

**New Brunswick & Rutgers University Collaborative Development, 1967-1980:**

**Suburban Model City to Urban Developer**

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MPUP 5200 History and Theory of Planning

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## **Abstract**

In New Brunswick, New Jersey, the 60s and early 70s saw a period of massive civic organization and demands for fair housing, employment, and educational opportunity. Out of this context, local experiments like Livingston College were conceived to address the educational gaps and complex urban problems of New Brunswick. This bold educational mission was translated into a campus plan for small, clustered living and learning communities centered around the quadrangle. However, without attention to the built environment and the lived experiences of students, both the curriculum and campus plan of Livingston College were bold yet insufficient in addressing the social issues of the time. Livingston's social justice mission was eventually sidelined by the university's efforts to create a world-renowned, centralized research institution. With the arrival of New Brunswick Tomorrow and the cataclysmic planning and development process of the Johnson & Johnson-backed New Brunswick Development Corporation (DevCo), Rutgers University aligned with corporate-backed efforts to create a modern, globally connected, business-friendly city.

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## **Introduction: Rutgers and New Brunswick at a Crossroads**

The 1960s saw a period of turmoil and crisis in New Brunswick, as in many other American cities. Years of suburbanization and "White flight" combined with a massive influx of Black Americans who were met with racism and deliberate neglect to create an abandoned and poverty-ridden downtown. The summer of 1967 marked a crux in the city when a few hundred Black residents protested downtown, as did Black residents in other American cities like Newark, Detroit, and Trenton.<sup>1</sup> Residents demanded improvements to living conditions and employment opportunities. Non-white residents (mostly Black and some Latino) made up about a third of New Brunswick's residents, and about 28.5% of non-white residents lived below the

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<sup>1</sup> Rasmussen, Chris, "A Web of Tension": The 1967 Protests in New Brunswick, New Jersey, *Journal of Urban History* 40, no. 1 (2013): 137-157, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0096144213491695>.

poverty line.<sup>2</sup> Non-white residents were concentrated downtown, in neighborhoods like the Hiram Market District, Albany & George Street (which was later acquired by Johnson & Johnson to build its international headquarters), and the poverty and crime-stricken Memorial Homes and Paul Robeson Village, which were low-quality public housing built in the 40s and 50s during the era of Urban Renewal.<sup>3</sup>

Protesters demanded change from Mayor Sheehan (1967-1974), and in the wake of the civil rights movement, there were considerable efforts made by the city to collaborate with Black residents and civic leaders to address the needs of the minority and low-income population, who had been subject to decades of discrimination. Unfortunately, with the 1974 election of attorney Richard Mulligan who defeated the city's first Black commissioner Aldradge Cooper, New Brunswick saw a period of white backlash and renewed *de facto* segregation.<sup>4</sup> In that same year, approximately 700 white students moved from New Brunswick High School to the newly established North Brunswick High School in a neighboring suburb. With this move, New Brunswick High School became majority-minority.

Economically, by the early 70s New Brunswick was at the tail end of a decline that had begun in 1950 with the suburbanization of the region. Highways to the surrounding areas reduced the need for regional traffic to drive through New Brunswick, and many residents and businesses moved into growing suburbs. New Brunswick saw seven of its major department stores move to the suburbs.<sup>5</sup> The municipal tax revenue declined from \$1.8 million in 1943 to

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<sup>2</sup> Rasmussen, "A Web of Tension," 140.

<sup>3</sup> Rasmussen, "A Web of Tension," 140.

<sup>4</sup> Rasmussen, Chris. "Creating Segregation in the Era of Integration: School Consolidation and Local Control in New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1965–1976." *History of Education Quarterly* 57, no. 4 (2017): 480–514. <https://doi.org/10.1017/heq.2017.29>.

<sup>5</sup> Holcomb, Briavel, "[Dr. Holcomb's text for her New Brunswick walking tour](#)," Rutgers University Department of Geography, (2003).

\$300,000 in the early 1970s.<sup>6</sup> The population of New Brunswick remained at a steady number, actually increasing by 3.4% from 1950 to 1960, then by 4.3% from 1960 to 1970, reaching just over 40,000 residents.<sup>7</sup> While the city grew modestly, the vast outward migration to the suburbs led to the explosive growth of Middlesex County which more than doubled in population from 265,000 in 1950 to over 580,000 in 1970.<sup>8</sup>



*C. 1958, Photo of Rutgers University's College Avenue Campus (top left), on the Raritan River, and Johnson & Johnson's plants (right). These factories were relocated to the suburbs.<sup>9</sup>*

In contrast, during the 50s and 60s, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, located in New Brunswick, enjoyed a period of massive expansion, funded by waves of state bonds and vast public support. This funding was characteristic of the “golden age of higher education,” and the university saw its enrollment more than double during the 60s. However, this growth did

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<sup>6</sup>Listokin, David, Dorothea Berkhout, and James W. Hughes. “NEW BRUNSWICK TRANSFORMATION: Challenge and Strategic Response.” In *New Brunswick, New Jersey: The Decline and Revitalization of Urban America*, 85–122. Rutgers University Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1bw1hjs.9>.

<sup>7</sup>“New Brunswick, New Jersey”, Wikimedia Foundation, last modified December 12, 2025, 20:19 (UTC), [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_Brunswick,\\_New\\_Jersey#Demographics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Brunswick,_New_Jersey#Demographics).

<sup>8</sup>New Jersey Department of Labor, [NEW JERSEY POPULATION TRENDS 1790 TO 2000](#), NJSDC 2000 Census Publication, (2001).

<sup>9</sup>Rutgers University Department of Geography, “Sample of John E. Brush aerial photographs,” (1979), [https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old\\_new\\_brunswick/JEB/RU\\_Jfactories\\_3\\_58.jpg](https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old_new_brunswick/JEB/RU_Jfactories_3_58.jpg)

not benefit Black students. In 1969, Black students were less than 1% of the student body, despite Black residents making up about 15.4% of New Brunswick's population in 1960 and 22.7% of the population by 1970.<sup>10</sup> In 1968-69, massive protests by Black students spread throughout Rutgers's campuses in New Brunswick, Newark and Camden. After months of protests and direct appeals to university leadership, Black students at Newark occupied the main administrative building Conklin Hall in 1969 in order to make demands for changes in admissions policies that disfavored Black students and other students of color.<sup>11</sup> These policies were implemented most passionately at Livingston College—a brand new campus intended to serve disadvantaged students and address the complex urban problems of the era.

### **Rutgers 1959 Plan and The Planning of Livingston College (1964-1974)**

The planning initiatives of Rutgers University during this era began with a 1959 25-Year Long Range Campus Master Plan, conducted by Harland Bartholomew and Associates. This massive expansion plan was funded by waves of state bond issues passed in the “golden age of higher education” when universities enjoyed ample state and federal funding and public support. Planners and policymakers in 1959 saw university expansion as critical, with university enrollment projected to increase from seven thousand undergraduate and two thousand graduate students in 1958-1959, to nearly eighteen thousand undergraduate and five thousand graduate students just ten years later.<sup>12</sup> This plan was adjusted in 1964 and 1969 and implemented under the coordination of Dr. Ed Wilkens, the Director of Campus Planning.<sup>13</sup>

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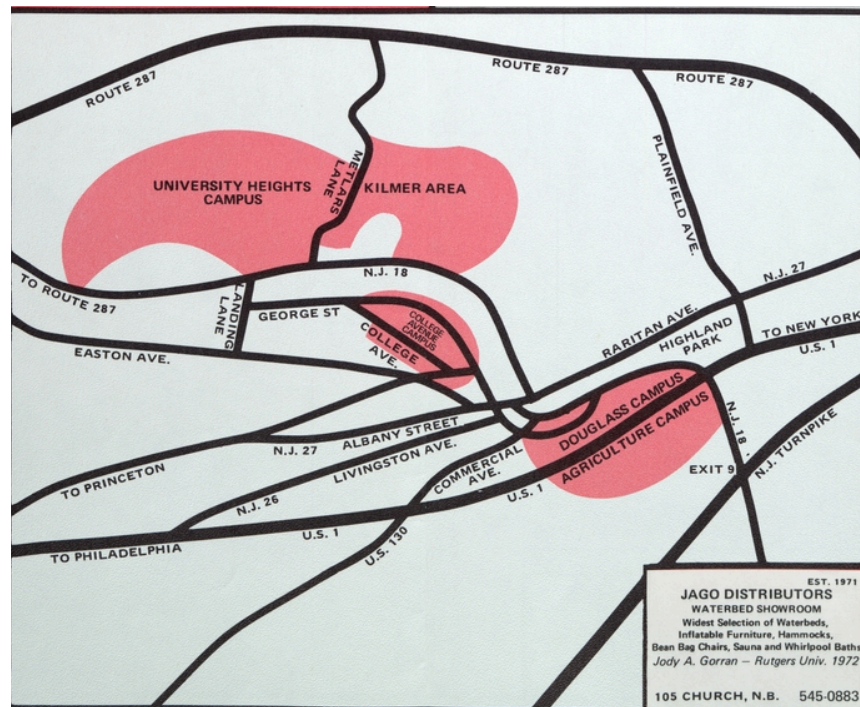
<sup>10</sup> Rasmussen, “A Web of Tension,” 150.

<sup>11</sup> Clemens, Paul G. E., and Carla Yanni. “Becoming a State University: The Presidencies of Robert Clothier, Lewis Webster Jones, and Mason Gross.” In *Rutgers since 1945: A History of the State University of New Jersey*, 1–31. Rutgers University Press, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bc53wr.5>.

<sup>12</sup> Clemens, Paul and Carla Yanni, “Becoming a State University,” 17.

<sup>13</sup> Wilkens, Ed, “Suggested Planning Procedures and Master Plan Concept for Rutgers – The State University of New Jersey”, (1969), Rutgers University Office of the President (Mason Welch Gross) Records, Box 24, RU-University Archives.

With the acquisition of the Kilmer Campus in 1964, which was formerly owned by the U.S. Military, the 60s saw the biggest wave of expansion of the university in its history.



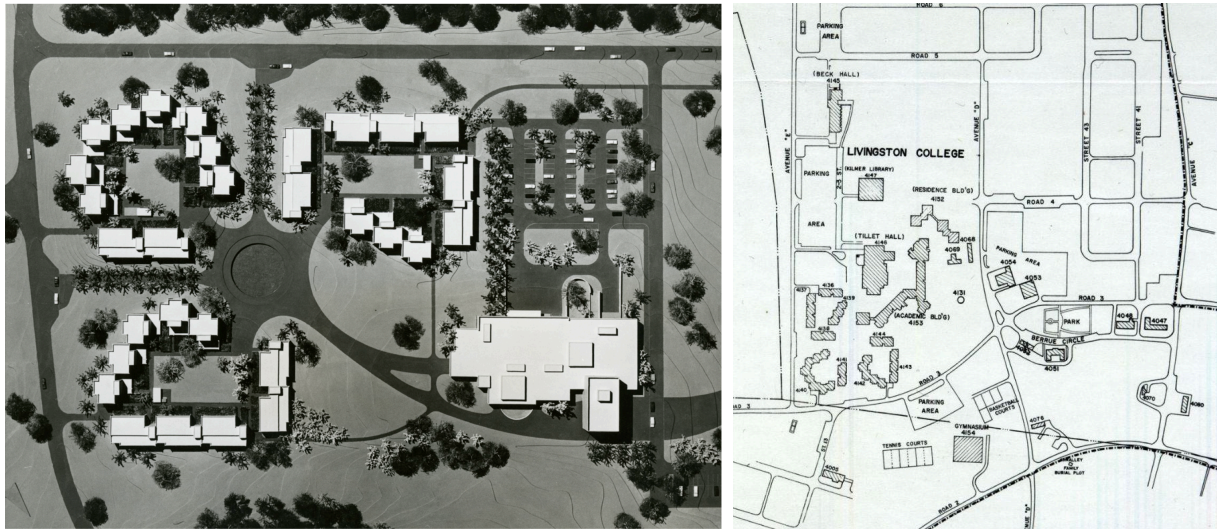
*1973 brochure of Rutgers's New Brunswick campuses. College Avenue is by the city center, Kilmer and University Heights are across the river, and Douglass is to the south of the city.<sup>14</sup>*

The plan for Livingston College was situated on the newly acquired Kilmer Campus. From the outset, Livingston was intended as an experimental college meant to involve students more holistically, with students producing self-evaluations rather than receiving letter grades. Even during the planning process, Dean Lynton consulted the students at Douglass and Rutgers College regularly.<sup>15</sup> Then from 1967-1969, Rutgers made sweeping plans to implement affirmative action, and these efforts invigorated the planning efforts at Livingston. As a result, the incoming class of freshmen to Livingston College was about 25% non-white, and 20% “high

<sup>14</sup> “Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey campuses 1973,” Rutgers University Libraries, Special Collections and University Archives, <https://doi.org/doi:10.7282/T3C53MCR>.

<sup>15</sup> Yanni, Carla, and Paul G. E. Clemens. “Residence Hall Architecture at Rutgers: Quadrangles, High-Rises, and the Changing Shape of Student Life.” In *Rutgers since 1945: A History of the State University of New Jersey*, 138–63. Rutgers University Press, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bc53wr.9>.

risk” or low-income, and Livingston adopted an explicit mission to serve disadvantaged students. Unfortunately, the diverse, multi-racial student body experienced numerous race-related incidents in its early history, and these tensions played out upon a cluster college model that enabled racial separatism and tribal mentalities.<sup>16</sup> Livingston’s curriculum was intended to have an explicit connection with urban problems, and students were supposed to have internships with local firms to build their real-world experience. However, the college’s suburban location and cluster design proved to be a severe roadblock to accomplishing its twin goals of serving disadvantaged students and addressing urban problems in real time.



Left: 1966 photo of the cluster college model for Livingston College, connected to the academic building/dining hall called Tillett Hall.<sup>17</sup> Right: Actual map of Livingston College in 1973.<sup>18</sup>

Livingston College was designed as a quasi-utopian small cluster college, which was a departure from the modern high-rise dormitories that defined campuses in the 1950s. Rutgers itself had built three high-rise dormitories along the Raritan River, now called the River dorms, and Dean Lynton rejected this model, instead favoring the model developed by Clark Kerr with

<sup>16</sup> Clemens, Paul, and Carla Yanni, The Early Years of Livingston College, 1964-1973: Revisiting the ‘College of Good Intentions’, *The Journal of the Rutgers University Libraries* 68, no. 2 (2016), <https://doi.org/10.14713/jrul.v68i2.1987>.

<sup>17</sup> Yanni, Carla, “Residence Hall Architecture,” 157.

<sup>18</sup> Rutgers University Department of Geography, “Kilmer Campus 1973,” [Historical Maps of New Jersey](#).

the UC Santa Cruz campus.<sup>19</sup> The idea of the cluster college was to fuse elements of the large public university and the small liberal arts college into one plan, in which there would be a series of residential clusters organized within a broader residential community that would then connect to the instructional facilities. The model builds on the idea of nested communities that scale outwards, with each floor of each building as a small group of 9-10 students, who live in a building of 50 students, within a cluster of buildings housing 500 students, then into a broader community of 1500.

The planners wanted to encourage spontaneous interaction among students. Small units of 9-11 students per floor promoted small group interaction, a quadrangle shared among 500 students was intended to promote a general sense of familiarity, while facilities in the clustered residential buildings were shared in a set of underground tunnels which would provide the largest public space. Unfortunately, these elements had unintended consequences. The quadrangles were trampled and destroyed, becoming *de facto* parking lots, and were constantly muddied, meaning that in the early years students and faculty had to walk across narrow walkways made of wooden planks to avoid the mud.<sup>20</sup> The tunnels were confusing and enabled theft and clandestine activity. The clusters themselves became designated for particular racial groups, which contributed to the development of racial fault lines. For example, some of the Black freshmen who formed the Organization of Black Unity (OBU) were allowed to move in early and claim one of the buildings, calling it the “Malcolm X House.”<sup>21</sup>

Furthermore, the timing of construction meant that in the early years, students had no access to a library or a gym, and had minimal access to health services. The poor transportation services meant that students were siloed on campus and cut off from the city and their homes. The university had financed the construction of the buildings but not their maintenance, leaving students to constantly contend with faulty facilities. Eventually, the library and gym were built,

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<sup>19</sup> Yanni, Carla, “Residence Hall Architecture,” 152.

<sup>20</sup> Clemens, “The Early Years of Livingston College,” 85.

<sup>21</sup> Clemens, “The Early Years of Livingston College,” 87.

and new walkways, academic buildings, and parking lots were developed, although the shoddy services in the early years led to a poor internal and external image of the college.<sup>22</sup>

As an educational enterprise, Livingston devoted its resources to addressing urban issues. Nowhere was this more prominent than the budding Urban Planning program and Urban Teacher Education program. The Urban Planning program was attended by Nelessen, a resident of the Hiram Market District, a diverse and low-income area, and when the historic district was slated for bulldozing by DevCo, Nelessen led a studio course at Livingston aimed at presenting an alternative plan for the area.<sup>23</sup> The former Rutgers provost Kenneth Wheeler, who served on the board of New Brunswick Tomorrow, participated in the studio class, and supported Nelessen when he presented his plan to DevCo. However, his plan was ultimately rejected in favor of the I.M. Pei Plan, which aimed to remove the historic designation and redevelop the area, and which J&J's Heldrich had already agreed to fund.<sup>24</sup> Meanwhile, the Urban Teacher Education program was a direct response to the *de facto* segregation in New Brunswick, and the glaring lack of teachers of color in the local schools. The Urban Teacher Education program addressed that gap, and also addressed the demands of residents who wanted more curriculum with Black history and international perspectives by training teachers in those very subjects.<sup>25</sup>

Despite a few notable bright spots, Livingston College suffered from the lack of comprehensive short-term and long-term planning. There was little infrastructure put in place for students to have internships in the cities, as there was no transportation system connecting students to the city nor an official office to aid in the establishment or administration of those internships. The commitment to serving disadvantaged students was bold, but not supported by

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<sup>22</sup> Clemens, "The Early Years of Livingston College," 99.

<sup>23</sup> Nelessen, Tony, David Listokin and Dorothea Berkhout, "Nelessen, Tony: New Brunswick Redevelopment," Rutgers Oral History Archive, (2016).

<sup>24</sup> Nelessen, Tony, Oral History.

<sup>25</sup> Rasmussen, "Creating Segregation," 482.

resources or infrastructure. There were no structures in place to address the financial struggles students might encounter, and in fact Livingston students had less access to basic campus services compared to the other Rutgers campuses, as seen in their lack of a campus doctor, no library or gymnasium, and no recreational facilities or student centers.<sup>26</sup>

Despite initial challenges, Livingston experienced general success in its early years. However, the goals of Livingston College eventually faded in prominence due to a mix of internal and external factors. The poor reputation and frequent conflicts caused the school to lose favor in the eyes of the Board of Governors. Dean Lynton, who had formulated the image of the college, resigned after the inaugural class reached graduation. The university experienced a presidential transition, and the new President Bloustein (served 1972-1989) appointed the new and extremely unpopular Dean Mesthene.<sup>27</sup> Bloustein established new institutional priorities of centralizing the federated college system and transforming Rutgers into an international research university, which shifted resources and faculty away from Livingston and muted its social justice goals. Nevertheless, the innovations at Livingston were eventually incorporated into the identity of Rutgers, which now serves a vastly diverse population, grants students powerful autonomy and representation, and has expanded its internships and local community engagement.<sup>28</sup>

### **President Bloustein and the New Brunswick Tomorrow Plan**

Dr. Ed J Bloustein was inaugurated as the university's 17th president in 1972, after Mason Gross retired in 1971. Externally, Bloustein allied with local and state officials to secure advantageous policies for Rutgers, which he viewed as critical now that the "golden age" of higher education

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<sup>26</sup> Clemens, "The Early Years of Livingston College," 96.

<sup>27</sup> Clemens, "The Early Years of Livingston College," 100.

<sup>28</sup> Clemens, "The Early Years of Livingston College," 105.

had faded, and government funding and public popularity were no longer guaranteed.<sup>29</sup>

Internally, Bloustein called for a new centralized model to replace the old federated college model. This push for centralization would aid his overarching goal of advancing Rutgers as a prestigious international research university, which would feed back into his first goal of securing more funding for the university.

While Rutgers pursued centralization and research prowess, new forces were gathering in New Brunswick to reshape the urban environment in the spirit of globalization and revitalization. New Brunswick Tomorrow (NBT) was established as Johnson & Johnson, the city's largest for-profit employer, was considering fleeing the decaying downtown area and relocating its headquarters to the suburbs, thereby reducing the already diminished municipal tax revenue in the central business district (CBD). However, in 1975, J&J commissioned a report from the American City Corporation on whether or not New Brunswick had the potential to be revitalized.<sup>30</sup> When the report yielded an optimistic evaluation, J&J formed NBT, a public-private partnership to begin planning downtown revitalization. They also formed the New Brunswick Development Corporation (DevCo) which provided the funding and institutional backing for the projects. Early on, city officials as well as NBT & DevCo recognized a need to engage Rutgers as a partner due to its large physical and economic presence in New Brunswick.<sup>31</sup>

Seeing a common interest, President Bloustein brought the university into alignment with the NBT revitalization plans. The Bloustein administration donated funds to the research of the plan in 1975 led by the American City Corporation, leveraged the Eagleton Institute of Politics to conduct a residential poll to show local support for revitalization, and Bloustein

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<sup>29</sup> Clemens, Paul G. E., and Carla Yanni. "Rutgers Becomes a Research University: The Presidency of Edward J. Bloustein." In *Rutgers since 1945: A History of the State University of New Jersey*, 32–58. Rutgers University Press, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bc53wr.6>.

<sup>30</sup> Santos, Jorge, "[New Brunswick Tomorrow: Community Development Case Study](#)" (2010).

<sup>31</sup> City of New Brunswick, New Jersey, "Planning in partnership," New Brunswick Free Public Library Archives (c. 1972).

himself spoke in a public hearing in support of the Route 18 bridge extension .<sup>32</sup> Bob Totten, the Physical Plant Director of Rutgers University served on the board of DevCo and Provost Kenneth Wheeler served on the board of NBT.<sup>33</sup>

In 1976, NBT hired I.M. Pei & Partners to plan urban redevelopment, and the most critical component of the plan was the development of the Route 18 bridge extension, without which J&J would threaten to leave New Brunswick. Rutgers was an instrumental voice on the matter. Student protesters had been outspoken activists who helped stall the extension of Route 18, as it would pass within 50 feet of the River dormitories, cutting the university off from the river and bringing noise and pollution.



*Photo of River dormitories on the College Avenue Campus before canal in-fill and construction of Route 18 extension, undated, probably around 1956.<sup>34</sup>*

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<sup>32</sup> “Johnson & Johnson Correspondence” Records of the Office of the President (Edward J. Bloustein Administration) Rutgers University Archives, Box 147-148.

<sup>33</sup> Høglund, Al, “NBDC”, Inter-office communication, 1976, New Brunswick Free Public Library Archives.

<sup>34</sup> Rutgers University Photograph Collection BG-01, RU - Archives.



*Construction of Route 18 extension running behind River dormitories, undated, c. 1970.<sup>35</sup>*

Bloustein supported this project as it would relieve the downtown traffic congestion that hampered university transportation services. The congestion on Landing Lane, which was the only way to move between Rutgers campuses on either side of the Raritan River, was extremely slow and reduced the ability for students to have a cross-campus education, all of which he spoke about in his testimony.<sup>36</sup> In an April testimony and an August affidavit in 1977 (there were several civic lawsuits against the bridge construction), Bloustein acknowledged student protest around the project's environmental impact, but argued that there were sufficient environmental studies conducted that showed that noise and pollution levels would fall within acceptable levels, and that engineers had concluded that there was no better alternative plan for this urgently needed bridge.<sup>37</sup> With his support and the continued lobbying of DevCo's members, the

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<sup>35</sup> Rutgers University Photograph Collection BG-01, RU - Archives.

<sup>36</sup> Bloustein, Edward, "Testimony on Route 18," (1977), Records of the Office of the President (Edward J. Bloustein Administration) Rutgers University Archives, Box 147-148.

<sup>37</sup> Bloustein, Edward, "Affidavit of President Bloustein", The Citizens Committee for Environmental Protection et. al vs. United States Coast Guard et. al, (1977), Records of the Office of the President (Edward J. Bloustein Administration), Rutgers University Archives, Box 147-148.

Route 18 extension was eventually finished in 1980,<sup>38</sup> enabling a slew of development projects that would reshape downtown New Brunswick.



*1979 photo of Johnson & Johnson Headquarters site cleared for construction, after acquiring and bulldozing the existing neighborhood.<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>38</sup> Santos, Jorge, "[New Brunswick Tomorrow: Community Development Case Study](#)" (2010).

<sup>39</sup> Rutgers University Department of Geography, "Sample of John E. Brush aerial photographs," (1979), [https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old\\_new\\_brunswick/JEB/HiramMarket\\_6\\_79.jpg](https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old_new_brunswick/JEB/HiramMarket_6_79.jpg)



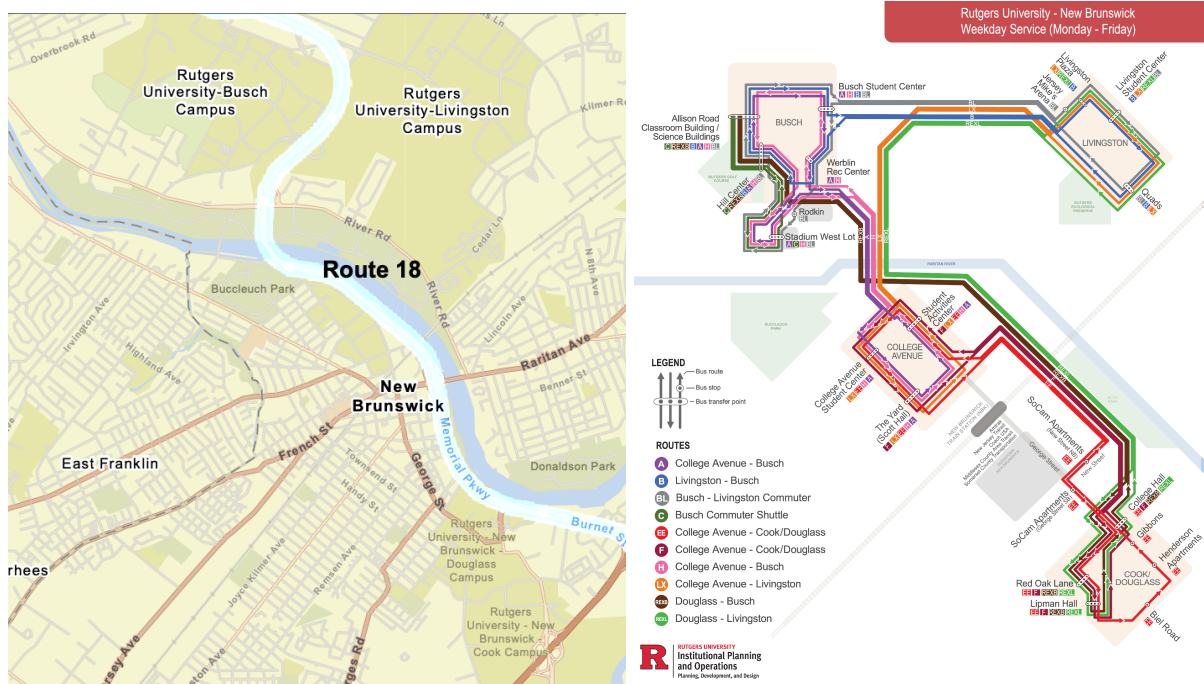
*Development Projects included within DevCo's scope of work from 1970 - 2002.*<sup>40</sup>

In the ensuing years, several minority neighborhoods and low-income housing projects were slated for destruction and development, and over the years vouchers were provided and eventually, new housing was built.<sup>41</sup> Other projects included the international headquarters for Johnson & Johnson, office buildings such as Plaza I and Plaza II, new middle-class housing

<sup>40</sup> Rutgers University Department of Geography, "Central Business District Development," (c. 2000) [https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old\\_new\\_brunswick/jpegs/development\\_map\\_with\\_dates.gif](https://geography.rutgers.edu/images/old_new_brunswick/jpegs/development_map_with_dates.gif)

<sup>41</sup> Listokin, David, Dorothea Berkhout, and James W. Hughes. "NEW BRUNSWICK TRANSFORMATION: Challenge and Strategic Response." In *New Brunswick, New Jersey: The Decline and Revitalization of Urban America*, 85-122. Rutgers University Press, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt1bw1hjs.9>.

units in the Hiram Market district (after removing low-income housing), new parking structures, and a new cultural center.<sup>42</sup> DevCo also convinced Rutgers to start a bookstore downtown, marking Rutgers’s first attempt to establish more of an active presence in the city.<sup>43</sup>



*Left: Present-day map of Route 18 in New Brunswick. Right: Map of Rutgers University - New Brunswick bus system. All bus lines that cross the river use the Route 18 bridge.<sup>44</sup>*

For the university, the Route 18 extension facilitated the creation of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1981, Bloustein’s initiative to scrap the federated college system and unify the faculty in New Brunswick under one umbrella. Colleges would fuse, eliminating duplicate departments, and these departments would be located on one of the campuses but would be required to host a course offering on each of the campuses.<sup>45</sup> The university developed a new transportation system designed to optimize circulation between each campus, enabling students to live on one campus and participate in the courses and activities on other campuses. This

<sup>42</sup> I.M. Pei & Partners, “Downtown Renewal Plan”, (1976) accessed [online](#).

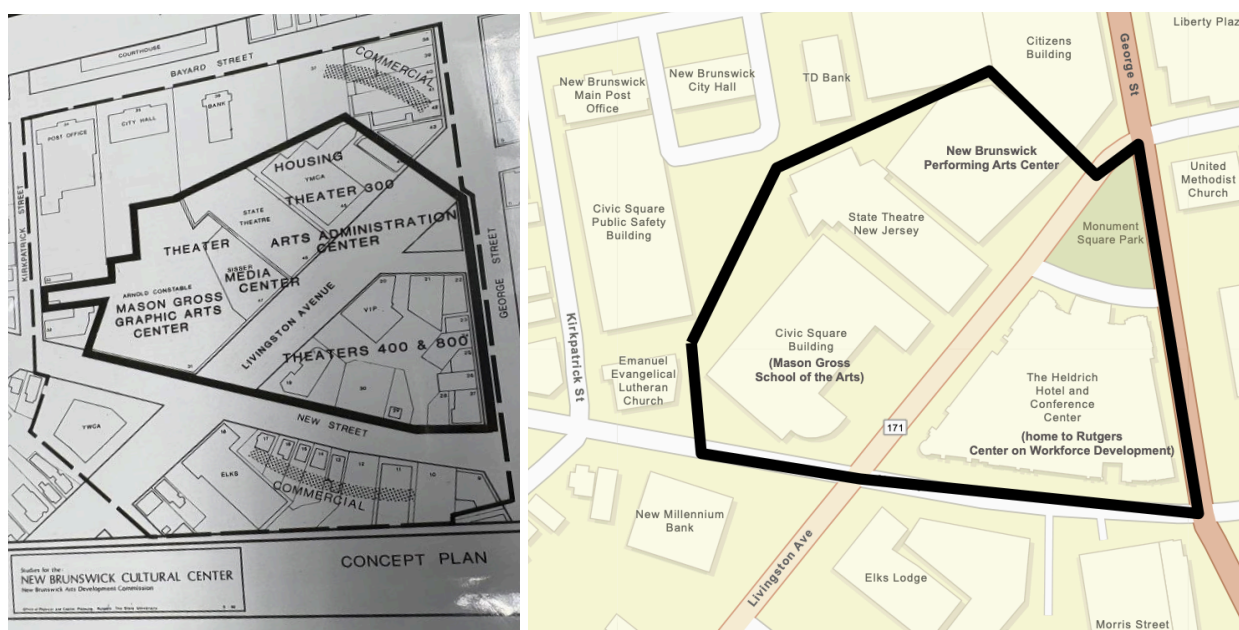
<sup>43</sup> Epps, Roy, David Listokin and Dorothea Berkhout, “Epps, Roy: New Brunswick Redevelopment,” Rutgers Oral History Archive, (2016).

<sup>44</sup> Rutgers Institutional Planning, “Rutgers New Brunswick Bus System Map”, (2025), <https://ipo.rutgers.edu/transportation/buses/nb>.

<sup>45</sup> Clemens, Paul, “Rutgers Becomes a Research University,” 48.

reorganization was intended to strengthen the college's graduate programs and research, allowing the university to concentrate resources on the particular departments that were excelling in either category, which would attract more prestige to the school.

Rutgers and DevCo also aligned on the creation of a cultural center in downtown New Brunswick. DevCo financed the construction of the Mason Gross Arts Center downtown, and aided in theater acquisition and rehabilitation. For example, DevCo purchased the State Theatre in 1979, which, in the 60s, had deteriorated into an adult film theatre.<sup>46</sup>



*Left: New Brunswick Cultural Center Concept Plan, created by DevCo in partnership with Rutgers University and local artists.<sup>47</sup> Right: Present day map of Cultural Center area, all of which involved DevCo.*

<sup>46</sup> Star-Ledger Staff, "Glimpse of History: Different stages for New Brunswick theater", (2011) [https://www.nj.com/news/local/2011/03/glimpse\\_of\\_history\\_different\\_s.html](https://www.nj.com/news/local/2011/03/glimpse_of_history_different_s.html)

<sup>47</sup> "New Brunswick Cultural Center Concept Plan," (c. 1979), Rutgers University Photograph Collection BG-01, RU - Archives.

## **Rutgers Today**

The era of revitalization in New Brunswick established a new model for Rutgers and other local institutions to engage in complex, multi-stakeholder urban development. Rutgers has adopted the partnership model with other major organizations in order to expand its presence downtown. For example, Rutgers partnered with the Port Authority of New Jersey and New York to finance the Civic Square Building in 1994, which now hosts the Mason Gross School of the Arts and the Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy.<sup>48</sup> Rutgers has established its School of Social Work in the Albany Street Plaza office building, one of DevCo's first projects. In my recent visit to New Brunswick to access the city archives and the university archives, both Rutgers and DevCo had many banners downtown, on lightposts all along Albany Street and George Street. Today, Rutgers and DevCo are involved in the building of the HELIX, a 750-million-dollar, multi-university and multi-corporation collaboration to build a state of the art medical research and treatment facility downtown, across from the historic railroad station and right along Albany Street.<sup>49</sup> All of these developments indicate Rutgers University's active relationship with its local surroundings.

As for the legacy of Livingston College, the innovations and lessons pioneered from the college's early years have become integrated with the Rutgers identity. On its many campuses, Rutgers now has a majority-minority student population, and has numerous centers and organizations in place to maximize graduation and retention rates. It has dedicated services that promote the success of its students on campus and beyond, and has implemented an ethos of community engagement visible in its curriculum and its major urban investments in the arts, education, urban planning, and social work.

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<sup>48</sup> Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, "Our History," accessed December 11, 2025, <https://bloustein.rutgers.edu/our-history/>

<sup>49</sup> Health and Life Science Exchange (HELIX) New Jersey, accessed December 19, 2025 <https://www.helixnj.com/>