


BRINGING BACK THE HARBOR

Jasmine Grossmann

Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy

Spring 2020 | Planning and Design II

OVERVIEW:



Location and History

Site Location and Inspiration

Discovered Community Values

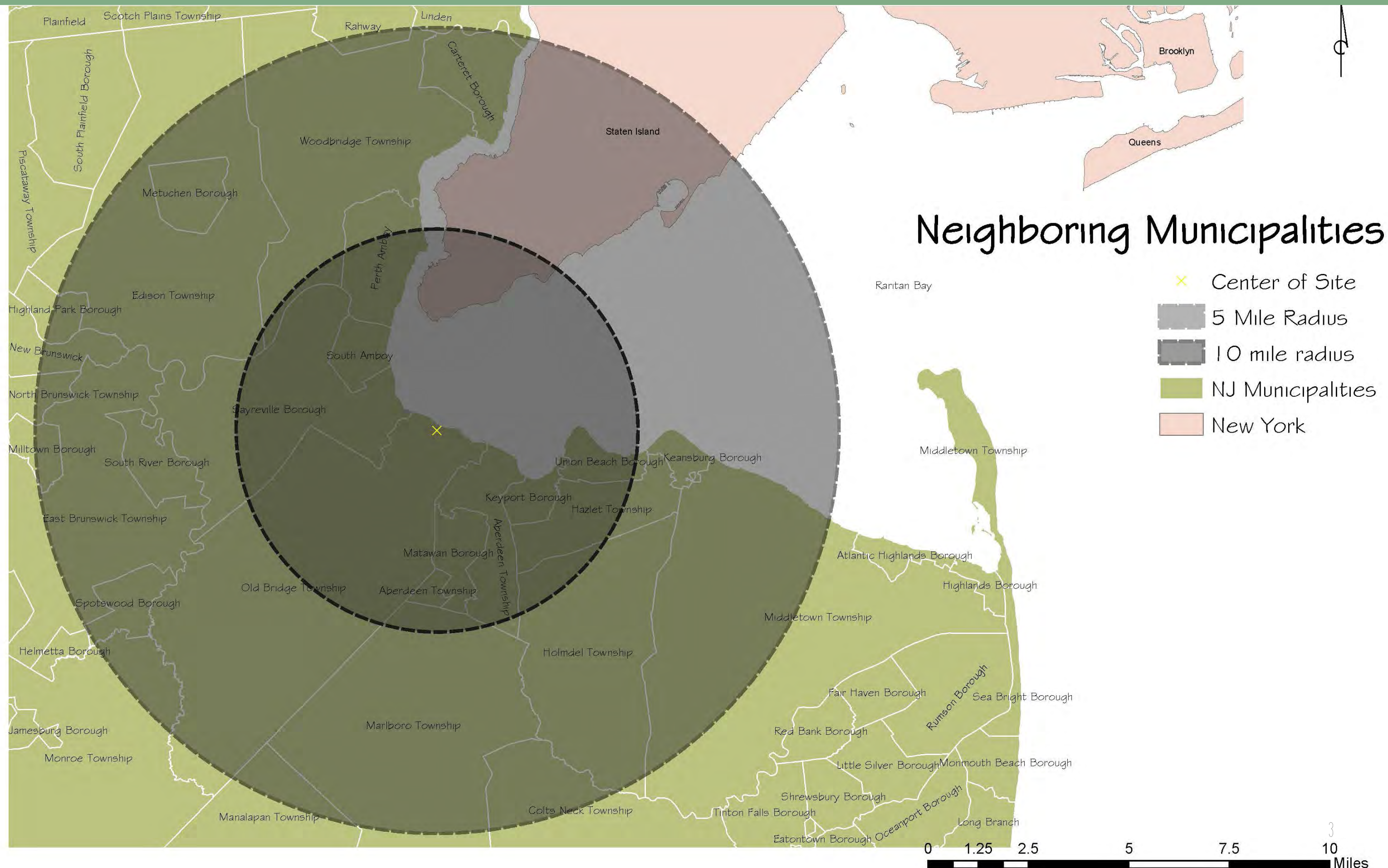
Project Goals

Framework Diagram

Illustrative Site Plan

Visual Simulations

LOCATION: LAURENCE HARBOR - OLD BRIDGE, NJ



HISTORY: LAURENCE HARBOR - OLD BRIDGE, NJ

Laurence Harbor has faced many hardships within the last 50 years. Many hurricanes have struck the waterfront area, damaging the boardwalk and the entertainment that happened along it over the years; one in 1953, two in 1954, and one in 1960 (Cheslow, Living In Laurence Harbor). Then in 2012 Hurricane Sandy hit and the boardwalk was destroyed once again and flood waters reached the houses that sit 34' above the Raritan Bay and beach front.

Laurence Harbor was once a part of Old Bridge that had many community events and an active beachfront, but this changed during the 1970s. The National Lead Company had a location in Perth Amboy where it would smelter lead and other hazardous substances. The following information is from the Office of Response and Restoration:

"During the late 1960s and early 1970s, slag from National Lead's lead smelter in Perth Amboy was used as building material to construct a seawall along the southern shoreline of Raritan Bay, several miles to the south of the facility... Slag, battery casings, and demolition debris were used to fill in some areas of a nearby marsh and littered the marsh and beaches along the bay. In September 1972, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection received a tip that the slag being placed along Raritan Bay at the Laurence Harbor beachfront contained lead. Over time, contamination from the slag and other wastes began leaching into the water, soil, and sediments of Raritan Bay, which is home to a variety of aquatic life, including flounder, clams, and horseshoe crabs, but evidence of the pollution only became available decades later. Cleanup will involve digging up and dredging the slag, battery casings, associated waste, and sediment and soils where lead exceeds 400 parts per million."

This site is classified as a superfund site and is located along the shoreline of site's boundary. Fences and signs are up around the waterfront to keep residents and visitors from getting too close to the contamination, but there are many people who still fish and swim in this water.

In very close proximity to this site, there is the Garden State Parkway, which was under construction around the same time as the bungalow community in order to mitigate some of the congestion that was occurring along Route 35. It is said it was to also aid in improving "access to more southern destinations along the Jersey Shore" (Cheslow, Living In Laurence Harbor). There are also many annual events that occur in this part of Laurence Harbor, particularly within the site boundary. Salt Water Day has been occurring in Laurence Harbor for decades images for the 80s and even before then of people enjoying the waterfront. Today at this festival, there is live music just like there was in the past, cornhole games, local food vendors and trucks, craft vendors, rides for children, and shuttles to and from parking areas! Another community gather event that happens every year is on September 11th. "Annually on Sept. 11, the Laurence Harbor Volunteer First Aid Squad organizes a candlelight vigil on the beach, which overlooks Staten Island, Brooklyn and Lower Manhattan. When the World Trade Center collapsed in 2001, many Old Bridge residents watched from the beachfront, which was then in its early stages of reconstruction." (Cheslow, Living In Laurence Harbor). Overall, Laurence Harbor has as extensive history and this plan aims to resurface the liveliness, walkability, and community gathering functions of the waterfront area





Bathing Beach at Laurence Harbor Beach, Laurence Harbor, N. J.

67232



<https://www.digitalcommonwealth.org/search/commonwealth/d79isp533>

67232

Bungalow Colony on Beach at Laurence Harbor, N. J.

67231



67231

Bathing at the Pier, Laurence Harbor, N. J.

67233



67233

Beach and Bungalow Colony at Laurence Harbor Beach, Laurence Harbor, N. J.

67230



67230

SITE LOCATION: LAURENCE HARBOR - OLD BRIDGE, NJ



INSPIRATION:

Laurence Harbor in Old Bridge is currently one of the forgotten areas of town, but it used to be one of the most popular and frequented areas. Ever since the lead contamination in the late 1970s the area has been neglected. Everybody knew everybody – it was the quaint small part of town that took care of each other. The Old Bridge Waterfront located in the middle of Laurence Harbor is a beautiful community gathering space that brings people together, it is the center of this community. Although the contamination has resulted in neglect, there is untapped potential for this part of town and its community members. There are many redeeming qualities that this site has, and the towns' people deserve a place where their community values are instilled and preserved. The water is visible from the streets and many homes that sit atop the land abutting the water, appreciate the natural landscaping of the area. Families play here with their children, community members enjoy scenic walks along the bay, and runners and bikers can stay connected with their built environment while staying physically active. The original town library is located right off the water, along with the Laurence Harbor Post office abutting Route 35. Laurence Harbor has the potential to provide its people with the amenities of a beach town, without overcrowding or upsetting the character of this existing community. I want to bring the Harbor back to its people and restore the commercial and community activities that once took place here.

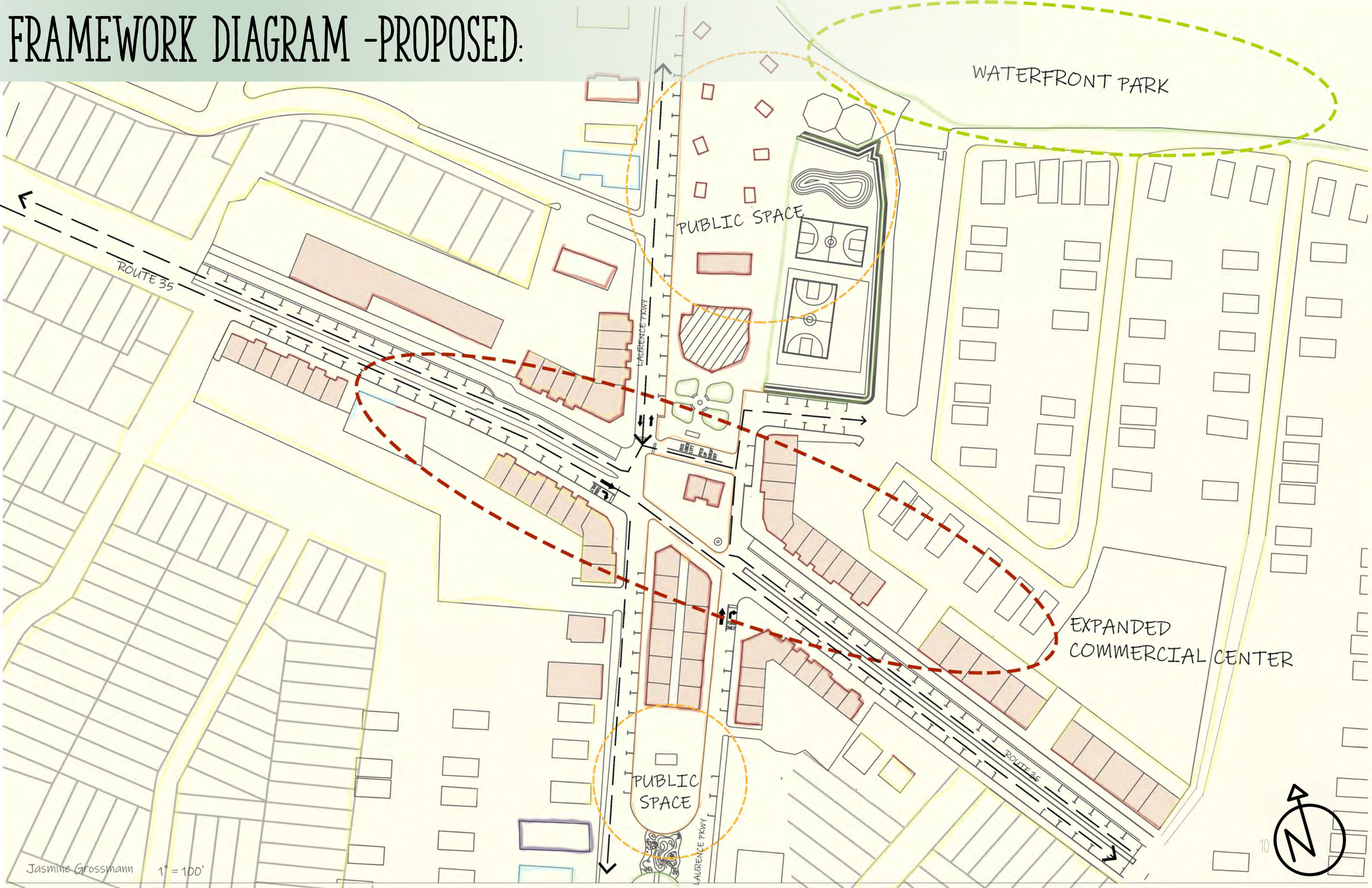
PROJECT GOALS:

Sustainability | Community | Affordability

FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM - EXISTING CONDITIONS:



FRAMEWORK DIAGRAM -PROPOSED.

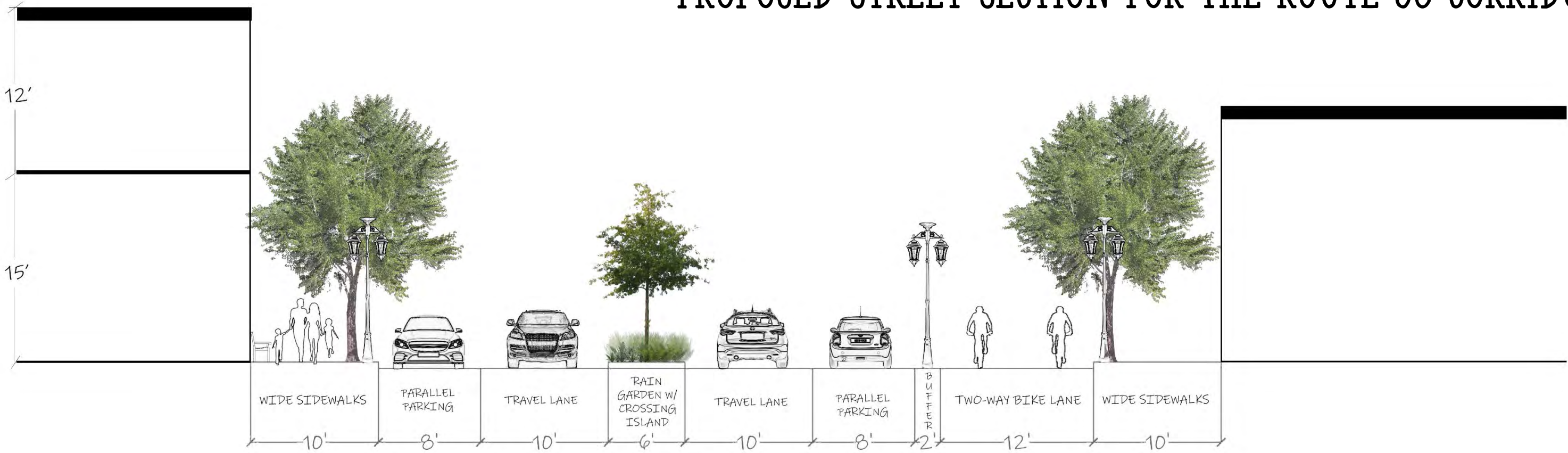


DESIGN



BUILDING DESIGN

PROPOSED STREET SECTION FOR THE ROUTE 35 CORRIDOR





SCALE: 1" = 100'
ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN







P

P



FINAL VISION

BEFORE AND AFTER





