

# THRIVE

Philadelphians THRIVE in  
the center of a competitive  
metropolitan region.



## **Neighborhoods 66**

- Neighborhood Centers 1.1
- Housing 1.2



## **Economic Development 76**

- Metropolitan Centers 2.1
- Industrial Land 2.2
- Institutions 2.3
- Cultural Economy 2.4



## **Land Management 90**

- Vacant Land and Structures 3.1
- Land Suitability 3.2
- Municipal Support Facilities 3.3

# THRIVE

In 2035, Philadelphia is a thriving metropolis. It is a city built on healthy neighborhoods and a diverse economy offering opportunity to everyone. Cultural and institutional resources and new enterprises flourish, and land is used in suitable and vibrant ways.



## Neighborhoods

Improve neighborhood livability



## Economic Development

Make Philadelphia more competitive in the metropolitan region



## Land Management

Capitalize on land assets



Improve the quality and diversity of new and existing **housing**



Manage and reduce **vacancy**

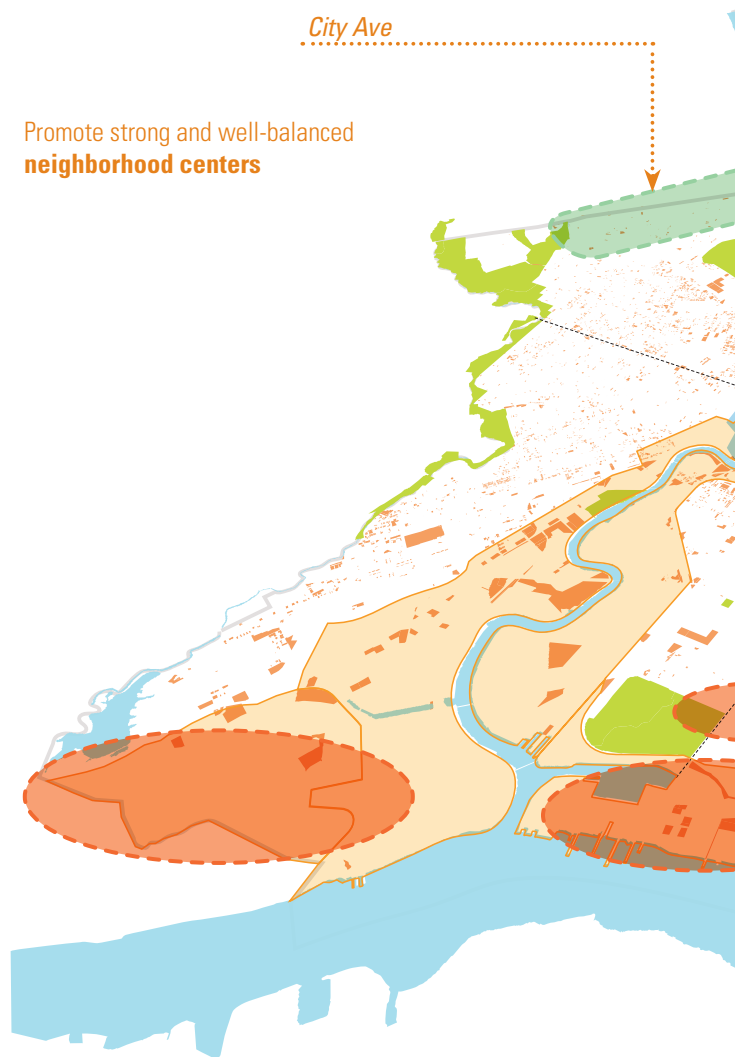


Promote strong and well-balanced **neighborhood centers**



Wayne Junction

City Ave



Manage all **municipal support facilities** efficiently



Grow Philadelphia's strong **institutional** job sectors



Develop **tourism and the creative economy** into a leading economic sector



Protect **sensitive lands** from over development

Far Northeast



Market East as Main Street



Support the growth of **economic centers**



Sports Complex AT&T Station TOD



Target **industrial** lands for continued growth and development



*Metropolitan Center*



*Metropolitan Subcenter*



*Regional Center*



*Industrial-Legacy Area*



*Vacant Land Opportunity*

# > Neighborhoods

## Improve neighborhood livability

Philadelphia is called “The City of Neighborhoods” as neighborhoods are the foundation of our city. The Neighborhoods element places communities and the people of Philadelphia at the forefront of *Philadelphia2035*. This element focuses on issues related to land use, economic development, and quality of life.

Each one of our neighborhoods has its own character and atmosphere, but all neighborhoods share common assets that strengthen and form their identity. Some neighborhood assets are intangible and social, which land use and economic policies cannot affect; these include ethnic identity, religious institutions, and great neighbors. But important physical development considerations such as public facilities, housing and commercial services are the kind of issues that can be affected by City policies and are considered in this section.

The Neighborhood Centers topic focuses on the community-serving public facilities such as libraries and health centers, commercial corridors, and transit stations that form the hearts of our communities. The policies in this topic aim to strengthen these assets by recommending capital improvements, zoning changes, and incentive programs. This topic also pays special attention to transit and healthy food access in our neighborhood centers.

The Housing topic addresses policies that affect both new construction and our existing housing stock with an emphasis on rehabilitation and infill. The housing policies set forth in *Philadelphia2035* ensure that Philadelphians have quality housing choices that reflect changing demographics and affordability needs while locating new housing to strengthen our neighborhood centers.

The strategies set forth in the Neighborhoods element are generally applicable from Mayfair to Mantua to Mount Airy. Specific recommendations for many of the strategies, such as public facilities locations, zoning map revisions and healthy-food access, will be determined in the forthcoming District Plans. All of the policies in the Neighborhoods element strive for intelligent use of limited resources, reducing costs, and strengthening our neighborhoods to improve our city’s economic and physical health.







## 1.1

### Definition | *Neighborhood Center*

- A neighborhood center can be:
1. A clustering of community-serving public facilities
  2. A viable commercial corridor or node
  3. A transit hub



*Fishtown library, recreation, and school center*



*Germantown Avenue commercial corridor (Source: GPTMC)*



*Temple University Regional Rail development*

## 1.1 Neighborhood Centers

**Goal:** Promote strong and well-balanced neighborhood centers

People define their neighborhood centers in many different ways. Some neighborhood residents see their center as the intersection where the elementary school, recreation or community arts center, and neighborhood park are all located. Others find their center at a regional rail station, elevated station, or subway stop. Certain neighborhoods describe their center as their commercial corridor, node, or shopping destination. The ideal neighborhood center has all three: transit, community services, and retail. In addition, convenient access to healthy food options is important to all neighborhoods.

Establishing locations for community-serving facilities, such as libraries, health centers and parks, is directly affected by the City of Philadelphia and its Capital Program. Policies and standards for public facilities in *Philadelphia2035* are tied to providing a state of good repair, easy access to residents, and locating these facilities to strengthen our neighborhood centers. By consolidating and co-locating community-serving public facilities, the City can ensure that basic services are convenient, well-maintained and cost efficient to run.

*Philadelphia2035* also recognizes that the siting an operation of schools play important roles in our neighborhood centers.

The most traditional neighborhood center is the commercial “Main Street” and Philadelphia has numerous such commercial corridors. Due to population changes and competition from new, often auto-oriented retail developments, some corridors are shrinking. Other corridors, however, are growing where new demand can be accommodated in existing or redeveloped sites. Commercial corridors can be strengthened by applying appropriate zoning to manage growth or decline, strategic use of grant and business-improvement programs, and capital improvements.

Transit-oriented development promotes one of Philadelphia’s best assets, the extensive transit system. By identifying station areas that have potential for growth due to their proximity to high-demand neighborhoods, available developable land, and suitability for higher-density development, the City can promote neighborhood growth in a sustainable and urbane way. Built-out neighborhoods can also turn to their transit hub to promote the growth, redevelopment, and desirability of neighborhood centers.

Access to healthy food is essential to all neighborhoods. By supporting urban agriculture, community gardens, farmers’ markets and healthy corner stores, as well as strengthening neighborhood centers, *Philadelphia2035* envisions communities with healthy food and lifestyle choices.

## Objectives

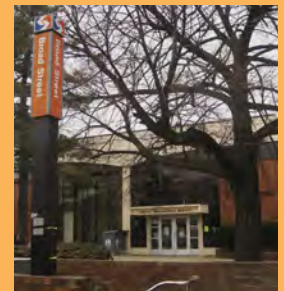
### 1.1.1 Strengthen neighborhood centers by clustering community-serving public facilities.

- a Co-locate, consolidate, and modernize community-serving public facilities, and locate them, along with schools, in neighborhood centers.
- b Establish level of service standards to prioritize capital improvement funding.
- c Locate community-serving public facilities and neighborhood parks on walkable streets.  
*See RENEW 6.3 for more information on neighborhood parks.*
- d Coordinate public and private investment to create innovative mixed-use developments.
- e Maintain community-serving public facilities in a state of good repair and energy efficiency.
- f Coordinate with educational institutions — public, charter, parochial, private schools, as examples — to understand opportunities and plan for joint-use.

#### 1.1.1.a Case Study Co-located Public Facilities at Tasker-Morris Station

The most dynamic neighborhood centers are those that offer both community-serving public facilities and commercial services in a walkable and transit-accessible location. A good example of this concept is the area near the Tasker-Morris station on the Broad Street Line in South Philadelphia.

A branch library, health center, and recreational facilities share a single block on the southwest corner of Broad & Morris, directly above the entrance to the station. An east-west bus route makes a connection at the station. Two blocks to the south and east, commercial corridors provide a mix of goods and services including small groceries, pharmacies, home goods, and clothing stores. Residents of this neighborhood center can access most daily necessities on foot, and can reach larger employment, commercial, and recreational resources in other parts of the city without private automobiles. The co-location of community serving public facilities above a high capacity transit line, investment in nearby commercial areas, and zoning permitting a mix of uses makes this possible.



Library at Subway Station

### 1.1.2 Strengthen neighborhood centers by developing viable commercial corridors.

- a Focus commercial zoning on the strongest retail blocks of commercial corridors.
- b Transition non-commercially viable portions of commercial corridors that are in decline to more appropriate land uses.  
*See RENEW 8.1.3 for more information on preserving historic assets in commercial corridors.*
- c Support commercial infill development and rehabilitation through financial, zoning, and redevelopment incentives.
- d Continue to establish business improvement districts and special services districts and encourage establishment of business associations.
- e Limit development of new auto-oriented commercial centers to strategic locations that complement the overall vitality of surrounding neighborhoods.
- f Prohibit parking lots as primary uses along viable, pedestrian-oriented commercial corridors.

#### 1.1.2.d

**Definition | Business Improvement District (BID) and Special Services District (SSD)**

BIDs are areas where businesses pay an additive tax to fund improvements within the BID boundaries. SSDs provide similar services as BIDs, but are not funded through an additive tax or fee.

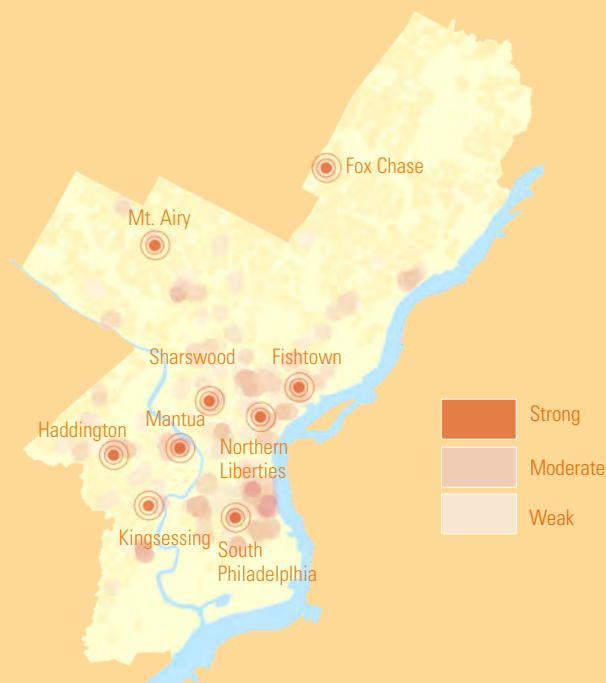


Center City District Streetcleaner  
(Source: Peter Tobia)



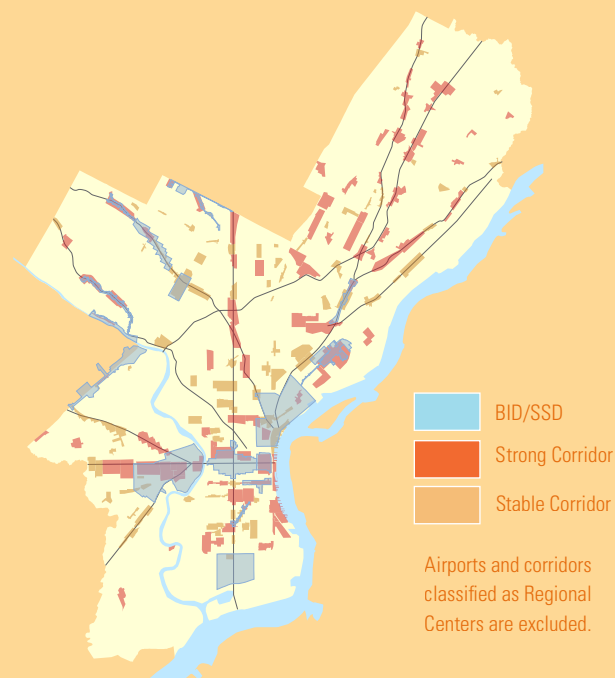
### 1.1.1.a Areas of Clustered Community-Serving Public Facilities

Clusters of three or more community-serving public facilities in a quarter-mile radius of each other, that create a strong neighborhood center are highlighted in red. These facilities include recreation centers, neighborhood parks, playground/tot lots, libraries, health clinics, and senior centers. Fire stations, police stations, and Philadelphia Gas Works service centers also are important community-based facilities.



### 1.1.2.d Strong and Stable Commercial Corridors

A 2009 report by Philadelphia LISC and Econsult states that Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and Special Service Districts (SSDs) are the most effective intervention associated with improved corridor performance.



### 1.1.3.a

#### Definition| *Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)*

Mixed-use development, including residential, commercial, and institutional uses, centered at transit stations to maximize access to and ridership of public transportation. TOD generally encourages higher density and reduced parking requirements.



*TOD development at 36th and Sansom Streets*

### 1.1.3 Strengthen neighborhood centers by promoting transit-oriented development around stations.

- Encourage higher density, mixed-use developments at stations through zoning and Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) designation.
- Focus TOD efforts around nodes identified by PCPC staff, and encourage context-sensitive density at these nodes according to the guidelines in the proposed new Zoning Code.
- Coordinate transit-oriented development efforts with transit providers.
  - Ensure that transit agencies' capital investments, service frequency, and intermodal connections are coordinated with the City's transit-oriented-development priorities and private development investments.
  - Support SEPTA's strategic target of one TOD project per year by collaborating on their TOD portfolio and otherwise facilitating conversations between the agency and the development community.
- Promote transit-oriented development at transit stations on new or extended routes.
- Create sustainable parking strategies for commuter transit stations to meet demand for park-and-ride facilities.

See [CONNECT 4.1.3](#) for more information on transit-oriented development.

### 1.1.3.a Case Study Wayne Junction

Wayne Junction, a SEPTA regional rail station located at the crossroads of Germantown, Wayne, and Windrim Avenues, is an excellent candidate for transit-oriented development. In 2008, it was the focus of the PCPC's Germantown and Nicetown Transit-Oriented Plan. Wayne Junction's frequent rail, bus, and trackless trolley service already attracts high ridership, but the surrounding former industrial sites lay fallow. Through zoning changes to allow mixed-use commercial and residential redevelopment, historic certification of significant buildings, marketing and sale of city-owned sites, and renovation of the station by SEPTA, Wayne Junction has the potential to become a major transit-oriented development success.



Proposed site plan from Germantown and Nicetown Transit-Oriented Plan  
(Source: KSK Architects Planners Historians, Inc.)

#### 1.1.3.a

#### Definition | *Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID)*

The Transit Revitalization Investment District Act of 2004 (TRID) is Pennsylvania legislation that promotes transit-oriented development. TRID designation accesses planning monies, prioritizes state funding, and allows value capture areas that function like tax-increment financing districts for funding transit improvements.

#### 1.1.3.b

#### Definition | *Type I, II and III TOD Nodes*

As part of work on the proposed Zoning Code, the PCPC staff undertook detailed analysis to identify tiers of TOD and delineate appropriate levels of density and design guidelines at each type of node. Candidate locations for Type I (regional) nodes include AT&T Station, the Girard and 46th St Stations, and the Broad Street Line stations between Center City and Temple University. Candidate Type II (neighborhood) nodes include the Temple University Regional Rail station and Wayne Junction. Candidate Type III (Park and Ride) stations include Eastwick and Torresdale.

### 1.1.4 Provide convenient access to healthy food for all residents.

- a Maximize multimodal access to fresh food by encouraging grocery stores, healthy corner stores, and outdoor markets at key transit nodes and within transit-oriented development zones.
  - Coordinate efforts between the Food Trust, PDPH, MOTU, SEPTA and PCPC to open farmers' markets at the busiest stations in the system.
  - Identify opportunities to incorporate open spaces suitable for new farmers' markets into larger development projects, such as the Piazza at Schmidts.
  - Farmers' markets provide excellent access to local, fresh foods, but their seasonal availability makes access to year-round healthy food at corner stores and supermarkets a priority.
- b Support agriculture and food distribution programs at recreation centers, schools, and other public facilities located in key neighborhood centers.
- c Establish farmers' markets along commercial corridors within neighborhood centers.
- d Increase local food production through zoning designations that permit urban agriculture as-of-right in strategic locations and allow for roof-top gardening.
- e Develop standards and guidelines for community gardens and urban agriculture sites on public lands to ensure transparency, continuity of use, and community benefit.
- f Work with supermarket developers to create site designs that respond to neighborhood context and allow access for seniors, children, and other transit-dependent and mobility-limited populations.

#### 1.1.4.a

#### Definition | *Healthy Food*

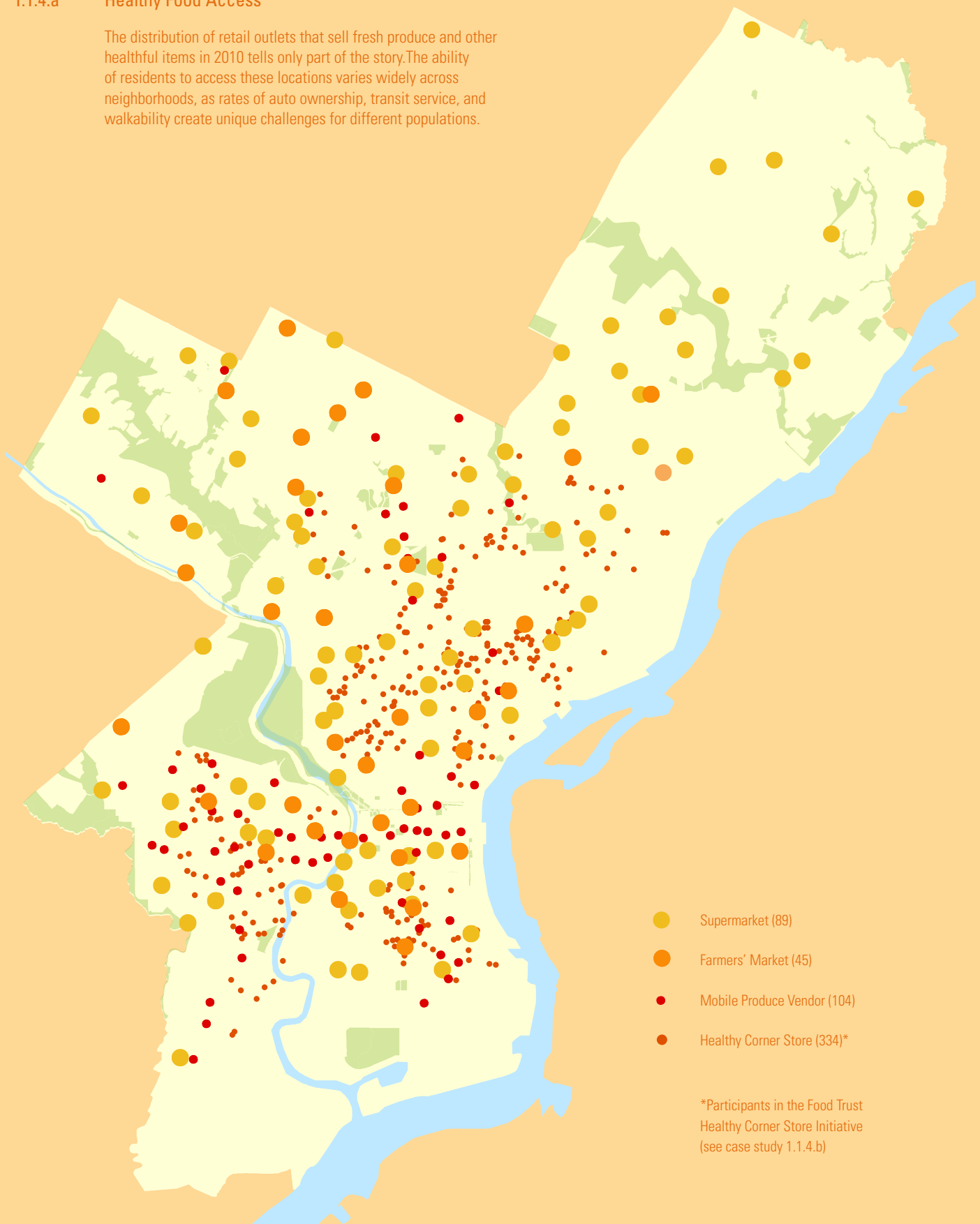
Those foods identified in the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NEMS) supported by the National Institutes of Health: fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads and cereals, lean meats and poultry, and low-fat milk.



Clark Park farmers' market  
(Source: GPTMC)

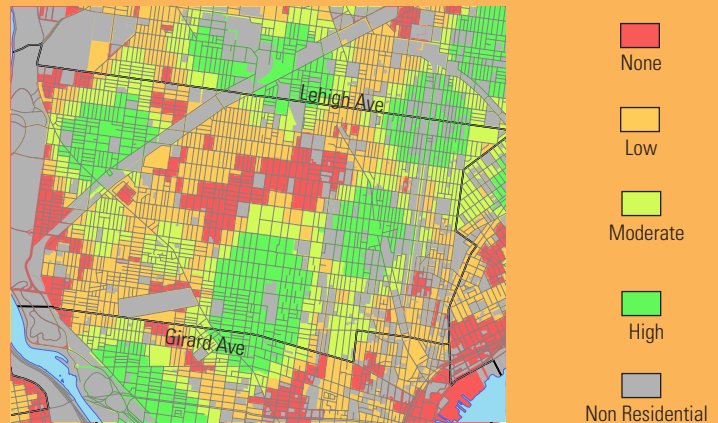
#### 1.1.4.a Healthy Food Access

The distribution of retail outlets that sell fresh produce and other healthful items in 2010 tells only part of the story. The ability of residents to access these locations varies widely across neighborhoods, as rates of auto ownership, transit service, and walkability create unique challenges for different populations.



#### 1.1.4.a Case Study Food Access

The Philadelphia Department of Public Health conducted a Food Access Study in 2010-2011. The study provided a comprehensive assessment of current conditions, calculated the proportion of residents within walking distance of healthy food sources, and weighted those sources according to the level of service they provide (e.g., a 24-hour supermarket scored much higher than a seasonal, once-weekly farmers' market). Analyzing these data in conjunction with factors like walkability and auto ownership rates allows planners to recommend zoning and infrastructure changes and improvements to maximize residents' access to healthy foods.



Accessibility to Healthy Food in Lower North Philadelphia  
(Source: Philadelphia Department of Public Health)

#### 1.1.4.a Case Study Healthy Corner Store Initiative

The Food Trust and the Philadelphia Department of Public Health are partnering with as many as 1,000 corner stores to increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods through the Healthy Corner Store Initiative (HCSI). The program provides education and micro-grants to encourage store owners to expand their selection of healthy options. *Philadelphia2035* District Plans will identify strategic locations along commercial corridors and near transit stations for these and other fresh food outlets to create a more equitable food environment throughout Philadelphia.



Corner Store Display  
(Source: PDPH)

#### 1.1.4.e Case Study GreenThumb

GreenThumb, run by the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, is the nation's largest urban gardening program. GreenThumb assists over 600 urban gardens and 20,000 garden members. In order for an urban garden to receive recognition, materials, education, and services through GreenThumb, the community garden must be registered with the City and meet specific guidelines. Gardeners must attend trainings as well. In 2010, New York City finalized revisions to its community garden rules to further protect community gardens on public lands.



New York City  
(Source: The New York Times,  
American Community Gardening Association)



## 1.2 Housing

**Goal:** Improve the quality and diversity of new and existing housing

Philadelphia has an aging housing stock with over 75 percent of houses more than 50 years old. This, coupled with large amounts of vacant land and structures in parts of the city, makes strong housing policies very important. As vocalized very clearly in the *Philadelphia2035* community meetings, Philadelphians want existing housing and infill housing to be the City's priority. The housing priorities of *Philadelphia2035* reflect the desire to have quality housing choices that strengthen the fabric of all neighborhoods. Most importantly, the location of new housing, particularly housing supported by government funding, should be prioritized based on adjacency to existing community assets and strengths: commercial corridors, transit stations, and stable residential blocks.

### 1.2.2.a

#### Definition | *Housing Choice*

The ability to have a choice of quality, safe and affordable housing for either lease or purchase, regardless of income.

### 1.2.2.d

#### Definition | *Accessory Dwelling Unity Unit*

A secondary housing unit on the same site often known as "in-law suite." The draft new Zoning Code includes one 800 sq. ft. or less accessory dwelling unit per single-family detached or twin home as a defined use.

### 1.2.2.e

#### Definition | *Accessible Housing*

Housing that allows persons with physical disabilities to enter and move within their home.



*MLK Housing Development*  
(Source: [www.phila.gov/ohcd/](http://www.phila.gov/ohcd/))

## Objectives >

### 1.2.1 Stabilize and upgrade existing housing stock.

- a Shift public investments towards housing reuse and rehabilitation.
  - For the past 10 years, the City has spent 64 percent of its subsidized housing funds on new construction projects. Over the past three years, that rate has increased to 87 percent.
- b Expand housing preservation and rehabilitation incentive programs.
- c Retrofit housing to improve energy efficiency.

See [RENEW 8.1.1](#) for more information on preserving cultural, historic and architectural assets.

### 1.2.2 Ensure a wide mix of housing is available to residents of all income levels.

- a Promote mixed-income housing developments and a broad range of housing choice throughout the city.
- b Reduce concentrations of poverty.
  - Consider existing poverty levels when siting new affordable housing developments.
- c Expand existing property tax programs for low- and moderate-income property owners.
- d Provide a wider variety of housing options for an aging population such as aging-in-place programs and accessory housing options.
  - The Philadelphia Corporation for Aging (PCA) expects the population 65 and older to increase from 13 percent of the total population, as measured in 2005, to 16 percent in 2025 (PCA, 2006).
  - Seventy-eight percent of seniors age 60 and older own their own homes. Seniors 65 and older make up 30 percent of total homeowners citywide. The PCA expects to see a trend away from institutional living for seniors (PHA, 2006).
- e Expand accessible housing choices, including "visitable" units, which allow for barrier-free access into the first floor and to a first-floor toilet room.
- f Work with developers to create mixed-income developments at transit stations to improve access to transport, jobs, and services for all Philadelphians.
  - The proposed new Zoning Code includes density bonuses for the provision of affordable housing in select commercial mixed-use zoning districts at TOD zones and in the Metropolitan Center.

### 1.2.3 Promote new affordable housing developments to strengthen existing neighborhood assets.

- a Locate new affordable housing near commercial corridors and transit stations.
- b Prioritize infill of gap vacancies on otherwise stable blocks over large subdivision developments.

#### 1.2.3.b Definition | *Infill*

Construction on vacant or underutilized parcels of land within areas that have already been substantially developed.

#### 1.2.3.b Case Study Mixed-Income Infill Housing

The Bookmark Apartments is a 47-unit mixed-income, mixed-used development located in Portland, Oregon. Built in 2002, it has 28 market-rate units and 19 affordable units. The ground floor contains a public library, retail space, and shared open space. The building is located near transit, entitling the developers to a density bonus through Portland's transit-friendly zoning code.



(Source: [www.bookmarkapartments.com](http://www.bookmarkapartments.com))



*Thin Flats, Northern Liberties*



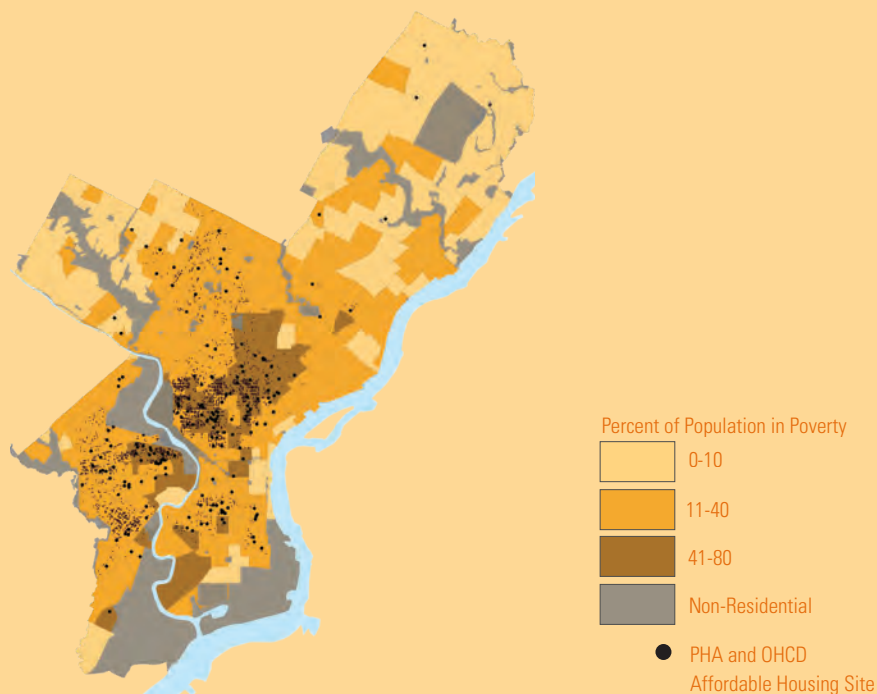
*Infill, Manayunk*



*Infill, 21st Street*

#### 1.2.2.b Poverty and Affordable Housing Concentrations

High concentrations of affordable housing are often located in census tracts with high levels of poverty.



# > Economic Development

Make  
Philadelphia  
more  
competitive  
in the  
metropolitan  
region

Growth of Philadelphia's job and tax base is critical to the success of both the city and the Greater Philadelphia region. For several decades, the city has experienced erosion in employment and tax ratable properties. Philadelphia's economy has lagged behind surrounding counties and other peer cities as well. But the tides are turning in favor of Philadelphia's economic resurgence: Philadelphia remains a dynamic force in the region's economic market, the population has increased for the first time since 1950, and *Philadelphia2035* forecasts 100,000 new residents and 40,000 additional jobs over the next 25 years.

A key factor in the economic revival of Philadelphia is its central location in the Northeast Megaregion, a globally significant economic superengine stretching from Northern Virginia to Southern Maine. The Northeast Megaregion produces 20 percent of the nation's gross domestic product, with only two percent of the nation's land area, and is expected to add one million new residents over the next generation (*America2050*, 2010). To maximize Philadelphia's share of this growth, *Philadelphia2035* recommends a series of strategies to reinforce the city's many unique urban assets and advance Philadelphia's position as a globally competitive component of the megaregion.

Among the city's unique assets are its existing and emerging employment centers. The Center City/University City area makes up the Metropolitan Center of Philadelphia, and generates jobs in leading education, health care, cultural, professional services, and hospitality sectors. The Navy Yard, Sports Complex, and Philadelphia International Airport comprise one of the region's most dynamic Metropolitan Subcenters. Located across the city are several nationally-renowned universities and hospitals that are both key employers, and sources of entrepreneurial talent and innovation for Philadelphia.

The full realization of our economic potential requires the City to infuse entrepreneurial energy into areas long associated with Philadelphia's rich industrial past. Numerous industrial-legacy areas, weakened by the decline in manufacturing, now present opportunities for redevelopment into modern industrial enterprises, and/or into creative mixes of other land uses, including institutional, commercial, and residential.







## 2.1 Metropolitan and Regional Centers

Goal: Support the growth of economic centers

National trends suggest a renewed interest in cities and the advantages of urban living. The Center City/University City Metropolitan Center spans the area between the Delaware River and 40th Street and between Girard Avenue and Washington Avenue. With some 150,000 residents, Philadelphia's clean, safe, and livable downtown area is a national success story. Accessibility to transit, a pedestrian-friendly environment, boundless urban amenities and affordable commercial and residential rents make the Metropolitan Center well-positioned to attract new firms and new talent to Philadelphia's labor force.

Fifty percent of Philadelphia employment is in Center City and University City and a large majority of jobs in three of Philadelphia's strongest economic sectors (office, education/health services, and tourism/retail) are in this downtown area. Despite the national economic downturn, the Center City/University City office market has proven to be remarkably resilient and boasts high office occupancy rates in comparison to the Greater Philadelphia region's submarkets.

*Philadelphia2035* also supports the Metropolitan Subcenter comprised of the Philadelphia International Airport, Navy Yard, and Sports Complex. The Philadelphia International Airport is critically important to Philadelphia's competitive edge. The Philadelphia Navy Yard – the nation's first naval shipyard – is now a dynamic mixed-use office, research, and industrial park. The Sports Complex proudly houses four national sports teams and has tremendous income-generating potential for Philadelphia. *Philadelphia2035* offers recommendations to diversify Philadelphia's economy by supporting the complementary growth of the metropolitan subcenter to ensure its long-term stability and advancement.

Other strategies of *Philadelphia2035* focus on existing and emerging regional centers. Regional Centers, such as the shopping and office centers along City Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard, are significant employment hubs that support a variety of commercial, professional, institutional, and light industrial activities. Just like Philadelphia's Metropolitan Center and Subcenter, these Regional Centers support Philadelphia's economy by drawing visitors from beyond the city limits.

### 2.1 Employment in Selected Centers (and percent of city total)

Metropolitan Center	
Center City and University City	335,000 (50%)
Metropolitan Subcenter	
PHL, Navy Yard, Sports Complex	35,000 (5%)
Regional Center	
Existing	
Far Northeast	45,000 (7%)
City Avenue	30,000 (4%)
Emerging	
North Broad	20,000 (3%)
Total	465,000 (69%)

(Estimated 2010)

#### 2.1.1 Definition | *Metropolitan Center*

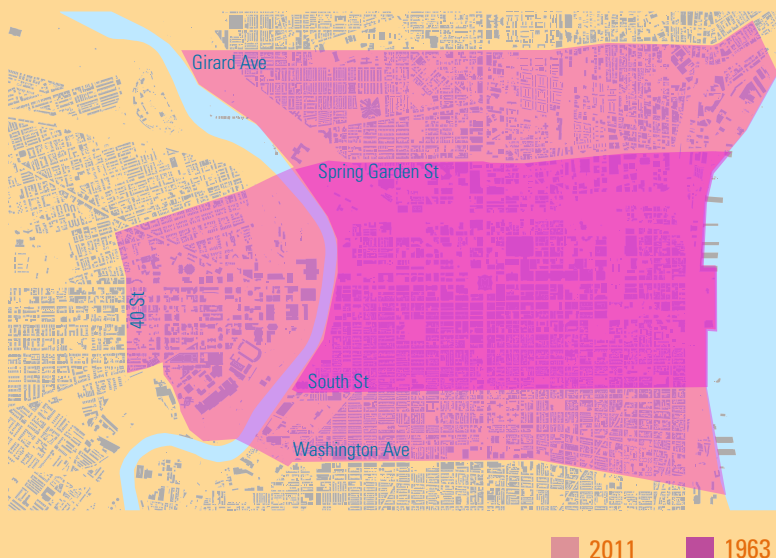
A metropolitan center is the primary focal point of an urban region; a highly dense, compact, mixed-use area that is the primary hub of the region's economic, educational, and cultural activities and institutions. Center City and University City make up Philadelphia's Metropolitan Center.

## Objectives >

### 2.1.1 Support and promote Center City/University City as the primary economic center of the region.

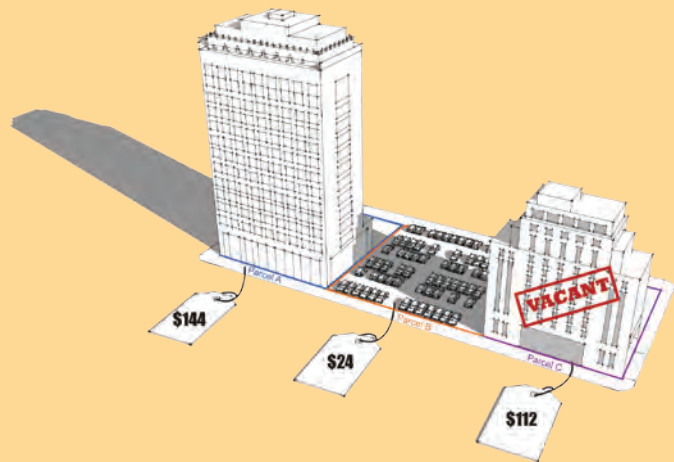
- a Expand the definition of the Metropolitan Center to include both Center City and University City.  
*See [CONNECT 4.1.1.g](#) for more information on 30th Street Station.*
- b Focus C-5 (or equivalent in the draft zoning code), the highest commercial mixed-use zoning district, around our transit hubs in Center City and University City.
- c Review business and property tax policies to create a more development-friendly environment.
- d Provide incentives for the attraction and retention of jobs in the Metropolitan Center.
- e Implement plans for the Central Delaware Waterfront to extend neighborhoods to the river, improve waterfront access, and renew obsolete industrial areas with new uses.  
*See [CONNECT 4.1.2](#) for more information about Delaware Waterfront rapid transit.*  
*See [RENEW 6.1.1](#) for more information about Delaware Waterfront trails.*
- f Redevelop Market East to become a more vibrant retail and entertainment destination, a gateway to Chinatown, and an intermodal transit center.
- g Create a transition plan for the Callowhill Industrial Area in northeast Center City to explore how to integrate this area appropriately and seamlessly into surrounding neighborhoods.
- h Discourage developments that feature structured parking as a primary use within the boundaries of the metropolitan center through parking policies, zoning, and other regulatory mechanisms.
  - Undertake a local study to test the prevailing hypothesis that the provision of parking induces demand, worsens congestion, and negates investments in transit and active transportation infrastructure.

#### 2.1.1.a Philadelphia's Expanding Metropolitan Center



### 2.1.1.c Diagram of Property Tax Land Assessments

Property taxes are determined by assessing two factors: 1) the value of land and 2) the value of the improvements. In Center City, properties on the same block often have widely different assessed land values, even though such differences are neither accurate nor fair. Undervalued land assessments on underutilized parcels, such as surface parking lots and single-story buildings, discourage development. More accurate land assessments would encourage owners to develop or sell their properties.



*Example land assessment values by square foot*

### 2.1.1.f Case Study Market East as Main Street

In 2009 the PCPC published a strategic plan for the area surrounding Market Street east of Broad Street to Independence Mall. The Market East Strategic Plan balances comprehensive long-term economic development goals with aggressive short-term strategies addressing existing issues. The vision is to restore Market Street's role as Philadelphia's Main Street by increasing density, promoting a mix of uses, and creating a new intermodal transit center. Increased density includes development of the surface parking lot at 8th and Market and encouraging the redevelopment of single- and two-story blocks. Proposed new uses include hotels, loft housing, and expansion of Chinatown and Thomas Jefferson University and Hospital to Market Street. Tenth Street is envisioned as a new gateway for both Chinatown and Jefferson. A new intermodal transit center would expand the existing bus depot and integrate it into the Market East regional rail station.



*(Source: Parsons Brinckerhoff, Market East Strategic Plan, 2009)*

## 2.1.2 Strengthen Metropolitan Subcenters.

- a Support the expansion of Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) as a globally competitive international airport.
  - PHL is one of the largest economic engines in Pennsylvania, generating \$14 billion annually into the local economy. Two hundred businesses linked to the Airport employ 42,000 workers (PHL, 2009).
  - Support the physical growth of the airport and the *Airport Master Plan*. Underutilized land near the airport, such as surface parking lots and undeveloped areas in Eastwick should be developed for airport expansion and supportive use. Airport-related development includes business parks, distribution centers, information technology complexes, and hotels.
  - Airport growth should consider sensitive land concerns and noise mitigation issues.

*See [CONNECT 4.4](#) for more information about strengthening Philadelphia's global connections.*
- b Transform the Sports Complex into a higher-density sports and leisure transit-oriented development.
- c Continue to develop the Navy Yard as a premier location for 21st century industry and mixed-use development.

### 2.1.2

#### Definition | *Metropolitan Subcenter*

Metropolitan Subcenters are major destinations that serve the entire metropolitan area and offer a mix of economic activities. Philadelphia's Metropolitan Subcenter is comprised of:

1. Philadelphia Navy Yard
2. Sports Complex
3. Philadelphia International Airport

## 2.1.3 Encourage the growth and development of both existing and emerging Regional Centers.

- a Strengthen the City Avenue Regional Center by continuing cooperation with Lower Merion Township to increase use of transit, upgrade walkability, and attract complementary job-creating uses.
- b Reinforce the Far Northeast Regional Center by capturing new industrial, corporate, aviation, and retail demand generated by improvements to I-95, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and Roosevelt Boulevard.

*See [CONNECT 4.1.2.a](#) for more information about the Roosevelt Boulevard rapid transit.*
- c Guide emerging (e.g., Temple University/North Broad Street) and existing Regional Centers to develop job-generating investments, while respecting the character of their surrounding neighborhoods.

### 2.1.3

#### Definition | *Regional Center*

Regional Centers are smaller destinations with significant employment bases that occupy over one million square feet, such as large malls and office complexes. Regional Centers serve multiple municipalities, and, specific to Philadelphia, serve multiple neighborhoods.

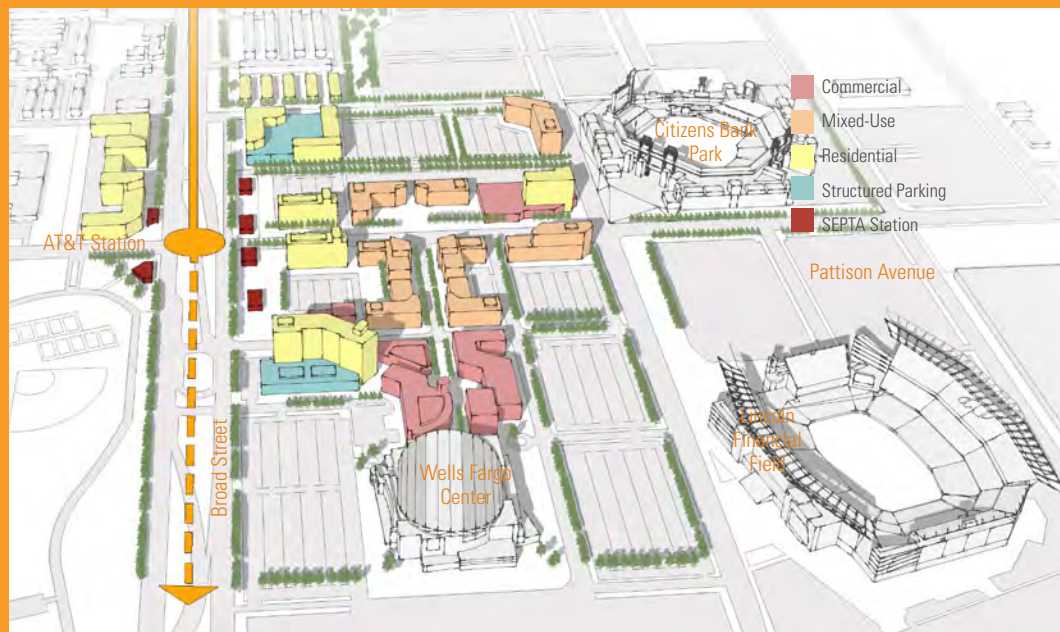
### 2.1.2.c Case Study Urban Outfitters

When Urban Outfitters renovated five derelict Navy Yard buildings as its new corporate headquarters in 2006, it sent a message that the Navy Yard can be much more than a traditional office or industrial park. The architects created a gritty, lived-in atmosphere for over 1,000 Urban Outfitters employees. Interiors have double-height ceilings with exposed brick, concrete, and timber. The mixed-use complex includes dramatic new spaces for a commissary, community hub, restaurant, coffee bar, and fitness center. A 20 percent federal historic tax credit was utilized in this 285,000 sq. ft., \$100 million adaptive reuse project. The unified campus provides individual workshops for the company's brands.





## 2.1.2.b Urban Design Study | Sports Complex as Transit-Oriented Development Concept



*Philadelphia City Planning Commission*



*(Source: Philadelphia Eagles)*

Currently the Sports Complex area has three major attractions: the Wells Fargo Center, Lincoln Financial Field, and Citizens Bank Park. Each stadium operates as an independent, self-contained venue and is surrounded by large surface parking lots. Recognizing the high attendance at events, the existing Broad Street Line subway station, and the large amounts of available land, the Sports Complex area is ideal for redevelopment as a transit-oriented development (TOD) with hotel, retail, residential, and entertainment mixed-use development. New developments using TOD standards including density and pedestrian orientation can make the walk from AT&T Station inviting, safe, and interesting by lining the sidewalks with shops and restaurants and minimizing curb-cuts for parking lots.

## 2.2 Industrial Land

**Goal:** Target industrial lands for continued growth and development

Decades of disinvestment in the manufacturing industrial base has stripped away Philadelphia's former status as the "Workshop of the World." However, an industrial land study led by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC) shows that the overall decline in Philadelphia's industrial employment base has been tempered by a shift away from traditional manufacturing towards construction, transportation, logistics, and advanced manufacturing. Philadelphia currently has over 100 million square feet of occupied industrial buildings.

*Philadelphia2035* prepares the city for a modern industrial economy with a two-pronged approach to industrial land. The first identifies industrial areas that are well-positioned to support modern industry. These areas have superior infrastructure and workforce access and have large, contiguous parcels that enable the agglomeration of many businesses into industrial districts or corridors. The second approach is to transition scattered, obsolete industrial lands to other productive land uses. Together these strategies protect industrial lands where it makes sense, and where it does not, invites the creative reuse of land and buildings.

### Objectives >

#### 2.2.1 Ensure an adequate supply and distribution of industrially zoned land.

- a Align industrial zoning to areas with active industrial users and good highway, freight, and labor access.
- b Modernize transportation and utilities to support competitive industry.  
*See CONNECT 4.3 and 4.4 for more information on highways and ports.*  
*See CONNECT 5.1.3 for more information on utility capacity.*
- c Use industrial land management techniques for identified "Industrial Protection Areas."
- d Maintain a citywide inventory of as much as 16,000 acres of industrially zoned land to meet industrial demand and attract new industrial users.
- e Transform the Hunting Park West industrial area into a vibrant commercial center and an industrial mixed-use hub with creative, clean industries and light manufacturing.
- f Create a long-term plan for the lower Schuylkill industrial-legacy area that emphasizes its location between the Navy Yard, the Philadelphia International Airport and the Metropolitan Center and promotes the development of region-serving light industry.

*See RENEW 6.1.1 for more information about the Schuylkill River Trail.*

### 2.2

#### Definition | PIDC Industrial Study

The Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation (PIDC), a nonprofit, quasi-governmental agency, conducted a comprehensive analysis of Philadelphia's industrial lands. The PIDC's *Industrial Market Analysis and Land Use Strategy* looks at historical trends, today's industrial users and industrially zoned lands, forecasts future industrial needs, and identifies areas for continued industrial use. The study finds that over 100,000 people are employed by public and private enterprises that use industrially zoned land, and that the industrial sector contributes nearly 15 percent of the City's annual tax revenue.



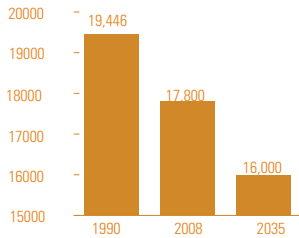
*Philadelphia Brewing Company  
(Source: GPTMC)*

#### 2.2.1.c

##### Definition | Industrial Protection Area

An Industrial Protection Area (IPA) is a proposed designation that reinforces industrial use through zoning, infrastructure investment, and special district management. The intent is to preserve the viability of industrial land by reducing market pressures to convert to non-industrial uses, and to ensure the availability of industrial real estate at locations and scales needed to grow industry and related operations.

## 2.2.2 Acreage of Industrially Zoned Land, Past and Projected



### 2.2.2.b Definition | *Industrial Mixed-Use Zones*

Two industrial mixed-use zoning districts have been proposed by the Zoning Code Commission. IRMX — Industrial Residential Mixed-Use — accommodates a mix of residences, neighborhood-oriented commercial uses, and low-intensity industrial uses including artists and artisan manufacturing. ICMX — Industrial Commercial Mixed-Use — supports a mix of service, commercial, and industrial uses. The IRMX and ICMX districts provide new opportunities to integrate light industry into mixed-use communities.



*Mishkan Shalom, adaptive reuse*



*Sherman Mills, adaptive reuse*

## 2.2.2 Reposition former industrial sites for new users.

- Develop transition plans for obsolete industrial sites and districts, preserving industrial heritage where appropriate
- Rezone obsolete industrial sites and districts for neighborhood-compatible redevelopment.  
*See RENEW 8.1.2 for more information on reusing industrial infrastructure for new uses.*
- Apply industrial mixed-use zoning in transitioning areas.
- Encourage arts and creative industry live-work activity in new and existing developments where appropriate.
- Provide environmental remediation programs and site assemblage funding for industrial sites.

### 2.2.1.a Case Study Penn Jersey Paper

Penn Jersey Paper (PJP) selected 30 acres in the Northeast Industrial District adjacent to the Northeast Airport to build its state-of-the-art warehouse/distribution facility in 2010 because of its large size, industrial zoning, and quick access to interstate highways. This well-established paper goods distributor has operated in Philadelphia since the 1960s and is a leader in its industry in the city. The company needed to rapidly address its diversification and expansion requirements, and had a limited number of assembled, large, industrially-zoned sites to choose from. Fortunately, the land surrounding the Northeast Airport was zoned and protected for this type of use, allowing the project to move forward by right. PJP will house around 250 employees, resulting in roughly \$1 million in tax benefits annually for the city.



*Penn Jersey Paper  
(Source: PIDC)*

### 2.2.1.c Illustrative Distribution of Industrially-Zoned Land, 2035

Philadelphia has nearly 17,800 acres of industrially-zoned land. This acreage includes: major transportation, utility, and public service facilities; facilities used actively for production, research, distribution; and repair activities, and properties that are substantially vacant or underutilized.

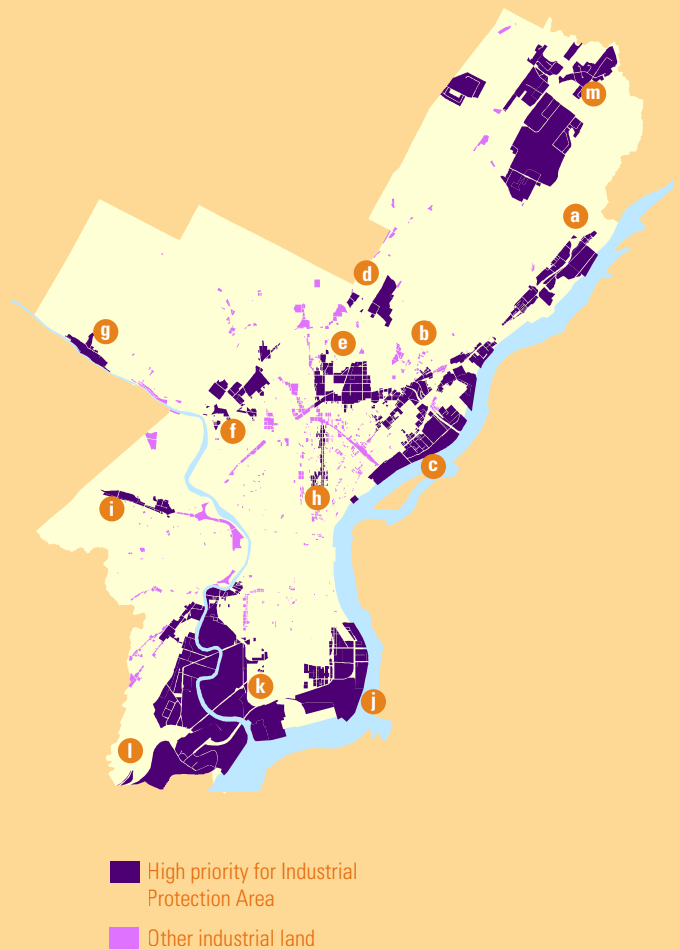
The majority of current industrially-zoned acreage is concentrated in 13 districts that have long histories of industrial use and supporting infrastructure. These districts have enough size, accessibility, capacity for growth, and consistency of industrial use to warrant special attention to enhance their competitiveness for retention and attraction of modern industry. The PCPC recommends prioritizing these industrial districts as Industrial Protection Areas (IPA) so that appropriate zoning, investment, and economic incentives can be applied in a consistent and comprehensive manner.

Much of the remainder of the city's industrially-zoned acreage, while still viable and beneficial for industrial activity, would not be prioritized as IPA candidates due to discontinuity of industrial use, lack of land for expansion, and/or adjacency to incompatible land uses.

Estimates by the PCPC and PIDC indicate that as much as 16,000 acres of industrially-zoned land will be needed citywide if Philadelphia is to support growth in population and employment to 2035 and beyond. This map illustrates a balanced distribution of 16,000 industrially-zoned acres, including IPA candidates and general industrial parcels. This map provides a reference as District Plans and Zoning Map Revisions are prepared (Source: PCPC 2010; PIDC 2010).

Industrial Districts  
a. Upper North Delaware  
b. Aramingo  
c. Lower North Delaware  
d. Lawncrest  
e. Hunting Park East  
f. Hunting Park West

g. Roxborough  
h. American Street  
i. Parkside  
j. South Delaware  
k. Grays Ferry  
l. Southwest  
m. Northeast



### 2.3.2.a Case Study Penn Alexander School

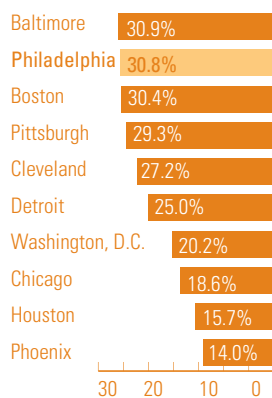
Opened in 2001, the Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander University of Pennsylvania Partnership School (Penn Alexander School) is a public elementary school resulting from a partnership between Penn, the School District of Philadelphia, and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers. The school's catchment area includes parts of the Spruce Hill, Walnut Hill, Garden Court and Cedar Park neighborhoods of West Philadelphia. Enrollment is just under 500 students. Penn provides a per-student operating subsidy and class sizes are substantially lower than the citywide average. Penn's Graduate School of Education provides student teachers, professional development courses, and enriched curricula in literacy, math, and science.



(Source: Penn Alexander School )



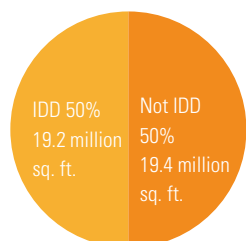
## 2.3 Percentage of Employed People Working in Education and Medicine in 2008



(Source: Census Bureau, 2008  
Economic Census)

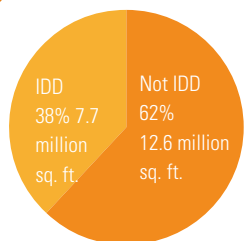
### 2.3.1 Definition | *Institutional Development Districts (IDD)*

#### Current Zoning of Colleges & Universities



Total College & University sq. ft.:  
38.6 million

#### Current Zoning of Hospitals



Total Hospital sq. ft.: 20.3 million

An Institutional Development District (IDD) is a zoning district that allows institutions, such as universities, schools, and hospitals, to have a publicly approved plan of development for future growth and change. IDD zoning provides predictability for both institutions and neighbors through long-range master planning. IDD zoning also enables the City to coordinate resources with institutions.

## 2.3 Institutions

### Goal: Grow Philadelphia's strong institutional job sectors

Philadelphia is home to numerous world-class universities and hospitals, including the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Saint Joseph's University, La Salle University, Thomas Jefferson University and Hospital, Pennsylvania Hospital and Fox Chase / Jeanes Hospital. The Metropolitan Center alone has 13 institutions of higher education with nearly 100,000 students living on campus or in adjacent neighborhoods. The continued growth and expansion of our education and health services industry is a vital part of Philadelphia's long-term economic development.

"Eds & Meds" institutions serve as our employment and education hubs and consequently have tremendous influence on their surrounding neighborhoods. The steady stream of students and employees traversing their campuses impacts how residents experience their neighborhood. Physical campus development has long-lasting effects on neighborhood character. Irresponsible growth can create tension between institutions and communities. Instead, *Philadelphia2035* recommends that institutions engage surrounding communities as they plan for future growth and proactively seek community-building opportunities. Such neighborhood-institutional collaboration can produce great benefits for communities and enhance the living and working environments for students and employees of the institutions.

### Objectives >

#### 2.3.1 Encourage institutional development and expansion through policy and careful consideration of land resources.

- Require creation of a campus plan for all medical and higher education institutions.
- Establish a City liaison for institutional relations to identify and pursue opportunities for growth of educational and health-care institutions, and encourage greater cooperation between the City and institutions.

#### 2.3.2 Create cooperative relationships between institutions and neighbors.

- Encourage medical and higher educational institutions to create neighborhood partnerships for the improvement of K-12 schools, public safety, neighborhood amenities, and housing.
- Ensure that public schools are good neighborhood partners.
  - Expand partnerships with local elementary and high schools.
  - Local public schools should be seen as community hubs and multi-use centers. Expanding the programming and use offered at public schools will further co-location efforts and cooperative relationships with neighborhoods.
- Locate new public schools in neighborhood centers and in emerging new communities where projections indicate need.

See *THRIVE 1.1* for more information on neighborhood centers

## 2.4 Cultural Economy

Goal: **Develop tourism and creative economy into leading economic sectors**

No other American city can match Philadelphia's cultural and historic heritage. Many "firsts" have occurred in Philadelphia: the first capital of the nation, the first zoo to open in the United States, the first art museum in America, and the first computer built in the world. More than two million tourists visit Independence National Historical Park, which includes the Liberty Bell Center, the Independence Visitor Center, and the National Constitution Center, each year.

Philadelphia has many attractions that support a diverse cultural economy and *Philadelphia2035* recognizes the untapped potential of Philadelphia's cultural tourism and hospitality market. With dozens of museums, galleries, and theaters, Philadelphia is a buzzing cultural destination. The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts alone has over one million annual visitors. Philadelphia also has a flourishing restaurant scene and has more than doubled the number of its fine-dining restaurants since 1992. The expanded Pennsylvania Convention Center is the largest continuous exhibit space in the Northeast, and has the largest convention center ballroom on the East Coast. In addition to providing entertainment and personal enjoyment to our citizens and tourists, these cultural amenities are a key component to creating an atmosphere that attracts successful and innovative businesses and the workers that they employ to the city.



*Independence Mall*  
(Source: GPTMC)



*Philadelphia Museum of Art*  
(Source: GPTMC)

### Objectives >

#### 2.4.1 Maintain Philadelphia's strong role in the national and international tourism market.

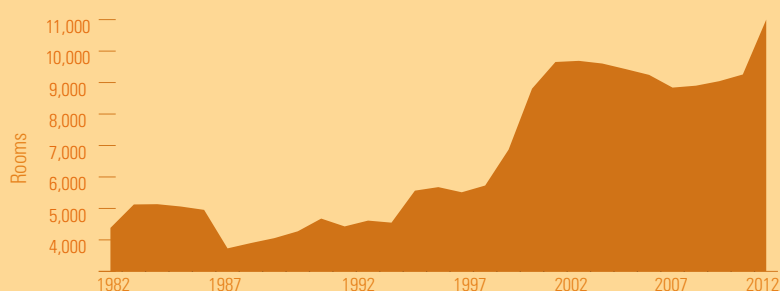
- a Continue to seek and host national and international visitor events.
  - In addition to hosting traditional events such as Welcome America and the Mummers Parade, the City ought to host special events such as the 250th Anniversary of the United States of America, and bid on competitive sports events like the World Cup and the Summer Olympic Games.
- b Encourage development of hotel rooms to support expanding markets.
  - The expanded Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC), is expected to generate the need for an additional 1,500 to 2,000 hotel rooms.
- c Improve hospitality and visitor facilities and services.
  - Hospitality and visitor facilities include visitor centers, public bathrooms, and visitor-friendly wayfinding and signage.

See *RENEW 8.2* for more information on heritage tourism



*The Franklin Institute, "The Heart"*  
(Source: GPTMC)

#### 2.4.1.b Daily Hotel Room Supply

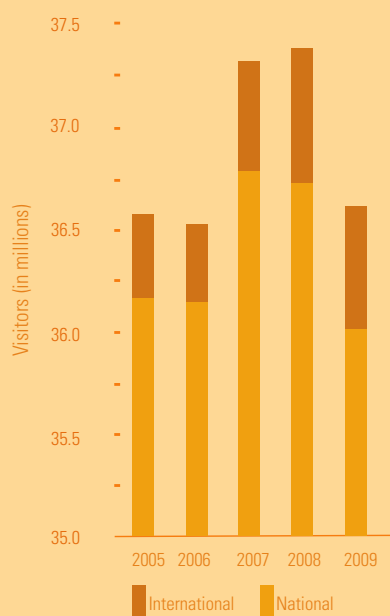


(Source: Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association Annual Report, 2005; 2010)

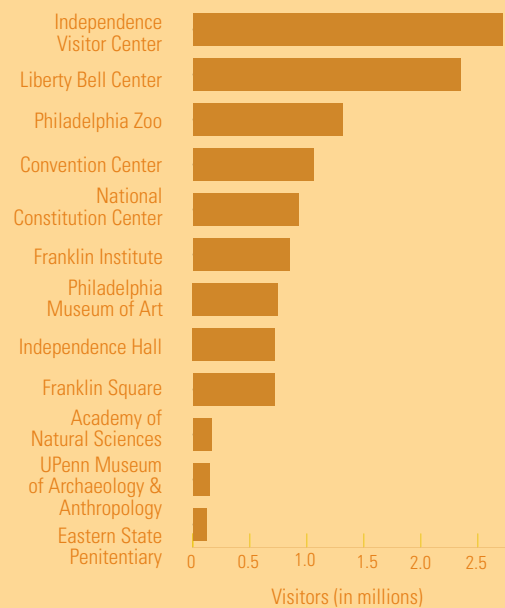
## 2.4.2 Provide ample resources to cultural institutions to enrich the City's quality of life.

- Encourage mixed-use development on the Avenue of the Arts and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway as cultural mixed-use corridors.
- Identify appropriate sites for future expansion and development of cultural facilities.
- Provide adequate resources and funding to institutions to maintain their facilities and programming (e.g., the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the African American Museum, The Philadelphia History Museum, and the Philadelphia Zoo, among others that receive City capital and/or operating support).
- Expand City support to arts and culture organizations through the City's cultural grant-making body, the Philadelphia Cultural Fund.

### 2.4.1 Visitors to Philadelphia and Attendance at Top Attractions, 2009



(Source: GPTMC; US Department of Commerce, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, 2009)

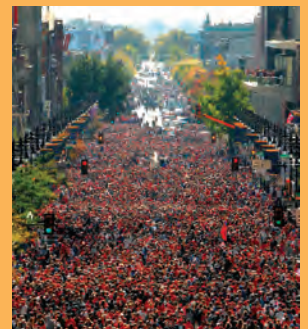


(Source: GPTMC, 2009; Pennsylvania Convention Center Self Reporting, 2009)

#### 2.4.1.a Case Study Phillies Post-Season Celebration

According to the City of Philadelphia's Commerce Department and the Philadelphia Sports Congress, the Philadelphia Phillies participation in the playoffs, including their World Series victory in 2008, generated a total estimated economic impact of more than \$20 million for the Philadelphia region. However, the economic impact of the playoffs is most likely much greater because the impact analysis accounts for visitor spending and direct City-tax revenues, but does not include the additional spending by area residents generated by the Phillies playoff run. In addition to the direct economic impact of the playoffs, Harmelin Media estimated that the television value of the World Series to the City of Philadelphia was more than \$21 million, due to "beauty shots" of Citizens Bank Park and the city at commercial breaks and live on-air mentions by announcers. The playoffs, like other national and international visitor events, have a valuable cultural economic impact on Philadelphia.

(Source: Press release Phillies Crowned World Series Champions: Team, City and Fans, Celebrate Title and Economic Boost Oct 21, 2008)

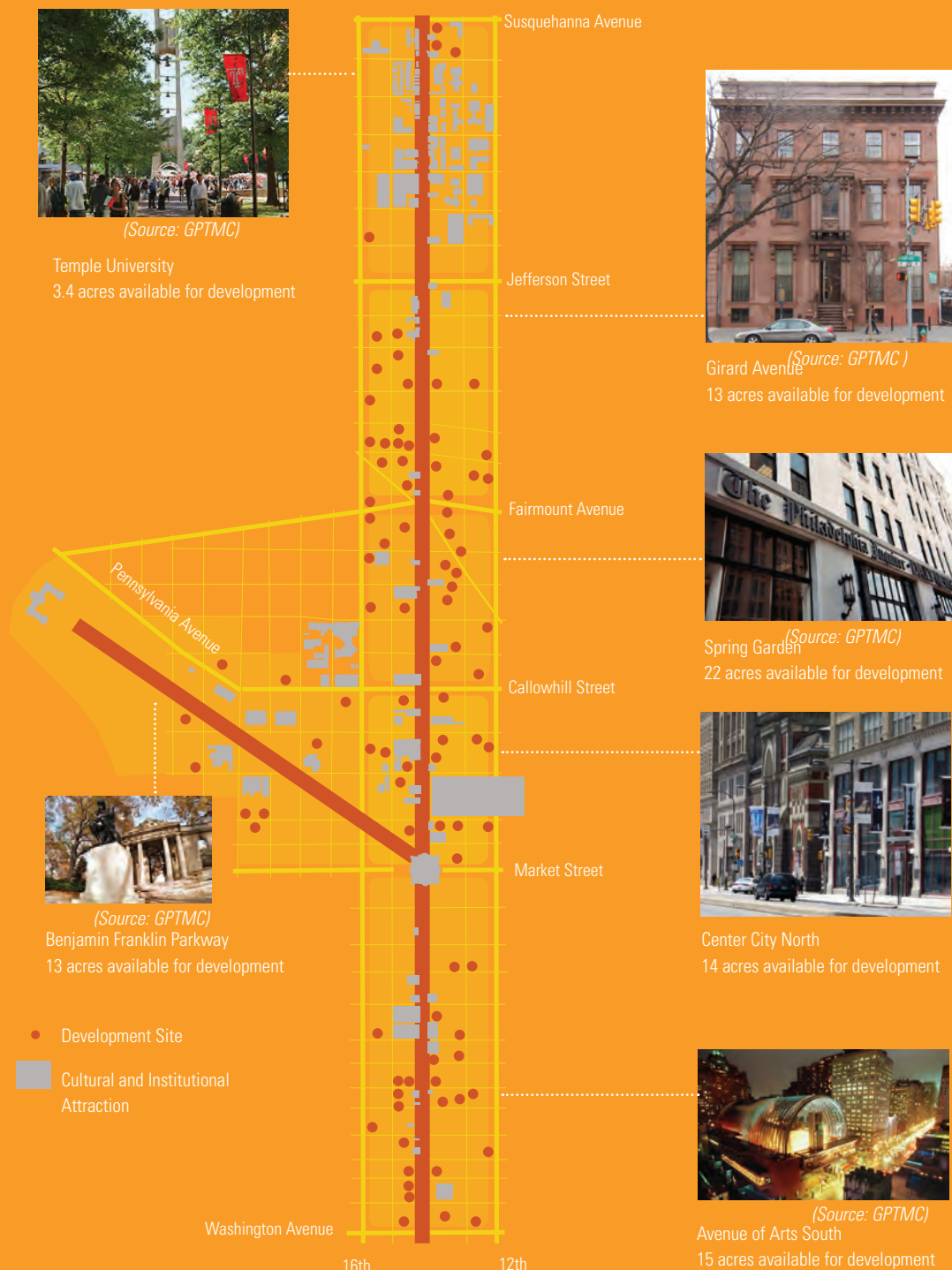


Phillies World Series Championship Parade, 2008  
(Source: GPTMC)

## 2.4.2.a Urban Design Study Opportunities for Cultural and Institutional Development

The Avenue of the Arts (both North and South Broad Street) and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway are Philadelphia's arts, entertainment, and cultural spines. On these signature streets there are still many sites available for development as well as opportunities to continue support and growth of existing venues. *Philadelphia2035* recommends that these parcels be prioritized for developments such as new arts and culture attractions, hotels, higher-density residential, restaurants, and shops.

This map shows six distinct sections of Broad Street and Benjamin Franklin Parkway and the available acreage for development in those sections.





# > Land Management

## Capitalize on land assets

The Land Management element sets forth policies for vacant land and structures, land suitability, and municipal support facilities. Issues related to land use and economic development are key to all of the elements within THRIVE. The topics under Land Management are related to land and how it is used, specifically land that is often overlooked and underutilized. This element also looks at the environmental impacts of development on sensitive lands in the Land Suitability topic.

Currently, policies for the Land Management topics are spread across numerous public agencies and are often uncoordinated. For example, five agencies hold vacant land and structures in Philadelphia and each has multiple ways by which it sells land. Policies for public notification, sales method, appraisal process, and what land is available for sale differ from agency to agency. Similarly, municipal support facilities, like vehicle fuel-pumping stations and maintenance yards, are maintained by various City departments. Often these facilities are not shared and may duplicate functions.

*Philadelphia2035* strives for coordinated policies for vacant land and structures, sensitive lands such as steep slopes and floodplains, and municipal support facilities. Implementation of the coordinated policies set forth in the Land Management element will result in: reduced capital and operational costs by lowering the number of City-owned facilities and eliminating duplicative programs and services; promotion of redevelopment and economic development; and protection of sensitive lands.







## 3.1 Vacant Land and Structures

Goal: **Manage and reduce vacancy**

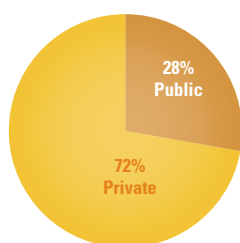
Philadelphia has an estimated 40,000 vacant parcels and 20,000 vacant structures. Significant population loss over the last 50 years and a shift from industrial to service activities have resulted in lowered demand for land in many parts of the city. Decreased real estate demand often results in property abandonment and high vacancy levels.

Most vacant land and structures in the city are privately owned. However, one quarter of vacant properties are owned by five public agencies: the Department of Public Property, the Redevelopment Authority, Philadelphia Housing Authority, Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation. Some of this publicly owned land was purposefully acquired for affordable housing sites or redevelopment projects. However, the majority of publicly owned vacant land and structures came into municipal ownership by default from private owners who did not pay their property taxes or code-violation fines.

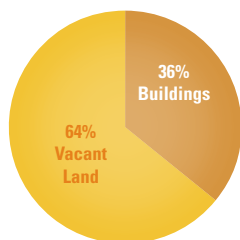
*Philadelphia2035* proposes three objectives for tackling the issues of long-term vacancy. First, create a transparent and market-based land disposition policy for the City with a comprehensive vacant property database. This will support improved code enforcement, tracking, and disposition of vacant land and structures. Second, adopt policies which prevent further abandonment. Third, discover creative ways to reuse vacant land and structures. Additionally, other strategies across *Philadelphia2035* promote economic development to strengthen private market real estate demand to meet forecasted population increases. Collectively, these long-term and realistic objectives advance responsible public and private ownership of vacant land and structures in the city.

### 3.1.1

#### Ownership of Vacant Land and Buildings



#### Distribution of Vacant Land and Buildings



(Source: Philadelphia Water Department 2009; Board of Revision of Taxes 2009)

## Objectives >

### 3.1.1 Centralize land management in a single City agency to track and dispose of surplus land and structures and return publicly owned vacant parcels to taxable status.

- a Develop a comprehensive, market-sensitive policy for vacant land management and disposal.
  - Create a city-wide policy of land disposition that looks at a number of factors such as parcel size, market conditions, zoning, and public services and needs to determine land use suitability and pricing.
  - Devise strategies that prevent oversaturating the real estate market with public properties.
  - Set a clear policy that states what entities qualify for nominal consideration (low or no cost sale), such as government subsidized projects, developments that support government subsidized projects, or the side-yard gift program.
- b Create a web-based, user-friendly clearinghouse for all surplus publicly owned vacant property.
  - Start by creating a coordinated in-house comprehensive database to determine what property is owned by public agencies versus owned privately, and what properties are surplus (not necessary for facilities, park and recreation opportunities, etc).

- c Consolidate City management and establish a single point of contact for one-stop shopping.
  - Consolidation will lessen public confusion on how to acquire land and ownership. This will also improve transparency of the land-disposition process.
- d Assemble and consolidate parcels for redevelopment.
  - Sell adjacent vacant properties as packages rather than as single lots. Properties are more valuable and developable as larger assemblages.
  - Acquire private properties that cause gaps in public assemblages to create larger development sites.
  - Dispose of assemblages through competitive bidding.
- e Expand vacant land management strategies in partnership with residents, businesses, and nonprofits
  - Prevent illegal use of lots for short dumping.
  - Include strategies such as community gardening and greening programs.

### 3.1.1 Vacant Land and Buildings

PCPC estimates that there are roughly 40,000 vacant parcels and 20,000 vacant structures in Philadelphia. This estimate is based on an analysis of land use and building condition values derived from Philadelphia Water Department parcel data, 2009, and Board of Revision of Taxes, 2009.

- Vacant Parcel
- Vacant Structure



#### 3.1.1.e

Vacant land management at 4th Street and Cecil B. Moore Avenue



Before  
(Source: PHS)



After  
(Source: PHS)

#### 3.1.1. Case Study Cost of Vacant Land

Chronically vacant land has a negative impact on the finances of the City and on nearby property owners. In a 2010 study, Vacant Land Management in Philadelphia, prepared by Econsult for the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia (RDA) and Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations (PACDC), the financial impacts of the over 40,000 vacant lots in the city are: a) \$3.6 billion lost in property values to properties near blighted lots; b) \$20 million/year spent on maintenance by the City (waste cleanup, pest control, fire/police); and c) \$2 million/year lost in uncollected property taxes.

(Source: Econsult, 2010; RDA, 2010)





### 3.1.2 Prevent abandonment of land and structures.

- a Target outreach to owners of high-visibility vacant properties.
  - Due to the high proportion of privately-owned vacant parcels and structures, not all properties can receive individual outreach by the City. With the help of the community, marquee vacant properties or singular vacancies can be identified. Outreach can include information about market conditions, community plans, redevelopment resources, and enforcement consequences.
- b Increase code enforcement and fines on abandoned land and structures.
  - Increasing fine levels requires state legislation.
- c After full and fair valuation is in place, consider moving to a land-value based tax system to increase the cost of owning vacant land.
- d Use the land database to track and register private vacant property owners for code violation and foreclosure purposes.
- e Foreclose on delinquent private property in bulk.
  - Bulk foreclosures will reduce legal fees for the City and allow for better coordination of vacant property disposal.

#### 3.1.2.c

##### Definition | *Land-Value Tax System (LVT)*

A land-value tax system taxes land at a higher rate than improvements to land such as structures. Property-tax assessments on developments or improvements to land can be seen as a deterrent to development and an incentive to keep land vacant. Pittsburgh and Harrisburg both use a hybrid version of LVT.



*Surface parking on vacant lot in Center City*



*Vacant building in Center City*

### 3.1.3 Reuse vacant land and structures in innovative ways.

- a Promote adaptation of vacant buildings for creative, mixed-use development; much of Philadelphia's vacant building stock is worthy of preserving through adaptive reuse.
- b Competitively bid out larger vacant property assemblages and give preference to proposals that incorporate high-performance building practices.
- c Support the use of vacant land to expand parks and recreation opportunities and/or stormwater management.
  - Find suitable sites such as vacant land assemblages in areas underserved by parks and recreation facilities.
  - Use vacant land along rail lines and within floodplains to create trail networks.

*See **RENEW 6.3** for more information on expanding park and recreation opportunities.*
- d Identify vacant lots for public art projects, neighborhood gateways, community gardens, agriculture, and energy farms.
  - Suitable lots should be identified, assembled, and zoned appropriately.
  - Simplify lease or transfer process for such uses.

### 3.1.2.d Case Study Youngstown, Ohio

Youngstown established a land bank in 2004. The bank acquires property through tax foreclosure and gifts from individuals; foreclosure takes up to 18 months, gifting about one month. The organization has over 800 properties worth about \$1.2 million.

The City is also a member of Lien Forward Ohio (LFO), a regional council of governments. Created in 2005, LFO tries to quickly transfer abandoned property to responsible owners by clearing title and providing financing and legal advice. Operating funds come from the City of Youngstown, the Mahoning County Treasurer's office, and tax-lien sales.



*(Source: City of Youngstown, Ohio )*

### 3.1.3.a Case Study 1010 - 1011 N. Hancock Street, Northern Liberties

Like many 19th- and early 20th-century multi-story mills and factories, these buildings sat vacant for decades. When the buildings were still abandoned, they were featured in the documentary film "My Architect" as possible influences on famed Philadelphia architect, Louis Kahn. While the former factories could have easily been torn down for new development, Tower Investments instead adaptively reused them in 2006 and 2007. These buildings now help form historical context and create architectural contrast to the innovative mixed-use Piazza at Schmidt's development. The upper floors are apartments and the ground floors are used for office and retail space.



*Before*

*(Source: Brad Maule)*



*After renovation*

### 3.2.1.a

#### Definition | *Steep slope*

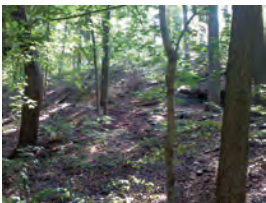
The draft Zoning Code proposes the expansion of steep-slope protections to all of Philadelphia's perennial and intermittent water courses. The steep slope regulations will prohibit new development on slopes 25 percent or greater and will require protective engineering controls for new development on slopes between 15 and 25 percent. These rules will protect our watersheds and steep-slope habitats, and mitigate stormwater runoff and flooding.



### 3.2.1.b

#### Definition | *Buffer*

The draft Zoning Code proposes to expand a 50 foot stream-buffer requirement to all of Philadelphia's water courses. Future development within buffers may not clear any existing native vegetation nor construct any structures or drives within the buffer area.



## 3.2 Land Suitability

**Goal:** Protect sensitive lands from over development

Land Suitability deals with the topic of sensitive lands, particularly steep slopes and floodplains. The perception is that Philadelphia is completely built-out and there are no "greenfields" or sensitive lands left to develop. However, along riverfronts and streams land-use changes, market pressures, and the potential affects of sea-level rise related to climate change require the City to look more closely at sensitive lands and how they are protected.

Large portions of the northwest section of the city, particularly Manayunk, Roxborough, and Chestnut Hill, remain undeveloped because of their rolling topography. Strong market demand in these areas has created development pressure for land with steep slopes. Deforested and developed steep slopes become prime areas for erosion and stormwater runoff causing flooding downhill. Additionally, floodplain areas are going through land-use transitions. As the location of port and industrial uses change, and demand for waterfront housing and recreation increases, the creation of strong policies for floodplain areas becomes more important.

Land suitability standards are meant to protect not only natural features, but people and property as well. Creating zoning code regulations that protect sensitive lands, properly mapping zoning districts in sensitive areas, and using stormwater management techniques all help protect the environment, people, and property while directing development to more appropriate sites.

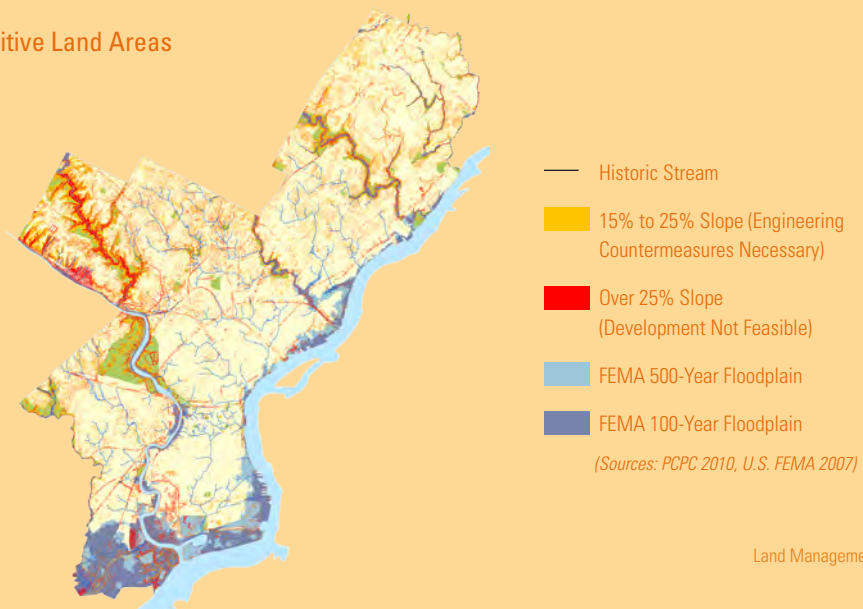
### Objectives >

#### 3.2.1 Use topography to direct land development.

- a Create controls to protect steep slopes from development.
- b Review and update codes that limit development in floodplains and near other surface water bodies.
- c Create policies for developments already existing on sensitive lands to lessen impacts on the environment and public safety.
  - The City should identify and work with owners of major developments on existing sensitive lands to reduce impervious coverage, increase setbacks from waterways, and create new stormwater-management interventions on site.

See [RENEW 7.2.3](#) for more information on stormwater management.

#### 3.2.1.a Sensitive Land Areas



## 3.3 Municipal Support Facilities

**Goal:** Locate and manage all municipal support facilities efficiently

There are 381 municipal support facilities in Philadelphia including fuel-pumping stations, parking lots, administrative buildings, automotive garages, and maintenance shops. Municipal support facilities differ from the other public facilities discussed in the Neighborhoods element since they do not provide services directly to the public as libraries and recreation centers do. These facilities support the day-to-day operations of City agencies.

Because municipal support facilities do not provide direct services to the public, they are often overlooked both in terms of capital and operating costs and also their location. By co-locating and consolidating municipal support facilities, the City can reduce the number of facilities and costs by allowing facilities to be multi-user. For example, fewer automotive garage and maintenance shops could be used for Police, Parks and Recreation, and Water Department vehicles especially as the City strives to reduce the size of its fleet. Municipal support facilities typically house “back of the operation” activities that are often industrial by nature, and as a result, siting is important. Not only should these facilities be easy to access and rationally distributed for municipal use, but they should be appropriately located away from residences, parks, and commercial corridors. The municipal support strategies of *Philadelphia2035* highlight an overlooked opportunity to reduce duplication of facilities and services and to lower capital and operating costs.

### 3.3.1 Definition | Municipal Support Facilities

City facilities that serve municipal operations and are generally not used by the public.



*Belmont Pumping Station*



*Reed Street Radio and Fleet Maintenance*

### Objectives >

#### 3.3.1 Reduce expenditures for municipal support facilities.

- Co-locate, consolidate, and modernize municipal support facilities.
- Align the location of municipal support facilities with compatible land uses.
  - Appropriate locations for municipal support facilities should be based on compatibility with adjacent land uses, zoning, roadway connections, and rationalized service areas. Industrial uses, such as storage or repair work, should be located away from parks, commercial corridors and residential areas.
- Maintain municipal support facilities in an energy-efficient state of good repair.

#### 3.3.1.a Municipal Support Facilities (381 Citywide)

