



**WEST POWELTON  
SAUNDERS PARK**  
Neighborhood Plan



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*Prepared for:* PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY CENTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORP. • DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

*With the Support of:* THE WILLIAM PENN FOUNDATION

## **West Powelton / Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan**

The West Powelton & Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan was undertaken in response to Mayor John F. Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative, which identified 31 neighborhoods in Philadelphia where a comprehensive planning process would direct future investments. West Powelton is one of three neighborhoods in Philadelphia where the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) directed those plans, with financial assistance from the William Penn Foundation, and in partnership with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission.

DVRPC would like to acknowledge and thank the many public officials and private citizens who contributed to this plan. Beverly Coleman of the Philadelphia Neighborhood Development Collaborative developed the original concept for this project. Lamar Wilson of Wilson Associates assisted throughout with the community outreach process. The consultant team of Neighborhood Design Group, led by project manager John Gibbons of Kise Straw & Kolodner researched and drafted the plan.

A neighborhood task force of over 30 organizations and individuals contributed countless hours to the development of the plan. In addition, many more attended various community meetings and workshops. While all can not be listed here, key individuals and organizations include:

Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell, 3rd District, and Alisa Orduna-Sneed of her staff  
People's Emergency Center, Gloria Guard, President  
People's Emergency Center Community Development Corporation, Melissa Long, CDC Director  
Lancaster Avenue Business Association, Sister Aisamah Muhammad and George Dunbar  
West Powelton Concerned Community Council, Elsie Wise and Katie Dunn  
Saunders Park Neighbors Association, Carolyn Smith and L. Jean Mitchell  
Philadelphia City Planning Commission, Maxine Griffith, Executive Director and Victoria Mason-Ailey, Director of Community Planning



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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The West Powelton/Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan was completed in close cooperation with a neighborhood based Task Force that included the principal stakeholders in the area. Key participants included:

- People's Emergency Center CDC (PECCDC)
- Saunders Park Neighbors (SPN)
- West Powelton Concerned Community Council (WPCCC)
- Haverford Union Brandywine (HUB) Coalition
- Lancaster Avenue Business Association (LABA)
- Presbyterian Medical Center
- University City District (UCD)
- Office of Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell
- 16th Police District
- City Planning Commission
- University of Pennsylvania
- Drexel University

The plan builds upon recommendations included in several previous planning studies that impact the study area: the Northern West Philadelphia Master Plan, completed by the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA); PHA Mill Creek development plan; and a market study completed for PECCDC of the Lancaster Avenue corridor.

In early 1996, PECCDC held a community-visioning process with the West Powelton Concerned Community Council, Saunders Park Neighbors, and other neighborhood residents, government officials, and institutional stakeholders, who led to the development of a neighborhood strategic plan in July 1998.

Mayor John Street's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) provided the impetus for PECCDC to update its 1998 strategic plan. That process began in August 2000, with a series of meetings with WPCCC, SPN, the 16th Police District, the City Planning Commission and Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell. At the same time, PECCDC turned its attention to the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor. With funding from the First Union Regional Foundation, a market study outlining a series of recommendations about cleaning, safety, vacancy reductions, and business marketing was completed in June 2002.

These two studies provided the framework for this West Powelton/Saunders Park Neighborhood Strategic Plan. The complexity of creating a large-scale community revitalization plan required a team of housing, economic development and transportation planning experts. PECCDC turned to the Philadelphia Neighborhood Development Collaborative (PNDC) for support, which then secured funding from the William Penn Foundation to create a community-based plan for PECCDC's target area as well as for communities in Chinatown and West Mount Airy. The plans would be prepared under the direction of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC).

In January 2003, DVRPC selected a team lead by Kise Straw & Kolodner (KSK) to create the updated neighborhood strategic plan for West Powelton. Lamar Wilson Associates oversaw the community outreach element of the planning process. Lamar Wilson Associates held one-on-one interviews with key community, governmental and institutional stakeholders from March through May 2002. The purpose of these interviews was two-fold: to describe the community planning process and goals; and to identify the community's needs in terms of housing, transportation, commercial development and quality of life issues. A summary of those interviews provided the basis of discussion

for the first Task Force meeting held at PECCDC's community room on June 5, 2003.

A second Task Force meeting was held on July 2nd to review specific planning concepts and development opportunities formulated by the KSK team. At this meeting, KSK asked the group to participate in a Community Based Observation Technique exercise in which stakeholders were provided with disposable cameras and invited to photograph places/sites in the neighborhood they believed to contribute both positively and negatively to the community. Results were presented at the Community-Visioning Workshop held on July 21, 2003 at the Philadelphia Cathedral.

Over 30 people attended the Community-Visioning Workshop including for-profit developers, Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell's office, Philadelphia Green and a wide range of community residents. The participants were separated into groups to discuss and prioritize housing and community development, economic development and transportation issues. The planning team incorporated these recommendations into draft development recommendations that addressed the needs of the community.

On August 6, 2003, KSK and Lamar Wilson Associates presented a summary of the community's issues and priority projects at a public meeting held at the Cathedral. Over 60 community residents attended. Residents were invited to comment on the recommendations and were asked to complete a survey. Over the next few months the planning team refined the recommendations for developments and programs into a final draft plan. This plan was submitted to the Neighborhood Task Force on November 6, 2003 and was met with overwhelming approval. KSK incorporated the comments from that meeting into this final plan.



## CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS, OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

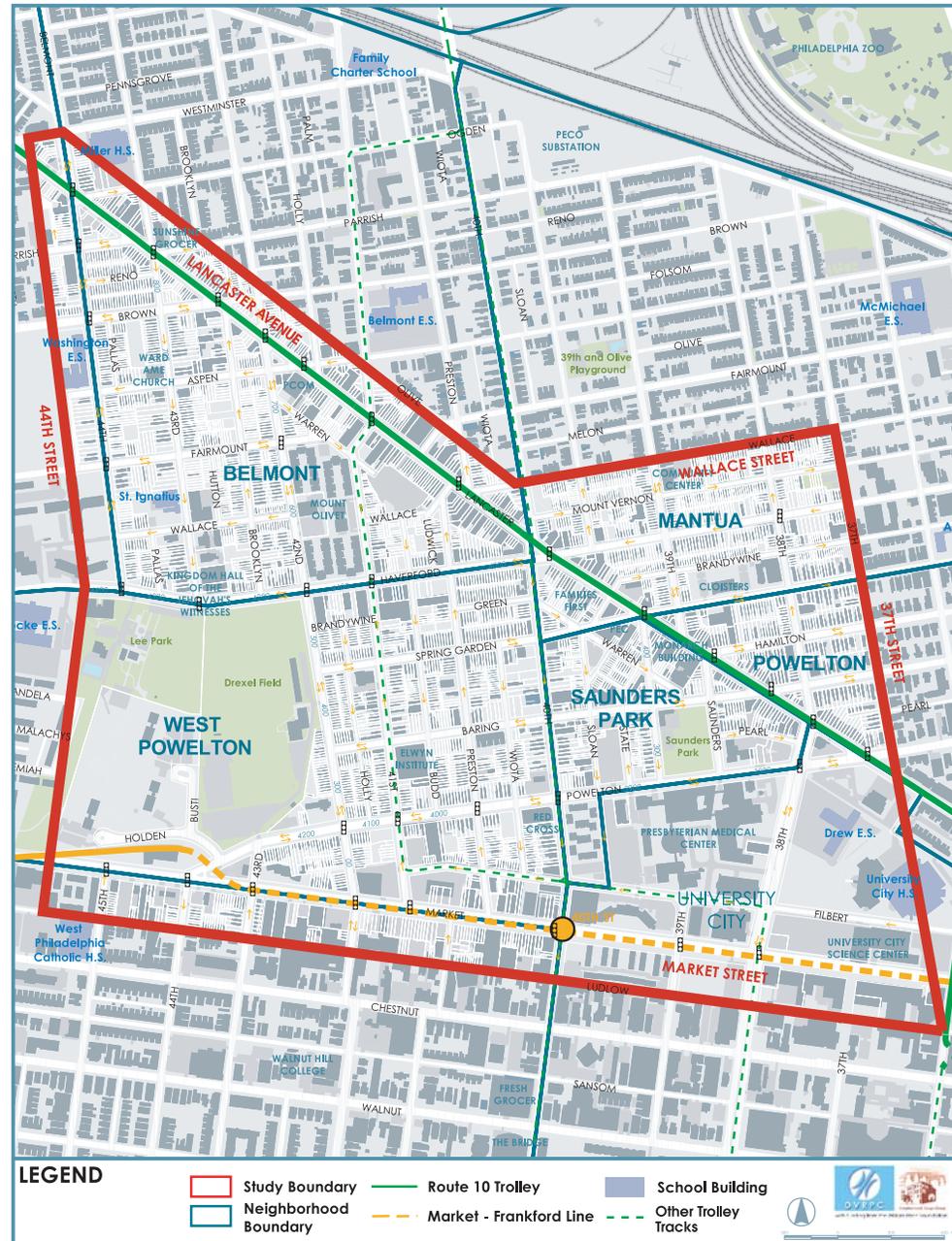
#### Neighborhood Description

The study area, located in West Philadelphia close to the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, is bounded by 44th Street to the west, Market Street to the south, 37th Street to the east, and to the north by Lancaster Avenue west of 40th Street and Wallace Street east of 40th Street. It encompasses the Saunders Park neighborhood, as well as portions of several other neighborhoods: West Powelton, Belmont, Powelton, and Mantua.

The Saunders Park neighborhood, located east of 40th Street and south of Spring Garden, is within the University City District business improvement district service area. The University of Pennsylvania Presbyterian Medical Center fronting 38th Street is an important institutional anchor in the southeast of the study area. While near the universities, the area has not benefited from the same increases in property values as other parts of University City. It is isolated from other sections of University City by the Market Street and 38th Street arterials that discourage pedestrian activity. The community has a diverse population, a fact that is highly valued by neighborhood residents.

The area developed in the late 19th century as a predominantly residential neighborhood, but with a mixture of small-scale industrial workshop uses, as well as retail commercial. Commercial and workshop uses were concentrated along Lancaster Avenue, Market Street and Haverford Avenue but were also scattered throughout residential neighborhoods. Workshop uses included a

*The study area*



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**38th Street**

cleared for development of the University City Science Center, expansion of Presbyterian Hospital, and construction of University City High School. In the mid 1970's, 38th Street was widened as a four lane divided highway.

West of the study area is the Philadelphia Housing Authority Mill Creek HOPE VI redevelopment site, where construction has begun on a mix of subsidized rental and owner occupied homes.

This project has been named "Lucien Blackwell Homes." Immediately east of the study area is the Powelton Village historic district, an attractive enclave of Victorian family homes and apartments that are home to many University academics, professionals, and students. Two blocks south of Market Street at Walnut Street is the University of Pennsylvania campus, and a campus-oriented retail center that includes a high

quality full-size supermarket, new movie theatre complex and restaurants. Abutting the southeast corner of the study area is the University City Science Center, a technology and research park adjacent to the Drexel and University of Pennsylvania campuses that includes two Keystone Opportunity Zone development sites.



**Fresh Grocer supermarket on 40th Street**

quality full-size supermarket, new movie theatre complex and restaurants. Abutting the southeast corner of the study area is the University City Science Center, a technology and research park adjacent to the Drexel and University of Pennsylvania campuses that includes two Keystone Opportunity Zone development sites.

The study area is represented by several community and business organizations. Community organizations include Saunders Park Neighbors Association, representing Saunders Park, West Powelton Concerned Community Council, representing West Powelton, and Haverford Union Brandywine Coalition (HUB), representing a portion of Mantua. The community organization representing the Belmont neighborhood was being reorganized during the study period. Other

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**Lancaster Avenue**



**PEC's Families First**

key organizations include the Lancaster Avenue Business Association, and the University City District (UCD) special services district.

In recent years, a local community development corporation, People’s Emergency Center Community Development Corporation (PECCDC), has sponsored development in the area, particularly in Saunders Park. PECCDC’s success is evidenced by the scale, concentration and diversity of development. Over the past 11 years, PECCDC has invested more than \$20 million in neighborhood revitalization; developed 100 units of housing, 3 social service facilities and 2 community playgrounds, replacing 78 vacant, abandoned and trashed filled buildings and lots; and completed nearly 20 home repair and facade improvements to homes of long time neighborhood residents. PECCDC’s real estate projects include: the renovation of a mill building as a facility for the homeless, at Spring Garden

and Lancaster; conversion of a former turn-of-the-century almshouse in Saunders Park as Rowan House a transitional housing facility, Families first, a Welfare-to-Work and child care center, on the 3900 block of Warren Street; expansion of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine health center on Lancaster Avenue at 41st Street; a facade improvement program targeted to homeowners in West Powelton and Saunders Park, and Imani Homes, scattered site permanent rental housing development. PEC also provided development assistance and residential staffing for the new Red Cross emergency housing facility at 40th and Powelton Avenue called Red Cross House.

Recent developments undertaken by others include a sheltered workshop for the Elwyn Institute on Baring Street, a new drive-in Eckerd Drug Store on Market Street at 41st, and the newly renovated Rudolph Home for the Blind at Saunders Street and Powelton Avenue.

*Philadelphia  
College of  
Osteopathic  
Medicine on  
Lancaster Avenue  
at 41st Street*



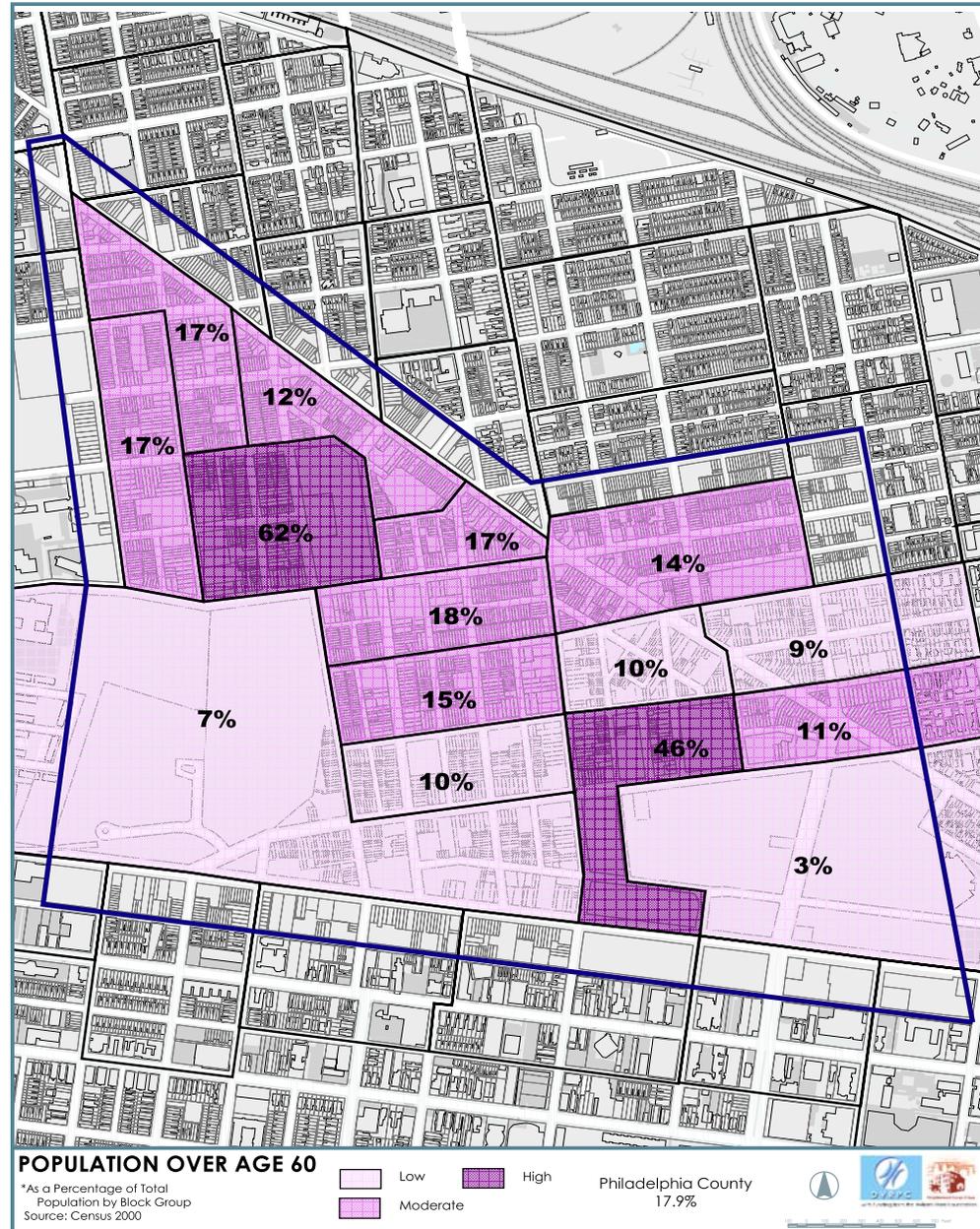


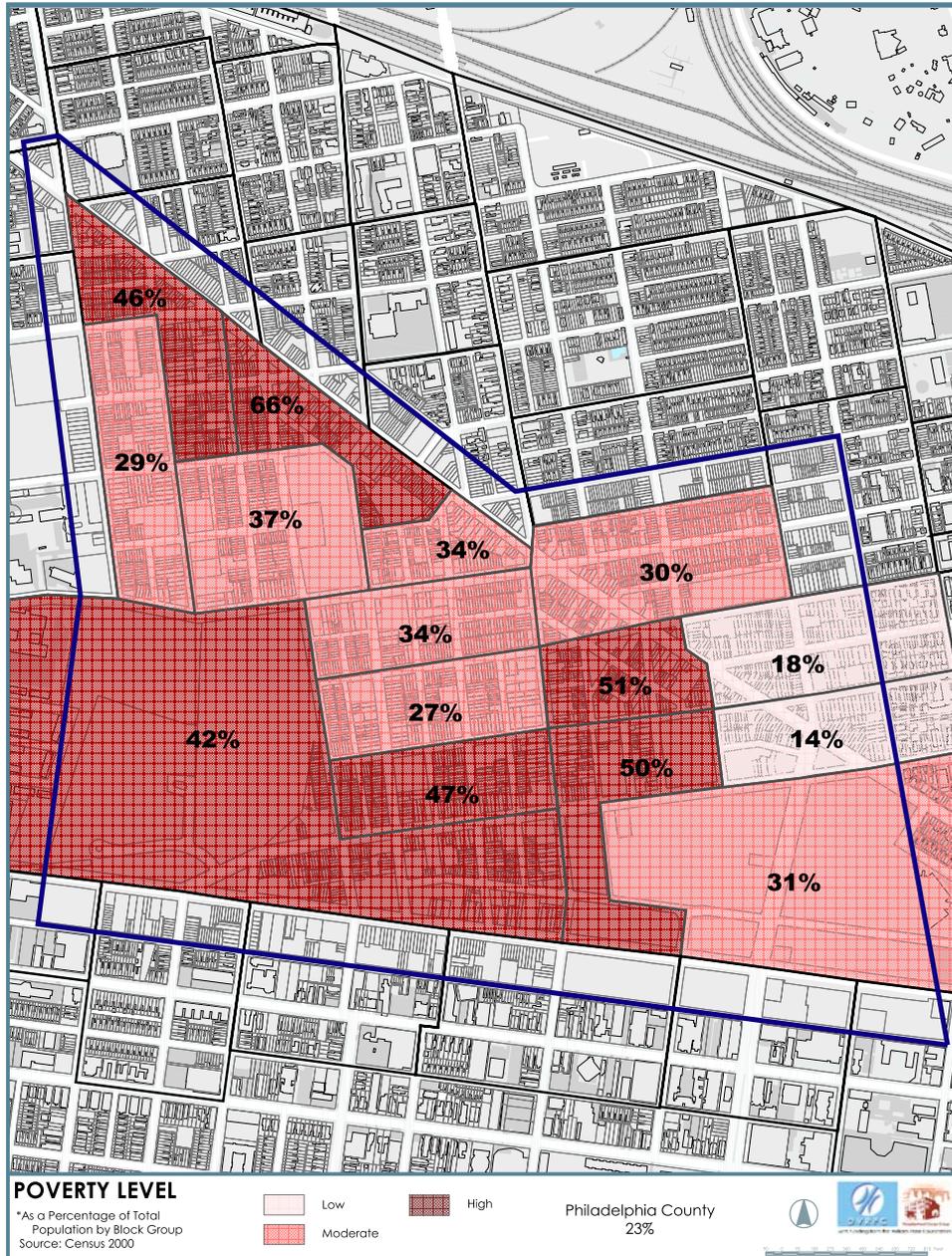
**Population Demographics/  
Socioeconomic Characteristics**

Total population of the study area in 2000 was approximately 8,500. Forty-Four percent of the population is male, but the percentage exceeds 50% in Powelton Village in the far east of the study area, where there are a large number of students. The population is overwhelmingly African-American, except for the Saunders Park and Powelton Village sections of the study area in the southeast, close to the universities. Median age of the population is highest in the northwest of the study area in Belmont, and lowest in the southeast, where many students live. The percentage of the population between 18 and 29 years of age is 21%, close to that for the city (19%). However the young adult population varies from over 50% in parts of Powelton Village, to under 10% in parts of Belmont in the northwest. Eighteen percent of the study area population is over 60, matching that for the city. However the elderly represents less than 10% of the population in much of Powelton Village, dominated by students and in the western section of West Powelton, dominated by the PHA West Park family housing development. The PHA Mt. Olivet Senior Housing at 42nd and Haverford Avenue and University Science Apartments for Seniors at 40th and Market Streets result in an unusually high percentage of people over 60 in the two census tract block groups surrounding these developments. Average household size varies from less than two in blocks dominated by housing for the elderly, single room occupancy accommodations and students, to near or above the city average of 2.34 in the west.

Median household income is well below the 2000 city median of \$30,746, and exceeds that for the city only in the southeast of the neighborhood, adjacent the University City Science Center.

**WEST POWELTON**





Median household income in other parts of the study area is only 50-66% of the city median, and several census tract block groups have median households incomes under \$20,000. Low incomes translate into a high population of residents who live below the poverty level. Thirty-seven percent of residents live below the poverty level compared to 23% for the city. In many of these blocks more than 50% of the residents live in poverty.

The unemployment rate in the study area was 20% in 1999, compared to 11% for the city as a whole. However unemployment varied widely, from under 5% on parts of Powelton Village to over 30% in parts of Saunders Park and West Powelton. Seventy-five percent of the population over 16 has a high school degree or better, compared to 71% for the city as a whole. Again, the percentage varies widely within the study area, from 85% in Powelton Village, to under 60% in parts of Belmont.

**Housing**

The homeownership rate in the study area is significantly lower than that for the city as a whole (59%). The percentage of owner occupied homes varies from less than 20% in much of the area east of 40th Street, to close to 50% in the far northwest of the study area, for an overall neighborhood homeownership rate of 28.7%. The Philadelphia Housing Authority West Park high-rise apartment development contributes to the low percentage of owner occupied homes in the southwest of the study area, while low homeownership rates in the east are due to the presence of senior housing, single room occupancy buildings, and student apartments. There are, however, significant pockets of owner occupied homes: in the 4000 block of Green Street vicinity, the 3700 block of Hamilton Street in Powelton Village, 42nd Street, and 4300 block of Reno Street vicinity. Several facilities serve residents with special needs, including the PEC



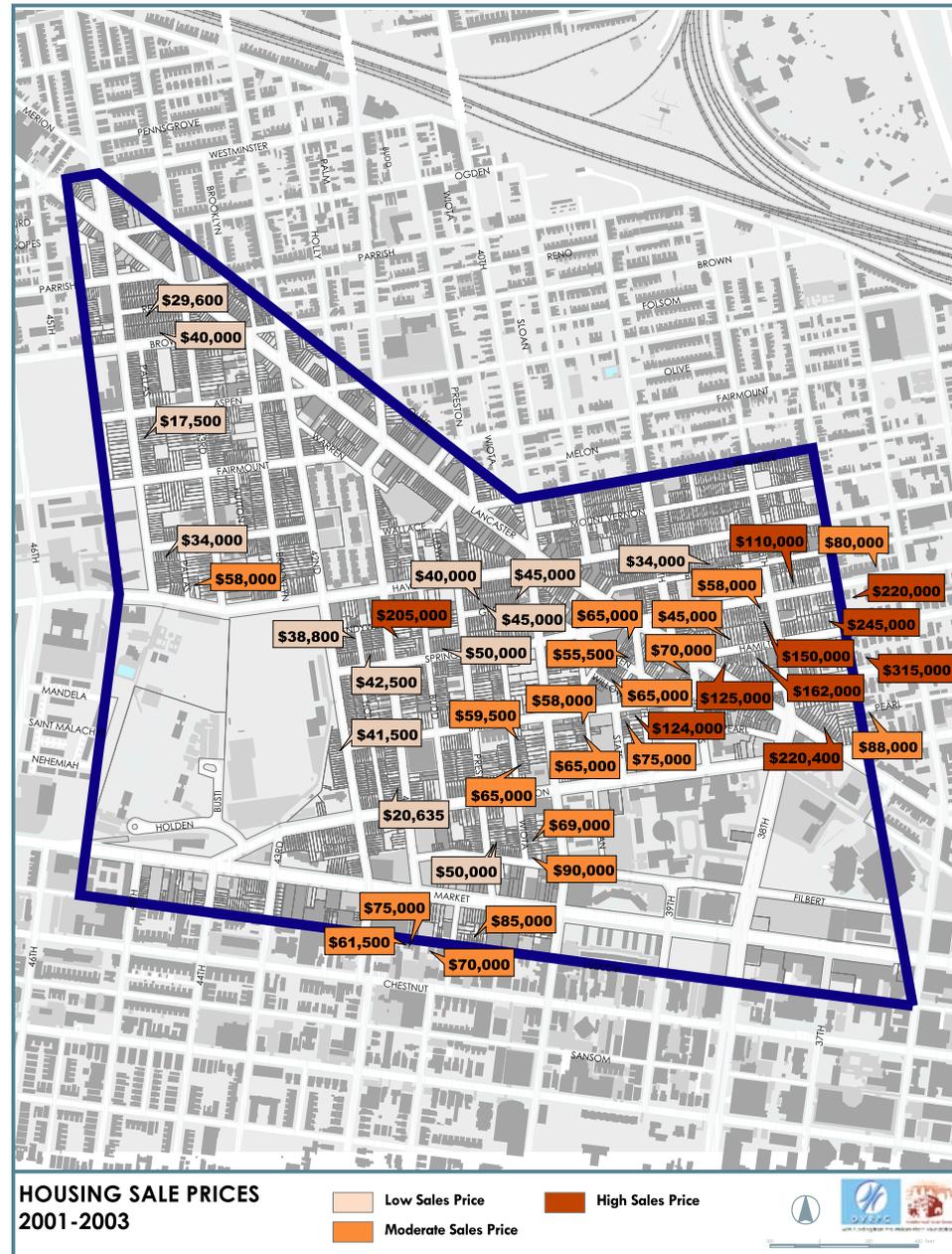
homeless shelter and transitional housing facility, the Red Cross shelter for disaster victims, and a handful of smaller residences for the retarded and/or mentally ill.

The housing vacancy rate exceeds that for the city as a whole (11%), particularly west of 40th Street. Vacancy rates in several block groups exceed 25%. The vacancy rate is lower than that of the city only in the southeast, south of Baring Street and east of 40th Street. However, neighborhood-wide, the vacancy level has declined by nearly 20% since 1990.

Housing values, as evidenced by sales over the last two years, vary widely between the east and west sides of the study area, but are all currently well below replacement value. Recent home sales prices have been in the \$50,000 to \$90,000 range east of Wiota Street, but only \$30-\$50,000 west of Wiota Street. The highest sales transaction for a home in Saunders Park has been \$124,000, for an attractive, well located home on 39th Street, near the park. However, immediately east of the study area on the 3600 block of Hamilton Street in Powelton Village, there have been recent sales of larger twin homes consistently above \$300,000. Presently, Lancaster Avenue and Spring Garden Street are perceived as important dividing lines in terms of property values, in the Powelton Village neighborhood. At present, low property values west of 40th Street provide little incentive for homeowners to improve their property. PECCDC has offered matching grants for facade improvements to homeowners on the 4000 block of Green Street, and in Saunders Park and they have seen adjacent homeowners begin to make repairs on their homes as well.

Because housing values are typically below replacement values, some form of public subsidy

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will likely be required to encourage reinvestment and redevelopment. Many federal and state housing assistance programs impose income restrictions on residents, which adversely affect the goal of creating a diverse community. Most federal subsidy programs limit assistance to low- and moderate-income residents earning less than 80% of the area median income (\$58,000 for a family of four, \$43,650 for a family of two, in 2003). The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA) Homeownership Choice Program, created to assist new homeownership development in blighted areas, limits benefits to middle income residents earning less than 120% of the state median income, (\$75,960 for a family of four, or \$60,720 for a family of two, in 2003).



*Sauders Park*



**Land Use and Zoning**

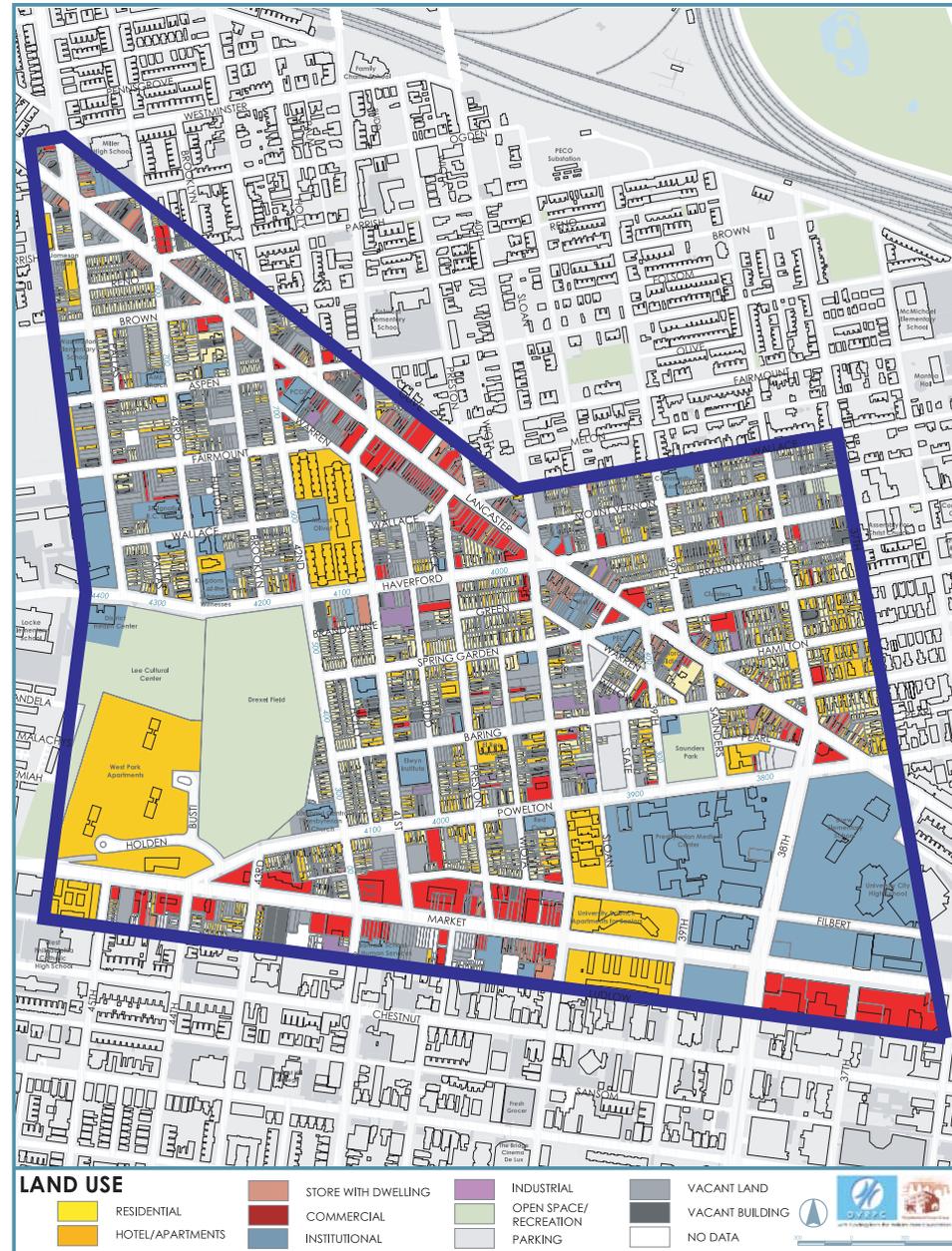
*Residential*

Most of the neighborhood was developed in the late-19th century with a mixture of 2- and 3-story semi-detached and row homes. Compared to much of North and South Philadelphia, there is a wide variety of architectural styles and housing types. Generally, larger 3-story row and twin homes front the major streets such as Powelton Avenue and Spring Garden Street, while smaller 2-story row homes front many of the smaller streets such as Sloan, Wiota and Holly. Unlike most sections of South and North Philadelphia, many homes are setback from the street with small front yards, and/or porches. Larger homes have often been converted to apartments, particularly east of Lancaster Avenue in Powelton Village and on Powelton Avenue and Preston Street. Major apartment developments include the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) West Park Apartments and Mt. Olivet Senior Housing, the University Science Apartments for Seniors, and Elrae Apartments on Baring Street. The Elrae Apartments, formerly owned by Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) but now privately owned, has been identified as a problem property and a blighting impact on the neighborhood.

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*The Elrae Apartments*



*City-owned lot behind the 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue*



Center Post Village, adjacent to Presbyterian Medical Center, Jameson Court at 44th and Brown Streets, and the Alan Klein subsidized apartment complex on the 3900 block of Powelton Avenue, are privately owned subsidized rental apartment complexes.

**Commercial**

Retail activity is concentrated along the Lancaster Avenue and Market Street transit corridors. Most buildings on Lancaster Avenue are typically 3-story narrow frontage row structures, originally with ground floor retail uses and upper floor apartments. While retail uses originally extended along most of the corridor, active retail uses are now limited to the 4000 and 4100 blocks of Lancaster Avenue. Stores serve a predominantly



*Very small irregular triangular blocks on Lancaster Avenue*



*Furniture Stores are located on Market St. west of 40th St.*

low-income transit dependent neighborhood clientele. Upper floors are mostly vacant. Deteriorated and vacant buildings on the 3800 and 3900 blocks discourage pedestrian access from Powelton Village. West of 42nd Street, there is a mix of vacant buildings, vacant lots, and marginal retail stores. There is no off-street parking except for the deteriorated and little used city-owned lot behind the 4000 block. The intersection of the Lancaster Avenue diagonal and the Philadelphia street grid results in a pattern of very small irregular triangular blocks, and multiple street intersections that create a challenging context for redevelopment. In addition, Lancaster Avenue is well trafficked with many cars and very few opportunities for pedestrians to cross Lancaster Avenue safely because it is a diagonal. This situation is further exacerbated because the distance between traffic light intersections is several blocks long.

On Market Street, marginal transit-oriented retail uses and furniture stores are located west of 40th Street, between 40th and Preston. West of Preston Street are predominantly auto-oriented retail

uses, including the new Eckerd Drugs and a Pep Boys. There are also commercial and workshop uses scattered throughout the study area. A particular concern is the large number of privately maintained auto repair shops, which park and repair cars on the sidewalk and vacant lots, and double park on the street. This creates a problem for pedestrians and traffic, as well as affecting the quality of life for neighborhood residents.

**Open Space/Recreation**

The principal city recreation center within the study area is the Lee Recreation and Cultural Center at 44th and Haverford.

The cultural center occupies the historic former Busti Mansion. Drexel Field, the Drexel University playing fields, are located on 42nd Street, but are not available for community use. Saunders Park, an attractive passive, grass open space, owned by Presbyterian Medical Center, is a focal point of the Saunders Park community. However, local children and families rarely choose to utilize this



*Drexel Field on 42nd Street*



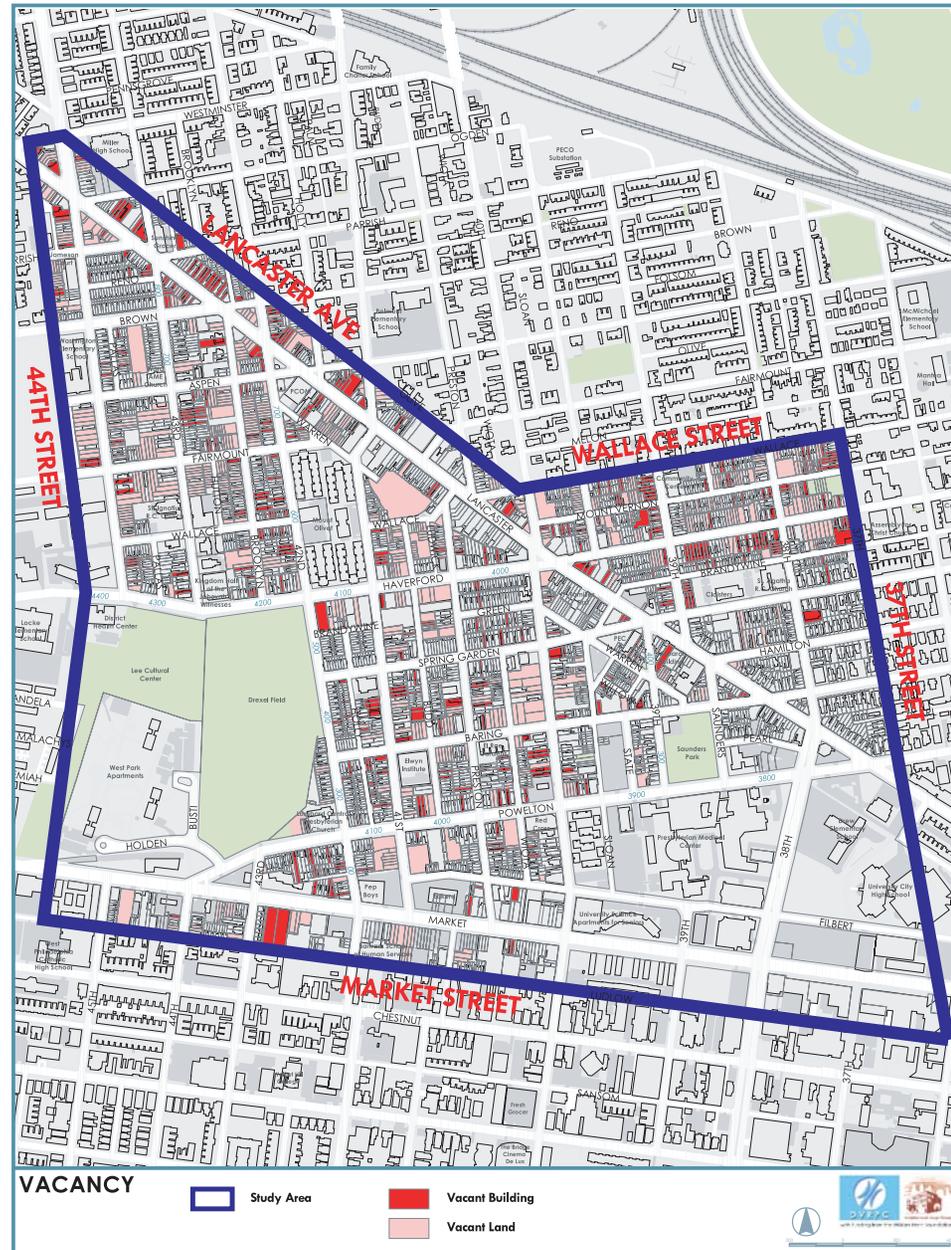
park because it is used as a dog park. Owners do not clean up after their dogs and the park is not conducive to recreation. Other recreation facilities include the tot-lot at Budd and Powelton, developed by PEC, the PECDL community playground is on the 3900 block of Warren St., and the passive grassed open space at Powelton and Wiota, adjacent the Red Cross building. There are active community gardens, including the Sloan Street garden, and the Lots of Love Park, located on the 4000 block of Wallace Street behind the little used city parking lot.

**Vacant Land and Buildings**

There are extensive areas of vacant land and individual vacant lots throughout the study area that have resulted from the demolition of vacant buildings. Concentrations of vacant land exist at the following locations:

- 4000 block of Baring Street.
- Blocks fronting Haverford Avenue and Mt. Vernon Street, between 37th and 40th Street in Mantua.
- Area east of Mt. Olivet, bounded by Haverford, 41st, Wallace, and Preston, including the Lots of Love community garden site.
- 700 block of Brooklyn Street vicinity, west of Mt. Olivet.
- Lancaster Avenue, west of 42nd Street.

Most of these vacant parcels are poorly maintained. In addition, there are numerous vacant buildings scattered throughout the study area, with concentrations in Mantua. While some vacant properties should be demolished, others are of architectural interest and offer an opportunity for encapsulation and future rehabilitation. An attractive former apartment building at 40th and Spring Garden that appears vacant and boarded, but accommodates a church run school offers an opportunity for rehabilitation.



In addition, there are two highly visible major vacant parcels at the southwest and northeast corners of 38th and Market Streets controlled by the University City Science Center. The development sites, currently used for surface parking, are Keystone Opportunity Zone sites.

***Institutions***

The University of Pennsylvania Presbyterian Medical Center on 38th Street, the principal institution within the study area, accommodates 300 beds, a noted cardiac facility and the renowned Scheie Eye Institute. In addition to the medical campus, it controls the parking lot on Powelton Avenue at

Sloan Street and Saunders Park. The layout of the campus isolates the community north of Powelton Avenue from Market Street as neither 39th Street, nor Sloan Street are through vehicular streets, nor do they provide pedestrian linkages through the campus. On the east side of 38th Street is the Drew Elementary School and University City High School. Developed during the 1960's the buildings are set back from the street and the expanses of asphalt playground, parking lots, and chain link fences create an unattractive environment, and a poor gateway to the community. In the west end of the study area is the Washington Elementary School dating from the 1930's.

***Other properties are of architectural interest and offer an opportunity for encapsulation and future rehabilitation***



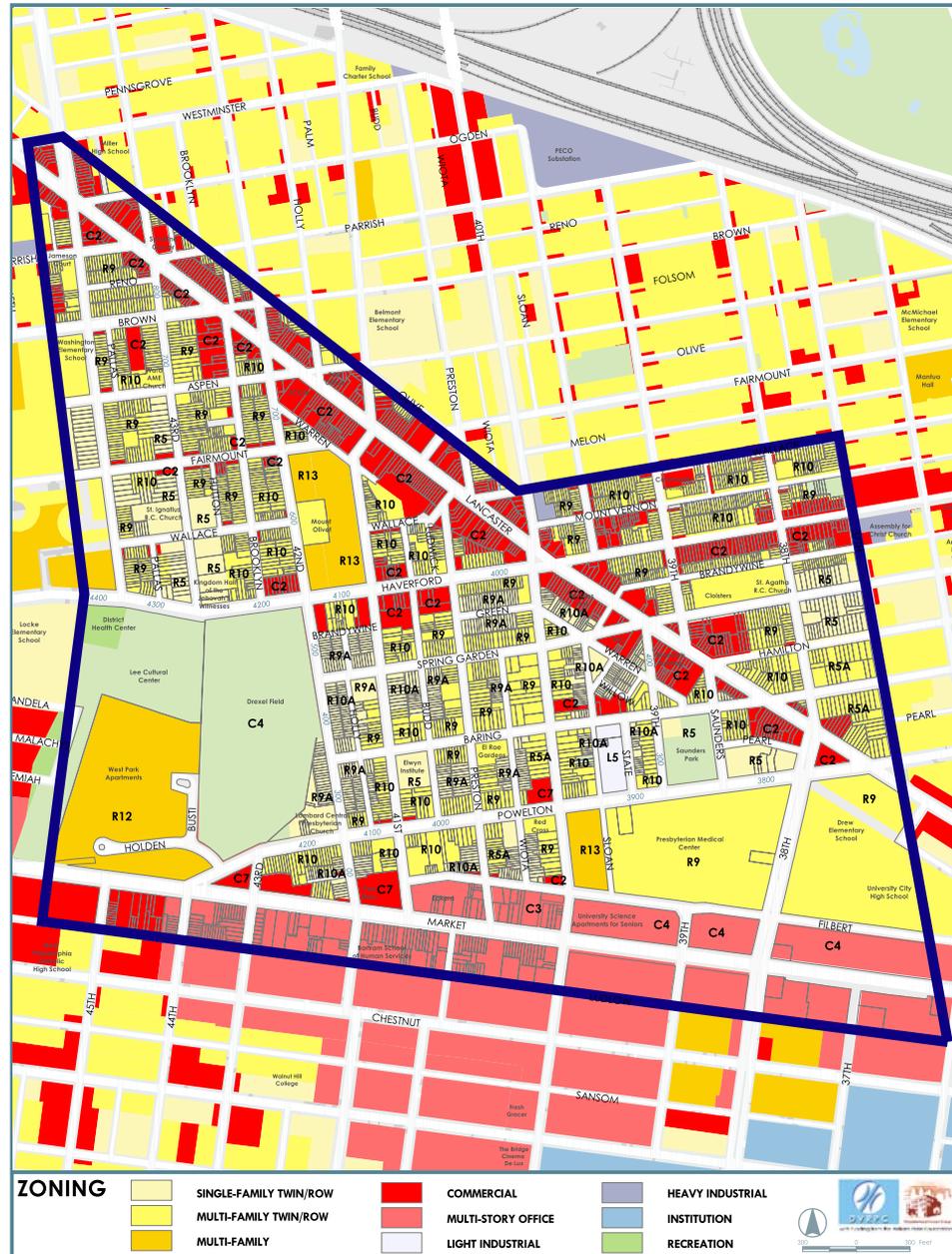
Presbyterian Medical Center

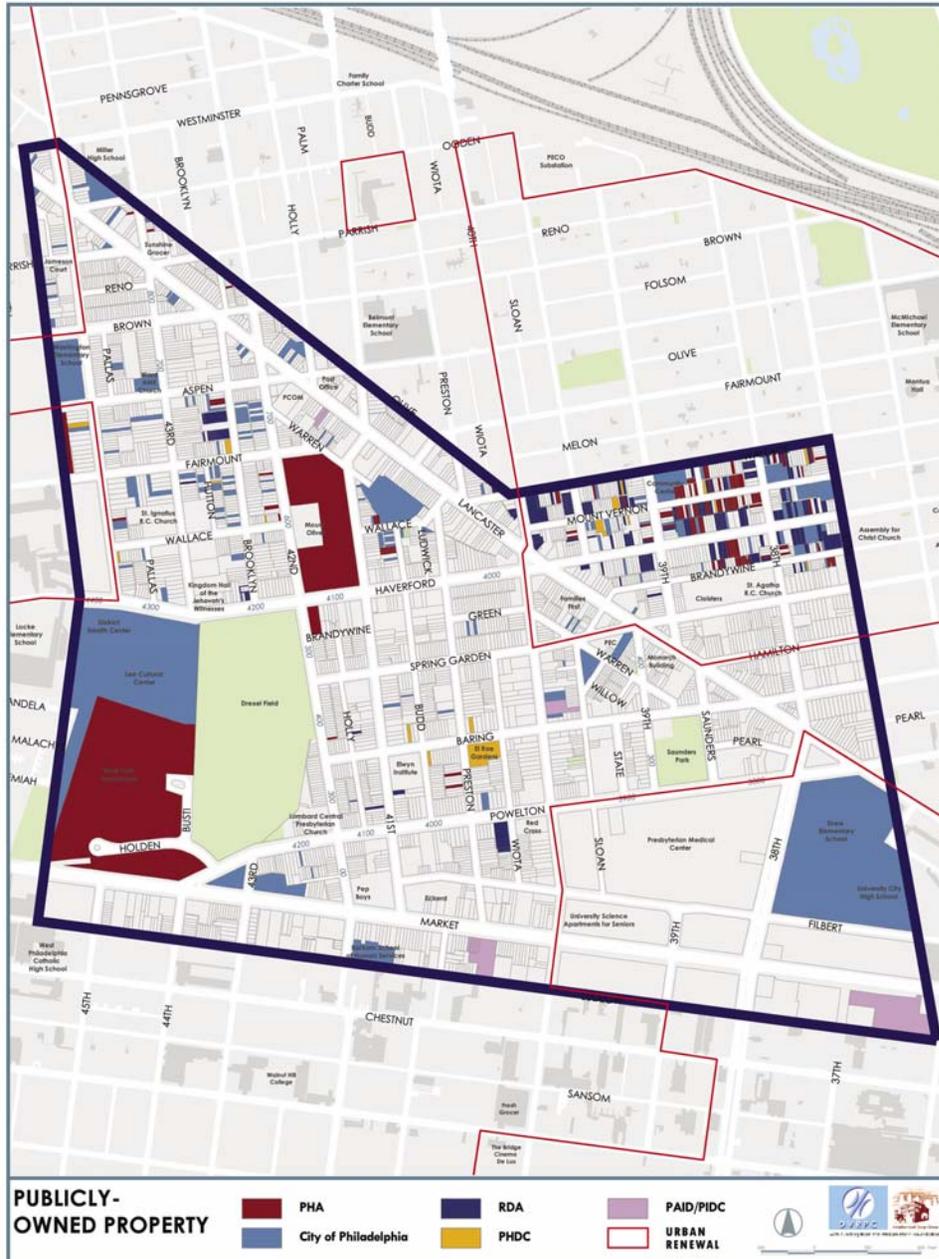


### Zoning

Residential zoning is generally consistent with existing land use, particularly in the Saunders Park/West Powelton area, where housing fronting smaller streets is zoned for single-family use, while larger homes on major streets permit multi-family use. North of Haverford Avenue in Belmont, and in Mantua, zoning is inconsistent with existing use, and most blocks are zoned for multi-family use, including homeownership enclaves such as the 4300 block of Reno Street.

There is an excessive amount of commercial zoning throughout the study area that is not reflective of existing conditions, or of economic realities for future development. Much of Haverford Avenue is zoned C2. While originally occupied by a variety of workshop uses and a bus garage, little commercial activity now exists or is likely to be viable in the future. Many corner parcels in Belmont, particularly on Fairmount Avenue, are also zoned C2, and do not reflect their current or potential use.





### Publicly Owned Property

Many of the publicly owned properties in the study area are vacant parcels resulting from the demolition of abandoned buildings. The most concentrated area of publicly owned land is in the Mantua section of the study area, in the vicinity of Mt. Vernon Street and Haverford Avenue, where the Redevelopment Authority has acquired numerous parcels under the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI) program. In the same area, Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) owns many occupied scattered site units on the 3800 blocks of Mt. Vernon Street. Other adjacent parcels are owned by the city and Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation (PHDC).

There is another concentration of publicly owned vacant lots in the vicinity of the 600 and 700 blocks of Brooklyn Street in the Belmont section of the study area, and several parcels on the 700 block of Budd Street adjacent the city owned parking lot. Other major publicly owned parcels include PHA's Mt. Olivet and West Park developments.

### Urban Renewal Areas

Much of the study area is located outside established Urban Renewal Areas. The portion of the study area in Saunders Park south of Powelton Avenue and east of 40th Street is located within the University City Urban Renewal Area. A portion of the study area in Mantua and Powelton Village east of 40th Street and north of Spring Garden Street and Hamilton Street is within the Mantua Urban Renewal Area.



## Historic Resources

The section of the study area fronting Lancaster Avenue extending north to Brandywine is located within the Powelton Historic District. While most of the historic district east of Lancaster Avenue has been restored, properties fronting the 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue are in need of rehabilitation. Other historic properties include the National Register Busti Mansion, now owned by the city and occupied by the Lee Cultural Center, and the locally certified Lombard Central Presbyterian Church at 42nd and Powelton.

The section of the study area bounded by Haverford Avenue, Powelton Avenue, Lancaster Avenue, and 42nd Street has been identified as an architecturally and historically sensitive area, where rehabilitation and infill development should be carefully reviewed for their impact on the character of the neighborhood. There are also a number of fine church buildings in the study area, as well as architecturally interesting, but deteriorated houses on 43rd Street north of Haverford. Two intact groupings of later, 1920's residential development are also of architectural interest; the block bounded by 44th Street, 43rd Street, Brown and Lancaster Avenue, centered on the 4300 block of Reno Street, and the block bounded by 41st Street, 42nd Street, Spring Garden and Brandywine Street.

### Lancaster and Hamilton Avenues



*The Monarch loft building*

The study area includes historically and architecturally important properties with a high potential for residential rehabilitation, including the Monarch loft Building on the 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue, and annex on Warren Street, as well as the attractive development fronting the intersection of 38th, Lancaster and Hamilton on the opposite side of the street. The entire 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue offers a high potential for historic rehabilitation, using historic tax credits.

## Crime

Drug related crime is a major problem in the study area, particularly in the vicinity of the 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue, and along the 40th Street corridor. The 41st and Lancaster Stop-n-Go is a center of drug related activity. Other problem locations include the Lots of Love Garden

vicinity and 42nd and Warren, both centers of prostitution and drug related activity. Other locations of drug activity include the WPCCC tot lot on the 4000 block of Powelton Avenue, the 16th Police District parking lot, the northeast corner of Saunders Park, and the 4100 block of Brandywine Street.

## Environmental Issues

The study area was developed with a mix of land uses. Past uses involving dry cleaning, manufacturing/industrial, printing, and gasoline station/automobile repair shops, all of which pose the greatest environmental concern, because of potential spills and leaks of chemical and waste products, and leaks from UST's. Based on past uses, areas of particular concern include Lancaster Avenue and Haverford Avenue, but workshops that pose potential environmental concerns were scattered throughout the study area. Of particular concerns are the large number of poorly maintained automobile service stations scattered throughout the area. The locations of past land use activities that may have had a detrimental impact on soils on the block have been identified.



*16th Police District parking lot*

### Transportation

The study area is served by two major transit lines: the Market Street Subway/Elevated with a station at 40th Street, and the Lancaster Avenue trolley. SEPTA buses operate on 40th and 41st Streets, Haverford Avenue, Aspen and Market Streets. Forty-Second Street is a predominantly residential street with heavy traffic volumes. Speeding traffic has been identified as a problem on wide, predominantly residential Powelton Avenue. In addition to Market Street and Lancaster Avenue, major traffic routes include 38th Street between Lancaster Avenue and Market Street, a divided arterial that links Lancaster Avenue to University City and functions as an important gateway for the study area. The wide street and heavy traffic volumes create a barrier to pedestrians. Haverford Avenue is an important east-west corridor that connects City Line Avenue and Lower Merion Township to West Philadelphia. Fortieth Street is a major north south link between Lancaster Avenue and the University of Pennsylvania campus to the south. Generally within the study area, wider streets accommodate 2-way traffic, while smaller streets are one-way.



Lancaster Avenue Trolley

### Neighborhood Aesthetics

The study area lacks a strong identity or sense of place, and because of its isolation, has little recognition within the Philadelphia community. In contrast, Powelton Village to the east has a strong image and attractive physical environment, but linkages between Powelton Village and Saunders Park are poor. The vehicular approaches to the study area and bounding streets are generally unattractive, particularly the gateways at Powelton Avenue and at Market Street, dominated by a poorly maintained auto repair facility and adjacent auto-oriented uses on Market Street. Poorly designed and maintained building facades and signage, as well as lack of streetscape improvements create a very negative image for the 40th and Market retail district. The 38th Street arterial is disfigured by the chain link and asphalt environment of the 1970's fortress-like University City High School while the intersection at 38th and Lancaster is dominated by a poorly designed single-story bank building that is out of character with its community context.

The character of Lancaster Avenue varies between 38th and 42nd Street. The 3800 block includes attractive historic buildings that form part of the Powelton Historic District, although most require rehabilitation. Those buildings, which are occupied are not busy and are closed to the Avenue pedestrian. They do not "invite" foot traffic. The 3900 block includes many vacant buildings, vacant lots, and an unsightly auto repair facility. The 4000 block



4000 block of Lancaster Ave.

has active retail stores, but buildings and signage are unattractive and poorly maintained. West of 41st Street, the Avenue quickly degenerates into a blighted environment of vacant lots and buildings. A used tire store located on a prominent triangle at the intersection of Lancaster, Aspen, and 42nd Street is particularly unsightly. The most distinctive image of the study area is the intersection of Haverford, 40th and Lancaster Avenue dominated by the magnificent former bank building now in disrepair, and occupied by Hoagie City. This intersection, if improved, could create a distinctive positive image and gateway for the area.

Within the study area, Saunders Park, and the abutting original hospital and residential buildings create a strong positive identity for this small relatively isolated residential enclave, although dog feces discourage use of the park by families and children. The park presents an opportunity for Presbyterian Medical Center to take a proactive role in making it cleaner and more inviting. There are still many sections of the study area affected by the larger number of poorly maintained vacant lots and vacant deteriorating buildings, particularly in Mantua on Haverford Avenue, in the 4000 block of Wallace Street vicinity behind the Lancaster Avenue parking lot, and in the Brooklyn Street vicinity,



west of Mt. Olivet. While there are many attractive buildings and groups of buildings throughout the study area, and a varied streetscape, many buildings are in disrepair. The 4000 block of Green Street, while basically architecturally attractive, is disfigured by deteriorating porches not repaired under previous facade improvement programs, and lack of street trees. The Elrae Apartments, on the 4000 block of Baring Street is a particularly unattractive development that presents a stark, grey window-less facade to the street, and is a blighting influence on the block.



Auto repair shop on Lancaster Ave.

### Community Issues

Community Issues and concerns were identified through an extensive public involvement process that sought out the opinions of all the principal stakeholders, as well as residents, in the West Powelton/Saunders Park community. Participants included People's Emergency Center CDC, Saunders Park Neighbors, Lancaster Avenue Business Association, University City District, West Powelton Concerned Community Council, Presbyterian Hospital, and Councilwoman Blackwell's Office.

The community provided input at a series of neighborhood task force meetings, a community visioning workshop, and public meetings. Residents participated in a Community Based Observation Technique exercise, in which they were provided with disposable cameras and invited to photograph places in the neighborhood that they thought contributed both positively and negatively to the community. The results were shared at the community workshop. In addition responses from a mail-back resident opinion survey were also analyzed and the findings incorporated.

A variety of housing, economic development, and quality of life issues were initially identified by stakeholders of the study area. These included:

#### 1. Housing and Community Development

- Demolition/encapsulation of vacant buildings
- Facade improvements to occupied homes
- Development of affordable/market rate/special needs services housing
- Development of a mix of rental/homeownership housing
- Concern that development serves people with a wide range of incomes

#### 2. Parks/Open Space

- Saunders Park improvements
- Pet/sitting parks
- Community gardens and improvement of Sloan Street garden
- Vacant lots as side yards
- Vacant lot maintenance
- Development of urban farm on vacant land
- Illegal use of large spaces and sidewalks for used car sales, auto repair, and storage of tires and appliances

#### 3. Economic Development

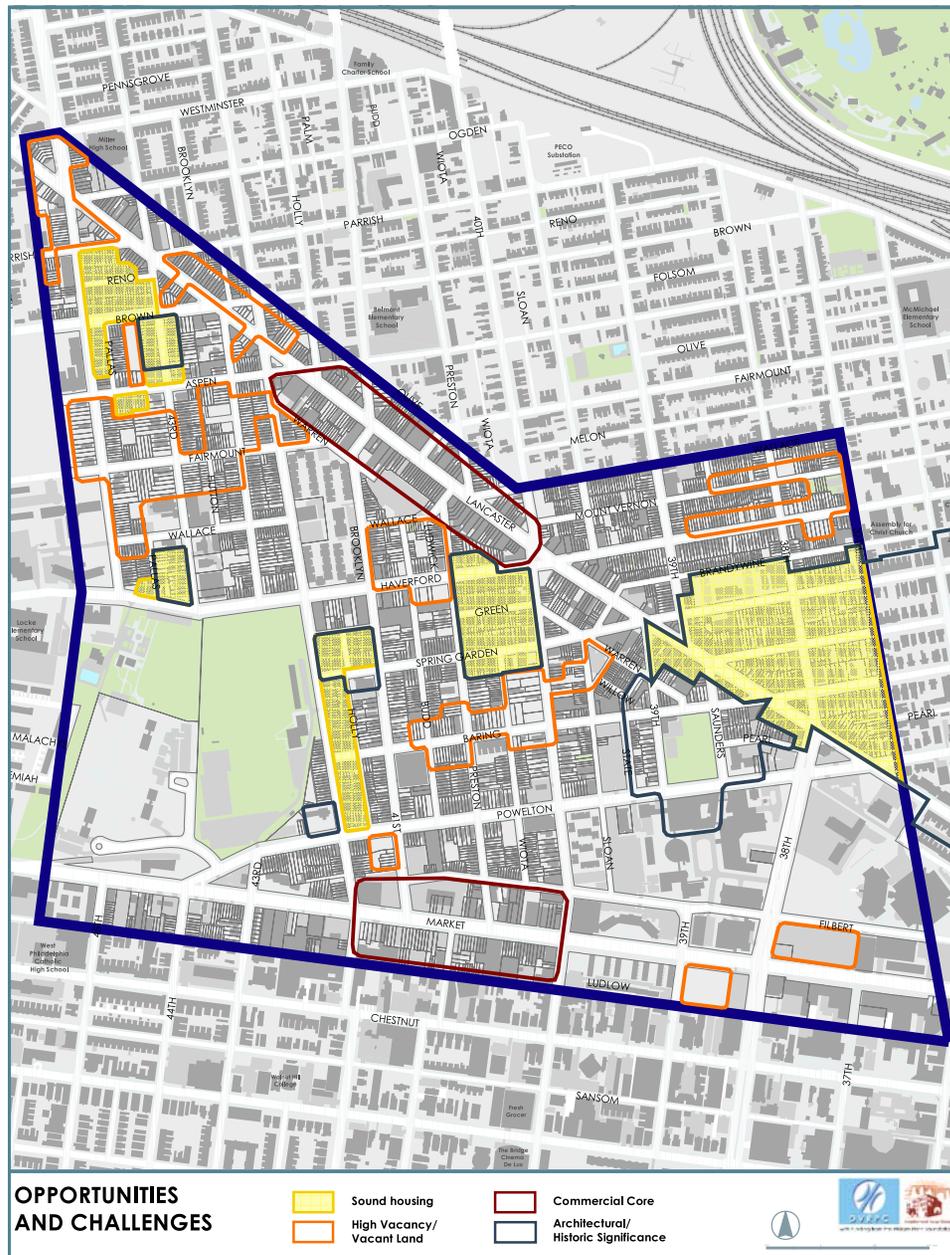
- Lancaster Avenue Revitalization
  - Consolidation of retail activities
  - Need for additional consumer goods and services
  - Streetscape improvements
  - Extension of University City Special Services District beyond 38th Street
- 40th & Market
  - Improvement of connections between community and The University of Pennsylvania

#### 4. Transportation

- Reassessment of one way street patterns
- Bus shelters on Lancaster Avenue
- Need for traffic calming on Powelton Avenue at 38th/39th Street
- Difficult resident parking on neighborhood streets in Saunders Park because of hospital employee parking

#### 5. Other

- Need to address street corner drug activity and other "quality of life" issues
- Improvement of "gateways"
- "One stop" neighborhood service center
- Employment linkages with institutions
- Community marketing
- Rationalize zoning
- Problem of sidewalk parking, associated with auto repair facilities and 16th Police District employees



## OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Based on the analysis of existing conditions, and community issues, the following opportunities and challenges affecting the revitalization of the study area were identified, to guide the development of recommendations for improvements.

### Housing and Community Development

#### Opportunities

- Proximity to University City and transit access to Center City
- Saunders Park open space as focal point for developing neighborhood
- Areas of sound housing that need reinvestment
- Attractive but neglected historic buildings on 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue



3800 Block of Lancaster Ave.

- Varied, architecturally interesting housing stock
- Vacant lots provide opportunity for new housing with contemporary amenities
- Potential for graduate student oriented housing east of 40th Street
- Proximity to desirable high property value blocks in Powelton Village



- Potential expansion of University of Pennsylvania mortgage assistance program to include portions of study area
- Keen interest in neighborhood improvements on the part of City Council member

#### **Constraints**

- Drug related crime and prostitution
- Large areas of poorly maintained vacant land, and deteriorated vacant buildings, not in public ownership
- Poor pedestrian connections to University City
- Existing building owners unwilling to invest in their property or use available subsidized loan/grant programs
- Property values do not support market rate reinvestment at present
- Unsightly ElRae Apartments on Baring Street
- Unattractive bounding streets and neighborhood gateways
- Poorly maintained auto repair shops that spill out into sidewalk areas
- Potential impacts of increasing property values on tax burden of existing low income residents
- Lack of zoning enforcement as to open land use

#### **Economic Development**

##### *Opportunities*

- Active retail district on 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue
- New subsidized housing in Mill Creek can help support retail investment
- Vacant land on 4100 block can provide opportunity for new retail
- Opportunity for auto-oriented retail on Market Street

##### *Constraints*

- Need to attract larger retail uses to Lancaster Avenue
- Need to encourage building owners to invest in their properties
- Deteriorated streetscape on Lancaster Avenue
- No obvious reuse potential for very deteriorated 4200/4300 blocks of Lancaster Avenue
- Lancaster Avenue diagonal results in small development parcels

#### **Transportation**

##### *Opportunities*

- Transit access to Center City and University City

##### *Constraints*

- Wide bounding arterials (Market Street, 38th Street) create a barrier to pedestrian movement
- Need for traffic calming on wide Powelton Avenue and busy 42nd Street
- Need for streetscape improvements on arterials, and Lancaster Avenue, as well as residential streets to create more attractive pedestrian environment.
- Need to address sidewalk parking issues



*Sidewalk auto repair on Pearl St.*

## WEST POWELTON/SAUNDERS PARK COMMUNITY VISIONING WORKSHOP

### Community Workshop Recommendations

Specific recommendations were developed during the community-visioning workshop held in the evening of July 21, 2003. The workshop was attended by a comprehensive group of stakeholders and representatives of the community. After a brief overview of the project team's initial observations, workshop participants were invited to join a series of "breakout" sessions to focus on specific topics, including "Housing and Community Development", "Economic Development" and "Transportation". The comments, ideas, and recommendations that were suggested by workshop participants, together with the observations of the project team, served as the basis for the development of detailed recommendations for the improvement of West Powelton/Saunders Park. A list of participants is included in the appendix.

### Housing/Community Development

- Improve "curb appeal" of neighborhood.
- Acquire, secure, and maintain vacant lots (PHS Clean and Green program-split rail fence/mown grass).
- Create dog walk park on vacant lots on 40th Street.
- Create permanent/fenced community gardens.
- Develop Urban Farm on vacant land in 40th Street/Baring vicinity.
- Develop more flexible facade improvement program for Saunders Park/West Powelton – focus on porches, whole blocks.
- Develop front yard lighting incentive program similar to UC Bright in Spruce Hill.



*Vacant lot stabilization  
in Mantua, 3700 block  
Haverford Ave.*

- Improve residential streetscape (sidewalks, trees) eg. 4000 block Green Street, similar to UC Green.
- Acquire and rehabilitate vacant properties in Powelton Avenue and Baring Street.
- Rehab/redevelop ElRae Apartments.
- Develop owner-occupied duplexes with rental unit for seniors, nurses etc. in Saunders Park.
- Consider relocation of Police District Station to Lancaster Avenue site. Create park from parking lot and rehab abutting residential buildings.
- Focus on 40th Street as spine for redevelopment (vacant buildings/lots/streetscape).
- Rental housing/duplexes on Haverford Avenue between 38th and 39th Street.
- Improve Saunders Park open space. Connect with a plan to improve the main entrance to Presbyterian Hospital. Encourage the Hospital to commit to redesign of the park, including a connection with the hospital entrance and a segregated dog park. Create Blind Garden to serve residents of Rudolph Home for Blind.



*Police District parking lot*

- Redevelop vacant land around Lancaster Avenue parking lot.
- Eliminate problem auto repair use at Baring/Lancaster Avenue intersection.
- Build Community Center in West Powelton for seniors/youth (41st and Powelton).
- Develop 38th/Lancaster Gateway.
- Build mid-rise apartments/mixed use development on Market Street.
- Enforcement – auto repair, used car sales, etc.
- Seek designation of the community as a Philadelphia "Livable Neighborhood Program" (LNP).



## Economic Development

- Create facade improvement program for Lancaster Avenue.
- Encourage installation of 2nd floor windows on Lancaster Ave.
- Focus on 40th Street link to Penn.
- Consider relocation of Police District Station to more central location on Lancaster Avenue.
- Encourage needed businesses: market, bank, upscale shops, restaurants, gas station, drugstore.
- Expand Mike's Hardware.
- Rehab Labor Ready Building.
- Address Stop-n-Go problem.
- Define respective goals and roles of PECCDC, UCD, LABA.

## Transportation

- Create sidewalk extensions at corners of wide residential streets such as Powelton Avenue to reduce speeding and make pedestrian crossings safer.
- Relocate police station to address associated police parking problems.
- Install sidewalk bumpouts on Lancaster Avenue to calm traffic and improve pedestrian safety.
- Relocate 40th Street Lancaster trolley stop to enlarged island.
- Consider University City trolley loop.
- Replace rusted trolley poles.
- Add transit shelters with advertising on Lancaster Avenue.

### *Vacant MOCS Building on 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue*



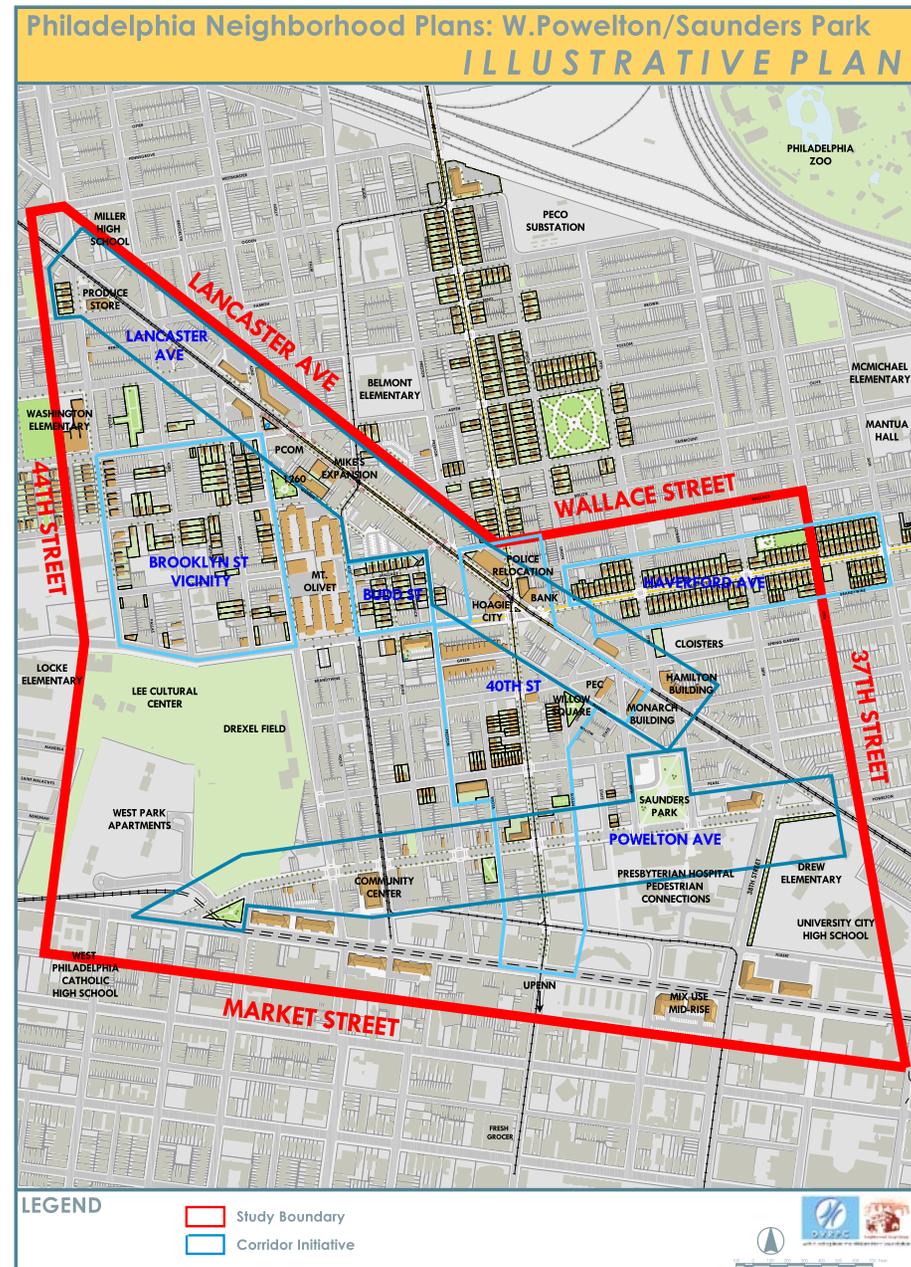
- Create landscaped median on 38th Street, together with maintenance plan.
- Make 38th/Powelton intersection safer for pedestrians.
- Slow speeding traffic on Powelton between 38th and 40th Street.
- Make Haverford Avenue and Spring Garden 2-way east of Lancaster Avenue.
- Install sidewalk extensions at intersections on 42nd Street and Baring to increase pedestrian safety.

### CHAPTER 3: WEST POWELTON/SAUNDERS PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the analytical work completed by the consultant team and input from the community-visioning workshops and community-wide meetings, detailed planning recommendations were developed for the Saunders Park/West Powelton neighborhood. From these recommendations a list of priority projects for early implementation was established. The recommendations focus on addressing quality of life concerns, improving the physical connections to the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University, supporting market rate housing reinvestment, improving open space, encouraging the preservation and rehabilitation of the interesting and varied housing stock, and revitalizing the Lancaster Avenue commercial corridor. Important city actions to support reinvestment will include expansion of the urban renewal area to cover the entire study area and facilitate acquisition of properties for development, as well as changes to zoning, to reflect proposed development patterns.

Planning recommendations are classified under the following categories:

- Quality of life improvements
- Housing, open space and community development
- Economic development
- Transportation





## QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS

Quality of life improvements, including safety, and cleanliness improvements are the highest priority for the community.

### Improve safety and security for all residents

During the community planning process, neighborhood residents identified crime as the primary threat to neighborhood stability. As a result, community leaders from WPCCC, SPN, the HUB Coalition along with PECCDC created a neighborhood Town Watch. Residents meet regularly and the town watch has received official designation by the City of Philadelphia. This is a priority effort and community leaders, residents and PECCDC should pursue other strategies to reduce crime and eliminate nuisance corners.

Collaborative meetings should be arranged between the community organizations, Police Department, UCD Security, the Anti-Graffiti Network, and Presbyterian Medical Center Security to prioritize specific problems, and determine how they should be eliminated. Priority problems to be addressed include:

- Muggings and assaults
- Property crimes (break-ins, porch furniture thefts, graffiti)
- Intimidation
- Panhandlers
- Drug dealers

Coordination meetings should also focus on shortening police response time.

### Improve Cleanliness of Neighborhood

A clean neighborhood was cited as a high priority by residents. Problems include blowing trash, dog feces, and improper disposal of residential trash. The community should work with the city to identify specific trash disposal problems,



and develop a community education campaign and enforcement program to assure that trash is put out on correct days. An education program targeted to dog owners should be initiated. A location for a dog park will be identified. Residents should cooperate to implement neighborhood clean up days. Additional trash receptacles should be installed on Lancaster Avenue. Seek designation of the community as a “Livable Neighborhood” under the Philadelphia Livable Neighborhood Program.

### Community Building: Leadership Development and Community Association Development Support

Community activities are a highly valued aspect of the neighborhood, particularly in Saunders Park. The community should seek public or foundation grants to fund workshops that can help each community association develop leadership and community activism skills, as well as focus on the development of cultural activities. Potential sources of support include the Philadelphia Livable Neighborhood Program (LNP).

### Financial Health Management Seminars

Last year, the PECCDC, in partnership with the Partnership CDC, conducted a financial seminar to educate neighborhood residents on strategies to repair credit as a first step toward homeownership. Funding should be sought to enable the delivery of additional seminars throughout the next five-year period.

### Digital Inclusion Program

In partnership with the United Way and AchieveAbility, PECCDC has completed the distribution of 100 computers to neighborhood residents in addition to providing them with internet access. Funding should be sought to enable PECCDC to widen the wireless internet network to reach more community members and to distribute 100 additional computers over the next three years. An expanded civic engagement project should be pursued to link community leaders and their members in an effort to ensure that as many community members as possible are kept abreast of local events and community resources. Development of a neighborhood-based web site could also promote marketing of area programs and encourage on-line communication. Future residential development sites should also be wired to participate in the wireless network.

### Education and Cultural Development

Relationships should be developed between Drew and University City High School and the community, businesses and cultural institutions, to encourage residents and workers to support school activities, and view the schools as a community resource for programs such as after school and cultural activities. Both Drew and University City High School are unattractive facilities. The School District should improve the external appearance of the schools, and provide increased levels of funding in a similar manner to the Penn-assisted school.

Recognizing the importance of high-quality educational opportunities to the success of neighborhood stability, a feasibility analysis should be performed for the development of a charter or a community elementary school. This study will include an examination of appropriate sites, potential owner/administrator of the school and funding possibilities.

## HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Housing and Community Development planning recommendations are focused on maintaining and enhancing the diversity of the community, by balancing assistance to existing residents, with actions to encourage the development of new and rehabilitated housing serving people with a wide range of income, age and lifestyles. A particular concern in the community is the need to provide incentives and limited subsidies to encourage housing development/rehabilitation for the population that cannot afford the cost of a \$300,000 “market rate” new home, but have incomes that exceed the 80% of median income restrictions that apply to many federal housing subsidizing programs. It is important that city and state funding sources be identified to provide housing incentives for this population group. Recommendations fall under the following general headings:

- Assistance to property owners
- Streetscape improvements
- Strategic scattered-site rehabilitation of vacant buildings
- Major residential developments
- Rehabilitation of occupied buildings
- Improvement of existing open space and vacant lot acquisition/maintenance
- Community facilities
- Education about mainstream and private market products, which are geared to help working families

### Assistance to Existing Property Owners

The need to improve the “curb appeal” of the neighborhood was a major theme of the community meetings. A top priority for residents was to improve the overall appearance of

buildings, public streets and vacant land. The community believed that one of the key ways of improving the appearance of the neighborhood as well as benefiting existing residents was a program of incentives to property owners to improve the appearance of the outside of their properties.

Many homes in West Powelton/Saunders Park have wood front porches that have fallen into disrepair. Many long-time neighborhood homeowners are unable to afford necessary improvements to their homes. PECCDC recently implemented a facade improvement program to address this issue and to date nearly 20 homes have received improvements and 20 homes are currently in the pipeline. Funding is limited to roughly \$10,000 a house. While this program has enabled some homeowners to make limited exterior and interior improvements, a sweeping dramatic transformation to the exteriors of all the homes on a block has not occurred due to limited funding. Expansion of the Facade and Home Improvement Repair Program is required. Incentives should not be limited by resident income, to assure the maximum level of participation, and greatest impact on the block.

In addition, the University of Pennsylvania should be encouraged to extend their successful mortgage assistance program to cover the area east of 41st Street and North of Market Street.

Poorly maintained rental properties are also a problem in the neighborhood. The community should work to identify all landlords and develop an outreach program to focus on issues such as trash disposal, property maintenance, and parking, as well as encourage landlords to improve the appearance of the buildings and property landscaping. Target blocks for facade improvements include the following:

#### a) 4000 block of Green Street

The 4000 block of Green Street is a potentially attractive block of 3-story architecturally and historically interesting rowhouses with a high percentage of owner-occupied homes. PECCDC investment on this and adjacent blocks, proximity to the relatively stable 4000 block of Spring Garden Street, and location on the important 40th Street corridor link to University of Pennsylvania, make it a





logical candidate for an expanded facade improvement program. PECCDC should pursue additional funding to develop standard design guidelines to address the repair/ replacement of porch structures, and railings, replacement of windows, repair of dormers and mansards, cleaning and pointing of brick work, and improvement of front yard areas, and other elements which have an impact on the public perception of the block. Funding should also be sought to cover the costs of these additional improvements, estimated to be approximately \$25,000 to \$30,000 for each property.

**b) 4000 block Spring Garden Street**

Once the 4000 block of Green Street is completed, this program should be extended to other blocks with a focus on porches or other defining aspect of the homes on the block.

To complement these efforts, the 4000 block of Spring Garden Street should also be targeted for scattered site rehabilitation and the facade improvement program. Existing homeowners should be encouraged to improve their properties through marketing of appropriate loan and grant products.

**c) 3800 block Brandywine Street**

Aggressive marketing of city income-restricted home improvement loan and grants to residents of the 3800 block of Brandywine Street will support the adjacent Cloister III development.

**d) 4300 blocks of Reno, Brown, and Parrish Streets**

These blocks of distinctive homes with bay windows, porches, and front yards have a high percentage of owner occupants, and most houses are in sound condition, compared to surrounding blocks. They represent an island



**4300 block of Brown Street**

of stability in a generally deteriorating area. Existing owners should be encouraged to continue to invest in their properties, through marketing of city loans and grants. Existing residents, especially in Saunders Park have expressed concern over the potential increase in property taxes as reinvestment takes place and the value of properties increases. The community should work with the city and councilwoman's office to develop mechanisms to assure that tax increases resulting from reassessments are spread over an appropriate time period to avoid sudden major increases in tax burdens. A consolidated list of home repair programs for owners should be collected and maintained for distribution by PECCDC for ready-access by residents.

**Streetscape Improvements**

Improvements to the public environment will support property owner investment, and also enhance the appearance of the neighborhood.

**a) Enforce prohibition on sidewalk parking at auto repair shops**

Neither parking on the sidewalk, nor repair of vehicles on the sidewalk is not permitted under the Philadelphia Code. While the community supports local, appropriately managed auto repair businesses there are several auto repair shops in the study area where sidewalks,

intersections and even sidewalk curb cuts, are continually blocked by parked vehicles in various stages of repair and/or by owners, employees and customers of these shops. Such activity is an impediment to pedestrians, creates a safety hazard, is unsightly, and adversely impacts residents' quality of life as well as property values. Particular problems are associated with the auto repair shops on 40th Street north of Baring Street, the 3800 block of Baring Street at the eastern corner of Lancaster Avenue, and the 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue. There is a large unauthorized unsightly used car lot on a vacant parcel at the corner of 40th and Baring. The community should coordinate a joint meeting with all relevant city agencies and work with the District Council person, the police district, and Department of Licenses and Inspections to assure the collective and comprehensive enforcement of the law, and consistent and continuing enforcement of prohibitions on parking and repair of vehicles on the sidewalk. City law governing parking ticket issuance specifically exempts West Powelton/Saunders Park from Philadelphia Parking Authority enforcement of illegal parking.

**b) 4000 block of Green Street and 40th Street Corridor**

There are presently no street trees on the 4000 block of Green Street, sidewalks are cracked, and curbs sunken. Proposed streetscape improvements to the 4000 block of Green Street, including new curb and sidewalks, historically appropriate street lighting, and street tree planting, will complement the facade improvements.

Fortieth Street is the major southbound link to the University of Pennsylvania from the north. The Northwest Philadelphia Master Plan has already identified improvement



**40th Street at Baring Street**

of the deteriorated 40th Street corridor north of Lancaster Avenue as a priority for redevelopment. Fortieth Street is also the perceived boundary between the Saunders Park and West Powelton neighborhoods. The deteriorated character of 40th Street discourages investment west of 40th Street and acts as a barrier between the two neighborhoods. Proposed streetscape improvements including new curbs and sidewalks, historically appropriate lighting to match the University of Pennsylvania's lights on 40th Street south of Market Street, and street tree planting improvements, will enhance the connections between University of Pennsylvania and the neighborhoods north of Market Street, as well as improve linkages between the Saunders Park and West Powelton neighborhoods.

These improvements should be funded through the City's Capital Improvement Program. The community should meet with the city Streets Department and Planning Commission to discuss the scope and funding of the project.

**c) Powelton Avenue, Sloan Street to 42nd Street**

Powelton Avenue is a wide 2-way street and the east-west spine of the community that links West Powelton/Saunders Park to Drexel University and the Powelton Village

neighborhood to the east. The 38th Street, Powelton/Lancaster Avenue intersection is a major gateway to Saunders Park from the east. The intersection of Powelton and Market Street at 44th Street is a major gateway from the west. Both Saunders Park, and the historic Presbyterian Medical Center front on Powelton Avenue. Many blocks lack trees, and sidewalks are often in a deteriorated condition, particularly west of 40th Street. Streetscape improvements, including new curb and sidewalks, sidewalk bump-outs and parking restrictions at corners, street trees and lighting will improve the appearance of this east-west spine and encourage reinvestment. These improvements should be funded through the City's Capital Improvement Program. The community should meet with the Streets Department and Planning commission to discuss scope and funding of the project.

Lighting should match that installed by the University of Pennsylvania south of Market Street, to enhance the perception that the community is part of University City. The University of Pennsylvania should be approached by the District Councilperson to gauge their interest in extending their program to West Powelton. In addition, community groups should initiate discussions with the Philadelphia Department of Streets, regarding city participation in funding the lighting.

**Strategic Scattered-Site Rehabilitation of Vacant Buildings**

There are vacant buildings scattered throughout the study area, particularly west of 40th Street. Initial efforts should be targeted to addressing the rehabilitation or redevelopment of vacant buildings on key corridors, including 40th Street, and Powelton Avenue, that link the neighborhood to University of Pennsylvania and Drexel.

**a) Powelton Avenue, Sloan to 43rd Street**

There are several deteriorated vacant structures on Powelton Avenue that detract from the appearance of the corridor. Of particular concern to West Powelton residents are the vacant buildings at 4226-30 Powelton Avenue. All vacant buildings on Powelton Avenue between Sloan and 43rd Street should be acquired by PECCDC under NTI program, and marketed for non-income restricted residential rehabilitation. Because the cost of rehabilitation will exceed the market value, public subsidies will be required.

**b) 4000 blocks of Green and Spring Garden Streets**

Vacant properties on the 4000 block of Green Street have been generally acquired by PECCDC, and rehabilitated into permanent supportive-service rental housing and homeownership units for first-time homebuyers. The remaining vacant properties on these blocks should be acquired through NTI and rehabilitated into non-income restricted homeowner housing units, using public subsidies to fund the difference between rehabilitation costs and market value.

**Rehab on Powelton Avenue**



**WEST POWELTON**



c) *Baring Street, 39th to 42nd Street*

Baring Street is an important westbound street that links the Saunders Park and West Powelton neighborhoods. There are several vacant buildings along this corridor that, if acquired and rehabilitated, would contribute to the improvement of this corridor, in conjunction with acquisition and maintenance of vacant lots, and improvement of occupied buildings. Vacant buildings should be acquired through NTI.



*Baring and  
39th Streets*

d) *40th Street, Spring Garden to Powelton Avenue*

There are several vacant deteriorated properties along the 40th Street corridor, including the highly visible, mostly unused 4-story apartment building at 40th and Spring Garden. The ground floor part of the building is currently being used as a church. This attractive structure could be rehabilitated for apartments targeted to young singles or the elderly. The current owner should be contacted to discuss possibilities of developing the building as apartments. An alternative longer-term strategy would involve the acquisition of the property by a developer for



*40th St. and Spring Garden Streets*

non-income restricted residential rehabilitation. Other vacant buildings, including 317 N. 40th Street should be acquired for non-income restricted residential rehabilitation, through NTI. A vacant property rehabilitation program should be established, to provide financial incentives to both rental developers and owner occupants.

e) *500 block of 39th Street*

Acquisition and rehabilitation of vacant structures on this block through NTI will support the proposed Cloisters Phase III development, and should be developed into homeownership housing.

f) *44th and Reno Street*

The residential block bounded by Parrish and Brown is generally well maintained, and in good condition. The one highly visible, very deteriorated vacant property at the corner of Reno and 44th Street, opposite Jamison Court should be acquired through NTI, and rehabilitated by PECCDC as an affordable homeownership housing project, to complete this block.

**Major Residential Development**

Several sites offer the opportunity for major new construction and rehabilitation with both residential and mixed-use development that can spur the revitalization of the neighborhood. While some of these opportunities provide immediate prospects for development, others are long-term recommendations that are dependent on a stronger real estate market in the neighborhood. While some sites are suitable for market rate development, others are more appropriate for affordable rental or homeownership development.

a) *Mid-Rise Mixed-Use Development on Market Street*

The Market Street corridor is effectively the dividing line between the University of Pennsylvania sphere of influence and the West Powelton/Saunders Park residential



*Vacant building  
on 39th Street*



**Apartment building example**

neighborhoods. University of Pennsylvania-funded streetscape improvements on 40th Street terminate at Market Street. The proliferation of vacant lots, surface parking, auto-oriented retail, and marginal residential uses on Market Street create a barrier between the University and the study area.

Development sites currently used for parking at Market and 38th Streets adjacent to the University Science Center offer the long-term potential for higher density transit-oriented mid-rise mixed-use development and adequate structured or underground parking. Loft-style apartments would be targeted to University faculty and employees and others who work in the vicinity. Other underdeveloped blocks currently occupied by marginal residential and commercial uses and parking, also offer the longer term potential for high density mixed-use residential and commercial development and supporting underground parking structures that can invigorate and create a new sense of place for this dispiriting corridor. City owned vacant lots at 38th and Market should be marketed for mixed-use development.

**b) Monarch Building, 3800 block Lancaster Avenue – Mixed-Use Development**

The vacant Monarch loft building, located within the Powelton Village National Historic District, is a highly visible landmark on Lancaster Avenue, and could provide an opportunity for market rate non income restricted residential rehabilitation for apartments targeted to singles, with first floor specialty retail such as an arts supply store, or as an artists’ live/work development. The development would also include adjacent buildings at 3862-68 Lancaster Avenue, to permit opening of windows in the party wall



**Monarch Building**

side elevation. Funding should be secured to complete a feasibility study for redevelopment of this important City landmark. An artists’ residence would complement University of Pennsylvania’s interest in promoting cultural corridors.

**c) Saunders Park Infill Development**

Property values in Saunders Park, east of 40th Street are such that there may be opportunities for market rate infill construction on vacant lots. A private developer is currently constructing a duplex at the corner of State and Powelton. Other vacant parcels on State Street, Sloan Street, and Baring Street should be developed for market rate single-family and duplex homes. There should be an opportunity to develop owner occupied

duplexes that include a rental unit for nurses at Presbyterian Medical Center, or University researchers. The character of new housing would be similar to other similar developments in Center City, combining both traditional and contemporary elements in moderate density attached homes. A particularly interesting development opportunity could be the vacant parcels on the 400 block of Sloan Street, which will front the proposed new Willow Square Park, created on the site of the police parking lot, after relocation of the police station. (See Community Facilities) Developer interest



**Infill site, Saunders Park**



**Market rate infill construction example**



should be solicited for potentially available parcels. Land assembly costs should be absorbed by the city, and limited state or city subsidies secured, to assure that the homes are available to middle income buyers with a range of incomes.

**d) 3700-3900 Haverford Avenue/Brandywine Street**

Parts of the 3700 and 3800 blocks of Haverford Avenue are proposed for new affordable rental and homeownership development as part of the Cloisters III development. Much vacant land and many vacant buildings have been acquired by PECCDC under NTI. Haverford Avenue over the longer term may offer opportunities for market rate development as outlined in the Northwest Philadelphia Master Plan, because of its proximity to Powelton Village and Drexel University. After the completion of Cloisters III, future new housing on these blocks should be developed with non-income restricted housing but using available subsidies to assure sales prices are affordable by people with a range of incomes. NTI should continue to acquire and demolish deteriorated occupied properties in the vicinity, to consolidate larger development parcels.

**e) 4050 Haverford Avenue**

This large vacant lot should be developed for new subsidized rental or homeownership housing. It is located around the corner from the 4000 block of Green Street and development of this lot will deter current drug activity and further stabilize the redevelopment already completed on the 4000 block of Green Street.



**f) 4100 block of Warren Street**

The 4100 block of Warren Street, adjacent to the newly renovated Philadelphia College of Osteopathic of Medicine (PCOM) medical center, consists of trash-strewn lots and vacant blighted buildings with environmental concerns. The 1260 Housing development group proposes to develop the site into affordable rental housing, which will further the stabilization of the area adjacent to the newly upgraded PHA Mount Olivet senior housing development, as well as support reinvestment along the soon to be upgraded Lancaster Avenue retail corridor. PCOM secured brownfields funding to conduct remediation and transferred the properties originally slated for parking to 1260 Housing.

**g) 4100 block of Wallace Street/600 block of Budd Street**

The 600 block of Budd Street is behind the Lancaster Avenue public parking lot and is one of the two most blighted sections of the study area. While some of the vacant land is currently occupied by the Lots of Love community garden, the area is isolated, and a notorious center of drug activity. Because of the isolation and lack of surrounding homes, it is not well



**Affordable rental or sales housing example**

located for a permanent community garden. Because of the proximity of the site to the PHA Mount Olivet senior housing complex, now under renovation, as well as to the Lancaster Avenue retail district public parking lot, the site is proposed for new single-family, twin, or possibly duplex affordable rental or sales housing. Vacant land, vacant buildings, and remnant occupied deteriorated buildings should be acquired under NTI. Part of the parking lot fronting Wallace Street is also proposed for residential development. The Lots of Love Park organization performs an important role in the community, and the community garden functions should be permanently relocated to the 700 block of Brooklyn vicinity as part of a comprehensive redevelopment effort on this block, outlined below. PHA has expressed an interest in being the developer for the 600 block of Budd Street site. A detailed site plan should be completed for this site, and land assembly begun through NTI.

**h) 700 block of Brooklyn Vicinity**

The 700 block of Brooklyn Street and 4200 block of Fairmount Avenue area is the most deteriorated in the study area. Much of the 600 block of Brooklyn is vacant land. Because of proximity to the PHA Mount Olivet development, as well as the Mill Creek HOPE VI

redevelopment, and the Lancaster Avenue retail corridor, the area should be a high priority for redevelopment for new affordable low-density homeownership housing. The development would accommodate the relocated Lots of Love community garden. A detailed site development plan should be prepared for this area, and land assembly begun through NTL.

**Rehabilitation of Occupied Buildings**

In certain areas, rehabilitation of deteriorated occupied buildings will be critical to eliminate a blighting influence, encourage market rate investment, or support other development activities. Target rehabilitation blocks include the following:

*Hamilton Building*



**a) Hamilton Building, 39th and Lancaster Avenue, Northside**

The Hamilton Building, the handsome curved block of 3-story brick buildings fronting Hamilton, Lancaster Avenue, and 39th Street is an architecturally distinguished development within the Powelton Village Historic District. While the buildings are occupied, they are in need of rehabilitation. The majority of the

first floor is occupied by a storefront church. Acquisition and rehabilitation of this complex using historic tax credits would provide the opportunity to create a market rate residential development, with some first floor commercial, targeted to a university clientele. Rehabilitation of this complex would provide a bridge between the Powelton Village and Saunders Park neighborhood, and encourage further investment in Saunders Park south of Lancaster Avenue. Existing owners should be contacted, and development interest solicited.

**b) Elrae Gardens Apartment Development**

The Elrae Gardens, an affordable rental apartment complex at 4012-4028 Baring Street, is a blighting influence on the neighborhood, and severely constrains the potential for investment on Baring Street west of 40th Street. The complex is poorly maintained and does not attract high-quality tenants. The windowless facades present an unattractive bunker-like appearance to the street. The complex should be acquired and either completely rehabilitated, or demolished and redeveloped, with new mixed-income rental housing that will support investment in the neighborhood. PECCDC and the city should work with the current owners and potential new investors to explore options for addressing this property.

*Fitler Square*



**c) 40th Street, Lancaster to Powelton**

Many occupied buildings on 40th Street and in the 40th Street vicinity are in desperate need of rehabilitation. Existing property owners will be encouraged to rehabilitate their properties, or encouraged to sell to new owners willing to invest in the buildings, to complement the streetscape of other improvements on this vital corridor link to University of Pennsylvania. Many of these properties are owned by existing or former residents of the area who do not have the funds to fix up the property. Funds should be sought to establish a rehabilitation program that would encourage owners to make the necessary repairs.

**Improvement of Existing Open Space and Vacant Lot Acquisition/Maintenance**

**a) Saunders Park**

Saunders Park is the focal point of the entire Saunders Park community. The grass and tree park, with the backdrop of the original Presbyterian Medical Center building, provides one of the most distinctive images of the community. However, the park currently offers few amenities for residents, or any reason to



stroll, or sit, or read a book in the park. In addition, it is littered with dog feces. Improvements such as walkways, lighting, benches, an information kiosk, and possibly a fountain, similar to Fidler Square in Center City, could make Saunders Park one of the most attractive urban squares in the city. Residents like the wide-open green space, but are dissatisfied with the lack of gathering places for picnics, or reading. The park is heavily used by dog owners, but there is no fenced area for dogs to run safely.

An education program on leash laws and picking up after dogs is needed. In addition, enforcement of the laws will be necessary. Unusually, the park is owned by Presbyterian Medical Center, not the city, and the hospital is responsible for both payment of taxes on the land, and maintenance. The hospital should be encouraged to make a long-term commitment to improvements and maintenance. Funds should be sought to prepare a detailed design plan for park improvements and the park renamed "Saunders Park Green". A "Friends of Saunders Park Green" group should be established to plan for future improvements and care for the park.

**b) Sloan Street Community Garden, 320-328 Sloan Street**

The Sloan Street Community Garden is an important neighborhood resource and social center and should be retained and expanded as a permanent community garden. Such a garden could become an important focus of the community, as well as enhance adjacent property values, in a similar manner to the 6th Street and B Avenue community garden, or BC



**Spring Gardens Community Garden in the Spring Garden neighborhood of Philadelphia**

Botanical Garden in East Village in New York, or the Spring Gardens Community Garden in the Spring Garden neighborhood of Philadelphia. The vacant paved parcels at 320/322 N. Sloan Street adjacent to the garden should be acquired under NTI from Presbyterian Medical Center. The paving should be removed, and the parcels incorporated into an expanded garden with an attractive wrought iron fence and gate. The adjoining building could become a community/cultural center, providing space for Saunders Park Neighborhood community meetings and garden workshops.

**c) Powelton and Wiota Park**

The RDA-owned green space at Powelton and Wiota should be retained and improved with City capital funds as a passive landscaped open space with seating to accommodate residents and employees of the Red Cross House, as well as other neighborhood residents of West Powelton. It should not be developed as a parking lot for the Red Cross House. Funds

should be sought to prepare a detailed plan for the long-term improvement of the parcel.

**d) Tot Lot at Powelton and Budd Streets**

The tot lot at Powelton and Budd Streets, funded through PECCDC, is currently located adjacent to two deteriorated vacant buildings that will be addressed under recommendation 3(a). It is close to a center of drug activity. Further improvements to the tot lot could be included with rehabilitation of the properties at 4059/61 Powelton Avenue, so that it can become a real community asset.

**e) Willow Square**

Relocation of the police station proposed under recommendation 8(b) will free up the existing police parking lot. The triangular parcel should be developed with city capital funds as an attractive landscaped village green, Willow Square, that is safe for children and can become a focal point for reinvestment in the abutting blocks.

**f) 40th and Baring vicinity**

Unmaintained vacant lots detract from the appearance of the community and suggest a lack of security and community control over the environment. Of particular community concern are the blighted vacant lots in the vicinity of 40th and Baring Street in the core of the study area. Several lots are used for the illegal storage of vehicles from a nearby auto repair shop, further detracting from the appearance of the area. Others lots are overgrown with weeds. While many of these parcels may ultimately be suitable for market rate residential development, market

conditions do not currently support the private market redevelopment of these lots. PHS has successfully implemented a vacant lot management program in other areas of the city, such as Mantua. Split rail fencing is installed to prevent parking, and grass regularly mown. PHS has already identified several properties at the 4000 block of Baring for inclusion in the program.

As soon as economically feasible, vacant parcels on the 4000 block of Baring Street, 400 block of North 40th Street and N. Wiota should be developed for market rate housing. Funds should be sought for preparation of a development plan and marketing brochure for this block that can be used to solicit developer interest. In the short-term the lots should be secured and maintained under the PHS Green City program and land assembly initiated. Parcels fronting the west side of the 400 block of 40th Street could be assembled and improved as an interim dog walking park similar to that in Tomkins Square in East Village

in New York, an amenity proposed by many Saunders Park residents. These improvements would reinforce efforts to improve the 40th Street corridor link to University of Pennsylvania.

**Community Facilities**

**a) Community Center**

The West Powelton community has voiced the need for a community center to accommodate the needs of seniors and youth in the neighborhood. Two potential sites have been identified that could accommodate such a center; the large vacant parcel on Powelton Avenue at 42nd Street, and an industrial building, currently used by a building contractor at 42nd and Haverford. The 42nd and Powelton site would accommodate a center of similar size to the Mantua Community Center on the 3500 block of Haverford Avenue, together with off-street loading service. A shared use parking agreement could be

negotiated with Pep Boys, for use of their parking lot adjacent to the center. The vacant lot across the street on 41st Street could also be acquired for additional parking to service the center. Funding should be pursued to conduct a feasibility study for the development and operation of such a center, and construction funds included in the City Capital Program.

**b) Police Station Relocation**

The current police station does not satisfactorily address the needs of either the police district, or abutting residents. The triangular parcel to the rear of the police station is inadequate to accommodate police parking needs, and many police cars park on the sidewalk. The police parking lot is poorly maintained, is a center of drug activity and a blighting impact on the neighborhood. Relocation of the police district station to a larger site on Lancaster Avenue, with ample parking would provide an opportunity for revitalization of the block bounded by Sloan, Warren and Union Street. The triangular block currently occupied by the police parking lot will be developed as a small landscaped park, Willow Square. Vacant parcels on the 400 block of Sloan Street, and former Nectarine Street will be developed for market rate infill housing fronting the park. Construction of Willow Square, rehabilitation of abutting housing, and construction of new infill housing could create a very attractive residential enclave. The existing police station should be acquired and rehabilitated by PECCDC as a mixed-use development. It could potentially accommodate a community arts center.

Several sites on Lancaster Avenue, could provide the opportunity for development of a new state-of-the-art district police station. Acquisition of properties on Lancaster Avenue, would be required. A proposal should be prepared and submitted to City officials for review, and funding sought for a more detailed feasibility study. In the short-term the community should work with the Police Department to improve the appearance and maintenance of the lot, as well as the small landscaped area at the front of the building on Lancaster Avenue.



Mantua Community Center



## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A major asset of the community is proximity to services, shopping and transportation. Economic development efforts will be focused on improving the existing retail corridors on Lancaster Avenue and Market Street.

### Lancaster Avenue



The overall development of a marketing strategy to identify a “brand” and promotional activities is recommended to improve the Lancaster Avenue Corridor. Recommendations for physical improvements and technical assistance to existing businesses fall under the following general headings.

- Enhanced Security and Cleaning on Lancaster Avenue and assistance to Lancaster Avenue Business Association CDC to increase their capacity to manage the corridor
- Assistance to Businesses and Property Owners
- Streetscape/Public Environment Improvements
- Business Recruitment on Lancaster Avenue
- Rehabilitation of Existing Buildings
- New Retail Development Opportunities

#### 1. *Enhanced Security and Cleaning on Lancaster Avenue and in Parking Areas*

Since concern with security in public areas is the highest priority of merchants and customers on Lancaster Avenue, a coordinated program of security enhancements will be developed for the avenue and nearby parking areas. This program may include increased police patrolling,

merchant-resident-police communication programs, on-street supplemental private security staff, parking lot attendants, security cameras in public areas and parking lots, improved lighting of parking areas, and other security enhancement activities. Special efforts will be targeted to curtailing drug sales on the Avenue, particularly at locations such as 41st and Lancaster that have generated high concern from merchants

and residents. These security enhancements will be coordinated with district cleaning services to further improve the appearance of the Avenue. The Lancaster Avenue Business Association Clean/Sweep and Security Initiative will be a key component of these efforts. Funding should be secured to implement a more comprehensive cleaning/safety program.

#### 2. *Assistance to Business and Property Owners and Cultural Institutions*

##### a. Lancaster Avenue Facade Improvement Program

The poor quality of building facades on Lancaster Avenue, both at storefront level, and upper floors, contributes to the poor quality of the environment and discourages

shoppers. A facade improvement program is proposed for Lancaster Avenue between 38th and 44th Streets that provides both technical and financial assistance to businesses and property owners to improve the exterior face of the buildings, in accordance with design guidelines. The guidelines will be prepared in conjunction with the business leadership, but should include requirements such as the installation of real windows on upper floors, painting and repairing of cornices, and requirements in which the improvements will respect the original character of the building. Guidelines would be established for storefront improvements, including assurances that storefront windows are as large as possible, and placement and style of signage is appropriate for the building. Funding should be secured to allow for a comprehensive facade improvement program.

##### b. Targeted Business Assistance Services

Technical assistance and business development services available through a variety of public and non-profit organizations such as the Mayor’s Business Assistance Team (MBAT), Small Business Development Center, Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC), West Philadelphia Entrepreneurial Center, and the Philadelphia Development Partnership will be actively marketed to existing merchants on the Avenue to support the improvement of their businesses. Where appropriate, technical assistance will be coordinated with available financing resources to support business expansion. The Lancaster Avenue Business Association and PECCDC should play key roles in identifying businesses that need this assistance, and coordinating delivery of these services.



Lancaster Avenue - After



c. Code Compliance

Funding should be sought for multilingual workshops (for the Asian business community), to explain L & I permit and inspection and enforcement procedures for both zoning and building permits, and encourage business compliance with codes and permits.

d. Cultural Development

Funds should be sought to explore expansion of cultural development on Lancaster Avenue.

**3. Streetscape/Public Environment Improvements**

a. Lancaster Avenue, 38th to 44th Streets

A comprehensive streetscape improvement program is proposed for Lancaster Avenue between 38th and 44th Streets. Sidewalks will be extended to create bump-outs at signalized intersections, to reduce pedestrian crossing distances. (See Transportation Improvement section.) Street improvements will include sidewalk replacement and repair, new pedestrian-scale street lighting, street trees and crosswalks. Transit shelters will be installed at each trolley stop, and rusted trolley poles painted or replaced. City capital funds should be secured for the improvements, and detail design study initiated. Funding should be secured to implement a more comprehensive cleaning and safety program to be subcontracted out to the University City District.

b. Parking Lot Improvements and Management

The existing public parking lot behind the 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue is in a very deteriorated condition and is little used by shoppers, except on weekends. Proposed improvements will include signage,

landscaping, lighting, striping and new perimeter fencing. The unused rear section of the lot fronting Wallace Street will be developed for new single-family housing as part of the Budd Street development. New signage will be installed on Lancaster Avenue directing drivers to the lot. The lot will be targeted to employees, as well as shoppers, to free up as many curb side spaces for shoppers. The lot could be subdivided into two sections, one a secure section open only to merchants and employees, thus keeping their cars off the avenue. Efforts will be directed to improve security and the perception of security in the parking lot including security cameras, improved lighting, and, if necessary at certain times, a parking lot attendant. Merchants and residents will aggressively pursue business owners to assure that employee and owner vehicles currently occupying shopper on-street spaces are parked off-street in this lot. Detailed designs should be prepared for the lot improvements, and city construction funds identified.

c. 40th and Lancaster Gateway Improvements

• 40th and Lancaster Gateway

The intersection of 40th Street, Lancaster Avenue, and Haverford Avenue is the focal point of Northern West Philadelphia, and is one of the most memorable images in Philadelphia. Expansion of the plaza created by the intersecting streets provides the opportunity to create a small landscaped plaza with special paving, seating, and planting, as a forecourt to rehabilitation of the Hoagie City Building. Special crosswalk treatments at each leg of the intersection will further enhance the sense of place. Improvements would be funded as part of the Lancaster Avenue streetscape project.

• 38th and Lancaster Gateway Improvements

The intersection of 38th Street, Powelton Avenue, and Lancaster Avenue is an important gateway from Powelton Village to the Lancaster Avenue retail corridor. It currently presents a poor image, because of the deteriorated United Bank building, unkempt surface parking areas, and lack of pedestrian amenities. United Bank has proposed improvements to their property. Supporting public improvements should be implemented, in conjunction with streetscape improvements to Lancaster Avenue, and modifications to 38th Street.



**38th and Lancaster Gateway**

• Belmont Avenue and Lancaster Gateway Improvements

Belmont Avenue/44th Street is a major gateway to West Philadelphia from City Line Avenue. Belmont Avenue/44th Street marks the western boundary of the Lancaster Avenue pedestrian oriented neighborhood retail district. While there is a handsome historic building at the southwest corner of Lancaster Avenue and 44th Street, currently occupied by a club, other corners of the intersection are in a deteriorated condition. Special signage and intersection design treatment will enhance the sense of arrival.

**Belmont and  
Lancaster Avenue  
Gateway**



- 41st and Lancaster  
The used tire store on the triangular parcel at Lancaster Avenue at the intersection of 42nd Street is an unsightly blighting impact on the neighborhood. The business should be encouraged to relocate to a larger site west of 44th Street, where auto oriented retail uses can be more easily accommodated. The triangle would be improved as a landscaped plaza.

**4. Business Recruitment for Lancaster Avenue**

A targeted, coordinated campaign to recruit new businesses to Lancaster Avenue will be implemented. This effort will involve identifying and directly contacting candidate businesses. This campaign will coordinate efforts by Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation, PECCDC, and MBAT staff, local realtors, and property owners such as the redeveloper of the Kay Electric property. A special focus will target reoccupancy of vacant stores in the 4000 and 4100 blocks of Lancaster Avenue. Once new development sites have been assembled (see Elements 6-a, 6-c, 6-d, 6-e, below), efforts will seek to recruit anchor tenants such as a customer oriented 7 day a week bank, drug store, produce store, apparel stores and restaurants to these locations.

**5. Rehabilitation of Existing Buildings**

- a) 3800 Block of Lancaster Avenue and Monarch Building

The 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue is located within the Powelton Village National Historic District. Property owners should be encouraged to rehabilitate their properties as mixed-use developments, with possible first floor gallery, restaurant, or workshop use, and upper floor apartments. Market rate apartments would be targeted to young single professionals. A marketing brochure should be prepared highlighting the historic character of the area, and the potential opportunities. Specific opportunities include the vacant Monarch Building, described in detail under Housing and Community Development Recommendations, 4b as well as the rehabilitation of the historic Hamilton Buildings at 39th and Lancaster, northside,

also described in the Housing and Community Development Section. 5a.

- b) 3900 Block of Lancaster Avenue

Several properties at the 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue are being rehabilitated for PECCDC rental housing and institutional uses. In other buildings, upper floors are vacant. Incentives are proposed to encourage rehabilitation of upper floors for apartments, while retaining commercial uses at street level.

- c) Hoagie City Building



The Hoagie City Building, the spectacular former bank building at the intersection of 40th and Lancaster, is the highest visibility building in the study area. At present the magnificent historic structure is in a deteriorated condition. The facade is disfigured by a huge billboard. The owners have recently further disfigured the building by spray-painting the historic brick on the Haverford Avenue frontage a bright gloss yellow. Current retail uses are marginal. It is unlikely that the present owners would be willing to invest in the improvement of the building. Rehabilitation of this building would have perhaps more impact on improving public perception of the neighborhood and the

WEST POWELTON



Hoagie City - After

Lancaster Avenue corridor than any other single act. The property should be acquired by the city through NTI, and developers solicited who would be interested in completing a historic rehabilitation of the building to accommodate a sit-down restaurant, or other use that can contribute to the revitalization of the retail corridor.

- d) MOCS Building, 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue

This vacant structure offers the potential for redevelopment for a variety of retail uses.

- e) Kay Electric Site

The former Kay Electric site should be marketed for new retail development to expand the choice of range of stores within the core blocks of the retail district.

**6. New Retail Development Opportunities**

- a) 40th and Lancaster

The northeast corner of Lancaster and 40th Street diagonally across from the Hoagie City building includes a historic former bank building (currently a storefront church) and the adjacent vacant lot. While the site would not accommodate a large foot print building and parking, it could potentially accommodate a bank, with drive thru facilities. The development could include historic



*Kay Electric Site*



*Possible Mike's Hardware expansion*

rehabilitation of the original bank building, and expansion and construction of parking on the adjacent lot. Development of this site would provide an impact visual anchor at the 40th and Lancaster intersection. The former bank structure and adjacent parcel should be acquired through NTI to consolidate an appropriate development site, and potential developers solicited.

- b) Mike's Hardware, 4100 block of Lancaster Avenue

The vacant lot adjacent Mike's Hardware offers the opportunity for expansion of the existing store, to include garden supplies, etc., as well as accommodate some off-street parking. Discussion should be initiated with the owner of Mike's Hardware regarding program, and site assembly.

- c) 4100 block of Lancaster Avenue

Fronting the 4100 block of Lancaster Avenue is a potential large development site bounded by Holly, Lancaster Avenue, 42nd Street, and Brown Street. The block includes a large vacant lot that fronts Lancaster Avenue and extends through to Holly Street. There are several other

vacant buildings and lots fronting Lancaster Avenue and 42nd Street, as well as several occupied properties. Assembly and clearance of this block through NTI would provide a parcel of sufficient size to accommodate a retail anchor, such as a drug store and associated parking, or other retail uses.

- d) 4200 block of Lancaster Avenue, Northside

The 4200 block of Lancaster

Avenue,

north side, includes a vacant triangular parcel bounded by 42nd Street, Lancaster Avenue, and Brown Street, and an adjacent block of deteriorated commercial structures bounded by Lancaster, Parrish and N. Brooklyn Street. Acquisition and demolition of properties on this block through NTI is proposed to permit assembly of a viable development parcel and a coordinated development of both blocks. The sites would be marketed for neighborhood-oriented retail uses.

- e) 44th and Lancaster Avenue, Southside

The parcel on the south side of Lancaster Avenue, bounded by 44th, Parrish, and Lancaster Avenue, is the site of a former gas station, now demolished. Remaining properties on the site are in deteriorated condition. Acquisition and demolition of remaining properties at this gateway location through NTI will permit assembly of the entire triangular block, which will be marketed for new retail development. Potential uses could include a produce store, such as a Produce Junction. Potential operators should be contacted regarding their interest.



44th and Lancaster Avenue



Auto repair, 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue



Produce Junction

## f) Auto Repair, 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue

The current condition of the auto repair facility on the 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue, between 39th and Brandywine Streets, is in need of substantial upgrade. Diligent and immediate efforts must be concentrated to resolve this situation, by aggressively assisting the owner to clean up and redevelop the site. This property could be joined with other adjacent deteriorated properties on Lancaster Avenue and Brandywine Street to create a consolidated parcel for new development.

## 7. Arts and Culture

Philadelphia's arts community is showing a growing interest in West Powelton as a place to live, work and set up gallery space. South of Market Street, just beyond the boundaries of this study area, the University of Pennsylvania is working with community-based arts groups to stimulate arts-related activity along 40th Street and in adjacent neighborhoods.

Because of broad based interest in the arts, the West Powelton neighborhood should develop a strategy for using the arts as a tool for community revitalization. The strategy should consider how vacant buildings can be converted to artist live-work space, how vacant retail space can be used for presentation spaces, and how community artists can be engaged in creating public projects and events that strengthen the identity of the Lancaster Avenue corridor.

## 4000 block of Market Street

The Partnership CDC should be supported in site efforts to upgrade the appearance and range of stores on Market Street adjacent the subway station, so that it can serve both a University and neighborhood clientele, and improve the linkages between Saunders Park/West Powelton and The University of Pennsylvania.



Vacant parcel at 4100 block of Lancaster Avenue



New bank site at 40th and Lancaster Avenue

## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation improvements will further enhance the community links to the University of Pennsylvania, and Drexel University. Principal recommendations include the following.

### Traffic Calming on Busy Streets

#### *Sidewalk Bumpouts*

Sidewalk bump-outs are proposed at intersections on major traffic streets as part of the proposed streetscape improvements, to reduce pedestrian crossing distances, slow traffic, and enhance pedestrian safety.

These streets include:

- Lancaster Avenue
- 42nd Street
- 40th Street
- Powelton Avenue

Sidewalk bump-outs are proposed for Lancaster Avenue, 42nd Street, Powelton Avenue, and 40th Street, all heavy trafficked streets where speeding traffic is a problem. Forty-second Street is a two-way, two-lane street with on-street parking in both directions. Speeding is a problem on the section south of Haverford Avenue as there are no traffic signals or stop signs. Speeding is also a problem on Powelton Avenue between 38th and 40th Street, as this section of Powelton is not controlled by traffic signals. While the intersection at the emergency entry to Presbyterian Medical Center is controlled by stop signs, additional measures such as yellow flashing lights, or traffic signal pedestrian push buttons, will be explored to increase driver awareness. Bump-outs will be installed in conjunction with streetscape improvements.

#### *Pedestrian Walk Signal at 38th Street and Powelton*

A pedestrian walk signal is proposed at 38th and Powelton to increase pedestrian safety at this complex, five-point intersection adjacent Presbyterian Hospital. The City Streets Department should be contacted regarding a study to support installation of the signal. The District Council person should be contacted regarding funding for the study.

#### *38th Street Modifications*

Thirty-eighth Street is very wide and has significantly more capacity than is required to meet existing demand, and speeding is a problem. Actions to calm traffic and reduce the barrier effect of 38th Street are proposed through a reduction in the number of lanes, narrowing of lanes, and construction of a landscaped median, similar to that on Spring Garden Street in Philadelphia within the existing northbound left turn lane. Funding for a design study should be sought, and funds for construction included in the City Capital Program.

#### *Haverford Avenue/Spring Garden Two-way Conversion*

Haverford Avenue and Spring Garden Street east of Lancaster Avenue, are proposed for conversion to 2-way operation to reduce traffic speeds, and provide for more flexible access and circulation within the neighborhood, and to surrounding neighborhoods. Discussions should be initiated with Streets Department to implement this recommendation.

#### *Lancaster Avenue Modifications*

There are many 5-point intersections on Lancaster Avenue, resulting from the intersection of the Lancaster Avenue diagonal and the Philadelphia grid. The 5-point intersections pose potential



**Median on Spring Garden Street**

traffic safety issues and result in fragmented land parcels. The potential for eliminating small sections of minor streets at 5-point intersections on Lancaster Avenue, to reduce number of 5-point intersections was explored, but was not found to be feasible. Land parcels that are too small to be developed for contemporary retail uses will be improved as public plazas and open space. The triangular traffic island at 40th and Lancaster will be enlarged to include the width of the parking lane on Lancaster Avenue as part of the Lancaster Avenue streetscape improvements. The enlarged island will provide the opportunity to create an attractive plaza, and make pedestrian crossing safer and easier. New, better defined, pedestrian crosswalks will be installed at all intersections.



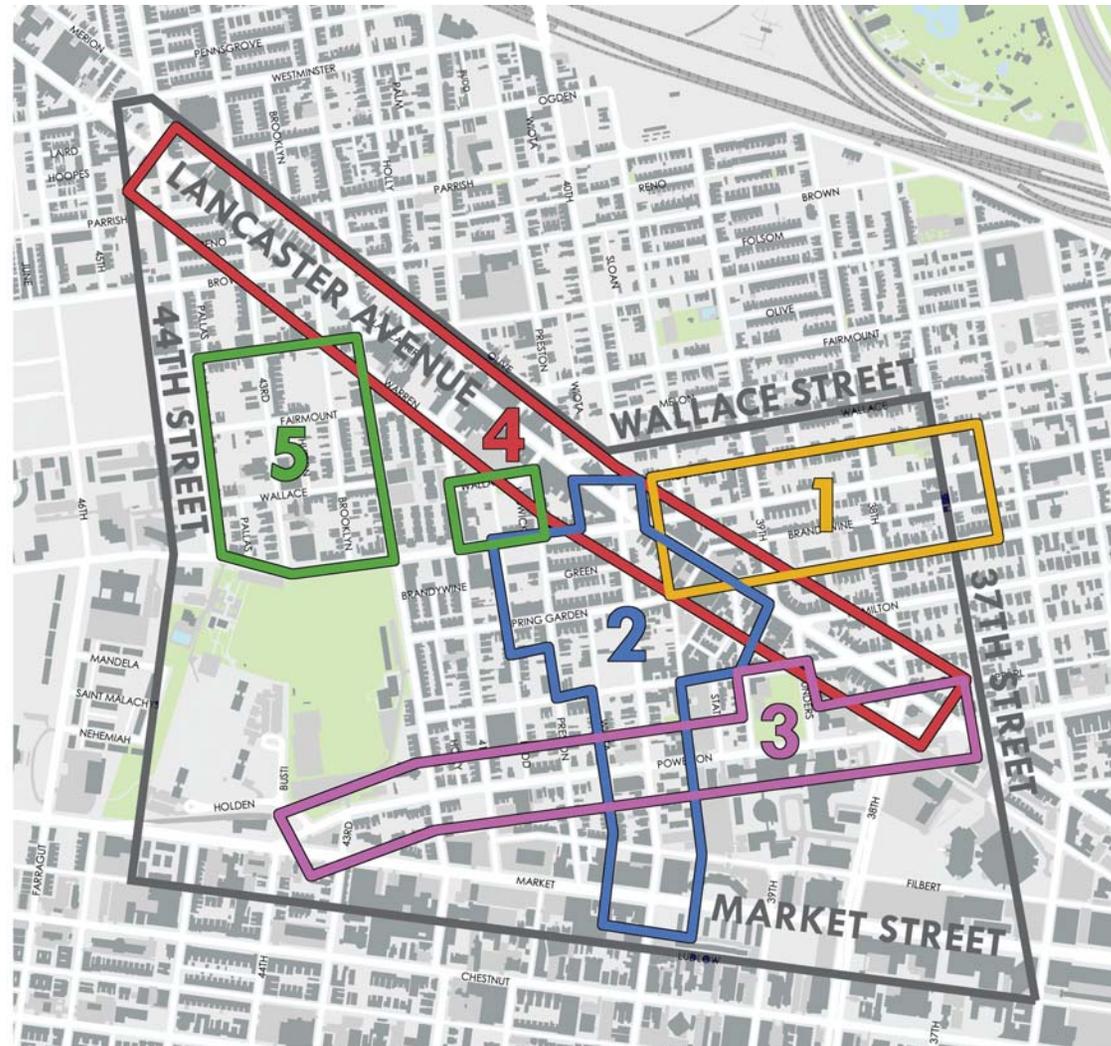
### Transit Connections to University City

Transit service between the study area and the Universities should be improved. The feasibility of a University City Trolley Loop that includes 40th and Lancaster Avenue should be explored, to further enhance the connections between the universities and the residential neighborhoods. Transit shelters will be placed at all principal trolley and bus stops within the study area under the streetscape improvement project.

### Pedestrian Link Between Saunders Park and Market Street, at 39th Street

At present there is no pedestrian route from Saunders Park to Market Street through Presbyterian Hospital, between 38th and 40th Street, hindering linkages between the community and University of Pennsylvania. New defined paved pedestrian links are proposed adjacent the surface parking lot on the alignment of State Street, and on the alignment of Saunders Street, through the medical center. Presbyterian Hospital should take the lead in implementing these improvements.

### PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS



## CHAPTER 4: PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

While basic quality of life improvements are the highest priority for the community, development projects are also critical to focus reinvestment. A series of priority development projects were established, based on community review of the recommendations and feedback from the community surveys. The priority development projects are categorized under four overall community revitalization efforts:

- Completion of projects already initiated: The Haverford Avenue/Brandywine Street Revitalization Initiative
- The 40th Street Corridor Comprehensive Revitalization Initiative
- The Powelton Avenue Corridor Comprehensive Revitalization Initiative
- The Lancaster Avenue Retail Corridor Revitalization Initiative

Land and vacant building assembly on the following blocks will facilitate the implementation of these priority projects:

- Continued acquisition of properties in area around Haverford/Brandywine
- Acquisition of key properties in and around 40th Street and Powelton Avenue
- Acquisition of key properties on Powelton Avenue
- Acquisition and land assembly of development parcels on Lancaster Avenue

In addition, land assembly within the blighted areas surrounding PHA's Mt. Olivet development

will permit future residential development of these sites.

The priority projects under each initiative address the comprehensive improvement of each corridor and create a synergy that will spur subsequent additional private market reinvestment.

### HAVERFORD/BRANDYWINE INITIATIVE (3900 AND 3800 BLOCKS OF HAVERFORD AVENUE)

The Mantua/Powelton Village connection

- Complete development of Cloisters III – 60-unit affordable rental housing project
- Develop 20-30 homeownership units
- Identify blocks for expansion of home repair and facade improvement program
- Complete feasibility study for development of elementary school
- Adoption of Digital Inclusion Program for new residential units



### 40TH STREET CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

The north-south link to University of Pennsylvania

- Complete 40th Street corridor streetscape improvements
- Complete property assembly at 40th and Lancaster

- Expand and improve Sloan Street community garden
- Rehabilitate/redevelop Elrae Apartments
- Acquire and secure vacant lots at 40th and Baring vicinity
- Create interim urban farm and dog park at 40th and Baring Streets
- Relocate police station to 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue and develop Willow Square on parking lot site
- Develop new infill housing on Sloan Street facing Willow Square



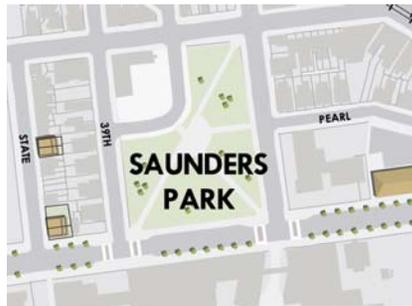
- Rehabilitate apartment building at 40th and Spring Garden
- Complete facade and streetscape improvements, 4000 block of Green Street
- Control auto repair operations
- Encourage rehabilitation of existing occupied and vacant properties on 40th Street, and 4000 block of Green and Spring Garden Street
- Rehabilitate historic Hoagie City building
- Create expanded gateway plaza at 40th and Lancaster



### POWELTON AVENUE CORRIDOR INITIATIVE

The east-west link to Powelton Village

- Acquire and rehabilitate vacant buildings on Powelton Avenue for residential use
- Implement traffic calming and streetscape improvements on Powelton Avenue
- Complete landscaping improvements to Saunders Park to create community focus



- Develop community center for youth and seniors on 4200 block of Powelton



- Create defined pedestrian link through Presbyterian Hospital, from Saunders Park Green to 39th Street

WEST POWELTON

### LANCASTER AVENUE INITIATIVE

The retail heart of northern West Philadelphia

- Improve Security and Cleaning
- Complete streetscape improvements
- Improve three gateways (38th Street, 40th Street, and Belmont Avenue/44th Street)
- Improve Lancaster Avenue parking lot
- Develop Monarch Building at 3800 block of Lancaster Avenue, Southside
- Assemble and develop MOCS site, 4000 block of Lancaster Avenue through to 40th Street, and 600 block N. 40th Street
- Assemble and develop site on 4100 block, northside bounded by Holly, Lancaster Avenue, 42nd Street and Brown Street



- Assemble and develop site at 44th and Lancaster, southeast corner



### 5. Other Land Assembly Initiatives

Longer term land assembly and detail site planning work should be initiated through NTI for two major redevelopment areas that will support the PHA rehabilitation of Mount Olivet for senior apartments, and complement the PHA Mill Creek development.



- 600 block of Budd Street/4000 block of Wallace redevelopment area, for affordable homeownership or rental housing
- 700 block of Brooklyn/Fairmount Avenue redevelopment area, for affordable homeownership housing

## CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS: RESPONSIBILITIES AND COSTS

These Implementation Actions provide a guide for PECCDC, community organizations, private developers, and city agencies undertaking revitalization activities in West Powelton/ Saunders Park over the next 5-10 years. The Recommendations and Priorities provide a framework for these Implementation Actions. However new opportunities that support the plan goals and overall recommendations may be pursued as they arise. In addition some proposed actions may not prove feasible, after completion of more detailed studies.

A wide variety of entities will be responsible for realization of each of these projects. Key responsibilities will be with PECCDC, Saunders Park Neighbors, West Powelton Concerned Community Council, HUB Coalition, and the Lancaster Avenue Business Association, as the major community groups serving the area. The lead responsibility will be established based on geographic location, capacity, and interest of each group. For each project, PECCDC will help coordinate a detailed action plan with community partners. For some projects, PECCDC may take the lead role, while for others PECCDC will merely provide support to its community partners.

Other important players will include, but not be limited to the University of Pennsylvania Presbyterian Hospital, Drexel University, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and University City District. Key public roles will be played by the 3rd District City Council person, the Department of Licenses and Inspections, the City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce, the 16th Police District, Philadelphia Housing Authority, City of Philadelphia

Department of Streets and the Redevelopment Authority. Private developers will also play a critical role in implementing many of the projects.

Similarly, a wide variety of funding sources will be utilized in the implementation of each project. Sources of the funds may include, but not be limited to, the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI), the Office of Housing and Community Development (OHCD), the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency (PHFA), city capital funds, foundations, developer equity, and other federal and state transportation funding sources.



## Year 1 (2004/5)

## Cost

**1. ACQUISITION**

- Vacant lots, 40th and Baring vicinity (for development) \$150,000 (1.5 acres)
- Vacant buildings, 40th/Baring vicinity (for rehabilitation) \$200,000 (8 buildings)
- Scattered-site vacant buildings, Powelton Avenue (for rehabilitation) \$400,000 (13 buildings)
- 4050 Haverford Avenue site (for homeownership development) \$300,000 (.33 acres)

**2. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT**

- Cloisters III Development \$9 million (50 units)
- 3900 block Lancaster Avenue developments \$5 million
- 4100 block Warren Street development \$4.5 million (30 units)
- Facade improvements, 4000 block Green Street, 4000 block Spring Garden \$150,000 (10)

**3. OPEN SPACE**

- Improvements to Saunders Park \$500,000
- Establish Friends of Saunders Park \$5,000

**4. PLANNING/DESIGN**

- Feasibility study, 16th District police station relocation \$25,000
- Feasibility study, 40th and Spring Garden apartment building rehab \$20,000
- Feasibility study, Elrae Apartments redevelopment/rehab \$25,000
- Feasibility study, artist live/work \$15,000
- Feasibility study, 40th and Powelton vacant gas station redevelopment \$15,000

**5. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS**

- 3900 block of Lancaster Avenue \$300,000
- Lancaster Avenue parking lot \$100,000
- 4000 block Green Street/Spring Garden Street (paving, street trees/lighting) \$200,000

**6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Facade improvements, 3900 block Lancaster Avenue \$150,000 (10)
- Code compliance workshops \$5,000
- Expand digital inclusion program to corridor businesses \$100,000

**7. QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Neighborhood-wide security issues \$60,000
- Address auto-repair sidewalk parking \$5,000
- Community building leadership development and support \$60,000
- Neighborhood cleanliness campaign \$30,000
- Address illegal used-car lot

**8. TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION**

- Haverford Avenue/Spring Garden 2-way conversion and Schuylkill River Gateway \$100,000
- Explore transportation enhancement grant for Lancaster Avenue/40th Street \$5,000

## Year 2 (2006)

## Cost

**1. ACQUISITION**

- Vacant buildings/lots 3700 block Brandywine for homeownership \$250,000
- Vacant buildings/lots 600 block Budd/4000 block Wallace \$350,000
- Police station relocation sites on Lancaster Avenue \$1,950,000
- Monarch Building sites \$900,000
- Sloan Street community garden expansion site \$30,000
- Sloan Street vacant lots/vacant buildings at Willow Square for development \$75,000

**2. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT/DEVELOPMENT**

- Powelton Avenue scattered-site rehabilitation \$2 million (13 buildings)
- 40th Street scattered-site rehabilitation/homeownership project (buildings) \$1.2 million (8)
- 40th and Spring Garden apartment building rehab \$1.6 million (15 apts.)
- Elrae apartments rehab, redevelopment \$3.8 million (30 apts.)
- Facade improvement program, Cloisters vicinity \$150,000 (10)
- 4050 Haverford homeownership development \$1.4 million (9 units)

**3. OPEN SPACE**

- Tot lot at Powelton and Budd improvements \$50,000
- Vacant lots – 40th and Baring (temporary improvements) \$50,000

**4. PLANNING/DESIGN**

- Feasibility study, West Powelton Community/Arts Center \$20,000

**5. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS**

- 40th Street corridor improvements \$300,000
- Powelton Avenue corridor \$400,000
- 4000 block Lancaster Avenue \$300,000

**6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Facade improvements, 4000 block Lancaster \$150,000 (10)

**7. QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS**

- Expand digital inclusion to neighborhood residents/groups \$100,000
- Schools as neighborhood resource study \$25,000
- Feasibility study, Charter School \$25,000
- Conduct seminar on neighborhood change and rising property values and taxes \$12,000

**8. TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION**

- Powelton Avenue traffic calming/walk signal see streetscape
- 40th Street corridor traffic calming see streetscape



Year 3 (2007)	Cost	Year 4 (2008)	Cost
<b>1. ACQUISITION</b>		<b>1. ACQUISITION</b>	
• Vacant lots and buildings, 700 block Brooklyn vicinity	\$500,000	• Vacant land and buildings, 4100/4200 blocks Lancaster Avenue	\$2 million
• Community center development site	\$250,000		
• 40th and Lancaster development sites	\$200,000	<b>2. HOUSING DEVELOPMENT</b>	
• 39th Street in Mantua scattered-site vacant buildings	\$450,000 (15 buildings)	• Sloan Street housing at Willow Square	\$1.5 million (8 units)
		• Ongoing facade improvement program, Baring Street vicinity	\$150,000 (10 units)
<b>2. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT DEVELOPMENT</b>		• 39th Street scattered-site rehab (Mantua) (sales)	\$2.5 million (15 units)
• Monarch Building	\$3.5 million (25 units)	• 40th Street and Baring new construction homeownership Phase 1	\$2.0 million (12 units)
• 600 block Budd Street	\$4.8 million (32 units)		
• Scattered-site infill market rate housing	\$1.5 million (10 units)	<b>3. OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
• Affordable energy efficient housing project with University of Pennsylvania (COPC Grant)	\$1 million	• Willow Square	\$250,000
• Facade improvements (ongoing)	\$150,000 (10 buildings)	• Powelton/Wiota open space	\$100,000
<b>3. OPEN SPACE</b>			
• Sloan Street community garden expansion	\$25,000	<b>4. PLANNING AND DESIGN</b>	
		• New construction homeownership housing development, 40th and Baring feasibility study	\$25,000
<b>4. PLANNING/DESIGN</b>		• Hamilton Building historic rehab feasibility study	\$20,000
• 38th Street modifications feasibility study	\$25,000		
• Hoagie City rehab feasibility study	\$25,000	<b>5. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
		• 38th Street improvements	\$1 million
<b>5. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS</b>			
• 4100 block Lancaster Avenue	\$400,000	<b>6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>	
		• 40th and Lancaster commercial development site	\$1.5 million (10,000 sq. sf.)
<b>6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>		• Hoagie City building historic rehabilitation	\$1.25 million
• Police station development, Lancaster Avenue	\$4 million (20,000 sq.ft.)		
• Facade improvements 4100 block Lancaster	\$150,000 (10)	<b>7. QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS</b>	
		• Ongoing	\$40,000
<b>7. QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS</b>			
• Ongoing security/cleaning campaign	\$20,000	<b>8. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION</b>	
• Seminars/forums on neighborhood issues	\$20,000	• 38th Street improvements	see streetscape
<b>8. TRAFFIC/TRANSPORTATION</b>			
• 42nd Street traffic calming	\$100,000		

**Year 5 (2009)****Cost****1. ACQUISITION**

- Vacant land and buildings, 4300 block Lancaster Avenue \$350,000
- Targeted scattered-site acquisition throughout Saunders Park/West Powelton \$250,000 (10 bldgs.)

**2. HOUSING IMPROVEMENT DEVELOPMENT**

- 40th and Baring Streets new construction homeownership project: Phase 2 \$2 million (12 units)
- 700 block Brooklyn \$9 million (50 units)
- Hamilton Building \$8 million (50,000 sq.ft.)
- Community Center \$8 million (50,000 sq.ft.)
- Ongoing facade improvement program \$150,000 (10 buildings)

**3. OPEN SPACE**

- 700 Brooklyn vicinity new park \$350,000

**4. PLANNING/FEASIBILITY STUDY**

- Market Street mixed-use development \$60,000
- Development feasibility study, auto repair facility, 3900 block Lancaster Avenue \$25,000

**5. STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS**

- Market Street improvements \$1 million

**6. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Retail development, 4200 block Lancaster Avenue \$2 million (15,000 sq.ft.)

**7. QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENT**

- Ongoing \$40,000

**8. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION**

- Pedestrian connections between Saunders Park and Market Street at 39th Street \$500,000

## CHAPTER 6: NEIGHBORHOOD INDICATORS: MEASURING SUCCESS

Tracking the success of community revitalization through on-going neighborhood indicators involves three types of measurements. The first focuses on whether the status of the neighborhood is improving in comparison to other communities—in effect a set of broadly recognized impact measures. The second assesses whether the specific plan objectives are achieved—the measurement of operational success. The third focuses on the impacts of plan implementation on current residents—the measurement of impact on plan participants.

### NEIGHBORHOOD STATUS INDICATORS

With regard to the broad assessment of neighborhood status, the Philadelphia Neighborhood Development Collaborative (PNDC) has researched potential measures of neighborhood conditions (neighborhood indicators) to assess the possible impacts of revitalization efforts on the health of neighborhoods. That research suggested eight measurements to track six indicators of neighborhood condition that would apply to all revitalizing neighborhoods (in fact, to all neighborhoods). The six suggested indicators are:

1. Housing vacancy/abandonment rate
2. Market for single-family houses
3. Business activity, particularly retail
4. Crime rate
5. Socio-economic status
6. School quality/educational attainment

The eight specific measurements recommended to track these indicators are:

### Vacancy/abandonment (overall)

The recommended measure that can be regularly updated involves tracking the ending of water service as reported by the Philadelphia Water Department, through the University of Pennsylvania Cartographic Modeling Laboratory's Neighborhood Information System (NIS).

### Single-family housing market

The recommended measure includes specific dimensions of house sales price, rate of change in house price, turnover (sales) rate, owner-occupancy rate, and population change that can be tracked through local government records reported in various databanks, including NIS and The Reinvestment Fund.

### Rental housing vacancy

PNDC recognizes that the suggested measurement—the percentage of all multi-family properties that seem to have at least one unit vacant, as evidenced by a water shut-off—does not provide a particularly accurate indicator. For the three neighborhoods in this study, an alternative approach may involve developing a list of multi-family property managers in the area and conducting an annual survey of them for vacancy as of a particular date.

### Business activity

The suggested measure is rate of commercial vacancy in designated commercial concentrations (commercial corridors, etc.). For the West Powelton/Saunders Park community, these districts would be Lancaster Ave. from 38th to 44th Streets and Market Street from 40th to Powelton. An annual community-business association survey, beginning with a baseline set at the beginning of plan implementation, would provide tracking of this condition.

### Crime/safety

PNDC recommends using the University of Pennsylvania reporting of crime data from the City Police Department. This data can be used to compute crimes, or serious crimes, per capita.

### Socio-economic/demographic status

Obviously, this information can be tracked through decennial census data. PNDC further recommends use of the rate of household poverty, drawn from the Philadelphia Health Management Corporation (PHMC) bi-annual survey, although there appear to be serious limitations with this data at many neighborhood levels.

### School quality/educational attainment

Three types of data are available – testing data, school attendance and enrollment data and school characteristics. All data is completely public for every school (including charters, privates and publics), conveniently available and can be manipulated.

### Early Distress Signals

PNDC proposes two indicators that over time could indicate that a community is undergoing negative changes. The one that appears to be more easily tracked is sheriff's sale data, which is a decent partial indicator of abandonment, to complement the vacancy information from water records.

We recommend that West Powelton/Saunders Park utilize these eight indicators to track general conditions.



## SPECIFIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Success in achieving several priority plan objectives will be tracked through the eight neighborhood status indicators detailed above. For instance, monitoring of certain crime statistics will track success in dealing with many of the quality of life issues prioritized by the community, successful rehabilitation activities will result in a decrease in housing vacancy, and reductions in commercial vacancy on Lancaster Avenue would measure the success of some of the specific economic development objectives.

Other indicators of success in achieving plan objectives would include:

1. Homeowner participation in home improvement activity
2. New housing construction
3. Business participation in facade improvement program
4. Investment in streetscape improvements
5. New commercial space construction

Specific measurements recommended to track these indicators are:

### Home improvement activity

Tracking the number of homeowners participating in home improvement or home improvement financing activities.

### New housing construction

Tracking the number of new housing units constructed.

### Business participation in facade improvement finance

Tracking the number of business facades improved through program activities.

## Streetscape improvements

Tracking the dollar investment in streetscape improvements.

## New commercial space construction

Tracking the square footage of new retail/commercial space constructed in the Lancaster Avenue and Market Street corridors.

## IMPACTS ON CURRENT RESIDENTS

One key community concern is whether current West Powelton/Saunders Park residents and businesses benefit from the process of revitalization or whether they are displaced for economic reasons. To track these impacts, we recommend four indicators:

1. Household mobility rate
2. Availability of affordable rental housing
3. Homeowner participation in housing improvement financing
4. Business turnover

Specific measurements recommended to track these indicators are:

### Housing mobility rate

This recommended measure is likely to be effective only once. Decennial census data reports at the block group level the number of households residing in the same house as five years previously. 2010 data would report on household mobility since 2005 (effectively the start of plan implementation). Comparison of this data with data from the 2000 census would indicate whether mobility has increased—a potential indicator of displacement.

## Availability of affordable rental housing

Decennial census data on rent distribution will give a timely report of data for 2010, though less timely for subsequent periods. This data can track the number of rental units with rents below a selected threshold of affordability. (Note: Number of affordable units is more useful than proportion of affordable units, since revitalization may be associated with increases in the number of market-rate units.)

## Participation in home improvement finance

Operational data could be maintained indicating whether the recipients of publicly-supported owner-occupied home improvement or new construction financing were previous residents of the neighborhood. Unfortunately, this data is not trackable for private financing.

## Business turnover

The annual tracking of business vacancy on Lancaster and Market (see above) could be extended to collecting an annual business roster for year to year comparison. At the annual update, notation could be made of the reason for businesses leaving the area to track any economic displacement of current businesses.









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