# SCHENLEY









# HEIGHTS

TOOLKIT



### R. DANIEL LAVELLE



#### Councilman, City of Pittsburgh-District 6

#### Chair, Land Use & Economic Development

What began as a home stabilization initiative of my office, the URA and the Schenley Heights Collaborative has turned into a framework to create a vision for Schenley Heights. The Schenley Heights Toolkit is the first of many project initiatives to emerge from the Greater Hill District Master Plan to address opportunities in Schenley Heights. It was created to help guide developers, investors and government entities with new development, renovation and infrastructure projects in the neighborhood.

Taking cues from the Greater Hill District Master Plan, the toolkit outlines some basic, but essential, first steps in renewing and revitalizing the neighborhood. It provides guidance for the creation of architectural standards for home renovation and new housing development, suggestions for streetscape improvements, strategies for vacant lot beautification and greening, and references to energy and cost saving measures for residents and business owners that can provide immediate long-term benefits.

I would like to thank UDream Fellows and URA architectural and urban design interns Kareem Cousar and DeShawn Davis for their time, effort and hard work in engaging community stakeholders and completing the toolkit. I would also like to thank Steve Glassman, director of the Design Center of Pittsburgh, and his staff members, Thor Erickson and Chris Koch for their time and resources. Finally, I would like to thank the Schenley Heights Collaborative, residents, business owners and community leaders for their participation in this project and their tireless work and commitment to the Schenley Heights neighborhood.

Sincerely,

R. Daniel Lavelle

R. Daniel Lande

# Acknowledgements

#### **Residents of Schenley Heights**

Thank you to the residents and participants of our two community meetings and for your continued enthusiasm and interest in the development of Schenley Heights.

#### **Sponsors**

Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl
Office of Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle, District 6

#### **Schenley Heights Planning Committee**

Phillis Lavelle | Schenley Heights Collaborative
Rev. Lee Walls | Amani Christian Development Corporation
Kareem Cousar | Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
DeShawn Davis | Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
Karen Abrams | Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
Richard Snipe | Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh
Steve Glassman | Design Center of Pittsburgh
Chris Koch | Design Center of Pittsburgh
Thor Erickson | Design Center of Pittsburgh

#### Prepared for the

Urban Redevelopment Authority the Residents of Schenley Heights and Councilman R. Daniel Lavelle

by
Kareem Cousar and DeShawn Davis
UDREAM Fellows - Carnegie Mellon University

2012

# Contents

Forward	
Previous Planning Efforts	
Мар	1-4
Existing Urban Fabric	5-12
Housing	13-18
Green Space	19 - 26
Sustainable Design Strategies	27 - 28
Camp Street Visioning	29 - 36
Services Provided by the URA	37 - 38
Community Activity	39 - 40
References and Resources	41 - 42

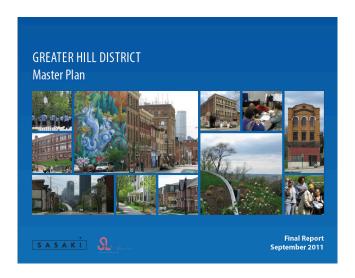
#### **FOREWORD**

The Schenley Heights Toolkit was produced specifically for the residents of the Schenley Heights neighborhood to educate and guide the community when making decisions involving new development. This document is only a starting point which will inform residents of some options they have when considering new development. The Toolkit does not contain design guidelines and should only be used as a reference. Residents should contact the Schenley Heights Collaborative and councilman R. Daniel Lavelle when seeking new development and improvements to the neighborhood.

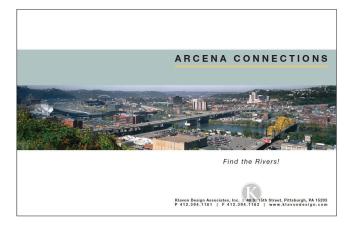


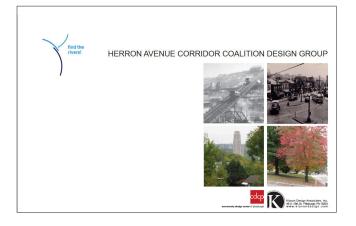












# Previous Planning Efforts

Several planning efforts have been made focusing on the Upper Hill neighborhood and its redevelopment. A majority of the plans focused on developing green spaces and the placement of infill houses, as well as re-activation of parks and capitalizing on the amazing views which are distinctive of this hill-top neighborhood.

The Schenley Heights Toolkit looks at the neighborhood's current urban fabric and gives information and options for suggested green space and residential infill development. A particular focus was given to Milwaukee Street and lowa Street, the two gateway entrances into the community which are of great importance in terms of development. These streets give the first impression to visitors of the neighborhood.

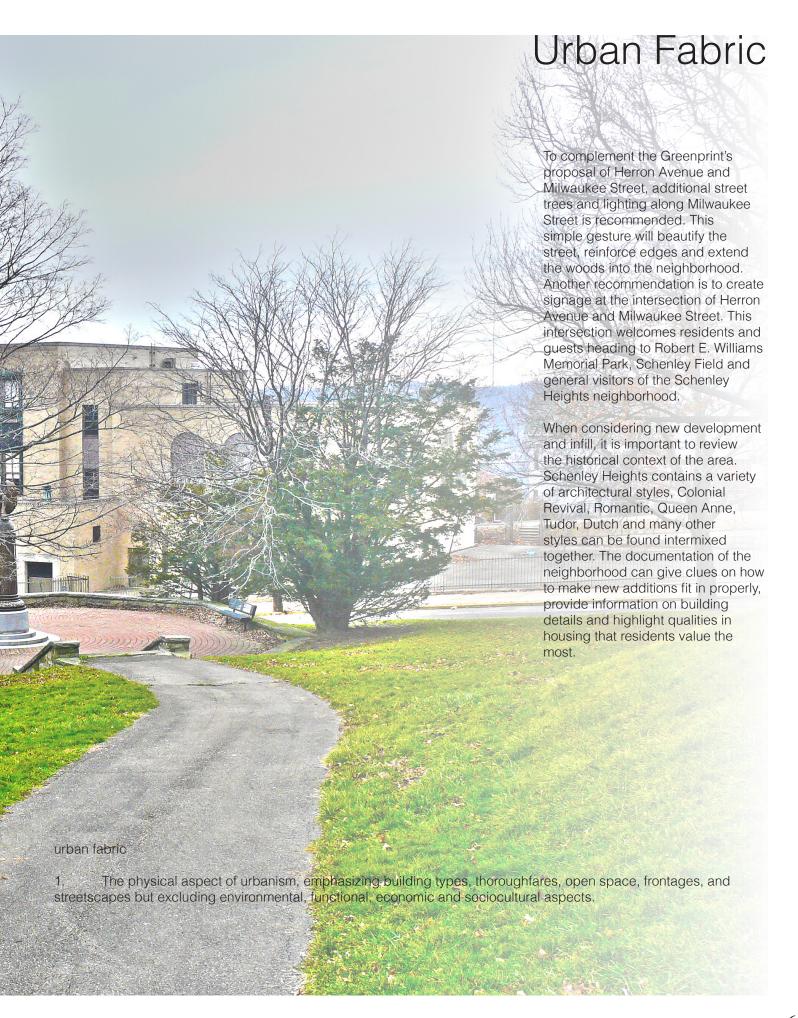














Finland St.- down toward Herron Ave.





Finland St.- down toward Herron Ave.



# Milwaukee Street Elevation(s)











Rampart St. - down toward Cherokee St.



# Iowa Street Elevation(s)





Rampart St. - down toward Cherokee St.



Rampart St. - down toward Cherokee St.



# Iowa Street Elevation(s)



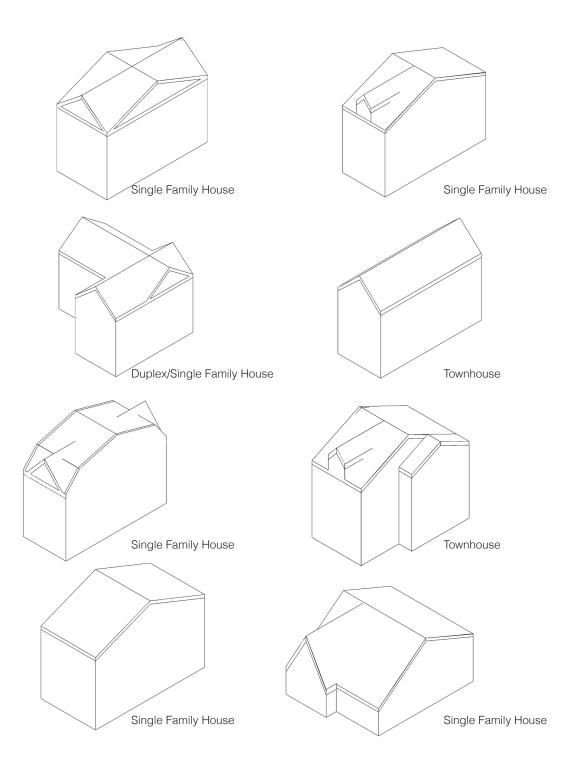




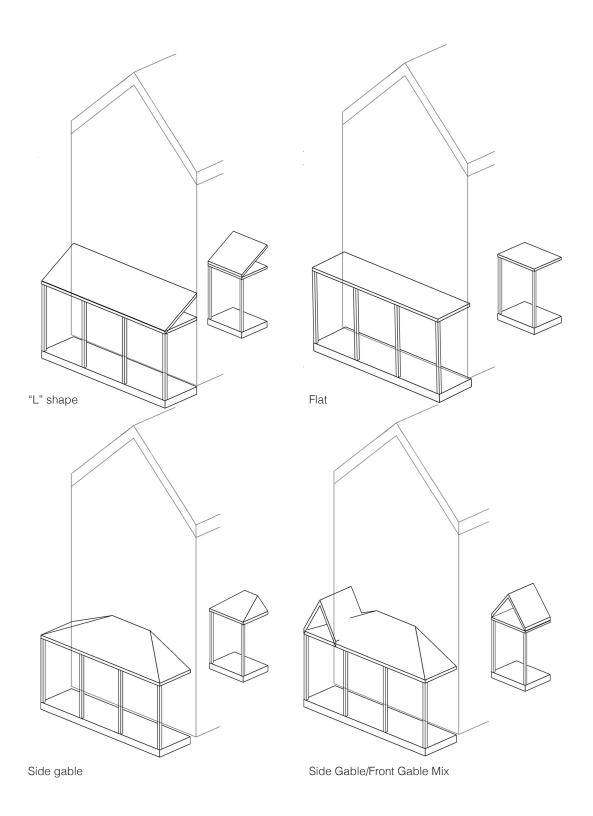




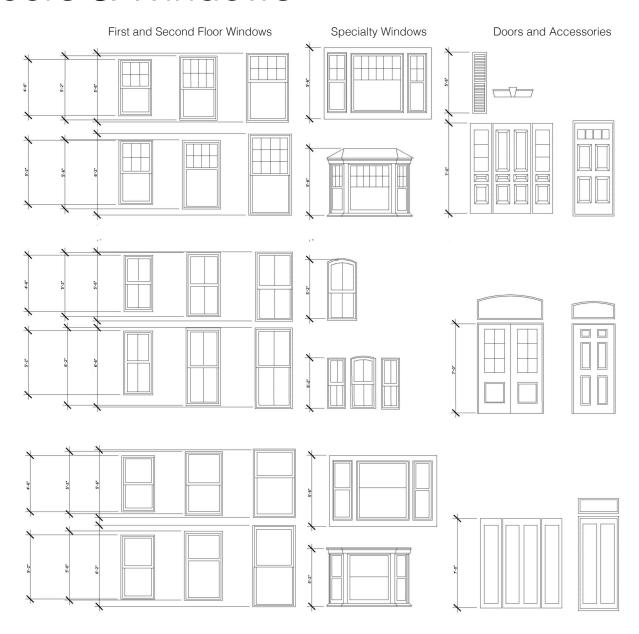
# Massing Types



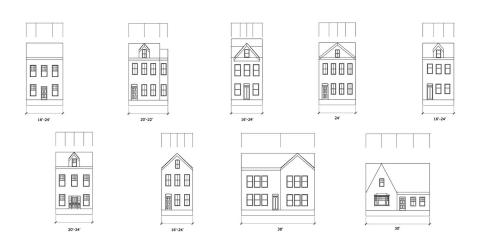
# Porch Types



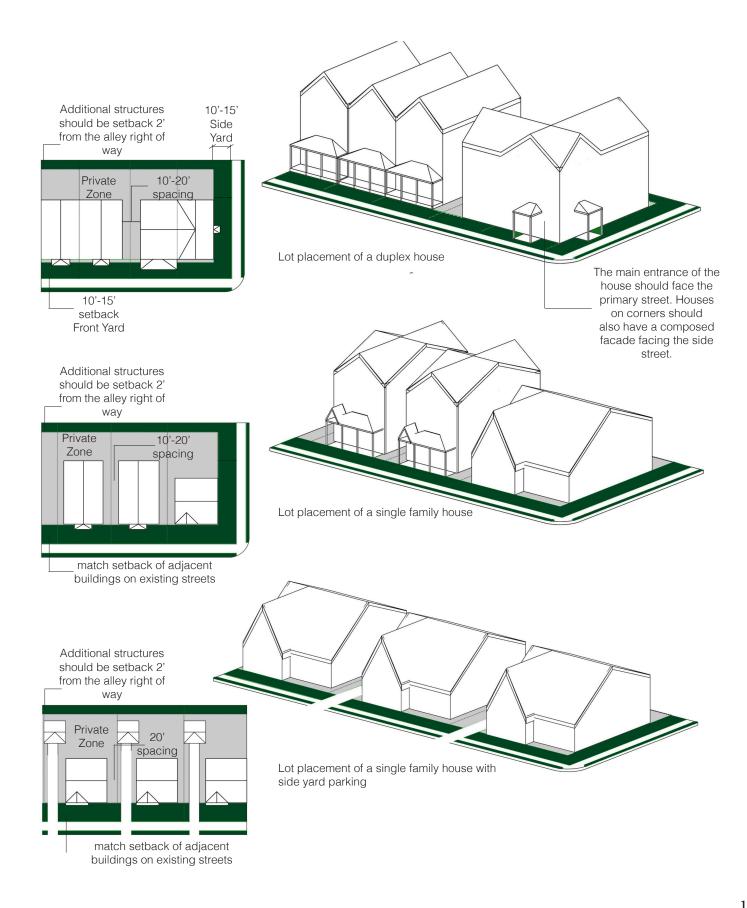
# Doors & Windows



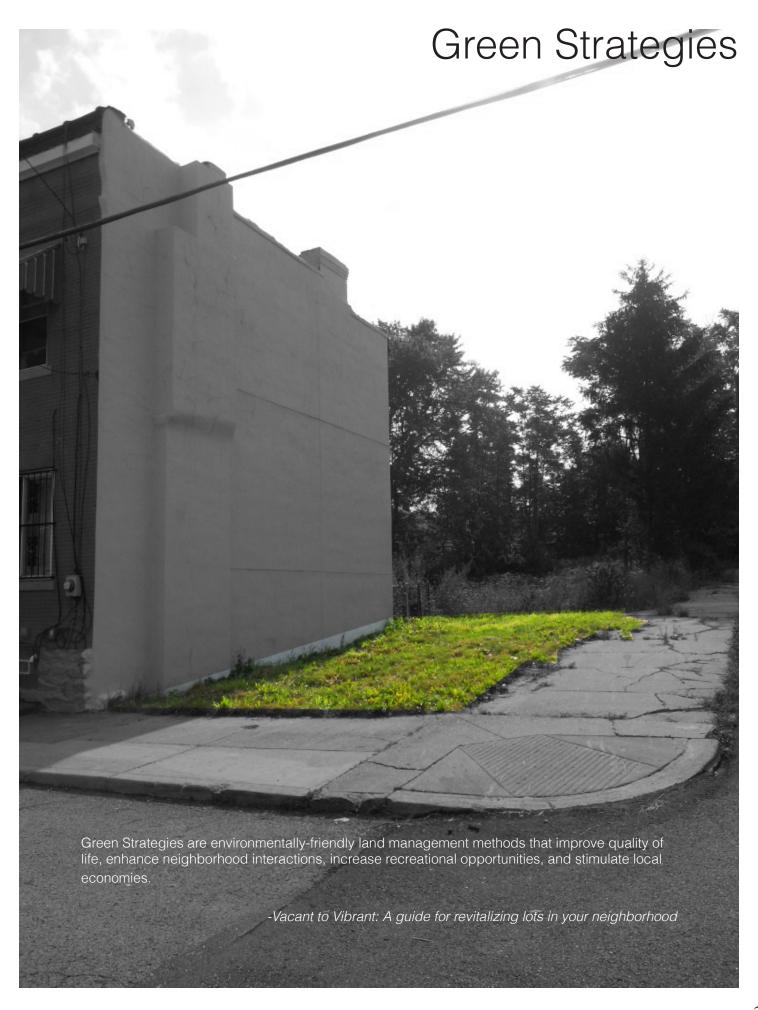
# **Facade Composition**



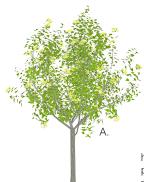
# Setback and Lot Placement



# GRER



# Streetscape



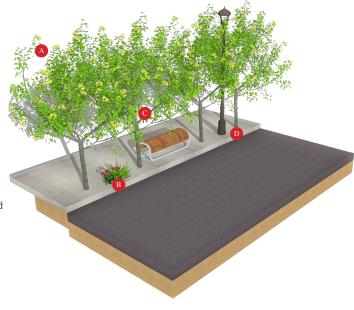
#### Street Trees

-Trees improve air quality, conserve water and harbor wildlife. Street Trees are proven to provide numerous benefits to residents on many different levels.



#### Planting

-Like trees, street plants help to filter the air and absorb water runoff in neighborhoods all while making the streetscape more beautiful.



Perspective View Amenity Layout



D.

#### Street furniture

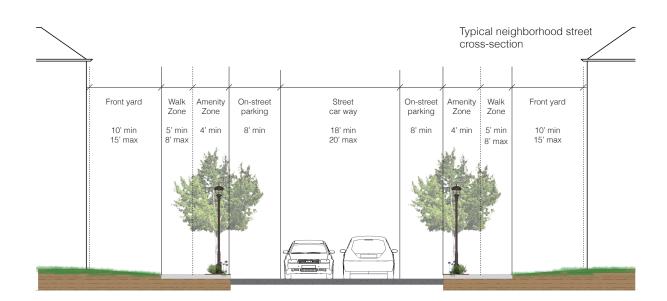
-A collective term for objects and pieces of equipment installed on streets and roads for various purposes.

-Rodeo bench, designed by city squared



#### Street lighting

-A raised source of light on the edge of a road or walkway, which is turned on or lit at a certain time every night.

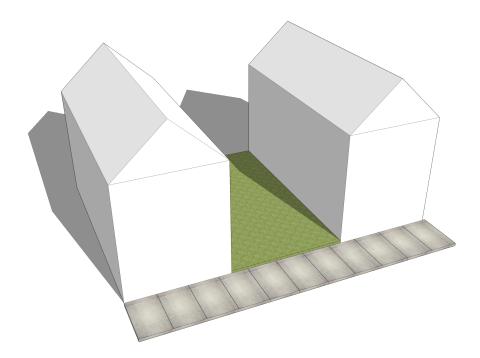


## Vacant Lots

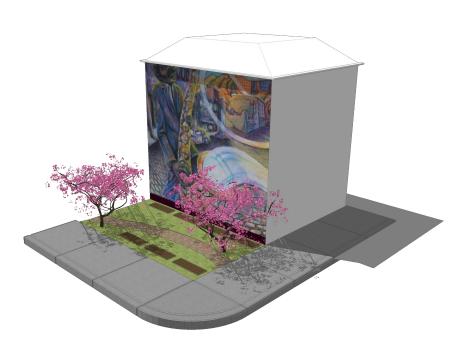
There are currently around 19,000 vacant lots in the City of Pittsburgh alone, not including those in the 129 other municipalities in Allegheny County. In the city, these represent approximately 10,000 acres, or 15 percent, of usable land. These vacant lots often become overrun with weeds and trash, becoming an eyesore for local communities.

-The Penn State Center

The City of Pittsburgh has several resources for cleaning and greening vacant lots through the Green Up Pittsburgh program. For further information residents should contact the office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl.



# Community Garden



Community gardens provide access to traditional produce or nutritionally rich foods that may otherwise be unavailable to low-income families and individuals.

Community gardens allow families and individuals, without land of their own, the opportunity to produce food. Oftentimes gardeners take advantage of experiential knowledge of elders to produce a significant amount of food for the household.

-United We Serve

## Pocket Park

Pocket parks can be urban, suburban or rural, and can be on public or private land. Although they are too small for physical activities, pocket parks provide greenery, a place to sit outdoors, and sometime's a children's playground. They may be created around a monument, historic marker or art project.



## Rain Garden

A rain garden is a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious urban areas like roofs, driveways, walkways, and compacted lawn areas the opportunity to be absorbed.

Native plants are recommended for rain gardens because they generally don't require fertilizer and are more tolerant of one's local climate, soil and water conditions.

-United States Environmental Protection Agency



Gateway on to Milwaukee Avenue

## **Native Plants**



Plant name: Blue Flag Iris Moisture: Wet Soil, Medium Moist Soil Sunlight: Full Sun, Partial Sun

Blooms: May - June Flower Color: Purplish Blue Height: 2.0 - 3.0 feet

General Natural Plant Setting: Low Meadows, Stream Banks, Floodplains or Swampy Places

Rain Garden Suitable: yesa

Native plants are plants that have evolved over thousands of years to be able to survive in a particular region, and have adopted to the geography, hydrology, and climate of that region. A community of native plants provides habitat for a variety of native wildlife species; and will be hardy and resistant to the local conditions, thereby usually requiring less maintenance when used in landscaping.

-United States Environmental Protection Agency



Plant name: Boneset

Moisture: Wet Soil, Medium Moist Soil Sunlight: Full Sun, Partial Sun

Blooms: July - August Flower Color: White Height: 2.0 - 5.0 feet

General Natural Plant Setting: Low Meadows, Stream Banks, Floodplains or Swampy Places

Rain Garden Suitable: yes



Plant name: Golden Groundsel Moisture: Wet Soil, Medium Moist Soil,

Sunlight: Full Sun, Partial Sun,

Blooms: May - June Flower color: Yellow Height: 1.0 - 2.0 feet

General Natural Plant Setting: Woodlands and Woodland Edges

Low Meadows, Stream Banks, Floodplains or

Swampy Places

Rain Garden Suitable: yes



Plant name: Monkey Flower

Moisture: Wet Soil, Medium Moist Soil,

Sunlight: Full Sun, Partial Sun, Blooms: July - September Flower color: Violet Height: 2.0 - 3.0 feet

General Natural Plant Setting:

Low Meadows, Stream Banks, Floodplains or

Swampy Places

Sunny Upland Meadows and Hillsides

Comments: Naturalizes well Deer Resistant: yes Drought Tolerant: no Rain Garden Suitable: yes

Native plant examples Sylvania Natives

# Why Trees?



Trees are an important part of every community. Our streets, parks, playgrounds and backyards are lined with trees that create a peaceful, aesthetically pleasing environment. Trees increase our quality of life by bringing natural elements and wildlife habitats into urban settings. We gather under the cool shade they provide during outdoor activities with family and friends. Many neighborhoods are also the home of very old trees that serve as historic landmarks and a great source of town pride.

-Save a Tree: The Tree and Shrub Care Company

Photo credit: Floyd Wilde

# Benefits of Trees

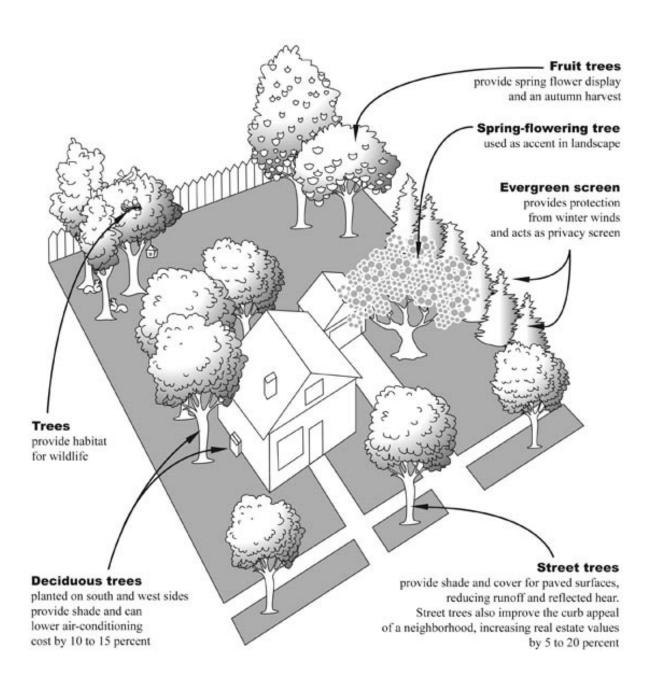


Diagram credit: Tree Pittsburgh

# Sustainable Design

#### **Sustainable Development**

The URA is committed to fostering, encouraging, and supporting sustainable development and green building practices to the maximum extent practical and possible in the City of Pittsburgh. To that end, the URA has adopted a Sustainability and Green Design Policy which includes all aspects of our activities – from day-to-day operations to the creation of large-scale mixed-use developments.

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the negative environmental impacts of our activities while simultaneously responding to the increasing market demand for products and services that are more environmentally benign.

The benefits of green buildings are both broad and specific. For businesses, green buildings can offer economic advantages including lower operating costs, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and higher rental and retail sales rates. Green residential developments provide occupants with lower monthly utility bills as well as increased comfort and indoor air quality.

It is extremely important that green strategies are incorporated into projects during the pre-design phase in order to realize the most cost effective implementation strategies.

There are a number of ways in which current home-owners and new home buyers can improve the energy use of their homes. Pittsburgh's Community Services, Inc. (PCSI) and the Environment and Energy Community Outreach (EECO) Center provides Water and Energy EcoKits to qualified residents.

#### Water EcoKit contents:

High efficiency handheld shower head, dual-spray kitchen aerator, 2 bathroom aerators, toilet tank bank, toilet water saver fill cycle diverter, plumber's tape, leak detection tablets and a flow meter bag.

#### **Energy EcoKit contents:**

3 CFL light bulbs, lime light night light, draft stopper gaskets, 4 switch gaskets, 8 outlet gaskets, a refrigerator thermometer and an air filter whistle.

Those interested should contact the Pittsburgh Community Services Inc. Neighborhood Safety Program at (412) 904-4711



Water EcoKit



**Energy EcoKit** 

#### **Sustainable Design Strategies**

#### 1. Green Framing

Choose sustainably harvested Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified wood for framing. Also consider using finger joists and open web floor joists to maximize resource efficiency and make it easier to route plumbing, wiring and HVAC duct work. Use advanced framing techniques to minimize the amount of wood used.

#### 2. Natural ventilation

To achieve natural ventilation, locate operable windows at both ends of the residential structure.

#### 3. High Efficiency Windows & Doors

Make sure that new windows and doors are ENERGY STAR qualified and have a U-Value of no more than 0.3. For new construction orient windows towards the south to maximize solar heat gain in the winter and design overhangs to shade these windows in the summer.

#### 4. Porch Mass

With the correct sizing and proportioning of porches and overhangs it is possible to shade heat on souther and western facades.

#### 5. Indoor Air Quality

Specify low emitting materials for paints, coatings, adhesives, sealants, carpet and composite wood products. These products do not off-gas Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) and other toxic materials which threaten the health of building occupants. Also make sure that all kitchen and bath fans are vented to the outdoors to reduce moisture and air quality issues.

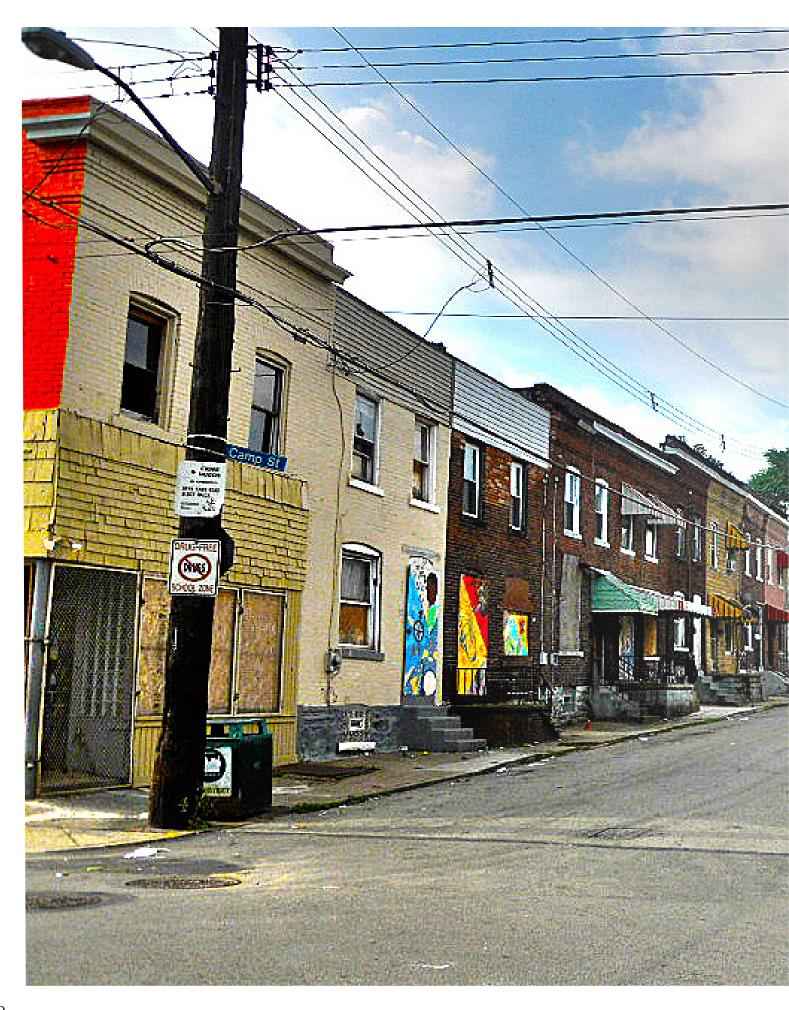
#### 6. Landscaping

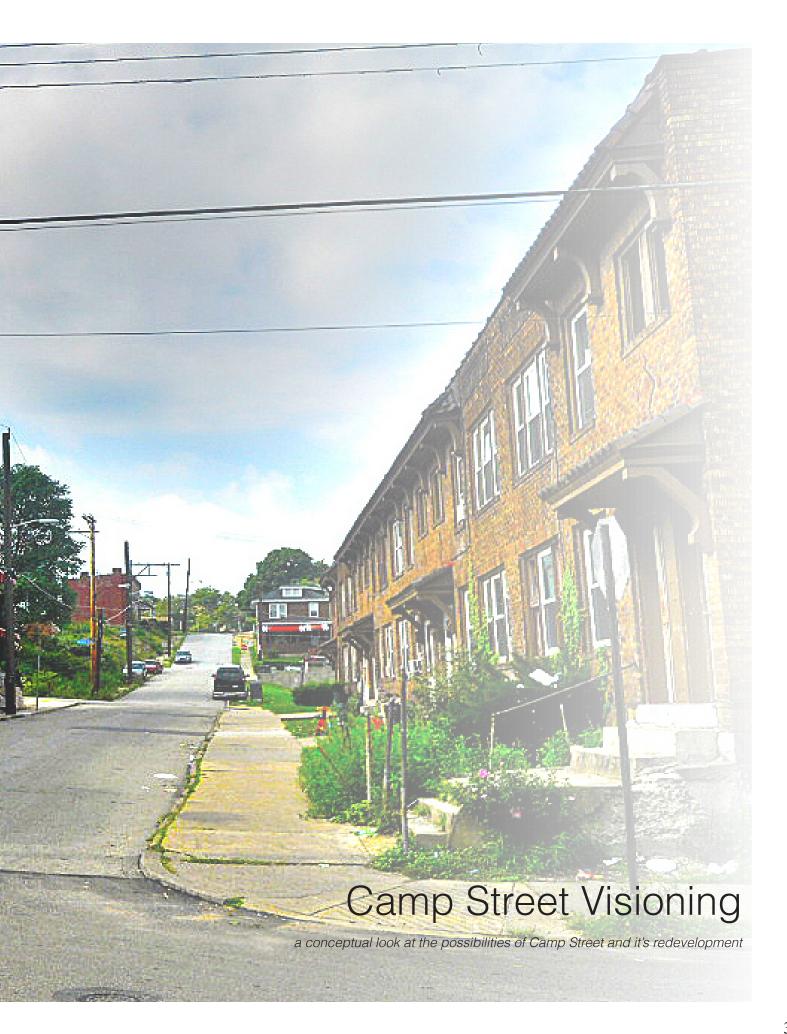
The placement of plats, shrubs, ground covers and trees around the house provides for heat reduction from the reflected sun, making outdoor spaces cooler.

#### 7. Roof Strategies

Choose ENERGY STAR qualified roof products to minimize heat gain in the summer months. For new construction orient the majority of the roof surface towards the south so that as the price of solar panels continues to drop the house will be "solar ready".





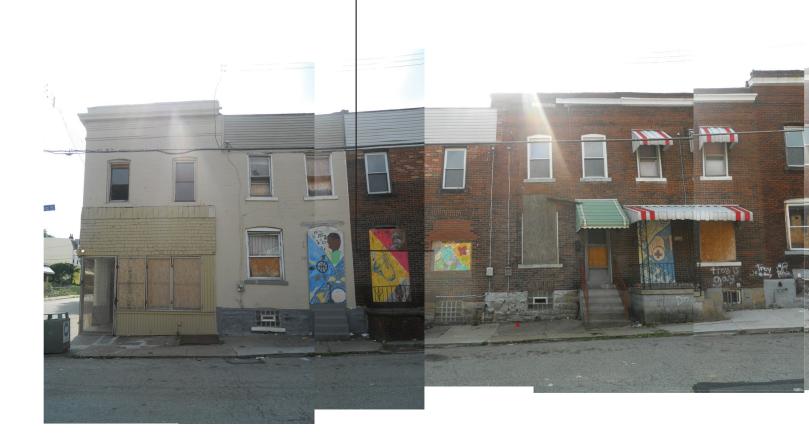


# Design Vision: Camp Street Analysis & Opportunities

Abandoned houses are boarded up with small jazz murals, clearly a reference to the historic fabric of the Hill District and it's once prominent jazz community.



Entrance stairs are in poor condition and in need of repair. Sidewalks also require some maintenance due to cracks and unkempt vegetation.





# Design Vision: Camp Street



Camp Street Row House Facade Renovation



Perspective View



South East Elevation View

# Design Vision: Camp Street



Perspective View



Camp Street Row House Facade Design + Parking Garage/ Garden Implementation



Bird's eye View of Elevated Garden Space



Interior View of Garden Space



South East Elevation View

# URA Programs for Pittsburgh Residents

#### Home Buyer Loans

The URA has an array of mortgage products available to help you on your way to home ownership. Income limits and program areas apply.

### Pittsburgh Home Ownership Program (PHOP)

Provides below market rate first mortgage financing for the purchase of new or existing homes in move-in condition located in the City of Pittsburgh. Down payment/closing cost assistance grant funds are available for all borrowers.

For further information about this program, please contact Sharon Taylor (412) 255-6677.

#### Second Mortgage Financing

Interest free, deferred second mortgage financing is available to help purchase a newly constructed or rehabilitated single family home through the Neighborhood Housing Program and the Housing Recovery Program-Developer. This program is only available for the purchase of a URA-sponsored single family home.

For further information about this program, contact Alicia Majors at (412) 255-6698

For program Fact Sheet(s) go to http://www.ura.org

#### Home Improvement Loans

The URA offers an array of products designed to assist you in the renovation or repair of your home. Income limits and program areas apply.

#### Pittsburgh Home Rehabilitation Program (PHRP) and PHRP Plus for Energy Efficiency

PHRP provides a 0% fixed interest rate for up to 20 years for home improvements. With the new PHRP Plus, you receive the added benefit of an energy Efficiency Loan Program with a grant of up to \$2,500.

## Home Improvement Loan Program (HILP)

The interest rate is only 5.99% with terms of 10, 15 and 20 years with no equity requirements. You may borrow up to \$15,000 for a single unit home, although the home can have up to four units.

For further information about this program, please contact Sharon Taylor at (412) 255-6677.

### **Keystone Renovation and Repair Program (R&R)**

Program is for homeowners in the City of Pittsburgh who earn up to \$99,900. Borrow up to \$35,000. There are no equity requirements.

For further information about this program, please contact Sharon Taylor (412) 255-6677

For program Fact Sheet(s) go to http://www.ura.org

continued...

## Home Emergency Loan Program (HELP)

Interest free loans for low income homeowners to make emergency repairs to correct immediate health and safety hazards in an expedient manner.

For further information about this program, please contact Jarmele E. Fairclaugh at (412) 255-6573.

### Home Accessibility Program for Independence (HAPI)

Funding available to low income homeowners or landlords with low income tenants to assist in making the home accessible to people with disabilities. Limited funding available.

## Pittsburgh Party Wall Program (PPWP)

Grant funding to low income homeowners or landlords with low income tenants to reconstruct exposed party walls of residential row houses. Vacant properties are not eligible.

For further information about this program, please contact Sharon Taylor at (412) 255-6677.

#### **Tax Abatement**

If you purchase or build a new home or make home improvements on your home in the City of Pittsburgh your Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh and District School taxes can be abated for 3 years. If the home is located within a Targeted Growth Zone, your City of Pittsburgh, and School District taxes can be abated for ten (10) years after property is reassessed.

# URA Programs for Developers

#### Housing

URA supported housing developments transform neighborhoods, protect affordability for Pittsburgh residents, and enhance the value of our communities. Residential developer financing is offered by the URA's Housing Department. We offer a number of construction loan and grant gap financing programs that vary in features and eligibility requirements.

Financing is available for small and large-scale new construction or the rehabilitation of rental or for-sale housing. We also provide equity financing to assist community-based organizations in real estate development projects that provide housing or job creation opportunities. We work with both for-profit and non-profit developers to structure individualized financing programs that work over the long term to create sustainable housing developments.

There are a variety of financing programs available for your rental or for-sale housing development project. The Pittsburgh Housing Construction Fund is one source available for financing new construction or rehabilitation of for-sale housing. Rental Housing Development & Improvement Program provides permanent gap financing for new construction or rehabilitation of rental housing.

To discuss your residential development project with a housing development officer, contact Jessica Smith Perry, Manager, Housing Development Programs, at 412.255.6670 or send an email to <a href="mailto:ismithperry@ura.org">ismithperry@ura.org</a>

#### **Earning the ENERGY STAR®**

The URA now requires all new residential construction projects that we build or finance earn the ENERGY STAR®

**ENERGY STAR** specifications make homes more energy efficient and comfortable which helps homeowners save money on utility bills and prevents unwanted pollution from energy production (mercury, particulates, CO2, etc.) from entering our atmosphere.

ENERGY STAR® version 3 includes additional specifications that address other aspects of whole house performance. These additional specifications help make homes that have earned the ENERGY STAR® even more durable and healthy to live in by addressing issues including moisture and indoor air quality.

For more information on ENERGY STAR® homes please contact Matt Smuts, Sustainable Design Coordinator, at 412-255-6430

#### **Tax Abatement**

Multiple tax abatement programs exist for development in the City of Pittsburgh. Abatement of City, County and School taxes may be made available for your commercial or residential renovation or redevelopment project based on project type and location. Staff at the URA can assist you in making application for the product that applies to your project.

#### **Elm Street**

The Elm Street Program was created by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to strengthen our states historic downtown neighborhoods that are beset by low property values, negative images, and perceptions of poor public safety. Elm Street aims to improve the situation of Pennsylvania' s urban neighborhoods while linking revitalization efforts to those of adjacent business districts. Using the long-established Main Street program as a model, the Elm Street concept is structured around simultaneous action in five focus areas (Clean, Safe and Green; Neighbors and Economy; Design; Image and Identity; and Sustainable Organization), integrated through a community-based strategic planning process. The Elm Street program is a work in progress, and is likely to be so for the next several years.

The URA partners with the Pittsburgh Partnership for Neighborhood Development to pilot the Elm Street program in five Pittsburgh communities:
East Allegheny
East Liberty
Lawrenceville
South Side Slopes
For more information on the Elm Street program, please contact Josette
Fitzgibbons, Main streets / Elm Street
Program Coordinator at 412.255.6686

# Green Development Resources for Residential Development

The benefits of green buildings are both broad and specific. For businesses, green buildings can offer economic advantages including lower operating costs, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, and higher rental and retail sales rates. Green residential developments provide occupants with lower monthly utility bills as well as increased comfort and indoor air quality. Pittsburgh is recognized as a leader in the construction of green buildings and we believe that the maintenance of this position is advantageous to make the City of Pittsburgh a more desirable place to live, work and play.

# Next Steps - Community Activity

Identifying the most important opportunities and challenges that emerge during community visioning and mapping sessions is an important step in implementing comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategies. Below are four neighborhood conditions that were most discussed during the Schenley Heights community meetings. We recommend that the Schenley Heights Collaborative continue to work with residents, businesses and other community stakeholders to prioritize their importance and create actionable plans to address each condition.



Addressing the current conditions of the Camp Street row houses. (infrastructure and streetscape)



Reactivating the reservoir and park as a destination for the community.



High Priority



Medium Priority



Low Priority



Addressing a solution for Madison Elementary School.



Revitalization of current infrastructure and maintenance of current vacant overgrown lots.

## References & Resources

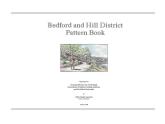
#### **Existing Urban Fabric**

Schenley Heights Proposal
Carlos Richardson, URA intern 2011



#### Housing

Bedford and Hill District Pattern Book Urban Design Associates, 1999



A Pattern Book for Neighborly Houses: Details and techniques for building and renovating neighborly houses

U.S. Area Office of Habitat for Humanity International and the Classical Architecture & Classical America



#### **Green Space**

Vacant to Vibrant: A guide for revitalizing vacant lots in your neighborhood Carnegie Mellon University, Heinz School of Public Policy and Management







#### **Green Space continued**

Green Up Pittsburgh Office of Neighborhood Initiatives Office of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl http://www.pittsburghpa.gov/mayor/

#### OSNAF

Open Space Neighborhood Advisory Panel Urban Redevelopment Authority http://www.ura.org

#### Streetscape

Trees Are Good http://www.treesaregood.com

Save A Tree http://www.saveatree.com

#### **Tree Care**

Tree Pittsburgh http://www.treepittsburgh.org

#### **Vacant Lots, Community Gardens**

GTECH Strategies
http://www.gtechstrategies.org

The Penn State Center http://pittsburgh.center.psu.edu

Clean Green Hill contact: Phyllis Jackson 412-688-0502

#### **Native Plants**

Sylvania Natives http://www.sylvanianatives.com

#### **URA Programs**

Pittsburgh Housing Development Corporation (PHDC) Richard Snipe 412-255-6586 rsnipe@ura.org

Sustainable Development Coordinator Matt Smuts 412-255-6430 msmuts@ura.org

#### **Community Activity**

Schenley Heights Collaborative Phillis Lavelle 412-621-2992

Design Center of Pittsburgh http://www.designcenterpgh.org Chris Koch 412-391-4144







