

# implementation and resources

Implementation should start by the URA and City Planning adopting the Vision Plan, modifying and adopting the Riverfront Overlay District zoning, and communicating to all stakeholders there is now a framework in which they can confidently invest. These actions will convey a sense of certainty that the City is serious about implementing the Vision Plan. Respective development plans will be needed for the large parcels identified as development opportunities for transformative intervention. The City will need to come forward and make a commitment to infrastructure—not only in the 1-3 year timeframe to support specific projects, but also in the 5-, 10-, 15-, 20-year timeframe segments needed to acquire City, State, and Federal monies. There will also be the need to coordinate efforts between the URA and City Planning with capital expenditure investments, and between other agencies, including PWSA and ALCOSAN, the Parking Authority, City and County Public Works, and PennDOT.

## Infrastructure Phasing

Both the development and real estate communities are clearly looking for the City to make the first move and strongly expressed the need for public investment to precede private development. Research of precedents uncovered that the most successful district-wide revitalization examples began with government intervention with infrastructure, usually in the form of transportation and environmental improvements, occurring during the late first stage of redevelopment after the pioneers had established a strong foothold.

### Recommendations

- URA and City invest in transportation and environmental improvements.
- Concentrate on connections improvements, such as the circulator trolley, the railroad Green Boulevard, and extending Smallman Street to 40th Street.
- Include stormwater improvements as integral with connections improvements.

## Incentives to Spur Private Development

Revitalization of existing building stock through tax credits, along with constructing a few new buildings in transformative locations, can spur development and demand. More new construction will come later as the demand is created. It is important that any tax credit program be of limited duration to spur enough initial redevelopment to create desirability and demand, and then pull back to let normal market forces generate further development.

### Recommendations

- City, School District, and County initiate tax credit programs for targeted Regenerative and Transition Zone properties.
- Tax credits should be in addition to historic and new market tax credits.
- Limit the time period for tax credit eligibility.

## Hot Spots and Future Spots

Certain locations have a greater chance of early success, primarily because they are large tracts of undeveloped land under the Buncher Company's and the URA's ownership and where the URA has an interest in their immediate development. They are:

- Produce Terminal between 16th and 21 Streets on Smallman and the land between the Produce Terminal and the river (as new residential uses)
- Tippins International site at 62nd Street (as a new distribution center)
- The Buncher Company's flex building between 43rd and 48th Streets (which could become prime residential property)

Other large properties have hot spot potential:

- Heppenstall Steel property between 44th and 48th Streets
- Tow Pound site between 29th and 31st Streets along the riverfront
- Properties between 11th Street and 16th Street
- Properties between 39th and 40th Streets from Butler Street to the river (which has the potential to become Lawrenceville's "civic center")
- Pitt-Ohio property between 33rd Street and 35th Street along the river

### Recommendations

- Concentrate on The Buncher Company and URA properties as the first step to undertaking development and infrastructure improvements. Use these sites as demonstration projects.
- Encourage residential development along the riverfront as early-stage objectives.

## Trading Parcels

The Buncher Company/URA agreement, involving three sites, suggests the potential for trading sites to achieve "right fit" development and ownership possibilities. A few other possible trades include:

- Flex building between 39th and 40th Streets at the riverfront for space at the Tippins International site or another Transition Zone location to allow the present industrial uses to be converted to riverfront residential uses.
- Heppenstall Steel site for other land elsewhere in the city where industrial-only uses are more appropriate and accessible to free up the site for neighborhood residential and/or mixed uses.
- Pitt-Ohio Property between 33rd and 35th Streets at the riverfront for RIDC's Heppenstall site. Relocating 43rd Street Concrete to the Pitt-Ohio property is also an option as the site enjoys good trucking access.
- City- and County-owned properties to the Service Zone or more appropriate locations, particularly the City's sign shop on Liberty Avenue and the Public Works property along the Highland Park riverfront, and the County's land beneath the 40th Street Bridge.

### Recommendations

- Government agencies work together to continue with land trading that matches up strategic properties with "right fit" ownership.
- Require that redevelopment activities begin within a limited time period for traded land within the Regenerative and Transition Zones.

## Development Spillover

It is anticipated that once the revitalization program reaches the second and third stages the spillover effect will begin an infill process. The typical metric for spillover development are new projects undertaken beyond 600' of a major development or transformation.

### Recommendations

- Strategize where early-stage development projects would have the maximum spillover effect and concentrate infrastructure and other subsidies on these locations.
- Limit subsidies and other incentives for spillover sites so that limited funds can be applied to catalytic and strategic development sites.

## Letting the Market Take Over

At some point the stimulus will be felt beyond the development spillover effect. However, cities and markets are dynamic and growth is not predictable. This is where a regenerative agenda is most beneficial to long term sustainability. The second dimension of building for adaptability is to encourage development plans that adapt to changes in market needs and dynamics. The scale and pace of development needs to be phased according to availability of funding, sites under control, and current market needs without taking too much property out of private hands and off the tax rolls. Deliberate and continuous investment in the public realm infrastructure by government and the community, even when it can only be accomplished incrementally, will strengthen community's desirability and its attractiveness for private investment that will have a positive effect on the overall market.

### Recommendations

- Continuously invest in public infrastructure to sustain private investment.
- Pace development plans to market conditions while conveying the community's agenda for sustained and regenerative development.

## Value of Time

"Big bang" projects where heavy subsidies are concentrated on very few, but very large-scale, projects absorb the majority of market demand. The results are development spikes that, while resulting in exciting new projects, slow development elsewhere. Instead, evolutionary development is more beneficial to the community by allowing neighborhoods and infrastructure to absorb change and make accommodations, while allowing for multiple investors and investments. Development is spread over a larger area and is more responsive to opportunities.

### Recommendations

- Limit development subsidies and incentives to strategic and catalytic portions of larger development projects so that normal market forces can become the economic generators of a sustained development process.
- Spread, rather than concentrate, subsidies and incentives to multiple investor developers to encourage a more evolutionary process.

## Funding Programs

There are a number of available grants, loans, tax credits, and real property tax exemptions available to facilitate development projects aligned with the Allegheny Riverfront Vision Plan.

The Strip District and 40th Street Corridor transformation designs qualify under the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's transit oriented development (TOD) criteria. The 33rd Street Corridor/Doughboy Square transformation design would also qualify if the commuter rail lines are implemented.

### City of Pittsburgh

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Pittsburgh Housing Construction Fund
- Pittsburgh Rental Housing Development & Improvement Program
- Neighborhood Housing Fund
- Commercial LERTA (conversion)
- Residential LERTA (conversion)
- Act 42 Enhanced (defined areas)

### Allegheny County

- Tax exemptions and deferred second mortgages
- Act 202
- Allegheny Housing Development Fund

### Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

- PA Housing Finance Agency
- Growing Greener II
- Housing and Redevelopment Assistance
- Transit Revitalization Investment District Fund (TRID)
- TRID Fund
- PA Economic Development Financing Authority
- H2O PA
- Infrastructure Development Program

### Federal and Other Programs

- New Markets Tax Credits
- Transit Investments for Greenhouse Gas and Energy Reduction (TIGGER) Program
- Federal Transit Administration
- Federal Appropriation/Earmark

Joint Federal programs for riverfronts and sustainability:

- Department of Transportation's (DOT) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery program (TIGER II)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Challenge planning grants
- Upcoming joint EPA/FTA/HUD programs

## Proposed Incentives by the Development Community

A number of programs were suggested by the development community during focus group sessions and interviews.

### Targeted Local Tax Abatement

- City, School District, and County real property tax abatement for projects in targeted areas

### Assistance with Lending and Subsidies

- Innovation Zones

### Assistance with Creative Financing

- Empowerment Zones
- Energy credits
- Sustainability credits

### Public Incentives

- Construct public parking facilities
- Clean up environmental hazards

### Coordinated Permitting

- DEP, PWSA, County Health Department, and Pittsburgh Public Works for sustainability goals and design standards

## Sponsorship Roles

### Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

- Investment in public realm infrastructure
- Catalyst for development
  - Site acquisition
  - Site improvements
  - TIF and other incentive programs
- Land exchanges

### City Planning

- Riverfront Overlay District and other zoning
- Development master plans
- Transportation planning

### Riverlife

- Riparian buffer and stormwater infrastructure maintenance program
- Capital funding for long-range improvement programs (Federal and State)

### Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority (PWSA)

### City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works (DPW)

### City of Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances

### Allegheny County Health Department Environmental Regulations

- Review and modify regulatory barriers to green infrastructure improvements and implementation

### Pittsburgh City Council

- Tax credit and other financial incentive programs
- Zoning amendment approvals

# Design Team

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