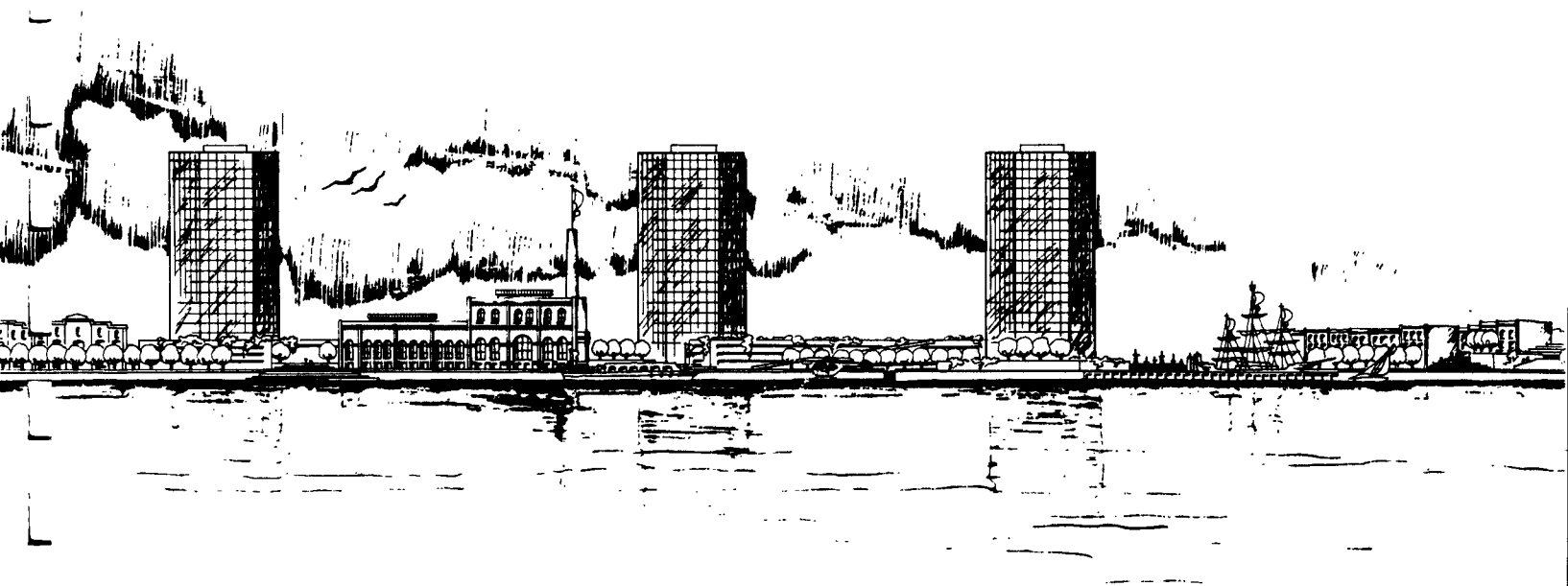


A Development Plan for

The Newark Passaic Riverfront

Downtown Newark, New Jersey



Wallace, Roberts and Todd
Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban and Ecological Planners

Introduction

The City of Newark, founded in 1666, is one of the oldest urban settlements in the United States. It originally prospered as an important port city on the Passaic River, developing a strong industrial base of small manufacturing firms, as well as becoming established as the finance and insurance capital of New Jersey.

Like many of the older manufacturing centers of the eastern seaboard, Newark has suffered a period of general recession in the last two decades. This decline is primarily due to the decreasing role of manufacturing in the national economy and the growing importance of service and related non-manufacturing industries. Although industrial activity in Newark has declined steadily since the 1950's, the city has maintained a stable and slowly expanding base of office and retail employment, which affords a solid foundation for renewed economic prosperity.

Recognizing the imperatives of a changing national economy, the City of Newark is currently concentrating its revitalization efforts on strengthening and diversifying this emerging service sector. A number of important development initiatives has already been undertaken and the City is continuing to conduct planning studies and to explore innovative financing mechanisms and public-private investment partnerships to further the example of these first successful redevelopments.

The preparation of this development plan for the Passaic Riverfront area represents one facet of this continuing effort, and its realization will be an important step towards the city's eventual "renaissance."

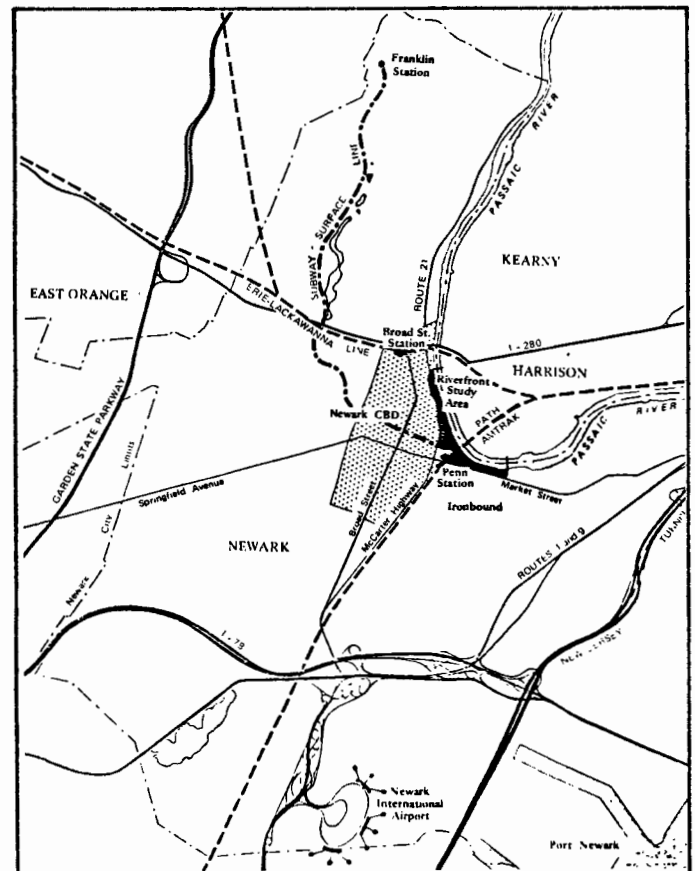
The study was supported by a Local Coastal Grant from the New Jersey State Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Coastal Resources, and administered through the City of Newark's Office of Planning and Grantsmanship. Because of its broad experience in waterfront planning and design projects, the Philadelphia-based consultant firm of Wallace Roberts and Todd, Architects, Landscape Architects, Urban and Ecological Planners, was commissioned to prepare the plan. The Consultant's work was reviewed at regular intervals by a Project Steering Committee comprised of representatives of City, County and State Government, and the private sector.

Study Context

The City of Newark, with a population of almost 330,000, is the largest and one of the most densely populated cities of New Jersey. It is located just six miles west of the southern tip of Manhattan.

Major Assets

- o Central location in the New York Metropolitan Area with proximity to Manhattan and other key centers in the Northeast Corridor
- o Highly-developed transportation systems, including a containerized port and international airport; an integrated network of interstate and local highways; comprehensive rail services; and high levels of inner city public transportation by bus and subway
- o A sophisticated communications network through the services of New Jersey Bell
- o Readily-available labor resources
- o Immediate development opportunities for both new construction and rehabilitation
- o Public and private leadership capable of and eager to take decisive steps to move into a new era of city development.



Downtown Newark

Newark's Central Business District is one of the largest retailing areas in the State of New Jersey and has the highest concentration of office employment, mainly in finance, insurance and government services.

About half of the downtown's 86,000 employees travel to work by mass transit, arriving mainly at Penn Station. The station area has recently become a focus of new development activity centered in the Gateway District which is adjacent to part of the Riverfront Site.

Other development activity is clustered around Washington Park, a prestigious downtown location where the new Bell Telephone Headquarters building will soon be completed.

Recent Downtown Development

1960's

1. Hilton Hotel
2. Gateway I
3. Blue Cross Building

Current

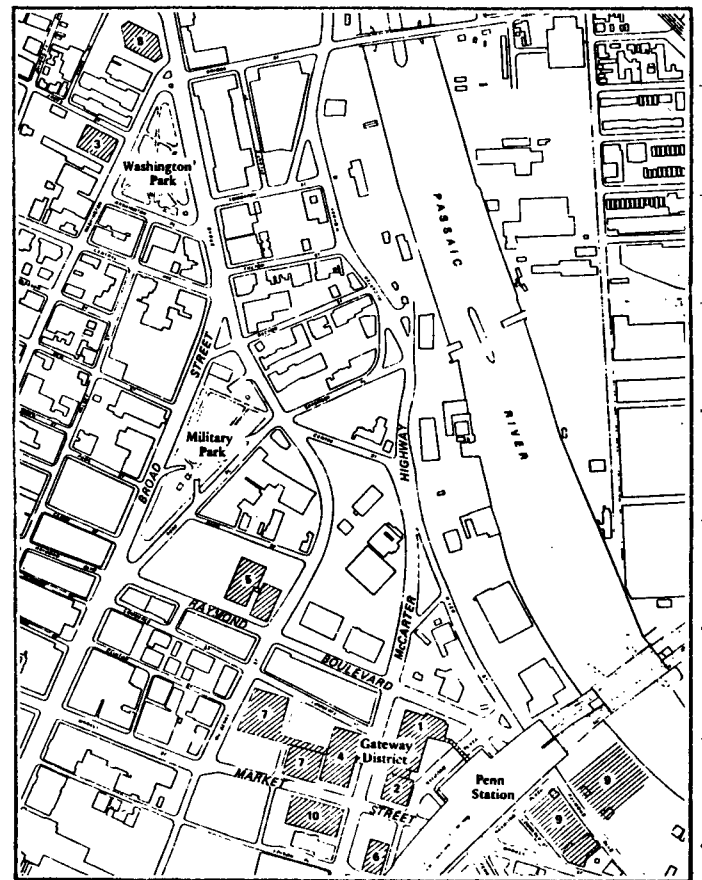
7. Gateway III
8. One Washington Park

1970's

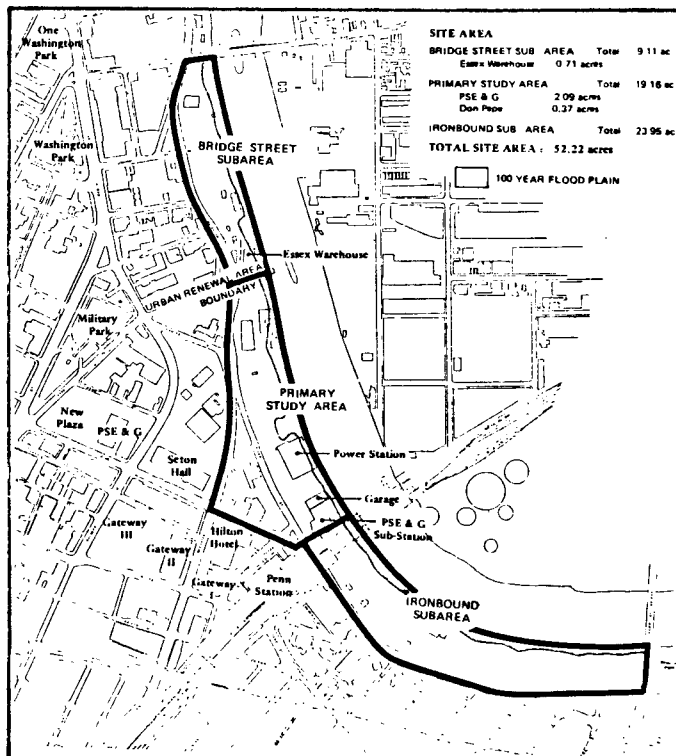
4. Gateway II
5. P.S.E.&G. Headquarters
6. Alling Street (N.J. Transit)

Proposed

9. Penn Station Bus Terminal
10. Sutton Project



The Riverfront Site



The area covered in this development plan is a narrow strip of land along the west bank of the Passaic River, extending from Jackson Street in the south to Bridge Street in the north, and bounded on the west by McCarter Highway and Raymond Boulevard, the two main vehicular routes into the downtown.

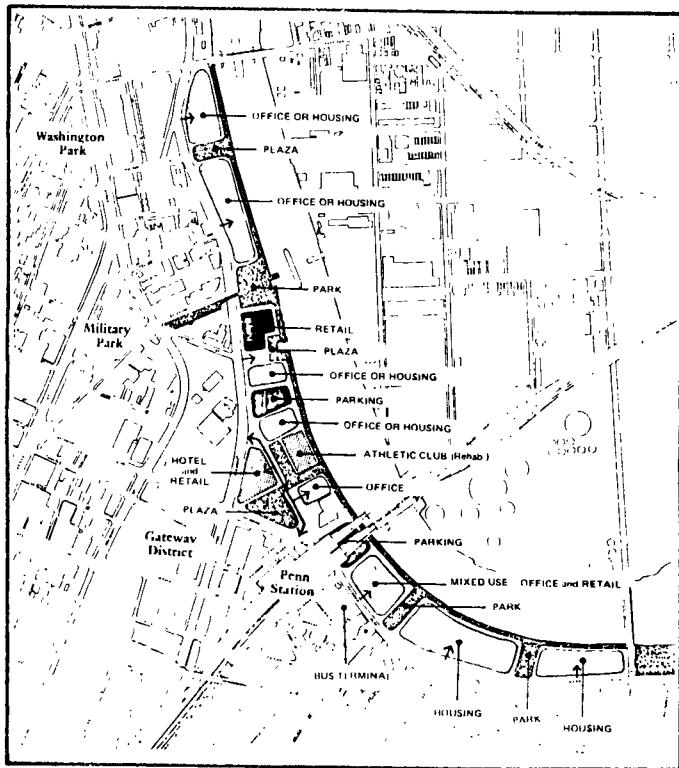
The area is presently under-utilized, consisting of parking lots, vacant lots and old commercial buildings, many of which are unoccupied. Rehabilitation potential is apparent in the presently-vacant Power Station building, and in the brick row houses, which are in low intensity commercial use, located at the foot of Saybrook Place.

Site Assets

- o Proximity to Penn Station
- o Relationship to existing downtown development
- o High visibility from trains, buses and private vehicles entering the downtown
- o Readily-available land for development
- o Location on the Passaic River which, when water quality is improved, will be a major recreational resource and key focus of downtown activity.

The Primary Study Area, from Penn Station to Saybrook Place, has these assets to a greater degree than the Bridge Street or Ironbound Sub-areas which are considered as longer-term development prospects.

Design Concept



The organizing element of the design concept is a continuous riverwalk along the water's edge, from Bridge Street to the existing Riverbank Park at Jackson Street. New development is punctuated at regular intervals by a series of parks and plazas, allowing frequent pedestrian connections from established upland areas to the river bank.

A centrally-located waterfront park is proposed at the foot of Saybrook Place, to be connected by a landscaped walk to Military Park, the existing focus of outdoor activity in the downtown.

Major commercial development is concentrated in a mix of office, hotel, conference facilities, retail and recreational uses on the Primary Study Area sites closest to Penn Station. The Power Station is rehabilitated as part of this mixed-commercial complex.

Entrance to the Riverfront Area is emphasized by a large, formal plaza on Raymond Boulevard, which is linked to the riverwalk by landscaped paths through an open, multi-purpose space adjacent to the Power Station.

Program flexibility in the Bridge Street and Ironbound Sub-areas is stressed in a design framework which permits commercial, residential or mixed development, including other special uses, as future market conditions may dictate.

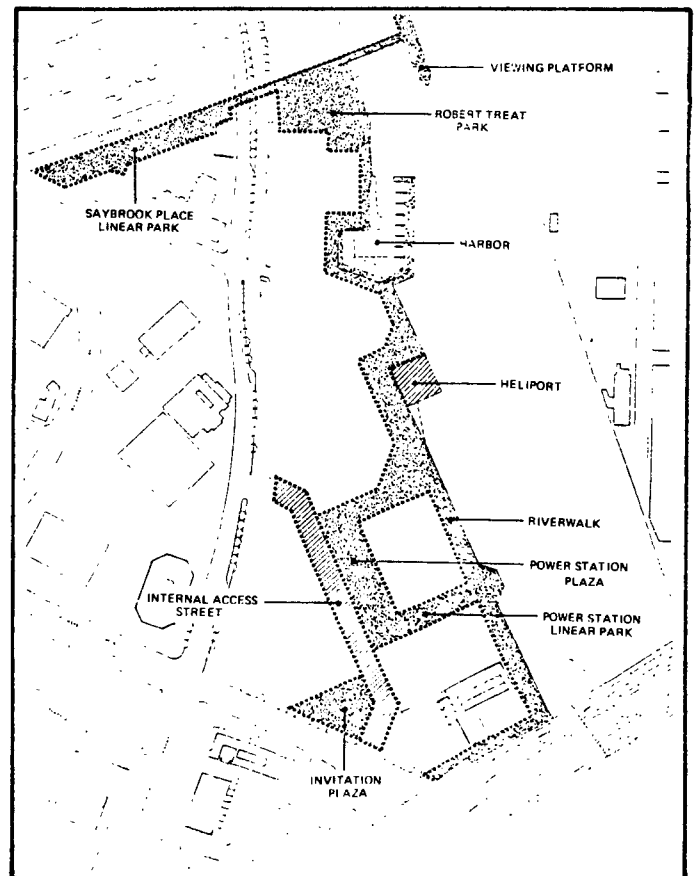
Development Strategy

The principal strategy for successful implementation of the plan is to undertake a series of public actions to stimulate private development responses.

The Primary Study Area directly north of Penn Station exhibits the greatest potential for immediate development because, as well as its locational advantages, it falls within two designated Urban Renewal Areas and all the land is presently owned, or in the process of being acquired, by the Newark Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Successful development of the Primary Study Area will act as a catalyst for longer-term developments in the Bridge Street and Ironbound Sub-areas, hence design studies were focused on this portion of the site.

Recommended public improvements in this area include demolition and preparation of potential development sites; construction of an internal access street between McCarter Highway and Raymond Boulevard; river edge stabilization and construction of the riverwalk; and development of a series of integrated parks and plazas connecting to the river's edge. The City of Newark is presently preparing an application for Green Acres funding to support these improvements.

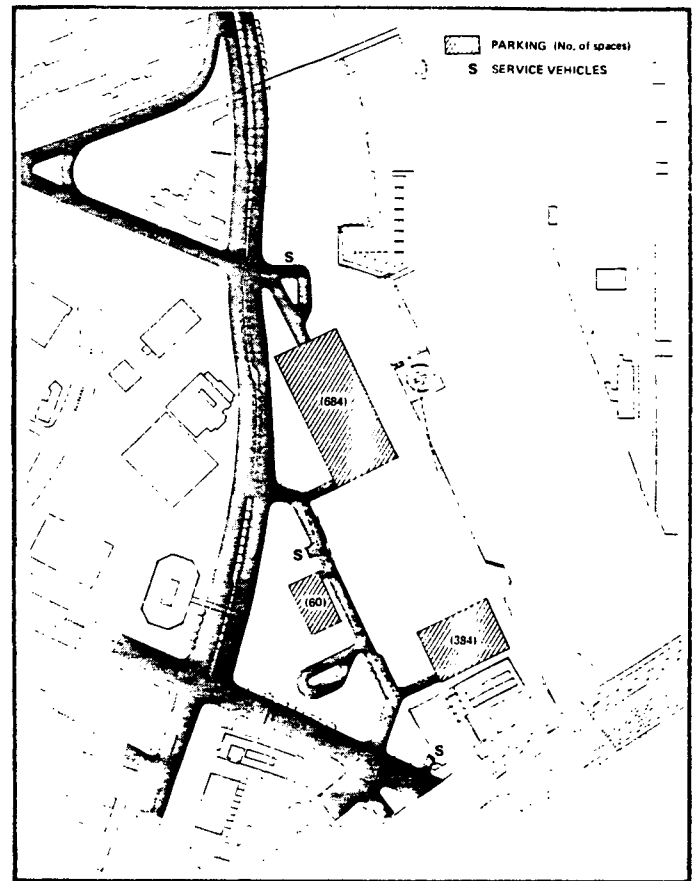


Vehicular Access and Parking

The development plan preserves sufficient right-of-way for the upgrading of McCarter Highway to a six-to-ten lane, at-grade arterial in anticipation of planned future improvements to this vital city access route.

Because of the high volumes of traffic on McCarter Highway and Raymond Boulevard, primary access to the site is limited to three points, one from Raymond Boulevard and two from McCarter Highway. From these three points, direct access is available to all planned parking structures, to hotel and office drop-offs, and to all necessary service courts.

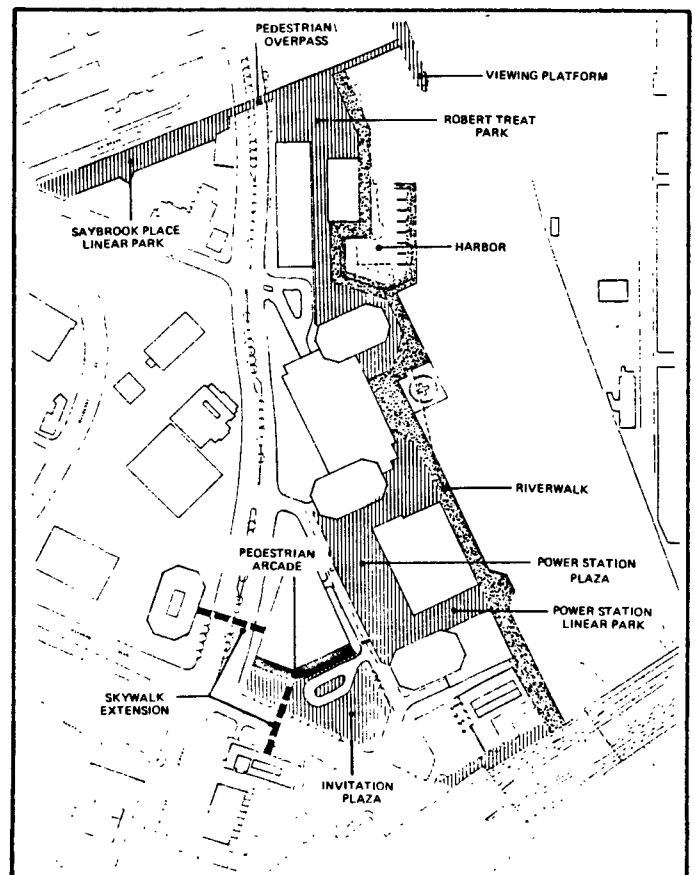
Parking requirements are satisfied as part of each development project. Although certain specific parking indices were adopted in the preparation of this plan and it was assumed that each parcel will be developed separately, the design framework is sufficiently flexible to accommodate different parking provisions. The actual number of spaces to be provided should be determined individually for each design proposal, according to the particular circumstances of the development.



Pedestrian Circulation and Open Space

The major elements of the pedestrian circulation and open space system are:

- o A continuous riverwalk along the Passaic, which will be richly landscaped and provide places to tie up small boats, historic vessels and restaurant barges, as well as places for public gatherings, informal entertainments, and for sitting and viewing the river.
- o An extension of the Gateway Skywalk system across Raymond Boulevard and McCarter Highway to facilitate pedestrian crossing of these heavy traffic streets and to encourage the large numbers of workers in the Gateway complex to enter the riverfront area.
- o An open pedestrian bridge across McCarter Highway at Saybrook Place, and landscaped pedestrian path linking Military Park to the new river's edge park.
- o A landscaped public plaza facing Penn Station and the Gateway District, with pedestrian connections from this "invitational" space to the riverwalk.
- o Other plazas and pedestrian ways integrated with development as it occurs.



Immediate Development Opportunities

Five development parcels are designated in the Primary Study Area as immediate opportunities that can be designed and constructed in conjunction with the surrounding public improvements.

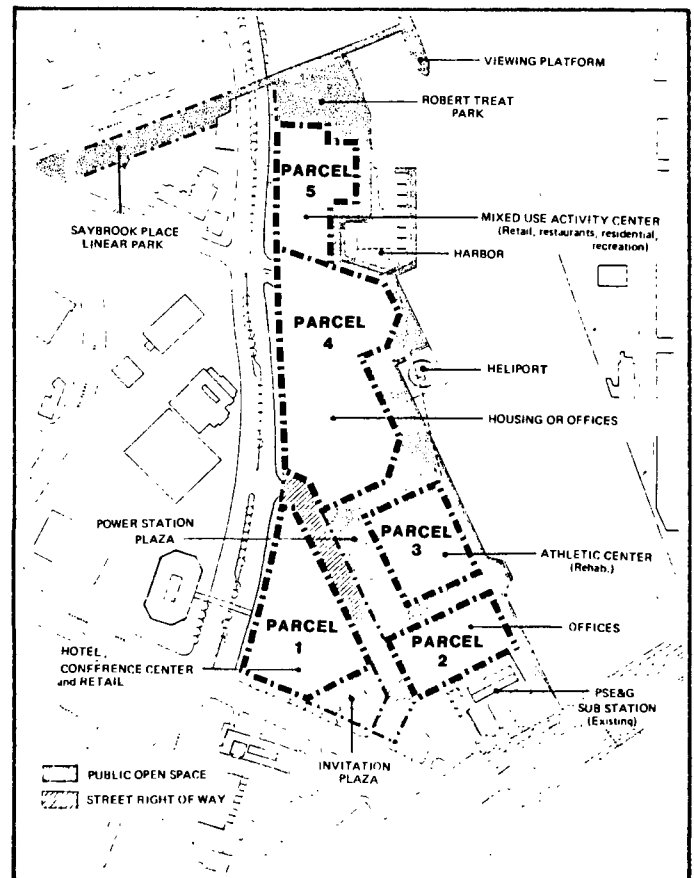
PARCEL 1 provides for a 250-400 room hotel with ancillary office, retail and conference facilities as appropriate.

PARCEL 2 permits 300-400,000 gross square feet of office space with up to 400 parking spaces.

PARCEL 3 is the Power Station building recycled as a commercial athletic facility with related public activity spaces. Other proposals of a generally-public, recreational nature, however, may be considered for this building.

PARCEL 4 allows for 600-700,000 gross square feet of office space, 600-700 dwelling units, or a mixed development of offices and housing with related parking.

PARCEL 5 calls for the rehabilitation and extension of the existing three-story buildings at the foot of Saybrook Place to accommodate shops, restaurants, exhibition spaces and workshops at the ground level, with housing units above.



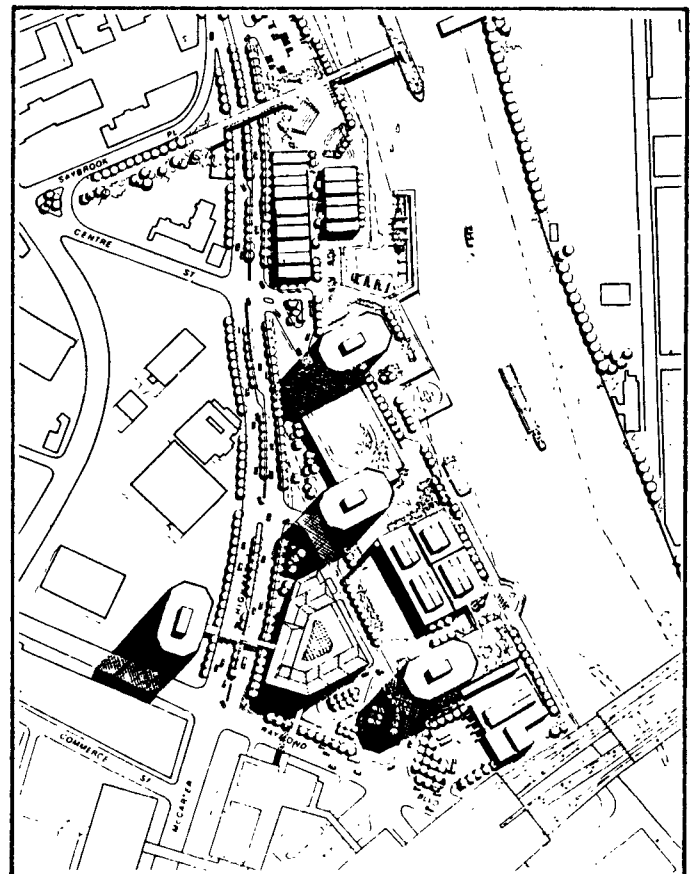
Design Standards

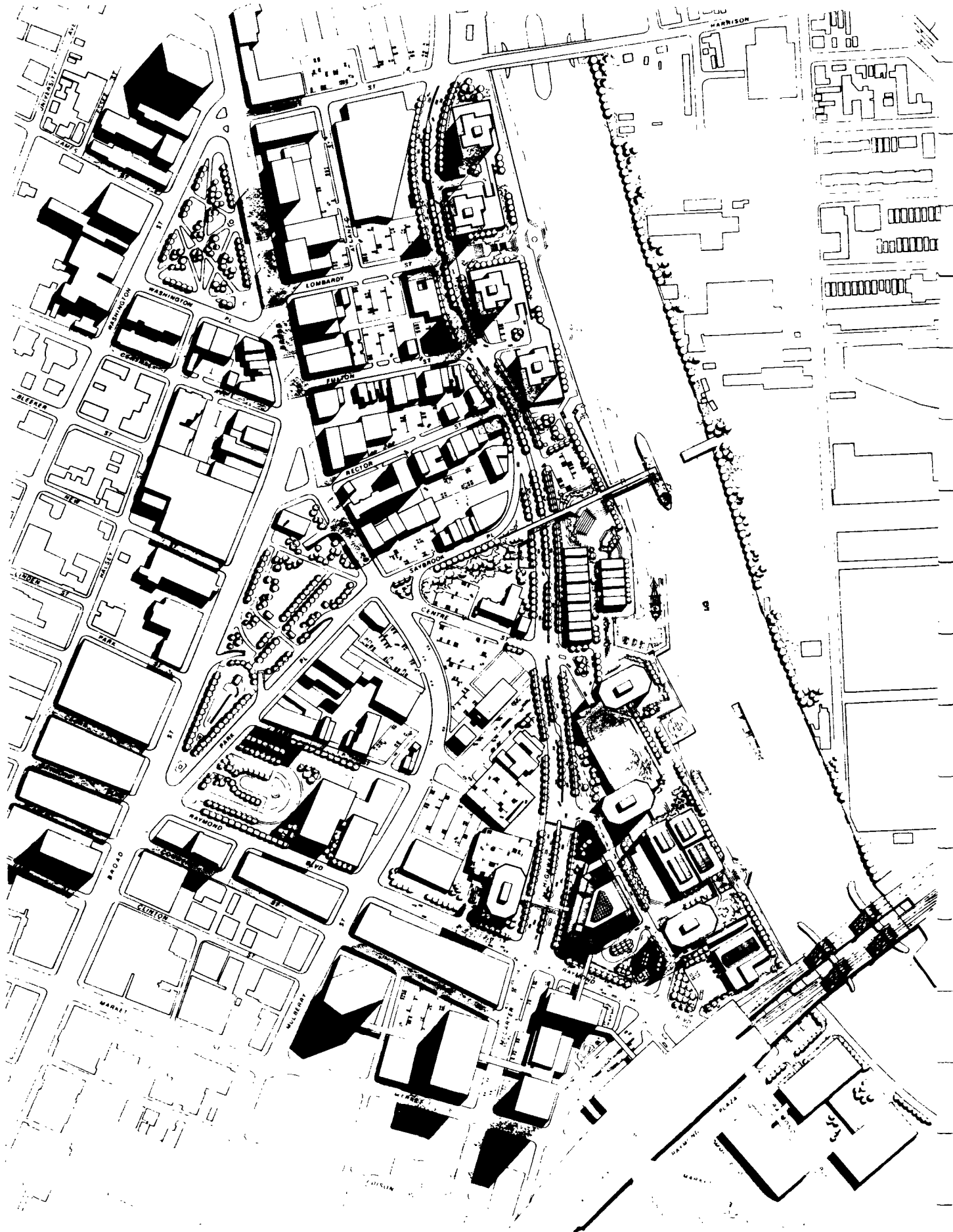
This Illustrative Plan shows how the Primary Study Area might appear after implementation of the proposed development plan.

To achieve the best possible environment, it is important that each component of the plan be sensitively designed in relation to each other. Certain design controls will be developed to ensure a desirable level of design consistency throughout the area, but sufficient flexibility will remain for the developer and the architect to respond creatively to the special opportunities afforded by each parcel.

The orientation of new buildings will be controlled to produce a necessary order amid the complex geometries and constrained dimensions of the riverfront site.

The public open space improvements will be designed as an integrated whole, providing a clear system of pedestrian movement throughout the site. Ancillary open spaces within the development parcels should be designed to be compatible with these public improvements. Consistency in the use of materials, lighting fixtures, signage, planting and outdoor furnishings will be an important design requirement.





Northern Study Area
ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

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NEWARK PASSAIC RIVERFRONT
 Downtown Newark, New Jersey



for the City of Newark
 Office of Planning and Grantsmanship

Wallace Roberts and Todd