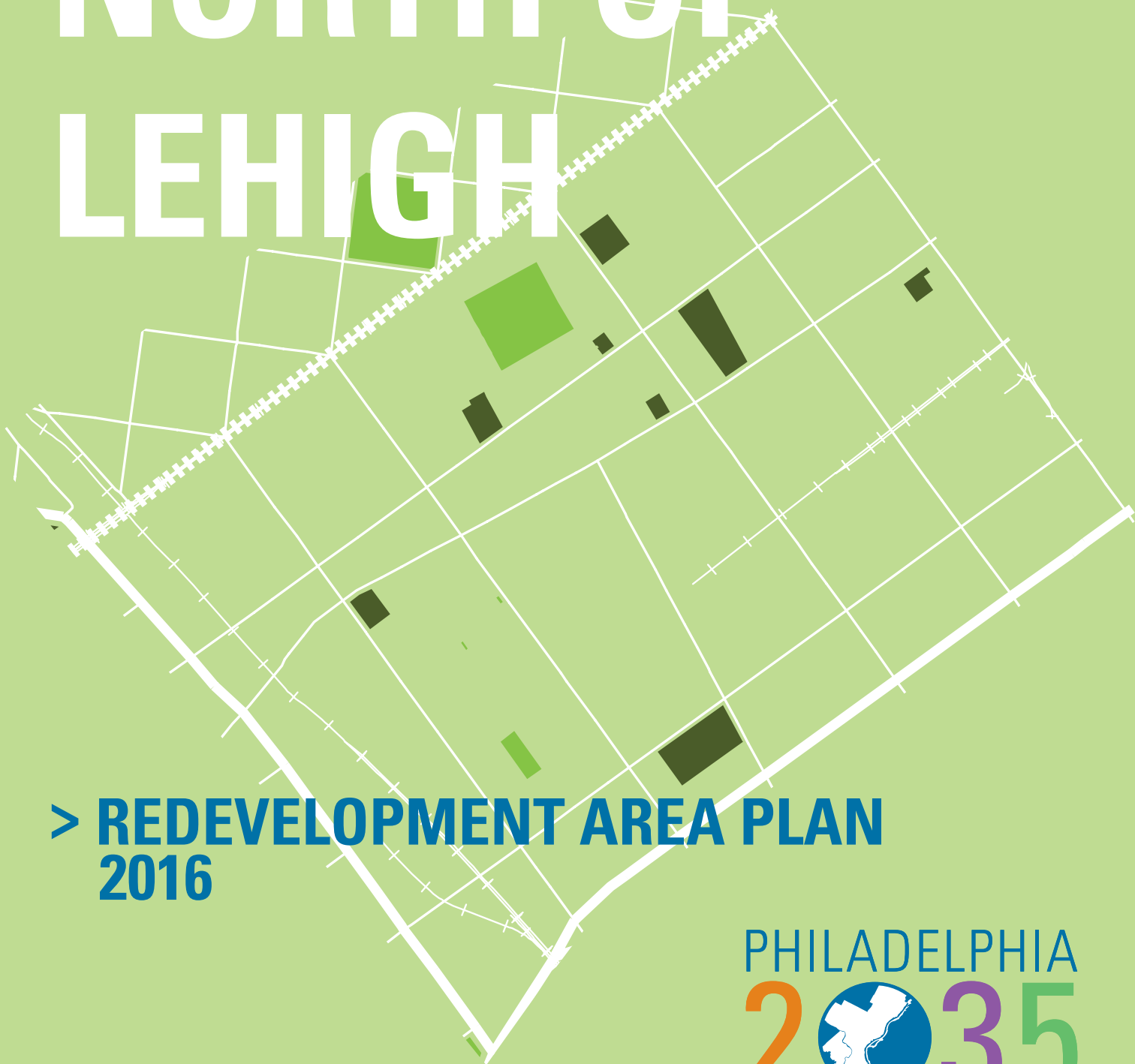


KENSINGTON

NORTH OF

LEHIGH



> **REDEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN**
2016

PHILADELPHIA
2035



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

Jim Kenney, Mayor



Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Michael DiBerardinis

Rob Dubow

Patrick J. Eiding

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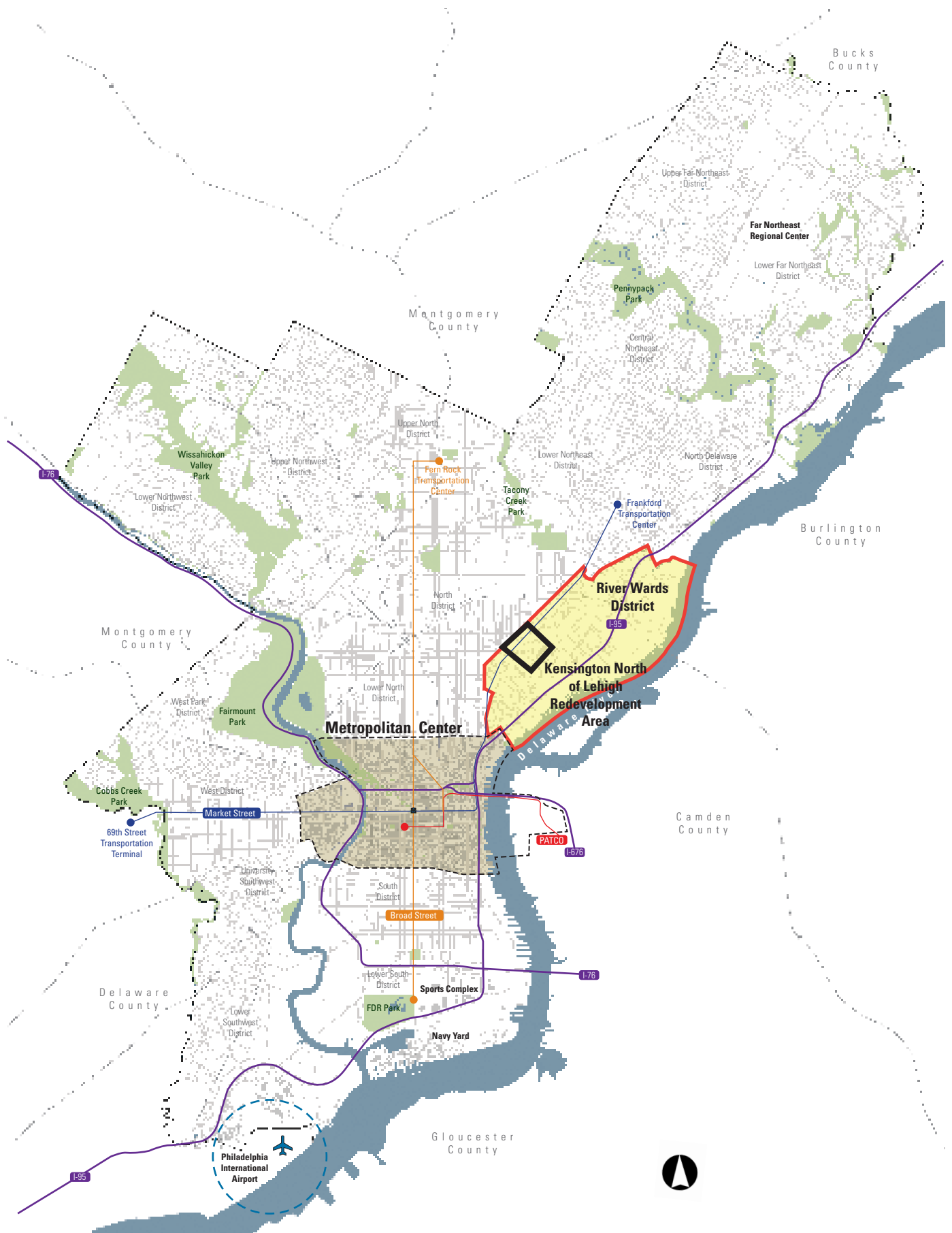
Division Director

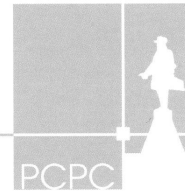
David Fecteau, AICP

Lower North and River Wards Planner

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January 25, 2017

Anne Fadullon, Chair
Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
1234 Market Street, 16th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Gary J. Jastrzab
Executive Director

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Cheryl Gaston, Esq.
Maria Gonzalez
Nancy Rogo Trainer, FAIA, AICP

Dear Ms. Fadullon:

Transmitted herewith is the Kensington North of Lehigh Redevelopment Area Plan which has been updated by the City Planning Commission in accordance with the provisions of the Urban Redevelopment Law of May 24, 1945, P.L. 991, as amended.

This Redevelopment Area Plan covers the area bounded on the north by Allegheny Avenue, on the east by Tulip Street, on the south by the Lehigh Avenue viaduct, and on the west by Kensington Avenue.

It is in conformity with the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Philadelphia dated June 2011 and was approved by the City Planning Commission at its meeting of March 15, 2016.

Sincerely yours,

Gary J. Jastrzab
Executive Director

cc: Eleanor Sharpe, PCPC
Gregory Heller, PRA
Tania Nikolic, PRA
John Haak, PCPC
Laura Spina, PCPC
David Fecteau, PCPC

Enclosure: Kensington North of Lehigh Redevelopment Area Plan

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Certification

WHEREAS Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law, Act of May 24, 1945 (P.L. 991 as amended, authorizes the Philadelphia City Planning Commission to certify as blighted specific areas which may then, in whole or in part, be made the subject of redevelopment proposals formulated by the Redevelopment Authority in accordance with said Act, and

WHEREAS, in November 1969, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission certified certain areas as blighted, and

WHEREAS the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority holds land within the Redevelopment Area, which must be disposed of in accordance with an updated Redevelopment Area Plan, and

WHEREAS the Philadelphia City Planning Commission concurs with the findings and conclusions set forth in this staff report, and further recognizes this Redevelopment Area Plan to be in conformance with *Philadelphia 2035*, the City's Comprehensive Plan,

NOW THEREFORE, this 19th day of April 2016, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission hereby finds, based upon its staff report dated April 19, 2016, that the area bounded by Kensington Avenue, Allegheny Avenue, Tulip Street and the Lehigh Avenue viaduct exhibit the following characteristic of blight as established by Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law:

- Economically or socially undesirable land use; and
- Faulty street and lot layout.

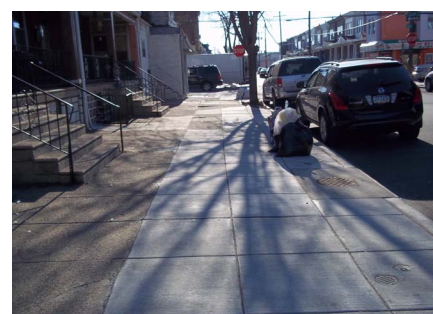


Community Women's Education Project at Frankford and Somerset (top) remains a strong neighborhood anchor. The Orinoka Civic House (bottom) will provide 51 low-to-moderate income apartments and offices for New Kensington Community Development Corporation on the 2700 block of Ruth Street.

Introduction

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission created the *East Kensington Redevelopment Area* and the *Auburn Redevelopment Area Plan* in 1969 to accompany a blight certification. The blight certification was prepared to facilitate a housing proposal that never materialized.

The *North of Lehigh Redevelopment Area Plan* renames these redevelopment areas and this redevelopment area plan supersedes both previous plans. The Redevelopment Area is bounded by Allegheny Avenue on the north, the Lehigh Avenue viaduct on the south, Tulip Street on the east, and Kensington Avenue on the west. It encompasses approximately 180 acres with a population of about 13,000 people and roughly 4,900 dwelling units, of which almost 85 percent are occupied, according to the 2010 census. The Redevelopment Area exists within PCPC's River Wards planning district.



Continuing gaps within intact blocks show the need for intervention to reclaim vacant lots and either repair or demolish empty buildings like this one on the 2200 block of E. Cambria Street (middle). At the same time, new sidewalks on the same block (bottom) are a sign of renewal.

Note: Because the Redevelopment Area's boundaries do not match Census Tract boundaries, the numbers stated above are estimates.

Redevelopment Objectives

The *North of Lehigh Redevelopment Area Plan* is a statement of long-term community development intentions, and a means of advancing the implementation of project proposals that are ready to proceed. The principal purpose for establishing a redevelopment area is to allow selective public interventions that will promote the conservation of positive physical characteristics.

This plan's objective is to maintain an active Redevelopment Area Plan to enable the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority to dispose of property which it holds, in accord with state Redevelopment law. Further acquisitions could take place if the Commission recertified the area as blighted.

Existing Conditions

The North of Lehigh Redevelopment Area was certified on October 7, 1969 as the East Kensington Redevelopment Area and the Auburn Redevelopment Area based on the following criteria:

- Inadequate planning of the area;
- Unsafe, unsanitary, inadequate or overcrowded condition of certain dwellings;
- Excessive land coverage;
- Lack of proper light, air and open space;
- Defective arrangement of buildings;
- Faulty street and lot layout; and
- Economically and socially undesirable land uses.

At that time, the City Planning Commission also cited the following reasons to justify redevelopment: 590 deteriorating buildings; 108 dilapidated units; and 345 units with more than one person per room, evidence of overcrowding.

Objectives included: creating small recreational areas, elimination of blighted structures and vacant lots; and elimination of incompatible land uses, many of which still exist, specifically scrap yards.

The criterion that still apply to this redevelopment area are economically and socially undesirable land uses and faulty street and lot layout.



Grace Townhomes (top) at Trenton Avenue and Auburn Street is a sign of investment amidst an active scrapyards (middle) and empty lots and buildings (bottom).

Public Improvements

Philadelphia 2035, the City's Comprehensive Plan, recommends:

- improving access to existing parks and recreation centers;
- restricting access to the Lehigh viaduct from Somerset Street;
- installing signs and landscaping on Frankford Avenue;
- cleaning, painting and lighting the Lehigh viaduct underpasses; and
- creating new streetscape at Kensington and Allegheny avenues.

Housing of Displaced Families

No families are anticipated to be displaced by the redevelopment of currently vacant lots.

Estimated Cost of Acquisition

No acquisition through condemnation is anticipated at this time. However, some may occur at a later time through condemnation, land bank acquisitions, tax sale or other methods.

Proposed Standards and Controls

The Philadelphia Zoning Code shall continue to provide general regulation of permitted uses, development densities, parking and loading, and dimensional requirements. To ensure that development will complement existing uses, development controls may be established on a case by case basis as redevelopment proposals are submitted to the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority for approval.

Illustrative Site Plans

No illustrative site plan is included because no large-scale acquisitions are anticipated at this time.



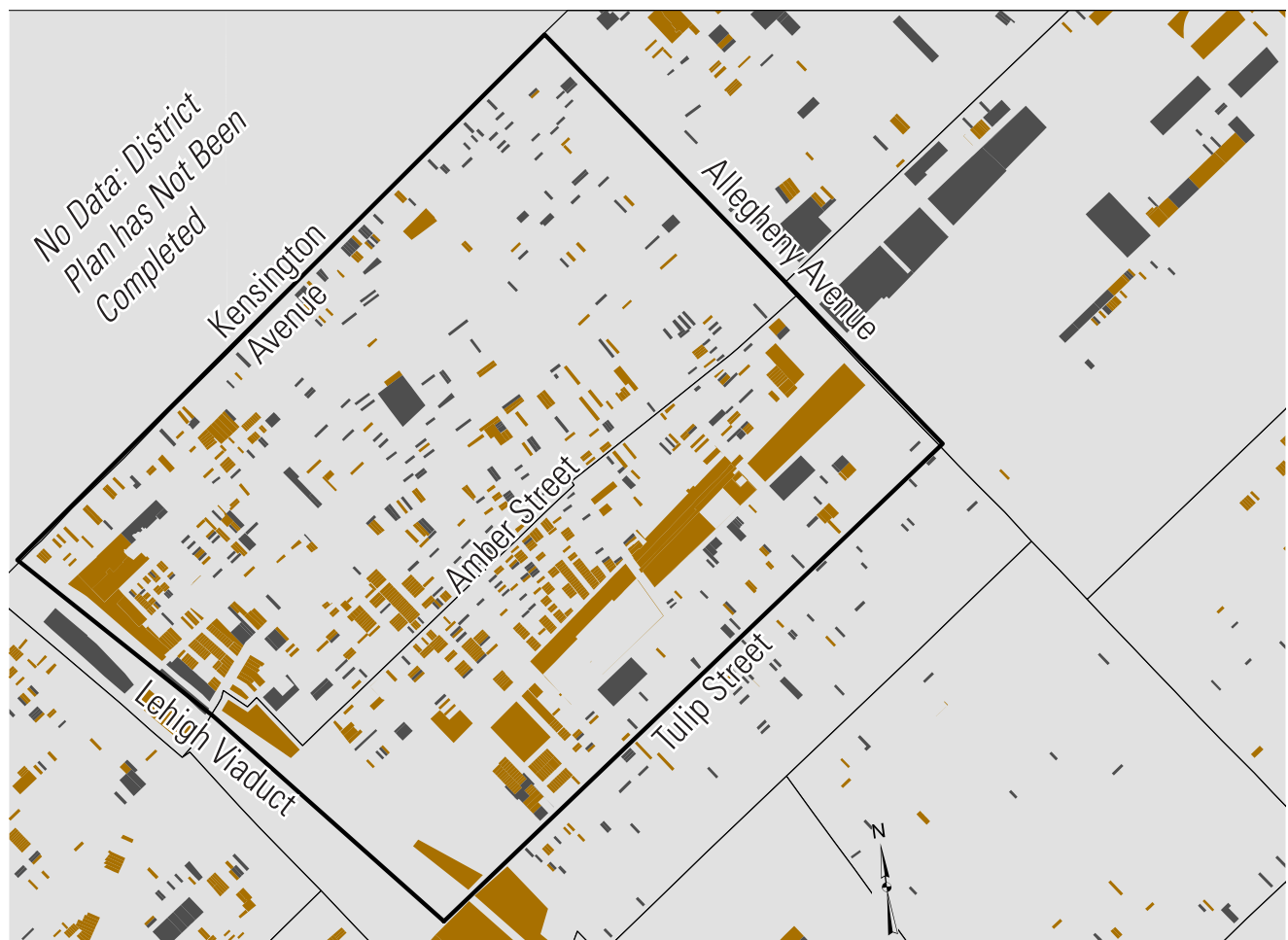
A long-time business (top) shares Frankford Avenue with a newly-repaired building (middle) and vacant house lots (bottom).

Vacant Land and Buildings by Census Tract

Vacancy is the absence of use. In 2013 and 2014, PCPC staff conducted a survey of all parcels in the River Wards Planning District, within which this Redevelopment Area falls. Parcels that did not appear to have any present use were called vacant. This map does not show parcels where staff observed gardens, yards or other activity, and does not take into account whether the user owned the land.

Legend

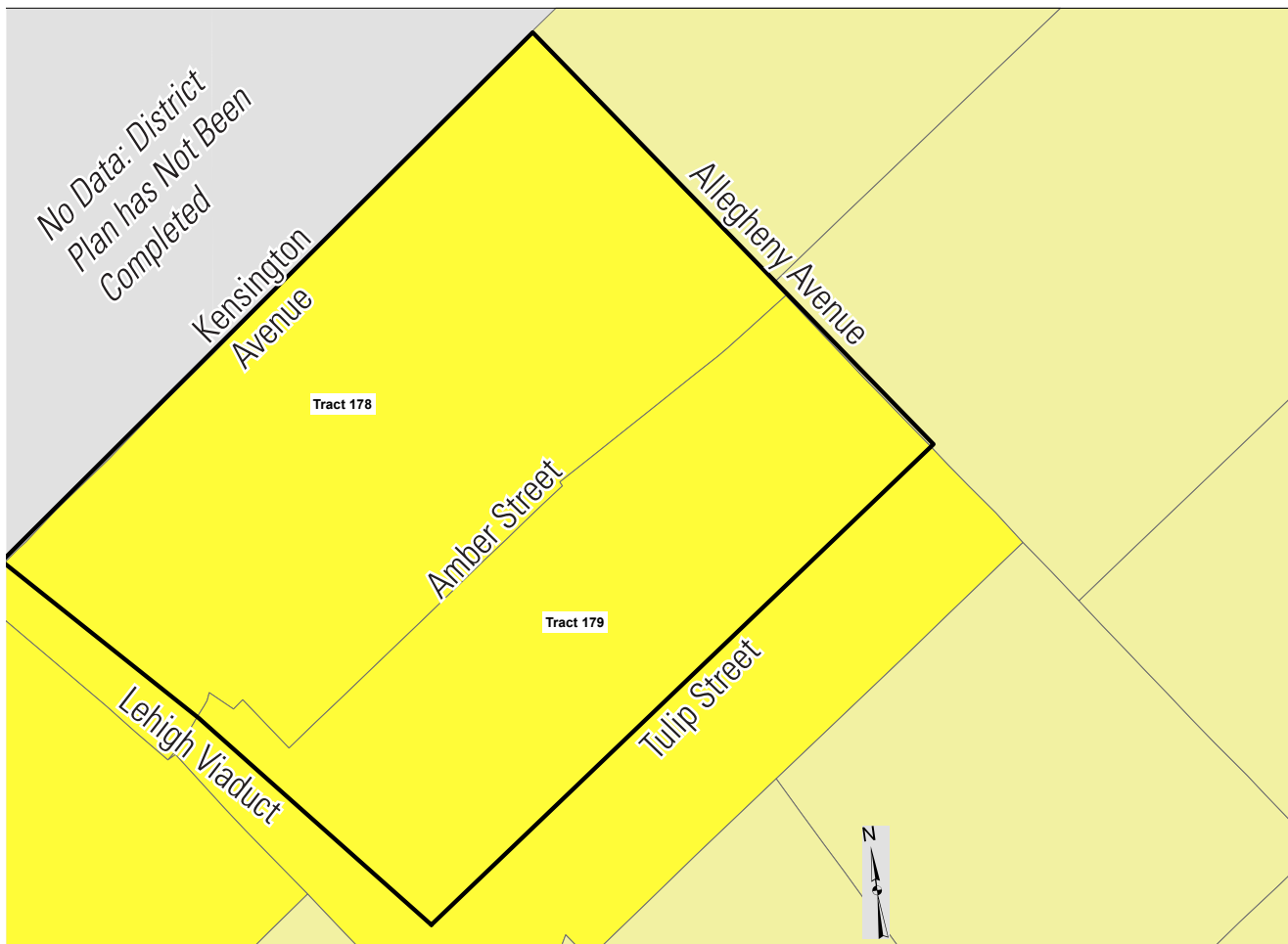
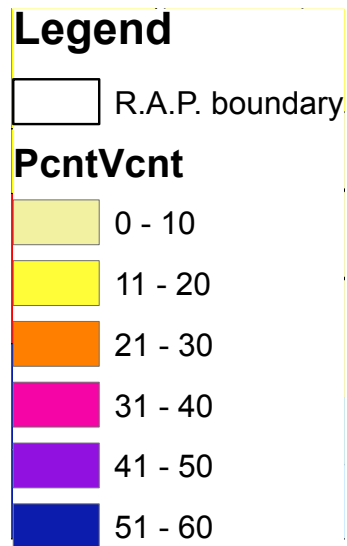
- Fully Vacant Buildings
- Vacant Land
- R.A.P. boundary
- 2010 Census Tracts



Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Percentage of Land That is Vacant by Census Tract

Vacancy can also be displayed as a comparison of vacant lots to occupied lots. Within this Redevelopment Area, both Census tracts have vacancy rates under 20 percent.



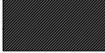
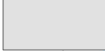
Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Publicly Owned Surplus Property

Approximately 94 parcels in this Redevelopment area are publicly owned and available for sale. That land is held by: the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (6); Philadelphia Land Bank (14); and the Department of Public Property (74).

The Redevelopment Area Plan is only needed to guide disposition of land held by the Redevelopment Authority and acquired through condemnation.

Legend

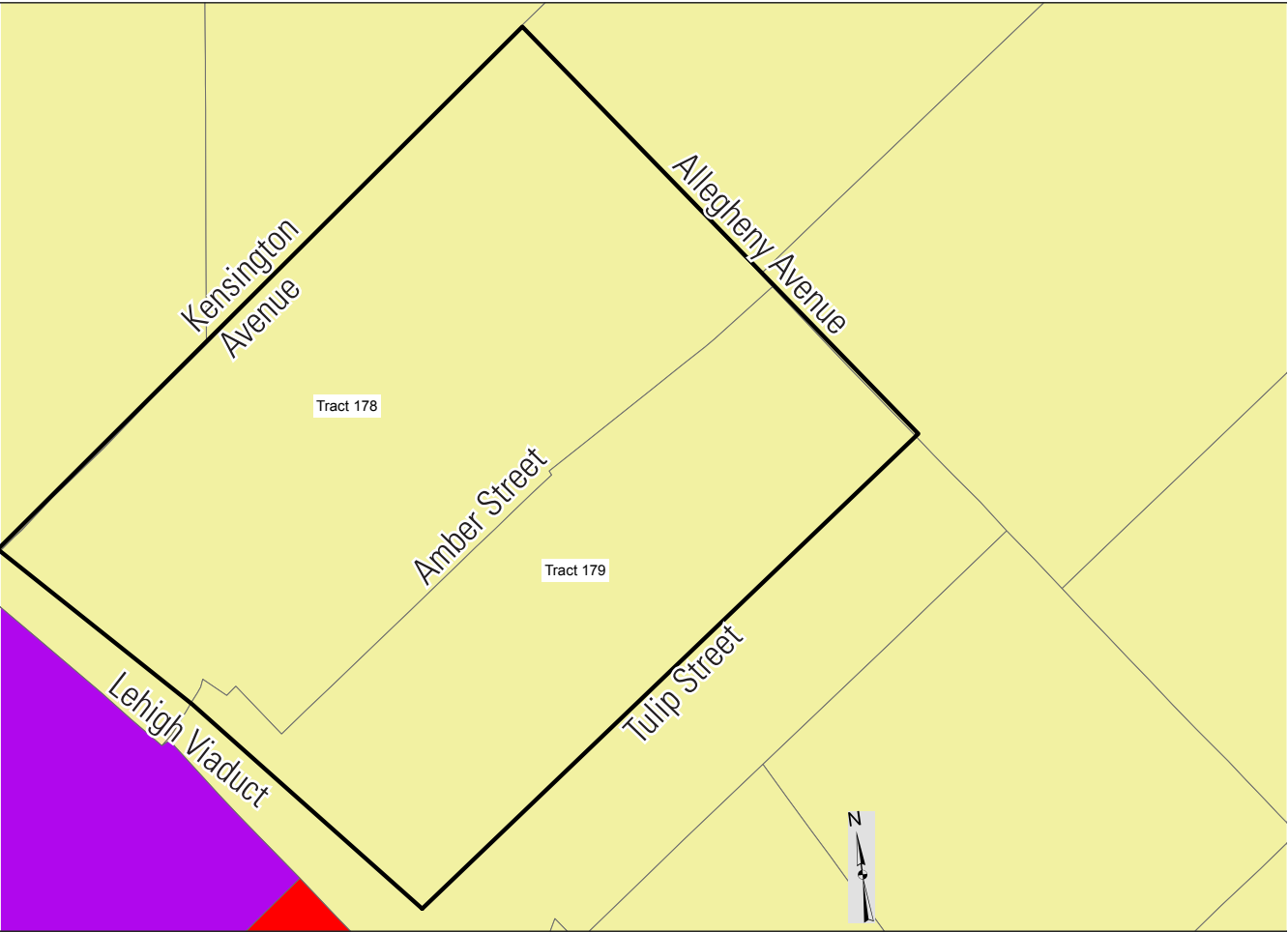
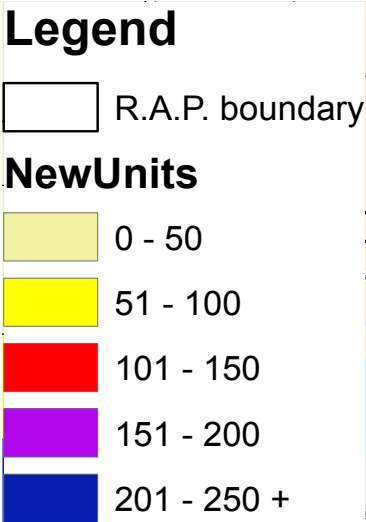
-  Public Surplus Property
-  R.A.P. boundary
-  2010 Census Tracts



Source: Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority

Housing Units Built (2006 to 2013) by Census Tract

New construction is almost non-existent in the Census Tracts within which this Redevelopment Area resides.



Source: Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections

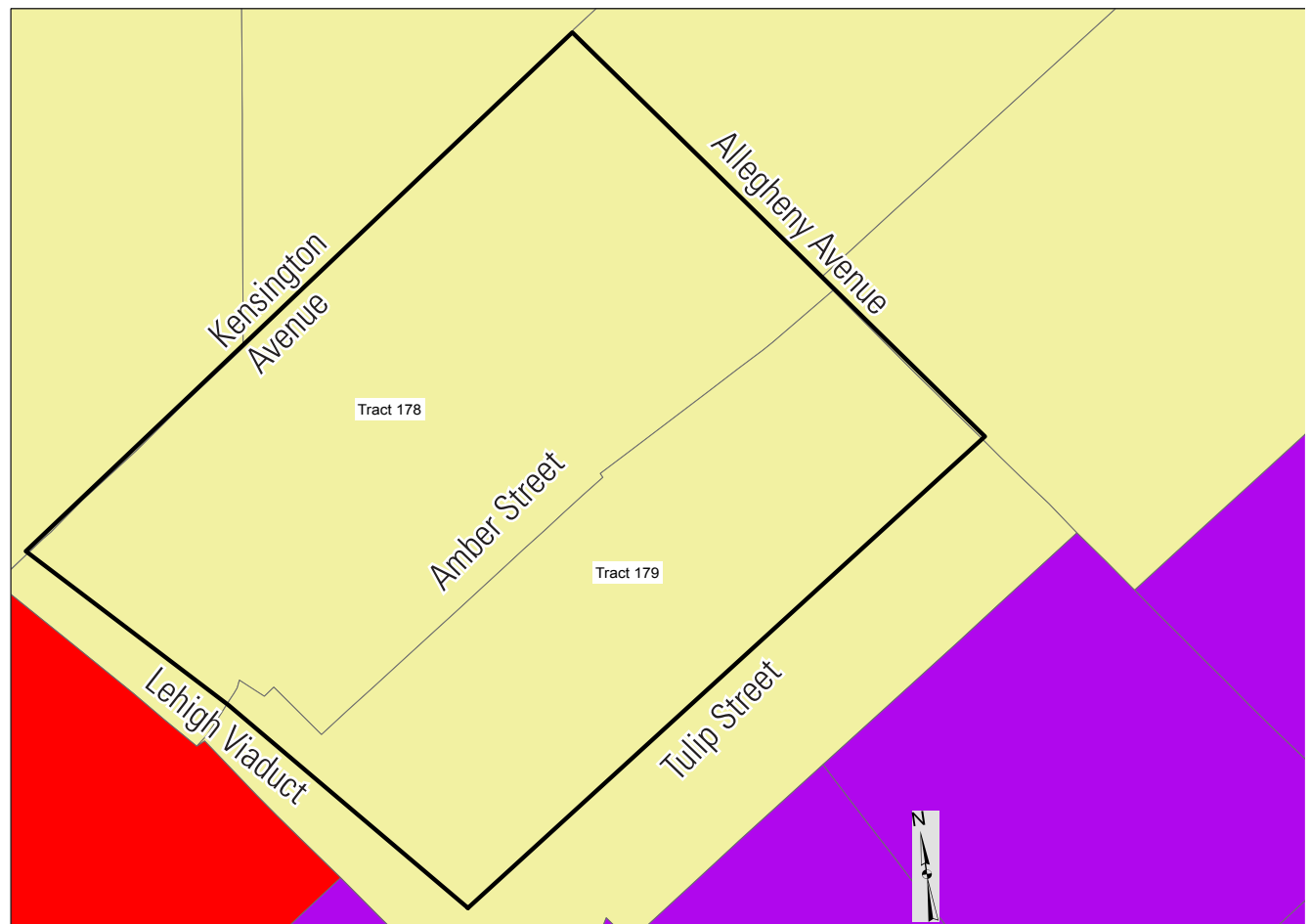
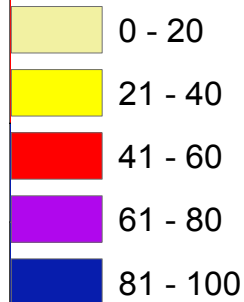
Percent of Owner Occupied Homes Valued at over \$100,000 (Citywide Median) by Census Tract

The percentage of owner occupied homes valued at over \$100,000 is uniform within this Redevelopment Area at roughly 15 percent in each Census Tract.

Legend

 R.A.P. boundary

PctOvr100K



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Tax Delinquency (as of 2013) by Census Tract

Tax delinquency data represents a snapshot in time. This map shows the percentage of tax delinquent properties by Census Tract. Lighter colored tracts have the fewest delinquent parcels, while darker colored tracts have the most. In 2013, 30 percent of taxable properties in Tract 178 and 21 percent in Tract 179 were delinquent.

Legend

 R.A.P. boundary

PctTxDlnqt

 0 - 10

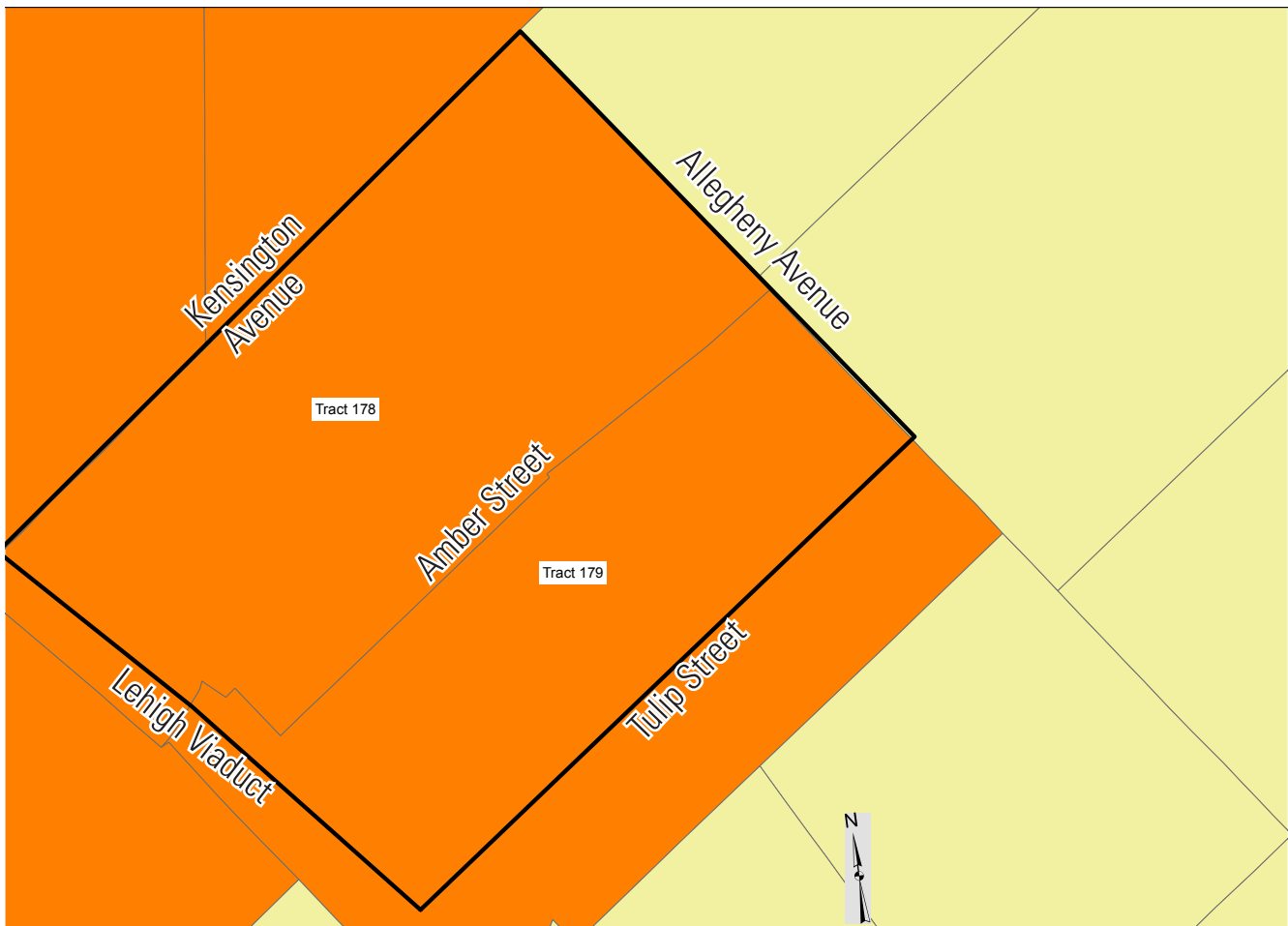
 11 - 20

 21 - 30

 31 - 40

 41 - 50

 51 - 60



Source: Philadelphia Department of Revenue

Proposed Land Use

The proposed land use map illustrates desirable development patterns given the assumptions contained in the Comprehensive Plan's recommendations. Since vacancy is not a desirable condition, it is not shown.

The proposed land uses accommodate all categories and subcategories allowed by right in the Philadelphia Zoning Code.

- Commercial and related: CMX-1, CMX-2, CMX-2.5, CMX-3, CA-1 or CA-2;
- Residential and related: RSA-5, RM-1 and RM-2;
- Industrial and related: IRMX, ICMX, I-1 and I-2
- Institutional and related: SP-INS or RSA-5;
- Parks, Recreation and Related: SP-PO-A and SP-PO-P.

Conforming with the land use recommendations in this document does not imply support of a proposal at the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Legend

 R.A.P. boundary

 Delaware River

Proposed Land Use

 Residential and Related

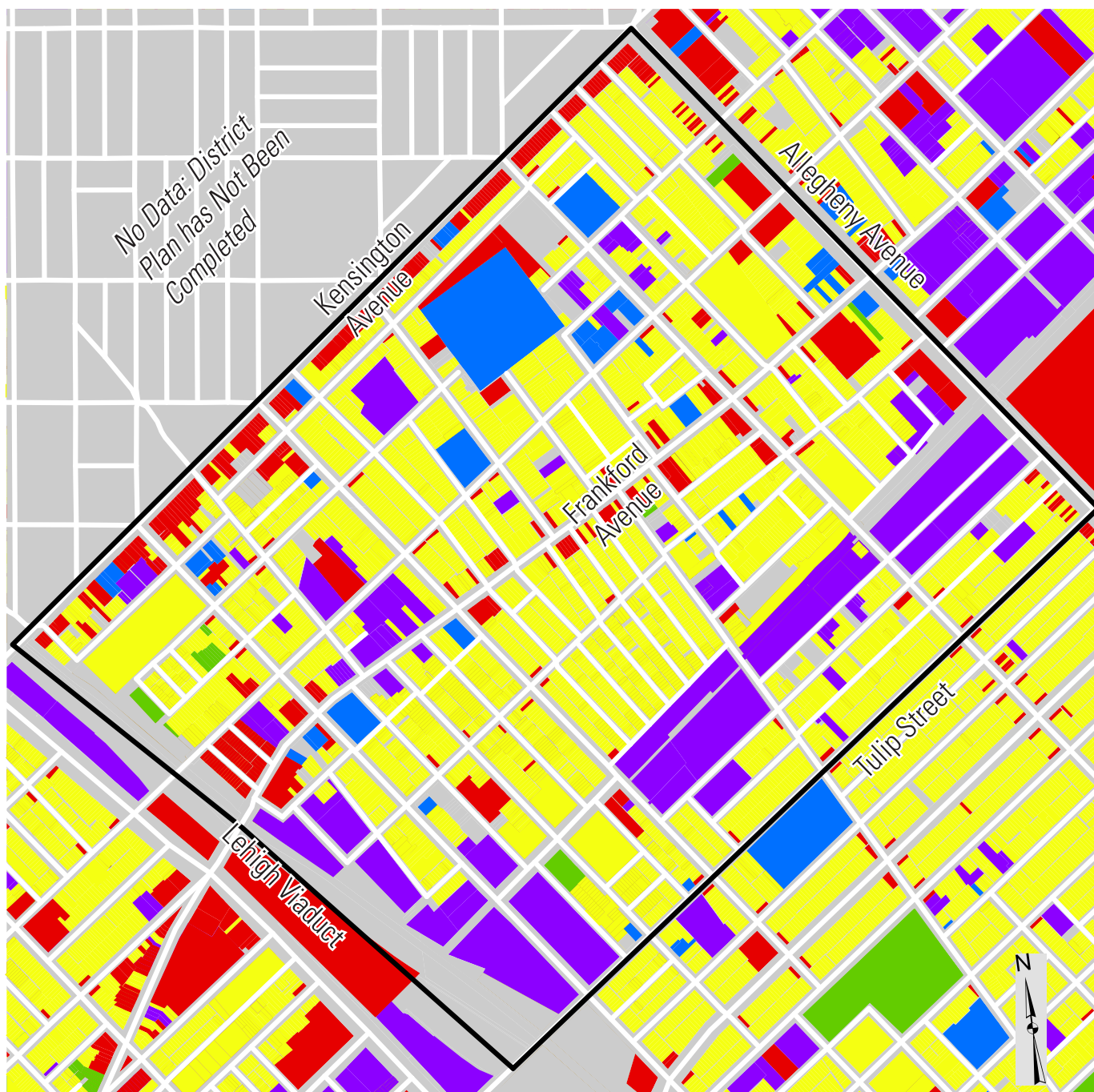
 Commercial and Related

 Industrial and Related

 Institutional and Related

 Parks Recreation and Related

 Transportation and Related

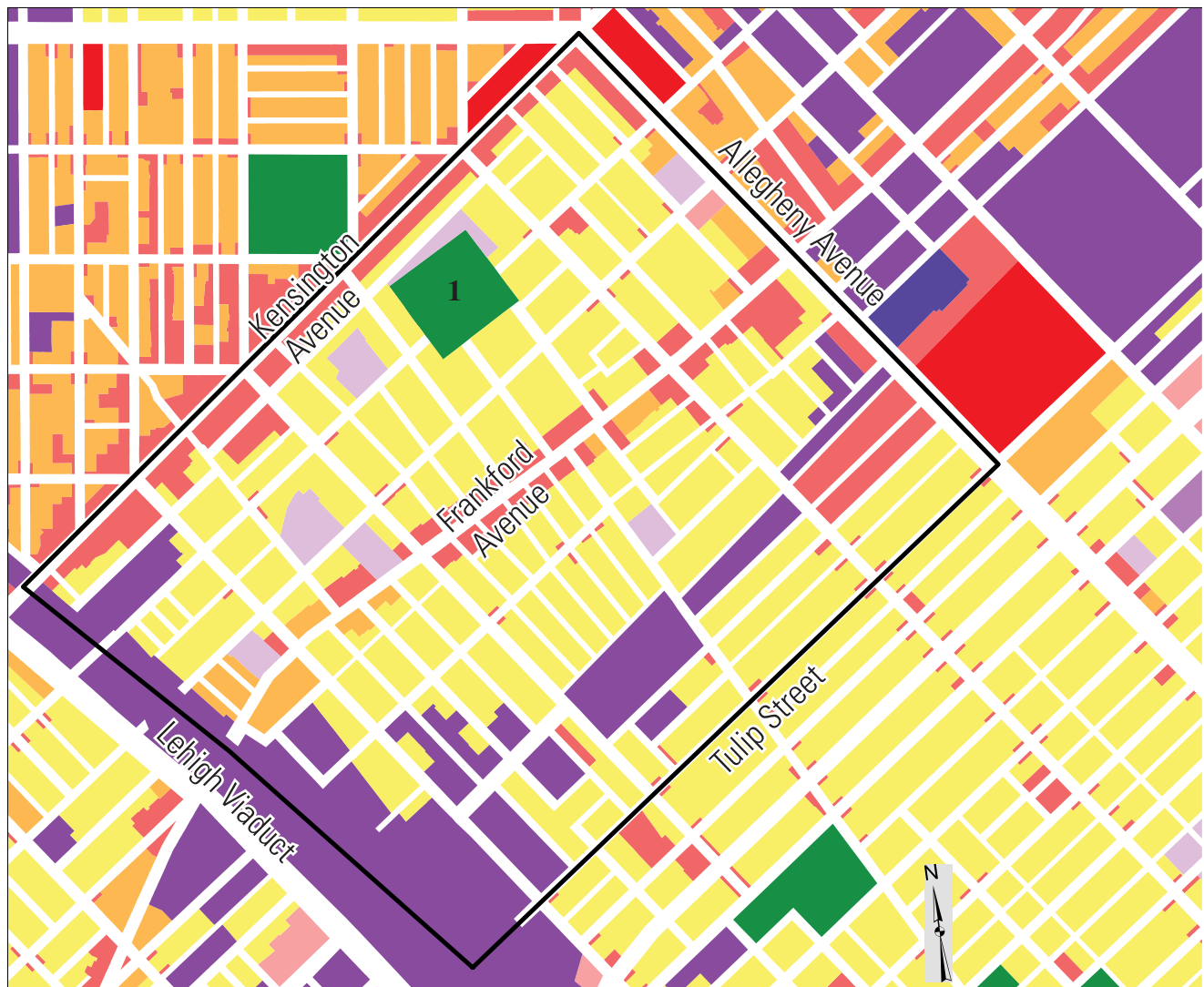


Current Zoning

Zoning is the primary tool to regulate land use (use), where a building can locate on the property (area), and building size (bulk). The zoning of a parcel is analyzed to ensure that it can implement the desired future land use.

Zoning can change after the underlying use has. In the case of the former Franklin Playground (1), the current zoning reflects the property's use before the new Willard School was built on the site.

	Residential Single-Family Detached	RSD-1; RSD-2; RSD-3
	Residential Single-Family Attached	RSA-1; RSA-2; RSA-3; RSA-4; RSA-5
	Residential Multifamily	RM-1; RM-2; RM-3; RM-4
	Residential Mixed-Use	RMX-1; RMX-2; RMX-3
	Auto-Oriented Commercial	CA-1; CA-2
	Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-1; CMX-2; CMX2.5
	Community/Center City Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-3; CMX-4
	Center City Core Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-5
	Light Industrial	I-1
	Medium Industrial	I-2
	Heavy Industrial	I-3
	Port Industrial	I-P
	Industrial Commercial Mixed-Use	ICMX
	Industrial Residential Mixed-Use	IRMX
	Recreation	SP-PO-A; SP-PO-P



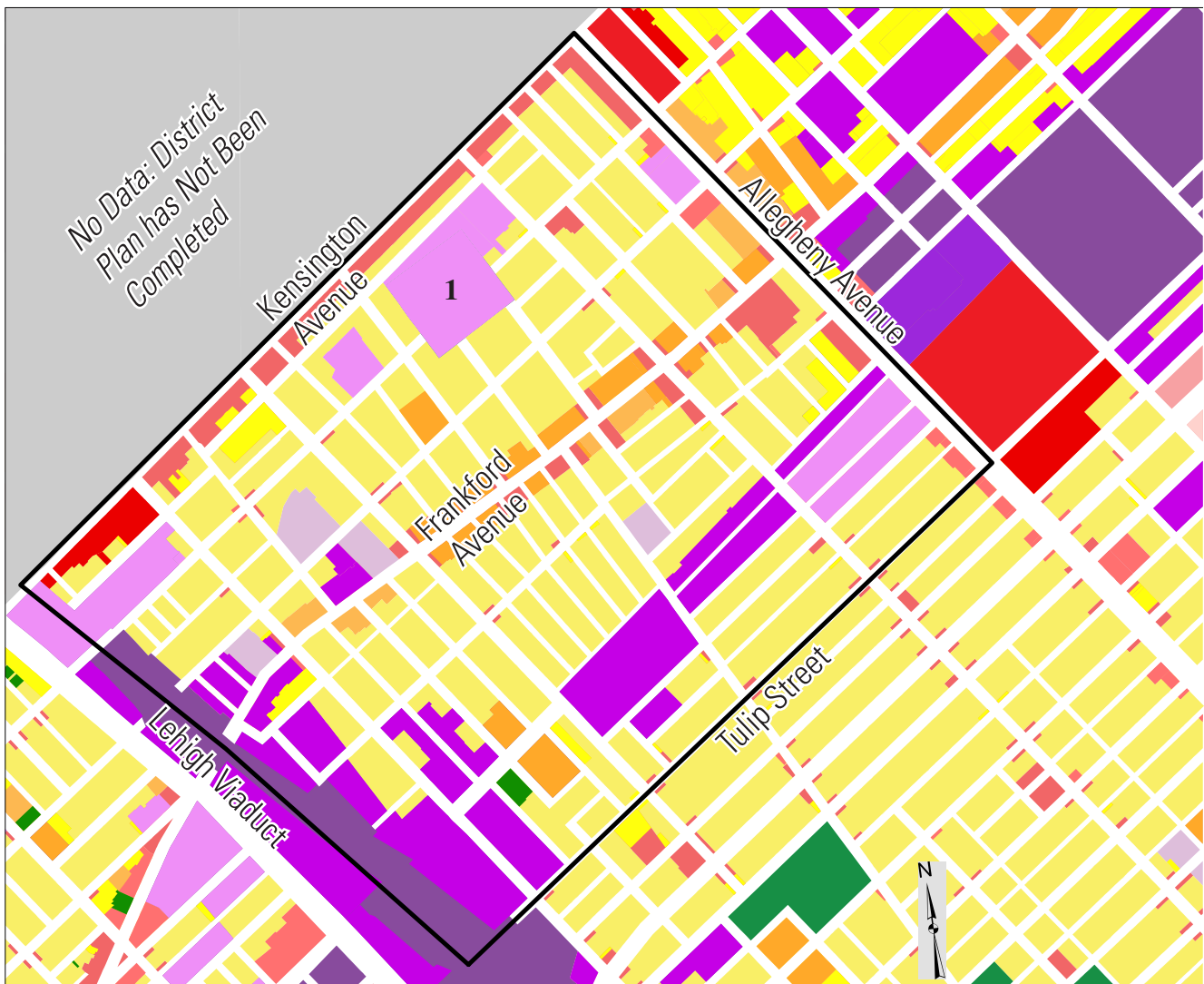
Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission

Proposed Zoning

The proposed zoning reflects recommendations from the River Wards District Plan. These recommendations have been transmitted to City Council, the legislative body responsible for introducing zoning bills.

Heavy industrial zoning is recommended for removal, to be replaced with light industry where businesses still operate or commercial light industrial / residential-light industrial where they no longer do.

	Residential Single-Family Detached	RSD-1; RSD-2; RSD-3
	Residential Single-Family Attached	RSA-1; RSA-2; RSA-3; RSA-4; RSA-5
	Residential Multifamily	RM-1; RM-2; RM-3; RM-4
	Residential Mixed-Use	RMX-1; RMX-2; RMX-3
	Auto-Oriented Commercial	CA-1; CA-2
	Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-1; CMX-2; CMX2.5
	Community/Center City Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-3; CMX-4
	Center City Core Commercial Mixed-Use	CMX-5
	Light Industrial	I-1
	Medium Industrial	I-2
	Heavy Industrial	I-3
	Port Industrial	I-P
	Industrial Commercial Mixed-Use	ICMX
	Industrial Residential Mixed-Use	IRMX
	Recreation	SP-PO-A; SP-PO-P



Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission

