



Imagine Philadelphia LAYING THE FOUNDATION





City of Philadelphia

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SUMMARY



SUMMARY

Comprehensive planning in Philadelphia is back. *Imagine Philadelphia: Laying the Foundation* for a comprehensive plan is the first step toward envisioning and planning a bright future for our city in 2035, and for the generations of people will who live, work, learn, play, and visit here.

Imagine Philadelphia: Laying the Foundation

Begun in 2007 by the City Planning Commission and supported with generous grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, *Imagine Philadelphia: Laying the Foundation* for a comprehensive plan has three basic purposes:

1. To assemble data and background information needed for preparing a long-range, comprehensive plan;
2. To engage regional experts and citizens in dialog about the future of neighborhoods, the city, and the region; and
3. To lay out preliminary ideas about vision, goals, and actions to inform a subsequent, citywide comprehensive-planning effort.

Why Now?

It's been a long time since Philadelphia prepared a long-range, holistic plan for growth and development. In fact, it's been 50 years. So, why is it important to be doing this now?

What the Charter Says

"The comprehensive plan shall be known as the Physical Development Plan of the City and shall show the general location, character and extent of streets, parks, recreation facilities, sites for public buildings and structures, pierhead and bulkhead lines, City and privately owned utility facilities, waterways, water conduits and such other features as will provide for the improvement of the City and its future growth and development and afford adequate facilities for the housing, transportation, distribution, health and welfare of its population."
Excerpt: Section 4-600 Philadelphia Home Rule Charter, 1951

First and foremost, to achieve a desired future we must envision and plan for it, rather than simply let trends run their course. Although numerous neighborhood, corridor, district, and other plans were prepared and adopted over the years—together guiding growth and change—we firmly believe a single comprehensive plan will serve better than a patchwork of multiple plans of varying scope and scale going forward.

Second, local and global trends regarding energy costs and availability, population growth and migration, and changes to the use of land and other resources, cities have the opportunity to prosper in the coming years. Philadelphia is well-positioned to capture its fair share—or more—of this prosperity with proper planning. After six decades of shrinking population, trends show that Philadelphia's population decline has stabilized and is beginning to grow again. Former industrial areas on our riverfronts and near Center City have experienced considerable development pressure. While the region already has an extensive transit network—the envy of many cities—many neighborhoods are lacking access to convenient transit. We must fully recognize the need for a sustainable future and, as Mayor Michael A. Nutter has challenged us, become "the greenest city in America."

Finally, we're rewriting our Zoning Code, originally authored in 1933 and updated in the early 1960s, and the city will be rezoned and mapped according to the new code. A long-range plan that creates a framework for a series of strategic district plans and land-use proposals, is absolutely necessary to guide this remapping effort.



Public Participation

The *Imagine Philadelphia* process was kicked off in mid-2007 with a series of eight roundtable meetings of regional experts focused on specific planning topics. These were followed by nine widely publicized workshops in late 2007 and early 2008. The sessions provided an opportunity for broad input, with the intent on generating some “big ideas.” The workshops were organized around eight topic-specific breakout groups. The outreach effort received positive media coverage with over 700 residents and other stakeholders participating.

A consensus for the future of Philadelphia emerged from the roundtables and public workshops: A place where...

- Arts and culture are celebrated along a vibrant Benjamin Franklin Parkway and Avenue of the Arts, and also in neighborhood venues;
- The Philadelphia economy is diversified and the city is a global leader in green technology and niche industries;
- There is a wide range of housing choices that are affordable and respond to changing household needs;
- Neighborhoods are the lifeblood of the city, offering a complete array of services and amenities;
- Public open space and waterfronts are universally accessible;
- Public services and utilities are customer-service oriented and service delivery is equitable;
- The region is known for intergovernmental cooperation and a seamless transit system; and
- There is a choice of convenient, interconnected modes of transportation.

The Vision

City Planning Commission staff and consultants next developed more complete vision statements that were both inspirational and aspirational, along with associated goals, opportunities and constraints, big ideas, and actions. We see the visions and goals set forth on the following pages as the foundation on which further comprehensive planning will be built:

Citizen Voices...

“Have a bold vision for what the city can be.”

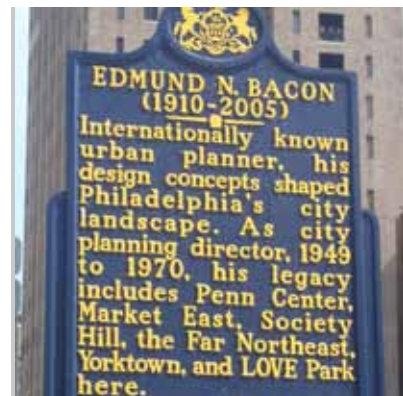
“Congratulations on a great first step on a very long road.”

“The best part ... was the conversations at the tables”

“This is an important effort that should involve our youth.

Kids should have a say in the future ...”

“Truly a great way to give a voice and empowerment to the people. Please keep this up.”



SUMMARY



Neighborhoods

Imagine Philadelphia... where neighborhoods are the building blocks of our city: Social networks are nurtured; retail and housing markets are healthy; institutions strengthen the well-being of residents; and where the city's rich history and culture are shaped and shared:

- Establish a systematic, accountable, and equitable community-planning process to ensure strong links between long-range citywide planning, community priorities, capital investment, and zoning;
- Assure that each neighborhood has access to its fair share of services, resources, and amenities, as defined by its unique needs;
- Enhance the quality of life in every neighborhood through targeted physical improvements.



Housing

Imagine Philadelphia... where a robust housing market provides a wide range of high-quality and affordable choices for current residents and a growing regional population:

- Increase the housing supply through small-scale infill development, rehabilitation of existing underutilized buildings, and construction of new housing developments;
- Upgrade the housing stock to modern standards, and ensure that sustainable design and construction practices are used;
- Ensure that the housing market and providers offer diverse choices, attractive to, and appropriate for, a broad range of renters and buyers, as well as for our most vulnerable populations.



Mobility

Imagine Philadelphia... with a fully integrated pedestrian, bicycle, transit, highway, and goods-movement network that provides significant and sustainable economic benefits to residents, the city, the region, and beyond:

- Provide neighborhoods with ample transit to jobs and services;
- Create a citywide, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system that is well integrated into the larger transportation network;
- Make the network of city streets and parking safe, efficient, and supportive of sustainable development practices;
- Enhance the regional transportation network through coordinated port, highway, rail, and airport improvements.



Economic Development

*Imagine Philadelphia...*capitalizing upon its substantial economic assets and providing expanding opportunities for job, income, and wealth creation for residents, workers, and businesses:

- Position Philadelphia as the vital urban center of a competitive and sustainable 12-county metropolitan region;
- Make Philadelphia the location of choice for entrepreneurship and trade in the Northeast Corridor “mega-region;”
- Establish the city as a leading international center for learning, culture, trade, and tourism.



Open Space

*Imagine Philadelphia...*with a network of grand open spaces, intimate parks, and lush natural areas—as well as other public and private “green infrastructure”—that connect the population to nature and provide opportunities for quiet relaxation, vigorous exercise, and improved quality of life:

- Create a seamless network of public green spaces including parks, recreation sites, trails, green streets, and other resources so all residents are within one-half mile (ten-minute walk) of a park or trail;
- Use Philadelphia’s public green spaces for “utility” purposes, such as managing stormwater or generating renewable energy;
- Enhance Philadelphia’s open-space resources as important components of regional environmental and recreational systems;
- Leverage open space for economic development to help Philadelphia attract and retain residents, visitors, and businesses.



Public Facilities

*Imagine Philadelphia...*where public services and utilities supporting recreation, learning, socializing, good health, emergency assistance, and daily life in general are distributed equitably through a well-designed and maintained network of public facilities and centers for community activity:

- Create an appropriately sized network of public facilities and services to meet the needs of a dynamic population;
- Coordinate delivery of public services and utilities between multiple providers, through shared facilities, infrastructure, and operations;
- Deliver high-quality and efficient public services via exemplary, pleasing, functional, well-maintained, and sustainable buildings and operations.





Preservation

Imagine Philadelphia... where continued preservation of historic assets contributes to the city's environmental, economic, and social well being:

- Leverage and honor the city's manufacturing heritage by aggressively reusing industrial sites as contemporary places to work, live, learn, create, and play;
- Facilitate renovation of housing and neighborhood anchors to preserve Philadelphia's neighborhood building stock, the fabric of vibrant and unique communities;
- Revitalize and protect the city's commercial corridors, the backbone of vibrant and unique communities;
- Use preservation and archeology to promote and celebrate the city's history, cultural resources, ethnic heritage, and unique customs.



Urban Design

Imagine Philadelphia... continuing a tradition of superior urban design into the 21st Century by building upon its iconic image as a city with pre-colonial roots, positioned between two major rivers, and defined by an historic grid of streets, vibrant neighborhoods, and lively public spaces:

- Preserve and extend the city's street grid to allow for efficient circulation between existing and new neighborhoods;
- Build upon the citywide public-space system by creating or enhancing at least one purposeful public open space in every neighborhood;
- Capitalize on the positive physical characteristics—both natural and man-made—that make Philadelphia a unique city;
- Apply sound urban-design principles to development across the city.

Next Steps

As intended, *Imagine Philadelphia* will serve to inform several planning and zoning efforts going forward.

The City Planning Commission will continue this work by commencing its long-range, comprehensive planning effort in winter 2010. This will correspond to launching the "Citizens Planning Institute" as a formal means of educating the public about, and ensuring stakeholder participation in, planning in Philadelphia. Further, these efforts will inform 19 strategic district plans covering all corners of the city. These will be prepared over a several-year period beginning in late 2010, resulting in proposed land-use and zoning changes, strategies for effective public investment, and ultimately, a more predictable development process for all concerned.



LAYING THE FOUNDATION

We've organized this document around eight subject areas:

- **Neighborhoods**
- **Housing**
- **Mobility**
- **Economic Development**
- **Open Space**
- **Public Facilities**
- **Preservation**
- **Urban Design**

For each we offer an *Imagine Philadelphia...* vision statement, a series of three or four aspirations, the rationale and challenges behind each, several big, transformative ideas, and suggested short-term actions.

As appendices, we (1) identify the best practices in other places from which we can learn and (2) provide a list of selected existing plans, programs and resources integral to taking the work presented here to the next level.



NEIGHBORHOODS

Imagine Philadelphia...

...where neighborhoods are the building blocks of our city: Social networks are nurtured; retail and housing markets are healthy; institutions strengthen the well-being of residents; and where the city's rich history and culture are shaped and shared.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Establish a systematic, accountable, and equitable community-planning process to ensure strong links between long-range citywide planning, community priorities, capital investment, and zoning.
- 2** Assure that each neighborhood has access to its fair share of services, resources, and amenities, as defined by its unique needs.
- 3** Enhance the quality of life in every neighborhood through targeted physical improvements.



1

Establish a systematic, accountable, and equitable community-planning process to ensure strong links between long-range citywide planning, community priorities, capital investment, and zoning.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Community plans reach a level of detail better able to reflect the specific needs and aspirations of communities than a citywide plan.
- Having plans that cover all neighborhoods enables the City to invest its resources and guide growth or change in the most well-informed and efficient manner.
- Residents, community-based organizations, and local institutions frequently advocate for neighborhood plans to help articulate their community vision and predict and guide future development.
- The City Planning Commission is already organized to facilitate community planning; community planners have relationships with stakeholders and citizens in their respective areas of the city.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Many neighborhoods and institutions are already engaged in community planning; while these plans are often aspirational, they may represent the vision of a passionate few rather than the collective voice of a community working together.
- Community-sponsored planning results in overlaps and gaps; some areas have multiple plans while others have none at all.



- The City does not have the resources to allow for fully organizing and working with community groups, and for preparing community plans.
- The link between community planning and decision-making concerning land-use, capital improvement, and other implementation measures is not as strong as it should be.
- The City Planning Commission has limited staff that can devote its time to developing community plans.

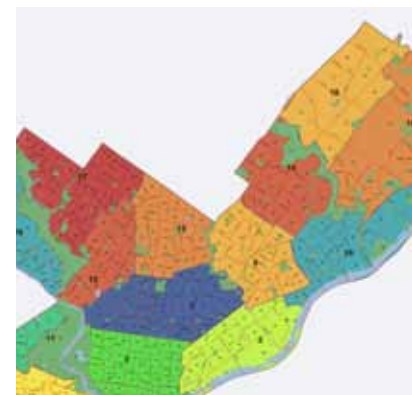
Big, Transformative Ideas

- Prepare plans for all Philadelphia communities, articulating five to ten-year strategies, and update the plans every five years.
- Ensure broad community participation in all plans.
- Make the link between community plans and land-use and development regulations and decisions understandable.



Short-Term Actions

- Outline the issues and merits of the existing PAS community groupings and establish criteria for redefining the boundaries.
- Redefine the PAS boundaries so they more accurately reflect the current physical, economic, and social character of the city's neighborhoods.
- Identify sites throughout the city (the Delaware waterfront, for example) that would be suitable for new neighborhoods.
- Appoint a liaison to the City Planning Commission within each City agency that is involved in planning, development, and plan implementation in order to strengthen the link between neighborhood planning and implementation.
- Establish an infrastructure needs assessment tailored to each community in Philadelphia linked to the annual capital budget and its five-year program.





2

Assure that each neighborhood has access to its fair share of services, resources, and amenities, as defined by its unique needs.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Residents desire complete neighborhoods—those with housing choices and easy access to a variety of public services, retail, employment, and recreation—as the places they’d like to live in the most.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- For some time, the City’s capital and operating budget has been fiscally constrained; as a result, there are simply not enough funds to support the full menu of public facilities and services in all neighborhoods.
- In communities where population and incomes have declined, it is difficult to attract and sustain neighborhood businesses and retailers.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Develop one “strength corridor” in each community where public services and private resources are concentrated and fiercely protected. Business owners within the corridor and adjacent homeowners would receive technical and financial assistance to upgrade their properties but would also be held to high standards of service, product quality, and property maintenance.



**CITIZEN SURVEY: TECHNICAL
CITY OF INFORMATION
PHILADELPHIA PAPER**

Planning Commission survey
from the 1980's.

citizen SURVEY

Short-Term Actions

- Create “mobile resource centers,” based in an existing school or other facility to provide services that are otherwise unavailable in a given neighborhood (e.g., a mobile health clinic).
- Identify the most pressing needs and community values through analysis and resident surveys.
- Identify potential one- or two-block sites for strength corridors in several neighborhoods; suitable sites will be accessible to residents and adjacent to an existing community asset.

“Encourage taking ownership
of neighborhoods –increase
neighborhood pride...
Build on the uniqueness of
neighborhoods and create
identity”

—Workshop Participant



3

Enhance the quality of life in every neighborhood through targeted physical improvements.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The physical appearance of the city's neighborhoods plays a major role in shaping the image of Philadelphia as a whole.
- Pleasant public surroundings contribute to a sense of well being and pride-of-place for residents, business owners, visitors, and those considering living or investing here.
- High-quality public environments add value to economic-development activity.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- In communities where quality of life has suffered the most, neighbors typically have limited financial resources for property maintenance and improvements.
- Homeowners are financially responsible for the upkeep of property elements that are in the public domain, such as sidewalks. As a result streetscapes are in poor condition in many neighborhoods.
- Public parks and vacant properties can become places for nuisance, blight, and criminal activity; once these forces have taken root they are difficult to remove.
- Civic-minded residents of declining neighborhoods can be discouraged by abandonment and lack of upkeep of nearby properties. In order to re-energize these residents' attempts at beautification, increased government and resident participation is needed.



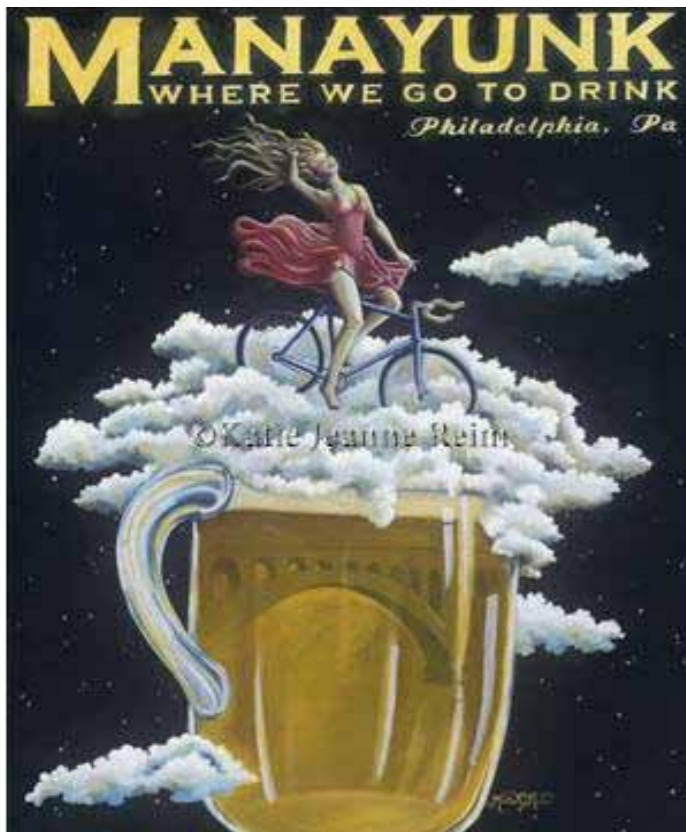


Big, Transformative Ideas

- Encourage each community, working with the City Planning Commission, to develop and promote design guidelines for façade improvements and alterations within their neighborhood.
- Develop and implement a neighborhood streetscape program citywide, to facilitate tree planting, lighting improvements, and other treatments.
- Create an asset-mapping program to identify historic, cultural, and architectural assets in each of the city's neighborhoods. Utilize the findings to increase residents' pride of place and provide support to neighborhood branding and marketing efforts.

"Philadelphia has distinct neighborhoods. In the next ten years development pressures will put these neighborhood identities at risk. One must try and consider each neighborhood when planning"

— Roundtable Participant



Neighborhood branding efforts for South Philadelphia and Manayunk.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Many of the city's neighborhoods maintain high standards for cleanliness and maintenance.



Short-Term Actions

- Provide property-tax credits for certain exterior improvements including sidewalk repair, landscaping, façade improvement, or purchase of vacant land.
- Present annual beautification awards honoring residents, businesses, and communities for maintaining high standards of cleanliness and beauty on their property or in neighborhood parks. Recipients would receive decorative placards for public display.
- Increase life-safety code enforcement and fine collection in neighborhoods in a downward transition; offer one-time amnesty to residents that make needed exterior repairs to correct existing violations.
- Place Police Department surveillance cameras and “blue-light” emergency telephones in neighborhood parks, placing a priority on public parks that have received recent investment.



HOUSING

Imagine Philadelphia...

...where a robust housing market provides a wide range of high-quality and affordable choices for current residents and a growing regional population.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Increase the housing supply through small-scale infill development, rehabilitation of existing under-utilized buildings, and construction of new housing developments.
- 2** Upgrade the housing stock to modern standards, and ensure that sustainable design and construction practices are used.
- 3** Ensure that the housing market and providers offer diverse choices, attractive to, and appropriate for, a broad range of renters and buyers, as well as for our most vulnerable populations.



1

Increase the housing supply through infill development, rehabilitation of existing under-utilized buildings, and construction of new housing developments.

“Encourage more progressive housing design and creativity”

— Workshop Participant

Rationale & Opportunities

- Decades-long population loss has ceased, the city is increasingly attractive to new market sectors (e.g., immigrants and empty-nesters), and current city policies promote population growth over the next several years.
- There are ample opportunities throughout the city for reusing under-utilized or vacant land for new housing, from small infill projects to brand-new communities.
- There is a large number of vacant buildings that offer great opportunities for rehabilitation or reuse as new housing.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Housing developers often build new units en masse rather than renovate existing homes or fill in gaps in existing blocks.
- Many properties have clouded titles, and City-owned properties must go through complicated protocols before disposition; this makes acquisition of vacant lots and homes difficult.
- Renovation and infill development typically happen incrementally, with individual developers producing just a few units at a time; this slow change may not be enough to instill consumer confidence in weak neighborhoods.





- Housing development intended to create new neighborhoods will have to compete with other uses for vacant land.
- Many older homes are too small to appeal to modern consumers or be suitable for families.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Address the problem of obsolete housing through strategic consolidation of existing structures that are too small to meet modern preferences.
- Create incentives that encourage major developers to focus on restoring and upgrading existing neighborhoods wholesale, with the aim of creating complete marketable blocks where there are “missing teeth” and disinvestment.
- Treat neighborhoods where vacant lots abound as places for new construction, while retaining significant and sound structures as reminders of the community’s past.

“We need to do a better job of retaining students graduating from college by offering jobs and reasonably priced housing”

— Workshop Participant

Short-Term Actions

- Identify areas in the city where consolidation of buildings would be most beneficial; the most suitable sites include blocks of small and/or dilapidated units where space for parking is severely constrained and vacancy is high.
- Work with the City’s Division of Technology and the Managing Director’s Office to highlight the efficiencies that would be achieved through a single, unified land and property system.
- Create a “Housing Development and Marketing” task force. This unit would work specifically on marketing vacant residential property and offer guidance through the rehabilitation, land assembly and development processes.



Philadelphia has a large number of vacant buildings that offer opportunities for rehabilitation and reuse as shown on left.



2

Upgrade housing stock to modern standards and ensure that sustainable design and construction practices are used.

Rationale & Opportunities

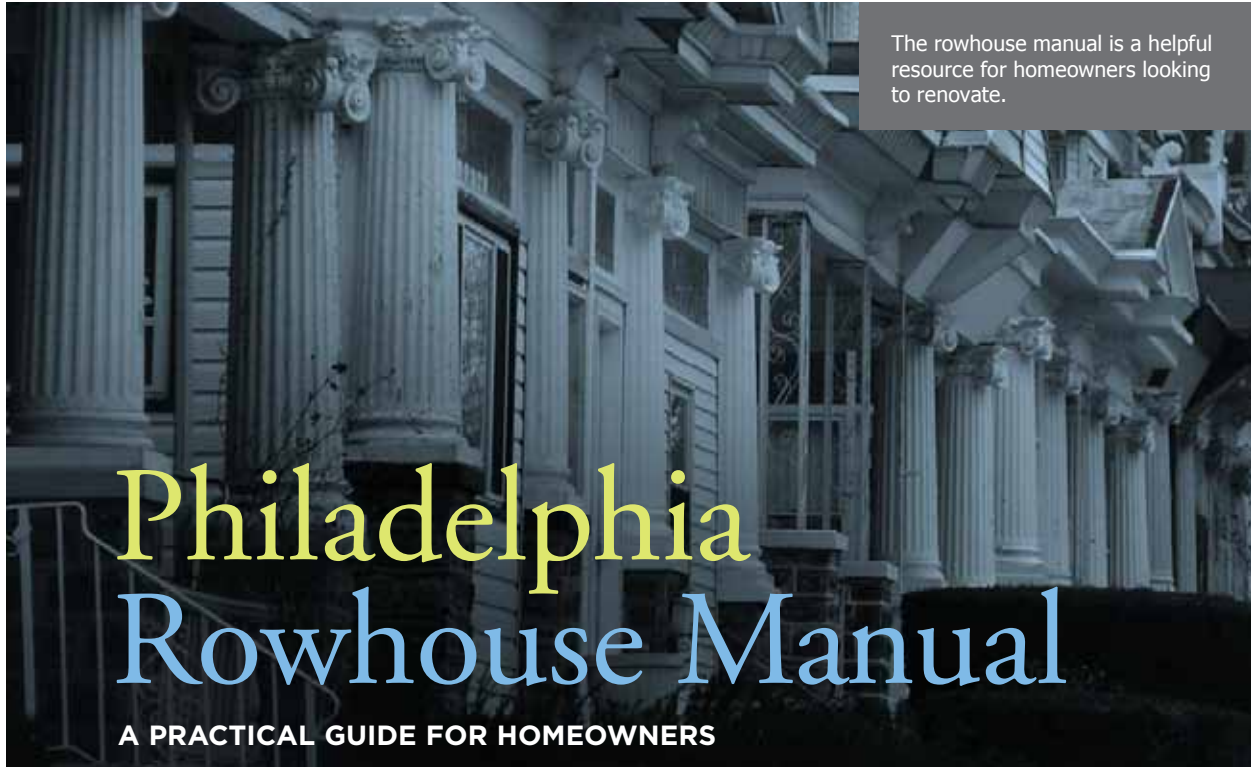
- Philadelphia’s housing stock is worthy of preservation and upgrading; it’s built of desirable, time-tested materials that genuinely contribute to the historic character of the city.
- Upgrading the city’s housing stock will create safer, more comfortable environments for residents and will reduce home maintenance costs and energy use.
- The ubiquitous housing type—the rowhouse—offers flexibility in rehabilitation and adaptation, and is by design and form, highly sustainable.
- Investment in sustainable design and building practices for improving Philadelphia’s housing will have far-reaching positive effects due to vastness of residential uses (e.g., residential building roofs account for 65% of the city’s total roof area).

“Rising real estate values are displacing existing residents...subsidized housing and market-rate housing needs to be mixed and distributed across the City”

— Workshop Participant

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- A citywide upgrade of housing would require substantial effort and investment dollars; the number of homes that suffer from lack of accessibility features, deferred maintenance, drafty windows, poor insulation, or obsolete heating, electrical and plumbing systems is great and most residents have limited resources to address these problems.



The rowhouse manual is a helpful resource for homeowners looking to renovate.

- Homeowners and investors generally do not see the rowhouse as a flexible housing type and are not inclined to envision the possibilities for modernization and adaptation of this building style.
- Many homeowners and investors are only beginning to discover the value of developing sustainably; many are skeptical and unwilling to invest in “green” technologies.
- Some of the alterations needed to achieve energy efficiency, modernization or adaptation of existing homes are likely to be at odds with citywide and neighborhood preservation goals.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Launch a program with financial incentives, technical assistance, and group purchasing to promote a major market expansion in rowhouse rehabilitation projects.
- Develop one model “green” block in every city neighborhood.
- Facilitate the development of a local industry focused on manufacturing historically sensitive green-building products.

Short-Term Actions

- Work to modify the existing major-renovation tax-abatement program to include smaller rehab projects and a sustainable-materials bonus.

HOUSING



- Develop a cost sharing program wherein the City enters into an agreement with suppliers of green building materials in order to secure quantity discounts and reduce the individual cost of purchasing such materials by homeowners.
- Build a public campaign around the rowhouse that showcases the design possibilities and environmental benefits of this housing type. Host an annual “Showcase of Homes” to allow the public to tour exemplary housing projects throughout the city and highlight best practices in rowhouse preservation, renovation, and adaptation.
- Hold design competitions and create prototypes and cost estimates for rehabilitation and infill that can be replicated by private developers. Prototypes should include both traditional and contemporary designs.
- Market existing programs and find new incentives to encourage property owners and developers to use energy-efficient materials.
- Strengthen contextual and historic guidelines to allow contemporary design while protecting the historic character of buildings and neighborhoods.
- Provide technical assistance to homeowners to assist them in finding financial resources to support sustainable rehabilitation and energy conservations.





3 Ensure that the housing market and providers offer diverse choices, attractive to, and appropriate for, a broad range of renters and buyers, as well as for our most vulnerable populations.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Historically, Philadelphia has provided a broad range of affordable housing opportunities.
- As the city attracts a wider range of potential residents from the region and beyond, the housing market needs to continue to provide products that are affordable and desirable to households of varying incomes and needs.
- An adequate supply of supportive housing for the city’s most vulnerable populations will continue to be needed and can help combat homelessness.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- It is difficult to produce new market-rate options that are also affordable to working- and middle-class residents due to high construction and renovation costs.
- Some homes that are considered affordable have high operating costs due to their age and state of repair.
- Without interventions, long-term affordability for lower-income groups is difficult to create and preserve.
- Government-supported housing options for populations with more critical needs are subject to fluctuations in funding levels. Limited funds results in long waiting lists. Many residents who need affordable choices do not qualify for public housing, and for those who do, there is a long waiting list.

HOUSING

An upscale condo at the Ayer building on Washington Square.



- Proposals for subsidized, supportive, transitional and homeless housing often cause “not-in-my-back-yard” (NIMBY) reactions.
- Philadelphia’s supply of units that appeal to those who prefer new or suburban-style housing is limited compared to the surrounding counties.
- Development of housing suitable for residents with high incomes may ignite concerns about gentrification.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Sponsor the development of a Community Land Trust to preserve an inventory of perpetually affordable homes throughout the city.
- Utilize revenue from high-value residential construction projects to create an income stream for homeowner upgrading, affordable rental housing and supportive housing projects within a radius of the project. This could help to reduce tensions that arise from the development of high-value units in existing neighborhoods.
- Create small pockets of supportive and special-needs housing throughout the city, to minimize the impact on any one neighborhood and create a greater sense of community for recipients of these housing services.

Short-Term Actions

- Work with the Zoning Code Commission to develop regulations for supportive and special-needs housing that minimize their impact on local neighbors, and improve distribution of such facilities across the city.





MOBILITY

Imagine Philadelphia...

...with a fully integrated pedestrian, bicycle, transit, highway, and goods-movement network that provides significant and sustainable economic benefits to residents, the city, the region, and beyond.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Provide neighborhoods with ample transit to jobs and services.
- 2** Create a citywide, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system that is well integrated into the larger transportation network.
- 3** Make the network of city streets and parking safe, efficient, and supportive of sustainable development practices.
- 4** Enhance the regional transportation network through coordinated port, highway, rail, and airport improvements.



1 Provide neighborhoods with ample transit to jobs and services.

Rationale & Opportunities

- An economically successful community is one where access to work and other services is equitable, efficient, and affordable.
- Well-planned and operated transit systems enable a land development pattern that is efficient and sustainable.
- Public transit reduces our dependence on nonrenewable resources.
- We’re not starting from scratch; the region already has an extensive transit network, many transit-oriented development areas, and growing ridership that can leverage further investments.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Certain areas are underserved (e.g., Northeast Philadelphia neighborhoods) as a result of shifting residential development patterns; “recalibrating” the system will be critical to achieving a boost in ridership.
- Our “hub and spokes” transit system serves and reinforces Center City, but is problematic for connections between the spokes.
- Four key development areas are lacking transit convenience: the Navy Yard, Northeast Philadelphia, Delaware River waterfront, and Market Street West of Broad in Center City.
- Travel times by transit between some areas of the city (e.g., the Northeast to Center City) are long and not competitive with automobile travel.
- There is a “chicken-or-egg” problem: demonstrated demand needs to precede capital investment, yet new transit creates demand and value for high-density development.



- Philadelphia’s surface transit does not consistently offer frequency of service of less than 10 minutes, which is usually required for people to rely on transit.
- Demand for weekend and night service is less than that during traditional peak service, thus transit is minimal or unavailable during those times.
- The perception that transit is for the poor, combined with classism/ racism, discourages wider use.
- Transit needs to be repositioned in the marketplace as cool, hip, and fashionable, in addition to being convenient and safe.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Provide rapid-transit service to the Navy Yard, Northeast Philadelphia, Delaware River waterfront, and Market Street West of Broad in Center City.
- Achieve a 35-percent increase in system capacity through operational and capital improvements (e.g., reduce dwell times, provide more subway cars, etc.).
- Make transit a major component of a redesigned and reconstructed Roosevelt Boulevard corridor.
- Develop a new “loop” transit service connecting the spokes of our radial service.

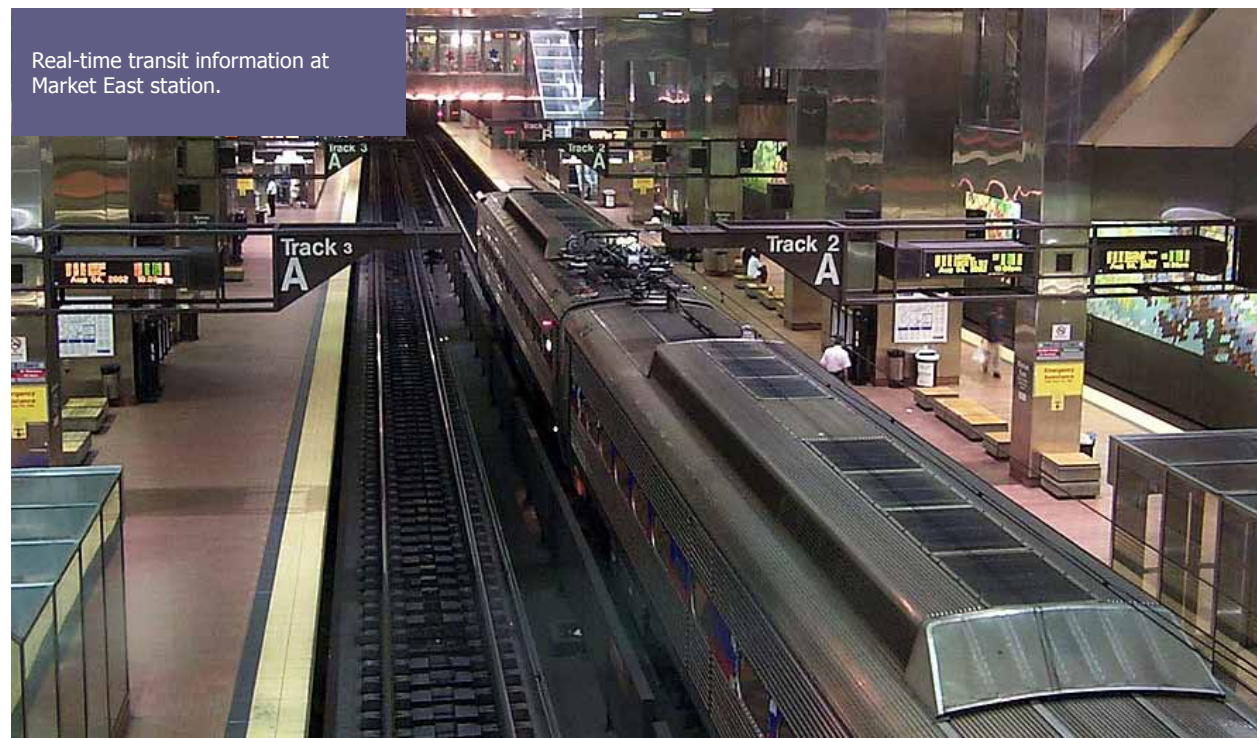
“Offer more incentives to get people out of their vehicles and into public transportation”

— Workshop Participant



Short-Term Actions

- Investigate the feasibility of bus rapid transit and operate a pilot route.
- Modernize fare-payment technologies across the SEPTA system.
- Replace the seasonal Phlash service with a permanent transit route.
- Rehabilitate City Hall Station, 15th Street Station, and Dilworth Plaza.
- Improve and market the College Pass Program (Compass).
- Create a new-residents' guide to transit.
- Install real-time transit information at all rapid-transit and regional rail stations, as well as bus shelters.
- Work with the Zoning Code Commission as it rewrites the code to direct highest-density development to those sites in the city best served by transit.
- Strongly encourage or incentivize medium- to high-density development, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly design at our many transit nodes.
- Review all site plans for transit-operations needs (e.g., stops, passenger drop-off, etc.).
- Strongly encourage or incentivize transit support (e.g., construction of shelters, subway/el/trolley access, and underground concourse extensions) as a component of major development projects.
- Reopen shuttered regional rail stations within the city.





2 Create a citywide, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system that is well integrated into the larger transportation network.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Non-motorized modes of transportation promote healthy living and reduce our dependence on nonrenewable resources.
- Compared to most large North American cities, Philadelphia is already hospitable to pedestrians and bicyclists:
 - Philadelphia has been named by several sources as one of America’s most walkable and bicycle-friendly cities;
 - In 2000, city residents walked to work at three times the national rate and biked to work at more than two times the national rate;
 - Center City has been called the most walkable downtown in the US, with nearly 17,000 walking to work in 2000;
 - In 2006, 1.2 percent of journey-to-work trips used bicycles, double New York City’s mode share of 0.6 percent; and
 - Bicycling in Philadelphia is growing rapidly; bike counts doubled over the past three years.
- There are ample opportunities to expand and improve our infrastructure supporting pedestrians and bicycle riders.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Those parts of the city developed after World War II are suburban in nature and not pedestrian-friendly (e.g., Upper Roxborough, Andorra and the Northeast).
- City sidewalks are the maintenance responsibility of the property owner and many are in a state of disrepair; some are extremely deteriorated.
- Sidewalks in older areas of the city are narrow—most 12 feet or less—and obstructions need to be better controlled.



- Most streets in older areas of the city are narrow, often have parking on both sides and only one narrow traffic lane, leaving no room for a bike lane.
- The city's existing bicycle-lane network has gaps that need to be filled in.
- Some major roadways connecting parts of the city have few or no provisions for bicycles (e.g., Broad Street or Roosevelt Boulevard).

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Remove traffic lanes on roadways where pedestrians must cross more than four lanes at once; convert those lanes to bike lanes, parking, expanded sidewalk space, plantings, or medians.
- Build-out a complete interconnected bicycle network of on-street bike lanes and off-road trails, coordinated with street and streetscape improvements and traffic-calming efforts.
- Complete the Schuylkill River Trail and develop a waterfront trail on the Delaware River.
- Retrofit areas without sidewalks, and improve sidewalks in sub-standard condition.
- Develop a system of sidewalk trails throughout the city's neighborhoods that are mile marked for pedestrians and joggers and connected to park trails.



A vision of a continuous waterfront trail along the Delaware River.

Short-Term Actions

- Develop curb bump-outs wherever possible at intersections in high-volume pedestrian areas.
- Add additional east-west bikeway corridors through Center City.
- Add a north-south bikeway corridor paralleling Broad Street.
- Complete the ongoing pedestrian and bicycle plan for all sections of Philadelphia.
- Improve pedestrian safety and experience at key intersections, (e.g., Hunting Park and Henry Avenues).
- Construct a continuous waterfront trail along the Delaware riverfront and link the trail to the city's existing trail system.
- Create "request-a-rack" program for bicycle parking.
- Adopt bicycle-parking requirements for new development.
- Adopt and enforce design standards for sidewalks and street furniture.
- Require more rigorous critique of pedestrian connectivity and "respect for the grid" in site-design review.



3 Make the network of city streets and parking safe, efficient, and supportive of sustainable development practices.

“Our system was designed at the turn of the last century for the turn of the last century. It needs to be updated by re-evaluating the needs of 21st century Philadelphians.”
— Roundtable Participant

Rationale & Opportunities

- Despite increase in other modes of travel, Philadelphia should continue to safely accommodate automobile, truck, and surface transit on a hierarchy of roadways.
- Our traditional grid street pattern provides efficient connectivity and offers alternative travel routes throughout much of the City.
- Streets and parking lots are a significant portion of impervious surface in the city, and need to manage stormwater run off, accommodate non-motorized modes of travel, and function as public spaces.
- Interstate 95, as well as other state highways, are programmed to be rebuilt; these offer opportunities to address broader traffic-flow and transit improvements.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Like other major urbanized areas, the region suffers from road-capacity problems and congestion in key travel areas, particularly during commuting hours.
- But during off-peak hours, most major roads have excess capacity, which leads to speeding.



Congestion along I-76, The Schuylkill Expressway.

- Increasing interstate highway capacity is becoming too expensive so the focus now is more on management of flows and maintaining a state-of-good-repair.
- Making roadways safer may result in some loss of capacity.
- High-density development in areas that lack excellent transit access is eroding traffic capacity and, because it is accompanied by large, expensive parking facilities, is not conducive to the future development of transit.
- Parking is increasingly difficult in many neighborhoods due to increased automobile ownership and density of development.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Complete the Interstate 95 modernization program; avert roadway failures and improve safety.
- Redesign and rebuild Roosevelt Boulevard; safely integrate provisions for transit, pedestrians, and bicycles.
- Renew the "Transit First" policy, which strives to improve operations of on-street transit, and strengthen enforcement of traffic and parking regulations, including use of red-light cameras.
- Implement traffic calming to improve safety of all modes.

Roosevelt Boulevard offers opportunities for rapid transit and improved bicycle and pedestrian use.



Short-Term Actions

- Continue to implement the recommendations of the Center City Parking Policy Study, such as reforming the short-term parking rates in garages.
- Launch a variable-pricing pilot program for on-street parking supply.
- Make interim operational and safety improvements to Roosevelt Boulevard.
- Add maximum limits to parking requirements in the Zoning Code where appropriate and “un-bundle” parking requirements from new residential-development projects.
- Prohibit front-loaded parking in dense residential zoning districts to preserve public on-street parking supply, reduce conflicts with pedestrians, and improve streetscape.
- Sharply constrain development of surface parking along street frontages.
- Consider decreasing the width standards for new streets.



4

Enhance the regional transportation network through coordinated port, highway, rail, and airport improvements.

Rationale & Opportunities

- To succeed in a global economy, our region's major transportation assets must be competitive by being intermodal, state-of-the-art, expandable, and connected to other centers of commerce.
- Philadelphia is well-positioned with such assets including a space-constrained but expandable international airport, general-aviation airport (Northeast Philadelphia), deep-water port, freight and passenger rail service, and major interstate highway access.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Institutional and infrastructure barriers are preventing the realization of an optimal regional system.
- Our port needs improved truck access, river-channel dredging, facilities modernization, and expansion.
- Maintaining a state-of-good-repair on our existing interstate system.
- Airport transit, bicycle connectivity, and long-term parking must be examined for efficiency opportunities.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Bring the entire SEPTA regional rail system to high platforms, increase frequencies, and provide 24-hour service.
- Re-establish passenger rail service to Reading and Allentown, PA, and Vineland, NJ.
- Increase the inter-modal capacity of freight railroads and better manage truck movements.



“Make our gateways attractive; people’s first impression of Philly often begins along railways and highways including 30th Street Station”
 — Workshop Participant

- Construct the Interstate 95/Pennsylvania Turnpike interchange in lower Bucks County.
- Develop a new, comprehensive truck-route system to improve access to interstates and truck/port operations, and to reduce conflicts with automobiles and bicycles.

Short-Term Actions

- Complete the conversion of at least one regional rail line to new fare collection system, high platforms, and extended hours.
- Expand park-and-ride facilities at SEPTA stations from 69th Street to the greatest extent possible.
- Encourage and incentivize increased development densities where strong links to the regional transit system exists.
- Control the erosion of capacity of arterial roadways through a combination of site-design techniques, limits on parking, and enhanced transit access.
- Improve truck access between I-95, I-76, and the Walt Whitman Bridge.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Imagine Philadelphia...

...capitalizing upon its substantial economic assets and providing expanding opportunities for job, income, and wealth creation for residents, workers, and businesses.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Position Philadelphia as the vital urban center of a competitive and sustainable 12-county metropolitan region.
- 2** Make Philadelphia the location of choice for entrepreneurship and trade in the Northeast Corridor “mega-region.”
- 3** Establish the city as a leading international center for learning, culture, trade, and tourism.



1

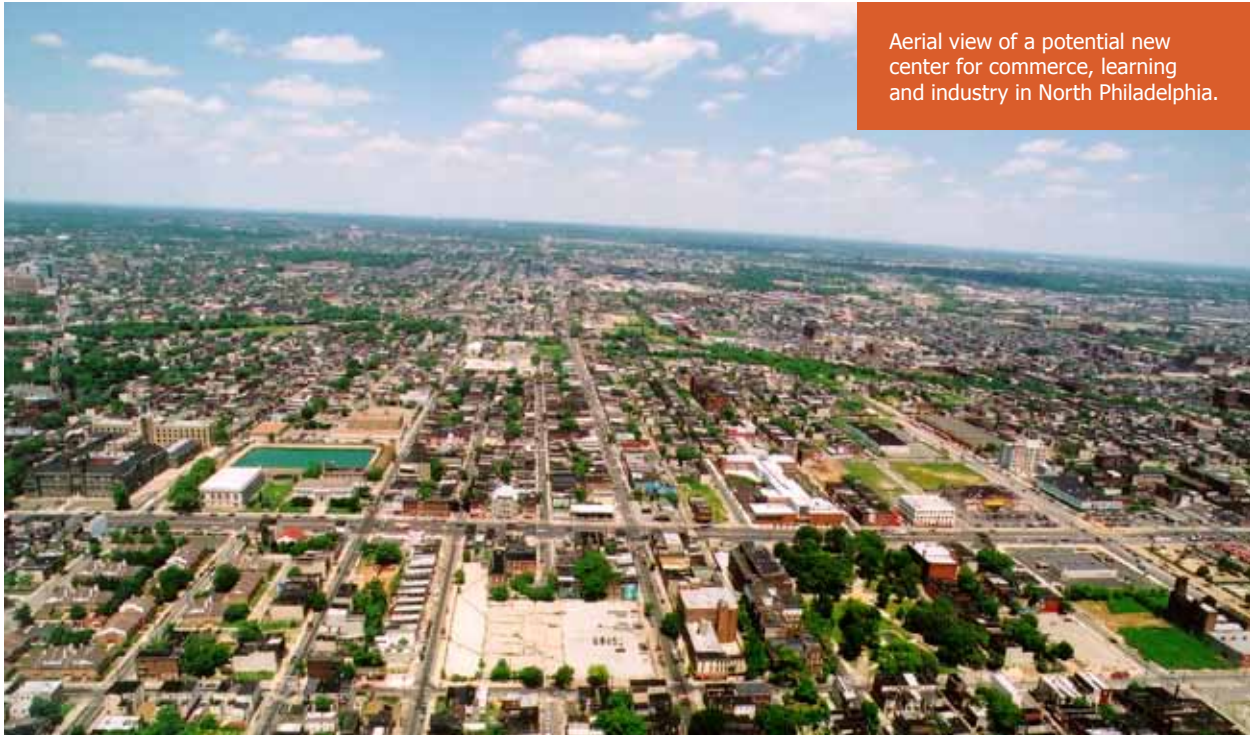
Position Philadelphia as the vital urban center of a competitive and sustainable 12-county metropolitan region.

Rationale & Opportunities

- A strong and growing city complements the metropolitan area's suburban and exurban communities, and boosts the overall economic competitiveness of Greater Philadelphia.
- Philadelphia's diversity and amenities help Greater Philadelphia attract and retain a growing share of households and enterprises that prefer a high-quality urban environment.
- Reinvestment in existing economic assets in the city, and re-concentration of new regional investment on underutilized land in the city, demonstrates regional stewardship of fiscal, energy, and environmental resources.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Philadelphia has a limited supply of readily-developable sites for new investment. Constraints include environmental contamination, older infrastructure, derelict buildings, community opposition, low market appreciation, and sites with multiple ownership.
- The gap between city and suburbs (e.g., taxes, crime, schools) must continue to narrow in order to retain and attract households and employers who can locate anywhere in the metropolitan area, but would prefer an urban location.
- The city's workforce has relatively low educational attainment and many residents face unemployment and poverty.
- High taxes, high construction and redevelopment costs, and an often-unpredictable development process raise the cost of doing business in Philadelphia.



Aerial view of a potential new center for commerce, learning and industry in North Philadelphia.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Develop the next Center City: While already-identified redevelopment areas in Philadelphia and neighboring communities absorb increasing shares of the region's expected growth to 2035, prepare to capture post-2035 growth in a new, mid-town "metropolitan subcenter" in the area between Wayne Junction/Route 1 and Temple University.
- Expand Philadelphia's "regional-choice" locations: neighborhoods and employment centers that can compete successfully for mobile households and enterprises.
- Lead the region's "low-carbon conversion:" structure Philadelphia's development process, infrastructure modernization, tax policies, and workforce and entrepreneurial programs to encourage energy-efficient, low-carbon investments that lead to net increases in jobs, income, taxes, and exports of goods and services.

"Promote international business...increase jobs in emerging fields like biotechnology...support small businesses in smaller neighborhoods...look at expansion and protection of industrial land"

— Workshop Participant

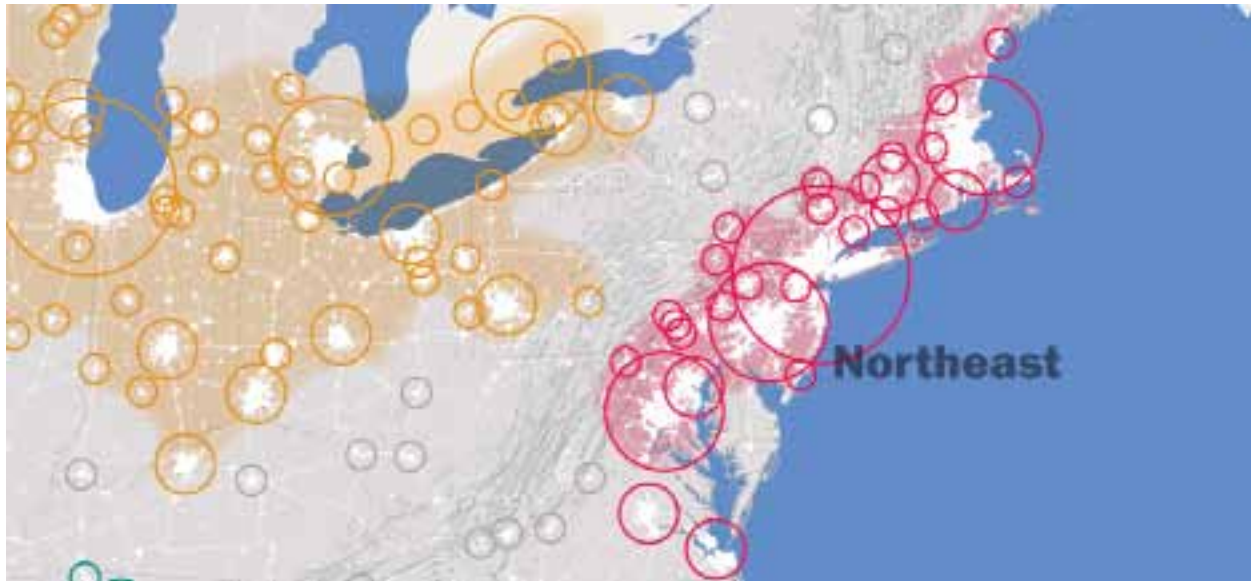
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Identify sites for absorption of commercial, institutional, industrial and residential demand.



Short-Term Actions

- Support neighborhood, commercial-corridor, and industrial stabilization efforts.
- Support orderly business and residential site redevelopment and re-investment in already-established redevelopment districts that adjoin areas exhibiting consistent market strength.
- Identify areas for 10- to 20-year absorption of commercial, institutional, industrial, and residential demand.
- Update standards for public service levels and performance in neighborhoods and business districts. Integrate into community planning standards, the zoning code, and citywide policies.
- Refine and implement Greenworks Philadelphia recommendations to reduce energy consumption and costs in buildings, vehicle fleets, and waste management.



2 Make Philadelphia the location of choice for entrepreneurship and trade in the Northeast Corridor “mega-region.”

Rationale & Opportunities

- Greater Philadelphia is situated in the geographic center of the growing Northeast Corridor mega-region, which spans from Maine to Virginia, and where a substantial segment of the nation’s population resides.
- The region provides efficient access to the nation’s centers of government and finance, as well as to European, Caribbean, and South American markets.
- There are ample opportunities for development in the city and metropolitan area for enterprises and households that need a Northeast Corridor location.
- Philadelphia is well-positioned to capture an increasing share of international trade by way of expanding its port and port-related infrastructure and facilities.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Philadelphia faces strong competition from other Northeast Corridor metros; New York City and Washington, DC, are close neighbors and powerhouses that often overshadow Philadelphia.
- There are hundreds of municipalities within Greater Philadelphia; splintered allegiances within the region weaken its ability to present a unified image, achieve shared successes, and leverage outside resources.
- The region’s seaport facilities have lost market share, and rail and airport facilities need improvements to compete with other Northeast corridor markets.

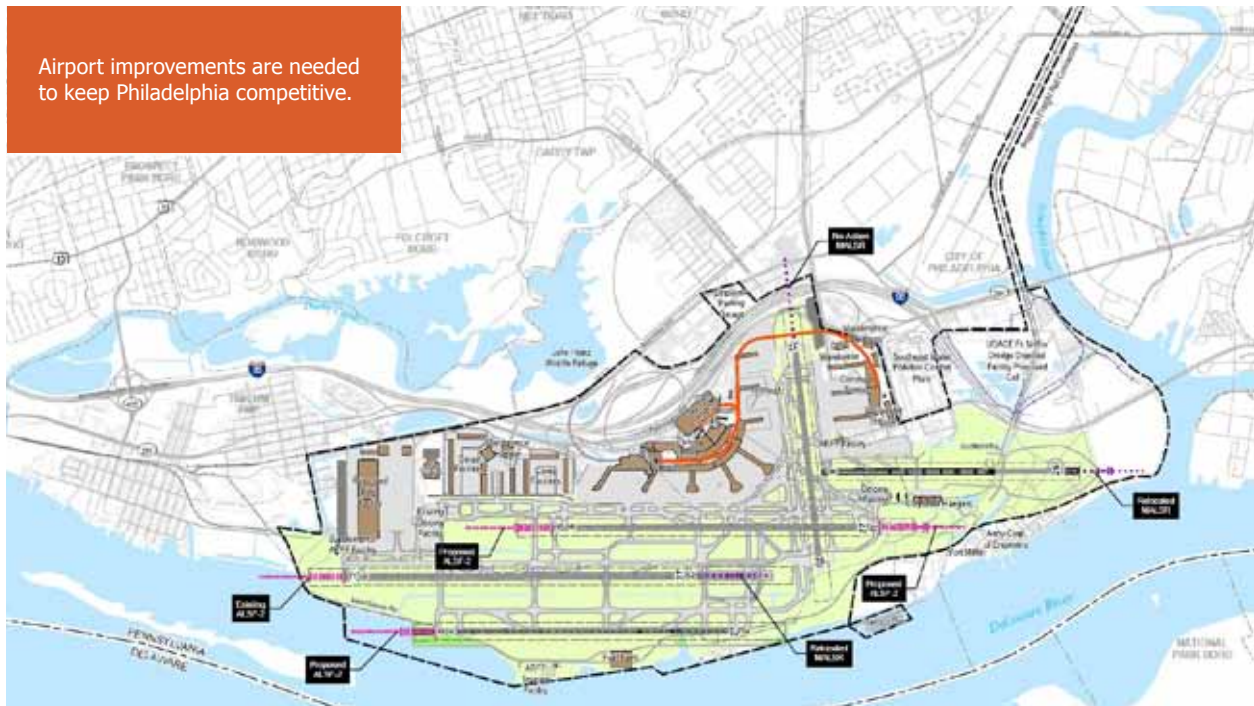
Big, Transformative Ideas

- Develop trade and investment opportunities that make the Philadelphia region a principal Northeast Corridor partner with top emerging markets such as Brazil, Russia, India, and China.

Short-Term Actions

- Continually improve the Greater Philadelphia marketing portfolio that outlines opportunity sites throughout the region; highlight the assets of the region as a whole compared to our-mega region competitors (e.g., less congestion, lower cost of living, central location).
- Utilize the existing regional forums including Select Greater Philadelphia, the Metropolitan Caucus, and DVRPC to create synergies and develop a business attraction strategy.
- Continue capacity enhancements of the port, airport, and rail system.

Airport improvements are needed to keep Philadelphia competitive.





3 Establish the city as a leading international center for learning, culture, trade, and tourism.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The Philadelphia region is a national center for higher education and research and development in the medicine and biotechnology fields; the region already attracts a substantial number of international students.
- The city offers world-class cultural attractions and destinations for residents and visitors, building on American history and fine institutions.
- Increasing Philadelphia’s exposure to international students and visitors can contribute to business innovation and population growth.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Philadelphia has made progress, but has room to improve as a U.S. portal for international students and visitors. Enrollment of international students would have to increase by 25 percent to keep Philadelphia in the top five for this ranking.
- The city ranked 15th nationally as a port of entry for overseas visitors and 16th for foreign-born metro population.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Bring the world to Philadelphia: Build the partnerships necessary for Philadelphia to win, successfully host, and enjoy the legacy of the first summer Olympic Games in North America since 1996.
- Host an international fair in 2026 marking the 250th anniversary of US independence.

Short-Term Actions

- Market the expanded Convention Center to international associations.
- Incorporate multi-lingual text into directional and transit signage at the airport and throughout the city.
- Continue to support the work of public and private bodies that improve the daily experience of foreign-born visitors and residents while they are in Philadelphia.

“Need to market our higher education and find ways to keep graduates in Philadelphia post-graduation”

—Workshop Participant



OPEN SPACE

Imagine Philadelphia...

...with a network of grand open spaces, intimate parks, and lush natural areas—as well as other public and private “green infrastructure”—that connect the population to nature and provide opportunities for quiet relaxation, vigorous exercise, and improved quality of life.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Create a seamless network of public green spaces including parks, recreation sites, trails, green streets, and other resources so all residents are within one-half mile (ten-minute walk) of a park or trail.
- 2** Use Philadelphia’s green spaces for “utility” purposes, such as managing stormwater or generating renewable energy.
- 3** Enhance Philadelphia’s open-space resources as essential components of regional environmental and recreational systems.
- 4** Leverage open space for economic-development to help Philadelphia attract and retain residents, visitors, and businesses.



1

Create a seamless network of public green spaces including parks, recreation sites, trails, green streets, and other resources so all residents are within one-half mile (ten-minute walk) of a park or trail.

Rationale & Opportunities

- An interconnected system of green elements (streets, parks, schoolyards, rail-to-trail corridors, etc.) improves access to and between a variety of resources and uses, and connects people to nature.
- Equalizing access to public open space improves the health and well being of all city residents through improved recreational opportunities, cleaner air, and visual relief.
- Connected open spaces create improved habitat for a variety of wildlife, which helps balance our ecosystem.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Adding new public land to the City's parks and recreation inventory has impacts on capital, operating, and maintenance budgets.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Build-out a fully integrated, citywide system of trails that spans abandoned rail corridors, parks and greenways.
- Add public parkland to the City's inventory to ensure equal distribution and access to all.
- Transform public school yards from hard-surfaced to "green" as a means of getting green space closer to residents.



Short-Term Actions

- Continue building key segments of the Central and North Delaware River Greenways, Schuylkill River Trail, and associated park projects and fill in gaps where they exist.
- Inventory all existing street trees, and begin infill and replacement of those that are dead and dying.
- Identify locations for ten new neighborhood parks, including greening of public school yards.
- Create more public access points to the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers.
- Establish a program to convert paved, vacant traffic islands and medians into green spaces filled with shade trees, flowering trees, shrubs, and groundcover.
- Investigate use of tax increment financing (TIF) strategies to finance park improvement and capital projects.
- Use the vacant property disposition/acquisition process to make use of vacant land as permanent public open space, where appropriate.
- Work with the Zoning Code Commission and the Department of Licences and Inspections to ensure development of tree-friendly zoning and building codes.
- Create processes for design review and a maintenance provision for open-space projects.

“Include neighborhood farms and/or farmers’ markets in every neighborhood”

— Workshop Participant



Opportunities for new parks as identified in GreenPlan Philadelphia.



2

Use Philadelphia's green spaces for "utility" purposes, such as managing stormwater or generating renewable energy.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Tree cover serves a variety of purposes including creating shade, mitigating the "heat-island" effect by cooling summer temperatures, filtering stormwater, and cleaning the air through carbon sequestration.
- Public park areas and facilities offer potential for generating renewable energy by providing places for solar or wind energy production, and for capturing and filtering stormwater.
- Public streets, sidewalks, and alleys account for a significant portion of the city's impervious surface, and offer vast opportunities for "greening" to handle stormwater, connect parks and open space, and become friendlier to bicyclists and pedestrians.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Often agencies have different or conflicting uses for the same public land or right-of-way, and balancing these interests can be difficult.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Where appropriate, use vacant land as public open space and to manage stormwater run-off, for agricultural uses, and to generate new sources of local energy.
- Promote use of green-building elements such as green roofs, green walls, and cisterns as a means to expand Philadelphia's open-space



Green building elements like green roofs can contribute to the city's open space network.

system and achieve sustainability goals.

- Convert city streets to “green streets,” which are more effective at managing stormwater and, when properly designed, handling multiple modes of transportation.
- Fully “stock” streets with trees and achieve at least 30 percent tree cover in all neighborhoods of the city.
- Daylight historic streams currently in pipes, such as Mill and Cresheim Creeks, for improved stormwater management.

Short-Term Actions

- Create new City programs to generate new sources of energy (wind, solar, water) as part of public open-space projects.
- Identify public buildings suitable for green roofs and/or solar panels, and implement such projects.
- Establish monitoring and annual reporting responsibilities for performance on sustainability and climate change as articulated in Greenworks Philadelphia.
- Use open space to help meet *Local Action Plan for Climate Change's* goals to reduce nonrenewable energy use and dependence upon fossil fuels.
- Fully implement recent stormwater-management regulations for large-scale development.

“Parks are not always for active uses. They could be passive, simply contributing to the visual quality of the environment.”

— Roundtable Participant



3

Enhance Philadelphia’s open-space resources as essential components of regional environmental and recreational systems.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Enhancing and reinforcing such resources as watersheds, stream valleys, wildlife habitats, forests, and meadows improve water quality, recreational opportunities, and the environmental health of the region.
- Natural systems cross political boundaries; the City and surrounding municipalities must share in the stewardship of resources.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Regional resources are under multiple political jurisdictions with differing policies, funding sources, and restrictions.
- Ongoing operational and maintenance costs associated with new public parkland must be considered whenever adding to our open-space inventory.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Where appropriate, preserve unused land along waterfronts as public open space.
- Extend Philadelphia’s stream-valley parks, a significant regional resource.
- Work with adjacent municipalities to create a fully inter-connected system of parks, forests, meadows, and stream corridors as one green-space network.
- Create a fully inter-connected, regional system of multi-use, off-road trails for recreational and transportation use as a regional trail



network.

Short-Term Actions

- Implement recommendations of the Philadelphia County Natural Heritage Inventory, prepared as part of *GreenPlan Philadelphia*.
- Create an inter-county authority or regional parks agency to protect and secure regional resources.
- Adopt new conservation initiatives and tools for natural areas on private lands.
- Protect bodies of water with adequate natural buffers.
- Orient open-space management and restoration plans to identify and address species of special concern and natural communities as targets of conservation.

“Philadelphia needs to take advantage of the wonderful natural resources it has... the city should reclaim and naturalize floodplains along the rivers and “daylight” underground creeks.”

— Workshop Participant



4

Leverage open space for economic development to help Philadelphia attract and retain residents, visitors, and businesses.

- Manage the control of invasive species.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Open space provides economic benefits by generating revenue through increased property values and tourism, stimulates revitalization, and improves the overall quality of life.
- Employers seek regions that offer natural and cultural amenities, which contribute to attracting and retaining talent.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- It is difficult to quantify the benefits of open space, in order to demonstrate a positive return on investment.
- Providing public open space incurs additional expenses for development and requires ongoing maintenance by the City or a private entity.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Complete the Central and North Delaware River Greenways and associated park projects; complete the Schuylkill River Trail.
- Build at least one signature urban open-space project that becomes a national or global attraction.

“There should be a green and accessible riverfront along the entire length of the Delaware and the Schuylkill Rivers.”

— Workshop Participant



Short-Term Actions

- Plan and design a signature park project that has the potential to provide a substantial economic return on Philadelphia’s public investment.
- Create large-scale cultural, educational, and recreational programming in parks citywide to attract residents and visitors year round.
- Implement an extensive advertising campaign to go along with new park programming.
- Establish a long-range fund, including the City’s capital program, for developing a signature park project.
- Develop an open-space impact fee to be assessed to all new housing developments which could go into a fund for the acquisition and maintenance of open space.
- Develop incentives to increase overall open space, and encourage public amenities to be provided on private development sites.
- Continue to explore opportunities for private organizations to sponsor parks, open space, and recreation facilities.



Millennium Park in Chicago is a signature open space for that city.



PUBLIC FACILITIES

Imagine Philadelphia...

...where public services and utilities supporting recreation, learning, socializing, good health, emergency assistance, and daily life in general are distributed equitably through a well-designed and maintained network of public facilities and centers for community activity.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Create an appropriately sized network of public facilities and services to meet the needs of a dynamic population.
- 2** Coordinate delivery of public services and utilities between multiple providers, through shared facilities, infrastructure, and operations.
- 3** Deliver high-quality and efficient public services via exemplary, pleasing, functional, well-maintained, and sustainable buildings and operations.



1

Create an appropriately sized network of public facilities and services to meet the needs of a dynamic population.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Meeting current and projected needs for the city's population makes for complete neighborhoods and improves residents' quality of life.
- Philadelphia's vast inventory of public facilities was built for a much larger population with different needs.
- Duplication and inequitable distribution of services is inefficient and wasteful.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Residents see facility closures and consolidations as a threat to the well-being of their community.
- Population is not static; reduction of public facilities or services could prove problematic if the population in affected neighborhoods begins to change dramatically.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Realign or close facilities that have outlived their useful life, duplicate services, and/or no longer serve a critical mass of population.
- Size public facilities based upon such factors as projected population growth for a given community and/or maximum residential build-out scenarios within the service area.
- Plan capital investment according to a longer-range program, based on population, socioeconomic, and market projections.

"Philadelphia needs more modern schools and state-of-the-art facilities with all the modern conveniences."

— Workshop Participant



PHILADELPHIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

The City's annual six-year capital program.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CAPITAL PROGRAM



Short-Term Actions

- Redesign the process for preparing the capital budget and program to reflect the need for: (1) deferred maintenance of existing facilities where appropriate; (2) adaptation of existing facilities; and (3) the consolidation and development of new facilities.
- Closely align capital budget and program decisions with strategic community planning.
- Refine the capital budget process to balance facility improvements in existing and underserved neighborhoods with the development of new facilities to support anticipated growth in new neighborhoods.
- Analyze existing facilities and current and forecasted population need; update when 2010 US Census data are available. This analysis should also consider projected need based upon full occupancy of existing housing and/or build-out based on zoning.



2

Coordinate delivery of public services and utilities through shared facilities, infrastructure, and operations.

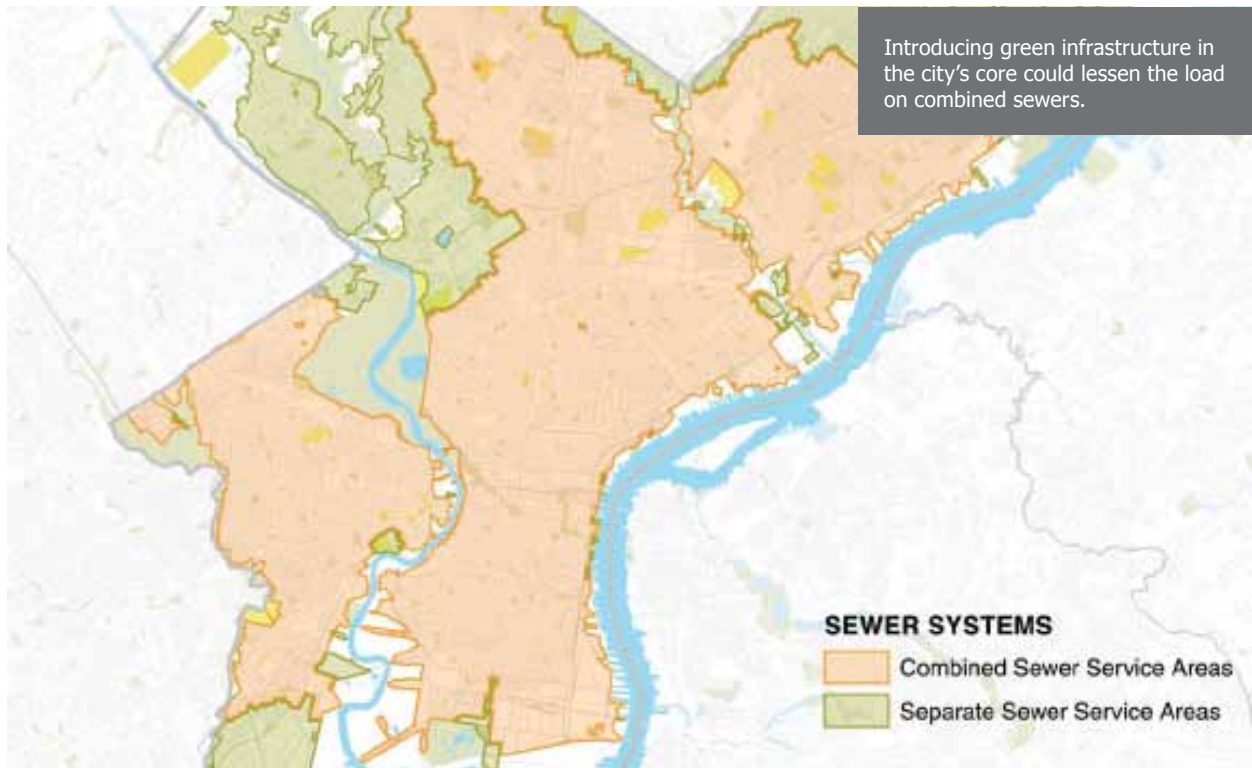
Rationale & Opportunities

- Improved coordination leads to improved operational synergies and efficiencies for providers, consumers, and taxpayers.
- Co-locating public services in consolidated public facilities is a more sustainable practice than providing the same services in single-use, freestanding buildings.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Coordinating capital investment among multiple service providers, with sometimes competing objectives, may be difficult.
- Each service provider employs unique standards for establishing its service area; these can be based upon population, accessibility to residents, response time, or equipment capacity, and have a significant impact on where facilities and infrastructure are located.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Create several major community civic centers on sites that are within easy reach of residents; each center would house a mix of services appropriate for the residents it serves (e.g., regional library, recreation center, swimming pool, health center, municipal-services satellite office).
- Cluster public services that serve similar functions (e.g., police and fire) into single facilities in order to increase coordination between departments and maintain appropriate levels of service where closures might otherwise be recommended.
- Co-locate utilities wherever possible; for example, locate wireless equipment on existing electrical transmission towers, street lights, or other structures.

“Provide infrastructure for new technology including fiber-optic and other telecom innovations”

— Workshop Participant

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Short-Term Actions

- Improve the GIS layers that contain facilities data for each department; work with each department to gather data that might be relevant to a citywide facilities analysis.
- Complete an analysis of the service area requirements and capacity of all of the city's public services and utility providers. The study should seek to identify which uses can be co-located while maintaining their standards for service delivery.
- Partner with local universities and/or design advocacy organizations to hold a design charrette focused on creating community civic centers out of several existing facilities clusters.
- Make "quick-fix" improvements or retrofits (signage, building access, public space, etc.) to existing clusters of facilities to transform them into community civic centers.
- Better coordinate scheduled repairs and expansions of the street network and underground infrastructure between the Streets Department, PennDOT, and the various utility providers.



Minor modifications and retrofits of existing public facilities can move the city toward its environmental goals.





3

Deliver high-quality and efficient public services via exemplary, pleasing, functional, well-maintained, and sustainable buildings and operations.

Rationale & Opportunities

- New and modernized state-of-the-art facilities require less capital investment to keep in good repair.
- From an operational and service-delivery perspective, state-of-the-art facilities generally function more efficiently than those that are outdated or obsolescent.
- Philadelphians deserve public places that are inviting, clean, and safe, and offer a first-rate customer experience, thereby encouraging use.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- A large percentage of the City's buildings are old and in a state of disrepair; the City spends so much of its resources maintaining these facilities that little, if any, money remains to build new facilities or truly improve existing buildings to modern standards.
- Overhead electrical and telecommunication infrastructure contribute to visual clutter, inhibit placement of street trees, are easily impacted by weather conditions, and pose occasional danger to people.
- Philadelphia's sidewalks, which provide access to some underground utilities and serve as public spaces where residents congregate, walk, play, and exercise, are costly to demolish and reconstruct for utility purposes and are prone to damage from trees and other environmental factors.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Modular rubber sidewalks are one type of paver that facilitates access to underground utilities and support healthy tree roots.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Make the customer experience the priority and ensure that each community civic center exceeds the highest standards for operations, design, and sustainable-building practices, and that each of these features is showcased prominently.
- Incorporate at least one major system or feature that is on the cutting edge of design or green-building practice into every major facility renovation or construction project.
- Transition to underground electrical and telecommunication infrastructure citywide.
- Replace poured-concrete sidewalks with modular pavers which can be removed and replaced for easy maintenance of underground utilities. Some types of pavers allow for stormwater infiltration and provide increased safety for pedestrians.





The LEED certified Microsoft School of the Future is a leader in environmental and academic excellence.

Short-Term Actions

- Hold a design competition for a prototype community civic center that could be developed in a variety of urban settings.
- Finalize green-building standards and policies for City projects; develop a mechanism for enforcing these standards.
- Require review by the proposed City Planning Commission's Design Review Committee of new public facilities that exceed 10,000 square feet in size.
- Develop planning and design standards for state-of-the-art public facilities, for different building and service-delivery types.
- Identify local vendors and contractors that have experience with new-paver technologies, and begin to utilize rubber or similar pavers to replace sidewalks after underground improvements around the city have been completed.

"Though actual LEED certification isn't always reached, trying to do so is still important."

— Roundtable Participant



PRESERVATION

Imagine Philadelphia...

...where continued preservation of historic assets contributes to the city's environmental, economic, and social well being.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Leverage and honor the city's manufacturing heritage by aggressively reusing industrial sites as contemporary places to work, live, learn, create, and play.
- 2** Facilitate renovation of housing and neighborhood anchors to preserve Philadelphia's neighborhood building stock, the fabric of vibrant and unique communities.
- 3** Revitalize and protect the city's commercial corridors, the backbone of vibrant and unique communities.
- 4** Use preservation and archeology to promote and celebrate the city's history, cultural resources, ethnic heritage, and unique customs.



1

Leverage and honor the city’s manufacturing heritage by aggressively reusing industrial sites as contemporary places to work, live, learn, create, and play.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Adaptive reuse of industrial buildings is a sustainable practice and can provide flexible space for light manufacturing, offices, housing, and other uses, while catalyzing development in stagnant areas.
- Some of Philadelphia’s historic industrial neighborhoods grew around rail or transit lines, which may offer opportunities for transit-oriented redevelopment.
- Philadelphia’s industrial buildings are an important reminder of the city’s noteworthy 19th- and early 20th-century role as “workshop of the world.”

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Environmental contamination, awkward building configurations, and rehabilitation costs can make reuse difficult.
- The differential between industrial land values and those of residential and commercial land exacerbates the trend away from industrial reuse.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Reuse the Reading Viaduct as a significant cultural resource and open-space element, and use it as a catalyst for leveraging the reuse of adjacent industrial buildings.
- Make adaptive reuse an official part of the City’s industrial-land policy; work with the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation to proactively assemble and market vacant historic industrial buildings

“Utilize the history of industry; Philly needs a big effort to preserve factories and tell their stories”

— Workshop Participant



Long abandoned, the Reading Viaduct provides an opportunity for preserving a historical right-of-way for a new purpose.

for adaptive reuse, particularly for mixed-use projects, supermarkets, or even large congregations or other institutional uses.

- Create transit-oriented development districts in historic industrial areas and provide incentives for preservation.

Short-Term Actions

- Create a priority list of potential landmarks and districts based on current redevelopment plans.
- Create incentives for adaptive-reuse projects that help to implement recommendations in plans.
- Create incentives for rehabilitation projects in former industrial buildings.
- Work with the Preservation Alliance to conduct a pilot survey of the Delaware River waterfront and/or rail-related areas for historic industrial sites and create a priority list for designation.
- Designate existing National Register industrial buildings that are not yet listed by the City.
- Take full advantage of existing programs financing and incentives including: 10-year tax abatement, brownfield program (Act 2), Keystone Opportunity Zones (KOZs), and the Pennsylvania Redevelopment Capital Assistance Program (RCAP).
- Create a GIS database of historic resources in industrial areas with information including historic importance, architectural features, size and number of buildings, location, environmental conditions, and other factors.





2 Facilitate renovation of housing and neighborhood anchors to preserve Philadelphia’s neighborhood building stock, the fabric of vibrant and unique communities.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The preservation of, and investment in, existing housing stock is a sustainable practice and can stabilize property values and promote neighborhood redevelopment.
- Neighborhood anchors—schools, places of worship, community centers, libraries, etc.—can serve as important places for community focus and collective memory, and be tangible reminders of a community’s heritage.

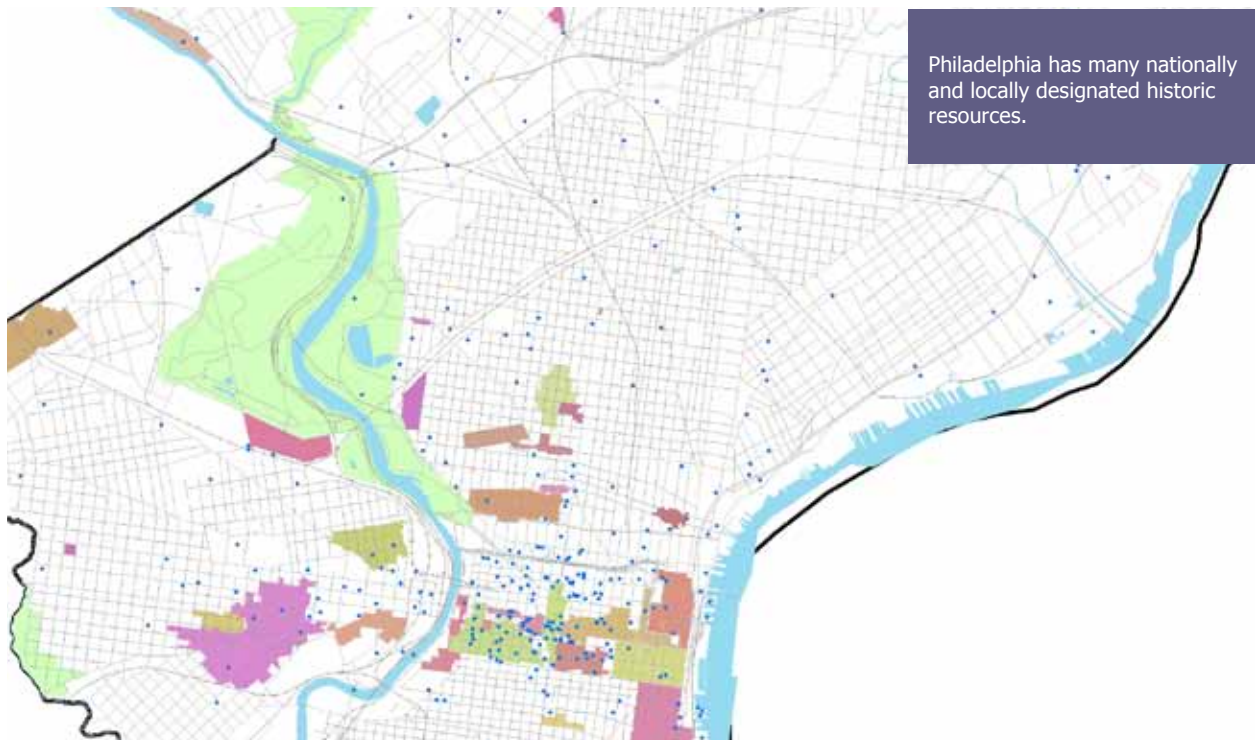
Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Aging building materials, absentee landlords, and homeowners with limited financial resources and know-how about proper home maintenance pose considerable hurdles.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Create a robust “tool box” of incentives for rehabilitating our existing housing stock for use by developers and homeowners of a variety of means and talents.
- Develop a plan to promote and assist in the preservation and reuse of anchor buildings and institutions within neighborhoods (e.g., schools, churches, apartment buildings).



Short-Term Actions

- Create a clearinghouse for information on how to rehabilitate older homes including architectural/historical information, grant/loan applications, contact information for housing agencies, and sample floor plans.
- Rewrite Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) legislation to have a basis in preservation rather than land use and move the program to the Philadelphia Historical Commission.
- Support state and national initiatives for tax-credit programs for historic homeowners.
- Designate all National Register Historic Districts as local districts or NCDs.
- Emphasize preservation of existing buildings, especially housing stock, in the new zoning code.
- Provide significant tax incentives to rehabilitate buildings on the Philadelphia Register or in an NCD. Consider increasing public investment in areas with historic district designation as a means to leverage private investment.

“The city needs to offer incentives for historic preservation for homeowners... older deteriorating homes should be restored to bring pride back to neighborhoods”
— Workshop Participant



3

Revitalize and protect the City's commercial corridors, the backbone of vibrant and unique communities.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The rejuvenation of commercial corridors can increase property values, generate jobs, and provide a diversity of retail options.
- Investing in commercial corridors preserves the tradition of keeping wealth within neighborhoods, by meeting the specific needs of unique communities.
- Many of Philadelphia's commercial corridors are served by trolley, subway, or commuter rail, offering opportunity for transit-oriented revitalization.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Shrinking customer base as patrons choose to go outside their neighborhoods for shopping.
- Organizing and gaining consensus among merchants or neighborhood associations on common goals and actions.
- Often there is a mismatch between merchants' goods and services and what the community's customers need and want.

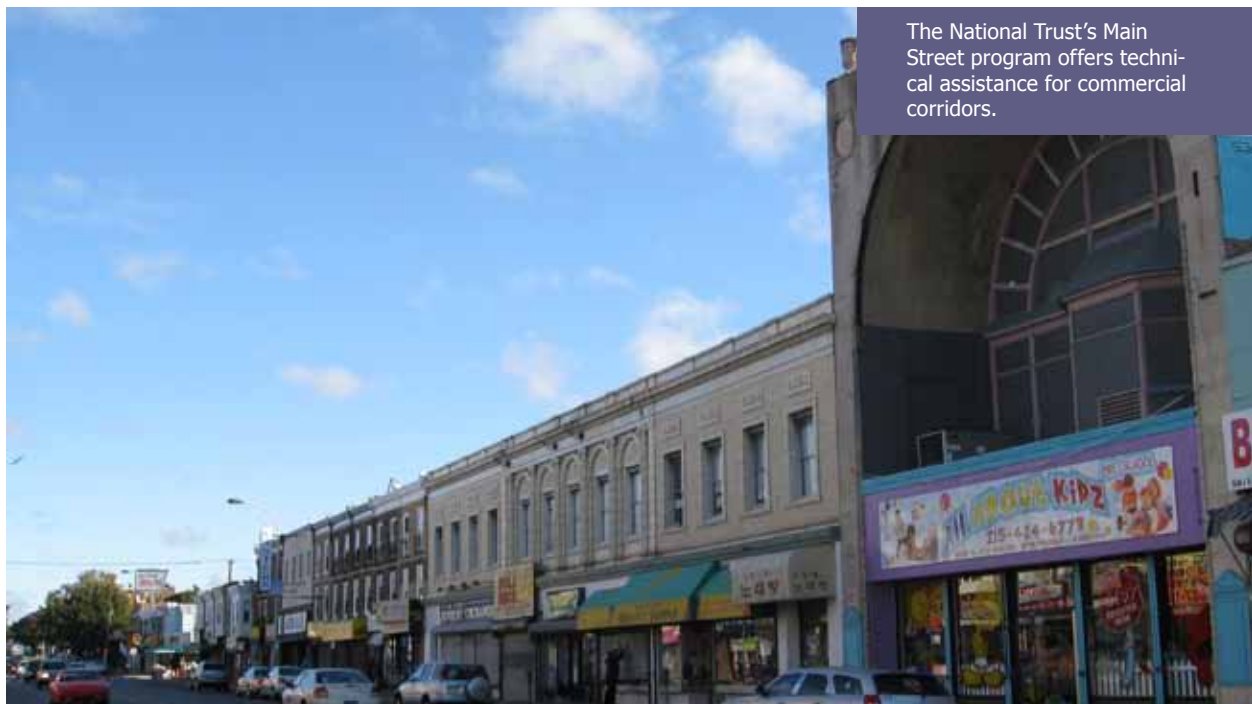
Big, Transformative Ideas

- Ensure that every neighborhood has a vibrant commercial center or corridor, which uses its historic storefronts and other buildings as assets.
- Ensure that every major transit hub is the focus of commercial development appropriate to its location and ridership.
- Encourage major national retailers to open downtown locations.



Short-Term Actions

- Identify and map historic commercial corridors at risk.
- Build on existing outreach programs to target new commercial areas.
- Change Neighborhood Conservation District legislation to apply to commercial, as well as residential, areas.
- Research and designate various corridors as historic districts or Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs).
- Further coordinate with the City's and State's Main Street Programs to better integrate historical and cultural information in marketing and promotional programs.
- Expand and enhance the existing Main Street programs and encourage inter-neighborhood cooperation in securing funds.
- Further coordinate with other preservation organizations such as Partners for Sacred Places that use historic properties as magnets for group activities.
- Work with the Philadelphia Historical Commission and nonprofit partners such as the Community Design Collaborative to research history and establish better design for buildings along corridors.
- Use the City's facade rebate program to support preservation and better design.
- Strengthen funding (private and public) for corridor management, especially after corridors cycle off of the five-year Main Street program.
- Use the zoning code reform process and the revised code to protect the historic character of commercial corridors.



The National Trust's Main Street program offers technical assistance for commercial corridors.



4

Use preservation and urban archeology to promote and celebrate the city's history, cultural resources, ethnic heritage, and unique customs.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The preservation of our cultural heritage can boost the tourism economy, foster civic pride, and attract new, diverse populations to Philadelphia.
- Heritage tourism can be a revitalizing force for struggling neighborhoods.
- Philadelphia has great potential for archeological discovery, which enables better understanding of our important place in history.



Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Cultural resources can be difficult to protect because they are often not associated with specific buildings or locations.
- The City and Commonwealth do not have laws that protect archeological sites that are found during construction.
- Archeological remains are too often destroyed before they can be researched and properly excavated.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Survey areas throughout the city for potential archeological finds.
- Survey and designate historic thematic districts based on certain cultural themes (e.g., sports, Underground Railroad).
- Create a GIS database of culturally significant places based on neighborhood nominations.
- Expand the Interpretive Center, now housed at Independence National Historical Park, to include all areas of the city, not just the sites found in the park.
- Work with the Philadelphia Historical Commission and Philadelphia Archeological Forum to produce educational programs on the importance of archeology and what it tells us.
- Create an oral-history project modeled on National Public Radio's "StoryCorps."
- Create legislation that protects all archeological sites as soon as more than five artifacts are found, in order for a proper survey to be conducted.
- Create a streamlined system of recovery for archeological artifacts so that development projects may continue, but the historical resources are recorded, and recovered where possible.
- Provide incentives for projects that encounter major archeological sites to off-set the cost (time and monetary) of the surveying and recovery.

PRESERVATION

Excavation at President's House archeological dig.



Short-Term Actions

- Establish the position of cultural liaison at the Philadelphia Historical Commission to coordinate the activities of all cultural and historical organizations in the city.
- Hire a historian at the Philadelphia Historical Commission to research and write for various organizations throughout the city, such as the Greater Philadelphia Tourism and Marketing Corporation (GPTMC), smaller historic house museums, community-development corporations, etc.
- Develop a cultural-heritage tourism strategy in coordination with the GPTMC.
- Restore the full-time archeologist position to the staff of the Philadelphia Historical Commission.
- Create a "special cultural district" designation for strategic arts/cultural districts.
- Work with the Philadelphia Archeological Forum to devise an interim plan to survey potential archeological sites.
- Designate documented culturally significant sites to the Philadelphia Register for protection.
- Partner with community organizations to produce historic markers, cultural street festivals, and other programs.



URBAN DESIGN

Imagine Philadelphia...

...continuing a tradition of superior urban design into the 21st Century by building upon its iconic image as a city with pre-colonial roots, positioned between two major rivers, and defined by an historic grid of streets, vibrant neighborhoods, and lively public spaces.

To Make the Vision Reality

- 1** Preserve and extend the city's street grid to allow for efficient circulation between existing and new neighborhoods.
- 2** Build upon the citywide public-space system by creating or enhancing a purposeful public open space in every neighborhood.
- 3** Capitalize on the positive physical characteristics—both natural and man-made—that make Philadelphia a unique city.
- 4** Apply sound urban-design principles to development across the city.



1

Preserve and extend the city's street grid to allow for efficient circulation between existing and new neighborhoods.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The city's historic grid pattern of streets has served well as a definition of urban form and means of circulation and access.
- The grid supports a variety of building scales and public spaces appropriate for all sections of the city—and promotes walking and a sense of security.
- Well-connected neighborhoods allow for greater community interaction and shared resources and experiences.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Many modern development projects do not typically conform to a dense urban grid. Big-box retail or industrial uses are examples of development that rely on mega-blocks or sites with limited access.
- Extensive infrastructure investment would be necessary to reconfigure mega-block sites and return them to the grid. These sites tend to be occupied by less-intensive uses, wasting valuable land resources.



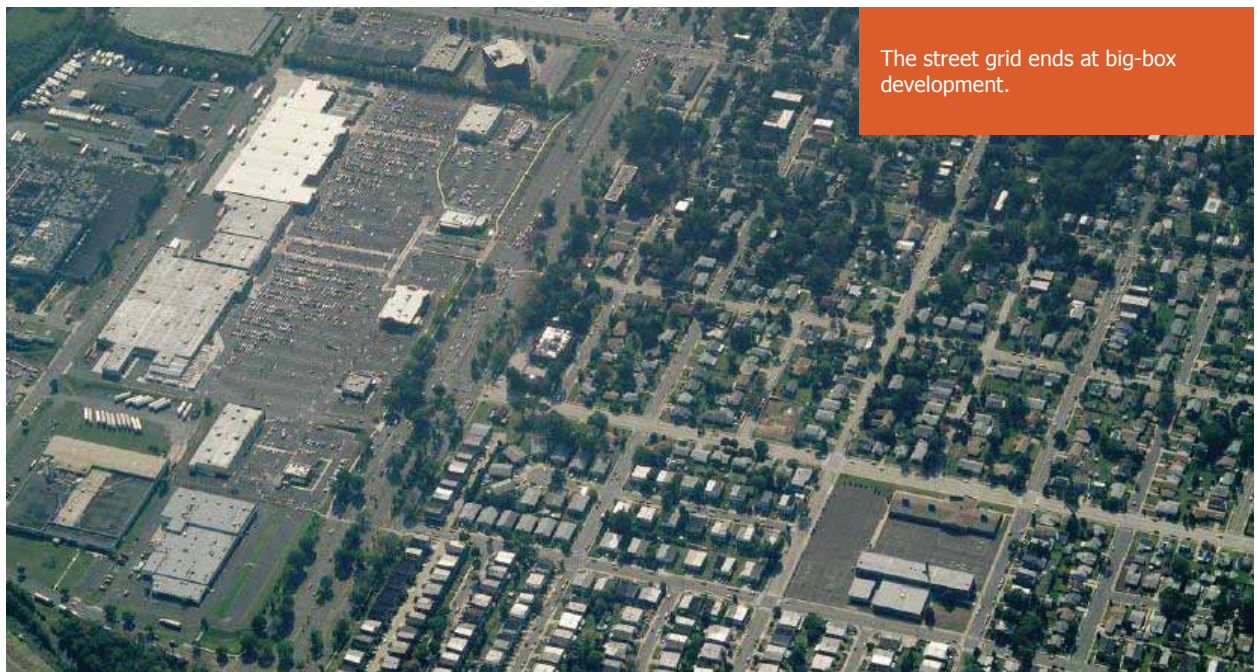
Big, Transformative Ideas

- Break up mega-blocks and extend the street grid to/through large parcels that are suitable for redevelopment for a mix of new uses.
- Reconfigure off-grid sites including parks, large residential, commercial or industrial developments, in order to incorporate visual and/or functional pathways that roughly connect and correspond to the street grid.



Short-Term Actions

- Investigate creating a rational street grid among large parcels along the Delaware River, as planning work continues along its north and central sections.



The street grid ends at big-box development.



2

Build upon the citywide public-space system by creating or enhancing a purposeful public open space in every neighborhood.

Rationale & Opportunities

- The historic design of Philadelphia exhibits a careful balance between public open space (Penn’s five original squares) and compact development.
- Public open space offers visual and functional relief from dense urban development, offering places to play, rejuvenate, gather, and celebrate.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Some of the city’s neighborhoods that lack public space have developed too densely to introduce new parks easily.
- The City’s resources for maintaining public open space are minimal.
- Public access to riverfronts—particularly the Delaware and Lower Tidal Schuylkill—is extremely limited because so much of the riverfront land is in private ownership.

“Create ‘villages’ made up of walkable neighborhoods that are linked by green corridors”

—Workshop Participant



Penn Alexander school in West Philadelphia

Big, Transformative Ideas

- “Green” portions of schoolyards throughout the city to increase the supply of and access to neighborhood public open space.
- Transform selected streets to safe, useable public open space by removing travel lanes and adding trees or other landscaping, promoting “car-free” days, or limiting automobile use; this is particularly important for areas with limited access to other public open space.
- Strategically fill gaps in the community open-space system with new resources, and ensure that these spaces are linked to one another and to existing open space.

Short-Term Actions

- As part of district planning efforts, work with community development corporations and neighborhood associations to identify where public open spaces could be located.
- Develop design standards for typical features of neighborhood public open space.
- Further develop design standards for public streets and other rights-of-way, for their use as public spaces and green connections between public open space.
- Work with the Philadelphia School District to develop a prototypical approach to the design of green schoolyards.



3

Capitalize on the positive physical characteristics—both natural and man-made—that make Philadelphia a unique city.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Philadelphia's physical attributes, such as the Benjamin Franklin Parkway and Avenue of the Arts, historic and institutional buildings, waterfronts and stream valleys, viewsheds, and the skyline all contribute to creating a sense of place and quality of life distinct from other cities.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- The city has often had limited influence over the appearance of its waterways and corridors because adjacent properties are typically privately owned.
- Developing a "signature skyline" of tall, dense buildings may conflict with the goals and aspirations of adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Maintenance of both the built environment and the natural environment has often been lacking.



Big, Transformative Ideas

- Transform the Municipal Services Building plaza, Dilworth Plaza, and other public spaces adjacent to City Hall into a world-class, signature destination.
- Improve the design and appearance of all major gateways to the city, as well as the full length of the primary corridors that carry people into and through it (e.g., arrival from the airport, Broad Street, Market Street, Amtrak right-of-way, I-95, Schuylkill and Vine Expressways, and Roosevelt Boulevard).
- Enable public recreational access to riverfront amenities, while balancing that use with the needs of the port and industry.



Short-Term Actions

- Improve the Benjamin Franklin Parkway by increasing pedestrian safety at intersections and introducing cafés, street furniture, and other features that add interest and convenience to the pedestrian experience.
- Institute effective design and maintenance standards for properties along the city's most visible corridors.



Benjamin Franklin Parkway in Center City



4

Apply sound urban-design principles to development across the city.

Rationale & Opportunities

- Design principles should reinforce the city's traditional urban fabric and other desirable features of Philadelphia's physical form.
- High-quality design matters in all neighborhoods; it contributes to neighborhood identity and the image of Philadelphia.
- Developing universal urban-design principles can inform other tools such as zoning.

Challenges to Reaching the Goal

- Philadelphia is largely built out; urban-design principles applied to an infill context may have less impact than when applied to major new development.
- There is a wide variety of building types and development patterns in neighborhoods throughout the city, so principles need to be broad and flexible enough to be useful.

Big, Transformative Ideas

- Institute a design-review process for development projects of a certain size, scale, location, visibility, and/or other qualities to be determined.
- Produce a comprehensive guidebook of urban-design principles and standards applicable to the wide variety of existing and new development situations in Philadelphia.
- Establish a legal framework for citywide design standards to make them enforceable.
- Improve the quality of streetscapes in all city neighborhoods.

"We need big strategic planning for how to use the existing fabric."

— Roundtable Participant



Design Guidelines help to ensure a high-quality and consistent public realm.

Design Guidelines
for **Commercial Façade Improvements**
The City of Philadelphia

Short-Term Actions

- Use Neighborhood Conservation Districts as a means for protecting the unique qualities of the city’s many neighborhoods.
- Establish a “Greatness in Design” awards program sponsored by the City and partner organizations (e.g., Design Advocacy Group, American Institute of Architects, Community Design Collaborative) to recognize the use of good urban-design principles in buildings and public spaces.
- Establish classes, produce guidebooks, offer homeowner loans and/or technical support to educate the public about design issues, particularly related to rehabilitating existing building stock.
- Determine how design review can apply to neighborhood-scale projects.





APPENDIX A: LEARNING FROM OTHER PLACES

NEIGHBORHOODS

Imagine Philadelphia...where neighborhoods are the building blocks of our city: Social networks are nurtured; retail and housing markets are healthy; institutions strengthen the well-being of residents; and where the city's rich history and culture are shaped and shared.



To Make the Vision a Reality...

1. Establish a systematic, accountable, and equitable community-planning process to ensure the link between long-range citywide planning, community priorities, capital investment, and zoning.

Seattle Neighborhood Plans; Seattle, WA

Seattle's 1995 Comprehensive Plan called for a neighborhood planning process focused on: "How can we accommodate growth?." By 1999 the City approved 38 neighborhood plans. Adoption of the plans included an implementation matrix to identify neighborhood priority projects and matching funds available for projects that involved volunteer labor. Completed projects under these plans include streetscape improvements, rezoning, open space, design guidelines, and historic districts.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Seattle is a city of neighborhoods, each with unique needs. The Seattle plan allowed neighborhoods to accommodate growth by establishing their own priorities with adopted neighborhood plans that have both legal stronghold and financing plans.



2. Assure that each neighborhood has access to its fair share of services, resources, and amenities, as defined by its unique needs.

Comprehensive Community Revitalization Program (CCRP); South Bronx, NY

The CCRP is a strategic alliance of four community development corporations in the South Bronx. The program focuses on implementation. The planners and implementers of this program include church groups, block associations, tenant associations, private property owners, local institutions, public schools, and police precincts.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many of the communities in the South Bronx share traits and issues with distressed areas in Philadelphia. The CCRP allowed underrepresented neighborhoods and community members to utilize their assets and stretch resources to implement programs.

3. Enhance the quality of life in every neighborhood through targeted physical improvements.

Great Streets; Washington, DC

The key strategy is to unite public streetscape and transportation investment “between the curbs” with private redevelopment of commercial corridors. The city has invested \$100 million over four years for streetscape and transportation improvements on six target corridors through a partnership of six city agencies.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Washington, DC, has limited funds to attract investment. By coordinating private and public investments the city got a greater “bang for the buck” than either individual investment alone.

Green Streets Program; New York, NY

The program is a partnership between the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Transportation. Launched in 1996, Green Streets is a citywide program to convert paved, vacant traffic islands and medians into green spaces filled with shade trees, flowering trees, shrubs, and groundcover.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many neighborhoods in New York City, like those in Philadelphia, have limited access to greenery and open space. With minimal investment, the Green Streets program has transformed leftover space to attractive amenities in an economically diverse range of neighborhoods.

HOUSING

Imagine Philadelphia... where a robust housing market provides a wide range of high-quality and affordable choices for current residents and a growing regional population.



To Make the Vision a Reality...

- 1. Increase the housing supply through small-scale infill development, rehabilitation of existing underutilized buildings, and construction of new housing developments.**

Portland's Infill Design Project; Portland, OR

The City convened residents, designers and developers to create a menu of infill-design prototypes that meet regulatory requirements and fulfill city and neighborhood planning goals.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

A big opportunity for Philadelphia for increasing housing supply is through infill. Many Philadelphia neighborhoods suffer from "missing teeth," vacant lots in otherwise occupied blocks. Portland's is a model program to efficiently implement infill development.

- 2. Upgrade housing stock to modern standards, and ensure that sustainable design and construction practices are used.**

Historic Chicago Bungalow Initiative; Chicago, IL

The Department of Construction and Permits has a special permit assistance program to guide bungalow owners through the renovation process. Also, groups of bungalow homeowners can apply for the Energy Saver's Program, or grants to cover most of their energy-efficiency needs.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia and Chicago each have their own iconic form of housing: in Philadelphia it is the rowhouse, in Chicago the bungalow. The Chicago program has focused the city's efforts on preserving, upgrading, and promoting its most prevalent and common form of housing.





Green Rowhouse Renovation Template; Baltimore, MD

The template was designed in conjunction with the State of Maryland to establish renovation schemes that can be incorporated affordably into existing Baltimore rowhomes. The template is based upon a holistic evaluation of building systems in an effort to reduce energy consumption.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia and Baltimore share the same ubiquitous housing type: the rowhouse. Renovating the city's housing using green principles can help to reduce energy and maintenance costs.



3. Ensure that the housing market and providers offer diverse choices, attractive to, and appropriate for, a broad range of renters and buyers, as well as for our most vulnerable populations.

Inclusionary Housing; Montgomery County, MD

Montgomery County requires housing developers to provide between 12.5 and 15 percent moderately priced units in exchange for a density bonus. The requirement applies to new housing developments of 20 units or more. The ordinance also allows the Housing Authority to fill a percentage of the inclusionary units with Section 8 voucher holders, providing even greater affordability.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Inclusionary housing programs such as Montgomery County's ensure a certain amount of workforce and affordable housing in markets where they might not otherwise be developed.



Stabilizing Neighborhoods and Encouraging Economic Diversity; MD

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's "Live Near Your Work" program aims to encourage employees to buy homes near their workplace. There are no income restrictions for program participants. The local jurisdiction designates neighborhoods, with the department's concurrence, and administers the program. Participating employers, which include businesses, nonprofit organizations, colleges, universities, and government agencies must set eligibility requirements, promote the program to their employees, and provide matching funds.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Programs like this encourage home ownership within Philadelphia instead of the suburbs, thus bolstering local neighborhood economies.



LEARNING FROM OTHER PLACES



City First Enterprises (CFE); Washington, DC

CFE is an organization that runs three programs: City First Bank; City First Capital; and a DC-area community land trust. The CFE Community Land Trust initiative ensures that Washington remains a welcoming city for families of all income levels by providing permanently affordable homeownership for the district's working families.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

A concern in Philadelphia is to keep housing affordable in the long term. A land trust uses a deed restriction or ground lease to ensure permanent affordability by including lease or covenant provisions that restrict resale prices of homes. More than 150 CLTs have been established in the United States in the past 25 years.

MOBILITY

Imagine Philadelphia...with a fully integrated pedestrian, bicycle, transit, highway, and goods-movement network that provides significant and sustainable economic benefits to residents, the city, the region, and beyond.

To Make the Vision a Reality...

1. Provide neighborhoods with ample transit to jobs and services.



Oystercard; London, UK:

Passengers on the Tube, bus, tram, or DLR who use Oyster PAYG never pay more than the price of a one-day travelcard, no matter how many Oyster PAYG journeys in zones 1 to 6 they make. Oyster is the first smartcard ticketing system in the world to offer price capping.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

The Philadelphia region's transit network is made up of several connected systems but with disconnected pricing structures. A system similar to Oystercard would facilitate transfer between systems and expand the reach of the existing network.



Transmilenio Bus Rapid Transit; Bogotá, Columbia:

Transmilenio is a rapid-transit system that operates on grade, using vehicles with rubber tires. The stations are like subway stations and operate in a similar manner with level-boarding to vehicles, fare collection at the station entrance, and other amenities. In addition, systems of bicycle lanes were constructed as part of Transmilenio. The bicycle feeder system has achieved extraordinary results and increased the share for bicycles for commuting from 0.2 percent to 5 percent. A future phase of the trunk lines is planned with the goal of having at least 80 percent of the city population within 500 meters of a trunk line.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many areas of Philadelphia have limited access to transit. The Transmilenio Bus Rapid Transit is a model for bringing transit to lower density and auto dependent areas such as Philadelphia's Northeast neighborhoods.

2. Create a citywide, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system that is well integrated into the larger transportation network.

Portland Bicycle Master Plan; Portland, OR

The Portland Bicycle Master Plan provides a blueprint for making bicycling an integral part of daily life in Portland. Since the first Bicycle Master Plan was adopted, Portland has more than doubled its bikeway network, to 300+ miles, and added thousands of bicycle parking spaces and daily bike rides, events, and activities.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia's bicycle master plan is in its early stages. Portland is an example of how integrating an extensive and complete bicycle network into the fabric of the city can increase bicycle ridership.

Vélo'v Bike Sharing; Lyon, France

This program is a bicycle rental service run by the city of Lyon, in conjunction with the advertising company JCDecaux. The relationship with JCDecaux allows the city to provide the service on a cost-neutral basis for the city, and at very low cost to users, in return for providing exclusive advertising access on bus shelters and the like. The primary aim is to reduce vehicle traffic within the city.





Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many of Philadelphia's streets are conducive to bicycle use and bicycle sharing can reduce vehicle traffic within the city, especially if planned in conjunction with a bicycle master plan.

Street closures; Bogota, Colombia:

In Bogota, on Sundays and holidays the streets are closed to vehicles and become public open space. The program has grown from eight miles of "reclaimed" road space to 70 miles; the key reason for the event's success is good management.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Utilizing streets as public space is a growing trend in areas of high density and in need of open space. A similar program to Bogota's can be implemented in Philadelphia with minimal cost.

3. Make the network of city streets and parking safe, efficient, and supportive of sustainable development practices.

Better Streets; San Francisco, CA:

The Better Streets Plan creates a unified set of standards, guidelines, and implementation strategies governing how the City designs, builds, and maintains its pedestrian environment. The Better Streets Plan process brings together staff of multiple city agencies to comprehensively plan for streets and balances the needs of all street users, with a particular focus on the pedestrian environment and how streets can be used as public space. The Plan reflects the understanding that streets serve a multitude of social, recreational, and ecological needs that must be balanced when deciding on the most appropriate design.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia has an Executive Order calling for a "complete streets" approach to street design, but the city could further coordinate between government agencies to find the best balance of the use of the public right-of-way, depending on circumstances.



St. Louis Great Streets Initiative; St. Louis, MO

East-West Gateway launched the St. Louis Great Streets Initiative in early 2006 to expand the way communities think of their streets. Rather than viewing a roadway project as solely a way to move more cars and trucks faster, the goal of the initiative is to trigger economic and social benefits by centering communities around interesting, lively and attractive streets that serve all modes of transportation.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia has demonstrated success with the branding of Broad Street as “The Avenue of the Arts.” The St. Louis program expands on this concept and is a model of a program that can be implemented city-wide.

4. Enhance the regional transportation network through coordinated port, highway, rail, and airport improvements.

Port of Los Angeles, I-110 Connector Improvement Program; Los Angeles, CA:

The primary goal of this program is the reduction and separation of port truck traffic from roadways heavily used by the general public. Strategies include several complementary projects that improve freeway access to port facilities, eliminate traffic movement conflicts, improve existing non-standard elements, and accommodate existing and future traffic conditions for port and other traffic.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

In some Philadelphia neighborhoods truck traffic mixes with general traffic. Focused road improvement programs can help to support existing industrial uses in Philadelphia and speed transport by separating truck traffic from general traffic.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Imagine Philadelphia...capitalizing upon its substantial economic assets and providing expanding opportunities for job, income, and wealth creation for residents, workers, and businesses.

To Make the Vision a Reality

1. Position Philadelphia as the vital urban center of a competitive and sustainable 12-county metropolitan region.

Sustaining Success: Developing London’s Economy; London, UK: Sustaining Success focuses on four major investment themes: places and infrastructure; people; enterprise; and marketing and promoting London. Together, the recommendations in each of these themes holistically support the development of London’s economy, promote employment, and help businesses be more competitive.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Programs like Sustaining Success recognize that public and private investments must be approached comprehensively. This approach is key to positioning Philadelphia as the center of the region.

2. Make Philadelphia the location of choice for entrepreneurship and trade in the Northeast Corridor “mega-region.”



NOMA; Washington, DC

NoMa, shorthand for North of Massachusetts, is a dynamic new economic growth center within the District, developed around the New York Avenue Metrorail Station. It is fast becoming a technology, media, and arts center. The development won considerable support from information-technology and telecommunications industry executives and local officials from suburbs in Virginia and Maryland.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia has clusters of industry in areas of the city that can be targeted and expanded into unique places for entrepreneurship, by taking advantages of synergies in the economy.

3. Establish the city as a leading international center for learning, culture, trade, and tourism.



Chicago Neighborhood Tours, Chicago, IL

Chicago Neighborhood Tours take you outside of the famed Loop and central downtown area, which is home to Chicago’s cultural icons. The program expands the traditional tourist sites in Chicago enabling visitors to travel beyond traditional tourist areas. The program is operated by the City’s Department of Cultural Affairs.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia’s traditional tourist destinations are clustered in and around Center City, and include the historic district, the Parkway, and the Zoo. A program similar to Chicago’s would reveal other areas of the city and expand tourist destinations to include many of Philadelphia’s neighborhoods.



OPEN SPACE

*Imagine Philadelphia...*with a network of grand open spaces, intimate parks, and lush natural areas—as well as other public and private “green infrastructure”—that connect the population to nature and provide opportunities for quiet relaxation, vigorous exercise, and improved quality of life.

To Make the Vision a Reality

1. Create a seamless network of public green spaces including parks, recreation sites, trails, green streets, and other resources so all residents are within one-half mile (ten-minute walk) of a park or trail.

PlaNYC 2030; New York, NY:

PlaNYC lays out several open space initiatives to ensure public spaces in every community including using school yards as public play grounds, developing high-quality competition fields, creating destination parks across the city, converting asphalt play areas to multi-purpose fields, maximizing the use of open space at night, filling every available street-tree pit, and expanding the Green Streets program.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia has great open spaces but they are not as accessible and/or connected to as many neighborhoods as they should be. Many of New York City’s strategies could be used to improve Philadelphia’s situation.

Chicago’s CitySpace program; Chicago, IL:

The CitySpace program viewed school grounds as an opportunity to transform entire neighborhoods.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Every Philadelphia neighborhood has a public school; but not all school grounds are open to the community. By leveraging these existing assets the city can quickly increase public open space, in accessible locations, at low cost.





2. Use Philadelphia’s public green spaces for “utility” purposes, such as managing stormwater or generating renewable energy.

Curitiba’s Seasonal Parks; Curitiba, Brazil:

These parks respect the natural flow of rivers and have transformed flood plains into beautiful parks. In addition to their utility, the parks are recreational areas for citizens and tourists with commercial facilities such as restaurants that help to pay park capital costs.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Like Fairmount Park’s historic stream-valley parks, the Curitiba example provides a replicable model for meeting certain infrastructure needs while demonstrating that such limited assets can do double duty as functional park land.



Fresh Kills; Staten Island, NY

Fresh Kills Park is the transformation of the world’s largest landfill into a productive and beautiful cultural destination. Additionally, a substantial wind farm is proposed for the site, highlighting the park as a model for using a public space for the generation of green power.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Incorporating renewable-energy production into public open space can help Philadelphia reach its goal of being the greenest city in America.

3. Enhance Philadelphia’s open-space resources as important components of regional environmental and recreational systems.



Greenbelt; London, UK

The “Greenbelt” is a land-use tool for managing urban growth in and around London. As a sprawl-preventing mechanism, a belt of permanent open space is created around an urban area, preventing land-intensive growth and encouraging density within its boundaries. It also serves as a valuable open space resource for greater London.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

The open space needs of Philadelphia’s residents cannot always be met inside city limits. The London Greenbelt provides an example of regional cooperation and collaboration.



4. Leverage open space for economic development to help Philadelphia attract and retain residents, visitors and businesses.

Millennium Park; Chicago, IL

Millennium Park is a signature park in downtown Chicago constructed in 2004 for \$430 million. Over ten years, the park is projected to generate \$1.4 billion of economic benefits.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Substantial economic return in the areas of tourism and economic development can result from strategic investments in open space.

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Imagine Philadelphia...where public services and utilities supporting recreation, learning, socializing, good health, emergency assistance, and daily life in general are distributed equitably through a well-designed and maintained network of public facilities and centers for community activity.

To Make the Vision a Reality...

1. Create an appropriately sized network of public facilities and services that meets the needs of a dynamic population.

Cincinnati's School Facilities Master Plan; Cincinnati, OH

The goals of this ten-year plan are to reduce the total number of schools by 14; reduce the total space by 800,000 SF; build 35 new schools and renovate 31 existing schools; require new facilities to attain LEED certification; reuse closed facilities; and create "Community Learning Centers" in each new school, targeted to neighborhood needs.



Relevance to Philadelphia:

Because of changes and shifts in population, Philadelphia's infrastructure is not always efficiently located to serve the city's neighborhoods. The Cincinnati plan has examples of how Philadelphia could successfully "right-size" public facilities through strategic consolidation, renovation, and new construction.



2. Coordinate delivery of public services and utilities between multiple providers, through shared facilities, infrastructure, and operations.

Los Angeles Civic Center Shared Facilities, Los Angeles, CA

The Los Angeles Civic Center Shared Facilities and Enhancement Plan calls for different levels of government to share facilities, thereby cutting operational costs. It also encourages mixed-use development to help revitalize the area and provides a vision for a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

With limited resources for new public facilities, Philadelphia must efficiently allocate resources. This program is a model for increased efficiency in both facility use and delivery of services.

3. Deliver high-quality and efficient public services via exemplary, pleasing, functional, well-maintained and sustainable buildings and operations.



Newtown Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant; Brooklyn, NY

An outmoded treatment facility was replaced with a sustainable facility designed by Polshek Partnership. The iconic “eggs” are ringed by walkways and green space. The project has won several design awards.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Great design of public facilities can help Philadelphia overcome public resistance. Infrastructure is an important part of the public face of the city and raising the bar on design can also raise the stature and visibility of the city.

PRESERVATION

Imagine Philadelphia...where continued preservation of historic assets contributes to the city's environmental, economic, and social well being.

To Make the Vision a Reality...

1. Leverage and honor the city's manufacturing heritage by aggressively reusing industrial sites as contemporary places to work, live, learn, create, and play.



International Market Square; Minneapolis, MN

To increase industry competitiveness and adaptively reuse valuable building stock, Minneapolis is converting historic industrial buildings into mixed-use complexes, combining manufacturing and other uses.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many Philadelphia neighborhoods--including those with former industrial buildings--are in transition, reflecting the shift from a manufacturing to a service economy. The Minneapolis example and the successful reuse of buildings at the Philadelphia Navy Yard demonstrate there can be opportunities for other areas of the city.



Granville Island; Vancouver, Canada

Granville Island in Vancouver is a former industrial district that is now a thriving entertainment and retail destination with a public market, theaters, hotel, brewery, and artist studios.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Philadelphia has a strong industrial history. Granville Island shows that this heritage can be celebrated and marketed.



The High Line; New York, NY

New York is reusing an abandoned 1.5-mile elevated freight rail line to create a green trail along the West Side of Manhattan.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many of Philadelphia's neighborhoods are pockmarked by vacant and underutilized formerly industrial land and infrastructure. The High Line project demonstrates their reuse potential as public open space.



2. Facilitate renovation of housing and neighborhood anchors to preserve Philadelphia's neighborhood building stock, the fabric of vibrant and unique communities.

Neighborhoods in Bloom Program; Richmond, VA

Richmond redirected nearly all of its discretionary funds into six of its 49 neighborhoods, in order to have a major effect on those neighborhoods. The program targets specific neighborhood resources to create sustainable change. Since the effort was initiated the targeted neighborhoods have seen dramatic changes in market activity and quality of life.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many Philadelphia neighborhoods have experienced substantial population loss of the past decades. Targeted neighborhood preservation efforts like Richmond’s can help to reverse that pattern.

3. Revitalize and protect the city’s commercial corridors, the backbone of vibrant and unique communities.



Boston Main Streets Program; Boston, MA

This program is operated by the Office of Business Development and utilizes Community Development Block Grant funds. The Main Streets Program provides funding and technical assistance to 19 neighborhood commercial districts including storefront improvement grants. The program is focused on four areas: community organization; promotion; design; and economic restructuring.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many of Philadelphia’s historic neighborhood shopping districts are physically intact but are shells of former commercial activity and need new and/or consolidated uses. The Boston Main Streets Program shows how these strips can be revitalized through technical support and strategic investments.



4. Use preservation and archeology to promote and celebrate the city’s history, cultural resources, ethnic heritage, and unique customs.

Documenting Community History; New York, NY

In New York, Place Matters used a grant from the Department of Cultural Affairs to create sidewalk signs documenting the history of community life in the Lower East Side.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

This is a simple approach to promoting Philadelphia’s wealth of community and cultural history.



URBAN DESIGN

Imagine Philadelphia...continuing a tradition of superior urban design into the 21st Century by building upon its iconic image as a city with pre-colonial roots, positioned between two major rivers, and defined by an historic grid of streets, vibrant neighborhoods, and lively public spaces.

To Make the Vision a Reality...

1. Preserve and extend the city's street grid to allow for efficient circulation between existing and new neighborhoods.

Battery Park City; New York, NY

Battery Park City was a planned expansion of the Manhattan street grid that simplified land development and ensured systematic, market-friendly construction on the waterfront. The development plan created a series of parcels that could be developed sequentially, one at a time, helping with market absorption.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Battery Park City is an excellent precedent for urban waterfront development and creating neighborhood scale by extending the existing street grid across large parcels. As Philadelphia's waterfronts are redeveloped, neighborhood connections become all the more important.



2. Build upon the citywide public-space system by creating or enhancing at least one purposeful public open space in every neighborhood.

Melbourne, Australia

The City of Melbourne identified public space as a key focus for improving the city, leading to a huge investment in neighborhood parks, including the renovation of Federation Square.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Melbourne's program of successfully leveraging neighborhood parks is applicable to Philadelphia from both the perspective of providing public open space and creating a focal point of neighborhood pride.



3. Capitalize on the positive physical characteristics—both natural and man-made—that make Philadelphia a unique city.

LEARNING FROM OTHER PLACES



Miami Beach; Miami, FL

The Art Deco District of Miami Beach was threatened in the 1960s and 70s when the South Beach area had become run down and crime ridden. Thanks to efforts of the local design and preservation community, the area was revitalized beginning in the early 1980s resulting in the renovation of hundreds of buildings, especially hotels and motels, which are now among the most ornate Art Deco structures anywhere.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

The Miami example shows the importance of leveraging the existing physical-design character of the a city; strategies like this can help Philadelphia continue to keep its unique characteristics.



River Walk; San Antonio, TX

The River Walk is a 2.5-mile stretch of landscaped waterfront that features many of San Antonio's hotels, restaurants, night clubs, bars, shopping centers, and businesses. The Paseo del Rio River was a cause of flooding and was almost converted into a storm sewer in the 1920s. It was saved by an architect's proposal for a river-level park with open space and shops. Today, it is a dynamic tourist attraction, pouring nearly \$800 million annually into the local economy.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

The River Walk provides an example of capitalizing on unique geographic features, of which Philadelphia has many.

4. Apply sound urban-design principles to development across the city.



City-wide Design Guidelines; Toronto, Canada

Urban-design guidelines are used by the City of Toronto to clarify and implement the urban-design objectives of the Comprehensive Plan in a predictable manner.

Relevance to Philadelphia:

Many Philadelphia neighborhoods are experiencing increasing development pressures. Citywide design guidelines help to anticipate and shape growth rather than react to it.



APPENDIX B: RELEVANT PLANS, PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

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