

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

People has many different comments about this topic. A common underlying theme was the desire to maintain and improve stability and quality of life in the City's residential areas. The following were the suggestions made most frequently:

- Control uncooperative absentee landlords
- Enforce codes and step up inspections designed to prevent blight
- Encourage more housing rehabilitation
- Encourage more deconversion from apartments back to single-family homes
- Neighborhoods should be bike and pedestrian-friendly
- Make sure new construction is compatible with the neighborhood's density and scale
- Common open space needs to be a part of all new multi-family projects
- Use zoning to stop commercial uses from encroaching into residential areas
- Residents need to better organize to further their neighborhood improvement agendas
- Pay more attention to picking up litter and trash
- Address disruptions caused by student housing
- Require construction of more affordable, workforce housing
- Use more bike police to provide better security
- Ethnic and income diversity in neighborhoods is a good thing
- Promote and celebrate each neighborhood's distinctive identity

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Comments about these topics focused mainly on ways to keep both the south side and north side business districts vibrant and competitive. Concerns about other business locations in the City were also expressed.

- Provide more convenient parking both on-street and off-street
- Consider an occasional free parking day or time
- Make sure building codes do not unnecessarily constrain reuse of older buildings
- Make a bigger effort to attract, keep, and assist small business owners
- Promote residential uses on the of upper floors of commercial buildings
- Strive to calm traffic and ensure business areas are pedestrian-friendly
- Landscaping and other streetscape improvements are essential in business areas
- Encourage merchants to set longer hours and cooperate on marketing and promotion
- Provide more police and public directional signs in business areas
- Control size and density to ensure new buildings are compatible with their surroundings
- Create a shuttle to encourage casino visitors to all also go elsewhere in Bethlehem
- Continue to redevelop former Bethlehem Steel property
- Don't let go of the Christmas City motto and image
- Fix up gateway entrances that don't project a good image of Bethlehem

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Areas deserving more preservation and concerns about the effects of inappropriate development were among the major topics raised by people commenting on the City's environmental protection strategies:

- Use stronger zoning and other means to preserve as much of South Mountain as possible.
- Protect water quality in the Lehigh River, Saucon Creek and Monocacy Creek.
- Clean up our streambanks, including the D&L Towpath
- Provide incentives for developers to use green building techniques
- Set the example by demonstrating conservation in City buildings and City operations
- Partner with local schools for more environmental education/awareness programs
- Promote more urban gardening and community garden
- Begin to address our regional stormwater management problems
- Strengthen our connection to the Lehigh River by highlighting river access points
- Restore the City's Urban Forester and Shade Tree Commission
- Require more street trees to be planted by developers
- Take advantage of opportunities for more interconnected trails and greenways
- Preserve Camel's Hump area if possible

PARKS AND RECREATION

The topic of Parks and Recreation generated significant discussion about both traditional parks and newer recreation features such as greenway trails, skate parks, and indoor community centers. Opportunities for safe biking, wider recreation programming and better security were also mentioned:

- Increase the funding available for park maintenance throughout the system
- Prioritize and address park refurbishment needs
- Improve park safety, park security, park cleanliness and park restroom facilities
- Examine options for an indoor recreation center, especially one that includes a pool
- Follow through on building the proposed skatepark
- Offer more recreation programs for a greater variety of age groups
- Don't neglect the smaller neighborhood parks
- Involve more private funding sources through adopt-a-park, and similar programs
- Emphasize greenway trails that will connect current parks, Lehigh and other locations
- Casino should include park and open space area
- Improve signage along trails
- Provide cultural content along proposed South Side greenway
- Provide more promotional/informational material about City parks and the greenways
- Place more focus on bikeway planning and construction
- Plan for more riverfront recreation
- Search out ways to better connect with Easton, Allentown and Hellertown

HISTORIC PRESERVATION, ARTS AND TOURISM

Many people contributed to the discussion on historic preservation. The main theme seemed to be ways to better promote and better implement protection of historic resources.

- Expand the City's historic districts
- Require developers to respect their area's historic context and architecture
- Increase fines for violating historic regulations
- Give Historic Architectural Review Boards more authority
- Step up marketing and promotion of our historic resources
- Make sure new residents are aware their moving into a historic district
- Ensure enthusiasm for preservation is from the grass roots not imposed from the City
- Create a Fine Arts Commission that considers many smaller groups not just ArtsQuest
- Encourage more mural art
- Enact an ordinance to govern demolition of buildings over 50 years old
- Capture all historic eras when telling/ promoting Bethlehem's history
- Link BethWorks and Bethlehem's tourism to a valley-wide bus tour
- Devise flood protection strategy for the frequently flooded Colonial Industrial Quarter
- Enhance support for small arts groups and artists, especially local ones
- Look at successful comprehensive tourism plans carried out by other cities
- Maintain Boyd theater as a theater; don't adapt it to a new use
- Promote more historic walking tours of Bethlehem
- Strive to make Bethlehem a multi-faceted cultural mecca
- Create more tourism opportunities that are kid-friendly

TRANSPORTATION

Traffic's affect on quality of life and Bethlehem as a more pedestrian & bike-friendly city were two much talked about transportation topics. The need for better public transportation and safety concerns at several different intersections were also mentioned frequently:

- Implement traffic calming measures, such as landscaped medians and others
- Convert Center Street and Linden Street from one-way to two-way
- Address speeding on the following streets:
 - Eaton Avenue at 8th Avenue
 - North New Street
 - Center Street (speed limit should be reduced from 40 to 30 mph)
 - Linden Street
 - Creek Road
- Address problem with cut-through traffic on Montclair Ave., other South Side streets.
- Install noise walls along Route 22
- Provide more frequent transit service throughout the City
- Provide parking at the perimeter of city, and electric shuttles (for clean air) to provide transit from satellite parking to City attractions
- Provide trolley service from Main Street to the South Side

TRANSPORTATION (continued)

- Improve transit link between North and South Sides
- Light rail service linking Bethlehem, Allentown, Easton, and Philadelphia
- Create a city-wide pedestrian and bicycle plan
- Improve pedestrian facilities on the Hill-to-Hill Bridge, and other bridges in Bethlehem
- Install sidewalks where missing
- Install more brick crosswalks
- Adjust signal timing to better accommodate pedestrians
- Increase the number of motorists yielding to pedestrians at:
 - Center Street and East Broad Street
 - Summit Street and Wyandotte Street
 - 8th Avenue and Schoenersville Road
- Install bike lanes on wide streets, such as on Broad Street and Eaton Avenue.
- Address safety problems at the following intersections:
 - Market Street and Linden Street
 - Center Street and Fairview Street
 - Center Street and Goepp Street
 - Stefko Boulevard and Pembroke Street
 - Stefko Boulevard and Washington Avenue
- Encourage greater use of Mountain Drive and Hayes Street for motorists entering South Bethlehem.