6 Expressive of Local Creativity & History

(RECOMMENDATIONS 3.0)

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC REALM CONDITIONS

The Avenue has a nice, cozy scale for a shopping street, and unlike many other historic neighborhood commercial corridors in the City, the streetwall is mostly intact. The public right-of-way between the building facades is 53 feet wide, with 10-foot sidewalks framing a parallel parking lane on each side of the street and a travel lane in each direction. Trolley tracks from the former 23 trolley (now replaced by the 23 bus) run along the street.

Along The Avenue

PUBLIC ART

HISTORY & CULTURE

STREETS & SIDEWALKS

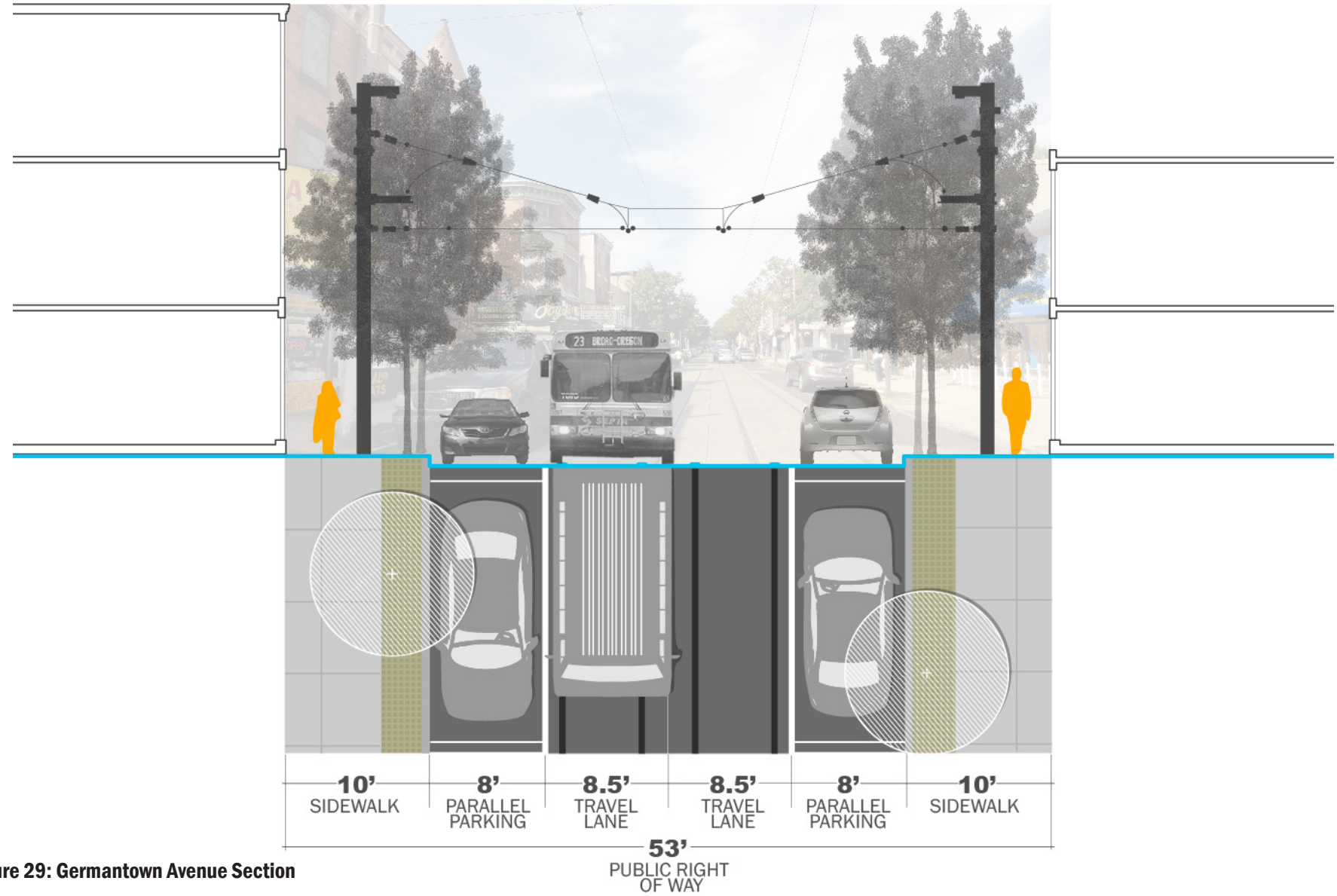


Figure 29: Germantown Avenue Section

As described in the Analysis of Commercial Uses and The Avenue, the antique signs and architectural details of the historic buildings are assets though often hidden by an overwhelming mix of new and out-of-date signage. Vacant storefronts detract from the rhythm and visual appeal of the street, and sidewalk conditions reflect the age and decline of the corridor. The area where the cobblestone strip meets the concrete sidewalk, and the cobblestone strip itself, appear particularly prone to damage and deterioration. Weeds and trash accumulate along the paving and at the base of trees, parking meters, signs, and SEPTA poles.

Assets along The Avenue include antique signage and architectural details.

Issues along The Avenue include worn-away sidewalks and litter.

Crosswalk striping across The Avenue is consistently worn away throughout the business district, and pedestrian conditions are especially compromised in three locations:

- On the east side of Germantown Avenue crossing Lehigh, where the crossing distance is 85 feet between sidewalks compared to the 54-foot crossing distance on the west side of Germantown at Lehigh

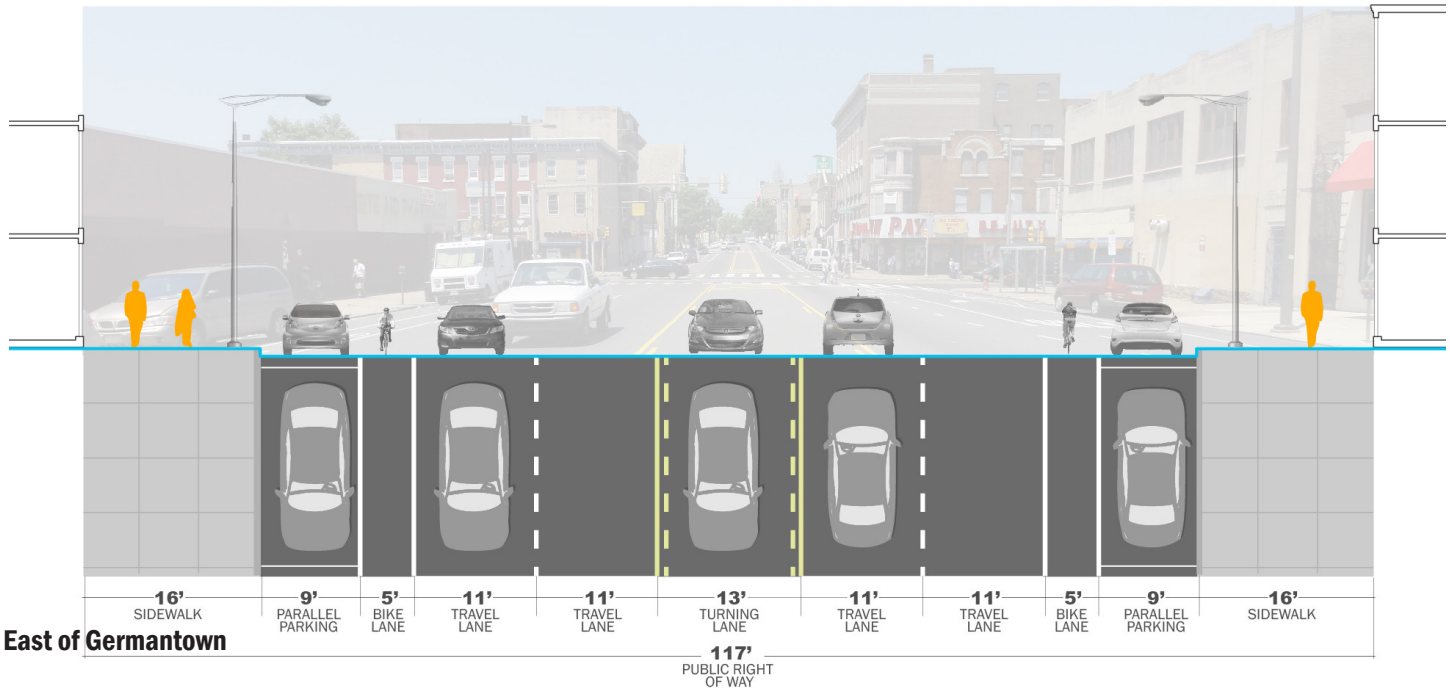


Figure 30: Lehigh Avenue Section, East of Germantown

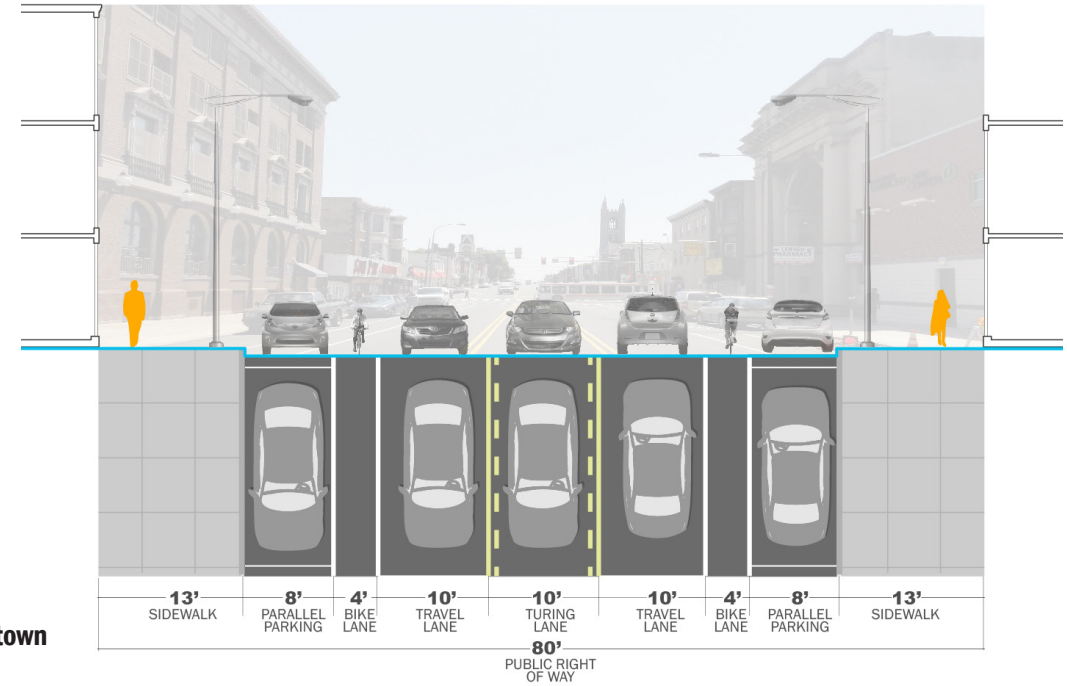


Figure 31: Lehigh Avenue Section, West of Germantown

The Avenue widens at the bends in the road.

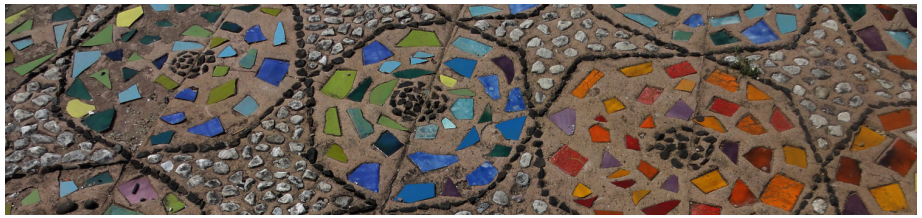
- At the northern bend in The Avenue at Historic Fair Hill burial ground, where the road widens just south of Indiana and allows cars to speed up as they pass through this undefined intersection with odd geometry
- At the southern bend in The Avenue at The Village of Arts and Humanities, where the road widens just north of North Alder Street, creating an awkward, triangular space used for double parking, which obstructs sight lines for pedestrians and turning cars

At the time of the field survey, the 2500 though 2800 blocks of the commercial corridor had 24 mature trees, 10 unpaved empty tree pits (some former tree pits appear to have been haphazardly paved), four dead trees, and seven young saplings at Warnock Village. The mature trees vary in size as well as health and degree of maintenance; some have bare branches and appear partially dead, while others are quite overgrown with foliage that obstructs store signage and poses a potential risk to wires and structures in their vicinity.

Slack space in the road where The Avenue curves at North Alder Street

Unplanted tree pits

Philly Painting, the Mural Arts initiative, is generating much needed attention and positive buzz about Germantown and Lehigh and will serve as a catalyst for the area, reinventing its public image in mere months. The following recommendations suggest additional canvases beyond the façades that artists Haas and Hahn will recreate with a crew of local painters to bring the art to street-level, further brand The Avenue as a front door to North Philadelphia's alternative arts scene, and showcase the talents of local artists and creative businesses.



The Village of Arts and Humanities, located at the southern end of the commercial corridor, nurtures and celebrates the creative talents of local youth.

3.1 Partner with Mural Arts, Dutch Artists Haas and Hahn, and The Village in the Design and Installation of Large-Scale Murals that Transform The Avenue

>> EARLY ACTION

Philadelphia's celebrated Mural Arts Program, with funding from the Commerce Department, Knight Foundation, and Bank of America, has brought world-renowned Dutch Artists, Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn (Haas and Hahn) to Philadelphia to undertake multiple large-scale, transformative mural projects under the title *Philly Painting*. Haas and Hahn's largest project will be along The Avenue, reaching from The Village of Arts and Humanities (where the artists are living as artists-in-residence) to Historic Fair Hill Burial Ground.

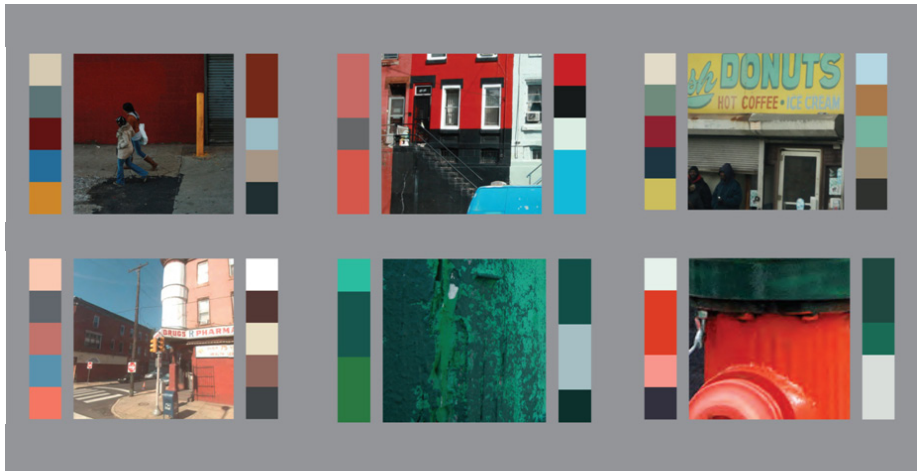
Haas and Hahn are famous for their massive, community-driven murals in the favelas of Brazil, which turned the slums of Rio de Janeiro into "monumental artworks of epic size" to build local pride, change outside perceptions, and draw positive attention to these infamous neighborhoods. They hired teams of local residents to help them paint, and "completely changed the image" of the community. The murals created jobs and provided job training for the painters, drew high-profile media attention, and stimulated the local economy, as new businesses opened to serve growing throngs of visitors and tourists.

Top Left: plaza in Santa Marta in Rio de Janeiro before the painting began, Top Right: mural painting by team of local painters underway, Above: finished mural by Haas and Hahn

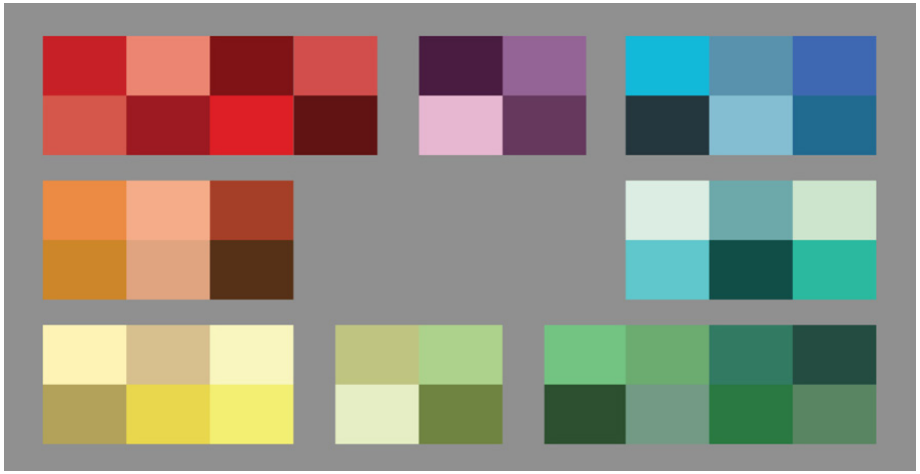
Source: www.favelapainting.com/santa-marta

Figure 32: *Philly Painting* Color Research and Approach for Germantown Avenue Murals

Source: Artists Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn



Philadelphia color research

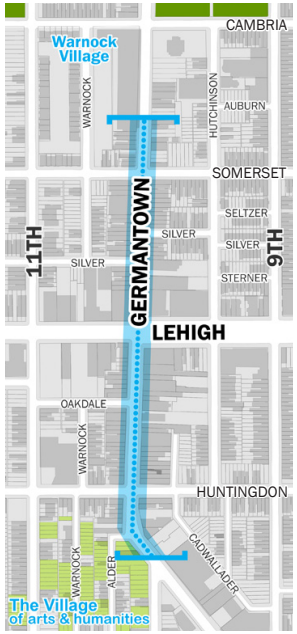


Philadelphia color palette

With their current project, *Philly Painting*, Haas and Hahn want to test whether a similar project can work in an underserved neighborhood in North Philadelphia. The Avenue is their new canvas, and their design goals are to:

- Create a new image and identity for Germantown Avenue, which will radiate optimism, instigate positive change, and increase commercial potential
- Get rid of the drab, messy image by transforming The Avenue with a visually appealing and unifying design
- Accommodate the tastes and opinions of the many merchants and building owners
- Develop a color palette which breathes PHILADELPHIA[20]

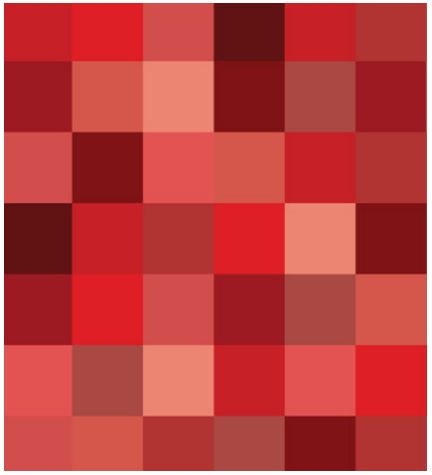
Preliminary designs feature a "Philadelphia Red," pulled from brick, signage, hydrants and other elements along The Avenue as well as an array of other colors pulled from the local landscape. The artists have envisioned a scheme of woven and irregular stripes that reach from one building to the next on The Avenue's vacant upper floor façades. While designs must be refined and customized to please individual building and storeowners, the massive undertaking promises to be transformative and one-of-a-kind, creating a new image for Germantown and Lehigh. Such a large project with so many key players requires coordination between City agencies, Mural Arts, the artists, the painters they hire to help install the work, community partners at The Village and NET CDC, and local merchants and property owners.



Mural target area

20 Presentation by artist, Dre Urhahn, at Merchant Meeting, March 1, 2012.

PHILLY Painting



"Philadelphia Red"

2601 Germantown, primed and ready for paint

Rendering of design for 2601 Germantown by Haas and Hahn

Philly Painting commenced work at the northwest corner of Germantown and Huntingdon, 2600 Germantown

Members of the Philly Painting crew priming 2565 Germantown

3.2 Beyond Façades, Consider Additional Surfaces for Public Art

Philly Painting commenced in April 2012, starting at the four corners of Germantown and Huntingdon, then moving to the intersection of Germantown and Lehigh, and then on to portions of the corridor where Mural Arts has received the greatest concentrations of authorizations by building and business owners to paint. Beyond the façade work, however, additional surfaces should be considered for public art to further brand the corridor.

The 40 grey and rusted SEPTA poles that support the trolley wiring should be incorporated in the design for The Avenue. The poles have been deemed lead-free and only require scraping before repainting.

Crosswalks (or the lack of crosswalks up and down The Avenue) represent another surface. The Streets Department has recently permitted free-style painting in the negative spaces between official crosswalk striping, and Mural Arts has experimented with this alternative canvas in Manayunk, as have other cities across the country. The design concept for the façade murals, with its flexibility and functionality at large scales and across multiple surfaces translates perfectly to crosswalk painting and should be extended into the street at The Avenue. Coordination will be required as the design and schedule of the ReStore streetscape improvements unfold.

Finally, the ubiquitous security grates represent potential canvases, as does the Route 23 bus – the longest route in the City – which could be wrapped in a pattern reminiscent of the murals along with information about the project to travel the length of the City and invite visitors to come and explore The Avenue.

Crosswalk mural in Manayunk

Crosswalk mural in North Hollywood

Crosswalk mural in Miami

Potential surfaces for additional public art: the SEPTA poles, the crosswalks, and security grates

3.3 Restore Old Signs as Sculptural Objects to Integrate History with a New Image for The Avenue

Despite considerable contraction, the remaining node of commercial activity at Germantown and Lehigh is remarkably intact. Most of the original buildings with their ornate architectural detailing are still standing, and many three-dimensional signs – some advertising businesses of the past, others highlighting those of the present – add interest and authenticity to this commercial corridor. In fact, there are eight of these three-dimensional signs along the 2500 through 2800 blocks of Germantown as well as one on Lehigh just west of Germantown.

These historic signs should be restored as sculptural objects and maintained as elements that stand out against the new murals to integrate history with the new image for The Avenue. Such restoration would be costly and could represent a sizable portion of a Storefront Improvement Program grant from the Commerce Department.

In Knoxville, Tennessee, a "Save Our Signs" fund[21] was created to preserve old signs though a partnership between Knox Heritage, the local historic preservation nonprofit and JFG, a local business with one such historic sign. Their program offers a matching grant up to $2,500 per sign. A similar program should be explored by the Commerce Department in partnership with the Preservation Alliance. And with Gazelle Signs at Germantown and Glenwood, an effort to restore signs would foster local economic development.

Signage locations include:

- **Best Fresh Fish**: 2560 Germantown, active
- **Lucky Pharmacy**: 2623 Germantown, ghost sign
- **Stan the Man Dry Cleaning**: 2625 Germantown, active
- **Crawford Jewelers**: 2648 Germantown, ghost sign
- **Arthur's Dog House**: 2650 Germantown, active
- **New Hong Kong Lou**: 1004 West Lehigh, active
- **Chung's Restaurant**: 2710 Germantown, ghost sign above new Germantown Food Court
- **Integrity Meats**: 2728 Germantown, active
- **Dave's Bakery**: 2749 Germantown, ghost sign

21 http://www.knoxheritage.org/node/537

Three-dimensional antique signage along The Avenue

Figure 33: Conceptual Sketch of Refurbished Antique Signage

3.4 Work with Property Owners to Transform Vacant Storefronts and Blank Interior Walls into Temporary Gallery Spaces

The commercial market demand determined by Real Estate Strategies is not robust enough to fill every vacant storefront along The Avenue. Though the market dynamics may change once the *Philly Painting* murals are in place, an interim strategy to reactivate vacant storefronts is to transform them into temporary gallery spaces to showcase the work of local talent (including students at The Village of Arts and Humanities) and document The Avenue's transformation by *Philly Paining*. Currently, solid security grates shutter the majority of vacant storefronts rendering them ineligible for a temporary gallery, but the few with windows visible through security grilles present opportunities to further brand the corridor as a creative and artful place, add color and interest to the streetscape, and establish exhibition venues for emerging artists within a world class public art project. The ground floor windows at Warnock Village with blinds that remain down could also be activated with art hung between the window panes and the blinds. Interested storeowners who are open for business can participate as gallery hosts as well, displaying artwork on the walls of their shop, salon, restaurant, or office.

The Village of Arts and Humanities, as the pulse of the local art scene, should work with the emerging Business Partnership to approach property owners with protected but open storefront windows and business owners with blank wall space about hosting a temporary exhibit.

Vacant storefronts repurposed as temporary art galleries in Chicago
Source: www.makebelieve.wegotitinWPB.com

HISTORY & CULTURE Along The Avenue

While the mural design respects The Avenue's historic architectural details and antique signage, visitors to The Avenue should have the opportunity to see not just the murals and the stores along the corridor, but the rich history and culture that provides context for the art. Creating or adapting spaces for expression along The Avenue will also strengthen local pride and identity.

3.5 Reclaim Excess Road Space on Both Ends of the Commercial District for Pedestrian Plazas

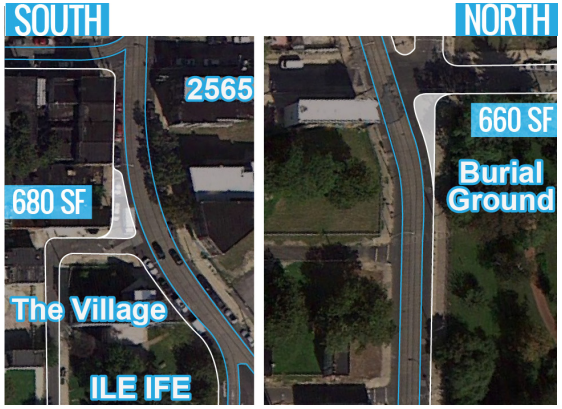
Where Germantown Avenue curves, first near The Village of Arts and Humanities at North Alder Street in the 2500 block and then again at Historic Fair Hill burial ground at Indiana in the 2900 block, the road widens on one side creating an awkward triangle of underutilized space, big enough for cars to double park, obstruct sight lines for pedestrians or other motorists, and cause general confusion. The excess width of the roadway here also encourages drivers to speed through these turns.

This excess space should be reclaimed for pedestrians and community use as small plazas created by extending the curb to more closely hug the line of the trolley track. These pedestrian plazas would also bookend the commercial district with unique spaces that announce its beginning and end. Furthermore, the spaces could be programmed with amenities that celebrate or express the area's history and culture.

The proposed bumpout immediately north of North Alder Street in the 2500 block could encompass up to 680 square feet, comparable to a single-wide storefront. Located at the busy southern end of the commercial district and in close proximity to The Village of Arts and Humanities and the possible home of NET CDC, a plaza here could host an improved bus stop, benches and tables, a Healthy Food Cart, trash bins, signage, and wayfinding.

The proposed bumpout at the northwest corner of Historic Fair Hill would create a 660 square foot plaza for those waiting for the bus and interested in learning about the history of the burial ground, the nearby Harriet Tubman mural, or the Black History offerings at St. Mark Outreach Baptist Church. This northern plaza is a secondary priority, as the intersection at Indiana is less busy than the curve at North Alder and Huntingdon.

In Fall 2011, the City of Philadelphia's Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities (MOTU) and the Department of Commerce issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Pedestrian Plaza Program to "convert underutilized street segments" into plazas that "provide the public the chance to sit and enjoy the city's busy street life." If MOTU and Commerce sponsor the program again, these proposed bumpouts at Germantown and Lehigh should be considered as prime candidates. The bumpouts should also be considered in the ReStore streetscape improvement design and implementation described in Recommendation 3.9.



Potential bumpout locations and sizes

Existing slack space where The Avenue curves at North Alder Street

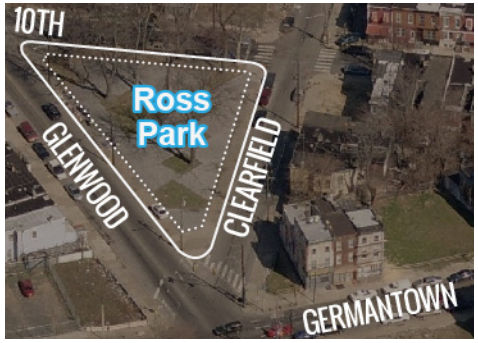
Figure 34: Rendering of Proposed Bumpout and Plaza in the 2500 Block of Germantown Avenue

3.6 Revive Ross Park to Reflect Community Pride and Grass Roots Efforts

Ross Park, a small, mostly paved, triangular City park nestled between Clearfield, Glenwood, and 10th Street, is one of the last places in the neighborhood visible from Germantown Avenue as you head north out of the study area. Ross Park appears forgotten. Patches of grass have grown where the paving has crumbled, and bench frames remain though the wooden slats are long gone. Vacancy has taken hold in the blocks that surround the park, and the ground is littered with trash. And yet, seven giant trees provide ample shade, and neighbors still congregate here.

The Advocates for the West Fairhill Community have embraced Ross Park and its revitalization as an opportunity to foster pride, build community, and improve the image of this northern gateway to West Fairhill and The Avenue. They have organized clean ups and started to raise money to repave the triangle, replace the benches with new ones that are less susceptible to vandals, and introduce new lighting, trash cans, trees, and bollards to keep parked cars out. With a strong track record in the creation and maintenance of a garden at 3006-3016 North Darien Street on land that is partially publicly-owned, Advocates for West Fairhill are committed to help maintain the park once it is improved.

City Council has provided an initial financial contribution in support of the Park's improvement, and the Planning Commission will reach out to the Department of Parks and Recreation to confirm that this long-overlooked park is on their radar. Pro-bono design services facilitated by the Community Design Collaborative could help with a landscape design that blends low-maintenance paving with green features that assist in cooling in the summer and managing stormwater.



Ross Park at Germantown, Clearfield, and Glenwood needs investment.

3.7 Rename 12th & Cambria Recreation Center to Reference Local History and Strengthen the Link between Resources

The City invested over $300,000 to upgrade the facilities and playground at the 12th and Cambria Recreation Center in Summer 2011. The park got a make-over; now it needs a better name, one that reflects the community in which it sits. Just one block west of Historic Fair Hill burial ground and St. Mark Outreach Baptist Church, a name for 12th and Cambria could reference strong local roots in the abolitionist movement, linking these two green assets in the neighborhood. Alternatively, the park could be named for a key figure in more recent neighborhood history. City policy states that parks cannot be named after people who are still living. Neighborhood organizations, churches, and residents need to reach consensus on a name fitting for the renewed park.

The 12th & Cambria Rec Center needs a new name.

Investments in the upper floors and storefront spaces along The Avenue must be complemented by improvements (and improved maintenance) in the pedestrian realm – the intersections, sidewalks, and crosswalks that people inhabit as they walk through the commercial district.

3.8 Alert Area Merchants about the Pending Roadway Improvements along Lehigh Avenue

>> EARLY ACTION

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) is currently using seven million dollars in Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funding to improve intersections along Lehigh Avenue. These will encompass 23 modernized traffic signals between Richmond Street and Broad, new signal mast arms, and some reconfigured intersections to reduce pedestrian crossing distances by adding bumpouts to the sidewalks. The crosswalks on Lehigh will be restriped, and pedestrian countdowns will be added for safer crossing. Construction is predicted to reach Germantown Avenue in 2012.

To mitigate disruption to businesses on Germantown and Lehigh Avenues, area merchants should be notified of the pending improvements. As construction approaches, PennDOT and the Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities (MOTU) staff should coordinate with NET CDC and the emerging Business Partnership representatives to ensure that all businesses are aware of the schedule and have a point of contact should a problem arise that requires reporting.

Lehigh, looking west toward Germantown Avenue. East of Germantown, Lehigh is 85 feet curb to curb. West of The Avenue, Lehigh narrows to 54 feet.

3.9 ReStore The Avenue's Public Realm in Keeping with *Philly Painting's* Façade Enhancements

>> EARLY ACTION

City Council recently approved the allocation of ReStore funding for a capital investment project for this stretch Germantown Avenue. The streetscape improvements represent a three million dollar investment (for design, engineering, and construction) and could include new curbs and sidewalks along The Avenue, ramps at intersections to ensure that all sidewalks are ADA- (Americans with Disabilities Act) compliant, new trash cans, trees, and possibly upgraded street lighting. This funding reflects an ongoing commitment by the City to focus resources for revitalization at Germantown and Lehigh and will ensure that the public realm (streets and sidewalks) are improved in concert with the murals on building façades.

The allocation of ReStore dollars should target the north end of the 2500 block of Germantown Avenue (to include The Village of Arts and Humanities, 2565 Germantown Avenue, and the southern end of the commercial district) through the middle of the 2800 block of Germantown Avenue, where PHA's Warnock Village begins. In addition to the possible curb replacement, ADA-compliant ramps, sidewalk repairs, and lighting upgrade, special attention should be given to restoring the cobblestone strip between the curb and concrete sidewalk. Beyond the weeds and trash that litter these strips, the cobblestone paving has been compromised in scattered locations – filled in with asphalt or concrete, resulting in uneven, cracked, and unattractive surfaces. Tree replanting and landscape maintenance are discussed in Recommendations 3.10 and 3.11, respectively.

Engineering and construction work for the ReStore-funded streetscape improvements will commence in 2012, with construction planned to start in Spring 2013. The Commerce Department will work with the Streets Department to execute the design based on the ideas documented in this plan.

3.10 Maintain Existing Street Trees and Adopt a Planting Strategy that Complements the Murals

Given the planned mural design concept, which embraces a massive scale to span multiple buildings along the corridor, façade visibility and access is key. The Department of Parks and Recreation, which manages all park and street trees in the City of Philadelphia, is working with the Mural Arts Program to prune existing trees and remove dead trees along The Avenue in preparation for the mural preparation and installation work. Trees that are invasive species should also be removed, to make room for a cohesive replanting strategy that complements the coming murals, maintains views along the corridor, and introduces trees that are better suited for urban conditions.

New street trees for The Avenue, planted in conjunction with the ReStore streetscape improvements should be chosen with both foliage color and volume in mind. Trees that shift to reds or yellows in the fall will echo the "Philadelphia Red," identified by mural artists Haas and Hahn, which will feature heavily in their design as a unifying color across facades. Trees that grow vertically and are appropriate for narrow streets are also desirable, as species with a branch structure that spreads outward will block the planned public art. Prior to replanting, a maintenance plan must be in place, utilizing either the landscape skills of The Village Community Land Care staff, developing such skills among the staff and volunteers of the corridor cleaning program, or working with the Business Partnership to develop an alternative plan for maintaining the new trees.

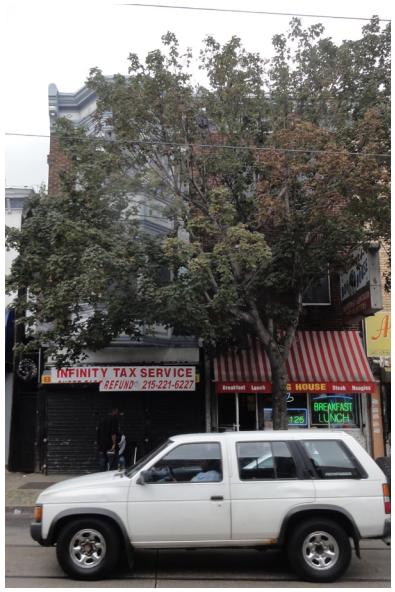
3.11 Grow the Cleaning Program to Include a Landscape Maintenance Component for The Avenue

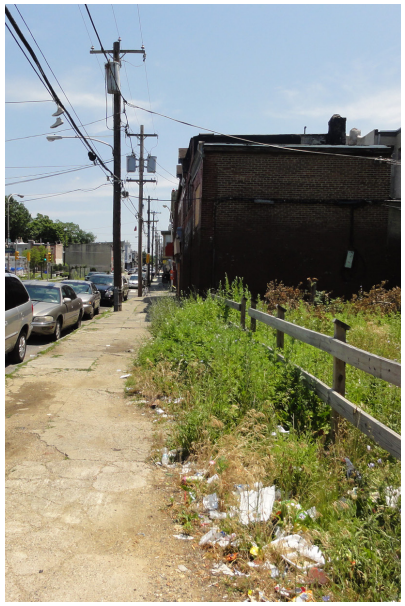
>> EARLY ACTION

Many vacant lots throughout the study area are cleaned, greened, and maintained through the combined efforts of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's (PHS) Philadelphia Green program and The Village of Arts and Humanities' Community Land Care contract. With 13 vacant lots along the commercial corridor itself (2500 – 2800 blocks) and many more in close proximity to the business district, efforts to keep these parcels free of litter and larger-scale illegal dumping is critical to the overall image of The Avenue and must continue.

However, the curbs, cobblestone strips, tree pits, and side streets along Germantown Avenue – especially during the growing season when weeds run rampant – often take on the appearance of littered and overgrown lots. The cobblestone strips are an attractive, feature that must be maintained as such, and before the tree pits are replanted, a landscape maintenance plan must be in place. The reinstated cleaning program (Recommendation 1.1) will dramatically reduce litter along The Avenue, strewn on side streets, and collecting in the weeds. Come late spring and summer, the cleaning program should adapt or expand to include weeding in the cobblestone strip (particularly at the base of parking meters and other poles, where weeds thrive) and basic maintenance of old and new plantings in the tree pits.

Right: tree growth obstructing view of facades and signage
Far Right: vacant land collecting trash just a half-block off The Avenue





7 Surrounded by Good Homes & Neighbors

(RECOMMENDATIONS 4.0)

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Vacancy to the north and south of the Germantown and Lehigh commercial core affects perceptions of the business district, sending the message that the corridor is nestled within a declining neighborhood. In fact, the study area's population grew by six percent between 2000 and 2010, with roughly 275 new households moving to the neighborhood, likely drawn by new affordable rental housing built by the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) and the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP).

In addition to stabilizing the west side of the 2800 block and the area north of Historic Fair Hill burial ground, these new housing developments have brought new rooftops and, by extension, customers near The Avenue. While the sales housing market continues to be weak, the demand for rental housing is strong and presents an opportunity to reinforce residential investment and positively impact the marketplace.

NEW HOMES

PRESERVED AMENITIES

ANALYSIS OF RESIDENTIAL MARKET CONDITIONS

Real Estate Strategies, Inc. / RES Advisors (RES) completed an analysis of the residential and commercial market. The RES report is in a separate document, but the residential market findings are summarized here.

To assess the residential market conditions, RES conducted a site analysis and multiple interviews with developers, Realtors, property managers, and community organizations. They then defined a competitive Primary Market Area, from which new residents might be drawn; this includes Erie Avenue to Cecil B. Moore Avenue. Front Street and Kensington Avenue generally define the eastern edge, and 22nd Street is the western edge.

RES analyzed household growth, replacement demand, household age and income, and sales trends. They also analyzed sales prices and rental and absorption rates. The market assessment yielded recommendations for housing rehabilitation and construction focused along The Avenue.

What follows is a summary of market conditions and residential demand in the target area.

- Sales data and interviews with sponsors of sales housing suggest that **market demand for sales housing is very low**. The housing market in North Philadelphia and in the study area needs to stabilize before additional sales housing construction is planned, especially as funding sources for homeownership are limited and very competitive. However, a small program of substantial rehabilitation and sales housing on streets near The Village will strengthen the area.

- **Rental demand is high for housing units affordable for families at or below 50 percent of area median income**[22] when rents are competitive in the market.[23] This is especially the case for new developments built at scale as a sub-neighborhood. The rental communities at both Warnock Village and Evelyn Sanders Townhomes enjoy high occupancy rates and long waiting lists.

- **Market support exists for a 50-70 unit rent-subsidized senior housing development** to serve the very low-income seniors in the area. Other rent-subsidized senior developments in the Primary Market Area (PMA) have waiting lists of up to five years. A 70-unit project would need to capture only 1.2 percent of income-eligible seniors in the PMA. A location near Warnock Village's senior units might permit the joint use of common spaces and services.

- **Overall demand in the target area is estimated to be 23-36 new or renovated housing units per year** (115-181 units from 2012 through 2017). This represents about 11 percent of the total estimated market area demand,[24] which should be an achievable capture rate.

22 In the Primary Market Area in 2011, 61.6 percent of households were estimated to have incomes below $25,000. Very low-income seniors in the area include those below 40 percent of area median income for a one-person household or $22,520 during 2011 based on Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) income limits.
23 Gross rent, including utilities would be below $600 per month for a one-bedroom.
24 The estimated residential demand for the Primary Market Area is 1,051 units over five years, 45 percent homeownership (473 units), 55 percent rental (578 units). 616 units of the 1,051 represent potential market area household growth, while the remaining 435 units represent replacement demand.

Figure 35: Potential Residential Opportunities, 2012-2017
Source: Real Estate Strategies

OPPORTUNITY	UNIT RANGE low - high	PRICING/INCOME TARGETING [2012 dollars]
> INFILL CONSTRUCTION		
RENTAL TOWNHOUSES/FLATS	50 80	1 BR/1BA: $450-550 2 BR/1 - 1.5BA: $650-750 3 BR/1 - 2BA: $750-825 4 BR/2BA: $800-900
AFFORDABLE SENIOR	50 70	Rent Subsidized - 30% of Income (Not just Tax Credits)
> TARGETED SUBSTANTIAL REHABILITATION - "VILLAGE ANCHOR"		
RENTAL REHABILITATION: VILLAGE & 2565 GERMANTOWN	10 16	1 BR: $350-400 2 BR: $525-575 3 BR: $575-675
REHABILITATION FOR-SALE	5 15	$60,000 - $80,000
TOTAL UNITS	**115 181**	Predominantly RENTAL during the first 5 years

TRANSLATES TO MONTHLY PITI PAYMENTS OF
[PITI: principal, interest, taxes, insurance]

$500 - $650

Affordable to households earning $20,265 - $25,790 annually if 30% spent for home

COMPARISON: 40% of Area Median Income for four-person household in 2011: $32,160

Homes on the 2700 block of N 9th Street

NEW HOMES Along The Avenue

The recommendations for residential development flow from Real Estate Strategies' demand and supply analysis and conclusions about market depth and breadth. The five-year total demand of 115-181 units should be mostly rental (100-110 units), include a mix of sizes for different household types, and introduce a blend of infill construction and targeted rehabilitation of existing structures.

4.1 Reinforce Assets & Recent Investment with Residential Development

The square block west of Historic Fair Hill (the 2900 block of Germantown) comprises three smaller streets – the 1000 blocks of Monmouth, Orleans, and Stella. These small blocks are home to considerable vacancy and distressed conditions, standing in stark contrast to the new investment by PHA at Warnock Village and WCRP at the Evelyn Sanders Townhomes. These streets are sandwiched between the restored burial ground and the renovated 12th & Cambria Recreation Center. The blocks bounded by Germantown Avenue, 11th, Cambria, and Indiana contain 104 vacant lots and 20 vacant buildings. These blocks are also home to 42 homeowners and a collection of houses in excellent or good condition. The block also has one long-term business (Cambria Pharmacy) and three churches.

The concentrated vacancy, high proportion of publicly-owned parcels (28 out of 104 vacant lots, two out of 20 vacant buildings), proximity to recent investment and historic community assets, and visibility from Germantown Avenue, all render the square block west of 2900 Germantown Avenue a prime location for residential redevelopment. Homes would reinforce the recent investment, enjoy a view into Historic Fair Hill, improve the image of the commercial corridor, and help to support the compact commercial node surrounding Germantown and Lehigh avenues.

The conceptual site plan for these blocks incorporates the following design principles:

- Preserve owner-occupied homes, churches, and Cambria Pharmacy
- Rebuild the Germantown Avenue frontage, and locate dense housing along this corridor
- Use infill along Cambria and Indiana to strengthen these blocks
- Introduce a less dense housing typology on small streets, and locate off-street parking away at the block interior, away from main streets

Drawn in pale yellow, the site plan (Figure 37) accommodates 44 row homes within the target area outlined in blue, as well as 17 row homes on the south side of Cambria facing the improved 12th and Cambria Recreation Center and seven row homes on the north side of Indiana. Combined, there are a total of 68 potential new construction rental townhouses. The building in peach at Germantown and Monmouth could host 12 apartment flats in a three-story building. The proposed senior housing development shown north of Orleans at Germantown will be discussed in the following recommendation.

This scheme requires substantial acquisition by City government and then disposition to a developer.

4.2 Incorporate an Affordable Senior Housing Component in the Redevelopment of 2900 Germantown Avenue

The RES market study also recommends 50-70 units of affordable senior housing, with rent subsidies so that seniors will be able to pay to 30 percent of household income. These subsidies are important because of the very low incomes of local seniors. The conceptual site plan shows a three-story, 60-unit senior development with 18 parking spaces.

Existing vacancy on Stella Street

Existing vacancy on Orleans Street

Figure 36: Detailed Existing Conditions, 2900 Block of Germantown Avenue

- 104 Vacant Lots
- 1 Yard
- 20 Vacant Buildings
- 3 Churches
- 1 Long-Term Business
- 42 Owner-Occupied Homes
- 12 in Distressed Condition
- 14 in Failing Condition

Figure 37: Conceptual Site Plan, 2900 Block of Germantown Avenue

- 60 units of affordable senior housing in 3-story building
  - 51 @ 500 SF
  - 9 @ 550 SF
  - 18 off-street parking spaces
- 44 rowhomes within target area
  - 7 rowhomes on north side of Indiana
  - 17 rowhomes on south side of Cambria/11th
- 12 flats in 3-story building at Germantown & Monmouth
- 15 flats in 3-story building on Germantown
- Mixed Use Redevelopment at Somerset

4.3 Address Housing Conditions at the Southern Gateway of The Avenue

In addition to a northern residential anchor across from the burial ground, the commercial district can benefit from housing revitalization at the southern gateway to the corridor. The RES market study indicates that there is market support for 10-16 rehabilitated rental units including apartments at 2565 Germantown and the growing Village Campus, which together frame this block of Germantown Avenue.

- 2565 Germantown Avenue may be renovated to incorporate six apartments on the two floors above ground floor commercial or office space.
- The Village of Arts and Humanities has plans to rehabilitate four structures as rental properties as part of its *Creative Village Master Plan*. An additional six rental units could be renovated within The Village.

These rehabilitation recommendations represent near term opportunities to foster a mixed-use gateway. First steps include transfer of 2565 Germantown Avenue and vacant PHA-owned structures within The Village campus. These are now underway. However, both NET CDC and The Village will need to seek funding from public and charitable sources within a competitive fundraising environment before renovation can commence. Sources of funding might include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds. For 2565 Germantown Avenue, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and possibly New Market Tax Credits for the first floor commercial space might help to attract one or more investors. The services of an experienced development consultant should be sought to help pull together the financing and steer the project toward completion.

In the longer-term, two other underutilized structures should be considered for redevelopment. The industrial architecture of 2519-37 Germantown Avenue and 2501 Germantown Avenue is suited for conversion to live/work units that would appeal to artists and creative businesses. For locations of these opportunities, see Figure 27 on page 48.

4.4 Complement Residential Development with Targeted Resources for Rehabilitation

Focus dollars for homeownership rehabilitation along major east-west and north-south streets including 11th Street, Cambria Street, and streets near The Village with similarly distressed conditions. As with other rehabilitation initiatives, the most likely sources of funding are the City's annual entitlements of CDBG and HOME dollars.

PRESERVED AMENITIES Along The Avenue

The second category of recommendations under *Surrounded by Good Homes and Neighbors* focuses on small parcels of City-owned land, which are not suitable for redevelopment due to size, location, or both and are currently being used by residents and community organizations as small parks or gardens, yards, or driveways and parking lots. These amenities make the neighborhood more livable for existing residents and should be preserved. An analysis by PCPC staff found 65 such lots in the portion of the study area that falls within the 7th Council District (east of Germantown Avenue/10th Street, north of Lehigh between 9th & Germantown, north of Huntingdon between 8th & 9th) and 23 such lots in the portion of the study area that falls within the 5th Council District (west of Germantown Avenue/10th Street, south of Lehigh between 9th & Germantown, south of Huntingdon between 8th & 9th).

Per the City's recently released Policies for the Sale and Reuse of City Owned Property, residents may buy adjacent lots from the City for nominal value if (1) the neighbor lives in and owns the house next door; (2) the block is mostly occupied; (3) the value of the lot is less than $15,000; and (4) the lot is less than 3,000 square feet. A resident may buy up to two lots. While encouraging the sale of small, scattered pieces of vacant, surplus City-owned land to adjacent homeowners does not translate into a large-scale housing strategy, it is an important strategy nonetheless. The community has informally reclaimed almost 90 lots for uses that add beauty (gardens), functionality (yards), and convenience (driveways) to daily life in the neighborhood. A proactive disposition strategy for publicly-owned vacant land has numerous benefits. It would pass along the maintenance and potential liability costs of holding surplus land while also putting the parcels back on the tax roll. Further, it will encourage residents to formalize their claims on these parcels to preserve such residential amenities, and it will ultimately increase property values for adjacent owners.

4.5 Preserve and Improve Small Parks and Gardens Established on City-Owned Vacant Land

>> EARLY ACTION

There are five[25] existing small parks or gardens within the study area that are established on City-owned vacant land. These small parks and gardens exhibit varying degrees of maintenance and programming, but all of them bring green space into the context of otherwise dense, residential urban blocks, carving out spaces for relaxing outdoors in shaded areas, visiting with neighbors, playing, or growing flowers and vegetables. With the exception of one, which is truly overgrown and detracting from conditions on the block, these parks and gardens are examples of vacant public land being put to good use.

To ensure the preservation of these small green spaces, community organizations should facilitate conversations between Council Office representatives and adjacent owners or park and garden stewards to discuss land disposition at the following locations:

- **2656-2658 N 8th Street** – overgrown City-owned pocket-park no longer adding value to the street or to community life
- **3006-3016 N Darien Street** – a very established garden maintained by the Advocates for the West Fairhill Community; only 3014 is owned by the City, the other three parcels are privately owned
- **3061-3063 N 9th Street** – small garden, both lots City-owned
- **923-925 Auburn Street** – two City-owned lots that have been repurposed as a thriving raised-bed vegetable garden adjacent to Hannah House. These lots are just two out of 15 contiguous vacant lots on the block, 11 of which are publicly-owned.
- **2535 N Hutchinson Street** – one lot out of four currently in use as the Philadelphia Parent & Child Center playground

Figure 38: Small Parks & Gardens for Preservation

Source: Field Survey 2011, Office of Property Assessment, September 2011

25 There are at least two other sites in the study area where publicly-owned vacant land has been reclaimed by residents for park or garden space. However, these sites (801-813 W Huntingdon with three City-owned lots, one PHA-owned lot, and three privately-owned lots and 923-933 W Somerset with two City-owned lots, one PHDC-owned lot, and three privately-owned lots) are part of larger, contiguous collections of parcels that may be suitable for future redevelopment.

In addition to the small and scattered parks and gardens that exist on publicly-owned vacant land, more than 20 of the parcels that comprise art gardens and green spaces maintained by The Village of Arts and Humanities are publicly-owned (by the City, PHA, PHDC, or PRA). As The Village recently completed a master plan for its campus, the parcels that fall within the bounds of the envisioned campus should be conveyed to The Village or sold to them at nominal cost. City-owned lots for which improvement plans have been developed as part of *The Creative Village Master Plan* include:

Lots for The Village Herb Garden and proposed Environmental Learning Center:

- **1021 W Cumberland Street**
- **2506 N Warnock Street**
- **2510 N Warnock Street**

Lots that would be part of Memorial Park, Magic Garden, and Guardian Angel Park:

- **2515 N Warnock Street**
- **2535 N Warnock Street**
- **1005 W Cumberland Street**

Part of proposed Artist Residency Garden:

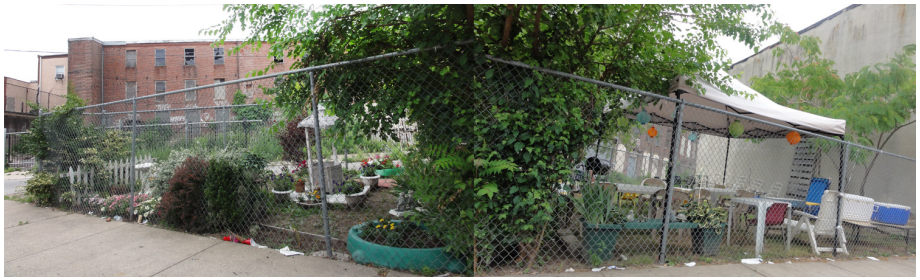
- **2503 N Alder Street**

Portions of these parks and gardens created by The Village are still publicly-owned.

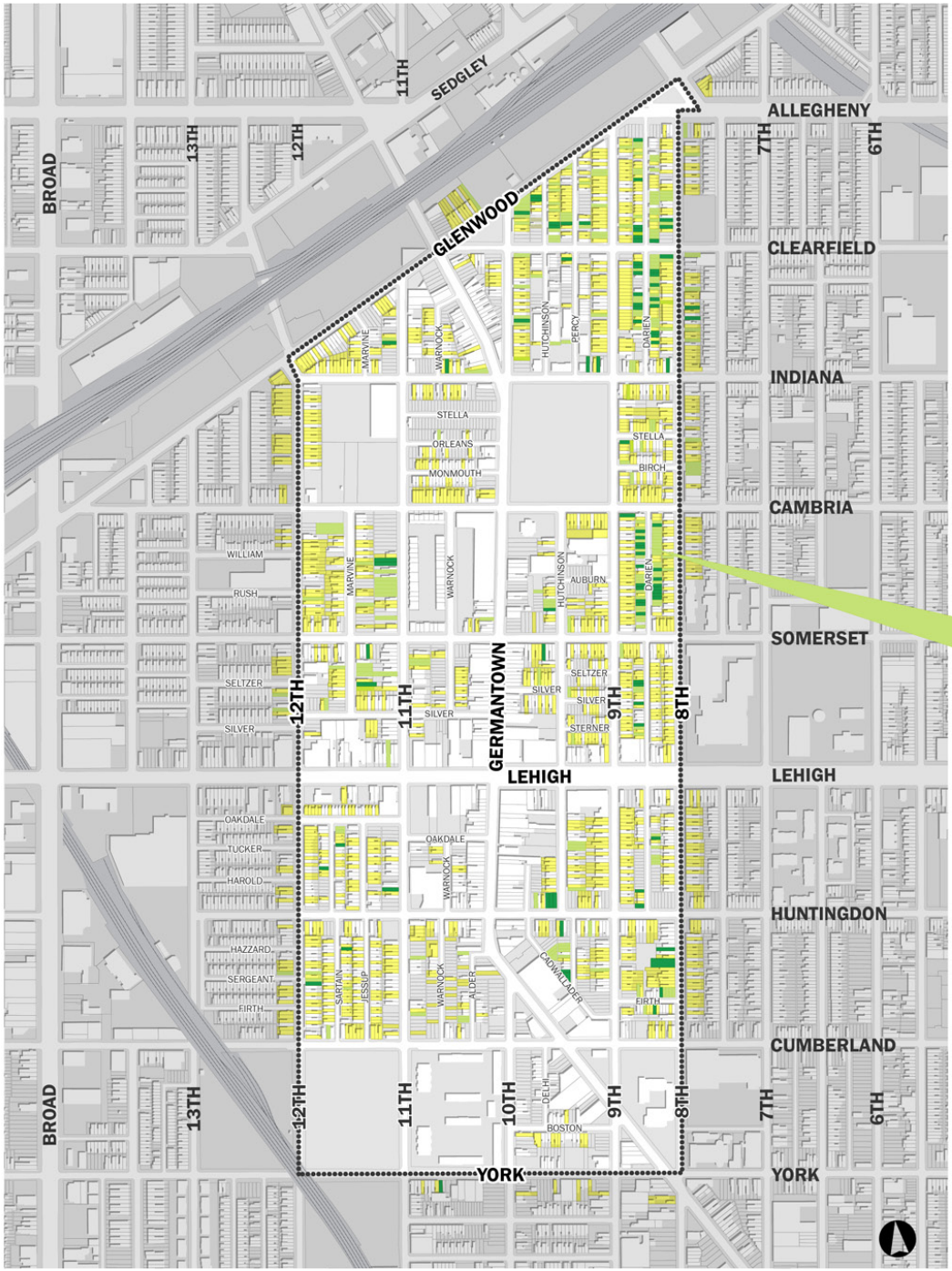
4.6 Sell Small, City-Owned Vacant Lots to Adjacent Homeowners for Reuse as Yards and Driveways

>> EARLY ACTION

Of 300 parcels in use as yards or driveways at the time of the field survey, 31 percent (93) are publicly-owned. Of the 93 publicly-owned yards and driveways in the study area, the City owns 72, the Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) owns nine, the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA) owns eight, and the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) owns four. Where these publicly-owned yards and driveways abut owner-occupied homes, the City should make an effort to sell the lots to adjacent owners. The 2800 block (between Somerset and Cambria) and 3000 block (between Indiana and Clearfield) of North Darien Street, presently have concentrations of yards and driveways tucked behind owner-occupied homes on 8th and 9th Streets, and thus should be starting points for this initiative.



An elaborate yard on publicly-owned land.



Focus on Darien St first

2800 and 3000 blocks

Figure 39: Yards and Driveways for Disposition

Source: Field Survey 2011, Office of Property Assessment, September 2011

- Owner-Occupied Residential
- Yard or Garden
- Publicly-Owned Yard or Garden

8 Organized & Active

(RECOMMENDATIONS 5.0)

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY

The City has invested considerable resources in the Germantown and Lehigh commercial corridor and surrounding area, not only through the creation of this plan, but through early implementation efforts and a commitment to coordinate among agencies to ensure that program dollars reach The Avenue and adjacent blocks for maximum impact. However, to access available City resources, community leaders must be organized and proactive, engaged in the planning process, committed to achieving the plan's vision, and working in concert not only with the City, but with each other.

CAPACITY

RESOURCES

As part of *The Economic Development Strategic Plan*, Wilson Associates conducted an assessment of organizational capacity within the neighborhood, interviewing key representatives from seven community-based organizations to determine their interests and priorities, strengths, and opportunities for collaboration and growth. Wilson Associates' *Community Capacity Analysis* is a separate document, but the findings are summarized below.

Two community organizations, the Neighborhood Enrichment and Transformation Community Development Corporation (NET CDC) and The Village of Arts and Humanities (The Village), emerged as the primary local partners in the creation of this plan. Both organizations are already at work, in collaboration with Police Officer Tyshaan Williams of the 25th District, helping to implement early action steps and will remain key players in moving forward different elements of the plan.

NET CDC

NET CDC envisions a stable, socially and economically diverse community where all residents benefit from neighborhood amenities and enjoy access to economic, educational, and other opportunities. NET CDC provides a range of services in the community, including constituent services for area residents, by sharing information about City programs and resources available for residents. NET also serves as the zoning committee, reviewing projects proposed and in need of community support for variances. Through Philly Rising, NET CDC established a partnership with the 25th and 26th Police Districts and the Managing Director's Office and has worked to improve safety in the area and shut down nuisance businesses. NET staffs a computer lounge at Hartranft Community Center and maintains five vacant lots on the 800 block of Huntingdon Street as park space.

Active in the selection committee for this planning process and on the Advisory Committee charged to oversee the plan's development, NET played a crucial role in *The Economic Development Strategic Plan* and along The Avenue, in particular. NET facilitated the business survey of Avenue merchants, walking door to door with Interface Studio, and undertook advocacy and organizing efforts to inform merchants on upcoming meetings and unfolding plans in partnership with Officer Tyshaan Williams of the 25th District. NET's role in managing the interim cleaning program with The Village and the organization's plans to renovate 2565 Germantown Avenue to establish business development and corridor management space on The Avenue further underscore their commitment to revitalization on The Avenue.

The Village

The mission of The Village of Arts and Humanities is to support the voices and aspirations of the community by providing opportunities for self-expression rooted in art and culture. The Village works to inspire people to be agents of positive change through programs that encompass arts and culture, engage youth, revitalize community, preserve heritage and respect the environment. The Village maintains 138 properties in the study area: three program or office buildings, two artist residences, three land care crew facilities, two Spells Writing Labs, three vacant lots, and 125 parcels within 16 parks or gardens. They also tend roughly 150 PHS Community Land Care lots. While The Village's physical presence has transformed acres of land in the area, especially adjacent to the 2500 block of The Avenue, it is its breadth of programs that create incredible opportunities for area youth. By integrating public art, land reclamation, and land care with physical planning and development, formal education, work-based learning and service opportunities for children, youth, and adults, The Village has established itself as a unique and valuable institutional resource in the community.

The Village spearheaded the *Shared Prosperity* plan for the area in 2005, recently completed a master plan for its own campus, is the designated community partner working with the Mural Arts Program's *Philly Painting* project, and has been involved throughout this planning process as well. With its proven capacity in land care, The Village is working with NET CDC and Officer Williams on the interim cleaning program, and with the varied creative skills that The Village fosters in local youth, there will be ample opportunities to put talented teens to work in branding and marketing The Avenue and continuing to build a vibrant southern gateway to the commercial district.

Philadelphia Police Department (PPD)
As described above, Officer Williams, of the 25th Police District, and his efforts along commercial corridors present a source of seemingly unparalleled support for The Avenue that can be easily harnessed if coordinated across community development organizations and service providers under the management structure developed for the interim cleaning program to ensure accountability and results. Officer Williams has had great success in developing a business association (from scratch) at Germantown and Erie (now known as GEMA – Germantown Erie Merchants Association) and has ready access to equipment, supplies, and other materials that have enabled improvement projects including sidewalk cleaning, vacant land maintenance, surveillance, and enforcement. At Germantown and Lehigh, Officer Williams has secured community office space in the basement of Liberty Management Services at 1007 Lehigh Avenue. Despite difficulties in the past, Officer Williams has, in partnership with NET CDC, The Village, and Commerce, reinitiated discussions with interested Avenue merchants regarding an active and cooperative Business Partnership to which he can direct available resources and assistance. It is critical that an organized, trusted, and capable Partnership emerge in order to sustain Officer William's efforts over time.

A Business Partnership to Convene and Organize Merchants
The *Community Capacity Analysis* identified a void in the neighborhood – and along The Avenue in particular – in regard to an active association of merchants who are fully engaged, representing the interests of the commercial and retail sector of this community, and marshaling resources for investments to help grow and sustain a vibrant and diverse commercial market place. Though some businesses in the area participate in the Germantown Lehigh Business and Merchants Association (GLBMA), the vast majority of businesses along The Avenue (90 percent of those surveyed) report that they are not involved in a community group or business association at present, mostly due to infrequent meetings and lack of activity and action. However, there is a core group of long-term merchants and those newer to The Avenue who care deeply about the commercial corridor and the community and have expressed interest in reigniting an Avenue Business Partnership – organized and led by active Avenue merchants – to help foster revitalization in concert with Mural Arts' *Philly Painting* investment and other implementation efforts. NET CDC and Officer Williams have agreed to work together with the merchants to fill the existing business association void.

Other organizations interviewed as part of the *Community Capacity Analysis* who are working in close proximity to The Avenue, although not on issues that pertain directly to the commercial district, include:

Historic Fair Hill (formerly Fair Hill Burial Ground)
The mission of Historic Fair Hill is to restore and preserve the Historic Fair Hill burial ground as: a) a green space and source of peacefulness in an urban neighborhood; b) part of Quaker history in Philadelphia; c) a contribution to the restoration of this neighborhood; and d) an opportunity to carry forward the cause of equality for all people, which was the life work of many now buried there." At the five-acre historic Quaker burial ground and final resting place of important figures in the abolitionist and women's rights movements, Historic Fair Hill currently organizes fall clean-ups, community gardening, games and activities, and educational opportunities for children and adults, as well as astronomy nights in conjunction with the Franklin Institute. The space is open to the public on weekends in the summer, for workdays and by appointment. Women at the nearby Hannah House also have access to the grounds for exercise.

Historic Fair Hill's priorities are to:

- Ensure that the blocks facing the burial grounds are stable and secure with owners who are actively engaged in preservation of their blocks and the cemetery
- Encourage the reuse of vacant lots and buildings in the immediate area, including the vacant St. Bonaventure Roman Catholic Church at 9th and Cambria and the New Life Cathedral of Praise at 9th and Auburn Street
- Expand and broaden the participation of children in the community in the cultivation of the vegetable garden on their site and using it as an opportunity to engage them in learning about horticulture, fresh foods, and empowerment

As such, Historic Fair Hill's interests align closely with recommendations of the plan as well as initiatives of other community-serving organizations active in the area. The volunteer energies and philanthropic or private funds that Historic Fair Hill can access are clear assets which could – and should – be harnessed in implementing elements of the plan.

Advocates for the West Fairhill Community (AWFC)
Formed in 2004 by a group of concerned and action-ready neighbors seeking to promote a safer and healthier neighborhood, the AWFC's mission is to strengthen the Fairhill community spiritually, politically, and economically through outreach and networking. The group represents a small but dedicated cadre of residents and leaders working quietly, somewhat behind the scenes, and without significant resources. Members are focused on neighborhood beautification, empowering the community to bring about family unity and change, and creating a positive environment for local children. The have identified the overlooked Ross Park, located in the triangle at Germantown and Clearfield (see Recommendation 3.6), as a priority project and recently received a $6,500 grant from the City's Recreation Department to make improvements to the sitting area there. They have also been working with residents at WCRP's Evelyn Sanders Townhomes on organizing and advocacy efforts, particularly pertaining to vacant land, and have expressed interest in helping to implement recommendations in the plan, especially the recommendations about preserving yards and gardens.

Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)
WCRP is a non-profit community-based development organization committed to social and economic equity for low-income women and their families. The organization was established in 1986 by a group of women in Eastern North Philadelphia, one of the nation's poorest communities. WCRP has built 175 affordable rental townhouses and has an additional 50 units planned for development. They have worked with women and their families to turn abandoned, vacant lots into gardens, neighborhood parks, and playgrounds. WCRP also assists community organizations in developing facilities that serve low-income families, and provides housing counseling and supportive services. Advocacy is a final element of the WCRP mission, and throughout their work, WCRP has built the capacity of constituents to lead the organization and carry out campaigns to change public policies and win resources for the community.

In the Fairhill neighborhood, WCRP built and manages 54 units between 7th and 8th Streets at Somerset (Adolfina Villanueva) and 71 units at Percy and Hutchinson (Evelyn Sanders). In the mid-1990s, WCRP also provided low-interest loans and grants to over 150 low-income households for home repairs in this neighborhood. With their recent Evelyn Sanders development, WCRP has not only stabilized several blocks north of the burial ground, but has established additional neighborhood capacity through their trained tenant leadership and resident advocates. WCRP's current policy, advocacy, and planning work on land trusts could bring research regarding the use of a land trust for equitable development activities on vacant land in the area to the neighborhood, and their multi-year grant from the from the U.S. Department of Agriculture could improve this community's access to fresh and affordable foods through farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture buying clubs, and the Food Trust's Healthy Corner Store Initiative.

BUILDING CAPACITY Along The Avenue

The *Community Capacity Analysis* concludes that there is indeed capacity in the community, though not necessarily a strong track record of collaboration. Though relations between groups have been contentious in the past, new partnerships are emerging, and cooperative efforts will certainly aid applications to continue to build capacity and raise funds to support implementation activities. Building capacity, particularly for the commercial corridor, is crucial for the plan's success in implementation. As local community organizations are already busy and hard at work, capacity will need to be built not only though collaboration on projects where missions align and capabilities are complementary, but through the creation of new roles and positions put into place to drive implementation activities.

5.1 Hire a Corridor Manager by Applying for Corridor Management Funds from the Commerce Department

>> EARLY ACTION

First and foremost, The Avenue needs a corridor manager – a paid staff person tasked with building upon the plan, maintaining the momentum built by the *Philly Painting* process, raising funds, and coordinating with the emerging Business Association, community organizations, volunteers, and City agencies, to put the plan's recommendations into place. The Commerce Department has a Corridor Management program which could fund or partially fund this position, and NET CDC together with The Village and The Avenue Business Partnership should apply in the next funding round. In the meantime, Commerce should consider whether a corridor manager could be hired in the near-term on an interim basis, in a model reflecting the interim cleaning program.

Recommended tasks for the corridor manager are highlighted in the implementation matrix at the end of this report, but additional tasks could include maintaining an up-to-date inventory of commercial vacancies, building a relationship with the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA), and assuming grant writing responsibilities to make programs and improvements sustainable over time.

5.2 Raise Funds to Retain the Cleaning Program Manager

>> EARLY ACTION

The interim cleaning program funded by Commerce and coordinated by NET CDC in partnership with The Village covers basic materials as well as staff time for program management. NET CDC has hired a program manager who works with a member of The Village's staff to oversee the volunteers provided by Liberty Management Services, ensure quality results, coordinate timely pickups of the collected trash, and purchase or organize procurement of necessary supplies and equipment. Now that the program has started, the NET and Village staff charged with running the program have ironed out kinks in the work flow and learned a lot already. Their skills, experience, and the relationships they are building on The Avenue with merchants and others are valuable and must be retained. Funding must be secured to ensure that the cleaning program remains in place after the initial six months, and The Village has already submitted for a Corridor Cleaning grant in response to the Commerce Department's RFP. These Corridor Cleaning funds must be sought at every granting cycle to maintain the work that has gotten underway.

5.3 Organize Merchants through The Avenue Business Partnership

>> EARLY ACTION

As mentioned above, an active association of businesses with full participation of Avenue merchants has been lacking at Germantown and Lehigh, but at a recent meeting hosted by Planning and Commerce to introduce the plan and *Philly Painting* design concept, several merchants and religious leaders agreed to start meeting with Officer Williams and NET CDC to reactivate a Business Partnership for The Avenue. The Partnership needs a formal structure, with a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, as well as participation by as many merchants and service providers along The Avenue as possible. With his experience at Germantown and Erie, Officer Williams is prepared to offer invaluable guidance.

The results of the business survey, as documented in this plan, summarize some of the main topics that The Avenue Business Partnership must address, among them coordination with City agencies as planned investments in public art and streetscape improvements move forward, improved safety and better lighting, cleaner sidewalks, storefront improvements, marketing and branding, and establishing a culture of local hiring practices. The Corridor Manager and Cleaning Program Manager would serve as liaisons between the Business Partnership and other community organizations to ensure that revitalization efforts are coordinated and meeting the needs of merchants and residents, alike.

5.4 Provide Technical Assistance to NET CDC

>> EARLY ACTION

NET CDC has demonstrated focused commitment to The Avenue's revitalization and strong community support, earning the organization the recognition from Avenue merchants and City agencies necessary to position NET to take a lead role in implementing the recommendations outlined by this plan. To help NET grow into this important role, the City and others should continue to provide technical assistance along the following lines:

- **Board development** – to enhance NET's internal governance, program oversight, and accountability (bylaws, directors/officers, liability insurance, record keeping, etc.), which is essential for attracting public and private funding and serving as good stewards of the capital needed to operate and sustain services provided. The types of skills recommended to complement the strong resident contingent on the existing Board include: real estate management, legal, planning/design, and project financing.

- **A strategic plan** – to guide the organization's development and mission as it evolves to embrace a greater focus on corridor revitalization and economic development.

- **Performance-based fee for service contracts** – to offset their operating and managing costs across three program areas in which core competencies exist: community building, corridor and adjacent block area cleaning, and safety and security improvements.

- **Formalized partnerships** - through a standing committee established to help guide revitalization initiatives on the Corridor now that this plan is complete. The committee should include members of the Advisory Committee, Commerce and PCPC, plus additional residents and merchants to oversee corridor implementation initiatives.

Possible consulting resources to help NET work on board development, program development, resource development, and organizational strategic planning include the Philadelphia Foundation, the Nonprofit Center at La Salle University, the Regional Foundation Center at the Free Library, Young Involved Philadelphia's Board Prep program, and VISTA/PhillyFellows, which requires an organization to provide a matching contribution toward salary in the amount of $12,500 per year.

The recommendations contained in this plan are intended to target established City funding streams including the Commerce Department's Corridor Management, Corridor Cleaning, and Storefront Improvement Programs, and City Council's ReStore initiative as well as Community Development Block Grant monies, HOME funds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, and New Market Tax Credits. Additional resources are available, and should be targeted to maximize the impact of investment on The Avenue at Germantown and Lehigh.

5.5 Work with Commerce to Identify Special Projects Eligible for Neighborhood Economic Development Grants

>> EARLY ACTION

The Department of Commerce, together with the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD), awards matching grants to qualified non-profit organizations and community development corporations for "neighborhood economic development." The grant money may be used for planning, pre-development, or development opportunities in low- and moderate-income areas and can be used to cover architectural or engineering services and project gap financing among other tasks. Local organizations interested in implementing a component of the plan should work with Commerce to determine whether a Neighborhood Economic Development Grant would be competitive.[26]

5.6 Work with Commerce and the North Central Empowerment Zone Board to Identify Economic Development Projects Eligible for Neighborhood Funding Stream Grants

>> EARLY ACTION

The North Central Empowerment Zone extends into the study area of this plan, encompassing the area bound by Germantown Avenue, Lehigh Avenue, 13th Street, and the rail line. In 2004, the Empowerment Zone partnered with the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania to create a Neighborhood Funding Stream established by members of the local Community Trust Boards of the American Street and North Central Empowerment Zones. The Neighborhood Funding Stream is an endowment from which grants can be made to community organizations working to support funding priorities, such as "sustainable community and economic development efforts in culturally and ethnically diverse communities" that foster a "healthy, self-sufficient, and safe environment for community stakeholders and residents."[27] Commerce and PCPC, together with community partners, should inquire with the North Central Empowerment Zone's Community Trust Board regarding an application for Neighborhood Funding.

5.7 Reapply for a Community Land Care Contract

>> EARLY ACTION

The Village is one of the community-based organizations with which the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society contracts for vacant land maintenance assistance through their Community Land Care program. Though resources are tight, PHS should continue to fund The Village's work along and in the area surrounding Germantown Avenue in particular to reinforce the City's investment in the commercial district.

5.8 Work Together as a Network of Community-Based Organizations to Attract Private and Philanthropic Funds for The Avenue as well as In-Kind Services

As the different community groups working in the area digest the recommendations in this plan and make decisions about elements that fit with their missions and priorities, efforts should be made not only to form strategic partnerships in program offerings and service provision, but also in fundraising for common goals – equitable economic development and a revitalized Germantown Avenue. Each organization should consider ways in which they can contribute in-kind services, but also new ways in which they can draw on their funders to support the implementation of this plan.

26 http://www.phila.gov/commerce/comm/lvl_2/mbat_neighborhood.htm

27 http://www.uwsepa.org/Programs_NFS.asp

9 Next Steps in IMPLEMENTATION

NOW THAT THE PLAN IS COMPLETE

The *Early Action Plan for Germantown and Lehigh* marked one step in the planning process for this plan, *Along The Avenue: The Economic Development Strategic Plan for Germantown and Lehigh*. Intended to guide critical next steps by the City and community leaders, define the roles of City agencies and community groups, and lay important groundwork necessary to secure initial funding for implementation of *Along The Avenue*, the *Early Action Plan* has succeeded as:

- **A play book for important next steps in implementation and coordination** by City agencies and community partners who have been collaborating in the creation of the strategy
- **A road map for early successes** that demonstrate the City's commitment to sustained investment and revitalization efforts along this important and historic commercial corridor
- **A jump start for positive change** that at once builds local capacity to carry out elements of the final economic development strategy and proves that *Along The Avenue* will catapult years of talking – and planning – into visible, tangible, transformative action

Now that *The Economic Development Strategic Plan* is complete, there are several important next steps:

The first action item is to present the plan to the Philadelphia City Planning Commission for adoption as part of the Comprehensive Plan – the document that guides PCPC in future policy and development decisions at Germantown and Lehigh and informs the upcoming District Planning process. A copy of the plan should also be delivered to Council President Darrell Clarke, Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez, and the Philadelphia Housing Authority. The intent is to raise awareness that significant strides have been made to coordinate between efforts and start implementing for corridor revitalization.

The plan should also be shared with all members of the Advisory Committee convened to oversee the planning process as well as local partner organizations and foundations who may have a natural role and interest in supporting implementation efforts, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), Community Design Collaborative (CDC), Merchants Fund, and North Central Empowerment Zone Community Trust Board, among them.

The next step, as mentioned in Recommendation 5.4 under Formalized Partnerships, is to organize an Implementation Committee comprising Advisory Committee members, new staff hired to manage the corridor cleaning program, new members of the emerging Business Partnership, as well as resident and youth representatives. The Implementation Committee should be accountable for tracking the status of the plan and overseeing the progress of distinct working groups assigned to take ownership of different elements of the plan. The Implementation Committee should meet quarterly so that the working groups can report back on progress, road blocks, and implementation targets for the following quarter.

Lastly, this plan can – and should – be updated in coming months and years. The combined investments planned for Germantown and Lehigh are unprecedented in the City, and an effort must be made to measure the short- and long-term impact of such coordinated efforts to introduce transformative public art, business support, and streetscape improvements along with technical assistance for increased local capacity. This plan and the data it contains establish a baseline against which to measure progress, and such progress should be measured annually by a corridor manager and every five years by an update of the plan.

Indeed, the completion of this document does not signal an end to the planning or coordination process. Rather, this is still the beginning of what promises to be a strong working relationship between City agencies and community partners all invested in The Avenue and its future. Continued involvement by all parties is key for implementation, and the vibrant *Philly Painting* murals unfolding along The Avenue this spring and summer should serve as a reminder of the hard work to date and an inspiration for all to sustain positive change and welcome the return of The Avenue as a destination for art, commerce, and culture in the heart of North Philadelphia.

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

The following implementation matrix details the time frame, staffing roles and organizational responsibilities, potential funding sources, and estimated costs for each recommendation to help guide and keep track of progress in implementing the plan's components. The spreadsheet should be used actively and updated as implementation moves forward. It should be noted that costs are preliminary and will need to be revised, and although a number of potential funding sources are identified, the City and community partners will need to determine the most attainable source of funds at the time fundraising efforts are underway.

Figure 40: Implementation Matrix

Implementation Matrix Glossary

ABP	The Avenue Business Partnership
APM	Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha for Everyone
AWFC	Advocates for the West Fairhill Community
BYD	Bureau of Young Designers
CDBG	Community Development Block Grants
CDC	Community Design Collaborative
Commerce	Philadelphia Department of Commerce
FTA	Federal Transportation Administration
GEMA	Germantown Erie Merchants Association
H&H	Haas & Hahn (Dutch Artists Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn)
HFH	Historic Fair Hill (Burial Ground)
HRP	Homeownership Rehabilitation Program
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
LIHTC	Low Income Housing Tax Credits
LISC	Local Initiatives Support Corporation
LMS	Liberty Management Services
MAP	Mural Arts Program
MDO	Managing Director's Office
MOTU	Mayor's Office of Transportation & Utilities
NCEZ CTB	North Central Empowerment Zone Community Trust Board
NCEZ NFS	North Central Empowerment Zone Neighborhood Funding Stream
NED	Neighborhood Economic Development Grant
NET	Neighborhood Enrichment and Transformation Community Development Corporation
NMTC	New Market Tax Credits
OHCD	Office of Housing and Community Development
PCPC	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PHA	Philadelphia Housing Authority
PHDC	Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation
PHS	Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
PPD	Philadelphia Police Department
PRA	Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
SCI	Sustainable Communities Initiative (a LISC program)
Streets	Streets Department
The Village	The Village of Arts and Humanities
THPP	Targeted Housing Preservation Program

Implementation Matrix

▶ Early Action Strategies Indicated by: ▶

NEXT STEPS Now that the Economic Development Strategy is Complete

	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
▶	**Present this plan to the Planning Commission for adoption as part of the City's comprehensive plan**	Immediate	PCPC, Commerce with NET & The Village	-	-
▶	**Present the Plan to Elected Officials and Other Public and Non-Profit Agencies Who May Have a Role or Interest in Implementation**	Immediate	Commerce, PCPC	-	-
	Share plan with the Offices of Council President Darrell Clarke and Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez				
	Share elements of plan with PHA, OHCD, PRA				
	Share elements of plan with PHS, LISC, CDC, Merchants Fund, NCEZ CTB				
▶	**Organize an Implementation Committee**	Immediate	Commerce, PCPC, NET, ABP, The Village	-	-
	Convene another Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the transition to an Implementation Committee				
	In addition to Advisory Committee members, recruit additional representatives from resident, merchant (Business Partnership), and youth communities				
	Hire a Corridor Manager (Recommendation 5.1) to Co-Chair the Implementation Committee				
	Assign responsibilities for Immediate and Year 1 strategies based on members' core competencies & interests				
	Schedule quarterly check-in meetings				
▶	**Plan for Plan Updates**	Year 1	PCPC, Commerce, MAP, Implementation Committee representative	-	-
	Meet to discuss metrics and schedule for measuring the impact of investments along The Avenue				
	Train the Corridor Manager to track changes along the corridor				
	Follow up in five years with a plan update to document progress, evaluate relevancy of recommendations, and revise strategies for continued economic development				

1 Ready for the Limelight

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
CLEANING ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**1.1 - Reinstate the Cleaning Program**	Immediate	NET, The Village, LMS, 25th District	Commerce Department: Interim Grant + Corridor Cleaning Grant	**$27,375**
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Launch an Interim Cleaning Program	DONE	NET, The Village	Commerce	$27,375
	Respond to the Commerce Department's Corridor Cleaning RFP	DONE	The Village		
	Coordinate with MDO, 25th District, and GEMA to procure and pool necessary supplies	Immediate	NET, The Village, 25th District, ABP		
	Reach out to APM LISC to coordinate cleaning efforts along Germantown Avenue with SCI North's efforts	Immediate	NET, The Village, APM		
	Develop measurement criteria and track impact of cleaning program	Immediate	NET, The Village, Commerce		
	Formalize the Interim Cleaning Program into a sustained effort to keep The Avenue Clean	Year 1	NET, The Village, LMS, 25th District, ABP, APM	Commerce / LISC	
▶	**1.2 - Secure New Trash Cans for The Avenue**	Immediate	NET, The Village, Streets	MDO, ReStore	**$31,940**
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Request wire bin trash cans from MDO - at least 12, in order to place two bins per block on each side of The Avenue on the 2600, 2700, and 2800 blocks	Immediate	NET, 25th District, Streets	MDO	$1,000 each, including installation
	Work with Streets to incorporate Big Belly units or corridor-specific bins in the ReStore streetscape improvements	Year 1	NET, 25th District, ABP, Streets, Commerce	ReStore	$4,985 each for trash can + recycling bin, including installation
▶	**1.3 - Campaign to Keep The Avenue Clean**	Immediate	NET, ABP, Streets	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Bring representatives from the Streets Department's UnLitter Us Network and Recycling Rewards program to share information with residents at a community meeting	Immediate	NET		
	Bring representatives from the Streets Department's SWEEP initiative to share information with merchants at a Business Partnership meeting	Immediate	ABP, Corridor Manager		

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
SAFETY ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**1.4 - Link Merchants with Resources for Combating Criminal Activity**	Immediate	NET, PPD, ABP	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Share details about the Safe Cam program at an ABP meeting and follow up with merchants individually to encourage registration in the program	Immediate	NET, PPD, ABP		
	Develop and distribute a flyer to remind merchants and store managers that 311 is an anonymous tool for reporting non-emergency issues and explain how to partner with NET & Philly Rising to fight crime	Year 1	NET, PPD, ABP, Philly Rising		
▶	**1.5 - Coordinate with the 22nd Police District on the Proposed Commercial Corridor Policing Pilot Project in ROC North: East**	Year 1	Commerce, PPD, NET, ABP, Corridor Manager	-	-
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Invite a representative from the 22nd District to attend all planning and coordination meetings				
	1.6 - Improve Storefront Lighting	Immediate	Commerce, ABP, Corridor Manager	SIP, Merchant Investment	variable
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Prepare and share a pricing and benefits information packet about façade lights and security grilles for merchants interested in the SIP	Immediate	Commerce		exterior mounted lighting for buildings: $500 - $1,000 each; security grates: $4,000 each for new, semi-transparent, $2,000 for basic grate
	Negotiate a bulk purchase and installation rate from selected vendors and work with merchants to invest as part of a collective effort to brighten The Ave	Year 2	ABP, Corridor Manager		
	1.7 - Enhance Street and Sidewalk Lighting at the Pedestrian and Street Scale	Year 2	Commerce, Streets	ReStore	Included in Rec 3.9
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Ensure that new LED technology is a component of the ReStore streetscape improvements and planned capital investment (Recommendation 3.9)	Year 1	Commerce, Streets		LED upgrades to existing lights: $400 per light
	1.8 - Continue to Explore an Outdoor Surveillance Camera Plan for The Avenue	Year 3	25th District, Streets, property owners		
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Build upon research and relationships at Germantown & Erie to bring improved surveillance to The Avenue at Lehigh		25th District		$40 - $400 for individual outdoor cameras, not including installation
	Prune trees to enable clear sight lines		Dept of Parks and Recreation		

2 Open for Business

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
BUSINESS SUPPORT ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**2.1 - Link Merchants with Resources for Storefront Improvements and Interior Upgrades**	Immediate	Commerce, NET, ABP, The Merchants Fund, LISC, CDC	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Reach out the Pat Blakey at The Merchants Fund and invite her to attend a walking tour along The Avenue with Commerce, Mural Arts, Haas and Hahn. Determine whether there is (or could be) a Merchants Fund grant program available at present or anticipated in the near future that might be a good fit for local business owners. Determine whether The Merchants Fund could provide technical assistance to area business people looking to grow or improve their business or store.		Commerce, NET, ABP, Corridor Manager	The Merchants Fund / Business Stabilization & Loan Matching Grants	
	Continue outreach to merchants to encourage broad participation in Commerce's Storefront Improvement Program		Commerce, Corridor Manager	SIP, merchant investment	matching grant, up to $8,000 / storefront
	Reach out to the Community Design Collaborative (CDC) to investigate the possibility of *pro bono* storefront design work for merchants participating in SIP		Commerce, CDC	CDC Service Grant	$1,500
▶	**2.2 - Bring Merchandising and Marketing Assistance to Businesses**	Immediate	Commerce, ABP, NET	LISC, The Merchants Fund	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Inquire with Iola Harper, Director of LISC's SCI West and Principal of IgC LLC, about the availability of a small business marketing expert to help with merchandising and window displays for merchants within the Mural Arts target area.		Commerce	LISC	
	Determine whether The Merchants Fund could provide technical assistance to area business people in need of merchandising help.		Commerce, ABP, NET	The Merchants Fund / Business Stabilization & Loan Matching Grants	
▶	**2.3 - Reach Out to Vendors to Include Them in Business Improvement Discussions**	Year 1	Commerce, ABP, NET	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Convene a special meeting with existing vendors as well as merchants who were once vendors on The Avenue to discuss the costs and benefits of a storefront lease				
▶	**2.4 - Develop a Multi-Media Marketing Approach**	Immediate	The Village, ABP	Commerce's Implementation Grant Program	$25,000
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Develop and maintain a website for ABP, highlighting existing merchants and targeting tourists drawn by *Philly Painting*				$20,000
	Develop and distribute t-shirts and reusable tote-bags with the brand developed for The Avenue (Rec 2.5)				$5,000

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
	2.5 - Use the Mural Arts Design to Brand The Avenue	Year 1	The Village, ABP, H&H, MAP	Commerce's Implementation Grant Program or The Merchants Fund	$5,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Develop a curriculum for Corridor Branding project by the Bureau of Young Designers (BYD)	DONE	The Village		
	Build support among Business Partnership members and merchants and solicit contributions to match potential Merchants Fund grant	Immediate	ABP	Include with Commerce Implementation Grant or collect from ABP members	$2,500
	Apply for a Special Grant from The Merchants Fund	Immediate	ABP	The Merchants Fund	$2,500
	2.6 - Host Events to Bring People Back to The Avenue	Years 1-5	MAP, ABP, Corridor Manager, NET, The Village	Philadelphia Cultural Fund, Pew Charitable Trust	$15,000 per event
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Determine the schedule and appropriate kind of event(s) to be featured along The Avenue		Implementation Committee		
	Partner with the Mural Arts Program's mural tours to ensure that tours of *Philly Painting* benefit local merchants		MAP, ABP		
	Design, print and distribute promotional postcards, flyers, etc		The Village		$5,000

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**2.7 - Recruit New Businesses to Fill Key Commercial Vacancies**	Years 1-5	Commerce, Corridor Manager	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Maintain up-to-date list of commercial vacancies and expand list to detail features and amenities of these properties		Corridor Manager		
	Encourage local hiring practices and link interested employers with eligible candidates		Corridor Manager		
▶	**2.8 - Begin to Investigate the Possibility of a Mixed Use Infill Development in the 2800 Block, just North of Somerset**	Year 1	Commerce, PCPC, PHA, PRA, nonprofit developer	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Transfer ownership of vacant parcels from PHA to the city for disposition to a developer		PHA, PRA, Commerce		
	Determine cost and opportunity of rehabilitation versus demolition and new construction		PHA, PRA, Commerce		
	Develop an RFP for interested developers to initiate process		PRA, Commerce, PCPC		
	2.9 - Encourage Merchants to Purchase Vacant City-Owned Lots as Accessory Parking Spaces	Year 1-3	ABP, PCPC, Commerce, PRA	-	-
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Convene a meeting with merchants to determine the level of interest in taking ownership of City-owned parcels to create off-street parking spaces for businesses		PCPC, Commerce, ABP		
	Help merchants navigate new vacant land disposition process on phillylandworks.org		ABP, PCPC, PRA		
	2.10 - Foster New Business Development at the Southern Gateway of The Avenue Building	Years 1-3	NET, The Village	Commerce/OHCD Neighborhood Economic Development Grant, NMTC, NCEZ NFS	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
▶	Request a pro-bono architectural and engineering evaluation by the Community Design Collaborative of 2565 Germantown Avenue for mixed use reuse by NET	Year 1	NET, CDC	CDC Service Grant	$1,500
▶	Proceed with acquisition of publicly-owned parcels within Creative Village Master Plan	Immediate	The Village, City agencies		
	Partner with experienced developer to pull together financing and oversee redevelopment	Years 1-3	NET & The Village		
	2.11 - Stay Involved in Discussions about the Reuse of the Vacant Salvation Army Building	Years 1-5	The Village, NET, Commerce, PCPC	-	-
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Refer potential operators or interested parties with a mission that meets a community need to the Salvation Army to help reopen this asset to the neighborhood and draw more traffic near The Avenue				
	2.12 - In the Long-Term, Consider Live-Work at the Former ACME Wire and Breyers Buildings	Year 5	NET, PCPC	-	-
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Maintain long-term vision for future reuse of these buildings and be prepared to communicate that vision to property owners interested in redevelopment				
	2.13 - Re-Zone for a More Vital Commercial District Surrounded by Housing and Open Space	Years 2-5	PCPC, City Council, Community Input	-	-

3 Expressive of Local Talent, Creative Energy & Authenticity

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
PUBLIC ART ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**3.1 - Partner with Mural Arts, Dutch Artists Haas and Hahn, and The Village in the Design and Installation of Large-Scale Murals that Transform The Avenue**	Ongoing	Mural Arts Program, The Village, Commerce	Commerce, Knight Foundation, Bank of America	$215,000
	3.2 - Beyond Façades, Consider Additional Surfaces for Public Art	Years 2-5	Mural Arts Program, Commerce, Streets, SEPTA	Commerce, Streets, ReStore, Foundations	$210,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Continue discussions with SEPTA about painting the old trolley poles in conjunction with *Philly Painting*		Mural Arts, Commerce, SEPTA		$40,000
	As planning for the ReStore Streetscape improvements get underway (Rec 3.9), coordinate with Streets about extending the mural landscape into the crosswalks		Mural Arts, Streets		$120,000
	To raise awareness about *Philly Painting* , coordinate with SEPTA to wrap the 23 bus in a design reflective of the *Philly Painting* patterns		Mural Arts, SEPTA	FTA, Foundations	$15,000 per bus
	3.3 - Restore Historic Signs as Sculptural Objects to Integrate History with a New Image for The Avenue	Years 3-5	Commerce, Historical Commission, Preservation Alliance, ABP, Property Owners	LISC, Foundations	$27,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Develop a pilot Save Our Signs matching grant program, similar to SIP		Commerce, Historical Commission, Preservation Alliance		
	Develop a list of approved artists, manufacturers, and restorators to partner with property owners		Commerce, Preservation Alliance		
	Reach out to property owners with historic signs to gauge interest and recruit participants for the pilot program		Commerce, ABP, Property Owners		$3,000 per sign
	3.4 - Work with Property Owners to Transform Vacant Storefronts into Temporary Gallery Spaces	Years 1-5	ABP, The Village, PHA, Property Owners	-	-
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Reach out to PHA at Warnock Village and owners of vacant storefronts with see-through security grilles to start discussions about displaying art along the corridor in blank windows				

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
HISTORY & CULTURE ALONG THE AVENUE					
	3.5 - Reclaim Excess Road Space on Both Ends of the Commercial District for Pedestrian Plazas	Years 1-2	Commerce, Streets, MOTU, The Village	ReStore, Pedestrian Plaza Program, LISC, NCEZ NFS	$125,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	As planning for the ReStore Streetscape improvements get underway (Rec 3.9), coordinate with Streets about extending the sidewalk to create two bumpouts with pedestrian amenities on The Avenue		Commerce, Streets	ReStore	$70,000
	In the interim, if MOTU reissues the Pedestrian Plaza RFP, apply for funding for a plaza and programming in the 2500 block		The Village, MOTU	Pedestrian Plaza Program	$20,000
	Work with a design-build consultant, like Public Workshop, and Streets to develop and install custom-designed, youth-built bus shelters		The Village, Streets	LISC	$10,000
	Program the space throughout the year to draw people to The Avenue		The Village, ABP	NCEZ NFS	$25,000
	3.6 - Revive Ross Park to Reflect Community Pride and Grass Roots Efforts	Years 1-5	AWFC	Council, CDC Service Grant, City	$40,265
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Reach out to Council Women Quinones-Sanchez's office for support	DONE	AWFC	7th Council District	$6,500
	Investigate the potential for pro-bono landscape design services by the Community Design Collaborative	Years 1-2	AWFC, CDC	CDC Service Grant	$1,500
	Coordinate within the City to keep up to date with community initiatives and endeavor to support their work with scheduled City maintenance and investment	Years 3-5	PCPC, Dept of Parks & Rec	City	$3 - $5.5/SF for basic improvements
	3.7 - Rename 12th & Cambria Recreation Center to Reference Local History and Strengthen the Link between Green Resources	Year 3	Implementation Committee, Dept of Parks & Rec, City Council	--	--
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Reach out to network of constituents to ask for naming ideas		AWFC, HFH, WCRP, NET. PHA		
	Work with City Council to introduce a resolution to rename the park.		Implementation Committee, City Council, Dept of Park & Rec		
STREETS & SIDEWALKS ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**3.8 - Alert Area Merchants about the Pending Roadway Improvements along Lehigh Avenue**	Immediate	PennDOT, MOTU, ABP, NET	--	--
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Determine construction schedule and provide merchants with notice				
▶	**3.9 - ReStore The Avenue's Public Realm in Keeping with Façade Enhancements by Mural Arts**	Years 1-2	PCPC, Commerce, Streets, Implementation Committee	ReStore	$3,000,000
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Coordinate with Streets and the Implementation Committee to ensure that the engineering and construction documents reflect the ideas in this plan		PCPC, Commerce		
	3.10 - Maintain Existing Street Trees and Adopt a Planting Strategy that Complements the Murals	Immediate	Dept of Parks & Rec	--	--
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Evaluate existing trees to determine which require pruning and which require removal		Dept of Parks & Rec		
	Keep the artwork and sightlines in mind in planning a new planting strategy		Dept of Parks & Rec		Included in Rec 3.9
	Develop a maintenance plan		ABP, The Village		
▶	**3.11 - Grow the Cleaning Program to Include a Landscape Maintenance Component for The Avenue**	Year 1	The Village, PHS's Roots 2 ReEntry	Philly Green Community Land Care Program	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Coordinate vacant land maintenance along Germantown Avenue with the Cleaning Manager		Cleaning Manager, The Village		

4 Surrounded by Good Homes & Neighbors

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
NEW HOMES ALONG THE AVENUE					
	4.1 - Reinforce Assets & Recent Investment with New Residential Development	Years 1-5	subsidized housing developer	CDBG, LIHTC, HOME, Homeownership Choice, private equity	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Assemble privately-owned vacant properties to prepare land for disposition and redevelopment	Years 1-2	PRA		
	Develop an RFP for interested developers to initiate process	Years 1-2	PRA		
	4.2 - Incorporate an Affordable Senior Housing Component in the Redevelopment of the West Side of 2900 Germantown Avenue	Years 1-5	subsidized housing developer	LIHTC, HUD Section 202, private equity	
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Coordinate senior housing component with larger redevelopment of same block (Rec 4.1)				
	4.3 - Address Housing Conditions at the Southern Gateway of The Avenue	Years 1-3	NET, The Village	CDBG, HOME, LIHTC, NMTC	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Continue acquisition / title transfer process for 2565 Germantown Avenue	Immediate	NET, Commerce		
	Proceed with acquisition of publicly-owned parcels within Creative Village Master Plan	Immediate	The Village, City agencies		
	Partner with experienced developer to pull together financing and oversee redevelopment	Years 1-3	NET & The Village		
	4.4 - Complement New Residential Development with Targeted Resources for Rehabilitation	Years 1-5	NET, AWFC, PHDC, private developer	CDBG, HOME, HRP, THPP	$30 - $120 / SF
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Identify and reach out to eligible owner-occupied units near to new affordable housing investments		NET, AWFC, PHDC	THPP	
	Identify and target vacant, distressed houses located on otherwise stable blocks		NET, partner developer, PHDC	HRP	
PRESERVED AMENITIES ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**4.5 - Preserve and Improve Small Parks & Gardens Established on City-Owned Vacant Land**	Year 1	PCPC, PRA, Council, AWFC, The Village	Organizational Resources	variable
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Reach out to current stewards of identified parks and gardens to determine the level of interest in taking ownership of City-owned parcels		PCPC		
	Help stewards navigate new vacant land disposition process on phillylandworks.org		PCPC, PRA		
▶	**4.6 - Sell Small, City-Owned Vacant Lots to Adjacent Homeowners for Reuse as Yards and Driveways**	Year 1	PRA	Individual Resources	variable
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Target outreach to homeowners with adjacent vacant lots on the 2800 and 3000 blocks of North Darien Street		PCPC, AWFC		
	Host a meeting for all residents to share information about purchasing side yards, and walk through the PRA's new online land disposition website (phillylandworks.org)		AWFC, NET, PCPC, PRA		

5 Organized & Active

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
BUILDING CAPACITY ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**5.1 - Hire a Corridor Manager by Applying for Corridor Management Funds from Commerce**	Immediate	NET, ABP, Commerce	Commerce, NCEZ NFS	$40,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Discuss strategy and role of Corridor Manager at meeting with NET, ABP, and Commerce				
	Develop a program model based on the interim cleaning program for an interim corridor manager				
▶	**5.2 - Raise Funds to Retain the Cleaning Program Manager**	Immediate	The Village or NET	Commerce	$54,750
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Convene a meeting with Officer Williams, NET, The Village, and ABP to develop a plan for grant writing to make the corridor cleaning program sustainable over time				
	Appoint an organization to take the lead on reapplying for program funding annually				
▶	**5.3 - Organize Merchants through The Avenue Business Partnership**	Immediate	NET, 25th District, ABP, GEMA, Corridor Manager, Cleaning Manager	NCEZ NFS	--
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Continue to convene planning meetings for emerging ABP & encourage merchants to attend each time				
	Ask Officer Williams and GEMA to advise based on experience at Germantown & Erie				
	Determine initial goals for the ABP and key tasks in the plan that the ABP wishes to take on				
	Establish a formal structure with a President, Vice President, Secretary & Treasurer				
	Work with Corridor & Cleaning Managers as staff/personnel resources for ABP				
▶	**5.4 - Provide Technical Assistance to NET CDC**	Year 1	NET	The Philadelphia Foundation Organizational Effectiveness Grant	$14,000
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Enroll in workshops or a nonprofit consulting relationship with The Nonprofit Center at La Salle		The Nonprofit Center at La Salle University		$1,500
	Reach out to Young Involved Philadelphia (YIP) to learn more about their Board Prep program and consider applying for a match		Young Involved Philadelphia		--
	Investigate the opportunity to hire a Philly Fellow or VISTA volunteer to add staff capacity		VISTA / Philly Fellows		$12,500
	Visit the Regional Foundation Center at the Free Library to learn more about fundraising to grow capacity		Regional Foundation Center at the Free Library		--

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Potential Source of Funds	Estimated Cost
SECURING RESOURCES ALONG THE AVENUE					
▶	**5.5 - Work with Commerce to Identify Special Projects Eligible for Neighborhood Economic Development Grants**	Year 1	Commerce, OHCD	Neighborhood Economic Development Grant	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Schedule a special Implementation Committee meeting with Commerce to discuss strategic projects that would be eligible for NED grant money		Implementation Committee		
	Develop grant application template for Along the Avenue-related projects		Corridor Manager or lead organization		
▶	**5.6 - Work with Commerce and the North Central Empowerment Zone Board to Identify Economic Development Projects Eligible for Neighborhood Funding Stream Grants**	Year 1	North Central Empowerment Zone Community Trust Board	NCEZ NFS	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Schedule a special Implementation Committee meeting with the NCEZ CTB to discuss strategic projects that would be eligible for NFS grant money		Implementation Committee		
	Develop grant application template for Along the Avenue-related projects		Corridor Manager or lead organization		
▶	**5.7 - Reapply for a Community Land Care Contract**	Annually	PHS, The Village	Philly Green Community Land Care Program	
	Key Initial Action Steps				
	Work with PHS to ensure that vacant lots along or visible from Germantown Avenue are targeted within the Community Land Care contract inventory				
	Coordinate vacant land maintenance along Germantown Avenue with the Cleaning Manager		Cleaning Manager		
	5.8 - Work Together as a Network of Community-Based Organizations to Attract Private and Philanthropic Funds for The Avenue as well as In-Kind Services	Ongoing	Implementation Committee	--	--
	Key Initial Action Step				
	Ensure representation and active participation of all key community groups on the Implementation Committee				

10 Appendix

GERMANTOWN AVENUE BUSINESS SURVEY SUMMARIZED BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

UNDER SEPARATE COVER

Early Action Plan for Germantown and Lehigh by Interface Studio
Commercial & Residential Market Study by Real Estate Strategies
Community Capacity Analysis by Wilson Associates

Along The Avenue

the ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN for GERMANTOWN and LEHIGH

Germantown & Lehigh Business Survey

tell us what YOU think

The Commerce Department and Philadelphia City Planning Commission are sponsoring two projects at Germantown & Lehigh:

* an economic development strategy to help revitalize the commercial corridor and
* an exciting public art project with Mural Arts and The Village to bring more shoppers to the Ave

Thank you for filling out this business survey. Your input will help guide both projects.

This is your market place... YOUR OPINIONS MATTER.

TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Business Name: _____ Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Do you own or lease your retail space? ☐ own ☐ lease

If you lease, please provide contact information for the property owner:

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

Type of Business: _____

How long have you operated a business in the area? _____

Do you have any other stores? ☐ yes ☐ no If yes, how many? _____

Where are they located? _____

How many employees do you have? _____ full-time _____ part-time

What are your hours of business?

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN

What are your busiest times/days of operation?

What have been your sales trends over the past year? ☐ increasing ☐ keeping with inflation ☐ declining

If increasing or declining, to what do you attribute this change? _____

Within the next 2 years, what do you plan to do?

☐ expand ☐ stay about the same ☐ downsize or close business ☐ other

If planning any changes, why? _____

turn over...

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS

Where do your customers come from?

_____ % surrounding area (5-6 blocks or ½ mile) _____ % rest of North Philadelphia

_____ % elsewhere in Philadelphia _____ % outside the City

Are there any unique characteristics of your customers?

How old are most of your customers? _____

Are they mostly men or women? _____

What form of transportation do your customers use?

_____ % public transportation _____ % walk _____ % bike _____ % drive

TELL US ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY

What do you call this neighborhood? _____

What is the brand/identity of the commercial corridor? Or what should it be? _____

_____

What do you like about doing business here? _____

Are there issues in the neighborhood that are hurting your business? Please explain. _____

_____

If so, are they being addressed? ☐ yes ☐ no

Which 3 would most help you improve your business?

- ☐ physical improvements to neighborhood streets
  (circle: lighting, trash cans, better sidewalks, other: _____)
- ☐ improved maintenance/cleanliness
- ☐ more parking
- ☐ better police patrolling/response time
- ☐ better street signage and branding
- ☐ coordinated marketing for businesses
- ☐ addition of businesses that would complement the services or products you supply
- ☐ affordable façade improvement program
- ☐ support and advice on how to strengthen business management and improve profitability
- ☐ information on and access to funding to improve energy efficiency and reduce utility costs
- ☐ other: _____

In 3 words, describe the shopping experience you would like your customers to have on Germantown Ave:

_____ _____ _____

Are you a member of any business associations or community groups in the area? ☐ yes ☐ no

If so, which one?

If you have additional comments, please write them below:

thanks!!

BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS SUMMARY

INTERFACE STUDIO LLC
NET CDC

SUMMARY

SURVEY DATES:

10/13, 10/20, 10/31, 11/7

SURVEY BLOCKS:

- 2500 Germantown (2550 and north)
- 2600 Germantown
- 2700 Germantown
- 2800 Germantown (2821 and south)

PARTICIPATION:

- 48 completed (64 percent of businesses present)
- 27 attempted (36 percent of businesses present) (declined or not open at time of survey)
- 28 vacant storefronts (26 percent of total)

MERCHANTS

CLOSURES

- Hector's Live Poultry Shop (2556) – closed pre 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- T&J's Family Restaurant (2603) – summer 2011
- Jenning's Poultry Market (2605) – closed pre 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Hardware Store (2623) – Oct 2011
- Rainbow Kids (2639-41) – reopened Dec 2011 as Al-Minar Books & Islamic Fashion
- Rite Aid (2649-53) – closed pre 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- M&D Fashion City (2612) – closed pre 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Toto Fish & Chips (2636) – Oct 2011
- Metro Sports (2644) – still open at time of 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Silver Spoon Family Restaurant (2737) – different restaurant at time of 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Dave's Bakery (2749) – still open at time of 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Mateen's Barber & Styling (2738) – clothing retailer at time of 2010 survey by Brian Kelly
- Studio 2752 Unisex Salon (2752) – closed pre 2010 survey by Brian Kelly

OWNERSHIP

RENT versus OWN (37 responses):

- 15 own (41 percent)
- 22 rent (59 percent)

OWNERS OF MULTIPLE PROPERTIES ON THE AVE

- Sang Jin Han
- Simon Sherman
- Carlo Magno Castillo
- Milton Kleiman
- Charlie Choe
- Mourad Taoufik
- Val Sigal
- Henry Collins
- Amuoi Truong
- Germantown Investments

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

TYPE	105
Clothing	10
Hair	8
Islamic Fashion, Oils	7
Dollar/Variety	6
Beauty/Accessories	5
Grocer/Produce	5 (one vendor)
Convenience	4
Financial	4 (three seasonal tax shops, one check cashing)
Dry Clean/Laundry	3
Shoes	3
Take Out	3
Nails	3
Day Care	3
Church	3*
Electronics	3
Phones	3
Jewelry	2
Restaurant	2
Music	2
Health/Medical	2
Wholesale	1
Vacant	23*

NOTE: *three churches not included in count of businesses
*three seasonal businesses added to vacant count in text

DURATION OF OPERATION (48 answers)

- MIN = one month
- MAX = 58 years
- AVERAGE = 11.5 years

- less than one year: 13 percent
- one to five years: 33 percent
- six to 10 years: 19 percent
- 11 to 20 years: 14 percent
- longer than 20 years: 21 percent

OTHER STORES

- Most stores on The Ave only have one location
- National Chains: Rainbow, Mobile Trac, Cash Well, MetroPCS, Family Dollar, Cricket
- Stores with Multiple Locations
  - Front Line (urban wear) has a second location in Grays Ferry
  - Shoe Plus has a second location at Broad & Erie
  - Value Plaza has a second Dollar Plus location across the street
- MJ Apparel has a new second location on N 5th at Somerset
  - Hope Rising Child Learning Center has three other locations; ILM Day Care also has multiple locations

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES (48 answers)

- AVERAGE = 2.65
- TOTAL = 126 (NOTE: InfoUSA database records 251 jobs on The Avenue – the businesses we reached represent just half of that number)

HOURS OF OPERATION

- 37 of the 47 businesses surveyed are open Monday through Saturday
  - Of these, 19 are open 9:00 AM – 6:00 PM, with the earliest opening at 7:00 AM and the latest closing at 10:00 PM
  - All but four businesses close by 7:00 PM
  - All but nine close by 6:00 PM
- Eight are open Monday through Sunday
- Two are open only Monday through Saturday

BUSIEST TIMES (out of 47 answers)

- Weekends: 18
- Always slow: 9
- Beginning of month: 7
- It varies: 6
- Morning: 2
- Lunch: 2
- After School: 2 (beauty supplies)
- Summer: 1 (nails)
- "What, here!?"

SALES TREND OVER PAST YEAR (out of 43 answers)

- Declining: 30 (70 percent)
  - Caused by: competition from big corporations, lack of money in the area, bad economy, competition from vendors who sell same goods at lower prices because no overhead, neighborhood deterioration
- Holding Steady: 8
- Increasing: 2
- Up and Down: 2
- Too Soon to Know: 1
- "Declining by 70 percent - four or five years ago, we were always busy" (shoes)

FUTURE PLANS

- Downsize/Close: 4
- Survive: 4
- Expand: 3
- Improve: 2 (start accepting food stamps, add hot food)
- Open store at mall: 1

TELL US ABOUT YOUR CUSTOMERS

WHERE DO THEY COME FROM?

- Surrounding area: 46 (65 percent)
- Elsewhere in North Philly: 10 (14 percent)
- Elsewhere in Philly: 12 (17 percent)
- Outside the City: 3 (four percent)

- "Surrounding area – the neighbors come in, they know me. I have steady customers."
- "They come for emergency purchases. Otherwise, they go to the mall."

HOW DO THEY GET HERE?

- Walk: 36 (49 percent)
- Bus: 18 (24 percent)
- Drive: 17 (23 percent)
- Bike: 3 (four percent)

- "There's no parking."
- "They walk. If they drive, they go to the mall."
- "Walk, Bike, Bus, Car, MOTOR SCOOTER!"

TELL US ABOUT THIS COMMUNITY

NOTE: People struggled to answer the questions about what the brand or identity of this corridor is and what it should be.

NEIGHBORHOOD NAME (48 total)

- The Ave 15
- North Philly 10
- Germantown 6
- Germantown Ave 5
- Germantown & Lehigh 4
- Nearest intersection 3
- The Badlands 2
- Beirut 1
- Temple Area 1
- Ile Ife 1

- "NOT Germantown & Lehigh... people would say, 'What's down there?'"
- "If there's a name for this neighborhood, I don't know it."
- "This is the South Street of North Philly."
- "Singing – there's a lot of talent in this area."

LIKES ABOUT DOING BUSINESS HERE (35 total)

- The people/I know the people 18
- It's what I know 5
- I like the area 5
- The other businesses 2
- I'm the boss 2
- No competition 1
- The area's history 1
- Making money 1

- "I relate to the people. People hang out, keep an eye on me and my business."
- "It's work – keeps me busy; I would close, but I have nowhere to go – no one else would hire me."

LOCAL ISSUES HURTING YOUR BUSINESS (58 total)

- The vacancies 10
- Crime, shoplifting 9
- Slow, no foot traffic 4
- Repetition of goods 4
- No money in area 4
- The Ave looks bad 3
- Neighborhood deterioration 3
- Economy 3
- Guys loitering on Huntingdon 2
- Trash 2
- Competition (Vendors, Mall) 2
- No parking 2
- Crazy people 2
- Fragmented Police Districts 1
- Corrupt community leaders 1
- Temple moving in 1
- No anchor 1
- Need interior renovation 1
- Potholes 1
- Religious tension 1
- Lack of food 1

- "The 2600 block is not as vibrant as the 2700 block – there is competition within The Ave."
- "It gets dark early in the winter, and The Avenue closes up because it's dangerous after dark."
- "Too much of the same stuff."
- "If I had to pay rent, I would have been gone long ago."

WHAT WOULD MOST HELP YOUR BUSINESS (100 total)

- Maintenance/cleaning 15
- Security 15
- Lighting 12
- Physical improvements 10
- Branding/marketing 7
- More parking 7
- Anchor stores 6
- More stores 5
- Trash cans 5
- New signage/merchandising 4
- More food 4
- More variety 2
- New grates 2
- Holiday decorations 2
- Motivation/effort 2
- Jobs 1
- Businesses organized 1

- "More eateries, more ethnic food to attract diverse customers; food will bring people in."
- "Would like to see the apartments above the stores re-occupied."
- "The Ave is going down. We need something fast and good. It's a different place than even five years ago."
- "New businesses should be directed to Germantown Ave, not to Lehigh."

DESCRIBE IDEAL SHOPPING EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR CUSTOMERS

- "Pleasant, happy."
- "Clean, safe, vibrant."
- "Music, good atmosphere."
- "Bargains, unique, eclectic."
- "LOTS of stores – give people something to go to The Ave for..."
- "Clean, well kept, people working together."
- "More respect for the customers and better quality goods."
- "Keep the classic structure – the architecture of the neighborhood. Don't modernize, fold in modern renovations."
- "Lots of people."
- "Ethnically diverse."

MEMBER OF BUSINESS ASSOCIATION OR COMMUNITY GROUP (40 total)

- No 29 ("There are no meetings.")
- Used to be 6
- Would consider it 2
- Yes 2
- Too busy 1

The End