RIVER WARDS

> DISTRICT PLAN 2015

City of Philadelphia
MAYOR MICHAEL A. NUTTER
LIFE • LIBERTY • AND YOU™

PHILADELPHIA 2035

The future begins with *Philadelphia2035*. It builds on our city's recent achievements and long-established assets to guide physical development for the next 25 years and beyond.

>The Philadelphia Home Rule Charter requires the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC) to adopt and maintain a comprehensive plan. *Philadelphia2035* is our two-phase comprehensive plan. The *Citywide Vision* portion was adopted by the PCPC in June 2011. Over the next several years, the PCPC will complete 18 strategic district plans, taking many of the broad-brush objectives of the *Citywide Vision* and applying them at the local level.

Phase 1:
Citywide Vision
> Informs district plans

Phase 2:
District Plans
> Informs zoning map revisions

>The PCPC also prepares the Capital Program, a six-year funding plan for public facilities and infrastructure such as transit lines, highways, parks, playgrounds, libraries, health centers, and other municipal facilities. Specific recommendations for these facilities are included in the district plans.

>*Philadelphia2035* is part of an integrated planning and zoning process that includes zoning reform and the *Citizens Planning Institute.* A new zoning code was signed into law in December 2011. The new code is user-friendly and consistent with today's uses and development trends. The *Citizens Planning Institute* offers classes in planning, zoning, and the development process.

PHILADELPHIA
2035
www.phila2035.org

***Philadelphia2035* is our blueprint for a 21st-century city** that thrives with new growth and opportunities, connects to the region and the world, and renews its valued resources for future generations.

> CITYWIDE VISION

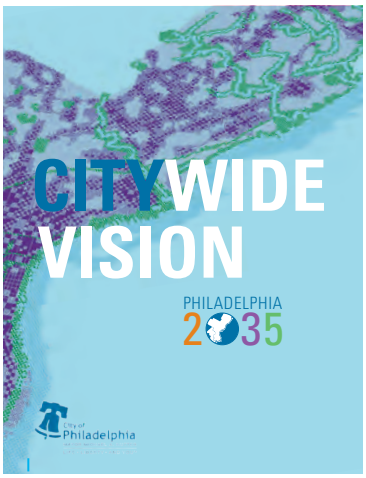
The *Citywide Vision* lays out broad, far-reaching goals for the future under the themes of THRIVE, CONNECT, and RENEW.

These themes and their related goals are described through specific objectives across the nine planning elements of neighborhoods, economic development, land management, transportation, utilities, open space, environmental resources, historic preservation, and the public realm.

The *Citywide Vision* builds on our strengths of a strong metropolitan center, diverse neighborhoods, and industrial legacy areas by recommending goals that contribute to a stronger economy, a healthier population, and a smaller environmental footprint.

The *Citywide Vision* also includes an ambitious forecast for population and employment in 2035 of an additional 100,000 people and 40,000 jobs.

Implementation of the *Citywide Vision* is ongoing. Progress is tracked at regularly scheduled "Exchange Meetings" with City agencies and partners. The PCPC will also provide an annual update on progress to the public.



+100,000 people in 2035

+40,000 jobs in 2035

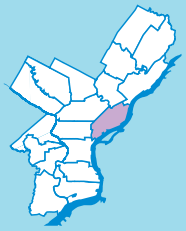
> DISTRICT PLANS

There are three major products of the district plans: land use plans, planning focus areas, and Capital Program recommendations.

The 18 district plans are focused on a shorter time frame than the 25-year *Citywide Vision*. While the majority of the land use and development recommendations are meant to be accomplished within a ten-year period, some of the recommendations are early action items designed to lay the foundation for longer-term proposals. Strategic recommendations for municipal facilities, infrastructure, and City-owned land are addressed because of the PCPC's leadership role in the Capital Program process. The district plans present priority planning focus areas to illustrate the written recommendations and suggest visionary changes in these areas. The district plans' land use maps guide the zoning map revisions, a public process that begins after each district plan is complete.

The civic engagement planning process for each district plan includes three public meetings, frequent Steering Committee meetings, and several public presentations to the PCPC. When the PCPC completes all 18 district plans, the entire *Philadelphia2035* planning process will be revised and updated, thereby maintaining a current comprehensive plan for the city.

This is the **RIVER WARDS DISTRICT PLAN**. It was adopted by the PCPC on August 18, 2015.



THE 18 DISTRICTS

CENTRAL
CENTRAL NORTHEAST
LOWER FAR NORTHEAST
LOWER NORTH
LOWER NORTHEAST
LOWER NORTHWEST
LOWER SOUTH
LOWER SOUTHWEST
NORTH
NORTH DELAWARE
RIVER WARDS
SOUTH
UNIVERSITY SOUTHWEST
UPPER FAR NORTHEAST
UPPER NORTH
UPPER NORTHWEST
WEST
WEST PARK

RIVER WARDS DISTRICT PLAN

Former PECO Power Plant

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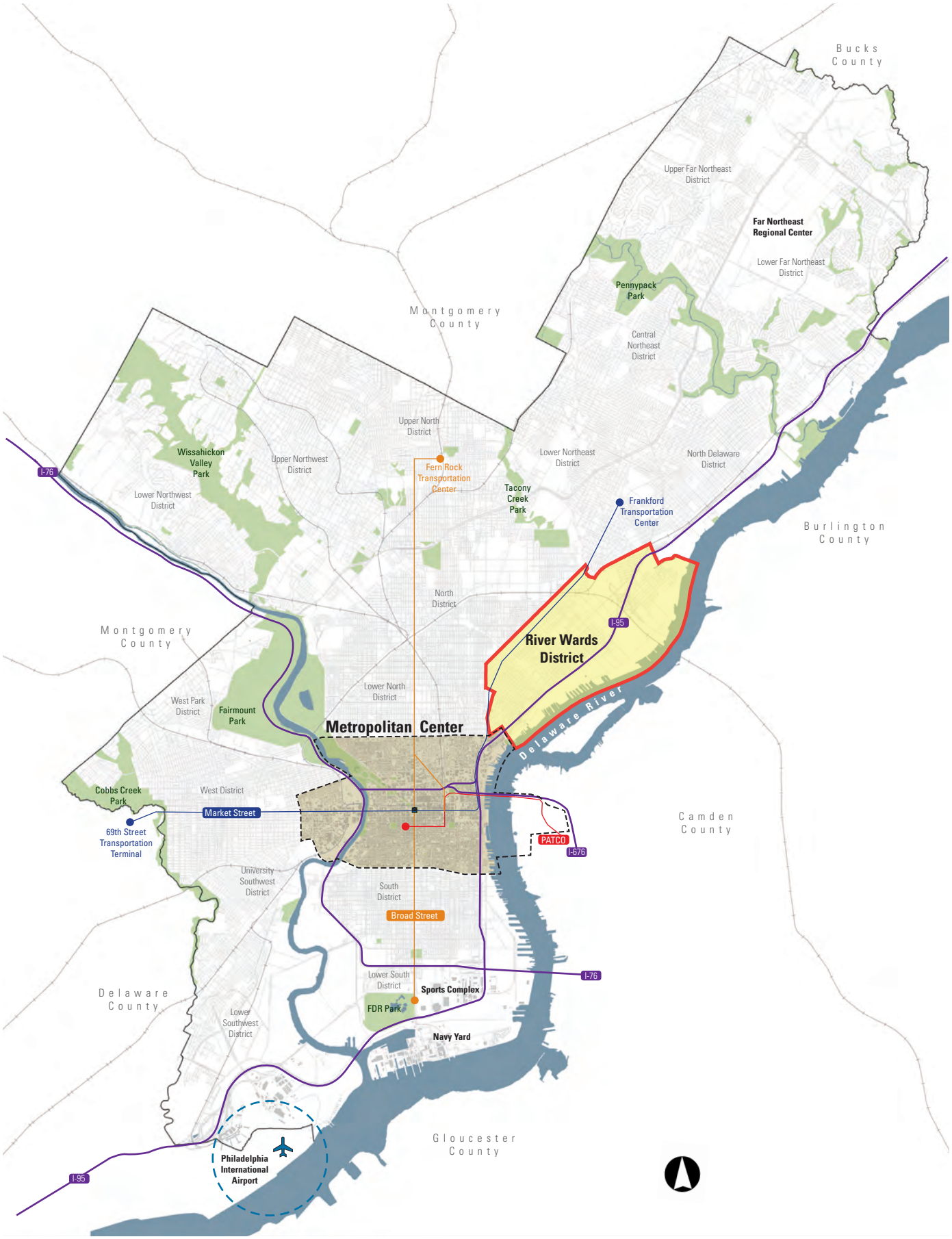

Bucks County
Upper Far Northeast District
Far Northeast Regional Center
Lower Far Northeast District
Pennypack Park
Montgomery County
Central Northeast District
Upper North District
Wissahickon Valley Park
Upper Northwest District
Fern Rock Transportation Center
Lower Northeast District
North Delaware District
I-76
Lower Northwest District
Tacony Creek Park
Frankford Transportation Center
Burlington County
North District
I-95
River Wards District
Montgomery County
Lower North District
West Park District
Fairmount Park
Metropolitan Center
Delaware River
Cobbs Creek Park
West District
Market Street
69th Street Transportation Terminal
Camden County
PATCO
I-676
University Southwest District
South District
Broad Street
I-76
Lower South District
Sports Complex
Delaware County
FDR Park
Lower Southwest District
Navy Yard
Gloucester County
Philadelphia International Airport
I-95

RIVER WARDS DISTRICT

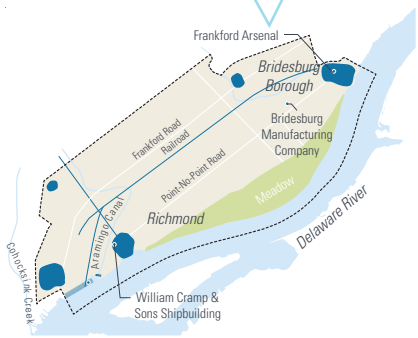
The River Wards District covers an area of 7.56 square miles with a 2010 population of approximately 69,000 residents (U.S. Census), including the neighborhoods of Fishtown, East Kensington, Kensington, Olde Richmond, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg. The district saw a large increase in the size of its population between the years 2000 and 2010, led mostly by working-age adults. Historically, the River Wards District was an industrial and manufacturing center within the Philadelphia region. Today, the district's employees work in a wide variety of business sectors. Additionally, the district has become more culturally diverse over the past two decades; a significant percentage of its residents are now foreign born and Latino.

Prior to 1800

European colonists begin settling and creating neighborhoods.

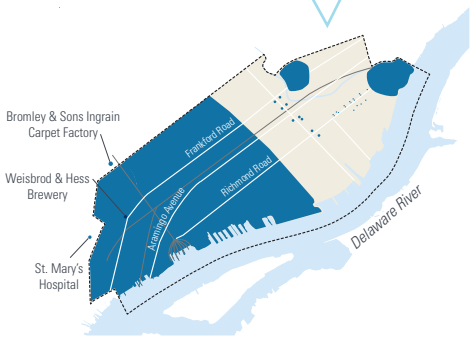
1800

Each neighborhood starts developing along with its industries.



1850

Factories flourish and the developed areas expand.



Neighborhoods and Development

Pre-colonial: River Wards is inhabited by the Turtle Clan of the Lenni Lenape tribe, who refer to their land as Kachamensi.

1630s: Swedish colonists settle in today's Fishtown, Kensington, and Port Richmond, and Kachamensi becomes articulated in English as Shackamaxon.

1723: Thomas Chalkley, a merchant and Quaker proselytizer, builds Chalkley Hall on a large site along Frankford Creek. It is demolished in 1954.

1730s: Anthony Palmer purchases and plans a large part of the River Wards. He names it Kensington after London's Kensington Palace.

1800: The development of marine-related trades results in Fishtown's population growth.

1810: The Penn Treaty Elm, under which William Penn pledged friendship with a Lenape chief, falls in a storm. The tree is replaced with a memorial obelisk, which remains today.

1820: Kensington is established as a district.

1844: The Kensington Soup Society is founded as the city's longest-running meal assistance society. It finally closes in 2007.

1847: Richmond is established as a district.

1848: The area at the mouth of the Frankford Creek, originally referred to as Point-No-Point, is established as Bridesburg Borough.

1854: Kensington, Bridesburg, and Richmond are consolidated into the City of Philadelphia under the Act of Consolidation.

1860s: St. Mary's Hospital is founded to help the sick and poor; first located at the northeast corner of 4th Street and Girard Avenue, it later moves to Frankford Road (today's Frankford Avenue).

Late 1800s: Port Richmond becomes a major terminus for colliers who ship coal from the port's Reading Railroad facility.

1893: Penn Treaty Park is established.

Philadelphia and Reading Railway Company's terminal, Port Richmond. Source: Philadelphia Year Book 1917

Industry

1660s: Swedes operate a water-powered gristmill by the Frankford Creek.

1730–1780: Shipbuilding trades, crowded out of the central Philadelphia waterfront by mercantile activities, begin to cluster in Fishtown.

A Map of Philadelphia and Parts Adjacent, circa 1750 Source: Zebooker Collection, Athenaeum of Philadelphia

1700s: Cohocksink Creek and Gunner's Run, two waterways running through the district, support the area's growing industries.

1820: Bridesburg Manufacturing Company, a large cotton and woolen manufacturer, is built.

1825: William Cramp and Sons Shipbuilding begins building wooden ships at the foot of Otis Street, and continues to expand to Port Richmond over the course of the next century.

1850s: Kensington emerges as a major global manufacturing hub, especially for textiles.

1860: The Bromley & Sons Ingrain Carpet Factory is established, one of the nation's largest mills.

1882: Weisbrod and Hess Brewery opens its doors. Today the site is home to the Philadelphia Brewing Company.

Transportation

1834: Philadelphia and Trenton Railroad establishes its southern terminus at Front and Norris Streets.

1847: Gunner's Run is converted into Aramingo Canal.

Aramingo Canal from Richmond Street bridge, circa 1875. Source: PhillyHistory.org, a project of the Philadelphia Department of Records

1858: The Frankford-Southwark Passenger Railway begins its operation.

1860: The polluted Cohocksink Creek is declared a nuisance and is covered.

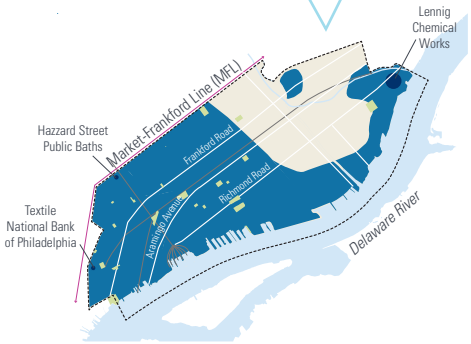
1880s: Electrified trolley cars extend to Richmond and Bridesburg.

1896: Aramingo Canal is covered and turned into a combined sewer, creating present-day Aramingo Avenue.

1896–1899: Two bridges over Frankford Creek are rebuilt at Bridge Street and Orthodox Street.

1900

Neighborhoods in the district continue to develop and industrial growth continues.

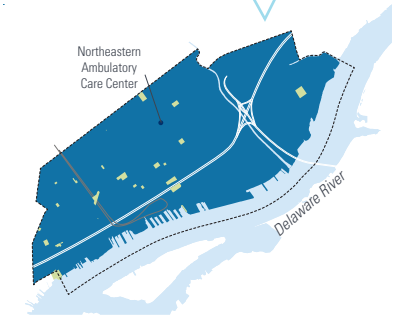


1950

The district suffers from widespread industrial decline.

2000

Attempts to accommodate changes and improve the neighborhood continue.



1882–1909: The three Catholic churches of Allegheny Avenue are constructed during this time to serve German, Polish, and other immigrant communities.

Church on Allegheny Avenue

1928: Inspired by public baths in New York City and London, the Public Baths Association opens the Hazzard Street Public Baths at 1808–14 East Hazzard Street.

1910–1940: Many companies in the district shift production to support the war efforts during World War I and World War II.

1927: The Cramp Shipyard closes. The Navy takes over the site until it is finally shut down in 1949.

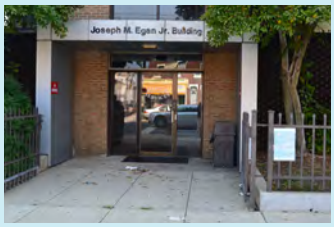
1927: The Philadelphia Coke Company begins operating in Bridesburg.

1945: Tioga Pipe, Inc. is founded by Mort Keiser.

1922: The Market-Frankford Line's elevated north-eastern extension opens.

The elevated Frankford line. Source: Examiner.com

1974: Impact Services Corporation is founded to provide services related to employment, housing, and community development.



Impact Services Headquarters, the former Down's carpet mill

1979: As many industries in the area decline, St. Francis Inn is founded by the Franciscan community to serve meals to the needy.

1985: The New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) is founded to "strengthen the physical, social, and economic fabric of the community."

1950s: Use of the Lehigh Viaduct declines along with the coal industry. The viaduct continues to serve a number of frequest rail customers.

1960s: The Tioga Marine Terminal is built in Port Richmond. Today, the terminal is run by the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority.

1982: The Philadelphia Coke Company is permanently closed.

1956: Frankford Creek is diverted from its natural course through Bridesburg; the mouth of the original creek remains.

1969–1974: Betsy Ross Bridge is constructed, linking Pennsauken, New Jersey, with Bridesburg.

1979: I-95 is completed after beginning construction in 1959.

1988–2003: SEPTA reconstructs the Market-Frankford Line.

2007: The Flomar Building, abandoned since 1998, reopens after renovations by Impact Services, with tenants including the Esperanza Health Center.

2009: Temple University's Northeastern Hospital closes and reopens as Northeastern Ambulatory Care Center.

2011: The Central Delaware Waterfront Plan is released and adopted by the City Planning Commission the following year.

2013: The City receives a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency to create a plan guiding reuse of brownfields in the Frankford Creek watershed.

2000s: Many of the area's old mills are renovated for new uses, including artists' studios and other commercial purposes.

2005: NKCDC opens the Coral Street Arts House in an old mill, providing affordable live-work housing for artists and others.

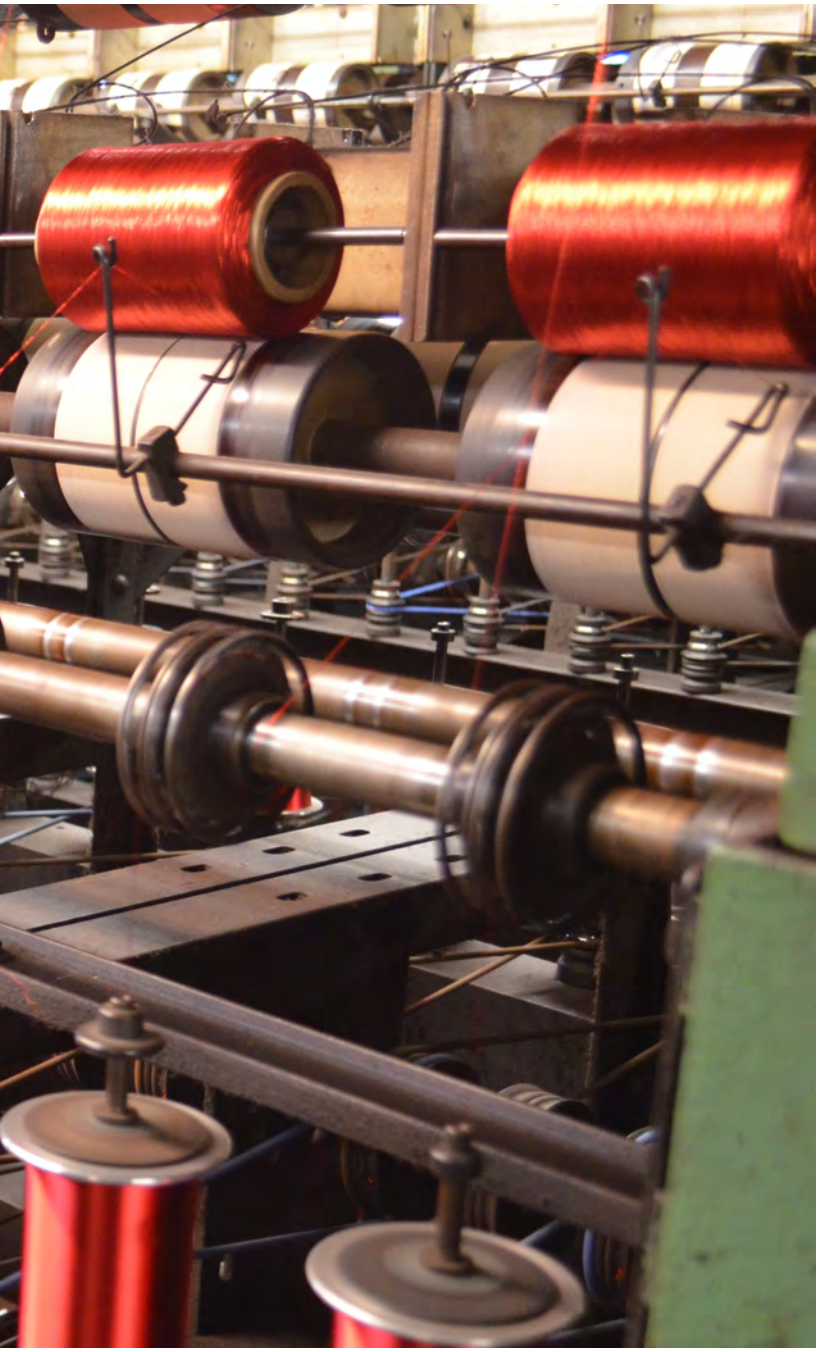
Coral Street Arts House, the former William Beaty Textile Mill

2008–present: PennDOT begins reconstruction of I-95.

2014: Brazilian paper and pulp company Fibria Celulose establishes its North American distribution center at the Tioga Marine Terminal.

BUILDING ON OUR STRENGTHS

Huntingdon Yarn Mill, 3114 East Thompson Street



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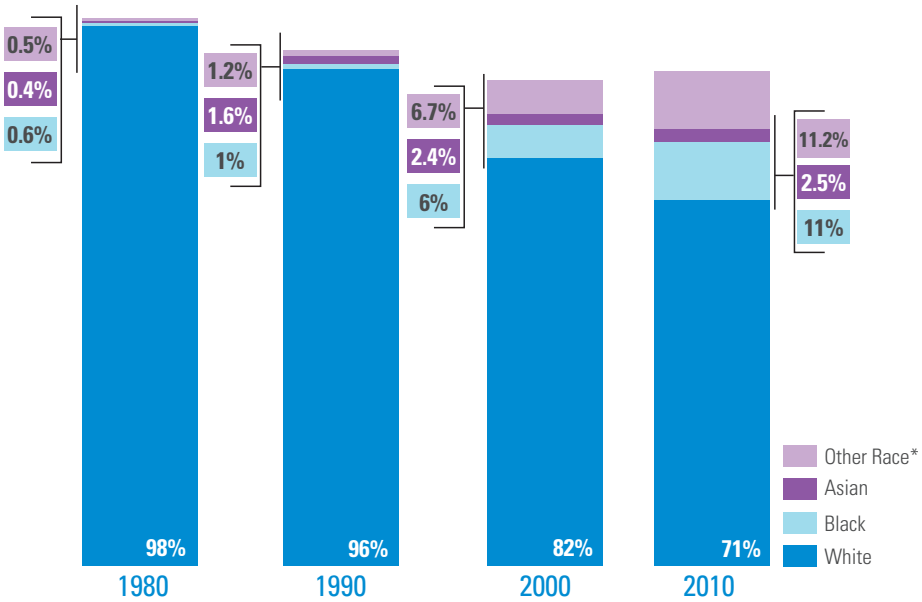
A Younger, More Diverse Population

Since 2000, the population of the district has grown approximately 3 percent and by 2010, the district had a total population of 68,749. By 2020, it is projected that the district will continue to grow and have a population of 72,006 (DVRPC & PCPC). Since 1980, the River Wards District has become younger and more racially diverse. While the black and Asian populations in the River Wards district remain below the citywide average (43 percent and 6 percent, respectively), both groups are growing and as of 2010 the black population was 11 percent of the population and the Asian population was 2.5 percent.

> Trends

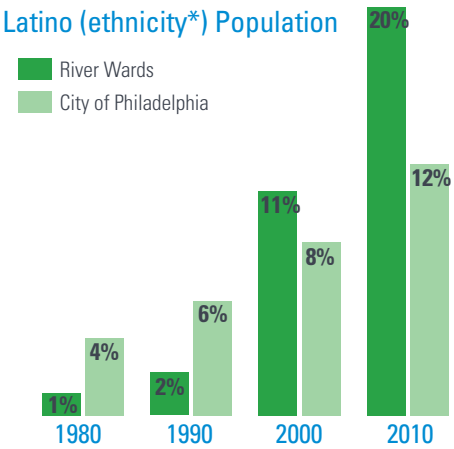
Demographically, the River Wards District has been a racially homogeneous, white community. However, over the past few decades the district has grown more racially and ethnically diverse with rapid growth in the number of residents identifying as black, Asian, Latino, and other, with a corresponding loss of a significant portion of the white population. By 2010, the loss of white population in the River Wards District slowed, and with the steady growth of black, Asian, other race and Latino populations, the district experienced its first total population increase in thirty years. Based on current population growth trends, the River Wards District is projected to continue to grow through 2035, particularly in school-age population less than 20 years of age. While some socioeconomic indicators show a district burdened with high poverty, unemployment, and housing costs, there are positive signs of growth within the district. Between 2000 and 2010, the number of housing units, the housing occupancy rate, and educational attainment all increased, while the housing vacancy rate declined.

Racial Composition, 1980–2010



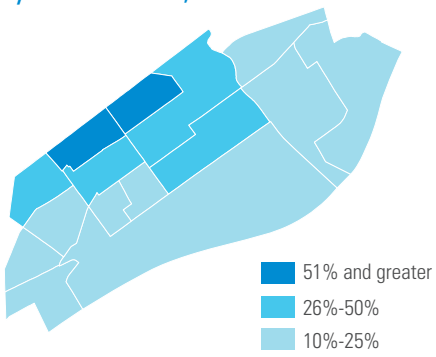
*Other Race includes American Samoans, mixed race people, and any others who self-identify as "Other Race." *Source: U.S. Census*

Latino (ethnicity*) Population



* People who identify their origin as Latino may be of any race. *Source: www.census.gov*

Percentage of Population in Poverty by Census Tract, 2010



> Population Growth in the District

Recent population gains have not occurred evenly throughout the River Wards District. In particular, between 2000 and 2010, the largest population increase occurred in the Kensington neighborhood. Also, while portions of Bridesburg and Port Richmond experienced population increase, the East Kensington and Fishtown neighborhoods faced population decline.

While the East Kensington and Fishtown neighborhoods have had the steepest population decline between 2000 and 2010, they have also had the largest concentration of building permits within the last ten years. Two factors may explain this perceived disconnect. First, building permit data is available for a relatively recent time frame, while full and accurate census counts are only completed at the beginning of each decade. Additionally, average household size in both East Kensington and Fishtown is on a downward trend. This means that, over time, fewer people will live in the same number of residential units.

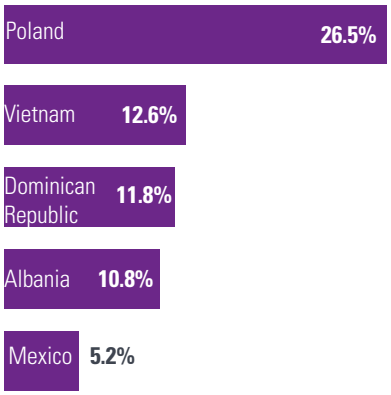
> Age

The age distribution in the River Wards District has remained rather constant during the last thirty years. The majority of the age cohorts within the district—those who are younger than twenty, those between twenty and forty-four, and those between forty-five and sixty-four—have been mostly stable or growing in size since 1980. On the other hand, the senior population, those who are sixty-five or older, has decreased significantly, by over 40 percent in the same time frame.

> Foreign-Born Population

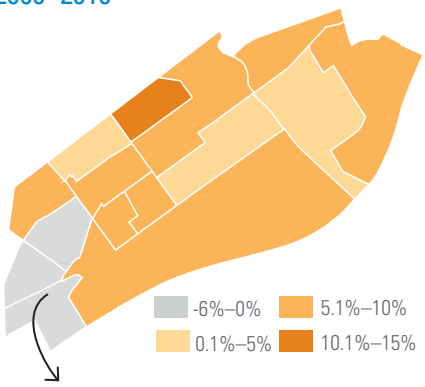
Approximately 8 percent of the River Wards District's population is foreign born, however this percentage does not account for the rise in Latino populations (see p. 8 for the Latino Population Graph). The largest origin of the foreign-born populations in the River Wards District is from Poland, with 26.5 percent of the population. The remaining places of origin that represent the largest percentages of the foreign-born population in the district include Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, Albania, and Mexico. Within the district, the foreign-born population is mostly concentrated in East Kensington and the sections of Bridesburg and Port Richmond along the waterfront.

Top Five Origins of Foreign-Born Population in the River Wards



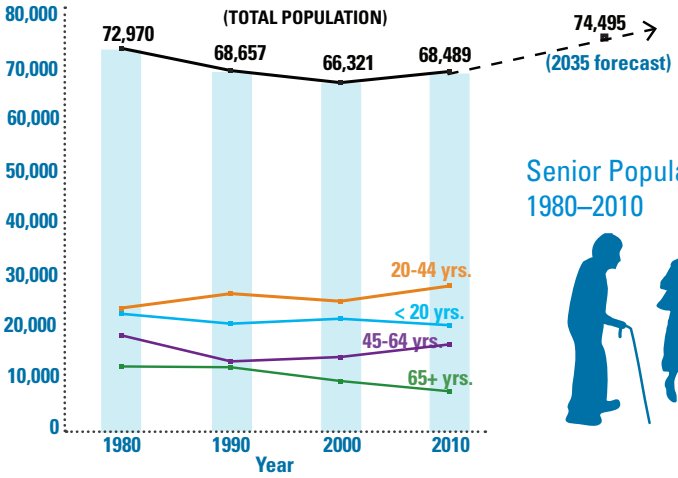
Source: U.S. Census

Population Change by Census Tract, 2000–2010



The same area of the district that is experiencing population loss is also experiencing a boom of building permits. See Housing section in THRIVE, p. 35.

Change in Population by Age Cohort



Senior Population Decrease, 1980–2010

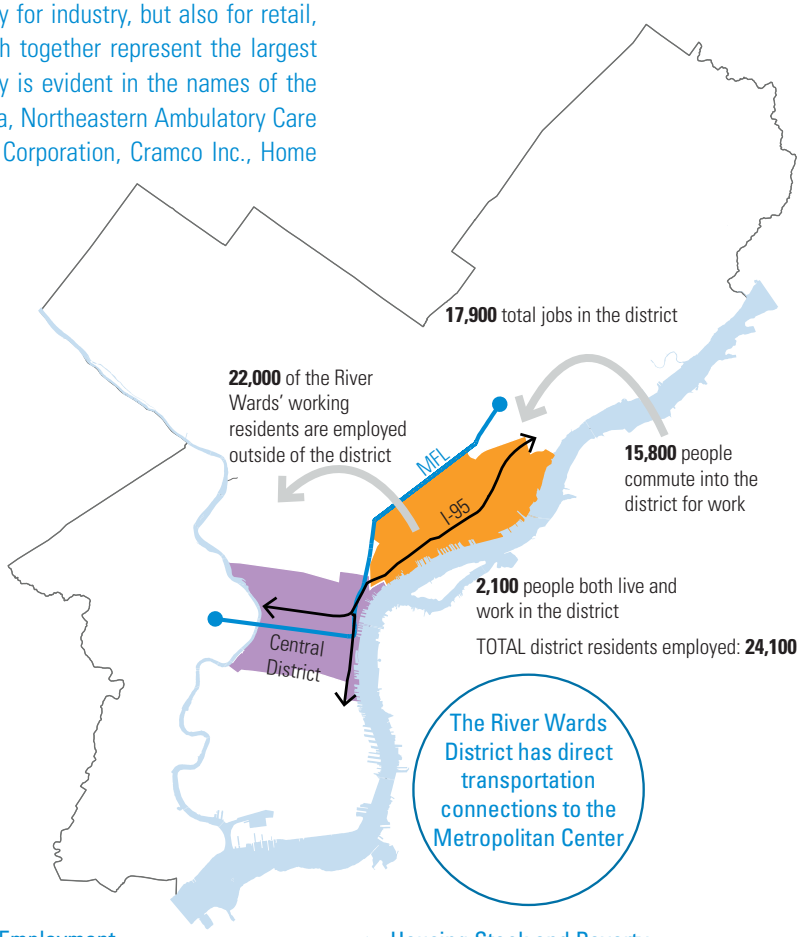
A Diversifying Economy

While the River Wards District may once have anchored Philadelphia's claim to be the "Workshop of the World," today the district's economy is known not only for industry, but also for retail, health care, educational, and food service enterprises, which together represent the largest sectors of the district's economy. Today's diversified economy is evident in the names of the district's largest employers: the School District of Philadelphia, Northeastern Ambulatory Care Center, Philadelphia Police Department, Allied Security, ICS Corporation, Cramco Inc., Home Depot, and the United Parcel Service (UPS).

Largest Employers in River Wards, 2010

Source: Philadelphia City Planning Commission/DVRPC

Employer	2010 Estimated Jobs
School District of Philadelphia	1,385
Northeastern Ambulatory Care Center	765
Philadelphia Police Department	635
Allied Security	325
ICS Corporation	225



> Metropolitan Center Connections

Strong transportation connections, including the Market-Frankford Line and I-95, between the River Wards District and the Metropolitan Center provide opportunities for both areas to flourish. For district residents, the transportation opportunities create an expanded job market as residents have reliable transportation to access job opportunities in the entire Metropolitan Center. The economy of the River Wards District also benefits as businesses that may be looking for larger spaces or cannot afford the rents demanded in the Metropolitan Center can look to the district to accommodate their needs. In particular, those areas closest to the Central District have the opportunity to attract spill-over retail, entertainment, and business service establishments, while areas of the district more distant from the Central District may have an opportunity to host production, distribution, and repair firms.

> Resident Employment

The River Wards District is home to 17,900 jobs, and 24,100 district residents are employed. Of those who are employed, 2,100 residents hold jobs within the district and 22,000 commute to jobs in other parts of the city and region, mostly to the Metropolitan Center. There are also 15,800 workers who travel from elsewhere to work in the district.

Residents of the River Wards District are employed primarily in four sectors: business, professional, and administrative services (22 percent); retail, food services, lodging, arts, and recreation (22 percent); industrial (21 percent), and health care and social assistance (16 percent). The district's 18.3 percent unemployment rate in 2010 is higher than the city's overall rate of 13.4 percent. Unemployment is higher than 20 percent in neighborhoods of Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg. This may be attributable to the shift in the district's economy, the need for job and skills training, or lack of access to jobs available elsewhere in the city and region.

> Housing Stock and Poverty

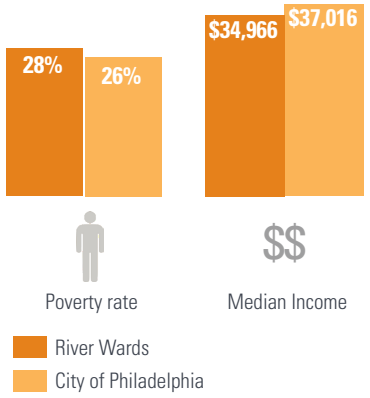
One of the River Wards District's greatest assets is its historic housing stock. In fact, the district has the highest percentage of housing units built before 1939 of all districts in the city. Unfortunately, older homes can be difficult and expensive to maintain. Currently many River Wards residents are living in poverty, particularly in Kensington and Port Richmond. As of 2010, over 50 percent of the residents in some areas of Kensington were considered impoverished by U.S. Census standards. There are a variety of programs that can help individuals maintain their homes without a great personal expense which will become fundamental as the housing stock continues to age.

> Industrial Clusters

As of 2011, the industrial sector provided 7,005 jobs, or 39 percent of total employment, within the district. Primary concentrations of industrial uses are located adjacent to transportation infrastructure. Historically, many industries clustered along the waterfront and freight rail lines, leading to the land use patterns that are still present today. There are also remaining vestiges of industrial operations embedded within residential neighborhoods. Newer industrial operations have chosen to locate in proximity to I-95 and major arterial roads as highway access has become their primary location concern.

The decrease of industrial businesses in the River Wards District has left a legacy of large, vacant industrial facilities. Some of these relatively inexpensive properties have been renovated to support businesses associated with the Makers Movement, an emerging light manufacturing trend featuring a strong focus on creative artistic and artisanal production.

Income Comparison, 2010

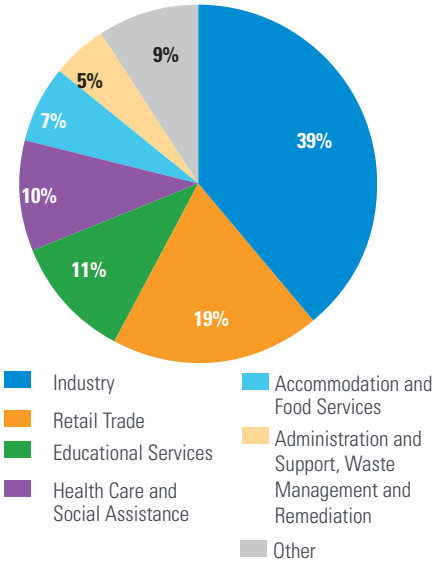


> Local Shopping

The district has roughly 3.6 million square feet of commercial floor area contained in 15 distinct commercial corridors and nodes. As of 2011, there were 3,340 retail jobs located within the district, 19 percent of all jobs in the district. About half of the retail space in the River Wards has been developed in an auto-oriented style on former industrial sites along Aramingo, Castor, and Erie Avenues. The retail developments clustering around Aramingo and Castor Avenues are approaching the scale of a regional shopping center. As the population of the district continues to grow there will be additional opportunities to enhance the commercial corridors.

Residents and visitors also shop at the more traditional and walkable commercial corridors located within the district. The Frankford Avenue corridor is known for being a retail and arts center and both the Kensington Avenue and Allegheny Avenue corridors are known for their strong immigrant influences. The guidance, management, and investment of local stakeholders on both Kensington and Allegheny Avenues shows the powerful impact that dedicated individuals and associations can have on a commercial corridor. Both Frankford and Girard Avenues in Fishtown and East Kensington have seen significant reinvestment in the past decade and have not only attracted new residents to the district, but also created new destinations, particularly for dining, shopping and artistry.

Employment Distribution of Jobs, 2011



Definition | *Regional Center*

Regional centers are defined by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission as destinations with significant employment bases that occupy over one million square feet, such as large malls and office complexes. Regional centers serve multiple municipalities and, specific to Philadelphia, serve multiple neighborhoods.

Imperial Plaza, 3400 Aramingo Avenue
This auto-oriented plaza is part of the emerging regional center shopping district along Aramingo Avenue.

La Colombe Torrefaction, 1335 Frankford Avenue
A recent conversion from a vacant industrial building to a retail business, this store contributes to the walkability of the Frankford Avenue corridor.

Charles Jacquin Et Cie Inc., 2633 Trenton Ave
Located at Trenton and Lehigh Avenues, the Charles Jacquin distillery and liquor manufacturer has been operating in Kensington for 150 years.
Photo Source: Hidden City Philadelphia/Michael Bixler

A Multimodal Transportation System

Nearly all transportation modes are well-represented in the River Wards District. Located between Center City and Northeast Philadelphia, significant transportation infrastructure traverses the district, including I-95 and the elevated Market-Frankford Line. Along with convenient automobile, bus, trolley, and train access, the district is also bordered on the east by the Delaware River, making it one of the districts within the city fortunate to have port access.

> Transit

The Market-Frankford Line borders the western edge of the River Wards District, providing convenient access to other areas of the city to the southwest and northeast of the district. Six Market-Frankford Line stations serve the District. In addition, numerous bus routes feed into the Market-Frankford Line, thereby further linking district residents to employment in Center City, University City, and Northeast Philadelphia. Average daily bus ridership in the River Wards District for all routes exceeds 35,000 riders per day, with Route 60 accounting for over 8,000 of these trips.

Regional rail service, providing access to the northeast corridor via the Trenton Line, is also available in Bridesburg. Ridership at the Bridesburg station is growing despite limited pedestrian and automobile access. The Route 15 trolley is another transit option operating within the district.

12 bus and trolley routes serve the River Wards

> Goods Movement

The River Wards District has extensive port facilities that line the majority of its waterfront above Lehigh Avenue as well as extensive freight networks that support the surrounding industrial, port, chemical, and construction material industries. Many businesses in this area are linked to these facilities or their imports in some way. In addition, improvements to I-95 and the extension of Delaware Avenue will enhance access to and from the district, alleviating congestion from trucks moving goods. The extension also provides opportunities to mitigate safety hazards associated with the movement and congestion caused by trucks on local surface streets.

A unique benefit of improving the transportation infrastructure that serves industrial, port, and freight uses in the River Wards is the opportunity to expand public access to the waterfront. Unlike other areas of Philadelphia that are increasing waterfront public access, waterfront linkages and new trails in the River Wards District are being achieved in tandem with very active industrial, port, and freight uses that are likely to expand and intensify.

Rail parallel to Lewis Street and the Frankford Creek

> I-95 Reconstruction

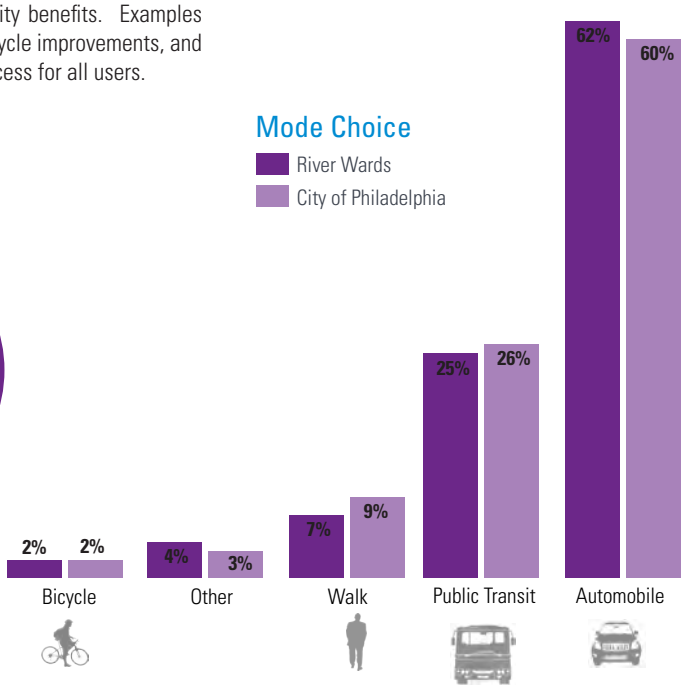
A significant undertaking by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to reconstruct an eight-mile stretch of I-95, north of Center City Philadelphia, is underway. I-95 not only carries substantial traffic volumes each day within the Greater Philadelphia region, but also serves as a portal to regions north (e.g., New York) and south (e.g., Washington D.C.), and is an important corridor for moving freight (13,000 trucks per day through Pennsylvania). While most of the I-95 reconstruction through the River Wards District has been fully designed, it has led to major design changes to surface streets and public spaces underneath and adjacent to the interstate that will provide community benefits. Examples include pedestrian and bicycle improvements, and better connectivity and access for all users.

Bike and pedestrian sidepath and truck traffic at Allegheny and N. Delaware Avenues

> Commuting Trends

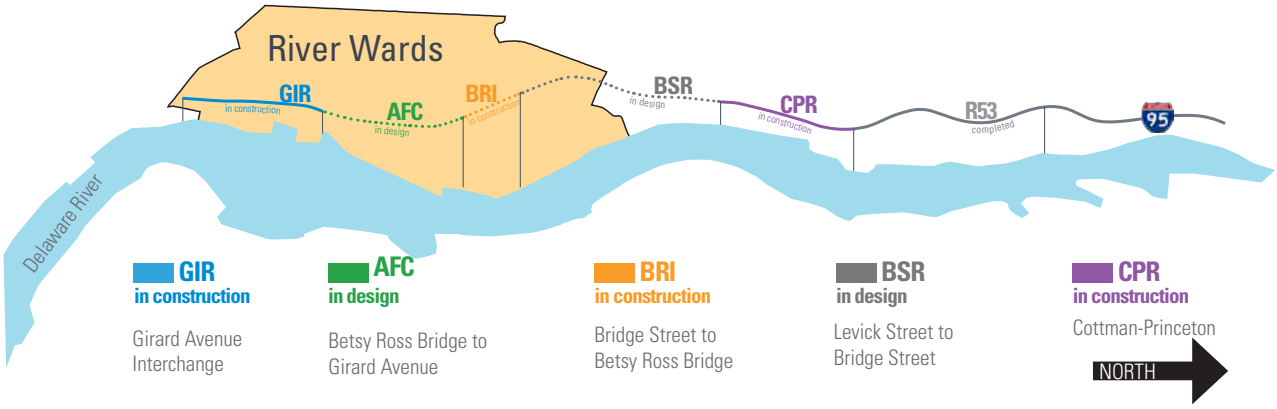
There is great variation within the River Wards District regarding transportation behaviors and the type of transportation modes available to its residents. Despite many commuting options, the vast majority of district residents (62 percent) drive to work. Of those who use transit to commute, bus is the primary mode in most areas of the district at approximately 60 percent. Bicycle commuting rates appear comparable to those citywide, but vary greatly within the district depending on the neighborhood. Overall, commute trends within the district are very similar to citywide trends.

Mode Choice



I-95 Construction Phases

I-95, an important transportation corridor for the nation and region, is being improved in the River Wards. Design and construction of I-95 is ongoing and subject to change.



River Wards Health Profile

The built environment influences how we interact with the world: what we eat, how we travel, and how often we play and exercise. Healthy eating and active living relate to our risk for developing chronic disease conditions including, but not limited to, heart disease, obesity, asthma, and cancer. The success of *Philadelphia2035*, and the sustainability of the River Wards District, depends on the continued health of its residents. The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) has partnered with the PCPC to create healthy communities that promote healthy lifestyles. This means that healthy choices are easier where we live, work, learn, shop, and play.

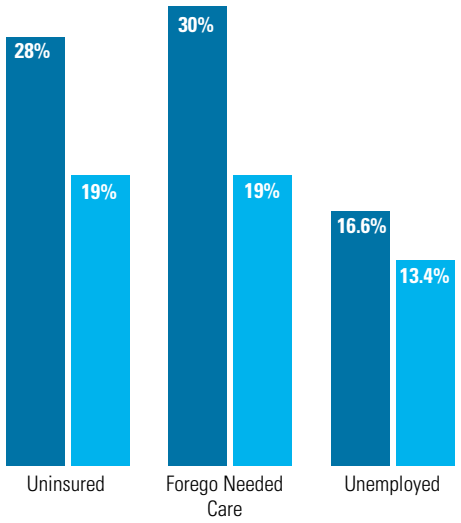
> Summary

PDPH's analysis of primary health indicators determined that the prevalence of chronic disease in the River Wards is comparable to the citywide average. However, Philadelphia rates poorly among similar-sized cities across these indicators. Further, effects of chronic disease are compounded in the River Wards, where concentrations of poverty and unemployment inhibit economic development and its associated health benefits, including access to health insurance and healthy foods.

The district's 18 percent unemployment rate has left many residents underinsured and overburdened. The departure of the Northeast Hospital in 2009, the district's only emergency room and inpatient care facility, and the absence of a neighborhood Health Center continue to pose additional challenges to accessible healthcare. In addition, 30 percent of adults report foregoing needed care. Portions of the district are also burdened with six times its share, in comparison to the city, of drug and poison overdose emergency calls.

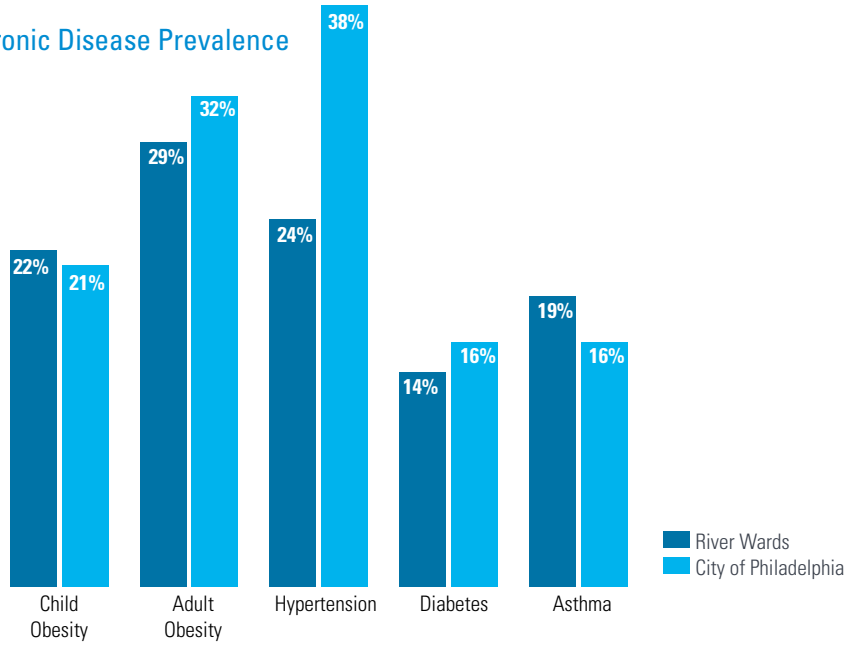
A legacy of intense industrial and transporation activity in the district has blocked recreational access to the waterfront and other open space resources, and has led to higher-than-average concentrations of pollutants that contribute to the city's highest asthma hospitalization rates.

Adult Healthcare and Prevention



Data source: Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Community Health Assessment, 2013.

Chronic Disease Prevalence



> Access to Parks and Open Space

Parks and recreation centers provide opportunities for realizing one's daily physical fitness needs, and open space helps mitigate exposure to harmful air pollutants. *GreenPlan*, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation's open space plan, recommends all residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park or recreation center. The district's dense neighborhoods and low car ownership underscore this need. Residents in southern Bridesburg, northern Kensington, and Port Richmond have an unmet demand for these resources.

Adapting portions of underutilized industrial land and space along transportation corridors and underpasses (e.g., unused rail rights-of-way, I-95, Betsy Ross Bridge) for recreational uses would help underserved neighborhoods meet park access goals (see Renew section). Prioritizing safe routes to parks for streetscape improvements increases the geographic reach of parks into residential neighborhoods, encouraging children and seniors to utilize the health amenities more frequently and from further away.

Park usage is enhanced by accessibility, proximity, lighting, public toilets, and drinking water.

American Planning Association's City Parks Forum, 2003

> Active Living by Design

Philadelphia2035 supports active living by building physical activity into resident's daily routines. Practical public transit; safe, continuous sidewalks; shared roadways; and mixed-use pedestrian-scale development are prerequisites to a healthy pedestrian environment. The Market Frankford Line (MFL), with six district serving stations, and associated retail corridors along Front and Kensington support "active" commuting. However, perceived safety concerns at stations are a barrier to ridership, especially for early morning and evening commuters. Bringing underutilized properties along the MFL back to productive neighborhood-serving uses will help extend commercial peak hours and add more pedestrian activity with the desired result of creating safe destinations. This may also attract a broader diversity of bike and pedestrian commuters.

Distance to MFL stations is a barrier for residents living in the central and eastern parts of the district. Improving walkability along east-west arterials, and complementing existing bike lanes with secure bike-handling facilities at stations should increase transit ridership.

Pedestrian activity is inhibited along the Aramingo Avenue Shopping District by the uncoordinated auto-oriented design of the separate centers that currently make up the shopping district. Local pedestrian shoppers must contend with multi-lane roads, high vehicle speeds, and expansive parking lots. Streetscape and parking lot improvements to reduce risk of pedestrian injury are addressed in the Aramingo Avenue Focus Area (see Focus Area, p. 70).

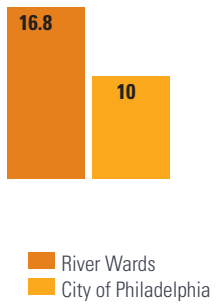
> Access to Healthy Foods

Close proximity to healthy foods makes healthy food the easy choice. Through programs like the Healthy Corner Store Initiative and expansions in farmers' markets, the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Get Healthy Philly program and its partners have helped improve access to healthy foods. Between 2010 and 2012, the number of low income River Wards residents with poor access to healthy foods decreased by 18 percent (Get Healthy Philly, Walkable Access to Healthy Food in Philadelphia, 2010-2012). Support for these efforts should continue by creating opportunity sites for fresh food retail and its promotion in Kensington and upper Bridesburg, where low-income communities still have poor access.

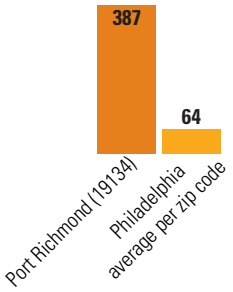
The New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC) works with local nonprofits to provide healthy food at affordable prices to residents through its Farm to Families program. This program can be expanded to include areas of Kensington and northern Bridesburg still lacking healthy food access. Another strategy is to replicate Greensgrow's Community Kitchen model. Greensgrow repaired and enhanced a church kitchen in exchange for the space and equipment. This improved neighborhood access to healthy food, created jobs, and supported the church community—a triple bottom line benefit (see THRIVE, p. 30).

GET HEALTHY PHILLY
Healthy, Active & Smoke-Free

Child Asthma Hospitalization per 1,000 Children



Emergency Calls for Drug Overdose (second half of 2012)



Data source: Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services

A Legacy of Industry

Industrial development has significantly affected the River Wards. As early as the 1660s, the district acquired a reputation for production as mills began to appear along the area's creeks. By the time of the Industrial Revolution, the number and diversity of industrial establishments helped cement Philadelphia's reputation as the "Workshop of the World." By the end of the 20th century, however, large-scale industry in the district had declined. Smaller-scale manufacturing and distribution now perseveres in scattered locations throughout the district, aided by creativity, innovation, and public and private investment.

> Industrial Development in the 18th and 19th Centuries

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Philadelphia was a global manufacturing hub and the River Wards District was one of the city's most important industrial centers. Industrial development in the River Wards grew out of direct access to the Delaware River. In the early 19th century, manufacturing and maritime trades began to cluster in Bridesburg and Port Richmond.

The arrival of passenger and freight railroad lines stimulated tremendous industrial growth. By the middle of the 19th-century Fishtown and Kensington were the largest manufacturers of textile goods in the United States. The area became a major shipping center, especially for coal, and the Cramp Shipyard became an important shipbuilder along the Delaware River.

The River Wards became a center for immigrants, predominantly European, who settled in the district to gain access to its abundant jobs. Bringing their skills from abroad, they participated in the growth of industries across Philadelphia. Notably, the arrival of many German immigrants to the River Wards area led to an influx of brewing and brewing-related industries.

> 20th-Century and Post-World War II Industrial Decline

The River Wards played an important role in both World War I and World War II. For example, in 1920 the Rohm and Haas Bridesburg facility developed Plexiglas, which was used in building military aircraft.

However, during the interwar period and the Great Depression many companies shuttered that would never return. The textile and shipbuilding industries in particular were severely affected, and industrial decline resumed following World War II.

In 1946, the Cramp Shipyard was closed. Rohm and Haas began to reduce the scale of its operation in 1966, and it is currently a cleared, nonoperating site. After a prolonged decline in coal transportation, the Reading Company declared bankruptcy in 1971 and transferred its assets to Conrail. In 1977, the Frankford Arsenal closed. Philadelphia Coke closed in 1982.

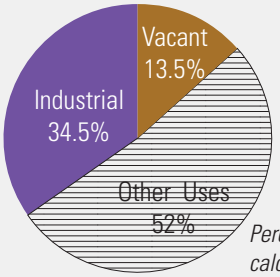
> 21st-Century Clean and Creative Industry

Today, much of the large-scale industry that once dominated the River Wards has departed. However, a number of companies still thrive. The area is now home to many new and exciting enterprises that build the industrial legacy. In addition, organizations such as the Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise and the Richmond Corridor Association work to strengthen the business environment of the industrial area.

The River Wards District has long been a center for the production of synthetic chemicals and other potentially harmful materials. Many of these industries have left the district or stopped production, creating opportunities for new, cleaner industrial uses to take advantage of the district's significant resources.

The Makers Movement—focused on creative production by both traditional and innovative methods—has taken root in many parts of the district, presenting the possibility of a new kind of industrial future. The Makers Movement and artist and community-centered projects also bring adaptive reuse opportunities. These include utilizing former manufacturing facilities as artist studios and performance spaces. This contributes to the preservation of historic resources and helps maintain the district's distinctive character.

> River Wards Land Use, 2014

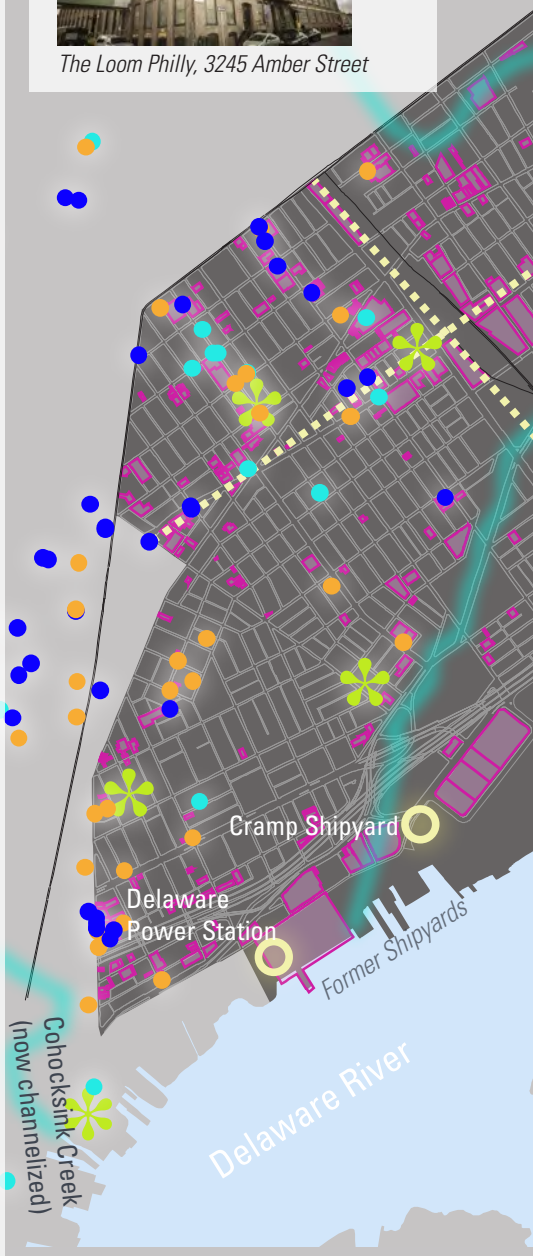


Percentages are calculated by area.

> Historic Mills

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC), Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC), and the Preservation Alliance identified **84 historic mills** in the River Wards. Many are a part of the *Buildings Related to the Textile Industry in the Kensington Neighborhood of Philadelphia* National Register of Historic Places listing.

The Loom Philly, 3245 Amber Street



> Breweries, Roasters, and Distilleries

The River Wards District has seven companies that either brew, roast, or distill. Philadelphia Brewing Company has renovated the 1885 Weisbrod & Hess Oriental Brewing Company's building at Martha and Hagert Streets.

Philadelphia Brewing Company
2439 Amber Street

Frankford Arsenal

Old Frankford Creek

Rohm and Haas

Philadelphia Coke

Frankford Creek

Gunner's Run (now channelized)

Philadelphia Water Department

PECO/ Exelon Richmond Station

Philadelphia Gas Works

Tioga Marine Terminal

Former Reading Coal Depot

> Makers Movement

The Makers Movement is gaining momentum. One group that is bridging the gap between artists and manufacturing is **Manufacturing Reimagined**. The organization is a grassroots effort to spur growth through the collaboration of local designers and factory owners, resulting in the development of new products on traditional, idle, or underutilized machinery.

Huntingdon Yarn Mill
3114 E Thompson Street

> Municipal Utilities

The River Wards District has the largest concentration of active, major utility facilities within its boundaries of any district in Philadelphia. This includes power generation, energy storage and distribution, wastewater treatment, and solid-waste processing.

> Maritime Industry

The waterfront remains a significant industrial asset, although coal shipments and shipbuilding have long ceased. Today, Tioga Marine Terminal, Westway, Kinder Morgan, the Philadelphia Water Department, and Honeywell maintain active port facilities.

LEGEND

- Prominent Past Industry
- Former Rail Lines
- Active Rail Lines
- Former Creeks
- 2014 Industrial Land Use
- Active Brewery, Coffee Roaster, or Distillery

Mills

- Active or adaptively reused
- Demolished
- Status unclear

36 Actively used

20 Demolished

28 Status unclear

Land Use and Zoning

What Is Land Use?

Planners categorize and map land use to document and understand the current state of development. Land use refers to broad categories such as residential, commercial, or industrial and can be broken out into more detail such as high-density residential, office commercial, or warehousing/distribution. Maps can help planners identify potential uses that, if developed, could enhance the quality of life or economic productivity of an area. Intensity or type of land use also impacts infrastructure needs such as transit or utilities. Most importantly, land use impacts development regulations such as zoning.

What Is Zoning?

Zoning is the primary tool for regulating land use. Zoning is a set of regulations governing land development and permitted uses for property. These laws regulate what type of uses can occur (use), where buildings can be located on a property (area), and the size of the buildings (bulk). Existing properties may not conform with zoning regulations if they have received a variance for their use, area, or bulk, or if they legally existed prior to the zoning laws being enacted.

Zoning Map Revision Process

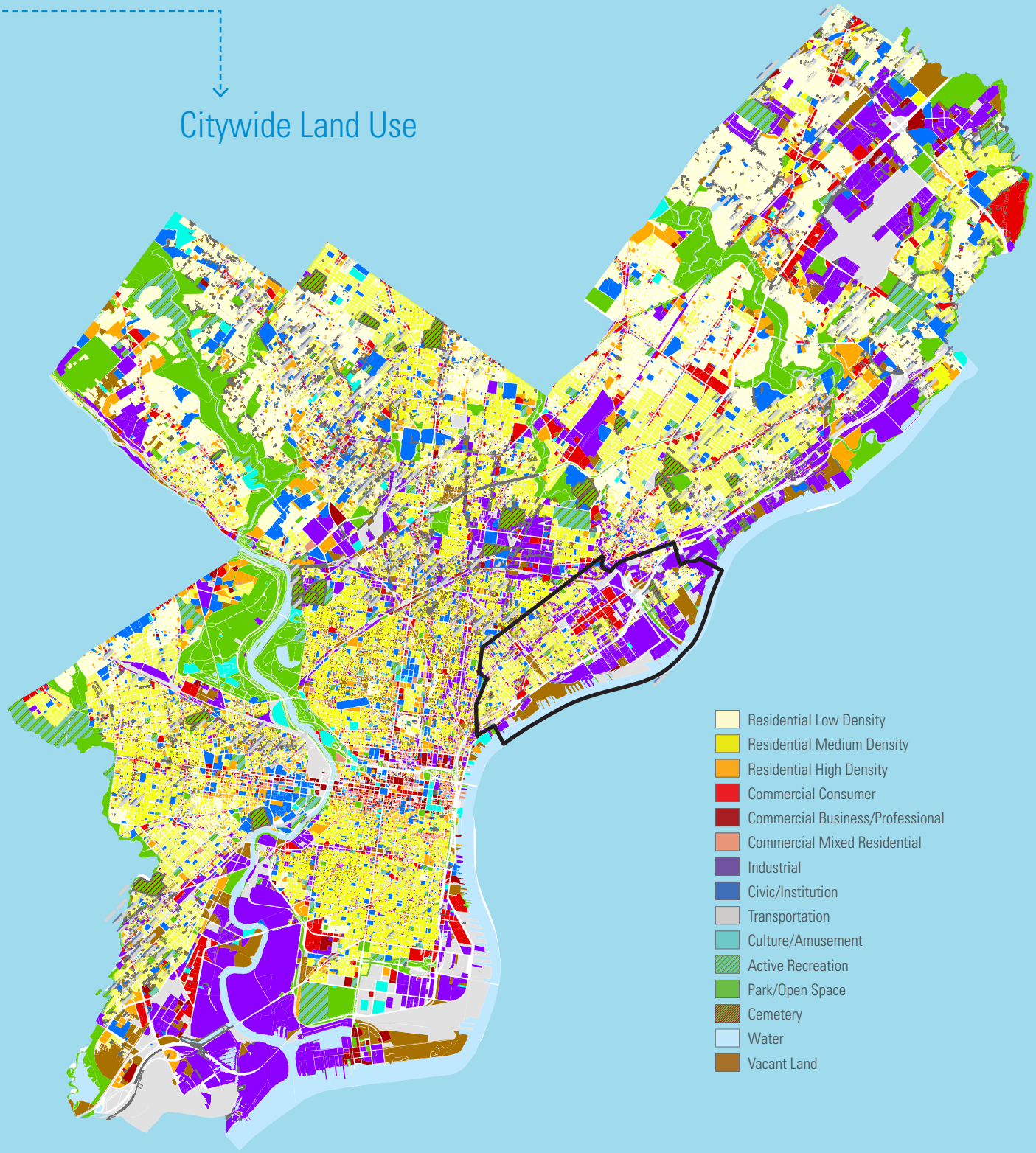
When analyzed together, land use and zoning inform planners if a property or area is zoned correctly for current conditions or if zoning changes are necessary to either reflect existing conditions or bring about changes to future physical development. Over time, changes in land use may require remapping, or a change to a property's zoning district classification. Zoning remapping is a public process for updating and revising the zoning map for an area.

Adoption of the New Zoning Code

On December 22, 2011, Mayor Nutter signed Bill No. 110845, enacting into law the first comprehensive rewrite of the Philadelphia Zoning Code in 50 years. The new code took effect on August 22, 2012. Better organized and easier to navigate, the new code sets clear rules and expectations for land use, preserving neighborhood character, protecting open space, and encouraging investment and jobs.

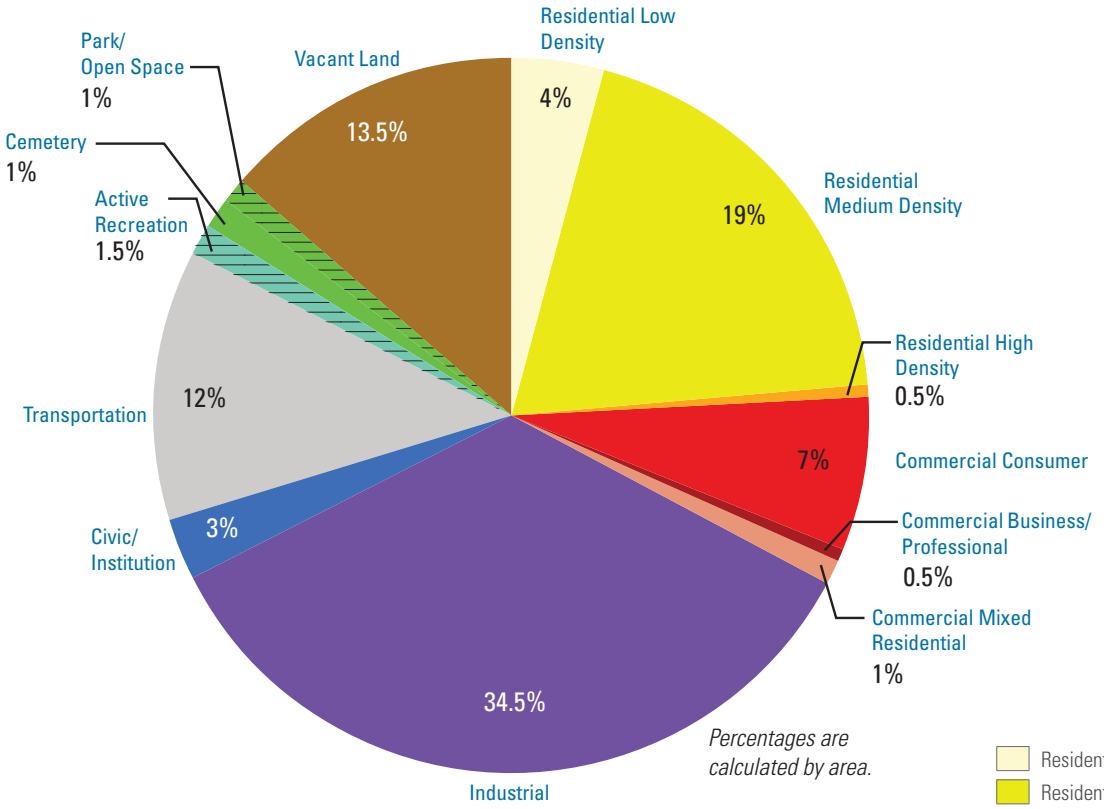
The zoning code rewrite is part of Philadelphia's integrated planning and zoning process, which also includes the zoning map revision process. District plans guide the zoning map revision process by providing land use and zoning recommendations, ensuring that the new code is properly mapped to reflect both existing and future land use needs. This will reduce the number of developments requiring relief from the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Citywide Land Use



Existing Land Use

Land use is important to understanding the character of an area and serves as the foundation for planning its future. A detailed land use survey of the River Wards District was completed in the fall of 2014. To collect this information, a working land use map was created from various city sources, including the Office of Property Assessment, and then verified by field surveys conducted by PCPC staff. The land use data is stored in a geographic information system (GIS) database maintained by the PCPC. Color codes are used to represent 15 major categories of land use.



Residential Low Density
Residential Medium Density
Residential High Density
Commercial Consumer
Commercial Business/Professional
Commercial Mixed Residential
Industrial
Civic/Institution
Transportation*
Culture/Amusement
Active Recreation
Park/Open Space
Cemetery
Water
Vacant Land

* The Transportation percentage does not include streets and sidewalks.

> Existing Land Use

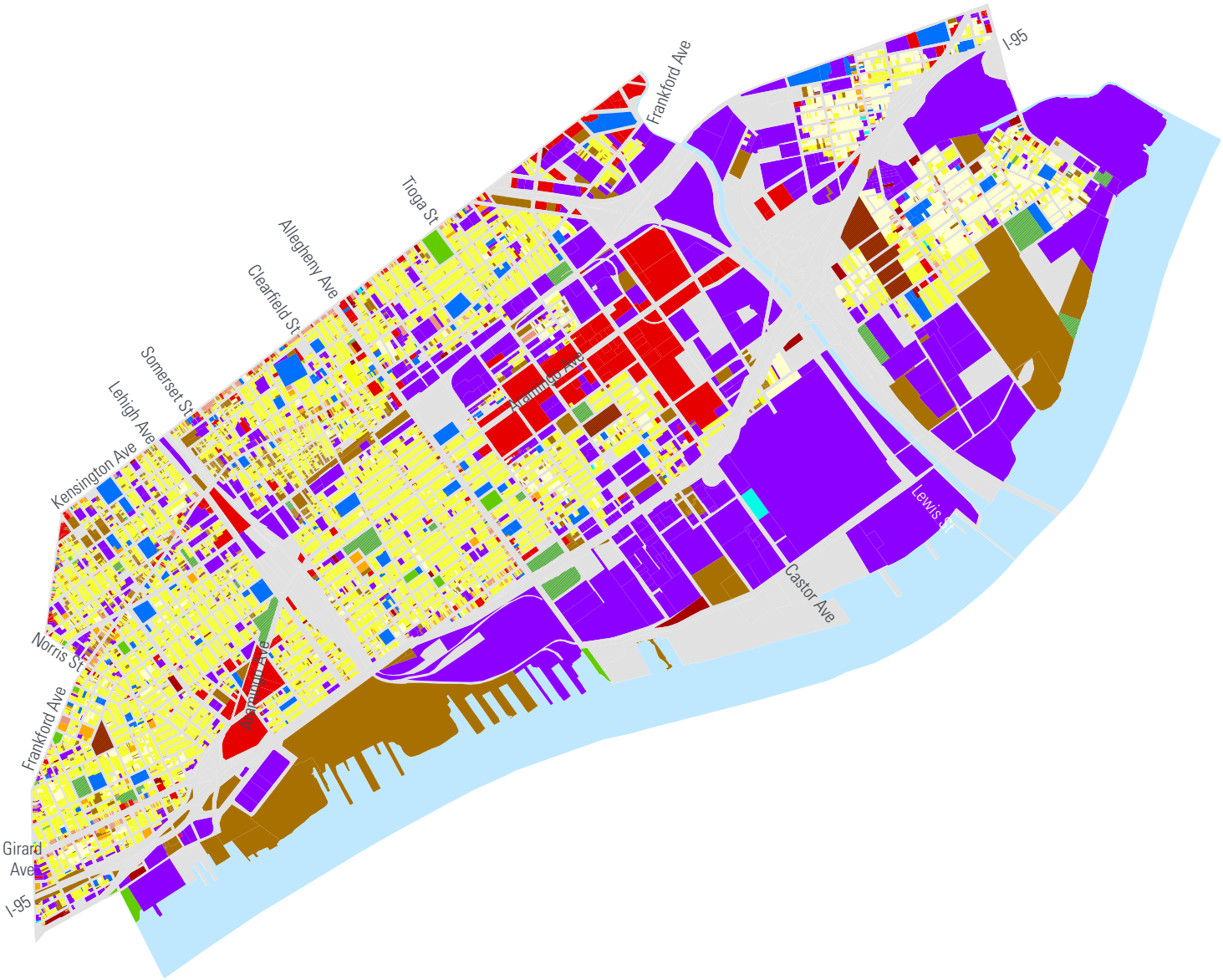
The River Wards District has traditionally had a strong mix of working class residential, industrial, and transportation uses. Today, those three uses account for over 70 percent of total land use categories within the district. The remaining 30 percent of land uses fall into commercial corridor, civic/institutional, cultural/recreation, park/open space, or vacant/other categories.

Notable is the vacant/other category, which accounts for 13.5 percent of total land use but consists almost entirely of several large tracts of land that were former industrial areas and railroad uses such as freight terminals and sidings, particularly along the Lehigh Viaduct. Therefore, the majority of vacant land in the River Wards District is concentrated along the Delaware riverfront and available for future development.

Many of the rowhouses in the district were originally built for households who had workers employed at the industrial establishments within the district.

Existing Land Use, 2014

Source: PCPC field survey, 2014

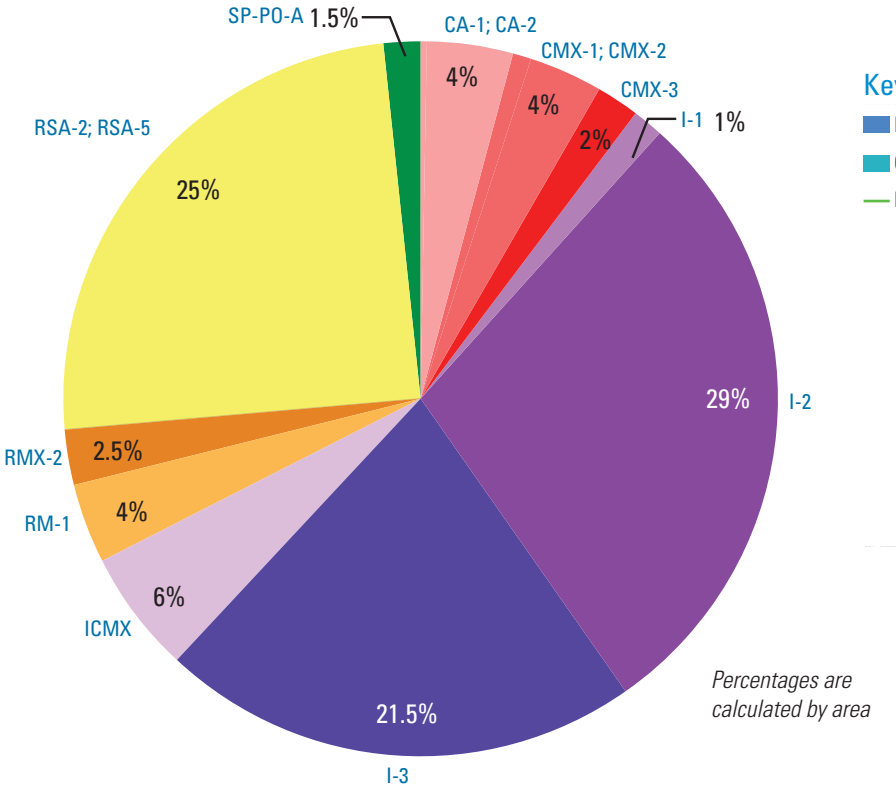


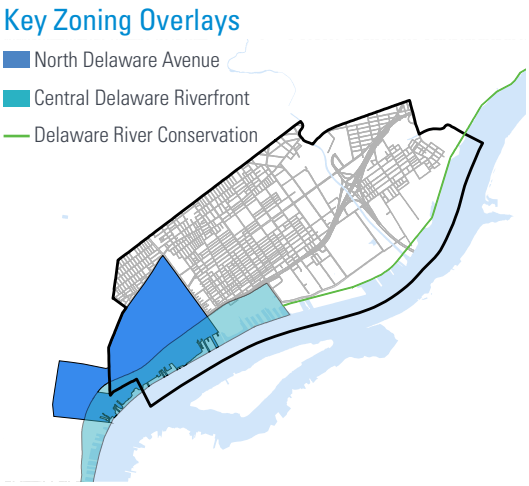
> Land Use Along the Waterfront

The predominance of industrial land, both active and vacant, along the waterfront highlights a unique aspect and resource of the River Wards District. The opportunity exists to reinvest in and manage waterfront areas to better serve the long-term needs of the city, waterfront industries, and adjoining neighborhoods.

Existing Zoning

The existing zoning reflects both the industrial history and strength of the residential neighborhoods within the River Wards District. The majority of the area in the district, over 50 percent, is zoned industrially. Industrial zoning ranges from light to heavy, and industrially zoned parcels are present in areas throughout the district. Much of the industrial zoning can be found along the waterfront, the Lehigh Avenue Viaduct, and in Bridesburg and Port Richmond. More than 30 percent of the district is residentially zoned, the majority of which is zoned either RSA-2 or RSA-5, both of which are residential, single-family attached districts, and concentrated in Olde Richmond, East Kensington, and the lower portions of Kensington and Port Richmond.



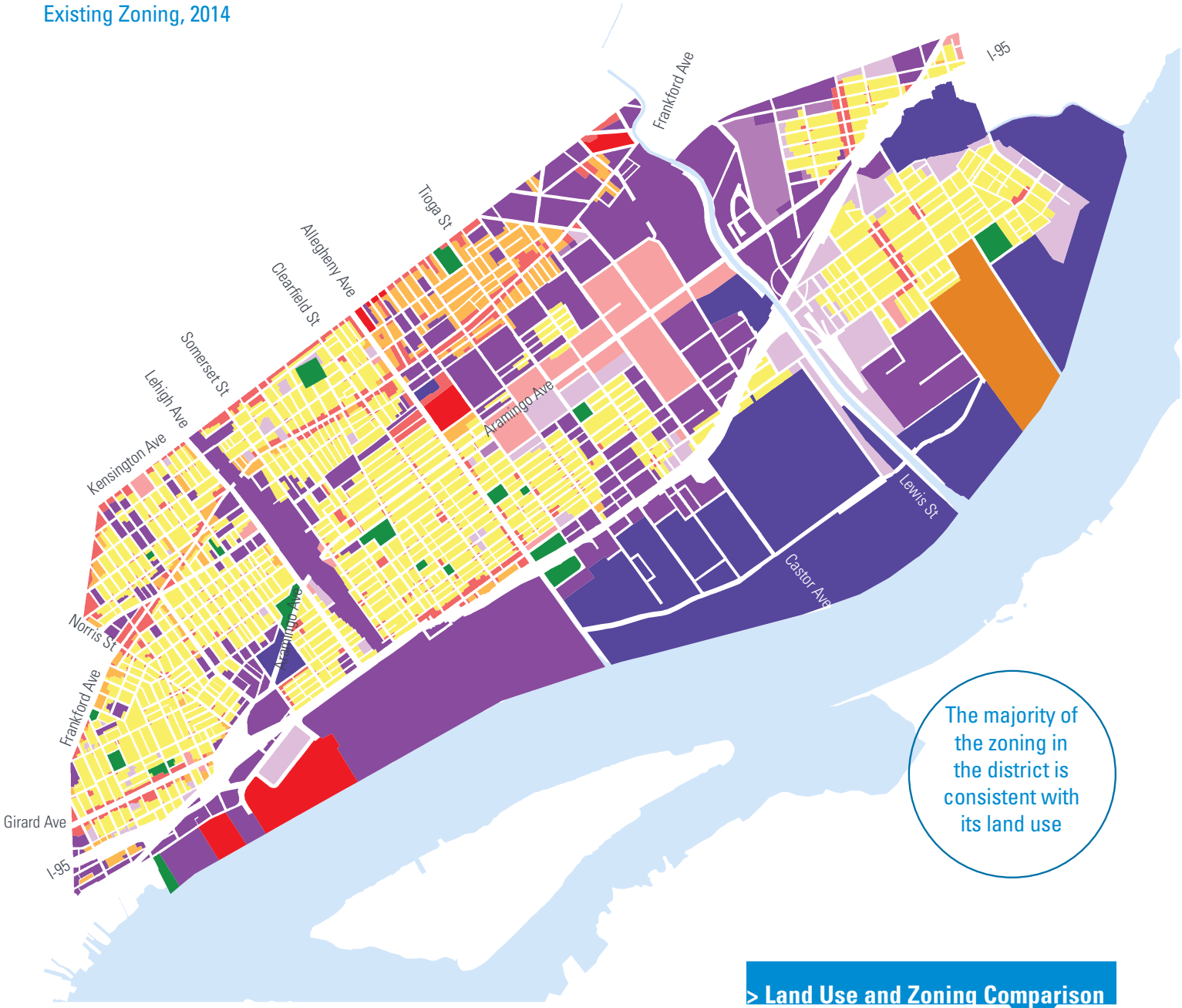


> Existing Zoning

While residential and industrial zoning account for over 85 percent of the land within the River Wards District, approximately 2,600 acres, it is important to note the commercial zoning as well. The commercially zoned land within the district accurately reflects many of the existing commercial corridors. In particular, the prominence of commercial zoning along Aramingo Avenue, Girard Avenue, and Kensington Avenue beneath the MFL, has served to establish some of the commercial hubs within the district. The recreational zoning also highlights some of the River Wards District's most valuable public assets, such as Penn Treaty Park, Campbell Square, and Bridesburg Recreation Center.

Three zoning overlays also impact development in the River Wards District. They include the North Delaware Avenue Neighborhood Commercial Area, the Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay, and the Delaware River Conservation Overlay. Each of the overlays adds regulations in addition to those required by the base zoning districts. The North Delaware Avenue Neighborhood Conservation Area regulates uses regarding assembly, entertainment, and eating and drinking establishments. The Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay guides riverfront development to encourage a mixture of uses to help generate new economic growth and recreational opportunities. The Delaware River Conservation Overlay promotes and protects a system of parks and trails along the Delaware River Greenway by requiring a fifty-foot buffer along the western bank of the Delaware River.

Existing Zoning, 2014



The majority of the zoning in the district is consistent with its land use

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

> Land Use and Zoning Comparison

Approximately 13 percent of the River Wards District zoning has been identified as potentially inconsistent with the underlying land use. Of that percentage, the greatest mismatches occur within the CMX-2 (neighborhood commercial mixed use), I-3 and I-2 (industrial), and RSA-5, (residential single-family attached) districts.

FRAMING OUR FUTURE

Market-Frankford Line Structure, 2014

26 | Recommendations
- 28 | THRIVE
- 42 | CONNECT
- 48 | RENEW

62 | Focus Areas
- 66 | Aramingo Avenue Shopping District
- 74 | Port Richmond Village
- 80 | Lehigh Avenue Corridor

Recommendations

Land use and zoning recommendations of the River Wards District Plan are organized into three forward-looking themes: THRIVE, CONNECT, and RENEW. These themes reflect the goals and strategies of the *Citywide Vision*.

Within the three themes are seven elements from the *Citywide Vision* that address the major issues, opportunities, and unique qualities of the River Wards. Each element is further refined into topics that include a description of existing conditions, district-specific recommendations, responsible implementing agencies, and references to applicable objectives from the *Citywide Vision*. A complete list of objectives from the *Citywide Vision* is provided in the Appendix.

> THRIVE

28 | Neighborhoods
Improve neighborhood livability

36 | Economic Development
Make Philadelphia more competitive in the metropolitan region

> CONNECT

42 | Transportation
Improve transportation safety, efficiency, and convenience

> RENEW

48 | Open Space
Expand access to our open-space resources

52 | Environmental Resources
Fulfill city obligations to meet ambitious federal environmental standards

55 | Historic Preservation
Preserve historic resources

58 | Public Realm
Improve the public realm in commercial corridors

> THRIVE

Philadelphians THRIVE in the center of a competitive metropolitan region

> CONNECT

Philadelphians CONNECT seamlessly to the region and the world

> RENEW

Philadelphians RENEW valuable resources to sustain a bright future

The strengths of the River Wards District include people, places and potential. The population is growing, in part, due to an influx of immigrants. Although jobs have declined, the district is still an employment center, and has the potential for neighborhood, industrial, and commercial district improvement. Recommendations build on assets such as arts-related business clusters, the port, health care services, manufacturing, and big-box retail, stable single-family neighborhoods, and proximity to SEPTA service.

The Market-Frankford Line (MFL) and Interstate 95 are the two primary transportation corridors of the River Wards. The MFL provides a quick and vital connection to Center City and University City, which combine to form the region's Metropolitan Center. I-95 provides a similar service, but also connects the district to other metropolitan areas within the Northeast Corridor. I-95, the Delaware River, and freight rail lines are also major routes for goods movement, which make the district an ideal location for industrial operations. Recommendations address ways to bolster this infrastructure and mitigate its impact on adjacent residential areas.

The River Wards District is enhanced by over four miles of waterfront along the Delaware River. Its neighborhood parks and recreation centers serve as points of community focus and pride. Recommendations include increased waterfront access, improvement of existing parks and recreation facilities, expansion of the inventory of locally designated historic sites and districts, and an improved public realm, especially around the Lehigh Viaduct and near the edges of remaining industrial areas.

THRIVE > Neighborhoods

Commercial Corridors and Nodes

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 1.1:
Promote strong and well-balanced neighborhood centers.

The River Wards District benefits from a variety of commercial destinations. The district has roughly 3.6 million square feet of commercial floor area in 13 commercial corridors and nodes. About half of this floor area is auto-oriented along Aramingo, Castor, and Erie Avenues. These resources are generally well-managed, and provide a range of competitive goods and services. They contain the district's five full-service, chain supermarkets.

These newer commercial centers are not, however, located or designed to reinforce traditional, walkable neighborhood centers and nodes. Pedestrian-oriented corridors are primarily located along Frankford, Kensington, Allegheny, and Girard Avenues. Both Frankford and Girard Avenues in Fishtown and East Kensington have seen significant private sector reinvestment in the past decade and have become corridors that offer specialty services such as boutique shopping, and eating and drinking establishments.

The River Wards District knits together diverse communities, each with a distinct identity. Economic activity related to arts, entertainment, and recreation in the River Wards is characterized by small-scale establishments that primarily serve local residents. The largest concentration of cultural businesses and arts resources is located in Fishtown and East Kensington. Arts programming and events have also brought nonresident spending into the area, assisted in large degree by proximity to Center City and the Market-Frankford Line. The Trenton Avenue Arts Festival and Kensington Kinetic Sculpture Derby combined bring over 10,000 visitors to East Kensington every year.

The intersection of Kensington and Allegheny Avenues is a vibrant commercial node that offers low-price convenience goods, social services, and excellent access to the Market-Frankford Line. Allegheny Avenue in Port Richmond offers a mix of convenience and specialty goods, which, combined with religious and cultural institutions, form the civic center of this community. Similarly, the Richmond and Orthodox node in Bridesburg serves as the heart of this close-knit community. Impact Services and New Kensington CDC provide corridor management and cleaning on East Girard, Frankford Avenue to Cambria Street, Kensington and Allegheny Avenues, PRIDE Service Area, Aramingo Avenue, and Richmond and Allegheny corridors.

PhilaShops

The PCPC has taken periodic inventories of commercial corridors, centers, and districts since 1988. These PhilaShops inventories focus on characteristics such as area location, size, anchor establishments, physical condition, vacancy, establishment mix, and parking. Information from the inventories can help communities, businesses, and public officials make informed decisions to serve the needs of residents, workers, and visitors.

Corridor Management Program

Vibrant commercial corridors contribute to strong neighborhoods. They provide places to work, shop, and meet your neighbors. A corridor manager brings planning and resources to the corridor, provides assistance to businesses, oversees activities to make the corridor clean and safe, and works to attract new businesses to the area. Through the Targeted Corridor Management Program, the City supports the redevelopment of commercial corridors by providing funding to community-based development organizations to hire corridor management staff.

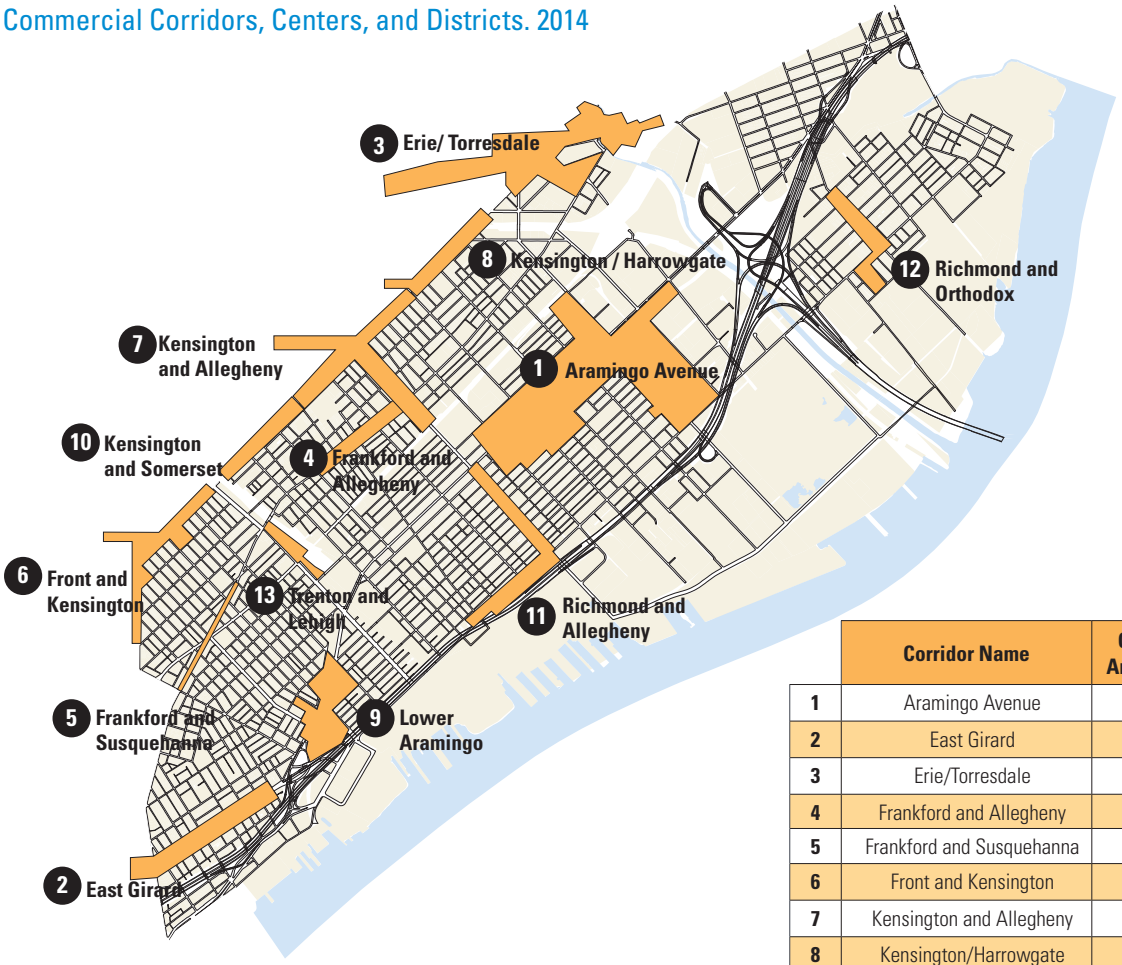
Recommendations

1. Target public resources to leverage private investment in viable commercial districts.
   - Reinforce pedestrian-oriented commercial development around the Richmond and Orthodox Street node;
   - Rezone Frankford Avenue in East Kensington to encourage mixed-use development;
   - Analyze parking demand and potential solutions to improve parking management along Front Street and Kensington Avenue to serve the needs of residents, businesses, and institutions; and
   - Preserve and expand the Frankford Arts Corridor by encouraging more affordable arts-based developments.
     > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, PWD, PPA, SEPTA, Streets, Nonprofits | CW Objective 1.1.2

2. Expand branding and wayfinding to highlight the unique character of the following commercial districts and nodes:
   - Allegheny Avenue and Richmond Street as a center for Polish and international heritage;
   - East Allegheny from Kensington Avenue to Aramingo Avenue as a hub for health services; and
   - Front Street and Kensington Avenue as a destination for Latino and Vietnamese food and services.
     > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, Nonprofits | CW Objective 8.1.7

3. Establish a Business Association to improve the separate stretches of Front Street and Kensington Avenue commercial corridors underneath the MFL, from E Norris Street to E Cambria Street.
   - Encourage applications to the Department of Commerce's Storefront Improvement and InStore Forgivable Loan Program, and the American Street Empowerment Zones financing programs;
   - Continue and expand the Corridor Management and Steward Program; and
   - Reposition industrial and vacant commercial spaces to develop more community-led and affordable arts-based developments along the corridor.
     > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, City Council, Mural Arts, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.2

Commercial Corridors, Centers, and Districts. 2014



	Corridor Name	Gross Leasable Area (square feet)	Vacancy Rate
1	Aramingo Avenue	1,600,000	9.3%
2	East Girard	215,000	16.3%
3	Erie/Torresdale	300,000	8.3%
4	Frankford and Allegheny	80,000	26.5%
5	Frankford and Susquehanna	60,000	32.7%
6	Front and Kensington	207,000	34.3%
7	Kensington and Allegheny	300,000	22.4%
8	Kensington/Harrowgate	40,000	29.0%
9	Lower Aramingo	230,000	10.2%
10	Kensington and Somerset	100,000	36.1%
11	Richmond and Allegheny	160,000	12.4%
12	Richmond and Orthodox	45,000	31.3%
13	Trenton and Lehigh	20,000	33.3%

Case Study | *Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor*

More than half a dozen recent plans for areas of the River Wards—crafted by community organizations—seek to better define neighborhood centers and strengthen connections between communities. From Fishtown and the Frankford Avenue Corridor to the Port Richmond industrial district, Kensington, and up to Bridesburg, distinct efforts have led to new neighborhood gateways, more consistent signage, streetscape enhancements, public art projects, and other significant improvements. One of the largest concentrations of cultural businesses and emerging cultural resources is located along Frankford Avenue in the southern part of the district in Fishtown and East Kensington. A long-term initiative organized by the New Kensington CDC and community partners was to enhance Frankford Avenue into an arts-based hub. Now known as the Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor, the area has retained existing and attracted arts-related businesses and residents, and has had very successful community-driven events, arts festivals, and open gallery nights.

Other community-driven efforts have emerged along the corridor including Girls Rock Philly, a volunteer-based nonprofit music and mentoring organization dedicated to empowering girls, young women, and gender nonconforming youth through music education and activities that foster leadership skills, critical thinking, and deconstructing gender-based oppression.

THRIVE > Neighborhoods

Community-Serving Facilities and Access to Healthy Food

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 1.1:
Promote strong and well-balanced neighborhood centers

The River Wards District has over 40 City-owned or managed facilities. The *Citywide Vision* recommends co-locating, consolidating, and modernizing city facilities to ensure that they are conveniently and appropriately located and are in a good state of repair. The Fishtown Community Library Branch is one of the two Free Library facilities in the district, located in a former stable and fire station at East Montgomery Avenue and Flora Street. The branch neighbors a cluster of public facilities, including Fishtown Recreation Center, Lederer Pool, Hetzell Playground, two elementary schools, and the 26th Police District. The branch opened at its current location in 1950 and continues to serve Fishtown, East Kensington, Olde Richmond, and Northern Liberties. The building currently faces issues related to flooding, mold remediation, and insulation. Space for programming, desks, and materials is also at capacity. This plan proposes to build a library annex that is more accessible to residents and all users.

Fresh food choices can be difficult to find in many urban neighborhoods. In the River Wards District there is a shortage of full-service grocery stores located near transit-accessible corridors. Through programs like the Healthy Corner Store Initiative (facilitated by The Food Trust), the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's Get Healthy Philly program, and the Farm to Families Initiative (a program of St. Christopher's Foundation for Children), there has been improvement in the district's access to fresh and healthy foods. Local organizations that host food pantries and soup kitchens (e.g., Saint Francis Inn Ministries) also support low-income and homeless populations having direct access to food. Expanding these programs into areas of need and partnering them with local farms will continue to enrich the organizing efforts addressing chronic disease reduction through affordable access to fresh and local foods.

Improved access to healthy foods through community agriculture and farms is also a productive reuse for vacant or underutilized land, and can be further supported through zoning and the City's Land Bank. There are two Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) Neighborhood Gardens Trust gardens and one farm (Greensgrow Farms) that exist in the district. Increasing opportunities for new agricultural land should be prioritized to provide more localized approaches to food access. Notable areas that may benefit from the maintenance and expansion of food access programs include lower Fishtown, portions of Kensington and Port Richmond, and Bridesburg. Continuing partnerships between local nonprofits, the PCPC, and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) to support food access programs and promote zoning incentives to bring in additional fresh food retail will help further reduce the number of low-income residents with poor food access.

Definition | *Community Serving Facilities*

Community-serving facilities are city facilities that serve the general public. Examples include recreation centers, neighborhood parks, libraries, and health centers.

Existing Fishtown Community Branch Library, 1217 E Montgomery Avenue

Definition | *Neighborhood Center*

A neighborhood center can be:

1. A clustering of community-serving public facilities
2. A viable commercial corridor or node
3. A transit hub

Recommendations

4. Program City capital funding and build an annex to the Fishtown Community Branch Library to provide 7,000 to 8,000 square feet of ADA accessible space for programming and to accommodate an increase in users.
   > Implementing Agencies: City Council, DPP, Library, PCPC | CW Objective 1.1.1

5. Improve access to healthy foods for underserved residents.
   - Identify a partner along East Allegheny Avenue to serve as a Farm to Families CSA food distribution site [see THRIVE, p. 31].
   - Continue to support the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative through zoning incentives and the identification of potential sites based on analysis of need and available resources for ADA and universal access.
   - Establish food access programs to promote free or subsidized food resources and seasonal farmer's markets at neighborhood centers in Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg through partnerships between local organizations, health care providers, Friends of Parks groups, nonprofits, and City agencies.
   - Encourage the development of a full-service grocery or supermarket in the areas of need using the zoning code's Fresh Food Market incentive (i.e., near the Allegheny MFL station or along Richmond Street in Bridesburg).
   - Encourage the continued growth of urban farming by designating agricultural opportunity lands within the Land Bank inventory.
     > Implementing Agencies: PDPH, MOTU, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 1.1.4

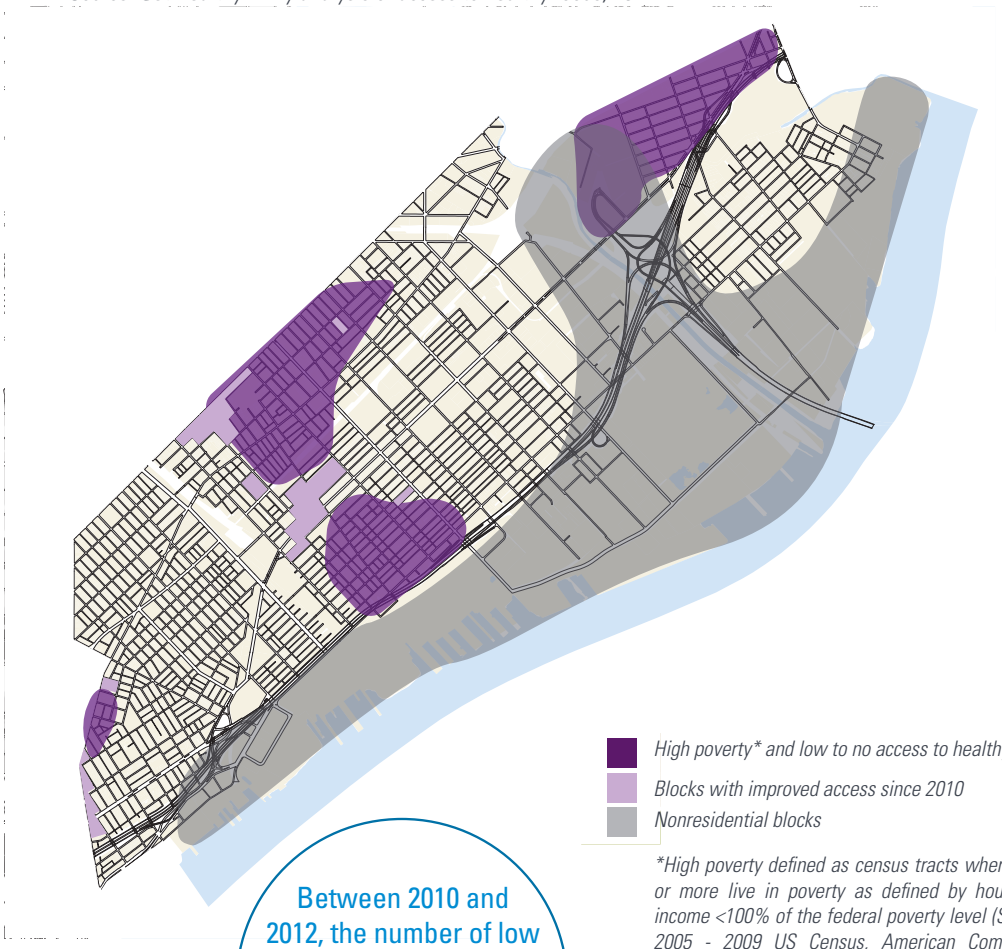
Recommendations

6. Consolidate adjacent vacant properties for potential adaptive reuse as community gardens or farms for underserved populations, and preserve existing community green spaces, including community gardens and memorial parks

   > Implementing Agencies: Land Bank, PPR, DPP, Nonprofits | CW Objective; 6.3.1

River Wards Low-to-No Walkable Access to Healthy Foods

Source: Get Healthy Philly analysis of access to healthy foods, 2012.



Between 2010 and 2012, the number of low income River Wards residents with poor access to healthy foods decreased by 18%

> Fresh Food Resources

Sunday Suppers, in partnership with Memphis Street Academy in Kensington, is a family-centered and a hands-on grassroots approach to tackling the barriers to food access. Through food and family dinners, participants gain greater exposure to different foods, see produce grown in a community garden, pack food boxes at SHARE Food Program, and cook together. Photo: Philly.com

> Farm to Families

Farm to Families is a program of St. Christopher's Foundation for Children that works in partnership with SHARE Food Program and other community-based organizations to address availability and affordability of fresh food in North Philadelphia.

Each week Farm to Families distributors supply North Philadelphia families with boxes of wholesome fresh produce or fruit from local farmers at a cost of only $10 or $15. Boxes are packed with delicious seasonal fruits and vegetables, often valued at double the price. Additional fresh items including local eggs, meat, and seafood are also offered at affordable prices. Farm to Families is open to all with no income restrictions.

For more information, and to find a program near you, visit www.scfchildren.org/farm-to-families-initiative.

Health Corridor

Definition | *Health District*

A Health District is a place where investments are focused to improve population health outcomes and to inspire healthy behaviors. It aims to complement a health system by reinforcing organization across the continuum of care.

Generally, healthcare service providers in the River Wards have promoted preventative care by directing resources toward community outreach programs. Therefore, a formal Health Corridor and coordination of efforts to connect health services and health amenities can help capture the benefits of the neighborhood's thriving health industry cluster.

When the 100-year-old Temple Northeastern Hospital closed its doors on East Allegheny Avenue in 2009 to reopen as the Temple Northeastern Ambulatory Center for outpatient care, a number of other enterprises responded to help reinforce East Allegheny as a corridor for health services. Leading health service organizations include: Esperanza Health Center (a federally qualified health center), which has equipped over 200 community leaders and residents with training and tools to connect residents with health resources, and Comhar Inc. (a community mental health, rehabilitation, and intellectual disabilities service provider), which targets low-income residents through free screening stations at area markets. Still, 30 percent of River Wards adults report foregoing needed health care, more than any other planning district, according to the Philadelphia Department of Public Health's 2013 Community Health Assessment.

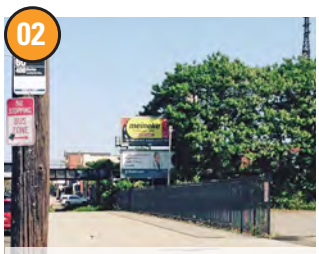
The PCPC recommends the creation of a Health Corridor, along East Allegheny Avenue from Kensington to Aramingo Avenues, to help individual, community-based health organizations capture the benefits of clustering together in a health-promoting built environment.

East Allegheny Avenue Existing Conditions

01

Empty lot next to Northeastern Ambulatory Center

02

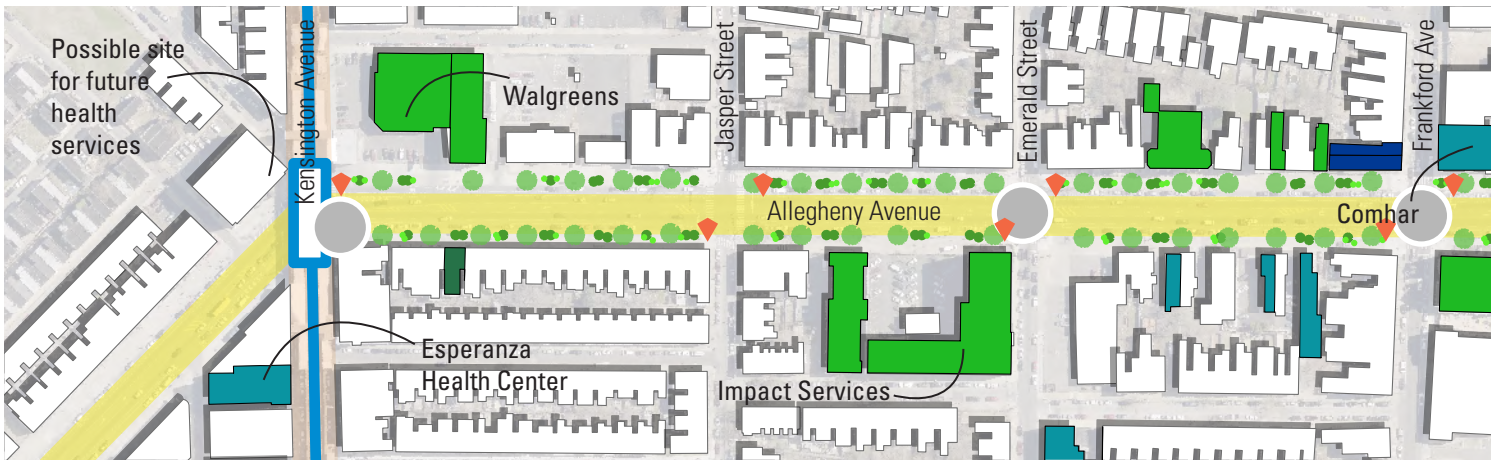


Allegheny Ave has wide sidewalks but lacks bus shelters and trees

Recommendations

7. Establish East Allegheny Avenue as a Health Corridor, a district that integrates and links health-supporting services across the continuum of care.
   - Prioritize sidewalk and streetscape improvements using Complete Streets principles along East Allegheny Avenue between Kensington and Aramingo Avenues to encourage active transportation (i.e., walking, biking, bus, and train transit) for staff, seniors, children, and transit-dependent and mobility-limited populations.
   - Pilot the introduction of sidewalk exercise equipment at bus shelters on East Allegheny Avenue.
   - Brand the Health Corridor through streetscape, bus shelters, and health service directional signage.
     > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, City Council, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 2.3.2

Vision for East Allegheny Avenue Health Corridor



Example of Health Corridor signage

"We need better community partnerships. We should be talking more to Northeastern Ambulatory to coordinate public screenings together and to set up a referral network."

- Lisa Kramer,
Division Director, Comhar, INC.

"Many River Wards' residents forgo needed healthcare because more immediate needs like food, family, and shelter take precedence. Crime, real and perceived, is a barrier to walking to the doctors."

- Marta Warner,
Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual Disability Services (DBHIDS)

"Although the barriers to access to healthcare are complex, many people are unaware of the accessibility of existing resources until someone they trust informs them."

- Robert Reich,
Director of Community Health and Wellness, Esperanza Health Center

Example of outdoor fitness equipment

THRIVE > Neighborhoods

Housing

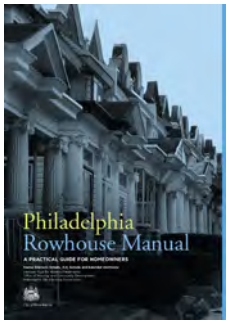
Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 1.2:
Improve the quality and diversity of new and existing housing.

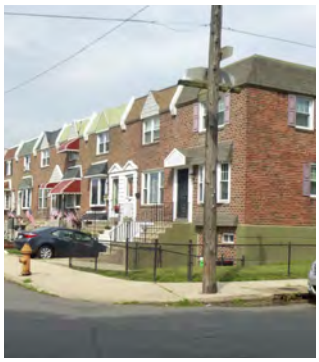
The rowhouse is the basic building block of the River Wards. It offers a low-cost, efficient means of housing that is attractive to people of varying ages and lifestyles. The housing stock of the district is relatively old: 72.1 percent of homes were built before 1939, according to the U.S. Census. However, the area has seen a significant amount of residential construction over the past decade, primarily in Fishtown. Between 2003 and 2013, the median home sales price in the River Wards District more than doubled from $41,000 to $100,000.

As with other districts in Philadelphia, the River Wards District has experienced a dramatic increase in renter occupied housing units. This involves both new construction as well as the conversion of older units to rental housing. Based on Census data, the number of renter-occupied units increased from 6,886 in 2000 to 9,948 in 2010 (44.5 percent). While the renter occupancy rate increased from 27.8 percent in 2000 to 38.6 percent in 2010, rates in the district are still below the citywide rate of 45.9 percent. As the housing stock continues to age and rental units increase within the district, it's critical to address issues related to quality, affordability, and accessibility to financial and educational resources. These issues are of particular concern in neighborhoods such as Kensington, where low incomes, poverty, and language barriers persist.

As the demand for quality and affordable residential units increases within the district, solutions may lay within its industrial past. The district has a large supply of vacant multistory industrial buildings. These vertically oriented structures are no longer favored by modern industries, which now prefer more horizontally oriented operations. Reuse opportunities exist within their conversion to residential units. City-owned land can also be used for the construction of new affordable and mixed-income housing.



Pubished by the PCPC, the Philadelphia Rowhouse Manual offers homeowners tips and advice on maintaining thier homes.



The district's housing stock mostly consists of rowhomes and twins, much like this block in Bridesburg.

Recommendations

8. Preserve single-family housing stock (both rental and owner-occupied) through zoning and marketing of home improvement resources including incentives for home rehabilitation.
   - Ensure that a full range of housing is available to populations of all abilities and income levels;
   - Facilitate infill housing along Kensington Avenue; and
   - Promote retrofits to improve energy efficiency.
     > Implementing Agencies: OHCD, City Council, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 1.2.1

9. Perform an assessment of the quality, condition, and licensing status of rental housing in the areas along Kensington Avenue.
   > Implementing Agencies: OHCD, City Council, L&I, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 1.2.1

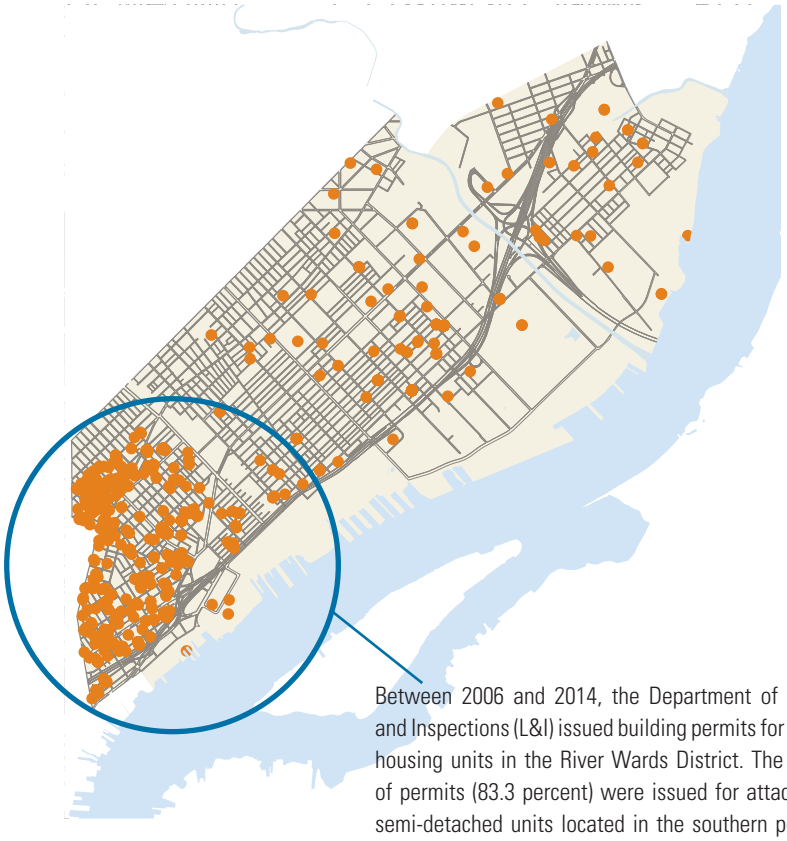
10. Provide financing and zoning relief to owners of large buildings and former industrial sites around the Market-Frankford Line to encourage adaptive reuse or redevelopment.
    - Increase supply of affordable, senior, and workforce housing through City Housing Programs (e.g., Housing Trust Fund, Philadelphia Land Bank).
      > Implementing Agencies: City Council, L&I, OHCD, PRA, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 1.2.2

Photo: theoxfordmills.com

Case Study | *Oxford Mills*

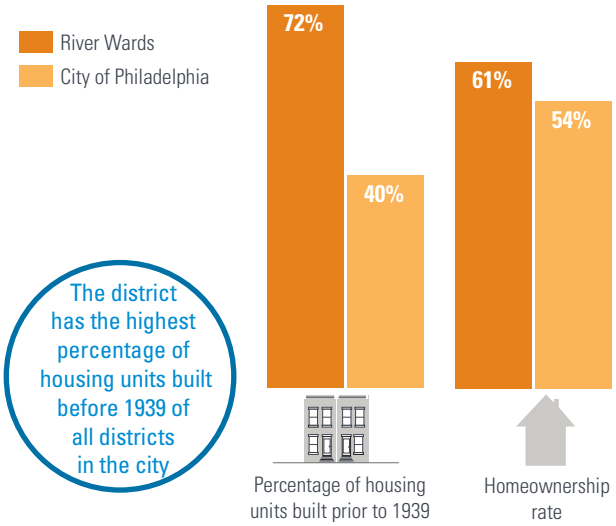
The Quaker City Dye Works once churned out cotton and woolen products for Philadelphia's garment industry. After decades as a lamp factory, the historic loft buildings at Front and Oxford Streets were transformed into Oxford Mills, a mixed-use development with a focus on education. The redevelopment features 40,000 square feet of office space built to house nonprofit education businesses, a low-income housing developer, and 114 apartments. Teachers who live in this building receive a 25 percent discount on rent. The project is a testament to the potential of creative adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings. The River Wards District contains many similar structures and complexes that are no longer viable for industrial uses and present excellent opportunities for a similar kind of renovation.

Building Permits (2004–2014)



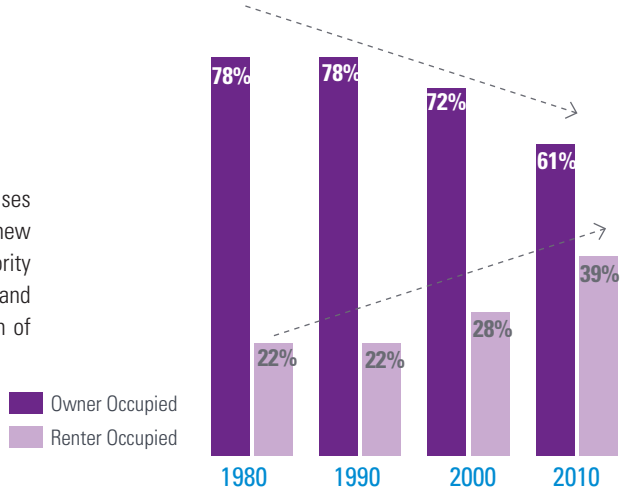
Between 2006 and 2014, the Department of Licenses and Inspections (L&I) issued building permits for 761 new housing units in the River Wards District. The majority of permits (83.3 percent) were issued for attached and semi-detached units located in the southern portion of the district near Fishtown.

Housing Conditions of the River Wards and the City of Philadelphia, 2010



The district has the highest percentage of housing units built before 1939 of all districts in the city

Owner Occupied and Renter Occupied Trends



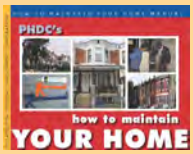
> Home Improvement Programs

Listed below are four examples of incentive programs offered through the City. These are particularly relevant to homeowners in the River Wards District because the housing stock generally dates prior to the 1940s and there is a high percentage of homeowners and residents who want or need to age in place.

Basic Systems Repair Program

The Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC)'s "How to Maintain Your Home" manual guides residents through easy maintenance and energy conservation steps to save money and preserve their home.

phdchousing.org/bsrp.htm



Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA)

The ECA offers federal programs designed to help low-income households pay their heating bills and conserve water through plumbing repair.

ecasavesenergy.org

Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP)

SHARP is a minor home repair program provided by Philadelphia Corporation for Aging for Philadelphia homeowners 60 years and older.

pcacares.org

Adaptive Modifications Program for Persons with Disabilities

The Office of Housing & Community Development maintains, as a priority, increasing housing accessibility for disabled people. Available for homeowner-occupied and renter-occupied houses which need to be made accessible for people with disabilities.

phila.gov/ohcd/adaptmod.htm

THRIVE > Economic Development

Lower Frankford Creek Watershed Brownfield Area-Wide Plan

Definition | *Brownfield*

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency defines a brownfield as "real property, the expansion, reuse or redevelopment of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant."

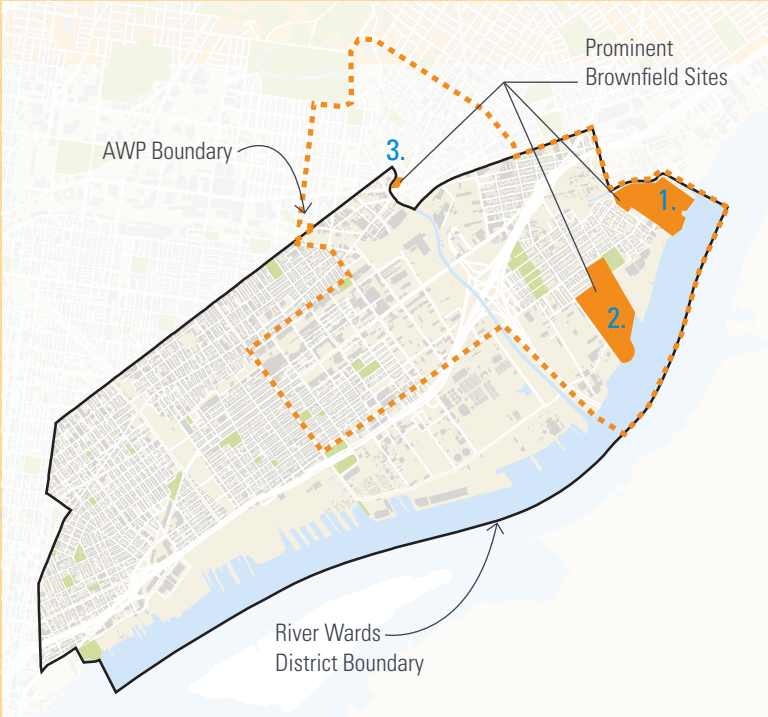
The City of Philadelphia received in 2013 a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to conduct an Area-Wide Plan (AWP) for brownfields along sections of the lower Frankford Creek watershed, including Bridesburg and parts of Frankford, Port Richmond, and Juniata Park. This plan, completed in 2015, was designed to complement ongoing public, private, and community initiatives and to provide an implementable approach for economically and environmentally beneficial redevelopment of key, catalyst brownfield sites or areas.

Because the research and public outreach for the AWP coincided with the development of the River Wards district plan, the AWP effectively served as a Frankford Creek- and Bridesburg-focused area of emphasis within the district plan.

The AWP recommends reuse strategies for three very prominent brownfield challenges in Bridesburg and the Upper Reach of the Frankford Creek above Frankford Avenue.

For more information, visit www.frankfordcreekbrownfields.com

Area-Wide Plan Boundary and Catalyst Sites/Area



1. Bridesburg's Rohm and Haas/Dow Chemical Company site at 5000 Richmond Street (approx. 68 acres) is actively engaged in a process with US EPA and the PA Department of Environmental Protection to establish the regulatory framework for site closure and potential future reuse. The site is currently mostly paved.

2. The Philadelphia Coke Co./National Grid property at 4501 Richmond Street (approx. 67 acres) was closed in the 1980s under the supervision of the US EPA. The site is currently vacant, largely revegetated, and for sale. Further environmental evaluations may be needed to support future redevelopment.

3. The Upper Reach of the Frankford Creek includes a number of smaller, vacant or underutilized properties that once housed thriving industrial enterprises. Direct adjacency to the Creek makes these properties important, potential contributors to future environmental and public access enhancements to the Creek itself. Environmental due diligence would be required for future adaptive reuses.

In Bridesburg, the AWP recommends primarily industrial reuse on the catalyst sites, with continued extensions of Delaware Avenue and the North Delaware Greenway through both properties, and context-sensitive buffers between areas of industrial reuse and community residents. For the Upper Reach, the AWP calls for site redevelopments to promote pedestrian activity across and along the Creek, complement the Frankford Creek Greenway and Trail, and encourage new economic activity compatible with neighborhood needs.

1. Rohm and Haas

The reuse concept for this site calls for industrial activity between Brill Street and a proposed new access road. The access road is recommended to provide access to the industrial parcel while ensuring adequate truck diversion from the heart of Bridesburg. New commercial sites would develop along Bridge Street, with an extension of waterfront parkland on land between the proposed Delaware Avenue extension and the river's edge. The far northern section of the site could be devoted to low-impact, environmental service activities compatible with the section's industrial legacy and location in the flood plain.

Industrial Activity

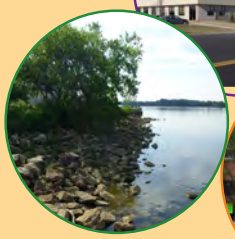
Neighborhood Commercial

Environmental Services

2. Philadelphia Coke

The AWP recommends that roughly 40 acres of the site, from the planned Delaware Avenue Extension to the alignment of an extended Bath Street, be redeveloped for industrial activity. Waterfront acres to the east of the extension are envisioned as parks, open space, and environmental restoration. The AWP calls for the section between Richmond Street and the future Bath Street to be redeveloped for a mix of residential and neighborhood-serving commercial uses that are compatible with the existing, surrounding neighborhood.

Industrial Activity



Waterfront Parkland and Open Space

Neighborhood Mixed Use

3. Upper Reach Frankford Creek

The reuse plan for this section calls for the long-term establishment of public access and amenity in key locations, adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings, and pedestrian-oriented in-fill development. The former Edgewater Dyeing and Finishing site at Frankford and Torresdale, and the former U.S. Pile Fabric complex at Leiper and Deal Streets, present two significant opportunities for plan implementation.

Industrial Arts Park

Creek Access

Adaptive Reuse

THRIVE > Economic Development

Regional Centers

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 2.1:
Support the growth of economic centers.

The Aramingo Avenue Shopping District in Port Richmond has redeveloped into the largest concentration of commercial space within the River Wards. Its 1.6 million square feet of space comprise 44 percent of all gross leasable floor area within the River Wards District. Aramingo Avenue offers an array of value-oriented convenience and comparison goods that draws customers from throughout the city and fills a market need between the more established, regional-scale shopping destinations of Center City and Cottman Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard. More than 500,000 square feet of floor area has been added to Aramingo Avenue's retail mix in just the past 12 years. The shopping district generally fronts Aramingo Avenue between Westmoreland and the Frankford Creek and fronts Castor Avenue between Richmond and Tulip Streets.

Despite its commercial success and value to customers, Aramingo Avenue has been allowed to develop in a haphazard manner that now presents challenges to future growth and to other commercial centers and industrial areas in the River Wards. Over 40 years, unconnected redevelopments of once-industrial blocks have resulted in an auto-oriented cluster of big-box stores and commercial strips. Many of the commercial uses were approved by zoning variance. The shopping district's success is mainly due to its main economic driver being automobile access. More recently, a Business Improvement District (BID) was formed by Impact Services, and interest has grown in ways that coordinated physical improvements and retrofits can help upgrade the shopping district to better accommodate new tenants, traffic, pedestrians, and stormwater runoff while also being a better neighbor to adjoining residential and industrial uses.

Definition | *Regional Center*

Regional centers are defined by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission as destinations with significant employment bases that occupy over one million square feet, such as large malls and office complexes. Regional centers serve multiple municipalities and, specific to Philadelphia, serve multiple neighborhoods.

Recommendations

11. Strengthen Aramingo Avenue as a competitive regional shopping center [see Focus Areas, p. 66].
    - Promote the modernization of existing buildings and improved facade, signage, and landscape design.
    - Program city and state funding for coordinated public streetscape improvements, including paving, crosswalks, lighting, signage, security features, landscaping, and stormwater management.
    - Activate parking lots during non-peak and peak hours by holding community-led special events (i.e., festivals and farmers markets).
    - Encourage redevelopment of opportunity sites in a pattern that best supports transit accessibility to allow access for seniors, children, and transit-dependent and mobility-limited populations.
    - Develop design guidelines for the Business Improvement District.
    - Increase density within the center of the shopping area's footprint, preserving surrounding industrial zones.

      > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, City Council, Nonprofits, PWD, Streets, PCPC | CW Objective 2.1.3

Above Photo: Mercer Mall shops equipped with traffic calming and cross walk markers
Below Photo: Aerial of Mercer Mall's solar panel program

Case Study | *Mercer Mall, An Integrated Regional Shopping Center*

Auto-oriented retail centers like those clustered around Aramingo and Castor Avenues can thrive in the right setting and generate substantial sales tax revenues for municipalities. However, they also tend to be surrounded by massive parking lots that interrupt the urban fabric and make pedestrian access challenging. Some large shopping centers, such as Mercer Mall in Lawrence Township, New Jersey, have made access safer by building pedestrian links between stores and from the street.

Simple design interventions like sidewalks, striping, and shade trees remove the physical and psychological barriers that keep walk-up shoppers away without negatively affecting automobile access. Mercer Mall also has been outfitted with a solar panel system to produce electricity for the mall's staff, services, and auxiliary vehicles. These improvements would be especially beneficial along Aramingo Avenue, which abuts dense, walkable residential neighborhoods.

Aramingo Avenue's Transformation from Industrial Uses to Commercial Uses

Pre 1900 Aramingo Avenue, in Fishtown and Kensington, is built upon Gunner's Run in the mid-1800s. The southern section of current Aramingo (approximately from Tioga Street to the Delaware River) becomes the Aramingo Canal, which helps to bring industrialization to the area.

1920 The Aramingo and Castor area becomes crisscrossed with freight rail lines to serve growing industries.

Late 1970s Commercial uses begin replacing industrial uses.

1999 *Plan for the Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise (PRIDE) Industrial Park* outlines how industry in Port Richmond could strengthen its identity as an urban industrial center.

Prior to 2001 Many commercial sites are permitted by right under the industrial zoning classification. There are no requirements for landscape buffers, tree planting, walkways, or interior landscaped areas.

2001 Commercial retail uses are removed from the I-2 district as permitted uses. Any new uses must go to the zoning board where landscaping is a condition of approval.

Early 2000s Zoning remappings begin to formally change industrial districts to commercial districts.

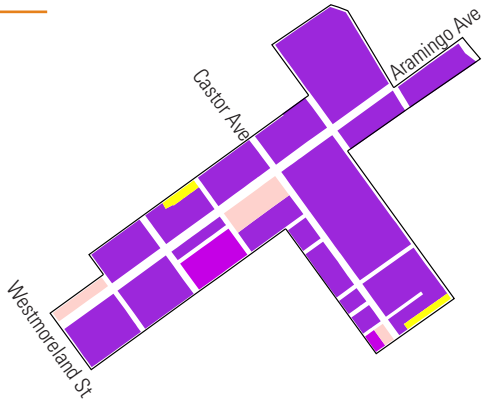
2008 City Council approves formation of the Aramingo Business Improvement District (managed by Impact Services), which begins providing services in 2009.

2011 The Richmond Corridor Association develops a five-year strategic plan.

2013 Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) and Impact Services commissions a stormwater management plan for Aramingo Avenue that addresses concerns about reducing the district's environmental impact.

2015 See Focus Area, p. 70 for the proposed plan.

General Zoning History



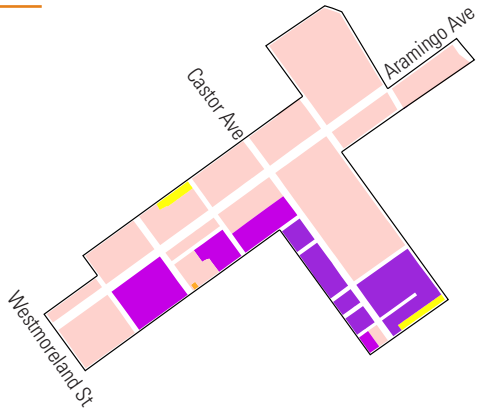
2000 Zoning

The majority of the shopping district was zoned **I-2** for medium industrial uses.

Zoning Code Landscape Requirements

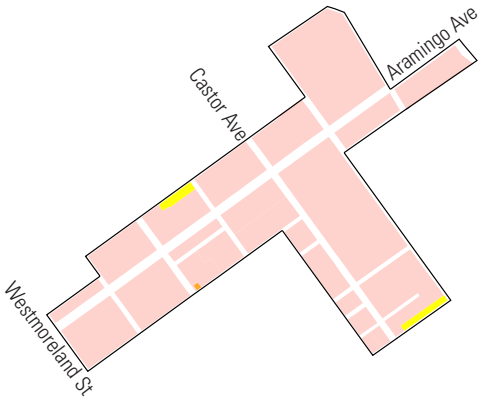
Zoning District	Street Buffer	Buffer to Residential	Interior Landscaping	Pedestrian Walkways
CA-2	✓	✓	✓	✓
I-2	✓	✓		
I-2 Pre 2012				

Many of the commercial properties were developed as-of-right under industrial zoning and without landscape requirements. 2001 use changes in the I-2 district and the new zoning code in 2012 have drastically increased landscape requirements.



2001-2014 Zoning

Most of the industrial parcels have been remapped to **CA-2** for auto-oriented commercial uses.



2015 Proposed Zoning

Correctively rezone industrial parcels in the district that no longer reflect industrial uses [see Making It Happen, p. 100].

THRIVE > Economic Development

Industrial Land

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 2.2.1:
Ensure an adequate supply and distribution of industrially zoned land.

An Industrial Land and Market Strategy for the City of Philadelphia (2010)

The Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) commissioned a study to provide policy direction for industrial land use in Philadelphia. The goals of this document are to provide guidance on the expansion and retention of industry in the city, protection of employment opportunities and tax revenues generated by the sector, and evaluating the supply of industrially zoned land to meet the projected needs of Philadelphia businesses. All of the River Ward's active industrial clusters are recommended for a continuation or intensification of industrial uses.

"If we were provided an opportunity to leave we would not take it—the neighborhood is why we stay. Most of our employees live in the neighborhood and district and so the knowledge about running the mill comes from and stays within the community."
- Majid Jaraha, Huntingdon Yarn Mill

As of 2011, there were over 7,000 industrial jobs in the River Wards, representing almost 40 percent of employment within the district. Industrial operations have historically been attracted to the district's waterfront, rail and highway access, and utilities. Major employers include Honeywell, Tioga Marine Terminal, PTR Baler, Castor Metals, and Port Richmond Tool and Die. Despite such strengths, the district lost over 1,300 industrial jobs between 2002 and 2011, while experiencing a corresponding decline in economic opportunities for households. Parts of the communities of Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg suffer from unemployment rates close to 20 percent.

In total, 244 acres of land—representing 14 percent of industrially zoned parcels—are no longer used for industry. Over the past few decades, traditional industrial clusters have experienced encroachment by nonindustrial uses such as large-format retail. This has threatened the viability of these clusters and necessitates a shift in policy and actions to help protect these industrial areas. In recent years, public and private groups such as the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise (PRIDE), and Richmond Corridor Association (RCA) have issued studies that reaffirm the value and strength of these clusters, while advocating for their protection. Such protection initiatives can include organizational and support mechanisms for businesses.

Environmental contamination presents a potential barrier to returning fallow industrial land to productive use. City policy must also ensure that industrial sites with a history of unsafe disposal practices are made appropriately safe for intended future uses. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has recognized 22 brownfield sites in the district where reuse must be preceded by environmental remediation. PCPC has identified 21 sites that saw a past smelting use, which may have resulted in contaminated soil.

However, not all vacant industrial property is fit for modern industrial use. Today's industry typically favors horizontal operations, i.e., large parcels, one-story buildings, easy access to interstates, and sufficient distance from existing residential uses to mitigate negative impacts like truck traffic, noise, and vibrations. Older industrial properties in the southern end of the district are typically vertically oriented and are nestled within dense residential neighborhoods. Such properties are better positioned for adaptive reuse such as residential, commercial, arts, and cultural spaces.

Recommendations

12. Preserve industrial zoning in areas with active industrial users and transportation access.
    - Oppose zoning changes or variances for residential or other incompatible activities in the Aramingo, Lower North Delaware, and Upper North Delaware industrial areas.
    - Explore mechanisms for industrial preservation and identify compatible land uses for the industrial areas.
    - Develop design standards for signage, building identification, fencing, street furnishings, and plantings to improve safety and access.
      > Implementing Agencies: Council, Commerce, Nonprofits, PCPC, PIDC | CW Objective 2.2.1

13. Reposition obsolete industrial sites for new users by rezoning them for appropriate new uses.
      > Implementing Agencies: Council, Commerce, PCPC, PIDC | CW Objective 2.2.2

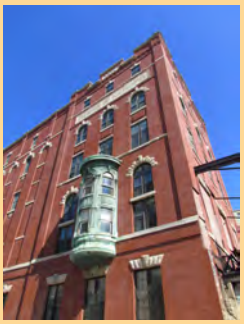
14. Follow the recommendations of the *Lower Frankford Creek Watershed Brownfields Area-Wide Plan*.
    - Participate in similar studies conducted by other organizations or agencies.
    - Include stormwater management, environmental resources, and waterfront opportunities in any reuse proposals.
      > Implementing Agencies: Council, Commerce, PCPC, PIDC, PWD, EPA, PPR, Streets | CW Objective 2.2.2

15. Develop a scrap yard and recycling facility strategic plan that addresses zoning, enforcement, safety, truck access, site suitability, buffering between adjacent land uses, and short dumping in the Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg neighborhoods (i.e., areas along Somerset Street).
      > Implementing Agencies: Council, Commerce, PCPC, PIDC, Nonprofits | CW Objective 2.2.2

Industrial Typologies

Vertically Oriented Industry

In the late 1800s and early 1900s, multistory loft factories were the norm. They were constructed in tightly knit urban areas with good rail and water access. Industrial processes used a "gravity-flow," in which production of an item began on the top floor and continued down to lower floors until it was finished.



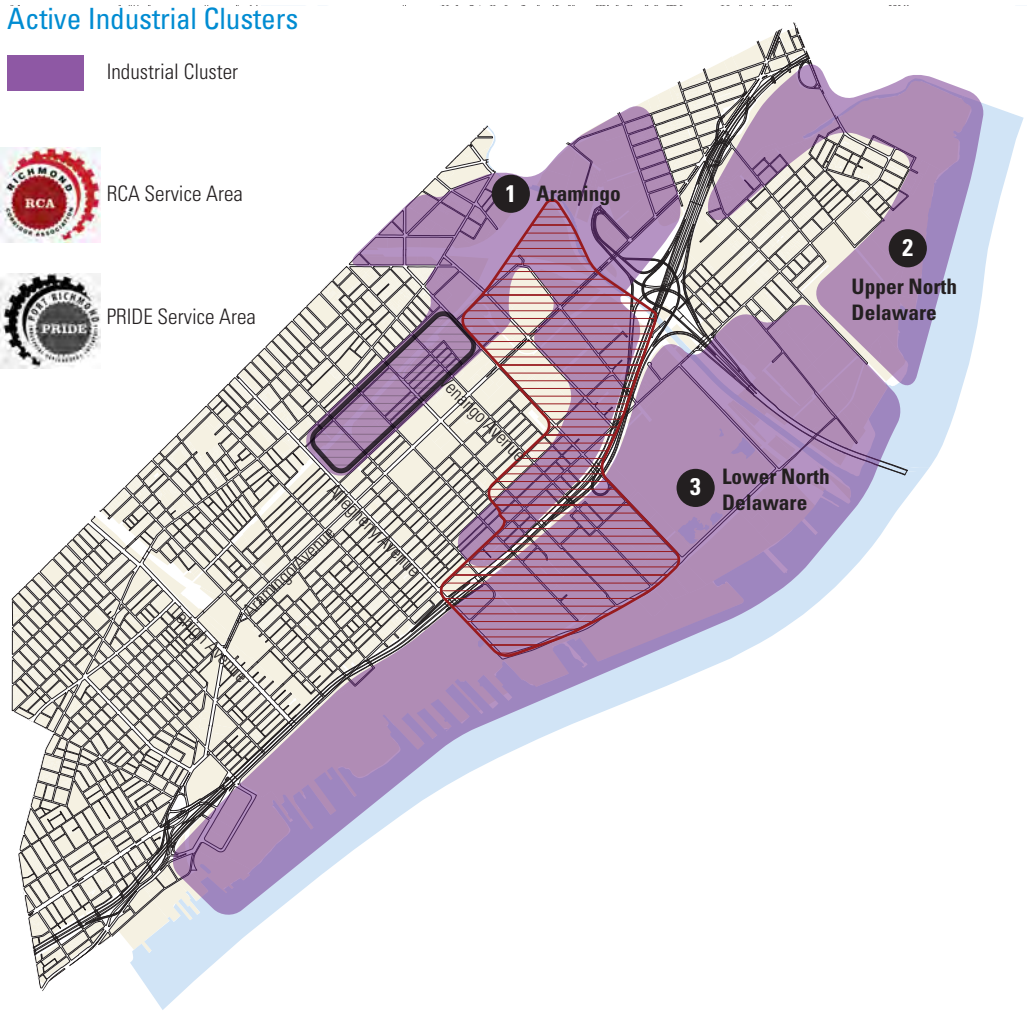
Former Poth Brewing Company

Horizontally Oriented Industry

One-story industrial buildings emerged in the early 1900s, and were primarily driven by assembly line manufacturing. In the 1950s, trucks and automobiles altered freight and commuting patterns in a way that encouraged the location of new one-story industrial buildings on the periphery of cities on inexpensive land.

Tastykake Headquarters

Active Industrial Clusters



"Our goal is to provide artists and small manufacturers access and to lower the hurdle to getting space. The Loom is a model and it's working."

- Chris Dardaris, The Loom Philly

> Maintaining Industrial Clusters

Industrial clusters have unique service needs. Rigid daytime business hours lead to vandalism, theft, and illegal dumping. A group of businesses in two clusters have decided to take such challenges on collectively. The Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise (PRIDE) and Richmond Corridor Association (RCA) facilitate street maintenance, create unified signage, provide public safety, and cleaning services.

Industrial clusters are also engaged in planning efforts. PRIDE completed the *Plan for the PRIDE Industrial Park* in 1999 and was the first Special Services District dedicated to an industrial area. PRIDE recently completed a comprehensive green stormwater management study to address stormwater runoff from private property in its service area. RCA, a voluntary association, produced its *Five Year Strategic Plan 2012-2017* in 2011, addressing a wide variety of topics affecting its members, including business retention and growth, public realm improvements, and environmental stewardship.

CONNECT > Transportation

Transit

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 4.1:
Increase the use of transit to reduce environmental impacts and travel time.

SEPTA's extensive transit system connects the River Wards District with many other neighborhoods, employment centers, and recreational destinations throughout the city and region. Approximately 25 percent of the district's residents use transit as their primary commute mode. The backbone of this network is the Market-Frankford Line (MFL), which borders the western edge of the district. With six stations located in the district, the average daily ridership exceeds 30,000 rides per day. In addition, twelve bus routes, the Route 15 trolley, and the Trenton Regional Rail Line all provide transportation opportunities to residents and employees in the district.

Despite the strong transit connections in the district, improvements can be made. The condition of many transit stops and the surrounding streetscape may impede or discourage people from accessing transit opportunities. Many of the intersections underneath the stations along the MFL need street-level improvements, including but not limited to streetscape amenities (e.g., lighting, seating, bus shelters, signs, and crosswalks [see RENEW, p. 60]). Implementation of Transit First policies along key bus routes will also facilitate improved access, safety, and travel time, making buses more efficient while enhancing streetscapes. As development continues along the waterfront, enhanced connections to the waterfront will be important. Expanded bus service and improvement to Route 15 turnaround on Richmond Street will help make these connections.

PennDOT has begun a long-term, multiphase initiative to rebuild and improve I-95. As this reconstruction continues, upgrades to the Trenton Regional Rail Line stations will help encourage new riders and alleviate traffic on the congested highway. Improvements to the Bridesburg Station, including new lighting, streetscape improvements, bus connections, and potential relocation, will make the station more accessible, safe, and attractive.

Definition | *Transit First*

The Transit First Initiative is a SEPTA and City program tasked with improving the operation, speed, safety, and efficiency of transit service. This can be accomplished by targeted capital improvements, changes in operating strategies, and better traffic law enforcement.

Definition | *Transit Signal Prioritization Program*

TSP is a Transit First Initiative. TSP technology allows for preferential treatment for transit vehicles at traffic signals, thus reducing travel times for SEPTA riders and increasing transit efficacy. Transit First Initiatives also consider relocating some stops and consolidating other stops to improve customer safety and convenience.

Entrance to Bridesburg Station on Bridge Street

Recommendations

16. Expand Transit First programs along Kensington, Aramingo, and Allegheny Avenues, and Richmond Street for bus routes 3, 15, 25, 60, and 73 to meet transit demand and reduce travel times. Include such policies as Transit Signal Prioritization, far-side stops, additional and/or improved bus shelters, and stop consolidation as appropriate.
    > Implementing Agencies: Commerce, MOTU, SEPTA, Streets | CW Objective 4.1.1

17. Expand existing bus service and study potential route changes to improve access to the Delaware River waterfront's trail network, North Delaware Avenue extension, and port facilities.
    > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, SEPTA, Streets | CW Objective: 4.1.1

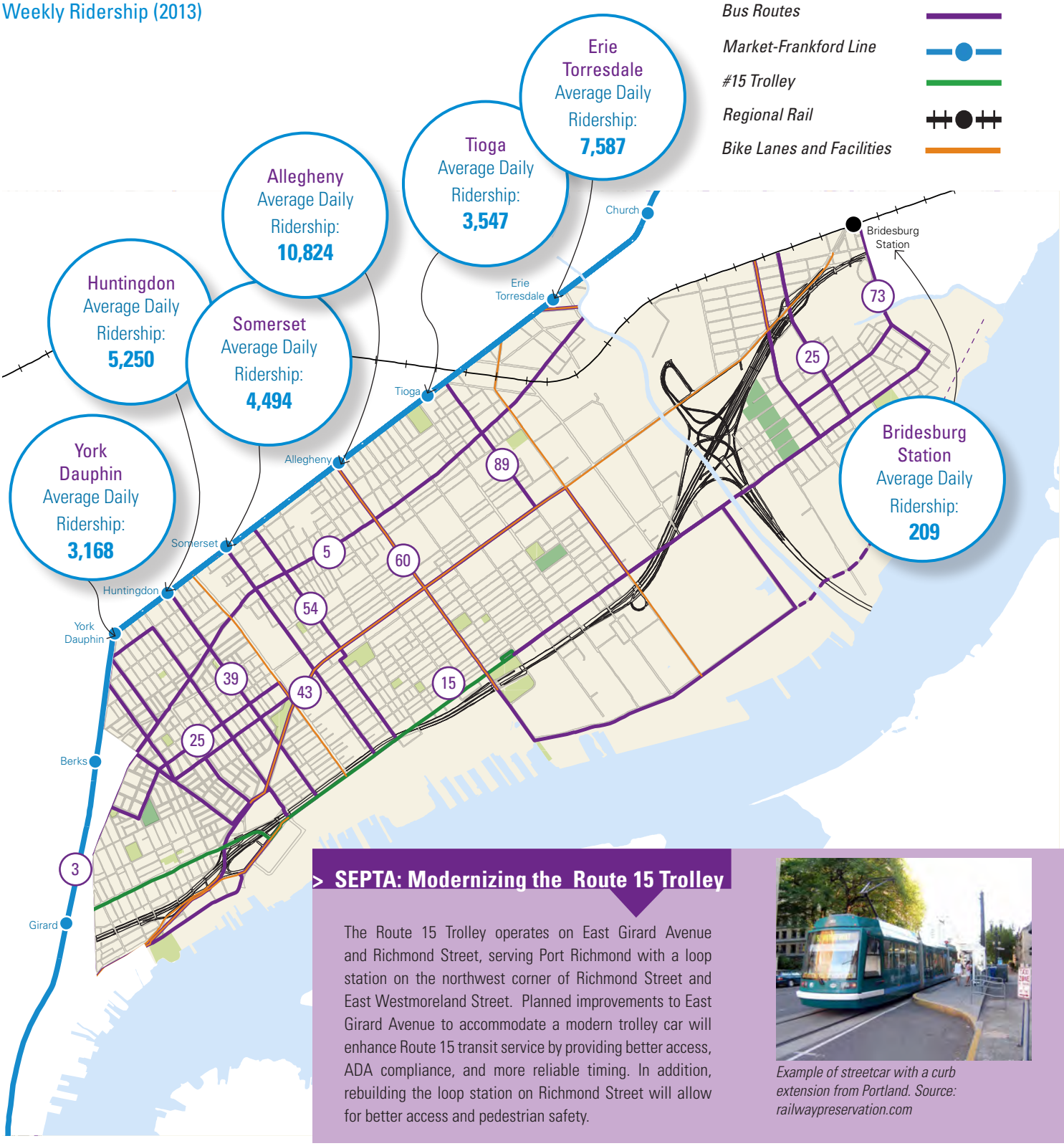
18. Improve Route 15 trolley service, in conjunction with light rail fleet modernization and I-95 reconstruction.
    - Reconstruct the loop at Richmond Street and Westmoreland Street including installation of signage, shelters, ADA accessibility, trees, bicycle parking, and other features to retain and grow ridership;
    - Create ADA accessible curbside stops along the rebuilt Richmond Street to accommodate modern light-rail service;
    - Improve the stops on East Girard Avenue by modifying the pedestrian islands to improve safety and accessibility and accommodate new transit fleet vehicles; and
    - Investigate opportunities to increase the exclusivity of the transit right-of-way and institute traffic calming measures along East Girard Avenue.

    > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, PennDOT, SEPTA, Streets | CW Objective: 4.1.1

19. Pursue and study short- and long-term improvements to the Bridesburg Regional Rail Station to enhance ridership and service:
    - Short-term: Lighting, directional signs to bus connections, real-time information, and landscaping;
    - Rebuild adjacent sidewalks to *Complete Streets* standards, specifically along Bridge Street; and
    - Long-term: Explore potential locations that will enable construction of an ADA accessible Bridesburg Station.

    > Implementing Agencies: Amtrak, Commerce, DPP, MOTU, PennDOT, SEPTA, Streets PWD | CW Objective: 4.1.1

Market-Frankford Line and Trenton Regional Rail Line Weekly Ridership (2013)



> SEPTA: Modernizing the Route 15 Trolley

The Route 15 Trolley operates on East Girard Avenue and Richmond Street, serving Port Richmond with a loop station on the northwest corner of Richmond Street and East Westmoreland Street. Planned improvements to East Girard Avenue to accommodate a modern trolley car will enhance Route 15 transit service by providing better access, ADA compliance, and more reliable timing. In addition, rebuilding the loop station on Richmond Street will allow for better access and pedestrian safety.

Example of streetcar with a curb extension from Portland. Source: railwaypreservation.com

CONNECT > Transportation

Complete Streets

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 4.2:
Balance the use of roadways to ensure safe and efficient travel by all modes.

Definition | *Connector Street*

Primary Connector Streets are those streets that directly connect neighborhoods with the waterfront parks proposed every ½ mile. These streets, which pass under or over I-95, not only provide safe pedestrian and bicycle passage, but also welcome users with impacting design.

Definition | *Complete Streets*

Complete streets are designed to provide safe and comfortable travel for all users. On June 4, 2009, Mayor Nutter signed an executive order that established Philadelphia as the first city in Pennsylvania to have a complete streets policy and in 2013 the *Complete Streets Handbook* was adopted. The policy decrees that every City agency should adopt complete streets strategies to balance the needs of multiple users on city streets.

The Complete Streets Design Handbook can be downloaded at http://philadelphiastreets.com/complete-streets.aspx.

The River Wards District has a network of streets that range from small, one-way residential streets to large, commercial arterials, providing for multiple modes of transportation. The Streets Department recently installed several miles of sharrows on narrow streets between Frankford Avenue and Penn Treaty Park. Other major bicycle facilities include Lehigh Avenue, Aramingo Avenue, Kensington Avenue, Castor Avenue, and the Port Richmond Trail. However, not all streets allow safe travel for cyclists and walkers.

There are several locations where cyclists have repeatedly been hit by cars. These include Aramingo Avenue between Cumberland and York Streets, along Frankford Avenue between Clearfield and Cambria Streets, and at intersections including Tioga Street and Frankford Avenue, Lehigh and Frankford Avenues, and Girard and Frankford Avenues. There are also several locations where large numbers of pedestrian crashes occur, including Aramingo Avenue between Cumberland and York Streets, Girard Avenue, Front Street under the MFL, Allegheny Avenue, Tacony Street, and several locations along Frankford Avenue.

The *2012 Philadelphia Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan* outlines where infrastructure needs to be added or modified for the improved mobility of bikes and pedestrians. These improvements include completing sidewalks where there are gaps, adding sharrows and other bike facilities on various streets, and extending/completing sidepaths and trails along the waterfront and Frankford Creek. Improvements should also be made where there have been recurring accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists.

As the reconstruction of I-95 continues, opportunities should be explored to enhance local streets. Streets that run under the highway to the waterfront, such as Allegheny Avenue, will be enhanced as connector streets to the Delaware River with lighting, streetscaping, and public art. Richmond Street will be rebuilt to accommodate all modes and will have improved lighting and streetscaping. The proposed extension of North Delaware Avenue will also facilitate truck traffic in the industrial areas east of I-95, reducing truck congestion on local streets.

Recommendations

20. Coordinate with PennDOT in its next phase of reconstructing I-95 to ensure safety, connectivity, and improved highway access for goods movement, including associated roadway construction on Allegheny Avenue, Castor Avenue, North Delaware Avenue, and Richmond Street.
    - As I-95 interchanges are rebuilt, ensure that improvements recognize existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian networks connecting to the future river trail (i.e., greenways to the river).
    - Preserve motorists' views of important community landmarks and destinations when designing and installing sounds walls as part of I-95 reconstruction.
      > Implementing Agencies: : PennDOT, MOTU, PRPA, Streets, PCPC, DRWC, DRCC | CW Objective 4.3.1, 4.3.3, 4.4.2

21. Advance the connector street recommendations in the *Master Plan for the Central Delaware* to better connect neighborhoods to the Delaware River and its amenities. Make improvements to Columbia, Lehigh, and Allegheny Avenues, and Berks, Cumberland, Orthodox, Tacony, Lefevre, Richmond, Buckius and Bridge Streets.
    > Implementing Agencies: DRCC, DRWC, PCPC, PennDOT, Streets | CW Objective 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.3.4

22. Install ADA facilities at intersections near senior centers, schools, parks and recreation centers, and libraries that serve disabled and sensory-impaired residents. Prioritize improvements near the Horatio B. Hackett School.
    > Implementing Agencies: Streets, MOTU, PPR, PWD | CW Objective 6.3.1

23. Increase the amount of parking in key commercial and industrial locations throughout the district, including the neighborhoods of Kensington, Olde Richmind, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg.
    - Assess feasibility of angled parking where appropriate, for traffic calming and safety benefits; and
    - Use areas under I-95 where feasible.
      > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, Streets, PennDOT, DRCC, DRWC | CW Objective 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.3.4

Recommendations

24. Implement high-priority bicycle infrastructure projects, as identified in the PCPC *2012 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan*:
    - Explore the potential to protect the bicycle lanes along Lehigh Avenue with a traffic and right-sizing study [see Focus Areas, p. 86].
    - Install bike safety measures and lanes (where they do not exist) along Allegheny, Frankford and Girard Avenues, prioritizing high-risk intersections.
    - Install bicycle lanes and bicycle facilities along Aramingo Avenue from York Street to Cumberland Street.
      > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, Streets | CW Objective 4.2.2, 4.2.3

25. Implement Complete Streets improvements along corridors and intersections to improve walkability, safety, transportation mode choice, stormwater management, and aesthetics for all users:
    - Kensington Avenue, Frankford Avenue, Aramingo Avenue, Lehigh Avenue, Allegheny Avenue, Castor Avenue;
    - Implement roadway changes that encourage reduced curb cuts, traffic calming measures to address speeding, and improved signalization at high-traffic intersections on Aramingo Avenue from Westmoreland to the Frankford Creek [see Focus Areas, p. 70];
    - Somerset Street from Kensington to Aramingo Avenue;
    - Tulip, Emerald, and Butler Street in the Olde Richmond and Port Richmond neighborhood;
    - Frankford Avenue, Trenton Avenue, and York Street intersection, Tacony and Bridge Street intersection, Frankford Avenue, East Sergeant Street and Amber Street Intersection, Richmond and Allegheny intersection;
    - Install safety and traffic calming measures such as lighting, curb bump-outs, medians, and mid-block crossings, to improve connections across neighborhood barriers; and
    - Install street trees, stormwater management, directional signage, public art, and transit stop upgrades, among other streetscape improvements and treatments.
      > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, Commerce, PennDOT, Streets, PWD, Nonprofits | CW Objective 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.3.4

> Bicycle Network

Proposed Bicycle Facility Locations:

- Orthodox Street from Aramingo to North Delaware Avenue Extension (sharrows or bike lanes)
- Bridge Street from Torresdale to North Delaware Avenue Extension (sharrows or bike lanes)
- Frankford Avenue from Delaware Avenue to Torresdale Avenue (sharrows)
- Richmond Street from Allegheny Avenue to Bridge Street (sharrows)

High-Priority Network Expansion Areas:

- Aramingo Avenue sidepath from Wheatsheaf Lane to Margaret Street
- Adams Avenue Sidepath
- Frankford Creek Greenway

Case Study | *Bridging the Gap across the Two Halves of Frankford Avenue*

Trenton Avenue, Frankford Avenue, and York Street create a complicated intersection where three neighborhoods meet. Long distances and awkward angles impede pedestrian movement, and the wide roadway creates safety hazards and a sense of emptiness. The *East Kensington Transportation and Community Development Plan (2013)* recommended the creation of a gateway with pedestrian crossing refuges, curb extensions or bump-outs, and plantings to create safe access and enliven the space. This would provide an opportunity to create a green and accessible neighborhood gateway into the Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor and bridge the gap in walkability between the two halves of Frankford Avenue.

Existing conditions at the intersection

CONNECT > Transportation

Goods Movement

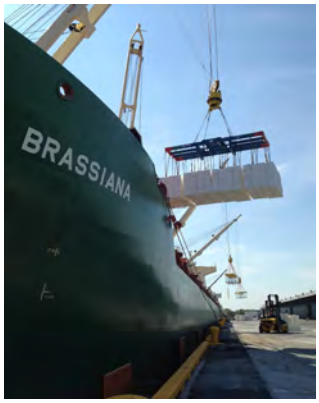
Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 4.3:
Provide a safe and efficient road network that supports planned land uses.

The River Wards District has extensive transportation infrastructure that supports manufacturing, distribution, wholesale, construction, international trade, and utility activities. The existing freight networks not only provide a conduit for goods movement, but also act as physical and visual barriers. Several active freight rail lines provide service to CSX, Norfolk Southern, and Conrail customers.

The district has high truck volumes due to the significant amount of industry. The district has excellent access to I-95 and NJ-90 (Betsy Ross Bridge), but trucks too often utilize smaller neighborhood streets to access industrial areas and commercial customers. Ongoing reconstruction of I-95 includes improvements to multiple local streets that interact with the interstate, including Aramingo Avenue, Allegheny Avenue, Castor Avenue, and Richmond Street among others. In addition, the North Delaware Extension from Lewis Street to Orthodox Street is currently under construction and planned to extend to Tacony Street. This will improve access to industrial lands and reduce truck traffic on neighborhood streets by providing an alternate route.

As one of the few districts in the city with active ports, the River Wards District boasts extensive maritime facilities that line the majority of the Delaware River waterfront north of Lehigh Avenue. Currently, the Philadelphia Regional Port Authority owns and manages the 116-acre Tioga Marine Terminal and Conrail controls the Port Richmond Terminal. Currently, truck and freight rail improvements are being made and planned to handle increased demands.



Fibria Pan Ocean Vessel unloading cargo at the Tioga Marine Terminal

Hunt Point Landing, a one-acre park located on the waterfront near the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center.
Source: www.sustainablesites.org/

Case Study | *Hunts Point Vision Plan*
Accommodating goods movement without impacting users

The Hunts Point peninsula, a 690-acre site in the South Bronx, is home to several large food distribution markets for fish, meat, and produce arriving by rail, truck, and boat. This flood-prone area has an enormous volume of traffic— over 15,000 truck trips per day— which creates adverse impacts for residents, including poor air quality and pedestrian and truck conflicts. In concert with a local task force, the New York City Economic Development Corporation created the Hunts Point Vision Plan, which includes recommendations to create new truck access routes that avoid residential streets and, in the long term, shift more goods delivery from truck to rail. The plan also recommends reintroducing the waterfront with the South Bronx Greenway back to the public and creating new parks. By improving traffic safety and enhancing the waterfront and streetscapes, the Hunts Point Vision Plan seeks to revitalize this area of the South Bronx and stimulate job growth.

In addition to expanding public access to the waterfront, the plan was also awarded funding from the federal Housing and Urban Development's Rebuild by Design competition, $20 million in funding, to incorporate resiliency and energy efficiency projects in the plan.

Recommendations

26. Undertake a study to analyze the efficiency and safety of the existing freight rail network and determine where changes are necessary to improve safety and connections.
    - Build new or improve existing infrastructure (i.e., fencing, tracks) for the safe and efficient movement of rail freight.
    - Provide adequate protection and safety measures at highway-railroad grade crossings throughout the industrial districts.
    - Improve the underpasses of rail infrastructure.
      > Implementing Agencies: Amtrak, Conrail, CSX, DVRPC, MOTU, PCPC | CW Objective: 4.4.2, 4.4.3

27. Reduce truck traffic and idling on neighborhood streets by diverting trucks to special routes and staging areas:
    - Coordinate with the upcoming DVRPC's Philadelphia Delivery Guidebook.
    - Develop a truck routing and management plan, in conjunction with the PennDOT I-95 Reconstruction Project, to ensure public safety, connectivity, and improved highway access for goods movement.
    - Promote truck traffic on main arterials designed for truck traffic (i.e., North Delaware, East Allegheny, and Aramingo Avenues), away from neighborhood streets, schoolyards, public parks, and community centers.
    - Determine the feasibility of creating multiple truck staging and parking areas in high truck-traffic areas.
    - Install pedestrian and bicycle safety treatments and directional signage at targeted truck route intersections.
    - Reduce the number of curb cuts, where possible, and improve existing infrastructure for the safe and efficient movement of trucks to minimize the impact on residents (i.e., Aramingo Avenue).
      > Implementing Agencies: MOTU, PennDOT, Streets, DVRPC | CW Objective: 4.2.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.3

Truck traffic on Richmond Street

Freight rail near Lewis Street

> Lower North Delaware Industrial District

Rickmers ships at the Tioga Marine Terminal Port Facility

The Lower North Delaware Industrial District contains over 900 acres of industrial land, and serves as a major hub for goods movement. It stretches from the old Reading Railroad coal piers at Cumberland Street to the former Philadelphia Coke site at Buckius Street, all east of I-95. The Tioga Marine Terminal, public utilities (e.g., Philadelphia Gas Works, Excelon/PECO, and PWD Northeast Plant) and Conrail are major landholders.

Recent developments impacting the area include:

- I-95 reconstruction on the Girard Interchange and planning for Section AFC and BRI
- The Delaware Avenue Extension
- Investments to increased freight rail capacity and safety
- Modifications to the Tioga Marine Terminal to accommodate increased shipments of paper products

RENEW > Open Space

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 6.1:
Complete, expand, and connect watershed parks and trails in the city and the region.

Philadelphia Trail Master Plan

The PCPC, in collaboration with other city agencies and trail development partners, completed the *Philadelphia Trail Master Plan* in 2013. It was adopted by the Commission in July 2013. There are more than 70 proposed trails in Philadelphia, which will link with the existing trail network to connect parks, waterfronts, and employment centers not currently served by the trail facilities. Completion of this plan fulfills Objective 6.1.1 of the *Citywide Vision*.

Watershed Parks and Trails

The River Wards District includes five miles of shoreline along the Delaware River and four miles of combined shoreline along the Frankford-Tacony Creek's two banks. For generations, industrial and port activity have limited public access to these waterways. The decline and consolidation of once-dominant industrial uses presents an opportunity to promote strategies for reactivating the waterfront with recreation and transportation uses.

The Frankford Creek Greenway will connect several neighborhoods to the East Coast Greenway and improve the management of stormwater runoff. To ensure that the Frankford Creek and East Coast Greenway's benefits are long-lasting, each must include safe, practical bike and pedestrian connections to surrounding areas.

The relatively flat River Wards District provides an excellent opportunity to manage stormwater in the Delaware River watershed. However, water quality preservation is complicated by a shortage of riparian wetlands and the shoreline's industrial legacy. The Delaware River will benefit from the strategic creation of watershed parks and trails to buffer the river from intense land uses and absorb stormwater runoff. A well-designed waterfront recreation system will decrease any significant future environmental impact and increase waterfront connectivity.

Strategic open space and trail investments have begun to rebuild the district's relationship to the Delaware River. For example, the 2013 renovation to General Pulaski Park created a waterfront access point that attracts local anglers. The City also recently completed a land swap with the Arsenal Business Center, PIDC, and the Commonwealth to create a waterfront access point in Bridesburg.

The East Coast Greenway is a 3,000-mile trail connecting Florida to Maine that was about 30 percent complete in 2014. Two of its segments traverse the River Wards. The Port Richmond Trail is completed and work has begun on the Delaware Avenue Extension Sidepath. Completion of this segment will provide new opportunities for physical activity and active transportation to co-exist and help satisfy the need for stormwater management. It will also provide a green buffer along the Delaware River to minimize the environmental and aesthetic impact of existing and future development. However, the greenway still faces major obstacles including land acquisition and funding.

Recommendations

28. Complete the following trails and recommendations as prioritized by the *Philadelphia Trail Master Plan* to improve connections between neighborhoods and amenities:
    - Delaware Avenue extension sidepath – Orthodox Street to Tacony Street.
    - Frankford Creek Greenway – Delaware River to Tacony Creek Park and Wheatsheaf Lane to Adams Avenue Connector.
    - Torresdale and Wingohocking Trail.
    - Ensure that I-95 improvements recognize existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian networks connecting to the future river trail (i.e., greenways to the river).
    - Incorporate signs at key intersections along the pedestrian and bicycle trail network, highlighting the distance and direction to major nodes and amenities.
    - Explore future trail alignments in the following locations: Penn Treaty Park to Richmond Connector Trail and a trail along the Lehigh Viaduct [see Focus Areas, p. 84].
      > Implementing Agencies: Streets, PPR, PennDOT, MOTU, City Council, DRCC, DRWC | CW Objective: 6.1.1, 6.1.2

29. Identify a site and create public waterfront parks in Bridesburg on the North Delaware Waterfront, perhaps adjacent to the intersections of Orthodox and Brill Streets and the Delaware Avenue Extension.
    > Implementing Agencies: PPR, DPP, PWD, City Council | CW Objective; 6.3.1

Trails and Open Space

Case Study | *Frankford Creek Greenway*

The Frankford Creek watershed has been recognized by Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation (PPR) as an area of the city in need of greening to mitigate stormwater surges and provide open space for citizens. The PCPC and PPR decided to address these two related problems in the Frankford Greenway Feasibility Study (2014). The study determined potential alignments of a greenway along the Frankford Creek in the Juniata, Frankford, and Port Richmond neighborhoods. As proposed, the greenway will connect the Tacony Creek Trail to the North Delaware Trail at the Delaware River. In addition to providing a new active transportation and recreational amenity, the trail also has the potential to reduce the severity of combined sewer overflows during heavy rains and restore natural habitat along the creek. Implementation will involve acquiring private land and partnering with PennDOT and the Streets Department.

Frankford Creek at Aramingo Avenue

RENEW > Open Space

Neighborhood Parks and Recreation

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 6.3:
Expand access to neighborhood parks and recreation.

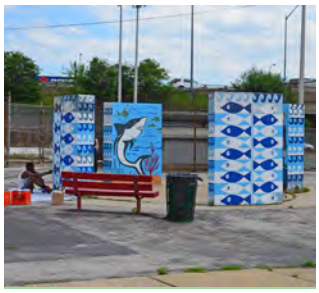
The River Wards District is home to twenty-five public parks and playgrounds, and five major recreation centers. This network of public spaces provides residents with opportunities to engage in physical activity and community building in a clean, safe, and healthy environment. Parks serve as spaces for gathering, celebration, physical activity, outdoor markets, and civic events. Recreation centers also meet neighborhood needs for continued learning, after-school and summer programming, and community meetings. Parks in the district range in size from less than an acre to ten acres; many also have community-led support in the form of a friends group.

The *Citywide Vision* recommends that every resident live within a 10-minute walk to a neighborhood park, open space, or recreation center. To meet this criterion, the River Wards will need additional park space in parts of Bridesburg, northern Richmond Street, and Kensington along Allegheny Avenue. Recommendations for new parks in this section focus on converting underutilized land into recreational space to satisfy the citywide access goal and promote the importance of parks to the health and vitality of the River Wards District.

While many of the district's parks are widely used and maintained, some recreation structures are aging and in need of structural and cosmetic repairs. As parks are renovated, designs should incorporate the principles of adaptive recreation to broaden accessibility to residents of all ages and abilities.

Located along Allegheny Avenue, Campbell Square is centrally located and well cared for, and offers programming to satisfy community needs. Frank Glavin Playground, just one block away, complements Campbell Square's passive design with active recreation activities. Recommendations to improve existing parks emulate the success of Campbell Square and Frank Glavin Playground to provide high-quality passive and active recreational sites with diverse amenities for all residents. In addition, PennDOT is exploring an opportunity to connect the open space areas of Monkiewicz Playground by placing I-95 on an elevated structure (viaduct). Outreach to the community will help identify options to enhance park activity using the area beneath the highway.

Campbell Square entrance



Monkiewicz Playground

Hunting Park

Recommendations

30. Program City capital funds to leverage other resources for improvements to park and recreation facilities including:
    - Rebuild Monkiewicz Playground in conjunction with I-95 reconstruction;
    - Expand amenities at McPherson Square and Harrowgate Park to improve community access to recreation, safety, and stewardship as identified in the *Kensington & Allegheny Streetscape Plan*;
    - Rehabilitate Trenton and Auburn Park with new sidewalks, benches, equipment, greenery, and stormwater management infrastructure;
    - Renovate the grounds and play equipment at Cione Recreation Center, Heitzman Recreation Center, Fishtown Recreation Center, and Hagert Street Playground;
    - Incorporate outdoor exercise equipment and additional parking at Bridesburg Recreation; and
    - Incorporate adaptive recreation equipment and universal design principles to be inclusive of residents with disabilities at parks and recreation facilities where feasible.

    > Implementing Agencies: PPR, PWD, DPP, PennDOT, City Council | CV Objective; 6.3.1

31. Green and incorporate adaptive equipment in the schoolyards of the Alternative Middle Years (A.M.Y.) at James Martin School, Webster School, Alexander Adaire School, and Horatio B. Hackett School to create recreation and stormwater amenities.

    > Implementing Agencies: SDP, PWD, Nonprofits | CW Objective; 6.3.1

Recommendations

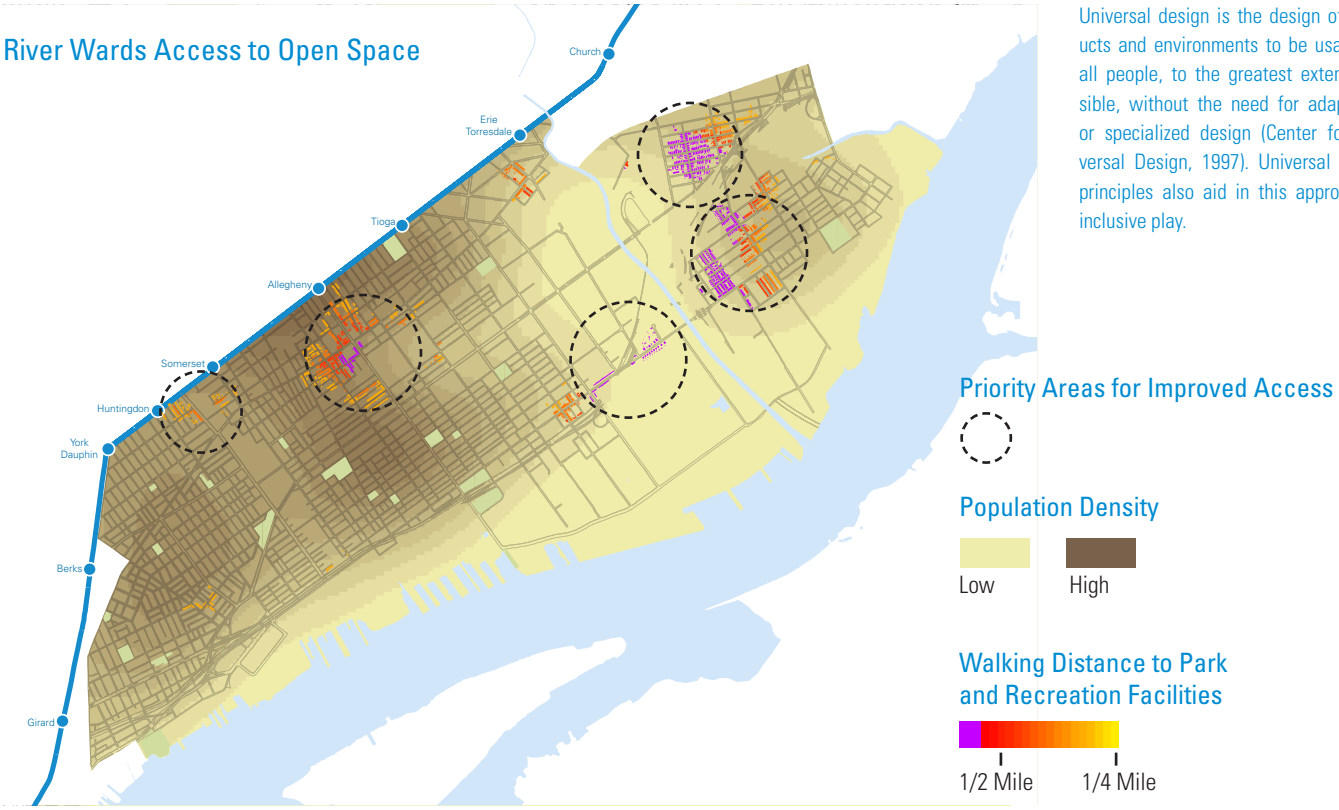
32. Improve access between park and recreation facilities, trails, and neighborhoods to minimize barriers to open space by the following initiatives:
    - Establish green connector streets between and to existing park and recreation and trail facilities, on Castor Avenue, Bridge Street, Lehigh Avenue, Richmond Street, Orthodox Street, and Columbia Avenue.
    - Provide directional and interpretive signage between neighborhoods, trails, parks and recreation facilities, and public waterfront areas.
    - Provide safety improvements and improve sidewalks along major roadways and other rights-of-way such as elevated and sunken railroad infrastructure and highway interchanges.
      > Implementing Agencies: PPR, Streets, MOTU, PWD | CW Objective 7.3.1

Definition | *Adaptive Recreation Equipment*

Adapted recreation (sports and outdoor) equipment are designed to allow disabled or mobility-impaired youth, young adults, and adults to increase their independence and enjoy meaningful participation in recreational activities. The equipment also encourages anyone with a disability to participate in sports in a healthy and active way.

Definition | *Universal Design*

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design (Center for Universal Design, 1997). Universal design principles also aid in this approach to inclusive play.



Case Study | *Greening Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School*

Many Philadelphia public school yards are asphalt-paved spaces. The Philadelphia Water Department, School District of Philadelphia, Friends of Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School, New Kensington Community Development Corporation, and volunteers from the Community Design Collaborative (CDC) re-imagined the school yard as a neighborhood oasis. The collaboration led to a design that integrates stormwater management infrastructure with play and fitness equipment, shade trees, murals, and an outdoor classroom. The new schoolyard will provide the community with open space while filtering and retaining stormwater on-site.

For more information, visit http://www.phillywatersheds.org/category/blog-tags/friends-horatio-b-hackett-elementary-school.

Conceptual design for the Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School school yard. Source: phillywatersheds.org

RENEW > Environmental Resources

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 7.2:
Improve the quality and management of our water and wetland resources.

Goal 7.3:
Increase tree coverage equitably across the city.

Definition | *Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)*

A combined sewer system collects wastewater from homes, businesses and industry, and stormwater from the storm drains on our streets through a single-pipe system to a water pollution control plant.

Definition | *Green Streets*

Green street projects capture rain and melting snow (stormwater) from the impervious street surface in an effort to reduce combined sewer overflows and overall pollution of our city's waterways. Tree trenches, stormwater planters, and stormwater bump-outs are three types of technologies found on green streets that utilize landscaping to manage stormwater runoff.

Water Quality and Tree Cover

The River Wards District lies within the Delaware River watershed, and is drained by the city's combined sewer system. The district's low elevation, tidal waterfronts, flat topography, and development on top of historic streams present significant water management challenges.

Under heavier rainfall conditions, the flow in combined sewers may be more than the pipe or treatment plant can handle. This means that some of the wastewater and stormwater may flow directly to a nearby stream or river to prevent the flooding of homes and streets. Limited capacity in the primary sewer lines impacts residents in low-lying areas, particularly in industrial and residential sections of Bridesburg and Port Richmond. The global phenomena of rising sea levels and increased probability of severe weather present the district with an additional challenge: how to best protect lives, property, and critical infrastructure from the threat of major floods. The recommendations in this section focus on stormwater management strategies designed to capture and absorb rain runoff before it overburdens sewers. They complement the Philadelphia Water Department's *Green City, Clean Waters* initiative, a 25-year plan to protect and enhance our watersheds through targeted interventions that increase tree cover, capture stormwater, and increase access to green space throughout the district.

The environmental benefits of trees are plentiful, including air purification, stormwater absorption, protection from soil erosion, and shading to reduce heat island effects. With its relatively low tree cover rate (7 percent) relative to the city as a whole (20 percent), the River Wards District is in need of significant new tree plantings. The benefits of trees will become increasingly important as temperature and precipitation increase.

The recommendations in this section aim to increase the district's tree canopy by taking advantage of several major areas of opportunity. These include some of the district's large publicly held rights-of-way (e.g., Allegheny Avenue), and private parking lots (e.g., Northeastern Ambulatory, Aramingo Shopping Center). Certain commercial zones are also now required by city ordinance to landscape a percentage of their lots. Coordinating efforts between city agencies and nonprofits listed below will help maximize the benefits of planting trees across the district.

Recommendations

33. Install green stormwater infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff at public facilities, large-scale private sites, and commerical corridors:
    - Encourage owners of large private sites (commercial and industrial) that face increased PWD stormwater fees to consider greening their facilities through green stormwater infrastucture
    - Prioritize green infrastructure at Harrowgate Park, Black Coyle, McBride (Pop's) Playground, and Hagert Street Playground.
    - Prioritize green infrastructure at the Tezzi Reitz Memorial [see Focus Areas, p. 95].
    - Identify vacant City-owned land on which to install green stormwater infrastructure.
      > Implementing Agencies: PWD, Streets, PPR, City Council | CW Objective; 7.2.3

> Flooding in Philadelphia : Definitions

Cities across the nation, including Philadelphia, are aware that the flooding of properties and natural areas may increase in frequency and intensity in coming decades.

The types of flooding currently experienced in Philadelphia include:
Riverine: Streams and rivers overtopping their banks during short, intense rainstorms, tropical storms and hurricanes.
Street Runoff: Streets and parking areas fill with water due to a lack of storm sewer capacity.
Sewer Backups: Water and sewage backs up into basements and plumbing due to overwhelmed sanitary sewer or combined sewer capacity.
Groundwater: Basement walls and floors get damp or leak due to seepage from ground saturated by high water tables and/or heavy precipitation.

Example Green Street (curb extension)
Source: Philadelphia Water Department

Recommendations

34. Integrate wetland mitigation and stormwater management initiatives with efforts to address flooding and sewer back-ups that are consistent with previous North Delaware greenway planning efforts.
    > Implementing Agencies: PWD, PPR, Streets | CW Objective; 7.2.3

35. Support innovation, modernization, expansion, and safety in the district's energy, waste, and maritime facilities.
    - Include PGW Richmond Plant, Exelon/PECO, PWD Northeast Plant, and Port Facilities.
    - Increase energy efficiency, maintain public access along the waterfront, and retrofit utility facilities to mitigate future environmental risks and address resiliency to climate change.
    - Encourage solid waste enterprises and regulatory authorities to spur innovation in the use of land and technology, compliance with applicable laws, and cooperation to mitigate impacts on host neighborhoods.
      > Implementing Agencies: PGW, PECO, PWD, DRPA, MOTU, PRPA | CW Objective: 5.1.3, 5.1.4

36. Improve the tree canopy by planting trees, stormwater planters, and green streets along major corridors, waterways, and the blocks around parks:
    - Riparian buffers along the Delaware River, Frankford Creek, and the Frankford Inlet
    - Along Castor, Allegheny, Aramingo, and Lehigh Avenues;
    - Along Orthodox, Bridge, East Tioga, East Cumberland, East York, East Huntingdon, and East Somerset Streets; and
    - Trenton and Auburn Playground, Stokely Playground, and Hagert Playground
    - Bridesburg
      > Implementing Agencies: PPR, Streets, PWD, PHS, Nonprofits | CW Objective; 7.3.1, 7.3.3

Resiliency Planning

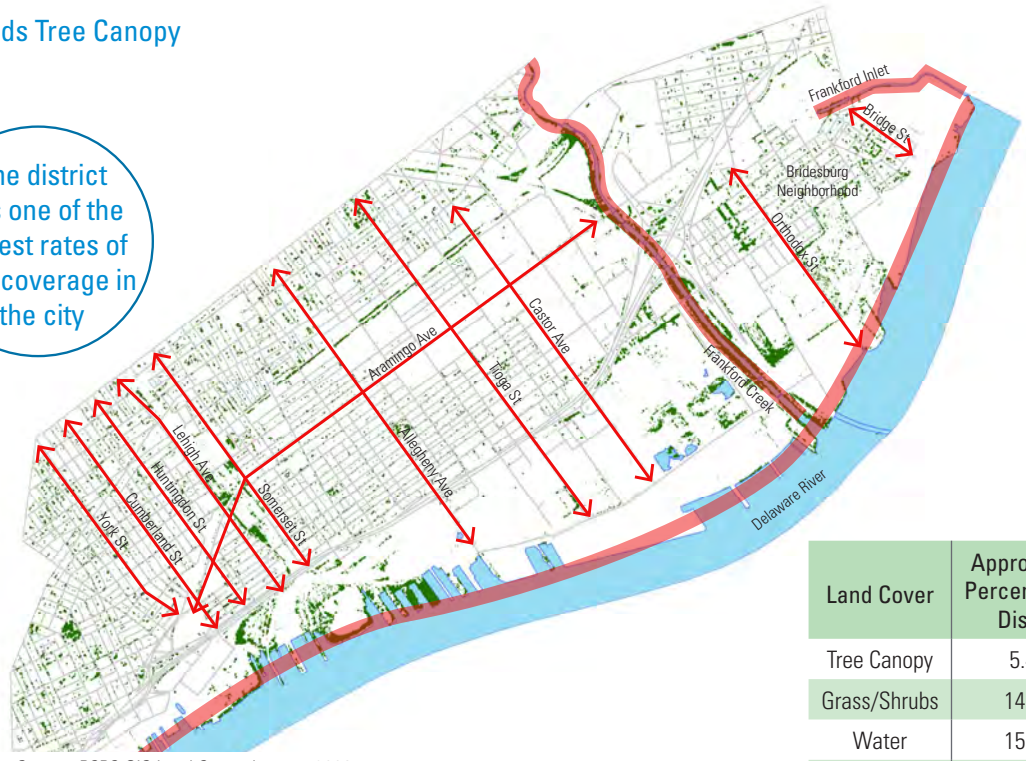
Philadelphia has been planning for climate change since releasing its first *Greenworks* report in 2009. According to climate projections in the Mayor's Office of Sustainability (MOS) *Useful Climate Information for Philadelphia: Past and Future*, Philadelphia is going to continue to see increases in temperature and precipitation in both the near- and long-term.

In 2014, the City initiated a Flood Risk Management Task Force and a study of potential climate change impacts on public facilities and services. This on-going work will help City and regional agencies partner with state and federal agencies, elected officials, neighborhood groups, private developers, and other interests groups to address current vulnerabilities and begin to manage longer-term risks.

For more information, visit www.phila.gov/green/resources.html.

River Wards Tree Canopy

The district has one of the lowest rates of tree coverage in the city



Source: PCPC GIS Land Cover dataset, 2008

Major corridors needing street trees

Land Cover	Approximate Percentage of District	Approximate Percentage of the City
Tree Canopy	5.4%	18.6%
Grass/Shrubs	14.7%	23.3%
Water	15.8%	5.9%
Buildings and Hardscape	63.8%	51.9%

RENEW > Environmental Resources

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 7.2:
Improve air quality within the city and region.

Definition | *Point and Nonpoint Pollution*

Environmental scientists distinguish between two classes of pollution sources: point and nonpoint. Point sources are single, easily identifiable source of pollution, such as the smoke stack of a coal-fired power plant. Nonpoint sources, like motor vehicle exhaust, are diffused over a wide area.

Above: An example of a exposure monitor intake and filtering device
Source: Clean Air Council

Air Quality

The River Wards District is home to petrochemical, waste treatment, trash transfer, and recycling facilities. It is traversed by a high-volume interstate highway that is currently under reconstruction, and its businesses are visited daily by large numbers of diesel fuel-emitting trucks, trains, and ships. As the River Wards District continues to evolve as an industrial center, new and current industrial users share an obligation with the City to comply with existing air quality regulations. This effort will continue to improve air quality and conditions for the district's residents.

The Philadelphia region remains noncompliant with federal air quality standards for ground-level ozone, which forms when pollutants from cars and trucks, power plants, factories, and other sources come in contact with each other in heat and sunlight. Emissions from such point and non-point sources can contribute to short-term respiratory irritation and long-term respiratory and cardiovascular disease. In fact, Health Department data shows that the district has the highest asthma hospitalization rate in the city [see Health Profile, p. 14].

Air pollution in the district is primarily attributed to truck traffic (specifically diesel trucks) including refrigerated cargo, drayage, and short haul delivery trucks. Chemical processing facilities, oil and gas storage, asphalt recycling, and sewage treatment facilities are also pollution sources that impact the public health of the neighborhoods. Over several decades, air quality conditions in the River Wards have improved markedly in response to citizen activism, regulatory enforcement, the advent of low-sulfur diesel for trucks, the introduction of cleaner and more efficient industrial processes, and the closure of several heavy polluters. Recommendations to improve air quality in the River Wards focus on regulating the activities of point source and nonpoint source polluters.

Recommendations

37. Reduce vehicle emissions from truck, port, rail, and bus traffic and idling by developing cooperative partnerships with local industrial and community organizations and major transportation stakeholders [see CONNECT, p. 47].
    - Prioritize the neighborhoods of Port Richmond, Kensington, and Bridesburg.
    - Continuing to work with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on Clean Diesel Programs and grant opportunities.
        > Implementing Agencies: PennDOT, PDPH, PIDC, PRPA, Streets, Nonprofits | CW Objective 4.2.3, 4.3.1, 4.3.3 , 7.1.1
38. Continue monitoring compliance and enhancements of air quality from stationary industries and facilities.
    > Implementing Agencies: PDPH, SEPTA, Streets, PennDOT, Nonprofits | CW Objective 7.1.1

Case Study | *Understanding Air Quality in the River Wards: The Port Richmond AIR Project*

In 2012, the Clean Air Council, in partnership with local organizations and Dr. Michelle Kondo, began ongoing research and work, through its Environmental Justice Program, with residents to address a number of issues related to air pollution in the River Wards District. Their work has spanned from Port Richmond into much of Philadelphia's Delaware River communities including Bridesburg and Kensington. Over time, the program has moved towards community organizing and education, specifically addressing the environmental hazards and related air quality issues in the area, organizing participatory health assessments and air monitoring device tours, and building an effective policy to improve the local environment. With the goal of collecting data and improved public health for the low-income and working-class neighborhood of Port Richmond, the partnership aims to foster a collaborative and community-driven research effort to document community exposure to hazards associated with transportation and goods movement in the port-adjacent neighborhoods of Philadelphia. The council is currently working with elected officials to update the truck routes, put up more signage, and have better enforcement.

Above: An example of a backpack monitor
Source: Clean Air Council

For more information, visit: http://www.cleanair.org/.

RENEW > Historic Preservation

Cultural, Historical, and Architectural Resources

At the height of Philadelphia's industrial age, the city was known as the textile capital of the world. The neighborhood of Kensington was at the center of this thriving industry, home to almost half of the city's cloth, clothing, and carpet factories, alongside related trades such as dye works, machine shops, and box factories. While some of these factories are on the National Register of Historic Places, as a part of the Kensington Industrial Thematic District, they are not protected with designation to the Philadelphia Register. Today, many of these buildings are abandoned or underutilized; however, some are being repurposed for new manufacturing enterprises and live-work spaces.

The River Wards District has been the site of many historic events that have shaped its development over time. Some important themes in history of the district include the presence of the Lenni Lenape Indian tribe, the rise of the manufacturing and industrial era, and the introduction of modern transportation. Today, there are many significant industrial, religious, educational, institutional, and residential sites, including iconic view-sheds or points that contribute to the district's sense of place. As sites age, it will be important to consider eligibility for designation and protection, and to explore appropriate adaptive reuses of underutilized sites.

Like many neighborhoods that have welcomed immigrants from a variety of faiths, the River Wards District has a large collection of churches and places of worship that reflect its immigration history. Along Allegheny Avenue, the spires of three prominent churches dominate the skyline. As congregations dwindle or need financial help, finding appropriate partners to revitalize these buildings will be key. One such program is run by the Partners for Sacred Places, which pairs arts and other organizations with churches to share these spaces.

Only 31 properties within the River Wards are listed on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. All of these local properties fall within Fishtown. To address this inconsistency, four potential historic districts have been identified, all of which have been determined eligible (DOE) for the National Register of Historic Places. These include the Fishtown Historic District (DOE 1994), Richmond Industrial Historic District (DOE 1994), Kensington/Allegheny Historic District (DOE 1999), and the Port Richmond Historic District (DOE 2014). A survey also needs to be done to determine the potential historic resources in Bridesburg.

Recommendations

39. Identify and designate historic resources to the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places to recognize significant places of worship, industrial, institutional, landmark and residential resources:
    - Preserve the viewshed of the landmark Allegheny Avenue churches, including St. Adalbert Polish Roman Catholic Church, Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, and Our Lady Help of Christians Church
    - Schlichter Jute & Cordage Factory/Sterling Paper Company
    - Harbison's Dairies and Milk Bottle Water Tower
    - Lithuanian Music Hall
    - Carnegie Library, Free Library of Philadelphia, Richmond Branch

    > Implementing Agencies: PHC, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objectives: 8.1.1

40. Pursue nomination of individual or groups of buildings that are a part of the Kensington Textile Multiple Property Documentation Form (MPDF) to the National Register.

    > Implementing Agencies: PHMC, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 8.1.1

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 8.1:
Support sensitive development that preserves and enhances Philadelphia's multifaceted past.

Definition | *National Register of Historic Places*

The National Register of Historic Places is the federal government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation. Owners of income-producing properties listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places or of properties that are contributing resources within a National Register Historic District may be eligible for tax credits for the rehabilitation of the historic structure.

Definition | *Philadelphia Register of Historic Places*

The Philadelphia Historical Commission (PHC) is responsible for ensuring the preservation of historically significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, interiors, and districts in the city. The commission identifies and designates historic resources, listing them on the Philadelphia Register of Historic Places. It regulates preservation through the city's building and other permitting processes.

For more information, visit *www.phila.gov/historical/register.*

RENEW > Historic Preservation

Cultural, Historical, and Architectural Resources

Definition | *Partners for Sacred Places*

Partners for Sacred Places is an organization that advocates for sound stewardship and active community use of architecturally significant houses of worship that are home to shrinking congregations. PSP connects religious organizations with community artists to broaden the base of support for their vital and beautiful buildings.

Recommendations

41. Survey in Bridesburg and re-survey the Fishtown Historic District to identify sites that best represent the historical development of the area.
    - Nominate the districts to the Philadelphia Register.
      > Implementing Agencies: PHC, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 8.1.1

42. Facilitate partnerships to find appropriate users and accommodate adaptive reuse options for underused places of worship.
    - Partner arts and culture organizations with congregations of large facilities; and
    - Provide flexibility in regulations to accommodate uses other than religious services in existing buildings.
      > Implementing Agencies: PHC, MOACCE, L&I, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 8.1.5

43. Preserve immigrant history and heritage in Port Richmond through programs, wayfinding signage, and historic markers.
    > Implementing Agencies: PMHC, MOACCE, Commerce, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 8.1.1

> Archaeological Work within the I-95 Reconstruction Project

Archaeological resources are abundant in the River Wards District, as evidenced by the research done for the Interstate-95 reconstruction. The *I-95/Girard Avenue Interchange Reconstruction Project* area extends roughly from the Vine St. Expressway to Allegheny Avenue in the Port Richmond neighborhood. Thus far, excavations have been limited to the Fishtown and Port Richmond neighborhoods, and work within the Northern Liberties neighborhood will be up-and-coming.

Information regarding the archaeological discoveries from this project are being compiled in an interactive digital report, which is web based and accessible by the public. The report is a work in progress and will be continuously updated with more information as the project is completed.

Finding a permanent home for these artifacts for the public to view and learn about the vast history of the River Wards is an important step to preserving these fragile resources.

For more information, visit www.diggingi95.com.

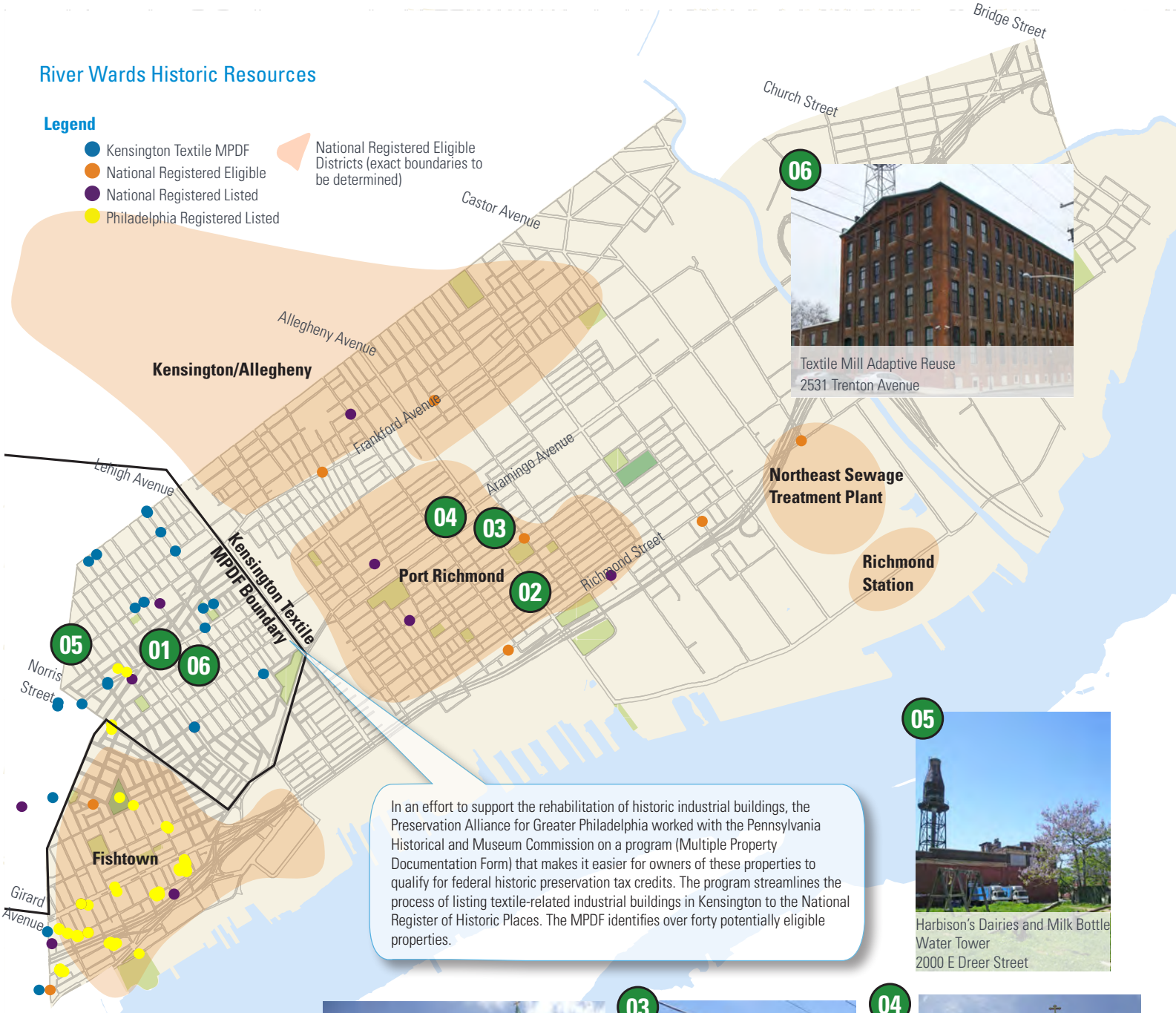
Top: Example of glass artifacts recovered from the project.
Bottom: Example of Dyottville Glass Works excavations.

River Wards Historic Resources

Legend

- Kensington Textile MPDF
- National Registered Eligible
- National Registered Listed
- Philadelphia Registered Listed

National Registered Eligible Districts (exact boundaries to be determined)



Textile Mill Adaptive Reuse
2531 Trenton Avenue

In an effort to support the rehabilitation of historic industrial buildings, the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia worked with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission on a program (Multiple Property Documentation Form) that makes it easier for owners of these properties to qualify for federal historic preservation tax credits. The program streamlines the process of listing textile-related industrial buildings in Kensington to the National Register of Historic Places. The MPDF identifies over forty potentially eligible properties.

Harbison's Dairies and Milk Bottle Water Tower
2000 E Dreer Street

Trenton Avenue Belgium Block
2000-2300 blocks, 2400-2600 blocks

St. Adalbert Polish Roman Catholic Church
2639 E Allegheny Avenue

Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church
3200 Belgrade Street

Our Lady Help of Christians
2424 E Allegheny Ave

RENEW > Public Realm

Development Patterns, Gateways, and Urban Design

The River Wards District's public realm has two distinctive scales: a traditional rowhouse neighborhood scale and a commercial or industrial mega-block scale. Major transportation corridors divide the district such as I-95, several rail viaducts, and the Market-Frankford Line. Often infrastructure marks the boundary between these two scales. For example, I-95 buffers the industrial mega-blocks along the Delaware waterfront from residential areas. The myriad needs of these different built environments leave the district without a predominant development pattern and without a single set of urban design issues. Instead, a fractured mix of public realm issues exists in a physically and socially changing district.

Recent infill contributes to the shifting public realm of rowhouse neighborhoods such as Fishtown, Port Richmond, and sections of Kensington. Improvements to the district's infrastructure are also affecting the public realm. I-95 is undergoing significant reconstruction, including widening, street extensions, and ramp reconfiguration. Public recreation and river access are increasing as the Frankford Creek Greenway, the Delaware Riverfront trail, and the Delaware Avenue extension are constructed. And while change occurs slowly to the large-scaled former industrial sites along the Delaware River, efforts are underway to study their potential to contribute to a more robust waterfront public realm.

Philadelphia2035 Citywide Vision

Goal 9.1:
Enhance and improve the walkable form with buildings and spaces that have appropriately scaled heights, massing, and setbacks.

Goal 9.2:
Elevate public demand for good design in the public realm.

Definition | *Gateway*

A gateway is a moment of transition or point of entry between two or more neighborhoods, landscapes, districts, or other defined areas of the city. Gateway elements, such as signage, art installations, memorials, and/or monuments can introduce the character and spirit of a neighborhood as well as welcome in those traveling between different parts of our city.

Definition | *Place-Making*

A multifaceted approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking capitalizes on a local community's assets, inspiration, and potential, with the intention of creating public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well being.

Recommendations

44. Activate the underpasses of the Lehigh Viaduct at key intersections to improve pedestrian safety: Kensington, Frankford, and Aramingo Avenue [see Focus Area, p. 83].
    - Include neighborhood streets, Emerald and Tulip Street.
    - Utilize spaces under I-95 in Port Richmond and Bridesburg and create new public spaces that restore neighborhood connections while complementing parking and stormwater management where feasible.
      > Implementing Agencies: Streets, PennDOT, Conrail, DRWC, PHS, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.2

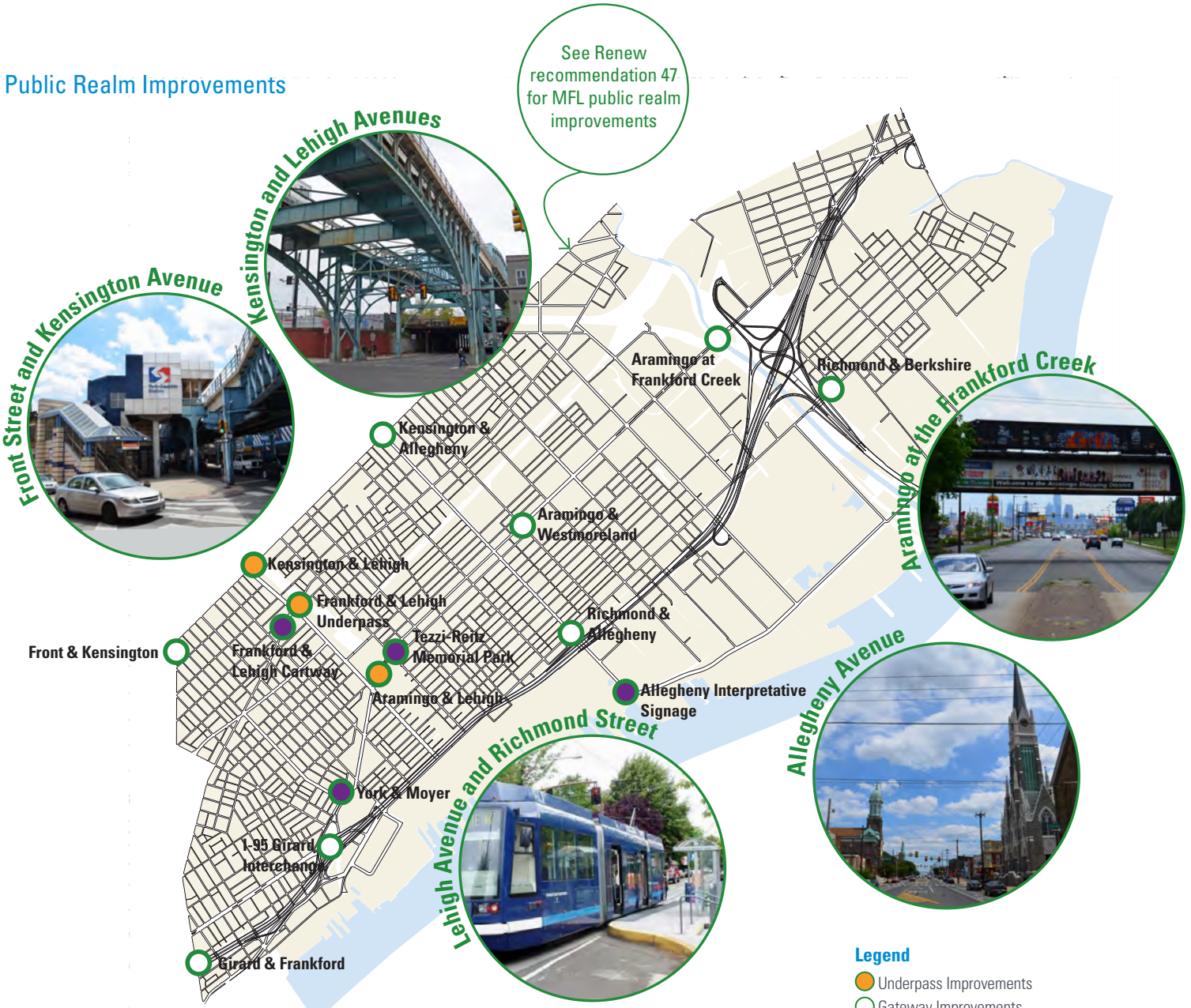
45. Install public art and interpretive signage along Allegheny Avenue to Pulaski Park to promote water and immigration heritage and the East Coast Greenway.
    > Implementing Agencies: Streets, Commerce, MOACCE, PCPC, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.3

46. Redesign the Tezzi-Reitz Memorial Park to accommodate bus riders, visitors, and gateway features [see Focus Area, p. 85].
    > Implementing Agencies: Streets, PWD, PCPC, DRCC, PHS, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.2

47. Use excess cartway and unused right-of-way to create a pedestrian plaza at Frankford and Lehigh Avenue and York and Moyer Streets.
    > Implementing Agencies: Streets, MOTU, PCPC, DRCC, PHS, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.2

48. Strengthen neighborhood, commercial, and cultural identity through the use of gateway and place-making treatments:
    - Girard and Frankford Avenue
    - Front Street and Kensington Avenue
    - I-95 Girard Interchange
    - Kensington and Allegheny [see RENEW, p. 60]
    - East Westmoreland Street and Aramingo Avenue
    - Richmond Street and Allegheny Avenue [see Focus Area, p. 78]
    - Aramingo and York and Aramingo at Frankford Creek
    - Richmond Street and Berkshire Street
      > Implementing Agencies: PennDOT, Streets, Commerce, Nonprofits, Civic Groups | CW Objective: 9.2.2

Public Realm Improvements



Example of planned streetscape and trolley improvements
Source: PennDOT

Case Study | *I-95 Girard Avenue Interchange Improvement, Philadelphia*

While elevated roadways provide mobility to the city and region, the spaces underneath tend to be utilitarian at best and dark and uninviting at worst. PennDOT, in collaboration with City agencies, local community groups, and area nonprofits, has taken on the challenge of activating the space underneath I-95 as a way to connect residential neighborhoods with the waterfront. As part of the project, the area underneath the highway will be programmed with green stormwater infrastructure, public art, neighborhood gathering areas, pedestrian lighting, parking, and a multiuse path. Key connector streets will receive additional lighting, art, and pedestrian amenities. A space that was once uninviting and empty will become a center of activity that connects the communities I-95 used to divide.

For more information, visit www.95revive.com.

Planned improvements under I-95 near Lehigh Avenue
Source: PennDOT

RENEW > Public Realm

Definition | *Form-Based Zoning*

Form-based zoning is a set of development regulations that specify physical form. This contrasts with traditional zoning, which is organized around separation of uses.

Recommendations

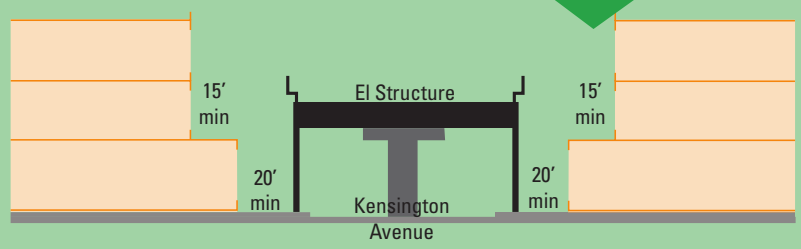
49. Improve the safety, usability, and appearance of Front Street and Kensington Avenue, underneath the MFL, through the following actions:
    - Prioritize stations with high ridership: Allegheny, Somerset, and Huntingdon;
    - Install new crosswalks and safety and traffic calming measures at major Market-Frankford Line stations;
    - Work with local schools and youth organizations to implement a large-scale civic project under the Market-Frankford Line to celebrate the corridor;
    - Incorporate City storefront improvement programs to modernize and support existing character;
    - Install bicycle parking and storage; and
    - Install landscape and streetscape improvements, including benches, pedestrian-scale lighting upgrades, trash receptacles, multimodal directional signage, and improved signalization.

      > Implementing Agencies: Streets, SEPTA, Commerce, MOTU, Mural Arts, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 4.1.1

50. Explore form-based zoning design guidelines for the area along the Kensington Avenue corridor so that development fronting the Market-Frankford Line is compatible with the elevated structure.

    > Implementing Agencies: PCPC, City Council, Nonprofits | CW Objective: 9.2.1

> Lomg-Term Vision: Market-Frankford Line Design Guidelines



Section showing proposed building setbacks on Kensington Avenue

As currently configured, the pedestrian realm along Kensington Avenue gets little sunlight because of the Market-Frankford Line's elevated structure and the narrow canyon formed by buildings on each side of the street. The close proximity of buildings to the noise of the MFL also makes upper-floor residential uses undesirable. Increased setback requirements for new buildings will create a more inviting pedestrian environment by allowing more light onto sidewalks and building facades. Furthermore, upper-floor setbacks will make residential uses adjacent to the MFL more marketable.

Case Study | *Kensington & Allegheny Streetscape Plan*

The Kensington & Allegheny Streetscape Plan is a study focused on the design of the streetscape and the activation of the Kensington and Allegheny intersection and corridor. Along with maintaining the essence of the multicultural corridor, Impact Services and Kensington and Allegheny Business Association would like to transform the heavily traveled and visible intersection by implementing cleaning, safety, marketing, accessibility, and facade improvements.

Substantial investment would be required to adequately implement the vision the Business Association and the community has for the area. Therefore multiple city agencies and partners have been involved to ensure the realization of the plan.

> Short-Term Vision: Streetscape Improvements

The looming Market-Frankford Line structure presents unique urban design challenges to the retail districts on Kensington Avenue and Front Street. Near Huntingdon Station, local nonprofits and businesses have partnered to liven up the sidewalk with evergreens in concrete planters and streetscape improvements. This small but effective community-led addition to the streetscape strengthens the businesses that serve the Latino and Vietnamese community and local residents. There is also a cultural presence around the York/Dauphin Station, where local Latino-owned businesses serve the diverse Latino communities of Kensington. Preserving this cultural presence and local-owned atmosphere is important in keeping this area thriving and accessible to the existing residents.

Hosting a program such as the Food Trust's Night Market Philadelphia would also provide local businesses with partnership opportunities to economically and socially grow their businesses. The Night Market is a street food festival that spotlights Philadelphia's growing cultural and regional restaurants, food trucks, and vibrant corridors. Local non-food related businesses could also be incorporated into the market by offering services and information specials as part of the event.

Existing conditions of the Latino and Vietnamese Cultural Corridor at Kensington Avenue and Huntingdon Street

Night Market Philadelphia

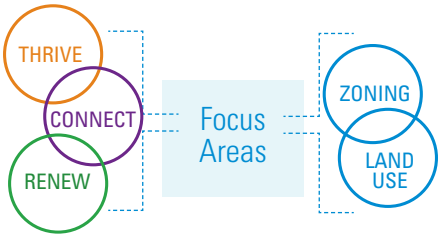
Proposed International Market Under the MFL

Focus Areas

Focus areas are strategically located sites with the potential to benefit the entire district, or even the city as a whole. They can be catalysts for thoughtful reinvestment in the larger community.

Focus areas illustrate many of the recommendations from the THRIVE, CONNECT, and RENEW sections of this plan. They show how individual recommendations work together to transform a place comprehensively.

Focus areas often have underutilized land or inappropriate zoning classifications, which make them suitable for land use and/or zoning recommendations.



> Identifying the Focus Areas

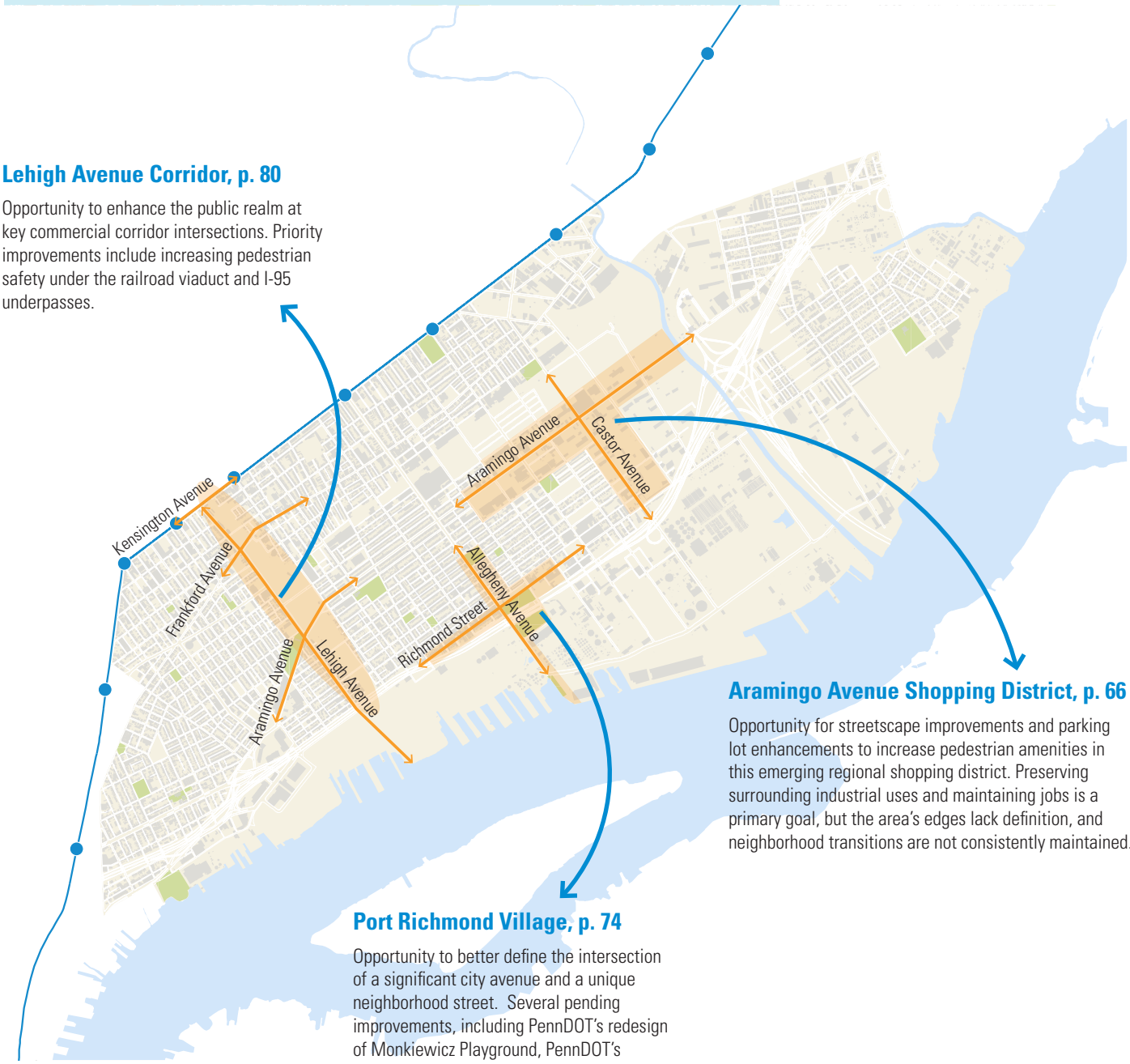
The process of "discovering" the focus areas is extensive. The PCPC strives to select locations for more intensive planning studies that have a strong contextual framework yet do not function to their highest capacity. After completing the land use survey, the district can be analyzed in terms of use, vacancy, and zoning in order to then find the areas with the greatest potential for redevelopment within the next ten years. The focus area analysis is the result of input from the PCPC staff, the district's steering committee, and community members. After several iterations of feedback from all these stakeholders, the focus areas to the right were identified.

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District Focus Area

Port Richmond Village Focus Area

Lehigh Avenue Corridor Focus Area

Three focus areas emerged from the River Wards District analysis, the key intersections within each area are identified below. The individual characteristics of each neighborhood lay the groundwork for reimagining the areas as more competitive, attractive, and functional. The illustrative visions in the following pages provide inspiration and a framework for gradually transforming the areas over time.



Lehigh Avenue Corridor, p. 80

Opportunity to enhance the public realm at key commercial corridor intersections. Priority improvements include increasing pedestrian safety under the railroad viaduct and I-95 underpasses.

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District, p. 66

Opportunity for streetscape improvements and parking lot enhancements to increase pedestrian amenities in this emerging regional shopping district. Preserving surrounding industrial uses and maintaining jobs is a primary goal, but the area's edges lack definition, and neighborhood transitions are not consistently maintained.

Port Richmond Village, p. 74

Opportunity to better define the intersection of a significant city avenue and a unique neighborhood street. Several pending improvements, including PennDOT's redesign of Monkiewicz Playground, PennDOT's Richmond Street improvements, and SEPTA's redesign of their transit loop, give the city an opportunity to improve pedestrian connections among these activity hubs.

Recent and Current Public Projects

Within the River Wards District, several areas have planning initiatives and projects that are being designed or are currently under construction. Summarized here are the public initiatives around the district that are either in progress or have recently completed a public planning process.

The Thrive, Connect, and Renew sections of the district plan build on these public initiatives by offering recommendations that help facilitate development and complement ongoing efforts. The Focus Area section reimagines areas that do not have a recent plan but do have great redevelopment potential.

1. In Progress

Frankford Creek Greenway

Completed in May 2014, the Frankford Creek Greenway Feasibility Study lays out the feasibility of a shared-use path along or parallel to the Frankford Creek to link the Tacony Creek Trail to the Delaware River Trail. The sections of the greenway that are in the River Wards District are in progress.

Frankford Creek, channelized section

Dow site

2. In Progress

Lower Frankford Creek Watershed Brownfields Area-Wide Plan

Completed in 2015, the plan provides an implementable approach for the economically and environmentally beneficial redevelopment of key sites. It will help further community-based partnerships within underserved or economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

3. Recent Plan

Master Plan for the Central Delaware

The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) commissioned this plan for the central Delaware waterfront in 2011. This plan was adopted by the PCPC and is considered part of the city's Comprehensive Plan. The section of the plan from Penn Treaty Park to Allegheny Avenue is within the River Wards District.

Illustrative rendering showing multiuse trails near Schirra Drive
Source: Master Plan for the Central Delaware

4. Recent Plan

Kensington & Allegheny Streetscape Plan

This 2009 streetscape plan creates a detailed design approach for both Kensington Avenue (north of McPherson Square) and Allegheny Avenue from F Street to Aramingo Avenue. The design focused on improving the intersections where there is currently the most activity and better natural light.

PCPC Focus Areas

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District

Port Richmond Village

Lehigh Avenue Corridor

8. In Progress

I-95 Improvement Project

PennDOT is working on a long-term, multiphase infrastructure initiative to improve and rebuild I-95, including a major reconstruction from the Girard to Cottman Avenue interchanges in Philadelphia. Currently the River Wards District includes various stages of sections, GIR (Girard Avenue Interchange to Allegheny/ Castor Interchange), AFC (Allegheny to Frankford Creek), BRI (Bridge Street Interchange to Betsy Ross Bridge Interchange), and BSR (Levick to Bridge Street Interchange) that are under construction or in design.

Construction on the median for relocated Richmond Street near the Girard Avenue Interchange. Source: 95revive.com

7. In Progress

Waterfront Access Improvements

A land swap involving the City and Dietz and Watson, Inc. has been finalized. It will add 20 acres to Dietz and Watson, Inc's current facility and is part of a larger land transaction that will provide area residents with new and improved public access and open space.

Fishing at the Frankford Arsenal Boat Launch

6. In Progress

North Delaware Avenue Extension

Phase 1A of this Streets Department project is extending Delaware Avenue along the river from Lewis Street to Orthodox Street, with future phases to continue north to Tacony Street. The project will include a sidepath, increase vehicular access to additional industrial parcels, and help to reduce truck traffic in adjacent neighborhoods.

Construction of N. Delaware Avenue extension at Lewis Street

5. Recent Plan

Philadelphia Trail Master Plan, 2014 update

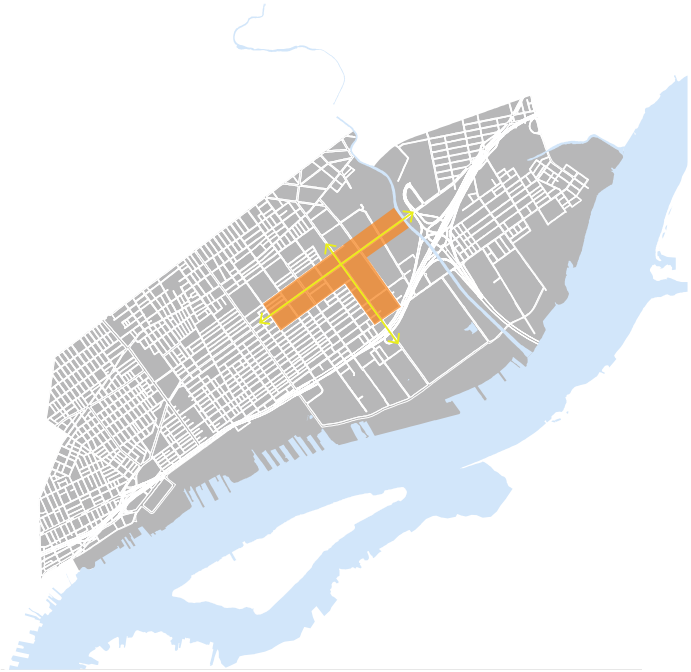
The PCPC Philadelphia Trail Master Plan Progress Report reflects the work in the past year of the Philadelphia Trail Committee and our nonprofit trail development partners towards expanding the Philadelphia trail network.

- Proposed trails
- Existing trails

FOCUS AREA >

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District

Creating a seamless corridor



Focus Area Goals

> Transform Aramingo Avenue into a unified, attractive shopping corridor

> Improve stormwater management in a manner that fulfills private, public, and environmental interests

> Integrate pedestrian safety features within the auto-oriented context

The Aramingo Avenue Shopping District, an emerging regional shopping center, is a successful commercial hub that serves nearby neighborhoods as well as shoppers from outside the area, including Center City and New Jersey. A wider variety of retail and service uses could help the district evolve into a more complete commercial destination.

The district has developed as an auto-dependent commercial corridor, but the low car ownership rate in the River Wards District and the high bus ridership along the Aramingo Avenue bus route demand better pedestrian safety measures and amenities. Much of the district developed before contemporary stormwater management and landscaping standards were required, and the addition of trees, swales, and other features will benefit the pedestrian experience as well as its environmental impact.

Many of the district's physical shortcomings can be solved through public investment in streetscape improvements and private investment in parking lot improvements. Future developments should view pedestrians as a high priority, especially in regard to building form and site design. New zoning code requirements will help to ensure increased surface permeability and green coverage. Together, these elements will elevate the aesthetics of the area, strengthen the reinvestment potential, and transform a random assemblage of separate developments into a more cohesive whole.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District

Maintained industrial areas

Lot size or location suggest future potential for redevelopment

Traffic signal

SEPTA bus stop

The community prioritized the intersection of Castor and Aramingo Avenues for pedestrian safety improvements and identified it as the center of the district

Speeding and drag racing are issues in the district

The rail right-of-way has low usage and presents safety hazards

Loading area faces Aramingo Avenue

Blank facades face Aramingo Avenue

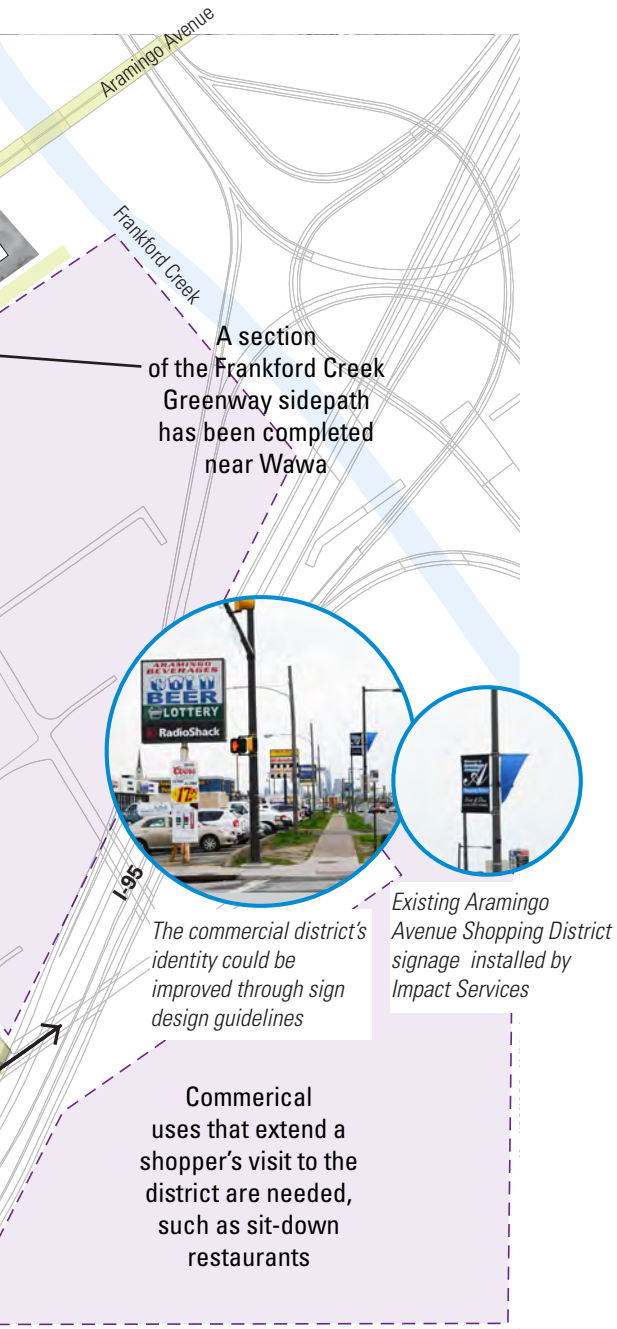
Aramingo Avenue lacks pedestrian amenities such as bus shelters, street trees, benches, etc.

Parking lots do not meet current standards for landscaping and stormwater management

Walmart
Lowe's
Wawa
Extra Space Storage
Shop Rite
Forman Mills
Imperial Plaza
Home Depot
Target
Residences
Toys R Us
Pathmark
KMart
Castor Avenue
Butler Street
Wheatsheaf Lane
Rail R.O.W.
Aramingo Avenue
Tulip Street
Venango Street
Belgrade Street
Tioga Street
Gaul Street
Ontario Street
E Westmoreland Street
Thompson Street
Edgemont Street
Salmon Street
Richmond Street
I-95
89
89, 25
25
60, 73
1
2
3
4

> CASE STUDY: H&M Retail Store, 69th and Market Streets, Upper Darby, PA

When considering an additional urban location for a new H&M store, the company looks for a building that has great foot traffic and access to street frontage. The retailer prefers sites where customers can walk directly from the sidewalk into the store. Both 69th Street and Market Street are urban arterial roads with multiple lanes and a high volume of traffic, yet the pedestrian environment is still accommodating and developing over time. This retail building typology, which is desired by retailers, is missing from the Aramingo Avenue Shopping District.

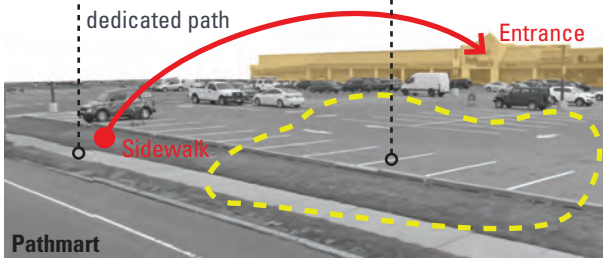


RETAIL BUILDING TYPOLOGIES

1 Older Large Format Site

Entrance: Pedestrians do not have a dedicated path

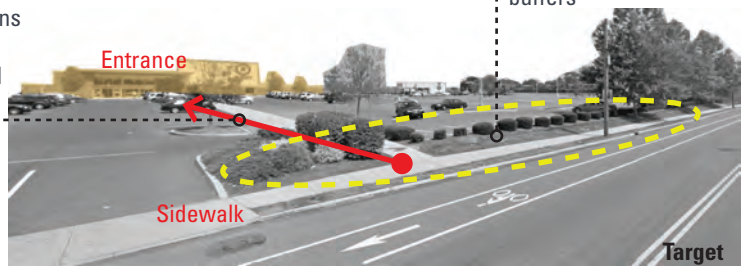
Parking: Large lot without interior landscaping or buffers



2 Newer Large Format Site

Entrance: Pedestrians have a dedicated path

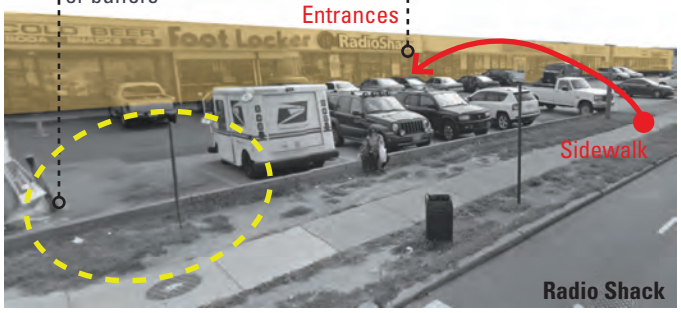
Parking: Large lot with interior landscaping and buffers



3 Older Small Format Site - Strip Mall

Parking: Small lot without interior landscaping or buffers

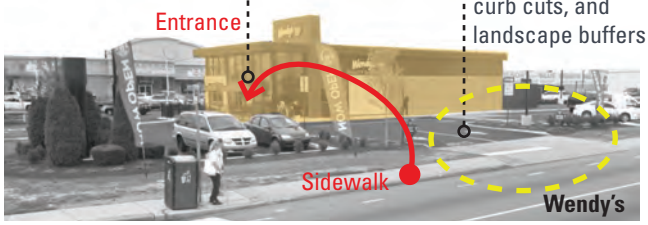
Entrance: Multiple entries that face the street but do not have pedestrian pathways



4 Newer Small Format Site - Pad Site

Entrance: Typically not oriented towards street and no dedicated path, some pedestrian amenities such as outdoor seating

Parking: Small lot with drive thru lanes, multiple curb cuts, and landscape buffers



Commercial development generally started towards the south and grew north towards the Frankford Creek over time, making the retail buildings near East Westmoreland Street older than those near Butler Street.

The variety of building typologies along Aramingo reflects approximately 40 years of development, expanding as industrial uses transformed into commercial uses, and including more landscaping and stormwater features as the zoning code refined its requirements over the decades (see THRIVE, p. 38 for timeline). Many of the older buildings are now in need of modernization.

Missing from the existing retail building typologies are stores that front on to the avenue, welcoming pedestrians from the sidewalk to enter, see case study to the left.

FUTURE VISION

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District

Design Principles

Optimize Land Use

1. Increase density of commercial uses on parcels within the Aramingo BID. The shopping district can continue to grow within its current boundaries by:
   - Adding multistory buildings
   - Activating underutilized parking lots with temporary programming or permanent structures
   - Building a centralized, shared parking garage to fulfill demand

2. Preserve industrial uses on parcels within the Industrial Protection Areas. Industrial parcels should maintain their public realm to a standard that is consistent with the PRIDE plan, including sidewalks with clear walking zones, quality fence material, and consistent signage. Key connector streets for public realm improvements are Castor Avenue and Butler Street.

Improve Pedestrian Safety

3. Focus streetscape improvements towards maximizing pedestrian and bicycle saftey. Despite the high truck traffic volume and the auto-oriented built environment, the area has high bus ridership and many pedestrians. Improvements shown include:
   - Curb extensions, green medians, and mid-block crossings at key intersections
   - Landscaped pedestrian areas and dedicated pedestrian walkways within parking lots
   - Benches and bus shelters where appropriate
   - New circulation alignments

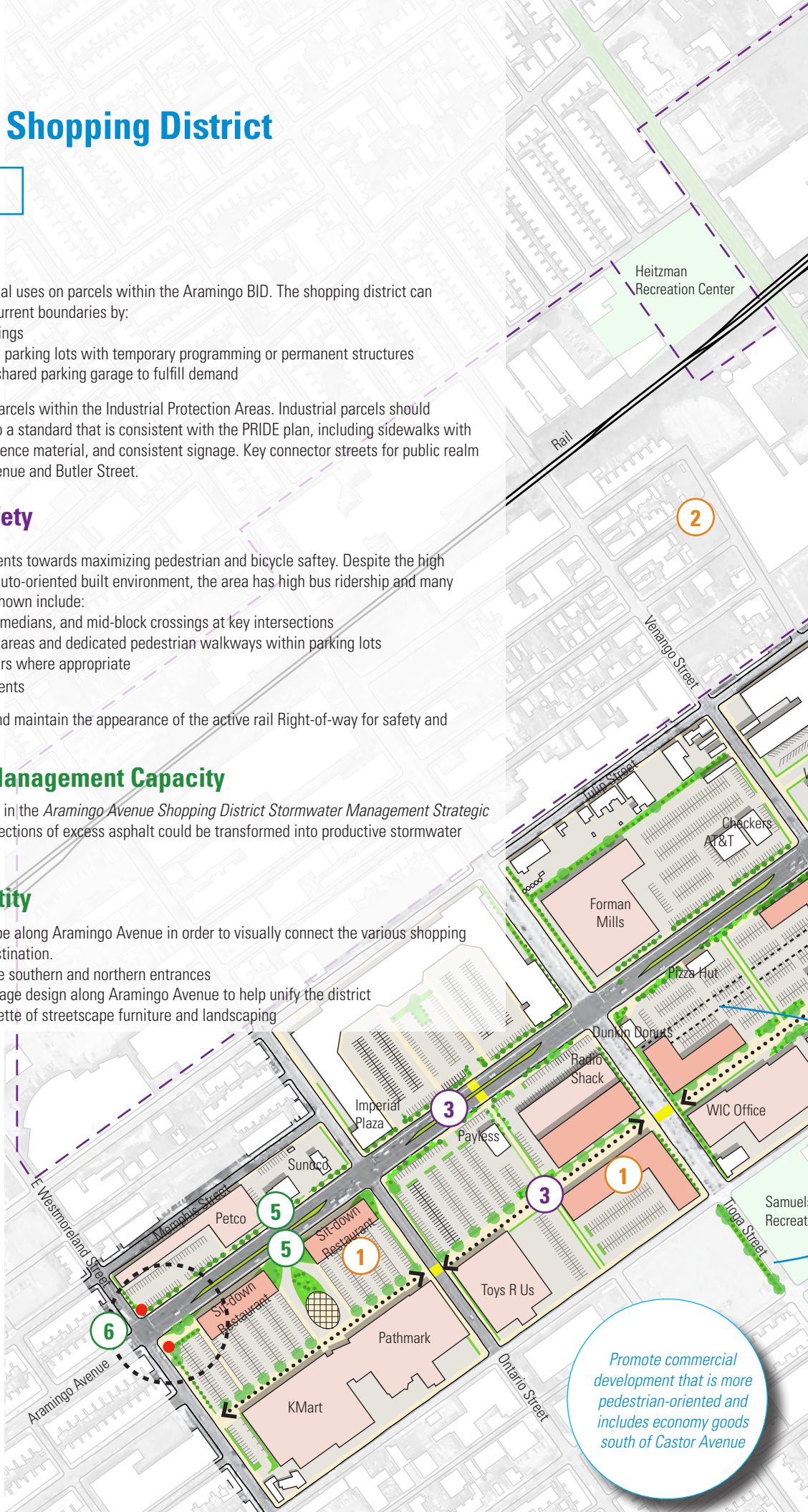
4. Upgrade the infrastructure and maintain the appearance of the active rail Right-of-way for safety and function.

Increase Stormwater Management Capacity

5. Follow the recommendations in the *Aramingo Avenue Shopping District Stormwater Management Strategic Plan* (2013) that detail how sections of excess asphalt could be transformed into productive stormwater management landscapes.

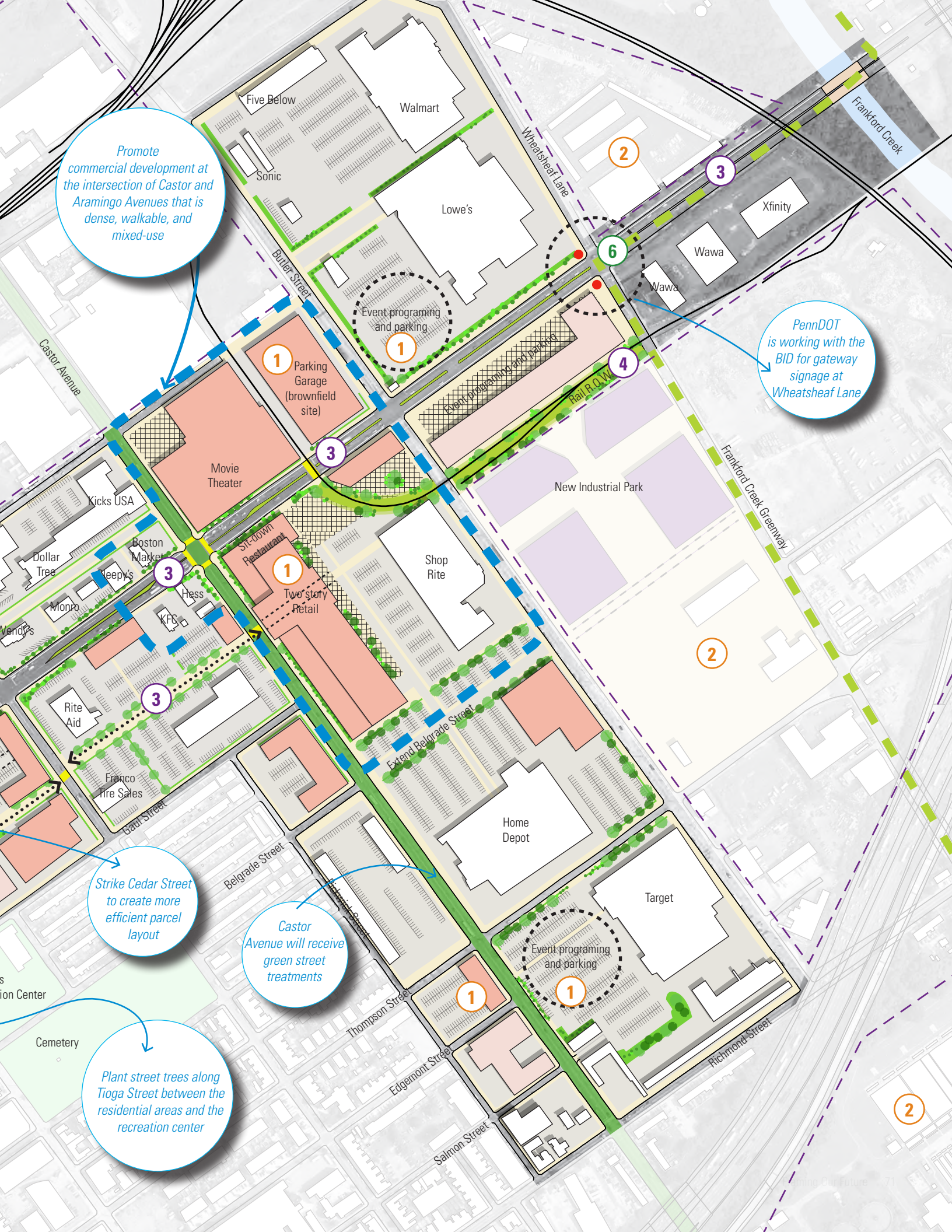
Create a Cohesive Identity

6. Establish a unified streetscape along Aramingo Avenue in order to visually connect the various shopping plazas into a single retail destination.
   - Create a gateway at the southern and northern entrances
   - Present consistent signage design along Aramingo Avenue to help unify the district
   - Establish a uniform palette of streetscape furniture and landscaping



LEGEND

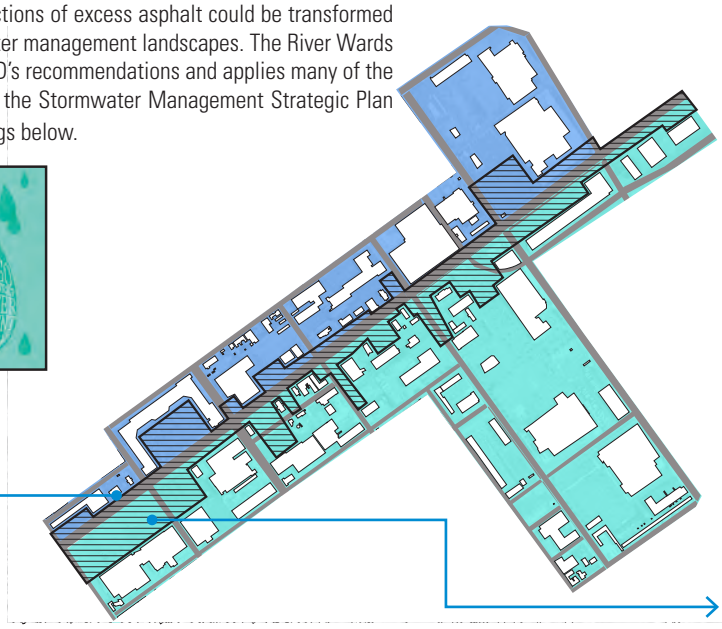
- Building Modernization (includes facade renovations that increase transparency along Aramingo Avenue)
- Redevelopment Concept (includes uses such as retail, offices, restaurants, and movie theater)
- Industrial Protection Areas
- Enhanced Pedestrian Only Space
- Internal Circulation Alignment
- Gateway Signage
- Mid-block Crossing


Promote commercial development at the intersection of Castor and Aramingo Avenues that is dense, walkable, and mixed-use
Five Below
Walmart
Sonic
Lowe's
Wheatsheaf Lane
Frankford Creek
Xfinity
Wawa
Wawa
PennDOT is working with the BID for gateway signage at Wheatsheaf Lane
Butler Street
Event programing and parking
Event programing and parking
Rail R.O.W.
Castor Avenue
Parking Garage (brownfield site)
Movie Theater
New Industrial Park
Frankford Creek Greenway
Kicks USA
Dollar Tree
Boston Market
Sleepy's
Hess
Monro
Wendy's
KFC
Sit-down Restaurant
Two story Retail
Shop Rite
Rite Aid
Franco Tire Sales
Gaul Street
Extend Belgrade Street
Home Depot
Target
Event programing and parking
Strike Cedar Street to create more efficient parcel layout
Belgrade Street
Castor Avenue will receive green street treatments
Thompson Street
Edgemont Street
Richmond Street
Salmon Street
Cemetery
Plant street trees along Tioga Street between the residential areas and the recreation center

Aramingo Avenue Shopping District

Example Application of Stormwater Management Practices (SMP)

PWD and Impact Services prepared an SMP Strategic Plan because the shopping district "presents a remarkable opportunity to spearhead green stormwater infrastructure in Philadelphia...given the large amount of stormwater runoff from the abundance of impervious cover." The plan details how sections of excess asphalt could be transformed into productive stormwater management landscapes. The River Wards District Plan follows PWD's recommendations and applies many of the approaches described in the Stormwater Management Strategic Plan in the illustrative drawings below.



Streetwall of Aramingo Avenue

In general, buildings on the west side of Aramingo Avenue form a more consistent street wall than those on the east side.

Given existing street frontage conditions, the east side of Aramingo has greater opportunity to apply a new stormwater credit policy that would allow joint use private and public drainage areas in order to manage the maximum amount of water possible.

- Building setback line
- Combined right-of-way and setback area
- Public right-of-way (22% of the land in the focus area is public right-of-way)
- East side of Aramingo Ave
- West side of Aramingo Ave

SCENARIO 1: Least Disturbance

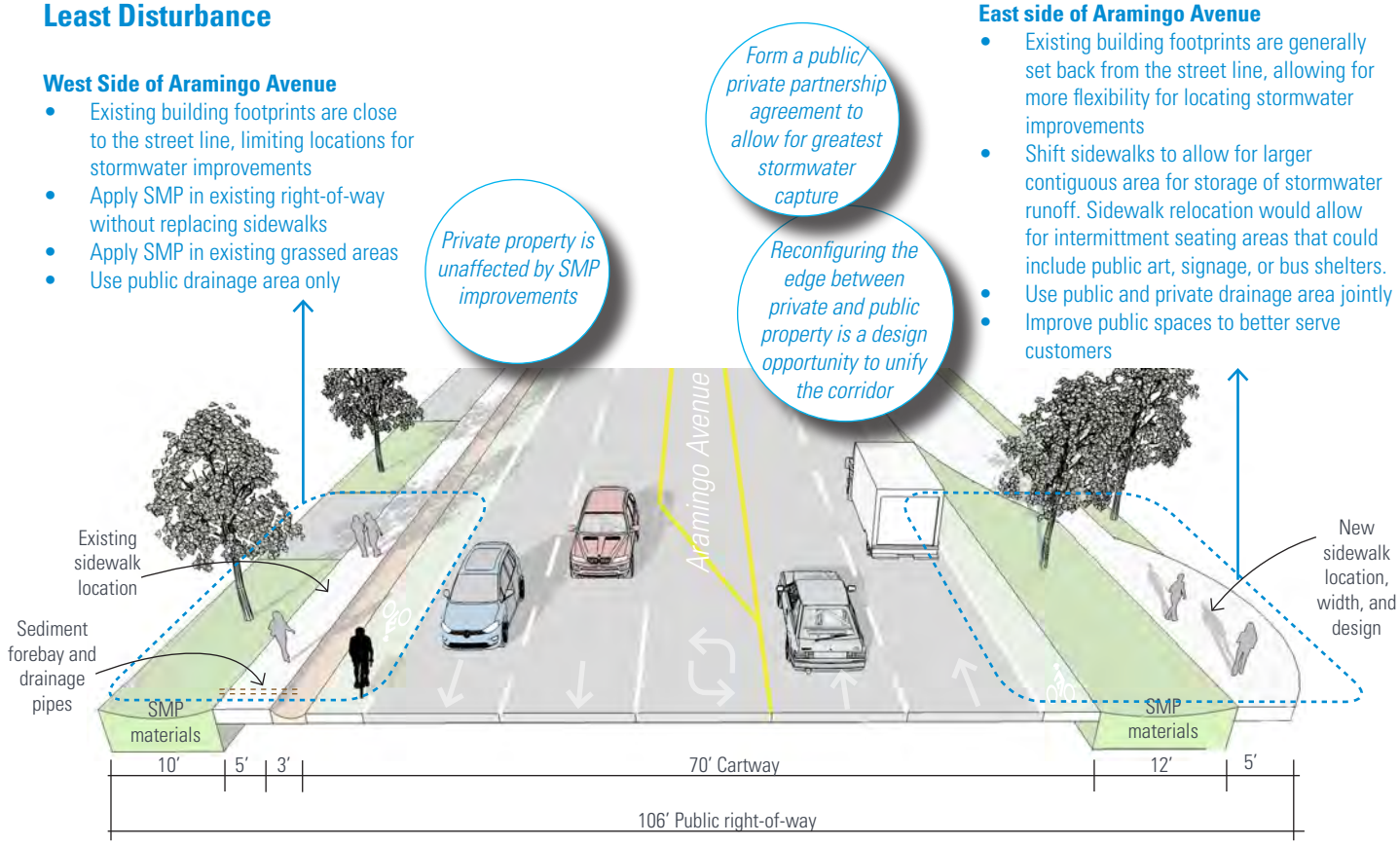
West Side of Aramingo Avenue

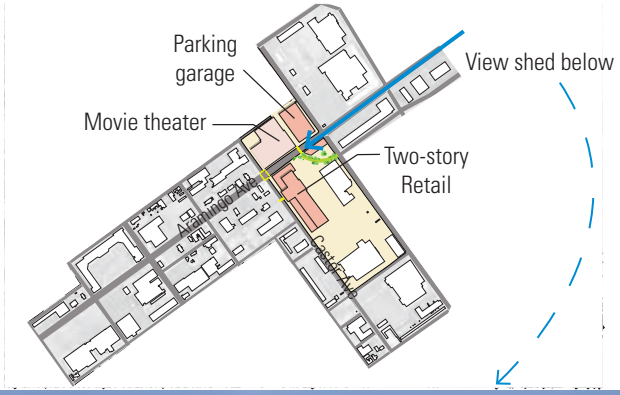
- Existing building footprints are close to the street line, limiting locations for stormwater improvements
- Apply SMP in existing right-of-way without replacing sidewalks
- Apply SMP in existing grassed areas
- Use public drainage area only

SCENARIO 2: Maximum Capacity

East side of Aramingo Avenue

- Existing building footprints are generally set back from the street line, allowing for more flexibility for locating stormwater improvements
- Shift sidewalks to allow for larger contiguous area for storage of stormwater runoff. Sidewalk relocation would allow for intermittment seating areas that could include public art, signage, or bus shelters.
- Use public and private drainage area jointly
- Improve public spaces to better serve customers





Future Vision of Aramingo Town Center

Future vision of Aramingo Town Center at Aramingo and Castor Avenues. View looking south down Aramingo Avenue.

Proposed stormwater improvements at Aramingo Avenue and East Westmoreland Street

Existing conditions east side of Aramingo Avenue

Source: Aramingo Avenue Shopping District Stormwater Management Strategic Plan (2013)

FOCUS AREA >

Port Richmond Village

A convergence of commercial, cultural, and recreational activities

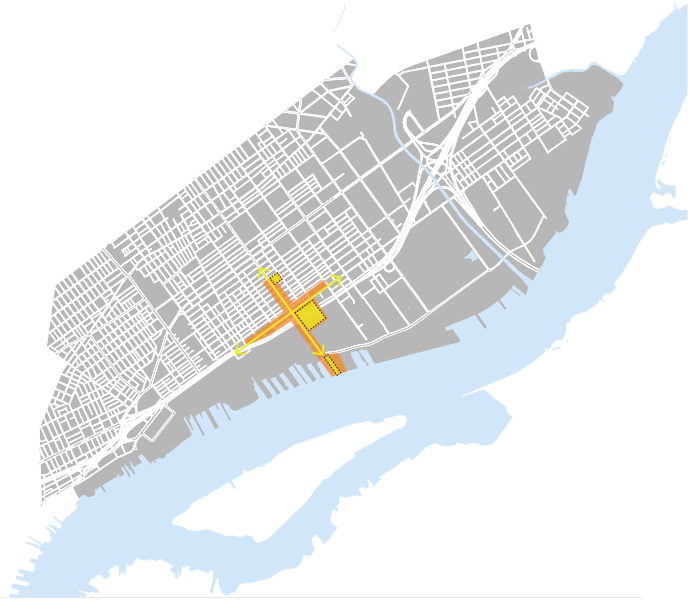
Focus Area Goals

> Leverage investment in large infrastructure projects to improve community facilities

> Reinforce and strengthen a pedestrian-oriented streetscape on Richmond Street and Allegheny Avenue

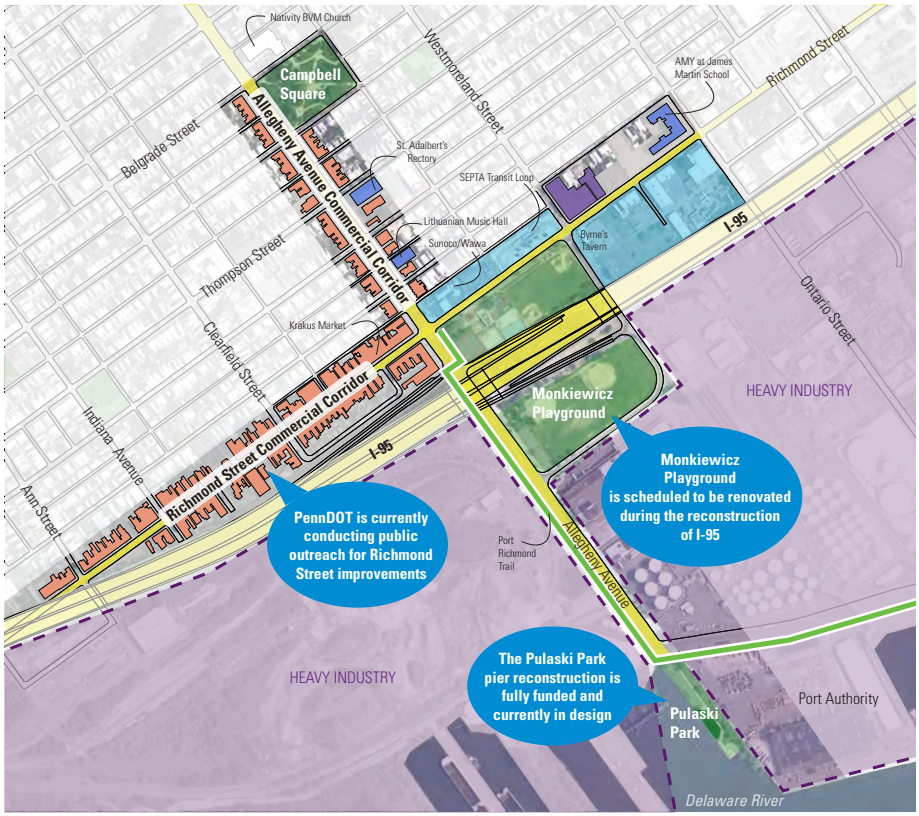
> Enhance connections to community facilites

> Celebrate Port Richmond's multicultural heritage to strengthen neighborhood identity and facilitate economic development



The Port Richmond neighborhood is well known for its rich international traditions and identity. In particular, there is a large concentration of residents with Eastern European ancestry. Richmond Street and Allegheny Avenue are the primary corridors for businesses and institutions that serve this population. Port Richmond Village is a planning initiative aimed to bolster the community through economic development and placemaking projects that will create a unique multicultural destination within the Philadelphia region.

Port Richmond Village



LEGEND

- Mixed-Use, Pedestrian-Oriented Uses
- Institutional Uses
- Industrial Uses
- Parks and Open Space
- Opportunity Areas
- Port Richmond Trail

ALLEGHENY AVENUE

Allegheny Avenue is a wide east-west thoroughfare that bisects the Port Richmond neighborhood and connects it to the Delaware River. West of I-95, it serves as the primary commercial/cultural corridor for the neighborhood and has a grand scale, framed by generous sidewalks fronted by large, ornate religious and cultural buildings. Here, approximately half of the street right-of-way is dedicated to sidewalks. East of I-95, Allegheny Avenue takes on a vastly different character. Industrial uses dominate the landscape and truck traffic is heavy, which creates a psychological barrier between the neighborhood and Pulaski Park. This is further exacerbated by the physical barrier created by the presence of I-95. The recent construction of the Port Richmond Trail along Allegheny and Delaware Avenues in this area has helped to increase pedestrian safety.

RICHMOND STREET

Richmond Street is a narrow north-south thoroughfare flanked by buildings that create an intimately scaled street. Traditional mixed-use buildings with ground-floor commercial uses are prevalent south of Allegheny Avenue. This area is locally known for its Polish-owned and operated businesses. North of Allegheny Avenue, the character of Richmond Street stands in stark contrast. Uses in this area are more varied and consist of an auto-oriented convenience store, gas station, recreation center, SEPTA Transit Loop, industrial uses, rowhomes, and school. The quality of the pedestrian environment is significantly less than the area to the south.

> Philadelphia's Sister City: Toruń, Poland

In our bicentennial year of 1976, the City of Philadelphia established a "sister city" relationship with the City of Toruń, Poland. This relationship was formalized by a Philadelphia City Council resolution, which acknowledged the contributions of Toruń's most famous son, astronomer Mikolaj Kopernik (Nicolaus Copernicus), and Polish-American generals Thaddeus Kosciuszko and Casimir Pulaski. This sister city relationship was fostered by former 6th District Councilperson Joseph L. Zazyczny, himself a Polish-American from the River Wards. Torun's primary waterfront street has since been renamed Bulwar Filadelfijski, Polish for "Philadelphia Boulevard." Honoring Toruń, Poland within the theme of Port Richmond Village would be a noble gesture towards Philadelphia's Sister City.

> FUTURE VISION: Extending the Urban Fabric

Many opportunities exist to expand the pedestrian-oriented urban fabric of Port Richmond Village east along Allegheny Avenue and north along Richmond Street. This transformation will have the benefit of enhancing aesthetic appeal and better connecting residents and visitors to community facilities such as Pulaski Park at the waterfront, Monkiewicz Playground, Alternative Middle Years (A.M.Y.) at James Martin School, the SEPTA Transit Loop, businesses, and other employers.

PLANNING GOALS

Promote Economic Development

1 Introduce low-intensity industrial and commercial uses on the east side of Richmond Street between Westmoreland and Ontario Streets

Upgrade Public Transportation Facilities

2 Reconstruct the SEPTA Transit Loop at Westmoreland Street with a focus on the following improvements:

- ADA accessibility
- Trolley modernization
- Enhanced pedestrian environment on Richmond Street
- Better connections from residential blocks to the rear
- Additional passenger amenities

2 Opportunity area for residential and commercial parking beneath I-95

Improve Pedestrian Environment Adjacent to Community Facilities

3 As part of the reconstruction of Monkiewicz Park, provide the following pedestrian amenities:

- A connection beneath I-95 to unite the two halves of Monkiewicz Playground
- A wide promenade with seating and tree canopy along Richmond Street
- An entrance sign to better identify the playground

4 Improve landscaping and signage on the northern corners

5 Initiate a streetscape and schoolyard greening effort at the AMY at James Martin School

6 Enhance Port Richmond Trail riverfront connection on Allegheny Avenue with street trees, additional landscaping, stormwater improvements, attractive fencing, and public art

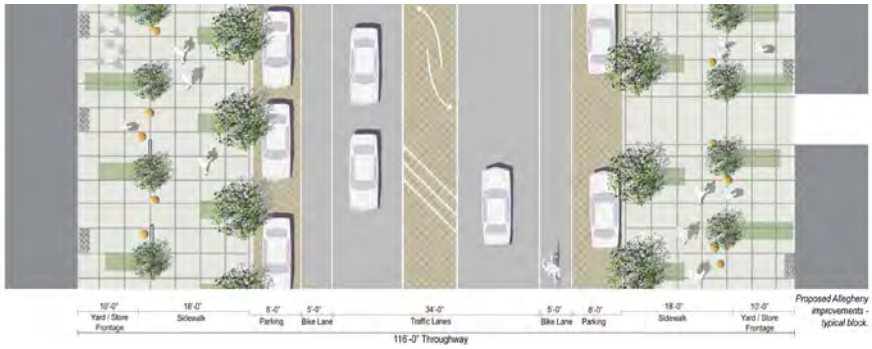
Port Richmond Village

PULASKI DAY PARADE TO CELEBRATE IMMIGRATION HISTORY

Port Richmond Village's diverse multicultural heritage and immigrant history can be embraced and celebrated by attracting seasonal events to the neighborhood. One major opportunity is the relocation of Philadelphia's Pulaski Day parade to Allegheny Avenue. The ceremonial scale of the street is very appropriate for this event and the neighborhood's deep Polish roots make the neighborhood a very appropriate location. Internationally themed signage and branding, along with streetscape improvements such as landscaping and lighting, will create an inviting environment for residents and visitors.

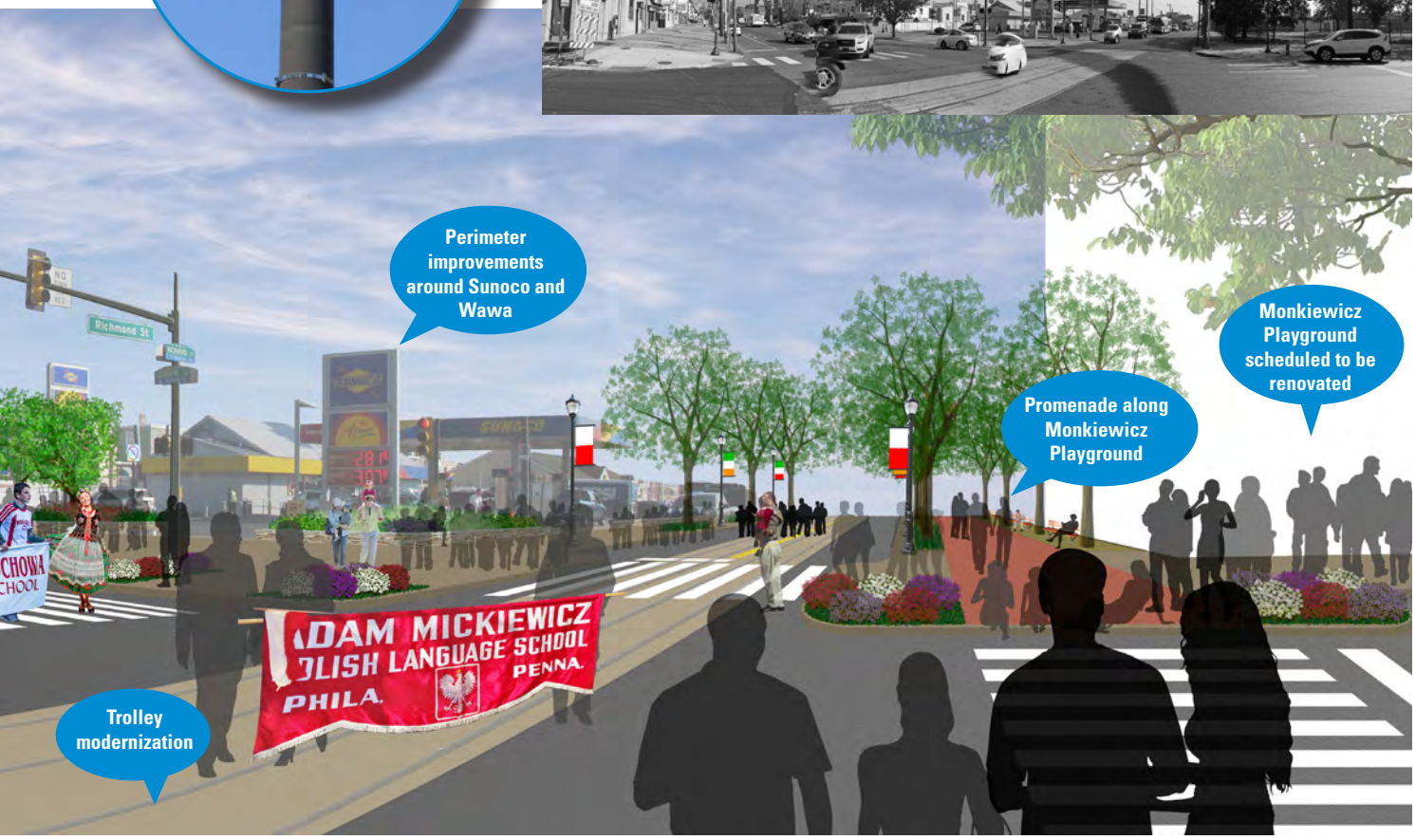
STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

West of I-95, the sidewalks of Allegheny Avenue are generally 28 feet wide and capable of handling a transformative streetscape project that incorporates attractive paving, generous amounts of landscaping, lighting, multicultural branding elements, historic markers, and stormwater management improvements.



Proposed cross section from Kensington & Allegheny Streetscape Plan

Existing conditions on Allegheny Avenue



> CASE STUDY: Project Row Houses, Houston, TX

Project Row Houses (PRH) is a community-based arts and culture nonprofit organization in one of Houston's oldest African American neighborhoods. Founded by local artists in 1993, PRH is a unique experiment in activating the intersections between art, historic preservation, affordable and innovative housing, community relations and development, neighborhood revitalization, and human empowerment.

One of the primary features of PRH is the utilization of historic row houses as a canvas for a rotating group of local artists. Such a model would be ideal for a neighborhood such as Port Richmond, where there is a strong desire to channel multicultural identity and neighborhood history into arts, culture, placemaking, and community development.

FOCUS AREA >

Lehigh Avenue Corridor

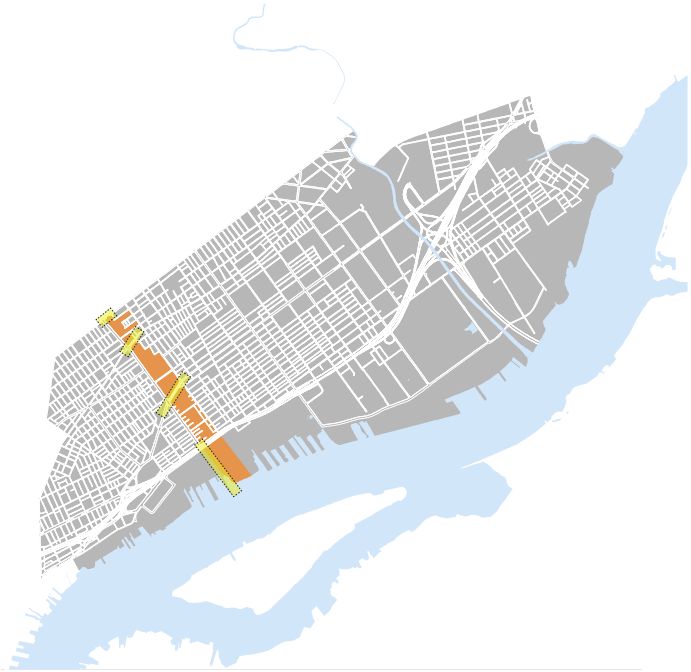
Restoring neighborhood connections

Focus Area Goals

> Short Term
Increase pedestrian safety around the viaduct, especially at key intersections with commercial corridors

> Medium Term
Create or improve public spaces near corridor intersections to increase neighborhood identity along the viaduct

> Long Term
Transform sections of the viaduct structure and nearby waterfront piers into publicly accessible spaces



This focus area defines the Lehigh Avenue corridor as the stretch of Lehigh Avenue from the Market-Frankford Line (MFL) to the Delaware River waterfront and includes the viaduct structure itself, the parallel section of Somerset Street, and parts of the former coal piers at the waterfront.

The primary focus of the analysis is at street level, with particular attention given to the underpass spaces. Urban design and streetscape improvements are concentrated at key intersections because their benefits can affect adjacent neighborhoods and visitors from other sections of the city alike.

Given the complexity of these spaces in terms of ownership, elevational differences, and land uses, the focus area recommendations are organized into short-, medium-, and long-term goals. All phases strive to reduce the barrier effect of a large piece of infrastructure on nearby communities.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Lehigh Avenue Corridor

Underpass Conditions

1 Viaduct passes under the MFL structure at Kensington Avenue

4 Lengthy underpass at Aramingo Avenue

2 Two viaduct structures at Emerald Street

5 I-95 underpass at Lehigh Avenue

The viaduct underpasses were the primary safety concern of community members at the River Wards 2nd public meeting

The second greatest safety concern was the Somerset Street access points on to the viaduct structure

Safety Improvement "Tool Set"

These are standard improvements that can be applied within the public street right-of-way at the key intersections and underpasses in order to increase pedestrian safety.

Separated Bike Lanes

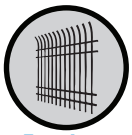
The Lehigh Avenue bike lanes could be separated at busy intersections.

Lighting

Viaduct and interstate underpasses need pedestrian lighting; it could function as public art as well.

Curb Extensions and Crosswalks

Intersections flanking viaduct underpasses need curb extensions and crosswalks to increase pedestrian visibility to drivers.



Fencing

Secure fencing is needed in multiple locations where trespassing is occurring on the viaduct embankment.

> CASE STUDY: Race Street Connector, Philadelphia, PA

Long underpasses present their own distinct challenges, especially in regard to adequate lighting to help people feel secure. However, designing a sense of openness has been made easier with the advent of modern LED lighting systems. A great example of creative use of new lighting technology is the Race Street connector beneath I-95 in Old City. The designers approached the lighting as art, with installations featuring changing color patterns and a live feed of images of the Delaware River. Large-scale directional signage announces the River and an art installation draws people through the underpass.

FUTURE VISION

Lehigh Avenue Corridor

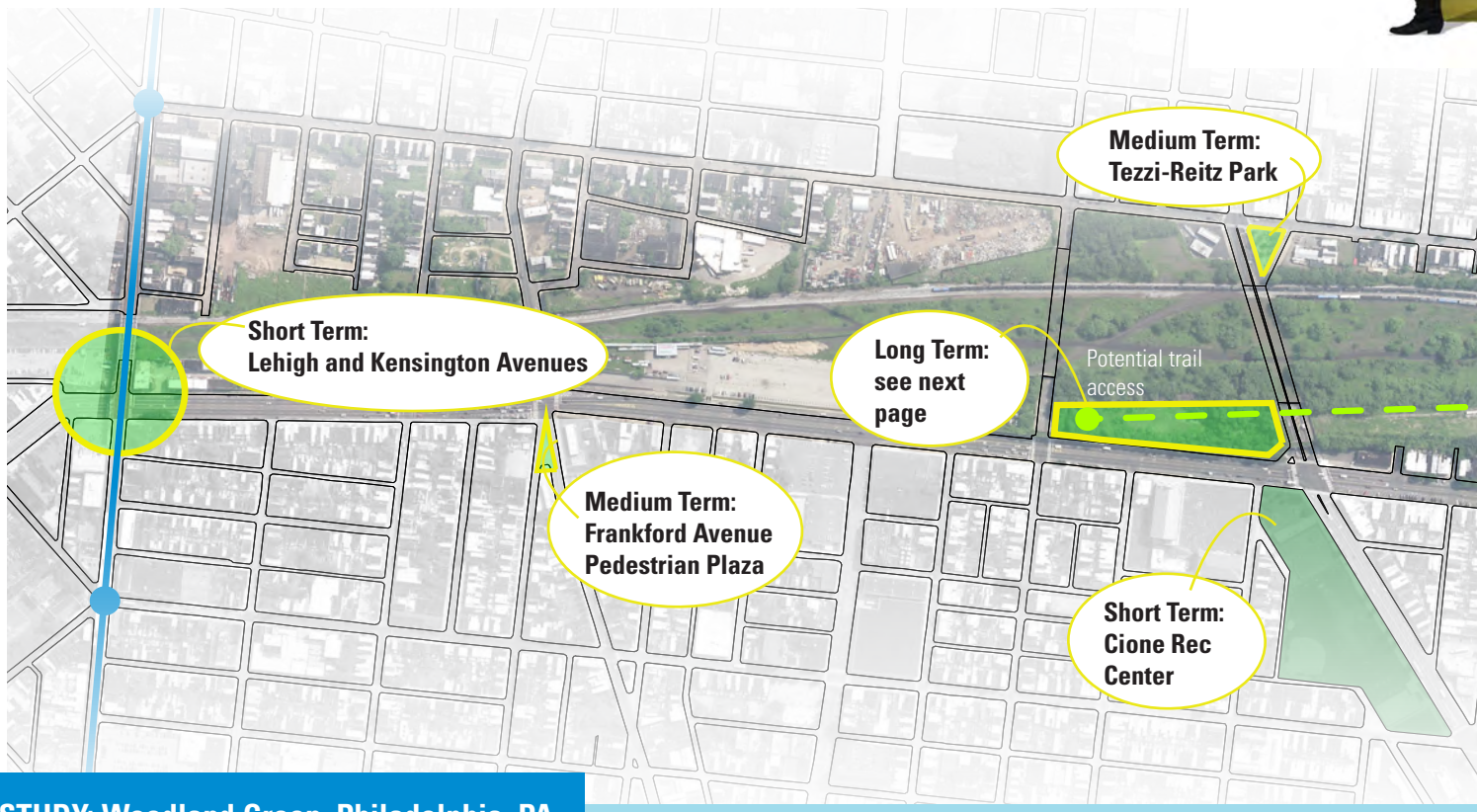
Short Term: Increase pedestrian safety around the viaduct, especially at key intersections with commercial corridors

- Restripe Lehigh Avenue to maximize the cartway for all modes and refresh crosswalk paint
- Install signage in order to unify corridors that are divided by the viaduct
- Add landscaping elements such as street trees, planters, and green stormwater infrastructure
- Increase safety around the viaduct structure by restricting access to it from Somerset Avenue
- Renovate the grounds and play equipment at Cione Recreation Center to create a welcoming street frontage [see RENEW, p. 50]
- Implement Complete Streets (e.g., safety and traffic calming measures) improvements along Lehigh Avenue [see CONNECT, p. 45]

Existing conditions at Lehigh and Kensington Avenues

At Kensington, Frankford, and Aramingo Avenues:

- Clean, paint, and light viaduct underpasses
- Install curb extensions to aid pedestrian crossing



> CASE STUDY: Woodland Green, Philadelphia, PA

Woodland Green is a triangular-shaped, pedestrian plaza located at 42nd Street and Woodland Avenue in University City that illustrates how the excessive cartway at Frankford and Lehigh Avenues could be transformed. The once underutilized space is now filled with tables, chairs, and native plantings for stormwater management. University City District in partnership with the Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities, the Department of Commerce, the Streets Department, SEPTA, the University of the Sciences, and ThinkGreen have turned the previously temporary plaza into a permanent public space.

Source: http://www.universitycity.org/woodland-green-0

Short-term improvements at Lehigh and Kensington Avenues

Medium Term: Create or improve public spaces near corridor intersections to increase neighborhood identity along the viaduct

Existing Conditions at Tezzi-Reitz Veterans Memorial Park

- Showcase and interpret industrial heritage through public art installations and signage
- Transform the excess cartway on Frankford Avenue at the intersection with Lehigh Avenue into a pedestrian plaza [see RENEW, p. 58]
- Redesign the Tezzi-Reitz Veterans Memorial Park and incorporate a bus shelter, stormwater management, landscaping, and interpretative signage [see RENEW, p. 58]
- Install separated bike lanes along Lehigh Avenue to increase bicycle safety [see CONNECT, p. 45]

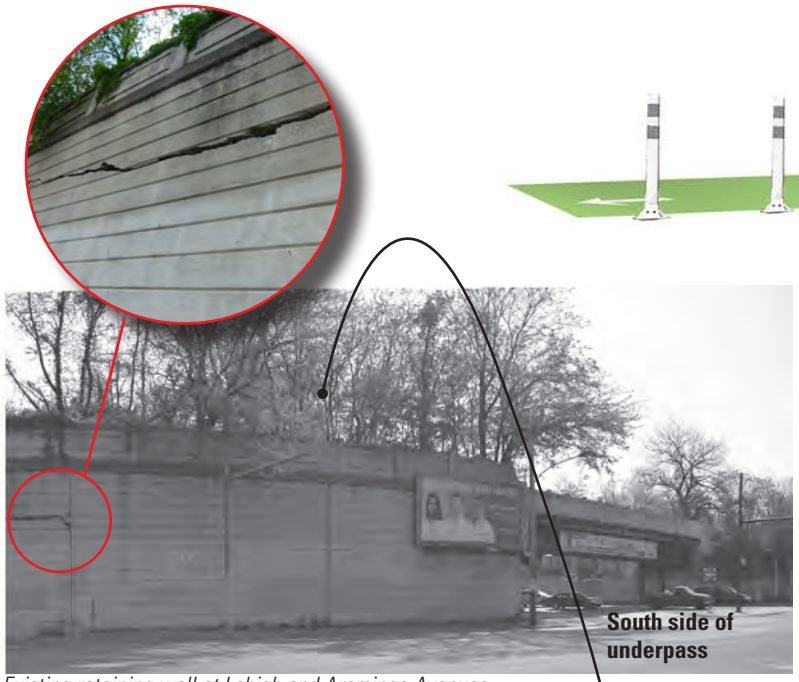
FUTURE VISION

Lehigh Avenue Corridor

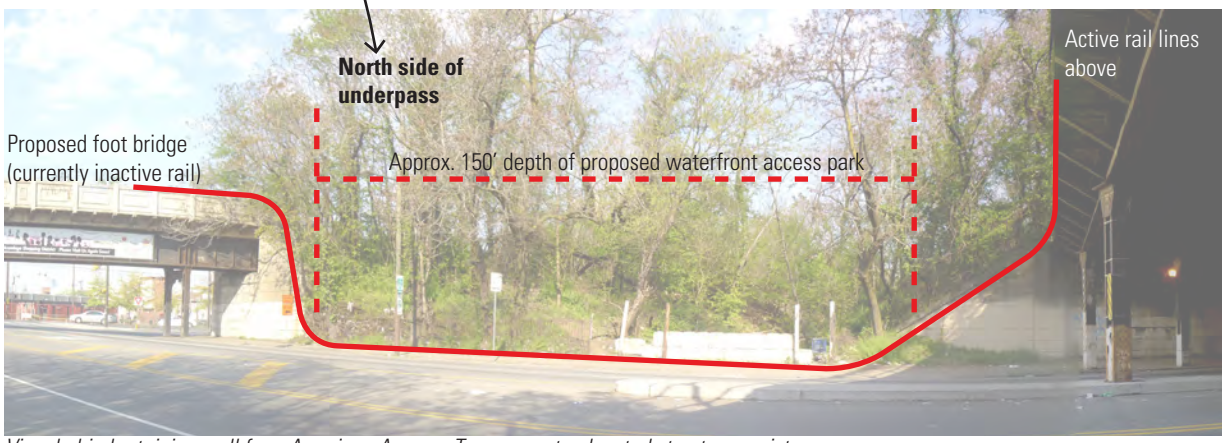
Long Term: Transform sections of the viaduct structure and nearby waterfront piers into publicly accessible spaces

- Bring more commercial and recreational activity to Lehigh Avenue by rezoning small, underutilized industrial parcels. Maintain the Industrial Protection Areas along the waterfront
- Create a pocket park along Lehigh Avenue by removing the section of deteriorated viaduct wall between Emerald Street and Frankford Avenue
- Encourage any redevelopment of the Anderson and Conrail site to provide a waterfront setback for a recreational trail
- Create waterfront access and linkages to recreation activities by connecting the Lehigh Corridor to Richmond Street and Richmond Street to the Delaware Waterfront [see RENEW, p. 48]

Proposed Waterfront Access Park, view from Lehigh Avenue with retaining wall removed



Existing retaining wall at Lehigh and Aramingo Avenues



View behind retaining wall from Aramingo Avenue. Two separate elevated structures exist.

> PIDC Industrial Market Study Report

As part of PIDC's Industrial Market Study Report (September 2010), two key locations were identified as potential demonstration case studies to highlight how underutilized industrial locations might be better positioned for industrial development. These concepts are not endorsed by the owners of each parcel.

The Port Richmond railyard site includes 122 acres along the Delaware River in the River Wards District. It includes Conrail lands and adjacent vacant properties, and is one of the largest industrial development sites in the city. It could potentially support 1.1 million square feet of manufacturing, warehouse/distribution, and flex space. This site could potentially accommodate 2,300 new jobs, $99 million annually in payroll, and nearly $10 million annually in tax revenue to the city. The concept plan also looks to develop waterfront trails and open space linking this area to the rest of the Central Delaware.

Potential development rendered plan included in PIDC's report

MAKING IT HAPPEN

View of rail right-of-way from Rohm and Haas site

90 | Implementing the District Plan
91 | Priority Recommendations
94 | Proposed Land Use and Zoning

Implementing the District Plan

> Public Process for Zoning Map Revisions

After the River Wards District Plan is adopted by the PCPC, civic engagement will continue to ensure that the zoning recommendations in this plan are appropriate and implemented.

The PCPC will use the district plan's future land use map and zoning recommendations to prepare draft zoning maps and ordinances. After discussion with the Steering Committee and input from public meetings, the PCPC will make revisions to the draft maps and ordinances and then submit final versions to City Council for introduction as a bill.

Both the PCPC and City Council will host public hearings to discuss the zoning legislation. If the bills pass Council, they will go to the mayor for approval. After the bill is enacted into law with the mayor's signature, the PCPC will change the official city zoning maps to reflect the new revisions.

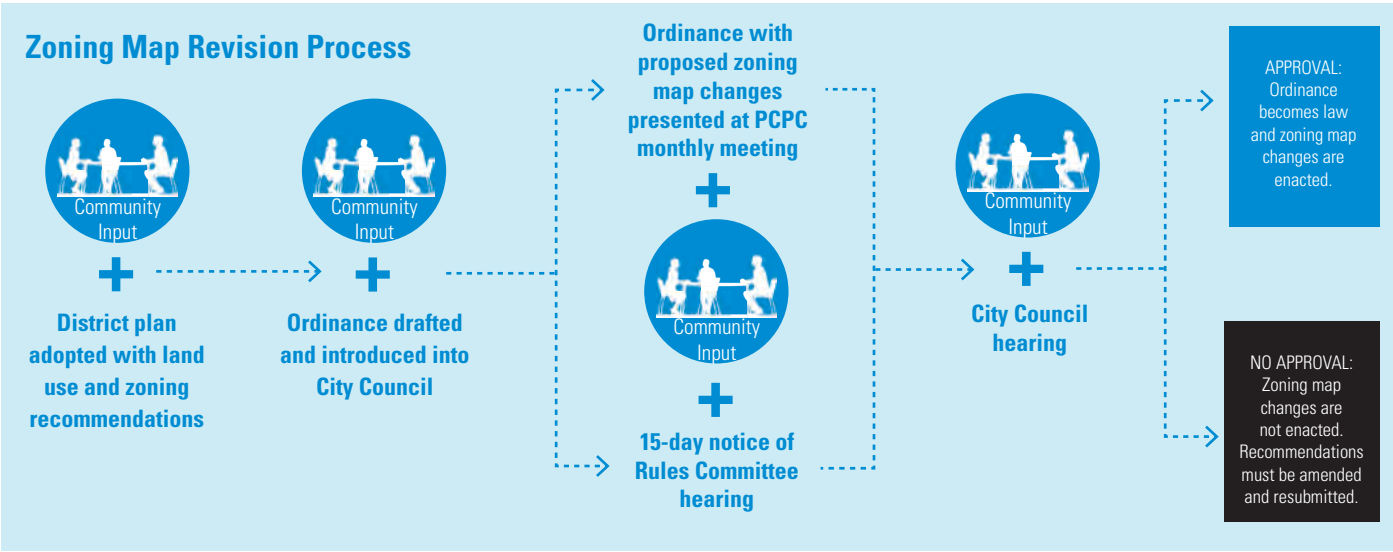
> Making Proactive Investments with the City's Capital Program

The Capital Program is the City's six-year investment strategy for public improvements, infrastructure, and facilities. The first year of the six-year program is known as the Capital Budget. Both the Capital Budget and Capital Program are introduced by City Council as ordinances. Once the Capital Program is approved by City Council and signed by the mayor, the City is permitted to spend funds on public improvements.

The Capital Program plays an important role in strategic planning for city government. It can be an effective tool for aligning scarce resources with the needs of Philadelphia's diverse population and its use of City facilities, and can aid in decision-making about the future of those facilities. In recent years, however, without the benefit of an up-to-date comprehensive plan, the Capital Program has served as a reactive mechanism for dealing with deferred maintenance and has had little influence on the planning of facilities based on current and future needs.

The City's last comprehensive look at public facilities was in 1960. That analysis did not anticipate the significant population decline that took place between 1960 and 2000, and created a legacy of public facilities and infrastructure built for a much larger 1960s-era population. Recent population growth in Philadelphia has not altered that legacy significantly, but with a new comprehensive plan, *Philadelphia2035*, the City now has the means to make proactive investment decisions. The PCPC, the Department of Public Property, and the Department of Finance—the agencies most involved in preparing the Capital Budget and Program—can use the recommendations of *Philadelphia2035* as a framework for future capital projects.

Each district plan identifies opportunities for improved delivery of city services through new, renovated, and/or consolidated public facilities. The annual Capital Program process, coordinated by the PCPC, will help implement recommendations for public facilities contained in the district plans. Additionally, by Executive Order in summer 2011, Mayor Nutter established the Mayor's Task Force on City Facilities. Its charge is to develop specific recommendations for improving the financial efficacy of and delivery of services by the City's vast inventory of owned and leased facilities. The PCPC is a member of the task force and will ensure that its recommendations align with those of *Philadelphia2035*.



Priority Recommendations

> THRIVE

RW 10 Strengthen Aramingo Avenue as a competitive regional shopping center.

RW 11 Preserve industrial zoning in areas with active industrial users and transportation access.

RW 14 Develop a scrap yard and recycling facility strategic plan that addresses zoning, enforcement, safety, truck access, site suitability, buffering between adjacent land uses, and short dumping in the Kensington, Port Richmond, and Bridesburg neighborhoods (i.e., areas along Somerset Street).

> CONNECT

RW 17 Improve Route 15 trolley service, in conjunction with light rail fleet modernization and I-95 reconstruction.

RW 23 Implement high priority bicycle infrastructure projects, as identified in the *2012 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan*.

RW 26 Reduce truck traffic and idling on neighborhood streets by diverting trucks to special routes and staging areas.

> RENEW

RW 29 Program City capital funds to leverage other resources for improvements to park and recreation facilities.

RW 42 Activate the underpasses of the Lehigh Viaduct at key intersections to improve pedestrian safety: Kensington, Frankford, and Aramingo Avenue.

RW 47 Improve the safety, usability, and appearance of Front Street and Kensington Avenue, underneath the Market-Frankford Line.

In addition to the zoning map revision process, implementation efforts include advancing priority recommendations contained within the district plan. The PCPC will coordinate with relevant agencies and organizations and help to facilitate the next steps. The recommendations listed are identified as priorities because of factors such as:

- master plans or feasibility studies indicate need and strong public support,
- zoning map revisions will facilitate development,
- availability of resources, and
- multiphase planning or development processes require initial studies.

The priority recommendations of the district plans support the 73 objectives of the ***Citywide Vision*** (see Appendix for the complete list). The PCPC is measuring progress on citywide objectives through an annual progress report for *Philadelphia2035,* which can be found at www.phila2035.org.

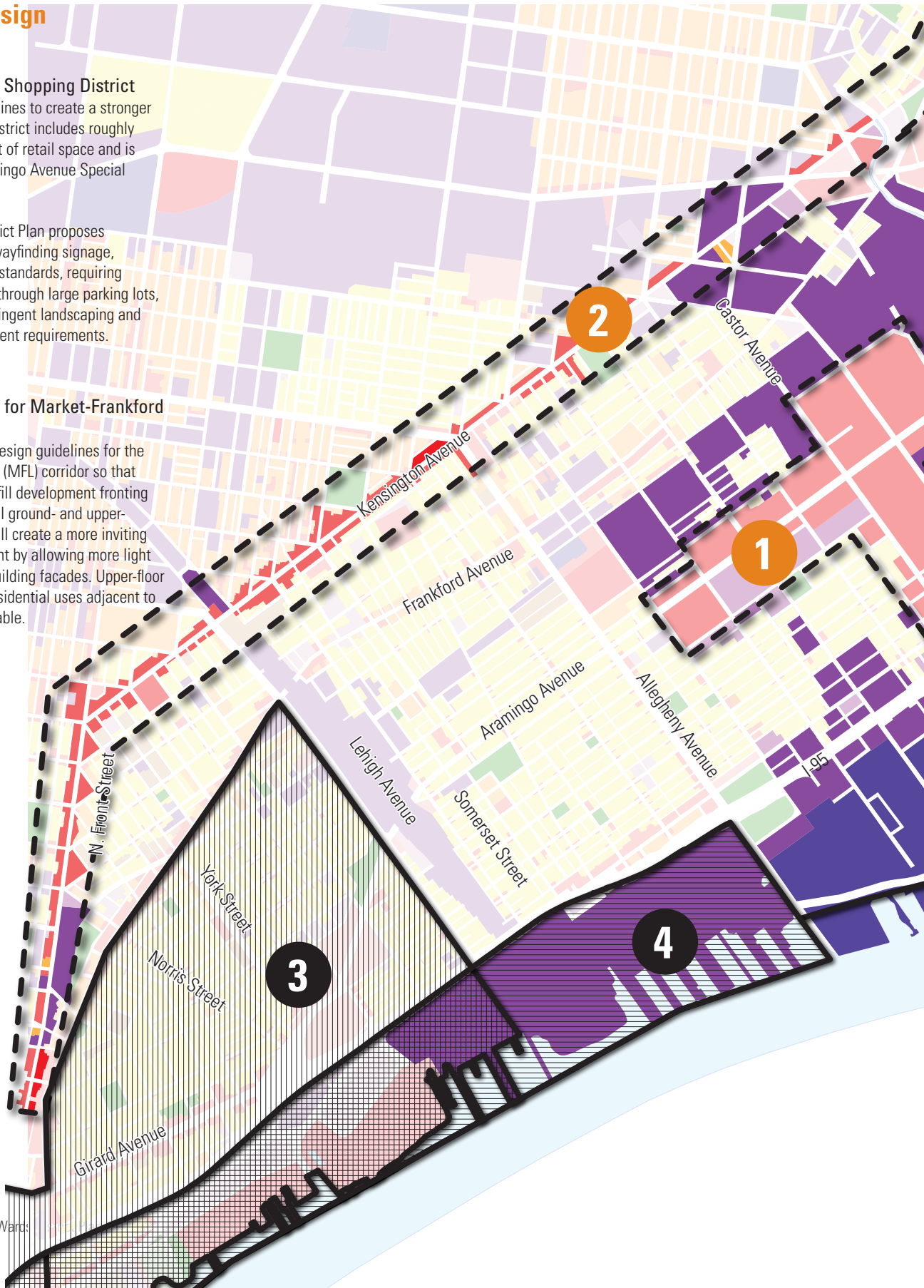
Proposed Design Guidelines and Existing Zoning

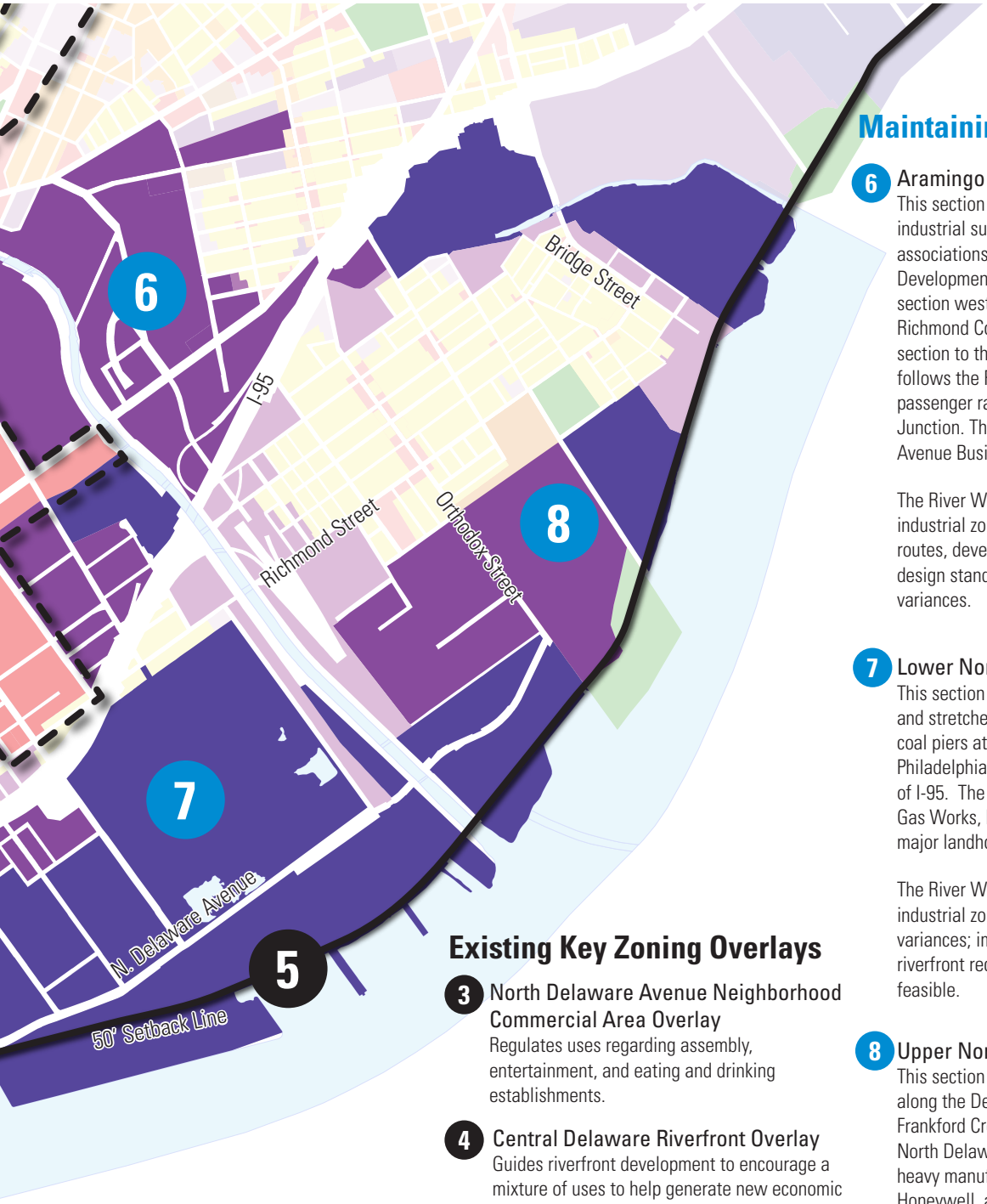
Proposed Design Guidelines

1 Aramingo Avenue Shopping District
Develop design guidelines to create a stronger sense of place. The district includes roughly 1.6 million square feet of retail space and is managed by the Aramingo Avenue Special Services District.

The River Wards District Plan proposes developing common wayfinding signage, creating basic design standards, requiring pedestrian pathways through large parking lots, and applying more stringent landscaping and stormwater management requirements.

2 Building Setbacks for Market-Frankford Line Corridor
Develop form-based design guidelines for the Market-Frankford Line (MFL) corridor so that redevelopment and infill development fronting the MFL has additional ground- and upper-floor setbacks. This will create a more inviting pedestrian environment by allowing more light onto sidewalks and building facades. Upper-floor setbacks will make residential uses adjacent to the MFL more marketable.





Existing Key Zoning Overlays

3 North Delaware Avenue Neighborhood Commercial Area Overlay
Regulates uses regarding assembly, entertainment, and eating and drinking establishments.

4 Central Delaware Riverfront Overlay
Guides riverfront development to encourage a mixture of uses to help generate new economic growth and recreational opportunities.

5 Delaware River Conservation Overlay
Promotes and protects a system of parks and trails along the Delaware River Greenway by requiring a fifty foot buffer along the western bank of the Delaware River.

Maintaining Industrial Zones

6 Aramingo Industrial Area
This section includes two primarily light-industrial sub-districts, managed by business associations. The Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise (PRIDE) manages a section west of Aramingo Avenue, while the Richmond Corridor Association manages a section to the east. The other major section follows the Frankford Creek and the freight and passenger rail lines running through Frankford Junction. The area surrounds the Aramingo Avenue Business Improvement District.

The River Wards District Plan proposes continued industrial zoning, coordinating truck travel routes, developing common wayfinding and design standards, and opposing residential use variances.

7 Lower North Delaware Industrial Area
This section contains mostly heavy industry and stretches from the old Reading Railroad coal piers at Cumberland Street to the former Philadelphia Coke site at Buckius Street, all east of I-95. The Tioga Marine Terminal, Philadelphia Gas Works, PWD, PECO/Excelon, and Conrail are major landholders.

The River Wards District Plan proposes continued industrial zoning, opposition of residential use variances; improvements for vehicle access, and riverfront recreational trails and access where feasible.

8 Upper North Delaware Industrial Area
This section is partially located in Bridesburg, along the Delaware riverfront and old Frankford Creek with the rest in the Lower North Delaware Planning District. It includes heavy manufacturers Provident Packaging and Honeywell, and the former Rohm and Haas site.

The River Wards District Plan proposes continued industrial zoning to allow these activities to continue to operate, while building the North Delaware Avenue extension and waterfront recreational trail along the Delaware River.

Proposed Land Use

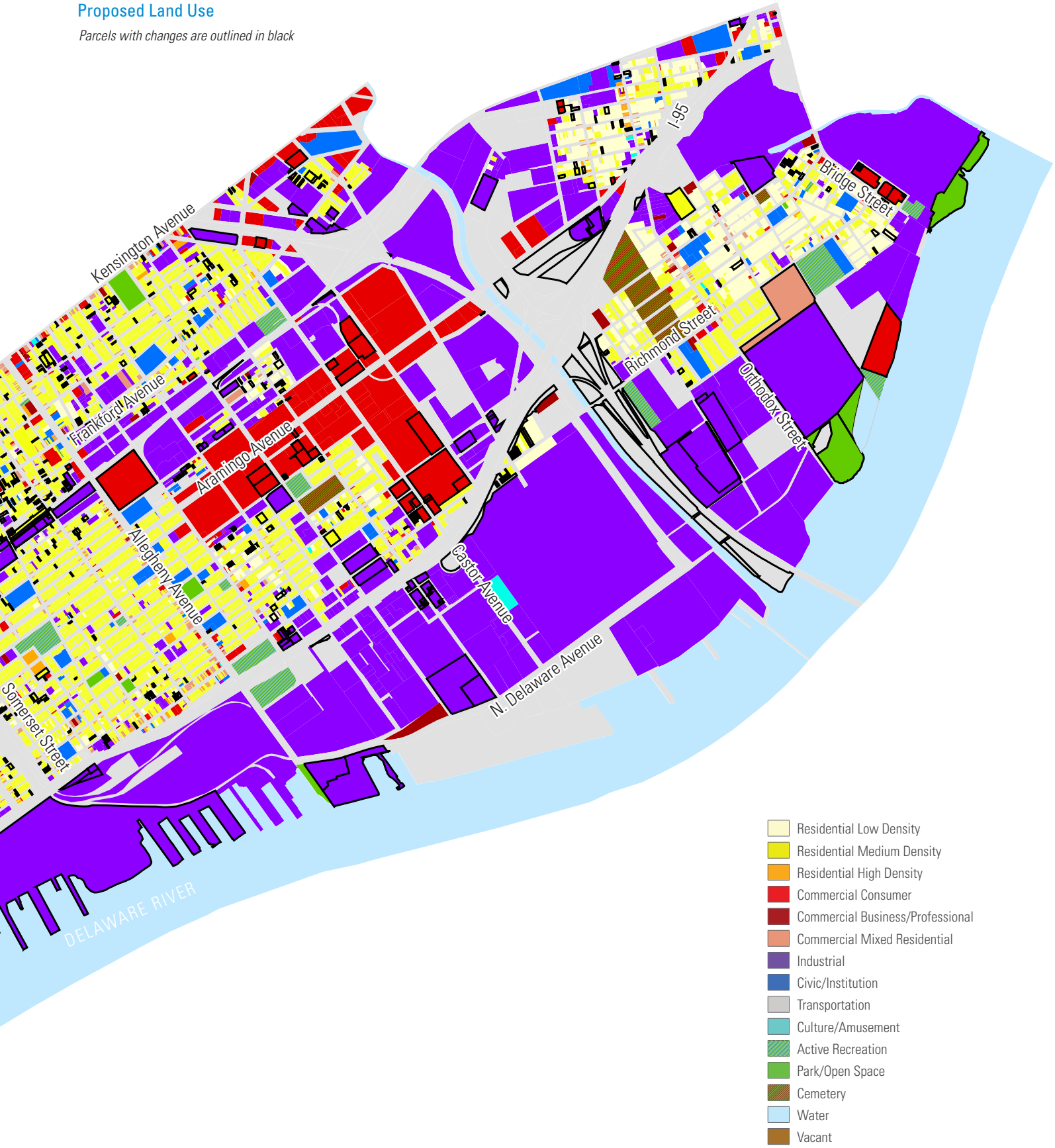
The River Wards District has the opportunity to capitalize both on its long-established residential neighborhoods and strong industrial core. The proposed land use map provides a generalized road map for the appropriate distribution of residential densities, industrial uses, and intensity, and where commercial activity should be concentrated. The land use map is guided by the recommendations of this plan, and leads to the zoning recommendations on the following pages. Other considerations include neighborhood context, guidance from the *Citywide Vision*, existing neighborhood plans, and community feedback.

Major recommendations contained in this land use map include the following:

- Preserve existing single-family housing stock by downzoning primarily single-family blocks;
- Strengthen commercial corridors by appropriately zoning active commercial areas, while allowing obsolete commercial districts to transition to residential land use;
- Reserve industrial land in Kensington, Bridesburg, and Port Richmond for job creation. Accommodate public recreational access adjacent to the Frankford Creek and Delaware River;
- Establish mixed-use industrial districts to encourage reuse of vacant industrial buildings and land in areas no longer suitable for manufacturing;
- Protect land for utilities, industry, transportation, and environmental management.

Proposed Land Use

Parcels with changes are outlined in black



Proposed Zoning

Zoning is the primary tool to regulate land use (use), where a building can locate on a property (area), and building size (bulk). In some areas, the zoning does not match the existing and proposed land use and, therefore, requires *Corrective Zoning*. Other areas are targeted for long-term transition to new uses and development as envisioned by the community through the planning process. Such zoning revisions are referred to as *Zoning to Advance the Plan*.

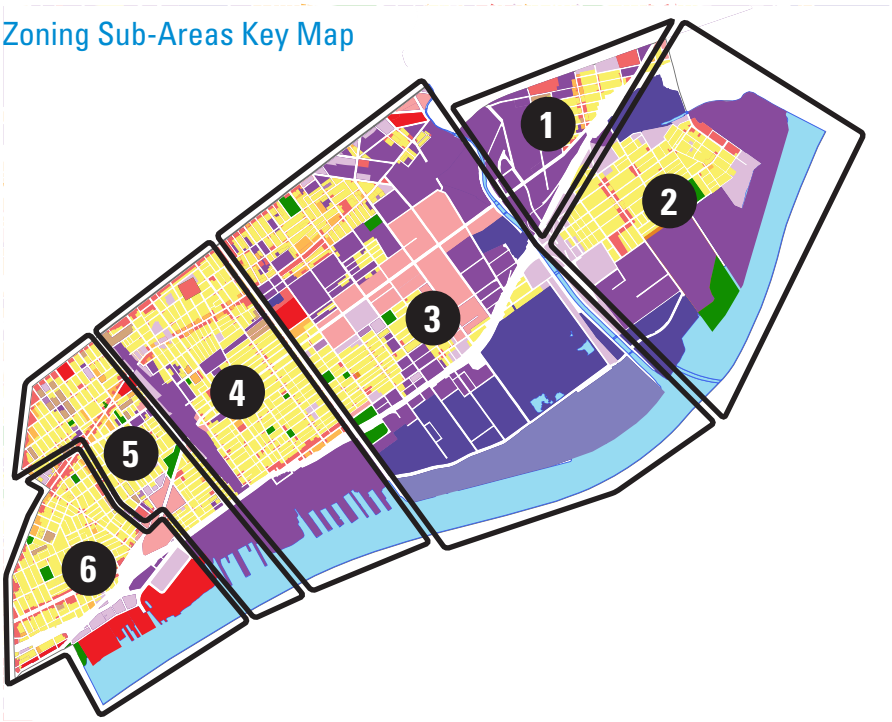
The following zoning recommendations are based on the premise of redeveloping underutilized land and directing development toward transit nodes and commercial corridors and away from single-family neighborhoods. This is done with the intention of preserving existing neighborhood character, strengthening commercial corridors, and increasing transit ridership.

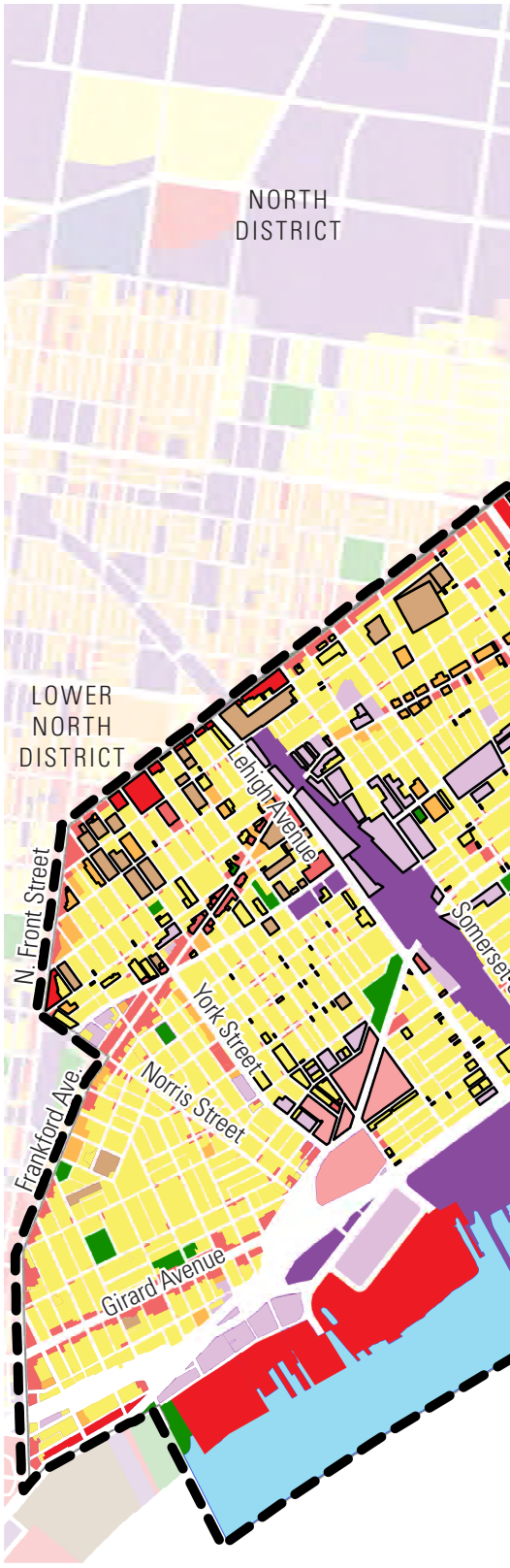
Detailed maps of **Zoning Sub-Areas** begin on page 98.

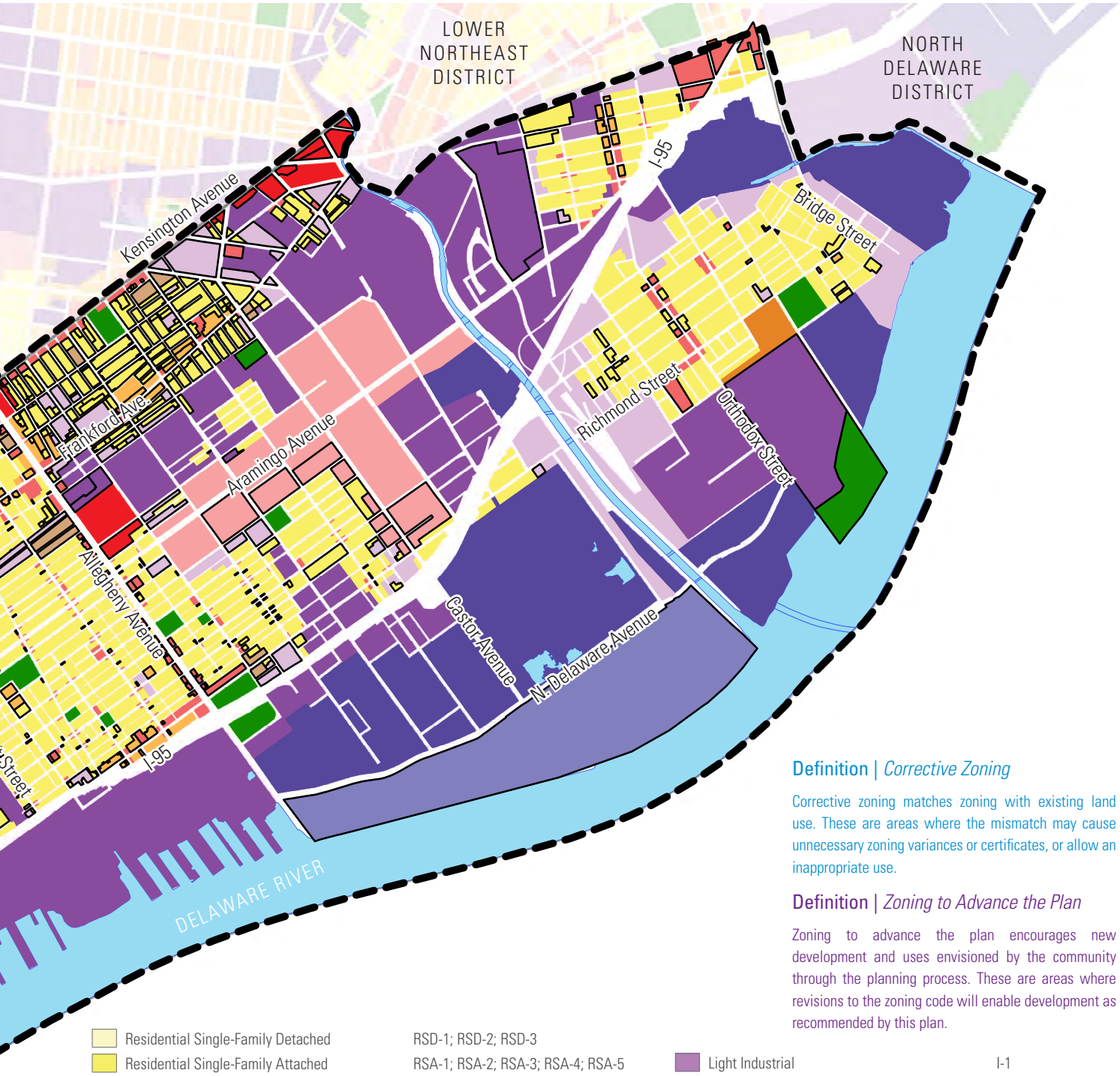
Zoning Sub-Areas

1. Frankford Valley
2. Bridesburg
3. Harrowgate and Aramingo Shopping Center
4. Kensington and Port Richmond
5. East Kensington and Olde Richmond
6. Fishtown

Zoning Sub-Areas Key Map







Definition | *Corrective Zoning*

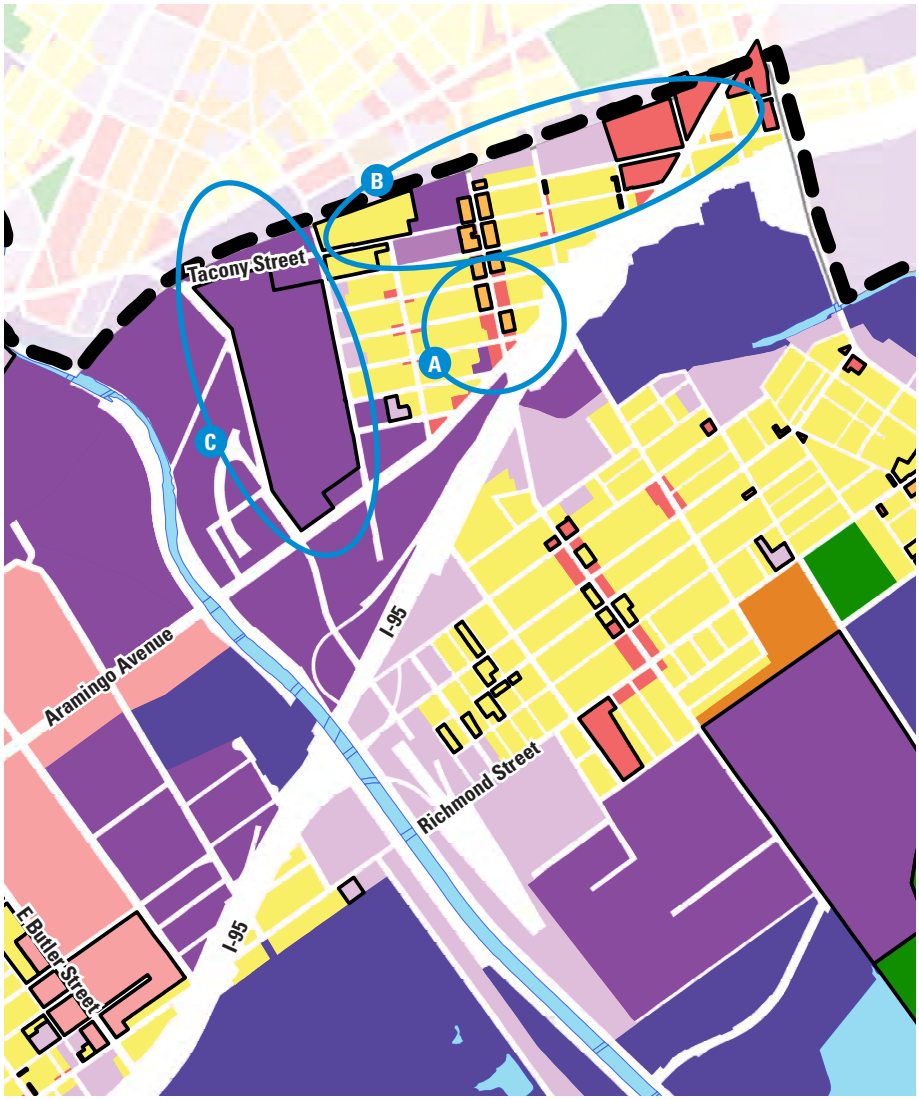
Corrective zoning matches zoning with existing land use. These are areas where the mismatch may cause unnecessary zoning variances or certificates, or allow an inappropriate use.

Definition | *Zoning to Advance the Plan*

Zoning to advance the plan encourages new development and uses envisioned by the community through the planning process. These are areas where revisions to the zoning code will enable development as recommended by this plan.

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

1. Proposed Zoning | Frankford Valley/Bridesburg

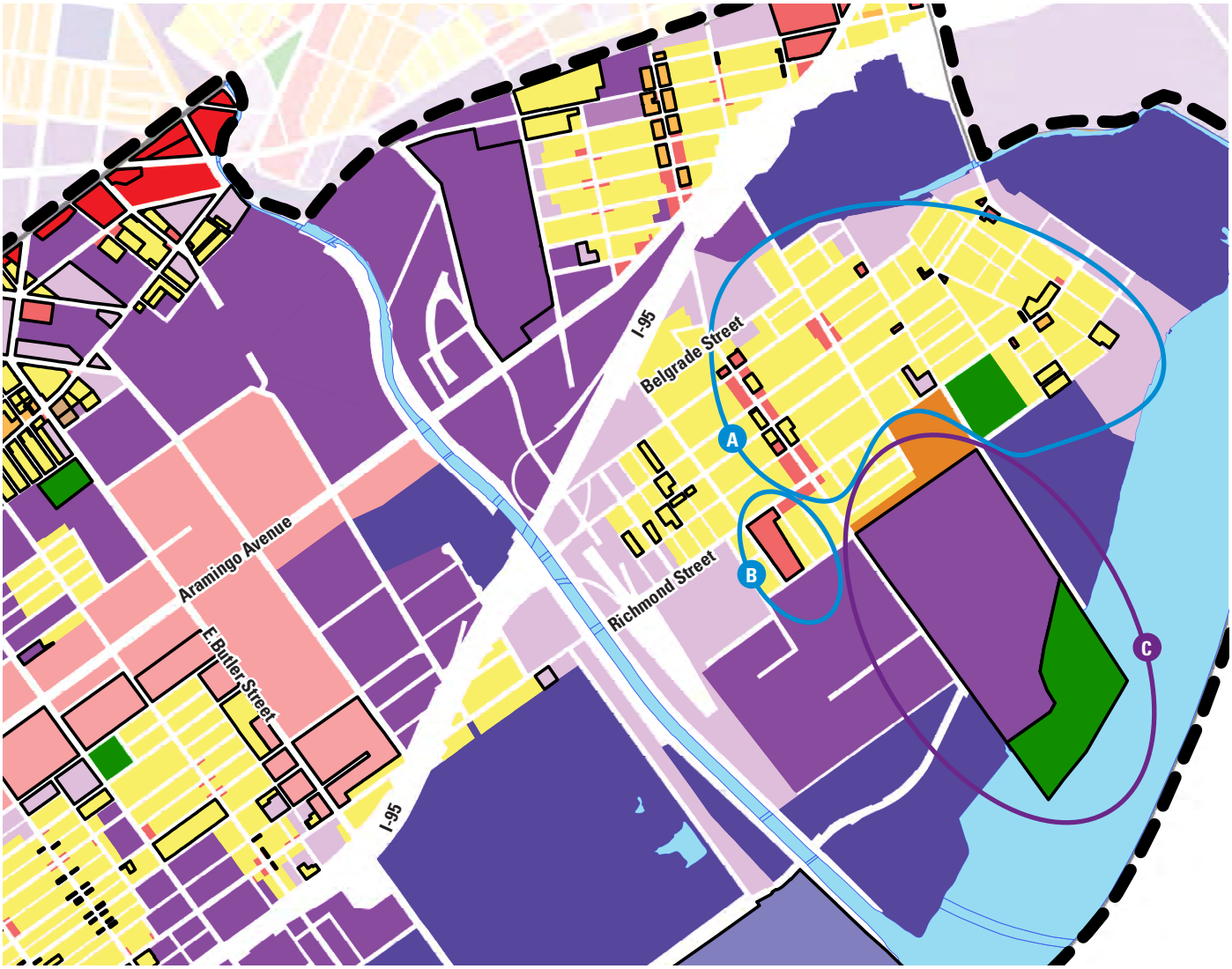


Legend

- Proposed Zoning Change
- Area of Corrective Zoning
- Area of Zoning to Advance the Plan

Corrective Zoning			
Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
A. Various residential areas	CMX-2	RSA-4; RM-1	Preserve existing housing
B. Northern Border	I-2	CMX-2	Match existing commercial and institutional uses
C. Adams Avenue	I-1	I-2	Match existing industrial use

2. Proposed Zoning | Bridesburg



Legend

- Proposed Zoning Change
- (X) Area of Corrective Zoning
- (X) Area of Zoning to Advance the Plan

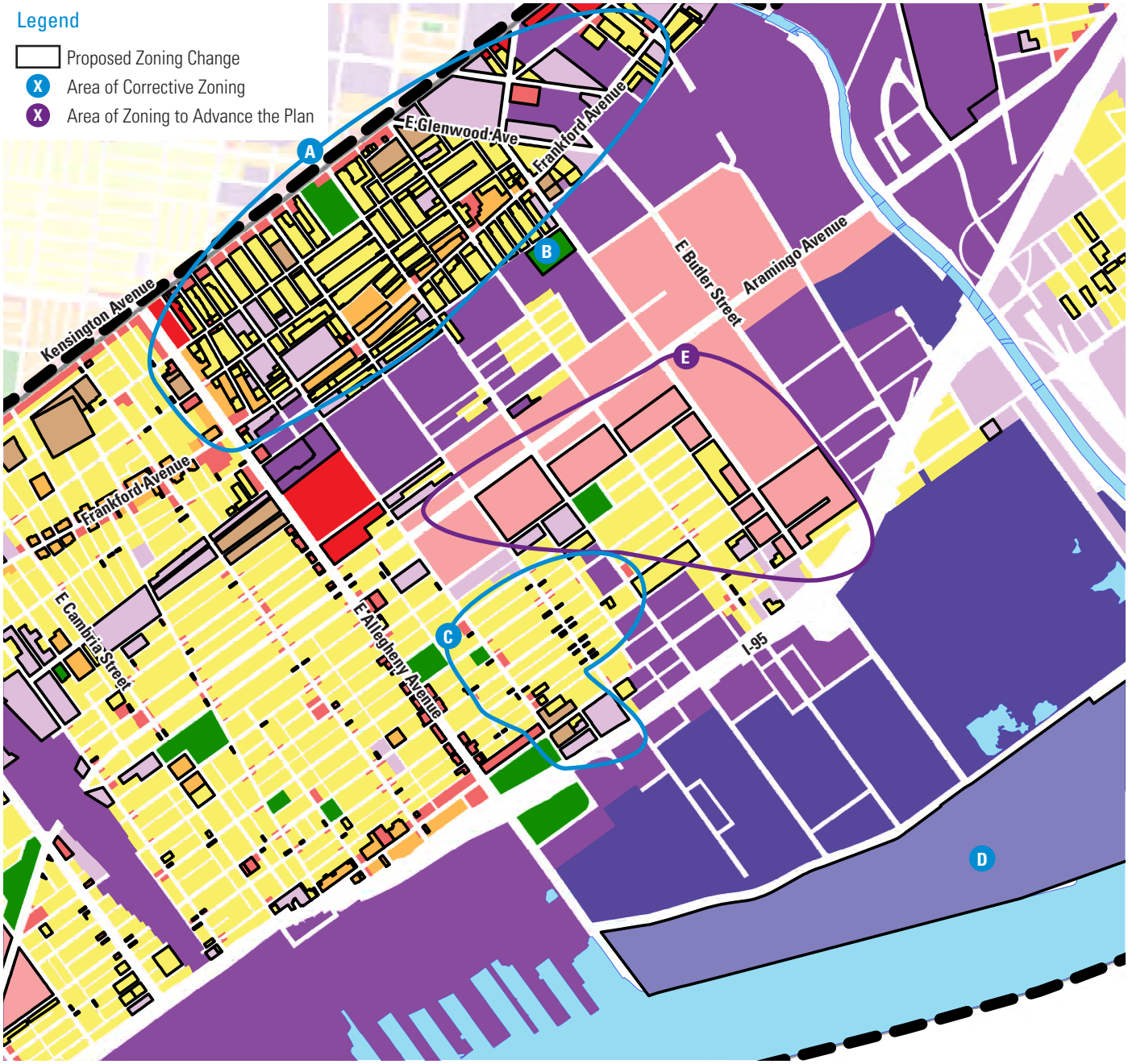
Corrective Zoning

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
A. Various residential areas	RSA-5	RSA-4;RSA-3	Preserve existing housing
B. Richmond Street and Sellers Street	CA-2	CMX-2	Match existing educational facility

Zoning to Advance the Plan

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
C. Former Philadelphia Coke site	Various Zoning Districts	Various Zoning Districts	Reposition former industrial sites for development

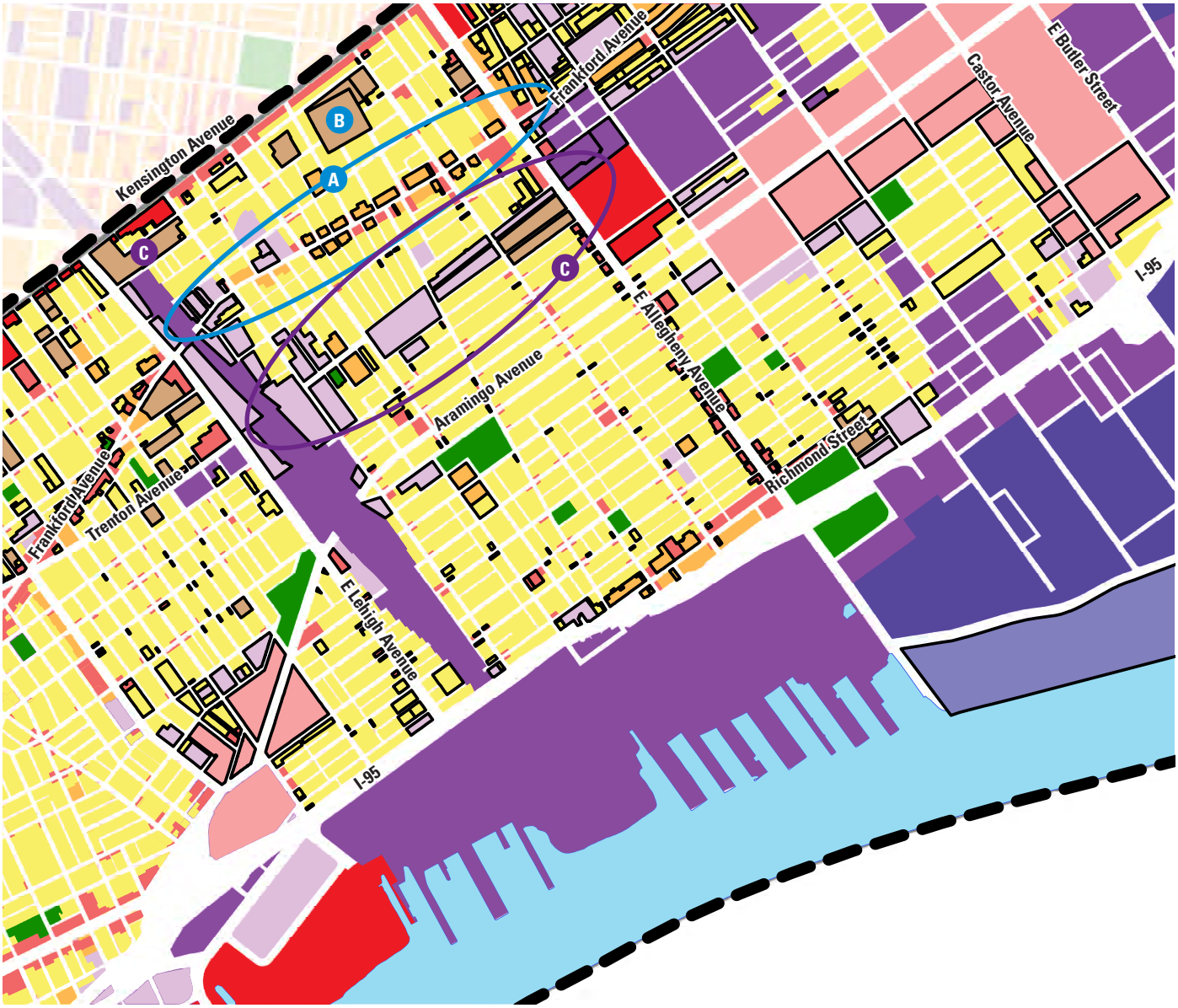
3. Proposed Zoning | Harrowgate & Aramingo Shopping Center



Corrective Zoning			
Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
A. Harrowgate	RM-1, I-2	RSA-5, ICMX, I-1	Preserve existing single-family housing
B. Heitzman Recreation Center	I-2	SP-PO-A	Preserve existing open space
C. Port Richmond	I-2	RSA-3;RSA-4;RSA-5	Match existing residential uses
D. Port	I-2	I-P	Match existing port industrial use

Zoning to Advance the Plan			
Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
E. Aramingo Avenue Shopping District	I-2	CA-2	Expanding the commercial corridor

4. Proposed Zoning | Kensington & Port Richmond



Legend

- Proposed Zoning Change
- Area of Corrective Zoning
- Area of Zoning to Advance the Plan

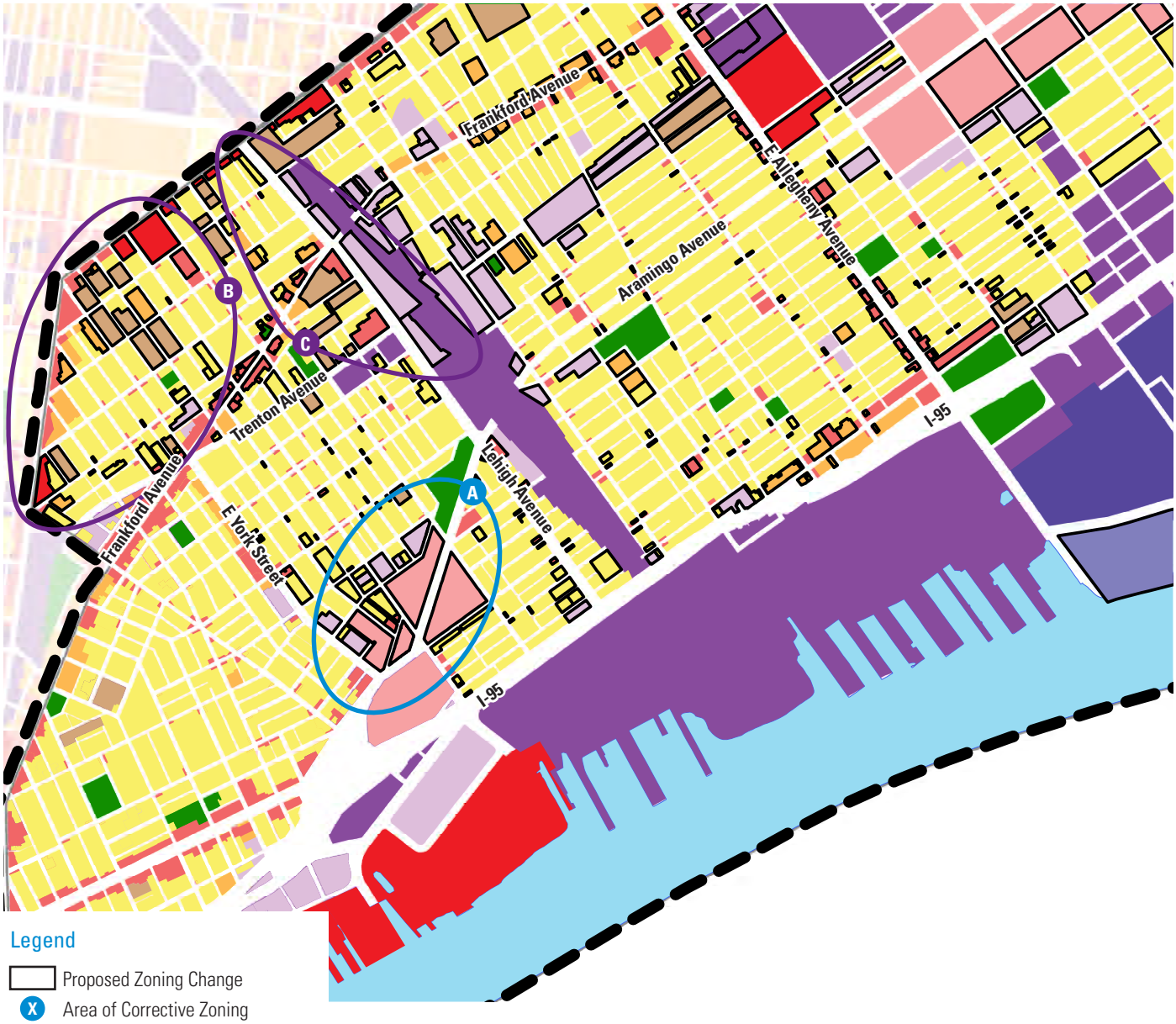
Corrective Zoning

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
A. Frankford Avenue	CMX-2;I-2	ICMX;RM-1;I-2	Right-size commercial corridor to reflect residential use
B. Francis E. Willard Elementary School	SP-PO-A	IRMX	Match existing educational facility and encourage redevelopment of adjacent vacant land

Zoning to Advance the Plan

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
C. Various former industrial parcels	I-2	IRMX;ICMX	Reposition former industrial sites for mixed-use redevelopment

5. Proposed Zoning | East Kensington & Olde Richmond



Legend

- Proposed Zoning Change
- (X) Area of Corrective Zoning
- (X) Area of Zoning to Advance the Plan

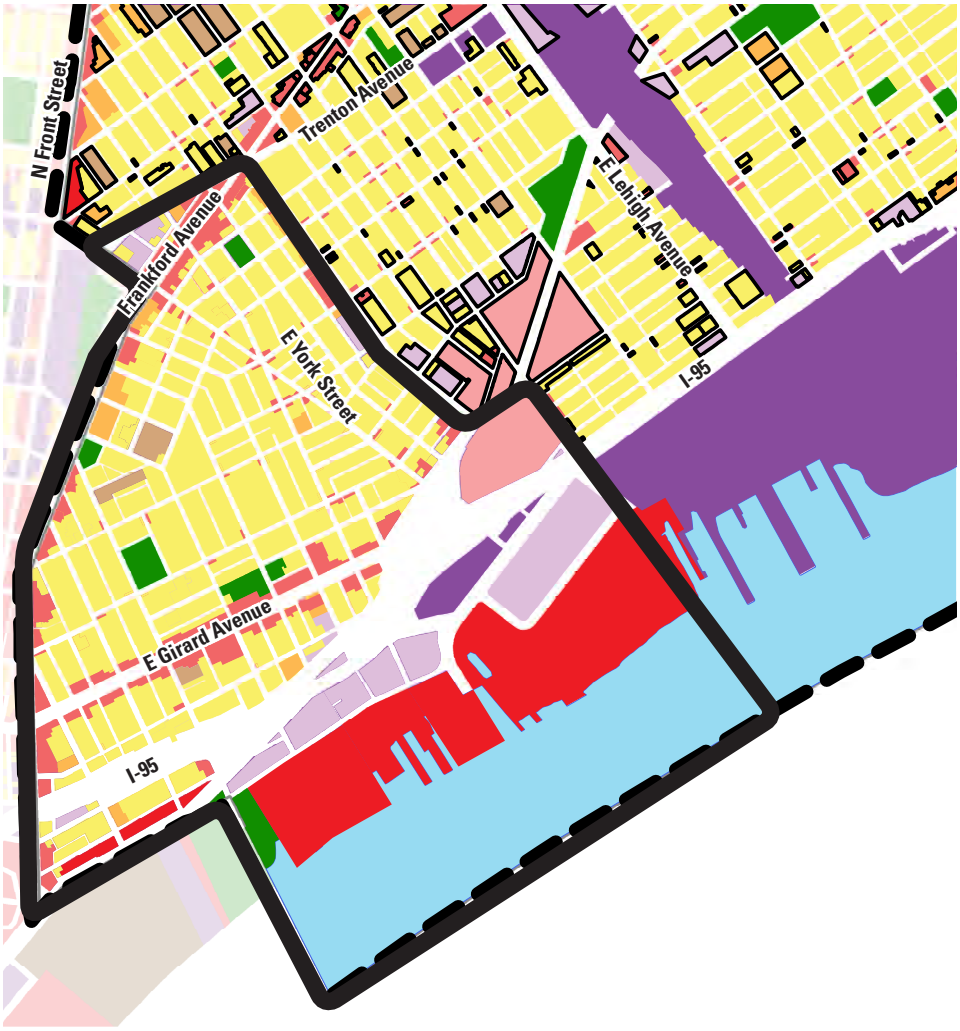
Corrective Zoning

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
A. York and Aramingo	I-2	CA-2;ICMX;RSA-5;CMX-2;I-1	Reflect current uses

Zoning to Advance the Plan

Location	Existing Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Reason for Rezoning
B. York and Emerald	I-2	IRMX;RM-1;CMX-3	Encourage redevelopment of former industrial sites
C. Various Locations	I-2	IRMX; ICMX; CMX-2	Allow for reuse of industrial land

6. Recent Rezoning | Fishtown



This map represents the new zoning that was approved by City Council and signed by the mayor in spring 2015.

APPENDIX

Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor Public Art Installation

106 | Summary of Public Meetings
108 | *Citywide Vision* Objectives
111 | Agency Names and Abbreviations
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Summary of Public Meetings

PCPC held three public meetings to solicit ideas, priorities, recommendations, and feedback at various stages of the planning process. Each of these meetings was held within the district.

January 13, 2015: The Loom Philly, 3245 Amber Street

March 30, 2015: Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School, 2161 East York Street

June 2, 2015: Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts, 1901 North Front Street

These public meetings were open to all interested citizens, regardless of their ties to the district. Additional information about the public outreach process and detailed summaries of meetings can be found at www.phila2035.org.

> First Public Meeting: Identifying Focus Areas

PCPC held the first public meeting on January 13, 2015 at The Loom Philly, a former carpet mill converted to artist studios and office space. The meeting attracted about 100 attendees.

After a presentation about the planning process and existing conditions, attendees broke into small groups for a group mapping exercise. The groups identified important physical attributes of their community, including strengths, weaknesses, barriers, and opportunities. These four attributes were then used to locate the district plan's focus areas.

Guests were also invited to participate in discussions at a healthy living station. Feedback from this table helps PCPC and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health assess barriers to healthy living within the district.

> Second Public Meeting: Setting Focus Area Priorities and Goals

PCPC held the second public meeting on March 30, 2015 at Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School. Approximately 80 participants attended.

Arriving guests interacted with staff at two stations. At the first station, residents were asked to identify places worthy of preservation. The second station asked for input on the unique urban design challenges associated with the Market-Frankford elevated structure on Kensington Avenue and Front Street.

Staff began the meeting by presenting an update on the planning process. Following the presentation, guests joined small groups for facilitated discussions about the district's three focus areas. PCPC staff asked groups to identify their priorities with written comments and by using stickers to indicate preferences for various public realm improvements.

> Final Public Meeting: Refining Recommendations

PCPC hosted an open house at Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts at Front Street and Berks Street on June 2, 2015. During this final public meeting, guests spoke individually with PCPC staff while viewing graphics, maps, and draft recommendations. Existing conditions, planning focus areas, priority recommendations from THRIVE, CONNECT, and RENEW, and future land use and zoning recommendations were presented at various stations. Staff documented comments on each topic and used this feedback to refine the plan.

Public meeting, January 13, 2015

Public meeting, March 30, 2015

Public meeting, June 2, 2015

For each public meeting, PCPC designed and printed graphics that were used to solicit meaningful feedback from participants and build a community vision. The following are copies of meeting materials that were used as an exercise to help prioritize physical improvements and future land uses in the Aramingo Avenue Shopping District.

Attendees prioritized physical improvements on Aramingo Avenue by placing game pieces that represented a variety of streetscape improvements on the map. The resulting site plans indicated to the PCPC staff the areas that the community has the most interest in changing.

> Share River Wards Online Outreach

In an effort to extend outreach beyond traditional methods, the River Wards district plan team created an online tool to recreate the materials presented and the input exercises performed at the three public meetings. The District Plan team worked with OpenPlans to create an online version of the Group Mapping Exercise performed at the first public meeting. For the second and third public meetings, the team set up online versions of the meetings to garner further feedback from the public. Almost 180 additional comments were received through the Share River Wards website during the planning process. More information and summaries of each iteration of the Share River Wards website can be found at http://www.phila2035.org/sharerw.

2035
SHARE / INFORM / ENVISION

River Wards online outreach

Focus area material from Second Public Meeting

Citywide Vision Objectives

THRIVE

Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Centers

1.1.1 Strengthen neighborhood centers by clustering community-serving public facilities.

1.1.2 Strengthen neighborhood centers by developing viable commercial corridors.

1.1.3 Strengthen neighborhood centers by promoting transit-oriented development around stations.

1.1.4 Provide convenient access to healthy food for all residents.

Housing

1.2.1 Stabilize and upgrade existing housing stock.

1.2.2 Ensure a wide mix of housing is available to residents of all income levels.

Economic Development

Metropolitan and Regional Centers

2.1.3 Encourage the growth and development of both existing and emerging Regional Centers.

Industrial Land

2.2.2 Reposition former industrial sites for new users.

Institutions

2.3.1 Encourage institutional development and expansion through policy and careful consideration of land resources.

2.3.2 Create cooperative relationships between institutions and neighbors.

Cultural Economy

2.4.2 Provide ample resources to cultural institutions to enrich the city's quality of life.

Land Management

Vacant Land & Structures

3.1.3 Reuse vacant land and structures in innovative ways.

Municipal Support Facilities

3.3.1 Reduce expenditures for municipal support facilities.

Citywide Vision Objectives

CONNECT

Transportation

Transit

4.1.1 Invest in existing infrastructure to improve service and attract riders.

4.1.2 Extend and introduce new technological advances to the transit network to serve new markets.

4.1.3 Coordinate land use decisions with existing and planned transit assets to increase transportation choices; decrease reliance on automobiles; increase access to jobs, goods, and services; and maximize the economic, environmental, and public health benefits of transit.

Complete Streets

4.2.1 Implement a complete streets policy to ensure that the right-of-way will provide safe access for all users.

4.2.2 Expand on- and off-street networks serving pedestrians and bicyclists.

4.2.3 Improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and reduce pedestrian and bicycle crashes.

Streets and Highways

4.3.1 Upgrade and modernize existing streets, bridges, and traffic-control infrastructure to ensure a high level of reliability and safety.

4.3.2 Control automobile congestion through traffic management and planning.

4.3.4 Improve pedestrian connections across major rights-of-way.

Airports, Seaports, and Freight Rail

4.4.3 Modernize freight rail assets to ensure efficient goods movement to and through Philadelphia.

Utilities

Consumption, Capacity, and Condition

5.1.1 Reduce electric, gas, and water consumption to reduce financial and environmental costs.

5.1.3 Modernize and bring the condition of existing utility infrastructure to a state of good repair.

Broadband Infrastructure

5.2.2 Expand affordable access to broadband and promote digital literacy programs among low-income populations.

RENEW

Open Space

Watershed Parks and Trails

6.1.1 Create a citywide trails master plan to coordinate the planning and construction of trail systems within Philadelphia.

6.1.2 Create a corridor network that connects parks, neighborhoods, and trails citywide.

6.1.3 Connect citywide parks to the existing protected natural areas of the regional green-space network.

Waterfronts

6.2.1 Improve and increase waterfront recreation opportunities.

Neighborhood Parks and Recreation

6.3.1 Ensure that all Philadelphians live within a 10-minute walk of a neighborhood park or a recreation center.

6.3.2 Connect neighborhood parks and trails to neighborhood centers and major public facilities.

6.3.3 Ensure proper maintenance and vibrancy of parks and recreation facilities.

Environmental Resources

Air Quality

7.1.1 Reduce overall and per capita contributions to air pollution.

Citywide Vision Objectives

7.1.2 Reduce overall and per capita greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 45 percent by 2035.

7.1.3 Reduce air temperature during the warm season in the city.

Water Quality

7.2.1 Improve the quality of city and regional water sources.

7.2.2 Restore and create urban stream banks and tidal wetlands along watersheds.

7.2.3 Support stormwater regulations set by the Philadelphia Water Department to capture stormwater on-site and reduce flooding damage.

Tree Cover

7.3.1 Increase the overall tree canopy across the city to 30 percent.

7.3.2 Enhance the city's forests to create a total of 7,200 acres.

7.3.3 Support tree planting and stewardship within the city.

Historic Preservation

Cultural, Architectural, and Historic Resources

8.1.1 Preserve culturally, historically, and architecturally significant buildings, sites, structures, and districts.

8.1.2 Rehabilitate abandoned industrial infrastructure for new uses and reuse industrial buildings to create new neighborhood anchors.

8.1.3 Preserve and reuse all "at risk" historic anchor buildings, commercial corridor buildings, and districts' elements.

8.1.4 Protect archeological sites.

8.1.5 Ensure maintenance and management of cemeteries and religious properties.

8.1.6 Preserve historically significant viewsheds and landscapes.

8.1.7 Preserve cultural and ethnic traditions, places, and resources.

Heritage Tourism

8.2.1 Create new and enhance existing tourism programs based on various cultural experiences unique to Philadelphia.

8.2.2 Demonstrate sustainability practices in visitor activities and facilities.

Public Realm

Development Patterns

9.1.1 Preserve the walkable scale of the city.

9.1.2 Ensure that new development reinforces the urban scale.

Urban Design

9.2.1 Apply sound design principles to guide development across the city.

9.2.2 Create welcoming, well-designed public spaces, gateways, and corridors.

9.2.3 Link public art with major capital initiatives.

9.2.4 Ensure maintenance and protection of public works of art.

Agency Names and Abbreviations

As noted in the Framing Our Future section, the goals, objectives, and recommendations found in the River Wards District Plan will be accomplished with the partnership of various agencies and organizations. Below is a listing of organizations and government agencies at the federal, state, regional, and local levels that will play a role the implementation of the River Wards District. The abbreviations correspond with those used in the *Citywide Vision*.

Full Name	Abbreviation
State Agencies	
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	PennDOT
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	PHMC
Regional Agencies	
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission	DVRPC
Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority	SEPTA
Philadelphia Regional Port Authority	PRPA
Delaware River Port Authority	DRPA
Delaware River City Corporation	DRCC
Regional Port Authority	RPA
Quasi-Governmental Agencies	
Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation	PHDC
Environmental Protection Agency	EPA
Service Provider	
Energy Coordinating Agency	ECA
Philadelphia Electric Company	PECO
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society	PHS
CSX (Railroad) Transportation	CSX
Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation	PIDC
Air Management Services	AMS
New Kensington Community Development Corporation	NKCDC

Full Name	Abbreviation
City Agencies	
Department of Public Property	DPP
Free Library of Philadelphia	Library
Philadelphia Housing Authority	PHA
Philadelphia Historical Commission	PHC
Mayor's Office of Arts, Culture, & the Creative Economy	MOACCE
Mayor's Office of Sustainability	MOS
Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities	MOTU
Office of Housing and Community Development	OHCD
Philadelphia City Council	City Council
Philadelphia City Planning Commission	PCPC
Philadelphia Department of Commerce	Commerce
Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspections	L&I
Philadelphia Department of Public Health	PDPH
Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department	PPR
Philadelphia Streets Department	Streets
Philadelphia Water Department	PWD
Philadelphia Parking Authority	PPA
School District of Philadelphia	SDP
Mural Arts Program	Mural Arts
Preservation Alliance	Preservation

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Karen Thompson, AICP	Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC)
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PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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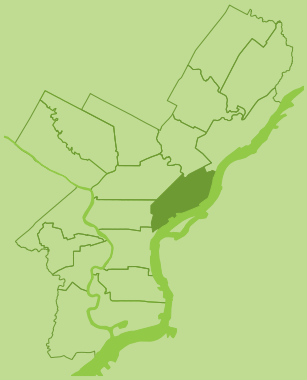

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