

East End Communities Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

May 8–13, 2016



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A new approach for revitalization

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About the Urban Land Institute

THE MISSION OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. ULI is committed to

- Bringing together leaders from across the fields of real estate and land use policy to exchange best practices and serve community needs;
- Fostering collaboration within and beyond ULI's membership through mentoring, dialogue, and problem solving;
- Exploring issues of urbanization, conservation, regeneration, land use, capital formation, and sustainable development;
- Advancing land use policies and design practices that respect the uniqueness of both the built and natural environments;
- Sharing knowledge through education, applied research, publishing, and electronic media; and

- Sustaining a diverse global network of local practice and advisory efforts that address current and future challenges.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has more than 38,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academics, students, and librarians.

ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of the world's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

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About ULI Advisory Services

THE GOAL OF THE ULI ADVISORY SERVICES program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 600 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for issues such as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfield redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's advisory services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the panel topic and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI's interdisciplinary panel teams provide a holistic look at development problems. A respected ULI member who has previous panel experience chairs each panel.

The agenda for a five-day panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing day composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; a day of hour-long interviews of typically 50 to 75 key community representatives; and two days of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. A written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's five-day panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and

to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A major strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw on the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services panel report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance the environment.

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Acknowledgments

ON BEHALF OF THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE, the panel would like to thank the many organizations and individuals who assisted with this process. The panel would especially like to thank Councilman Rev. Ricky Burgess and his chief of staff Marita Bradley. Their passion and dedication to the East End communities is truly inspiring.

The panel also wishes to thank the East Liberty Development Inc. (ELDI) staff and board, especially executive director Maelene Myers and deputy director Skip Schwab. Their insight and knowledge were crucial to the success of the panel.

The panel thanks the many other organizations and individuals that made this panel possible, including Dan Paul of Westminster Presbyterian Church; the Mosites

Company; Sitko Bruno LLC; Mistick Construction Company; PWCampbell Construction Company; Walnut Capital Management Inc.; East Liberty Development Inc.; and Alphabet City Company. The panel also expresses thanks to former Pittsburgh mayor Tom Murphy and Stanley Lowe, former president and chief executive officer of Pittsburgh Neighborhood Preservation Services, for their contributions, both before and during the panel process.

Finally, the panel wishes to thank the more than 60 community stakeholders, which included residents, local businesses, service organizations, government officials, and others who agreed to be interviewed and gave meaningful insight, time, and energy to the panel process.

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Background

THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH, population 305,000, is the center of the western Pennsylvania economic region. The ten-county area surrounding the city includes 2.6 million people. The area is home to more than 30 universities and places of higher learning, including Carnegie Mellon University, Duquesne University, and the University of Pittsburgh. Known as Steel City because of its former ranking as the largest steel producer in the world, Pittsburgh has seen the loss of the steel industry over the past 30 years. The disappearance of the steel industry has resulted in a population that is half of what it was in 1950.

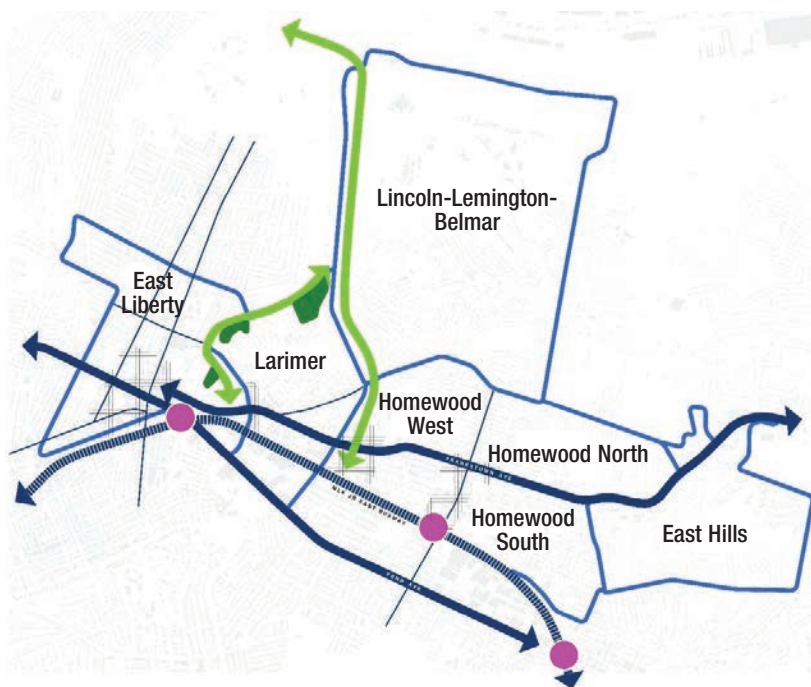
However, Pittsburgh continues to demonstrate a successful transformation from an older Rust Belt city to a city of the new economy. Pittsburgh receives high marks for addressing the needs of millennials and for leveraging the educational and technological opportunities associated with its myriad universities and technology businesses. However, even with all of the city's recent success, many neighborhoods continue to struggle and have yet to benefit from the economic transformation.

Regional map.



The East End Communities

The East End communities—East Liberty, Larimer, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills—suffer from high crime, low homeownership, neglected infrastructure, and minimal economic development. East Liberty, under the guidance of East Liberty Development Inc. (ELDI), has seen the most positive transformation over the past 20 years in its commercial core and adjacent residential areas. However, the other East End neighborhoods



The East End communities represent five distinct but connected neighborhoods located generally north and northeast of the Martin Luther King Jr. East Busway. Whereas East Liberty has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past 20 years, the other communities—Larimer, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills—suffer from high crime, low homeownership, neglected infrastructure, and minimal economic development.



Examples of portions of East End neighborhoods.

continue to struggle. ELDI and the city council member representing these neighborhoods asked ULI to convene an Advisory Services panel and provide strategic advice regarding a host of issues, including homeownership, economic development, crime, and community engagement.

Panel's Assignment

The panel was asked by the sponsors to offer help in areas such as the following:

1. Identify public and private financing tools and the ways in which they can be used to support housing and economic development activities in the East End.
2. Identify national, state, and public/private funding partnerships that can be used to fund affordable housing development projects of more than \$10 million to \$30 million.
3. Recommend what affordable housing ratios should look like in the East End and what ratios would be appropriate for a sustainable mixed-income community.



An aerial view of the East Liberty neighborhood in 1968 shows the ravages of Pittsburgh's urban renewal efforts.

4. Provide examples of inclusionary zoning around transit stops that have been successful or, for that matter, not successful. Recommend how the economic development activity in and around the East Liberty Transit Center can be used to benefit existing low-income residents who live near this development.
5. Suggest how to encourage existing, low-income residents to become engaged in neighborhood revitalization initiatives. Further, recommend how the communities can maximize the participation of minority- and women-owned business enterprises and residents in housing and economic development activities.
6. Explain the role that crime and schools play in neighborhood revitalization. Recommend tools and best practices for crime reduction and improvements in the public schools.
7. Recommend the timing or sequence of development projects within the East End and particularly identify any strong market edges in the East End that could support housing and economic development initiatives.
8. Identify land use planning tools and best practices that support or encourage social equity.

Summary of Recommendations

After conducting more than 60 interviews with stakeholders, touring the study area, and reviewing the briefing materials, the panel made the following observations and recommendations:

- Recognize that the five East End neighborhoods are different from one another and so require different responses.
- Complete a citywide comprehensive land use plan to make neighborhood planning easier across the city.
- Provide some property tax relief to existing homeowners through programs like Philadelphia's homestead exemption and LOOP program.
- Engage and coordinate with anchor institutions and the philanthropic community.
- Combat perceptions and transcend boundaries between neighborhoods, which are often arbitrary and not meaningful to newcomers.
- Take a long-term view and work west to east in tackling neighborhood revitalization.
- Limit additional low-income units throughout the East End to achieve the target of one-third affordable, one-third workforce, and one-third market-rate housing and to avoid further concentrating lower-income populations.
- Engage current residents by extending the excellent planning and community participation efforts already used in Homewood.
- Establish the HELP Initiative as a cross-neighborhood community development corporation, separate from East Liberty Development Inc., but engaging ELDI as a technical adviser. Provide financial stability and wherewithal through the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh.



Real estate and land use professionals from around the country participated in the ULI Advisory Services panel to provide recommendations for revitalizing Pittsburgh's East End.

The remainder of this report outlines the panel's observations and elaborates on these prime recommendations.

Market Potential

AS PART OF THE ASSIGNMENT, the panel listened to the commentary of the key Pittsburgh stakeholders it interviewed. The panel also listened to what the market was saying. The market forces told a story about where Pittsburgh and the East End neighborhoods have been and where they are going. An important axiom of the ULI Advisory Services panel process is, that before recommendations are rendered, the panel must understand socioeconomic trends facing a community.

Pittsburgh and the Greater Pittsburgh Region

The population of Pittsburgh is just over 305,000 people and the combined statistical area is just over 2.6 million people. The city population is down significantly from its 1950 high of 676,000 people largely because of the decimation of the steel industry and its collateral trades. Employment in both the city and the area experienced a significant drop in the 1980s and 1990s that was also directly tied to decline of the steel industry and its collateral trades. The trends in both population and employment have stabilized in the past ten years.



Pittsburgh has experienced remarkable revitalization and regeneration over the past 15 years. Most of the improvements have been concentrated downtown, near the universities, and along the rivers.

Projected Growth

Population, household, and employment forecasts project that both Pittsburgh and the ten-county Greater Pittsburgh region will grow during the next two decades. As shown in the top table on the facing page, Pittsburgh is expected to grow to approximately 337,000 residents and 172,000 households by 2035, an increase of 29,000 residents and 33,000 households over 2010 figures. Employment in Pittsburgh is projected to total about 425,000 jobs by 2035, an increase of about 30,000 since 2010.

By 2035, the ten-county region is projected to grow to about 3.08 million residents, 1.5 million households, and 1.78 million jobs. Compared with 2010 figures, the 2035 projections represent an increase of about 457,000 residents, 380,000 households, and 199,000 jobs within the region.

Because household growth drives growth in residential unit demand, the household projections in the table suggest potential market support for new residential units in Pittsburgh and the East End communities. In part, future increases in citywide employment will support future growth in the number of households. In addition, to meet the household growth projections shown in the table, Pittsburgh will need to experience an increase in the rate of household formation. The result would be smaller household sizes, which develop as individuals achieve higher incomes and are therefore able to support a household with fewer members (for example, as adults achieve income levels needed to move out of their parents' homes). An increase in enrollment at the universities in Pittsburgh also could support an increase in households in the absence of more significant employment growth.

Demographics for Pittsburgh and Ten-County Region

Pittsburgh	2010	2035	Increase, 2010–2035	% increase
Population	307,890	337,044	29,154	9.5
Households	138,253	171,748	33,495	24.2
Employment	394,752	425,127	30,375	7.7
10-county region				
Population	2,619,033	3,075,555	456,522	17.4
Households	1,118,283	1,497,970	379,687	34.0
Employment	1,582,799	1,782,117	199,318	12.6

Residential Market Overview

The following sections provide an understanding of where the residential market stands for the East End communities. This analysis includes both for-sale and for-rent units.

For-Sale Market Trends

The East End has experienced a modest level of activity in the for-sale market during the past six months, with stronger activity in East Liberty than in the other four neighborhoods. During the past six months, the median home sale price for single-family homes in the East End communities was \$24,500. The median sale price varied from \$8,450 in Homewood to \$133,500 in East Liberty, as shown in the table below. East Liberty experienced the highest volume of sales, with 14 home sales in the past six months, followed by Homewood (ten sales), Lincoln-

Lemington-Belmar (seven sales), and Larimer and East Hills (two sales each).

Those data reflect the relative strength of the residential market in East Liberty, with substantially less significant market demand for homes in Larimer, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills. That disparity in home prices and sales volume is attributable to East Liberty's proximity to shopping and other amenities and to recent real estate activity in the neighborhood that has led to an improvement of the housing stock, among other factors.

Many of the homes in the East End, including in East Liberty, need substantial and costly repairs. The cost to fully renovate many of the homes in the East End typically amounts to about \$150,000, or \$80 per square foot. In addition, a number of other costs are associated with

Home Sales in East End Communities, 2015

Neighborhood	Median sale price	Number of sales	% of sales in East End
East Liberty	\$133,500	14	40.0
Larimer	\$11,850	2	5.7
Homewood	\$8,450	10	28.6
Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar	\$13,500	7	20.0
East Hills	\$24,250	2	5.7
All neighborhoods	\$24,500	35	100.0

acquiring many of the properties in the East End, such as legal fees required to clear titles on abandoned properties. In total, property acquisition costs and renovation costs often exceed the likely home sale price. Although some fully renovated and newly constructed properties in East Liberty have sold for more than the cost of acquisition and rehabilitation, home sale prices in Larimer, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills have not yet reached that threshold.

Rental Market Trends

Rental market trends among new units provide an indication of the likely price points and affordability levels for future multifamily developments in the East End communities. With the exception of the residential units that were constructed as part of the Bakery Square development in Larimer, all of the market-rate multifamily construction in the East End communities has occurred in East Liberty.

The East Liberty rental market comprises both income-restricted and non-income-restricted units. Among the income-restricted units, some are affordable to households with incomes that are comparable to the typical incomes of households in the East End communities, whereas others are targeted to households earning incomes that are higher than those typical for East End community households (e.g., units targeted to households earning 60 percent of area median income [AMI]).

Among units that are not income-restricted, some are relatively affordable because of the basic quality of the building, amenities offered, or other factors. However, because these units are not subject to income restrictions, the affordability of this portion of the housing stock could increase if demand for rental units in the area leads to an increase in market-rate rents.

Among new market-rate properties (built between 2013 and 2015), average monthly rental rates generally range from \$1,400 for a studio to \$2,600 for a two-bedroom apartment. An annual household income of about \$50,000 to \$94,000 is necessary for households to afford these

rents, substantially higher than the median incomes for existing households in the East End communities. Rents for market-rate units in mixed-income properties tend to be slightly lower than the rents in market-rate properties because they lack the higher level amenities that market-rate properties typically offer. For example, rents for non-income-restricted units in one mixed-income property in East Liberty range from \$900 per month for a one-bedroom unit to \$1,100 per month for a two-bedroom unit, requiring a household income of about \$32,000 to \$40,000 per year to make rent affordable.

Overall, these rents provide a likely indication of the scale of rents among future multifamily rental developments in the East End communities. Those figures indicate that market demand from relatively high-income households will likely be necessary to support new market-rate development in the East End.

Strong market demand exists for new market-rate multifamily rental units in East Liberty—property owners and managers report low vacancy rates (5 percent or less for projects that have reached stabilization) and fast absorption over the past several years. Affordable properties throughout the East End all are reported to have waiting lists that well exceed the total number of affordable units.

East End Communities—Affordability

According to one definition of affordable housing, housing is considered affordable if the household spends no more than one-third of the household income on housing costs. For a household earning the median income among households in the East End communities (estimated around \$23,000 per year), the affordable rental rate is \$640 per month. The affordable home sale price for a household earning \$23,000 per year is about \$100,000. By any estimation, the East End communities include a significant share of the city's affordable housing stock.

East End Communities—Market Considerations

Potential sources of new demand for residential units in the East End communities include the following:

- **Population shifts from elsewhere in Pittsburgh.** Of the five neighborhoods that compose the East End, East Liberty is the most likely to draw residents from other Pittsburgh neighborhoods in the near term. Residents from outside the East End are not likely to represent a significant source of residential unit demand in Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills in the near term because of current perceptions of these neighborhoods. However, these four neighborhoods may be able to draw a larger share of residents from elsewhere in Pittsburgh over time if the market improves such that community perceptions of the neighborhoods begin to shift.

Whereas drawing households from elsewhere in Pittsburgh could help fill vacant units and support residential rehabilitation and development in East End communities, such population shifts would represent a decline in households in other neighborhoods.

- **Residents from outside Pittsburgh moving into the city.** Particular potential demand for housing could come from residents who have left the East End communities for suburbs further out and would benefit from being closer to employment.
- **Future citywide and regional population growth.** Projections indicate that the number of households in Pittsburgh is expected to grow by almost 25 percent over the next 25 years. That rate is substantially more than that projected for population growth, thus Pittsburgh can expect household growth will come disproportionately from a reduction in household size. Employment growth will be necessary to support future growth in households. If the city experiences significant growth in employment that exceeds population projec-

tions, household growth also could be more significant than the projections indicate.

East End communities could capture a moderate share of this citywide growth in demand in the near term and over the longer term because the housing stock is affordable and households coming from out of town are not as familiar with neighborhood boundaries. In the near term, Larimer and Homewood are best positioned to capture demand from citywide and regional growth because they are closer to the strong market in East Liberty, have better-developed community plans, and have better access to transit.

Projected Demand

As of 2010, the East End communities accounted for about 7 percent of households citywide. As previously discussed, Pittsburgh is projected to grow by 29,000 households by 2035. If the East End communities can capture a share of that growth equivalent to the communities' 2010 share of households citywide, residential unit demand in the East End communities would total about 2,400 units within the next two decades and average about 120 units per year. However, this figure may overstate the likely rate of growth in these areas. A concerted strategy is needed to continue to improve the market position of the East End neighborhoods.

Growth in Pittsburgh and the East End neighborhoods will occur at uneven rates over the course of the next two decades. In the near term, East Liberty is likely to continue to absorb the majority of demand for new residential units in the East End neighborhoods because of East Liberty's strength relative to other neighborhoods in the East End.

Because of the high number of vacant parcels and vacant houses in the East End, a portion of any new demand for housing in these neighborhoods will be fulfilled by households that occupy existing units rather than newly constructed new units. As a result, a somewhat reduced demand for new residential construction is likely.

Retail and Commercial Development in Larimer and Homewood

The projection for retail and commercial uses in the East End communities is limited, with the highest opportunities expected in East Liberty and the lowest in Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar and the East Hills. Although the retail vacancy rate remains low for the city as a whole (about 3.5 percent), the ability of the East End communities (other than East Liberty) to capture pent-up demand is significantly limited by the lack of available and usable commercial building stock and by the low density of neighborhoods because of abandonment and vacancies. For example, in Larimer the total market demand for food service and drinking places is less than 1,000 square feet, according to Esri data. In Homewood, the market demand for food service and drinking places is nonexistent.

(Note: Market demand, as used in this report, is not determined on the basis of the desire of a community for certain uses. Rather, it is a complex quantitative measurement from a variety of sources that focuses on relationships among population, buying power, and the availability of acreage or building space. Market demand is used by

companies, investors, and organizations to help make locational decisions for their businesses. For a better explanation of market demand, see the ULI publications *Retail Development Handbook* and *Real Estate Market Analysis: Methods and Case Studies*.)

Although demand for grocery store square footage is 17,000 square feet in Homewood, the neighborhood is unlikely attract any national chains given the current state of the commercial corridors in Homewood and competition with nearby grocery stores that currently are within the acceptable range of travel for such uses. Similarly, the lack of housing units and population in Larimer coupled with the neighborhood's proximity to East Liberty retail results in no demand for grocery stores in that neighborhood.

The panel concludes that until the population significantly increases in Larimer, the neighborhood offers few near-term opportunities for additional retail space. Equally, additional households would be needed in Homewood to boost its buying power, and that growth would need to be combined with a program to improve the commercial building stock.

Pittsburgh 2016 in Context

PITTSBURGH, LIKE MANY CITIES in the Northeast and Midwest, saw rapid urbanization as it became an industrial powerhouse in the first half of the 20th century. Fundamental structural changes to the global economy in the second half of the last century, aided by public policies, led to job and resident migration to suburbs and to rapidly growing cities on the coasts and Sun Belt. Pittsburgh shares a similar history with the other 50 legacy cities across the country.

Today, Pittsburgh is increasingly attractive to employers and residents and has curtailed population loss. This new moment of modest growth presents a unique opportunity to preserve affordable housing and to create mixed-income neighborhoods in and adjacent to economically growing areas of the city.

To effectively manage its successes, Pittsburgh should continue its steps toward comprehensive planning—a process that determines community goals and aspirations articulated through a comprehensive plan, which dictates public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, land use, recreation, and housing. The city should continue and strengthen both the community engagement and data analysis dimensions of neighborhood and citywide planning. Effectively establishing comprehensive planning will require increased investment in the neighborhood and citywide institutions that provide the level of capacity required to develop comprehensive strategies and execute brick-and-mortar projects that fulfill them.

Assumptions

The Urban Land Institute panel holds a set of assumptions in common that inform its observations and recommendations. These include the following:

- Healthy neighborhoods are truly mixed-income and diverse places.
- Each neighborhood holds a unique set of qualities and goals, and neighborhood residents have a voice in articulating a creative vision that is guided by the larger citywide strategy.
- Effective comprehensive strategies are holistic and informed by evidence, and they address systems.
- Effective comprehensive strategies establish goals for multiple time horizons: short term, ten years out, 20–40 years out.
- The market can bring essential capital, but the market cannot and will not solve everything.

Strengths

Pittsburgh has a strong set of strengths at its disposal to continue citywide revitalization and preserve affordability across a very wide spectrum of residents. City and regional population growth reflects the preference of new and long-time residents to be there. Pittsburgh possesses not only an incredibly strong sense of place, but also a level of buzz that is palpable today across the nation. Urban economists have indicated that scale matters. It is much easier to strengthen an economy around a core city population of 305,000 and a metro population of 2.3 million than one much smaller.

Another important asset is the presence of many large philanthropies, such as the Heinz Endowments, the McCune Foundation, and the Richard King Mellon Foundation, as well as very strong anchor institutions, such as Carnegie Mellon University, Point Park University, Duquesne University of Pittsburgh, and University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). The value that those institutions have

brought to the city cannot be understated, and opportunities exist for them to amplify their results with more coordinated approaches.

The abundance of low-cost urban land and buildings, inventory of building stock with aesthetic character and good bones, and ample fresh water all are assets that could be deployed in support of holistic revitalization strategies. The panel's recommendations seek to preserve and strengthen those assets for Pittsburgh's future.

Challenges

Like many legacy cities that lost a substantial proportion of their jobs, residents, and tax base, Pittsburgh made tough choices to stabilize its economy. A lack of investment from outside meant that the city did not invest in infrastructure, and many institutions that provided the capacity to develop and execute complex economic and community development strategies were attenuated. A very real challenge in the city is overcoming the history of extremely strong racial, economic, social, and geographic lines that divide the city. Although a handful of neighborhoods are strong, a substantial share of neighborhoods are moderately to highly distressed. Finally, the panel observed a marked shortage of recent immigrants, a demographic that typically facilitates economic vitality in high- and low-income neighborhoods alike.

This panel identified one citywide obstacle in particular that appeared to be a major impediment to developing and executing complex revitalization strategies: a history of fragmented authority and responsibility for citywide planning. Although bottom-up community planning is essential, clear codification of the rules of the game provide clarity to developers and residents alike about the level of risk and opportunity involved in site-specific projects.

Outside forces pose potential risks. For example, the economy works in market cycles. There will be another recession, and it is unclear how economically resilient Pittsburgh and its neighborhoods can be during the next recession. Annual regional growth could be absorbed by continued suburban development, thus depressing demand inside the city.

Finally, as is the case in any U.S. city today, outside market forces are continually probing and testing lower-value neighborhoods for opportunity. In some instances, this practice can lead to the worst of the problems associated with gentrification. Increases in property values drive out existing residents, often longtime residents who are struggling economically and are either unable to pay property taxes if they are homeowners or unable to pay increased rents. In both cases, longtime residents leave the neighborhood. At the same time, the dynamic of an influx of new residents can be extremely beneficial in reducing or eliminating the concentrations of very low-income communities, improving overall buying power as it relates to retail and improving property values for longtime residents. Balancing the retention of existing residents and the preservation of their social and organizational networks with the needs of new residents is the key to success.

Some organizations have taken the first important steps in addressing this issue. For example, Operation Better Block (OBB) has tackled this issue head on with its Cluster Planning Process. The cluster planning process creates a detailed land use vision for Homewood's future on the basis of the needs and desires of existing community stakeholders. As is made patently clear by OBB, this process will not resolve all questions regarding how the vision will be implemented. However, it will set goals for ensuring that future development is equitable and addresses the needs of the existing community.

The panel commends OBB, and the group's statements represent an earnest desire to ensure that the social fabric of the neighborhood remains intact. From the panel's perspective, several issues that logically proceed from this work need to be addressed:

- The cluster planning recommendations need to be tested against the market realities. The panel understands that OBB is currently engaging a consultant to do that.
- The panel is encouraged by the idea to promote the city of Pittsburgh Side Yard Sale program, in which homeowners who live next to vacant, city-owned land

and who are up-to-date on their taxes can purchase adjacent parcels for a low fee.

- An overriding issue that should be addressed early in this process is how new residents can assimilate into the neighborhood without causing the actual or perceived negative impacts of gentrification. This goal requires a truly mixed-income approach to housing opportunities. Of course, this is easier said than done. Although it may require only modest modifications from the suggested land uses proposed in the cluster planning exercise, a reality check must be given to the existing residents about who the likely new residents will be. The panel believes that most of the new residents will have higher incomes and higher educational levels than existing residents, that they will not be from Pittsburgh, and they will not be African American. The question is whether Homewood is ready to embrace this change in demographics. If the answer is no, then the panel sees the time frame for regeneration and improvement for Homewood increasing significantly.

Recommendations

The panel had several comprehensive recommendations that will help the city effectively manage its current successes and help the East End neighborhoods experience a renaissance of their own. These recommendations, combined with the site-specific suggestions for each of the individual East End neighborhoods, will allow the communities to begin to reap the same type of benefits as the more successful parts of the city.

Comprehensive Plan

The first recommendation is that Pittsburgh continue steps to articulate a citywide and long-term strategic vision, establish clearer lines of accountability and responsibility for citywide comprehensive planning, and codify comprehensive and community plans. A long-term strategic vision should articulate goals for multiple time horizons (short, medium, and long term). The vision should be informed by evidence, but it should also be creative and reflect what makes the city unique. The vision should provide guidance

to determining the distribution of future population densities, and it should guide more specific strategies.

Tax Protection Measures for Longtime Residents

Tax protections for longtime owner/occupiers should be intensively explored. One approach could be a program similar to Philadelphia's Longtime Owner Occupants Program (LOOP). LOOP includes a tax abatement program that allows longtime resident owners to significantly reduce their tax bills.

Clarified Responsibilities

Pittsburgh should continue to clarify the responsibilities and authority of its major planning and redevelopment bodies, including the URA, planning department, housing authority, and related existing or in-development authorities, such as the land bank, housing trust fund, and land trusts.

Transportation and Connectivity

It is important that all forms of transportation be examined in conjunction with land use planning. The two policy domains must be examined and when modified done with an understanding of how one affects the other. Transportation that should be examined includes all modes: walking, biking, other nonmotorized transport (NMT), public transportation such as traditional buses and the busway (and other bus rapid transit [BRT] and BRT-like options), as well as traditional and technologically enabled market transportation options that include the informal (but well used) jitney system, formal taxis, and ride hailing apps such as Lyft, Uber, and shared modes such as Uber Pool. Finally, the neighborhoods, as they move through the revitalization process, should consider establishing complete streets or other safe street methods that provide more emphasis on the pedestrian.

Also, there is a clear benefit to locating affordable housing in areas with high levels of access to the economic and social opportunities afforded by transportation. Inclusionary zoning would not be the most effective way to increase affordability around the transportation-rich areas in the East End neighborhoods (though it may be more effective

tive in the city's strongest markets). An incentive that rewards developers with increased density is more likely to encourage housing development around transit. Incentives would also support the ability for low-income households to afford a higher share of the costs of rehabilitation and new construction. The panel recommends borrowing the Portland, Oregon, model of a density bonus through a zoning overlay that allows for one extra unit (e.g., an accessory dwelling unit in a single-family zone) if the parcel is within one-quarter mile of light rail, or, in Pittsburgh's case, the Busway in addition to light rail. Pittsburgh could consider a half-mile radius. An advantage of the zoning overlay process is that it is far easier and faster to adopt than a complete rezoning.

Anchor Institutions and Philanthropies

Anchor institutions should follow the lead of Point Park University as a deeply engaged anchor institution that revitalizes neighborhoods. Other programs to consider include Cleveland's University Circle and Evergreen Cooperatives as well as Syracuse University's Connective Corridor partnership in New York State, and partnerships of the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University in Philadelphia and Rutgers University and Newark, New Jersey.

Philanthropies have done incredibly good work in Pittsburgh. The panel encourages Pittsburgh's philanthropies to build from these strengths and to become more coordinated among themselves.

HELP Initiative

The HELP (Homewood, East Hills, East Liberty, Larimer, and Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar Protection) Initiative is a program to help coordinate housing opportunities, real estate development, and economic opportunities in Pittsburgh's East End neighborhoods. The goal of the HELP Initiative is to preserve and increase affordable housing choices and to develop diverse and sustainable mixed-income communities. A guiding principle of the HELP Initiative is that concentrations of poverty are neither healthy nor desirable. Furthermore, the affordability of housing is affected not just by market-rate pressures but also by

crime and blight. The initiative outlines a framework for cooperation with government agencies and with locally established collaboratives in each of the neighborhoods.

Current Structure

The current structure of HELP is evolving, though the program was approved conceptually by the City Council. As presented to the ULI panel, the HELP Initiative currently has no permanent staff but is supported by Councilman Burgess's staff, ELDI staff members, and volunteers. HELP Initiative's responsibilities include creating and marketing a strategy for multineighborhood affordable housing protection to capitalize on both the strengths and the opportunities in the East End market. In essence, HELP acts as a clearinghouse for information and as a technical assistance exchange between the various levels of government, private businesses, and the grassroots organizations that are operating in each of the neighborhoods.

As envisioned by ELDI, the HELP Initiative would be managed by a new 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and would comprise three functions:

- **Wrap-around services.** This category of activities would include community engagement; comprehensive community planning; communications and a web page; and coordination of supportive services, workforce, education, and community health programs.
- **Technical assistance related to development.** This category would provide community partners in the East End with technical assistance in real estate development.
- **Acquisition of occupied nuisance rental properties.** ELDI has started the legal process to incorporate a new nonprofit organization to acquire and hold for redevelopment occupied nuisance rental properties in the East End. This new entity, HELP Pittsburgh Inc., will have an independent board of directors. The mission of the new entity is to be a land holding and land recycling company and not an active real estate development company.

The panel believes that as a stopgap measure, ELDI could fulfill the roles and tasks outlined in this section until a

new development entity is created. However, the panel is concerned that ELDI does not have the capacity to take on this role for the entire East End in the long run. ELDI's current and future commitments could be compromised by the organization's taking on these further roles.

Areas for Improvement for the Initiative

From an outsider's point of view, the HELP Initiative provides a theoretical framework for activities focused on housing opportunities and economic opportunity in Pittsburgh's East End neighborhoods. That framework suggests a logical flow of information and action between the collaboratives at the neighborhood level and the various government agencies that fund, review, approve, inspect, and support the land use process and real property activities.

The panel believes that the effectiveness of the HELP Initiative can be greatly improved with the following actions:

- Formalize the organizational structure of the initiative by creating an organizational chart.
- Establish clear lines of information flow, identifying individuals, organizations, and timelines for activities.
- Create permanent resources to coordinate the effort.

The panel believes that a community development organization, backed by the URA, is the best method to achieve these ends. A more detailed explanation of this approach will be covered in the implementation chapter of this report.

Planning and Urban Design

TO ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS provided by the sponsor, the panel employed a geographic approach. Each recommendation for an individual neighborhood in the East End is followed by sections that evaluate the neighborhood's opportunities and challenges. Each recommendation is intended to be part of the HELP Initiative.

East Liberty Background

The East Liberty neighborhood is writing its success story. From the early 20th century, East Liberty was one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in the nation, home to the biggest names in Pittsburgh's history, such as Mellon and Westinghouse. Through the 1950s, it was a bustling marketplace, the state's third-largest business district behind Center City Philadelphia and downtown Pittsburgh with over 1 million square feet of commercial real estate.

However, like Pittsburgh and many of its neighborhoods, East Liberty began to lose population in the 1960s because of the suburbanization of the region and migration from the metropolitan area. East Liberty has lost almost 51 percent of its population since then (the same as the city as a whole). The neighborhood also suffered through a disastrous urban renewal program, which caused the loss of much of East Liberty's historic fabric and was followed by crime and property abandonment.

Over the past 20 years, the city, East Liberty residents, and organizations have made a concerted effort to reverse this trend. Through much hard work, community planning, and strategic interventions, East Liberty is experiencing a renaissance, transitioning into a desirable neighborhood for residents looking for a culturally diverse, central urban neighborhood near transit and retail.

Within just over a half square mile, East Liberty had 5,869 residents and 3,519 housing units, according to the 2010



City officials, East Liberty residents, and ELDI have made a concerted effort to revitalize the East Liberty neighborhood.

census. This is twice the density (persons per square mile) of the city of Pittsburgh as a whole. In the neighborhood, 86.8 percent of housing units were occupied, with more than 78.0 percent of those being renter occupied. Much of this housing stock—43 percent—was built before 1939. The median sales price was \$79,250 in 2010.

The racial composition of the neighborhood was 67 percent African American and 25 percent white. Almost 24 percent of the population was under 19 years of age, in line with the city of Pittsburgh. However, East Liberty had a higher percentage of elderly residents, with 13 percent of residents over age 75. Median income was \$24,945, with 33 percent of residents living below the poverty level. The overall demographics from 1960 through 2010 describe a neighborhood in distress.

Opportunities

East Liberty is on the upswing. Not only does it have great architecture, walkability, access to transit, and a central location, but it also has positive neighborhood indicators of decreasing crime, increasing population, and increasing property values. It is adjacent to the strong housing

markets of Highland Park and Shadyside, unlike other neighborhoods in the study area. It is near city landmarks and parks, such as Highland Park Zoo, Highland Park, and Mellon Park. In addition, it has a mix of national retailers and locally owned stores and restaurants.

One of the key strengths of East Liberty is the grassroots community-based organization ELDI. From its community organizing, community planning, and strategic development efforts, the organization and its partners have made significant strides in reducing crime, improving property values, and creating affordable and market-rate housing. All of these efforts serve to reverse the effects of neighborhood decline and disinvestment that occurred from the 1960s through the 1980s.

Specifically, ELDI has instituted several successful strategies that are worth noting as considerations for other neighborhoods:

- Acquisition of vacant lots focused on a block by block strategy
- Construction of scattered-site affordable housing that blends into the neighborhood
- Development of both market-rate and affordable housing
- Intensive property management of rental properties
- Reduction of nuisance properties and crime by targeting bad landlords
- Facilitation of commercial development in key nodes

All of these strategies working together have served to remove blighted properties, keep the community engaged, preserve affordable housing units, and attract new residents and investment into the neighborhood.

Given this positive activity, the market in East Liberty still has the capacity for both additional residential and commercial development. As there is a demand for diverse, safe neighborhoods with an urban vibe, East Liberty is well poised to capture this market and its benefits for existing residents.

Challenges

After decades of disinvestment and population loss, residents understandably have a distrust of institutions and fear of displacement. Recent steep increases in property values and sales of single-family homes in some areas of East Liberty have increased the perception that the entire neighborhood is no longer affordable and is losing its historic social fabric. In addition, there is a perception that East Liberty has completed its transformation, while in reality work on the physical, economic, and social fabric of the neighborhood is still unfinished.

Although ELDI has developed capacity for real estate development and has helped to move the needle forward on the key neighborhood indicators previously described, the group is beginning to feel the pressure of organizational challenges. Specifically, with its staff resources limited, ELDI could find that working in the East End distracts the group from its core mission of revitalizing East Liberty.

In 2013, as part of ELDI's neighborhood stabilization initiative, ELDI developed and implemented an 18-month pilot program to help vulnerable families achieve their goals of social stability and securing stable housing through the neighborhood's transformation process. ELDI hired two full-time staff people to pilot social service programs at the 125-unit East Liberty Garden Apartments, which was the only remaining Section-8 vouchered property in the area and slated for redevelopment. ELDI staff met with residents to explain coming changes, organized programs for children, and built a computer lab in a vacant unit. Social equity ensures that individuals and groups:

- Have access to a wide variety of experiences, resources, goods, and services;
- Are protected from health, economic, environmental, and social disparities;
- Have the opportunity to participate in public decisions; and
- Are treated fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, income, gender, age, or disability.

Helping families achieve social goals will make residents better tenants, better homeowners, and better neighbors. Achieving social goals of family stability, employment, and education will help them be permanent members of a revitalized community.

This initial pilot program then led ELDI to implement the Circles program, a national antipoverty program that matches low income neighbors with middle and upper income neighbors in long-term relationships. Circles now exists in East Liberty and several other nearby neighborhoods. The program is showing great results and may be a useful tool as the HELP Initiative moves forward.

Part of the question that the panel was asked to evaluate is whether ELDI's strategy could be replicated in other neighborhoods. In the panel's opinion, the success of ELDI may be difficult to replicate because East Liberty is unique in scale, strategic location, and presence of a historic commercial center. Specifically, it would not be a sustainable practice in other neighborhoods to take on large amounts of land acquisition that require higher holding costs because the other neighborhoods are more geographically isolated, the perception or reality of crime and nuisance properties is greater, and fewer anchor institutions, critical population mass, and community organizations exist. This is a high-risk strategy for organizations without strategic community plans, capacity, or funding or for an existing organization that may be spread too thin.

Recommendations

ELDI needs to be deliberate in addressing resident fears of displacement for both residents and businesses. Although ELDI should do a better job of telling the neighborhood's story and its successes, it should focus on what the organization is doing next to help residents and businesses stay in the neighborhood. Specifically, ELDI should focus on a wealth creation/asset building strategy to help residents and businesses benefit from stronger economic realities.

Retail strategy. The panel made the following recommendations regarding a retail strategy:

- With increased pressure for market rents, focus on developing a strategy for the desired mix of national

and locally based retail. Determine how much retail the neighborhood wants and where it should go. ELDI needs a market study that can analyze the growing market in and around East Liberty and that would include retail leakage, extended demographics, and psychographics to be able to identify new opportunities for business creation. This process can lead to a deliberate plan to reserve spaces for entrepreneurial, local startups.

- Partner with existing organizations and initiatives to offer business retention programs, such as technical assistance on how to reposition businesses for the changing market and demographics, how to market in the social media realm, how to buy property, and how to gain access to grant and loan programs. Most importantly, ELDI can be a conduit to provide a support network for these businesses to make their transitions successful.
- Alternatively, the EDLI can take a more aggressive stance and provide subsidies for maintaining rents at a reasonable level, providing physical space (incubator type space), or putting land in a land trust to keep commercial rents affordable.
- Research other programs, such as facade improvement or restaurant build-out grants that can provide a direct benefit to business owners.

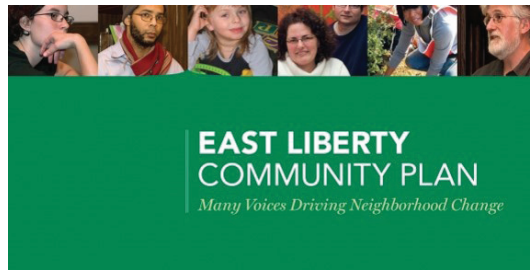
Residential strategy. The panel made the following recommendations regarding a residential strategy:

- As a way to continue to stabilize the neighborhood and create wealth for its residents, continue the vacant land acquisition strategy and focus on the development of affordable, single-family, for-sale housing. The Circles program is a strong start in this endeavor to provide those wraparound services needed to create readiness for homeownership.
- Work aggressively with the city and URA to develop a homeowner rehabilitation program using community development block grants or other resources to assist existing homeowners with health- and safety-related improvements to their homes, such as roof, weatherization, electrical, and plumbing upgrades.

Revenue sources. ELDI needs a more stable, recurring revenue source as the competition for development fees from tax credit projects and other developments gets more intense and opportunities for revenues from land sales decline. ELDI should continue to focus on its efforts in real estate development. However, as the organization evolves it will need to focus on more sustainable revenue sources. Be wary that success in past performance is not an indicator of future performance.

- The organization should evaluate its core mission and align those with current and proposed projects through 2020. Specifically, ELDI needs to develop a sustainability plan. The organization needs to evaluate what ELDI does best and conduct financial projections given those strategies to make sure the organization is sustainable and effective in the long run. Particular attention should be paid to the high-risk strategy of land acquisition and holding properties long term in areas outside of East Liberty.
- One avenue to consider as part of this evolution is the formation of a business improvement district (BID). A business improvement district is a defined area within which businesses are required to pay an additional tax (or levy) to fund projects, infrastructure maintenance, branding, programming, and management within the district's boundaries. The BID is often funded primarily through the levy but can also draw on other public and private funding streams. BIDs often focus on "clean and safe" programs, marketing the district, and capital improvements, such as streetscaping and wayfinding programs.

ELDI should continue its success of community engagement and community planning with a focus on the implementation of its Community 2010 Plan. ELDI should create a yearly action plan or work program of projects to be accomplished through 2020. At that time, ELDI should begin developing a new 10-year community plan, revisiting the mission of the organization and aligning projects and programs with its community values.



The East Liberty Community Plan will play an important role in the continued revitalization of the neighborhood.

Given the panel's recommendation about ELDI's focus on East Liberty, more information about how to address other East End project recommendations will be found later in this report.

Larimer

In many ways the Larimer neighborhood is well integrated into East Liberty. Physically, the Fairfield Homes and Choice Neighborhoods developments at the southeastern edge of Larimer create an attractive and welcoming front door to the neighborhood, weaving it across Broad Street and into the East Liberty commercial district.

Larimer is compact and most of the homes are within a mile of the transit center and the core of the East Liberty commercial district. Further, with a total land area of less than one-half of a square mile, Larimer is only two-thirds the size of East Liberty. This size allows the two neighborhoods to feel like parts of a connected whole. In addition, the Kingsley Center is seen by many as a community



Vacant and abandoned property sends a negative message to current and prospective residents. The poor physical condition of the Larimer neighborhood limits its attractiveness, particularly to native Pittsburghers.

resource for the entire East End, a place that serves East Liberty and Homewood as much as it serves Larimer.

Larimer's scale, its proximity to and connectivity with East Liberty, and its location in walking distance to the Google offices and retail at Baker's Square position the neighborhood well to benefit from East End revitalization and to experience "edge growth" spilling over from East Liberty as that community builds out in the coming decades. In addition, the significant amount of high-quality open space planned for Larimer and the potential rails-to-trails project are amenities that would be very attractive to new residents of both market-rate and income-restricted housing.

Opportunities

The Larimer community has done more than any of the other neighborhoods in the East End to take advantage of the opportunities created by the revitalization of East Liberty. The Larimer Consensus Group achieved buy-in from the community and key public and private officials on a vision to concentrate housing, shrink the residential footprint, and significantly green the community with both parks and sustainable infrastructure.

Moreover, Larimer secured a \$30 million Choice Neighborhood award that is making significant physical and social improvements. The Larimer Consensus Group has adopted a vision that acknowledges the link between East Liberty and Larimer.



New development in Larimer is leading to significant improvement in the physical and social well-being of the neighborhood.

Challenges

Despite the opportunities, there are obstacles to the revitalization of Larimer. More than 200 vacant or abandoned properties scattered throughout the neighborhood create opportunities for crime and discourage private market-rate investment. Larimer cannot stabilize until the reality and perception of crime are addressed. Moreover, the very high concentration of income-restricted rental housing and the low level of owner-occupied housing are also deterrents to investment. For Larimer to stabilize, it must attract market-rate homeowners. To date, substantially all of the new investment in the neighborhood has been targeted at creating new income-restricted rental housing. Although providing affordable rental housing is essential to housing Pittsburgh's workforce, the neighborhood will never attract the private investment necessary to improve and stabilize itself if income-restricted housing is the only new housing development in Larimer.

Recommendations

The revitalization effort in Larimer should pivot to a focus on creating owner-occupied market-rate housing. A significant amount of income-protected rental housing has been created by the McCormick Barron and KDK developments. That housing meets an important need; however, a substantial amount of affordable rental housing exists in and is planned for Larimer. Moreover, the rents charged for much of the existing market-rate housing in Larimer are similar to those charged at income-restricted properties. In other words, virtually all of the rental housing available today in Larimer is affordable housing. Further, only two market-rate home sales have been made in Larimer in the last six months, compared with 14 sales during the same period in East Liberty. The difference indicates a lack of market-rate housing available for sale in Larimer.

To create a stable mixed-income community in Larimer, most of the new housing built needs to be market-rate housing. Specifically, no more than half of all the new units built in the future (rental and owner occupied) should be targeted to households at or below 60 percent of AMI.

Without an explicit focus on creating both new market-rate owner-occupied housing and scattered site affordable housing, poverty will be concentrated in Larimer, and the neighborhood will not revitalize.

In addition, there will be demand for a limited amount of neighborhood-serving businesses targeted at the residents of Larimer. The retail core of the East End will continue to be in East Liberty, and the expected population densities in Larimer and the other East End neighborhoods will not support significant additional retail development outside of East Liberty.

For potential homeowners to invest in Larimer in the near term, they will need to perceive that the neighborhood is safe and stable and offers a significant value relative to other options in more established communities. In addition, the scale of new market-rate development needs to be large enough to persuade homeowners that it will be transformational. Specifically, a new home development of at least 50 lots, with homes priced at \$200,000 to \$250,000 should absorb eight to 12 new homeowners per year with annual price increases of 10 percent. Given the significant supply of lots that remains in East Liberty, Larimer will need to maintain significant discounts and differentiation from East Liberty so that it does not cannibalize that market.

Creating this opportunity will require a community development entity to assemble the land, clear title, and prepare new building pads for development. Specifically, a community development entity will need to aggressively acquire tax delinquent properties, vacant lots, and other targeted properties to create enough development parcels to attract significant interest from new market-rate residents. In addition, given that the total development costs of the homes may exceed the sales prices that can be obtained initially, the lots may need to be sold to builders at a loss and the forgivable financing of up to \$150,000 per homeowner may be required to incentivize buyers to purchase in Larimer.

Rehabilitation incentives should also be used to stimulate the creation of additional owner-occupied housing. For

example, vacant or tax-delinquent homes could be sold to homeowners for nominal consideration (e.g., \$100) and forgivable or deferred loans provided to finance rehabilitation of the homes. This program would increase homeownership in Larimer, provide housing at a more moderate price point, and remove abandoned buildings from the neighborhood. In addition, a grant program should be established to provide existing homeowners with funds to rehabilitate their homes to preserve equity and prevent disrepair from occurring.

Because of the high concentration of affordable housing that already exists in Larimer, all new affordable housing should be constructed on scattered sites and interspersed among market-rate housing. Alternative building forms have been used in other cities to integrate affordable rental housing into single family neighborhoods without creating a noticeable shift in building typology. This design approach seems appropriate for Larimer given the predominately single-family character of the neighborhood. In addition, allowing new and renovated market-rate homes to include accessory dwelling units that could be leased by homeowners (so-called granny flats) would both generate income that homeowners could use to help pay mortgage costs and provide additional market-rate rental housing.

In this way, allowing accessory dwelling units would subsidize both homeownership and the production of additional rental housing without requiring a direct public subsidy. These strategies may require zoning changes to allow multifamily housing in a single family building form (e.g., R-2 or R-4 zoning or the creation of a zoning overlay).

Some interviewees expressed concern about the housing authority's management of its existing scattered site housing. In order for the market-rate housing in Larimer to be successful, scattered site housing must be well maintained and tenant issues must be addressed promptly, and there must be open, honest, easy, and frequent communication between the housing authority and adjacent homeowners. The housing authority should consider contracting this

work to a private property management company with experience managing mixed-income communities.

Community Issues

As in East Liberty, it is likely that many of the new homebuyers will be from outside the surrounding area. Revitalizing Larimer will change the economic and demographic composition of the neighborhood. As a result, the physical redevelopment should be accompanied by a deliberate and focused effort around building community and ensuring that long-standing concerns of the current residents are addressed concurrently. Potential strategies to improve community engagement and provide access to the benefits of the development include

- Use Kingsley Center to create a regional hub for small business and city services support.
 - Consolidate information on federal, state, and local programs.
 - Provide ombudsmen to help navigate programs.
 - Establish a clean title triage center, a one stop shop to help with legal and tax issues.
- Set tough minority business enterprise (MBE) contracting and hiring targets on all projects over \$5 million that use public land or money.
 - Set a target of 30 percent of contract dollars going to MBEs.
 - Establish a hiring preference for East End Pittsburgh residents.
- Establish a Circles group serving Larimer.
- Apply aggressive and uniform code enforcement.

Homewood

Homewood is a historically African American neighborhood, officially divided into three neighborhoods: Homewood North, Homewood South, and Homewood West. It is bordered on the east by East Hills, on the west by Larimer and Shadyside, on the north by Lincoln-Lemington-



Homewood is one of the centers of the African American community in Pittsburgh.

Belmar, and on the south by Point Breeze. In the 1980s, the Homewood-Brushton Revitalization and Development Corporation put together a strong effort to rebuild the area. It accomplished this goal by building homes and helping to open new businesses.

However, the loss of the steel mills and other manufacturing resulted in massive job losses throughout the region. Population loss and decline in property values hit this area particularly hard. The result is the current situation, in which the neighborhoods have lost significant portions of their populations. Those residents and businesses that remain experience loss of equity in their properties, crime, and further tax base erosion, putting stress on the provision of city services.

The panel was asked to provide both a response to the robust planning efforts that have taken place so far and suggestions regarding sequencing and financing a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy for the East End, in general, and Homewood, in particular.

Opportunities

Homewood has multiple strengths that can serve as a platform for a revitalization strategy that must involve both physical development and attention to the socioeconomic conditions in the neighborhood. The panel found many grassroots organizations working in Homewood. Chief among those groups is Operation Better Block, which has recently undertaken a community-driven planning process to identify clusters of opportunities and potential

redevelopment strategies for nine residential nodes and the business district. OBB has amassed parcel-level data that will be critical to identifying areas that could constitute “early wins” in transforming the neighborhood. The level of resident input in this process was extraordinary and should be taken into consideration when identifying both the timing and type of neighborhood-level intervention, with the caveat that market demand must be taken into account.

Some strategic locations in the neighborhood, from a physical development perspective, yield opportunity to leverage what already exists and create new housing and small business opportunities. Chief among them:

- Homewood Busway Station, which provides a potential source of development demand and a barrier to North Point Breeze consumer markets for local businesses
- Development of a greenway between the neighborhood and downtown, which offers the potential to provide both connectivity and a new recreational amenity
- Revitalization of the commercial corridor of Homewood Avenue between Frankstown and Hamilton Commercial, which provides opportunities for additional neighborhood-serving retail
- Carnegie Library and the “Neighborhood Resources Hub” (Afro-American Music Institute, Community Empowerment Association, Operation Better Block, Homewood Children’s Village, Building United SW PA, Homewood House, and the Community College of Allegheny County) provides an easily accessed central location within the neighborhood for organizations that provide a variety of important services to residents of Homewood.

The local YMCA and YWCA provide neighborhood-based senior programming that serves Homewood Station Senior Housing and neighborhood senior citizens. The YWCA provides infant and preschool programming and summer camp programs. These programs support working families with children.

The local faith-based community in Homewood provides a wide range of social services that support neighborhood residents, including youth programs, homeless services, and support for working families.

Challenges

Although there are many neighborhood strengths and assets on which to build, any realistic strategy must acknowledge the conditions in the neighborhood that would characterize it as a weak market. These include

- High rates of property tax delinquency;
- Low rates of homeownership (between 28.6 and 45.6 percent);
- Deteriorated property conditions;
- Lack of market for local businesses;
- Low-performing local (nonmagnet) schools; and
- High rates of both violent and property crime.

The loss of residents over the past 20 years has created vacant structures, many of which have been demolished as the city moves to control conditions that would bring further neighborhood deterioration. The current status of land in Homewood (based on data provided by ELDI) is this:

Total parcels	5,160
Tax delinquent	3,133 (60.7 percent)
Vacant land	3,615 (70.1 percent)
Government owned (city and URA)	1,961 (38.0 percent)

Interventions, both immediate and longer term, are required to prevent this historic neighborhood from total abandonment. The panel found that a high percentage of existing residents are at risk of losing their homes to tax foreclosure. Continuing social and economic isolation of the neighborhood from the resources and amenities of downtown and surrounding, more stable neighborhoods have stifled strong efforts by indigenous leadership to revitalize the area on their own. This isolation is due in

The large number of vacant and abandoned homes in Homewood presents a challenge to revitalization.



part to the lack of an organization that is widely accepted by resident, governmental, and philanthropic leadership and that has both the financial and operational capacity to undertake large-scale, multifaceted development projects.

In addition, access to resources that support asset building and social equity, while seemingly available in Pittsburgh, were perceived as nonexistent or nonresponsive to Homewood residents and businesses. A disconnect appears between available jobs in and near the neighborhood and indigenous workforce skills.

Recommendations

The panel sees a number of exciting opportunities in Homewood, but it should be noted that reversing years of disinvestment will not happen overnight. Success builds success, and several small, focused initiatives are perhaps

The Operation Better Block Cluster Plan has amassed parcel-level data that will be helpful in transforming the neighborhood.



preferable to a large undertaking. Market and capacity must drive physical development.

As noted, the panel sees the HELP Initiative as a means to coordinate resources and facilitate redevelopment projects. The panel recommends beginning to build from strength at the edges and in proximity to the busway transit stop, as the OBB Cluster Plan suggests. The initial focus would be on increasing the stock of quality affordable rental housing with some limited for-sale development, basing the number of units on realistic absorption rates. It will be important to identify new potential markets for the housing, with a focus on supporting existing residents and repopulating target neighborhoods. Some potential markets could include students and recent graduates of local colleges and universities with entry-level jobs who wish to remain in the community, families who relocated to close-in suburbs but include members who work in the city, alumni of local high schools, and congregants of local churches.

The panel also encourages elected leadership, the foundation community, the faith-based community, and the anchor institutions (universities, medical center, hospitals) to come together to create change. Homewood could serve as the pilot project for using this framework.

A number of objectives should be addressed if Homewood is to remain a viable neighborhood and, indeed, a neighborhood of choice for new residents:

- Homeownership stabilization programs that protect and support existing homeowners in their efforts to remain in the neighborhood and that provide homeownership opportunities for households wishing to move to Homewood. Strategies to achieve this objective should include
 - Some form of tax amnesty program for current owners who are delinquent on their taxes. This amnesty should be available to senior citizens and others with specific hardships.
 - Discounted or free title clearance assistance and other legal services

- An owner-occupied home repair program, either in the form of grants or forgivable loans
 - Homebuyer assistance programs and financial counseling
 - Acquisition and rehabilitation of vacant properties for sale to moderate-income homebuyers
 - Lease/purchase programs to provide current renters with the opportunity to purchase in the neighborhood
- Programs that improve the existing rental stock:
- Strategic code enforcement of problematic rental properties
 - Access to low-interest loans for rental repairs
 - Property management training for landlords
- Programs to support small and minority businesses:
- Links with existing business services
 - Business mentoring programs
 - Business development programs
 - Grants and low-interest loans to startup and expanding businesses
 - Low-cost commercial incubator spaces, such as the former Westinghouse factory, which is being converted to provide educational and business opportunities for minority-owned construction businesses and other small minority firms
 - Anchor institution vendor opportunities
- Workforce programs:
- Training programs for neighborhood residents that are closely linked to employment opportunities and that provide a career path and living wage, possibly in partnership with the anchor institutions
 - Summer youth employment programs that provide meaningful exposure to a variety of occupations
- Programs that improve the safety of neighborhood residents and businesses and reduce the incidence of crime through identification and removal of opportunity:
- Continue the model developed by ELDI to acquire and depopulate multifamily buildings that have become neighborhood crime hot spots.
 - With local police, develop neighborhood-level strategies that focus on eliminating opportunities for burglaries, car thefts, and drugs (for example, ComStat data to identify hot spots).
 - Initiate lights and lock programs for seniors.
- One approach that could be considered is a well-honed theory of change (TOC) process to convert multifaceted ideas and priorities into an actionable plan. The process begins by identifying the outcomes or desired change to be achieved and the types of activities or strategies that will lead to the identified outcomes, linking strategies to the identified outcomes or success metrics to allow measurement of progress, and identifying the costs to implement the plan and the resources necessary to finance specific strategies. To be feasible, strategies must have an integrated financial plan to ensure implementation.
- The TOC is a framework that involves answering four inter-related questions:
- What results will we hold ourselves accountable to achieve and what is our intended impact?
 - What strategies do we need to achieve these results?



Several concentrations of commercial properties in Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar provide both challenges and opportunities. A focused effort to improve these highly visible assets, as achieved in the commercial areas in Homewood and Larimer, would make East End neighborhoods more inviting to Pittsburghers and outsiders alike.

- How do we build the capacity needed to deliver the results?
- What will the results cost and how will we fund them?

The panel believes that this framework and the way in which the participants think about how services are delivered would result in better coordination and alignment of efforts to achieve the identified objectives.

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar is a neighborhood located northeast of downtown Pittsburgh. The neighborhood is bordered by Highland Park, Larimer, Homewood West, Homewood North, Penn Hills Municipality, Aspinwall Borough, and O'Hara Township. Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar has one of the highest elevations in Pittsburgh, with downtown Pittsburgh visible (nearly eight miles away) from many parts of Upper Lincoln. It is the largest neighborhood in the ULI study area.

The neighborhood is made up of mostly single-family brick "Pittsburgh Box" type homes—some parts of the neighborhood have a rural feel to them. The neighborhood is also unique in the sense that its borders extend across the Allegheny River to the opposite shore. The area is home to UPMC St. Margaret Hospital and the sprawling retail complex of Waterworks Mall. Although commonly referred to simply as Fox Chapel, the land is, in fact, a part of the city of Pittsburgh.

Opportunities

The proposal for a greenway on the western edge of the neighborhood would provide additional connectivity. Urban

pioneers specifically look at these types of amenities and links when making locational decisions. This can lead to areas that would act as the first target for renovation. As with Homewood, some potential markets could include students and recent graduates of local colleges and universities with entry level jobs who wish to remain in the community, families who relocated to close-in suburbs but whose members work in the city, alumni of local high schools, and congregants of local churches.

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar includes several concentrations of very stable, well-maintained single family and duplex homes. From these concentrations, strategies can be prepared to provide improved connections to the potential greenway and to generally grow the stabilizations of homeowner units outward to connect to other stable areas. These stable concentrations need to be nurtured and, to the extent possible, connected with other stable areas.

Concentration of tax-delinquent parcels allows for acquisition and consolidation opportunities that can be made ready for development. Since no near-term redevelopment and revitalization opportunities are available, time should be spent organizing neighborhood collaboratives and soliciting neighborhood input into plans.

Challenges

Like the other neighborhoods, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar is plagued with significant neighborhood deterioration and crime. The crime appears to be concentrated in several locations. The percentage of vacant and tax delinquent parcels is similar to the Homewood neighborhood. The percentage of homeownership is marginally better than in Homewood and Larimer, but its distance from retail and services and transit is greater.

Also, the scale of the neighborhood is enormous, and large expanses of open areas are adjacent to the institutional uses that provide a haven for nefarious activities. The neighborhood also appears to lack significant public parks and recreational facilities. Road maintenance in some areas appears to be a problem. Finally, steep topography in a redevelopment scenario is always a challenge.

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar includes several concentrations of stable, well-maintained single-family and duplex homes. From these concentrations, strategies can be prepared to provide improved connections to the potential greenway and to generally extend stable homeowner units outward to connect with other stable areas.





The panel believes that the community needs to identify strategic clusters of tax-delinquent, city- and Urban Redevelopment Agency–owned properties for consolidation. For example, a concentration of these properties is located on the north side of Lincoln Avenue between Tennis Street and Rowan Street.

Recommendations

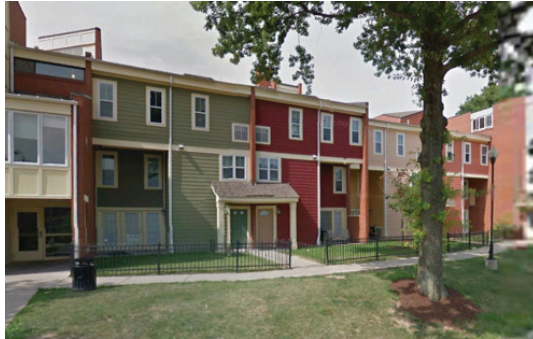
The panel believes that the community needs to identify strategic clusters of tax delinquent, city- and URA-owned properties for consolidation. For example, a concentration of these properties is located on the north side of Lincoln Avenue between Tennis Way and Rowan Street. As previously noted, although there does not appear to be any near-term market for either commercial or residential in this area, acquisition and consolidation could make such parcels attractive to investors. The inventory approach used by Operation Better Block in Homewood should be deployed throughout Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar to identify and prioritize such concentrations of properties.

The panel also believes that another strategy to deploy would be a focused effort to improve unstable properties located in between stable clusters. One approach could be to strategically evaluate, plan, and improve 75 percent of the properties on Westmoreland Avenue and Elrod Way between Joshua Street and Lemington Avenue. In this context, “improvements” for properties with homes means yard maintenance, trash removal, roof and siding improvements, and paint. For vacant parcels it means mowing and trash removal. Improvement to these two blocks will provide a tangible physical and emotional

connection between two areas with relatively stable properties (Broadhurst Street and Wiltsie Street). If successful, suddenly a 20-acre-plus area that was challenged becomes more stable.

Because the comprehensive strategy calls for concentrating effort progressing west to east, the panel feels that for the Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar neighborhood, time should be spent organizing and preparing for eventual revitalization. Organizationally, this neighborhood should assemble neighborhood collectives as envisioned in the HELP Initiative. These collectives could be formed around not only land use and development issues, but also around public realm improvements, transportation and connectivity, environmental issues, and the cultural and social components that make up a community.

Taking a cue from Operation Better Block’s approach in Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar should “provide a structured environment for residents and community leaders that promotes a unified approach to neighborhood safety, self-sufficiency, and civic & parent engagement.” Further, the collective(s) should be committed to using technology, social media, and data-driven products as tools to engage the community.



The Second East Hill development has undergone exterior renovations, but it continues to struggle with a serious crime problem.



The abandoned commercial property adjacent to the Second East Hills development could provide an opportunity for a public use. In the near term, clearing the vegetation will improve the safety of the area.

Another approach to preparing a neighborhood for revitalization is surveying and inventorying road and public realm improvements. Although not a particularly high-profile activity, cataloguing and prioritizing these improvements will prove particularly useful for budget requests and grant applications. As with the parcel-level data collected by ELDI in East Liberty and Larimer and by OBB in Homewood, the road and sidewalk inventory will enable Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar to be ahead of the curve, so to speak, when the city and market forces finally descend on the neighborhood.

East Hills

East Hills is the easternmost neighborhood in this study area. East Hills is bordered by Homewood South and Homewood North, Wilkinsburg borough, and Penn Hills municipality. East Hills is particularly vulnerable given its remoteness from transit and commercial activity. Like

Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, East Hills includes several concentrations of very stable, well-maintained single-family homes.

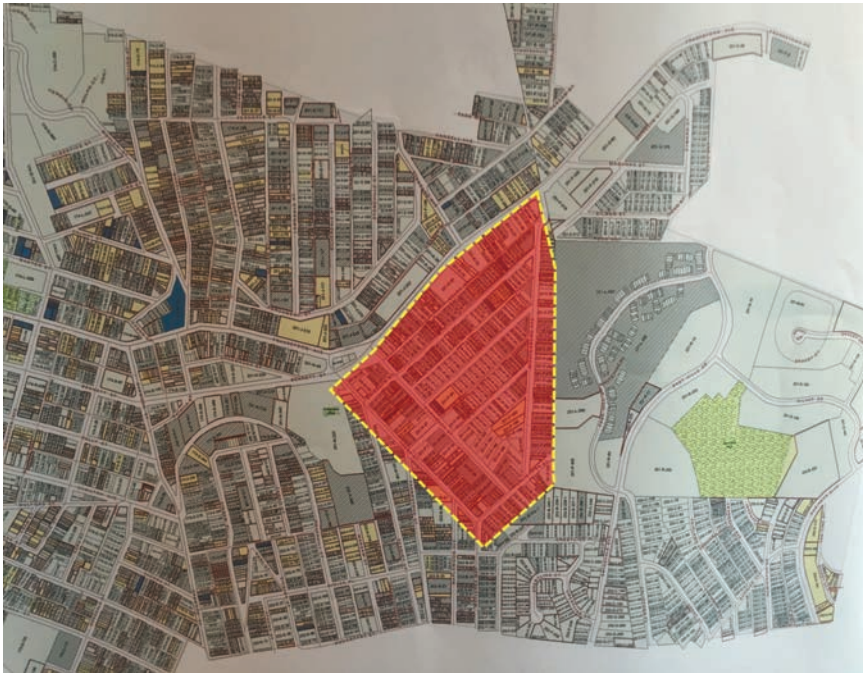
At the extreme eastern part of East Hills is the Telisis-owned development. The property was originally vacant land until it was purchased by ACTION Housing Inc. in the early 1960s. The neighborhood has undergone three phases of development. The first phase consisted of 187 nonsubsidized, individually owned townhouses and 91 subsidized rental units. The second phase contained 326 townhouses and apartments renting to low-income families. The third phase, completed in 1972, consisted of 140 subsidized units that were converted in 1975 from rentals to a resident-owned cooperative. The housing in the neighborhood was recently renovated and features an attractive, colorful design with many streetscape enhancements. However, the neighborhood continues to struggle with a serious crime problem. The western portion of East Hills has more in common with neighboring Homewood, with mostly single-family homes.

Opportunities

Significant clusters of well-maintained homes with home-ownership present an opportunity for strategic acquisition of tax-delinquent parcels, which would result in increased neighborhood stabilization. Large parcels at the top of the hill could be repurposed for a park or new town center. Near-term development pressures are limited, so now is the time to plan.



Several portions of the East Hills neighborhood include stable housing stock.



The panel suggests that the area outlined above be the focus of efforts to consolidate parcels.

Challenges

East Hills is also plagued with significant neighborhood deterioration and crime. The percentage of vacant and tax-delinquent parcels is lower than in Homewood, but the Telisis development is a concentration of low- to very low-income houses needing attention. The development's isolation from the rest of the East Hills neighborhood and the other East End communities is a problem, and as in the other neighborhoods, there are concentrations of unprogrammed open areas that are perceived locations for criminal activities. It also appears that the neighborhood has a significant lack of public parks and recreational facilities. Road maintenance in some areas appears to be a problem. More than in other neighborhoods, steep topography is particularly pronounced in the East Hills neighborhood and adds another dimension to redevelopment opportunities. Finally, there is limited capacity of organized neighborhood groups.

Recommendations

Unlike in Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, the property-specific approach in East Hills should be focused on the acquisition of key parcels in areas where clusters of well-maintained homes could benefit simply by acquiring and removing problem structures. The Side Yard Sale Program could also be applied, and the panel believes using it would result in stabilization of the neighborhoods.

As with Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, the East Hills neighborhood can probably best spend its time organizing and inventorying. Organizationally, this neighborhood should assemble neighborhood collectives as envisioned in the HELP Initiative. That collective should be committed to using technology, social media, and data-driven products as tools to engage the community. Again, as with Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, the collectives can concentrate on surveying and inventorying road and public realm improvements and putting together a priority list for the city.

Implementation

THE PANEL BELIEVES A NUMBER of actions can be useful in creating economic impact and in improving the lives of the residents of the East End communities. Because of the variety of the neighborhoods, no one set of physical solutions applies for all neighborhoods. However, and as with the overall recommendations noted in the previous sections, the panel recommends the following actions.

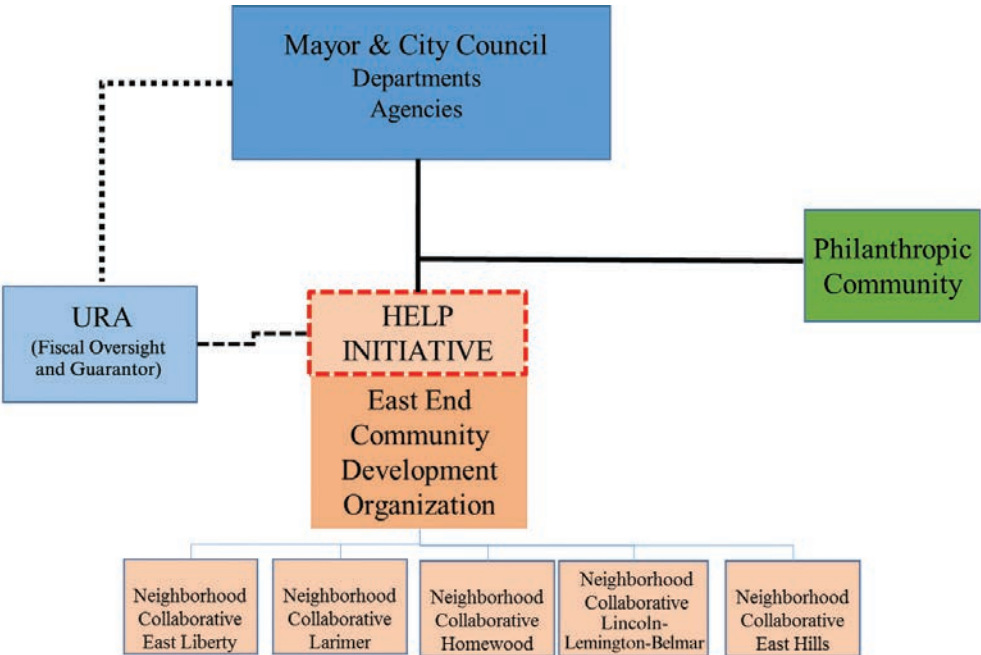
Perform Market Analysis of Operation Better Block

Operation Better Block has been operating in the Homewood neighborhood for many years and has the on-the-ground knowledge to help. The results of the market analysis of Operation Better Block can lead to modified outcomes for individual areas and parcels in the Homewood neighborhood.

Refine and Promulgate the HELP Initiative

The panel believes that the concept of the HELP Initiative is both sound and necessary to enable the East End communities to tap into and participate in the recent success of Pittsburgh. The HELP Initiative must be dedicated not only to physical improvements but also to social capital and economic opportunity. The panel recommends that the community

- Formalize the organizational structure of the initiative by creating an organizational chart and procedural steps.
- Establish clear lines of information flow, identifying individuals, organizations, and timelines for activities.
- Create permanent resources to coordinate the effort.



A conceptual organization chart for the HELP Initiative.

- Tie this process to a new community development organization.

In addition, these refinements must be widely disseminated among the various participants in the development process. The city agencies—planning, URA, and housing chief among them—must be willing and able to participate, and the mayor and city council must hold these entities responsible to the initiative's concept and process.

Create a New Community Development Organization

The panel believes that a community development organization, supported and financially backed by the URA, is the best method to achieve the previous recommendations. Three elements that must be present in such an entity are organizational leadership, administrative capacity, and technical expertise. All three of these elements are crucial to success. Although the strategic direction and day-to-day tactical actions of the community development organization would be coordinated by a local board and staff, the URA can act as the guarantor, provide fiscal oversight, and contribute technical expertise.

Significant funding from a variety of sources will be necessary to accomplish the HELP Initiative. Over time the required funding would likely total hundreds of millions of dollars. The existing administrative and managerial capacity of URA and its reputation will make the grant applications and administration easier. Further, the new entity can connect with URA initiatives already underway such as Power Up, the facade improvement program, and its loan program.

Conduct Test Fit Protocol

The panel believes that one physical planning approach that should be explored is a “test fit.” As noted earlier in this report, a significant concentration of vacant, abandoned, or government-owned parcels is located throughout the study area, especially in Homewood. Combined with tax delinquent properties, groups of these parcels can be

cobbled together under a single ownership and those parcels subjected to a test fit protocol. A test fit can be done for any range of spaces, from an interior building layout to an individual parcel to several blocks.

The architectural portion of this exercise can explore several options using different unit types, height and bulk parameters, parking requirements, setbacks, and ameni-

A test fit for unit types can be done for any range of spaces, from an interior building layout to an individual parcel to several blocks. In this series of illustrations, the top represents the existing condition, with a series of vacant parcels of land, abandoned houses, and underused parcels. The middle represents redevelopment using only the existing neighborhood housing typology. The lower illustration (preferred) suggests a range of design and unit types that could explore a sense of variety not offered by the homogeneous development.





Revitalization plans for the East End communities should explore a variety of unit types that may attract new residents from inside Pittsburgh, within the region, and outside the region.



ties. The panel sees this approach as exploring single family, duplex, triplex, courtyard apartment, bungalow, townhouse/rowhouse, multiplex, and mid-rise apartment options to see if such units can be physically accommodated and where they align with the community vision and desires established by the collaboratives. After the architectural test fit options are established, the next step would be to evaluate the economic feasibility of the several options.

The organization continues to play a key role in East Liberty, and for the time being it is the go-to organization for such services in the other East End neighborhoods. However, in the long run a separate organization must be established. Doing so will ensure success for what work remains in East Liberty by having ELDI focus on that specific geographic area and will ensure focus from the new entity for the other neighborhoods.

Consider an Evolving Role for ELDI

First, the panel recognizes the critical and essential role that ELDI has played in the revitalization of East Liberty and the initial phases of redevelopment and strategic thinking for the other East End neighborhoods. No other organization could have pulled off what ELDI has done over the past 25 years.

Conclusion

WHAT DOES A CITY THAT used to have 600,000 residents look like when the population becomes 300,000?

In many ways, what the panel saw was a tale of two cities. One is the Pittsburgh that has been in the news and abuzz in social media. It is the city that millennials are flocking to, the city that has an incredible university presence, the city where companies such as Google have put down roots, the city of a new vibrant downtown, and an archetype of how Rust Belt cities can reinvent themselves.

However, that reinvention model has really only touched a small fraction of the city. By one count only nine of more than 90 neighborhoods in the city are seeing the impact of the renaissance that Pittsburgh is now famous for. Several of the less fortunate neighborhoods, including most of this ULI study area, have continued to struggle with crime and blight, the decisions of urban renewal 50 years ago,

and loss of economic opportunity for African American residents. To be sure, the East Liberty neighborhood is a success story. But that took a long time to realize, and there is still more work to do. The Larimer, Homewood, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills neighborhoods are far behind.

The panel has suggested several physical and organizational approaches to the challenges facing the East End communities. The panel's prime conclusion is that density (more people) is key to success. How the neighborhoods organize to receive this density, what physical and social infrastructure must be in place to attract the density, and how the existing residents can help determine their own future will be key in realizing the larger vision for the East End communities.

About the Panel

Alan Razak

Panel Chair

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Razak is principal of AthenianRazak LLC, a Philadelphia-based company that consults on, creates, and manages real property. He has four decades of commercial real estate experience, encompassing development and project management, finance, architectural design, and consulting. His diverse real estate background includes managing the development process, both as owner and on a consulting basis as owner's representative, in project types that include residential, office, and commercial, as well as specialized expertise in data centers and other highly technical facilities.

AthenianRazak was formed in 2011 in a merger between Athenian Properties and Razak Company, which he founded and led. He was responsible for the development of Main Line Jaguar Land Rover, Pembroke North Condominium, 5035 Ritter Road for the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts, the Curtis Institute of Music's Lenfest Hall, and other projects. He also has led real estate consulting and development assignments for clients including Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania, Walnut Street Theatre, Swarthmore College, the Rock School of Dance, Natural Lands Trust, CSX, Conrail, Digital Realty, Berkadia, Vanguard Group of Mutual Funds, and many others. He currently leads the team developing a new \$80 million practice facility and corporate headquarters for the NBA's Philadelphia 76ers.

Before forming Razak Company in 2003, he was a principal with a Philadelphia real estate consulting and investment advisory firm, consulting on a broad variety of assignments across the spectrum of real estate issues.

Throughout the 1980s, as a partner at developer Rouse & Associates, Razak managed such high-profile projects as a 400,000-square-foot Washington, D.C., office building and the development of a 20-acre Penn's Landing urban mixed-use project.

He began his career as an architect, working on the design of multifamily residential, commercial, and health care projects in the Midwest and Pacific Northwest; he maintains his status as a registered architect in Pennsylvania. Razak has served on the Central Philadelphia Development Corporation's board of directors, is chairman of the Board of the Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, and is a full member of the Urban Land Institute, where he developed and currently teaches several workshops for real estate practitioners internationally.

He holds a BS in arts and design from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a master of architecture from the University of Washington, and an MBA with a concentration in real estate from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Stephanie Hagar

Berkeley, California

Hagar provides thorough, timely, and compelling analysis of housing, retail, office, industrial, and special purpose land uses to BAE clients. Her work throughout both northern and southern California puts her at the cutting edge of market trends and innovative policy solutions.

Her recent affordable housing projects include completing housing element updates for the cities of Milpitas and Concord, California. For each housing element, Hagar prepared updated data and analysis of housing needs, analyzed potential housing development sites, and

presented findings to community meetings and the city council. For Napa, California, she completed a city analysis of impediments to fair housing as well as a consolidated plan. She led the analysis for the city of Berkeley's nexus study to examine increasing its in-lieu housing fees.

Hagar has supported numerous transit-oriented development plans throughout Northern California, including plans for the city of Berkeley's Adeline Corridor, Walnut Creek's West Downtown, Larkspur's SMART Station, South San Francisco Downtown, and the Suisun Downtown/Amtrak Station area. For each plan, Hagar conducted market analysis for a wide range of uses, assessed affordable housing needs, and formulated financing strategies for public improvements.

Hagar has also developed strong expertise in local fiscal impact analysis. She led all the major technical work for the Facebook headquarters campus and a new SRI corporate headquarters, both for the city of Menlo Park, California.

Before joining BAE, Hagar worked as a planner for Suisun City, California, and as a housing analyst for the city of Berkeley, California. She holds a master of city planning with a concentration in housing and economic development from University of California, Berkeley, and a bachelor of arts in psychology from University of California, San Diego.

Nicholas Hamilton

New York, New York

Hamilton directs the urban policy work of the American Assembly, where he also leads the Legacy Cities Partnership, a national coalition of practitioners, researchers, leaders, and advocates working to revitalize America's legacy cities. His work focuses on inclusive economic development, urban governance, and civic engagement. Before joining the American Assembly, he worked at the Earth Institute Center for Sustainable Urban Development at Columbia University.

He is also a cofounder of the international urban collaborative Cairo from Below, awarded the 2009 Leous-Parry Award for Progressive Sustainability for contributions to more inclusive and sustainable urbanization in Cairo, Egypt. He also serves on the leadership team of the Preservation Rightsizing Network, founded the New York Metro chapter of the Urban Sustainability Meetup group, and was honored as a Next City Vanguard in 2013. He has spoken at numerous convenings, events, and universities, including at New Partners for Smart Growth, the Van Alen Institute, and Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation.

His architectural and urban design work for the firm Davis Brody Bond included the master planning and architectural design of U.S. diplomatic facilities abroad as well as research laboratory buildings at Columbia and Princeton universities. Hamilton holds a master of international affairs degree from Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs and a BA in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley.

Brian (A.J.) Jackson

Bethesda, Maryland

Jackson is a partner with EYA LLC, a Washington, D.C.–area urban infill development company. He is senior vice president of land acquisition and development and leads the company's investment committee, directs strategy and planning for the firm, and serves on its executive committee.

At EYA, Jackson has played a leading role in \$1 billion of public/private development partnerships, creating mixed-income communities that are integrative, walkable, and sustainable. He has led development projects that exemplify equitable placemaking and transit-oriented best practices, including Old Town Commons, a partnership with the Alexandria, Virginia, Redevelopment and Housing Authority to redevelop an underperforming public housing site into a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-income community with 365 units of affordable rental and market-rate for-sale housing; Capitol Quarter, a 323-unit mixed-income com-

munity that is part of the Arthur Capper/Carrollsbury HOPE VI redevelopment in Washington, D.C., one of the largest urban redevelopment areas in the country; McMillan Reservoir, a 25-acre mixed-use/mixed-income redevelopment partnership with the District of Columbia government, the Trammell Crow Companies, and Jair Lynch Development Partners; Shady Grove Station, a 90-acre mixed-use/mixed-income/transit-oriented redevelopment partnership with Montgomery County, Maryland; and National Park Seminary, one of the largest adaptive use developments in Maryland.

Before joining EYA, Jackson was chief of staff at the U.S. General Services Administration, the single largest owner and operator of real estate assets in the United States. While at GSA, he played a key role in several high-profile development projects as well as in GSA's response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the anthrax attacks in Washington, D.C.

Geri Lopez

Clearwater, Florida

Lopez, most recently the director of economic development and housing for Clearwater, Florida, is a certified economic developer with 20 years of experience spanning affordable housing, community development, neighborhood revitalization, redevelopment, and economic development in the municipal, private, and nonprofit sectors. She is currently in the process of establishing her own consulting company focusing on housing, community and economic development strategies, projects, and implementation practices.

In Clearwater, for over 13 years, Lopez was responsible for improving and expanding the economic base of the city through business and community development efforts, including the recruitment and expansion of value-added new residential, retail, office, industrial, mixed land use, cultural and tourist-based resort developments. She also administered the city's affordable housing programs. With a staff of 12, Lopez administered two divisions. The economic development division included operating incen-

tive programs for the Clearwater Community Redevelopment Agency and state and local economic development programs. The housing division was responsible for federal and state affordable housing programs and projects for low- to moderate-income residents. Before moving to Clearwater, she lived in Boston, Massachusetts, where she worked as a consultant assisting clients such as the cities of Memphis, Tennessee; Boston; and Houston, Texas, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development with community, housing and neighborhood redevelopment plans, strategies, and housing policy.

Lopez received her bachelor's degree in architecture from Yale University and her master's degree in city planning with an urban design certificate from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She also recently completed a certificate in community real estate development from the University of South Florida. Lopez is a member of ULI Tampa Bay, the Florida Redevelopment Association, and the International Economic Development Council.

Alrich Lynch

Atlanta, Georgia

Lynch has 20 years of experience in numerous aspects of the real estate, development, construction management, and asset management arenas. His varied background has afforded him the ability to smoothly transition between various positions, complex assignments, and unique organizations. His track record in diverse roles involved more than \$837 million of projects, including more than \$333 million in public/private ventures. Having been involved with all aspects of the development life cycle for more than 4,000 units—including condominiums, market-rate apartments, mixed-income apartments, and units in mixed-use developments—he brings a wealth of knowledge to projects.

Lynch's various roles have included lead development manager on multiple phases for multifamily housing clients as an extension of staff; adviser to a nonprofit family services client on using low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC)

financial structuring and on targeting intergenerational housing; and adviser and project manager on the final buildout of the 500-plus single-family homes of a HOPE VI revitalization program, including use of tax allocation district financing, coordination with the local public housing agency, and completion of infrastructure.

His roles have also included sole development manager for the simultaneous development, construction, and operation of more than 1,270 market-rate apartment units; development lead and contact for sales, marketing, construction, condo association management, equity's asset manager, and finance groups for 442 units developed in three different product types; development manager for several redevelopment and repositioning projects; and program manager for complex mixed-income developments financed with HOPE VI loans and grants, LIHTC, community development block grants (CDBG), and traditional equity, including negotiating debt, equity, and grant instruments for new mixed-income developments.

Lynch's career began in earnest at H.J. Russell and Company, where he worked as both an estimator and an assistant project manager. He later transitioned to the Integral Group, doing a one-year stint in construction management before joining the development group, focusing on mixed-income communities. After spending two years at Julian LeCraw & Company, Lynch was hired by Trammell Crow Residential (TCR) to run the project that he helped LeCraw and its partners sell to TCR. In addition to operating the \$170 million development, Lynch eventually became the lead development manager for three simultaneous market-rate apartment deals totaling more than \$244 million. In 2010, he took the helm of LDG Consulting, an advisory services firm focused on the design, construction, and real estate industries.

Lynch, a native of West Palm Beach, Florida, graduated from the University of Florida, earning a bachelor of design in architecture with a minor in business as well as a masters of building construction. He also obtained an MBA with a concentration in real estate from Georgia State University.

Chris Merritt

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Merritt is a landscape architect with five years of professional experience and is currently studying at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. His work at Sasaki Associates in Boston and AECOM in Florida ranges from planning and urban design to detailed site design. Merritt is particularly interested in the design of significant projects for the urban public realm with implementation in complex infrastructural, ecological, and cultural contexts, as evident in his work on the Chicago Riverwalk and on the East Liberty Transit Center in Pittsburgh. He is currently working on a design research project focused on reinvention and renewal in cities through the designed urban landscape. The research looks at case studies across the urban Midwest.

Merritt has received recognition of his work with exhibitions in Boston, New York, and London and has been published in *Landscape Architecture* magazine, *Environment and Landscape Architecture of Korea*, and a variety of online media publications. He has contributed to projects receiving awards from the Urban Land Institute and the American Society of Landscape Architects, and has been recognized for his undergraduate work at Purdue University, where he was an Olmsted Scholar. He has lectured and been a design critic at schools in Boston, Florida, and Indiana. Merritt is also the cofounder of a monthly event series in Orlando, Florida, focused on urban issues and titled "Rethinking the City."

Sue Southon

Bloomfield Hills, Michigan

Southon is a development professional, trainer, and strategic planner with more than 40 years experience in community development, economic development, and housing development. She is currently working on several disaster recovery-related technical assistance engagements in New Jersey and New York, where she is providing senior expertise on program design, organizational structure, and staffing requirements, budget development, regulatory

compliance, project underwriting, implementation, and public interface.

Southon provides technical assistance to recipients of new Community Development Block Grant disaster recovery (CDBG-DR) national disaster resilience (NDR) awards in Iowa and Virginia. She is conducting several webinars for those recipients on action plan development, citizen engagement, language assistance plan development, monitoring, and recordkeeping under a technical assistance contract from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). She garnered this expertise through years of working in states and localities.

She served as project manager for HUD-funded affordable housing projects in Wayne, Oakland, and Genesee counties, Michigan, and before that was with the Michigan Department of Commerce, responsible for comprehensive strategic planning in distressed communities, as well as helping local municipalities develop and implement a range of economic development programs in Michigan's 83 counties. Under contract with HUD, she provided technical assistance to states and local units of government in the use of HOME investment partnerships program (HOME) and Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funding to develop housing and revitalize neighborhoods. She has also worked with Local Initiatives Support Council's building sustainable communities initiatives in Detroit, Michigan; Jacksonville, Florida; Peoria, Illinois; and Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota.

Southon has served as a strategic adviser to local governments, community development organizations, and private developers. She served as a trainer for the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) professional certification program, the Economic Development Institute, and the National Association of Workforce Boards. In September 2007, Southon received the Fellow Member designation from IEDC for significant contributions to the profession. She holds certifications as HOME program specialist, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and Economic Development Finance Professional, the National Development Council.

She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Michigan.

A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report



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Washington, DC 20036-4948

 Printed on recycled paper.