OUR COMMUNITY OUR IDEAS

SCI EASTERN NORTH **QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN**

Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha APM ... for everyone

LISC Philadelphia

_INTERFACE STUDIO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the season of renewal, Spring 2010, Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha, with the support from the Local Initiatives Support Corporation, embarked in a year long quality of life planning process in eastern North Philadelphia. As the title indicates, the process has brought together our community and our ideas to develop a collective vision for our future.

In this journey we have benefited from the good will and collaboration of volunteers, partners, community leaders and residents who participated in interviews, meetings, round-table discussions, planning conference calls, canvassed the community, provided food, music entertainment and hosted us in their locations.

Special mention and appreciation is due to Rose Gray, Jennifer Rodriguez, Sarah Sturtevant and Marangeli Mejia-Rabell for their concerted efforts in guiding this project to fruition. The long-range benefits of this work would not exist without their talents and diligence. Others who have made significant contributions are listed in the following pages.

To our partners and community stakeholders who have signed on to the actions included in this plan our sincere thanks and appreciation. And to those who will join us in the future, Welcome! Bienvenidos!

As APM has done for the past 41 years, we look forward to providing more of the quality improvements the community deserves and has come to expect from APM and its partners. LISC has been a partner in this community for 20 of these 41 years and expects to continue supporting the efforts of APM, the partners in this plan, and the community into the foreseeable future.

Un millón de gracias!

Nilda Iris Ruiz, APM President/CEO

Andrew Fishkroff, Philadelphia LISC Executive Director

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19th Ward
26th Police District
5th District Council
703 Diagnostic Medical Center
7th District Council
8th/Diamond Playground
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Abel Pons
Abram Garcia
Ada Rendón
Adelfi Burgos
Adolfo Gonzalez
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Aida Tapiz
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Kasey Thompson
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Kathleen Cannon
Kathleen Grady
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Kensington CAPA High School
Kensington International Business High School
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Kimmel Center
Kyle Flood
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La Familia Rojas Dance
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South Kensington NAC
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Tamara Clark
Taness Clark
Temple University
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Thalia Ortiz
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Tripod Initiative
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Tyree Dumas
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PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Our neighborhood will be clean and beautiful and will capitalize on its unique local assets including schools, diverse housing options and public transportation. We will strive to **REDUCE BLIGHT BY MANAGING VACANT LAND AND BUILDINGS** by maintaining and repurposing vacant land, and identifying pilot projects; **IMPROVE STREETS AND PUBLIC SPACES** by activating neighborhood clean ups, improving lighting and streetscapes, and redesigning targeted streets and gateways; **PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING TO PROMOTE A DIVERSE COMMUNITY** by developing and marketing mixed income housing; **REINFORCE AND STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY ASSETS** by supporting transformative projects such as transit oriented development; **HELP PROPERTY OWNERS MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE PROPERTY** with incentives and workshops for maintenance, repair and rehabilitation.

LEADERSHIP

Leaders will work together to create a diverse, united and involved community that is empowered and confident. Our community will strive to **CREATE A MULTIGENERATIONAL NETWORK OF EXISTING AND EMERGING LEADERS** through a mix of organizing and recruitment efforts; **STRENGTHEN EXISTING ORGANIZATIONS** by building volunteer base and capacity; **STRENGTHEN COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS** by forming a coalition and monitoring the progress of the plan; **ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION THROUGH COMMUNITY BUILDING EVENTS** that forge community identity and engagement through a SCI communication network.

INCOME & WEALTH

Residents will be well-trained for a variety of jobs and have access to services that support economic growth. Our community will strive to **CREATE A BETTER TRAINED WORKFORCE AND DEVELOP JOB OPPORTUNITIES** by coordinating job training and placement across a range of needs; **EDUCATE RESIDENTS ABOUT ATTAINING FINANCIAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY** by offering financial literacy education and services; **PROVIDE COORDINATED SOCIAL SERVICES** by identifying service gaps and creating a network of providers.

HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT & LIFESTYLE

Our community will become one of the safest, healthiest and greenest communities in the city. We will strive to **STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY POLICING TO REDUCE CRIME IN THE AREA** by developing strategies that combine police and community efforts; **REDUCE OBESITY, TEEN PREGNANCY AND DRUG ABUSE** by developing health and nutrition programs and improving access to healthy food; **MAKE THE NEIGHBORHOOD A GREEN MODEL FOR THE CITY** by encouraging neighborhood greening, environmental practices, and improved recreational spaces; **ENCOURAGE TRANSIT USE AND ALTERNATE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION** by improving transit stops and adding bike lanes.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Our neighborhood will be home to a diverse range of businesses that provide residents with jobs and meet the needs of our community as well as visitors. We will strive to **SUPPORT EXISTING LOCAL BUSINESSES** by creating a local marketing campaign and coordinating small business assistance; **ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW BUSINESSES** by offering entrepreneurial support, targeting vacant storefronts, and attracting businesses to American Street; **CREATE CLEAN, SAFE AND INVITING COMMERCIAL AREAS** by improving the curb appeal of commercial streets; **BUILD A STRONG COMMUNITY RETAIL CENTER** by developing activities and new businesses around existing commercial assets such as Borinquén Plaza.

ARTS & CULTURE

Arts and culture will infuse our community, provide a voice for all community members and an opportunity for exposure to other cultures and traditions, and draw Philadelphians from all over the city. We will strive to **STRENGTHEN AND MARKET EXISTING ARTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS** by setting up local tours and linking up with complementary groups and events; **HIGHLIGHT THE CULTURAL DIVERSITY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD** by developing programs and events to encourage cultural exchange; **USE ARTS AND CULTURE TO MAKE A STATEMENT AND ENCOURAGE DIALOGUE** by developing programs that link businesses, schools, artists and residents.

CHILDREN, YOUTH & EDUCATION

Abundant opportunities for training and education will be available for all members of the community from children to adults, with a high level of engagement and collaboration between parents, teachers and students to meet educational goals. Children and youth of all ages will have places to go and activities that keep them interested and engaged in shaping their community and their future. We will strive to **DEVELOP PROGRAMMING TO REDUCE TRUANCY AND INCREASE GRADUATION RATE** by engaging youth in a range of activities that cultivate leadership and self-motivation; **GET PARENTS AND GUARDIANS INVOLVED IN THEIR CHILDREN'S EDUCATION** by enhancing awareness and access to parenting resources; **DEVELOP OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADULT EDUCATION** by removing barriers to access; **ADVOCATE FOR SCHOOL REFORM** by engaging parents and stakeholders in dialogue with the school system.

QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN At a Glance

our community our ideas

I VISION

Residents and stakeholders crafted a vision statement that embodies the values and aspirations of the community and will serve to guide future development:

"The SCI Eastern North community is moving forward to create a better future for all of its members by celebrating its unparalleled diversity and community spirit. The vision is for a community that is:

> **Educated**: where neighbors learn and grow through better access and improved educational opportunities for persons of all ages;

> **Connected**: to their neighbors, local social services and job opportunities;

> **Self Sufficient**: where residents can have their needs met locally by businesses and providers that reach out to and are a part of the community;

> **Nurtured**: by families and residents supporting each other and giving youth a voice and a role in the future;

> **Empowered**: where the future is guided by actively engaged residents and leaders;

> **Expressive**: where arts and culture have meaning and power to facilitate communication and community building;

> **Welcoming**: for all families and individuals through a diverse mix of housing options; and

> **Livable**: through a safe, clean, sustainable, and healthy environment with abundant open space and recreational opportunities."

Word cloud generated by visioning exercise. The size of the word corresponds to the frequency of the word in the visioning results.

II INTRODUCTION

Less than two miles from Center City, in an area once considered Philadelphia's industrial core, live 13,000 residents from six neighborhoods who are transforming a community that was in decline into a growing, culturally vibrant place with a bright future.

Our community, eastern North Philadelphia, is rising. Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM) has stabilized hundreds of properties, redeveloped huge tracts of vacant land and built hundreds of affordable homes. Our arts scene is thriving. Our diversity is recognized by all as a strength and asset to build on. Community organizations are working together to implement positive change.

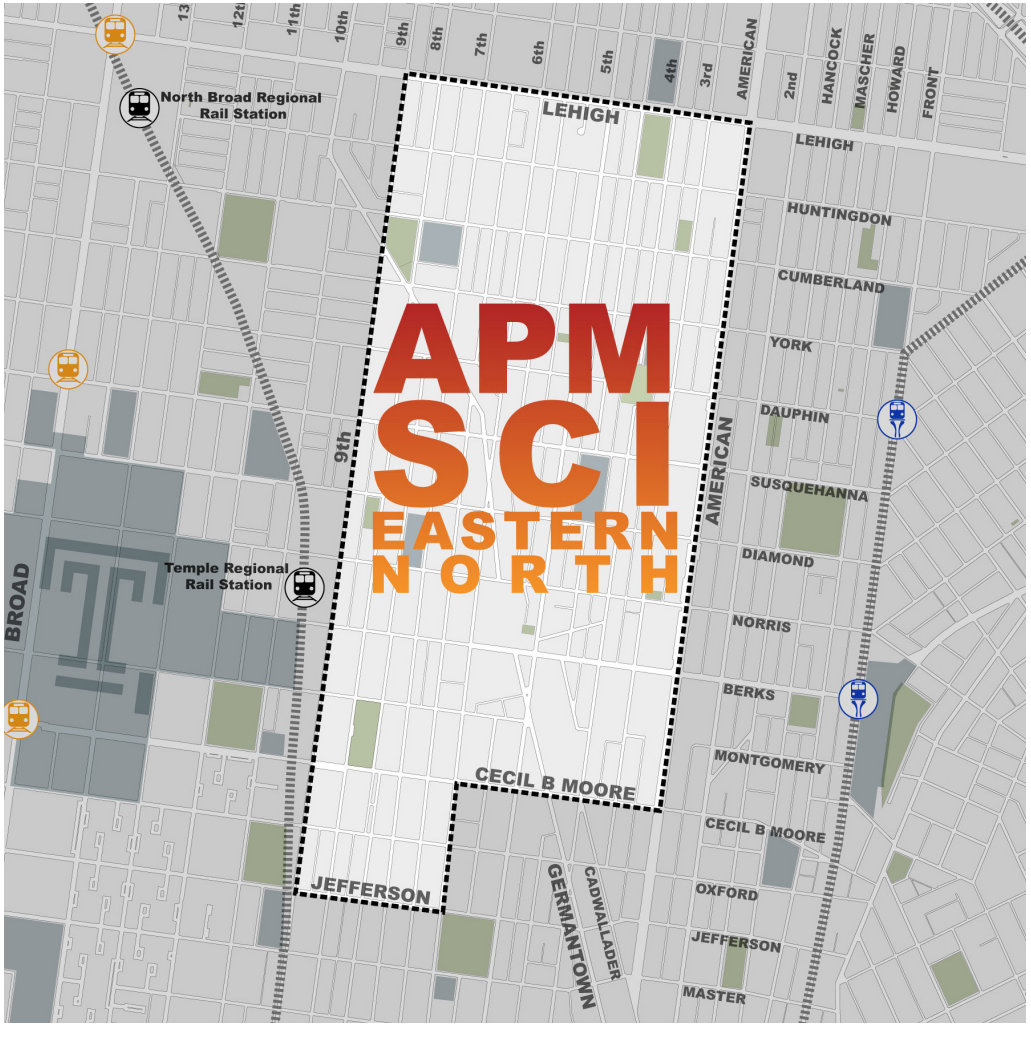
Last year, the Philadelphia Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) selected lower eastern North Philadelphia as the next site for its Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI), naming APM the lead agency. This initiative, based on a successful national model, seeks to unify residents and local organizations around a common vision for their communities. SCI recognizes that brick and mortar improvements are, on their own, not enough. It combines place-oriented initiatives with people-oriented ones. Above all, SCI stresses the need for collaboration, both in identifying community challenges and in overcoming them. LISC asked APM to serve as its lead partner and community facilitator on the initiative due largely to APM's experience developing long-term community plans and its development and social service expertise, as well as the strong community ties and 20-year-old relationship between the two organizations.

While SCI is sponsored by LISC and facilitated by APM, the community is the driver and owner of SCI Eastern North and its success hinges on collaboration between all residents and local organizations.

How to Use the Plan

This plan was born of collaboration. It is the product of countless hours of hard work and bold thinking by hundreds of residents and dozens of community leaders and organizations working together for nearly a year. It represents our collective vision for our community. In this plan, we frankly acknowledge the challenges we face, and we identify the solutions – and the real, concrete steps we must take – to make our vision for this community a reality.

This plan is divided into seven focus areas, which we identified as top community priorities: the physical environment, income and wealth, economic development, education and children, leadership, healthy environment and lifestyles, and arts & culture. Each section articulates a clear goal, identifies specific, real-world actions, and assigns those jobs to people and organizations within the community.



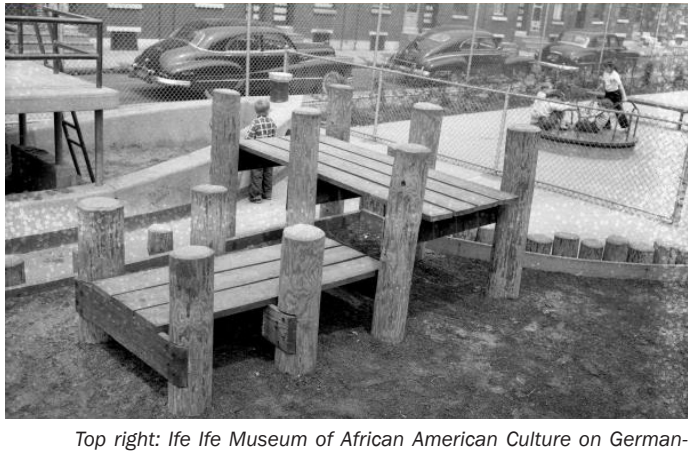
Study Area

ACTION STEPS are prioritized in each program area as follows:

!!! HIGH PRIORITY **!! MEDIUM PRIORITY** **! LOW PRIORITY**

In addition to community input and local knowledge, the plan was driven by research into the demographic and physical conditions of the community, the details of which are contained in the Appendix.

This is a living document. We will revisit and update it regularly to ensure that the goals and priorities listed here continue to match those of the neighborhood groups and institutions, agencies and investors that are committed to this vision.



Top right: Ife Ife Museum of African American Culture on Germantown Avenue, 1984 (City of Philadelphia).
Left top to bottom: Teatro Puerto Rico on Germantown Avenue, 1967 (www.nycsubway.org); Stetson Hats, Nelson Playground, 1956 (City of Philadelphia).

III SCI Eastern North, Past & Present

Industry & Prosperity

Our older residents can still recall the days when lower eastern North Philadelphia was an industrial powerhouse.

The John B. Stetson Hat Manufactory – a sprawling 20-building complex at 4th and Montgomery – employed as many as 3,500 workers at its peak. Good & Plenty candy, the oldest branded candy made in the United States, was first manufactured in our community. On many blocks, small-scale manufacturers and warehouses were sprinkled in among the densely-packed row homes, lending a vibrant, around-the-clock quality to the street life.

Hard times

Eventually, though, forces outside the neighborhood's control – from suburbanization to advances in manufacturing – led local factory owners to close up their plants in droves. Many residents followed the jobs. The population plummeted, and in time, the community was filled with abandoned homes and obsolete factories.

As businesses and residents moved out, the bulldozers moved in. Beginning in the 1950s, a series of federal and city urban renewal programs funded widespread demolitions across distressed sections of the city. Lower eastern North Philadelphia was hit particularly hard by these sometimes indiscriminate razings. For many years, nothing was built on these empty lots, and so the community became known as "the badlands," a neighborhood where vacant land – much of it filled with junked cars and 10-foot-tall weeds – stretched for acres.

Rebirth & Recovery

But it was in those difficult years that the seeds of the community's recovery were planted. Philadelphians of Puerto Rican descent began settling in the community in large numbers. This influx helped prevent near total depopulation, and created the conditions for a community with a distinctive culture rooted in its diverse mix of residents.

Grassroots organizations were formed on shoestring budgets to aid local residents and foster cultural expression, such as APM, the Ludlow Community Development Corporation, Taller Puertorriqueño, and the Village of Arts & Humanities.

After much organizing through the 1960s, in 1970 a handful of grass roots community activists created APM. The organization commenced as a social service provider, offering low-income Puerto Rican/Latinos and African American Philadelphians access to everything from mental health care to housing counseling.

Two decades later, APM got into community development, in hopes of building affordable, decent housing for local residents. In concert with the City of Philadelphia, APM crafted a comprehensive physical redevelopment plan for the community. That plan, which proved instrumental in luring both public and non-profit funding to the area, has largely been realized.

Since 1990, APM has constructed 210 units of affordable housing and cleared and developed 20 acres of vacant land, attracting more than $100 million in public and private investment to the community. LISC has been a crucial partner throughout, supplying $26 million in funding for APM projects over the last 20 years (in all, LISC has invested $40 million in our community). Notable APM projects include:

- Borinquén Plaza, built by APM in 1999 with financial assistance from LISC, features two vital community services: first urban supermarkets built in Philadelphia, and a credit union. This year, the plaza was enhanced with a pocket park featuring a stage and advanced storm water management features.
- The 128-unit Pradera townhome development offered suburban-styled homes to low and moderate-income buyers, and remade the streetscape in the community's southwestern blocks.
- 13 newly built green homes on Sheridan Street designed by Interface Studio Architects featuring cutting-edge designs.

Other organizations that have further fueled our community's transformation, such as the 26-unit Lillia Crippen Townhouses constructed by Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) for special-needs low-income women and their families and the Philadelphia Housing Authority. In all, over 400 units of housing have been constructed in our community since 1990.

Together, grassroots organizations, city agencies and funders like LISC have changed the landscape of our community so dramatically that private investors are waking up to its potential. The evidence is clear: we are becoming a community of choice, instead of one of last resort.

Recent Development and Current Initiatives

Early Action Grants

LISC and APM also sponsored community projects to keep the community and stakeholders engaged in the quality of life planning process. LISC allocated funding for two micro grant programs:

Make Your Mark Block Grant – For grants of $1,000 or less. The objective of this grant is to empower, build the capacity of residents, and obtain buy-in by enabling residents to visibly impact their community at the block level.

Our Communities, Our Ideas Grant – For grants ranging from $2,000 to $5,000. The objective of this pool is to keep the community engaged in the SCI process by investing in programs and projects that propose to have a positive impact in priority areas.

Some of the Early Action Grant projects include:

Village of the Arts and Humanities – a Youth Arts Magazine in collaboration with arts organizations and neighborhood youth. The magazine will highlight young artists and empower youth to develop leadership and writing experience.

CEIBA – a free income tax preparation site to serve residents in the SCI Eastern North target area and connect them to other financial education services.

Semilla Arts Initiative – a garden and educational environment in a vacant lot that includes a mural on the surrounding walls for the students, teachers and community members in and around McKinley Elementary School.

1500 block of North 6th Street – two peace parks at 6th and Oxford and 6th and Jefferson.

At 6th and Cecil B. Moore, a for-profit developer has converted an old warehouse into an apartment facility called 32|Lofts, which asks $1,200 a month for a two-bedroom apartment. Closer to Temple University, housing targeted at students has been built, such as the University Village at 10th and Montgomery, and the Kardon Building a block further north.

Yet non-profit development remains a crucial driver. A prime example is the ambitious Transit Oriented Development slated to begin construction later this year at the foot of the Temple University rail station. Jointly developed by APM and the Jonathan Rose Companies with support from LISC, the TOD will feature mixed-income housing, retail and community services. Residents need only cross the street to access SEPTA's regional rail system, cutting commute times sharply and strengthening our community's links to Center City. The TOD will serve too as a bridge between our community and Temple University, a neighbor that has felt far more distant than it actually is, in part because of the railroad viaduct dividing us from the school. The TOD, built snug against the rail lines, connects one side of the tracks to the other. It's a development that has been hailed by Mayor Nutter and HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, among others.

There are many other exciting projects underway in our community, including:

- Renovations to the Rainbow de Colores playground on N. 5th Street, an early action project enabled by LISC that exemplifies the collaborative spirit that SCI Eastern North is based on.
- A planned facility at 8th and Berks for the Hope Partnership for Education.
- A mixed-use facility targeted at Temple students called Diamond Green is in the works at 10th and Diamond, a project driven by Metamorphosis CDC.
- Mosaic Development is working to convert the former Julia de Burgos School site at 8th and Lehigh into Edison Square, a 38,000 square foot mixed-use facility featuring a supermarket and senior housing.
- A relocated Taller Puertorriqueño.

La Placita Park at Borinquén Plaza.

IV COMMUNITY PROFILE

Demographics

In recent years our community has halted the decline in population, become better educated and improved household incomes. These findings are based on the most recent census data available and research done by John Kromer and Christopher Kingsley on behalf of the Fels School of Government at the University of Pennsylvania, who conducted a comprehensive study of our community up to York Street last year.

Population

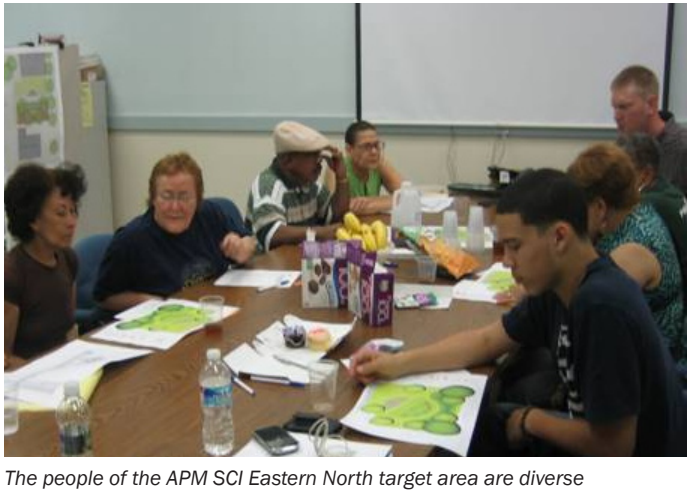
- After losing 19% of our residents between 1990 and 2000, our neighborhood has put an end to population loss in the last decade. Some areas, most notably the southern blocks where APM development has been concentrated, have grown robustly.
- The community remains exceptionally diverse, even as economic conditions have improved. About 45% of the area is comprised of residents of Hispanic origin, and 48% of our neighbors are African American. Note that the Census considers Hispanic heritage an ethnicity, not a race.

Education

- In 2009, the community's graduation rate stood at 51%, a 16.3% improvement over the graduation rate of a decade before.
- Residents with college degrees in our community are limited in number, but their ranks are growing, with the total nearly doubling between 1999 and 2009. Today, just over 5% of residents are college-educated.

Income & Employment

- Household incomes are growing alongside the population growth in areas that have seen development, rising 4.7% between 2000 and 2009 to $18,655.
- We are attracting a growing number of employed, working-class residents every year. Between 2002 and 2008, we added an average of 42 new workers each year.
- Of those new workers, over half earned over $40,000 a year. Indeed most workers in our community were better off economically in 2008 then in 2002. The proportion of very low-wage workers declined by 8% in that time, while the share of $40,000-and-up workers has grown to include nearly 16% of the local workforce.



The people of the APM SCI Eastern North target area are diverse and dedicated to making our community a great place.

Physical Conditions

Thanks to the efforts of local organizations, funders and city agencies, the physical condition of our community has improved dramatically in recent years. The progress has opened the eyes of private investors to the area's potential and made it a destination for new residents who would never have considered it a decade ago. Yet for all that, vacant land, blighted buildings and a shortage of retail and recreational spaces continue to pose considerable challenges, as do fears over public safety.

Land Use & Vacancy

In 1998, the City of Philadelphia conducted a survey of properties in our community. The results detailed a depressing reality: back then, nearly two-thirds of all parcels in the community were abandoned. Our progress since then has been remarkable.

- In 2010, Interface Studio conducted a survey, which was combined with data collected previously in 2008 and 2009, revealing that abandoned and unimproved lots now account for about one-third of the parcels in the community.
- Many vacant lots have been cleaned-up and converted into well-tended grassy lots, side yards or surface parking facilities. These improved lots make up 11% of the parcels in the community, many of which are maintained by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS).
- 475 lots have been redeveloped, converted into new housing or commercial ventures, so that today housing accounts for 42% of the parcels in our community.
- Home values have soared. The median sales price in the 1990s was just $3,000. Today, it is $24,500.

Commercial

- Retail uses account for only 9% of the total land area in our community.
- Of that, more than half are mixed-use facilities such as corner stores, 25% are auto-repair related, 17% are retail establishments and 6% for office space.

The community has a range of housing types, from market-rate lofts to rowhouses to new affordable housing.

- With the exception of Borinquén Plaza, the community lacks major shopping facilities.
- APM and Interface Studio developed a master plan for reviving the Germantown Avenue commercial corridor in 2009, which has the potential to once again serve as an urban marketplace and gateway to the city's Hispanic community.

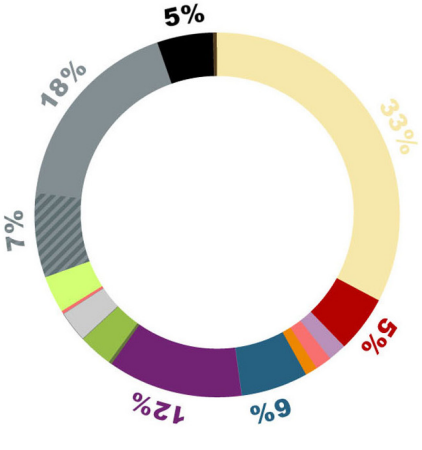
Crime

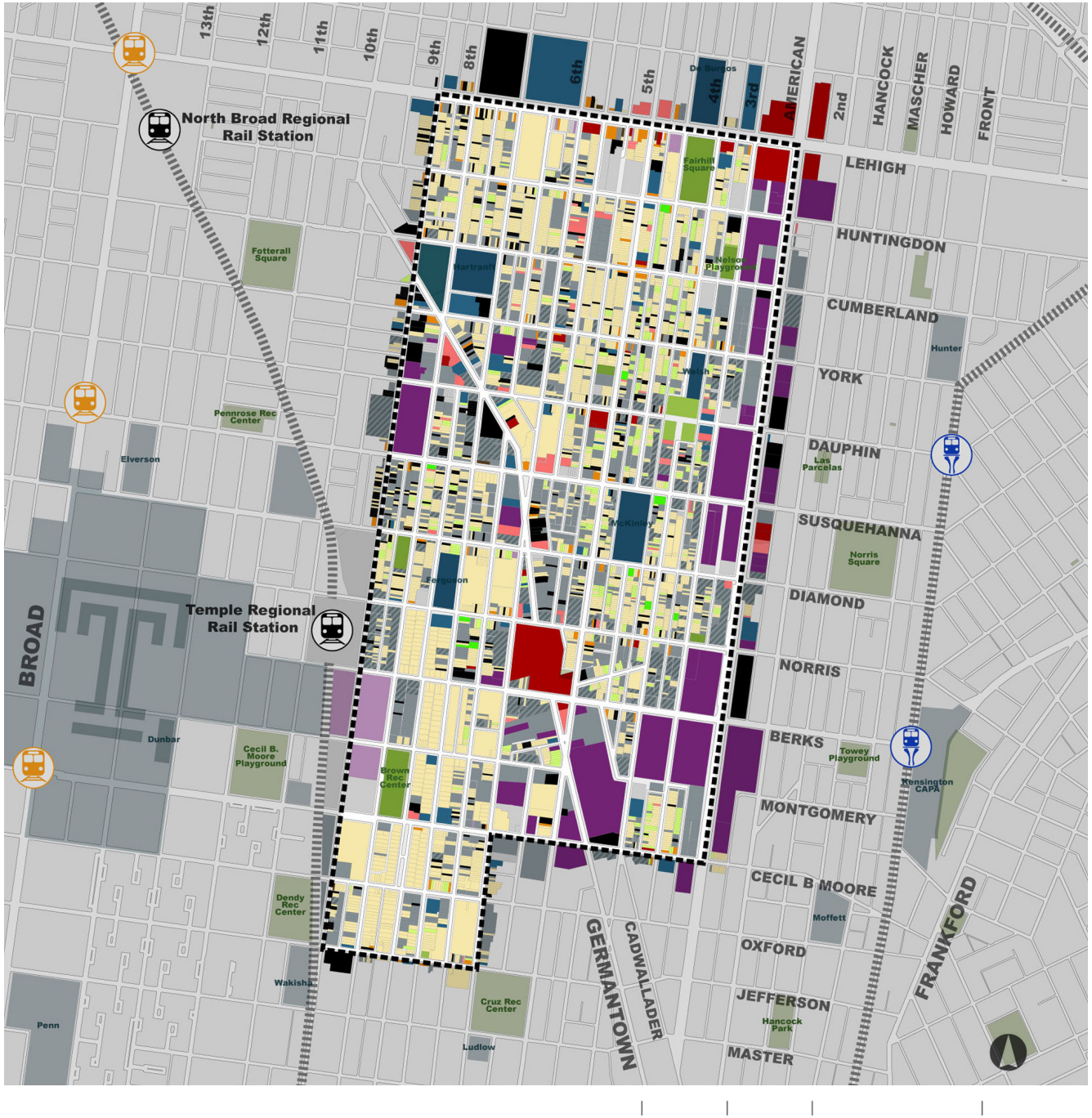
- Although community residents consistently list crime and public safety as one of their primary concerns, the neighborhood is safer today than it has been in many years.
- Serious crime has fallen by 37% since 1998, a significantly larger drop than the citywide improvement of 24%.
- Robberies and aggravated assaults are down 42% over the same period. Notably, there was no decline in the robbery and aggravated assault rate in the city overall during the same period.
- Quality of life and drug crimes declined as well. Drug arrests fell nearly 50% since 1998, while actually increasing elsewhere in Philadelphia. Nuisance crimes such as vandalism declined by 41%.

Parks & Open Space

- Our section of lower eastern North Philadelphia has fewer parks and recreational spaces than many other areas of the city, and residents say the lack of adequate facilities and open space for children is an increasingly important concern.
- A PlanPhilly analysis found that most areas of this community were three-quarters of a mile away from the nearest recreation center or park.
- Closer facilities, such as playgrounds, are often not well maintained.
- The new pocket park built by APM in Borinquén Plaza has brought a welcome splash of green, and Rainbow de Colores playground on 5th Street is undergoing renovations designed to make it safer and more welcoming to children and families.

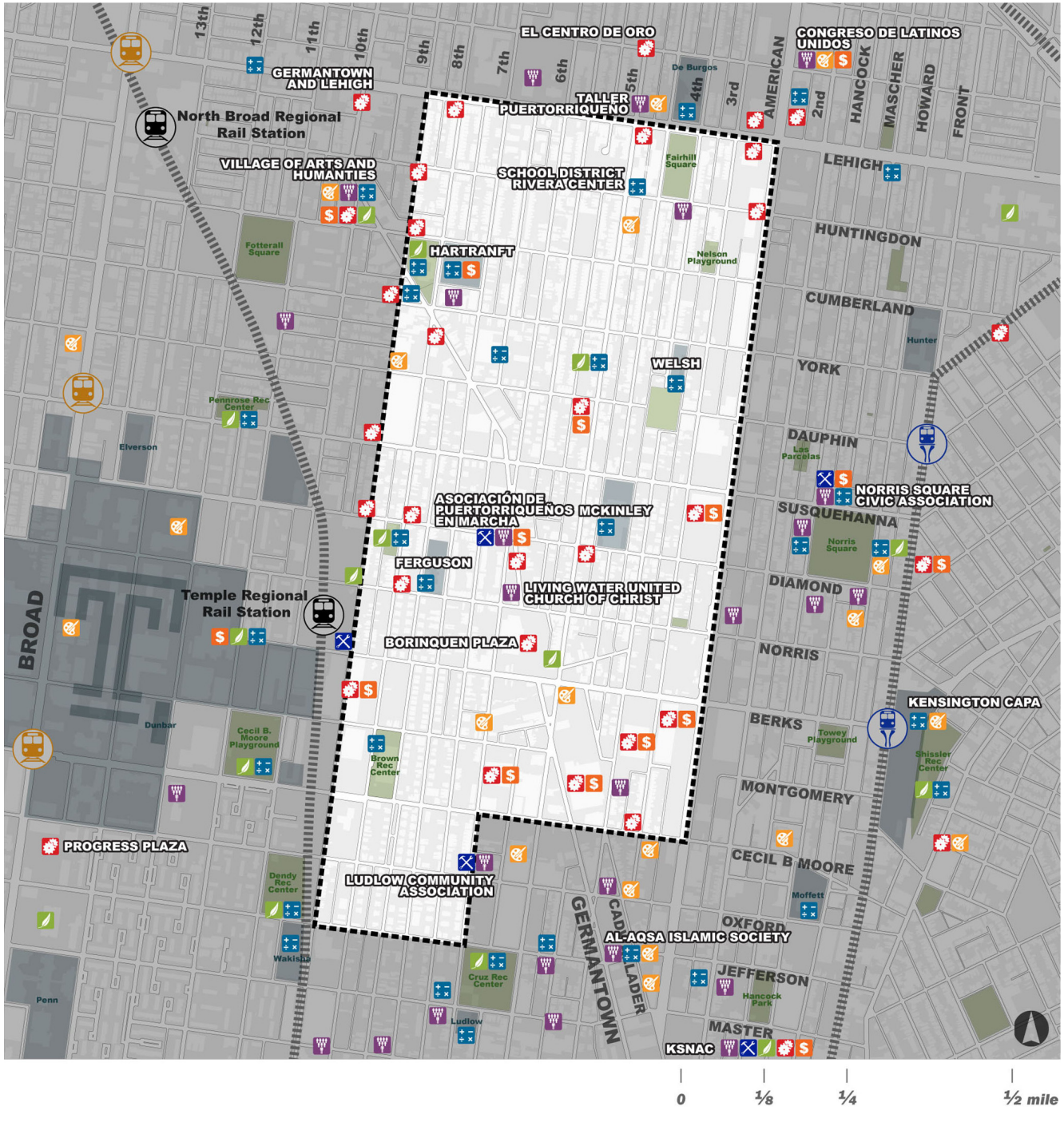
- Commercial
- Auto-Oriented Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Residential
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Office
- Garden
- Park/Open Space
- Yard
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- PHS Stabilized Lot
- Vacant Building
- Partially Vacant





Land Use

0 ⅛ ¼ ½ mile



ASSETS

PROXIMITY AND GOOD ACCESS
PUBLIC TRANSIT
NEW INVESTMENT
IMPROVING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES
INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS
GROWING POPULATION AND DIVERSITY

- PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
- INCOME & WEALTH
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUTH
- LEADERSHIP
- HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT & LIFESTYLE
- ARTS & CULTURE

Local Assets

Local Assets

The planning committee was tasked with community asset mapping within each of the program areas. Committee members attending the January Committee Meeting were asked to physically map local assets and also list those that were not geographically based. See Appendix for classification of assets by program area.

ARTS
Alberto Pagan-Ramirez dance
Arts Sanctuary
Crane Building
Dance Studio
Emerald Studios
Frankford Avenue Corridor
Invincible Studios
Latin Art Gallery
Mascher Space Cooperative
North Philadelphia Arts and Culture Alliance
Raices Culturales Latinoamericanas
Semilla Arts Initiative
Taller Puertorriqueño
Tyler School of Art/Temple Gallery
Uptown Theater
Village of Arts and Humanities

BUSINESSES
Borinquén Plaza
Centro Musical
Chaes Food
El Centro de Oro
El Cafeito
Germantown and Lehigh Corridor
Kurths Seafood Restaurant
La Rosa del Monte Movers
Progress Plaza

CELEBRATIONS
Feria del Barrio
Festival de la Caña
Norris Square Festival
Parada Puertorriqueña
Plena and Bomba Festival
Village Park Day

CHILD CARE
APM Child Care Center
Ferguson Child Care Center
McKinley Child Care Center
Parent and Infant Center

EDUCATION
De Burgos Elementary School
Dunbar Elementary School
Ferguson Elementary School
Hartranft computer lab
Hartranft Elementary School
Hartranft Head Start
Hartranft PAL
Hope Partnership for Education
Kensington CAPA
La Salle Academy
Ludlow Elementary School
Ludlow Head Start
McKinley Elementary School
Moffet Elementary School
Rivera Parent Resource Center
Spells Writing Lab
Temple University
Welsh Elementary School
YouthBuild Charter School

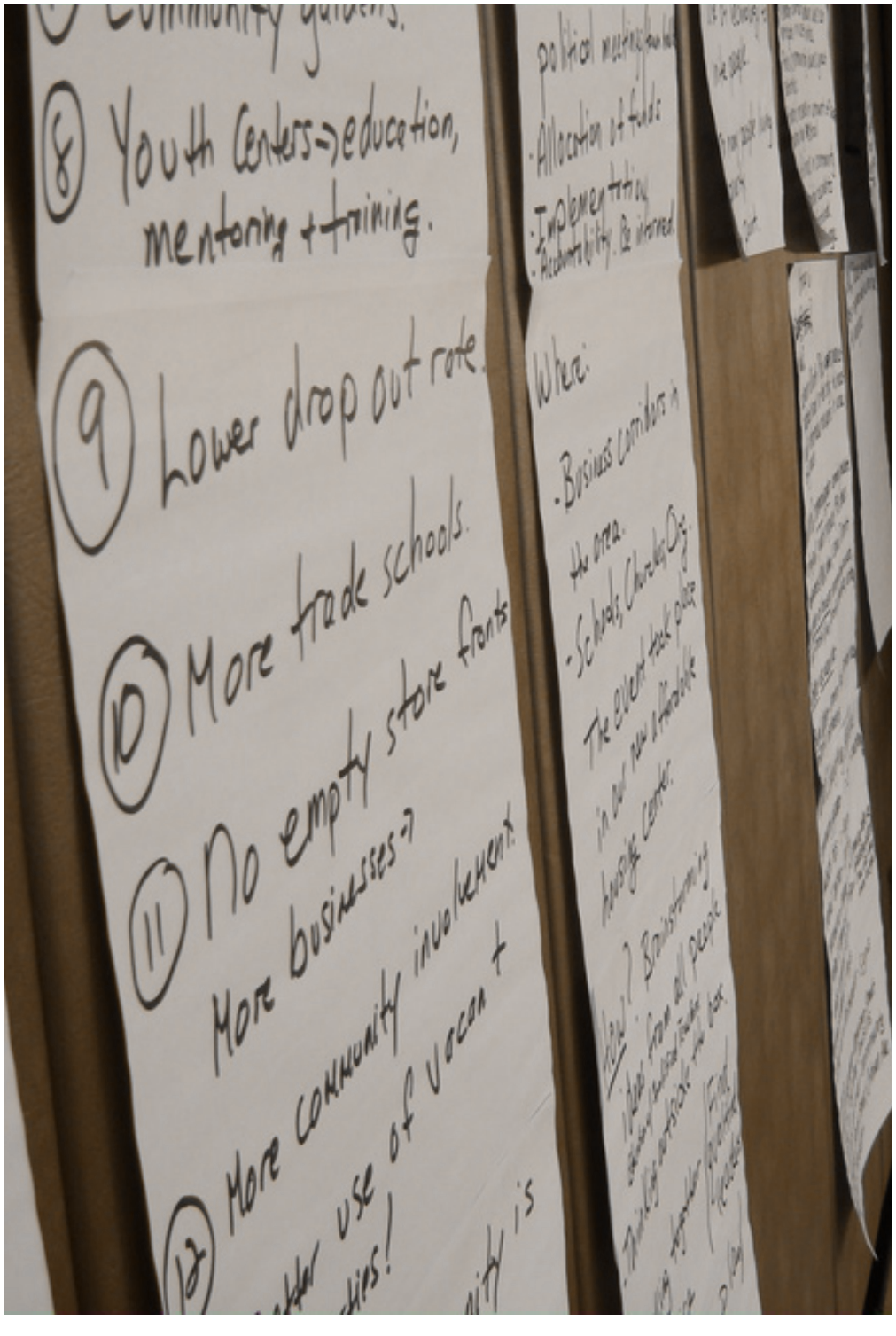
HEALTH
Community Health Collaborative
Girard Medical Center
Kensington Hospital
Temple University Episcopal Hospital

ORGANIZATIONS/AGENCIES
ACT
Al-Aqsa Islamic Society
Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha
Arab-American CDC
Aspira
Casa Providencia
CCIS
Ceiba
Congreso de Latinos Unidos
Eastern North Philadelphia Youth Services Coalition
Empowerment Group
Empowerment Zone Board
Energy Coordinating Agency Training Center
FINANTA
Free Library
Kensington South NAC
MIMIC
NET CDC
Norris Square Civic Association
Norris Square Neighborhood Project
PHA Housing Office
Philabundance
Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Project Rainbow-Drueding Center
Philadelphia Water Department
Salvation Army
Women's Community Revitalization Project
YMCA
Youth United for Change

PARKS AND RECREATION
5th Street Handball Court
8th and Diamond Playground
Brown Recreation Center
Cecil B. Moore Playground
Community gardens
Cruz Recreation Center
Dendy Recreation Center
Department of Parks and Recreation
Fairhill Square
La Placita Park
Ludlow Youth Community Center
Rainbow de Colores Handball Court
Nelson Playground
Norris Square
Pennrose Playground

PHYSICAL
Edison Square (proposed)
Temple Rail Station improvements
Transit Oriented Development
Tree Tenders

RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS
6th Street Mennonite Church
Al Aqsa Islamic Society
Bright Hope Baptist Church
Cookman United Methodist Church
Highway Temple of Deliverance
Living Water United Church of Christ
Midtown Parish United Methodist Church
Norris Square Presbyterian Church
Pentecostal Church of God
St. Boniface Church and School
St. Michael Roman Catholic Church
St. Peter Claver Catholic Worker House
Temple Presbyterian Church
West Kensington Ministries



V PROCESS

Work on this plan began in the summer of 2010, when APM recruited a team of 11 volunteers to interview 83 local leaders: pastors and politicians, educators and artists, block captains and non-profit managers, among others. Each local leader was asked to evaluate the community. What were its strengths and weaknesses? What opportunities did they see for the community, and what threats did it face?

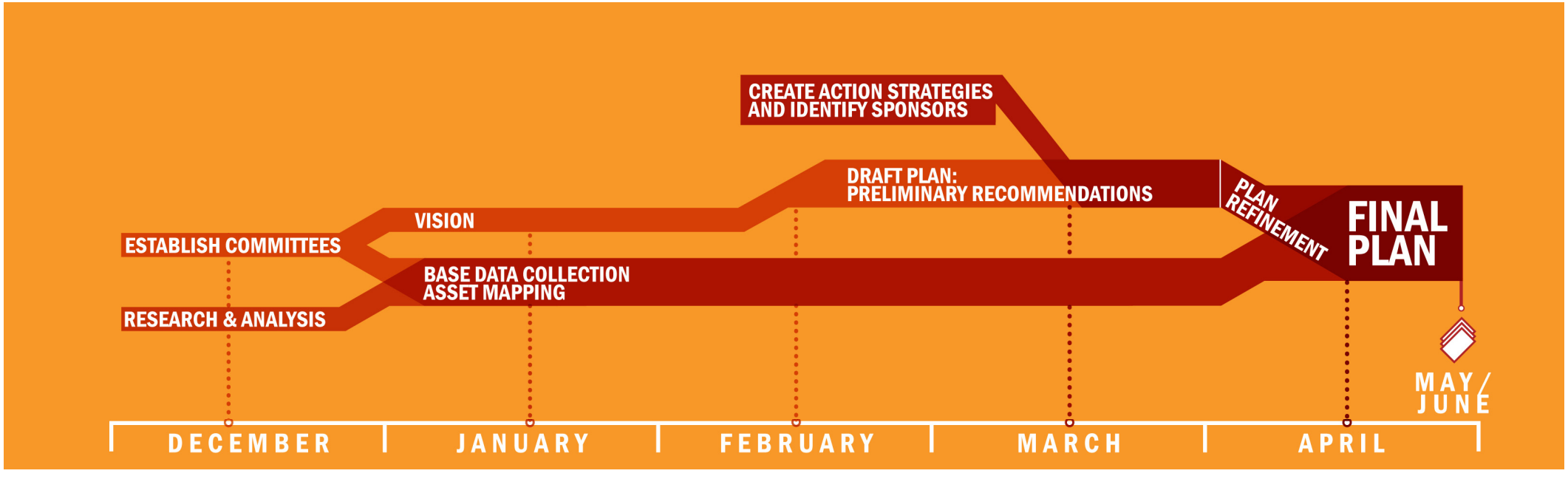
The portrait that emerged from those interviews was that of a diverse community with considerable human and institutional capital and a rapidly improving physical landscape. Those strengths were countered, the community leaders said, by crime and safety concerns, lack of meaningful collaboration among local organizations and too much reliance on government programs and subsidies by residents and institutions alike.

In November, the broader community was invited to join in, beginning with a well-attended Community Visioning Event at Kensington CAPA High School. There, working neighbor-to-neighbor, residents crafted the outlines of a vision for the area, while producing a lengthy community to-do list.

LISC and APM distilled that list into the seven focus areas: 1) Physical Environment, 2) Income and Wealth, 3) Economic Development, 4) Education, Children and Youth, 5) Healthy Environment and Lifestyles, 6) Leadership, and 7) Arts and Culture.

Resident-led committees were formed to dive deeper into each program area. They collected data. They mapped assets. They sat side by side with city officials, organization and institution leaders, and talked to local and national experts who were brought in by LISC and APM to share lessons from other communities.

Finally, the committees settled on a host of specific, real-world actions, and assigned those jobs to actual people and organizations within the community. This report reflects their hard work, and serves as a roadmap for achieving our vision.



SCHEDULE OF PLANNING ACTIVITIES

DECEMBER

- Kick Off Meeting to inform the community of the planning process and timeline.
- Research and analysis into existing conditions.

JANUARY

- Community Meeting to review visioning results and existing conditions data, map local assets.

FEBRUARY

- Community Meeting to develop vision statement and program area goals.
- Crime and Safety Roundtable with National LISC presentation on Community Safety Initiative.

MARCH

- Community Meeting to develop strategies, action steps, and sponsors.
- Education Roundtable to review education strategies.
- Community Meeting to review best practices from other communities.

APRIL

- Community meeting to review the draft plan and identify priorities.
- Leaders Roundtable to review draft plan.
- Community meeting to identify early action projects.

JUNE

Roll out of final plan!

Top: Posters for the Visioning Events were translated into different languages reflecting the diversity of the community.
Bottom: Participants at the Community Visioning Event spent the day with their neighbors to imagine their future.

COMMUNITY VISIONING EVENT

On November 13, 2010, **211** people came out to Kensington CAPA High School to meet their neighbors, share a meal, enjoy youth group performances, and dream about the future. Participants were broken into small groups to imagine their community in the year 2020 and then report back to the whole group.

They came up with a range of ideas that focused on COMMUNITY, BUSINESSES, EDUCATION, YOUTH, HOUSING, AFFORDABILITY, CRIME, and ACTIVITIES. The ideas fell within the program areas as follows:

30% of the ideas addressed **Education, Children & Youth** and called for better educational opportunities, more parent involvement, better graduation rates, more activities and places for children and youth to go, and more opportunities for their voice to be heard.

23% of the ideas addressed the **Physical Environment**, with vacant land management and transformation, and a mix of housing touched on most frequently.

17% of the ideas addressed **Healthy Environment and Lifestyles** with participants envisioning a place that was safe, healthy and green.

11% of the ideas addressed **Leadership** with participants expressing the need for more a united and engaged community and better collaboration.

8% of the ideas addressed **Economic Development** with a vision of a thriving retail center with new and diverse businesses.

8% of the ideas addressed **Income & Wealth** with participants calling for more jobs and a better trained workforce.

3% of the ideas addressed **Arts & Culture** where artists and the diversity of the community would be promoted.

The responses generated through the stakeholder interviews and the community visioning event form the basis of the Vision Statement and Program Area Goals for the Quality of Life Plan. This Plan reflects the hard work of our community members, and serves as a roadmap for achieving our vision.

What is your vision?

"Ownership
Stability
Self pride
Citizenship
Responsibility"

"We want a better future for our children"

"We want the best neighborhood we can have for everyone"

"We want companies to invest in our neighborhood"

"No drop outs"

"The end of drugs in the community"

"More businesses"

"Cleaner, safer streets"

"More community involvement"

"Greenest neighborhood in the city"

"Better use of vacant properties"