

CA - Highland Park

20 - Mar ~~1968~~ 1969

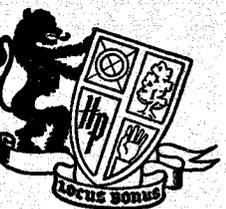
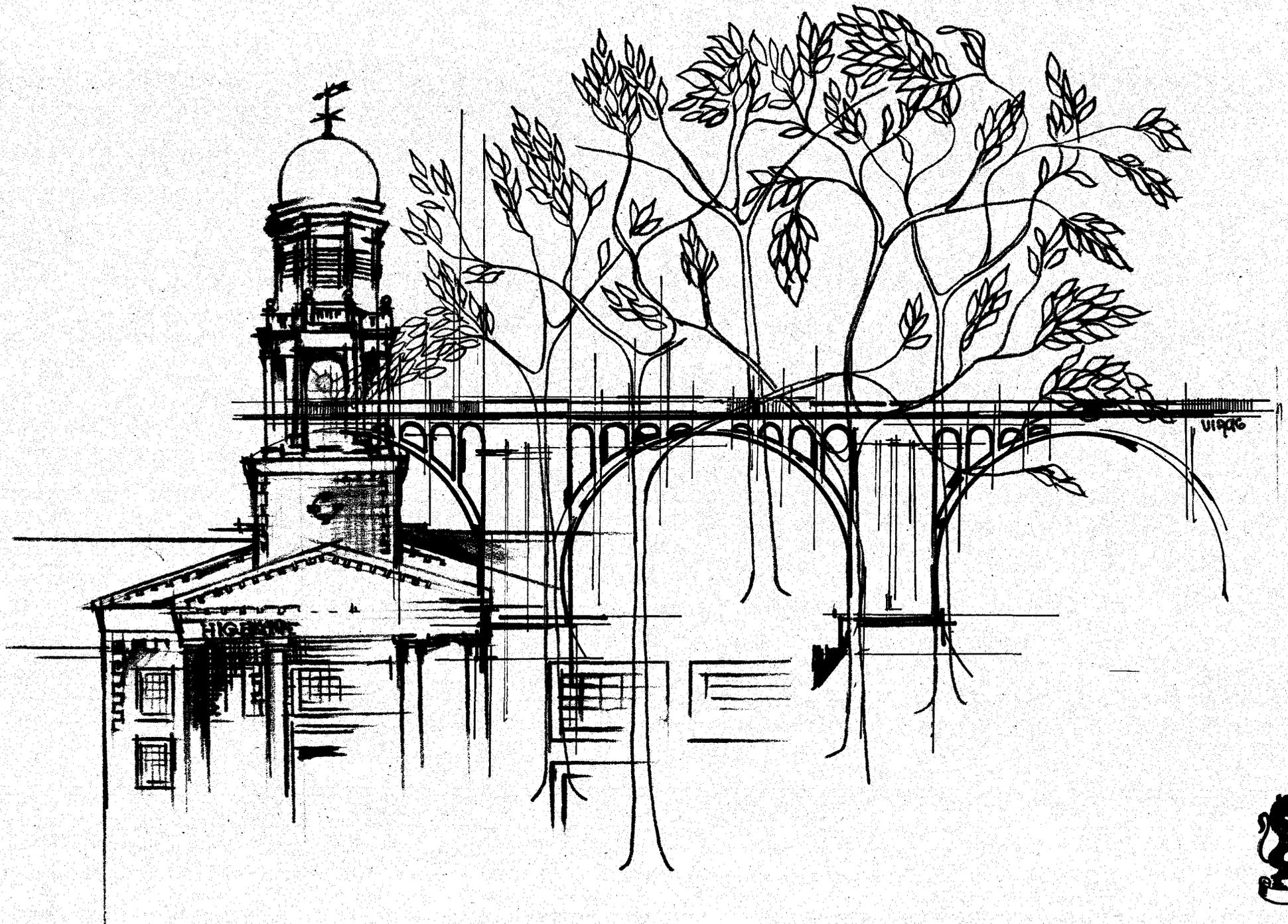
Master Plan: a comprehensive development plan

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# highland park • master plan



CA001438T

PLANNING BOARD  
**BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK**  
BOROUGH HALL, 21 SOUTH FOURTH AVENUE  
HIGHLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

SECRETARY  
MURRAY MARGOLIS  
144 AMHERST STREET

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Planning Board of the Borough of Highland Park has met, discussed and conferred with regard to the adoption of a Master Plan for the Borough of Highland Park; and

WHEREAS, a proposed Master Plan has been prepared; and

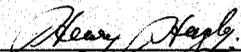
WHEREAS, it is the intention of the Planning Board of the Borough of Highland Park to adopt the said Master Plan:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Board of the Borough of Highland Park that the proposed Master Plan heretofore prepared and discussed at the Public Hearing on March 20, 1969, and as amended and supplemented in accordance therewith be and is hereby adopted as the Master Plan of the Borough of Highland Park in accordance with and pursuant to the Laws of the State of New Jersey in such case made and provided; and

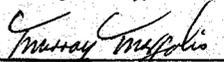
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Planning Board of the Borough of Highland Park shall be and is hereby directed to forward a certified copy of this resolution to the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park.



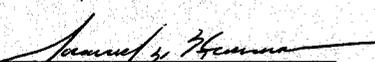
Dr. Roger Varney, Chairman



Henry Hugly, Vice-Chairman



Murray Margolis, Secretary



Samuel Kronman, Chairman  
Master Plan Committee

Dated: March 20, 1969

THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT HAS BEEN FINANCED BY LOCAL FUNDS AND BY AN APPROPRIATION OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AS PART OF THE CO-OPERATIVE GOVERNMENTAL PLANNING PROGRAM.

**A COMPREHENSIVE  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

**BOROUGH OF  
HIGHLAND PARK**

**1969**

**MIDDLESEX COUNTY  
NEW JERSEY**

# BOROUGH LETTER

# PLANNING BOARD

PLANNING BOARD  
BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
BOROUGH HALL, 21 SOUTH FOURTH AVENUE  
HIGHLAND PARK, NEW JERSEY

SECRETARY  
MURRAY MARGOLIS  
144 AMHERST STREET

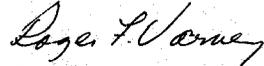
March, 1969

To the Governing Body and the  
Citizens of the Borough of Highland Park:

On behalf of the Planning Board, it is my pleasure to present to you this Comprehensive Development Plan for the Borough of Highland Park. During the past two years the Planning Board--with the aid of professional planning consultants, the Governing Body, various Borough agencies, and many citizens of the Borough--has willingly given many hours to review and make recommendations in order to formulate this Plan for the future. They have given gladly in the interest of a better community--a community with a Plan to show us and assure us our rights in living and investing here now and in the studied foreseeable future--a community with a Plan to show others interested in living and investing here what they can expect of the future.

While the Plan as presented here is intended as a working guide, we believe that it provides a logical, workable framework for Borough development and that, if followed, it will provide orderly, planned growth and will insure the continuance of a healthy, safe and beautiful community in the near and distant future.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Roger F. Varney, Chairman  
Highland Park Planning Board

Roger F. Varney, Chairman  
Henry Hugly, Vice-Chairman  
Herbert M. Tanzman, Mayor  
Frank R. Young, Councilman  
Samuel J. Kronman  
Dr. Frank Quaranta  
Leon A. Campbell  
Murray Margolis, Secretary  
David J. Monyek, Attorney  
William Rimmey, Engineer

## BOROUGH COUNCIL

Herbert M. Tanzman, Mayor  
Frank R. Young, Council President  
John H. Wyckoff, Jr.  
Sylvester C. Rusciano  
Daniel J. Sullivan  
G. Paul Beck  
Harold Berman

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# INTRODUCTION

A Master Plan represents a general statement of policy for the long-range physical development of a community. Utilizing this plan as a guide, the day to day activities and decisions can be encountered without losing perspective of the enduring values which the community has set forth to pattern its future growth.

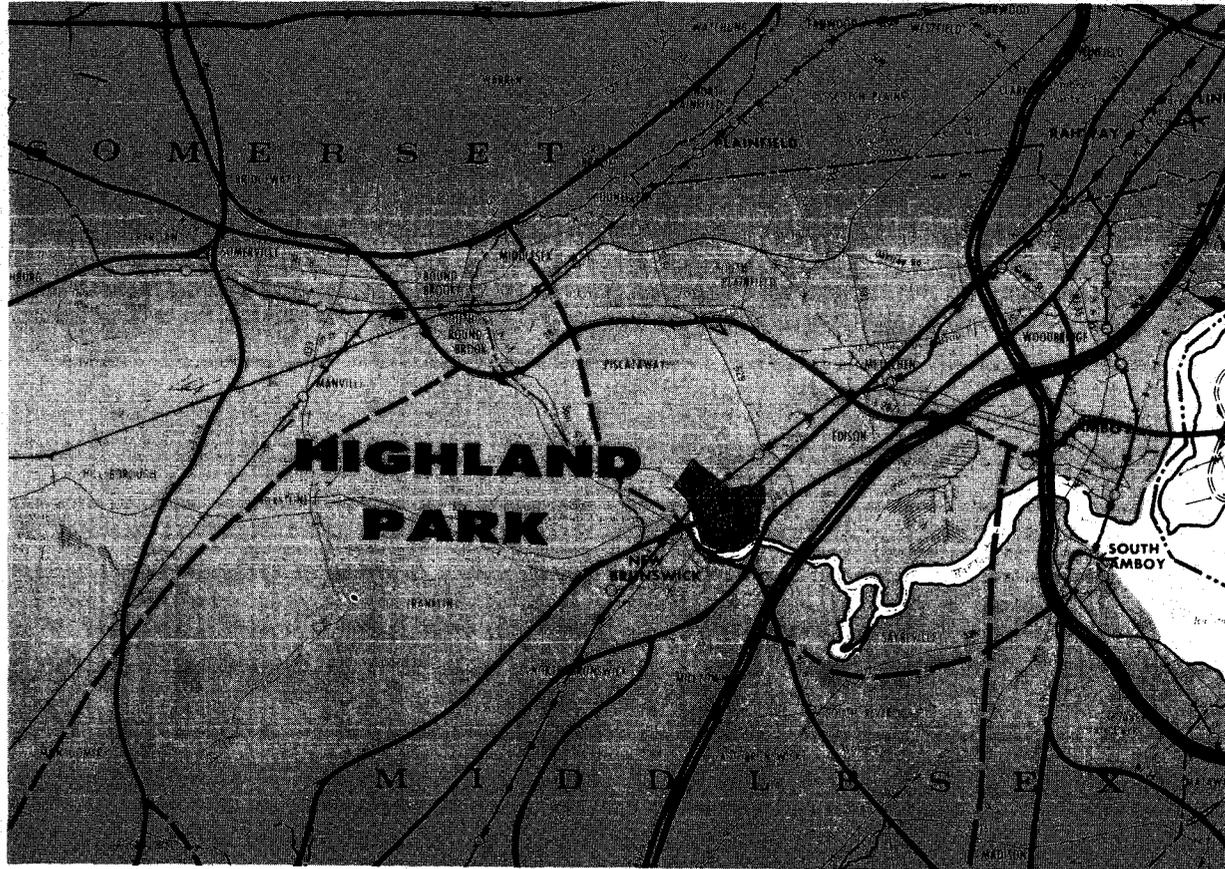
The Master Plan must be scaled to the realities of the community, for it must be capable of practical achievement by its citizens. Above all, the Master Plan must be representative of the goals and ideals of the citizens. Of course the civic goals and the ideals of all the citizens are not always compatible. Each group champions certain goals and ambitions. Moreover, each person possesses a personalized concept of what is ideal for Highland Park and this, of course, means that ideals and concepts do vary.

The Planning Board's task is to correlate and bond these

differing concepts into a plan which is best suited to fulfill the present and probable future needs of all the people. The plan must be in scale with the financial resources of the Borough, present and prospective.

There is no standard plan. Each community is unique in its natural geography, location and man-made physical elements.

Highland Park is a compact suburban-urban place. The community-wide land use pattern is firmly established. Yet as in so many developed suburban places, the fringe areas--areas of change--between general residential and commercial uses; between residential and industrial; and etc., are areas in some instances exhibiting real changes. These areas are a most crucial concern. This Master Plan focuses upon these areas so as to make provision for a proper balance and coordination of land uses. In essence, this document presents a workable outline for the coordinated staged development of new uses in proper perspective and relationship to existing development concentrations in the Borough of Highland Park.



# REGIONAL LOCATION



(Roads shown consist of highways and expressways)

SOURCE: TRI-STATE METROPOLITAN REGION

# BACKGROUND

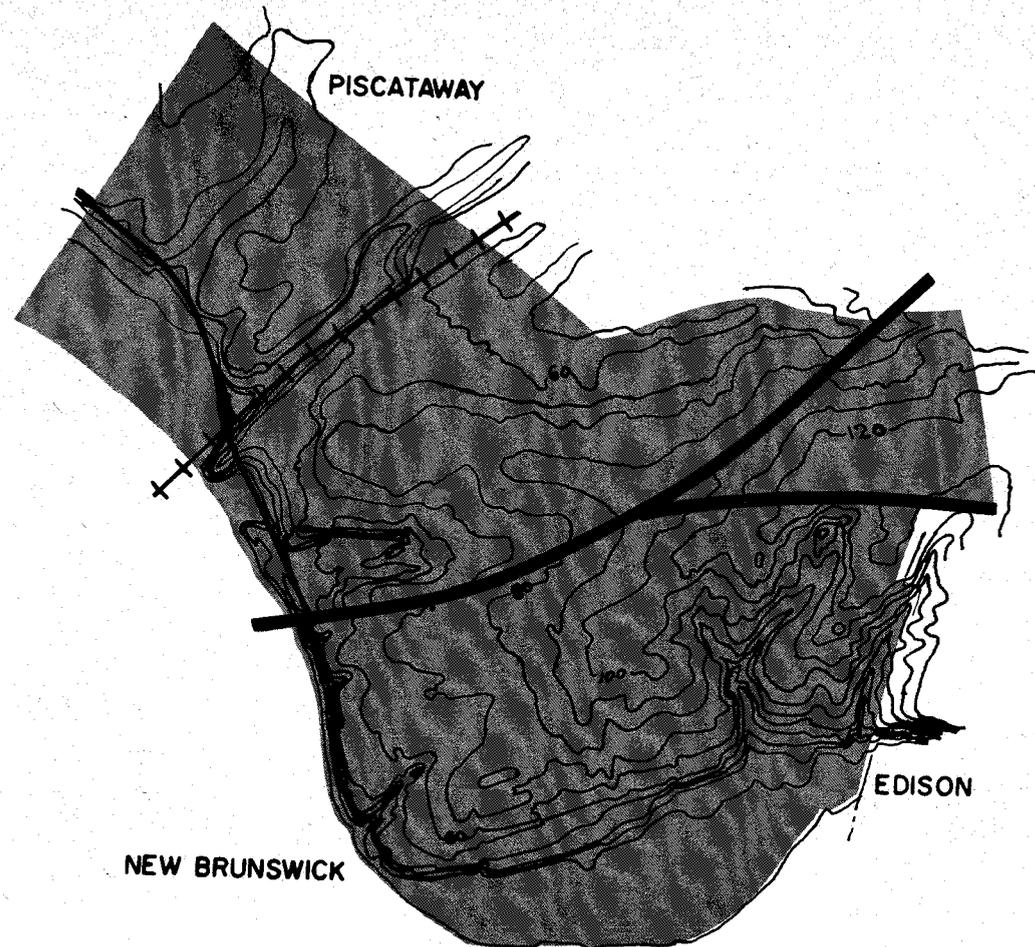
## REGIONAL LOCATION

Highland Park is located on the east bank of the Raritan River opposite the City of New Brunswick. This location is approximately the geographic vortex of Middlesex County. The development and population growth of New York-New Jersey Metropolitan Region and Middlesex has had a real impact on this community. Highways and rail-lines circumscribe and transcribe this municipality. Large numbers of people travel to and from Highland Park daily to places of residence, work, and to shop. Highland Park is directly influenced and is a part of the rapidly expanding central Middlesex area.

Prior to World War II, Highland Park was a suburban, even rural community with a downtown area limited to several blocks along Raritan Avenue. Today, Highland Park still retains in part a suburban residential character. However an urban development character is now most definitely an equally characteristic feature in terms of both residential and commercial development along Raritan Avenue and other locations throughout the Borough.

A basic consideration is the competitive nature of the central Middlesex County area. What will be Highland Park's role in the future development of the county and the region? Highland Park is clearly in the main-stream of this region's growth as evidenced by substantial sustained commercial and residential development throughout the Borough.

As the metropolitan area and the County grow, the Borough will continue to be pressured for more residential space and commercial development. Such pressure, properly guided and controlled, can create new stores, additional housing, and new employment, all essential to the present and future well-being of the residents of the Borough.



## HIGHLAND PARK: ITS POPULATION

Prior to the twentieth century, Highland Park was a noted shipping and transfer point. In 1918, the first steel bridge crossing the Raritan was constructed; and in 1920, the population was recorded at 4,866 persons.

Increased accessibility, the Pennsylvania Railroad bridge crossings, and the subsequent population growth in the 1920's served to forecast the initial stage of suburban exodus to central Middlesex County from more northerly metropolitan areas. By 1930, Highland Park's population totalled some 8,491 persons. After a period of relative stability during the depression and World War II, Highland Park saw a resurgence in terms of population growth. Today, the

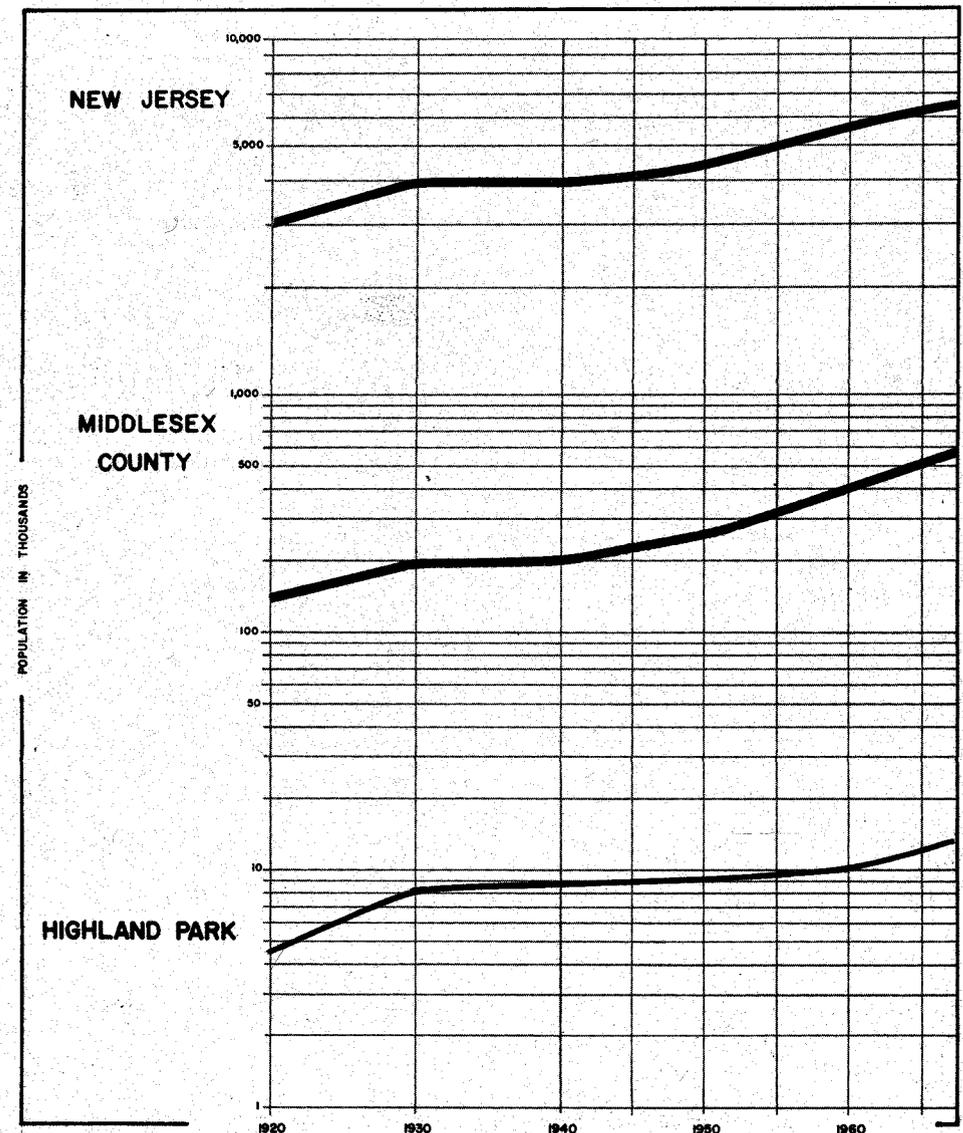
TABLE I  
POPULATION GROWTH  
Borough of Highland Park  
Middlesex County, New Jersey  
1920-66

Year	Population	Increase Over Preceding Year Number	Percent
1920	4,866	--	--
1930	8,691	3,825	78.6
1940	9,002	311	3.6
1950	9,721	719	7.9
1960	11,049	1,328	13.7
1966*	14,610	3,561	32.2

SOURCE: U.S. Census of Population

\* New Jersey Department of Conservation and Economic Development  
Research Report #146.

## POPULATION GROWTH 1920-1966



Borough numbers more than 14,600 persons. Garden apartments provided in part a source of housing supply for new families moving into the area in response to job opportunities offered by an expanding Rutgers University and the rapidly expanding industrial base in central Middlesex County.

Regional forces are encouraging urban development throughout Middlesex County. Highland Park's future growth will continue to be influenced by these regional forces. Indeed, the search for desirable neighborhoods with developed parks and schools, in close proximity (in terms of travel time) to shopping and employment areas indicates without question that Highland Park will continue to grow.

A study by Candub & Fleissig Associates estimated that Highland Park's total population by 1980 would approximate 14,500 to 15,000 persons. This total is in fact the approximate total number of persons now residing in this community. Such population growth is testimony to the statement that Highland Park will continue to be a housing demand area. However, considering the availability of developable land and current development controls, it is estimated that Highland Park's total population by 1980 will approximate 16,000 to 16,500 persons.

Analysis of population data revealed that the population age structure is changing. There has been an increase in the number of

children in the preschool and early school years. However, because the greatest proportion of new housing facilities are not designed to promote long-term residence of family forming-family raising households; in the next few years a levelling off of the school-age population will be the subsequent result. Concurrently, the number of families either young couples or elderly as a proportion of the total population has increased.

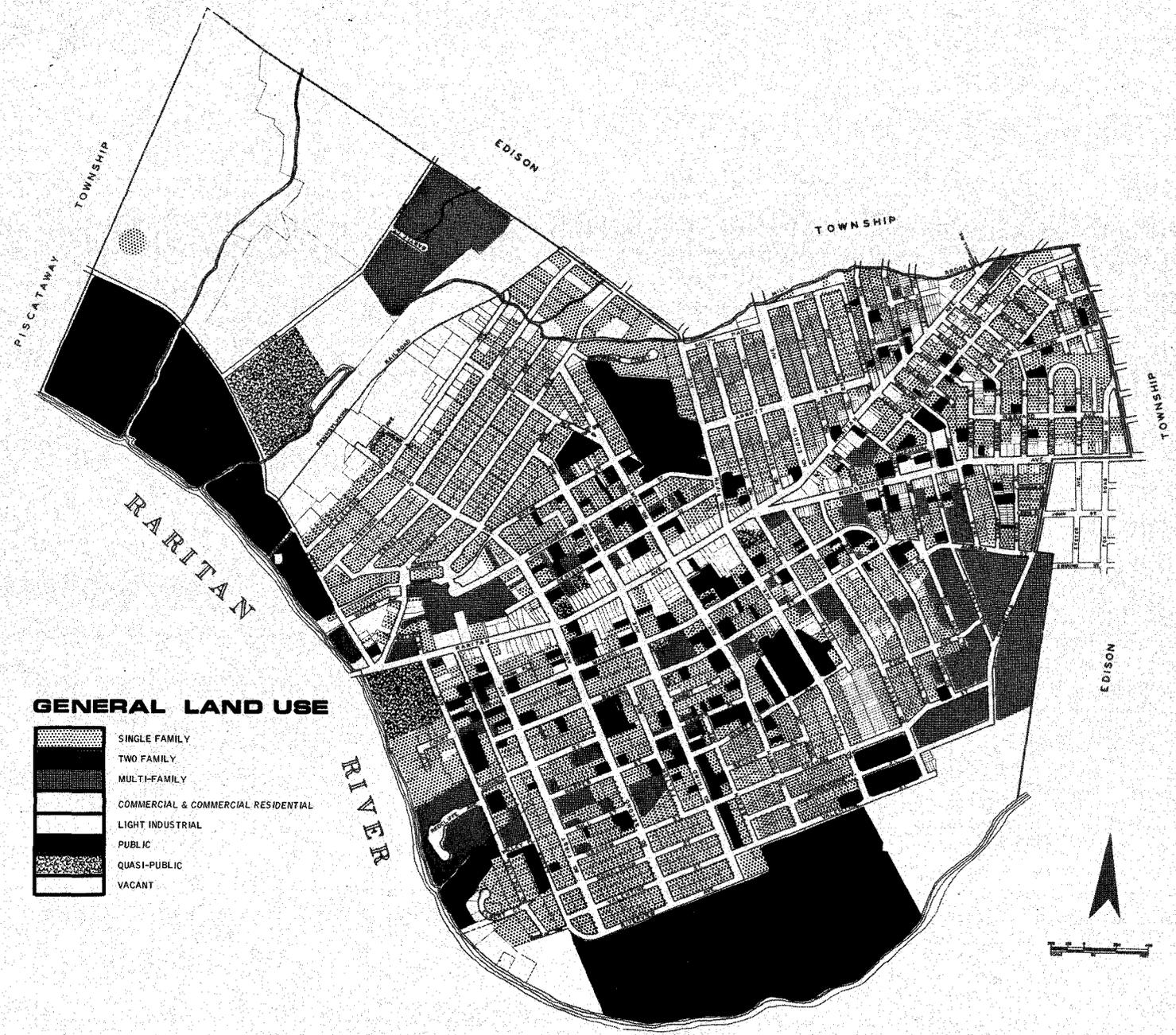
#### EXISTING LAND USE

A lot-by-lot land use survey of Highland Park was conducted in September, 1960. This survey showed the Borough to be a compactly developed residential community with a strong commercial area extending along Raritan Avenue.

This survey was updated in January, 1968. A considerable number of development projects have been completed since 1960. These are basically-

- private redevelopment of Raritan Avenue Commercial Area;
- the development of attractive garden apartment housing facilities; and
- the expansion and/or development of public facilities and services.

To date more than four-fifths of the land area in Highland Park is developed. The greatest proportion of all vacant land is located north of the Pennsylvania Railroads tracks. The bulk of this



**GENERAL LAND USE**

-  SINGLE FAMILY
-  TWO FAMILY
-  MULTI-FAMILY
-  COMMERCIAL & COMMERCIAL RESIDENTIAL
-  LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
-  PUBLIC
-  QUASI-PUBLIC
-  VACANT

vacant area--107 acres--is owned by Rutgers--the State University. The remainder of the vacant land suitable for private development is scattered throughout the Borough.

#### Residential Development

The outstanding characteristic of Highland Park is its low density residential development. Approximately four out of every five acres of land in residential use are developed for single-family residential purposes.

Since World War II new garden apartment and low-rise apartment structures have been added to this community's housing inventory. The scarcity of land suitable and available for residential development strongly implies that the aggregate housing facilities and the character and nature of such will not change appreciably.

#### Commercial Development

Highland Park's major business concentration is located on Raritan Avenue between Second and Sixth Avenues. Other retail and commercial establishments are scattered along the rest of Raritan Avenue and to a lesser degree, along Woodbridge Avenue.

Raritan and Woodbridge Avenues are by far the two most heavily travelled streets in the Borough. Increasing traffic and the extension of commercial uses along both streets have resulted in serious traffic congestion in the downtown area and at the Raritan Avenue bridge crossing.

Regional highway developments such as the extension of Route #18, the completion of Route #287, and the improvement of Route #1 should effectively absorb a significant proportion of the thru traffic, non-business trips on Raritan Avenue routes. Nevertheless, Raritan Avenue is a most vital link in the regional circulation

network, and heavy traffic flow especially at peak traffic periods can be expected to remain on this route.

Real possibilities exist to facilitate vehicular flow on Raritan and Woodbridge Avenue. The construction of the Route #18 extension to Route #287 will greatly reduce the left hand turning movement from the Albany Street Bridge onto River Road, thereby greatly reducing the existing River Road-Albany Street traffic congestion and therefore eliminating this existing bottleneck on Raritan Avenue.

Intersection redesign and signalization improvements can also effectively increase peak period vehicular capacity of Woodbridge and Raritan Avenues. Such improvements also serve to improve the traffic safety conditions of Woodbridge and Raritan Avenues.

#### Industrial Development

The most industrial land uses are located adjacent to the Pennsylvania Railroad. This industrial enclave accounts for most of the 27 acres of land in industrial use. The Mid Land Ross Engineering Company is the largest of all industrial uses located in this area.

#### Public and Quasi-Public Development

Approximately 350 acres or 30 percent of the entire land area of the Borough is devoted to public and quasi-public use. Public and quasi-public uses consist of public schools and park lands, Rutgers University property, and other non-secular uses such as churches and private schools. Donaldson and Johnson Parks, two county park facilities, account for approximately one-third of the 350 acres of land in public or quasi-public ownership. Rutgers--the State University owns 107 acres of land north of Carder Lane. Public school properties and the Borough landfill site account for the bulk of the remaining land areas in public and quasi-public ownership.

TABLE II  
LAND USE  
BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
MIDDLESEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY  
1968

<u>LAND USE CATEGORY</u>			
Residential -	458.6	39.8	46.4
Single-family	347.8	30.2	35.2
Two-family	45.0	3.9	4.5
Three-family	10.7	.9	1.1
Garden-Apartment & Apartment	55.1	4.8	5.6
Commercial-Residential	6.7	.6	.7
Commercial	25.6	2.2	2.5
Industrial	27.6	2.4	2.8
Public & Quasi-Public	242.8	21.1	24.6
Railroad	27.8	2.4	2.8
Streets	200.0	17.4	20.2
TOTAL Developed Acreage	989.1	85.9	100.0
Water Area	13.2	1.1	
Vacant Land	149.7	13.0	
TOTAL Undeveloped Acreage	162.9	14.1	
Gross Acreage	1152.0	100.0	

SOURCE: E. Eugene Oross Associates, January, 1968  
Candeub & Fleissig and Associates, 1960

### HOUSING AND PLANNING DISTRICT ANALYSIS

Well-maintained homes abutting tree-lined streets are a basic and most attractive characteristic of Highland Park. This is one of the more important factors which make the Borough an attractive place in which to live and serves as a direct stimulus for sustained housing demand in the Borough.

Experience has shown that where deteriorating conditions are left unchecked, adjacent properties become subject to real factors contributing to their economic depreciation.

In communities where such a situation exists or has existed, these communities have been faced with enormous fiscal problems, as well as socio-economic problems. Such problems could well have been avoided if action and positive preventive programs had been instituted at the outset of evident localized structural decline.

The Highland Park housing stock is almost without exception one of well-maintained, structurally sound dwellings. The maintenance of this enviable state requires routine property maintenance in most instances.

However, rent cost and area change in terms of the economic land value by location strongly suggests that low density residential land use along Raritan Avenue has little future. A number of residential structures formerly located along Raritan Avenue have been razed or completely reconstructed and redesigned to provide for the expansion of existing businesses or the development of new business activity.

### STRUCTURAL CONDITION ANALYSIS

An exterior structural condition survey conducted in 1960 by Candeub, Fleissig and Associates and updated in 1968 by E. Eugene Oross Associates serves as the information source upon which this analysis is founded.

The complete Borough-wide survey revealed that the great proportion of all structures in Highland Park are in good condition

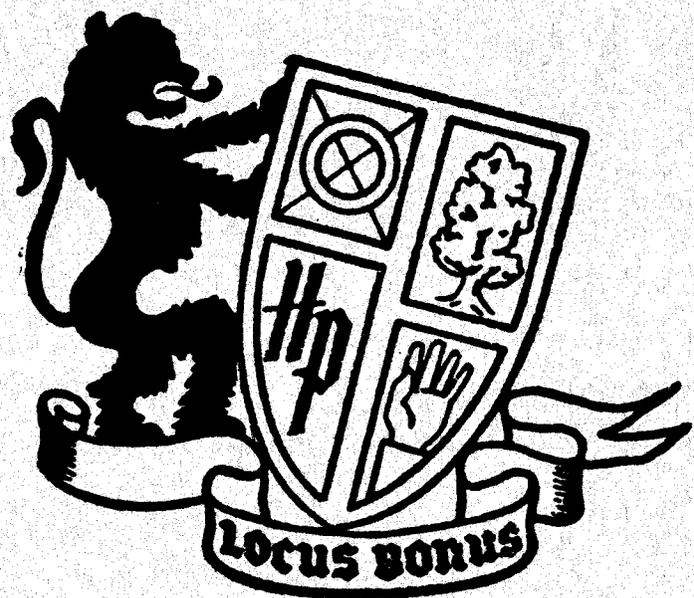
and only normal maintenance and housekeeping is needed to maintain this amiable situation.

It was also found that a number of structures originally constructed for single-family housing and located along Raritan and Woodbridge Avenues have been subject, in the past, to conversion either to multi-family or commercial uses. Some structures have also been converted to mixed-commercial and residential uses. Generally, a converted single-family structure cannot provide adequate facilities for both resident and business needs. Recent changes to existing Borough codes and ordinances coupled with strict enforcement serves to correct and negate unwanted activity in this vain.

High standards have been required and maintained for new construction in the Borough. However, Highland Park cannot rely solely on new construction to maintain and upgrade a good neighborhood environment.

The Borough has a history of taking the initiative toward improving the community and these efforts should be continued. For example, improvement of traffic control and development of street parking areas are just two methods of relieving traffic congestion and, therefore, improving the general environment along the major streets in the Borough. Continued enforcement of modern, comprehensive codes and ordinances is another means of maintaining the attractiveness of the entire Borough of Highland Park.

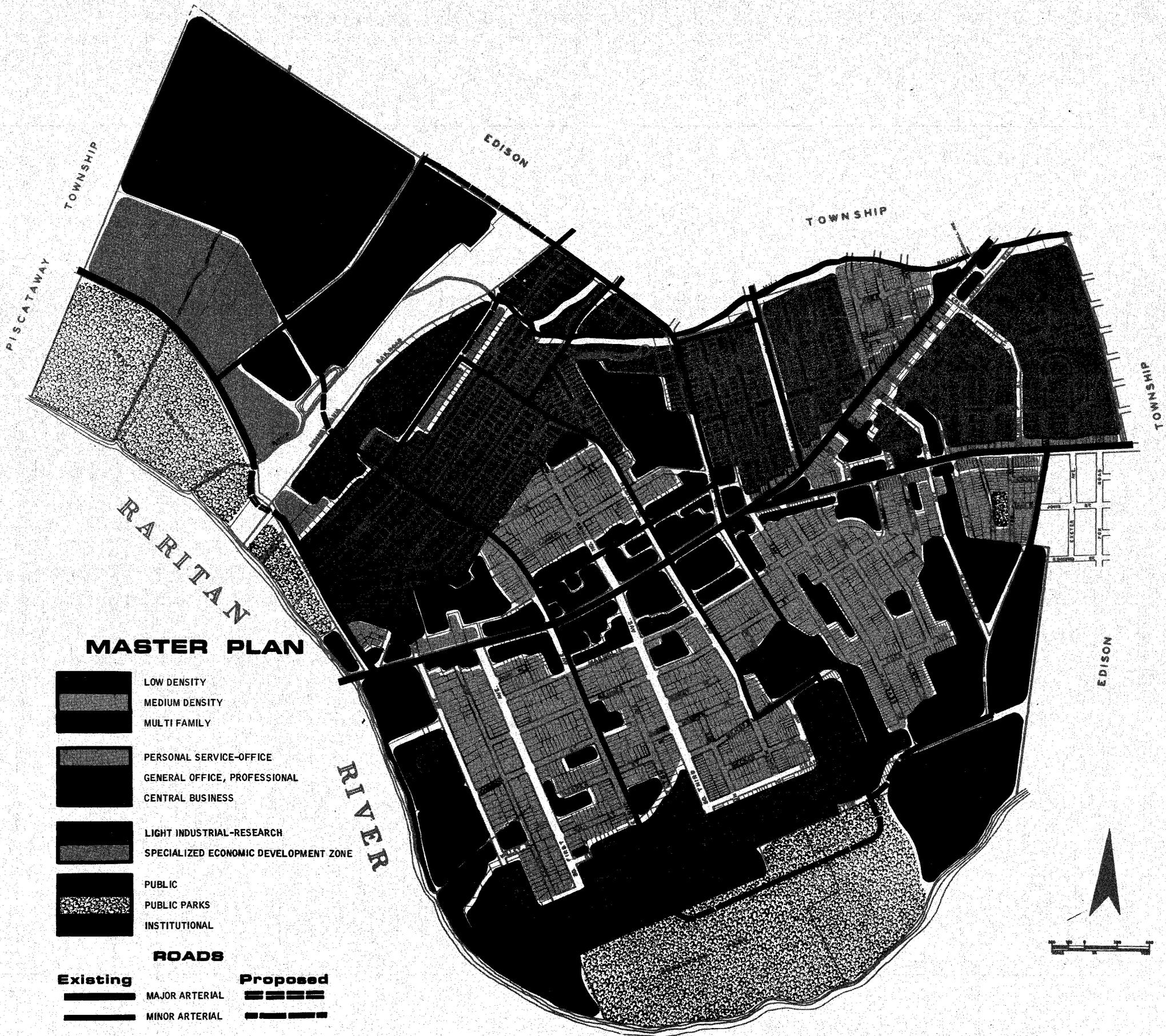




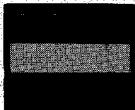
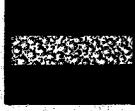
## **MASTER PLAN**

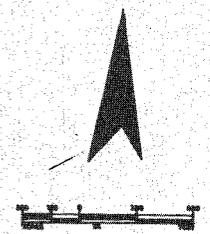
# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- preserve and protect residential areas
- consolidate and promote the further development of the downtown center
- promote and develop a coordinated network of private and public off-street parking areas within the downtown commercial district
- encourage commercial business development along Woodbridge Avenue
- encourage and provide for the development of integrated office-professional businesses in and about the downtown shopping area
- encourage and direct the continued development of a suburban community offering a choice of housing and shopping facilities, and employment opportunities
- maintain and further develop a system of parks, recreation and school facilities, streamway and flood control facilities and other community facilities designed to serve and provide for the needs of this community
- direct all new development to promote and facilitate public service and facility planning and to restrict and discourage development projects which would disrupt and cause an imbalance upon the community's public service and facility network
- develop and provide for a more efficient and safe street system



**MASTER PLAN**

-  LOW DENSITY
  -  MEDIUM DENSITY
  -  MULTI FAMILY
  -  PERSONAL SERVICE-OFFICE
  -  GENERAL OFFICE, PROFESSIONAL
  -  CENTRAL BUSINESS
  -  LIGHT INDUSTRIAL-RESEARCH
  -  SPECIALIZED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ZONE
  -  PUBLIC
  -  PUBLIC PARKS
  -  INSTITUTIONAL
- ROADS**
- Existing**
  -  MAJOR ARTERIAL
  -  MINOR ARTERIAL
  - Proposed**
  -  MAJOR ARTERIAL
  -  MINOR ARTERIAL



# LAND USE PLAN

## Summary of Planned Proposals

The core of the Borough is to become essentially even more of a "central" area. Channelization improvements in the circulation system will give a whole new aspect to locate downtown. Included in these essentially commercial uses will be room for professional offices and services oriented and businesses, plus administrative offices for such Regional services as banks, communications industries and utility companies.

Within the core there will be provision for high-density residence to enhance the image and the fact of centrality.

Centrality does not necessarily imply extreme building density. Off-street parking areas and landscaped areas, although not shown on the mapped Plan, are an integral part of the business district. Landscaping and density standards as set for high density zones are as described and prescribed in the Highland Park Ordinance. Another specific objective is to encourage high rise development having both retail and office space and perhaps apartment facilities in the core area.

Important to centrality is the concept of a balanced array of uses developed in an arrangement which shall be of a real benefit to the community at large. The Borough center is to be a place of business, employment, and having an environment and character conducive of urban-suburban living. Off-street parking areas, circulation improvements, and on-street parking regulations will provide for more efficient and safe traffic flow through and within the downtown area.

The Borough's outlying residential areas will remain as medium and low density areas. Apartments, offices and off-street parking facilities will serve as a transition use between the central business

area, along major streets and the adjoining residential areas. Large open exclusive recreation areas should be expanded where possible.

The Master Plan is itself a conceptual statement of this community's planned objectives for the future. Contained within the Master Plan are three interdependent planning entities, the Land Use Plan, the Transportation-Circulation Plan, and the Community Facilities Plan. Each plan embodies certain elements which contribute to and constitute the end product, the Master Plan.

#### Land Use Plan

The purpose of the Land Use Plan is to provide a general guide for future land use development and to incorporate and protect existing uses within the total land use scheme.

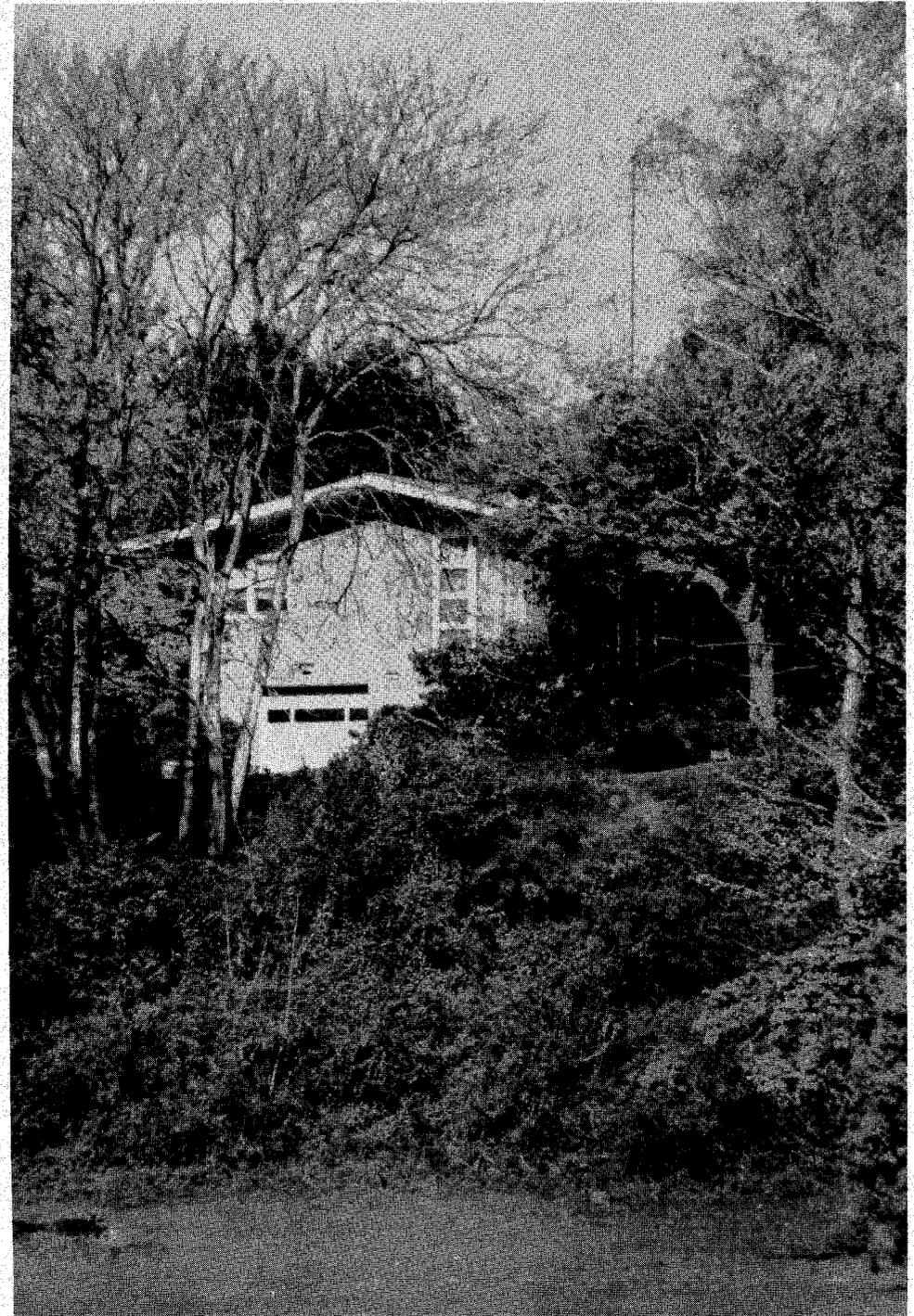
#### Land Use Plan Objectives

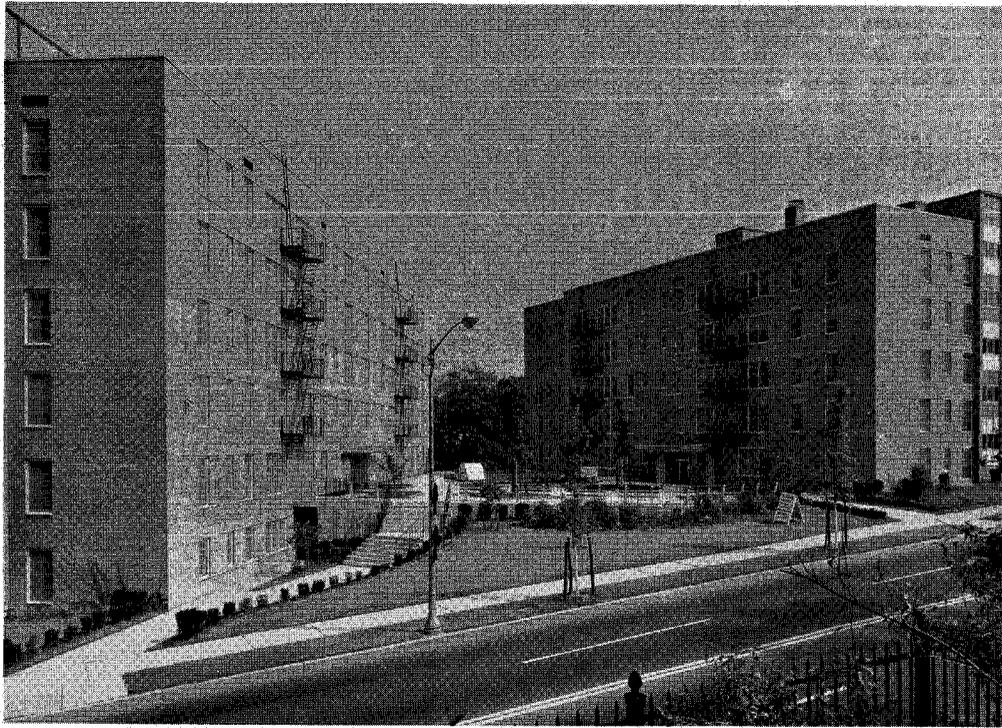
- Preservation and continued maintenance of residential areas
- Provide for and encourage the sustained physical and economic growth of downtown Highland Park.
- Provide for and encourage the development of a more diverse employment job market and further strengthen the community's economic base.
- Preserve and protect park, school and recreational areas.
- Provide for and encourage the preservation and maintenance of open green spaces.
- Protect and conserve the water front area for the health and betterment of the community at large.
- Provide for the further development of a municipal civic-administration center.

#### Residential Land Use Plan

The Borough of Highland Park possesses an admirable resi-

dential base. Single family homes are the predominant building type. Multi-family units and two and three family homes are located for the most part either near or adjacent to the downtown area, or at the periphery of residential areas.





Because of the real limitation of vacant land suitable for additional residential development, because of high real estate costs, and because of the physical capacity of this community's education plant, no new large tract single family residential areas are recommended.

This recommendation reflects and reinforces the existing residential development pattern; one of clustered, consolidated residential development and all areas of which are generally located within walking distance of the Borough Center and retail and service facilities.

Multi-family residential units have served as a transition use and activity between business uses and activities located in the Borough Center and along Woodbridge Avenue. Where the opportunity exists or arises that additional multi-family development will serve as a transition or buffer use between business and low density residential uses they should be encouraged.

High density residential-commercial office development is proposed in the Downtown area. This development type will afford



this community a more diverse and active downtown environment. The maximum recommended use density is thirty-five units per acre.

#### Commercial Land Use

The concept of a downtown center for Highland Park will be emphasized. Various commercial uses and development types are provided for and encouraged to complement each other and to further the development and diversity of this municipality's economic base. A concentration and diverse number of activities will serve to attract people to the downtown area, provide a centralized service area in the Borough of Highland Park.

The Master Plan also proposes office professional-personal service uses along Woodbridge Avenue and Route #27. Woodbridge



Avenue and Route #27 are major arterial routes and the environment associated with such is not generally conducive to low density residential development. As stated previously, multi-family development is recommended near or adjacent to these routes, and this development type will provide a diversity of use and activity, yet be in conformity with adjacent site development intensity.

#### LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND RESEARCH LAND USES

##### Industrial

No additional light industrial land use areas are proposed on the Master Plan. The land area between Cleveland Avenue and Pennsylvania Railroad line is the only area shown on the Master Plan as light industrial land use development area.

#### SPECIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AREA

The area fronting on River Road from the Pennsylvania Railroad line north to Piscataway Township is proposed as a future Special Economic Development area. Office, research-laboratory uses, high-rise development (residential and/or office use), also including a motor-inn and related commercial uses are proposed as the integrated development type and ultimate land use of this area. The specific objective is that the area be developed as a cohesive-integrated arrangement of buildings and uses and, therefore, development of individual shops in small free-standing buildings should be discouraged.

Office and/or residential high-rise development require a full complement of public utilities, plus good accessibility and exposure. This location will possess all of these distinguishing attributes with the development of the Route #18 extension. In addition, the location's proximity and exposure to Johnson's Park does give this area added prestige value. The realization of this proposal should serve the Borough in two ways: (1) produce increased job opportunity in the community, and (2) should aid in strengthening the community's economic base. The broad objectives of the Master Plan and physiographic and economic considerations realistically negate the desirability of this area being developed for low density residential use or individual free-standing or small retail service uses.

##### Institutional

The bulk of the land area north of the Pennsylvania Railroad

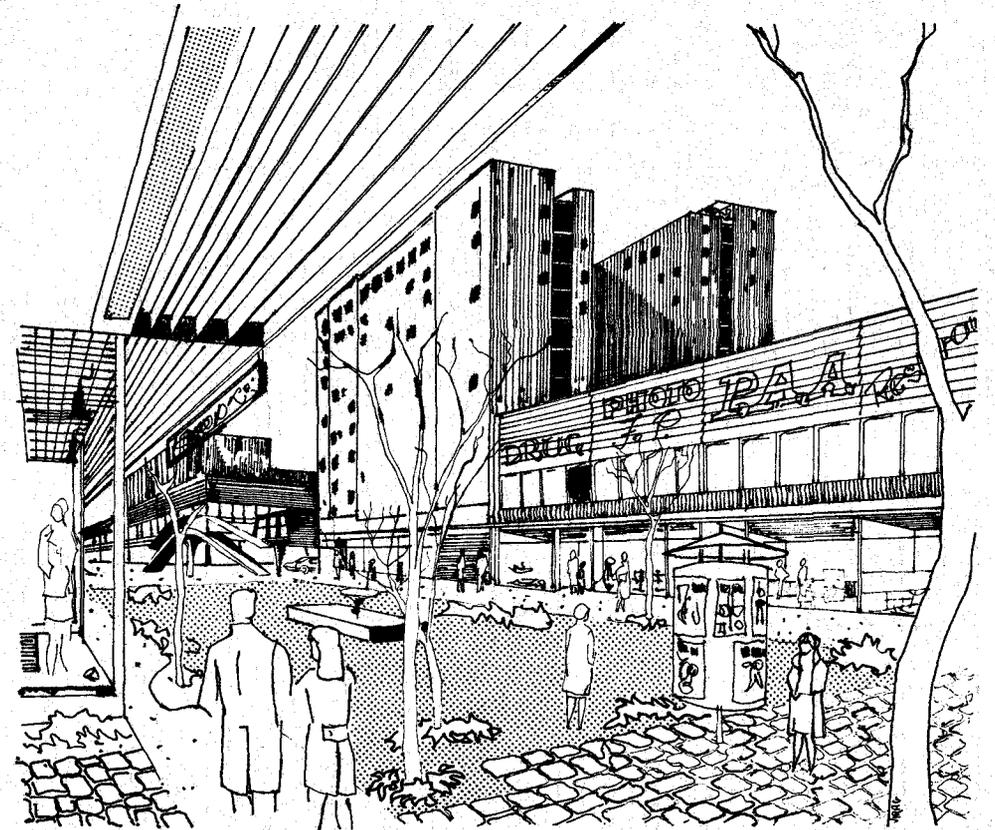
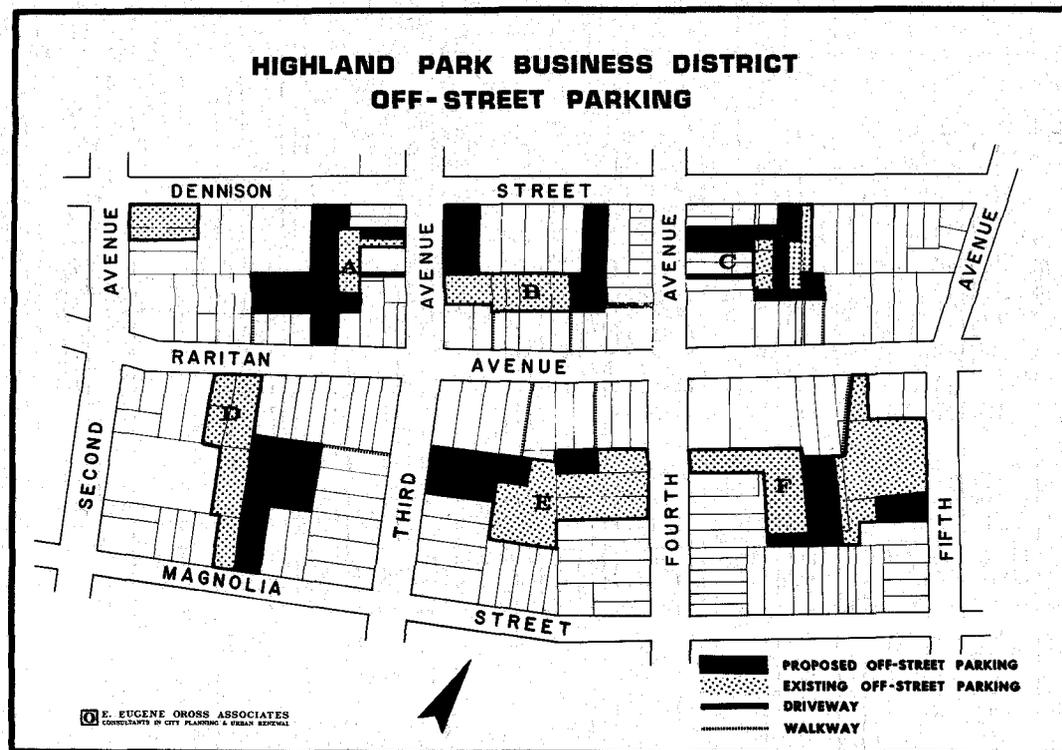
is the property of Rutgers the State University. Much of this areas has been designated by the University as a future campus expansion location. The Borough of Highland Park's Master Plan specifically proposes that if and when developed that this land be developed by the university as an educational or research area and that it not be for college family.

### Core Parking Plan

Off-street parking facilities are a most essential element necessary for the continued development of Highland Park's central business area. A field survey made by the consultant reveals that a number of off-street parking areas and the possibility of developing new ones exists. At present most lots are in private ownership and have

been developed and designed to serve individual businesses. Consolidation of some lots and expansion of others will produce a significantly increased number of available parking spaces. A program administered by the Highland Park Parking Authority will be developed to purchase some lots, lease others and in some instances share the expense of redesigning, consolidating and enlarging others. This multi faceted approach provides the most economical and expeditious method of developing needed off-street parking areas through out the downtown center.

The off-street parking areas shall be developed in conjunction with the business area. Access to the lots should be from the side streets where possible. Pedestrian walk ways connecting the business area to parking areas are expected to be provided where possible.



# CIRCULATION PLAN

## Circulation- Transportation

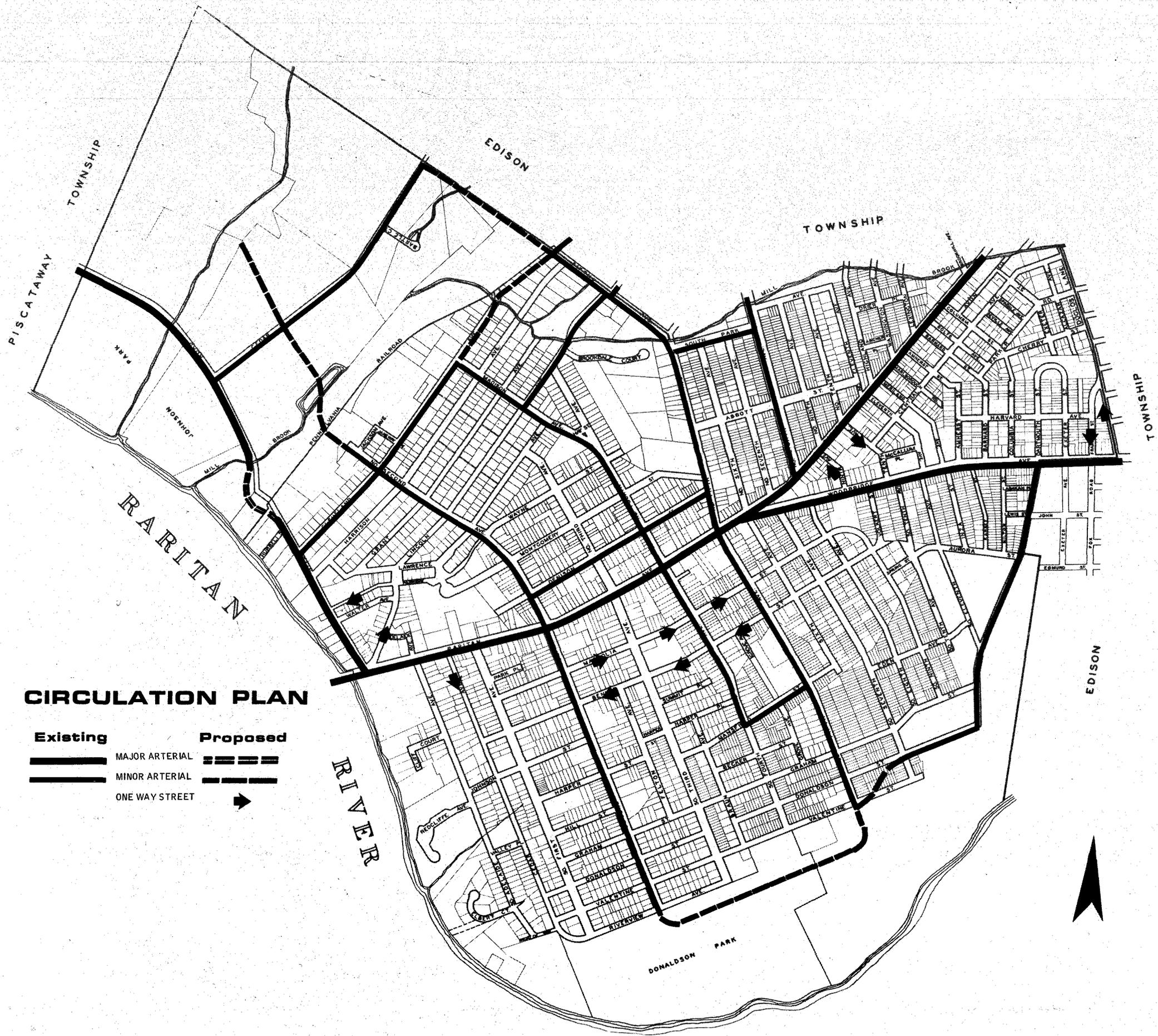
Traffic and circulation patterns are vital to every phase of the Master Plan. Regional highways, state routes, and local streets, all have one basic function: to provide access to particular destinations. The Borough of Highland Park is generally bounded by major regional Highways, the New Jersey Turnpike, Route 287, Route 1, and Route 18 provide the means of direct regional accessibility to this community. Route 27, Woodbridge Avenue and River Road are the major travel routes through Highland Park. These routes connect the regional highway system. Route 27, and Woodbridge Avenue are essential links within this regional system.

In the case of River Road, the planned extension of Route 18 across the Raritan River into Piscataway Township should divert a portion of north-south through traffic away from the Highland Park section of River Road. However, River Road will remain as the principle north-south link between the Highland Park downtown area and the Piscataway Route 287 and proposed Route 1-95 area.

The major routes immediately effecting the traffic patterns contributing to the traffic flow on major routes through Highland Park are state and county highways. Therefore State and County highway plans and improvement will have direct bearing upon traffic flow in Highland Park.

## State Proposals

Route 18 extension is scheduled as a first priority improvement in the recently published State Master Plan for transportation. This extension will provide a direct north-south link from Route 1 and the New Jersey Turnpike to Route 287 and proposed Route 1-95, therefore absorbing much of the traffic on River Road. However, because River Road is the major access route to Johnson Park and Rutgers' Livingston Campus, River Road will continue to function as a heavily used arterial link. In addition continued



**CIRCULATION PLAN**

- |   |                |   |  |
|---|----------------|---|--|
| <b>Existing</b>   |                | <b>Proposed</b>   |  |
|  | MAJOR ARTERIAL |  |  |
|  | MINOR ARTERIAL |  |  |
|  | ONE WAY STREET |   |  |



population growth and industrial and commercial development in this immediate area of central Middlesex County will generate an increasing number of trips through this area. With the development of the Route 18 extension and Route 1-95, it is recommended that River Road be widened to four lanes and a new underpass and roadway at the Pennsylvania Railroad bridge be developed.

Route 27 has been designed as a second priority improved route in the State Transportation Master Plan. Effectuation of State plans will provide a much improved north-south access route to and from the New Brunswick-Highland Park area.

Because this route serves and will continue to serve both through and local traffic, it is strongly recommended that all on-street parking and left-turns be prohibited during peak travel periods after sufficient off-street parking facilities have been developed.

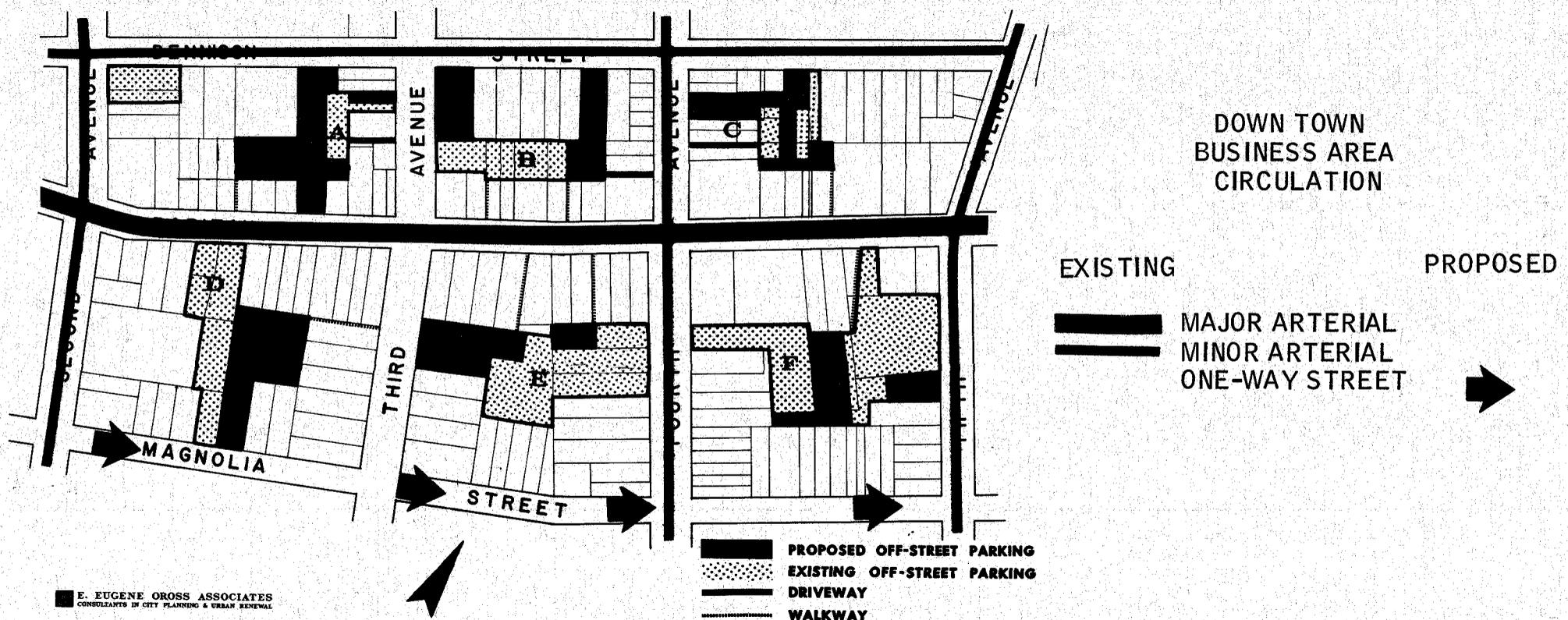
### Middlesex County Plans

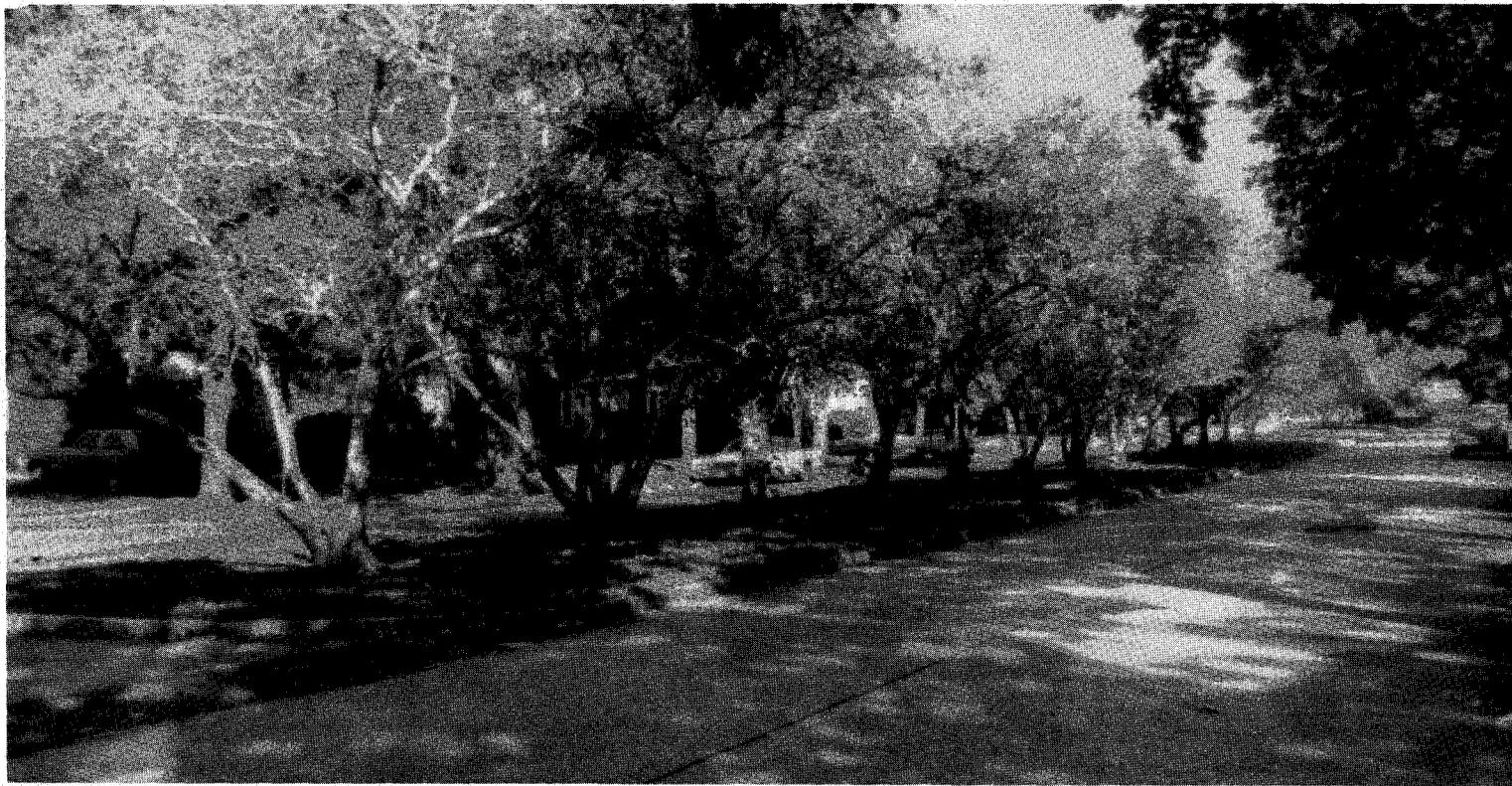
Middlesex County is currently preparing to improve Woodbridge Avenue from Route 1 through Edison. Improvements will significantly increase the vehicular capacity of this route. It is recommended that on street parking be prohibited from Route 1 to Tenth Avenue in Highland Park. In addition, signals should be installed at the intersections of Duclose Lane-Woodbridge Avenue and Eleventh and Woodbridge Avenues.

### Internal Circulation Proposals

The growing regional population will generate much traffic whose destination is within the Borough of Highland Park. Raritan Avenue, Woodbridge Avenue and River Road will carry most of the through and

## HIGHLAND PARK BUSINESS DISTRICT OFF-STREET PARKING





business trip traffic. The improvements proposed on these routes by the State and County agencies will greatly facilitate flow on these streets.

Traffic generated within the Borough and about the business and the employment areas of the community will add to existing traffic volumes. To provide for a safe and efficient pattern of traffic flow a directional system is recommended. The principal purpose of such a system is to direct business traffic away from local residential streets, and separate business and local traffic from through traffic along Raritan Avenue in the downtown area.

The local road proposals are:

- Prohibit on-street parking along Raritan Avenue from Sixth Avenue to River Road.
- Extend Second Avenue to Cedar Lane
- Extend Fifth Avenue to Cedar Lane
- Extend Cleveland Avenue to proposed extension of Fifth Avenue
- Improvement and widening of Dennison Street from Fifth

Avenue to Second Avenue

- Magnolia Street is recommended to be made a one way street east as shown on the Master Plan
- Benner Street is recommended to be made a one way street west as shown on the Master Plan
- Duclos Lane functions as a collector street and link between Route 27 and Woodbridge Avenue. It is recommended that this street be improved and all on-street parking be prohibited during peak traffic periods
- Valentine Street is proposed to be extended east and north to Donaldson Street
- Extend Second Avenue through Donaldson Park to Fifth Avenue
- It is proposed that Cedar Lane, a County road, be widened and improved and its intersection with River Road should be redesigned and cleared to eliminate a hazardous travel point. Installation of a traffic light is also recommended.
- Improve and realign River Road
- The Master Plan Circulation Map designates the recommended function of each street in Highland Park.

# COMMUNITY FACILITY PLAN

## Community Facility Plan

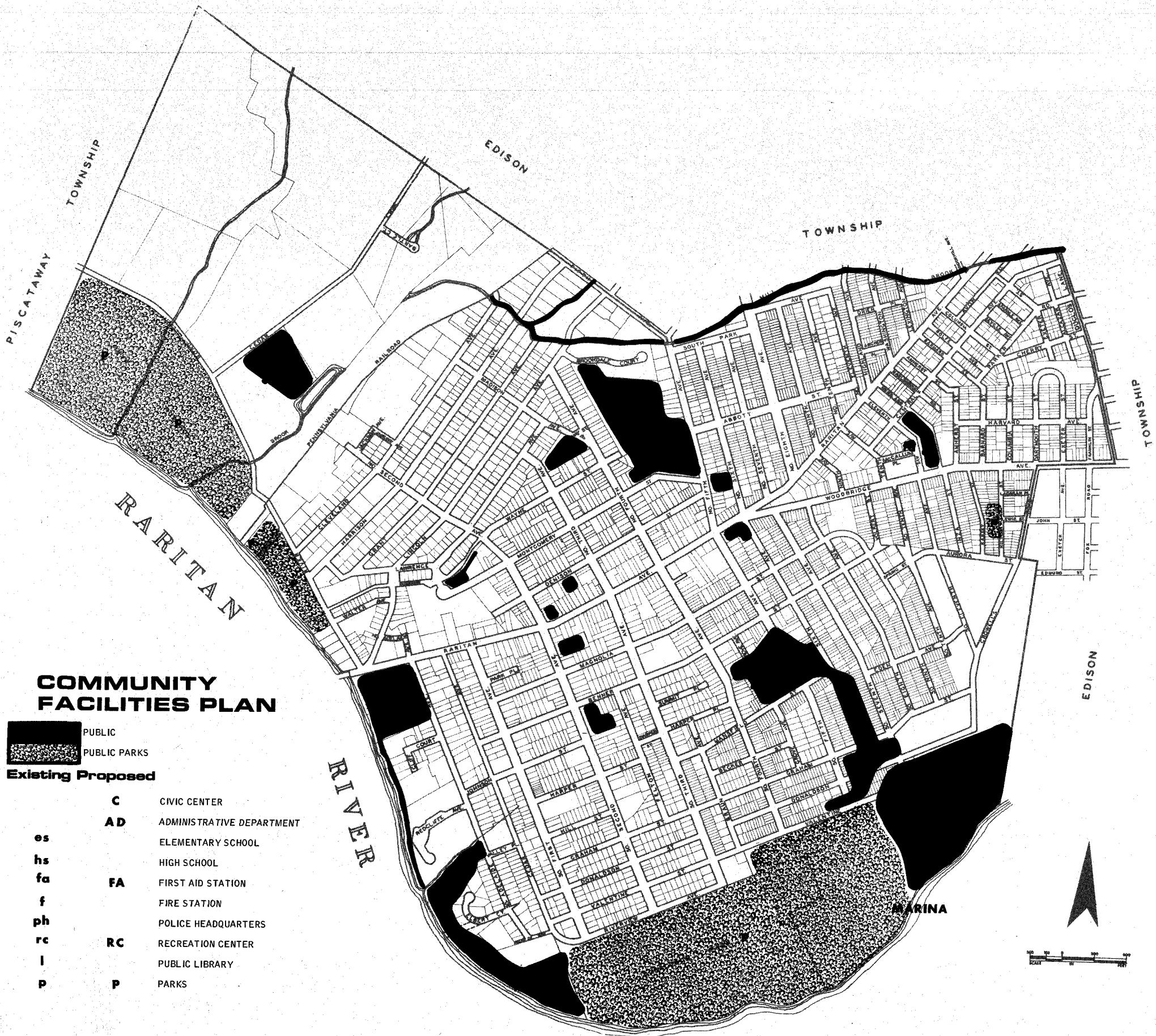
A municipality has the responsibility of providing and maintaining most community facilities and utilities to its citizens. The planning administration, and operations of all facilities involves public, private and semi-anotomomous agencies. The Master Plan recommendations have been coordinated with these agencies so that the objectives of the Master Plan are in agreement with the operating and planning policies of other agencies.

## Administrative Building

The present Highland Park municipal administration building is a two-story brick veneer structure originally designed for residential use. The building is located on South Fourth Avenue and adjacent to the downtown shopping district of the Borough. There is off-street parking facilities available at this site.

Today, although maximum utilization of all available building space is accomplished, the building does not adequately accommodate and provide the necessary and proper administrative and meeting space requirements. Continued need for more storage space, increased staff working space, and larger assembly rooms cannot be satisfied by this building. In addition, the maintenance cost of this structure is becoming increasing uneconomical. It is recommended that the Borough of Highland Park allocate funds for the planning and development of a new municipal administrative building. The recommended location for the proposed new municipal building is the Middle School, fire and police station, Municipal Court site. The existance of a clustering of public facilities and services at this location outweighs a possible recommendation to rebuild at the present downtown site.

In developing a new municipal building at the Middle School site, the Borough will be creating a civic center. In addition, complementary public administration and service personnel will then be



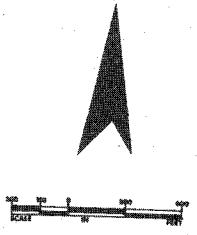
# COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN



PUBLIC  
PUBLIC PARKS

Existing Proposed

- |           |                           |
|-----------|---------------------------|
| <b>C</b>  | CIVIC CENTER              |
| <b>AD</b> | ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT |
| <b>es</b> | ELEMENTARY SCHOOL         |
| <b>hs</b> | HIGH SCHOOL               |
| <b>fa</b> | FIRST AID STATION         |
| <b>f</b>  | FIRE STATION              |
| <b>ph</b> | POLICE HEADQUARTERS       |
| <b>rc</b> | RECREATION CENTER         |
| <b>l</b>  | PUBLIC LIBRARY            |
| <b>p</b>  | PARKS                     |



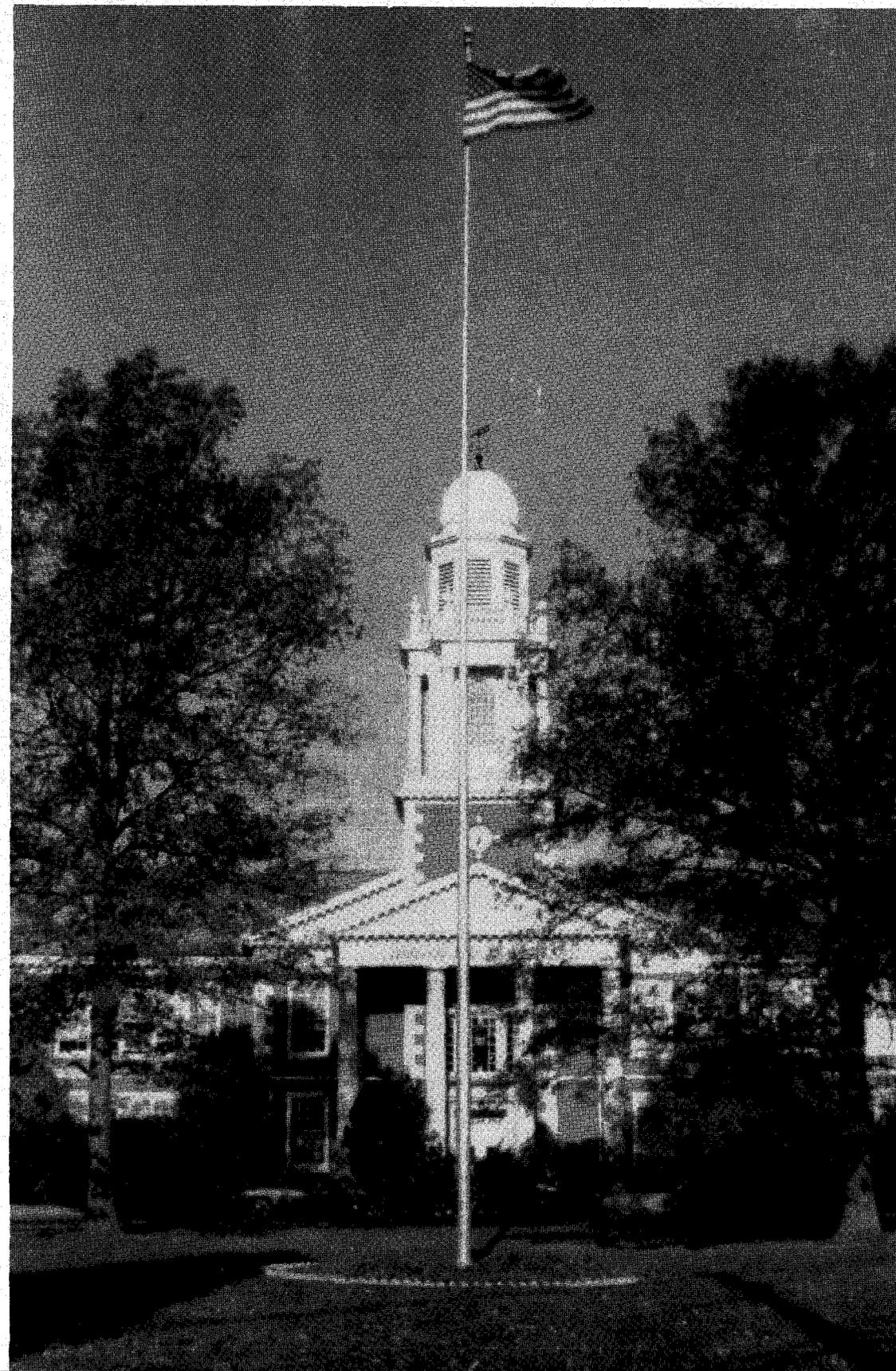
grouped to allow for greater and more efficient communication. The area itself will allow for expanded parking areas, and can also accommodate additional services such as a branch library, outdoor and indoor community recreational facilities. The specific intent is to create an efficient operating public administrative-service center which will afford the maximum utilization possibilities to an intensively developed suburban community.

#### School Facilities

One of the most important and costly community facilities is schools. Providing adequate school facilities to meet enrollment demands for the next twenty years is almost crucial concern for the Borough of Highland Park.

#### Existing Facilities

Highland Park has significantly expanded its school facilities in recent years. In 1961 the total public school enrollment was 2292 pupils and there were four public schools having a combined total of 95 classrooms. In 1968 the total pupil school enrollment increased to 2737 pupils in increase of 17 percent. During this period 1961 to 1968 a new school and several additions to existing facilities were opened. The number of available classrooms now totals 133 rooms and the functional capacity of this total number of classrooms will accommodate approximately 3330 pupils.



The Following is an Inventory of Existing Pupil School Facilities in the Borough of Highland Park.

School	Year Constructed	Classrooms	Capacity*
Lafayette	1906, 1910 1917, 1953	20	550
Irving	1915, 1920 1957, 1958	21	508
Hamilton	1915, 1920 1928	16	450
High School	1927, 1957 1968	44	1038**
Middle School	1968	32	784**
		<hr/> 133	<hr/> 3330

\* Based on Class Size if 25

\*\* Functional Capacity.

At the present, there is adequate space available to meet current enrollments. The Land Use Plan does not propose any further large residential development in Highland Park. However, the land area owned by Rutgers, the State University north of the Pennsylvania Railroad has been tentatively planned by this institution as married student housing. If this institution should develop this area for that purpose, preservation for an elementary school site at this location must be made, because (1) the entire area is divorced from existing schools sites and (2) the elementary school (Hamilton) nearest the Rutgers property - Cedar Lane area is utilized at near functional capacity and there is no possibility of future expansion at this site.

The projected future public school enrollments and total classroom requirements are shown below. Because no new areas of single family home development are proposed, future increased school enrollment will be generated by (1) the natural increase of present and new families living in single family dwellings. (2) the resale by retired residents of homes to new families with children, and (3) proposed multi-family uses within the downtown core area and along Route 27 and Woodbridge Avenue.

The projected school enrollment based upon the land use plan does not exceed the existing school classroom capacity. This projection does not include the possibility of married student hous-

ing on the Rutgers University property. If such does occur a new elementary school will be needed and as stated previously this facility should be built as a part of and in conjuncture with the University's development plan and for the area.

Projected School Enrollment

	Highland Park		
	Enrollment	Classrooms	Desirable Capacity*
1961	2292	95	2092
1968	2737	133	3330**
1973	2911	133	3330
1978	3051	133	3330

\* The capacity of each school and the total of these has been determined by applying New Jersey State Department of Education standards of functional class size per classroom. The functional (desirable) class size is 25 pupils.

\*\* The desirable capacity 1968 was computed by the Highland Park Public Schools Administrative personnel.

The projection forecasts an increase of 410 pupils. This increase is generated by complete saturation of all existing developable land for residential land use as proposed on the land use plan.

Public School Administrative personnel periodically check the number of school children generated from multi-family developments in Highland Park. The most recent data show that 426 school children or approximately fifteen percent of the total public school population lived in apartments.

The Land Use Plan recommends that multi-family development be encouraged between business areas along Route 27 and Woodbridge Avenue to provide a transition of land usage, an interface development type and intensity of development between business uses and low den-

sity residential areas. However, because limited acreage exists along these arterial streets, it is estimated that less than 100 units could be developed within the entire area along the entire length of Route 27 and Woodbridge Avenue in Highland Park. The bulk of public school enrollment increase will be a result of increased school age population generated from existing single family and two family dwellings. The survey referred to above by Highland Park Public School Administrative Personnel showed that 2312 or 85 percent of the public school children lived in dwelling units other than garden apartments.

In 1968 there were approximately 3600 occupied non-garden apartment residential units located in Highland Park. The consultant's calculations of these data reveals that this residential dwelling type generated .64 school children per unit. This is a low figure for a highly developed suburban community. It is expected that normal home occupancy turn-over will in the long run result in increased numbers of school aged children produced from non-garden apartment units.

The consultant has projected an increased school enrollment of 410 pupils or a total of 3051 public school pupils in 1978, 2551 students or .7 children per unit from non-garden apartment housing units, and 500 or .3 children per unit from garden apartment residential development.

Based upon proceeding analysis and in respect to the Land Use recommendations it has been determined that the existing educational plant will satisfactorily provide for the future educational space requirements of Highland Park.

One specific recommendation pertaining to existing school facilities is that all remaining play field and play yard areas associated with each school be preserved for outdoor school athletic activities and general community recreation use. Adoption of this recommended policy will serve to make the most optimum utilization of municipal open space and recreational facilities.



### LOCAL PLAYGROUNDS

The neighborhood playground is a small area devoted to active recreation for children ranging from 5-15 years of age. It is normally located within a maximum of 1/2 mile of its users, and is generally developed in conjunction with an elementary school. The Borough has seven existing playgrounds of this type, four of which are located at elementary schools.

Lafayette Elementary School Playground is a small asphalt play area covering the undeveloped portion of the school site approximately 0.8 acres in area. It contains slides, swings, basketball backboards and a jungle gym.

Irving Elementary School Playground is approximately 1.3 acres in area consisting of a long rectangular open playfield with a small baseball diamond, and two small asphalt areas next to the school with apparatus similar to that the Lafayette School Playground.

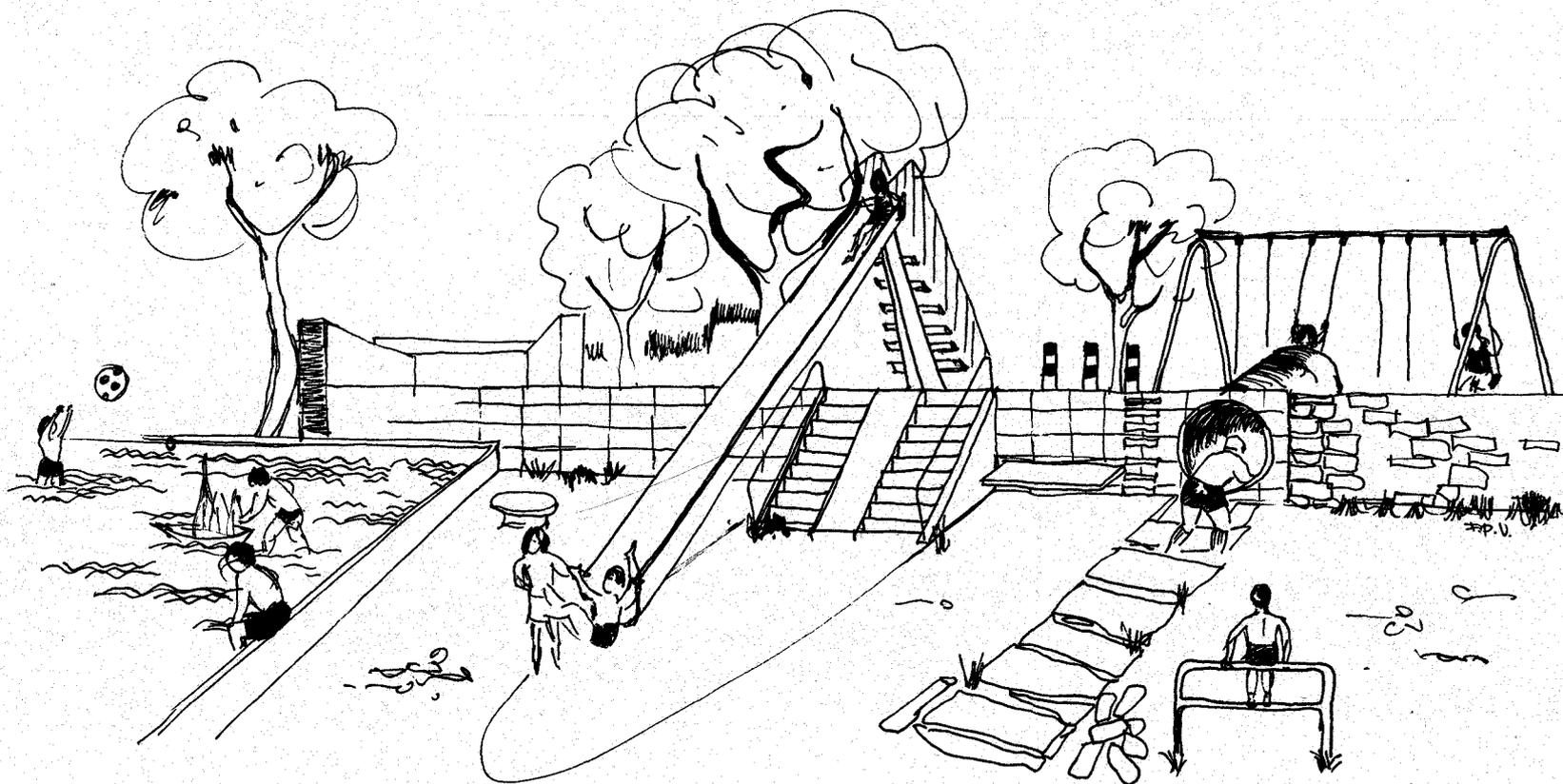
Hamilton Elementary School Playground consists of 1.2 acres of play area. A small portion is hard surfaced with play apparatus similar to the above two playgrounds and the remainder consists of an open playfield with a small baseball diamond.

Karsey Street Playground is a small 0.8 acre tract. The site which is well located is mostly wooded. A small portion is paved and has basketball boards. Play apparatus is also available.

Middle School Playground is small. It has a paved area and basketball nets. Additional play space is needed to serve this school and adjacent neighborhood areas.

A Tot Lot play area located on the westerly side of South Sixth Avenue between Brenner and Mansfield Streets is well developed and play apparatus is available.

A small conservation area is located on Brookdale Street between Fourth Avenue and Lincoln Street.



The Borough has three sites which function as community parks. The High School Playfield, Donaldson Park, and Johnson Park.

The High School Park is a large area and is designed to provide the open space necessary for organized sports events and special community wide activities. The site is centrally located in respect to the residential areas north of Raritan Avenue.

Donaldson Park is a large county park located adjacent to the Raritan River on the south side of the Borough. It provides a wide variety of facilities including tennis courts, athletic fields, picnic groves, and boat docking and landing areas. The Borough uses the athletic fields and open space areas to supplement their own local facilities for organized recreational programs and other community activities.

Johnson Park is located adjacent to the Raritan River, north of

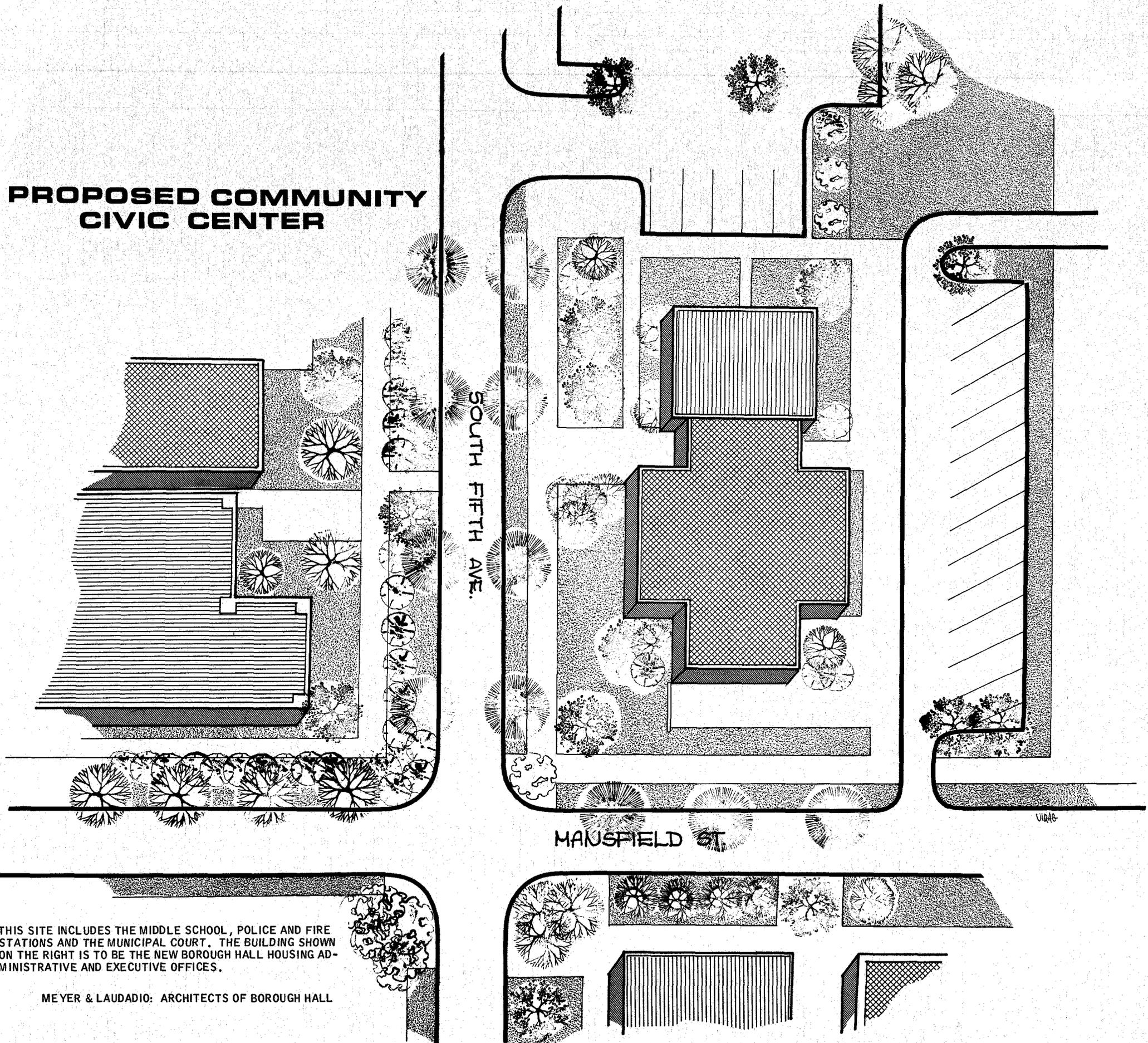
the Pennsylvania Railroad Line. This is a large County Park, but because of its close proximity to residential areas in Highland Park, the community is afforded an excellent recreational facility.

The two county parks having a combined gross average of 400 plus acres, more than adequately provide the necessary and proper community wide recreational facilities and open space.

#### Other Recreational Programs

The Borough of Highland Park has recently created the Cultural Arts Commission. This commission is charged with organizing and sponsoring programs designed to involve both young and adult residents in activities such as painting classes, modern dance classes, and orchestra workshop groups. Lectures and concerts are also sponsored by this commission.

# PROPOSED COMMUNITY CIVIC CENTER



THIS SITE INCLUDES THE MIDDLE SCHOOL, POLICE AND FIRE STATIONS AND THE MUNICIPAL COURT. THE BUILDING SHOWN ON THE RIGHT IS TO BE THE NEW BOROUGH HALL HOUSING ADMINISTRATIVE AND EXECUTIVE OFFICES.

MEYER & LAUDADIO: ARCHITECTS OF BOROUGH HALL

URAG

The establishment of this commission creates a full range of programs, and activities available to all groups in Highland Park. Participation and involvement are the real indices showing a successful comprehensive community recreational program. The Borough of Highland Park through the Recreation and Cultural Art Commissions has provided the means and direction to achieve this goal, citizen participation and involvement.

#### Recreation Proposals

- All existing open space and recreational space, parks, Borough land and school grounds be preserved for future outdoor recreational use.
- All water front areas be preserved and walkway and bike path be developed connecting Donaldson and Johnson Parks.
- The streamway between South Fifth and Seventh Avenues be developed as a recreational area which would then connect the proposed municipal center to Donaldson Park.

#### Fire and Police Protection

The Fire Department and Police Headquarters Building erected in 1955 is located between Benner and Mansfield Streets on South Fifth Avenue.

#### The Fire Department

The Department possesses men and equipment adequate to ensure good service and fire protection in the Borough. The equipment is well maintained. Periodic replacement of existing equipment and apparatus is made to ensure continued adequacy of service.

The building and equipment are owned by the Borough. Four full-time firement and 75 volunteer members constitute the fire fighting force. A fire alarm siren, telephone call boxes and a home alert radio are the means of fire alert. These communication systems in combination provide a comprehensive and efficient means of fire alarm.

#### Police Department

At present the police department is adequate and possesses sufficient equipment to provide adequate protection of person and property in Highland Park.

Police headquarters and all facilities associated with such is located in the same building as the fire department. Storage and operating space are at a premium.

The municipal court is located in the same building which houses the police and fire departments. A feasibility study is currently being prepared to determine the possibilities of relocating the municipal court facility.

It is recommended that provision be made to provide space for a municipal court in a new Borough Municipal building. In relocating municipal court, additional space will then be available to provide for future operating and storage space needs of the fire and police departments.

#### Library Service and Facilities

A new main library building was constructed in 1959 at North Fifth Avenue. An addition to the original structure was made in 1967. The completed building now has adequate space for reading rooms, storage areas and special program areas.

The library is now in the process of developing a childrens library section, and record library. In addition lecture series and art exhibits are to become a part of the overall library program.



The library is well staffed by highly competent professional certified persons. A director of library services and activities, appointed by the Board of Library Trustees, is in charge of all administrative operations.

The Highland Park library has 19,000 books in stock. In addition, the library is Federated with the public library of Metuchen. Both the reference facilities and book stock of the two library facilities are open to the residents of both communities which effectively avails the residents to a larger more comprehensive facility.

#### Utilities Analysis

A full complement of public utilities and services are essential to personal health and safety in suburban-urban environment. The residents of Highland Park have long been afforded a full range of public utilities and services. All developed areas are served by sanitary sewers, storm sewers, water, gas, electric and telephone service. The adequacy and maintenance of these services is the responsibility of both the Borough of Highland Park and private utility companies. Continued inspection of maintenance utilities and services has resulted in an adequate and admirable level of service provided to the community. Continued efforts in this vain are necessary to the maintenance of the present levels of service.

#### Sanitary Sewer System

Sanitary sewage service is available to all properties in the Borough. There are approximately 29 miles of sanitary sewage lines in the system. The greatest proportion of all lines were installed from 1926 to 1932. The lines themselves were constructed of vitrified clay pipes. The system itself functions quite adequately.

There is a problem of excessive infiltration resulting for the most part from illegal individual storm drain connections to this system. The Borough is conducting an on going program to rectify this situation.

The Borough sewage system connects with the Middlesex County Sewage Authority trunk sewage line paralleling the Raritan River. The cost of the connection and eventual treatment service to the Borough is based upon volume discharge into the Middlesex County Authority System.

With the eventual removal of illegal private individual connections to the Borough's sanitary sewage system, the cost of sewage service to the Borough should be reduced.

There is one problem area in the existing sewage flow system. A pumping station at North Cleveland Avenue is over thirty years old and during periods of high flow this facility is not able to function ade-

quately. The pumping station can be abandoned and lines can be directly connected to the Edison Trunk Sewage line which is in very close proximity to the pumping station. This would allow for the most economical solution of the infrequent yet unhealthy condition.

#### Water System

Water is supplied by the Municipality. The Municipality purchases water in bulk from Elizabeth Town Water Company.

The capacity of the existing water system is quite adequate. The Highland Park system is connected to the New Brunswick Water System. The principle purpose of this connection is that in the event of emergency water needs, it is available. The connection serves as an emergency safe guard and as a standby link. The Borough owns and operates its own floridation system.

The American Insurance Association (formerly the National Board of Fire Underwriters) has determined that hydrant pressures throughout the Borough insure adequate fire protection.

#### Storm Drainage System

The existing storm drainage systems channels surface run-off into either Mill Brook or the Raritan River. The culvert under the Pennsylvania Railroad line is not sufficient drainmeter to accommodate run-off during peak flow and flooding does occur. Land develop-

ment projects in both Highland Park and Edison along Millbrook have aggravated and increased the frequency of flooding in this area. The Pennsylvania Railroad company is responsible for the correction of the undersized culvert which appears to be the principle element contributing to flooding in the Millbrook area. An engineering survey is necessary to determine the extent and cost of improvements necessary to correct the flood problem.

#### Refuse Disposal

Refuse collection and disposal service is provided by the Borough. The refuse is transported to a private disposal area in Edison Township. The Borough has a ten year contract with the property owners. Five years remain under the current contract agreement.

The Borough also owns a tract of land adjacent to Donaldson Park bordering the Raritan River. This tract has served as a sanitary land fill site in the past and could be used as an interim site in the future in the event that the current disposal operation and agreement were terminated. Moreover a specific remuneration would be derived from sanitary landfill operations conducted at this site; reclamation of submarginal land and considering the possibilities of the further recreation development here, a distinct benefit would be realized by all residences of the community after sanitary landfill operations were completed.

# IMPLEMENTATION

## MASTER PLAN EFFECTUATION

A Master Plan for the controlled orderly development of Highland Park should be adopted and effectuated by the Planning Board and Officials of the Borough. After a Master Plan is adopted, implementation and realization of the ideas and objectives of the plan can be achieved by means of four interrelated actions: Legislation, capital improvement planning, continuing planning, and citizen participation.

## LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

There are three basic documents which guide development and maintenance of private property in the community: The zoning ordinance, the land subdivision ordinance, and the Official Map. Other ordinances, such as housing, building and public health codes also aid in the plan implementation on a day to day basis.

## ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning is the most effective means of controlling the use of private land for the general health and welfare of the community. Through the division of the Borough into districts wherein certain land uses are permitted or prohibited with appropriate controls, zoning serves to guide the development of the community towards a predetermined but everchanging objective.

Zoning should be reasonable and should be reflective of the intent and the objectives of the Master Plan. A zoning ordinance need not initially reflect all of the land use recommendations of the Master Plan for the simple reason that a Master Plan is a long-range projection and a Zoning Plan is not.

Periodic review of the Zoning Ordinance, the Master Plan, and public improvements accomplished in view of existing development activities through the Borough is essentially the staged procedure through which the Zoning Ordinance is updated and made more reflective of the comprehensive Master Plan.

### SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE

Whereas the zoning ordinance provides the legal means of controlling the use of the land; the subdivision ordinance gives legal control over design and layout of land that is to be subdivided.

The Borough presently has an effective subdivision ordinance. As new subdivision standards or controls emerge, recommendations will be made to include them in the community's ordinance.

### OFFICIAL MAP

The Official Map is a legal document, adopted by the governing body of the municipality, designating land in the Borough which shall be reserved for future streets, drainage rights-of-way, parks and playgrounds. In this capacity it also serves as the official statement by the governing body with regard to what streets, drainage rights-of-way, parks and playgrounds it has accepted for maintenance. Whereas the Master Plan is a statement of the Planning Board's policies, it is not legally binding upon the governing body; the official map is legally binding upon the governing body.

The Official Map must be an engineered document with detailed, measurable dimensions, and must be produced and certified by a licensed engineer or land surveyor.

### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM

A Capital Improvement may be defined as essentially a new or expanded physical facility which is to be of relatively large size or importance, is of considerable cost and is reasonably permanent. This includes new road construction, major improvement of existing roads, schools, playgrounds, sewers and water systems, municipal buildings and land acquisition for public purposes.

The Capital Improvements Program is a long-range schedule of proposed municipal projects including the most appropriate means of financing those projects. The division of Local Finance of the State Department of Community Affairs now requires that every municipality prepare a six-year Capital Improvement Program and a Capital Budget. These are submitted to the Department annually.

Within the financial framework and capability of the community, various elements of the Master Plan should be scheduled in the six (6) year capital improvements program.

### CONTINUING PLANNING

The Master Plan represents an objective, considered view into the future. It is also a working document, one which must necessarily be subject to constant review and updating in light of the changing needs.

The Planning Board should review each year the concepts and ideals as related to development that has actually occurred during that year. As new patterns of growth and activity become evident, it may be desirable to revise the priority schedule of Master Plan objectives.

The Borough participates in State of New Jersey's 50-40

six-year continuing planning program. Under the 50-40 program E. Eugene Cross Associates Professional Planning Consultants will review the Plan on annual basis and recommend to the Planning Board changes to the Plan if found necessary.

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Perhaps the most important ingredient to the future development of the Borough is citizen participation, understanding and support of the Plan. Without this, the Plan would be just another volume, stored away to be pulled out as a relic by future historians of Highland Park. With this most valuable ingredient, an involved and understanding citizenery, the goals and objectives set forth in this plan can be reached and met.



**E. EUGENE CROSS ASSOCIATES**  
**CONSULTANTS IN CITY PLANNING & URBAN RENEWAL**

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