BOROUGH OF TARENTUM



Allegheny County, Pennsylvania

RESOLUTION #20-17



RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF TARENTUM, COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY, COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTING THE MULTI-MUNICIPAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE BOROUGH OF TARENTUM.

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), 53 P.S. §1010 et seq., requires municipal comprehensive plans to be reviewed at least every 10 years; and

WHEREAS, agencies of the Commonwealth are required to rely upon municipal comprehensive plans when approving grants and permits for infrastructure and facilities, and to give priority consideration to applications for financial or technical assistance for projects that are consistent with the comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Borough of Tarentum entered into a joint contract with Harrison Township and Brackenridge Borough through Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) for the municipal planning grant program to assist with the development of a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the joint municipalities have utilized ACED funding to engage the services of Pashek + MTR to assist with development of a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the consulting team of Pashek + MTR, in conjunction with Harrison Township, Brackenridge Borough and Tarentum Borough, has prepared the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit "A", which complies with the requirements set forth in Sections 210 - 212 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

WHEREAS, prior to all required public meetings and hearings held by the governing body, the municipality submitted the proposed Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan to the county planning agency for recommendations and forwarded copies to all contiguous municipalities and to the local school district for their review and comment; and

WHEREAS, Tarentum Borough and the Tarentum Borough Planning Commission did comply with the requirements set forth in Sections 301.3 and 302 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code with respect to public meetings, public notice, public comment and public hearings, and all deadlines set forth therein, and;

WHEREAS, the Tarentum Borough Planning Commission is empowered to recommend to the Borough Council the adoption of a Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of the Borough, pursuant to Section 209.1 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission, at their November 17, 2020 agenda meeting, unanimously approved the Comprehensive Plan be recommended to Borough Council for approval at the December 1, 2020 public meeting of Borough Council; and

WHEREAS, notice of public hearing on the proposed Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan was published in the Valley News Dispatch on October 7, 2020; and

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BOROUGH OF TARENTUM

Allegheny County, Pennsylvania





WHEREAS, the Borough of Tarentum, pursuant to Section 302(b) of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, provided public notice and subsequent public hearing on December 1, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. relative to the proposed Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, Borough Council held the required public hearing on December 1, 2020, after complying with the notice and 45-day public review and comment requirements; and

WHEREAS, the Borough Council of the Borough of Tarentum is of opinion that the Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan should be adopted as the Borough's primary planning document.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Borough of Tarentum of Allegheny County hereby adopts the proposed Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, attached hereto and marked as Exhibit "A", pursuant to Article III and Article XI of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

RESOLVED and ENACTED this 1st day of December, 2020.

ATTEST:	BOROUGH OF TARENTUM	
Michael L. Nestico, Borough Manager	Scott Dadowski, President of Council	
EXAMINED AND APPROVED by m	e this 1st day of December, 2020.	
	Eric Carter, Mayor	
the foregoing Resolution #20-17 is a true and correct co	ough of Tarentum, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, hereby certify that py of a Resolution duly ratified and adopted by a majority vote of the st day of December, 2020 and said Resolution has been recorded in the et as of this date.	
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I affix my hand and attach	the seal of the Borough of Tarentum, this 1st day of December, 2020.	
	Michael L. Nestico, Borough Manager	

Exhibit A

HARRISON BRACKENRIDGE TARENTUM















COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FORGING OUR FUTURE

REPORT SUMMARY 2020



UMMARY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Forging a Future

Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs used to be "steel towns," but over several decades lost that identity along with a significant portion of their population. From those painful losses now arises a new ambition to forge a future. Community pride is bubbling up in the form of social entrepreneurship, small businesses, the steady presence of some larger industries, and a recognition that the communities' location along the Allegheny River presents an opportunity to layer new personalities and character traits upon the old.

The communities have recognized, as residents repeatedy stated during public input for this comprehensive plan, that with concentrated effort, they are positioned to move forward together to accomplish the changes that can enhance the quality of life for existing residents and draw newcomers.

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum hope to build on their assets, including affordable real estate, their location along the Allegheny River, well-maintained local parks and an Allegheny County Park, some anchor businesses and industries, traditional business districts and bikeable, walkable neighborhoods. They also hope to welcome and guide change through efforts springing from community planning and several concurrent initiatives.

The three communities share an identity as members of the Highlands School District, and geographically as the northernmost communities in Allegheny County.

They share problems as well; years of declining population, job loss and business disinvestment have caused vacancies, property deterioration, and the social ramifications of poverty. The communities recognize that these problems do not halt at municipal borders but occur in all three. The communities' best chances for pursuing solutions to these problems and to build on strengths will be to work together to foster change and forge a new future.

The four Key Issues that community stakeholders chose to address via this plan are:

- Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development
- Property Deterioration and Blight
- Trails, Parks and Recreation
- Community Identity.

What propelled this plan

Elected officials and staff from Harrison Township expressed an interest in using the Implementable Comprehensive Planning process to improve Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs. They were looking for a very focused approach to solving challenges facing the three communities. Their hope was also for the planning process to investigate opportunities where the three municipalities could work together to reduce costs or increase services to residents The three communities secured a planning grant from Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) to partially fund the effort.

ACED and its planning division as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), which oversees planning at the state level, vigorously encourage multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of maximizing resources and enhancing community capacity.

Joint approaches, such as collaborating on planning and projects, will better position the communities to apply for funding from private or public sources. Joint approaches also respond to DCED and ACED expectations for multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of better serving the communities and residents.

Public Engagement

STEERING COMMITTEE

The project's joint steering committee met nine times between Feb. 12, 2019 and Aug. 26, 2020. The committee's responsibilities included assistance with:

- Generating a questionnaire
- Seeking information from residents via pop-up surveying
- Interacting with residents at the public meetings to collect their input
- Distilling input and helping to generate the Key Issues
- Working in small groups to interview and discuss issues and solutions with experts from the state and region on those topics.
- Reviewing and prioritizing potential strategies to identify the most feasible and promising options
- Reviewing chapters from an earlier draft version of this report
- Initiating implmentation, including property condition mapping, and enlisting a local non-profit to be a CDC
- Answering questions from their

communities' Planning Commissions and elected officials, and advocating for plan adoption.

QUESTIONNAIRE

More than 600 people responded to the questionnaire, most via digital platform and about 30 via paper forms.

The top four areas of concern were (1) Drug issues/Crime, (2) Dilapidated Buildings, (3) Emergency Services, (4) Streets and Roads.

Several of our steering committee members conducted "pop up" events and interviewed people at the YMCA and the Library for this plan.

PUBLIC MEETING 1

The project's initial public meeting took place June 3, 2019, at the Salvation Army gym. Approximately 80 participants generated 140 ideas on things that could be improved and 50 things they thought were positive aspects of the communities/strengths to build on.

KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Based on contacts provided to us by the steering committee Pashek+MTR interviewed 21 people from the area. People included: developers, bank managers, non-profit directors, members of the faith community, business owners and municipal staff.

OTHER PUBLIC INPUT

The steering committee met with Pennsylvania State Sen. Lindsay Williams on Sept. 12, 2019, to discuss this planning process and to seek her help in identifying opportunities for public funding.

CHECK-INS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

After identifying and defining the four Key Issues that the comprehensive plan would address, the consultant attended regularly scheduled meetings of the three communities' governing bodies to review the process so far and answer questions.

PUBLIC MEETING 2

The second public meeting, held Feb. 17, 2020, at the Salvation Army gym in Brackenridge, was a check-in with residents after the Key Issues were developed and some early ideas for solutions were sketched out. This meeting also served as an additional round of input, because the format asked residents to contribute ideas toward solutions to specific problems.

Sen. Lindsay Williams and Rep . Frank Dermody attended. Both povided supportive remarks about the comprehensive planning process and the plan's goals for community improvements.



Residents at the second public meeting consider elements of a riverfront improvement plan for Natrona and add comments



Residents at the second public meeting review a recreation resources map and note what facilities they use or would like to have.

The Key Issues

One of the important concepts of an Implementable Comprehensive Plan is to: (1) focus the plan on real issues as identified by the community and , (2) match the number and types of issues to the capacity of the communities to implement the recommendations. Too often, earlier plans identified hundreds of recommendations that simply overwhelmed even the best-intentioned municipal staff. Through careful listening and much discussion with an active steering committee, we arrived at the following key issues.

The input from residents from all sources – public meetings, a community questionnaire, steering committee guidance and key stakeholder interviews – was collated and counted by topic. The consultant categorized all the "Problems To Solve," "Strengths To Build On," and used frequency and degree of vehemence to begin to identify themes and priorities.

The topics that emerged as priorities are called "Key Issues."

The Four Key Issues in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum

- a. Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development
- b. Property Deterioration and Blight
- c. Trails, Parks and Recreation
- d. Community Identity

History and context lie behind each Key Issue. These matters didn't emerge overnight as issues in the communities, and didn't become priorities suddenly. Rather, both problems and strengths have developed over time, often over decades. The implementable comprehensive plan report delves into the complexity of each Key Issue, assessing its components.

Considering best practices and Key Issue solutions

The Steering Committee for this comprehensive plan process divided into small groups aligned with each Key Issue. Each group researched best practices and potential solutions to gain an overview of possible next steps. This would help the group determine what strategies might best apply in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum, and align with community needs and capacity.



Steering committee members meet with Jessica Trimble (center), a local government policy specialist with DCED.

• The Social Enterprise, Comunity and Economic Development team met with Jessica Trimble, a Local Government Policy Specialist with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The group had an initial meeting via conference call and then hosted her for a field visit and in-person brainstorming meeting about what DCED programs might align with community goals.

- The Property Deterioration and Blight team met with two specialists affiliated with the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance: Andrea Mannino, Senior Advisor, Policy and Practice, and Winifred Branton, of Branton Strategies, which provides policy guidance in a legal context for communities working with the Housing Alliance. This team also met with Amanda Settelmaier, Executive Director of the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, who has developed a code enforcement database.
- The Trails, Parks and Recreation team met with Kathy Frankel, Recreation and Conservation Manager, Southwest Regional Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The conversation provided an overview of how DCNR strives to support local community improvements with technical and funding assistance.
- The Community Identity and Branding team met with Brenda Armstrong and Asaka Narumi from Visit Pittsburgh, to hear how that organization seeks to reflect the character of the Pittsburgh region in strategic communications. The team also met with representatives of New Sun Rising, a non-profit organization based in the Tri-Borough area along the Allegheny River, to learn how it supports sustainable economic and community development.

Along with ideas discussed with the state and regional professionals, the consultant developed a list of potential strategies the communities could undertake. The steering committee then chose the strategies it considered to be most important and most feasible, and ranked the strategies in order of those they felt most strongly that their communities should pursue.

The Key Issues and Strategies for Making Change

The implementable comprehensive plan report provides chapters for each Key Issue, presents history context and background, and lists the recommended strategies the communities should employ to address problems and build on strengths. The highest priority strategies include step-by-step guides for implementation.

By contrast, this summary is a condensed version of the full implementable comprehensive plan report. It presents abridged versions of the descriptions and background of each Key Issue and provides a list of the strategies aimed at solving specific problems, but does not include step-by-step detail. The idea behind this is to provide two levels of detail for readers or users of the plan who have different levels of involvement and interest.

These Key Issue summaries are provided on the following 10 pages.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Key Issue Overview

Business development, job growth and social entrepreneurship together create a more stable local economy, which will make the communities a better place to live. Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum can pursue strategies listed in this chapter that capitalize on their assets, such as some strong existing anchor businesses and industries, a local volunteer corps, interesting old buildings, traditional walkable business districts, the Allegheny River, and relatively affordable real estate.

Looking Ahead

Social enterprise, community and economic development goals can best be met through a coordinated effort among the communities, in collaboration with existing businesses and non-profit organizations. Efforts to create development opportunities should:

- Align with community development objectives, goals, strategies, master plans and/or programmatic initiatives common to the three communities.
- Be developed jointly among the communities, sharing efforts and services to the greatest degree feasible, and including a community/economic development organization to provide leadership.
- Support the intention of creating and maintaining visually attractive communities, and align with a related multi-municipal effort to address commercial and residential property deterioration and blight. Redevelopment of deteriorated properties can interrupt a vicious cycle.
- Whenever possible, support local entrepreneurship and small business. Additionally, involve

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum thrive at individual and community scales. They address disinvestment methodically, and align continuing efforts with objectives and goals developed collaboratively among the three communities and with existing businesses, institutions and non-profit organizations. The communities continuously respond to existing community needs and capitalize on strengths.

and include existing businesses and established community institutions and non-profits, such as Highlands Partnership Network, an umbrella organization for many community groups.

- Potentially include updating the communities' zoning districts and ordinances.
- Respond to the needs of residents lacking transportation access to food, goods and services.
- Capitalize on existing assets of the communities, such as the Allegheny Riverfront, municipal parks, and a sidewalk network and other active transportation infrastructure.

High Priority Strategies



Support a formation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that represents all three municipalities, then methodically leverage the agency's services.

NOTE: As this plan was being completed, Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.) expanded its service in the Upper Allegheny Valley to serve as a Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a particular emphasis on Harrison Township and the Boroughs of Brackenridge and Tarentum. See Appendices 2A and 2B.



Maximize the Allegheny Riverfront as a prime community asset, as demonstrated in the concept drawings that incorporate walking and biking routes, parks, river access or views, historic neighborhoods, and connections with the traditional downtowns

Additional Strategies

- **3** Give people reasons to visit targeted areas in the three communities, through special events, holiday celebrations and other activities, and provide amenities.
- 4 Create and maintain a consolidated listing of commercial spaces available for the three communities, with information about "what it would take" to get the property ready for occupancy or redevelopment.
- 5 Identify and champion large sites that could have redevelopment potential.
- Arrange for the EDC/CDC or the individual municipalities to provide web-hosting of the high-priority target properties for redevelopment as set forth in Strategies No. 2 and 5.
- 7 Align redevelopment and blight-fighting efforts, working from jointly developed priorities, goals and strategies. Begin with these areas in the community as revitalization targets, and leverage the services of the CDC.
- Explore creating tax increment financing districts (TIFs) in specific areas

- of the communities to help finance redevelopment.
- Working through the Pennsylvania
 Department of Community and
 Economic Development, create a
 Neighborhood Partnership Program
 (NPP) or Neighborhood Assistance
 Program (NAP) in Brackenridge
 and Harrison (perhaps the Natrona
 neighborhood). In Tarentum, Faith
 Community Partners (FCP) has initiated a
 Neighborhood Partnership Program.
- 10 Support a market study to determine the area's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.
- 11 Review ordinances and consider changing some zoning provisions to encourage a range of development types.
- 12 Engage in planning for the future of the Heights Plaza.
- 13 Strengthen the local food system.
- 14 Connect all residents to affordable, reliable high-speed Internet access.



BLIGHT & PROPERTY DETERIORATION

Issue Overview

Property deterioration is a problem that crops up in nearly every community in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, or indeed the nation. It negatively affects quality of life, community reputation, and economic growth. Addressing the problem is not easy, but it is possible, via the proven strategies presented in this chapter. Because of economies of scale and because blight doesn't recognize municipal boundaries, the problem is best addressed on a multimunicipal basis.

Looking Ahead

Property deterioration can best be addressed through a coordinated effort among the communities. Efforts to address property deterioration and blight should:

- Be developed jointly among the three communities, sharing services to the greatest degree feasible
- Create common definitions within the continuum of property deterioration
- Create and work from a unified, consistent and up-to-date database
- Align with jointly developed overarching strategies that include prevention and remediation as well as removal and redevelopment
- Be developed and implemented in the context of economic and community development goals and efforts
- Emphasize strategies to assist people who live in substandard housing.

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum present a low incidence of deteriorated or blighted properties. They follow a jointly developed plan to remediate, demolish and/or redevelop properties in support of quality of life, public health and economic/community development goals.

High-Priority Strategy



Using a multi-municipal approach, systematically pursue improvements as set forth in this chapter, overseen and driven by a multimunicipal "Blight Team." Work on addressing blight should be framed within the goals of this plan, and especially those related to economic development.

NOTE: As part of implementation for this comprehensive plan, volunteers from the community began collecting data to map property condition. This process is undertaken in collaboration with Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.).

Additional Strategies

- 2 Revise ordinances with provisions that assist with addressing blight.
- 3 Pursue collaborative approaches within the multi-municipal framework, such as code enforcement and uniform landlord ordinances.
- 4 Explore creating a regional land bank.
- 5 Assist property owners trying to make improvements.
- Research and weigh other potential avenues for addressing blight, which are likely to be more complex but may have potential: advocate for a County Tax Claim Bureau that would collect delinquent taxes; investigate creating a Demolition Authority; cooperate with utility companies.



TRAILS, PARKS & RECREATION

Issue Overview

Recreation facilities and programs are some of the highest priority public services that contribute to community quality of life. Being outside in nature, enjoying exercise, recreation and leisure, and socializing in the company of neighbors are factors that enhance community and individual health and wellbeing.

As more people recognize the importance of outdoor and community activities, officials are increasingly considering trails, parks and recreation to be essential facilities and services directed toward meeting basic human needs.

Looking Ahead

Communities can benefit from increased community connectivity and the assets of river access, riverfront views, parkland and recreation. Next steps should include efforts that:

- Coordinate an approach to planning of park assets and use of parkland
- Coordinate recreation initiatives, programs, events and services
- Plan multi-municipal connectivity and trails within the three communities and with external
 destinations or routes. This network should include associated features such as wayfinding,
 promotion, programming, and connection with other community assets.
- Capitalize on river access and riverfront views, which potentially can be a factor for all three

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum residents can safely access places, goods, services, employment, and care through a connected network that includes walking/biking routes. The communities capitalize on the recreation and leisure potential of the Allegheny River and the availability of parks and recreation. They coordinate recreation and planning efforts in order to make the most of tax dollars and grants, and to provide the greatest possible variety and quality of services for all residents.

communities as they pursue social enterprise, community and economic development goals.

- Recognize parks, greenspace, watersheds and the river as potential learning centers.
- Embrace conservation and preservation of open space, greenspace and natural systems or potential planning for an eco-district.

High-Priority Strategy



Convene a trails, parks and recreation group, and begin working on joint programs and events, and planning of public facilities and trails.

Additional Strategies

- Create a unified, multi-municipal approach to trail network development within and beyond the communities.
- 3 Create communications and volunteer engagement mechanisms for improving parks and trails and creating programs.
- 4 Use the riverfront development concept plan drawings presented in the "Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development" chapter to select potential public access improvements to help connect the three communities to the Allegheny River, one of the area's most important assets.
- Review land-use maps and ordinances to identify parcels that could be acquired by their home communities, potentially with the assistance of grant funding, to be conserved for open space, future park land and stormwater management or resource conservation purposes.



COMMUNITY IDENTITY & BRANDING

Issue Overview

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum are distinctive places with rich and complex histories and an ambition to be known as convenient places to live that have a vibrant, small-town feel, affordable housing, and amenities like parks, trails, recreation options, walkability and Allegheny River views. The three communities desire to assemble a "toolkit" for communicating both to local people and to the greater Pittsburgh area as a whole. They wish to speak with one voice about the characteristics and assets they offer today and about the future the communities intend to forge.

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum attract and retain residents, businesses and investment by marketing themselves successfully through a commonly held identity or brand.

Looking Ahead

Communities share strengths, assets and challenges, many of which this comprehensive plan seeks to address. Creating a joint "identity" or "brand" should include efforts that:

- Articulate a shared understanding of the communities as they are today and as they hope to be in the next five to 10 years
- Reflect the cultural, human, historical, ecological and built assets the three communities share or plan to develop
- Support the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum vision for social enterprise, community and economic development
- Can result in official and informal marketing and promotion efforts by the communities together or individually.

High-Priority Strategy

1

Convene a team that can pursue the Community Identity and Branding initiatives over time. The team should include the members of the Community Identity comprehensive plan working group and new volunteers with expertise in media relations, marketing and branding. Because the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum area's community identity may encompass new facets or features as other elements of the comprehensive plan are implemented, the team should strive to keep abreast of other work under way in the communities.

Additional Strategies

- Develop a "community identity" through storytelling. This is different than creating a geographic label. A community identity articulated through storytelling is a more thoughtful and inclusive process, with a nuanced product.
- 3 Create a community branding campaign. Following story gathering and community outreach efforts, the Community Identity team and partners will synthesize the information gathered to identify common themes about life in the community. Focus groups can help distill meaning from a collection of individual stories.
- 4 Create talking points for business owners, media, faith community, neighbors, and distribute them to media outlets, Visit Pittsburgh, state and county elected officials and others who can share important stories and information about Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum.
- 5 Create a digital and printed map identifying community assets and public amenities as well as historic locations and properties. This can service as a tool for communicating the three communities' identity and brand.



ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Implementable comprehensive plans focus their content heavily on "Key Issues" that the public process identified as the most important and most feasible to address in the coming years. Those topics typically warrant whole chapters for each. The public process also identified topics that either had less priority or were considered less feasible to address.

We include a section called Additional Topics to recognize the matters that arose during the public process but did not become Key Issues because they were viewed to be of lower priority or highly unlikely to be successfully addressed through the comprehensive planning process.

TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

ISSUE: Lack of transportation creates and perpetuates inequity and hardship in the three communities. People in the three communities who don't have their own cars have significant difficulty getting to grocery stores or accessing health care and other needed services due to distance, topography and a lack of public transit.

Statement of support

• This comprehensive plan supports increased and improved transit/shuttle services to enable residents of Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum to access food stores, health care, goods and services, employment and recreation.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

ISSUE: The three communities lie entirely within the Highlands School District, but there is arrangement for sharing information or communicating between the governing bodies. This can lead to missed opportunities at best and suspicion, competition for resources and mistrust at worst.

Strategy

- Begin holding liaison meetings among one or two volunteers from each elected body. These should be held semi-annually. The first meeting should discuss:
 - a. How to build collaboration among elected officials

b. Projects or ideas to explore or undertake together, such as producing a multi-municipal public festival showcasing student achievements in art, music, robotics, voluntarism, other projects.

CRIME

ISSUE: Some residents participating in the public process perceived crime to be an important problem to solve in the three communities. A review of uniform crime statistics showed that a spike in some forms of crime had occurred in the communities in 2016-17, possibly related to the opioid epidemic, but that no trend appeared to be continuing in 2018-2020. However, since even low statistical levels of crime can disrupt communities, neighborhoods and households, this comprhensive plan recommends the steps listed below.

Strategies

- All three communities should join a communications service such as Savvy Citizen, perhaps recruiting a local business to support the service on an annual basis. Use this, as well as informal social networks such as NextDoor.com, to notify citizens when emergencies occur to begin to establish an understanding that crime and public emergencies are not common.
- Create a section on each website showing incidences of crime and trend lines, and crime prevention techniques.
- Partner with the two large health-care providers to help inform residents of resources to help families and individuals who need health care or mental health care, including substance use disorders. This is listed here, since some property crimes are associated with substance abuse problems.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: Road maintenance and improvements are crucial to all communities, and this is particularly difficult for Brackenridge, which does not qualify for some state funding due to its small size. At the same time, heavy truck traffic from local industries damages roads and is highly disruptive to the quietude of residential neighborhoods.

Strategies

- Explore creating a road impact fee for truck use on local roads.
- Consider establishing an official truck route through the communities to divert heavy vehicles away from quiet residential areas, parks and trail routes.
- Develop a list, by community, of needed road improvements, arranged by priority and road owner. In cases where projects are on more than one community's list, create a multi-municipal plan for pursuing funding, by approaching state representatives, PennDOT, Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to elevate awareness of need.

The Adoption Process and What's Next

Review and Adoption

Allegheny County Economic Development reviewed this comprehensive plan for consistency with Allegheny Places, the County's comprehensive plan, and Active Allegheny, the County's Active Transportation Plan.

In addition, the draft comprehensive plan report was provided to neighboring municipalities and Highlands School District for their review and consideration.

The comprehensive plan in a final draft form was presented at public hearings in December 2020, prior to adoption by the three communities' governing bodies. Adoption resolutions are provided in the Appendix or are available at these URLs:

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placeholder URL

placeholder URL

Why action is important

- There are costs to making changes (time, money, effort), but also potential costs to doing nothing (citizen resentment, declining property values, less tax revenue and overall decline).
- Citizens expressed a need for change in the four Key Issue areas, and are expecting follow-through.
- The communities can best ensure their future viability by diligently undertaking the improvements outlined in this implementable plan.

Start-Up To-Do List

Recognizing that municipal staff members, elected officials and volunteer board members are very busy, it can help to have a summary of a summary. Therefore, this report provides a chart depicting the first things each community should do on the road to plan implementation. Work can begin on any of these in any order at any time. Some can even begin before the communities formally adopt the comprehensive plan.

This list will help guide action and focus energy. The chart appears on the next page.

12-MONTH START-UP TO-DO LIST

Harrison	Brackenridge	Tarentum	Start-Up Task	
\checkmark	\checkmark	✓	Create an implementation team for this plan.	
✓	√	√	Survey local non-profit organizations to determine whether any has the interest in and capacity for serving as an Economic Development Corporation or Community Development Corporation. ACHIEVED	
✓	√	√	Harrison, Brackenridge, Tarentum governing boards each vote to support the EDC/CDC financially and institutionally, and determine how to leverage the agency's services.	
✓	\checkmark	\checkmark	View the suggested locations for additional trees as depicted on the riverfront concept plans, and plant them.	
	✓		Strive to end the difficult one-way traffic problem at the foot of Mile Lock Lane.	
✓	✓		Discuss with ATI Corp. the possibility of the corporation's installing and maintaining a high-quality mural on the Brackenridge face of wall.	
✓		√	Improve the foot of Wood Street (Tarentum) and a pathway from Veteran's Way (Harrison) with seating and access to the riverfront for small-scale uses, such as fishing, bird-watching and rock skipping.	
✓	✓	✓	Create and convene Meeting 1 of a blight team that will pursue funding, encourage code enforcement and DPW sharing, develop a legal definition of "blighted property," create an overaching strategy, and other steps.	
✓	✓	✓	Hold Meeting 1 of a trails, parks and recreation group (including representatives from all three Recreation Boards and the comprehensive plan working group that has focused on Trails, Parks and Recreation, to start planning a joint event as a pilot project.	
✓	√	✓	The joint trails, parks and recreation group investigates state Department of Recreation and Natural Resources programs that encourage multimunicipal collaborations on recreation staffing, funding and technical assistance.	
\checkmark	√	√	The joint trails, parks and recreation group reviews the multi- municipal trails map and existing efforts, and identifies next steps for implementation.	
√	✓	√	Create and distribute an illustrative map highlighting H-B-T assets and amenities, to underscore the communities' Identity and Branding.	

Now who does what?

This report can serve as a guide in the following ways:

• ELECTED OFFICIALS - This report documents the development of the implementable comprehensive plan. It identifies the directions in which the municipalities will change, and lays out the practical next steps that will produce the desired changes. Next steps, in most cases, rest in the hands of elected and appointed officials who have the role and responsibility of initiating policies or procedures; providing funding via grants or municipal revenue streams; providing human and material resources; and lending oversight. Residents expect leadership from their elected officials, including anticipating future challenges before they become problems.







- CITIZENS Individuals will advocate for the plan and track progress by comparing the steps listed in this report to visible changes in the community and actions taken by Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum. Citizens take the initiative and become involved by attending public meetings where decisions are made. Citizens take an active role by pressing for the actions and policies listed in this plan, which are designed to create change in the three communities. Citizens also, by volunteering for committies or for special initiatives, support and propel change.
- COMMUNITY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.
 Once established, this organization will play a crucial role in initiating and supporting some of the recommendations set out in this comprehensive plan. A CDC or EDC that is partly funded by the municipalities can help to lead and implement.
- TOWNSHIP OR BOROUGH STAFF MEMBERS The communities' employees will work on a day-to-day basis to develop policies and procedures; muster resources; and assist elected and appointed officials in pushing the outcomes of the plan. Staff members are in the best position to spot obstacles to progress and propose solutions.
- APPOINTED OFFICIALS Individuals serving on the Planning Commissions will become deeply familiar with the contents of this report. These members, along with other

board and commission members, are prepared to set out an action plan, make recommendations to the elected governing bodies, and help to solve problems in order to clear the way for progress.

• STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS - A number of the members of the Steering Committee that guided preparation of the comprehensive plan have agreed to continue their efforts as members of implementation teams for each Key Issue. These groups need to be fully engaged in the contents of this report, for they will have primary responsibility for identifying successive next steps and tracking progress - keeping a "foot on the gas." These groups will be responsible for collaborating across municipal lines to help implement this plan, and for communicating with the Planning Commissions or elected bodies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Community	Working Group
Eric Bengel	Harrison	Blight
Robin Bergstrom	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation
Natalie Cajka Cale	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation
Lauren Cottone	Harrison	Community Identity
Chuck Dizard	Harrison	Blight
Beth Edson	Brackenridge	Development
Lindsay Frazier	Brackenridge	Community Identity
Bill Godfrey	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation
Michelle Goetzinger	Harrison	Community Identity
Lou Ann Homa	Tarentum	Blight
Brad James	Tarentum	Trails, Parks, Recreation
Tim Kuhns	Tarentum	Blight
Dino Lopreiato	Brackenridge	Trails, Parks, Recreation
JP Marino	Tarentum	Development
Michael Nestico	Tarentum	Blight
Cody Nolen	Harrison	Development
Scott Slezak	Harrison	Development
Denise Sloan	Brackenridge	Blight
John Stanzione	Brackenridge	Development
Pat Walters	Harrison	Blight
John Waters	Tarentum	Development

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Harrison

Commissioners

William W. Heasley, Chairman Gary Meanor, Vice-Chairman Gary J. Lilly Charles Dizard Eric Bengel

Rich Hill, Manager

Planning Commission

Cody Nolen, Chairman Scott Slezak, Vice Chairman Thomas Cajka, Recording Secretary Norbert Cieslinski Gary Kesicki Robin Bergstom, Alt. Michelle Goetzinger, Alt.

Brackenridge Council Members

Timothy Connelly, President John Stanzione, Vice President Timothy Kolar Dino Lopreiato Verne Petz Randall Elliott

Thomas Kish, Mayor

Tarentum

Council Members

Scott Dadowski, president Erika Josefoski Lou Ann Homa Carrie Fox Adam Blythe Brian Snyder Jim Bonner

Eric Carter, Mayor Michael Nestico, Mgr.

Planning Commission

Dianna Roney, Chairperson Cindy Homburg, Vice Chairperson Rosemary Martin Tim Rapp

Funding and Collaboration



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HARRISON BRACKENRIDGE TARENTUM















COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FORGING OUR FUTURE

2020



CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
SUMMARY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN	ES1
INTRODUCTION	1
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	11
STRATEGIES: Improving Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development	16
BLIGHT & PROPERTY DETERIORATION	35
STRATEGIES: Improving the Condition of Properties and the Effects of Deterioration	38
TRAILS, PARKS AND RECREATION	47
STRATEGIES: Improving Trails, Parks & Recreation	50
COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND BRANDING	59
STRATEGIES: Improving Community Identity and Branding	62
ADDITIONAL TOPICS	65

Appendices provided in companion document

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UMMARY OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Forging a Future

Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs used to be "steel towns," but over several decades lost that identity along with a significant portion of their population. From those painful losses now arises a new ambition to forge a future. Community pride is bubbling up in the form of social entrepreneurship, small businesses, the steady presence of some larger industries, and a recognition that the communities' location along the Allegheny River presents an opportunity to layer new personalities and character traits upon the old.

The communities have recognized, as residents repeatedy stated during public input for this comprehensive plan, that with concentrated effort, they are positioned to move forward together to accomplish the changes that can enhance the quality of life for existing residents and draw newcomers.

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum hope to build on their assets, including affordable real estate, their location along the Allegheny River, well-maintained local parks and an Allegheny County Park, some anchor businesses and industries, traditional business districts and bikeable, walkable neighborhoods. They also hope to welcome and guide change through efforts springing from community planning and several concurrent initiatives.

The three communities share an identity as members of the Highlands School District, and geographically as the northernmost communities in Allegheny County.

They share problems as well; years of declining population, job loss and business disinvestment have caused vacancies, property deterioration, and the social ramifications of poverty. The communities recognize that these problems do not halt at municipal borders but occur in all three. The communities' best chances for pursuing solutions to these problems and to build on strengths will be to work together to foster change and forge a new future.

The four Key Issues that community stakeholders chose to address via this plan are:

- Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development
- Property Deterioration and Blight
- Trails, Parks and Recreation
- Community Identity.

What propelled this plan

Elected officials and staff from Harrison Township expressed an interest in using the Implementable Comprehensive Planning process to improve Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs. They were looking for a very focused approach to solving challenges facing the three communities. Their hope was also for the planning process to investigate opportunities where the three municipalities could work together to reduce costs or increase services to residents The three communities secured a planning grant from Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) to partially fund the effort.

ACED and its planning division as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), which oversees planning at the state level, vigorously encourage multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of maximizing resources and enhancing community capacity.

Joint approaches, such as collaborating on planning and projects, will better position the communities to apply for funding from private or public sources. Joint approaches also respond to DCED and ACED expectations for multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of better serving the communities and residents.

Public Engagement

STEERING COMMITTEE

The project's joint steering committee met nine times between Feb. 12, 2019 and Aug. 26, 2020. The committee's responsibilities included assistance with:

- Generating a questionnaire
- Seeking information from residents via pop-up surveying
- Interacting with residents at the public meetings to collect their input
- Distilling input and helping to generate the Key Issues
- Working in small groups to interview and discuss issues and solutions with experts from the state and region on those topics.
- Reviewing and prioritizing potential strategies to identify the most feasible and promising options
- Reviewing chapters from an earlier draft version of this report
- Initiating implmentation, including property condition mapping, and enlisting a local non-profit to be a CDC
- Answering questions from their

communities' Planning Commissions and elected officials, and advocating for plan adoption.

QUESTIONNAIRE

More than 600 people responded to the questionnaire, most via digital platform and about 30 via paper forms.

The top four areas of concern were (1) Drug issues/Crime, (2) Dilapidated Buildings, (3) Emergency Services, (4) Streets and Roads.

Several of our steering committee members conducted "pop up" events and interviewed people at the YMCA and the Library for this plan.

PUBLIC MEETING 1

The project's initial public meeting took place June 3, 2019, at the Salvation Army gym. Approximately 80 participants generated 140 ideas on things that could be improved and 50 things they thought were positive aspects of the communities/strengths to build on.

KEY STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Based on contacts provided to us by the steering committee Pashek+MTR interviewed 21 people from the area. People included: developers, bank managers, non-profit directors, members of the faith community, business owners and municipal staff.

OTHER PUBLIC INPUT

The steering committee met with Pennsylvania State Sen. Lindsay Williams on Sept. 12, 2019, to discuss this planning process and to seek her help in identifying opportunities for public funding.

CHECK-INS WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

After identifying and defining the four Key Issues that the comprehensive plan would address, the consultant attended regularly scheduled meetings of the three communities' governing bodies to review the process so far and answer questions.

PUBLIC MEETING 2

The second public meeting, held Feb. 17, 2020, at the Salvation Army gym in Brackenridge, was a check-in with residents after the Key Issues were developed and some early ideas for solutions were sketched out. This meeting also served as an additional round of input, because the format asked residents to contribute ideas toward solutions to specific problems.

Sen. Lindsay Williams and Rep . Frank Dermody attended. Both povided supportive remarks about the comprehensive planning process and the plan's goals for community improvements.



Residents at the second public meeting consider elements of a riverfront improvement plan for Natrona and add comments



Residents at the second public meeting review a recreation resources map and note what facilities they use or would like to have.

The Key Issues

One of the important concepts of an Implementable Comprehensive Plan is to: (1) focus the plan on real issues as identified by the community and , (2) match the number and types of issues to the capacity of the communities to implement the recommendations. Too often, earlier plans identified hundreds of recommendations that simply overwhelmed even the best-intentioned municipal staff. Through careful listening and much discussion with an active steering committee, we arrived at the following key issues.

The input from residents from all sources – public meetings, a community questionnaire, steering committee guidance and key stakeholder interviews – was collated and counted by topic. The consultant categorized all the "Problems To Solve," "Strengths To Build On," and used frequency and degree of vehemence to begin to identify themes and priorities.

The topics that emerged as priorities are called "Key Issues."

The Four Key Issues in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum

- a. Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development
- b. Property Deterioration and Blight
- c. Trails, Parks and Recreation
- d. Community Identity

History and context lie behind each Key Issue. These matters didn't emerge overnight as issues in the communities, and didn't become priorities suddenly. Rather, both problems and strengths have developed over time, often over decades. The implementable comprehensive plan report delves into the complexity of each Key Issue, assessing its components.

Considering best practices and Key Issue solutions

The Steering Committee for this comprehensive plan process divided into small groups aligned with each Key Issue. Each group researched best practices and potential solutions to gain an overview of possible next steps. This would help the group determine what strategies might best apply in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum, and align with community needs and capacity.



Steering committee members meet with Jessica Trimble (center), a local government policy specialist with DCED.

• The Social Enterprise, Comunity and Economic Development team met with Jessica Trimble, a Local Government Policy Specialist with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The group had an initial meeting via conference call and then hosted her for a field visit and in-person brainstorming meeting about what DCED programs might align with community goals.

- The Property Deterioration and Blight team met with two specialists affiliated with the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance: Andrea Mannino, Senior Advisor, Policy and Practice, and Winifred Branton, of Branton Strategies, which provides policy guidance in a legal context for communities working with the Housing Alliance. This team also met with Amanda Settelmaier, Executive Director of the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, who has developed a code enforcement database.
- The Trails, Parks and Recreation team met with Kathy Frankel, Recreation and Conservation Manager, Southwest Regional Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The conversation provided an overview of how DCNR strives to support local community improvements with technical and funding assistance.
- The Community Identity and Branding team met with Brenda Armstrong and Asaka Narumi from Visit Pittsburgh, to hear how that organization seeks to reflect the character of the Pittsburgh region in strategic communications. The team also met with representatives of New Sun Rising, a non-profit organization based in the Tri-Borough area along the Allegheny River, to learn how it supports sustainable economic and community development.

Along with ideas discussed with the state and regional professionals, the consultant developed a list of potential strategies the communities could undertake. The steering committee then chose the strategies it considered to be most important and most feasible, and ranked the strategies in order of those they felt most strongly that their communities should pursue.

The Key Issues and Strategies for Making Change

The implementable comprehensive plan report provides chapters for each Key Issue, presents history context and background, and lists the recommended strategies the communities should employ to address problems and build on strengths. The highest priority strategies include step-by-step guides for implementation.

By contrast, this summary is a condensed version of the full implementable comprehensive plan report. It presents abridged versions of the descriptions and background of each Key Issue and provides a list of the strategies aimed at solving specific problems, but does not include step-by-step detail. The idea behind this is to provide two levels of detail for readers or users of the plan who have different levels of involvement and interest.

These Key Issue summaries are provided on the following 10 pages.



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Key Issue Overview

Business development, job growth and social entrepreneurship together create a more stable local economy, which will make the communities a better place to live. Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum can pursue strategies listed in this chapter that capitalize on their assets, such as some strong existing anchor businesses and industries, a local volunteer corps, interesting old buildings, traditional walkable business districts, the Allegheny River, and relatively affordable real estate.

Looking Ahead

Social enterprise, community and economic development goals can best be met through a coordinated effort among the communities, in collaboration with existing businesses and non-profit organizations. Efforts to create development opportunities should:

- Align with community development objectives, goals, strategies, master plans and/or programmatic initiatives common to the three communities.
- Be developed jointly among the communities, sharing efforts and services to the greatest degree feasible, and including a community/economic development organization to provide leadership.
- Support the intention of creating and maintaining visually attractive communities, and align with a related multi-municipal effort to address commercial and residential property deterioration and blight. Redevelopment of deteriorated properties can interrupt a vicious cycle.
- Whenever possible, support local entrepreneurship and small business. Additionally, involve

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum thrive at individual and community scales. They address disinvestment methodically, and align continuing efforts with objectives and goals developed collaboratively among the three communities and with existing businesses, institutions and non-profit organizations. The communities continuously respond to existing community needs and capitalize on strengths.

and include existing businesses and established community institutions and non-profits, such as Highlands Partnership Network, an umbrella organization for many community groups.

- Potentially include updating the communities' zoning districts and ordinances.
- Respond to the needs of residents lacking transportation access to food, goods and services.
- Capitalize on existing assets of the communities, such as the Allegheny Riverfront, municipal parks, and a sidewalk network and other active transportation infrastructure.

High Priority Strategies



Support a formation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that represents all three municipalities, then methodically leverage the agency's services.

NOTE: As this plan was being completed, Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.) expanded its service in the Upper Allegheny Valley to serve as a Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a particular emphasis on Harrison Township and the Boroughs of Brackenridge and Tarentum. See Appendices 2A and 2B.



Maximize the Allegheny Riverfront as a prime community asset, as demonstrated in the concept drawings that incorporate walking and biking routes, parks, river access or views, historic neighborhoods, and connections with the traditional downtowns

Additional Strategies

- Give people reasons to visit targeted areas in the three communities, through special events, holiday celebrations and other activities, and provide amenities.
- 4 Create and maintain a consolidated listing of commercial spaces available for the three communities, with information about "what it would take" to get the property ready for occupancy or redevelopment.
- 5 Identify and champion large sites that could have redevelopment potential.
- Arrange for the EDC/CDC or the individual municipalities to provide web-hosting of the high-priority target properties for redevelopment as set forth in Strategies No. 2 and 5.
- 7 Align redevelopment and blight-fighting efforts, working from jointly developed priorities, goals and strategies. Begin with these areas in the community as revitalization targets, and leverage the services of the CDC.
- Explore creating tax increment financing districts (TIFs) in specific areas

- of the communities to help finance redevelopment.
- Working through the Pennsylvania
 Department of Community and
 Economic Development, create a
 Neighborhood Partnership Program
 (NPP) or Neighborhood Assistance
 Program (NAP) in Brackenridge
 and Harrison (perhaps the Natrona
 neighborhood). In Tarentum, Faith
 Community Partners (FCP) has initiated a
 Neighborhood Partnership Program.
- 10 Support a market study to determine the area's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.
- 11 Review ordinances and consider changing some zoning provisions to encourage a range of development types.
- 12 Engage in planning for the future of the Heights Plaza.
- **13** Strengthen the local food system.
- 14 Connect all residents to affordable, reliable high-speed Internet access.



BLIGHT & PROPERTY DETERIORATION

Issue Overview

Property deterioration is a problem that crops up in nearly every community in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, or indeed the nation. It negatively affects quality of life, community reputation, and economic growth. Addressing the problem is not easy, but it is possible, via the proven strategies presented in this chapter. Because of economies of scale and because blight doesn't recognize municipal boundaries, the problem is best addressed on a multimunicipal basis.

Looking Ahead

Property deterioration can best be addressed through a coordinated effort among the communities. Efforts to address property deterioration and blight should:

- Be developed jointly among the three communities, sharing services to the greatest degree feasible
- Create common definitions within the continuum of property deterioration
- Create and work from a unified, consistent and up-to-date database
- Align with jointly developed overarching strategies that include prevention and remediation as well as removal and redevelopment
- Be developed and implemented in the context of economic and community development goals and efforts
- Emphasize strategies to assist people who live in substandard housing.

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum present a low incidence of deteriorated or blighted properties. They follow a jointly developed plan to remediate, demolish and/or redevelop properties in support of quality of life, public health and economic/community development goals.

High-Priority Strategy



Using a multi-municipal approach, systematically pursue improvements as set forth in this chapter, overseen and driven by a multimunicipal "Blight Team." Work on addressing blight should be framed within the goals of this plan, and especially those related to economic development.

NOTE: As part of implementation for this comprehensive plan, volunteers from the community began collecting data to map property condition. This process is undertaken in collaboration with Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.).

Additional Strategies

- 2 Revise ordinances with provisions that assist with addressing blight.
- 3 Pursue collaborative approaches within the multi-municipal framework, such as code enforcement and uniform landlord ordinances.
- 4 Explore creating a regional land bank.
- 5 Assist property owners trying to make improvements.
- Research and weigh other potential avenues for addressing blight, which are likely to be more complex but may have potential: advocate for a County Tax Claim Bureau that would collect delinquent taxes; investigate creating a Demolition Authority; cooperate with utility companies.



TRAILS, PARKS & RECREATION

Issue Overview

Recreation facilities and programs are some of the highest priority public services that contribute to community quality of life. Being outside in nature, enjoying exercise, recreation and leisure, and socializing in the company of neighbors are factors that enhance community and individual health and wellbeing.

As more people recognize the importance of outdoor and community activities, officials are increasingly considering trails, parks and recreation to be essential facilities and services directed toward meeting basic human needs.

Looking Ahead

Communities can benefit from increased community connectivity and the assets of river access, riverfront views, parkland and recreation. Next steps should include efforts that:

- Coordinate an approach to planning of park assets and use of parkland
- Coordinate recreation initiatives, programs, events and services
- Plan multi-municipal connectivity and trails within the three communities and with external
 destinations or routes. This network should include associated features such as wayfinding,
 promotion, programming, and connection with other community assets.
- Capitalize on river access and riverfront views, which potentially can be a factor for all three

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum residents can safely access places, goods, services, employment, and care through a connected network that includes walking/biking routes. The communities capitalize on the recreation and leisure potential of the Allegheny River and the availability of parks and recreation. They coordinate recreation and planning efforts in order to make the most of tax dollars and grants, and to provide the greatest possible variety and quality of services for all residents.

communities as they pursue social enterprise, community and economic development goals.

- Recognize parks, greenspace, watersheds and the river as potential learning centers.
- Embrace conservation and preservation of open space, greenspace and natural systems or potential planning for an eco-district.

High-Priority Strategy



Convene a trails, parks and recreation group, and begin working on joint programs and events, and planning of public facilities and trails.

Additional Strategies

- Create a unified, multi-municipal approach to trail network development within and beyond the communities.
- 3 Create communications and volunteer engagement mechanisms for improving parks and trails and creating programs.
- 4 Use the riverfront development concept plan drawings presented in the "Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development" chapter to select potential public access improvements to help connect the three communities to the Allegheny River, one of the area's most important assets.
- Review land-use maps and ordinances to identify parcels that could be acquired by their home communities, potentially with the assistance of grant funding, to be conserved for open space, future park land and stormwater management or resource conservation purposes.



COMMUNITY IDENTITY & BRANDING

Issue Overview

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum are distinctive places with rich and complex histories and an ambition to be known as convenient places to live that have a vibrant, small-town feel, affordable housing, and amenities like parks, trails, recreation options, walkability and Allegheny River views. The three communities desire to assemble a "toolkit" for communicating both to local people and to the greater Pittsburgh area as a whole. They wish to speak with one voice about the characteristics and assets they offer today and about the future the communities intend to forge.

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum attract and retain residents, businesses and investment by marketing themselves successfully through a commonly held identity or brand.

Looking Ahead

Communities share strengths, assets and challenges, many of which this comprehensive plan seeks to address. Creating a joint "identity" or "brand" should include efforts that:

- Articulate a shared understanding of the communities as they are today and as they hope to be in the next five to 10 years
- Reflect the cultural, human, historical, ecological and built assets the three communities share or plan to develop
- Support the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum vision for social enterprise, community and economic development
- Can result in official and informal marketing and promotion efforts by the communities together or individually.

High-Priority Strategy

1

Convene a team that can pursue the Community Identity and Branding initiatives over time. The team should include the members of the Community Identity comprehensive plan working group and new volunteers with expertise in media relations, marketing and branding. Because the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum area's community identity may encompass new facets or features as other elements of the comprehensive plan are implemented, the team should strive to keep abreast of other work under way in the communities.

Additional Strategies

- Develop a "community identity" through storytelling. This is different than creating a geographic label. A community identity articulated through storytelling is a more thoughtful and inclusive process, with a nuanced product.
- 3 Create a community branding campaign. Following story gathering and community outreach efforts, the Community Identity team and partners will synthesize the information gathered to identify common themes about life in the community. Focus groups can help distill meaning from a collection of individual stories.
- 4 Create talking points for business owners, media, faith community, neighbors, and distribute them to media outlets, Visit Pittsburgh, state and county elected officials and others who can share important stories and information about Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum.
- 5 Create a digital and printed map identifying community assets and public amenities as well as historic locations and properties. This can service as a tool for communicating the three communities' identity and brand.



ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Implementable comprehensive plans focus their content heavily on "Key Issues" that the public process identified as the most important and most feasible to address in the coming years. Those topics typically warrant whole chapters for each. The public process also identified topics that either had less priority or were considered less feasible to address.

We include a section called Additional Topics to recognize the matters that arose during the public process but did not become Key Issues because they were viewed to be of lower priority or highly unlikely to be successfully addressed through the comprehensive planning process.

TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

ISSUE: Lack of transportation creates and perpetuates inequity and hardship in the three communities. People in the three communities who don't have their own cars have significant difficulty getting to grocery stores or accessing health care and other needed services due to distance, topography and a lack of public transit.

Statement of support

• This comprehensive plan supports increased and improved transit/shuttle services to enable residents of Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum to access food stores, health care, goods and services, employment and recreation.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

ISSUE: The three communities lie entirely within the Highlands School District, but there is arrangement for sharing information or communicating between the governing bodies. This can lead to missed opportunities at best and suspicion, competition for resources and mistrust at worst.

Strategy

- Begin holding liaison meetings among one or two volunteers from each elected body. These should be held semi-annually. The first meeting should discuss:
 - a. How to build collaboration among elected officials

b. Projects or ideas to explore or undertake together, such as producing a multi-municipal public festival showcasing student achievements in art, music, robotics, voluntarism, other projects.

CRIME

ISSUE: Some residents participating in the public process perceived crime to be an important problem to solve in the three communities. A review of uniform crime statistics showed that a spike in some forms of crime had occurred in the communities in 2016-17, possibly related to the opioid epidemic, but that no trend appeared to be continuing in 2018-2020. However, since even low statistical levels of crime can disrupt communities, neighborhoods and households, this comprhensive plan recommends the steps listed below.

Strategies

- All three communities should join a communications service such as Savvy Citizen, perhaps recruiting a local business to support the service on an annual basis. Use this, as well as informal social networks such as NextDoor.com, to notify citizens when emergencies occur to begin to establish an understanding that crime and public emergencies are not common.
- Create a section on each website showing incidences of crime and trend lines, and crime prevention techniques.
- Partner with the two large health-care providers to help inform residents of resources to help families and individuals who need health care or mental health care, including substance use disorders. This is listed here, since some property crimes are associated with substance abuse problems.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: Road maintenance and improvements are crucial to all communities, and this is particularly difficult for Brackenridge, which does not qualify for some state funding due to its small size. At the same time, heavy truck traffic from local industries damages roads and is highly disruptive to the quietude of residential neighborhoods.

Strategies

- Explore creating a road impact fee for truck use on local roads.
- Consider establishing an official truck route through the communities to divert heavy vehicles away from quiet residential areas, parks and trail routes.
- Develop a list, by community, of needed road improvements, arranged by priority and road owner. In cases where projects are on more than one community's list, create a multi-municipal plan for pursuing funding, by approaching state representatives, PennDOT, Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to elevate awareness of need.

The Adoption Process and What's Next

Review and Adoption

Allegheny County Economic Development reviewed this comprehensive plan for consistency with Allegheny Places, the County's comprehensive plan, and Active Allegheny, the County's Active Transportation Plan.

In addition, the draft comprehensive plan report was provided to neighboring municipalities and Highlands School District for their review and consideration.

The comprehensive plan in a final draft form was presented at public hearings in December 2020, prior to adoption by the three communities' governing bodies. Adoption resolutions are provided in the Appendix or are available at these URLs:

placeholder URL

placeholder URL

placeholder URL

Why action is important

- There are costs to making changes (time, money, effort), but also potential costs to doing nothing (citizen resentment, declining property values, less tax revenue and overall decline).
- Citizens expressed a need for change in the four Key Issue areas, and are expecting follow-through.
- The communities can best ensure their future viability by diligently undertaking the improvements outlined in this implementable plan.

Start-Up To-Do List

Recognizing that municipal staff members, elected officials and volunteer board members are very busy, it can help to have a summary of a summary. Therefore, this report provides a chart depicting the first things each community should do on the road to plan implementation. Work can begin on any of these in any order at any time. Some can even begin before the communities formally adopt the comprehensive plan.

This list will help guide action and focus energy. The chart appears on the next page.

12-MONTH START-UP TO-DO LIST

Harrison	Brackenridge	Tarentum	Start-Up Task
\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	Create an implementation team for this plan.
✓	√	√	Survey local non-profit organizations to determine whether any has the interest in and capacity for serving as an Economic Development Corporation or Community Development Corporation. ACHIEVED
✓	√	√	Harrison, Brackenridge, Tarentum governing boards each vote to support the EDC/CDC financially and institutionally, and determine how to leverage the agency's services.
✓	\checkmark	\checkmark	View the suggested locations for additional trees as depicted on the riverfront concept plans, and plant them.
	✓		Strive to end the difficult one-way traffic problem at the foot of Mile Lock Lane.
✓	✓		Discuss with ATI Corp. the possibility of the corporation's installing and maintaining a high-quality mural on the Brackenridge face of wall.
✓		√	Improve the foot of Wood Street (Tarentum) and a pathway from Veteran's Way (Harrison) with seating and access to the riverfront for small-scale uses, such as fishing, bird-watching and rock skipping.
✓	✓	✓	Create and convene Meeting 1 of a blight team that will pursue funding, encourage code enforcement and DPW sharing, develop a legal definition of "blighted property," create an overaching strategy, and other steps.
✓	✓	✓	Hold Meeting 1 of a trails, parks and recreation group (including representatives from all three Recreation Boards and the comprehensive plan working group that has focused on Trails, Parks and Recreation, to start planning a joint event as a pilot project.
✓	√	✓	The joint trails, parks and recreation group investigates state Department of Recreation and Natural Resources programs that encourage multimunicipal collaborations on recreation staffing, funding and technical assistance.
√	√	√	The joint trails, parks and recreation group reviews the multi- municipal trails map and existing efforts, and identifies next steps for implementation.
√	√	√	Create and distribute an illustrative map highlighting H-B-T assets and amenities, to underscore the communities' Identity and Branding.

Now who does what?

This report can serve as a guide in the following ways:

• ELECTED OFFICIALS - This report documents the development of the implementable comprehensive plan. It identifies the directions in which the municipalities will change, and lays out the practical next steps that will produce the desired changes. Next steps, in most cases, rest in the hands of elected and appointed officials who have the role and responsibility of initiating policies or procedures; providing funding via grants or municipal revenue streams; providing human and material resources; and lending oversight. Residents expect leadership from their elected officials, including anticipating future challenges before they become problems.







- CITIZENS Individuals will advocate for the plan and track progress by comparing the steps listed in this report to visible changes in the community and actions taken by Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum. Citizens take the initiative and become involved by attending public meetings where decisions are made. Citizens take an active role by pressing for the actions and policies listed in this plan, which are designed to create change in the three communities. Citizens also, by volunteering for committies or for special initiatives, support and propel change.
- COMMUNITY OR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORP.
 Once established, this organization will play a crucial role in initiating and supporting some of the recommendations set out in this comprehensive plan. A CDC or EDC that is partly funded by the municipalities can help to lead and implement.
- TOWNSHIP OR BOROUGH STAFF MEMBERS The communities' employees will work on a day-to-day basis to develop policies and procedures; muster resources; and assist elected and appointed officials in pushing the outcomes of the plan. Staff members are in the best position to spot obstacles to progress and propose solutions.
- APPOINTED OFFICIALS Individuals serving on the Planning Commissions will become deeply familiar with the contents of this report. These members, along with other

board and commission members, are prepared to set out an action plan, make recommendations to the elected governing bodies, and help to solve problems in order to clear the way for progress.

• STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORKING GROUPS - A number of the members of the Steering Committee that guided preparation of the comprehensive plan have agreed to continue their efforts as members of implementation teams for each Key Issue. These groups need to be fully engaged in the contents of this report, for they will have primary responsibility for identifying successive next steps and tracking progress - keeping a "foot on the gas." These groups will be responsible for collaborating across municipal lines to help implement this plan, and for communicating with the Planning Commissions or elected bodies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Community	Working Group	
Eric Bengel	Harrison	Blight	
Robin Bergstrom	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation	
Natalie Cajka Cale	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation	
Lauren Cottone	Harrison	Community Identity	
Chuck Dizard	Harrison	Blight	
Beth Edson	Brackenridge	Development	
Lindsay Frazier	Brackenridge	Community Identity	
Bill Godfrey	Harrison	Trails, Parks, Recreation	
Michelle Goetzinger	Harrison	Community Identity	
Lou Ann Homa	Tarentum	Blight	
Brad James	Tarentum	Trails, Parks, Recreation	
Tim Kuhns	Tarentum	Blight	
Dino Lopreiato	Brackenridge	Trails, Parks, Recreation	
JP Marino	Tarentum	Development	
Michael Nestico	Tarentum Blight		
Cody Nolen	Harrison	Development	
Scott Slezak	Harrison	Development	
Denise Sloan	Brackenridge	Blight	
John Stanzione	Brackenridge Developmen		
Pat Walters	Harrison	Blight	
John Waters	Tarentum Developme		

PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Harrison

Commissioners

William W. Heasley, Chairman Gary Meanor, Vice-Chairman Gary J. Lilly Charles Dizard Eric Bengel

Rich Hill, Manager

Planning Commission

Cody Nolen, Chairman Scott Slezak, Vice Chairman Thomas Cajka, Recording Secretary Norbert Cieslinski Gary Kesicki Robin Bergstom, Alt. Michelle Goetzinger, Alt.

Brackenridge Council Members

Timothy Connelly, President John Stanzione, Vice President Timothy Kolar Dino Lopreiato Verne Petz Randall Elliott

Thomas Kish, Mayor

Tarentum

Council Members

Scott Dadowski, president Erika Josefoski Lou Ann Homa Carrie Fox Adam Blythe Brian Snyder Jim Bonner

Eric Carter, Mayor Michael Nestico, Mgr.

Planning Commission

Dianna Roney, Chairperson Cindy Homburg, Vice Chairperson Rosemary Martin Tim Rapp

Funding and Collaboration



Work on this Implementable Comprehensive Plan was funded by Harrison Township, Brackenridge Borough and Tarentum Borough, and through a grant from Allegheny County Economic Development. Pashek+MTR served as planning consultant.



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Communities adopt a comprehensive plan to guide them toward the future they want to see in the next five to 10 years. An *implementable* plan is a variation on that, providing specific next steps to help the communities move forward along their route to change. The Implementable Comprehensive Plan for Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum is deeply rooted in community input and focuses on four "Key Issues" that residents, business owners and other stakeholders said during the public process are important to them. As a multi-municipal effort, the plan describes problems and strengths that are common to the three communities, and solutions or next steps that are best pursued jointly.

Forging a Future

Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs used to be "steel towns," but over several decades lost that identity along with a significant portion of their population. From those painful losses now arises a new ambition to forge a future. Community pride is bubbling up in the form of social entrepreneurship, small businesses, the steady presence of some larger industries, and a recognition that the communities' location along the Allegheny River presents an opportunity to layer new personalities and character traits upon the old.

The communities have recognized, as residents repeated during public input for this comprehensive plan, that with concentrated effort, they are well positioned to move forward together to accomplish the changes that can

enhance the quality of life for existing residents and draw newcomers.

What propelled this plan

Elected officials and staff from Harrison Township expressed an interest in using the Implementable Comprehensive Planning process to improve Harrison Township and Brackenridge and Tarentum Boroughs. They were looking for a very focused approach to solving challenges facing the three communities. Their hope was also for the planning process to investigate opportunities where the three municipalities could work together to reduce costs or increase services to residents The three communities secured a planning grant from Allegheny County Economic Development (ACED) to partially fund the effort.

ACED and its planning division as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), which oversees planning at the state level, vigorously encourage multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of maximizing resources and enhancing community capacity.

Joint approaches, such as collaborating on planning and projects, will better position the communities to apply for funding from private or public sources. Joint approaches also respond to DCED and ACED expectations for multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of better serving the communities and residents.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

HARRISON, BRACKENRIDGE AND TARENTUM BY THE NUMBERS

	Harrison	Brackenridge	Tarentum	Allegheny Co.
Population (2019 Est)	10,236	3,280	4 4,349	1,216,045
Pop. change since 2010	-6.4%	-7.4%	4 -4.57%	-0.6%
Land Area	7.36 sq mi	0.5 sq mi	1.2 sq mi	730 sq mi
Population density	1,421 per sq mi	6,560 per sq mi	3,624 per sq mi	1,676 per sq mi
Median age	42.6	39.7	37.9	40.8
Median household income 2019	\$53,336	\$41,858	\$31,604	\$59,899
Percent of pop. below poverty line	12%	17.5%	23.3 %	11.7%
Race/ethnicity (100% includes other or 2 or more ethnicities)	90% White 3.5% Black	92% White 5% Black	83% White 11% Black	81% White 13.4% Black

Statistics in isolation don't always convey a lot of meaning. But all three show higher incidences of poverty than in Allegheny County as a whole. Also, the communities' small size in terms of population and their population decline ssuggest they are likely to be stretched financially to serve their populations.

Joint approaches, such as collaborating on planning and projects, will better position the communities to apply for funding from private or public sources. Joint approaches also respond to DCED and ACED expectations for multi-municipal planning and cooperation as a way of better serving the communities and residents.

Public Engagement

STEERING COMMITTEE

The project's joint steering committee met nine times between Feb. 12, 2019 and Aug. 26, 2020. The committee's responsibilities included assistance with:

- Generating a questionnaire
- Seeking information from residents via pop-up surveying
- Interacting with residents at the public meetings to collect their input
- Distilling input and helping to generate the Key Issues
- Working in small groups to interview and discuss issues and solutions with experts from the state and region on those topics.

- Reviewing and prioritizing potential strategies to identify the most feasible and promising options.
- Initiating implementation, including property condition mapping and enlisting a local non-profit to be a CDC.
- Reviewing chapters from an earlier draft version of this report.
- Answering questions from their communities' Planning Commissions and elected officials, and advocating for plan adoption.

QUESTIONNAIRE

More than 600 people responded to the questionnaire, most via digital a digital platform and about 30 via paper forms.

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum Quality of Life Questionnaire

Harrison Township, Brackenridge Borough and Tarentum Borough are in the process of planning for the future, and seek citizen input into how they can improve. We hope to hear from residents, business owners and those who work locally but live elsewhere. Filling out this survey will take less than 10 minutes, and your thoughts will be valuable as we develop a strategy for the future. (The survey will close at the end of May.) Your responses will be anonymous.



Next

The top four areas of concern were (1) Drug issues/Crime, (2) Dilapidated Buildings, (3) Emergency Services, (4) Streets and Roads.

Several of our steering committee members conducted "pop up" events and interviewed people at the YMCA and the Library for this plan.

PUBLIC MEETING 1

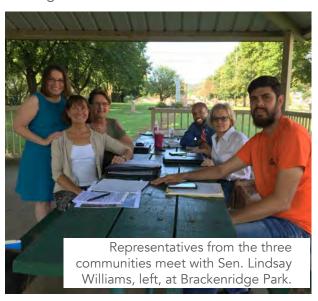
The project's initial public meeting took place June 3, 2019, at the Salvation Army gym. Approximately 80 participants generated 140 ideas on things that could be improved and 50 things they thought were positive aspects of the communities/strengths to build on.

KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

Based on contacts provided to us by the steering committee Pashek+MTR interviewed 21 people from the area. People included: developers, bank managers, non-profit directors, members of the faith community, business owners and municipal staff.

OTHER PUBLIC INPUT

The steering committee met with Pennsylvania State Sen. Lindsay Williams on Sept. 12, 2019, to discuss this planning process and to seek her help in identifying opportunities for public funding.



PUBLIC MEETING 2

The second public meeting, Feb. 17, 2020, and held at the Salvation Army gym in Brackenridge, was a check-in with residents after the Key Issues were developed and some early ideas for solutions were sketched out. This meeting also served as an additional round of input, because the format asked residents to contribute ideas toward solutions to specific problems.

Sen. Lindsay Williams and Rep. Frank Dermody attended. Both povided supportive remarks about the comprehensive planning process and the plan's goals for community improvements.



Residents at the second public meeting review a recreation resources map and note what facilities they use or would like to have.

The Key Issues

One of the important concepts of an Implementable Comprehensive Plan is to: (1) focus the plan on real issues as identified by the community and , (2) match the number and types of issues to the capacity of the communities to implement the recommendations. Too often, earlier plans identified hundreds of recommendations that simply overwhelmed even the best-intentioned municipal staff. Through careful listening and much discussion with an active steering committee, we arrived at the following key issues.

The input from residents from all sources – public meetings, a community questionnaire, steering committee guidance and key stakeholder interviews – was collated and counted by topic. The consultant categorized all the "Problems To Solve," "Strengths to Build On," and used frequency and debree of vehemence to begin to identify themes and priorities.

The topics that emerged as priorities are called "Key Issues.

The Four Key Issues in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum

- a. Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development
- b. Property Deterioration and Blight
- c. Trails, Parks and Recreation
- d. Community Identity

History and context lie behind each Key Issue. These matters didn't emerge overnight as issues in the communities, and didn't become priorities suddenly. Rather, both problems and strengths have developed over time, often over decades. The implementable comprehensive plan report delves into the complexity of each Key Issue, assessing its components.

Identifying best practices for Key Issue solutions

The Steering Committee for this comprehensive plan process divided into small groups aligned with each Key Issue. Each group researched best practices and potential solutions to gain an overview of possible next steps. This would help the group determine what strategies might best apply in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum, and align with community needs and capacity.

- The Social Enterprise, Comunity and Economic Development team met with Jessica Trimble, a Local Government Policy Specialist with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED). The group had an initial meeting via conference call and then hosted her for a field visit and in-person brainstorming meeting about what DCED programs might align with community goals.
- The Property Deterioration and Blight team met with two specialists affiliated with the Pennsylvania Housing Alliance: Andrea Mannino, Senior Advisor, Policy and Practice, and Winifred Branton, of Branton Strategies, which provides policy guidance in a legal context for communities working with the Housing Alliance. This team also met with Amanda Settelmaier, Executive Director of the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, who has developed a code enforcement database.
- The Trails, Parks and Recreation team met with Kathy Frankel, Recreation and Conservation Manager, Southwest Regional Office of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The conversation provided an overview of how DCNR strives to support local community improvements with technical and funding assistance.



• The Community Identity and Branding team met with Brenda Armstrong and Asaka Narumi from Visit Pittsburgh, to hear how that organization seeks to reflect the character of the Pittsburgh region in strategic communications. The team also met with representatives of New Sun Rising, a non-profit organization based in the Tri-Borough area along the Allegheny River, to learn how it supports sustainable economic and community development.

Along with ideas discussed with the state and regional professionals, the consultant developed a list of potential strategies the communities could undertake. The steering committee then chose the strategies it considered to be most important and most feasible, and ranked the strategies in order of those they felt most strongly that their communities should pursue.

The Key Issues and Strategies for Making Change

The implementable comprehensive plan report provides chapters for each Key Issue, presents history context and background, and lists the recommended strategies the communities should employ to address problems and build on strengths. The highest priority strategies include step-by-step guides for implementation. (A report summary is also available to provide a condensed version of the full implementable comprehensive plan report. It presents abridged versions of the descriptions and background of each Key Issue and provides a list of the strategies aimed at solving specific problems, but does not include step-by-step detail. The idea behind this is to provide two levels of detail for readers or users of the plan who have different levels of involvement.)

The Adoption Process and What's Next

Review and Adoption

Allegheny County Economic Development reviewed this comprehensive plan for consistency with Allegheny Places, the County's comprehensive plan, and Active Allegheny, the County's Active Transportation Plan.

In addition, the draft comprehensive plan report was provided to neighboring municipalities and Highlands School District for their review and consideration.

The comprehensive plan in a final draft form was presented at a joint public hearing on XX/XX/2020 prior to adoption by the three communitie's governing bodies. Adoption resolutions are provided in the Appendix or are available at these URLs:

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placeholder URL

Why action is important

- There are costs to making changes (time, money, effort), but also potential costs to doing nothing (citizen resentment, declining property values, less tax revenue and overall decline).
- Citizens expressed a need for change in the four Key Issue areas, and are expecting follow-through.
- The communities can best ensure their future viability by diligently undertaking the improvements outlined in this implementable plan.

12-MONTH START-UP TO-DO LIST

Harrison	Brackenridge	Tarentum	Start-Up Task
✓	✓	✓	Create an implementation team for this plan.
✓	√	√	Survey local non-profit organizations to determine whether any has the interest in and capacity for serving as an Economic Development Corporation or Community Development Corporation. ACHIEVED
✓	√	√	Harrison, Brackenridge, Tarentum governing boards each vote to support the EDC/CDC financially and institutionally, and determine how to leverage the agency's services.
\checkmark	√	√	View the suggested locations for additional trees as depicted on the riverfront concept plans, and plant them.
	√		Strive to end the difficult one-way traffic problem at the foot of Mile Lock Lane.
\checkmark	√		Discuss with ATI Corp. the possibility of the corporation's installing and maintaining a high-quality mural on the Brackenridge face of wall.
✓		√	Improve the foot of Wood Street (Tarentum) and a pathway from Veteran's Way (Harrison) with seating and access to the riverfront for small-scale uses, such as fishing, bird-watching and rock skipping.
✓	✓	✓	Create and convene Meeting 1 of a blight team that will pursue funding, encourage code enforcement and DPW sharing, develop a legal definition of "blighted property," create an overaching strategy, and other steps.
✓	√	✓	Hold Meeting 1 of a trails, parks and recreation group (including representatives from all three Recreation Boards and the comprehensive plan working group that has focused on Trails, Parks and Recreation, to start planning a joint event as a pilot project.
✓	√	√	The joint trails, parks and recreation group investigates state Department of Recreation and Natural Resources programs that encourage multimunicipal collaborations on recreation staffing, funding and technical assistance.
✓	\checkmark	√	The joint trails, parks and recreation group reviews the multi-municipal trails map and existing efforts to identify next steps for implementation.
✓	√	✓	Create and distribute an illustrative map highlighting H-B-T assets and amenities, to underscore the communities' Identity and Branding.



CHAPTER II SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

KEY ISSUE: Social Enterprise, Community, and Economic Development

Issue Overview

Business development, job growth and entrepreneurship together create a more stable local economy, which will make the communities a better place to live. Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum can pursue strategies listed in this chapter that capitalize on their assets such as some strong existing anchor businesses and industries, a local volunteer corps, interesting old buildings, traditional walkable business districts, the Allegheny River, and relatively affordable real estate.

Background and Context

As employment patterns changed and population declined in Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum since the 1970s, disinvestment created economic stress in the communities' commercial areas. Commercial property vacancies increased in all three communities.

Other external factors, such as the rise (and more recent decline) of The Pittsburgh Mills in Frazer Township and the global transition to online retail have created additional pressure on the business districts of the three municipalities.

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum thrive at individual and community scales thanks to social enterprise, community and economic development. The communities address disinvestment methodically, and align continuing efforts with objectives and goals developed collaboratively among the three communities and with existing businesses, institutions and nonprofit organizations. The communities continuously respond to existing community needs and capitalize on strengths.

Today, most commercial buildings on the main downtown streets in Brackenridge are unoccupied. A few key tenants have helped Tarentum maintain a small downtown to some degree, but there are also numerous vacancies downtown, and in Tarentum's highway commercial zone along West Seventh Avenue. Tarentum has seen some new growth in its commercial corridor on East 10th Avenue. Harrison's commercial area, mainly in Natrona Heights along Freeport Road, has experienced challenges at the Heights Plaza shopping center, currently in receivership. The community has experienced commercial growth farther north at the Walmart Plaza.

The Heights Plaza's future is tied up in legal proceedings at this time, but improvements were made in the appearance of the northern half.

Elsewhere in Harrison Township, an ambitious development plan called Harrison Point is proposed for 168 acres along Route 28, to include senior independent living, medical



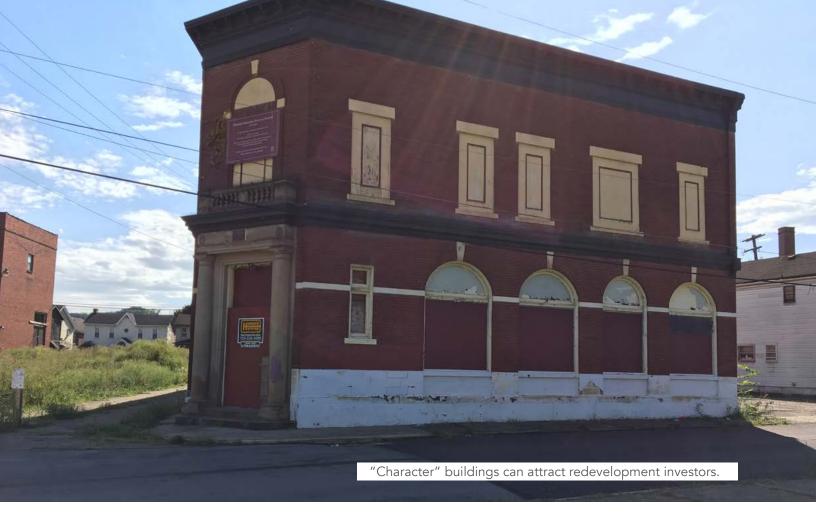
office space, a technology park, restaurant space and a township park. In addition, padready sites are awaiting development at Harrison Township Business Park on Alter Road.

All three communities are locations for industrial/manufacturing and light manufacturing, including a major presence of ATI, a highly automated steel rolling plant, in Harrison.

This discussion focuses mainly on the traditional commercial downtowns of Tarentum and Brackenridge, and the commercial areas along Freeport Road in Harrison and the River Road area of Natrona.

Investment has certainly occurred on a case-by-case basis, with additional possibilities in the works. Examples: Brackenridge Construction developed an attractive building at Cherry and Third; investors are planning renovations at two historic buildings in Harrison (Chestnut and Center, and Federal and North Canal); and two new businesses renovated old buildings in Tarentum (on Corbet Street), and plans are under way for Faith Community Partners to renovate buildings on Fifth Avenue and Corbet Street, and to create programming in Tarentum.

These improvements reflect both market-driven and social-enterprise ambitions. While "more business" is important for residents and the tax base, so is creating locations and opportunities for programs, initiatives, businesses and services that meet social and community needs. Equal access to services, food, health care and other necessities is important but as yet insufficient or absent in these communities.



The strengths

- The Allegheny River provides a natural and realistic basis for developing attraction-based assets that foster small businesses and economic growth. Throughout the nation, communities have successfully embraced riverfronts as strengths that make them desireable to current and future residents as well as to visitors who come to enjoy views, activities, local businesses and river access. They foster economic development based on outdoor recreation, riverfront access, local businesses and connected walking and biking trails.
- Historic and "character" buildings: Many commercial and residential structures, particularly in "the Flats" portions of these communities were built in the early or mid-20th century. These can have great appeal to potential investors.
- Anchor businesses and employers: Companies and institutions such as Gatto, Blackburn
 Physicians Pharmacy, Wulfrath Refactories, Weleski Transfer, Brackenridge Construction, ATI,
 Natrona Bottling Company, Allegheny Valley Hospital and UPMC-Natrona Heights, Highlands
 School District, No. 1 Cochran, JV Manufacturing, Trib Total Media, Nick Chevrolet, Highland Tire,
 and others provide centers of gravity for future business growth.
- Affordable prices: Because of population decline and other factors, properties can be acquired for less money than in high-demand areas.

The problems

- Undeveloped vision and goals: The communities or businesses districts have not created a statement articulating their social enterprise, economic and community development vision and goals. As well, the communities need to revise their community development objectives.
- Vacancies and disinvestment: Vacant buildings and lots create a need for infill development. Efforts to identify infill locations are tied to the issue of property deterioration and blight.
- Lack of compiled data: The communities do not have an inventory of available properties and information on "what it would take" for them to be rehabbed or made market-ready.
- Insufficient basis for marketing: The communities or business districts have not developed a strategic, coordinated or concerted message for marketing that makes prospective investors, businesses, residents and tenants decide to take a look.
- Some problems are not in official municipal control: The Heights Plaza is privately not publicly owned, and as such its redevelopment is largely outside of township hands.
- Lack of human and financial resources: There is a need for a person or group to lead social
 enterprise, economic and community development work, such as creating an inventory, working
 with existing businesses to address their needs, developing programs and initiatives, seeking
 funding, and conducting marketing.
- Ordinances may not align with contemporary goals: The communities have different zoning schemes dating to different decades. Revisions may be needed to support revised community development objectives, and an articulated vision. Brackenridge's zoning map and ordinances are not available online, and the community does not have a planning commission, though it has the Brackenridge Improvement Group.
- Lack of access: Some residents have insufficient or non-existent access to grocery stores, health care, education, employment and other necessary services.
- Non-contiguous area: The business districts in "the Flats" are not connected to each other, and the commercial areas along Freeport Road are further separated by geography and travel patterns.





Looking Ahead

Social enterprise, community and economic development goals can best be met through a coordinated effort among the communities, in collaboration with existing businesses and non-profit organizations. Efforts to create new development opportunities of all types should:

- Align with community development objectives, goals, strategies, master plans and/ or programmatic initiatives that are created and held in common among the three communities, working with the new Community Development Corporation created by Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.).
- Be developed jointly among the three communities, sharing efforts and services to the greatest degree feasible, and potentially including a joint community/economic development organization to provide leadership.
- Support the intention of creating and maintaining visually attractive communities.
- Whenever possible, support local entrepreneurship and small business.
- Whenever possible, involve, include and support the goals of existing businesses
 and established community institutions and non-profits, including the Highlands
 Partnership Network, which strives to foster communication among community
 groups, and Faith Community Partners, which is in the process of rehabilitating
 some structures in Tarentum, developing a Neighborhood Partnership Program and
 has created a Community Development Corporation.
- Recognize that rehabilitation of deteriorated residential properties can forestall disinvestment in the community by interrupting a vicious cycle.
- Align with a related multi-municipal plan to address commercial and residential property deterioration and blight.
- Update the communities' zoning districts and ordinances.
- Respond to the needs of residents who do not have transportation access to food, goods and services.
- Capitalize on existing assets of the communities, such as the Allegheny Riverfront, municipal parks, and a sidewalk network and other active transportation infrastructure.
- Recognize and strive to resolve the friction that can occur between communities if
 one is "holding out" for the kind of development it believes enhances community
 character but another is seeking development of any sort as quickly as possible to
 generate revenue.

STRATEGIES: Improving Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development

High-priority strategies



Support a formation of a Community Development Corporation (CDC) or Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that represents all three municipalities, then methodically leverage the agency's services.

Such an organization would, it is hoped, support the entirety of this comprehensive plan and become a key driver of plan implementation. Conversely, the implementation steps of the plan are intended to help foster social enterprise, community and economic development goals, which are the point of a CDC/EDC. For example, a the agency would strive to enhance the quality of life, the economic viability, and the overall vitality of the communities through actions such as remediating blight; restoring and repurposing vacant and underutilized commercial and residential buildings; and building a coalition of community organizations, governmental agencies, businesses, and faith-

What is "Social Enterprise Redevelopment" or "Social Entrepreneurship?"

People, companies or organizations pursuing this form of redevelopment first identify a need in the community that is aligned with the common good, then strive to meet the need through entrepreneurship. This can be a profitmaking or non-profit venture.

based organizations that implement joint planning efforts, such as this comprehensive plan.

An EDC/CDC will be a clearinghouse for available commercial property, grant writing and administration, and serve as a liaison between federal, state, county and local governments and agencies to foster development. An EDC/CDC will also be a promoting body for the three communities.

The agency's ultimate goals will be to foster job growth, expand local options for goods and services, make the communities a better place to live, and through those and other steps, enhance the local tax base.

More about Economic or Community Development Corporations

An Economic Development Corp. (EDC) or Community Development Corp. (CDC) is a non-profit organization created to work collaboratively with local governments and other institutions and agencies. Typically, an EDC strives to improve local economic conditions by fostering business and job growth, while a CDC strives to improve quality of life conditions more generally, making the community a better place to live.

Since the lines between those goals can overlap, this plan does not advise whether the communities should create one versus the other. An EDC is expected by the IRS to conduct its work in economically depressed or blighted areas and strive to improve economic conditions.

EDCs and CDCs are typically 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 organizations under the U.S. tax code, the

main difference being that 501(c)3s are charitable organizations and 501(c)4s are social welfare organizations structured to be able to do more advocacy and lobbying. An existing 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 organization could take on the responsibilities of an EDC or CDC, so long as the organization is properly incorporated under federal and state law. An existing organization should obtain legal advice to ensure it can add the EDC or CDC functions within the breadth of its mission statement, governance structure, programmatic choices and financial practices.

Because it is far more expedient for an existing non-profit organization to add EDC/CDC responsibilities than for community stakeholders to start a non-profit from scratch for this purpose, the following set of next steps begins with that suggestion.

The EDC or CDC would define its mission and create programs or projects in support of that mission. An example, Greensburg Community Development Corp., is explained below.

Greensburg Community Development Corp. (GCDC)



MISSION STATEMENT: The purpose of the Greensburg Community Development Corporation (GCDC) is to assist the City of Greensburg, businesses, institutions, and organizations in the development and implementation of plans and programs encompassing total community development, beginning in the core area and focused within the geographical boundaries of the City.

DCDC has three focus areas: Cultural and Shopping District offerings; increasing private and public investment within the downtown area; strengthening Greensburg's neighborhoods.

Programs and projects include:

- Façade improvements
- ThinkGreensburg (expand cultural and shopping district; increase private and public investment in downtown; strengthen neighborhoods)
- Promote Greensburg Development, including a healthcare district
- LERTA/G funds Use Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act (LERTA) funds as a way to implement strategic financial opportunities.

At a Glance

- GCDC is a 501(c)3.
- In 2017 it had revenue of about \$109,000 and expenses of about \$91,000. Funding sources included gifts, grants, contributions and membership fees. It was starting to collect rental income from property it owned. Expenses were for programs (façade program, Lynch Field Project, Street light banners, supplies), subscriptions, supplies, advertising, bank fees, travel/meetings, meals.
- It has a paid executive director (about 15 hours/week and paid within a range of \$11,000 to \$30,000).
- It has a 35-member board of directors.

\checkmark

Making It Happen



Survey local non-profit organizations to determine whether any has the interest in and capacity for serving as an Economic Development Corporation or Community Development Corporation.

An appropriate choice would be a non-profit organization that has office space, a track record at fund-raising, strong governance, employee and volunteer capacity, respect of the community, and the desire to include EDC/CDC functions to its existing mission.

Only if no suitable non-profit organization can be recruited or identified, should the three communities seek community stakeholders to create a body to serve this important function.

NOTE: As this plan was being completed, Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.) expanded its service in the Upper Allegheny Valley to serve as a Community Development Corporation (CDC) with a particular emphasis on Harrison Township and the Boroughs of Brackenridge and Tarentum. See Appendices 2A and 2B.

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum support the EDC/CDC financially and institutionally.

Once an appropriate non-profit partner is identified, the three communities should anticipate providing financial and institutional support, as this will be crucial to efforts to propel its mission.

An EDC/CDC is likely to require funding from the municipalities as well as from grants, corporate donations and trusts, with a goal of becoming self-sustaining or at least far less reliant on governmental support over time.

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum should participate in the governance of the EDC/CDC by supplying board members and to ensure that the agency's actions align with the goals and strategies of this Comprehensive Plan. To align with the Key Issues of this comprehensive plan, the focus areas should take a multi-municipal approach to these:

- Address blight
- Improve real estate and business development prospects, including emphasizing the Allegheny Riverfront as an asset
- Encourage the development of trails and other active transportation connectivity
- Develop and champion the communities' local identity and brand

NOTE: A guide to Community and Local Government Assistance programs offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development is provided in Appendix 2C.

2

Maximize the Allegheny Riverfront as a prime community asset, as demonstrated in the concept drawings that incorporate walking and biking routes, parks, river access or views, historic neighborhoods, and connections with the traditional downtowns.

The Allegheny River should be a crucial driver of the communities' identity and place-making, and through that, the communities' economic development.

Unlike many other river-contiguous communities in Allegheny County, Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum each have riverfront public spaces or access points that can serve as catalysts for economic development and community improvements.

Capitalizing on the availability of the riverfront in all three communities will be a decades-long process rather than a rapid transformation. Maximizing the riverfront is huge undertaking that would include many facets of community life and physical assets: recreation, natural resources, commerce in the traditional downtowns, placemaking, cultural and historic resources, blight remediation and more. As a whole it is a major undertaking. But broken into pieces, it is possible to get the ball rolling on specific projects that build community identity, create placemaking and make the most of local assets. River-oriented development is a proven, long-term strategy for creating employment opportunities and an increased tax base that benefit all residents.

Communities nationwide have embraced riverfronts as strengths that make them desireable to current and future residents as well as to visitors who come to enjoy views, activities, local businesses and river access. This is not to imply that a kayak launch or river overlook is more important to local residents than direct services like road paving or public safety, but rather that economic development based on outdoor recreation, riverfront access and connected walking and biking trails is a proven successful model for economic development.

This strategy will be particularly effective if Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum work not only with each other and also think regionally – with other Allegheny River towns to the north and south, the communities can captialize on the river as an economic and community asset.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) project OutdoorTowns.org (formerly separate programs called River Towns and Trail Towns) lists these characteristics of thriving "outdoor towns:"

- Outdoor Towns are fun and welcoming. They invite all people to come play outside.
- Outdoor Towns have easy access to recreation. Visitors come for hiking, biking, paddling, hunting, fishing, or wildlife viewing.



- Outdoor Towns embrace nearby parks, trails, rivers, lakes, and forests as valuable assets to be protected and enhanced.
- Outdoor Towns are vibrant communities that connect places to eat, stay, and shop with people seeking adventure.

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum are in a position to make gains in each of these aspects or elements as a means of driving economic and community development overall. On the following pages are concept drawings that reflect some proposed improvements that could propel this approach. Following the maps are specific implementation next steps.

NOTE: The American Planning Association's "Downtown Revitalization in Small and Midsized Cities" provides additional best practices. The document's executive summary is provided in Appendix 2D.



Making It Happen

As noted, this is a major undertaking that should be broken into smaller steps to be implementable. Here are some ideas for places to start:

Note on the drawings the suggested locations for additional trees, and plant them. (All three communities)



Strive to end the difficult one-way traffic problem at the foot of Mile Lock Lane. (Brackenridge)

A strategy could be to determine:

a. If the owner of vacant parcels 1224-H-314 and 316 would sell them at low cost to the Borough

b. If the owner of 1224-H-320 would then be willing to execute a land trade

c. If Allegheny County would be willing to alter the road alignment.



Discuss with ATI Corp. the possibility of the corporation's installing and maintaining a high-quality mural on the Brackenridge face of its wall. (Brackenridge and Harrison)



Improve the foot of Wood Street into a parklet with seating and access to the riverfront for small-scale uses such as a kayak launch. (Tarentum)

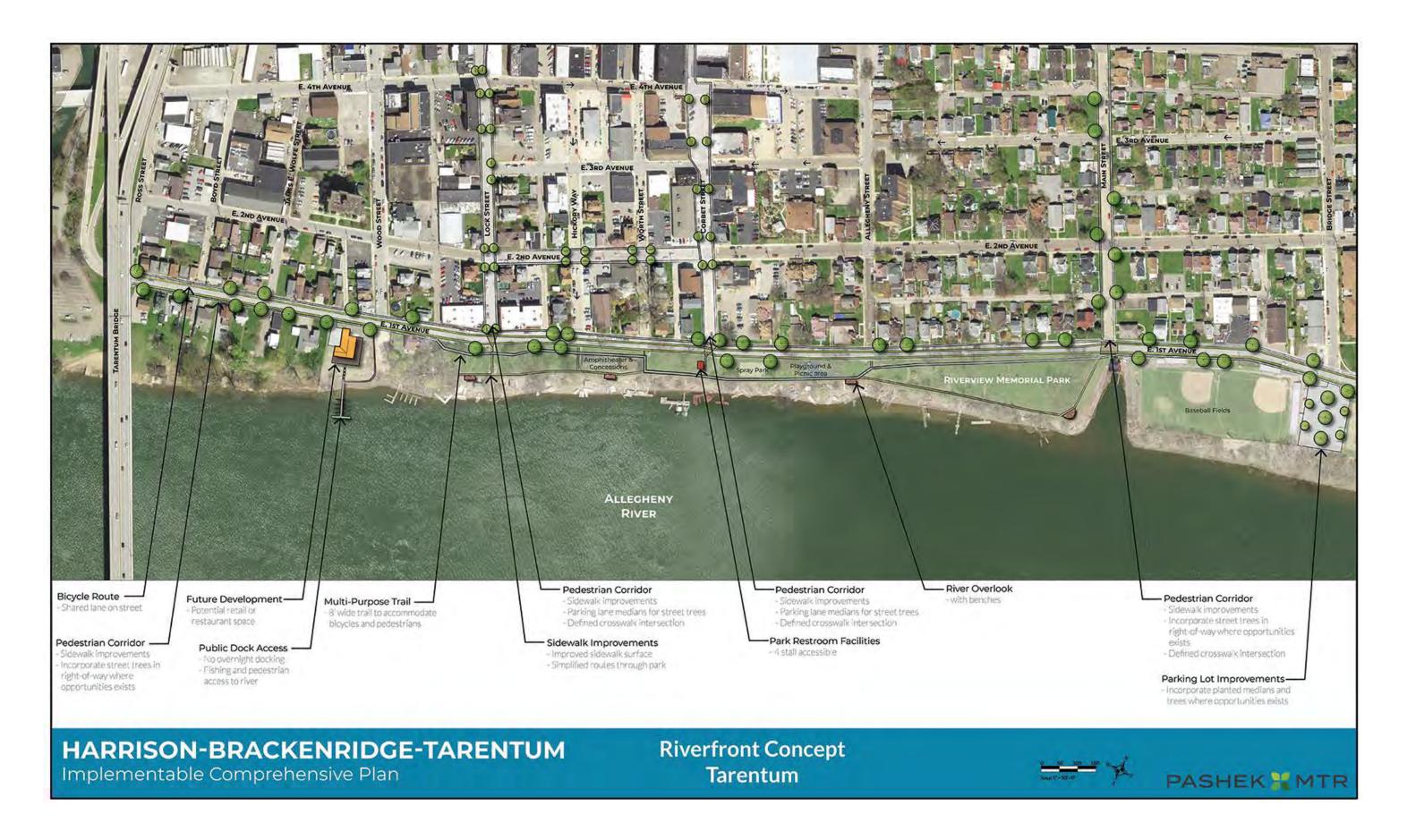
Should it be possible, the adjacent vacant parcel, zoned R-1 and within the Riverfront Overlay District, should be acquired for local public use, parkland.

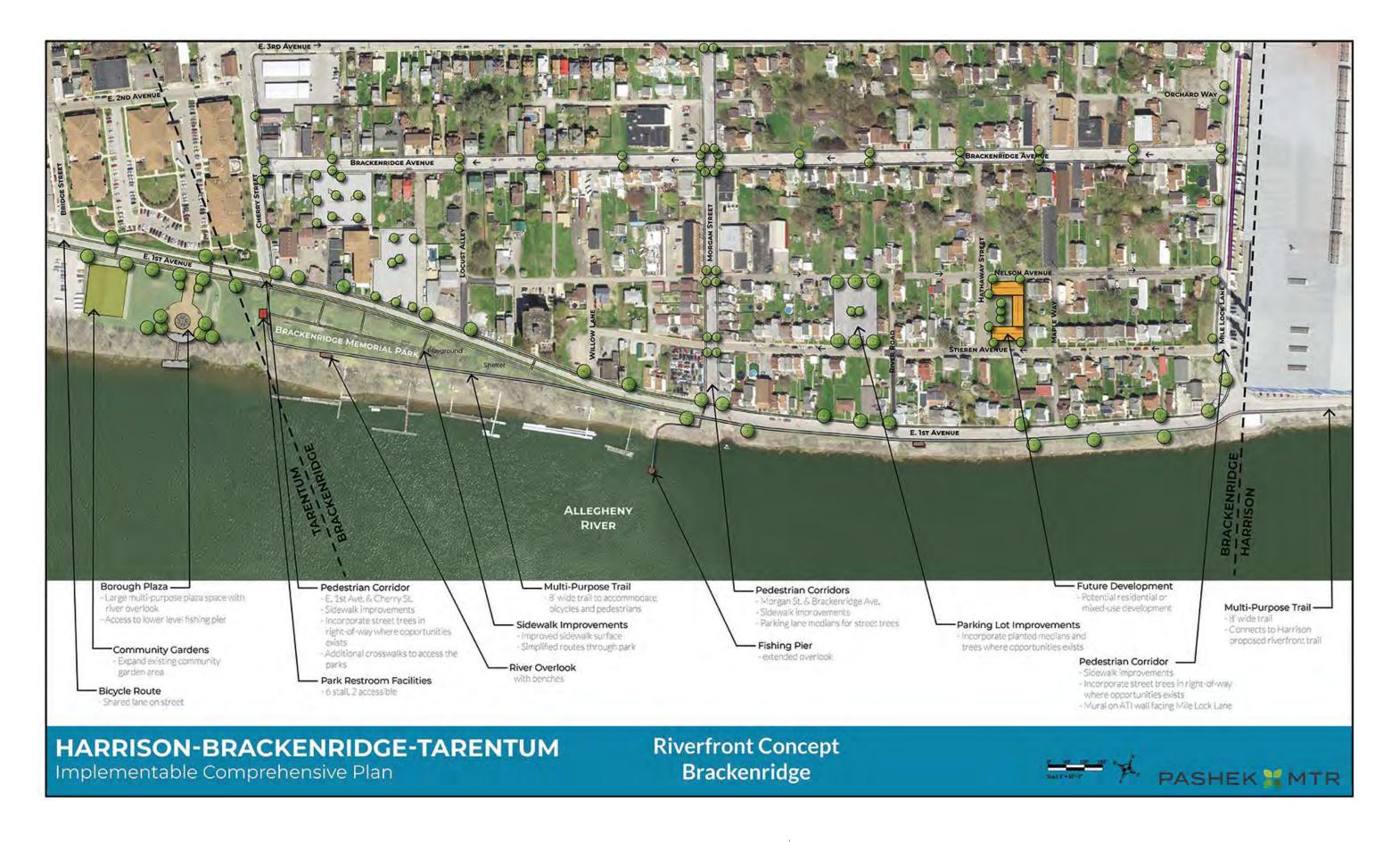


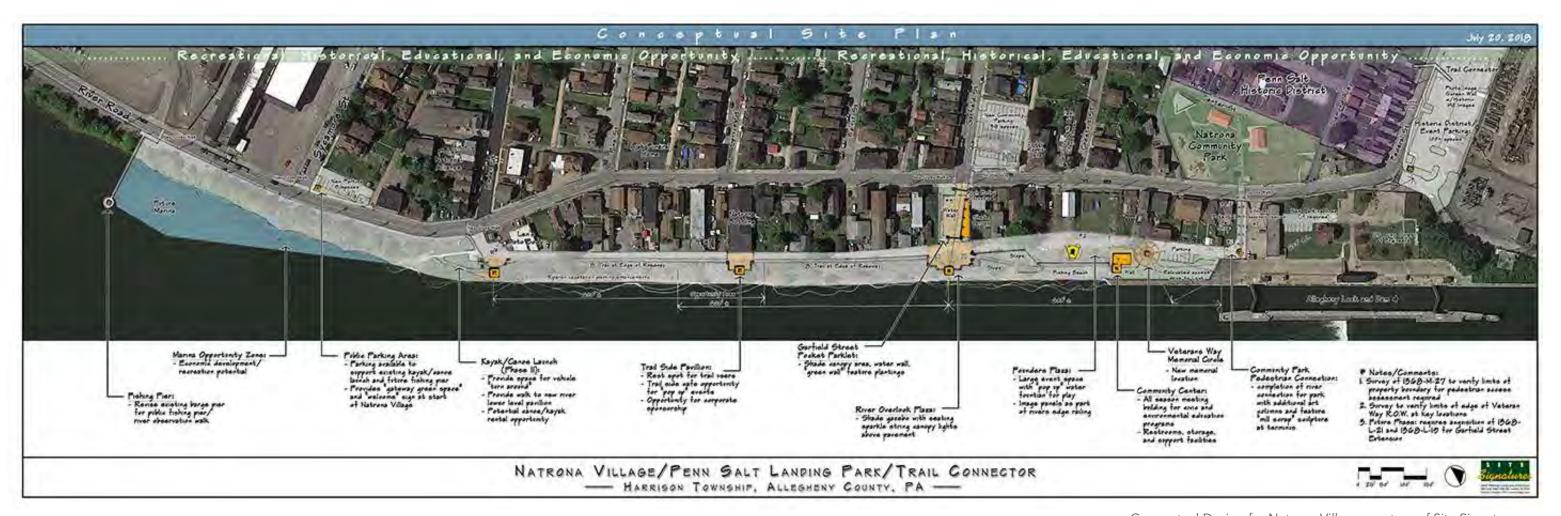
Improve the river access point at **Veterans Way** Linear Park currently an informal trail down the bank - for smallscale uses such as fishing and stone-skipping. (Harrison)



- Consider creating or amending Riverfront Overlay Zoning Districts to enable some forms of commercial development in streets near the river to encourage economic development and entrepreneurship and to create more of a destination environment for local residents and visitors to the community.
- Consider creating facade improvement programs for commercial properties on riverfront access streets to create more inviting environments.







Conceptual Design for Natrona Village courtesy of Site Signatures

Continue to implem Heritage Trail and lo well as the trail map County, other agend	ocal connecting rout os in Chapter 3, and	es, as shown on th as under discussio	ne concept ma	aps as
	T		i Hayjiian Barra	

A proposed bike route along Freeport Road in Harrison would create access to Harrison Hills Park





A view of the ATI retaining wall along Mile Lock Lane A proposed bike route in Tarentum would include a segment along the borough's Riverview Memorial Park

Additional strategies

3

Give people reasons to visit targeted areas in the three communities, such as the traditional downtowns, and provide amenities.













This can include providing inviting amenities, such as streetscaping benches, street trees, façade improvements, plants or banners.

This also can include organizing street festivals, themed events or other activities. "Activating the space" creates enthusiasm on the part of residents and business owners, builds community pride, and potentially draws outsiders to visit. These efforts can help to jump-start revitalization.

Activities can be mounted by local groups such as the Brackenridge Improvement Group, merchants/

businesses, an independent group or non-profit, or the communities' Reccreation Boards, working collaboratively. Here are suggested types of activities or events; maybe the communities could work collectively to undertake one of each type per year:

- Street festivals with art, music, food. These can be themed, such as one highlighting the achievement of local youth, showing off their music/bands, art works, skills or volunteer initiatives. Another themed street festival could celebrate active lifestyles and health, with yoga and fitness activities and "open streets" for walking and cycling.
- "Crawls," also known as walking tours or self-guided tours. Suggestions include themed crawls such as to show off local businesses, gardens, houses of worship, or high-priority targets for property rehabilitation. One additional idea for a theme would be a walking tour explaining concept plans for riverfront development (see concept drawings).
- A "night market" where local farms or artisans can sell their products/wares.



Create and maintain a consolidated listing of commercial spaces available for the three communities, with information about "what it would take" to get the property ready for occupancy or redevelopment.

This list would have to be actively curated in order to keep current; although this task would rightly fall to a CDC or EDC in the future, its first draft can be undertaken at this time. This can be done using college or graduate-level interns from programs such as GIS/Geography, Planning, Public Affairs or Urban Design.

- 1. Recruit a Planning Commission member to supervise the interns' work, and identify the interns or recruit a college faculty member to make this a class project. Map vacancies and opportunities in the communities, with accompanying data-sets such as photos and rehabilitation needs.
- 2. This project can be initially achieved without funding if academic credit for students can be arranged.
- Recruit a local commercial real estate agent to provide guidance and expertise.
- 4. Use open-source mapping and information-sharing applications so the communities and later an EDC/CDC can maintain the maps and lists with current information.



Identify and champion large sites that could have redevelopment potential.

The communities could enhance their tax rolls if vacant or underused properties can be redeveloped. The CDC/EDC or Planning Commissions can take the lead on these tasks.

- a. List or map vacant former industrial or manufacturing sites, lay-down yards, unoccupied prepared sites, golf course or other large sites.
- b. Open discussions with the property owners to learn about their plans for the properties and current conditions at the sites, such as whether environmental testing has occurred, and any obstacles to redevelopment.
- c. Initiate conversations with Allegheny County Economic Development, the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County, or development companies operating in the regional market to see if there is potential to pursue mutual goals.
- 6

Arrange for the EDC/CDC or the individual municipalities to provide web-hosting of the high-priority target properties for redevelopment as set out in Strategies No. 2 and 5.

- a. Produce downloadable FAQ sheets, such as explaining steps toward redeveloping a specific property and resources available; and explainers for issues that routinely pop up, such as "What's going on at the Heights Plaza?" or "Why don't you 'bring in a Chick-Fil-A?' "
- b. Align all Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development implementation efforts with initiatives in the "Community Identity" chapter, so that Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum are increasingly able to "speak with one voice" to residents, business owners and potential residents or investors about the communities and their strengths and opportunities.



Align redevelopment and blight-fighting efforts, working from jointly developed priorities, goals and strategies. Leverage the services of the CDC/EDC. Begin with these general areas in the community as revitalization targets:

- a. The riverfront areas in all three communities, as noted above.
- b. Tarentum's traditional downtown; 7th Avenue in West Tarentum
- c. Harrison's traditional downtown in Natrona, including Center Street and Chestnut Street, and Freeport Road between Heights Plaza and Walmart
- d. Brackenridge's traditional downtown, including Brackenridge Avenue

Here are some potential ways of proceeding with this:

- Adopt the social entrepreneurship model Faith Community Partners (FCP) is applying in Tarentum, which is to first identify community needs, then to redevelop buildings for businesses that address those needs. For example, FCP's first effort has been to rehab a building to house a laundromat and shared working space, community area and library, as these were needs identified by community members. FCP, as a non-profit owner and manager, seeks to break even on its endeavors or reinvest in the next project operating for the community's benefit.
- Adopt the business entrepreneurship model, which helps match businesses with locations or vice versa. For example, from a list of available commercial spaces (see No. 2 above) or a list of businesses seeking a location to accommodate a new business or expanded operations of an existing business.
- Identify multiple residential properties for demolition, and seek a developer to build new housing that aligns with other goals of this plan as one step for remediating blight and stabilizing the housing base in crucial areas.

The group responsible for this would be a new EDC/CDC. In the absence of such an organization, the planning commissions would need to take a more active role, working with individual property owners or entrepreneurs to simultaneously address blight and seek reinvestment.



Explore creating tax increment financing districts (TIFs) in specific areas of the communities to help finance redevelopment.

Begin with a workshop session held with Allegheny County staff members with this expertise, to begin identifying possibilities and specific next steps. Contact: Samuel Ezio Bozzolla, Allegheny County Department of Economic Development, Authorities Division, 412-350-1194 or Sam. Bozzolla@AlleghenyCounty.US

9

Working through the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, create a Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP) or Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) in Brackenridge and Harrison (perhaps the Natrona neighborhood). In Tarentum, FCP has initiated a Neighborhood Partnership Program.

Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)

 A project must serve distressed areas or support neighborhood conservation. Projects must fall under one of the following categories: affordable housing programs, community services, crime prevention, education, job training or neighborhood assistance. A tax credit of up to 55% can be awarded.

Neighborhood Partnership Program (NPP)

 Long-term collaborations (five years or more) of business, government and community leaders to produce a comprehensive, asset-based and relationship-driven approach to community development. A tax credit of 75% or 80% can be awarded based on the length of the program.

Contact: Johnna A. Pro, Regional Director/Southwest, PA Department of Community & Economic Development, 412-565-5098 or jopro@pa.gov



The communities should support efforts by a CDC/EDC to conduct a market study to determine strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for the communities.

This is most likely a stretch goal, but should not be dismissed without consideration since it could have subtantial future value if the communities later wish to make realistic pitches for funding and investments to the private, public and non-profit sectors. A study can also clarify how not to spend time and money for low-likelihood prospective projects. The cost of hiring a consultant with this expertise could be approximately \$25,000.



Review ordinances and consider changing some zoning provisions to encourage a range of development types.

Many traditional zoning district definitions, use charts and ordinances do not allow some uses that are considered important options today. This can include provisions related to urban farming, mixed-use development, and accessory uses, among others. Other ordinances may need updating to encourage desired types of development, such as those that encourage incorporating sustainability measures such as green infrastructure or net-zero buildings.

The Planning Commissions are best positioned to conduct reviews of existing ordinances and make recommendations.

12

Engage in planning for the future of the Heights Plaza.

The condition of the Heights Plaza has been a topic of discussion for years. At the time of this writing, the property is in receivership, and the expectation is that the property will continue to be privately held.

Property owners decide what to demolish or build on their property, with how much financial investment and risk, and when to do it – within the limits of regulations, laws, codes and permits. However, the township has the ability to create ordinances that guide future development, and can enforce codes and ordinances governing safety and health if the properties are not sufficiently maintained.

Because Harrison Township has the ability to influence future development and regulate uses and appearance, here are some approaches:

- 1. Harrison Township elected officials, as representatives of the community, should develop a Vision Plan to articulate what is the desired future for this property. A Vision Plan, particularly if it leverages the expertise of a CDC/EDC, can be the foundation for any future changes in ordinances or policies, including those that consider flexibility with zoning for the redevelopment that can be undertaken at the property.
- 2. As future development will also depend on market forces and owner actions, this plan recommends regular communication with the receiver or owner.
- 3. Another tool would be for Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum to adopt a "specific plan" of development for non-residential sites within the multi-municipal planning area, per Section 1106 of Pennsylvania's Municipalities Planning Code. The municipalities' specific plan would govern development of non-residential sites.



13

Strengthen the local food system.

Consistent local access to fresh, nutritious food helps keep people healthy. It can also help keep communities healthy, empowering growers and producers to contribute to the local economy and connecting neighbors. The communities should seek ways to bring food growing, processing and preparing closer to home, increasing resilience in an era of increasing climate and energy uncertainty and providing options for improved health outcomes.

Strategies include:

- Continue to support and facilitate regular farmers' market events. Seek ways to increase access to and publicity for the events.
- Ensure that zoning provides ways to create family, community and/or school gardens.
- Identify and acquire clean vacant property suitable for community gardens, connect would-be gardeners without land access to local organizations that can help them establish access, a structure for the space and a maintenance plan.
- Coordinate the sharing and swapping of garden supplies. A community compost pile represents
 a new life for food scraps and yard trimmings as well as a nutrient-rich resource for gardeners.
 Communities could consider establishing a garden tool lending library for items such as lawn
 mowers, pruners, shovels and post-hole diggers.
- Analyze barriers to entry in the local market for small-scale food producers and sellers. What
 would need to happen for a corner grocery to be viable, or to make space available and
 affordable to a restaurant entrepreneur?

14

Connect all residents to affordable, reliable high-speed internet access.

The Covid-19 pandemic threw into sharp relief the importance of solid residential internet access for education, for business and employment, for health care, for public safety and for staying connected to the world. Households without affordable broadband access are comparatively isolated and left behind by an increasingly online world. Pockets of scarcity exist throughout all three communities, according to federal and provider maps, resulting from a lack of providers in some areas and a lack of affordable service options in others. According to one estimate, more than 60% of residents in Allegheny County's economically deprived communities lack affordable residential internet access.

The economic sustainability of Harrison Township, Brackenridge and Tarentum depends just as much on the infrastructure of broadband as it does on the infrastructure of Route 28. The communities need strong, reliable access to attract and retain businesses as well as younger, more affluent residents. Luckily, technology innovations such as last-mile wireless distribution exist to overcome obstacles such as the cost of installing cable and wire. However, the communities will need to advocate for themselves to ensure that they are competitive for the resources available to improve broadband access.

The communities should support efforts by a CDC/EDC to plan for, advocate for and secure resources for improving broadband infrastructure.



CHAPTER III BLIGHT & PROPERTY DETERIORATION

KEY ISSUE: Blight & Property Deterioration

Issue Overview

Property deterioration is a problem that crops up in nearly every community in the Pittsburgh metropolitan area, or indeed the nation. It negatively affects quality of life, community reputation, and economic growth. Addressing the problem is not easy, but it is possible, via the proven strategies presented in this chapter. Because of economies of scale and because blight doesn't recognize municipal boundaries, the problem is best addressed on a multi-municipal basis.

Background and Context

The story of blight in our communities has similar origins throughout Western PA. In some cases, a lack of jobs may lead people to move out, which leaves homes and businesses vacant. Also, as the population ages, deaths can leave homes unoccupied. People who inherit properties may not want them, and owners sometimes turn the houses into rentals or just walk away. Some owners do not have the intention to care for property, but others may not have the means or capacity to do so. Some first-time home owners may not know how.

Deteriorating property can be cancerous when it recurs and radiates from clusters. Our

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum present a low incidence of deteriorated or blighted properties. They follow a jointly developed plan to remediate, demolish and/or redevelop properties in support of quality of life, public health and economic/community development goals.

communities must contain it so that it does not start to harm property values next door, or on the next street, or the next block. An impression by residents or outsiders that blight is eroding a community can have a snowballing effect on the community's prospects. We must work to turn the tide, although that is difficult, as we have all seen over a few decades of effort.

All three municipalities recognize the importance of this issue, which they hold in common. The communities have had some success in addressing property deterioration

or blight on a case-by-case basis through code enforcement, legal action, property acquisition, remediation, demolition and/or redevelopment.

Each community has its own level of resources to apply to the problem – though never nearly enough – and each continues to make efforts and try new solutions despite a sense that this is a never-ending problem. Most recently, a volunteer group in Tarentum has begun an early intervention initiative to help some property owners to hold the line on decline.

The problems

- Lack of data: The communities do not as a group or individually have complete, updated databases of problem properties on a continuum of early stages of disrepair, active decline or blight.
- Lack of a consistent, unified approach: Property deterioration in each of the three communities affects all three because they are contiguous municipalities. But as separate entities, they work individually, applying their own resources to the matter. Each community has specific strengths in terms of code enforcement, but also varying abilities to address the problem due to resource availability and funding.
- No overarching strategy: All three communities have pursued remedies on a case-by-case basis, but they have not individually or together developed a strategy for approaching the problem and applying solutions. Which problem properties are most important to address? Is it more important to prevent properties from tipping from "maintenance problems" to "blight," or to remove blighted properties? What should be the priority: Pockets of deteriorated properties, those in high-visibility areas? Those near well-maintained properties? Worst first?
- Full coordination with redevelopment efforts has not been established: The communities have successfully encouraged and supported redevelopment of specific buildings and or side yards on a case-by-case basis, but not on community-wide scales. A wider plan for addressing blight and tying it to redevelopment goals can help attract investment.
- Cumbersome processes: The requirements and process for dealing with long-term abandoned properties are time-consuming and full of legal and regulatory hurdles, some based on Allegheny County requirements.





- Lack of coordination with Highlands School District: The communities currently are not working jointly with the School District on this issue.
- Toxic materials exposure: Adding to the difficulty or expense of removing dilapidated buildings are current or emerging regulations governing exposure to toxic substances, such as lead paint or asbestos, which can often be found in old buildings.
- High costs: Addressing the problem of property deterioration will require significant funding. Particularly vexing is a lack of funding for demolishing abandoned commercial property.
- Lack of strategies to assist homeowners: Some properties decline as owners lose physical or financial capacity to maintain their homes. Some first-time home owners may not know how to maintain property. Few programs are available to assist.
- Lack of awareness of programs: Some homeowners are not aware of programs such as the Allegheny County Vacant Property Recovery Program, which assists with demolition and rehabilitation of blighted structures as well as side lot acquisition opportunities.
- Public perception: Externally, a sense that the three communities "have a blight problem" may
 have detrimental effects on other efforts. Within the communities, an actual or perceived lack
 of progress frustrates neighbors and other citizens. We recognize that citizens may not be fully
 informed about the legal requirements involved in blight remediation, or the procedural and
 regulatory complexity of acquiring property, securing funding for demolition, and completing the
 work. More efforts at community education might be needed.

Looking Ahead

Property deterioration can best be addressed through a coordinated effort among the communities. Efforts to address property deterioration and blight should:

- Be developed jointly among the three communities, sharing services to the greatest degree feasible.
- Create common definitions within the continuum of property deterioration.
- Create and work from a unified, consistent and up-to-date database.
- Align with jointly developed overarching strategies that include prevention and remediation as well as removal and redevelopment.
- Be developed and implemented in the context of economic and community development goals and efforts.
- Emphasize strategies to assist people who live in substandard housing.

STRATEGIES: Improving the Condition of Properties and the Effects of Deterioration

High-priority strategy



Using a multi-municipal approach, systematically pursue improvements as set forth in this chapter, overseen and driven by a multi-municipal "Blight Team." Work on addressing blight should be framed within the goals of this plan, and especially those related to economic development. The following steps align with a model adopted in Tarentum Borough, and can be applied or modified for a multi-municipal approach.

/

Making It Happen

Create a blight team.

The blight team should include code enforcement officials and key stakeholders such as the municipalities' solicitors and representatives from selected community organizations with interest in housing, community health, equity, community development or related matters. It should include at least one comprehensive plan steering committee member from each community to serve as liaisons to their home communities' residents and elected officials.

The team should establish a regular meeting schedule. One person should oversee coordinating and managing the team.

Identify and pursue funding opportunities throughout the effort to support all the steps listed below.

Agency, foundation and organizational funders. This should include typical sources such as CDBG, Keystone Communities, Neighborhood Assistance Program, and Neighborhood Partnership Program through DCED and PHARE/RTT through PHFA. Also consider sources such as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, Rivers of Steel, and foundations that share an interest in eliminating blight or rehabilitating properties.

Collaboration with Council of Governments. HBT should initiate collective action to seek funding through Allegheny Valley North COG, as a multi-municipal approach may have more power.

Act 152 funding via Allegheny County. The blight group should apply for Act 152 funding through Allegheny County. This funding stream is generated via the Allegheny County Demolition Fund, which applies a new \$15 fee to deed and mortgage recording transactions under PA Act 152. The Act allows counties to use such fees as a dedicated resource for demolishing blighted buildings.

Local funding via ordinance provisions. Consider adding a Neighborhood Mitigation Penalty in each municipality's property maintenance ordinances, as the City of Reading did:

"106.4.1 Neighborhood mitigation penalty.

"In addition to the foregoing fines, fees, penalties and/or restitution in PM 106.4, upon conviction of any violation of a provision of this code, an additional Neighborhood Mitigation Penalty (NMP) shall be levied in the amount of \$50. All such NMPs levied and collected by any division of the unified judicial system existing under Section 1 of Article V of the Pennsylvania Constitution and 42 Pa.C.S.A. § 301, shall be remitted to the City of Reading for deposit into the Neighborhood Mitigation Fund for the purpose of funding mitigation exercises performed by the City on private properties, including but not limited to demolitions, cleanups, light repairs, abandoned vehicle towing, removal of trash and/or cutting of grass and weeds, etc. If any fine is paid on installments, the proportionate amount of the NMP shall be remitted on each installment."

	Encourage property code enforcement and DPW collaboration and sharing
_	among the three communities via the blight team.

Consistent code enforcement. The code enforcement staff at each community should meet annually to share knowledge and best practices that each can "bring home" to their own communities. This will help communities to align their actions and priorities to achieve changes that have the most impact.

Unified and coordinated enforcement of landlord ordinances. Each of the three municipalities have similar landlord ordinances. The blight team and code enforcement staff should put the three ordinances side by side and arrive at a consolidated ordinance for landlords/investor residential properties so that all three municipalities have the same ordinance. They also should assemble a unified and shared investor-owned residential property date base or file.

Develop a legal definition of "blighted property."

A clear legal framework is essential to addressing blight, and this starts with the definition. The communities should add a definition to their ordinances, incorporating ideas from definitions provided in state laws and tapping the expertise of their solicitors and code enforcement officials. Note that some property may be in violation of the property maintenance code but not be a "blighted property" by definition; however, serious and chronic violations of the code may lead to a property being declared "blighted."

Collect and maintain data.

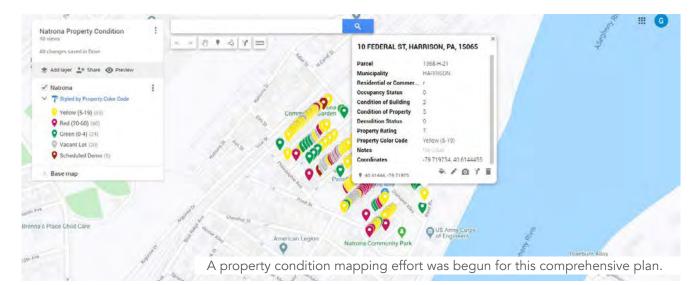
Map blight. The group must document occurrence of blight across the three communities by "coding" properties via visual review. A data-driven map will create a better understanding of the H-B-T landscape and create a blight database that can be jointly maintained into the future. Mapping can help identify blight "clusters" that could inform what strategic approaches to apply.

Mapping will facilitate applying/receiving grants to address blight, demolition, development and other property matters. Documentation of current conditions via mapping is something that grant reviewers look for when considering applications. The communities' blight team could create, populate and manage such a parcellevel database, which H-B-T could then employ to inform community decision-making and action.

The data collection and mapping can be done with the help of a small "army" of volunteers using a simple app on their phones and public webhosting for ease of access. Different mapping applications are available for doing this kind of survey-coding process, such as Landgrid, which includes a mobile app.

Note that consistent coding or ranking are essential here. Volunteers will need to receive training on how to code properties, aided with visual images and examples. This effort could be effectively led by the three communities' code enforcement officers, providing they first compare notes on property maintenance standards to identify and resolve any dissimilarities.

The resulting data is simply a point-in-time review, but a blight committee could maintain it to track progress.



NOTE: As part of implementation for this comprehensive plan, volunteers from the community began collecting data as shown in the sample above. This process is undertaken in collaboration with Faith Community Partners (FCP Services Inc.). A Quick Start guide for property condition map is in Appendix 3A. The process protocol is documented in Appendix 3B. This dataset currently is linked Google mapping, but could alternatively be linked to a GIS-based map.

- A smaller approach would be to have each community identify a small number of their most serious blighted properties, gather key information on those properties and map them. Work through the combined list to develop individual plans to address each property.
- A more ambitious approach to data collection and mapping would be to create and maintain a multi-municipal database for inspections, code violations and enforcement, such as the Turtle Creek Valley COG. This type of database should also include standards for assessing "what is blight," but even more fundamentally would facilitate consistent and cooperative application of standards, definitions, policies, priorities and goals.

Note the historic value of structures. Identify any buildings and structures that have historic value or that are significant to the community, and whether any can be saved. These could be prioritized based on their importance and the feasibility of saving the building or structure.

Citizens at the public meeting suggested investigating these properties as impressive buildings that might be good rehabilitation targets:

- Natrona Bank
- Knapek Store
- Silver Slipper (River Avenue)
- Chapman's Drug Store
- Drews Card Store

Learn more about rental properties in targeted areas. Conduct a block-by-block inventory of all properties in targeted neighborhoods to further identify useful information about rental properties: which are owner-occupied; landlords who consistently demonstrate responsibility vs. lack of care; vacancies; tax delinquencies; properties that appear to be beyond repair; owners who might be interested in minor repair assistance; and which properties might be for sale. This is a low-tech project; volunteers need a computer, internet, and a printer. Individuals would be recruited on a block by block basis who can help inform the process with the "details on the ground."

Assemble a list of properties for sale and determine their prospects for potential rehabilitation as well as those that are blighted. This could be for owner occupants and for potential rental properties.

Develop a robust multi-municipal strategy and approach to addressing blight.

After mapping, the blight team should develop and present to councils an ovearching approach for multi-municipal blight remediation. This approach should connect to market strength and align with the economic and community development goals of this comprehensive plan to ensure that progress is made once blighted properties are removed.

An overarching approach should include establishing priorities that help all three communities and support the other elements and goals of this comprehensive plan. Do the communities want to focus on their waterfronts? Their traditional downtowns? Gateways and corridors? Historic or important buildings or structures? Concentrated areas of blight? Blight near community assets?

Meet with the local magistrate.

Once the team is established and a plan developed, elected officials from the three communities should hold a meeting with the local magistrate to educate her/him about the new plan and seek input, such as how best the communities can prepare cases for presentation.

Improve community awareness of all aspects of fighting blight.

Raise the community profile about the problem and what H-B-T is doing. Make it an agenda item monthly at Council/Commission meetings and provide extensive public information about all steps related to addressing blight. For example, create a three-community document explaining blight, how it occurs and why it takes so long to address, and make this available to help with community education.

Conduct landlord and tenant information campaigns. Before implementing enforcement efforts, the municipalities should conduct a broad public education campaign with the landlords to bring registered owners up to compliance and to get non-registered landlords to register. Simultaneously, work with tenants to make sure they can prepare for any disruption in their housing situation.

Inform public of assistance available through programs (such as side yard) or volunteer efforts (such as cleanups). Lack of awareness of programs: Some homeowners are not aware of programs such as the Allegheny County Vacant Property Recovery Program, which assists with demolition and rehabilitation of blighted structures as well as side lot acquisition opportunities.





A Linden Street homeowner in Harrison Township purchased the adjacent property through the Allegheny County Vacant Property Recovery Program, then demolished the blighted house and constructed a garage.

Additional strategies

2

Revise ordinances.

Update ordinances governing inspection and licensure of rental units to prohibit rentals if the landlord has delinquent taxes, property maintenance citations, or delinquent utilities. (If one of the communities does not have a rental registry ordinance, it is recommended they adopt one. Further, property rental registration ordinances could require a local agent/property manager to be listed upon getting the license.)

3

Pursue collaborative approaches within the multi-municipal framework.

- a. Consider an intergovernmental cooperation agreement to address demolition in a collaborative way, including for paying for equipment and labor. (The City of Johnston and the Johnstown Redevelopment Authority have an MOU that governs collaboration on selecting properties for demolition and paying for the demo/supplying the equipment/labor.)
- b. Consider a multi-municipal shared services agreement or a joint third-party contract for cleaning up vegetation on vacant properties during the high grass and weed season. Keep a charge and cost log of the properties maintained to document costs and for potentially filing a tax lien on the properties.



Explore creating a regional land bank.

This is a long-term process; it can be years before properties are acquired. However, land-banking is a valuable tool that should not be overlooked. The first step will be to open conversations with Highlands School District, and this can be done immediately to begin building the relationships needed for future action. Funding for the startup of such an initiative could be available through private foundations.



Assist property owners.

A fund could be established that provides small grants or loans to residential property owners for minor house repairs or commercial property owners for façade improvements. Work with the library, local businesses or other groups to create courses that could help new homeowners learn how to maintain their property or make repairs. Create a list of properties where volunteer assistance is appropriate, and make matches. Review the process Tarentum set up for this and consider replicating it in the other communities.

Also, work with Allegheny County regarding potential funding for home repair and rental rehabilitation assistance programs via federal monies through CDBG or HOME.



Research and weigh other potential avenues for addressing blight, which are likely to be more complex but may have potential:

- a. Advocate for a County Tax Claim Bureau that would collect delinquent taxes. As a County of the Second Class, Allegheny County does not have the authority to create a tax claim bureau. Adding the authority to do so would require legislative action. The three municipalities should approach the area's state representative and senator about proposing legislation to create a tax claim bureau, and approach Allegheny County Council representatives about potential future action to create, staff and fund the agency.
- b. Demolition Authority. A steering committee member suggested examining the possibility of creating, implementing and carrying out of a Demolition Authority.
- c. Cooperation with Utility Companies. A steering committee member suggested exploring ways for the joint municipalities to get consistent and updated information from utility companies (electric, gas, etc.) regarding account holder information. Municipalities currently have a difficult time tracking down who is responsible for the upkeep and property conditions at rental properties. While the owner is ultimately responsible for a property, it can be quicker and easier to get results from tenants, thereby preventing community blight and issues to linger. In conjunction, is there a way to cooperate with utilities so that blighted conditions could lead to service disconnections. These are some thoughts for Harrison and Brackenridge based upon Tarentum's model of using electric service and customers to tackle database and tenant issues.





KEY ISSUE: Trails, Parks and Recreation

Issue Overview

Recreation facilities and programs are some of the highest priority public services that contribute to community quality of life. Being outside in nature, enjoying exercise, recreation and leisure, and socializing in the company of neighbors are factors that enhance community and individual health and wellbeing.

As more people recognize the importance of outdoor and community activities, officials are increasingly considering trails, parks and recreation to be essential facilities and services directed toward meeting basic human needs.

Background and Context

The three Allegheny River Valley communities share several important characteristics and assets:

- Riverfront access
- Parkland
- Sidewalks and connectivity
- Trail planning
- Engaged citizens groups that assist with recreation planning

These are valuable and important to the communities and create a basis for additional opportunities that could have even greater

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum residents can safely access places, goods, services, employment, and care through a connected network that includes walking/biking routes. The communities capitalize on the recreation and leisure potential of the Allegheny River and the availability of parks and recreation. They coordinate recreation and planning efforts in order to make the most of tax dollars and grants, and to provide the greatest possible variety and quality of services for all residents.

impact. Therefore, this section of the comprehensive plan represents both "strengths to build on" and "problems to solve."

The strengths

• Parkland: Riverview Memorial Park in

Tarentum, Brackenridge Borough Park, and the Fred C. Skwirut Memorial Park and Natrona Playground and Ballfield in Harrison include Allegheny River views, walking paths, play areas, sport courts, picnic shelters, monuments, ball fields and community gardens. Harrison Township's green space also includes the Township's Alsco Community Park and Silver Lake Park, and Bushman Ballfield. With improved community connections, concerted planning, program enhancements, and marketing efforts, these could become even more of a draw.

- Riverfront potential: Via the parks listed above, Brackenridge, Tarentum and Harrison have green space along their riverfronts. The Brackenridge Boat Club, a private marina, occupies about 1,000 linear feet of riverbank below that community's park. Private docks occupy a total of about 2,000 linear feet of riverbank in Tarentum below the community's park or private properties. An undeveloped public access point is available at the foot of Wood Street. Harrison Township has developed a Riverfront Plan, to include community connections.
- Historic and Cultural Assets: Links to the communities' past include the historic Burtner House, the Allegheny Kiski Valley Historical Society Heritage Museum, Chartiers Old Town, and the planned Row House Museum.
- Fish and Boat Commission launch area: A parking area, viewing platform, boat ramp, riverbank fishing area and seasonal dock occupy land under the Tarentum-New Kensington Bridge (SR 366).
- County Park: Allegheny County's Harrison Hills Park occupies 468 acres in Harrison Township.
- Sidewalks: Most or all portions of the communities in "the Flats," and some neighborhoods above the bluffs include sidewalks.
- Trail planning: The communities have been developing bicycle and walking connections. Harrison and Brackenridge have acquired planning grants and are moving toward implementation of specific routes that are part of or connect with the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. Over time, the coummunities' trunk route will align with other segments of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail to the south, and with the Butler-Freeport Trail and Tredway Trail to the north.
- Three Rivers Water Trail: Users may access a canoe/kayak trail on the Allegheny River at the Fish and Boat Commission launch in Tarentum or the Natrona launch at River Avenue and Linden Street in Harrison. Intrepid paddlers can move through the Army Corps of Engineers locks at Dam 4 in Harrison.
- Recreation Committees: The communities have several recreation committees that coordinate with Township or Borough administrations.

The problems

- No integrated plan for connecting community assets: The three communities do not have an overarching, integrated plan to link future development and existing assets such as commercial areas, parks, health care and external transit to employment.
- Lack of coordination of recreation: Each community has its own recreation committee (or two of them). Coordination, collaboration and shared services would reduce redundancy and make the most of valuable volunteer efforts.
- No coordination of park planning: Each community has developed its own parks, which are in proximity to each other. This creates a situation in which space is not always used well, and redundant equipment is installed. Joint planning would help all three communities limit costs of both installation and maintenance.
- Under-emphasis of Harrison Hills Park and ALSCO Park: The County-owned Harrison Hills Park

appears to be a somewhat untapped asset that could be emphasized more as a destination and an important community feature. Lack of transit and trail connectivity makes it difficult to reach for those without vehicles. Meanwhile, the ALSCO Park is little used because of lingering mistrust about its safety, since it was constructed atop a capped toxic waste dump.

- Lack of open space conservation and planning: Tarentum and Harrison, especially, have large areas of green space, steep slopes, and stream networks. Without long-term land use planning, there are few mechanisms to encourage preservation and support of natural systems, or to create sustainable conservation and recreation opportunities.
- Lack of coordinated planning for Silver Lake Park. The development site that includes Silver Lake Park land lies within Harrison Township but abuts the other two communities. Though a concept design has been prepared, there has been little or no joint discussion about the project. The project is targeted to be implemented as part of a proposed commercial development at the property, which lies at the southeast corner of the Route 28/Route 366 interchange.
- Limited river access: Despite Allegheny River frontage, the communities do not have many access points for fishing and boating, or associated parking.

Looking Ahead

The communities can benefit from increased community connectivity, mobility, and the assets of river access, riverfront views, parkland and recreation. Next steps should include efforts that:

- Coordinate an approach to planning of park assets and use of parkland.
- Coordinate recreation initiatives, programs, events and services.
- Plan multi-municipal connectivity and trails within the three communities and with
 external destinations or routes. This network should include associated features
 such as wayfinding, promotion, programming, mobility, and connection with other
 community assets.
- Capitalize on river access and riverfront views, which potentially can be a factor for all three communities as they pursue social enterprise, community and economic development goals.
- Recognize parks, greenspace, watersheds and the river as potential learning centers.
- Embrace conservation and preservation of open space, greenspace and natural systems or potential planning for an eco-district.

STRATEGIES: Improving Trails, Parks & Recreation

High Priority Strategy

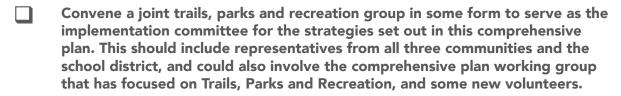


A multi-municipal trails, parks and recreation group should begin working on joint programs and events, and planning of public facilities and trails.

This plan suggests the communities form a formal or informal collaborative group to plan and mount events, and plan future recreation facilities and trails. A formal arrangement as explained below; would be most durable and most likely to attract funding assistance. However, even an informal group can be effective. Once established, the group should start planning shared and joint efforts such as facilities planning, maintenance or programming.



Making It Happen



A joint planning and implementation group will be in the best position to encourage collaboration among the three communities, and serve as the clearinghouse for shared initiatives such as grant applications. The point of this effort is to work jointly rather than in isolation on facilities, programs and other efforts, with the goal of maximizing effectiveness in developing partnerships with local businesses and institutions, in providing residents with the widest menu of activities and programs, and to increase likelihood of attracting funding.

At its initial meeting, the group should review the contents of this comprehensive plan and set priorities for implementation.

Currently, each of the communities plans trails independently and operates a Recreation Board, as shown here:

How does it work currently?

HARRISON: The township operates a six-member recreation board and seven member citizen advisory committee. Their purpose is to contribute to improved health and wellness spirit in the community, bringing together old and young to participate in community-wide recreational programs and events. Examples are park cleanups, holiday events.

BRACKENRIDGE: The borough's three-member recreation committee focuses on park facilities and operations.

TARENTUM: The borough's nine-member recreation board hosts community events including the Summer Concert Series, Senior Bingo and holiday parade events. It meets on the last Tuesday of each month. In addition, an ad hoc group has also begun planning additional activities.

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum should consider a model that has operated effectively in four Beaver County communities for almost two decades. The four communities and the school district they share use the model explained on the following pages.

New Brighton Area Recreation Commission (NBARC)



PURPOSE: The commission includes representatives from the Boroughs of New Brighton and Fallston, the Townships of Pulaski and Daugherty, and the New Brighton Area School District. Its purpose is to operate playground programs, maintain landscaping at athletic fields, and provide recreation services currently not being met in the community. The property and facilities utilized are owned, maintained, and insured by the five governmental members.

Background: The commission was formed by an intergovernmental agreement in 2002, and adopted by Ordinance or Resolution by four communities and school district. A nine-member board is appointed by the governing bodies to serve on the Commission. The commission began meeting monthly in 2003. Please see model intergovernmental agreement, which includes the commission's bylaws, Appendix 4A

Before the commission was created, the communities and school district operated an authority, which included oversight of a public swimming pool. When the school district took on oversight of the pool, the authority was no longer needed and the five parties formed the commission that remains in operation.

How It Works:

- Representation on the nine-member commission is proportional by population. The share ratios are: School District: 3; New Brighton: 2; Daugherty: 2; Pulaski: 1; Fallston: 1.
- The commission's budget was created at \$50,000 annually. Cash contributions by the home communities are proportional by population and billed monthly. The share ratios are: School District: 50%; New Brighton: 25.11%; Daugherty: 16.8%; Pulaski: 6.2%; Fallston: 1.89%.
- The participating communities and school district each maintain their own recreation facilities, though the commission maintains the school district ballfields, which get used

- by community-based leagues/associations. Routine inspections of play areas are conducted by a member of the commission who is a certified playground inspector.
- If one participating community or the school district wants or needs a capital improvement, that governing body assumes financial responsibility for the project. If a grant is sought, the home community or school district writes the grant application and provides the base financial contribution. The NBARC may vote to provide a financial match, particularly if the identified improvement benefits all the participating communities and school district. To facilitate the

grant process, the commission as well as the member bodies typically write letters of support to be included in grant applications, which grantors have stated are highly desirable.

- The commission pays monthly stipends to two New Brighton Borough employees

 the assistant borough manager (\$300) and her assistant (\$150) – to serve as recreation coordinators for programs that the commission jointly plans and operates.
- The recreation and community programs held each year are selected by the commission. The nine commissioners plus the two recreation coordinators and

community volunteers staff the events. The planned 2020 events were (with some rescheduling or other changes due to restrictions caused by the pandemic:

- a. Two "5K and Fun Walks"
- b. A sanctioned triathlon (USA Triathlons)
- c. Movies in the Park
- d. A summer playground program run in conjunction with the YMCA.
- e. Rivers Casino trips

Effectiveness Tips from the NBARC Recreation Coordinator: The NBARC recreation coordinator (Nicole Oliver) explained that this five-party collaboration has worked smoothly for decades in different iterations – first as an authority, and currently as a commission.

- What makes the partnership work well, she said, is that the communities already have the common bond of the school district. Moreover, the communities see the value in collaboration and the "get along." People often travel from one community to another for shopping, work or other purposes, so going from one place to another for recreation feels natural.
- When collaboration doesn't go so well, it usually is a problem with the challenges of mounting an event, and the problem can be traced to a lack of volunteer support from the community, she said. For example, it takes a lot of people to host a triathlon, and sometimes there just aren't enough helping hands. The communities should understand that recreation takes help beyond the nine members of the commission.
- Joint planning creates cohesiveness among the communities and helps them avoid redundancy or duplicated efforts. "You don't need three Halloween Parades," she said. "Everybody can go to one parade."
- If Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum (and Highlands School District) form a commission or other formal body, they should invite someone from the County Parks division to participate since Harrison Hills County Park is within the area. This could help build an important alliance.
- No matter what form the collaboration takes, the important thing is communication. "If you have that, then you're not forming those old ideas like 'this town is better than that town.' "

NBARC's program sponsors: Back Door Tavern, Beaver Valley Remodeling, Brighton Health Mart, Corner Grill, Craig's Hardware, Evolution Audio, Fancy Plants & Bloomers, Fisher's Foodland, Frank Hacko Insurance & Notary, Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 1342, Gabauer-Lutton Funeral Home, Hall's Lawn Care, Louis Capo, CPA, Marbulls, Mr. Trophy, Oak Hill Veterans Association, Robert J. Baker, DMD PC, Rosalind Candy Castle, The Sports Factory, United Croation Club, Valeria D. Martone DMD MSD, Widmer Engineering

CONTACT: Nicole Oliver, NBARC.net

Working together, the communities should first undertake joint programs, because that is the simplest form of collaboration. Create a consolidated, joint calendar of events and publish it on all three websites.

EXISTING: Participants in the public process for this comprehensive plan identified these activities, events and programs as ones they currently participate in or attend.

- Tree plantings or community cleanups
- Community gardens
- Fireworks

- Volunteer fire companies
- Performances or movies in a park
- Youth sports leagues
- Programs at Harrison Hills Park Environmental Learning Center
- Hiking on Rachel Carson Trail

FUTURE ACTIVITIES: Residents perceived the following activities as gaps in recreation programming in the three communities. They should be considered:

- Roller skating all ages event
- Pet parade
- Battle of the bands
- Wellness/fitness programs such as yoga
- Adult education classes to teach home repair skills
- Summer schedule of arts and music festivals with food
- Beer/wine tastings

- Fall festival
- Painting, Zumba, Yoga classes in the park
- Contests for youth to spruce up areas of the community.

Pet Parade

The communities should schedule a Pet Parade - as a pilot project, as it is relatively easy to put on, and is likely to be a true crowd-pleaser. Here is a checklist.

- a. Recruit planning team. Please see sample registration and volunteer application forms in Appendix 4B and 4C.
- b. Select date. September/October window is suggested as not too hot for people and animals.
- Identify a location. Considerations should include availability of restrooms, parking and water source, convenience and fees.
- d. Theme/judging/prizes. This could be a Halloween- or fall-oriented pet costume parade, with prizes for best-dressed, best-behaved, best "Tricker," best "Treater," etc. Judges could be elected officials and children.
- e. Booths/sponsors. Local pet stores, groomers and other businesses can be solicited for prizes. Parameters should be established for booth space, with fee structures offering discounts for non-profits but not for for-profit companies. Arrangements need to be made for electricity if needed, but booth vendors

- should provide their own tents, tables and chairs, along with requirements for completing set-up and cleanup.
- f. Determine if there will be food vendors or food trucks.
- g. Comfort stations. Rented portable toilets are expensive, so existing facilities would be a plus.
- h. Permits and public safety. Consider street closures, police, fire department, EMS. Make sure masks, hand sanitizer, pet clean-up materials, garbage collection are lined up.
- i. Water supply. Encourage everyone to bring water for their pets.
- j. Publicity and how to participate: Participants should have to register, including listing what kind of pet they are bringing. Many will be surprising, adding to the fun! Rules should include maximum length of leash, and that all animals are current with their shots and licenses.

The multi-municipal group should commence joint planning for future facilities as a way of saving money and effort, and targeting to meet community needs.

The group should assess existing facilities shown on the map on the facing page, and formulate an achievable plan for maximizing the facilities' use and maintenance.

EXISTING FACILITIES: Participants in the public process for this comprehensive plan identified these facilities in the three communities as particularly valuable:

- Community parks and playgrounds in Brackenridge, Tarentum and Natrona
- Rachel Carson Trail

 Harrison Hills Park (Allegheny County park)

FUTURE FACILITIES: Residents perceived these as gaps in recreation facilities in the three communities:

- Outdoor basketball court in Brackenridge
- Boat rides for kids
- Kitchen area for Natrona Community Park
- Driving range

- Ice skating
- Indoor play area at Lloyd
 D. Hayden Community
 Center, Sheldon Park (County
 Housing Authority facility)

Skating Rink

A skating rink is probably the most feasible and likely to be considered useful and exciting to residents of all three communities. It could potentially be installed in ALSCO Park or a riverfront park. The communities should consider using a seasonal membrane rink and edge. This can be filled with

water and left to freeze, then opened up for free public use.

In 2010, Fox Chapel Borough first set up a new 52-by-88-foot rounded rectangle rink, costing \$4,500. Today a membrane and edge costs about \$8,000.

In some communities, skates are collected by donation, and borrowed/used by skaters then returned to the "borrow table" when the skaters leave. This model could be considered as a means of encouraging equal access to winter recreation.





5 Highlands Early Childhood Center Playground 6 Natrona Community Park Playground 5heldon Park Neighborhood Playground 8 Harrison Hills Park Play Areas

River Access Points Tarentum Fish & Boat Commission Launch 10 Wood Street River Access 11 Tarentum Boat Docks

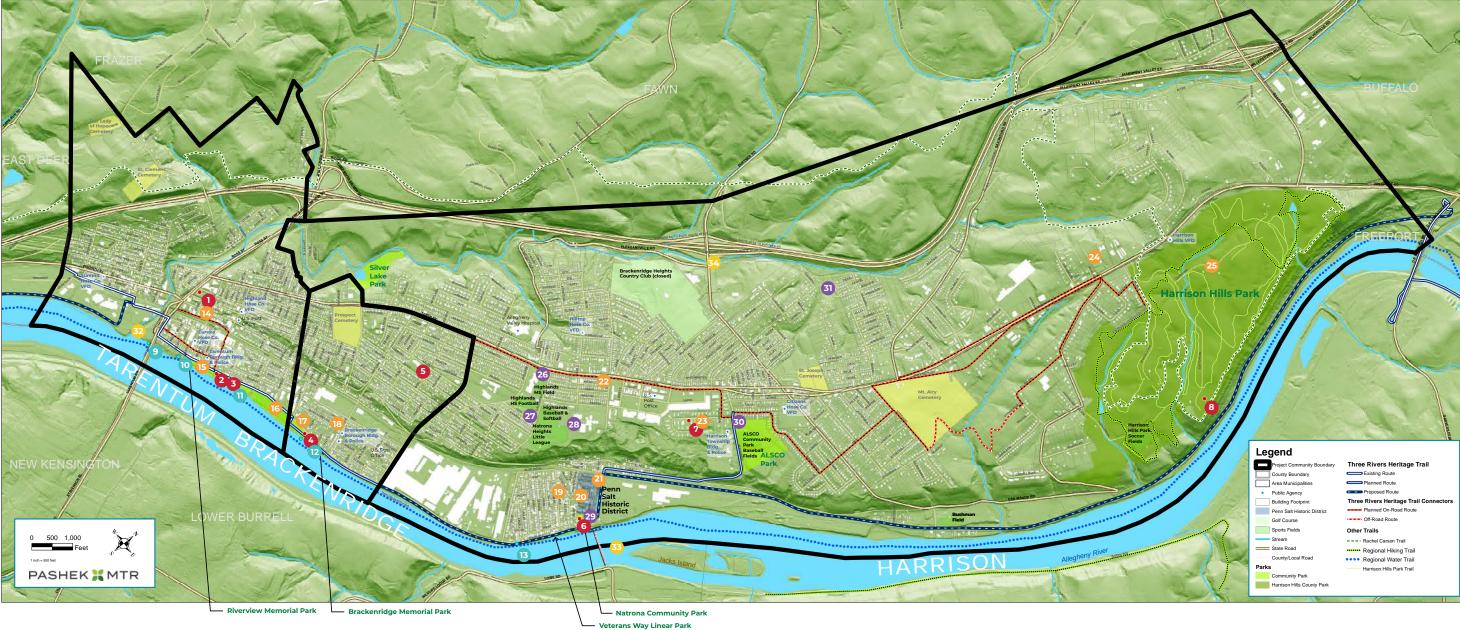
Brackenridge Boat Docks Three Rivers Water Trail Access **Activity Centers** Alle-Kiski Heritage Museum Riverview Park Amphitheater 16 Tarentum Community Garden Veterans of Foreign Wars

American Legion Hall

20 Penn Salt History Museum Natrona Community Garden Allegheny Valley Library Deborah D. Booker Community Center Allegheny Valley Salvation Army Allegheny Valley YMCA Harrison Hills Environmental Learning Ctr.

Fitness 26 Natrona Sports Courts 27 Highlands Middle School Walking Track Highlands School District Tennis Courts Highlands High School Pool 30 ALSCO Tennis Courts 31 Sylvan Pool

Historic & Cultural Structures Chartiers Old Town 33 Army Corps of Engineers Lock & Dam No. 4 34 Burtner House



HARRISON-BRACKENRIDGE-TARENTUM Implementable Comprehensive Plan

Recreation Resources Map



Investigate state Department of Recreation and Natural Resources programs that encourage multi-municipal collaborations on recreation staffing, funding and technical assistance.

The Peer and Circuit Rider grant programs fund projects that help municipalities, counties, multi-municipal partnerships, and councils of governments to increase local capacity for recreation, parks and conservation.

- The Peer program funds projects that, through a collaborative process, focus on a specific need identified by the grantee and its partners.
- The Circuit Rider program aids in the hiring of a full-time park, recreation or conservation professional whose services are shared by the members of a formal partnership, commission or authority. These grant opportunities are available and open year-round with no application deadline.
- Please see Peer program and Circuit Rider grant information, Appendix 4D.

Other Strategies

2

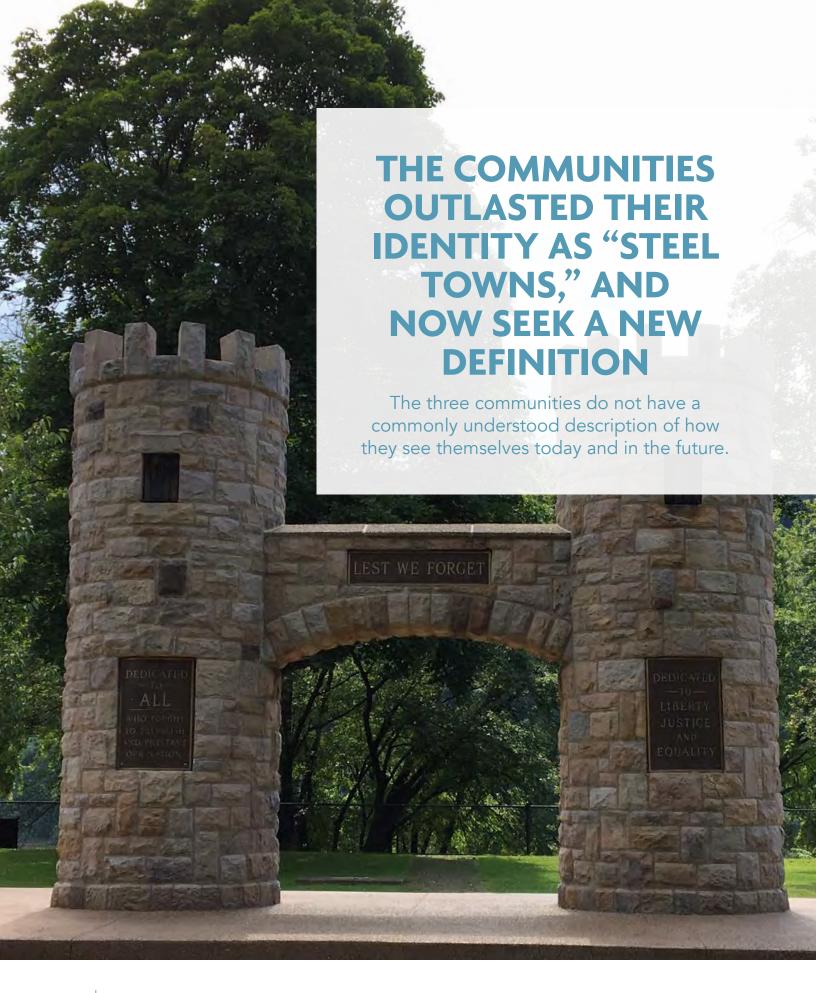
Create a unified, multi-municipal approach to trail network development. This includes:

- a. The joint recreation group should review the Three Rivers Heritage Trail maps and status of implementation within each of the three communities so people in Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum can be fully aware of each other's plans, and can begin to pursue projects and grants on a multi-municipal basis.
 - Using trail planning resources and best practices as well as feedback from the public collected via this comprehensive planning process, determine where improvements could be made to the trail route. One very useful idea is to revise the Three Rivers Heritage Trail route to include spurs or alternative routes through the traditional downtowns of Tarentum, Brackenridge and Natrona, to drive traffic to the commercial districts as well as the riverfront, to improve mobility, and to achieve other goals and priorities.
- b. Initiate discussions with the Rachel Carson Trail organization about trail use, events and operations and potential cooperation or joint efforts between the trail conservancy and the three communities. The northern trail terminus is in Harrison Hills Park, and this trail is a local asset with some regional significance.
- c. Open conversations with trail planners in East Deer to the south and Freeport (Butler County) to the north to identify next steps toward creating external connections to the larger trail network. It is the larger regional trail network that will significantly increase the value and profile of the routes in Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum and play an important role in establishing the communities as Trail Towns. As noted previously in this chapter, trail connectivity is an increasingly desirable asset or amenity for attracting the next residents and business owners.
- d. Assemble a meeting of key stakeholders to review trail options and plans, and to build interest in potential projects. Take a multi-municipal approach to conferring with the stakeholders (including some potential funders) listed here:
 - Adam Mattis, DCNR Southwest Regional Office Advisor: amattis@pa.gov

- Andy Baechle, Allegheny County Parks and trails, abaechle@county.allegheny.pa.us
- Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County Economic Development-Transportation, Ann.Ogoreuc@ alleghenycounty.us
- John Stephen, Rachel Carson Trail, jwsdi@yahoo.com
- Courtney Mahronich Vita, Friends of the Riverfront, courtney@friendsoftheriverfront.org
- Brett Hollern, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, bhollern@pecpa.org
- Darla Cravotta, Allegheny County Office of Special Projects, County Executive, Darla.
 Cravotta@AlleghenyCounty.US
- Bill Lesterick, PennDOT District 11-Active Transportation planning, wlesterick@pa.gov
- Leann Chaney, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission-Active Transportation, Ichaney@ spcregion.org
- Melissa Girty, Port Authority of Allegheny County, mgirty@portauthority.org
- Chris Ziegler, Butler-Freeport Trail and Armstrong Trail, (724) 822-7176
- Lance Welliver, Butler County Parks director, alamedapark@co.butler.pa.us
- e. Following the stakeholders meeting, refine a list of trail development priorities and formulate a funding matrix for these projects, seeking where feasible to apply as a multi-municipal group. Matrix to include funding source/grant, deadlines, matching information and other specifics.

3 Create communications and volunteer engagement mechanisms.

- a. Publicize public recreation facilities and assets found in the three communities, such as on municipal websites or via new joint website or social media group.
- b. Publicize the multi-municipal map of trail routes and status of new project implementation within each of the three communities. Work with trail organizations or websites to have H-B-T routes included on their maps, such as:
 - https://trails.dcnr.pa.gov/
 - https://www.alltrails.com/
 - https://friendsoftheriverfront.org/three-rivers-heritage-trail/
- c. Using the publicity means identified above as contact with local social media groups and large employers such as ATI and Allegheny Valley Hospital, recruit volunteers for initiatives related to parks, recreation and trails.
- Use the riverfront development concept plan drawings presented in the "Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development" chapter to select potential public access improvements to help connect the three communities to the Allegheny River, one of the area's most important assets.
- Review land-use maps and ordinances to identify parcels that could be acquired by their home communities, potentially with the assistance of grant funding, to be conserved for open space, future park land and stormwater management or resource conservation purposes.



CHAPTER V COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND BRANDING

KEY ISSUE: Community Identity and Branding

Issue Overview

Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum are distinctive places with rich and complex histories and an ambition to be known for being convenient places to live, that have a small-town feel, affordable housing, and amenities like parks, trails, recreation options, walkability and Allegheny River views. The three communities desire to assemble a "toolkit" for communicating both internally to local people and externally to the greater Pittsburgh area all the valuable characteristics they embody, offer and hope to become.

Background and Context

During the 20th Century, the communities of Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum were (speaking generally) steel mill and manufacturing towns that supported local economies driven by residents of European heritage who earned sufficient wages to live middle-class lives. These residents owned their homes, shopped locally, joined community organizations and churches, and sent their kids to local schools.

As populations shrank and disinvestment followed, the small downtowns faltered and some properties deteriorated. Over a few decades, the communities became more affordable to lower-income residents, and

Vision

Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum attract and retain residents, businesses and investment by marketing themselves successfully through a commonly held identity or brand.

Allegheny County constructed various publichousing facilities. New residents moved in, though the populations continued to fall. The communities became more diverse and less centered on steel mill and manufacturing employment. The opening of Route 28 and the growth of "eds and meds" jobs in Pittsburgh to some degree turned this part of Allegheny County into a bedroom community.

Concurrently, a sense of community created by membership and participation in faith communities fell away as population and attendance dwindled. Houses of worship and parochial schools closed as congregations were consolidated, leaving some residents without one traditional hometown "anchor." In the public-school district, which typically is







another a source of community cohesiveness, population decline led to elementary school closures; this consolidation represented the loss of another neighborhood anchor.

As these transformations occurred, the communities' self-image as Allegheny Valley steel towns no longer held true (although ATI continues to operate in Harrison and employs about 500 people from throughout the region).

"We're not an old mill town anymore," as one local elected official stated, "but what are we?" Now, in the third decade of the 21st Century, the three communities do not have a commonly understood description of how they see themselves today and in the future. One community activist noted that lack of identity for the three communities, defining it as "the area between Exits 14 and 15 off Route 28, and down to the river."

Moreover, there are different ideas of how unified the three communities are or can become. One local community activist said during the public input process for this plan: "Harrison Township and the neighboring boroughs are territorial. My generation and younger call our area 'Highlands,' but some elected officials don't see it that way."

Historic patterns of mistrust may also affect the communities' self-perception and identity. A community stakeholder interviewed for this plan provided a potent explanation of how a loss of manufacturing jobs and resultant decline in individual and community financial security in 1970-2010 occurred simultaneously with in-migration of populations with lower socio-economic status. This concurrency led some long-time residents to adopt a belief that the larger demographic representation of disadvantaged individuals or minority groups – rather than the loss of manufacturing jobs - caused the decline in economic conditions.

The stakeholder believes that this misunderstanding of regional and national trends created a fear of "the other" that can only be addressed through communication and open, honest conversations. This undercurrent of mistrust is likely amplified by what many see as a persistent lack of coordination and communication between the Allegheny County Housing Authority (which provides low-income housing) and the three communities.

The problems

Progress-dependent: Marketing the community is interrelated with progress on the other Key Issues.

Lack of an identity: There is no articulated and commonly held revised-for-the future self-image of Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum.

Visibility and Reputation: The communities have a low profile or perhaps are not viewed entirely positively from the outside.

Divided views I: Individuals have different assessments of how distinct the three communities are or should be, and whether they are united now or can unite behind a vision.

Divided views II: Individuals have different assessments of the degree to which socio-economic, racial/ethnic, political and age-based differences in viewpoints can be overcome in the interest of a common vision.

Limited resources: The communities individually may have difficulty marshalling resources to achieve goals matching their vision for the future. However, collaboration and shared services can be tools for doing more.

Looking Ahead

We feel that the communities share strengths, assets and challenges, many of which this comprehensive plan will seek to address. Creating a joint "identity" or "brand" should include efforts that:

- Articulate a shared understanding of the communities as they are today and as they hope to be in the next five to 10 years
- Reflect the cultural, human, historical, ecological and built assets the three communities share or plan to develop
- Support the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum vision for social enterprise, community and economic development
- Can result in official and informal marketing and promotion efforts by the communities together or individually.

STRATEGIES: Improving Community Identity And Branding

High-priority strategy



Identify and convene a team that can pursue the Community Identity and Branding initiatives over time.

The team should include some members of the Community Identity comprehensive plan working group and new volunteers with expertise in media relations, marketing and branding. Because the Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum area's community identity may encompass new facets or features as other elements of the comprehensive plan are implemented, the team should strive to keep abreast of other work under way in the communities.

- 1. Along with that, the team will be responsible for engaging community partners to enhance the value of any efforts pursued in this Key Issue topic. Finally, team members will also be liaisons for the three communities' elected officials and professional staff members.
- 2. Develop a website for the comp plan initiatives that can serve as a communications device in the future to house content such as the Community Identity hometown stories or the trail maps; to recruit volunteers; to post news; and to reflect implementation. This could be a new website, or the section of the Tarentum site devoted to the plan. Items posted on the site can be shared via existing and new social media partners and platforms.



Making It Happen

- Discuss the Community Identity and Branding initiative with existing groups such as the a new CDC operating in the three communities, the Business Improvement Group in Brackenridge, other merchants groups, the Chamber of Commerce, Highlands Partnership Network, social media partners, local historical societies and others. Use this opportunity to identify future participants in a branding effort.
- Hold a 2- or 3-hour brainstorming creative meeting with local professionals working in the marketing, advertising and design fields to begin a discussion about how to identify this area via a logo and geographic designator.

Other strategies



Develop a "community identity" rooted in storytelling.

A community identity articulated through storytelling is a more thoughtful and inclusive process, with a nuanced product.

The Community Identity team will work with partner organizations to identify common themes and community attributes that can be the foundation for articulating an identity and driving a marketing campaign. This process uses proven methodology for community story gathering and focus group facilitation to gather stories from community members across the stakeholder spectrum. It can borrow some ideas from the "Community Heart and Soul" process (https://www.orton.org/what-wedo/) to ask these questions of residents and business owners:

- Why do you love it here?
- Why do you stay here?
- What makes it feel like home?

The individual stories that people convey as well as the themes or characteristics that are seen when the stories are viewed together comprise the community identity of Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum. A series of focus groups can help identify themes and distill meaning.

A local historian or historical society may be able to help coordinate this project, assisting the communities with acknowledging their roots as well as aspirations, and honing the information into a brand.

- Create a community branding campaign. Following story gathering and community outreach efforts, the Community Identity team and partners will synthesize the information gathered to identify common themes about life in the community. Focus groups can help distill meaning from a collection of individual stories.
 - a. From this distillation, it should be possible to articulate a slogan that captures the character of the area. Both the stories and the slogan are parts of the community's identity. Local experts in graphic design, marketing and communications can create visuals that reflect that effort.
 - b. As part of this, strive to develop a geographic shorthand name for the area that will assist with external communications, helping people from outside Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum to understand the communities' location on the Allegheny River in northern Allegheny County.

NOTE: During the development of this implementable comprehensive plan, a working group received advice from Visit Pittsburgh on how a community can articulate its identity through the stories of people, places, businesses and organizations. See notes in Appendix 5A.

- Create talking points for business owners, media, faith community, neighbors, and distribute them to media outlets, Visit Pittsburgh, state and county elected officials and others who can share important stories and information about Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum.
- Create a digital and printed map identifying community assets and public amenities as well as historic locations and properties. This can service as a tool for communicating the three communities' identity and brand.



CHAPTER VI ADDITIONAL TOPICS

Implementable comprehensive plans focus their content heavily on "Key Issues" that the public process identified as the most important and most feasible to address in the coming years. Those topics typically warrant whole chapters for each. The public process also identified topics that either had less priority or were considered less feasible to address.

We include a section called Additional Topics to recognize the matters that arose during the public process but did not become Key Issues because they were viewed to be of lower priority or highly unlikely to be successfully addressed through the comprehensive planning process.

TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

ISSUE: Lack of transportation creates and perpetuates inequity and hardship in the three communities. People in the three communities who don't have their own cars have significant difficulty getting to grocery stores or accessing health care and other needed services due to distance, topography and a lack of public transit.

Statement of support

 This comprehensive plan supports increased and improved transit/shuttle services to enable residents of Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum to access food stores, health care, goods and services, employment and recreation. This plan encourages organizations and individuals to continue to make the Port Authority of Allegheny County aware of the significant need in the communities for additional transit service.

INFRASTRUCTURE

ISSUE: Road maintenance and improvements are crucial to all communities, and this is particularly difficult for Brackenridge, which does not qualify for some state funding due to its small size. At the same time, heavy truck traffic from local industries damages roads and is highly disruptive to the quietude of residential neighborhoods.

Strategies

- Explore creating a road impact fee for truck use on local roads.
- Consider establishing an official truck route through the communities to divert heavy vehicles away from quiet residential areas, parks and trail routes.
- Develop a list, by community, of needed road improvements, arranged by priority and road owner. In cases where projects are on more than one community's list, create

a multi-municipal plan for pursuing funding, by approaching state representatives, PennDOT, Allegheny County and Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission to elevate awareness of need.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MUNICIPALITIES AND HIGHLANDS SCHOOL DISTRICT

ISSUE: The three communities lie entirely within the Highlands School District, but there is arrangement for sharing information or communicating between the governing bodies. This can lead to missed opportunities at best and suspicion, competition for resources and mistrust at worst.

Strategy

- Begin holding liaison meetings among one or two volunteers from each elected body. These should be held semi-annually. The first meeting should discuss:
 - a. How to build collaboration among elected officials
 - b. Projects or ideas to explore or undertake together, such as producing a multi-municipal public festival showcasing student achievements in art, music, robotics, voluntarism, other projects.
 - c. A potential joint effort is development of a land bank, which would require participation by the school district and municipal governments.

CRIME

ISSUE: Some residents participating in the public process perceived crime to be an important problem to solve in the three communities. A review of uniform crime statistics showed that a spike in some forms of crime had occurred in the communities in 2016-17, possibly related to the opioid epidemic, but that no trend of increased crime appeared to be continuing in 2018-2020. However, since even low statistical levels of crime can disrupt communities, neighborhoods and households, this comprehensive plan recommends the steps listed below.

Strategies

- All three communities should join a communications service such as Savvy Citizen, perhaps
 recruiting a local business to support the service on an annual basis. Use this, as well as informal
 social networks such as NextDoor.com, to notify citizens when emergencies occur to begin to
 establish an understanding that crime and public emergencies are not as common as may be
 perceived.
- Create a section on each website showing incidences of crime and trend lines, as well as crime prevention techniques.
- Some property crimes are associated with substance abuse problems. Therefore, the communities' governing bodies should further develop partnerships with the two large health-care providers specifically to help inform residents of resources or connect people to services. The goal is to help families and individuals access health care or mental health care, including treatment for substance use disorders. A result of this assistance is likely to be a reduction in property crimes, such as burglary and theft.

CONSISTENCY WITH THE PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPALITIES PLANNING CODE

In order for the governing bodies of Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum to approve this comprehensive plan, the proposed plan must be reviewed by Allegheny County for consistency with the county's own comprehensive plan (Allegheny Places), and the plan must meet the requirements of the state Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Article III, Section 301. The following is a summary of those MPC requirements and a comparison of where that information is included in this comprehensive plan. Where the key issues did not include an element listed in the MPC, we address that following the chart.

CONSISTENCY TABLE							
MPC Requirement	Where it can be found in the Forging Our Future Comprehensive Plan						
Statement of Community Development Objectives	Refer to the Additional Topics chapter.						
Plan for land use	Refer to the Community and Economic Development and Additional Topics chapters.						
Plan to meet housing needs	Refer to the Blight and Community and Economic Development chapters. Also see Community Development Objectives.						
Plan for movement of people and goods	Refer to the Trails, Parks and Recreation and Additional Topics chapter of the plan.						
Plan for community facilities	Community facilities are addressed in the Trails, Parks and Recreation and the Community and Economic Development chapters of the plan.						
Statement of Interrelationship among various plan components	The nature of the Implementable Comprehensive Plan is to focus on major issues in the Community. Each issue tends to address multiple planning elements in an integrated manner.						
Short- and long-term implementation strategies	Found in each chapter for each issue.						
Statement that existing and proposed development is compatible with existing and proposed development in adjacent communities and consistent with "Allegheny Places," the Allegheny County comprehensive plan.	The Community Development Objectives addresses consistency with adjacent municipality development. The proposals in this plan are consistent with the Allegheny County Plan.						

MPC Requirement	Where it can be found in the Forging Our Future Comprehensive Plan
Plan for protection of natural and historic resources	See Trails, Parks and Recreation chapter and Community Development Objectives.
Plan for reliable supply of water	The Allegheny County comprehensive plan indicates that the water supply for these three municipalites is adequately served via Harrison Township Water Authority, Brackenridge Borough, and Tarentum Borough.
Plan to be reviewed in 10 years	This plan recommends in the Introduction that this process be updated in 10 years.
Careful analysis of all of the ele- ments	We believe that the Key Issues identified by the three communities were developed in a careful manner that incorporated most of the planning elements of the MPC.
Adoption process	To take place in 2020.

Steering future community development

Zoning and subdivision and land development (SALDO) ordinances should be revised in tandem with comprehensive planning because these ordinances can support and propel the kinds of changes that are sought in an implementable plan. Revised SALDO and zoning ordinances are tools the communities can employ to make sure they are steering future growth and development in the directions they have chosen. For example, zoning ordinances and maps build on goals for community development by adding specificity about what kinds of development should occur, where, and in what manner. And the design and other standards for public and private improvements in a SALDO affect the quality of proposed development.

New zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances could help the communities achieve their goals related to the chapters on Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development, Blight, and Trails, Parks and Recreation.

The communities should create, update and revise their subdivision and land development and zoning ordinances entirely or by amending or revising sections. (Brackenridge and Tarentum do not administer local SALDOs.)

This section of the Forging Our Future comprehensive plan sets out Community Development Objectives, which are a primary building block of zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. The objectives, which appear on the next page, align with the intention of the comprehensive plan and provide necessary context to enable the communities to undertake updates or revisions of their ordinances.

Statement of Community Development Objectives for Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum, PA

- Generally maintain and protect the historic pattern of development in each community, respecting
 the street grid, the original bulk and massing of buildings and the ability to embed civic,
 institutional and commercial activity into specified neighborhoods and districts at an appropriate
 scale.
- Incentivize mixed uses, particularly in downtowns, including residential living on the upper floors of commercial uses.
- Build flexibility into local regulations to accommodate innovative uses and activity such as "popup" businesses, food trucks and micro-breweries.
- Encourage a broad range of housing types and price levels within neighborhoods to bring people
 of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, income levels, ages and abilities into daily interaction,
 strengthening community life.
- Use dimensional standards to reinforce a cohesive built environment for each district while ensuring that infill and redevelopment are viable options for vacant and underutilized property.
- Guide the design of the public realm to ensure quality, visually attractive development that becomes a significant asset to the community.
- Respect pedestrians and the form of public space in accomodating vehicles, incorporating best practices for access management and the creation of "complete streets." Ensure that parking is not overbuilt.
- Ensure safe and efficient bicycle and pedestrian movement, promoting the development of trail and other non-motorized mobility networks.
- Protect and enhance open space, historic and cultural resources.
- Steward and conserve natural resources by incorporating policies and measures that enhance environmental sustainability. These will include steps such as best practices for reducing stormwater runoff; improving groundwater and stream quality; creating buffer areas; protecting steep slopes and green space; providing for non-motorized transportation; minimizing impervious surfaces such as parking lots; reducing night-sky light pollution and urban heat island effect; and improving air quality.
- Require appropriate buffers and transitions between uses of greatly different intensity.
- Be aware of the impact that surrounding municipalities have on each community, particularly shared border streets, and regulate land use accordingly.
- Reduce property maintenance problems and spur reinvestment in the existing building stock.
- Encourage future development in the proposed Harrison Point and the pad-ready Harrison Township Business Park, and redevelopment of Heights Plaza. Encourage infill development throughout the communities and particularly in the traditional commercial areas near the Allegheny River.
- Facilitate administration and enforcement of the municipalities' regulations, particularly code enforcement and rental regulation.

Future Land Use Planning

Tarentum and Brackenridge are traditional riverfront communities that are largely built out. Harrison Township has some remaining undeveloped space, but it, too, has seen development on most parcels that would not pose significant construction challenges. The focus of this plan regarding future land uses has been on targeted areas of redevelopment and reinvestment, as explained in the Social Enterprise, Community and Economic Development chapter. Otherwise, the plan has focused on enhancing existing development and improving quality of life in other ways.

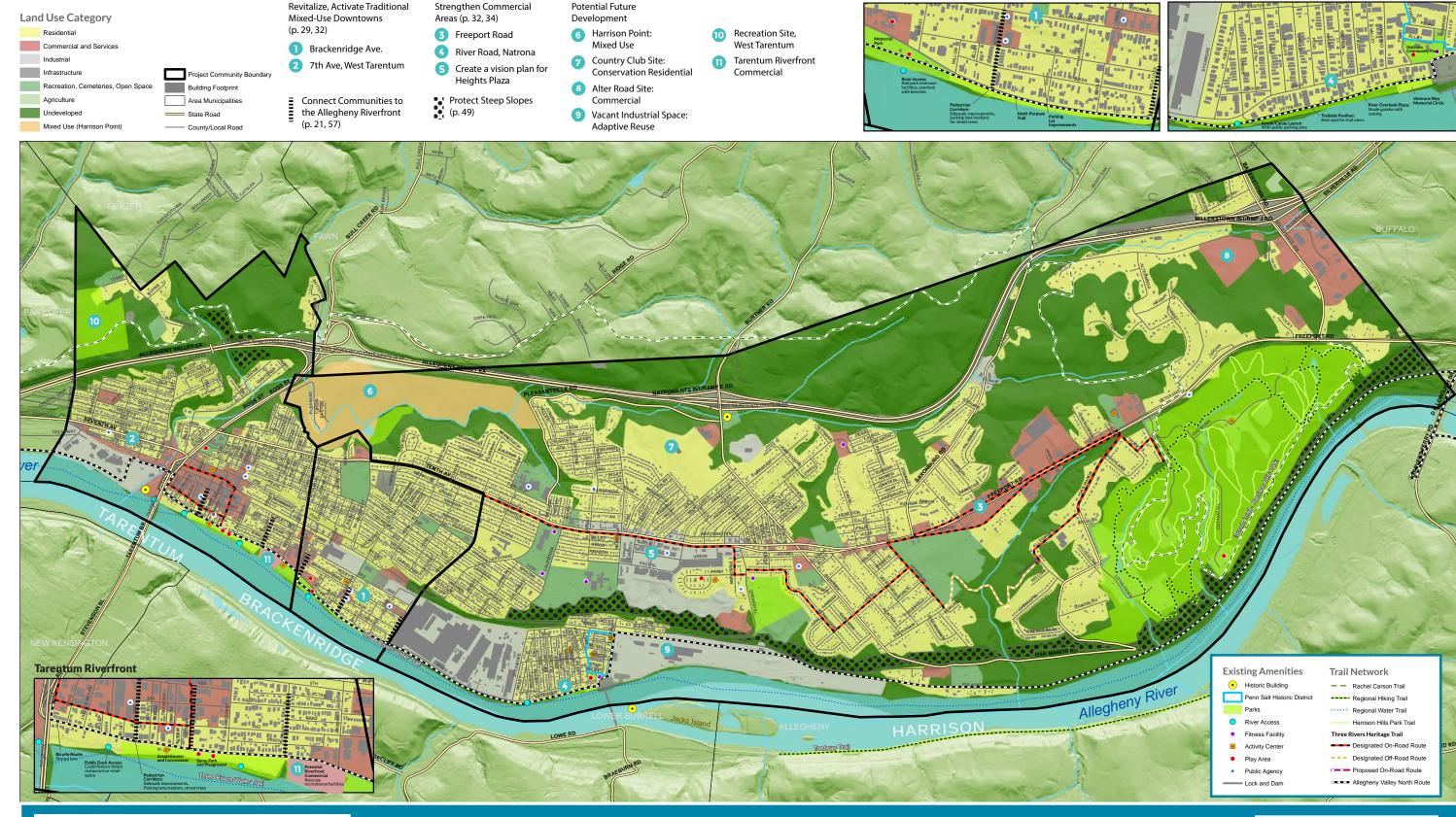
A major influence on any future revisions of zoning regulations is the future land use component of this implementable comprehensive plan. Each community's zoning ordinance should be consistent with the land use vision of the plan. Consequently, the future land use priorities presented herein combine and depict the communities' vision for upholding quality neighborhoods and businesses while specifically supporting redevelopment and reinvestment in targeted areas, such as the traditional commercial areas near the Allegheny River and privately owned industrial or commercial development sites.

Future land use priorities

Overall, the general land use patterns that currently exist will be maintained. Residential neighborhoods will remain intact, existing commercial areas will be strengthened, and industrial areas will continue in place.

Redevelopment and reinvestment strategies presented in previous portions of the comprehensive plan highlight the major proposed changes:

- In all three communities, the future vision includes a new emphasis on blight remediation and infill development in the traditional commercial areas. Some specific use definitions should change to consider new and innovative uses or mixed uses.
- The vision extends through all three communities a "Conservancy" use that is intended to protect existing residential areas, green space, steep slopes and buffers. This land use is consistent with elements of the plan focusing on collaborative planning for trails, parks and recreation and property maintenance.
- Encourage new uses for vacant lots, either residential development or alternative uses such as community gardens.

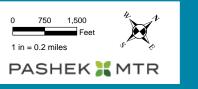


Brackenridge Riverfront

Natrona Riverfront

FUTURE LAND USE AND IMPROVEMENTS

HARRISON-BRACKENRIDGE-TARENTUM Implementable Comprehensive Plan





HARRISON BRACKENRIDGE TARENTUM













COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FORGING OUR FUTURE

APPENDIX 2020



CONTENTS

ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS	3
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	5
BLIGHT & PROPERTY DETERIORATION	23
TRAILS, PARKS AND RECREATION	43
COMMUNITY IDENTITY AND BRANDING	55



To come.

1A: Harrison Township adoption resolution

1B: Brackenridge Borough adoption resolution

1C: Tarentum Borough adoption resolution

1D: Resolutions of support

OCIAL ENTERPRISE, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2A: Faith Community Partners to serve as a Community Development Corporation, with specific emphasis on Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum

2B: FCP Services, Inc.: CDC Advisory Council

2C: PA Department of Community and Economic Development resource guide

2D: Executive summary of the American Planning Association's "Downtown Revitalization in Small and Midsized Cities"

JOINT PRESS RELEASE

DATE: September 1, 2020 CONTACT INFORMATION

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Faith Community Partners' (FCP Services, Inc.) Board of Directors is pleased to announce that FCP has expanded its focus of service in the Upper Allegheny Valley to serve as a **Community Development Corporation (CDC)** with a particular emphasis on Harrison Township, and the Boroughs of Brackenridge, and Tarentum.

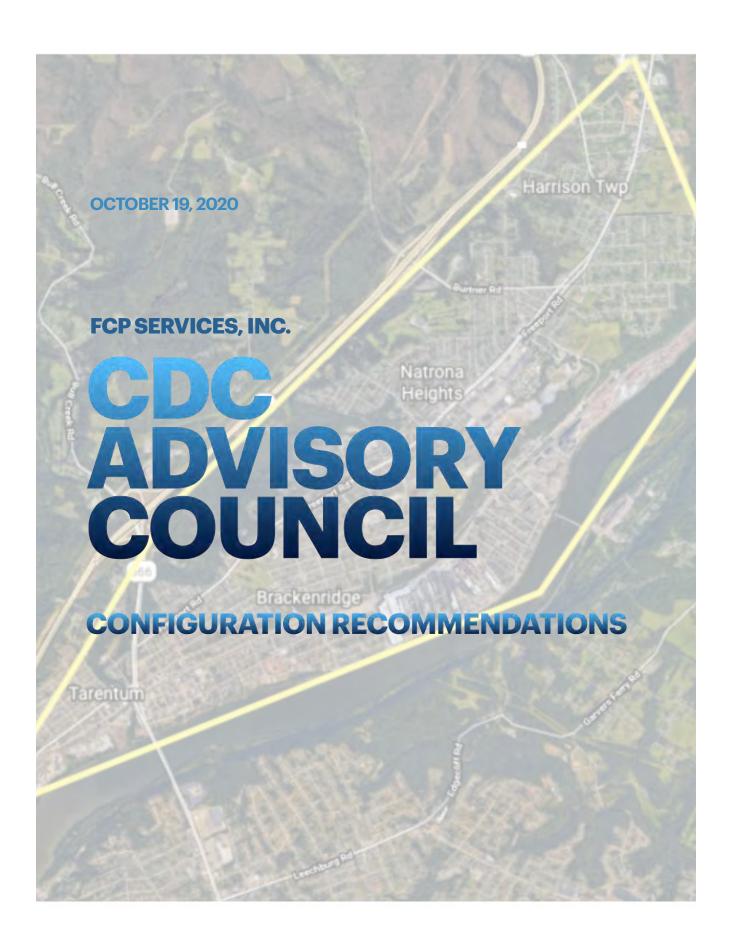
David Rankin, the Executive Director of FCP Services, provides the following statement detailing FCP's expanded scope of work.

"FCP Services Inc. is a community development corporation serving the Upper Allegheny Valley in southwestern Pennsylvania. Our priorities are to initiate, fund, and implement services that enhance the quality of life, the economic viability, and the overall vitality of the three-municipality region including, Tarentum, Brackenridge, and Harrison Township. In so doing, FCP will help to restore hope in residents' lives, develop stronger self-reliance skills, and deliver resources and services they need to improve their quality of life. Emphasis will be placed on remediating blight; restoring and repurposing vacant and underutilized commercial and residential buildings; and building a coalition of community organizations, governmental agencies, businesses, and faith-based organizations that implement the joint planning efforts of the region's three municipalities."

Expanding FCP's scope of work, geographic reach, and service priorities will require additional staff expertise and organizational capacity. Ground Floor Solutions (GFS) has agreed to increase its involvement with FCP Services in the form of "loaned" executive services that focus on the new CDC services. Gerald Driggs, Managing partner of GFS, will act as the director of a CDC division established within FCP Services.

Driggs has more than 35 years of nonprofit management experience and is trained as an organizational development specialist. He was formerly the CEO of the Social Innovation Accelerator that managed a portfolio of nearly 50 nonprofit organizations serving Southwestern PA. His firm Ground Floor Solutions, specializes in working with nonprofit organizations build financial sustainability while increasing the impact of their work in the community.

Driggs indicated "My first priority is to establish an advisory council to help establish the CDC's priorities and direction, especially as it relates to blight reduction and redevelopment in the area." The CDC offices will be in the newly renovated first floor of the Murphy Building at the corner of Corbet St. and E. Fifth Avenue in Tarentum.



Upper Allegheny Valley

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

ORGANIZING FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

he Upper Allegheny Valley Community Development Corporation exists to stimulate positive redevelopment and to improve the quality of life for the residents of Harrison Township, Brackenridge, and Tarentum. It is a catalyst for redevelopment by identifying, acquiring, renovating, and repurposing residential and commercial properties in key areas of its target communities. Reversing years of disinvestment and decline of formally productive sections of these communities is a task that requires innovation and vision as well as the ability to attract new money into these communities. Blight reduction and strategic revitalization are key elements of the CDC's plan to be a catalyst for additional resources to be brought to these communities.

The CDC operates under the umbrella of FCP Services, Inc, a nonprofit 501c(3) organization doing business as Faith Community Partners. It is a coalition of faith based organizations, businesses, community organizations, individuals, and institutions serving our target communities. In its relatively short life, FCP has gained the confidence and support of key funders.

To accomplish the broader goals of serving three communities, FCP chose to expand its focus to include the work of a CDC. The CDC is establishing a broad-based Advisory Council comprised of a cross section of our constituents to maximize its potential for success. This council will advise and recommend the focus and priorities of the CDC for FCP Board approval and implementation. Much of the early CDC priorities will follow recommendations identified in the recently approved Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum (HBT) Comprehensive Plan.



ADVISORY COUNCIL STRUCTURE

The following recommendations are offered as a starting point for forming the CDC Advisory Council. Based on the priorities listed above, it is important to have a cross section of individuals and organizations represent on the Advisory Council.

These recommendations will be modified and presented in a draft form to the FCP Board of Directors for approval at its next meeting (October 23, 2021).

- **1.** All seats on the Advisory Council will be filled by representatives of the following organizational designations based on the allocations of seats on the attached chart.
- 2. The Advisory Council will elect a Chairperson, Secretary, and Vice Chairperson from its membership. The Chairperson of the Advisory Council will have a seat on the FCP Board of Directors. The Council will have a maximum of 19 members.
- 3. The initial group of Advisory Council members will be selected by the CDC Staff and approved by the FCP Board of Directors for 2 and 3 year terms. See attached chart for details of terms assigned to each seat on the Advisory Council.
- **4.** In addition to invitations being extended by the CDC staff, Council members will be recruited from the various organizational designations based on each organization's preference.
- **5.** The CDC staff will submit an initial set of priorities for the Council to consider for the first year of operations. In each subsequent year, the Council will determine its priorities and will generate a plan to obtain operational and project funding.
- **6.** The council will meet a minimum of six times per year.
- **7.** CDC offices will be established and maintained at the Murphy Building in Tarentum and transferred to *The Depot* upon its completion.
- **8.** The Advisory Council will submit an annual plan and budget to the FCP Board of Directors for review and approval.

CDC ADVISORY COUNCIL







Configuration

Organizational Type	Number of Seats	Suggested Terms (Years)	
Municipalities			NOTES
Harrison Township	1	2	provide detailed guidelines for their selection
Brackenridge Borough	1	2	provide detailed guidelines for their selection
Tarentum Borough	1	2	provide detailed guidelines for their selection
Area Businesses	3	3	start-up; medium size; large
Nonprofit Organizations	3	3	Natrona Comes Together; BIG, Allegheny Family Services North, Alle-Kiski Health foundation
Faith Based Organizations	2	3	First Preby Tarentum,AVAC,
Highlands School District	1	2	provide detailed guidelines for their selection
Allegheny Valley Hospital	1	2	provide detailed guidelines for their selection
Grass Roots Organizations	2	2	Highlands Partnership Network, Taretnum Action Committee,
At Large Members	4	3	Realtor; Developer;Banker; Activist; Commercial landlord, others
TOTAL Members	19		

CDC Staff

First Name	Last Name	Phone	Email	Position	Notes
Gerald	Driggs	412.680.1602	gerald@groundfloor.solutions	CDC Director	
David	Rankin	724.882.2185	DavidRankinFCP@gmail.com	FCP Exec. Dir	

CDC MISSION

The Upper Allegheny Valley Community Development Corporation exists to stimulate positive redevelopment and to improve the quality of life for the residents of Harrison Township, Brackenridge, and Tarentum.

CDC PRIORITIES

- 1. Remediate blight.
- 2. Restore and repurpose vacant and underutilized commercial and residential properties.
- 3. Build a coalition of organizations to implement the planning efforts of Harrison, Brackenridge, and Tarentum.

CDC ADVISORY COUNCIL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Become familiar with the content of the HBT Comprehensive Plan.
- 2. Bring ideas for projects based on the actions outlined in the Comprehensive Plan and input from HBT commissions and boards.
- 3. In conjunction with CDC leadership, participate in the formulation of a 5-year project plan with targeted funding opportunities.
- 4. Bring ideas to the CDC from constituencies they represent.
- 5. Update government representatives and community members of the actions of the CDC.
- 6. Yearly, assist in the formulation of priorities and generation of a plan to operationalize and fund projects.
- 7. Submit an annual plan and budget to the FCP Board of Directors for review and approval.
- 8. Continuously bring networking and funding opportunities to the Advisory Council.

COMMUNITY & LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES.



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania | Tom Wolf, Governor PA Department of Community & Economic Development | Dennis M. Davin, Secretary | dced.pa.gov

COMMUNITY & LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

WORK SMART. LIVE HAPPY.

Pennsylvanians are innovators, from Ben Franklin through the talent behind today's robotics and health sciences startups. The global economy demands fast-paced innovation at all levels, and PA is getting the job done—from pioneering the latest technological and scientific advances to developing collaborative support networks for early-stage entrepreneurs, to pursuing smart, creative approaches to community development and workforce training.

Pennsylvania is dedicated to assisting communities that provide both a vibrant lifestyle and fulfilling, well-paying jobs through targeted investments that support long-term sustainability. Our available programs, which offer various types of funding, are listed below. Please visit **dced.pa.gov/programs** for the most recent list of active funding opportunities.

APPLY

You can apply for most department program funding online through our easy-to-use Single Application for Assistance. Please review the guidelines for each program to verify if any addenda or supplements are required with the application. Apply today at **dced.pa.gov/single.**

Visit dced.pa.gov/programs

The programs listed are regularly evolving. For the most up-to-date information, visit dced.pa.gov/programs.

NEED HELP?

Call **866.466.3972** or visi**ticed.pa.gov/contact-us.** We're happy to answer any questions regarding our programs or website. If you're not sure whether you need to complete the Single Application, please give us a call! We'll help you make sure you're on the right track.

	FUNDING TYPE					FUNDING APPLICANTS & BENEFICIARIES			
Program Title	Grant	Loan	Loan Guarantee	Tax Credit	Bonds	Business	Community/ Nonprofit	Local Governments	Program Website dced.pa.gov
Abandoned Mine Drainage Abatement and Treatment Program (AMDATP) – Act 13	X					×	×	×	/amdatp
Act 47	X	X						X	/act47
Alternative and Clean Energy Program (ACE)	X	X	X			X	X	X	/ace
Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC)	X						X		/arc
Baseline Water Quality Data Program – Act 13	X					×	×	×	/bwqdp
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	X						*	X	/cdbg
Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)	X						×	×	/csbg
Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC)				X		×	×		/eitc
Emergency Solutions Grant (formerly Emergency Shelter Grant) (ESG)	X						*	X	/esg

	FUNDING TYPE			FUNDING APPLICANTS & BENEFICIARIES					
Program Title	Grant	Loan	Loan Guarantee	Tax Credit	Bonds	Business	Community/ Nonprofit	Local Governments	Program Website dced.pa.gov
Flood Mitigation Program (FMP) – Act 13	×					×.	×	×	/fmp
Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) – Act 13	X					X	×	×	/gtrp
High Performance Building Program (HPB)	X	X	×			X	×		/hpb
HOME	X	X					× *	X	/home
Industrial Sites Reuse Program (ISRP)	X	X				X	×	X	/isr
Keystone Communities Program (KCP)	X						X	X	/kcp
Local Government Capital Project Loan Program (LGCPL)		X						×	/lgcpl
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Fayette County	X						×	×	/Isafayette
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Northampton & Lehigh Counties	•							•	/Isalehigh
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Luzerne County	•						•	•	/Isaluzerne
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Monroe County	X						X	×	/Isamonroe
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Montgomery County	X						X	×	/Isamontgomery
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Philadelphia	•						•	•	/Isaphilly
Local Share Account Fund (LSA – Gaming Funds) Washington County	X						×	×	/Isawashington
Marketing to Attract Tourists	×						×		/marketing-tourists
Municipal Assistance Program (MAP)	X						X	X	/map
Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP)				X		X	×		/nap
Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program (OSTC)				X		X	X		/ostc
Orphan or Abandoned Well Plugging Program (OAWP) - Act 13	X					X	X	×	/oawp
PA Military Community Enhancement Commission (PMCEC)	X					X	X	X	/pmcpc-ldg
Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP)	X/					X	X		/prep
PEDFA Tax Exempt Bond Program					X	X	X		/pedfa-tax- exempt-bond
PEDFA Taxable Bond Program					X	X	X		/pedfa-taxable- bond
Pennsylvania Community Development Bank Loan Program (PCD Bank)		X				×	×		/pcdbank
Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank (PIB) (PA Dept of Transp Program)		\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\\				X	×	X	/pib

^{*} Must apply through Local Government

	FUNDING TYPE					FUNDING APPLICANTS & BENEFICIARIES			
Program Title	Grant	Loan	Loan Guarantee	Tax Credit	Bonds	Business	Community/ Nonprofit	Local Governments	Program Website dced.pa.gov
Pipeline Investment Program (PIPE)	X					X	×	X	/pip
Section 108 Program			X			X		X	/section-108
Strategic Management Planning Program (STMP)	X							X	/stmp
Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Guarantee Program			X		X			X	/tif
Tourism Accredited Zoos Program	X						X		/zoos
Watershed Restoration and Protection Program (WRPP) – Act 13	X					X	X	X	/wrpp
Weatherization Assistance Program (WX)	X						X		/wx

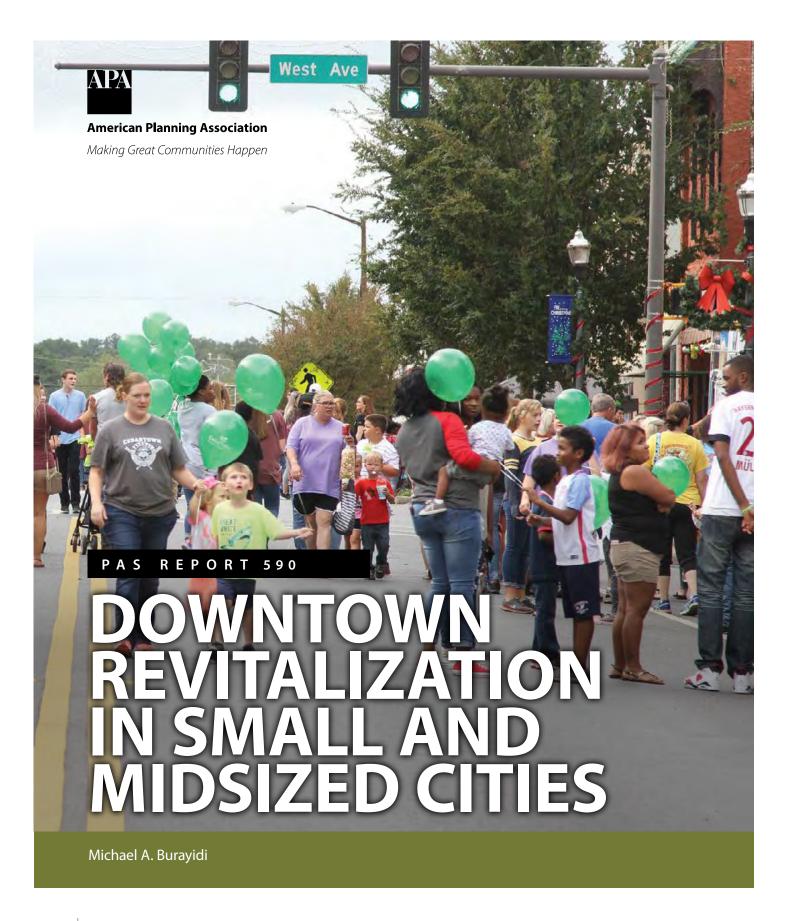
STAY IN TOUCH

At the PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), we encourage the shared prosperity of all Pennsylvanians by supporting good stewardship and sustainable development initiatives across our state. Driven by the needs of our citizens, we act as advisors and advocates to provide strategic technical assistance, training, and financial resources to help our communities and industries flourish.

For the latest department news and resources, remember to sign-up for our newsletter, join the Keystone Allies at **dced.pa.gov/allies** and follow us on social media on Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube.







EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Downtowns are more than retail, commercial, service, and work centers. They are the symbolic centers of cities and are unifying forces for their communities. These are the reasons cities across the country are committing resources, both financial and human, to bring them back to economic health.

Civic leaders have a renewed commitment to downtowns. Revitalizing downtowns in small and midsized cities is particularly challenging because these cities have fewer resources and less capacity to address needed responses—but they have positive attributes and assets too. These include cultural and institutional assets, relatively low costs of living, and local support for downtowns and efforts to revitalize them. The evidence from the literature shows that downtowns of smaller cities are different environments than those of large cities, face different challenges, have different assets, and proffer distinct attributes for their revitalization. This calls for redevelopment strategies that are tailored to the specific needs and conditions of these communities.

Several key points relating to downtown revitalization in small and midsized cities emerge from the numerous case studies that are discussed in this report. The main findings are: (1) cities need to have a long-term vision in the revitalization of their downtown; (2) city staff play a critical role in downtown revitalization; (3) building public-private partnerships is essential to the effectiveness of downtown revitalization; (4) cities need to be patient and commit to a long-term process to see results; (5) mixed use development should be prioritized in downtown development projects; (6) quality placemaking enhances the downtown environment and helps draw people to the city center; and (7) each city must identify and build on the assets of its downtown.

identify and build on the assets of its downtown.

This PAS report builds on previous work on the subject, Downtown Planning for Smaller and Midsized Communities (Walker 2009). That book provides guidance to civic leaders and downtown organizations on the intricacies of planning for the redevelopment of downtowns in smaller and midsized cities; it provides a step-by-step approach to developing a downtown plan and explores the issues that need to be considered in the preparation of the plan. This report is different. It is evidence-based, and digs deeper into strategies that cities have implemented and their effectiveness in the revitalization of a downtown. This report is written primarily for municipal planners and those engaged in the revitalization of downtowns in the United States. It provides exemplary strategies that have proved successful in transforming the downtowns

of small and midsized cities and discusses the conditions that make them appropriate for use under each situation. Thus, the report is a resource that urban planners can turn to in selecting and adapting strategies that may be applicable to their own communities. But every community is different in its history, physical morphology, economic conditions, and political climate. The exemplary strategies discussed in this report are not meant to be formulas to be replicated without critical assessment of their suitability to each locality.

The sample communities used in this report are all cities with populations of fewer than 250,000 that self-identify as small or midsized cities, either because of the population size or the character of the community.

DIVERSIFYING AND GROWING DOWNTOWN'S ECONOMY

Many downtowns continue to struggle with boarded-up buildings, crumbling infrastructure, and high vacancy rates. One objective of local governments is to revive downtown economies by getting businesses back into vacant spaces, attracting talent, increasing business investment, and luring customers back to spend money in the downtown.

Downtown economies began to fray by the mid-20th century as they faced stiffer competition from suburban malls. The first knee-jerk response to the decentralization of economic activity away from the downtown was to remake downtowns like the suburban malls, so they could more effectively compete with them for business. But across the country, downtown shopping malls and pedestrian malls failed despite providing similar amenities as their suburban competitors.

When it became clear that Main Street could not compete on equal terms with the suburban malls, civic leaders sought to recast downtowns as alternative retail venues that complemented, but did not compete with, the malls. This led to the development of a suite of economic development programs with the goal of making downtown a shopping destination that differed from the experience shoppers enjoyed in the suburban mall.

⁴ AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION www.planning.org

Successful revitalization strategies built on the positive assets of downtowns and addressed the challenges of doing business downtown. These strategies sought to encourage local businesses, restaurants, and retail to locate in and populate downtown vacant spaces and to make these the economic base for the downtown.

As part of this approach, cities provide economic incentive programs to businesses to decrease the cost of business location, to help decrease investment risks, and to incentivize business location in the downtown. Such incentives include tax increment financing (TIF), facade grant programs, the formation of business improvement districts (BIDs), fee waivers, and rent assistance programs. Besides addressing financing and location costs, community boosters also need to attend to the professional and business development needs of downtown businesses. The most prevalent of these strategies are mentorship and business training programs.

Gaining ascendancy in the last couple of decades, the regenerative approach uses strategies including entrepreneurial centers, business incubators, makers hubs, and innovation clusters. The primary goal is to nurture the talents that reside in the community itself. A secondary goal is to attract new talent from outside the community to create and start new businesses.

In deciding on the types of businesses that are needed in a city's downtown, it is often necessary to do market research. A sophisticated market analysis requires the use of consultants who are specialized in the field, but a rudimentary market assessment can be done in-house to help planners understand the local economy and the types of businesses that a downtown and the community may need to attract or incentivize.

One such example is a retail and service business mix analysis. This tool offers a snapshot of street-level business activity to stimulate ideas about business expansion and recruitment and provides the baseline information for a more detailed and comprehensive analysis of the downtown and the community's economy. Another way to gauge a downtown's market potential is through retail gap analysis. This analysis enables a community to identify the market potential for different businesses by revealing the divergence between demand and supply for goods and services in the community.

DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING

Physical form is important to the perception and experience of a downtown. Because physical elements give people the

first impression about the downtown's health, civic leaders often begin downtown redevelopment efforts with modifications to the physical environment. Because these changes are tangible and visual, they communicate to all that a city is starting to pay attention to its downtown.

Placemaking is the art of transforming public space into quality places. Downtown placemaking is not just about improving aesthetics; it is also concerned with improving the function of a downtown, such as making it more pedestrian friendly or enhancing traffic flow and parking. Placemaking is recognized not just for its intrinsic value, but also because it can be a tool for economic development by helping attract and keep talent in a community. Good placemaking helps to create a strong bond between people and the places in which they live, work, shop, or play. It breeds a sense of pride and belonging.

There are four types of placemaking. Standard placemaking focuses on improving public places through modifications to the physical environment and privately owned elements of the built environment that impact the perception of public space. Strategic placemaking is used as an instrument for the achievement of a specific goal, such as economic development, talent attraction, or cultural enhancement. Creative placemaking uses the arts and cultural activities to rejuvenate public spaces. Tactical placemaking, sometimes referred to as tactical urbanism, is a temporary transformation of public space through experimentation to observe the benefits associated with the modifications and to generate new ideas for improving public spaces.

Placemaking may be initiated in a community by a nonprofit organization, a city's leadership, the planning commission, a downtown development authority, or a civic organization. A critical component of placemaking is a civic engagement process that involves the citizens of the community in generating ideas for the use of the public space. Cities can pursue placemaking through a structured and formal process by including it as part of a downtown plan, the comprehensive plan, or the capital improvement plan. Another approach is to pursue placemaking as an ad hoc and incremental strategy for improving public spaces without a grand plan. This is more likely to take the form of strategic placemaking, with a goal to accomplishing a given end. Recent developments have also hinted at the importance and success of using tactical urbanism to transform the urban environment and to learn of possible options that cities can use to enhance public spaces. These small, low-cost, and incremental approaches can be part of larger placemaking transformations in a city.

There are a number of tactics that are often used by cities across the country for public space improvement. These include streetscaping projects, gateway enhancement, public art, the provision of public gathering places and destination points, and landscaping.

DOWNTOWN HOUSING

Since the turn of the 21st century, there has been a resurgence in downtown living. This dramatic turnaround is attributable to two factors: an improving economy and changing demographics. Young professionals and the baby boomer population group are pre-children and post-retirement households, respectively, for whom large houses and yards, typical of the suburbs, are not needed. These two demographic groups are attracted to downtown living. Downtown living is also attractive to artists who prefer live-work units that enable them to work from home, students, and downtown workers.

Favorable demographic trends are necessary but not sufficient for increasing downtown's residential population. Two conditions must also prevail to make downtown living a reality: the downtown must provide an environment in which people want to live, and there must be an investment motive for home ownership downtown. A third important factor is that downtown housing should be profitable to real estate developers. Developers take the initial risk of building in the downtown, and will not do so if they perceive the return on investment (ROI) downtown to be lower than elsewhere in the city or that of alternative investment opportunities.

While local governments cannot create demand for downtown housing, they can affect the supply side of the equation by decreasing development costs to the private sector through incentives and a supportive regulatory environment. Such government actions can assist in bringing the cost of providing downtown housing into balance with demand and establish a viable housing market for developers. This is particularly the case where market conditions are not yet strong enough to support development activity. Local government support may also be necessary to incentivize affordable housing. Such strategies include offering gap funding programs, modifying zoning ordinances to make them supportive of housing development, and providing incentives to decrease housing development costs to developers. In addition to regulatory tools, local governments can also deploy economic incentives to support the development of downtown housing, particularly in high-cost housing markets in need of affordable housing. Such

strategies may include the use of density bonuses, fee waiv ers, and property tax credits.

The public sector can also facilitate the provision of downtown housing and more efficient decision making by making information available to private and nonprofit housing providers through a housing market assessment. While sophisticated housing market analysis requires the use of consultants specialized in such areas, city staff can do a preliminary assessment of the housing market conditions as a prelude to the more detailed analysis that can then be undertaken by the consultants. An assessment of the downtown housing market is aimed at identifying the potential demand and supply for housing to give guidance to developers on the type of housing that is feasible and profitable.

Cities must support the private sector to provide housing in the downtown, but even with available housing, people must find the downtown attractive as a place to live. An added responsibility of civic leaders then is to provide the amenities that will attract residents to choose downtown living over the suburbs. Cities that are successful in attracting and keeping young professionals and baby boomers are the ones that provide the lifestyles they seek, extolling "quality of place" rather than "quality of work" values. These values should be reflected in downtown urban environments to attract these population cohorts.

Additionally, the downtown should be perceived as a safe place. It should be designed for human-scale activities, and have the amenities that people need. As part of the downtown redevelopment process, cities should track crime rates and implement programs that improve the safety of their downtowns. In addition to programs that put safety officers on the street, the design of the physical form also plays an integral part in downtown safety.

DOWNTOWNS AS CIVIC, CULTURAL, AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTERS

Downtowns have traditionally been the sites where community civic, cultural, and entertainment amenities are located. Downtown is also where community heritage and cultural pride is celebrated. Successful downtowns attract and retain museums, sports stadiums, theaters, and performing arts centers, and capitalize on the location of civic buildings to ensure they enhance their communities.

Events have become a relatively low-cost approach for cities to showcase their heritage resources, to reintroduce people to downtown, and to increase foot traffic for down-

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town businesses. Art walks, outdoor performances, concerts, and film festivals are some of the events that can recurrently take place downtown. The scheduling and holding of these events require a collaboration of city staff, downtown development organizations, and event planners to pull off. City staff and downtown development organizations also work in concert with the private sector to raise funds, advertise, and organize the downtown events.

Civic, cultural, and entertainment uses are of several types: civic buildings that provide services to the public, such as city and county offices and courthouses; places of contemplation, such as churches, libraries, museums, and arts centers; congregational spaces and facilities that bring the community together, such as convention and conference centers, sports stadiums, concert halls, and theaters; and heritage sites and buildings, such as the historic commercial buildings, historic military forts, and historic homes that are the embodiment of a community's history. In many ways, these amenities are the qualities that distinguish a downtown from its competition and make it an attraction for heritage and leisure tourists.

Recognizing the significance of civic and cultural resources to a city's history and its development, many are turning to these amenities as linchpins in the redevelopment of their downtowns, a trend that may be appropriately termed the cultural turn in downtown development. In line with this trend, a growing strategy for redeveloping downtowns across the country is the designation of cultural districts. A cultural or heritage district acknowledges the concentration of a city's civic and cultural assets in its downtown and the utilization of the symbiotic relationships between them for the downtown's development.

Once a cultural district is designated, city planners and downtown revitalization specialists lead the effort to prepare and implement the cultural district enhancement plan. Like other sector or special area plans, such a cultural or heritage district plan may be a part of the overall downtown redevelopment plan or a stand-alone plan that complements the downtown plan. Staff planners, elected officials, the public, and the private sector should all be engaged in discussions that lead to the identification of the types of amenities and the prioritization of funding for the implementation of a cultural plan. Planners can play a role in engaging the public and political leadership, in organizing public forums to discuss and get the public's input in the decision-making process, and in writing persuasive memos to educate and convince decision makers about the contribution of and location of these amenities in the downtown.

ORGANIZING AND MANAGING DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

Civic leadership is important to the revitalization of downtowns in both large and small cities. It takes visionary leadership, commitment, and organizational prowess to bring resources together and mobilize them to effect change. This leadership may emanate from either the public or private sector, it may be an individual or group of people, or it may be an organization with passion for the development of the downtown. In the end, it is people that make the difference.

The public sector also plays a central role in the redevelopment of the downtown. But there must also be a recognition that downtown revitalization will not succeed without buy-in from the private sector. A city, through its agencies and department staff, may provide the incentives and inducements for downtown redevelopment, but the private sector must see an economic logic for investing in the downtown for revitalization to succeed. Without private-sector commitment, public stimulus alone will have limited impact. Hence, successful revitalization programs, even when they begin with the public sector, have quickly brought the private sector on board as partners in the redevelopment of the downtown.

Downtown revitalization often starts heuristically without a plan. In most cases, a city embarks on one or a few downtown projects or programs in response to an identified problem. Eventually, however, cities recognize that the disparate projects in the downtown need some cohesiveness. Discussions among downtown stakeholders, planning staff, and the community development department eventually lead to a decision to prepare a downtown revitalization plan that provides a clear and unified vision for the improvement of the district. A city may prepare a downtown plan as an element of its comprehensive plan or as a stand-alone plan prepared specifically for the downtown's redevelopment.

No single organizational structure exists for the delivery of downtown redevelopment among cities with reputations for the successful revitalization of their downtowns. The approach adopted by a city is dependent on the institutional culture of the community. Downtown redevelopment plan implementation or revitalization efforts may be led by several types of formal organizations. These include city agencies, downtown development authorities, business improvement districts, or both a business improvement district and a downtown development authority.

The process and institutional framework established for revitalizing a downtown varies from one community to the other and depends on the institutional traditions of each

community. Each community should evaluate its situation, determine how well the institutional relationships work to its benefit, and adopt the most appropriate organizational structure for its needs. What is common to all is that a downtown redevelopment plan is often the end result of multiple uncoordinated efforts at downtown revitalization. The plan knits together all the projects that are being undertaken by the different stakeholders in the downtown. Planning staff play an important role in the process by helping crystalize ideas of civic leaders, organize meetings, identify and evaluate alternative options, explore funding sources, and, where necessary, sell the ideas to the public, planning commission, and city council.

ASSESSING PROGRESS AND MEASURING SUCCESS

Assessing the impact of downtown revitalization programs and projects is the most underdeveloped aspect of the downtown revitalization process. Few cities regularly monitor and report the outcomes of their plans, and even fewer provide comprehensive evaluations of plan outcomes. Without a documentation of impacts, it becomes more difficult for elected officials and staff planners to justify the continued expenditure of public funds in the downtown. This is particularly challenging when investors and property owners in other parts of the city argue for parity in municipal spending.

Cities need to routinely monitor and assess conditions in their downtowns to ascertain their health and to determine if redevelopment programs are working. Ideally, this should be done as part of a routine annual reporting by the entity leading downtown revitalization efforts. When a city agency leads downtown development efforts, this responsibility falls on planning staff or the community development department. Where there is a downtown development agency or business improvement district outside city government, this responsibility lies with the agency's staff.

The assessment process works best if development agencies establish goals and benchmark indicators as part of downtown redevelopment plans. This makes it easier to measure progress against the established goals. Civic leaders can use measurable indicators to gauge a downtown's health. When tracked over time, these metrics provide information about progress in the achievement of the downtown goals and indicate where more effort needs to be directed. This assists the community in prioritizing its budget and in fine-tuning implementation strategies. Some indicators for

measuring conditions in downtowns may be quantitative in nature, while others are more perceptual.

Clear and measurable ways for communities to ascertain how well their redevelopment strategies are working address the image of the downtown (positive media reports on downtown); demographics (proportion of city's population residing downtown, demographic diversity, population density, volunteerism); housing, property values, and vacancy rates (number and proportion of housing units downtown, change in assessed values of downtown property, vacancy rates); economy (business starts, numbers of downtown businesses and employees, sales volumes, business turnover rates, business longevity, hours of operation, tax base growth, income growth, regulation of on-street parking, redevelopment grant activity); civic and cultural amenities (proportion of civic and cultural amenities downtown, public gathering spaces, events); and design and land use (land-use mix, pedestrian and bike friendliness, transit options).

DIAGNOSING DOWNTOWN CHALLENGES AND TAKING ACTION

Downtown is the heart of the city. Downtowns lost their optimum lifeblood functions to the city for decades because civic leaders did not pay enough attention to their critical roles in the health of cities. Perhaps the malfunction was due to an erroneous belief that other body organs and appendages could perform just as well in maintaining a healthy body. That may explain why some cities abandoned the downtown and sought new centers in the suburbs. Strip commercial centers and faux downtowns were created as a result. But lacking the natural DNA of the body, these "centers" have had to be supported with medication to prevent rejection and so have become even more expensive to maintain.

Thankfully, there is a growing realization among civic leaders that the natural heart of the city can only be abandoned at the peril of death. In medicine, repairing the natural heart requires a careful diagnosis of the problem that caused the heart failure in the first place. Some cities have done this successfully and their treatment plans have regained the heart's function. These are the cities whose stories have been narrated in this report. Other cities are now just beginning to diagnose the cause of the problem and to begin a treatment regimen. However, like with the physiology of the body, generic prescriptions will not do. To be effective, we need to fully understand and sequence the genotype of each body. That way we can devise prescription and treatment plans that

⁸ AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION www.planning.org

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION IN SMALL AND MIDSIZED CITIES PAS 590, EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

are specific to each person. In the same way, planners and civic leaders must carefully evaluate the current status of their downtowns and prescribe context-appropriate interventions that build on existing assets to overcome challenges. Herein lies the direction for resuscitating downtowns, the natural hearts of cities

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3A: Property condition inventory Quick Start guide

3B: Property condition inventory protocols

Property Conditions Quick Start Guide

1. Log into Google Drive (in mobile app or online)

- a. Email: HBT.CDC@gmail.com
- b. Password: letsmap2020

2. Locate Spreadsheet file for community location you will be evaluating

- a. In folders by townships and labeled by location
- b. PDF maps in folder show spreadsheet evaluation areas

3. Evaluating Properties

- a. Properties preloaded into spreadsheet have data in four columns already filled in
 - i. Parcel#
 - ii. Full Address
 - iii. Municipality
 - iv. Coordinates
- b. Blank Columns will need to be filled out for evaluations

i. Residential or Commercial column

- 1. Fill with R for residential, C for commercial, and C/R for mixed use properties
- 2. Commercial is anything related to business activity, residential are properties with dwellings, mixed use properties have both residential and commercial uses on the same site
- 3. Vacant lots that do not have an apparent use should be designated based on adjacent property uses, if still unclear mark as C/R

ii. Occupancy Status rating

- 1. Assign number rating based on rating scale
- 2. The property appears to be abandoned and unfit for human habitation
 - a. Strongly Agree- 20, Agree- 10, Borderline- 5, Disagree- 2, Strongly Disagree- 0

iii. Condition of Building rating

- 1. Assign number based on rating scale
- 2. Evidence of significant structural disrepair is visible (i.e. broken or missing windows, fire damage, collapsing sections of building, etc.)
 - a. Strongly Agree- 20, Agree- 10, Borderline- 5, Disagree- 2, Strongly Disagree- 0

iv. Condition of Property rating

- 1. Assign number based on rating scale
- 2. Evidence that the property is not being maintained is clearly visible (i.e. debris, trash, tall weeds, vermin, etc.)
 - a. Strongly Agree- 20, Agree- 10, Borderline- 5, Disagree- 2, Strongly Disagree- 0

v. Demolition Status

- 1. Assign number based on rating scale
- 2. Building has been demolished or is officially condemned and slated for demolition
 - a. Agree- Demo/Condemned 100, Disagree- 0

vi. Property Rating

1. Add together the 4 rating columns (Occupancy Status, Condition of Building, Condition of Property, Demolition Status)

- 2. Sum should be between 0 and 60 or 100
- 3. Totaling the ratings can be done in the field or at a later time on a computer

vii. Property Color Code

- 1. Color code determined by property rating
- 2. Gray demo/condemned/vacant- 100, Red blighted- 20-60, Yellow in trouble- 5-19, Green stable- 0-4
- 3. The data for these cells should be copied and pasted to have consistent formatting that is needed for mapping
- 4. This can be done in the field or at a later time on a computer

viii. Notes

- 1. Include any comments on the property that you feel is important to note
- c. Mark where you left off in the spreadsheet by highlighting the cells for the next set of properties to evaluate in blue

Adding a Property to the Spreadsheet in the field

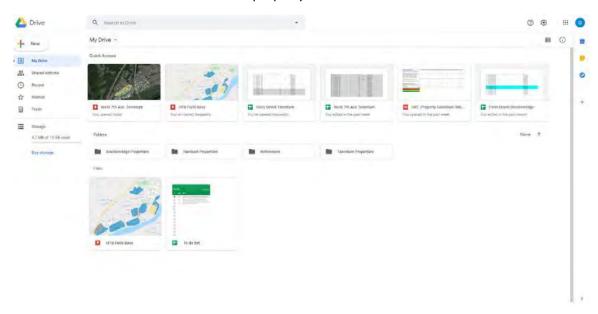
- 1. If a property or address is not preloaded into the spreadsheet **insert a new row** into the spreadsheet between adjacent property numbers
- 2. In this case you will have to **fill in all the column fields**
 - a. Locate the **parcel number** by searching the address on the Allegheny County GIS Viewer website
 - b. Fill in the **full address** of the property, using the same format as the existing address fields
 - c. Indicate which municipality the property is in (Tarentum, Harrison, or Brackenridge)
 - d. Fill out the next 8 columns the same as all the other property evaluations (Residential or Commercial, Occupancy Status, Condition of Building, Condition of Property, Demolition Status, Property Rating, Property Color Code, Notes)
 - e. Determine coordinates for the property through Google Maps (app or online)
 - i. Search Google Maps by the property address
 - ii. Click on the property (not the placemark pin)
 - iii. A popup box should appear with an image, the property address, and in gray text the coordinates
 - iv. Copy coordinates into spreadsheet
 - IMPORTANT! The coordinates from Google are formatted as Latitude, Longitude, but the spreadsheet coordinates are LONGITUDE LATITUDE
 - 2. You will need to reverse the order of the coordinates and use just a space to separate the numbers, with no comma
 - 3. Make sure the negative sign remains in front of the Longitude coordinate
 - 4. The formatting for the coordinates needs to match the existing formatting or the properties will not be mapped correctly with the rest of the data. The number of decimal digits can vary.

For more detailed instructions and some common troubleshooting see the full instructions document saved in the Google Drive.

HARRISON BRACKENRIDGE TARENTUM

PROPERTY CONDITION EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. The files for the property condition evaluations are located in the community Google Drive account
 - a. Account email address: HBT.CDC@gmail.com
 - b. Account password: letsmap2020
 - c. Google Drive can be accessed online or through an app available for all mobile devices and tablets
 - d. The community Google Drive includes instructions, spreadsheets for evaluations, maps, and other resources for the property condition evaluations



2. Spreadsheets for evaluations are compiled by location

- Locate spreadsheet that corresponds with the location you will be evaluating
 - For reference on the locations the Google Drive includes a PDF map for each spreadsheet area



3. Spreadsheet Organization

- a. Each spreadsheet includes 12 columns
 - i. Parcel#
 - ii. Full Address
 - iii. Municipality
 - iv. Residential or Commercial
 - v. Occupancy Status
 - vi. Condition of Building
 - vii. Condition of Property
 - viii. Demolition Status
 - ix. Property Rating
 - x. Property Color Code
 - xi. Notes
 - xii. Coordinates
- b. Spreadsheets are organized by Parcel Number
- c. Each row is an individual address for the parcels in the location, the addresses have been set up to not have duplicates

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AL 1204-0-69	5572 390 AVE. BRÁCKENRIDGE, PA. 55014	BRADIEWROOD 2		. 6	5	8	7 Green (5-4)		-79 73623299453036 40.50548472157862
E 1224-0-79	1070 SAD THE BRACKENAIDSE, FA, 15014	BAICKEVADGE R		0	0	200	100 Gray (120)	Visitant Lot - seed for parking	-79 75667516378776 40 636458190517284
2 1224 0 71	1966 SRO AFE, BRACKENHOGE, NA. 25034	STACKEVAROGE TI	1	2	5	- 0	7 Yeston (\$ 15)		79 79605812971731 40 606431650903765
76 1234-0-72	1064 510 AVE BRADDENINGS, RA, 19014	STADENBULE IS	70	8	10	.0	85 RH (2060)	Sign at door - unaccupied	19.7970E71945577.40.60657890404438
3 12240-73	1000 DRD AVE, DRACKENRIDGE, PA, 55014	SHADITHADGE R		10	5	0	35 Yellow (5-19)		-79 73721906771231 41.60K35054906789
T 12344-127	BSB BRACKEURIOGE AVE BRACKEMATIGE PA, 15014	BRADIEWROSE A		0	0	0	0 Green (0-4)		-79.741.96802761578.41.60886699085676
E 1228#-128	BEZ BRACKENRIOGE AVE BRACKENRIOGE PA 1501A	ERACKENROGE R		6	0	6	0 Green (0-0)		-79 74166769787863 40 60674414974955
10 12394-190	686 STATES WITH SINGLE PA 15014	STALIFFRENCE V	1	ú	2	1	TOMM (NE)		19 /416990636302 40 60404813993952
S 12344-135	BY SHADILARIDGE NVL SHADILARIDGE PA 15014	SHADONROUL R	1.2	5	- 2	- 0	7 (810x (5-05)		-79.74172947315315.40.654507584887734
N 3234F-136	BET BRADIENRIGGE N/E BRADIENRIGGE PA. 15014	SALCIENAIGUE X	9	5	1		7 Yellow (5-19)		-79 741780675710058 40 6042672084254E
II 1224-F-139	REF BRACKFIRROSE N/E BRUCKFIRROSE RIC 15014	SKORROGE 2		2		6	2 Green (0-4)		-79 701917037670035 00 63625660662781
E 1234 F-141	BEI BRACKENBINGE BUF BRACKENBINGE FA. 15014	BMANEWOOD IS		6		0	0 Green (0.4)		-79 74106177118608 40 534189034773065
□ (2)M-142	SH HALL VINSING BY TRACIFORDS, PA 15/14	SALVENIUS X		9	9	1	0. Green (0-4)		-79.7421976.Vi9415.47.974219451222115
N 1234F348	ESS BIADERDE AS BIADERDE N. 1504	SHADENROSE R					0 Green (0-4)		-79 7422974275095 40 63417151995987
E 19944.101	SET PRODUCED OF REACHERINGS IN 15014	MANDROS I			-0		A Green (Ad)		35 71074271147000 47 00417131892901

4. Spreadsheet Information by Column

- a. Parcel#
 - i. Allegheny County tax parcel number
 - ii. Reference the Allegheny County GIS Viewer
 - This website shows the mapping of all the tax parcels with property address and is a helpful reference for parcel locations without visual addresses
 - 2. To aid in field collection it is helpful to have the GIS Viewer open in another window to reference as needed



b. Full Address

- i. Full property address as designated by the county parcel number
- ii. Format: house number and full street name, municipality, state, zip code
- iii. These addresses are taken from online property data and there may be variances in the field, meaning some may not match the field address and some may show addresses of vacant lots. For how to address potential issues see the *Tips, Tricks, and Troubleshooting* section.

c. Municipality

- i. Name of the municipality the properties belongs to
 - 1. Harrison
 - 2. Brackenridge
 - 3. Tarentum
- ii. Designation is based on municipal district lines
- d. Residential or Commercial
 - i. Designate the type of property as residential or commercial
 - 1. Can be indicated with a simple "R" or "C"
 - 2. For mixed use properties designation can be "C/R"
- e. Occupancy Status
 - i. Rating number based on defined property condition rating scale

- ii. The rating scale is described in the next section, and a PDF copy of the matrix is included in the Google Drive
- f. Condition of Building
 - i. Rating number based on defined property condition rating scale
 - ii. The rating scale is described in the next section, and a PDF copy of the matrix is included in the Google Drive
- g. Condition of Property
 - i. Rating number based on defined property condition rating
 - ii. The rating scale is described in the next section, and a PDF copy of the matrix is included in the Google Drive
- h. Demolition Status
 - i. Rating number based on defined property condition rating
 - ii. The rating scale is described in the next section, and a PDF copy of the matrix is included in the Google Drive
- i. Property Rating
 - i. Sum of columns with ratings
 - 1. Occupancy Status
 - 2. Condition of Building
 - 3. Condition of Property
 - 4. Demolition Status
 - ii. These numerical rating will be converted into color coded ratings in the next column
- j. Property Color Code
 - i. Assigned color code based on Property Rating number
 - 1. Gray for demo/condemned, Red for blighted, Yellow for in trouble, and Green for stable
 - ii. Color Code Definitions
 - 1. Gray (100)
 - 2. Red (20-60)
 - 3. Yellow (5-19)
 - 4. Green (0-4)
 - iii. Copy of rating matrix is included in the Google Drive
- k. Notes
 - i. Column is to add any generally notes you may have in the field related to the property and property conditions
- I. Coordinates
 - i. These are the latitude and longitude associated with the parcel
 - ii. The coordinates are needed to allow mapping of the spreadsheet data

5. Evaluation of Property (what to put in the spreadsheets)



- a. Any property already set up in the spreadsheet will have four columns already filled out
 - i. Parcel#
 - ii. Full Address
 - iii. Municipality
 - iv. Coordinates
- b. All the remaining columns will need to be filled out in the field or after field data collection. Instructions for filling out these columns are listed below.
 - i. Residential or Commercial
 - For this column simply put a capital R for residential, a capital C for commercial, or mark as C/R for mixed use properties
 - 2. Commercial properties include
 - Any properties that would deal with business activity, or generating profits
 - Offices, Retail, Manufacturing, Restaurants, Parking, etc.
 - 3. Residential properties include
 - a. Properties for living or dwelling
 - Houses, Apartments, Duplexes, Multifamily housing, etc.
 - 4. Mixed use properties include
 - a. A property that has residential and commercial on the same parcel
 - Example: retail on the first floor of a multifamily apartment building
 - 5. Vacant Lots
 - a. Parcel that has no existing use (commercial, residential, or mixed)

- b. These parcels can be designated by assigning the same designation as the adjacent properties
 - Parcel between two residential properties should be marked residential
 - ii. If this is not easily determined assign the property as mixed use
- c. Official designations of commercial and residential are typically determined by the municipal zoning code, but in this evaluation the designation is just for general reference to whether the property is a residence or a business.

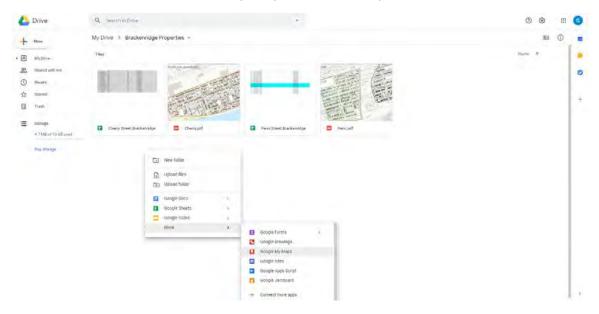
RESIDENTIAL/COMMERCIAL	Demo/Condemned (100)	Strongly Agree (20)	Agree (10)	Borderline (5)	Disagree (2)	Strongly Disagree (0)	Score
Occupancy Status: The property appears to be abandoned and unfit for human habitation.							
Condition of Building: Evidence of significant structural disrepair is visible (i.e. broken or missing windows, fire damage, collapsing porches or other section of the building).							
Condition of Property: Evidence that the property is not being maintained is clearly visible (debris, trash, tall weeds, graffiti, vermin etc.).							
Demolition Status: Building has been demolished or is officially condemned and slated for demolition							
Total							
GRAY = 100					-	,	
RED Blighted = 20 to 60							

- ii. Occupancy Status
 - 1. Assign a number rating based on the predetermined rating scale
 - 2. The property appears to be abandoned and unfit for human habitation.
 - a. Strongly Agree 20
 - b. Agree 10
 - c. Borderline 5
 - d. Disagree 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree 0
- iii. Condition of building
 - 1. Assign a number rating based on the predetermined rating scale
 - Evidence of significant structural disrepair is visible (i.e. broken or missing windows, fire damage, collapsing porches or other section of the building).
 - a. Strongly Agree 20
 - b. Agree 10
 - c. Borderline 5
 - d. Disagree 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree 0
- iv. Condition of Property
 - 1. Assign a number rating based on the predetermined rating scale

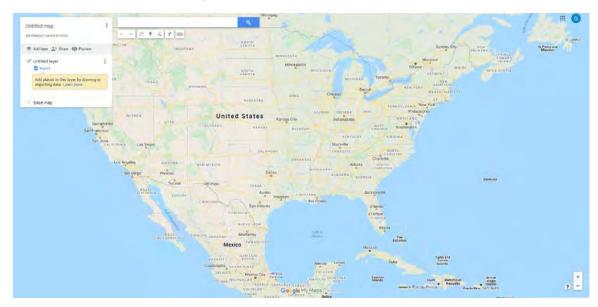
- 2. Evidence that the property is not being maintained is clearly visible (i.e. debris, trash, tall weeds, graffiti, vermin etc.).
 - a. Strongly Agree 20
 - b. Agree 10
 - c. Borderline 5
 - d. Disagree 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree 0
- v. Demolition Status
 - 1. Assign a number rating based on the predetermined rating scale
 - 2. Building has been demolished or is officially condemned and slated for demolition.
 - a. Agree Demo/Condemned 100
 - b. Disagree 0
- vi. Property Rating
 - 1. Add together all the rating columns for a total property rating
 - a. Occupancy Status
 - b. Condition of Building
 - c. Condition of Property
 - d. Demolition Status
 - 2. The sum in this column should fall between 0 and 60 or 100
 - 3. Totaling the rating columns could be done in the field or at a later time on a computer
- vii. Property Color Code
 - 1. The color code is determined by the property rating total
 - 2. Gray for demo/condemned/vacant, Red for blighted, Yellow for in trouble, and Green for stable
 - a. Color Code Definitions
 - i. Gray (100)
 - ii. Red (20-60)
 - iii. Yellow (5-19)
 - iv. Green (0-4)
 - 3. To make sure that these work with the Google mapping it is best to copy and paste the color code definitions in each row
 - a. The formatting for this column's fields need to be all exactly the same or the color coding for the map will not work properly
 - 4. As with the Property Rating totals the Property Color Code designation could be done after the field data is collected on a computer, this method makes it easier to copy and paste the color code fields to make sure the mapping will work.
- viii. Notes
 - 1. This field can be left empty or can contain any notes on the property that the reviewer feels may be important
- c. See *Tips, Tricks, and Troubleshooting* for addressing common in the field issues and for information on adding rows for properties not included in the spreadsheet

6. Mapping Spreadsheets

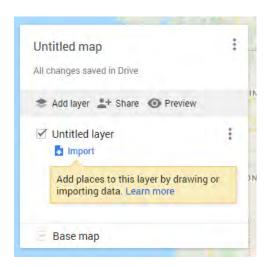
- a. Once a spreadsheet has been completely filled out a map of the data can be created in Google.
- b. Create a new Google My Map for spreadsheet data
 - i. Right click in open space within the Google Drive.
 - ii. Go down to "More"
 - 1. Under "More" select "Google My Maps"
 - 2. This will open up a new blank map document in another tab



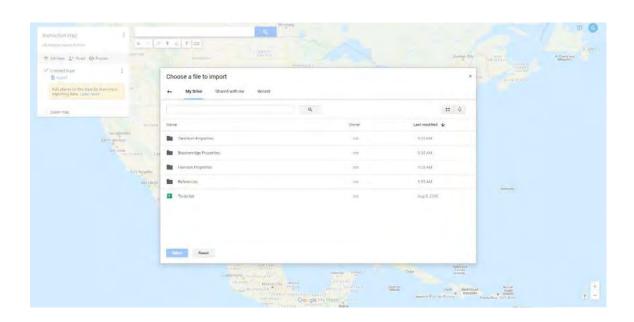
iii. Title the new map to correspond with the spreadsheet that will be imported into the map



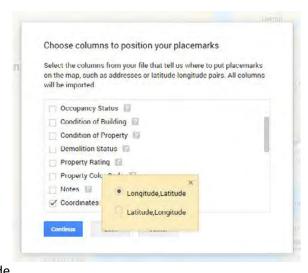
iv. In the legend to the left of the map under "Untitled Layer" click on "Import"



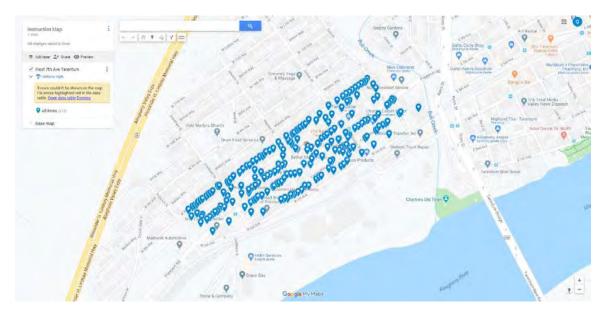
- v. You will then be prompted to choose the file to import
 - 1. Go the "Google Drive" tab and select the spreadsheet data you would like to import
 - 2. Click "select" after highlighting the spreadsheet file you want to import



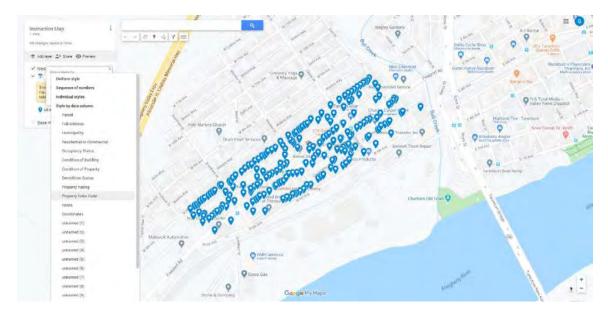
- vi. You will be prompted to choose the column from the spreadsheet to position the placemarks on the map
 - Scroll and select the "Coordinates" field
 - You will be asked if the coordinates are Longitude, Latitude or Latitude, Longitude



- a. Coordinates in the spreadsheet are set up **Longitude Latitude** so select that option
- 3. Click "Continue"
- vii. Next you will be prompted to choose a column to name the placemarks
 - 1. This could be any column you may want depending on your mapping needs, for general mapping select "Full Address"
 - 2. Click "Finish"
 - 3. This will import the spreadsheet into the map
 - a. If you get a yellow box in the legend after the import, that means that there was some sort of error with some of the data, it will usually prompt you with how many errors and where they are.
 - b. This error will only occur if there is a problem with the coordinate data, either it is not formatted correctly, or it is missing information
 - i. See Tips, Tricks, and Troubleshooting section for help

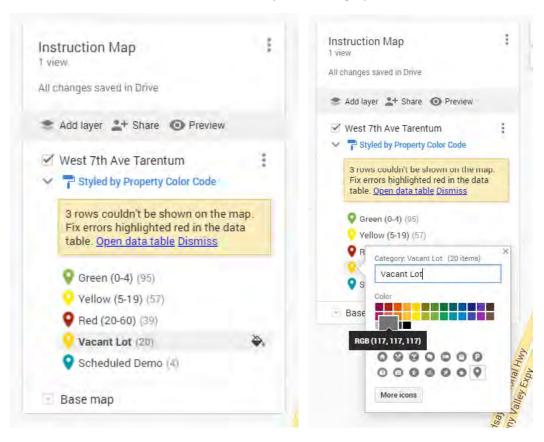


- viii. At this point your data should be shown on the map through little placemark points, now we need to format the display for the placemarks
- ix. Formatting placemarks
 - 1. In the legend, under the layer for the data you just added click "Uniform Style"
 - 2. In the Group Places by pull down select "Property Color Code"
 - 3. Click out of the style manager window by clicking anywhere outside the box



- 4. Assign color to the placemark categories in the legend by clicking on the paint bucket icon next to the placemark icon in the legend
 - a. Red-should be red
 - b. Yellow- should be yellow
 - c. Green- should be green

d. Gray should be gray

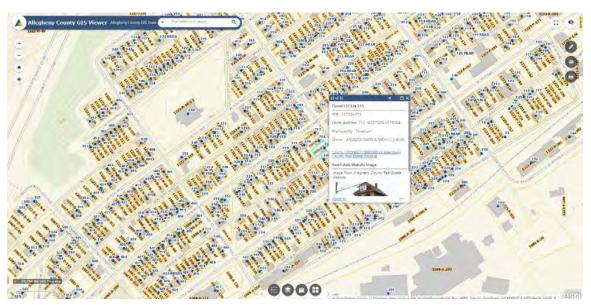


- x. The map will automatically save all the changes to your Google Drive folder, so you can just exit when you are done
- c. To print a copy of the map
 - i. Zoom in and pan the map to show the areas that you want to print
 - ii. In the legend click on the three dots next to the map title
 - 1. Select "Print Map"
 - 2. Printing dialog box will pop up
 - a. Select paper size, orientation, and output type
 - b. Click "Print"
 - c. Document will print as a PDF or Image file that you can save and print like a standard PDF or Image document

7. Tips, Tricks, and Troubleshooting

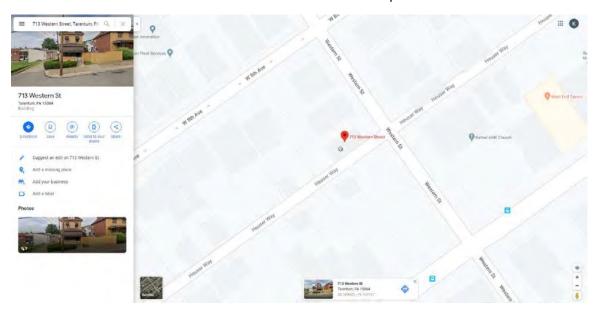
- a. Tips
- i. Adding a Property to the Spreadsheet
 - If you come across an address or lot that you cannot find already in the spreadsheet and you would like to add it the instructions to do so are below
 - a. First, insert a new row to the spreadsheet

- It would be best to insert this row adjacent to neighboring property addresses of the property you are adding
- b. Once the new row is in, you will need to fill in all the fields
 - i. Parcel Number
 - 1. You can locate the parcel number by looking it up in the Allegheny County GIS Viewer
 - 2. In the GIS viewer you can locate the property on the map or by searching using the address



- ii. Full Address
 - This information will likely be on the property you are looking at, if not it can be located in the GIS Viewer with the parcel number
- iii. Municipality
 - 1. Indicate if the property is in Harrison, Brackenridge, or Tarentum
- iv. Fill out the next few fields as like all the other properties condition evaluations
 - 1. Residential or Commercial
 - 2. Occupancy Status
 - 3. Condition of Building
 - 4. Condition of Property
 - 5. Demolition Status
 - 6. Property Rating
 - 7. Property Color Code
 - 8. Notes
- v. Determine coordinates for the property
 - 1. This can be done through Google Maps

- 2. Open Google Maps and locate the property, likely through the address
- Click on the property, not the placemark, this should add a small placemark and cause a small pop up box to appear in the bottom, center of the map



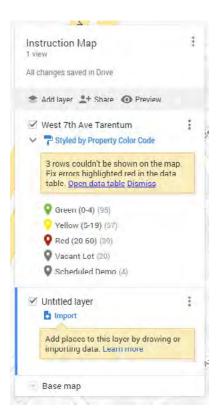
- 4. This box should have an image, the address of the property, and at the bottom in gray text is the coordinates for the property.
- The default coordinate format for these coordinates is Latitude, Longitude. You will need to change this to match the other coordinates in the spreadsheet
 - a. Spreadsheet coordinates are Longitude Latitude
 - Be sure the format matches exactly, the spreadsheet coordinates do not use any commas, just a space between the numbers.
 - ii. Don't forget the negative sign in the Longitude coordinate
 - iii. If the coordinates don't match the format of the others in the spreadsheet Google will not be able to map it with the rest of the property data when imported into My Maps

- ii. Marking where you left off on field data collection
 - 1. If you do not complete an entire spreadsheet of property data in one field evaluation, indicate in the spreadsheet where you have left off, so you know where to start when continuing collecting data
 - 2. Highlight the rows with the next group of properties to be evaluated and add a background color
 - a. Any color can be used but we have been using a bright blue
 - b. Be sure to remove the background color when you continue field data collection

b. Tricks

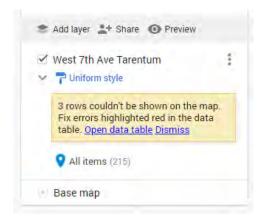
- i. Duplexes and other similar properties
 - 1. The spreadsheets are set up to have no duplicate addresses
 - a. This means that if the duplexes have separate addresses, they should both be in the spreadsheet
 - The data, since taken from online resources is not perfect, it is possible that even with separate addresses both may not be listed in the spreadsheet
 - Addresses are listed by the parcel, if for some reason the parcel does not list both addresses in the database it will not show in the spreadsheet
 - ii. If both addresses are not listed, add the missing property to the spreadsheet following the directions in the *Tips* section.
 - If the duplexes have the same address just a unit number or letter to delineate the two sides, they will only be listed in the spreadsheet one time
 - i. For evaluation the property could either be evaluated as a whole, or duplicated to evaluate each side
 - 1. To evaluate each side simply duplicate the property data row for the parcel/address
 - Indicate in the addresses, using the unit number or letter, which unit is being evaluated in that row
 - 3. By duplicating the row instead of just inserting a new blank row you have some of the data already filled in, most importantly you have the coordinates filled in.

- ii. To add more than one spreadsheet to a single map
 - Add the first spreadsheet using the mapping instructions provided earlier
 - After the spreadsheet data is imported click on "Add Layer" in the legend, this will create a new untitled layer in the legend.
 - Click on the "Import" link and import the spreadsheet using the same process described in the mapping instructions.

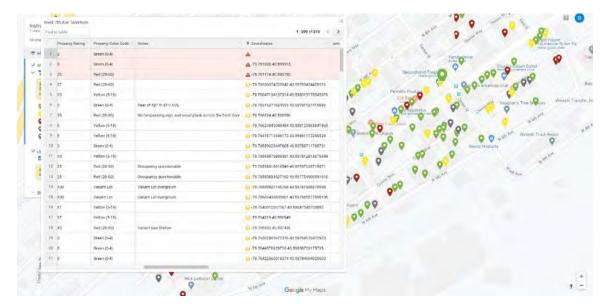


c. Troubleshooting

- i. Data Import Error when mapping
 - If you get a yellow box pop up in the legend after importing the spreadsheet, it means there is a data error
 - 2. In the yellow box click on the link "Open Data Table"



- 3. The property data table will open (should look similar to the spreadsheet)
 - a. In the table the data rows with the error will be highlighted
 - Since we are using the coordinates to map the properties, if there is an error it is most likely with the coordinate data either missing or incorrectly formatted



- 4. Return to the spreadsheet file in the Google Drive and locate the properties that were highlighted in the map data table
- 5. Correct the coordinate data, match the format of the other coordinates in the spreadsheet
 - a. Format should be LONGITUDE *space* LATITUDE
 - i. Be sure there are no commas in the coordinates
 - ii. Don't forget the negative sign in front of the Longitude coordinates
- 6. Once the coordinate data is all corrected in the spreadsheet return to your My Map with the imported data
 - a. Delete the layer with the data error and import the updated spreadsheet, if everything was corrected there should not be any more errors mapping the data
- d. Trouble accessing Google account

i. Recovery email: driggsceo@gmail.com

ii. Recovery phone number: 412-680-1602

iii. Birthdate on account: 07/29/1920



4A: New Brighton Area Recreation Commission bylaws as model

4B: Marshall Township recreation program registration form as model

4C: Bloomington Illiniois volunteer application / waiver as model

4D: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resource Peer program and Circuit Rider program grant information

"Exhibit A"

New Brighton Area Recreation Commission

An Intergovernmental Agreement of Cooperation

AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT OF COOPERATION

THIS AGREEMENT, made this 1st day of December, 2002 By and Among New Brighton Area School District, a public school district of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the citizens of which school district reside in New Brighton Borough, Daugherty Township, Pulaski Township and Fallston Borough herein called the "School District", the Borough of New Brighton, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, herein Called "New Brighton Borough", the Township of Daugherty, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Herein called "Daugherty Township", the Township of Pulaski, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Herein called "Pulaski Township", the Borough of Fallston, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, herein Called "Fallston Borough", situated in the County of Beaver, Pennsylvania, hereafter collectively referred to as "Participants" or sometimes individually as "Participant."

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Cooperation Act (53 Pa. C. S. Section 2301 et seq., herein called the "Act") permits municipalities (under the Act the term "municipality" includes school districts) to enter into agreements to cooperate in the exercise or performance of their respective functions, powers or responsibilities, including recreation and parks activities; and

WHEREAS, it is believed by the Participants that the citizens within their respective political boundaries will be benefited by a community recreation and parks program jointly administered by them, which program shall comply with all applicable laws; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Agreement is to provide a framework and mechanism to adequately maintain community recreation and parks services and facilities, and to organize. Manage, sponsor, and supervise community events within the political boundaries of the Participants through joint efforts rather than by separate efforts of each Participant; and

WHEREAS, to prevent duplication of effort and to maximize cost effectiveness, and in order to promote and conduct a program of community recreation and parks, the Participants mutually desire to mobilize community resources to effectively and economically meet the present and future recreation and parks needs of their citizens; and

WHEREAS, all Participants are legally authorized to enter into such an Agreement for the joint administration of a community recreation and parks program for their respective citizens,

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of mutual promises contained herein, and intending to be legally bound hereby, the Participants agree as follows;

1. Incorporation of Recitals

The above recitals are hereby incorporated herein as if fully set forth

2. Commission

A. The Participants hereby authorize the creation of the New Brighton Area Recreation Commission (herein called "Commission"), which shall direct, manage, and administer a community recreation and parks program pursuant to this Agreement, and all amendments hereto.

B. Representation. The Commission shall consist of nine (9) members, as follows:

- (a.) The School District shall have three (3) members to the Commission, one (1) of whom shall be an elected member of the School Board and one (1) of whom shall be an administrative staff member. Such persons shall serve as members to the Commission at the pleasure of the School District. The School District shall also appoint one (1) member who shall be a resident of the school district and not an employee of the Commission. The terms of member appointment shall be; one (1) appointed to a five (5) year term, one (1) to an initial four-year (4) term and one (1) to an initial two (2) year term, with all terms extending to the first Commission meeting in January next succeeding the date of creation of the Commission.
- (b.) New Brighton Borough shall have two (2) members who shall be elected members of the Borough Council or their designee. The terms of member appointment shall be; one (1) appointed to an initial three (3) year term and one (1) to a five (5) year term, with all terms extending to the first Commission meeting in January next succeeding the date of creation of the Commission.

- (c.) Daugherty Township shall have two (2) members; one (1) appointed to an initial one (1) year term and one (1) appointed to an initial four (4) year term, with all terms extending to the first Commission meeting in January next succeeding the date of creation of the Commission. Such members shall be an elected member of the Daugherty Board of Supervisors or their designee.
- (d.) Pulaski Township shall have one (1) member appointed to an initial three (3) year term, with the term extending to the first Commission meeting in January next succeeding the date of creation of the Commission. Such appointed person shall be an elected member of the Pulaski Board of Supervisors or their designee.
- (e.) Fallston Borough shall have one (1) member appointed to an initial two (2) year term, with the term extending to the first Commission meeting in January next succeeding the date of creation of the Commission. Such appointed person shall be an elected member of the Fallston Borough Council or their designee. Upon expiration of the initial terms, all terms thereafter shall be for a period of five (5) years.
- (f.) Alternates. One (1) alternate member shall be appointed by each Participant, thus, there shall be a total of five alternates to the commission whose affiliation shall be at the discretion of each Participant. The alternate members shall serve in the absence of a regular member and shall have full voting rights at the meeting at which the regular member is absent. It shall be the responsibility of the Commission Members to notify their alternates when an absence is necessary.
- (g.) Voting. Each member of the Commission shall have one (1) vote.
- (h.) Establishment of Advisory Committees. The Commission may establish advisory committees as deemed necessary or desirable for the operation of the Commission. The number of advisory committees and members assigned to said committees shall be established by the entire Commission.
- (i.) Vacancy. Any vacancy on the Commission shall be filled by the Participant which appointed the vacating member of the Commission. If a Commission member who is required to maintain his or her residence in the political boundaries of a Participant ceases to be such a resident, his or her membership shall terminate automatically and his or her position on the Commission shall be declared vacant. When a Commission member who is required to be an elected member of a Participant's governing body is no longer serving as such an elected official, his or her membership on the Commission is terminated. Any vacancy on the Commission must be filled within 60 days to complete the existing term.
- (j.) Attendance. The Commission may request that a Participant remove such Participant's members for his or her repeated lack of attendance at meetings. Members who attend less than 50% of regularly scheduled meetings during one year or three un-excused consecutive meetings are subject to removal.
- (k.) In no instance can there be more than four (4) members on the Commission from one Participant communities.

3. Duties of Commission -Powers

- (a.) Purpose. The Commission shall organize, supervise, administer, maintain and operate a community recreation and parks program for the residents of New Brighton Borough, Daugherty Township, Pulaski Township and Fallston Borough.
- (b.) Property. Facilities and Equipment. The Commission may contract for or acquire property, furnishings, equipment and other amenities (collectively "Equipment") for community recreation facilities. Equipment, which is acquired by the Commission, shall be administered and maintained by the Commission for the benefit of all residents of the Participants. Equipment so acquired that is permanently affixed to the property of a Participant (hereinafter called "Fixtures") shall become the property of such Participant if the Commission is dissolved or if the Participant withdraws from this Agreement, unless otherwise agreed upon by all of the Participants. The acquisition and purchase of Equipment shall be in accordance with the standards set forth in the Act.
- (c.) Employment of Personnel. The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out its purpose, employ and terminate such personnel, as it shall deem proper. All employees of the Commission shall be paid through the Commission. The Commission shall have the authority to enter into contracts for policies of group insurance and employee benefits or utilize existing Participant group policies. The Commission shall employ a Director, who shall serve at the Commission's pleasure, and who shall be responsible for coordinating the development and supervision of all recreational activities and programs. The Director, with the approval of the Commission, shall be responsible for the selection and hiring of all other personnel, including supervisors, instructors and leaders. All Commission employees shall be required to posses Act 151 and Act 34 clearances prior to their start of employment. The Director shall be required to attend all regular meetings of the Commission and may participate in any discussion undertaken during such meetings, but shall have no voting rights with respect to and shall not be entitled to vote at any such meeting. Executive sessions of the Commission may be held without the attendance of the Director only to determine performance evaluation of the Director, at the discretion of the Commission. The Director will be entitled to attend all other executive sessions of the Commission.

- (d.) Conduct of Business. The Commission shall establish its own form of organization and appropriate rules and regulations for the conduct of its business, including adopting its own by-laws. Said by-laws shall incorporate any and all provisions set forth in this agreement with regard to the conduct of commission business and shall be reviewed and commented upon by the governing bodies of the Participants.
- (e) Officers. The Commission shall elect a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer of the Commission. The Chairperson shall act as chair at all duly called meetings and shall be empowered to execute, together with an attestation by the Secretary, all legally binding documents on behalf of the Commission. The Vice-Chairperson shall serve in the absence of the Chairperson. The Secretary or his/her designee shall record the Commission's actions and be custodian of the Commission's records. The Treasurer of the Commission or his/her designee shall receive and expend all Commission funds and shall keep an accounting of all of the Commission's finances including, but not limited to, employee payroll. The Treasurer shall also present monthly reports regarding the finances of the Commission to the Commission members. The Commission shall organize annually at the first meeting held in January of each year. All officers shall be elected at the Commission's January organizational meeting and serve a one (1) year term of office, expiring December 31. If an officer ceases to be a member of the Commission, a successor shall be elected in accordance with the requirements of this Agreement.
- (2) Commission Meetings. The Commission shall have regularly scheduled meetings at least once every month. The Chairperson of the Commission may, when he or she deems it necessary or desirable, and shall, upon the request of five (5) members of the Commission and/or the Director, call a special meeting of the Commission for the purpose of transacting any business designated in the call of the meeting. The call for any regular and special meeting shall in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
- (3) Quorum. When a majority of the number of members of the Commission (5) five or more members are present at a Commission for a quorum to be met and official actions may be taken.

4. Finances

- (a.) Fiscal Year -Budget. The Commission shall prepare an annual accounting for an independent audit to include all of its financial operations and activities on a calendar year basis beginning on January 1 of each year. On or before October 1 of each year, the Commission shall prepare a budget, which budget shall include in detail the costs and expenses expected to be incurred by the Commission in the performance of its duties for the succeeding calendar year. Such budget shall include the amount of funds which the Commission expects to receive from the sources other than the Participants. Any remaining funds which the Commission budgets as necessary or desirable for the performance of its duties shall be reflected as cash contributions to be received from the Participants in accordance with paragraph 6 (Cash Contributions) hereof. Such budget shall not include any expenditure for any item designated as an in-kind contribution pursuant to paragraph 5 (In-Kind Contributions) hereof. Any excess funds remaining after conclusion of a calendar year shall be applied to the fund balance of the Commission.
- (b.) Approval of Budget. The budget prepared by the Commission shall be submitted to the governing bodies of the Participants for approval on or before September 1 of each year. No budget shall be effective if disapproved by a majority of the Participants' governing bodies prior to the end of October of each year. Such disapproval shall be immediately communicated orally or in writing to the other Participants and to the Commission. Contributions by the Participants shall not exceed an increase of more than 5% of the previous year's contribution without unanimous approval of each of the Participant's' governing bodies. If the budget has not been so approved by January 1 of the next calendar year, the prior year's contribution shall remain operative unless and until such approval shall be given to the Commission.

5. In-Kind Contributions

- (a.) Property. The Participants agree to make available, without charge, for use by the Commission the property ("Property") of the Participants when the use of the Property by the Commission will not interfere with or conflict with the usage thereof by the Participants or by third parties, to which Participants granted permission to use, or be contrary to any legal restrictions or obligations relating to the use of the Property; provided, however, that the Property as listed on Schedule A of this Agreement shall not be available for use by the Commission. The in-kind contribution shall include in accordance with the terms of this Agreement:
- (1) the use of the Property of the School District
- (2) the use of the Property of New Brighton Borough
- (3) the use of the Property of Daugherty Township
- (4) the use of the Property of Pulaski Township
- (5) the use of the Property of Fallston Borough
- (6) The in-kind contributions shall include the normal operational costs and expenses related to or associated with the use of the Property or any Participant which would have been incurred by the Participant's property (including but not limited to maintenance, repair, insurance, heat, air-conditioning,

ground maintenance, improvements, police and fire protection, water, sewer, utility services and all other items of cost and expense) with respect to the Property irrespective of the Commission's use thereof. The inkind contributions shall not include costs and expenses, which would not have been incurred by the Participants except for the Commission's use of the Property, specifically, the costs and expenses for janitorial services or special police protection with respect to a specific event of the Commission ("Extra Costs"). The Extra Costs actually incurred by each of the Participants shall be promptly reimbursed by the Commission.

- (b.) Maintenance of Property. Participants agree to keep their respective facilities/equipment in a safe usable condition and the Commission agrees to leave said facilities/equipment in a like condition.
- (c.) Capital Improvements/Existing Agreements. The Participants agree to be responsible for capital improvements to facilities and property that they own and further agree that the Commission shall not be responsible for making any such capital improvements. This Agreement, and the duties of the Commission hereunder, shall not interfere with any existing lease agreements or licenses among any of the Participants or by and between any of the Participants and any third party. Any such agreements or licenses shall remain in full force and effect, and the powers and duties of the Commission are subject to any such agreements or licenses.
- (d.) Rules and Regulations. The Participants may adopt and enforce reasonable rules and regulations relating to the Commission's use of their respective Property, provided that such rules and regulations shall not require the Commission's expenditure of funds for services or items agreed to be contributed in-kind.

6 Insurance.

- (a) Liability Insurance. The Participants shall obtain and maintain liability insurance, which policy or policies of insurance shall name the Commission, its directors, officers, employees, and agents, as a named insured with respect to the Commission's duties and activities on the Property of each Participant. Each such policy shall contain limits of not less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence for injury or damage to persons or Property.
- (b) Casualty Loss Insurance. The Participants shall each maintain, with respect to their respective property, such casualty loss insurance as they shall deem appropriate. All such insurance shall contain waiver of subrogation rights against the Participants or Commission as applicable.
- (c) Directors and Officers Insurance. The Commission shall obtain and maintain public officials' "directors and officers" insurance coverage or utilize existing Participant policies for its members.

7. Cash Contributions

- (a.) First Year Operating Budget. The Participants have agreed that for the year 2003 they will appropriate and budget a sum of money as they mutually agree shall be sufficient for the first year of operation of the Commission. Accordingly, each Participant shall pay a proportionate share of the total cost in the aggregate amount of \$50,90.23 he first year operating budget shares are as described in (b.) Cash Contribution Formula.
- (b.) Cash Contribution Formula. In addition to the in-kind contributions as set forth in this agreement, the Participants agree to contribute to the Commission in accordance with its budget (whose dollar amount may be adjusted from time to time), the amounts of cash as are necessary or desirable to fund the Commission's operations. Subsequent years shall employ the same share (50% assessed value/50% per capita) formula as applied to each new budget amount. The cash contributions shall be determined by multiplying the total annual Participant Revenue Budget Requirement times the participant % share ratio.

% Share	\$ Contribution
(.5000 share)	25,295.11
(.2511 share)	12,703.21
(.1680 share)	8,499.16
(.0620 share)	3,136.59
(.0189 share)	956.16
	(.5000 share) (.2511 share) (.1680 share) (.0620 share)

Data Used	2001 Assessed Values	Assessed Ratio	2000 Census	Per Capita Ratio	50/50 Blended Ratio
School District	92,854,693	0.5000	12,063	0.5000	0.5000
New Brighton	42,177,727	0.2271	6,641	0.2753	0.2511
Daugherty	35,909,497	0.1934	3,441	0.1426	0.1680
Pulaski	10,119,591	0.0545	1,674	0.0694	0.0620
Fallston	4,647,878	0.0250	307	0.0127	0.0189
		1.0000		1.0000	1.0000

(c.) Cash Contribution Payments. The Participants shall make payments to the Commission in four (4) equal installments by the first day of January, April, July and October of each budget year.

8. Effective Date, Term -Termination

- (a.) Effective Date and Term. This agreement shall be effective ______, 2003, and shall be for a term of five (5) calendar years ending December 31, 2007. Participants may not withdraw from this Agreement during the initial five (5) year term of the Agreement. This Agreement shall continue in full force and effect and shall be automatically renewed year-to-year thereafter except as otherwise provided in this Agreement.
- (b.) Withdrawal. After the initial five (5) year term, any Participant may withdraw from the terms of this Agreement at the end of any calendar year by giving written notice of such withdrawal to the other Participants and the Commission one (1) year before the proposed withdrawal date. Withdrawal from this Agreement by any Participant shall not terminate the Agreement among the remaining parties. Any funds contributed by a withdrawing Participant shall be retained by the Commission. Withdrawal from this Agreement must be approved by a majority of the voting members of the governing body of the Participant which desires to withdraw, voted on following a public meeting held in accordance with the Pennsylvania Sunshine Act.
- (c.) Dissolution. In case of dissolution of the Commission by mutual consent of all Participants hereto, the Equipment, property, materials, supplies, and capital assets of the Commission that remain shall be distributed to the Participants in proportion to the cumulative contributions of the Participants from the date of this Agreement to the time of dissolution; provided, however, that any Fixtures shall remain the property of the Participants on whose Property any such Fixtures are affixed, and shall not be subject to the distribution provided for in this section.

9. Entire Agreement

This agreement constitutes the entire contract by the Participants and there are no other understandings, oral or written, relating to the subject matter hereof.

10. Amendment

This Agreement shall not be amended or altered except by writing duly approved by and signed on behalf of all of the Participants.

11. Governing Law

This Agreement shall be governed by the Laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This Agreement is adopted pursuant to the Act and each Participant shall take all necessary steps under said statute to comply with the same.

12. Further Action

The Participants agree to take all action necessary to carry forth the provisions of this Agreement.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

ATTEST:	NEW BRIGHTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Secretary	President of the Board
ATTEST:	BOROUGH OF NEW BRIGHTON
Secretary	President of Council
ATTEST:	DAUGHERTY TOWNSHIP
Secretary	Chairman
ATTEST:	PULASKI TOWNSHIP
Secretary	Chairman
ATTEST:	FALLSTON BOROUGH
Secretary	President of Council

PARKS & RECREATION REGISTRATION

All programs, except where noted, require advance registration and are filled on a first come, first served basis. Programs require a minimum number of participants to be held. Most programs have a limited enrollment, so early registration assures you a place in the program.

Programs will be available until they have reached maximum enrollment or are canceled due to a lack of registrants. If a program does reach maximum enrollment, we encourage placing your name on the waiting list. By doing so, we will be able to contact you in case of a cancellation or possible new session being added. Waiting lists are intended to be a source of contact and do not guarantee you will receive a return call. Credit Cards are not accepted.

REGISTER NOW FOR RECREATION PROGRAMS!

WALK IN REGISTRATION

Come to the Marshall Township Municipal Building located at 525 Pleasant Hill Road (off of the Red Belt) between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Our recreation department will be glad to enroll you in the program of your choice.

MAIL IN REGISTRATION

Please complete and sign the registration form below. Enclose payment for any fees listed in the program description. Make checks payable to Marshall Township and mail to:

> Marshall Township 525 Pleasant Hill Road Suite 100 Wexford, PA 15090

Please print:	
Participant's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Date of Birth (if under 18):	 _
Street Address:	
City, State & Zip Code:	
E-mail:	
Program:	
Fee:	

PLEASE READ AND SIGN OTHER SIDE

RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

ON THIS day of	, in consideration of my or my child's participation in								
•	am activities in which I or my child participate(s), I,								
intending to be legally bound, do hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors and administrators, waive and									
release, acquit and forever discharge the Township of Marshall, or the Township of Marshall Parks and									
Recreation Department, or any of their officers, agents, employees, instructors, representatives,									
successors, and/or assigns and any and all other persons, firms and corporations, whether herein named or									
referred to or not, from any and all future rights, claims, causes of action, civil or criminal claims,									
demands, costs, attorneys fees, loss of service, ex	xpenses, compensation, third party actions, suits at law or								
equity, including suits for contribution and inden	nnity, of whatever nature, and all consequential damages								
on account of, or in any way associated with the	above-mentioned program or with arriving to and/or								
returning from any activity associated with the p	rogram.								
I/we further state that I/we have carefully	y read the foregoing release and know the contents								
thereof, and I/we sign the same as my/our own fr	ree act. I/we acknowledge that signature by either parent								
or by one guardian hereby binds all parents and/o	or guardians of any minor participant.								
Signature of participant	Signature of Parent/and/or Guardian								
Signature of participant	Signature of Parent/and/or Guardian in the event that participant is a minor								
Signature of participant									
	in the event that participant is a minor								
***PERMISSION T	in the event that participant is a minor								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH photographs of me with or without my name and for								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p any lawful purpose, including for example such	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH photographs of me with or without my name and for								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p any lawful purpose, including for example such	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH photographs of me with or without my name and for								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p any lawful purpose, including for example such	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH photographs of me with or without my name and for								
PERMISSION T I agree that Marshall Township may use such p any lawful purpose, including for example such and Web content.	in the event that participant is a minor TO USE PHOTOGRAPH photographs of me with or without my name and for h purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising,								



Volunteer Application

GENERAL INFORMATION								
Application Date		Adult	☐ Teen					
Are you 18 years or older?	☐ Yes ☐ No)						
Best way to contact you:	☐ Home Phone	☐ Work Phone	☐ Email					
Last Name		First Name		MI				
Nickname		Home Phone						
Address				Apt. #				
City		State		Zip				
E-mail Address								
Emergency Contact								
	EDUCATION A	AND WORK EXPERIENCE						
Current Employer								
Work Phone								
Position Responsibilities								
Students - List School			Last Grade Completed					
Previous Volunteer Experience								
		INTERESTS						
Hobbies/Interests								
Hobbies/Interests Skills/Languages Spoken								
Skills/Languages Spoken			unity service requirements	☐ Other				
Skills/Languages Spoken What is motivating you to volunt	teer?	☐ School/commu		☐ Other				

	VOLUNTEE	R WORK PREFERENCE		
☐ Adult Center	☐ General Clerical	Marketing/Publici	ty	
☐ Pepsi Ice Center	S.O.A.R.	Aquatics	☐ Inclusion Compa	nion
Park or Trail	Recreation Programs	☐ Special Events	☐ Miller Park Sumn	ner Theatre
☐ Sports	Preschool/Youth	Other		
	R	EFERENCES		
References: We reserve the ri would be willing to serve as per				nan relatives who
Last Name:	First Name	:	Daytime Phone: _	
Address:	City:		State:	Zip:
Last Name:	First Name	:	Daytime Phone: -	
Address:	City:		State:	Zip:
Have you ever been convicted of the second o	of a felony? No ☐ Yes	_		
 I authorize the City to tany other matters releven the employers, their respective demands, and liabilities I understand that I will I understand that I will 	e information provided above the horoughly investigate my revent to my suitability for volutive officers, employees and a arising out of or in any want to paid as a volunteer. It serve at the pleasure of the or without cause. A voluntithout cause.	eferences, work record lunteering. I hereby ful d agents, and all other ay relating to such inve he City of Bloomingto	education, criminal conv y release and discharge to persons and entities from estigation or disclosure.	ictions record, and the City, my former any and all claims, from my volunteer
Signature of Appl	licant		Date	
If volunteer is under 18 years of to my child's participation in the				r. I hereby consent
Signature of Parent/Gu	ıardian		Date	

Please return to: Bloomington Parks & Recreation, 115 E. Washington, Bloomington, IL 61701



Peer and Circuit Rider: Local Capacity Building Project Funding

Partners may apply for grant funding to help build municipal, multi-municipal, or county capacity to better develop, manage, and promote:

- Recreation, park, or trail facilities
- Installation and maintenance of green infrastructure
- Conservation of our natural resources
- Other projects deemed appropriate by DCNR

Two types of local capacity building programs are offered -- the Peer and Circuit Rider programs.

Peer Program

The Peer Program is available to assist municipal entities with hiring a professional consultant to study specialized small-scale issues. Up to \$10,000 can be made available to hire a peer -- typically a park and recreation professional -- to work in close collaboration with community leaders to develop an action plan.

Circuit Rider Program

This Circuit Rider Program provides grant funds for county or regional organizations to hire a professional, full-time staff person.

The circuit rider's purpose is to initiate new regional programs and services that position sponsoring entities to more efficiently and effectively meet their recreation, park, greenways, open space, and/or natural resource and community conservation needs.

The annual grant funding decreases over a period of four years with the understanding and intention that the sponsoring organization.

More Information

https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Communities/Grants/PartnershipGrants/Pages/default.aspx



5A: Notes from steering committee working group meeting with Visit Pittsburgh



Harrison-Brackenridge-Tarentum Comprehensive Plan Community Identity and Branding working group

Meeting Notes / Visit Pittsburgh

Nov. 14, 2019

Brenda Armstrong, Senior Director of Marketing, and Asaka Narumi, Director of Web Development, Visit Pittsburgh; Lindsay Fraser & Elaine Kramer from working group

Q: How might the communities think through and develop an identity?

• The goal is to create a "brand message" that everyone has. "Everyone" is businesses, non-profits, institutions, civic groups, local governments, residents.

Q: What is a brand message?

- These are the stories you want to tell and the stories you want to get past. You have to have a nice blend of what people already know about the place and what you want them to know.
- Create a series of statements that cover different aspects of the place, such as, "Pittsburgh has always been a hub of innovation, and it continues to be." An example for the H-B-T area could be, "We prize our river and riverfront access, and value conservation efforts to protect the Allegheny."

Q: How do you create a brand message? Who gets to decide who we are, what we are, and what best describes our communities?

- Create a two-step focus group process (The process example is from the consulting firm that worked with Visit Pittsburgh).
 - Create two very broad-based stakeholder focus groups that are very representative of the community. Work hard at this – create equitable access to this for many points of view, and don't rush this step.
 - Lead the first focus group through a probe questions discussion, with the goal of creating a list of key words describing the communities. https://humansofdata.atlan.com/2017/09/conduct-successful-focus-group-discussion/.
 - Second focus group is given the key words from the first group but no other history.
 Ask this group to assemble the key words into statements that the participants feel describe both how the communities have been/are but also the direction that the communities are/should be moving.
- These become the brand message talking points. (Note: Because this sounds very wonky, we
 can think of another name for them, like "Our Towns, Our Values," or "Get to know
 Harrison, Brackenridge and Tarentum!" But in this memo, they're called "brand message
 talking points.")
- Next, test the brand message talking points. Hold lots of meetings with stakeholders such a community groups, boards of directors, business groups, homeowner groups, everyone you can think of to test the brand message talking points. Explain the purpose and ask them to support this brand messaging. If people are not supportive, find out why. While the talking points do not have to please everyone, it's important to find out right away if

something about the talking points is way, way off target, because if it is, the brand message won't work and could even be ridiculed. Do not rush this step.

Q: What do you do with the brand message talking points? How are these used?

- When the brand message passes the stakeholder sniff test, give the list of talking points to
 "everyone." Share with the communications people in local businesses and industries; the
 groups and institutions that make up the fabric of the community; people who are
 interested in speaking up for H-B-T.
- Ask the businesses, institutions, groups, etc. to incorporate these brand message talking points in their corporate or business communications.
 - They can include them in the "About" section of their websites or social media presences.
 - They can #hashtag the key words in posts.
 - They can use the themes of the brand message talking points for their own examples/stories, such as in newsletters or websites. For example, if one of the talking points is about how nice homes are affordable in H-B-T, a moving company website could include a story about how it moved a family to H-B-T, to a home/neighborhood that was affordable.
- Think of other ways to get stakeholders to share via their networks.
 - Businesses can distribute or incorporate the brand message talking points when they are representing their businesses with customers or clients at conferences, trade shows or meetings.
 - o Residents can #hashtag key words in social media groups.

Q: Can you explain more about "telling local stories" that illustrate the brand message talking points?

- Local media and the national and foreign press all write stories about H-B-T or about "Pittsburgh" more generally.
- You should prepare stories to illustrate the talking points, such as a story quoting/showing three families that moved to town for affordability. Another example could be story illustrating "We prize the river and riverfront access," (if that's a talking point) that shows volunteers picking up trash, people fishing, people using the marina, people birdwatching at the park.
- Create a series of these stories and use them on their own websites but also provide them
 to media and to groups like Visit Pittsburgh and the Allegheny Conference on Community
 Development both of which field media calls and want to have stories and contacts at
 the ready.
- Recognize that people love stories that illustrate local "firsts," or ways of doing things that have sustained over time, so prepare examples of that too.
- Recognize that people love weird one-off stories, so don't be afraid to prepare examples
 of those too, assuming they align with the talking points.

