

Joint Comprehensive Plan for the Cities of **Duquesne & McKeesport**



July 2015

“Duquesne and McKeesport are dynamic cities of enduring value, committed to a future of new opportunities and discovery.”

Acknowledgements

The strength of this plan lies in the hands of those who have shaped it. Countless residents have played a part in the process. Those who were formally involved include the following:

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Unless otherwise noted, images were provided courtesy of the Daily News

City of Duquesne Resolution Adopting Plan

To be included in final plan after adoption

City of McKeesport Resolution Adopting Plan

To be included in final plan after adoption



Table of Contents

Foreword xi

Overview 1

Foundations..... 11

Vision..... 23

Duquesne’s Plan Elements..... 33

McKeesport’s Plan Elements..... 87

Cooperation, Collaboration and Interrelationships 149

Action and Implementation Plan 159

Background Studies and Trends..... 175

Appendix..... 201

List of Maps

Regional Context Map..... 13

RIDC Industrial Center of McKeesport Map..... 15

RIDC City Center Duquesne Map..... 16

Duquesne Comprehensive Plan Map..... 33

Duquesne Key Focus Area Map 36

Duquesne Vacant and Blighted Lands Map 80

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission 2040 Transportation Plan – Relevant Projects 82

McKeesport Comprehensive Plan Map 88

McKeesport Key Focus Area Map..... 91

McKeesport Vacant and Blighted Lands Map..... 143

Allegheny County Future Land Use Plan..... 154

Vacant and Blighted Lands 179

Generalized Existing Land Use Map..... 187

Landform and Watershed Map 188

Great Allegheny Passage Trail Map 190

Civic Amenities Map 191

Allegheny Places Greenways Map 192

AlleghenyPlaces Water Service Map..... 193

AlleghenyPlaces Sewer Service Map..... 193

Allegheny Places Community Facilities Map..... 194

Roadways and Traffic Volumes..... 197

Roadways Road Widths, and Traffic Volumes 198

Allegheny Places Transportation System Map..... 199



Foreword

For generations, the Mon Valley was the economic engine that drove the Pittsburgh economy. The cities of Duquesne and McKeesport were key players and prime communities for good paying industrial jobs, attractive residential neighborhoods, and vibrant shopping destinations. However, as most people in this region are well aware, over the past four decades the Mon Valley's industrial base has been virtually decimated. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, US Steel, Westinghouse Electric, WABCO, Union Switch and Signal, and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel all closed major manufacturing plants in the area. Some sources indicate that as many as 175,000 jobs were collectively lost in the region when these plants closed. Major industrial sites occupied nearly 1,000 acres of land, and as landowners, the corporations were major taxpayers. Without these tax revenues, communities in the Mon Valley were hard pressed to provide and maintain the same level of services that residents were accustomed to. People moved out, and the area's role as the engine of the regional economy was lost.

Allegheny County's comprehensive plan, *AlleghenyPlaces*, identifies McKeesport as an Urban Neighborhood and Duquesne as a Community Downtown. Through decades of change, Duquesne and McKeesport have retained a unique character, which they can build upon and leverage to realize future success. Each city has continued to be a community with an accessible central core of commercial and community services, residential units and recognizable natural and built landmarks and boundaries that provide a sense of place and orientation.

The traditional downtowns remain the center of each community and those centers create the defining characteristic of each city, both for residents and for outsiders. Many of the recommendations focus on helping to strengthen the center of the community—from housing to intersection improvements. This defining characteristic, along with a shared history and collective memory tie Duquesne and McKeesport together.

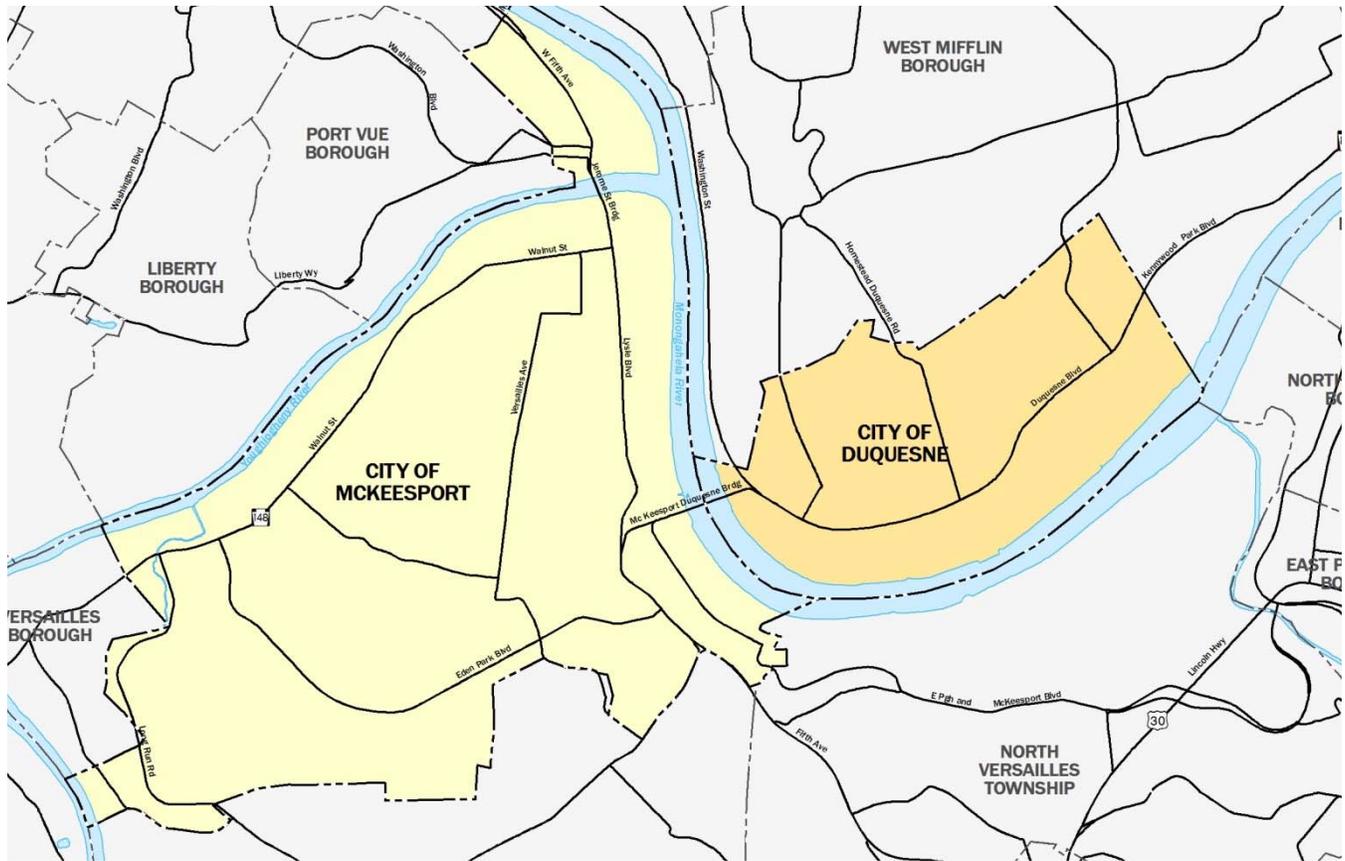
The two communities continue to be a regional hub for the Mon Valley. The regional Great Allegheny Passage Trail passes through both cities. McKeesport is turning its focus to the river for recreation and potential development, as well as continued growth on the industrial areas. Duquesne has one of the

*The real voyage
of discovery
consists not in
seeking new
landscapes but in
having new eyes.*

Marcel Proust

last remaining viable and developable industrial river shipping ports. That important infrastructure cannot be easily replicated elsewhere. Because of the railroad junction, there is a unique junction of rail and river transportation in Duquesne that makes it a regional industrial transportation center.

Regional Location Map



Despite being separated by a river, Duquesne and McKeesport have many common issues and opportunities. Each is a community in its own right but together they make up a central part of the Mon Valley, a regional community. They have a distinct character that is shaped by their place in the region. They maintain largely separate infrastructure and services—a function of the fact that their shared border is under the Monongahela River. However, they do utilize a larger regional authority for wastewater treatment as well as a regional EMS provider.

Today, Duquesne and McKeesport are looking to the future. The cities have worked together to jointly complete a comprehensive plan that lays the groundwork for reinvention and revitalization. The following joint planning document consists of plans for both cities as well as an action plan to implement each individual plan and to leverage opportunities/benefits of collaboration/joint efforts.

This plan—informed by the public, many community partners, the technical planning team and the Steering Committee—lays out a framework for the long-term future of both cities. It honors the region’s industrial history while setting the stage for expanding opportunities by leveraging the many social, economic and environmental assets of the area.

As you read this plan, seek to understand the process, but also focus on the roles you and the organizations you are involved with can take to move strategies and initiatives forward. This document contains ideas, achievable steps and useful tools to further the vitality and substance of Duquesne and McKeesport as they move into the future.



Overview

The simplest way to approach planning is a process – an organized way of thinking about the future. Generally, a comprehensive planning process consists of making surveys, analyses and projections; defining problems, setting goals and objectives; formulating alternative ways to reach objectives; choosing among alternatives; implementing decisions; experiencing outcomes; and finally evaluating those outcomes and updating goals and/or methods.

The vehicle through which this process is initiated and formalized for the guidance of officials and the understanding of the general public is the comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a document that is designed to establish several community development oriented policies and to guide future growth and development of the community. It carries no weight of law and contains no rules or regulations, but it defines documents the vision and aspirations of a community and outlines a roadmap to assist decision makers. It is broad in scope, examining the physical, social and economic characteristics, but it seeks to apply this knowledge to the future. It speaks to various issues in general terms, but it also makes specific recommendations. The comprehensive plan is, in part, a factual report that examines how the past has led to the present, as well as a report that can be used to chart the community's path into the future.

*The ancestor of
every action is a
thought.*

*Ralph Waldo
Emerson*

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act 247 of 1968, as amended, mandates that the comprehensive plan contain certain basic elements including the following:

- A statement of community development goals and objectives;
- A land use plan;
- A housing needs plan;
- A transportation and circulation plan;
- A community facilities and utilities plan;
- A statement of plan component interrelationships;
- A discussion of short and long range implementation strategies; and
- A statement of the relationship of the community's future development to adjacent areas.
- A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources.
- A plan for the reliable supply of water.

The comprehensive plan is by no means limited to these elements, nor should it be.

In preparing the plan, studies must be conducted on various subjects, including the existing conditions within the community and the prospects for future growth. Usually, these studies include such items as a history, existing land use, transportation and circulation, community facilities, socio-economic analyses, natural features, population and housing.

The studies conducted in the areas previously mentioned attempt to objectively analyze the community from a number of different perspectives. Each individual study takes an in-depth look at a topic. When completed, each study will then lend support to the development of the plan. Various studies must be utilized to gather the data necessary to prepare the studies. From these sources, facts and trends can be assimilated and used to develop the basic assumptions and forecasts necessary for the development of the plan.

How to Read This Plan

This plan is lays out a strategic direction for Duquesne-McKeesport through achievable approaches and steps for implementation. The plan document itself is the final element of a planning process. After the studies have been completed and a factual base exists from which to make decisions, and after the community development goals and objectives have been stated to guide future decisions, a preferred course of action will form the foundation for the community's future growth.

Overview: The opening chapter of this plan lays out its purpose and explains the process of engaging community members, elected leaders and technical experts to develop the plan's major goals, strategies and initiatives.

Foundations: Foundations contains a brief description of existing conditions in the communities along with an outline of issues and opportunities that were identified during the planning process. Expanded discussions of these items can be found in the Background Studies and Trends chapter.

Vision: The next chapter introduces the overarching vision of the plan along with the accompanying goals that can move the region towards its vision. Following this overview of vision and goals is a short discussion of each plan element:

- Land Use, Redevelopment and Economic Development
- Housing
- Transportation, Assets and Amenities
- Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy

Plan Elements: These two chapters—one for each city—contain more in-depth discussions of plan elements, goals and actions. Accompanying each goal is at least one key initiative. Each initiative supports multiple goals and strategies, that, when executed, will provide meaningful, measureable progress. Each initiative is, in turn, a collection of implementation steps that can be carried out at the local or regional level. The initiatives are lofty but achievable—asking the communities to think about the big picture and stretch their horizons towards the future. The plan also begins to outline potential champions and partners and key steps to bring the plan to fruition.

Action and Implementation Plan: This chapter is a consolidated plan for implementation of the plan’s action steps and a discussion of short and long range implementation strategies. Key partners are identified as well as timeframes. All too often, the implementation of plans like this falls to government. Rarely do they target action from individuals, business leaders and civic groups. This chapter provides ways to involve all stakeholders. The true strength of the plan is that it was developed with public support and its success depends on continued public involvement.

This piece can be a key tool in future evaluation and benchmarking of plan implementation.

Cooperation, Collaboration and Interrelationships: This chapter outlines strategic ways that the cities can work together to reach a common vision.

Background Studies and Trends: This chapter contains expanded discussions on topics like issues, opportunities and influencing factors. It also contains technical documents and other resources that will help to guide implementation.

Plan Terms and Concepts

The high-level goals and supporting objectives outlined on the following pages work as a system to direct Duquesne and McKeesport toward a vibrant future of lasting value. Any one of the individual recommendations and key initiatives can simultaneously move a variety of these goals forward.

Vision conveys the cities' hopes for the future.

Goals are broad aspirations for the region and each city individually.

Actions are steps that Duquesne and McKeesport will undertake independently or collaboratively to achieve their goals. The sections are generally directed to specific areas within the community (such as Grant Street in Duquesne or the area around the Marina in McKeesport) or specific individual situations that are unique in each community (such as Duquesne's ability to control water or the presence of a Penn State branch campus in McKeesport).

Key Initiatives are collaborative ideas that are essential for implementing the plan's top priorities; these initiatives range from short to long-term for implementation but are high priority actions and should be approached simultaneously for implementation with other key recommendations.

Case in Point provides examples of relevant planning efforts and initiatives to further explain the plan's recommendations.

CASE IN POINT

EXAMPLES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE REGION AND AROUND THE COUNTRY

Testing ideas is an important strategy for understanding outcomes and moving forward in a positive manner. For actions that require more than a minimal input of resources, reaching out to communities where the concepts have already been tested is a good way to “test” the strategy, ask questions about pitfalls to avoid, special circumstances and lessons learned. Many of the key actions found in this plan feature examples of communities that have implemented the same or similar measures. They are identified with gray boxes and labeled “Case in Point.”

*Many of the examples come from Pittsburgh and the surrounding region while others draw on a more national perspective. None are exact parallels for Duquesne or McKeesport but the examples offer a unique perspective on planning concepts. The communities identified in the “Case in Point” discussions are perceived as successful today but they were chosen, in part, because they are **not overnight successes**. They have taken decades of work to get to this point, led by active, persistent, dedicated community organizations and government support that catalyzed them to become advocates for their communities. For example, the Pittsburgh neighborhoods of Lawrenceville, East Liberty and Mount Washington were in a situation not unlike Duquesne and McKeesport 20 years ago. Coordinated efforts over the past two decades have made them into the successes that they are today. The intention of the “Case in Point” discussions is not only to celebrate successes but also to identify examples and potential resources for Duquesne and McKeesport—communities that can help them to understand how transformation happened and what factors contributed to it. Generally, the “Case in Point” discussions center on a few broad themes:*

- *Identifying, building on, and promoting the assets that are unique to the community*
- *Creating redevelopment plans for specific areas of each community*
- *Making sure that redevelopment plans have realistic time frames for implementation*
- *Engaging community stakeholders to help to develop and promote the plans and the communities*

Planning Approach and Process

This plan was launched early in 2014 and began by understanding background information, demographics, physical infrastructure and related planning efforts. The Steering Committee diligently worked through this information over the course of several months to gain a broad understanding of the factors that are influencing each city. Throughout the summer of 2014, public input was solicited through a community survey and several public outreach events.

During the fall of 2014, the Steering Committee turned their attention to the future and began the work of defining achievable recommendations. All of the goals, strategies and initiatives described in this plan were informed by the many dialogues among the planning team, the public and stakeholders from the region.

*Simple, clear
purpose and
principles give rise
to complex and
intelligent
behavior.*

Dee Hock

Community Engagement

Planning is the forum for an engaged discussion about the future. As a process, a plan is only as successful as the commitment of the participants who help form the concepts, believe in the vision and further the recommendations towards implementation. To this end, the planning team led an evolving participation and outreach process that used a variety of in-person and virtual modes of communication. The goals for the participation and outreach process were to engage, educate and elicit feedback from residents, elected officials and business and civic leaders.

*The best way to
get a good idea is
to get lots of
ideas.*

Linus Pauling

Stakeholder Interview and Outreach

A key strength of this plan has been the ability to draw upon existing resources. The team spent time at various points during the planning process to reach out to stakeholders from a wide variety of sectors to understand issues like water systems, conservation and parks, education, economic development, arts and culture.

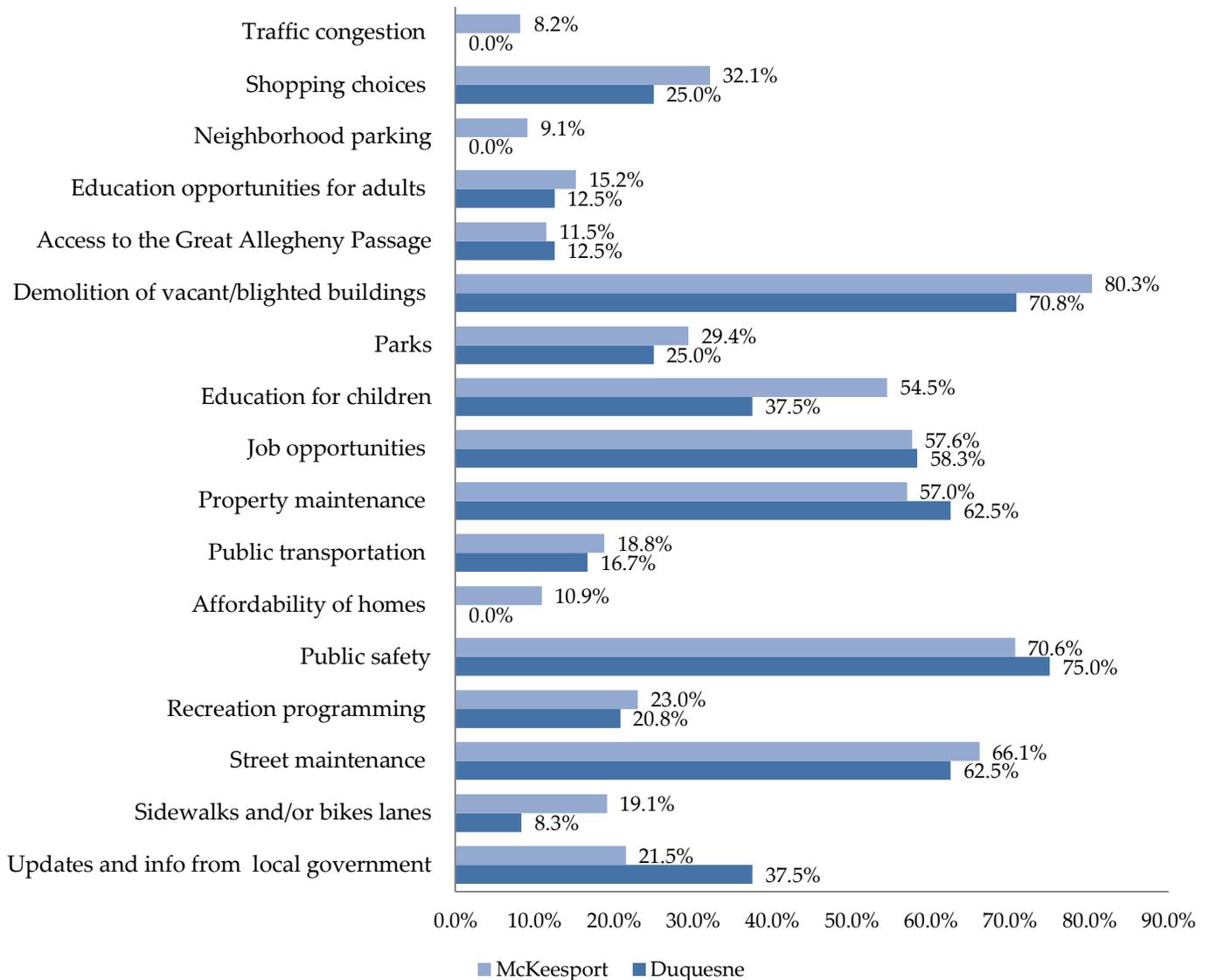
Outreach Events and Presentations

Public meetings and outreach events were key opportunities to gather input and feedback as well as go into depth on important issues. At various points, the team synthesized and incorporated public feedback into ongoing content development as well as the design of the planning process.

Community Surveys

As part of the Community Engagement Process, a community survey was developed to gather information from the community defining vision, values, goals, policies and priorities. Information was collected regarding potential issues and opportunities relating to the Comprehensive Plan, particularly population, economic development, natural and cultural resources, community services, housing, land use, transportation, and intergovernmental coordination. This survey captured results through an online website-based survey and paper surveys made available at key locations in each City. Full survey results can be found in the Appendix. With some exceptions, the survey results from Duquesne and McKeesport indicate a high level of consistency in terms of priorities and issues in both communities.

Survey Question #2: Which of These Are Most Important to You and Your Family?



Penn State Greater Allegheny Outreach

Your community. Your future.
Please join us to help shape your community's plan and share your thoughts

DESIGN WORKSHOP

What should McKeesport look like in the future?
What is your preference for new development?

Thursday September 18 - drop in any time from 2pm-6pm

Penn State University Greater Allegheny Campus
4000 University Drive

Ostermayer Room

Take this opportunity to engage with urban design consultant Glenn Smith of PUSH Studio to help define the future look of McKeesport

Your voice matters. Tell us about the community you want.
If you have any questions about the survey or the plan being created, please contact AJ Tedesco at 412-675-5020

April Belback, program director of the campus Center for Academic and Career Excellence at Penn State Greater Allegheny, worked with 13 students in a spring civics/community engagement course to develop two brief surveys geared toward the student body, faculty and staff. Not only did students want to give something back to the community that hosts their campus, they wanted an outlet for students and staff to share their thoughts on how to make McKeesport more welcoming or more sustainable. "I enjoyed getting to work with the city of McKeesport," said student

Shar Cobb, who came to Penn State Greater Allegheny from Ohio. "I think our survey could cover a lot of different aspects of the work they're trying to do here." Student Lauren Antosik of Elizabeth said she is proud that Penn State is involved in gathering data for McKeesport's comprehensive plan. "This shows that our students have the talent to create something like this survey and the ability to ask the right questions and get the word out," she said. "We have to create a campus and a community that's better for future students."

Penn State Greater Allegheny hosted two events to promote the survey and gather data for the plan. Mayor Michael Cherepko addressed Penn State students and faculty about the direction McKeesport is taking with economic and social change. He encouraged them to take part in campus surveys related to perceptions of the City of McKeesport. As vice president of the Lion Ambassadors, Antosik said the campus is finding new ways to reach out to the community and participation in the survey will help bridge the gap.

Students and faculty weighed the concepts of McKeesport being a destination versus encouraging passing traffic to stop and stay for a while. "I drive through McKeesport to get to the South Side, the Waterfront or Century III," student Sam Durant said. "Maybe if some of those things were closer, or if they were here, people would stay here." Attendees suggested that McKeesport needs retail options outside of pharmacies and dollar stores, more restaurants and a better nightlife. Artist movements and youthful energy made the list.

PSU campus gathers data for McKeesport plan



Jennifer R. Vertullo | Trib Total Media
Program director April Belback and student Shar Cobb pass survey sheets to LaRhonda Lennon and engineering and design teacher Alandra Kahl.

By Jennifer R. Vertullo
Friday, Sept. 19, 2014, 4:26 a.m.

As an invested stakeholder in the McKeesport community, Penn State Greater Allegheny hosted two events on Thursday to gather data for the city's new comprehensive plan.

Mayor Michael Cherepko addressed Penn State students and faculty about the direction McKeesport is taking with economic and social change. He encouraged them to take part in campus surveys that will be used by consultants with Environmental Planning and Design to draft a plan to shape the city's future.

"We want your input, your feedback," Cherepko said. "We want to make your experience in this community the best it can be."

April Belback, program director of the campus Center for Academic and Career Excellence, worked with 13 students in a spring civics/community engagement course to develop two brief surveys geared toward the student body, faculty and staff.

"It started as an open forum," Belback said. "We started talking about definitions and what makes Penn State Greater Allegheny a stakeholder in this community. We talked about being a community partner and what our responsibility is in that."

Not only did students want to give something back to the community that hosts their campus, they wanted an outlet for students and staff to share their thoughts on how to make McKeesport more welcoming or more sustainable.

"I enjoyed getting to work with the city of McKeesport," said student Shar Cobb, who came to Penn State Greater Allegheny from Ohio. "I think our survey could cover a lot of different aspects of the work they're trying to do here."

TRIBLIVE



Factors such as changing demographics and the ever-increasing influence of global economics complicate planning for the future while making it all the more necessary. Regardless of where a city is or how successful it has been in the past, change is an inevitable factor in the life-cycle of any community. In short, the foundation is constantly shifting. Change is driven by factors within the city itself, such as evolution of businesses and employers, resident attitudes and desires, or shifts in administration. Change is driven by factors external to the city, such as transportation corridors, demographic shifts, changing technologies, demographic changes and policy changes at the county, state and federal level.

These internal and external drivers force cities to respond by altering to the way they provide services to their businesses and residents. Depending on how cities react to these drivers, these changes can help them progress. When it comes to transforming cities, many different factors have to be considered:

- *Cities are complex.* Even small cities are multifaceted and interconnected with their regions and markets in multitudinous ways.
- *Change affects different layers of the city.* Change affects everything: revenues and costs, the utility of various authorities and committees, the amount of traffic passing through streets and the success of local businesses.

Change is inevitable.

Growth is optional.

John C. Maxwell

- *Change affects the hard and the soft.* Next to “hard” tangible aspects of a city (like roads and pipes), the even more important “soft” aspects of change need to be considered: cities are made and kept alive by people, and our emotions often run high when it comes to change.
- *Change does not always start at the same place.* Change is often not initiated by top-management or city government. Depending on the driver for change and the current situation a city is in, changes ripple up, down and sideways (e.g. the internet and mobile communication giving rise to new ways of working and doing business).

Taken together, these factors mean that even cities that are impacted by similar regional factors may react to the same drivers in completely different ways. To maintain success, it is important to know where the community is coming from, to be clear about where it is heading, and to have a sound approach to maintaining quality-of-life issues and managing the transformation. Communities must understand past change, key trends, influencing factors, issues and opportunities before strategizing to create achievable recommendations that will guide successful implementation.

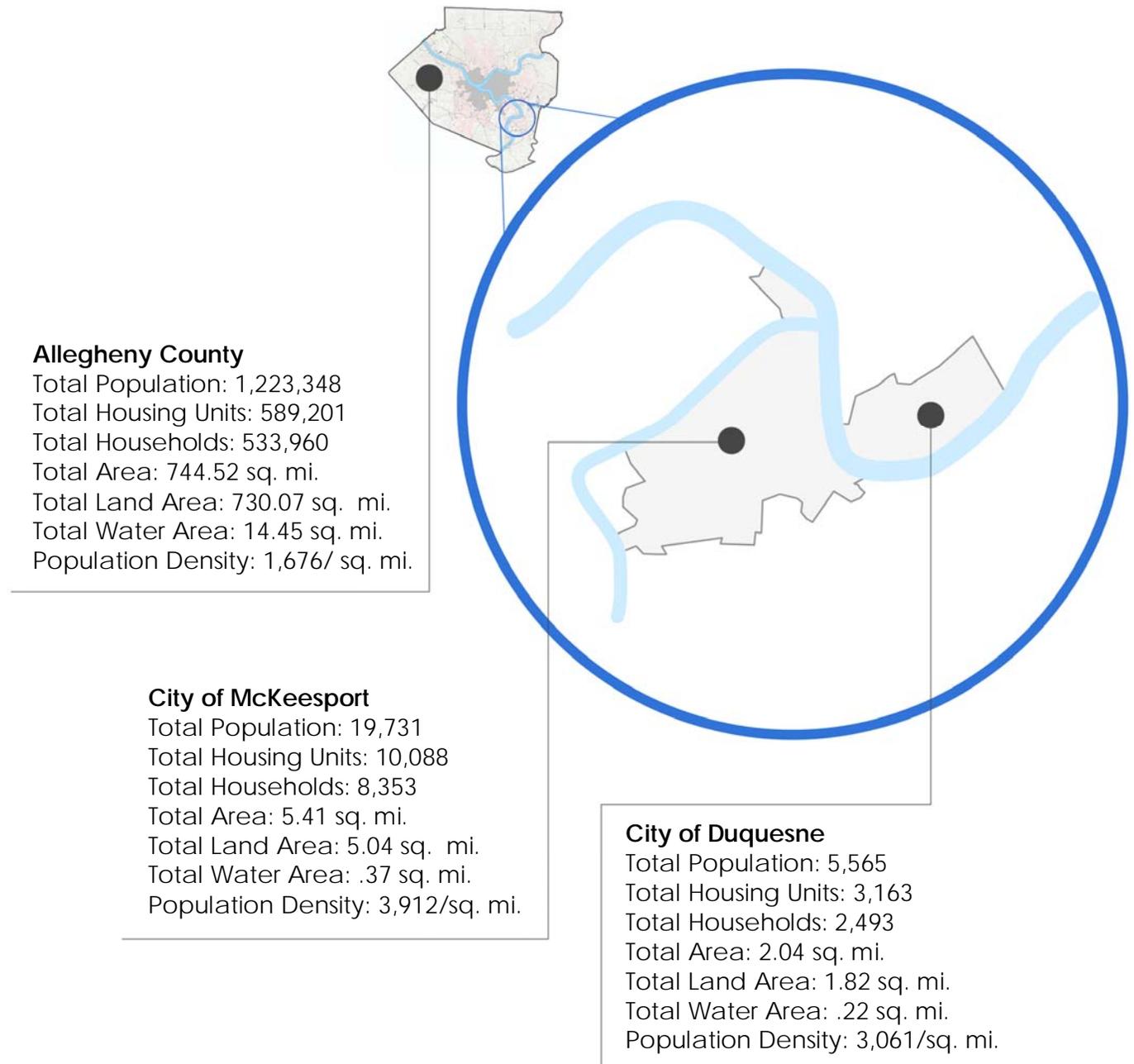
The knowledge that we consider knowledge proves itself in action. What we now mean by knowledge is information in action, information focused on results

Peter F. Drucker

Key Trends and Physical Conditions

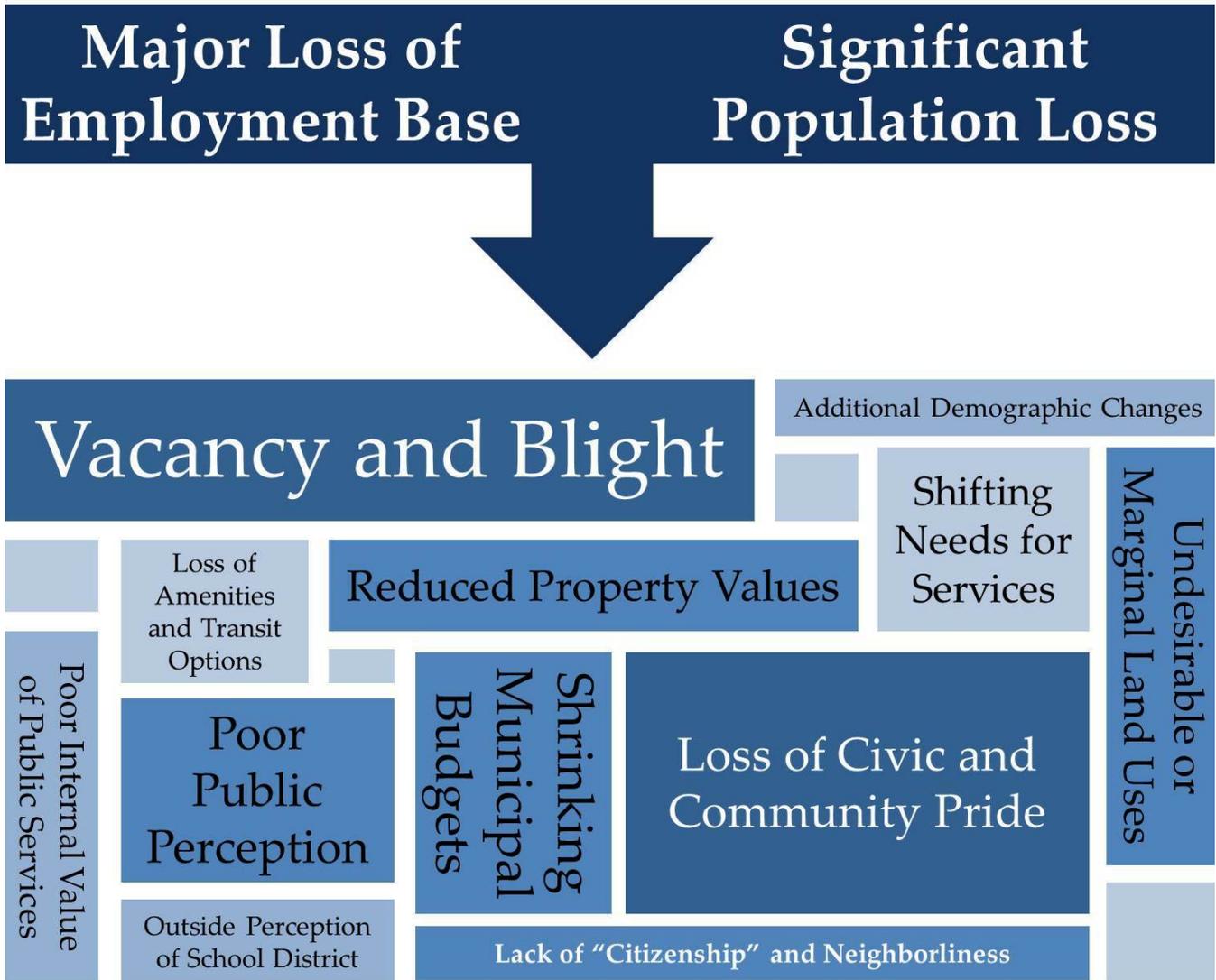
Full documentation of demographic data, physical conditions and issues and opportunities can be found in the Background Studies and Trends chapter.

Regional Context Map



Key Drivers of the Plan

Starting in the late 1970s when a number of large manufacturing plants closed, the entire Mon Valley has experienced a cascade of job loss, population decline and disinvestment. This has created vacancy, blight and other problems that, in turn, created additional job loss, population decline and disinvestment.

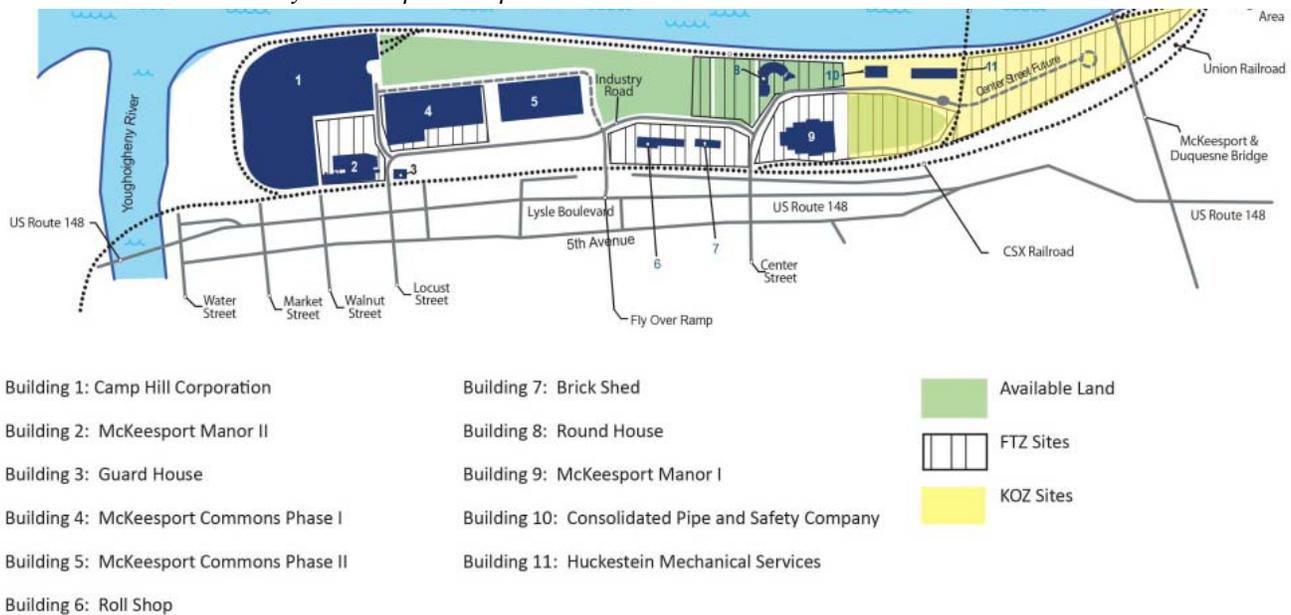


Today Duquesne and McKeesport are dealing with a number of issues that are a direct and indirect result of changes in industry and demographics over the past decades. However, both cities have a number of unique opportunities and a history of hard work and dedication that will become the underpinnings of continued revitalization and reinvention.

RIDC

The Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) is a major industrial park owner/developer in the region. It is a privately funded non-profit serving the Pittsburgh metropolitan area to focus on a regional approach to economic development primarily through managing and rehabilitating industrial land for modern tenants. RIDC was formed in 1955 as a non-profit corporation as a central agency responsible for developing and coordinating efforts to create new employment and economic diversity. Much of that effort is focused on redeveloping sites associated with the region’s former steel industry. Consequently, most of RIDC’s property has existing infrastructure and environmental issues that characterize industrial redevelopment sites.

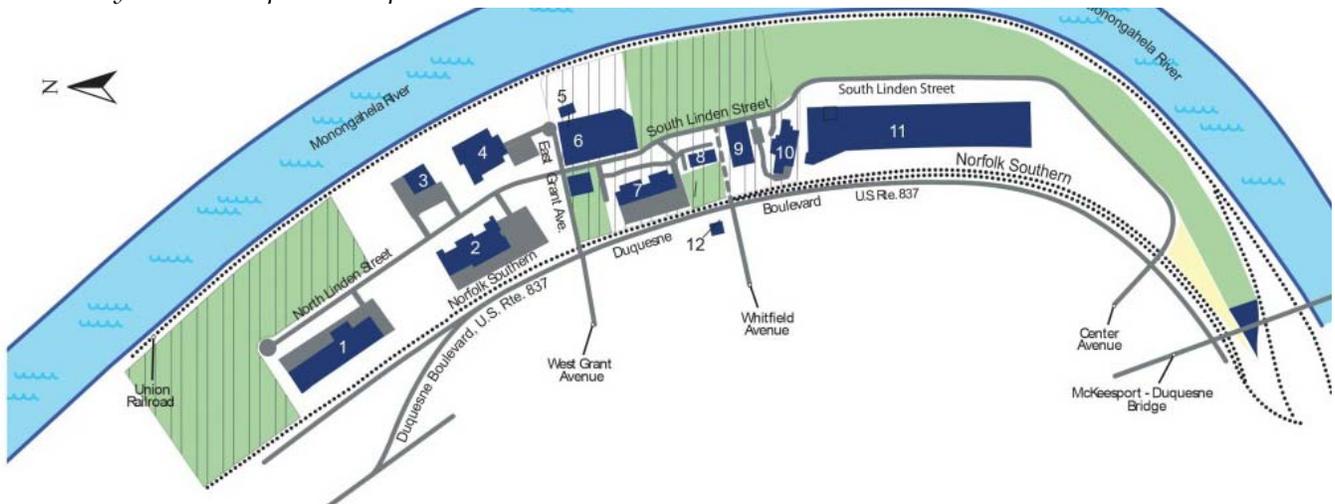
RIDC Industrial Center of McKeesport Map



There are a number of other industrial park owners/developers in the region—many of which focus on the development of greenfield sites, where there are no costs associated with redevelopment, repurposing or remediation. Reusing or redeveloping industrial sites can be costly. From replacing/upgrading infrastructure to environmental cleanup, the expense is significant. Most RIDC sites have significant investment—often in the form of grants and loans—to prepare them for future development. Sometimes this money comes from public agencies but often the money comes in the form of loans. It is not surprising to find that the RIDC parks typically have higher sale and lease prices than parks that focus on the development of greenfield sites. However, the RIDC parks in Duquesne and McKeesport are the least expensive in the RIDC portfolio.

The RIDC Industrial Center of McKeesport is 133 acres (3.8% of the city's land area)

RIDC City Center Duquesne Map



- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Heat Treat Building | 7. Linden Square One |
| 2. American Textile | 8. Roll Shop |
| 3. Department of Labor & Industry | 9. Brick Shed |
| 4. Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank | 10. Stores Building |
| 5. Open Hearth Building | 11. Allegheny Recovery Corporation |
| 6. Duquesne Industrial Manor | 12. Business Innovation Center |

- Available Land
- FTZ Sites
- KOZ Sites

When RIDC developed the parks in Duquesne and McKeesport, there was a significant investment to remove old infrastructure and build new infrastructure. Because of the high cost of site cleanup, RIDC had to find funding/financing to support this effort. The pay-back terms of the financing for that investment is a large part of what dictates land value/sale price and rent price for buildings in the parks.

The RIDC City Center Duquesne is 240 acres (18.2% of the city's land area)

The RIDC parks in Duquesne and McKeesport have always been marketed to industrial users but the sale price is closer to the price of land for commercial uses. Consequently, development at the two parks has been slow. RIDC is the largest owner of developable commercial/industrial land in both the cities of McKeesport and Duquesne and controls most riverfront property on the Monongahela River in each city. Because of the high visibility of the sites, lack of robust development activity and vast land area, there has been frustration from the communities because of a perception that activity on the sites is stagnant.

Based on market forces, other types of uses may be able to bear the higher purchase or lease price that is needed because of the cost associated with the past investments on the RIDC sites in Duquesne and McKeesport. For instance, if the park properties were marketed for commercial uses/activities such as office or retail, the market appeal most likely would be broadened.

Zoning

Both cities have issues related to zoning that are common in built-out communities—a number of regulations do not coincide with the existing fabric of the built environment or common building products/industry practices. Fence height and opacity is an example in Duquesne. These types of building and code enforcement issues have the capacity to consume a large amount of municipal staff time.

McKeesport has an additional zoning issue related to requirements of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. A number of fair-housing issues were identified in a housing report that needs to be addressed as part of a battery of zoning ordinance updates.

The issue of zoning on RIDC property is of concern in both cities. There is a desire to expand uses and raise the bar in terms of the quality of the built environment. There is also a desire to level the playing field by ensuring that development opportunities and zoning regulations are consistent between the two cities.

Community Character

Grant Street in Duquesne and 5th Avenue in McKeesport were once the “Main Streets” of the cities. These commercial corridors were where residents and businesses would obtain goods and services to satisfy daily needs. Today both communities suffer from vacancy, marginal land uses and disinvestment, in spite of the fact that much of the building stock remains intact. The upside of stagnant economies is often historic preservation. Both communities have an urban fabric that has retained some character through the years—old buildings, walkable streets and brick roads. Duquesne and McKeesport do not have to expend energy creating or manufacturing an artificial sense of place. They need to retain what is existing, and build on it through physical projects, programs and storytelling. The Heritage Center in McKeesport can play a role in these efforts along with other local and regional organizations.

Transportation

Duquesne and McKeesport are located in close proximity to regional hubs like the Route 22 corridor in Monroeville and the Waterfront in West Homestead/Munhall. The drive to downtown Pittsburgh is reasonable for many commuters—particularly those with private vehicles.

Like many communities in the region, Duquesne and McKeesport have experienced severe service cuts from the Allegheny County Port Authority, which operates all main bus routes serving the area. Valley Heritage /Work link busses have completed some connections, especially in McKeesport, to get residents from the community to main bus routes and transportation corridors.

A significant number of rail lines along with industrial waterfront are servicing the industrial land uses in both communities. RIDC identified the large industrial waterfront parcels as an opportunity worth preserving for the right tenant or buyer.

Regional and Recreation Assets

There are a number of regional assets that draw people into and around Duquesne and McKeesport: UPMC McKeesport Hospital, Penn State Greater Allegheny Campus, the RIDC sites, McKeesport Marina and Kennywood (which borders Duquesne). Building and maintaining relationships to reach common goals is important as limited municipal budgets restrict each city's ability to implement long term planning goals completely independently.

The Great Allegheny Passage trail passes through both Duquesne and McKeesport along the RIDC properties. The trail has been experiencing increased traffic as additional portions are completed and local interest grows. There are opportunities in both cities to focus some improvements and investments in an effort to bring trail users into the communities.

Economic Development Incentives

Hundreds of acres are available for development in Duquesne and McKeesport:

- 20 acres within the KOZ at the RIDC Industrial Center of McKeesport
- 11 acres within the KOZ at the RIDC City Center of Duquesne
- 14 acres in the new Duquesne KOZ/Redevelopment Area

The Redevelopment Authority of the City of Duquesne (RACD), as administrator of the 3-City Enterprise Zone comprised of Duquesne, McKeesport and Clairton, has consolidated the four Enterprise Zone revolving loan funds into one revolving loan fund. RACD, over the past year, has been aggressively marketing the Enterprise Zone Program. Funds are geared toward economic development programs that encourage businesses to locate in the communities. In addition to the revolving loan fund, the following incentives are also available:

- Neighborhood Assistance Enterprise Zone Tax Credit Program
- Technical Assistance Matching Grants
- Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) Program (Only at selected locations)
- Job Training and Other Technical Assistance Programs
- Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) in McKeesport for local and school district taxes (Allegheny County does not participate)

Perception

A resident at a public meeting in McKeesport shared her experiences with friends who had never been to McKeesport. Once they arrive, they are pleasantly surprised to find a nice community that, largely, stands in stark contrast to the 6:00 news reports and newspaper headlines. This theme was repeated regularly throughout the planning process. Duquesne and McKeesport have a lot to offer—the challenge is getting people past the “front door.”

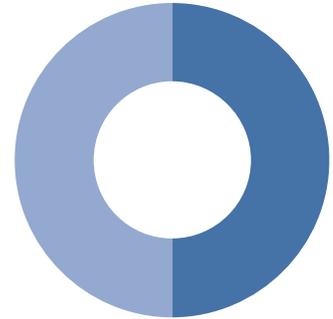
Housing Stock

The housing stock in Duquesne and McKeesport is varied and provides a range of opportunities for the local population. Little new market rate for sale housing has been developed in recent years. Most new housing in the community has been initiated by nonprofit organizations or public bodies to fulfill service and/or revitalization missions. However, some projects have found it difficult to find qualified home purchasers and struggled to close out the project successfully.

In comparison with Allegheny County, Duquesne and McKeesport’s home ownership rate is significantly lower (54% versus 65% in 2010).

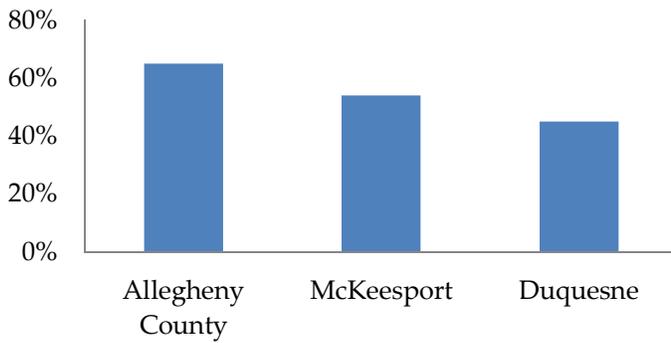
Aging communities often struggle with an oversupply of economically obsolete housing that is uncompetitive in today’s housing market. A result of this imbalance is abandonment by the owners or investors, leaving the city to assume the costs and responsibilities to demolish the structure.

McKeesport is battling a backlog ranging from 650 to nearly 1100 units (source: US Census as published by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission) and a budget that permits ~20 demolitions per year. As a result, McKeesport is facing a 40-50 year backlog. Similarly, Duquesne’s backlog ranges from 200 to nearly 500 units (source: US Census as published by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission) and a budget that permits 25 demolitions per year, or a 10-20 year backlog.

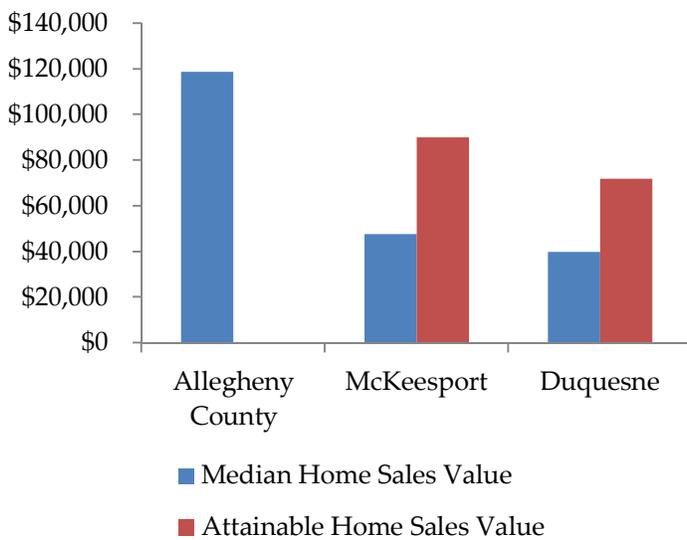


Approximately half of all housing units (55% in Duquesne and 46% in McKeesport) are not owner-occupied and half the population resides in these units.

2010 Home Ownership Rates



Home Sales Value



In McKeesport, with a median household income of \$27,100, potential home sales values of \$90,000 would be considered attainable for existing residents (annual home ownership costs that are no more than 30% of annual household income). This represents 89% potential increase in McKeesport home values for existing residents and homeowners.

In Duquesne, with a median household income of \$21,700, potential home sales values of \$72,000 would be considered attainable for existing residents (annual home ownership costs that are no more than 30% of annual household income). This represents a 78% potential increase in Duquesne home values for existing residents and homeowners. (Baseline figures from the 2007-2011 American Community Survey as published by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.)

Population Projections and Build-Out

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 9a Forecast is projecting continued decline in McKeesport's population through 2025 with modest growth beginning in the 2030-2035 time period; Duquesne's population is projected to continue to decline through 2040. Full projections can be found in the Appendix.

Build out scenarios are a common analysis undertaken as part of a comprehensive plan. Their intent is to understand implications related to future land use, development, infill, redevelopment, zoning and municipal services and infrastructure needs. Duquesne and McKeesport are unique in this context because of the decline that is projected to continue. Therefore, build-out in this context is not looking at the implications of an increased population—it is looking at the implications of potential infill development or continued vacancy. The three build out scenarios related to this plan include the following (the full data and description of assumptions can be found in the Appendix):

- Scenario 1: Existing vacant land and structures are redeveloped within the parameters of the existing zoning districts to continue existing development patterns.
- Scenario 2: Vacant land in the more dense central area of the communities remains vacant (turned over to neighbors for use as side yards) and the peripheral areas of the communities are redeveloped within the parameters of the existing zoning districts to continue existing development patterns.
- Scenario 3: Vacant land in the more dense central area of the communities remains vacant (turned over to neighbors for use as side yards) and the peripheral areas of the communities are redeveloped within the parameters of the existing zoning districts to continue existing development patterns. Additional new development occurs based on discussions found later in this comprehensive plan (housing and commercial development near the “point” in McKeesport where the Youghiogheny and Monongahela Rivers meet and housing development on the parking lot of the recreation field in Duquesne).

Based on population projections and the build out scenarios considered, there is little anticipated impact on municipal services or infrastructure within the next decade. Much of the infrastructure in Duquesne and McKeesport was built to support larger populations and more robust non-residential activity—from industrial activities to retail and commercial operations. Because of the nature of the scattered blight and vacancy, the cities do not have viable options to reduce infrastructure like roads or to seal off underground pipes. Consequently, the amount of infrastructure will likely remain the same (miles of roads, etc.) but the number of people supporting the maintenance of that infrastructure through tax revenues will likely continue to decline. Other services such as trash collection are scaled based on the current residential population and commercial needs.



Community visioning is the process of developing consensus about what future the community wants, and then deciding what is necessary to achieve it. A vision statement captures what community members most value about their community, and the shared image of what they want their community to become. It inspires community members to work together to achieve the vision. A thoughtful vision statement is one of the elements needed to form a forward-looking strategic framework that gives governments the long-term-comprehensive perspective necessary to make rational and disciplined tactical/incremental decisions on community issues as they arise. As Yogi Berra would say, "if you don't know where you are going - you might end up someplace else."

**Duquesne and McKeesport are
dynamic cities of enduring
value, committed to a future
of new opportunities and
discovery.**

Focus Areas and Goals

Community development goals and objectives for Duquesne and McKeesport are outlined through the following goals in the following chapters.

1

A Plan for Land Use, Redevelopment and Economic Development

Goal: Facilitate private-sector growth with strategic actions to create catalytic change in community focus areas. This section includes a land use plan.

2

A Plan for Housing

Goal: Implement coordinated steps to stabilize and support neighborhoods, encourage reinvestment and promote a wide variety of equitable housing options.

The plan for housing identifies housing problems and recommends measures for maintenance of housing quality in the future. This section includes a housing needs plan.

3

A Plan for Transportation, Assets and Amenities

Goal: Leverage and enhance existing systems with targeted investments. This section includes a transportation and circulation plan as well as a plan for the protection of natural and historic resources and for recreation systems.

4

A Plan for Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy

Goal: Take a long-term and big-picture view on all city decisions. This section includes a plan for community facilities and utilities and a plan for the reliable supply of water.

Interrelationships

Interrelationships are key throughout the plan. Many actions and objectives support multiple goals.



Key Initiatives

Key Initiatives are collaborative ideas that are essential for implementing the plan’s top priorities; these initiatives range from short to long-term for implementation but are high priority actions and should be approached simultaneously for implementation with other key recommendations.

- Continue fostering relationships/creating partnerships with RIDC to enhance the marketing of available City Center of Duquesne and Industrial Center of McKeesport commercial/industrial sites.
- Broaden the range of allowable uses designated in both city ordinances related to RIDC properties
- Solidify and strengthen the market rate housing sector in stable neighborhoods to achieve increased potential home values and expand interest in owner-occupied housing
- Preserve existing homeownership in threshold neighborhoods
- Enhance general marketing efforts to show Duquesne and McKeesport in an improved light.
- Implement ordinance updates to address land use issues identified in the other plan elements
- Enhance external communication and storytelling
- Explore and evaluate options for code enforcement
- Leverage the Great Allegheny Passage to showcase the community and give people a reason to ride there from Pittsburgh or other destinations.
- Create a Joint Trail Committee

*Vision is not
enough; it must
be combined with
venture. It is not
enough to stare
up the steps; we
must step up the
stairs*

Vaclav Havel

Throughout the plan, Key Initiatives are indicated with the symbol above or the phrase “Key Initiative.”

Framework for Action

This plan lays out a series of goals and action items to help the cities of Duquesne and McKeesport move into the future with success. The priorities identified for the plan's action items are based on analysis of data and an understanding of issues and opportunities. The action plan should be reviewed annually to consider new opportunities, completed actions and unexpected circumstances. In moving forward for long term success, always return to the vision statement as a guiding principal and frame discussions about action items with the following concepts in mind:

*Don't just do
something. Stand
there.*

Rochelle Myer

Optimize, Don't Maximize: Optimizing means selecting actions and efforts that work toward multiple goals. To figure out how to optimize efforts, determine first what the most important goal is and then tailor efforts to work towards that goal while supporting other goals.

Think About ROI: In business, the term return on investment, or ROI, refers to how much of a result will be gained from the time, and resources invested. The same idea works in communities. Low-ROI activities—such as enforcement of a code that no longer has relevance in the community—deplete energy and willpower as resources are spent on activities that don't create results. Energy, time and money are finite resources. Actions that provide more utility than cost will help to create momentum and a positive feedback loop.

Test, Test, Test: For actions that don't require significant resources, test strategies and methods to see which are the best fit for the community. Regularly log progress to obtain a set of data or observations for objective evaluation. For actions that require more significant input of resources, reach out to communities where the concepts have already been tested. Ask questions about pitfalls to avoid, special circumstances and lessons learned. Many of the key actions found in the plan feature examples of communities that have implemented the same or similar measures.

Iterate: To remain competitive, most products or brands have to change and evolve. Community development efforts can apply the same principal. This doesn't always mean changing an approach entirely; but it does mean making it better. Take the example of press releases: The community may already be producing press releases but there may be ways to improve the process, quality, quantity or impact. Could they reach out to journalists to better understand how to improve the content? Find local students who could take photographs to include? Begin sending materials to different outlets? The

overarching action remains the same but different iterations offer opportunities to change both the process and the outcomes.

Don't be Afraid to Pivot: At various times in the upcoming years of plan implementation, there may be times when it is obvious that the current model for approaching an issue or opportunity is dated, inefficient, or simply not working. When that happens, it's okay to pivot toward new ideas and new processes. Long term planning cannot anticipate every possible scenario but it does provide a framework that communities can utilize to pivot when necessary.

*When you find
yourself in a hole,
stop digging.*

Will Rogers

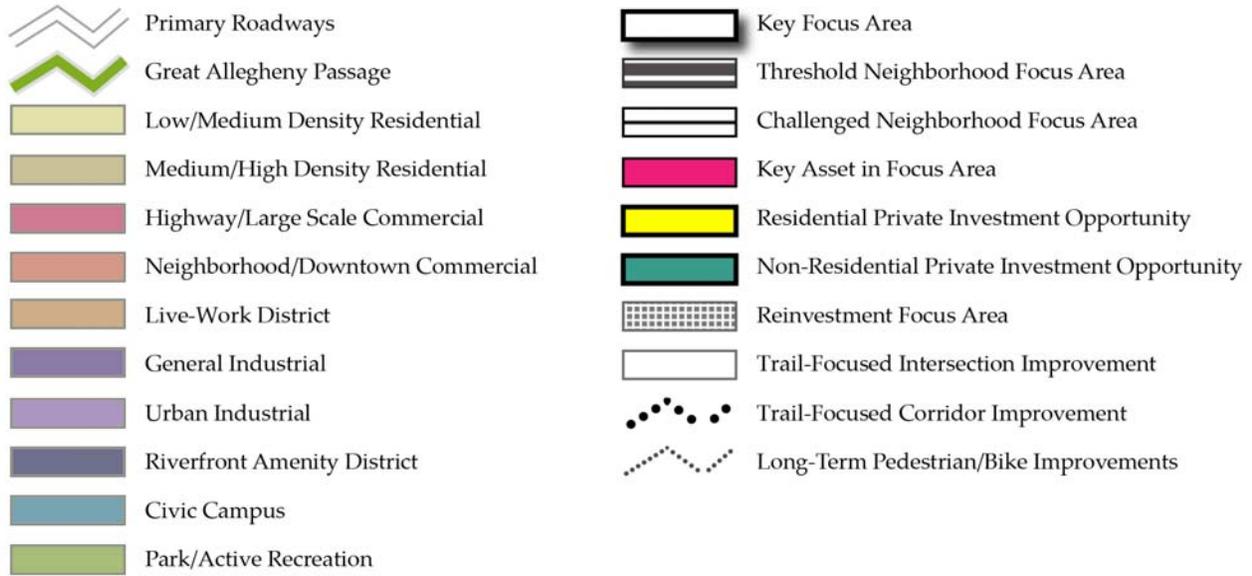
Common Knowledge Isn't Always Accurate: Entrepreneurs are used to hearing from experts every day that their idea or company won't work. If common knowledge was always the best, no one would ever take risks and launch innovative new companies. The same goes for community revitalization strategies — some concepts might hold true, but some trendy new ideas might be more fad than fact. Question what is known and why, search for data to back up understanding and reach out to partners and collaborators to enhance efforts.

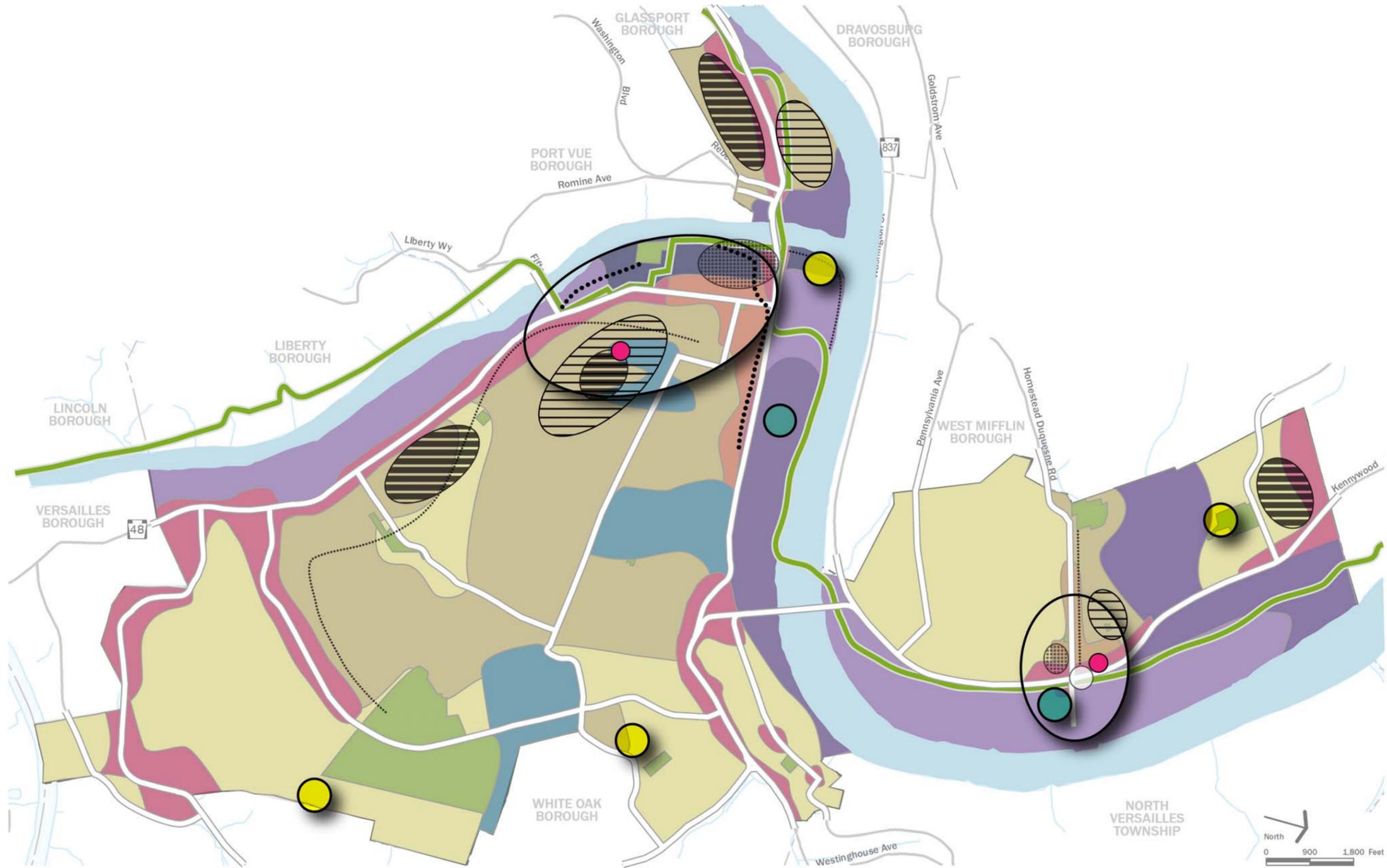
There is No Such Thing as a Get-Rich-Quick Scheme: We've all seen ads for ways to "Get Rich Quick!" — and we all know that they won't work. It's the same for community revitalization and development. Quick and easy options rarely have lasting impacts. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is. It might not be glamorous but slow, hard work that is compounded over weeks, months, years and decades is what leads to a healthy, strong community.

Work Toward the Vision: The takeaway? There is no one-size-fits-all community plan. Work toward the vision and expect bumps in the road. Successful small steps create positive reinforcement to keep moving forward in the long term.

Joint Comprehensive Plan Map

This comprehensive plan map incorporates various plan elements that are associated with physical places in the community. Details can be found in the following chapters.





The **Reinvestment Focus Areas** are key area where each city can work to promote, support and facilitate non-residential private investment and redevelopment. In Duquesne, this focus is the first few blocks of Grant Avenue. In McKeesport, this focus is the area around the McKeesport Marina and the area down Walnut Street, past Kane Hospital and down 12th Avenue.

Building on the Reinvestment Focus Area is the **Live-Work District** in Duquesne where there is an opportunity to build on the existing businesses to continue and promote the location of contractors and other related businesses. While this is part of the reinvestment strategy along Grant Avenue, there is additional opportunity along Second Avenue.

Non-Residential Private Investment Opportunity Focus Area is a key location where new investment in commercial land uses could occur. In Duquesne, this is the 3-acre parcel on RIDC property that is being marketed by Mark Harvey Smith, who is acting as a consulting property broker for Duquesne. In McKeesport, this is the area on RIDC near the flyover where there is potential for non-residential commercial space with the long-term possibility of housing in the form of row houses and condos.

Housing Focus Areas (Challenged and Threshold Neighborhoods) are key areas where investment and intervention could have significant impact. The areas identified on the map do not encompass all residential neighborhood types but identify the first-priority target areas. The Plan for Housing in each chapter further outlines the neighborhood types and the recommendations that can be utilized to support and uplift these areas.

Likewise, the **Residential Private Investment Opportunity Showcase Area** is a location where private investment in housing stock could occur in the long-term. The baseball field parking lot next to the stadium site in Duquesne is currently being used for recreation by the Duquesne School District but the city should be prepared to take control of the site if it ever becomes available and utilize it to facilitate private-sector new housing construction. Depending on the long-term outcome of the users in the RIDC park in McKeesport, there is an opportunity for waterfront housing development at the “point” of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers.

Trail-Focused Intersection/Corridor Improvement Areas are short or medium term improvements that could enhance the likelihood that trail users will experience the city. In Duquesne, this includes creating an additional dedicated trail parking area within the Duquesne Plaza parking lot with signage and promotions. In McKeesport, this includes returning 5th Avenue to a two-way street to facilitate small businesses, retail and office development that will support a walkable and interesting downtown to attract trail users into the community.

Long-Term Pedestrian/Bike Improvements are key areas where significant investment could enhance connections to the Great Allegheny Passage and the trail riders there. In Duquesne, this improvement is in the form of a flyover that would connect the trail to Grant Avenue and a bike lane that would lead to the park at the end of the street. In McKeesport, this could be in the form of a trail connecting Renzie Park to downtown along a swath of open space. In the short-term, property ownership and easement information could be collected to begin the process of long-term planning. This would allow Renzie Park to become a more significant amenity for trail users who could take a detour from the trail to experience the park without traveling extensively on the roadways. It would also connect more residents to the community’s feature park.

The **Key Focus Area** represents a concentration of plan focus elements: land use, economic development, transportation, housing, community assets and government outreach and services. By focusing revitalization efforts, the city can create a synergy where success builds on success and investments can work towards multiple goals.

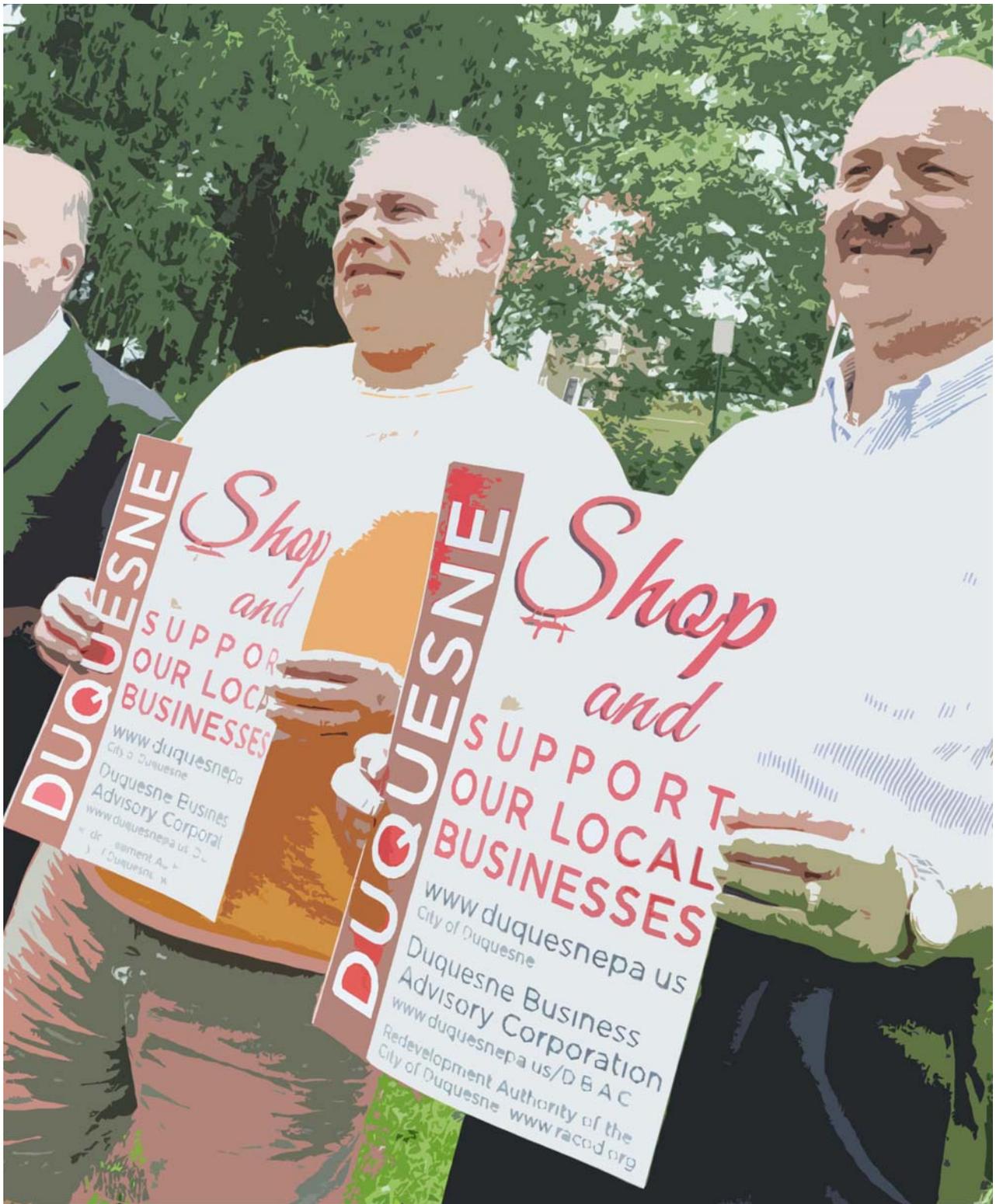
The **Key Asset in Focus Area** is an existing community asset within the Catalytic Change-Key Focus Area. There are opportunities to build from this asset to create change and reinvestment within the Key Focus Area. In Duquesne, this asset is Duquesne Plaza, which is now under new ownership and is more community minded. In McKeesport, this asset is the new Twin River School.

Other each community (residential, commercial, etc.) are primarily focused on infill and continuing the existing character of the community.

You’ve got to think about the big things while you’re doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction.

Alvin Toffler





Duquesne's Plan Elements

You've got to think about the big things while you're doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction.

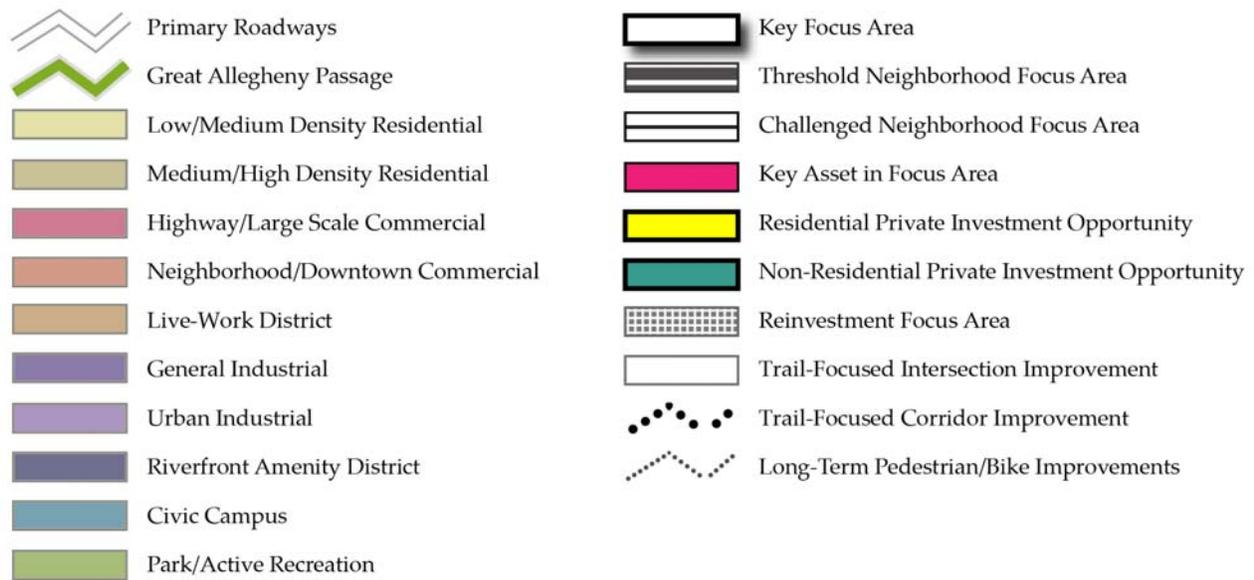
Alvin Toffler

This chapter contains more in-depth discussions of plan elements, goals and actions. Accompanying each goal is at least one key initiative. Each initiative supports multiple goals and strategies, that, when executed, will provide meaningful, measureable progress. Each initiative is, in turn, a collection of implementation steps that can be carried out at the local or regional level.

The initiatives are lofty but achievable—asking the communities to think about the big picture and stretch their horizons towards the future. This chapter also begins to outline potential champions and partners and key steps to bring the plan to fruition.

Duquesne Comprehensive Plan Map





This comprehensive plan map incorporates various plan elements that are associated with physical places in the community.

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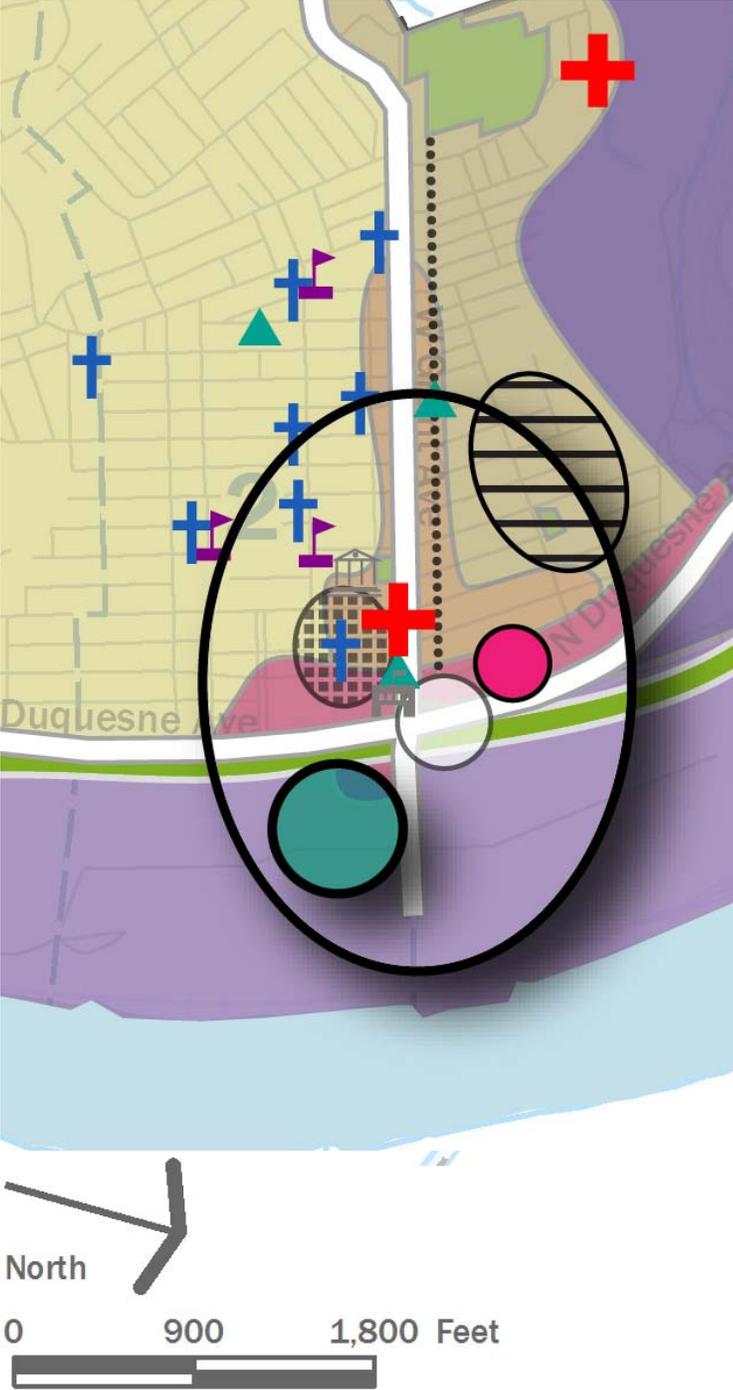
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-  Municipal Building
-  Post Office
-  Church
-  Emergency Service
-  Hospital
-  School
-  River Access
-  Library
-  Historic Site (Listed on the National Register)
-  Historic Site (Eligible for the National Register)

Duquesne Key Focus Area Map



A Plan for Land Use and Economic Development

Business and economic development strategies range from enhancing the marketing of each city and its available commercial sites to incentivizing new business development, to improving the physical environment of business districts. Each city should use these strategies as a guide as it pursues opportunities for commercial growth over the coming years.



Land Use and Economic Development Goal

Facilitate private-sector growth with strategic actions to create catalytic change in community focus areas



Continue fostering relationships/creating partnerships with RIDC to enhance the marketing of available City Center of Duquesne commercial/industrial sites.

The Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) is the largest owner of developable commercial/industrial land in the City of Duquesne. RIDC's ability to market the land to prospective tenants or purchasers is critical for attracting new businesses to each city. The communities must maintain a positive relationship with RIDC and ensure that the agency is employing its marketing and business-attraction resources effectively.

- Arrange regular meetings with RIDC staff to discuss and highlight available sites
- Request reports from RIDC on inquiries regarding the City Center of Duquesne to remain aware of any interest expressed for specific properties
- Attend RIDC workshops/conferences/events to represent the community and promote available sites

Promote City Center Duquesne independently of RIDC's efforts to gain maximum exposure of available commercial/industrial site opportunities and financial incentives.

While it's critical for RIDC to effectively advertise its commercial/industrial sites to attract tenants and employment, Duquesne should also take the initiative to market itself independently of RIDC to ensure that all possible resources are used to promote business opportunities.

- Enhance City of Duquesne and Redevelopment Authority websites and include a section on commercial/industrial properties available at RIDC properties

It does not take much strength to do things, but it requires a great deal of strength to decide what to do.

Elbert Hubbard

- Enhance websites to better promote the numerous financial incentives for businesses available through the Redevelopment Authority:
 - Enterprise Zone low-interest loan and tax credit programs,
 - Technical assistance matching grants,
 - KOZ opportunities, and
 - Available job training programs, and
 - Any utility incentives, such as relatively low costs for City water.
- Enhance websites to promote the numerous DCED (newpa.com) funding programs available to businesses
- Cross-reference efforts/listings/website of commercial broker on City's/Authority's websites
- Meet regularly with local and state representatives to promote the cities and its available commercial/industrial site opportunities
- Attend local/state/national workshops/conferences/events to represent each city and market opportunities, advantages, and incentives

Facilitate and incentivize the expansion of existing businesses.

Concurrent with the effort to attract new businesses, the cities must not ignore existing businesses and the importance of retaining them, many of which have been in the region for decades. Each city should ensure that the needs of existing businesses are acknowledged and addressed if possible so they can remain viable, whether it's financial, promotional, or procedural assistance. In a similar fashion, the cities should support businesses that express interest in expanding their operation.

- Create database of all existing businesses
- Contact owners by email, phone, mail, or in-person
- Provide owners with marketing material outlining all financial incentives available to them
- Remain in contact with owners to promote and encourage use of incentives
- Work with owners to facilitate any regulatory processes (code, etc.) necessary for business expansion

CASE IN POINT

MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Duquesne's Key Focus Area around Grant Avenue is the community's traditional downtown or Main Street. The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development used to run a Main Street Program that has recently been consolidated into the Keystone Communities Program.

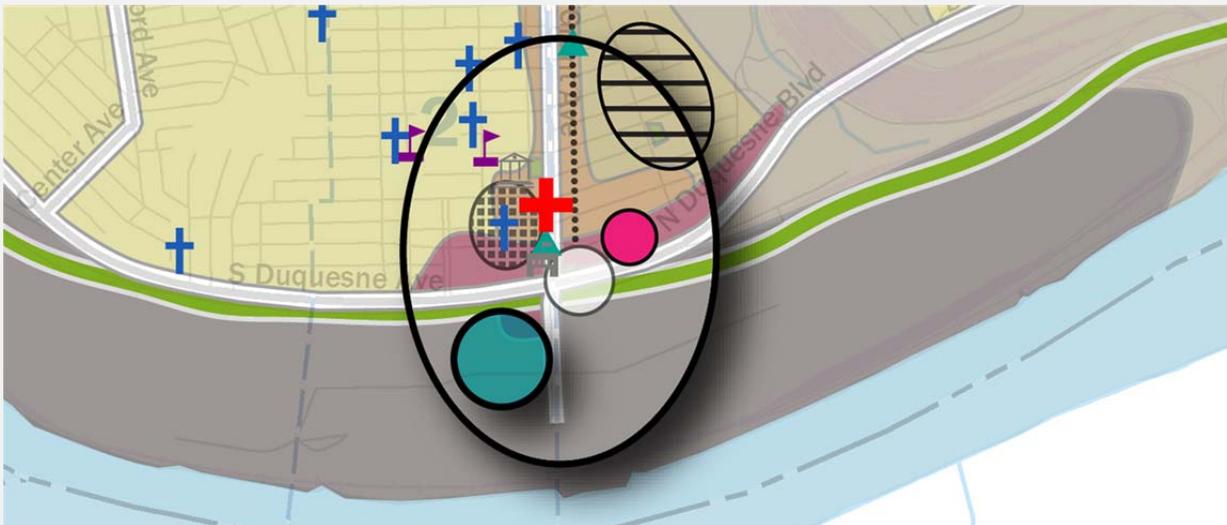
The Keystone Communities Program provides grants to municipalities to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator.

Funding uses include the following: Administrative Costs associated with Main Street Manager positions and offices; Physical improvements supported by downtown plan for Downtown Reinvestment Component; Acquisition costs and physical building improvements for Anchor Building component

Funding: Main Street: \$115,000 over a 5-year period; Downtown Reinvestment and Anchor Building components: up to \$250,000 or not to exceed 30% of project costs

Eligibility: Grants to municipalities to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator

Allegheny County also has a Main Street program called Allegheny Together.



Investigate and reach out to prospective start-ups and growing businesses potentially seeking to locate in City Center Duquesne.

Much of this strategy involves the City of Duquesne identifying business opportunities by being proactive through research and outreach to companies it desires to attract, and pursuing the opportunities through ongoing communication. This communication should involve face-to-face meetings. Through this communication, the City should promote any incentives it can offer to prospective businesses as well. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Research and contact industrial companies appropriate for industrial/flex space in City Center Duquesne, including Marcellus Shale-related companies, craft brewing companies, data centers, call centers, additive manufacturing companies, and waste services and recycling companies
- Research and contact service businesses appropriate for office space in City Center Duquesne, including management, financial, health care services, and high tech businesses
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market Duquesne
- Inform businesses of all potential financial incentives available to them
- Seek out and consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center in McKeesport) to help recruit businesses to Duquesne
- Use area universities as a resource for technical expertise, research, and promotion

Step up efforts to strengthen Grant Avenue and Duquesne Plaza commercial space opportunities.

One of Duquesne's best retail opportunities is Duquesne Plaza due to its location and visibility. Since investments have been made to the shopping center in recent years, retail space has become limited if not unavailable. However, developable land exists adjacent to the center, which would allow for expansion to include additional retailers. In addition, Grant Avenue, as the City's original commercial Main Street, contains many available commercial spaces in traditional storefronts. Understanding the retail and commercial market conditions, the City should strengthen its efforts to promote these commercial space opportunities to get them occupied. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Enhance City of Duquesne and Redevelopment Authority of the City of Duquesne websites and include a section on available retail properties in the Plaza
- Cross-reference efforts/listings/website of commercial broker on City's/Authority's websites

- Research and contact retailers of desired categories to gauge interest in a potential location in Duquesne
- Research and contact area developers to gauge interest in developing commercial properties in Duquesne
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market Duquesne's commercial space opportunities
- Consider hiring a professional retail attraction consultant, particularly for Duquesne Plaza and its developable sites

Create and promote a home improvement/contractor cluster along Second Avenue as a theme for downtown business district improvement.

A small cluster of construction and remodeling companies has emerged on Second Avenue in Duquesne. The City should work to continue enhancing this niche by attracting new businesses of a similar trade (selling both construction-related services and products) and marketing the businesses to potential customers throughout the region. The niche would also lend itself well to creating a center for construction trades training. Such a facility could also house an incubator for emerging businesses as well as teach classes to the public and offer rentable space and equipment for construction/manufacturing use. A model facility, which is a nationwide chain called TechShop is located in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood. A tool lending library is another alternative or complimentary concept that could be paired with shared office space, a fax machine and other facilities that could help startups share costs. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Research and contact area contractors to gauge interest in a potential location in Duquesne
- Coordinate with existing companies in Duquesne to identify their contacts in the trade
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market Duquesne's commercial space opportunities
- Promote the numerous financial incentives for businesses
- Consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center in McKeesport) to help recruit businesses
- Pursue the development of a construction trade training center and/or incubator as a centerpiece of the business cluster with assistance from the above organizations

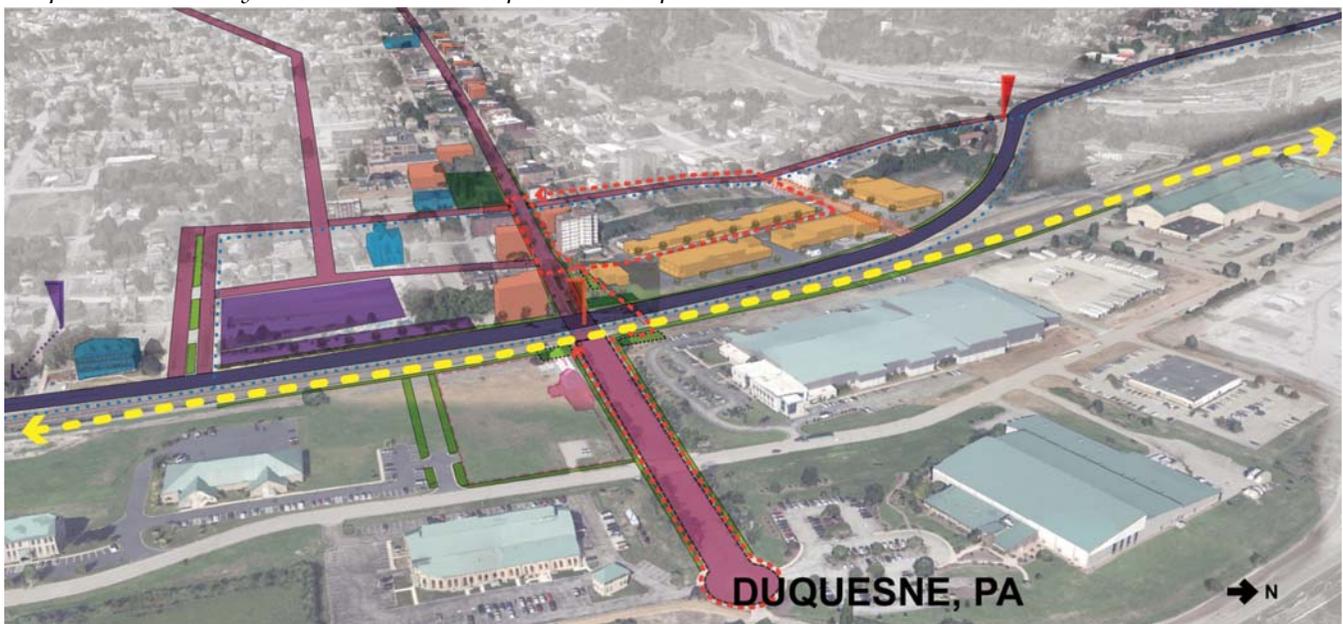
Urban Planning and Design Guidelines to Support the Key Focus Area

The Main Street is a generator of city life, commercial and economic activity and a key public space. In addition to economic development planning and a mix of commercial and housing, the aesthetics and visual quality of the main street is crucial to any revitalization efforts. Grant Avenue provides the physical presence and cohesive architecture to develop such a revitalization effort.

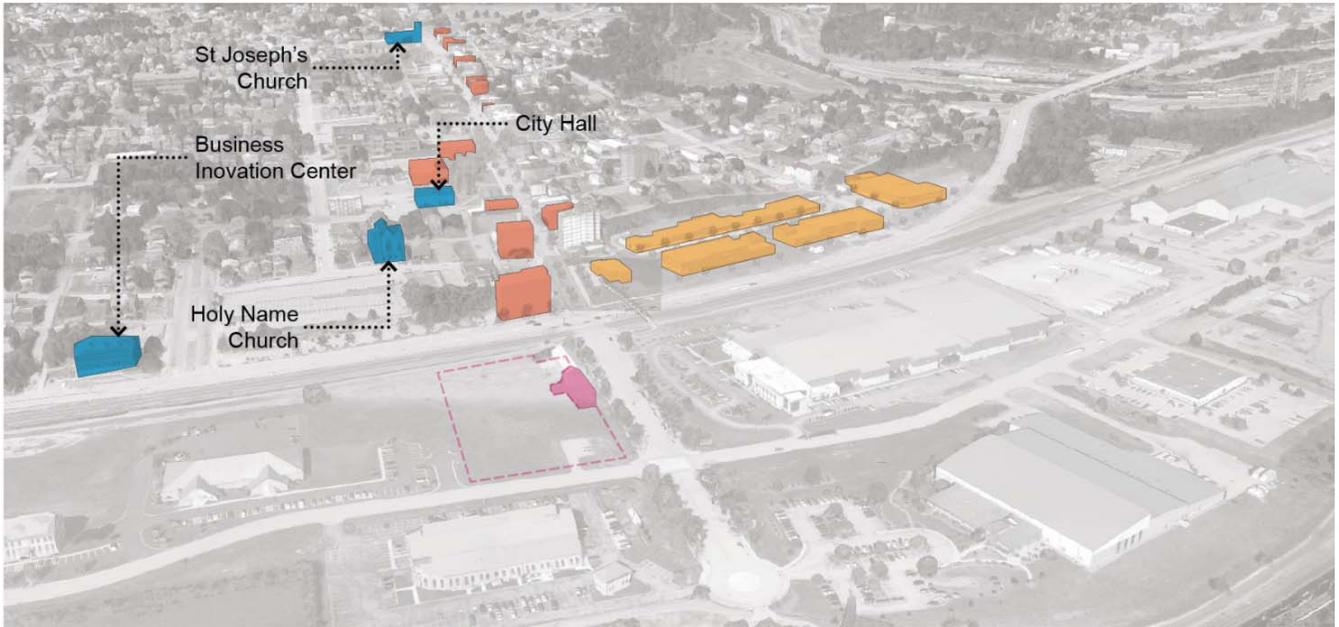
Revitalization connected to historic themes and other city assets may help to jump start increased commercial investment along the main street corridor. The aesthetic decisions for the specific character of the main street are linked to historic and other themed city assets.

The Greater Allegheny Passage Bike Trail is an extensive trail system that has a pivotal point of intersection within the Duquesne Main Street Corridor. The intersection of Grant Avenue and Duquesne Boulevard (Highway 837) serves as a nexus between the downtown and the Duquesne RIDC site and the Allegheny Trail Crossing. Enhanced services along Grant Avenue may potentially capture this important pool of visitors traveling through the City along the 400-mile passage from Pittsburgh to the north and Cumberland, Maryland to the south.

Duquesne RIDC/Key Focus Area Redevelopment Concept



Duquesne Building Form Guidelines

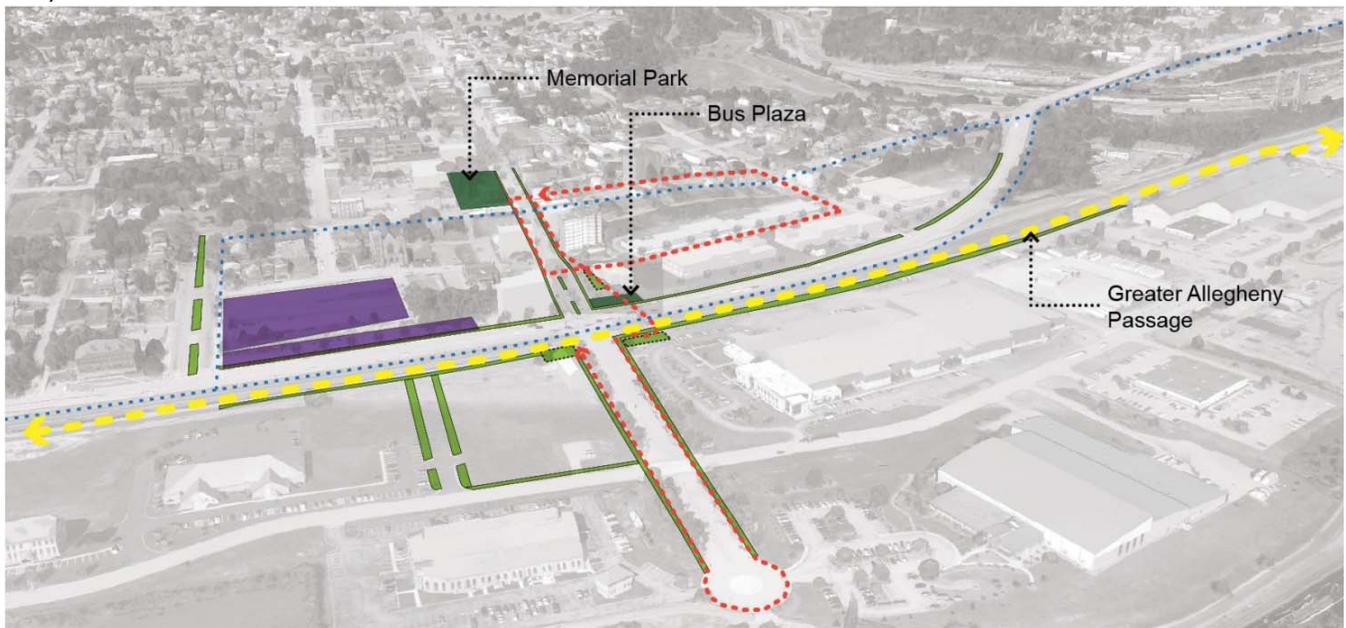


Building Form Guidelines

- Mixed-Use / Commercial Development
- Commercial Complex Development
- Potential Hospitality Development
- Landmark Building(s)



Duquesne Public Amenities Guidelines



Public Amenities Guidelines

- Existing Public Space
- Future Streetscape & Public Space
- Bike Trail
- Extended Bike Trail
- Existing Bus Routes
- Park & Ride



Duquesne Urban Gateway Guidelines

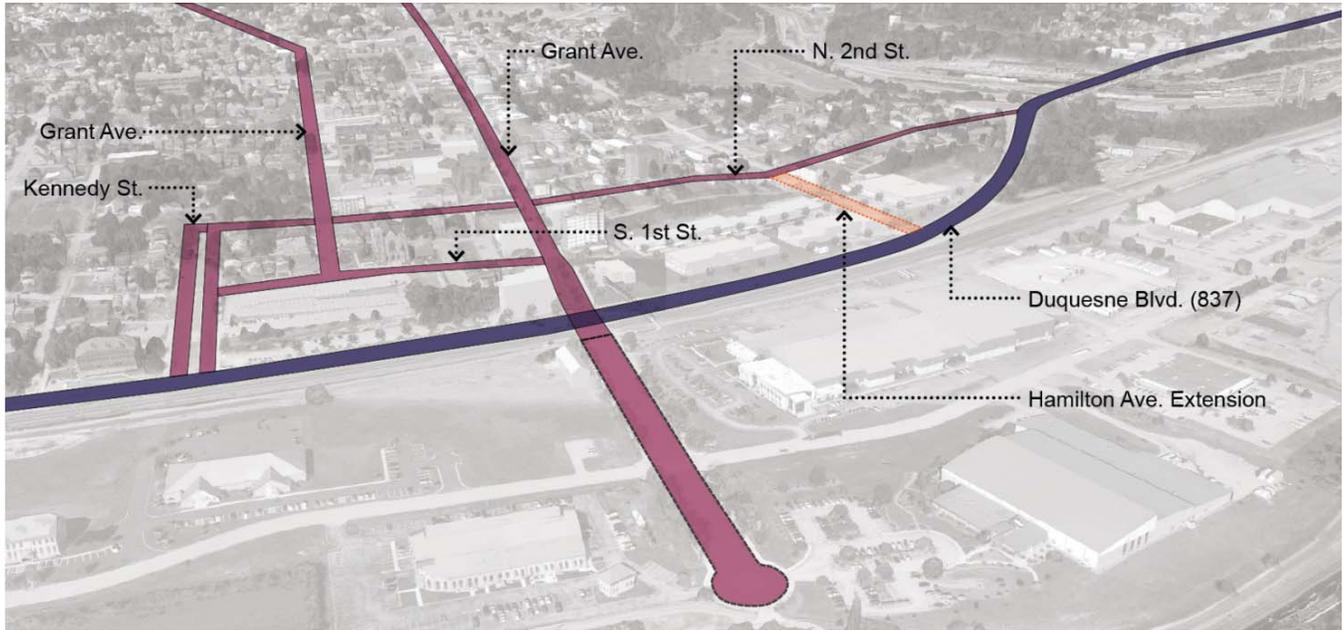


Urban Gateway Guidelines

- Duquesne Blvd. & N. 2nd St. Intersection Gateway
- Business District Gateway
- McKeesport - Duquesne Bridge Gateway



Duquesne Street Corridor Guidelines



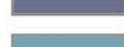
Street Corridor Guidelines

-  Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Corridor
-  Vehicle-Oriented Commercial Corridor
-  Future Street Corridor



Duquesne Future Land Use Map



-  Primary Roadways
-  Great Allegheny Passage
-  Low/Medium Density Residential
-  Medium/High Density Residential
-  Highway/Large Scale Commercial
-  Neighborhood/Downtown Commercial
-  Live-Work District
-  General Industrial
-  Urban Industrial
-  Riverfront Amenity District
-  Civic Campus
-  Park/Active Recreation

A Plan for Housing

Duquesne is a weak-market city with varied housing markets and conditions. The community exhibits multiple factors at play within it at the neighborhood level. As such, the individual neighborhoods reflect their particular set of assets and challenges. Collectively, however, they can be seen as forming a continuum of neighborhood dynamics from the strongest market-rate oriented neighborhoods with relatively high home values to weak neighborhoods with little housing demand and challengingly high vacancy rates and corresponding low home values.

In total, three types of neighborhoods (Stable, Threshold, Challenged) were identified in this undertaking with a set of recommendations for each typology. In this process, examples of real-world response strategies to address economic and community challenges that have been put in play both in the Pittsburgh market and from elsewhere across the country. While this plan's responsibility is not to



Housing Goal

Implement coordinated steps to stabilize and support neighborhoods, encourage reinvestment and promote a wide variety of equitable housing options.

drill into each particular neighborhood and assess its status in terms of typological fit, examples are provided of each typology.

As noted by the Center for Community Progress and others, “there is often a close relationship between the strength of a neighborhood’s housing market and many other factors, including tax delinquency, the vacancy rate, the homeownership rate, the level of homeowner investment in their properties and the volume of new construction.” The typology profiles featured here seek to account for this interrelationship and the strategies that should be deployed in each situation to maximize economic and community potential, both short term and long term.

Stable Neighborhoods

Stable Neighborhoods are those where a healthy private sector housing market is operating. Home prices are appropriately average for the region and supply and demand are in relative balance. Homebuyers are predominantly middle income, vacancy is nominal, and rental properties are a small portion of the market. Most properties and yards are well maintained and few vacant lots exist. While higher priced neighborhoods exist, in the context of Duquesne, this type of neighborhood is the goal.

Challenged Neighborhoods

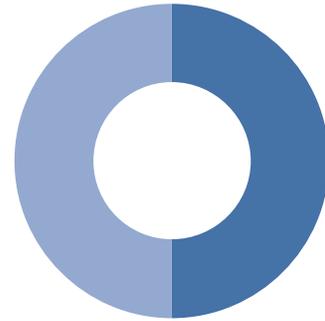
Challenged Neighborhoods are the most economically and socially challenged. Low housing values lead to high levels of abandonment, vacancy and absentee landlords. Homeownership rates are substantially below the regional market. The Center for Community Progress notes that in most cities the great majority of problem properties are privately owned investor properties, most often by owners who do not live in the property. Collectively, physical conditions of the homes in Challenged Neighborhoods are poor and most show evidence of disinvestment. Supply of homes substantially exceeds demand, and vacant lots abound in clusters. The area between Thompson’s Run and Grant Avenue in Duquesne would be classified as a Challenged Neighborhood. The challenged neighborhood focus area is identified on the Comprehensive Plan Map on page 88.

Because the different neighborhood types exhibit different market forces and a different type physical supply (e.g.: the type or condition of housing units or the prevalence of vacant land), the strategic response to either maintain, revitalize, or mitigate the conditions within the targeted neighborhood differs. While code enforcement and promotional efforts may be sufficient in Stable Neighborhoods, demolition is a standard tool in Challenged Neighborhoods.

Threshold Neighborhoods

Home prices in Threshold Neighborhoods are lower than in Stable Neighborhoods and the private housing market is considerably weaker. Supply of homes exceeds the demand for homes, and purely market rate new construction is rare in such areas. Tax credit developments or other financial subsidies deployed by specialized developers or nonprofits comprise the majority of any new housing developments or rehabilitation projects. While some homes are well maintained, a number show evidence of disinvestment, and rental properties abound. Absentee landlords acquire property willingly in these areas, as the return on investment (or often, the lack of investment) is attractive to such owners. Abandoned properties are sprinkled throughout the area and clusters of abandonment and vacant lots may begin to emerge. Vacant lots are rarely used for new development, and are often unkempt. In Duquesne, the far northern section of the city between Commonwealth Avenue and Hoffman Boulevard is the most robust housing market, but would still be categorized as a Threshold Neighborhood in this context. The threshold neighborhood focus area is identified on the Comprehensive Plan Map on page 88.

Data on vacant and blighted properties was sourced from the Financial Impact of Blight on the Tri-COG (Steel Valley Council of Governments, the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, and the Twin Rivers Council of Governments) report. Data associated with this report can be found on the Vacant and Blighted Lands Map on page 179



Approximately half of all housing units (55% in Duquesne and 46% in McKeesport) are not owner-occupied and half the population resides in these units.

In comparison with Allegheny County, Duquesne and McKeesport's home ownership rate is significantly lower (54% versus 65% in 2010).

Stable Neighborhoods

Currently, this key housing market component is missing in Duquesne, but with careful nurturing over time, there is potential to reestablish it, especially north of Commonwealth Avenue. As this housing market is reestablished in Duquesne, efforts should be made to support it.

- Solidify and strengthen the market rate housing sector in stable neighborhoods to achieve increased potential home values and expand interest in owner-occupied housing. Gain a greater depth of understanding of existing residents and their reasons for moving to and staying in the communities. This information will guide further efforts to encourage new residents to join the market. Consider undertaking surveys of new and former residents.
- The market rate housing neighborhoods are, not unexpectedly, those with the highest quality housing in good condition. Maintaining the condition of this housing requires continued code enforcement efforts to ensure private property owners preserve their property as well as their neighbors' home values.
- Creating a competitive environment can serve a housing market well by “upping the ante” of prospective developers to put their best proposal forward for consideration. Using the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for publicly held sites in a manner that evaluates best project fit, not just highest bid, has proven successful for many communities. A proactive approach to connect with successful local developers, such as that used by Pittsburgh’s Urban Redevelopment Authority, often yields positive results for neighborhood-scale projects.
 - Duquesne may consider this option for the parking lot of the Commonwealth Avenue site of the athletic fields of the former high school. This process would determine if there is a sufficient demand for market rate or mixed income housing development of the site.
- Consider uses beyond single family housing that will reinforce stability (corner stores or community centers, for example)



Ensure that maintenance levels are maintained in rental units

Healthy communities need a balance of housing types and choices, including apartments and other rentals. The key to rentals is proper maintenance (for example, through code enforcement).

CASE IN POINT

NEW RESIDENT AND FORMER RESIDENT SURVEYS

Both the Lawrenceville Corporation and the Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation have conducted in-depth surveys of new residents in recent years to greater understand their market demand, housing types needed, and gaps in development that should be served.

Further, the Lawrenceville Corporation also surveyed former residents to gain a greater understanding of why they chose to leave the community. The ability to understand and respond to former resident issues may highlight pending community concerns while they are still nascent and relatively manageable, rather than waiting until the issues become severe or costly to address.



Pittsburgh's Lawrenceville neighborhood. Pittsburghskyline.com

Threshold Neighborhoods

Threshold Neighborhoods come in many different stages and situations. Some are more comparable to Stable Neighborhoods, such as the northern end of Duquesne to those more akin to the Challenged Neighborhoods such as the 2nd Ward in Duquesne. While there is a wide variety of Threshold Neighborhoods, the reality is that the strategies for addressing the issues are the same. The severity of the situation results in deploying a variety of the techniques featured below, rather than only a limited array of them.

In addition to the range of neighborhoods under the Threshold Neighborhood banner, the strategies for consideration also depend upon the intent of the effort.

Celebrate any progress. Don't wait to get perfect.

Ann McGee Cooper



Preserve existing homeownership in threshold neighborhoods

Working to maintain existing homeowners in a Threshold Neighborhood is one of the highest priorities. It is clearly substantially easier to affirm a prior investment into a homeownership choice than it is to persuade potential candidates to consider the neighborhood in question. Further, much research has shown that homeownership creates a more stable community than one primarily focused on the rental market. As a result, this market segment is highly desirable to maintain.

- To enhance the quality of the housing stock, existing rehabilitation and repair programs and financial assistance should be marketed to current residents. Programs such as these both strengthen the physical housing stock as well as strengthen the emotional connection that homeowners have with their own property, thereby increasing the likelihood of further investments as well as lessening the desire to relocate. While a great variety of such programs exist, the list below features some particularly relevant to these communities.
- Improving the physical and aesthetic environment is important for area homeowners. Curb appeal strategies matter to those who reside in the communities on a daily basis.
 - In one Detroit neighborhood, a local nonprofit organization organized a landscaping contest of area homeowners. Discounts on flowers at the nearby nursery were made available and a panel of local residents was established for the end of year review. The contest enhanced the sense of belonging by the residents as well as beautified the neighborhood.

CASE IN POINT

ASSISTING RESIDENTS WITH REPAIRS AND UPGRADES

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, in cooperation with the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation, provides regular technical assistance sessions for how to maintain, rehabilitate, and invest in your home. The sessions are free, and are held monthly in the Housing Resource Center in Wilkinsburg. The Design Center of Pittsburgh provides low cost consultations with licensed architects and landscape architects to area homeowners. More than 2,000 consultations have facilitated an estimated \$9.5 million in homeowner projects.

State Representative Erin Molchany and Pittsburgh City Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak (District 4) organized and conducted a Housing Renovation Fair in April 2014 featuring local assistance organizations and the programs they offer to area residents. The session featured opportunities to learn about best practices and available resources for home renovation projects.

The Duquesne Business Advisory Corporation has sponsored two programs for local homeowners to preserve and improve the local housing stock. Up to \$250 in paint and painting supplies are made available to homeowners eligible for the program, though income is not a criteria. Uniquely, the program has involved a partnership with Schink's Hardware on Grant Avenue that occasionally advances the cost of the paint and materials. Reimbursement for the paint and materials is then made directly to the hardware store and the homeowner, allowing for the work to proceed with no money out of pocket by the homeowner. A similar program provides up to \$500 in matching grants for homeowners in need of sidewalk repairs. These low cost programs provide a benefit to the entire community by maintaining and enhancing the public realm of the community.

Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh repairs and renovates the homes of low-income, elderly homeowners, military veterans, and individuals with permanent physical disabilities. With support from local communities and corporate sponsors, Rebuilding targets "Impact Neighborhoods" for multiple properties in a concentrated area to stabilize entire neighborhoods. Currently, the organization is working with the Hazelwood neighborhood in Pittsburgh, where sixty homes have been repaired in three years. Additionally, about ten percent of Rebuilding's work in Allegheny County occurs outside of the targeted neighborhoods.

Leveraging the Community Development Block Grant program, the state of Wisconsin has not only used the CDBG funds for income eligible residents for home loans, but has also created a revolving loan fund (RLF) from funds repaid to the state for the program. The RLF funds have fewer restrictions on income and are then available to both homeowners and landlords (in exchange for an agreement to rent to eligible income households). Loans are due in full when the property is sold or when the home ceases to be the homeowner's primary residence. Under the CDBG housing RLF, homeowners in owner-occupied dwellings and homebuyers receive 0% interest loans that are either deferred or feature low monthly payments. Rental rehabilitation loans are 0% to 3% monthly installment loans. CDBG housing funds can only be used for CDBG eligible activities. Allegheny County also has a CDBG program.

- As was noted in the Stable Neighborhood strategies, learning more about how and why existing homeowners and renters made their choice to locate in the area is valuable to garnering a greater understanding of the market potential and how to maximize that potential. This may be even truer for the more fragile nature of a Threshold Neighborhood. Surveying these homeowners to understand why they originally selected this area and if they would do so again will help guide the appropriate strategy development and selection to retain them in the area. The University of Pittsburgh’s University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) has developed an outreach strategy to gather this information from both long time and new homeowners in an area. Lawrenceville Corporation partnered with UCSUR in their homeownership research efforts.
- Focus on strategic code enforcement. As in any area, code enforcement is crucial to maintaining, stabilizing, and improving the neighborhood conditions. While significant in Stable Neighborhoods to prevent decline, and overwhelming in Challenged Neighborhoods, the fragile state and transitional nature of Threshold Neighborhoods makes them the most significant areas to focus limited resources in the ongoing code enforcement effort. According to HUD, “targeted code enforcement and vacant property registration requirements can motivate absentee owners to maintain properties and prevent decline” in a community (PD&R *Edge* online magazine, May, 2014).
- Keeping homeowners in homes is particularly challenging in Threshold Neighborhoods. By definition, these areas are those with more fragile neighborhood economies, and the financial challenges of residents may have negative spillover effects if left unchecked.

CASE IN POINT **STRATEGIC CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Mt. Washington’s Housing strategy calls for the establishment of Community Zones monitored by local residents to alert municipal staff when enforcement efforts are needed in an area.

The Pennsylvania Neighborhood Blight Reclamation & Revitalization Act allows, in certain cases, a lien to be placed against the personal assets of an owner of a blighted real property, denial of permits for other properties under the same ownership entity, the extradition of out-of-state landlords and the establishment of blight courts. These strategies are significantly more impactful than placing a lien on an abandoned, vacant property.

CASE IN POINT

HELP RESIDENTS KEEP THEIR HOMES

In the Homewood neighborhood of Pittsburgh, abandonment and blight are being confronted by Operation Better Block and its partner organizations. The neighborhood group is canvassing door to door to meet with homeowners and assess their foreclosure risk. The program features a series of services that are crucial to maintaining homeownership in the community, and for which homeowners rarely understand where to turn for services. Included in the program are:

Foreclosure counseling and assistance. Financial guidance is provided through a partnership with NeighborWorks of Western Pennsylvania to prevent bank foreclosure when homeowners are in financial difficulty or get behind on mortgage payments.

A program to initiate tax payment plans for back taxes. Without direct outreach, many of these homes would accrue significant liens and further financial challenges. Operation Better Block has established a close working relationship with Jordan Tax Services as a result, to the mutual benefit of homeowners and the community at large.

Access to tangled title legal services of the Allegheny County Bar Foundation Wills Project. In Threshold Neighborhoods, the existence of foreclosure and tax liens against properties diminishes their market value and negatively impacts the housing market. Working with the Tangled Title program overcomes these issues to clear cloudy title situations.

Operation Better Block and the Wills Project also provide referrals to estate planning services for area residents. The intent of these referrals is to prevent the cloudy title situations from occurring that are often later addressed in the Tangled Title programs.

Allegheny County's Homeowner Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (HEMAP) assists clients in applying to the PA Housing Finance Agency for emergency financial assistance to cease foreclosure actions.

The Allegheny County Home Improvement Loan Program can be utilized by residents to correct code violations and undertake lead-hazard remediation activities. Remaining loan proceeds can be used for energy improvements and general property improvements.

- Especially true for homeowners in Threshold Neighborhoods, purchasing a home is typically the largest investment an individual makes. The financial stability of this purchase is impacted by the economic conditions of the Threshold Neighborhoods. One strategy that has proven successful in mitigating this risk is the creation of Home Equity Protection programs. Home Equity programs allow homeowners in designated target areas to buy insurance that ensures that they can get the value of their home back on resale, even if the market value of properties in their area declines during their ownership. There are a great many parameters to establishing such a program (including length of ownership, ratio of home value ensured upon sale, etc.), but they have proven successful in other markets to date. Typically homeowners pay a nominal fee (\$100-\$500) to enroll in the program to pay for an appraisal and for a contribution into the overall fund to pay out any losses in value.
- Ensuring that zoning ordinances continue to advance single family occupancy is important to the stability of the community in the long term.

CASE IN POINT ***PROTECT HOME VALUES***

The Syracuse Home Equity Protection program was co-developed by faculty at Yale and Neighborhood Works, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Home Headquarters Inc., a local nonprofit administers the program. The program is reported to have had a near instant impact in stabilizing market prices, which had been falling for nearly a decade previously. Claims against the program for payouts have been rare in both Syracuse and in similar programs in Chicago.

Expand homeownership opportunities in threshold neighborhoods

While maintaining homeownership is important to the short term stability of the community, expanding and growing homeownership in is a key strategy for long term vitality.

- Developing a marketing and outreach strategy for prospective homeowners in is an important element in expanding the potential housing market for interested parties. Target markets would include the large employment base available at both the City Center of Duquesne. Typically, people who take a new job in such a site are unlikely to learn about nearby housing opportunities from their coworkers. Marketing and promotional activities that might be carried out by the city, a local nonprofit or neighborhood association are another way to increase the demand for the area's housing stock. Getting accurate local information to people who lack it or providing more accurate information to people who may be excluding the cities from their search because of stereotypes or erroneous information may put the areas "on the map" for prospective new purchasers.

- Outreach through local churches may also reach potential homeowners that would not otherwise be possible. Research shows that at many suburban churches, congregants are not local, but actually drive an average of twenty minutes to their destination.
- One well established method of both solidifying neighborhoods and increasing homeownership in an area is through Employer Assisted Housing programs. In such programs, participants are provided a range of technical assistance, financial training, and potentially down payment assistance in the purchase of a home in an eligible area. The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency has Employer Assisted Housing program guidelines and works with both communities and employers to establish such programs.
 - These programs have been successful in a variety of settings, including at Johns Hopkins University, Howard University, and with Marriott Corporation. Large employers such as those at RIDC parks, municipal entities, school districts, or possibly UPMC could serve as key actors in establishing a program.
- As noted previously, the purchase of a home is typically the largest financial expenditure that any family undertakes. Despite the sizable investment, and one that often comes with a thirty year mortgage attached, research shows that homebuyers do not have sufficient financial understanding and training to fully comprehend all the issues or to maximize their fiscal situation. Homebuyer assistance programs and financial/credit counseling are key elements to making long term homeownership prosper in a distressed community.
 - Assist individuals in becoming credit ready for home ownership.

CASE IN POINT

OUTREACH THROUGH CHURCHES

At a recent service at St. Augustine/St. Monica Catholic Church in Detroit, parishioners were informed of nearby housing opportunities and open houses immediately after the service. When parishioners visited the homes after the service, they were greeted by the Mayor of the City of Detroit to encourage their interest.

The congregation of Macedonia Baptist Church in Duquesne, for example, could fit this profile and could prove a source of prospective homeowners for the area.

In the Pittsburgh region, a program at Carnegie Mellon University is launching the Wilkinsburg Vacant Home Tour in 2015. Designed to reframe the blight conversation, the self-guided tour will showcase abandoned or vacant properties, and lead tour participants on a journey back in time through the narratives of these homes and buildings. Most importantly, tour participants will be provided with a "tour kit" that will offer the tools to help visualize what the house once looked like in full vibrancy, and information on resources available to aid participants in more actively engaging these homes and buildings. The tour will be partnered with a resource workshop for those interested in learning more and will include a look at "next steps," the process, available tools, and the risks, challenges and rewards of such an endeavor.

- Locally, both Dollar Bank and Neighbor Works Western Pennsylvania are well recognized for their home buyer counseling programs and may be able to provide assistance in this arena. Oftentimes, the counseling element is supplemented by financial down payment assistance for completing the program.
- It is particularly important that the program continue for at least one year beyond the original purchase of the home to maximize effectiveness.
- Many existing homes are in substandard condition, but remain as potential assets to the community. Developing or sponsoring a Rehab and Resale program for these properties is one method that potentially corrects both the weakness in the housing stock as well as expands homeownership in the community. These programs are typically targeted to where homeownership rates are low and foreclosure rates are high. Without such programs, undesirable investors are more apt to target these neighborhoods, thereby exacerbating a number of adverse conditions in the community. Advocating for the creation or expansion of such programs may require the expansion of technical capacity of local community development organizations.
 - Both Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation and East Liberty Development Incorporated in Pittsburgh operate such programs. Mt. Washington CDC recently sold a property on Eureka Street for \$139,000, nearly double the previous high

CASE IN POINT

ABSENTEE LANDLORDS

The Center for Community Progress notes that in most cities the great majority of problem properties are privately owned investor properties, most often by owners who do not live in the property. Strategies for dealing with these types of investor-owned properties or absentee landlords include the following:

- *Strategic code enforcement: maximizing code enforcement capacity, targeting resources, working with property owners*
- *Working with rental landlords and investors: rental registration and licensing, tracking property owners, establishing and maintaining property standards, finding and targeting “bad apples”*
- *Dealing with vacant property owners: vacant property registration ordinances, motivating owners to reuse properties, vacant property receivership*

- home value on the street. The organization had acquired the property for only \$21,500 and invested approximately \$100,000 before selling to a new homeowner.
- One source of subject properties for the Rehab for Resale program is to work with financial institutions to acquire problem properties before they hit the open market. Each of the major local and national financial institutions offers Real Estate Owned (REO) properties to nonprofits or partner agencies for consideration before considering a sale to the general public.
 - While taking a direct role or sponsoring a nonprofit organization to undertake a Rehab for Resale program is effective, ideally the private sector market is an active partner. In some areas of Pittsburgh, local community organizations directly work with private investors to select and partner on rehabilitation projects that are directed and led by friendly private developers whom have a track record of success and community support. Encouraging successful local investors may preclude less desirable absentee landlords from becoming prevalent in the market.
 - To expand housing opportunities and, new development by private and nonprofit developers presents an opportunity. Similar projects have taken place in the past or are taking place currently (Orchard Park redevelopment project in Duquesne)
 - Typically these projects are conducted by private or nonprofit developers that specialize in tax credit supported projects. Such developers include TREK Development Group, Ralph A. Falbo, Inc. and ACTION-Housing.
 - Conducting outreach to these groups and providing “FAM Tours” or familiarization tours with similar developers has the potential to expand the market interest in the communities.
 - Developers are more readily engaged when available sites are presented as part of a package of strategic investment. This may be an individual site or a series of residential lots packaged as part of a scattered site strategy.
 - Similarly, when a particular site is well suited to redevelopment, conducting a Request for Proposals (RFP) process may generate additional interest from high quality developers. Locations such as the parking lot of the former athletic fields in Duquesne along Commonwealth Avenue may be particularly well suited to this approach.

- Coordinated housing efforts. The scope and scale of the challenge is daunting. It is recommended that all organizations come together under the Redevelopment Authority to select a priority neighborhood upon which to focus all related housing efforts for designated period. The neighborhood selected should exhibit market potential, while still having a demonstrated need for action. Partner agencies may include:
 - ACTION Housing
 - Habitat for Humanity
- Similarly, when a particular site is well-suited to redevelopment, conducting a Request for Proposals (RFP) process may generate additional interest from high-quality developers. Locations such as the former athletic fields' parking lot in Duquesne along Commonwealth Avenue may be particularly well-suited to this approach. This process may be particularly successful if the Redevelopment Authority first engaged a market study to demonstrate the viability of the site and prospective project.

These efforts should be coordinated with the City of Duquesne's housing demolition program for full effectiveness.

Address the rental market in threshold neighborhoods

Balancing housing types and choices is important in Duquesne. With 55% of the total population living in renter-occupied housing units, the rental market is an important consideration.

- An important key in the rental market is proper maintenance. In recent years, a number of new strategies for working with this segment of the housing market have been developed in Pennsylvania.
 - The Pennsylvania Neighborhood Blight Reclamation & Revitalization Act allows, in certain cases, a lien to be placed against the *personal* assets of an owner of a blighted real property, denial of permits for other properties under the same ownership entity, the extradition of out-of-state landlords and the establishment of blight courts. These strategies are significantly more impactful than placing a lien on an abandoned, vacant property.
 - The Pennsylvania Abandoned and Blighted Property Conservatorship Act (2009) provides a mechanism to transform abandoned and blighted buildings into productive reuse by transferring control of the property to a third party. If the owner of a residential, commercial or industrial building fails to maintain the property the court may appoint a conservator to make the necessary improvements before the building deteriorates further to protect the well-being of the public interest of the community at large. Many different interested parties, including non-profits and adjacent homeowners

and businesses, can petition the Court to establish a Conservatorship of a problem property.

Rental registration systems are often cited as crucial elements in a housing strategy. However, Duquesne has an existing strategy for addressing the rental market that is working well. Duquesne requires an occupancy permit and inspection every time a new resident moves into a building. Because Duquesne has maintained its own water department (the City of Duquesne Water Department), the city requires an occupancy permit for new water service. This series of checks and balances has helped to ensure that all housing units are being inspected when a new resident moves in. The city has relationships with larger apartment owners to schedule inspections and the system is working well. Duquesne’s situation is unique due to its small size and the fact that it has not transitioned to a multi-municipal water authority.

- While the above strategies are focused on enforcement, balanced programs also offer the “carrot” or an incentive for landlords to be productive community stakeholders. Good landlord programs or incentives have been developed in a number of markets to encourage pro-active support and coordination with public interests. The Center for Community Progress has noted the following incentive programs for rental housing situations.
 - One way some cities balance the rental registration program is by reducing or rebating fees to landlords who participate in good landlord or similar programs. The Utah Good Landlord Program offers a significant financial incentive in the form of a waiver of almost all of the Disproportionate Impact Fee. The criteria for participation in the program are set forth in the state law, which require landlords to follow anti-crime provisions and comply with applicable housing codes.
 - The city of Milwaukee offers a free training program to landlords that concentrate on how to be a “proactive property manager” including code compliance, applicant screening and how to recognize and deal with drug and other illegal activity. The program is five hours long, and at the end participants receive a free 100 page manual with useful information about the legal and business issues associated with managing rental property.
 - The Crime Free Rental Housing Program, was developed in Mesa, Arizona in 1992, and is now actively promoted by the International Crime Free Association to its members.
- Additional strategies can be used to support residents living in rentals.
 - The Allegheny County Accessibility Program is a program that makes accessibility modifications for both homeowners and renters to their homes to address the needs caused by permanent physical disabilities. Allegheny County residents who meet qualifying criteria can apply for improvements such as exterior ramps, interior and exterior lifts, doorway widening, bathroom modifications and more.

- The Weatherization Assistance program is a federally-funded program that provides income-eligible homeowners and renters free weatherization services. The improvements result in enhanced energy efficiency, reduced heating and electric bills, and make the home more comfortable.
- Duquesne has a strong rental market with only 45% of the housing units owner-occupied. About 40% of renters are paying less than 35% of their household income in rent. About 48% of renters are paying more than 35% of their household income in rent. Although rent in Duquesne is relatively inexpensive (only 3% of renter-occupied housing units have rent over \$1,000 per month), there may be unmet need for affordable housing.
 - Working to encourage new tax credit rental developments could help to address this need. Under this system, selected private tax credit developers coordinate their efforts with local philanthropic sources to leverage their work as catalytic change agents.
 - One current project in Brownsville, PA is projected to cost \$8 million, with significant financing achieved through low income housing tax credits. Local foundations have pledged an additional \$4 million in community support if the developer is successful with the tax credit application and proceeds with the project.

CASE IN POINT

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

Revitalizing the housing market in Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods is often accomplished by working to build the market value of housing opportunities to close the value gap with higher value Stable neighborhoods. Oftentimes, this is done through some form of private, though subsidized, housing development activity. The largest form of this development process is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).

In Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods, where properties may not be appreciating rapidly or may even be losing value, the investment into affordable tax credit housing is often the first new housing in the area in decades. The tax credits provide sufficient investment return to support a project that would otherwise not be financially feasible.

Specialized, private, for profit, housing developers often are experts in this particular housing finance mechanism. Locally, such firms include Trek Development Group, Ralph A. Falbo, Inc. (currently developing Orchard Park in Duquesne), a.m. Rodriguez Associates and others. (Many nonprofit housing developers such as ACTION-Housing also specialize in this market as well, as their work in McKeesport demonstrates.) Approximately 70% of all affordable tax credit housing is developed by for profit developers. The tax credits are competitive and overseen by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, thus forcing the developers to “up their game” to beat their competitors and secure the allocation of support. The competitive process thereby benefits Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods likely to be home to such developments.

Significant research over the years (see Lan Deng, 2011 and Smith and Williamson, 2008 among others) has demonstrated that neighborhoods with new affordable housing development are impacted more positively than otherwise comparable neighborhoods. Poor minority neighborhoods are among those that benefit most, especially when strategically located and complemented by related revitalization efforts.

Properly situated and balanced, affordable housing tools such as tax credits catalyze additional investment into the community and lead to increased home values. Closing the value gap with Stable neighborhoods results, allowing some communities to fully make the transition into Stable neighborhoods.

Take a comprehensive approach to mitigating vacancy in buildings and land in threshold neighborhoods

Vacant property and vacant lots are indicators of the economic challenges in Threshold Neighborhoods. While selective demolition may be appropriate for some of these structures, many others can be addressed using other strategies. (See the next section, Considerations in Demolition, for greater analysis and detail in this approach.)

- The Center for Community Progress offers a Vacant Property Registration Ordinance template for municipalities to refer to in the development of their own ordinance. It identifies three purposes to the ordinance:
 - To ensure that owners of vacant properties are known to the city and other interested parties and can be reached if necessary;
 - To ensure that owners of vacant properties are aware of the obligations of ownership under relevant codes and regulations; and
 - To ensure that owners meet minimum standards of maintenance of vacant properties.
 - In addition, the fee structure established in the ordinance may serve additional purposes, including covering costs incurred by the municipality to deal with vacant properties, and under some circumstances, motivating owners to restore and reuse vacant properties.
- As noted in the Considerations for Demolition section, one alternative to demolition is to board and secure (“mothball”) vacant properties for future redevelopment interest. As Threshold Neighborhoods are already indicative of weak market demand for housing in these areas, there is little likelihood of vacant land being productively reused for new housing opportunities in the near future. As such, municipalities should evaluate the future land use of the site as part of the analysis before choosing to proceed with demolition.
 - Some communities have found that artistic and aesthetically pleasing boarding strategies are more accepted by the community at large and have fewer negative perceptions than they might otherwise. The Hill District of Pittsburgh features buildings that have been boarded and secured, but feature vibrant flower patterns on the boards or window themes on the window boards, helping to reinforce a bit of the sense of place that would be activated if the home were occupied.
- While vacant structures are one aspect to the problem in Threshold Neighborhoods, lots where structures once stood are also a significant element of the challenge. Many, if not the majority, of vacant parcels that are negative factors in the community dynamic are a result of the demolition of the blighting property that preceded it on that site.

- Cleveland and Sandusky, Ohio both feature “mow to own” programs that provides credit to neighbors who mow and maintain vacant lots to be applied to the purchase price of the land. While the purchase price is nominal, the intent is to ensure that the lots will be maintained upon transfer. Initiating the transfer for \$1, as some municipalities do, may not ensure the continued maintenance of the lot into the future. Working through the sweat equity program is thought to enhance the likelihood of future maintenance.
- In the Mt. Washington neighborhood of Pittsburgh, individual vacant lots were included in the establishment and expansion of what has become Emerald View Park. Lots adjacent to the park were included in the overall park master planning process, conveying them from unloved community eyesores to part of the maintenance and trail development strategy of the park program.
- Student Conservation Association works with local community youth on greenspace and vacant land strategies while teaching conservation and building employable skills.
- The City of Pittsburgh features the Love Your Block program provides \$2,000 in funding to community residents and organizations tackling public place enhancements. Frequently, the program supports area residents in their efforts to beautify vacant lots with planters, community gardens, and public art.

Challenged Neighborhoods

Demolition is the primary tool of stabilization in Challenged Neighborhoods. The aim is to get things under control in these neighborhoods, oftentimes while using the strategies of Threshold Neighborhoods in concert with these efforts. At the same time, demolition approaches, especially those conducted in either Stable or Threshold Neighborhoods can be too aggressive and may need to consider other factors at play.

Establish a formal, written demolition strategy for use in challenged neighborhoods.

With a limited ability to keep pace, establishment of a formal, written, demolition strategy is key. The strategy should evaluate when it is best to demolish a structure versus when an alternative strategy such as boarding and mothballing the structure may be a more cost effective solution that facilitates redevelopment activity in the future.

While the final strategy should be refined and customized, the factors highlighted below could serve as a baseline for consideration. Develop an appropriate “score sheet” of these and other factors to assess the need for demolition of any particular structure.

- Is the building historically, architecturally, or culturally significant?
 - St. Louis, Missouri has proposed a vacant building “mothball” fund to preserve solid stock as it awaits future redevelopment. Targeted to architecturally significant properties or those in historic districts, the program would split funding with the demolition budget under a new fee structure as proposed.
- Is the building a current safety hazard, a threat to public health, safety and welfare, or structurally dangerous, or is it just unoccupied?
 - Public safety is one of the primary functions of municipal government, and burned out shells should be demolished expeditiously, in whatever neighborhood they occupy.
 - Vacancy, even long term vacancy, does not necessitate demolition, however. A recent study of the Hill District of Pittsburgh noted 373 vacant buildings. Yet, the same study indicated that only 80 (21%) of these required demolition. The balance was recommended for mothballing, or further analysis of redevelopment potential. Recently, new funding was approved in the Tax Increment Financing district accompanying the redevelopment of the former Mellon Arena site that would mothball and preserve these vacant units as far away as the Upper Hill District so that the private market can “catch up” to these units, and ensure that they will not be lost to the neighborhood fabric in the interim.
- Is the building open to trespass? Can this situation be resolved through boarding of vacant structures rather than demolition?
 - Focus: HOPE in Detroit, Michigan uses community volunteers and funding from insurance company programs and foundations to board and secure vacant property.
- Type of construction (masonry versus frame):
 - Masonry structures are more durable to vacancy over time and should be boarded for preservation rather than demolished if possible.
- Is the building adjacent to other occupied property?
 - Generally speaking, other than immediate safety hazards being prevalent, demolition should proceed rarely when otherwise occupied property is prevalent. Creating a “missing tooth” impact in weak market communities does not solve the problem. Rather it encourages additional abandonment and vacancy as the neighborhood takes on the pall of blight.

- In this analysis, it is therefore preferable to demolish a unit on the end of the block, rather than in the middle of an otherwise occupied block of homes.
- Conversely to above, it is also true that demolition of particular problem properties could enhance the value of adjacent homes, particularly the removal of severely structurally compromised property or the demolition of obsolete alley houses.
- Is the area one of a high concentration of homeownership?
 - Some practitioners have found that excessive demolition negatively impacts the homeownership rates in a community. Vacant structures in areas of high homeownership should be evaluated carefully before proceeding with demolition.
 - One study in Detroit, Michigan, found that 8 of every 10 properties sold in tax sales reverted for back taxes again within five years, further exacerbating the situation prior to the establishment of the Detroit Land Bank.
 - The Center for Community Progress has established national best practices for land banking strategies for communities large and small.
- The Local Government Academy has developed a training series for local officials reflecting best practices and new tools recently enacted in Pennsylvania under the “New Tools in the Fight Against Blight” sessions.
 - Likewise, the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania has recently published the “Fight Blight Brightly” handbook of tools, techniques, and strategies.



According to the Historic and Cultural Plan in AlleghenyPlaces, two key challenges to preserving community history and character are misperceptions about rehabilitation of historic structures, and lack of understanding about the economic value of historic properties. The AlleghenyPlaces Housing element recommends that municipalities inventory properties/structures that are vacant or abandoned and note their condition. Structures that are significant in some way and can still be saved should not be the top priorities for demolition.

A Plan for Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy

Providing residents and businesses with high quality services while maintaining fiscal responsibility is an important focus. Balancing investments of time and resources as part of delivering improvements and programs to the public are of utmost importance to the administration's everyday roles and responsibilities now and in the decade to come.

Leaders and staff are interested in and committed to advancing the effectiveness of services delivered.



Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy Goal

*Take a long-term and big-picture view on all
city decisions*

Outreach

Outreach efforts are aimed at reach an audience outside the city as well as internal audiences.



Enhance general marketing efforts to show Duquesne in an improved light.

Often distressed communities are known by the outside world only for the negative aspects such as crime, poverty, and abandonment. This is usually the case because local media outlets only feature news of the community when it's bad. However, despite experiencing some of these unfortunate conditions, in reality Duquesne is making strides toward revitalization. Develop a marketing campaign and approach the city as a business/product: Create a brand and marketing plan to:

- Manage brand and marketing
- Approach current residents, businesses and organizations as current customers to be retained
- Approach potential residents, businesses and organizations as potential customers to be attracted

Efforts include attracting new businesses, improving infrastructure, and constructing new housing. To overcome any negative perceptions and highlight positive accomplishments and its vision for the future, the cities should increase efforts to promote themselves in a positive manner.

- Use City and Redevelopment Authorities websites to better showcase upcoming and recent projects, positive facts and figures, and profiles of local residents improving the community; update regularly
- Enhance/create new marketing and press materials to highlight opportunities and incentives available
- Establish relationships with and regularly meet with area and **regional** media/press representatives to encourage more positive coverage
- Send regular press releases of positive events to local press outlets

Often the only way to make a hard decision is to come back to the purpose

David Allen

- Engage former residents who can become cheerleaders and advocates of change and success (seeing former residents as an asset who can continue to be invested in the community)

Find new and nontraditional marketing methods to showcase the cities and recruit niche businesses and new residents

- Solid, affordable and attractive housing stock exists in the community. Yet the awareness of these homes is quite weak. A champion of promoting these options needs to be established. This could be the Redevelopment Authority, a local nonprofit, or some other entity. This effort would include:
 - Outreach to the real estate brokers and sales persons to familiarize them with the options in the community. Oftentimes, prospective homeowners are steered by these industry professionals to other markets for an expedited closing, and developing relationships with those that specialize in niche markets is important. This effort could include quarterly tours of homes on the market or some shared marketing strategy, such as co-operative ad purchases.

Work with major employers and job training programs to guide residents to local jobs

CASE IN POINT

REACH OUT TO PROFESSIONALS

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association has conducted outreach to local real estate brokers to promote their listings at no charge in their annual StepTrek program book. These brokers likewise often feature Open Houses along the walk route to reach an audience they otherwise would have limited access to.

Many communities conduct outreach to real estate developers, brokers, and sales persons to build interest in the neighborhood market. Engaging with these industry professionals by hosting an occasional meeting to understand their perspective, issues, and concerns increases the vitality of the market potential.

This practice has taken place in Lawrenceville, Mt. Washington, and the South Side of Pittsburgh.

Government, Services, Infrastructure and Energy



Implement ordinance updates to address land use issues identified in the other plan elements

- Built-out communities oftentimes have zoning or other ordinances that are inconsistent with new housing design and construction techniques. An evaluation of current zoning and related building ordinances may alleviate the potential to discourage desired new development from taking place.
- Ensuring that zoning ordinances continue to advance single family occupancy is important to the stability of the community in the long term.
- While zoning addresses health, safety and welfare issues, community design guidelines ensure that development and redevelopment is compatible with existing neighborhood fabric. Design guidelines respond to issues of height, scale, setback, exterior detailing, garage placement, material selection, window proportions, etc.

Protect infrastructure that contributes to the community's character

Evaluate ways to protect brick streets and other key elements in the community's physical character. For example, the brick street found on Kennedy Street is an element worth preserving.

As discussed in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter, Duquesne is a highly urbanized area with full access to service, infrastructure and energy resources.

Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.

Henry Ford

Prepare to make strategic investments in infrastructure and energy systems to support the city's long term vision.

- Align long term improvements with planned growth and development. Utilize infrastructure investments to facilitate growth areas.
- Continue to make long term capital improvements to utilities and water systems and address problems as they arise

Water Service

Barring significant unforeseen industrial or other water needs, the current water and sewer facilities will be able to accommodate anticipated growth and development in Duquesne. It is not anticipated that expansion or extension to the existing sewer system is needed. This plan for the reliable supply of water is generally consistent with the State Water Plan. Lawful activities such as extraction of minerals impact water supply sources and such activities are governed by statutes regulating mineral extraction that specify replacement and restoration of water supplies affected by such activities.

Sewer Service

The Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport (MACM) owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant and conveyance system serving the greater McKeesport area. The communities served by the Authority include in whole or part of the City of McKeesport, City of Duquesne, East McKeesport Borough, Elizabeth Township, Liberty Borough, Port Vue Borough, North Versailles Township, Versailles Borough, White Oak Borough, Glassport Borough, and Lincoln Borough.

The Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport purchased the Duquesne Water Treatment Plant in 2010. Since then, operational changes have been made to better handle and treat the incoming flows. The Authority submitted a long term control plan to the PA Department of Environmental Protection in 2014 to address the wet weather issues that exist. The plan is currently under review. The plan will address the design loadings of the plant as well as address the combined sewer overflow regulatory requirements.

Stormwater

Watersheds in this region are covered by the Pennsylvania Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan. Allegheny County is currently preparing a county-wide Act 167 Plan that will update the existing plan. PA Act 167 requires municipalities to adopt a local Act 167 plan that is consistent with the County's plan within six months after the PA Department of Environmental Protection has approved the County's plan. The proposed Allegheny County Act 167 plan will include a model ordinance that can be used for this purpose, so achieving compliance could be inexpensive and relatively simple.

A Plan for Transportation, Assets and Amenities

Providing residents and businesses with high quality services while maintaining fiscal responsibility is an important focus. Balancing investments of time and resources as part of delivering improvements and programs to the public are of utmost importance to the administration's everyday roles and responsibilities now and in the decade to come.

Leaders and staff are interested in and committed to advancing the effectiveness of services delivered.



Transportation, Assets and Amenities Goal

Leverage and enhance existing systems with targeted investments

Parks, Recreation, Natural and Historic Resources

Inventories of park, recreation, natural and historic resources can be found in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter. Based on municipal budgets and projected continued population declines, the overall plan for parks and recreation is to support and enhance existing spaces and amenities.

Primary natural resources consist of riverfront areas and steep slopes, where development should be restricted. A number of historic resources were identified, which can be used to help build community character.

*The best place to
succeed is where
you are with what
you have.*

Charles Schwab

Exploit the City's position on the Great Allegheny Passage to enhance retail development opportunities.

The Great Allegheny Passage is a unique potential economic development resource. It brings with it many opportunities for new businesses that want to be near the trail as a quality of life amenity, as well as retailers and other businesses that can take advantage of trail users as customers. The City should enhance efforts to attract these types of businesses, and ensure that the trail's attributes are maximized as part of these efforts. There is always opportunity, particularly as trail traffic expands. It may be difficult to operate trail businesses like lodging properties or bike shops given proximity to Pittsburgh, but there are some opportunities to connect to the trail and offer basic services (café, ice cream, snacks, inner tubes, maybe even a bike rental). The trail should not be sold as an opportunity that will fully support a business, but rather one that can supplement income.

- Consider temporary retailers at first to test the market, including pop-up retailers/restaurants and food trucks
- Research and contact local food truck operators, restaurateurs, and eventually other retailers (recreation-related outfitters/retailers) to gauge interest in a potential location along the Great Allegheny Passage
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market the cities and the trail
- Promote the numerous financial incentives for businesses
- Seek out and consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center) to help recruit businesses

The Great Allegheny Passage: One Trail with Many Opportunities

Recreation Users: The Great Allegheny Passage is regional economic generator connecting the community to a growing market of consumers who spend money on leisure and recreational activities. This connection supports many types of non-residential activity. The growth opportunities for businesses related to the trail is significant. The *2012 Trail Town Business Survey Report* (The Progress Fund) looked at businesses related to the trail and found that, of those responding, they weighted average income per establishment was \$650,000 with over 50% of that income being generated in the summer months. Even though these establishments are open year round, the bulk of their income is generated in a three month window. 9.1% of the businesses were located in Allegheny County (the county with the most businesses was reported in the survey was Somerset at 37.5%).

The *2012 Trail Town User Survey Report* (The Progress Fund) surveyed the users of the trail and had 1,195 respondents. 6.4% of the respondents started their rides in McKeesport while 9.2% ended their rides in McKeesport (the highest ending point for all riders was in Boston, PA with 19.5%). The survey also showed a drop in multi-day users over the previous survey and a growth in daily trail users. This does not mean that the overall multi-day user rate has fallen, but rather the overall usage of the trail has increased, with daily users being the largest growing sector. These daily users can spend a significant amount of money. The survey looked at group average spending rates for groups of three people. The highest amount of money spent on the trail per person was \$228.85 in Cumberland, Maryland. The lowest average amount of money spent is in McKeesport with \$15.07 (specific data does not exist for Duquesne at this time). In Homestead the average user is spending \$179.37. There are untapped business opportunities related to trail use in the City as well as opportunities to introduce and welcome trail users to the communities.

Commuters: Bicycle commuting is on the rise in the US. Based on the 2013 American Community Survey results from the Census Bureau, bicycle commuting has increased 408% in Pittsburgh since 2000, the largest increase of any city in the US. The rates have doubled since 2007 to 2%, which places Pittsburgh in 11th place for rate of bicycle commuters, just behind Philadelphia.

The City has the ability to make themselves bicycle friendly communities attracting investment and residents for a lifestyle that is not fully auto dependent. The reason a community would want to make the leap towards being a bicycle friendly one is simple. It is cost effective and attracts a younger group looking for a lower impact, less expensive lifestyle. With the average vehicle yearly costs around \$6,000 - \$7,000 people have found that using a bicycle as a daily means of transportation gives them more money in their pocket. The highest rate of bicycle commuters are the most educated workers (representing roughly half of bicycle commuters). The City is poised to attract residents interested in bicycle commuting by utilizing and enhancing connections to the Great Allegheny Passage. By having a strong bicycle connection, residents have options. With a close proximity to downtown Pittsburgh and a direct connection on the Great Allegheny Passage, the City can become bicycle bedroom communities for urbanites attracted to a low cost of living and convenient location.



Leverage the Great Allegheny Passage to showcase the community and give people a reason to ride there from Pittsburgh or other destinations.

Often distressed communities are known by the outside world only for the negative aspects such as crime, poverty, and abandonment. However, despite experiencing some of these unfortunate conditions, in reality the city is making strides toward revitalization. To help overcome negative perceptions, highlight positive accomplishments and attract businesses and residents, the cities should increase efforts to promote themselves in a positive manner.

- Riding to Duquesne is a nice 20+ mile ride from Pittsburgh. A stop for lunch or snacks before heading back is probable.
- Duquesne is nice starting point from the east if people want to park their cars and ride into Pittsburgh.
- Find opportunities to get involved with Rivers of Steel, a nonprofit committed to preserving, interpreting and managing the historic, cultural and natural resources related to big steel. Rivers of Steel hosts popular tours.
 - There are opportunities to get involved with trail-related steel heritage tours showcasing industry—past and present—that the communities are built around as well as churches, historic buildings and other community institutions.
- Work with nearby trail towns to organize bike tours and create itineraries. Itineraries are an inexpensive way of telling a community’s story and a lot of cyclists are looking for such information. Itineraries could be themed and also direct people to local businesses.

CASE IN POINT

A TRAIL RIDER’S EXPERIENCE

We asked a regular GAP trail rider to take a detour from her normal route and ride through Duquesne. Here are her observations:

“Kennedy Ave. (although a hill) was really nice and there’s so much there – nicely maintained houses, churches, school library. The green space next to the municipal building looks nice. Basically, this area of Duquesne as well as the industrial park area (with the green space, new buildings, sculptures, etc.) present well. That said, people are not permitted to walk near the sculptures and old train car, which is disappointing.”

- Cycling church or historic tours could travel along the trail with “excursions” into communities. These could be organized group rides or itineraries available for riders to use in planning trips.
- Ghost signs are a niche tourist interest. There are a number of ghost signs along the trail. Itineraries and events could be created around the ghost signs to bring people into the communities. There are also artists who can enhance and restore signs that are extremely faded or damaged without altering the work—like a fresh coat of paint.
- Promote this section of trail for families:
 - Less busy than Pittsburgh
 - Ride 4-5 miles between Duquesne and Riverton Bridge in McKeesport for a great view of the Monongahela River.
 - Ride 4-5 miles from Duquesne to Homestead for a view of the roller coasters at Kennywood.
- Engage with local organizations and churches. For example, at Appalachian Trail Days in Damascus, VA, the churches really connect to trail users: cookouts, showers, etc.
- Build a relationship with the Progress Fund and keep up to date on information like trail counts.

A ghost sign is an old hand painted advertising sign that has been preserved (intentionally or inadvertently). They attract a niche group of preservationists and history buffs.



Ghost sign in Tarentum, PA.

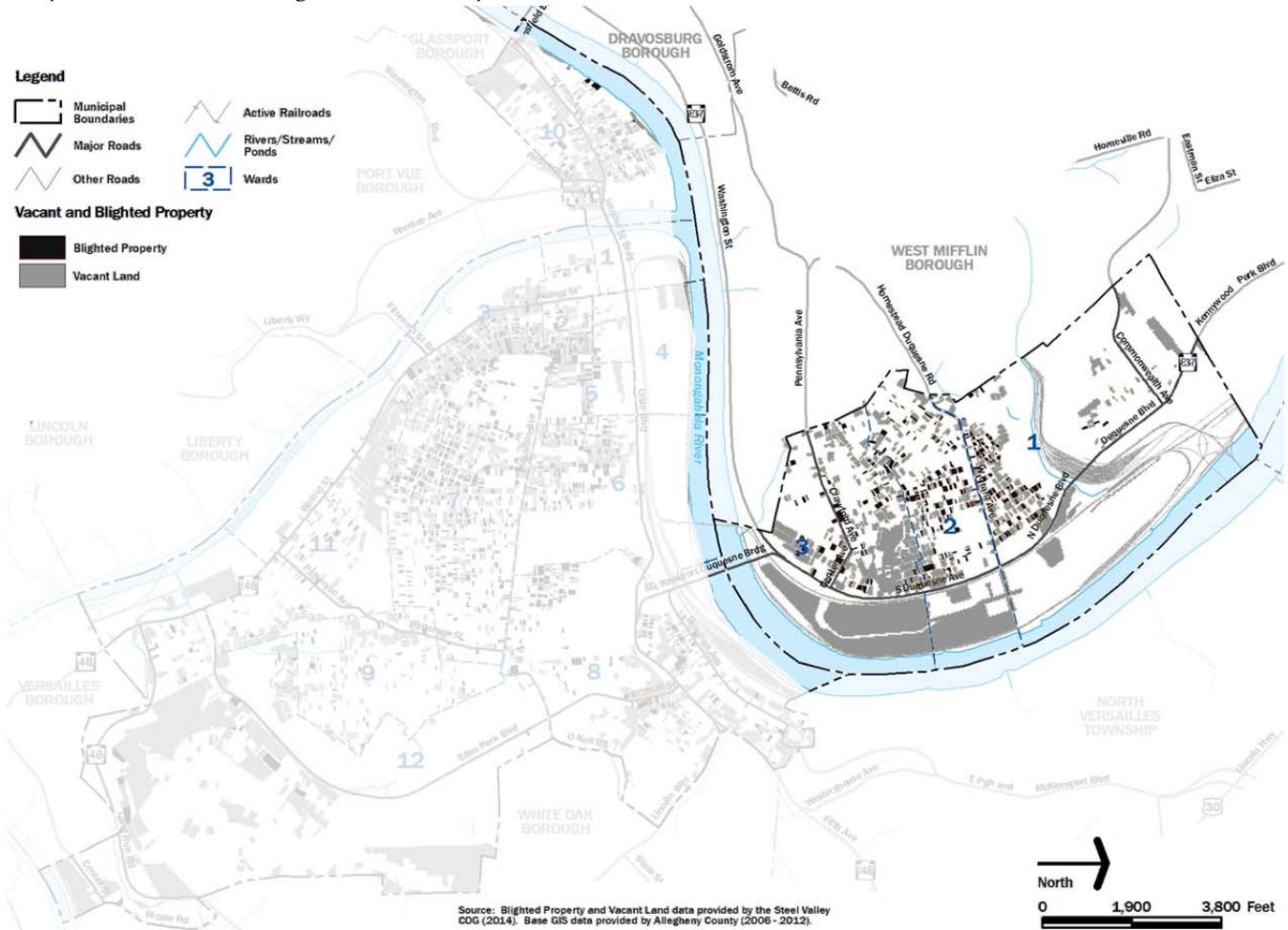
Vehicular Transportation Network

A number of important regional roads run through Duquesne. Land use considerations related to those roads can be found in the Land Use and Economic Development Section of the Plan Elements Chapter. A comprehensive inventory of roadways can be found in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter. Parking and roadway capacity was designed to handle significantly higher population, more robust industrial activity and regional commerce.

Because vacancy and blight has been scattered throughout the community, there are no opportunities to reduce roadways and infrastructure in a linear manner (literally closing a section of roadway). This model has been used in cities like Detroit and Youngstown where there may be only one or two occupied structures on a block and it is worth the cost of relocating the occupants in order to reduce infrastructure and maintenance costs. Duquesne and McKeesport are not in this type of situation. However, there is excess road capacity that could be used to create bike lanes, stormwater management areas or spaces to store snow when it is plowed.

Based on population growth projections and the build-out analysis (found in the Appendix), the current road systems in Duquesne can support anticipated growth. Further, additional industrial development will not strain the existing roadways beyond their existing capacity. The focus of the plan for the vehicular network focuses on supporting planned development in key focus areas and targeting roadway improvements to improve the city's regional image.

Duquesne Vacant and Blighted Lands Map



Prepare a preliminary plan for a flyover to connect the Great Allegheny Passage and Grant Avenue. Regularly seek opportunities and partners for construction of the flyover.



- Work with the owner of Duquesne Plaza to have post and ring style bike racks installed (similar to those at the Waterfront).
- Work with the owner of Duquesne Plaza to provide space and signage for additional trail-related parking
- Reinforce the Grant Street-Great-Allegheny Passage connection by taking advantage of opportunities for public art and murals at the intersection of Grant Avenue and First Street

Coordinate with Allegheny County and the SPC to get the project on the regional Transportation Improvement Plan

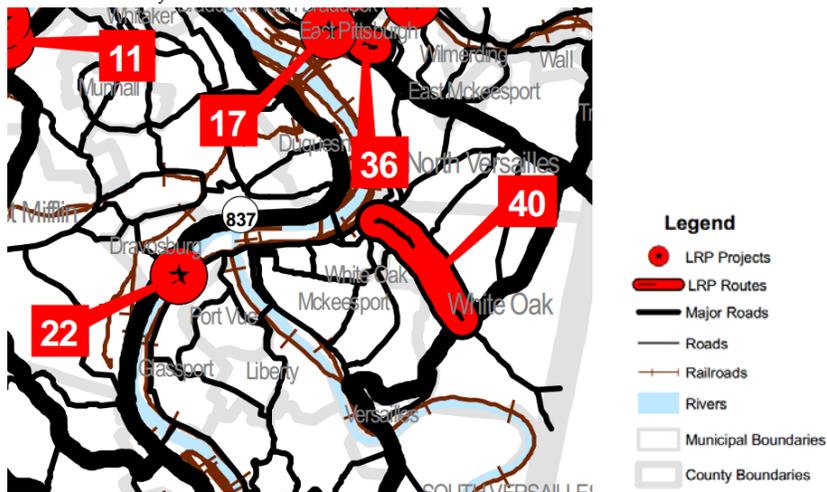
Invest in gateways and primary corridors.

The most important investments should be coordinated within the Key Focus Areas and follow design guidelines outlined in the Land Use and Economic Development Section of the Plan Elements Chapter.

Reprioritize transportation system improvements based on development and land use changes to accommodate changing needs for capacity.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has identified a number of projects in their 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern PA Fiscally-Constrained Component that could impact Duquesne.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern PA – Relevant Projects



Project 40, identified on the map above, represents the widening of Lincoln Way in White Oak. Project 22, identified on the map above, represents improvements the rehabilitation of Mansfield Bridge, which was completed in October of 2014.

Make stronger connections to the GAP on the existing community road network. Crosswalks are key; as are signage and attractive, safe places to park bikes. Pursue physical business district streetscape improvements on Grant and Second Avenues.

The physical environment along Grant and Second Avenues in Duquesne is in need of updating and improvement. While in some specific locations limited streetscape improvements have been installed over time, generally sidewalks are in disrepair, lighting is inadequate, trees and greenery are lacking, amenities such as benches and bike racks are missing, and wayfinding signage does not exist. This substandard streetscape environment negatively impacts the businesses within each commercial district, making it more difficult to attract customers to existing businesses while hindering the attraction of new businesses to vacant retail space. An attractive streetscape will help initiate investment in businesses while encouraging pedestrians to stroll and shop. A streetscape enhancement project is recommended to improve the appearance and function of these two streets, which will contribute significantly toward a revitalized commercial district. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Research funding opportunities for streetscape design

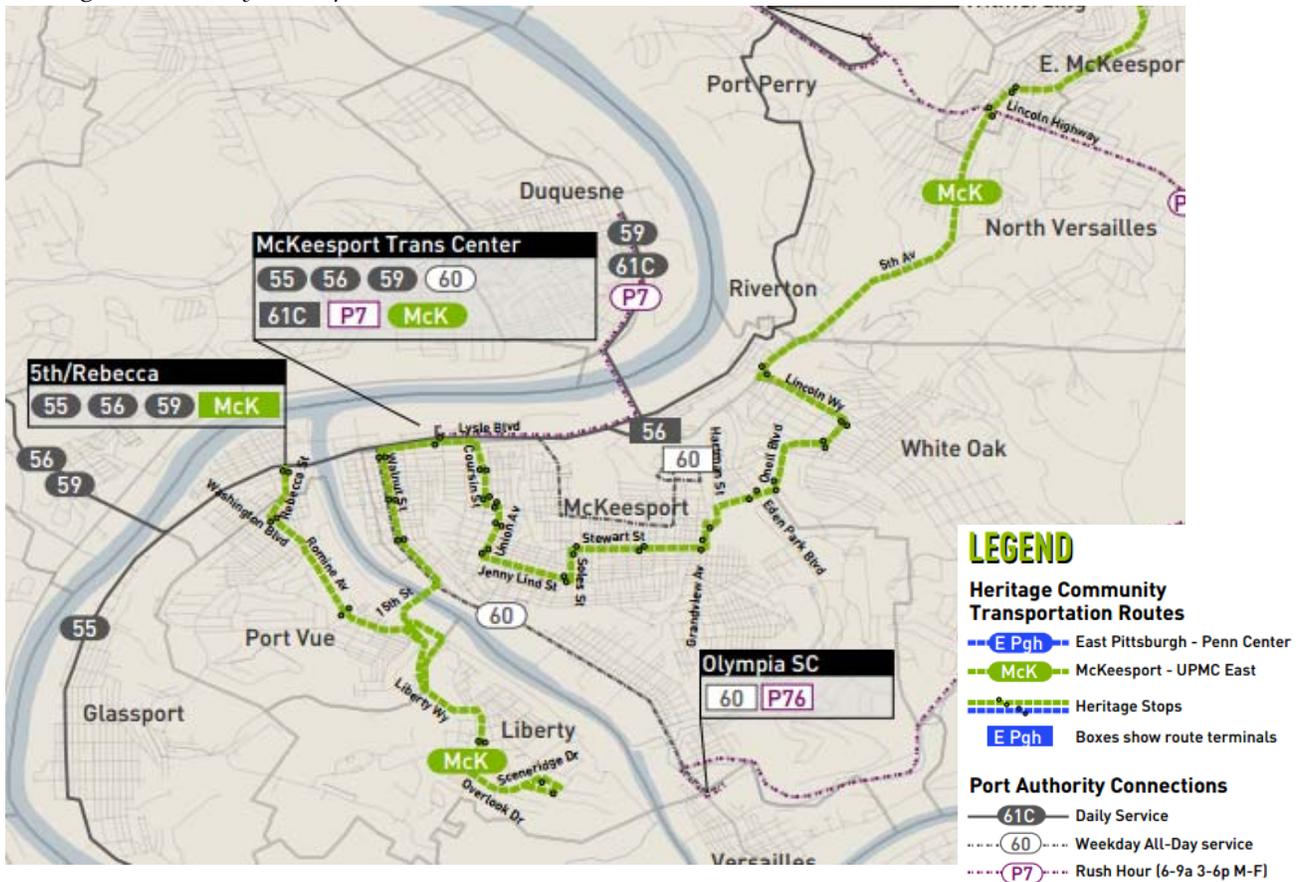
- Conduct conceptual planning and preliminary design of potential improvements. A consultant’s help may be needed with the conceptual planning/preliminary design phase but it is less expensive than the actual engineering and design of the improvements. That step is also needed to determine both the cost and the scope of work for final engineering and design. The conceptual design phase can also involve the community through activities such as charrettes or events such as those promoted through the Better Blocks Program
- Secure funding for design
- Prepare an RFP for design/engineering services; hire consultant to prepare documents
- Explore funding for physical public realm improvements through programs such as PennDOT’s Transportation Alternatives Program (administered by SPC) and the PA Multimodal Transportation Fund.
-

Mass Transit

Duquesne has experienced significant cuts in service from the Allegheny County Port Authority in recent years. Discussions with the Port Authority reveal that service levels are continuously being analyzed and reconsidered. Representatives emphasized the importance of sharing data and planning efforts to ensure that the Port Authority has up-to-date information.

Heritage Community Initiatives serves areas of the Mon Valley with WorkLink—a fixed-route van service filling critical transportation gaps that is designed to get residents to employment, retail centers and the greater transportation network. WorkLink does not currently have a route through or stops in Duquesne but Duquesne residents can connect to WorkLink lines via existing Port Authority routes.

Heritage Community Transportation Routes, 2015



Continue to advocate for public transportation and keep in contact with Allegheny County Port Authority and Heritage Community Initiatives.





McKeesport's Plan Elements

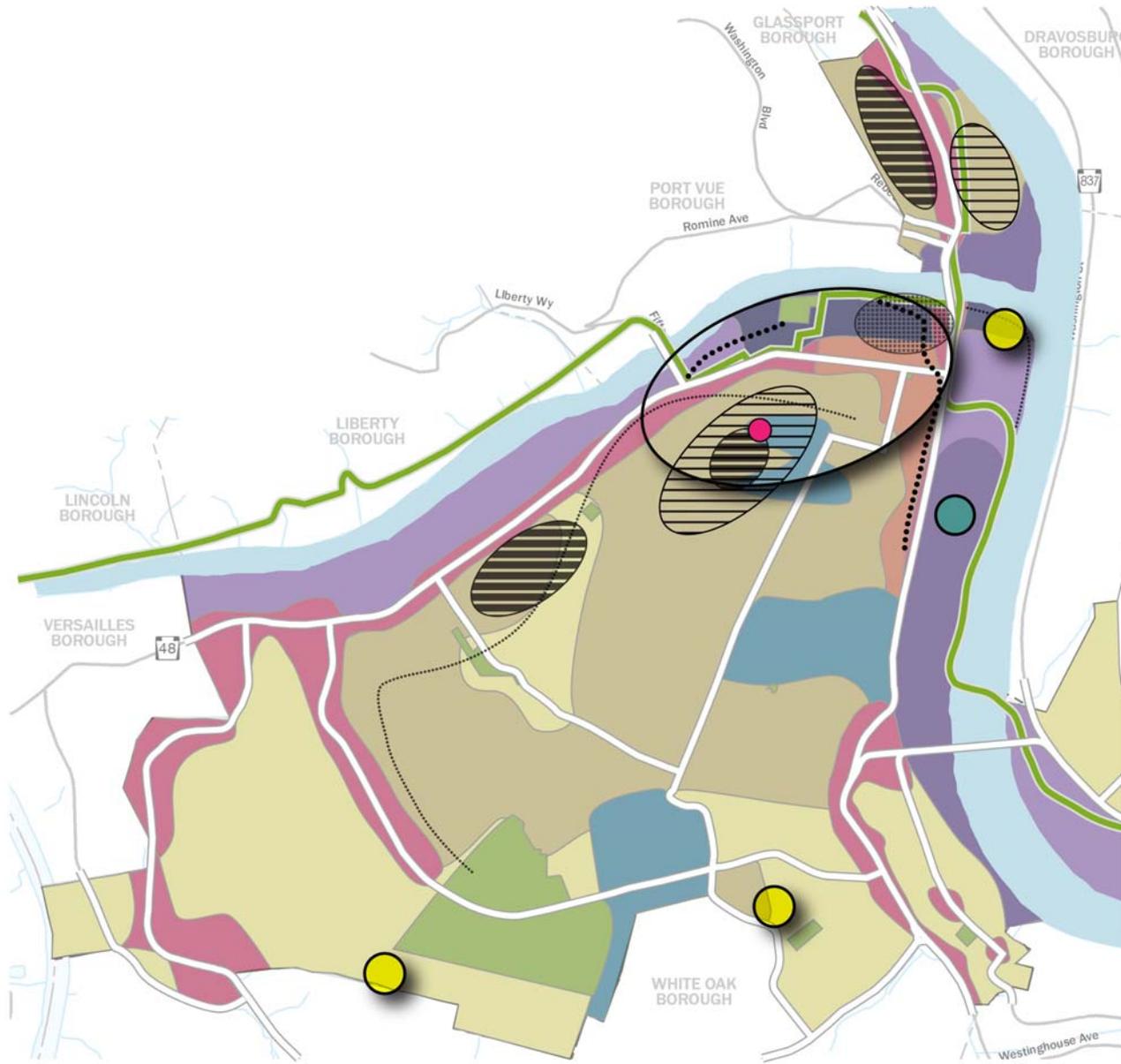
*You've got to
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direction.*

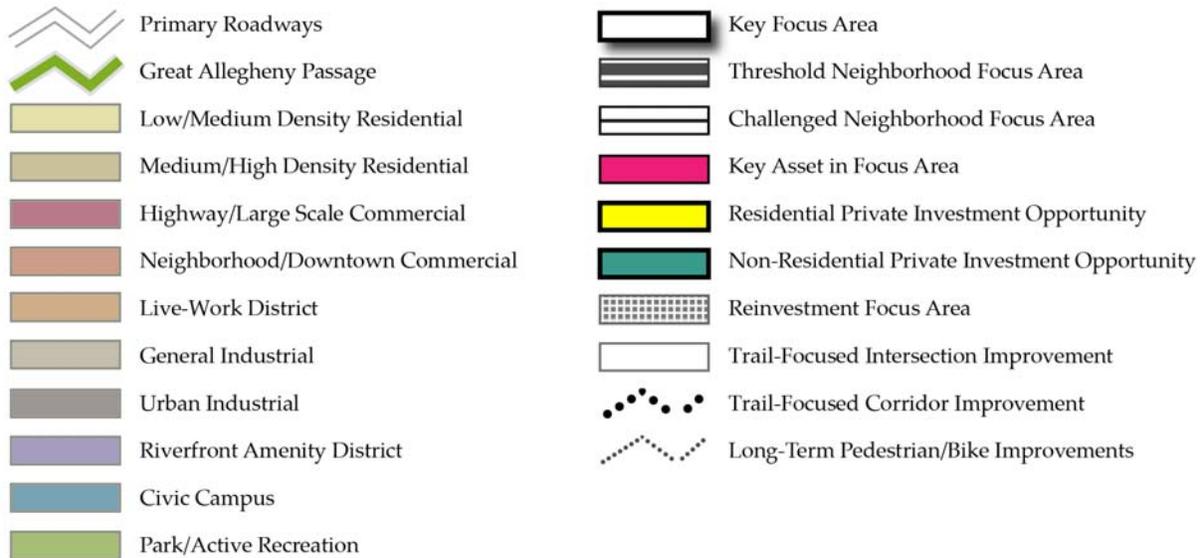
Alvin Toffler

This chapter contains more in-depth discussions of plan elements, goals and actions. Accompanying each goal is at least one key initiative. Each initiative supports multiple goals and strategies, that, when executed, will provide meaningful, measureable progress. Each initiative is, in turn, a collection of implementation steps that can be carried out at the local or regional level.

The initiatives are lofty but achievable—asking the communities to think about the big picture and stretch their horizons towards the future. This chapter also begins to outline potential champions and partners and key steps to bring the plan to fruition.

McKeesport Comprehensive Plan Map





This comprehensive plan map incorporates various plan elements that are associated with physical places in the community.

The **Reinvestment Focus Areas** are key area where the city can work to promote, support and facilitate private investment and redevelopment. In McKeesport, this focus is the area around the McKeesport Marina and the area down Walnut Street, past Kane Hospital and down 12th Avenue.

Non-Residential Private Investment Opportunity Focus Area is a key location where new investment in commercial land uses could occur. In McKeesport, this is the area on RIDC near the flyover where there is potential for non-residential commercial space with the long-term possibility of housing in the form of row houses and condos.

Housing Focus Areas (Challenged and Threshold Neighborhoods) are key areas where investment and intervention could have significant impact. The areas identified on the map do not encompass all residential neighborhood types but identify the first-priority target areas. The Plan for Housing in this chapter further outlines the neighborhood types and the recommendations that can be utilized to support and uplift these areas.

Likewise, the **Residential Private Investment Opportunity Showcase Area** is a location where private investment in housing stock could occur in the long-term. Depending on the long-term outcome of the users in the RIDC park, there is an opportunity for waterfront housing development at the “point” of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers. Additional areas are located near Renzie Park and feature existing Stable Neighborhoods and, in some cases, excellent views.

Trail-Focused Corridor Improvements are short or medium term improvements that could enhance the likelihood that trail users will experience the city. In McKeesport, this includes returning 5th Avenue

to a two-way street to facilitate small businesses, retail and office development that will support a walkable and interesting downtown to attract trail users into the community.

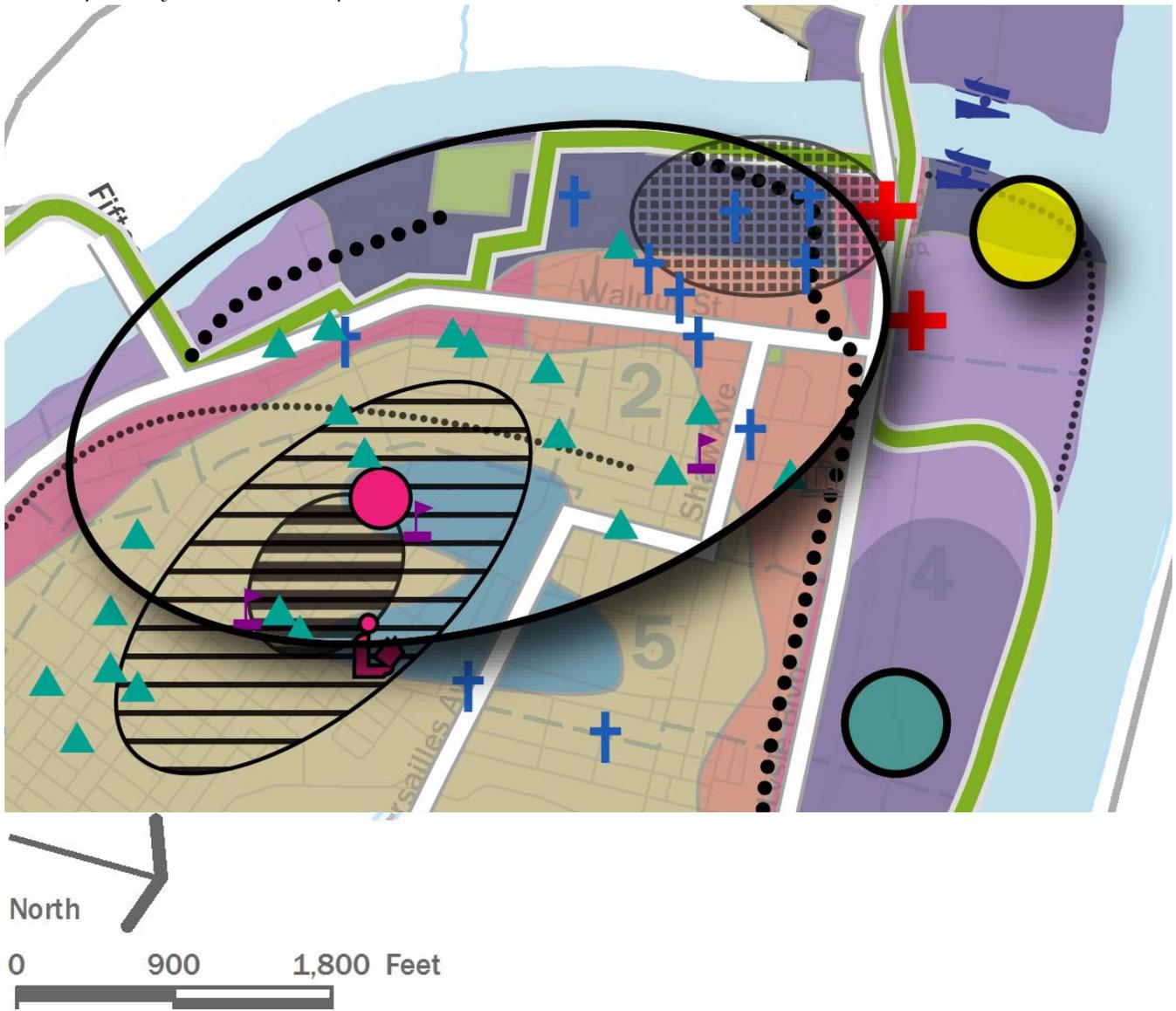
Long-Term Pedestrian/Bike Improvements are key areas where significant investment could enhance connections to the Great Allegheny Passage and the trail riders there. In McKeesport, this could be in the form of a trail connecting Renzie Park to downtown along a swath of open space. In the short-term, property ownership and easement information could be collected to being the process of long-term planning. This would allow Renzie Park to become a more significant amenity for trail users who could take a detour from the trail to experience the park without traveling extensively on the roadways. It would also connect more residents to the community’s feature park.

The **Key Focus Area** represents a concentration of plan focus elements: land use, economic development, transportation, housing, community assets and government outreach and services. By focusing revitalization efforts, the city can create a synergy where success builds on success and investments can work towards multiple goals.

The **Key Asset in Focus Area** is an existing community asset within the Catalytic Change-Key Focus Area. There are opportunities to build from this asset to create change and reinvestment within the Key Focus Area. In McKeesport, this asset is the new school.

-  Municipal Building
-  Post Office
-  Church
-  Emergency Service
-  Hospital
-  School
-  River Access
-  Library
-  Historic Site (Listed on the National Register)
-  Historic Site (Eligible for the National Register)

McKeesport Key Focus Area Map



CASE IN POINT

ACTION HOUSING'S CULTURAL DISTRICT PLAN

ACTION Housing has a long-standing relationship with the City of McKeesport and has recently been working on a Cultural District Plan that centers around the new Twin Rivers School in McKeesport. Phase One includes two vacant lots across the street from the school with plans for new single family housing. The money from the sale of those homes will be put into a fund to do more focused work in that district—targeting rehabilitation and repair of residential structures, particularly ones on well-maintained blocks where additional investment can support existing homeowners. The 2015 goal is to break ground on the two new residential structures and build interest in the area. In the long term, there is an interest in reusing the old Centennial School in the 7th Ward for multifamily housing (market rate or low/middle income).

In order to support the short-term investment and long-term vision, ACTION Housing has been in discussions with the McKeesport Area School District to enhance the pedestrian and bicycle network around the school. Although the Safe Routes to School program at the state level is currently on hold, ACTION Housing, the school district and the city are working together to connect Twin Rivers school to the high school and the nearby baseball diamond. The goal is to create a bike and pedestrian friendly corridor so kids would only have to walk 2-3 blocks on city sidewalks and could complete their trips on the corridor.

Coordinating efforts with ACTION Housing and other local organizations will help McKeesport lay the groundwork for change and revitalization in its key focus area.

A Plan for Land Use and Economic Development

Business and economic development strategies range from enhancing the marketing of each city and its available commercial sites to incentivizing new business development, to improving the physical environment of business districts. Each city should use these strategies as a guide as it pursues opportunities for commercial growth over the coming years.



Land Use and Economic Development Goal

Facilitate private-sector growth with strategic actions to create catalytic change in community focus areas



Continue fostering relationships/creating partnerships with RIDC to enhance the marketing of available Industrial Center of McKeesport commercial/industrial sites.

The Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC) is the largest owner of developable commercial/industrial land in the City of McKeesport. RIDC's ability to market the land to prospective tenants or purchasers is critical for attracting new businesses to each city. The communities must maintain a positive relationship with RIDC and ensure that the agency is employing its marketing and business-attraction resources effectively.

- Arrange regular meetings with RIDC staff to discuss and highlight available sites
- Request reports from RIDC on inquiries regarding the Industrial Center of McKeesport to remain aware of any interest expressed for specific properties
- Attend RIDC workshops/conferences/events to represent the community and promote available sites

It does not take much strength to do things, but it requires a great deal of strength to decide what to do.

Elbert Hubbard

Promote Industrial Center of McKeesport independently of RIDC's efforts to gain maximum exposure of available commercial/industrial site opportunities and financial incentives.

While it's critical for RIDC to effectively advertise its commercial/industrial sites to attract tenants and employment, McKeesport should also take the initiative to market itself independently of RIDC to ensure that all possible resources are used to promote business opportunities.

- Enhance City of McKeesport and Redevelopment Authority websites and include a section on commercial/industrial properties available at RIDC properties
- Enhance websites to better promote the numerous financial incentives for businesses available through the Redevelopment Authority:

- Enterprise Zone low-interest loan and tax credit programs,
- Technical assistance matching grants,
- KOZ opportunities, and
- Available job training programs, and
- Any utility incentives, such as relatively low costs for City water.
- Enhance websites to promote the numerous DCED (newpa.com) funding programs available to businesses
- Cross-reference efforts/listings/website of commercial broker on City's/Authority's websites
- Meet regularly with local and state representatives to promote the cities and its available commercial/industrial site opportunities
- Attend local/state/national workshops/conferences/events to represent each city and market opportunities, advantages, and incentives

Facilitate and incentivize the expansion of existing businesses.

Concurrent with the effort to attract new businesses, the cities must not ignore existing businesses and the importance of retaining them, many of which have been in the region for decades. Each city should ensure that the needs of existing businesses are acknowledged and addressed if possible so they can remain viable, whether it's financial, promotional, or procedural assistance. In a similar fashion, the cities should support businesses that express interest in expanding their operation.

- Create database of all existing businesses
- Contact owners by email, phone, mail, or in-person
- Provide owners with marketing material outlining all financial incentives available to them
- Remain in contact with owners to promote and encourage use of incentives
- Work with owners to facilitate any regulatory processes (code, etc.) necessary for business expansion

CASE IN POINT

MAIN STREET IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

McKeesport's Key Focus Area around 5th Avenue is the community's traditional downtown or Main Street. The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development used to run a Main Street Program that has recently been consolidated into the Keystone Communities Program.

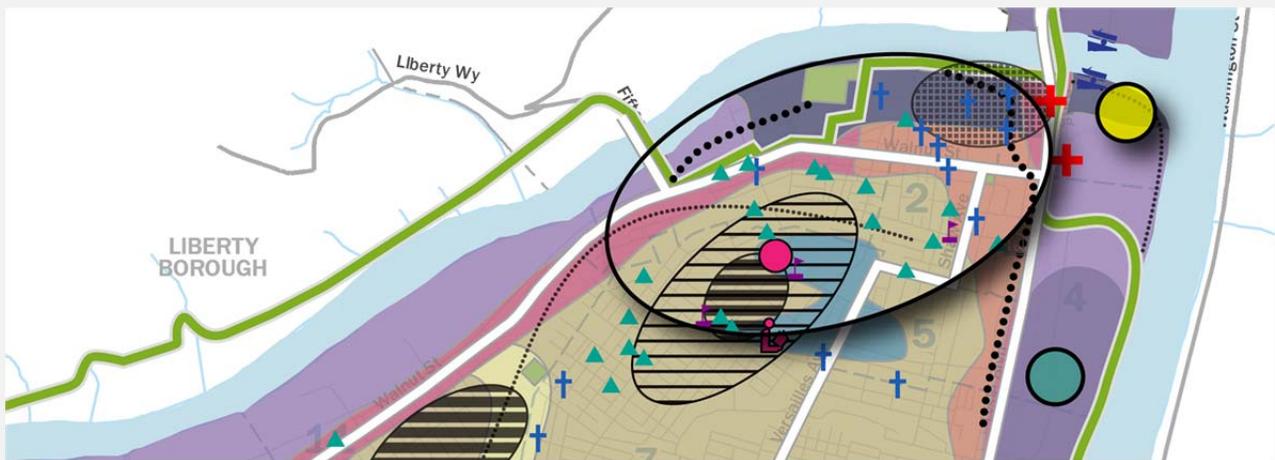
The Keystone Communities Program provides grants to municipalities to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator.

Funding uses include the following: Administrative Costs associated with Main Street Manager positions and offices; Physical improvements supported by downtown plan for Downtown Reinvestment Component; Acquisition costs and physical building improvements for Anchor Building component

Funding: Main Street: \$115,000 over a 5-year period; Downtown Reinvestment and Anchor Building components: up to \$250,000 or not to exceed 30% of project costs

Eligibility: Grants to municipalities to help a community's downtown economic development effort through the establishment of a local organization dedicated to downtown revitalization and the management of downtown revitalization efforts by hiring a full-time professional downtown coordinator

Allegheny County also has a Main Street program called Allegheny Together.



Investigate and reach out to prospective start-ups and growing businesses potentially seeking to locate in the Industrial Center of McKeesport.

Much of this strategy involves the City of McKeesport identifying business opportunities by being proactive through research and outreach to companies it desires to attract, and pursuing the opportunities through ongoing communication. This communication should involve face-to-face meetings. Through this communication, the City should promote any incentives it can offer to prospective businesses as well. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Research and contact industrial companies appropriate for industrial/flex space in the Industrial Center of McKeesport, including Marcellus Shale-related companies, data centers, call centers, additive manufacturing companies, and waste services and recycling companies
- Research and contact service businesses appropriate for office space in the Industrial Center of McKeesport, including management, financial, health care services, and high tech businesses
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market McKeesport
- Inform businesses of all potential financial incentives available to them
- Seek out and consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center) to help recruit businesses
- Use area universities as a resource for technical expertise, research, and promotion

Continue revitalization focus on the McKeesport Marina area and target area for commercial rehabilitation and trail-related retail growth.

The marina area of McKeesport, located along Water Street near the intersection with 5th Avenue, is an area of the City potentially most ripe for revitalization. With the marina, trail, and interesting industrial buildings, this part of McKeesport has many economic advantages that other commercial areas of the City do not. As a result, the City should focus on this location for targeted rehabilitation of commercial buildings and infill development. Over time, successful economic development in this area could potentially spread down 5th Avenue into the core of Downtown McKeesport. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Enhance City of McKeesport and Redevelopment Authority websites and include a section on available commercial and retail properties in this area
- Research and contact service businesses appropriate for office/commercial space in the marina area of McKeesport, including management, financial, health care services, and high tech businesses to gauge interest in this location

- Research and contact retailers of desired categories to gauge interest in a potential location in McKeesport near the marina and trail
- Research and contact area developers to gauge interest in developing commercial properties in McKeesport
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market McKeesport's commercial space opportunities
- Consider hiring a professional retail attraction consultant

Take advantage of the community's heritage of hands-on skilled trades and potential synergies with Penn State's engineering professors and students to encourage entrepreneurial and learning opportunities.

Consider ways to facilitate the development or location of a shared “maker” space in McKeesport. Such a facility could also house an incubator for emerging businesses as well as teach classes to the public and offer rentable space and equipment for construction/manufacturing use. A model facility exists in Philadelphia called NextFab. A similar nationwide chain called TechShop is located in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Work with Penn State to research shared spaces and their needs
- Contact potential organizations who could spearhead and run the facility—whether as a new location with an existing model (as in TechShop) or as a new facility
- Consider potential incentives or assistance that the city could provide
- Consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center in McKeesport) to help recruit a facility or an organization/startup to create a new facility

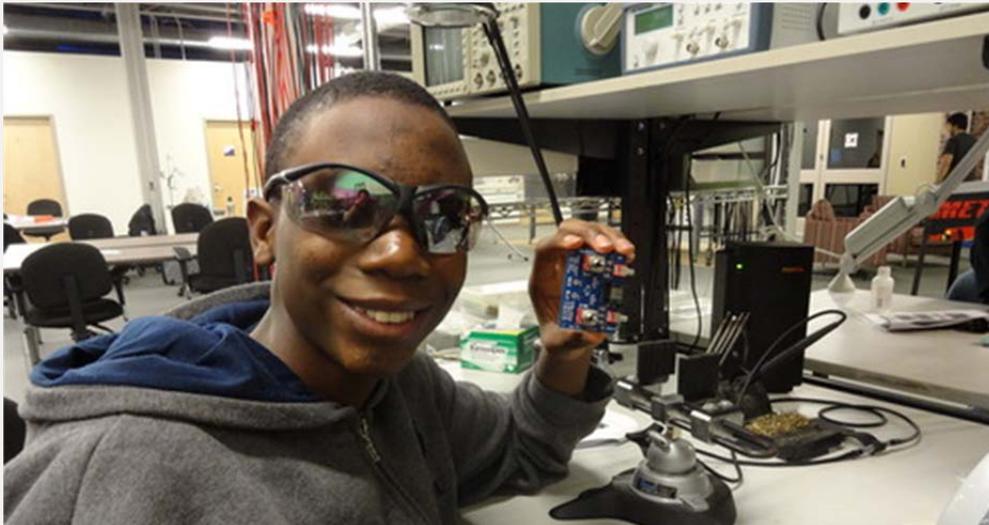
CASE IN POINT

NEXTFAB AND TECHSHOP

The NextFab Studio is a facility in Philadelphia that allows members to use a tremendous amount of industrial level technology for a small monthly membership fee. This is a 21,000 square foot facility with full time employees that are skilled in their trades so that they can teach you both the concepts, and the best practices for using equipment. Beyond basic education and the ability to prototype items you are also able to complete your first manufacturing runs of products that you are trying to get to market.

The company is organized as a limited liability corporation. It is funded by some startup grants and a variety of memberships. Aside from student and individual memberships, corporate and institutional accounts are available that provide access for multiple employee, with training included. The web site lists about 25 different classes ranging from basic safety and machine usage, to various software packages (Illustrator, Photoshop, Solidworks) and skills like Product Photography. The “Orientation and Workshop Safety Training” is required for each and every member, including each associate under a corporate or institutional account.

TechShop is a similar facility with nationwide locations including one in Pittsburgh’s East Liberty neighborhood.



Student project at NextFab. Blog.nextfab.com

Urban Planning and Design Guidelines to Support the Key Focus Area

The Main Street is a generator of city life, commercial and economic activity and a key public space. In addition to economic development planning and a mix of commercial and housing, the aesthetics and visual quality of the main street is crucial to any revitalization efforts. McKeesport is fortunate to have many strategic corridors that will assist in facilitating a positive revitalization effort.

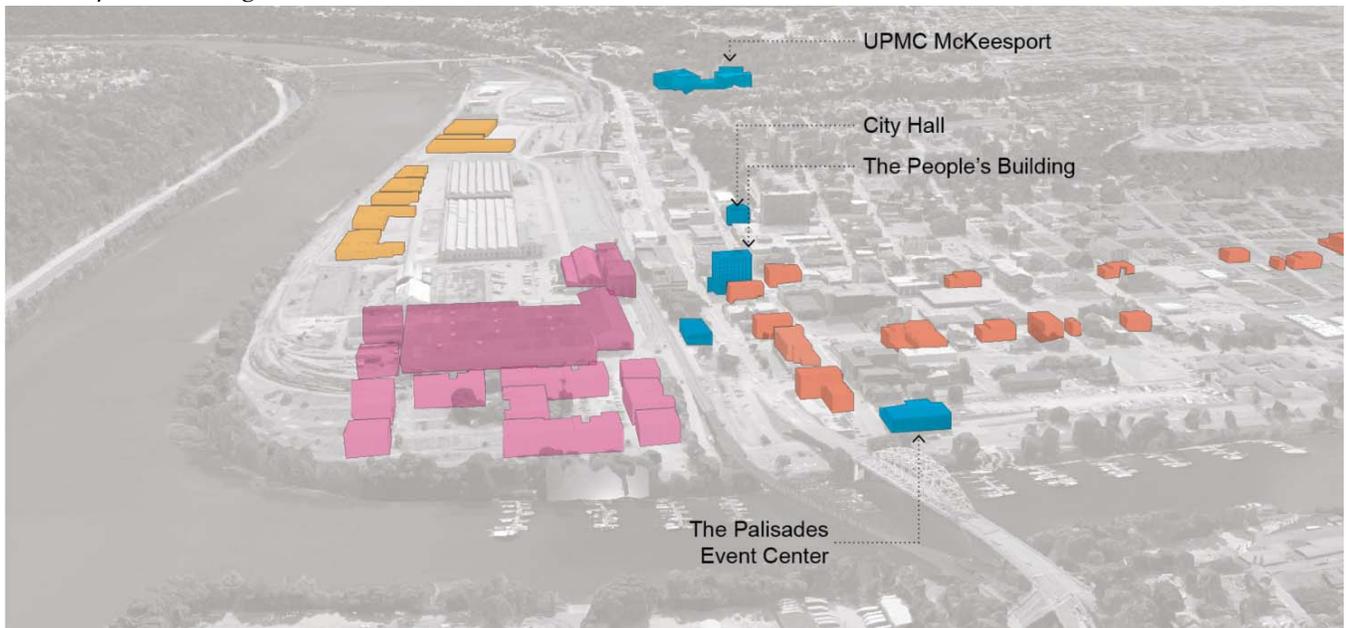
The Greater Allegheny Passage Bike Trail is an extensive trail system that has pivotal points of intersection through McKeesport. Enhanced services and development within the RIDC McKeesport site may potentially help capture this important pool of visitors traveling through the City along the 400-mile passage from Pittsburgh to the north and Cumberland, Maryland to the south.

Expanded urban design guidelines can be found in the Appendix.

McKeesport RIDC/Key Focus Area Redevelopment Concept



McKeesport Building Form Guidelines



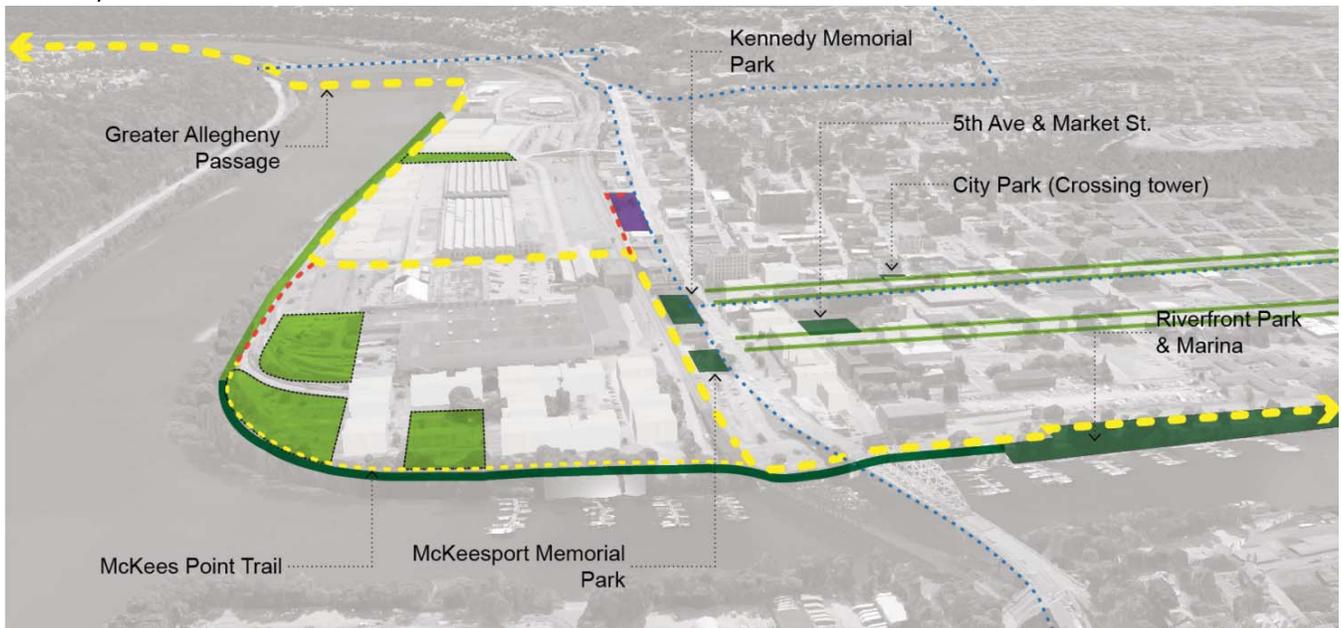
Building Form Guidelines

- Mixed-Use / Commercial Development
- RIDC Commercial Complex Development
- The Point - High Density Residential Development
- Re-Use Development (Existing RIDC Buildings)
- Landmark Building(s)

Existing RIDC buildings would not change; infill development would occur in the areas around the existing RIDC buildings.



McKeesport Public Amenities Guidelines



Public Amenities Guidelines

- Existing Public Space
- Future Streetscape & Public Space
- Bike Trail
- Extended Bike Trail
- Existing Bus Routes
- Future Inter-modal Transit Center



McKeesport Urban Gateway Guidelines

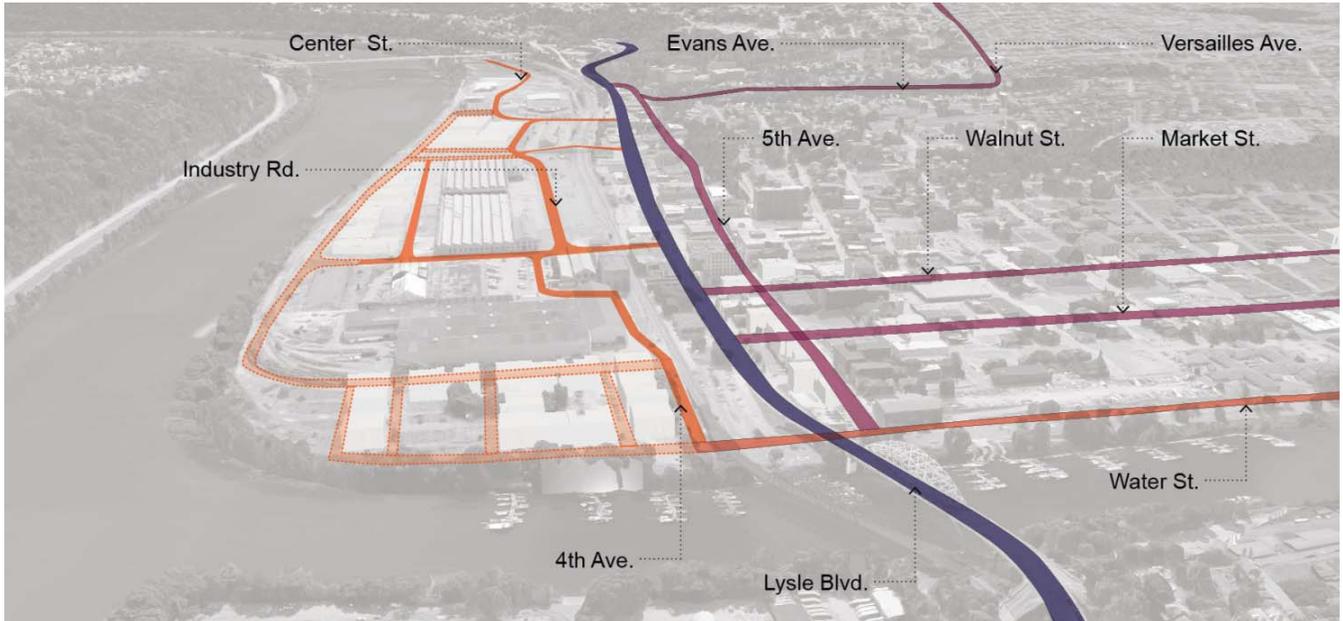


Urban Gateway Guidelines

- UPMC & 5th Ave. Intersection Gateway
- RIDC Commercial Complex Gateway
- Lysle Boulevard Transit Center Flyover Gateway
- Civic Center Complex Gateway
- Marina Point Gateway



McKeesport Street Corridor Guidelines



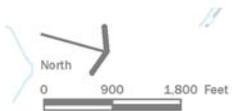
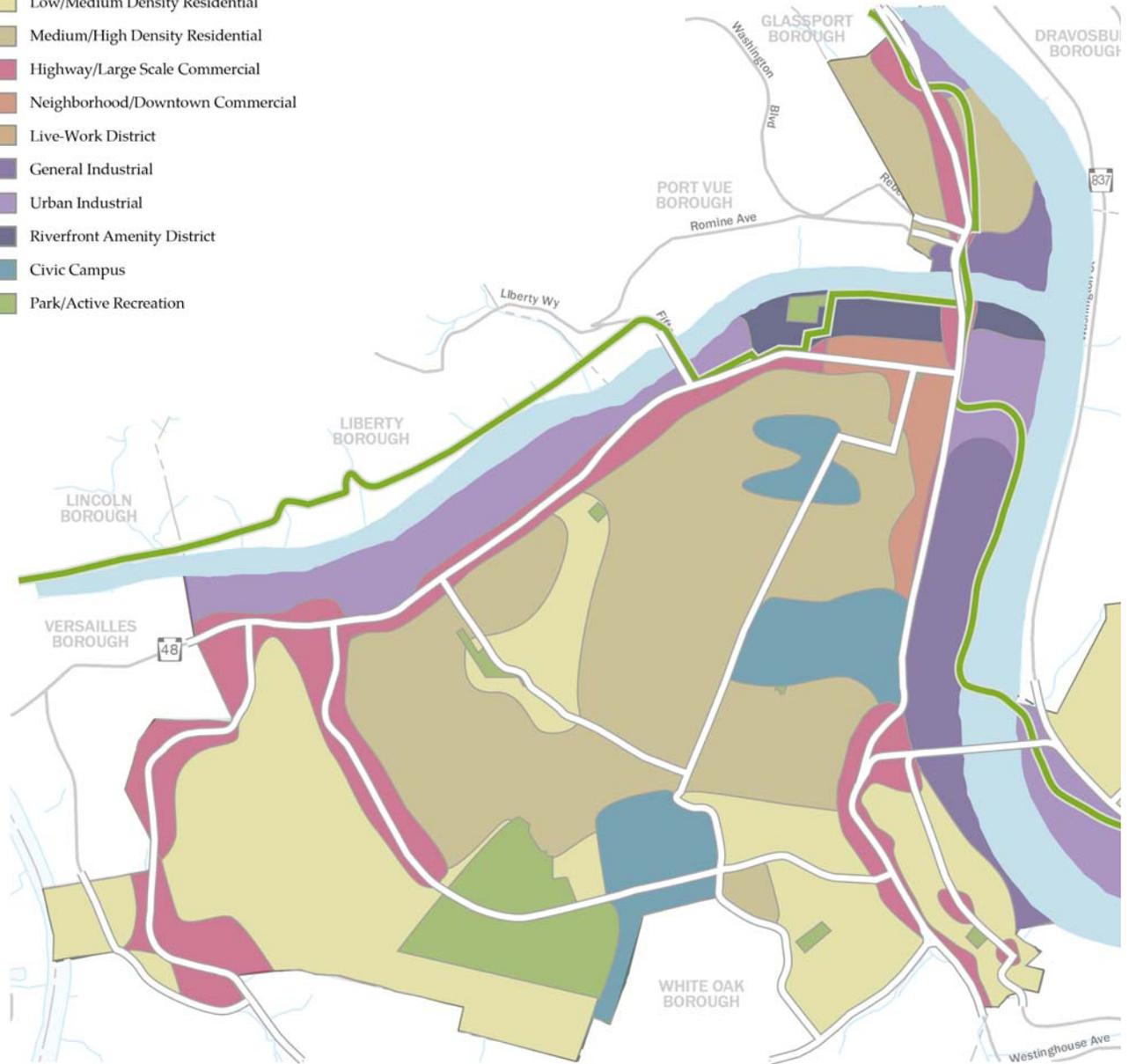
Street Corridor Guidelines

- Pedestrian-Oriented Commercial Corridor
- Vehicle-Oriented Commercial Corridor
- Existing Street Corridor
- Future Street Corridor



McKeesport Future Land Use Map

-  Primary Roadways
-  Great Allegheny Passage
-  Low/Medium Density Residential
-  Medium/High Density Residential
-  Highway/Large Scale Commercial
-  Neighborhood/Downtown Commercial
-  Live-Work District
-  General Industrial
-  Urban Industrial
-  Riverfront Amenity District
-  Civic Campus
-  Park/Active Recreation



A Plan for Housing

McKeesport is a weak-market city with varied housing markets and conditions. The community exhibits multiple factors at play within it at the neighborhood level. As such, the individual neighborhoods reflect their particular set of assets and challenges. Collectively, however, they can be seen as forming a continuum of neighborhood dynamics from the strongest market-rate oriented neighborhoods with relatively high home values to weak neighborhoods with little housing demand and challengingly high vacancy rates and corresponding low home values.

In total, three types of neighborhoods (Stable, Threshold, Challenged) were identified in this undertaking with a set of recommendations for each typology. In this process,



Housing Goal

Implement coordinated steps to stabilize and support neighborhoods, encourage reinvestment and promote a wide variety of equitable housing options.

examples of real-world response strategies to address economic and community challenges that have been put in play both in the Pittsburgh market and from elsewhere across the country. While this plan’s responsibility is not to drill into each particular neighborhood and assess its status in terms of typological fit, examples are provided of each typology.

As noted by the Center for Community Progress and others, “there is often a close relationship between the strength of a neighborhood’s housing market and many other factors, including tax delinquency, the vacancy rate, the homeownership rate, the level of homeowner investment in their properties and the volume of new construction.” The typology profiles featured here seek to account for this interrelationship and the strategies that should be deployed in each situation to maximize economic and community potential, both short term and long term.

Stable Neighborhoods

Stable Neighborhoods are those where a healthy private sector housing market is operating. Home prices are appropriately average for the region and supply and demand are in relative balance. Homebuyers are predominantly middle income, vacancy is nominal, and rental properties are a small portion of the market. Most properties and yards are well maintained and few vacant lots exist. While higher priced neighborhoods exist, this type of neighborhood is the goal. The Haler Heights and Renziehausen Park neighborhoods in McKeesport would be classified as Stable Neighborhoods in this context.

Challenged Neighborhoods

Challenged Neighborhoods are the most economically and socially challenged. Low housing values lead to high levels of abandonment, vacancy and absentee landlords. Homeownership rates are substantially below the regional market. The Center for Community Progress notes that in most cities the great majority of problem properties are privately owned investor properties, most often by owners who do not live in the property. Collectively, physical conditions of the homes in Challenged Neighborhoods are poor and most show evidence of disinvestment. Supply of homes

*Plans get you into
things but you've
got to work your
way out.*

Will Rogers

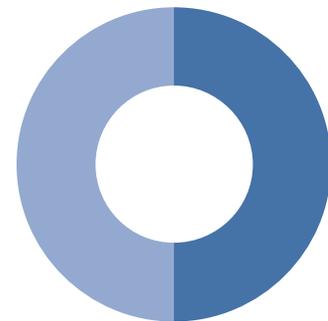
substantially exceeds demand, and vacant lots abound in clusters. McKeesport's 7th Ward and Lower 10th Ward are considered Challenged Neighborhoods.

Because the different neighborhood types exhibit different market forces and a different type physical supply (e.g.: the type or condition of housing units or the prevalence of vacant land), the strategic response to either maintain, revitalize, or mitigate the conditions within the targeted neighborhood differs. While code enforcement and promotional efforts may be sufficient in Stable Neighborhoods, demolition often becomes a standard public sector tool by default in Challenged Neighborhoods. The Challenged Neighborhood Focus Areas can be found on the Comprehensive Plan Map on page 88

Threshold Neighborhoods

Home prices in Threshold Neighborhoods are lower than in Stable Neighborhoods and the private housing market is considerably weaker. Supply of homes exceeds the demand for homes, and purely market rate new construction is rare in such areas. Tax credit developments or other financial subsidies deployed by specialized developers or nonprofits comprise the majority of any new housing developments or rehabilitation projects. While some homes are well maintained, a number show evidence of disinvestment, and rental properties abound. Absentee landlords acquire property willingly in these areas, as the return on investment (or often, the lack of investment) is attractive to such owners. Abandoned properties are sprinkled throughout the area and clusters of abandonment and vacant lots may begin to emerge. Vacant lots are rarely used for new development, and are often unkempt. The Upper 10th Ward and the blocks between the new Twin Rivers Intermediate School on Cornell and Union Avenue in McKeesport fit this typology. The Threshold Neighborhood Focus Areas can be found on the Comprehensive Plan Map on page 88

Data on vacant and blighted properties was sourced from the Financial Impact of Blight on the Tri-COG (Steel Valley Council of Governments, the Turtle Creek Valley Council of Governments, and the Twin Rivers Council of Governments) report. Data associated with this report can be found on the Vacant and Blighted Lands Map on page 179



Approximately half of all housing units (55% in Duquesne and 46% in McKeesport) are not owner-occupied and half the population resides in these units.

In comparison with Allegheny County, Duquesne and McKeesport's home ownership rate is significantly lower (54% versus 65% in 2010).

Stable Neighborhoods



Solidify and strengthen the market rate housing sector in stable neighborhoods to achieve increased potential home values and expand interest in owner-occupied housing

Stabilizing and strengthening the private market rate housing sector in McKeesport is vital.

- Gain a greater depth of understanding of existing residents and their reasons for moving to and staying in the communities. This information will guide further efforts to encourage new residents to join the market. Consider undertaking surveys of new and former residents.
- The market rate housing neighborhoods are, not unexpectedly, those with the highest quality housing in good condition. Maintaining the condition of this housing requires continued code enforcement efforts to ensure private property owners preserve their property as well as their neighbors' home values.
- Creating a competitive environment can serve a housing market well by “upping the ante” of prospective developers to put their best proposal forward for consideration. Using the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for publicly held sites in a manner that evaluates best project fit, not just highest bid, has proven successful for many communities. A proactive approach to connect with successful local developers, such as that used by Pittsburgh’s Urban Redevelopment Authority, often yields positive results for neighborhood-scale projects.
 - McKeesport may consider working with the private ownership of the Nottingham Estates site to promote completion of the development.
- Consider uses beyond single family housing that will reinforce stability (corner stores or community centers, for example)

Ensure that maintenance levels are maintained in rental units

Healthy communities need a balance of housing types and choices, including apartments and other rentals. The key to rentals is proper maintenance (for example, through code enforcement).

CASE IN POINT

NEW RESIDENT AND FORMER RESIDENT SURVEYS

Both the Lawrenceville Corporation and the Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation have conducted in-depth surveys of new residents in recent years to greater understand their market demand, housing types needed, and gaps in development that should be served.

Further, the Lawrenceville Corporation also surveyed former residents to gain a greater understanding of why they chose to leave the community. The ability to understand and respond to former resident issues may highlight pending community concerns while they are still nascent and relatively manageable, rather than waiting until the issues become severe or costly to address.



Pittsburgh's Lawrenceville neighborhood. Pittsburghskyline.com

Threshold Neighborhoods

Threshold Neighborhoods come in many different stages and situations. Some are more comparable to Stable Neighborhoods, such as the Upper 10th Ward in McKeesport to those more akin to the Challenged Neighborhoods such as the 6th Ward in McKeesport. While there is a wide variety of Threshold Neighborhoods, the reality is that the strategies for addressing the issues are the same. The severity of the situation results in deploying a variety of the techniques featured below, rather than only a limited array of them. In addition to the range of neighborhoods under the Threshold Neighborhood banner, the strategies for consideration also depend upon the intent of the effort.

Celebrate any progress. Don't wait to get perfect.

Ann McGee Cooper



Preserve existing homeownership in threshold neighborhoods

Working to maintain existing homeowners in a Threshold Neighborhood is one of the highest priorities. It is clearly substantially easier to affirm a prior investment into a homeownership choice than it is to persuade potential candidates to consider the neighborhood in question. Further, much research has shown that homeownership creates a more stable community than one primarily focused on the rental market. As a result, this market segment is highly desirable to maintain.

- To enhance the quality of the housing stock, existing rehabilitation and repair programs and financial assistance should be marketed to current residents. Programs such as these both strengthen the physical housing stock as well as strengthen the emotional connection that homeowners have with their own property, thereby increasing the likelihood of further investments as well as lessening the desire to relocate. While a great variety of such programs exist, the list below features some particularly relevant to these communities.
-
- Improving the physical and aesthetic environment is important for area homeowners. Curb appeal strategies matter to those who reside in the communities on a daily basis.
 - In one Detroit neighborhood, a local nonprofit organization organized a landscaping contest of area homeowners. Discounts on flowers at the nearby nursery were made available and a panel of local residents was established for the end of year review. The contest enhanced the sense of belonging by the residents as well as beautified the neighborhood.

CASE IN POINT

ASSISTING RESIDENTS WITH REPAIRS AND UPGRADES

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, in cooperation with the Wilkinsburg Community Development Corporation, provides regular technical assistance sessions for how to maintain, rehabilitate, and invest in your home. The sessions are free, and are held monthly in the Housing Resource Center in Wilkinsburg. The Design Center of Pittsburgh provides low cost consultations with licensed architects and landscape architects to area homeowners. More than 2,000 consultations have facilitated an estimated \$9.5 million in homeowner projects.

State Representative Erin Molchany and Pittsburgh City Councilwoman Natalia Rudiak (District 4) organized and conducted a Housing Renovation Fair in April 2014 featuring local assistance organizations and the programs they offer to area residents. The session featured opportunities to learn about best practices and available resources for home renovation projects.

The Duquesne Business Advisory Corporation has sponsored two programs for local homeowners to preserve and improve the local housing stock. Up to \$250 in paint and painting supplies are made available to homeowners eligible for the program, though income is not a criteria. Uniquely, the program has involved a partnership with Schink's Hardware on Grant Avenue that occasionally advances the cost of the paint and materials. Reimbursement for the paint and materials is then made directly to the hardware store and the homeowner, allowing for the work to proceed with no money out of pocket by the homeowner. A similar program provides up to \$500 in matching grants for homeowners in need of sidewalk repairs. These low cost programs provide a benefit to the entire community by maintaining and enhancing the public realm of the community.

Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh repairs and renovates the homes of low-income, elderly homeowners, military veterans, and individuals with permanent physical disabilities. With support from local communities and corporate sponsors, Rebuilding targets "Impact Neighborhoods" for multiple properties in a concentrated area to stabilize entire neighborhoods. Currently, the organization is working with the Hazelwood neighborhood in Pittsburgh, where sixty homes have been repaired in three years. Additionally, about ten percent of Rebuilding's work in Allegheny County occurs outside of the targeted neighborhoods.

Leveraging the Community Development Block Grant program, the state of Wisconsin has not only used the CDBG funds for income eligible residents for home loans, but has also created a revolving loan fund (RLF) from funds repaid to the state for the program. The RLF funds have fewer restrictions on income and are then available to both homeowners and landlords (in exchange for an agreement to rent to eligible income households). Loans are due in full when the property is sold or when the home ceases to be the homeowner's primary residence. Under the CDBG housing RLF, homeowners in owner-occupied dwellings and homebuyers receive 0% interest loans that are either deferred or feature low monthly payments. Rental rehabilitation loans are 0% to 3% monthly installment loans. CDBG housing funds can only be used for CDBG eligible activities. This approach is different than McKeesport's current approach to utilizing its CDBG funds and is offered as an example of alternative strategies.

- As was noted in the Stable Neighborhood strategies, learning more about how and why existing homeowners and renters made their choice to locate in the area is valuable to garnering a greater understanding of the market potential and how to maximize that potential. This may be even truer for the more fragile nature of a Threshold Neighborhood. Surveying these homeowners to understand why they originally selected this area and if they would do so again will help guide the appropriate strategy development and selection to retain them in the area. The University of Pittsburgh’s University Center for Social and Urban Research (UCSUR) has developed an outreach strategy to gather this information from both long time and new homeowners in an area. Lawrenceville Corporation partnered with UCSUR in their homeownership research efforts.
- Focus on strategic code enforcement. As in any area, code enforcement is crucial to maintaining, stabilizing, and improving the neighborhood conditions. While significant in Stable Neighborhoods to prevent decline, and overwhelming in Challenged Neighborhoods, the fragile state and transitional nature of Threshold Neighborhoods makes them the most significant areas to focus limited resources in the ongoing code enforcement effort. According to HUD, “targeted code enforcement and vacant property registration requirements can motivate absentee owners to maintain properties and prevent decline” in a community (PD&R *Edge* online magazine, May 2014).
- Keeping homeowners in homes is particularly challenging in Threshold Neighborhoods. By definition, these areas are those with more fragile neighborhood economies, and the financial challenges of residents may have negative spillover effects if left unchecked.

CASE IN POINT **STRATEGIC CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Mt. Washington’s Housing strategy calls for the establishment of Community Zones monitored by local residents to alert municipal staff when enforcement efforts are needed in an area.

The Pennsylvania Neighborhood Blight Reclamation & Revitalization Act allows, in certain cases, a lien to be placed against the personal assets of an owner of a blighted real property, denial of permits for other properties under the same ownership entity, the extradition of out-of-state landlords and the establishment of blight courts. These strategies are significantly more impactful than placing a lien on an abandoned, vacant property.

CASE IN POINT

HELP RESIDENTS KEEP THEIR HOMES

In the Homewood neighborhood of Pittsburgh, abandonment and blight are being confronted by Operation Better Block and its partner organizations. The neighborhood group is canvassing door to door to meet with homeowners and assess their foreclosure risk. The program features a series of services that are crucial to maintaining homeownership in the community, and for which homeowners rarely understand where to turn for services. Included in the program are:

Foreclosure counseling and assistance. Financial guidance is provided through a partnership with NeighborWorks of Western Pennsylvania to prevent bank foreclosure when homeowners are in financial difficulty or get behind on mortgage payments.

A program to initiate tax payment plans for back taxes. Without direct outreach, many of these homes would accrue significant liens and further financial challenges. Operation Better Block has established a close working relationship with Jordan Tax Services as a result, to the mutual benefit of homeowners and the community at large.

Access to tangled title legal services of the Allegheny County Bar Foundation Wills Project. In Threshold Neighborhoods, the existence of foreclosure and tax liens against properties diminishes their market value and negatively impacts the housing market. Working with the Tangled Title program overcomes these issues to clear cloudy title situations.

Operation Better Block and the Wills Project also provide referrals to estate planning services for area residents. The intent of these referrals is to prevent the cloudy title situations from occurring that are often later addressed in the Tangled Title programs.

Allegheny County's Homeowner Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (HEMAP) assists clients in applying to the PA Housing Finance Agency for emergency financial assistance to cease foreclosure actions.

- Especially true for homeowners in Threshold Neighborhoods, purchasing a home is typically the largest investment an individual makes. The financial stability of this purchase is impacted by the economic conditions of the Threshold Neighborhoods. One strategy that has proven successful in mitigating this risk is the creation of Home Equity Protection programs. Home Equity programs allow homeowners in designated target areas to buy insurance that ensures that they can get the value of their home back on resale, even if the market value of properties in their area declines during their ownership. There are a great many parameters to establishing such a program (including length of ownership, ratio of home value ensured upon sale, etc.), but they have proven successful in other markets to date. Typically, homeowners pay a nominal fee (\$100-\$500) to enroll in the program to pay for an appraisal and for a contribution into the overall fund to pay out any losses in value.
- Ensuring that zoning ordinances continue to advance single family occupancy is important to the stability of the community in the long term.

CASE IN POINT ***PROTECT HOME VALUES***

The Syracuse Home Equity Protection program was co-developed by faculty at Yale and Neighborhood Works, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Home Headquarters Inc., a local nonprofit administers the program. The program is reported to have had a near instant impact in stabilizing market prices, which had been falling for nearly a decade previously. Claims against the program for payouts have been rare in both Syracuse and in similar programs in Chicago.

Expand homeownership opportunities in threshold neighborhoods

While maintaining homeownership is important to the short term stability of the community, expanding and growing homeownership in is a key strategy for long term vitality.

- Developing a marketing and outreach strategy for prospective homeowners in is an important element in expanding the potential housing market for interested parties. Target markets would include the large employment base available at both the Industrial Center of McKeesport. Typically, people who take a new job in such a site are unlikely to learn about nearby housing opportunities from their coworkers. Marketing and promotional activities that might be carried out by the city, a local nonprofit or neighborhood association are another way to increase the demand for the area’s housing stock. Getting accurate local information to people who lack it or providing more accurate information to people who may be excluding the cities from their search because of stereotypes or erroneous information may put the areas “on the map” for prospective new purchasers.

- Outreach through local churches may also reach potential homeowners that would not otherwise be possible. Research shows that at many suburban churches, congregants are not local, but actually drive an average of twenty minutes to their destination.
- One well established method of both solidifying neighborhoods and increasing homeownership in an area is through Employer Assisted Housing programs. In such programs, participants are provided a range of technical assistance, financial training, and potentially down payment assistance in the purchase of a home in an eligible area. The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency has Employer Assisted Housing program guidelines and works with both communities and employers to establish such programs.
 - These programs have been successful in a variety of settings, including at Johns Hopkins University, Howard University, and with Marriott Corporation. Large employers such as those at RIDC parks, municipal entities, school districts, or possibly UPMC could serve as key actors in establishing a program.
- As noted previously, the purchase of a home is typically the largest financial expenditure that any family undertakes. Despite the sizable investment, and one that often comes with a thirty year mortgage attached, research shows that homebuyers do not have sufficient financial understanding and training to fully comprehend all the issues or to maximize their fiscal situation. Homebuyer assistance programs and financial/credit counseling are key elements to making long term homeownership prosper in a distressed community.

CASE IN POINT

OUTREACH THROUGH CHURCHES

At a recent service at St. Augustine/St. Monica Catholic Church in Detroit, parishioners were informed of nearby housing opportunities and open houses immediately after the service. When parishioners visited the homes after the service, they were greeted by the Mayor of the City of Detroit to encourage their interest.

In the Pittsburgh region, a program at Carnegie Mellon University is launching the Wilksburg Vacant Home Tour in 2015. Designed to reframe the blight conversation, the self-guided tour will showcase abandoned or vacant properties, and lead tour participants on a journey back in time through the narratives of these homes and buildings. Most importantly, tour participants will be provided with a "tour kit" that will offer the tools to help visualize what the house once looked like in full vibrancy, and information on resources available to aid participants in more actively engaging these homes and buildings. The tour will be partnered with a resource workshop for those interested in learning more and will include a look at "next steps," the process, available tools, and the risks, challenges and rewards of such an endeavor.

- Assist individuals in becoming credit ready for home ownership.
 - Locally, both Dollar Bank and NeighborWorks Western Pennsylvania are well recognized for their home buyer counseling programs and may be able to provide assistance in this arena. Oftentimes, the counseling element is supplemented by financial down payment assistance for completing the program. With Dollar Bank’s McKeesport branch location, an inquiry regarding their interest in promoting their program locally is likely to be well received.
 - It is particularly important that the program continue for at least one year beyond the original purchase of the home to maximize effectiveness.
- Many existing homes are in substandard condition, but remain as potential assets to the community. Developing or sponsoring a Rehab and Resale program for these properties is one method that potentially corrects both the weakness in the housing stock as well as expands homeownership in the community. These programs are typically targeted to where homeownership rates are low and foreclosure rates are high. Without such programs, undesirable investors are more apt to target these neighborhoods, thereby exacerbating a number of adverse conditions in the community. Advocating for the creation or expansion of such programs may require the expansion of technical capacity of local community development organizations.

CASE IN POINT

ABSENTEE LANDLORDS

The Center for Community Progress notes that in most cities the great majority of problem properties are privately owned investor properties, most often by owners who do not live in the property. Strategies for dealing with these types of investor-owned properties or absentee landlords include the following:

- *Strategic code enforcement: maximizing code enforcement capacity, targeting resources, working with property owners*
- *Working with rental landlords and investors: rental registration and licensing, tracking property owners, establishing and maintaining property standards, finding and targeting “bad apples”*
- *Dealing with vacant property owners: vacant property registration ordinances, motivating owners to reuse properties, vacant property receivership*

- Both Mt. Washington Community Development Corporation and East Liberty Development Incorporated in Pittsburgh operate such programs. Mt. Washington CDC recently sold a property on Eureka Street for \$139,000, nearly double the previous high home value on the street. The organization had acquired the property for only \$21,500 and invested approximately \$100,000 before selling to a new homeowner.
- One source of subject properties for the Rehab for Resale program is to work with financial institutions to acquire problem properties before they hit the open market. Each of the major local and national financial institutions offers Real Estate Owned (REO) properties to nonprofits or partner agencies for consideration before considering a sale to the general public.
- While taking a direct role or sponsoring a nonprofit organization to undertake a Rehab for Resale program is effective, ideally the private sector market is an active partner. In some areas of Pittsburgh, local community organizations directly work with private investors to select and partner on rehabilitation projects that are directed and led by friendly private developers whom have a track record of success and community support. Encouraging successful local investors may preclude less desirable absentee landlords from becoming prevalent in the market.

CASE IN POINT

ACTION HOUSING MCKEESPORT

In 2010, Allegheny County approached ACTION-Housing because the McKeesport YMCA was merging with the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh and the decision was made to close the facility, which had 84 Single Room units. ACTION-Housing agreed to manage the building and to lead the effort to preserve these housing units for the homeless or those at-risk of homelessness. After determining that it was feasible to continue to operate the structure, ACTION-Housing was successful in receiving an allocation of \$10 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credits, which were used to completely renovate the property. Additional funding was provided by Allegheny County Department of Human Services and The Allegheny County Department of Economic Development.

This preserves a crucial piece of housing in Allegheny County. It also represents the preservation of a historic building in the City of McKeesport. The former YMCA was built in 1922, and has been a landmark in the city since. Both the housing and the building itself were in danger of being lost until ACTION-Housing, The City of McKeesport, and the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency were able to intervene. Throughout the renovation, the building was constantly occupied.

- To expand housing opportunities and, new development by private and nonprofit developers presents an opportunity. Similar projects have taken place in the past or are taking place currently.
 - Typically, these projects are conducted by private or nonprofit developers that specialize in tax credit supported projects. Such developers include TREK Development Group, Ralph A. Falbo, Inc. and ACTION-Housing.
 - Conducting outreach to these groups and providing “FAM Tours” or familiarization tours with similar developers has the potential to expand the market interest in the communities.
 - Developers are more readily engaged when available sites are presented as part of a package of strategic investment. This may be an individual site or a series of residential lots packaged as part of a scattered site strategy.
 - Similarly, when a particular site is well suited to redevelopment, conducting a Request for Proposals (RFP) process may generate additional interest from high quality developers. Locations such as the former US Steel site in McKeesport at the confluence of the Monongahela and Youghiogheny Rivers may be particularly well suited to this approach.
- Coordinated housing efforts. McKeesport is blessed with an abundance of organizations and efforts underway to revitalize sectors of the housing market. Yet the scope and scale of the challenge is daunting. It is recommended that the organizations come together to select a priority neighborhood upon which to focus all related housing efforts for designated period. The neighborhood selected should exhibit market potential, while still having a demonstrated need for action. These efforts may be well suited to the Christy Park neighborhood, for example. Partner agencies may include:
 - ACTION Housing
 - McKeesport Housing Corporation
 - Habitat for Humanity

CASE IN POINT
MCKEESPORT HOUSING CORP.

McKeesport Housing Corporation has been operating in the community for 29 years and has invested over 19 million dollars in the housing stock, including some new construction. There are HOME funds for owner-occupied rehab, and an accessibility modification program for owners and renters who need accessibility modifications for their homes. They also have relationships with ACTION Housing, Dollar Bank, Neighbor Works and various others. They are the community point for residents who need mortgages, mortgage modifications, credit counseling, etc.

These efforts should be coordinated with the City of McKeesport's housing demolition program for full effectiveness.

Address the rental market in threshold neighborhoods

In recent years, a number of new strategies for working with this segment of the housing market have been developed in Pennsylvania.

- Implementing a rental registration system gives municipalities the opportunity to ensure and enforce that investor owned properties are in compliance with various municipal health and safety codes. While controversial at times, especially those with associated registration fees, these programs have proven successful in mitigating blight and upgrading the overall condition of the housing in affected communities.
 - The Local Government Academy offers template ordinances for initiating a rental registration system, as well as seminars on the effectiveness of various implementation strategies.
 - These systems allow municipal and public safety agencies to contact and track property owners, including those with out of state properties or absentee owners.
 - Consistent tracking of properties helps establish which investors are exacerbating neighborhood problems with poor tenant selection and a history of criminal activity at particular properties.
 - Courts have determined that the rental registration fee must be comparable to the actual administrative cost of operating the program. As such, the fee structure is typically below \$25 per unit in the Pittsburgh market. (The City of Pittsburgh's proposed fee structure is \$12.) The Borough of Swissvale determined that collecting the fee itself was not material to the budget and instead has waived the registration fee. Instead, the Borough has enhanced its fines for violations to cover the costs of the program. In this manner, good landlords are not penalized, and the fiscal burden of the program is placed primarily on those necessitating the need for the program in the first place.
 - Well-constructed ordinances allow municipalities to further recover public safety enforcement costs from private property owners with a pattern of repeated violations.
- The Pennsylvania Neighborhood Blight Reclamation & Revitalization Act allows, in certain cases, a lien to be placed against the *personal* assets of an owner of a blighted real property, denial of permits for other properties under the same ownership entity, the extradition of out-of-state landlords and the establishment of blight courts. These strategies are significantly more impactful than placing a lien on an abandoned, vacant property.

- The Pennsylvania Abandoned and Blighted Property Conservatorship Act (2009) provides a mechanism to transform abandoned and blighted buildings into productive reuse by transferring control of the property to a third party. If the owner of a residential, commercial or industrial building fails to maintain the property the court may appoint a conservator to make the necessary improvements before the building deteriorates further to protect the well-being of the public interest of the community at large. Many different interested parties, including non-profits and adjacent homeowners and businesses, can petition the Court to establish a Conservatorship of a problem property.
- While the above strategies are focused on enforcement, balanced programs also offer the “carrot” or an incentive for landlords to be productive community stakeholders. Good landlord programs or incentives have been developed in a number of markets to encourage pro-active support and coordination with public interests. The Center for Community Progress has noted the following incentive programs for rental housing situations.
 - One way some cities balance the rental registration program is by reducing or rebating fees to landlords who participate in good landlord or similar programs. The Utah Good Landlord Program offers a significant financial incentive in the form of a waiver of almost all of the Disproportionate Impact Fee. The criteria for participation in the program are set forth in the state law, which require landlords to follow anti-crime provisions and comply with applicable housing codes.
 - The city of Milwaukee offers a free training program to landlords that concentrate on how to be a “proactive property manager” including code compliance, applicant screening and how to recognize and deal with drug and other illegal activity. The program is five hours long, and at the end participants receive a free 100 page manual with useful information about the legal and business issues associated with managing rental property.
 - The Crime Free Rental Housing Program, was developed in Mesa, Arizona in 1992, and is now actively promoted by the International Crime Free Association to its members.
- Additional strategies can be used to support residents living in rentals.
 - The Allegheny County Accessibility Program is a program that makes accessibility modifications for both homeowners and renters to their homes to address the needs caused by permanent physical disabilities. Allegheny County residents who meet qualifying criteria can apply for improvements such as exterior ramps, interior and exterior lifts, doorway widening, bathroom modifications and more.
 - The Weatherization Assistance program is a federally-funded program that provides income-eligible homeowners and renters free weatherization services. The improvements result in enhanced energy efficiency, reduced heating and electric bills, and make the home more comfortable.

- McKeesport has a strong rental market with only 54% of the housing units owner-occupied. About 47% of renters are paying less than 35% of their household income in rent. About 40% of renters are paying more than 35% of their household income in rent. Although rent in McKeesport is relatively inexpensive (only 9% of renter-occupied housing units have rent over \$1,000 per month), there may be unmet need for affordable housing.
 - Working to encourage new tax credit rental developments could help to address this need. Under this system, selected private tax credit developers coordinate their efforts with local philanthropic sources to leverage their work as catalytic change agents.
 - One current project in Brownsville, PA is projected to cost \$8 million, with significant financing achieved through low income housing tax credits. Local foundations have pledged an additional \$4 million in community support if the developer is successful with the tax credit application and proceeds with the project.

CASE IN POINT

LOW INCOME HOUSING TAX CREDITS

Revitalizing the housing market in Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods is often accomplished by working to build the market value of housing opportunities to close the value gap with higher value Stable neighborhoods. Oftentimes, this is done through some form of private, though subsidized, housing development activity. The largest form of this development process is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC).

In Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods, where properties may not be appreciating rapidly or may even be losing value, the investment into affordable tax credit housing is often the first new housing in the area in decades. The tax credits provide sufficient investment return to support a project that would otherwise not be financially feasible.

Specialized, private, for profit, housing developers often are experts in this particular housing finance mechanism. Locally, such firms include Trek Development Group, Ralph A. Falbo, Inc. (currently developing Orchard Park in Duquesne), a.m. Rodriguez Associates and others. (Many nonprofit housing developers such as ACTION-Housing also specialize in this market as well, as their work in McKeesport demonstrates.) Approximately 70% of all affordable tax credit housing is developed by for profit developers. The tax credits are competitive and overseen by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, thus forcing the developers to “up their game” to beat their competitors and secure the allocation of support. The competitive process thereby benefits Challenged and Threshold neighborhoods likely to be home to such developments.

Significant research over the years (see Lan Deng, 2011 and Smith and Williamson, 2008 among others) has demonstrated that neighborhoods with new affordable housing development are impacted more positively than otherwise comparable neighborhoods. Poor minority neighborhoods are among those that benefit most, especially when strategically located and complemented by related revitalization efforts.

Properly situated and balanced, affordable housing tools such as tax credits catalyze additional investment into the community and lead to increased home values. Closing the value gap with Stable neighborhoods results, allowing some communities to fully make the transition into Stable neighborhoods.

Take a comprehensive approach to mitigating vacancy in buildings and land in threshold neighborhoods

Vacant property and vacant lots are indicators of the economic challenges in Threshold Neighborhoods. While selective demolition may be appropriate for some of these structures, many others can be addressed using other strategies. (See the next section, Considerations in Demolition, for greater analysis and detail in this approach.)

- The Center for Community Progress offers a Vacant Property Registration Ordinance template for municipalities to refer to in the development of their own ordinance. It identifies three purposes to the ordinance:
 - To ensure that owners of vacant properties are known to the city and other interested parties and can be reached if necessary;
 - To ensure that owners of vacant properties are aware of the obligations of ownership under relevant codes and regulations; and
 - To ensure that owners meet minimum standards of maintenance of vacant properties.
 - In addition, the fee structure established in the ordinance may serve additional purposes, including covering costs incurred by the municipality to deal with vacant properties, and under some circumstances, motivating owners to restore and reuse vacant properties.
- As noted in the Considerations for Demolition section, one alternative to demolition is to board and secure (“mothball”) vacant properties for future redevelopment interest. As Threshold Neighborhoods are already indicative of weak market demand for housing in these areas, there is little likelihood of vacant land being productively reused for new housing opportunities in the near future. As such, municipalities should evaluate the future land use of the site as part of the analysis before choosing to proceed with demolition.
 - Some communities have found that artistic and aesthetically pleasing boarding strategies are more accepted by the community at large and have fewer negative perceptions than they might otherwise. The Hill District of Pittsburgh features buildings that have been boarded and secured, but feature vibrant flower patterns on the boards or window themes on the window boards, helping to reinforce a bit of the sense of place that would be activated if the home were occupied.
- While vacant structures are one aspect to the problem in Threshold Neighborhoods, lots where structures once stood are also a significant element of the challenge. There are an estimated 2500 vacant lots in McKeesport alone. Many, if not the majority, of these parcels that are negative factors in the community dynamic are a result of the demolition of the blighting property that preceded it on that site.

- Cleveland and Sandusky, Ohio both feature “mow to own” programs that provides credit to neighbors who mow and maintain vacant lots to be applied to the purchase price of the land. While the purchase price is nominal, the intent is to ensure that the lots will be maintained upon transfer. Initiating the transfer for \$1, as some municipalities do, may not ensure the continued maintenance of the lot into the future. Working through the sweat equity program is thought to enhance the likelihood of future maintenance.
- In the Mt. Washington neighborhood of Pittsburgh, individual vacant lots were included in the establishment and expansion of what has become Emerald View Park. Lots adjacent to the park were included in the overall park master planning process, conveying them from unloved community eyesores to part of the maintenance and trail development strategy of the park program.
- McKeesport has worked in 2014 with GTECH Strategies in the ReClaim McKeesport vacant lot remediation program. GTECH provides technical assistance, planning, and funding for the community to develop individual plans for these sites with an intent to mitigating the blight that vacant land creates.
- Similarly, Student Conservation Association works with local community youth on greenspace and vacant land strategies while teaching conservation and building employable skills.
- The City of Pittsburgh features the Love Your Block program provides \$2,000 in funding to community residents and organizations tackling public place enhancements. Frequently, the program supports area residents in their efforts to beautify vacant lots with planters, community gardens, and public art.

Challenged Neighborhoods

Demolition is the primary tool of stabilization in Challenged Neighborhoods. The aim is to get things under control in these neighborhoods, oftentimes while using the strategies of Threshold Neighborhoods in concert with these efforts. At the same time, demolition approaches, especially those conducted in either Stable or Threshold Neighborhoods can be too aggressive and may need to consider other factors at play.

Establish a formal, written demolition strategy for use in challenged neighborhoods.

With a limited ability to keep pace, establishment of a formal, written, demolition strategy is key. The strategy should evaluate when it is best to demolish a structure versus when an alternative strategy such as boarding and mothballing the structure may be a more cost effective solution that facilitates redevelopment activity in the future.

While the final strategy should be refined and customized, the factors highlighted below could serve as a baseline for consideration. Develop an appropriate “score sheet” of these and other factors to assess the need for demolition of any particular structure.

- Is the building historically, architecturally, or culturally significant?
- Is the building a current safety hazard, a threat to public health, safety and welfare, or structurally dangerous, or is it just unoccupied?
 - Public safety is one of the primary functions of municipal government, and burned out shells should be demolished expeditiously, in whatever neighborhood they occupy.
 - Vacancy, even long term vacancy, does not necessitate demolition, however. A recent study of the Hill District of Pittsburgh noted 373 vacant buildings. Yet, the same study indicated that only 80 (21%) of these required demolition. The balance was recommended for mothballing, or further analysis of redevelopment potential. Recently, new funding was approved in the Tax Increment Financing district accompanying the redevelopment of the former Mellon Arena site that would mothball and preserve these vacant units as far away as the Upper Hill District so that the private market can “catch up” to these units, and ensure that they will not be lost to the neighborhood fabric in the interim.
- Is the building open to trespass? Can this situation be resolved through boarding of vacant structures rather than demolition?

- Focus: HOPE in Detroit, Michigan uses community volunteers and funding from insurance company programs and foundations to board and secure vacant property.
- Type of construction (masonry versus frame):
 - Masonry structures are more durable to vacancy over time and should be boarded for preservation rather than demolished if possible.
- Is the building adjacent to other occupied property?
 - Generally speaking, other than immediate safety hazards being prevalent, demolition should proceed rarely when otherwise occupied property is prevalent. Creating a “missing tooth” impact in weak market communities does not solve the problem. Rather it encourages additional abandonment and vacancy as the neighborhood takes on the pall of blight.
 - In this analysis, it is therefore preferable to demolish a unit on the end of the block, rather than in the middle of an otherwise occupied block of homes.
 - Conversely, to above, it is also true that demolition of particular problem properties could enhance the value of adjacent homes, particularly the removal of severely structurally compromised property or the demolition of obsolete alley houses.
- Is the area one of a high concentration of homeownership?
 - Some practitioners have found that excessive demolition negatively impacts the homeownership rates in a community. Vacant structures in areas of high homeownership should be evaluated carefully before proceeding with demolition.
- Rather than demolish a building, it may be preferable to convey the property to a new owner through a program like the Redevelopment Authority of McKeesport’s



According to the Historic and Cultural Plan in AlleghenyPlaces, two key challenges to preserving community history and character are misperceptions about rehabilitation of historic structures, and lack of understanding about the economic value of historic properties. The AlleghenyPlaces Housing element recommends that municipalities inventory properties/structures that are vacant or abandoned and note their condition. Structures that are significant in some way and can still be saved should not be the top priorities for demolition.

Vacant Property Review Program, which allows for the purchase of vacant lots and blighted structures.

- One study in Detroit, Michigan, found that 8 of every 10 properties sold in tax sales reverted for back taxes again within five years, further exacerbating the situation prior to the establishment of the Detroit Land Bank.
- The Center for Community Progress has established national best practices for land banking strategies for communities large and small.
- The Local Government Academy has developed a training series for local officials reflecting best practices and new tools recently enacted in Pennsylvania under the “New Tools in the Fight Against Blight” sessions.
 - Likewise, the Housing Alliance of Pennsylvania has recently published the “Fight Blight Brightly” handbook of tools, techniques, and strategies.

A Plan for Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy

Providing residents and businesses with high quality services while maintaining fiscal responsibility is an important focus. Balancing investments of time and resources as part of delivering improvements and programs to the public are of utmost importance to the administration's everyday roles and responsibilities now and in the decade to come.

Leaders and staff are interested in and committed to advancing the effectiveness of services delivered.



Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy Goal

*Take a long-term and big-picture view on all
city decisions*

Outreach

Outreach efforts are aimed at reaching an audience outside the city as well as internal audiences.



Enhance general marketing efforts to show McKeesport in an improved light.

Often distressed communities are known by the outside world only for the negative aspects such as crime, poverty, and abandonment. This is usually the case because local media outlets only feature news of the community when it is bad. However, despite experiencing some of these unfortunate conditions, in reality the City is making strides toward revitalization. Develop a marketing campaign and approach the city as a business/product: Create a brand and marketing plan to:

- Manage brand and marketing
- Approach current residents, businesses and organizations as current customers to be retained
- Approach potential residents, businesses and organizations as potential customers to be attracted

Efforts include attracting new businesses, improving infrastructure, and constructing new housing. To overcome any negative perceptions and highlight positive accomplishments and its vision for the future, the cities should increase efforts to promote themselves in a positive manner.

Often the only way to make a hard decision is to come back to the purpose

David Allen

- Use City and Redevelopment Authorities websites to better showcase upcoming and recent projects, positive facts and figures, and profiles of local residents improving the community; update regularly
- Enhance/create new marketing and press materials to highlight opportunities and incentives available
- Establish relationships with and regularly meet with area and regional media/press representatives to encourage more positive coverage
- Send regular press releases of positive events to local press outlets
- Engage former residents who can become cheerleaders and advocates of change and success (seeing former residents as an asset who can continue to be engaged in the community)

Find new and nontraditional marketing methods to showcase the cities and recruit niche businesses and new residents

- Solid, affordable and attractive housing stock exists in the community. Yet the awareness of these homes is quite weak. A champion of promoting these options needs to be established. This could be the Redevelopment Authority, a local nonprofit, or some other entity. This effort would include:
 - Outreach to the real estate brokers and sales persons to familiarize them with the options in the community. Oftentimes, prospective homeowners are steered by these industry professionals to other markets for an expedited closing, and developing relationships with those that specialize in niche markets is important. This effort could include quarterly tours of homes on the market or some shared marketing strategy, such as co-operative ad purchases.

CASE IN POINT

REACH OUT TO PROFESSIONALS

The South Side Slopes Neighborhood Association has conducted outreach to local real estate brokers to promote their listings at no charge in their annual StepTrek program book. These brokers likewise often feature Open Houses along the walk route to reach an audience they otherwise would have limited access to.

Many communities conduct outreach to real estate developers, brokers, and sales persons to build interest in the neighborhood market. Engaging with these industry professionals by hosting an occasional meeting to understand their perspective, issues, and concerns increases the vitality of the market potential.

This practice has taken place in Lawrenceville, Mt. Washington, and the South Side of Pittsburgh.

Maintain positive relationships with UPMC McKeesport and Penn State to accomplish community goals and ensure business/organizational needs are being met.

UPMC McKeesport and Penn State McKeesport are the City's two largest institutions. Both organizations employ City residents, but perhaps more importantly, bring significant numbers of visitors and students to the City who spend money while there. In addition, both institutions contribute substantially to the City's tax roll. It is critical to the future of McKeesport that they continue to thrive and remain in the City. Therefore, the City must ensure that the institutions are content with McKeesport in every aspect, and that their needs are addressed. To implement this strategy, the City should:

- Establish relationships with presidents/officials to encourage ongoing communication with the City
- Provide marketing and press materials to highlight opportunities and incentives available in McKeesport that may serve the institutions' needs
- Arrange regular meetings with hospital/university officials

Work with major employers and job training programs to guide residents to local jobs

Government, Services, Infrastructure and Energy



Implement ordinance updates to address land use issues identified in the other plan elements

- Built-out communities oftentimes have zoning or other ordinances that are inconsistent with new housing design and construction techniques. An evaluation of current zoning and related building ordinances may alleviate the potential to discourage desired new development from taking place.
- Ensuring that zoning ordinances continue to advance single family occupancy is important to the stability of the community in the long term.

- While zoning addresses health, safety and welfare issues, community design guidelines ensure that development and redevelopment is compatible with existing neighborhood fabric. Design guidelines respond to issues of height, scale, setback, exterior detailing, garage placement, material selection, window proportions, etc.

As discussed in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter, McKeesport is a highly urbanized area with full access to service, infrastructure and energy.

Prepare to make strategic investments in infrastructure and energy systems to support the city's long term vision.

- Align long term improvements with planned growth and development. Utilize infrastructure investments to facilitate growth areas.
- Continue to make long term capital improvements to utilities and water systems and address problems as they arise

Code enforcement is an important concern. There appears to be a need for increased capacity and increased enforcement. As outlined in the Cooperation, Collaboration and Interrelationships Chapter, the cities are going to assess possibilities related to shared code enforcement. Rethinking the role of the fire department is another strategy that McKeesport can utilize because it maintains a professional fire department.

Consider ways to expand the reach of the fire department.

Code enforcement is a key element in protecting community character as well as public health, safety and welfare. Swissvale Borough, outside of Pittsburgh has successfully enlisted their professional fire department to assist in code enforcement activities.

CASE IN POINT ***SWISSVALE FIRE DEPARTMENT***

As code enforcement is a health, safety and welfare situation, the Borough of Swissvale pioneered a unique strategy to catch up on its code enforcement efforts. Code enforcement responsibilities were transferred to the Fire Department for oversight. In the downtime between runs, the department conducted a methodical, block by block review of the conditions in the community. They approached this effort objectively, by alphabetizing the street names and advancing through the list for the review.

Water Service

Barring significant unforeseen industrial or other water needs, the current water and sewer facilities will be able to accommodate anticipated growth and development in McKeesport. It is not anticipated that expansion or extension to the existing sewer system is needed. It is not anticipated that expansion or extension to the existing sewer system is needed. This plan for the reliable supply of water is generally consistent with the State Water Plan. Lawful activities such as extraction of minerals impact water supply sources and such activities are governed by statutes regulating mineral extraction that specify replacement and restoration of water supplies affected by such activities.

*Obstacles are
those frightful
things you see
when you take
your eyes off your
goal.*

Henry Ford

Sewer Service

The Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport (MACM) owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant and conveyance system serving the greater McKeesport area. The communities served by the Authority include in whole or part of the City of McKeesport, City of Duquesne, East McKeesport Borough, Elizabeth Township, Liberty Borough, Port Vue Borough, North Versailles Township, Versailles Borough, White Oak Borough, Glassport Borough, and Lincoln Borough.

The Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport has enacted its Act 537 plan in the City of McKeesport. The Authority has upgraded its plant capacity from an average flow of 11.5 million gallons per day, with a peak flow of 21 million gallons per day to an average flow of 23 million gallons per day, with a peak flow of 56 million gallons per day. The Authority also constructed two new pump stations and upgraded their existing three pump stations to help convey flow to the plant more efficiently. With the upgrades to the plant and the pump stations, the Authority believes it will achieve an 85% reduction of combined sewer wet weather overflows.

Stormwater

Watersheds in this region are covered by the Pennsylvania Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan. Allegheny County is currently preparing a county-wide Act 167 Plan that will update the existing plan. PA Act 167 requires municipalities to adopt a local Act 167 plan that is consistent with the County's plan within six months after the PA Department of Environmental Protection has approved the County's plan. The proposed Allegheny County Act 167 plan will include a model ordinance that can be used for this purpose, so achieving compliance could be inexpensive and relatively simple.

A Plan for Transportation, Assets and Amenities

Providing residents and businesses with high quality services while maintaining fiscal responsibility is an important focus. Balancing investments of time and resources as part of delivering improvements and programs to the public are of utmost importance to the administration's everyday roles and responsibilities now and in the decade to come.

Leaders and staff are interested in and committed to advancing the effectiveness of services delivered.



Transportation, Assets and Amenities Goal

Leverage and enhance existing systems with targeted investments

Parks, Recreation, Natural and Historic Resources, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

Inventories of park, recreation, natural and historic resources can be found in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter. Based on municipal budgets and projected continued population declines, the overall plan for parks and recreation is to support and enhance existing spaces and amenities.

Primary natural resources consist of riverfront areas and steep slopes, where development should be restricted. A number of historic resources were identified, which can be used to help build community character.

Exploit the City's position on the Great Allegheny Passage to enhance retail development opportunities.

The Great Allegheny Passage is a unique potential economic development resource. It brings with it many opportunities for new businesses that want to be near the trail as a quality of life amenity, as well as retailers and other businesses that can take advantage of trail users as customers. The City should enhance efforts to attract these types of businesses, and ensure that the trail's attributes are maximized as part of these efforts. There is always opportunity, particularly as trail traffic expands. It may be difficult to operate trail businesses like lodging properties or bike shops given proximity to Pittsburgh, but there are some opportunities to connect to the trail and offer basic services (café, ice cream, snacks, inner tubes, maybe even a bike rental). The trail should not be sold as an opportunity that will fully support a business, but rather one that can supplement income.

- Consider temporary retailers at first to test the market, including pop-up retailers/restaurants and food trucks

The best place to succeed is where you are with what you have.

Charles Schwab

- Research and contact local food truck operators, restaurateurs, and eventually other retailers (recreation-related outfitters/retailers) to gauge interest in a potential location along the Great Allegheny Passage
- Establish relationships with and meet with company representatives to market the cities and the trail
- Promote the numerous financial incentives for businesses
- Seek out and consult with entrepreneurial/business development organizations (e.g. Duquesne University's Small Business Development Center) to help recruit businesses

The Great Allegheny Passage: One Trail with Many Opportunities

Recreation Users: The Great Allegheny Passage is regional economic generator connecting the community to a growing market of consumers who spend money on leisure and recreational activities. This connection supports many types of non-residential activity. The growth opportunities for businesses related to the trail is significant. The *2012 Trail Town Business Survey Report* (The Progress Fund) looked at businesses related to the trail and found that, of those responding, they weighted average income per establishment was \$650,000 with over 50% of that income being generated in the summer months. Even though these establishments are open year round, the bulk of their income is generated in a three month window. 9.1% of the businesses were located in Allegheny County (the county with the most businesses was reported in the survey was Somerset at 37.5%).

The *2012 Trail Town User Survey Report* (The Progress Fund) surveyed the users of the trail and had 1,195 respondents. 6.4% of the respondents started their rides in McKeesport while 9.2% ended their rides in McKeesport (the highest ending point for all riders was in Boston, PA with 19.5%). The survey also showed a drop in multi-day users over the previous survey and a growth in daily trail users. This does not mean that the overall multi-day user rate has fallen, but rather the overall usage of the trail has increased, with daily users being the largest growing sector. These daily users can spend a significant amount of money. The survey looked at group average spending rates for groups of three people. The highest amount of money spent on the trail per person was \$228.85 in Cumberland, Maryland. The lowest average amount of money spent is in McKeesport with \$15.07. In Homestead, the average user is spending \$179.37. There are untapped business opportunities related to trail use in the City as well as opportunities to introduce and welcome trail users to the communities.

Commuters: Bicycle commuting is on the rise in the US. Based on the 2013 American Community Survey results from the Census Bureau, bicycle commuting has increased 408% in Pittsburgh since 2000, the largest increase of any city in the US. The rates have doubled since 2007 to 2%, which places Pittsburgh in 11th place for rate of bicycle commuters, just behind Philadelphia.

The City has the ability to make themselves bicycle friendly communities attracting investment and residents for a lifestyle that is not fully auto dependent. The reason a community would want to make the leap towards being a bicycle friendly one is simple. It is cost effective and attracts a younger group looking for a lower impact, less expensive lifestyle. With the average vehicle yearly costs around \$6,000 - \$7,000 people have found that using a bicycle as a daily means of transportation gives them more money in their pocket. The highest rate of bicycle commuters are the most educated workers (representing roughly half of bicycle commuters). The City is poised to attract residents interested in bicycle commuting by utilizing and enhancing connections to the Great Allegheny Passage. By having a strong bicycle connection, residents have options. With a close proximity to downtown Pittsburgh and a direct connection on the Great Allegheny Passage, the City can become bicycle bedroom communities for urbanites attracted to a low cost of living and convenient location.



Leverage the Great Allegheny Passage to showcase the community and give people a reason to ride there from Pittsburgh or other destinations.

Often distressed communities are known by the outside world only for the negative aspects such as crime, poverty, and abandonment. However, despite experiencing some of these unfortunate conditions, in reality the city is making strides toward revitalization. To help overcome negative perceptions, highlight positive accomplishments and attract businesses and residents, the cities should increase efforts to promote themselves in a positive manner.

- Riding to McKeesport is a nice 20+ mile ride from Pittsburgh. A stop for lunch or snacks before heading back is probable.
- McKeesport is nice starting point from the east if people want to park their cars and ride into Pittsburgh.
- Find opportunities to get involved with Rivers of Steel, a nonprofit committed to preserving, interpreting and managing the historic, cultural and natural resources related to big steel. Rivers of Steel hosts popular tours.
 - There are opportunities to get involved with trail-related steel heritage tours showcasing industry—past and present—that the communities are built around as well as churches, historic buildings and other community institutions.
- Work with nearby trail towns to organize bike tours and create itineraries. Itineraries are an inexpensive way of telling a community’s story and a lot of cyclists are looking for such information. Itineraries could be themed and also direct people to local businesses.
 - Cycling church or historic tours could travel along the trail with “excursions” into communities. These could be organized group rides or itineraries available for riders to use in planning trips.
 - Ghost signs are a niche tourist interest. There are a number of ghost signs along the trail. Itineraries

A ghost sign is an old hand painted advertising sign that has been preserved (intentionally or inadvertently). They attract a niche group of preservationists and history buffs.



Ghost sign in Tarentum, PA.

and events could be created around the ghost signs to bring people into the communities. There are also artists who can enhance and restore signs that are extremely faded or damaged without altering the work—like a fresh coat of paint.

- Promote this section of trail for families:
 - Less busy than Pittsburgh
 - Ride 4-5 miles between Duquesne and Riverton Bridge in McKeesport for a great view of the Mon; Ride 4-5 miles from McKeesport to Homestead for a view of the roller coasters at Kennywood.
- Engage with local organizations and churches. For example, at Appalachian Trail Days in Damascus, VA, the churches really connect to trail users: cookouts, showers, etc.
- Build a relationship with the progress fund and keep up to date on information like trail counts.

*Imagination is
more important
than knowledge.*

Albert Einstein

Consider ways to connect more residents to Renzie Park without cars; continue to invest in Renzie Park

- Consider existing hillsides as assets and look for ways to utilize hillsides as open space and as an opportunity for long-term pedestrian and bike connections through the community.

Find opportunities to partner with UPMC and/or Penn State University to develop a community wellness program that could focus on both programs and physical infrastructure projects.

Focus on preserving the remaining historic structures and reach out to local preservation organizations to help with promotion, preservation and programming.

- Showcase historic structures with online maps, bike itineraries and participation in regional efforts.

Rethink the river as the front door to the city

Consider creating a temporary beach/park recreational area on the Monongahela River at "the Point." Quality of life is an important consideration for attracting residents and businesses to McKeesport, and recreational amenities are key to an enhanced quality of life. The Monongahela riverfront offers many opportunities for adding a recreational component to the City, particularly at "the Point" where the Youghiogheny and Monongahela Rivers meet. For this location, the City should consider creating a temporary beach during warmer months, where residents can relax, recreate, and enjoy views of the river. This could involve adding sand, chairs, hammocks, art installments, games, a performance stage, food trucks, and small vendors. These "pop-up" beaches and parks have become popular and very successful temporary (and relatively inexpensive) amenities in many cities across the country. Examples include the Oval and Spruce Street Harbor Park in Philadelphia, Campus Martius Park in Detroit, Brooklyn Bridge Park in Brooklyn, NY, and Sugar Beach in Toronto. Locally, Aspinwall is creating a temporary beach on the Allegheny River.

- Contact Project for Public Spaces, or another similar organization, to explore ideas for and feasibility of a temporary park at "the Point"
- Begin researching potential funding sources for a temporary park; possible sources include area foundations and Artplace (a collaboration of national foundations that fund such projects)
- Consider temporary retailers at first to test the market, including pop-up retailers/restaurants and food trucks. Research and contact local food truck operators, restaurateurs, and eventually other retailers (recreation-related outfitters/retailers) to gauge interest in a potential location in McKeesport as part of a park at "the Point"
- Promote the numerous financial incentives for such businesses appropriate for "the Point"

CASE IN POINT

EMERALD VIEW PARK

Recognizing the untapped potential of hillsides, the City of Pittsburgh and the Mount Washington Community Development Corporation initiated a planning process to enhance and expand the park's existing trail system. The 235-acre park flanks the slopes of Pittsburgh's hilltop neighborhoods and provides important green space in dense urban living. The trails have become a unique neighborhood feature in Mt. Washington—acting as the community's main street and providing public space for neighborly social interaction as well as physical fitness and recreation.

- Designated as Pittsburgh's fifth Regional Park in 2007.
- Challenges include existing homeless encampments, illegal dumps, difficult terrain and heavily trafficked streets.
- Student Conservation Associates constructed 6 miles of trails in early implementation efforts.
- The provision of recreational amenities was balanced with protecting wooded hillsides that stabilize steep slopes, reduce runoff, decrease heat effects, absorb airborne pollutants and provide valuable wildlife habitat.

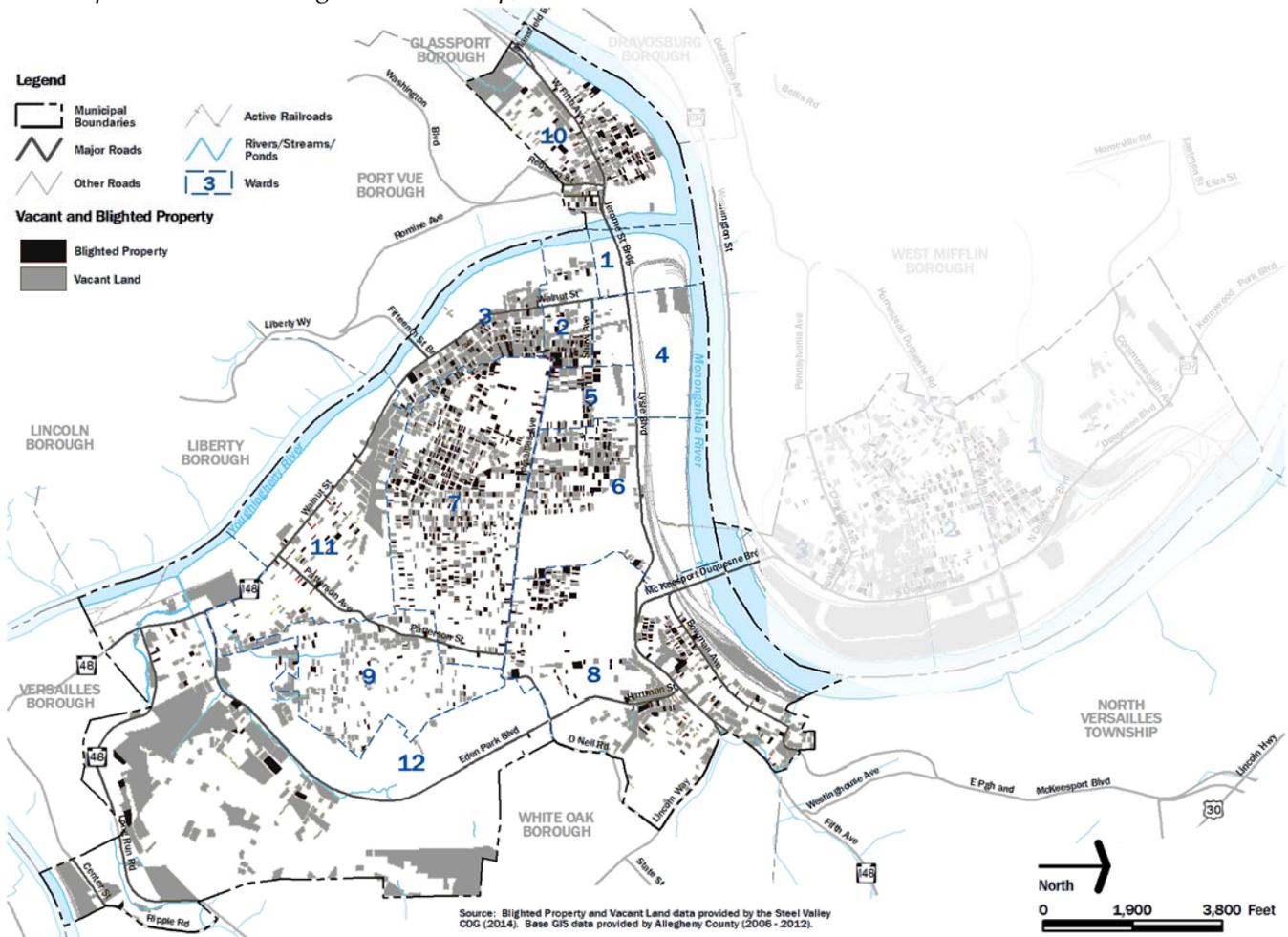


Emerald View Park in Pittsburgh's Mount Washington Neighborhood. MWDC.org

Vehicular Transportation Network

A number of important regional roads run through McKeesport. Land use considerations related to those roads can be found in the Land Use and Economic Development Section of the Plan Elements Chapter. A comprehensive inventory of roadways can be found in the Background Studies and Trends Chapter. Parking and roadway capacity was designed to handle significantly higher population, more robust industrial activity and regional commerce. However, because vacancy and blight has been scattered throughout the community, there are few (if any) opportunities to reduce roadways (or other similar infrastructure like underground pipes).

McKeesport Vacant and Blighted Lands Map, 2012



Based on population growth projections and the build-out analysis (found in the Appendix), the current road systems in McKeesport can support anticipated growth. Further, additional industrial development will not strain the existing roadways beyond their existing capacity. The focus of the plan for the vehicular network focuses on supporting planned development in key focus areas and targeting roadway improvements to improve the city's regional image.

Invest in gateways and primary corridors.

The most important investments should be coordinated within the Key Focus Areas and follow design guidelines outlined in the Land Use and Economic Development Section of the Plan Elements Chapter.

Reprioritize transportation system improvements based on development and land use changes to accommodate changing needs for capacity.

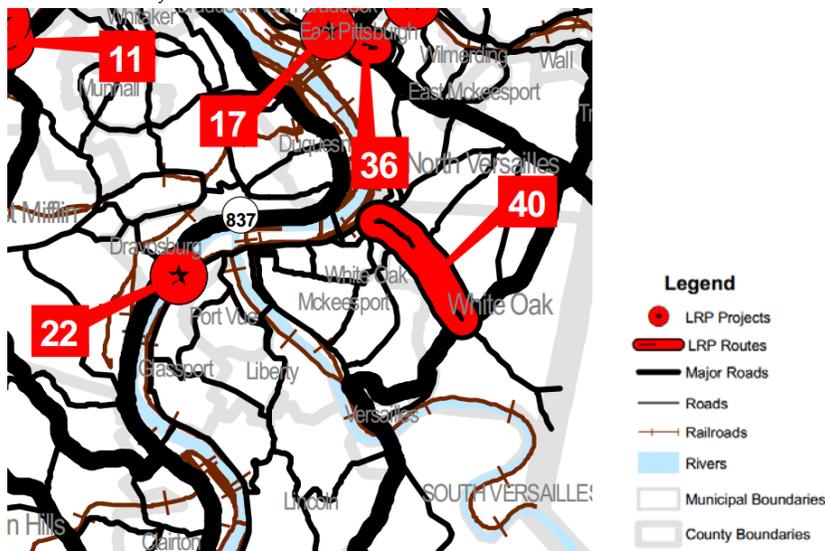
Make stronger connections to the GAP on the existing community road network. Crosswalks are key; as are signage and attractive, safe places to park bikes. Pursue physical business district streetscape improvements on 5th Avenue, including returning street to two-way.

Fifth Avenue in McKeesport is currently a one-way street through the downtown area from west to east. Two-way streets in business districts are better for pedestrians, drivers, and retailers than one-way streets. They encourage slower traffic making it safer for pedestrians to cross streets; they make it easier for drivers to find parking and get to businesses without having to circle around blocks; and they provide retailers more visibility due to slower traffic and ease of access. Therefore, a street enhancement project is recommended for 5th Avenue to return it to two-way, which will contribute significantly toward a revitalized commercial district.

- Research funding opportunities for streetscape design
- Conduct conceptual planning and preliminary design of potential improvements. A consultant's help may be needed with the conceptual planning/preliminary design phase but it is less expensive than the actual engineering and design of the improvements. That step is also needed to determine both the cost and the scope of work for final engineering and design. The conceptual design phase can also involve the community through activities such as charrettes or events such as those promoted through the Better Blocks Program
- Secure funding for design
- Prepare an RFP for design/engineering services; hire consultant to prepare documents
- Explore funding for physical public realm improvements through programs such as PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program (administered by SPC) and the PA Multimodal Transportation Fund.

Coordinate with Allegheny County and the SPC to get the project on the regional Transportation Improvement Plan. The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has identified a number of projects in their 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern PA Fiscally-Constrained Component that could impact McKeesport.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission 2040 Transportation and Development Plan for Southwestern PA – Relevant Projects



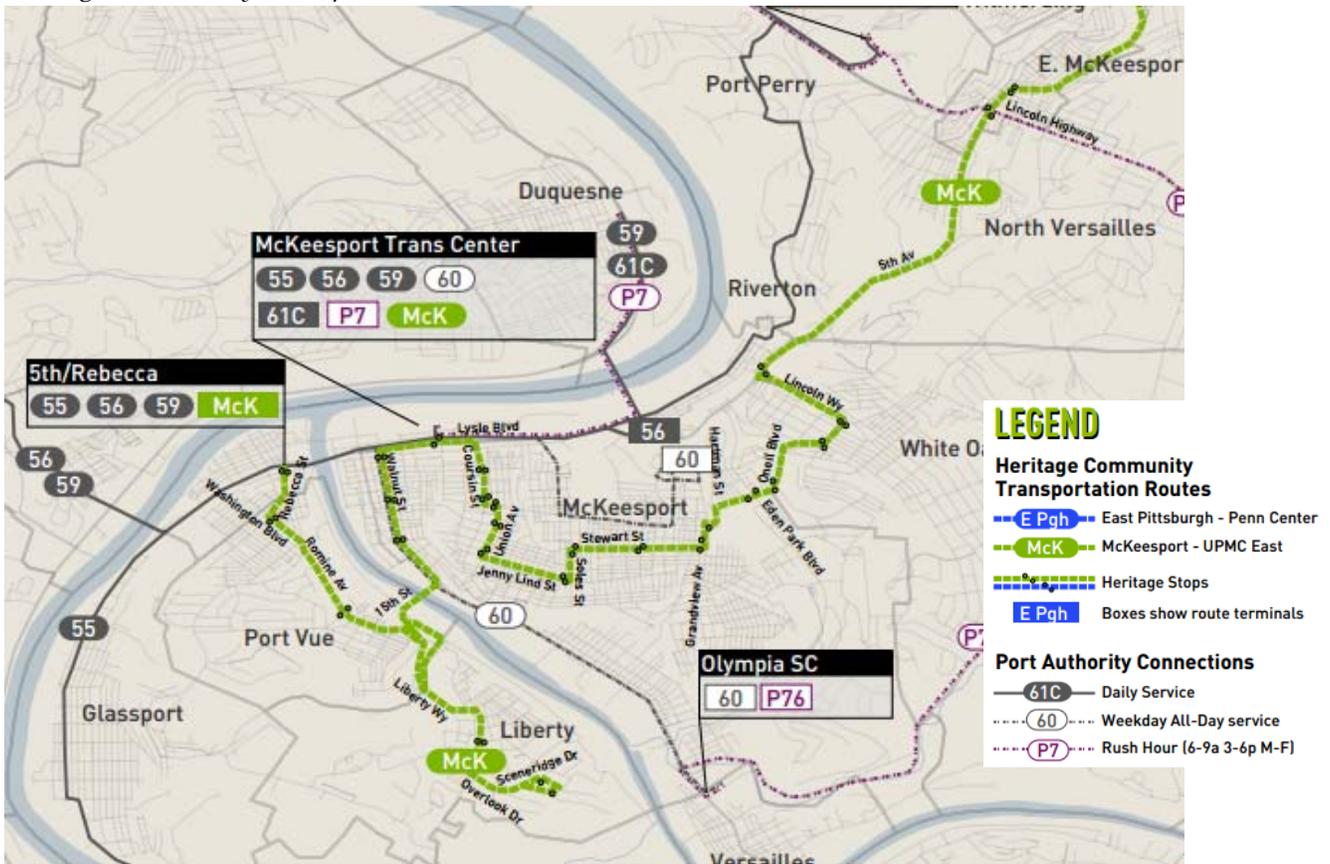
Project 40, identified on the map above, represents the widening of Lincoln Way in White Oak. Project 22, identified on the map above, represents improvements the rehabilitation of Mansfield Bridge, which was completed in October of 2014.

Mass Transit

McKeesport has experienced significant cuts in service from the Allegheny County Port Authority in recent years. Discussions with the Port Authority reveal that service levels are continuously being analyzed and reconsidered. Representatives emphasized the importance of sharing data and planning efforts to ensure that the Port Authority has up-to-date information.

Heritage Community Initiatives serves areas of the Mon Valley with WorkLink—a fixed-route van service filling critical transportation gaps that is designed to get residents to employment, retail centers and the greater transportation network. WorkLink does not currently have a route through or stops in Duquesne but Duquesne residents can connect to WorkLink lines via existing Port Authority routes.

Heritage Community Transportation Routes, 2015



Continue to advocate for public transportation and keep in contact with Allegheny County Port Authority and Heritage Community Initiatives.

CASE IN POINT

McKEESPORT TRANSPORTATION CENTER IMPROVEMENTS PLANNED

Recognizing

Port Authority of Allegheny County plans to replace the badly deteriorated McKeesport Transportation Center with a multimodal terminal serving regional and local buses, vans and ACCESS paratransit routes.

The project is among 86 recipients in 35 counties sharing \$84 million granted by PennDOT from the Multimodal Transportation Fund established in Act 89 of 2013. “The Multimodal Transportation Fund was designed to provide grants to encourage economic development and ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available to the residents of Pennsylvania,” said state Sen. James Brewster, D-McKeesport.

Port Authority plans to demolish the center, built for \$3.2 million in the late 1970s along Lysle Boulevard. It sits between Locust Street and the Coursin Street flyover ramp, two of three access roads into Regional Industrial Development Corp. of Southwestern Pennsylvania’s Regional Industrial Center of McKeesport.

“It leads me to believe when you are going to put money into a new transportation center that the Port Authority expects that it will be used,” Mayor Michael Cherepko said. The mayor anticipates additional use from commuters coming into the RIDC site. Port Authority will continue to have a park-and-ride lot now found outside the center, as well as access to the Great Allegheny Passage bicycle trail. “This project will both create jobs and give McKeesport a state-of-the-art transportation center that will enhance our regional appeal,” said Democratic state Rep. Marc Gergely of White Oak.

Over the years the old transportation center accumulated a full share of problems. “Generally we hope to replace the badly deteriorated building with a better transit facility to serve riders,” Ritchie said. “Details of the work are not yet finalized.”

When it was built, daily Amtrak train service linked McKeesport with Washington, Pittsburgh and Chicago. The old Tube City still was a stop for the Capitol Limited, first provided by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad that once had commuter service between McKeesport and Pittsburgh. From 1975 until 1989 the old Port Authority PATrain commuter service had stops in McKeesport and Braddock. I



Cooperation, Collaboration and Interrelationships

This comprehensive plan provides a long-term picture that seeks to organize and optimize Duquesne and McKeesport’s opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. Interrelationships among the plan’s key elements as well as consistency with the plans of Allegheny County and neighboring municipalities are important pieces related to cooperation and collaboration as well.

Joint Actions

The cities of Duquesne and McKeesport are working towards a common vision. While many actions will be undertaken by the cities and their respective stakeholders and partners, there are a number of joint actions that will provide a strong foundation for the cities’ individual efforts. Joint actions should meet the following criteria:

- Be of benefit both cities—the community as a whole. Each city has important actions and strategies to implement independently. Joint actions must be mutually beneficial.
- Be implemented with a no-blame approach. The key in undertaking joint actions is collaboration and relationship-building. Both cities must be prepared to move forward and respond to both successes and setbacks.
- Be cost-effective. Joint actions should not be undertaken simply on principal. Duquesne and McKeesport are separated by a river and do not share municipal services. Joint efforts must make sense from a fiscal perspective to be successful.

*Duquesne and
McKeesport are
dynamic cities of
enduring value,
committed to a future
of new opportunities
and discovery.*

*Comprehensive Plan
Vision Statement*



Broaden the Range of Allowable Uses Designated in Both City Ordinances Related to RIDC Properties

The presence of RIDC-owned properties in both Duquesne and McKeesport presents significant opportunities and challenges. There is a desire to expand uses and raise the bar in terms of the built environment. There is also a desire to level the playing field by ensuring that development opportunities and zoning regulations are consistent between the two cities.

Ultimately, they want to see new economic development and job creation through continued industrial land uses along the riverfront areas with the expansion of additional land-use types. However, the cities do not want to be in competition with one another for development at the RIDC parks. Both Duquesne and McKeesport are planning updates to their zoning ordinances at the conclusion of this comprehensive planning process. The zoning related to RIDC parks in each city should create equal opportunities for uses by right (permitted), conditional, and special exception land uses as well as performance standards and design guidelines.

To make knowledge productive, we will have to learn to see both forest and tree. We will have to learn to connect.

Peter F. Drucker



Create a Joint Trail Committee

The Great Allegheny Passage trail passes through both cities with a trailhead and parking areas near each downtown. As discussed above, there are opportunities to promote the cities via the trail and strategies that can be used to invite trail users off of the trail and into each city. While there are individual actions that each city can undertake to reach their goals related to the trail, there are number of significant opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. Both cities need to be poised to recognize and take advantage of potential opportunities. The cities should convene and Joint Trail Committee to meet regularly and discuss issues and opportunities related to the trail, strategies for leveraging investment and opportunities for partnership. For example, the cities may be able to identify grant opportunities to do joint trail-related enhancements at each city's trailhead, opportunities to create events that are focused on the trail or the creation of trail itineraries to guide cyclists from the trail to amenities within each city.



Explore and Evaluate Options for Code Enforcement

As discussed above, code enforcement is a significant issue in each city—from shifting personnel situations to evolving needs for code enforcement. There are a number of options open to both Duquesne and McKeesport, which each city has been exploring independently. With assistance from Twin Rivers COG, the cities should evaluate all options for code enforcement and determine if there is a fiscally-sound opportunity for partnership or shared services. Third-party code enforcement and shared city personnel are all options that should be evaluated.

*Imagination is more
important than
knowledge.*

Albert Einstein



Enhance External Communication and Storytelling

The use of communication and storytelling is expanding, constantly gaining new audiences and bringing more opportunities to communities. By understanding how to use online and other media to tell a story, communities have an advantage and authority to share their messages publicly, or privately, throughout the region.

Digital storytelling, though slightly open for interpretation, is essentially work produced by “the use of computer and web technology to enhance the ability to tell stories effectively,” says Ron Green, Founder of The Digital Storytelling Center of Kansas City.

Regardless of the freedom to create online and other content, the importance of a story being told well is the foundation for success.

A common discussion theme throughout the planning process was difficulties in getting the word out about positive things in each city – rather than only the negative stories that seem to appear on the regional news outlets. Duquesne and McKeesport have an opportunity to take charge of their stories – regardless of what is being broadcast on news channels. This is a significant shift in thinking but taking responsibility for storytelling and information management will help shed a victim mentality and begin to change outside and internal perceptions about Duquesne and McKeesport.

Because of limited municipal budgets, there may not be organizational capacity through existing staff to undertake this kind of communication. The cities should explore ways to work together to jointly enhance their external communication and storytelling.

A first step in the journey of enhanced communication and storytelling is a realistic evaluation. Spitfire recently released SmartScan™, a free online resource to help nonprofits assess their own communications practices. While not aimed specifically at municipal governments, these online tools are very relevant to what the cities are hoping to achieve.

Spitfire's SmartScan™ has four modules to help organizations evaluate (1) identity and branding, (2) communications planning, (3) best practices such as storytelling, media relations, and use of social media; and (4) measurement that ensures real impact. Users of this tool can pick one of these modules or any combination to address specific concerns. To learn more about SmartScan™ and begin a self-assessment, visit www.spitfiresmartscan.org.

Work with Twin Rivers Council of Governments to Utilize GIS Technology

This planning process has produced a significant amount of GIS data. The data is represented in this report as maps but the information could be used in a more interactive way. However, the cities of Duquesne and McKeesport do not have the software or trained staff to be able to utilize the data. Working with Twin Rivers Council of Governments, the GIS data could be hosted in an online account that the cities could use without any special training or software through a web browser. A great example of the way that this can be executed is at GoToTrails.com. The database is rich with information but it is displayed and organized so that trail enthusiasts who do not have special training can utilize the maps for planning and management activities.

Support RIDC's Efforts to Undertake Capital Improvements to Existing River Terminal Facilities

Conversations with stakeholders at RIDC consistently led to a discussion about the river terminal facilities in Duquesne and McKeesport and the possibilities related to multi-modal barge/rail transfer. While the cities do not have the ability to be partners in financing the capital improvements, they can

support RIDC's efforts to obtain grant funding for improvements to the river terminals or support the Redevelopment Authority's ability to provide additional financing or matching funds.

Work With Allegheny County and RIDC on the Land Remaining From the Development of the RIDC McKeesport Flyover

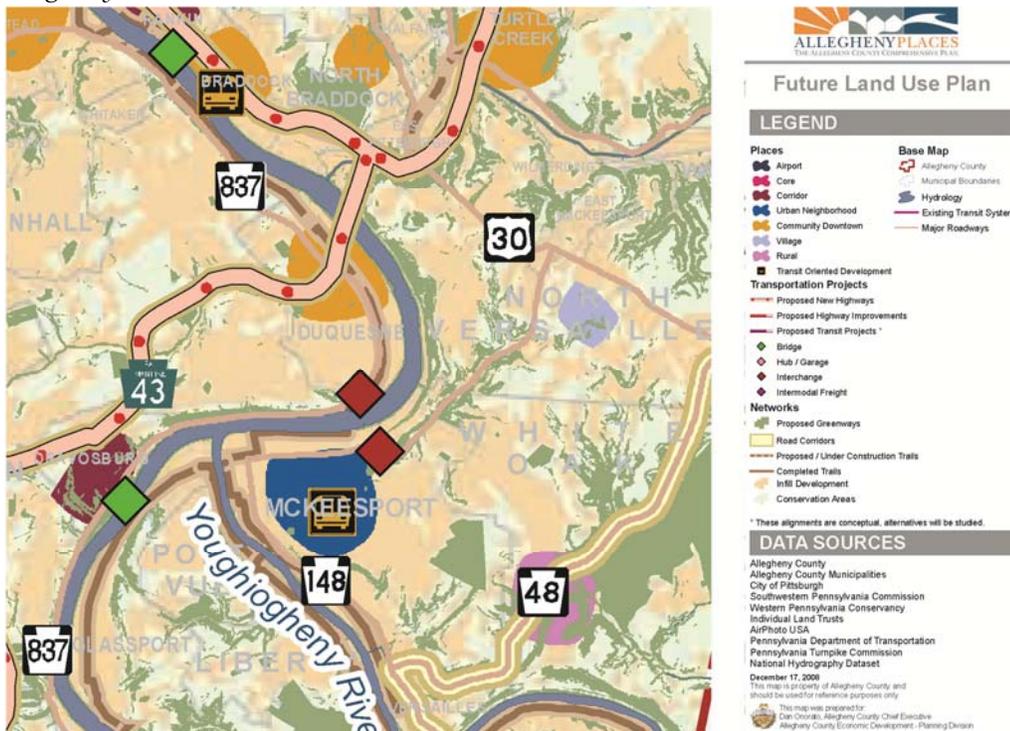
The process of acquiring land for the creation of the RIDC flyover has resulted in a remaining parcel near the Eat 'n Park restaurant on Lysle Boulevard. There is an opportunity for the development of a trailhead or trail facility/welcome center in McKeesport. If the community determines that a trail facility is not desired, working with the county and RIDC would help to make the land available for development as soon as possible.

Consistency with Allegheny County

Allegheny County's comprehensive plan, *AlleghenyPlaces*, identifies a vision for the entire county. The county comprehensive plan establishes broad goals and criteria for land use and growth management for municipalities to use in preparing their own comprehensive plans and land use regulations.

Duquesne and McKeesport's plan is consistent with *AlleghenyPlaces*. This is important because there is a greater likelihood that goals will be achieved when the County and municipalities work cooperatively on them. Another benefit is that state agencies are directed to consider and rely on comprehensive plans when evaluating grants and permit applications for facilities and infrastructure.

AlleghenyPlaces Future Land Use Plan



Urban Neighborhoods are located within the cities of Pittsburgh and McKeesport. They build on existing business districts and mixed-used areas in older, densely developed neighborhoods, and include more regionally-oriented services with a mix of housing types in a walkable setting. Revitalization of Urban Neighborhood Places will include infill development, rehabilitation of existing buildings and improved transit connections, and will take advantage of nearby cultural and recreational amenities.

Community Downtowns are similar in character to Urban Neighborhoods, but are less densely developed and include other municipalities. Most, but not all, Community Downtowns build on the existing business districts and downtowns in older communities. They will be Places where additional business development can occur in a mixed-use setting that includes residential, office, retail, and other

compatible uses. A number of the Community Downtowns include business districts targeted by Allegheny Together, including Oakmont, Swissvale, Castle Shannon, McKees Rocks, Wexford and Coraopolis. Allegheny Together is a new Allegheny County Economic Development program that assists in the revitalization of the County's "Main Streets".

Transit-oriented development, or TOD, is a mix of relatively dense residential, office and retail uses at transit stations or transit stops, to maximize pedestrian access to transit. TOD is an overlay on selected Places that are located along the existing 'T' line and busways, and on proposed new transit lines. TOD Places will incorporate both infill development, and substantial new development on large parcels when available. TOD Places will create opportunities for people to live, learn, work, invest and play in the same Place. TOD Places will also enable people to connect to other Places in the County via transit. Examples of TOD Places include Mt. Lebanon, Wilkinsburg, Oakland, the North Shore and Carnegie. TOD Places are a key element of the County's Equity and Diversity plan. Many people do not have cars; and many others, such as the disabled, elderly, and young, depend on walking and transit. TOD Places will support transit use and make it more accessible to more people.

Infill areas will provide opportunities for new development and redevelopment on properties that are vacant, abandoned, or under-used. Infill development can occur on a single lot or on groups of lots. Infill development areas are located throughout the County, although they tend to be the most concentrated in older communities. When blighted and vacant buildings are demolished in older communities, the lots can be reclaimed and infill development used to bring new housing, businesses and recreation into the community.

Consistency with Neighboring Municipalities

Duquesne and McKeesport share common borders with the following communities:

- Dravosburg Borough
- Glassport Borough
- Port Vue Borough
- Liberty Borough
- Lincoln Borough
- Versailles Borough
- Elizabeth Township
- White Oak Borough
- North Versailles Township
- North Braddock Borough

In 2003, Twin Rivers Council of Governments produced a comprehensive plan serving the communities of Elizabeth Township, Glassport Borough, Liberty Borough, Lincoln Borough, Port Vue Borough, Versailles Borough, and White Oak Borough (among others).

North Versailles and North Braddock have also completed separate multi-municipal plans (North Versailles Township, East McKeesport Borough and Wall Borough; East Pittsburgh Borough and North Braddock Borough).

Dravosburg Borough is part of the Steel Valley Comprehensive Development Plan (along with Braddock Hills Borough, Clairton City, Duquesne City, Homestead Borough, Munhall Borough, West Elizabeth Borough, West Homestead Borough and Whitaker Borough).

This joint comprehensive plan is consistent with the recommendations of the relevant plans of the neighboring municipalities and the future land use, and proposed development patterns are consistent with the existing land use in those communities.

Intergovernmental Cooperative Agreements

The PA Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) authorizes the use of intergovernmental cooperative agreements to implement multi-municipal plans. The MPC outlines required components of an intergovernmental cooperative agreement, which can be found in the Appendix.

Both Duquesne and McKeesport must carefully consider intergovernmental cooperation and seek advice of a solicitor or other qualified consultants when deciding whether the city will benefit. Questions for consideration include the following:

- What does the municipality hope to gain?
- Is intergovernmental cooperation necessary or can the results be achieved through independent municipal action?
- Is the benefit the same for all participants or skewed?
- Is there a loss of local control?
- Will a municipality's financial obligations and legal liabilities be impacted?
- How long is the commitment?
- What is the procedure for withdrawal or amendment?
- What are some of the anticipated problems?

The MPC does describe how the county can “facilitate convening representatives of municipalities and others with an interest in the plan...The county may also provide or contract with others to provide technical assistance, mediation or dispute resolution services in order to assist the parties in negotiating such agreements. “

- Pros
 - Savings through intergovernmental cooperation
 - Combining resources
 - Eliminating duplication
 - Increasing efficiency in services
- Cons
 - Disputes and dispute resolution
 - Potential litigation and legal liability
 - Need for legislative action related to relevant municipal ordinances
 - Requires agreement with the goals of the intergovernmental body
 - Funding of intergovernmental bodies and actions



Action and Implementation Plan

*The secret of getting ahead is getting started.
The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.*

Mark Twain

This action plan identifies the plan's major elements, goals and key objectives. Expanded discussion of these and other actions can be found in the respective chapters.

The city administration should take the lead in all plan implementation and actions. Because each city administration has full time staff, those staff members will form an internal committee tasked with oversight of plan implementation. (Further, in the case of the City of McKeesport, the city charter places the primary responsibility on the city administration and Mayor's office to advance or implement policy initiatives.)

This committee should act as a champion for plan implementation and coordination. The plan's goals, objectives and actions should be reviewed annually to identify ongoing priorities and evaluate new opportunities as they arise--breathing life and flexibility into the plan. As the plan moves forward, this action plan will evolve as actions are completed, priorities change and opportunities become available. The annual plan review should outline an updated action plan every year.

An evolving cast of key stakeholders and partners will be called upon as different action items are undertaken. For example, ACTION Housing will be an important partner for many of the housing-related actions while the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will be a key stakeholder for open space and recreation improvements.

A first and important key step will be to undertake comprehensive updates to each city's Zoning Ordinance and SALDO.

Partners and Champions

This plan contains a variety of ways for everyone to get involved—whether as a resident steward, an activist, a champion, a teacher, a community leader or a neighborhood group. The future of Duquesne and McKeesport depend on the actions of people.

This document is a written explanation of the ideas that emerged during the planning process and their technical underpinnings. It is up to residents, along with regional leaders, to breathe life into these words. Many of the recommendations address regional-scale policies but this discussion of large-scale ideas and administrative logistics in the public realm is not enough to ensure a sustainable future for the region. Individuals, households and local communities should embody and interpret the vision and goals of the plan into their actions.

Each city holds the power to modify local practices and make choices. Together, individuals can create significant economic, social and environmental outcomes. Successful implementation will require significant local expertise and individual engagement. The strategies identified in the plan will inevitably be more complex than the simple principles suggest and will require an infinite and diverse number of individual champions, improvisations and local interpretations that guide the best ideas forward with pragmatism, cleverness and maximum impact.

*A vision without a
task is but a
dream, a task
without a vision is
drudgery, a vision
and a task is the
hope of the world.*

*From a church in
Sussex, England,
ca 1730*

Ordinance Updates

The Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Ordinance are some of the key tools for carrying out the recommendations set forth by the Comprehensive Plan. They are specific, detailed pieces of legislation designed to carry out the general proposals stated in the Comprehensive Plan and used to coordinate and guide development, by providing standards for that development based on specific detailed regulations, which promote quality land uses.

Plans get you into things but you've got to work your way out.

Will Rogers

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance:

- sets minimum standards for the layout or design of developments;
- promotes coordinated development;
- guides the type and locations of streets and other public facilities;
- insures the installation of necessary improvements;
- minimizes existing or foreseen problems; and
- manages stormwater runoff and erosion.

Zoning Ordinance:

- uses of land, water courses and other bodies of water;
- size, height, bulk and location of structures;
- areas and dimensions of land to be occupied or to be unoccupied by uses and structures;
- density of population and intensity of use; and
- protection of natural resources and agricultural land.

Planned Residential Development:

Planned residential development (PRD) provisions combine elements of zoning and subdivision and land development regulation. Since passage of Act 170, PRD provisions and standards are to be contained in and part of the zoning ordinance. They bring together and mix residential, nonresidential development, open space, groundwater recharge and recreational uses in the same development. PRD provisions are special and unique. PRD provisions encourage a variety of designs and types of housing arranged in an efficient manner on the land thereby conserving land to use as common open space and for recreational purposes, and typically reduce the amount of street and utility infrastructure needed to serve the development. In contrast, conventional subdivisions are inherently more costly because extra linear feet of expensive streets, curbs, sidewalks and utility lines are needed to serve equal numbers of dwelling units, which usually results in higher housing prices.

Since design is flexible, PRDs can have grid systems of streets, if desired, instead of the more common curvilinear streets. In some situations, rectilinear streets may be more appropriate, for instance, as extensions to an existing village. A properly designed PRD can benefit both the developer and the municipality. The developer may benefit by having to install fewer linear feet of roads and utility lines, while the municipality benefits by centralization of service areas and less maintenance. In addition, the developer is permitted greater design flexibility and density can often be increased in some areas. Sensitive lands that should not be developed can be left untouched, e.g., wetlands, floodplains, or steeply sloped areas. It is conceivable that the municipality or homeowners association may gain title to some or all of the common open space, adding further to the community benefit from utilizing PRD provisions.

To summarize, planned residential development is a concept with several advantages over typical or conventional development practices. PRD regulations provide for flexibility in site and lot design. For that reason, PRD enhances the opportunities for quality residential and nonresidential development while at the same time reducing the cost of installing improvements. However, considerable time and effort must be devoted to both its development and to its ultimate administration. Finally, special processing procedures are mandated by the MPC, including a public hearing requirement to by-pass the normal subdivision and land development procedures and conventional zoning regulations. PRD provisions allow the community to combine the municipal SLD and zoning approval processes.

Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)

Many municipalities have searched high and low for a way to reintroduce small town character and a sense of community to their respective areas. For some, the concept of traditional neighborhood development (TND) now provides a solution through zoning. The TND attempts to recapture the village and town square flavor of a pedestrian oriented setting. By utilizing traffic calming design measures such as narrow streets, frequent intersections and on-street parking in combination with a mixed array and proximity to each other of housing, businesses and services, the TND also integrates different segments of the population otherwise separated by age or income.

Sidewalks, parks and ample open space along with the opportunity for viable public transportation are essential elements to the success of the TND. This form of development can occur either as an extension of existing areas, as a form of urban infill, or as an independent entity. As with many of these alternative approaches to zoning, modifications to otherwise strict density and dimensional requirements may be necessary. Large sites are usually required along with some level of coordination with adjacent developments. Overall, the positive impacts of a TND can be felt through an increase in safety and a resulting enhancement in community camaraderie.

Implementation Action Plan

Actions are organized into broad categories. Goals related to each action are identified. While a City department, board or leadership will take the lead in implementing each recommendation, there are others in the City and region who can contribute to the completion of the task or who will need to support the completion of the task. Additionally, outside agencies, neighboring municipalities, county and state governmental organizations as well as others could partner with the Cities in the completion of a number of tasks. Key partners for implementation are listed for reference as actions move forward. Achieving any of the objectives depends on the support of the community's residents, business owners, staff, appointed boards and commissions, and, of course, the elected officials.

General priority categories are identified for each action. The Cities can use this categorization as a basis for annual review and ongoing prioritization. Of course, actions can be initiated at any time and timeframes can be modified depending on the availability of personnel and resources.

- High priority (H) actions could be achieved within one to two years
- Medium priority (M) actions could be completed within two to four years
- Low priority (L) actions could be completed within four to eight years or longer
- Continuing priority (C) objectives vary from the continuation of ongoing activities to longer-term recurring actions

Ballpark costs identify a ballpark cost that can be used to aid in implementation and prioritization.

- \$ \$0 to \$10,000 (organizing events, staff sessions to prioritize recommendations, etc.)
- \$\$ \$10,001 to \$40,000 (community outreach, etc.)
- \$\$\$ \$40,001 to \$100,000 (rewriting ordinances, etc.- may require consultants)
- \$\$\$\$ \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 (construction projects, property acquisition, app development, etc.)
- \$\$\$\$\$ \$1,000,000+ (construction projects, property acquisition, development, etc.)

Narrative text outlining specific steps with detailed information related to partners and other considerations can be found in the Plan Elements chapter. The appropriate page number is listed for reference next to each action.

Interrelationships

Interrelationships are key throughout the plan. Many actions and objectives support multiple goals. Interrelationships can be identified through the related goals listed for each action. Community development goals and objectives for Duquesne and McKeesport are outlined through the following goals.

1

A Plan for Land Use, Redevelopment and Economic Development

Goal: Facilitate private-sector growth with strategic actions to create catalytic change in community focus areas.

2

A Plan for Housing

Goal: Implement coordinated steps to stabilize and support neighborhoods, encourage reinvestment and promote a wide variety of equitable housing options.

3

A Plan for Transportation, Assets and Amenities

Goal: Leverage and enhance existing systems with targeted investments.

4

A Plan for Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy

Goal: Take a long-term and big-picture view on all city decisions.

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Land Use and Economic Development						
Concurrent Actions						
Key Initiative	Continue fostering relationships/creating partnerships with RIDC to enhance the marketing of available City Center of Duquesne and Industrial Center of McKeesport commercial/industrial sites.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with RIDC	1, 3, 4	OH	-\$\$\$\$	42, 96
	Promote City Center Duquesne and Industrial Center of McKeesport independently of RIDC's efforts to gain maximum exposure of available commercial/industrial site opportunities and financial incentives.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with RIDC	1, 3	OM	-\$\$\$\$	42, 96
	Facilitate and incentivize the expansion of existing businesses.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with the Redevelopment Authority, Allegheny County, Twin Rivers COG and others	1, 3	M	-\$\$\$\$\$	43, 97
	Investigate and reach out to prospective start-ups and growing businesses potentially seeking to locate in City Center Duquesne or Industrial Center of McKeesport.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with RIDC	1, 3, 4	OM	-\$-\$	45, 99
Joint Actions						
Key Initiative	Broaden the range of allowable uses designated in both city ordinances related to RIDC properties	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport with extensive coordination between the two cities and additional partnership with Allegheny County	1, 3	H	\$\$\$	152
Duquesne Actions						
	Step up efforts to strengthen Grant Avenue and Duquesne Plaza commercial space opportunities.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with the Redevelopment Authority, Allegheny County, Twin Rivers COG, property owners and others	1, 3, 4	OM	-\$-\$	45

	Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Create and promote a home improvement/contractor cluster along Second Avenue as a theme for downtown business district improvement.	Independent action by Duquesne in partnership with local and relocating businesses, property owners and others	1, 2, 3, 4	OH	\$-\$\$\$	46
McKeesport Actions					
Continue revitalization focus on the McKeesport Marina area and target area for commercial rehabilitation and trail-related retail growth.	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with local and relocating businesses, property owners and others	1, 3, 4	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	99
Take advantage of the community's heritage of hands-on skilled trades and potential synergies with Penn State's engineering professors and students to encourage entrepreneurial and learning opportunities.	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with Penn State Greater Allegheny, local organizations, residents and others	1, 2, 3, 4	OH	\$-\$\$\$	100
Work with Allegheny County and RIDC on the land remaining from the development of the RIDC McKeesport flyover	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership RIDC and Allegheny County	1, 3, 4	OH	\$-\$\$	155

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Housing						
	Concurrent Actions					
Key Initiative	Solidify and strengthen the market rate housing sector in stable neighborhoods to achieve increased potential home values and expand interest in owner-occupied housing	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport with extensive partnership and cooperation with the federal and state government, Allegheny County, local organizations (such as Action Housing and Habitat for Humanity) and city departments, boards, authorities and elected officials	2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	56, 111
	Ensure that maintenance levels are maintained in rental units		2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	56, 111
Key Initiative	Preserve existing homeownership in threshold neighborhoods		2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	58, 113
	Expand homeownership opportunities in threshold neighborhoods		2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	62, 117
	Address the rental market in threshold neighborhoods		2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	66, 122
	Take a comprehensive approach to mitigating vacancy in buildings and land in threshold neighborhoods		2, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	70, 126
	Establish a formal, written demolition strategy for use in challenged neighborhoods.		2, 3	M	\$	71, 128

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Government, Outreach, Services, Infrastructure and Energy						
Concurrent Actions						
Key Initiative	Enhance general marketing efforts to show Duquesne and McKeesport in an improved light.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with staff, interns, volunteers and possibly outside organizations	3, 1, 2, 4	OH	\$-\$\$\$	75, 132
	Find new and nontraditional marketing methods to showcase the cites and recruit niche businesses and new residents		3, 1, 2, 4	OM	\$-\$\$\$	76, 133
Key Initiative	Implement ordinance updates to address land use issues identified in the other plan elements	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport with extensive coordination between the two cities and additional partnership with Allegheny County	3, 1, 2	OM	\$\$\$	77, 134
	Work with major employers and job training programs to guide residents to local jobs	Independent or joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with local and regional employers and organizations	3, 1, 2	OM	\$-\$\$	76, 134
	Prepare to make strategic investments in infrastructure and energy systems to support the city's long term vision.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with state organizations such as PennDOT	3, 1, 2, 4	OM	\$\$\$	78, 135

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
	Joint Actions					
Key Initiative	Enhance external communication and storytelling	Independent or joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with staff, interns, volunteers and possibly outside organizations	3, 1, 2	OM	-\$\$\$	153
Key Initiative	Explore and evaluate options for code enforcement	Joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with Twin Rivers COG	3, 1, 2	H	\$	153
	Work with Twin Rivers Council of Governments to utilize GIS Technology	Joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with Twin Rivers COG	3, 1, 2	H	\$	154
	Support RIDC's efforts to undertake capital improvements to existing river terminal facilities	Joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with RIDC and the Redevelopment Authority	3, 1, 2	H	\$	154
	Duquesne Actions					
	Protect infrastructure that contributes to the community's character	Independent by Duquesne in partnership with PennDOT and Allegheny County	3, 4	OM	-\$\$\$	77
	McKeesport Actions					
	Consider ways to expand the reach of the fire department.	Independent by Duquesne in partnership with PennDOT and Allegheny County	3, 1, 2, 4	OM	-\$\$\$	135
	Maintain positive relationships with UPMC McKeesport and Penn State to accomplish community goals and ensure business/organizational needs are being met.	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership PSUGA and UPMC McKeesport	3, 4	O	-\$-\$	134

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Transportation, Assets and Amenities						
Concurrent Actions						
	Exploit the City's position on the Great Allegheny Passage to enhance retail development opportunities.	Independent or joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with trail organizations, the Joint Trail Committee, businesses and organizations	4, 1, 3	OH	\$-\$	80, 138
Key Initiative	Leverage the Great Allegheny Passage to showcase the community and give people a reason to ride there from Pittsburgh or other destinations.		4, 1, 3	OH	\$-\$	82, 141
	Invest in gateways and primary corridors.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with neighboring communities, PennDOT and Allegheny County	4, 1, 3	OM	\$-\$\$\$\$	85, 146
	Reprioritize transportation system improvements based on development and land use changes to accommodate changing needs for capacity.	Independent action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with neighboring communities, PennDOT and Allegheny County	4, 1, 2, 3	OM	\$-\$\$\$\$	85, 146
	Continue to advocate for public transportation and keep in contact with Port Authority.	Independent or joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport in partnership with neighboring communities, regional and local organizations, Allegheny County, residents and businesses	4, 1, 2, 3	O	\$	87, 149

		Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
	Joint Actions					
Key Initiative	Create a Joint Trail Committee	Joint action by Duquesne and McKeesport	4, 1, 3	H	\$	153
	Duquesne Actions					
	Prepare a preliminary plan for a flyover to connect the Great Allegheny Passage and Grant Avenue. Regularly seek opportunities and partners for construction of the flyover.	Independent action by Duquesne in partnership with PennDOT, Allegheny County, RIDC and others	4, 1, 3	OL	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	85
	Make stronger connections to the GAP on the existing community road network: crosswalks are key, signage, attractive, safe places to park bikes. Pursue physical business district streetscape improvements on Grant and Second Avenues.	Independent action by Duquesne in partnership with PennDOT, Allegheny County, RIDC and others	4, 1, 3	OL	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	86
	McKeesport Actions					
	Consider ways to connect more residents to Renzie Park without cars; continue to invest in Renzie Park	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with Pennsylvania, Allegheny County, local organizations, business and residents	4, 1, 3	OH-L	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	142
	Find opportunities to partner with UPMC and/or Penn State University to develop a community wellness program that could focus on both programs and physical infrastructure projects.	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with Allegheny County, PSUGA, UPMC and others	4, 1, 3	OH-L	\$-\$	142
	Focus on preserving the remaining historic structures and reach out to local preservation organizations to help with promotion, preservation and programming.	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with Allegheny County, local organizations and others	4, 1, 3	OH	\$-\$\$\$\$\$	143

	Key Partners	Relevant Goals	Priority Level	Cost	Expanded Text
Make stronger connections to the GAP on the existing community road network: crosswalks are key, signage, attractive, safe places to park bikes. Pursue physical business district streetscape improvements on 5th Avenue, including returning street to two-way.	Independent action by Duquesne in partnership with PennDOT, Allegheny County, and others	4, 1, 3	OL	-\$\$\$\$\$	146
Rethink the river as the front door to the city	Independent action by McKeesport in partnership with Pennsylvania, Allegheny County, local organizations, business and residents	4, 1, 2, 3	OH-L	-\$\$\$\$\$	143



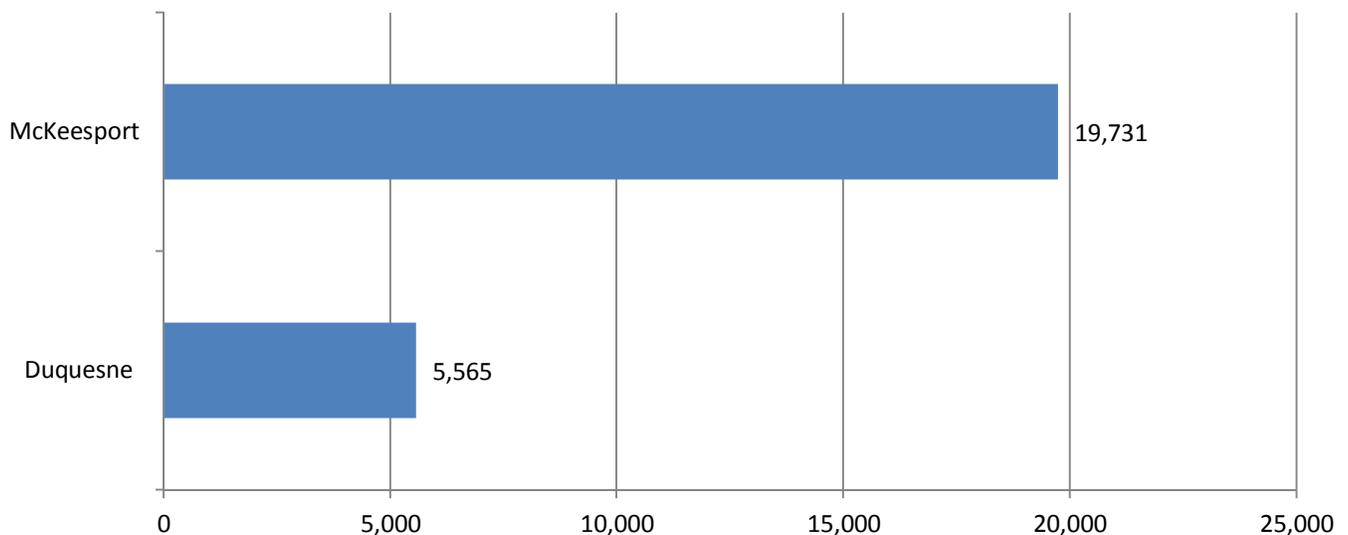
Background Studies and Trends

Background information provides enhanced explanation and data related to many of the issues and opportunities facing Duquesne and McKeesport as well as the recommendations outlined in this plan

To make knowledge productive, we will have to learn to see both forest and tree. We will have to learn to connect.

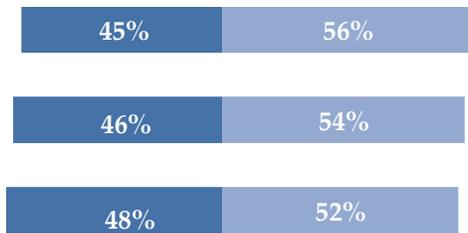
Peter F. Drucker

Total Population, 2010



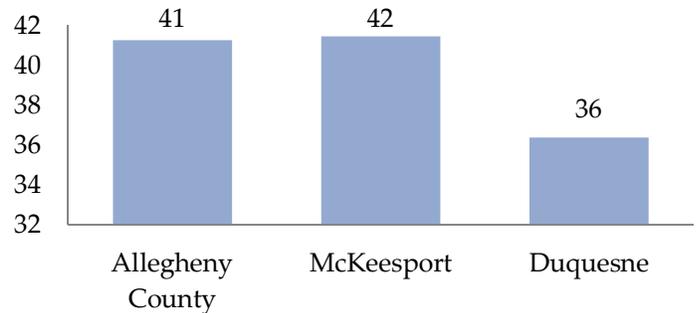
Population

Population by Sex, 2010



■ % Male Population ■ % Female Population

Median Age, 2010



■ Median Age in Years

While McKeesport’s median age is slightly higher than the median age in Allegheny County, Duquesne’s median age is significantly lower. Duquesne also has a higher proportion of females than McKeesport or the county. Duquesne, McKeesport and the county have a similar proportion of residents over age 65 but Duquesne has a higher proportion of residents under age 18.

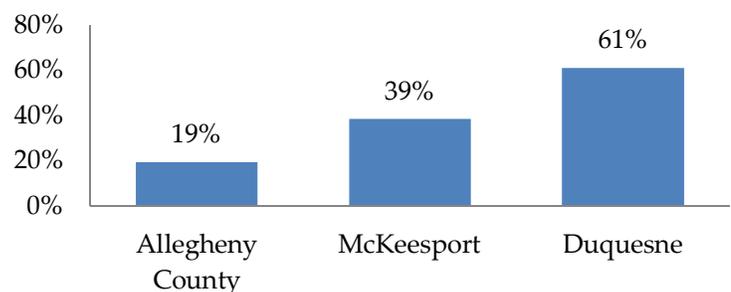
Age of Population, 2010



■ % Population Under Age 18 ■ % Population Age 18-65 ■ % Population Age 65+

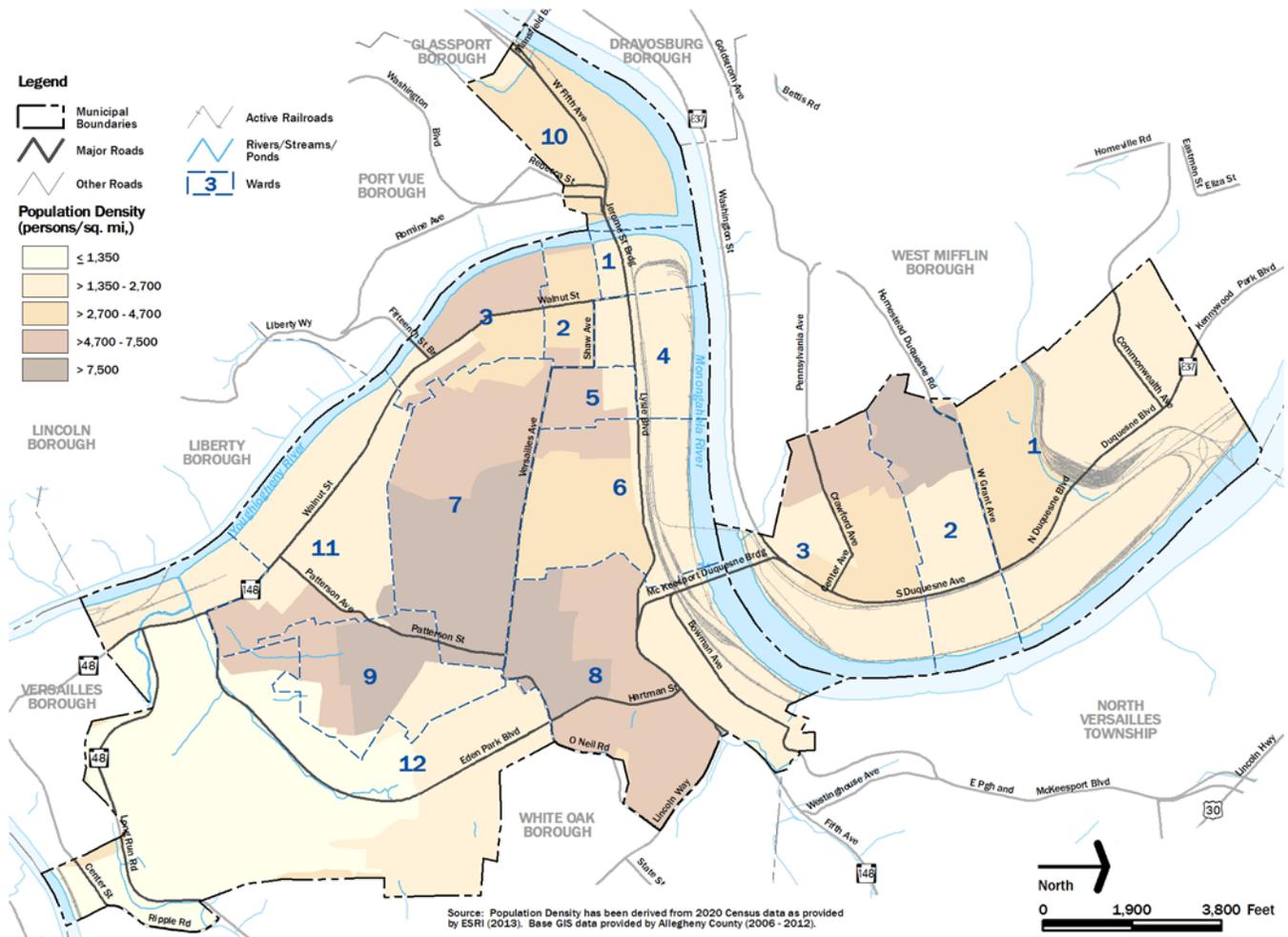
Duquesne and McKeesport also have higher minority populations than Allegheny County.

Percent Minority Population, 2010



■ % Minority Population

Population Density Map



Duquesne and McKeesport both have a population density of over 3,000 people per square mile while the county has a population density of just over 1,600 people per square mile. While higher density can be a positive characteristic for some communities, in McKeesport, in particular, vacancy and blight is concentrated in areas of higher population density.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 9a Forecast is projecting continued decline in McKeesport’s population through 2025 with modest growth beginning in the 2030-2035 time period; Duquesne’s population is projected to continue to decline through 2040.

Housing

The McKeesport Housing Authority (MHA) owns and manages eight properties with over 1,000 federally assisted units consisting of senior living communities, handicapped accessible housing and neighborhood sites consisting of town homes and single family homes. Admission into these housing units is not limited to income. Applicants may choose between rental rates based on income or flat rental rates. Similar issues in Duquesne are addressed through the Allegheny County Housing Authority.

Vacant and Blighted Lands Map

Source: Blighted Property and Vacant Land data provided by the Steel Valley COG (2014). Population Density has been derived from 2020 Census data as provided by ESRI (2013). Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).

Legend

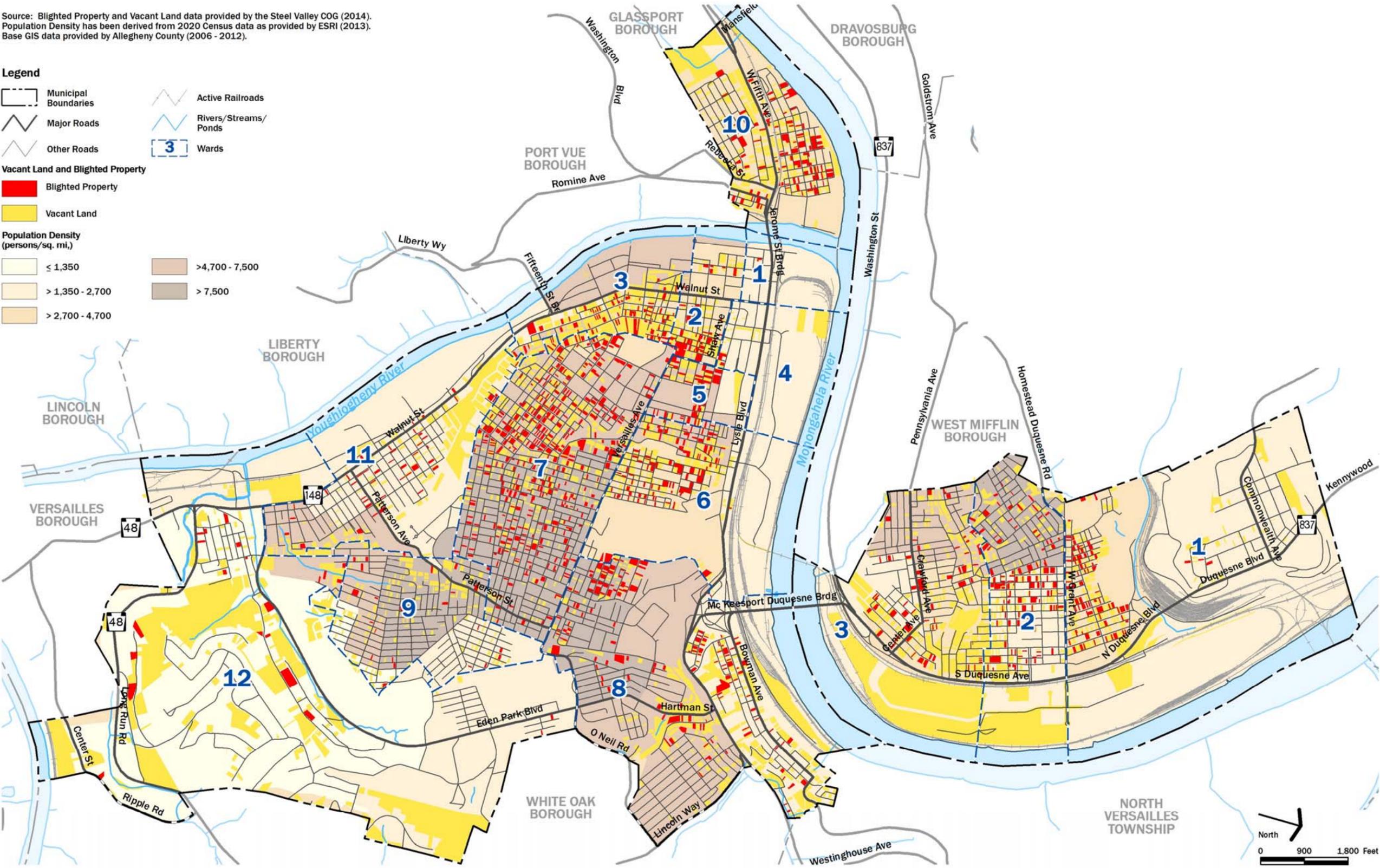
- Municipal Boundaries
- Major Roads
- Other Roads
- Active Railroads
- Rivers/Streams/Ponds
- Wards

Vacant Land and Blighted Property

- Blighted Property
- Vacant Land

Population Density (persons/sq. mi.)

- ≤ 1,350
- > 1,350 - 2,700
- > 2,700 - 4,700
- > 4,700 - 7,500
- > 7,500

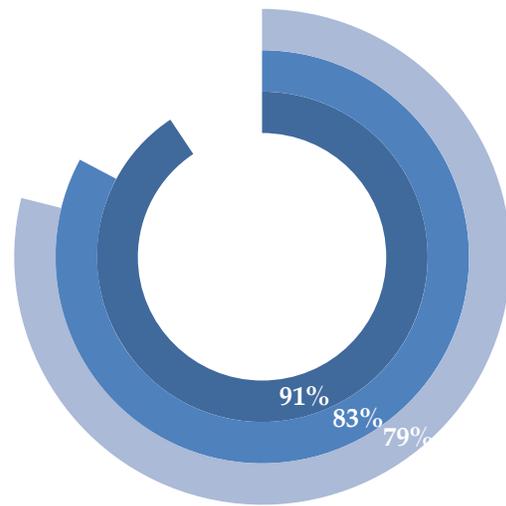


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Comparison of % of Occupied Housing Units, 2010

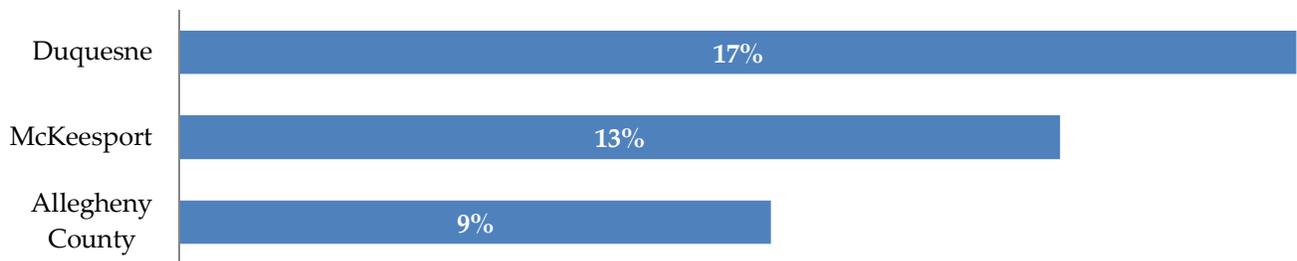
Vacancy rates are higher in Duquesne and McKeesport than in Allegheny County with 21% of Duquesne’s housing units and 17% of McKeesport’s housing units vacant in 2010.

In terms of residents, the percentage of the population who resided in the same house during the previous year is similar between Duquesne, McKeesport and the county (82% in Duquesne, 84% in McKeesport and 87% in Allegheny County). Further, about 60% of households the primary resident moved in before 2004 (66% in the overall county, 64% in McKeesport and 59% in Duquesne). However, throughout Allegheny County, the percentage of residents who moved within the county to a new home during the previous year is 9%, while that percentage is 13% in McKeesport and 17% in Duquesne.

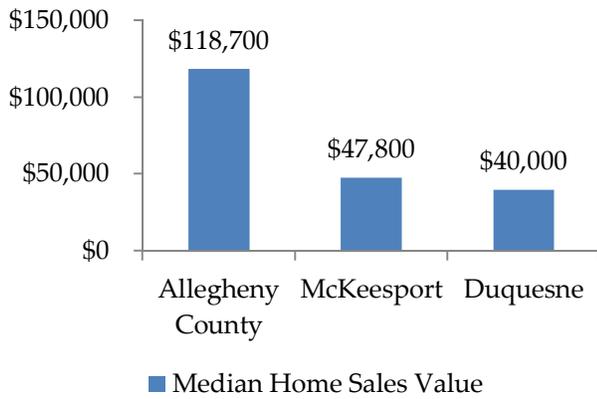


■ Allegheny County ■ McKeesport ■ Duquesne

Percentage of Population Age 1+ Who Moved Within County the Previous Year, 2010

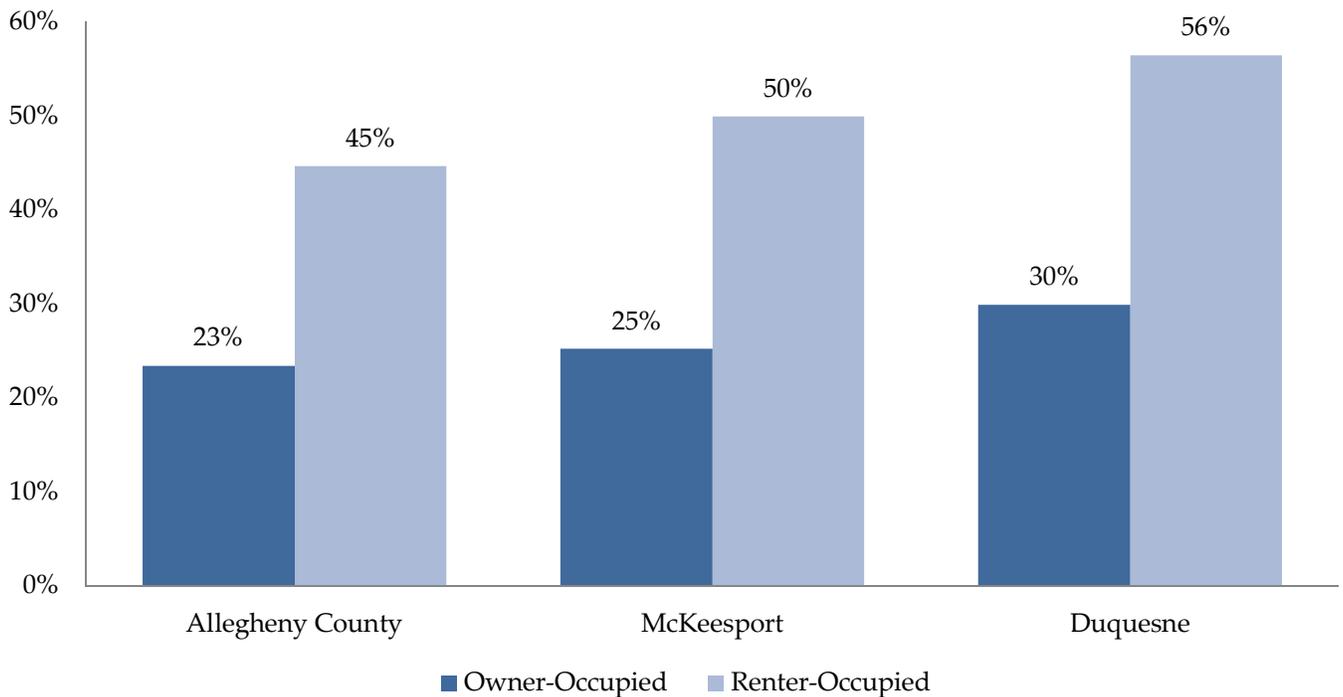


Median Home Sales Value, 2010



Compared to Allegheny County, homes are very affordable in Duquesne and McKeesport. However, due to incomes that are relatively low, there are still higher proportion of residents who are spending more than 30% of their income on selected housing costs (primarily rent and mortgage payments).

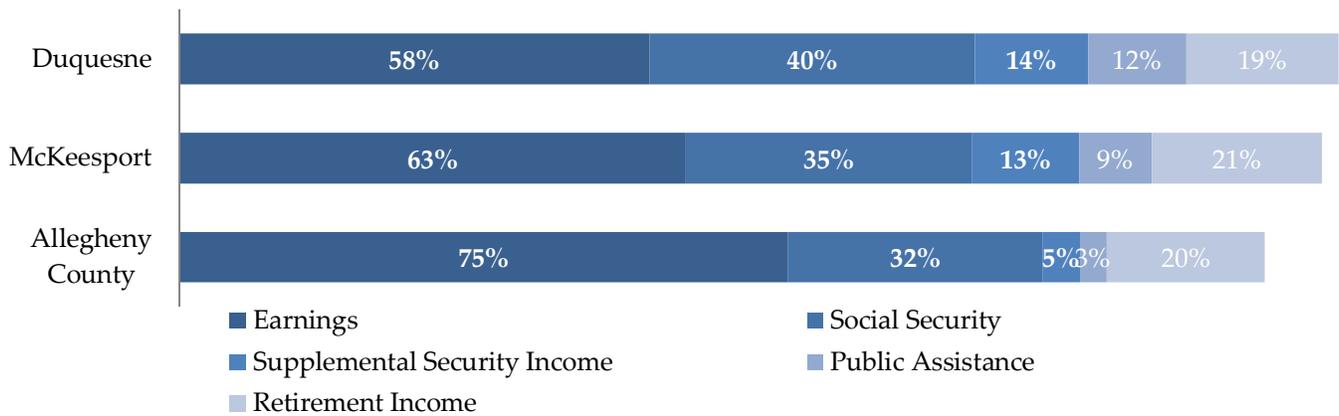
Percentage of Housing Units Where Selected Housing Costs Are 30% or More of Household Income, 2010



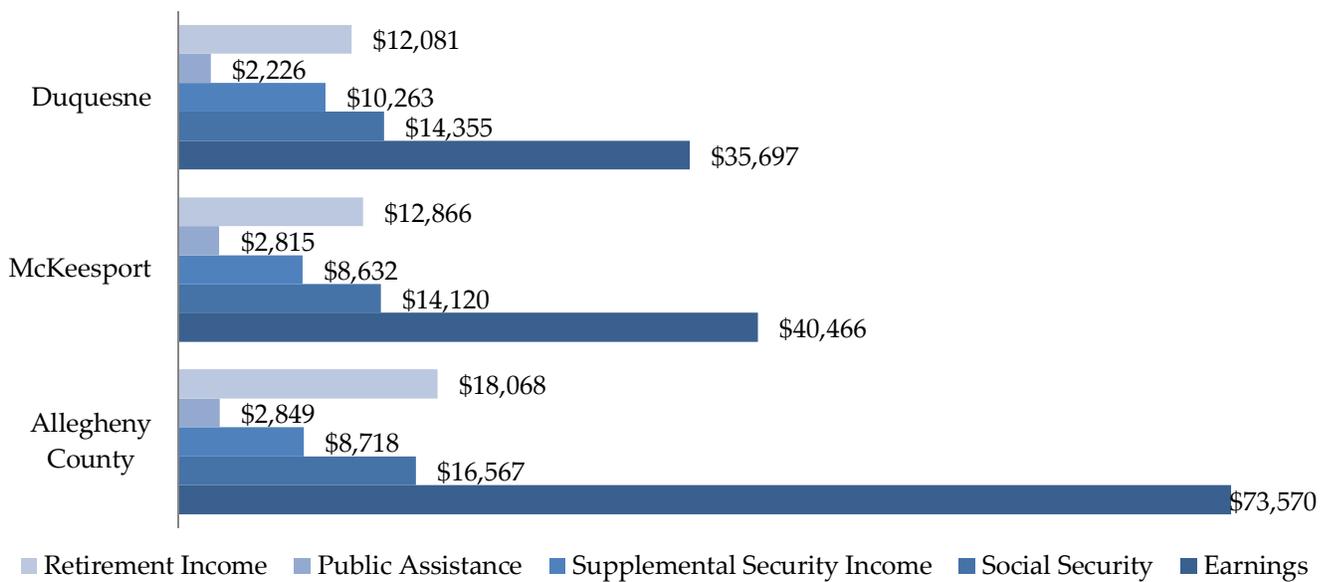
Economic and Education Characteristics

Both Duquesne and McKeesport have a lower proportion of their population with earnings (wages from jobs or earnings from businesses) than the county does. The percentage of the population with retirement income is essentially equal—and corresponds with the percentage of overall population over the age of 65. Both cities have a higher percentage of their population with social security, supplemental security and public assistance income. Average income from earnings and retirement income is lower in both Duquesne and McKeesport than the county. Median family income is lower in both cities (\$28,000 in Duquesne and \$37,000 in McKeesport) than the county (\$67,000)

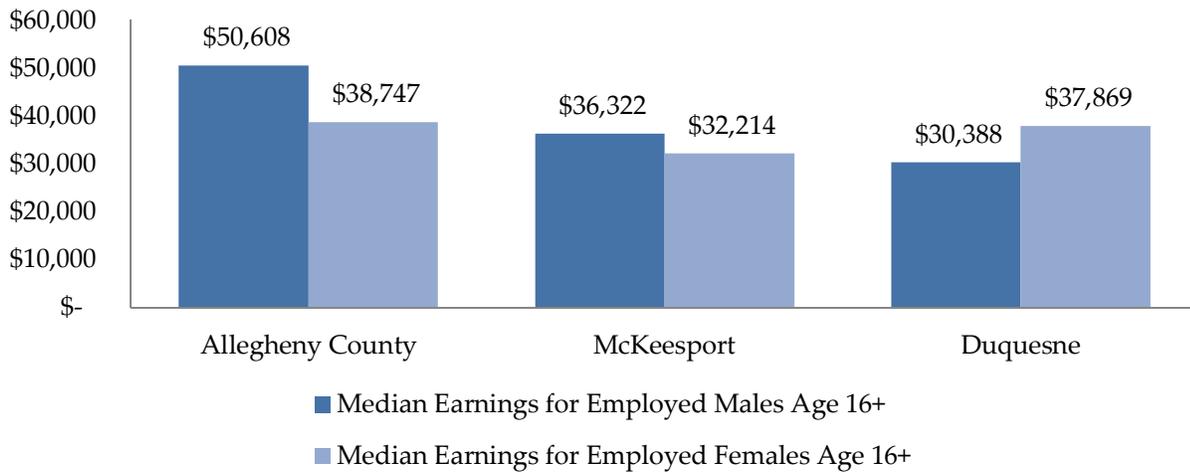
Percentage of Population with Income Type, 2010



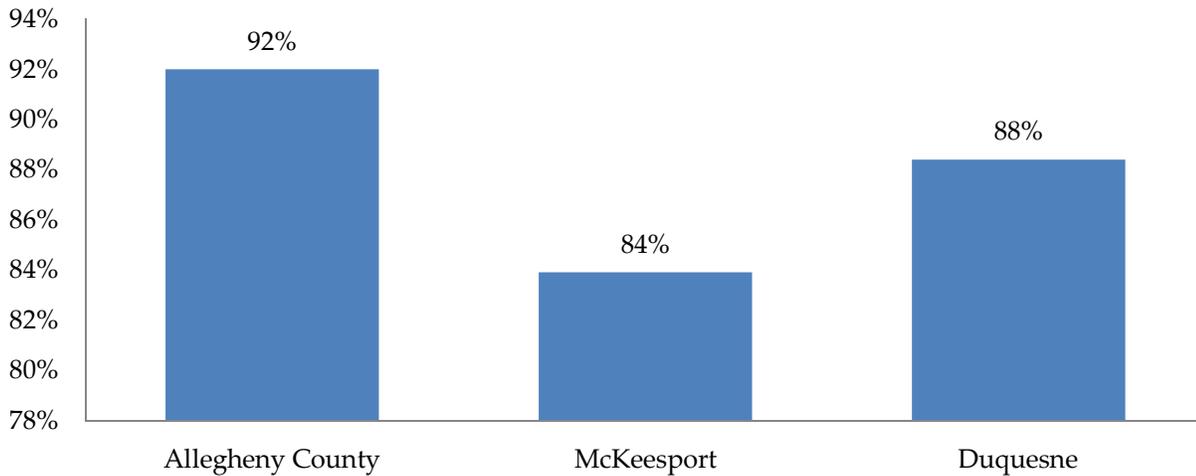
Average Income per Household by Income Type, 2010



Median Earnings for Employed Residents by Sex, 2010



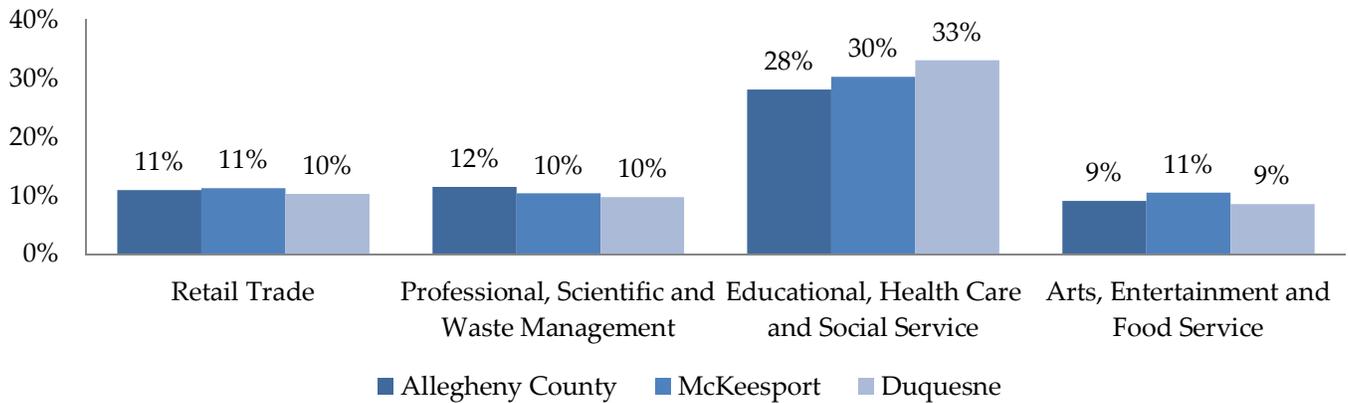
Percentage of Residents Who are High School Graduates or Higher, 2010



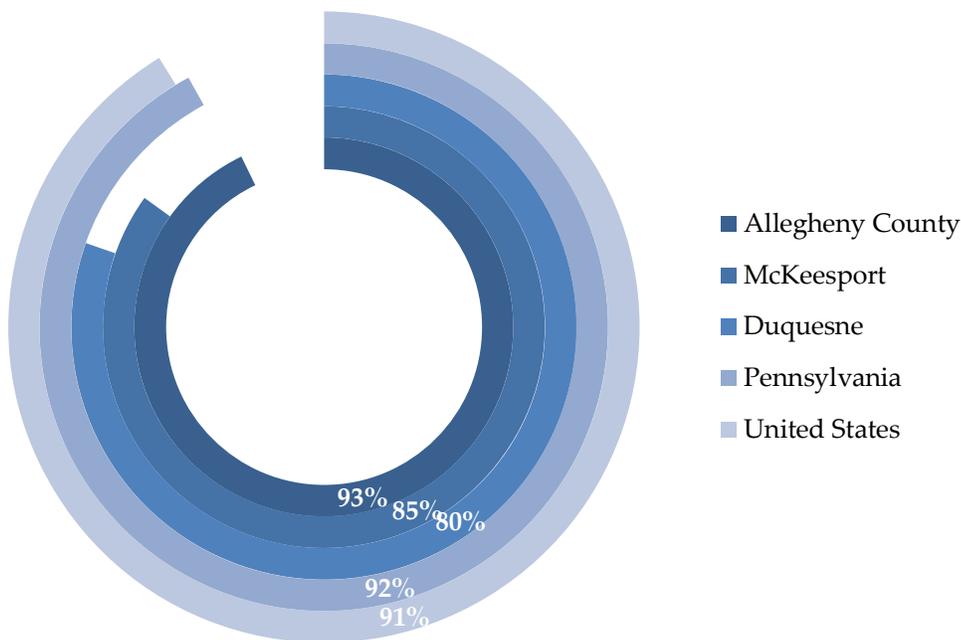
Employment and Commuting Characteristics

Both Duquesne and McKeesport residents are employed in industries that correspond to the trends in the overall county. Unemployment rates are higher in Duquesne and McKeesport than they are in the overall county, state and country

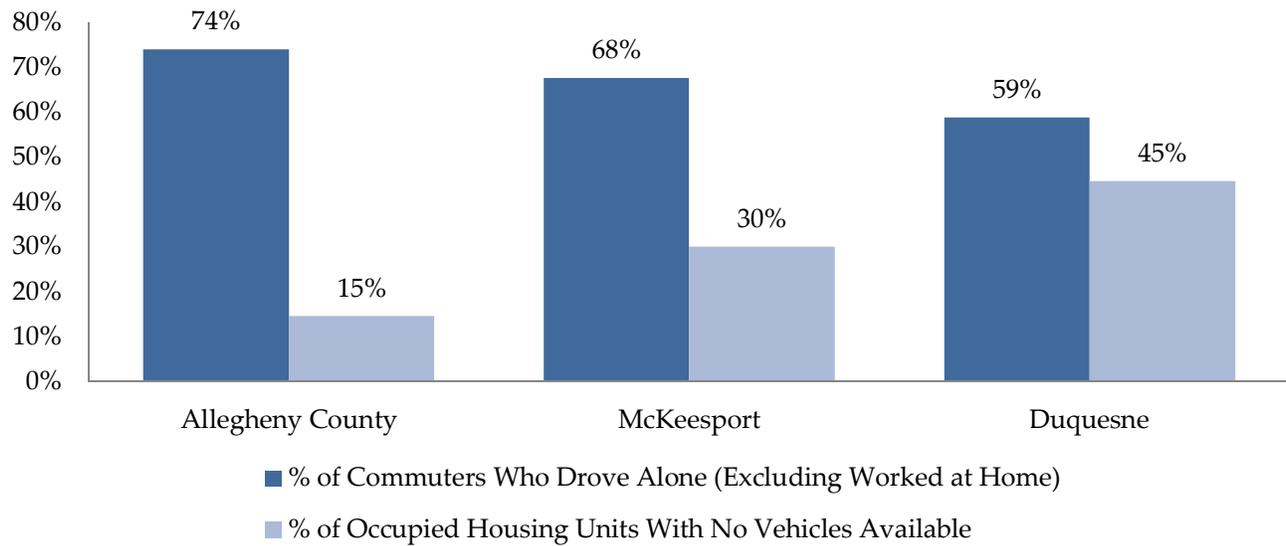
Selected Key Industry of Employment, 2010



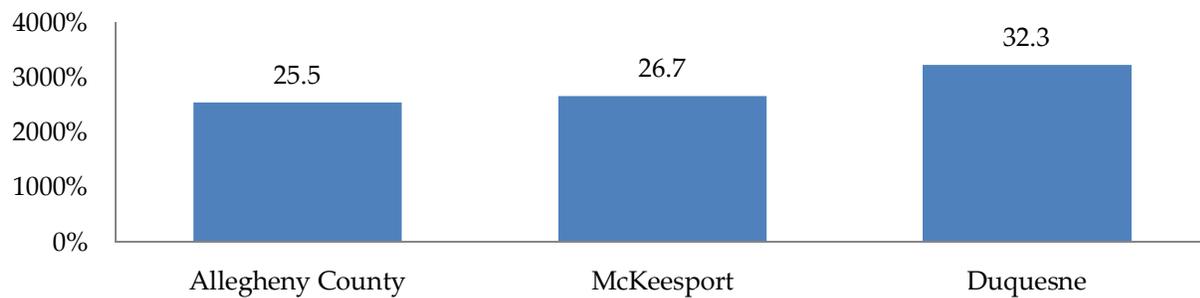
Employment Rates, 2010



Commuting Characteristics and Vehicle Availability, 2010



Average Travel Time to Work in Minutes (Excluding Worked at Home), 2010

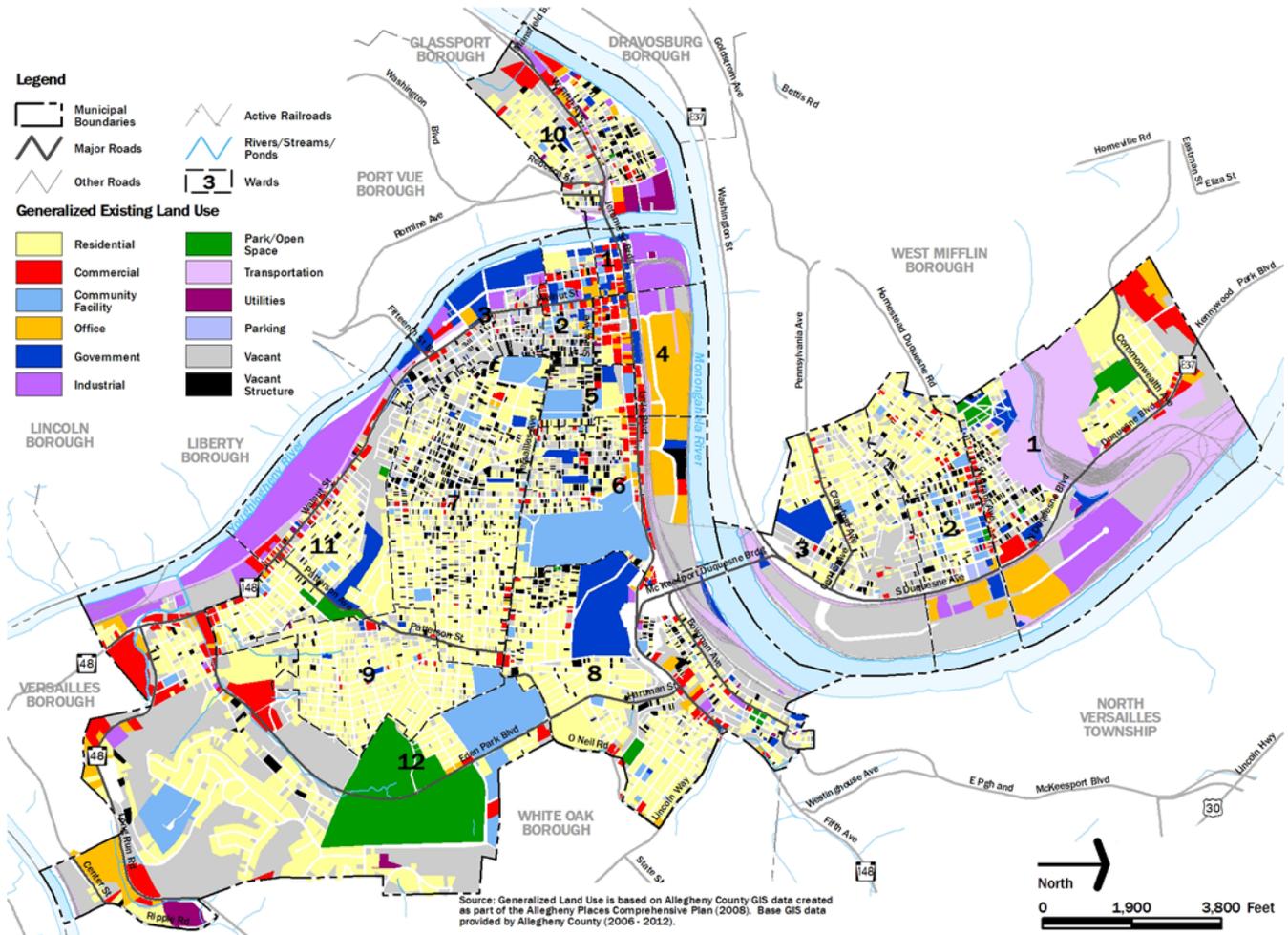


Duquesne has the highest percentage of occupied housing units with no vehicles available and the consequently the lowest proportion of commuters who drive alone to work. Duquesne residents also have longer average travel times than McKeesport or the county.

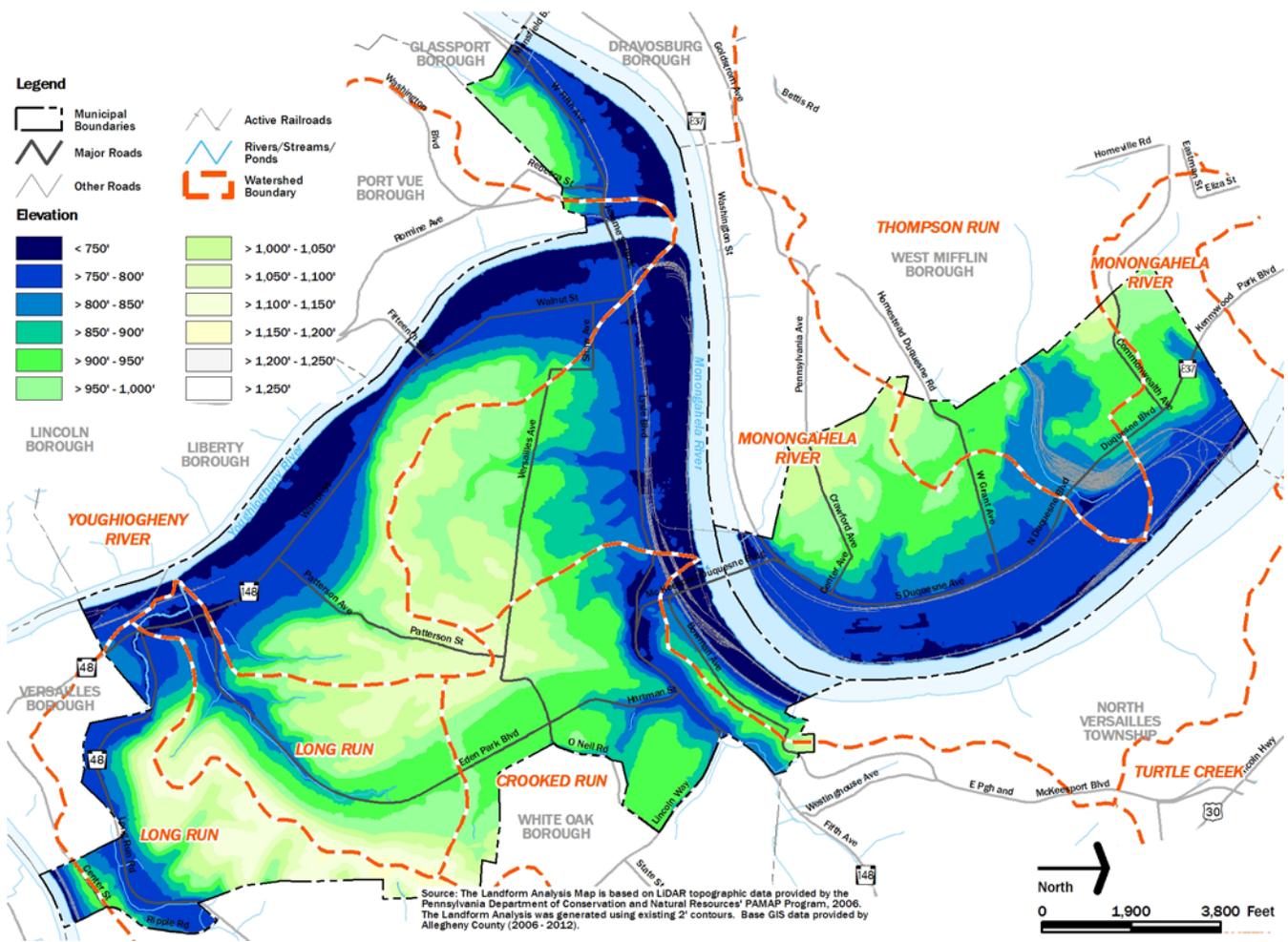
Physical and Land Use Characteristics

Both Duquesne and McKeesport are characterized by a mix of land uses with heavy concentrations of industrial activity near the riverfront, larger scale commercial uses along major boulevards and smaller scale commercial land uses in the historic downtown areas (Grant Avenue in Duquesne and 5th Avenue in McKeesport).

Generalized Existing Land Use Map



Landform and Watershed Map



Both cities are characterized by sloping terrain towards lower areas near the riverfront areas. The topography and geography define several watersheds in each city where water ultimately flows to the Monongahela River.

Civic Amenities and Natural Features

Ballfields are popular in Duquesne. The Amateur Athletic Union rents fields. Frisbee football and tee-ball also use the fields. McKeesport has a number of smaller green spaces but Renziehausen Park is the primary focus of the community and the largest space. It has extensive facilities and is the recipient of funding from the Allegheny County Regional Asset District.

AlleghenyPlaces, Allegheny County's Comprehensive Plan, calls out Renziehausen Park as a Special Use Park. Special Use Parks are considered to be destination parks because they have a unique feature or attraction. . Renziehausen Park in the City of McKeesport contains the Arboretum Rose Garden, the second largest rose garden in Pennsylvania (the garden at Hershey being the largest). There are currently more than 1,200 varieties of roses grown in the 3.5 acre park.

The Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) is a 152-mile bicycle and walking trail connecting Cumberland, Maryland with Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In Cumberland, the trail links with the C & O Canal Towpath, creating a continuous trail from Pittsburgh to Washington, DC. The GAP is designated as a National Recreation Trail and is a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. The retrofitting of the Riverton Bridge, connecting McKeesport to Duquesne, was recently completed and is part of the GAP. The Riverton Bridge was donated to the County by the US Steel Corporation.

Great Allegheny Passage Trail Map

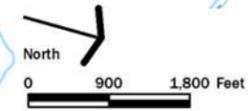
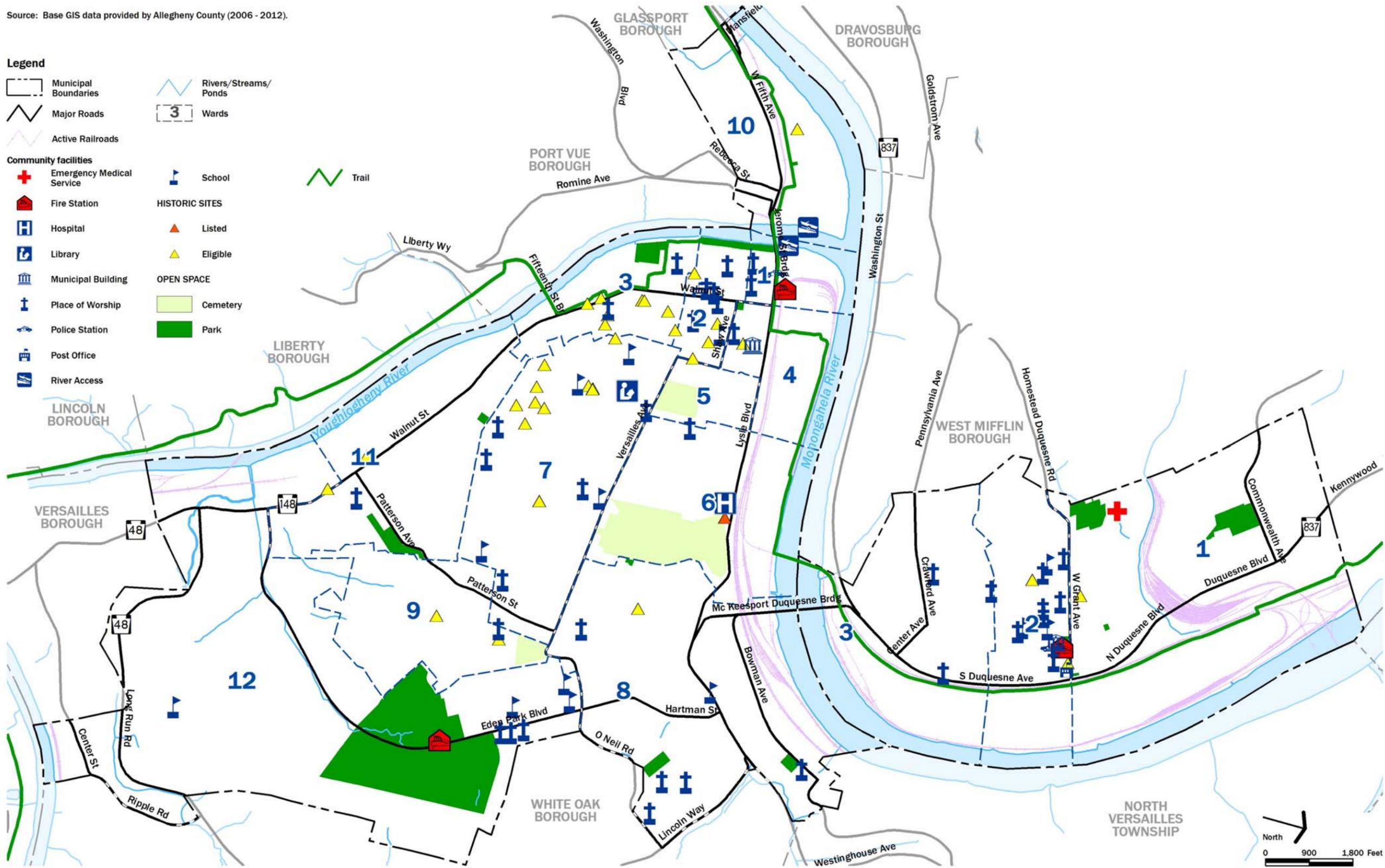


Civic Amenities Map

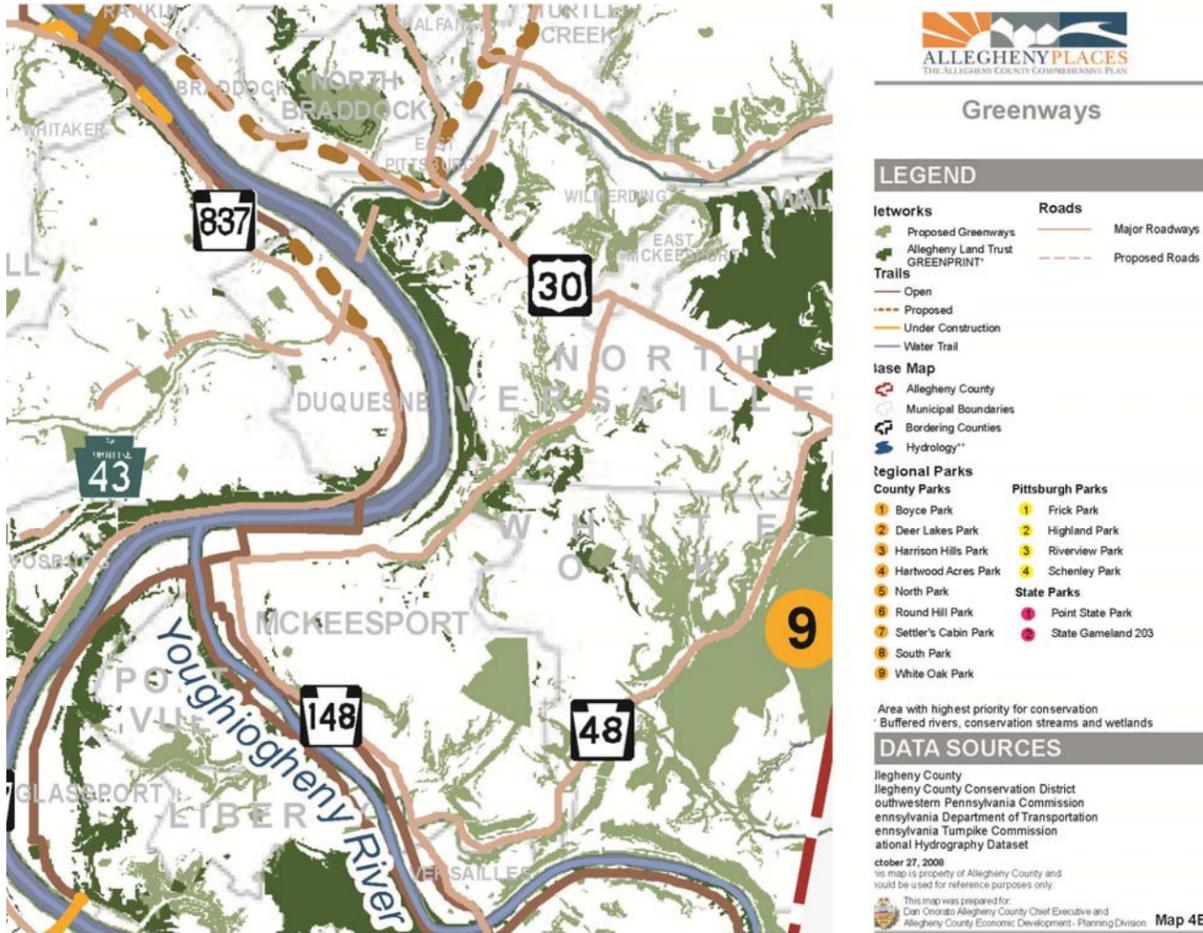
Source: Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).

Legend

-  Municipal Boundaries
-  Major Roads
-  Active Railroads
-  Rivers/Streams/Ponds
-  Wards
-  Trail
-  Emergency Medical Service
-  Fire Station
-  Hospital
-  Library
-  Municipal Building
-  Place of Worship
-  Police Station
-  Post Office
-  River Access
-  School
-  HISTORIC SITES
Listed
-  Eligible
-  OPEN SPACE
Cemetery
-  Park

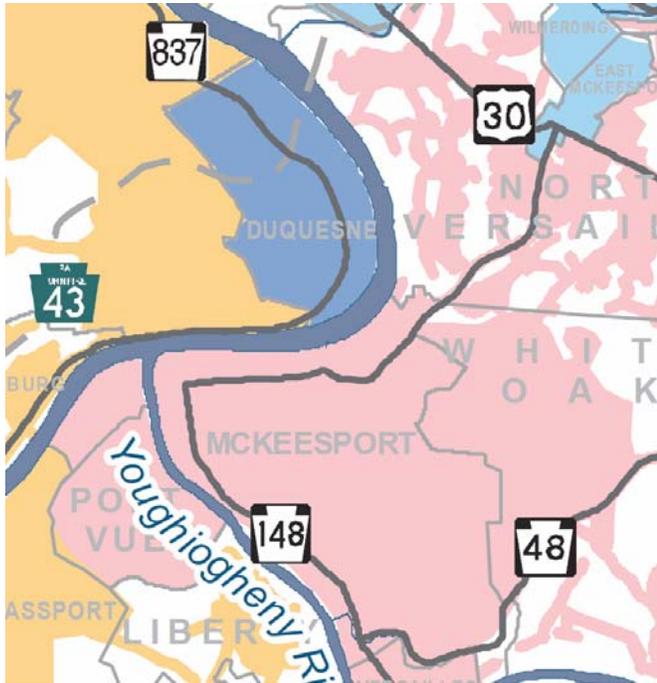


AlleghenyPlaces Greenways Map



Transportation, Facilities and Utilities

AlleghenyPlaces Water Service Map



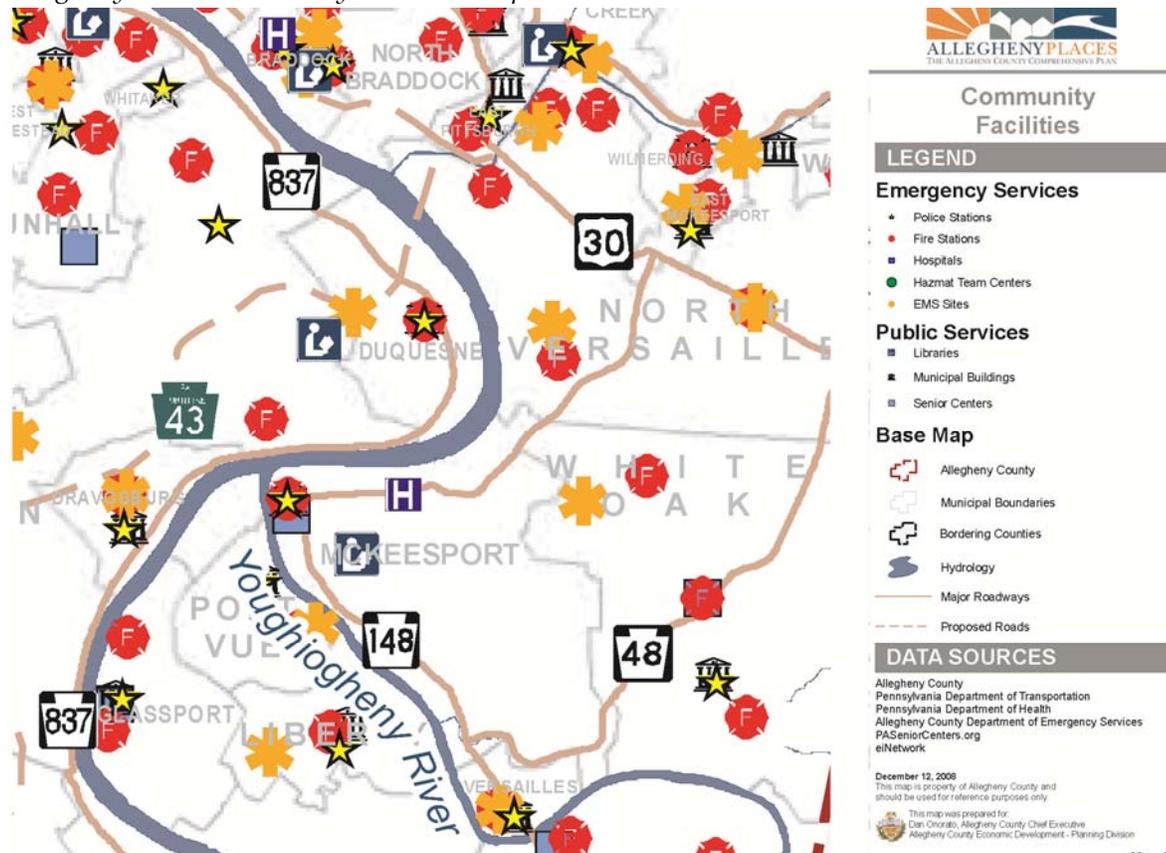
-  City of Duquesne Water Department
-  Westmoreland County Municipal Authority

AlleghenyPlaces Sewer Service Map



-  Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport
-  Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport

AlleghenyPlaces Community Facilities Map



Duquesne and McKeesport are well-served by emergency services. Discussions with the service providers indicate two issues:

1. A high rate of 911 calls for transport (25%-50% more calls than what would be anticipated for an average population of the same size).

In terms of the 911 calls, many result in non-emergency transport to area hospitals. This appears to be related to access to cars and public transportation. Car ownership rates are low in Duquesne and McKeesport and public transit routes have been significantly cut in recent years.

2. A desire for a beat patrol being added to the current police force.

There appears to be consensus related to idea of adding beat patrol officers to the current police force. However, funding is a major issue and obstacle. Federal funding for beat patrol has not been available for several years and the cities do not appear to be able to bear the personnel costs related to an increase in force size at this time. Even grant opportunities are problematic because of the need to continue employment after the grant period has ended. There is an additional and important issue of personality, fit and culture. The possibility of additional temporary summer police officers was discussed. However, anecdotal evidence indicates that an effective beat patrol hinges on the personality of the officers on beat patrol. Those best-suited for the position (more experienced officers

with ties to the community) are not looking for temporary summer work. As the financial situation of the cities improves in the future, the possibility of a beat patrol should be considered.

Code enforcement is an important concern. There appears to be a need for increased capacity and increased enforcement.

Water Service

Barring significant unforeseen industrial or other water needs, the current water and sewer facilities will be able to accommodate anticipated growth and development in McKeesport. It is not anticipated that expansion or extension to the existing sewer system is needed.

Sewer Service

The Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act (Act 537) was enacted to correct sewage disposal problems and to help treat wet weather flows. Sewage plants, like McKeesport's, that have combined sewers (sanitary sewage and storm water in the same line) have been mandated by the US EPA to severely limit the amount of water that is redirected to the rivers and creeks during a rain event.

The Municipal Authority of the City of McKeesport (MACM) owns and operates a wastewater treatment plant and conveyance system serving the greater McKeesport area. The communities served by the Authority include in whole or part of the City of McKeesport, City of Duquesne, East McKeesport Borough, Elizabeth Township, Liberty Borough, Port Vue Borough, North Versailles Township, Versailles Borough, White Oak Borough, Glassport Borough, and Lincoln Borough. These communities own and operate their own collection systems. Some of the collection systems are combined and some are separate, sanitary only systems. Although the Authority neither owns nor has jurisdiction over the collection systems, they are the permittee responsible for combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO).

The Authority was faced with a choice, place the responsibility for flow management and reduction with each of the communities, or develop a regional flow management plan. The Authority evaluated technical issues, completed plan development and worked through consensus building which allowed the communities to agree on and implement a regional wet weather flow management plan.

This is accomplished in one of two ways; either separate all of the lines into sanitary only and storm water only lines, or expand the treatment facilities to convey and treat the vast majority of the water that enters the combined lines. The second option was determined to be the best, and cheapest, option for facilities in McKeesport. The Plan and design was submitted to the DEP for review and approval. The construction is expected to take several years and is estimated to cost around \$60 million.

Stormwater

Watersheds in this region are covered by the Pennsylvania Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan. Allegheny County is currently preparing a county-wide Act 167 Plan that will update the existing plan. PA Act 167 requires municipalities to adopt a local Act 167 plan that is consistent with the County's plan within six months after the PA Department of Environmental Protection has approved the County's plan. The proposed Allegheny County Act 167 plan will include a model ordinance that can be used for this purpose, so achieving compliance could be inexpensive and relatively simple.

McKeesport Area School District

The McKeesport Area School District serves Dravosburg, McKeesport, South Versailles Township, Versailles, and White Oak, which encompasses approximately 7 square miles. According to District officials, in school year 2009-10 the McKeesport Area School District provided basic educational services to 3,927 pupils (down from 4,132 pupils in the school year 2007-08). The school district projects enrollment to decline to 3,400 by the year 2019.

With the recent construction of a new school near McKeesport's 7th Ward and the anticipated decrease in student body, the School District does not anticipate a need for significant facility expansion in the next 10 years.

Duquesne City School District

Duquesne City School District serves the City of Duquesne and encompasses approximately 2 square miles. In 2014, the District reported 366 pupils in grades kindergarten through 6th, with 100% of pupils receiving a federal free or reduced price meals due to family poverty.

The 7-12 grade students in the Duquesne School District may choose to attend the neighboring West Mifflin Area High School or East Allegheny High School. The school is the student's choice. Duquesne City provides transportation with the tuition paid by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

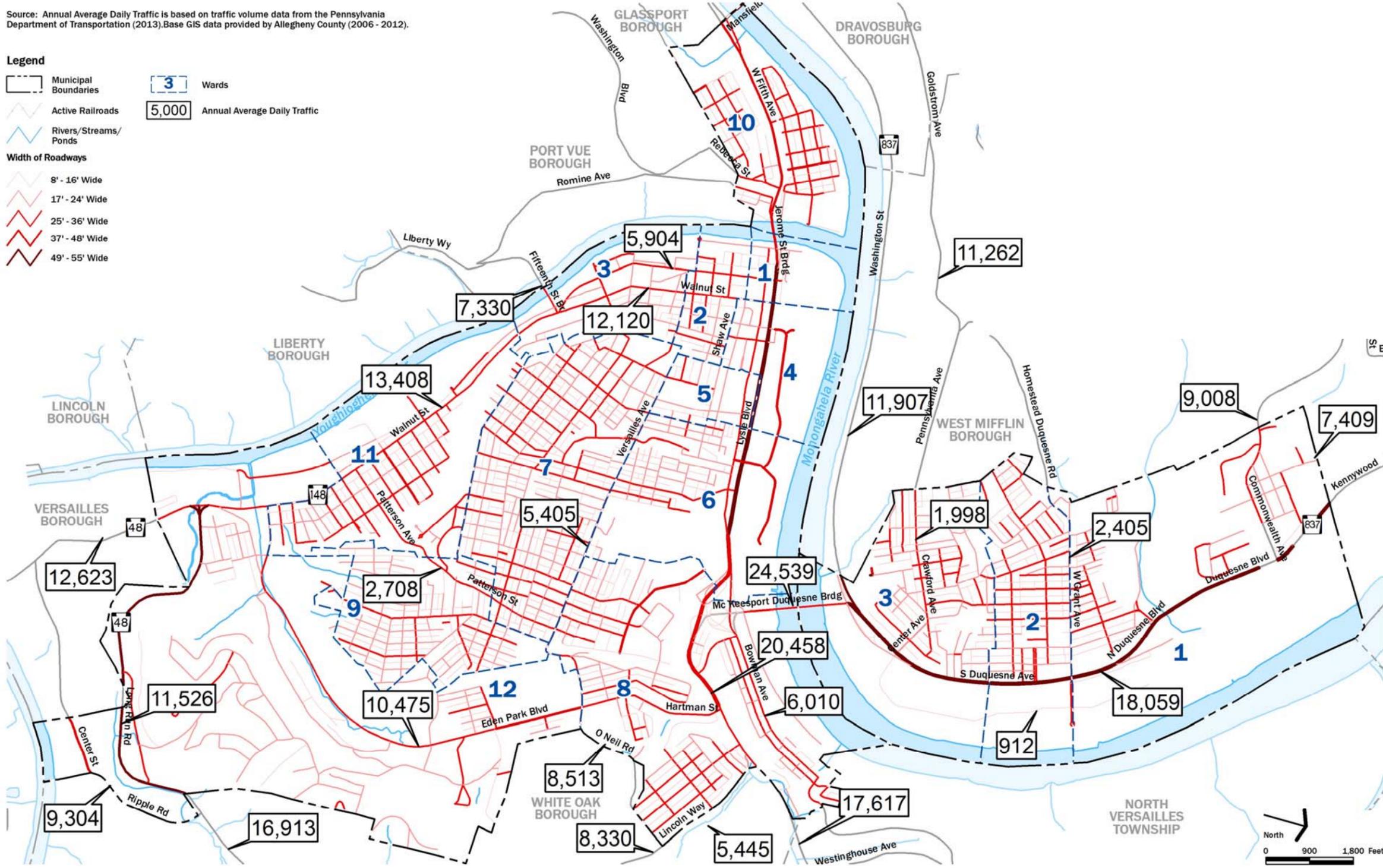
Enrollment projections for Duquesne City School District are not available at this time.

Roadways and Traffic Volumes Map

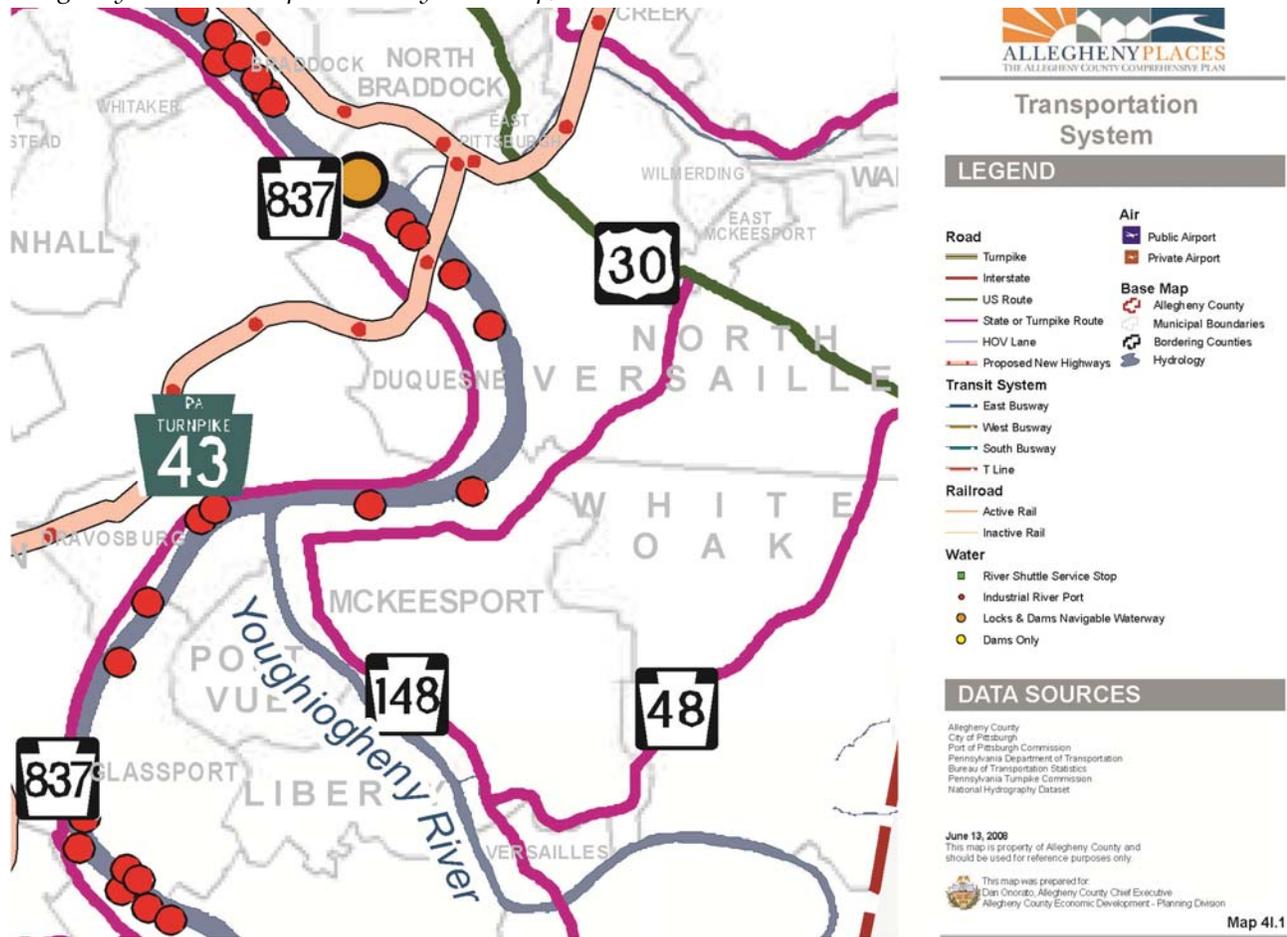
Source: Annual Average Daily Traffic is based on traffic volume data from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (2013). Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).

Legend

- Municipal Boundaries
- Active Railroads
- Rivers/Streams/Ponds
- Width of Roadways**
 - 8' - 16' Wide
 - 17' - 24' Wide
 - 25' - 36' Wide
 - 37' - 48' Wide
 - 49' - 55' Wide
- Wards
- Annual Average Daily Traffic



Allegheny Places Transportation System Map, 2010



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Appendix