

Implementation and Resources

As this plan is being finalized, major service changes are being put into place in the City of Pittsburgh's government. Although City services will still be in place and need to be enfranchised to ensure Highland Park's community health, local changes underscore the need for the community to find ways to collaborate with existing programs and organizations while engaging a broad-based core of community volunteers. Community action requires a timetable, key responsibilities, and identification of resources. Action requires a strong volunteer core. And, finally, action requires a structure within which volunteers can feel and be productive.

It is critical to take steps that are doable and translate into tangible results. Tangible results are easier to accomplish in physical development, as bricks and mortar, but are more of a challenge in the realm of human development. One immediate step addresses the importance of youth development along with the issue of strengthening residents' ties to the community. Highland Park residents have known for a while, quantifiably and intuitively, that high school age students in the community are choosing Alderdice, Schenley, CAPA, and elsewhere over Peabody High School. The community plan team recently discovered, through our youth focus group, that, although the students are happy with their respective schools and friends, they would like to feel more tied to the community and to other Highland Park High School students. Four leaders of the focus group have identified 25 others to receive a letter to start the "Highland Park Youth Group."

Another immediate step, in the area of community health and safety, recognizes the importance of combining strategies and actions for maximum impact. The Community Development Corporation has identified a housing development strategy that targets problem blocks in the southwest quadrant of the neighborhood. The Corporation is at work on rehabbing buildings and generally upgrading the housing stock. Concurrent with these physical changes, members of a reinvigorated Public Safety Committee should launch an initiative, similar to the "U-CAN" effort undertaken on Bryant Street in the 1990's, to make a visible community-supported statement for zero tolerance of illegal activity.

Finally, recognizing the link between strength of local schools and vitality of the neighborhood, immediate steps can be taken to shore up relationships between the Fulton School and Dilworth Academy. Principals and Parent Teacher Organizations have identified areas in which the schools can benefit from community involvement, including areas such as tutoring and mentoring programs, after-school activities, and grant writing.

A community plan depends on the enfranchisement of a number of stakeholders. In order to implement the plan, representatives of the Highland Park Community Development Corporation and Community Club will need to engage partners and resources such as:

- City of Pittsburgh Board of Public Education;
- Schools of Highland Park;

- Peabody High School;
- Churches and other institutions of Highland Park;
- City of Pittsburgh Departments of Public Works, Public Safety, City Planning, and Building Inspection;
- Housing Authority of the City of Pittsburgh;
- Port Authority of Allegheny County;
- East End Neighborhood Forum;
- Local foundations; and
- Community based organizations in other adjacent neighborhoods, such as East Liberty Development, Inc. and Garfield Jubilee, with programs that address issues identified in the plan.

Assigning Priorities

The goals and strategies identified in the plan provide an opportunity for the Highland Park Community Development Corporation and the Highland Park Community Club to examine their respective committee structures and work plans to address key community issues. The organizations convened a joint planning session in October of 2003 to clarify roles and responsibilities relative to the implementation of community planning strategies. At the planning session, members of Board of Directors of each organization, along with representatives of the Highland Park Community Planning Team, reviewed each strategy and participated in a group exercise to prioritize the strategies.

The successful realization of strategies will largely depend on the ability of the Community Club and Community Development Corporation to engage a broad range of volunteers. The organizations are considering a committee structure that would cross both organizations and may, in fact, result in community-wide committees, building on the broad-based participation in the Community Plan focus groups.

Success will also depend, to a large extent, on the ability of the community organizations to collaborate with institutions and organizations in and beyond the community. For example, the Learning Club, which offers education services for children in Kindergarten through twelfth grade, is ideally positioned to take the lead in educational initiatives. The Union Project, strategically located in the southwest quadrant of Highland Park, will be a natural leader in arts and youth development initiatives.

Goal: Improve the quality and market values of rental and owner housing throughout Highland Park	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a comprehensive housing strategy for Highland Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand Highland Park Community Development Corporation (HPCDC) three-year development plan • Focus efforts on improving housing of southwest quadrant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring housing and community health and safety measures together for concerted effort; engage community volunteers • Address deteriorated properties being rented to problematic tenants. • Address key non-residential deteriorated properties, such as the Union Baptist Church. • Market the neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand effort of Highland Park Community Club to centralize housing information; coordinate with HPCDC marketing program • Encourage home ownership to stabilize the community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize existing programs for home ownership counseling • Support and expand home acquisition and maintenance programs • Encourage maintenance and beautification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinstate block clubs; broaden focus to include beautification as well as safety; institute a window box program • Utilize the community newsletter to identify “beautification of the month” • Provide volunteer assistance for seniors to address property care; coordinate with new-to-form Highland Park youth group • Develop and publicize toolbox to address nuisance properties 	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>

Goals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a continuous, identifiable business district • Improve the image of Bryant Street 	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renovate dilapidated buildings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus renovation efforts on center portion of business district • Assist with funding for façade renovation • Focus commercial development on Bryant Street Corridor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit non-conforming uses • Reexamine zoning district boundaries in support of retained commercial district 	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>

Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a continuous, identifiable business district • Improve the image of Bryant Street 	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility of district <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop markers at entrance to street from Negley and Highland Avenues • Improve existing banners • Improve lighting on street • Improve snow removal, trash removal and other maintenance issues • Facilitate creation of merchants' association <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address issues such as night lighting, special hours, and joint events • Collaborate on marketing, safety issues, and fundraising • Identify and recruit prosperous, appropriate businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Stand-alone" businesses that would bring their own clientele • Services and goods that are missing from the community, such as groceries, family restaurant, etc. • Professional offices • Businesses that could capitalize on what's already prosperous • Businesses that could appeal to youth market • Create/provide formalized information to interested businesses, including demographics, available properties, etc. 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p>

Goal: Improve the public schools serving Highland Park residents and residents' perceptions of those schools	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create improved access to information about area schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide centralized information for current and prospective parents • Assess and address needs of local schools that can be impacted by community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical needs • Extra-curricular programs • Forge partnerships with the Public School Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create mechanisms for communicating schools' needs to community • Support initiatives of Education Innovations, Inc., targeting opportunities to improve the quality of out-of-school time • Capitalize on opportunities for community to influence change in schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop local leadership for education • Open up dialogue with Parent School Community Councils 	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>

Goal: Improve the public schools serving Highland Park residents and residents' perceptions of those schools	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize to testify at hearings of the School Board Utilize bulletin boards and other mechanisms to educate and mobilize the community 	

Goals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and publicize all after-school and summer programs in the community Provide a broader range and greater number of recreational activities and venues for Highland Park youth 	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link activities and programs via “virtual community center” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration among all providers Common marketing Develop marker/identifying element 	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and implement the year-round “Highland Park Youth Group” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an adult volunteer advisor Establish teen core Identify volunteer or paid and recreational/arts activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior yard help project 	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize recreational/arts activities to connect Highland Park to adjacent communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development of Union Project 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize farmhouse for activities 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take opportunities to bring together youth and adult activities 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shore up and develop additional after-school and summer recreational programs for school-age children 	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create opportunities for young people and artists to create and showcase their art <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classes, galleries, performance space 	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve sports opportunities within the neighborhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indoor sports for wintertime Better access to outdoor sporting facilities Skate park 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve dissemination of information about local and regional activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use town meetings as communication tools; develop kiosk 	Medium

Goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a safe, drug-free community, block by block • Develop a safe community image 	
Strategies	Priority (low, medium, high)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinvigorate Community Club Public Safety Committee into community-wide Committee 	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop network of active Block Watch groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address Block Watch burn-out • Connect Block Watches to neighborhood institutions • Utilize National Night Out for organizing Block Watches 	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build awareness of the role of police through community/police partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Block Watch members to enroll in Citizens Police Academy training • Develop institutional complaint process to allay fears of retribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize and distribute silent complaint forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Public Safety Silent Complaint Form • United Citizens Against Narcotics (U-CAN) Silent Complaint Form • Adopt-a-cop: Community appreciation event • Nominate problem blocks for Targeted Areas Program for problem blocks 	Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance “no trespassing sign” program, based on Manchester Citizens Corporation model, to eliminate loitering and illegal activity 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an information-sharing network in Highland Park regarding crime and safety 	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicize the positive aspects of the community and progress made in public safety 	Medium