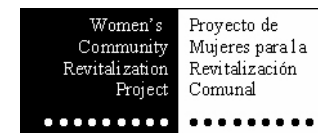


Our Community Plan:



a shared vision for our neighborhood in
Eastern North Philadelphia



Wilson Associates, Inc.
_INTERFACE STUDIO LLC

May . 2009

Acknowledgements

This comprehensive community-driven planning effort was organized by the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP) and the Eastern North Philadelphia Coalition (ENPC) and made possible by a Neighborhood Planning Grant from the Wachovia Regional Foundation. Special thanks to:

Project Funding

Wachovia Regional Foundation

Eastern North Philadelphia Coalition

Catholic Worker House

Circle of Hope Church

Congreso de Latinos Unidos

Drueding Center/Project Rainbow

Friends Neighborhood Guild

Kensington Gardens Homeowners Association

Kensington South NAC

Liberti Church

Mt. Tabor AME Church

Service Employees International Union 32BJ

St. Malachy's Catholic Church

Temple Presbyterian Church

West Poplar NAC

Women's Community Revitalization Project

Steering Committee Members

David Bartelt, Temple University, Department of Geography & Urban Studies

Angel Coleman, Girard Coalition, Inc.

Anne Marie Collins, Drueding Center/Project Rainbow

Luz Colon, Office of Councilman Bill Greenlee

Felicia Coward, Friends Neighborhood Guild

Patricia DeCarlo, Norris Square Civic Association

Justin DiBerardinis, Office of Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez

Mark Edwards, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)

David Fecteau, Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)

Joshua Grace, Circle of Hope Church

Zeina El-Halabi, Arab American CDC

Bronal Harris, Althea Gibson Community Education & Tennis Center

Rev. Dr. Valeria Harvell, Temple Presbyterian Church

Steve Huber, Liberti Church

Rev. Martha Lang, Mt. Tabor AME Church

Nora Lichtash, Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)

Conchetta Logan, Office of State Representative W. Curtis Thomas

Lisa Maiello, community resident, Kensington South NAC

Deborah McColloch, Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD)

Jean Norek, St. Peter Claver Catholic Worker House

Nilda Ruiz, Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM)

Guillermo Salas, Jr., Hispanic Association of Contractors and Engineers (HACE)

Carmen Sousa, Office of State Senator Christine M. Tartaglione

Carolyne Williams, Kensington Garden Home Owners Association

Subcommittee Members

Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings Subcommittee

Anne Marie Collins, Drueding Center/Project Rainbow
Luz Colon, Office of Councilman Bill Greenlee
Patricia DeCarlo, Norris Square Civic Association
Justin DiBerardinis, Office of Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez
David Fecteau, Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)
Rose Gray, Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM)
Rev. Dr. Valeria Harvell, Temple Presbyterian Church
Curtis Holmes, community resident
JoAnn Jones, Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD)
Nora Lichtash, Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)
Lisa Maiello, community resident, Kensington South NAC
Matt Ruben, Northern Liberties Neighborhood Association (NLNA)

Affordable Housing Subcommittee

Doris Berris, community resident, Temple Presbyterian Church and Women's Community Revitalization Project
Ruby Huntley, community resident, Temple Presbyterian Church
Dana Kenney, community resident, Kensington South NAC
Shirley Latham, community resident, Women's Community Revitalization Project
Timothy McDonald, Onion Flats
Chris Paul, Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)
Nicole Whittaker, Drueding Center/Project Rainbow

Economic Development Subcommittee

Allison Anderson Acevedo, resident, Office of State Representative W. Curtis Thomas
Kenneth Austin, community resident, Women's Community Revitalization Project
Paul Ayelsworth, Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP)
Danny Brown, Project Connect: A New Beginning
Angel Coleman, Girard Avenue Coalition
Zeina El-Halabi, Arab American CDC
Lindsay Gilmour, Green Village
George Matysik, Philabundance
Matt McFarland, Circle of Hope Church
Paul Parkhill, Greenpoint Manufacturing Design Center
Shanta Schacter, community resident, New Kensington CDC
Albert Swann, Project Connect: A New Beginning
Nicky Uy, The Food Trust

Youth and Human Services Subcommittee

Jane Austin, Drueding Center/Project Rainbow
Rosalie Bermudez, community resident, Kensington South NAC
Marita Fitzpatrick, community resident, Ludlow Elementary School
Ron Glover, 181 Kids Zone
Nicole Hines, National Comprehensive Center for Fathers
Richelle Phillips, GrandFamily Resource Center
Bunmi Samuel, community resident, Friends Neighborhood Guild
Brady Sanders, Lutheran Settlement House
Megan Thomson, LaSalle Academy
Thomas Warren, Drueding Center/Project Rainbow

Community Support and Participation

Additionally, many neighborhood residents and stakeholders participated in the creation of this community-driven plan. The plan's length and breadth reflect the myriad views expressed at community meetings, in interviews, and in surveys. Thanks to all who volunteered their time and opinions.

WCRP Planning Team

Nora Lichtash, Executive Director
Jill Feldstein, Meeting Coordinator and Facilitator, Vacant Land Subcommittee
Karyntha Cadogan, Affordable Housing Subcommittee
Carolyn Haynes, Economic Development Subcommittee
Bill Thomas, Youth and Human Services Subcommittee
Marcus Presley, Public Outreach
Stephanie Latham, Resident Survey Distribution and Collection
Benjamin Jones, Resident Survey Distribution and Collection
Chrissy Caggiano, Resident Survey Distribution and Collection

Planning Consultants

Wilson Associates, Inc.

Lamar Wilson

_INTERFACE STUDIO LLC

Scott Page, Principal

Mindy Watts, Associate

Stacey Chen, Planner & Urban Designer

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1	Environmental Conditions and Open Space.....	55
A. Background.....	2	Topography, Drainage and Environmental Contamination.....	55
B. Challenges and Opportunities.....	3	Trees.....	57
C. Action Steps.....	4	Parks and Play Space.....	58
<i>Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings</i>	4	Transportation.....	61
<i>Affordable Housing</i>	5	Street Network.....	61
<i>Economic Development</i>	7	Public Transit.....	62
<i>Youth and Human Services</i>	8	Commuting Patterns.....	62
<i>Quality of Life</i>	9	Pedestrian Conditions.....	63
I. Introduction	11	Bicycling Conditions.....	63
A. Basis for the Plan.....	12	Quality of Life.....	64
B. The Planning Area.....	12	Neighborhood.....	64
C. Acknowledgments.....	14	Crime and Safety	64
II. Planning Process	19	Trash and Vandalism	64
A. WCRP and ENPC Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations.....	20	Summary.....	66
B. Community Outreach and Engagement.....	20	IV. Action Steps	67
C. Other Data Collection and Research.....	24	A. Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings	68
III. Existing Conditions	25	B. Affordable Housing	72
Context.....	26	C. Economic Development	78
Prior Plans.....	30	D. Youth and Human Services	82
Neighborhood Profile – a demographic overview.....	32	E. Quality of Life	90
Population.....	32	V. Feasibility	97
Race and Ethnicity.....	34	Overview.....	98
Age.....	35	Feasibility Factors	98
Educational Attainment and Employment.....	36	Five-Year Plan	99
Income and Poverty.....	38	VI. Performance Measurements and Indicators of Change	105
Homeownership and Affordability.....	38	A. Data-Driven Related Indicators	107
Physical Conditions.....	42	B. Community Plan-Driven Indicators	108
Built Form.....	42	Appendix	109
Zoning and Land Use.....	43	Financing.....	110
Institutions.....	46	A. Local Level Funding Sources	110
Commercial Uses.....	47	B. State Level Funding Sources	111
Vacancy.....	49	C. Federal Level Funding Sources	111
Building Condition	50		
Public Ownership	52		
Recent Investment	53		

List of Figures

Figure 1. Neighborhood Base Map.....	13	Figure 47. Public Transit.....	62
Figure 2. ENPC Member Organizations	15	Figure 48. Travel Time to Work	62
Figure 3. Former route of the North Pennsylvania Railroad line.....	27	Figure 49. Means of Transportation to Work	62
Figure 4. Change in Land Use over Time.....	27	Figure 50. Crime: All Serious Incidents Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006	65
Figure 5. Detail of change in land use.....	27	Figure 51. Crime: All Serious Incidents Against Property Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006	65
Figure 6. Incentive Zones.....	28	Figure 52. Crime: All Serious Incidents Against Persons Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006	65
Figure 7. Market Pressure	29	Figure 53. Vacant Land Quantified	68
Figure 8. Population Change, 1990-2000.....	33	Figure 54. Large Parcels of Vacant Land and Significant Vacant Buildings	70
Figure 9. 2000 Race and Ethnicity.....	34	Figure 55. Potential Future Use of Vacant Land	71
Figure 10. 2000 Household Language and Linguistic Isolation.....	34	Figure 56. Existing Vacant Land Suitable for Residential Redevelopment	72
Figure 11. 2000 Age Pyramid	35	Figure 57. 6th Street Infill Opportunity Before and After	74
Figure 12. 2000 Educational Attainment	36	Figure 58. Potential Housing Renovation	76
Figure 13. Public School State-wide Testing Performance, 2006-2007	37	Figure 59. Commercial Corridor Strategic Approaches	80
Figure 14. Public High School Performance, 2007.....	37	Figure 60. Corner Stores and Youth Programs	81
Figure 15. 2000 Median Household Income.....	38	Figure 61. Hancock Park Diagram	88
Figure 16. 2000 Income and Poverty	38	Figure 62. Hancock Park Before and After	88
Figure 17. Median Residential Sale Price by Census Block Group, 2001-2002.....	39	Figure 63. Cruz Rec Center Before and After	89
Figure 18. Median Residential Sale Price by Census Block Group, 2006-2007.....	39	Figure 64. Cruz Rec Center Diagram	89
Figure 19. Residential Sale Price Trend, 2000-2008.....	39	Figure 65. Tree Planting and Stormwater Management Treatments	91
Figure 20. Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2000.....	40	Figure 66. Phytoremediation Diagram	92
Figure 21. Median Gross Rent as Percentage of Household Income, 2000.....	40	Figure 67. Rendering of Potential Phytoremediation Demonstration Project on American Street	92
Figure 22. Percent of Mortgage Loans Subprime 2006	41	Figure 68. Benson Park Diagram	93
Figure 23. Percent of Purchase Loans with a Second (or Piggy-Back) Loan, 2006.....	41	Figure 69. Benson Park improvements Before and After	93
Figure 24. Figure Ground Map.....	42	Figure 70. Benson Park entrance Before and After	93
Figure 25. Zoning Map.....	43	Figure 71. Gardens and Parks	95
Figure 26. Zoning of Vacant Parcels.....	44		
Figure 27. Land Use Map.....	45		
Figure 28. Neighborhood Institutions.....	46		
Figure 29. Commercial Properties	47		
Figure 30. Commercial Use by Type.....	47		
Figure 31. Neighborhood Groceries	48		
Figure 32. Comparison of Past and Present Commercial and Industrial Use.....	48		
Figure 33. Vacancy Map.....	49		
Figure 34. Building Condition.....	50		
Figure 35. Building Condition Grading System.....	51		
Figure 36. Public Ownership.....	52		
Figure 37. Property Sales Since 2000.....	53		
Figure 38. Property Sales Trend, 2001-2007.....	53		
Figure 39. New and Proposed Development	54		
Figure 40. Topography	55		
Figure 41. Impervious Surfaces.....	56		
Figure 42. Tree Cover.....	57		
Figure 43. Street Trees and New Trees.....	57		
Figure 44. Open Space Ratio	58		
Figure 45. Public Open Space.....	59		
Figure 46. Street Network	61		

List of Tables

Table 1.	Land Use Breakdown	45
Table 2.	Building Condition Breakdown by Building Type	51
Table 3.	Building Condition Breakdown for All Buildings	51
Table 4.	Potential, Projected Housing Production in Plan Area	73
Table 5.	Potential, Projected Housing Renovation in Plan Area	77

List of Appendix Tables

Appendix Table 1: Rental Housing Financing Scenario	112
Appendix Table 2: Homeownership Financing Scenario	112
Appendix Table 3: Housing Affordability: 2007-2008 Area Median Income Limits	113
Appendix Table 4: City of Philadelphia and PHFA Income Limits	113



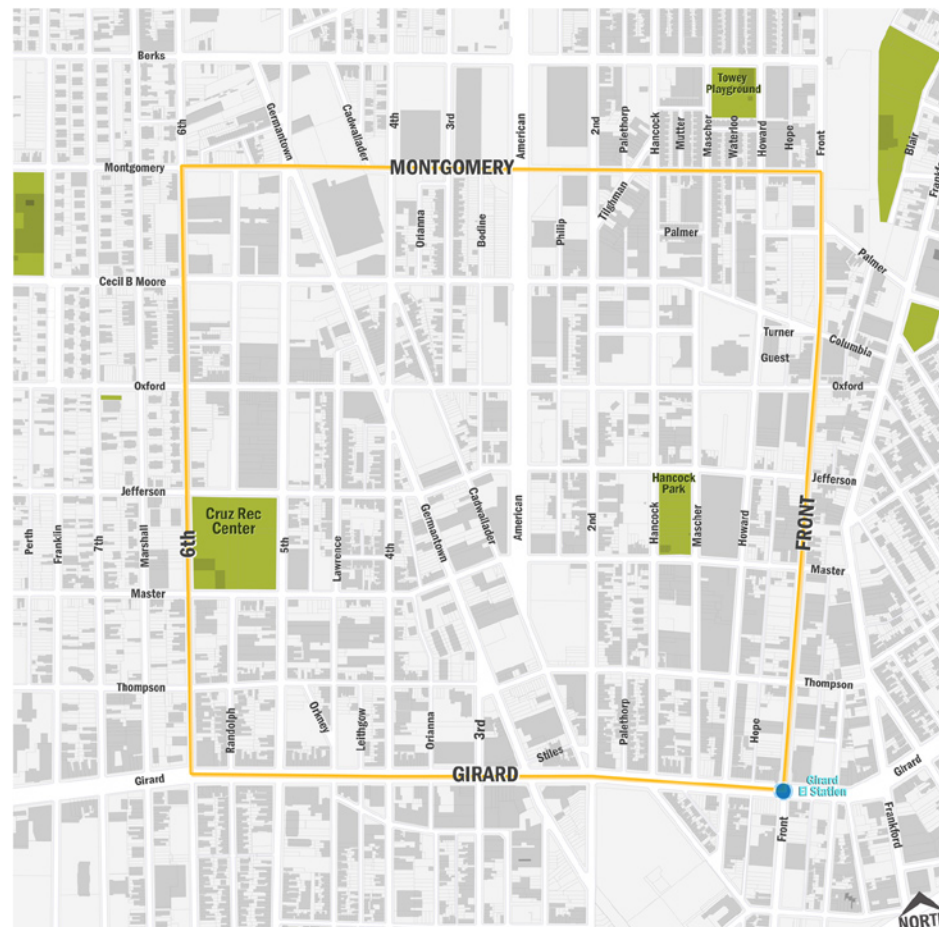
executive summary

2 Executive Summary

A. Background

This community plan which focuses on a 60 square-block area bordered by Montgomery Avenue on the north, Girard Avenue on the south, N. Front on the east and N. 6th Street on the west was developed as a collaborative effort by WCRP, members of the Eastern North Philadelphia Coalition and representatives from other neighborhood organizations. It represents an important milestone in the evolution of each organization and in the evolution of relationships between residents and stakeholders of the neighborhood in this part of the city. Over the past year, 435 people have participated in 37 formal and informal meetings to discuss the future of this neighborhood and how to make it a stronger place and healthier community in which to live, work, worship, learn and play. Informing and guiding the vision for achieving this goal are principles and values that center on one key, uncompromising idea: that lower-income residents and other stakeholders of the neighborhood not only want to see their neighborhood improve, but are determined to be involved in its future development for the benefit of those here now and those who will come in the future. Through it all, a special appreciation for the people of the neighborhood and the organizations who serve it was reinforced, and a genuine understanding of the value of collaboration emerged as the plan took shape over the year.

Planning, by its nature, is visionary, projecting general and specific actions and images for a better community, functionally, physically, socially, economically, and environmentally. The different constituencies and interests that spent countless hours and enormous energy to create the vision outlined in this report arrived at a consensus on many programs, projects and activities for implementation to take place over the next five years. Part of the consensus was agreement on the need to be both visionary and practical in recommending programs, projects and activities that met the neighborhood's test of "feasibility." Recommendations were weighed on the basis of whether and to what extent resources required to carry them out are currently available or reasonably expected to be available in the near term, subject to successfully competing for them in either case. In those circumstances where neither prospect is likely, but where there is a deep conviction that the community will advocate for the required resources, the plan projects the implementation of such programs, projects and activities for the latter period of the five-year term.



Neighborhood plan area.

This plan acknowledges, accepts, and appreciates that resource requirements are broadly defined to include human, financial, and political capital. WCRP and ENPC are committed to leveraging and combining all three categories of resources, starting with their own, to ensure successful management and completion of the neighborhood plan.

B. Challenges and Opportunities

The shift from heavy industry and manufacturing to a service economy has had an enormous impact on this Eastern North Philadelphia community. Emptied of jobs when the factories shut down, the neighborhood now suffers a high rate of poverty, low educational attainment, and high unemployment rates. Vacancy and neglect have created a fragmented neighborhood with long stretches of empty land or broken windows, detracting from community morale and public perception of place while also contributing to a sense that the neighborhood is not safe.

The challenge of such high levels of vacancy can also be seen as a unique opportunity. The area today is home to a remarkably diverse neighborhood in terms of ethnicity and race, income, religion, and tenure. With its excellent transit options, amount of developable land, and stock of historic factory and warehouse buildings, the neighborhood is experiencing dynamic change as investment begins to convert spaces into new residential and creative work spaces. New market-rate residential conversions and rehabilitated rowhomes have helped to restore the neighborhood's former density and vibrancy, but have brought with them rising housing costs, which pose a threat to long-term and lower-income residents. As the neighborhood continues to evolve, the main challenge is to manage change in a balanced way that meets the needs of all residents while building community among all neighbors, new and old. The opportunities for doing so revolve around community building, enhancing the public realm, managing and developing land as a resource for the community, and enhancing the economic and overall well-being of the people of this neighborhood through the actions proposed below:

Community Building

- Organize residents as proactive participants in neighborhood change
- Build the sense of community among neighbors
- Create a breadth of opportunities for youth
- Celebrate and preserve local diversity
- Welcome change while preserving existing residents and assets

Public Realm

- Improve neighborhood safety and stewardship
- Promote equitable development in which lower-income people participate in and benefit from revitalization
- Increase partnerships and coordination between local service providers
- Revitalize existing open space assets
- Grow greener open spaces



The challenge of vacancy also presents an opportunity.

Land Management and Development

- Manage vacant land
- Rebuild the urban fabric
- Utilize public land for public good
- Ensure sustainable affordable housing opportunities

Income, Employment and Well-Being

- Put the neighborhood back to work (both residents and commercial corridors)
- Support healthy habits and lifestyles

C. Action Steps

Below is a summary of the action steps of the plan for the early phases of implementation as established by the Steering Committee, with input from the four subcommittees. The priorities and the underlying goals and objectives are described more fully in the main text of the report which follows. The aggregate cost associated with undertaking and completing the early predevelopment work for all the priorities recommended below ranges from approximately \$215,000 to \$325,000 and is to be raised from potential financing sources that have traditionally supported WCRP and ENPC members, as well as new sources that will be identified in the months and years ahead as the plan is rolled out and presented to various other potential supporters.

With respect to the organizational support on the part of WCRP and ENPC members needed to sponsor and/or carry out these recommendations, there is a strong indication by many groups that participated in the planning process of their interest in and capacity for doing so. It is the goal of the sponsors of the plan, individually and collectively, to use the financial and human capital generated by the plan to help secure any required political support for it, and vice versa.



Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings

The economic shift away from heavy industry and manufacturing has left vacant holes where massive factories once operated, prompting the hollowing out of the neighborhood's stock of worker housing and small-scale businesses. The majority of blocks in the neighborhood host vacant land or abandoned buildings, and gaps in the urban fabric are the norm rather than the exception. Vacant land in the neighborhood makes up 19% of the total land area (equivalent to 32 acres) and another 4% of the land hosts vacant buildings. Door-to-door surveys in the neighborhood revealed that 70% of the residents considered vacant land to be a problem for them or their neighbors. With such high levels of vacancy, the neighborhood is lacking in other land uses, such as green space, affordable housing, commercial retail, and community facilities. Strategies for reducing the amount of vacant land and abandoned property should use a two-pronged approach involving stabilization and management of such sites as a preliminary step to ultimately reclaiming them for redevelopment purposes, focusing initially on areas with existing investments and community assets to "build off of." The following action steps are a community effort to influence land uses, vacant public land reuse, and vacant land maintenance.

- ✓ Create a Vacant Parcel Database to facilitate the cataloguing of vacant lots according to ease of acquisition. The database would help relevant entities enter into negotiations with public and private owners to convey ownership and/or commit property for reuses that help facilitate goals of this plan.
- ✓ Support the current research of ENPC identifying best practices of community land trusts across the country as part of their assessment of the feasibility of creating a formal Community Land Trust to help manage vacant and redeveloped properties in the neighborhood.
- ✓ Form a Land Maintenance Collaborative to explore potential working relationships with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and their affiliated contractors for maintaining and transforming vacant lots; use this mechanism to train residents as volunteer code enforcers using the 311 system and integrate with proposed block captain system.
- ✓ Sustain the ongoing work and interaction with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission to remap and rezone the neighborhood to achieve the priorities reflected in this plan.

Projected Predevelopment Costs: \$25,000 to \$40,000



Potential interim use for vacant land that cleans the soil and beautifies the neighborhood.



Rendering of 6th Street infill housing.

Affordable Housing

In recent years a new wave of investment has begun to reach into the neighborhood in the form of development pressure from Northern Liberties to the south and Fishtown to the east. Several former factory buildings in the neighborhood have been converted into residences. While adaptive reuse of the area's historic structures is a welcomed trend, new market-rate housing has also made the neighborhood less affordable to many existing residents. Home prices and rents rose dramatically between 2001 and 2007 and housing cost burdens also increased. On average, median sales prices jumped \$90,500 over this period. More than 7 out of 10 people surveyed did not believe there were affordable places in the neighborhood. The action steps aim to preserve existing affordable housing in the neighborhood and create new affordable and mixed-income housing opportunities.

- ✓ Form a Housing Preservation Collaborative to help identify existing clearinghouses through which information on resources can be efficiently disseminated through ENPC members and block captains to residents. Advocate for new resources and preservation of existing resources through existing channels and target those resources to residential blocks adjacent to or in close proximity to vacant sites targeted for redevelopment
- ✓ Begin predevelopment phases for affordable and mixed-income housing on the 6th Street to Randolph Street site (between Jefferson and Oxford) and the Southwest quadrant scattered sites (between 4th and 6th, Girard and Master), including starting the negotiations with public and private owners to secure site control as the first step of assessing project feasibility.

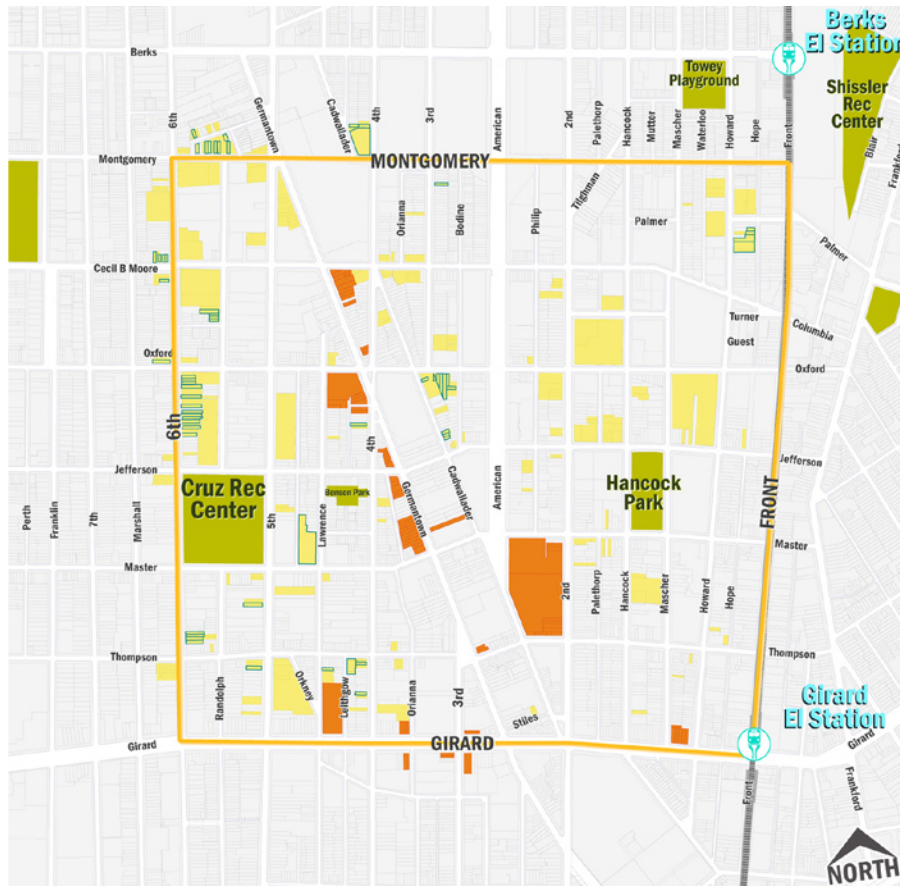
Projected Predevelopment Costs: \$45,000 to \$75,000



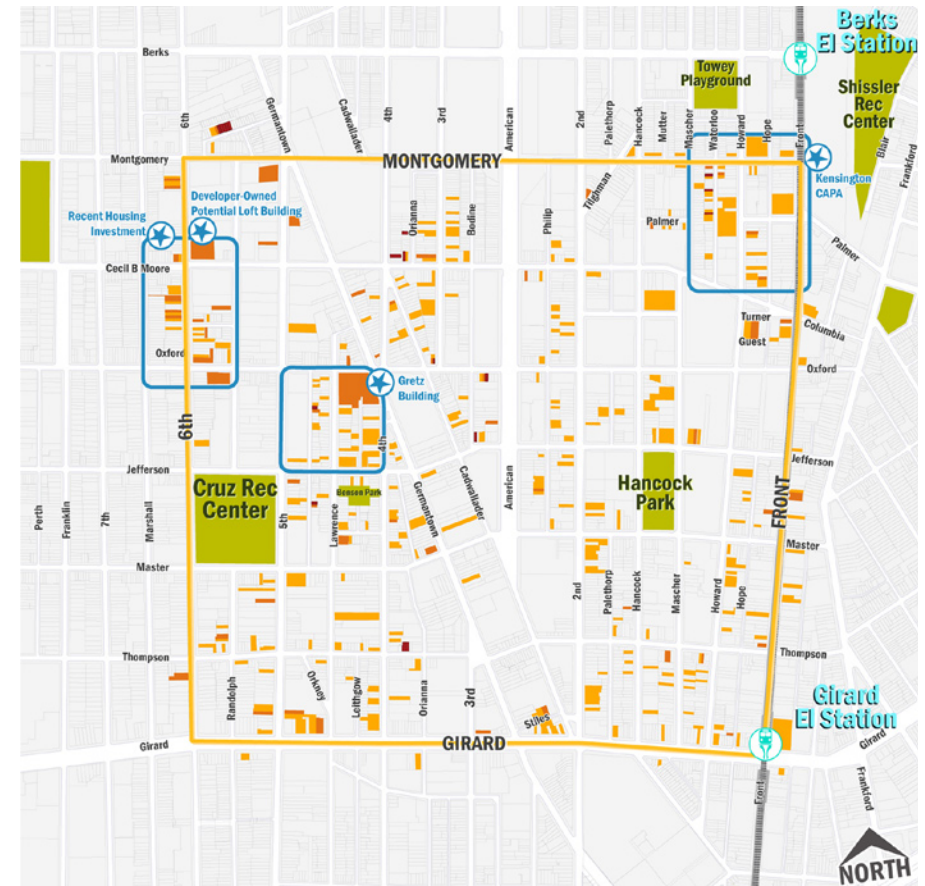
New construction and recent housing in the neighborhood.



Left to right: examples of fair, distressed, and failing structures.



Existing vacant land suitable for potential residential development



Potential housing renovation target areas

- ★ Catalyst
- Potential Rehab Cluster
- C: Fair
- D: Distressed
- F: Failing

Economic Development

The neighborhood suffers from low levels of educational attainment, high levels of unemployment, and high levels of commercial turnover and vacancy. Census data from 2000 shows that 33.5% of youth aged 16 to 19 have either dropped out of school or graduated from high school but remain unemployed or not in the labor force, more than double the city-wide rate of 15%. The neighborhood's dropout rate of 22% was more than twice the city average, and 45% of the adult population did not have a high school diploma. While these statistics are alarming, community stakeholders believe that they severely underestimate the problem, suggesting that, in fact, the high school dropout rate is much higher in the neighborhood. In 2000, 10% of the neighborhood's adult population was unemployed and 51% were not in the labor force. The following economic development action steps seek to address the goals of job training, employment, affordable retail opportunities, and healthy commercial corridors.

- ✓ Secure resources to support an Economic Development Coordinator position to provide staff support to help operate two task forces:
 - A Workforce Development Task Force whose role will be to identify existing resources for clean and green jobs and training programs for residents and clean and green business opportunities for entrepreneurs, and to create a local jobs clearinghouse and channel information through ENPC members and block captains.
 - A Business Support Task Force whose role will be to:
 - * explore, in collaboration with Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center (GMDC), opportunities to facilitate the redevelopment of derelict industrial properties, and identify potential underutilized commercial kitchens in local churches and day care centers that may be appropriate for commercial kitchen incubators; and
 - * explore in collaboration with The Food Trust the feasibility of launching a Corner Store Initiative to engage local stores in providing inexpensive, fresh and healthy products.

Projected Predevelopment Costs: \$75,000 to \$105,000



Green jobs are a priority.



Commercial corridor strategic approaches



The neighborhood offers robust youth programs that work to give youth a voice in planning the future of the community. Source: WCRP



Rendering of improvements to Hancock Park.

Youth and Human Services

The neighborhood boasts numerous service providers, yet many residents in the neighborhood are not aware of all the services, leading to underutilization. Youth and child services are particularly important in the neighborhood. Youth under the age of 18 made up a third of the neighborhood population in 2000, far higher than the city average. However, many school-age youth performed poorly on State tests and had high dropout rates. Generally speaking, neighborhood students perform best on State tests for reading and math performance earlier on, with grade-level scores falling over time. With low reading and math proficiency by high school, low SAT scores, and less than one in three local public high school graduates attending college, the incentive to remain in school is severely lacking. Additionally, some 70 school-age children in the neighborhood are currently served by unlicensed after-school programs. To address these issues, the following actions steps were devised.

- ✓ Provide support to youth development work and corresponding programs operated by the Friends Neighborhood Guild and the Eastern North Philadelphia Youth Services Coalition to help expand and enhance apprenticeship and other skill-building activities.
- ✓ Provide support to daycare advocacy groups and WCRP's facilities development work to:
 - * help unlicensed daycare centers and facilities comply with health and safety codes and remove other barriers to licensing in order to increase the supply of such facilities serving the neighborhood; and;
 - * help licensed facilities improve and expand their programs to better meet the needs of the families in the neighborhood.
- ✓ Form a task force to catalogue, update and disseminate information on local social and human resources available to neighborhood residents.
- ✓ Provide support to Kensington South NAC's greening/open space program activities to enhance maintenance, safety and functions of open space and play space throughout the neighborhood.

Projected Predevelopment Costs: \$45,000 to \$60,000

Quality of Life

The neighborhood is viewed as a friendly, supportive, family-oriented place; however it is also plagued by quality of life issues. Crime is perceived by residents to be one of the biggest problems in the neighborhood, although most residents also reported that they felt safe in the area. Litter, trash dumping and graffiti are pervasive and cited by 1 out of 2 residents surveyed as a problem in the neighborhood. Tree cover is insufficient; at 5%, it falls far short of the recommended 30% for the City. Residents also indicated that the lack of active meeting places or gathering spaces in the neighborhood poses a challenge to new neighbors interested in building a sense of community with longer-term residents. The actions steps outlined below seek to encourage greater community engagement and stewardship, and enhance public health and safety.

- ✓ Coordinate with ENPC members and stakeholders to solicit City Planning Commission support for urban design services through Green Streets/Green Plan for infrastructure improvements to 4-6 priority locations for:
 - * improved and/or raised crosswalks
 - * raised curb heights with accessible ramps
 - * bump-outs and improved sidewalks
 - * street trees, planters, bollards to prevent vehicles from entering pedestrian space, pedestrian scale lighting, and Safe Routes to School signage
 - * rain gardens and phytoremediation projects to help clean and remove harmful materials from the soil using plants
- ✓ Engage in community building activities that enhance quality of life:
 - * reactivate the existing community gardens spread throughout the neighborhood and/or explore the possibility of doing larger-scale urban agriculture on suitably-sized parcels in the area.
 - * sponsor events celebrating local ethnic diversity
- ✓ Organize a block captain communication network for general information dissemination and feedback on all plan action steps as they proceed.
- ✓ Create a neighborhood-based safety/security initiative working with block captains and the corresponding police district office serving the neighborhood.

Projected Predevelopment Costs: \$25,000 to \$40,000



Rendering of streetscape improvements around the Cruz Rec Center entrance at 5th and Jefferson.

I. introduction

12 I. Introduction

A. Basis for the Plan

In July of 2008, the Women's Community Revitalization Project (WCRP), with support from the Eastern North Philadelphia Coalition (ENPC), received a grant from the Wachovia Regional Foundation to lead a resident-driven planning effort in a neighborhood in the Eastern North Philadelphia community bounded by Girard Avenue to the south, Front Street to the east, Montgomery Avenue to the north, and 6th Street to the west. The awarding of the planning grant gave birth to a year-long community planning process that helped produce specific recommendations to ensure the progress and enhance the overall quality of life of this 60 square-block area. As the planning process evolved, WCRP, as the lead agency, and ENPC members and community stakeholders established important principles and goals, to help guide the work and inform specific priorities and recommended action steps outlined in the final plan.

These **guiding principles** are as follows:

- » Preserve existing and develop new affordable housing for low- to moderate income households (for rental and homeownership);
- » Preserve existing and develop new businesses and community facilities that serve the neighborhood;
- » Help residents, business owners, and community organizations protect their assets and build their wealth;
- » Promote equitable development to strengthen the ability of lower-income households to afford and remain in their homes as the neighborhood appreciates in value;
- » Utilize existing publicly-held land for neighborhood benefit;
- » Cultivate a cleaner, greener, healthier, and more sustainable community; and
- » Create opportunities to build and strengthen relationships among people who live, work, worship, play, and learn in the neighborhood.

B. The Planning Area

As depicted on the map, Germantown Avenue cuts diagonally across the neighborhood, but American Street acts as a true dividing line, "a gash" or void that bisects the community from north to south; these formerly thriving corridors, the first commercial, the latter industrial, are now marred by vacancy, creating gaps that fragment the area's residential blocks. Perhaps because of this fragmentation, the people who live, work, worship, study, and learn locally have multiple names for the neighborhood: "Kensington South," "Olde Kensington," "North Philly," "Penn Treaty," "Northern Liberties," and "Ludlow," among them. For the purposes of this plan, the study area is referred to as a section of Eastern North Philadelphia.

However, as confirmed by yet another resident's name for the area, "North of No Libs, South of Fishtown," the urban dynamics at work in surrounding communities influence the neighborhood today and will inform the neighborhood as it evolves in the coming years. As such, the plan adopts a larger view to place this portion of Eastern North Philadelphia in proper context so that the strategic plan of this community is grounded in specific goals, objectives, priorities, and action steps that ensure future investments in:

- » the people of this neighborhood;
- » the physical assets in this neighborhood; and
- » the institutions, businesses and industries that serve and help sustain this neighborhood.

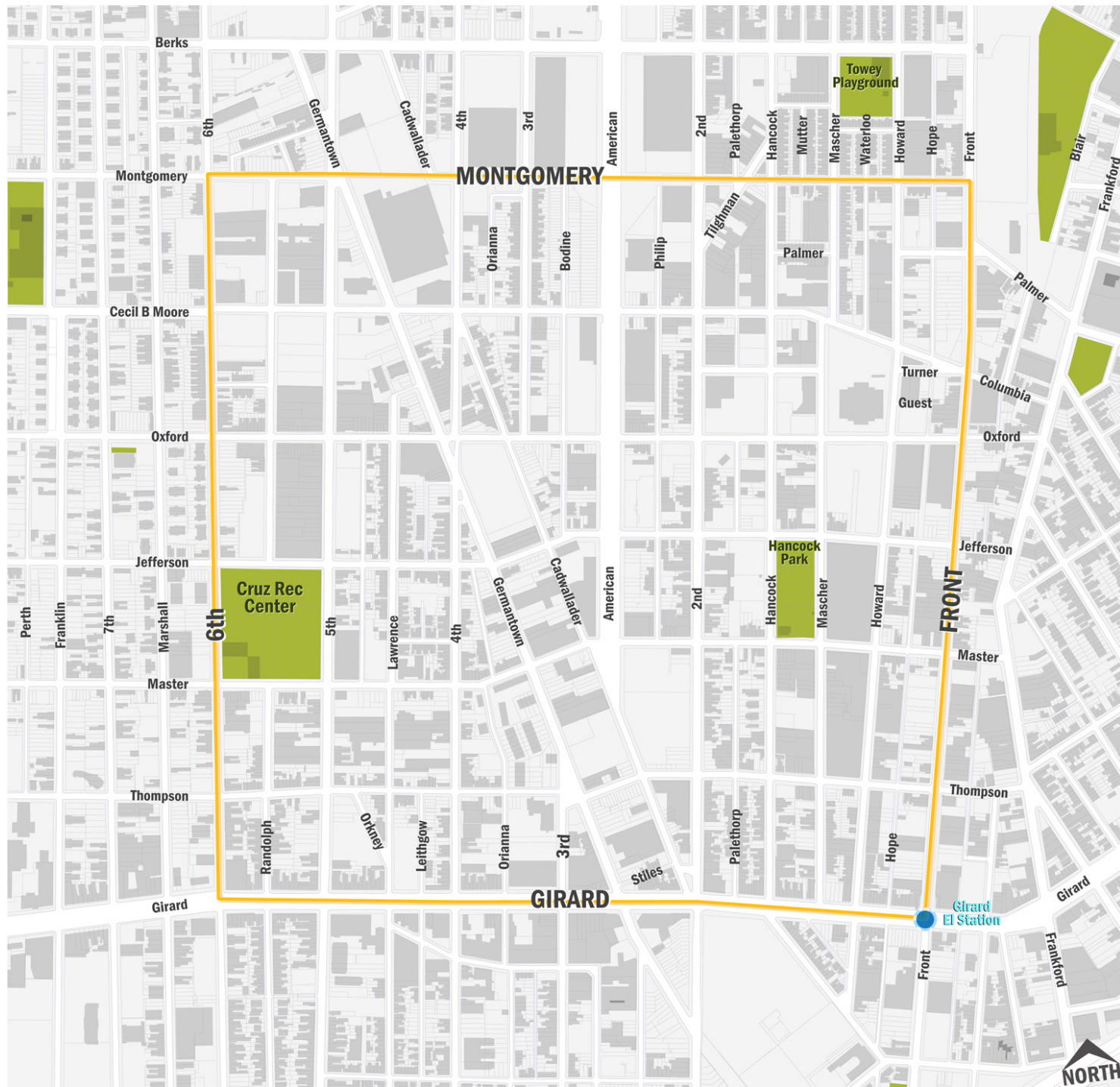


Figure 1. Neighborhood Base Map

14 C. Acknowledgments

WCRP and ENPC place high value on the participation, hard work, and dedication of many, many people, organizations, and entities over this past year whose resources, energies, ideas, and hands helped shape a plan that reflects the shared principles, goals and priorities of the community.

They include:

- » The **Wachovia Regional Foundation** which so generously provided the financial resources and institutional guidance to WCRP and ENPC that enabled our team to complete the planning work and produce this very document.

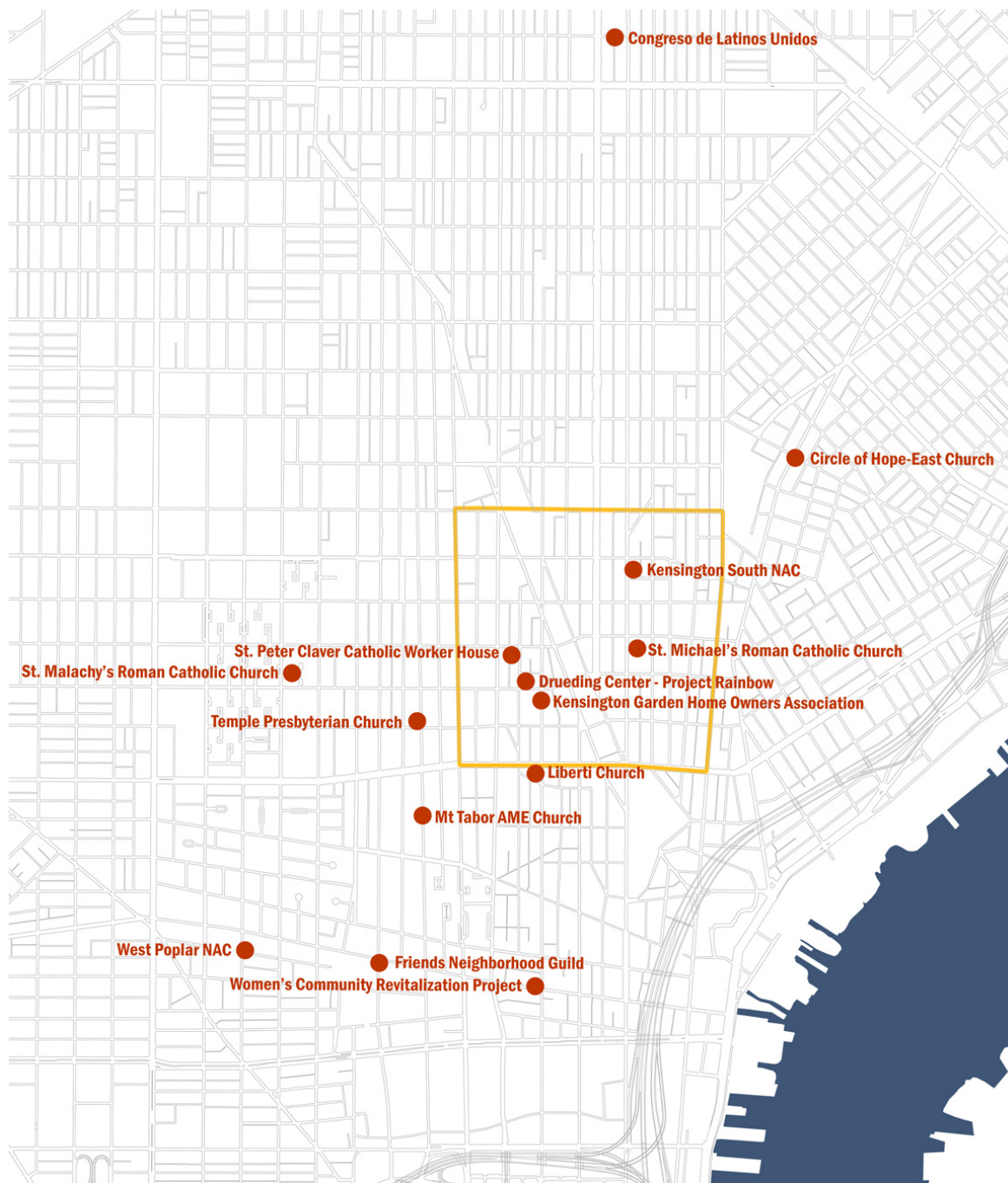


Top: WCRP receives the Wachovia Regional Foundation Neighborhood Planning Grant at the project kick-off celebration at Cruz Recreation Center.

Right: Lisa Nutter, WCRP Board Member, speaks at the kick-off.

Far Right: Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez speaks at the kick-off.

Source: WCRP



» The **ENPC members** listed below who gave of their time and energy to complete this task and remain committed to improving the neighborhood's quality of life through organizing, advocacy and education:

- » Circle of Hope Church
- » Drueiding Center/Project Rainbow
- » Friends Neighborhood Guild
- » Kensington Garden Home Owners Association
- » Liberti Church
- » Mt. Tabor AME Church
- » St. Peter Claver Catholic Worker House
- » Temple Presbyterian Church
- » Women's Community Revitalization Project

Figure 2. ENPC Member Organizations

- » The **community residents, businesses, institutions, and public agencies** who participated in community-wide meetings, and other community-based and community-serving stakeholders who provided counsel, helped us delve deeper into issues that get at the core of problems faced by the neighborhood, and respectfully pushed for actions that challenged conventional wisdom and helped expand all of our thinking about neighborhoods, what “sense of community” really means, and how we practice it. In addition to neighborhood residents, representatives from the following organizations participated in enriched the process in doing so:

- » Arab-American Community Development Corporation
- » Althea Gibson Community Education & Tennis Center
- » Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM)
- » Drueding Center/Project Rainbow
- » The Food Trust
- » Friends Neighborhood Guild
- » Girard Avenue Coalition
- » GrandFamily Resource Center
- » Green Village
- » Greenpoint Manufacturing Design Center
- » Hispanic Association of Contractors and Engineers (HACE)
- » Kensington Gardens Homeowners Association
- » Kensington South NAC
- » LaSalle Academy
- » Liberti Church
- » Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
- » Ludlow Elementary School
- » Lutheran Settlement House
- » Mt. Tabor AME Church
- » National Comprehensive Center for Fathers
- » New Kensington Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)
- » Norris Square Civic Association
- » Northern Liberties Neighbors Association (NLNA)
- » Office of Councilman Bill Greenlee
- » Office of Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sánchez
- » Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD)
- » Office of State Representative W. Curtis Thomas
- » Office of State Senator Christine M. Tartaglione
- » Onion Flats
- » Philabundance
- » Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC)
- » Project Connect: A New Beginning
- » St. Peter Claver Catholic Worker House
- » Temple Presbyterian Church
- » Temple University, Department of Geography & Urban Studies
- » Women’s Community Revitalization Project

- » The strategic **planning consultants** who developed the plan in partnership with the community:

- » Lamar Wilson Associates, Inc.
- » **INTERFACE STUDIO LLC**



A snapshot from our community meeting held September 25th. Source: Kate Houston



Faces of the community throughout the planning process. Source: WCRP



II. planning process

20 II. Planning Process

A. WCRP and ENPC Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations

At the outset of the planning work, WCRP and ENPC committed to an interactive and fully participatory planning process. Throughout the development of the plan, these organizations worked to solicit input from residents of the community who are the principal stakeholders of the products and actions generated by the plan and, therefore, stand to gain or lose the most from the plan's ultimate recommendations. As part of this process, hundreds of residents were asked through surveys, interviews, meetings, and "listening exercises" over the past year to identify their needs, priorities and preferences for their neighborhood. They and organizations serving the neighborhood were invited to participate on a Steering Committee and one of four Subcommittees to help guide the planning process, set goals, and review and make decisions on specific action plans to achieve those goals. The committee work occurred at:

- » quarterly Community Planning Steering Committee meetings with the first occurring in July of 2008 to identify the types of data and other information needed to identify and assess physical, demographic, and quality-of-life characteristics and trends, and to review the work of the subcommittees as they began their work; and
- » monthly Community Planning Subcommittee meetings formed around four specific subject areas that emerged in the early stages of the planning process.
 - » Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings
 - » Affordable Housing
 - » Economic Development
 - » Youth and Human Services

Going forward, the leadership of WCRP and ENPC is committed to supporting two very important actions to ensure that the work of the past year continues to have value; they include:

- » finalizing the plan by ensuring that its defined goals are clear, and the priorities and action steps designed to achieve those goals are reflected in implementation plans put forth, starting in June 2009; and
- » disseminating the plan throughout the community and promoting it among key public and private sector policy-makers and decision-makers to leverage the necessary resources for implementation over time.

B. Community Outreach and Engagement

Community Meetings

WCRP and ENPC members conducted outreach to invite residents and other participants to two community-wide meetings, the first of which was held September 25th of 2008 to introduce the residents to the planning process, share data about the neighborhood, vision about the future of the neighborhood, and gather resident priorities in the four key subject areas noted above. Over 110 residents attended this meeting on September 25th and came away excited about how the plan could help make the case for important resources to improve the neighborhood and enhance their quality of life.

The second meeting took place on April 23rd of 2009 to share the draft report and solicit feedback before the final plan was reviewed and adopted at a May 22nd 2009 Steering Committee meeting. At the April 23rd meeting, the recommendations that emerged from the series of Steering Committee and Subcommittee meetings that took place in the intervening months were presented to the community for review and comment. 55 residents attended that session and participated in discussions about the major themes of the plan and corresponding initiatives, programs and projects presented for their consideration.

Steering Committee Roles and Expectations

The 25-member Steering Committee has helped direct the work of the planning process. It is comprised of leaders from stakeholder institutions and constituents who have demonstrated over many, many years their deep appreciation of the neighborhood and their strong dedication to community service. The chief responsibilities of this highly skilled team boiled down to seven critically important areas of work:

- » Share data about the neighborhood and any development plans their organizations have in the neighborhood
- » Review data and analyze its implications
- » Review recommendations and priorities generated by community residents and subcommittees
- » Attend all Steering Committee meetings
- » Evaluate the draft plan, provide feedback, and build support for the final plan
- » Publicize the two community-wide meetings
- » Participate in decision-making by consensus

Subcommittee Roles and Expectations

The four Subcommittees – Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings; Affordable Housing; Economic Development; and Youth and Human Services – also included 41 stakeholders and constituents with long histories of work in the neighborhood as well as equally deep commitments of service to low- to moderate-income households. All members were charged with and graciously accepted the important roles described below:

- » Bring their expertise about the topic to the Subcommittee and share relevant data about the neighborhood as well as any development plans they have in the neighborhood
- » Familiarize themselves with resident priorities and data related to their Subcommittee
- » Identify priority areas and make recommendations for proposals and projects
- » Prepare information for Steering Committee decision-making
- » Attend each Subcommittee meeting
- » Publicize the two community meetings
- » Build support for the final plan

Resident Roles and Expectations

Finally, and most important, is the role of neighborhood residents who are the ultimate constituent and stakeholder in this and any community planning process. Their role and our expectations centered around four key activities:

- » Attend community meetings and share information and feelings about the neighborhood
- » Share information with their neighbors to involve them in process
- » Participate in Subcommittees through organizations they may be a part of
- » Help disseminate and build support for the final plan

22 Engagement through Resident Surveys and the Listening Project

Starting in the summer of 2008 through late fall, WCRP and ENPC members interviewed 325 neighborhood residents using two different survey methods, an oral history-style initiative called the Listening Project, and a questionnaire-style tool intended to measure resident quality of life. The interviews and surveys were designed to solicit insights, concerns, and ideas about the neighborhood, with the intention that the information would help shape, guide and generally inform the planning process so what the plan recognizes and focuses on is most relevant and meaningful to those it will affect most.

Community members explain why they got involved in the Listening Project:

“The Listening Project is connecting the community by involving the community.”

“It gave me a chance to feel like a real part of the community, and to talk to other people that I wouldn’t have talked to otherwise. I am one of the statistics, someone that had to move out because my rent became too high. I want to give a voice to people like me.”

“[We need to create] anything that gets the community involved and gives power to the people. I’m for anything that gives the community a voice.”

“There’s not enough listening in the world.”

The outcomes of the survey, as summarized below, were revealing and reinforcing in terms of what is most important to this group residents who call this neighborhood “home.”

The neighborhood is very diverse

- » **The neighborhood has a wide range of incomes.**
People earn from less than \$10,000 a year to more than \$50,000 a year.
- » **People have lived in the neighborhood for different lengths of time.**
3 out of every 10 people we talked to have lived here more than 30 years. Another 3 out of every 10 people have lived here less than 5 years.
- » **We have a mix of homeowners and renters.**
55% of people we talked to own their own home and 36% are renters

People like a lot of things about our neighborhood

- » **People are friendly.**
85% of people said they felt their neighbors were friendly. About half of residents said neighborhood friendliness is one of their favorite things about the neighborhood. This was far higher than any other category.
- » **People support each other.**
60% of people agreed that if there was a problem in their community, people would come together to fix it.
- » **Good access to transportation.**
Nearly 9 out of 10 residents are satisfied with the transportation options in the neighborhood. Many people said it was one of their favorite things about the neighborhood.



People have some concerns

» The neighborhood isn't affordable.

More than 7 out of every ten people said there are not affordable places in the neighborhood for their families.

» High prices hurt renters who would like to buy houses.

7 out of ten renters in the neighborhood would like to buy a home, but the vast majority (85%) cannot afford to.

» Crime.

4 out of every 10 people said crime was one of their least favorite things about the neighborhood, higher than any other category.

» Cleanliness.

Almost one out of every two people said lack of cleanliness in the neighborhood was a problem.

» Jobs.

Seven out of 10 people said there weren't enough jobs available in the neighborhood

The neighborhood does not have a clear identity

- » When we asked people what they call their neighborhood, we got a wide range of answers, from North Philadelphia to Olde Kensington to Ludlow to Northern Liberties and more!

WCRP and ENPC conducted a Public Land Listening Project during the same time period as the door-to-door surveying was taking place. Most of the 125 people who were interviewed have lived in the neighborhood for more than 15 years. Their views in general and particularly concerning vacant land were expressed as follows:

Changes in the neighborhood

- » 90% of neighborhood residents feel the neighborhood has changed since they have lived here.
- » 20% of people say new housing and development is the biggest improvement in the neighborhood. Others say safety (10%) and more cleanliness (7%) are ways the neighborhood has improved.
- » 35% of people say safety is the main way the neighborhood has become worse. Other answers include an increase in vacant land (7%) and rising rents and property taxes (7%).

Vacant land

- » 70% of residents said there was a piece of vacant land that was a problem for them and their community.
- » 85% also said that the people who live in the community should have a say in how that land gets used.
- » 25% feel that a grocery store should be built on some of this vacant land. Other "wants" are:
- » Neighborhood services like community and child centers (25%)
- » Affordable housing (20%)
- » Parks and community gardens (15%).
- » 95% of residents agree it would be a good idea to start an organization to own some of the vacant public land in the neighborhood. The organization could lease land to groups and developers to build the kinds of things people agree we need.
- » People felt strongly that the organization should be controlled by the community.

24 C. Other Data Collection and Research

While the community outreach and engagement process was ongoing, the consultant team was busy collecting data of a different kind. The analysis of the existing conditions phase of the work, defined by observation and research, included:

- » A parcel-by-parcel field survey to create an up to date land use map and document the exterior building conditions of every structure in the neighborhood;
- » Census research to evaluate demographic and socio-economic changes within the neighborhood over time, combined with projections to estimate the demographic shifts since 2000;
- » A review of historic maps and photographs to better understand the neighborhood's past and help uncover the stories behind its present;
- » An assessment of existing plans that overlap with portions or corridors within the neighborhood as well as a tabulation of recent and proposed development to determine the balance (or lack thereof) of affordable and market rate housing production, residential, commercial, and industrial development;
- » Research about land ownership patterns using data from the Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT);

The spatial and quantitative data and historic research in many ways complemented the qualitative data yielded by the community outreach initiatives. The stories told by the numbers and mapping verify, explain, and give new weight to the concerns, perceptions, and testimonials shared by community participants. Together, the numbers and the voices of the neighborhood tell a powerful story about this portion of Eastern North Philadelphia.



III. existing conditions



Engine House 29, N. 4th Street, 1896
Source: City Archives



Stetson Hat Manufactory, ca. 1978
Source: Historic American Buildings Survey



Northeast Manual Training School at Howard and Girard, ca. 1911
Source: City of Philadelphia Department of Records

III. Existing Conditions

Context

Once an economic powerhouse and center of Philadelphia industry, Eastern North Philadelphia has suffered major decline since the 1960s when many factories closed shop or moved to more cost-effective locations outside of the City. Indeed, manufacturing flourished in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with textiles dominating. In the mid-nineteenth century, Kensington (bound by Erie Avenue, 6th and Germantown Avenue, Girard Avenue, and Frankford Avenue) housed **one third of all the textile industries and workers in Philadelphia**.¹ The carpet industry had its beginnings in the neighborhood within a cluster of mills around Oxford and Howard Streets. Factories ranged in size from small textile firms employing only a few people and home hand looming to operations that covered whole city blocks and employed hundreds. The John B. Stetson Hat Manufactory, one of the largest factory complexes in the neighborhood, was built in the late 1800s and at its peak in the 1920s employed more than 3,500 people. The company even built a hospital and a savings and loan for its employees.

Other major local industries included **slaughterhouses** and **meatpacking plants**, especially along American Street, as well as **tanneries** and **leather-working** industries. Burk Brothers, one of the largest leather manufacturers in Philadelphia, had a plant in the neighborhood at Hancock and Turner Streets, and the Drueding Brothers Company, which produced chamois, was housed in a building at 5th and Master that still stands.

The **North Pennsylvania Railroad** ran up American Street and provided the infrastructure for factories and coal and lumber yards to locate along the corridor. A historically working-class neighborhood, laborers lived close to the factories where they were employed, and by the late 1860s Kensington had developed the physical characteristics that still define it: rowhouse blocks amid mill buildings and large parcels that once housed enormous factory complexes.

¹ <http://www.workshopoftheworld.com/kensington/kensington.html>

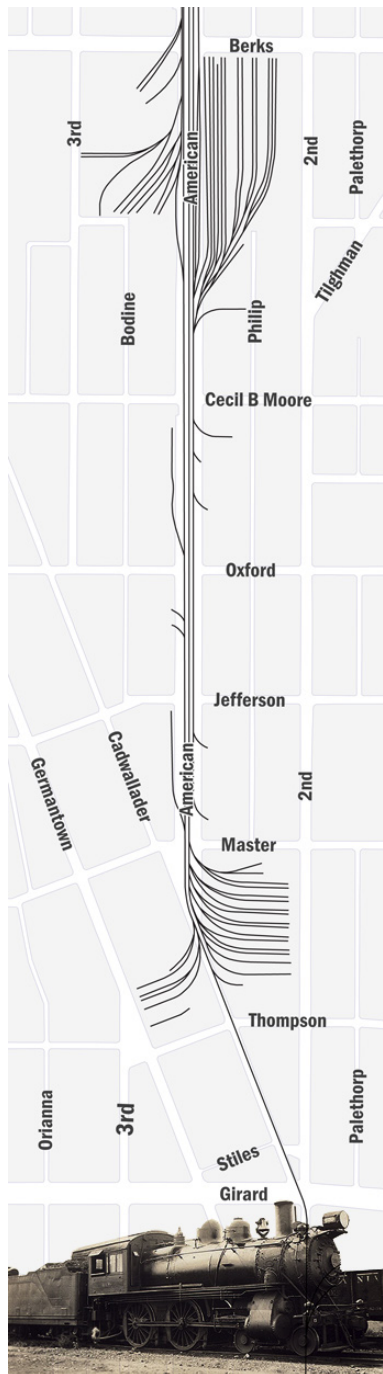


Figure 3. Former route of the North Pennsylvania Railroad line

1947



2008



Figure 4. Change in Land Use over Time

The economic shift away from heavy industry and manufacturing left vacant holes where massive factories once operated, prompting the hollowing out of the neighborhood's stock of worker housing and small-scale businesses which once lined the historic Girard and Germantown commercial corridors. The majority of blocks in the study area now host vacant land or abandoned buildings, and gaps in the urban landscape are the norm rather than the exception. These voids are represented in white in the 2008 map of the Change in Land Use over Time diagram.

Although the entire City felt the blow of the shift from a manufacturing to a service economy and the related population drain, Eastern North Philadelphia now bears prominent physical scars from the outflow of people, activity, and investment. American Street, once the center of industry that fueled this working neighborhood, has become a wide stretch of vacancy and blight that divides our section of Eastern North Philadelphia.

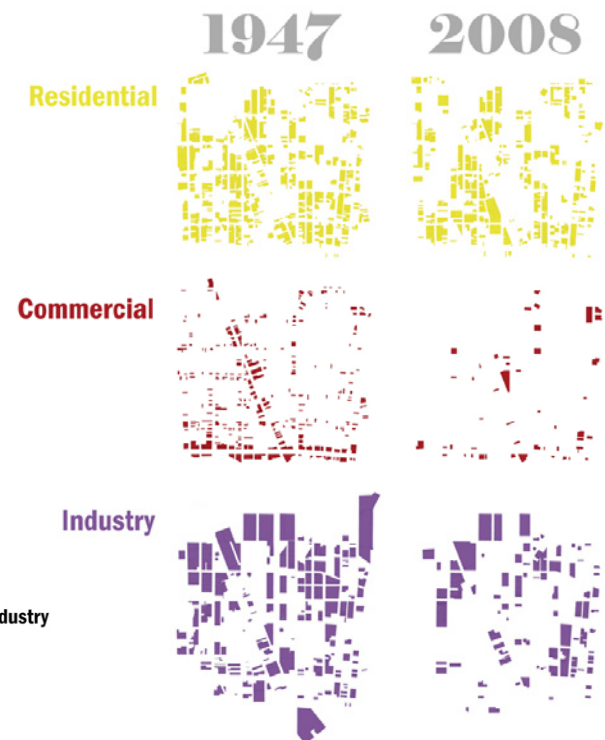


Figure 5. Detail of change in land use highlighting loss of residential, commercial, and industrial uses

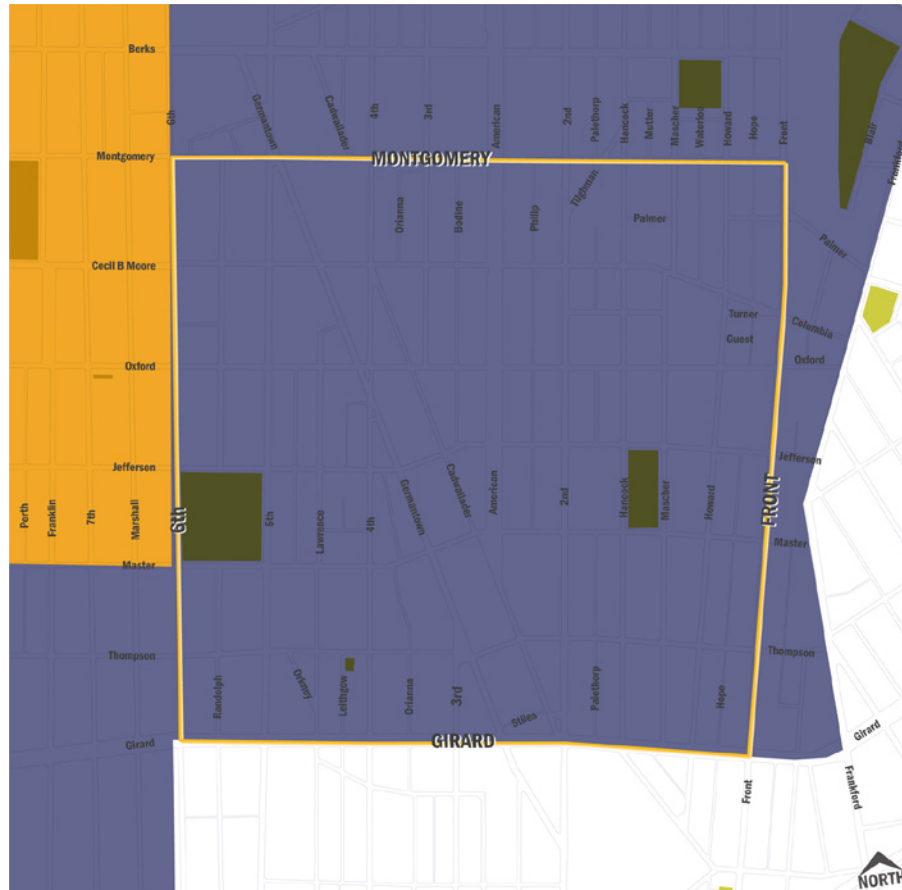


Figure 6. Incentive Zones

Incentive Zones



Efforts to revive industry around American Street started with federally-funded infrastructure improvements in the late 1970s and early 1980s to facilitate truck loading and delivery. In 1994, the area around American Street was designated an Empowerment Zone, one of three in the City with special tax incentives to attract businesses. In 2002, the Department of Housing and Urban Development designated portions of Philadelphia a Renewal Community, making them eligible for tax incentives to stimulate job growth, promote economic development and create affordable housing.



Top: Crane Arts Building on American Street

Bottom: Honor Foods on Germantown Avenue

Since then, several new businesses and major companies have relocated to or expanded operations in the American Street zone, among them, Aramark, American Metal Moulding, and Honor Foods; however, the corridor still hosts large swaths of vacant land. Although heavy industry is unlikely to return to the American Street zone within the neighborhood, light industry, such as the design firms and artisanal workshops that have located in the recently renovated Crane Arts Building and its surroundings, is reactivating the community's industrial spaces.



Figure 7. Market Pressure

In recent years and in relation to the growing creative community in Eastern North Philadelphia, a new wave of investment has begun to reach into the neighborhood in the form of development pressure from Northern Liberties to the south and Fishtown to the east. Several former factory buildings in the neighborhood have been converted into residences. While adaptive reuse of the area's historic structures is a welcomed trend, this new market-rate housing has also made the neighborhood less affordable to many of its existing residents.



Top: The Flats at Girard Pointe, under construction.

Bottom: Factory Lofts at 5th and Cecil B. Moore Streets.

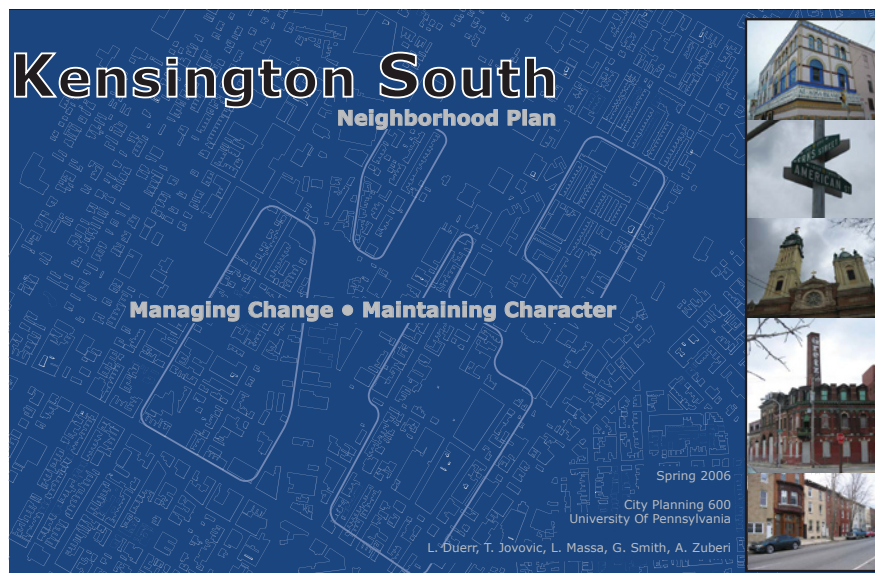
“The streets were empty, but now with new housing come new people.”

“New housing, some revitalization.

Hope – that people are moving in, not just leaving.”

“If we allow too many condos, we will be unable to control gentrification.”

It was within these shifting dynamics that this Community Plan for a section of Eastern North Philadelphia was created. Community members – including long-term residents and relative newcomers, neighborhood institutions, service providers, advocacy organizations, non-profit developers, as well as representatives of public agencies and officials – recognized the change brewing in the neighborhood and came together to organize, envision a revitalized future, and ensure that their collective voice would be heard as the neighborhood's story unfolds. This plan documents their priorities, introducing new ideas and added value, while contributing to the neighborhoods's already rich planning discussion.



Prior plans created for the neighborhood.



Prior Plans

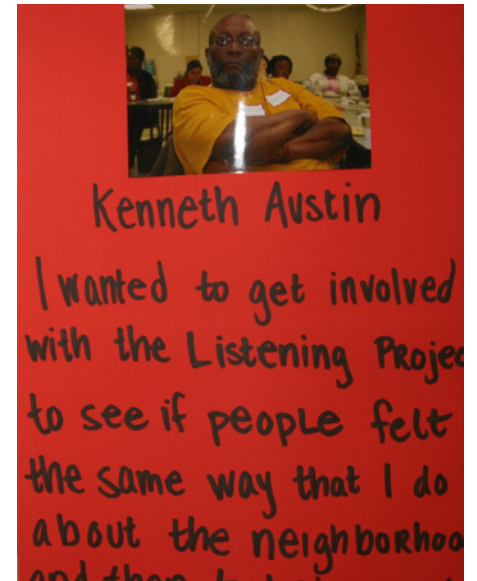
- Kensington South Neighborhood Plan (2006):** University of Pennsylvania students created this plan in their city planning workshop for the Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises (HACE). The plan recommends strategies for managing change while preserving the diversity that makes the neighborhood unique. Recommendations address vacant land management, an open space fund for park improvements, mixed-income and infill development, targeted streetscape improvements, downzoning from G2 General Industrial, and creating civic spaces and neighborhood centers.
- A Plan for Transforming 4 Changing Places (2005):** Brown & Keener and Kise Straw & Kolodner (KSK) created this plan for the American Street Empowerment Zone, which encompasses most of the current plan's area. Four distinct areas within the zone are detailed: Girard Avenue, Lehigh Avenue, Front and Kensington, and American Street. The plan envisions American Street as an employment center hosting light industrial and distribution companies that is also a good neighbor to the residential blocks that surround it. Specific recommendations for American Street include streetscape and landscaping improvements, a redesigned loading zone, a clear truck route, improved lighting, and a green buffer between industrial and residential uses. Girard Avenue is the Main Street of the area, and recommendations focus on creating identity, façade and streetscape improvements, trolley signs and shelters. Recommendations for Front Street

between Girard and Diamond focus on mitigating the impact of the EI through lighting and paint, creating safer pedestrian connections, renovating storefronts, and managing vacant property.

- Girard Avenue Market Analysis Report (2003):** Urban Partners prepared this plan for the Girard Coalition and Local Initiatives Support Corporation. The report divides Girard Avenue into four segments, of which Mid Girard, between Frankford Avenue and 9th Street, falls within the boundaries of this plan's area. The report for this segment of Girard Avenue concluded that residents' retail purchases exceeded local sales captures in 43 of 65 retail categories, amounting to \$66 million being spent outside the trade area. The report identified several key development opportunities including: full-service restaurants, a pharmacy, clothing and jewelry shops, and "lifestyle" goods, such as gifts, art, sporting goods, home furnishings, electronics, computers, and books.
- Making a Neighborhood Main Street: A Plan for Girard Avenue (2002):** Brown & Keener Urban Design and KSK produced this plan for the Girard Coalition. The document addresses the length of Girard Avenue as it travels through various neighborhoods. Mid-Girard, which traverses the area for this plan, is envisioned as a restaurant row. Improvements to support this vision include pedestrian safety enhancements, streetscape and façade upgrades, and defined truck routes to connect with American Street.



Our Community Plan: a shared vision for our neighborhood in Eastern North Philadelphia builds upon these prior documents and represents the community's current concerns, priorities, and dreams.



Faces of the community planning process. Source: (left to right) Harvey Finkle, Kate Houston, Harvey Finkle, WCRP



Neighborhood youth. Source: Harvey Finkle

“The neighborhood has changed dramatically. There used to be a lot more businesses in the community and a lot more people.”

“Established families of 30, 40, 50 years just left. Businesses left because of the decrease in population.”

“[Now] there is more construction, houses, and condominiums. More people come to church. There’s a mixture of races. This has been good for the church and more people are getting involved.”

Neighborhood Profile – a demographic overview

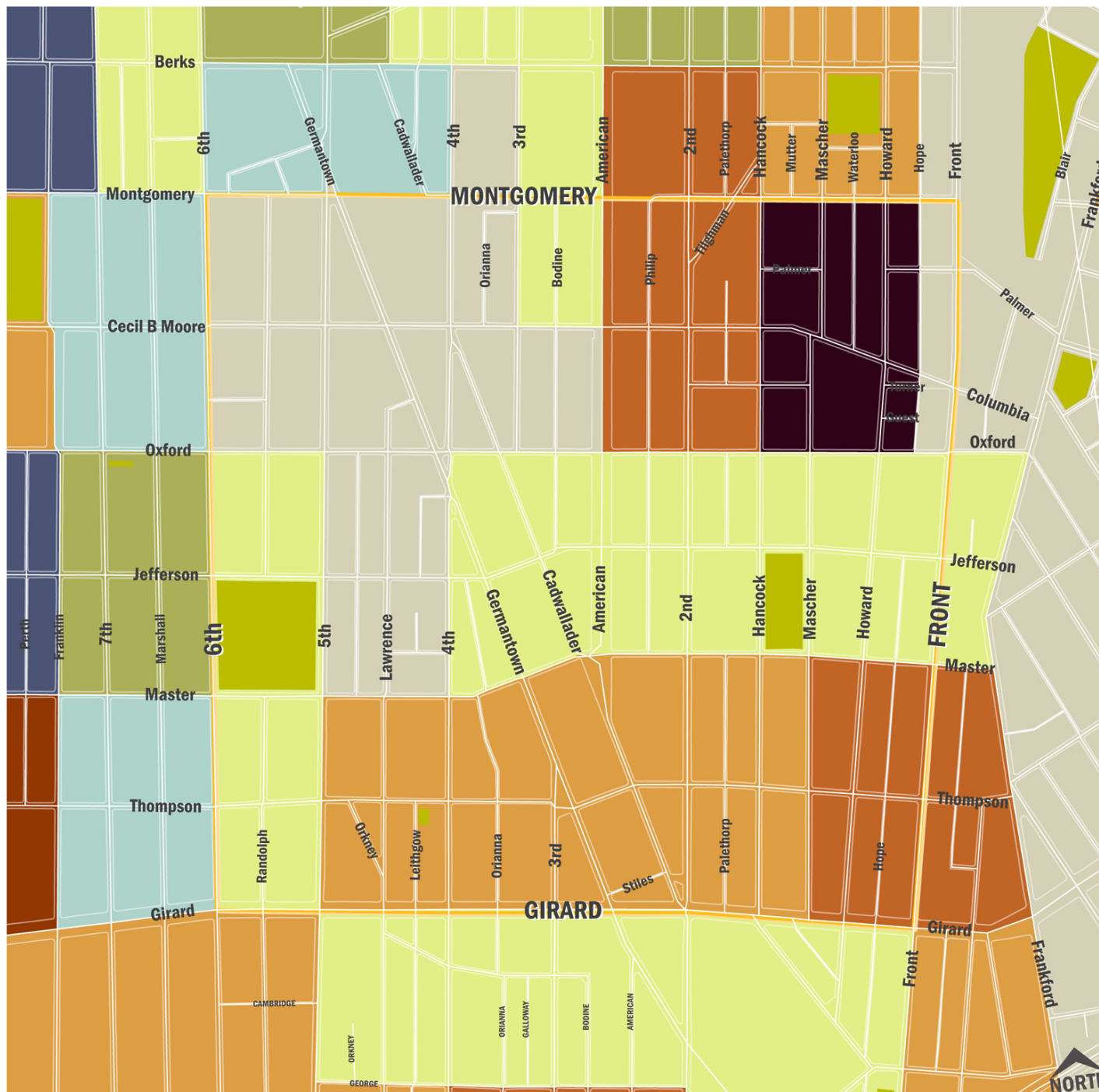
The following data was compiled using the United States Census for 1990 and 2000 and Claritas estimates for 2007. A full listing of included Census Block Groups is in the Appendix.

Population

The neighborhood population remained relatively stable between 1990 and 2000, and projections through 2007 show it holding steady. Between 1990 and 2000, the neighborhood experienced a 2% decline in population from 5,110 to 5,027 people. Over the same period, the city lost 4% of its population. Projections estimate a neighborhood population of 4,965 in 2007, which represents a 1% decline from the population in 2000.² Projections for neighborhood households indicate a 1% increase from 1,688 households in 2000 to 1,702 households in 2007. The estimated slight loss in population coupled with a gain in the number of households means that there are more households with fewer people and indicates an influx of young adults in the neighborhood.

The greatest population growth in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000 occurred in the area around the John Moffet School between American Street and Hope Street, which grew 40-50%. The blocks around the Girard Street El station also experienced growth of between 10-20%. Generally, the blocks south of Master Street experienced growth up to 10%. Based on 2007 estimates, population growth continued to push north from Girard to Oxford, while population loss was greatest between Oxford Street and Montgomery Avenue.

² Because Claritas estimates are based on larger trends and do not take into account finer grained information like new residential development and neighborhood revitalization, these numbers may be skewed low. On the other hand, perceived population growth at the southern and eastern edges of the neighborhood may be offset by population loss to the north and west, resulting in the estimated relatively static population estimates for 2007.



Study Area

2000 population

5,027

Change 1990-2000

- 2%

2007 population (est.)

4,965

Philadelphia

2000 population

1,517,550

Change 1990-2000

- 4%

Figure 8. Population Change, 1990-2000. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Race & Ethnicity

US Census 2000

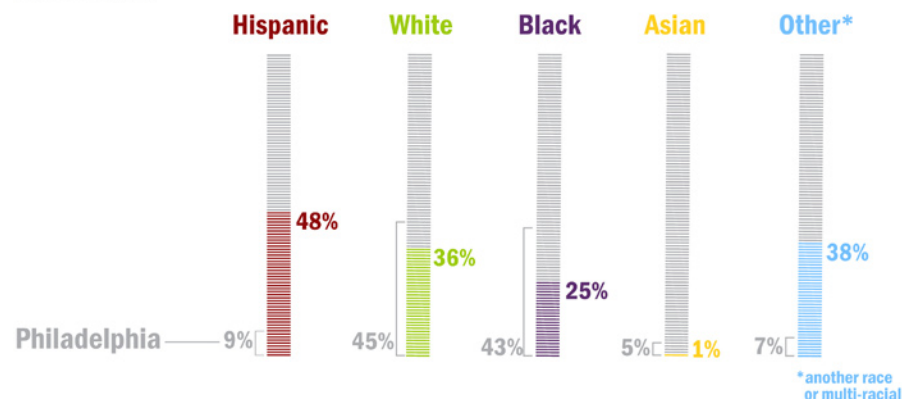


Figure 9. 2000 Race and Ethnicity. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Household Language

US Census 2000

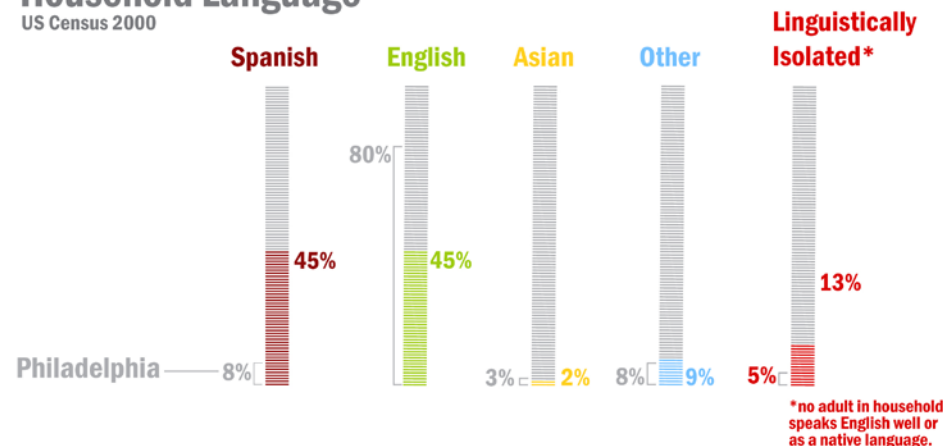


Figure 10. 2000 Household Language and Linguistic Isolation. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Race and Ethnicity

The neighborhood is home to a very diverse mix of people. In 2000, the racial breakdown of the population was 37% white, 25% black, 2% Asian and 38% identified as “other,” which includes bi-racial and multi-racial residents. Almost half of the neighborhood population (48%) identified their ethnicity as Hispanic, which far exceeds the city-wide percentage of 9%. Residents and community organizations describe an increase in Arab residents in recent years, immigrating from many parts of the Arab world including Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, and most recently Iraq.

Additionally, 13% of the households in the community (compared to 5% city-wide) were considered linguistically isolated in 2000, meaning that no one in the household aged 14 or over spoke English as a native language or spoke English very well. In 2000, household language was split evenly between Spanish and English, each accounting for 45% of neighborhood households.

A study of recent immigration trends up to 2006 shows that the greater Philadelphia region (which includes the suburban counties, Wilmington, and Camden) has the largest and fastest growing immigrant population among its peers with immigrants comprising 9% of the population.³ In the early 20th century, Philadelphia was among the top ten immigrant gateway cities along with New York, Chicago, and other industrial leaders such as Detroit, Buffalo, St. Louis, and Cleveland. By the middle of the century, industrial cities such as Philadelphia were no longer attracting immigrants. While that trend continues today for most of the old industrial cities, Philadelphia has been re-emerging as a destination for immigrants, and Mayor Nutter has emphasized the importance of immigrants to the revitalization of the City.⁴ While the City’s overall population declined for most of the latter half of the 20th century, the immigrant population grew by 30% between 1970 and 2006. The community reflects this trend, as foreign-born residents made up 10% of the population in 2000. This growth in the foreign-born population has important implications for City policy as well as the design and delivery of community services.

³ Audrey Singer, Domenic Vitiello, Michael Katz, David Park. “Recent Immigration to Philadelphia: Regional Change in a Re-Emerging Gateway.” The Brookings Institution, November 2008.

⁴ Michael Matza. “Nutter to host new citizens’ swearing-in,” The Philadelphia Inquirer. February 6, 2009.

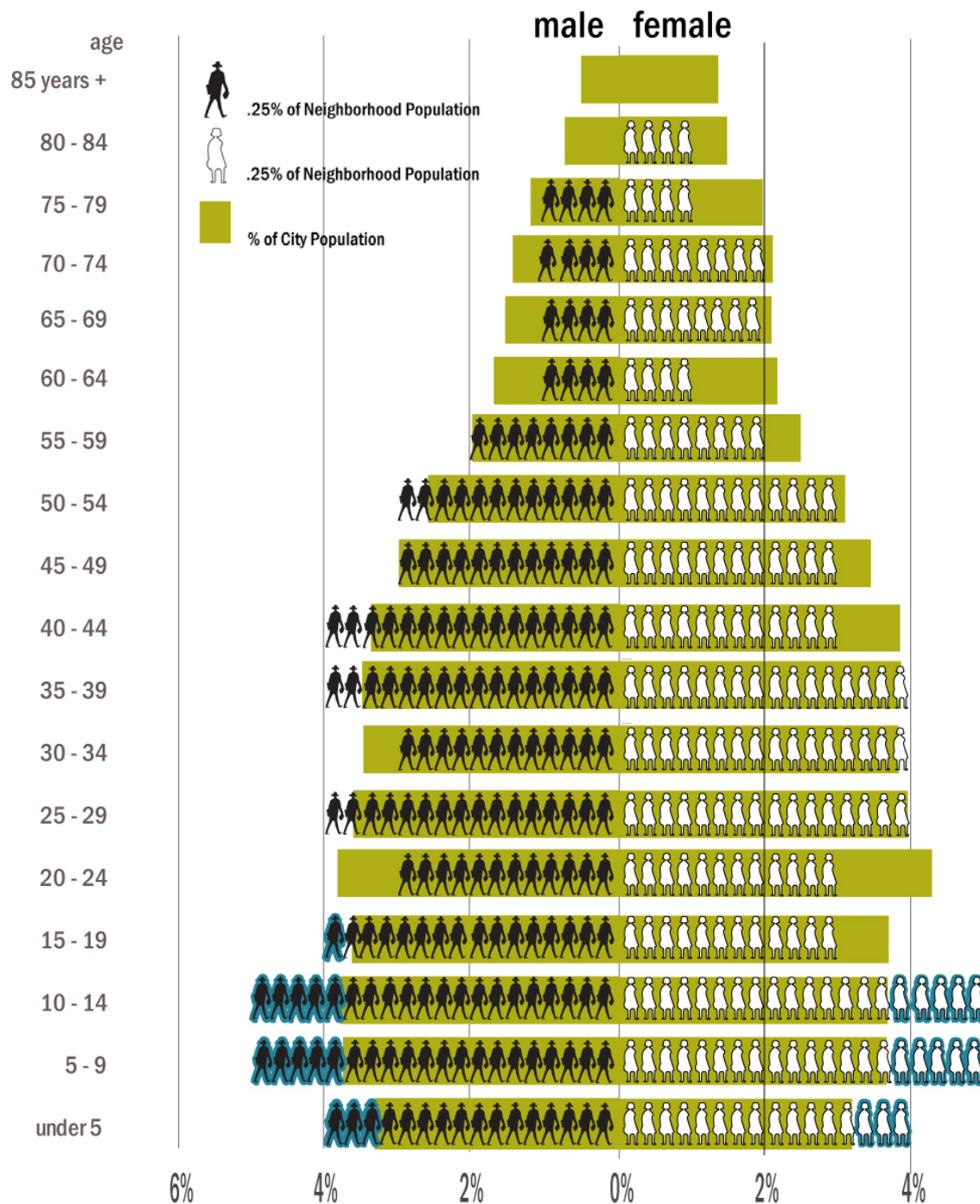


Figure 11. 2000 Age Pyramid. Source: U.S. Census 2000

In 2000, 1 out of 3 residents were under the age of 18

Age

A comparison of the age distribution between the neighborhood population and the city population in 2000 reveals a high proportion of youth under the age of 18 in the community. In 2000, 1 out of every 3 (33%) neighborhood residents was under the age of 18 compared to a citywide average of 1 in 10 residents. In contrast, the neighborhood had fewer people over 65 years of age in 2000 than the city average of 14% of the population. The large percentage of youth in the neighborhood indicates a need for services and resources for this group.

Educational Attainment: Adults 25 and Over US Census 2000

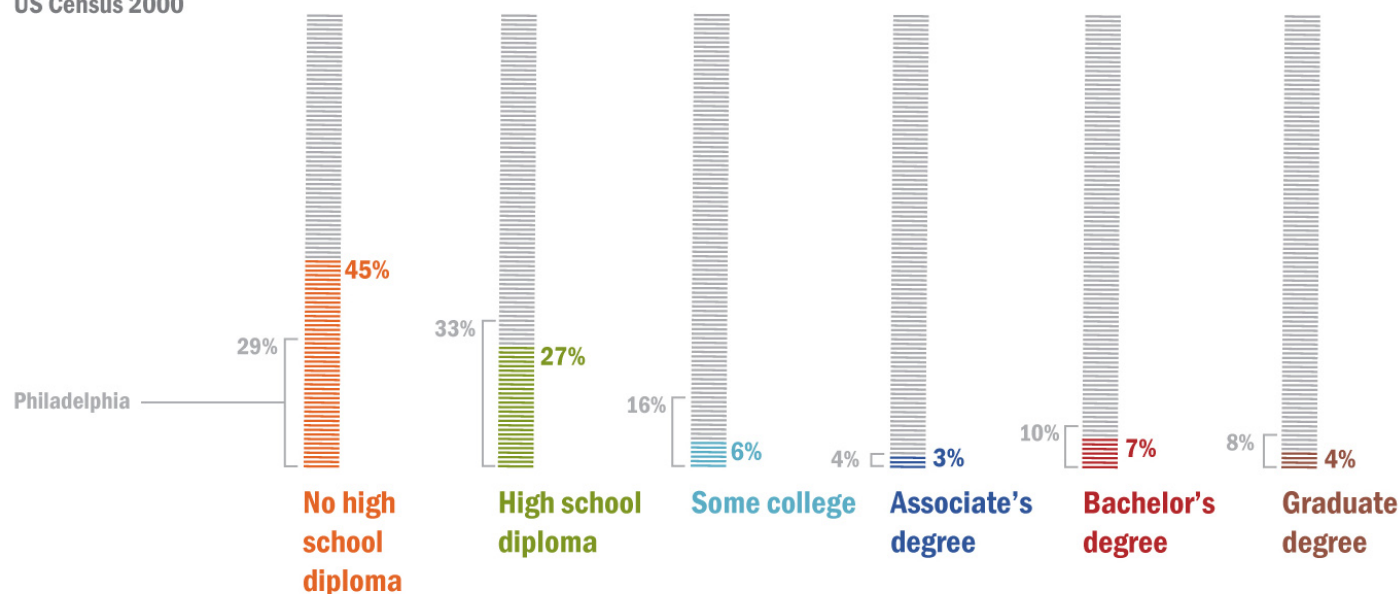


Figure 12. Educational Attainment. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Educational Attainment and Employment

In 2000, the neighborhood lagged behind the city average in educational attainment with much higher dropout rates and lower rates of high school and college-level completion. Of adults aged 25 and over, 45% in the neighborhood had not received a high school diploma, compared with the City average of 29%.

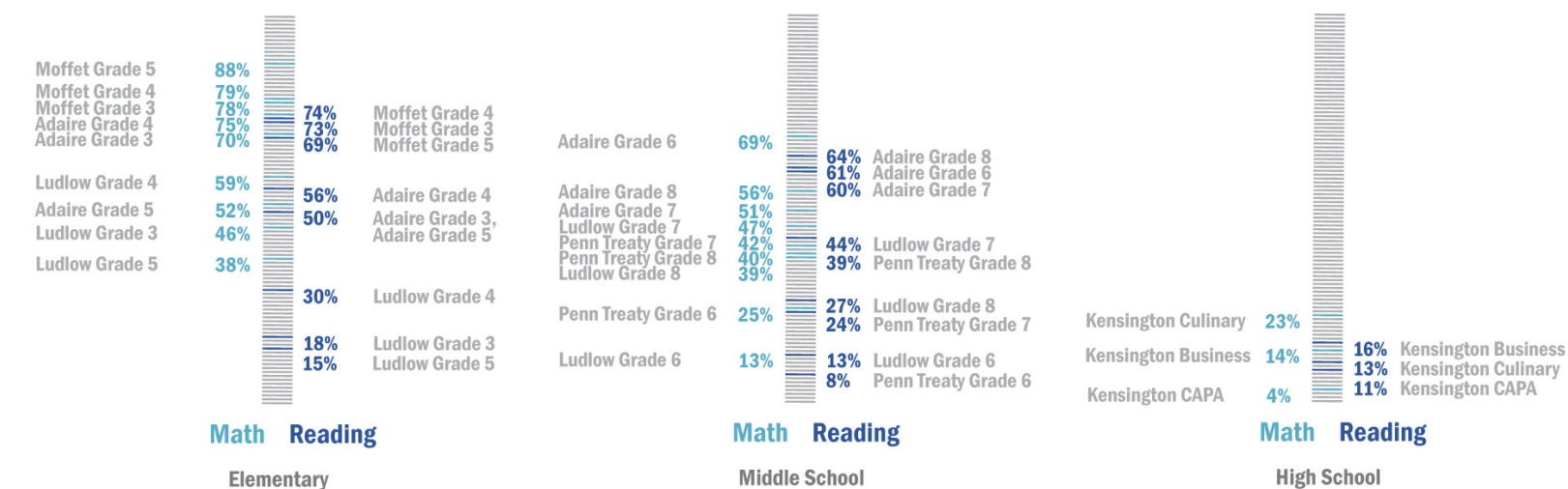
While these elevated numbers are alarming, so too are some of the state testing scores reported for the neighborhood's elementary and middle schools. Neighborhood youth enrolled in public schools attend either the John Moffet School or James R. Ludlow School for elementary school and Penn Treaty or Ludlow for middle school. There is no high school in the study area, so public high school students go to Kensington unless they test into a magnet school. Generally speaking, students perform best on State tests for reading and math performance earlier on, with grade-level scores falling over time. By high school, students have low reading and math proficiency, low SAT scores, and less than one in three local public high school graduates attend college. The incentive to remain in school is severely lacking.

As a result, the number of at-risk youth in the neighborhood is high. At-risk youth refers to the residents between 16 and 19 years of age who have either dropped out of school or graduated from high school but remain unemployed or not in the labor force.⁵ Data from the 2000 Census shows that 33.5% of youth between ages 16 and 19 in the neighborhood fall into this category compared with a city-wide rate of 15%. The community's dropout rate of 22% reported in the 2000 Census was more than twice the city average, and none of the population that had dropped out of school was in the labor force. While these statistics are alarming, community stakeholders believe that they severely underestimate the problem, suggesting that, in fact, the high school dropout rate is much higher in the neighborhood.

Closely linked to educational attainment, unemployment and low labor force participation are a challenge for many adults of working age in the neighborhood, not just those ages 16 to 19. The 2000 Census reported that 39% of the population over 16 was employed compared to 50% citywide, 10% was unemployed compared to 6% citywide, and 51% was not in the labor force compared to 44% citywide.

⁵ Labor force measures are based on the civilian non-institutional population 16 years old and over, comprising the employed and the unemployed. The remainder – those who have no job and are not looking for one are considered “not in the labor force.” After one year of continuous unemployment, individuals are no longer considered to be in the labor force. www.census.gov and www.bls.gov

Public School State-Wide Testing Performance: percent at or above proficient
PA Department of Education 2006-2007



State Average					
Grade 3	79%	73%	Grade 6	70%	64%
Grade 4	78%	70%	Grade 7	67%	67%
Grade 5	71%	60%	Grade 8	68%	75%
			Grade 11	54%	65%

Figure 13. Public School State-Wide Testing Performance. Source: PA Department of Education, 2006-2007

Public High School Performance: SAT performance and college attendance
Philadelphia Inquirer 2007

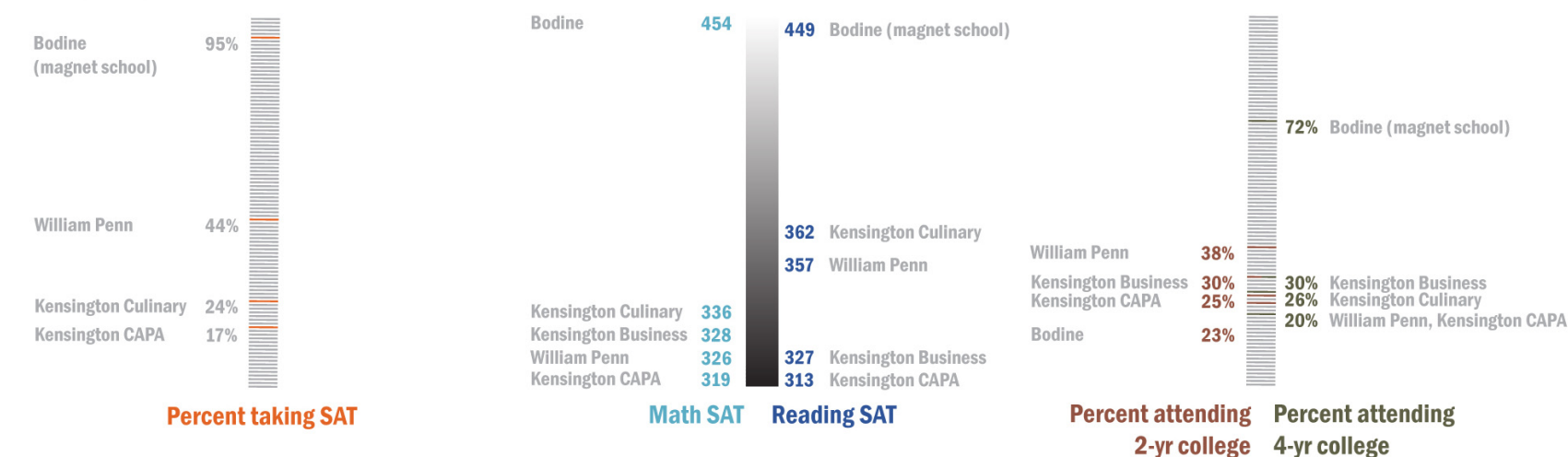


Figure 14. Public High School Performance. Source: Philadelphia Inquirer, 2007

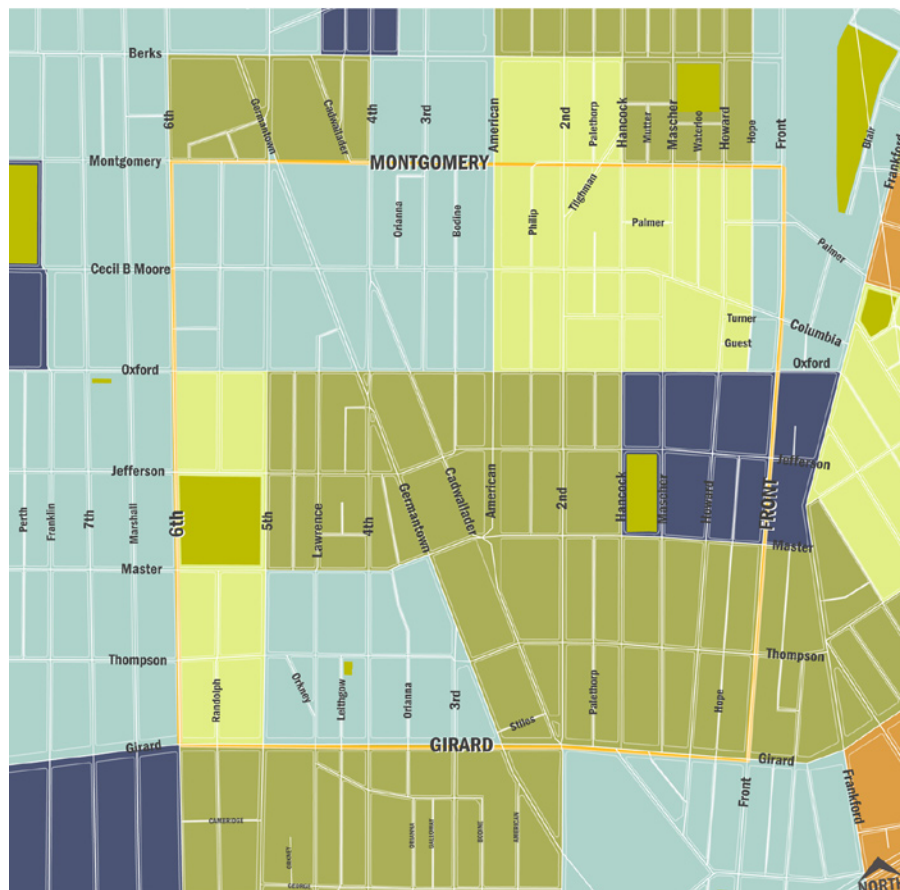


Figure 15. 2000 Median Household Income. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Income and Poverty

The neighborhood lagged behind the City average in median income, according to the 2000 Census, and had much higher levels of poverty. The median household income in 2000 was \$21,563, below the City median of \$30,746, and was projected to rise to \$29,901 in 2007. The 2000 poverty rate⁶ in the neighborhood of 38% was far higher than the City average of 23%.

⁶ Poverty is determined by a family's total money income measured against thresholds that vary by size and composition. The official poverty definition uses money income before taxes and does not include capital gains or non-cash benefits such as public housing, Medicaid, and food stamps. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then the entire family is considered to be in poverty. For example, the monetary value for the poverty threshold for a family of 3 in the 48 contiguous United States in 2006 was determined to be \$17,170 with \$3,480 added for each additional family member. Federal Register, Vol. 71, No. 15, January 24, 2006, pp. 3848-3849.

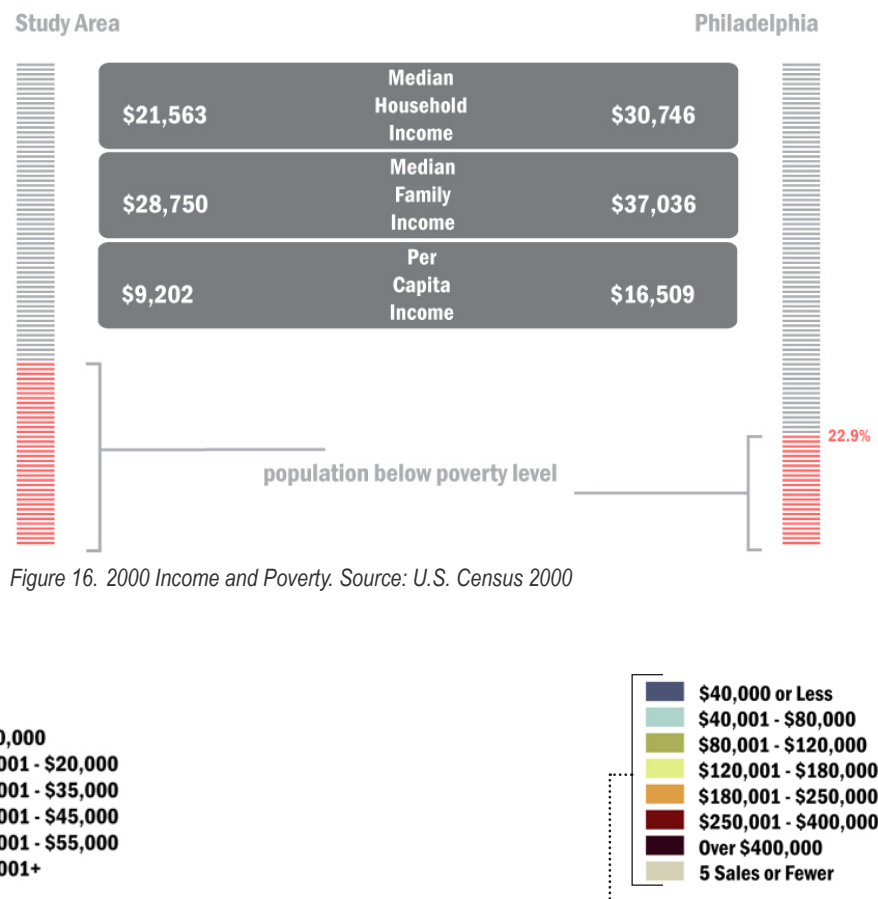


Figure 16. 2000 Income and Poverty. Source: U.S. Census 2000

Homeownership and Affordability

Homeownership rates are often used as a measure of neighborhood stability. The overall homeownership rate in the study area in 2000 was 48% compared with a city-wide rate of 59%. The highest levels of homeownership were found in the southeast quadrant of the study area, roughly east of 5th Street and south of Oxford Street where rates were 55-70%, closer to the city average and the national average of 66%.

More than 7 out of every 10 people interviewed in the Resident Satisfaction Survey did not think there were affordable homes in the neighborhood for their families. The same proportion of renters in the neighborhood would like to buy a home in the area, but the vast majority of them, 81%, cannot afford to.

The dramatic change in median sale prices in the neighborhood between 2001-02 and 2006-07 support the survey findings. In 2001-02, the median residential sale price

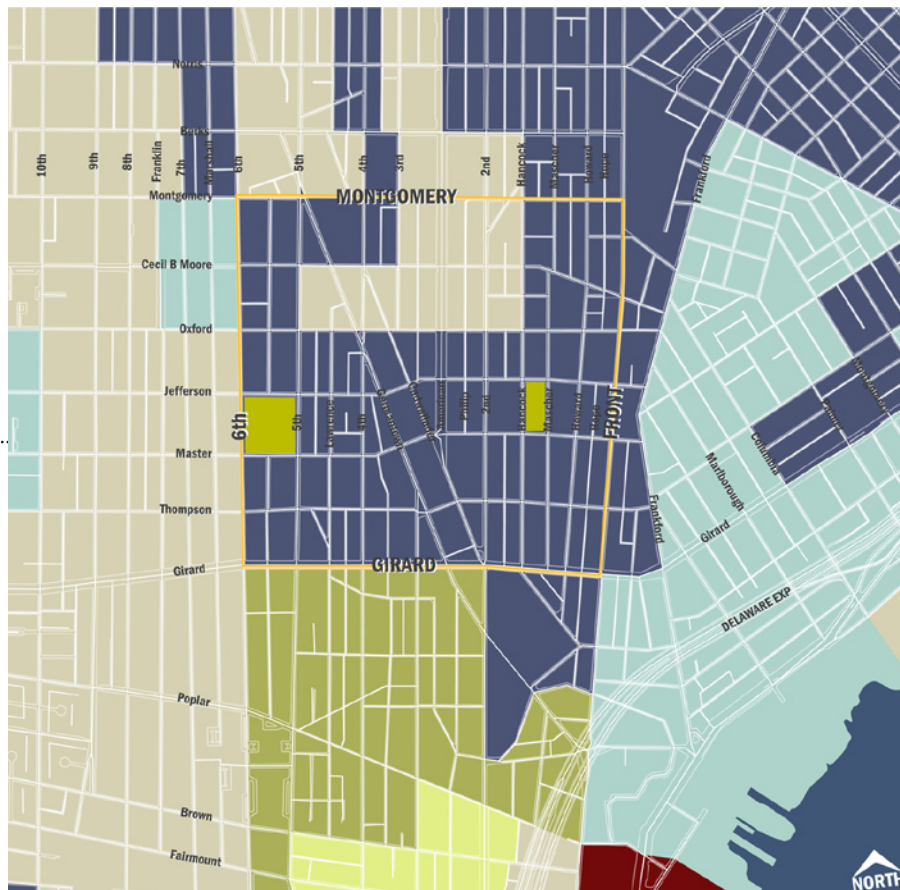


Figure 17. Median Residential Sale Price by Census Block Group, 2001-2002. Source: TRF

within the area was \$40,000 or less. By 2006-07, the median sale price had risen significantly, particularly in the block south of Master Street, where median sale prices ranged from \$120,000 to over \$400,000.

Median sale prices in the blocks south of Master have jumped more than \$180,000 and in some cases up to \$400,000 between 2001 and 2007. The dollar change in median sale prices in the blocks between Master and Oxford Streets between 2001 and 2007 ranged between \$40,000 at the low end of the scale to \$250,000 at the high end. High median sale prices and extreme increases in price over the last five years in Northern Liberties to the south of the neighborhood, and to a lesser extent Fishtown to the east, are putting pressure on the area.

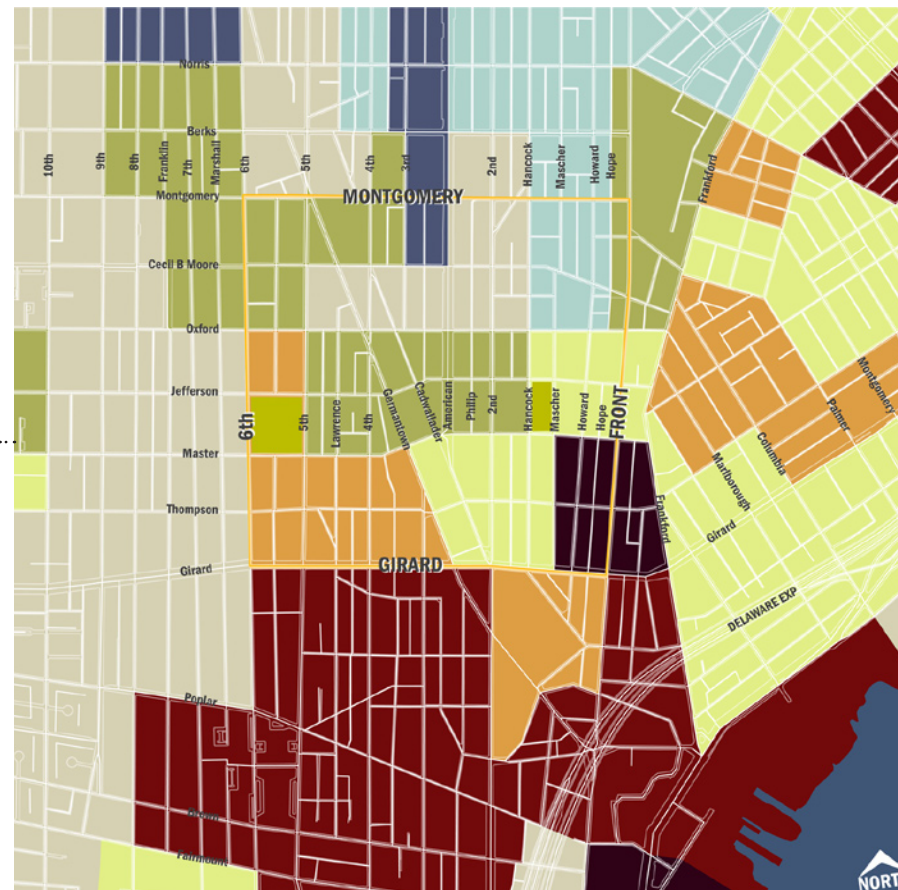
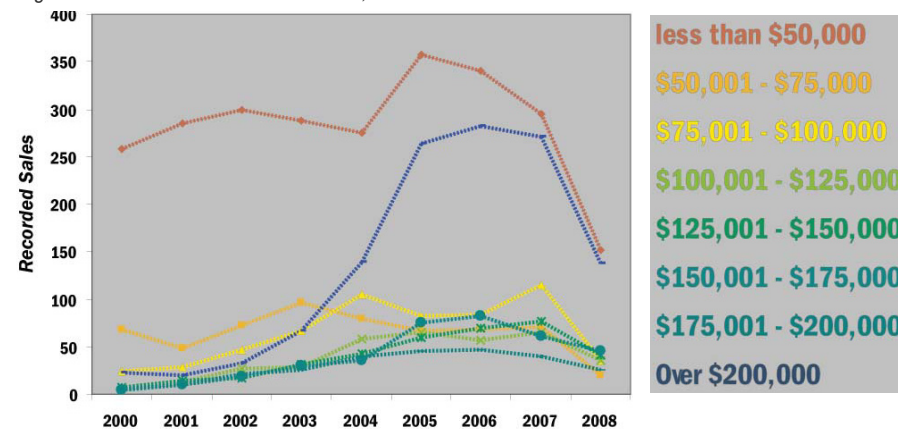


Figure 18. Median Residential Sale Price by Census Block Group, 2006-2007. Source: TRF

Figure 19. Residential Sale Price Trend, 2000 to 2008. Source: TRF



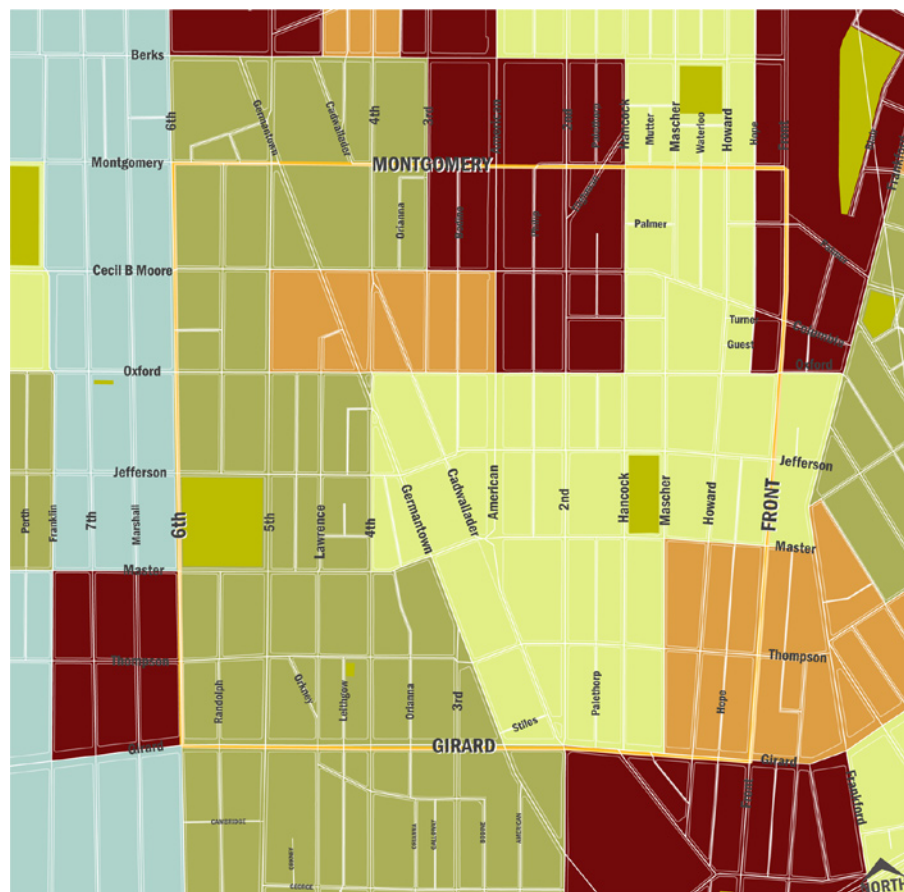


Figure 20. Median Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income, 2000
Source: U.S. Census 2000

Rising sale prices translate to rising costs and decreased affordability in the neighborhood. In 2000, the neighborhood met the federal standard of affordability whereby median housing costs do not exceed 30% of the median household income. In both the neighborhood and the City, costs were slightly higher for renters than for owners. The highest rent-to-income ratios in 2000 were found along the western and northwestern border of the neighborhood where median rents were over 40% of the household income. The greatest homeowner burden occurred in the northeastern quadrant of the neighborhood north of Oxford Street. Although there is no new Census data regarding housing burden, extrapolating from the striking sale price and property tax increases over the last five years, the ratio of housing costs to household income has likely shifted to the detriment of those in low income brackets.

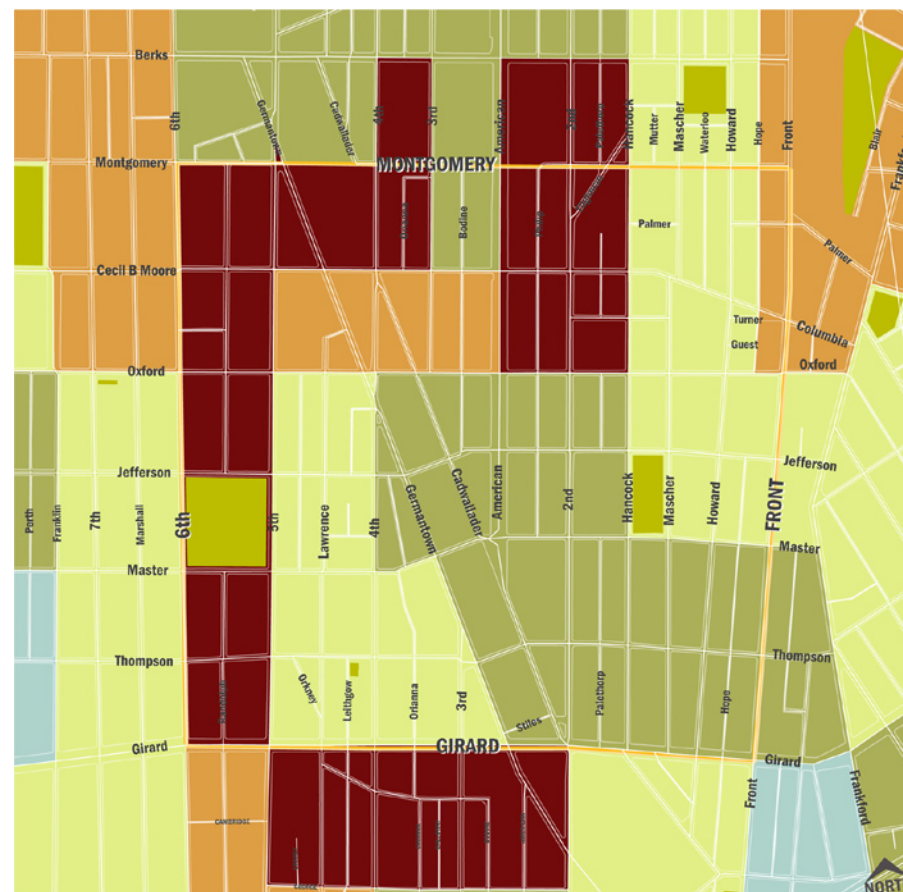
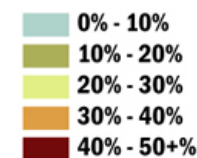


Figure 21. Median Gross Rent as Percentage of Household Income, 2000
Source: U.S. Census 2000

Through 2007, foreclosure was not yet an issue plaguing a large number of neighborhood residents, but as the economy continues to falter and job loss grows, the number of people at risk of foreclosure certainly increases. In 2007, houses in the neighborhood, especially north of Master Street, were slightly more vulnerable to foreclosure than in the City overall. Foreclosure filings in the neighborhood rose from 0.4% in 2006 to 0.7% in 2007, compared with the city rate of 0.5% in 2007. The number of foreclosures in the blocks above Master Street tripled from 5, or 0.3%, in 2006 to 15, or 0.9%, in 2007.



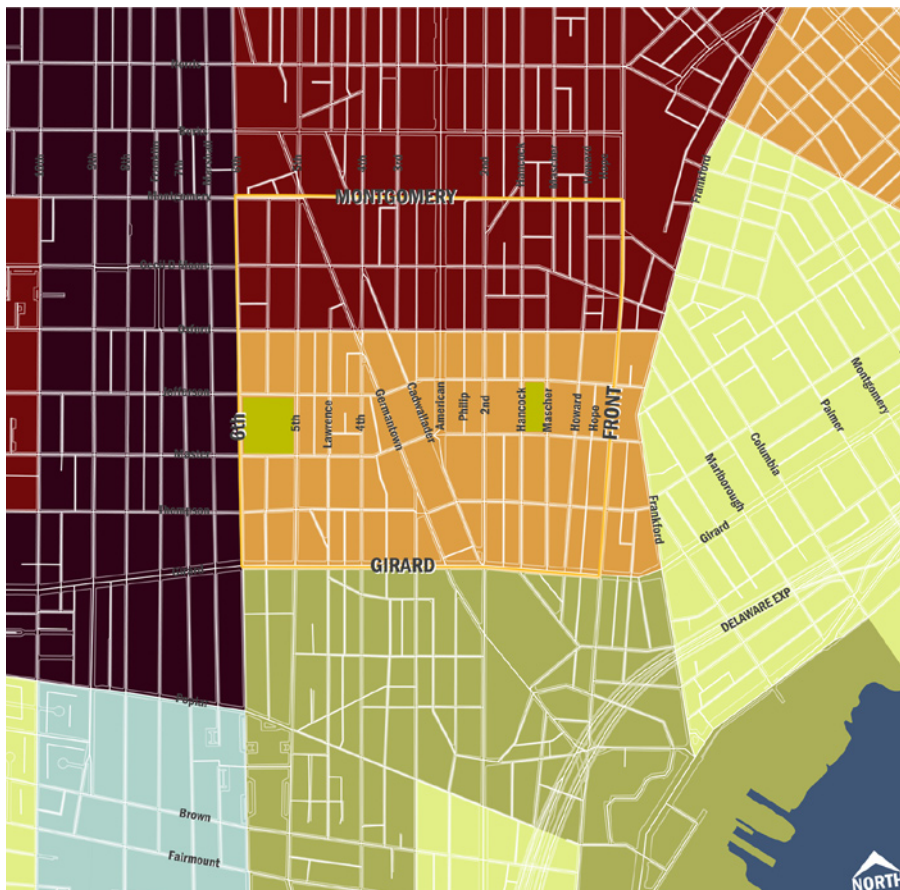


Figure 22. Percent of Mortgage Loans Subprime 2006
Source: TRF

However, according to 2006 data, the community and its northern and western neighbors had very high percentages of subprime mortgage loans, which are correlated with greater risk of default and foreclosure than prime loans. From Montgomery Avenue to Oxford Street, subprime mortgages accounted for 40-50% of loans. Between Oxford and Girard, 30-40% of mortgage loans were subprime.

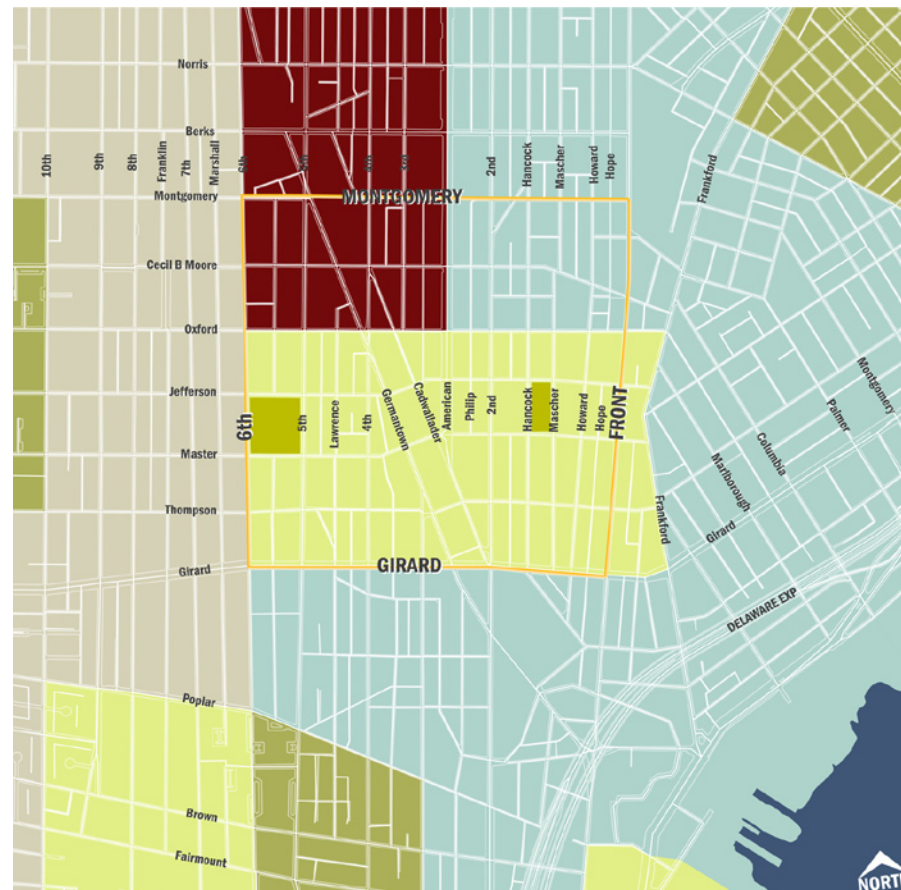
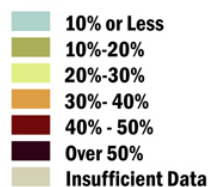
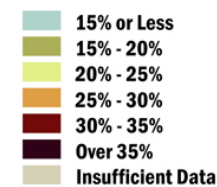


Figure 23. Percent of Purchase Loans with a Second (or Piggyback) Loan, 2006
Source: TRF

Second “piggyback” loans that enable home buyers to put little or no money down and avoid paying for mortgage insurance are another type of mortgage product associated with greater foreclosure risk. In 2006, 30-35% of purchase loans north of Oxford Street and west of American Street had a piggyback loan, while 20-25% of the loans south of Oxford Street did. The area north of Master Street also contained more properties with tax liens in 2007 than south of Master Street.



“Speculators have come in due to increases in housing values... The will of the community is absolutely not being listened to. It is horrible that people are getting pushed out and that things have gotten so expensive.”



Top: Block-long warehouse buildings.
Bottom: Lot on American Street.



Figure 24. Figure Ground Map

Physical Conditions

Built Form

The figure ground map (fig. 24) shows building footprints in black and streets, parking lots, parks and vacant lots in white to highlight the density of the urban fabric. The community appears in the map as a variegated patchwork of building sizes and street frontages. Very large industrial buildings – some occupying whole blocks – are interspersed with rowhouses. Large white holes in the fabric are apparent in the map, pointing to substantial vacancy and large surface parking lots. A significant portion of the neighborhood's street frontage consists of windowless warehouse structures, vacant land, abandoned buildings, parking lots, and fences that do not encourage street activity. The neighborhoods adjacent to the community appear more densely filled in. To the east and south of the community, the building footprints are densely packed and blocks appear as largely unbroken, with the exception of the vacant Schmidt's brewery parcel, which is currently under development. New detached and semi-detached housing construction is clearly discernable to the west of 6th Street.

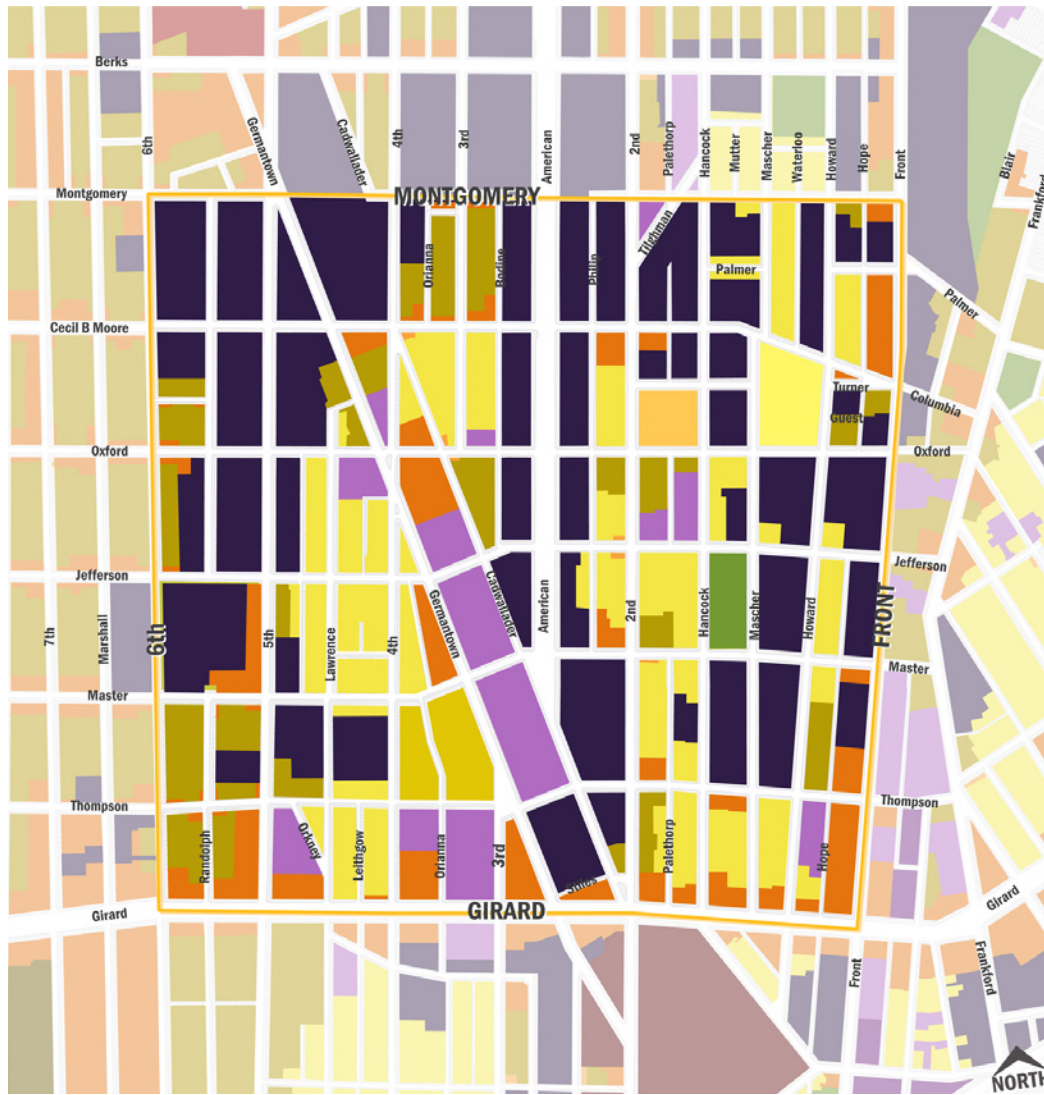
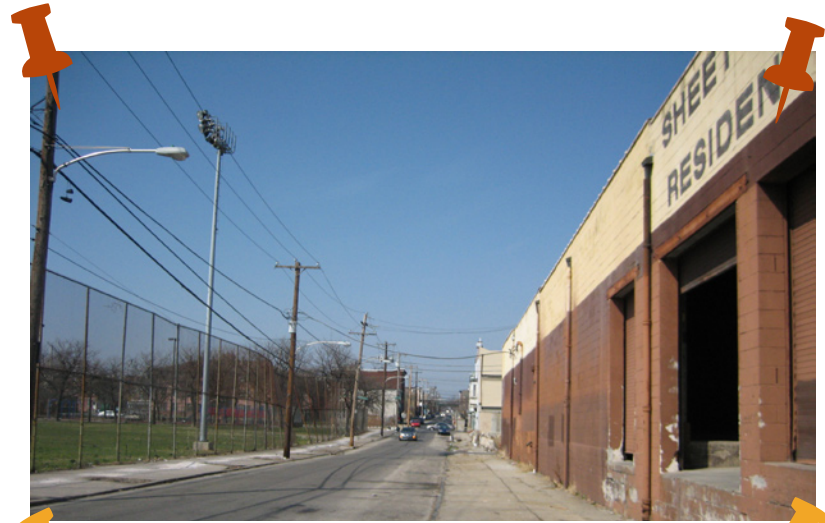


Figure 25. Zoning Map

R9A: Single-Family Residential	C2: Commercial/Mixed Use
R10A: Single-Family Residential	C3: Commercial/Mixed Use
R20: Single-Family Residential	C7: Commercial Center
R10: Multi-Family Residential	ASC: Area Shopping Center
R12: Multi-Family Residential	L4: Limited Industrial
R13: Multi-Family Residential	L5: Limited Industrial
RC1: Residential/Commercial	G2: General Industrial
C1: Commercial/Mixed Use	REC: Park



Top: Industrial building across from Cruz Rec Center.

Bottom: Rowhouses on Palethorp Street.

Zoning and Land Use

The neighborhood zoning is overwhelmingly a blend of residential and industrial zones. American Street, Montgomery Avenue and Cecil B. Moore Avenue are zoned as predominantly G2 general industrial corridors, as are the areas adjacent to Cruz Rec Center and Hancock Park. Girard Avenue within the neighborhood is zoned almost entirely mixed-use commercial, while Germantown Avenue is a mix of everything: G2 industrial, L4 limited industrial, single and multi-family housing, and mixed use commercial.

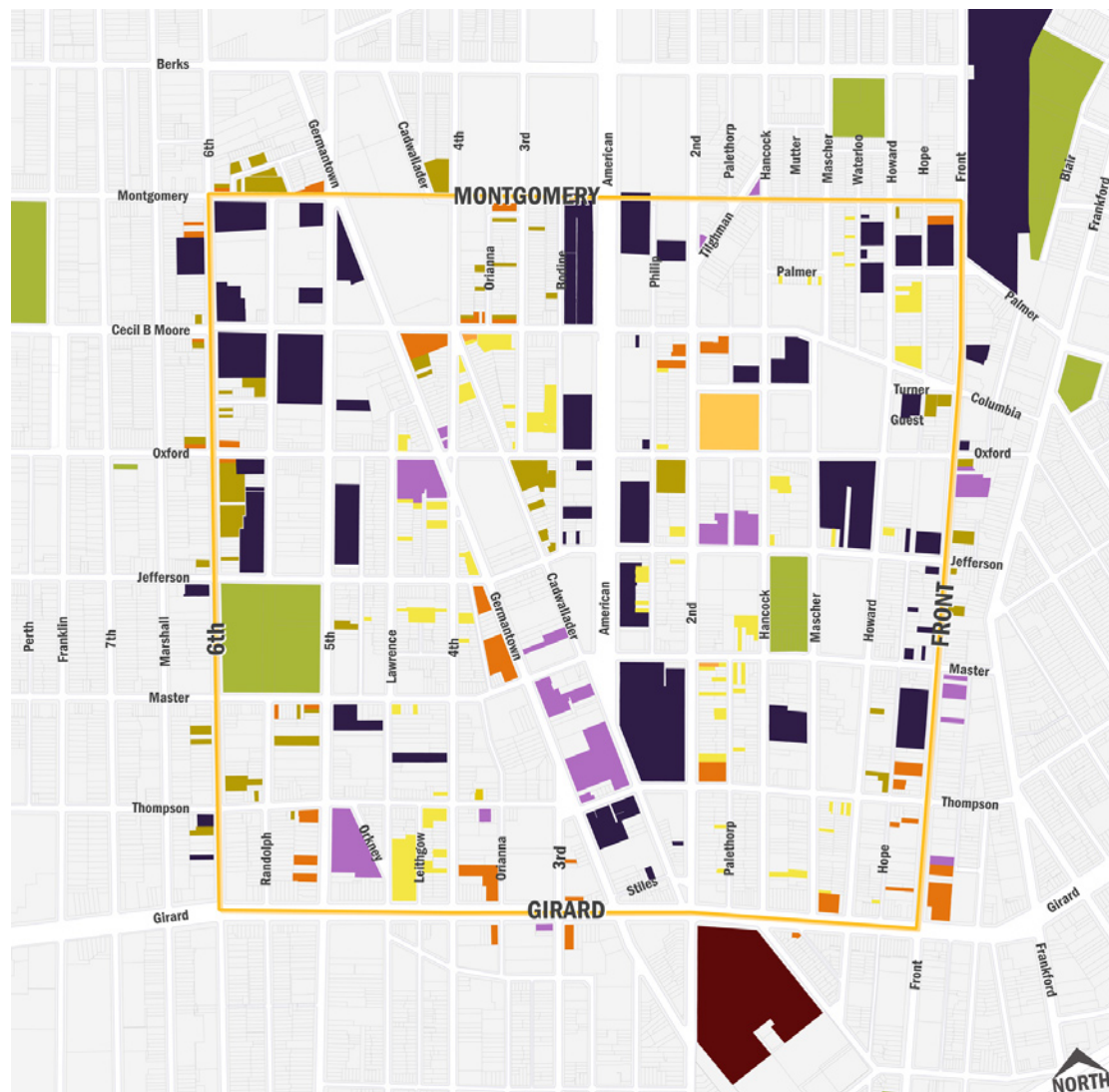
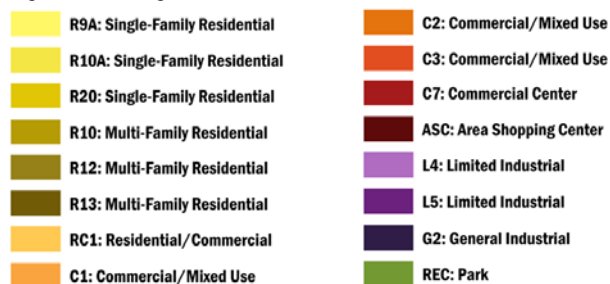


Figure 26. Zoning of Vacant Parcels

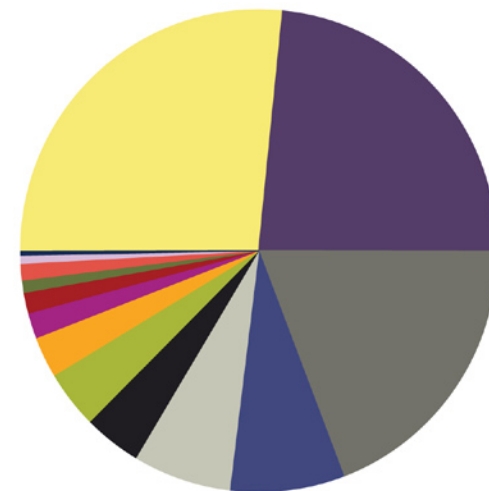


The land use map, compiled from a field survey conducted in August and September 2008, shows less industrial use than the area is zoned for. Some of the excess industrial-zoned parcels have been converted to residential and office/studio use, however many of these parcels are now vacant. Overlaying zoning with vacant parcels shows that the largest vacant parcels are zoned G2 general industrial.

Residential and industrial continue to be the dominant uses in the neighborhood: residential uses occupy 27% of the land area, the highest percentage, followed by industrial uses at 24%. Vacant land is the third greatest land use, occupying 19% of the parcel area. All commercial uses and mixed uses, including retail, office and auto, make up only 7% of the parcel area, and most are concentrated along Girard Avenue.



Figure 27. Land Use Map



Land Use	Square Feet	Acreage	% of Total Area
Residential	1,924,600	44.2	27%
Warehousing/Industry	1,707,716	39.2	24%
Vacant Land	1,388,108	31.9	19%
Institution	558,860	12.8	8%
Parking	484,956	11.1	7%
Vacant Building	281,045	6.5	4%
Park	269,842	6.2	4%
Mixed Use	206,139	4.7	3%
Auto	117,720	2.7	2%
Commercial/Retail	102,095	2.3	1%
Garden	75,055	1.7	1%
Office/Studio	74,799	1.7	1%
Private Garage	44,806	1.0	1%
Public Utility	11,937	0.3	0%
Total	7,247,679	166.4	100%

Table 1. Land Use Breakdown

46 Institutions

Institutional uses make up 8% of the parcel area. Houses of worship are the most common institutional use found in the neighborhood. The religious institutions reflect the immense diversity of the neighborhood and include: St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, Al-Aqsa Islamic Society, Hancock St. John's United Methodist Church, the Serbian Orthodox Church of Saint Nicholas, Albania Mosque, Iglesia Pentecostal, and Bethel Evangelistic. Ongoing participation by religious leadership and congregants from churches surrounding the study area, including Temple Presbyterian Church, Liberty Church, and Circle of Hope Church, underscores the central role that institutions in and adjacent to the area play in the community.

The community is served by 2 public schools: John Moffet Elementary School and James R. Ludlow School. Moffet Elementary provides kindergarten through 5th grade education to 424 students, and Ludlow offers kindergarten through 8th grade education and serves 288 students. Although there is currently no high school within the community, Kensington High School for the Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) is slated to relocate to Berks and Front Street on a large parcel at the northwestern border of the neighborhood. The neighborhood also has several private schools. Al-Aqsa Islamic School provides kindergarten through 12th grade, and LaSalle Academy serves underprivileged children in 3rd through 8th grades.

Lastly, numerous social service providers and community organizations operate in the neighborhood, including Head Start programs, Drueping Center/Project Rainbow, Salvation Army, the Lutheran Settlement House, the Philadelphia Arab-American Community Development Corporation, and Kensington South Neighborhood Advisory Council. Most of the day care and youth centers are located in the southern half of the neighborhood. The neighborhood also has a city health center located on Girard Avenue. Taken together, these religious, educational, and service institutions form the civic backbone of the community, and representatives from many have participated as active, organized, and interested stakeholders in the planning process.



Figure 28. Neighborhood Institutions

“Neighborhood groups try to better the neighborhood now by promoting unity, including community meetings, block parties, and tree plantings.”



Figure 29. Commercial Properties

“There are no stores anymore. There used to be a lot of stores along Marshall St, and the open market would come every weekend. It looked like the Italian Market in South Philly. All that’s gone now.”

Commercial Uses

Commercial uses make up a very small portion of the land uses in the neighborhood, only 7%. Retail uses, a subset of the total commercial uses, account for only 1% of the parcel area, while office or studio space accounts for another 1%. Auto-oriented commercial uses equal retail and office combined at 2%. Mixed use commercial occupies another 3% of the parcel area.



Auto detailing shop

Looking only at commercial parcel use, the vast majority is auto-oriented (22%), followed by an exceptionally high rate of commercial vacancy (20%). Commercial uses that benefit from and attract foot traffic, such as sit-down restaurants, bars, galleries, and shops, are scarce in the neighborhood. Almost all of this type of commercial activity occurs on Girard Avenue. Within the neighborhood, commercial land uses are scattered and represent mainly convenience stores, take-out restaurants, and auto-oriented uses.

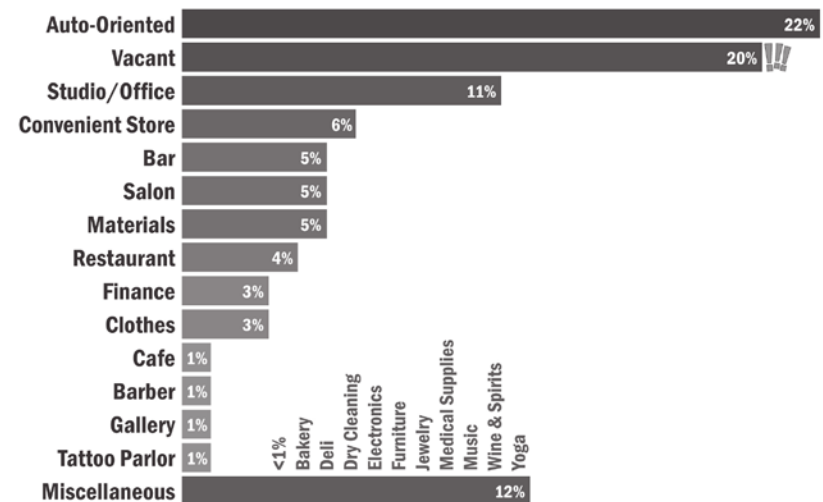


Figure 30. Commercial Use by Type



Figure 31. Neighborhood Groceries

“Seniors have to go way too far just to get food.”

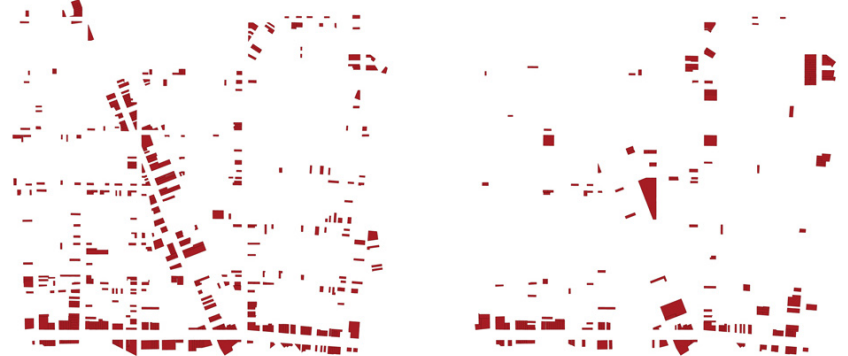
Respondents to the Resident Satisfaction Survey described a lack of places to shop for fresh food as one of the major neighborhood concerns. Aside from smaller supermarkets and corner stores which do not necessarily stock fresh produce, the closest supermarket to the neighborhood is Cousin's at 6th and Berks, which is about a half mile from the center of the community. Other large supermarkets are located at least one mile away. A planned Pathmark at 2nd Street and Girard Avenue will help bring more food shopping options to the neighborhood.

When compared with land use in 1947, the neighborhood's commercial and industrial losses are clear. Industrial uses were dominant in 1947, particularly in the northern half of the neighborhood. Commercial activity also appears very strong in the 1947 map, and the major commercial corridors of Girard and Germantown Avenue are very clearly delineated. Several east-west and north-south secondary commercial

1947

2008

Commercial



Warehousing / Industry



Figure 32. Comparison of Past and Present Commercial and Industrial Use
Source: 1947 Sanborn Map and 2008 Field Survey

corridors are also defined in the 1947 map. In contrast the only really discernable commercial corridor in the 2008 land use map is Girard Avenue. The disappearance of local industry and commercial uses has much deeper implications than a lack of local commercial services and shopping opportunities – the jobs that once employed this working neighborhood have, to large degree, disappeared as well.



Figure 33. Vacancy Map

“[This neighborhood is too full of] dilapidated houses and people moving out. The neighborhood used to be more cohesive. Now everything that is left is empty lots.”

■ Vacant Building
■ Vacant Land

Vacancy

The neighborhood is marked by a very high level of vacancy, and 70% of the Resident Satisfaction Survey respondents cited it as a problem in their neighborhood. Vacant land accounts for 19%, or 32 acres, of the parcel area, while another 4% of the parcel area hosts vacant buildings. In total, there are roughly 35 football fields of vacant space within the neighborhood. The vacancy is distributed throughout the neighborhood, touching almost every block. The large size or contiguous nature of some of the vacant parcels is particularly striking; many blocks with vacancy in the neighborhood are over half vacant, and sometimes the entire block is vacant. Such intense vacancy has far-reaching repercussions in the neighborhood; the vacant land and buildings detract from public perception of the area, attract illegal dumping and vandalism, reduce foot traffic, make residents feel less safe, make it more difficult for businesses to thrive, and reduce the value and security of investments.

Most of the large tracts of vacant land are privately-owned, however, some large areas, notably along American Street, are publicly-owned. The vacant block along American Street at Montgomery Avenue is owned by the City and the Redevelopment Authority (RDA). At the end of American Street across from the ABSCO site is a large parcel that has been capped to prevent contact with contaminated soil and is owned by the Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development (PAID). While these large, publicly-owned parcels represent opportunities for catalyst projects that benefit the public, some large, publicly-owned parcels have been recently disposed of to private entities, effectively removing the public from the dialogue about that land's future reuse.



Top: ABSCO Steel site

Bottom: Vacant lot on Front Street

50 Building Condition

A building condition survey was conducted concurrent with the land use survey in August and September 2008. The building condition survey graded buildings on a scale of A through F, without E, like grades in school. “A” buildings, in new or excellent condition, were well maintained with no visible sign of deterioration. “B” buildings, in good condition, were found to need minor cosmetic improvements such as painting or weeding. “C” buildings, in fair condition, required more serious improvements, such as major paint or some structural repair. “D” buildings, distressed, were found to be structurally intact, but in need of major rehabilitation, and “F,” or failing buildings, were deteriorated to the extent that they posed a threat to public safety and welfare.

The survey found that the bulk of buildings in the neighborhood are in fair (31%) to good (39%) condition, with a decent number that rank as excellent (23%). Building conditions vary greatly with most blocks, but the buildings in the best condition, those ranked as A and B, were found in more abundance in the southern half of the neighborhood, below Jefferson Street. The blocks north of Jefferson Street hosted more buildings in deteriorating condition, ranked C through F.

The highest-ranked buildings include new construction and renovated buildings, such as the Johnnie Tillmon Townhouses, the Crane Arts Building, and Aramark, and institutions, such as St. Michael’s Church and Al-Aqsa Islamic Society. Warehousing and industrial buildings accounted for a large proportion of the buildings ranked in fair condition. While these buildings are for the most part structurally sound, they are in need of more substantial cosmetic improvement such as painting, window and masonry repair, and graffiti removal. Community members felt that the number of failing structures was surprisingly low compared to their perception, but the large volume of vacant land suggests that many of the neighborhood’s once abandoned buildings may have been demolished. Virtually all of the failing structures were classified as commercial and mixed use buildings that had been abandoned, relating to the dramatically diminished commercial activity in the neighborhood.

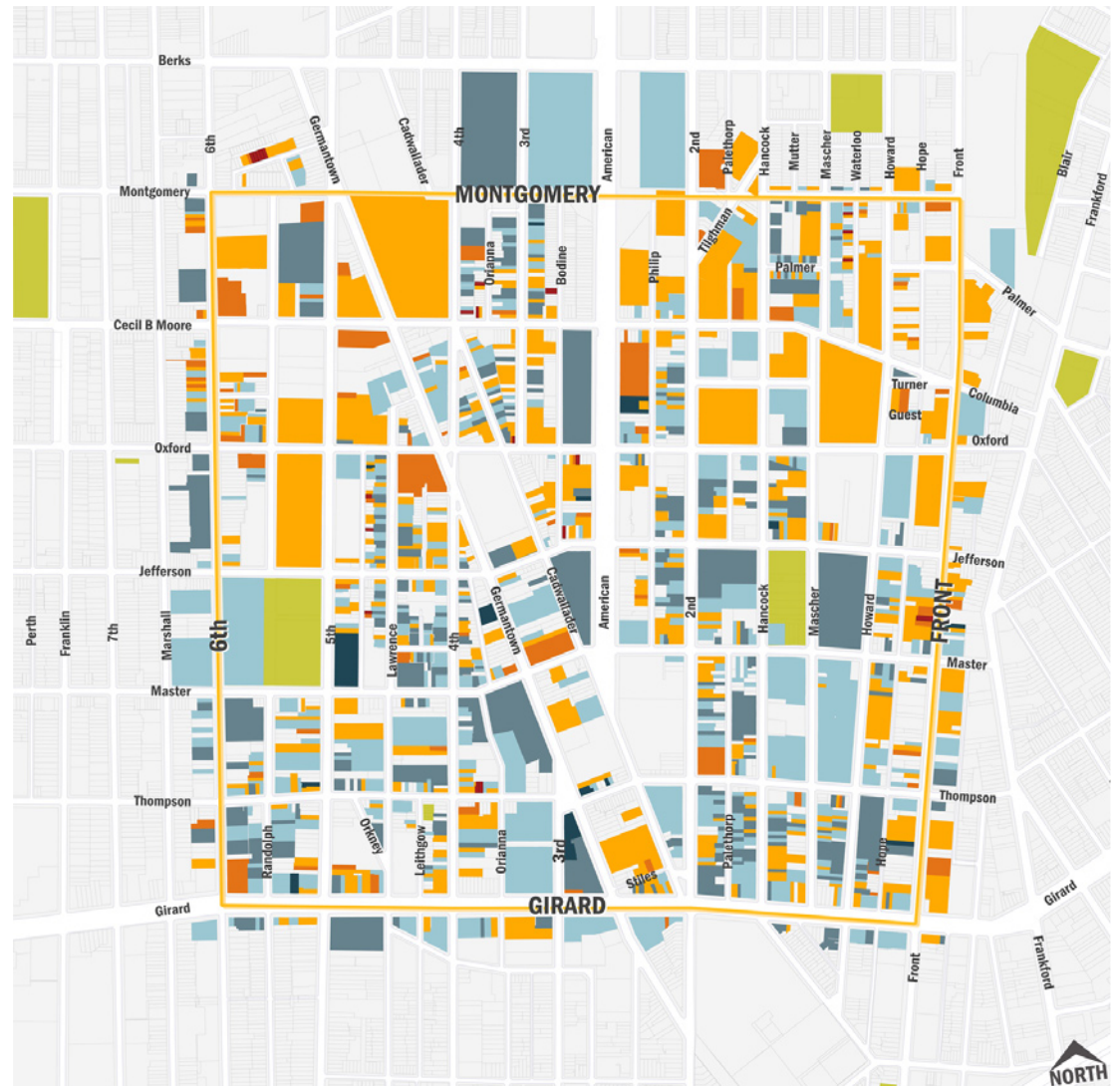


Figure 34. Building Condition





Figure 35. Building Condition Grading System

Building Type	Building Condition	Count	% of Total
Residential	A: Excellent	396	28%
	B: Good	574	41%
	C: Fair	333	24%
	D: Distressed	68	5%
	F: Failing Structure	2	0%
	Renovation/Construction	17	1%
Commercial/Mixed Use	A: Excellent	46	20%
	B: Good	83	35%
	C: Fair	70	30%
	D: Distressed	13	6%
	F: Failing Structure	19	8%
	Renovation/Construction	4	2%
Institutional	A: Excellent	35	37%
	B: Good	40	42%
	C: Fair	20	21%
	D: Distressed		0%
	F: Failing Structure		0%
	Renovation/Construction		0%
Warehousing/Industrial	A: Excellent	10	3%
	B: Good	100	31%
	C: Fair	192	59%
	D: Distressed	22	7%
	F: Failing Structure	1	0%
	Renovation/Construction	1	0%
Miscellaneous	A: Excellent	7	8%
	B: Good	28	31%
	C: Fair	33	37%
	D: Distressed	21	24%
	F: Failing Structure		0%
	Renovation/Construction		0%

Table 2. Building Condition Breakdown by Building Type

Building Condition	Count	% of Total
A: Excellent	495	23%
B: Good	822	39%
C: Fair	652	31%
D: Distressed	122	6%
F: Failing	22	1%
Renovation/Construction	22	1%
Total	2,135	100%

Table 3. Building Condition Breakdown for All Buildings

“Houses that are vacant and abandoned are a dumping ground. So are torn-down houses.”

“Ugly things happen in abandoned buildings. People die, people use drugs.”



Top: Publicly-owned vacant land on American Street.
Bottom: Public library on Girard Avenue.

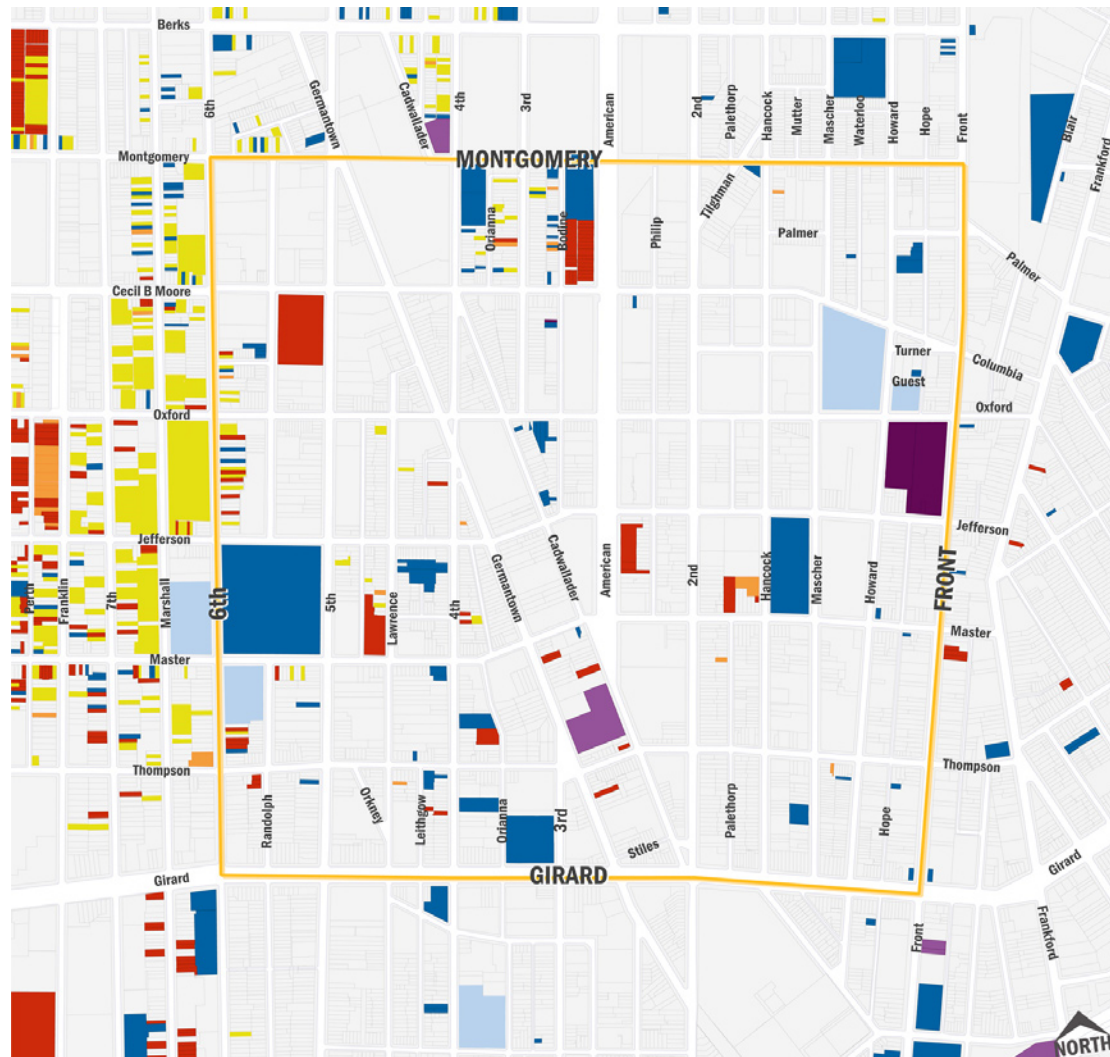


Figure 36. Public Ownership
Source: BRT



Public Ownership

The neighborhood contains a number of publicly-owned properties that include the City-owned parks and recreation centers, the public schools, and industrial or formerly industrial properties owned by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation, Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development, and the Redevelopment Authority (RDA). Smaller single-lot parcels are also scattered throughout the neighborhood. Along 6th Street within the neighborhood, the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA), RDA and the City own single parcels. In all, the publicly-held land in the neighborhood amounts to 5.5 acres; 1.87 acres are owned by the RDA, 2.75 acres by the City, 0.73 acres by the Housing Authority; 1.2 acres by Philadelphia Authority for Industrial Development (PAID), and 0.08 acres by Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC).

Just west of the 6th Street boundary, publicly-owned housing developments comprise a much larger proportion of the land. Most of this land is owned by the Philadelphia Housing Authority, Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, and the Redevelopment Authority.

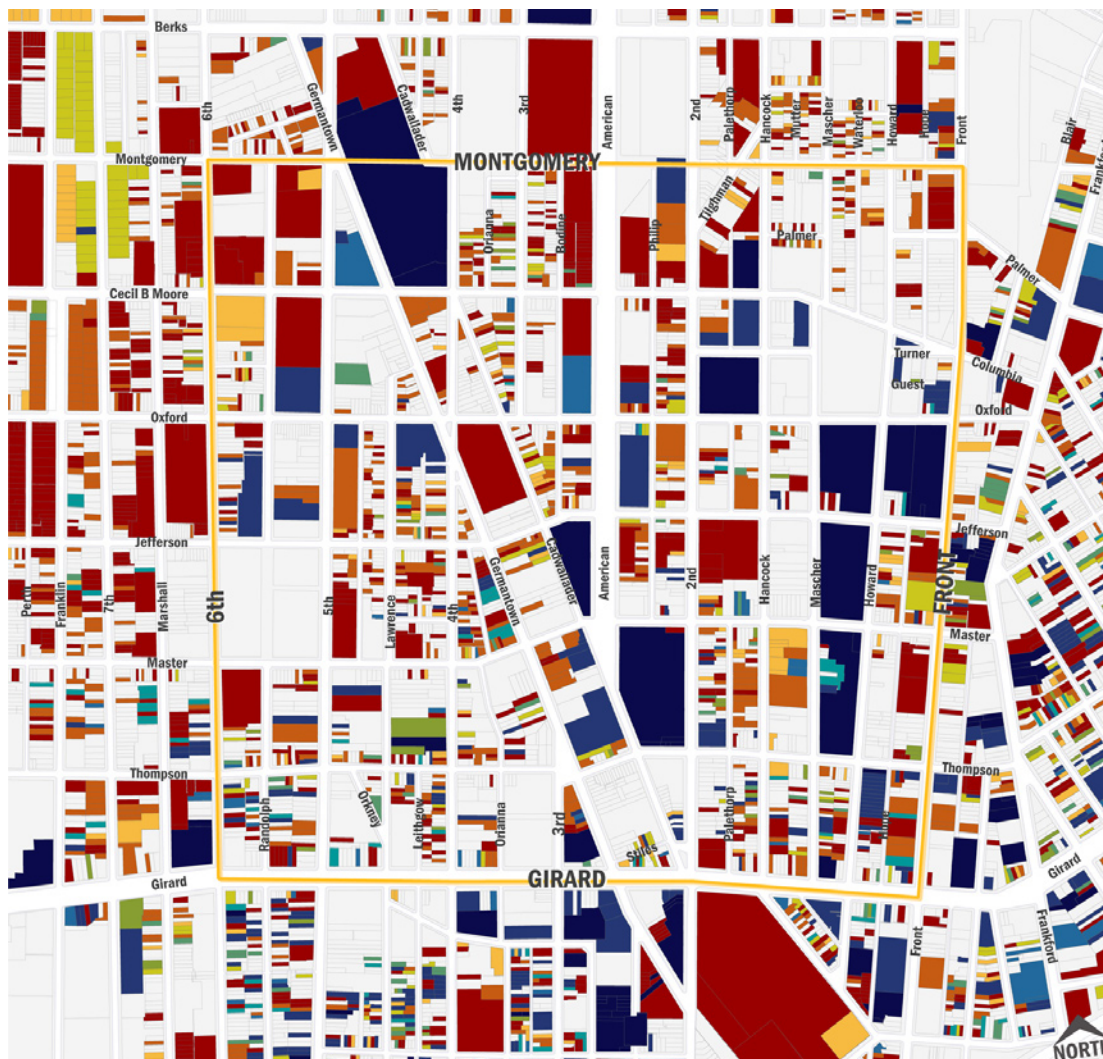


Figure 37. Property Sales Since 2000

Source: BRT

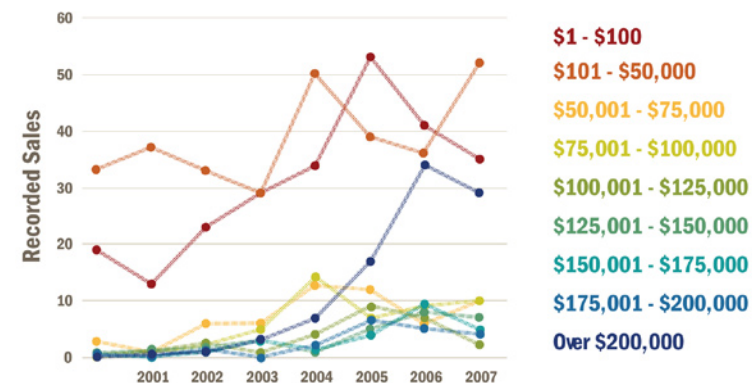


Figure 38. Property Sales Trend, 2001-2007

Source: BRT

Recent Investment

The map of sales since 2000 shows an incredible amount of activity in and around the neighborhood. The bulk of property sales fall into the \$1-\$100 and \$101-\$50,000 bracket, indicating a high instance of land transfers at nominal prices such as public disposition of property, sheriff sales, or family transfers. Between 2003 and 2006, sales exceeding \$200,000 spiked dramatically. Additionally, 14 properties (2%) sold for over \$500,000; these include Crane Arts, Pieri Creations, Honor Foods, and the ABSCO Steel site.

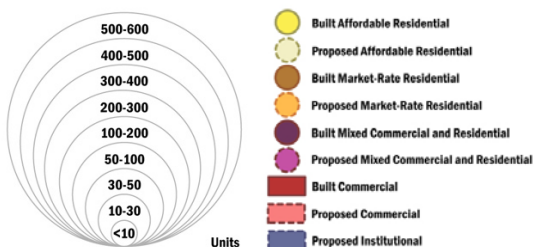
“More people are taking the time to work on their houses and make things presentable. This is probably because of the investment in the neighborhood. There is a lot more investment coming in, which leads to pride in the neighborhood.”

Most of the recent investment in the neighborhood has consisted of market-rate loft housing, heightening affordability concerns among long-term residents. Since 2000, over 180 units of market-rate housing have been built in the neighborhood. Additional large-scale market-rate housing is proposed for the ABSCO Steel site and the former Gretz brewery. The Umbrella Factory at 5th and Master has also been considered for market-rate housing. Most of the recent affordable housing development has occurred outside the neighborhood's boundaries to the west of 6th Street, with the exception of the Johnnie Tillmon Townhouses built by WCRP in the late 1990s and the Nueva Esperanza Homeownership project from 2000.

Recent commercial investment in the neighborhood includes a mix of light industrial and food distribution companies, and most recently the opening of a film studio, Invincible Studios. The Crane Building on American Street which anchors the emerging North American Street Design District, Honor Foods at 5th and Germantown, Aramark on American Street, and Pieri Creations at Front and Oxford are some of the larger companies that have invested in the neighborhood. The American Street Financial and Technical Assistance Center (FINANTA) is building an office at 2nd and Thompson Streets. Just beyond the neighborhood to the south, a Pathmark is planned as part of Tower Investment's mixed use development at 2nd and Girard.



Figure 39. New and Proposed Development



Gretz Building

"Investment has driven up prices, people feel unwelcome in the neighborhood."

Environmental Conditions and Open Space

Topography, Drainage and Environmental Contamination

The neighborhood's landscape is relatively flat, with topography that slopes gently downward to the east and southeast as it approaches Front Street and Girard Avenue. Gravity causes water to drain downward to lower elevations. However, because of the area's generally low elevation, high water table, and lack of dramatic topography, the neighborhood is susceptible to flooding, particularly at the lowest points along the east side between Front Street and Mascher Street and between Thompson and Girard west of Germantown.

Rainwater accumulates rapidly, flowing off of the impervious surfaces created by roads, roofs, and compacted urban soil, picking up pollutants along the way, and carrying them into the storm drainage system, rivers, and creeks. During heavy rainfall, water quickly overwhelms the area's aging and dysfunctional combined sewer system, sending water into the basements of many neighborhood homes. Thompson Street has had repeated issues with flooding, and earlier in 2009, a water main break at Front Street and Girard Avenue caused a sinkhole and disrupted SEPTA EI service.

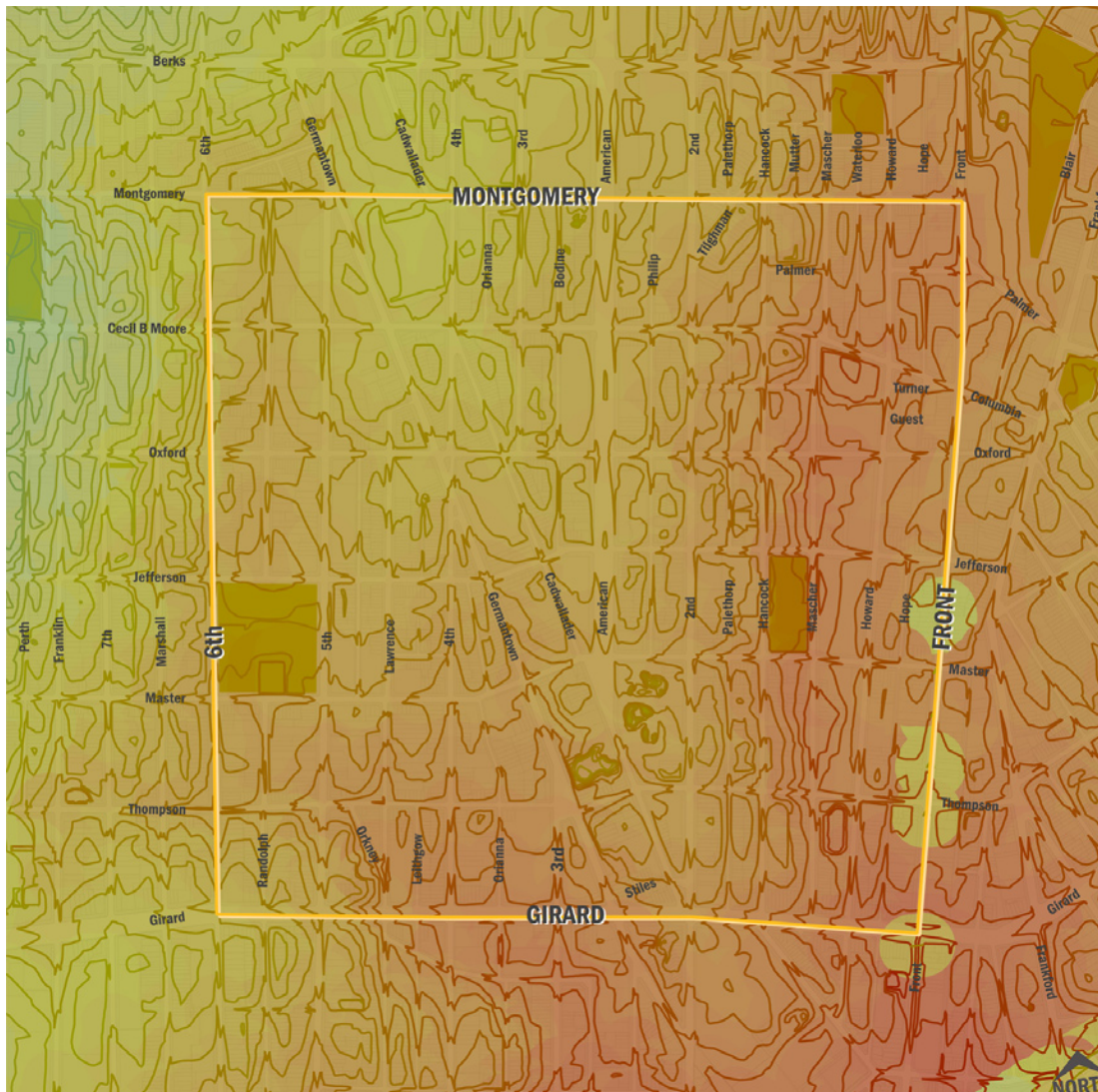
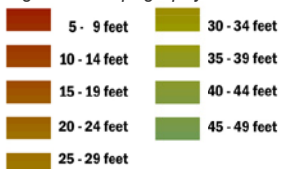


Figure 40. Topography





Top: The recently remediated ABSCO Steel site

Bottom: Vacant land with the ability to absorb stormwater

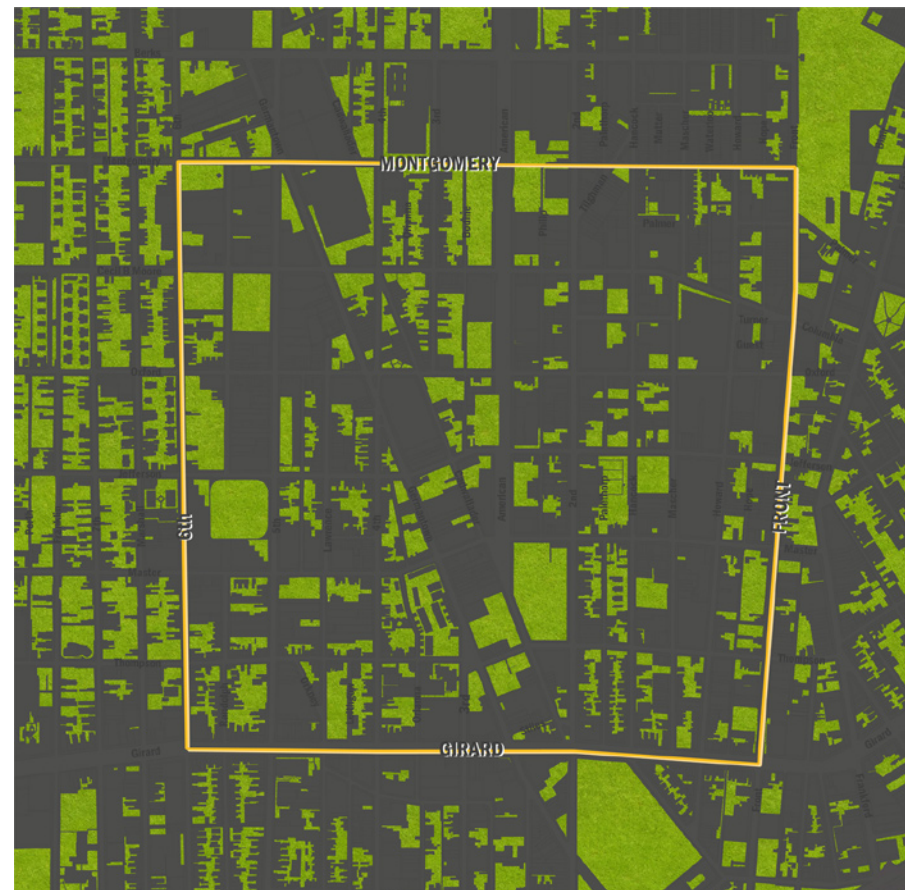


Figure 41. Impervious Surfaces

Impervious Surface
 Permeable Area

Permeable surfaces allow a more environmentally sound and gradual absorption of stormwater into the ground. With the large volume of vacant land in the neighborhood, there is a heightened proportion of permeable surfaces. However, in many cases, the soil lying below areas where buildings once stood and industry once thrived may be contaminated, thus appearing falsely environmentally friendly. As the neighborhood redevelops, it will be absolutely necessary to address both issues – stormwater management and soil remediation. The former ABSCO Steel site is a prime example; the site, which was a scrap metal yard for the past 40 years, is the most recent site to be cleaned in the neighborhood and had over 15,000 tons of contaminated soil removed from its grounds to prepare the lot for a green, mixed use residential development.



Figure 42. Tree Cover



Figure 43. Street Trees and New Trees

- New Street Trees
- Street Trees

Trees

Tree cover for the neighborhood is 5%, which is far below the recommended average tree cover for metropolitan areas of 30%. Many of the existing trees in the community are located in the parks, in residential yards, and in vacant lots. When calculating the coverage of street trees only, less than 2% of the neighborhood is covered. The community has undertaken tree planting efforts, and newly planted trees are noticeable in front of new developments and as part of the Kensington South Neighborhood Advisory Council (KSNAC) initiatives. Most of the new trees are concentrated in the southwestern quadrant of the neighborhood near the Cruz Rec Center and on the residential streets south of Master Street, and, thanks to a recent spring planting in partnership with the Al-Aqsa Islamic Society, around the mosque on Germantown Avenue.



Street trees near Hancock Park

58 Parks and Play Space

In theory, the high proportion of youth and the influx of new residents in recent years place a heavy and increasing burden on the existing parks and play spaces in the neighborhood. Using figures from the 2000 Census, the neighborhood had 1.56 acres of park space per 1,000 residents. Using recent development numbers to estimate the number of new residents who have moved into the neighborhood since 2000, the 2008 estimate of park space is even lower, at 1.20 acres per 1,000 residents. The average park space per 1,000 residents for cities of a population density comparable to Philadelphia's is 6.1 acres,⁷ and overall, Philadelphia has 6.9 acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. However, Fairmount Park's enormous size skews this ratio of park space per resident, and most of the City's dense urban neighborhoods offer less than 2 acres of open space per 1,000 residents. This section of Eastern North Philadelphia is no exception.

The two major recreational spaces in the neighborhood are the Cruz Recreation Center and Hancock Park, both in the southern half of the neighborhood. Residents have expressed concern that these two parks are underutilized, unsafe, and unwelcoming to families and children. Before advocating for the creation of new park space in the community, local stakeholders prefer that existing parks be improved, made safer, and better maintained, especially given the challenge of shrinking resources and the ongoing struggle with stewardship of the public arena, which includes park space.

Both Cruz and Hancock have harsh edges. The Ludlow School and a headstart program sit to the south and west of Cruz Recreation Center, providing a nearby population of potential park goers, but warehousing and vacancy to the north and east limit activity along those edges of the park. The park contains a field that is used frequently by baseball players, soccer players, dog owners with their dogs, and people having an informal catch. It also contains two playgrounds, one for tots, which is old and in need of updating, and a newer space for older children. There is also a Recreation Center, a set of basketball courts surrounded by a few steps that provide theater seating, and a pool.⁸ These uses – the ball fields, pool, and playgrounds, in particular, require tall fencing to keep baseballs within the park, kids safe from traffic which moves rapidly up 5th Street and down 6th, and passersby from tripping and taking an unplanned swim.

⁷ Center for City Park Excellence, The Trust for Public Land, 2008 (www.tpl.org/ccpe).

⁸ Pool closures are a possibility for many neighborhood pools; the Mayor's latest budget keeps 46 out of 73 pools open. "Council approves \$3.8 billion budget." Philadelphia Inquirer. 22 May 2009. <http://www.philly.com/philly/news/local/45834497.html>

Open Space Ratio: Acres/1,000 Residents



Figure 44. Open Space Ratio

Surrounding vacancy and warehousing, and the walled grounds of St. Michael's create a sense of isolation at Hancock Park, which suffers from little street activity, few nearby residences, and limited visibility into the park. Community members report that drugs and drug dealing have infiltrated this park, reducing the sense of security and, in turn, park usage. The park is surrounded by a high, dense, and prison-like metal fence atop a wall, which is necessitated by grade changes. Access to the park is limited to a single entrance on Hancock Street. The park contains a Recreation Center, a pool, a recently updated playground with a new rubber play surface for safety, and a baseball field. However, from the street, these amenities are all but invisible.

Smaller park spaces in the neighborhood include Benson Park, a pocket park with limited access from Leithgow Street (because the Lawrence and 4th Street entrances are almost always locked) between Jefferson and Harlan Streets, and Hart Playground, between 4th and Orianna Streets, in between Thompson and Master. Both are assets that could be improved upon. The neighborhood also has a number of garden spaces in various states of maintenance and disrepair. Some of the community gardens appear untended and are thus vulnerable, as market pressures drive new development upon underutilized land within the area.



Figure 45. Public Open Space

Parks



Gardens



Top: Community garden
Middle: Cruz Recreation Center
Bottom: Hancock Park

Hancock Park



Walls and high fences limit park visibility and result in low usage.



Benson Park



A nice pocket park...



tucked behind locked gates.

Cruz Recreation Center



An underutilized rec center with outdated equipment; nearby industrial use and vacancy contribute to an unwelcoming atmosphere.



Transportation

Street Network

The majority of streets in the neighborhood are one-way streets following the City's grid; 2nd Street, 5th Street, and 6th Street are the major one-way streets in the neighborhood, each carrying a significant volume of traffic moving at high speeds. Front Street, Girard Avenue, Cecil B. Moore, American Street, and portions of Germantown Avenue carry two-way traffic and comprise the neighborhood's biggest and most commercial or industrial corridors. Germantown Avenue and Cadwallader Street run diagonally through the community from northwest to southeast, complicating the intersections and block pattern where they intersect with streets that fit the north-south, east-west grid. The neighborhood also encompasses a handful of very small streets such as Palmer and Turner, Harlan, Leithgow, and Stiles.



Figure 46. Street Network





Figure 47. Public Transit

Transit Route Number
 El Station Stop

Public Transit

The neighborhood is fairly well-served by public transit. Survey respondents said that good access to transportation is one of their favorite things about the neighborhood, and 86% are satisfied with the local transportation options. There is good access to bus routes, although the number 57 along American Street is the only bus that runs through the neighborhood; the 47, 3, 5, and 25 skirt the edges of the neighborhood. Most of the buses run north-south; the only east-west service is the Girard Avenue trolley (Route 15) and the number 3 bus on Berks. Almost the entire neighborhood east of 5th Street is within a 10-minute walk of the two El stations at Girard and Berks.

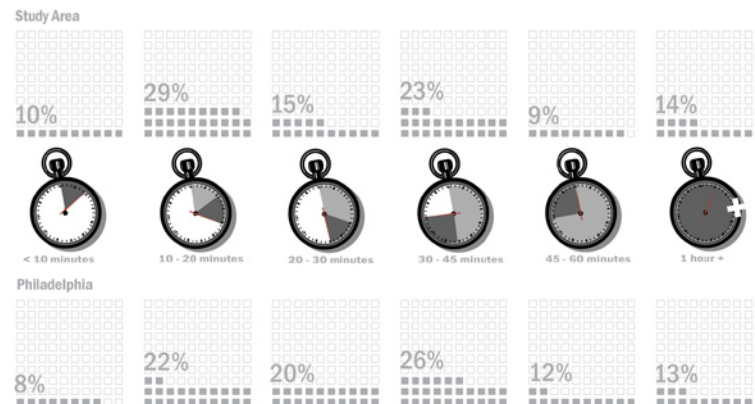


Figure 48. Travel Time to Work
Source: U.S. Census 2000

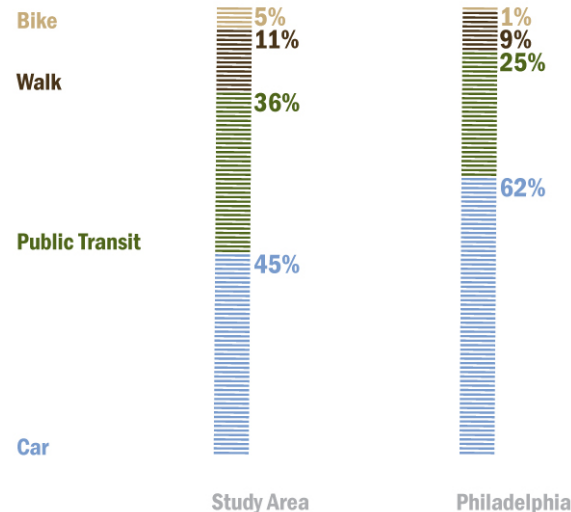


Figure 49. Means of Transportation to Work
Source: U.S. Census 2000

Commuting Patterns

According to the 2000 Census, residents in the neighborhood drove to work less and used public transit, walked, or biked more than the City average. While 62% of the City's residents drive to work, only 45% of the neighborhood's residents do. 36% of them take public transit, compared to the City's 25%, and slightly more of the neighborhood's residents walk and bike to work than the City average. The greatest percentage of residents (29%) have a 10 to 20 minute commute to work.



Sidewalks in the neighborhood range from safe and well-maintained to deteriorating to nonexistent.

Pedestrian Conditions

The high level of vacancy in the neighborhood and the abundance of auto-oriented businesses detract significantly from the pedestrian experience. Some of the vacant lots are used for parking, degrading the sidewalks next to them by eroding the curbs, and in many cases cars are parked on the sidewalk itself. The occupied residential blocks exhibit relatively well-maintained sidewalks; however, those adjacent to vacant lots are often very dilapidated, presenting a significant barrier to those with limited mobility, traveling in wheelchairs, or with strollers. Many of the neighborhood sidewalks have buckled and been patched unevenly. In some instances, the sidewalks are completely overgrown with vegetation or cracked to the point where they are barely recognizable as sidewalks and no longer traversable. Where the sidewalk has deteriorated, there is also no separation between the pedestrian and the cars in the street as the curb has worn away.

Bicycling Conditions

Of the streets in the neighborhood, Germantown Avenue, 5th Street, 4th Street, Cecil B. Moore Avenue, and Girard Avenue have been evaluated as part of the Philadelphia Bicycle Network. Of these, Girard Avenue was rated as above average for bicycling, although recent bump outs, new trolley infrastructure, and high traffic volume render cycling along this corridor both difficult and dangerous. No bike lanes currently exist in the community. Commercial areas within the community did not appear to have bike racks; however, New Kensington CDC has installed “art racks,” bicycle racks designed by local artists, along Frankford Avenue just east of the neighborhood.



Cyclists on Front Street (top) and Thompson Street (bottom).



Participants chat at a community meeting about vacant land.
Source: Harvey Finkle

“We are still pretty sociable and look out for one another.”

Quality of Life Neighborhood

One of the best aspects of the neighborhood according to the Resident Satisfaction Survey is the friendliness of neighbors. The survey shows a strong network of neighborly support; respondents indicated that they regularly engage in conversations with their neighbors and can depend on them in the event of an emergency. Fully 66% of the survey respondents have lived in the neighborhood for over 10 years, 19% for over 20 years and 34% for over 30 years. Overall, residents surveyed described the neighborhood as conveniently located, quiet and family-oriented, and expressed confidence that other residents in the neighborhood were committed to making it better. However, the lack of active meeting places or gathering spaces in the neighborhood poses a challenge to new neighbors interested in building a sense of community with longer-term residents.

Crime and Safety

Crime is perceived by residents to be one of the biggest problems in the neighborhood. Over 30% of the Resident Satisfaction Survey respondents cited crime and other safety issues as the worst thing about the neighborhood, while another 15% ranked it as the second-worst thing about the neighborhood. At the same time, 68% of the respondents said they and their family felt safe in the area.

Crime data from 1998 to 2006 show that serious incidents of crime in the neighborhood exceed the citywide average overall. However, in 2004 and 2006 the community's rates for crimes against persons and against property decreased to the same level as the city average. The breakdown of 2006 data shows that crimes against property were more prevalent than crimes against persons. Most of the property crimes in the neighborhood in 2006 were auto thefts, while thefts accounted for 30% of property crimes, and burglaries accounted for the remaining property crimes. In the neighborhood, twice as many burglaries were conducted against residential properties as commercial properties. A closer look at crimes against persons in 2006 shows the community had slightly higher rates of robbery and slightly lower rates of aggravated assault than the City average.

Trash and Vandalism

Littering and trash dumping are pervasive problems in the neighborhood. Almost 12% of the Resident Satisfaction Survey respondents cited litter and graffiti as the worst problem in the neighborhood, and another 15% listed it as the second-worst aspect of the neighborhood. Many of the vacant lots and the sidewalks in front of them are littered with trash and large items such as rusted cars, furniture, tires, and scrapped building materials. Additionally, graffiti and broken or boarded up windows are characteristic of many of the vacant buildings in the neighborhood.

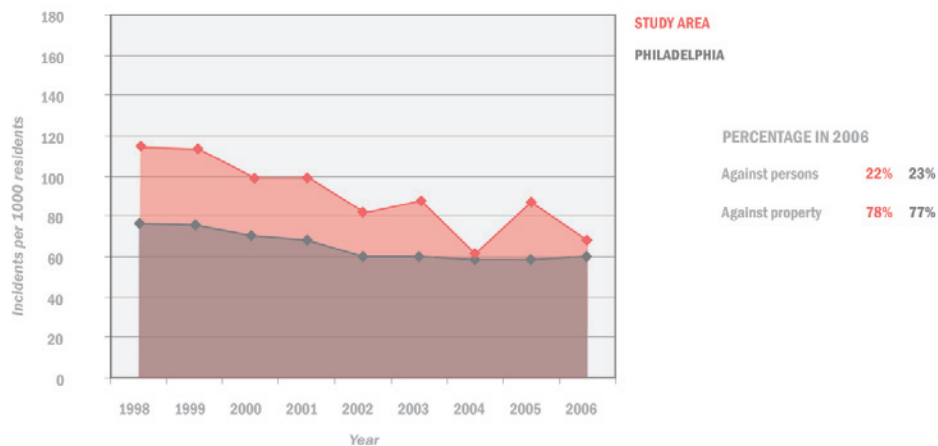


Figure 50. Crime: All Serious Incidents Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006
Source: Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML)

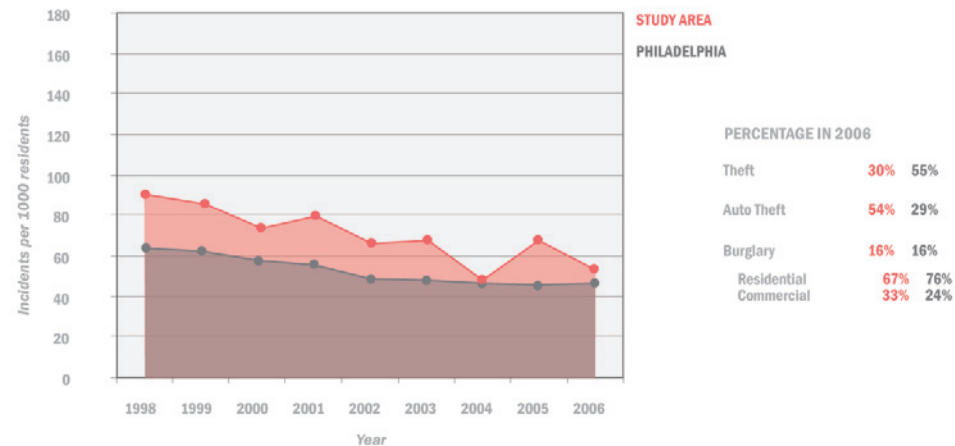


Figure 51. Crime: All Serious Incidents Against Property Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006
Source: CML



Graffiti, illegal dumping, and abandonment detract from neighborhood morale.

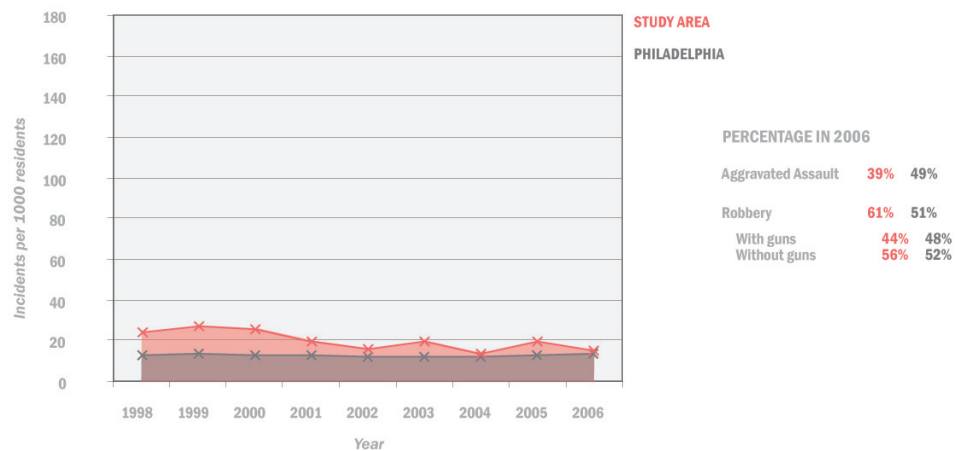


Figure 52. Crime: All Serious Incidents Against Persons Per 1,000 Residents, 1998-2006
Source: CML

“People used to sit on the porch all night, and there was more of a sense of community. It was safer. Now there is more crime and less togetherness.”

66 Summary

The shift from heavy industry and manufacturing to a service economy has had an enormous impact on this Eastern North Philadelphia community. Emptied of jobs when the factories shut down, the neighborhood now suffers a high rate of poverty, low educational attainment, and high unemployment rates. Vacancy and neglect have created a fragmented neighborhood riven with long stretches of empty land or broken windows, detracting from community morale and public perception of place while also contributing to a sense that the neighborhood is not safe.

The challenge of such high levels of vacancy can also be seen as a unique opportunity. The neighborhood today is remarkably diverse in terms of ethnicity and race, income, religion, and tenure. With its excellent transit options, amount of developable land, strong neighbor-to-neighbor relationships, and stock of historic factory and warehouse buildings, the neighborhood has many strong assets to build upon. New market-rate residential conversions and rehabilitated rowhomes have helped to restore the neighborhood's former density and vibrancy, but have brought with them rising housing costs, which pose a threat to long-term and lower-income residents. As the neighborhood continues to evolve, the main challenge is to manage change in a balanced way that meets the needs of all residents while building community among neighbors, new and old.





IV. action steps

68 IV. Action Steps

This section of the community plan addresses the four subject areas covered by the subcommittees as well as an overarching “quality of life” component and recommends priorities and actions steps which, taken together, support those priorities. The activities described in the next series of pages represent and summarize the views, concerns, ideas, and aspirations of WCRP and ENPC members along with a host of other community participants. There is universal acknowledgement that securing the resources required to implement the activities in this section of the plan is a daunting task. Notwithstanding this fact, the energy and enterprise invested in this plan requires that its products be fully presented in order that they are fully appreciated. In the next section of this report, beginning on page 98, the plan proposes specific projects, programs, and investments that will be pursued over a five-year period, the basis for pursuing them, and the capital requirements to implement them.



Figure 53. The neighborhood has the equivalent of 35 football fields (or 32 acres) of vacant land.

A. Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings

The priorities for the neighborhood in this category focus on:

- Reducing the amount of vacant property by stabilizing and managing underutilized property and subsequently putting it back into productive use through redevelopment;
- Affirming neighborhood residents' right to advocate for and influence reuses in ways that benefit the community as defined by this community plan;
- Ensuring that the reuses of public vacant land include a balance of green space, affordable housing, commercial uses, and community facilities to meet the broader needs of the neighborhood; and
- Employing a disciplined, strategic approach by targeting areas where existing investments have been made and strong community assets exist.

Among the principal reasons these priorities need to be addressed are these facts and factors:

- ✓ There are 32 acres of vacant land in the neighborhood, the equivalent of 35 footballs fields;
- ✓ In door-to-door surveys conducted, 70% of residents said vacant land has been a problem for them or their neighbors; and
- ✓ The neighborhood is lacking in a suitable volume of green space, affordable housing, commercial retail uses, and community facilities.



Interim vacant land uses such as a dog park (left), sideyard (middle), or compost center (right).

Corresponding Action Steps

To begin addressing these priorities, key recommendations and corresponding “action steps” for each, as outlined below, are part and parcel of the five-year plan for the neighborhood. This subject area of the plan speaks to advocacy on the part of the community to mobilize itself and outside resources to influence land uses, vacant public land reuses, and vacant land maintenance.

Strategies for reducing the amount of vacant land and abandoned property should use a two-pronged strategy involving stabilization and management of such sites as a preliminary step to ultimately reclaiming them for redevelopment purposes, focusing initially on areas with existing investments and community assets to “build off of.”

1. Create vacant parcel database for:

- Cataloguing privately-held parcels according to ease of acquisition to facilitate transfer for redevelopment and maintenance.
- Identifying and prioritizing large tracts of vacant land and significant buildings for redevelopment.

For contiguous lots that can be assembled and configured to provide sites that can support larger scale developments, a wide range of uses should be given priority and be determined by community-defined need, surrounding land uses and physical conditions, market studies, environmental and zoning analyses, and funding requirements and available sources to finance the proposed reuses. Specific reuses, consistent with the guiding principles of this plan include:

- * affordable family and senior rental housing
- * affordable homeownership
- * mixed income housing
- * commercial retail
- * community facilities
- * light industrial
- * urban agriculture including gardens and tree farms

Abandoned buildings should be targeted for conversion to similar uses, subject to the same parameters and considerations as the vacant land parcels in the neighborhood.

- Helping residents access/acquire adjacent properties and identify alternative reuses such as side yards or parking.

With respect to treating non-contiguous lots that are more scattered throughout the neighborhood, the goal should be to assist adjacent owners in acquiring lots for extensions of their property for side-yards or driveways, or interested individuals or groups to develop flower or vegetable gardens or tot lots incorporating mechanisms to ensure regular maintenance and upkeep.

- Negotiating agreements with City agencies and private owners to develop sites for housing affordable to low-to-moderate income households.
- Staging events and supporting interim uses for vacant land.

70 2. Support ENPC's research into Community Land Trust best practices for:

- Assessing feasibility of creating a Community Land Trust (CLT) to ensure permanent stewardship of land and the permanent affordability of housing and other buildings.

CLTs are nonprofit, community-based organizations whose mission is to provide affordable housing and other buildings in perpetuity by owning land and leasing it to groups who want to build affordable housing, create community facilities or small businesses, and/or use it as green space. CLTs are governed by a board of directors with membership from the community. The board is typically composed of leaseholders, community members, and other stakeholders. The CLT and the leaseholder agree to a long term ground lease agreement (typically 99 years) that spells out the rights and responsibilities of both parties.

3. Form a land maintenance collaborative for:

- Establishing mechanisms for maintaining and managing existing vacant land.

Potential working relationships with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and their affiliated contractors for maintaining and transforming vacant lots should be pursued to ensure stabilization of the properties so they become more of an asset to the community. A Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed can be created that loans out gardening tools to residents and offers technical advice and guidance.

- Facilitating increased code enforcement and volunteer code enforcement training to tackle abandoned buildings and vehicles, graffiti, trash, and overgrown lots, targeting blocks adjacent to existing assets and proposed affordable housing development sites.

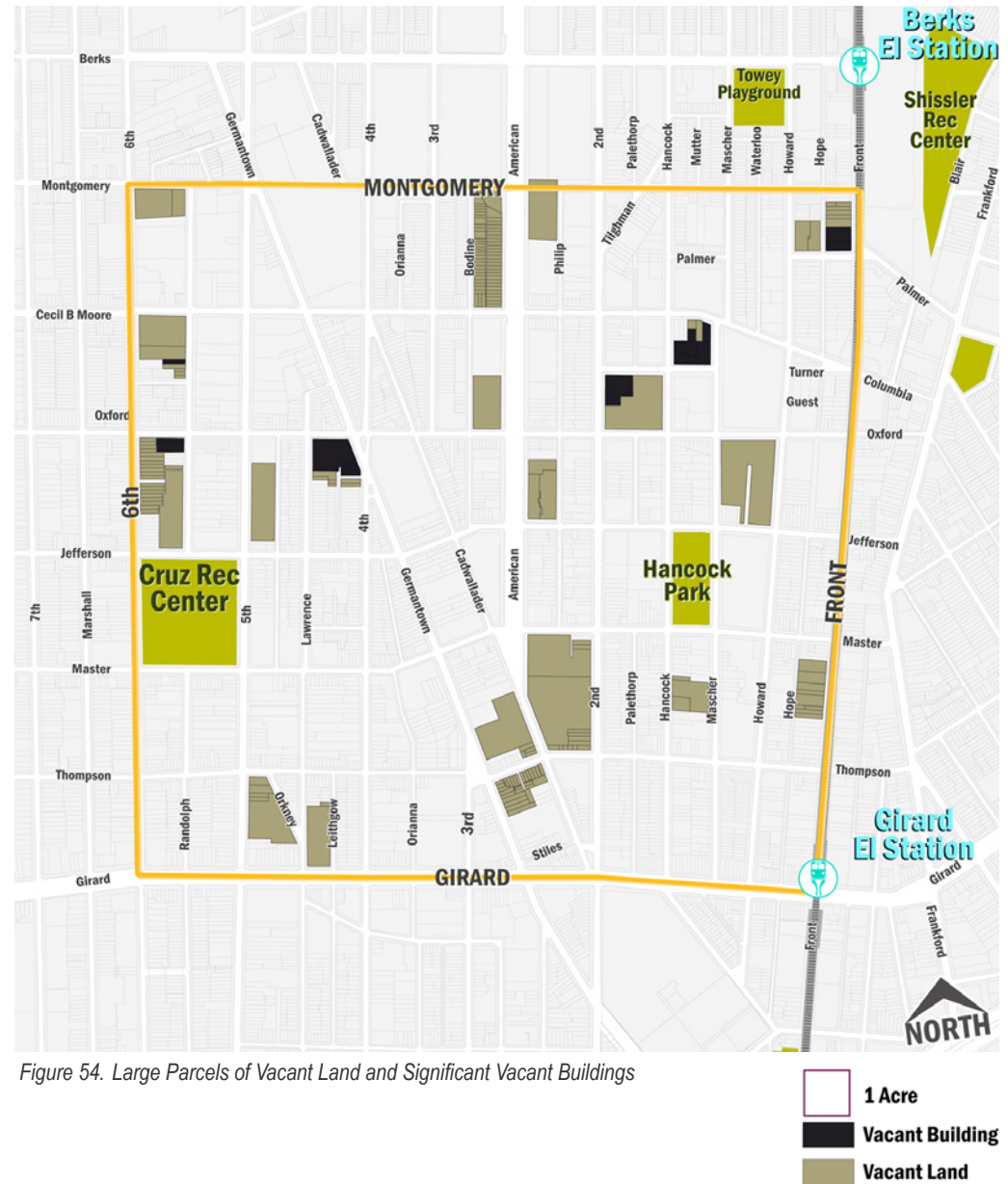


Figure 54. Large Parcels of Vacant Land and Significant Vacant Buildings

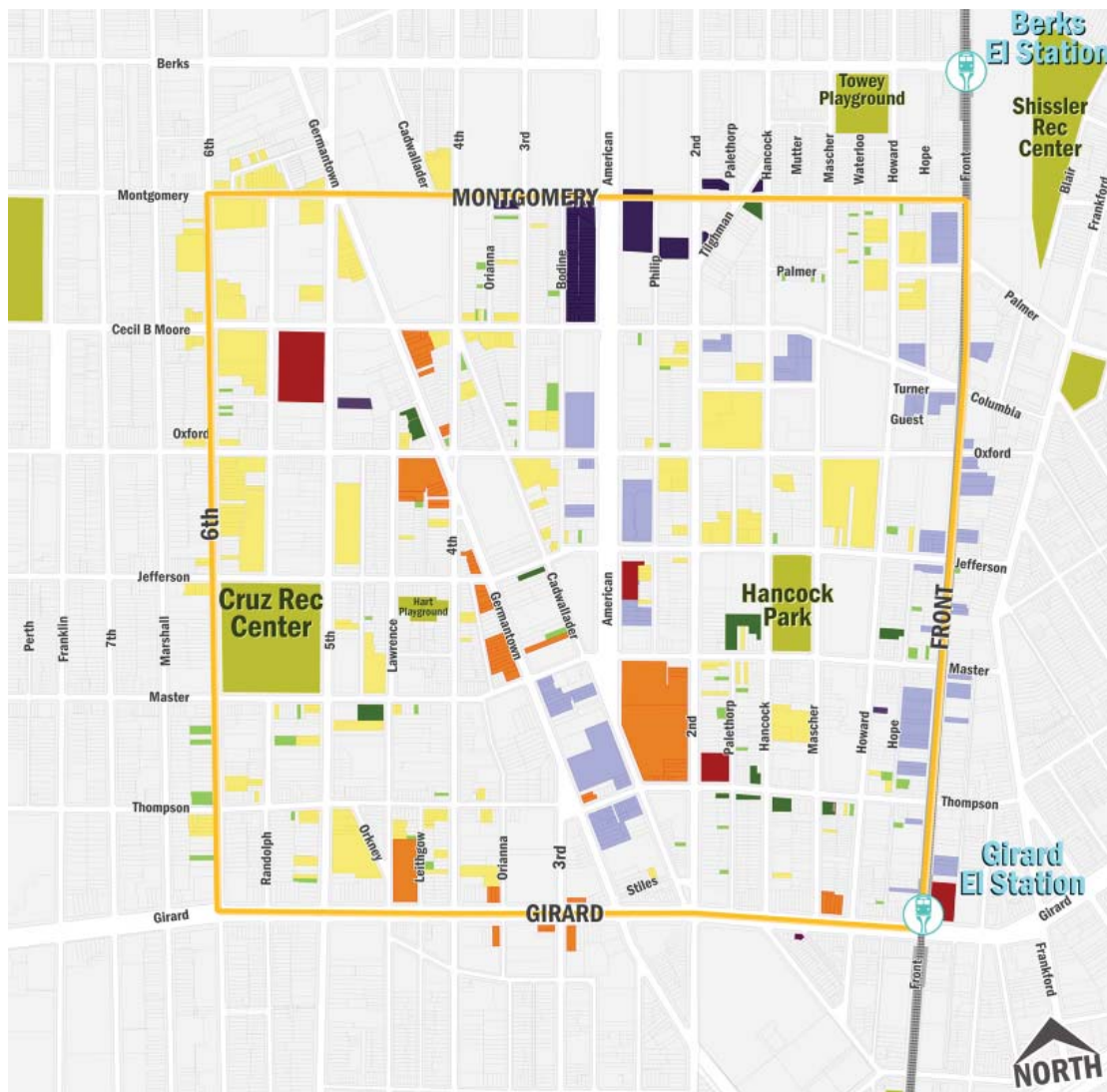


Figure 55. Potential Future Use of Vacant Land



4. Sustain involvement with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission:

- Working with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission and neighborhood organizations on zoning remapping, participating in the citywide zoning reform movement, and advocating for the endorsement of this community plan.
- Pursuing new state revenues to support Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) around the Girard and Berks SEPTA Stations.

In 2004, the Pennsylvania General Assembly authorized the creation of Transit Revitalization Investment Districts (TRIDs). The purpose of these districts is to spur transit-oriented development – mixed-use, mixed-income, green space development in and around transit stops to promote use of public transportation. The first step in establishing a TRID is to conduct a comprehensive planning study that defines its boundaries and feasibility. NeighborhoodsNow, through funding from the City of Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, collaborated with APM to complete a study of the neighborhoods around the Temple University Regional Rail Station to assess types of improvements and investments that will make that station more pedestrian friendly, including the types of stores and green space that would make the area more inviting and encourage use of the train and other modes of public transit. WCRP and ENPC should reach out to NeighborhoodsNow and assess the potential for an assessment of nearby SEPTA stations as potential TRID sites, drawing on the groundwork of and in collaboration with APM at the Berks Street station and the Girard Avenue Coalition at the Girard Street station.

72 B. Affordable Housing

To advance the neighborhood's affordable housing agenda, three priorities should be aggressively pursued, including:

- Creating new affordable and mixed-income sustainable housing opportunities for rental and homeownership that remain affordable to low- to moderate-income households on a permanent basis and that also promote “green technologies” to further enhance affordability;
- Preserving existing affordable housing by promoting sustainability measures that contribute to longer-term or permanent affordability and that also promote “green technologies” to enhance affordability; and
- Developing handicapped-accessible housing for seniors that can accommodate intergenerational families and provide supportive services that enable these households to live comfortably and gracefully in their homes as they “age-in-place”.

These priorities matter most because of the following statistics and the stories they tell of a troublesome reality for the neighborhood:

- ✓ Rising utility costs compound housing cost burdens, and the electric energy rate cap expires in 2010;
- ✓ Home prices and rents have risen dramatically between 2001 and 2007; median residential sales prices have risen \$90,500 on average over this time period; and
- ✓ More than 7 out of 10 people surveyed do not believe there are affordable places to live in the neighborhood for them and their families.

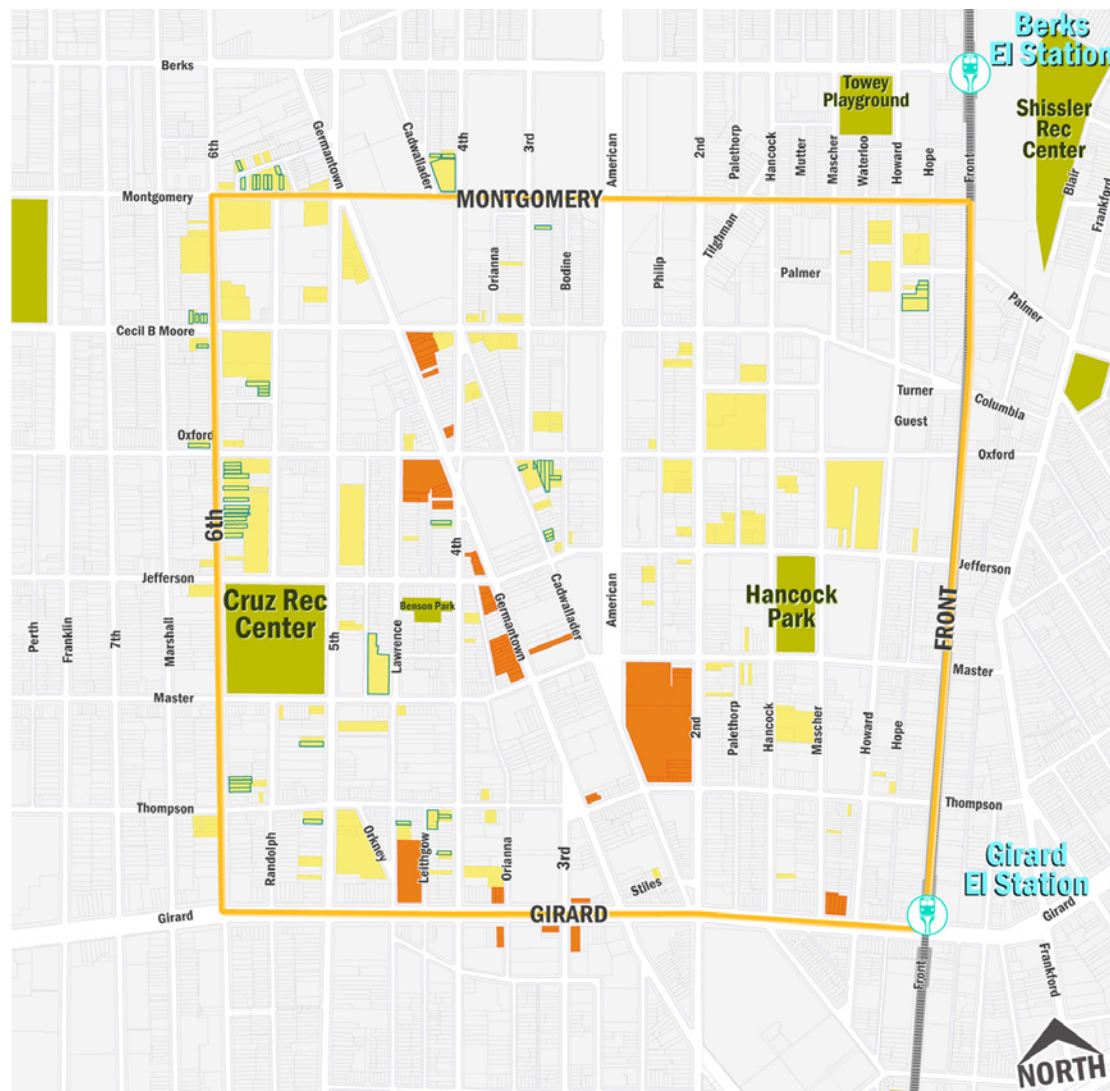


Figure 56. Existing Vacant Land Suitable for Residential Redevelopment



Corresponding Action Steps

To address these issues, create opportunities for more affordable housing, and help preserve the current inventory of affordable housing, the recommendations and action steps described below take precedence:

1. Set annual affordable housing development goals by:

- Identifying appropriate, high-priority sites and the resources to promote development of:
 - * family housing
 - * multigenerational housing
 - * supportive services to assist seniors in aging-in-place
- Developing models of sustainable development that include transit-oriented development, higher housing densities, using green building technology and encouraging “green habits” by residents.

For contiguous lots that can be assembled and configured into sufficiently large enough sites to support developments of scale, a wide range of uses should be given priority. The ultimate uses must be determined by surrounding land uses and physical conditions, subject to market study, environmental, and zoning analyses, and pursued to the extent financing can be secured to offset development and operating costs.⁹ Specific residential reuses, consistent with the guiding principles of this plan, include:

- * affordable family and senior rental housing
- * affordable homeownership
- * mixed income housing

The overall potential for housing production supported by the volume of vacant land and buildings (publicly and privately owned) in the neighborhood that is suitable for residential use is approximately 652 total units. Of this potential, a small portion (72 units or 11% of the total) sits on publicly-owned land or is in vacant buildings (36 units or 5.5% of total units), as shown in Table 4, and the remaining 544 units correspond to production estimates on privately-owned parcels which are concentrated more in the upper half of the plan area above Jefferson Street (see figure 56). In terms of the potential for affordable housing production, the plan calls for developing all of the volume of publicly-owned land for such use (72 units) and 50% of privately-held land (272 units) for affordable housing as is reflected in the bottom portion of the table. Unit production in vacant buildings amounts to approximately 18 units assuming half of those sites are committed to affordable housing.

⁹ See Appendix I for list of potential local, state and federal funding sources for consideration and Appendix Tables 1 and 2 for financing scenarios.

Potential, Projected Housing Production in Plan Area
(based on volume of vacant property and proposed development criteria)

	New Construction Vacant Public Land	New Construction Vacant Private Land	Rehab Vacant Buildings	Total
Total Units	72 11.0%	544 83.4%	36 5.5%	652
Affordable Goal	72	272	18	362
as a % of total	100.0%	50.0%	50.0%	55.5%

Table 4. Potential, Projected Housing Production in Plan Area

WCRP and ENPC should negotiate agreements with City agencies and private owners to reserve or allocate a percentage of their sites for housing affordable to low-to-moderate income households based on prevailing income limits for affordability.¹⁰

The primary sites targeted for affordable housing in which a high degree of public ownership exists, and for which early predevelopment should be considered, include:

- **6th Street to Randolph Street between Jefferson and Oxford:**

The public land (12 small parcels) is scattered and could host 9 units (at a lesser density than previously existed). However, almost the entire block is vacant and could host an additional 33 units on the privately held land, for a total of 42 units on that block. The proximity of the 6th Street site to the PHA scattered-site HOPE VI development across the street and the Cruz Recreation Center provides an opportunity to reinforce those edges and build from areas of greater strength.

- **Oxford Street between Bodine and Cadwallader:**

This site, which may be controlled by or targeted by the South Kensington CDC, could fit 15 units on the publicly held vacant land plus another 7 units on the adjacent, vacant, privately-held parcels, for a total of 22 units.

- **Northeast quadrant (between Howard and Hope):**

This public land, just off Front Street but zoned residential, could host about 10 units.



Figure 57. 6th Street Infill Opportunity Before and After

Above: Rendering of affordable housing development opportunity on 6th Street between Jefferson and Oxford

Bottom left: Existing block

- **Southwest quadrant (scattered between 4th and 6th, Girard and Master):**

The vacant public parcels are scattered here, but could host up to 10 units on 15 small parcels. This number does not include the housing potential for the large, RDA-owned parcel next to the proposed Umbrella Factory. Although plans for the Umbrella Factory building are again on hold, the building embodies great potential for residential reuse. For such a conversion project to move forward, the RDA site will likely be required for parking. At best, it may be possible to construct 4 rowhomes fronting Master Street with a parking structure behind.

2. Set annual affordable housing preservation goals by:

- Coordinating with community development corporations, and local, statewide and national intermediaries such as PACDC, LISC and the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania to advocate for new resources in federal, state, and local economic stimulus packages that support basic systems repairs, weatherization, moderate to substantial rehabilitation, and counseling in the areas of financial literacy, credit management, home-buying, leasing, and foreclosure prevention.
- Advocating for conservatorship programs to facilitate maintenance of privately-owned vacant buildings.
- Identifying clearinghouses for dissemination of up-to-date information on housing preservation resources and eligibility for City, state and private programs.
- Identifying existing resource guides and information clearinghouses that catalogue affordable home repair and improvement programs, housing, financial and credit counseling resources, as well as eligibility requirements and funding availability.

WCRP and ENPC should be active in reaching out to both residents to help them determine their home repair and improvement needs, as well as to the City to advocate for the resources lower-income households will need to help finance improvements. Those blocks of the neighborhood that have existing investments and community assets to build-off of should be targeted initially, but not to the exclusion of residents in other areas whose needs are of an immediate health and safety nature. Demand for these resources is traditionally high and exceeds available funding year after year. Among the programs that should be promoted are:

Adaptive Modifications Program

Provides free adaptations to house or apartment of low-income disabled individuals.

Basic Systems Repair Program

Free emergency repairs to electrical, plumbing and/or heating systems of an owner-occupied property up to \$17,500.

Emergency Heater Hotline

Free minor heater repairs.

Philadelphia Home Improvement Loan (www.philaloan.com)

Provides low-interest home improvement loan up to \$25,000 to qualified homeowners.

PHIL-Plus/Mini-PHIL

Provides home improvement loans to owners with less-than-perfect credit. Call for list of housing counseling agencies.

Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program

Free minor repairs to homes of elderly Philadelphians.

Weatherization

Free weatherization and energy-efficiency improvements to owner-occupied and rental units.

www.phdchousing.org

76 The primary sites targeted for preservation include:

- **6th Street to Randolph Street between Cecil B. Moore and Oxford:**

A developer-owned building and recent new housing investment make this site a priority for preservation efforts. There are roughly 28 rowhouses that would be candidates for preservation investments plus an additional estimated 28 units in 2 larger vacant structures suited for residential conversion.

- **4th Street to Orkney Street between Oxford and Jefferson:**

The proposed redevelopment of the Gretz Building can be a catalyst for this cluster of housing. There are roughly 36 rowhouse structures in close proximity to the Gretz Building that would be candidates for preservation initiatives.

- **Front Street to Mascher Street between Montgomery and Columbia:**

The planned construction of the new Kensington CAPA High School as well as proximity to the Berks El Station are strong assets for this corner of the neighborhood to build on. There are 34 row house structures in this potential target area that would be candidates for preservation efforts.

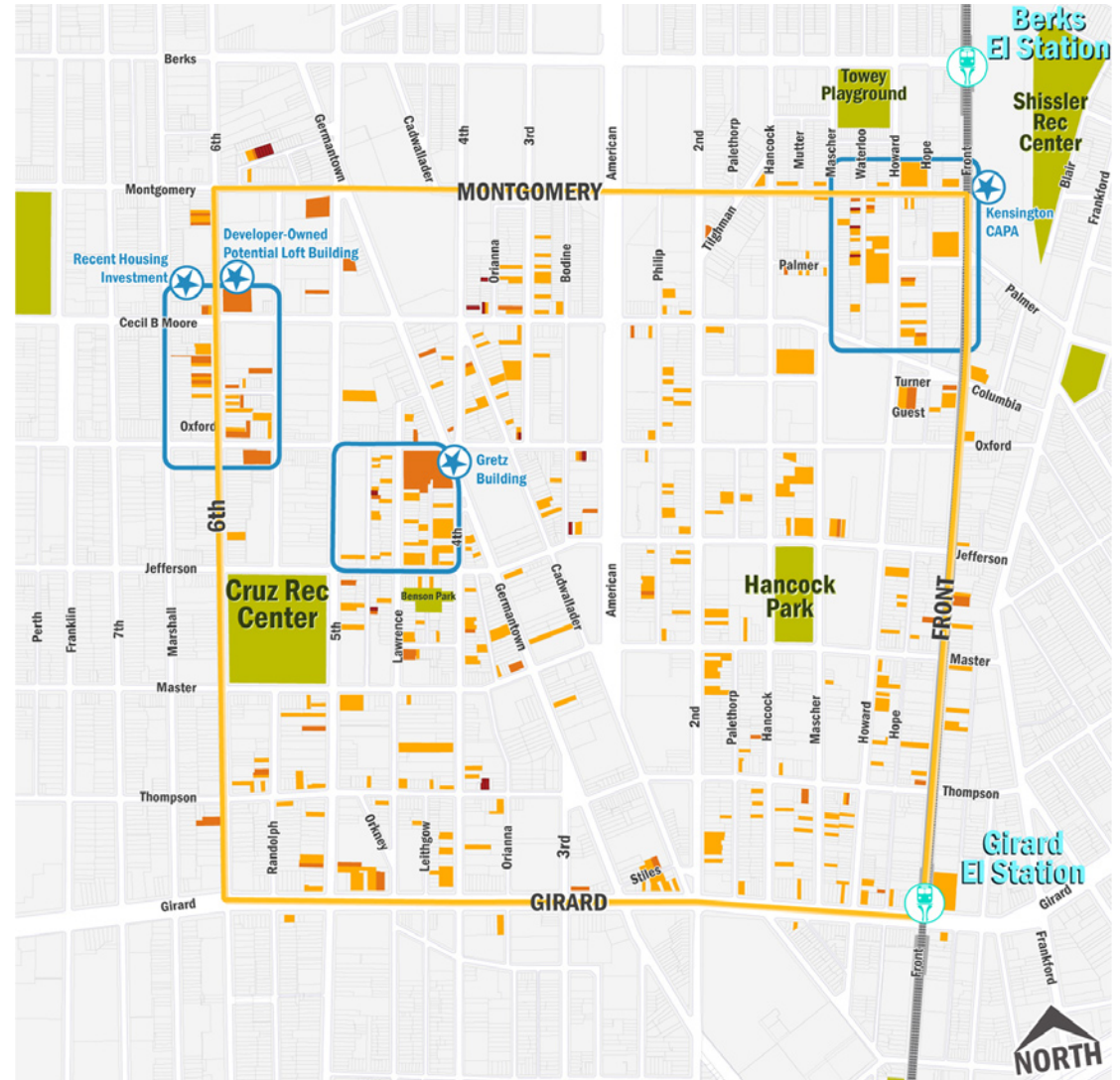


Figure 58. Potential Housing Renovation



Potential, Projected Housing Renovation in Plan Area

(based on exterior condition evaluations)

	Condition Rating C <u>Fair</u>	Condition Rating D <u>Distressed</u>	Condition Rating F <u>Failing</u>	<u>Total</u>
Treatment	Minor-Moderate Rehab	Substantial Rehab	Gut-Level Rehab	
Buildings	370 83.3%	65 14.6%	9 2.0%	444
Estimated Average Cost per Building	\$35,000	\$62,500	\$100,000	
Total Costs	\$12,950,000	\$4,062,500	\$900,000	\$17,912,500
5-year Average				
Buildings	74	13	2	89
Costs	\$2,590,000	\$812,500	\$200,000	\$3,582,500

Source: Interface Studio, LLC; field surveys; Wilson Associates cost estimates, 2009

Table 5. Potential, Projected Housing Renovation in Plan Area

“I just see there are half-torn-down buildings. What could we do to renovate these buildings? You see so many people walking around without any place to lay their head. We need shelter for women and children.”



Buildings with renovation potential.



Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center building in Brooklyn, NY

precedent: work it



BUILD Brooklyn is a community-based organization in New York dedicated to supporting redevelopment as “a means of creating economic opportunities to promote financial self-sufficiency and prosperity in socio-economically depressed communities.” BUILD created the Employment Linkage and Targeted Job Training Program (ELTJTP), a process for “bridging the skill mismatch between the competencies employers need to meet their business objectives and the current skill level of many local residents within a two mile radius” of the Atlantic Yards development project. The organization’s 21-week pre-placement program consists of three cycles in which participants hone professional skills, attend professional seminar series, increase their financial literacy, and work on personal development..

www.buildbrooklyn.org

C. Economic Development

At the core of the neighborhood’s economic development priorities are employment, job training, affordable retail goods, and supporting commercial corridors that serve the neighborhood, specifically:

- Creating skill-building opportunities for residents (especially youth) and local merchants.
- Creating job opportunities for local residents.
- Increasing residents’ access to fresh, affordable food.
- Promoting the health of the area’s commercial corridors through “buy local” marketing.

The reason why these priorities are high on the agenda is due to the fact that:

- ✓ 33.5% of neighborhood youth in 2000 were at risk (note, the community felt this number was very low – that the dropout rate reported by the Census was not accurate);
- ✓ 45% of the adult population did not have a high school diploma, according to the 2000 Census;
- ✓ 10% of the population was unemployed, and 51% were not in the labor force according to the 2000 Census; and
- ✓ Commercial areas experience high turnover and vacancy.

Corresponding Action Steps

The recommended strategy for addressing these priorities involves taking actions that cut across and integrate the other subject areas of the community plan so it is as comprehensive as possible in addressing the broader needs of neighborhood residents, businesses, and institutions. Those actions include:

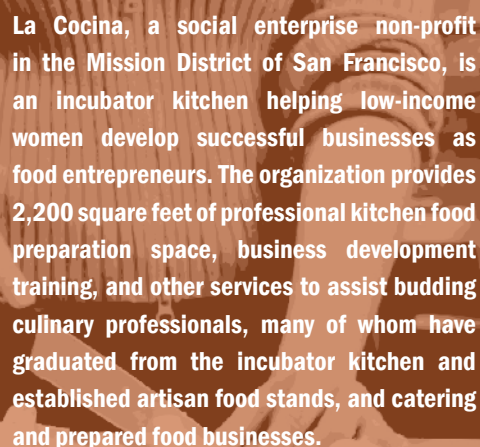
1. Form Workforce Development Task Force for:

- Pursuing clean and green job corps as a strategy for both creating jobs and protecting the environment, as the installation of green techniques (green roofs, rain gardens, and home weatherization) requires new skills and the local workforce must be prepared to participate, especially youth. This activity must be connected with efforts to facilitate the creation of businesses and encourage entrepreneurs in home repair, weatherization, and the green jobs industries, and should also engage retired construction workers in such work.
- Creating a local jobs clearinghouse and advocating for a “hire-local” model to encourage employers to partner with ENPC members to locate and help qualify workers. Potential partnerships with local and state workforce development programs should be explored including but not limited to:
 - * the City of Philadelphia through the Commerce Department Philadelphia Workforce Development Program, City Green Jobs Task Force, and Sustainable Business Network;
 - * the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Departments of Community Affairs, Labor, Conservation and Natural Resources, and Environmental Protection; and
 - * the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition (GPUAC) programs that help enroll residents in job skills and readiness programs, including their National Comprehensive Center for Fathers, the Workforce Development Committee, Work-Stream, and Summer/Year Round Employment for Youth.
- Conducting and regularly updating surveys of local businesses regarding employment opportunities, and regularly publicizing this resource so that community knows about it.

2. Form Business Support Task Force for:

- Facilitating the creation of space for light industry by working with Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center which is exploring opportunities to acquire, rehab, and manage vacant industrial properties in the neighborhood.
- Identify potential underutilized commercial kitchens in local churches and day care centers that owners may be interested in converting to low-investment commercial kitchen “incubators.” Three important goals can be accomplished through success of this action step, namely: (a) providing entrepreneurs currently in the food service business operating out of their homes with better facilities to grow their business; (b) enabling institutions with underutilized facilities to generate additional income to support their operations; and (c) processing fresh produce donated in larger quantities to food pantry/food relief programs such as Philabundance which are unable to process products.
- Increasing awareness of small business support and development programs to merchants and entrepreneurs.

precedents: food for thought



La Cocina, a social enterprise non-profit in the Mission District of San Francisco, is an incubator kitchen helping low-income women develop successful businesses as food entrepreneurs. The organization provides 2,200 square feet of professional kitchen food preparation space, business development training, and other services to assist budding culinary professionals, many of whom have graduated from the incubator kitchen and established artisan food stands, and catering and prepared food businesses.

www.lacocinasf.org

In addition to training programs to provide homeless and low-income individuals with the essential skills needed to become employed in the food service industry, DC Central Kitchen recovers surplus food left over from local foodservice businesses, prepares it, and delivers 4,000 meals a day to social service agencies in greater Washington, D.C. This three-pronged approach—job training, combating hunger, and reducing food waste—constitutes a useful model for addressing sustainability through community non-profits.

www.dccentralkitchen.org

- Encouraging merchants to enroll in business support programs offered by the City Commerce Department and PCDC's Small Business Support Center, Youth Business Entrepreneurship Program Work Experience, and Summer Career Exploration.
- Devising appropriate functions and images for Girard Avenue (restaurant-retail focus), Front Street (light industrial focus), American Street (light to heavy industrial focus), Cecil B. Moore (Art-Design), and Germantown Avenue (mixed-use focus).
- Promoting the different corridors' and commercial uses in general as viable shopping and business environments for resident and non-resident shoppers.
- Exploring and encouraging opportunities for arts and culture to generate economic development activity.
- Creating an economic development coordinator position to drive and coordinate the above activities.

"[There are too many] boarded up buildings on Girard. Something needs to inspire people."

"We have a unique opportunity with Girard Avenue to have a vibrant street life – a produce stand, a bookstore..."



Figure 59. Commercial Corridor Strategic Approaches

- Places of Interest
- ★ Planned Development
- Retail/Restaurant
- Light Industrial/Art/Design
- Heavy Industrial/Warehousing
- Mixed Use



4. Increase resident access to fresh, affordable food by:

- Engaging local corner stores in The Food Trust's Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, a program which seeks to bring inexpensive, fresh foods to low-income neighborhoods. By offering technical assistance and training to corner stores, connecting stores with suppliers of fresh, wholesome snacks, and providing nutrition education in local schools, this program has a track record of successfully changing the availability of fresh foods at the neighborhood level. While the planning process revealed the neighborhood's desire for fresh food, the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative also has specific health related goals such as reducing the incidence of diet-related disease and obesity in such communities.

www.healthycornerstores.org



Stores participating in the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative receive refrigerated barrels for fresh fruit and marketing materials.



Top: Friends Neighborhood Guild. Source: WCRP

Bottom: Mural Arts Apprenticeship program

D. Youth and Human Services

The strategy for serving youth and fully integrating them into the future of their neighborhood, and the neighborhood's vision for ensuring the delivery of comprehensive human services is reflected in five priorities that call for:

- Increasing high school graduation rates through early intervention at the primary education level;
- Increasing the quality and frequency of collaboration among youth-service agencies in the neighborhood as well as those serving the neighborhood from outside;
- Maintaining and expanding (as needed) youth-oriented educational and cultural services, facilities and spaces, with an emphasis on preserving existing programs;
- Increasing access residents have to individual and family services and enhancing their actual delivery; and
- Facilitating day care licensing for neighborhood-based and neighborhood-serving facilities.

The importance of these priorities is evident given the data, surveys, and stories of this neighborhood in Eastern North Philadelphia:

- ✓ 1 in 3 neighborhood residents were below the age of 18 in 2000;
- ✓ 33.5% of neighborhood youth in 2000 were at-risk;
- ✓ Approximately 70 school-age children in the community are served by unlicensed after-school programs; and
- ✓ Residents are not aware of all services, leading to their underutilization.

Corresponding Action Steps

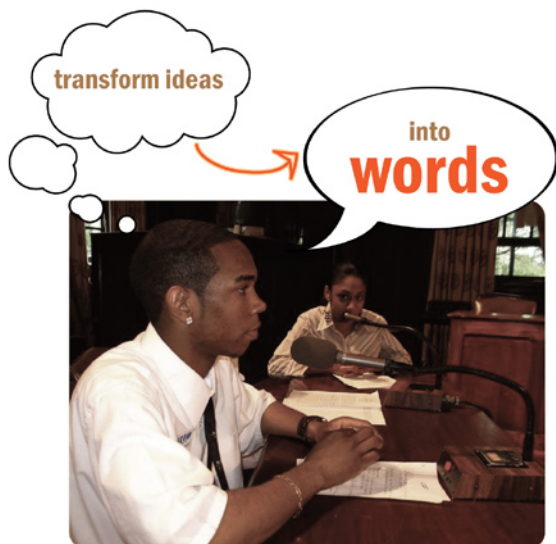
Addressing these priorities requires a set of actions that necessitate close coordination between public and private agencies, programs, and funding. These actions should be led by WCRP and ENPC members who have among them years of experience and the capacity for the following steps:

1. Form Youth and Family Support Collaborative:

Youth-Oriented

- Forming a Youth Council and incorporating information about the Friends Neighborhood Guild's new Youth Initiative Network.

Friends Neighborhood Guild teens as well as other interested community youth took part in several of the discussions and community meetings held during this planning process, contributing their opinions about the neighborhood's future. These teens welcomed the voice they have been given, have big ideas, and want to help make these ideas reality. They are ideal advocates for the neighborhood's youth agenda. Creating a neighborhood Youth Council is a natural next step and will help to effect positive change not only in the neighborhood but in the lives of local youth. The Youth Council, overseen by Friends Neighborhood Guild or another ENPC member organization, should comprise a group of 10 to 15 teens that will provide guidance on future development, planning, and neighborhood issues, including youth programming. Involved youth should be representative of the community, attending different schools and involved in different programs throughout the neighborhood.



Youth Council representatives will have an opportunity to contribute constructively to the future of this section of Eastern North Philadelphia and will benefit from leadership training, professional development, exposure to civic responsibility, and the opportunity to meet new mentors and contacts who might provide valuable references for future endeavors. Just as important, the community will benefit from the presence of another important perspective at the table.



Source: Harvey Finkle

- Developing youth skills through advocacy and apprenticeships.
- Training youth to testify at City budget hearings to make their voices known and heard by policy- and decision-makers.

Child-Oriented

- Working with existing programs that help streamline daycare licensing using a "one-stop-shop" service model.
- Assisting unlicensed day care programs in complying with health and safety codes for licensing.

Parents

- Expanding and promoting services for single moms.
- Creating a parent-child learning program.



Top: UNCFSP, WCRP, Harvey Finkle



Health

- Advocating for and carrying out, to the extent possible, programs in the following areas:
 - * nutrition and exercise
 - * reproductive health
 - * drug use/abuse prevention
 - * prenatal care
 - * senior care

Located on Girard Avenue at 3rd Street, Philadelphia Health Center #6 is an existing asset in the community. The Health Center offers comprehensive medical care including check-ups, family planning, pregnancy options counseling, prenatal care, well-baby care, blood tests, x-rays, medication, baby shots, flu shots for seniors, and TB immunizations, as well as basic dental services and referrals to specialty and emergency dental care. The clinic will provide care to any Philadelphia resident by appointment or on a walk-in basis and accepts Medicare, Medical Assistance, most health insurance and HMO plans. Uninsured patients are billed on a sliding scale based on family size and income.

Though health services are available locally when a need arises, the community should encourage the Health Center to embrace a more proactive role in promoting healthy lifestyles for neighborhood residents. Currently, Health Center #6 hosts a health fair once a year, but residents proposed the idea of more frequent health fairs – perhaps two or three times annually – or smaller scale monthly health seminars to increase access to health education and maintenance. Residents listed nutrition and exercise, sexual education, drug use prevention, prenatal care, children's health, and senior care as topics of particular interest as well as health risks like diabetes and heart disease.

In addition to conveying information about healthy habits to foster healthier lifestyles, improved access to education at the Health Center would raise the Center's visibility, such that residents in need of non-emergency care might look first to the local clinic rather than relying on costly and time-consuming trips to the emergency room. The local services directory described below should include the health center programs.

- Engaging schools and youth programs in healthy eating education.

The Food Trust also works to reinforce messages about healthy eating and to ensure that foods offered in Philadelphia schools promote good nutrition and contribute to the development of lifelong, healthy eating habits. This includes working with teachers and staff to educate parents about the value of school meals and the importance of encouraging their children to make healthy food choices on the way to and from school and during the school day.

General

- Informing residents of services and eligibility requirements, updating provider information on existing directories, and publicizing these resources.

Several directories of local social services exist – accessible on the web and via telephone hotline – but out-of-date information on services and programs and limited public knowledge of these information clearinghouses reduce their effectiveness. The Philadelphia Department of Human Services (DHS) hosts an online directory called Philly S.O.S. (Search Online for Services).¹¹ The United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania recently rolled out a new online directory of

The Harlem Children's Zone, a community-based organization in Harlem, was the first agency in New York City to create a "Beacon Center" out of a public school that "used to shut its door at the end of the school day." Beacon Centers are community centers that offer a range of free services and activities on nights, weekends, and throughout the summer to members of the public of all ages. With the mantra, "whatever it takes" to help children succeed, the Harlem Children's Zone and its Beacon Centers have become national models for holistic neighborhood revitalization, providing "safe, enriching place[s]" in which community members can grow and providing the education, tools, and supportive services to help them do so.

www.hcz.org

health and human services, complete with a mapping function, called Connect 2-1-1.¹² For residents without internet access, the United Way staffs a telephone hotline called First Call for Help, which provides confidential information and referral services throughout the region.

To help Philly S.O.S., Connect 2-1-1, and First Call for Help best serve neighborhood residents, ENPC members should coordinate an effort with local service providers to update all contact and program information. One person or organization should

be appointed to remind local service providers on a yearly or twice-yearly basis to maintain updated records in these directories.

Once the information contained in the directories is up to date and accurate, the challenge will be to ensure that residents know about and make use of these data repositories. An email blast to ENPC members' list-serves, regular announcements and handouts at community meetings, and information cards available at service provider locations would help get out the word about the range of local programs.

- Creating a local social service resource directory and referral system.

In addition to updating local service providers' information and encouraging community members to make use of the citywide and regional human service databases, ENPC members should pull together a multi-lingual summary (in English, Spanish, and Arabic to start) of locally available programs and services. The directory should be distributed to WCRP and ENPC constituents once every six months to ensure that both long-term residents and newcomers remain informed about area resources. Encourage all service providers to keep copies of the directory in their offices for additional distribution. Include information about city-wide resources and service providers located in adjacent neighborhoods as well.

The directory also should function as a tool to initiate better coordination of services in the neighborhood. The cooperation necessary to compile the directory, alone, should facilitate better communication between providers and develop referral relationships between agencies. To further facilitate referrals, an Eastern North Philadelphia neighborhood service providers' roundtable should convene quarterly to coordinate outreach and generate client referrals and placements within the neighborhood's continuum of services.

- Creating cross-agency partnerships to advocate for resources, including the development of State Representative W. Curtis Thomas' 181 Kids Zone in the neighborhood modeled off of the highly acclaimed Harlem Children's Zone in New York, a holistic system of education, social-service and community-building programs aimed at helping the children and families in a 97-block area of Central Harlem. www.hcz.org/programs

SafeRoutes

National Center for Safe Routes to School



Left to right: Safe Routes to School; Walk to School event in Denver, CO; Walk to School event in Charlotte, NC.

- Establishing a Safe Routes to School Program (State and National Resources) to improve walkability in the neighborhood, calm traffic, and encourage walking to school.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federal, state, and local effort to enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school – and to make walking and bicycling to school safe and appealing, even fun. Funds are made available for infrastructure, or capital, improvements that facilitate safe pedestrian and bicycle trips to school, such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and traffic calming techniques, as well as for non-infrastructure, or program, investments that include education and outreach about walking to school, traffic enforcement, and other staffing needs.¹³



Parent escorts or chaperones are a major component of Safe Routes to School programs. Parents, who take turns walking groups of children to school and patrolling the streets surrounding school grounds, make the environment and travel experience safer for children, prevent truancy, and get to know other involved parents. Program benefits also include regular physical activity for both children and parents and reduced traffic and pollution surrounding neighborhood schools.

A Safe Routes to School Program in the neighborhood should include the following program (non-infrastructure) initiatives:

- * Community outreach and education, including brochures that promote the program and participation by local parents. Outreach should champion the added benefit of truancy prevention achieved by parental patrolling of streets in the morning hours.
- * Two festive “walk your kids to school” events during the year that promote the program and encourage parents to talk with one another. One event should occur at the start of the school year to help establish new habits.
- * Additional crossing guards at both Ludlow and Moffett at the start and end of each school day.

¹³ National Center for Safe Routes to School, <http://saferoutesinfo.org/index.cfm>. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/Internet/Bureaus/CPDM.nsf/SRTSHomepage?OpenFrameSet>.



Left to right: Hopscotch sidewalk; raised crosswalk; colorful safety bollards.

Both public schools in the neighborhood – Ludlow and Moffett – are eligible for and deserving of Safe Routes to School-funded capital improvements. Such improvements should first focus on slowing traffic along busy corridors adjacent to the schools, making these corridors more walkable, and improving connections to nearby parks and green spaces. Specific ideas for capital improvements include but are not limited to:

- * improved and/or raised crosswalks
- * raised curb heights with accessible ramps at all intersections, bump-outs, and improved sidewalks; and
- * vertical streetscape elements such as street trees, planters, bollards to prevent vehicles from entering pedestrian space, pedestrian scale lighting, and Safe Routes to School signage.

Opportunities to make the walking environment colorful, fun, and engaging for students should also be explored as part of the Safe Routes to School program. Murals and signage placed down low for little kids' eyes, mosaic pavers, impressions in the sidewalk, and other small hidden treasures would make walking to school less drudgery and more magical for the neighborhood's student body.

- Evaluate the service needs, resources and potential gaps affecting the immigrant community as part of a broader human and social services study of the neighborhood.

With foreign born residents comprising 10% of the neighborhood's population in 2000, the services available and tailored to the immigrant community should be evaluated. Language barriers, fear, pride, and cultural differences, which hinder immigrant families from knowing about or making full use of supportive services, should be addressed by a trusted community-based organization, fluent in the values and traditions of different immigrant groups. Needs likely extend beyond language learning and service accessibility to legal services, education, healthcare, jobs, and labor benefits. Reaching out to clergy and community leadership at the area's churches and mosques is particularly important as these religious institutions serve as anchors for many immigrant families and communities. Religious leadership can help spread the word to their congregants about locally available social services while also serving as eyes and ears to observe and hear where additional gaps may be in the continuum of immigrant services.

2. Form Parks-Open Space Committee for:

- Making neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers cleaner, safer, and more welcoming.



Figure 61. Hancock Park Diagram

-  Entrance
-  Chain-link Fencing
-  Iron Fencing
-  Perimeter Wall



Figure 62. Hancock Park Before and After.

Left: Rendering of Hancock Park improvements and new entrance;

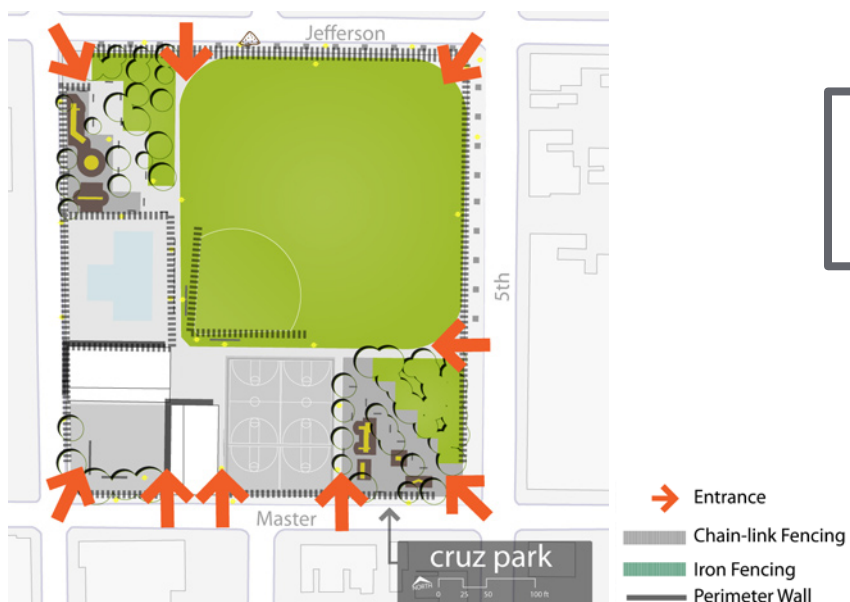
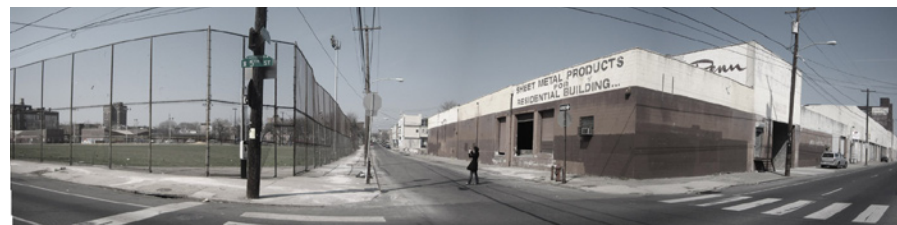
Above: existing park edge.



Figure 63. Cruz Rec Center Before and After.

Above: Rendering of Cruz Rec Center improvements.

Bottom right: Existing Cruz Rec Center entrance at 5th and Jefferson.



“...there aren’t enough places for kids to play.”

“We need a community center with funded programs aimed at the highest-need group, teens, to keep them from getting into street gangs, drugs, and early pregnancy.”

Figure 64. Cruz Rec Center Diagram

90 E. Quality of Life

A very common and resounding sentiment expressed at the Steering Committee and Subcommittee meetings throughout the planning process was the importance of creating, through the plan, opportunities to build and strengthen relationships among people who live, worship, play and learn in the neighborhood. Three priorities underscore this guiding principle and make any neighborhood sufficiently healthy, safe and secure enough to be a place where those relationships are sustained:

- Encouraging greater community stewardship;
- Enhancing public health and safety; and
- Bolstering a sense of place and community.



Artist-designed recycling bin; solar pedestrian lighting examples.



Facts and factors that shape the directions in which the neighborhood wants to go include:

- ✓ 30% of neighborhood residents surveyed cited crime as a major problem.
- ✓ 68% reported that they and their families feel safe in the area, but more than 50% said that crime was one of their least favorite aspects of the neighborhood.
- ✓ Littering, trash dumping, and graffiti are pervasive and cited by 1 out of 2 of those surveyed as a problem in the neighborhood.
- ✓ Tree cover in the neighborhood is only 5%, far below the recommended 30% for the City.

Corresponding Action Steps

The corresponding action steps recommended to improve the “public realm” are:

1. Dedicate energy and resources to making basic physical improvements by:

- Repairing sidewalks, removing graffiti, and cleaning vacant lots.
- Introducing new, decorative trash cans and recycling bins in parks and public places and promoting recycling and the reduction of waste.
- Advocating for more pedestrian lighting along major roads, near institutions, and in parks to enhance nighttime safety.
- Planting more trees and incorporating stormwater management practices in streetscape projects, including rain gardens and phytoremediation projects which help clean and remove harmful materials from the soil using plants.



Figure 65. Tree Planting and Stormwater Management Treatments



Top and middle: Rain gardens are depressed planting beds that collect and filter excess stormwater, allowing it to recharge ground water rather than overwhelm the sewer system and carry pollutants into the City's waterways. Bottom: Rain barrels capture stormwater from roof drain pipes which can then be reused for gardening.



Figure 66. Phytoremediation Diagram. Phytoremediation uses plants to clean the soil of contaminants such as heavy metals, herbicides, solvents, and chemicals.



Figure 67. Rendering of Potential Phytoremediation Demonstration Project on American Street.



“I think the neighborhood needs a place where everyone could go. We also need to take better care of trees in our neighborhood and plant more.”

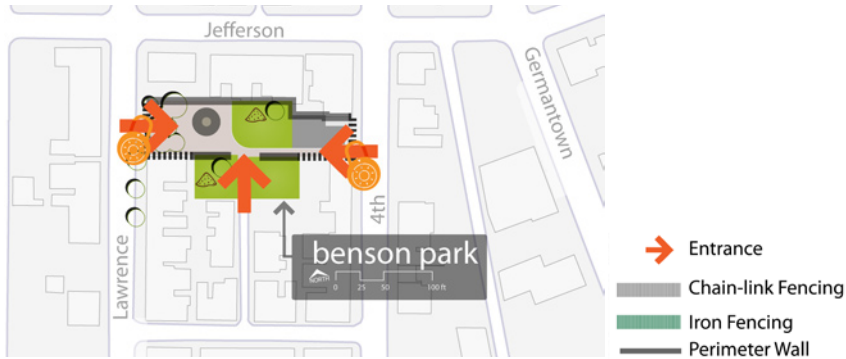


Figure 68. Benson Park Diagram



Figure 69. Benson Park improvements before and after.

Above: Rendering of improvements to Benson Park as a community gathering place.
Right: existing park conditions.



Figure 70. Benson Park entrance Before and After.
Far left: Rendering of improvements to 4th Street entrance of Benson Park.
Left: existing locked gate and fence.



Arab-American Heritage Festival in New York; San Sebastian Street Festival in Puerto Rico.

2. Build community by:

- Celebrating local ethnic diversity and holding fun community celebrations.
- Creating Town Watch and an associated Walk/Ride Home Escort Program and Block Captain Communication Network:

Organize a comprehensive community policing strategy in the community that includes a Town Watch, a Block Captain Communication Network, and a Walk Home Escort Program. Given the high level of neighborhood interest around safety and crime concerns, a stakeholder organization should be identified who could hold a special community meeting focused solely on increasing public safety and preventing crime. At the meeting, explain the three resident safety association approaches described below, rally support among all residents, recruit one or two volunteers to spearhead the local safety initiative, and enlist many more to participate in the effort.

- * **Town Watch** – comprising resident volunteers committed to patrolling local streets, corners, and pathways. Before hitting the streets, making their presence known, and building resistance to criminal activity, community volunteers should connect with an important partner, the Philadelphia Police Department.

Invite a representative from the Police Department, preferably from a local beat, to come to the public safety community meeting to talk about how to set up a safe and well-organized Town Watch. This might include: identifying target streets, corners, parks, or areas for the Town Watch to canvas, posterizing to let community members know that the neighborhood is on the look-out, making t-shirts or vests that identify official Town Watch walkers, and scheduling ongoing, regular meetings with the Police Department for progress reports and processing.

- * **Block Captain Communication Network** – composed of volunteers willing to serve as liaisons between residents, other block captains, and the Police Department. Block captains should be on call to receive complaints and reports of suspicious and/or illegal activity from residents, notify other block captains such that they can pass along news of the security concern to their neighbors, and relay the information to the Police Department or another City Department for action. Because many blocks in the neighborhood do not have a Block Captain, volunteer recruitment should occur at the public safety community meeting. In general, this type of network can help disseminate and collect information about resources, and can be used as a vehicle for continuing the communications that were initiated during this planning process.

- * **Walk Home Escort Program** – to help neighborhood residents walk home safely from evening meetings or other destinations and functions. Pairs of volunteer escorts should be on call after dark and accessible via a publicized dispatch number. Residents who do not feel comfortable walking home alone should be encouraged to make use of this volunteer service – and return the favor by volunteering to act as a Walk Home Escort once a month or so.

- Encouraging urban agriculture by reactivating and making more productive the existing 11 community gardens that encompass an acre of land spread throughout the neighborhood and vary in maintenance. The community has vocalized a strong interest in urban agriculture and community gardening, and WCRP has initiated information sharing partnerships with the Food Systems Planning faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, Weaver's Way Co-Op, and interested ENPC members to investigate the possibility of urban farming in the neighborhood. While larger tracks of land present potentially greater opportunity to farm at scale just west and north of the study area, the neighborhood's history of community gardening and collection of sizable garden spaces present an opportunity to build community, increase stewardship of community land, and improve access to fresh produce within the study area as well.

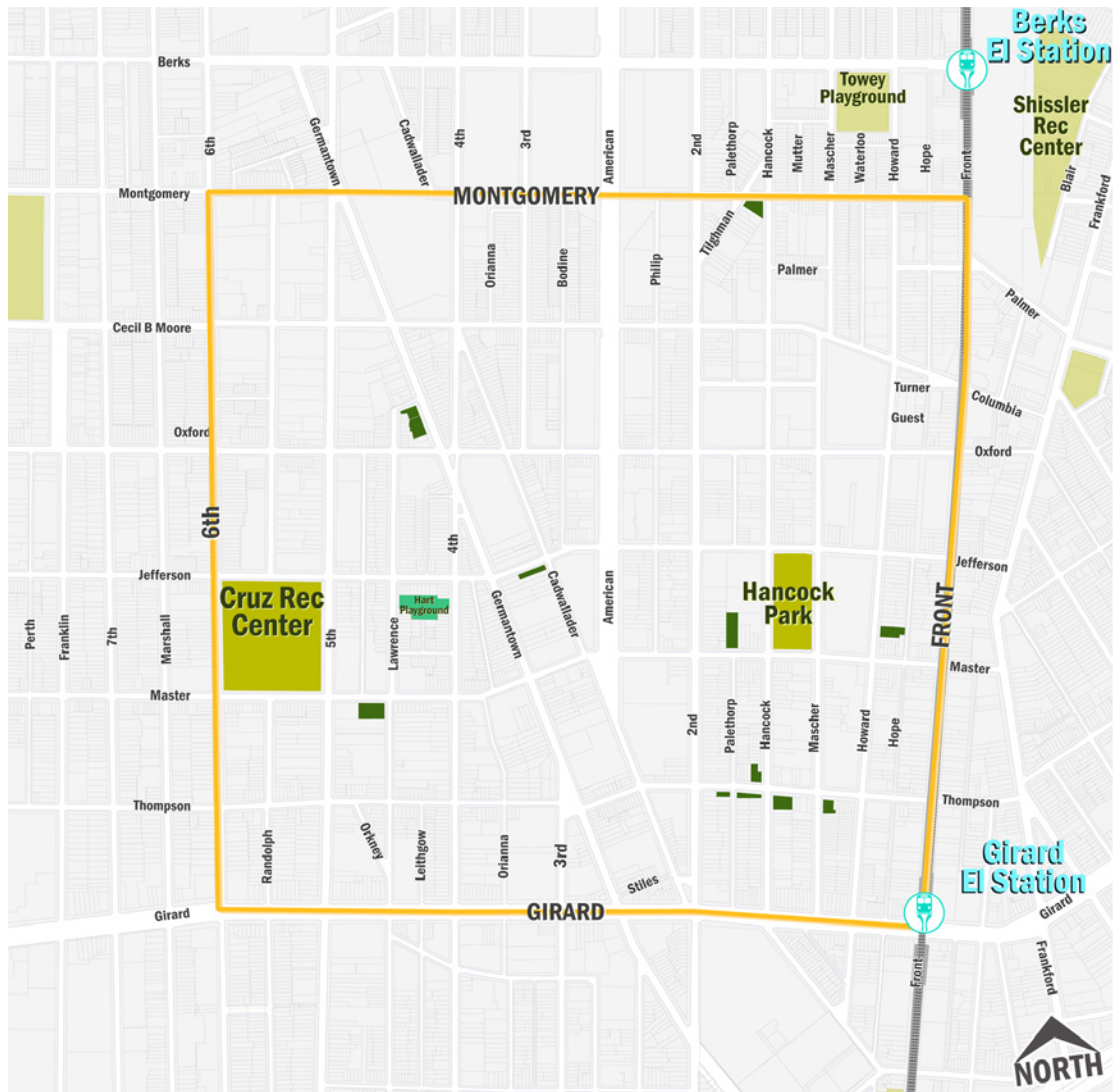


Figure 71. Gardens and Parks

- Reactivated Garden**
- Reclaimed Park**
- Improved Park**



Existing community gardens in the neighborhood.

The community needs to reclaim and reactivate its existing gardens, recruiting more gardeners to work the land. Indeed, the cluster of gardens along Thompson and Master Streets, so close to the pressures of the growing housing market pushing from Northern Liberties and Fishtown, will be vulnerable to new development unless they are adopted by neighborhood green thumbs and cultivated with new vigor.

The community, led by representatives of WCRP and ENPC, must begin – this summer! – to secure the remaining active community gardens as long-term open space assets. This includes six actions, both short- and long-term:

- * Rebuild a network of local community gardeners to increase activity and a sense of ownership of these sites. Increase awareness about the resources available through a Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed as recommended in Vacant Land Action Step 3. Encourage overlap between the health and nutrition initiatives described above;
- * Contact and coordinate with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society¹⁴ and the Neighborhood Gardens Association,¹⁵ and make use of the information they provide about gardening, and creating and protecting community gardens;
- * Coordinate with local zoning committee members about the need to preserve community gardens, and adopt a policy that will prevent any development requiring a variance from supplanting existing gardens;
- * Create a local committee with local Council support to organize a meeting with the RDA and City to lobby for use restrictions for existing gardens; and

- * Identify key publicly owned vacant properties for future use as community gardens and small parks keeping in mind that the buy-in of neighbors is critical to help maintain these spaces. The committee should target two lots as an initial pilot to help develop capacity at the block level to maintain each lot.
- * Work with the local Council representative and the City to attain site control where possible.

Planting strategies for the different gardens can vary. Independent local gardeners can tend small plots planted with flowers, fruits, and vegetables, as is the more common practice currently. Alternatively, the community could agree to plant a single species throughout the garden to enable production of larger quantities of produce, onions or corn, for example, for local distribution. Other gardens could cultivate indigenous plant species, focus on phytoremediation, or be replanted to improve stormwater management in the neighborhood's particularly low-lying areas.

¹⁴ The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) is a nonprofit organization founded in 1827 to motivate people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture. PHS provides events, activities, and publications for interested gardeners of all levels. See <http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/>.

¹⁵ Neighborhood Gardens Association / A Philadelphia Land Trust (NGA) is a nonprofit corporation whose mission is the continuity and long-term preservation of community-managed gardens and green spaces in Philadelphia neighborhoods. See <http://www.ngalandtrust.org/>.





V. feasibility

98 V. Feasibility

Overview

This community plan for this specific neighborhood of Eastern North Philadelphia serves as a framework and tool for guiding community investment policies and decisions and corresponding resource allocations by a wide variety of community stakeholders, including: neighborhood residents; community-based and community-serving institutions (especially WCRP, ENPC members and other important community stakeholders and institutions); business and industry serving the neighborhood; and government entities at every level. As priorities and proposed action plans and recommendations are discussed, weighed, and decided upon over the five years the plan is forecasting, the feasibility of each component must also be discussed, weighed, and determined, not just by WCRP and ENPC, but by those individuals, organizations and entities on whose resources – vacant land, financing, and technical assistance, among others – the plan depends.

The five-year feasibility plan includes a broad range of initiatives, programs and projects that observe and respond to the priorities and actions steps put forth by the Subcommittees and the Steering Committee. Over the next five years starting in June 2009, it is WCRP's and ENPC members' hope that many, if not most or all, of these recommendations are either underway or completed. Over the next couple of years, it will be more difficult than it has been in previous years to assess with any accuracy or approximation the state of resource-availability to support these recommendations. This issue does not diminish the value or importance of the recommendations, but it does require that WCRP and ENPC exercise great care and caution in pronouncing which initiatives, programs or projects are “feasible” and the timelines for proceeding to implementation on any one or any combination of them.

The feasibility plan also calls out a set of activities for the first 18 to 24 months, not because there is any greater predictability of resources but as a way to lift up specific ideas and initiatives that range from “lower-hanging – but very much worthwhile – fruit”, to less modest but still aggressive challenges that channel the energies and excitement demonstrated by the series of community, subcommittee, and steering committee meetings over the past several months to push for and make fundamental investments in the neighborhood.



Build on neighborhood assets. Source: Interface Studio all except third from right, Harvey Finkle.

Feasibility Factors

The ultimate “feasibility” of whether any proposed low-, moderate- or high-hanging fruit can and will proceed to implementation is a function of the nature and extent of the resources required, the resources potentially available, and the resources to be committed for implementation. Resources, in this context, are defined broadly to include:

- **human capital** (the people and organizations capable of and committed to providing the necessary leadership and sponsorship to carry out and manage the work);
- **financial capital** (the monies via grants, loans and/or equity needed to offset the hard and/or soft costs required to build and sustain the program or project over time); and
- **political capital** (the power and influence required to generate the first two categories of resources necessary to make the program or project ultimately happen).



The basis for moving forward on any project or set of projects presented in this section of the plan must consider the probability of gaining commitments of all three types of capital resources over time. In essence, the feasibility of this entire plan and its individual components is a function of whether and to what degree:

- ✓ there is a strong neighborhood constituency supporting the actions, projects, and programs in the plan;
- ✓ the plan sponsors, WCRP and ENPC members, in collaboration with community stakeholders are equipped, positioned, and prepared to move the required actions, projects, and programs forward;
- ✓ there is a reasonable expectation that financial resources are currently available and/or will be forthcoming to help underwrite the associated predevelopment, development, and operating costs of the actions, projects, and programs proposed; and
- ✓ there is a strong likelihood that the plan, upon completion and roll-out, will be able to attract a strong enough constituency among key public and private sector policy- and decision-makers.

Five-Year Plan

The overall five-year plan for this neighborhood of Eastern North Philadelphia is outlined on the next series of pages. Initiatives, programs and projects that are regarded as top priorities and more feasible, under the above criteria, immediately follow. Items indicated **[priority]** are those that have been suggested as 1-2 year priorities.

Total projected predevelopment costs are in the range of \$212,000 to \$318,000 for the first two years, an average of approximately \$106,000 to \$160,000 per year.

100 A. Vacant Land and Abandoned Buildings

The goals to be achieved by specific recommendations in this category of the plan are:

- ❖ Use existing publicly-held land to benefit the greater community; and
- ❖ Cultivate a cleaner, greener, healthier, and more sustainable community

The specific initiatives, programs and projects advance these goals are:

- Create Vacant Parcel Database
- **[priority]** catalogue vacant lots according to ease of acquisition and use those findings to negotiate with the public and private owners to convey ownership (through donor-taker, gift, fair market sale, etc.) for appropriate reuses including:
 - * transfer for side-yards;
 - * urban agriculture projects;
 - * play areas;
 - * staging events for interim uses.
- Support research into Community Land Trust best practices
- **[priority]** commission study to assess the practicality of CLT as viable tool for facilitating and ensuring:
 - * stewardship of underutilized land;
 - * permanent affordability of housing and other buildings over time.
- Form a Land Maintenance Collaborative
- **[priority]** explore working relationship with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and affiliated contractors to work with ENPC and neighborhood residents help maintain and transform vacant lots.
- **[priority]** train residents as volunteer code enforcers using 311 system and integrate with proposed block captain system starting with blocks:
 - * adjacent to proposed affordable housing development sites;
 - * where the 11 existing gardens are located.
- create a "Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed"
 - * loan out (library-style) the necessary tools and "know-how" in the hands of residents;
 - * offer technical advice and guidance.
- Sustain Involvement with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission

- **[priority]** remap and pursue zoning reforms that support the vision of this community plan.
- **[priority]** facilitate endorsement of this community plan.

Sponsor and Support Organization Capacity and Interest

- ✓ 9 of 12 ENPC members and community stakeholders have many years of experience in these areas and expressed strong interest in carrying out related work activities

Potential Project/Program/Operating Resources

- ✓ PHS Community LandCare

[priorities]

year 1-2 : June 2009 to December 2010

Vacant Land Management		Potential Resources/ Partners	Start Up	Completion
Database	\$ 3,000 - \$ 5,000	Oak Foundation	3 rd Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2009
Community Land Trust Feasibility Study	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Oak Foundation	3 rd Quarter 2009	1 st Quarter 2010
Land Management Collaboration	\$10,000 - \$15,000	PHS/PMB	3 rd Quarter 2009	2 nd Quarter 2010
Planning Commission Zoning/Remapping	\$ 2,000 - \$ 5,000	KSNAC	3 rd Quarter 2009	3 rd Quarter 2010
Projected Predevelopment costs	\$25,000 - \$40,000			

B. Affordable Housing

The goals to be achieved by specific recommendations in this category of the plan are:

- ❖ Preserve existing and develop new affordable housing for low- to moderate income households; and
- ❖ Strengthen the ability of lower-income households to afford and remain in their homes.

The specific initiatives, programs and projects to further these goals are:

- Form Housing Preservation Collaborative among interested ENPC members and stakeholders
- **[priority]** identify existing clearinghouses which disseminate information on:
 - * home improvement and repair programs, and financial and housing counseling resources;
 - * eligibility criteria, resource availability and application requirements.
- channel this information through ENPC members and block captains for dissemination and coordinate with clearinghouses to ensure and receive regular updating of information.
- **[priority]** advocate for new resources and preservation of existing resources through existing channels managed by other community development intermediaries (e.g. PACDC, Housing Alliance, RHLS, LISC, et. al.).
- **[priority]** target and promote a portion of these resources to residential blocks that are adjacent to or are in close proximity to vacant sites targeted for redevelopment (affordable housing, greening/open space, commercial retail, light industrial):
 - * 6th Street to Randolph Street between Cecil B. Moore and Oxford;
 - * 4th Street to Orkney Street between Oxford and Jefferson;
 - * Front Street to Mascher Street between Montgomery and Columbia.
- Begin Predevelopment Phase for Affordable and Mixed-Income Housing on the following sites (with priority and timing based on the ability to secure site control and/or obtain commitments from the owners) to determine the financial feasibility and market for rental or homeownership:
- **[priority]** 6th Street to Randolph Street between Jefferson and Oxford
 - * Negotiate with city and private owners to acquire sites or designate them for affordable or mixed-income housing accommodating approximately 42 units.
 - * Secure support from PHA and the Cruz Recreation Center whose adjacent sites add value to the proposed redevelopment and would be positively impacted by redevelopment of these vacant properties.

- **[priority]** Southwest quadrant (between 4th and 6th, Girard and Master)
 - * Negotiate with city agencies to acquire and assemble these parcels for the development of affordable or mixed-income housing accommodating approximately 14 units including development of a portion of the RDA-owned site fronting on Master Street that may support 4 rowhomes.
- Oxford Street between Bodine and Cadwallader
 - * Investigate with the owner (South Kensington CDC) the possibilities of expanding the footprint of their site to potentially include other vacant, privately-held parcels for affordable or mixed-income housing that could conceivably support 22 units.
- Northeast quadrant (between Howard and Hope)
 - * Negotiate with city agencies to acquire and assemble these parcels for the development of affordable or mixed-income housing accommodating approximately 10 units.

Sponsor and Support Organization Capacity and Interest

- ✓ 5 of 12 ENPC members and community stakeholders have many years of experience in these areas and are very interested in playing an active role to ensure these activities are implemented

Potential Project/Program/Operating Resources

- ✓ City of Philadelphia's Housing Trust Fund/Community Development Block Grant and federal HOME Programs
- ✓ Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation
- ✓ Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's Homeownership Choice, Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, PennHOMES and Low Income Housing Tax Credit Programs

[priorities]

year 1-2 : June 2009 to December 2010

Affordable Housing		Potential Resources/ Partners	Start Up	Completion
Information Clearinghouse	Predevelopment Costs \$ 5,000 - \$ 10,000	Wm Penn Foundation	3 rd Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2009
Resource Advocacy	\$0	NA	3 rd Quarter 2009	ongoing
Resource Targeting (Model Blocks)	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Wm Penn Foundation	4 th Quarter 2009	3 rd quarter 2010
6 th Street Development Initiative	\$ 30,000 - \$50,000	LISC	4 th Quarter 2009	3 rd Quarter 2011
Projected Predevelopment costs		\$45,000 - \$75,000		

102 C. Economic Development

The goals to be achieved by specific recommendations in this category of the plan are:

- ❖ Strengthen the neighborhood economy as part of the broader Philadelphia and regional economy;
- ❖ Preserve existing and develop new businesses and industry, and community facilities that serve the neighborhood; and
- ❖ Help business owners, entrepreneurs and community organizations protect their assets and build their wealth.

The specific initiatives, programs and projects that advance these goals are as follows:

- [priority] Secure resources to support an Economic Development Coordinator position to manage both Task Forces as part of an overall business development initiative for the study area
- Form Workforce Development Task Force
 - **[priority]** identify existing resources for clean and green jobs and training programs residents may qualify for in order to compete for them.
 - **[priority]** identify existing resources for clean and green business opportunities entrepreneurs may qualify for to compete for home repair, weatherization, and green industry contracts.
 - **[priority]** create a local jobs clearinghouse and channel information through ENPC members and block captains for dissemination.
- Form Business Support Task Force
 - **[priority]** explore in collaboration with Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Center (GMDC) opportunities to facilitate the redevelopment of derelict industrial properties in the study area.
 - **[priority]** identify potential underutilized commercial kitchens in local churches and day care centers as first step in assessing potential of creating low-investment commercial kitchen “incubators” for local entrepreneurs.
 - partner with existing business/merchant associations to access existing business support programs offered by the City and state and create marketing campaigns to promote individual corridors, overall shopping opportunities in neighborhood, and buy-local advantages.
 - Integrate arts and culture initiatives to help attract shoppers, dress-up the streetscape, and promote commerce.

➤ Facilitate Access to Fresh, Affordable Food

- **[priority]** engage local corner stores in The Food Trust's (TFT) Healthy Corner Stores Initiative, neighborhood schools, and youth programs in healthy eating education and practice.

Sponsor and Support Organization Capacity and Interest

- ✓ 7 of 12 ENPC members and community stakeholders are very interested in playing an active role in this area of the plan; although many indicated a need for additional staff dependent on specific tasks and timeframes for the work. Most ENPC members have limited experience in these areas and, therefore, may need to bring on to their staff some expertise to complement that of entities such as TFT, GMDC, and other stakeholders.

Potential Project/Program/Operating Resources

- ✓ City Commerce Department, Philadelphia Workforce Development Program, City Green Jobs Task Force, and Sustainable Business Network
- ✓ Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Departments of Community Affairs, Labor, Conservation and Natural Resources, and Environmental Protection
- ✓ Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition (GPUAC), the Workforce Development Committee, Work-Stream, and Summer/Year Round Employment for Youth.
- ✓ Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) and the Neighborhood Gardens Association (NGA)

[priorities]

year 1-2 : June 2009 to December 2010

Economic Development		Potential Resources/ Partners	Start Up	Completion
Economic Development Coordinator	Predevelopment Costs \$50,000 - \$75,000	Wm Penn Foundation	3 rd Quarter 2009	ongoing
Workforce/Business Support Task Force - Green Jobs - Green Businesses	\$15,000 - \$20,000	GMDC / GPUAC City Office of Sustainability Wm Penn Foundation	4 th Quarter 2009	ongoing
Corner store initiative	\$10,000 - \$15,000	The Food Trust	4 th Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2010
Projected Predevelopment costs	\$75,000 - \$110,000			

D. Youth and Human Services

The goals to be achieved by specific recommendations in this category of the plan are:

- ❖ Support a holistic system of education, social-service and community-building programs aimed at helping children and families; and
- ❖ Create opportunities to build and strengthen relationships among people who live, work, worship, play, and learn in the neighborhood.

The specific initiatives, programs and projects that further these goals are:

➤ Form Youth and Family Support Collaborative

Youth-Oriented

- **[priority]** create a Youth Council in partnership with Friends Neighborhood Guild.
- **[priority]** develop youth skills through advocacy and apprenticeship.
- train youth to testify at City budget hearings and participate in the democratic process.

Child-Oriented

- **[priority]** streamline daycare licensing process.
- **[priority]** comply with health and safety codes.

Parents

- expand and promote services for single moms.
- create parent-child learning programs.

Health

- **[priority]** create partnership with Philadelphia Health Center #6 to promote awareness and use of available services.

General

- **[priority]** identify written, web-based and telephone directories of local services.
- **[priority]** coordinate with the operators and publishers to:
 - * regularly update information on eligibility criteria, resource availability and application requirements;
 - * channel this information through ENPC members and block captains for wide dissemination, publication, and promotion of services.
- **[priority]** advocate for new resources and preservation of existing resources through existing channels managed by other community development intermediaries.

- target these resources to residential blocks in close proximity to sites targeted for affordable housing to complement physical development initiatives.
 - **[priority]** create a local, multi-lingual social service resource directory and referral system.
 - convene quarterly roundtables to coordinate outreach and generate client referrals and placement.
 - establish safe routes to school to calm traffic and encourage walking to school.
 - petition for additional crossing guards at Ludlow and Moffett School.
 - assess immigrants' service needs, resources and potential gaps in the system
 - **[priority]** conduct broader human and social services study of the neighborhood.
- Form Parks-Open Space Committee
- **[priority]** solicit resources to enhance maintenance, safety and functions of neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers.

Sponsor and Support Organization Capacity and Interest

- ✓ 8 of 12 ENPC members and community stakeholders have many years of experience in these areas and expressed strong interest in carrying out related work activities

Potential Project/Program/Operating Resources

- ✓ Philadelphia Health Center #6
- ✓ Kensington CAPA School
- ✓ Philadelphia Department of Human Services
- ✓ UWSEPA
- ✓ Philly S.O.S.
- ✓ Connect 2-1-1 / First Call for Help

[priorities]

year 1-2: June 2009 to December 2010

Youth and Human Services		Potential Resources/ Partners	Start Up	Completion
Predevelopment Costs				
Youth / Family Services Collaborative				
- Youth Council	\$15,000 - \$20,000	Crane Arts/GPUAC	4 th Quarter 2009	Ongoing
- Day Care Licensing	\$15,000- \$20,000	Health Center #6	3 rd Quarter 2009	Ongoing
Clearinghouse/Resource Study		United Way	4 th Quarter 2009	3 rd Quarter 2010
Projected Predevelopment costs		\$45,000 - \$60,000		

104 E. Quality of Life

The goals to be achieved by specific recommendations in this category of the plan are:

- ❖ Create opportunities to build and strengthen relationships among people who live, work, worship, play, and learn in the neighborhood and
- ❖ Improve public infrastructure, services, and service-delivery to enhance the safety, security, and overall quality of life in the neighborhood.

Initiatives, programs and projects that support these goals are:

Physical

- Petition Streets and Sanitation and Fairmount Park Commission for improvements to calm traffic, improve streetscape, and enhance safety along following streets/intersections:

- **[priority]** improved and/or raised crosswalks
- **[priority]** raised curb heights with accessible ramps
- **[priority]** bump-outs, and improved sidewalks
- **[priority]** street trees, planters, bollards, pedestrian scale lighting, and Safe Routes to School signage
- **[priority]** rain gardens and phytoremediation projects to help clean and remove harmful materials from the soil

Community Building

- Form Neighborhood Town Watch
 - create Walk/Ride Home Escort Program.
 - **[priority]** organize a block captain communications network.
- Plan community events
 - **[priority]** sponsor events celebrating local ethnic diversity.
 - host community celebrations.
 - **[priority]** reactivate and enhance the production of the existing community gardens spread throughout the neighborhood and/or explore the possibility of larger-scale urban agriculture on suitably-sized parcels in partnership with the Food Systems Planning faculty at the University of Pennsylvania, Weaver's Way Co-Op, and interested ENPC members.

Sponsor and Support Organization Capacity and Interest

- ✓ 8 of 12 ENPC members and community stakeholders have many years of experience in these areas and expressed strong interest in carrying out related work activities

Potential Project/Program/Operating Resources

- ✓ Philadelphia Health Center #6
- ✓ Kensington CAPA School
- ✓ Philadelphia Department of Human Services
- ✓ UWSEPA
- ✓ Philly S.O.S.
- ✓ Connect 2-1-1 / First Call for Help

[priorities]

year 1-2: June 2009 to December 2010

Quality of Life	Predevelopment Costs	Potential Resources/ Partners	Start Up	Completion
Healthy Living Collaborative - community garden production	\$10,000 - \$15,000	Weavers Way	3 rd Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2010
Infrastructure Improvements	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Green Space Committee	\$10,000 - \$15,000	City Recreation	4 th Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2010
Neighborhood Town Watch	\$ 5,000 - \$10,000	26 th Police District	4 th Quarter 2009	4 th Quarter 2010
Projected Predevelopment costs	\$25,000 - \$40,000			



VI. performance measurements and indicators of change



VI. Performance Measurements and Indicators of Change

WCRP and ENPC members will establish a working group to track and report on specific changes and indicators of those changes occurring over the five-year period of the community plan. Two categories of “changes” will be monitored:

- one is based on characteristics of the neighborhood which are impacted by variables that are broader and well beyond the ability of WCRP/ENPC to affect by itself, be they policy or resource decisions made at the local, state, or national level; these include:
 - * demographics (household income, employment, and education attainment)
 - * housing development and affordability
 - * land uses and zoning classifications
- the second category is based on specific initiatives, projects and programs impacted by variables WCRP/ENPC may have some degree of control or influence over to the extent the three types of capital resources discussed in the Recommendations section of the plan are generated and sustained (human capital, financial capital, and political capital); these include the priorities listed under the plan’s major areas of focus:
 - * vacant land and abandoned buildings
 - * affordable housing
 - * economic development
 - * youth and human services
 - * quality of life

In both categories, it is acknowledged that some if not most changes that occur will be longer in term extending beyond the five-year horizon covered by the plan. As part of WCRP’s and ENPC’s role in and commitment to this neighborhood, their work and the monitoring of neighborhood change did not begin and certainly will not end with this 2009-2014 time frame.

Categories	Frequency of Collection/Reporting	Primary Sources
Population Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - age, race, ethnicity, income - education, employment - utility costs, rents, sales prices - owner-occupancy 	2011 and 2015 mid-decade Census	U.S. Bureau of the Census
Proportion of Cost-Burdened Households	2011 and 2015 mid-decade Census	U.S. Bureau of the Census
Survey of Property Tax Increases Land Uses and Zoning by Proportion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - residential - commercial - industrial - open space 	2011 and 2015 2010 and 2015	City through BRT City Planning Commission
Perceptions of the Neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - issues, concerns, priorities - likes, dislikes - neighborhood identity 	2011 and 2014	Surveys/Interviews



108 B. Community Plan-Driven Indicators

Categories	Frequency of Collection/Reporting	Primary Sources
VACANT LAND		
Vacant Land Conveyed for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - green space - affordable housing - community facilities - neighborhood commercial 	2011 and 2014	City through BRT
Formation of Community Land Trust <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for land stewardship - for green space - for affordable housing - for community facilities 	2010, 2012 and 2014	WCRP/ENPC
AFFORDABLE HOUSING		
Public Fund Obligations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - for home repairs - for weatherization 	2011 and 2014	OHCD/PHDC
Households Served <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial counseling - housing counseling 	2010, 2012 and 2014	OHCD
Affordable Housing Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - units in predevelopment - units in development - units completed 	2010, 2012 and 2014	WCRP
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
Jobs/Businesses Created/Preserved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "green" and in general 	2011 and 2014	WCRP/ENPC
YOUTH/HUMAN SERVICES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - youth served - day care facilities licensed - resource study 	2010, 2012 and 2014 2011 and 2014 2010	WCRP/ENPC WCRP/ENPC WCRP/ENPC
QUALITY OF LIFE		
Town Watch Formation	2010 and 2014	WCRP/ENPC
Healthy Eating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gardens restored - corner stores participating 	2011 and 2014	WCRP/ENPC
Infrastructure Improvements	2012 and 2014	Streets Department



appendix

A. Local Level Funding Sources

Housing Trust Fund (HTF)

The City of Philadelphia's website describes the need for affordable housing as follows and the basis for establishment of a Housing Trust Fund: "Philadelphia is faced with escalating demands for affordable and accessible housing. Many homeowners, particularly seniors, need basic home repairs. Almost 130,000 Philadelphia households have an annual income below \$20,000 and pay more than they can afford on housing. More than 31,000 households are living in overcrowded conditions, and the demand for affordable housing exceeds the supply by at least 60,000 homes. Our neighborhoods need assistance to begin or continue their revitalization. At the same time, the City is experiencing regular reductions in community development resources from the federal government. The welfare and safety of our residents demand new sources of revenue for affordable-housing activities. [This is] the basis for launching the Housing Trust Fund, a dedicated funding source set aside for the housing needs of the city."

Goals of the Housing Trust Fund include:

- serving very low- to moderate-income households (under \$20,000 to \$78,000 per year for a family of four, respectively)
- creating and preserving affordable rental and sales housing at an expected rate of 275 additional units per year
- assisting more than 900 homeowners per year with home repairs
- preventing nearly 1,000 families each year from becoming homeless
- increasing the number of accessible and visit-able housing units
- revitalizing neighborhoods by building houses, fixing up vacant buildings and repairing owner-occupied homes
- helping prevent homelessness by providing emergency assistance for rent and mortgage arrearages, security deposits and utility bills
- building on vacant land cleared for redevelopment, forming mixed-income communities, and strengthening property values and
- leveraging additional funds from both private and public sources, including those provided through the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency – PHFA -- (Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, PennHOMES development subsidies, Homeownership Choice Program) and Federal Home Loan Bank programs, including their Affordable Housing Program.

The HTF was initially supported by \$1.5 million in NTI bond fund proceeds as capital, authorized by City Council in June 2004, a surcharge on document recording fees in Philadelphia, expected to raise at least \$10 million per year, and additional funding sources which to-date are being identified.

Homeownership - Neighborhood-Based Homeownership Housing

The City develops affordable housing through neighborhood-based community development corporations (CDCs) and developers who have formed partnerships with neighborhood organizations. The construction of new affordable, sales housing is increasingly important in rebuilding and revitalizing urban neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Vacant lots are acquired and assembled into buildable sites for new construction housing. In addition to providing affordable housing, new housing construction at scale can rebuild housing markets and increase value in communities affected by disinvestment and abandonment, and also provide residents with modern amenities such as off-street parking and larger lots.

Rental Housing - Neighborhood-Based Rental Production

In its role as the City's housing finance agency and real estate acquisition/disposition agency, the Redevelopment Authority, or RDA, has developed a reliable process for delivering CDBG funds for rental housing production by CDC, private, non-profit developers through a competitive request for proposals. The RDA combines CDBG development subsidy funding awarded with Low-Income Housing Tax Credit financing. RDA and PHFA underwriting staff work to coordinate their respective reviews of development financing proposals for Philadelphia ventures to ensure that CDBG subsidy funding is used to make Philadelphia proposals as competitive as possible for tax-credit financing. Because of this close working relationship and the capability of many developers of Philadelphia affordable-housing ventures, including WCRP, the City has succeeded in receiving substantial awards of tax-credit financing in every funding cycle since 1993.

Financing for the rehabilitation and new construction of rental projects is provided using CDBG and HOME funds in accordance with the Rental Project Selection Criteria. Project financing for rental ventures is usually made available in the form of a long-term, low, or no-interest loan. Financing administered by OHCD through the RDA usually leverages PHFA PennHOMES funds and low-income housing tax credits, and in some cases, foundation funding. In order to promote transitional and permanent housing for special-needs populations, projects recommended to receive financing must allocate 20 percent of the developed units for special-needs housing.

Other Housing Development Assistance

The City supports rental developments which receive other federal funding through the Housing Development Assistance budget. In general, the program provides funding for site improvements and related construction activities. For rental development with commitments of HUD 202 (elderly) or HUD 811 (disabled) financing, the OHCD subsidy is capped at \$15,000 per unit, based upon a dollar-for-dollar match of other funds.

City Construction Float Loan

Under this program, a 0% city financed loan is provided to eligible developments supported with other City resources such that permanent take-out financing from other lenders is committed.

American Dream Downpayment Initiative (ADDI)

ADDI provides a forgivable loan to help low- to moderate-income, first-time homebuyers to cover downpayment and closing costs. The maximum loan amount is the lesser of 6% of the purchase price or \$10,000. Prospective homebuyers using this resource are required to complete housing counseling through an approved provider agency.

Tax Abatement

A significant incentive for new housing development and housing rehabilitation in the City is the 10-year real estate tax abatement offered by the Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT). Under this program, the abatement is 100 percent of the value of the improvements.

B. State Level Funding Sources

Homeownership Choice Program (HCP)

PHFA sets aside funds to capitalize this program to support the development of single-family homes for purchase in urban communities. HCP is intended to be a part of a municipality's comprehensive approach to increase the net investment in housing in urban areas while building mixed-income communities and encouraging diversity of homeownership. HCP encourages market-sensitive and innovative land-use planning concepts and works in concert with commercial development and community and downtown revitalization efforts. The focus is on the development of new homeownership opportunities and the transformation of disinvested urban neighborhoods into attractive places to live, thereby offering a viable alternative to sprawling development. The program requires partnerships between the municipality, a for-profit and non-profit builder/developer to produce housing at scale. The minimum size for projects is 50 units.

Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI)

Recognizing that in many neighborhoods and core communities it can be difficult to amass the property required to build the number of new homes required by HCP, PHFA added the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative (NRI) to the HCP resource in 2004. The goal of this program was to encourage and support neighborhood and community revitalization efforts by promoting the development and renovation of existing structures and construction of new in-fill single family homes, for purchase, in urban neighborhoods and core communities. Its chief intent is to help a municipality revitalize its urban neighbor-

hoods by renovation of vacant residential structures and also allow for infill construction on the vacant lots in areas similar to the ones where WCRP is focusing its energy. Unlike the HCP, the NRI does not impose a minimum number of homes to be built or renovated based upon a municipality's population.

PennHOMES Program

PHFA provides permanent financing for rental projects through the PennHOMES Program which offers interest-free, deferred payment loans to support the development of affordable rental housing for lower-income residents. Financing is structured as primary or secondary mortgage loans. Eligible sponsors include for-profit or nonprofit entities. Developers can qualify for up to \$22,500/unit in PennHOMES financing.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credits

PHFA allocates federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) to generate private investment equity for rental ventures. It administers a \$20-million annual allocation for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This program provides owners of, and investors in, affordable rental housing developments with tax credits that offer a dollar-for-dollar reduction in their tax liability. The credit may be taken for up to 10 years. Tax credits are sold to investors with the proceeds – equity -- used to help cover project costs. Applications for credits are highly competitive as well. Substantial drops in pricing of credits has been occurring in the current recession (generally from .80/\$ to \$.60/\$); this is expected to continue in the foreseeable future which, if it pans out, will require more gap financing than would otherwise be the case.

Construction Loans

Under this program, below-market-rate construction loans are made available to sponsors of rental housing projects who have permanent take-out financing from other lenders. At least 20 percent of the residents must have incomes that do not exceed 80 percent of the area's median income.

C. Federal Level Funding Sources

HUD 202 Rental Housing Production Program for Seniors

For senior-specific housing, HUD's 202 program is the source; typically, this program is funded at the level of \$700-\$800 million per year, and this region receives 2-3 funding awards a year. Given the economic downturn, it is very unclear as to the level of funding going forward. When pursued, this program is usually combined with 4% credits and tax-exempt bond financing, which is non-competitive.

Appendix Table 1: Rental Housing Financing Scenario

Project Size (in units)	Total Development Costs	HOME/CDBG	HTF	PennHomes	Gap Sources (Equity/Debt)
60	\$ 17,915,000	\$ 1,280,000	\$ 775,000	\$ 860,000	\$ 15,000,000
50	\$ 14,930,000	\$ 1,069,000	\$ 645,000	\$ 716,000	\$ 12,500,000
40	\$ 11,944,000	\$ 855,000	\$ 516,000	\$ 573,000	\$ 10,000,000
per unit avg	\$ 298,600	\$ 21,300	\$ 12,900	\$ 14,300	\$ 250,000

Source

Based on City and PHFA Funding Awards Made September 2008 to seven non-profit-sponsored projects (numbers rounded); projects ranged in size from 29 to 63 units (see Appendix for more detailed breakdown). Development costs include nominal or no acquisition expense for publicly-owned land/buildings and environmental remediation costs considered off-pro forma.

Gap sources include investor equity generated from sale of LIHTCs and, in some cases, re-investment of developer fees back into the project.

Appendix Table 2: Homeownership Financing Scenario

Project Size (in units)	Total Development Costs	HOME/CDBG	HTF	HCP/NRI	Gap Sources (Sales/Debt)
50	\$ 12,875,000	\$ 2,900,000	\$ 1,425,000	\$ 1,400,000	\$ 7,150,000
30	\$ 7,725,000	\$ 1,740,000	\$ 855,000	\$ 840,000	\$ 4,290,000
20	\$ 5,150,000	\$ 1,160,000	\$ 570,000	\$ 560,000	\$ 2,860,000
per unit avg	\$ 257,300	\$ 58,000	\$ 28,500	\$ 28,000	\$ 143,000

Source

Based on City and PHFA Funding Awards Made 2006-08 to three CDC-sponsored projects (numbers rounded); projects ranged in size from 19 to 50 units. Development costs include nominal or no acquisition expense for publicly-owned land/buildings and environmental remediation costs considered off-pro forma.

Gap sources include but are not limited to: Federal Home Loan Bank AHP, sales proceeds, and re-investment of developer fees back into the project.

Appendix Table 3: Housing Affordability: 2007-2008 Area Median Income Limits

(4-person household)

<u>% of AMI</u>	<u>Income Limits</u>	<u>Maximum Annual Housing Costs</u>	<u>Maximum Monthly Housing Costs</u>
20%	\$ 14,863	\$ 4,459	\$ 372
30%	\$ 22,300	\$ 6,690	\$ 558
40%	\$ 29,725	\$ 8,918	\$ 743
60%	\$ 44,600	\$ 13,380	\$ 1,115
80%	\$ 59,450	\$ 17,835	\$ 1,486

AMI = area-wide median income

Appendix Table 4: City of Philadelphia and PHFA Income Limits

Income Limits: Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA										
<u>FY 2008 Income Limit Area</u>	<u>Median Income</u>	<u>FY 2008 Income Limit Category</u>	<u>1 Person</u>	<u>2 Person</u>	<u>3 Person</u>	<u>4 Person</u>	<u>5 Person</u>	<u>6 Person</u>	<u>7 Person</u>	<u>8 Person</u>
Philadelphia-Camden- Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD MSA	\$74,300	<i>Very Low (50%) Income Limits</i>	\$26,000	\$29,700	\$33,450	\$37,150	\$40,100	\$43,100	\$46,050	\$49,050
		<i>Extremely Low (30%) Income Limits</i>	\$15,600	\$17,850	\$20,050	\$22,300	\$24,100	\$25,850	\$27,650	\$29,450
		<i>Low (80%) Income Limits</i>	\$41,600	\$47,550	\$53,500	\$59,450	\$64,200	\$68,950	\$73,700	\$78,450