



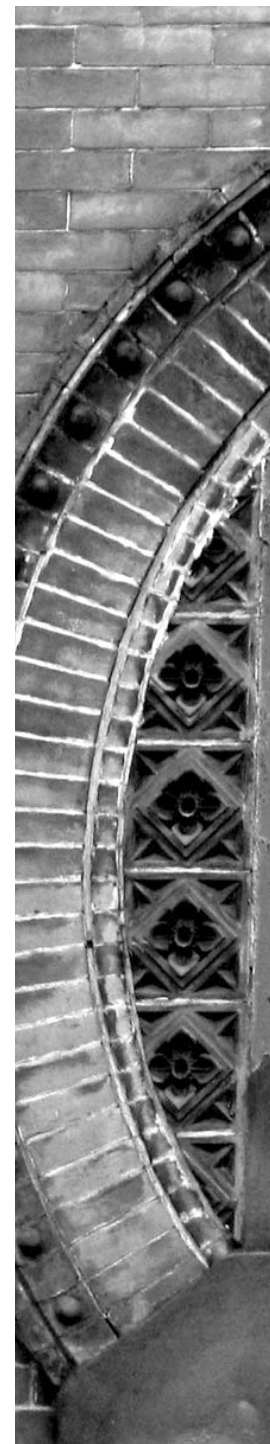
Moving Francisville Forward:

a blueprint for the future

Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation
People For People, Inc.

_INTERFACE STUDIO LLC
Klip // Collective

August . 07



Acknowledgements

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People For People, Inc.

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The 15th Ward Democratic Committee

The Arts Garage

The Baptist Women's Center

Berean Institute

Byron Story Foundation

Community Land Trust

Community Ventures

Fairmount CDC

Francisville Neighborhood Civic Association

Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation

Francisville Playground Advisory Committee

Girard Coalition, Inc.

Girard College

Holy Ghost Headquarters Revival Center at the Met

Mary Jane Enrichment Center

North Philadelphia Financial Partnership

North Philadelphia Health System

People For People, Inc.

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Spring Garden CDC

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Special Thanks

Dear Francisville Residents, Leaders, Stakeholders, and FNDC Members,

I want to personally thank each and every one of you who participated in the creation of this development Plan for our neighborhood. If you attended a planning meeting, answered a questionnaire, or participated in a workshop or focus group, thanks a bunch!

As you all know FNDC has worked very hard to bring the community together so that we can re-build our neighborhood in the spirit of collaboration and compromise. There is still so much work to be done, and we believe and know it will take all of our efforts and commitment to transform this plan into a reality. It doesn't matter how much you are able to do, what matters is that you do *something* because in the end it's all good! So, I encourage you to get a copy of the Plan and as you read all of the exciting recommendations, make note of what interests you, join the committee or volunteer to lead an initiative.

This plan is your Plan! Own it! Nurture it! Make it grow!

Just imagine the possibilities... Together we can and will make a difference!

Love,



Penny Giles
Executive Director/President
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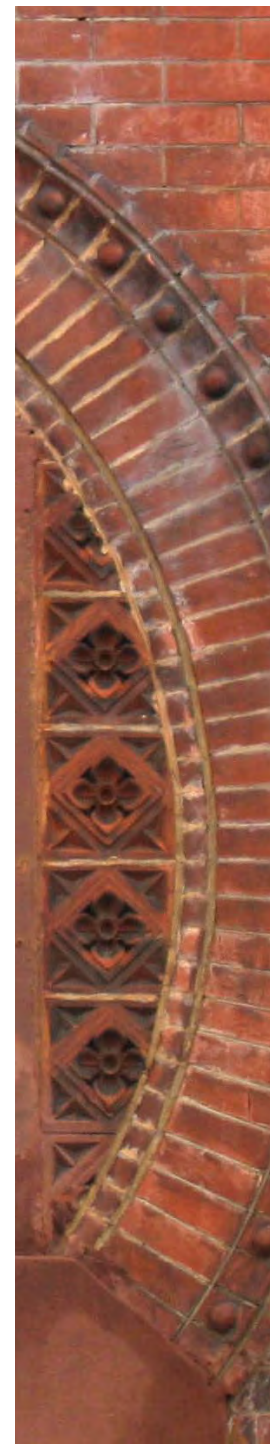


Table of Contents

Preface	1
Executive Summary	3
Purpose of the Plan	9
Methodology	9
Project Partners	11
Planning Process	12
Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future	17
Vision	19
Recommendations	21
1. Become one cohesive neighborhood, and get some recognition	22
2. Put the “Heart” of Francisville [Ridge Avenue] Back in Business	30
3. Manage your future; ensure that new residential development serves the full needs of Francisville’s families	48
4. Empower the neighborhood: reclaim vacant land; enforce safe streets and corners	56
5. Make Francisville a Greene Countrie Towne... again ..	62
6. Francisville is walkable; make it more so.....	76
7. Foster bright futures for neighborhood youth [and for the neighborhood]	80
8. Ensure that local services serve the neighborhood	88

Implementation Approach	92
Priority Action Items	93
FNDC’s Capacity to Implement	93
Implementation Matrix	95
Francisville Design Guidelines	111
Appendix: Analysis Report	116
Acronym Glossary	175



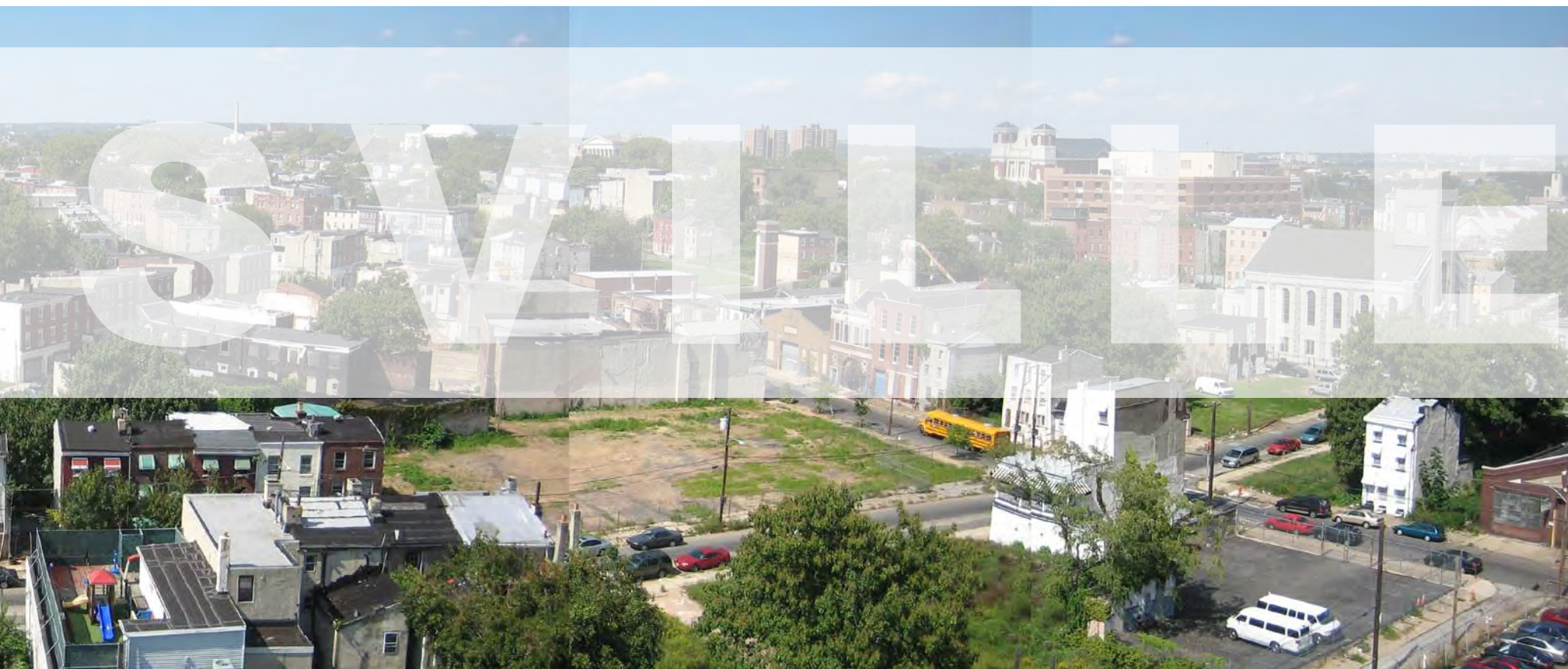
Preface

A few years ago, Francisville was a quiet and largely unrecognized community to outsiders. Comprising a unique collection of streets that followed its historic growth from a vineyard to a residential community, Francisville remained 'off the grid' in the many ways. Francisville was often lumped together with the Fairmount and Spring Garden neighborhoods under the broad 'Art Museum' designation.

The recent housing boom in Philadelphia combined with the increased awareness, power, and initiative of neighborhood organizations to plan their own futures has changed this dynamic. Francisville now has a voice, led by a collection of residents and organizations, dedicated to ensuring that Francisville grows in ways that respect and enhance its past and present.

The decision to undertake this Plan resulted from a shared concern that rapid reinvestment will irreversibly change Francisville, permanently ridding the neighborhood of some of its most cherished characteristics. Home to a rich history that informs today's diverse population and varied urban landscape, the local community leaders believe in Francisville's future as a model community for urban living, encompassing the full promise of city life.

The planning process is an opportunity to develop a collective vision for the future of Francisville, a chance to think about the effects of change, and how best to integrate old with new. The Plan itself is a mechanism to help balance the value of organic,



View of Francisville from the roof of People For People, Inc.

unguided growth with the importance of neighborhood priorities and preferences that, once clearly established, will steer the neighborhood down a path of development that is in the neighborhood and its residents' best interest. The Plan will empower the neighborhood as a proactive participant in Francisville's unfolding future, adding structure to the development review process and giving a voice to the understood, but at times unspoken, qualities that define life in Francisville and render the neighborhood a distinctive place worth preserving.

This effort is but one example of Francisville rediscovering its neighborhood pride and asserting a strong voice, a voice announcing the end of the neighborhood's

decline and neglect, a voice announcing a readiness to rebuild. This document presents the community's vision for Francisville followed by a comprehensive body of recommendations designed to help Francisville, the FNDC, and its partners transform vision into reality. The recommendations are as much a response to the in-depth analysis of Francisville past and present, included as an appendix to this Plan, as they are a reflection of the community's priorities; this Plan was informed by extensive community outreach and participation. It is the community's insights and feedback that made the completion of this year-long planning effort possible. With the continued involvement and interest of the community, Francisville is poised to build upon its strong roots and realize a better future.

Executive Summary

Today, Francisville is on the move. The neighborhood is rebuilding – it is growing and planning for the future – and, most importantly, the community is driving this process. Long-term residents and newcomers, business owners and developers, representatives from local organizations and City agencies, alike, have asserted their voices. Their beliefs, priorities, and ideas have formed a more cohesive choir, giving unified expression to a shared respect for the past, a common concern and commitment to the present, and an imaginative anticipation of the future.

From Francisville's planning process has emerged a community-driven vision for Francisville, a vision that builds upon the best that Francisville has to offer and reinforces the very qualities that have always made Francisville, *Francisville*.

Francisville grew from a vineyard. The community will nurture its future by planting new seeds and cultivating an inclusive, full-service urban neighborhood, a neighborhood for your family:

A seed of unity – to grow a cohesive neighborhood;

A seed of commerce – to grow a viable Ridge Avenue;

A seed of values – to grow equity and equitably;

A seed of action – to grow a clean and safe neighborhood;

A seed of green – to grow development in balance with the natural environment;

A seed of livability – to grow a walkable neighborhood;

A seed for healthy futures – to grow the neighborhood's future – its youth;

A seed of support – to grow a neighborhood anchored by strong foundations.

The vision translates into a series of eight goal areas, each of which encompasses a set of recommendations for *Moving Francisville Forward*. Together, these recommendations form a comprehensive neighborhood plan – a *blueprint for the future*.

Become one cohesive neighborhood, and get some recognition.

For a historic neighborhood so close to Center City, it is surprising how often Francisville is overlooked. With so much change occurring in the neighborhood, however, now is a good time for Francisville to reflect and redefine itself. The goal is to reintroduce Francisville (loudly, to get the neighborhood noticed) as one community – working together, unified, and renewed – back on the map, doors open for all to enjoy. The following recommendations are intended to build community, build community pride, and build a name for that proud community:

Build Community – Francisville is repopulating and becoming both more racially and economically diverse in the process. While some long-term community members welcome such change as desirable and necessary for the neighborhood's revitalization, others are skeptical of the recent influx of investor interest and middle-to upper-income residents. Francisville's future requires that the neighborhood grow as one community.

- *Develop a Neighborhood Talent Directory and appoint a Talent Placement Agent.*
- *Establish a Welcoming Committee.*
- *Schedule a roving FNDC summer block party featuring a different block each time.*
- *Develop a Francisville Shout-Out Page on the FNDC website.*
- *Expand the Francisville Information Network (FIN) – information is power.*

Build Community Pride – Francisville has a rich and unique history. The problem is, knowledge of this history (of the juicy details in particular) is confined to the minds of a handful of long-term residents. The archives of Francisville's collective memory must be documented and become more permanent and more accessible. Celebrate tradition, promote continuity, make your history *living history*.

- *Record oral histories.*
- *Start an Archives of Francisville.*
- *Compile a Francisville Soundtrack CD.*
- *Create a Neighborhood Cookbook.*

Build a Name – Francisville has a rare concentration of talent, creativity, and culture, but these qualities remain somewhat buried, known only to local residents. Few outsiders are privy to the neighborhood's hidden gifts, and even if someone

has heard good rumors about Francisville's art, music, or history, chances are that person is unable to locate the neighborhood on a map. Francisville must become a recognizable neighborhood with a unique identity and a host of healthy associations that the name, *Francisville*, triggers in the minds of many.

- Put Francisville on the map, literally, through the City Planning Commission, Penn's Cartographic Modeling Lab and PhillyBlog.
- Share the neighborhood through celebrations; market Francisville's art and culture.



Video installation intended to get neighborhood stakeholders involved in the planning process and to get Francisville noticed. Source: Klip Collective

Put the “Heart” of Francisville [Ridge Avenue] Back in Business.



Proposed Ridge Avenue traffic improvements, greening strategy, and mixed-use development scheme

Ridge Avenue in Francisville is in dire need of reinvestment. With few local shopping opportunities, Francisville residents must spend their dollars elsewhere. As a result, the local market loses more than \$65,000,000 in sales annually! Ridge Avenue, once a vibrant corridor, is now a dividing line, devoid of services, lacking maintenance and appeal, and cutting the neighborhood in two. Still envisioned as the heart of the neighborhood, Francisville's full revitalization will depend on Ridge Avenue's revival. With the goals of developing a cohesive and supportive business community, providing commercial services for local residents, and giving visitors a reason to explore Francisville, key recommendations for Ridge Avenue include:

Basics – Some of the recommendations for Ridge Avenue are basic, bare-bones strategies that apply to commercial corridors of all types – those thriving as well as those struggling to remain in business.

- Form a Francisville Business Association.
- Become a PCDC designated Commercial Corridor.
- Clean the Corridor.
- Create a safer pedestrian environment.
- Brand, broadcast and improve Ridge Avenue's Gateways.

Above and Beyond – Lacking stores to generate foot traffic and foot traffic to support stores, Francisville will have to work harder than other communities to re-zip the seam and put Ridge Avenue back in business. With 71,000 cars diving by the neighborhood's key intersections each day, Francisville should start by helping Ridge Avenue get noticed; give drivers a reason to park the car, get out, and walk around.

- Develop retail anchors to attract visitors to the corridor; balance a commercial vision with service missions.
- Encourage off-street parking, but off of the Avenue.
- Use key sites along the corridor as a loudspeaker; communicate the neighborhood's unique identity.
- Reclaim the "triangles" for new retail and open space.
- Plan for the short-term. —————→
- Plan for big events – Discover Ridge!

Proposed short-term intervention at the former Farmers' Market site: replant the vineyards



Manage your future; ensure that new residential development serves the full needs of Francisville's families.

Francisville is caught in the midst of a transforming urban marketplace, physically located between the growing residential market pressure pushing north from Center City and east from Fairmount and the contrasting reality of prolonged disinvestment and a market dominated by public housing in Cabot, Yorktown, and West Poplar. With extreme conditions representing both ends of the spectrum now emerging in Francisville and threatening to increase economic disparity within the community, there is a swelling desire for greater balance. Growth is needed – and should be welcomed – provided that it is growth well managed and guided to meet the community's objectives and vision for an equitable, economically and physically diverse neighborhood.



Neighborhood residents communicate their priorities at a community meeting

- Promote an equitable and economically diverse neighborhood.
Advocate for mixed-income development with an emphasis on "middle-income" housing.
Advocate for senior housing; age in place.
Approach PHA as a development partner to address vacant homes throughout the community.
Provide information and access to resources that help residents build equity. Serve as a liaison between tenants and landlords.
- Communicate the neighborhood's vision for Francisville's physical fabric; empower the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee.
- Push forward "transformative" development projects.
- Conserve Francisville's Historic Core.

Empower the neighborhood: reclaim vacant land; enforce safe streets and corners.

Most Francisville residents, when they take the time to rub their eyes and look around at their surroundings, agree that the neighborhood's public spaces – its streets and sidewalks, gardens, and building facades – could use a little TLC. With the goals of improving public perception and neighborhood morale, of protecting and respecting the neighbors and the neighborhood, and of maintaining a cleaner and safer environment, all neighbors in Francisville should be encouraged to support a Francisville Clean, Safe, and Beautiful effort.



- *Create a Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed.*
- *Recruit a Francisville Trash Czar/Recycling Guru.*
- *Francisville needs YOU for Town Watch.*
- *Reinvent the alleys – secure, redevelop, or reprogram.*
- *Pursue the acquisition of strategically-located publicly owned properties.*



Make Francisville a Greene Countrie Towne... again.

6

Francisville, at the moment is 30% sponge-like, covered with a permeable surface that absorbs rainwater as it falls. Tree coverage is sparse. With only a handful of small green spaces aside from the Francisville Playground, Recreation Center and the large common spaces incorporated into Community Ventures' developments, Francisville has a lot of seeding and sowing to do before it can reconnect with its roots as a vineyard. As Francisville's redevelopment brings new buildings and people to the area, the stormwater infrastructure, open spaces, and recreation facilities will service a larger population. These resources, which contribute to the health and vitality of local residents and ecosystems, require protection and improvement. Foster a "green" culture in Francisville. Mitigate the impacts of new development. Create a healthy neighborhood with healthy people.

- *Animate the "Soul" of the Neighborhood, the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center.*
Reconfigure the park; reinvest in its facilities.
Expand programming for people of all ages.
- *Spruce up existing gardens if you want to keep them as gardens; protect and expand community gardening.*
- *Start a Francisville Tree-Tenders group.*
- *Build an oasis for Francisville's Green Thumbs.*
- *Promote Low Impact Development (LID) and "green" building technologies.*
Set minimum standards for environmentally sensitive design; enforce these standards through the neighborhood zoning review process.



*Proposed oasis for Francisville's Green Thumbs:
Francisville Greenhouse and Tench Francis Community Gardens*

Francisville is walkable; make it more so.

Francisville is close to many major destinations in Philadelphia; walking and biking are realistic options for people traveling to and from Francisville each day. SEPTA bus, trolley, and El lines connect the neighborhood with destinations farther afield. And yet, people continue to rely on the car, and parking has surfaced as a serious issue for residents. To remain livable and convenient, Francisville must embrace its identity as a well-located and well-connected urban neighborhood, encouraging people to choose to get out of their cars, and to choose Francisville because of the opportunity to do so.

- *Advocate for improvements to local SEPTA stations.*
- *Integrate a bicycle environment along Francisville's main streets.*
- *Develop a strategy for on-street parking; help neighbors navigate the permitting process.*
- *Limit curb cuts for parking (and front-loading residential garages).*
- *Develop a shared parking scheme.*
- *Encourage PhillyCarShare to locate vehicles in a Francisville lot.*
- *Keep SEPTA schedules for neighborhood routes in the FNDC offices.*

Foster bright futures for neighborhood youth [and for the neighborhood].

The Francisville community values the long tenure of its residents. Many Francisville families have lived in Francisville for generations; they define Francisville just as Francisville defines them. While new growth and development interest are welcoming newcomers to the neighborhood, these new residents alone do not represent Francisville's future. Francisville's future is in its youth, comprising almost one third (31%) of today's population, and many of these youth are at risk. The youth of Francisville, *the future of Francisville*, need attention.

- *Found a Neighborhood Youth Council.*
- *Plug in your youth (and your young at heart).*
Connect the community to computers and a cutting-edge technology curriculum for all ages and skill levels.
- *Create a "Francisville Sound Studio" designed to teach youth music creation and production utilizing local talent.*
- *Develop a Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (FYC-3) [part fun, part job skills, part work] – an environmental maintenance program to clean and green Francisville.*

Ensure that local services serve the neighborhood.

Despite Francisville's unusually high institutional presence, the lack of coordination between churches, schools, health centers and hospitals, shelters, and other service providers in the area results in both redundancy and service gaps. Furthermore, many of the locally provided services target clients from across the City – bringing a particularly needy clientele to Francisville each day and creating somewhat of a misperception: Francisville has a substantial base of service providers, yet many programs do not serve Francisville residents, leaving the local population underserved in some areas.

- *Compile a Francisville Services Directory; make Francisville's Service Network more accessible.*
- *Enroll local students in local educational opportunities.*
- *Support the initiative to improve Bache-Martin Elementary School and the Franklin Learning Center.*
- *Address the concentration of services by adding new and active ground floor uses and lobbying against any additional homeless shelters in the community.*



*Introducing, the Francisville Sound Studio:
A local grass-roots music program for youth.*

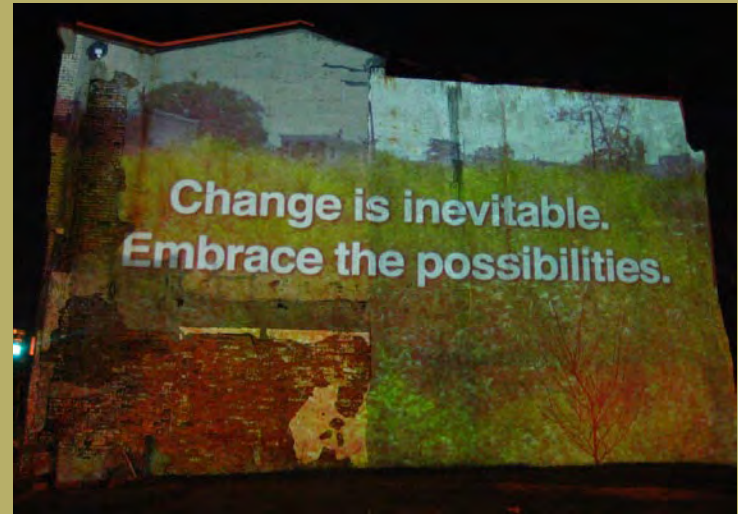
Neighborhood Capacity

Francisville is a neighborhood in flux. Strong, stable leadership is needed to guide the neighborhood as it revitalizes, ensuring that the existing community has a voice in the process and providing continuity between the Francisville of today and tomorrow. Poised to succeed in this role, the FNDC, viewed as a dedicated, democratic, but *young* organization, must evolve and mature, assuming new roles and responsibility as it gains in experience and achievement. As the FNDC's tasks grow in weight, number, and urgency, the organization must reconsider its goals, structure, and capacity and make changes within, accordingly.

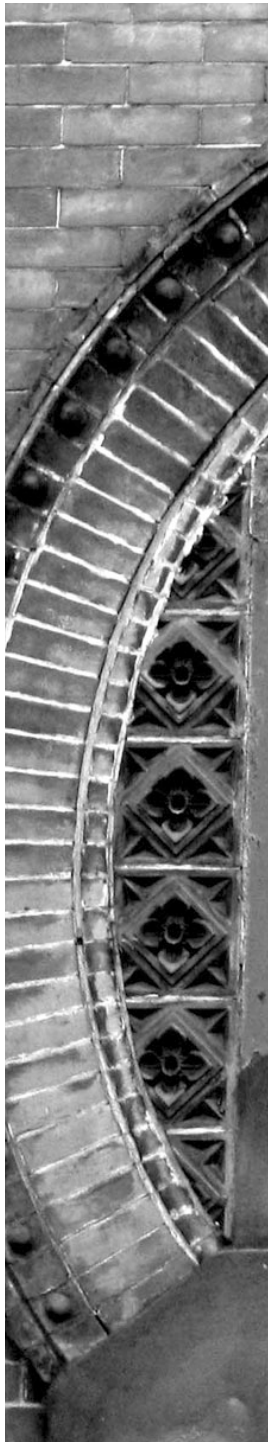
However, the FNDC cannot expect or be expected to implement the Plan on its own. A Francisville Alliance, including the Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation (FNDC), the Francisville Civic Association (FNCA), Fairmount CDC, Spring Garden CDC, Francisville CDC, People For People, Inc., Holy Ghost Headquarters/CDC, and the Girard Coalition, should be strengthened and formalized to help with implementation. The result will be a powerful team of unified, committed neighborhood groups, institutions, and volunteers on board and ready to work with each other, the Councilman, the City, potential funders, and private partners to steer the Plan's implementation and push for great change. As a more formal structure to guide the Plan's implementation, the FNDC should transform the Project Leadership Committee, created to oversee development of this Plan, into an Implementation Committee, adding additional representatives from the Francisville Alliance as necessary.

While the FNDC builds capacity among its partners and volunteers, it must also build capacity as an organization. The FNDC needs full-time staff – a paid Executive Director and a part-time grant writer to begin with, eventually more.

Lastly, the FNDC must continue to provide open and democratic community leadership. Resident support and participation are key to the success and implementation of the Plan. The FNDC must inspire all Francisville stakeholders to get involved and stay involved. The ball is rolling; the challenge now is to maintain the energy and momentum.



Video installation clips
Source: Klip Collective



Purpose of the Plan

The neighborhood planning process is a forum for neighbors, business owners, investors, and civic leaders to learn and to exchange ideas, to imagine – together – the future of Francisville.

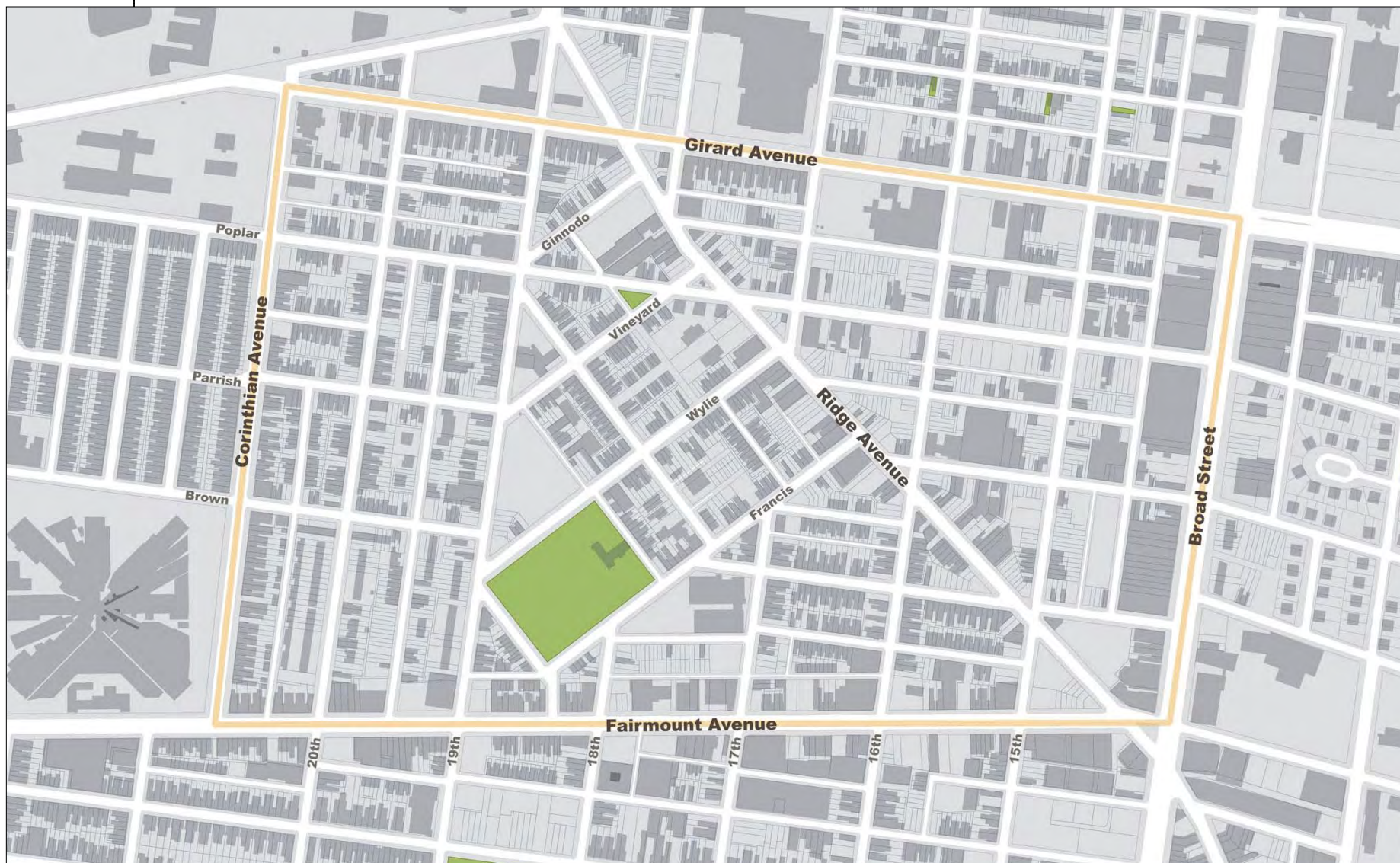
The neighborhood plan is also a tool for local organizations, residents and business owners to prioritize their goals and direct their efforts, increase resident involvement and, ultimately, raise funds and implement change. Created by, and for, the community, the key goals of this plan are to:

- Preserve the diverse character of the community;
- Promote equitable development;
- Improve local services;
- Transform Ridge Avenue into a viable business corridor;
- Coordinate revitalization activities;
- Promote community pride, awareness, and communication;
- Build partnerships between community residents and the public and private sectors;
- Develop business retention, attraction and marketing strategies;
- Create preservation strategies for the Francisville Historic Core;
- Address local schools;
- Develop local arts programs and cultural amenities;
- Improve the use of public transit; and
- Address key quality of life issues from crime to parking.

Methodology

Francisville is a neighborhood framed by strong boundaries: Fairmount Avenue to the south, Girard Avenue to the north, Broad Street to the east, and Corinthian Avenue to the west. Ridge Avenue cuts diagonally across Francisville, dividing the neighborhood's Historic Core from the northeast corner of the neighborhood, often termed the Triangle. This Plan adopts the area within these traditional and recognizable border streets, Fairmount, Girard, Broad, and Corinthian, as the primary study area.

However, as the edges of the community are changing rapidly given the new housing development speculation occurring along its south and west boundaries and the renewed interest in revitalizing historic commercial streets like Girard and Broad to the north and east, the Plan embraces a larger view that places Francisville in context. That adjacent neighborhoods share boundaries, and therefore mutual concern for the health of edge streets, and that change in one neighborhood spurs change beyond that neighborhood's borders, further warrants consideration of the communities neighboring Francisville.



Study Area for the comprehensive neighborhood plan for Francisville

Project Partners

The **Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation (FNDC)**, formerly known as the Concerned Residents of Francisville CDC, is a non-profit organization incorporated in 2003. A young group, managed entirely by dedicated resident volunteers, the FNDC emerged in an effort to address the serious state of decay in the fabric of the Francisville community, to encourage community participation in neighborhood growth and decision-making, and to disseminate information, thereby replacing fear of change with empowerment. Working toward its stated mission, “to improve the quality of life in the Francisville community through commercial and residential development and to implement programs designed to develop the youth, aid senior citizens, and generally invest in the people of Francisville,” the FNDC facilitates frequent and well attended community meetings. In this way, the FNDC serves as a resource for information and communication, bringing together community members and representatives from City agencies and other neighborhood groups to discuss local issues including development review, financial literacy, youth needs, crime prevention, and greening. Working in tandem with the FNDC is the **Francisville Neighborhood Civic Association (FNCA)**. The FNCA is a growing organization that already undertakes many programs in the community dedicated to improving outreach, pride and youth services.

Guided by consensus, the FNDC has given its community a voice both by listening and through leadership.

People For People, Inc. is a faith-based non-profit organization founded in 1989 as the community development branch of the Greater Exodus Baptist Church. With the overarching mission of social justice, People For People has been active in the community, helping people break the vicious cycle of poverty in their lives through faith, family, and home-ownership by providing access to quality education, counseling, training, and the development of entrepreneurial skills. At present, People For People operates one of the most successful job skills training programs in the City of Philadelphia in its state of the art computer labs. People For People’s partnership with the Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation in the context of this planning process reflects a shared long-term commitment to the future of the people of Francisville and the revitalization of the neighborhood that both organizations call home.

In response to the growing development pressure and sensing the neighborhood’s revitalization and change, the Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation, in partnership with People For People, Inc. and Fairmount CDC, obtained a Neighborhood Planning Grant from the **Wachovia Regional Foundation** to

develop a Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan. After receiving the grant award, the Francisville **Project Leadership Committee (PLC)** was formed and tasked with managing the planning process, guiding the Plan’s evolution, and facilitating the participation of Francisville residents. The PLC members, serving as representatives of the local community and liaisons between the community and elected officials and policy makers, retained Interface Studio LLC and the Klip Collective to provide such professional services.

INTERFACE STUDIO LLC is an urban design and planning practice based in Philadelphia that concentrates on community revitalization. With the goal of promoting the long-term success and viability of the neighborhoods, Interface Studio adopts a comprehensive approach to all project work, ensuring an in-depth consideration of a range of issues: market pressure, affordable housing, neighborhood diversity and character, local schools, and community services including commercial uses, open space, and social programs. Interface Studio assists clients in visualizing the potential impact of their investments, exploring creative solutions to complex design problems, and developing feasible strategies for implementation.

The **Klip // Collective** is a media-art collaborative with experience developing video installations that promote public dialogue. They are nationally known for their video installations and bring a sensitive approach to interactive design to each assignment. The Klip Collective’s creative productions engage the community, enriching the planning process, promoting the arts in Francisville, and bringing new life to Ridge Avenue. The video installations, “launched” in the late fall of 2006 and updated throughout the planning process, have offered an ongoing public reminder that the neighborhood is at work.

As evidenced by the Francisville Information Network (FIN), a phone and email broadcasting system that enables the FNDC to disseminate public service information, the FNDC recognizes the value of community input and feels a fundamental need to raise awareness and interest in community affairs among Francisville residents and business owners. The overriding objective of the Plan is to be consistent with the values, visions, and priorities of community members – a creative and successful extension of the public outreach and awareness already in place in the community. As such, **Francisville Community Members** played an integral role in informing the planning process conducted by Interface Studio, enriching our understanding of place and helping to shape a vision for Francisville with their wealth of information, anecdotes and memories, questions, ideas, and challenges.

Their words help tell the story of this report.

Planning Process

Given that the Plan belongs to the neighborhood and will serve as the unified voice of the community concerning prospective change and development, the participation and support of community stakeholders was essential to the planning process. Community input helped Interface Studio complete a thorough analysis and develop a comprehensive body of recommendations for the neighborhood. The community engagement process sought to interact with local stakeholders through a number of methods and will continue to do so as the FNDC and its partners transition from the planning process into implementation. The Plan's community outreach initiatives included the following:

- Confidential one-on-one interviews with a sample of long-term residents, relative newcomers, community activists, and neighborhood leaders;
- Four neighborhood youth became Interface Studio employees for a week, conducting a parcel-by-parcel building condition survey of every structure in the neighborhood. They gave us insight to the neighborhood in exchange for an introduction to the planning profession. The neighborhood, as they see it, appears in map form later in this report;



Source: Tanye Gilbert-Ruffin



Francisville Public Meeting: Project Kick-off



Francisville Public Meeting: Project Kick-off

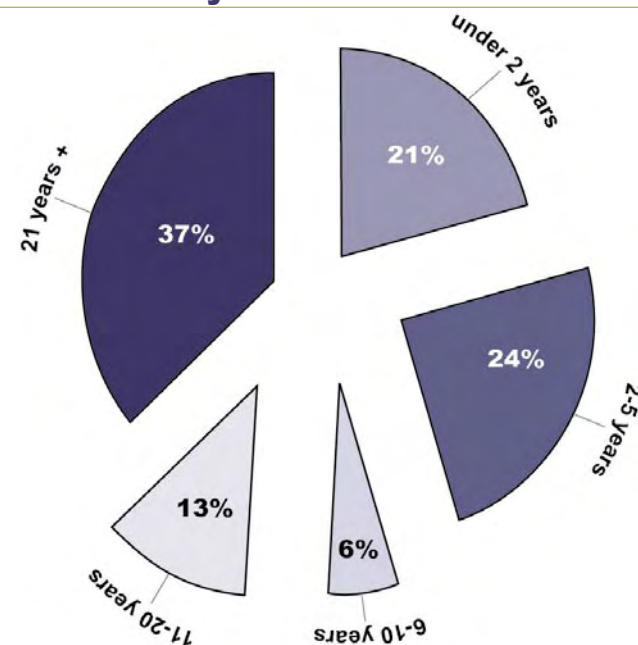


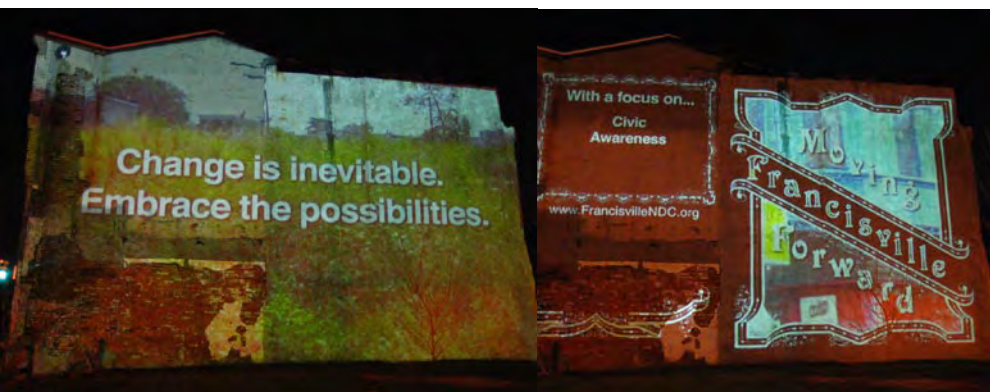
Klip Collective Video Installation Launch at Girard and Ridge. Source: Klip Collective

- A series of “focus groups” with representative samples of distinct stakeholders groups within the neighborhood, each with unique concerns and opinions regarding future growth in Francisville. For the analysis phase, Interface Studio conducted four focus groups of ten to fifteen people representing the following constituencies: the comprehensive neighborhood plan Project Leadership Committee, local business owners, local service providers, and local investors, developers, and community development partners;
- A public meeting held as a project kick-off and information sharing session at the commencement of the planning process. A second public meeting concluded the analysis phase, with Interface Studio presenting findings to the community. A third public meeting sought neighborhood feed-back as the recommendations phase neared completion, and a fourth public meeting will introduce and celebrate the final Plan;
- A Neighborhood Needs Survey designed to quickly and effectively gather information on local issues, concerns, and future priorities. The surveys were distributed at the kick-off meeting, online via the Francisville Information Network, and by members of the Project Leadership Committee. They successfully solicited responses from a wide range of residents, business owners, and other stakeholders.
- A day-long Project Leadership Committee Retreat during which Interface Studio worked intensively with PLC members to develop a vision for Francisville. Interface Studio presented preliminary recommendations for PLC review and organized mini-charrettes, or brainstorming sessions, to further develop ideas for key areas in Francisville, including Ridge Avenue and the Recreation Center.

- A series of video installations, projected on the side of a building and visible from both Girard and Ridge Avenue, looping through the night, catching the eyes of residents and visitors, suggesting that something is in the works, making them think, and inviting them to join in the planning process.

Length of Residency





Frames from the first video installation. Source: Klip Collective



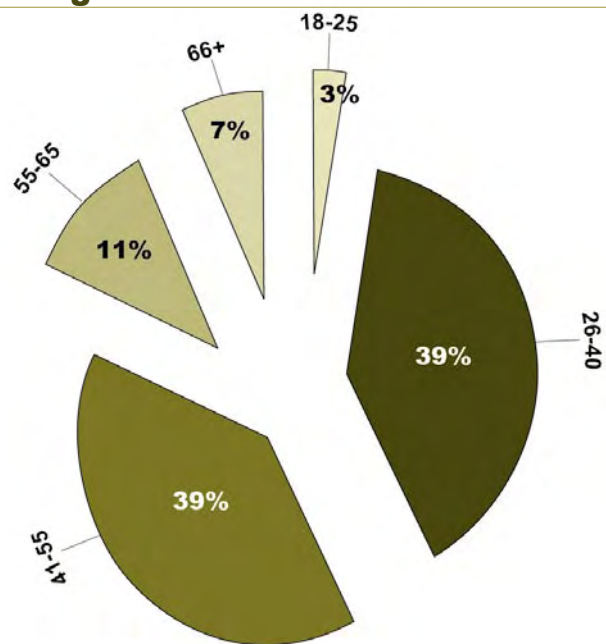
Teams discuss the future of Ridge Avenue at the PLC Retreat.

Results of the Neighborhood Needs Survey are sprinkled throughout the Plan. The questionnaire surveyed 76 people, including those who have lived in Francisville all of their lives and those who have moved to the neighborhood from: Mt. Airy, Fairmount, West Philly, Strawberry Mansion, Northern Liberties, Center City, New Jersey, and London!

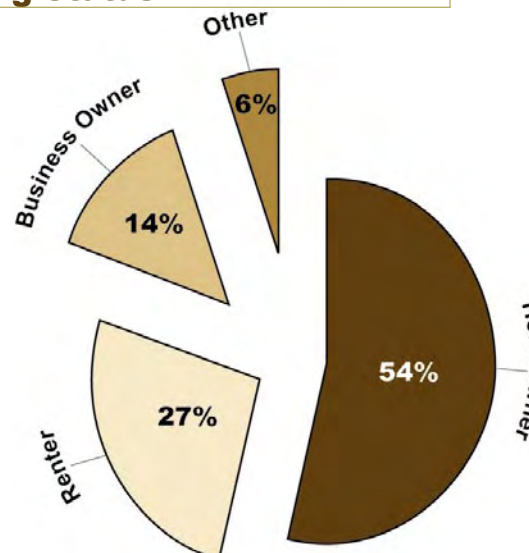
These people love Francisville for the: diversity of people, the proximity to Center City, the lack of congestion, the familial feel, the great views, the excellent potential...

The survey tells us that these people agree on some things and differ on others, but they all share hopes for the neighborhood's future. The planning process helped to locate the common threads; the Plan represents a collective voice for Francisville.

Age



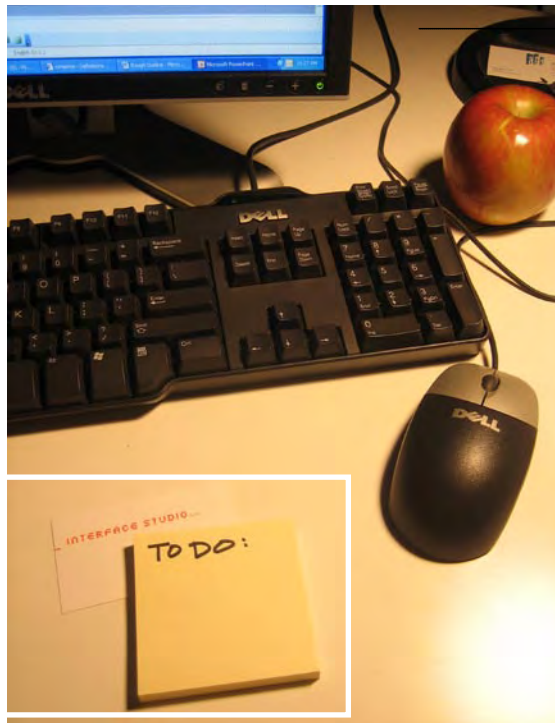
Housing Status



Neighborhood Needs Survey Population
Source: Neighborhood Needs Survey

Local stakeholders are the backbone of community. Accordingly, community participation benchmarks formed the skeleton of the planning process. The community established the frame; we filled the spaces in between with research and outreach, field work and mapping, drawing, thinking, and writing.

The planning process for *Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future* began in July 2006 and was completed in June 2007. Guided by the Project Leadership Committee and led by Interface Studio, four phases comprised the planning process.



I The **Analysis Phase**, defined by observation, research, and outreach to assess and determine neighborhood needs included:

- A comprehensive survey of Francisville to create an up to date land use map and determine the physical conditions of the neighborhood;
- Census research to evaluate demographic and socioeconomic changes within the neighborhood over time;
- A review of historic maps and photographs as well as the neighborhood plan completed in the Spring of 2005 by University of Pennsylvania School of Design graduate students in city planning;
- An assessment of real estate sales data from the Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT), Multiple Listing Services (MLS), and the University of Pennsylvania's Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML) for Francisville and adjacent neighborhoods to better understand market pressure in the study area;
and, perhaps most informative,
- A public outreach campaign composed of individual interviews, focus groups, and a neighborhood-wide questionnaire, all intended to tap the neighborhood's most valued resource, its residents, for their thoughts and opinions, concerns and desires regarding the future of Francisville.

2 The Preliminary Recommendations and Neighborhood Alternatives Phase involved:

- Processing the information collected during the analysis;
- Comparing observed trends and projections against shared concerns and desires for the future of Francisville;
- Beginning to imagine opportunities and outcomes as well as strategies to achieve such goals;
- Incorporating Best Practices Research, based upon identified opportunities and challenges, collected from neighborhoods in transition both in Philadelphia and beyond, to determine a relevant set of innovative and attainable planning strategies;
- Developing alternative scenarios or outcomes for transformative sites in the neighborhood;
- Updating the video installation with the Klip Collective; and
- Collaborating with the Project Leadership Committee at the PLC Retreat to seek feedback and further develop the preliminary recommendation ideas.

3 The Plan Development Phase encompassed:

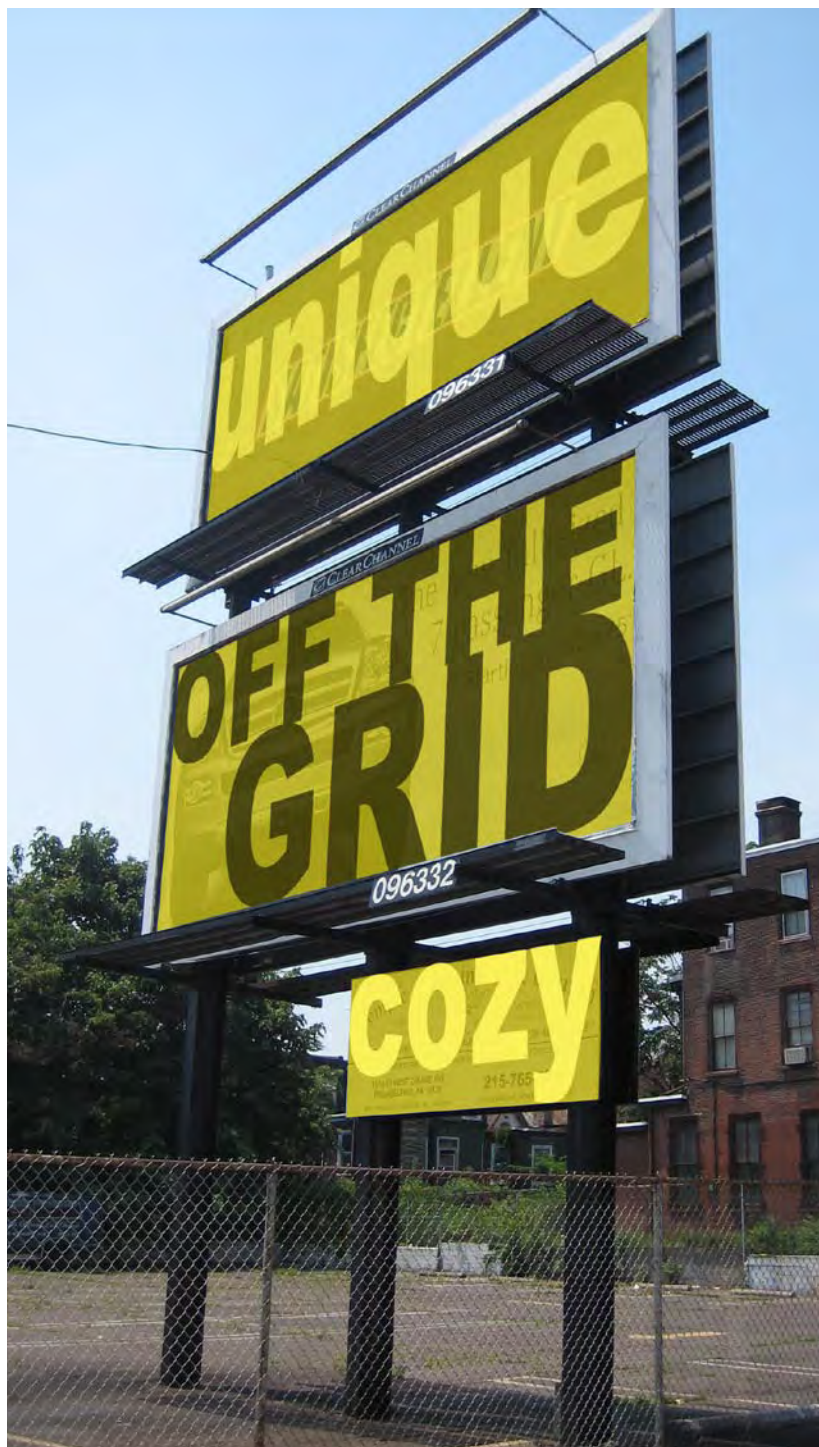
- Developing, in detail, the recommendations that comprise the final Plan. The recommendations stem directly from our alternatives and outreach conducted during Phase Two and fall within eight goal areas that address social, economic, physical, and environmental concerns;
- Drafting an Implementation Approach to support the recommendations. The Implementation Approach outlines a structure for ongoing collaboration and information sharing; and
- Continued community participation in the form of a public meeting during which the recommendations were presented and critiqued and ongoing Project Leadership Committee guidance.

4 The planning process culminates with the Final Neighborhood Plan Phase, the phase just completed, during which Interface Studio:

- Developed a Preliminary Action Plan and Phasing Strategy;
- Finalized a Draft of the Neighborhood Plan, incorporating changes that resulted from the public participation and response to the work shown at the end of Phase Three;
- Updated the video installation in collaboration with the Klip Collective; and
- Conducted a meeting with the Project Leadership Committee to polish the report and present the final comprehensive neighborhood plan for Francisville to the neighborhood at a public meeting.

The FNDC, People For People, and all interested neighborhood stakeholders now assume responsibility for the Plan, its adoption, and its implementation – a plan for *Moving Francisville Forward, a blueprint for the future*.





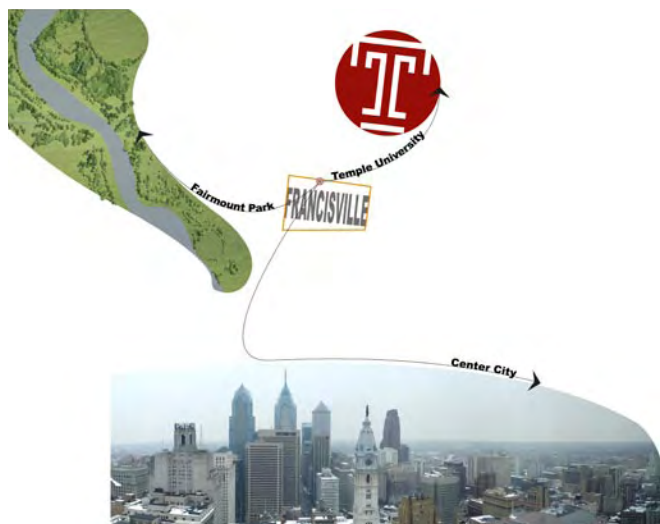
Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future

Francisville is unique, cozy, and off the grid. Over the years, despite changing urban dynamics and neighborhood conditions, Francisville has always remained a village in the City – *FrancisVillage*.

Today, Francisville is on the move. The neighborhood is rebuilding – it is growing and planning for the future – and, most importantly, the community is driving this process. Long-term residents and newcomers, business owners and developers, representatives from local organizations and City agencies, alike, have asserted their voices. Their beliefs, priorities, and ideas have formed a more cohesive choir, giving unified expression to a shared respect for the past, a common concern and commitment to the present, and an imaginative anticipation of the future.

From Francisville's planning process has emerged a vision for this village, a vision that builds upon the best that Francisville has to offer and reinforces the very qualities that have always made Francisville, *Francisville*.





Franciscville is: next door, good people, historic, off the grid, cultural...



These streets are found in Franciscville - and only in Franciscville.

Vision

Francisville grew from a vineyard. The community will nurture its future by planting new seeds and cultivating an inclusive, full-service urban neighborhood, a neighborhood for your family:

FrancisVillage – a diverse patchwork of people, place, and talent.
Independent, off the grid, connected.

FrancisVillage – sown from several seeds:

A seed of unity – to grow a cohesive neighborhood: an inclusive and diverse community working together to rebuild Francisville; a community proud of its history and talents, a distinctive and identifiable community.

A seed of commerce – to grow a viable Ridge Avenue: a thriving heart of the neighborhood, where residents and visitors come to work and shop, where goods change hands, job skills develop, and local dollars support the local economy; a Ridge that once again dances to the rhythms of days gone by.

A seed of values – to grow equity and equitably: a neighborhood where residential reinvestment benefits all residents and where all residents can afford to remain – and choose to do so; an economically diverse neighborhood, empowered to communicate its vision for Francisville's future.



A seed of action – to grow a clean and safe neighborhood: a neighborhood where vacancy no longer keeps fields fallow year after year; a community where neighbors respect and protect each other.

A seed of green – to grow a balanced neighborhood: a neighborhood where open space complements new development; a community with fresh air enjoyed by healthy, active residents.

A seed of livability – to grow a walkable neighborhood: a neighborhood bolstered by its proximity to Center City, Fairmount Park, and Temple University, among others; a neighborhood well connected to destinations throughout the City.

A seed of healthy futures – to grow the neighborhood's future – its youth: a community that invests in the education, talent, health, and experience of its children, teens, and young adults; a neighborhood that provides opportunities to develop self-worth, pride, and respect.

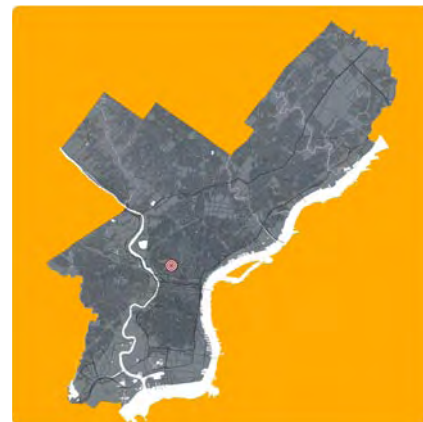
A seed of support – to grow a neighborhood anchored by strong foundations: a neighborhood where institutions and service providers communicate and coordinate to form an impressive service network that ensures the needs of all local populations are met.

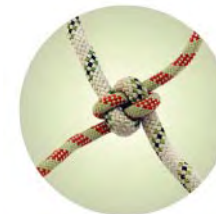
The FNDC's biggest challenge is to plant these eight seeds; its best hope and opportunity is to effectively bring the community together to nurture and harvest the fruits of their labor.



Recommendations

The vision translates into a series of eight goal areas, each of which encompasses a set of recommendations for *Moving Francisville Forward*. Together, these recommendations form a comprehensive neighborhood plan – a *blueprint for the future*.

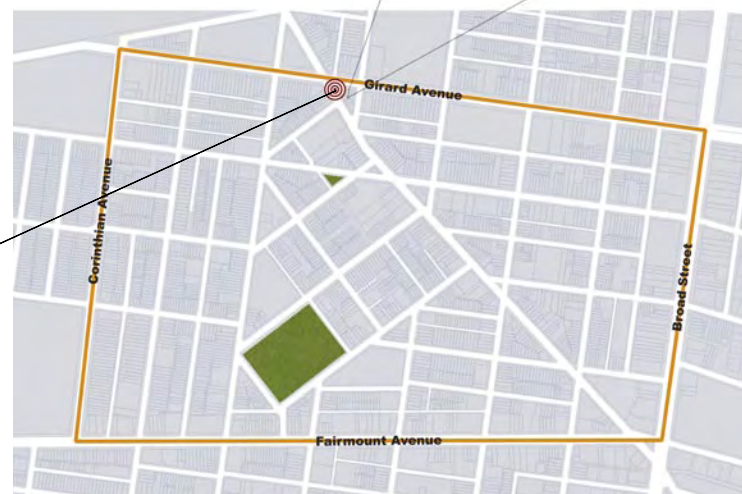




u n i t y

YOU ARE HERE, NOW!

Change is inevitable.
Embrace the possibilities.



Video installation locating Francisville on the map and generating some buzz about the neighborhood

I. Become one cohesive neighborhood, and get some recognition.

Bring the community together.
Reinforce neighborhood identity.
Elevate Francisville's presence in the City.
Plant a seed of unity.

For a historic neighborhood so close to Center City, it is surprising how often Francisville is overlooked. Timing is on Francisville's side though; with so much change occurring in the neighborhood, now is a good time for Francisville to reflect and redefine itself. The goal is to reintroduce Francisville (loudly, to get the neighborhood noticed) as one community – working together, unified, and renewed – back on the map, doors open for all to enjoy. The following recommendations are intended to build community, build community pride, and build a name for that proud community:



Build Community – Research conducted during the analysis phase of the planning process estimates that more than 700 new residents have moved to Francisville since 2000; conversations with residents suggested that tension exists between long-term residents and newcomers. Now at a turning point, Francisville is repopulating and becoming both more racially and economically diverse in the process. While some long-term community members welcome such change as both desirable and necessary for the neighborhood's future, others are skeptical of the recent influx of investor interest and middle- to upper-income residents. Francisville's future requires that the neighborhood grow as one community.

Short-Term Recommendation

1.1 Develop a Neighborhood Talent Directory and appoint a Talent Placement Agent.

This recommendation is intended to help the FNDC build capacity and a culture of volunteerism within the neighborhood. As the planning process comes to a close, it is important that the FNDC identify ready and capable volunteers interested in joining a team organized to help the FNDC with implementation of the neighborhood plan. Put very succinctly, the FNDC must strive to broaden participation.

The FNDC should circulate a Neighborhood Talent Directory Survey at the next few community meetings, asking residents about their skills and interests and informing them of ways in which they might get involved in neighborhood revitalization activities. All skills and interests are welcome, though the list might include: gardening, cooking, music, dance, art, photography, outreach, professional skills, construction skills, grant-writing, tutoring, history, land clean-ups, and recycling, among other things.

The FNDC should then begin to think about ways to match specific skills with specific needs. This will be the job of the Talent Placement Agent. For example, as described in Recommendation 7.3, the Talent Placement Agent might match potential mentors for youth or teens with kids who share a particular interest, hobby or goal. Or perhaps the FNDC needs an experienced gardener to help reclaim an existing, but somewhat forlorn garden (Recommendation 5.2). With all of the talent in Francisville, the possibilities are endless. And if the Talent Placement Agent can find a way to magically pair long-term residents with neighborhood newcomers in volunteer efforts, the benefit is enormous.



Extend your talent, celebrate your neighbors, share your information

1.2 Establish a Welcoming Committee.

The FNDC, charged with guiding Francisville's future, spends an incredible amount of time and energy working to ensure that the neighborhood's redevelopment (residential and commercial) is in keeping with the collective vision of neighborhood residents and business owners. As community leaders, they invest much effort in sharing information as well, inviting all of Francisville's stakeholders to get involved and get their voices heard. With so much change in the neighborhood, however, in the form of new houses and *new residents*, community building is just as important a task for the FNDC. A unified, open, and friendly neighborhood is a strong neighborhood.

The FNDC and FNCA should establish a Welcoming Committee in charge of greeting newcomers and fostering relationships between long-term residents and their new neighbors. The committee should prepare a Welcome to Francisville package for all residents – lifers, yes, but newcomers in particular. The Welcome package should include information about neighborhood services (trash schedule, recycling, buses, etc.), neighborhood groups, neighborhood history, neighborhood institutions, and a calendar of FNDC / FNCA events. The Welcome package should also include a Neighborhood Talent Directory Survey (Recommendation 1.1), inviting all residents, especially the new ones, to get involved and showing them how.

1.3 Schedule a roving FNDC / FNCA summer block party featuring a different block each time.

Neighbors – long-term and new – should not get involved with the neighborhood just for the purpose of *working* toward its full revitalization. Neighbors should get together with the neighborhood to have some fun. Francisville knows this; it is a neighborhood of people that like to have a good time. This recommendation proposes a roving annual FNDC / FNCA summer



Sample Shout-Out. Text Source: PLC Retreat

block party hosted by a different block each time so that new neighbors and lifelong Francisville residents can get to know each other in a social setting – no work required. The FNDC should contact the active Block Captains in the neighborhood and encourage them to invite the neighborhood – not just the block – to the first annual FNDC summer block party. The location of the block party should alternate every summer between the Highlands and the Historic Core. If it is a potluck party, residents should try out a recipe that they are considering for the Francisville Neighborhood Cookbook (Recommendation 1.9) to see if it is well received, meaning completely devoured.

Short-Term Recommendation

1.4 Develop a Francisville Shout-Out Page on the FNDC website.

Francisville is a creative community, and Francisville communicates well. This recommendation builds upon these two valuable community characteristics – and focuses on building pride at the same time. Think of it as an interactive, digital, public art project along the lines of www.postsecret.com¹ or like a graphic “I Love You”-only version of the Philadelphia City Paper’s “I Love You I Hate You”² page. The Shout-Outs are intended to champion Francisville and its residents online, for all to see, welcoming new additions and contributions each day.

The FNDC should add a Francisville Shout-Outs page to the FNDC website and maintain a digital online catalog of: fun facts, favorite Francisville stories, Francisville triumphs, or people, organizations, or activities in the

¹ PostSecret is an ongoing community art project where people mail in their secrets anonymously on one side of a homemade postcard. The postcards are then posted online, publishing the anonymous secrets online for the world to see. www.postsecret.com.

² The last page of the Philadelphia City Paper, a free alternative news weekly, is called “I Love You I Hate You.” Readers may submit short anonymous messages – words of praise or spite.

neighborhood that deserve celebration – for any reason. The Shout-Outs should be anonymous (and positive), welcoming a new family to the neighborhood, sending congratulations for a graduation or a new baby, or raving about the food at a new restaurant, for example.

To get this started, the FNDC should explain the project via the Francisville Information Network (FIN) and have a formal project launch at an upcoming community meeting. The FNDC should bring samples to pass around, so that residents understand what the Shout-Outs page is about, as well as note cards and markers for people to decorate or fill with Shout-Outs during or after the meeting. The opportunity to create a Shout-Out should be a regular feature of all community meetings, but the FNDC should also invite and encourage people to send postcards or notes through the mail or with email. Update the webpage frequently so that residents get in the habit of checking to see if they or someone they know has received a Shout-Out.

1.5 Expand the Francisville Information Network (FIN) – information is power.

The FNDC understands the importance of information, and lucky for Francisville, the FNDC not only feels compelled and committed to sharing information with *everyone* in neighborhood, but has also multiple ways of getting out the word. We all agree the Francisville Information Network, which broadcasts major neighborhood news via email, telephone, the web, and flyers is impressive. But the neighborhood needs more network members and more people receiving necessary information about Francisville. The FNDC should continue its efforts to broaden FIN membership, and should encourage its partners to help them. Getting more people online and checking email will help (see Recommendations 3.1 and 7.2), but the FNDC should also enlist the assistance of partner organizations and institutions in the neighborhood, like People For People, Holy Ghost Headquarters/CDC, the Fairmount CDC and the Girard Coalition.

Build Community Pride – Francisville has a rich and unique history – an amazing legacy and a story to tell. From its origin as William Penn’s Vineyard to its years in the spotlight of Philadelphia’s Jazz heyday, Francisville has always been a special and specialized neighborhood. The problem is, knowledge of this history (of the juicy details in particular) is confined to the minds of a handful of long-term residents. The archives of Francisville’s collective memory must be documented and become more permanent and more accessible. Neighbors and non-neighbors should come join the festivities and enjoy the Francisville experience. Celebrate tradition, promote continuity, make your history *living* history.

1.6 Record oral histories.



Interviews conducted with long-term Francisville residents during the analysis phase of this planning process revealed the wealth of greatness that reside in Francisville – great memories and great stories, among them. We listened as interviewees described a Ridge Avenue of the past, teeming with life, full of shops by day and jazz haunts by night. We listened to vivid recounts of families who had been in the neighborhood for decades, becoming Francisville institutions themselves.

Francisville must recognize the value of these stories, which offer priceless glimpses of the neighborhood’s past and a richer understanding of both the neighborhood’s evolution and of the lives of its long-term residents. The FNDC should organize a long-term residents party to honor its seniors and document the stories they have to tell on video and audio tape. Long-term residents should be invited to attend and encouraged to bring old photographs of the neighborhood to share. Local youth should be enlisted to interview the party’s attendees. Memories will be preserved. Stories will be forever retold by the voices of those who have tended to them over the years. Teens enlisted to help archive Francisville’s collective memory will meet



Former Farmers' Market
Source: National Register of Historic Places



Wylie Street Kids, Easter, 1968
Source: Penelope Giles

the neighborhood’s elders, sharing an afternoon, sharing experiences, and taking one step toward bridging the “age gap” perceived by residents young and old.

Sound recording equipment is inexpensive to purchase and easy to operate. The use of video to create a documentary about the event, the lives of local seniors, and the life of the neighborhood should also be explored. Francisville should enlist the help of an ethnographer to direct the process, coach youth interviewers, and help ensure quality results. The recorded oral histories should be kept in the Archives of Francisville collection, described below, as well as posted on the FNDC website for general consumption.

1.7

Start an Archives of Francisville.

Francisville’s history predates that of its surrounding communities. Its streets appear on maps at the Free Library dating back to the early 18th Century, and images of its grand buildings and institutions lie buried in the stacks of the City Archives. Though the public is welcome to peruse these historic maps and photos, curious residents and budding historians must not only make the trip to the Library or Archives, they must also have an understanding of the resources that exist and a sense of what they are looking for. Wouldn’t it be better to bring Francisville’s history home to Francisville – to make it readily accessible and easily navigable? This recommendation proposes a mini



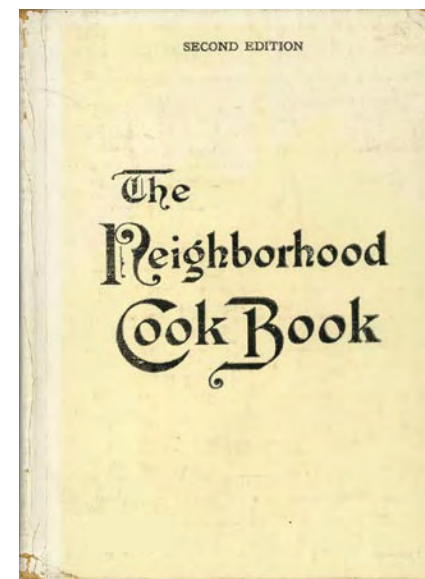
1828 Map of Francisville Vineyards
Source: Free Library of Philadelphia



Family photo
Source: Penelope Giles



Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Smith, John Coltrane
Source: www.wikipedia.com



Source: <http://digital.lib.msu.edu>

and informal Francisville library, a space set aside in the new Recreation and Community Center described in Recommendation 5.1, a place to foster community pride, to digitize and preserve historic materials, and to educate those interested in Francisville's varied past.

Collecting the contents of an Archives of Francisville requires community-wide effort. The FNDC should initiate a neighborhood photo drive, calling for old family and institutional photos to be scanned and kept as digital files. The City Archives and www.phillyhistory.org, which will someday host a comprehensive online database of the City Archive's photographs, are public resources for historic photographs. Those working to start an Archives of Francisville collection should also comb through and gather old maps and written documents pertaining to the neighborhood at the City Archives, the Free Library, the Temple University archives, and in their own and their neighbors' basements. Publish all materials online – impress people not only with Francisville's history, but with its collective skills in library science.

1.8 Compile a Francisville Soundtrack CD.

Francisville residents are fiercely proud of the neighborhood's musical legacy and the impressive concentration of musicians living and working in Francisville today. Music is a part of the community's identity. Music is a part of daily life – a way of life. Music in Francisville is more than background noise.

Francisville should compile a database of music that represents all musicians of Francisville heritage or fame – past and present. The database could be a collection of new recordings of old tunes covered by current musical artists in the neighborhood as well as contemporary music made in Francisville

today. The collection should be publicly available for listening at either the Archives of Francisville (Recommendation 1.7) or the Francisville Sound Studio (Recommendation 7.2), and compilation CDs should be available for sale to benefit FNDC initiatives. Put the local soundtrack to work to market both the neighborhood and its musical genius.

1.9 Create a Neighborhood Cookbook.

Once a vineyard, Francisville has always been a place of where good food (and wine) is important – and enjoyed. Walk by the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center on a nice day, and chances are, there is a barbeque underway. Community meetings are often followed by community dinners, complete with home cooked food and lively conversation, a testament to the facts that Francisville likes to eat (for good reason – the food is good!), and that Francisville likes to eat together.

A family-oriented neighborhood, Francisville no doubt has an impressive collection of family recipes to rival the locally-grown oral histories and musical scores. These recipes, too, need to be collected, archived, and published. The FNDC should recruit a volunteer to spearhead the creation of a Francisville Family Cookbook. The Francisville Information Network should be engaged in a neighborhood-wide Call For Recipes. The cookbook, once compiled, illustrated, and formatted, should be sold at community meetings, on Ridge Avenue, and at other local events, described in Recommendation 1.11, as a fundraiser for the FNDC and FNCA projects.

Build a Name – Francisville has a rare concentration of talent, creativity, and culture, but these qualities remain somewhat buried, known only to local residents. Few outsiders are privy to the neighborhood’s hidden gifts, and even if someone has heard good rumors about Francisville’s art, music, or history, chances are that person is unable to locate the neighborhood on a map. Francisville must become a recognizable neighborhood with a unique identity and a host of healthy associations that the name, *Francisville*, triggers in the minds of many.

Short-Term Recommendation

1.10 Put Francisville on the map, literally.

With the FNDC’s help, Francisville has come a long way in terms of name and place recognition, but there is still much work to be done in this regard. Hearing of a place is different than actually knowing where it is, what it is about, and what it has to offer. The FNDC needs to introduce itself and the neighborhood to some major local sources of information – enlist their help in putting Francisville on the map, literally. Following are four ideas for doing just that:



1. The FNDC should approach the University of Pennsylvania’s Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML) about redefining their Neighborhood Information System (NIS) neighborhood designations to more closely reflect neighborhood boundaries in Lower North Philadelphia (and elsewhere). CML’s free and interactive mapping functions provide an incredible wealth of information in a digestible format to people all over the City, and yet Francisville does not appear as a neighborhood in their mapping system.

2. The FNDC should also recruit a volunteer to check the locational maps of nearby institutions, such as Eastern State Penitentiary, the Philadelphia Zoo, and Temple University, to see whether their maps reference the adjacent neighborhoods. The FNDC should advocate, with help from other nearby neighborhood groups, to get Francisville, and others, on the map. Visitors to these destinations should know where in the City they are, and they should be invited and encouraged to explore the surrounding neighborhoods.

Just moving to Philly? [Ask a PhillyFriend](#) and you will have an answer!

Find out what is going on in OUR Philadelphia neighborhoods:

[Center City](#)
[Fairmount / Art Museum/Brewerytown](#)
[Fishtown / Northern Liberties / Kensington](#)
[Germantown / Mt. Airy / Chestnut Hill](#)
[Manayunk / Roxborough / East Falls](#)
[North Philadelphia](#)
[Northeast Philadelphia](#)
[Old City/Society Hill](#)
[Queen Village / Bella Vista / Hawthorne](#)
[South Philly](#)
[Southwest Center City](#)
[University City / West Philadelphia](#)

Neighborhood listings. Source: www.phillyblog.com

3. The FNDC should also ask a friend or two to start blogging about Francisville. There is nothing wrong with a little neighborhood self-promotion, so start getting the word out. Enlist the help of neighborhood stakeholders who are active on the blogosphere – or even just interested in Philadelphia’s web-presence – to post a thought or a note about interesting events at The Arts Garage, or the video installation at Girard



and Ridge, or anything else of a *positive* note on www.phillyblog.com, www.uwishunu.com, or another thriving Philadelphia blog. While the bloggers are working it, they should request that www.phillyblog.com add Francisville to the neighborhood heading that currently stops at “Fairmount / Art Museum / Brewerytown.”

4. The FNDC deserves to be recognized (officially) by its partners in community development in Philadelphia. The FNDC should, therefore, become a member of the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC).³ This will help further legitimize the FNDC and will provide the FNDC with access to new information.

1.11 Share the neighborhood through celebrations; market Francisville’s art and culture.

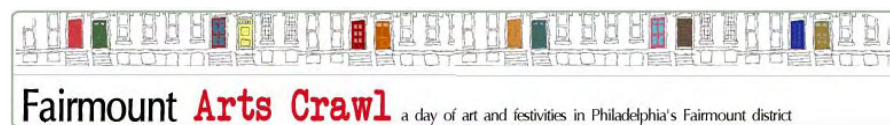


As Francisville revitalizes and rebuilds, the neighborhood will be proud of much more than its history. Celebrating the neighborhood’s progress and accomplishments will be just as important as refashioning public perception of Francisville. This recommendation proposes a series of parties in Francisville, annual festivities honoring Francisville’s past, present, and future. The FNDC and FNCA should coordinate and market neighborhood events intended to bring neighbors together and to

draw people from all over the City and region to Francisville. To advertise Francisville’s arts, music, and culture, the FNDC and FNCA should:

³ PACDC is a membership organization dedicated to advocacy, policy, development, and technical assistance for community development corporations and other organizations in their efforts to rebuild communities and revitalize neighborhoods. They need to know about you. <http://www.pacdc.org/>.

- **Host a yearly wine tasting** – Though William Penn’s vineyards were uprooted long ago, the streets of Francisville’s historic core still reference a unique time, place, and land use in the City’s history. Invite the City to sample the fruits of Francisville (or other wineries in the region). The Wine Tasting School on Fairmount Avenue is a natural partner in this effort.
- **Introduce First Fridays in Francisville** – Francisville emerged on the City’s contemporary art scene recently with The Arts Garage’s debut in the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival and Philly Fringe. Build upon The Arts Garage’s momentum by launching First Fridays in Francisville, an open invitation to explore art, music, and culture in the neighborhood. Coordinate this effort with the Avenue of the Arts, Inc. and their plans for North Broad Street.
- **Build upon and participate in Fairmount’s festivities** – The Fairmount neighborhood, just west of Francisville, has an active arts culture, which the Fairmount CDC and Fairmount Arts Council actively promote. The Fairmount Arts Crawl is “a community open house – where the entire Fairmount district becomes a showplace for local art and music, displayed and performed on the streets and in restaurants, bars, cafes, and other local businesses—all with an open door policy for the day.”⁴ The Fairmount neighborhood also enjoys free Bastille Day festivities at the Eastern State Penitentiary⁵ with a French-themed festival and a mock beheading of Queen Marie Antoinette. Neighboring Francisville and its residents should become active participants in these activities.



⁴ Fairmount Arts Crawl, <http://www.fairmountartscrawl.org/Home/>.

⁵ For more information, see: <http://www.easternstate.org/events/bastille.php>.



Re-zip Ridge Avenue: re-establish the corridor as a meeting place, a place that brings people together



2. Put the “Heart” of Francisville [Ridge Avenue] Back in Business.

- Develop a cohesive and supportive business community.
- Provide commercial services for local residents.
- Give visitors a reason to explore Francisville.
- Plant a seed of commerce.

Ridge Avenue in Francisville is in dire need of reinvestment. City-wide efforts to revitalize commercial corridors have touched adjacent commercial districts along North Broad, Girard, and Fairmount, leaving Ridge Avenue overlooked and Francisville residents to suffer from a lack of commercial services. With few local shopping opportunities, Francisville residents must spend their dollars elsewhere. As a result, the local market loses more than \$65,000,000 in sales annually! Ridge Avenue, once a vibrant corridor, is now a dividing line, devoid of services, lacking maintenance and appeal, and cutting the neighborhood in two, separating the historic core from the “triangle.” Still envisioned as the heart of the neighborhood, Francisville’s full revitalization will depend on Ridge Avenue’s revival. The neighborhood’s central seam must be re-zipped and re-populated.

Basics – Some of the recommendations for Ridge Avenue are basic, bare-bones strategies that apply to commercial corridors of all types – those thriving as well as those struggling to remain in business:

Short-Term Recommendation

2.1 Form a Francisville Business Association.

Restoring Ridge Avenue as a thriving and vibrant commercial corridor will likely be the FNDC's most long-term and challenging project. It will require the involvement, cooperation, and coordination of multiple players and partners: the City, private developers and investors, private land-owners, existing business owners, and the community as a whole. Most successful business districts benefit from the support, advocacy, and activities of a strong business association, which functions to undertake organized improvements and marketing initiatives and to provide useful information and assistance to existing business owners and people interested in pursuing business development along the corridor.

A group of Ridge Avenue stakeholders has already started meeting and discussing the formation of a Business Association to develop and pursue a vision for the corridor. This group, composed largely of service providers at present, should continue to meet monthly. They must maintain their momentum, as an effective Business Association will require dedication and committed leadership. As a next step, the Business Association should reach out to business owners on Ridge Avenue (and throughout the community) to broaden membership to include a mix of business owners, entrepreneurs, service providers, and FNDC representation.

The Business Association will need to draft a committee structure, action plan, and set priorities for the Business Association. In the short-term, the Business Association will function to help the FNDC promote, coordinate, and implement physical improvements to the Ridge Avenue corridor. Once the Business Association becomes more established, its activities might include:

- Facilitating introductions between all business owners along the strip and engaging them in a more cohesive and cooperative community;
- Hiring a consultant to assist existing businesses with merchandising and window displays;
- Linking new or struggling business owners with City, consultant, or graduate student resources for business plan review and small business assistance;
- Selecting key buildings for façade improvements; and
- Coordinating ongoing streetscape maintenance.



Security grates should allow sight lines into and out of store windows



Decals are an affordable window treatment



2.2 Become a PCDC designated Commercial Corridor.

The Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC)⁶ works to further neighborhood revitalization by facilitating economic development and providing small business assistance. Though PCDC has proven experience working with individual commercial and business development projects, the organization also plays an integral role in “stabilizing and growing” urban commercial corridors through its Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) Program.⁷ Of central importance to PCDC is wealth circulation, bringing commercial services to neighborhoods so that residents can meet their needs locally and support the local economy. That goal resonates with Francisville and its Ridge Avenue corridor.

Recognizing the incredible value of PCDC’s technical guidance and the immeasurable worth of increased access to commercial development funding streams that a partnership with PCDC affords, the FNDC has reached out to PCDC and requested designation as a Commercial Corridor. With the relatively small number of open and active businesses along Ridge Avenue in Francisville, PCDC has explained that it does not meet the necessary criteria to become a PCDC designated Commercial Corridor at this time. However, PCDC has designated Ridge Avenue as an “emerging commercial corridor” because it meets the following three criteria: 1) New housing activity near

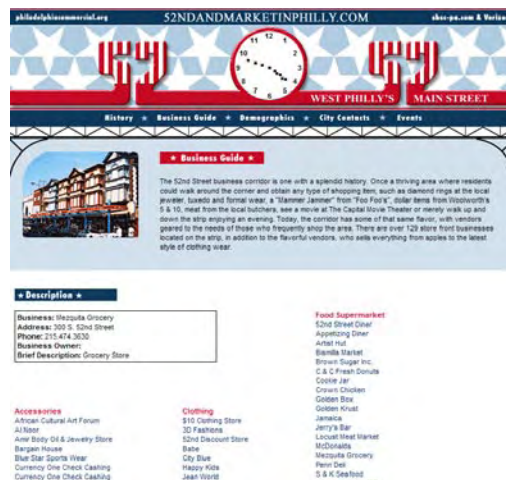
the corridor; 2) An active community CDC with an emphasis on the commercial environment; and 3) New or proposed business anchors in the form of the Arts Garage and People for People’s proposed development at 15th Street. As an “emerging commercial corridor,” PCDC will provide technical assistance to the local business association and serve as a liaison for important City services that will help the corridor revitalize. The FNDC and its partners in Ridge Avenue’s revitalization should continue to work with PCDC until the corridor’s commercial market is once again strong enough to win designation and ongoing support as a PCDC designated Commercial Corridor.

⁶ For more information about resources that PCDC makes available to commercial corridors and small businesses in the City of Philadelphia, visit their website: <http://www.philadelphiacommercial.com/>.

⁷ As PCDC’s website explains, the “Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) Program works with community organizations and local business associations to strengthen the economic base of neighborhood commercial districts. The NCR Department focuses on improving the appearance and operations of neighborhood shopping areas. PCDC provides both technical and financial assistance to merchants, business associations and community development corporations located within the targeted NCR districts and the adjacent areas through its Commercial Area Specialist (CAS) Program. The NCR department places its concentration on Commercial Area Strategic Planning, Crime Prevention assistance, Storefront Improvement assistance, Special Event Coordination, Real Estate Development assistance and overall Corridor Guidance.”



Online presence of other local business associations



Short-Term Recommendation

Create a cleaner environment.

Ridge Avenue's deteriorated state is only underscored by the litter and debris that creeps out from adjacent vacant properties, fills the sidewalks (where they exist), and ventures into the street. If the lots, sidewalks, and streets were cleaned and kept cleaned, Ridge Avenue's image would improve immediately.

The FNDC and Business Association should investigate the possibility of enlisting a street cleaning crew in the short-term to provide regular cleaning along Ridge Avenue in Francisville. Once the Youth Community Caretakers Club is established as described in Recommendation 7.5, Ridge Avenue should be a focus of activity for the program. To reinforce the cleaning work, the FNDC and Business Association should talk to residents and businesses about the importance of maintaining the corridor's appearance; inspire them to make more of an effort to keep their sidewalk areas clean.



Stabilized vacant land must be maintained as clean and green

Create a safer pedestrian environment.



Roughly 11,000 cars a day travel along the two lanes of Ridge Avenue that run between Girard Avenue and Broad Street; the majority of these 11,000 cars are traveling quickly – using Ridge Avenue as a shortcut to downtown or Manayunk, Roxborough, and beyond. For Ridge Avenue to become a thriving urban commercial corridor once more, pedestrians must feel safe crossing the Avenue, and drivers must slow down enough to notice the strip's offerings. Through-traffic, destination trips, transit, and pedestrians must coexist within the 56-foot throughway. Several streetscape improvements will accomplish this task and create a slower, cozier, and more intimate environment along Ridge Avenue:



Ridge Avenue's 56-foot throughway has the potential to host an intimate, pedestrian-scaled streetscape



Sidewalk bump-outs in Northern Liberties make crossing 2nd Street easier and safer



Planted bump-outs will help to manage stormwater running down Ridge



DuraTherm street print allows patterns and logos to be imprinted into crosswalks



Triangle identified for proposed security kiosk

- **Traffic Calming** – To slow traffic moving along Ridge Avenue and better facilitate pedestrian crossings, the FNDC should work with the City Streets Department to advocate for sidewalk bump-outs and crosswalk material changes at main intersections along Ridge. The bump-outs should extend the sidewalk into the parking lane to decrease the distance that pedestrians must cross. They should also be partially planted to capture stormwater as it runs downhill. The crosswalks, if treated with a visible material, will alert drivers to the presence and domain of pedestrians.
- **Sidewalk Restoration** – Where sidewalks exist along Ridge Avenue, they are cracked and crumbling. Large expanses do not have any sidewalk at all. Restored sidewalks, kept clean and intact, are crucial to the pedestrian experience, and imperative to seniors or disabled residents who lack sure-footing and mobility.
- **Pedestrian-Scale Lighting** – Ridge Avenue requires pedestrian-scale lighting to look and feel safe throughout the day and night. The existing lights illuminate the street for cars rather than the sidewalks for pedestrians, and their spacing leaves portions of the sidewalk in darkness. New lighting will not only brighten the sidewalks, but will also serve as a design element that makes Ridge Avenue a more desirable destination.
- **Trash Cans** – People will continue to drop their trash on the street until they have conveniently placed, regularly emptied trash cans that offer an alternative. Cleaner streets will improve the safety, appearance, and perception of Ridge Avenue. Trash cans are a necessity.
- **Trees** – Trees will offer shade in the summertime and will help to frame views on the street, making the thoroughway feel more enclosed, and thus encouraging cars to drive more slowly. Trees will also soften the edges of the street, adding beauty and generating an immediate impact.
- **Security Kiosk** – A number of small, difficult to develop triangles of land line Ridge Avenue. The smallest one, located at Ridge, Parrish, and 16th, is an ideal location for a security kiosk – a small base station for a foot- or bike-cop whose beat targets Ridge Avenue. Staff at the small security kiosk could use the nearby Fire Station's facilities as necessary, and Ridge Avenue's pedestrian environment would benefit from an increased police presence, which would encourage slower driving and discourage criminal activity.

2.5 Brand, broadcast and improve Ridge Avenue's Gateways.

The last “basic” recommendation for the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor speaks to signage, marketing and the quality of the corridor’s gateways. This includes three necessary actions:

- **Partner with the Girard Coalition to undertake a gateway project at Ridge and Girard** - The Girard Avenue and Ridge Avenue intersection has long been recognized as a critical gateway for Francisville and unique moment along the length of Girard Avenue. The Girard Coalition has already identified this intersection for strategic improvements. The FNDC and Business Association should further this relationship to jointly seek funds to create an active gateway for the area. A small plaza, street treatment (including a potential street mural or paving pattern), lighting and new tree planting should be integrated to elevate the look and feel of this gateway.
- **Brand the corridor at key intersections** - The FNDC should work with the Business Association to develop unique signage for Ridge Avenue’s gateways at Fairmount and Broad to the south and at Girard Avenue to the north. The signage should let people know that they are in or entering Francisville and should welcome them to Ridge Avenue. The signage should function at multiple scales and speeds, capturing the attention of drivers and bus passengers moving quickly through the area, and helping pedestrians and bicyclists to navigate the corridor.



Playful signage in Los Angeles, California

Signs should also be placed at the intersection of Girard and Broad, the intersection of Corinthian and Girard and the intersection of Corinthian and Fairmount, indicating an entrance to Francisville and pointing people in the direction of Ridge Avenue.

- **Improve access to Ridge Avenue** - One of the primary concerns of residents and business owners is the poor access to Ridge Avenue via the intersection of Ridge Avenue, Fairmount Avenue and Broad Street. The recent changes to the intersection that removed a lane of traffic has created a bottleneck at all times of the day. With a significant amount of proposed development in the pipeline including the redevelopment of the Divine Lorraine as well as new mixed-use development on the 1400 and 1500 blocks of Ridge Avenue, this intersection needs to be improved to encourage and support commerce. A coalition including the FNDC, the Business Association, People for People, the Spring Garden CDC, and the developers of the Divine Lorraine should be formed to lobby for intersection improvements and work with the Street Department to develop an effective solution that balances the need for improved traffic flow with pedestrian safety.



Ridge Avenue's gateways should welcome visitors and alert people that they are entering Francisville

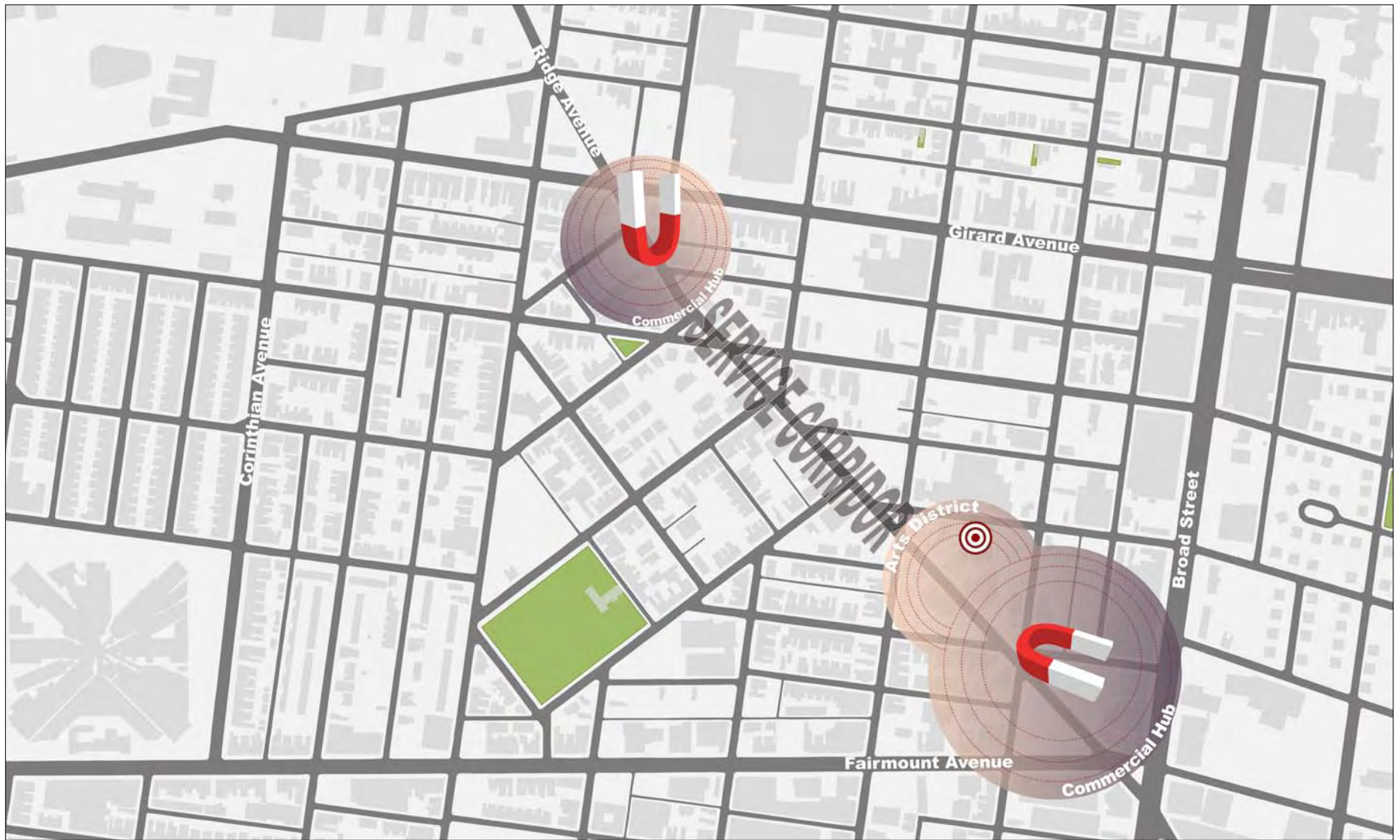


Which came first?

Above and Beyond – Ridge Avenue is in a somewhat unusual position for a commercial corridor; it is facing the old quandary, “which came first, the chicken or the egg?” Lacking stores to generate foot traffic and foot traffic to support stores, Francisville will have to work harder than other communities to re-zip the seam and put Ridge Avenue back in business. With 21,000 cars passing the intersection of Ridge and Girard each day and 50,000 passing the intersection of Ridge, Fairmount, and Broad, Francisville should start by helping Ridge Avenue get noticed; give drivers a reason to park the car, get out, and walk around – up and down the corridor, through the neighborhood. These “above and beyond” recommendations for Ridge Avenue are designed to get Ridge Avenue the attention it needs and deserves.



Notice me...



Two commercial hubs should serve as anchors, or magnets, drawing people to Ridge Avenue.

2.6 Develop retail anchors to attract visitors to the corridor; balance a commercial vision with service missions.

The FNDC and Project Leadership Committee for this planning project envision a revitalized Ridge Avenue as a mixed use corridor that locates commercial and retail uses in ground floor spaces with residential, office, and services uses located above. These instincts are smart, but given the need to build a market (almost from scratch), a commercial corridor lined entirely by retail to encourage walking is unrealistic. The FNDC and Business

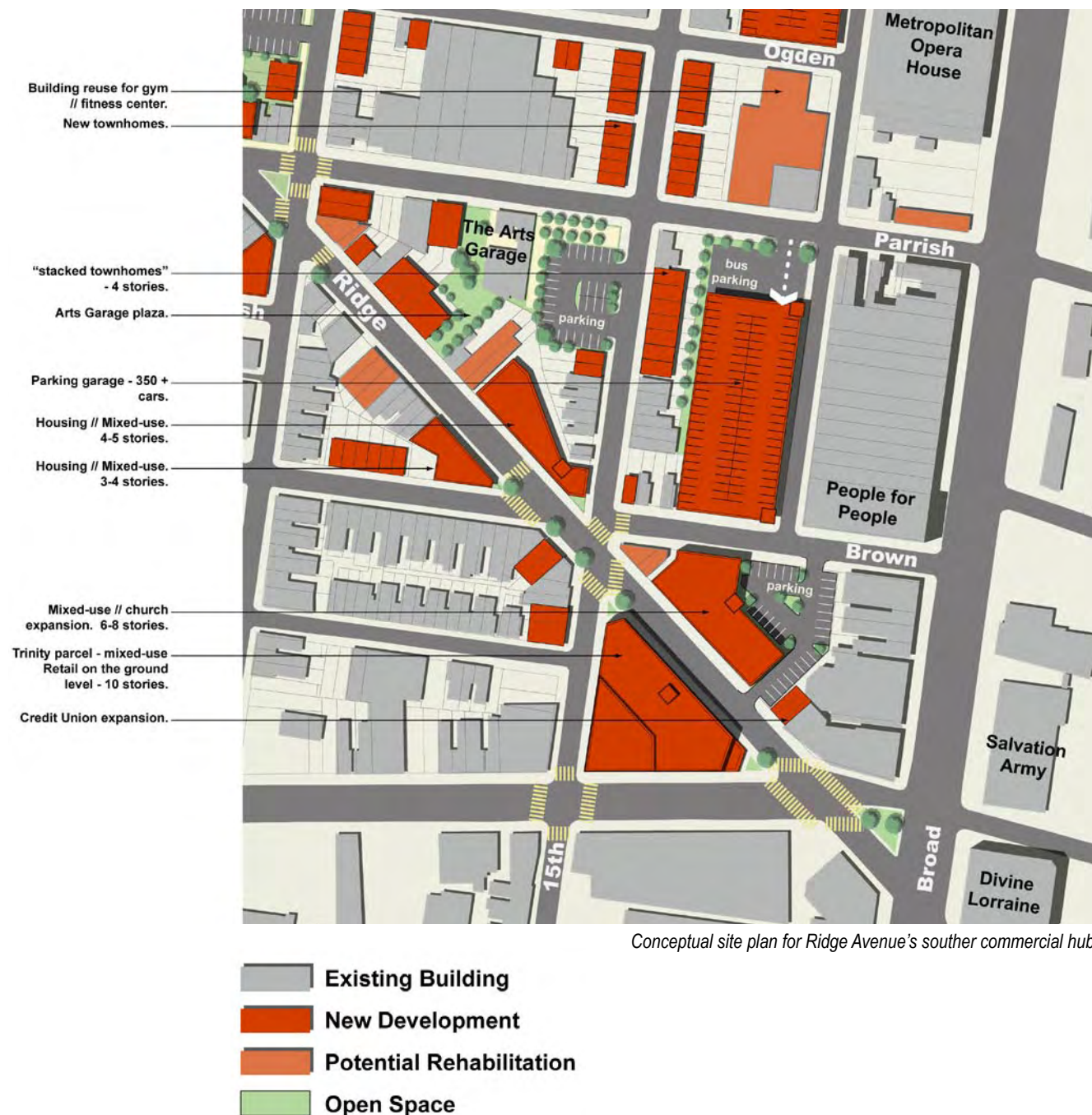
Association should focus their retail business attraction efforts around two hubs or magnets at either end of the corridor. These retail gateways, one at Girard and one at Broad and Fairmount, will serve as anchors, visible along major thoroughfares and providing a reason for pedestrians to walk the entire length of Ridge Avenue as they shop.

People For People, Inc. is in the midst of planning a mixed-use development project within the southern retail hub. People For People currently owns three large properties – 2 parking lots north of Ridge and the empty land bounded by 15th, Ridge and Fairmount referred to as the “Trinity” parcel. These sites enable People For People to coordinate an aggressive mixed-use program across the three sites to serve their mission and the larger objectives of the community. Specifically:

- New mid-rise structures should be considered and developed along the 1400 block of Ridge Avenue to host a mix of uses including expansion of the Greater Exodus Baptist Church.
- All new structures and uses should contribute to an active street wall along Ridge Avenue.
- Support development by creating a new parking garage located on Carlisle Street. The garage would serve the needs of a growing community as well as retail and cultural uses on Broad Street.

The development of these three sites will extend the investment proposed at the Divine Lorraine site on Broad Street north into Francisville, acting as a spark to a Ridge Avenue revival.

Working closely with the FNDC, People For People should also identify additional underutilized and vacant sites for potential development between Broad Street, Fairmount Avenue, 16th Street, and Ogden Street. Redevelopment in this area coordinated with the activities of The Arts Garage will serve as the foundation for an arts district on Ridge, drawing energy and arts supporters from Avenue of the Arts North into Francisville.



Conceptual site plan for Ridge Avenue's southern commercial hub

To the north of the arts district, is Francisville's service corridor. Already home to the Mary Jane Enrichment Center, Trevor's Campaign, and the Byron Story Foundation, among others, as well as the proposed future home of the FNDC offices (Recommendation 5.4), Francisville's service corridor should continue to provide services to its clients and customers for existing and emerging businesses. As the market strengthens, service providers with storefronts on Ridge, like the Mary Jane, should explore the possibility of reopening their storefronts to the general public, creating jobs for their clients or students in new restaurants or stores and restoring the corridor's commercial frontages. Local businesses and service providers will need to work together, sharing information about economic development, business assistance, and capital improvement resources, and balancing a commercial vision for Ridge with service missions. The FNDC should help facilitate such cooperation.

The northern retail hub for Ridge Avenue in Francisville should grow around the site of the former Farmers' Market. While this large parcel of land will likely host mixed use development, the FNDC should work with the developer to ensure that the retail component of the project reintroduces fresh, healthy, and affordable produce for neighborhood residents. The old Farmers' Market is vivid in residents' memories, and creating a new one is a major priority for the community.

This northern gateway for Ridge Avenue should be sensitively designed to maximize the benefits for the corridor and community as a whole. This includes four inter-related tasks.

- The area should be developed as a mixed-use gateway, combining retail with new housing and a parking lot to serve Ridge Avenue businesses.
- Given the visibility of the site and the desire to bring fresh produce back to Ridge Avenue, the community should embrace higher densities on the site (above the currently allowed 35 feet height limit) to bring residents onto Ridge Avenue.



Existing conditions at Ridge Avenue's proposed northern commercial hub

- To facilitate the use of the parking lot and farmers market, we Ginnodo Street should be turned into a two-way street.
- Additional infill development for small storefronts with housing and the reuse of an existing structure along Ridge Avenue for live / work lofts should explored for smaller lots and vacant buildings. These live / work lofts could complement the programs and activities of The Arts Garage just a few blocks away.



Conceptual site plan for Ridge Avenue's northern commercial hub

- Existing Building
- New Development
- Potential Rehabilitation
- Open Space

2.7 Encourage off-street parking, but off of the Avenue.

With street parking located on one side of Ridge Avenue only, the commercial corridor has limited on-street parking potential. To support the businesses that will repopulate Ridge, the FNDC needs to define a strategy that locates off-street parking close by but in locations that do not visually impact the corridor. The off-street parking strategy for Ridge Avenue includes both new, multi-use at-grade parking lots and two structured parking garages.

The FNDC should advocate for the creation of three small parking lots on currently vacant land to occur in association with new development projects. One of the proposed lots sits at the interior of the Farmers' Market site, serving customers of that retail use. One of the proposed lots sits along Cambridge Street, east of the structures that front on 18th Street. The third proposed lot is located at the corner of Ogden and 16th. All three lots should be free parking resources for the neighborhood, restricted to a two-hour time limit during business hours, and creating an off-street, over-night parking resource for residents.

The two proposed structured garages are intended to support major neighborhood institutional uses.

- A garage proposed for Carlisle Street between Brown and Parrish will serve People For People, Inc. and Greater Exodus Baptist Church, with additional spaces available for Ridge Avenue customers, patrons of The Arts Garage, and nearby residents.
- A garage proposed for Carlisle between Ogden and Poplar will serve the Holy Ghost Headquarters' congregation, the Holy Ghost CDC, and the Metropolitan Opera House as well as other uses along Avenue of the Arts North.



Overall conceptual site plan for Ridge Avenue and the "Triangle"

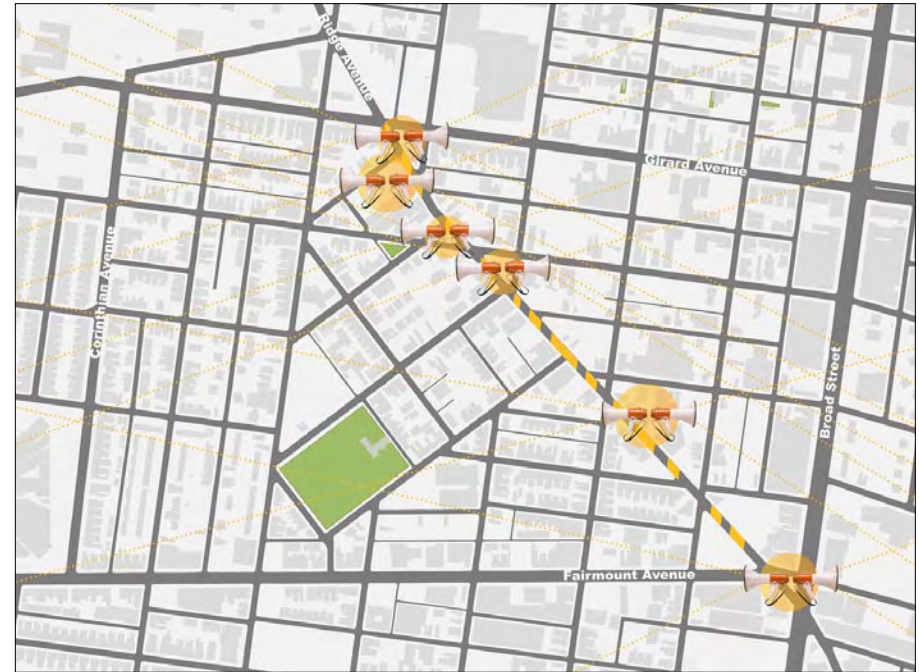


2.8 Use key sites along the corridor as a loudspeaker; communicate the neighborhood's unique identity.

The FNDC should “adopt” key sites and spaces along Ridge Avenue for the implementation of creative streetscape improvements. The public spaces, quirky triangles, underutilized surfaces along the corridor should become loudspeakers for Francisville, contributing to rather than detracting from the streetscape. The FNDC should use these spaces to capture the attention of passersby and to broadcast information about the neighborhood, its history, and its future. The possibilities are endless; here are some ideas:

Short-Term Recommendation

- **Expand the Video Installation** – Currently operating on the side of a building at the corner of Ridge and Girard, the video installation should continue sharing information about the plan and progress in its implementation. The FNDC should explore opportunities for additional installations closer to the proposed arts district on Ridge. The FNDC should also consider regular updates to a video installation in their storefront office window on Ridge (once its headquarters are built).
- **Directories** – Information about businesses and services on Ridge Avenue in Francisville should be presented on information boards or directories along the corridor to help visitors navigate the area and meet their commercial and service needs.
- **Walk Francisville's History** – Along Ridge Avenue and within the adjacent historic core, mosaic tiles should be designed that express the unique history of the community. The tiles should be a minimum of 2 feet by 2 feet and integrated into sidewalk paving at least every 10 feet. Up-front design costs should be borne by the FNDC with installation and implementation costs paid for by the developers of each property in the area.

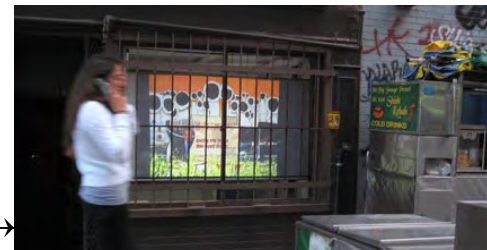
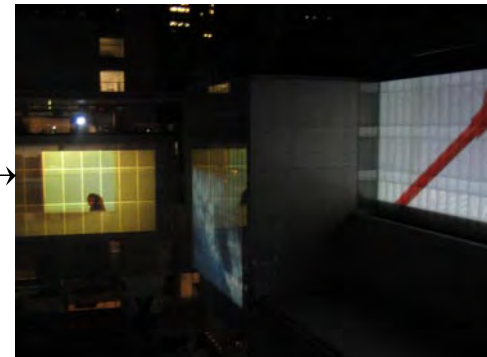
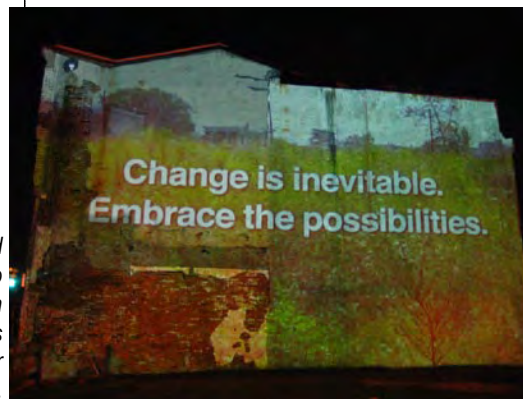


Ridge Avenue should function as a loudspeaker, broadcasting the neighborhood's identity

Sample mosaic tile with vineyard theme.



Expand the video installation to storefronts and larger surfaces.



Directories needed: Tell people where they are and what is available.

- **Create Artboards along the Avenue** – Large-scale graphics and photographs should be considered to tell the story of the community and Ridge Avenue. At times, these can be new, large-scale signs and at other times a creative reuse for blank walls. One approach that should be considered is to reuse the billboards on Ridge Avenue as “artboards.” Billboards on Ridge Avenue are peeling, ugly, and sending the wrong message. The FNDC should investigate the ownership of these billboards as many across the City have been illegally erected and, therefore, subject to removal or change. SCRUBS, a local non-profit dedicated to fighting billboards, could be an ally to transform billboards into artboards that say something positive and educational about Francisville.



*Convert Billboards
into Artboards*



- **Emphasize that Francisville is Off the Grid** – The FNDC should consider painting street murals on the surface of Ridge Avenue in the area between Girard and 18th Street to emphasize that the neighborhood is “off the grid” and different. A quick and affordable place branding installation, this recommendation requires coordination with the Mural Arts Program and the Streets Department. The murals would catch drivers’ attention and slow traffic entering the neighborhood from the north. A similar treatment should be considered near the Arts Garage to draw attention to that resource.



*Conceptual
sketch:
vineyard mural*



2.9 Reclaim the triangles.

As mentioned above, some of the parcels of land along Ridge are small, irregular, and difficult to develop triangles. The neighborhood should work with the City and with property owners to make these triangles active and publicly accessible. The following recommendations should be pursued.

- Integrate security kiosks where possible.
- The FNDC should approach the owner of the triangle at Ridge, Poplar, and Vineyard with a vision for a coffee stand with outdoor seating.
- The slightly larger triangle across the street at Ridge, Poplar, and 17th is of substantial size to host some new, mixed-use development. The southern tip of the triangle should, however, remain an open plaza, perhaps themed to celebrate the neighborhood's jazz or multi-cultural history or programmed as a year-round stage or music park - a venue for live entertainment during the spring, summer, and fall. The plaza should incorporate a bus shelter on 17th.
- All crosswalks linking to these triangles should feature a material other than asphalt.



Conceptual rendering of triangle redevelopment



Conceptual rendering of triangle redevelopment



2.10 Plan for the short-term. Short-Term Recommendation

Ridge Avenue's full commercial comeback will be a lengthy process, requiring patience and commitment by those guiding the work. The neighborhood should be able to see and celebrate positive change in the interim, and so the FNDC and its partners should embrace the responsibility for planning (and implementing) in the short-term. Until the developers arrive and the stores reappear, the FNDC should make the most of the available space to remind people of Ridge Avenue's past vibrancy and prove to them that it is emerging again. The parcel of cleaned and greened land that once hosted the Farmer's Market should become a temporary vineyard (at least around the edges). The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Green program should be enlisted as a partner in this initiative. In the arts district on Ridge, The Arts Garage lawn should become a landscaped sculpture garden and entrance to the gallery and performance venue. These spaces, well maintained, will transform the area and its image.



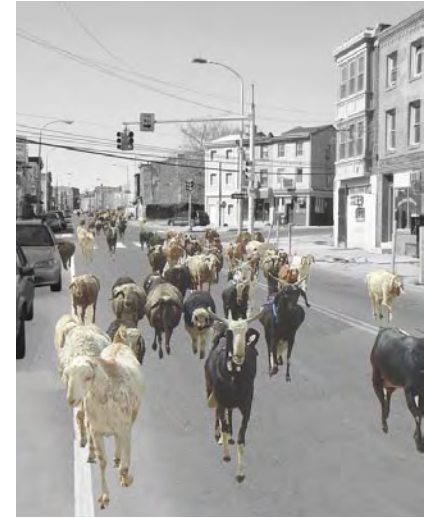
*Short-term proposal for the former Farmers' Market site:
replant the vineyards*



2.11 Plan for big events – Discover Ridge!

The FNDC should encourage the celebration of every small step in Ridge Avenue's comeback. One expression of this ongoing celebration should be big, seasonal public events that occur on the street, helping to shift Ridge Avenue from a space for passing through to a destination. These events, scheduled somewhat regularly to maintain public interest and buzz, might include:

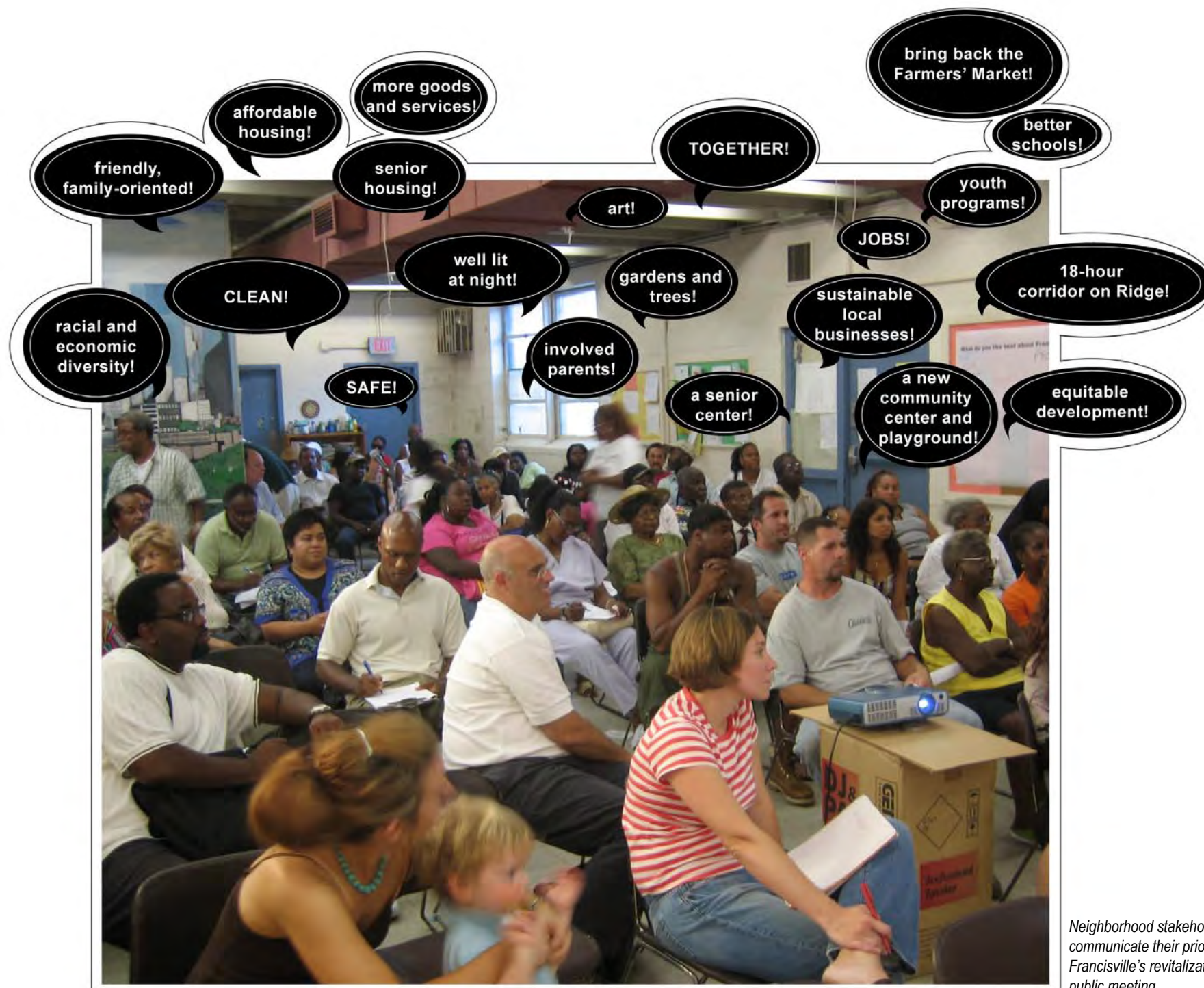
- **A Music Festival** – featuring artists living and making music in Francisville today as well as covers of the songs of former Francisville greats;
- **A Farmers' Market kick-off** – with a children's petting zoo and goats or horses marching along Ridge Avenue for the day; and
- **A Flavor of Francisville Food Tasting and Sidewalk Sale** – where new shops and restaurants bring their wares outdoors for all to see and sample.



Farmers' Market kick-off: petting zoo with goats on parade



Short-term proposal for The Arts Garage's lawn: landscaped entry and sculpture garden



Neighborhood stakeholders communicate their priorities for Francisville's revitalization at a public meeting.



values



3. **Manage your future; ensure that new residential development serves the full needs of Francisville's families.**

Promote equitable development.

Build an economically and physically diverse neighborhood.

Negotiate to ensure that the Francisville of tomorrow reflects the vision of the neighborhood of today.

Plant a seed of values.

Francisville is caught in the midst of a transforming urban marketplace, physically located between the growing residential market pressure pushing north from Center City and east from Fairmount and the contrasting reality of prolonged disinvestment and a market dominated by public housing in Cabot, Yorktown, and West Poplar. With extreme conditions representing both ends of the spectrum now emerging in Francisville and threatening to increase economic disparity within the community, there is a swelling desire for greater balance. Growth is needed – and should be welcomed – provided that it is growth well managed and guided to meet community objectives. Survey respondents noted a mixed-income future for the community (62%), and quality affordable housing options (48%) as top priorities for Francisville. Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents noted building rehabilitation as a housing needs priority.

3.1 Promote an equitable and economically diverse neighborhood: Focus on moderate-income housing. Short-Term Recommendation

Francisville was not always a predominantly low-income neighborhood; years of decline and abandonment drained the neighborhood of many of its services, resources, and financially mobile families. As Francisville rebuilds and repopulates, the neighborhood is becoming more economically diverse once again.

As Francisville moves forward, the FNDC must encourage residents of all income brackets to put their skepticism aside and meet somewhere in the middle – to see the value of an economically diverse, full-service urban neighborhood and to ensure that all residents benefit from Francisville’s redevelopment.

Current market-rate projects in Francisville cater to upper-middle- and upper-income buyers. These market rate developments are necessary to increase the local tax base and support the services residents would like to see re-emerge on Ridge Avenue. At the same time, Francisville already has a large base of subsidized, rental, and scattered-site public housing that accommodates the needs of many low-income residents. What the community needs is more housing targeted toward working families.

The FNDC should work with interested developers to deliver homeownership products for moderate- or middle-income buyers. These projects should target families making between 80% and 120% of Area Median Income (AMI). Addressing this need, Community Ventures is currently developing 7 middle-income homeownership units scattered throughout the neighborhood.

Short-Term Recommendation

3.2 Advocate for mixed-income development; all are welcome.

Market rate housing in Francisville is a key ingredient to Francisville’s revitalization. Access to lower income families to housing opportunities is equally important. While a large base of low-income housing units exists in the community, some of these units are now at the end of their required period of subsidy and available for conversion to market-rate units.

For larger projects of 20 units or more, the FNDC should advocate for mixed-income development that blends market-rate units with an established percentage (10%) of units set aside as affordable for renters or buyers earning equal to or less than 80% of Area Median Income. This small percentage of affordable housing for low-income residents will serve to replenish the base of low-income housing currently in the community as new market-rate projects are developed. Additionally, FNDC will continue to support well-conceived and designed affordable housing developments for low and moderate income home purchasers, rental housing for senior citizens (as described below) or single family rental housing for families who are given a realistic opportunity to purchase their homes after a set term of years. Although high land values will constrain this kind of development, it will further address the expected reduction in existing affordable housing units.

Short-Term Recommendation

3.3 Advocate for senior housing; age in place.

With many long-term Francisville residents on the cusp on senior-citizenship, the FNDC is committed to ensuring that desirable, affordable, and accessible housing units for seniors exist within the neighborhood and within the context of necessary support services. Seniors who are dependent on SSI and do not qualify for social security are particularly in need. Community Ventures is meeting this need at its mixed generation Francisville Village development in the 1700 Block of Ridge Avenue and is applying for funding to build “Francisville East,” a similar rental development of approximately fifty units that will include an apartment building on the 1500 Block of Poplar Street. Approximately a third of the projected twenty-five units in the apartment building will be targeted to very low income seniors and small households needing accessible housing, with the remainder affordable to seniors with social security or small pensions. The FNDC should not only support the creation of new senior housing and the inclusion of affordable units for seniors in projects of greater scale, but should also prioritize projects that incorporate Universal Design⁸ to make units accessible to seniors with limited mobility.

Enabling seniors to age in place in Francisville requires more than the creation of new housing units for seniors. The FNDC should link seniors with information about home repair and home modification programs, such as the Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP), eldercare services, and counseling on reverse mortgages to allow elderly homeowners to remain in their homes.

⁸ See the website of the **Center for Universal Design at North Carolina State University** for more information: <http://www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/index.htm>.



Potential PHA properties for rehabilitation and/or new construction.

3.4 Approach PHA as a partner.

The Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) plays an important role in Francisville by providing housing for the very low-income. PHA's presence in Francisville will continue to be important, assuring that Francisville remains economically diverse and open to residents of all incomes. Given the significant number of PHA-owned properties in Francisville, the FNDC must recognize PHA as a partner in the neighborhood's redevelopment, encouraging ongoing improvement of PHA dwellings in keeping with renovation of the surrounding market-rate stock. Furthermore, if the FNDC or one of its partners undertakes a large-scale infill development scheme, the FNDC may opt to request the acquisition of one or more PHA properties for redevelopment as affordable housing as part of that scheme. Transfer of PHA-owned parcels is a lengthy and complicated process, and a healthy working relationship with PHA will be critical.

A relevant example exists in the Spring Garden neighborhood to the south of Francisville. The Spring Garden CDC worked closely with PHA to strategically rehabilitate a number of properties along a few key blocks using federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits. FNDC should reach out to the Spring Garden CDC to learn about that process and understand the challenges associated with the approach.

As a start, the FNDC will need to set a meeting with PHA to discuss their objectives. PHA has already indicated an interest in working in Francisville. The map above indicates three primary focus areas that should be considered for rehabilitation efforts. Each area contains multiple PHA units some of which are in good condition while others show signs of deterioration or are vacant. The objective should be to target those properties that show signs of deterioration such that these properties can be improved both for the residents and the neighbors of each property. FNDC will need

to work with PHA to undertake a more thorough survey of each property, as the conditions generated for this plan are based solely on the exterior condition.

1. **20th Street** - A concentration of PHA properties stretches up 20th Street and extends to Brown and 19th Streets. Approximately 15-20 properties could be considered for rehabilitation or new development for low-income residents. This project should be done in tandem with the redevelopment of the large lot on 19th Street across from the Recreation Center described in Recommendation 3.9. The result would be one large, mixed-income development that connects the Highlands with the Recreation Center.
2. **Leland / Parrish / Brown Streets** - This area of the neighborhood has long suffered from drug trafficking and scattered vacancies. Redeveloping between 10 and 15 PHA properties will greatly improve the housing stock and bring new investment to these streets. Redevelopment of these properties will also complement efforts to stabilize Ridge Avenue and create a community greenhouse and gardens along Field Street, described in Recommendations 3.9 and 5.4.
3. **Poplar Street** - Poplar Street has been designated a critical, east-west street for development. As noted earlier, Community Ventures is applying for funding for Francisville East, which will include affordable family and senior housing on the 1500 block. This will eliminate some of the worst blight in Francisville and provide a jumpstart to future development. PHA owns three triplex properties on this street, which are poorly designed and hard to manage. These properties should be converted to affordable single family housing, which could be accomplished by transferring them to Community Ventures, which would remove the rears and rehabilitate the properties as a part of Francisville East development.

3.5 Provide information and access to resources that help residents build equity.

Information: The FNDC already serves as an incredible source of information for the neighborhood. To afford all residents in Francisville the opportunity to build wealth and benefit in the neighborhood's equitable redevelopment, the FNDC has a responsibility to deliver a range of finance-related information and administer City grants that help facilitate this. The FNDC should either provide referrals to nearby homeownership counseling and credit repair courses or develop and teach a financial literacy curriculum. The FNDC should welcome all interested participants, but should target

homeownership-eligible renters to help preserve the base of long-term residents in Francisville.

Technical and Financial Resources: To the extent that it can, the FNDC should also support Do-It-Yourself home improvements, helping property owners invest in their homes and build equity in doing so. The FNDC should compile and distribute a resource database for homeowners and landlords seeking information about available grants and funding sources for necessary repairs. The FNDC should also investigate and coordinate the provision of grant monies from the City's Basic Systems Repair Program (BSRP) for homeowners in need of repairs to their heating, plumbing, drainage, electrical, roof, or structural systems. Properties in Fair or Deteriorated condition according to the Building Condition Survey conducted during the analysis phase of this project should be targeted for property improvement grants.

3.6 Integrate new computers as basic infrastructure for all new affordable units in the community.



Integrating new computers as a standard component of all new affordable housing has become common practice around the City, region and country. Coupled with the low-cost internet access that will be made available by the Wireless Philadelphia initiative, providing this technological infrastructure in the community's new affordable housing stock will create opportunities that otherwise may not have been possible.

Providing this "basic" infrastructure must be coupled with programming at the neighborhood-serving technology center (Recommendation 7.2). Just as homeownership training is required for new homeowners prior to occupation of their new homes, a basic skills technology course at the technology center is needed to ensure that the computers are put to good use. Coupling homeownership and digital inclusion is also looked upon very favorably by many funders in terms of grant writing activities that the FNDC may wish to pursue to finance the technology center's creation, programs, and staff support.

3.7 Serve as a liaison between tenants and landlords.

As property taxes (and therefore rents) go up in Francisville, the FNDC and FNCA should ensure that long-term renters have an informed and unified voice – one that gets heard. When necessary, the FNDC should be prepared to serve as a liaison between tenants and landlords until the FNDC can link the tenant(s) seeking to file a complaint or in need of advocacy or assistance with the Philadelphia Fair Housing Commission.⁹

Short-Term Recommendation

3.8 Communicate the neighborhood's vision for Francisville's physical fabric; empower the Francisville Zoning Committee.

As housing market pressure in Francisville continues to grow, there will be an increasing number of investors and developers seeking opportunities to transform the physical fabric of the community.

This is a good thing, provided that the neighborhood and the developer/investor community communicate well and that everyone understands and respects the neighborhood's priorities for the future of Francisville.

Philadelphia's current development climate delegates much responsibility and influence to neighborhood groups, allowing them to inform the redevelopment of their communities. The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee has embraced this role in a professional and transparent manner, introducing both consistency and democracy to Francisville's zoning review process – and they have been busy! Discrepancy between the City's antiquated zoning map and existing land use patterns, coupled with the growing number of residential conversion proposals, has brought many developers in need of variances for their projects before the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee because modern projects are often not permitted “as of right.”

As Francisville continues to revitalize and redevelopment proposals become more numerous, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee will capitalize on their position of influence most effectively by proactively communicating their priorities for development projects to interested investors. By conveying the neighborhood's expectations clearly, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee

will establish a local development atmosphere that is defined by collaboration and cooperation rather than conflict, frustration, and tension.

The FNDC and FNCA needs to formalize the Zoning Committee procedures, building capacity, documenting its process for reviewing all zoning applications, and adopting some basic design guidelines. The Zoning Committee will then be poised to truly flex its muscles and test drive its strength and effectiveness.

Build Capacity – The Zoning Committee should meet bi-monthly with representation from the FNCA and FNDC, local residents, and, if possible an architect/designer and realtor from the neighborhood for additional expertise. A representative should reach out to other successful Zoning Committees in the City, asking about their structure and process and learning from what they've learned – their experiences, their achievements, ongoing challenges, and frustrations.¹⁰

Document the Process – The Zoning Committee should publish its clear and consistent process for reviewing and supporting/opposing zoning requests on the FNDC website. The Committee should also publish a description of the role and objectives of the Zoning Committee on the FNDC website.

Draft a Community Benefits Agreement – The Zoning Committee should draft a community benefits agreement applicable for use in negotiating with developers of large or semi-large projects in the neighborhood. Developers of all large projects (more than 20 residential units) should be required to enter into a community benefits agreement. Developers of all semi-large projects (10 to 20 residential units) should be prepared to contribute a scalable dollar amount to help fund one of the ongoing community initiatives by either the FNDC or FNCA.

⁹ For more information, see: <http://www.phila.gov/fairhousing/>.

¹⁰ Useful contacts include: Larry Freedman of the Northern Liberties Neighbors Association and Scott Page of the Fairmount CDC. Bella Vista, Old City, and Queen Village also have very active zoning committees.

Adopt Design Guidelines – The Zoning Committee should adopt a set of broad guidelines for new development that address open space, parking, height, setback, and other factors of importance to the community, like income-eligibility and affordability for projects of scale, low impact or green development, and the percent of project work allocated to minority/women/disabled/locally-owned businesses. Many of these guidelines appear in different chapters of this document. They are based upon community concerns regarding new development. To provide a useful tool for the Zoning Committee, a summary of all design guidelines begins on page 93, within the implementation section of this report.

Ensure that what is approved is developed - All too often in Philadelphia, approved projects by community groups change during construction. Sometimes this change is significant resulting in diminished civic space, poorer materials or different uses. The Zoning Committee must forge relationships with both the local Councilman's office and Councilman-at-large William Greenlee's office as well as representatives from License and Inspections to report changes in approved developments that do not meet community expectations.



3.9 Push forward “transformative” development projects.

At times, the community will need to be more proactive in instigating development by working with property owners, City representatives, developers and residents to facilitate the thoughtful transformation of key underutilized parcels of land into active uses. The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee has several opportunities to make a big, concentrated impact in the neighborhood's redevelopment. The following sites will require ongoing cooperation and collaboration between the Zoning Committee and Councilman Clarke's office, as well as property owners and designated developers to ensure that such transformative projects unfold in the neighborhood's best interest.

1. **Engage the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center** – public land as a public good. The Recreation Center has long been marred by the adjacent, block-sized parcel of vacant land. Primarily publicly owned, there has been agreement to dispose of the site to a private developer that will work hand-in-hand with the community. A Request for Proposals will be issued, and the community will have a direct say in the selection of the developer. The FNDC and its partners must work to ensure that the resulting redevelopment reflects the community's values in terms of use, income mix, and design principles.
2. **Engage the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center part 2** – the Recreation Center is also impacted by the adjacency of concentrated vacancy along Folsom Street. The FNDC will need to work closely with the City and owners to create a strategy for redevelopment.
3. **Focus on Ridge Avenue** – FNDC has made Ridge Avenue the centerpiece of its mission. This plan has identified three separate but inter-related development opportunities, one for each portion of the Avenue. In all cases, the FNDC will need to be a coordinating entity. At times, the FNDC should take the lead to develop properties that best meet the organization's mission, as in the case with proposed investment along Field Street (Recommendation 5.4). At other times, the FNDC should work closely with its partners and private developers to navigate zoning review and build community support for the development projects.
4. **Stretch the community to Broad along Poplar** – Poplar is the only east-west street that connects both ends of the neighborhood. Poplar Street also contains the Metropolitan Opera House. As such, reviving Poplar Street east of Ridge Avenue is critical to extending the community



Transformative development projects in Francisville's revitalization

community to Broad Street, bringing new residents close to Ridge Avenue and improving the overall image of the neighborhood. The 1500 block of Poplar has been slated for the development of Francisville East by Community Ventures. Sites adjacent to the Metropolitan Opera House have also been under discussion for new uses in support of that institution. The FNDC should support and help facilitate the realization of these projects. In addition, the FNDC should collect property information for vacant sites and buildings along the 1600 block to create a development plan with a private partner. This effort should be coordinated closely with Trevor's Campaign, which is undertaking improvements to their facility on that block.

5. **Don't forget the small projects** – Along 19th Street between Girard and Poplar and along Poplar between 19th and the MLK Park, there are eight vacant properties which significantly impact outside perceptions of the community. As these vacancies are visible from a bus line and along the neighborhood's lone east-west street, a concentrated effort should be made to rehabilitate these structures. The City's Housing Rehabilitation Program (HRP) provides dollars on a competitive basis for projects of less than 12 units and would provide a good fit for a small, but important project in the community.

3.10 Conserve Francisville's Historic Core.

The FNDC should explore the option of applying for Conservation District¹¹ designation within the neighborhood's Historic Core to ensure that all rehabilitation or new construction projects respect the historic foundation of Francisville. Different than Historic District designation, which would be accompanied by stringent and often costly guidelines for building renovation and maintenance, Conservation District designation in the City of Philadelphia applies a set of neighborhood-generated urban design guidelines to a specific area within a community. Developed by the neighborhood in partnership with the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, the design guidelines can be carefully tailored to each block to ensure that all new development projects – whether they require a variance or not – respect and reflect the historic context and architectural qualities of nearby buildings. However, once the pre-determined criteria are established, future project reviews are handled entirely by the Planning Commission, effectively removing the neighborhood from the process after the completion of the design guidelines.

Given this provision, the FNDC should only consider establishing a Conservation District for the Historic Core – a well defined portion of the neighborhood with a clear historic character. The benefit would be to reduce the workload of the Zoning Committee by reassigning review of all projects within the District to the Planning Commission, thus allowing the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee to focus on other parts of the community. An additional benefit is that the Conservation District introduces a transparent means of guiding development within its boundaries. The FNDC and FNCA should reach out to the Queen Village neighborhood, which gained the first Conservation District designation in fall 2005, to learn about their experience and ask for their evaluation of the process.

¹¹ For information about Philadelphia Conservation Districts and to review a copy of the legislation, see: http://www.preservationalliance.com/news_dist.php.



action



4. Empower the neighborhood: reclaim vacant land; enforce safe streets and corners.

- Improve public perception of Francisville.
- Maintain vacant land for a cleaner, safer environment.
- Respect and protect the neighbors and the neighborhood.
- Plant a seed of action.

Most Francisville residents, when they take the time to rub their eyes and look around at their surroundings, agree that the neighborhood's public spaces – its streets and sidewalks, gardens, and building facades – could use a little TLC. While the Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club program participants (Recommendation 7.4) will be trained and responsible for beautifying and maintaining the neighborhood's vacant parcels, all neighbors in Francisville should be encouraged to support a Francisville Clean, Safe, and Beautiful effort. With 24.2 acres of vacant land in the neighborhood, and crime and safety clearly the top priority of survey respondents (85% cited lower crime and greater safety as necessary for improving Francisville's quality of life), a Francisville Clean, Safe, and Beautiful effort is no small task. Resistance is building in Francisville, and with resistance comes action.

4.1 Create a Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed.

All neighbors should be enlisted as stewards of the neighborhood, invested and committed to its long-term improvement. (After all, 73% of survey respondents noted cleaning and trash control as a top quality of life concern!) This recommendation proposes the creation of a Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed – a community resource established to put the necessary tools and handy-man know-how in the hands of all residents, those new to yard and house work as well as experienced professionals. Make the tools accessible. Offer a little technical advice and guidance. Inspire the neighbors to clean, fix, or garden to improve the neighborhood's appearance. The “spring cleaning” will be contagious.

Get your hands dirty, Francisville.

The Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed should be located adjacent to the Francisville Greenhouse and Tench Francis Gardens (Recommendation 5.4) or within the Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (FYC-3) (Recommendation 7.4) program's maintenance shed. Neighborhood volunteers or FYC-3 staff should take Saturday morning shifts at the Shed, facilitating the loaning out of available tools (library-style), distributing how-to information, and offering advice and tool training. Some neighborhood tool sheds request a yearly membership fee to help pay for tool maintenance and the development of instructional materials for distribution.

Short-Term Recommendation

4.2 Recruit a Francisville Trash Czar/Recycling Guru.



Beautiful grounds will only remain beautiful, respected, and maintained if they are clean. Littered trash and illegal dumping will undo not only the hard work of the neighbors (cleaning, fixing, gardening, etc.); it will bring the momentum and energy of their efforts to a halt and kill their morale. In Francisville, improved trash control and collection is especially complicated – the neighborhood is currently forced to coexist with the garbage taken out to the curb by local residents and business owners as well as the garbage brought to Francisville from other areas of the City and thoughtlessly dumped in lots where it blends with the sea of assorted other items that somehow find their way to Francisville.



The FNDC should enlist a Trash Czar/Recycling Guru, a person charged with ensuring that Francisville's neighbors understand (and follow) the garbage collection schedule and curbing the bad habits of people who view Francisville as a free dumping ground. The Trash Czar/Recycling Guru should educate the neighborhood about the trash pick-up schedule and City recycling opportunities and coordinate plastics recycling, which the City does not facilitate.

Serving to support and expand the City's trash collection efforts, this person should also establish a relationship with the Department of Streets' Streets and Walkways Education and Enforcement Program (SWEET)¹² and serve as a liaison between the City and the neighborhood. The neighbors should feel comfortable directing anonymous complaints about offending neighbors, businesses, or illegal dumping to the Trash Czar/Recycling Guru. The Trash Czar/Recycling Guru would then send letters to the offending parties requesting adherence to proper trash disposal methods as well as follow up letters to the City's Sanitation Police or Department of Licenses and Inspections if no action by the responsible party is taken.



¹² For more information, see <http://www.phila.gov/streets/sweep.html>.



Short-Term Recommendation

4.3 Contract for Cleaning and Greening.

Until the neighborhood has capacity to undertake cleaning and greening of vacant lots as well as landscaping as described in Recommendation 7.5, the FNDC should contract vacant land maintenance with an outside organization. In many neighborhoods, PHS's Philly Green program provides these services. However, their services are much in demand and over time other organizations such as the East Park Preservation Alliance and the Urban Tree Connection have stepped in to assist in these efforts. FNDC should coordinate with all of these groups to develop a work plan for cleaning and greening of designated vacant lots in the community.

4.4 Francisville needs YOU for Town Watch.

Crime and violence are on the minds of Francisville residents, life-long residents and newcomers, alike. A concern for public safety represents common ground in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, it is widely recognized that many responsible for local crime comes from Francisville's own families. Therefore, efforts to improve services to youth as described in Goal 7 are a first priority in this plan. A local Town Watch is a supplementary strategy that serves multiple purposes: it will significantly deter crime, it will foster community involvement, and it will encourage long-term residents and new neighbors to meet and work together to make Francisville safer for everyone.

The FNDC and FNCA should start mentioning the concept at community meetings and on the Francisville Information Network. Rally for support among all neighborhood residents, recruit one or two volunteers to spearhead the initiative, and enlist many more to participate in the Town Watch. Before

hitting the streets, walking a regular route each evening, making their presence known and building up resistance to criminal activity in the neighborhood, the FNDC, FNCA and Francisville Town Watch Volunteers must connect with two important partners:

1. **Men United for a Better Philadelphia** – Much of the local concern about crime and violence in Francisville centers around the drug trade that exerts a strong pull on some of the neighborhood's youth. Francisville is not alone in its drive to change the dynamics on its corners, making the neighborhood safer for all of its residents, those who work the corners, included. Francisville's Town Watch should reach out to a powerful anti-violence group in the City – one "led by black men, for black men" – Men United for a Better Philadelphia. Volunteers with the group target known drug corners, arriving during the evening with three goals: to make their "presence" felt, to "shut down" the criminal activity during their stay, and to "recruit" young men off of the corner. They arrive armed with information about "job opportunities, G.E.D. programs, drug counseling, health services and parenting workshops."¹³ Imagine how effective a Francisville Town Watch could be working in partnership with Men United to take back the corners, to reconnect with local youth, and to involve some of the neighborhood's teens and young adults in the organization and operation of the Town Watch.
2. **The Philadelphia Police Department** – Invite a representative from the 9th District and/or the local bike and foot cops to come to a community meeting to talk about how to set up a safe and well-organized Town Watch. This will likely include:
 - Identifying target streets, corners, or areas for the Town Watch to canvas;
 - Postering to let community members know that Francisville is on the look-out;
 - Making t-shirts or vests that identify official Town Watch walkers; and
 - Ongoing regular meetings with the 9th District representative for progress reports and processing.

¹³ Gregory, Kia. "We Need the Men to Come Back." *Philadelphia Weekly*. 4 Aug. 2004.

4.5 Take Take-Out in; bring corner (store) activity indoors.

Short-Term Recommendation



Francisville residents dream of a restaurant culture in the neighborhood, places within walking distance that serve a range of cuisines and cater to people who live in Francisville and beyond. The current collection of food establishments, primarily convenient stores, delis, and Chinese Take-Out places are, however, perceived more as a detriment or threat to neighborhood safety and stability than as additives. These “problematic retailers” do not serve local residents so much as people passing through or looking for a place to hang out or traffic drugs. Because the food sold is to-go, patrons who have purchased something to eat or smoke stand outside eating, smoking, and littering. People in Francisville do not identify with these stores. Newcomers feel intimidated by them. They keep potential investors and developers at bay.

As more legitimate restaurants would better serve the community, attract visitors, and, in theory, run a better business, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should adopt a policy that requires food establishments to provide indoor seating – more than just a bench or a single chair. The Francisville Business Association (Recommendation 2.1), while focused on Ridge Avenue, should also reach out to the neighborhood’s “problematic retailers,” inviting them to remake their image and contribute to Francisville’s revitalization.

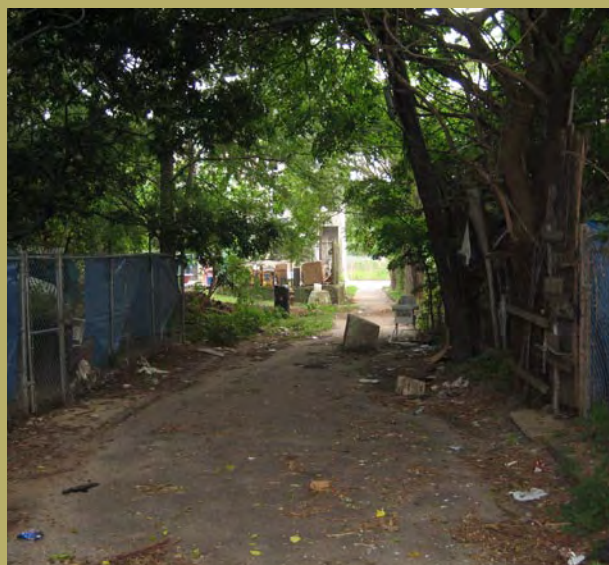
4.6 Reinvent the alleys – secure, redevelop, or reprogram.

Beyond cleaner, safer streets and more beautiful public spaces (streets included), Francisville’s streets – all of them – must feel safe to walk along. A walk down most streets in Francisville feels friendly and comfortable, the sidewalks populated by talkative neighbors. Some streets are so deserted though that footsteps almost echo. None of Francisville’s streets feel more overlooked, abandoned, and unprotected, than several of its alleyways. These alleyways are so quiet, it is hard not to imagine the secrets they might contain. Like the quirky grid that hosts them, however, Francisville’s alleys are quirky themselves and, as such, require a range of strategies for making the neighborhood’s street system more uniformly safe and welcoming. Francisville’s alleys should be secured, redeveloped, reprogrammed or redesigned as follows:



Existing alley conditions

- **Secure** – Several of the currently overgrown and abandoned alleyways are not suited for redevelopment, either because of the narrow width of the street or the constrained parcels of land that front or back up to the passageway. These overgrown spaces should be pruned, cleared, and cleaned by the FYC-3 crew (Recommendation 7.4), re-establishing visibility along the length of the alley. Once cleared, the alleys should be either maintained as cleaned and greened linear gardens or used as parking resources for the adjacent uses that front on major streets. If safety continues to be an issue once the land is cleared, the FNDC should help to coordinate with the neighbors about securing these alleys, or the land that abuts them, with new fences. Keys would be made available to residents of adjacent parcels.
 - Harper currently accommodates parking for the lots that back up to it. This use should continue, but pruning is needed to increase visibility along the alley.
 - George has an incredibly tight cartway and is not currently used for parking by adjacent uses. In the short-term, this alley should be cleared and secured with fencing as described above. In the long-term, it should be considered for off-street parking.

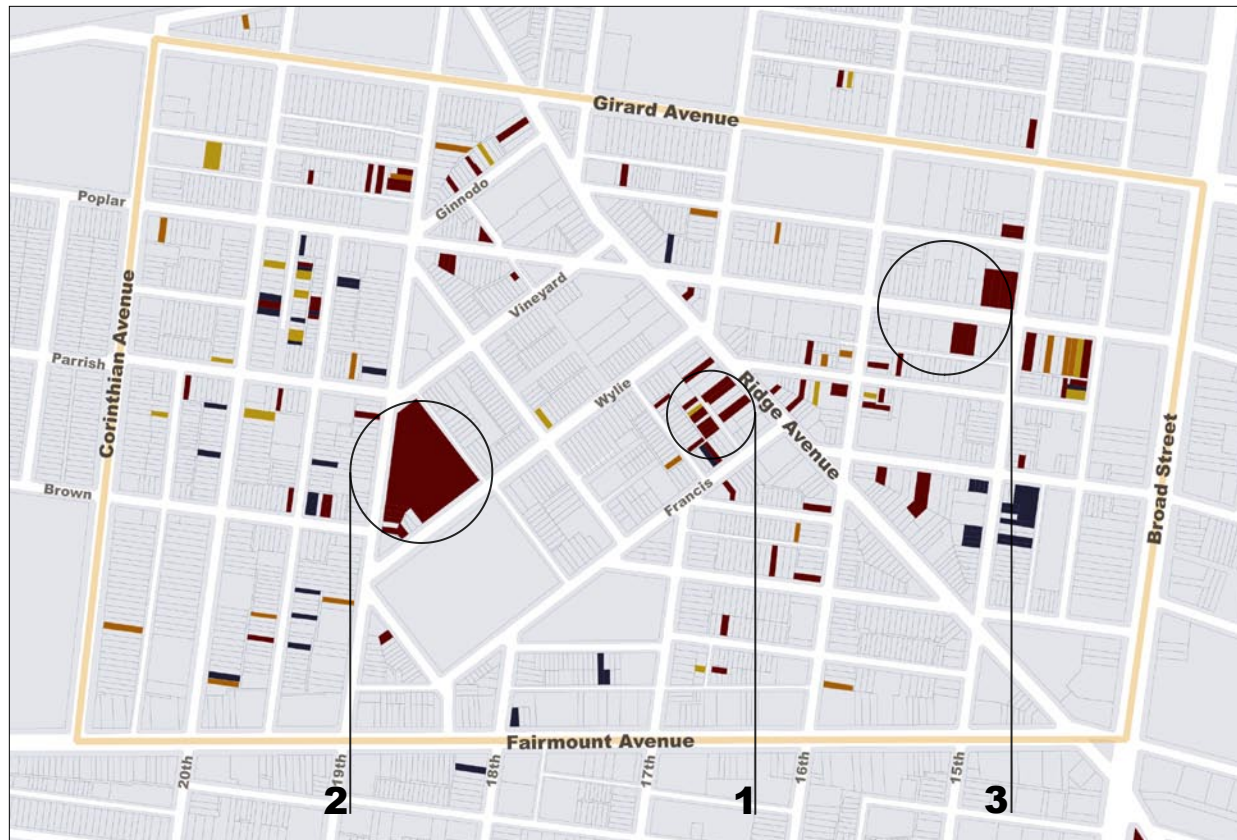


Intersection of Opal and Ogden

- **Redevelop** – Three existing alleys, Harmer, Burns and Leland between Ginnodo and Poplar, lie adjacent to large swaths of vacant or underutilized land that has been earmarked for redevelopment. These rights-of-way must be considered as development progresses, either folded in as a part of the projects' scope, or integrated as part of the projects' safe, accessible, and well-maintained circulation systems.
- **Reprogram** – A few of Francisville's alleyways have great potential to be transformed into neighborhood amenities. Specific ideas for the intersection of Opal and Ogden Streets are outlined below. Field Street is discussed at length in Recommendation 5.4.
 - Ogden Street a well maintained and intimate residential block currently runs from Corinthian to 20th Street, only. Between 20th and Uber Streets, Ogden continues as a overgrown footpath that is in the shadows during the day and pitch-black at night. Bisecting the footpath at a perpendicular angle midway between 20th and Uber, runs Opal Street, an alley lined by a stretch of vacant, largely publicly owned parcels. Together Opal and the Ogden footpath create a hidden and unsafe pocket in the midst of an otherwise intact portion of the neighborhood.

The Ogden Street footpath should be reinstated as a vehicular road, creating space for a small development project on the south side of the street where Opal truncates. The vacant City-owned parcels on the east side of Opal Street should be transformed into an off-street parking resource for adjacent neighbors; the extension of Ogden Street would provide the necessary outlet for the new parking lot.

- **Redesign** – Other alleyways are usable with existing homes along them. The greatest challenges in these cases relate to the relative safety of these streets. Because these alleys feel separated from the rest of the community, vacant lots along them are often breeding grounds for illegal dumping and drug trafficking. Simple street lighting and new planter boxes can help to change the look and feel of these unique alleys. The FNDC should work with local neighbors to spearhead these simple streetscape improvements and improve the safety of these blocks.



Vacant publicly owned properties
proposed for acquisition

- City - Vacant
- PHA - Vacant
- PHDC - Vacant
- RDA - Vacant

The FNDC should work closely with Councilman Clarke's office to dispose of key City-owned vacant property for new uses as determined by this Plan. Much of the vacant, publicly owned land is scattered, but there are four areas in which the provision of land would make a big impact on revitalization efforts. Prior to completion of this plan, the FNDC convened a meeting to determine the potential use of these properties and the appropriate local partners to move forward with development. The targeted areas include:

1. Field Street / Leland Street / Ogden Street near 16th Street – Properties to be reused for a maintenance shed, greenhouse, community gardens, new FNDC headquarters on Ridge, and housing along Ogden Street (Recommendation 5.4).

Short-Term Recommendation

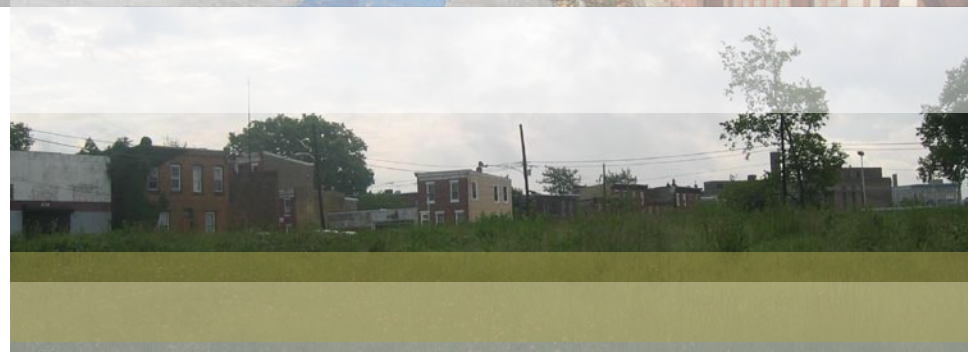
4.7 Pursue the acquisition of strategically-located publicly owned properties.

This recommendation is about laying groundwork for the FNDC's first development projects. With 29% of the neighborhood vacant, land appears plenty in Francisville – but that will not always be the case. While the FNDC recognizes that increased market interest will help to make good things happen in Francisville, the FNDC also recognizes that leaving everything to the market is neither responsible nor desirable. The community, working together as an allied, unified force and in partnership with the City, should play an active role in Francisville's revitalization, and residents of all incomes should enjoy the ability to afford living there. The FNDC's projects will accomplish both of these goals: community development will build community pride and a sense of ownership in the neighborhood's revitalization and will help to ensure an equitable and mixed-income future. The first ingredient in this endeavor is land.

2. **19th / Francis** – Properties to be reused for mixed-income housing. The Councilman has already agreed to put these properties out for bid through an RFP process to select the appropriate developer.
3. **1500 Block of Poplar / 15th Street south of Parrish** – Properties to be used for new affordable housing. Community Ventures is planning to develop Francisville East, an affordable housing development that emerged from a design competition held in the 1990s.
4. **Scattered corner properties** – Some of the publicly owned vacancies are corner lots that, due to their visibility, have an immense impact on the community. A handful of these corner properties should be retained as community gardens and small plazas maintained by the community and adjacent neighbors. This effort should be coordinated with Recommendations 5.2 & 5.4.



green



5. Make Francisville a Greene Countrie Towne... again.

Foster a “green” culture in Francisville.

Mitigate the impacts of new development.

Create a healthy and attractive environment.

Plant a seed of green.

Francisville, at the moment – with its vast expanses of vacant land and its relatively small number of houses and rooftops (compared to densities of the past and predictions for the future) – is 30% sponge-like, covered with a permeable surface that absorbs rainwater as it falls. Tree coverage is sparse. With only a handful of small green spaces aside from the Francisville Playground, the Recreation Center and the large common spaces incorporated into Community Ventures’ developments, Francisville has a lot of seeding and sowing to do before it can reconnect with its roots as a vineyard. As Francisville’s redevelopment brings new buildings and people to the area, the stormwater infrastructure, open spaces, and recreation facilities will service a larger population. These resources, which contribute to the health and vitality of local residents and ecosystems, require protection and improvement.

5.1 Animate the “soul” of the neighborhood, the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center.



Two pools - one intentional, one not

The Francisville Playground and Recreation Center is beloved and well-used, but in dire need of improvement. The Recreation Center is a hard-working building, overworked in fact, and it should be retired – a revamped, enhanced Recreation Center built in its place. The park grounds suffer from stormwater issues, inactive edges, blocked sight lines, and a lack of connectivity with adjacent neighborhood amenities. With a growing population, Francisville has a growing need for open space that serves all neighborhood residents *well*; and as much as neighborhood residents love the Playground and Rec Center, they welcome the idea of a total makeover. More than half (55%) of survey respondents noted park improvements as a top three priority; almost half (48%) listed a new community center as a top priority; 38% advocated for a new tot lot, while 35% prioritized a new senior center.

This proposal responds to those requests with recommendations along two different lines – one that focuses on the park’s physical grounds and one that focuses on the park’s programming for the physical health of the neighborhood. The park’s makeover should occur in concert with the redevelopment of the large parcel of publicly owned land across the street. Programmatic planning should begin now so that the programs will be in full swing at the time of the new Recreation Center’s ribbon cutting.

- **Reconfigure the park; reinvest in its facilities.**
The proposed total makeover for the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center has five components:
- 1. **Traffic Calming** – Slower vehicular traffic on the streets surrounding the Playground and Recreation Center serves two purposes: safer pedestrian crossings for park visitors and improved visibility for the



Francisville Playground and Recreation Center, existing site plan

park. This recommendation proposes rerouting Wylie Street to meet the intersection of Brown and 19th Streets at three-way stop. Cars, which currently fly down 19th Street, will have no choice but to slow down and take a look, and the increased traffic generated by the redevelopment of the parcel of land across Wylie Street from the Playground will benefit from a safer left turn onto 19th Street.

Four crosswalks (as well as signage reminding people that Brown Street is still one-way) will be needed to help pedestrians and cars coexist in the reconfigured intersection. Additional crosswalks along the park’s southern edge will make the pedestrian environment along Francis Street safer, slowing cars that turn into the neighborhood from Fairmount Avenue traveling at high speeds. These crosswalks



Franciscville Playground and Recreation Center, proposed improvements

ease crossings between the PAL and the Recreation Center as well as call attention to the proposed new entrance to the park at the intersection of 18th and Francis Streets.

2. **A new Tot-Lot** – Wylie Street's new alignment will annex the pointed tip of the parcel of land across the street from the Playground, collapsing it into the park's expanse of land. This newly introduced park corner should become a brand new, highly visible Tot-Lot and playground, separated somewhat from the "big kids" play area adjacent to the Recreation Center. The new Tot-Lot location will also help bridge the highland and the lowlands, attracting children and parents from both sides of 19th Street. The new play equipment, long overdue, will be fun, safe, colorful, and engaging.



The proposed sloped green roof on the Rec Center offers a view of the City for everyone

3. **A new, state-of-the-art Recreation Center** – Never has a Recreation Center in Philadelphia received more use and love than Franciscville's. The neighborhood needs a new Recreation Center, though – a bigger one with multiple spaces for many different types of year-round activities. The new Recreation Center should stand on top of the current Recreation Center's footprint, and then some, reaching north toward Wylie Street in the northwest corner of the park.

It should be accessible via a new plaza and parking area along Wylie, and its (green) roof should be accessible too, affording the entire neighborhood stellar views of the City. The new space should host year-round indoor athletics for people of all ages, not just those under 13 who are served by the PAL. It should house multi-purpose community meeting rooms, a neighborhood archive, a Recreation Center Program Coordinator's office, a kitchen, and a distinct space for a senior center. It should welcome the neighborhood and a whole new set of memories.

4. **A refurbished pool and playing fields** – Francisville's pool and playfields are well used too. These facilities should not be ignored. Pool maintenance should be a priority, and the basketball courts and baseball field should be updated with lights, new bleachers, and a scoreboard.
5. **Softer edges and stronger connections** – The Police Athletic League (PAL), located at Brown and 17th Streets, is another beloved community asset. With an excellent youth sports program, it is a good neighbor for the Recreation Center, creating a nook in the neighborhood for kids. Though within throwing distance of the Recreation Center, the PAL nonetheless feels far away, and the relationship between the PAL and Recreation Center feels disjointed. The PAL's fenced and often empty parking lot lies between the two facilities, and people traveling from the PAL to the Recreation Center must walk half-way around the park in order to enter. The PAL's parking lot should be greened and opened to address the Recreation Center, and a south-side entrance to the park should be created to greet the PAL. In addition, an expanded and more welcoming entry to the Playground and Recreation Center should be created along Francis Street. Given the change in topography, this entry could be a more formal set of stairs that creates a true front door for the Playground.
6. **Expand programming for people of all ages.**
When the new Recreation Center is complete, it will be hard to keep people away, but the Recreation Center should expand its programming, regardless, to ensure that everyone in the neighborhood feels welcome and encouraged to swing by. The programming opportunities are endless, but a *Recreation Center's* new schedule would do the neighborhood a disservice if it did not include a range of programs to promote active, healthy lifestyles.

- **Use it OR lose it** – The new center must offer active programming for people of all ages – youth, teens, young adults, adults, and seniors. These should include sports and dance activities that continue past the age of 13 and target boys *and girls*. Only the well-attended programs will survive, so the youth had better use them... or lose them.

For adults and seniors, this familiar adage – use it or lose it – assumes a different meaning. Exercise classes, dances, and guided walks should be coordinated for these age groups to ensure that middle-aged and elderly residents remain fit and active enough to enjoy their golden years in Francisville.

- **Lose it WHILE you use it** – In addition to exercise, Francisville's new Recreation Center has a responsibility to educate neighborhood residents about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Local radio stations are now broadcasting diabetes awareness messages in an effort to combat the epidemic sweeping the African American community. Awareness is important, half the battle, maybe, but ongoing support and health education is crucial. The Recreation Center should offer classes on healthy cooking and portion sizes (eat what's grown in the Tench Francis Gardens – Recommendation 5.4), coordinated nutrition and exercise schemes for healthy weight loss, nutrition counseling and follow-up, and a diabetes support group. Enlist the help and resources of City-wide organizations working toward common goals.¹⁴

The Recreation Center will require a Program Coordinator to oversee all activities and classes and to engage with the Francisville Service Network (Recommendation 8.1) to establish a referrals relationship between the community center and the health center to match people in need with necessary services.



¹⁴ The Francisville Recreation Center Program Coordinator should establish working relationships with the following two groups:

- 1) **Steps to a Healthier Philadelphia**, funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, is charged with implementing chronic disease prevention efforts for Diabetes, Obesity, and Asthma. The program addresses three related risk factors: Physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use. <http://www.philasteps.org/>.
- 2) The University of Pennsylvania's **Urban Nutrition Initiative** is a university-community partnership that engages K-16+ learners in an active, real-world problem-solving curriculum that strives to improve community nutrition and wellness. <http://www.urbannutrition.org/>.

Short-Term Recommendation

5.2 Spruce up existing gardens if you want to keep them as gardens; protect and expand community gardening.

Francisville currently has almost 10 gardens. Three of them are well cared for, beautifully planted, and maintained as the productive and healthy semi-public spaces that they should be. The others lie fallow, either completely overgrown, dried and hollow, or home to a host of illegal activities. And yet, more than one quarter (27%) of those who took the Neighborhood Needs Survey indicated that more trees and gardens would enhance the quality of life in Francisville. Instead of more gardens, Francisville needs more gardeners – some green thumbs to adopt the derelict gardens and protect them from the development pressures of the growing housing market.

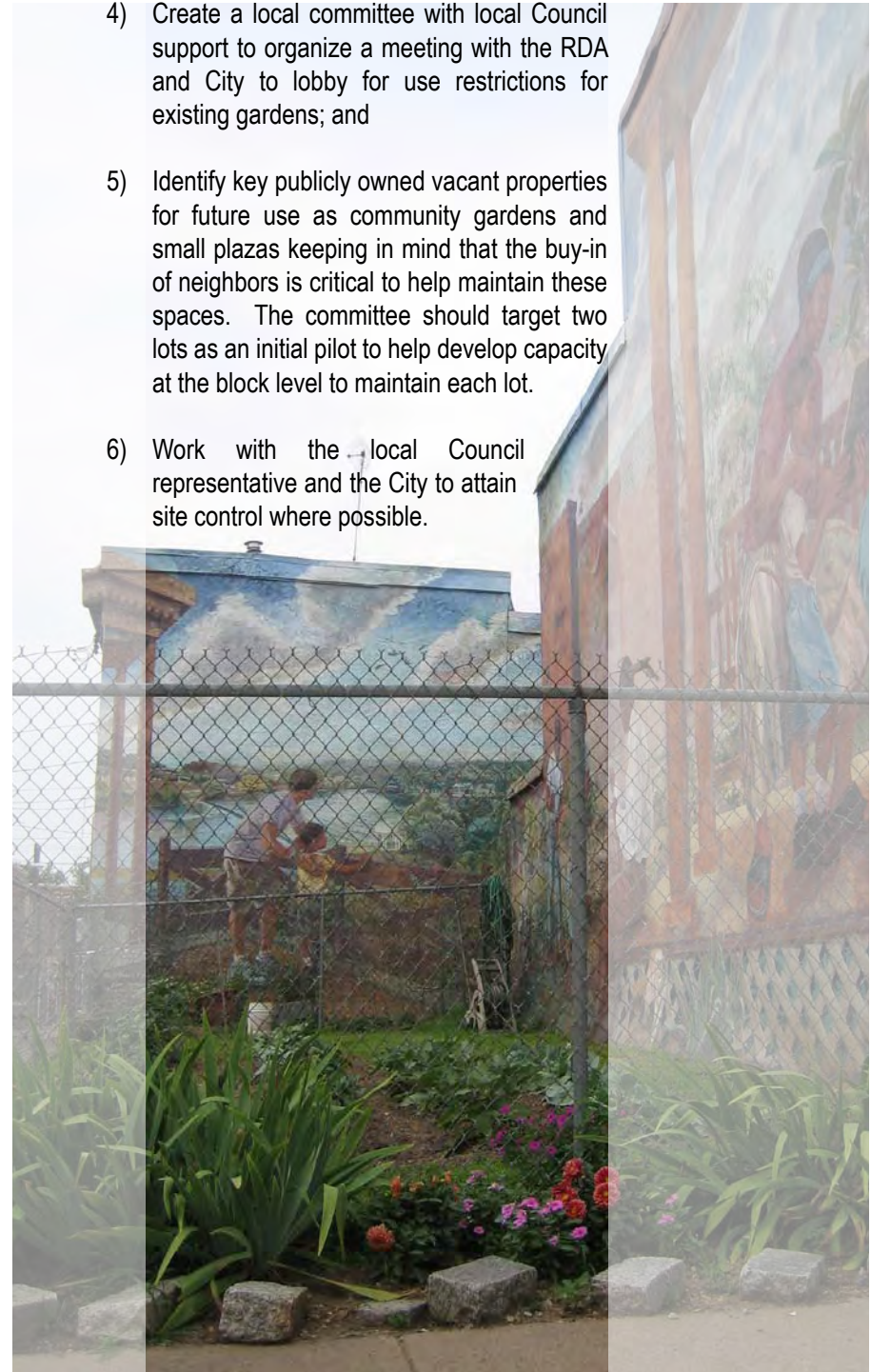
The neighborhood, led by the FNDC, as its representative and advocate must begin – this summer! – to secure the remaining active community gardens as long-term open space assets. This includes five actions, both short- and long-term:

- 1) Rebuild a network of local community gardeners to increase activity and a sense of ownership of these sites. Increase awareness about the resources available through the Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed described in Recommendation 4.1. Encourage overlap between the health and nutrition initiatives described in Recommendation 5.1;
- 2) Contact and coordinate with the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) and the Neighborhood Gardens Association (NGA). Make use of the information PHS and NGA provide about gardening, and creating and protecting community gardens;¹⁵
- 3) Educate the local zoning committee members about the need to preserve community gardens, and adopt a policy that will prevent any development requiring a variance from supplanting existing gardens;

¹⁵ The **Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS)** is a nonprofit organization founded in 1827 to motivate people to improve the quality of life and create a sense of community through horticulture. PHS provides events, activities, and publications for interested gardeners of all levels. <http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/>.

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

- 4) Create a local committee with local Council support to organize a meeting with the RDA and City to lobby for use restrictions for existing gardens; and
- 5) Identify key publicly owned vacant properties for future use as community gardens and small plazas keeping in mind that the buy-in of neighbors is critical to help maintain these spaces. The committee should target two lots as an initial pilot to help develop capacity at the block level to maintain each lot.
- 6) Work with the local Council representative and the City to attain site control where possible.





Street tree planting in Francisville. Source: Penelope Giles

Trees frame streets and views and their presence has been proven to increase residential property values, reduce summer cooling bills, and reduce stormwater runoff. They help to combat ozone and air pollution, bringing a decrease in associated lung and heart problems as a result. Their presence reduces individual stress and, in urban communities, has been associated with reduced violence and increased positive social behavior and interaction.¹⁶ Trees are affordable and tree planting is an achievable strategy that yields immediate results. In Francisville, however, trees are few and far between; street trees are even scarcer. And for some residents, trees are viewed as trouble makers, interfering with underground sewer lines and hiding illicit activity from plain view.

For Francisville to grow an urban forest, therefore, requires first, an educational campaign, and second, a team of volunteers committed to long-term tree health and maintenance. The FNDC should establish a neighborhood Tree-Tenders group to assume responsibility for long-term, community-based stewardship of existing trees as well as future plantings. Founded in 1993

¹⁶ Wachter, Susan. "The Determinants of Neighborhood Transformation in Philadelphia. Identification and Analysis: The New Kensington Pilot Study." The Wharton School. University of Pennsylvania, 2005. This article describes an increase in nearby property values due to tree planting.



Phased street tree planting strategy

by the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), the Tree Tenders program¹⁷ offers nine hours of free basic training twice annually to organized community groups. The training covers tree selection (so as to avoid root interference with sewer lines and open sight-lines), tree care, tree pruning, and tree pit maintenance, as well as organization building techniques and grant writing skills.

Increased and well-maintained tree coverage should be an ongoing goal, made attainable by funding sources and street tree planting support efforts active in neighborhoods across the City, both through PHS's Tree Tenders and Philadelphia Green programs and, currently, under the State's TreeVitalize¹⁸ initiative. To be eligible for these technical, material, and financial resources, blocks, areas, or neighborhoods must organize Tree Tenders groups of at least 4 individuals, and members must attend training at the Horticultural Society.

Bel Arbor Tree Farm at 10th and League in South Philadelphia has gained permanent, protected status and grows and distributes trees to interested community groups throughout the City. The FNDC should consider the potential for a Francisville Tree Farm tended and operated by local residents at the site of the proposed Francisville Greenhouse and Tench Francis Gardens (Recommendation 5.4).

¹⁷ For more information on PHS's Tree Tenders program, visit: www.pennsylvaniahorticultural.org/phlgreen/treetenders.html.

¹⁸ For more information of TreeVitalize, visit: www.treevitalize.net.



Rendering of a tree-lined Philadelphia street

5.4 Build an oasis for Francisville's Green Thumbs.

Nestled behind Ridge Avenue on Field Street, lies a row of vacant, predominantly publicly-owned parcels. The FNDC has been eyeing this land, envisioning its future as an oasis for Francisville's Green Thumbs – a home base for the Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (Recommendation 7.4) and a meeting place for community gardeners. The FNDC should work closely with Councilman Clarke's office to enable the acquisition of these parcels as well as the two-parcel garden on Leland Street by the FNDC for use in a community and economic development initiative. The stretch of contiguous parcels, which begins at Field Street's terminus, would be transformed into a Francisville Greenhouse and Learning Lab where FYC-3 participants would learn their trade and grow their seedlings, shrubs, and flowers, as well as fruits and vegetables to be sold at an affordable price to neighborhood residents.

Community gardens, called the Tench Francis Gardens, would be plotted in the space between the Greenhouse and the backyards of the homes that

front on Leland Street, providing a protected space for interested gardeners as well as the FYC-3 employees and teen volunteers to grow produce for the neighborhood. A small parking lot would accommodate visitors and employees, but traffic along Field Street, a narrow dead-end street, would remain low and mainly pedestrian in nature. The two-parcel lot on Leland, currently a defunct garden, would be converted into a maintenance shed for storing tools, materials, and vehicles used by the community in the upkeep of the neighborhood. The entire site including the greenhouse and gardens should be secured in the evenings to prevent many of the illegal activities that currently occur in the area.

A City-owned lot fronting on Ridge Avenue and adjacent to the lots identified for the Francisville Greenhouse has been identified as the potential future home of the (much needed) FNDC offices. The new building could provide some retail space for the sale of plants grown in the Greenhouse and community gardens. Designs for the new offices would also allow access, via a small, landscaped



Existing conditions at Field Street



Conceptual site plan for Field Street and adjacent area

path, from Ridge Avenue through to the Francisville Greenhouse and Tench Francis Gardens, thus diverting some foot traffic that would otherwise either overlook Francisville's new green oasis or travel along Field Street past its existing residences.



Proposed Francisville Greenhouse and Tench Francis Community Gardens

- Existing Building
- New Development
- Potential Rehabilitation
- Open Space

5.5 Promote Low Impact Development (LID)¹⁹ and “green” building technologies.

The FNDC recognizes that Francisville’s revitalization requires redevelopment of its vacant land and deteriorated buildings. They welcome development, but not at the expense of the neighborhood’s environmental health and ecosystems; they welcome new development that is balanced with open space and that incorporates environmentally sensitive design. This recommendation reflects the sentiment of 35% of survey respondents who noted that new development projects should provide open space in addition to buildings. It reflects growing trends in awareness, education, and dedication to green development within urban settings. It embraces Low Impact Development as a necessary approach for all new local investment, and it puts the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee in charge of overseeing this commitment to the natural environment and health of Francisville neighbors.

- **Set minimum standards for environmentally sensitive design; enforce these standards through the neighborhood zoning review process.**

This recommendation echoes the neighborhood’s belief in the importance of reducing stormwater runoff, mitigating flooding, and attracting new growth that balances development with open space; it proposes that the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee add a commitment to sustainable design to their agenda and promote Low Impact Design and green building techniques at all levels of redevelopment. The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should require developers to adhere to a set of minimum standards for environmentally sensitive design²⁰ and formulate an incentive based policy to encourage implementation of additional LID and green building techniques in the neighborhood. The policy should grant a streamlined Zoning Committee review process for

¹⁹ Low Impact Development (LID) is a growing trend in design and development that fuses site planning, land development, stormwater management, and ecosystem protection. LID aims to preserve predevelopment hydrology systems and water quality by introducing a series of small-scale interventions structured to produce quantifiable results. LID techniques reduce long-term stormwater infrastructure costs, shift maintenance burdens from local government to the private sector, provide pollution control and hydrologic control for small, frequently-occurring storms, and mitigate combined sewer overflow (CSO).

projects incorporating LID and green building methods. It should also recognize and reward projects that provide additional accessible green space.

These standards should be developed around the three primary aspects of low impact development:

1. **Managing Stormwater;**
2. **Building Green;** and
3. **Providing Open Space.**

1. **Managing Stormwater** – Undeveloped land employs a combination of three processes to manage stormwater: surface runoff, evatranspiration, and infiltration.

- **Surface runoff** flows directly into sewers through drainage points. The amount of built, impermeable surfaces – like rooftops and roads – in Francisville causes the majority of stormwater to enter the sewer system in this way, at high volume and high speeds. When the sewers overflow, this high volume, fast moving sewage enters peoples’ basements – an unwelcome guest.
- **Evatranspiration** accounts for water that evaporates from the ground or from plant matter and water absorbed by plants.
- **Infiltration** accounts for the water that sinks into the soil.

Low Impact Design strategies minimize the proportion of precipitation that is converted to surface runoff by maximizing the water volume that evaporates or infiltrates. This method of preventative stormwater management requires both sensitive site design and the introduction of various tools:

²⁰ The Philadelphia Water Department recently formed a Stormwater Relief Committee, charged with developing new ideas and strategies for managing flooding caused by rainfall. The Committee’s stringent new guidelines for stormwater management apply to all new development and give neighborhood groups like the FNDC the City’s political support for demanding more ecologically sensitive design. The FNDC should meet with their deputy commissioner and representatives from the Office of Watersheds to discuss these guidelines and determine the full range of legal assistance provided by the new guidelines.



L-R: Bioretention Cell, Green Roof, Permeable Paving, Vegetated Swale, Planted Bump-Out

- **Bioretention Cells** – Also known as rain gardens, bioretention cells are vegetated depressions that store and infiltrate runoff.
- **Green Roofs** – The soil and plants in green roofs detain, absorb, and filter precipitation, reducing the annual volume of roof runoff.
- **Permeable Pavements** – Permeable asphalt, concrete, or paving blocks allow runoff to infiltrate into the underlying soil.
- **Tree Box Filters** – Located below grade, tree box filters provide “bioretention in a box” along road curbs.
- **Vegetated Swales** – Shallow vegetated swales simultaneously serve as drainage, infiltration, and storage devices.
- **Dry Wells** – Dry wells are aggregate-filled pits that promote infiltration into the surrounding soil.
- **Rain Barrels or Cisterns** – These devices retain rainwater indefinitely for uses such as landscaping and potable water applications.



Rain barrels, generally 55 to 57 gallon food grade barrels made of recycled plastic, collect stormwater directly from a structure's roof gutter, storing the water for later use in the garden or yard. The barrels have spigots for hose or irrigation attachments as well as overflow tubes that redirect runoff to the garden when the barrel reaches capacity. Beyond their function as a buffer between rainfall and the sewer system, rain barrels reduce internal flooding by directing stormwater away from residential foundations.

They also improve plant health by providing a supply of natural, not municipally treated, water. Pre-configured rain barrels cost between \$80 and \$120 at the outset, but lessen water bill costs in the future. www.urbangardencenter.com is a resource for researching and purchasing rain barrels.

To quantify the effect of neighborhood-wide rain barrel implementation, use the following formula:

1 inch of rain on a 1,000 square foot roof yields 623 gallons of water. Calculate the yield of your roof by multiplying the square footage of your roof by 623 and dividing by 1,000.



2. Building Green – In addition to environmentally responsible site design, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should advocate for the incorporation of green building technologies in all new construction and rehabilitation projects. Green building techniques adopt a comprehensive design approach to create buildings that are ecologically and economically efficient and interior spaces that are healthy and comfortable. To lessen the environmental impact of new construction, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should request that development conforms to the following green building principles and give preference and support to projects that:

- Use energy and water efficiently;
- Use renewable sources of energy, like solar and wind;
- Use building materials that are energy efficient, have high recycled content, low toxicity, and good durability; and
- Reduce the waste from construction, renovation, and demolition when possible.



Recycled paneling



Solar and wind power generators



Open space

3. Providing Adequate Open Space and Ensuring Proper Maintenance – The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should also establish minimum standards for open space provision requirements. Though the existing zoning code specifies varying proportions of the overall lot area to remain “open” depending on each lot’s residential zone, zoning currently accepts paved, impervious, yet unbuilt surfaces such as parking spaces as “open.” The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should consider adopting development principles that include a required percentage of developable property to remain green and permeable, not just “open,” as well as requirements related to street tree plantings. Projects that do not meet open space requirements should be required to address stormwater runoff concerns through use of LID techniques or financial support of public open space improvements. Northern Liberties, for example, is integrating open space provisions into their zoning review and requiring developers to meet their green expectations through LID techniques, green roofs or a donation to a neighborhood open space fund.

At a minimum, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should:

- Require that the 30% open space zoning requirement for residential zoned districts is 100% permeable. Parking will not be accepted as open space unless the driveway is constructed of permeable materials and a minimum of a third of that space is planted green space. Although commercial and industrial zoned districts require in some cases no open space, the Zoning Committee should apply this policy to all developments regardless of pre-existing zoning.
- For projects that cannot meet these open space minimums, or where 100% coverage of the site is pre-existing, developers must address stormwater runoff concerns through the construction of a green roof or through the use of permeable materials that occupy 30% of the site. Flexibility should be granted to developers who suggest alternative methods for reducing stormwater runoff.
- For the design of public spaces, the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should promote the incorporation of vegetated swales, permeable paving and other stormwater management tools. Parks, streetscapes, and other public spaces should exceed the greening and stormwater runoff management ideals described above. The conceptual designs proposed for Ridge Avenue and the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center accomplish this goal.

5.6 Remain a Neighborhood Off the Grid – Get Off the Grid.

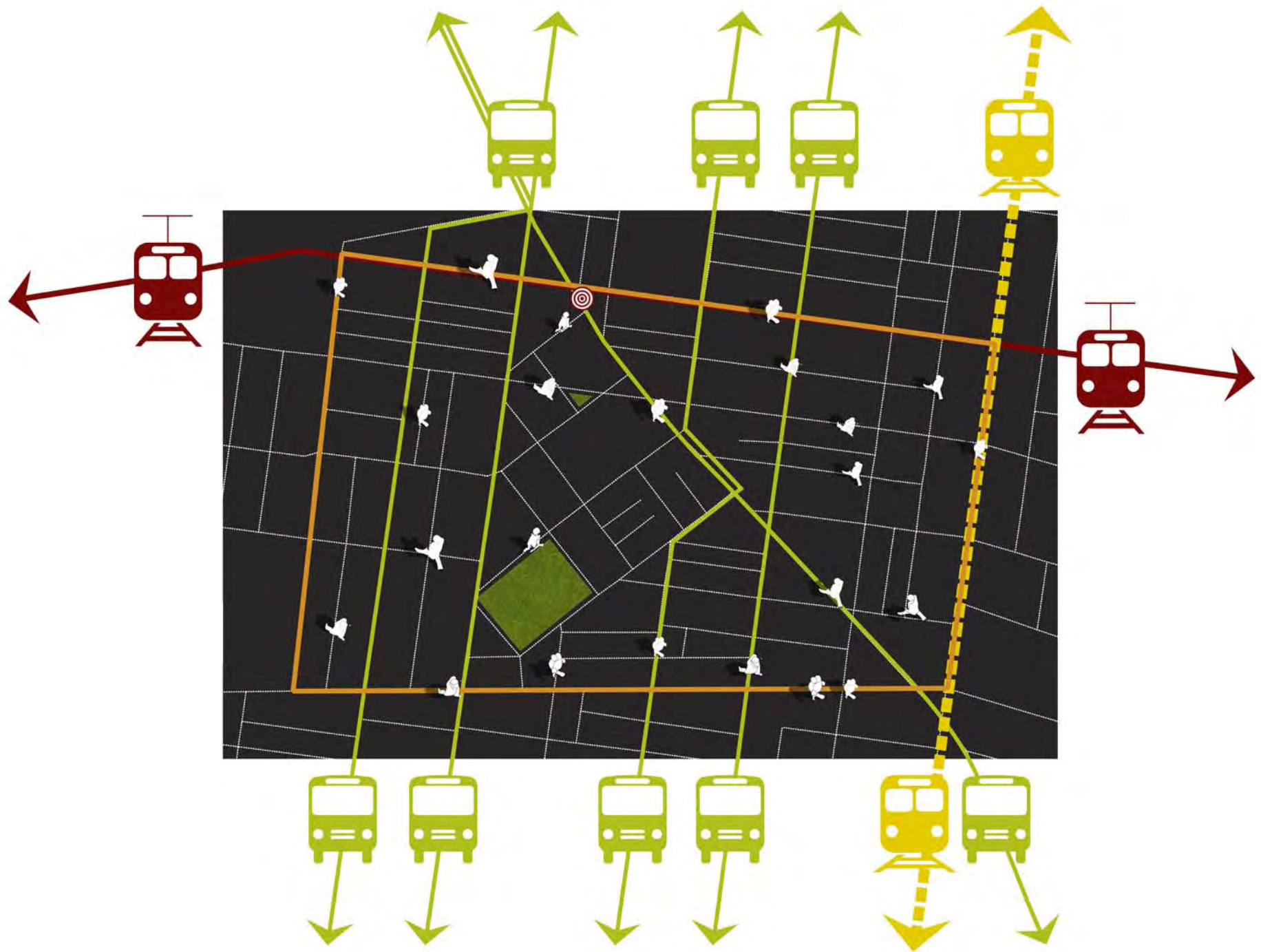
Full neighborhood endorsement of a green philosophy for Francisville would be the ultimate expression of Francisville's commitment to a more sustainable future and a strengthened identity as a neighborhood that is "Off the Grid." An exercise in community identity building as well as in education, the FNDC should launch a simple awareness campaign to teach neighborhood residents and property owners about affordable, individual efforts that effectively lessen the volume of water passing through the neighborhood's sewers, contribute to a healthier urban environment, and reduce energy consumption. Teach residents what they can do, how they can do it, and why they should do it – every drop counts!

Possible topics addressed in the FNDC's outreach campaign should include: rain barrels for stormwater collection and reuse, strategies for decreasing domestic water usage, and techniques for decreasing heat loss and lowering heating bills. These education initiatives should be coordinated with PGW's ongoing campaign to teach local residents how to save energy and money on their bills. In the meantime, though, *everyone* can do more to consume less energy and save money on bills. In fact, former Vice President, Al Gore, compiled a list of "Ten Things To Do," including:

- Replacing regular incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent light bulbs;
- Walking, biking, carpooling, or riding transit instead of relying on your automobile for transportation;
- Recycling;
- Keeping tires inflated properly and improving your gas mileage;
- Using less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead and washing clothes in cold or warm water;
- Avoiding products that come with a lot of packaging;
- Using less heat or air conditioning by moving the thermostat down two degrees in the winter and up two degrees in the summer;
- Planting a tree;
- Turning off electronic devices such as the television, DVD player, stereo, or computer when they are not in use; and
- Spreading the word!²¹

²¹ The contents of the list are communicated via the film, *An Inconvenient Truth*. An original copy of the list is available on the film's website, <http://www.climatecrisis.net>.

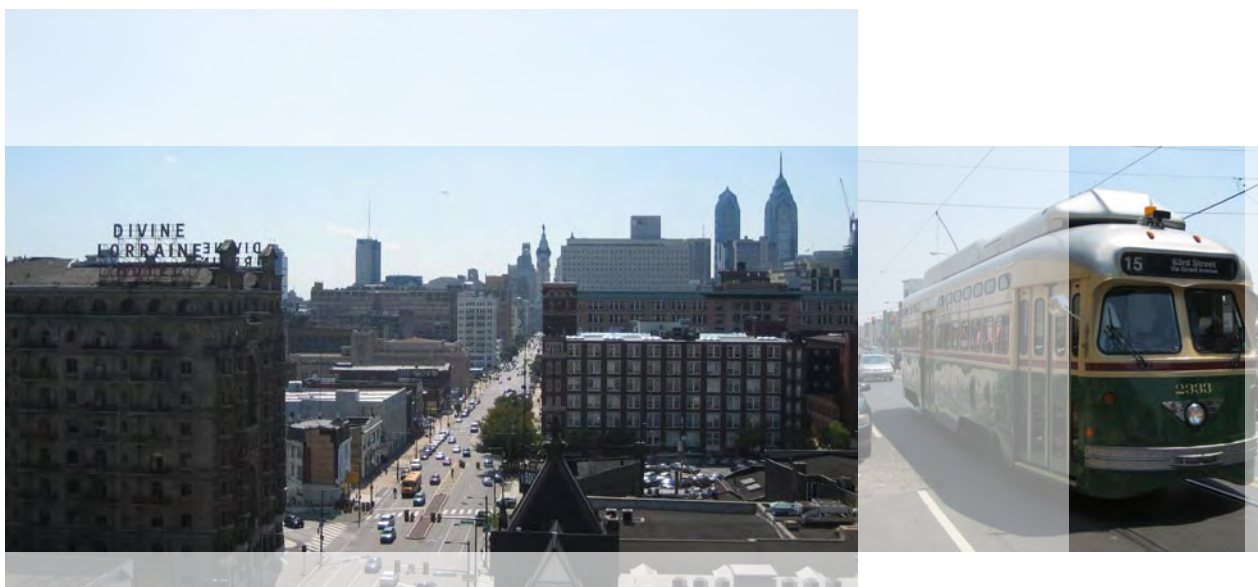




Francisville's alternatives to the automobile



livability



6. Francisville is walkable; make it more so.

Market your proximity.

Expose your connectivity.

Plant a seed of livability.

Francisville is close to many major destinations in Philadelphia. Walking and biking are realistic options for people traveling to and from or working in Francisville each day. SEPTA bus, trolley, and subway lines connect the neighborhood with destinations throughout the City. Many new and long-term residents continue to rely on the car while parking problems grow exponentially for all residents in the neighborhood. To remain livable and convenient, Francisville must embrace its identity as a well-located and well-connected urban neighborhood, encouraging people to get out of their cars, and to choose Francisville because of the many alternative means of transportation and the opportunity for a walkable lifestyle.

6.1 Advocate for improvements to local SEPTA stations.



SEPTA's Broad Street Subway Line, under construction in 1927 and today

Francisville is unique for its access to multiple transit modes and lines. The Broad Street Line subway makes two stops in the neighborhood – one at Fairmount and one at Girard. These stations facilitate critical connections to Center City extending as far south as the sports stadiums and north well past Temple University. Multiple bus lines run through the neighborhood, and the Girard Avenue Trolley was recently reintroduced, connecting the Philadelphia Zoo and West Philadelphia neighborhoods with neighborhoods along East Girard Avenue, like Fishtown and Northern Liberties. For Francisville to fully benefit from its proximity to transit and connectivity to destinations across the City, all SEPTA stations and bus stops require both capital improvements and increased security. The station facilities should reflect the high quality of transit service offered in Francisville.

Improvements at the Broad Street Subway Line stations and local bus stops would result in new riders for SEPTA and new residents for Francisville. The FNDC should appoint its most patient, long-sighted, and persistent volunteer

to petition for improvements that make the Broad Street Line stations at Fairmount and Girard cleaner, safer, and more pleasant to be in. If major capital improvements to the Fairmount Station do move forward the FNDC should advocate for the exit stairs to be realigned to direct riders leaving the station toward Ridge Avenue. All Ridge Avenue businesses and the neighborhood as a whole would benefit from increased pedestrian traffic.

Creative, artistic, and aesthetically pleasing bus shelters that serve people waiting for the 2 bus and the 61 bus, which intersect and travel along Ridge Avenue, respectively, should be incorporated into Ridge Avenue streetscape improvements.



*Bus Shelter
Source: Wall USA*

6.2 Integrate a bicycle friendly environment along main streets.



None of Francisville's streets currently have bicycle lanes. However, Poplar Street and Fairmount Avenue are designated as "Bicycle Friendly," on the Philadelphia Bicycle Map. This means that they were rated "above average for bicycling."²² The Philadelphia Bicycle Map identifies Broad Street, Corinthian Avenue, Girard Avenue, and Ridge Avenue as within the "Evaluated Bicycle Network," which means that they have been "evaluated as part of the bicycle network plan." However, no

improvements have been made to date. The FNDC should coordinate with the Streets Department regarding improvements to the bicycle environment on all six streets: Poplar, Fairmount, Broad, Corinthian, Girard, and especially Ridge. Specifically because Ridge Avenue is envisioned as a mixed-use destination corridor, bicycle-oriented improvements should include not only a dedicated bike lane, but also bicycle racks for parking and storing bicycles.

6.3 Develop a strategy for on-street parking; help neighbors navigate the permitting process.

As Francisville redevelops and its residential population grows, the demand for parking will increase. In fact, grumblings about parking problems are already emerging along the southern and western edges of the neighborhood. At night, cars push from the high-parking-demand neighborhoods of Spring Garden and Fairmount and encroach on Francisville's resource. During the day, commuters take advantage of the free and unrestricted parking found along many of Francisville's streets. One option for managing the perceived parking problem is to introduce restrictions that regulate who can park where, when, and for how long.

For Ridge Avenue, the FNDC together with the Business Association should consider the merits of meter parking along the street. While meters are not needed in the current market, once commercial activity returns, there will be a need to encourage faster turnover within the customer base. Parking

²² <http://www.phila.gov/streets/Philabik.pdf>.

restrictions along residential streets would take the form of permit parking. The City's permit parking process requires cooperation at the block level and a collective decision by block inhabitants to request the introduction of permit parking along their block. The FNDC should become familiar with the process of obtaining permit parking and should be prepared not only to discuss objectively the pros and cons of permit parking with curious neighbors but also to guide those interested through the City's process.

Short-Term Recommendation

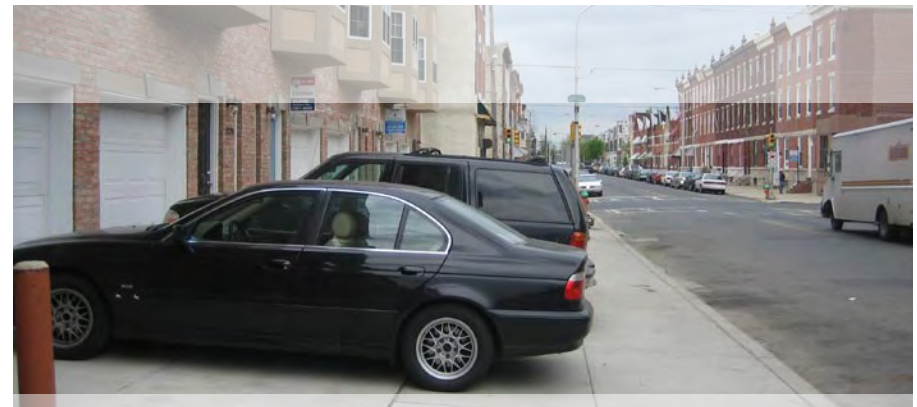
6.4 Limit curb cuts for parking (and front-loading residential garages).



Source: Philadelphia Weekly

As the parking demand in Francisville grows, on-street parking will become a more valuable and scarce resource. The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should adopt a policy of limiting curb cuts for off-street parking on streets where on-street parking currently exists. Though in some cases the curb cuts create a private parking space for the adjacent property owner, the cuts reduce the on-street parking supply by one to one and a half car lengths, subtracting from the public resource. The FNDC should adopt a policy that in any situation in which curb cuts

will be permitted, the curb cuts will not take more than one parking space. This will eliminate the net loss of one half of a parking space where curb cuts are necessary.



Cars parked in front of front-loading garages block the sidewalk in South Philadelphia.

6.5 Develop a shared parking scheme.

Single-use at-grade parking lots are almost always an underutilized resource. Rarely is any one-use parking lot open and active around the clock throughout the week. In a neighborhood so close to Center City, where the market is growing and parking demand is increasing as a result, at-grade parking resources should be open either to the public or two complementary user groups – such as church-goers on Sundays and residents of surrounding blocks during the evening hours and overnight. The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should adopt a policy that prohibits the creation of new single-use at-grade parking lots in Francisville, except where those lots proposed serve the commercial uses along Ridge Avenue. The FNDC should also engage the owners of existing single-use at-grade parking lots in a discussion with the goal of developing a shared parking scheme for complementary populations. More efficient use of parking resources will free new parcels for redevelopment and help to restore healthy, continuous street walls along the neighborhood's main corridors.

6.6



Encourage PhillyCarShare to locate vehicles in a Francisville lot.

Another option for solving the growing parking problem in Francisville is to welcome PhillyCarShare²³ to the neighborhood. Their fleet is taking the City by storm, providing an affordable, accessible alternative to owning a car in the City. The FNDC should contact PhillyCarShare and inquire about the possibility for locating a PhillyCarShare vehicle or two in one of Francisville's proposed lots or garages (Recommendation 2.7). Residential developers in other neighborhoods charge a premium to units for the amenity of access to PhillyCarShare spaces. The FNDC should also consider approaching developers of larger scale projects about donating a space to PhillyCarShare in exchange for a lower required parking ratio.

6.7

Keep SEPTA schedules for neighborhood routes in the FNDC offices.

Encourage transit ridership by helping SEPTA do its job. People are more likely to ride transit if they know where routes go and how often they go. Keep a stash of bus schedules as well as a full SEPTA transit map in the proposed new FNDC offices; distribute them as needed to visitors, and be prepared to discuss fares, transfers, and token purchasing procedures.

²³ PhillyCarShare provides cars by the hour from convenient neighborhood locations throughout Philadelphia, <http://www.phillycarshare.org/>.

6.8

Focus on Corinthian Avenue to reconnect communities.

Francisville is bounded by large, divisive streets. These streets sever Francisville from adjacent communities and services available outside of the neighborhood. However, many of these edge streets are currently on the radar of other organizations. Plans are in place to improve Girard Avenue by the Girard Coalition and Broad Street by the City Planning Commission. Additionally, the Fairmount CDC and Spring Garden CDC have committed to improving Fairmount Avenue. The missing link is Corinthian Avenue, which divides Fairmount and Francisville yet is home to numerous historic assets. The FNDC should work with the Fairmount CDC to:

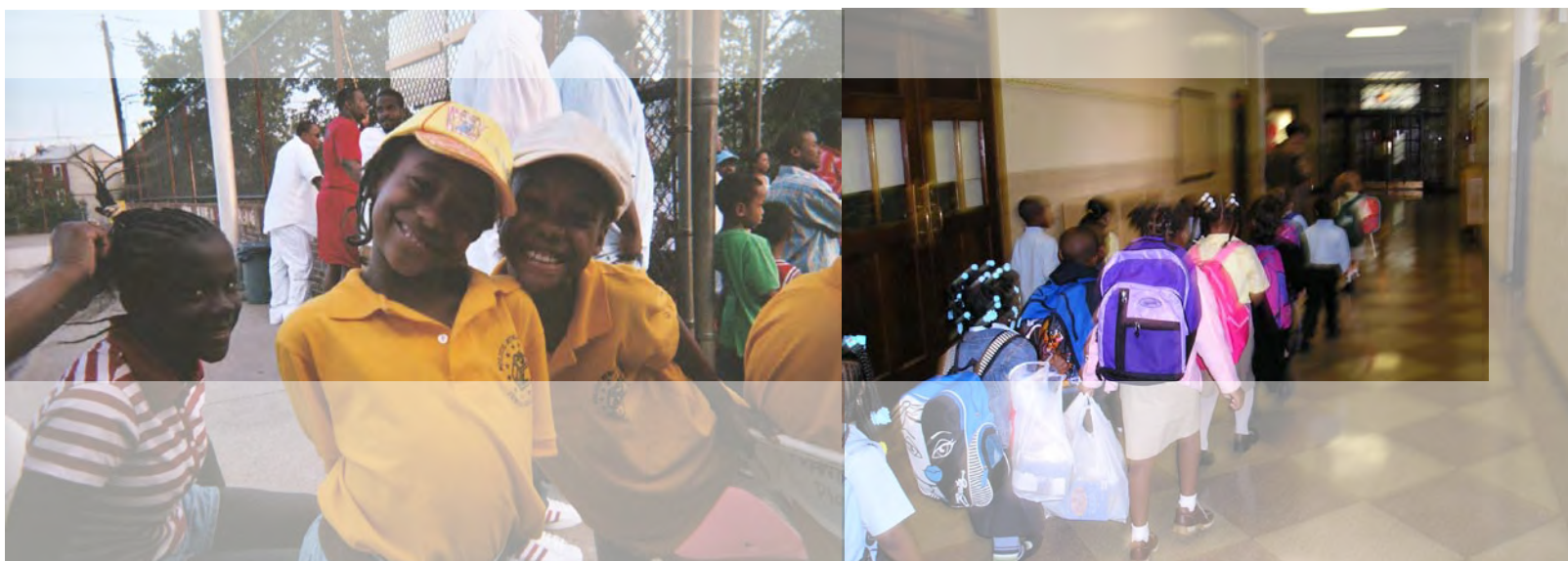
- **Create a bridge to school** - New “bumpouts” at the intersections of Brown, Parrish and Poplar Streets will slow traffic and provide safer routes to the Bache-Martin school from Francisville.
- **Make Corinthian a key hub in Philadelphia's bicycle network** - Corinthian is currently “bicycle friendly” but not an official route. New bike lanes and bike racks should be installed to formalize a bike friendly connection between Girard and Fairmount Avenues while providing amenities for both commercial corridors.
- **Fill the gaps with new greening** - Much of Corinthian is lined with trees. However, some areas would greatly benefit from new tree planting (between Poplar and Girard) and planter boxes. The FNDC and Fairmount CDC should work to install new planter boxes and plantings as a concerted effort to create a green seam between the communities.
- **Communicate a shared history** - Corinthian is home to nationally registered buildings, one of the nation's most unique penitentiaries, a former reservoir and the original location of Lankenau Hospital. New interpretive signage should be considered as well as an ongoing video installation on the vacant lot at the end of Corinthian on Fairmount Avenue that expresses and celebrates this unique history.



Girard College facing Corinthian Avenue



**healthy
futures**



Source: Tanye Gilbert-Ruffin

7. Foster bright futures for neighborhood youth [and for the neighborhood].

Invest in their education, talent, health, and breadth of experience.

Instill self-worth, pride, and respect.

Plant a seed for healthy futures.

The Francisville community values the long tenure of its residents. Many Francisville families have lived in Francisville for generations; they define Francisville just as Francisville defines them. While new growth and development interest are welcoming newcomers to the neighborhood, these new residents alone do not represent Francisville's future. Francisville's future is in its youth, comprising almost one third (31%) of today's population, and many of these youth are at risk. The youth of Francisville, *the future of Francisville*, need attention.

7.1 Found a Neighborhood Youth Council.

Both lifelong and new residents, together with Francisville community leadership, share a common concern about the youth of the neighborhood. As described in the analysis, adults in Francisville worry about a lack of parental supervision, lives lost – literally and figuratively – to drugs, violence, the prison system, under performing schools and low educational attainment, children raising children, and the widening gap between the community, law enforcement, and local youth. More than anything else, however, the collective voice of the community worries about a lack of opportunity for the children – a lack of educational opportunities, a lack of job opportunities, and a lack of opportunities for a traditional childhood.

A Neighborhood Youth Council is the first step toward effecting positive change in the lives of local youth. The Youth Council, comprised initially of a group of five or so teens in Francisville, will serve several purposes.

- The Youth Council will give local kids a voice in the community – an opportunity to contribute constructively to the neighborhood's future. The FNDC will benefit from the presence of another important perspective at the table and a powerful new partner in Francisville's revitalization.
- The individual teens involved will benefit from leadership training, professional development, and exposure to civic responsibility.
- Local teens will have an opportunity to work on a productive project outside of the classroom setting, to restore hope and belief in the power of their actions, and to meet new mentors and contacts who might provide valuable references for future opportunities.
- Beyond the personal empowerment that teens on the Youth Council will experience, their work in partnership with the FNDC will improve the youth environment in Francisville for all children, adolescents, teens, and young adults.



Source: Penelope Giles

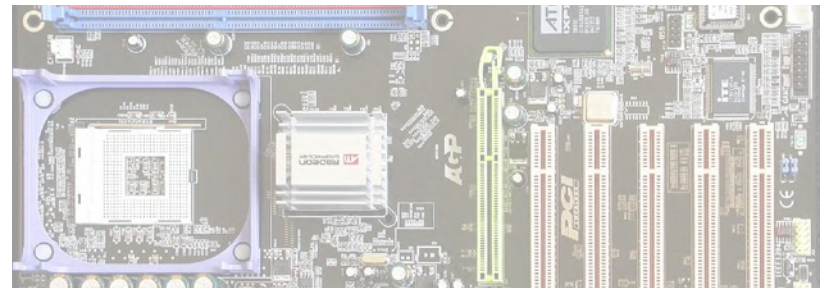
The FNDC and FNCA should ask their partners and the principals and teachers at local schools for recommendations of four or five teens with the qualities and passion needed to start a Council, and then ask the teens to take charge of organizing the fun stuff for boys *and girls* in Francisville. Following are some ideas that they can help with:

7.2 Plug in your youth (and your young at heart): Connect the community to computers and a cutting-edge technology curriculum for all ages and skill levels.

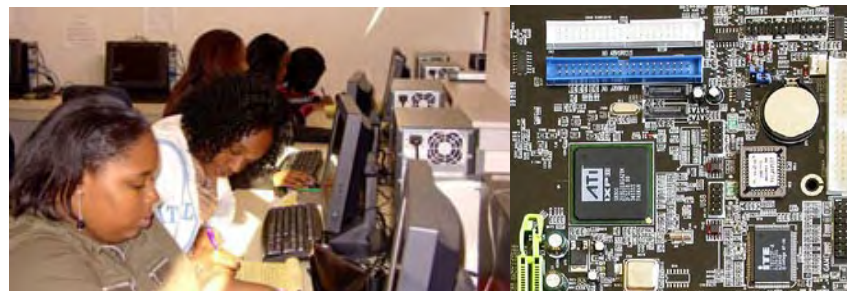
Everyday, technology becomes a larger, more influential and far reaching component of our world. It informs the way we communicate, the way we learn, the way we work, the way we create, and the way we experience. Technology – and access to technology – is fundamental to establishing meaningful new life opportunities for Francisville's youth (and young at heart).

The neighborhood and its residents need both access to computers, the machines themselves, and access to a progressive educational curriculum that teaches the skills needed to use computers and computer programs for a variety purposes. This recommendation calls for a neighborhood-serving technology center with an educational goal of expanding skill sets and creating new learning and work opportunities for youth and adults in Francisville. Improving local technology is grounded in the following objectives:

- All ages and skill levels require well-tailored classes and activities to ensure life-long learning and to encourage intergenerational contact among residents. One-time workshops on important topics like resume writing and tax preparation will help to attract an additional array of residents that might not normally utilize the center.



- The curriculum developed for the community must be flexible enough to allow for individual differences in their comfort level and familiarity with computer technology. The curriculum should allow and motivate students to escalate or accelerate their education, moving from basic computer skills to advanced class offerings.
- The technology center should teach job skills and generate local work opportunities within the center and must therefore be recognized as a forum for and form of economic development – not just social development. Together, with support from the community and partner organizations, Francisville should actively pursue the economic development resources and technology funding streams necessary to help support the center, develop a curriculum, and open the doors to opportunity for all residents.
- A Francisville Technology Council should be formed under the umbrella of the FNDC, bringing representatives from local organizations, schools, City-wide organizations to the table.²⁴ The Council can be staffed initially by volunteers, but as demand for programs grows, part-time or full-time staff will be needed to manage the center. The Council will, over time, become a separate nonprofit with its own budget, board of directors, and staff.
- The new technology center should be located on Ridge Avenue or at the Recreation Center.
- The FNDC and its partners should build the center from the experience of other organizations in Philadelphia and elsewhere.²⁵ Because technology programs have numerous demands – space, equipment, curriculum, capacity, know-how, and secured funding – strong partnerships are required, and resources should be shared between the FNDC and three established neighborhood institutions: the Berean Institute, the Holy Ghost Headquarters/CDC, and People For People, Inc. In addition, the FNDC and its partners should reach out to City and regional agencies that provide support and help develop neighborhood technology centers, specifically.²⁶
- As an interim strategy, the FNDC should work closely with People For People, the Berean Institute, and the Holy Ghost Headquarters/CDC to provide technology access to local residents while planning for the Francisville Technology Center is ongoing.



Source: People For People, Inc.

²⁴ People's Emergency Center and the Mt. Airy Community Center are good models of organizations whose active technology councils have led to successful technology centers.

²⁵ Community technology programs that might serve as valuable resources and contacts include:

1) The Mt. Airy Community Computer Center and the People's Emergency Center (PEC) Neighborhood Technology Programs in West Philadelphia are good local examples.

2) **Playing 2 Win**, a cutting-edge community technology center that provides instruction in an access to web design, digital art and video, music production, e-business, and an array of other marketable skills, Harlem, New York City, New York, <http://www.playing2win.org/>.

3) **Hopeworks 'N Camden**, a nonprofit program for youth that provides website design and development training and exposure to GIS technology, Camden, New Jersey, <http://www.hopeworks.org/>.

4) **Plugged In**, a creative arts and technology studio for young people that includes a youth-operated web-design firm, Palo Alto, California, <http://www.pluggedin.org/>.

²⁶ Three agencies dedicated to supporting neighborhood technology initiatives and bridging the Digital Divide include:

1) **Teaming for Technology** of the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania provides leadership and support to nonprofits in the Philadelphia region by furthering their missions through the use of technology. They should be an integral partner in planning efforts, <http://www.uwsepa.org/team4tech>.

2) **Community Technology Centers' Network** (CTCNet) offers networking, capacity-building, program development, and partnership opportunities. Their Youth Visions for Stronger Neighborhoods program recognizes that, "young people are our most valuable community asset" and offers community technology programs a framework for using multimedia tools and training to engage youth in community decision-making, <http://www.ctcnet.org/>.

3) **Wireless Philadelphia**, a nonprofit created to transform Philadelphia's neighborhoods by making high-speed Internet access more available and affordable through Digital Inclusion, <http://www.wirelessphiladelphia.org/>.

Short-Term Recommendation

Introducing, the Francisville Sound Studio.

Francisville should not take the concentration of musical talent in the neighborhood for granted just because it has always been there. The clustered creativity and talent is surprising, refreshing, something very special, and at this point, Francisville's little secret. It is something to build upon. This proposal identifies music technology as a way to reintroduce the music scene to Francisville, generate buzz about the neighborhood, and fertilize homegrown musical genius. It suggests transforming Francisville's rich musical history into a living legacy, harnessing the big talent that remains in the neighborhood, and launching a Francisville Sound Studio.

Though the full realization of this idea is a long-term project requiring space, equipment, dedicated funding sources, and very committed leadership (the talent, we trust, will not be in short supply), it is a powerful idea, with the potential to be amazing, and it belongs in Francisville. The Francisville Sound Studio will be a recording studio, a space for music creation, production, and appreciation, a program for youth development, a huge opportunity for the neighborhood, its kids – and the City. A recording studio requires minimal space and depending upon the funding available, it could be housed within the FNDC's future offices on Ridge Avenue.



Introducing, the Francisville Sound Studio

The Francisville Sound Studio will require a lot of preparation, daydreaming, brainstorming, research, networking, and forged partnerships. The daydreaming and brainstorming responsibilities should fall on the shoulders of community members involved in the music industry and local youth with aspirations for a future in music. These adults and youth should think about what a program like the Francisville Sound Studio would entail – what kind of space it would need; what inventory of equipment; which music industry magnates currently sponsor similar programs or might be interested in doing so; and whether the program might develop into a music development charter school, etc.

Researching efforts should learn from other groups that are administrating or developing similar programs.²⁷ Local partnerships should be pursued including, most importantly, partnerships with local resources. Specifically, a meeting should be scheduled with Reverend Hatcher at the Met to discuss his ideas for a similar program.²⁸ Given Reverend Hatcher's vision for the restoration of the Metropolitan Opera on North Broad, a shared commitment to the Francisville Sound Studio is not only critical, but makes perfect sense.

²⁷ Potential local contacts include:

- 1) **KaPow! Inc.** is a four-year old nonprofit in Philadelphia, which specializes in academic achievement through media literacy, using music and video production, dance, online journalism and arts programming. They also develop media projects for nonprofit organizations and charter schools. Office: 1500 Market Street, 12th Floor East, Philadelphia, PA, 19102. Office Phone: 215-665-5626.
- 2) **Hip Hop Speaks**, affiliated with KaPow! Inc., challenges students after school, in school, and through our premier summer hip-hop media arts institute to examine evidence from the cultural sources students consume the most – hip hop music, film and music videos, television, and advertising—and to use that knowledge to create new and exciting media of their own, <http://hiphopspeaks.org/>.
- 3) Assistant Professor of English at Penn State Abington, **Dr. James Peterson**. Dr. Peterson has a research interest in Jazz and Hip Hop as a means to bridge the generational gap in the African American community. Office Phone: 215.881.7578. E-mail: jbp11@psu.edu.
- 4) Adjunct Professor of Hip Hop at Drexel University and Temple University, **Michael Coard, Esq.** The Bowser Law Center. Office Phone: 215.552.8714. E-mail: mc@bowserweaver.com.

²⁸ For example, in a joint program structure, the Francisville Sound Studio and the Met could share space – program and performance space at the Met in exchange for recording studio and equipment storage space at the FNDC offices.

7.4 Bridge the Age Gap.

An “age gap” exists in Francisville. We heard about it during our interviews. It came up at public meetings. Concerned adults worry that they cannot reach or relate to the neighborhood’s youth. With almost one third of the neighborhood below the age of 18, the age gap threatens to become more pronounced. Younger kids look up to teens and young adults as role models. It is important to help the current group of teens and young adults to re-engage and re-connect with their community, not just for their own good, but for tomorrow’s teens and for a more cohesive future for Francisville.

This proposal outlines additional strategies for getting local teens and young adults talking with neighborhood youth and elders beyond the natural relationships that will emerge through the creation of a Francisville Youth Council and the Francisville Sound Studio.

- **Connect: Teens to Seniors** – Introduce teens participating in the Francisville Sound Studio to local seniors through an effort to record oral histories, described in Recommendation 1.6. If incentives are needed, completion of an oral history recording project could be a prerequisite to using the sound studio for music creation. Teens might also “adopt” a senior, helping with errands or home maintenance tasks on a weekly basis.
- **Connect: Teens to Adults** – Start a What Do You Want to Be When You Grow Up? Mentoring Program in which teens and young adults get paired up with adults in the neighborhood who possess common skills, interests, or experience. Encourage teens to think seriously about their futures and start training them in the art of networking – a very necessary job skill. Compile a list of the talents of Francisville’s adults – of long term residents and newcomers bringing new skills to Francisville, alike – through the Neighborhood Talent Survey described in Recommendation 1.1.

Teens and young adults could also gain exposure to local adult’s professions through a Francisville Career Fair Night organized by the FNDC based upon the skills volunteered through the Neighborhood Talent Survey.

- **Connect: Kids to Young Adults** – Big Brothers Big Sisters, a youth mentoring program that has been in existence for over 100 years, has its national and international headquarters in Philadelphia, just across North Broad Street. “Bigs,” adult and young adult mentors, meet with their “Little” mentee at least 4 hours a month, often more, getting together to play sports and games, visit museums, cook, or do an art project, etc. “Bigs” are well-screened and trained to view their participation in the program as a long term commitment, and studies show that kids participating in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program as “Littles” are 52% less likely to skip school, 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, and more likely to get along with their families and peers.²⁹

The FNDC should contact Big Brothers Big Sisters, seeking information about enrolling some of the neighborhood’s youth in the program. The FNDC should then share the information with local families and build support, interest, and enrollment in the program.

²⁹ Tierney, J.P., Grossman, J.B., and Resch, N.L. (1995). *Making a Difference: An Impact Study of Big Brothers Big Sisters*. Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures. <http://www.bbbs.org/>.

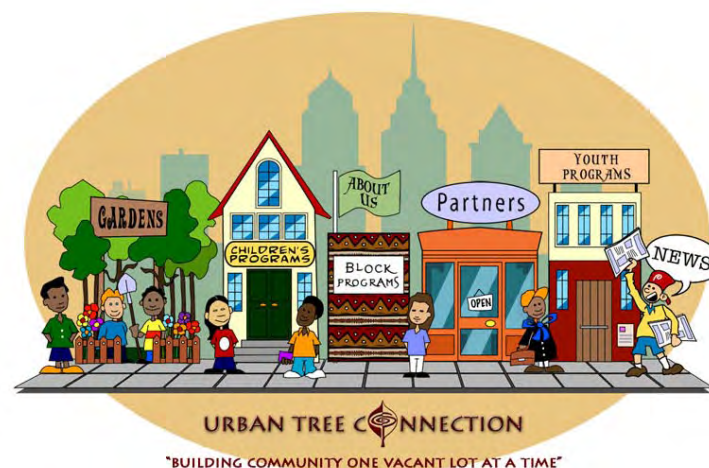
Short-Term Recommendation

Develop a Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (FYC-3) [part fun, part job skills, part work] – an environmental maintenance program to clean and green Francisville.

Eager to start effecting change in Francisville and determined to hit the ground running upon completion of the plan, the FNDC has already made great progress tackling two pressing issues in Francisville – the littered, tattered state of the neighborhood's streets, sidewalks, and vacant land, and the precarious state of the neighborhood's youth (underemployed in legal, productive jobs and so earning income by illicit means). The FNDC has devised an environmental maintenance program to be operated jointly with the FNCA that will at once clean and green the neighborhood while creating new jobs for local youth and young adults – the future (paid) stewards of Francisville's natural environment.

The program, named the Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club, or FYC-3, will employ young adults ages 18 to 25 year-round and provide stipend part-time work for youth ages 13 to 17 after school and five half-days a week during the summer months. Vacant land will be stabilized and maintained; sidewalks, gardens, and trees will be made more beautiful. Youth will develop a range of new skills: in horticulture and landscaping, in leadership and entrepreneurship, in civic responsibility and community pride. The neighborhood will rub its eyes, will see the vacancy and debris with a re-trained critical eye, and will work together to show the City that Francisville is no longer a dumping ground. The neighborhood will work to reduce violent crime and illegal drug activity, and, independently, the neighborhood will connect its youth with economic opportunity. It will be an exercise in loving your community and having it love you back.

Implementation of the FYC-3 environmental maintenance program will require resources – financial resources, organizational resources, technical know-how, and capacity. As envisioned by the FNDC, funding for the program will come from donations made by local residents and business owners, as well as from grants sought by the FNDC. As an increasingly mixed-income, economically diverse community, Francisville's local fundraising potential is on the rise. However, the FNDC should also consider forming a Salary Scholarship Fund to which developers can contribute as part of a community benefits agreement. As for organizational, technical, and capacity resources, the FNDC should network and partner with other organizations working in the City and elsewhere.³⁰



The Urban Tree Connection based in West Philadelphia runs a full vacant land management and gardening program that teaches youth landscaping skills. Information on the Urban Tree Connection can be found online at www.urbantreeconnection.org.



FYC-3:
cleaning

clearing

greening

landscaping

Weeding Photo Source: <http://www.byronstoryfnd.com>

³⁰ Valuable contacts include:

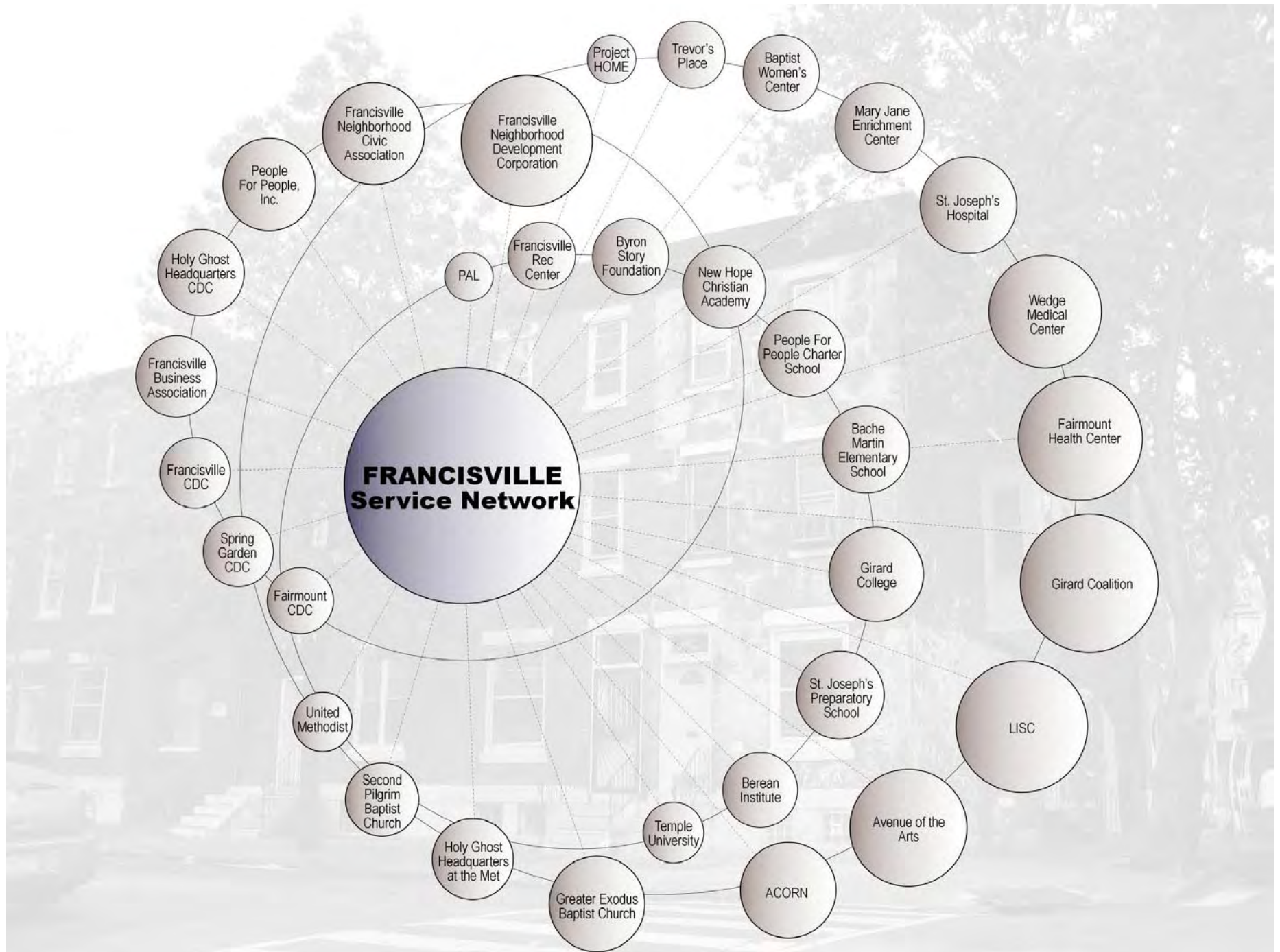
1) **Philadelphia Green**, a program of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, is the nation's most comprehensive urban greening program. Through the Vacant Land Stabilization Program, Philly Green begins stabilization by cleaning and mowing the grounds, laying topsoil, planting seeds, and adorning the area with new trees and fencing. Through the Community LandCare Program, Philly Green facilitates the stabilization and maintenance of the land.

<http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/vacantland.html>

2) **East Park Revitalization Alliance (EPRA)**, a community-based nonprofit based in the Strawberry Mansion neighborhood, has, over the past four years, planted over 300 trees, built community gardens, facilitated numerous murals throughout the neighborhood, and created and maintained over 13 acres of community-friendly open green space at the sites of formerly abandoned vacant lots. EPRA operates an after-school and summer program that focuses on teaching neighborhood youth about the importance of environmental stewardship, physical activity and nutrition. <http://www.epralliance.org/>.

3) **Men United for a Better Philadelphia (MUBP)**, is an anti-violence group based in Brewerytown that focuses on providing a network of support services for men to attract them away from lives of criminal activity and negative attitudes, which contribute to the destruction of families and neighborhoods. Community activists involved with MUBP spend time on the streets, organizing at the grass roots level, and communicating with the men on the corners – the same young men targeted by the FYC-3. <http://www.menunited.org/>.

4) **Added Value**, a non-profit organization based in the Red Hook neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, promotes the sustainable development of Red Hook by nurturing a new generation of young leaders. They create opportunities for the youth of South Brooklyn to expand their knowledge base, develop new skills, and positively engage with their community through the operation of a socially responsible urban farming enterprise. Check out some of their ongoing initiatives: <http://www.added-value.org/initiatives.php>. Also, check out their list of partners: <http://www.added-value.org/links.php>.



Francisville Service Network



8. **Ensure that local services serve the neighborhood.**

Provide alternatives for the neighborhood's at-risk populations.
 Bring institutions to the table; define working partnerships.
 Plant a seed of support.

Francisville will not move forward unless it does so as a recognized and unified community, improving the circumstances of all residents and families as the neighborhood strengthens and rebuilds. In 2000, 36% of Francisville lived below the poverty line, 9% of the labor force was unemployed, 41% of adults 25 and over did not have a high school diploma, and 26% of families with children were headed by single mothers. It is Francisville's responsibility to ensure that all of these populations benefit from the neighborhood's stabilization and revitalization. These populations need a network of support and services to do so, and at a glance, Francisville, with its numerous social service, educational, health, and religious institutions, seems well equipped to meet the community's needs.

Despite Francisville's unusually high institutional presence, the lack of coordination between churches, schools, health centers and hospitals, shelters, and other service providers in the area results in both redundancy and service gaps. Furthermore, many of the locally provided services target clients from across the City – bringing a particularly needy clientele to Francisville each day and creating somewhat of a misperception: Francisville has a substantial base of service providers, yet many programs do not serve Francisville residents, leaving the local population underserved in some areas.

8.1 Compile a Francisville Services Directory; make Francisville's Service Network more accessible.

As an information hub for the neighborhood, the FNDC should be well versed and able to provide referrals to local constituents in need of a particular social service. Though the analysis phase of the planning process sought to collect a full list of social services provided by institutions located in Francisville, the surveys were largely unreturned or returned uncompleted. This response is indicative of the accessibility of the local service network. Many services are provided, yet residents either do not know about the services or do not know how to benefit from them. A full list of social services available in the neighborhood should be compiled in a Francisville Services Directory. The FNDC's services and responsibilities should be included in the directory as well as contact information for various City agencies. The Directory should function as a tool for better coordination of services in the neighborhood, resulting in less redundancy and fewer service gaps.

The Francisville Service Network, an alliance of local institutions that emerges from the process of creating the Directory, should facilitate better communication and develop referrals relationships between clients and services. For example, case workers at the Health Center on Fairmount Avenue should talk regularly with the Program Coordinator at the Francisville Recreation Center, helping to match people in need of exercise coaching or nutritional guidance and support with Recreation Center programs. Another goal of the Francisville Service Network should be to establish a stronger commitment between local institutions and local people. Francisville residents should have access and should be encouraged to access programs provided in the community.

8.2 Enroll local students in local educational opportunities.



The analysis identified several of the public schools that Francisville youth attend as underperforming. Improved educational choice for Francisville families is imperative to neighborhood revitalization, both for the futures of Francisville's children and teens and for the success of the neighborhood in attracting and retaining young families. The FNDC should support the work of local charter schools and advocate for an annual enrollment allocation for Francisville students at People For People, Inc. Charter School, Byron Story Foundation, and New Hope Christian Academy. The FNDC should also reach out to Girard College to investigate the possibility of scholarships for Francisville students for both school-year and summer program enrollment.

³¹ <http://www.abington.psu.edu/psasite/ce/ocprodev/teenw.html>.

Short-Term Recommendation

8.3 Support the initiative to improve the Bache-Martin Elementary School and the Franklin Learning Center High School.

A grant application has been submitted to transform the Bache-Martin Elementary School and the Franklin Learning Center High School into “magnet schools.” If the grant is successful, these schools will provide a continuum of learning for Francisville residents that exceeds the opportunities available in other neighborhoods.

If the proposal is granted, the FNDC will need to work with the Fairmount CDC (FCDC) to accomplish several key tasks:

- Although Bache-Martin is a neighborhood school, all parents will need to submit an application to attend. Residents within the school catchment area will have first priority. That said, the FNDC will need to work with parents to ensure that applications are understood and submitted.
- If successful, the catchment area may change. If this is the case, the FNDC should push to include all of Francisville in the new catchment area such that all neighborhood children will have the opportunity to attend the same school.
- Magnet schools require a lot of participation by parents. The FNDC and FCDC should coordinate closely with Bache Martin’s principal and teachers to determine where additional assistance may be needed to improve the school.
- The FNDC should work with the FCDC to jointly market the magnet school to encourage existing and new families to settle, and stay, in the area.
- The Franklin Learning Center has a city-wide catchment area and thus teaches students from across Philadelphia. As the school is located in close proximity to Francisville, the FNDC should remain involved in the Franklin Learning Center’s future institutional development and should serve as an advocate for the enrollment of Francisville students in the school’s student body.

8.4 Encourage Learning Partnerships.

The FNDC should encourage increased educational attainment within the neighborhood for people of all ages. Beyond championing education classes, making enrollment materials available and advocating for scholarships for local students, the FNDC should embrace a more hands-on, enabling role. This might include coordinating a teen work program as part of the people-based Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (Recommendation 7.4) that provides babysitting or childcare during the meeting times of continuing education classes. Alternatively, the FNDC could devise an incentive-based “I Will If You Will” Stay In School/Go Back to School Program for parents or guardians and their children or for friends or significant others, etc. Pairs who sign up for the program must meet established benchmarks and hold each other accountable in their school or program attendance and homework. Special dinners or given gift certificates donated by nearby businesses could act as incentives.

Lastly, the FNDC should adopt a proactive role in making learning relevant for neighborhood residents. Recognizing the racial imbalance in public education history and reading materials, the FNDC should investigate creating a small library or collection of contemporary books that are interesting and applicable to children of all ages growing up in an urban environment and a neighborhood like Francisville.³² The collection should be available to everyone in the neighborhood at the Archives of Francisville room in the new Recreation Center. Adults and teens should be encouraged to come and read to children.

³² For example, Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan has a **Millicent A. Wills Collection of Urban Ethnic Materials**. Begun in 1968 and dedicated in 1990 to former Detroit school teacher Millicent A. Wills, this collection consists of books that deal with urban life and ethnic diversity, http://www.lib.wayne.edu/resources/special_collections/.



8.5 Form partnerships to tackle issues of mutual concern.

The institutions in the area bring added resources and knowledge to the community that should be leveraged to solve local issues. Most often, what is in the best interest of the community is shared by these local institutions whether it be St. Joseph's Preparatory, the Metropolitan Opera House, or St. Joseph's Hospital. As the FNDC moves forward with many of the recommendations outlined in this Plan, these institutions should be encouraged to use their experience and knowledge to assist the community in addressing each issue. For instance, as the FNDC begins a local Town Watch program (Recommendation 4.3), neighborhood security efforts should be coordinated with St. Joseph's Hospital. The hospital, located near the corner of Girard and Broad, has struggled to reduce crime. The hospital's security personnel should receive a list of contacts for the local Town Watch leaders so that the two groups can share information and avoid duplicating efforts.

8.6 Address the concentration of services.

As Francisville emptied of people and stores, a number of social services stepped in to fill a need both in the neighborhood and throughout the City. The result is a long history of homeless shelters and related services that have made Francisville home. All of them provide a valuable service, but the large concentration of these services inhibits the changes the community is committed to undertaking along Ridge Avenue and throughout the neighborhood. This is a difficult community issue, as some of these organizations are valued neighbors – as committed to the future of the community as anyone else. Other, more recent shelters have caused strained relations with neighbors. There are three components to addressing the concentration of homeless and related services in Francisville:

1. Lobby the City for funds to improve existing shelters and, where possible, relocate specific shelters to another location.
2. Work with Council leadership to ensure that no more shelters are located in the community.
3. Help raise funds to create a more active street presence for other shelters such that their programs continue to serve their mission while enhancing the look and feel of the community. The Mary Jane Enrichment Center, for instance, should consider transforming their 1st floor along Ridge Avenue into an active retail establishment run by tenants of the shelter. Project Home's café on Fairmount Avenue is a relevant example of this approach.



Implementation Approach

Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future is a comprehensive neighborhood plan for Francisville. The Plan outlines the direction for the community over the next decade. Although the plan contains multiple strategies for the FNDC and its partners to pursue, each recommendation requires a different set of partners, enabling many proposals to be addressed concurrently. In addition, many of the recommendations are tailored to low-cost solutions that can be implemented by volunteer efforts and through the capacity of local organizations.

Attached is an Implementation Matrix that details the action steps, timeline, responsibility, costs, and potential funding sources for each recommendation, to help keep track of the FNDC's progress in implementing the Plan's components. The spreadsheet should be actively used, updated, and changed once implementation commences. It should be noted that the costs are preliminary and will need to be updated as efforts move forward with each recommendation item. Similarly, although a number of potential funding sources are identified for some items, it is the FNDC and its partners' responsibility to determine the most attainable source of funds at the time fundraising efforts are underway.

This plan can, and should, be updated in five to 10 years. Funding sources, political representatives, community leaders, and even some local priorities will change in ways that are impossible to fully predict. This plan serves as a beginning. As different recommendations move forward, priorities should be re-evaluated, and, if necessary, new recommendations should be considered that reinforce the principles set forth during this process.

Priority Action Items

The first action item for the FNDC is to present this Plan to Councilman Clarke, the Planning Commission, the Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation (PCDC), and the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI). The intent is to get the plan recognized by these representatives as the designated plan for Francisville and to raise awareness that significant strides have been made to improve the community. This should occur as soon as the FNDC adopts the plan.

The immediate next step is to present this Plan, in full, to the Wachovia Regional Foundation for discussion about potential implementation funding. The Wachovia Regional Foundation offers implementation grants of up to \$750,000. A budget and grant application must be submitted as part of any request for funding.

Before we fully launched the recommendations phase of this planning process, Interface Studio created a Top Ten list for Francisville – a set of early action recommendations for the FNDC to start work on while the plan was still in progress. Since then, discussions with the FNDC and the Project Leadership Committee have helped to refine that list in order to identify a number of priority projects (some early action recommendations, some not) that should commence this fall. Many of these priority items target capacity building, securing financial resources, and improving local organizing and advocacy:

- Create a Neighborhood Talent Directory and appoint a Talent Placement Agent (1.1);
- Start a Francisville Shout-Out page on the FNDC website (1.4);
- Put Francisville on the map, literally (1.10);
- Develop the Business Association (2.1);
- Formalize the Zoning Committee's review process and adopt broad design guidelines (3.8);
- Make a formal request to Councilman Clarke for the acquisition of strategically-located publicly owned properties (4.6);
- Lay the groundwork for the Francisville Sound Studio (7.3); and
- Launch an Environmental Maintenance Program (7.5).

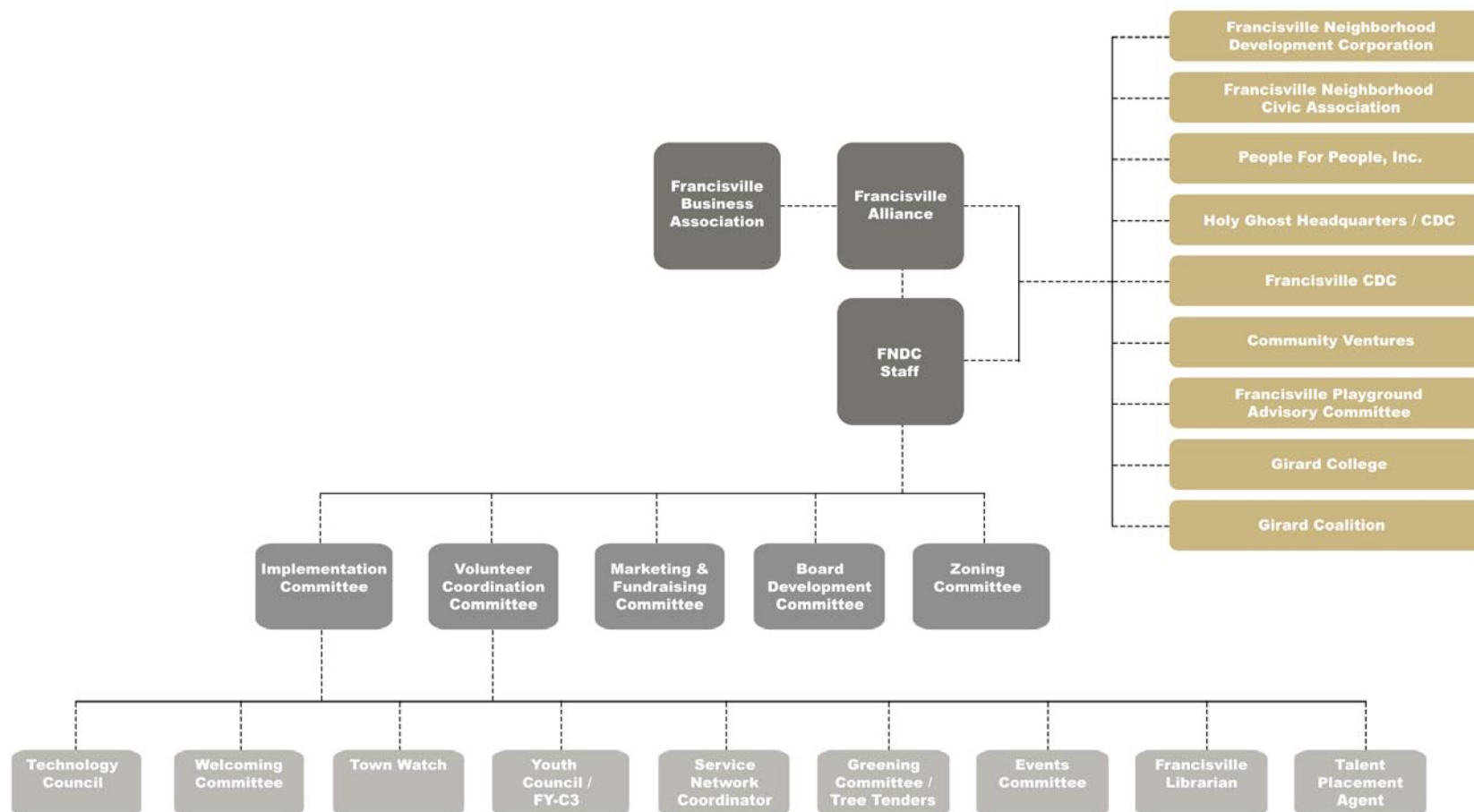
FNDC's Capacity to Implement

Francisville is a neighborhood in flux. Strong, stable leadership is needed to guide the neighborhood as it revitalizes, ensuring that the existing community has a voice in the process and providing continuity between the Francisville of today and tomorrow. Poised to succeed in this role, the FNDC, viewed as a dedicated, democratic, but *young* organization, must evolve and mature, assuming new roles and responsibility as it gains in experience and achievement. As the FNDC's tasks grow in weight, number, and urgency, the organization must reconsider its goals, structure, and capacity and make changes within, accordingly. The same is true of the FNCA, which is now filing for its non-profit status as the neighborhood civic association. Both groups are necessary to undertake the breadth of recommendations outlined in this Plan.

However, the FNDC and FNCA cannot expect or be expected to implement the Plan on its own. A Francisville Alliance, including, but not limited to, the Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation (FNDC), the Francisville Neighborhood Civic Association (FNCA), Francisville CDC, Community Ventures, People For People, Inc., Holy Ghost Headquarters/CDC, Francisville Playground Advisory Council, Girard College, and the Girard Coalition, should be strengthened and formalized to oversee implementation of the Plan. The result will be a powerful team of unified, committed neighborhood groups, institutions, and volunteers on board and ready to work with each other, the Councilman, the City, potential funders, and private partners to steer the Plan's implementation and push for great change.

The Francisville Alliance should be accountable for tracking the status of the plan and the progress of the different individuals and committees that are overseeing each component. The Francisville Alliance should meet monthly to coordinate and report on implementation achievements. Each sub-committee or individual must take responsibility for their part of the implementation, set aggressive schedules, and monitor their progress. The organizational chart outlines the relationship of the FNDC, the Francisville Alliance, and potential committees and sub-committees that should be created to guide implementation of this Plan. The roles of these sub-committees are noted in the Implementation Matrix as well.

While the FNDC builds capacity among its partners and volunteers, it must also build capacity as an organization. The FNDC needs full-time staff – a paid Executive Director and a part-time grant writer to begin with, eventually more.



Proposed Francisville Alliance organizational chart

The FNDC will also need to fund raise to help finance the implementation of the Plan, build internal capacity, and grow its financial and technical resources. In addition to presenting the full Plan and submitting for an implementation grant from the Wachovia Regional Foundation, the FNDC should spend a day at the Free Library's Regional Foundation Center. The Regional Foundation Center at the main branch of the Free Library provides local nonprofit organizations with free access to information on management, grant-seeking, fund development and proposal writing. They have a

comprehensive collection of print and electronic materials available on all aspects of fundraising, institutional advancement and general philanthropy.³³

Lastly, the FNDC must continue to provide open and democratic community leadership. Resident support and participation are key to the success and implementation of the Plan. The FNDC must inspire all Francisville stakeholders to get involved and stay involved. The ball is rolling, the challenge now is to maintain the energy and momentum. *Good luck... and have fun!*

³³ The Regional Foundation Center is located on the 2nd floor of the Central Library in the Social Science and History Department. You can receive a free orientation on selected Tuesdays and Saturdays. For more information, call 215-686-5423.

Implementation Matrix

Glossary		
Capital Program = City's Capital Budget		MUFFI = Mixed-Use Facility Financing Initiative
CDBG = Community Development Block Grant (Federal administered by City)		NTI = Neighborhood Transformation Initiative
DVRPC = Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission		PHFA = Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency
DCED = Department of Community and Economic Development (State)		PHS = Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
DCNR = Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (State)		PCPC = Philadelphia City Planning Commission
L&I = License and Inspections (City)		TE funds = Transportation Enhance Funds (Federal)
LIHTC = Low Income Housing Tax Credit (Federal administered through the State)		TCDI = Transportation and Community Development Initiative (DVRPC grant)
LISC = Local Initiatives Support Corporation		

► Priority Projects Indicated by: ►

Note: All costs are conceptual and will need to be re-evaluated as action items move forward

Organize for Success - Initial Implementation Steps					
	Action	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
►	Get the plan adopted by PCPC as the designated NTI plan for the community	2007	FNDC	--	--
►	Re-organize the FNDC and FNCA to designate committees to guide implementation	2007	FNDC / FNCA	--	--
	Committees should be organized at two levels. The first are committees comprised primarily of Board members of organizations in the Francisville Alliance. These include: Implementation; Volunteer Coordination; Marketing and Fundraising; Board Development and; Zoning.				
	The second set of committees should include broad participation from residents in stakeholders regardless of their affiliation with any one organization. These include: Technology Council; Welcoming Committee; Town Watch; Youth Council; Service Network Coordinator; Greening and; Events				
►	Market the plan & expand the local base of volunteers				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Create a brochure summary of this plan for distribution in local stores, churches, etc.	2007	FNDC	\$10,000 for design and large quantity printing	developer and private contributions
	Write an op-ed column in the local newspaper solely dedicated to the need to assist with the plan's implementation	2007	FNDC / FNCA	--	--
	Present the plan to Wachovia Regional Foundation and other potential funder:	2007	FNDC / FNCA	--	--
►	Submit an Implementation Grant to the Wachovia Regional Foundation	2007	FNDC / FNCA	\$2,000 for grant writing assistance	in-kind donations, event fundraiser

1. Become one cohesive neighborhood, and get some recognition.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	1.1 - Develop a Neighborhood Talent Directory and appoint a Talent Placement Agent.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Distribute talent survey at upcoming community meetings	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Volunteer Coordination Committee	\$500 for printing	in-kind donations
	Identify a talent placement agent from the community's leadership	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Volunteer Coordination Committee	--	--
	Track all responses to the survey in an excel data base and link information to the Francisville Information Network.	2007-	Talent Placement Agent	--	--
	1.2 - Establish a Welcoming Committee.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Designate 5-10 welcoming committee representatives	2010	FNDC & FNCA	--	--
	Form partnerships with local realtors to work with committee	2010	FNDC & FNCA	--	--
	Develop content for a Welcome to Francisville Brochure - Assign 3 volunteers to develop draft	2011	Welcoming Committee	--	--
	Undertake fundraising campaign from local businesses and institutions	2011	Welcoming Committee	--	--
	Hire local graphic designer to develop brochure and distribute	2012	Welcoming Committee	\$5,000	Private donations, in-kind services Foundation
	1.3 - Schedule a roving FNDC summer block party featuring a different block each time.	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee / local organizations / institutions	cost will range for each event	advertising / sales / donations / Foundation support
▶	1.4 - Develop a Francisville Shout-Out Page on the FNDC website.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Create a basic design for a postcard to be distributed at meetings	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$500 for printing	in kind donations
	Designate one member of the implementation committee to collect and archive postcards with shout-outs	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	Update the FNDC website to include a shout-out page	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	donation of time for web update
	1.5 - Expand the Francisville Information Network (FIN) - information is power.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Reach out to partner organization (People for People, etc) to get the word out	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	Work to get more people linked in via email - set up a regular on-line newsletter	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	1.6 - Record oral histories.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Purchase recording equipment and enlist volunteers in the effort	2009	FNDC staff	\$1,000 for audio & video recorder	Foundation grant
	Consider hiring an ethnographer to direct initial process and gather all recordings into one database	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$5,000-\$10,000 for ethnographer	Foundation grant
	Place recording on the FNDC website and update annually	2010-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	donation of time for web update

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	1.7 - Start an Archives of Francisville.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Solicit a "request for artifacts" at community meetings - photos, maps, etc.	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Volunteer Coordination Committee	--	--
	Designate one "librarian" for the community to collect and organize material:	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Volunteer Coordination Committee	--	--
	Designate a space in the recreation center or other communal space to safely display all artifacts	2011	Francisville librarian	unknown until space is secured - some improvements may be necessary	Foundation grant
	1.8 - Compile a Francisville Soundtrack CD.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Reach out to local musicians regarding their interest in the project	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Identify a recording studio that will offer a reduced rate for use as a community fundraising project	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	TBD	advertising / sales / donations / Foundation support
	Create and market the CDs as a fundraiser	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	\$5,000 for CD creation	advertising / sales / donations / Foundation support
	1.9 - Create a Neighborhood Cookbook.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Release a call for recipes at community meetings, events and on-line	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Compile recipes into one book	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Print limited copies with an on-line publisher with order placed through the FNDC website	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	\$2,000-3,000	advertising / sales / donations / Foundation support
	▶ 1.10 - Put Francisville on the map, literally.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Approach University of Pennsylvania's Cartographic Modeling Lab to be a recognized community in their database	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Check local signage and maps on-line for local institutions (Zoo, Museum of Art, Eastern State) and reach out to change references to Francisville's boundaries when appropriate	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Designate 2-3 neighborhood residents to begin blogging about the community on Phillyblog and other local blogs	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Marketing & Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Become an active member of PACDC	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	1.11 - Share the neighborhood through celebrations; market Francisville's art and culture.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Host a yearly wine tasting in partnership with the Fairmount CDC and Wine Tasting School	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee	\$500 for marketing	advertising sales / private donations
	Begin monthly "First Fridays" centered on the Arts Garage	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee	\$500 for marketing	advertising sales / private donations
	Coordinate with adjacent organizations to assist and play a role in their events where appropriate	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee	--	--

2. Put the "Heart" of Francisville [Ridge Avenue] Back in Business.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	2.1 - Form a Francisville Business Association				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Expand membership and work with PCDC to gain technical assistance	2007	Business Association	--	--
	Set up sub-committees and develop a 5-year action plan for activities	2007	Business Association	--	--
	2.2 - Become a PCDC designated Commercial Corridor.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Coordinate on gaining access to City services to help develop corridor	2007-	Business Association	--	--
	Apply for official designation by PCDC	2012 (goal)	Business Association	--	--
▶	2.3 - Create a cleaner environment.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Contact potential organizations that provide cleaning services.	2007	Business Association	--	--
	Contract on an annual basis for Ridge Avenue cleaning	2008	Business Association	TBD	Developer contributions
	2.4 - Create a safer pedestrian environment.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Develop a streetscape plan to identify and cost necessary improvements - plan should include wayfinding / signage design	2008	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA: Marketing and Fundraising Committee	\$40,000-\$50,000	Dept. of Commerce / DCED / local businesses
	Work to secure funding for tree planting along the corridor	2009	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	\$15,000 for 50 trees along or adjacent to Ridge Avenue	City / DVRPC (TE funds) / TreeVitalize
	Coordinate with the City Streets Department on potential bump-outs and other street improvements	2012	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA: Marketing and Fundraising Committee	\$200,000 (estimated) for implementation of initial streetscape improvements	DVRPC (TE funds) / DVRPC TCDI Grant / City Capital Program
	2.5 - Brand, broadcast and improve Ridge Avenue's gateways.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Form a coalition of local partners to approach City Council and the City with a request for traffic improvements at Broad, Ridge and Fairmount	2007	FNDC leadership / Business Association	--	--
	Work with Streets Dept. to design and implement traffic improvements	2008-2010	FNDC leadership / Business Association	TBD	City Capital Program
	Coordinate with streetscape plan and implementation above	2008-2012	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA: Marketing and Fundraising Committee	\$25,000 for initial signage implementation	
	2.6 - Develop retail anchors to attract visitors to the corridor; balance a commercial vision with service missions.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Coordinate with People for People on acquisition and planning for new development	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	costs born by People for People	--
	Identify a developer partner to acquire properties near Ridge and Girard for redevelopment	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	costs born by developer partner	--

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	2.7 - Encourage off-street parking, but off of the Avenue.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work with property owners to determine possibility of using each site for Ridge Avenue parking	2008-	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee	--	--
	Acquire land for permanent parking where possible	2009-	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee	TBD	Private donations / City funds
	2.8 - Use key sites along the corridor as a loudspeaker; communicate the neighborhood's unique identity.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
▶	Expand the video installation at a new site along the Avenue	2008	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee	\$5,000-\$10,000 for design and implementation	Foundations / private donations / Dept. of Commerce
	Create directories in tandem with Recommendations 2.4	2012	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee	Included in funds dedicated to streetscape improvements in 2,4	Dept. of Commerce / DCED / local businesses
	Approach the Streets Department and Mural Arts about the possibility of "street" murals in two locations	2012	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee / Mural Arts	TBD	Mural Arts / Foundations /
	Reach out to SCRUBS to determine if local billboards are illegal. Work with local artists to reuse for artboards	2012	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee / SCRUBS	TBD	Developer contributions / Foundations
	2.9 - Reclaim the triangles.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work with existing property owners to determine current plans for each property	2008	Business Association / FNDC staff	--	--
	Develop landscape plans for 2-3 triangles that include cost estimates	2009	Business Association / FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	\$10,000-\$15,000	Dept. of Commerce / NTI
	Fundraise for public improvements and greening	2009-	FNDC & FNCA: Fundraising Committee and Greening Committee	TBD	City / DVRPC (TE funds) / TreeVitalize
▶	2.10 - Plan for the short-term.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Determine key short-term lots necessary for improvements	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / Business Association	--	--
	Reach out to PHS to coordinate efforts	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / Business Association	--	--
	Implement cleaning, greening and other designated improvements for two visible lots	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / Business Association	TBD	PHS / Private donations / Business owners
	2.11 - Plan for big events - Discover Ridge!				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Develop a list of existing and potential events - coordinate 2-3 events associated with marketing campaigns each year	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee	--	--
	Fundraise for marketing, promotion and other event costs	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Events Committee	\$5,000	in kind donations / private contributions

3. Manage your future; ensure that new residential development serves the full needs of Francisville's families.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	3.1 - Promote an equitable and economically diverse neighborhood.	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
▶	3.2 - Advocate for mixed-income development; all are welcome.	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
▶	3.3 - Advocate for senior housing; age in place.	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	3.4 - Approach PHA as a partner.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Organize a meeting with PHA to discuss the plan	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / PHA / Councilman's office	--	--
	Conduct more thorough survey of properties with PHA to determine need	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / PHA / Councilman's office	--	--
	Create development plan with a developer partner and PHA to submit for LIHTC	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / PHA / Councilman's office	TBD based on scope and overall number of units	Private equity / CDBG / LISC predevelopment funds
	3.5 - Provide information and access to resources that help residents build equity.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Compile a list of available resources to homeowners and landlords for grants and funds for home repair	2008	FNDC staff	--	--
	Compile a list of information on homeownership counseling, credit repair and other programs offered in the City	2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	Investigate the Basic Systems Repair Program and feasibility of operating the program in Francisville	2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	3.6 - Integrate new computers as basic infrastructure for all new affordable units in the community.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Coordinate with the Philadelphia Housing Finance Agency on limitations and guidelines for the Tax-Credit program	2008	FNDC staff	--	--
	Meet with the Computer Reuse Collaborative to discuss a plan for extending the program into Francisville	2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	3.7 - Serve as a liaison between tenants and landlords.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Keep relevant information from Philadelphia's Fair Housing Commission in FNDC and FNCA offices	2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	Maintain a list of both landlords and renters in the community	2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	Work to get more renters signed onto the Francisville Information Network	2009	FNDC staff	--	--

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	3.8 - Communicate the neighborhood's vision for Francisville's physical fabric; empower the Francisville Zoning Committee.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Develop zoning procedures and guidebook that describes process, membership and expectations	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Place zoning information on Coalition website and update regularly	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Officially adopt the design guidelines of the plan and make them available separately on-line	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Maintain relations with Council manic representatives and L&I to enforce zoning decisions	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	3.9 - Push forward "transformative" development projects.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Maintain connections with local Council regarding publicly owned properties in key development areas	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Oversee and guide RFP process including creation of the RFP for the development of the site across from the Rec Center along 19th Street	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Seek to acquire property for the FNDC along Ridge at Ogden for new mixed-use development, new townhomes and construction of FNDC's headquarters	2009-2014	FNDC Board	\$400,000 for headquarters, \$4-8,000,000 for 25 new townhomes & stacked flats, \$6-12,000,000 for new mixed use depending on density	State MUFFI program / PHFA's Homeownership Choice program / private equity
	Work with private developer partners to develop plans	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee / People for People	TBD based on scope and overall number of units	LISC predevelopment funds / People for People
	3.10 - Conserve Francisville's Historic Core.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Organize meeting with PCPC to discuss process and requirements	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Undertake specific design guidelines for historic core	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	\$10,000 for research and packaging of guidelines	foundations / private contributions
	Submit application to the City for designation	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--

4. Empower the neighborhood: reclaim vacant land; enforce safe streets and corners.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	4.1 - Create a Neighborhood Tool and Gardening Shed.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Meet with Urban Tree Connection and East Park Preservation Alliance to learn about their programs and develop partnerships	2008	FNDC staff	--	--
	Apply to City's Office of Housing for CDBG funds to support tool shed	2009	FNDC Board	--	--
	Prepare an operational plan, develop tool shed rules and secure funds to buy equipment and staff the shed part-time during the week	2009-2010	FNDC Board	TBD	Home Depot Foundation
▶	4.2 - Recruit a Francisville Trash Czar/Recycling Guru.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Reach out to local business, developers and institutions to create a funding pool for czar	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	Create educational materials on the issues of trash including rules for trash days, special pickups, etc.	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Volunteer Coordination Committee / Philadelphia More Beautiful	\$2,500-\$5,000 for material and distribution	City
▶	4.3 - Contract for Cleaning and Greening.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Reach out to PHS / EPRA and Urban Tree Connection to develop work plan and determine annual costs.	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	--	--
	Raise funds for cleaning services for designated lots based upon the information provided during this planning process	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	TBD	developer contributions / foundation support
	4.4 - Francisville needs YOU for Town Watch.	2012	FNDC & FNCA Town Watch / Police District / Men United for a Better Philadelphia / Local Institutions	--	--
▶	4.5 - Take Take-Out in; bring corner (store) activity indoors.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Adopt a policy of required indoor seating for restaurants	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Reach out to "problem" retailers to discuss ways of improving the safety and image of the businesses	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	4.6 - Reinvent the alleys - secure, redevelop, or reprogram.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work with neighbors to raise funds and secure alleyways where appropriate	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$1,000 per alley for fencing, locks and installation	City
	Work with the City to "strike" existing alleyways that could be better used for alleyways or other uses	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	Work with the City to extend Ogden Street to Uber Street	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$50,000	City / DVRPC (TE funds)
	Organize block clean-ups / enlist local artists to design planter boxes	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$5,000	Philadelphia More Beautiful / foundations

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	4.7 - Pursue the acquisition of strategically-located publicly owned properties.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Maintain an active list of public properties to use in negotiations with local Council	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	Share the plans for each area with local stakeholders	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--

5. Make Francisville a Greene Countrie Towne... again.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	5.1 - Animate the "Soul" of the Neighborhood, the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work with Streets Dept. to implement traffic calming around Rec Center	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$10,000	DVRPC (TE funds) / City Capital Program
	Negotiate with private land owners and City Streets Dept. to re-direct Wylie Street to meet 19th @ Brown and add an all-way stop	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$50,000-\$100,000	DVRPC (TE funds) / City Capital Program
	Work with PAL to green and open up their rear lot	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	TBD based on level of improvements	PAL / private donations
	Create a new Tot Lot along 19th Street	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$10,000	Dept. of Recreation / foundations / developer contributions
	Refurbish playfields and add perpendicular parking along Wylie Street	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	\$100,000-\$150,000	Dept. of Recreation / foundations / in kind donations / developer contributions
	Raise funds for a new Recreation Center structure with expanded programming	2015	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee & Fundraising Committee	\$750,000-\$1,000,000	City Capital Program / foundation grants / developer contributions
▶	5.2 - Spruce up existing gardens if you want to keep them as gardens; protect and expand community gardening.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Create linkages with NGA and PHS	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / NGA / PHS	--	--
	Work with Councilman's office to obtain site control for gardens	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / NGA / PHS	--	--
	Create a list of active community gardeners and enlist more interested residents	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / NGA / PHS	--	--
	Adopt a policy that no existing community gardens will be developed	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / NGA / PHS	--	--
▶	5.3 - Start a Francisville Tree-Tenders group.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Coordinate with PHS on setting up program	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	--	--
	Seek foundation assistance for trees and subsidy for participants - apply for TreeVitalize grant	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	\$2,000 for grant writing assistance if necessary	foundation / private donation
	Recruit local property owners to participate	2009-2010	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	--	--
	First planting - 50 trees	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee / PHS	\$25,000	TreeVitalize / PHS / Property owner match
	5.4 - Build an oasis for Francisville's Green Thumbs.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work to acquire property along Field Street	2008-	FNDC Board	City assisted acquisition / condemnation necessary	--
	Develop specific business and security plan for the property including how plots will be divided, rent structure, etc.	2008	FNDC Board	--	--
	Reach out to local non-profit gardening organizations to discuss potential educational programming on-site	2008-2009	FNDC staff	--	--
	Implement greenhouse, gardens, parking and site improvements	2012	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	\$500,000-\$1,000,000	private donations / developer contributions / DCNR grant

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	5.5 - Promote Low Impact Development (LID) and "green" building technologies.	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	5.6 - Remain a Neighborhood Off the Grid - Get Off the Grid.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Invite the director of Philadelphia Futures to speak at a community meeting to talk about energy savings and green communities	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	--	--
	Coordinate with the Philadelphia Office of Watersheds, Earthpledge and other organizations to gather information about effective low-impact development initiatives	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Greening Committee	--	--
	Develop a short brochure of information covering permeable materials, rain barrels and other tools for distribution in churches and local businesses	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--

6. Francisville is walkable; make it more so.

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	6.1 - Advocate for improvements to local SEPTA stations.	2009-	FNDC Board / SEPTA / PCPC	TBD based on level of improvements	SEPTA
	6.2 - Integrate a bicycle friendly environment along Francisville's main streets.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Work with Streets Dept. and the Philadelphia Bicycle Network to create bike lanes and racks along Fairmount, Corinthian, Girard, Poplar, Broad and Ridge	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Streets Dept.	TBD based on level of improvements	Streets Dept / DVRPC
	6.3 - Develop a strategy for on-street parking; help neighbors navigate the permitting process.	2009-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
▶	6.4 - Limit curb cuts for parking (and front-loading residential garages).	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	6.5 - Develop a shared parking scheme.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Adopt a policy that no new single-use parking lots will be allowed in the community	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	Reach out to owners of existing parking lots to discuss possibilities for sharing use of the space	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Zoning Committee	--	--
	6.6 - Encourage PhillyCarShare to locate vehicles in a Francisville lot.	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee	--	--
	6.7 - Keep SEPTA schedules for neighborhood routes in the FNDC offices.	2008-	FNDC staff	--	--
	6.8 - Focus on Corinthian Avenue to reconnect communities				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Convene a meeting with representatives from Girard College, Eastern State, Fairmount CDC and the nursing home to discuss their priorities for Corinthian	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Eastern State / Girard College / Nursing Home / Fairmount CDC	--	--
	Work with owners to plant trees where none exist	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Fairmount CDC / residents	\$5,000	Treevitalize
	Reach out to owner of vacant lot on Fairmount facing Corinthian to get permission to use lot for a video installation	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Fairmount CDC	\$15,000-20,000 for equipment, design and installation	Eastern State, Girard College, local businesses / advertising revenues
	Work with the City to install bumpouts at Brown, Parrish and Poplar	2011	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Fairmount CDC / School District / Streets Dept.	\$120,000	DVRPC (TE funds) / City Capital Program

7. Foster bright futures for neighborhood youth [and for the neighborhood].					
	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	7.1 - Found a Neighborhood Youth Council.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Organize meeting of local principals and organizations engaged in after school activities	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / School Principals	--	--
	Identify and designate 5-10 youth representatives	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / School Principals	--	--
	Develop plan for Council with youth representatives	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / School Principals	--	--
	Set preliminary budget for Council outreach activities to local youth	2010	Youth Council	\$5,000 starting budget to be approved by FNDC & FNCA Implementation Committee	City, local schools, United Way, Foundations
	7.2 - Plug in your youth (and your young at heart).				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Form a Technology Council that meets monthly to coordinate development of programs and curriculum	2008	FNDC / Berean Institute / Holy Ghost CDC / People for People		
	Work with local partners and the School District of Philadelphia to develop technology curriculum for community members	2008	Technology Council	--	Volunteer activity
	Pool funds to hire a grant writer to assist in submitting targeted grant applications	2009	Technology Council	\$5,000-\$10,000	Local contributions, City, Foundations
	Fundraise and develop technology center as a part of the FNDC headquarters	2014	Technology Council	\$50,000 as room within larger structure	Comcast, Teaming for Technology, Microsoft, Foundations
	Hire one full time staff to manage the Technology Center	2015	Technology Council	\$60,000	Comcast, Teaming for Technology, Microsoft, Foundations
	Form a separate 501C3 organization to operate Technology Center and expand staffing and programming	2017	Technology Council	\$60,000-\$100,000 annual budget	Comcast, Teaming for Technology, Microsoft, Foundations
	7.3 - Introducing, the Francisville Sound Studio.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Organize the use of a room as temporary space until the FNDC headquarters is complete for use as studio	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Holy Ghost CDC / People for People	TBD based on condition of space	local partners / developer contributions / foundation support
	Fit-out space with new and used equipment	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Holy Ghost CDC / People for People	\$10,000	local partners / developer contributions / foundation support
	Set up rules for using the studio - community service for free time in the studio by youth	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Holy Ghost CDC / People for People	--	--
	Offer instruction at designated times of the week	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Holy Ghost CDC / People for People	--	volunteer activity

	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
	7.4 - Bridge the Age Gap.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Encourage teens to participate in recording oral histories from local seniors	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Link teens with local professional to learn about different career paths	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Reach out to Big Brothers Big Sisters to enroll more neighborhood youth in the program	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
▶	7.5 - Develop a Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club (FY-C3) [part fun, part job skills, part work] - an environmental maintenance program to clean and green Francisville.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Reach out to local greening organizations to build capacity at FNDC about cleaning and greening	2007	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council / PHS / EPRA / Urban Tree Connection	--	--
	Contract with another non-profit to clean and green until the program is fully operational	2007-2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	TBD	developer contributions / foundation assistance
	Fundraise from neighbors for salary stipend for youth	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Fundraising Committee	--	--
	Engage youth and enlist 5-10 teens and young adults to the program	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	\$50,000-\$100,000 annual target	developer contributions / resident donations / foundation assistance

8. Ensure that local services serve the neighborhood.					
	Recommendation	Timeframe	Responsibility / Partners	Estimated Cost	Potential Source of Funds
▶	8.1 - Compile a Francisville Services Directory; make Francisville's Service Network more accessible.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Designate a Service Network Coordinator for the community whose job is to keep track of all of the local service agencies	2008	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Fundraising Committee	--	volunteer activity
	8.2 - Enroll local students in local educational opportunities.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Advocate for annual enrollment targets for Francisville residents at local charter schools	2009-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Explore the possibilities for scholarships at Girard College for Francisville youth	2009-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Explore the possibilities for scholarships at Berean Institute for classes and use of their Career Counseling Center	2010-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Contact Penn State Abington about competitive scholarships for their college prep courses and help local youth apply	2010-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
▶	8.3 - Support the efforts to improve the Bache-Martin Elementary School and the Franklin Learning Center High School.	2007-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	8.4 - Encourage Learning Partnerships.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Organize childcare during times of adult education classes	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	Set up an "I will if you will" Stay in School / Go Back to School Program	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Youth Council	--	--
	8.5 - Form partnerships to tackle issues of mutual concern.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Set up a regular meeting with local institutional partners to discuss this plan and define where each member's interests overlap	2009	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Service Coordinator		
	Set joint work plan with partners on a yearly basis	2010	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Service Coordinator		
	8.6 - Address the concentration of services.				
	<i>Key Initial Action Steps</i>				
	Lobby the City for more funds to improve homeless shelters	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Service Coordinator	--	--
	Work with City Council leadership to ensure that no more shelters are located within Francisville	2008-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Service Coordinator	--	--
	Help raise funds and develop plans to transform the ground floor of specific shelters and agencies into more active, storefronts which would provide income for services	2009-	FNDC & FNCA: Implementation Committee / Service Coordinator / Project Home / Mary Jane Enrichment Center / Trevor's Campaign	TBD based upon use, size of property, condition, etc.	Foundation grants / City Capital Program / Continuum of Care dollars

Francisville Design Guidelines

This comprehensive plan has identified a number of inter-related guidelines and objectives for new development in the community. Each guideline emerged from our discussions with concerned residents, and each reflects the neighborhood's position for guiding new growth.

The following summarizes all of the design guidelines discussed in this document for use by the FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee. The design guidelines are divided into 6 sections.

- I. Affordability
- II. Design Excellence
- III. Sustainable Development
- IV. Parking
- V. Urban Site Design Issues
- VI. Conversions / Construction Without Permits

I. Affordability

All new projects (both new construction and new rehabilitations of existing structures) of more than 20 units should have at least ten percent of the square footage of the building set aside as affordable housing units. Example: a building of 20 units that are 1000 sq. ft. each should have 2000 sq. ft. (two units) that qualify as "affordable." Buildings with less than 20 units are not required to have an Affordable set-aside to obtain support from the FNDC regarding a project, but inclusion of affordable units even when it is not required is still looked upon favorably in the rating of a project, and may result in the FNDC supporting additional bonuses for the project.

"Affordable," for the purposes of this project, is defined as a monthly payment (rent or mortgage) which is less than or equal to 28% of the monthly income of someone earning 80% of the City's most recently reported median household income, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

In accordance with affordability goals, projects should also seek, where possible, to include a percentage of minority/women/disabled/locally-owned contractors. For more information on affordability concerns and goals, see Recommendation 3.1.

II. Design Excellence

The FNDC expects developers to respect the architectural legacy of the Francisville

neighborhood, which is inclusive of a variety of styles, materials, and site designs. The FNDC seeks to encourage excellence in design of new projects and rehabilitations of existing structures. The following design characteristics should be observed:

- Context sensitive site and building design that enhances the local environment.
- Use of quality materials that add value to the community as a whole. Avoid the use of stucco, EIFS systems, wood or simulated wood products, one-way or mirror glass, and spandrel glazing as primary building materials.
- Maximization of natural light through the use of adequate and attractive windows, and use of only above-grade space for occupancy.
- Integration of green building techniques and low impact development as described in Section III.
- Ensure front facades activate the sidewalk – for commercial uses, this includes active storefronts at the ground level; for residential uses, this involves usable space living space on the ground level.
- Encourage the preservation of historic features, where appropriate. Contrived historical references, however, should be avoided.

III. Sustainable Development

It is the policy of FNDC to promote sustainable building techniques (those supported by the U.S. Green Building Council) and Low Impact Development (LID) in the Francisville community in all levels of development and redevelopment as described in Recommendation 5.2 and 5.5.

For projects that exceed the recommendations below, FNDC is willing to allow higher density, zoning adjustments, or other changes as determined by the merits of each project. In addition, projects that are LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified may be eligible for exemption from other requirements, as agreed upon by the community.

1. Low Impact Development (LID)

To compensate for the environmental and infrastructural strain caused by new development, FNDC requires developers to implement at least one of the Low Impact Development techniques described below in the construction of their projects or to contribute to LID endeavors elsewhere in the neighborhood of comparable size and environmental value. LID strategies minimize the proportion of precipitation that is converted to surface runoff by maximizing the water volume that evaporates or infiltrates.

LID development techniques include:

- **Green Roofs** – The soil and plants in green roofs detain, absorb, and filter precipitation, reducing the annual volume of roof runoff. Extensive green roofs contain several inches of soil and hardy, self-sustaining plants, and may be added to many existing roofs. Intensive green roofs are full-fledged rooftop gardens.
- **Permeable Pavements** – Permeable asphalt, concrete, and paving blocks allow runoff to infiltrate into the underlying sub-base and soil.
- **Tree Box Filters** – Located below grade, tree box filters provide “bioretention in a box” along road curbs, integrating the water quality benefits of bioretention into ultra-urban settings.
- **Vegetated Swales** – Shallow vegetated swales simultaneously serve as drainage, infiltration, and storage devices.
- **Dry Wells / Infiltration Trenches** – Dry wells are aggregate-filled pits that promote infiltration into the surrounding soil. Infiltration trenches are similar in function, but filled with sand or soil.

It is important to recognize that the Philadelphia Water Department has stringent new guidelines for stormwater management for all new development in place as of 2006. Developers of large sites are encouraged to meet with the deputy commissioner and with representatives from the Office of Watersheds and PWD to discuss how these development techniques can be integrated into the projects to meet these new guidelines.

2. Energy Efficiency

The development of energy efficient homes and buildings in the Francisville neighborhood and throughout Philadelphia is a high priority of the FNDC.

As part of our commitment to energy efficient development, no project involving new construction or complete rehabilitation shall have the support of the FNDC without the following:

- All of the following mechanical items / appliances in the building *must* receive the “Energy Star” designation by the U.S. Department of Energy: refrigerators, stoves, cooktops, ranges, ovens, dishwashers, microwaves, washing machines, clothes dryers, and water heaters.³⁴

In addition to the above requirement, any one (1) of the recommendations below must also be met:

- “Energy Star” designation for heating / cooling systems;
- “Energy Star” compliant windows and exterior doors throughout;
- Low-flow toilets, faucets and showerheads throughout the project; or
- Solar panels, wind uses, or other forms of on-site renewable energy which provide at least 5% of the projected annual energy consumption to the project.³⁵

3. Neighborhood Greening

The FNDC realizes that as Francisville is an urban neighborhood, green space is at a premium. Therefore, to obtain FNDC support for any new construction or rehabilitation project, the project must be in compliance with the following requirements:

- The 30% open space zoning requirement for residential zoning must be 100% permeable. Parking will not be accepted as open space unless the driveway is constructed of permeable materials and a minimum of a third of the space is planted, green space. For permeable parking to be accepted as open space, it must also be in full compliance with the Parking and Traffic Guidelines listed in this document.
- Although commercial and industrial zoning districts require in some cases no open space, the FNDC requires at least 20% permeable space in cases where pre-existing structures do not represent a full build out. Flexibility should be granted to developers who suggest alternative methods for reducing stormwater runoff.
- For projects that cannot meet these open space minimums, or where 100% coverage of the site is pre-existing, developers must address stormwater runoff concerns through the construction of either an intensive or extensive green roof or a financial contribution to the Francisville Tree Tenders, to be determined by the Zoning Committee.
- All tree boxes within 20 feet of the project in any direction must have trees present. In the event one or more of the tree boxes are empty, approved street trees of at least eight feet in height must be installed.
- The FNDC / FNCA Zoning Committee should promote the incorporation of vegetated swales, permeable paving and other stormwater management tools for the design of public spaces. Parks, streetscapes, and other public spaces should exceed the greening and stormwater runoff management ideals described above.

4 .³⁴ Solar powered water heaters are exempt from this requirement.

³⁵ Both the City and Federal governments provide tax incentives for solar panel installation. Contact a tax professional for details regarding the latest incentives.

LEED Certification

The U.S. Green Building Council is responsible for maintaining the LEED program, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.

More information about the LEED program and the necessary forms to begin the certification process can be found at the U.S. Green Building Council's website, www.usgbc.org.

The FNDC considers LEED certification to be the highest level of urban design excellence, and as such is prepared to support all bonuses necessary to make a LEED projects financially feasible.

IV. Parking and Traffic Guidelines

In recognition of the limited supply of on-street parking in the Francisville neighborhood and the generally high level of vehicle ownership in the area, the FNDC has developed the following guidelines regarding parking and traffic issues:

- All construction must meet the minimum requirements established in the City code for applicable parking and traffic issues.
- Parking should always be located to the rear of the lot when possible. Placement of parking on the front side of a lot is undesirable.
- Curb cuts usually take away one to one and one half on-street parking spaces to provide off-street parking. Designs involving curb cuts will not be supported by the FNDC unless there is no existing on-street parking at the location of the curb cut. Even in these cases, placement of parking structures or spaces on the front of the lot is still seen as undesirable.
- All loading and unloading of trucks and service vehicles must be done in a non-disruptive fashion. This is an agreement that will be tailored to each business location with the surrounding community, but should address the days and times that loading may occur, agreements not to obstruct traffic during the course of loading activities, and any other site-sensitive issues.
- Parking lots should not be enclosed by cyclone fencing. Wrought iron fencing is preferred.

For information on parking related issues, see Recommendations 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, and 6.6.

V. Urban Site Design Issues

The FNDC recognizes that urban spaces present a specific set of challenges in redevelopment. The following guidelines are designed to set forth the expectations of the FNDC as they relate to urban site design. Recognizing the importance (and uniqueness) of Ridge Avenue, these guidelines are split into two categories: site design guidelines that pertain to all developments; and site design guidelines specific to Ridge Avenue.

ALL DEVELOPMENTS:

- Locate pedestrian-oriented uses on the ground floor of buildings and provide pedestrian amenities to activate public spaces.
- Construct building(s) with no setback from major streets. "Hold the corner" of buildings at intersections by building to the property line. Irregular corners along Ridge Avenue should be considered for publicly accessible open spaces that serve as active edges.
- Utilize landscaping, rather than walls and fences, to create semi-public/private buffers for service entrances.
- Parking should be located in the rear of properties where possible. No new curb-cuts should be allowed on streets with existing on-street parking.
- Avoid large, blank walls covering any portion of new development. A minimum of 15% should be transparent on all surfaces. Alternative approaches including landscaping or murals must be approved by the FNDC.
- Do not fear density. The parcel of land across from the Recreation Center, People For People's Trinity parcel at Ridge and Francisville, along with other parcels in the "triangle" between Ridge and Broad can handle taller buildings and greater housing density. The Divine Lorraine at 10-stories has long been the tallest building in the area, and should remain so; all new buildings should be shorter than the Divine Lorraine out of respect for this historic icon.
- Design locations for light fixtures, trash cans, signage, and other necessities should be part of the initial building concept.

DEVELOPMENTS ALONG RIDGE:

- Focus retail development along Ridge Avenue. Ridge should be lined with active, visually interesting uses, including retail, storefront offices, residential entryways, and other public uses.
- Promote mixed-use along Ridge by providing a minimum first floor height of 18 feet to accommodate a wide range of ground floor uses.
- Ensure that all retail is neighborhood serving and high quality.
- Refrain from building surface or structured parking lots that front on Ridge.
- Refrain from locating above-grade utility structures along Ridge.

- Ensure that 75% of ground floor facades are transparent for all developments except new townhouses.
- Ensure that ground floor glazing is 100% transparent, allowing clear views into and out of buildings.
- For storefronts that require security grates, require grates that permit sight lines in and out of the store and allow light to pass through.
- Require new commercial developments to install a water spout on the front of the property for daily sidewalk cleaning and plant watering.
- Integrate exterior lighting such that it does not negatively impact adjacent uses.

VI. Conversions / Construction Without Permits

The FNDC recognizes the City of Philadelphia's Zoning Code and review process as an effective means of controlling development and providing a livable urban environment. Converting a dwelling from single-family use to a duplex or multi-family dwelling, or any other change of use requires a zoning variance or use permit from the City. Applications for such variances and/or permits that meet the applicable requirements in the FNDC Development Guidelines will not be opposed by the FNDC.

Homeowners and developers in Francisville should be advised that the FNDC, in support of this process, WILL NOT TOLERATE illegal changes of use. Furthermore, owners of buildings which have been converted without proper zoning or permits should not expect to have their zoning applications approved by the FNDC simply because work has already been completed and is in use, even if the work was done prior to the current owner taking possession and ownership of the property.



appendix

Analysis for **Moving Francisville Forward:** a blueprint for the future

The analysis presented in this Appendix to *Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future* was completed during the first phase of the planning process.



1828: 'Francisville Vineyards'



1833



1855



1879



2006

Francisville's Historic Development
Source: City maps, Free Library of Philadelphia

Analysis

Past

Long before a city surveyor platted the streets that now stripe a map of Philadelphia between Callowhill Street and Fairmount Avenue, linking Center City with Francisville, the historic core of the neighborhood appeared on the map, a cluster of streets rotated roughly 45 degrees off of the traditional city grid. William Penn's Vineyard preceded Francisville, establishing the angled streets that now comprise the historic core to capture the sun's rays as they flooded the gently sloping terrain. New streets, with names that shifted over time, were etched around the historic core between 1833 and 1879. The network of streets that exists today has been in place for more than 125 years.³⁶

Francisville's street pattern is quirky; one part speaks the language of the regular urban grid, one part is off-center and fiercely independent, both parts are framed by major corridors and thus, the neighborhood is quite contained. The network of streets has endowed the neighborhood not only with a sense of history, but with a distinct sense of place and identity. Francisville residents know when they are in Francisville.

Francis, Wylie, Vineyard, Shirley, Perkiomen, and Ginnodo Streets run through Francisville, and only Francisville.

³⁶ Historic Maps found at the Free Library of Philadelphia, Main Branch. L-R: *Plan of Philadelphia & Adjoining Districts*, William Allen, published by IIs Tanner, 1828; *Carey & Hart Plan of the City of Philadelphia*, 1833; *Barne's New Map of the Consolidated City*, 1855; *S. Augustus Mitchell* by Will Gamble, 1879; *Map of the City of Philadelphia by Simmons* by CP Fessenden, 1834.

The longevity of Francisville's blocks and paths matches that of the neighborhood's many extensive family networks. The soil of William Penn's vineyard cultivated more than grapes. Local family trees span many generations.



Roots run deep.

The intersection of Broad, Fairmount, and Ridge was paved in 1892, trolley lines running along Ridge Avenue. The mid-1920s marked the construction of the Broad Street subway, built to transport a growing population.

Though the majority of the neighborhood's fabric in the first half of the 20th Century housed and serviced a large working-class population, Francisville, at that time, hosted several very grand structures along its edges. Some of these majestic buildings are still standing today, adopted and adapted by local religious, educational, and non-profit institutions.



In these buildings, flickers of a thriving past are visible.



Historic Francisville
Source: City Archives³⁷

³⁷ Historic Photographs collected from the Philadelphia City Archives. L-R: *Paving Broad at Ridge & Fairmount, 1892; Northwest corner of Broad and Fairmount, 1924; 704-714 North Broad, 1925; Metropolitan Opera House Broad and Poplar, 1925; Broad residences South of Girard, c. 1892; Broad residence of PAB Widener at Girard, c. 1892; 840-842 North Broad sidewalk, 1938; Broad west sidewalk looking south from southwest corner at Parrish, 1925; Broad southwest corner at Girard, 1924; Southwest corner of Broad and Ridge, 1924; 1431 Brown, 1896.*

Once upon a time, there was “a pawn shop, a fresh chicken shop, a smoked meats and chitlins shop, a fish shop, a department store, a store with dungarees and overhauls, a drugstore, a farmers’ market, one store after another, all along the strip.”

Commercial services were comprehensive. Ridge Avenue was a well-stitched seam, a place where people worked, where the daily shopping needs of a robust population could be met, a place where people could meet and share news, see and be seen. Ridge was the social backbone of a close-knit and familial neighborhood...



Source: www.flickr.com

...and the home of a vibrant nightlife. Entertainment venues along Ridge Avenue and North Broad Street rendered Francisville a center of arts and culture. Jazz legends Lester Young, Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Smith, and John Coltrane frequented the Avenue. Patti LaBelle, Bootsie Barnes, Pearl Bailey, Marilyn Anderson, the list goes on.

Though Ridge Avenue has hollowed and North Broad Street is a shadow of its former self, musical talent and appreciation lives on in the people of Francisville today. Just this fall, Poplar Street between Broad and 21st Streets was renamed “Dixie Hummingbirds Way” after the gospel group that relocated to Philadelphia from South Carolina in 1942.³⁸



Ridge Theater, 1734 Ridge Avenue, 1933
Source: City Archives



Lester Young, Ella Fitzgerald, Jimmy Smith, John Coltrane, Patti LaBelle, Bootsie Barnes
Source: www.wikipedia.com

The Sanborn Map for the Francisville section of Philadelphia, originally surveyed in 1917 and edited in 1947 illustrates the drastic difference between neighborhood conditions in the middle of the 20th Century and those at the turn of the 21st. With the actively used land parcels painted in land use colors, the white spaces highlight areas not claimed by a residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, or recreational use.

The white spaces on the 1947 map indicate neatly drawn streets, the only spaces between the actively used parcels. The white spaces on the 2006 map seem to have overcome many of the residential, commercial, and industrial parcels, highlighting not only the street grid, but the vacancy left in the wake of decades of decline and deterioration that characterized the second half of the 20th Century in urban America, North Philadelphia, and Francisville in particular.



1947



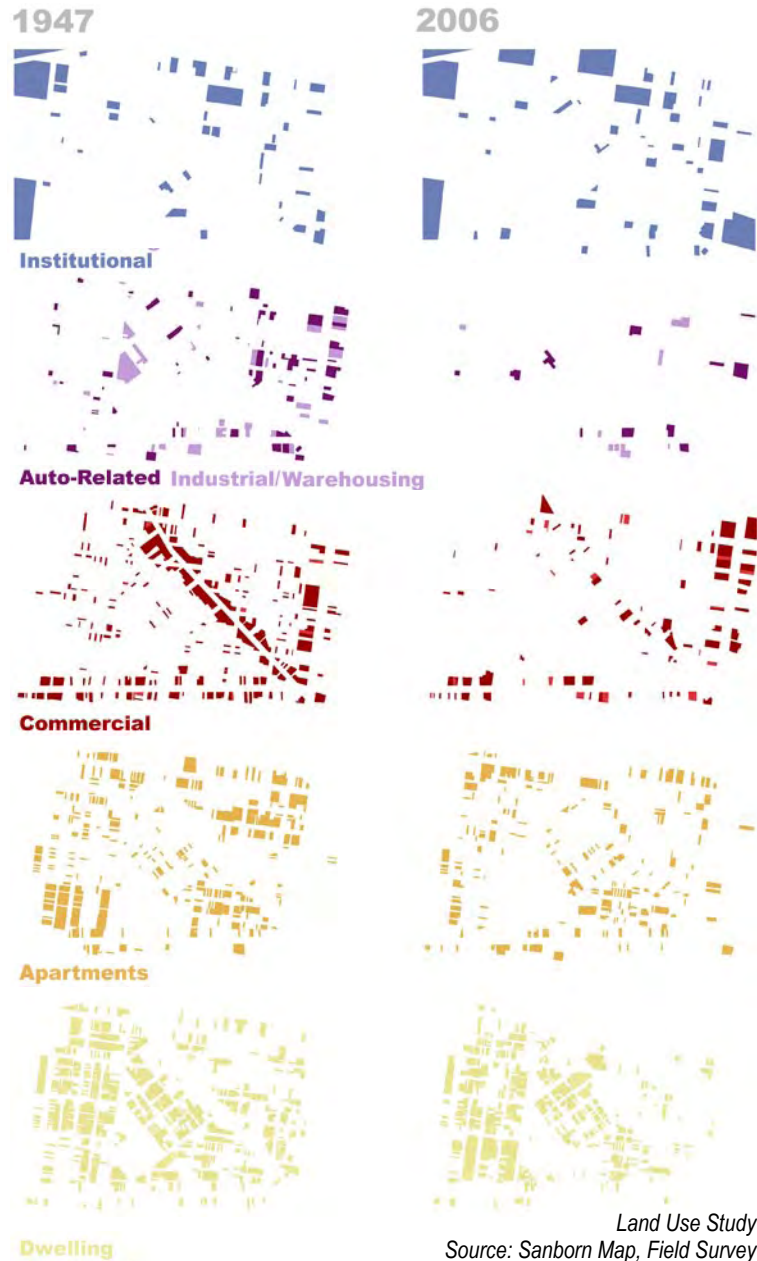
2006

Dwelling
Apartments
Commercial
Auto-Related
Industrial/
Warehousing
Institutional

Land Use Study
Source: Sanborn Map, Field Survey

³⁸*The Philadelphia Inquirer*. "North Philadelphia Street Becomes Gospel Road." 27 September, 2006.

The decline is perhaps most visible in the loss of local commercial services in the neighborhood; Ridge Avenue, once a healthy and contiguous strip of shops is now barely legible as a commercial corridor.

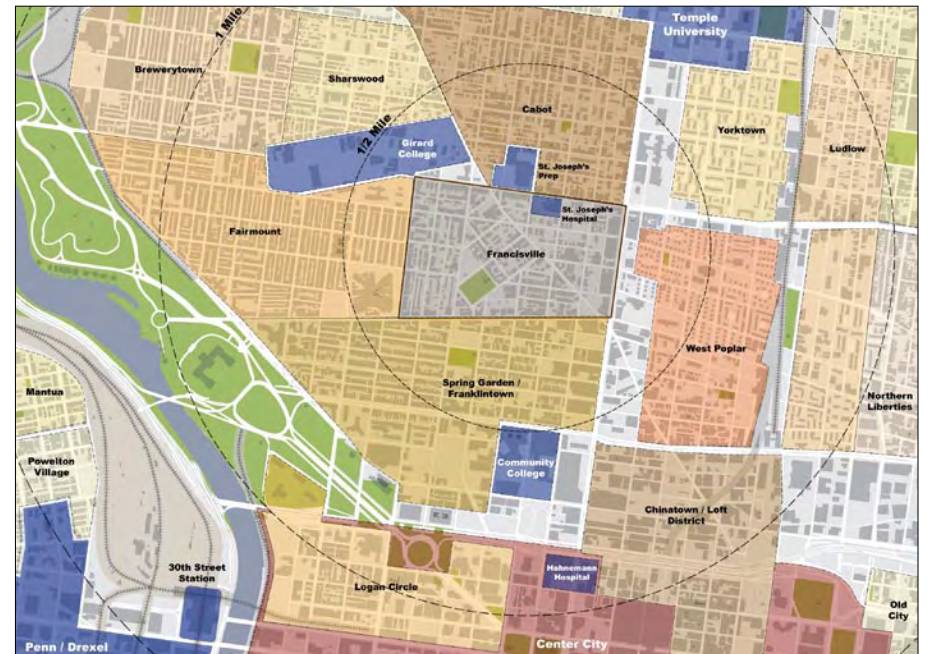


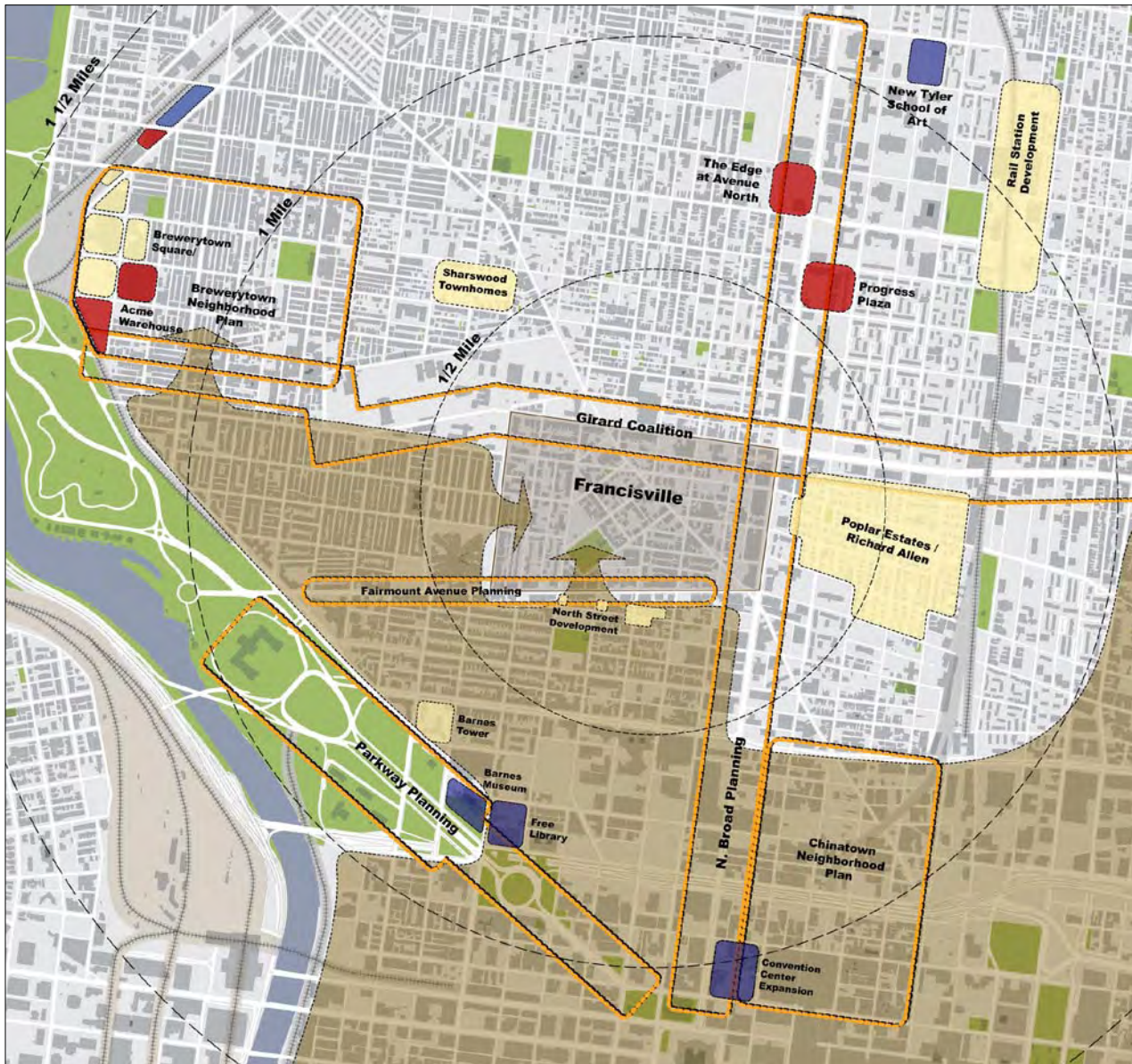
Present

Today Francisville sits in Lower North Philadelphia, within walking distance of Center City, Fairmount Park, and Temple University. The neighborhood, long insulated by the strength of its boundaries and overlooked by the public and private reinvestment efforts at work in surrounding neighborhoods – West Poplar and Yorktown, Spring Garden and Fairmount – now finds itself an area of interest for both public and private dollars.

As Francisville community activists, neighborhood residents, business owners, civic and religious leaders, and developers participate in their neighborhood planning process, they do so in the context of shifting redevelopment energies and adjacent revitalization efforts. Exerting pressure along Francisville's southern and western edges is the thriving residential housing market of downtown Philadelphia, Fairmount, Spring Garden, and the Loft District.

While the effects of this trend are apparent in increased private investment in Francisville and rising residential real estate prices, nearby recent public housing developments and private development projects with substantial affordable housing components reinforce the reality that housing affordability remains a challenge and priority in Lower North Philadelphia.

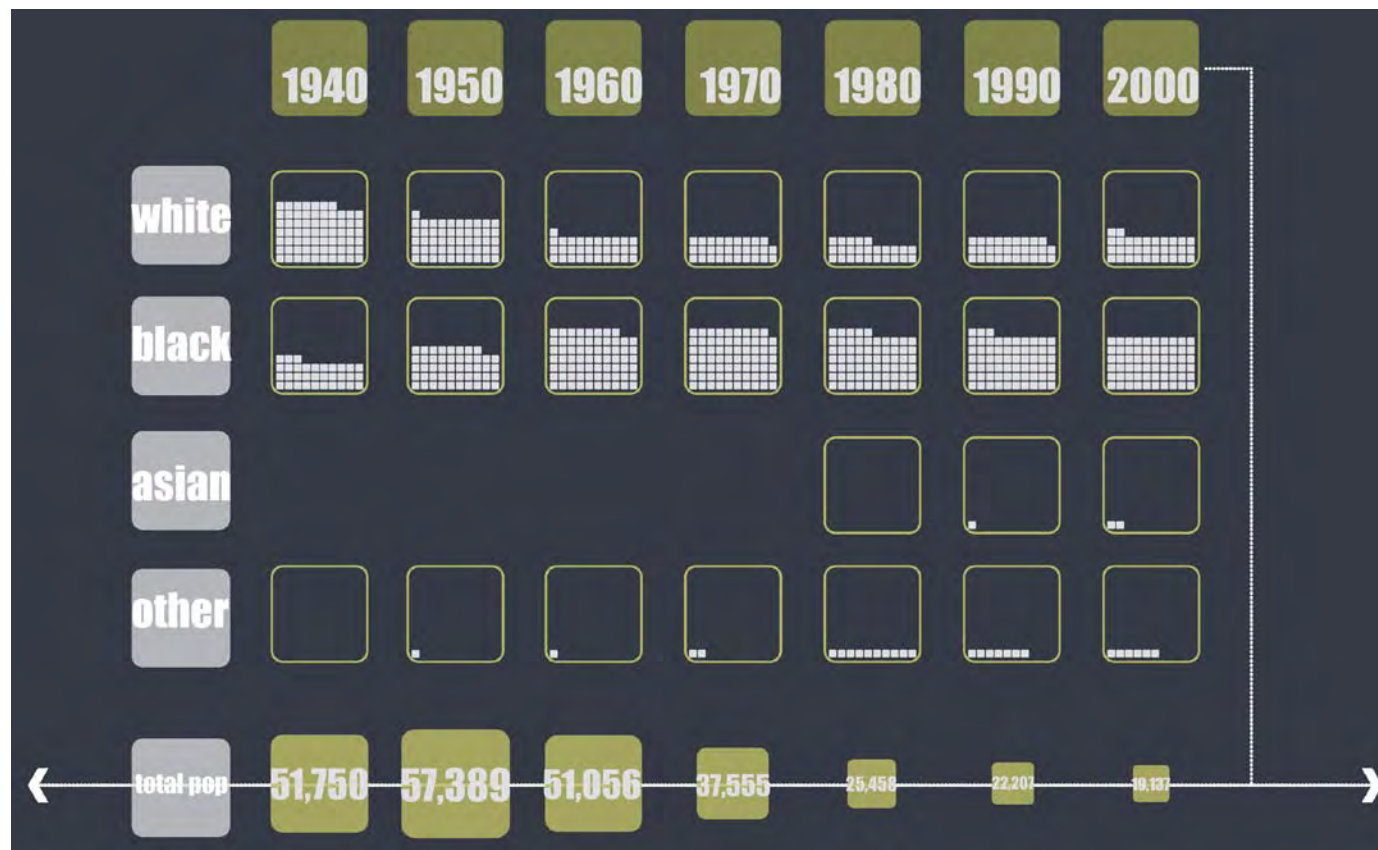




Adjacent revitalization efforts and redevelopment energies

Francisville's commercial edges are also the center of ongoing planning and revitalization projects. With the Girard Coalition overseeing Girard Avenue's come back, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission spearheading work along North Broad Street, and neighborhood groups assuming responsibility for Fairmount Avenue's future, new life and new services are emerging along these corridors. Larger scale commercial reinvestment in Brewerytown, at the ACME Warehouse and Westrum's proposed grocery store at 31st and Girard, and near Temple University, at Progress Plaza and The Edge at Avenue North, promises to re-center commercial activity in Lower North Philadelphia and provide additional shopping opportunities for people living and working in Francisville.

Francisville is in view, a community vision for the future is on the way.



Population by Race over Time
Source: U.S. Census



note:
This population study encompasses an area much larger than Francisville to enable accurate documentation of a longer trend based on historic U.S. Census Tracts. The larger area had 19,137 residents in 2000. Francisville's population at that time consisted of 4,684 residents, or one-quarter of the larger area.

Change Over Time

Tracing Francisville's population across history reveals consistent population loss between 1950 and 2000, a trend shared to varying extents by many of Philadelphia's neighborhoods. The diagram captures the effects of white flight to the suburbs during the 1950s, accompanied by slight population loss over the course of that decade. The dramatic drop in population during the 1960s and 70s reflects the aftermath of the Riots of 1964 and the destruction wrought by the introduction of drugs and addiction during the 1970s. Population loss slowed during the 1980s, inviting community activists to intervene and begin the process of reclaiming their neighborhood, a process which continues today.

Francisville diverges from the demographic trends of much of North Philadelphia in that the neighborhood has remained racially mixed throughout recent history. Furthermore, the racial mix is diversifying, growing to include not only African American

and Caucasian residents, but Asians, American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and groups the Census defines as "others," alike.

Francisville is at a turning point. It is beginning to stabilize, to repopulate and rebuild.

After hemorrhaging population for half of a century, a rough population estimate³⁹ for Francisville suggests that, in fact, Francisville's population is on an upward swing, more than recouping the 16% loss that occurred in the 1990s within the first half of the 2000-2010 decade alone.

³⁹ The population estimate took into account all new residential development in Francisville since 2000 that was recorded in FNDC Zoning Committee meeting minutes, reported during interviews with neighborhood developers, or observed by the consultants during the analysis. The number of new units was reduced by 17% to adjust for the neighborhood vacancy rate as

- Auto
- Retail
- Office
- Mixed Use
- Transitional Housing
- Multi-Family Residential
- Single-Family Residential
- Institution
- Institutional Parking
- Park
- Clean & Green
- Garden
- Yard
- Garage
- Industrial / Warehousing
- Parking
- Vacant Land
- Vacant Building



Land Use

To continue the story of Francisville today, it is important to answer:

Who is the community? *and* **What's happening in Francisville now?**

Who is the community?

An up to date land use map indicates how each property in Francisville is currently being used – where there are homes, apartments, schools, parks, and shops, and where there is vacancy and abandonment.

reported by the 2000 U.S. Census. The number of new, occupied units was then multiplied by the average household size for the neighborhood, 2.6 people per household, as reported by the 2000 U.S. Census, yielding a total of 280 new or rehabilitated occupied units and 728 new residents in Francisville since 2000.

Residential Community

While the mosaic of colors on the land use map references Francisville's mixed use, urban character, selecting for residential uses only – single family homes, apartments, transitional housing, and private yard space – locates the residential clusters in the neighborhood. This is where Francisville's residential community lives.



Residential Use

Residential uses account for 48% of the neighborhood's parcels. 72% of all residential properties are single family homes. The remaining 28% of residential properties are multi-family structures, comprised of apartments, condominium units, or rooms for rent. Multi-family properties are sprinkled throughout the neighborhood, but there is a greater concentration of them at the neighborhood's fringe, along Girard and Corinthian and just north of Fairmount Avenue.

As in any neighborhood, sub-neighborhoods exist in Francisville. In Francisville, these sub-neighborhoods are fairly established and frequently used by residents as a point of reference for describing people or hyper-local trends in housing prices or nuisance behavior. Conditions within the sub-neighborhoods vary. The Highlands, lying between Corinthian and 19th Street have survived, most intact, through the decades of decline. The Lowlands, which encompass the area between 19th Street, Ridge, and Fairmount Avenue, including the historic core, hosts a larger variety of homes: the area above Francis Street experienced more concentrated reinvestment and new construction of affordable housing over the past 15 years, while scattered private market housing renovations are now underway in greater numbers below Francis. The Triangle, in contrast, is largely vacant, its residential fabric quite fragmented. Signs of change are visible, though – apparent along Cambridge and Parish Streets – suggesting restoration of the area's residential fabric and regeneration of its residential community.



Sub-Neighborhoods



Sub-Neighborhoods Detail



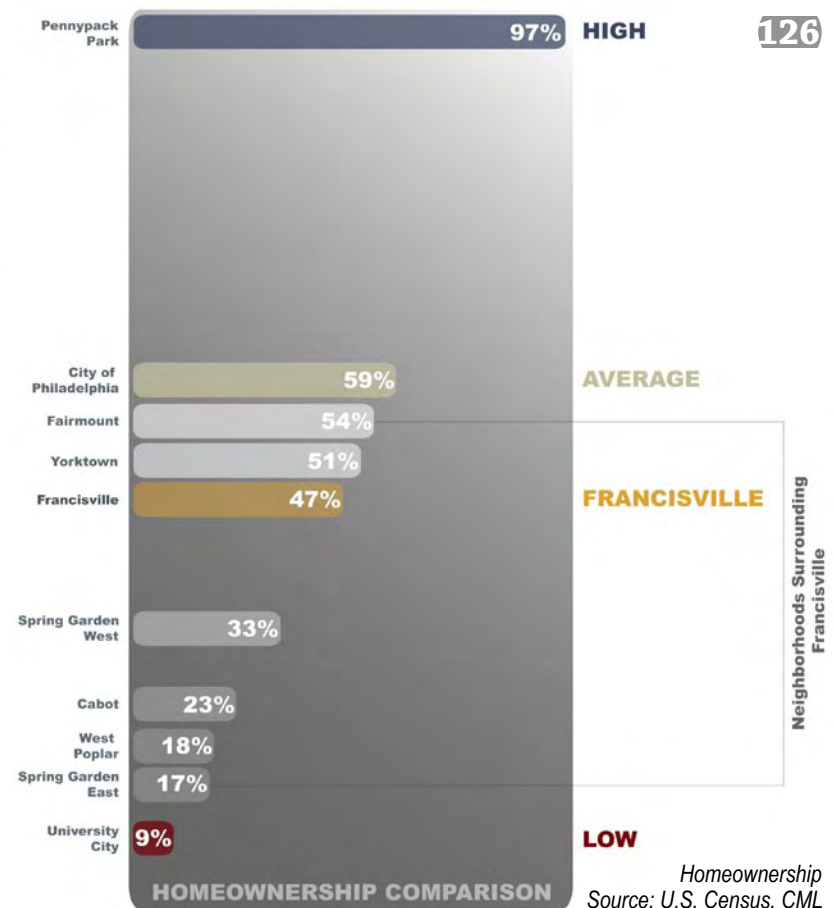
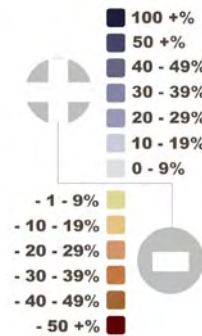
Change in Population, 1990 - 2000
Source: U.S. Census

As described above, Francisville's residential community continued to shrink during the 1990s. The populations of the Census Block Groups in the historic core remained relatively stable during this time, experiencing either slight growth or decline. In- and out-migration was more dramatic at the neighborhood's edges, especially along Broad Street. In all, 537 residents moved out of Francisville between 1990 and 2000.

Homeownership

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, the homeownership rate for the neighborhood as whole is 47%.⁴⁰ Homeownership rates range by Census Block Group, however, from 20% to 78%. Used as a measure of neighborhood stability and property maintenance and streetscape upkeep, Francisville's homeownership rate, which is 12% lower than the City of Philadelphia's average rate of 59%, could be interpreted as an issue to be improved upon. Considered in the context of surrounding neighborhoods, Francisville's homeownership does not appear alarmingly low, but rather relatively typical of a neighborhood in such close proximity to downtown, where the rentals and the flexibility they provide to their tenants dominate the market.

Regardless of ownership status, housing affordability is a concern for many residents of Francisville. Over 16% of owners spend more than 30% of their household income⁴¹ on housing. For renters, the proportion of housing-burdened is much higher, with 37% spending more than 30% of their household income on housing.

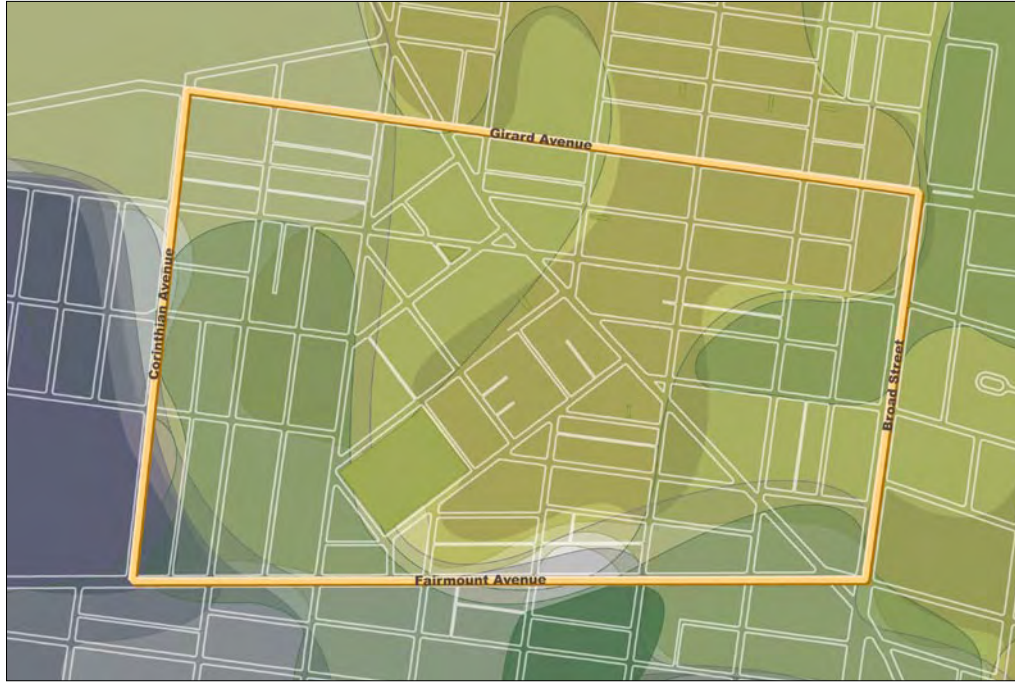


⁴⁰ The Census does not include condominium ownership as a form of homeownership, which might render the neighborhood's 47% homeownership rate lower than it is in reality. However, as condominiums represent a relatively new market product in Francisville, condominium ownership likely would not raise the neighborhood's homeownership rate greatly.

⁴¹ Household income is a commonly used measure for determining housing cost burdens. State and Federal guidelines adopt 30% of household income as the threshold for affordable housing expenditures. Therefore, people spending more than 30% of their household income on rent or homeownership costs plus utilities are recognized as having burdensome housing costs.

Race and Ethnicity

In 2000, 67% of Francisville's resident population was African American, 23% was Caucasian, 1 % was Asian, and 7% fell under the Census' "Other" category. At that time, 11% of the population was Latino. As the race-based topographic maps indicate, in Francisville, unlike other North Philadelphia neighborhood's, rarely is anything black or white.

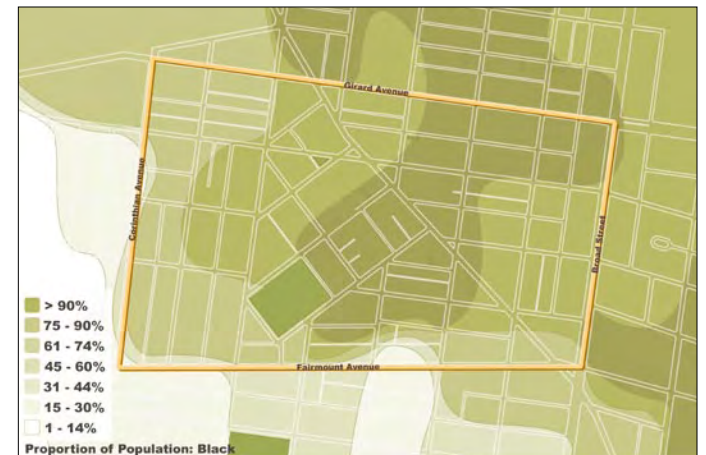


2000 Racial Topography
Source: U.S. Census

Age Structure

The most striking feature of Francisville's age pyramid is the bulge in the pyramid that represents Francisville's youth. 31% of the population is under the age of 18. That's almost 1 person in 3. Many of these children are raised by single parents, as 26% of families in Francisville are comprised of single mothers with children.

Also striking is the large step in the pyramid that occurs at the 50-65 years age brackets. As the baby-boomer generation enters senior-citizenship, Francisville, as a neighborhood, will need to devote additional resources to social and commercial services, housing typologies, and streetscape improvements that accommodate the greater population of elderly who opt to age in place.



2000 Racial Topographies, Top - Bottom: "Other," Caucasian, African American
Source: U.S. Census

Youth At Risk

Francisville's youth population demands attention – and not only because children, adolescents, and teens comprise almost one third of the entire population.

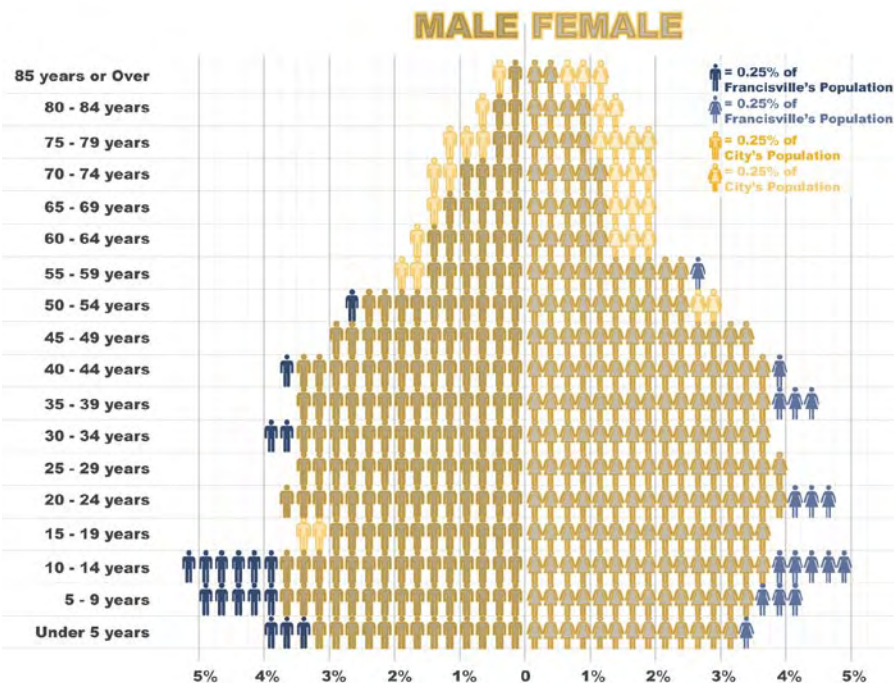
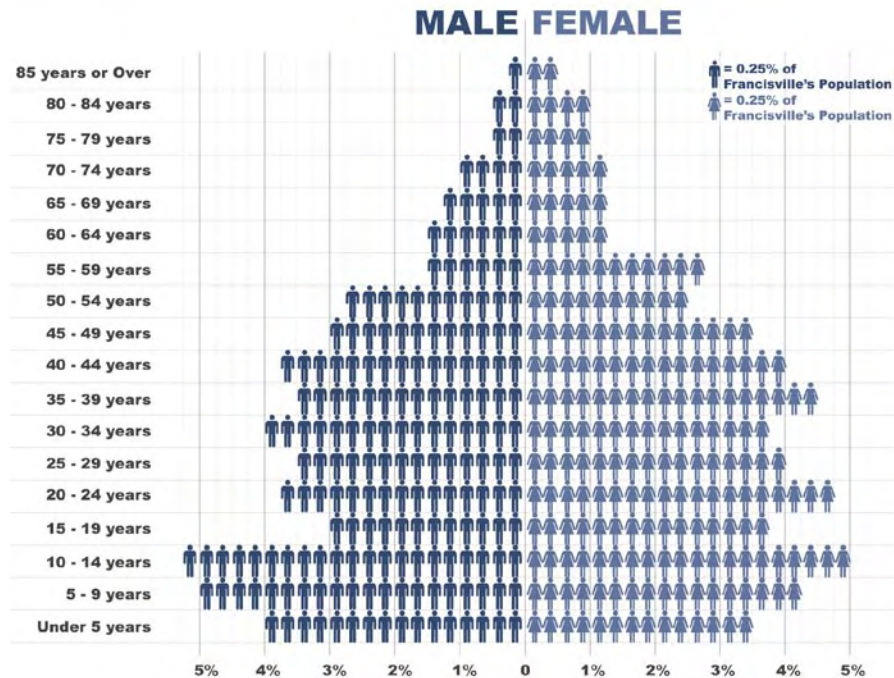
Francisville's youth population demands attention because so many neighborhood kids are at risk.

In 2000, almost one out of every five (19%) Francisville teenagers ages 16-19 had dropped out of high school. Of the 13% who had graduated, only 3% were employed. Between 20% and 29% of local youth between the ages of 16 and 19 years were at risk, meaning without a high school diploma, unemployed, not in the labor force, or some combination of the above.⁴²

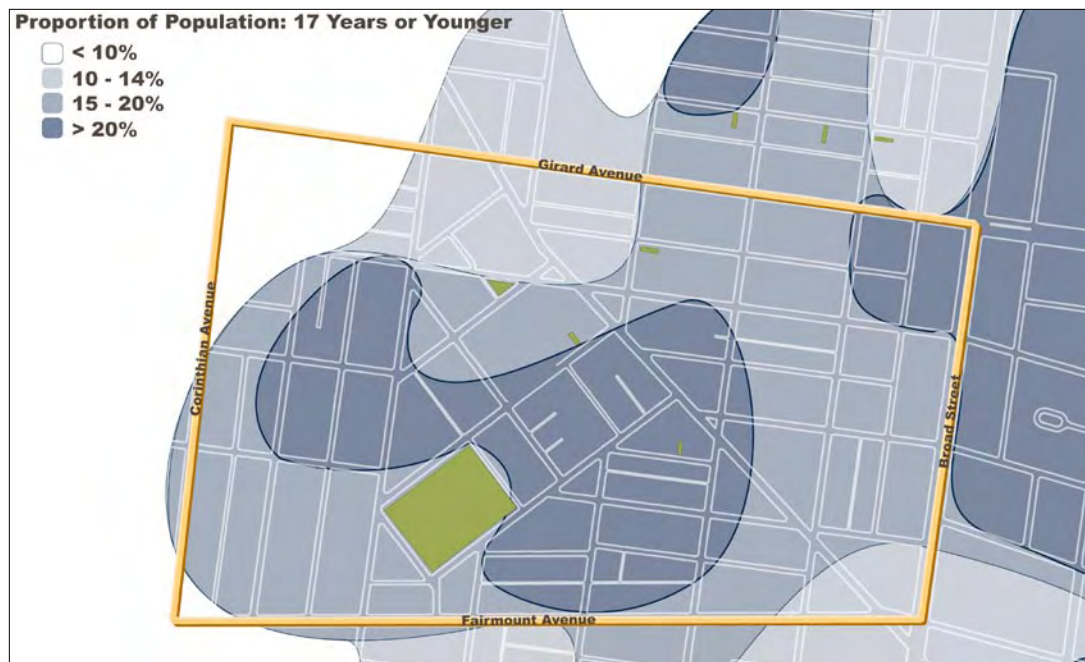
- *“They are parents, often with no education and no direction, and yet, they are still children.”*
- *“The link between education and employment has been broken. Kids don’t see the road to employment opportunities. School seems irrelevant.”*
- *“There are too many trappings – drugs result in trouble with the law, which results in juvenile and adult records, which open the revolving door to prison and back. The cycle begins early.”*
- *“We need to reach kids earlier, deliver supportive services at younger ages – before our youth become disinterested, while they can still imagine a productive future for themselves, before they turn hard.”*
- *“There is a great need to bridge the gap between youth and the community, youth and law enforcement.”*
- *“Ages 14-22 are critical years.”*

- Concerned citizens and service providers

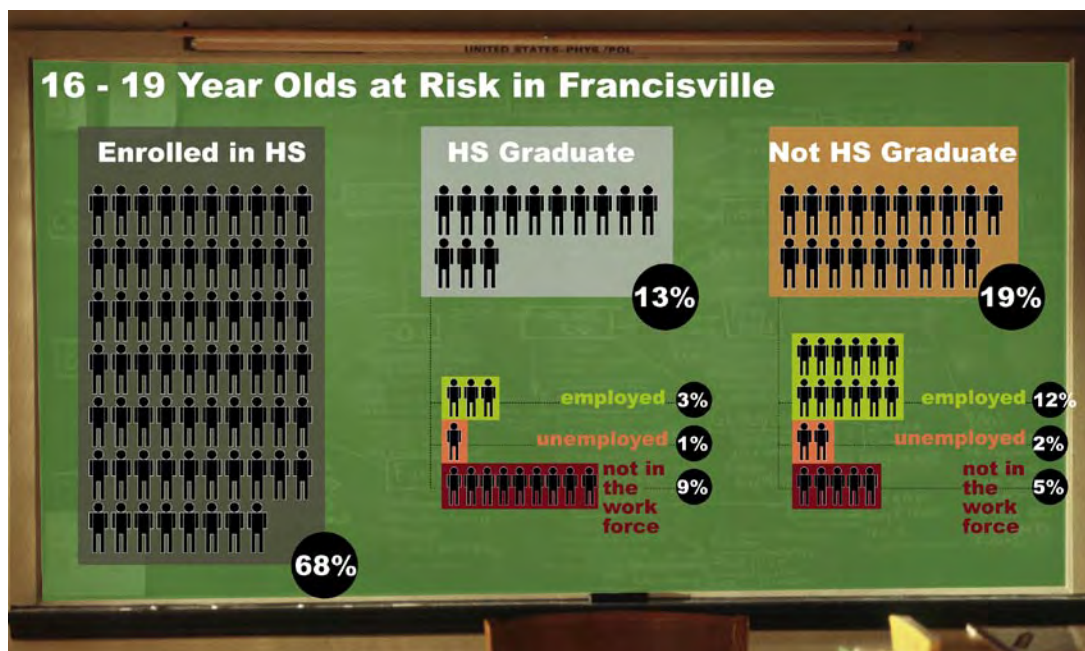
⁴² Though the category of people not in the labor force includes those eligible to work but who have given up looking for work, it is important to note that some or all of the 9% of 16-19 year-olds who had graduated from high school but were not in the labor force may have been continuing their education. It is therefore not accurate to assume that the entire 9% of high school graduates not in the work force are at risk.



2000 Age Pyramid, Top - Bottom: Francisville, Francisville with City Overlay
Source: U.S. Census



2000 Youth Topography
Source: U.S. Census



2000 Youth at Risk
Source: U.S. Census

Educational Attainment / Employment

Educational attainment in Francisville is low. In a job market that becomes increasingly competitive each day, educational attainment becomes ever more important, and a shift in people's personal goals and expectations becomes imperative. What is clear from interviews and community input is that a large number of local youths are not prepared for today's job market, which impacts the local unemployment rate.

Between 1990 and 2000, the employment rate in Francisville increased by 5% from 39% to 44%. Unemployment also grew, rising from 8% to 9%, which was 3 percentage points higher than the City's rate of 6% in 2000.

Despite the persisting low educational attainment and high unemployment in the neighborhood, the 1990s did witness a growing number of executives and professionals (4% increase) and service providers (3% increase) living in Francisville. The number of people employed in the manufacturing industry continued to decline (7% loss). Employment rates for other industries remained steady in Francisville between 1990 and 2000.

Francisville

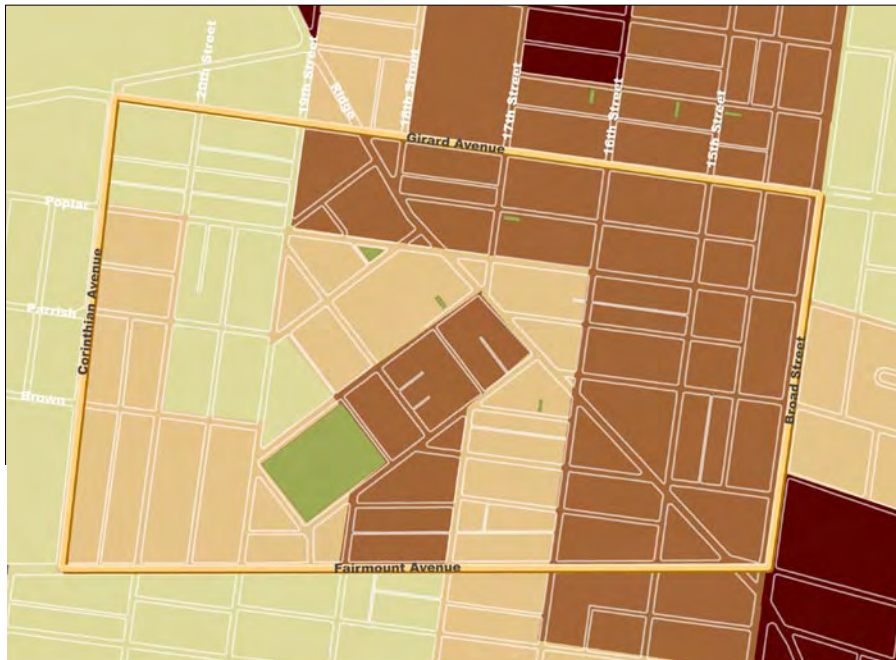
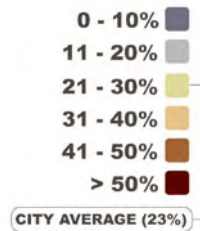
Educational Attainment (Adults 25 and Over):



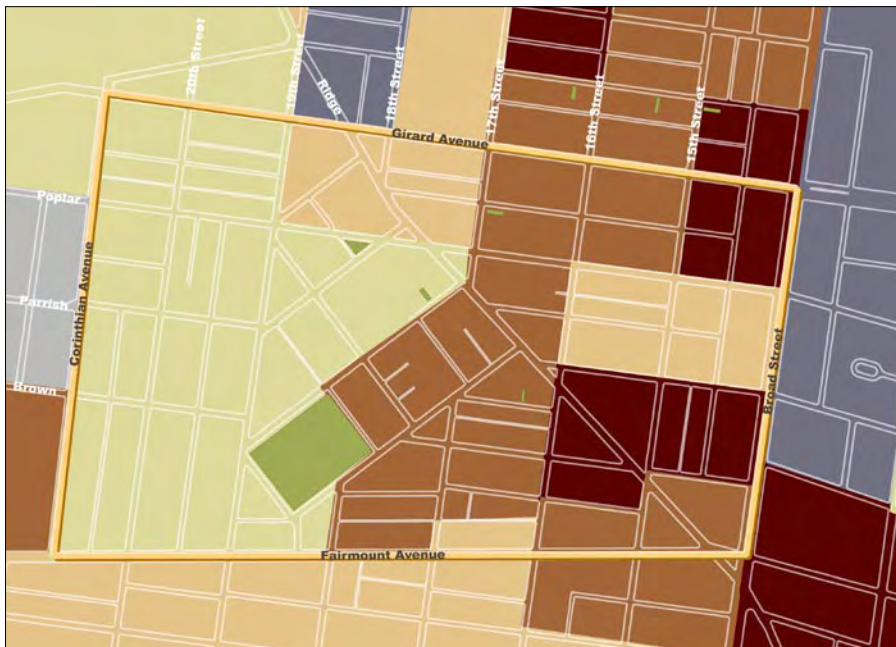
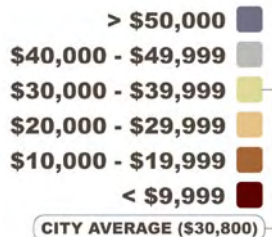
2000 Educational Attainment
Source: U.S. Census



Percent-Share Change in Employment by Industry, 1990 - 2000
Source: U.S. Census



2000 Population Living Below Poverty
Source: U.S. Census



2000 Median Income
Source: U.S. Census

Income / Poverty

Income and poverty are inextricably linked – both to each other and to education and employment, discussed above. Given low educational attainment and high unemployment in Francisville, it is not surprising that the neighborhood's median household income is low – \$25,080 compared to the City's median income of \$30,800 – and poverty rate is high – 36% compared to the City's rate of 23%.

Earning power varies throughout the neighborhood, with the median income of Francisville's Census Block Groups ranging from \$11,250-\$37,375. The same applies to poverty rates, which hover around the City's rate at 22% in some Block Groups and soar as high as 56% in others.

Ridge is a dividing line. Though the statistics are based on the very small number of households living in the Triangle, household income there is lower and poverty is higher.

Social Portrait

What a demographic overview of the neighborhood fails to capture about Francisville's community is its personality - the "community vibe," the stuff that makes the neighborhood *the neighborhood* to the people who live there.

Forever, Francisville has been a place where everyone knows each other.

- "You can't walk one block without seeing someone you know."
- "Families hold the neighborhood together. They are the backbone, the structure. Families in Francisville stick together through thick and thin."
- "People in the neighborhood take care of each other. When something happens on the street, shutters open. People come to help."

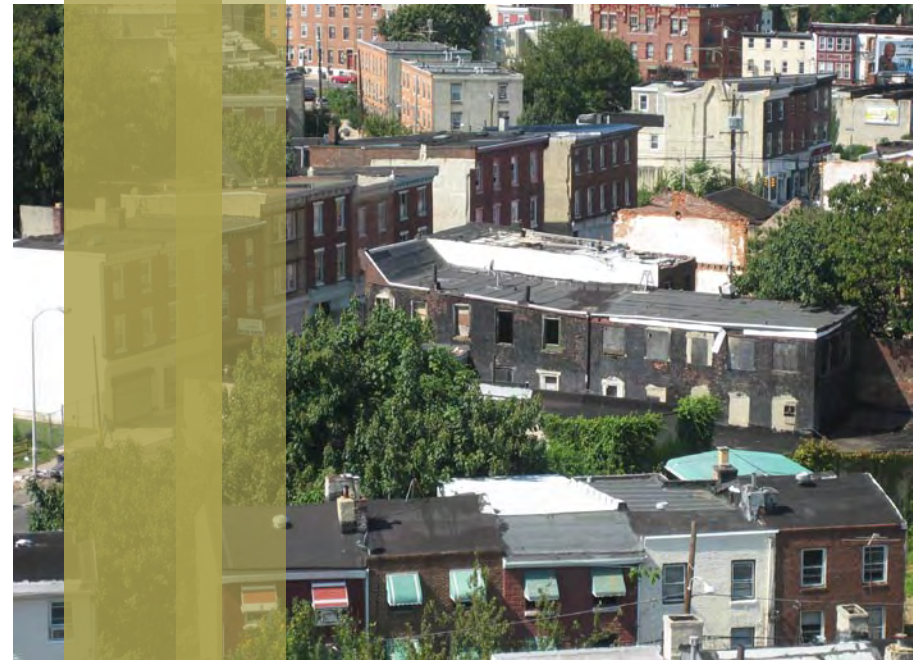
But Francisville is a neighborhood in transition. It declined over a period of 40 years, but now the trend is reversing. Francisville changed, and now it is changing again. With change comes new challenges, and these challenges are very much on the minds of people in the community.

“My biggest concern in the neighborhood right now is the divisiveness that is resulting from all of the transition. The transformation can be a good thing, can lead to something beautiful – and frankly, the blight is getting on my nerves – but I am worried about the social changes that are taking place. It used to be that everyone knew everyone. Neighbors were interchangeable – you knew them all and could talk to them all. Now the neighborhood is comprised of sectors. Some people feel one way about change, others feel differently, and then there are the newcomers.”

Some people in the community do not want the neighborhood to change – physically, socially, economically, demographically. Others embrace the change, rejoice when a vacant home is renovated. Relations between long-term residents and newcomers vary, interactions characterized by most as “polite,” “brief,” and “occasional.” Though neighborhood tenure trumps race in terms of who sticks together, race is an issue, and “fear and racism cut both ways.”



Unity Mural



Zigzagging urban form created by Francisville's unique street network.

So that is the community, in transition itself – but all of this talk of change in Francisville leads to the second question:

What's happening in Francisville now?

What is the texture, the landscape that grounds the daily lives of people in the community? What are the urban dynamics in motion – in Francisville?



Figure Ground

Figure Ground

Figure ground maps simply illustrate the physical form of a place. In Francisville's figure ground map, the irregular pattern composed by the grey shapes represent buildings – each building standing in the neighborhood today. The navy blue spaces in between show all of the areas where no built structure stands – streets, sidewalks, parking lots, open space, vacant land.

A glance to the left (Fairmount) or right (West Poplar) of Francisville shows patterns that, while different, are very much intact: the solid rows in Fairmount depict the neighborhood's blocks of continuous rowhouses; the even pattern of squares in West Poplar maps the new detached and semi-detached structures, built with yard space and driveways in between. In Francisville, the pattern has largely eroded, streets lined by unbroken walls of buildings are rare. The gaps between buildings speak both to the past and the future. Land lies fallow in Francisville, at once testament to the neighborhood's deterioration and decay and to the as yet unrealized potential for a future of renewed vitality.

As the neighborhood moves forward with its Plan and redevelopment, all eyes are on those spaces in between.



Vacancy

Vacancy

- Partially Vacant Mixed Use
- Vacant Land
- Vacant Building

The vacancy map for Francisville in part represents the inverse of the figure ground, though it illustrates the spatial distribution of vacant buildings in the neighborhood in addition to the vacant land. Vacancy in Francisville exists in several forms:

- There is scattered vacancy – a vacant building here, a vacant lot there;
- There is concentrated vacancy – a series of parcels, all connected, one more empty than the next;
and
- There is large-lot vacancy – big parcels of underutilized land, often sites of prior industrial activity.

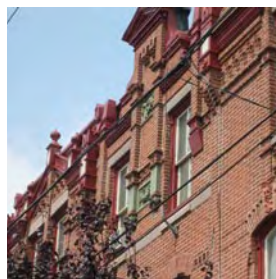
More importantly, vacancy exists in Francisville in large quantity:

- There are 20 partially vacant mixed use structures on 0.6 acres of land, in which either the ground floor commercial or upper floor residential space is unoccupied;
- There are 169 vacant buildings on 9.6 acres of land;
and
- There are 449 parcels, or 16.7 acres, of vacant land in the neighborhood.

29% of the neighborhood, or 24.2 acres of land in Francisville, is at least partially vacant.



Vacancy takes many forms.



A: EXCELLENT

- No visible signs of deterioration
- Well maintained and cared-for
- New construction / renovation
- Historic detailing, unique



B: GOOD

- Needing “cosmetic” improvements only such as a little paint, removal of weeds, and/or cleaning



C: FAIR

- Some cracking of the brick
- Major painting required
- Deteriorated cornice
- Cracked windows or stairs



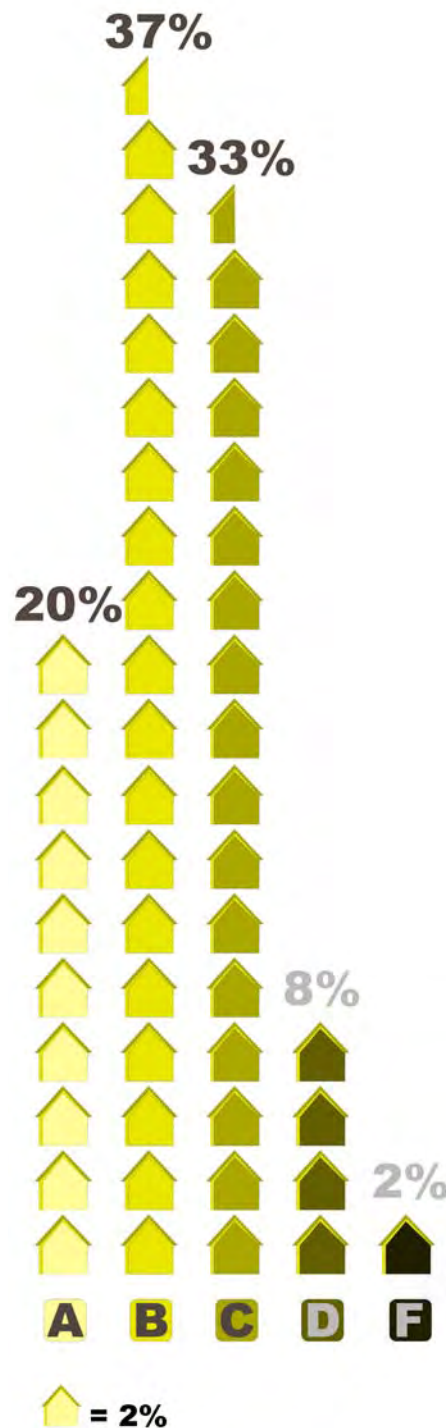
D: DETERIORATED

- Major cracking of the brick
- Broken or missing windows
- Missing brick



F: UNSAFE / FAILING

- “Shell” filled with trash or completely “see-through”
- Ready to fall down, leaning, loose pieces
- Needs to be demolished



Building Condition

As decline and abandonment spread through Francisville, much of the built form collapsed or crumbled, and many people – specifically those whose earned incomes rendered them financially mobile – left the neighborhood. The concentrated poverty left behind took a toll on the neighborhood, on its remaining buildings, on its image, and on its morale, alike.

The building condition map, created with the data collected by neighborhood youth who surveyed each structure in Francisville, illustrates the current state of the built form in the neighborhood. The majority (57%) of property owners or tenants does a Good (B) or Excellent (A) job of maintaining and improving their building facades, a costly and time consuming endeavor, especially for old homes, which comprise a large percentage of Francisville’s building stock. The recent reinvestment in and renovation of some of the residential stock of the neighborhood no doubt contributes to this favorable statistic.

However, conversations during public outreach forums revealed an interesting fact about how people perceive Fair (C), Deteriorating (D), and Unsafe (F) structures – they don’t.



Building Condition as Recorded by Neighborhood Youth

The neighborhood has developed a “blind tolerance,” people have “lost their critical eye.” Until they see their neighborhood photographed by outsiders or local youth trained to scan a building for its structural soundness, façade health, and ornamentation, they do not know how they are perceived from the outside.

A B C D F
under construction





Public Ownership

Source: Board of Revision of Taxes



note:

Statistics for Section 8 housing voucher rental properties in Francisville and surrounding neighborhoods are not available.

Public Ownership

325 parcels, or 10.5 acres of land, in Francisville are publicly owned, which equates to 12% of the neighborhood's total acreage. Like the privately owned vacant land and buildings in need of repair, some of the publicly owned land is highly susceptible to change, and therefore a focus of all interested stakeholders' attention. Furthermore, because the land is perceived as a public good, local stakeholders have a strong belief that the reuse of this land in particular must conform to the community's values and vision as far as future use, income mix, and design principles.

Compared to its adjacent neighborhoods, Francisville has the highest percentage of Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA)-owned properties: 8% of all parcels in the neighborhood are occupied by either public housing or vacant buildings or land owned by PHA. Francisville's rate of 8% ties with Brewerytown for the 2nd highest occurrence of scattered-site public housing in a given neighborhood in the City.

PHA-Owned Property

Francisville	8%
Cabot	7%
Spring Garden East	6%
West Poplar	3%
Yorktown	2%
Spring Garden West	2%
Fairmount	1%

City-Owned Property

Cabot	29%
West Poplar	20%
Francisville	15%
Yorktown	7%
Spring Garden East	6%
Spring Garden West	3%
Fairmount	1%

Public Ownership in Francisville Compared to Adjacent Neighborhoods
Source: Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML)

Negative public perceptions about the effects of concentrated public housing swirl through discussions about PHA's large presence in Francisville. Some comments stem from unwarranted bias, others from valid hypotheses. Two facts remain though:

- 1) PHA must be recognized as a partner in Francisville's redevelopment, and
- 2) not all PHA residents are the same.

15% of all parcels in Francisville are owned by the City. Whereas PHA acts as a developer and it is therefore reasonable to anticipate that renovation or new construction on their properties would be done either by or in partnership with PHA, the City-owned properties are of interest to neighborhood stakeholders because they will likely be disposed of, eventually, for redevelopment by either a private, non-profit, or partnership entity. The discussion of City-owned land in Francisville is also high-profile and at times, heated, because several of the City's lots are of significant size, marking the last of the sought-after large-scale redevelopment opportunities in Francisville at this time.

3% of all parcels in Francisville are owned by the Redevelopment Authority (RDA) of Philadelphia. Several groupings of these properties along 15th and Folsom Streets compose large tracts of land, primed for redevelopment. Like the City-owned land, acquisition of RDA-owned parcels is an aspiration of potential investors competing for project space in Francisville.

Market Pressure

The discussion of land, building condition, and property ownership is so central, so relevant, to *what's happening in Francisville* because land in the neighborhood, long undervalued in the real estate market, is no longer selling for prices far below market value. Market pressure, defined by rising real estate values, has reached Francisville, bringing with it new development energy as well as the speculative market, which together, threaten to drive prices higher still.

Data from the Multiple Listing Service (MLS), an information base used by realtors to track real estate sales, aggregates sales data for Francisville with sales from the adjacent Fairmount neighborhood, where real estate values have been healthy, and indeed, appreciating for years. As such, according to MLS, the change in private market sales prices in the "Art Museum" area between 2003 and 2005 was only 108%.

Using a finer comb and a wider time span, data from the University of Pennsylvania's Cartographic Modeling Lab (CML) suggests that market forces in Francisville have been much more dramatic than the MLS data suggest. Between 1999 and 2004, the median residential sale price in Francisville increased by 313%, to nearly \$150,000 in 2004. The large jump in sales prices was partly caused by the severely undervalued land prices, which served as the 1999 base point for these calculations. Compared to surrounding neighborhoods, Francisville's 2004 average median sales price still falls well below that of Spring Garden and Fairmount.

RDA-Owned Property

West Poplar	12%
Cabot	11%
Yorktown	3%
Francisville	3%
Spring Garden West	1%
Spring Garden East	0%
Fairmount	0%

Source: CML



Market Pressure

MLS Data

Neighborhood	Sales Price % Change: 03 - 05
Northern Liberties	181%
Old City	171%
Brewerytown	163%
Graduate Hospital	142%
Pennsport	140%
Fishtown	131%
Queen Village	121%
Bella Vista	121%
Rittenhouse Square	109%
Art Museum	108%

Change in Residential Sales Prices, 2003 - 2005
Source: Multiple Listing Service (MLS)

2004 Average Median Sale Price

Spring Garden West	\$ 386,219
Fairmount	\$ 253,104
Spring Garden East	\$ 207,778
Francisville	\$ 148,193
West Poplar	\$ 109,350
Yorktown	\$ 81,187
Cabot	\$ 34,618

Change in Sale Price 1999-2004

Cabot	322%
Francisville	313%
Fairmount	176%
Spring Garden East	135%
West Poplar	100%
Spring Garden West	95%
Yorktown	73%

Residential Sales Data, 1999 - 2004
Source: CML



Real Estate Sales, 2000 - 2006
Source: Board of Revision of Taxes

The cost of vacant land in Francisville is rising too:

Average Price / Square Foot	
2000	2006
\$4.55/SF	\$59.45/SF

note:

The average prices of vacant land listed above include all vacant land sales in Francisville during 2000 and 2006. They do not exclude extreme outliers, which skew the average prices upward. In 2000, the \$/SF of vacant land ranged from \$0.00 to \$36.89. In 2006, the \$/SF ranged from \$0.00 to \$532.15!

It is also important to note that these averages are for the neighborhood as a whole. The \$/SF of vacant land varies greatly according to the location of the vacant parcel. Parcels west of 19th Street and those just north of Fairmount Avenue sell for much higher prices. Parcels northeast of Ridge Avenue are generally much less costly.



Sales

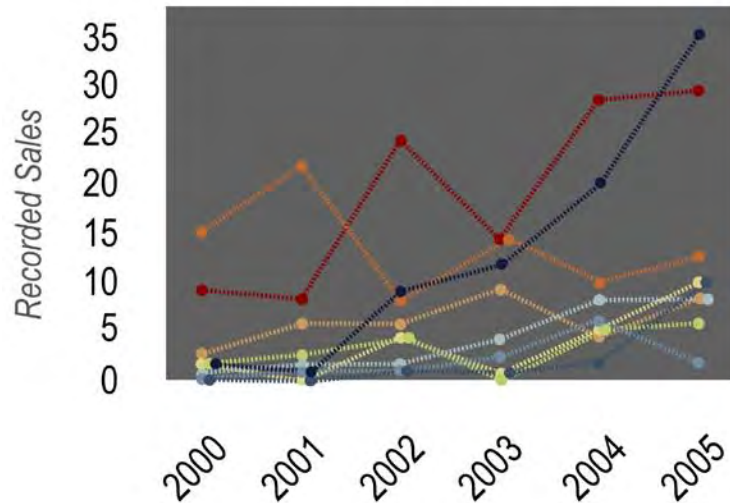
Additional data collected from the City of Philadelphia's Board of Revision of Taxes (BRT) confirms the real and perceived market pressure growth in Francisville. Since 2000, roughly 735 property sales have occurred in Francisville. The number of sales per year increased by 360%, from 51 in 2000 to 185 in 2005. Heightened market activity is powerful enough to cause fear among long-term neighborhood stakeholders – fear that their community is changing without their input, fear that the market will take advantage of them by offering less than their property's full value, fear of gentrification, and fear of displacement.

Closer examination of the price points that are defining real estate sales in Francisville uncovers three interesting trends:

- Very low sales prices continue to dominate the real estate market in Francisville. Between 2000 and 2005, 28% of all residential property sales sold for less than \$1,000. An additional 20% of properties sold for less than \$50,000.
- The highest bracket of sales prices used for this study (sales of more than \$200,000) rose to become the greatest market segment in the neighborhood in 2004 and 2005. Between 2000 and 2005, 20% of all residential sales fell within this upper-most bracket.
- Middle market residential sales between \$50,001 and \$200,000 remained infrequent between 2000 and 2005.

RESIDENTIAL SALES in FRANCISVILLE

% SALES: **140**
2000-2005

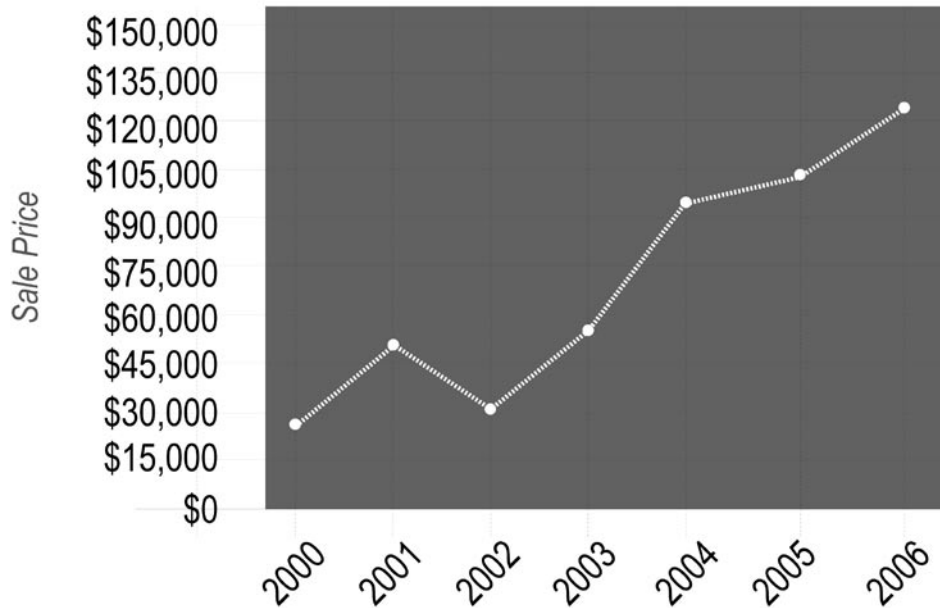


More than \$200,000	(79 sales: 20%)
\$175,001 - \$200,000	(14 sales: 3%)
\$150,001 - \$175,000	(13 sales: 3%)
\$125,001 - \$150,000	(25 sales: 6%)
\$100,001 - \$125,000	(20 sales: 5%)
\$75,001 - \$100,000	(22 sales: 6%)
\$50,001 - \$75,000	(36 sales: 9%)
\$1,001 - \$50,000	(82 sales: 20%)
Less than \$1,000	(112 sales: 28%)



Residential Sales, 2000 - 2005
Source: Board of Revision of Taxes

MEDIAN RESIDENTIAL SALE PRICE



Median Residential Sales Prices, 2000 - 2006
Source: Board of Revision of Taxes

It is true that, according to BRT data, the median residential sale price in Francisville has been steadily on the rise since 2002. Given the high proportion of low sales, concerns about the speculative market taking hold in Francisville are likely justified, though a percentage of low sales is attributable either to Sheriff's Sales or to property transfers for negligible amounts that occur between family members. And while the private market has taken hold in the neighborhood, it is not true that market pressure has rendered the development environment in Francisville completely out of the community's control.



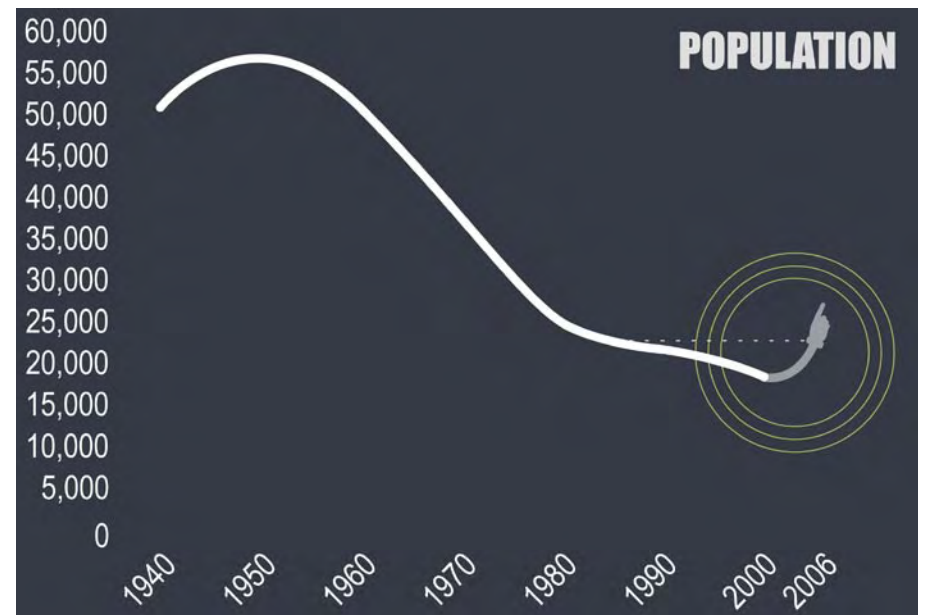
Completed Reinvestment since 2000



Proposed Future Reinvestment 2006



Surveyed Reinvestment 2006



Francisville is at a turning point.

Investment

Rather than allowing paralysis caused by fear and conflict about recent market activity to take hold in Francisville, redevelopment energies must be harnessed and put to work for and with the community. Since 2000, an estimated 280 new and rehabilitated units have been completed or proposed in Francisville, which translates into roughly 611 new residents and a 13% growth rate for the neighborhood.⁴³ This growth is healthy – it has put Francisville back on the map, it tells us that Francisville is on the rebound.

Newcomers, local investors and community development partners, alike, are excited about the neighborhood and its future for the same reasons as those who have always lived there. When asked, “Why all of this investment, why now?” they say:

“The location is great. You can walk to Center City.”

“There is so much potential, so much untapped opportunity.”

“The neighborhood has good bones.”

“The neighborhood has good people.”

“It’s got history.”

- survey responses & interviews



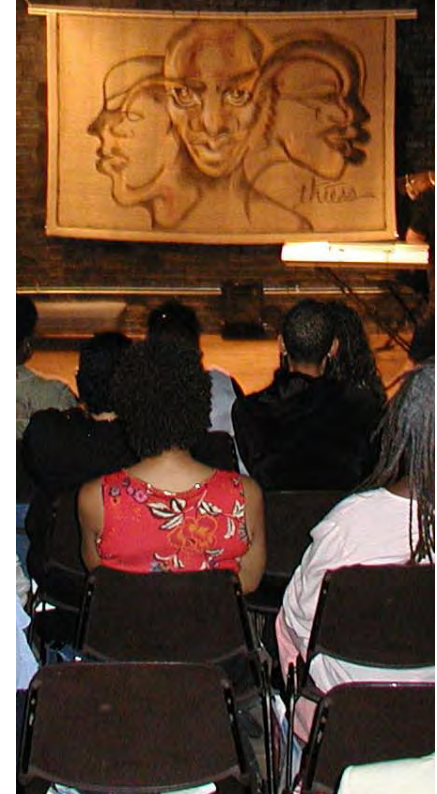
⁴³ See note 39 for discussion of population projection conducted for this study.



Source: Tanye Gilbert-Ruffin

In addition to renewed interest in residential redevelopment, Francisville is experiencing new investment in the arts, culture, and education. Current development projects include:

- *The Arts Garage, pictured below*
- *The Met*
- *New space for Eastern University*
- *A new charter school for the Byron Story Foundation*



Source: Ola Solanke

Housing Affordability and Balanced Growth

Francisville's social infrastructure is shifting. Francisville will remain a neighborhood defined by family, by history, by strong roots. As Francisville rebuilds, though, the neighborhood will open its doors to new people, people from elsewhere, people of different races, ethnicities, and economic status, people with different traditions and expectations and cultures. As is starting to happen, life-long residents and new residents will become neighbors, they will call the same block, the same neighborhood, "home." Francisville's community will be healthy if it adopts a philosophy of inclusiveness, of welcome, of embrace. It will require effort and patience, but Francisville will emerge as one Community, a community of which old and new residents alike can assume proud ownership.

Education will be an important piece of Francisville's community building. Life-long residents and newcomers are not to be seen as necessarily different or opposed. The two groups can learn from each other and work together to build a stronger, healthier, and more balanced neighborhood. Empowering people through information is integral. Diffusing fear and skepticism through openness and honesty, even more so. Neighborhood planning and revitalization is not about displacement – it does not mean in with the new, out with the old. Rather, neighborhood planning and revitalization is about balance and building upon commonalities.

Neighborhood leaders recognize the sensitivity of the situation, the excitement shared by some that redevelopment has begun, the frustration of others that the neighborhood's revitalization has taken so long, the worry felt by others still that change will cause the neighborhood to lose its greatest assets, among them its tight-knit and historically diverse community, fear that those who have "weathered the storm" will not fully benefit from the positive aspects of coming change, or worse yet, will be forced to leave by rising rents and property taxes.

Neighborhood leaders empathize with those frustrated by the slow pace of change as well as with those who fear and resist change in Francisville, explaining that,

*"It's hard because redevelopment feels very urgent to the people who have been here for so long, but you can't fix it like *SNAP* that. It's going to be a long, slow process marked by small steps forward. It's going to be a work in phases..."*

and that,

"It's also hard because the redevelopment may feel out of the neighborhood's control at times, but it isn't. If the community comes together as advocates and partners – rather than just watching, we can effect change. People need to realize that they have the power to get the best out of the redevelopment process – that it's not all bad – but they have to participate in controlling and managing change, in making sure that a balance is struck."

62% of respondents indicated that creating a mixed-income community is a priority. 48% noted affordable housing as a priority for Francisville's future.

SURVEY SAYS:

The analysis suggests that Francisville has mix of housing options already, from privately owned homes to a substantial stock of affordable rental or subsidized housing. The analysis does not suggest, however, that the existing affordable housing stock is safe, livable, or comfortable, nor that it meets the needs of today's modern families. Preserving a mix of housing options in Francisville will be a large part of the Plan. As the private market takes off, the neighborhood will need to ensure that the affordable stock benefits from reinvestment too.

The Plan will be a tool to achieve balance in Francisville – affordability with growth, development with green, history with innovation. The Plan will help enrich the neighborhood – according to the neighborhood's terms – as Francisville grows in number, diversity, and character.

What does what's happening in Francisville mean for the community?

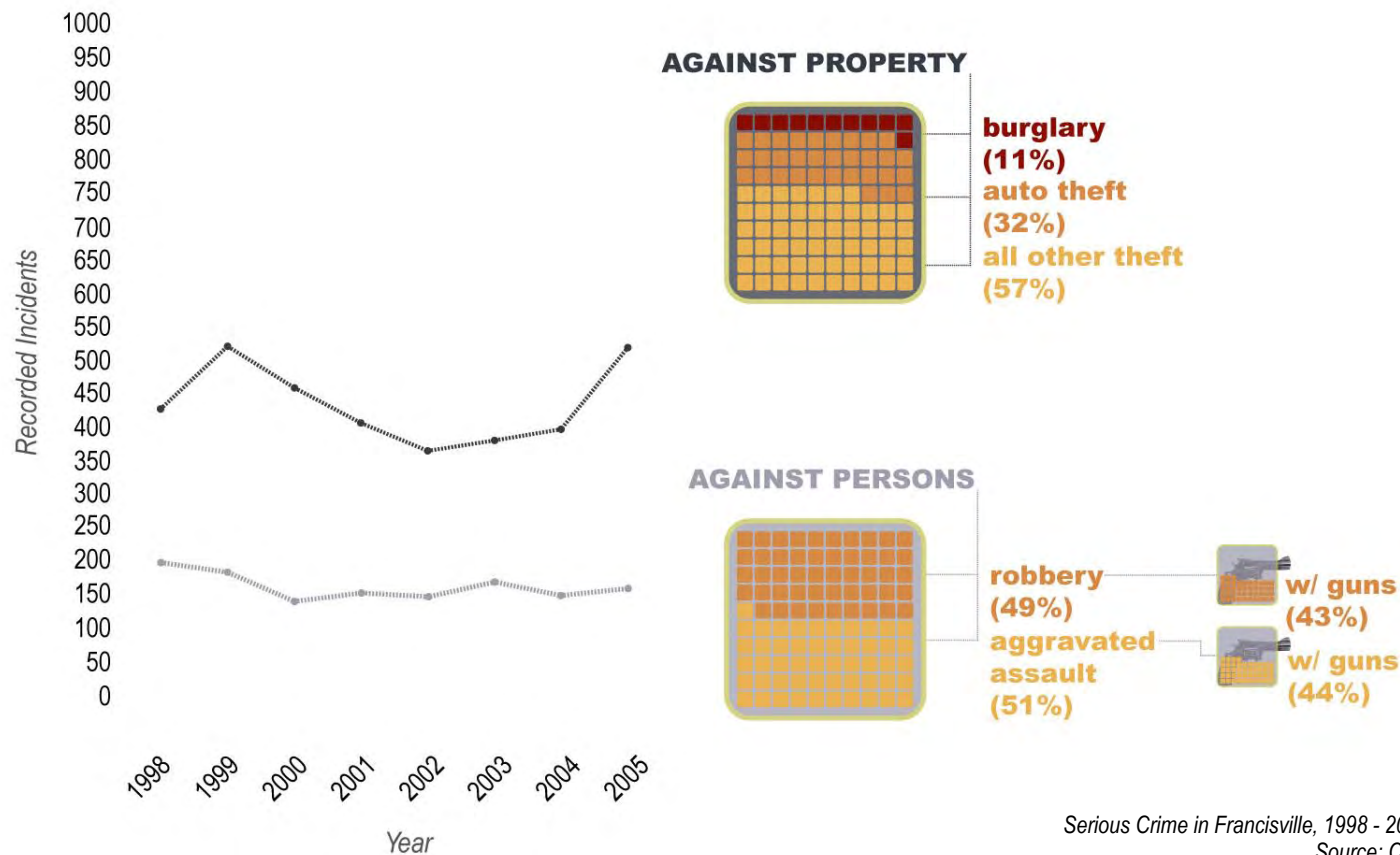
What do these shifting dynamics mean for the current residents of Francisville? How will such change affect their daily lives? What are the neighborhood's beloved assets, the places and characteristics that require careful protection, preservation, or restoration in the face of change? What aspects of life in the neighborhood might the community want to change proactively - what remains a struggle, a burden, or a source of discontent for local stakeholders? What in Francisville may be hindering new investment and further delaying the process of neighborhood reclamation?

Crime

Crime in Francisville is a serious problem. New residents cite violent crime and safety among their top two concerns about the neighborhood, the other top concern being trash and illegal dumping, a punishable offense, albeit of lesser severity, itself. Long-term residents relay mixed opinions about the local crime problem. Some recognize and appreciate Francisville as a haven in North Philadelphia, unique for its safe streets. Others feel that crime in the neighborhood is increasing, a perception held, in particular, by a significant number of senior citizens, who, having lived very social lives in the neighborhood for decades, now fear returning home alone from a friend's house after dark.

144

SERIOUS CRIME:



Violent crimes against people have hovered around 200 incidents per year for the past 8 years. A gun was involved in more than 40% of those incidents. Serious crime against property occurs with roughly twice as often. After a steady, but slight increase between 2002 and 2004, theft and burglary in Francisville increased sharply between 2004 and 2005.

Neighborhood needs surveys pleaded, "stop the violence." 85% of respondents ranked safety and crime as a top priority for improving the neighborhood's quality of life.

Serious Crime in Francisville, 1998 - 2005
Source: CML

No one denies the presence of drugs in Francisville – or the toll that the drug market takes on the lives of the community's young men. Drugs, and the young people involved in the trade, are visible on numerous corners in the neighborhood. Concerned community members lament the inadequacy of the school system and the lack of good jobs available to neighborhood youth who turn instead to the drug market to earn a living. There is a sense that these young men have few alternatives, and unfortunately, many young men have paid a hefty price for this decision. Some have lost their lives. Others have lost their youth to prison – community members report a high incarceration rate among young men in Francisville.



Spatial Distribution of Serious Crime
Source: CML

Take another look at the age pyramid. The sharp change between the percentage of young men and the percentage of boys is likely not a coincidence.

Serious Crime Spatial Distribution

The orange and red dots mark serious crimes committed against property and persons, respectively. The dots do not mark the exact location of each incident, but rather the volume of incidents per census Block Group. A hot spot exists at the corner of Broad and Girard.

Nuisance

Nuisance crimes, while usually less immediately traumatic to the victim, wreak havoc in Francisville, on neighborhood image and morale, especially. Francisville has the highest rate of illegal dumping in the City of Philadelphia. The vacant lots are easy targets. Enforcement is rare.

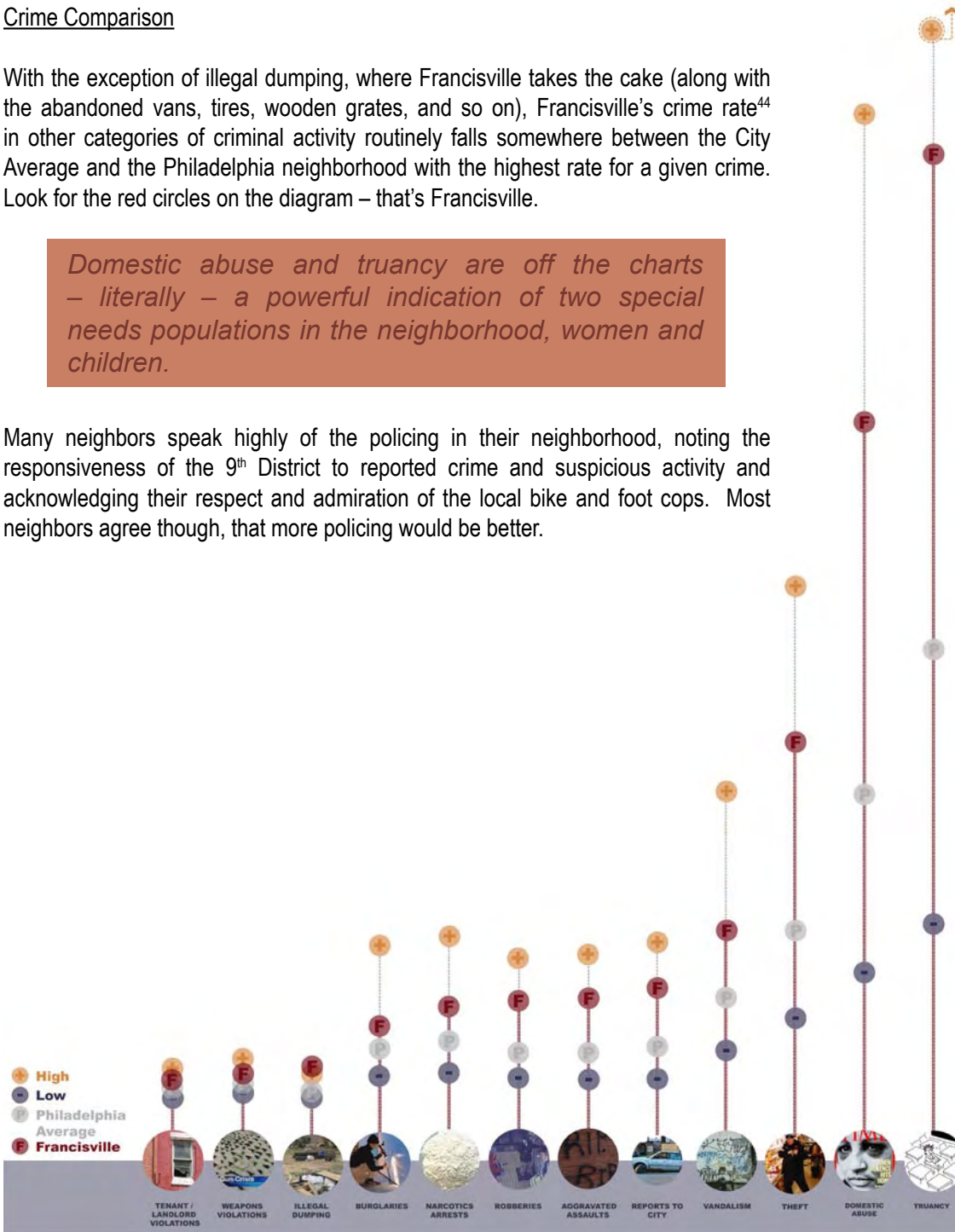


Crime Comparison

With the exception of illegal dumping, where Francisville takes the cake (along with the abandoned vans, tires, wooden grates, and so on), Francisville's crime rate⁴⁴ in other categories of criminal activity routinely falls somewhere between the City Average and the Philadelphia neighborhood with the highest rate for a given crime. Look for the red circles on the diagram – that's Francisville.

Domestic abuse and truancy are off the charts – literally – a powerful indication of two special needs populations in the neighborhood, women and children.

Many neighbors speak highly of the policing in their neighborhood, noting the responsiveness of the 9th District to reported crime and suspicious activity and acknowledging their respect and admiration of the local bike and foot cops. Most neighbors agree though, that more policing would be better.



⁴⁴ Crime rates for Francisville, the City, and other neighborhoods were calculated either as number of incidents per 1,000 residents or number of incidents per 100 acres depending on the crime.



Existing conditions along Ridge Avenue

Commercial Services

Public perception about Francisville is informed by more than crime statistics and articles documenting the strengthening real estate market. The neighborhood's image is informed as much by rumor and hearsay as by the face that it presents to the public, the way it markets itself. Local stakeholders know this, they are fiercely proud of Ridge Avenue's past, and fiercely committed to its restoration.

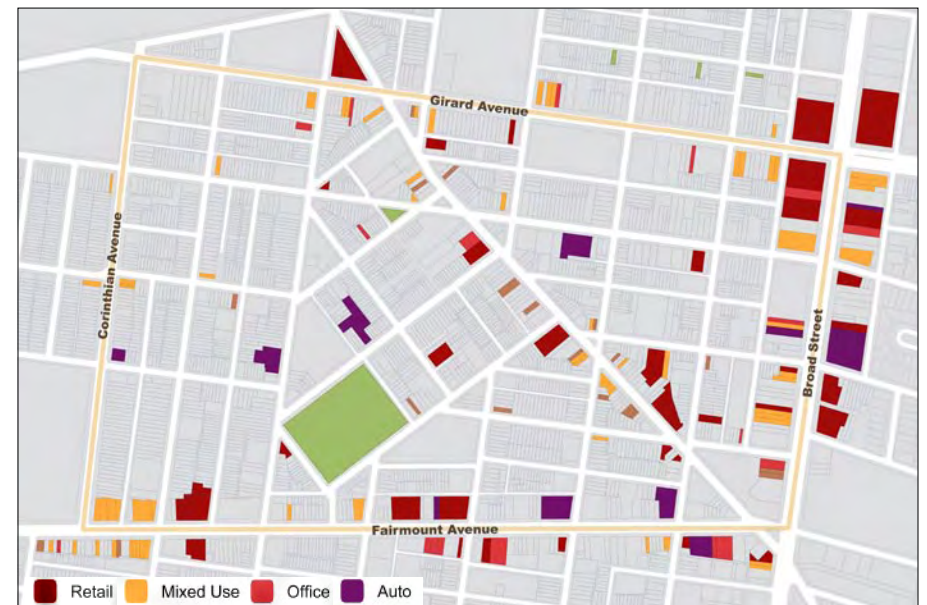
Like it or not, Ridge Avenue is the face of the neighborhood with which most outsiders are familiar.

34% of respondents selected street-scape improvements for Ridge Avenue as a #1 priority for the neighborhood. 75% chose that option as the #1 priority for the local commercial environment. 48% of respondents indicated that street cleaning, which would make Ridge not only more aesthetically pleasing, but also safer to navigate, is a major priority.

SURVEY SAYS:

Neighborhood Commercial

Commercial services are scarce in Francisville. Only 8% of the neighborhood's parcels are occupied by commercial use: 3% retail, 3% mixed-use, 1% office, and 1% auto-oriented.

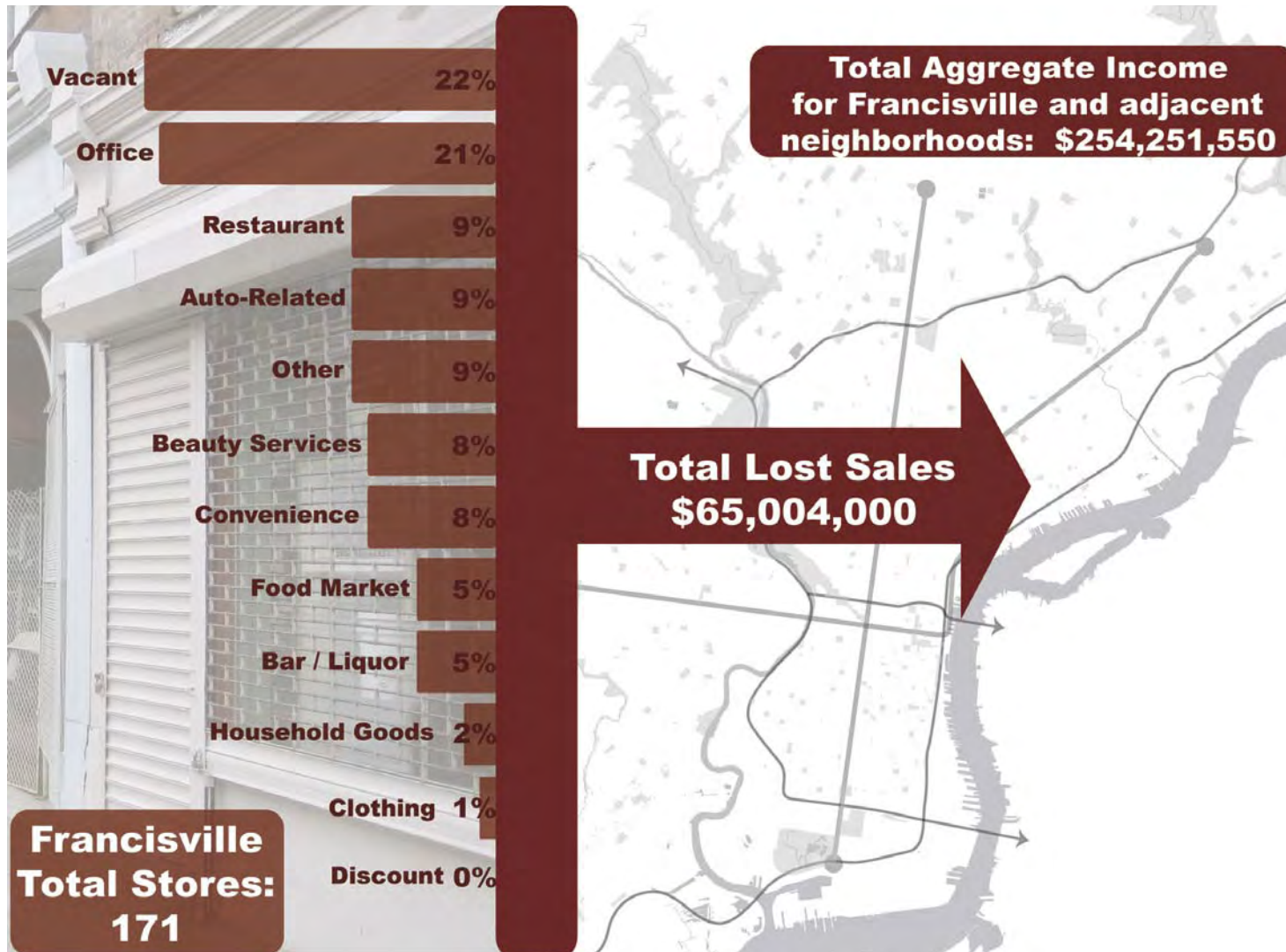


Commercial Use

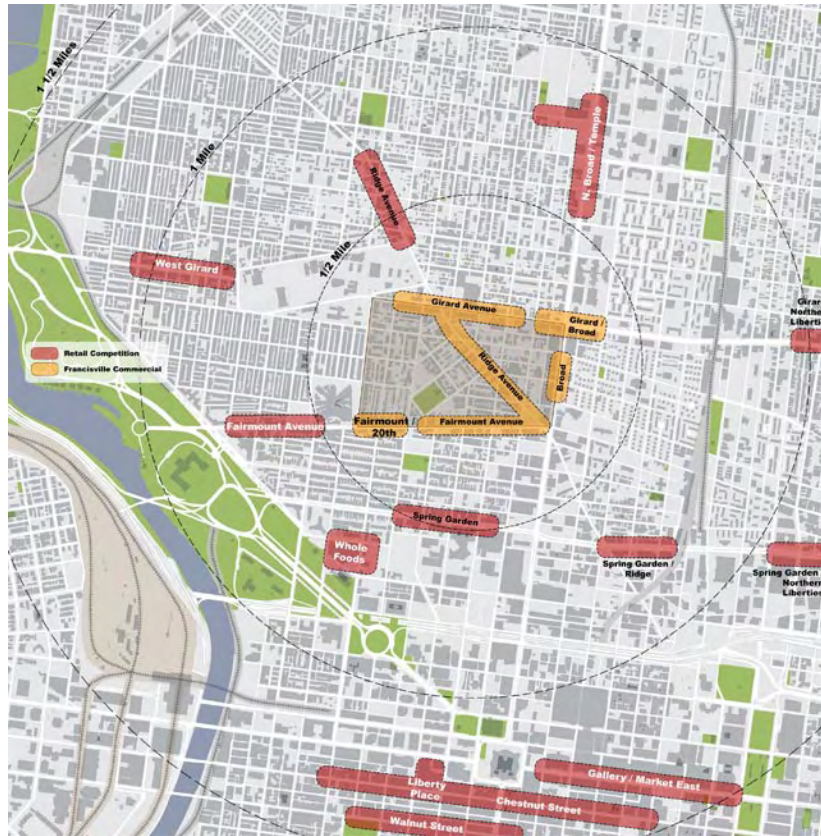
The lack of local commercial energy, especially given the four major commercial corridors in the area, Girard, Fairmount, Broad, and Ridge, translates to several harsh realities for neighborhood residents and business owners:

1) Most people leave the neighborhood to do their shopping. They bring their dollars with them, spending a large portion of local expendable income somewhere else besides Francisville.

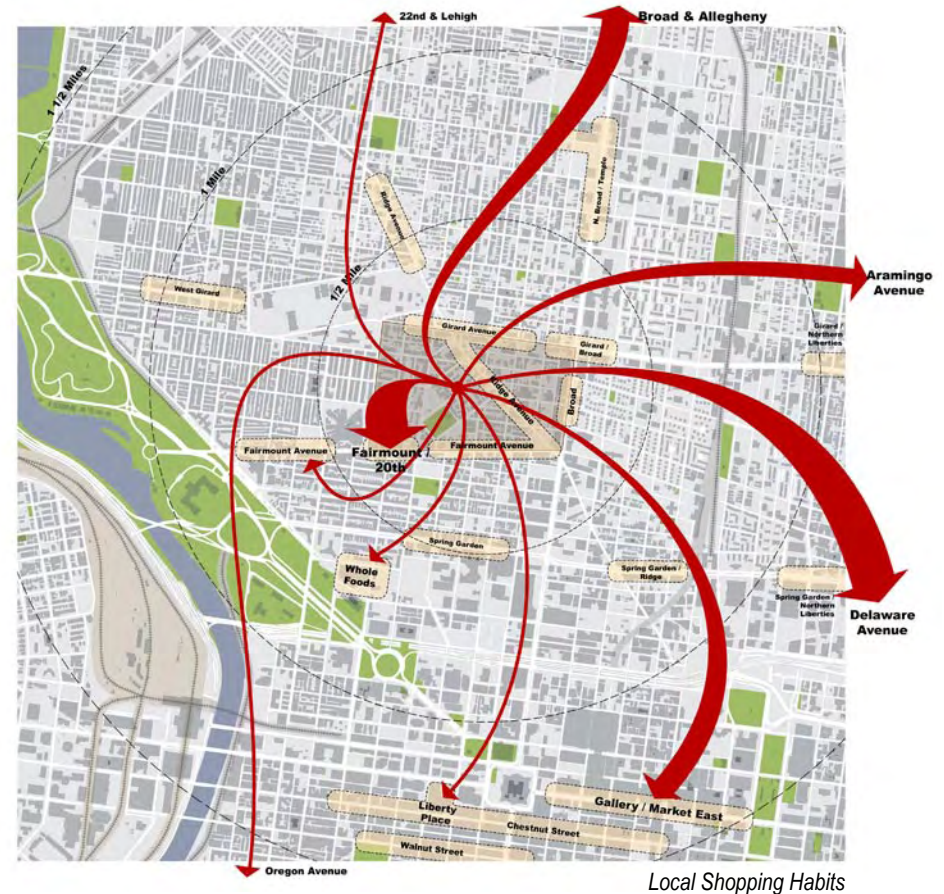
With 22% of all local commercial facades barred and vacant, this is not a surprise for anyone familiar with the area.



Commercial Services and Leakage
Sources: Field Survey, Urban Partners Girard Avenue Market Analysis Report, 2003 (trade area includes 19th - 10th, Susquehanna to Green)



Commercial Competition

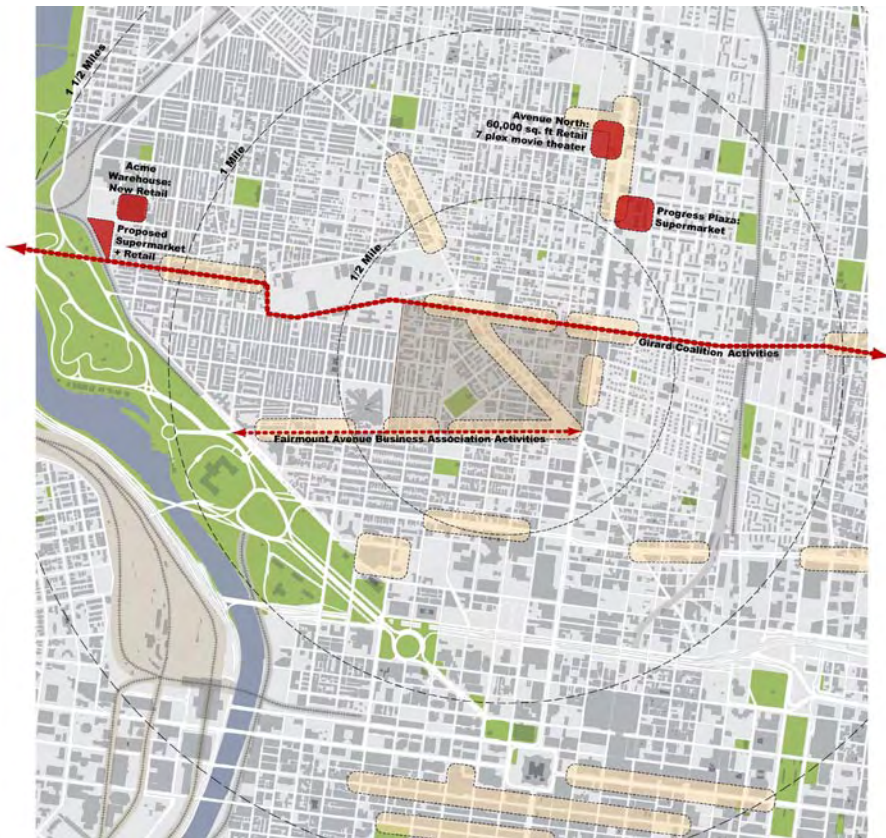


Local Shopping Habits

In most cases, Francisville loses to the commercial competition. The width of the red arrows corresponds to the volume of Francisville residents who travel to those particular shopping destinations. For new commercial to succeed along Francisville's commercial corridors, the mix of shops must complement, not replicate, the retail programs planned for Progress Plaza, The Edge at Avenue North, and the Brewerytown developments. These sites share a local customer base with Francisville.

2) Shopping becomes more of a chore and a challenge, especially for people dependent on public transportation who must travel home from the grocery with multiple bags in tow. This reality is particularly difficult for seniors who are unable to carry heavy loads. Many cite the corner stores and take-out Chinese food stores as sources of neighborhood trouble.

"Newcomers would feel more welcome in Francisville if issues with the problematic retailers were mitigated. The people who go there pick up something to eat or smoke, and then stand outside eating or smoking – and littering. They are the ones slinging racial slurs and starting fights at the corners. They prevent new people from feeling welcome in the neighborhood."



Planned Commercial Reinvestment

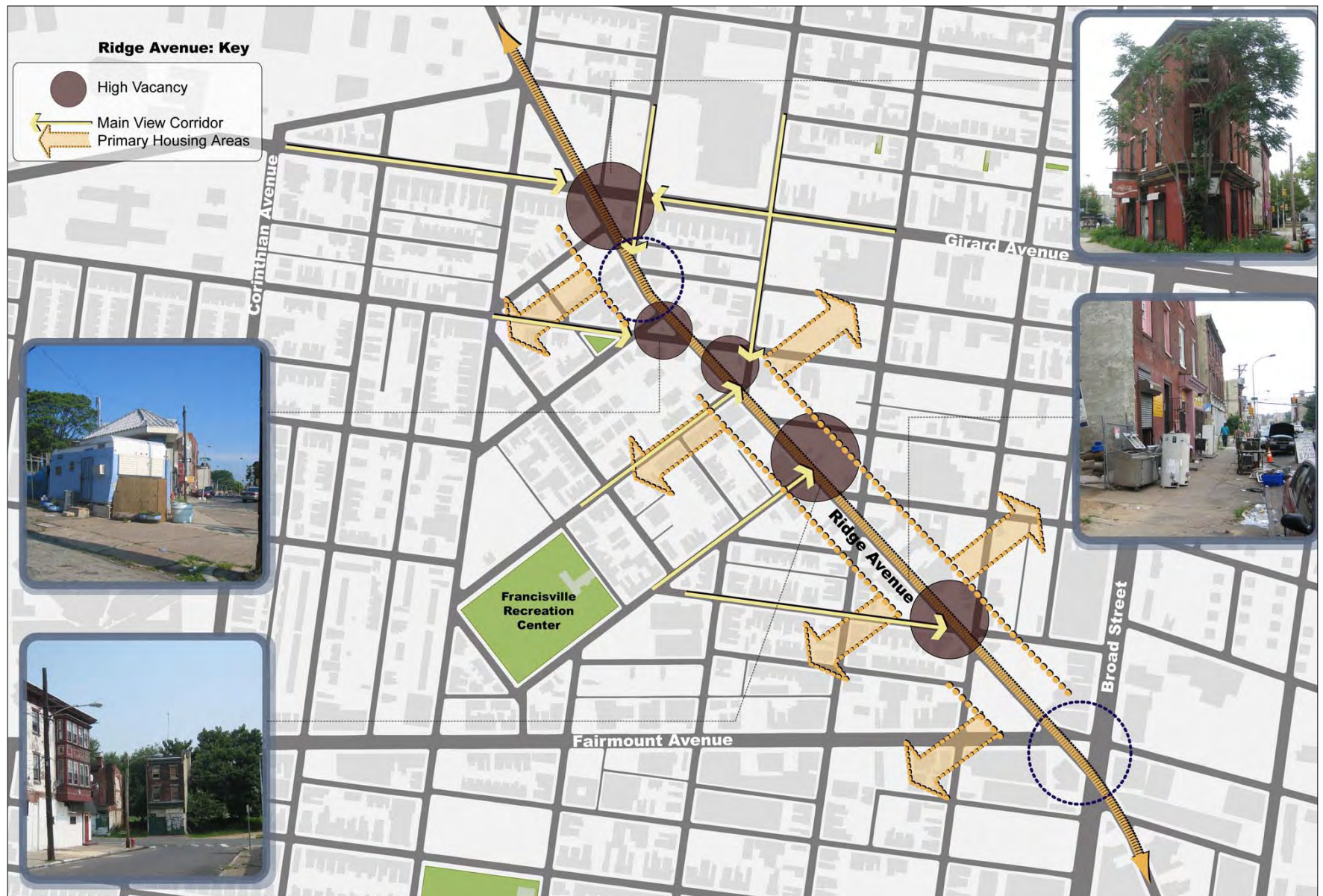
56% of respondents said that a greater range of businesses was a top priority for Francisville's commercial environment. 44% of survey respondents believe that an active business association is a priority.

SURVEY SAYS:

3) Business is hard for business owners. With vacancy defining Ridge Avenue, Ridge retailers suffer from the lack of contiguous shops drawing potential customers along the corridor with the promise of interesting window displays and sales. The business environment is also to blame for the ongoing struggles of existing stores and the difficulty of attracting new businesses to the area. Local business owners explain that it is not only hard, but expensive, to be a first-time business owner: they want to make improvements to their stores, but the risks are too high. They will lose everything if they cannot afford their loan repayments. They cannot afford to make necessary changes without more business in the store, but without any improvements, it is impossible to bring in new customers.

Ridge Avenue business owners, in addition to the corridor itself, need assistance.

4) Jobs are few in Francisville because employers are few in Francisville. In addition to being starved of basic commercial services, Francisville's economic potential suffers from the lack of employment opportunities available to local youth and adults.



Ridge Avenue Existing Conditions

The above listed problems that shape the commercial environment in Francisville exist – in exaggerated form – along the community’s main commercial corridor, Ridge Avenue. Ridge Avenue, long seen as the “scenic route” through the City, carries a high traffic volume, and provides glimpses into the neighborhood at its intersections.

The diagonal street bends twice within the neighborhood’s boundaries, the odd angles created at such instances becoming highly visible gateways to the neighborhood. At present, the gateways with ‘windows’ on the neighborhood say little about the character and worth of the community...



Reinvestment Energy

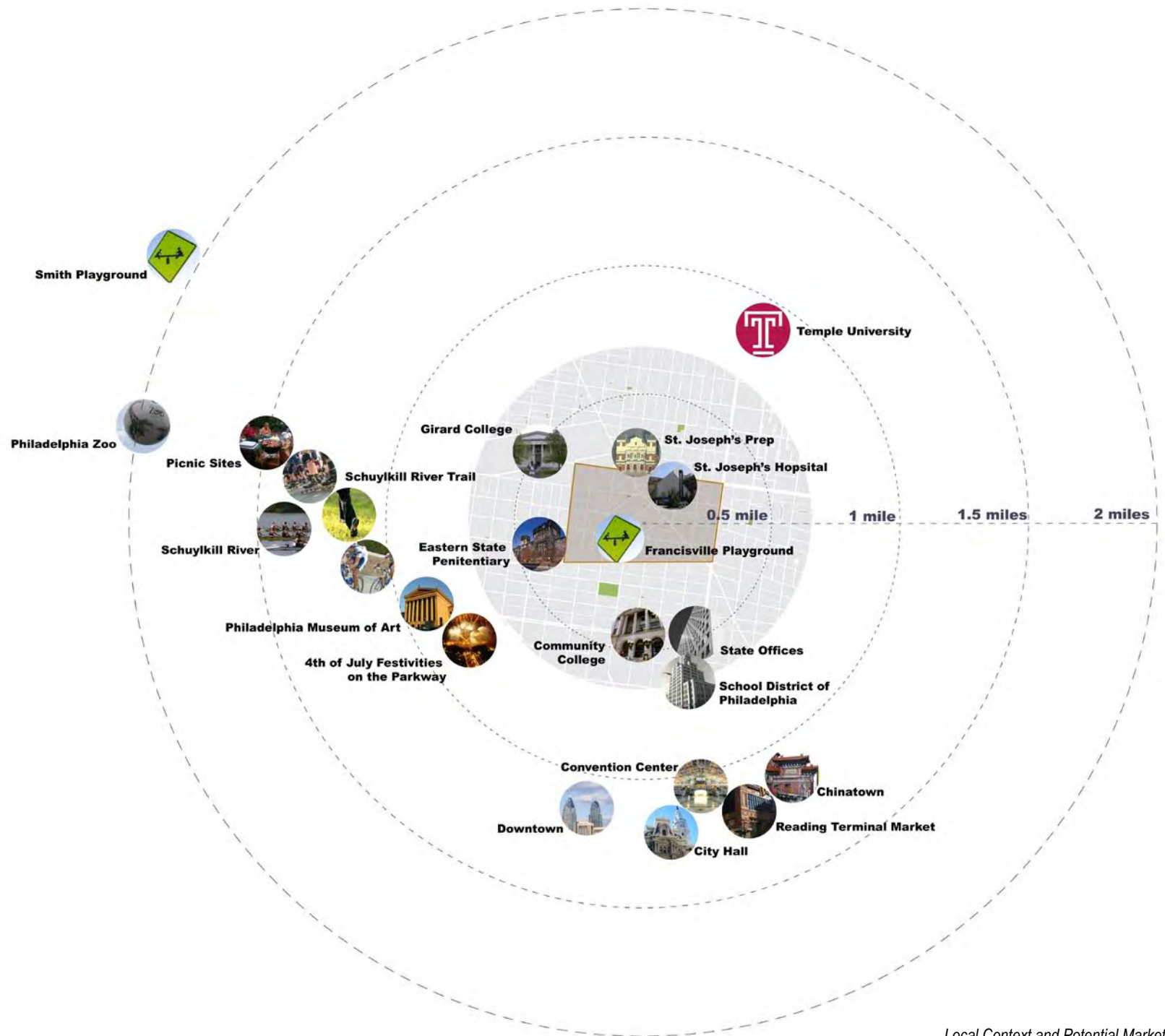


Institutional and Commercial Anchors



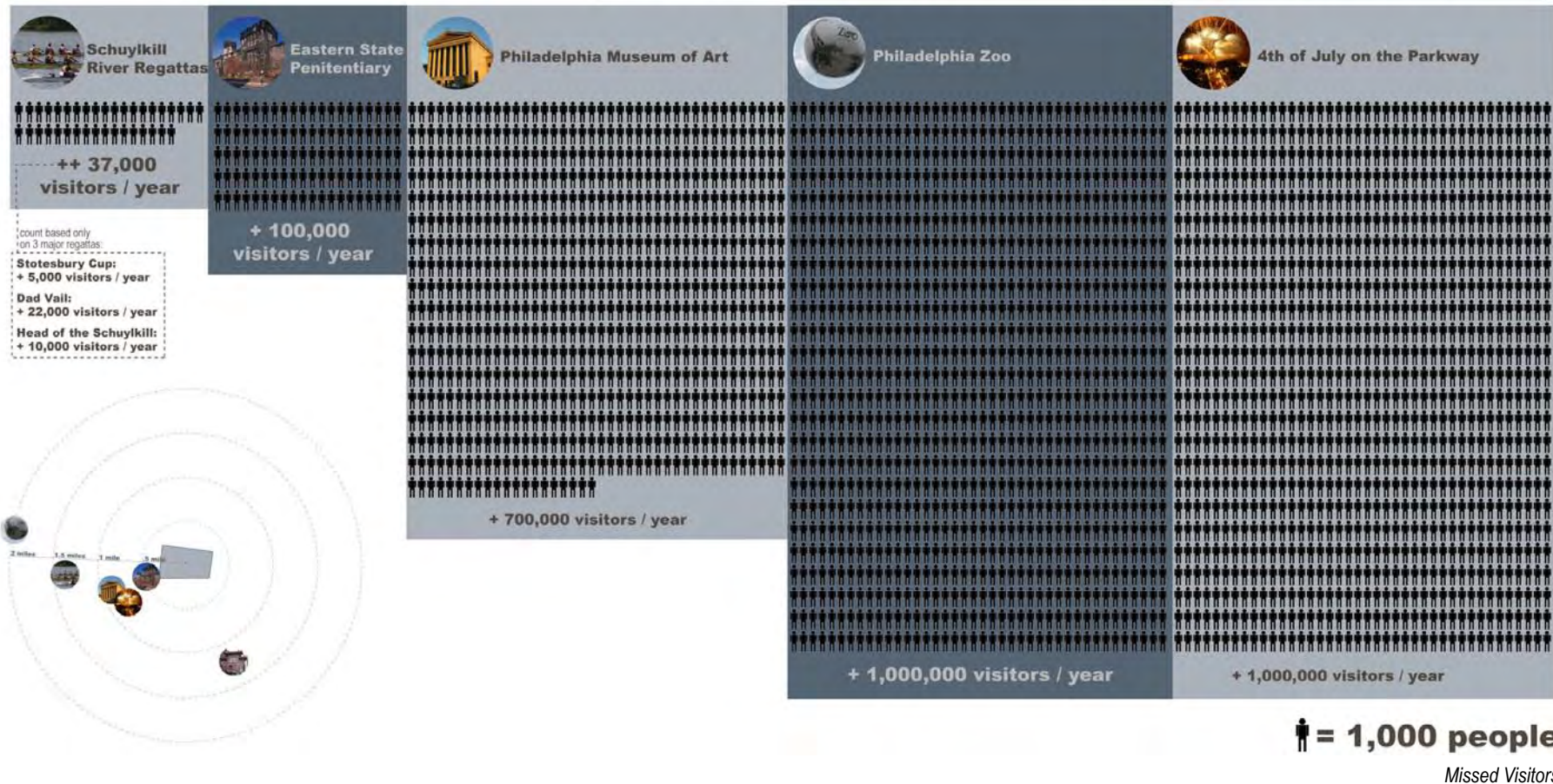
Greater Exodus Baptist Church Site for Eastern University, Divine Lorraine in Background

...but not for long. Ridge Avenue, the gateways at Girard and Broad and everything in between, is poised for change. Ridge, which has long represented the struggles of the neighborhood, will be the first to announce its full comeback. Though reclamation of Ridge Avenue is a major undertaking and a long-term goal for the neighborhood, the first signs of spring are visible. Development energies of Center City are pushing northward, those of Temple University, reaching south. Caught in the middle, Francisville, and Ridge Avenue in particular, stands to benefit from the momentum of change. Planned new projects along Ridge including the new Eastern University building with retail at 15th, Fairmount and Ridge by the Greater Exodus Baptist Church and The Arts Garage will further enhance the sense of transformation, inviting additional foot traffic by the students, artists, patrons of the arts, professors, customers, and employees who will populate the proposed buildings. The institutional anchors to the north and south of Ridge's limits in Francisville, each with a long-term commitment to the neighborhood's health and vitality, will ensure the soundness of investments along the corridor Ridge.



Local Context and Potential Market

MISSED VISITORS: + 2.8 MILLION people / year



Missed Visitors

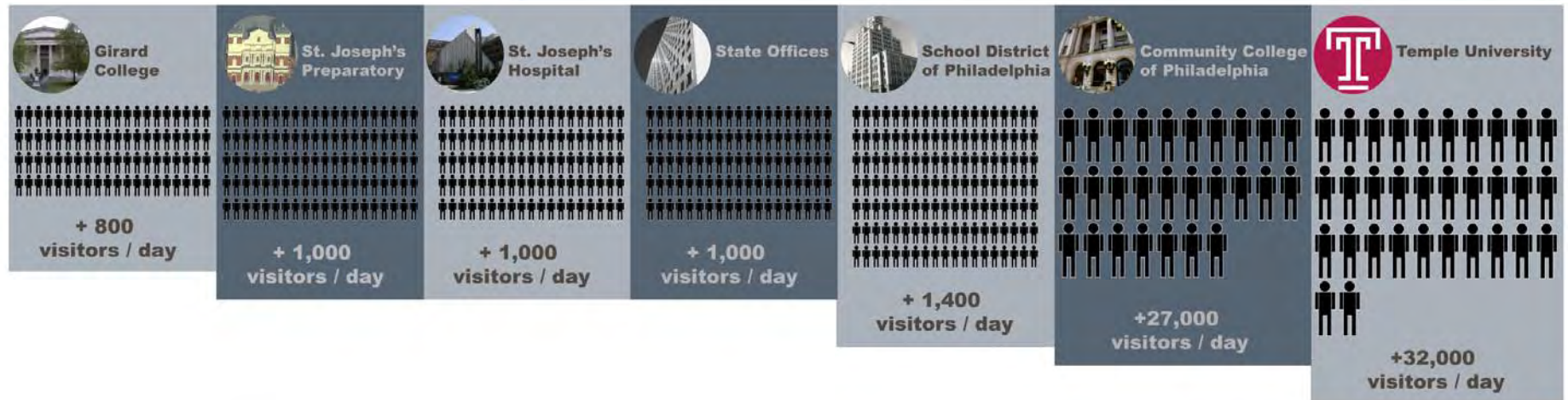
Such hints of positive change on Ridge, long overdue, come none too soon. Francisville's commercial market represents a missed opportunity, not only for the lost dollars of local expendable income spent elsewhere, but also for the substantial population of visitors and potential customers that it fails to capture – everyday. Indeed, Francisville is unique for its location in Lower North Philadelphia – more accurately, Oh-So-Central Lower North Philadelphia. Multiple major City institutions and regional attractions lie within a one-mile radius of the neighborhood. These places attract people – shoppers, brunchers, and lunchers – and these people need a reason to come to Francisville.



Missed Market

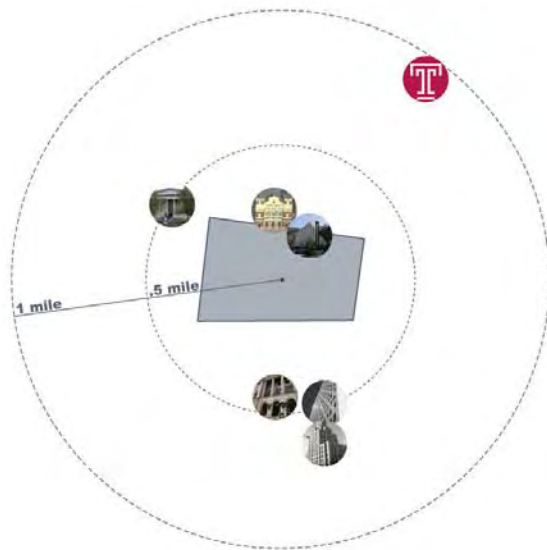
On a yearly basis, Francisville's struggling commercial market fails to attract an estimated 2.8 million visitors in the vicinity for a Schuylkill River regatta, a tour of Eastern State Penitentiary, a trip to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Zoo, the 4th of July celebration on the Parkway.

Within a still more local context, Francisville's commercial market fails to serve an estimated 64,200 people per day! 64,200 people work or attend school within less than a mile of Francisville, Monday through Friday.

POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS: + 64,200 people / day



 = 10 people
 = 1,000 people
 Potential Customers

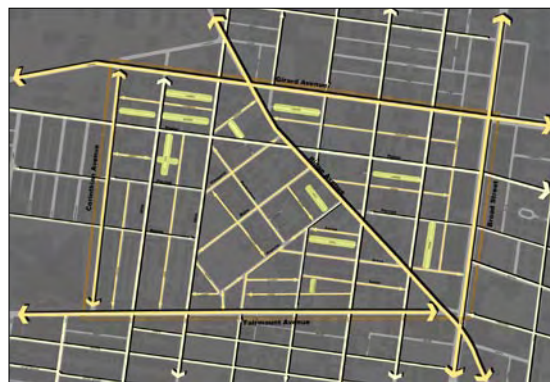


A missed market speaks to something of the past. A missed opportunity speaks to the future. What is Francisville going to do to let people know that the neighborhood is open and ready for business?

Local Circulation

Francisville's local street network is irregular. Those streets that do conform to the City's standard grid are foiled by the historic streets of William Penn's vineyards. Few streets permit travelers to drive straight across the neighborhood in any direction. Those that do, like 15th, 19th, 20th, and Poplar, have more traffic – and more through traffic – accordingly.

The quirks of the street network coupled with the proximity of major thoroughfares along the edges of the neighborhood, Girard, Broad, Fairmount, Corinthian, and Ridge, render most streets in Francisville relatively quiet. Most of the traffic is local. Some of the neighborhood's streets, designed primarily for service as alleys, are too small even to host local traffic. Plant life has taken full advantage of these overlooked passageways, quietly growing a forest of sorts.

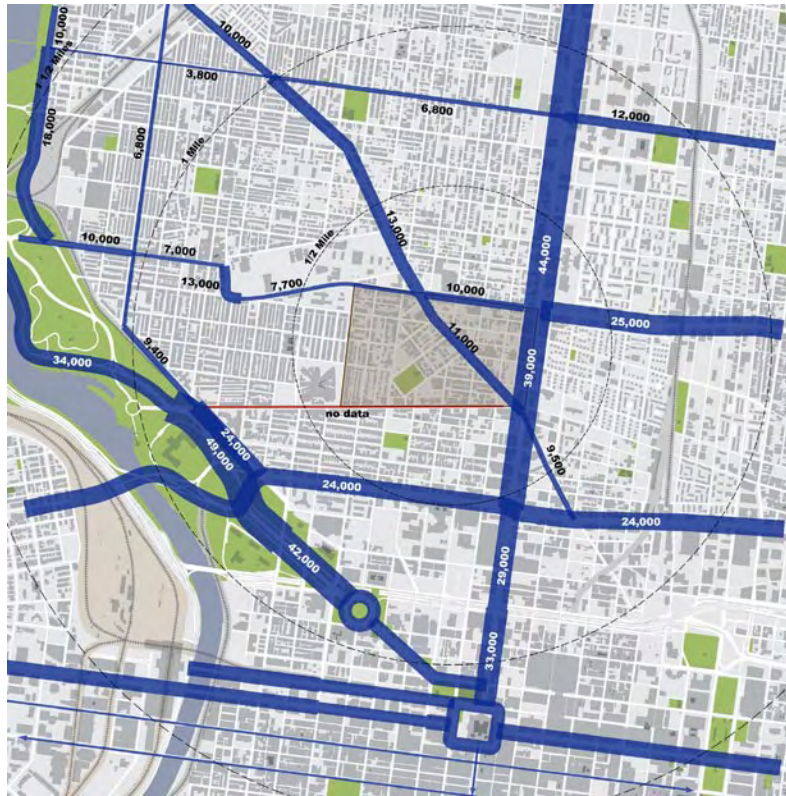


Local Street Network



Overgrown Alleys

Pedestrian travel along local streets and sidewalks can be treacherous: 27% of survey respondents ranked street and sidewalk improvements as a priority, though never a #1 priority.



Daily Traffic Volume
Source: PennDOT

Regional Road Network/Traffic Volume

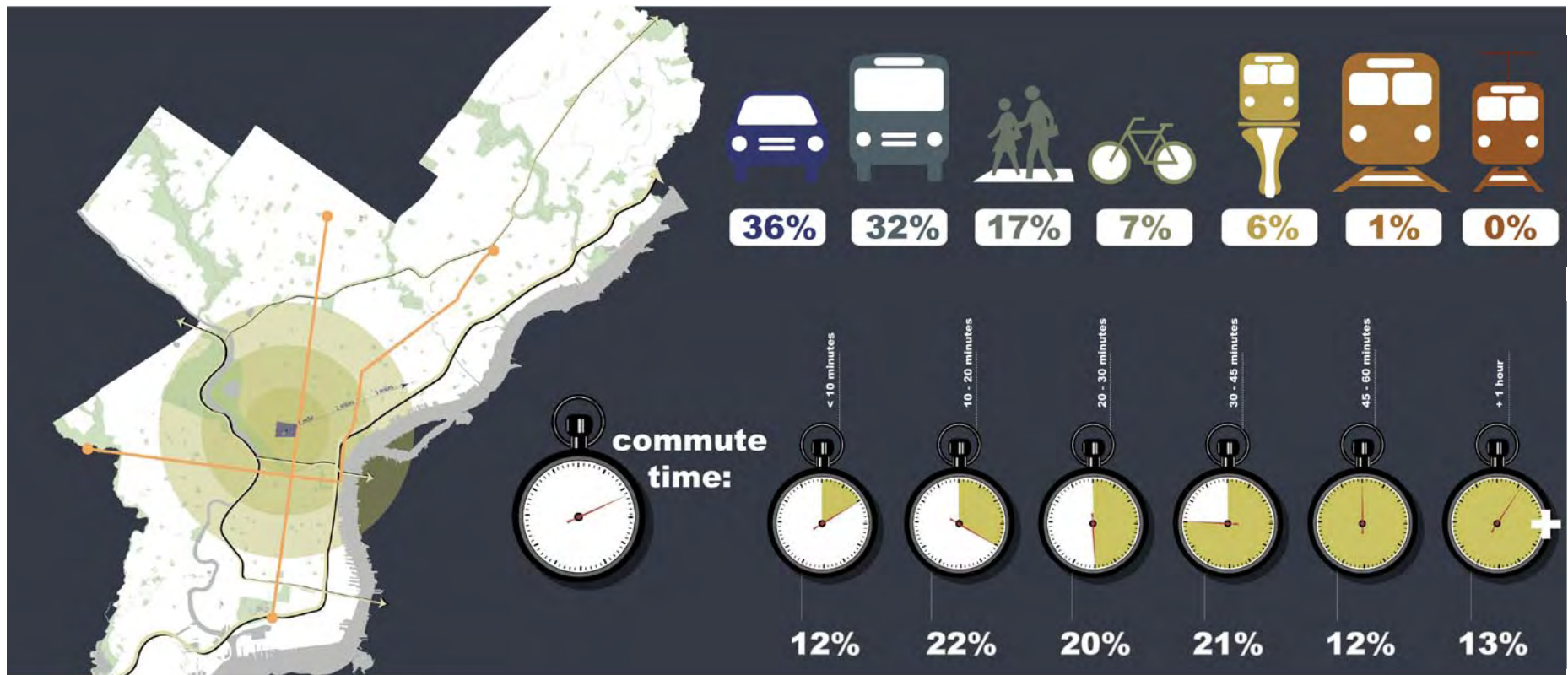
The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) keeps average daily traffic counts for State-owned and maintained roadways. PennDOT records offer proof that not all streets in Franciscville are quaint and residential or narrow and overgrown. The sections of Girard, Broad, and Ridge that are adjacent to or contained within Franciscville carry a total of 60,000 cars per day. The question is, how many of these cars stop? How many passengers get out of their cars and explore the neighborhood? How many passersby have heard the buzz about Franciscville?



Local Transit System

Local Public Transportation

Local stakeholders or visitors to the neighborhood who are not traveling by car, have several transportation options. The neighborhood has excellent access to two stops of SEPTA's Broad Street Line, one at Fairmount Avenue, and one at Girard. A little less than half of the neighborhood falls within a 5-minute walk of these stations. Ironically, this area corresponds to the most sparsely populated portion of the neighborhood. The recently reinstated Trolley now carries Route 15 passengers along the length of Girard Avenue, connecting people to West Philadelphia and the Zoo and as far east as Fishtown. Bus lines run along Ridge and major north-south streets. Residents without cars rely on the bus system above other modes of transportation.



Commuter Mode and Time
Source: U.S. Census

Commuter Mode and Time

Francisville's working population benefits as much from the neighborhood's comprehensive access to transit as from its close proximity to downtown. 90% of the local working population works in the City of Philadelphia, and commuters make use of a wide range of transportation modes in their travels to work. Almost a quarter of the population walks or rides a bike to work, making the best of urban living – good for their health, good for the environment.

Better still, commute times are short. More than one third of the working population reports a commute time of less than 20 minutes.



Parking

Francisville's proximity to transit and to downtown has its disadvantages. Neighbors and business owners report a parking problem caused by day-parkers – people who take advantage of Francisville's largely un-metered, unregulated street parking, depositing their vehicles each day on their way to work downtown.

In addition to the street parking, Francisville has a good deal of land area – 5.8 acres to be exact - devoted to parking uses. That's 3% of the neighborhood. 4.3 acres of the at-grade parking is dedicated to an institutional use, either the hospital or the area's large churches. 1.5 acres are used as public or pay-parking. Many parking lots are underutilized a good deal of the time.



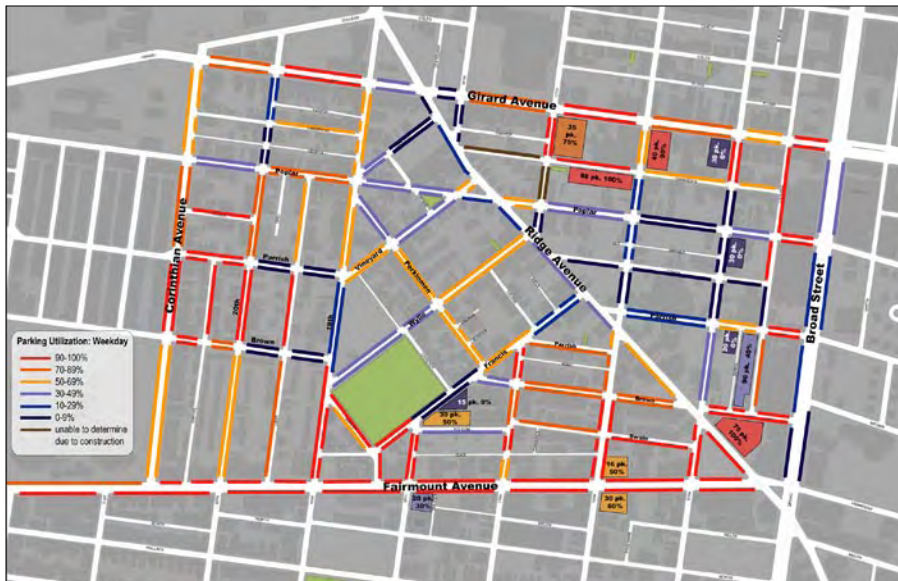
Parking Use



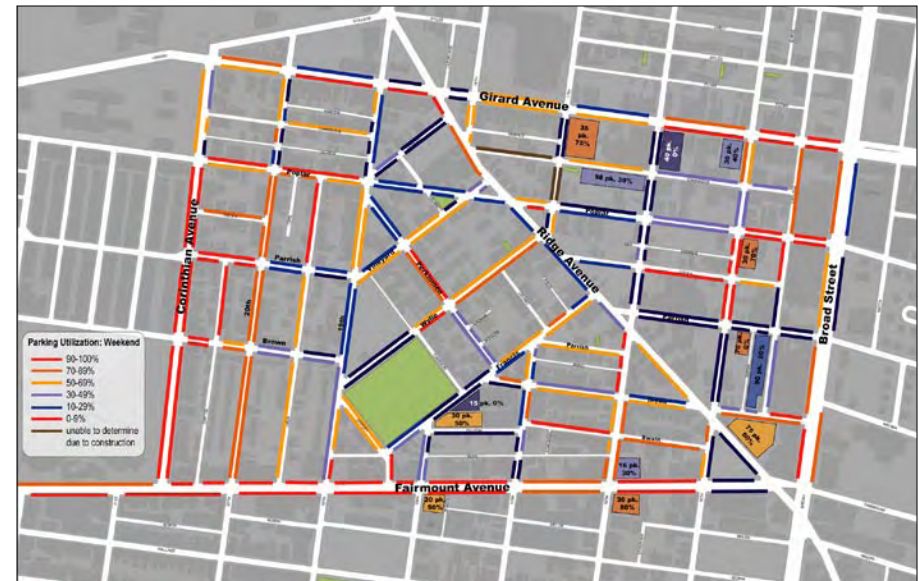
Proximity to Center City



Utilized Street Parking near Fairmount Avenue



Weekday Parking Survey Results



Weekend Parking Survey Result



Parking Restrictions

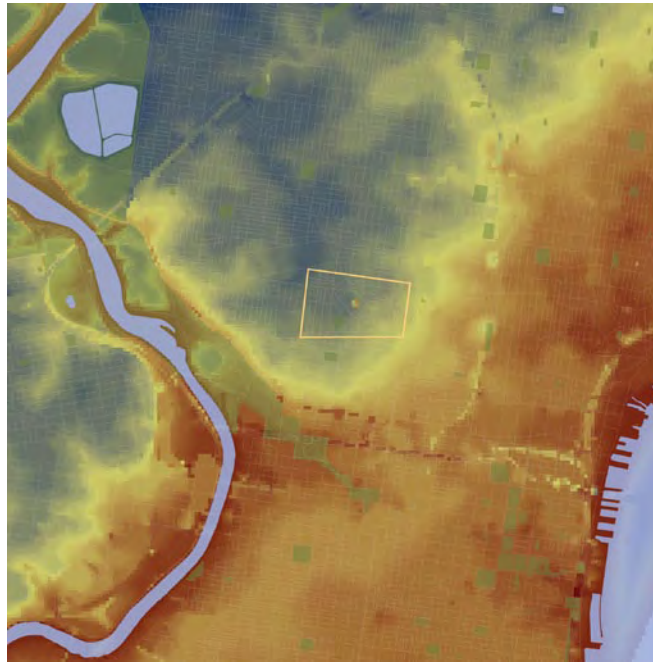
Street Parking Survey and Street Regulations

A parking survey conducted during a weekday and on a Sunday morning for comparison purposes confirmed resident perceptions about parking issues in Francisville. Very few blocks have adopted permit parking. Those that did, mostly located in the neighborhood's southwest corner and feeling the effects of Fairmount residents parking east of Corinthian, did have fewer cars parked along their length during the weekday survey. Otherwise, street spaces were more fully utilized on streets west of 19th Street and just north of Fairmount. In the Triangle and parts of the lowlands, parking availability begs come one, come all. Hospital parking lots were more fully occupied during the week than on the weekends. Church parking remained only partially occupied on the weekends as well as during the week. The results from the parking survey suggest two things:

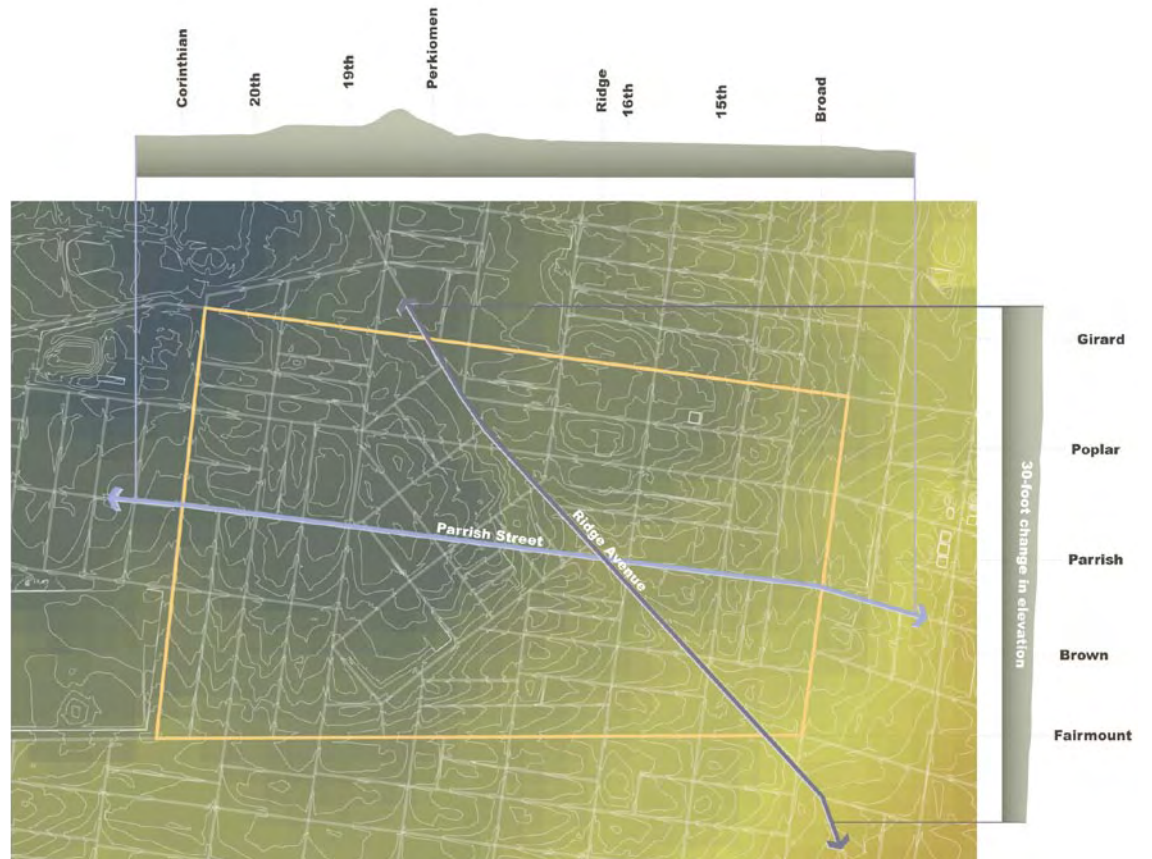
- 1) Though parking in Francisville has changed from being no problem at all to somewhat of a problem, the severity of the problem for most streets pales in comparison to that of most urban neighborhoods.
- 2) The amount of at-grade parking space in the neighborhood is excessive, adding to the already substantial stock of underutilized land in Francisville.

Environmental Conditions and Open Space

Topography, Views and Drainage



City Topography



Local Topography

Francisville sits on a hill, elevated just above downtown Philadelphia, a position which affords the neighborhood both great views and more dramatic drainage patterns, felt mostly by people who live and work at lower elevations. Ridge Avenue drops 30 feet in elevation as it progresses southward between Girard and Broad. The neighborhood's east-west topographic section locates a hillcrest in the historic core, the footprint of William Penn's vineyards.



Views

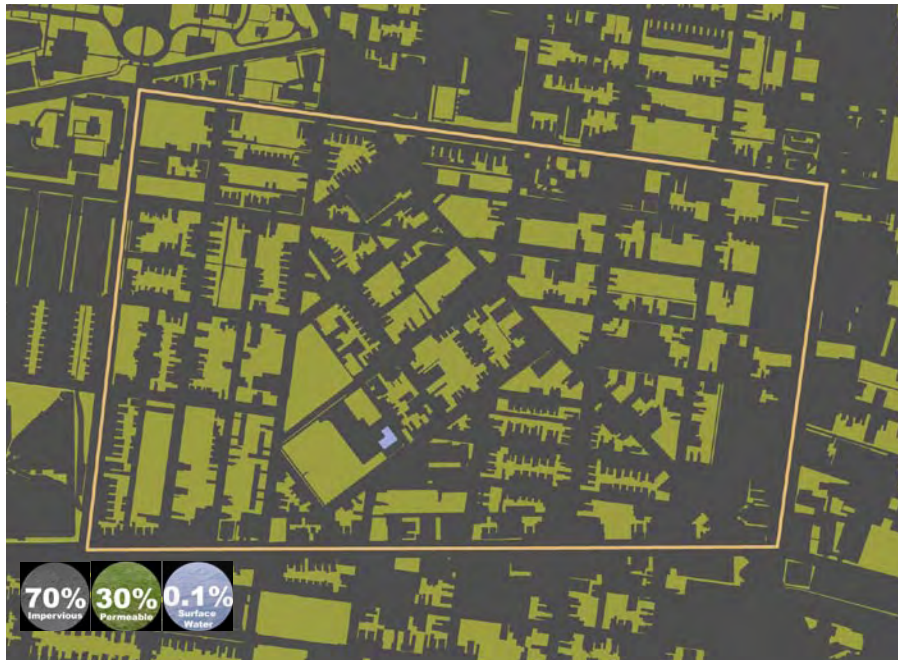


Drainage

Impervious Surfaces

The amount of impervious surfaces in Francisville is a key determinant of drainage and stormwater management issues in the neighborhood. Whereas impermeable

surfaces like roads and rooftops send stormwater directly into the sewer system (and people's basements when the sewers overflow), permeable surfaces allow



Impervious Surfaces



Green Space

34% of survey respondents noted that providing open space with new development is a priority, suggesting that the neighborhood recognizes the need to balance growth and development with the need for green and permeable surfaces.

SURVEY SAYS:

a more environmentally sound and gradual absorption of stormwater into the ground. Francisville has an astounding amount of permeable surfaces – 30% of the neighborhood enjoys natural cover. The large amount of vacant land deserves some credit for the neighborhood's high proportion of permeable surfaces. However, in some cases, the soil lying below areas where buildings once stood, may in fact be contaminated, thus appearing falsely environmentally friendly.

Green Space

Neighborhood green spaces differ from permeable surfaces in that green space, in this report, refers to park space, gardens, yards, and lots that have been cleaned and greened. Green space does not refer to untended vacant land. Roughly 3%, or 6.7 acres of the neighborhood is comprised by green space, which means that there is only one more acre of green space in Francisville than there is of parking space. Of

Francisville's green space, 3.7 acres are park space, 0.3 acres are gardens, 2.5 acres are private yard space, and 0.2 acres are cleaned and greened by Philly Green.

Regarding open space and public space, survey respondents registered the following priorities:

- 55% listed park improvements as a top three priority.
- 48% listed a new community center as a top three priority.
- 38% listed new tot lots as a top three priority.
- 35% listed a new senior center as a priority, with 13% marking this option as a #1 priority.

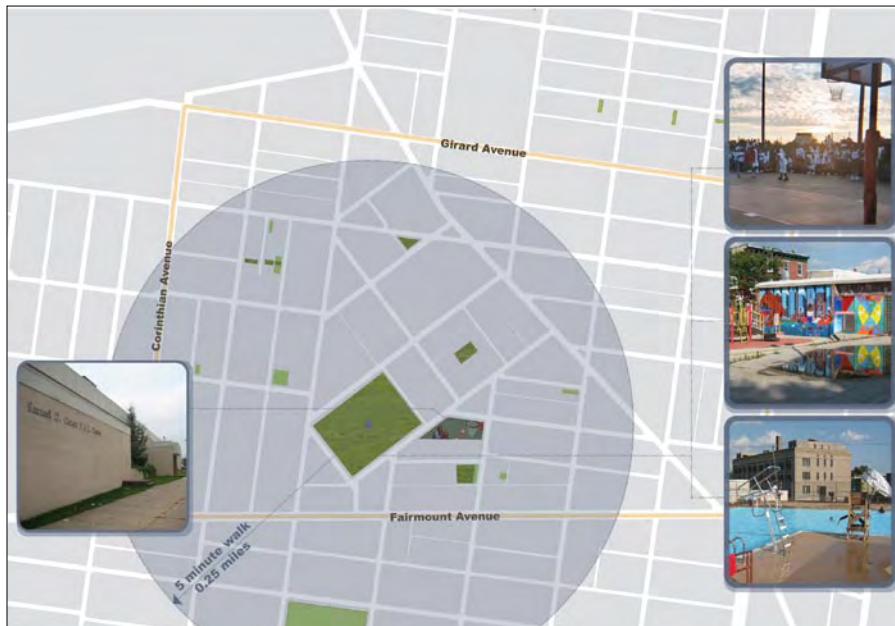
Parks, Play Space, and Gardens

Green space can be actively used or passively used. Francisville has a mix of both types of park spaces. The Francisville Playground and Recreation Center has long been the heart of the community. With playing fields, basketball courts, a playground, a pool, and an indoor community center, the Francisville Playground hosts organized basketball, arts and crafts, and after school programs. Beloved as it is, the Francisville Playground and Recreation Center is in dire need of improvements and updating.

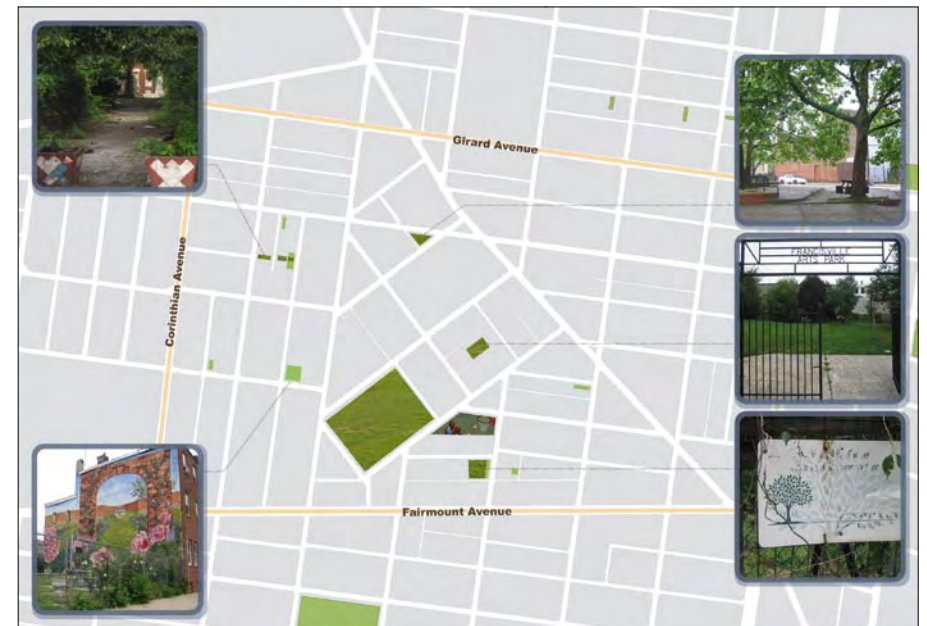
Nearby, though not directly accessible from the playground, is the Cozen Police Athletic League (PAL) Center, which runs additional athletic programs for community youth, most notably, a baseball, football, and basketball league. PAL coaches use sports to communicate "a philosophy of sports based in coordination, cooperation, and teamwork." Both the Recreation Center and the PAL serve as community resources for people of all ages, not just for neighborhood youth. Both facilities host community meetings and events. The PAL also organizes donations of Christmas baskets for families in need and runs computer literacy programs.

SURVEY SAYS:

Rumor has it the Cozen PAL in Francisville is the best in the City.



Active Park and Play Space



Passive Green Space



Street Play

Passive Green Space

Despite the offerings of the Playground and PAL, clean and safe play space remains in high demand – no surprise given the large local youth population. Kids make do.

As for passive open spaces, Francisville has many. The neighborhood boasts several beautiful and well-tended murals and gardens, a plaza that sits on one of the triangular parcels on Poplar, and the Francisville Arts Park. The neighborhood also has some forgotten gardens, now overgrown. With development pressure building in Francisville, the neighborhood will need to decide how they feel about these spaces, vulnerable to redevelopment, particularly if neglected.

Tree Coverage

Both trees and overgrown vacant land contribute to Francisville's inventory of green. At first glance, Francisville appears well-treed, but this accounts for street trees as well as trees located in the rear yards of homes. When only street trees are illustrated, it becomes obvious that there are only a few places where street trees foster a "green" image for the community. The Highlands, west of 19th Street have a sizable stock of street trees, the Lowlands have some, but Ridge Avenue and the Triangle have almost none at all. New development will take the place of some of the neighborhood's interior block trees. New buildings will hide many from view. The neighborhood, now so green – and even wild in parts – will feel barren if street trees do not accompany new development.

Stabilized/Unstabilized Vacant Land

The vacant land in Francisville has two faces. Some of it is as you might imagine vacant land – trash strewn and unkempt. Some of it is quite beautiful. Some of it has developed an ecosystem of its own. This greenery, so close to Center City, is one of the unique and defining aspects of Francisville's physical character.



Tree Canopy

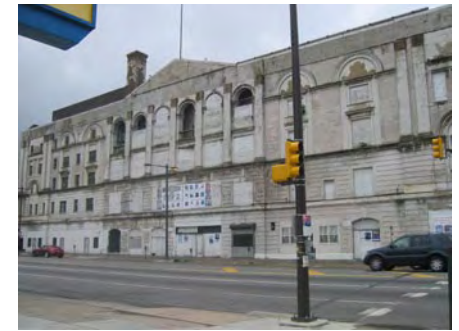


Street Tree Canopy

27% of survey respondents reported that more trees and gardens would enhance the quality of life in Francisville.



Institutional Use



Greater Exodus Baptist Church, The Met, Greater Exodus Redevelopment Site, St. Joseph's Hospital



Distribution of Civic Buildings

Institutional Presence

More unusual, and more permanent, than Francisville's sizable permeable surface area is the striking institutional presence in the neighborhood. A whopping 20%, or 43.1 acres, of Francisville is dedicated to an impressive list of religious establishments, service providers, and schools – and that statistic does not include the immense footprint of Girard College. Francisville's institutions are institutions of all scales and stature, but they share a dedication to their individual missions, a commitment to the education, health, shelter, spiritual fulfillment, safety, and improved life circumstances of the people they serve and the community in which they serve.

Religious Establishments

The churches within Francisville's borders are invaluable resources for the community. Greater Exodus Baptist Church and the Holy Ghost Headquarters at the Met have a large reach and commendable aspirations. In addition to the spiritual nurturing and development fostered by both churches, the sheer size of each church's congregations renders them powerful politically as well as economically. Furthermore, both Greater Exodus Baptist Church and Holy Ghost Headquarters have active non-

From initial interviews and meetings, the following key observations have been made about local services:

- Youth programming is still very much in need. The Francisville Recreation Center offers basketball, arts and crafts and after school programs. The Police Athletic League offers sports programs but does not host programs for kids over 14 years. Given that the Recreation Center has limited indoor space, there are no active programs for 14-20 year olds in the long winter months.
- Senior services are also in short supply. With the population aging in the community, more services targeted to the full range of senior needs will be critical.
- There is a concentration of homeless services, attracting a very impoverished and transient population. While these programs provide a necessary service in the community and City as a whole, their concentration in the community, at times, negatively impacts the surrounding residential and commercial fabric. There were complaints from community members about specific homeless shelters operating without the appropriate number of staff or supportive services. It should be stressed that this concern was not levied against every shelter in the area.
- With the large number of families comprised of single mothers with children, quality services from after school programs, daycare and job training and placement services need to be evaluated for the community.



Francisville Recreation Center, Cozen PAL, Calcutta House, Mary Jane Home Enrichment

profit community development branches, with plans to reinvest in and rebuild adjacent areas of Francisville. Both churches are stewards of grand historic structures, adding value to Francisville by their very presence alone. Together with the pastor of the Second Pilgrim Baptist Church, representatives of the Holy Ghost Headquarters and Greater Exodus' community development arm, People For People, have taken an active role in the development of this Plan, *Moving Francisville Forward: a blueprint for the future*.

Service Providers and Programs

There are many valuable services in the community that serve a wide range of community issues. As a part of this plan, we are collecting information from every service provider in the community as to their services, objectives, funding and targeted population. This survey is ongoing. The full results will be presented in future reports with the content serving as a valuable tool to raise awareness about these resources.



Public School Catchment Areas

Schools

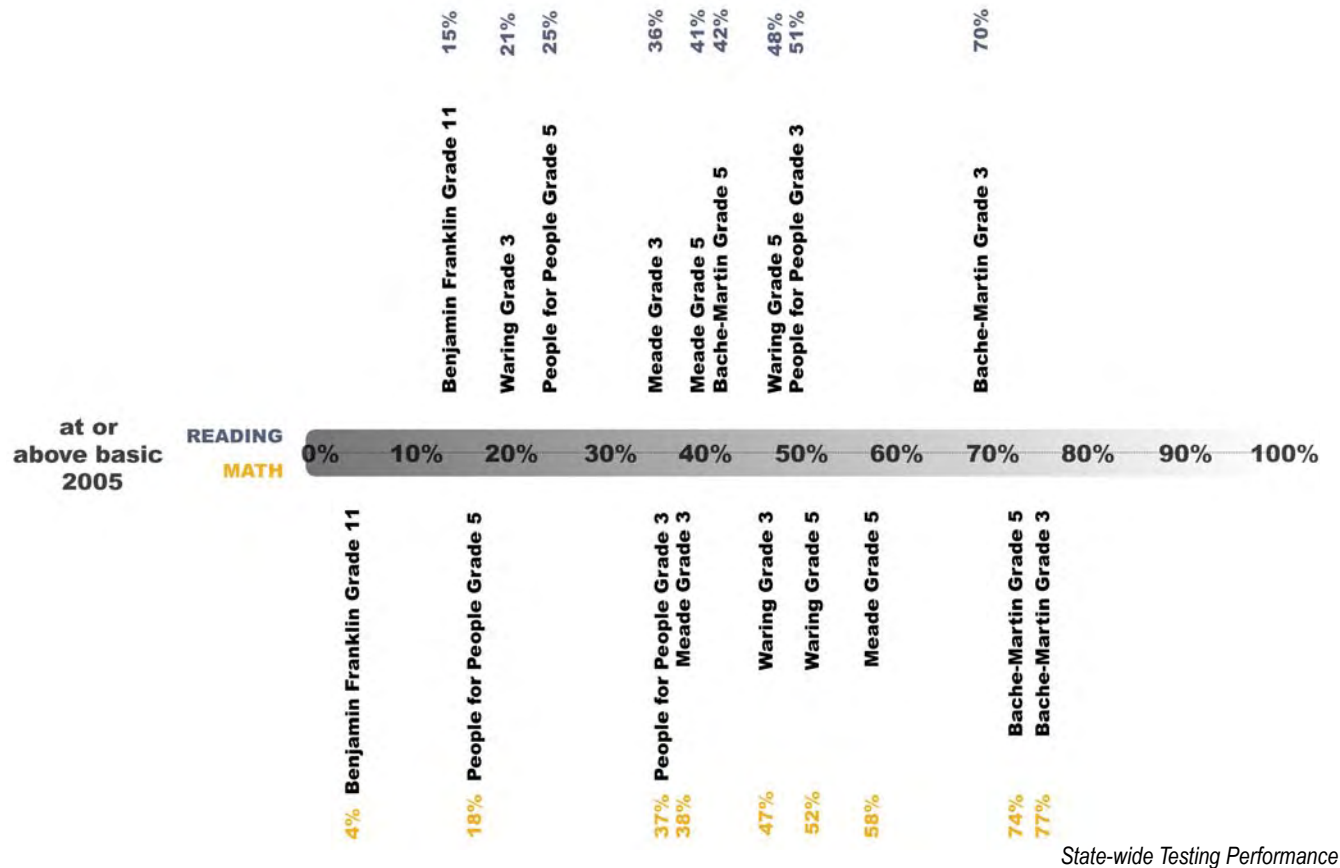
Schools are an issue of concern for Francisville parents and community leaders, though the issue is complicated by the fact that the home address of a child's family or guardian determines where that child goes to school. Three different public elementary schools teach Francisville youth, two different high schools educate the neighborhood's adolescents and teens. To effect change in the neighborhood's schools, concerned adults in Francisville have to divide and conquer.

Academic performance and violence in the schools is a struggle for all of the schools in the area. Though students at Bache Martin consistently out-perform the students at the other elementary schools in State-wide reading and math proficiency tests, all elementary schools far out-perform Benjamin Franklin High School, where most

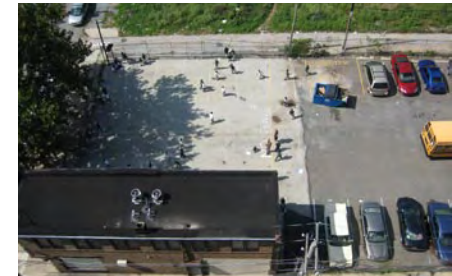
Math SAT	Reading SAT
St. Joseph's 617 (2nd Best Private School Score)	St. Joseph's 618 (2nd Best Private School Score)
Girard College 440-460	Girard College 450-470
YouthBuild 348	YouthBuild 339
Benjamin Franklin 319 (31 Out of 31 in the City)	Benjamin Franklin 333 (24 Out of 31 in the City)
SAT Performance	

Francisville High School students attend. Benjamin Franklin ranks last in the City on the Math SAT. Only 4% of the schools 11th Grade students test at or above a basic level in math. That statistic is 15% for reading.

Given the state of academic performance in the public school system, some parents are seeking to improve the existing schools. Francisville and Fairmount residents, for instance, have recently joined forces to further improve Bache Martin by working closely with school officials, opening the school to the community after school hours and undertaking a comprehensive survey of parents to determine priorities. The School District has also submitted a grant application to the federal government to transform both the Bache-Martin Elementary School and the Franklin Learning Center High School into magnet schools.



State-wide Testing Performance



Girard College, Byron Story Foundation Charter School, New Hope Christian Academy Charter School, People For People Charter School

Other parents seek alternatives for their children's education, provided either by private schools or charter schools. Francisville has several options for both private and charter school education, although none of the local private and charter schools target Francisville kids specifically. Nearby private school options include Girard College and St. Joseph's preparatory. Local charter schools include People For People and the Byron Story Foundation, as well as the New Hope Christian Academy currently under construction.

The Berean Institute on the north side of Girard Avenue offers associates degrees in a wide range of areas. Like the private and charter schools, the Berean Institute has few Francisville students enrolled, though the Institute is seeking to build a stronger

relationship with the community through a proposed Career Center and Cyber Café open to the community.

Finally, the Center City District has spearheaded the creation of the Center City School District which will offer choice for Center City residents. The District originally did not include the area of Francisville between Cambridge, Girard, Broad and Ridge. However, the boundaries are currently changing to encompass more area of the City. The FNDC will need to coordinate closely with the Center City District and School District of Philadelphia to maximize the benefit of this new District for area youth.



Leadership

The future of Francisville hinges on community leadership. With so much in flux in the neighborhood, with so many opportunities awaiting adoption and challenges awaiting confrontation, the role of community leadership is multi-faceted.

True community leadership must be representative of the people. It must listen and advise. It must advocate. It must serve as the constant, known-factor, offering continuity in the face of change. It must be visionary. It must be patient. It must have a sense of humor. It must build bridges.

This plan, its partners, and the community members who have participated in the planning process thus far recognize the FNDC as the neighborhood leadership tasked with helping Francisville navigate change. A young organization, the FNDC has won the respect of Francisville, it has the ear of interested developers, and it is building a relationship with the City, but the FNDC is still evolving. As the FNDC prepares to guide Francisville through its redevelopment and revitalization, its successes should be celebrated; its struggles should be identified. Strategies for the organization's continued capacity building and improvement should be set in place.

A big part of building local capacity is to strengthen local organizations that can help the FNDC undertake community improvements. The Francisville Neighborhood Civic Association (FNCA) has played this role informally for years. The FNCA was started by Fred Snead (Ali) who has organized events and developed programs to address local issues important to the community. Ali has since been joined by a growing number of community members who are now working to formalize the FNCA as a designated non-profit. With funding secured by Jerry Blinebury who is helping to officially establish the FNCA, the paperwork necessary to become a 501-C3 is underway and will be submitted in the coming months. In the meantime, the FNCA has worked closely with the FNDC to organize meetings, raise awareness and handle zoning issues in the community.

In addition, strengthening capacity is also a process of leaning on your long-time partners. Community Ventures is one of the largest landowners in Francisville and has had an immense impact on the Lowlands by filling the gaps through new development and rehabilitation, providing affordable housing for both for families and seniors, creating green spaces and investing in the community when many others would not. Their skills and experience should be viewed as an asset and resource as the FNDC moves forward with implementation of this plan.

FNDC Successes

The FNDC brings people together.

The organization has succeeded in building partnerships with other major neighborhood stakeholders, movers and shakers, who share a common goal of promoting equitable neighborhood redevelopment, revitalization that respects and integrates community values with each project completed, each step forward. The coalition that the FNDC has built in the form of this Plan's Project Leadership Committee is testament to the organization's ability and desire to work cooperatively and collaboratively for the greater good.

The FNDC has also brought the community together. The organization has made it a priority to inform the people of the neighborhood and to listen to their thoughts and opinions. In doing so, the FNDC has become a legitimate voice for the community. The FNDC has engaged the people of Francisville and truly represents the neighborhood and has done so while developing relationships with the community groups of adjacent communities.

The FNDC keeps people in the loop.

The organization provides information to the community, information to which people previously had no access. The FNDC provides information to all who seek it. They welcome all neighbors, business owners, and partner organizations at their meetings.

The FNDC offers information to investors and community development entities too, explaining the neighborhood's project review process as well as the neighborhood's values and priorities for the future.

The FNDC is dedicated.

The level of volunteerism shown by the FNDC is heroic. The organization's leaders are committed to the constituents and the neighborhood that they represent.

The FNDC is consistent.

The organization is consistent in its actions and its goals. It is a known quantity. It treats all community members, all developers, each project with respect. It has established a legible process for neighborhood decision-making.

The FNDC is democratic.

The FNDC has empowered the community. The organization has taught people in the neighborhood that what they think and feel matters. At the FNDC, majority does rule. Each person's vote carries the same weight. Every vote is important.

The FNDC had given Francisville an identity.

The hard work of the organization has established the neighborhood in the City. People now know where Francisville is – and that good things are happening in the neighborhood.

FNDC Challenges

The FNDC must continue to push hard to keep developing as an organization.

The organization must strive to become a more persuasive advocate, to strengthen its political relationships, both with other community groups and with the City. Conflicts between neighborhood groups undermine the authority of neighborhood leadership. No one benefits when this happens. The organization must hone its moderating skills, it must allow people to speak passionately, it must listen, it must mediate with fairness and neutrality.

The FNDC must seek new opportunities to confront negative issues in a proactive way.

Leaders must strive to make a difference everyday, to start effecting change now.

The FNDC must expand their outreach efforts.

The organization must focus on increasing attendance at each community meeting.

The FNDC must utilize community youth.

Local youth represent a large part of the neighborhood's future. Youth must be encouraged to take part in the neighborhood's revitalization, they must be involved with the FNDC. The FNDC must listen to their idea and concerns, their needs. The organization needs to tap the skills of the community's youth, to pull them off of the corners, fold them into the organization, and put them to work *for* the neighborhood.

The FNDC must support its leaders.

Longevity and continuity of leadership is important during times of change.

Challenges and Opportunities

The neighborhood analysis, informed by extensive research, enriched and augmented by intensive public outreach, yields the following conclusions about the current state of Francisville. These are the neighborhood's greatest challenges and opportunities:

Challenges

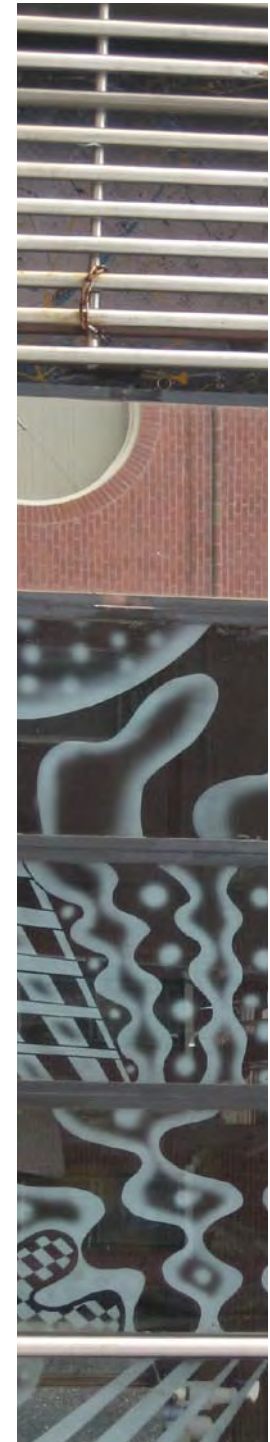
- *Low Income and High Poverty Rates* – Francisville has a large share of families in dire need of economic and social assistance. In addition, these economic indicators inhibit the community's ability to support local retail.
- *Discrepancy between the Housing Stock and the Market* – The housing stock in many cases is too small for today's market standards. Furthermore, there is a widening gap in both the condition and the price of homes affordable to low-income households and homes redeveloped for higher-income buyers. Such imbalance breeds unrest in the community.
- *Landlords* – High numbers of rental units exist on the fringes of the community. Their management must be controlled by landlords committed to the long-term health of Francisville.
- *Commercial Activity* – What was once a bustling commercial center has transformed into a "bedroom community." Local dollars flow to other shopping centers, and the blight along Ridge Avenue lowers the image of the community to outsiders.
- *Corner Stores* – Some corner stores are flashpoints for violence and nuisance behavior. While this is not true of every corner store, strategies must be developed to better manage and integrate corner stores into the community.
- *Youth* – Francisville's high numbers of youth require better play space, more programs and better access to the skills that will make them prepared for today's economy.
- *Education and Workforce Preparedness* – Major concerns have been raised about local schools and whether today's youth are prepared for the modern job market.
- *Health and Nutrition* – With limited access to fresh vegetables and fruits, many families rely on lower quality foods because that is what is locally available. Raising the health and nutrition of local youth must be a priority.
- *Crime and Violence* – One of the top concerns from local residents, crime keeps development at bay and lowers property values. The fear of snitching and the lack of an organized townwatch only further local trends.
- *Alleys* – Some of Francisville's streets were originally platted for small homes and service garages. These streets today are completely vacated, extremely difficult to develop and carry with them perceptions of crime and trash.
- *Traffic and Transportation* – Through traffic along Ridge Avenue due to speed is a safety concern for the community. Although two subway stops are located at the edge of Francisville, large tracts of vacant land separate the stations from where the majority of people live.
- *Concentrated Services* – Francisville has long provided services for the City's poor individuals and families. While the services are valuable and much needed, Francisville, in recent years, has become saturated with homeless shelters and facilities, some of which, negatively impact adjacent uses.
- *Physical Environment* – The vacancy that has impacted the neighborhood has left a fragmented community. A lack of "eyes on the street" in many cases enables nuisance crime and adds to perceptions of fear. Combined with a lack of trees, lighting and other public investment, the community portrays an image of deterioration as opposed to the hope shared by residents for Francisville's renewed future.
- *Changing Base of Residents* – With new interest and investment come new residents. A more diverse Francisville, economically and racially, is on the way. The fear of change must be replaced with a communal spirit that embraces all residents, regardless of their tenure.
- *Neighborhood Politics* – Not everyone agrees on Francisville's future. As the FNDC continues to lead the community's renaissance, there needs to be an open forum for solving the differences between different organizations.

Opportunities

- *Location* – The single most cited asset of Francisville is its central location – between Center City, Temple University and Fairmount Park. The number of people within a short walk to the community means there is an opportunity to greatly improve local retail corridors like Ridge Avenue.
- *Transit* – Though the neighborhood's proximity to Center City, Temple, Fairmount Park, and major downtown employers enables many residents to walk to work, school, and play activities, the neighborhood is well serviced by public transportation as well. Accessed by subway, trolley, and bus, Francisville can accommodate a dense and growing urban population.
- *Diversity of People* – Francisville is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the City. This diversity is a hallmark of the community's widespread appeal.
- *Market Interest* – The interest in revitalizing older homes and building new ones has transformed vacant buildings and land into active, well maintained uses. There is an opportunity now to create a mix of both market rate and affordable homes in the community.
- *Space* – The sheer amount of vacant land – as yet unprogrammed space – in Francisville provides ample room for the community to integrate its priorities for the neighborhood within the coming redevelopment. Market pressure coupled with a well-organized neighborhood will help these dreams come to fruition.
- *Historic Housing Stock* – Francisville's historic roots inform its street layout and ornament its architecture. The building stock has excellent bones, which can add significant value to the future of the community.
- *Institutional Presence* – Throughout the years of decline and abandonment, the community's institutional presence has remained. Today, Francisville is blessed with a hospital, active and influential churches, educational resources and other programs that provide a strong basis for further improving the lives of local residents.
- *Arts and Culture* – Francisville was once a center of jazz. Today, arts and culture are finding their way back into the community through The Arts Garage and the renovation of the Metropolitan Theater. These are catalyst

projects that signal a larger rebirth of the area while providing a greater diversity of amenities to new and existing residents.

- *Ridge Avenue* – Despite its deteriorated state and struggling businesses, Ridge Avenue remains the heart of the community. Residents are committed to the corridor's comeback, which, when realized, will restore community morale and will champion Francisville as a place to live, work, shop, and play, once again.
- *Neighborhood Communication and Outreach* – Francisville already enjoys a strong and far-reaching communication network, making the neighborhood a model for other communities in transition. Facilitated by the FNDC, the Francisville Information Network (FIN) will continue to be an integral tool for sharing information and engaging the community.
- *Community Pride* – The community pride and sense of identity shared by Francisville residents bodes well for the future of the neighborhood. Because residents care deeply about the neighborhood, they will remain interested participants and committed volunteers in the revitalization process, ensuring that Francisville remains a distinctive place, true to their values and vision.
- *New Partnerships* – FNDC is actively forming partnerships with local organizations to collaboratively address issues of mutual concern. Their increased presence as the voice for the neighborhood opens the doors to additional opportunities to proactively guide the future of the community.



Neighborhood-wide Priorities

The challenges and opportunities echo the sentiments of the Neighborhood Needs Survey. Loud and clear, the survey says that it is important – imperative – to:

- *Improve Ridge Avenue as the neighborhood commercial corridor* – 84%
This was the #1 priority for 46% of residents.
- *Improve local schools* – 54%
- *Improve local volunteer efforts and public outreach* – 38%
- *Create additional affordable housing* – 37%
This was the #1 priority for 13% of respondents.
- *Create new parks and gardens* – 25%
- *Undertake streetscape improvements for major streets* – 20%
- *Address inadequate infrastructure* – 18%
- *Create additional parking resources* – 11%
- *Other:* – 11%
 - Stop the violence*
 - Develop vacant lots*
 - Mitigate traffic*



Acronym Glossary

AMI – Area Median Income

blog – abbreviation for web log

BRT – Board of Revision of Taxes
<http://brtweb.phila.gov>

CAS – Commercial Area Specialist Program, through PCDC
http://www.philadelphiacommercial.com/int.asp?page=resources_support#page=commercial_corridor

CDC – Community Development Corporation

CML – Cartographic Modeling Lab
<http://www.cml.upenn.edu>

CTCNet – Community Technology Centers' Network
<http://www.ctcnet.org/>

EPRA – East Park Revitalization Alliance
<http://www.epralliance.org>

FCDC – Fairmount Community Development Corporation
<http://www.fairmountcdc.org/>

FIN – Francisville Information Network, through the FNCD
<http://www.francisvillencd.org/page4/page4.html>

FNCA – Francisville Neighborhood Civic Association

FNDC – Francisville Neighborhood Development Corporation
<http://www.francisvillencd.org/>

FYC-3 – Francisville Youth Community Caretakers Club

GED – General Educational Development Tests

HRP – Homeownership Rehabilitation Program
<http://www.phila.gov/ohcd/hrp.htm>

LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
<http://www.usgbc.org/LEED>

LID – Low Impact Development

MLK – Martin Luther King

MLS – Multiple Listing Service
<http://www.mls.com/>

MUBP – Men United for a Better Philadelphia
<http://www.menunited.org/>

NCR – Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Unit, part of PCDC
http://www.philadelphiacommercial.com/int.asp?page=resources_support#page=commercial_corridor

NGA – Neighborhood Gardens Association
<http://www.ngalandtrust.org>

NIS – Neighborhood Information System
<http://www.cml.upenn.edu/nis>

NTI – Neighborhood Transformation Initiative
<http://www.phila.gov/nti>

PACDC – Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations
<http://www.pacdc.org/>

PAL – Police Athletic League
<http://www.phillypal.com/>

PCDC – Philadelphia Commercial Development Corporation
<http://www.philadelphiacommercial.com/>

PEC – People's Emergency Center
<http://www.pec-cares.org/>

PennDOT – Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
<http://www.dot.state.pa.us/>

PHA – Philadelphia Housing Authority
<http://www.pha.phila.gov>

PHDC – Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation
<http://www.phdchousing.org>

PHS – Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
<http://www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/home/index.html>

PLC – Project Leadership Committee

PWD – Philadelphia Water Department
<http://www.phila.gov/water>

RDA – Redevelopment Authority
<http://www.phila.gov/rda>

SEPTA – Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
<http://www.septa.org>

SHARP – Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program
<http://www.phdchousing.org/programs.htm>

SWEEP – Streets and Walkways Education and Enforcement Program
<http://www.phila.gov/STREETS/sweep.html>

TLC – Tender, Loving Care
