



# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

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## Memo

To: Darlene Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning  
From: Alicia Miller Karner  
CC: Mayor Robert Donchez  
Date: August 5, 2020  
Re: LERTA Boundary

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The Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act (LERTA) gives the City of Bethlehem the authorization to create districts to allow for the abatement of property taxes on new construction and improvements to certain deteriorated industrial, commercial and other business property. These districts must consist mainly of impoverished areas and the following criteria, identified in the state act should be taken into account when identifying a geographic area: unsafe, unsanitary and overcrowded buildings; vacant, overgrown and unsightly lots of ground; a disproportionate number of tax delinquent properties, excessive land coverage, defective design or arrangement of buildings, street or lot layouts; economically and socially undesirable land uses.

The Department of Community and Economic Development is proposing a new LERTA district on the city's Southside on land formerly incentivized with a Tax Increment Financing District (see attached map). This land, bordered by Webster and Taylor Streets on the west, 1<sup>st</sup> Street and the River to the north, Wind Creek Service Road to the east and Route 412, Evans and Mechanic Streets to the south, consists primarily of land formerly owned by Bethlehem Steel and since acquired by various private land owners. In addition to vacant lots, there are more than 10 vacant buildings in this area.

The role of the Bethlehem Planning Commission is to make recommendations concerning the location of boundaries of a deteriorated area or areas for the guidance of the municipal governing body. These recommendations will be presented to Bethlehem City Council at a public hearing in the near future.

Please place this item for consideration on the August 13, 2020 Planning Commission agenda.