Improved Access for Urban Revitalization

Pennsylvania Planning Association
2004 Annual Conference

November 7,8,9, 2004
Harrisburg, PA
Case Study: Lafayette Street Transportation Improvements

Borough of Norristown
Plymouth Township
Montgomery County, PA
Case Study: Lafayette Street Transportation Improvements

- Context for Revitalization
- History and Trends (Urban History 101)
- Factors for Revitalization
- Lafayette St. Project
- Lesson Learned (revitalization and project)
HISTORY & TRENDS

- Industrial Decline / Change
HISTORY & TRENDS

• Suburban Mobility / Growth
• Regional Expressway Expansion
HISTORY & TRENDS

- Regional Centers at Interchanges
- Disinvestment / Socioeconomic Decline
- Loss of Tax Base
HISTORY & TRENDS

• Out-migration of Population
FACTORS and FORCES for REVITALIZATION

- Leadership / Commitment / Vision / Communication
- Strategic Planning / Funding
  - Local plan
  - County programs
- Identify and Build on Assets
  - County Seat
  - Riverfront / Trail
  - Transportation Center
  - Historic Buildings / District
FACTORS and FORCES for REVITALIZATION (continued)

- Public Investment
  - Infrastructure
  - Public safety
  - Redevelopment planning
  - Office bldg. subsidy
  - Staff
  - Advocacy
- Private Investment
  - Office construction
- State Policy

PA DEP Southeast Regional Office
LAFAYETTE STREET

- Federal / State / Local Partnership
- Agency Outreach / Support
- Local Support / Cooperation
- Urban Connections / Enhancements
- Streamlining Opportunities
PROJECT ELEMENTS

• New PA Turnpike Interchange
PROJECT ELEMENTS

- U.S. 202 / Dannehower Bridge Interchange
PROJECT ELEMENTS

- Roadway Extension / Widening
PROJECT ELEMENTS

• Street Level Improvements
PROJECT ELEMENTS

• Parking / Traffic / Access Management
PROJECT ELEMENTS

• Intersection Capacity / Design
PROJECT ELEMENTS

• Bike / Ped Connections
PROJECT ISSUES

Engineering / Design

• Design Criteria (Design Speed, etc.)
• Project Limits / Logical Termini
• Utilities / Railroads / Construction Costs
• “Right-sizing” / Scale
• Tolls / Toll Revenues
• Access / Access Management
• Level of Detail
PROJECT ISSUES

Environmental

• Scoping NEPA Level of Action
• Displacement / Concerns
• Section 106 Requirements
  • Historic Eligibility
  • Historic Boundaries
  • Levels of Effect
• Mitigation
• Streamlining / Agency Coordination
• Section 4(f)
• Environmental Justice
Public Involvement

• Meet for Purpose
• Timing of Newsletter
• Bilingual Communication
• Access to Meeting
• Website Updates
• Visualization / Simulation Tools
LESSONS LEARNED
(revitalization)

• Political Leadership
• Communicate, Communicate, Communicate
• Link with Other Places, Programs and Politics
LESSONS LEARNED
(revitalization continued)

• Committed Developer(s)
• Partnerships
• Local Hero
• Persevere
LESSONS LEARNED

• Listen to Opponents
• Be Willing to Change / Compromise
• Look for Time Savings / Reductions
• Start Section 106 (Historic) Early
• Sell the Benefits / Advocate
• Meet Regularly / Identify Steps
• Find Connections to Other Initiatives
• Look for Allies
Case Study: Chester City Access Improvements

City of Chester
Delaware County
HISTORY / TRENDS / INFLUENCES

- Industrial Decline
- Loss of Community Cohesion – I-95 cuts through city
- Poor Access / Isolation
- Out-migration of People / Businesses
• Suburban Sprawl – Loss of Downtown Business
• Disproportionate LULU
• Social Problems
• Blight
EXISTING ASSETS

• Delaware River Waterfront
• Philadelphia International Airport
• Close Proximity to I-95, I-476 and U.S. 322
• Transit Lines
• Good Rail / Freight Access
REGIONAL LOCATION

CHESTER CITY ACCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
Chesler City & Chester Township, PA
PROJECT STUDY AREA

January, 2002
OTHER PUBLIC / PRIVATE INVESTMENT PROJECTS

• Wharf at Riverton
• Chester Housing Authority
• Boat Ramp / Waterfront Park
• PA 291 Improvements
• Racetrack Potential
• Home Buying Programs
• Planned Communities – Buckman Village, Chestnut Village
• Small Business Loan Program
• Economic Incentives – Enterprise Zones, LERTA, Microenterprise Partnership
OPPORTUNITIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT

- Wellington Ridge Retail Complex, $25,000,000
- Wellington Ridge New Housing, $34,800,000
- Chatham Estates New Housing, $18,600,000
- Crozer Regional Cancer Center, $12,000,000
- Crozer Chester Trauma Center, $20,000
- Crozer Chester Expansion, $8,000,000
- Residences at Chestnut Ridge Construction, $20,000,000
- Univ. Tech. Park, $10,000,000
- Edgmont Ave. I-95 On-Ramp, $6,000,000
- Widener Univ. Center Exp., $8,500,000
- Widener School of Business, $9,000,000
- Rt. 291 East Reconstruction, $21,000,000
- SCI Chester, $70,000,000
- Chester Transit Center Reconstruction, $8,000,000
- The Wharf at Riverton, $50,000,000
- William Penn New Housing, $10,000,000
- Kimberly-Clarke Plant Investment, $181,000,000
- New City Hall, $7,000,000

Source: City of Chester
PROJECT BACKGROUND

- Private Investment Conditional on Access
- State / Regional Commitment to Develop Access
- DRPA Funded Initial Planning (Economic Development Grant)
- PennDOT Design
- $40 Million Construction Cost
- 2008 Projected Completion
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT
ISSUES

- Civil Rights / Title VI / Environmental Justice
- Property / Housing Ownership
- Churches / Community Centers
- Historic Structures / Impacts
- Contaminated Land
• Existing and New Sources of Noise
• Traffic Changes / Circulation Impacts
• Negative Public Perception
LESSONS LEARNED

• Manage Public Perception
• Guarantee Two-way Communication
• Identify Community Leaders
• Coordinate with Church Leadership
• Recognize Community Characteristics
• Stress Mitigation Efforts
COMMUNITY BENEFITS

• New Business Enterprises
• Increase in Employment Opportunities
• Increase in Property Values
• Possibilities for Re-use of Waterfront
• Improve Waterfront Access
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