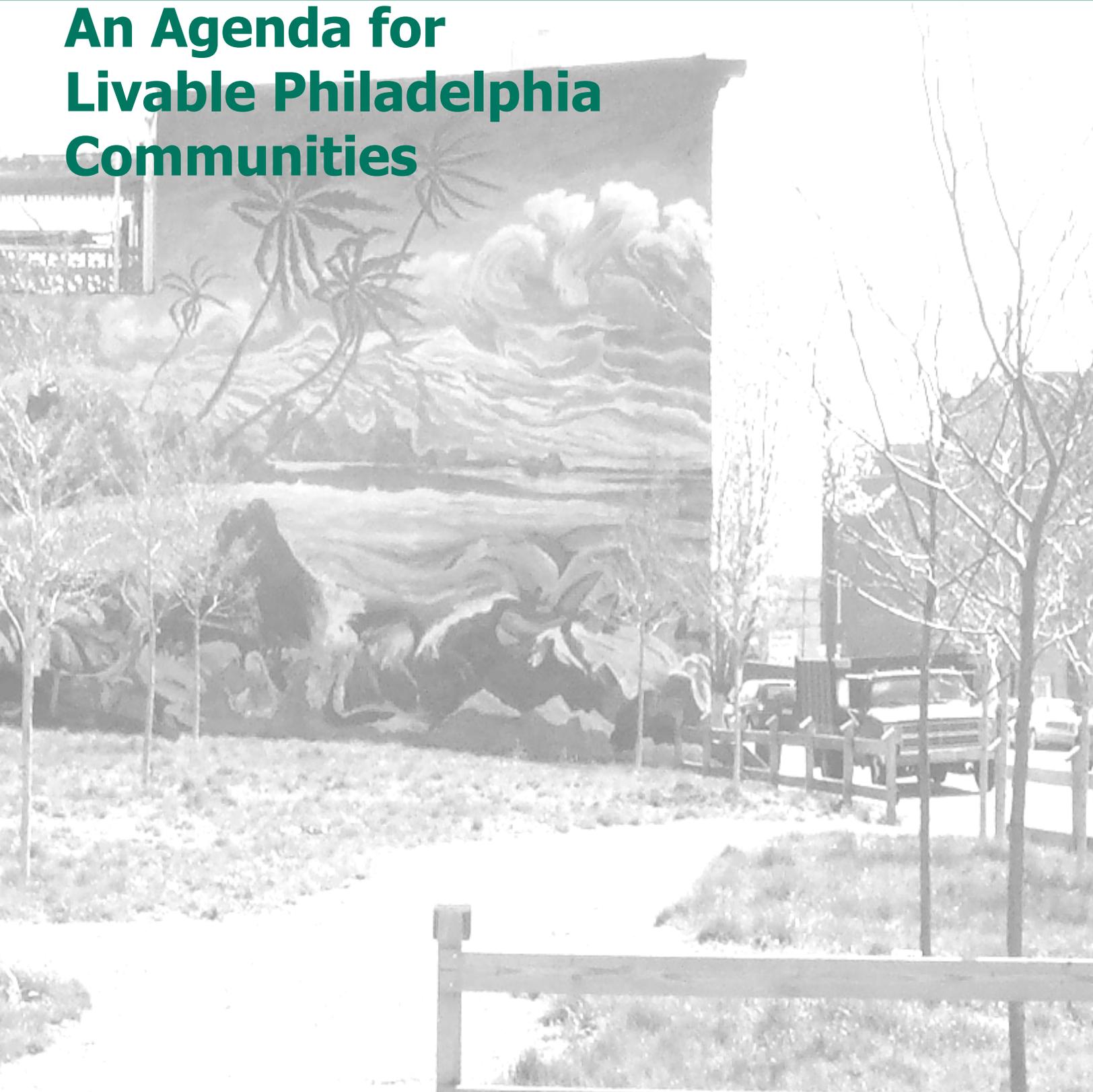


INVEST IN NEIGHBORHOODS:

An Agenda for Livable Philadelphia Communities



Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

May 2003

PACDC Members

CDC Members

Bridesburg/Kensington

Kensington Area Revitalization Project, New Kensington CDC

Center City

Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation

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Advocate CDC, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha, Inc., Friends Rehabilitation Program, Kensington South CDC, Project H.O.M.E., Renaissance CDC, Spring Garden Civic Association, Women's Community Revitalization Project, Yorktown CDC

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Southwest Philadelphia

Fresh Start CDC, Southwest CDC

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Citywide

Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office for Community Development, Community Ventures, Dignity Housing, Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia

Other Members

Beneficial Savings Bank, Blueprint to End Homelessness, Ceiba, Citizens Bank, Commerce Bank, Community Design Collaborative, Diamond Associates, Duane Morris LLP, First Union National Bank, Fleet Bank, Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition, Homeownership Counseling Association of the Delaware Valley, Hudson United Bank, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, M&T Bank, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Pennsylvania Low Income Housing Coalition, Philadelphia Housing Development Corporation, Philadelphia Neighborhood Development Collaborative, Philadelphia Volunteer Referral Organization, PNC Bank, Prudential Financial, Rebuilding Together with Christmas in April of Philadelphia, Regional Housing Legal Services, Say Yes to Education, Society Created to Reduce Urban Blight, Sovereign Bank, Tenant's Action Group of Philadelphia, Washington Mutual, Wilson Associates.

CDC Production

Over the past ten years, our CDC members have leveraged over \$650 million in investment to our neighborhoods. They have:

Developed nearly **3,500 homes and apartments** for first time home buyers, lower income families and special needs populations

Created over **1.1 million square feet of commercial and facilities space**, including supermarkets and retail space, job training centers, child care centers, and charter schools

Assisted or created over **2,000 businesses**

Provided job training or placement for more than **10,000 neighborhood residents**

Converted nearly **1,000 vacant lots** into neighborhood parks, gardens, and open space

Assisted nearly **9,000 children and youth** through education and child care programs



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An Agenda for Livable Philadelphia Communities

Philadelphia: the City of Brotherly Love, the Birthplace of Liberty, the “City That Loves You Back.” But above all, Philadelphia is the City of Neighborhoods. And as we go to the polls in 2003, Philadelphians will ask, “What will our neighborhoods be like in four years?”

What should Philadelphia neighborhoods be? A livable community provides a range of housing opportunities. A livable community retains existing families and attracts new ones. A livable community has a growing economy and does its business on a vibrant commercial corridor.

To make all of our neighborhoods livable communities, the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations proposes a four-point agenda for neighborhood investment and revitalization. The City’s Neighborhood Transformation Initiative has begun to clear blight and make land ready for redevelopment. Our platform complements NTI’s strategies and takes them to the next step by supporting the comprehensive neighborhood-based work of successful community development corporations (CDCs).

Our plan calls for the City to:

1. Invest in **Vacant Land** by streamlining the process of handling vacant property and ensuring sufficient property acquisition to support CDC projects.
2. Invest in **Housing** by creating a Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund to build more affordable rental and mixed-income homeownership housing in our neighborhoods.
3. Invest in **Livable Neighborhoods** by rehabilitating abandoned homes and sponsoring visible neighborhood improvements.
4. Invest in **Neighborhood Economies** by supporting commercial development and strengthening neighborhood business districts.

Implementing this plan will have real results in our communities. Over the next four years:

- A pipeline of more than 2,000 properties will flow to CDCs for redevelopment.
- More than 3,000 units of affordable rental housing and mixed-income homeownership housing will be created, leveraging over \$350 million in outside investment.
- 8,000 vacant lots in our neighborhoods will be greened and maintained, and 60 blocks will have comprehensive facelifts.
- Neighborhoods will receive \$24 million in new economic development investment, leveraging over \$100 million to create jobs, support local businesses, and strengthen commercial corridors.

Together, Philadelphia’s CDCs have developed thousands of units of housing, created thousands of jobs, developed more than a million square feet of commercial space, greened hundreds of vacant lots, assisted thousands of small businesses, and over the past 10 years invested more than \$650 million in our communities. Philadelphia’s CDCs are experts in neighborhood transformation. By drawing on the experience of our CDC community, Philadelphia can learn from the past and build a stronger future.

Philadelphia is the City of Neighborhoods, and our neighborhoods are at a crossroads. **We call on candidates for elected office to make investing in neighborhoods and the work of CDCs a priority of their platforms and of their actions.**

Summary of Recommendations

1. Invest in Vacant Land

Streamline the process for acquiring and disposing of vacant property, and make the Philadelphia Land Bank a reality.

The City's processes for managing vacant property must become fast, consistent, and effective. The City should implement its proposed Land Bank, beginning by consolidating surplus PHA-owned and other public property under one roof and making it readily available for redevelopment.

Support neighborhood redevelopment by giving CDCs land to build on.

The City should acquire and dispose of at least 500 properties per year to support CDC housing and economic development projects, an investment of about \$7 million in NTI funds annually.

2. Invest in Housing

Build more affordable rental housing.

Philadelphia should double production of neighborhood-based and special-needs rental housing to produce at least 550 affordable rental housing units a year (an increase of 275 units). Investing an additional \$8 million will leverage more than \$32 million in new outside investment annually.

Prioritize community-based housing developers.

Viable CDC-sponsored housing projects should receive priority for City development funding.

Support mixed-income homeownership.

The City should increase support for mixed-income homeownership development by \$7 million per year, partnering to produce 145 additional homeownership units and leverage \$19 million annually.

Establish a Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund.

Philadelphia should create a Housing Trust Fund, using dedicated revenue to raise at least \$15 million per year in new resources for housing and to leverage non-City investment.

3. Invest in Livable Neighborhoods

Improve neighborhoods and help neighbors maintain their property.

Invest at least \$3 million per year in programs to improve the physical appearance of targeted blocks in our neighborhoods.

Support more Basic Systems Repair grants.

Help CDCs to rehab vacant housing.

The City should partner with CDCs to produce at least 100 units of rehabbed housing a year through the Homeownership Rehabilitation Program, thus leveraging almost \$7 million annually.

Support neighborhood greening.

The City should invest \$3 million a year to clean and green 2,000 lots and plant 1,000 street trees.

4. Invest in Neighborhood Economies

Transform the physical infrastructure of neighborhood main streets.

Invest \$2.5 million per year to help CDCs facilitate development of commercial properties.

Strengthen the "curb appeal" of neighborhood business districts.

Help neighborhood businesses improve their appearance through façade programs, and support clean streets, improved safety and enhanced streetscapes in neighborhood business districts by investing an additional \$2.5 million annually to strengthen the overall appeal of neighborhood commercial corridors.

Increase investment in effective, flexible economic development programs to meet these needs.

Expand the Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program to 10 additional neighborhoods.

Increase investment in neighborhood economic development by \$5 million per year, using Economic Stimulus, NTI, and other funds.

1. Invest in Vacant Land

Vision: Clean, safe parks and gardens replacing trash-filled lots. New buildings rising from empty land. Vacant land treated as a valuable resource, not a liability. City policies that encourage short and long term redevelopment.

Process for Acquiring and Disposing of Vacant Property Through Urban Renewal in the City of Philadelphia¹



Strategy: Streamline the process for acquiring and disposing of vacant property, and make the Philadelphia Land Bank a reality.

Philadelphia's abandoned property problem is titanic. More than 30,000 vacant lots and more than 25,000 vacant buildings. More abandoned buildings per person than any other city in the nation.² While abandonment devastates our neighborhoods, our region is squeezed for space and choked by sprawl. Solving this problem is a central goal of the City's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative.

To answer this challenge, Philadelphia must change the way it handles vacant land. Under the current system, which has put a wet blanket on redevelopment for years, it can take 54 separate steps by 12 different City agencies for the City to acquire a vacant property and turn it over to a redeveloper. A key solution is a Land Bank, as proposed under the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. The Philadelphia Land Bank would put all the vacant land in the City under one administrative roof, assemble developable sites, and set up straightforward procedures for CDCs and other developers to "withdraw" land on which to build.

Consolidating the City's surplus public property and making it available for reuse is the first step to cutting the red tape. Currently, at least six public agencies own vacant land; the Philadelphia Housing Authority alone owns 1,500 vacant buildings and empty lots.³ The City must make this land available for redevelopment.

Reforming property acquisition and disposition costs very little, and will save significant time and money in the development process. Although the City recently began to move huge numbers of properties through the system, the current procedures are simply barriers to redevelopment. The bottom line is that we can't allow bureaucracy to block our neighborhoods from turning around.

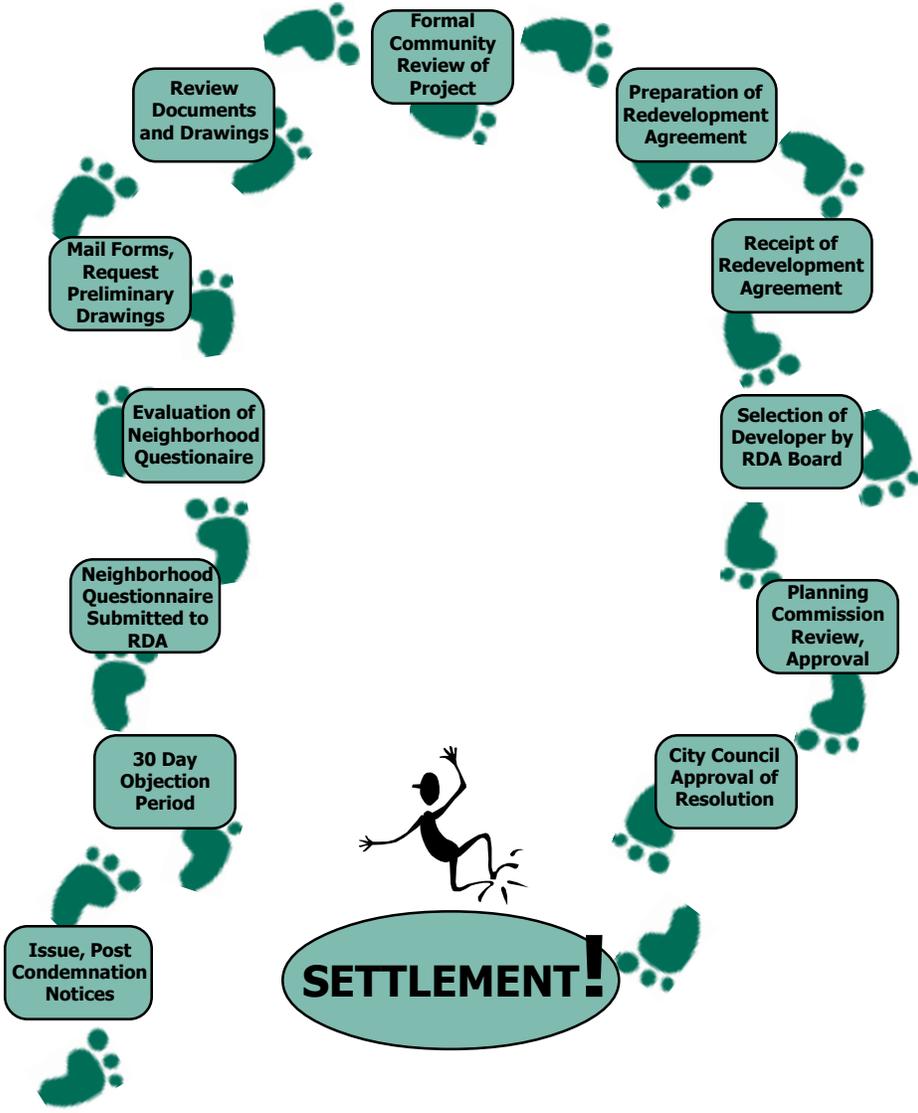
Recommendation: *The City's processes for managing vacant property must become fast, consistent, and effective. The City should implement its proposed Land Bank, beginning by consolidating surplus PHA-owned and other public property under one roof and making it readily available for redevelopment.*

Strategy: *Support neighborhood redevelopment by giving CDCs land to build on.*

As we work to implement a long-term solution to the problem of vacant land, Philadelphia must also ensure that development takes place in the near future. The City's CDCs have found that one of the biggest obstacles to revitalization is the difficulty of obtaining land on which to build.

For several years, Philadelphia's CDCs have had a large accumulation of acquisition requests waiting to be satisfied. While the City has just begun acquiring property for several CDC projects, we need to commit resources to ensure a continuous flow of acquisition for future CDC efforts as well. Backlogged requests don't just stall neighborhood revitalization, they cost the City money. CDCs bring significant outside resources to the table, but having site control is a prerequisite for applying for most sources of funds. Delays in acquiring properties mean losing millions in potential outside investment.

Recommendation: *The City should acquire and dispose of at least 500 properties per year to support CDC housing and economic development projects, an investment of about \$7 million in NTI funds annually.*



2. Invest in Housing

Vision: New construction in neighborhoods, improving housing quality and blending with neighborhood character. Vibrant, mixed-income communities that include a range of housing types. Affordable housing for lower-income families as well as development to attract new residents. Sustainable redevelopment that does not force families out of improving neighborhoods.



Strategy: *Build more affordable rental housing.*

Philadelphia is facing a housing crisis. Almost one-quarter of Philadelphia families make less than \$20,000 per year and pay more than 30% of their income for housing.⁴ Penn researchers have found that Philadelphia needs 30,000 more affordable homes for this group alone.⁵ According to a recent national study, a full-time Philadelphia worker must earn more than three times the minimum wage to afford a two-bedroom apartment.⁶

Building affordable rental housing addresses Philadelphia’s housing crisis and is also a smart public investment. Every dollar of City investment in affordable rental housing can leverage more than four dollars from other sources. These resources are not fully tapped – for example, the City could draw down twice the Low Income Housing Tax Credit investment it currently does. And new housing not only ensures that lower-income residents benefit from revitalization, but can stabilize declining property values, remove blight, and attract additional investment.

The Neighborhood Transformation Initiative has called for 3,500 additional units of affordable housing over five years. To move within reach of this goal, the City should increase its investment in affordable rental housing to the level needed to bring in all available outside resources.

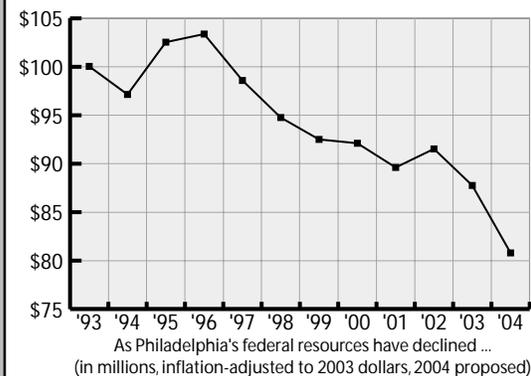
Recommendation: *Philadelphia should double production of neighborhood-based and special-needs rental housing to produce at least 550 affordable rental housing units a year (an increase of 275 units). Investing an additional \$8 million will leverage more than \$32 million in new outside investment annually.*

Strategy: *Prioritize community-based housing developers.*

CDCs are our city’s experts in revitalization. Based in and accountable to our communities, CDCs are committed to neighborhood renewal over the long run. CDCs believed in our disinvested neighborhoods before anybody else did. As non-profits, CDCs can draw in millions of dollars in outside resources to support City investment. CDCs work in neighborhoods that other developers often aren’t interested in, planting the seeds that make more market-oriented development possible.

Philadelphia’s CDCs have a strong track record of developing housing, creating jobs for neighborhood residents, and renewing our neighborhoods. Our CDC industry has built almost 3,500 units of housing in the past 10 years. When the City chooses to support CDCs, we don’t just get new housing; we also build the strength and capacity of a home-grown, neighborhood-based industry.

Recommendation: *Viable CDC-sponsored housing projects should receive priority for City development funding.*



Strategy: *Support mixed-income homeownership.*

New homes are great for neighborhoods. Communities get new neighbors, and the visible investment encourages existing residents to increase their own commitment to the community. New homeownership housing can boost the neighborhood's income mix, making it stronger and more economically diverse.

Philadelphia is justly proud of our high homeownership rate. But in a troubling sign for neighborhoods, homeownership has recently started to decline.⁷ Furthermore, the City's affordable and mixed-income homeownership pipeline has been nearly frozen in recent years. New funds are needed just so projects the City has already committed to can proceed.

Philadelphia must continue to support the American Dream. The City must invest enough to support new homeownership development at a range of prices. City investment will draw outside resources, whether through Pennsylvania's Homeownership Choice Program, which can leverage City investment at more than four-to-one, or from other sources, like the investment of homebuyers.

Recommendation: *The City should increase support for mixed-income homeownership development by \$7 million per year, partnering to produce 145 additional homeownership units and leverage \$19 million annually.*

Making It Happen

Pradera ("The Meadows"), **Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha's** newest housing development, is a key part of APM's comprehensive plan to revitalize its Eastern North Philadelphia neighborhood. Over the past thirteen years, APM has invested \$56 million in the neighborhood to build 268 units of housing, develop a state of the art supermarket, and provide housing counseling to over 2,000 people.

After building more than 200 units of affordable rental housing, APM is working to diversify the income mix in the neighborhood and help homeowners build equity. Increased property values are repaying the City's investment in their work. Ten years ago, existing houses in this neighborhood were worth \$7,000. Today, they sell for closer to \$20,000; still far too low, but a great improvement. APM expects to sell homes in their next development at up to \$70,000, a once unheard-of value for its neighborhood.



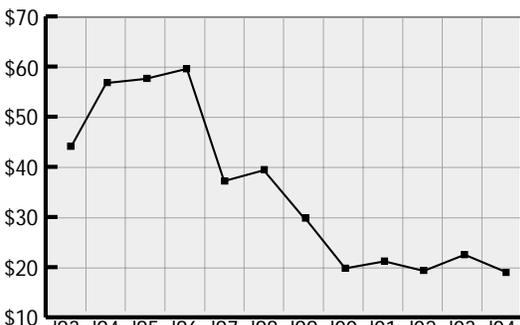
Strategy: *Establish a Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund.*

Philadelphia needs significant housing investment to spur revitalization. In recent years, the City has been unable to dedicate enough revenue to affordable housing development to leverage all available outside investment, losing out on millions of dollars in funding from other sources.

Many other cities and counties have also faced similar problems in recent years. In response, more and more are turning to housing trust funds as a way to raise dedicated revenue to support affordable housing development in their communities. Currently, more than 275 U.S. cities, counties, and states have housing trust funds, providing more than \$750 million per year to address critical housing needs.⁸

A Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund would fill the gap needed to make our recommendations a reality. Philadelphia's housing needs deserve no less.

Recommendation: *Philadelphia should create a Housing Trust Fund, using dedicated revenue to raise at least \$15 million per year in new resources for housing and to leverage non-City investment.*



... City spending on housing production has plummeted. (in millions, inflation-adjusted to 2003 dollars, 2004 proposed)

3. Invest in Livable Neighborhoods

Vision: Blocks that reflect neighborhood pride. Help for homeowners to improve their houses and fix dangerous problems. Neighborhoods where vacant lots bloom with community gardens. Abandoned buildings rehabilitated into new housing. Houses that increase in value, so that residents build equity, remain in neighborhoods, and invest in their property.



Strategy: *Improve neighborhoods and help neighbors maintain their property.*

Philadelphia is known as the City of Neighborhoods. Today, though, Philadelphia neighborhood pride is in trouble. In a recent national survey, Philadelphia was the *highest-scoring* city in neighborhood dissatisfaction: almost one-quarter of us said that our neighborhood is so bad we want to leave.⁹

The City should follow a two-track investment plan to maintain homes and support neighborhoods. First, invest in programs that improve the look of a whole neighborhood – by strategically repairing a block of home façades, for example. Although blight is often contagious, the reverse is also true. Many CDCs have found that when homeowners are helped to make repairs, particularly visible improvements such as new façades, neighborhood morale perks up and neighbors’ investment increases. This is magnified when repair efforts are concentrated, improving an entire block at once.

Second, make sure individual homeowners can get the help they need. Philadelphia’s Basic Systems Repair Program is the only grant program the City runs to help low-income homeowners do essential repairs on major household systems. The program has been proven to prevent abandonment, but more funding is badly needed.¹⁰ Homeowners now wait over a year for plumbing repairs, for example. The City should invest more in this important program.

Recommendation: *Invest at least \$3 million per year in programs to improve the physical appearance of targeted blocks in our neighborhoods.*

Recommendation: *Support more Basic Systems Repair grants.*



Strategy: *Help CDCs to rehab vacant housing.*

The impact of even one vacant house on a block can be dramatic – a recent study showed a decrease in neighbors’ property values of \$6,468 per home.¹¹ On a block with 35 homes, this adds up to over \$225,000 of lost value. When the house down the street is vacant, homeowners hold back on maintenance and new investment, worried that their property values will fall.

Investing in rehabilitating vacant buildings on blocks with low overall vacancy makes financial sense. But rehab may also be the correct strategy on blocks with higher abandonment levels, in order to preserve other investment in the neighborhood, preserve historic properties, or build from an area of strength.

The City’s Homeownership Rehabilitation Program is tailor-made for moderate rehabilitation, but the number of houses fixed through HRP has been falling over the past few years. The City has made recent improvements to the program, and must monitor it and make more changes if necessary to ensure that rehabs take place. A realistic goal is increasing support for CDC rehabs to 100 vacant houses a year, using previously committed funds and adding NTI and other dollars as needed.

Recommendation: *The City should partner with CDCs to produce at least 100 units of rehabbed housing a year through the Homeownership Rehabilitation Program, thus leveraging almost \$7 million annually.*



Making It Happen

New Kensington CDC has been working since 1996 to take back the over 1,500 vacant lots littering its neighborhood. In the process, the CDC has pioneered ways to treat vacant land, organize community gardens, and stop illegal dumping. With help from the City and Philadelphia Green, New Kensington CDC has reclaimed 60% of the vacant lots.

New Kensington CDC operates a garden center and supports a hydroponic farm on a reclaimed industrial site. Their greening work, which has won numerous awards, is considered a national model for urban open space management. Most critically for Philadelphia, New Kensington’s work is retaining residents – neighbors who have changed their minds about leaving the community because they see it improving.

Strategy: *Support neighborhood greening.*

Fairmount Park is the largest park system of any U.S. city. In spite of this, many neighborhoods are far from parks and have little open space. It’s ironic that the vacant lots that crowd our city and overwhelm our neighborhoods are in fact potential parks and gardens. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and Philadelphia Green have documented the increased value green space adds to a neighborhood, and have calculated that treating a vacant lot raises the value of nearby properties by 5%. A broad-based investment in greening and stabilizing vacant land pays for itself over the long haul because of the increased property tax revenues flowing to the City.¹²

A vacant lot is often a magnet for trash, drugs, and crime. The same lot, stabilized and transformed into green space, becomes a source of neighborhood pride, healthy recreation for children and adults, and a visible sign that residents care about the neighborhood. As a strategy, adding trees, gardens, and parks to our neighborhoods stabilizes previous investments and builds on neighborhood strengths.

Recommendation: *The City should invest \$3 million a year to clean and green 2,000 lots and plant 1,000 street trees.*



4. Invest in Neighborhood Economies

Vision: Residential neighborhoods centered around vibrant shopping districts. Stores and services that meet neighbors' needs locally. Small businesses that are able to grow and thrive. Foot traffic in commercial districts and life in stores. Neighborhood jobs for neighborhood residents.



Strategy: Transform the physical infrastructure of neighborhood main streets.

Commercial corridors are the hearts of our neighborhoods – think of 5th Street in the Latino community, Germantown Avenue in Northwest Philadelphia, Frankford Avenue in the lower Northeast, 52nd Street in West Philly. A thriving commercial corridor draws residents to shop, creates foot traffic through the neighborhood, gives neighbors local access to products and services, and provides jobs. The neighborhood's "Main Street" gives it identity and a sense of place.

But many of our neighborhood commercial corridors are struggling. Useable storefronts sit vacant. Neighbors can't find groceries, clothes, or services close to home. Vacant storefronts reduce drop-in business at other stores, driving sales down. Blight can spread rapidly in commercial districts, damaging nearby residential neighborhoods.

A key step to making a neighborhood commercially viable again is repairing the physical infrastructure. With help, a neighborhood storefront is the perfect starting place for entrepreneurship. But small businesses need available and affordable commercial space. This is where CDCs come in, using initial public investment to leverage private-sector resources, redevelop storefronts and catalyze a revival on the commercial corridor.

Recommendation: Invest \$2.5 million per year to help CDCs facilitate development of commercial properties.

Strategy: Strengthen the "curb appeal" of neighborhood business districts.

In marketing, looks matter. A run-down commercial street drives customers away, regardless of the quality of goods and services sold. If a store is dirty or looks unwelcoming, customers will shop elsewhere.

Public initiatives to improve the look of neighborhood business districts are relatively low-cost, and can have an impact far above the dollar amount of their investment. If businesses redo their signs and façades, the improvement draws foot traffic. A less obtrusive security gate is less threatening to potential shoppers. Like homeowners, businesses are more likely to invest if they see others making improvements.

In Center City, street-cleaning crews and safety ambassadors have paid off in the revival of downtown as a shopping destination. Our neighborhoods deserve clean streets, improved streetscapes, and increased safety as well. While some neighborhoods have commercial corridor programs, many more are interested. The City should increase its investment in improving the image of neighborhood business districts: façade programs, street cleaning, and pedestrian friendly lighting.

Recommendation: Help neighborhood businesses improve their appearance through façade programs, and support clean streets, improved safety and enhanced streetscapes in neighborhood business districts by investing an additional \$2.5 million annually in the overall appeal of neighborhood commercial corridors.



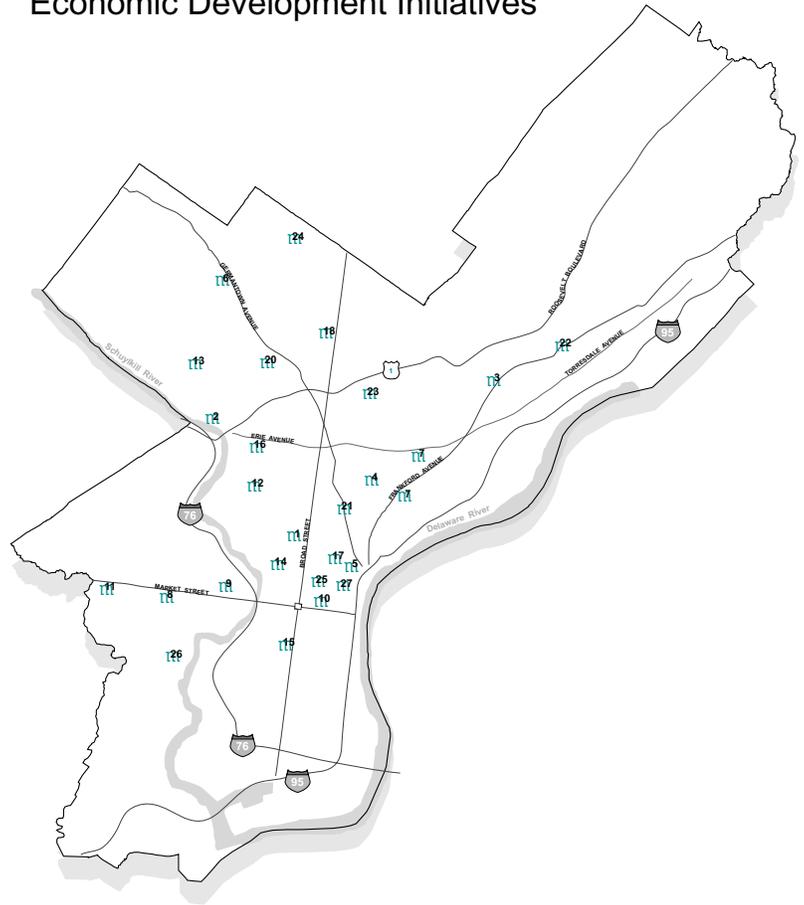
Making It Happen

Mt. Airy USA's new \$2.9 million commercial development, Phebe Commons, has transformed a formerly blighted corner in Mt. Airy, is helping to catalyze a revitalization of Germantown Avenue, and has created 13 jobs so far. The building replaces a long-time nuisance bar that had troubled the neighborhood for years, and complements Mt. Airy USA's façade programs, small business development, and other work on the Avenue.

Phebe Commons shows the value of City investment in economic development. The City contributed less than 10% of the total project cost, which leveraged over \$2.6 million in outside funds. Mt. Airy USA calculates that within five years, increased tax revenue will let the City recoup its investment. And two nearby buildings are being redeveloped by private owners, showing the ripple effect public investment can have on neighborhood economies.



CDC's with Neighborhood-Based Economic Development Initiatives



Strategy: *Increase investment in effective, flexible economic development programs to meet these needs.*

Our neighborhood economies are crying out for reinvestment. In many of our neighborhoods, private-sector financial support is almost non-existent. The recommendations in this report show neighborhoods' need for public investment to spur private involvement and strengthen local markets.

The City's groundbreaking public-private partnership, the CDC Economic Development Tax Credit, should be expanded. Because of this new program, 15 neighborhoods are experiencing a long-term flow of \$100,000 per year in new private capital to support the economic development work of the local CDC. Many more neighborhoods are in need of the same investment and should have the chance to participate.

Recharging our neighborhood economies requires an investment of public funds. The City's Economic Stimulus Program represents our commitment to economic growth. A few years ago, this program received \$25 million per year; it has now been cut to under \$5 million. City economic development funding can be leveraged up to 10 to 1. We must restore lost funding and increase investment in the economic future of our city and our neighborhoods.

Recommendation: *Expand the Philadelphia CDC Tax Credit Program to 10 additional neighborhoods.*

Recommendation: *Increase investment in neighborhood economic development by \$5 million per year, using Economic Stimulus, NTI, and other funds.*

Conclusion

The City election in 2003 will be a defining moment for Philadelphia's neighborhoods. Over the next four years, our elected leaders will have the opportunity to guide Philadelphia into renewal, using the ground already laid by the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative. But without additional development and proactive investment, we risk our neighborhoods continuing down the path of disinvestment and blight. Our leaders' choices will make the difference.

Through investing in neighborhoods, Philadelphia and local CDCs can:

- Cut the red tape hampering redevelopment of vacant property and fully realize the promise of the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative.
- Build thousands of new homes in our neighborhoods through a Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund.
- Make Philadelphia's neighborhood commercial corridors engines of economic growth and neighborhood renewal.
- Leverage over \$450 million in outside investment in our neighborhoods.
- Help Philadelphia's neighborhoods to truly reflect Philadelphia pride.

PACDC's program lays out a plan for neighborhood renewal over the next four years. **We call on our elected officials to adopt these recommendations. Together, we can make all of our neighborhoods livable communities again.**



Notes:

- 1 *Acquisition A to Z: A manual for community development corporations about how to acquire real estate in Philadelphia*, PACDC (1996), 6, 8-9.
- 2 Michael A. Pagano and Ann O'M. Bowman, "Vacant Land in Cities: An Urban Resource," Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy (2001).
- 3 Leonard N. Fleming, "Phila. wants to show blight the door," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1/27/03, B1.
- 4 Amy Hillier and Dennis Culhane, "Closing the Gap: Housing (Un)Affordability in Philadelphia," University of Pennsylvania Cartographic Modeling Lab (March 2003), 10.
- 5 Hillier and Culhane, 4.
- 6 Winton Picoff and Sheila Crowley, "Rental Housing for America's Poor Families: Farther Out of Reach Than Ever," National Low Income Housing Coalition (2002). Available at www.nlihc.org/oor2002.
- 7 In 1990, Philadelphia had a 61.9% homeownership rate. In 2000, it had dropped to 59.3%. United States Census data, available at www.census.gov.
- 8 Mary E. Brooks, "Housing Trust Fund Progress Report 2002: Local Responses to America's Housing Needs," Center for Community Change (2002).
- 9 Gordon Whitman and Adam Pine, "More Than a Home: Affordable Housing and Quality of Life in Philadelphia," Research for Democracy (2002), 12.
- 10 *Blight-Free Philadelphia: A Public-Private Strategy to Create and Enhance Neighborhood Value*, Research for Democracy (2001), 31.
- 11 *Blight-Free Philadelphia*, 22.
- 12 *Managing Vacant Land in Philadelphia: A Key Step Toward Neighborhood Revitalization*, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (2000).

About the Philadelphia Association of Community Development Corporations

PACDC's Mission and Goals: PACDC is dedicated to advocacy, policy development and technical assistance for CDCs and other organizations in their efforts to rebuild communities and revitalize neighborhoods.

PACDC accomplishes our mission through the following activities:

1. Fostering a more supportive environment for community development activities and the work of CDCs in Philadelphia through policy analysis, advocacy, and public education;
2. Building the capacity of CDCs and helping them utilize technology to implement more efficient and effective programs and projects through providing direct technical services to individual CDCs, as well as services for the broader community development community; and
3. Serving as an information clearinghouse on Philadelphia area CDCs and community development through our web site and publications, and providing a forum for CDCs to exchange information and network with others in the field.

PACDC's Members: PACDC has more than 80 members, both CDCs and other organizations involved in community development. Our CDC members have worked for years to rebuild the physical and social fabric of Philadelphia's neighborhoods and overcome years of disinvestment.

As the problems facing our neighborhoods have become more complex, CDCs have approached community development more comprehensively. They have turned vacant properties and abandoned lots into quality homes and open space, revitalized commercial corridors, and brought supermarkets to neighborhoods. CDCs have developed child care centers and charter schools, launched workforce development programs, and created jobs.

PACDC is Celebrating Ten Years of Neighborhood Transformation in 2003.

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PHOTO CREDITS: **Cover:** Mural and improved vacant lot, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society **Inside Front Cover:** Local folks enjoy Diamond Park, Advocate CDC courtesy Tiger Productions **Contents Page:** Mural and improved vacant lot, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society; Hing Wah Yuen, Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation; Art Noir on Ogontz Avenue, courtesy Ogontz Avenue Redevelopment Corporation **Page 4:** Demolition of Vacant property on the 1900 Block of 6th Street **Page 5:** Lillia Crippen Townhouses II, Women's Community Revitalization Project; Belmont Gardens, courtesy Friends Rehabilitation Program; Sing Wah Yuen, Philadelphia Chinatown Development Corporation **Page 6:** Taino Gardens, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha; APM Townhouses, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha; Pradera, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha **Page 7:** Façade Improvements on Green Street, Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia courtesy Tiger Productions; Blockscape Project, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha; Homeownership Rehabilitation on Priscilla Street, Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia courtesy Tiger Productions; Volunteers at work, courtesy Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia; Homeownership Rehabilitation on Stiles Street, courtesy Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia; Homeownership Rehabilitation, courtesy The Partnership CDC **Page 8:** Homeownership Rehabilitation, courtesy Project H.O.M.E.; 4200 Block Stiles Street, Habitat for Humanity Philadelphia; Community Garden Center, New Kensington CDC courtesy Tiger Productions; Mural and lot, courtesy New Kensington CDC; Sideyard Program, New Kensington CDC courtesy Tiger Productions **Page 9:** 5th Street Façade Improvements, Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises; Boriquen Gateway Plaza, Asociación de Puertorriqueños en Marcha; Sidewalk Cleaning Machine, CORS/The Partnership CDC; Plan for 40th & Market Streetscape, courtesy The Partnership CDC **Page 10:** Phebe Commons, Mt. Airy USA; Façade Improvements on Germantown Avenue, courtesy Mt. Airy USA; Street Banner, Mt. Airy, USA **Page 11:** Playground at childcare center, courtesy Impact Services Corporation; Jose Manuel Collazo Playground, courtesy Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises; Playground at Sarah Allen Complex, Friends Rehabilitation Program courtesy Tiger Productions

