

Southside Vision 2012

Southside Bethlehem Residential Master Plan
2002 - 2012



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Prepared by Sasaki Associates, Inc.

under the direction of

Community Action Development Corporation of Bethlehem



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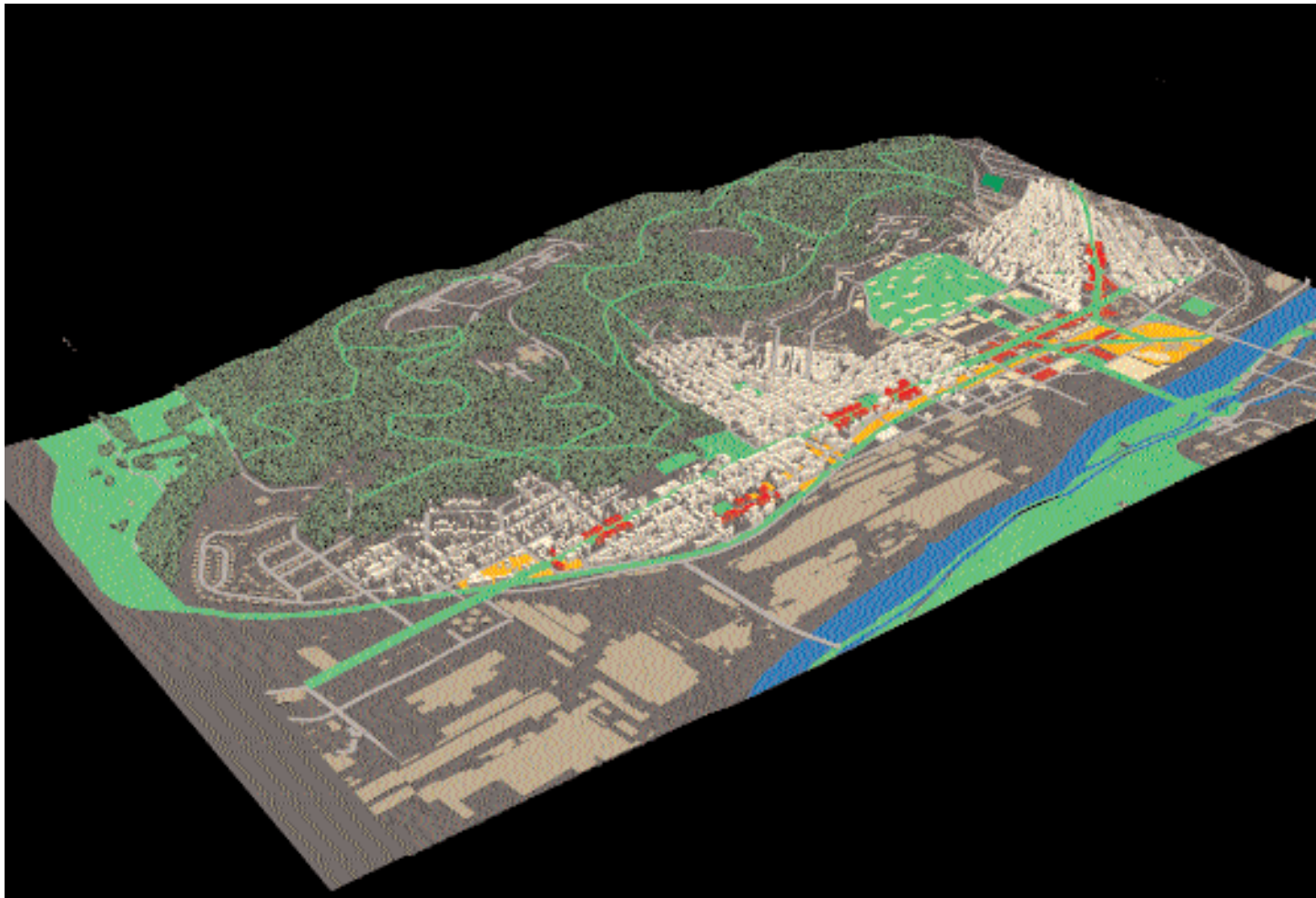
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Introduction



Major Recommendations of this Plan

- Create a strong open space network with a hierarchy of regional, Southside and local open spaces, connected by a tree-lined street network.
- Concentrate new commercial and retail improvements in areas with existing concentrations of commercial to create a critical mass.
- Identify and reuse abandoned parcels and buildings.
- Improve gateway districts at Fourth Street on the east and at the Five Points on the west side to enhance the arrival sequence and first impression of the Southside.
- Identify ways to improve parking on the Southside, including new policies, better enforcement of existing policies and other indirect improvements to help reduce demand.
- The density of the residential neighborhoods should decrease as they get farther from the commercial zones. Deconversion programs aimed at lowering density should be targeted towards neighborhoods that are not directly adjacent to commercial zones.
- Encourage home ownership and home improvement in all neighborhoods based on building condition.



History-Process-Goals

History of the project

Southside Vision 2012 is the culmination of a seven-month process, involving Southside Bethlehem residents, to develop a strategy for addressing some of the issues and opportunities in the neighborhoods on the Southside. The final report will be a companion to the Southside Bethlehem Master Plan completed in June 2001, which looked at strategies for economic development in the core retail and commercial districts of the Southside, particularly using New Street as a connector between the Southside core and Lehigh University. While that report was commissioned by the City of Bethlehem, this study is funded through the Community Action Development Corporation of Bethlehem (CADC-B) and their parent organization, the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley (CACLV), by a grant from Allfirst Bank with tax credits from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The CADC-B partnership with Allfirst is part of a larger effort by the CADC-B to meet local needs through public and private partnerships.

Process

The current planning process, completed at the end of August 2002, looked at the residential districts surrounding the commercial core. The study team, including representatives of CADC-B, CACLV, the City of Bethlehem and a team of private consultants, held three public work sessions with residents of the Southside neighborhoods. The results of the first work session included an inventory of issues and assets of the existing conditions on the Southside. In the second session, a strategic vision began to emerge that ultimately will guide city planning and development efforts, as well as CADC-B initiatives and potential funding partnerships. At the final work session, the team presented ideas for implementation of many of the projects in the strategic vision and a strategy for ongoing project identification and implementation efforts. The CADC-B also conducted individual interviews of 150 Southside residents, asking over 30 questions about the strengths and needs of their community.



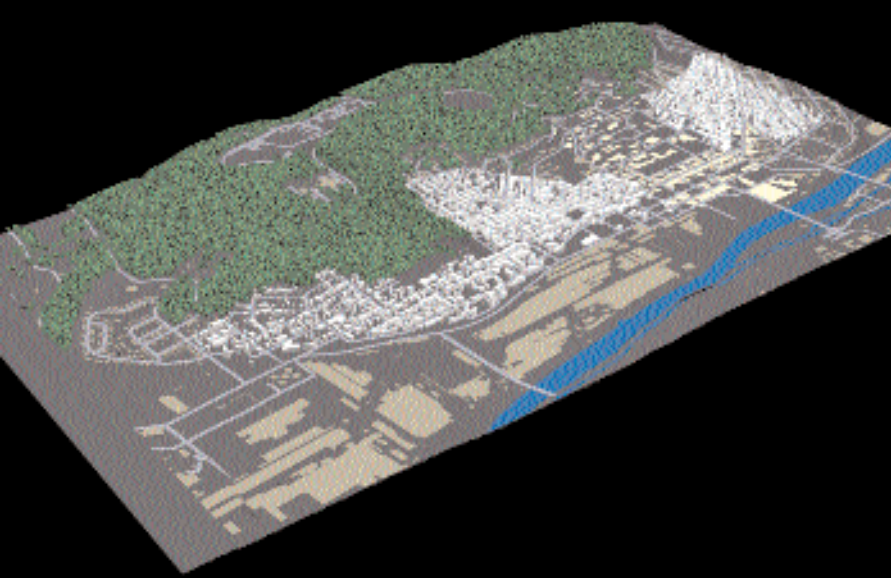
Plan for the Southside Core Commercial District - June 2001

Project Goals:

- **Provide CADC-B with an action plan for physical, economic and community development as part of the Strategic Neighborhood Revitalization Plan for Southside Bethlehem.**
- **Address issues specifically relating to the residential areas in the neighborhoods on the Southside.**
- **Coordinate recommendations with the Master Plan for the Southside, prepared for the City of Bethlehem in June 2001.**
- **Make recommendations for implementation of specific projects.**

Analysis





Southside residential master plan study area

Analysis

The Southside has incredible assets that are not always recognized.

They include:

- Close proximity to a world-class research institution
- Diverse topography and great views
- Diverse and generally good quality housing stock
- Diverse population, both culturally and economically
- Good local schools
- Great urban density, strong street grid and view corridors
- Strong community activism
- Great landmark/tourism potential with Bethlehem Steel and the neighborhood churches
- Close proximity to Philadelphia (70 miles) and New York City (85 miles)

These assets are a strong basis for building community and strengthening economic growth and development on the Southside.

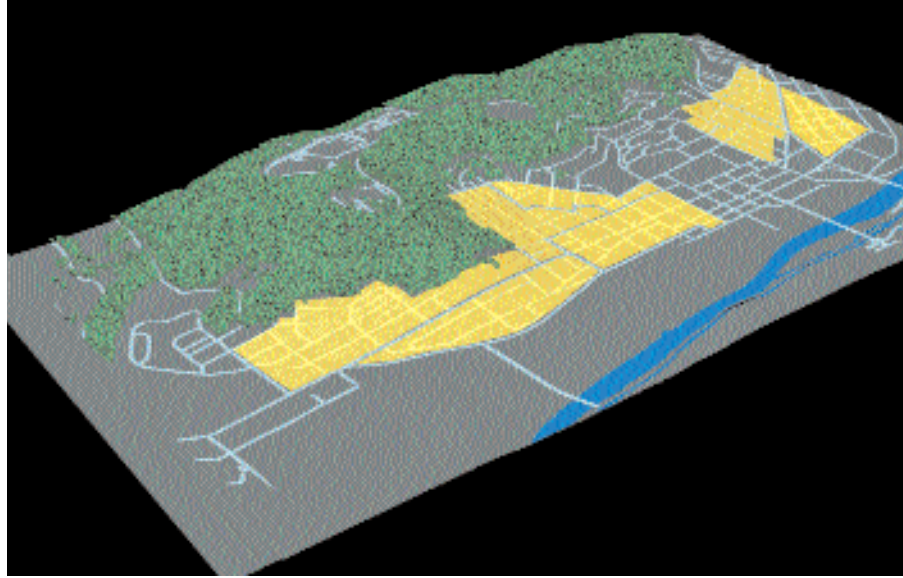
Analysis of the Southside further looked at Land Use, Districts, Churches, Commercial Zones, Existing Parks, 10-minute Walking Distances, Bus Routes, Settlement History and Topography, Lighting, Employment and Housing & Density.

Land Use

The study area is predominantly urban residential with some areas of neighborhood retail and commercial uses, primarily located along Fourth Street. Separating the east and west districts of this study area is the mixed-use Southside commercial core. Both the east and west districts are bordered to the north by the abandoned Bethlehem Steel Works and to the south by the forested mountaintop owned by Lehigh University.



Southside general land use



Eight Subdistricts

The study area is more easily understood as a series of neighborhoods, roughly corresponding to the eight subdistricts identified after the first meeting with residents.

Churches: City of Steeples and Faith-based Communities

One of the Southside's most prominent features is the large number and variety of churches anchoring street corners and providing focus to the neighborhoods. Most still have active congregations whose constituencies are interested in the issues of the Southside, even if they now live elsewhere.



Southside subdistricts



City of steeples



Existing commercial zones



Existing neighborhood open space

Commercial Zones

Outside the existing Southside commercial core, commercial uses are somewhat scattered throughout the neighborhoods. However, several areas identified have a noticeable concentration of commercial uses. On the east side, Fourth Street is zoned for commercial use along its entire length, though there are a few places where commercial uses have enough critical mass to create a strong commercial zone (most notably the Southside Core, addressed in the 2001 Master Plan, and the 500-800 Block of East Fourth Street). The rest of the commercial uses occur sporadically along the entire stretch of Fourth Street. On the west side, commercial uses are concentrated at the Five Points and along Broadway. According to Southside residents, commercial uses should meet their consumer needs and include grocery stores, clothing stores, household mega-stores, recreational and entertainment stores, and autoparts stores. Southside residents need access to banking services that are close to where they live and shop.

Existing Parks and Playgrounds

There are small neighborhood parks located throughout the study area, with roughly one in each of the eight subdistricts. The only districts without a park or other formal open space are the zone directly east of Lehigh University, populated mostly by students who use the campus for their open space needs, and Subdistrict 2 on the east that includes the 500-800 block of Fourth Street and the rarely-used Bethlehem Steel parking lot. There are six playgrounds on the Southside. Most of those playgrounds are in need of renovation and on-going maintenance.

Youth Development Services

According to Southside residents, the single most important issue facing children in the neighborhood is not enough youth services or activities.

10-minute Walk Circles

Another method of looking at neighborhoods and understanding how well they function is to overlay a circle indicating the distance it takes the average person to walk 10 minutes (approximately 2,200 feet or 2½ to 3 miles per hour). On the Southside, steep topography dictates that the distance covered in 10 minutes on level ground will be greater than the distance covered walking up- or downhill. This results in a 10-minute walking “ellipse” which, when overlayed on the Southside districts, shows that most of the Southside is generally walkable as a result of its history as a town where the employees lived on the hillsides and walked to work in the steel factories.

Bus Routes

Three bus routes serve the Southside.

B - East Hills/Prospect Heights via Fountain Hill

F - Lehigh Valley Mall to Spring Hill Shopping Center in Hellertown

G - Bethlehem Center City to Lynnfield via Allentown

The system has good coverage within the Southside; however, as many jobs are now dispersed in the surrounding suburban areas, few Southside residents use the bus system to commute. This adds to some of the parking problems mentioned in work sessions with the community.



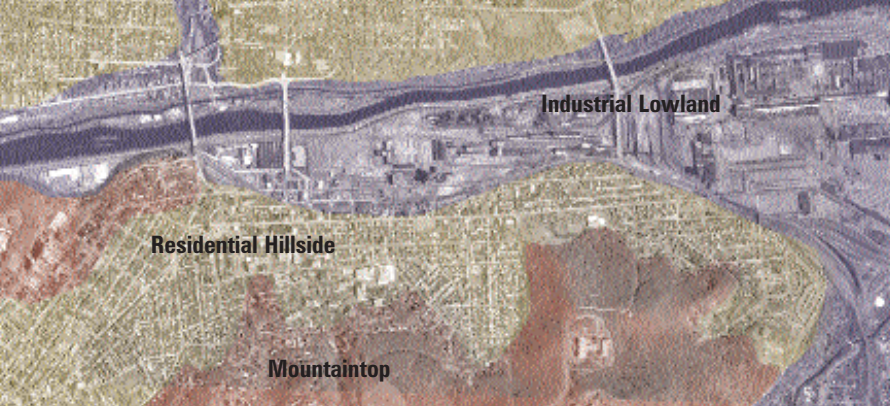
Ten minute walking distance



LANTA bus routes on the Southside



Buses along Fourth Street



Southside settlement history

Settlement History, Topography, and Views

The settlement history visible today is a direct result of the topography. The flat lowland along the river served large industrial uses and railroad beds. Residential areas developed on the hillsides with easy access to the industrial and commercial uses in the flatter areas. The mountaintop remained mostly undeveloped as a result of steep slopes, and has only been developed more recently as space pressures on the downtown have forced institutional uses up the steeper slopes. As a result of this pattern of development, there are many places in the residential districts of the Southside with excellent views out across the valley, especially areas at the edge of the developed hillside and the undeveloped mountaintop, just at the treeline.



Views of the former Bethlehem Steel Plant from the neighborhood



View of the Lehigh Valley from Ridge Street



View from State Street

Lighting

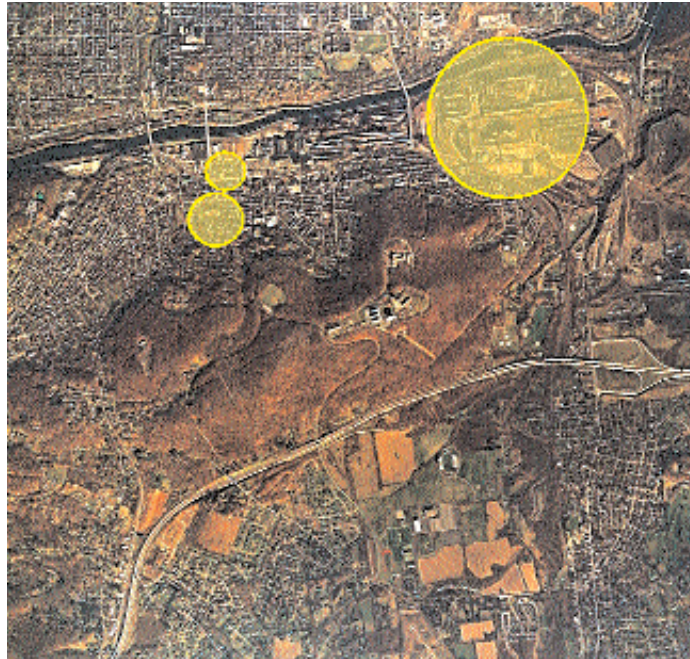
Street lighting in the study areas is not evenly distributed and there is no obvious hierarchy. Some commercial areas, such as Broadway and along Third Street, have been identified with more pedestrian-friendly and commercial-oriented lighting. Other commercial areas, especially along Fourth Street, are still lit like highway corridors; this does not enhance the sense of a strong commercial and retail district. Lighting in the neighborhoods is uneven and there appear to be gaps in the system in some of the residential areas.

Employment

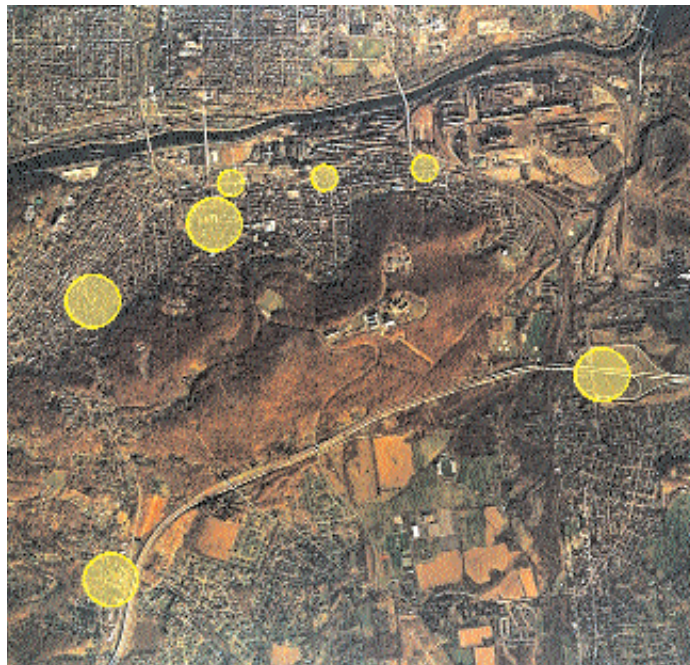
Traditionally, the two big employers on the Southside were Lehigh University and the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. While Lehigh has grown over the years and the Bethlehem Campus of St. Luke's Hospital is the fourth largest employer in the Lehigh Valley, they cannot compensate for the slow but steady decline in factory jobs as, over the years demand for steel decreased. The Bethlehem plant eventually closed in 1995. At its peak, Bethlehem Steel employed 31,000 people in Bethlehem alone. Many of these people have been forced to find work elsewhere in the region, often in new suburban commercial and service establishments. Suburban jobs follow the highway and counteract efforts to concentrate employment in the Southside core.



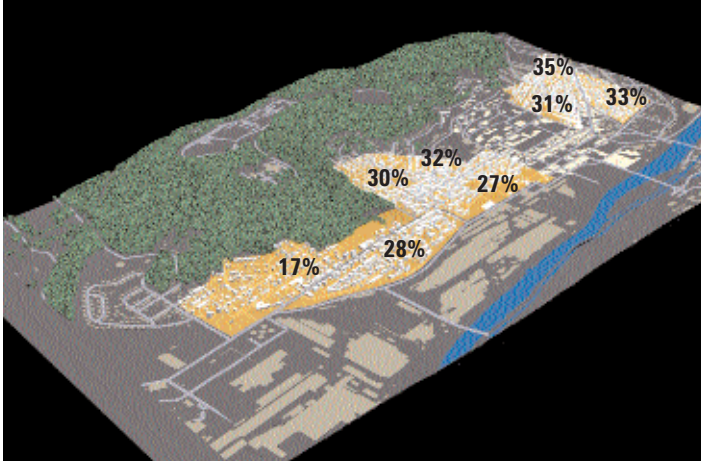
Street lighting - no hierarchy and uneven distribution



Historic centers of employment



Current centers of employment



Strong urban residential areas are generally 20% to 30% building coverage

Housing and Density

One of the issues the community mentioned often was the increasing density of the neighborhoods and the resulting lack of open space and parking problems. This issue is divided into two categories: density of population and density of buildings. Much of the sense of crowding on the Southside occurs along the edges of the University, where many of the single-family homes are rented out to students. This can lead to perceptions of noise and parking problems that are common in the neighborhoods abutting large universities. Lehigh and the city recognize this density of population issue and are working toward providing more housing on campus and establishing parking policies that remove student cars from the neighborhoods.

The other part of the issue, density of buildings, is most evident in areas, such as Mechanic Street, where alleys have been converted into official streets. In some cases there are no sidewalks and no room for cars to park as what used to be the parking and service access is now the front door and what used to be a carriage house is now a home. The closeness of the buildings to the street and the lack parking has led to a perception of structural density that is not supported by facts.

Overall, the Southside's building and population densities are a normal characteristic of a vital urban district and improvements to the open space network and parking policies should enhance the quality of life throughout the residential areas.



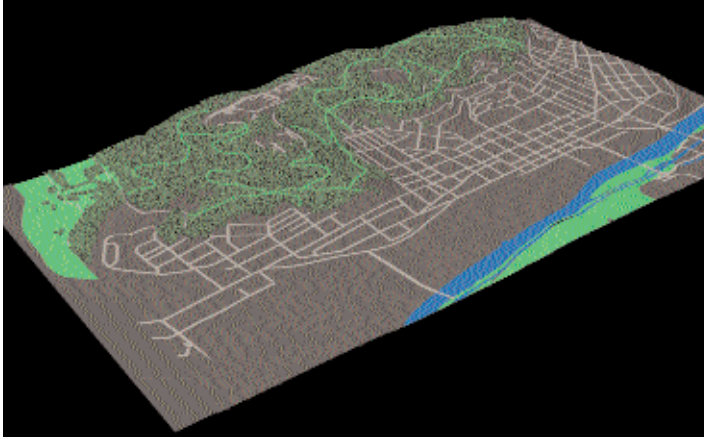
Population density: Student housing along Birkel Avenue near Lehigh



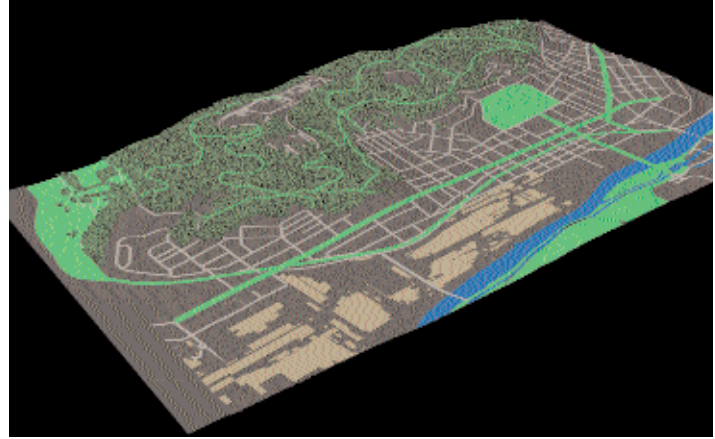
Building density: Mechanic Street

Strategic Vision





Regional



Southside

Open Space: Regional, Southside, Local

The key concept focuses primarily on creating new open space opportunities in the Southside neighborhoods and linking the new and existing in ways that enhance neighborhood character. It identifies three types of open spaces that together create an entire open space network:

REGIONAL OPEN SPACE

This category includes major regional open space amenities such as Saucon Park, Lehigh's Goodman Campus, and the Mountaintop areas currently owned by Lehigh.

SOUTHSIDE OPEN SPACE

This important element of the open space network is open space that affects the entire Southside and serves as a link between regional and local open space. This category includes the potential to create a linear park along the abandoned Norfolk Southern railroad right-of-way that would connect local to regional open spaces, and the open space that will be created as part of the Bethlehem Works project slated for the site of the old steel mill.



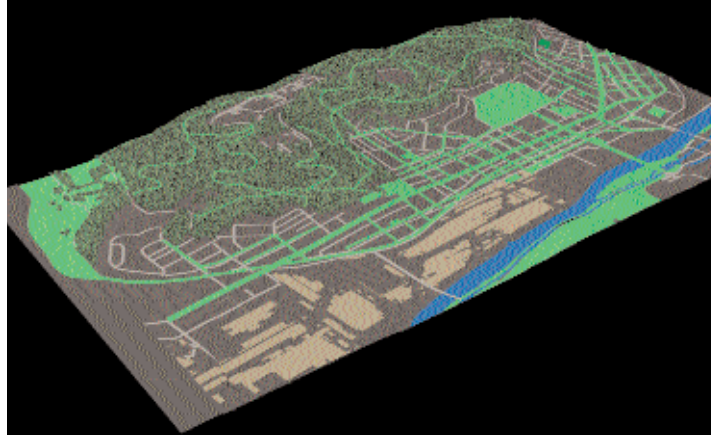
Regional



Southside - before existing rail corridor



(Southside) potential for rail corridor, rail corridor park near Davis Square, Somerville, Massachusetts



Open space network

LOCAL/NEIGHBORHOOD OPEN SPACE

The final element of the open space network is the neighborhood parks and the local streets that link larger Southside and regional open spaces to each other and the neighborhoods.

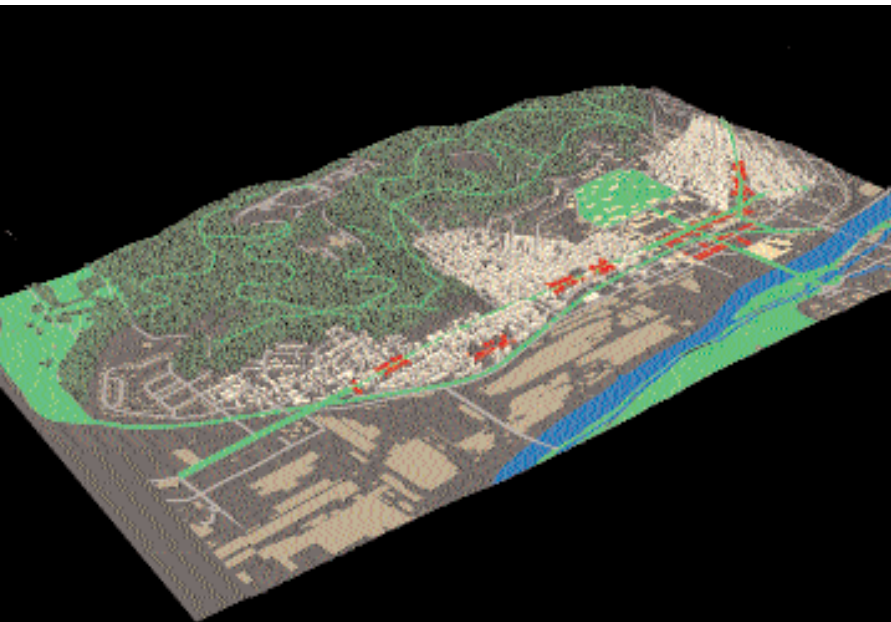
The plan identifies city streets and other existing assets as connectors that will link parks, pathways and trails together.



Local Southside open space, McNamara Park



Local streets as connectors in the open space network



Southside concentrated commercial zones

Concentrated Commercial and Retail Zones

In addition to an improved open space network, the strategic vision identifies areas where physical and policy improvements should be made to concentrate neighborhood retail, creating strong neighborhood commercial cores with enough critical mass to be successful. Identifying and dedicating these zones will guide policy and improvements to provide a more commercial character in those zones and will allow CADC-B to target funding for small business loans and other programs to encourage neighborhood commercial development.



Existing retail district along Fourth Street

Opportunities For Reuse of Buildings and Land

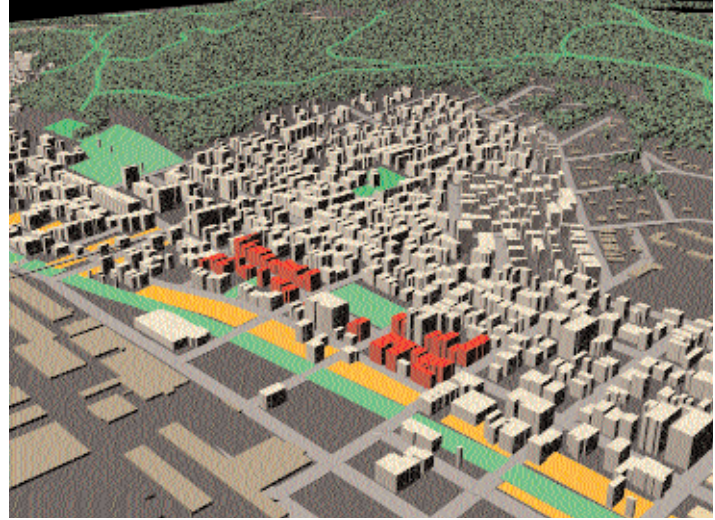
In addition to the land and buildings associated with the Bethlehem Works site, there are many opportunities for building reuse and land redevelopment on the Southside. There are two types of vacant land:

- 1) parcels associated with former industrial sites or along the railroad and
- 2) vacant commercial or residential parcels throughout the neighborhoods.

All of these sites will become more vulnerable to inappropriate development as investment in open space and infrastructure raises the land value.

Vacant land should be developed in a way that is sensitive to the existing architectural and urban context. For instance, vacant land along the railroad corridor will become extremely valuable as soon as the linear park is created. In general, this land should be targeted for residential development or, where it abuts commercial areas, for complementary commercial development or denser residential uses.

There are also areas where vacant buildings should be identified for redevelopment and a concentrated effort should be made to locate and partner with the owners. Redevelopment could occur using combinations of public and private tax and funding incentives and technical assistance programs.



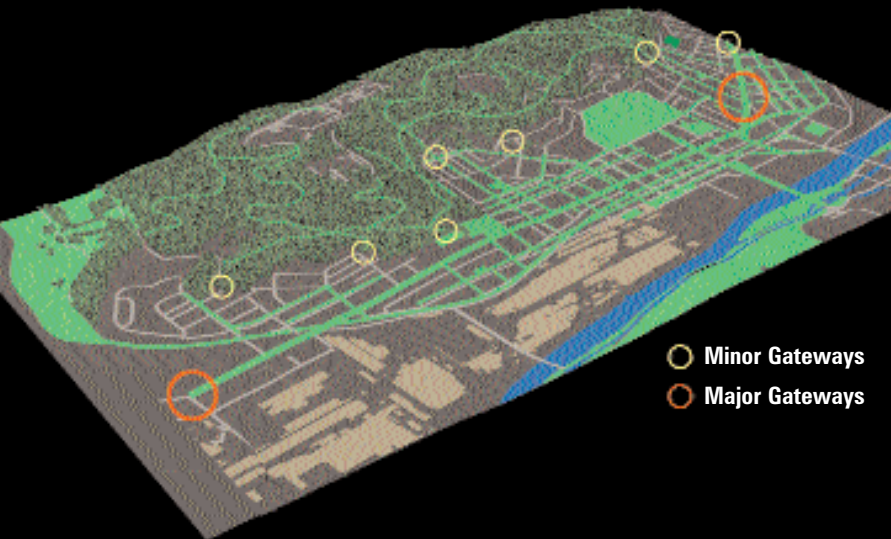
Potential development parcels if rail way becomes a park



Opportunity - vacant land



Opportunity - abandoned buildings



Fourth Street Eastern Gateway

Gateways

Gateways are an important way to inform residents and visitors that they have entered a special area. Regionally, the gateways into the Southside, both at the Five Points on the west side and where Fourth Street crosses the railroad tracks at the eastern edge of the study area, are important points of entry that require thoughtful improvements. Locally, there are other opportunities for enhanced gateways within the Southside. Many north-south streets terminate either at the forested edge of the mountaintop or at the abandoned Norfolk Southern railway corridor, creating a visual dead end and a barrier to access. When these spaces are enhanced and more accessible to the public, the gateways will formalize the transition from the open space corridors of the city streets to the recreational open spaces of the Mountaintop and linear park.



Five Points Gateway: West Side

Many of these dead ends also have great views back down across the town and into the Lehigh River valley. These gateways and view corridors should be linked in a way that encourages people to stop and appreciate the views. Opportunities exist on both the East side and the West, including, but not limited to:

EAST SIDE

Ridge Street

**Hillside Avenue &
East Seventh Street**

**Edwards &
East Seventh Street**

WEST SIDE

**Broadway, as it climbs
the hillside**

**Wyandotte, as it climbs
the hillside**



Local Gateway: dead ends into open space

Parking

Parking is an ongoing issue in any urban area. Because the problem is dispersed rather than localized, building new parking lots or a parking garage is not the solution. Many of the problems identified by residents of the Southside can be alleviated to a great degree through more strategic policies and more consistent enforcement. Some of the parking problems can be alleviated by some more subtle changes that will reduce the demand for parking. These include:

- Increased quantity and variety of job opportunities within convenient transit or walking distance from Southside residential districts.
- Convenient transit opportunities and encouragement of alternative modes of transit, such as bicycles and carpooling.
- Increased incentives and encouragement of homeownership and owner-occupied homes.

Incentives for home ownership may take the form of financial support or possibly increased access to services that long-term resident homeowners need to encourage them to stay (such as activities for the elderly) or that newer residents may need to encourage them to settle (such as daycare and good schools).

There are also many parking lots on the Southside that are vacant much of the time. Lots that are chronically empty should be identified and targeted for partnerships that allow more efficient use. One example is the many church lots along Fourth Street that are only used to full capacity on Sundays or for special events. Partnerships should form with the parishes, especially in the areas designated as concentrated commercial zones, where convenient parking could help increase commercial traffic.



Stronger city and Lehigh University parking policies and enforcement



Enhanced transit opportunities



Church lot - vacant on weekdays, is a candidate for shared parking

Implementation



Matrix

As part of the study, a strategy for implementation was developed to continue the momentum generated by the recommendations discussed in the Strategic Vision section of this report. A critical piece of the implementation strategy is involving local residents and business owners as partners in the revitalization strategy. Support from the community is essential in helping residents feel an ownership that encourages them to take responsibility and care for their environment.

Implementation plans rely on identifying specifically achievable projects and the stakeholders and resources that will be required to realize them. In this way, resources are targeted first to projects that can be implemented quickly and have visible results. Projects identified for later phases and the longer term are those that require more resources, are politically more complicated, or that depend on the completion of other projects first.

Matrix

As a way to begin thinking about the implementation possibilities of specific projects, a matrix was developed to guide the decision-making process. The matrix is designed to link the issues identified in the work sessions with the community to physical plan elements and policy changes. It identifies existing potential funding sources, both public sector and non-profit, and lists potential stakeholders who should be at the table as decisions are made. It is an exercise for this study as well as a methodology for ongoing analysis of issues and actions. The matrix is designed for maximum flexibility in implementation by breaking the plan down into a series of incremental, achievable steps, providing the ingredients to allow multiple organizations to play a role. CADC-B will be the steward of the implementation process, continuing to ensure that the appropriate stakeholders are at the table and that funding is in place for successful implementation. It should also be noted that this is an ongoing process. It could take many years for some of these projects to be realized, and this matrix methodology can allow for changes in vision, priorities, or practicality and still be a valid and useful guide to resolving issues in the Southside neighborhoods.

Southside Vision 2012 Implementation Guide

“THE MATRIX”

This matrix is designed to link issues identified through work sessions with the community to physical plan elements and policy changes. It identifies existing potential funding sources, both public sector and non-profit, and lists potential stakeholders who should be at the table as decisions are made. It is an exercise as well as methodology for ongoing analysis of issues and actions. The matrix is designed for maximum flexibility in implementation by breaking the plan down into a series of incremental, achievable steps, providing the ingredients to allow multiple organizations to play a role. In terms of leadership, CADC-B will create a Steering Committee that will take responsibility for this document and its implementation. It should also be noted that this is an ongoing process. It could take many years for some of these projects to be realized and this matrix can allow for changes in vision, priorities or practicality and still be a valid and useful guide to resolving issues on in the Southside neighborhoods.

The following acronyms are used in the matrix:

ACRONYM	DESCRIPTION
BHA	Bethlehem Housing Authority
CADC-B	Community Action Development Corporation of Bethlehem
CDBG (Federal)	Community Development Block Grant Grant: Housing and Urban Development)
FRED	Fund for Revitalization and Economic Development
HOOP	Home Ownership Outreach Program
LANTA	Lehigh and Northampton Transit Authority
PA DCED	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
PHFA	Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency

Open Space

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
<p>REGIONAL Lack of access and trails to the Mountaintop</p> <p>Lack of connectors to the Northside and to Goodman Campus, Saucon Park</p> <p>Access to potential public spaces at Bethlehem Works site</p>	<p>Create gateways to Mountaintop at the ends of North-South Streets, enhance existing trails & create new ones</p> <p>Identify and enhance pedestrian, bicycle access to the north side, Saucon park and Goodman Campus</p> <p>Create strong pedestrian connections from the Southside Core, neighb. commercial zones and parks to the new Bethlehem Works Site</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ease University liability • Improve security presence
<p>SOUTHSIDE Possibility to convert the Railway Corridor into a linear park</p> <p>Need to improve community connections to Lehigh Historic Packer Campus</p>	<p>Create a permanent greenway along the abandoned Norfolk Southern rail line through town</p> <p>Include the Packer Campus in Southside open space networks, improve connections to it from the neighborhoods</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning • Signage
<p>LOCAL McNamara Park: Improve safety and usability</p> <p>4th Street Park: Need for civic open space in the heart of 4th Street commercial zone</p> <p>Lack of Parks in the West Side neighborhoods</p> <p>Neighbors say Uhlman Park (off Wyandotte just south of study area, near cemetery) seems cut-off from neighborhood</p> <p>Local Parks are difficult to maintain</p> <p>Lack of Primary Connectors to existing and proposed open space</p> <p>Lack of Secondary Connectors to Railway Corridor and Bethlehem Works</p>	<p>Renovate the park to improve usability and allow more visibility from both 3rd & Fortana Streets. Connect to other neighborhood parks & regional open space networks</p> <p>Re-use old Beth Steel parking lot as a new civic plaza to serve as community open space and link neighborhood open space to a larger network. Address need to accommodate displaced parking with new lots or other alternatives.</p> <p>Assess potential for a new park on land behind Masonic Temple - West Side</p> <p>Improve access/signage, include Uhlman Park in local open space networks and link to regional networks.</p> <p>Identify parks where maintenance has been difficult.</p> <p>3rd, 4th, Atlantic, Hayes, Wyandotte & Williams Streets should be designated as primary open space connectors and receive special street treatment</p> <p>Remaining streets, mostly north South Streets to connect Fourth Street and the Mountaintop to the Railway Park and the River, should be designated Secondary Connectors and receive special street treatment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning • Zoning • Signage • Zoning • Traffic/Public Works review • Programs to encourage Community Stewardship • Signage • Street Design Regulations • Signage • Street Design Regulations

**Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs**

Ownership

**Additional
Stakeholders**

**Phasing
Priority**

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Lehigh University

- Neighborhood Residents/Regional park users
- City Parks & Rec. County • State Parks Depts.

Longer Term

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Various Public & Private

- City/County
- Lehigh University

Longer Term

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Bethlehem Steel Corp.

- BethWorks Dev./Bethlehem Steel
- City, County, State • Local Business Community

Longer Term

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Norfolk Southern

- City/County • State Gov'ts
- Southside Community

Longer Term

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding

- Lehigh University

- City
- Southside Community

18 Months

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- City

- Surrounding Neighbors

18 Months

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Bethlehem Steel Corp.

- St. John's Windish Church
- Surrounding Neighbors/Businesses
- City

18 Months

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- Private

- City • Masonic Temple
- Surrounding Neighbors/Businesses

Longer Term

- CDBG • PA DCED • Federal Funding

- City
- Fountain Hill

- Surrounding Neighbors

18 Months

- City

- Local Businesses
- Surrounding Neighborhoods

18 Months & Ongoing

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- City

- Southside Community

18 Months

- CDBG • PA DCED
- Federal Funding • Foundations

- City

- Southside Community
- Norfolk Southern
- BethWorks

Longer Term

Retail/Commercial Zones & Jobs

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
<p>Zoning allows retail and commercial uses anywhere along 4th Street - should be concentrated into several strategic areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 800 Block Concentrated Commercial Zone • 4th Street Gateway Concentrated Commercial Zone • Broadway Concentrated Commercial Zone • Rezone other areas back to Residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning
<p>Commercial target zones should feel more commercial</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Design Guidelines for new development, street improvements and façade/ signage in Commercial Zones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Guidelines • Façade improvement programs
<p>Neighborhood businesses do not meet local resident's needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate Commercial Overlay Zones where retail mix will be encouraged based on neighborhood public process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning • Economic Incentives for Local Businesses, desired mix that meets neighborhood needs • Site Plan Review and Commercial approval process
<p>Lack of local jobs means more cars, and less time with families</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage a diversity of Commercial Uses in the commercial overlay zones to allow more opportunities for residents to have access to local jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning • Economic Incentives for Local Businesses, desired mix that meets neighborhood needs • Site Plan Review & commercial approval process

Housing & Density

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
<p>Increase the number of owner occupied units</p>	<p>Identify Target areas where demand for rental units is increasing</p>	
<p>Improve the quality of the housing stock</p>	<p>Identify Target areas where the quality of the housing stock is suffering</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Improvements programs
<p>Single family homes are being converted into multi-family units</p>	<p>Identify Target Areas for stricter enforcement of existing conversion regulations and possible de-conversion policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement of zoning regulations & building codes pertaining to conversion of single family units to multi-family • Deconversion programs

**Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs**

Ownership

**Additional
Stakeholders**

**Phasing
Priority**

- Bethlehem Loan Pool, Façade Improvements & Gap Financing
- CADC-B
- FRED Loans

Various

- Surrounding Businesses and Neighbors
- CADC-B
- City

18 Months

- Bethlehem Loan Pool, Façade Improvements & Gap Financing
- CADC-B
- FRED Loans

Various

- Surrounding Businesses and Neighbors
- CADC-B
- City

18 Months

- Bethlehem Loan Pool, Façade Improvements & Gap Financing
- CADC-B
- FRED Loans

Various

- Surrounding Businesses and Neighbors
- CADC-B
- City

18 Months

- Bethlehem Loan Pool, Façade Improvements & Gap Financing
- CADC-B
- FRED Loans

Various

- Surrounding Businesses and Neighbors
- CADC-B
- City
- LANTA

18 Months

**Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs**

Ownership

**Additional
Stakeholders**

**Phasing
Priority**

- PHFA
- HOOP
- BHA

Various

- CADC-B
- City
- Non-profits

Ongoing

- PHFA
- BHA

Various

- CADC-B
- City
- Non-profits

Ongoing

- CDBG
- Fannie Mae

Various

- CADC-B
- City
- Non-profits

18 Months &
Ongoing

Parking

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
Shared Parking Opportunities with Churches, especially in Commercial Zones	Identify churches with parking lots in commercial zones which would be candidates and pursue shared parking agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning • Parking Policies
Parking conflicts between students living in neighborhoods and local residents	Identify areas of conflict to target new policies and enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lehigh/City Parking Policies • Enforcement
Lack of on-street parking in areas where alleys have been converted into regular streets - especially Zone 3, north of 4th Street	Ensure that multi-family units on former alleys include parking on-site and enforce illegal parking in problem areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking Policies • Enforcement

Crime/Safety

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
Neighborhood concerns over crime in certain Southside areas	Improve street lighting and access to police call boxes	Empower community block watch programs, encourage residents to take a more active role in stewardship of neighborhoods
Street Cleaning/Maintenance	Improve the collection of trash, reduce litter, and decrease the misuse of public trash receptacles.	Mandate uniform garbage pick-up days

Youth Services

Issues/Objectives	Physical Plan Action/Projects	Potential Policy Actions
Lack of youth services	Improve and increase the provision of youth services	Develop policies and procedures to develop and fund youth servicing

Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs

Ownership

Additional
Stakeholders

Phasing
Priority

Churches

- City
- Surrounding Businesses & Neighbors
- CADC-B
- Parking Authority

18 Months &
Ongoing

Various

- City
- Lehigh-Surrounding Businesses & Neighbors
- CADC-B
- Parking Authority

18 Months &
Ongoing

Various

- City
- Surrounding Businesses & Neighbors
- CADC-B
- Parking Authority

18 Months &
Ongoing

Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs

Ownership

Additional
Stakeholders

Phasing
Priority

N/A

- Community
- City/Police/Block Watches
- CADC-B

18 Months &
Ongoing

- City
- Residents

18 Months

Existing Gov't/
Non-Profit Programs

Ownership

Additional
Stakeholders

Phasing
Priority

- Dept of Education
- United Way
- Foundations
- Local contributions

N/A

- Children and Youth
- Residents
- Non-profit Organizations
- Communities of Faith Bethlehem Area
- Bethlehem Area School District
- Family Centers
- Bethlehem Parks and Public Property
- CADC-B

18 Months &
Ongoing

First Steps

The matrix lists each of the issues identified by residents in the analysis phase. For each issue, potential physical and policy actions are identified, as are existing funding programs that may be applicable, who owns the property, additional stakeholders, and whether it is potentially a long- or short-term project.

Physical Implementation

Every issue can be addressed with either a physical or a policy implementation action or a combination of both. As issues arise they can be added to the matrix, and as each column is completed there will be enough information to begin the process of talking with stakeholders, identifying potential funding sources and setting the general priority. Priority should be given to projects that will affect the most people and are the most likely candidates for funding and approvals. If a project is small or limited in impact, it may still be a high priority if implementation will draw attention and generate momentum for other projects. All projects should be coordinated with on-going city, state and federal improvements to roads, infrastructure, open space, and other projects in order to minimize the disruption caused by construction and to maximize potential shared costs.

Policy Implementation

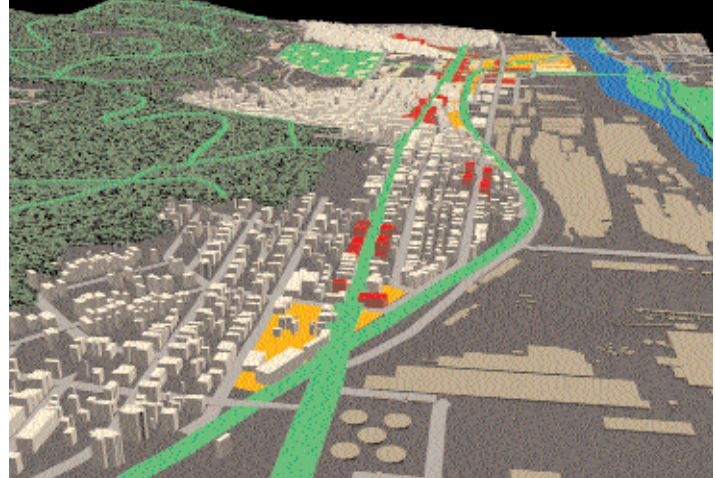
Many issues will have both physical and policy implications. Some, like the parking issues, will be eased more with policy solutions than with physical solutions. As with the physical projects, priority should be given to policies that can be achieved quickly and affect the largest number of people.

Four Critical Projects

The first step that CADC-B should take is to identify a Steering Committee to identify needs and priorities, and oversee the various projects as they progress. The next priority is to begin implementation of the four projects identified as the critical projects in the plan.

As part of the implementation, there are several physical projects for which detailed planning and design for implementation can begin

immediately. These include the gateway areas in the east and west, the transformation of the Bethlehem Steel parking lot in the 700 block of Fourth Street, and the first open space connections.



1. FOURTH STREET EASTERN GATEWAY

At the eastern end of Fourth Street, visitors and residents to the Southside cross the railroad tracks that lead to the Bethlehem Steel factory complex and enter the Southside very unceremoniously. There is no sense of arrival or that the area they are entering is a great place to visit, live and work.

There are numerous opportunities for façade and building improvements as well as several parcels that could be developed. To kick-start the process, CACLV is moving its headquarters from the Northside to a renovated building, the Forte Building, located a block off Fourth Street but visible from this gateway arrival point. To take advantage of the momentum gained through the CACLV investment in the Southside, partnerships should be formed with the city and private sector to concentrate new and compatible neighborhood retail and commercial uses in this district and to improve some of the existing retail and commercial structures. In addition, district design guidelines should be created and adhered to as commercial redevelopment occurs.



As public and private funding is focused on the designated commercial areas, such as the Fourth Street Eastern Gateway, market forces will help improve the quality of the adjacent residential areas. Policies and guidelines should be in place to ensure appropriate façade improvements and encourage homeownership. Residential uses in this district can be of a slightly higher density, appropriate to a mixed use, but predominantly commercial and retail node.

Open space improvements should also be considered at the same time to begin the process of creating the network throughout the entire Southside, linking existing local, Southside and regional open spaces.

Goals

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS (1 YEAR)

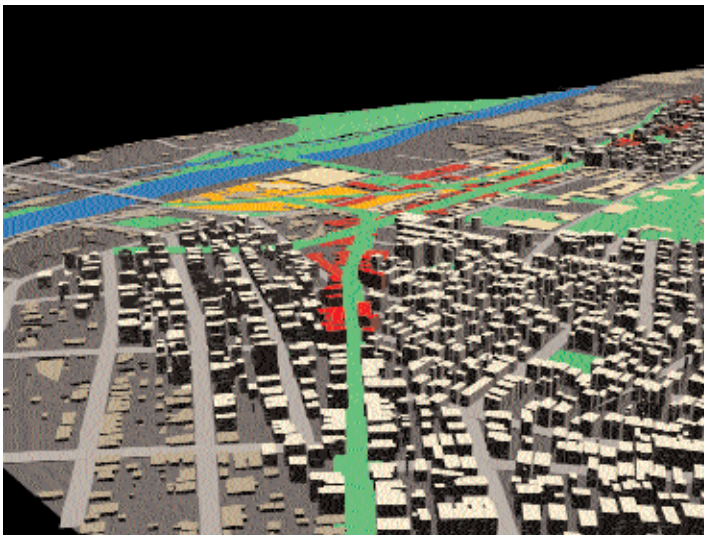
1. Define the physical area of the Eastern Gateway area.
2. Develop mapping and a physical assessment and inventory of the area including at least land use, housing characteristics, vacant properties, areas of safety/ crime issues, parking, bus routes.
3. Convene two public meetings within the neighborhood and assess the priority issues concerning residents and business owners in the neighborhood.
4. Complete Forte Building project and hold grand opening to involve community.
5. Pursue commercial zoning for "gateway" of Fourth Street corridor.

MID TERM ACTION ITEMS (2-5 YEARS)

1. Based on the neighborhood inventory and priorities of residents, determine priority properties for code enforcement, occupancy, façade improvements, deconversion or other action.
2. Identify funding sources/partners/resources/services to assist with priority projects.
3. Target existing programs that encourage owner occupancy of homes and home improvement programs for existing owner occupied units.
4. Utilize current code enforcement programs to address both rental and owner occupied problem properties.
5. Work with Parking Authority to create solutions to parking congestion.
6. Work with existing block watch groups and neighborhood police patrols to address safety/ crime issues and to identify target areas.
7. Pursue funding for & install additional public improvements along the Fourth Street commercial corridor.
8. Partner with churches or owners of other chronically empty parking lots to help alleviate parking congestion.

LONG RANGE GOALS (10 YEARS OR MORE) & ON-GOING PROGRAMS

1. Increase the number of owner occupied units.
2. Improve the quality of the housing stock
3. Pursue shared parking uses with churches or other part time uses.
4. Encourage better mix of retail/commercial uses to meet the needs of local residents.
5. Create opportunities for local residents to have opportunities to local jobs.
6. Pursue alternatives to deconvert structures that were originally built as single-family homes but have since been converted to apartments. Recognizing that some properties are more conducive to rental units, continue to encourage responsible code compliant rental housing.
7. Continue to monitor and address the resident's concerns regarding crime/safety issues.
8. Continue to identify vacant buildings for redevelopment and partner with owners for their reuse.



2. FIVE POINTS GATEWAY

Another project that should begin immediately is the Five Points Gateway on the west side. As with its sister gateway on the east side, this area should receive careful consideration to create a compatible mix of commercial and retail uses that meet the needs of the neighborhood. Also, as with the primary gateway on the east side, described above, strong design guidelines need to be implemented and followed as parcels are developed and reused.

This area also has some pedestrian and vehicular circulation problems that should be identified more specifically and addressed as planning for this area moves forward.

Goals

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

1. Pursue additional funding for targeted housing revitalization programs.
2. Develop parking strategy and pursue funding to support it.
3. Install phase II of public improvements program.
4. Continue targeted code enforcement and inspection program.

MID TERM ACTIONS

1. Schedule and monitor targeted housing revitalization program funding for target properties.
2. Initiate parking strategy
3. Work with existing block watch groups and neighborhood police; patrols to address safety/crime issues and identify target locations.
4. Outline strategic plan to address pedestrian and vehicular circulation problems.

LONG RANGE GOALS

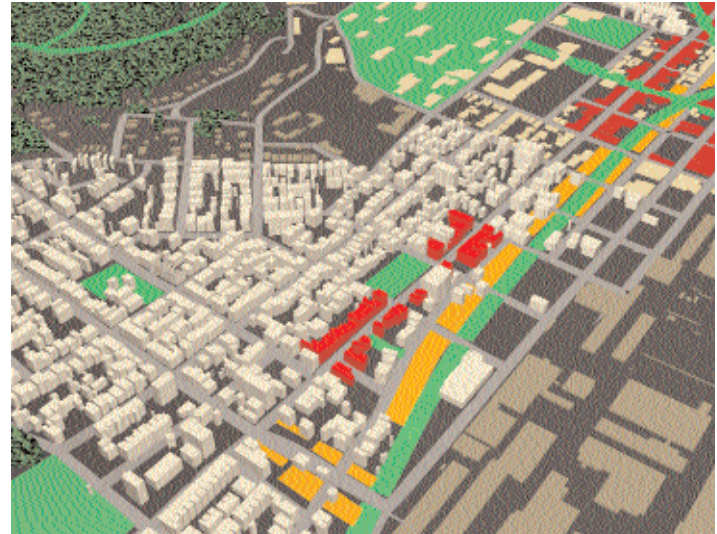
1. Increase the number of Owner occupied units. Recognizing that some properties will remain rental apartment buildings, utilize current code enforcement programs to encourage responsible code compliant rental housing.
2. Improve the quality of the housing stock
3. Encourage better mix of retail/commercial uses to meet the needs of local residents.
4. Pursue alternatives to deconvert structures that were originally built as single-family homes but have since been converted to apartments.
5. Continue to analyze and review the parking situations in the neighborhood.
6. Continue to monitor and address resident concerns regarding crime/safety issues.
7. Continue to identify vacant buildings for redevelopment and partner with owners for their reuse.



3. NEW PLAZA ON FOURTH STREET

This site is located across the street from St. John's Windish Church and is owned by Bethlehem Steel. The plan recommendation is to convert this currently vacant (except for a small portion) parking lot in a prominent commercial district into a civic plaza of some sort that satisfies the open space needs in that subdistrict and creates a link between the commercial district and the residential areas on its other edge. This very sensitive site requires careful planning and good design.

The site should be carefully designed to meet the various needs of the adjacent users including some parking and open space for residents and an urban plaza or meeting area to complement local commercial users on Fourth Street. Parking spaces should not be placed along the Fourth Street edge and can be shared parking for patrons of the local stores during business hours and for church parishioners on Sundays.



Goals

SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

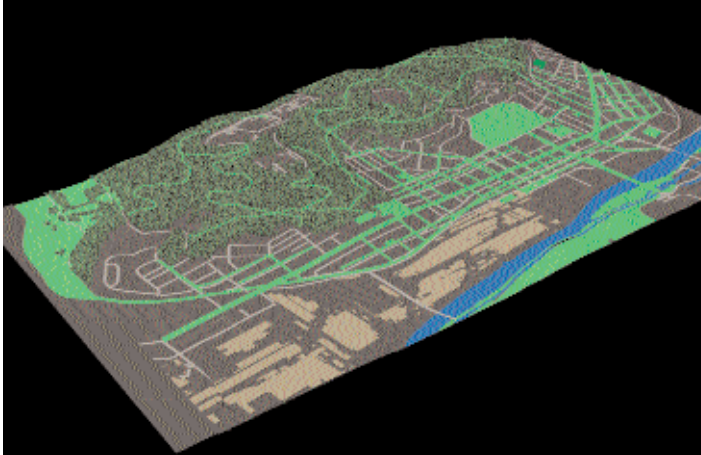
1. Pursue acquisition of parking lot on Fourth Street corridor for Plaza/Parking complex.
2. Hire design consultant to develop proposal for design/layout of proposed plaza/parking area with public input.
3. Pursue funding for implementation/development of adopted design plan.

MIDTERM GOALS

1. Construct plaza/parking area per approved proposal.
2. Continue to develop support for the plaza as a community anchor and gathering area.

LONG-TERM GOALS

1. Develop programs and events to support the use of the civic plaza as an anchor to the commercial center and surrounding residential communities while continuing to allow some parking for churches, business and local residents.



Local

4. OPEN SPACE NETWORK

Many of the elements of the open space network already exist on the Southside and are identified in this report. The process of really creating a solid, open space network begins with identifying priority projects that can be accomplished quickly or easily and that will have a high visibility. One example is the ongoing efforts by neighbors to improve McNamara Park. This project will be the first step in creating a better open space network. To capitalize on the momentum of that project, the next step may be streetscape improvements that link McNamara Park clearly to other elements of the system, such as Yosko Park, the new plaza on Fourth Street and the playgrounds and small play field at the Donegan Elementary School.

Another important element of the open space network that is an ongoing but likely long-term project is the potential linear park along the Norfolk Southern Rail right-of-way. The 2001 Master Plan identified an important section of the linear park at the end of New Street that will be more urban and help anchor the northern edge of New Street. This plan recommends continuing the park so that it extends the whole east-west length of the Southside and connects to regional open space on either end and local open space within the urban areas.

Goals

SHORT TERM ACTION ITEMS

1. Pursue Northampton County funding through open space initiative.
2. Pursue dialogue with Lehigh University and other involved property owners regarding access to trails on Mountaintop and access to Goodman Campus for open space.
3. Pursue negotiations with Norfolk Southern for acquisition of railroad corridor.
4. Complete development plan for McNamara Park.

MID TERM ACTION ITEMS

1. Fund and complete study of phasing, design and development of rail corridor.
2. Begin implementation of study and development of rail corridor greenway.
3. Develop plan/program for better signage of existing south side parks.
4. Identify additional local-scale projects that can be accomplished relatively easily and that will have high visibility.

LONG RANGE GOALS

1. Create gateways to Mountaintop at the ends of North-South streets with approval of existing property owners.
2. Enhance pedestrian and bicycle access to the north side, Saucon Park and Goodman Campus.
3. Create open space/ park connection from the Southside core to the new Beth Works site.
4. Create permanent greenway along the abandoned railroad corridor.

Summary

The Southside has great assets that are largely unrecognized by outsiders and often overlooked by residents. Identifying these assets is just the beginning; the challenge is now to capitalize on them with physical interventions and social programs that enhance the quality of life for all members of the Southside's culturally and economically diverse community. Partnerships between the public sector -- the city, state and federal governments -- and the private sector including non-profit organizations, will help make individual projects identified in this report and in the future using the issues matrix reality. Some of the issues and projects can be realized almost immediately; others may take several years, some possibly longer. The goal is to take small steps with the greater goals in mind, so that each incremental move contributes to the overall vision for the community.

CADC-B

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