

LAND USE

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Prioritize revitalization of previously developed land rather than developing natural open space.

The following areas should be the focus for any future development:

- Underutilized commercial parcels on key corridors – i.e., Route 35, Route 36.
- Identified Redevelopment Areas.

Comments:

3 Explore zoning changes to address residential lots that do not meet current bulk standards.

For example:

- Many lots in the R-5 zoning district do not meet the minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet.
- The River Plaza area is zoned R-10, yet many existing homes do not meet setback requirements.

Comments:

2 Promote attractive, pedestrian-scaled environments in local business districts.

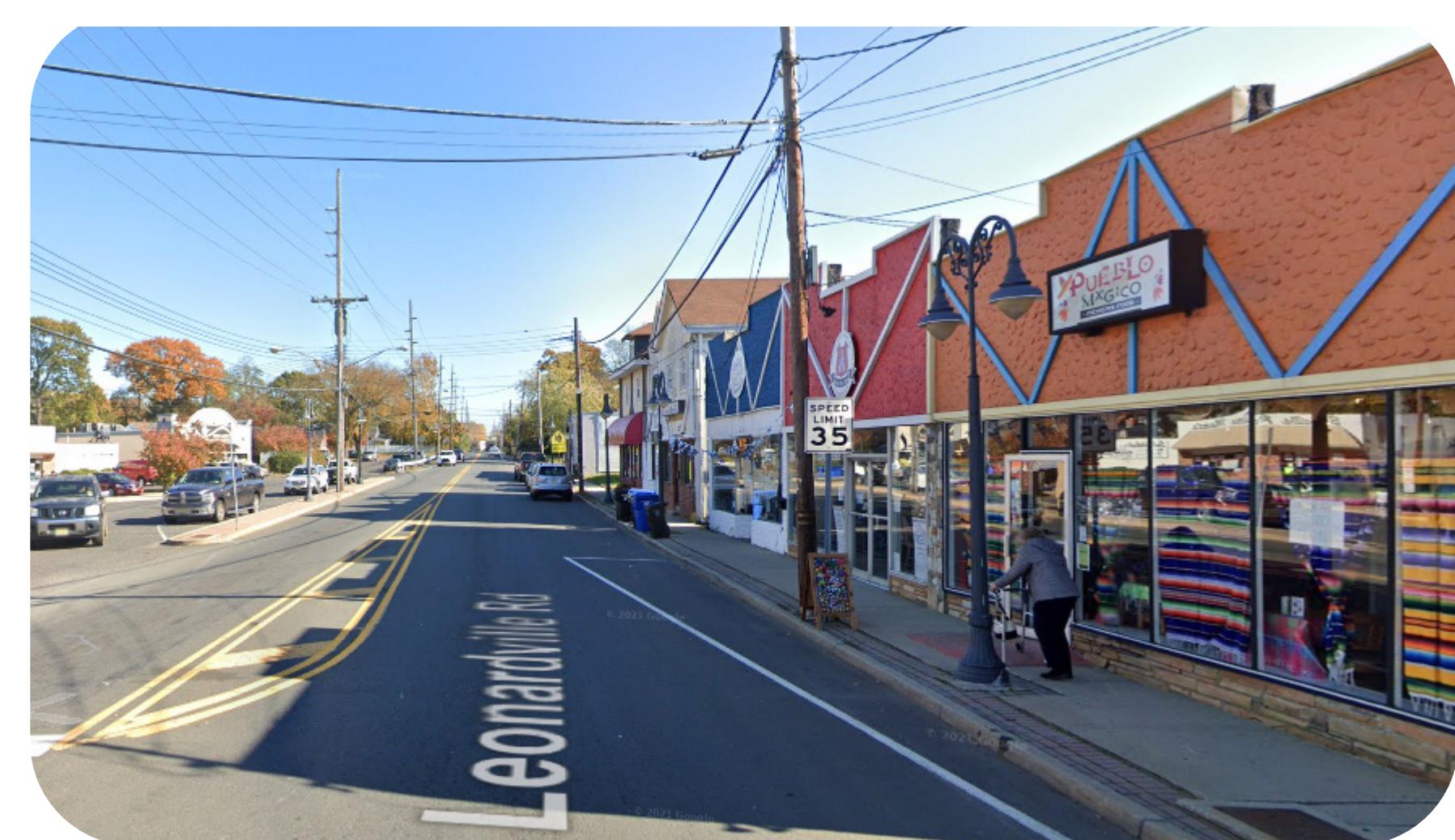
Examples include:

- Consider zoning changes in central Lincroft Village to promote infill development on underutilized parcels.
- Proceed with redevelopment planning for Campbell's Junction, including engagement of the nearby community to ensure development is of the desired scale and quality.
- Identify and implement transportation improvements, such as new/extended sidewalks, traffic calming measures, and parking changes.

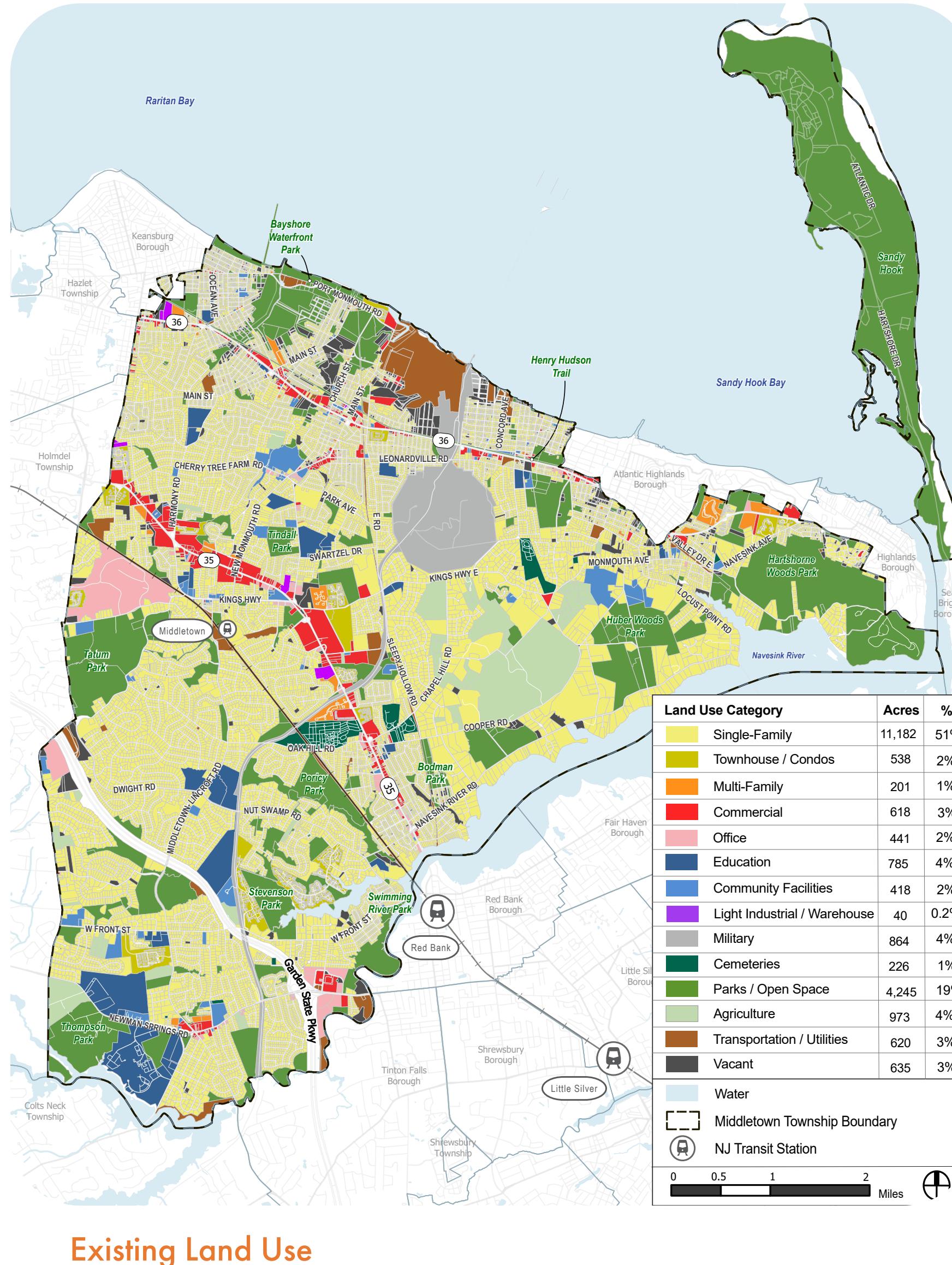


Route 36

Comments:



Campbell's Junction



Existing Land Use

4 Preserve and strengthen light industrial areas and underutilized commercial parcels.

Assess opportunities to introduce cleaner, economically productive uses that can better connect to environmental and open space uses, such as:

- Incubator and "maker spaces" containing multiple emerging light industrial/commercial uses with shared common areas.
- Green industry, such as businesses that provide components for solar or wind energy.
- Indoor recreation.
- Allow limited food and beverage uses that can link to the Henry Hudson Trail.

Comments:

5 Keep Middletown appealing to both young adults and seniors looking to downsize by taking advantage of opportunities to create various housing options.

- One approach could be sensitive integration of smaller, multifamily units (no more than 4) in existing single-family zones with sufficient lot area to accommodate parking and driveway access and potential restriction to lots on major roads.

Comments:

6 Streamline and clarify land use regulations to ensure consistent processes and optimal development outcomes.

7 Re-evaluate current parking standards for all uses, but especially non-residential uses.

Right-sizing parking requirements can help support economic development and sustainability goals.

Comments:



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CIRCULATION

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Adopt a Township "Complete Streets" Policy.

A Complete Streets policy ensures that streets are planned, designed, operated, and maintained to provide safe, convenient, and comfortable access for all users regardless of their mode of transportation, age, or abilities. Complete Streets strategies could target Township Roads, based on physical parameters/constraints, with improvements generally falling into two key categories: traffic calming and pedestrian enhancements. Particular focus of pedestrian improvements should be on local business districts (e.g., Lincroft) and near transit.

Comments:



State of New Jersey Complete Streets Design Guide

2 Continue to coordinate with Monmouth County and NJDOT on ongoing and potential future roadway improvement studies and projects.

The Township's most used roads are in County or State jurisdiction.

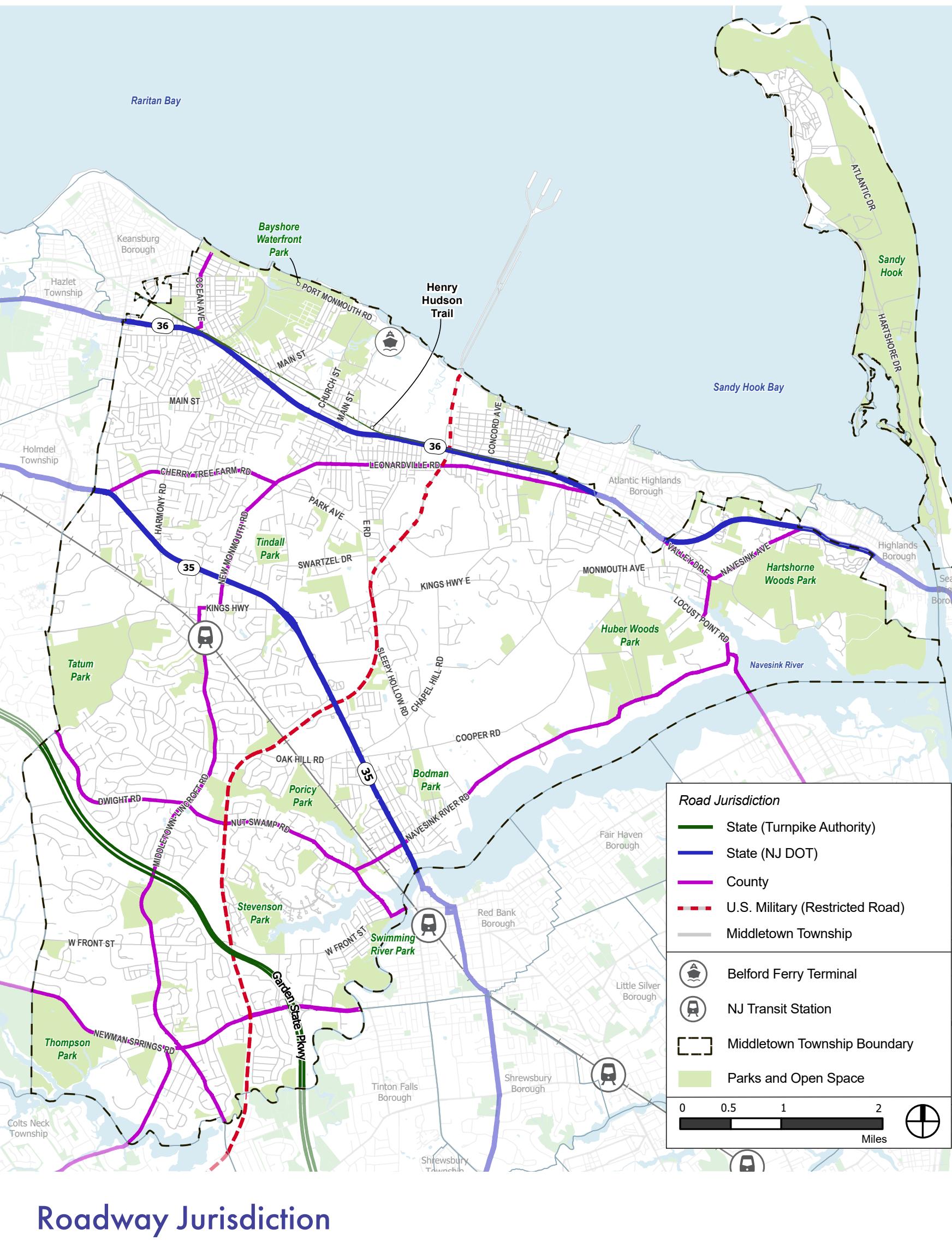
Comments:



Newman Springs Road and Swimming River Road

3 Target intersection and corridor upgrades to improve traffic safety at locations that have the highest crash rates.

Comments:



4 Pursue upgrades that enhance the pedestrian experience and safety throughout the Township, with a priority at key intersections and near key community facilities.

- Planned projects include enhancing train station connectivity, Hubbard Avenue, and Campbell's Junction. Other priority locations include:
 - Route 35 and Route 36 intersections that lack adequate pedestrian facilities.
 - Central Lincroft, with a focus on the Newman Springs Road-Swimming River Road intersection and connectivity to adjacent areas.
 - Areas within a half-mile of schools and other community facilities.
 - Intersections in denser walkable residential areas, e.g., Port Monmouth.

Comments:

Comments:

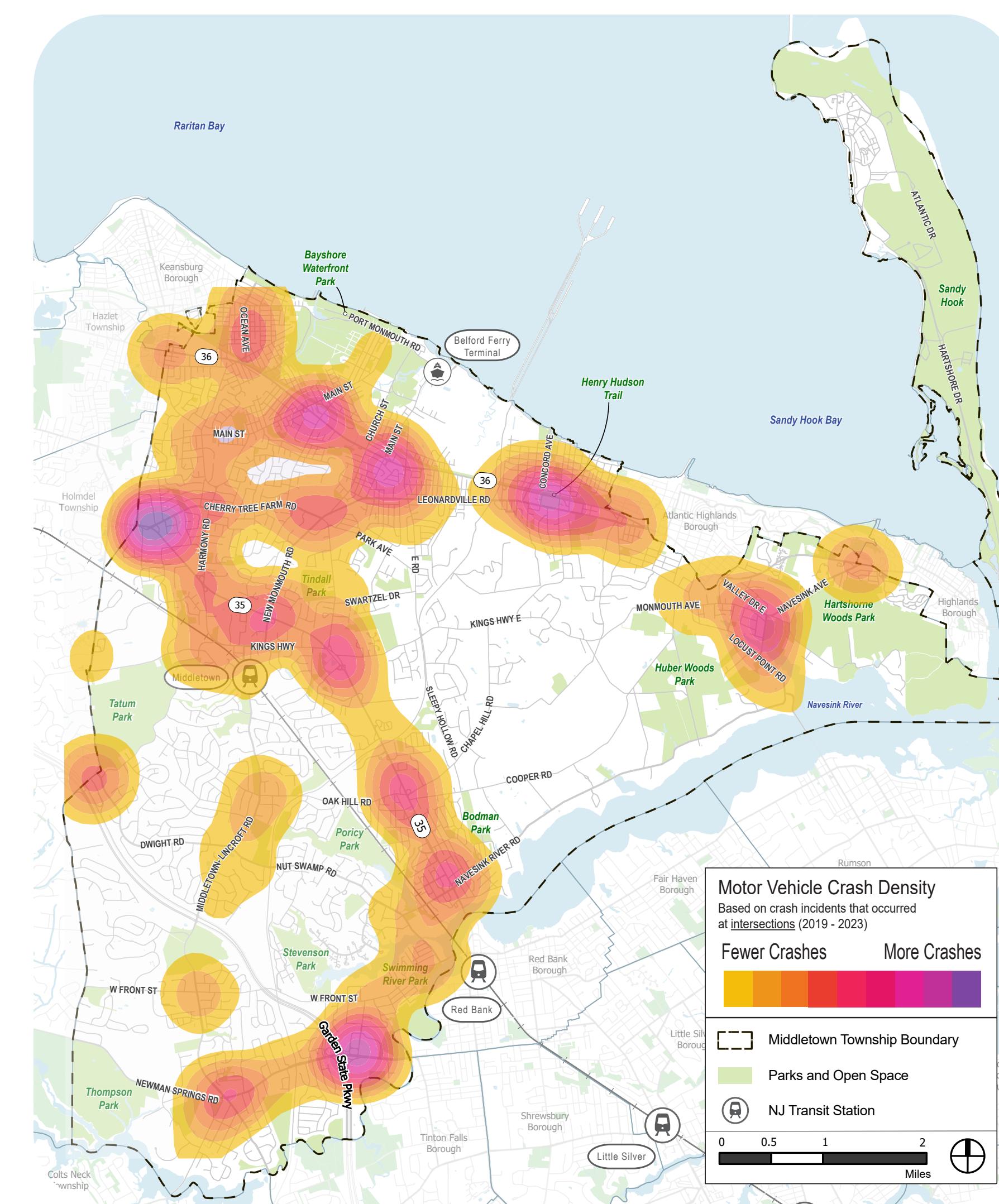
5 Explore standards for access management techniques along key corridors such as Route 35 and Route 36, with the objective to enhance traffic efficiency and safety.

Careful management of the location, spacing, design, and operation of driveways and median openings can help to improve safety and efficiency in the roadway network.

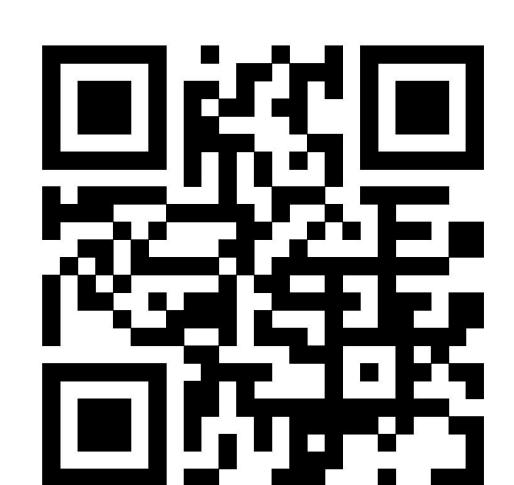
6 Maximize streetscape and traffic improvements through redevelopment planning efforts.

- Promote walkability and connections to transit.
- Anticipated redevelopment planning areas include Campbell's Junction, Route 36 corridor, and Belford.

Comments:



Intersection Motor Vehicle Crash Incidents (2019 - 2023)



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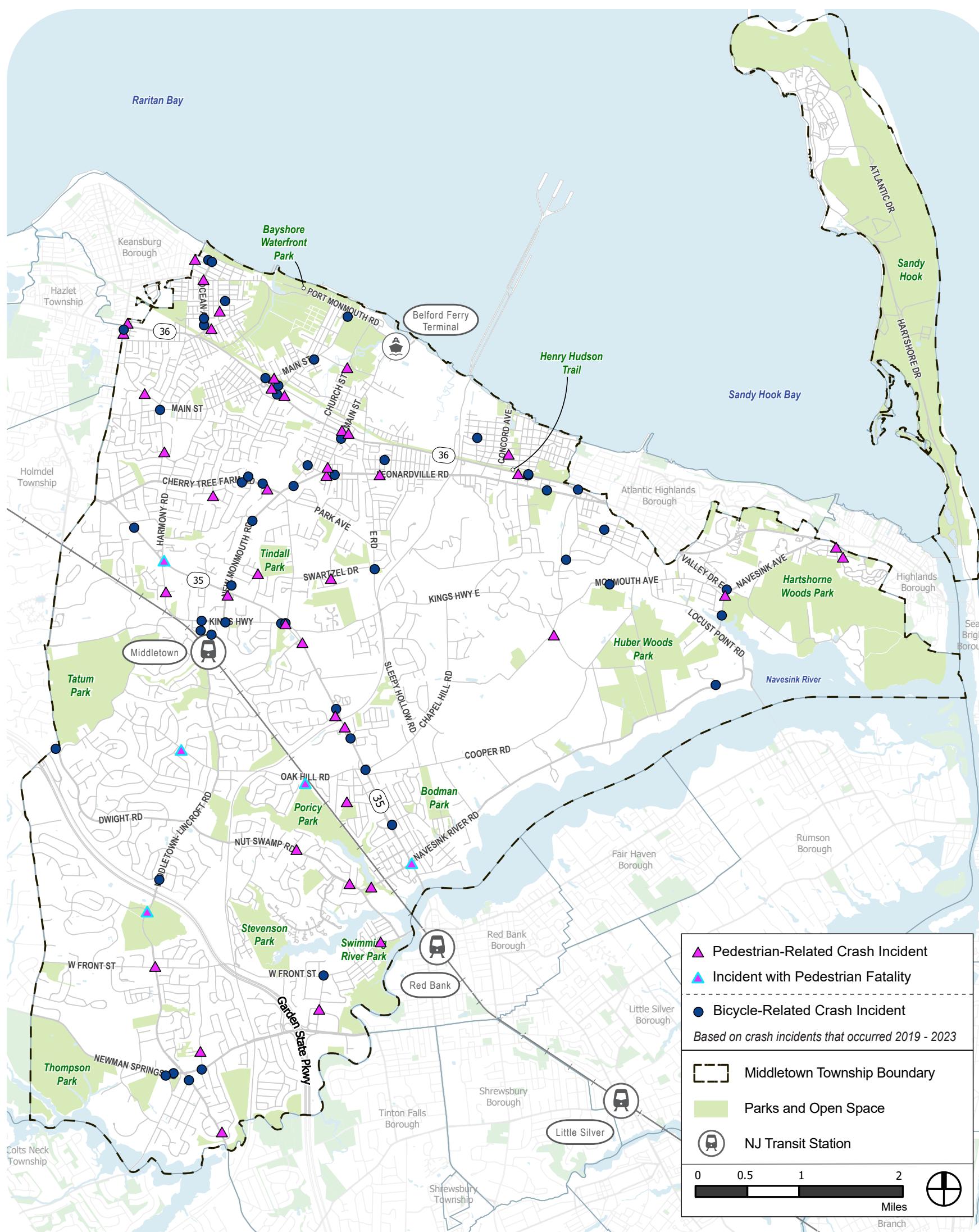
Newman Springs Road and Swimming River Road

CIRCULATION

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

7 Address concerns about speeding on Township roadways through traffic calming interventions (i.e., narrowed intersections, speed humps, stop signs, etc.) and enforcement by the Middletown Police Department.

Comments:

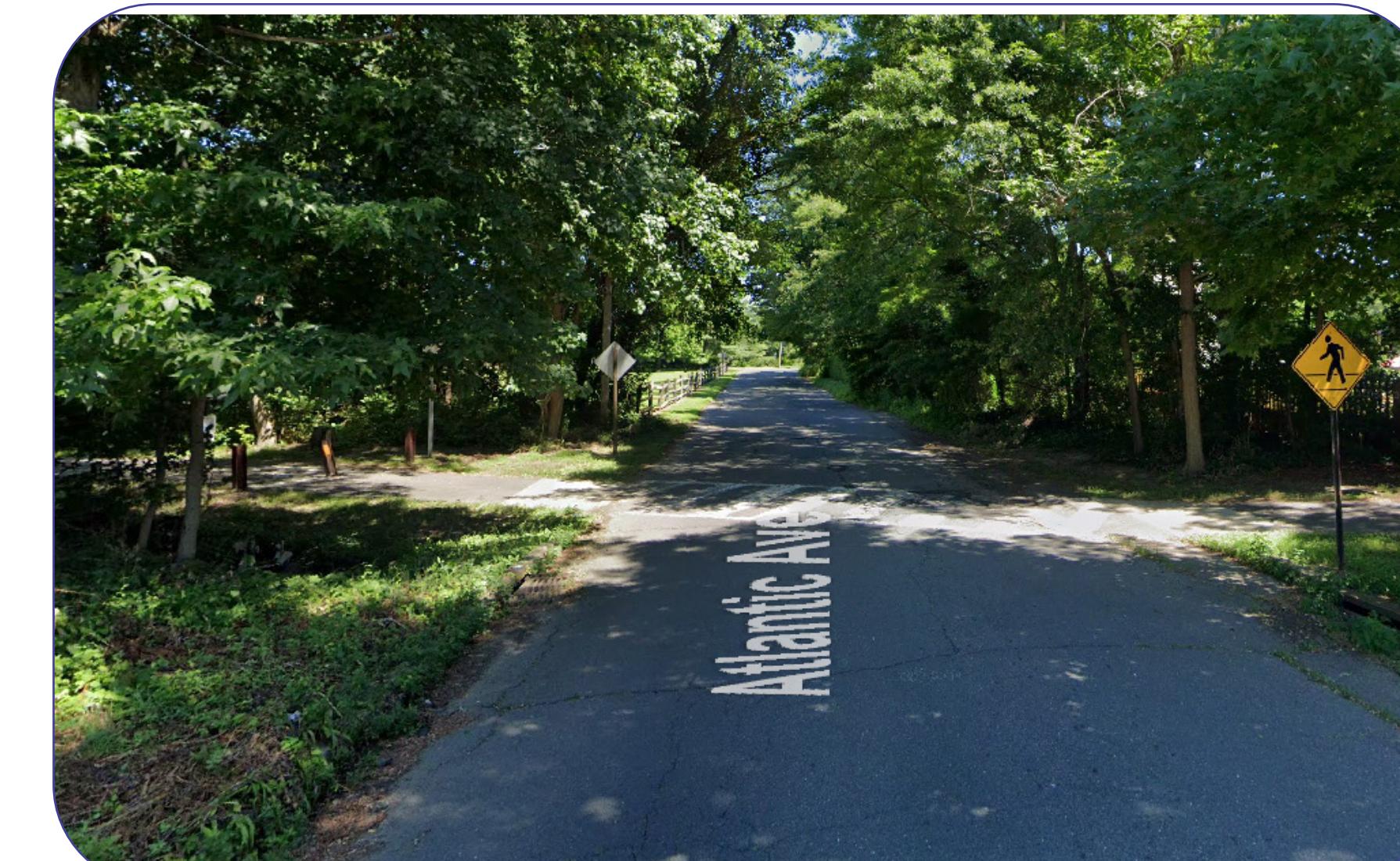


Pedestrian and Cyclist Crash Incidents

8 Consider conducting a Township-wide pedestrian and bicycle circulation study to identify a strategy for creating additional neighborhood connections, including trails and greenways.

- Provide safe connections from the Henry Hudson Trail to the waterfront and County parks.
- Reinforce connections to the train station and other local parks.

Comments:



Henry Hudson Trail and Atlantic Avenue

Comments:

10 Continue robust Township communications about roadways and transit service alerts.

Comments:



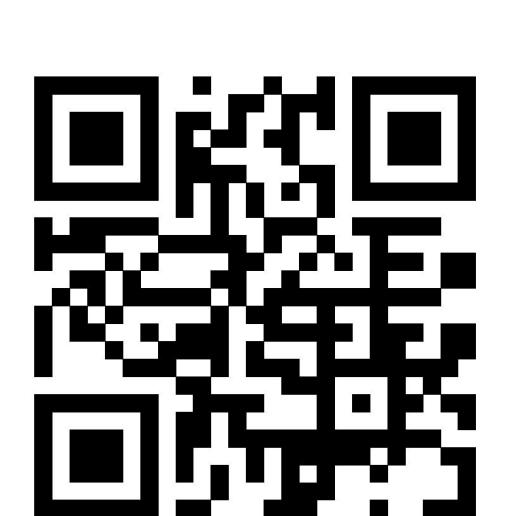
Middletown Train Station



Public Transit



Church Street and Railroad Avenue



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COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Continue to prioritize investment in indoor and outdoor recreational space, youth and adult programming and other recreational amenities to ensure all facilities can adequately serve current and future residents.

Consideration for new facilities, such as pools or indoor gyms, should be based on analysis of community needs and available space/funding.

Comments:

2 Explore funding opportunities, including through existing grants, to renovate the following buildings:

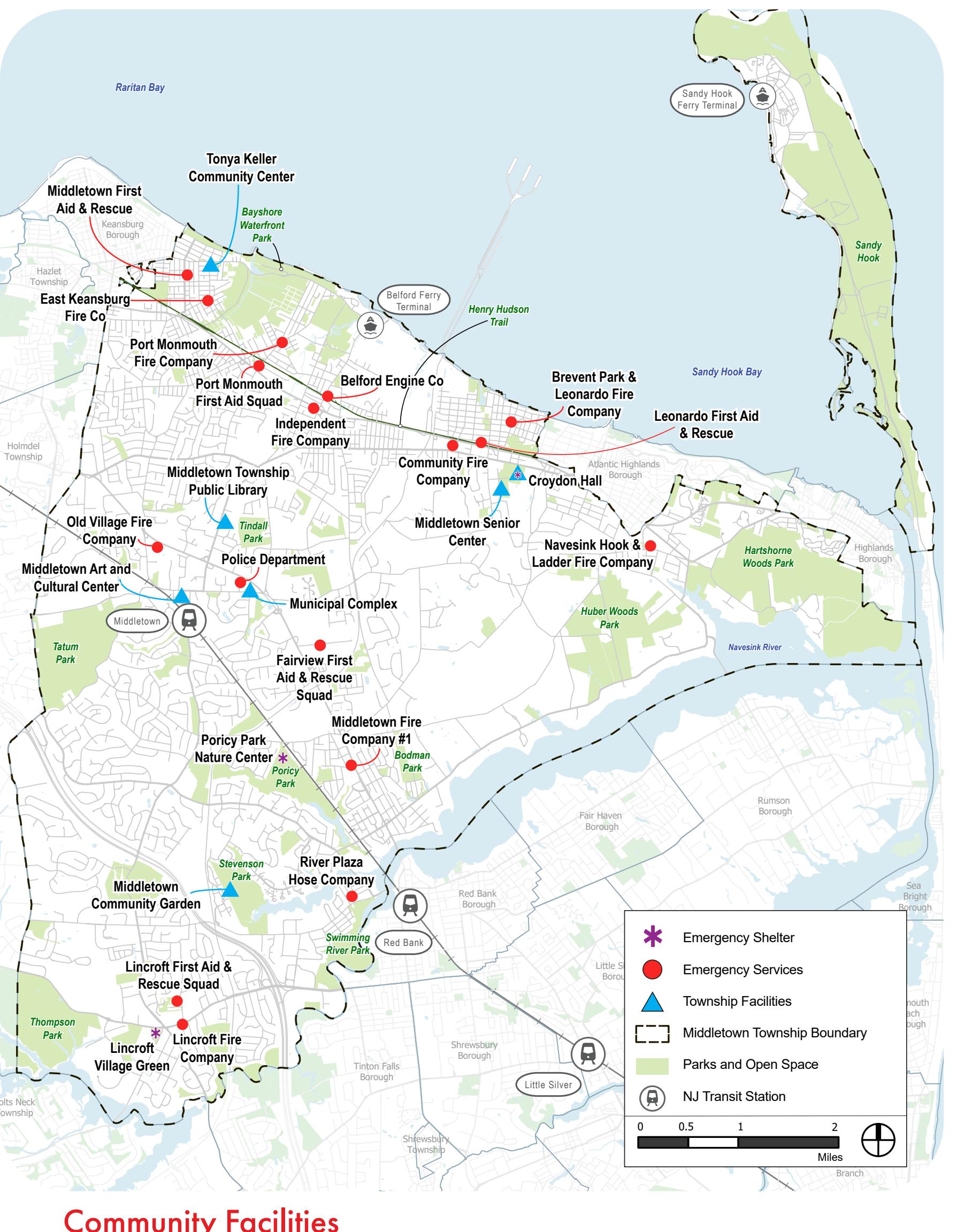
- Middletown Arts Center
- Tonya Keller Community Center
- Department of Recreation offices and Nature Center at Poricy Park
- Pigeon Building at Tindall Park

Comments:



Tonya Keller Community Center

3 Evaluate future programming and space needs, (and the associated funding needed) based on a growing senior population.



Comments:

4 Explore the feasibility of providing continuous public access along the Navesink River, with a portion of the space dedicated to the Recreation Department, as feasible, to allow for additional programs and facilities.

Comments:

5 Continue to explore potential alternate uses for the former Mater Dei High School building and Croydon Hall Annex.

- These buildings could serve as additional community or recreational centers to keep pace with the growing demand for open space and recreation.

Comments:

6 Maintain funding for new vehicles, improved equipment and advanced training for the Police, Fire and EMS Departments.

Comments:



Middletown Arts Center

7 Upgrade the Fire Academy Administration Building to provide ADA access; mechanical, electrical, and plumbing infrastructure; and larger classrooms.

Comments:

8 Explore funding opportunities for the renovation of facilities at the Fire Department Training Academy to provide upgraded resources and classroom space.

Comments:

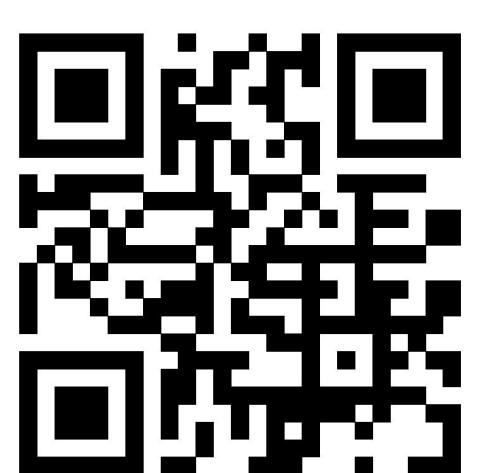
9 To address recruitment and retention issues, explore the feasibility of providing a live-in housing program or setting aside workforce housing in new development for volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel.

Comments:

10 In addition to Croydon Hall, identify locations to serve as official shelter facilities outside of the 100-year floodplain.

Expand information on these shelters for shoreline residents, such as through targeted media or special meetings.

Comments:



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OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

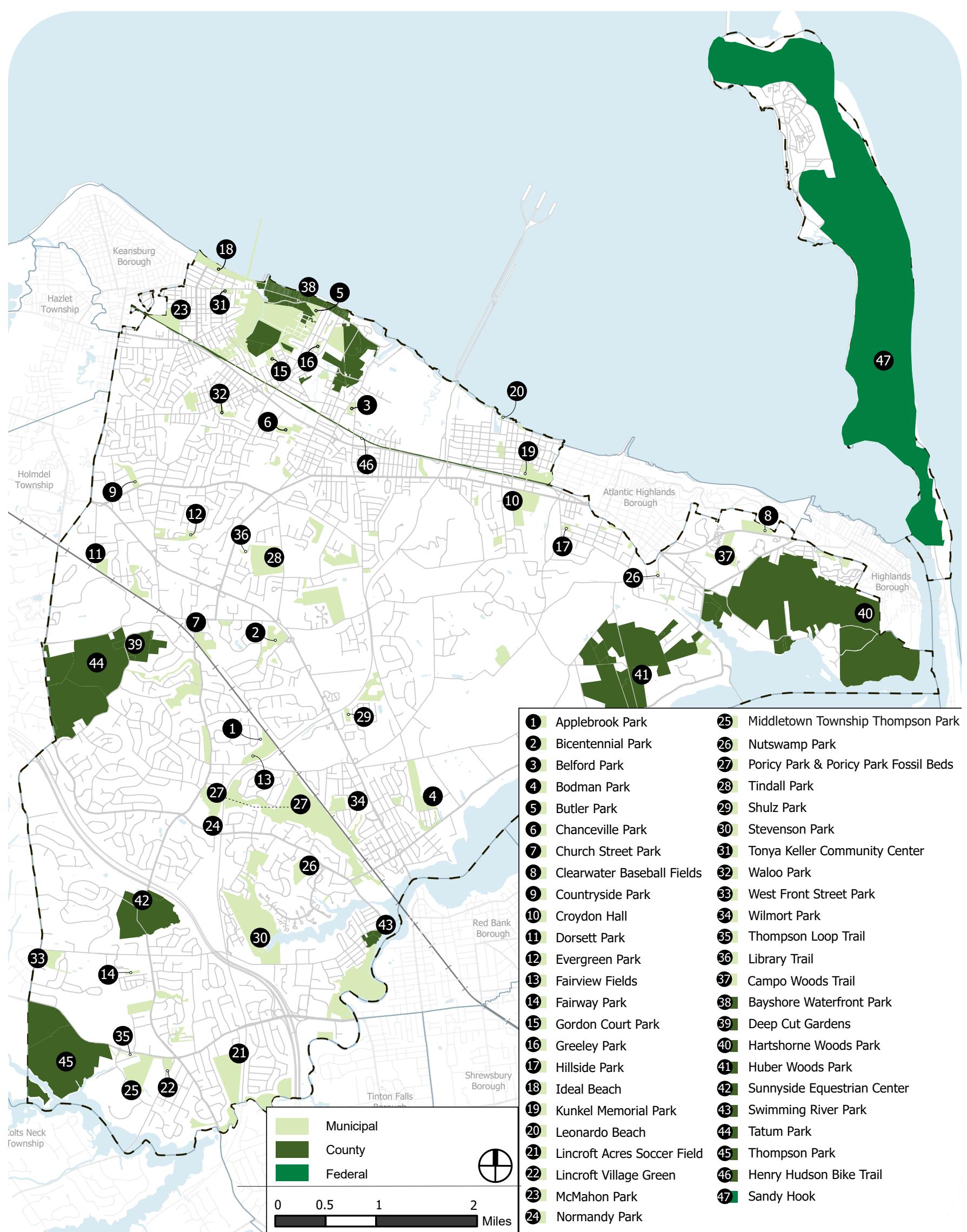
1 Establish consistent signage, building/façade materials, colors, and amenities throughout municipal parks and open space, to promote the visibility of these assets as a complete system.

Comments:



McMahon Park

3 Explore opportunities that take advantage of the Township's waterfront and create water access points to provide for water-related recreational activities, with a focus on the Navesink River.



5 Continue to provide and maintain high-quality recreational programming for residents of all ages.

Comments:



Ideal Beach

8 Continue to participate as a member of the Fort Hancock 21st Century Federal Advisory Committee and to advise the Park on achieving the vision for the greater good while preserving national history.

Comments:

6 Continue to prioritize the maintenance of the Township's existing parks and recreational assets and continue to coordinate with youth leagues.

Comments:

2 Continually evaluate opportunities to provide indoor recreational space to accommodate year-round programming for residents, with a focus on the needs of the senior population.

4 Explore opportunities to build trail connections between parks and open space.

Comments:

7 Actively pursue grants and loans to supplement the Open Space Trust Fund to improve open space and recreation and acquire land suitable for open space.



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UTILITIES

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

Stormwater Management

Recommendations:

1 Consider zoning updates to include specific standards for green infrastructure stormwater techniques for all development, such as rain gardens, bioretention areas, and vegetated swales/dry swales; green roofs; porous pavement; stream buffer restoration; and stormwater planters and tree filters.

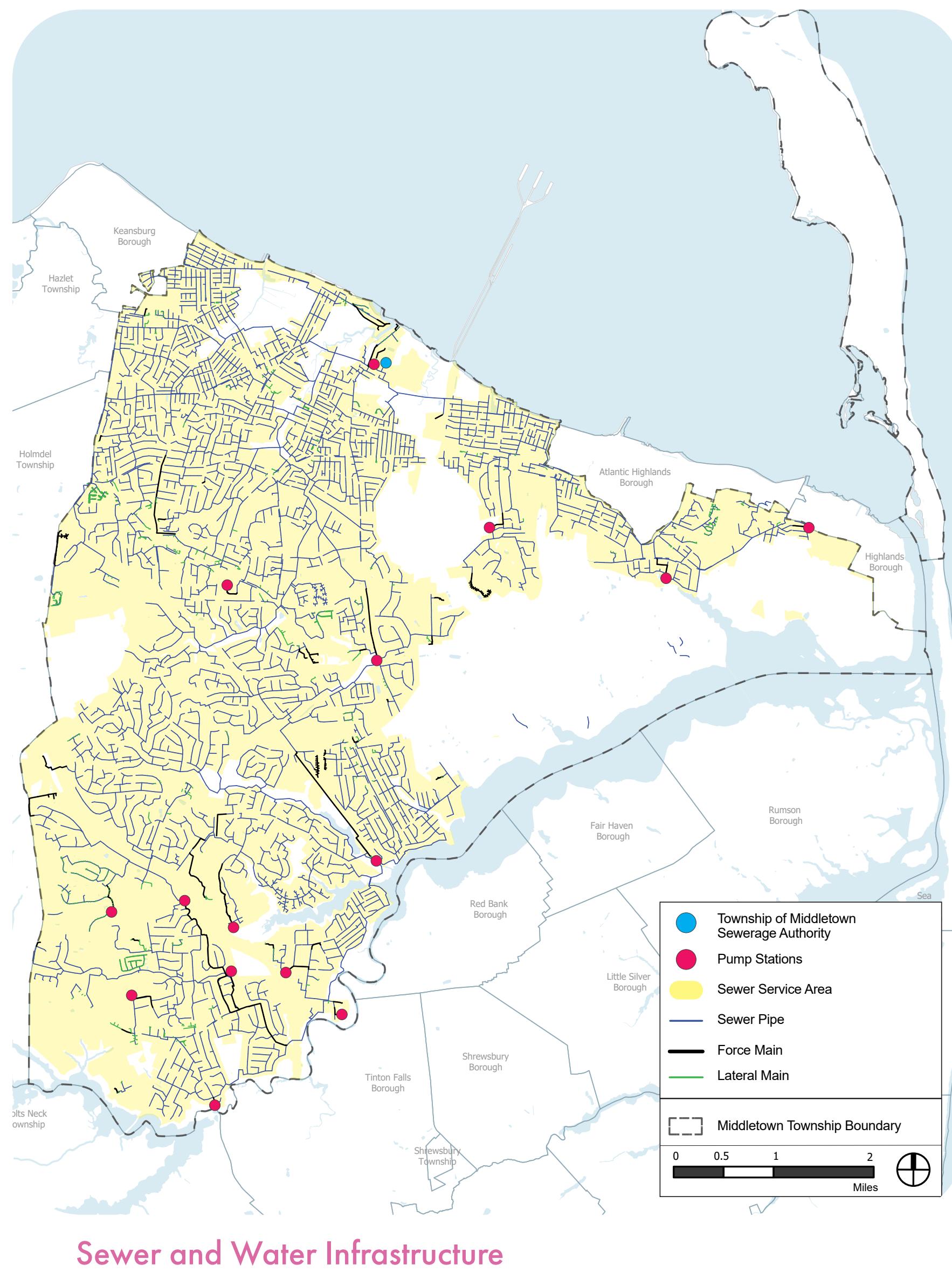
2 Require new or redeveloped parking lots over a certain threshold to incorporate permeable pavement, porous design techniques, and/or landscaping islands, to reduce stormwater runoff volume.

Comments:

3 Install rain gardens and bioswales along Township-owned roadways to mitigate flooding and drainage issues, prioritizing flood-prone streets and roadways.

4 In partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, continue to monitor and regularly maintain stormwater management infrastructure throughout the Township.

Comments:



Sewer and Water Infrastructure

5 Review and update the Township Code to include specific MS4 (municipal separate storm sewer system) requirements, best management practices and green infrastructure as required by the NJDEP.

6 To reduce stormwater flooding, consider reevaluating and adjusting the allowable percentage of impermeable lot coverage for new development and substantial redevelopment.

Comments:

7 Educate residents on the benefits of natural stormwater management practices including installation of native plantings and removal of invasive species.

8 In anticipation of continued flood events and sea level rise, consider relocating or elevating existing utilities and infrastructure in flood-prone areas.

- Explore long-range planning for the possible relocation of the TOMSA waste treatment facility in Belford.
 - NJDEP has suggested a potential location at the intersection of Normandy Road and Route 36.



Pump Station

9 Explore the feasibility of installing additional nature-based shoreline protection measures such as living shorelines, submerged aquatic vegetation, artificial reefs and living breakwaters to reduce damage from future storm surges.

These measures should be implemented so as to avoid impacts on Leonardo Marina and the experimental oyster beds near the Naval Weapons Station Earle pier.

Comments:

Other Utilities Recommendations:

10 Consider water conservation measures for the summer and during severe droughts.

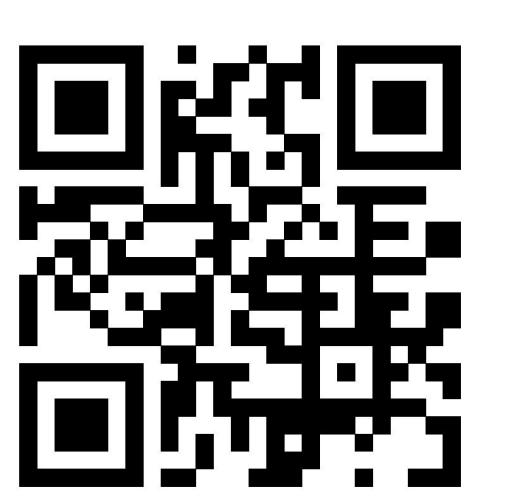
11 Encourage installing utilities underground as streetscape and roadway improvements are undertaken throughout the Township and as part of new development.

12 Consider providing free public Wi-Fi at all Township-owned facilities and properties to ensure that every resident has access to high-speed data services.

13 Implement Low-impact development (LID) principles designed to minimize runoff for any new development.

14 Add garbage and recycling bins throughout the Township, especially in public spaces such as parks and recreational areas, to increase recycling and garbage collection efforts and prevent litter from accumulating in streams.

Comments:



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HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Preserve historic landmarks, both residential and non-residential, throughout the Township, through reinforcement of the local process, and officially designate landmarks not included in existing historic districts as per the Township Code.

Comments:

2 Develop a historical signage plan throughout the Township to promote awareness, appreciation, and education among the community of the Township's historic districts, landmarks, roads, corridors, and cemeteries.

This plan should focus on gateway and interpretative signage in all historical villages in Middletown.

5 Continue to actively pursue grants for historic preservation.

6 Investigate, in coordination with the residents of the area of New Monmouth, the official designation of a group of historic landmarks as a Historic District.

Comments:

3 Continue to preserve historic cemeteries through cleaning, restoration and maintenance, volunteerism, and grants.

7 Pursue placement of the Locust Historic District and Chapel Hill Historic District on the NJ State Register and National Register of Historic Places.

8 Develop a new process for the enforcement of Township Code that regulates, via the Landmarks Commission, approval for certain modifications/repairs of historic landmarks.

The traditional communication method by the Zoning Board to the property owner to meet with the Landmarks Commission no longer exists since updated New Jersey Uniform Construction Code (UCC) exempts owners from obtaining permits through the Zoning Board for the same work. Communicate the new process and procedure to the owners of historic landmarks.

Comments:

9 Create local process to guide owners of historic landmarks interested in official historic landmark designation.

10 Designate certain roads in the Township as historic roads.

Comments:

4 Continue to restore and preserve Township-owned historic landmarks, such as the Historic Middletown Train Station, MacLeod-Rice House, Joseph Murray Farmhouse and Barn, Grant-Stevenson House, Grover House, and the Dempsey Pump House.

11 Educate and promote the benefits of historic landmark designation to owners of historic landmarks, including the eligibility for grants for repairs/ restoration and for access to the Landmarks Commission's architect for advice on same.

12 Continue creation of a searchable electronic database of all the Historic Landmarks (structures and cemeteries) in the Township which are currently in paper files at the Landmarks Commission.

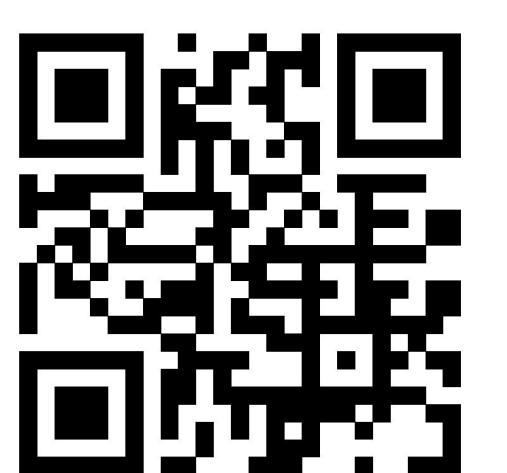
Database to include information such as circa date, name of historic district in which the landmark resides if applicable, address and notable historical information.



Historic Districts

13 Bolster partnerships with private and nonprofit organizations dedicated to historic preservation.

Comments:



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GREEN BUILDINGS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Prepare a Community Sustainability Plan

Plan with a vision statement, goals and objectives, and sustainability actions that Middletown can work toward completing. Many of the actions listed below could be part of implementing this plan.

Comments:

Comments:

Comments:

3 Transition to clean, renewable energy.

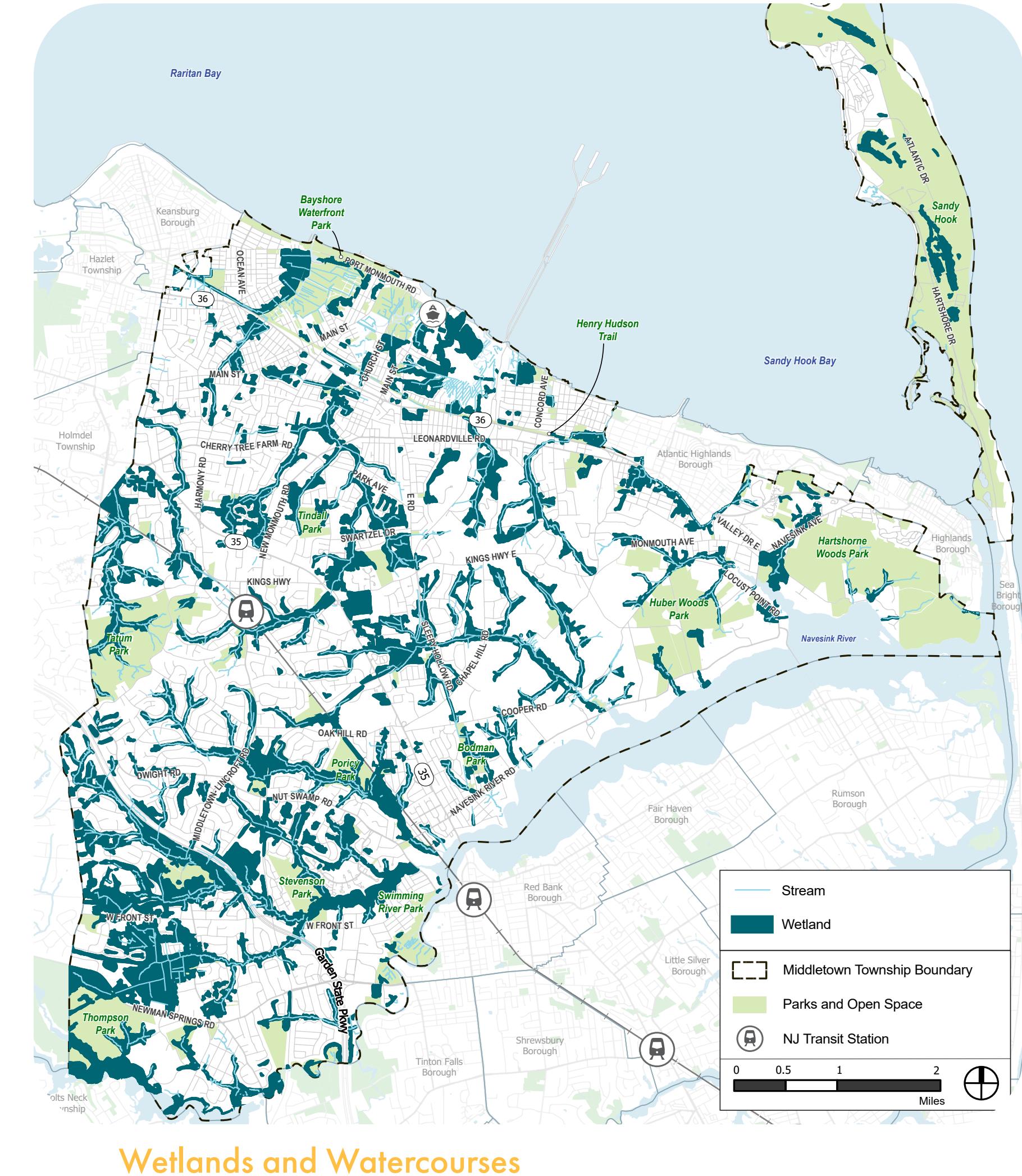
- Where feasible, install solar facilities on Township-owned buildings, facilities, and parking lots.
- Identify appropriate locations throughout the Township for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, with a focus on key community facilities and transit hubs.
- Explore the feasibility of using a portion of the Middletown NJ Transit Station parking lot for a community solar project, balancing the opportunity to support clean energy with the lot's current and future usage.
- Consider amending the zoning code to promote sustainability initiatives:
 - Implement incentives (e.g., increased floor area ratio (FAR), additional height) throughout the business and industrial zones to encourage the installation of solar panels on new buildings.
 - Allow accessory wind turbines for individual buildings in appropriate zoning districts (such as industrial and commercial districts) with appropriate setbacks and aesthetic specifications.
 - Ensure that rooftop solar and parking lot solar canopies are permitted accessory uses in business and industrial zones.
 - Facilitate the introduction of EV charging stations on privately owned lots, as part of new development or improvements to existing development.
- Explore the feasibility of installing waste-to-energy facilities at the Township compost site (at the end of Center Avenue in Belford), Recycling Center, and TOMSA. This property is owned by the County and coordination would be needed.
- Continue to explore opportunities for emerging renewable energy technologies, i.e. wave energy, hydrogen, and geothermal installations.

2 Continue to pursue Sustainable Jersey actions to maintain Silver Certification and obtain a Gold Star Award.

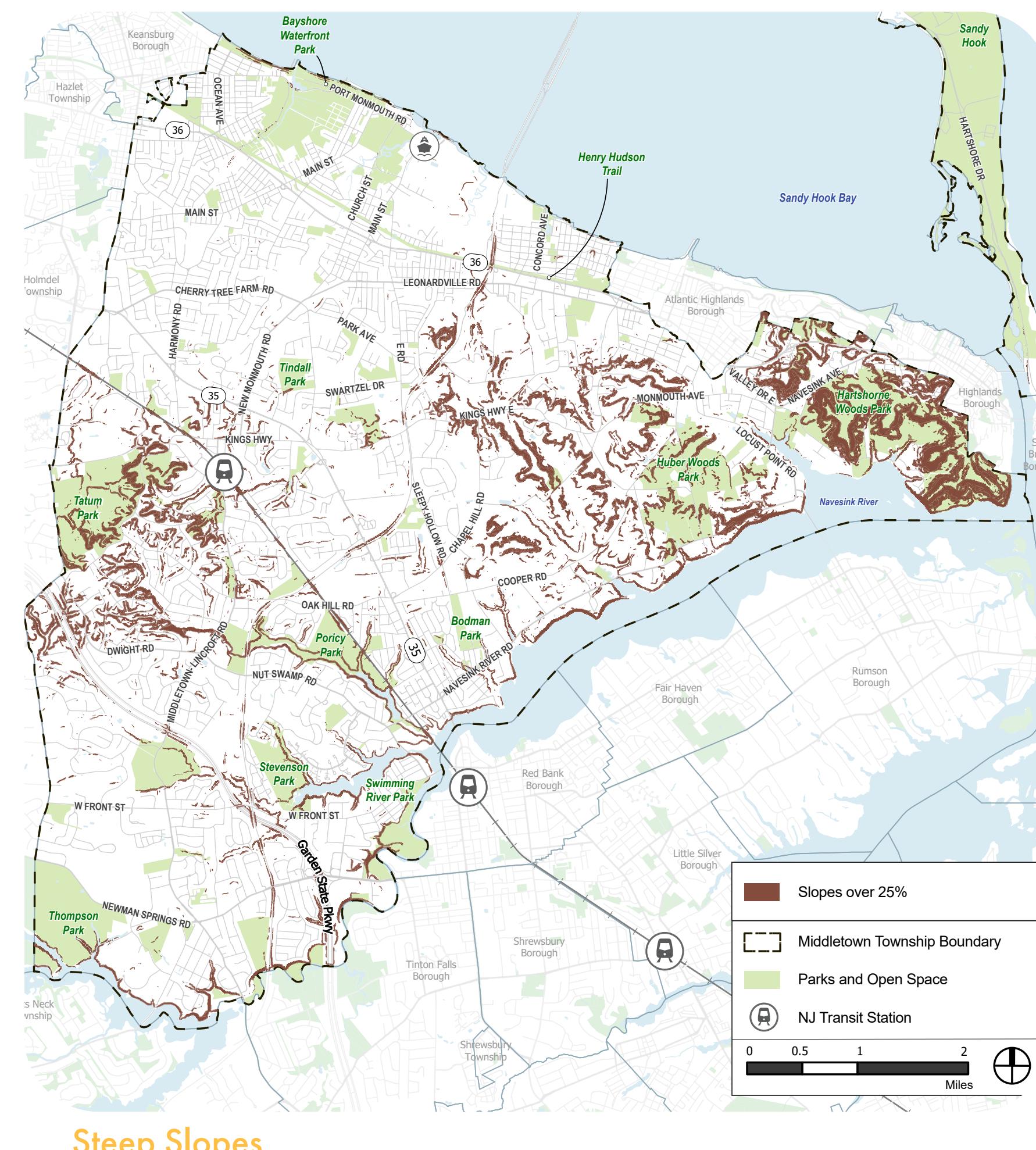
- Adopt a Green Development Checklist to incorporate sustainability measures into the Completeness Review process for development applications.
- Complete the transition of the entire municipal fleet to zero-emissions vehicles.
- Require a certain percentage of construction and demolition waste generated from Township-owned facilities to be recycled.

4 Preserve and enhance existing natural resources and habitats.

- Provide educational information on the Township's website on native plant and animal species and invasive plant and animal species.
- Continue to explore innovative and nature-based methods for invasive species removal.
- Explore funding opportunities for a native plant and/or rain garden rebate programs for homeowners.
- As a condition of site plan approval, consider requiring landowners and developers to restore wetlands impacted by development with native vegetation. Explore State and Federal funding to restore wetlands throughout the community.



Comments:



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GREEN BUILDINGS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

5 Increase tree canopy and preserve wooded areas and existing trees by enforcing the Township's tree preservation law and mandatory tree replacement requirements for any new development.

Comments:

7 Decrease energy usage and continue to invest in energy retrofits:

- Incentivize solar panels, green roofs, and cool roofs for all new construction or substantially reconstructed buildings.
 - Cool roofs—also called highly reflective roofs—are light-colored or white roofs that bounce the sun's heat back to the sky rather than transferring it to a building's interior.
- Encourage bicycle facilities (e.g., bicycle racks and bicycle parking shelters) at new multifamily residential and mixed-use developments.
- Advance renewable energy initiatives, as mentioned on the previous board.

Comments:

6 Water conservation measures.

- Create a rain barrel program to encourage rainwater harvesting for uses such as gardening.
- Replace aged water equipment at Township buildings and facilities with water-efficient products.
- Require automatic irrigation systems using smart controller technology at all new multifamily residential developments (including mixed-use buildings).



Bayside Parkway in North Middletown

8 Increase the sustainability of Township buildings and facilities. For example:

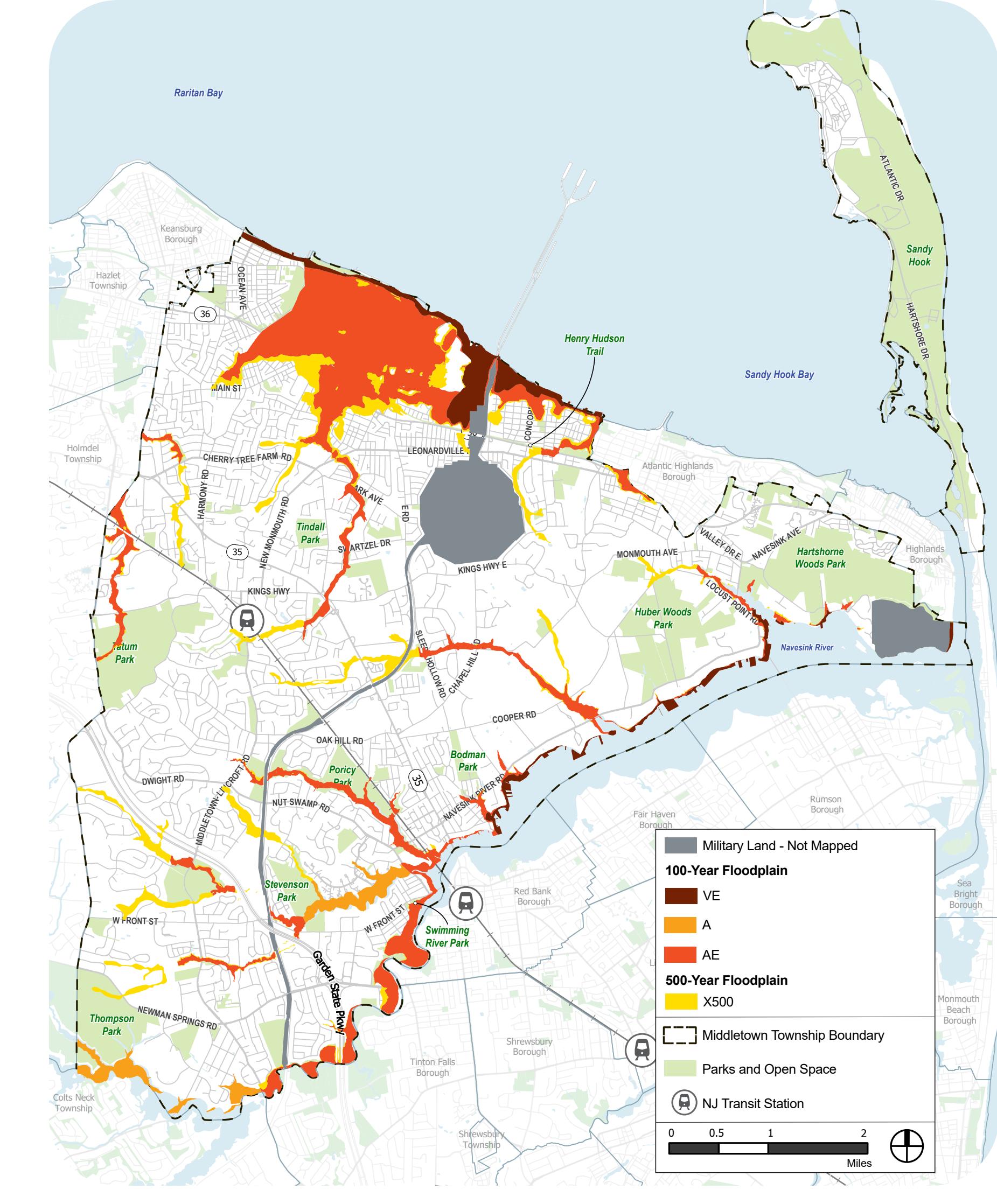
- Switch to heat pumps at Township facilities where feasible.
- Consider amending the Zoning Code to require LEED-equivalent certified buildings within all business zones, industrial zones, and office research zones.
- Replace aged equipment at older Township buildings and facilities with more efficient equipment (e.g., lighting, upgraded HVAC systems, energy-efficient appliances, etc.).

Comments:

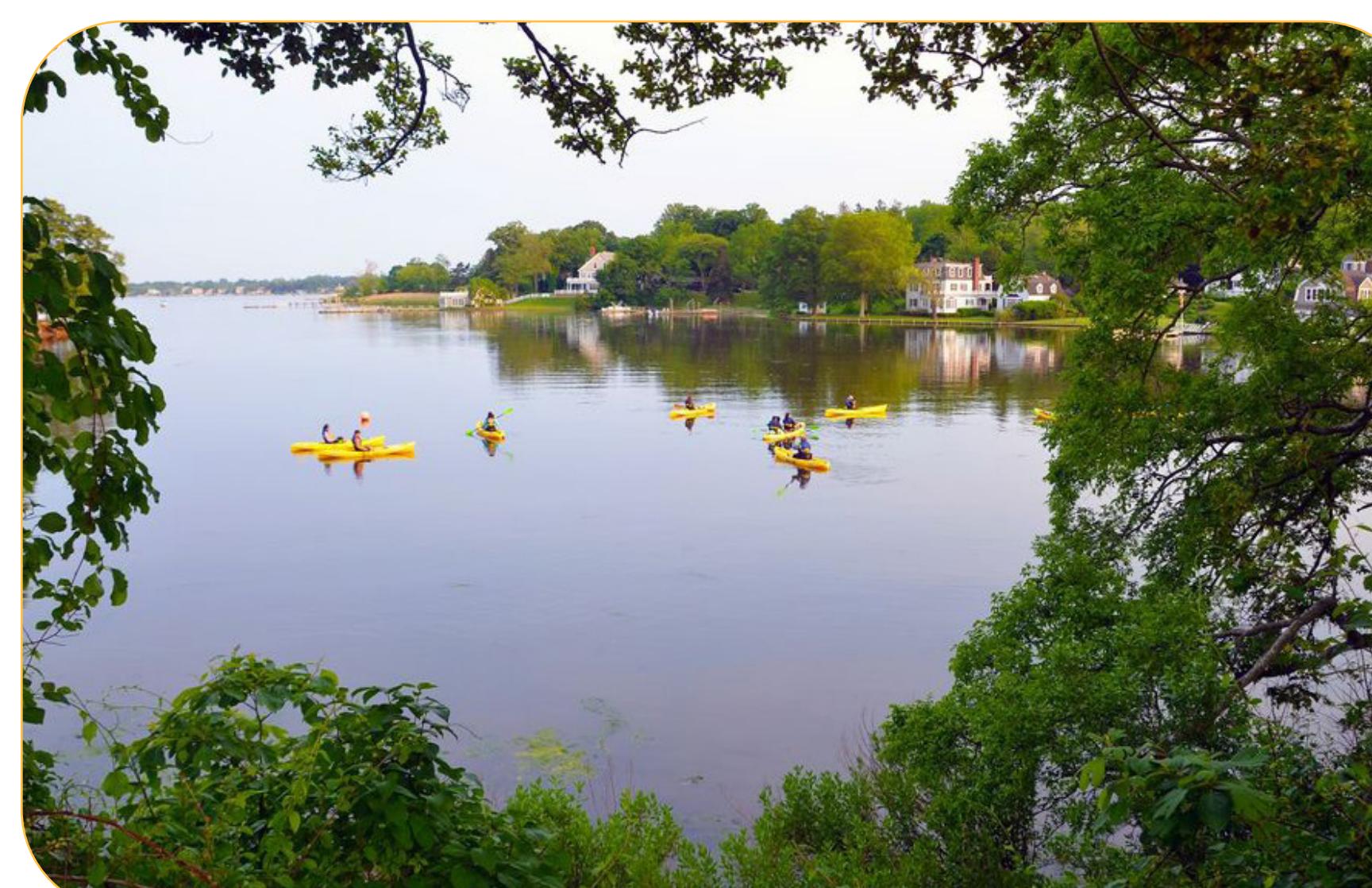
9 Ensure that any future development in floodplains uses sustainable land development techniques and is elevated or floodproofed in accordance with FEMA standards.

- For areas within the 100-year floodplain that are targeted for redevelopment, explore best development practices, such as requiring new development along the waterfront to be Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines (WEDG)-verified to protect important habitats.
- Consider acquiring and preserving properties in the floodplain that are not targeted for redevelopment through the State's Blue Acres program. Preservation of lands within the floodplain can help mitigate the impacts of flooding.
- Amend the Floodplain Management section of the Township Code to include the new design flood elevation requirements per the 2023 NJDEP Inland Flood Protection Rule.
- Consider reductions to allowable impervious coverage in floodplains and flood hazard areas.

Comments:

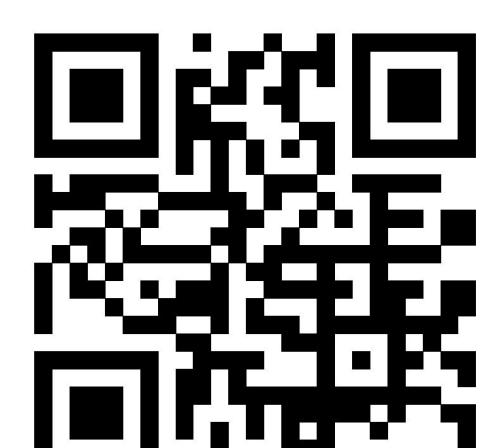


Comments:



Navesink River

Comments:



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Draft Strategies and Recommendations

1 Support commercial corridors and local business districts to help them remain competitive in a challenging retail environment.

- Review business zoning requirements to streamline approvals processes and remove potential barriers to entrepreneurs, new business types, and experiential retail.
- Leverage partnerships with Brookdale Community College (Small Business Development Center), the Eastern Monmouth Chamber of Commerce, and Monmouth County's Division of Economic Development to connect with and support existing and emerging small businesses.
- Increase the visibility of the Township's Economic Development Board by posting agendas and meeting minutes.
- Encourage residents to support local businesses through "buy local" or "Made in Middletown" campaigns.

Comments:

Comments:

2 Invest in public realm upgrades in Middletown's business areas.

- Facilitate sidewalk and paving improvements, landscaping, lighting, wayfinding signage, and street furniture (e.g., coordinated benches and waste receptacles), coordinating with State and County entities as needed.
- Investigate options to phase out nonconforming signs.
- Consider a façade improvement program to support commercial building upgrades. Work could be incentivized through a property tax refund for a percentage of the cost of improvements, and through Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding.
- Explore creation of a Special Improvement District (SID) for local business districts, such as Campbell's Junction and Central Lincroft.

Comments:

Comments:

3 Continue to monitor the health of large-scale office uses and consider flexibility in future uses.

- Support re-use of large campuses with a wide range of uses, not just residential. Redevelopment at Exit 109 of the Garden State Parkway offers a good example of uses, including recreation and veterinary services/education that create jobs and community amenities.

Comments:



Belford Ferry Terminal

4 Build Middletown's reputation as an arts and cultural destination.

- Better publicize the arts and cultural resources in the Township, including the Middletown Arts Center and the Brookdale Performing Arts Center.
- Consider creative placemaking by introducing public art, signage, and arts-related events, potentially in partnership with Monmouth Arts and Monmouth County Tourism.
- Cultivate a local artist community, including allowing related land uses (e.g., live/work lofts, artisan manufacturing).
- Promote historic tourism and ecotourism for regional visitors, leveraging Middletown's substantial inventory of historical assets and its recreational network (including Sandy Hook, the Henry Hudson Trail, and parks).

Comments:

5 Implement a branding initiative to illustrate and promote Middletown.

- Develop consistent branding and signage to denote commercial areas, community facilities, historical resources, parks, and other areas of interest.

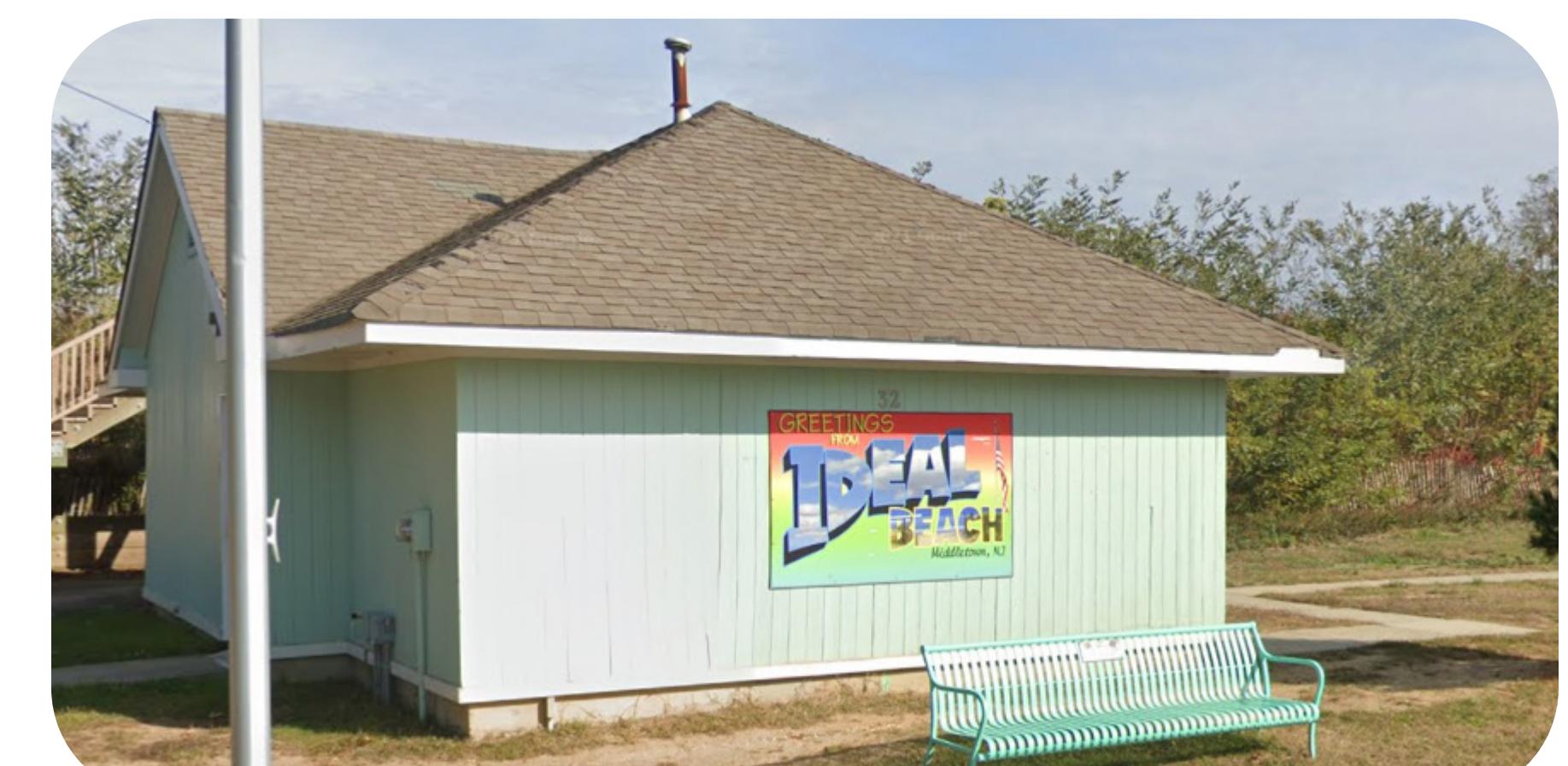
Comments:



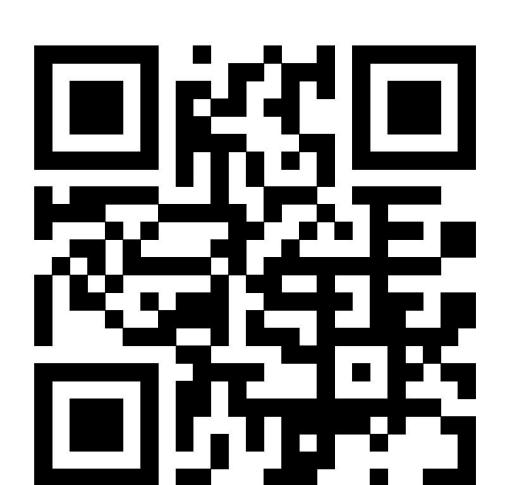
Butler Park



Bodman Park



Ideal Beach



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VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

Middletown's array of unique neighborhoods, business corridors and local business districts, natural and historical resources, and proximity to New York City and the region create a high quality of life and a strong community feeling. The Township will work to balance economic prosperity with preservation of open space and environmental assets, to ensure that all residents can enjoy thriving neighborhoods, a safe and effective transportation network, a range of goods and services in attractive settings, and excellent community facilities and amenities.

LAND USE

- Use targeted zoning strategies and best practices to implement desired land use patterns, bolster Middletown's distinct neighborhoods, and facilitate economic revitalization of local business districts and corridors.
- Promote a diverse mix of uses that meet the needs of the community and support a strong tax base.
- Provide opportunities for the development of a range of housing types in suitable locations, at various price points, that meet the needs of people at various stages in their life.

CIRCULATION

- Ensure safe, functional, and accessible mobility for all users: drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders.
- Leverage opportunities to better connect public and community facilities such as parks, schools, business districts, and natural resources. This should include creation and expansion of trail networks and addition of sidewalks along traditionally auto-oriented corridors, to enhance connectivity for pedestrians.
- Promote efficient traffic circulation and adequate parking to ensure that the Township's businesses continue to thrive.
- Continue to collaborate with state and regional transportation entities to facilitate an effective multi-modal network in Middletown.

UTILITIES

- Facilitate necessary infrastructure and municipal facility upgrades to maximize public safety, meet the capacity needs of residents and businesses, protect against natural hazards, advance sustainability and resiliency initiatives, and ensure cost-effectiveness.
- Assess and implement strategies to protect the shoreline from the impacts of flooding, to safeguard residential neighborhoods, maritime businesses, and natural resources.
- Improve stormwater management throughout Middletown, including through the use of green infrastructure techniques.
- Ensure that there is adequate infrastructure in place for high-speed internet access and other technologies that support local business and residential quality of life.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Promote economic development activities that support existing businesses, attract new business and employment, and foster entrepreneurship and creativity, including programming, strategic zoning, and revitalization of underused commercial sites.
- Upgrade commercial corridors and local business districts (such as Campbell's Junction and Lincroft) to support diverse uses, improve aesthetics, and support a multi-modal transportation environment.

Comments:



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VISION STATEMENT & GOALS

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GREEN BUILDING AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Promote the conservation and preservation of natural resources to enhance the Township's ability to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including its capacity to recover from emergencies and natural disasters.
- Support environmental sustainability initiatives that improve waste and energy systems, enhance the tree canopy, protect natural resources, and strengthen connections to open space and recreational amenities.
- Incorporate the anticipated impacts of climate change in future planning for community facilities and local infrastructure improvements, with a focus on addressing coastal resiliency and localized flooding.

OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND CONSERVATION

- Provide a system of public and private open space that offers both passive and active recreation opportunities, protects environmentally sensitive areas, and leverages opportunities for sustainability and resiliency initiatives.
- Explore opportunities to link parks and open spaces through trails, sidewalks, street-ends, and similar connections.
- Pursue strategic investments in the open space system that ensure achievable and consistent long-term management and maintenance of facilities.
- Seek opportunities to introduce and expand public access to waterfront areas, especially along the Navesink River, to facilitate more water-related recreational options.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

- Exercise strong capital and programmatic planning to ensure adequate provision of community and social services, efficiency in the use of buildings and land, and predictability in Township expenditures.
- Maintain and upgrade municipal facilities such as the community center, senior center, and parks buildings, to effectively serve current and future residents.
- Improve communication and coordination across municipal departments, agencies, and boards and committees.
- Closely monitor building and staffing needs of emergency-services agencies to accommodate demand for services based on population changes.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Preserve the Township's historic resources to preserve the Township's rich history, to enhance quality of life, further community identity, and promote economic development.
- Update data and resources to align with the latest best practices and equip stakeholders with essential tools for preservation and designating additional historic landmarks and districts that reflect the rich and varied historical essence of Middletown.
- Within designated historic districts, upgrade the public realm where necessary, sensitive to the historical context and historic preservation, to present a cohesive district identity that promotes awareness and education of the Township's historic resources.

Comments:



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