

# Bridging the Busway



A Transit-Based  
Community Plan for  
Homewood &  
Point Breeze North



April 2012

Homewood & Point Breeze North  
Communities + Pittsburgh Urban  
Redevelopment Authority

# Steering Committee & Project Team

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Senator Jim Ferlo  
Building United of Southwestern PA  
Construction Junction  
East End Food Co-op  
Homewood Children's Village  
Point Breeze North Development Corporation  
Operation Better Block  
Rosedale Block Cluster  
Save Race Street Committee  
Pittsburgh Department of City Planning  
Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

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# Acknowledgements

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Studio for Spatial Practice would like to thank the Steering Committee members who guided the two year Bridging the Busway planning process and all of the community members who contributed their time and ideas during public outreach sessions.

It is our hope that this Plan will serve as a road map to support community-driven revitalization efforts in Homewood and Point Breeze North for years to come.

We are also grateful to the following organizations for hosting one or more event associated with the project:

Academy at Westinghouse

Afro-American Music Institute

Carnegie Library Homewood Branch

Construction Junction

East End Food Co-op

Point Breeze North Planning & Development Corporation

Operation Better Block

Pittsburgh Faison

Rosedale Block Cluster

Homewood-Brushton YMCA

# Foreword: Councilman Ricky Burgess

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Since elected, we have worked together to identify and address the needs of the 9th Council District. One major concern is providing economic development that will sustain the current residents as well as attract others to our neighborhoods. Mayor Luke Ravenstahl has committed to help me rebuild Homewood. As part of planning for a more vibrant future, we initiated the Bridging the Busway Vision Study and began coordinating a vision plan for renewed Homewood and Point Breeze North communities. The Bridging the Busway Steering Committee led a comprehensive process which will leverage the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway, allowing us to transform Homewood from its current state of decline into a sustainable, thriving community which links its residents, through maximizing the use of available transit nodes, to jobs, goods, services and healthcare.

Bridging the Busway has been a community-driven, community-focused plan from its inception. The two largest issues that arose from this three-year planning process were a universal desire to protect the residents from being displaced from the neighborhood, and a tacit commitment to protect our senior citizens. The community's support of this and future initiatives is predicated on those two criteria.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority selected S&A Homes and Oxford Development as the development team for key projects in Phase One of this plan. Their plan would see the construction of a 40-unit senior apartment

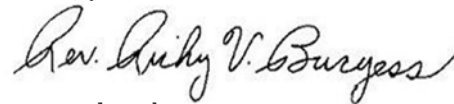
building with retail on the ground floor, directly across the street from the Homewood Avenue East Busway Station. This will connect our seniors with convenient access to Edgewood Towne Center, Wilkinsburg, East Liberty and Shadyside, as well as Downtown Pittsburgh.

Completing this component of the Bridging the Busway Plan will serve as a catalyst to renewing and rebuilding the Homewood Avenue Corridor which is critical to Homewood's very bright future.

I would like to thank Christine Brill and Jonathan Kline of the Studio for Spatial Practice for their planning expertise as well as the Steering Committee members who were diligent in ensuring that community interests were represented. In addition, I would like to thank Executive Director Rob Stephany and his staff at the URA for their time, effort, and resources to complete the Bridging the Busway plan.

I hope to continue to work with the community to continue taking the steps toward revitalization of our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



Reverend Ricky V. Burgess  
Pittsburgh City Council



# A Vision for Homewood & Point Breeze North

Improved Busway Station,  
Underpass & Trail

Improved, Expanded  
Parks & New Trails

Expanded Youth, Arts  
& Education Campus

New Uses on Homewood:  
Grocery Store & Housing

New Infill Housing &  
Home Renovations

Enhanced Homewood  
Business District





# Executive Summary

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Bridging the Busway, a community-driven planning vision for Pittsburgh's Homewood and Point Breeze North neighborhoods, explores the potential for building market strength through **transit oriented development** around the MLK Jr. East Busway's Homewood Station. The Plan aims to enhance and leverage the relative health of Point Breeze North to help stabilize and revitalize Homewood.

This Executive Summary describes the **Goals & Strategies** articulated by community members during the Bridging the Busway planning process, and summarizes **Priority Recommendations** for each of the four strategic focus areas: the Homewood Avenue Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Target Area, Homewood North, Rosedale and Lexington and the residential part of Point Breeze North.

Conceptually, these recommendations leverage and build upon existing community strengths. Three distinct assets stand out in their ability to help revitalize the Homewood Avenue business district and surrounding neighborhood:

- 1) **The MLK Jr. East Busway's Homewood Station** and the underutilized land surrounding it;
- 2) **Homewood's existing institutional core**, a unique asset that should be intentionally branded as a regional destination for African-American arts, culture and services; and
- 3) the relative strength of **the Point Breeze North housing market**, just across the Busway.

In addition to specific development initiatives, these recommendations also include actions that must be taken by local community organizations to build capacity and help ensure that future development projects meet the expectations and needs of neighborhood stakeholders.

Finally, an **Implementation Table** provided at the end of this Executive Summary briefly lists “Early Actions” and “Next Steps” that should be taken to realize Homewood’s promising future as a neighborhood of choice. More detail about these recommendations and other proposals can be found in the main body of the Bridging the Busway Plan document.

# Project Goals & Strategies

Project Goals & Strategies describe the overarching development priorities articulated by Steering Committee Members, residents and other community stakeholders throughout the Bridging the Busway planning process. The Goals & Strategies outlined in the table below are organized into five major themes. The five Goals, provided in the left-hand column, informed the Planning Recommendations that follow and they can also be used as a checklist for evaluating future development projects.

The Strategies, provided in the right-hand column, are specific tactics that could be used in Homewood and Point Breeze North to help stabilize and enhance the neighborhoods.

For more details and information, please see the Goals & Strategies section of the main Bridging the Busway Plan document.

<b>Equitable Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Create a Neighborhood Planning Forum</li><li>Plan for the Future of Vacant Properties</li><li>Develop Community Relocation Strategies</li><li>Protect and Promote Homeownership</li><li>Build Community Wealth through Neighborhood Revitalization</li></ul>
<b>Stabilize and Diversify Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Rehabilitate Homes in Targeted Areas</li><li>Help Residents Maintain their Homes</li><li>Build New Housing in Targeted Areas</li><li>Provide a Range of Housing Options</li><li>Develop Equitable Housing Relocation Strategies</li></ul>



<b>Expand Business, Arts and Culture</b>	<p>Address Safety First</p> <p>Build Mixed-Use Transit-Oriented Development around Homewood Station</p> <p>Create a Branded Youth, Arts and Education Campus around the Institutional Core</p> <p>Make Homewood Avenue a Regional Arts and Culture Destination</p> <p>Grow Local Enterprises through a Business Incubator</p> <p>Create a New Environmental Industries District</p>
<b>Green the Neighborhood</b>	<p>Consolidate Vacant Properties into Productive New Uses</p> <p>Build Community through Cleaning, Greening and Beautification</p> <p>Open Up the Neighborhood around The Academy at Westinghouse and Pittsburgh Faison</p> <p>Create a Green Pedestrian and Bicycle Network</p> <p>Transform Key Corridors and Neighborhood Gateways</p> <p>Connect, Expand and Create New Green Economy Businesses</p>
<b>Build a Sustainable Community</b>	<p>Energy</p> <p>Leverage Public Infrastructure Investments</p> <p>Aggregate Residential Systems</p> <p>Encourage Low Energy or Net Zero Energy Multiuse Developments</p> <p>Incentivize Individual Action</p>
Water	<p>Reestablish Natural Systems</p> <p>Leverage Public Infrastructure Improvements to Create Neighborhood Amenities</p> <p>Target Net Zero Water for New Development</p> <p>Match Sources and Uses</p> <p>Incentivize Individual Action</p>
Nutrients	<p>Harvest From Residual and Under-Utilized Spaces</p> <p>Create Flexible and Appropriate Management Structures for Urban Agriculture</p> <p>Integrate Productive Landscapes into Green Commercial Developments</p> <p>Incentivize Individual Action</p>

# Community Capacity Building Recommendations

## 1. Create a Homewood Planning Forum

- Create a planning forum to guide neighborhood development, help coordinate projects and initiatives, ensure that projects meet community goals, engage and inform stakeholders and lead/initiate future planning initiatives.
- The forum needs to be heavily supported with staff, consultants and community intermediaries.
- Sub-forums can meet to drill down to very specific details early in the implementation process. For example, a sub-forum could develop guidelines for providing alternative homes for homeowners living in areas designated for school recreation facilities, open space and other types of development.

## 2. Add Community Development Capacity

- A community organization with strong local ties should bring in a knowledgeable “Homeowner Advocate” assigned to or hired by the neighborhood to work with current homeowners to identify appropriate options and resources.
- As an early action effort, target and market a menu of small-scale programs to support homeowners including: income-customized loans and grants for home repairs, energy-efficiency programs, sideyard lot transfers, volunteer facade enhancement “events,” coordinated block landscaping and relocation options if that is the appropriate next step. Target areas with

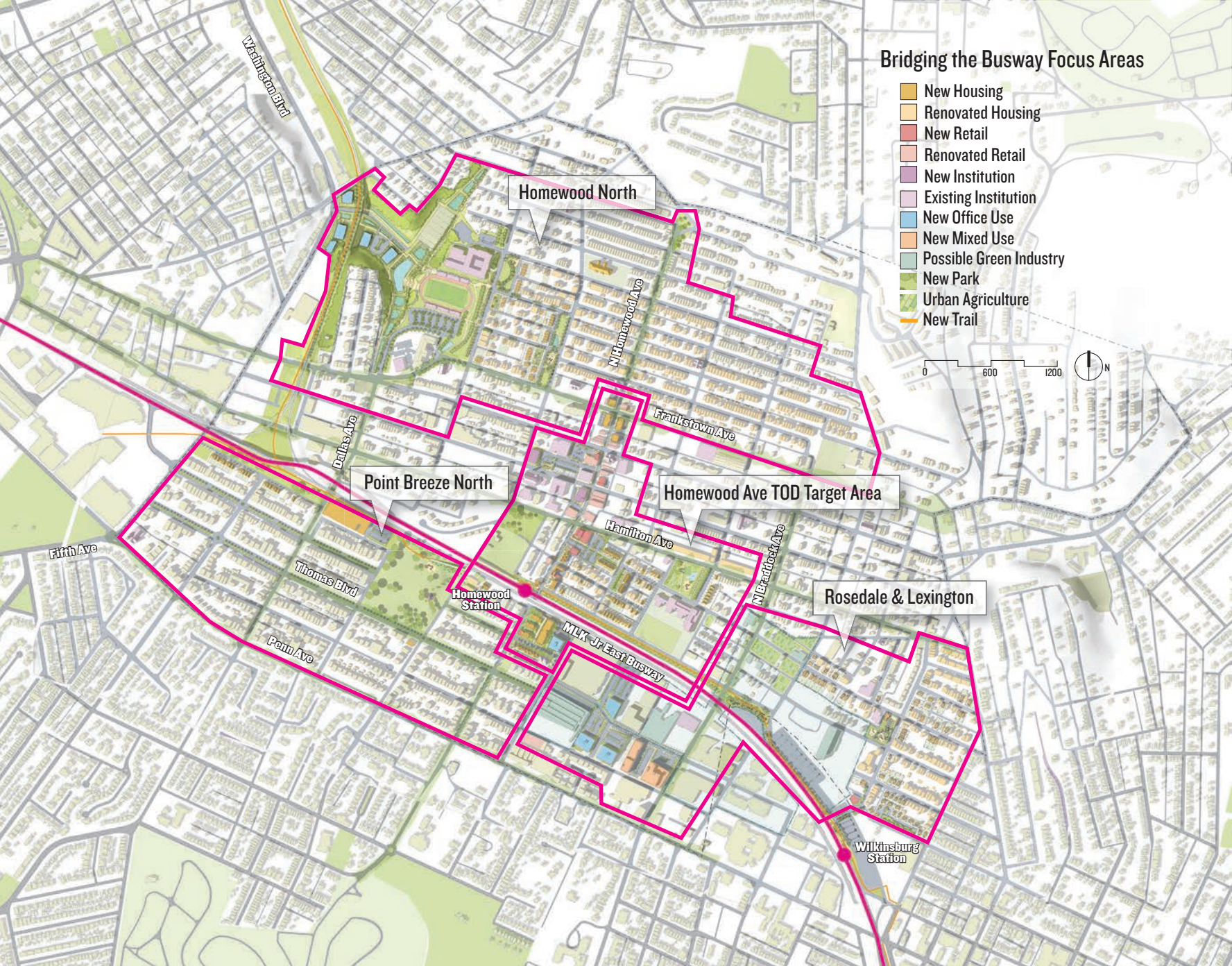
relatively high homeownership rates, increasing vacancy rates and high-quality housing stock, such as parts of Homewood North and the Rosedale area.

- Create or partner with an entity to help acquire and land bank vacant properties. This is a way to combine properties into larger sites that are more feasible to redevelop, and it also helps to limit speculation by outside investors.
  - Build local organizational capacity, or work with other entities, to rehabilitate properties and develop new projects in partnership with private developers.
- ## 3. Communication is Key
- Promote Homewood’s strengths. Coordinate events and create well-advertised, regularly-scheduled opportunities for people to participate in and learn about the neighborhood’s cultural offerings. The *Unblurred* first Friday events organized by the Penn Avenue Arts Initiative promote local talent and also introduce many people to Pittsburgh’s Garfield neighborhood.
  - Use existing communication venues, such as Homewood Nation ([homewoodnation.com](http://homewoodnation.com)), to share information about events, employment opportunities, development projects and planning initiatives.
  - Create a robust multi-media communication network, including a community newsletter, bulletin boards in high-visibility locations and a radio station to reach residents without Internet access.



# Bridging the Busway Focus Areas

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Office Use
- New Mixed Use
- Possible Green Industry
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail



Homewood North

Point Breeze North

Homewood Ave TOD Target Area

Rosedale & Lexington

Homewood Station

Wilksburg Station



# TOD Target Area Recommendations

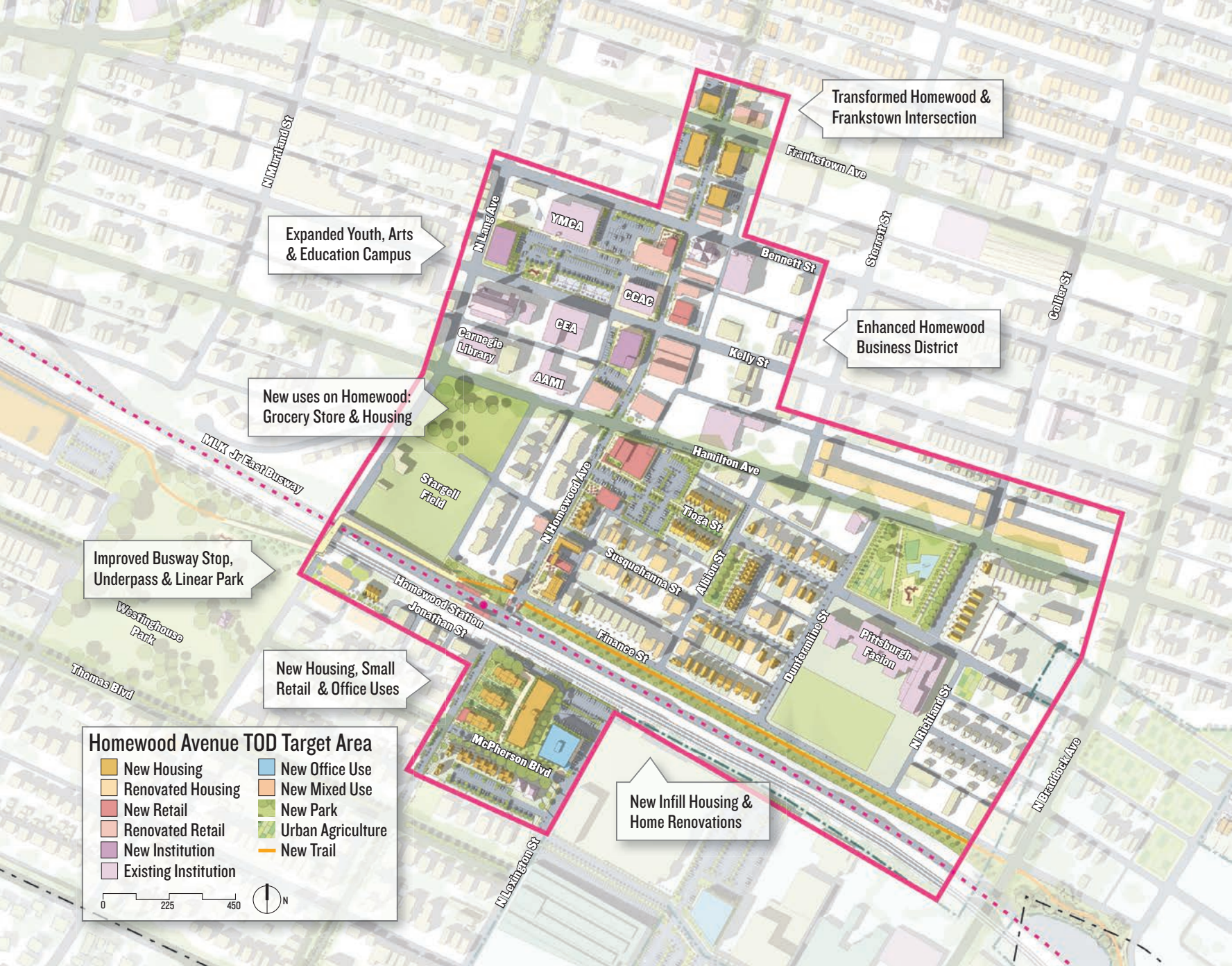
## 1. Build from Strength - The Institutional Core

- Formalize/brand the existing institutional core as an arts and education campus to provide a thematic narrative for revitalizing Homewood Avenue and the TOD target area north of the Busway. A name for the area should express its uniqueness as a regional destination for African-American culture and services. For example, the *16:62 Design Zone* in Lawrenceville successfully markets the neighborhood as a unique destination for products and services in home and office design, décor and furnishings.
- Bring campus elements to Homewood Avenue to increase its visibility and regional draw, for example: a new institutional building, gallery spaces, public art and/or banners. Connect campus activity directly to restaurants and other retail amenities along a revitalized Homewood Avenue.
- Improve the public realm using a campus-wide approach with common streetscape elements, signage, public art, etc.
- Provide new campus open space to support and expand cultural, educational and recreational activities. Create an outdoor amphitheater, for example, across the street from the Carnegie Library, on the site of the former Early Childhood Education building.

## 2. Strengthen the Homewood Avenue Corridor

- Develop this area in a coordinated, mutually-supportive manner to strengthen each site and component.

- Support the campus with a series of small-scale “early action” projects to create an environment for success along Homewood Avenue between Hamilton and Frankstown. Projects may include: 1) enhancing storefront facades; 2) establishing at least one new restaurant; 3) acquiring and re-tenanting/demolishing a few nuisance properties; 4) creating a business incubator; 5) selectively recruiting/creating tenants to fill prominent vacancies, including, if necessary, placement of educational and cultural activities in these storefronts; and 6) doing modest streetscape improvements and improving the Busway underpass.
  - Develop anchor retail at the highly-visible southeast corner of Hamilton and Homewood Avenue. This site was identified as a possible grocery store location.
  - Sites on the Point Breeze North side have strong markets and can be developed independently.
- ## 3. Provide Transit-Oriented Housing
- If a commercial or institutional anchor doesn't locate on the east side of Homewood Avenue, the strongest market potential is for new housing to complement the housing across the street.
  - To quickly transform these blocks, quality rental units or homeownership-like products, such as cooperatives or mutual housing, would be appropriate. For-sale town homes could also be one component of the new housing.



Transformed Homewood & Frankstown Intersection

Expanded Youth, Arts & Education Campus

Enhanced Homewood Business District

New uses on Homewood: Grocery Store & Housing

Improved Busway Stop, Underpass & Linear Park

New Housing, Small Retail & Office Uses

New Infill Housing & Home Renovations

**Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area**

New Housing	New Office Use
Renovated Housing	New Mixed Use
New Retail	New Park
Renovated Retail	Urban Agriculture
New Institution	New Trail
Existing Institution	

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# Pittsburgh Faison Area Recommendations

## 1. Revitalize the Area around Pittsburgh Faison

- Improve public safety, address vacancy and make Pittsburgh Faison more visible to Hamilton Avenue by creating a new park and improved road connections to Hamilton Avenue. Specifically target improvements to corridors utilized by school children.
- Improve traffic patterns and road infrastructure around Pittsburgh Faison to better accommodate school bus access and simplify the confusing one-way street system.
- Provide alternative homes for homeowners in locations designated for school recreation facilities, open space and new development. Every effort should be made to retain these homeowner households within Homewood.

## 2. Build New Housing and Renovate Existing Homes

- Support Building United of Southwestern Pennsylvania's efforts to build new single family homes in vacant lots near the Busway. New homes may take design cues from existing homes and utilize similar materials (brick, wood trim, etc.).

## 3. Green Busway Edges

- The northern Busway edge, along Finance Street from Homewood Avenue to Braddock Avenue, will receive landscape improvements in 2012. This edge could one day be part of a Busway trail leading east to Wilkinsburg and west to Bakery Square.



An alternative proposal for enhanced connectivity and new open space in the area north of Pittsburgh Faison.



**Development Program:\***

- 18 Townhouses
- 37 Single Family Houses

\*not including uses on Homewood Ave



Stewart St

Hamilton Ave

New Park

Collier St (extended)

Tioga St

Allison St

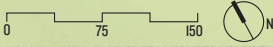
Dunfermline St

Pittsburgh Fashion

Susquehanna St

Finance St

- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- Existing Institution
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail



# Homewood North Area Recommendations

## 1. Build from Strength - The Academy at Westinghouse

- The area around The Academy at Westinghouse is full of vacant lots and houses. Transform this area into new structured open space and some housing in concentrated areas, making the school visible from Frankstown Avenue and providing valuable recreational amenities for the school and surrounding community.
- Provide alternative homes for homeowners in locations designated for school recreation facilities, open space and new development. Every effort should be made to retain these homeowner households within Homewood.
- The valley behind Westinghouse could accommodate a new site-based stormwater capture system that would help reduce the load on nearby Washington Boulevard. This system of green space and wetland areas, located on and near the historic site of Silver Lake, would have ecological value for wildlife and would also be a green amenity for Homewood residents.

## 2. Help Existing Homewoners

- The area around Race and Monticello Streets has some of the strongest homeownership rates in all of Homewood. It also has valuable housing stock in need of rehabilitation and preservation. Portions of this area should be designated as a zone for existing homeowner support.

- As an early action effort, a menu of small-scale programs to support homeowners should be targeted and marketed, including: income-customized loans and grants for home repair, energy-efficiency programs, sideyard transfers, volunteer facade enhancement “events,” coordinated block landscaping and other small-scale property-specific efforts.
- Also see the **Community Capacity Building Recommendations** at the beginning of this section.

## 3. Stabilize the Existing Housing Stock

- Aggressively pursue property acquisition to limit the further transfer of homes to absentee investors. Some of these homes could be candidates for substantial rehabilitation and sale to new homeowners.
- New housing development should be concentrated on specific blocks and be extensive enough to create stronger neighborhoods. Small-scale housing improvement programs should be aggressively undertaken on and near blocks where new construction occurs.





New Trail to Allegheny River

Stormwater Treatment Wetlands

Playing Field, Reserve Event Parking and Stormwater Storage Bed

New Office Flex Uses and Parking

Lincoln Renovated as Housing

New Gateway Garden

New Small Park

Infill Housing

Reconstructed Silver Lake

The Academy at Westinghouse

Stormwater Treatment Wetlands

Event & Park Parking

Community Garden

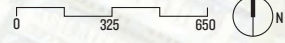
Targeted Renovation Zone

New Football Stadium

New Park & Playground

**Homewood North**

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Office Use
- New Mixed Use
- Possible Green Industry
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail





# Rosedale and Lexington Area Recommendations

## 1. Communication is Key

- Involve community members in discussions about the future of the Rosedale/Brushton area especially, where a dedicated group of residents is actively creating positive change.

## 2. Support Existing Homeowners

- Early action project: dedicate some housing development resources to improving existing homes and building new, green housing to further establish a designated housing zone.
- Also see the Community Capacity Building Recommendations at the beginning of this section.

## 3. Update Local Zoning

- Work with City Planning to develop an updated, community-supported land use plan for the Rosedale/Brushton area through a process similar to Map Pittsburgh. Carefully distinguish between areas oriented towards housing development and rehabilitation, and other areas dedicated to expanding and recruiting compatible businesses.

## 4. Create a Mixed-Use Environmental Industries District

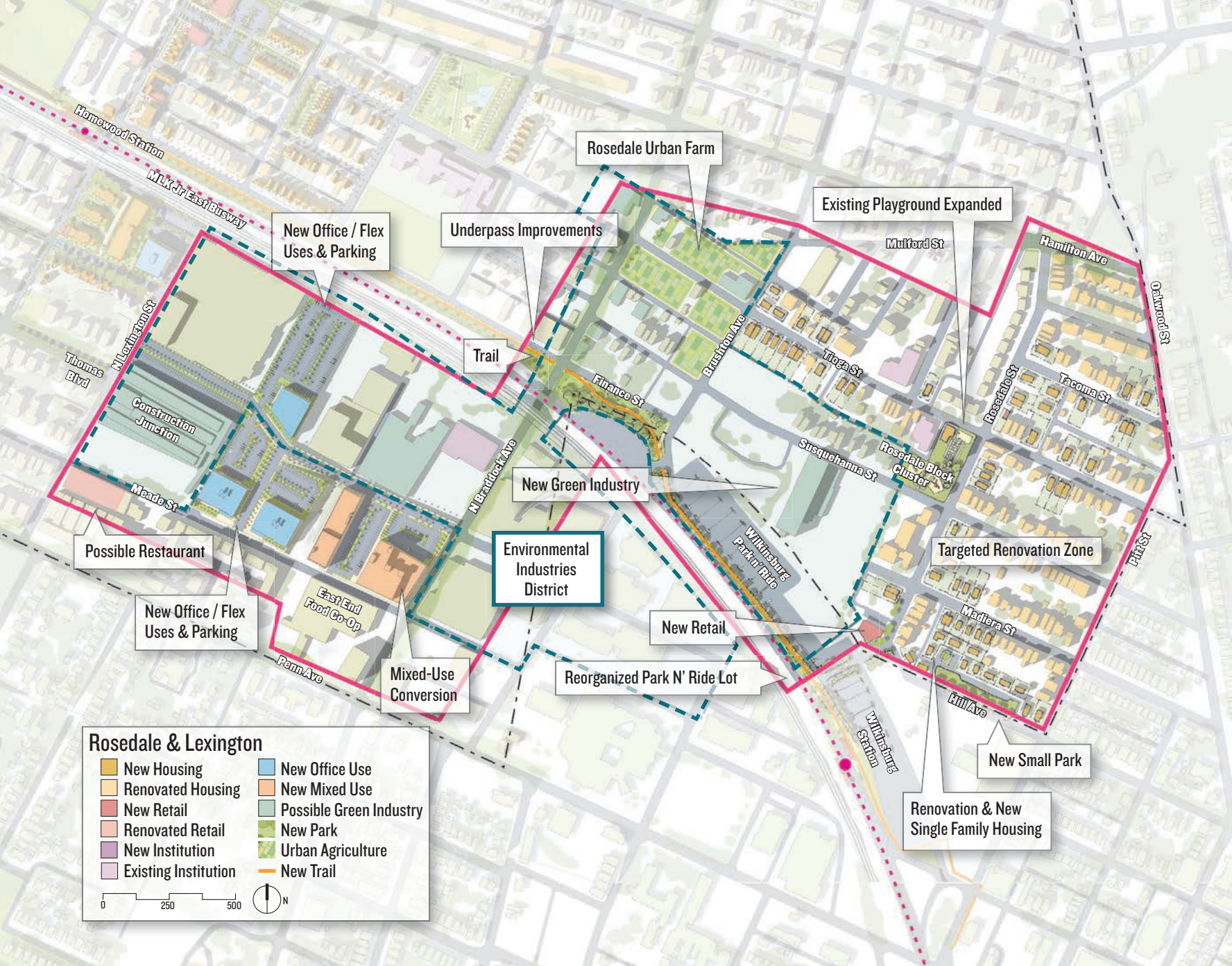
- Consider creating an Environmental Industries District spanning the Busway to include the Lexington Technology Park in Point Breeze North and the Rosedale area in Homewood South. This area is full of existing “green” entities, such as the Rosedale

Block Cluster Farm, Construction Junction, The East End Food Co-Op, Agricycle and Free Ride, that could mutually-support one another. For example, Construction Junction could serve as a future marketplace for plants and value-added products produced by the Rosedale Block Cluster.

- Communication and coordination needs to be emphasized with City and County economic development staff to position an Environmental Industries District within overall City and County business recruitment and expansion efforts.

## 5. Build Sustainable Systems

- Traffic patterns (especially truck routes) need to be carefully planned to avoid destructive traffic in neighborhood areas where housing development is encouraged.
- Limited infrastructure investments could help to establish the Environmental Industries District, such as high-profile green energy generation elements (wind and/or possibly solar, perhaps along the Busway edges); small scale signage and truck routing improvements; and targeted site acquisition to regularize the developable parcels.
- Improve pedestrian connections to Wilksburg Station, plant trees in the park-and-ride lot and incorporate on-site stormwater management systems. Enhance adjacent roadway corridors and gateways, especially those that are frequented by people accessing the Busway.



### Rosedale & Lexington

<span style="color: #e67e22;">■</span> New Housing	<span style="color: #3498db;">■</span> New Office Use
<span style="color: #f1c40f;">■</span> Renovated Housing	<span style="color: #f39c12;">■</span> New Mixed Use
<span style="color: #e74c3c;">■</span> New Retail	<span style="color: #2ecc71;">■</span> Possible Green Industry
<span style="color: #f08080;">■</span> Renovated Retail	<span style="color: #27ae60;">■</span> New Park
<span style="color: #9b59b6;">■</span> New Institution	<span style="color: #2ca02c;">■</span> Urban Agriculture
<span style="color: #d1ecf1;">■</span> Existing Institution	<span style="color: #f1c40f;">■</span> New Trail

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# Point Breeze North Recommendations

## 1. Enhance Open Space

- Work with the City and potentially the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to create a master plan to restore Westinghouse Park including new lighting, enhanced landscape treatments and a safer pedestrian bridge. Reorganize park uses to improve playground facilities, add a dog run and create a new park shelter that builds on the history of the site.
- Extend the signature green medians and traffic circles on Thomas and McPherson Boulevards across the rest of the neighborhood.
- Transform the railroad property along Simonton Street into a linear park and trail. Explore the possibility of extending the trail over both Dallas and Fifth Avenues to connect between Westinghouse Park and Chatham University's new facilities and potentially to Bakery Square.
- Green the Homewood, Dallas and Penn Avenue Corridors and improve lighting and surface treatments at the underpasses.

## 2. Target Housing Improvements

- Address vacant houses and lots along Simonton Street and Jonathan Place and build appropriately scaled infill housing.

## 3. Convert Non-Conforming Uses into Housing

- Convert the industrial building on Lynn Way to a more compatible residential loft use.





# Implementation Table - Early Actions

<p><b>Community Capacity Building Recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a staff-supported Homewood Planning Forum.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a “Homeowner Advocate” staff position to help existing homeowners. Target areas with high homeownership rates, rising vacancy and quality housing stock.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use existing communication venues to share community news and information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development Recommendations</b></p> <p>TOD Target Area</p> <p>Homewood Avenue and the Institutional Core</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Brand Homewood’s institutional core and Homewood Avenue business district as a regional, themed destination for African-American arts, culture and services.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop mixed-use buildings between the Busway and Hamilton Avenue with residential units and ground level storefront space.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Renovate Homewood Avenue storefront facades and open at least one new restaurant. Acquire and demolish a few nuisance properties.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do modest streetscape improvements and enhance the Busway underpass.</li> </ul>
<p>Pittsburgh Faison Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop a community-supported plan for improvements to the area around Pittsburgh Faison, including open space, new housing, improved road connectivity and targeted home rehabs.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support efforts to build new housing in vacant lots along Finance Street.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Support landscape improvements along the northern Busway edge.</li> </ul>
<p>Homewood North</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Help existing homeowners care for and stay in their homes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Transform vacant land and buildings around The Academy at Westinghouse into new park space and some concentrated new housing development.</li> </ul>
<p>Rosedale and Lexington Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consider creating a mixed-use Environmental Industries District spanning the Busway.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dedicate some housing development resources to improving existing homes.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Work with City Planning to develop an updated, community-supported land use plan.</li> </ul>
<p>Point Breeze North</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Address vacant houses and lots along Simonton Street and Jonathan Place.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Commission a master plan study for improvements to Westinghouse Park.</li> </ul>

# Implementation Table - Next Steps

<p><b>Community Capacity Building Recommendations</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Promote Homewood’s strengths in media outlets. Coordinate events and create regularly-scheduled opportunities for people to access local cultural offerings.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a robust multi-media communication network, including a community newsletter, bulletin boards in high-visibility locations, a radio station, etc.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create (or partner with) an entity to land bank vacant properties.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Development Recommendations</b></p>	
<p>TOD Target Area</p> <p>Homewood Avenue and the Institutional Core</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Create a business incubator and selectively recruit and/or create businesses to fill prominent vacancies. CCAC could be a good host for a business incubator.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop anchor retail/mixed-use at the corner of Hamilton and Homewood.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enhance Homewood Station.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Develop properties south of the Busway with mixed-use buildings.</li> </ul>
<p>Pittsburgh Faison Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Implement community-supported improvements to the neighborhood.</li> </ul>
<p>Homewood North</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pursue property acquisition to limit the further transfer of homes to investors.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Selectively build new homes on vacant land in targeted areas.</li> </ul>
<p>Rosedale and Lexington Area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Make infrastructure improvements to help establish the Environmental Industries District, such as high-profile green energy generation elements (wind/solar) and truck routing improvements.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Acquire targeted sites to regularize developable parcels.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Build new, green housing at high-visibility locations.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Enhance corridors and gateways leading to Wilkinsburg Station and improve pedestrian connections. Plant trees in the Park-and-Ride lot and incorporate on-site storm water systems.</li> </ul>
<p>Point Breeze North</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Expand green medians and traffic circles across the rest of the neighborhood.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Green the Homewood, Dallas and Penn Avenue corridors.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Improve Busway underpasses.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Convert non-conforming industrial uses into residential loft units.</li> </ul>

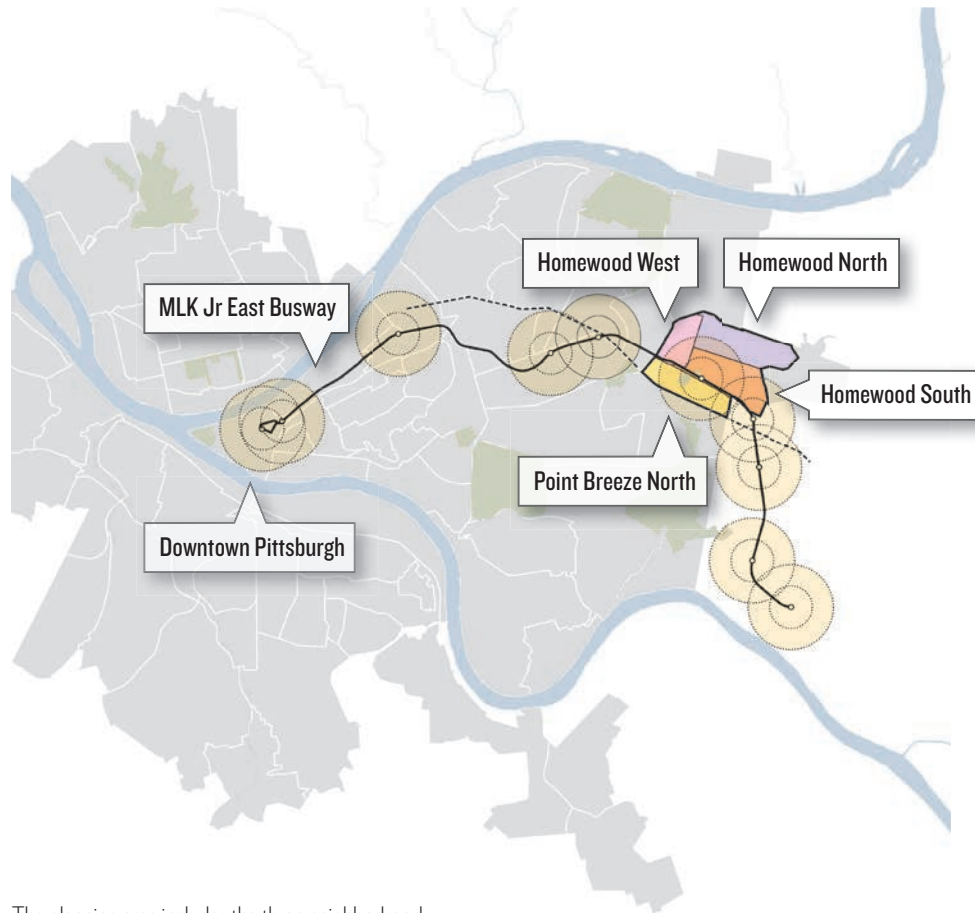






# 1 PROJECT APPROACH

# Project Approach



The planning area includes the three neighborhoods that together comprise Homewood (Homewood North, Homewood South and Homewood West) and Point Breeze North.

## What is Bridging the Busway?

Bridging the Busway, a community-driven planning vision for Pittsburgh's Homewood and Point Breeze North neighborhoods, explores the potential for building market strength through **transit oriented development** around the MLK Jr. East Busway's Homewood Station. The Plan aims to enhance and leverage the relative health of Point Breeze North to help stabilize and revitalize Homewood. It also builds on Homewood's existing assets to reestablish the neighborhood as a community of choice. Most importantly, Bridging the Busway re-imagines the Busway as a positive element that connects neighborhoods, catalyzes investment and improves the quality of life of local community members.

The planning team, led by Studio for Spatial Practice, operated at two scales: focusing on market-based development scenarios for Homewood Avenue, north and south of the Busway; and also proposing strategic projects that could catalyze revitalization throughout Homewood. Bridging the Busway is



not a comprehensive plan, intended to imagine the future of every neighborhood parcel and address all of the economic and social challenges facing Homewood. Instead, this Plan identifies targeted development opportunities that would positively impact the entire neighborhood.

Bridging the Busway specifically seeks to capitalize on the underutilized potential of Homewood Station to help jump-start revitalization in the heart of the neighborhood. Relatively dense, mixed-use, mixed-income development around Homewood Station would provide community resources and also offer amenities to help attract new residents to the neighborhood. Transit oriented development is geared towards people seeking a vibrant urban lifestyle without the need to own a car. This would be attractive to people seeking affordable housing, students and young professionals, mobility challenged people, senior citizens and anyone desiring a more environmentally friendly lifestyle.

### Building from Community Strengths

Homewood has faced many challenges over recent decades, including segregation, red-lining, gang activity and a dramatically reduced population from its peak in the 1950s. Its resilient community is struggling with concentrated poverty, one of Pittsburgh's highest crime rates and a significant number of vacant and tax-delinquent properties. But Homewood has not always been in crisis. This Plan recommends a series of physical development strategies that could help to stabilize the neighborhood, improve the lives of existing residents and attract new investment in key areas throughout the neighborhood. The planning team worked closely with steering committee members to identify existing strengths so that future development supports, engages and leverages indigenous efforts to great effect. The wealth of community assets considered during the planning process is described below.

Homewood's **significant physical and social assets** include its resilient community, rich local culture and history, numerous architectural gems. The neighborhood is also home to new and rejuvenating schools, a branch of the Carnegie Library, a YMCA and a YWCA, the Community College of Allegheny County's Homewood-Brushton Center, many churches and active community-based organizations. Several local faith-based organizations are making a palpable difference, bringing in dedicated new residents and supporting community members in need. Homewood Community Sports also supports neighborhood youth.

While the volume of vacant properties in Homewood may initially be daunting, it provides a rare opportunity to restructure and reorganize parts of the neighborhood to accommodate additional open space, new housing types and innovative approaches to providing neighborhood infrastructure.



# A Vision for Homewood & Point Breeze North

Improved Busway Station,  
Underpass & Trail

Improved, Expanded  
Parks & New Trails

Expanded Youth, Arts  
& Education Campus

New Uses on Homewood:  
Grocery Store & Housing

New Infill Housing &  
Home Renovations

Enhanced Homewood  
Business District





Public transportation is another neighborhood asset. Despite recent transit cuts, Homewood retains several local bus routes and access to the East Busway. The neighborhood can also accommodate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists because it is relatively flat compared to other Pittsburgh neighborhoods. While Homewood is limited in terms of recreational amenities, it is adjacent to Westinghouse Park and half a mile from Frick Park, the largest of Pittsburgh's regional parks.

The assets listed above - rather than crime, poverty and vacancy - should define Homewood and help to guide revitalization efforts moving forward.

During the Bridging the Busway community planning process, several **patterns of activity** were also identified, suggesting possible opportunities for economic development. For example, a significant number of families come to Homewood every Sunday to attend church services, yet there are no local restaurants to keep congregants in the neighborhood. The Afro-American Music Institute also attracts students from around the City and region, but

it is nearly invisible to people driving through Homewood. Some existing businesses also attract customer bases from outside the neighborhood. These businesses, including Strong Cleaners and two BBQ restaurants, could play an important role in helping to revitalize Homewood Avenue as part of a walkable, mixed-use TOD district. To help stabilize and strengthen the local market, attract residents and lure new development, positive aspects of the neighborhood need to be celebrated and made evident to a broader public.

An impressive range of **current projects**, throughout Homewood and Point Breeze North, were also highlighted. These efforts could be complemented with key development projects to further stabilize the neighborhood and spur investment. Ongoing projects include but are not limited to:

- The Homewood Children's Village's rejuvenation of The Academy at Westinghouse;
- Rosedale Block Cluster's urban farm, community building and advocacy;

- Building United of Southwestern Pennsylvania's new homes near the Busway;
- A partnership between Operation Better Block and Rebuilding Together Pittsburgh, investing \$1 million in home rehabilitation projects over five years;
- Save Race Street Committee's focus on stabilizing and protecting Homewood North's high-quality housing stock;
- Mary Savage's "Edge Gardens" on vacant lots;
- The Arts, Culture, and Training Institute, a partnership between Community Empowerment Association and the August Wilson Center for African American Culture; and
- Greening the northern Busway edge in Homewood, between Homewood and Braddock Avenues.

There are also several active green economy initiatives within the study area including Construction Junction, Agricycle, an apiary and Tree Pittsburgh's tree nursery. Homewood and Point Breeze North

should support, connect and expand upon these efforts, highlighting local culture and green economy strengths. Homewood can also promote these projects as a way to re-present the neighborhood in a more balanced and hopeful light.

## Community Values

The Bridging the Busway process was one of the first times that community members from both sides of the Busway engaged in co-creating a vision for the future of the Homewood and Point Breeze North neighborhoods. Planning participants shared information about local challenges and successes and learned about the people, organizations and initiatives that are already transforming each neighborhood in positive ways.

Community members also articulated a shared set of values. Both communities are interested in improving access to trails and open space; stabilizing the existing housing stock and increasing home-ownership rates; greening streets; providing new open space and improving parks. Sustainability is another core value

shared across the neighborhoods. Homes can be retrofitted to become more energy-efficient, locally-produced urban agriculture can provide access to healthy and affordable food, and green streets can encourage exercise and community interaction. Homewood and Point Breeze North community members also acknowledge that the Busway is a valuable asset that should attract new development and residents to their neighborhoods.

Homewood residents also articulated a specific set of concerns. They want to ensure that existing stakeholders participate in and benefit from future development projects through the creation of job and training opportunities. They insist on supporting existing local businesses and preserving and promoting the local history and culture. They emphasize the importance of improving public safety, addressing vacancy and creating high-quality open space around neighborhood schools. They also desire a range of housing options: everything from senior living facilities, to artist residences, to affordable housing

and market-rate single-family homes. Community members also want to stay involved in conversations about the future of their neighborhood.

These community values directly informed the Goals & Strategies section of this document. They also underlie the development proposals presented in the Urban Design Focus Areas section.

## A Planning Roadmap

This Plan is intended to serve a wide audience including residents, local community-based organizations and potential developers interested in investing in Homewood and Point Breeze North. It can be used to inspire new initiatives and inform existing efforts as well. With determination and creativity, community stakeholders can use this document to help leverage neighborhood investment, assess the strength of future development projects and test their compatibility with the community's values and vision for the neighborhood.



# Bridging the Busway Vision Plan

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Office Use
- New Mixed Use
- Possible Green Industry
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail





## Document Overview

The Bridging the Busway Plan is comprised of the following parts:

1. **Project Approach** describes the asset-based approach to development planning that guided the Bridging the Busway project. This section also explains how community values are incorporated into this Plan and provides an overview of this document's structure.
2. **Planning Process** provides background information about the project time line, its steering committee and community engagement efforts.
3. **Analysis** presents the data that informed this Plan within the framework of four planning questions:
  - a. How can the East Busway play a central role in revitalizing and building market strength in Homewood and Point Breeze North?
  - b. How can the relative health and stability of the Point Breeze North neighborhood be enhanced and help to stabilize and reinvigorate Homewood?
  - c. How can existing, indigenous assets be leveraged to establish Homewood's business district a regional destination for celebrated African-American culture, institutions, businesses and entrepreneurship?
  - d. How can we ensure that neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment efforts benefit and enhance the lives of existing residents and business owners?
4. **Goals & Strategies** describes five fundamental community values and a set of related strategies that guided this Plan. The goals and strategies are planning values and specific actions that can generally be applied to different parts of the Homewood and Point Breeze North neighborhoods.
  - a. Equitable Development
  - b. Expand Business, Arts and Culture
  - c. Stabilize and Diversify Housing
  - d. Green the Neighborhood
  - e. Build a Sustainable Neighborhood
5. **Urban Design Focus Areas** provides more detailed analysis and planning proposals for four targeted focus areas:
  - a. The Homewood Avenue Transit Oriented Development Target Area
  - b. Homewood North
  - c. Rosedale and Lexington, and
  - d. Point Breeze North
6. **Moving Forward** recommends the creation of a Homewood Planning Forum, suggests a three-phase approach to implementing the Plan and discusses the capacity of local organizations to coordinate neighborhood revitalization efforts well into the future.



A Mix of New and Renovated Houses with New Community Open Space



New Transit Oriented Development on Homewood Ave







**“The process brought our communities together in a way I haven’t seen happen before.”**



# 2 PLANNING PROCESS

# The Planning Process

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Analysis	Fall 2010 - Spring 2011
Community Focus Groups (5)	April 2011
Design Workshops (4)	May 2011
Presentation & Discussion of Alternatives	July 26, 2011 Public Meeting
Presentation & Discussion of Draft Plan	August 30, 2011 Public Meeting
Final Plan Open House	November 5, 2011 Public Meeting
Final Plan Document	January 2012

## A Community Driven Process

The Bridging the Busway (BTB) process was informed by a diverse community-based steering committee representing organizations, businesses and residents from Homewood and Point Breeze North and public sector leadership. The steering committee crafted the original project mandate, selected and guided the planning team and met monthly for the duration of the project.

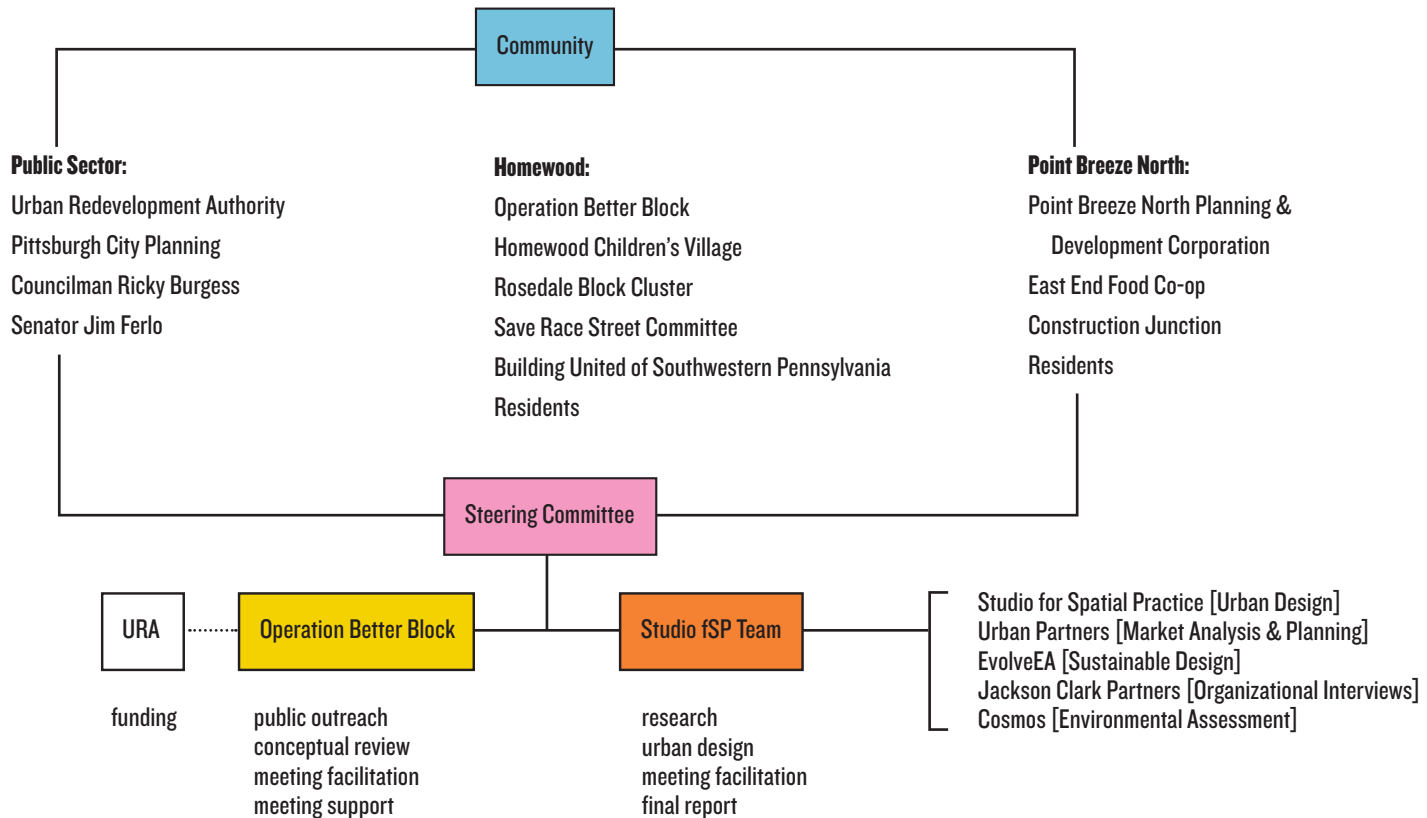
BTB began with a kick-off meeting hosted by the Homewood Children's Village, which initiated a parallel Children Youth & Family Master Plan (CYFMP) process. While there are areas of overlap between the two planning efforts, the CYFMP generally focuses on social issues and BTB is largely focused on physical development and place-making. Steering committee members involved in both Plans helped to coordinate recommendations.

The Planning Team conducted public focus groups and design workshops to gather additional information about community assets and challenges and generate preliminary design concepts. They were followed by three public meetings where a range of redevelopment scenarios were presented for review and feedback and a vision for strategic neighborhood development was confirmed.

A project website - [www.bridgingthebusway.com](http://www.bridgingthebusway.com) - was also used to disseminate information and solicit feedback regarding interim design proposals.



# Participants & Planning Team



# Community Focus Groups



Five thematic focus groups were held on the following topics:

1. Point Breeze North Residents
2. Homewood Businesses and Entrepreneurship
3. Homewood History, Culture and Arts
4. Green Space and Green Economy
5. Housing: Retaining and Attracting New Residents



The focus groups explored assets and challenges in both neighborhoods, and were conducted at locations relevant to the topics at hand. Participants included residents, business owners, steering committee members and representatives from a range of non-profit organizations working in the community.



# Design Workshops

Four design workshops explored development possibilities for targeted areas in Homewood and Point Breeze North.

1. Homewood North
2. Industrial Busway Edges
3. Residential Busway Edges
4. Homewood and Frankstown

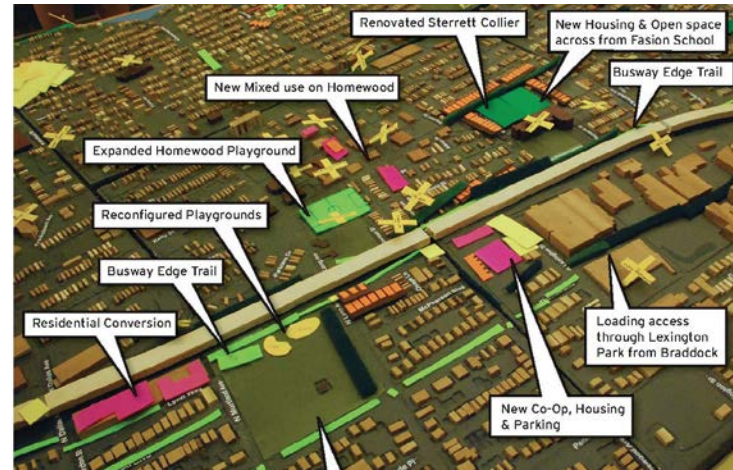
Design workshops were held at various locations throughout the study area. At each meeting, analysis, findings and project goals were presented, followed by a community design exercise to explore possible changes to neighborhood areas.

Results of the design workshops were carefully documented and became the initial basis for many of the Plan recommendations that followed.



# The Design Workshop Process

Design workshops were organized to help community members generate and explore a variety of possible future development scenarios. Colored model pieces were used to represent a range of uses including housing, new mixed use and various kinds of green space. Design ideas were tested using a large physical model of the study area that was constructed by Carnegie Mellon School of Architecture's Urban Laboratory. At each workshop, multiple scenarios were generated, discussed and documented. Ideas from the workshops informed the planning goals and influenced the development of urban design proposals for neighborhood focus areas.





# Public Meetings

Three public meetings followed the Design Workshops in July, August and November. At the first meeting, redevelopment options were presented and discussed for three key focus areas. At the second meeting a more refined set of goals and design scenarios was presented. A final Open House was held at the end of the planning process to present the final project goals and preferred scenarios for the four urban design focus areas.



A photograph of a row of colorful, multi-story houses with awnings and a street scene with a car. The houses are painted in shades of green, yellow, and red, with white trim and awnings. A dark car is parked on the street in the foreground. The sky is blue with white clouds.

**“I realized 20 years ago that I was living in a \$200,000 house in a \$20,000 neighborhood.”**



# 3 ANALYSIS

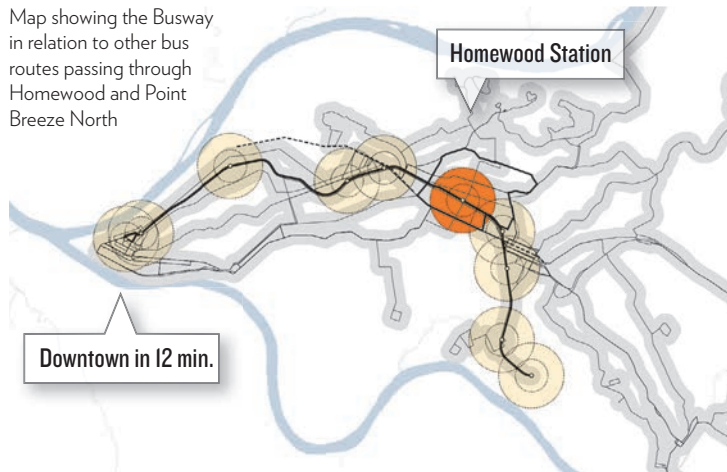
The Bridging the Busway planning team walked with residents through Homewood and Point Breeze North, conducted stakeholder interviews, analyzed geographic and demographic data, studied past community plans and convened a series of focus groups and Design Workshops to build an informed understanding of community assets, challenges, goals and desires.

Four planning questions were developed as a way to focus the data-gathering and analysis process. The following pages address each of the planning questions, providing relevant data and framing the development of the project goals and urban design proposals that follow.

# Planning Question 1:



Map showing the Busway in relation to other bus routes passing through Homewood and Point Breeze North



How can the East Busway play a central role in revitalizing and building market strength in Homewood and Point Breeze North?

## Transit Oriented Development Opportunities

The East Busway is an undervalued asset in Homewood and Point Breeze North, as it is surrounded by vacant land with enormous potential for new transit oriented development (TOD). TOD is a method for organizing relatively compact, high density mixed-use development around transit as means for encouraging transit use and creating more efficient and sustainable land use patterns. It typically consists of moderate and high-density housing, along with a mix of complementary public uses, jobs, retail and services, within a half-mile walk from a major transit stop. TOD is a way to think about neighborhoods with transit as places with potentially high housing and development demand. Studies on the market potential for TOD predict that over the next 25 years a quarter of all households nationally will look to rent or buy housing located within a quarter mile of a transit stop.\*

\* "Hidden in Plain Sight: Capturing the Demand for Housing Near Transit" Center For Transit Oriented Development, 2004. Source: [ctod.org/portal/node/2192](http://ctod.org/portal/node/2192)

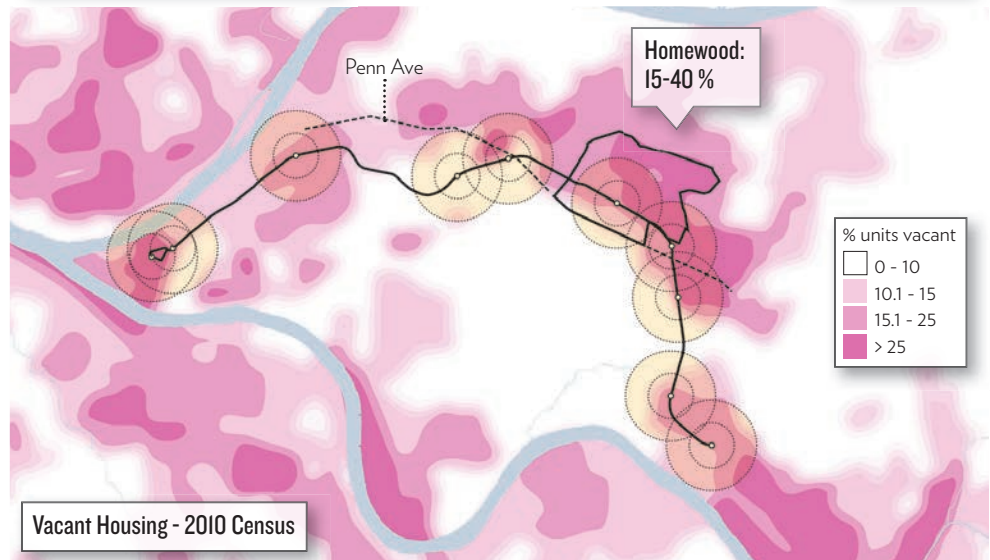
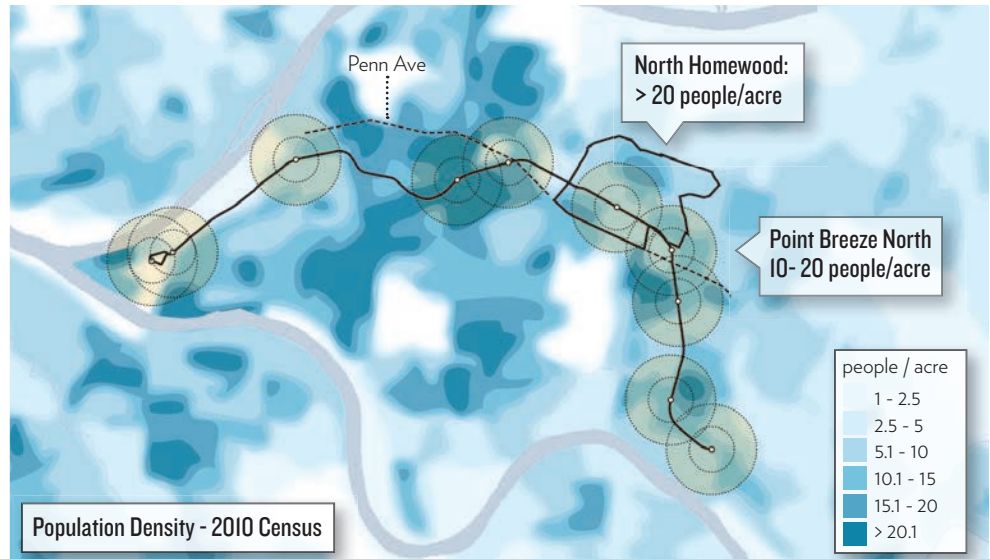


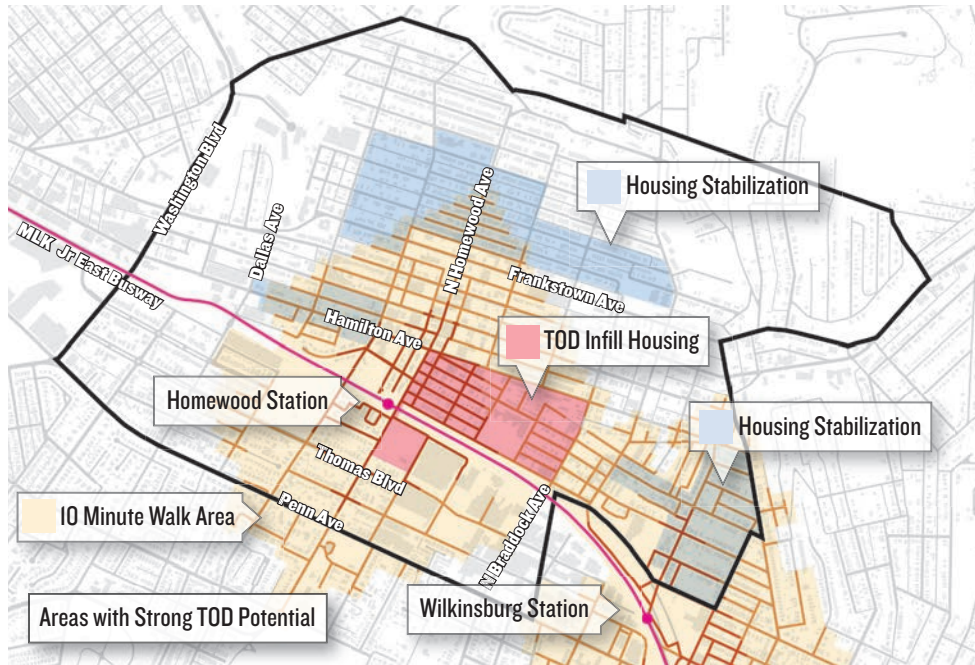
New transit oriented development within a 10 minute walk of both stops in Homewood and Point Breeze North can be a tool for adding value to both neighborhoods, but especially as a means to revitalize Homewood.

### Living Near Transit

Looking at where people live in relation to the Busway is a first step in understanding the TOD potential of Homewood and Point Breeze North. The greatest concentration of people in the City of Pittsburgh is found in neighborhoods near or alongside the Busway: in Shadyside, Bloomfield, Friendship, Oakland and Highland Park. Notable exceptions are areas around Homewood and Wilksburg Stations, which serve the Bridging the Busway study area. These areas historically had a much greater population density but today endure high rates of home vacancy, as seen in the diagram to the right. In Homewood, around 25% of houses are vacant with some census tracts having up to 40% vacancy.

New transit oriented housing development can be a tool for bringing people, neighborhood services and jobs back to Homewood. Because of





its proximity to both the Busway and the relative strength of Point Breeze North's residential housing market, Homewood South should continue to be targeted for new infill housing, rehabilitation programs and a range of other types of residential units including market rate apartments, condominiums, senior housing and affordable housing. To succeed, these projects will need to be welcoming to neighborhood residents and prospective community members who are looking for housing that is transit friendly. This will also require improvements to the transit stations and to the public realm around it, to enhance pedestrian connectivity and ensure safety.



New Housing near Transit



Vacant House on Race Street

In addition to new housing development, it is important to ensure the long term viability of high quality older housing stock within a 10 minute walk from the Stations. New housing development should also be paired with strategies to address crime and vacancy and to stabilize existing housing in the larger neighborhood, especially parts of Homewood North and South with high concentrations of both homeownership and housing vacancy.



## TOD and Neighborhood Retail

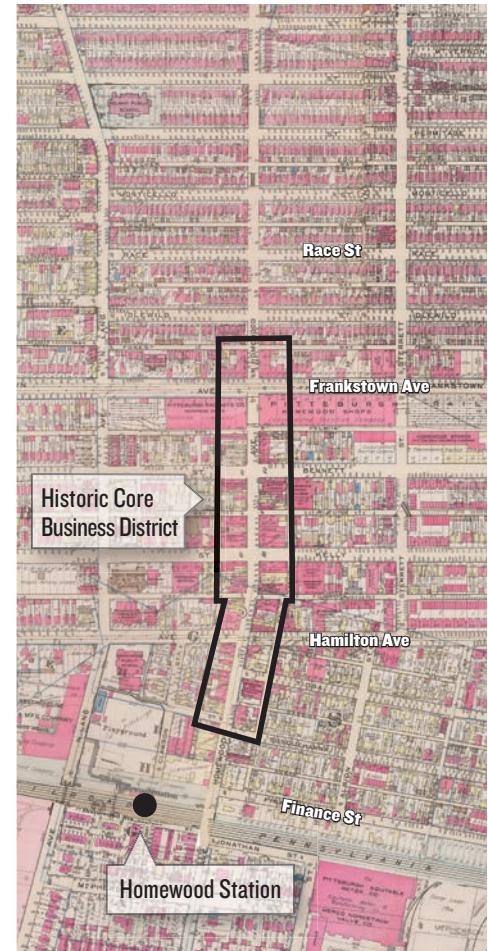
The Homewood Avenue business district was once filled with banks, theaters, commercial storefronts, a post office and apartment buildings with ground floor retail. Many of those original uses and buildings have since disappeared, but a PNC Bank, a bakery and a hardware store remain. Homewood also has businesses scattered along the Frankstown Avenue corridor and in a few other neighborhood locations.

It is unlikely that retail uses in the business district will experience significant revitalization until the market in the surrounding neighborhood is stabilized and public safety concerns are addressed. To strengthen the market the population of Homewood ultimately needs to increase.

TOD can play a role in reinvigorating the business district in a number of ways. First and foremost, new TOD housing will bring more residents to the neighborhood. There are also some sites along Homewood Avenue where small neighborhood serving retail uses could be integrated with upper-story housing.

A TOD strategy for development suggests that the Homewood Avenue business core be the primary focus for efforts to revitalize business activity in the neighborhood because of its relationship to the transit station. Historically the neighborhood grew up around Homewood Station, which originally was a railroad stop, and the Homewood Avenue business district. The business district connected residents to transit.

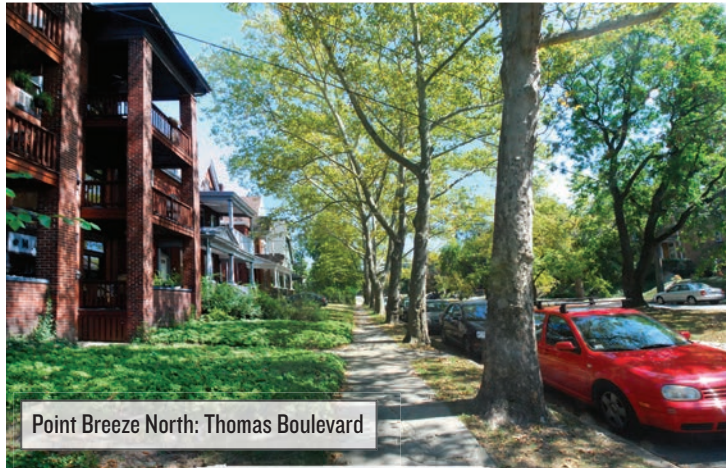
Though the tightly-knit development pattern described above has been eroded, it should be revisited and reinforced. Efforts to reinvent the business district (discussed in Planning Question 3) should focus on bringing new uses to Homewood Avenue between Frankstown and Hamilton Avenues. In the area between Hamilton Avenue and the Busway, new retail spaces should be considered as part of transit oriented development projects to reconnect the transit stop with the business district.



1939 Hopkins Map centered on Homewood Avenue leading from Point Breeze North through the central business district up into the dense Homewood North residential neighborhood. Source: Historic Pittsburgh website: <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/pittsburgh/>.

## Planning Question 2:

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How can the relative health and stability of the Point Breeze North neighborhood be enhanced and help to stabilize and reinvigorate Homewood?

### A Strong Market Next to a Weak Market

Homewood and Point Breeze North are both neighborhoods with beautiful historic houses but Homewood is challenged by hundreds of vacant lots and houses, high levels of foreclosures and limited property maintenance. Although Point Breeze North still has some problem properties, its residential market experienced an increase in stability over the last two decades. During that same period, Homewood endured the abandonment of housing, leading to demolitions and the progressive devaluation of residential properties to the point where median sales prices are consistently less than \$10,000.

This pattern of disinvestment, which occurred in numerous Pittsburgh neighborhoods, was exacerbated by crime and City-wide population loss. But Homewood has some advantages worth leveraging that comparable neighborhoods with similar housing issues do not: its access to the East Busway, and proximity to a neighborhood with a relatively strong market.



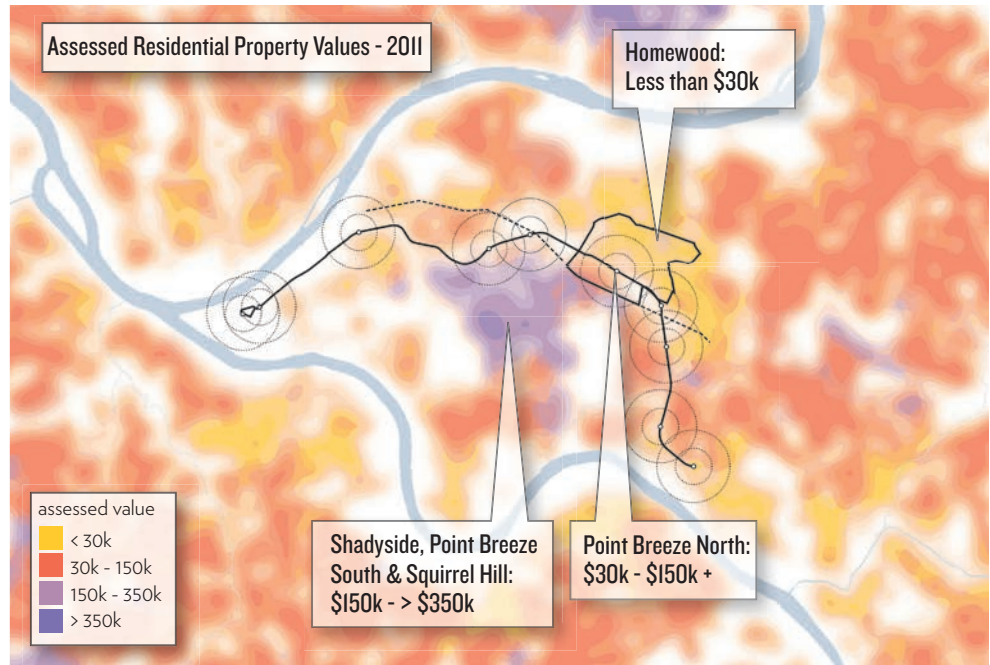


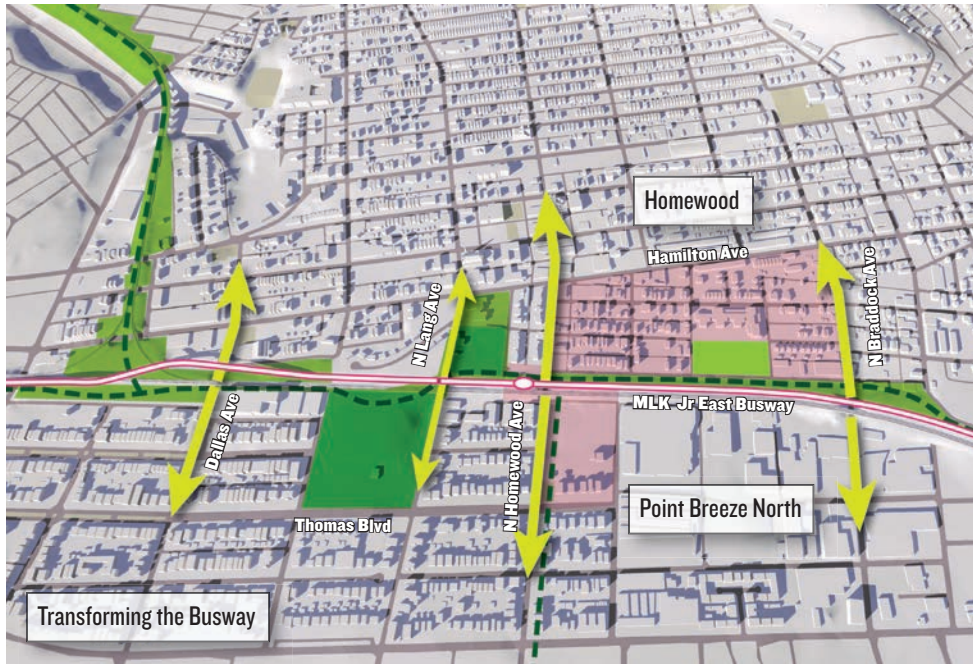
When evaluated in a larger context, as shown in the diagram to the right, it is apparent that Homewood is one of the only places in the entire region where extremely weak and strong housing markets are located so closely together.

### Bridging the Busway

The Busway and Penn Avenue corridors create major divisions in property values across Pittsburgh's East End. In neighborhoods immediately north of these corridors, comparable houses tend to be radically undervalued. Median household incomes follow a similar pattern, with lower incomes to the north of the Busway. Homewood has an opportunity to capture some of the demand for high quality older homes from the adjacent East End neighborhoods. This will require physical barriers separating Homewood from Point Breeze North to be mitigated, and internal threats to its remaining housing stock to be addressed.

Although it is a neighborhood asset, the Busway is a powerful barrier between the communities. Existing connections over and under the Busway are unwelcoming and unsafe, and land alongside it tends to be vacant and unkempt.





The Busway needs to be transformed from a barrier into a safe place linking communities to transit. Its residential edges offer opportunities for more new housing, recreational trails and expanded open space. Its industrial edges offer an opportunity to further grow a new green economy and create jobs in the community. A strategy that transforms the southern edge of Homewood, adjacent to the stronger market of Point Breeze North, will set the stage for restoring the housing market in the rest of the neighborhood.

Further development around the station should be part of this strategy, as should a physical transformation of the Busway edges and underpasses. Cities around the world are transforming existing infrastructure into new public spaces by adding pedestrian and bicycle connections where only rail or car infrastructure existed previously. The High Line in New York City recycled an abandoned, elevated railway into a new linear park and trail. The Knokke Footbridge, in Belgium, provides an artful example of a new pedestrian bridge linking two communities that were previously separated by a



The High Line - New York City



Knokke Footbridge - Belgium



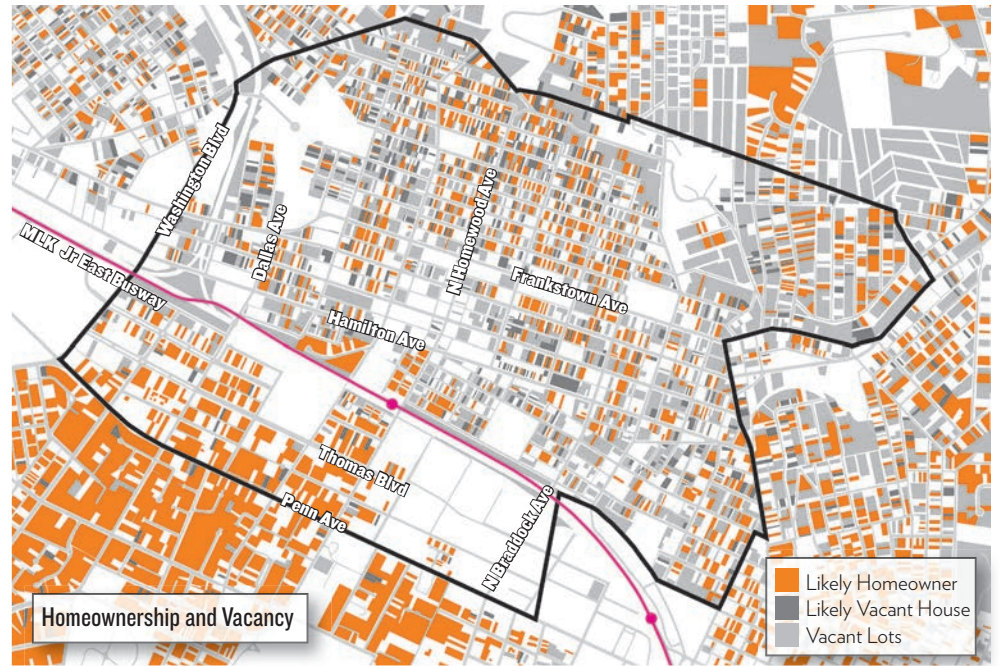
highway. Both projects are relevant precedents to consider in relation to softening the infrastructure barriers that exist between Homewood and Point Breeze North.

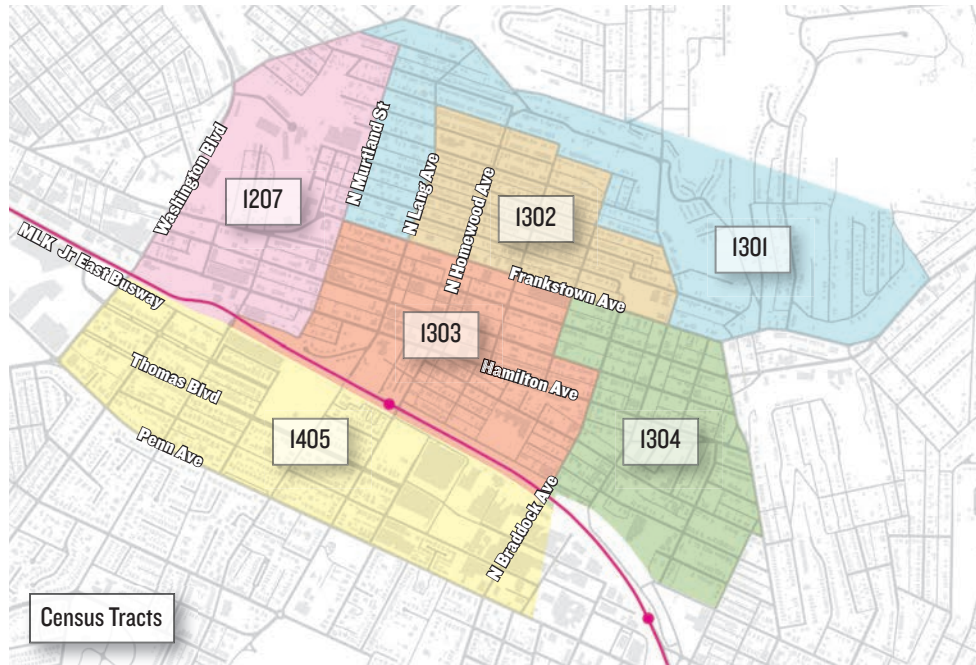
### Addressing Problem Properties

Targeting physical barriers is only one aspect of restoring Homewood's housing market. Vacant houses and lots, as well as deferred maintenance, tax delinquency and tangled ownership titles, all severely challenge Homewood's residential market. Addressing vacant houses and unkempt vacant lots is essential for transforming the value of housing in Homewood. This is especially important when a significant volume of viable vacant houses is located in areas with a relatively high level of homeownership.

### Assisting Homeowners

In addition to addressing problem properties, targeted coordinated assistance to existing homeowners will be needed to ensure that residents are able to remain in their houses and ultimately benefit from a restoration of the neighborhood's housing market.





## Sales Housing Market

Urban Partners examined the Homewood/Point Breeze North area sales housing market for both owner-occupied and investor purchases to help identify economic characteristics of the two neighborhoods.

The following pages summarize this information for each of the census tracts that were examined,

including tracts 1207, 1301, 1302, 1303 and 1304 on the Homewood side of the Busway, and tract 1405 on the Point Breeze North side. A table is also provided so that the relative economic characteristics can be understood across the census tracts. This information can be used by community members and neighborhood organizations to inform housing advocacy and stabilization efforts.

The median sales price for housing transactions was calculated for a period of 24 months between January 2009 and February 2011.

### Homewood Census Tract 1207

This census tract is characterized by mostly detached homes, but with some duplexes and many vacant lots where former homes stood.

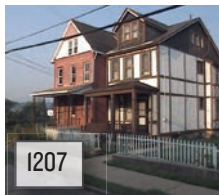
- 63% of home purchases were by owner-occupants
- With a median sales price of only \$23,550, owner-occupied homes experienced sales prices of more than four times the price of investor-purchased homes
- Overall median sales price in the census tract is only just over \$10,000
- Most recent owner-occupied sales were the least expensive
- Largest investor-purchased home was the least expensive at only \$1.51 per SF
- Sales prices do not necessarily correspond to house size
- No apparent correlation between house size and owner-occupancy vs. renter status



## Residential Real Estate Activity

	Buyer Type	# of Sales	% of Sales	Median Sales \$	Highest Sale	Location	Lowest Sale	Location
Homewood Census Tract 1207	Owner-Occupied	5	63	\$23,550	\$42,294	Frankstown Ave.	\$5,000	Chaucer St.
	Investor	3	37	\$5,000	\$10,500	Chaucer St.	\$3,999	Sweeney Pl.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>		<b>\$10,388</b>				
Homewood Census Tract 1301	Owner-Occupied	9	56	\$7,000	\$61,000	Perchment St.	\$4,000	Mt. Vernon St.
	Investor	7	44	\$10,000	\$19,000	Upland St.	\$3,000	Monticello St.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>\$7,225</b>				
Homewood Census Tract 1302	Owner-Occupied	13	65	\$7,500	\$30,000	Monticello St.	\$3,000	Hermitage St.
	Investor	7	35	\$4,710	\$10,900	Hermitage St.	\$3,624	Kedron St.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>\$5,475</b>				
Homewood Census Tract 1303	Owner-Occupied	4	37	\$18,000	\$80,615	N. Homewood Ave.	\$14,400	Susquehanna St.
	Investor	7	63	\$5,000	\$33,000	Bennett St.	\$3,404	Clawson St.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>\$9,700</b>				
Homewood Census Tract 1304	Owner-Occupied	5	83	\$9,000	\$70,000	Rosedale St.	\$4,000	Hamilton Ave.
	Investor	1	17	\$14,400	\$14,400	Bennett St.	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>\$11,250</b>				
Point Breeze North Census Tract 1405	Owner-Occupied	15	75	\$90,000	\$275,000	N. Linden Ave.	\$15,000	Jonathan Ct.
	Investor	5	25	\$10,000	\$95,600	Penn Ave.	\$4,003	Jonathan Ct.
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>		<b>\$75,250</b>				

Relative economic characteristics of the for-sale housing market across census tracts in the Bridging the Busway study area, between January 2009 and February 2011.



## Homewood Census Tract 1301

This census tract is characterized by mostly detached homes and vacant lots on the western edge; to the east in the hillier areas, there are more single-detached homes along with some duplexes and areas of higher-density and newer infill housing.

- 56% of home purchases were by owner-occupants
- Investor-purchased homes experienced higher median sales prices (at just \$10,000) than owner-occupied
- Highest-priced home is located just above Frankstown Avenue on the east side of the census tract
- Despite having one owner-occupied sale transaction of \$61,000, the median sales price is \$7,000
- Largest owner-occupied home is the second least expensive
- Smallest home sold (760 SF) is in the middle of the tract's recent sale price range
- Investor-purchased homes sold are slightly larger than the owner-occupied homes
- Sales prices do not necessarily correspond to house size

## Homewood Census Tract 1302

This census tract is characterized by dense detached homes with rear alleys; while there are scattered vacant homes, there are relatively few vacant lots.

- This tract has blocks with very high levels of homeownership
- 65% of home purchases (and almost twice the number of investor purchases) were by owner-occupants – a trend more similar to 1207 than surrounding 1301
- Owner-occupied homes experienced higher median sales prices than investor-occupied
- At just \$5,500, census tract 1302 has the lowest recent median sales price in the entire study area
- Tract ties for the highest number of recent sales transactions in the study area at 20
- Highest recent sales price is \$30,000
- Smallest homes are in the middle of the tract's recent sale price range
- Contains the lowest-priced recently sold home in study area at \$3,000
- Investor-purchased homes sold are about the same size as owner-occupied homes

- Sales prices don't necessarily correspond to house size or location

## Homewood Census Tract 1303

The heart of the study area is characterized by a wide variety of housing types including single detached, row-houses and duplexes, as well as new detached homes and townhomes; vacant homes and vacant lots abound.

- Only 37% of home purchases were by owner-occupants
- Owner-occupied homes experienced more than 3x the median sales prices of investor-occupied
- Overall median sales price is less than \$10,000
- Contains the most expensive recent sale of the largest size north of the Busway (4,275 SF) at \$80,615
- Most recent owner-occupied homes sold are around 1,100 SF
- Highest recent investor purchase was twice that of the next highest for the same size
- Most recent investor-purchased homes sold for less than \$5,000
- Largest investor-purchased home is the second least expensive



- Most recent investor-purchased homes recently sold are of a similar size – around 1,300 SF
- Sales prices do not necessarily correspond to house size or location

### Homewood Census Tract 1304

This census tract is eastern-most in the study area and is characterized by a variety of housing types including single detached, some twins and newer infill detached homes; vacant homes and vacant lots abound.

- This tract has blocks with very high levels of homeownership
- 5 of 6 recent home purchases were by owner-occupants – the highest percentage in the study area
- The single recent investor purchase had a higher sale price than the median sale price of owner-occupied purchases
- Tract experienced highest total median sales price in study area north of the Busway
- Tract contains the 2nd most expensive recent sale at \$70,000; however median sales price of owner-occupied homes is only \$9,000

- Largest home most recently sold in tract (at over 2,000 SF) was investor-purchased
- 2 owner-occupied homes on same block recently sold for a difference of \$61,000 within 3 months
- Sales prices do not necessarily correspond to house size or location

### Point Breeze North Census Tract 1405

The only census tract south of the Busway in the study area is characterized by large single detached homes – many multi-family – and some duplexes; almost no vacant homes or lots exist, but there is a major industrial/commercial/non-residential element on the east side of the tract.

- 75% of recent home purchases were by owner-occupants
- Owner-occupied homes commanded 9x the median sales prices as investor-occupied
- At just \$90,000, census tract 1405 has the highest recent median sales price in the entire study area
- The total median sales price is the highest in the study area as well

- Tract ties for the highest number of recent sales transactions in the study area at 20
- Tract contains the most expensive recent sale in the study area, at \$275,000
- Almost half of the recently sold owner-occupied homes were over \$100,000, while none of the investor-purchased homes were
- Tract contains the largest home recently sold in the study area – an investor-purchased home of 5,760 SF
- Lowest-price investor-purchased home in tract sold for a similar price as many north of the Busway
- Smallest recently sold home is in the middle of the price range
- Generally, sales prices do not necessarily correspond to house size or location within the tract

## Planning Question 3:

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Homewood Avenue Business District 1935



Homewood Avenue Business District 2011

How can existing, indigenous assets be leveraged to establish Homewood's business district as a destination for celebrated African-American culture, institutions, businesses and entrepreneurship?

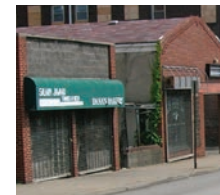
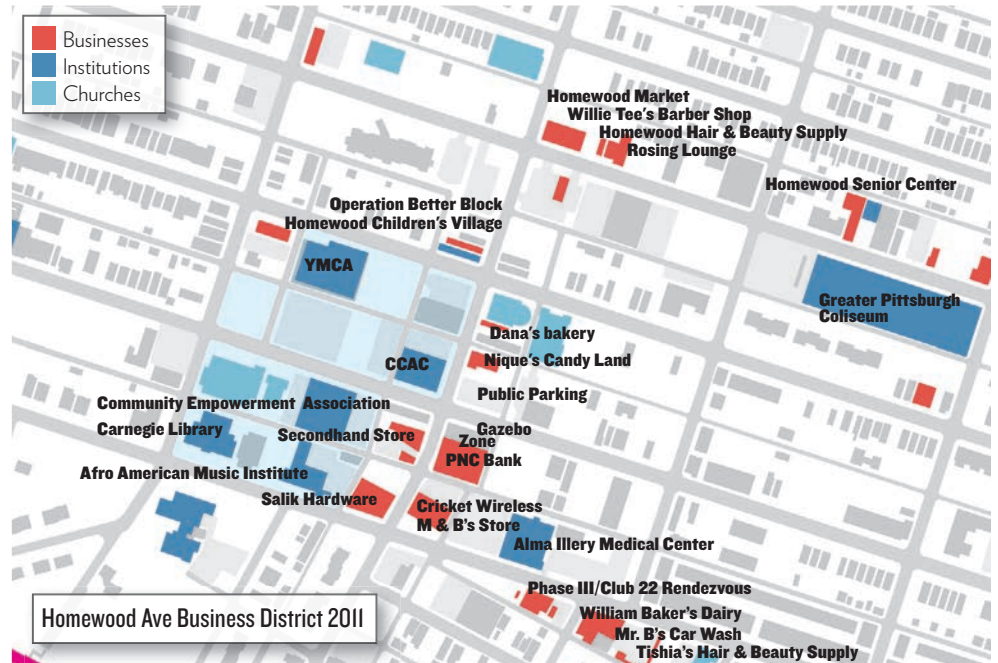
### The Decline and Reinvention of Main Street

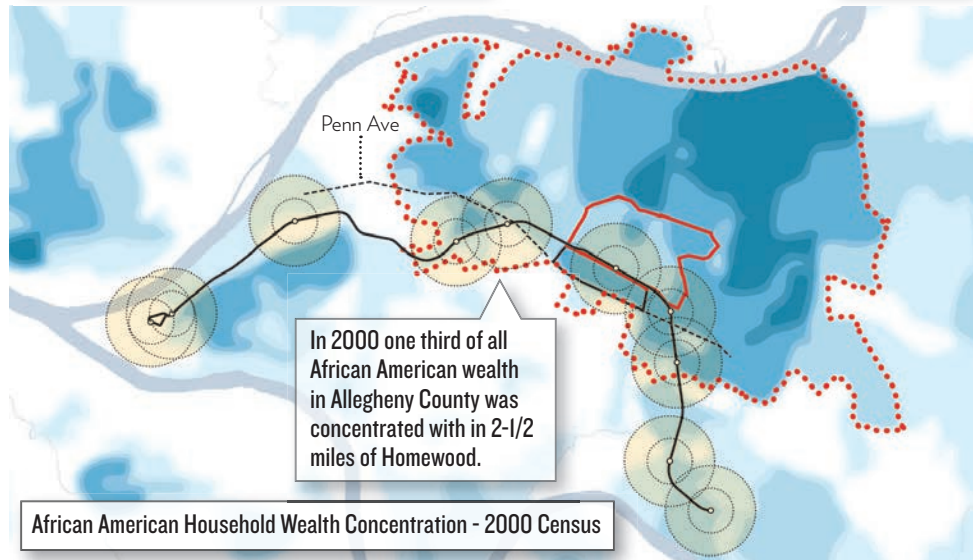
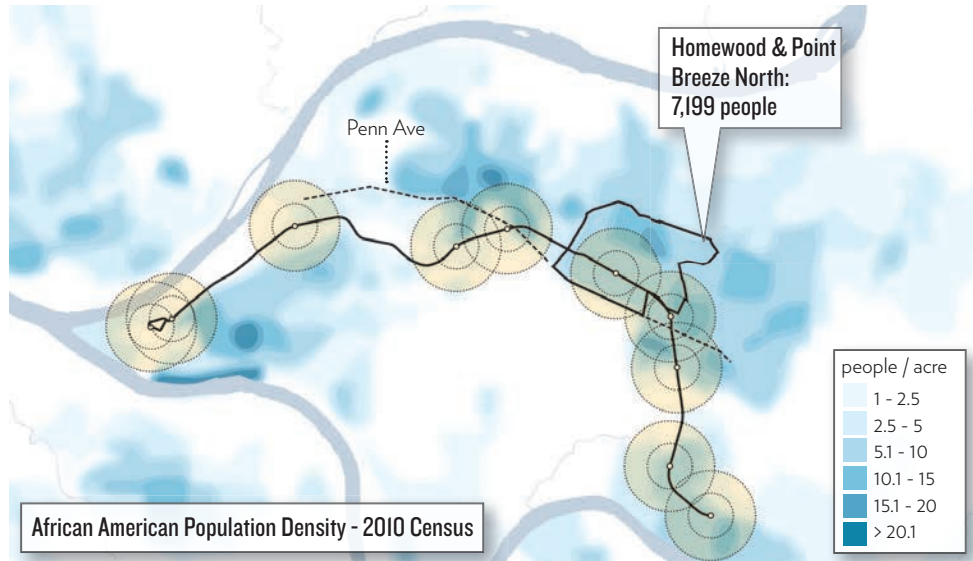
Like neighborhood business districts across the country, Homewood Avenue used to be a place where a full range of goods and services could be found, home to banks, theaters, commercial storefronts, a post office and even a department store. Neighborhood population loss, changes in retailing patterns, the rise of suburban malls and on-line purchasing have contributed to the decline of most urban Main Streets. Successful districts play a new role in the lives of busy neighborhood residents and sometimes define themselves as a unique destination in the context of the larger City or region. It is unlikely that Homewood will ever again have the full service business district that it had 50 years ago. The remaining neighborhood assets and retail uses should inform the business district's revitalization and help reinvent Homewood Avenue retail district, helping it serve neighborhood needs and also become a unique regional draw.



## Building on Existing Assets & Identity

Unlike many other Pittsburgh neighborhoods, Homewood has numerous remaining businesses and institutions in and around its core business district. Especially unique is the concentration of strong educational, youth and cultural institutions in the blocks west of the business district. This institutional core, shown in blue at right, consists of the YMCA, a Community College of Allegheny County branch location, a public library, the Afro American Music Institute and most recently the Community Empowerment Association's Arts, Culture and Training Institute. Two of the strongest community based organizations, Operation Better Block and The Homewood Children's Village, also have their offices in this area. Around the corner, on Hamilton Avenue, the Alma Illery Health Center provides services to lower income residents. Finally, numerous churches surround the business district. These institutions provide essential services to Homewood residents and also serve as destinations bringing people from around the city and region to the district. They also establish a positive, culturally specific identity of place.





## Re-Regionalizing Homewood

To be successful Homewood's business district needs to build on its institutional strengths and expand these uses to build a unique regional brand as a destination for African American arts and culture, and premier education and youth services. Existing organizations like the Afro American Music Institute and many of Homewood's churches, already attract people to the neighborhood on a regular basis. Homewood's significance as a cultural destination could be expanded if existing arts and education uses were paired with one or two high quality restaurants as well as performing arts venues tied to existing local jazz and hip-hop educational programs.

Homewood was historically one of the most important African American communities in the region. Although this status has eroded, with many residents leaving the neighborhood over the last 30 years, Homewood still sits at the center of the largest concentration of both African American population and aggregate household wealth in the region. In 2000, one third of all African American wealth in Allegh-



eny County was concentrated within 2-1/2 miles of Homewood.

Homewood's existing assets and location at the center of the region's black neighborhoods suggests that Homewood Avenue could play an expanded and unique role within the African American community and in the larger regional context.

A focus on arts, culture, education and youth would tie into existing organizations and the newly founded Homewood Children's Village. In the short term, organizing regular arts, music and youth-oriented events could be explored as a means to re-brand the business district and bring people back to the neighborhood. In the longer term, the institutional core should be expanded and reorganized as more of a campus with a unified identity connected to the Homewood Business District.

Finally, building a brand around cultural and educational services is a means of creating a destination in the absence of a strong retail market. Over time new users and residents will reestablish a retail market for the district.



**HOMEWOOD** | ARTIST RESIDENCY

invites you to join us  
for an afternoon of food and entertainment as we celebrate  
**the unveiling of**  
**HOME**

**4.30.11**  
**12-4pm**

The Greater Pittsburgh Coliseum  
7310 Frantstown Ave  
Pittsburgh, PA 15209  
homewoodartistresidency@gmail.com

Homewood Artist Residency



## Retail Market Capacity

To understand the viability of new retail uses in the district, Urban Partners conducted a retail market analysis to evaluate and describe the current performance of Homewood/Point Breeze North retailers. This analysis is intended for use in identifying opportunities for further developing retail based on the capture of area residents' retail purchases. The demographic area included in this analysis encompasses all of Homewood and Point Breeze North.

The retail supply within this trade area includes:

- 54 stores, 236,000 SF of space, \$37 million in estimated sales
- 23 eating and drinking places, including 14 bars, 4 limited-service restaurants and 5 full-service restaurants
- 10 convenience stores
- 7 hair salons and barbers
- 6 other community-serving retailers, including a laundry, a brewery, a bakery, a gift shop, a dollar store and a hardware store
- 3 specialty retailers, including a record and CD store, a women's

- apparel store and computer store
- 2 used merchandise stores
- The area also includes some larger stores, including the East End Co-op, Walgreens and Construction Junction

Retail demand depends on the current estimated total population (8,254), total income or buying power (\$150,230,578) and regional spending patterns, as compiled for the Pittsburgh region by Sales and Marketing Management, an annual publication by The Nielsen Company that tracks retail spending behavior in metropolitan area markets across the country. With this information, the trade area's population will spend approximately \$69 million on retail goods and services.

Based on the trade area's retail supply and demand, there are several supportable new retail development opportunities for the area. Retail development opportunities are determined by subtracting total purchases at all trade area stores from the trade area's total demand for each retail category. The result is unmet retail demand for the trade area by store type and size. Opportunities include:

- Expanded Co-op
- Beauty supply store — 1,000 SF
- Restaurants — 3,000 SF (could be two or three)
- Optical store — 1,000 SF
- Florist — 1,500 SF
- Pet supply store — 1,000 SF

While there may be enough market strength within the combined Homewood and Point Breeze North trade area to support local restaurants, an expanded Co-op and other retail opportunities, there is a much greater likelihood that new community-supporting businesses will open on Homewood Avenue if the area's residential population grows, if the market is strengthened accordingly and if public safety concerns are met. But the results of Urban Partners' retail market capacity study underscore the fact that there is unmet local retail demand within the existing community that can be met by creative and dedicated entrepreneurs.

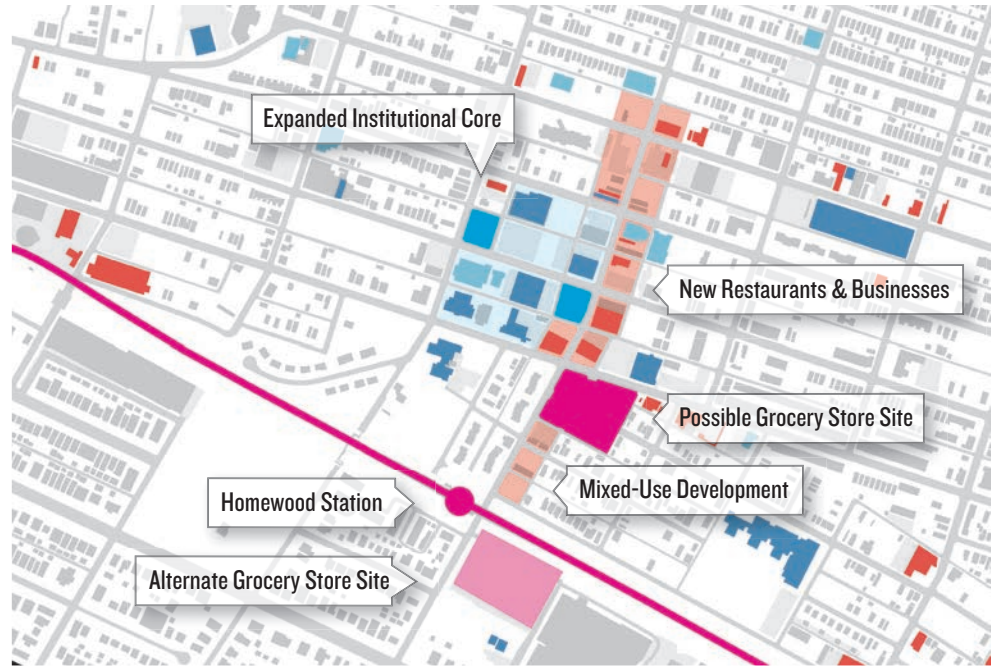
## Bringing a Grocery Store to Homewood

Homewood currently has no full service grocery store. The closest grocery store is the East End Food Co-op in Point Breeze North, a member-owned full service grocery store and



cafe with a focus on local and natural food. Other grocery options are found in East Liberty where Giant Eagle, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's and Target can be found.

Although the retail market capacity of the neighborhood is limited, having a full service grocery store located within walking distance of Homewood Station and within the Homewood business district would be a transformative amenity for both existing and new residents. A grocery store could act as an anchor for other neighborhood services businesses. Two sites in the transit oriented development target area could accommodate a new grocery store and its required parking. Siting a new store at the corner of Homewood and Hamilton Avenues would help link the existing business district and institutional core to the Busway stop and help attract new customers to the neighborhood. A store in this location would also be ideally sited to serve Homewood's existing residents who rely on public transportation. If market conditions make the Homewood site infeasible in the near term, an alternative site exists on the Point Breeze North side of the Busway.



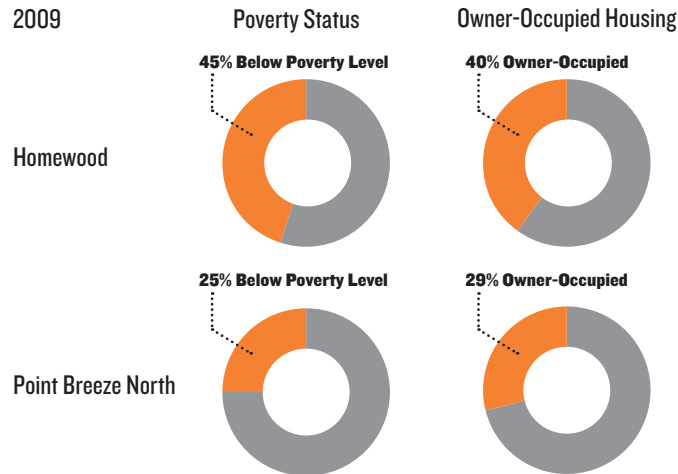
# Planning Question 4:



How can we ensure that neighborhood revitalization and redevelopment efforts benefit and enhance the lives of existing residents and business owners?

## Building Equity for Lower Income Households

The majority of Homewood's households are lower income, with around 45% of households below the poverty line in 2009. At the same time, the neighborhood had relatively high levels of homeownership: around 40% of households in 2009. One strategy for building equity in the community is to raise the value of depressed residential properties over time, which will benefit existing homeowners by building household wealth. Strategies for doing this are explored in planning question 2. For existing residents to benefit from rising home equity, it is essential that their ownership stake in the community is maintained and that redevelopment does not displace them from the neighborhood. If some existing homeowners are relocated to facilitate future development projects, they must have the option to gain ownership of another home, in Homewood, as part of the transaction. Many existing homeowners, particularly elderly residents with fixed incomes, will also need assistance with maintenance costs to see the full benefit of rising residential real estate values.

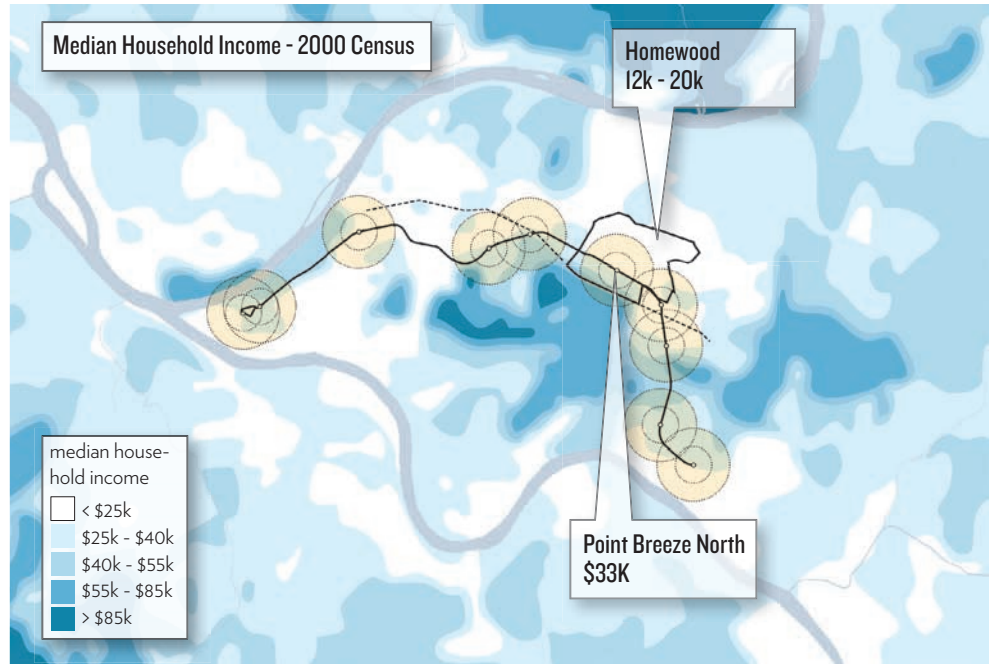




## Reducing Household Expenses through Design

A substantial portion of any household's budget is devoted to paying for heat, electricity and transportation. For lower- and fixed-income households, the burden of these costs is particularly large. Recent studies show that the national average energy and transportation costs for households earning between \$10,000 and \$30,000 a year, is 23% of their total after-tax income.\* For many, these costs are fixed, but in Homewood and Point Breeze North there is an opportunity to reduce these costs by retrofitting homes and building new energy efficient housing near transit stations. Progressive green building practices can radically lower energy costs, and good access to transit can lower household transportation expenses by as much as 10%. Building new energy efficient, or even net-zero energy housing near the Busway could radically lower household expenses for the families who live there. The Busway itself makes Homewood a more affordable place to live, simply

\* 'Energy Cost Impacts on American Families, 2001-2011', American Coalition for Clean Coal Electricity, 2011.  
Source: [http://www.americaspower.org/sites/default/files/Energy\\_Cost\\_Burdens\\_on\\_American\\_Families\\_2011.pdf](http://www.americaspower.org/sites/default/files/Energy_Cost_Burdens_on_American_Families_2011.pdf)



Photos: Interface Studio Architects



because you do not need to have a car to get around the city. Along with new green housing construction, it is important to assist lower income homeowners with energy efficiency retrofits to their homes.

### Providing Affordable Housing

Because such a significant number of households in Homewood are lower-income, it is essential that affordable housing be included as a part of new development. Well managed affordable rental housing, affordable renovated homes and new for sale housing should be part of the strategy. In order to maintain the equity benefits of transit, it is especially important that affordable units be included in projects close to the Busway. Recent prototype houses, such as the 100K Houses in Philadelphia or the R-House in Syracuse, demonstrate that modular energy efficient infill housing can be built for as little as \$100 per square foot while still achieving LEED Platinum rating and including energy saving mechanical systems.\*

\* 100K House Philadelphia, Interface Studio Architects and Postgreen Homes. More Information: <http://postgreenhomes.com/customize/?s=0>

### Engaging the Local Workforce in Redevelopment

Existing residents and business owners can also benefit from redevelopment efforts through local job training and hiring practices and contracting of local businesses. Existing businesses in the community offer a range of services from printing, catering and landscaping, to construction and demolition contracting. Efforts should be made to hire local businesses, when possible, and to train and place neighborhood residents in jobs created through the redevelopment process. Existing organizations in Homewood are already engaged in job training and contracting (for instance, the Community Empowerment Association, through Ma'at Construction Group).

### Supporting Entrepreneurship

Business creation is another way to enable residents to build an ownership stake in the neighborhood and benefit from redevelopment efforts. In the past, community infrastructure existed to directly support the creation of small businesses in Homewood, but this support system has lapsed. A new business incubator space, as well as supporting classes and seminars in small business creation and management, could help support the development and growth of new small businesses within Homewood and Point Breeze North. Another way to support local entrepreneurship could be the creation of shared marketing and branding materials for the Homewood Avenue business district, the Youth, Arts and Education Campus, and the larger neighborhood. Such efforts could help support existing and new businesses in the neighborhood.




## Expanding Green Jobs

Beyond the jobs directly related to redevelopment efforts, there are existing employment zones in both neighborhoods along the eastern edges of the Busway. Originally, this zone was home to heavy industry served by the railroad. Today, this zone is home to a significant cluster of green businesses and non-profits including: Construction Junction, promoting the reuse of building materials; Agricycle producing compost and soil; and the Rosedale Block Cluster, with its urban farm, greenhouse and community center. This green orientation could be expanded to attract more businesses and jobs focusing on green building products, materials recycling, high-value agriculture, ornamental plant and tree cultivation, and landscaping services. The zone could be marketed and developed as an environmental industries district to attract new green jobs to the neighborhood. As with redevelopment, a priority should be placed on providing job training and hiring from within the community.





An aerial photograph of a city, likely Homewood, showing a dense residential area with many houses and a prominent church spire in the center. The city is surrounded by lush green trees, and a city skyline is visible in the far distance under a clear blue sky.

**"We need to build on the assets we already have to make Homewood a great place to live again."**



# 4 GOALS & STRATEGIES

The Bridging the Busway recommendations are organized into two sections. This section organizes a set of project goals and related strategies around five major themes: Equitable Development, Stabilize and Diversify Housing, Expand Business Arts and Culture, Green the Neighborhood and Build a Sustainable Community. The goals and strategies address all major aspects of the plan and can generally be applied to different parts of Homewood and Point Breeze North. In the section that follows, Urban Design Focus Areas, the physical design proposals for specific, key areas are explained and illustrated in greater detail.

# 4.1 Goal: Equitable Development



Plan the Future for Vacant Properties



Neighborhood Planning Forum

Equitable development is an approach to creating healthy, vibrant, communities of opportunity. Equitable outcomes come about when smart, intentional strategies are put in place to ensure that low-income communities and communities of color participate in and benefit from decisions that shape their neighborhoods and regions.\*

## Equity Strategies

1. Create a Neighborhood Planning Forum
2. Plan for the Future of Vacant Properties
3. Develop Community Relocation Strategies
4. Protect and Promote Homeownership
5. Build Community Wealth through Neighborhood Revitalization



New Affordable Housing:  
Federal Hill on Pittsburgh's Northside



Homewood Avenue: A Transit Oriented  
Mixed-Use District

\* Source: [www.policylink.org](http://www.policylink.org)



## 1. Create a Neighborhood Planning Forum

Keep community members involved in neighborhood planning. Create a neighborhood planning forum with a dedicated group of stakeholders whose mission is guiding Homewood's revitalization efforts. Provide an open public forum, convened by local leadership, for updates regarding development initiatives and conversations about future revitalization efforts. Continue to engage Point Breeze North community members in collaborative planning efforts. To tackle the complex issues associated with equitable development, the planning forum should have the ability to create separate committees to address specific issues in greater detail, such as vacant properties, or relocation strategies. The forum will also need to be supported by community organization staff and have the ability to engage consultants.

## 2. Plan for the Future of Vacant Properties

The Homewood community should guide decisions about what

happens with vacant neighborhood properties. This document identifies prioritized redevelopment areas: around Westinghouse and Faison, near the Homewood Station, and in Homewood North. Commission an inventory of vacant land and buildings within those targeted areas. The community should then work with planners to determine the best future uses for those properties and identify prioritized redevelopment projects: new open space, house rehabilitations and/or new construction.

## 3. Develop Community Relocation Strategies

Community members are interested in seeing positive, transformative change happen in Homewood. With change comes the possibility that some residents, renters and homeowners alike, may be asked to move to allow larger development projects to occur. Community-supported relocation strategies should be in place before development occurs so that residents are assured that they will be able to continue living in Homewood during and after redevelopment has occurred.

## 4. Protect and Promote Homeownership

Residents' current ownership stake in the neighborhood must be protected. If existing homeowners are relocated to facilitate future development projects, they must have the option to gain ownership of another home as part of the transaction. New development projects should also include some for-sale units that are affordable to existing neighborhood residents.

## 5. Build Community Wealth through Neighborhood Revitalization

The community must benefit from neighborhood development. Provide opportunities for people to build wealth through Homewood's revitalization. This can occur through a range of approaches including:

- providing affordable housing;
- making catalytic investments that build equity for nearby property owners;
- instituting local hiring initiatives, creating jobs; and
- building walkable neighborhoods that provide access to community amenities and transportation options.

## 4.2 Goal: Stabilize & Diversify Housing

---



Renovation of Existing Housing



New Single Family Houses

Balance new construction with house rehabilitation to protect the existing housing stock, preserve the community character and provide a range of housing options.

### Housing Strategies

1. Rehabilitate Homes in Targeted Areas
2. Help Residents Maintain their Homes
3. Build New Housing in Targeted Areas
4. Provide a Range of Housing Options
5. Develop Equitable Housing Relocation Strategies

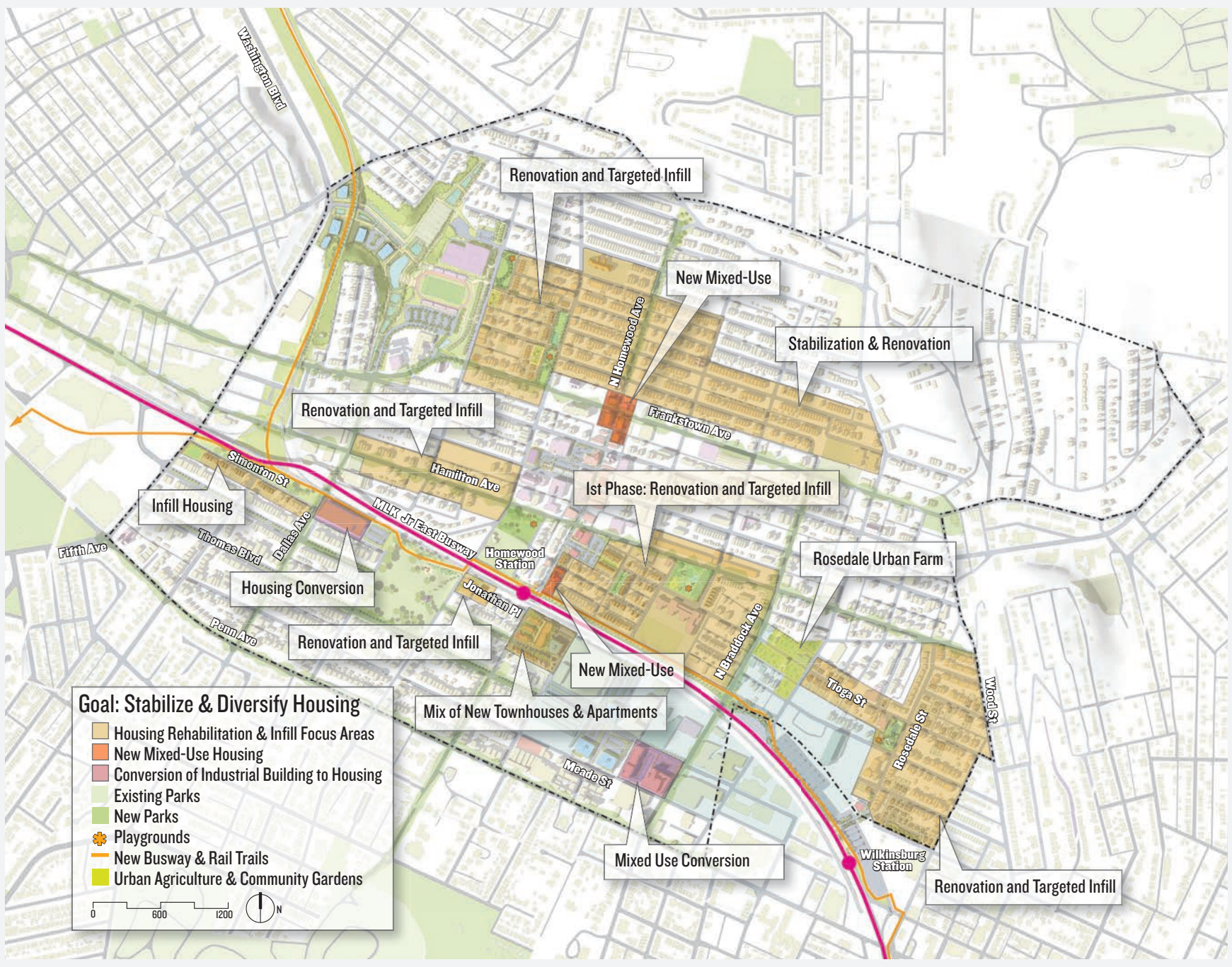


New Apartments



New Mixed Use Buildings





**Goal: Stabilize & Diversify Housing**

- Housing Rehabilitation & Infill Focus Areas
- New Mixed-Use Housing
- Conversion of Industrial Building to Housing
- Existing Parks
- New Parks
- Playgrounds
- New Busway & Rail Trails
- Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens

0 600 1200 N

Renovation and Targeted Infill

New Mixed-Use

Stabilization & Renovation

Renovation and Targeted Infill

Infill Housing

Ist Phase: Renovation and Targeted Infill

Housing Conversion

Rosedale Urban Farm

Renovation and Targeted Infill

New Mixed-Use

Mix of New Townhouses & Apartments

Mixed Use Conversion

Renovation and Targeted Infill

## 1. Rehabilitate Homes in Targeted Areas

One of the greatest assets in Homewood is its existing historic housing stock. In targeted zones of the neighborhood, viable vacant houses should be renovated and sold to new homeowners, without displacing existing residents. Areas of the neighborhood with relatively high homeownership levels and quality construction should be the primary focus of rehabilitation efforts. Recommended target areas are illustrated on the map on page 71. The first phase of targeted home rehabilitation should focus on the area around Pittsburgh Faison.

Areas excluded from this zone would only include parcels designated for school recreation facilities, aggregated areas designated for new open space and land assemblages for new development.

An aggressive program of property acquisition should also be pursued to limit the further transfer of homes to investors. Some homes could be candidates for rehabilitation, while others may only need minimal work before being resold to a new homeowner.

## 2. Help Residents Maintain their Homes

Develop and/or administer programs to help existing Homewood residents maintain their homes and age in place. It is important that this task is undertaken as a long term effort by a neighborhood organization with strong community ties, and the ability to dedicate staff time to homeowner advocacy.

As an early action effort, a menu of small-scale programs supporting homeowners should be targeted and marketed in the specific zones of the neighborhood illustrated on the previous page. These would include income-customized loans and grants for home repair, energy-efficiency retrofit programs, accessibility improvements, sideyard transfers, volunteer facade enhancement “events,” coordinated block-by-block landscaping and other small-scale property-specific efforts.

## 3. Build New Housing in Targeted Areas

New housing development should be concentrated on specific blocks and extensive enough to strengthen neighborhoods. Development should

also be located in high-visibility areas, such as the zone near the Homewood Station and Pittsburgh Faison, so as to have a transformative neighborhood impact. New home construction should not be scattered throughout the neighborhood.

On blocks where new construction occurs, and on immediately adjacent blocks, targeted home rehabilitation and the aggressive marketing of small-scale housing improvement programs should be undertaken.

There are also areas in Homewood and Point Breeze North where infill houses should be built on vacant or underutilized property or between existing homes. This is one strategy for strengthening neighborhood areas that are suffering from erosive blight.

## 4. Provide a Range of Housing Options

Build a range of housing options to attract a mix of incomes, ages, household sizes and lifestyles, including affordable for-sale and rental housing. A range of new housing types should be built, including small senior cottages, single family houses, townhouses, apartments and mixed use buildings



with housing over active ground floor uses. Fully accessible and elderly housing should also be included.

In the TOD target area housing should include a mix including for-sale townhouses and single family houses as well as a range of rental apartments. The desire for rapid absorption to transform the neighborhood suggests that much of the new housing needs to be quality rental units and/or “homeownership-like” products such as cooperatives or mutual housing.\* Rental units, in a range of sizes and price ranges, are especially appropriate in areas within a quarter-mile walking

distance of Homewood Station. They may also comprise part of mixed-use development projects that also accommodate active, ground-floor spaces for non-residential uses. Point Breeze North has a strong enough housing market that residential or mixed-use development (on Homewood Avenue south of the Busway and other locations) could occur independently.

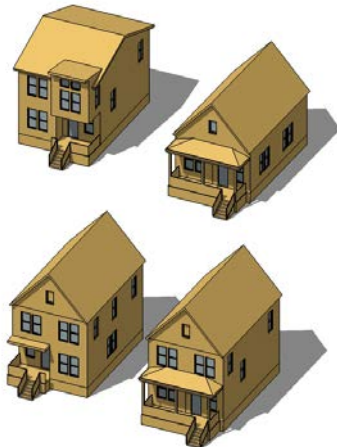
## 5. Develop Equitable Housing Relocation Strategies

Work with residents to develop equitable relocation strategies if displacement occurs as a result of development efforts.

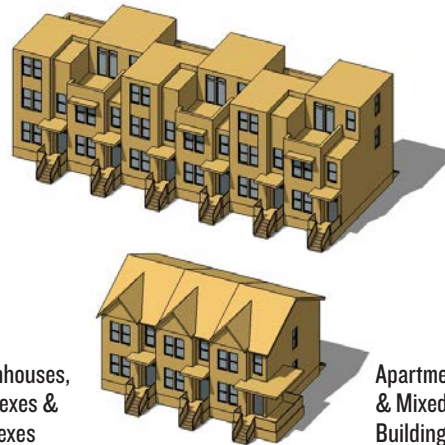
Early, customized efforts should be undertaken to provide alternative homes for homeowners in locations designated for school recreation facilities, open space and new redevelopment. Every effort should be made to retain these homeowner households within Homewood.

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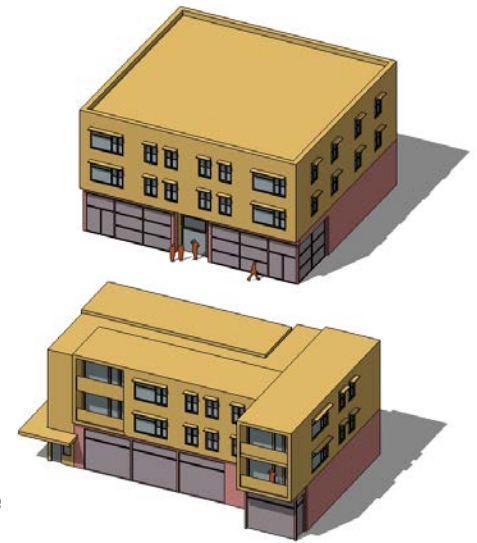
\* Mutual Home Ownership is a new form of tenure that seeks to increase the supply of affordable intermediate market housing without requiring a major increase in capital investment from Government. Unlike other forms of low cost home ownership, it is designed to remain permanently affordable and not move out into the open market. Source: [www.cds.coop](http://www.cds.coop)



A Range of Single Family Houses



Townhouses, Duplexes & Triplexes



Apartments & Mixed-Use Buildings

## 4.3 Goal: Expand Business, Arts and Culture



New Restaurants



New Grocery Store

Build on local assets to revitalize the neighborhood, promote entrepreneurship and create jobs.

### Business, Arts and Culture Strategies

1. Address Safety First
2. Build Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development around the Homewood Avenue Busway Stop
3. Create a Youth, Arts & Education Campus
4. Make Homewood Avenue a Regional Arts and Culture Destination
5. Grow Local Enterprises through a Business Incubator
6. Create a New Environmental Industries District

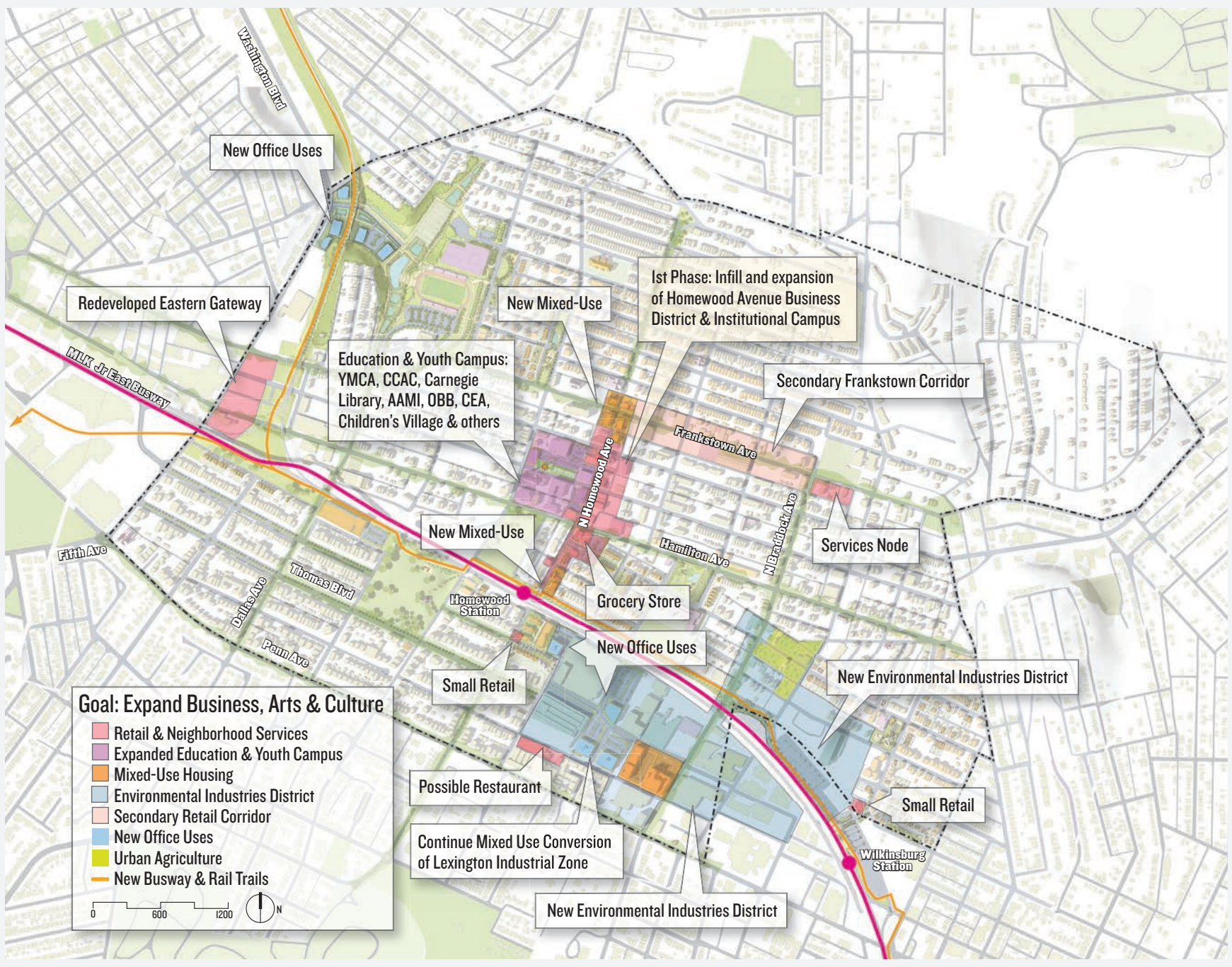


New Arts Venues



Expanded Educational Institutions





New Office Uses

Redeveloped Eastern Gateway

New Mixed-Use

Ist Phase: Infill and expansion of Homewood Avenue Business District & Institutional Campus

Education & Youth Campus:  
YMCA, CCAC, Carnegie Library, AAMI, OBB, CEA, Children's Village & others

Secondary Frankstown Corridor

New Mixed-Use

Services Node

Grocery Store

New Office Uses

New Environmental Industries District

Small Retail

Small Retail

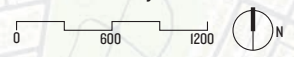
Possible Restaurant

Continue Mixed Use Conversion of Lexington Industrial Zone

New Environmental Industries District

**Goal: Expand Business, Arts & Culture**

- Retail & Neighborhood Services
- Expanded Education & Youth Campus
- Mixed-Use Housing
- Environmental Industries District
- Secondary Retail Corridor
- New Office Uses
- Urban Agriculture
- New Busway & Rail Trails



## 1. Address Safety First

Community members advise that the Homewood Avenue business district cannot be successfully revitalized until key properties are acquired and transformed. The properties that were identified as being of greatest concern are located at the intersection of Frankstown and Homewood Avenues. "Milk Crate Park," as it is referred to by some residents, is the northern gateway to the Homewood Avenue business district. The intersection is located on a busy commuter corridor and is actively used, day and night, for a range of informal and sometimes illicit uses.

In the short term, these properties should be acquired and negative conditions should be remediated. In the longer term, this intersection should be developed into small, high-quality anchor buildings, most likely residential with ground floor commercial.

## 2. Build Mixed-Use Transit Oriented Development around the Homewood Avenue Busway Stop

New mixed-use transit oriented development can help revitalize the Homewood Avenue business district by

transforming the area around the station. Sites on the Point Breeze North side of the Busway have strong markets and can be developed independently. However, the core area along Homewood Avenue, from the Busway to Frankstown Avenue, needs to be developed in a coordinated, mutually-supportive manner to strengthen each individual site and component.

The blocks on the east side of Homewood Avenue, between the Busway and Hamilton Avenue, form an important link between the stronger markets south of the Busway and the heart of the Homewood commercial/civic district north of Hamilton Avenue.

There is strong community support for bringing additional businesses to this section of Homewood Avenue with a new grocery store as an anchor. The preferred location is the southeast corner of Hamilton and Homewood Avenues. A grocery store is unlikely to open at this location until the surrounding neighborhood stabilizes and the Homewood market strengthens as a result of attracting new residents to the area. Alternately, a grocery store could be part of a mixed-use development south of the

Busway, on the site of a URA-owned parking lot currently used by County office employees.

There is also strong market potential for new housing to be a major component of new transit oriented development. Housing on Homewood Avenue could include townhouses and apartments over active ground floor uses.

At the time of this writing, Operation Better Block is working diligently to open Cafe 524 on Homewood Avenue in the block between Finance and Susquehanna Streets. In addition tax credits are being pursued to build a complementary senior housing building on this block.

Homewood Avenue should also be enhanced with public art, structured open space, artful bus shelters, street trees and bicycle infrastructure.

## 3. Create a Youth, Arts & Education Campus

Reinforce the existing institutional core by branding it as a Youth, Arts and Education Campus and expand its presence onto Homewood Avenue. The current institutions include



the YMCA; the Carnegie Library; the African-American Music Institute; the Community Empowerment Association's Arts, Cultural and Training Institute; Operation Better Block; the Homewood Children's Village; and the Community College of Allegheny College. With minimal physical redesign, the parking and recreation spaces associated with these institutions could be organized into a shared campus in the center of the neighborhood.

The proposed Youth, Arts and Education Campus will anchor and brand the revitalization of the Homewood Avenue commercial district between Hamilton and Frankstown Avenues. Bringing some element of that campus onto Homewood Avenue is critical—both to increase the visibility of the campus and its components in the larger, regional market, but also to connect campus activity directly to restaurants and other retail services along a revitalizing Homewood Avenue.

There is also an opportunity to extend the Education and Youth Campus southward to include the site of the Homewood Early Childhood School and Stargell Field, with its swimming

pool and playing fields. Also celebrate the connection to Westinghouse Field, across the Busway, through lighting and pedestrian bridge improvements.

#### 4. Make Homewood Avenue a Regional Arts and Culture Destination

Efforts to revitalize the existing Homewood Avenue Business District should build on the neighborhood's institutional strength and focus on making Homewood a regional destination for African-American arts and culture. The community's living, creative heritage should have a visible presence, with new performance spaces, galleries, restaurants, artist residency programs and a regular schedule of "happenings," possibly through a monthly event such as the "Unblurred" events in Garfield.

To support this effort there must be a series of small-scale early action projects to create an environment for success in the Homewood Avenue business district. These early action projects should include:

- facade enhancements of storefronts between Hamilton and Frankstown Avenues;

- support for at least one new restaurant;
- acquisition and retenanting/demolition of a few nuisance properties;
- modest streetscape improvements; and
- selective tenant recruitment to fill prominent vacancies, including, (if necessary,) the placement of educational and cultural activities in these storefronts.

Cultivate businesses that build from neighborhood strengths. For example, with all of the weekly church traffic - there are 24 churches in Homewood - a Sunday Dinner buffet might be successful. People currently go to the Golden Corral in Monroeville, or the Chinese Buffet. Patrons also travel to Homewood from miles away to frequent the neighborhood's BBQ establishments. A restaurant serving BBQ specialties, owned and operated by local entrepreneurs, could be an anchor in the revitalized Homewood Avenue business district.

Jazz is alive at the Afro-American Music Institute and the Kuntu Repertory Theater operates out of the

Homewood Branch of the Carnegie Library. The creative community of Homewood also includes hip hop performers, sculptors, quilters, textile and spoken word artists, but there is currently no obvious location where people can go on a regional basis to appreciate local cultural offerings. New arts venues should be established in vacant storefronts in partnership with existing neighborhood institutions to bring activity and life back to Homewood Avenue.

To help make Homewood's rich heritage more visible and accessible, several community members are interested in creating and installing artful banners along Homewood Avenue to celebrate accomplished individuals who grew up in or spent time in the neighborhood. Local talent includes jazz musicians Billy Strayhorn and Ahmad Jamal and the author John Edgar Wideman. There are also important neighborhood landmarks such as the home of the National Negro Opera Company, the first permanent African-American opera company in the United States. Homewood's history and living culture should be preserved and celebrated as

an engine that can help drive investment and revitalization.

There is also a need to better communicate information about the different happenings occurring in the neighborhood to residents, Busway riders and commuters driving through Homewood alike. An electronic messaging board could be placed at a high-visibility location on Homewood Avenue with information about local events. Homewood Nation ([www.homewood-nation.com](http://www.homewood-nation.com)) currently provides an on-line event calendar, but there is no replacement for real-time information provided in the public realm.

### **5. Grow Local Enterprises through a Business Incubator**

Develop and support businesses from within the community through a local business incubator. An incubator should offer a wide range of services including: low-cost office space, on site staff, basic administrative services, conference room use, copy machine and Internet access, keyed security, etc. An incubator might also offer training classes and seminars to cover a wide variety of business management subjects. A business incubator should

also serve as a permanent, high-visibility clearinghouse entity to guide prospective business owners, nurture/mentor viable business ventures and connect them to resources. An incubator should have the ability to connect people with promising ideas and energy to investors and start-up capital. The Community College of Allegheny County Homewood Brushton Center could be a potential host for a new neighborhood business incubator.

### **6. Create a New Environmental Industries District**

Beyond the Homewood Avenue business district, this study also recommends the creation of a new Environmental Industries District that would span the Busway to include portions of Homewood South and the Lexington Office Park. There is a long tradition in Pittsburgh of having close knit housing interwoven with industry. While Homewood is predominantly a bedroom community full of houses, churches, schools and neighborhood retail portions of Homewood South have historically had a stronger tie to industry due to their proximity to the Pennsylvania Railroad and industrial areas located just south of the railroad.



Several green economy businesses have independently grown up in this area: the Rosedale Block Cluster with its urban farm, green house and community center; Construction Junction, promoting the reuse of building materials; and Agricycle composting; to name a few. With guidance from community members, more green-economy businesses could be successfully integrated into the neighborhood, providing good job opportunities training in emerging green industries.

This zone, which spans the Busway to include parts of Homewood South and Point Breeze North, could become an Environmental Industries District, in which a range of housing types can co-exist with clean, green industry and urban agriculture. It may be possible to develop incentive programs that would encourage green economy businesses to locate in this area. The district could promote green housing - new infill homes and weatherization initiatives to retrofit existing homes. The Environmental Industries District might also be a good location for implementing an eco-district approach to energy production, stormwater management and nutrient optimization.

In Point Breeze North, the URA owned Lexington Technology Park could be reorganized to support such uses. Consolidating parking and reorganizing circulation through Lexington would allow for the development of additional office space or flex industrial uses. This would also help support the redevelopment of adjacent properties as mixed-use. In South Homewood this area contains a mix of vacant land, industrial uses and housing, all with Urban Industrial zoning. This zone has great potential for new green industry, but land use conflicts will need to be resolved through further community-led planning.

If an Environmental Industries District is pursued, a careful distinction needs to be made between portions of the area that will be oriented to housing development and/or rehabilitation and portions dedicated to the expansion, creation and recruitment of compatible businesses. Traffic patterns, especially truck routes, need to be carefully planned to avoid portions of the neighborhood where housing is encouraged.

The first step towards creating an Environmental Industries District is convening a conversation among

residents from both sides of the Busway, and key stakeholders. As an early action project, some housing development resources (both new construction/rehab and homeowner repair) need to be targeted to further establish the designated housing zone.

Targeted infrastructure investments could go a long way towards helping to establish the environmental industries portion of the district. Investments might include high-profile energy generation elements (windmills and/or possibly solar arrays), small-scale signage and truck routing improvements, and targeted acquisition to create larger and easier to develop parcels. There should be an effort to visually tie the two sides of the Busway together through greening elements and signage, at the Braddock Avenue underpass especially. The Busway parking lot should also be upgraded, including improved pedestrian connections and street trees throughout.

Communication and coordination needs to be emphasized with City and County economic development staff to position this district within overall City and County business recruitment and expansion efforts.

## 4.4 Goal: Green the Neighborhood

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New Parks and Recreational Areas



Green Streets and Infrastructure

Greening forms the foundation of the Bridging the Busway Plan. Greening can create opportunities for community building, beautification, job training, resource conservation and economic development.

### Greening Strategies

1. Consolidate Vacant Properties into Productive New Uses
2. Build Community through Cleaning, Greening and Beautification
3. Open up the Neighborhood around Westinghouse and Faison
4. Create a Green Pedestrian and Bicycle Network
5. Transform Key Corridors and Neighborhood Gateways
6. Connect, Expand and Create New Green Economy Businesses



Community Gardens



Urban Agriculture





New Trail to Allegheny River

Raingardens & Stormwater Park

New Youth Sports Facilities

New Small Parks & Community Gardens

New Trailhead & Gateway

Homewood Avenue Corridor

New Busway Linear Park & Trail

Frankstown Corridor & Gateways

Mellon Park

New Youth Campus

Dallas Avenue Corridor

New Pedestrian Bridge

New Faison Park

Fifth Ave

Thomas Blvd

Homewood Station

Rosedale Urban Farm

Penn Ave

Hamilton Ave

N Braddock Ave

Hamilton Avenue Corridor

**Goal: Green the Neighborhood**

- Existing Parks
- New Parks
- New Active Recreation
- Playgrounds
- Priority Streets for Greening
- New Busway & Rail Trails
- Urban Agriculture & Community Gardens
- New Stormwater Park

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Extend Thomas & McPherson Green Medians

Penn Avenue Corridor

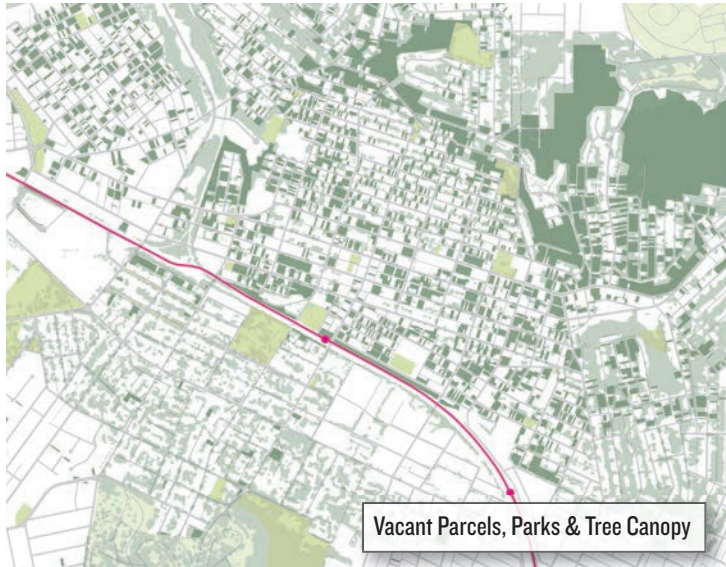
Braddock Avenue Corridor

Frick Park

Wilkesburg Station

Connect to existing Busway trail





## 1. Consolidate Vacant Properties into Productive New Uses

Due to its reduced population, Homewood has an opportunity to reimagine itself as a livable green community with strong connections to nature and the outdoors. Vacant and underutilized land should be reorganized to enhance the lives of current and future residents. This can be accomplished through various actions.

- Because there is a large amount of vacancy throughout Homewood, the community should actively plan for the future use of vacant neighborhood properties. Also see section 4.1 of this document. Consider creating a land bank to facilitate the conversion of vacant land into community-supported future uses.
- Property owners can acquire vacant City-owned and tax-delinquent properties at a low cost, if they directly border their property, through the City of Pittsburgh Sideyard Sales Program. Applicants can immediately begin using and maintaining the lot, though they may not make permanent improvements until it is owned outright.
- Vacant land can be put into productive new uses as open space: parks, gardens, trails, agriculture, etc. In addition to vacant parcels and buildings, there may also be opportunities to convert vacant street right-of-ways into new community-supporting uses.
- Vacant land provides a habitat for wildlife. Land can be intentionally converted into a diverse network of habitats for birds, bees and other species. Trees, meadows, gardens, greenways, wetlands and even green roofs can enrich the local ecology, improve air quality, provide





educational opportunities and encourage residents to engage in active outdoor activities.

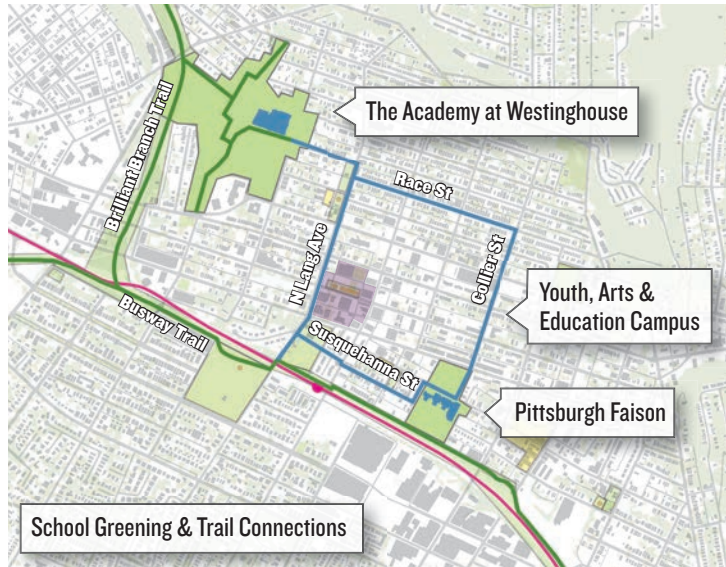
- Create a range of attractive stormwater infrastructure, everything from rain gardens and bioswales, to green roofs, to larger detention facilities in the valley below Westinghouse. Also see the "Goal: Build a Sustainable Community" section below.
- ## 2. Build Community through Cleaning, Greening and Beautification

Engage youth and other community members in neighborhood cleanups, greening and beautification efforts. These activities can be positive and transformational, helping kids learn that they can a) control the environment in which they live, and b) develop a sense of personal agency and ownership. Partner with local schools, Operation Better Block's Junior Green Corps and the Rosedale Block Cluster to effectively involve youth in community-based efforts.

Also support and expand existing initiatives to help stabilize vacant parcels and beautify Homewood:

- Reproduce Mary Savage's eye-catching and resource-efficient gardening approach throughout Homewood. Mrs. Savage's "Edge Gardens," filled with blooming perennials throughout the planting season, maximize their impact on the surrounding community by focusing on the five-foot-deep edge of land that is adjacent to sidewalks and pedestrian activity.
- Learn from the Rosedale Block Cluster's efforts at stabilizing, acquiring and putting vacant land into productive service. The RBC, led by Dianne Swan, also successfully trains and employs local youth to do landscaping. The RBC supports its community in other ways by encouraging public safety and building gardens and a playground for local children.
- Support cleanup and greening efforts by organizations including Operation Better Block, the Save Race Street Committee and House of Manna. These organizations can coordinate clean up efforts to conserve resources and make the greatest possible impact in the neighborhood.





### 3. Open Up the Neighborhood around Westinghouse and Faison

The Homewood Children's Village, along with partner organizations and community members, is working hard to "simultaneously improve the lives of Homewood's children and to reweave the fabric of the community in which they live." Their efforts to strengthen local schools should be complemented by improvements to public safety and to the physical environment surrounding school buildings.

In the near term, prioritize beautification, cleaning and greening in areas around neighborhood schools, involving students in the efforts. Create School Safety Zones with targeted cleanups and prioritize the demolition of dilapidated structures within those areas.

In the longer term, vacant land surrounding the schools should be acquired by the School District. Enhance the presence and visibility of Westinghouse and Faison through new maintained open space and strong visual connections to major corridors. Structured open space can also help stabilize the surrounding neighborhood and provide valuable recreation amenities for students and residents alike.



### 4. Create a Green Pedestrian and Bicycle Network

Create pedestrian and bicycle connections to other neighborhoods and city parks through a trail network along the Busway and railroad corridors. Also create a safe bike and pedestrian loop within Homewood, connecting The Academy at Westinghouse to Pittsburgh Faison and the proposed Youth, Arts & Education Campus along relatively quiet, tree-lined side streets.





## 5. Transform Key Corridors and Neighborhood Gateways

Green neighborhood streets with trees and ornamental stormwater plantings. With community and organizational support, Edge Gardens could be planted along high-visibility corridors to beautify the environment for residents, visitors and commuters alike. Provide welcome and orientation signs at neighborhood gateways and use wayfinding



Street Edge Ornamental Stormwater Planting



Neighborhood Gateway Sign & Planting

signage to direct visitors to neighborhood landmarks, cultural institutions and other local destinations. Landscaping elements are an economical and impactful way to enhance gateway sites. Neighborhood gateways are also an opportunity for Homewood and Point Breeze North to express their unique character and culture through public art installations. Stormwater and flooding issues should also be addressed in key corridors such as Braddock Avenue.



Street Edge Ornamental Stormwater Planting



Plaza & Street Surface as Public Art

## 6. Connect, Expand and Create New Green Economy Businesses

Create a local network of green entities and resources and develop a green identity that crosses the Busway to connect Homewood and Point Breeze North. A wide range of green economy entities are currently operating within the Bridging the Busway study area, including but not limited to: the Rosedale Block Cluster, Construction Junction, Burgh Bees' Susquehanna Street apiary, Tree Pittsburgh's Simonton Street tree nursery, Agricycle composting, eLoop and Free Ride Pittsburgh. Local green economy entities can and should support one another. For example, Construction Junction could serve as a retail outlet for locally-produced "green" products, ranging from honey and furniture, to trees, compost, vegetables and plants.

Explore opportunities for creating additional green economy businesses, particularly within the Environmental Industries District that is proposed in the "Goal: Expand Business, Arts and Culture" section of this report.

## 4.5 Goal: Build a Sustainable Community

Homewood and Point Breeze North could become leaders in sustainability. The vacant land in Homewood, in particular, provides a compelling opportunity to reimagine the neighborhood as a place that embraces and incorporates sustainability as an essential part of its community identity moving forward. Future planning and development projects should incorporate innovative, sustainable approaches towards resource utilization to enhance the physical environment and local ecology, to improve quality of life and to potentially reduce cost of living expenses for residents.

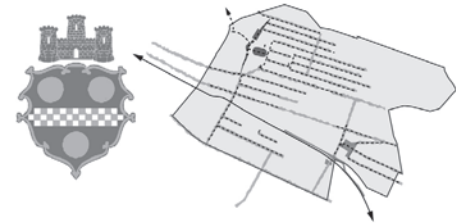
This section presents a range of goals that, if pursued, could help to make Homewood and Point Breeze North leaders in neighborhood sustainability.

Goals are broken into three distinct resource categories: **energy, water** and **nutrients**. These resources are needed to sustain human life at the scale of a household, a campus or an entire City or region. Standard approaches to obtaining and consuming these

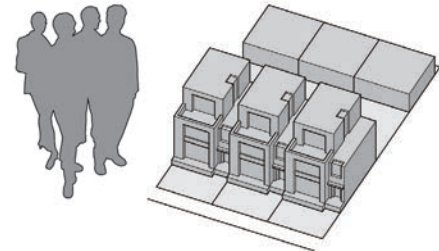
resources involve a great deal of inefficiency and waste production. By planning and retrofitting Homewood and Point Breeze North with resource optimization in mind, different patterns of development and land use would emerge with a new sustainable neighborhood aesthetic.

Sustainable practices should be pursued at a range of scales and time frames. In the recommendations that follow, three scales of intervention are considered: **household, development** and **infrastructure**. At the household scale, individuals can take immediate actions which can be aided by incentives and opportunities to connect to larger infrastructures. At the development scale, strategies such as district heating and cooling, coordinated water management and green building standards can have a larger impact. Finally at the "eco-district" or even city scale, infrastructure for water, energy and nutrients can be managed with increasing efficiency, ideally as a "net-zero" closed loop that generates clean water and energy internally, without creating waste.

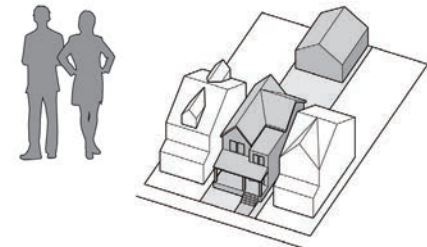
### Public Sector & Community: Infrastructure Scale



### Developers & Institutions: Multi-Building Development

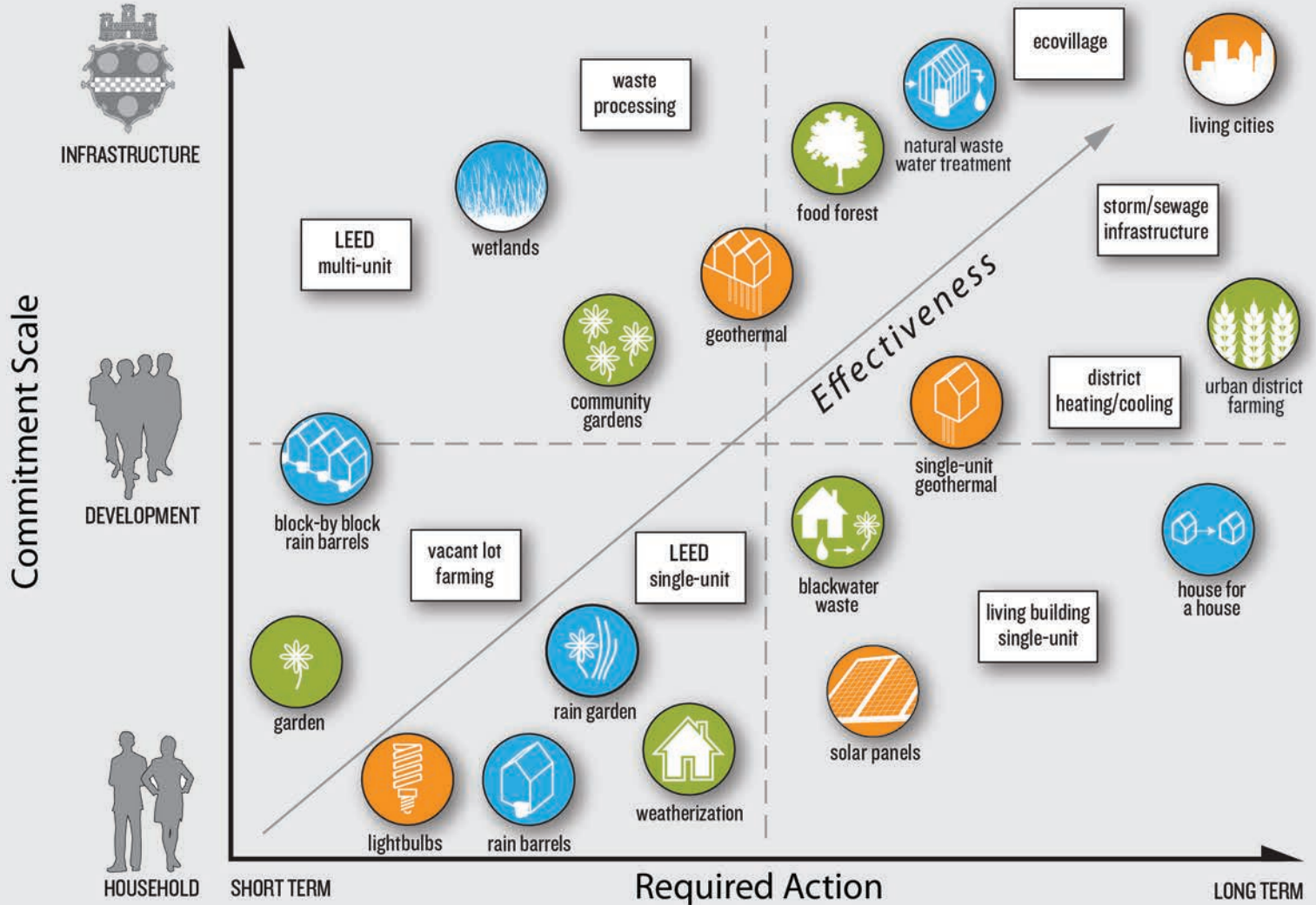


### Individuals: Household Scale





# Build a Sustainable Community: Scale & Action



# Sustainability Strategies

The following pages identify actions that individuals, community groups, developers, institutions and the public sector could take to make Homewood and Point Breeze North more ecologically rich and sustainable neighborhoods.



## Energy

1. Leverage Public Infrastructure Investments
2. Aggregate Residential Systems
3. Encourage Low Energy or Net Zero Energy Multiuse Developments
4. Incentivize Individual Action



## Water

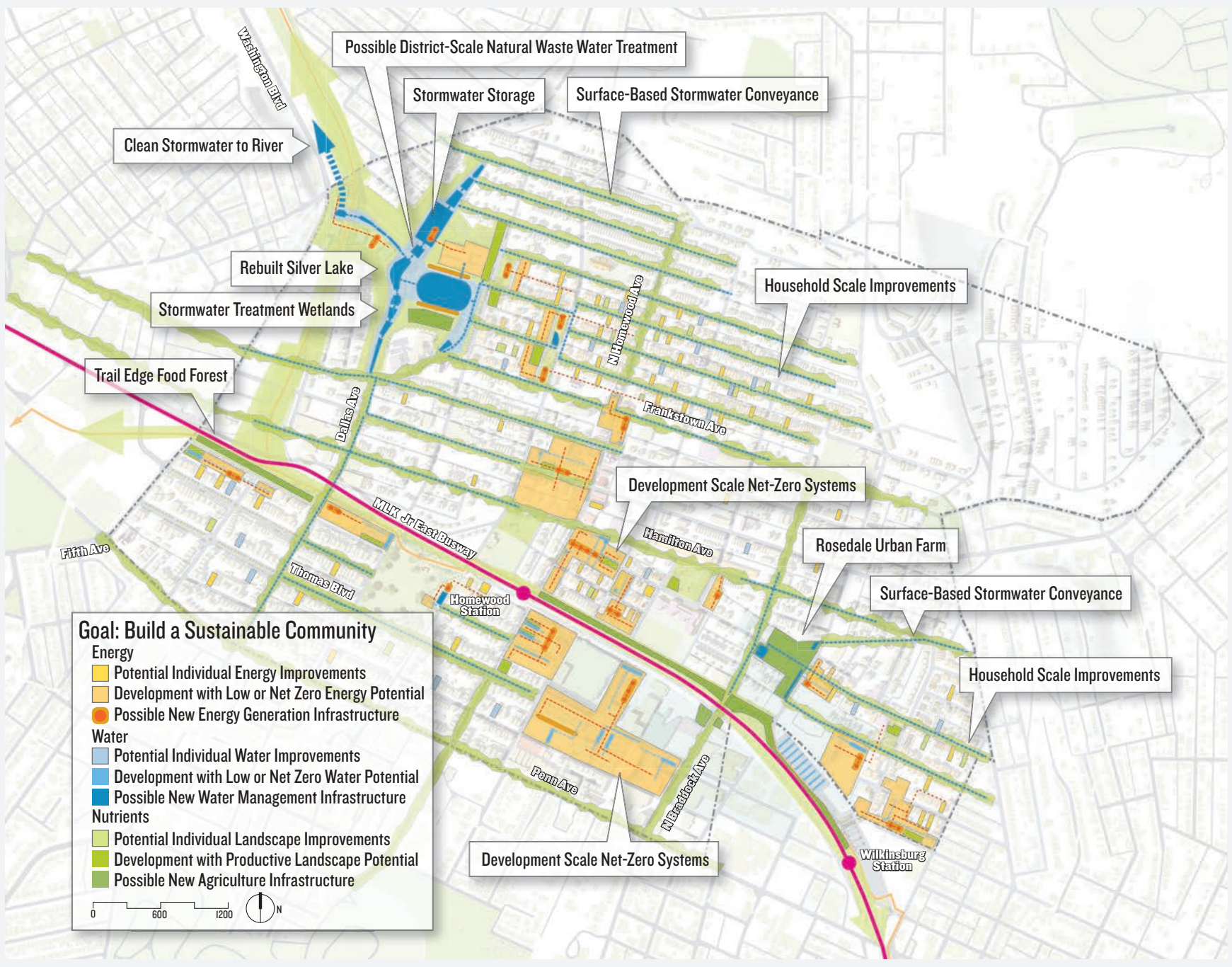
1. Reestablish Natural Systems
2. Leverage Public Infrastructure Improvements to Create Neighborhood Amenities
3. Target Net Zero Water for New Development
4. Match Sources and Uses
5. Incentivize Individual Action



## Nutrients

1. Harvest From Residual and Under-Utilized Spaces
2. Create Flexible and Appropriate Management Structures for Urban Agriculture
3. Integrate Productive Landscapes in Green Commercial Developments
4. Incentivize Individual Action





Possible District-Scale Natural Waste Water Treatment

Stormwater Storage

Surface-Based Stormwater Conveyance

Clean Stormwater to River

Rebuilt Silver Lake

Stormwater Treatment Wetlands

Household Scale Improvements

Trail Edge Food Forest

Development Scale Net-Zero Systems

Rosedale Urban Farm

Surface-Based Stormwater Conveyance

Household Scale Improvements

Development Scale Net-Zero Systems

Wilksburg Station

**Goal: Build a Sustainable Community**

**Energy**

- Yellow square: Potential Individual Energy Improvements
- Orange square: Development with Low or Net Zero Energy Potential
- Red circle: Possible New Energy Generation Infrastructure

**Water**

- Light blue square: Potential Individual Water Improvements
- Medium blue square: Development with Low or Net Zero Water Potential
- Dark blue square: Possible New Water Management Infrastructure

**Nutrients**

- Light green square: Potential Individual Landscape Improvements
- Medium green square: Development with Productive Landscape Potential
- Dark green square: Possible New Agriculture Infrastructure

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# Sustainability Strategies: Energy

## 1. Leverage Public Infrastructure Improvements

Attaching energy performance criteria to large scale public projects can create distributed energy infrastructure and build energy networks. Large scale investment in localized energy systems may also serve future projects or projects outside of the immediate scope. For example, geothermal well fields, district heating or alternative energy infrastructure can be used to create energy districts and leverage future investment.

### opportunities

- demonstration project
- creating economic return on property not otherwise generating income
- long term energy security planning

### challenges

- coordinating public entities
- reducing energy volatility risk for public entities

## 2. Aggregate Residential Systems

Multifamily residential developments administered by a single entity create opportunities for distributed heating, cooling and energy systems at a scale not possible in single family or multi-owner development. Systems can be scaled to integrate existing buildings if it is thought of as distributed energy infrastructure.

### opportunities

- multifamily or managed properties may be easier than single family developments

### challenges

- tax credit structures
- joint ownership agreements



### 3. Encourage Low Energy or Net Zero Energy\* Multiuse Developments

Building rating systems such as LEED and the Living Building Challenge encourage low energy or zero energy levels of performance. Properties need to be aggregated to create larger and more efficient systems. Commercial and institutional developments can integrate building and site based technologies and benefit from aggregated purchasing if they are considered a commonly administered energy district.

#### opportunities

- could capture tax credits or other rebate credits
- lessens energy cost volatility

#### challenges

- single sites may be easier than coordinating with multiple owners
- upfront costs for systems would have to be offset or incentivized

### 4. Incentivize Individual Action

Energy districts can be created around programs that incentivize individual action. A number of existing programs, such as those targeting weatherization, smart metering or the use of energy efficient bulbs, can emphasize behavioral changes within a geographical area. However, these programs need to be brought under the umbrella of a commonly administered initiative to be most effective.

#### opportunities

- partnerships with energy programs by utilities
- energy cost stability for community members
- community directly gains from larger infrastructure

#### challenges

- lack of aggregated site control + large scale infrastructure investment
- capacity of community to participate; reliance on individual action
- duration of project may be long

\* Net-Zero Energy Building is a term to describe a building with zero net energy consumption and zero carbon emissions annually. Zero energy buildings can be independent from the energy grid supply.  
Source: wikipedia.com

# Sustainability Strategies: Water

## 1. Reestablish Natural Systems

Identify areas where natural systems can be reestablished to reduce stormwater runoff into combined sewer systems. For example, wetlands and recharge zones can lessen the burden on existing public infrastructure and can reduce costs for future improvements.

### Leverage Public Infrastructure Improvements to Create Neighborhoods Amenities

Major investment in stormwater infrastructure is needed to avoid costly fines and penalties. Leverage investments to create compelling places that also solve ecological and engineering challenges. Green strategies can address stormwater above ground at the surface, instead of requiring buried infrastructure, and provide community open space amenities as well.

## 2. Target Net Zero Water\* for New Development

New commercial or multifamily residential sites are developed at a scale where it may be affordable to achieve net zero water. Some strategies require little technology or maintenance, while other processes can only be successful at a larger development scale. Larger systems can also serve as decentralized utilities, making water resources available for nearby properties.

### opportunities

- natural systems can reduce underground infrastructure
- creates natural habitats

### challenges

- site control can take many years and costs are not recoverable given current financial structure

### opportunities

- community can engage with ecological systems
- more cost effective than sub-surface treatment/mitigation

### challenges

- maintenance requires some skill
- requires investment over time; may not function until fully complete

### opportunities

- can be celebrated as part of the architectural experience

### challenges

- cost of initial systems is not currently offset by savings on water costs



### 3. Match Sources and Uses

Larger developments, properties or districts should be inventoried to align sources and uses based on water quality, quantity and availability. Consider potable (water of drinkable quality) and non-potable needs, and possible sources including recaptured water, aquifer sources, or water treated on site using a natural waste water treatment system\*\*. Physical proximity is important for viability, as shorter distances between source and use helps to limit the amount of energy expended to move water.

### 4. Incentivize Individual Action

Watershed districts plan at a larger scale so that individual property owners can be informed of their role in reducing stormwater problems. Districts with well designed plans can create supportive networks, distribute information and garner financial incentives to enable individual action. Note: The Bridging the Busway study area spans two separate watersheds, with the northern portion draining to the Allegheny River and the southern part draining to the Monongahela River. The related sewershed boundary passes through Construction Junction's property.

\* The Net Zero Water standard is an idea that aims to relieve households from dependence on city water, which will decrease strain on water treatment facilities and lead to water independence.  
Source: <http://netzerowater.com/blog/tag/net-zero-water/>

#### challenges

- if sources are not aligned to uses there will be first costs or operational penalties
- design systems for growth
- regulations may prevent use of closed loop systems
- redundancy of site-based vs. public systems adds cost
- localized systems may be more vulnerable to failure due to lack of maintenance, malfunction, etc.

#### challenges

- effectiveness of individual action can be limited due to technologies that are feasible to individuals
- urban compactness raises costs of individual action
- regulatory and utility policy provides little opportunity to gain financial advantage

\*\* Natural waste water treatment systems use a sequence of engineered wetlands and microorganisms to treat water for reuse on-site, using natural ecological processes. They can be designed to serve a range of scales from a single building to a small community. A variety of proprietary systems exist including: Living Machines: [www.livingmachines.com](http://www.livingmachines.com)  
Eco-Machines [www.toddecological.com](http://www.toddecological.com)

# Sustainability Strategies: Nutrients

## 1. Harvest from Residual and Under-Utilized Spaces

Combine under-utilized or under-maintained spaces to create food growing opportunities. The character and distribution of the spaces and the expected availability of the land resource will determine the nature of planting that can be implemented and administered. Residual open spaces can be planted for long term nutrient harvest, such as fruit and nut trees in a food forest, but an advocate is needed to steward the progress.

### challenges

- control of properties can determine degree of investment
- maintenance of residual or under-utilized sites can limit yield and ecological capacity

## 2. Create Flexible and Appropriate Management Structures for Urban Agriculture

The type and scale of urban agriculture is determined by the scale of the administrative unit and needs to be modeled for economic opportunity or community engagement to ensure stability. It may range in scale from an urban farm, a public green space food forest, vacant lot community gardens or residual space. Note: properties are often in flux and business plans or economic models need to plan for multiple future scenarios.

### challenges

- a certain scale and administrative unit is needed to capture a return (money + food)
- administrative authority needs to be established for long term planning and maintenance
- property uses may change frequently preventing long term systems
- there may be a lack of knowledge or physical capacity to implement solutions

### 3. Integrate Productive Landscapes in Green Commercial Developments

Larger scale developments should be planned with accessible and productive landscapes to deal with stormwater, cut energy loads for buildings and produce nutrients. Address maintenance issues with appropriate planting strategies and awareness-building.

#### opportunities

- natural systems can lessen the size of underground infrastructure, natural habitat creates healthier communities

#### challenges

- site control can take many years and costs are not recoverable given current financial structure

### 4. Incentivize Individual Action

Community gardens and open space improvements are a visible sign of stewardship and need time to reach their peak productivity and health. The best programs are community-owned, but capacity needs to be built to ensure that efforts are sustainable over the time period needed to sustain a living ecosystem. Identify community champions and create or use programs that commit efforts over a minimum of 3-5 years.

#### opportunities

- large scale urban farms may provide capacity for community members as support and by providing start up services

#### challenges

- the capacity of large scale efforts to provide services depends on funding or volunteer efforts
- individual action can be limited due to lack of access to knowledge of process and procedure for small scale efforts





**"I love the idea of greening the neighborhood and bringing a grocery store back to the community."**

# 5

## URBAN DESIGN FOCUS AREAS

While the goals and strategies presented in the previous section can generally be applied to different parts of Homewood and Point Breeze North, this section presents detailed development plans and an urban design vision of how four key neighborhood focus areas could look and feel in the future. The immediate transit oriented development zone, including the historic Homewood Avenue business district and the residential area around Homewood Station, is the primary planning focus area. Recommendations are also included for three secondary focus areas: Homewood North, Rosedale and Lexington, and Point Breeze North.

# Urban Design Focus Areas

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Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area



Homewood North

## Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area

The primary focus of this Plan is on the Homewood Avenue corridor between Frankstown Avenue and Thomas Boulevard, along with the area around Pittsburgh Faison.

## Homewood North

Homewood North is an important secondary focus area, especially the blocks around The Academy at Westinghouse.



Rosedale and Lexington



Point Breeze North

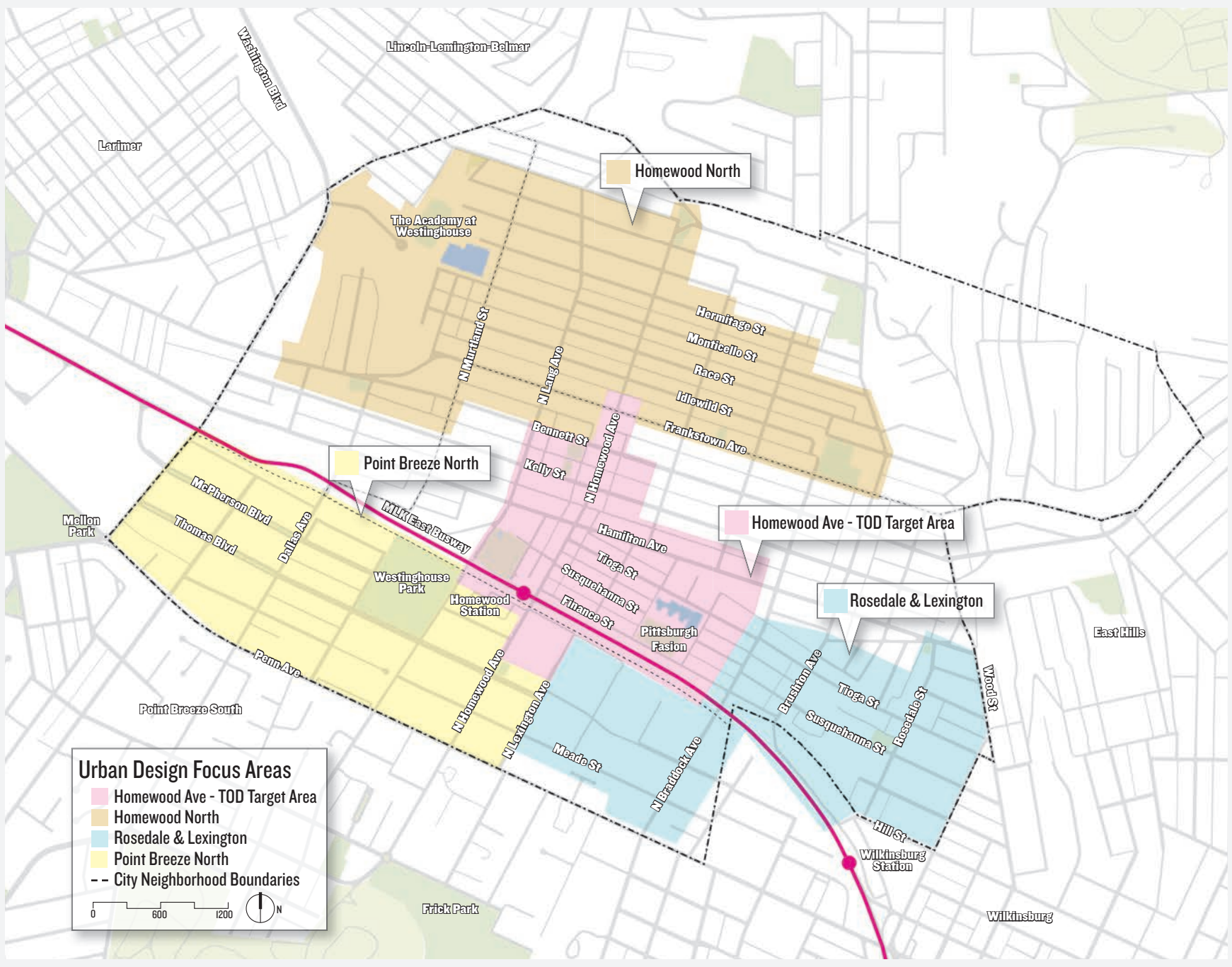
## Rosedale and Lexington

The residential blocks around Rosedale Avenue, as well as the industrial areas along both sides of the Busway, form another secondary focus area.

## Point Breeze North

The residential blocks of Point Breeze North, including Westinghouse Park, comprise the fourth and final focus area.





**Urban Design Focus Areas**

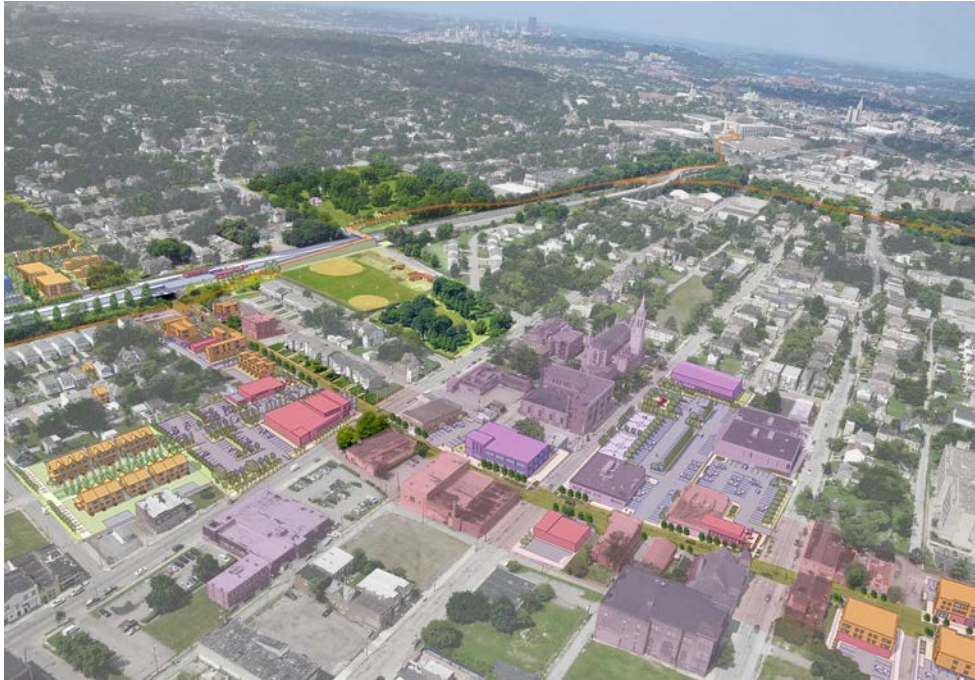
- Homewood Ave - TOD Target Area
- Homewood North
- Rosedale & Lexington
- Point Breeze North
- City Neighborhood Boundaries

0 600 1200

N

# Urban Design Vision Plan

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The urban design focus areas illustrate how the project goals could be achieved through specific design interventions. In many cases the goals could be achieved in a variety of ways and in some cases multiple scenarios are presented. The goals and the urban design vision are meant to serve as a road map to test actual proposals against as development projects emerge and parts of the neighborhood are studied in greater detail.

The aerial image at left shows how a mix of new uses could transform the Homewood Avenue corridor and the area around Homewood Station. The plan drawing on page 83 shows a composite urban design vision for the entire neighborhood, the details of which are explained in the following sections.



# Bridging the Busway Vision Plan

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Office Use
- New Mixed Use
- Possible Green Industry
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail





## 5.1 Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area

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Homewood Avenue Business District



Homewood Library

### Rebuilding the Heart of the Community on Homewood Avenue

The Homewood Avenue business district, Homewood Station and adjacent residential areas comprise the primary zone for short term transit oriented redevelopment. This area has a wealth of institutional assets including Pittsburgh Faison and a cluster located west of Homewood Avenue including the YMCA, the Homewood branch of the Carnegie Library and the Afro-American Music Institute.

This zone also contains a significant number of vacant and under-utilized land along the northern Busway edge with close proximity to Homewood Station. Though there has already been significant investment in new housing in the blocks around Pittsburgh Faison, this area still contains numerous vacant houses and lots and presents an unkempt face towards the Busway.



Vacant Lots at Homewood Station



Vacant Houses on Tioga Street



Cluster of Strong Existing Institutions

Crime Hotspot

Historic Walkable Business District

Vacancy in Business District

Recent Housing

Vacant Houses

Retail Uses & Stop are Disconnected

Vacant Lots

Cafe 524 Project

Major Bus Rapid Transit Station

Unkempt Busway Edge

Unwelcoming Underpass

Vacant Lots

Underutilized Land at Stop

New School

New Housing

**Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area Existing Conditions**

- Existing Buildings
- Parks
- Surface Parking
- Vacant Lots
- Tree Canopy

0 225 450

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# TOD Target Area Recommendations

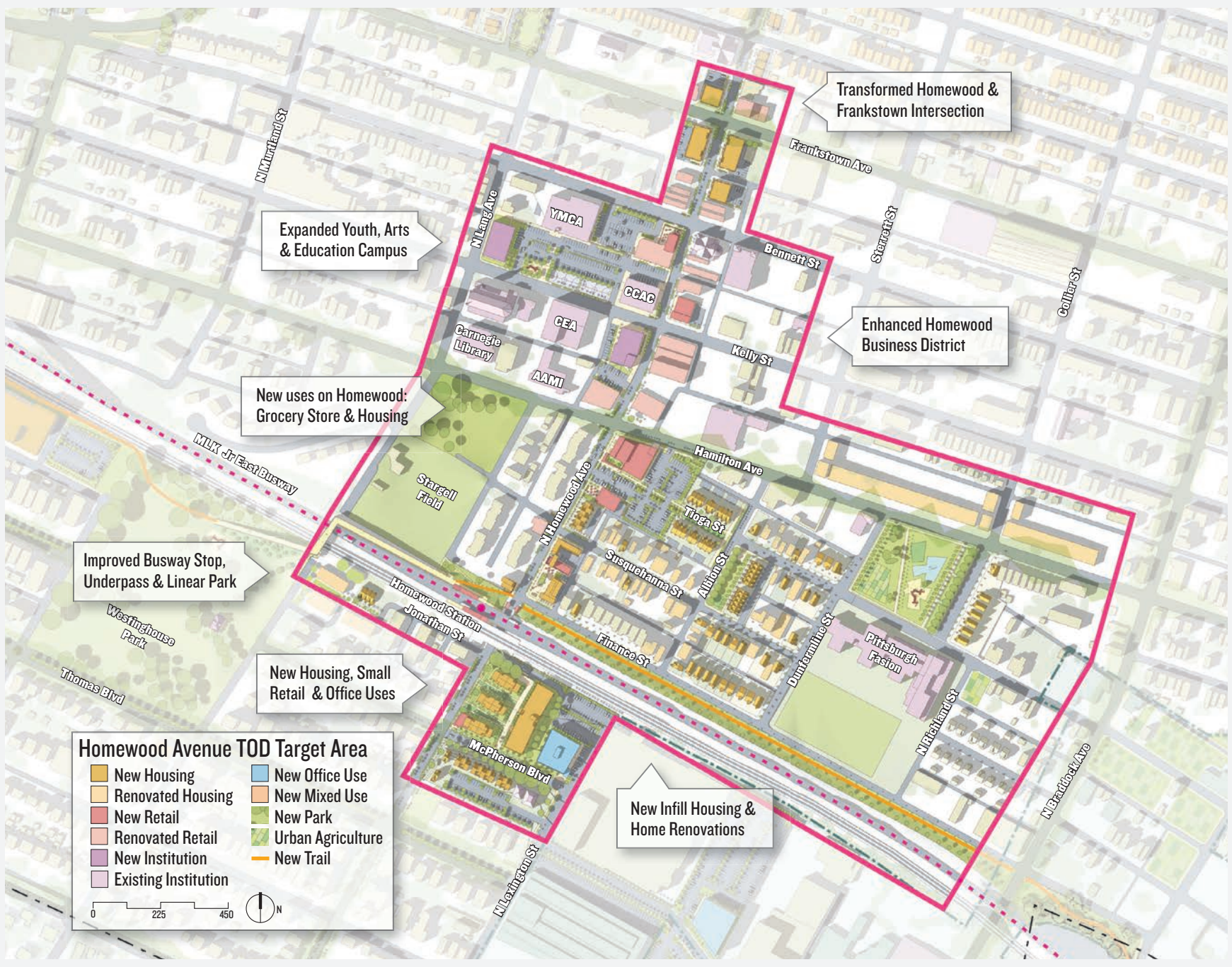
The TOD target area has the greatest potential for utilizing transit oriented development as an engine for neighborhood revitalization and leveraging the strong market values of Point Breeze North to help restore market conditions in Homewood.

New mixed-use development on the eastern blocks of Homewood Avenue, between Hamilton Avenue and Thomas Boulevard, could literally bridge the Busway and quickly transform people's perceptions about this part of the City. At the same time, the existing institutional core adjacent to the Homewood Avenue business district could be enhanced and expanded to help revitalize and brand the area as a destination for African-American arts and culture. An increase in the area's residential population, along with a reinvented business and cultural district, can then set the stage for attracting a new grocery store and other community amenities to the neighborhood.

Projects in the TOD target area also have the potential to be part of an innovative, resource-efficient eco-district.

- A. Create a mix of new uses on Homewood Avenue from McPherson to Hamilton around Homewood Station.
- B. Develop a new grocery store anchor at the corner of Homewood and Hamilton Avenues.
- C. Bring new arts, education and cultural offerings, in addition to restaurants and retail, to the Homewood Avenue business district.
- D. Consolidate and unify the Youth, Arts and Education Campus bounded by Hamilton, Lang and Bennett and expand its presence on Homewood Avenue. The Campus could potentially expand south to the Busway to include open space/recreational amenities.
- E. Target house renovations and new house construction around Pittsburgh Faison.
- F. Improve the Homewood Station bus stop and underpass and green the Busway edge.
- G. Develop a mix of housing, small retail and office or institutional uses on the surface parking lot south of the Busway at Homewood Avenue and Lexington Street.
- H. Acquire and remediate problem properties at the corner of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues with the long term strategy of developing mixed-use corner buildings around the intersection.
- I. Explore options for creating new park space and housing around Pittsburgh Faison.





Transformed Homewood & Frankstown Intersection

Expanded Youth, Arts & Education Campus

Enhanced Homewood Business District












New uses on Homewood: Grocery Store & Housing

Improved Busway Stop, Underpass & Linear Park

New Housing, Small Retail & Office Uses

New Infill Housing & Home Renovations

**Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area**

 New Housing	 New Office Use
 Renovated Housing	 New Mixed Use
 New Retail	 New Park
 Renovated Retail	 Urban Agriculture
 New Institution	 New Trail
 Existing Institution	

0 225 450

N





This image highlights vacant and underutilized land around Homewood Station. To the north, a series of vacant parcels line Homewood Avenue between Hamilton Avenue and the Busway. To the south, a large surface parking lot owned by the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh could be a prime site for new transit oriented development.



This photograph shows Homewood Ave as viewed from the Busway. Vacant lots along the east side of the street have the potential to be redeveloped as housing and neighborhood serving retail, connecting the existing neighborhood to Homewood Station.





Transformed Homewood & Frankstown Intersection

New Infill Housing & Home Renovations

Enhanced Homewood Business District

New Uses on Homewood: Grocery Store & Housing

Expanded Youth, Arts & Education Campus

New Housing, Small Retail & Office Uses

Improved Busway Stop, Underpass & Trail

Homewood Avenue TOD Target Area

Stargall Field

Hamilton Ave

Starrett St

Tioga St

Duferin Ave

Albion St

Susquehanna St

Finance St

MLK Jr East Busway

Homewood Station

N Homewood Ave

McPherson Blvd



## 5.1a New Uses on Homewood Avenue: A Grocery Store and Housing

Today the east side of Homewood Avenue between Hamilton Avenue and the Busway is a series of vacant lots and underutilized buildings. This zone has the potential to become a new gateway into the community. This Plan proposes a mix of uses in this area. At Hamilton and Homewood, a number of properties are consolidated to accommodate a new grocery store. Between Tioga and Susquehanna, a series of new townhouses line Homewood Avenue matching the scale of existing townhouses. In the block between Susquehanna and Finance a pair of new mixed-use buildings are integrated with the proposed Cafe

524 project, and a new public plaza is provided at Homewood Avenue and Finance Street.

A new grocery store would be a valued community amenity, enabling residents to purchase groceries within their own neighborhood. To create a site large enough for 20,000 SF of retail and associated parking, the block of Tioga Street between Homewood and Albion is converted into a parking entrance and a green pedestrian connection lined with townhouses and community gardens.



- A** New Grocery Store
- B** New Townhouses
- C** Cafe 524
- D** New Plaza
- E** New Mixed-Use Building
- F** Infill Houses
- G** Targeted Renovation Blocks
- H** New Busway Trail

- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- Existing Institution
- New Park







PNC Bank

Alma Illery Medical Center

New Townhouses & Community Gardens

Possible District Energy Generation

New Grocery Store

New Townhouses

New Street Trees

**Development Program:\***

- 12,000 SF Grocery Store
- 4,500 SF Associated Retail Spaces
- 6 Townhouses
- 12-20 Apartment Units
- Cafe 524
- 103 Surface Parking Spaces (retail)
- 30 Residential Parking Spaces

\*includes the Cafe 524 block





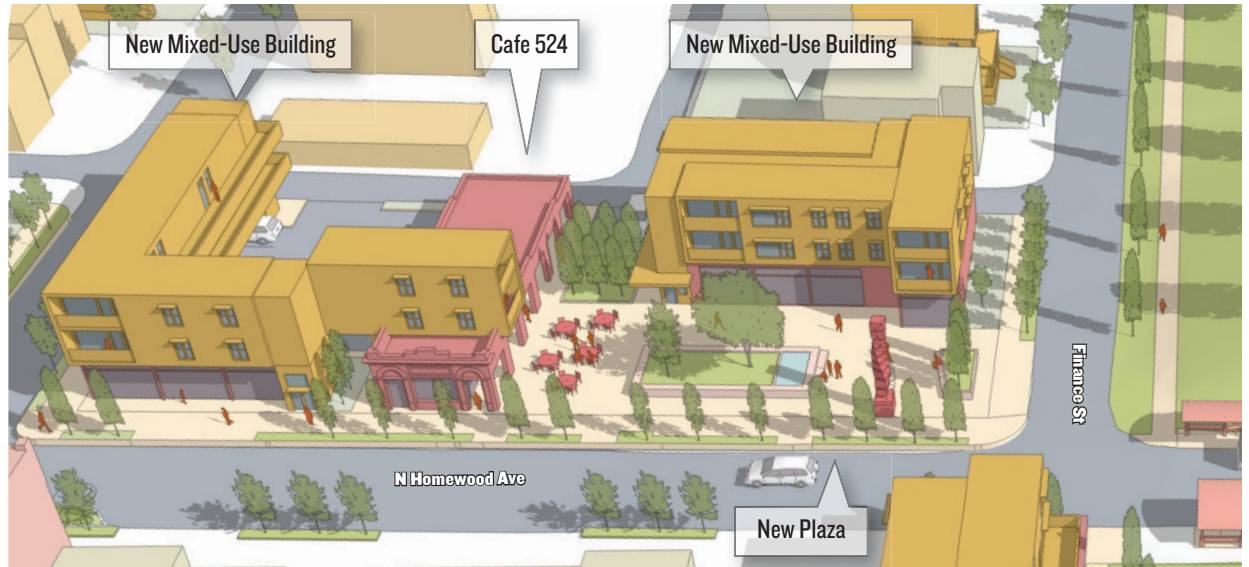
The new grocery store at Homewood and Hamilton could include outdoor seating and windmills and/or geothermal heat pumps for on-site energy generation. The existing Homewood Avenue business district is visible across Hamilton Avenue in the background.

Redevelopment along this section of Homewood Avenue bridges gaps between Point Breeze North, the Busway and the existing business district. The Plan proposes a range of new housing opportunities within a five minute walk from Homewood station and brings much needed neighborhood services to Homewood Avenue. The scale of the proposed redevelopment could make the TOD area a good candidate for becoming an eco-district, with on-site energy generation, green buildings and low impact stormwater management.



New townhouses are proposed between Tioga and Susquehanna Streets, reflecting the scale of existing townhouses across Homewood Avenue.

At the Busway, a new public plaza is framed by Cafe 524 and a pair of new mixed-use buildings with small ground floor retail spaces and upper-story apartments. Provisions should be made to ensure that a significant number of housing units near Homewood Station remain affordable.



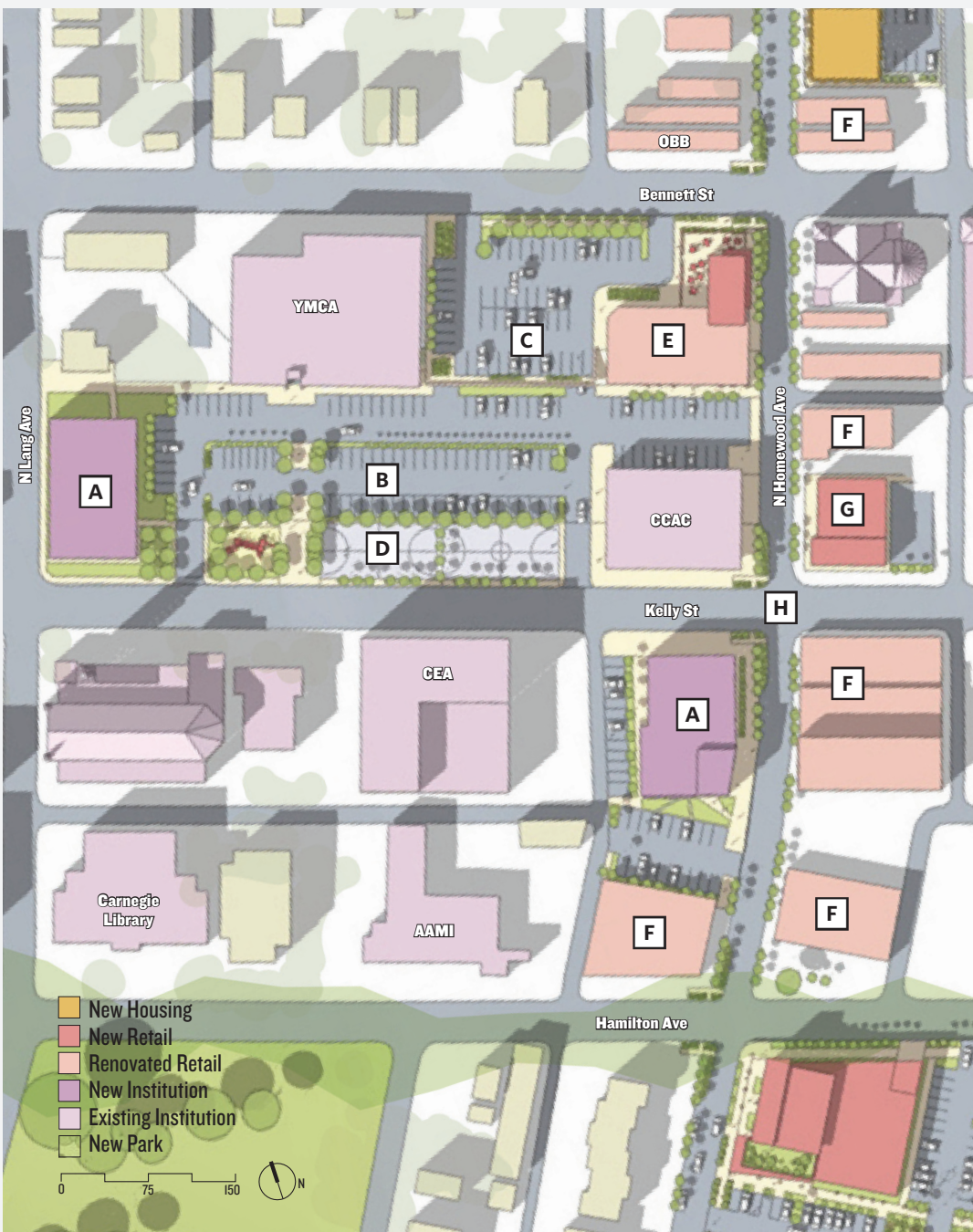
This image shows a view of the proposed plaza, entering from the southeast corner of Finance Street and Homewood Avenue. This space will connect to the proposed Cafe 524 space and could be an opportunity for a new, signature gateway public art element.





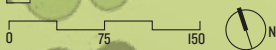
## 5.1b Enhanced Business District and Youth, Arts & Education Campus

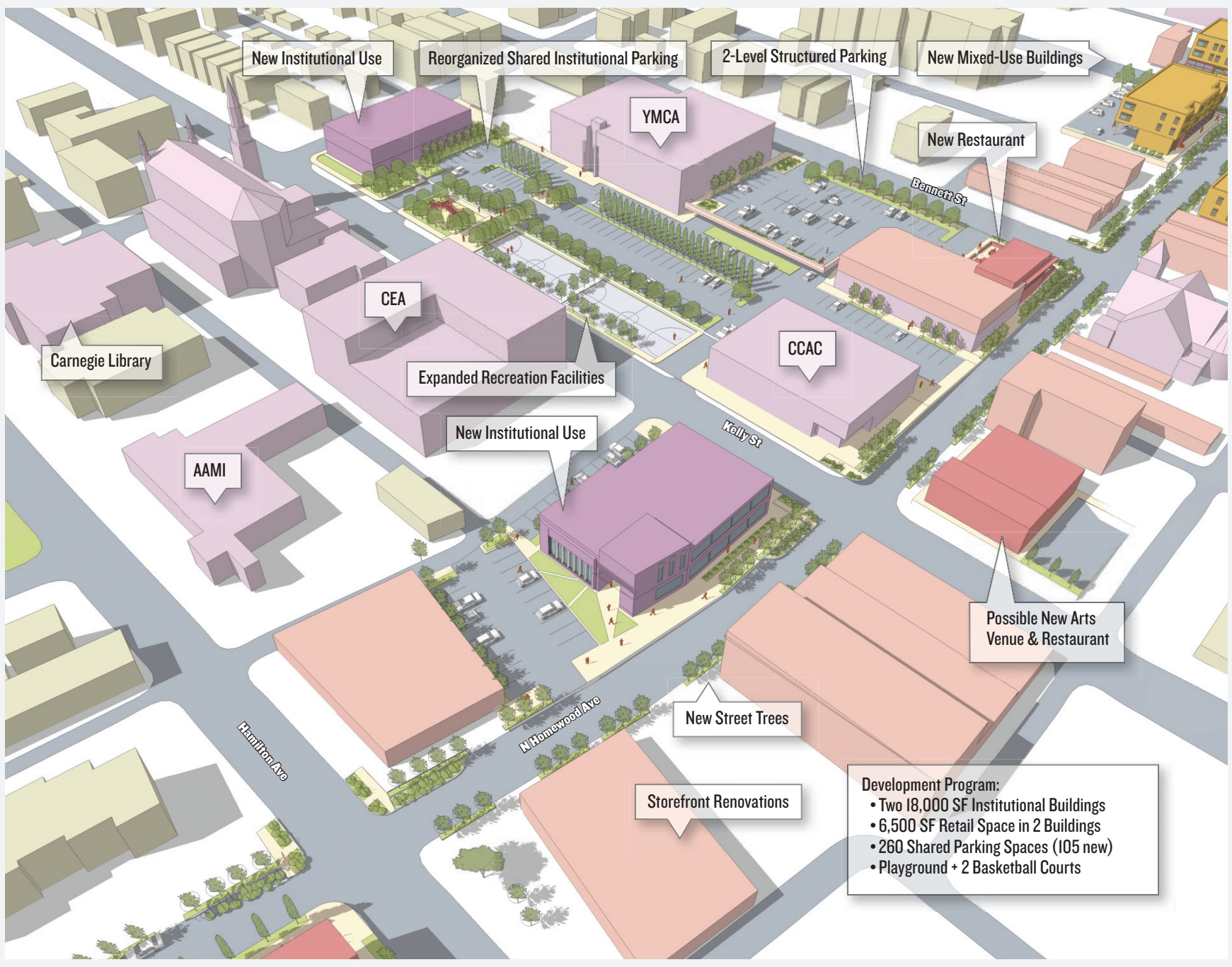
Rebrand Homewood's core as a destination for arts, culture and education, building on the strength of the existing institutions. The revitalized Homewood Avenue business district should be thought of as a complementary extension of the Youth, Arts & Education Campus to the west, with restaurants, galleries, artist residencies, public art, new institutional uses and performance venues.



- A** New Institutional Uses
- B** Reorganized Shared Institutional Parking
- C** 2-Level Structured Parking
- D** Expanded Recreation Facilities
- E** New Restaurant
- F** Storefront Renovations
- G** Possible New Arts Venue & Restaurant
- H** New Street Trees

- New Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Park





New Institutional Use

Reorganized Shared Institutional Parking

2-Level Structured Parking

New Mixed-Use Buildings

YMCA

New Restaurant

Bennett St

CEA

Carnegie Library

Expanded Recreation Facilities

CCAC

New Institutional Use

Kelly St

AAMI

Possible New Arts Venue & Restaurant

Hamilton Ave

N Homewood Ave

New Street Trees

Storefront Renovations

**Development Program:**

- Two 18,000 SF Institutional Buildings
- 6,500 SF Retail Space in 2 Buildings
- 260 Shared Parking Spaces (105 new)
- Playground + 2 Basketball Courts





Homewood Avenue and Bennett Street will be activated by a new restaurant, outdoor seating, street trees and plantings, banners and public art.

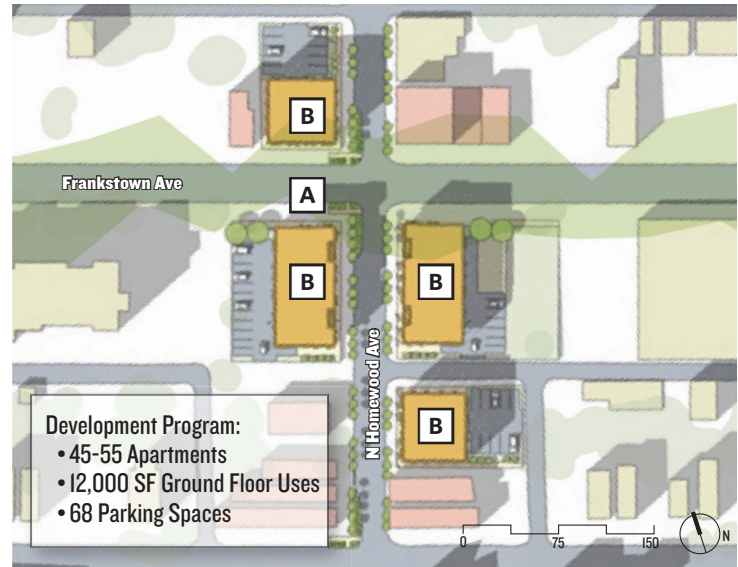


The longer term strategy for Homewood Avenue includes new or expanded institutional uses, such as CCAC or another higher education entity, with a strong presence on Homewood Avenue.

## 5.1c Transformed Homewood and Frankstown Intersection

The intersection of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues today is a crime hotspot, deterring some people from using the business district and negatively impacting people's perception as they pass through the neighborhood. Problem properties at Homewood and Frankstown Avenues should be acquired as a short term remediation strategy. In the longer term, the intersection should be redeveloped as a series of new, mixed-use corner buildings to anchor the northern end of the business district.

- A** Address Crime Issues at Frankstown & Homewood
- B** New Mixed-Use Buildings



New mixed-use buildings at the intersection of Homewood and Frankstown Avenues create an anchor for the northern end of the Homewood Avenue business district. Transforming this key intersection will connect the residential blocks of Homewood North to the revitalizing area around Homewood Station and make the neighborhood's revitalization evident to people passing through on Frankstown Avenue.





## 5.1d New Infill Housing and Home Renovations

The residential neighborhood bounded by Homewood, Hamilton and Braddock Avenues and the Busway is the one place in Homewood where a significant investment in housing is already underway. Building United of Southwestern Pennsylvania recently completed 14 new, for-sale single family homes on Susquehanna Street, east of Pittsburgh Faison. Development is slated to continue along Finance Street between Albion and Dunfermline Streets.

Because of its proximity to the Busway and proposed mixed-use development along Homewood Avenue, this area should be prioritized for targeted residential reinvestment. The housing strategy focuses primarily on building new single-family houses on vacant lots and renovating viable vacant houses. New open space is also proposed to create a new green identity for this section of the neighborhood: a small park edged by townhouses along Albion Street, and a larger park between Hamilton Avenue and Tioga

Street. The larger park would also open up the area around Pittsburgh Faison and give the school a public presence on Hamilton Avenue.

The downside of this proposal is that it requires the demolition of some of the better renovation candidates in this part of the neighborhood and relocating some homeowners. For this reason, two options for new housing and open space around Pittsburgh Faison are explored and detailed on page 102.

The Plan for this area also transforms part of Tioga Street into a space for pedestrians and community gardens fronted by new townhouses. This strategy is designed to mitigate car traffic from the proposed supermarket while establishing a green amenity for the new and existing residents.



New Houses on Susquehanna Street developed by Building United of Southwestern Pennsylvania

- A** New Grocery Store
- B** New Townhouses
- C** New Single Family Houses
- D** Targeted Renovation Blocks
- E** New Faison Park
- F** New Playground
- G** New Small Park
- H** New Community Gardens
- I** New Busway Trail

Key to map  
on page 99 >

**Development Program:\***

- 18 Townhouses
- 37 Single Family Houses

\*not including uses on Homewood Ave



**Legend:**

- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- Existing Institution
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail

0 75 150

N





Green Housing Precedent:  
High Point (Hope VI)  
Seattle, WA USA  
Design: Mithūn, 2009  
Developer: Seattle Housing  
Authority  
Photo: Mithūn

High Point is a redeveloped community in Seattle integrating green building practices, low impact stormwater management, community gardens and affordable housing into a new sustainable neighborhood. The development includes energy efficient townhouses, condominiums and apartments priced for a range of incomes, with half of the 1600 units designated as affordable.

In this area, the implementation of sustainability strategies can happen at both the individual household scale and possibly in conjunction with multi-unit housing development. Houses can be weatherized and stormwater improvements, such as rail barrels and rain gardens, can be added to homes. In the future, new and existing housing units could be tied to a district heating system and stormwater could be managed in shared open spaces containing community gardens.



The blocks between Pittsburgh Faison and Homewood Avenue are a mix of older existing structures, new single family homes and vacant lots, all within a five minute walk from Homewood Station.



This image shows new townhouses and community gardens along Tioga Street between Homewood Avenue and Albion Street. This block of Tioga has been turned into a green street designed to accommodate pedestrians, community gardens and district-based energy generation. Residential parking is maintained in existing (improved) alleys behind the houses.



At right is an image showing a mix of new and existing houses around a new small pocket park at Albion and Susquehanna Streets. Vacant lots in this area could be developed into new houses, maintained as side yards for existing homeowners, or turned into community gardens.



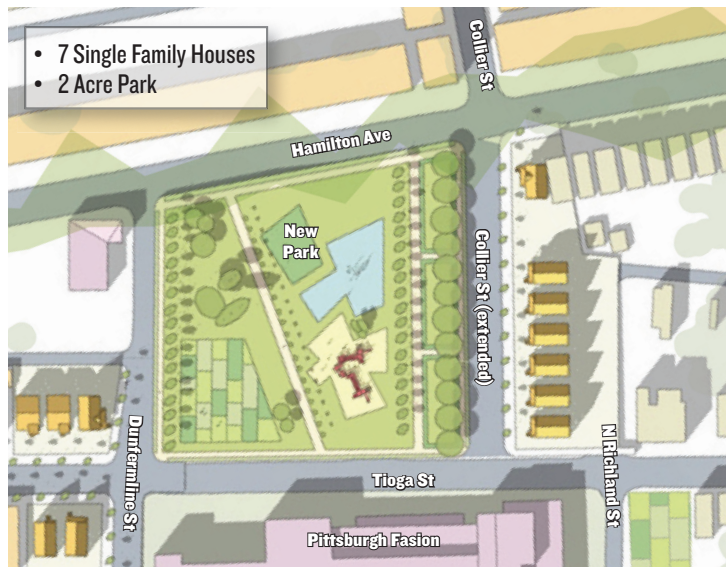


## 5.1e Development Alternatives around Pittsburgh Fasion

The area around Pittsburgh Fasion has recently seen significant investment with new for-sale houses on Susquehanna Street east of the school. Building on this momentum, two alternatives are presented to help guide future home construction and the creation of a new connection between Fasion and Hamilton Avenue. The preferred scenario, shown below and on page 83, creates a new park between Tioga Street and Hamilton Avenue, from Dumferline to an extension of Collier Street. The new park would make the school visible from Hamilton Avenue, help to establish a new green identity for this section of the neighborhood and provide a new, family-oriented amenity.

This plan requires a small number of homeowners to be moved, and the demolition or relocation of some of the more architecturally valuable houses in this part of the neighborhood. An alternate scheme, shown below, maintains and renovates a majority of the existing houses while adding a smaller pocket park and new townhouses. Collier Street extends to one side of the park, while the existing dead end street (Panke Avenue) continues to meet Hamilton Avenue.

Further planning is needed to determine the right strategy for this area.



New Busway Trail & Landscape

New Park + Townhouses

Finance St

Widened Dunfermline St

Pittsburgh Fasion

Dunfermline St

Tioga St

New Faison Park

Hamilton Ave

Renovated / Replaced Sterrett-Collier

New / Moved Single Family Houses

New Extended Collier St

Collier St (extended)

Susquehanna St

Albion St



## 5.1f Improved Homewood Station, Underpass and Busway Trail



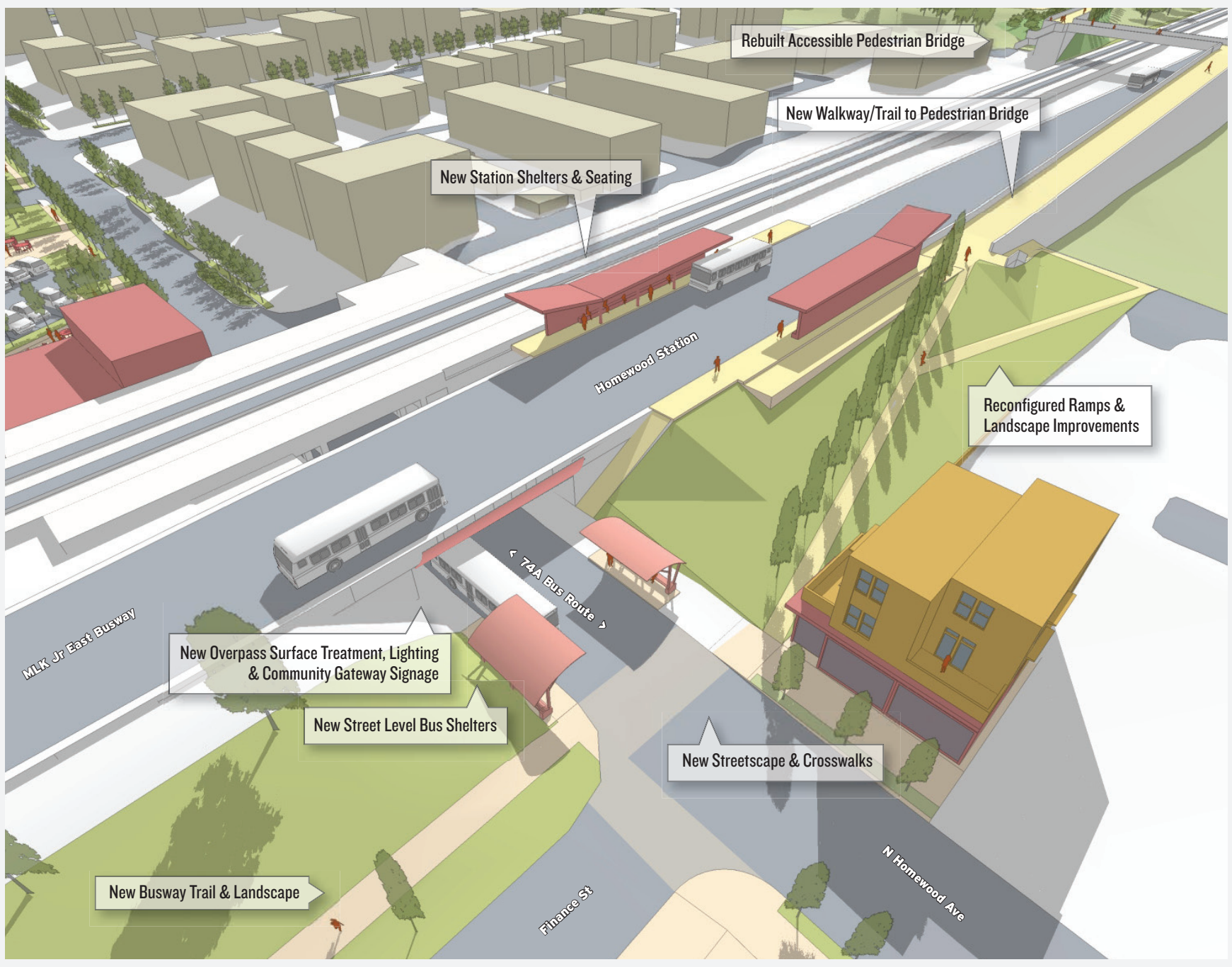
Underpass Improvement  
Precedent:  
A8ernA Highway  
Zaanstad, Netherlands  
Design: NL Architects,  
2006  
Developer: Zaanstad City  
Photo: Luuk Kraner

At left is an example of creatively recladding and lighting an underpass condition in an urban neighborhood. The lit columns were treated as an opportunity for public art and safety improvements.

The Homewood Avenue Station, overpass and Busway edges should be improved to create a safer, higher quality bus rapid transit experience. The underpass, which currently has a mural and gateway signs for Homewood, would benefit from better lighting, more public art and improved signs acknowledging both the Homewood and Point Breeze North neighborhoods. New surface treatments could also be added to the walls, columns and underside of the overpasses. Dedicated shelters should be added on Homewood Avenue for 74A bus riders. A new accessible Lang Avenue pedestrian bridge, connecting Westinghouse Park directly to the Station, is also proposed to improve neighborhood connectivity.



The existing underpass and stairs leading up to Homewood Station.



Rebuilt Accessible Pedestrian Bridge

New Walkway/Trail to Pedestrian Bridge

New Station Shelters & Seating

Homewood Station

Reconfigured Ramps & Landscape Improvements

New Overpass Surface Treatment, Lighting & Community Gateway Signage

New Street Level Bus Shelters

New Streetscape & Crosswalks

New Busway Trail & Landscape

MLK Jr East Busway

74A Bus Route

Finance St

N Homewood Ave



## 5.1g Homewood Avenue Development South of the Busway

On the Point Breeze North side of the Busway there is a unique opportunity to create transit oriented mixed-use development that complements the existing neighborhood. The preferred scenario includes a range of housing types, an office or institutional use and a small retail space for a cafe or other neighborhood-serving retail use. Both North Lexington Street and McPherson Boulevard are reopened to traffic to connect the site to the existing neighborhood.



- A** New Townhouses
- B** New Apartment Building
- C** New Small Neighborhood Serving Retail
- D** New Office or Institutional Use
- E** New Surface Parking
- F** New Below Grade Parking
- G** New Street Trees

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Office or Institutional Use







New Office/Institutional Use

New Townhouses

New Apartments

Garage Access

New 6-Unit Townhouse Buildings

Small Community Serving Retail

- Development Program:**
- 31 Townhouses (13 in a traditional row, 18 in 6-unit buildings)
  - 45-65 Unit Apartment Building
  - 33,000 SF Office Building
  - 2,000 SF Neighborhood Serving Retail Space
  - 62 Surface Parking Spaces (office)
  - 141 Garage & Surface Parking Spaces (housing)

N Lexington St

McPherson Blvd (extended)

N Homewood Ave

McPherson Blvd

Jonathan St

Homewood Station

MLK Jr East Onramp

Finance St





Green Housing Precedent:  
Dockside Green  
Victoria, British Columbia  
Design: Perkins + Will, 2006  
Developer: Vancity  
Photo: Bob Baxter

This medium density housing development has a mix of building and unit types and emphasizes green design, including LEED Platinum certified buildings and LEED for Neighborhood Design certification. The project, notable for on-site stormwater management, integrated wastewater treatment and energy generation infrastructure, approaches the net-zero goals put forth in the Building a Sustainable Community portion of this document.

The Homewood and Lexington Avenue parking lot could be developed as an eco-district with on-site energy generation, green buildings and low impact stormwater management. The site should be organized to preserve as many existing mature plane trees as possible.

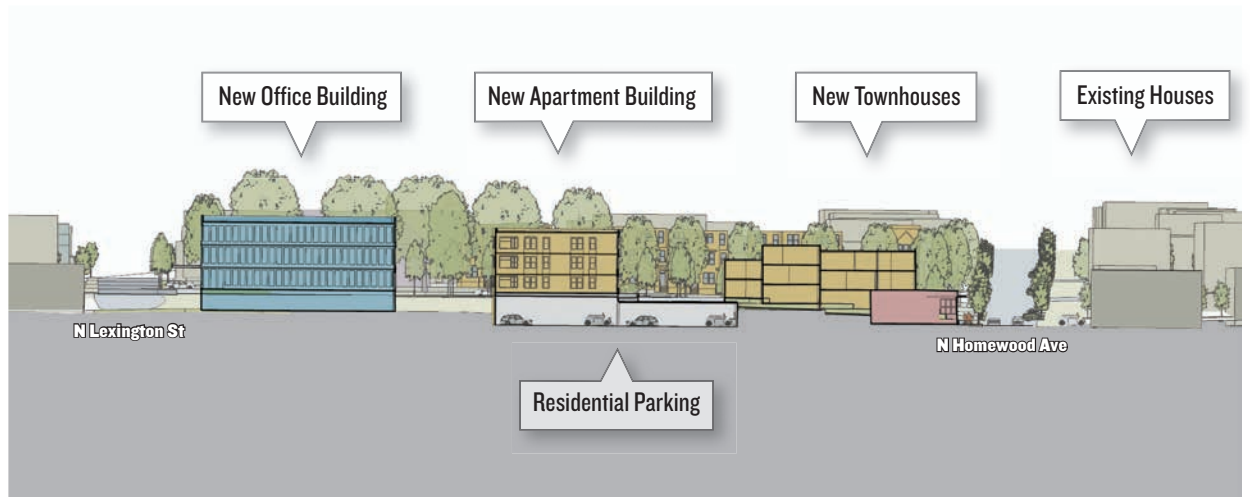


The site today is a large surface parking lot adjacent to Homewood Avenue and the Busway corridor. Today the lot is used by County office employees.

Build a range of housing types to create a medium-density development next to Homewood Station including: apartment buildings, back-to-back attached two-story units and traditional townhouses. In the scenario illustrated to the right, parking is provided in a garage below the buildings and green space.



Conceptual Site Section: The site is large enough to accommodate a range of uses and housing types, however new buildings should decrease in scale as they move towards Homewood Avenue to relate to the 2 ½ story houses across the street.

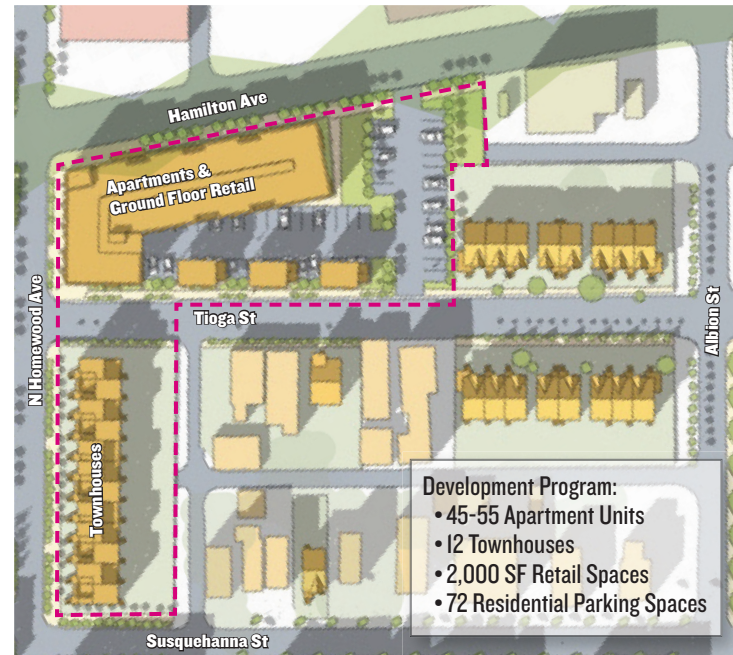




## 5.1h Alternative Grocery Store Development Scenario

An alternative grocery store scenario was explored as part of the planning process. This option includes a grocery store as part of a mix of uses on the Lexington parking lot in Point Breeze North. The preferred location for the grocery, at Hamilton and Homewood Avenues, could be developed primarily as housing with a ground floor retail or institutional use. While the Homewood and Hamilton site is the preferred location for a grocery store, the Lexington site could be an alternative if market conditions make the Homewood site infeasible in the near term.

Including a grocery store on the Lexington parking lot significantly increases the complexity of developing the site. Significant excavation would be needed to create a two-level parking structure and allow the store to have a street level entrance on Homewood Avenue. Creating a full service loading dock for the store would also be a challenge given the grade of the site. The impact of lighting, parking access and truck deliveries on the adjacent neighborhood would need to be studied in more detail.







## 5.2 Homewood North

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High Quality Existing Homes



The Academy at Westinghouse

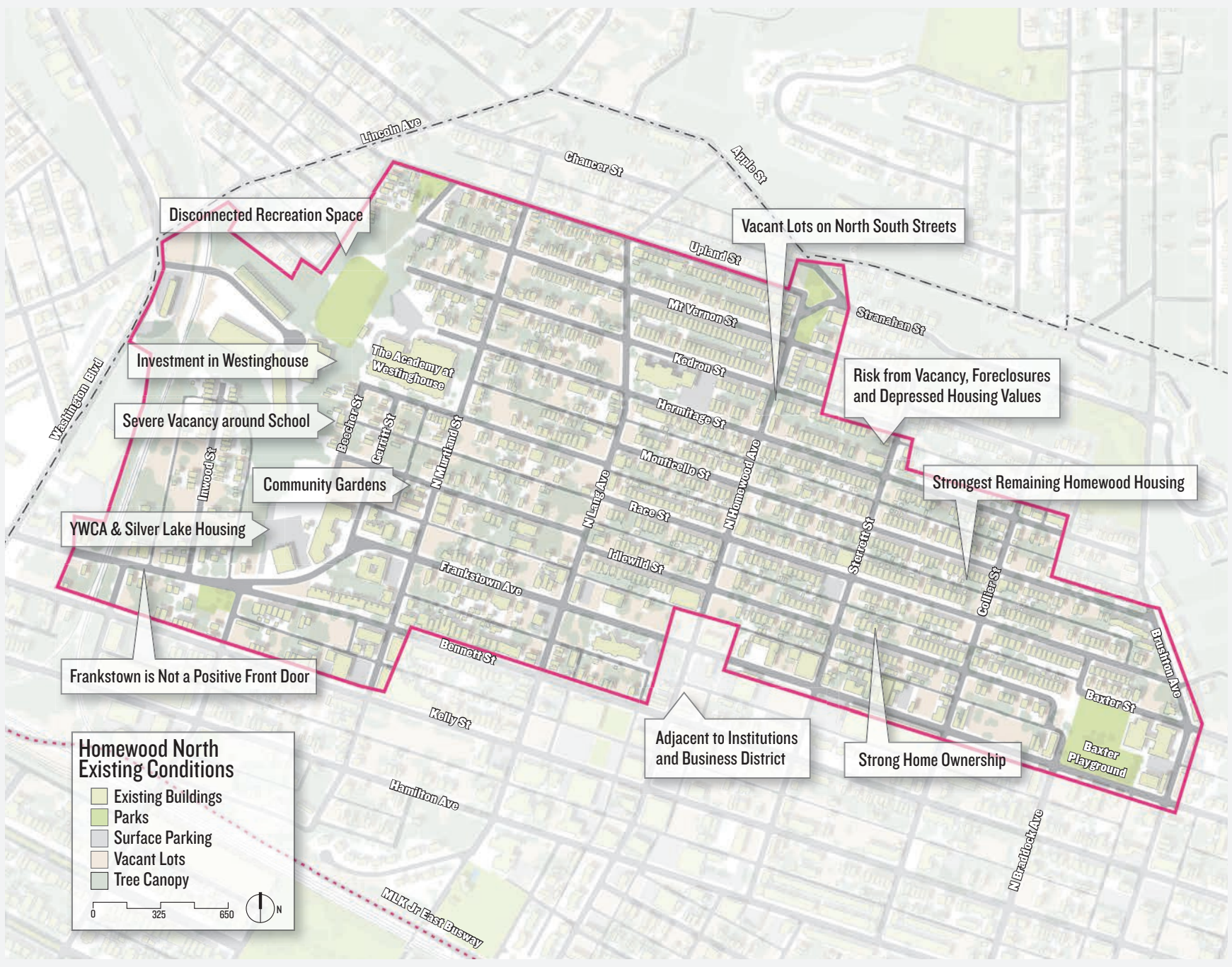
Homewood North contains the greatest concentration of high quality historic housing stock in the neighborhood. It also has some of the highest rates of both homeownership and home vacancy of any part of the neighborhood. The Academy at Westinghouse, a 6-12 public school that has recently received significant public investment, is also a key asset in this part of the neighborhood.



Vacant Houses on Race Street



Unique Green Infrastructure Opportunities



Disconnected Recreation Space

Vacant Lots on North South Streets

Investment in Westinghouse

Risk from Vacancy, Foreclosures and Depressed Housing Values

Severe Vacancy around School

Strongest Remaining Homewood Housing

Community Gardens

YWCA & Silver Lake Housing

Frankstown is Not a Positive Front Door

Adjacent to Institutions and Business District

Strong Home Ownership

**Homewood North Existing Conditions**

- Existing Buildings
- Parks
- Surface Parking
- Vacant Lots
- Tree Canopy

0 325 650

N

Lincoln Ave

Chaucer St

Apple St

Westinghouse Blvd

Inwood St

Beaquer St

Carritt St

N Murland St

N Lang Ave

N Homewood Ave

Stewart St

Collier St

Barham Ave

The Academy at Westinghouse

Upland St

Mt Vernon St

Kedron St

Hermitage St

Monticello St

Race St

Idlewild St

Frankstown Ave

Bennett St

Kelly St

Hamilton Ave

MUK Jr East Busway

Stranahan St

N Braddock Ave

Baxter St

Baxter Playground



# Homewood North Recommendations

The long term stability and revitalization of Homewood North is critical to the entire neighborhood's future. Homewood North strategies focus primarily on stabilizing housing by addressing problem properties and supporting the remaining homeowners.

Significant physical transformation is recommended around The Academy at Westinghouse which is surrounded by vacant parcels and houses. The plan at right shows new open space on all sides of the school. Immediately south of the school, a new youth football facility is proposed to possibly serve the City's East End. The proposed green space extends to the valley behind the school where a system of creeks historically fed into Silver Lake, a recreational amenity.

In the long term, this plan proposes that Silver Lake be recreated as part of new system of green stormwater management. Today, multiple combined sanitary and storm sewer lines converge underground in this valley and flow beneath Washington Boulevard. A significant amount of stormwater could be detained and/or retained on-site using a system of green rain gardens and a rebuilt Silver Lake to mitigate flooding in Washington Boulevard. The resulting green space could also be a new kind of terraced water park. A final component of this new green edge for Homewood North would be the creation of a trail to the Allegheny River along the Brilliant Branch railroad viaducts and hillside above Washington Boulevard.

1. Prioritize house stabilization and renovation, but also add some new houses in targeted areas.
2. Support existing homeowners with a range of financial assistance programs for home improvement and maintenance projects.
3. Create a new park around The Academy at Westinghouse with a football stadium and supporting parking.
4. Create a new green gateway to the neighborhood that is visible on Frankstown Avenue.
5. Emphasize Homewood Avenue as an important north-south street, first through greening and later as a targeted housing infill corridor.
6. Green east-west streets with new rain gardens.
7. Explore the viability of creating a stormwater management park with green infrastructure to mitigate overflows on Washington Boulevard, including trails, wetlands and a reconstructed Silver Lake.
8. Explore the viability of using part of the Brilliant Branch railroad right-of-way on the western edge of the neighborhood as a new trail connecting to the Allegheny River.



New Trail to Allegheny River

Stormwater Treatment Wetlands

Playing Field, Reserve Event Parking and Stormwater Storage Bed

New Office Flex Uses and Parking

Reconstructed Silver Lake

Stormwater Treatment Wetlands

Event & Park Parking

New Football Stadium

Community Garden

New Park & Playground

New Small Park

Infill Housing

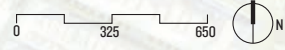
Lincoln Renovated as Housing

New Gateway Garden

Targeted Renovation Zone

**Homewood North**

- New Housing
- Renovated Housing
- New Retail
- Renovated Retail
- New Institution
- Existing Institution
- New Office Use
- New Mixed Use
- Possible Green Industry
- New Park
- Urban Agriculture
- New Trail





## 5.3 Rosedale & Lexington



Strong Residential Community



The Rosedale Block Cluster Urban Farm

The Rosedale & Lexington area is the most industrial part of the study area, spanning the Busway to include portions of Homewood and Point Breeze North.

Historically this area was home to manufacturing connected to the Pennsylvania Railroad. Today, many industrial buildings have been converted to other uses including offices, retail and artist studios. Some light industrial uses continue to exist on both sides of the Busway.

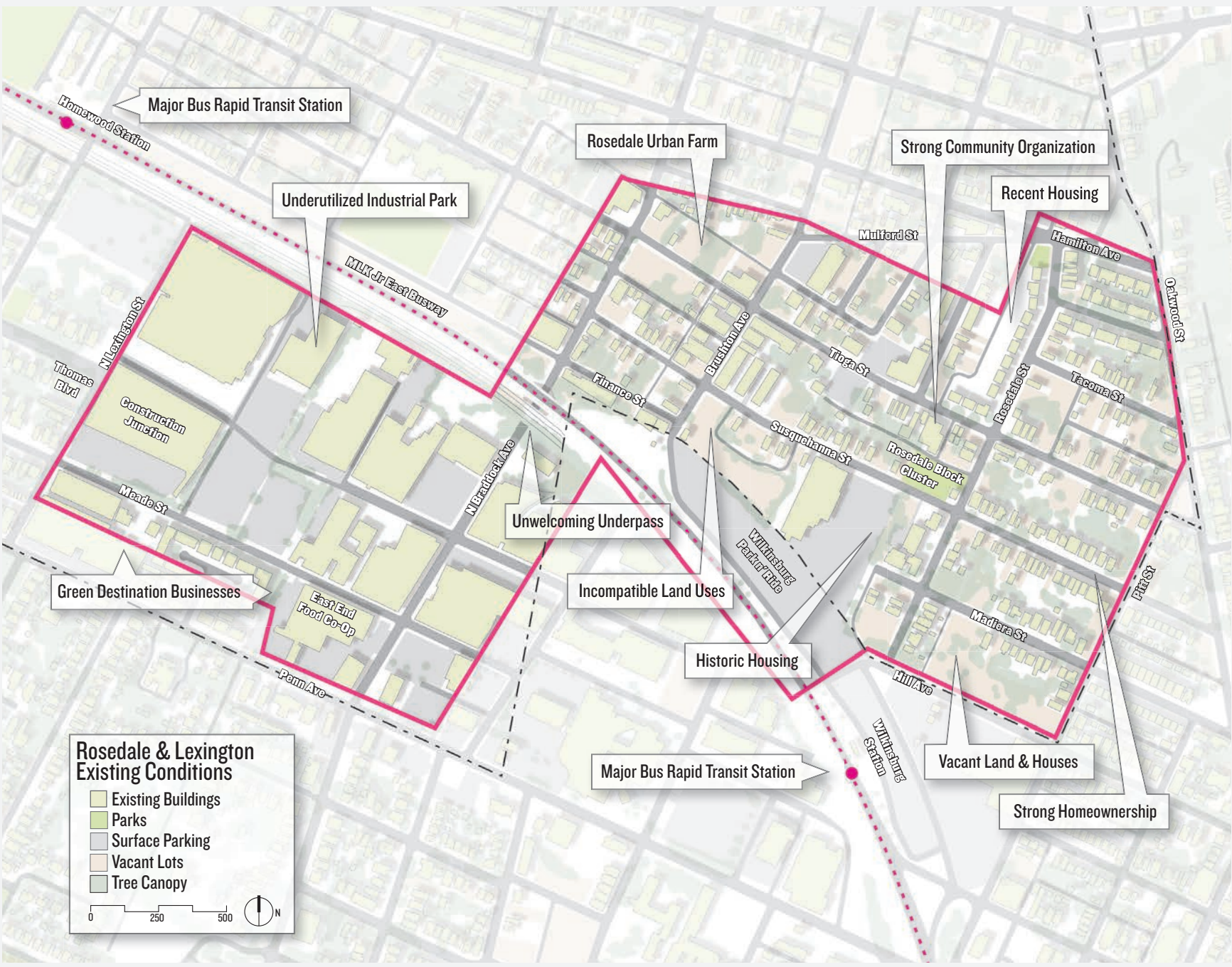


East End Food Co-op



Construction Junction

Rosedale & Lexington's greatest asset is the concentration of existing green and non-profit businesses, including Construction Junction and the East End Food Co-op in Point Breeze North and The Rosedale Block Cluster in Homewood. The area around Rosedale Street also has a high concentration of homeowners and significant historic architecture clustered near Wilksburg Station.



**Rosedale & Lexington Existing Conditions**

- Existing Buildings
- Parks
- Surface Parking
- Vacant Lots
- Tree Canopy

0 250 500

N

Major Bus Rapid Transit Station

Underutilized Industrial Park

Rosedale Urban Farm

Strong Community Organization

Recent Housing

Unwelcoming Underpass

Incompatible Land Uses

Historic Housing

Vacant Land & Houses

Strong Homeownership

Homewood Station

Major Bus Rapid Transit Station

Wilkesburg Station

Thomas Blvd

N Lexington St

Construction Junction

Meade St

Penn Ave

East End Food Co-Op

N Braddock Ave

Finance St

Brushom Ave

Susquehanna St

Tioga St

Miford St

Rosedale Block Cluster

Rosedale St

Tacoma St

Hamilton Ave

Oakwood St

First St

Madera St

MVAve

Wilkesburg Park & Ride

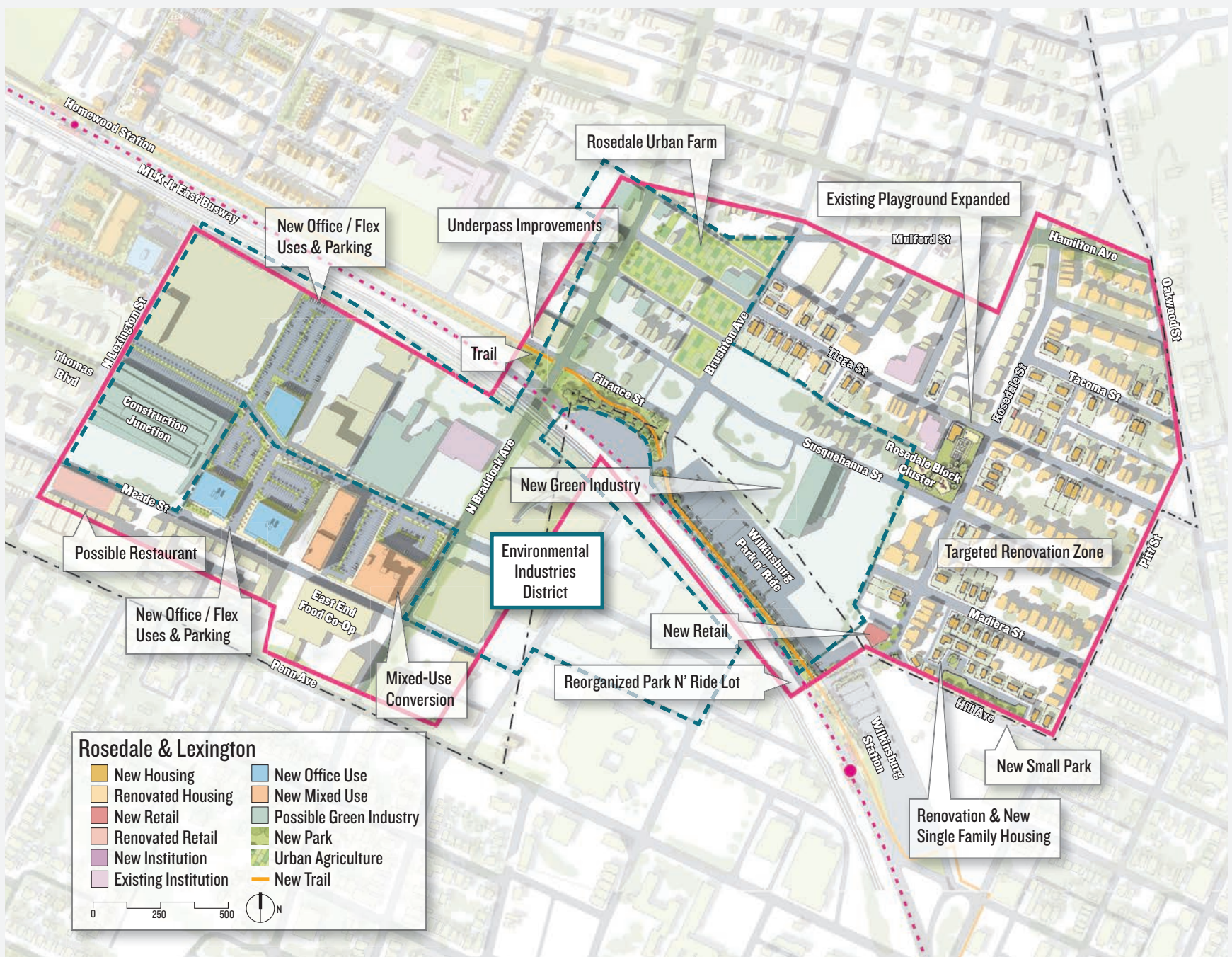


# Rosedale & Lexington Recommendations

The Rosedale & Lexington area could be a new, 21st Century green industry district, providing jobs for community members and creating a new identity for the neighborhood. Industrial areas on both sides of the Busway could be rebranded as an "environmental industries district" (EID), building on the presence of Construction Junction, Agricycle, the Rosedale Block Cluster, The East End Food Co-op and other businesses. The EID should connect existing activities and attract new investment related to green building products, construction and materials recycling, high-value agriculture and silviculture and landscaping services. The district could utilize shared energy and water management infrastructure as it develops. Future planning for this area should explore relationships between industrial uses and existing and future housing, and identify/develop the most appropriate zoning use ordinances. Modern, green light industry can be compatible with housing if vehicular access, noise and other impacts are well planned.

In the residential area centered around Rosedale Street, there should be a continuing focus on addressing problem properties and building targeted infill housing. This part of Homewood and Point Breeze North is very close to the Busway's Wilkinsburg Station and is another potential candidate for transit oriented development. Busway entrances at Brushton Avenue and Rosedale Street should be reconfigured to create safer pedestrian access and more attractive neighborhood gateways.

1. Consider the creation of a new environmental industries district, intentionally integrating green economy industries with a residential neighborhood.
2. Encourage synergy between green businesses.
3. Plan traffic patterns (especially truck routes) to protect housing areas and mitigate conflicts with industrial uses.
4. Acquire and demolish problem properties.
5. Support the Rosedale Block Cluster's new urban farm on Tioga Street and explore options for expanding it along Brushton Avenue.
6. Create new housing at a reorganized Busway entrance with small retail.
7. Extend a Busway edge trail from Homewood Avenue to Wilkinsburg Station and later expand the trail westward towards Bakery Square.
8. Create a new green gateway to Homewood at the Braddock underpass.
9. Extend Thomas Boulevard to Braddock Avenue and encourage new mixed use, green industry and office uses in the Lexington Technology Park.



### Rosedale & Lexington

New Housing	New Office Use
Renovated Housing	New Mixed Use
New Retail	Possible Green Industry
Renovated Retail	New Park
New Institution	Urban Agriculture
Existing Institution	New Trail

0 250 500

N



## 5.4 Point Breeze North

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Tree Lined Green Boulevards



Diverse High Quality Housing



Historic Westinghouse Park



Historic Architecture: Scheibler

Point Breeze North is a strong residential neighborhood centered around Westinghouse Park and known for tree-lined boulevards along Thomas and McPherson. The neighborhood is home to diverse historic architecture with a range of house sizes and styles including several architecturally significant apartment buildings by Frederick Scheibler. Over the last two decades many homes have been renovated and the housing stock has been generally stabilized, although some problem properties still exist.

Westinghouse Park, the centerpiece of the neighborhood, is a large passive park located on the site of "Solitude." George Westinghouse's mansion, personal laboratory and gardens. Today the Park is well used, but because it is the only significant open space located in all of Homewood and Point Breeze North, it is often used for events and activities that are not compatible with its status as a passive park.





Vacant Railroad Property

Vacant Land & Houses

Unwelcoming Underpass

Incompatible Land Use

Use & Maintenance Issues in Westinghouse Park

Unkempt Railroad Edge

Stargall Field

Major Bus Rapid Transit Station

Green Medians

Historic Housing

Strong Homeownership

**Point Breeze North Existing Conditions**

- Existing Buildings
- Parks
- Surface Parking
- Vacant Lots
- Tree Canopy

0 250 500

N

Simonton St

57th Ave

N Linden Ave

Lynn Way

N Dallas Ave

N Highland St

Westinghouse Park

Thomas Blvd

Meade St

N Lang Ave

McPherson Blvd

Penn Ave

N Hamwood Ave

N Lexington St

MLK East Busway

Homewood Station  
Jonathan Pl



# Point Breeze North Recommendations

Point Breeze North has already taken significant successful steps towards stabilizing its housing and improving its key asset: Westinghouse Park. Through the Map Pittsburgh process, residential parts of the neighborhood were rezoned for single-unit housing, which has positively affected homeownership rates. Neighborhood advocacy efforts should continue, targeting problem properties along the railroad and Busway edge and pursuing enhancements to Westinghouse Park.

Westinghouse Park would benefit from an in depth master plan for landscape improvements and park use. The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy could be a good partner to work with to plan and implement Park improvements. Westinghouse Park also has a unique opportunity to highlight, build on and reveal the history and archeology of the site and its role in the history of technology. Another key greening recommendation is to extend the neighborhood's signature green medians across the entire community. There is enough room for medians on Thomas Boulevard all the way to Lexington Street and on McPherson Boulevard in the block between Dallas and Linden Avenues.

Housing efforts should focus on the neighborhood's northern edge along Simonton Street and Jonathan Court where there are vacant houses and lots. Also continue to transform the vacant railroad property and siding along Simonton Street into a linear park and trail. Another longer term housing project is the conversion of the industrial property along Lynn Way into residential lofts.

1. Address vacant houses and lots along Simonton Street and Jonathan Place and build appropriately scaled infill housing.
2. Work with the city and potentially the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy to create a master plan to restore Westinghouse Park including new lighting, enhanced landscape treatments and a safer pedestrian bridge. Reorganize park uses to improve playground facilities, add a dog run and create a new park shelter that builds on the history of the site.
3. Extend the signature green medians and traffic circles on Thomas and McPherson Boulevards across the rest of the neighborhood.
4. Transform the railroad property along Simonton Street into a linear park and trail.
5. Explore the possibility of extending the trail over both Dallas and Fifth Avenues to connect between Westinghouse Park and Chatham University's new facilities and potentially to Bakery Square.
6. Green the Homewood, Dallas and Penn Avenue Corridors and improve lighting and surface treatments at the underpasses.
7. Convert the industrial building on Lynn Way to a more compatible residential loft use.





**“We are on the verge of finally turning this neighborhood around.”**



# 6 MOVING FORWARD



# Moving Forward

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## Strengthening Community Capacity

At the time of this writing, the first phase of new development on Homewood Avenue is already in the works: a mixed-use project, located between Finance and Susquehanna Streets, including a cafe and senior housing. The design is compatible with Bridging the Busway planning goals and there are aspirations to achieve a LEED (Leader in Energy and Environmental Design) rating for the project.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh initiated this first phase of new development, but it intends to step back to allow local community organizations to drive future revitalization efforts. While community members welcome the opportunity for local stakeholders to guide subsequent redevelopment, existing community development organizations do not currently have the capacity to take on redevelopment efforts. There are several ways to address this issue:

- an existing community organization could assume/resume a community development role, with staff dedicated to that purpose;
- a new organization could be created to lead redevelopment efforts;
- an existing organization could partner with a CDC from another neighborhood that has development expertise; or
- different neighborhood entities could take ownership of different parts of the Plan and advance discrete elements independently.

In any of the above scenarios, a Homewood Planning Forum should be created to: guide the Plan's implementation, help to coordinate projects and initiatives, act as a development clearinghouse to ensure that projects meet community goals, and keep neighborhood stakeholders engaged and informed about local development efforts.

While Homewood's non-profit community achieves remarkable work independently, there have been some challenges in getting different groups to work together towards holistic community action. In this economic landscape where neighborhoods are competing against one another for funding, it is important that the community unites to coordinate planning and development efforts for the greater good. A Homewood Planning Forum would be a venue for bringing residents, organizations and local leadership to the table for this common purpose.

Another reason to keep community members engaged around planning issues is to address concerns that were raised repeatedly during public meetings and focus group discussions. The most commonly asked questions related to:

- the timetable and parties responsible for implementing the Bridging the Busway Plan,

- preventing/addressing resident displacement when development projects occur,
- planning for the future of vacant properties,
- ensuring that specified percentages of Homewood residents are employed on redevelopment projects, and
- helping community members build wealth through neighborhood revitalization by ensuring that training, jobs development and local businesses are integral parts of redevelopment efforts.

Homewood's Neighborhood Planning Forum needs to be heavily supported - with staff, consultants and community intermediaries - in a way that facilitates the creation of subcommittees to address these issues early in the Plan implementation process. These important topics are outside the scope of the Bridging

the Busway Plan, but they could be early agenda items for a Homewood Planning Forum.

Homewood stakeholders should continue to work with Point Breeze North community members on shared projects, such as: advocating for improvements to Homewood Station, enhancing/replacing the existing Lang Avenue pedestrian bridge and creating the proposed trail along the Busway. It makes sense for one or two Point Breeze North representatives to stay engaged in cross-Busway planning discussions. Connections between Homewood and Point Breeze North should be physically enhanced through public realm improvements and art and both communities will benefit from broader revitalization efforts. With time and perseverance, the Homewood Avenue business district will become a destination that Homewood and Point Breeze North residents, and a broader regional audience, will enjoy.

## A Three-Phase Development Approach

With coordinated efforts, continued community engagement and a positive vision for the future, the Bridging the Busway Plan can be a road map for neighborhood revitalization. Although the details as to how the recommended development projects will be implemented need to be resolved after this document is published, this Plan recommends a general, three-phase strategic approach to neighborhood revitalization:

1. Stabilize the neighborhood and support existing planning efforts,
2. Plan for next steps and pursue/undertake development projects, and
3. Connect development efforts and improve connections to the rest of the City.

The three-phase development approach is graphically illustrated in the following pages. A table of



prioritized "Early Action" and "Next Steps" implementation items is also provided in the **Executive Summary** of this Plan document.

Neighborhood revitalization will not occur overnight. The local market needs to be strengthened and perceptions about public safety need to be improved to support a revitalized Homewood Avenue business district. Additional community planning will also be needed as neighborhood revitalization efforts advance, to build consensus about development

alternatives in some locations (around Pittsburgh Faison, for example) and to provide more detail in other places.

Certain Plan recommendations that reach outside of the study area boundaries, such as a trail connection to Bakery Square and the Allegheny Riverfront, could take a decade or more to achieve. But if there is community interest in those projects, local leadership can help to initiate feasibility studies and identify resources to guide future planning and development efforts.

# Phase I: Year 1

Stabilize the neighborhood and support existing projects and planning efforts



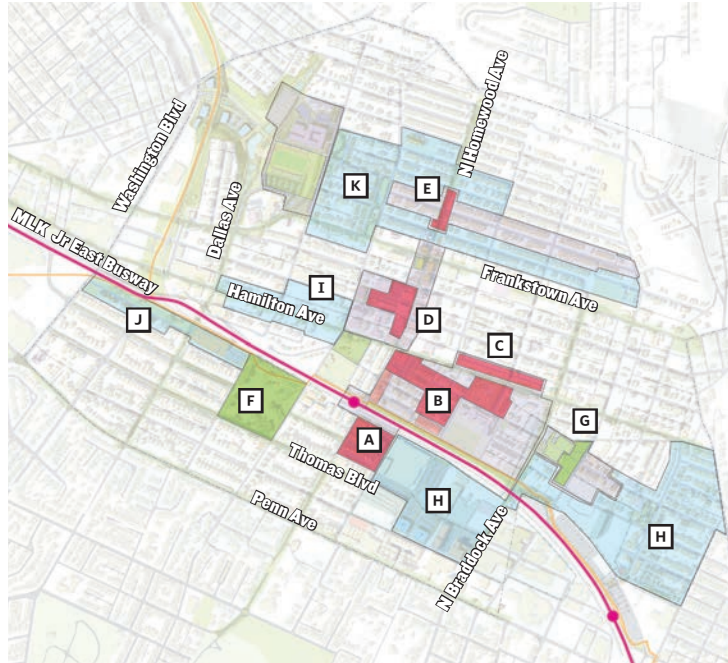
- Development Areas
- Greening
- Focused Planning Area

- Development Areas
  - A Homewood Avenue Phase I Senior Housing Development w/ Cafe 524
  - B New Single Family Homes
- Greening
  - C Busway edge tree planting and landscape improvements (Homewood Avenue to Braddock Avenue)
  - D Stabilize vacant property and create new green space around The Academy at Westinghouse
  - E Expand Stargell Field
  - F Expand Rosedale Block Cluster's Urban Farm
  - G Stabilize vacant property at the Homewood and Frankstown intersection
- Focused Planning Areas
  - H Develop community consensus re: future development investment in the area bounded by Homewood, Frankstown and Braddock Avenues and the East Busway
  - I Study the potential for changing land uses around Brushton Avenue and Tioga Street
  - J Stabilize vacant properties around The Academy at Westinghouse
  - K Stabilize existing houses along Race Street
  - L Strengthen the Homewood Avenue business district and the Youth, Arts & Education Campus
  - M Enhance Westinghouse Park
  - N Plan for Homewood Avenue Phase II Development south of the East Busway



# Phase II: Years 1-5

Plan for next steps and pursue/undertake new development projects

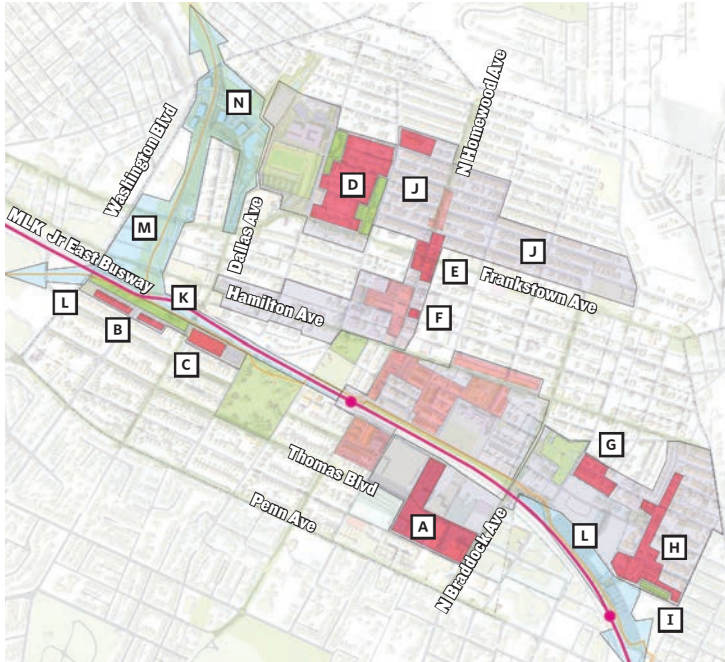


- Development Areas
- Greening
- Focused Planning Area
- Planning Completed
- Development Completed

- Development Areas**
  - A Homewood Avenue Phase II Development south of the East Busway (URA) and improvements to Homewood Station
  - B Improvements to area around Pittsburgh Faison
  - C Redevelop the Sterrett-Collier block of Frankstown Avenue
  - D Strengthen the Youth, Arts & Education Campus
  - E Homewood and Race Street
  
- Greening**
  - F Westinghouse Park Improvements
  - G Expand Rosedale Block Cluster's Urban Farm
  
- Planning Areas**
  - H Investigate the potential for an Environmental Industrial District north and south of the East Busway
  - I Study improvements to the Hamilton Avenue neighborhood gateway
  - J Plan for new housing and greening along Simonton Street from Washington Boulevard to Westinghouse Park

# Phase III: Years 5-10

Connect development efforts and improve connections to the rest of the City



- Development Areas
- Greening
- Focused Planning Area
- Planning Completed
- Development Completed

- **Development Areas**
  - A Lexington Technology Park redevelopment
  - B New houses and/or renovations along Simonton Street
  - C Industrial Building Converted into Residential Units
  - D New housing and open space near The Academy at Westinghouse
  - E New mixed-use buildings at the Homewood and Frankstown intersection
  - F New insitunal building along Homewood Avenue (a highly-visible extension of the Youth, Arts & Education Campus)
  - G New homes and/or renovations around Rosedale Block Cluster
  - H New development and improved gateways to Wilkinsburg Station
- **Greening**
  - I Greening along Susquehanna Street
  - J New housing and open space in Homewood North
  - K Trail and greening along Simonton Street
- **Focused Planning Areas**
  - L Explore the potential for TOD around Wilkinsburg Station
  - M Improve Homewood's western gateway and the study the potential for a trail connection to the Allegheny Riverfront
  - N Study the potential for an attractive new storm water detention facility and development opportunities in the Silver Lake Valley