

Chapter 5

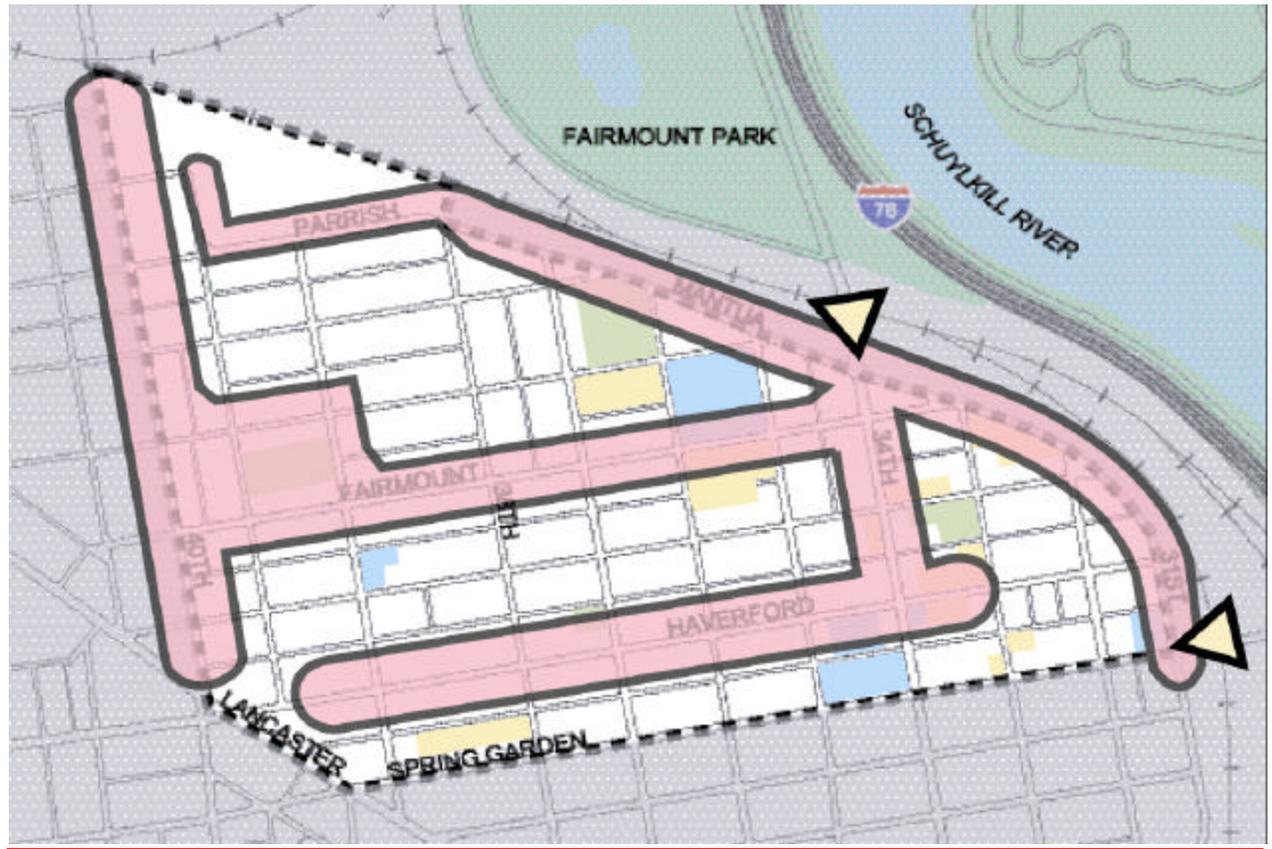
Recommendations

Overview

This section recommends strategies to bolster revitalization activities in Mantua and encourage people and businesses to remain and invest in the neighborhood. The types of recommendations range from general concepts for revitalization to specific actions or catalyst projects that may be appropriate for City investment given limited resources.

The recommendations are the result of a year-long process beginning with a study and analysis of conditions in Mantua. Previous plans and newer data used to develop these recommendations was supplemented by input from community residents, business owners, and elected officials in recognition of the important links between physical revitalization, and support and action by community stakeholders.

The issues that emerged from the community-wide needs assessment and the neighborhood analysis are complex and the challenges associated with addressing them are many and wide-ranging. A main objective of this plan is to support community revitalization efforts, facilitate existing viable development proposals, and to highlight attract interest to largely untapped redevelopment opportunities.



Corridors, edges and gateways recommended for top-priority treatment and improvement

Among the plans that have been formulated for Mantua in the past, there are two plans that are most important in laying a foundation for the recommendations in this report. The first is the KSK/PHA plan of 2003. It contains a complete set of recommendations for the physical renewal of Mantua. The Planning Commission had significant input into this plan and PCPC staff endorses the

plan. The second plan is The Plan for West Philadelphia, 1994. Many of its concepts and recommendations are carried forward to this report.

The recommendations are presented in several categories: major corridors, edges and gateways, housing and community renewal, zoning remapping, blight removal and land stabilization, commercial

and economic development, transportation, recreation, community facilities and support, community based organizations and neighborhood safety.

Goals

- Conduct a planning process that is open and inclusive, with community input
- Utilize some recommendations and strategies from previous plans for Mantua
- Provide guidelines for neighborhood revitalization and renewal
- Establish priorities for action
- Target available resources and programs where they can be used most effectively, with maximum impact
- Leverage investments, both public and private, so that one recommendation can build upon another recommendation for greater impact
- Promote community action to help revitalize the neighborhood
- Recommendations should consider cost, feasibility and the potential for implementation

Revitalizing the Major Corridors, Edges and Gateways

Because of the geographic layout of the community and because of the patterns of investments already underway by various developers, enhancing the major corridors, "edges" and gateways is seen as a high-priority item for Mantua. Improving these sites will allow Mantua be noticed in a new and more favorable light. It is a strategic recommendation designed to attract new investment to the area. Mantua can define its neighborhood boundaries, recognize its culture and history and support its

character and charm by improving its corridors, borders and gateways.

Recommended actions to revitalize the corridors include:

- making these corridors the first priority locations for allocation of resources and programs, including acquisition, marketing and disposition of publicly-owned land;
- encouraging private developers to invest in sites along the corridors; and installing sidewalks, curbs, street trees and other similar "site improvements" to the extent that the City budget will allow. Specific strategies for the corridors are recommended below.

Haverford Avenue Corridor

Recommendation: Create a new Town Center along Haverford Avenue, centered at 34th & Haverford and extending west to include other development opportunities on the Avenue. The Town Center would be a cluster of public facilities and new developments, with new retail and housing and schools, and celebrated with new sidewalks, trees, banners, etc. In terms of land use, it would be a mixed-use corridor. Retail must be included in the mix of uses. In terms of design, it should be a dense urban street with buildings constructed to the street line. This concept will revitalize Haverford Avenue and solidify it as "Mantua's Main Street." This was recommended in the West Phila. Plan, 1994.

Residential development should also be part of the mix of uses along Haverford Ave. In this regard, Peoples Emergency Center CDC is developing

homes west of 37th Street in a project known as "The Cloisters." It is mostly rental housing, new construction, with a smaller amount of homeownership housing also involved. Located on Haverford, Brandywine, 38th and 39th Streets.

Recommendation: install site improvements along the Haverford Avenue Town Center, including new sidewalks, lighting, banners, street trees and signage.

34th & Haverford development site
An important part of the Town Center will be the redevelopment of the RDA-owned site at NW corner 34th & Haverford (site of a former food market.) The current proposal is for mid rise elderly housing, by Presbyterian Homes. This use is acceptable but it will be important for it to include ground floor retail services so the Avenue can have a mix of uses. If the elderly housing is not built, retail development or mixed use development is recommended.

3600 block - development sites
On the north side of Haverford Avenue, vacant land is owned by a charter school. There is considerable vacancy on the south side of the block as well. There is also heavy vacancy to the north, across Mt. Vernon Street extending to Wallace Street, suggesting that the development opportunity could potentially be even larger if it spanned Mt. Vernon Street.

Three possibilities than can work here. All would be beneficial, and all would contribute to the Town Center.

1. Retail development - food market and shopping plaza
2. New community school (north side or south side of Haverford Ave.)
3. Housing (expansion of Cloisters housing initiative)

If retail development is chosen, it should be urban in nature. Buildings should be constructed to the street line and parking situated to the side or rear of commercial buildings.

40th Street Corridor

The 40th Street corridor is an important highway route in West Philadelphia, but conditions are severely blighted. Private developers are interested in building housing. Currently a private developer is proposing new homes along one section of the corridor, and another developer is committed to producing additional housing here. The new housing will extend east to the 39th & Olive playground, to be discussed later under Recreation. The playground will be expanded and new homes will face the playground on all four sides.

Development controls: Sloan Street, running parallel to 40th, should be stricken, allowing for the new housing to have larger lots and lower densities. The new homes should be predominantly twins and singles, with garages or other types of off-street parking. Where possible, parking should be to the rear of the homes. When parking is accessed from the front, the parking space should extend into the side yard between the homes, so the cars can be kept more out of sight; similar to the Spencer's Place design at 36th & Aspen.



Renewal concept for the Haverford Avenue Corridor (PHA & KSK Consultants)



Recommended design of new homes proposed for sections of the Haverford Avenue Corridor (PHA & KSK Consultants)

Public actions: It is not sufficient to plan for housing without also considering the supportive actions that make a housing development complete

and properly coordinated. Many public sector actions will be needed to support the revitalization of 40th Street corridor. Due to budget uncertainties,

these actions are listed below as goals, and not recommendations. Timing issues will require coordination with housing developers. This points out the complexity and expense associated with neighborhood redevelopment. Public actions would include:

Streetscape and landscape

- Site improvements (sidewalks, trees) (OHCD, Capital Program)
- Roadway and lighting (Streets Dept. and Capital Program)
- Reconstruction of 40th St. bridge over AMTRAK (an existing Capital Program project)
- Striking of Sloan Street from the City Plan
- Greening projects on major vacant lots (Horticultural Society & NTI Office)
- NTI cleaning of vacant lots (Managing Director's Office and NTI Office)
- NTI demolitions

Housing

- PHA property transfers and supportive investments

39th & Olive Playground

- RDA acquisition and relocation, for expansion of site to the surrounding streets
- Capital Program: Planning Commission, Recreation Dept. and Capital Program Office

Public Safety

- Targeted police services from Police Dept.

Ongoing Public Support

- PHFA funding commitments
- RDA acquisitions



Conceptual site plan showing the renewal of the 40th Street Corridor (PHA & KSK Consultants)



Elevations showing design of proposed new homes along the 40th Street corridor (PHA & KSK Consultants)

Mantua Avenue Corridor and the Community "Edges"

This is the northern boundary of Mantua. This important edge roadway needs to be beautified and revitalized, and the improvements must be properly maintained over time.

Recommendation: Landscaping and screening should be installed along the Mantua Avenue corridor, especially alongside the unsightly PECO transformer near 38th & Mantua/ 39th & Parrish Streets. At this location, screening should be designed and installed by PECO with community input. Further east along 31st Street near Haverford Avenue, the edge needs to be redesigned with new fencing and landscaping. This is where views are available across the river to the Art Museum; but currently the view is obscured by poor fencing and overgrowth. The new Westbank Greenway will accomplish some, but not all, of these improvements. Large vacant lots at 34th & Mantua should become mini-parks with signs saying, "Welcome to Mantua." Ongoing maintenance of these sites would be an appropriate task for the CDC or SSD.

Recommendation: build the Westbank Greenway which will enhance this community boundary and enhance recreation and transportation access in Mantua.

Recommendation: The City should make a request to the federal government and federal elected officials to designate funds in the AMTRAK budget to make site improvements along the edge of the railroad. These funds would pay for new

fencing and landscaping/ trimming, augmenting the Westbank Greenway project.

The gateway intersection of 31st & Spring Garden makes the connection between the Spring Garden Street bridge and the neighborhoods of Powelton and Mantua. The Caring Center is an institutional facility that has greatly enhanced this gateway, but the other corners of the intersection are in worse condition.

Recommendation: This gateway should be improved and made more attractive. The Westbank Greenway will create some improvement with new sidewalks and street trees. Additional improvements are recommended:

- privately-funded upgrading of the existing auto sales property
- permanent removal of billboards (the railroad is

the lesser)

- beautification of the open space at the southeast corner. The railroad can finance development of a mini-park and the University City District can maintain it over time.

Recommendation: a new development proposal will result in redevelopment of the large vacant lots where Mantua Avenue intersects with 38th Street and Brown Street. Inglis Housing plans to build a housing complex for physically disabled persons. This will greatly enhance one of the community edges.

Fairmount Avenue Corridor

This is Mantua's most important east-west residential street. The neighborhood school and the public housing complex are located on Fairmount

Avenue, and many of the homes are in relatively good condition. Therefore, it is important to keep this corridor viable and stable. Recommendations are as follows:

Housing Preservation: existing housing programs from OHCD should be utilized to support homeownership. Infill development of housing is recommended where needed.

Redevelopment: Land assembly and new housing is recommended for the 3600 block of Fairmount Avenue, which has a high vacancy rate. This block can be developed with new homes in a manner similar to Spencer's Place, located a block to the north. A new corner store or convenience store is also needed along this corridor. Additionally, the 3900 block of Fairmount Avenue



The vacant lot at NW corner 34th & Haverford, partly owned by the Redevelopment Authority, is recommended for mixed use development including retail commercial use. The current proposal is for a mid rise building for elderly housing with ground floor commercial space.

is the expansion site for the 39th & Olive playground.

34th Street Corridor

This north-south corridor carries the highest traffic volumes in the neighborhood. Thirty-fourth Street connects to expressway, the Zoo and University City. Recommendations for the corridor:

Greening: a landscaped "Welcome Park" will create an attractive gateway at the triangular parcel located at the southeast corner 34th & Mantua Avenues. The site is owned by the Redevelopment Authority. This can also happen on a privately-owned vacant lot at the southwest corner of the intersection. The Philadelphia Zoo may want to develop these parks as a gesture to the community. The 34th Street bridge is already painted with a mural depicting zoo animals. Maintenance of the parks can also be performed by a new Special Services District or similar organization in Mantua.

New development: mixed use development is recommended at the northwest corner 34th & Haverford. The current plan is for elderly housing with ground floor retail space.

Gateway

Recommendation: Gateways should be enhanced by using greenery, art, lighting, and signage improvements. Most of the prominent gateway locations have already been discussed:

- 31st & Spring Garden
- 34th & Mantua
- 40th Street corridor
- Mantua Avenue corridor

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society can help with some of the gateway projects. Since 1996, Philadelphia Green has worked in the neighborhoods of Philadelphia to incorporate managed green open space into new housing complexes and shopping centers and convert abandoned, trashed lots into managed "clean and green" spaces landscaped with grass and trees and edged with wood-fencing. More recently, PHS has applied this interim land stabilization treatment to parcels at 39th & Haverford and the 3400 block of Haverford Avenue.

Housing and Community Renewal Strategies

Eastern Mantua

This is a section of Mantua containing some of the best single-family housing conditions and values. During the 1960s and 70s, significant public investment took place on the residential blocks to the east of 34th Street. The programs included loans and grants to homeowners, and rehabilitation of vacant homes by public agencies.

Recommended strategies: conservation and infill housing using all available housing preservation programs.

Housing Preservation Programs

Phil Loan - low interest loans for home improvements

Homeownership Rehabilitation Program - grants up to \$35,000 per house

Settlement Grant - up to \$800 for first-time homebuyers

SHARP - minor home repairs for the elderly

Adaptive Modifications Program - grants for home improvements for physically disabled persons

HomeStart - housing rehabilitation funded by OHCD and developed by PHDC

Weatherization

Property Tax Abatement on home improvements

Western Mantua

To the west of 34th Street, the neighborhood is geographically larger and more blighted.

Recommended strategies:

- blight removal/ demolition
- greening, open space and gardens with community control
- infill new construction and rehab on stronger blocks
- assembly for new housing (for weaker blocks including 40th Street; long term)
- new housing and mixed-use development along Haverford Avenue
- marketing of major opportunity sites by the Redevelopment Authority and the Office of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

Mantua Hall Public Housing

Located between the eastern and western sections, the Mantua Hall PHA complex is a prominent feature of the community. It is adjacent to the McMichael School, and the two facilities create a significant focal point in Mantua. In recent years

the public housing property has not been a major problem for the community. In fact, the appearance and the maintenance of the PHA complex has been good. With some additional enhancement and support, Mantua Hall can become a model in terms of positive impacts on the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendations:

- Intensified maintenance of the building and grounds
- Redevelopment of vacant properties on the edges of the PHA site; for new infill housing and well-maintained open space

Spring Garden Street

Properties along Spring Garden Street, and on streets immediately to the south, are within the boundary of a national historic district. Historic tax credits have spurred private investment and this area is successfully being revitalized with an emphasis on historic preservation. When buildings become vacant in this area, they should not be demolished; encapsulation and preservation is preferred. However, limited resources will not allow for all properties to be saved. A strategy to target as many of these properties as possible given existing resources is recommended. In terms of recommendations for future revitalization along Spring Garden Street, the most important action will be the enhancement of the gateway at 31st Street.

Zoning Remapping

Zoning Remapping is recommended. Although zoning remapping goals are established in a partnership with the local community, some suggested goals for Mantua would include the following:

- encourage single-family occupancy of housing
- allow two-family housing where appropriate
- reflect major changes in land use that have taken place over the years
- help implement recommendations of this Plan

Blight Removal and Land Stabilization

The activities and concepts of the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) are well suited to the kinds of problems Mantua is experiencing. NTI programs are addressing the outflow of population by removing blight and improving the environment of the neighborhood. This gives existing residents some important reasons to stay in the neighborhood, and it invites new families to move into the Mantua area. Additional benefits include:

- Positive change - a signal that something important is happening
- Streamline the development and renewal process
- Create larger development sites, making new development more feasible
- Enable large rehabilitation packages with economies of scale

NTI programs

- blight removal
- cleaning of vacant lots and land stabilization
- acquisition for development, open space or landbanking

Focus on Land Stabilization

One of the NTI programs is land stabilization. This is a major need in Mantua, where vacant land is the most blighting element in the neighborhood.



Recommendation: As proposed in The Plan for West Philadelphia, a community-based organization should become involved in the ownership and management of vacant land in Mantua. The community-based land trust could take ownership of vacant lots (perhaps a small number at first as a demonstration project), make decisions on the use of the lots (such as side yard or parking pad or garden), and transfer the lots to community residents for permanent use and development. Ideally the New Kensington Open Space Management Program (an OHCD-supported pilot project) can be replicated here in Mantua. It will require the presence of a well-established CDC in the neighborhood.

A new organization is getting started in Mantua and it has the potential to fulfill this kind of mandate. The Mantua Community Improvement

Committee (MCIC) has worked to clean streets, sidewalks and vacant lots in Mantua. MCIC has operated seasonally with summer youth workers, and permanent funding is being sought. This type of effort is applauded and encouraged by the City.

Other ways in which open space can be maintained is through partnerships between the community and local institutions to establish stewardship of vacant land. In Mantua, potential institutional partners include the McMichael School, the Housing Authority, the Caring Center, the Zoo, and the Crime Prevention Association which operates one of the community centers in Mantua.

What are some of the ways that vacant lots can be put to productive use? The Philadelphia City Planning Commission explored design options for community open space in their study, Elements of Urban Form in Philadelphia. Examples of some of the open space design options are:

Private Gardens

Small vacant lots could be donated or sold to the adjacent homeowners. Maintenance and landscaping of the lot, as well as repair of the sidewalk, would be the responsibility of the homeowner. Private gardens create an opportunity and sense of pride for homeowners to have a garden of their own within the dense neighborhood.

Play Lots

Play lots are intended for the use of small children supervised by an adult. These small spaces can either be supplied with modest play equipment, built either by community volunteers or provided

from formal sources.

Meadows

A meadow might be considered an entire space within a block or a series of blocks, and might have mown paths within it. The paths might be permanent or changeable. In an urban setting, a meadow would require maintenance. It must have a well defined edge, a fence being preferable to a border of trees. Gates in the fence will allow control of the space by local users.



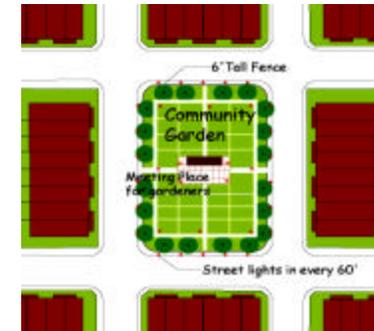
Paths

When there are two or more back to back vacant lots, a semi public or private path could make an interesting alternative through block connections.

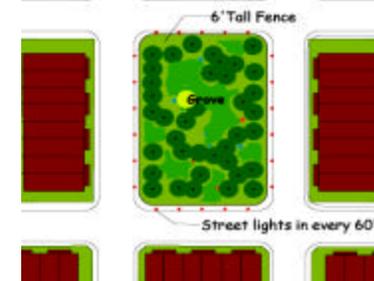
Examples of strategies that can be used to achieve some of the open space design ideas above are to:

- Promote the Small Vacant Lot Abatement Program as an open space management method for vacant land on residential blocks
- Identify vacant properties for permanent public

Garden



Meadow



use. Community residents should be encouraged to consider the establishment of a community-managed park as a way to provide and maintain additional open space in the neighborhood. Successful community-managed parks may be found in other areas of the city and are an increasingly important park management model in light of the City's reduced ability to maintain public parks due to limited City resources.

Commercial and Economic Development

Shopping and Retail Services

New stores are needed for eastern Mantua. There was a food market at 34th & Haverford until the early 1990's, and it is sorely missed. Residents now have only one convenience store in the area, at 34th & Hamilton. The lack of retail stores in eastern Mantua can be seen in the database of "Philadelphia Shops Update" study.

Recommendation: mixed use development, including retail, is recommended along Haverford Ave. near 34th Street. This location has proximity to the unserved area, and it also has high traffic volumes at a major intersection; so the retail would serve residents as well as commuters and other motorists passing by.

The Philadelphia Shops Update material also indicates a shortage of retail services in the northernmost section of Mantua, in the vicinity of 36th & Brown, or 39th & Parrish. This area is not within reasonable walking distance of retail stores. Therefore, it is recommended that housing develop-

ments in northern Mantua should include a small retail component so that families without cars can have access to some convenience shopping services.

Recommendation: In light of the parking analysis from PhilaShops, it is recommended that when retail stores are developed in these sections of the neighborhood, it should include adequate parking.

Commercial Corridor at 40th & Lancaster
The Lancaster Avenue commercial district, centered on the 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue, is the major shopping area located closest to Mantua. The district has a business association that holds regular meetings, promotions and events, coordinates with local police, and maintains a website.

Recommendation: Consolidation of Commercial Area

As recommended in Philadelphia Shops and the West Philadelphia Plan, the 40th & Lancaster Commercial area should be developed as a smaller, more concentrated retail district. Consolidated retail nodes have the best chance for business success. They are areas with visibility, favorable access, and a retail mix.

Recommendation: Utilize City Economic Development Programs and Incentives

It is recommended that city economic development agencies work closely with business owners and the Lancaster Avenue Business Association to concentrate commercial uses around nodes of strength and to provide assistance with façade repair and design, security upgrades, loans and improvements to public sidewalks and parking lots. The following

agencies might be involved:

- Department of Commerce
- Mayor's Business Action Team (MBAT)
- Renewal Communities staff
- Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC)

Employment and Economic opportunity for the residents of Mantua

Recommendation: Mantua's community leaders should work with institutions, elected officials and City agencies to obtain the commitment of nearby employers to hire local residents. Some of these organizations are already targeting Mantua as a source of workers. The list of major employers includes:

- University of Pennsylvania
- Drexel University
- The University of Pennsylvania Health System
- University City Science Center
- Children's Hospital of Philadelphia
- Philadelphia Art Museum
- Philadelphia Zoo
- Proposed Microsoft High School
- Proposed new and expanded Please Touch Museum

Recommendation: Promote use of job training programs. Some programs are available through public schools and the Philadelphia Workforce Development Corporation. Locally, job training is available at the Families First facility operated by People's Emergency Center (offering welfare-to-

work programs). For senior citizens who need to work, there are job training, search and referral services available from the Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging, the Mayor's Commission on Aging and the Jewish Employment and Vocational Service.

Recommendation: The City should market sites in the Renewal Community for appropriate new job creation investments.

Recommendation: Establish a Neighborhood Transportation Center and implement a public transit shuttle for improved "reverse commuting" (see transportation recommendations).

Recommendation: support increased funding for the Mantua Community Improvement Committee (MCIC) which hires local residents to provide cleaning and maintenance services.

Transportation

Efforts at implementing the TSNR study are continuing. Consolidation of the bus routes was not supported by SEPTA because of high ridership on those routes. The Planning Commission believes that some of the other TSNR recommendations are good ideas for Mantua and they are being recommended again in this Plan.

Recommendation: Create a neighborhood transit center

- With on-site manager
- Promote safety security, easier transfers
- Tie in with neighborhood development. Joint

usage of facility.

- Some re-routing would be necessary
- Best location is along Haverford Avenue, 34th to 37th

Recommendation: Introduce circulator/ shuttle route to provide better connections to 30th Street Station, Market-Frankford Line, the Zoo and Fairmount Park

- Can be provided by SEPTA, or possibly by the Zoo, or a Special Services District
- Reminiscent of the 1876 Centennial transit connections to 30th Street

Recommendation: Increase Route 38 night-time service, as proposed by SEPTA instead of consolidating bus routes as recommended in TSNR study.

Recommendation: the Westbank Greenway will

be an important enhancement in terms of transportation, recreation and the beautification of edges and corridors.

Recreation

Recreation facilities are plentiful in Mantua. There are four playgrounds and a recreation center in the neighborhood and they are located in every section of the neighborhood. However there are two recommendations for improvement and change:

39th & Olive Playground

This playground has newly upgraded play facilities, but the site is surrounded by severely deteriorated and vacant housing and vacant lots. The playground should be expanded so it occupies the full city block bounded by 39th Street, Aspen Street, Union Street and Fairmount Avenue. This will improve the siting of the playground and contribute to the renewal of

the surrounding area. It will require acquisition, site assembly and some relocation (approximately six families). This playground expansion and redesign was recommended in the West Philadelphia Plan, 1994, and again by PHA's consultants in 2003.



Recommended recreation improvements are shown in the dark green dotted lines: (1) the Westbank Greenway, and (2) expansion of the 39th & Olive Playground.

Westbank Greenway

The new Westbank Greenway will be constructed along 31st Street and Mantua Avenue. It will improve recreational opportunities, establish better pedestrian and bike routes, and enhance the community's edge.

Community Facilities and Support

Mantua has unique and community resources, like the two non-profit community centers, which are found in few neighborhoods across the city. Sometimes these community centers are challenged to maintain funding levels.

Recommendations to support and expand existing programs:

- Create a "Beacon" program at McMichael School. Beacon schools provide after-hours programs for community residents of all ages.
- Support fundraising for existing community centers.
- Promote the concept of Shared Facilities where existing schools or community centers can expand their hours and offer space for various community programs and activities.

A more detailed Recreation and Open Space Plan appears in The Appendix.

Community Heritage, Arts and Culture

Although Mantua does not stand out among other Philadelphia neighborhoods for its architectural significance, community heritage is nevertheless a pertinent issue. The housing stock is 100 years old, the neighborhood contains part of a national his-

toric district, and several important places of worship exist in different sections of the community. The 40th Street corridor also contains some architecturally and historically significant buildings.

Architecturally and historically significant buildings and sites Encapsulation would be the appropriate treatment for buildings with significant architectural history. However, limited resources will not allow for all properties to be saved. A strategy to target as many of these properties as possible given existing resources is recommended. Stabilization of vacant buildings is also recommended on blocks that are structurally intact and which contain architecturally or historically significant buildings.

Recommendation: where economically feasible, conserve landmark corridors and architecturally/culturally significant properties using resources from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and other available resources.

Arts & Culture

Arts and culture can be a positive and transformational element in our communities. Arts and culture can enhance our neighborhoods by creating opportunities for artists and residents to restore vitality, explore creativity, and connect with communities citywide.

Recommendation: continue the Mural Arts Program which is administered through the Department of Recreation. The program has been of great benefit to Mantua and it has involved residents and neighborhood leaders. It will be vitally

important to maintain the murals over time, and maintain the properties adjacent to the murals. This will be an appropriate task for a CDC or Special Services District type of organization.

Recommendation: work with the Office of the City Representative, Arts and Culture to further assess physical needs and role of arts and culture in Mantua. This office is encouraging community development practices that support neighborhood arts and cultural assets:

- Include nonprofit arts and culture organizations in strategies to reuse or maintain vacant properties
- Support arts and cultural centers already operating in the community



Mural of Herman Wrice, 34th & Spring Garden. Mr. Wrice was the founder of "Mantua Against Drugs."

- **Involve artists in project design and development**
- **Augment arts and cultural programming in the community by facilitating outreach from institutions citywide**
- **Include artists' housing and studios in plans for new housing**
- **Include nonprofit arts and culture organizations in plans to reclaim and rehabilitate abandoned or vacant properties**

Community Based Organizations

Recommendation: Promote community revitalization through support of community-based organizations. The potential role of a community-based group is to facilitate organized and efficient communication of resident needs and concerns. Civic organizations can also educate citizens about the redevelopment process, fostering a better understanding for land assembly, relocation and preventative interventions in the neighborhood. Community-based groups can also educate citizens about civic responsibility, predatory lending and real estate fraud.

Some collective actions a civic organization could take to address community issues would be:

- **Develop a zoning committee to deal with planning and development proposals. Some community groups in the City have zoning and development committees that have had a positive effect in shaping the type of development in their neighborhood.**
- **Develop a committee to spearhead organized community clean-ups and vacant lot management. The City offers many programs to help residents**

with the effort.

Recommendation: The Planning Commission should work with community leaders, elected officials and City agencies to secure permanent funding for the Mantua Community Improvement Committee. As envisioned, MCIC would perform functions similar to a Special Services District, including sidewalk cleaning and safety patrols.

Neighborhood Safety

Recommendation: Develop and promote design guidelines that incorporate community safety. Some actions to support this strategy would be:

- **Design and configure buildings and spaces so that activity is visible**
- **Use lighting to promote safety**
- **Promote the concept of community "Safe Havens"**
- **Coordinate with "Safe Streets" activities and principles**

Recommendation: Promote and support the local Town Watch organization in Mantua and the community organization known as Mantua Against Drugs.

Recommendation: Encourage community leaders and community-based organizations to remain involved in the monthly Police Advisory Council meetings held at the local police district headquarters (located at 39th & Lancaster).

	<i>Goal</i>	Recommended Strategy	Strategy Detail / Location	Agencies / Organizations	Potential Funding Source	Timeframe
Revitalizing Corridors, Edges & Gateways	<i>Haverford Avenue: mixed use corridor with Town Center</i>	New housing, retail, institutional development and site improvements	34th & Haverford mixed use development; new homes and stores 3400 to 3900; sidewalks, banners, trees	Private developers, non-profits, RDA, Streets Dept., Mantua Community Improvement Committee (MCIC)	Private, Institutional, City, OHCD, PHFA, HUD, RDA, City Council	Early Action
	<i>Mantua Avenue corridor: improve neighborhood edges</i>	Improved landscape, upkeep and litter control, fencing, new development, sidewalks and Westbank Greenway	New housing vicinity 38th & Brown; gateway park at 34th & Mantua; better upkeep by the railroad; new sidewalks & fencing	RDA, private and non profit developers including Inglis Housing, Streets Dept., AMTRAK	Federal transportation allocations, private and non profit developers, Streets & Recreation Depts., PHS	Early Action
	<i>Improve the Gateways to Mantua</i>	Enhance properties at entry points to Mantua, making a positive first impression	Park at 34th & Mantua; redevelopment and beautification at 31st & Spring Garden; West Bank Greenway	Recreation and Streets Depts; RDA, MCIC, AMTRAK	City, AMTRAK, private developers, PHS	Early Action
	<i>40th Street corridor: residential redevelopment</i>	New housing along the 40th Street corridor and nearby areas, taking advantage of NTI demolitions & Mantua Acquisition Zone	New homes on 40th Street; new homes surrounding the 39th & Olive playground; including homeownership	Private and non profit developers	Subsidies from OHCD and PHFA. NTI funds already allocated for acquisition and demolition.	
	<i>Fairmount Avenue corridor: a residential main street</i>	Housing preservation and rehab; site assembly for new development; site improvements	Housing preservation corridor-wide; assembly in the 3600 block (south side to Melon St.)	OHCD, RDA, private developers, Streets Dept., MCIC	OHCD, private and non profit developers, Streets Dept. and City Council	
Housing & Community Renewal	<i>Conserve owner occupied housing.</i>	Conservation and infill housing using all available OHCD programs	Eastern Mantua	City Council District 3, OHCD, <i>OHNP</i> , <i>RDA</i> , NTI, area CDCs, civic groups	Existing homeownership programs: PhilLoan, Settlement Assistance, HRP, Homestart, Emergency Repairs, SHARP	Early Action
	<i>Conserve stable public housing.</i>	Enhance and improving the Mantua Hall PHA Complex	Intensified maintenance of the building and grounds	PHA	HUD	Early Action
			Redevelopment of vacant properties on the edges of the PHA site	PHA, RDA and private developers	HUD	
	<i>Update land use and development guidelines.</i>	Modify existing zoning on a neighborhood-wide basis using the Zoning Remapping Program	encourage single family occupancy of housing; reduce non-conforming uses; reflect new uses and current uses by updating the zoning	Planning Commission, Commerce Department, City Council, community groups and CDCs	Planning Commission staff services	Early Action

	<i>Goal</i>	Recommended Strategy	Strategy Detail / Location	Agencies / Organizations	Potential Funding Source	Timeframe
Housing & Community Renewal (continued)	<i>Remove blight</i>	Continue to use NTI programs and resources in a targeted manner in Mantua, to streamline the development process and create new and larger development opportunities	demolition, cleaning of vacant lots, removal of abandoned cars, acquisition for future development or open space	NTI, Managing Director, L&I, RDA, PHS	NTI	Early Action
		Open spaces should be well designed and maintained according to community needs and good landscape design practice.	The Planning Commission has developed a series of open space designs that can serve as alternative landscape treatments	Philadelphia City Planning Commission	NTI, PHS	Early Action
	<i>Improve housing conditions in blighted areas.</i>	Focus on redeveloping and improving Western Mantua (west of 36th Street).	blight removal, demolition, greening, gardens, cleaning of lots and sidewalks	NTI, RDA, PHS, MCIC and other local CDCs	City, NTI, PHS, City Council	Early Action
			land assembly to create larger sites for new development	OHNP, RDA, OHCD, local CDCs, private & non-profit developers	OHCD, RDA and the developers	
			infill new construction and rehab on stronger blocks	RDA, OHCD, local CDCs and private and non-profit developers	OHCD, RDA and the developers	
	<i>Stabilize vacant land and open spaces</i>	A new community land trust is recommended for Mantua.	With more than 700 publicly owned vacant lots in Mantua, there is a need for community-based management and control of this land resource.	A new community based organization or CDC is needed to take on this role; possibly the MCIC.	PHS, foundations, City Council	
Commercial and Economic Development	<i>New stores are needed in Eastern Mantua</i>	New mixed use development at 34th & Haverford including retail	Attract food store and convenience retail to the 34th & Haverford area	Commerce Dept., Phila. Commercial Dev. Corp. (PCDC), private and non-profit developers	Commerce Dept, PCDC, private investment	Early Action
	<i>Improve existing retail at 40th and Lancaster.</i>	Consolidate the commercial area at 40th and Lancaster into a smaller, more concentrated retail district	40th and Lancaster	Commerce Dept., MBAT, PCDC, private and non-profit developers	Commerce Dept, PCDC, LIISC, private investment	Early Action

	<i>Goal</i>	Recommended Strategy	Strategy Detail / Location	Agencies / Organizations	Potential Funding Source	Timeframe
Commercial and Economic Development (continued)	<i>Provide employment and economic opportunity for the residents of Mantua.</i>	Community leaders should encourage nearby employers to hire local residents	Mantua's community leaders and elected officials should work with the institutions for more local hiring.	University of Penna., U. of P. Health System, Science Center, Children's Hospital, Art Museum, Drexel U.	Private	Early Action
		Promote use of job training programs	A number of job training programs are available to Mantua residents, some locally	Phila. Workforce Dev. Corp., People's Emergency Center, Phila. Corp. for Aging	Institutional	Early Action
		The City should market sites in the Renewal Community for appropriate new job creation investments	Retail, residential and institutional development can benefit from Renewal Community incentives available here in Mantua	Empowerment Zone Office	Renewal Communities is a federally funded program with local administration	Early Action
		Support increased funding for the Mantua Community Improvement Committee (MCIC)	This program hires local residents to provide cleaning and maintenance services. It can play a major role in implementing this Plan and securing the future of Mantua.	MCIC	City, foundations, corporate, City Council	Early Action
Transportation	<i>Implement recommendations of the TSNR Study of 2002</i>	Establish a Neighborhood Transportation Center	Establish a new bus transfer point near Haverford Ave; implement a public transit shuttle for reverse commuting	SEPTA, City, RDA	SEPTA, City	
		Increase night-time transit service	Increase service on the Route 38 bus	SEPTA	SEPTA	Early Action
	<i>Develop the Westbank Greenway</i>	Provide a new multi-use path linking to Kelly Drive and M.L. King Dr.	The Greenway uses 31st St. and Mantua Ave., extending east over the Spring Garden St. bridge and to the north along 34th St.	Streets Dept.	Federal transportation grant and City money	Early Action
		Add an attractive new fence between the Greenway and the AMTRAK property.	Fencing is not part of the Greenway project scope, but the existing fence is in poor condition and needs replacement.	AMTRAK	AMTRAK and federal	Early Action

	<i>Goal</i>	Recommended Strategy	Strategy Detail / Location	Agencies / Organizations	Potential Funding Source	Timeframe
Parks, Recreation and Open Space	<i>Improve existing and develop new recreation outlets</i>	Improve existing conditions at community recreation centers; and develop the West Bank Greenway	Expand 39th and Olive Playground to occupy the entire city block to contribute to the renewal of the area.	Recreation Dept., RDA	City Capital Program, NTI funds, RDA and OHCD	
Community Facilities and Support	<i>Support place-based resources for residents of Mantua</i>	Support and expand existing programs	Create a "Beacon" program at McMichael School to provide after-hours programs for community residents of all ages.	School district, City, non-profits	School district, City, non-profits	Early Action
			Promote the concept of Shared Facilities where existing schools or community centers can expand their hours and programs for residents	School district, City, non-profits	School district, City, non-profits	Early Action
			Promote and sustain resources for existing community centers and after school programs	Local social service providers such as West Phila. Community Center/ Crime Prevention Assn.	City, foundations, corporate donors, City Council	Early Action
Community Heritage	<i>Preserve and promote awareness of Mantua's architectural and cultural identity.</i>	Encapsulate buildings with significant architectural history; renovate as many historic properties as possible given existing resources.	Spring Garden Street and 40th Street corridors: stabilize vacant buildings on blocks that are structurally intact and which contain architecturally or historically significant buildings. Promote historic renovations.	NTI, Historical Commission, National Trust for Historic Preservation	National Trust for Historic Preservation, federal historic tax credits and other available resources	Early Action
Arts & Culture	<i>Encourage Arts and Culture as a way to enhance the neighborhood</i>	Continue the Mural Arts Program's work in Mantua.	maintain the murals and the properties adjacent to the murals over time	Mural Arts Program, Department of Recreation, local CDC	City, foundations, corporate and CDCs	Early Action
		Work with the Office of the City Representative, Arts and Culture to further asses physical needs and role of arts and culture in Mantua.	Include nonprofit arts and culture organizations in strategies to reuse or maintain vacant properties	Non-profits, CDCs, civic associations, Commerce Dept., OHCD, NTI, Planning Commission, developers, West Philadelphia Cultural Alliance	Commerce Dept., private and non-profit developers and federal housing subsidy programs	Early Action

	<i>Goal</i>	Recommended Strategy	Strategy Detail / Location	Agencies / Organizations	Potential Funding Source	Timeframe
Arts & Culture (continued)			Support arts and cultural centers already operating in the community	Commerce Dept., foundations, corporate	Commerce Dept., foundations, corporate	Early Action
			Involve artists in project design and development; include artists' housing and studios in plans for new housing.	Planning Commission, CDCs, housing developers	Commerce Dept. and federal housing subsidy programs	Early Action
Community Based Organizations	<i>Promote community revitalization through support of community-based organizations.</i>	Civic Associations and CDCs can facilitate organized and efficient communication of residents needs and concerns.	Encourage and foster stronger and more participatory community groups in Mantua	Planning Commission, City Council, Mayor's Office of Community Services, Philadelphia More Beautiful Committee, OHCD	n.a.	Early Action