

strengths to build on

It's Almost All Right

The Allegheny Riverfront Area is rich in resources: its people, land, community, history, and livability. The riverfront's green edge and views of green bluffs beyond offer some of the most dramatic natural scenes within the city limits. The Allegheny River is Pittsburgh's recreational river, full of pleasure boats, kayaks, rowers, and fisherman. As the city's cleanest river, it provides most of Pittsburgh's drinking water. Its six bridges provide good access to the north side and to the feeder arterials and highways leading to the Interstate system. The riverfront trail, while not continuous, is in place between 11th Street to 21st Street, 24th to 25th Street, and from 36th to 43rd Streets. Three marinas are located along the south bank.

The Allegheny Riverfront is home to two regional destinations: the historic marketplace of the Strip District and the Pittsburgh Zoo. It contains a good variety of building stock, from six-story warehouses to modest bungalows. Its inventory of industrial structures is one of the richest in the city, ranging from simple steel sheds that once housed steel fabrication shops to substantial masonry structures for warehousing and storage. The housing stock varies from narrow brick row houses in Central Lawrenceville, to cheek-to-cheek frame houses on the slopes, to hip residential lofts and condominiums in former industrial buildings.

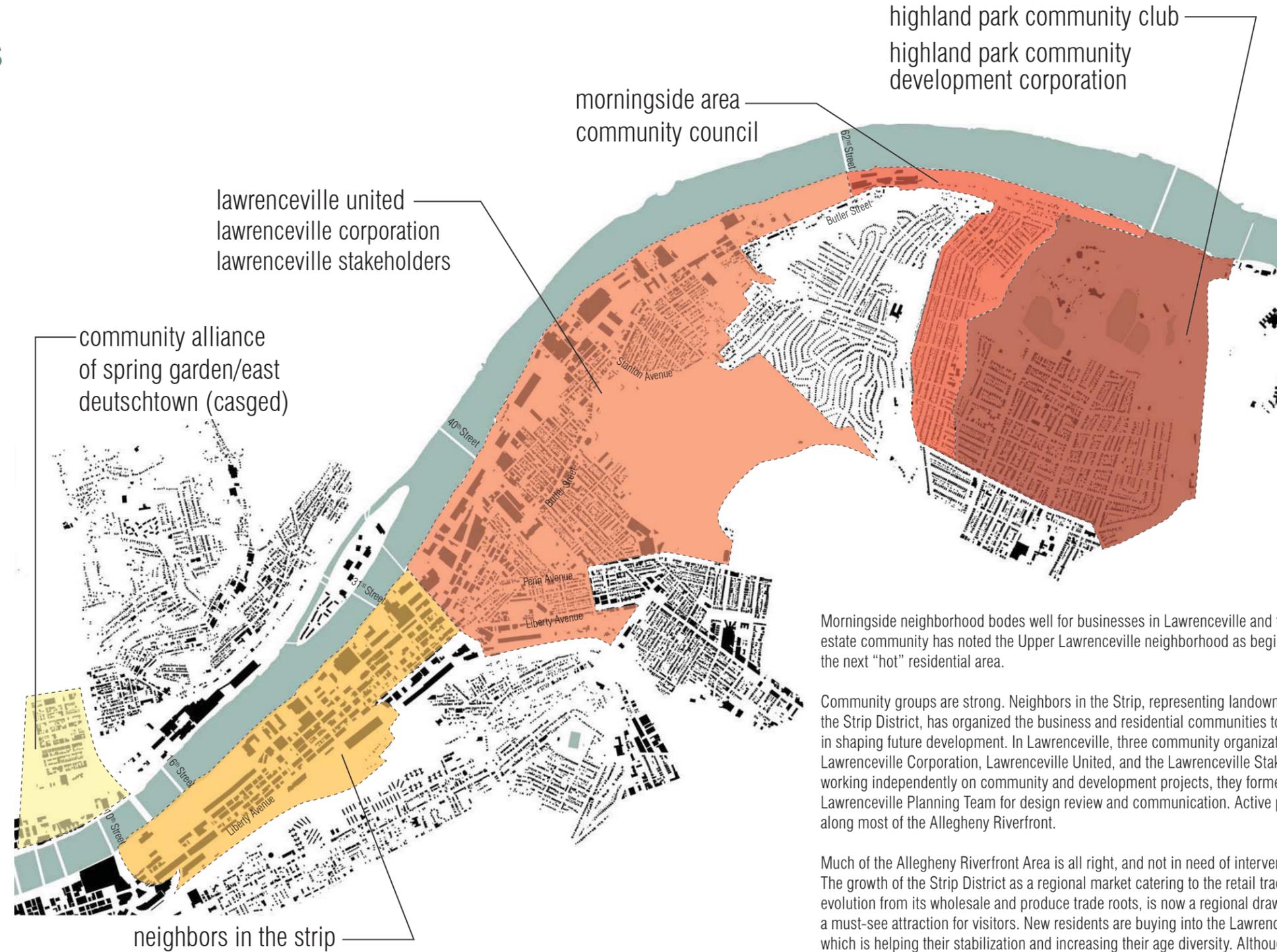
Recently there have been a number of significant investments that have pioneered the area's resurgence. The art and design community has made the Allegheny Riverfront Area its home, including furniture and cabinet makers, professional design offices, product showrooms, art galleries, artist studios, the Pittsburgh Ballet, and the Pittsburgh Opera. In recognition, the Riverfront markets itself as the 16:62 Design Zone (16th to 62nd Streets). Oakland institutions have begun investing in the Allegheny Riverfront Area. Carnegie Mellon University opened the National Robotics Engineering Center (NREC), which now employs over 120 in robotics research and development. Children's Hospital, newly built in Central Lawrenceville, has brought bio-med research into Lawrenceville and is contributing to increasing residential land values in the immediate neighborhood. The hospital's research and development tower along with NREC are beginning to define Lawrenceville as a center for research. New green industry has also begun to locate in Lawrenceville and the Strip, encouraged by inexpensive rents and the "cool" factor of locating in a pioneering community.

New loft and high-end residential development between 21st and 31st Streets is marketed as "downtown living," anchored by the Cork Factory's renovation into 297 rental units. The area has attracted the interest of newly-arrived residents to Pittsburgh and empty nesters relocating from the suburbs. Doughboy Square, through the efforts of the Urban Redevelopment Authority, the Lawrenceville Corporation, and several business and land owners, is undergoing stabilization and investment. Butler Street is gaining a new reputation as new restaurants and boutique retail stores serving a city-wide market are beginning to cluster in two zones: from Doughboy Square up to 39th Street and between 40th and 46th Streets. Their success has led to some spillover as new restaurants and shops are beginning to appear east of 47th Street. New families moving into the



Vibrant neighborhoods and good building stock

community organizations



community alliance of spring garden/east deuchtown (casged)

lawrenceville united
lawrenceville corporation
lawrenceville stakeholders

morningside area
community council

highland park community club
highland park community development corporation

neighbors in the strip

Morningside neighborhood bodes well for businesses in Lawrenceville and the Strip, and the real estate community has noted the Upper Lawrenceville neighborhood as beginning to show signs of the next "hot" residential area.

Community groups are strong. Neighbors in the Strip, representing landowners and businesses in the Strip District, has organized the business and residential communities to take a proactive role in shaping future development. In Lawrenceville, three community organizations are active: the Lawrenceville Corporation, Lawrenceville United, and the Lawrenceville Stakeholders. Although working independently on community and development projects, they formed the collaborative Lawrenceville Planning Team for design review and communication. Active planning is continuous along most of the Allegheny Riverfront.

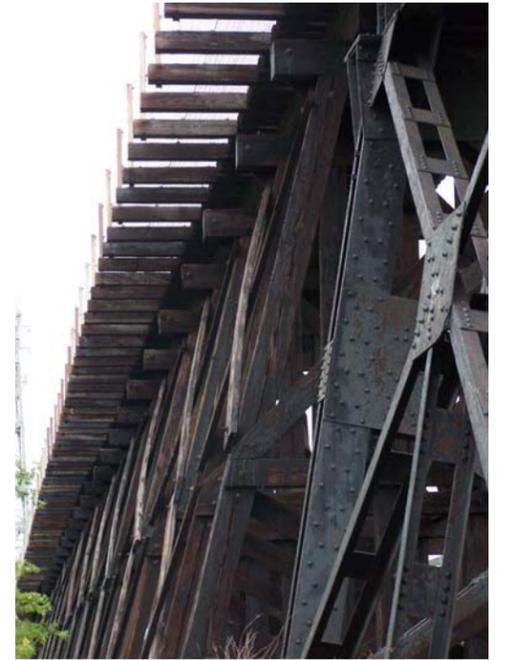
Much of the Allegheny Riverfront Area is all right, and not in need of intervention or transformation. The growth of the Strip District as a regional market catering to the retail trade, a relatively new evolution from its wholesale and produce trade roots, is now a regional draw on the weekend and a must-see attraction for visitors. New residents are buying into the Lawrenceville neighborhoods which is helping their stabilization and increasing their age diversity. Although economic progress is slow, it is steady and these areas are evolving well on their own. Locations requiring stimulus to keep pace with the majority of the Allegheny Riverfront are along the riverfront, the vacant and large former industrial sites, and a few inboard locations where residential and neighborhood services would benefit from catalytic intervention.

Authenticity and Identity

The Strip District conjures an image in everyone's mind as a rough, gritty place. Historically, it came alive in the early morning hours when trucks, dollies, and teamsters hauled and distributed the city's food and produce. Today most recognize it as a chaotic and crowded, yet fun, market place along Penn Avenue where vendors squeeze the sidewalk spaces hawking produce and merchandise and buildings line the avenue where you can buy the best cheese and specialty foods in town. Although the area of hustle and bustle is now relatively small, this image has become enlarged to now include all of the Strip District as far east as 40th Street.

Lawrenceville presents another, although similar, image: a community of hard-working residents who have spent their lives serving local industries and survived with little amenity. While not a wealthy community, it nonetheless attracts new residents because of its inexpensive housing, authentic character, convenient location, and image of a "Pittsburgh urban experience." Residents and businesspeople throughout the Allegheny Riverfront Area want to continue the mixture of people, uses, and buildings.

There is an area-wide authentic aesthetic that is alive and well. The buildings are simple forms with distinctive roofscapes. The older metal shed buildings have an architectural character that is clear in its functionality and massing. Many industrial and wholesale buildings are substantially built and worth redeveloping into other uses.



Strong and Diverse Neighborhoods

The Strip District, with its long flat blocks, is full of diverse uses—from food wholesaling to county offices to fashionable restaurants. It is walkable and has a strong, branded identity. Lower Lawrenceville is also walkable and has a substantial historic fabric. Central Lawrenceville has a strong residential base and active industrial uses. Upper Lawrenceville has good residential stock and the potential for a revived Butler Street. The adjacent neighborhoods of Morningside, Stanton Heights, and Highland Park have affordable mixed-income housing and an emerging, if not already stable, residential base to help support activities in the Allegheny Riverfront Area.

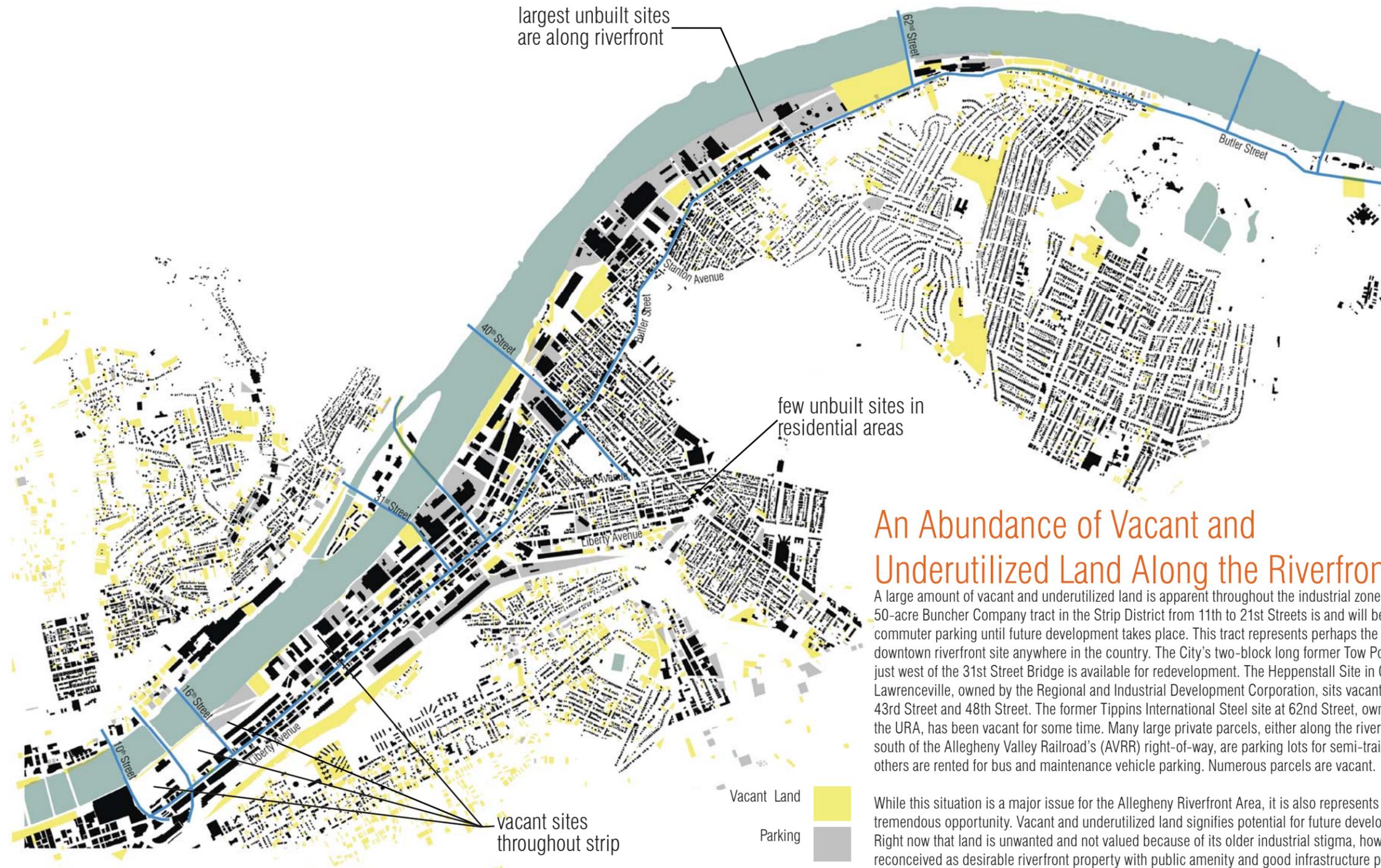
Regional Draw

Retailers in Pittsburgh—both the city and the metropolitan area as a whole—depend on non-resident spending for their survival, and the Strip District and retailers along Butler Street in Lawrenceville are well-positioned to benefit. The Strip District attracts the largest concentration of outside customers in the Allegheny Riverfront Area and, as a regional destination for shopping, has greater flexibility in adding retail that can be sustained by non-resident spending. Butler Street is beginning to distinguish itself as a city-wide, if not regional, draw with a wide diversity of restaurants, specialty retail stores, and entertainment venues.



Authentic, strong, and diverse neighborhoods attract residents, workers, and visitors

unbuilt parcels



An Abundance of Vacant and Underutilized Land Along the Riverfront

A large amount of vacant and underutilized land is apparent throughout the industrial zones. The 50-acre Buncher Company tract in the Strip District from 11th to 21st Streets is and will be used for commuter parking until future development takes place. This tract represents perhaps the largest downtown riverfront site anywhere in the country. The City's two-block long former Tow Pound site just west of the 31st Street Bridge is available for redevelopment. The Heppenstall Site in Central Lawrenceville, owned by the Regional and Industrial Development Corporation, sits vacant between 43rd Street and 48th Street. The former Tippins International Steel site at 62nd Street, owned by the URA, has been vacant for some time. Many large private parcels, either along the river or just south of the Allegheny Valley Railroad's (AVRR) right-of-way, are parking lots for semi-trailers while others are rented for bus and maintenance vehicle parking. Numerous parcels are vacant.

While this situation is a major issue for the Allegheny Riverfront Area, it also represents a tremendous opportunity. Vacant and underutilized land signifies potential for future development. Right now that land is unwanted and not valued because of its older industrial stigma, however reconceived as desirable riverfront property with public amenity and good infrastructure points to a stronger future. The Allegheny Riverfront is one of the few areas in the city that can accommodate new industry, desirable riverfront residential development, supportive retail and commercial activities, and higher densities.

A Strategic Location in the City

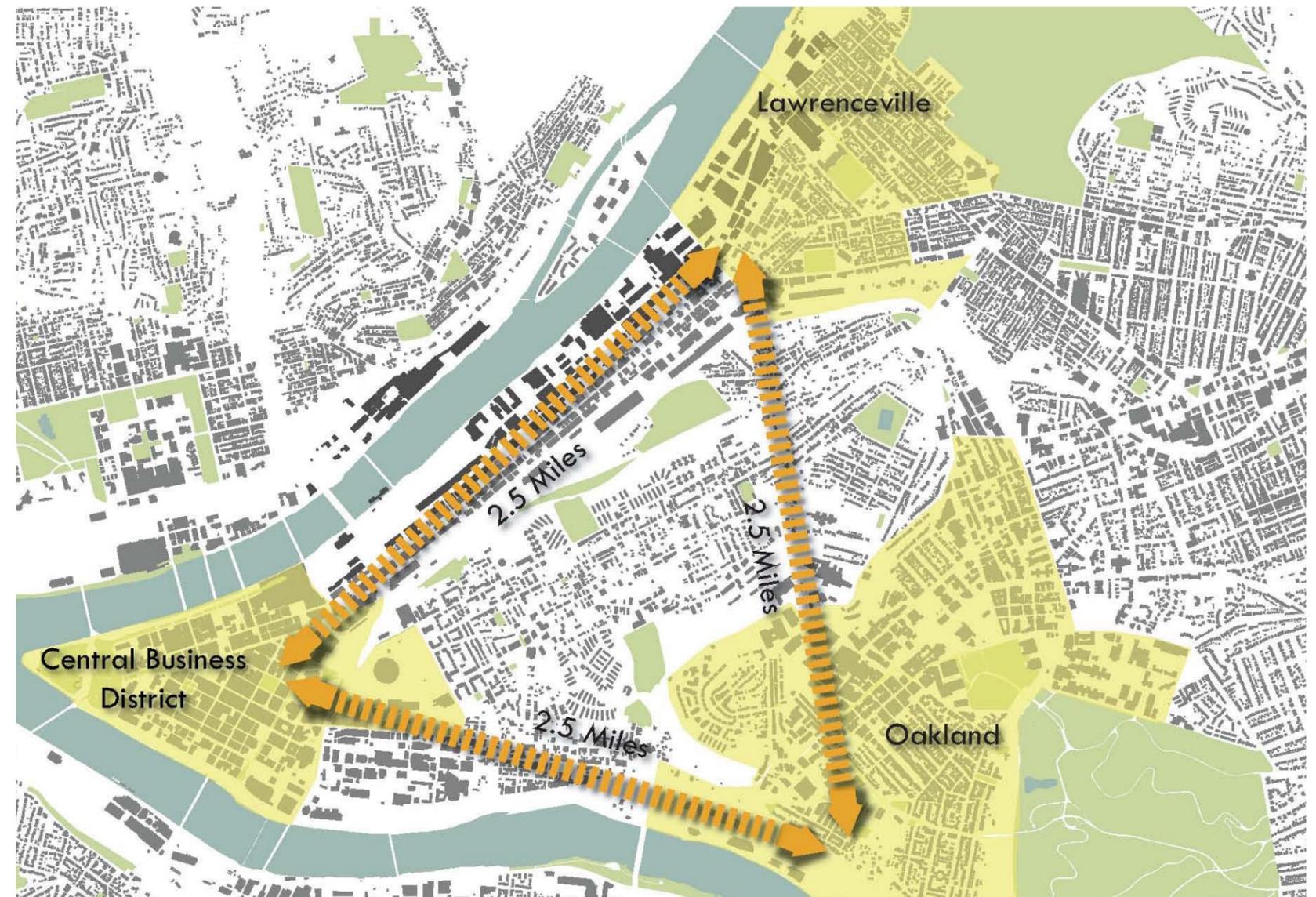
The center of Lawrenceville is equidistant from Downtown and Oakland, which suggests the potential for these three destinations becoming interconnected and complementary. Each is a center of productivity and value creation for the city: Downtown is the center of finance and management; Oakland is the center for innovation and education; and the Allegheny Riverfront is well-suited as a center of service for both Downtown and Oakland. The Allegheny Riverfront has a vital role to play in this new triangle—a resource of people, business, and industry. The complementary productivity of all three suggests a new definition of the Golden Triangle. No longer just the triangle of Pittsburgh’s corporate downtown, this “New Golden Triangle” links these three vital centers of Pittsburgh’s future.

the “new golden triangle” offers strategic resources

Community Themes

Although the Strip District and Lawrenceville are separate neighborhoods, they share very similar concerns, desire similar outcomes, and strongly believe in a collaborative approach to improving their communities. Common themes emerged from the civic engagement process, as well as from their previous plans:

- Reinforce identity and authenticity
- Reinforce the power of place and historic precedent
- Build on current social and physical assets
- Connect neighborhoods to the river
- Improve connections within the Allegheny Riverfront and to the city
- Resolve auto and truck conflicts
- Provide new open space, trails, and a pedestrian-friendly environment
- Encourage economic development of housing and retail within a mixed-use context



The Downtown and Oakland legs of the New Golden Triangle meet at 40th and Butler Streets: a location with good north, south, east and west access and, in market terms, Lawrenceville’s 100% corner. It is also noteworthy that the center of the Strip District is in the middle of the Downtown-Lawrenceville leg of the triangle, well-situated to stand alone as its own destination, yet close enough to encourage greater interaction between Downtown and Lawrenceville.

