

2020 Virtual APA PA Conference
October 19, 2020 1:45-3:15pm
Concurrent Session D3



EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT

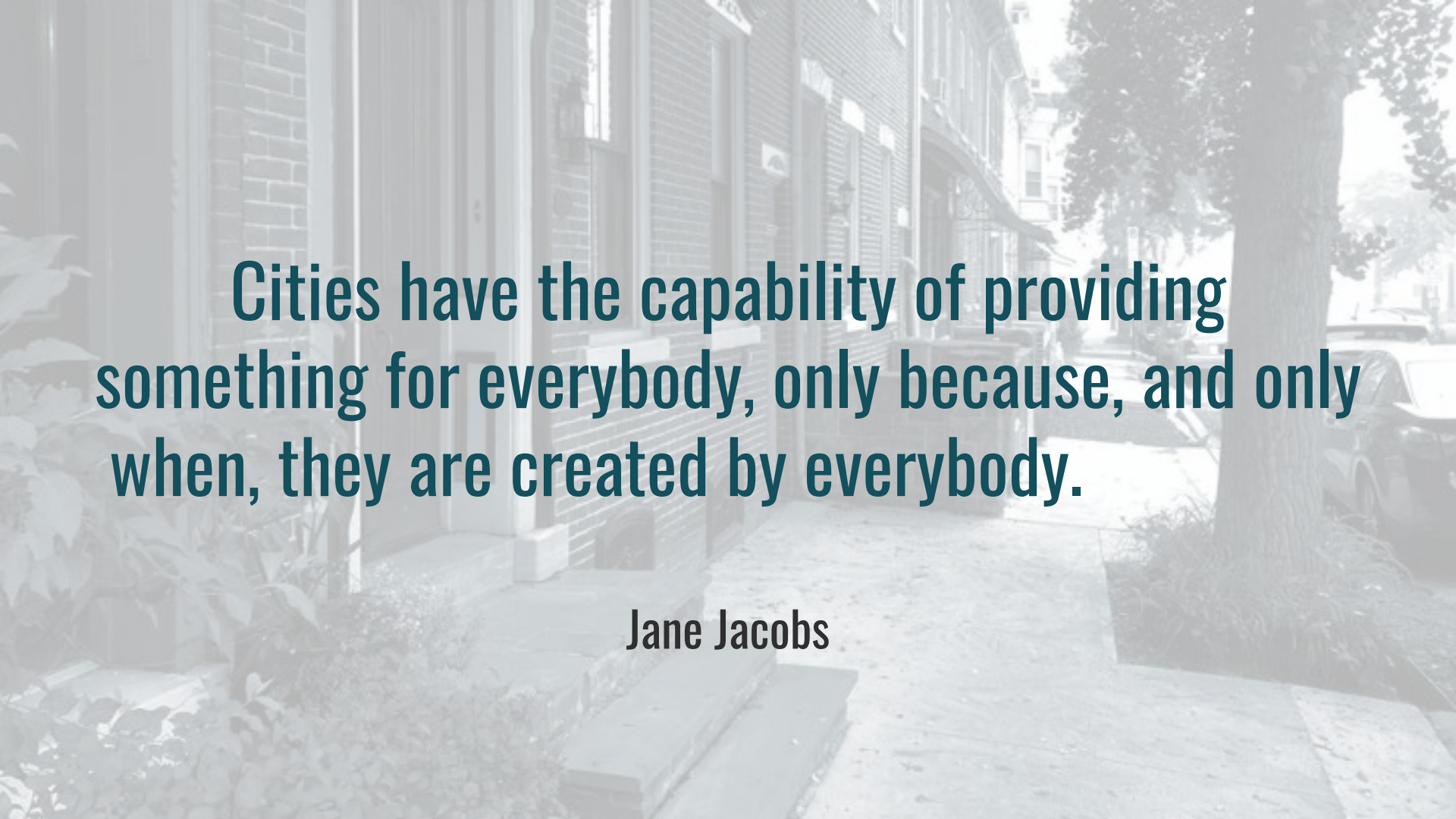
TO CREATE AN IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Irene Woodward, Director of Planning and Zoning, City of Allentown
Hannah Clark, Senior Planner, City of Allentown

Christine Mondor, FAIA, Principal, evolve environment::architecture
Ashley Cox, Senior Project Manager, evolve environment::architecture

Jerry Paytas, Vice President Research & Analytics, Fourth Economy





**Cities have the capability of providing
something for everybody, only because, and only
when, they are created by everybody.**

Jane Jacobs



Session Agenda

1. Equitable Engagement & AICP Code of Ethics
2. Nested Scales of Community Engagement
3. The Role of Data in Equitable Engagement
4. Allentown Vision 2030 Plan
5. Discussion



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FOURTH
ECONOMY



Champion



ALLENTOWN

VISION:
2030
Your City! Your Voice!

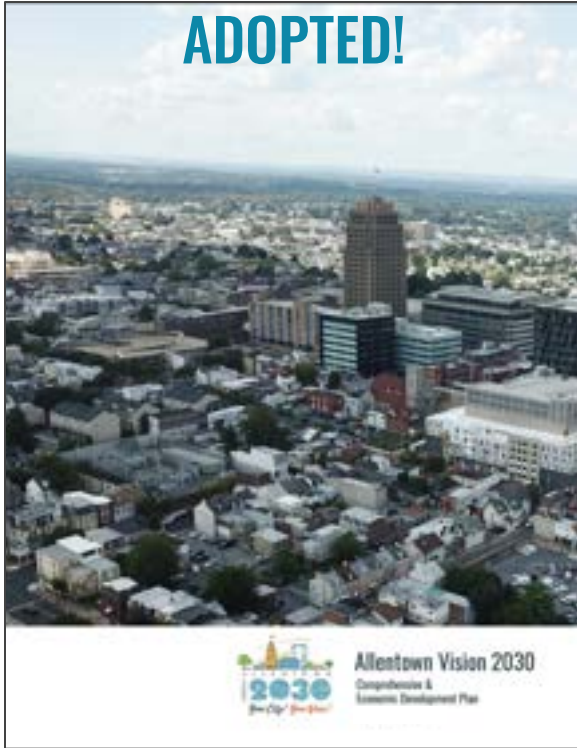
A black and white photograph of three young women standing outdoors in an urban setting, holding a large banner. The woman on the left is wearing a dark hoodie with the 'Champion' logo. The woman in the middle is wearing glasses and a dark jacket over a white shirt. The woman on the right is wearing a dark jacket over a dark shirt. The banner they are holding features a stylized city skyline with the word 'ALLENTOWN' written in large, spaced-out letters. To the right of the skyline, the text 'VISION: 2030' is visible, followed by 'Your City! Your Vision!'. The background shows a residential area with houses and a street.

Allentown needed to grow together!

Irene Woodward

Allentown Vision 2030

ADOPTED!



A Comprehensive AND Economic Development Plan

- Implementable Comprehensive Plan Framework
- Emphasis on economic development as implementation tool
- Iterative Engagement Model for buy-in and empowerment
- Implementation Report Card and Tracking



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

We are all committed to the CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics is comprised of 5 sections.
Today's presentation is focused on Section A.

Section A of the Code of Ethics is a series of aspirational principles that constitute the ideals to which we are committed.



We are all
committed to the
AICP CODE OF
ETHICS

including principles
of public interest

1. Our Overall Responsibility to the Public

Our primary obligation is to serve the public interest and we, therefore, owe our allegiance to a conscientiously attained concept of the **public interest that is formulated through continuous and open debate**. We shall achieve high standards of professional integrity, proficiency, and knowledge. To comply with our obligation to the public, we aspire to the following principles:



We are all committed to the AICP CODE OF ETHICS

including principles
of public interest,
meaningful impact,
& social justice.

e. We shall give people the opportunity to have a **meaningful impact** on the development of plans and programs that may affect them. Participation should be broad enough to include those that lack formal organization or influence.

f. We shall seek **social justice** by working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, recognizing a special responsibility to plan for the needs of the disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic integration. We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that oppose such needs.



**We are all
committed to the
AICP CODE OF
ETHICS**

**including principles
of public interest,
meaningful impact,
& social justice.**

**This is Allentown's
2030 context.**

How did the Code of Ethics guide Allentown's Comprehensive Plan update?

What needed to be accomplished?

- First time using an outside consultant
- Mistrust between the community and government
- Need to engage the public
- City is growing and changing



We are growing!

2010 population estimates

118,032

2019 population estimate

121,441

2.9%
increase!

+1.4% Bethlehem

+1.5% Easton

+0.8% PA

We are growing!

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We are diverse!

2000 Hispanic population
25,970

2018 Hispanic population
62,854

**Allentown's Hispanic
population represents**

52%

**of the city's total population
[2018]**

We are growing!

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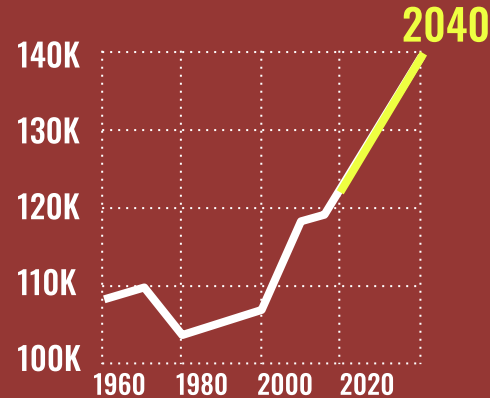
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[2018]

Our growth will continue!



**Allentown's
Actual & Forecasted
Growth [LVPC data]**

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118,032

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121,441 2019 ACS one year

2.9%
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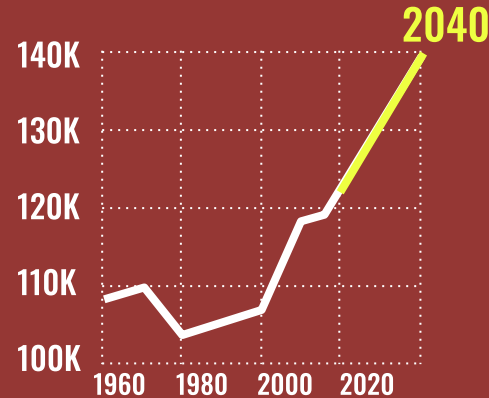
2018 Hispanic population
62,854 2014-18 ACS five year

Allentown's Hispanic population represents

52%

of the city's total population [2018]

Our growth will continue!



Allentown's Actual & Forecasted Growth [LVPC data]

Young adults & children will comprise much of the increase!

2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

We're thinking about Allentown at many scales.

WE'RE THINKING ABOUT NEIGHBORHOODS...



We're thinking about Allentown at many scales.

WE'RE THINKING ABOUT NEIGHBORHOODS...



We're thinking about Allentown at many scales.

WE'RE THINKING ABOUT NEIGHBORHOODS...



We're thinking about Allentown at many scales.

WE'RE THINKING ABOUT NEIGHBORHOODS...



We're thinking about Allentown at many scales.
THE LEHIGH VALLEY REGION...



We're thinking about Allentown over time...

Allentown Vision 2030

FOUR PHASES

2018
August to December



LEVEL SETTING

This phase documents our current understanding of the history, people, places, businesses and assets that make Allentown unique. This includes concise messaging about our vision for this project and the future of the Municipality.

2019
January to March



VISION/SCENARIOS

This phase documents gathered feedback on viability, preferences, and our current ability to implement. Including potential redevelopment opportunities, partnerships, and funding sources.

2019
March to June



BUILD SESSIONS

This phase will document future land use and planning strategies, design and character guidelines, and implementation. This includes specific action steps, associated timelines, responsible parties, supporting programs, and means of funding.

2019
June to November



LAUNCH

This phase will document a refined version of the final result of the plan process. This is a celebration of the work that has been completed and confirmation of the commitments made to realize our vision for the future!

We're thinking about Allentown over time...

Allentown Vision 2030

TEAM



with







Informed planning needs informed citizens!

Christine Mondor & Hannah Clark

Let's chat!

**Think of a project where community
engagement **advanced a good idea...**
what made that possible?**

Write it in the chat box.



**Allentown Vision 2030 was a
community-driven planning
process. We engaged...**

Hundreds of people at
the Community Collaboration
Meetings & the Community
Engagement Hub

Over
1200 voices
in our Community Survey

80+ volunteers
in the Community
Ambassador
Program

200 attendees
at the Build Session
working groups



RESILIENT CITIES
A GROSVENOR RESEARCH REPORT

RESILIENCY

GROSVENOR REPORT

the ability of a city to avoid or
bounce back from an adverse event

comes from the interplay of
vulnerability & **adaptive capacity**

GROSVENOR

RESILIENT CITIES
A GROSVENOR RESEARCH REPORT

RESILIENCY GROSVENOR REPORT

the ability of a city to avoid or
bounce back from an adverse event

comes from the interplay of

vulnerability &

climate
environment
resources
infrastructure
community

PLACE

adaptive capacity

governance
institutions
technical capacity
planning systems
funding structures

GOVERNANCE



Source: Shrinking Cities: International Research, ed. Philip Oswalt 2005

How Do We Create
Communities of **ACTION**?

ENGAGEMENT

THE FOCUS



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

ENGAGEMENT THE FOCUS EMPOWERMENT



**Neighborhoods have
many people taking
action to improve their
community.**



**Neighborhoods have
many people taking
action to improve their
community.**



**Neighborhoods have
many people taking
action to improve their
community.**



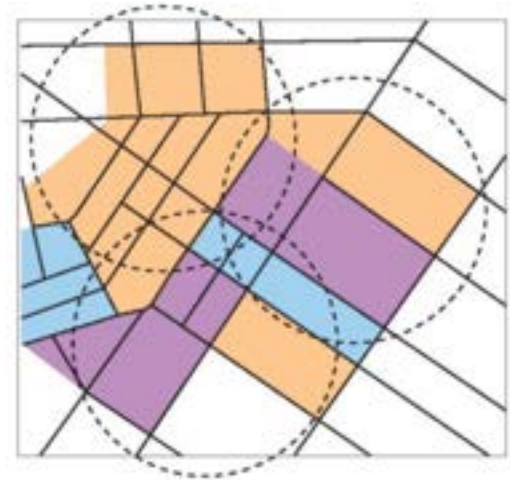
**To accomplish bigger
things, we need ways to
effectively to work
together.**



**Neighborhoods have
many people taking
action to improve their
community.**

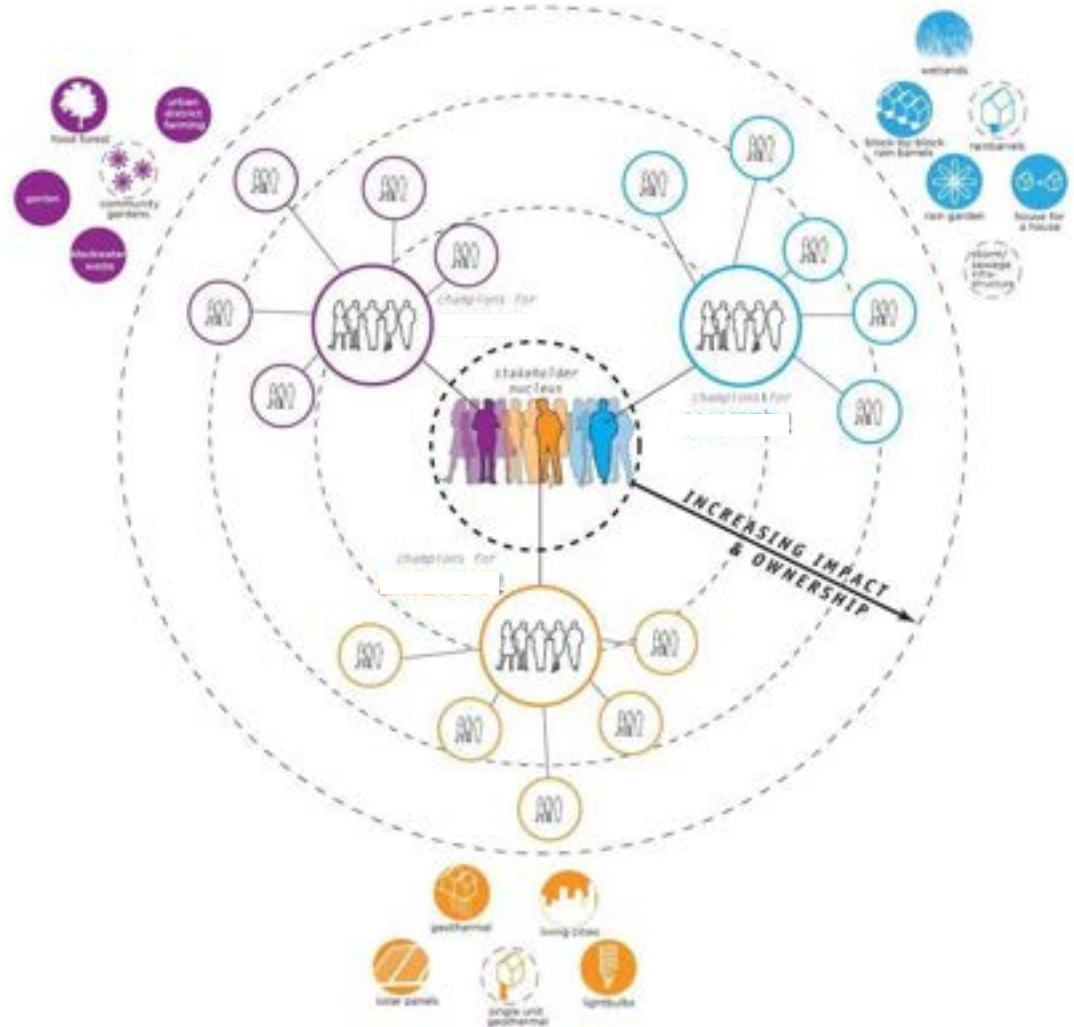


**To accomplish bigger
things, we need ways to
effectively to work
together.**



**A core team with a
plan of action can
make change.**

**Teams need to be
built and cultivated
over time.**



People invest in their neighborhoods when they feel ownership in the formal and informal processes that shape a city.

**To create effective processes, we need to understand the
DYNAMICS OF POWER**



DYNAMICS OF POWER

RESOURCE power

Who has the money? assets?

DYNAMICS OF POWER

RESOURCE power

Who has the money? assets?

POSITION power

Who has the role or title?

DYNAMICS OF POWER

RESOURCE power

Who has the money? assets?

POSITION power

Who has the role or title?

EXPERT power

Who has the knowledge?

DYNAMICS OF POWER

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Who has the knowledge?

PERSONAL power

Who has charisma?

DYNAMICS OF POWER

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PERSONAL power

Who has charisma?

NEGATIVE power

Who can say 'no'?

DYNAMICS OF POWER

RESOURCE power

Who has the money? assets?

POSITION power

Who has the role or title?

EXPERT power

Who has the knowledge?

PIVOT

PERSONAL power

Who has charisma?

NEGATIVE power

Who can say 'no'?

**ENGAGEMENT PROCESSES
ARE ABOUT THE
EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE**

+

PIVOT

**ELEVATING THE COMMUNITY'S
EXPERT POWER.**

**Different processes
require different
levels of engagement.**



**Different processes
require different
levels of engagement.**

*Do we need people to know
more about a subject?
Prioritize issues? Act together?*

**We can plan for different
LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT**



LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT



**DO WE
NEED TO...**

INFORM

giving information on what is planned

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

**DO WE
NEED TO...**

CONSULT

asking about options to gain feedback

INFORM

giving information on what is planned

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

**DO WE
NEED TO...**

DECIDE TOGETHER

generating ideas and deciding the best way forward

CONSULT

asking about options to gain feedback

INFORM

giving information on what is planned

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

**DO WE
NEED TO...**

ACT TOGETHER

deciding what is best and carrying it out together

DECIDE TOGETHER

generating ideas and deciding the best way forward

CONSULT

asking about options to gain feedback

INFORM

giving information on what is planned

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

**DO WE
NEED TO...**

SUPPORT INDEPENDENT INITIATIVES

acting on issues beyond the project self-interest

ACT TOGETHER

deciding what is best and carrying it out together

DECIDE TOGETHER

generating ideas and deciding the best way forward

CONSULT

asking about options to gain feedback

INFORM

giving information on what is planned

LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

TRANSFORMATIONAL

**DO WE
NEED TO...**

TRANSACTIONAL

SUPPORT INDEPENDENT INITIATIVES

acting on issues beyond the project self-interest

ACT TOGETHER

deciding what is best and carrying it out together

DECIDE TOGETHER

generating ideas and deciding the best way forward

CONSULT

asking about options to gain feedback

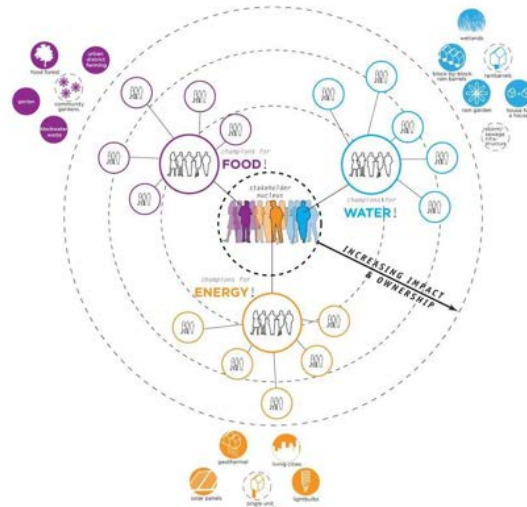
INFORM

giving information on what is planned

ENGAGEMENT CAN BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY

STRONG COMMUNITIES HAVE
decision-making mechanisms
organizational learning
legal structure
financial resources

THAT BUILDS A SENSE OF IDENTITY!



How Did We Move from a
Vision to **ACTION**?

[PLANNING] ENGAGEMENT



KNOW YOUR GOALS

What type of plan and what does it need to accomplish?

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Who do you need to reach and “where” are they?

DESIGN YOUR CURRICULUM

What do people need to know and when?

GIVE FEEDBACK

How can constant communication enable knowledge?



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY DECK

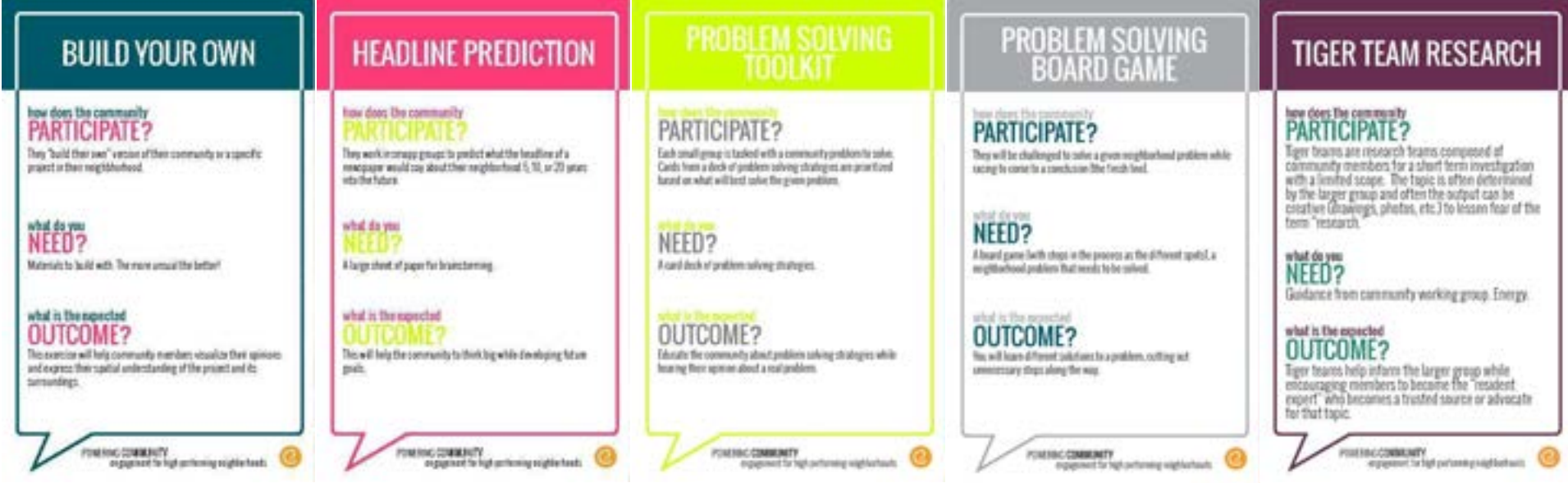


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**FOURTH
ECONOMY**



We used the Community Engagement Strategy Deck to build

NESTED SCALES

of engagement.

REFLECTION

Does the community have what it needs to make decisions during planning?

ACTION

Does the community have what it needs implement the ideas?



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ECONOMY

Allentown Vision 2030
was a **community-driven
planning process.** We engaged...

Hundreds of people at
the Community Collaboration
Meetings & the Community
Engagement Hub

Over
1200 voices
in our Community Survey

80+ volunteers
in the Community
Ambassador
Program

200 attendees
at the Build Session
working groups

Public Engagement Strategy

Early

Mutually inform

Interview

Focus Group

Survey

Site Visit

Later

Mutually decide

Meeting-in-a-Box

Storefront
Installation

Facilitator
Training

Public Meetings

Ongoing

Co-create
narrative

TV/Radio/
Press/Social
Media

Youth
Programming

Speaker Series

Video
Interviews

Guiding
Documents



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

Community Engagement Plan

FACILITATOR TRAINING

WE NEED A TEAM OF
PEOPLE WHO CAN
CREATE
EVER-WIDENING
CIRCLES OF
ACTION

WE ARE DEVELOPING
MATERIALS FOR
**FOR PEOPLE
TO LEAD THE
CONVERSATION.**



Community ambassadors were trained to “take the show on the road,” as were planning staff and partners

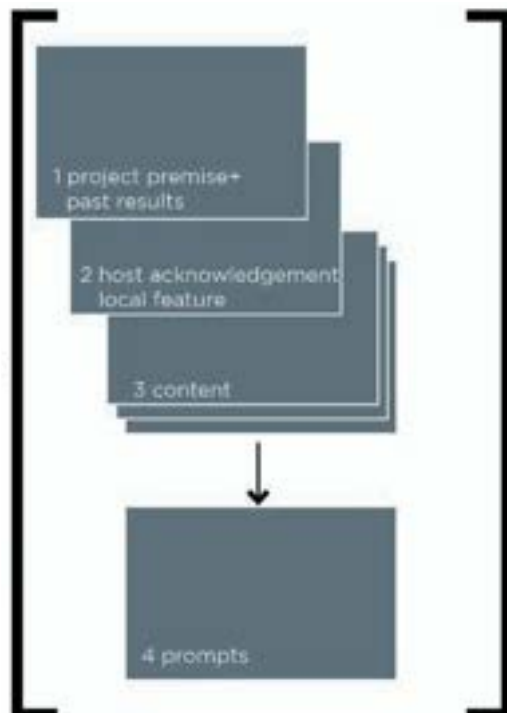
Subjects included:

- how to be a change agent?
- how do people think about change?
- how does change happen?
- understanding organizations and individuals
- types of power
- dealing with conflict
- types of engagement
- how to run a meeting

Community Engagement Plan

ON-THE-GROUND PRESENCE

OFFSITE GATHERINGS AND OTHER INFORMAL COMMUNICATIONS CAN BECOME AN IMPORTANT WAY TO REACH OUT TO THE PUBLIC.



LARGE GATHERINGS

Four public meetings will bring the process to the community throughout the years.

PORTABLE RESOURCES

Staff and stakeholders will be able to use a portable meeting-in-a-box that can be taken to different venues or organizations to share more broadly.

STOREFRONT INSTALLATION

In 2019, there will be a storefront available for use where organizations can host gatherings related to the comp plan process

VIRTUAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Faces International will manage social media material and virtual media.

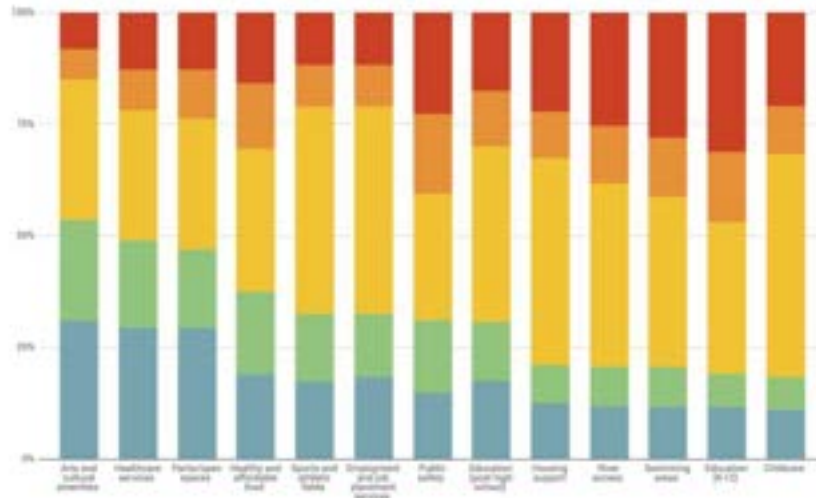
Hundreds of people at the Community Collaboration Meetings



Over
1200 voices
in our Community Survey

Comfort Utilizing Allentown Services & Amenities

Very Uncomfortable Somewhat Uncomfortable Neutral Somewhat Comfortable Most Comfortable



Services & amenities residents are *most comfortable* utilizing to the left

Services & amenities residents are *least comfortable* utilizing to the right

SURTH
Strategy





80+ volunteers
in the Community
Ambassador
Program



The Community Engagement Hub

storefront was open daily from March to October 2019 for community visits!







Smart decisions need smart data!

Jerry Paytas & Irene Woodward

Let's chat!

**Think of a time where the data
changed the way you approached a problem...
what made that possible?**

Write it in the chat box.



How you analyze and present data is critical



Inclusive Interpretation

Meaning is in the eye of the beholder

Share findings in stages
versus a big reveal

Flip the classroom and ask
for interpretation



Data <> Destiny

Misinterpreted data can harm
communities

Be transparent about the
limits of the data - Don't be
limited by the data



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

where we **WORK**

There are many places to work in Allentown and the region. Jobs are important to bring prosperity to Allentown's residents. **(PICK 3)**

IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALLENTOWN THAT WE ADDRESS...

Supporting small business development and keeping small businesses in Allentown

Proveer ayuda para desarrollo de nuevas empresas

Research and technology based businesses

Proveer apoyo al desarrollo de investigaciones tecnológicas para el desarrollo de nuevas empresas

Providing education and workforce development

Proveer apoyo para la educación y desarrollo de habilidades de empleo a los trabajadores

dónde **TRABAJAMOS**

Oportunidades de trabajo son importantes para los residentes de Allentown. En la región y la ciudad de Allentown are muchos lugares donde trabajar. **(ESCOGE 3)**

ES IMPORTANTE QUE EN ALLENTOWN EXISTAN...

Entrepreneurial and business startup support

Proveer ayuda para mantener y desarrollar empresas locales

Manufacturing and industrial based businesses

Proveer apoyo a industrias de manufactura

Others
Otras

Engage the community in interpretation



Providing education and workforce development



Business development / small businesses



Entrepreneurial and business start up support



Research and technology based businesses



Manufacturing and industrial based businesses



Other



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

Data can inform more inclusive engagement



Develop Perspective

Economic development is not neutral.

There are winners and losers.



Data as Affirmation

Confirm what is known or suspected.

Provide context and perspective - how good/bad is it?



Data as Revelation

Identify hidden trends and drivers.

Counter common assumptions and outdated narratives



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ECONOMY

Data can affirm and provide context

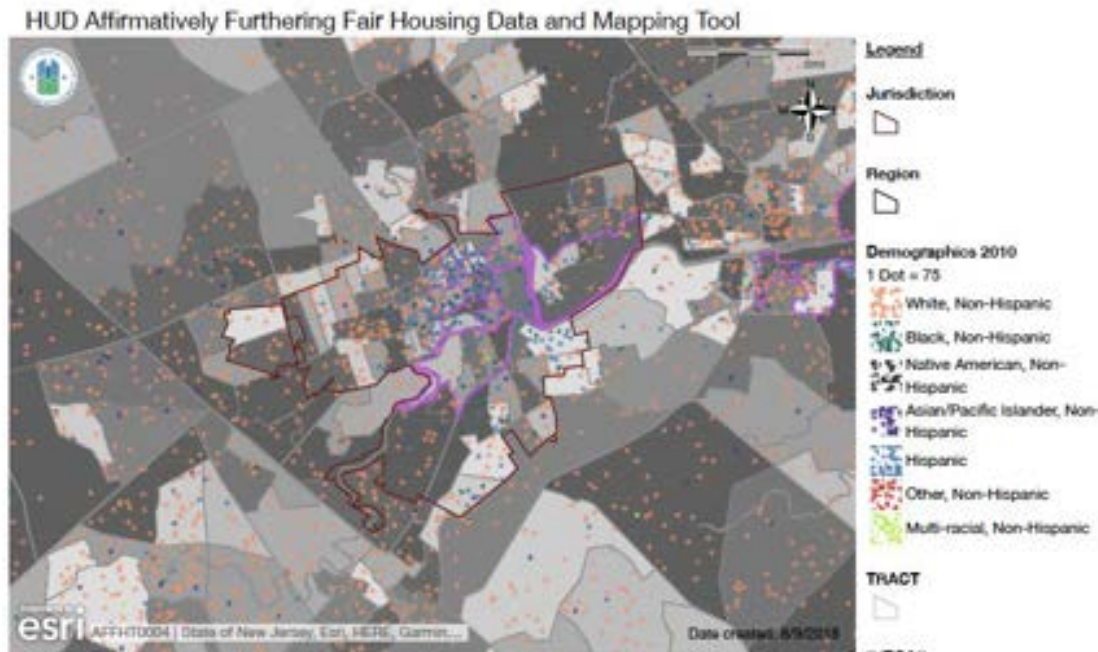


Allentown

Allentown is a majority Hispanic city

The 80-90 Problem: Disjoint between housing and jobs

Clarify the intersection of workforce, transportation, housing, and quality of life

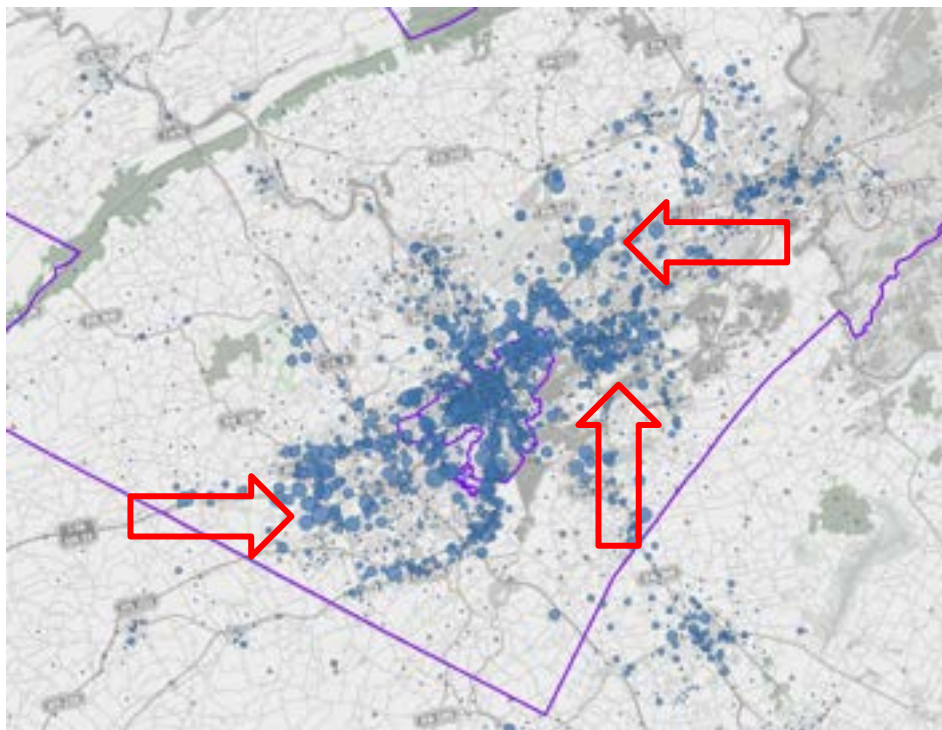


Name: Map 8 - Demographics and Job Proximity

Description: Jobs Proximity Index for Jurisdiction and Region with race/ethnicity, national origin, family status and IVECAPs



What are the equity impacts of the job and residential trends?



Source: U.S. Census Bureau; On the Map, 2016

80% of the jobs in the city are held by commuters (35,767)

90% of the employed city residents work outside the city (39,324)



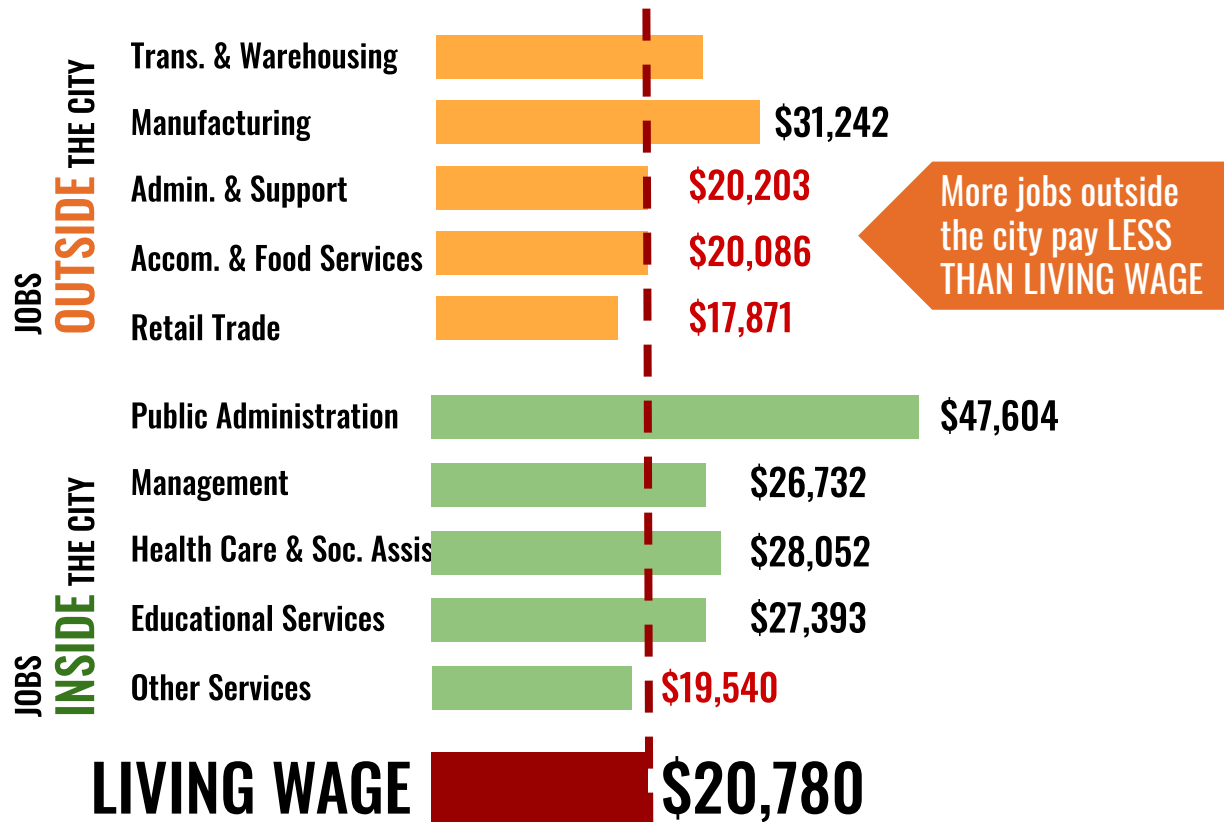
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Growing Hispanic population is disconnected from jobs

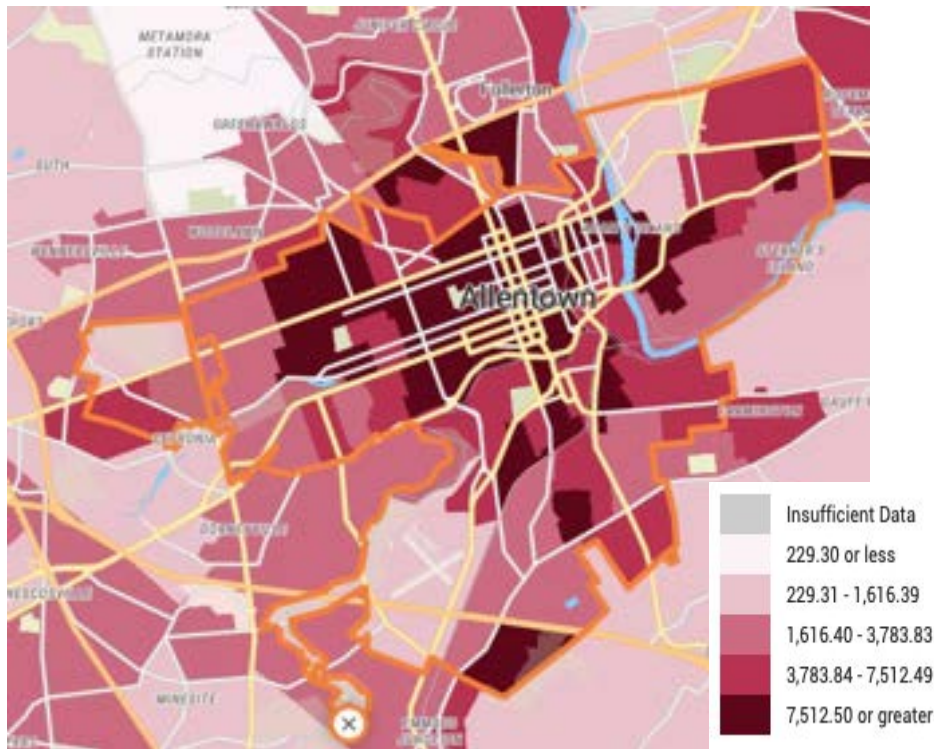
HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Data and Mapping Tool





What are the equity impacts related to housing, jobs and transportation?

Data can reveal critical issues



Allentown

Allentown is not “built out” but has many low density, low value areas

Population growth in the city is not balanced by job growth

Fewer jobs are paying a living wage and increasing costs for transportation squeezes the housing budget



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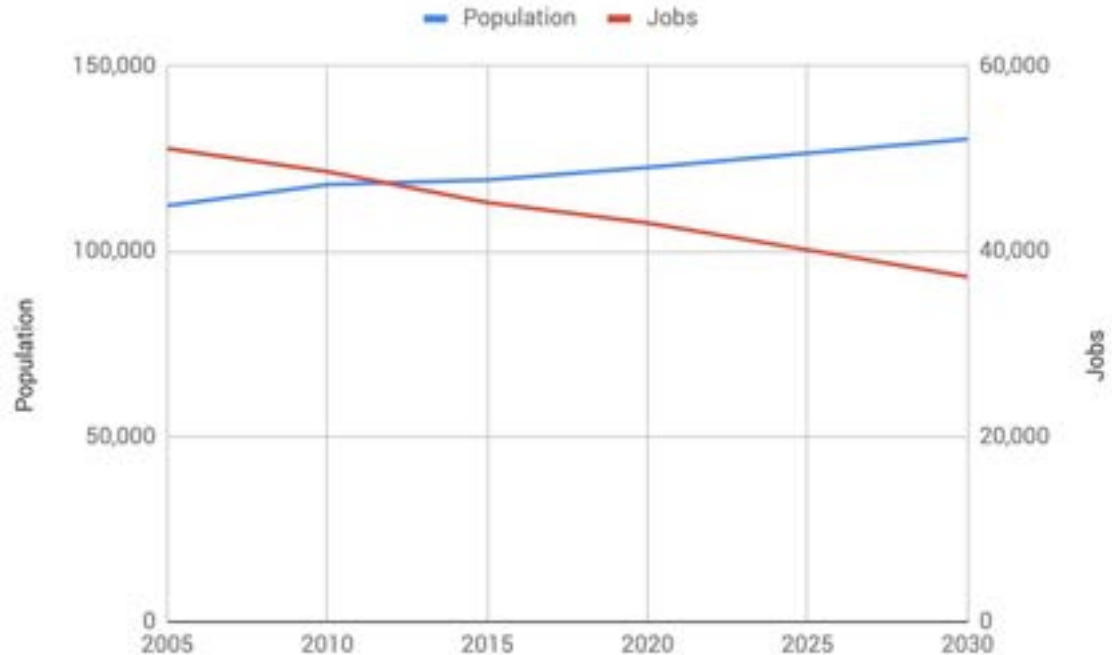
FOURTH
ECONOMY

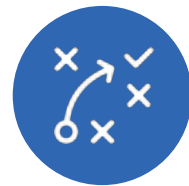
These diverging trends are not sustainable

Is the population growth sustainable?

Jobs in the region are growing, but the lack of jobs in the city increases commuting time and costs - which impact the affordability of housing.

This has implications for equity





Data <> Destiny but it defines the challenge

Do people understand and agree that a problem **exists**?

Do they agree that it is their **responsibility**?

Do they have the **capacity** to address it?

How does the data **align** with goals and desires?



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ECONOMY

Aligning desires and data is simple in theory



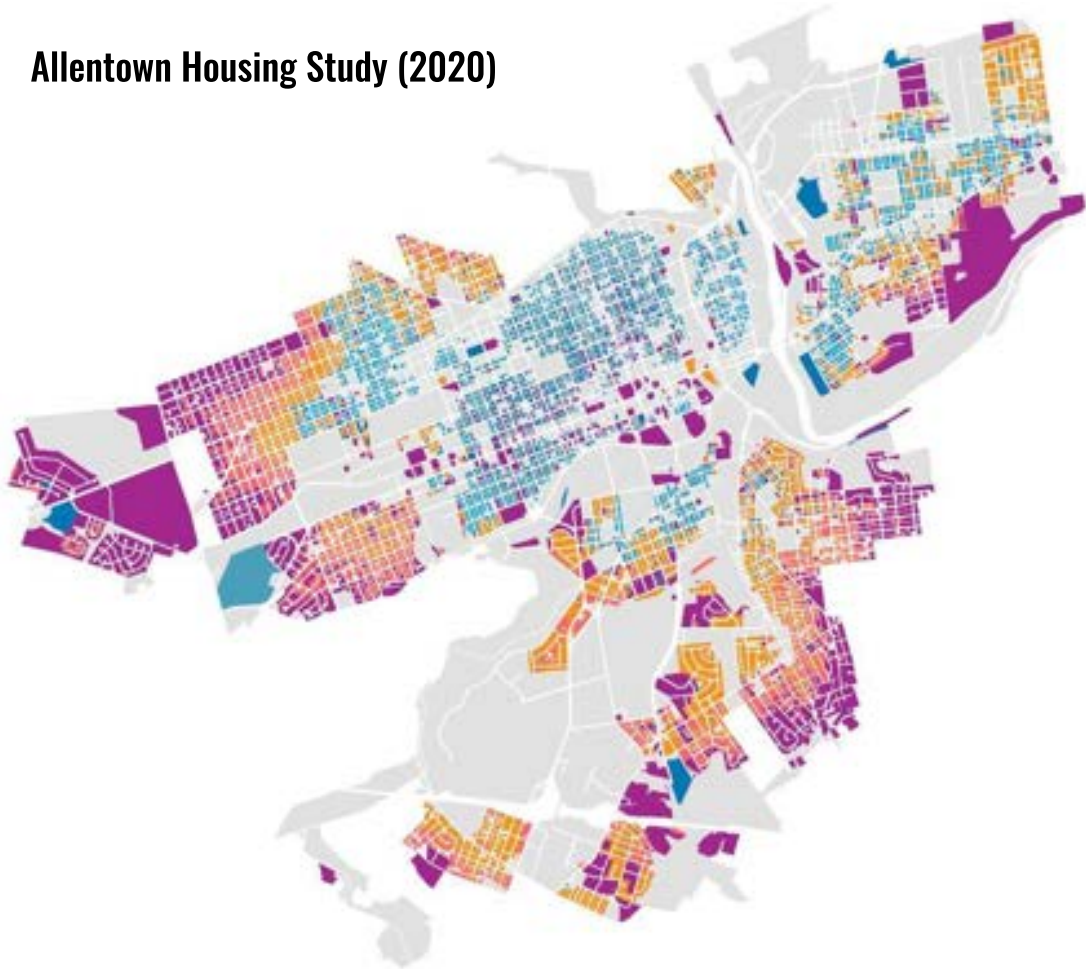
But in reality the lines are a bit blurry...



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

Allentown Housing Study (2020)



Total Household Utility and
Transportation Costs
Not Including Rent/Mortgage

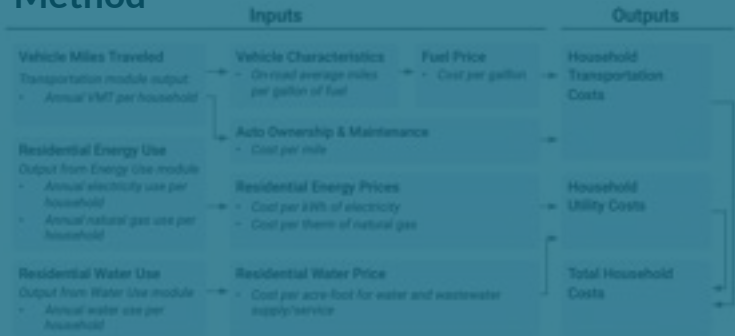
Household Costs Estimates

Total

≤ \$5,000
\$5,000 - \$10,000
\$10,000 - \$15,000
≥ \$15,000

Data is important to empower community, enable informed decisions, and remain accountable to an ambitious plan.

Method







Inform, engage, empower to get it done!

Ashley Cox & Hannah Clark

Let's chat!

**How do you maintain accountability...
in your planning processes?**

Write it in the chat box.



PHASES

1

level setting

SEPT - DEC 2018

our current understanding of the history, people, places, businesses, and assets that make Allentown unique

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Site Visit
Existing Plans Review
Spatial Analysis

PUBLIC INPUT

Public Meeting (x1)
Community Hub
Steering Committee
Meeting (x3)
Interview (x34)
Focus Group (x6)

OUTCOMES

Context + Critical Issues
Mission + Vision
allentown for all
economic inclusivity
city as a steward
diversity+equity
community empowerment
collaboration

2

vision+scenario development

JAN - MAR 2019

the evaluation of possible and preferred strategies to support community values and enhance Allentown's strengths

Scenario Modeling
Economic Analysis
Strategy Toolkit

Public Meeting (x1)
Community Hub
Steering Committee
Meeting (x3)
Survey (x1,215)

Urban Systems
economic development
housing
accessibility+connectivity
service+amenities
living systems

3

build sessions

MAR - AUG 2019

in-depth sessions to brainstorm creative solutions, opportunities, partnerships, and funding sources

Critical Issues Research
Urban Design Concepts

Public Meeting (x1)
Community Hub
Steering Committee
Meeting (x2)
Build Session (x8)
Action Planning

Priority Actions
Area Planning
East Allentown
South Allentown
West Allentown
Center Allentown

4

launch

SEPT - DEC 2019

a framework for action that comprehensively and succinctly reflect the city's vision

Catalytic Actions
Plan Refinement
Draft Report

Public Meeting (x1)
Steering Committee
Meeting (x3)

Allentown
Vision 2030
Final Report



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

We're thinking about Allentown over time...

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**We've discussed
the **qualities** that make
cities vibrant.**

**We've explored
how development changes
cities like Allentown.**

neighborhood fabric
connecting the dots
managing flows
visible and invisible boundaries
going with the flow
making an entry
hidden in plain sight
old patterns, new life

How do we create vibrancy?
How do we establish networks?
How do we manage our infrastructure?
How do we relate to our region?
How do we connect old and new?
How do we strengthen our identity?
How do we manage our housing assets?
How do we reimagine existing patterns?



01 PAMPHLET- MEETING AGENDA

Attendees were given a passport or meeting agenda to encourage active listening

- general project information
- contact information
- online portal/social media handles



04 PRESENTATION

Stakeholders received an overview of project goals and an update of work completed to date before break out sessions. Content shares information about the process, gathers information from the lived experience perspective and builds a coalition of change agents



02 POSTER- ANALYSIS MAPPING

Attendees were able to take a closer look at Citywide assessment data gathered by the team and were asked to respond with their value statements:

- it is important to me that...
- I have questions about...
- I am interested in seeing...



05 ACTIVITY- RATES OF CHANGE

Participants were broken into groups of 6-8 for a table moderated Q&A and reflections. They were then prompted to group their icebreaker impressions of Allentown and categorize them by scale of city development.

The chart on the following page shows the type of change groups thought would support their vision of Allentown. The word diagrams graphically show the sentiments that were shared in the room.

- Introductory activity | Quick Three Allentown
- Breakout activity | Rates of Change
- See appendix



**Vibrant cities are a
combination of both
hardware & software**

Our **places** serve as
hardware and are the
settings for activity.

Our **activities** are the
software that creates the
character and dynamic
quality.

A large mural on a city wall featuring a woman in a patterned dress and a heart symbol.

**Our ideas will shape
Allentown's places &
activities.**

CHANGE
STATUS QUO

Things stay the same, people know what to expect, relationships are maintained



CHANGE
INCREMENTAL

Small scale, allows for diversity and variety of participants, citizen driven



CHANGE
**HIGH
FUNCTIONING**

Citizens working together and with outside or high capacity entities



CHANGE
DESTINATION

Fully developed clusters lead to economic success, attracts outside resources



CHANGE
**FULL SCALE
REDEVELOPMENT**

Full scale massive redevelopment of major sites



**We've discerned the
values that will guide
change.**

01 PAMPHLET- MEETING AGENDA

Attendees were given a passport or meeting agenda to encourage active listening

- general project information
- contact information
- online portal/social media handles

02 PRESENTATION

Stakeholders received an overview of project goals and an update of work completed to date before break out sessions. Content shares information about the process, gathers information from the lived experience perspective and builds a coalition of change agents.



03 POSTER- SCENARIO ANALYSIS

Attendees were able to take a closer look at Citywide assessment data gathered by the team for reference. Each Scenario had a set of data points that ground participants while being prompted about which strategies would best support Allentown's future.



05 ICE BREAKER- ROLL INTO THE FUTURE

Participants were seated in groups of 5 to 8 where a meeting facilitator introduced the icebreaker activity. Each group has a set of three ice that would give them a prompt combination that asks



05 ACTIVITY- DECK CITY

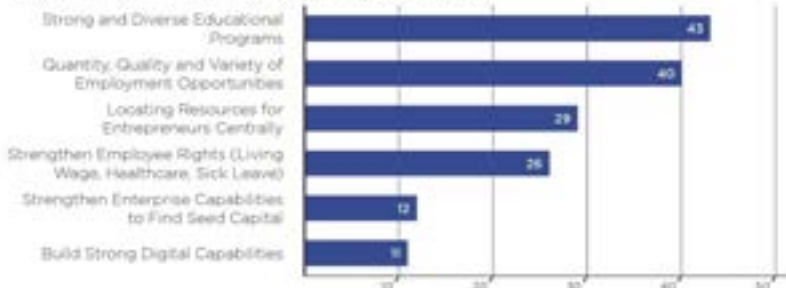
The responses from this activity were incorporated into the Deck City breakout activity. Participants are asked to sort strategies that support a particular scenario vision. Afterward, each group was asked to reflect on their scenario.



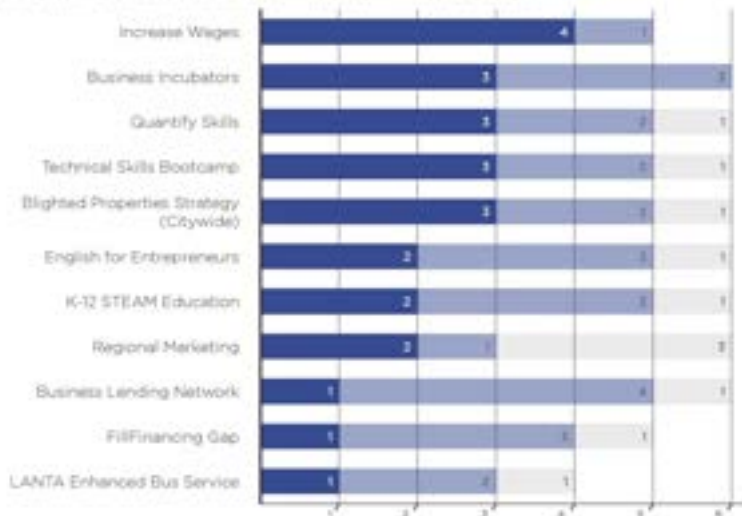
02 CITY OF OPPORTUNITY

Allentown is a place where anyone can grow a business or find training to enter the knowledge economy.

TO ACHIEVE THIS VISION, IT IS IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS... (PICK TOP 3)



WILL THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES ADDRESS OUR VISION FOR ALLENTOWN'S FUTURE?



Values guide our decisions as we navigate the future of Allentown.

We discerned **community values** that describe the outcomes that people want to see as the comprehensive plan is implemented.

A large mural on a city building wall. The mural features a woman's face in profile, a heart shape, and various patterns including a fleur-de-lis and a checkered design. The text "Our values prioritize the direction of change." is overlaid on the mural in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Our values prioritize the direction of change.

VALUE
MOBILITY

We can move safely within the city and to destinations beyond. We have choices as to how we travel.

VALUE
**WELL BEING
& SAFETY**

We are able to live healthy and active lives and to participate in civic life.

VALUE
**COMMUNITY
SERVICES**

We value strong neighborhoods with essential services that serve a diverse population.

VALUE
**LIVING
SYSTEMS**

We value ecological systems that are integrated into neighborhoods that improve human health & resiliency.

VALUE
PROSPERITY

Allentownians are able to thrive with equitable & abundant economic opportunity.

**We've discussed
visions for Allentown's
future.**

Economic development scenarios describe possible futures.

We imagined different **economic development scenarios** that describe how Allentown can strengthen its economic outlook, increase opportunity, and improve quality of life.

A large mural on a city wall featuring a woman in a patterned dress and a heart symbol.

Our shared vision builds mutual support for our values.

Allentown Vision 2030 PLAN



ALLENTOWN FOR ALL

“Allentown for All” means recognizing and respecting the sacrifices and hard work of past generations, while planning for the success of future generations. It means being a city that offers a variety of safe and secure housing options. It means considering the needs of all, so that people of all ages will be able to access the services, goods, and recreation to maintain a healthy, productive lifestyle.





01

ECONOMIC INCLUSIVITY

In Allentown, anyone, regardless of their gender, place of birth, family background, age, race, ethnicity, or other circumstances, has full and fair access to labor markets, financial tools, entrepreneurship, and, more generally, economic opportunity.





02

CITY AS A STEWARD

Allentown is a responsible steward of its citizens tax dollars, investing in projects that generate a return on investment through decreased social costs (e.g. health) and increased tax revenue from a more efficient use of land.





DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Allentown has long been a diverse city, but not everyone has always felt included. Allentown will be a city of welcoming neighborhoods. Allentown's diversity is a strength, and as we head towards 2030 all people should feel welcome, respected, and safe in our community.





COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT & COLLABORATION

Citizens have come together to contribute to Allentown Vision 2030, and their participation will ensure that the vision is brought to fruition. The city will facilitate this participation through new structures of engagement, guided, in part, by Allentown Vision 2030.



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

**We've drilled deep on
principles & tools that
support the change we
want.**

Allentown StoryMap

Tell us a story about a place in Allentown that is important to you.

MY PLACE

MY STORY

map

map

map

CONTRIBUTOR'S NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

CENTER ALLENTOWN

IMAGINE A FUTURE...

THE AREA IS AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND LARGE ENTERPRISES.

Center Allentown is a place of economic opportunity for all. ENTERPRIISING SMALL BUSINESSES in the historic area serve local residents and attract visitors to their unique offerings.

The DYNAMIC CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT serves as a major employment center, a hub for entertainment and culture, and the region's economic driver.

IT IS A SAFE AND VIBRANT AREA TO LIVE, CLOSE TO SERVICES.

The area welcomes new residents who connect to STRONG SCHOOLS AND RELIABLE SERVICES, empowering the next generation of Allentownians.

The historic housing is revitalized to provide HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING in walkable and safe neighborhoods.

THE WALKABLE STREETS GIVE PEOPLE MOBILITY CHOICES

Two of the city's major commercial corridors, Hamilton and 7th Streets, are regional destinations, attracting people for daytime and evening activities. New connections like the REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION hub links the two corridors and provides connections across the region and to major metro areas.

ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS invite people to explore the center of the city and surrounding historic neighborhoods and connect to new and existing green spaces.



CENTRAR ALLENTOWN

IMAGINATE UN FUTURO DONDE...

LA ZONA ES UN MOTOR DE OPORTUNIDAD ECONOMICA PARA EMPRESAS PEQUEÑAS Y GRANDES.

Center Allentown es un lugar de oportunidad económica para todos. EMPRESAS PEQUEÑAS en la área histórica dan servicios a residentes locales y atraen turistas con su carácter único.

El CENTRO DE NEGOCIOS y sus negocios lo convierten en un centro de trabajo y zona de diversión, cultura y un motor económico para la región.

ES UNA ZONA SEGURA Y VIBRANTE DONDE UN PUEDE VIVIR CERCA DE SERVICIOS.

La zona atrae nuevos residentes y tiene buenas CONEXIONES A LAS ESCUELAS, SERVICIOS Y APOYO al desarrollo de la nueva generación de Allentownians.

Las viviendas históricas son reconstruidas para proveer CASAS ECONOMICAS en una vecindad segura donde uno puede caminar y disfrutar los servicios y amenidades.

LA CALIDAD DE LAS CALLES OFRECE A LAS PERSONAS OPORTUNIDAD PARA UNIRSE A PE...

Las vías de Hamilton y 7th Street son coras de mayor comercio en la ciudad y atraen gente para actividades diurnas y nocturnas, son destinos regionales. El nuevo eje de TRANSPORTACION REGIONAL conecta a las dos vías y provee conexión a la región y a otras metrópolis importantes.

CAMINOS PEDESTRIANOS PARA RECONSTRUIR invitan a la gente a explorar el centro de la ciudad y conocer las vecindades históricas y conectar a la gente a los parques y zonas verdes.



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

**Policies, programs,
and projects can
create the change
that we want.**

Through our community meetings and the build sessions, we distilled **principles for action** and a **toolkit** for policies, programs, and projects.

A large mural on a city building wall. The mural features a woman's face in profile, looking upwards. Below her face is a large hand holding a heart. The background of the mural includes a city skyline and a patterned fabric. The text "Strategies for placemaking create the roadmap for implementation." is overlaid on the mural in large white letters.

**Strategies for
placemaking create
the roadmap for
implementation.**

Urban Systems- Principles

THE FIVE URBAN SYSTEMS ARE A COMPREHENSIVE WAY TO UNDERSTAND THE CITY OF ALLENTOWN, AND ENCOMPASS MANY DIFFERENT FORCES AND FACTORS THAT MAKE UP THE SYSTEMS OF THE CITY.

Under each system is a set of principles and several policies, projects, and programs that will enhance these systems. The Principles can be defined as the goals for each System. The actions that accompany each Principle detail how those goals will be accomplished, and have been sourced through the survey, interviews, and community meetings.

**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

HOUSING

**ACCESSIBILITY +
CONNECTIVITY**

SERVICES + AMENITIES

LIVING SYSTEMS



Economic Development

The City of Allentown will boast a strong, resilient and diversified economy, and support opportunities for residents and their families.

Increase Local Employment

Increase Access to Training and Skill Building

Foster Small Business Growth and Entrepreneurship

Enhance Land Value

Connect to Regional Markets



Housing

Allentown will be a place where people of all ages and incomes can obtain quality affordable housing in well-connected neighborhoods near greenspaces, good schools, and other essential services.

Improve the Quality of Allentown Housing

Increase the Quantity of Healthy, Safe, and Affordable Housing

Enhance Pathways to Homeownership

Preserve Allentown's Historic Legacy Housing



Accessibility & Connectivity

Allentown will be a place where people are connected to each other, to opportunities, and to supportive networks by an efficient network of diverse transportation options.

Create Safe and Efficient Routes

Connect Places in the City

Welcome People to the City

Create Mobility Choices

Prepare Allentown to be a Smart City



Services & Amenities

In Allentown, residents will have ease of access to the services and amenities needed to survive and thrive. In particular, the community will support the growth and development of young people, and will create an environment where the arts flourish, neighborhoods are empowered, and partnerships between public and private entities are leveraged.

Develop Neighborhood Identity and Organizational Capacity

Create Access to Local Essential Services and Amenities

Foster Inclusive and Welcoming Communities



Living Systems

Allentown will be a place where residents and visitors experience an environment where the health of the community and the environment is paramount. Allentown will plan for a sustainable, vibrant, and resilient future for the city and the region. In Allentown, residents will be connected to opportunities to reduce their energy usage, cultivate their own food, and enhancing the natural environment.

Plan for a Sustainable and Resilient Allentown

Improve Community Health Outcomes

Increase Environmental Stewardship

Create Productive and Connected Urban Landscapes



CATALYTIC ACTIONS

ACROSS ALL SYSTEMS:

ZONING CODE UPDATE

NEIGHBORHOOD

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUPPORT THE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM
ARTS AND CULTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

HOUSING

LAND BANK

ACCESSIBILITY + CONNECTIVITY

MOBILITY HUBS
INVESTMENT IN DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

SERVICES + AMENITIES

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PRE-K
COMMUNITY CENTERS: IMPROVEMENTS AND
INVESTMENT

LIVING SYSTEMS

NETWORK OF GREENWAYS AND URBAN TRAILS



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FOURTH
ECONOMY

**We have imagined the
neighborhoods & places
where we will thrive.**

Areas of Allentown

CITY WIDE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

HOW TO READ THIS MAP

Strategic Planning Areas: Identified in the Vision 2030 Urban Systems and Areas of Allentown sections as potential future areas of economic growth, redevelopment, and/or community planning efforts.

Transit-Oriented Development Opportunities: Areas located within a 5-minute walk of a LANTA transit stop that could potentially support higher residential and commercial densities with the implementation of the high-frequency LANTA Enhanced Bus Service.

Proposed Trails: Planned or proposed trails or trail connections from the Vision 2030 Urban Systems and Areas of Allentown sections.

Proposed LANTA Enhanced Bus Service Routes: High-frequency routes for LANTA Enhanced Bus Service upon full implementation of the LANTA Bus EBS system.

LANTA Enhanced Bus Service Transit Stops: Existing and proposed LANTA Transit Stops along the high-frequency LANTA Bus EBS routes.

LEGEND

PROJECT PROPOSALS

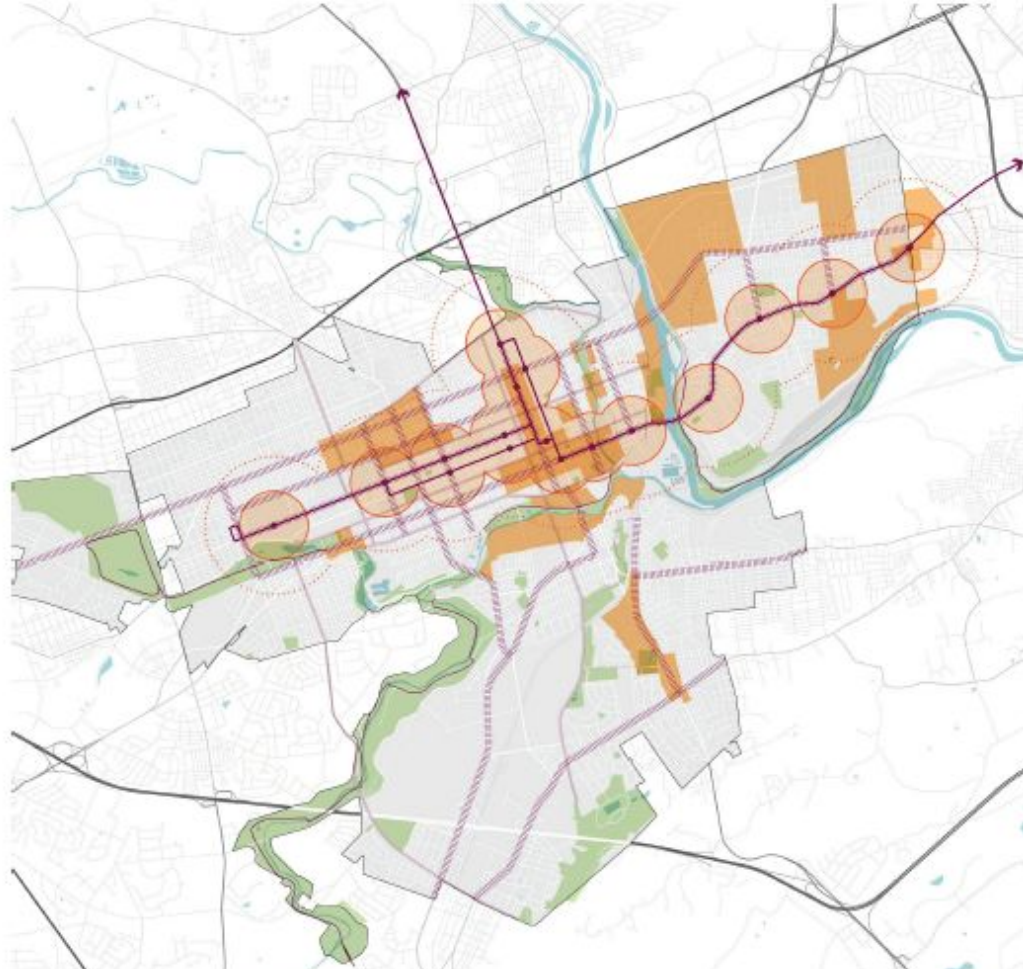
- 5-Minute Walk from EBS Stop
- 10-Minute Walk from EBS Stop
- Strategic Planning Areas
- EBS Stop-Proposed
- Major Intersection
- Minor Intersection
- EBS Route-Proposed
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Trail
- Streetscape Improvement

BASE LAYERS

- Rivers & Streams
- City Parks
- City Blocks
- Allentown Boundary



1 MILE



East Allentown

EAST ALLENTOWN IS WELL SERVED BY TRANSIT AND ITS TWO COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS ALONG HANOVER AND UNION CONNECT THE REGION CENTERS OF ALLENTOWN AND BETHLEHEM.

Future investments in transit as well as redevelopment of the former state hospital can spur growth along the corridors and create the conditions suitable for transit friendly development.

West Allentown

WEST ALLENTOWN'S NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE STABLE HOUSING AND GROWING CULTURAL AREAS SUCH AS THE THEATRE DISTRICT.

Future investment in a transit hub, trails, and other infrastructure can connect neighborhoods to jobs, parks, and attractions.

South Allentown

SOUTH ALLENTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS EACH HAVE A DISTINCT CHARACTER AND MUCH OF THE CITY'S INDUSTRIAL AREAS ARE IN THE SOUTH.

Future investments in trails and greenways, as well as redevelopment of underused retail properties on Fourth Street could create new mixed use housing and commercial development.

Center Allentown

CENTER ALLENTOWN IS THE HEART OF THE CITY, WITH THE REVIVED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT AND REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS.

By connecting to and investing in the housing, community facilities, and infrastructure in adjacent neighborhoods, the Seventh Street business corridor and neighborhood economic centers can grow and complement the downtown.

EAST ALLENTOWN

THE STATE HOSPITAL SITE

Large development areas like the Allentown State Hospital will bring additional activity and amenities, like schools, housing, commercial space, and leisure activities and will connect East Allentown to parks and greenways.



ON RAMPS TO HOMEOWNERSHIP

WHAT WE HEARD...

People in Allentown often live with extended family members and even friends in "nontraditional" households and want housing that suits their arrangements.

The community fabric will be strengthened with more flexible housing choices. The neighborhoods are safe and people are able to work closer to home.



TRANSIT & FLEX DISTRICTS

New infill development and improvements to intersections and sidewalks will make the commercial district safer and more pleasant to walk.



Example: 13th and W Chew Streets

Residential corridors may have small commercial spaces that is primarily accessed on foot and neighborhood serving. Improvements to the intersection should include pedestrians, bikes, and public transit. One way streets should be avoided to slow traffic.



Example: 13th and W Allen Streets

Commercial areas that are primarily accessed by automobile should encourage adequate sidewalk width, limit curb cuts, and screen parking lots. Areas should be on or near the property line to bring activity to the street and encourage slower driving speeds.



Example: 13th and Tighman Streets

Multimodal commercial corridors are dense enough to walk between destinations but not optimized for pedestrians. Area may need stop lights, crosswalks, and/or traffic calming. Minimize curb cut areas and limit vehicular entry onto corner properties.



Example: Chew and 17th Streets

The site at Chew and 17th Streets could become a mobility hub with prioritized signals for bus service and unused pull-off areas could be repurposed for public plazas. This is especially good near major employers like the hospital and may attract other infill development.



CENTER ALLENTOWN

PORTALS TO THE CITY

IN THE FUTURE...

Projects on the periphery of downtown, such as the growing Seventh Street Corridor, the Jordan Creek trail, and riverfront development, will attract investment. Portal projects will weave downtown with adjacent neighborhoods and strengthen the core.



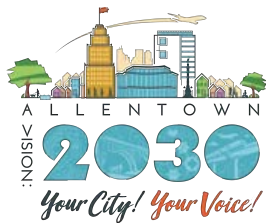
NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Seventh Street will continue to grow and serve the community. The corridor will develop a district identity that will be cultivated by local entrepreneurs. It will compliment Hamilton Street as a regional destination for food and culture.



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ECONOMY



QUESTIONS?

Please use the chat box!

Irene Woodward, Irene.Woodward@allentownpa.gov

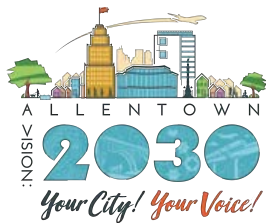
Hannah Clark, Hannah.Clark@allentownpa.gov

Christine Mondor, christine@evolveEA.com

Ashley Cox, ashley@evolveEA.com

Jerry Paytas, jerry.paytas@fourtheconomy.com

THANK YOU!



EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT

TO CREATE AN IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Irene Woodward, Irene.Woodward@allentownpa.gov

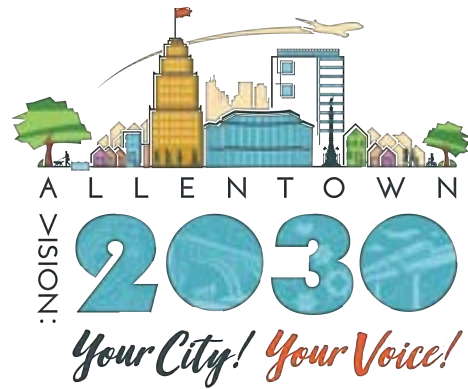
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Ashley Cox, ashley@evolveEA.com

Jerry Paytas, jerry.paytas@fourtheconomy.com

THANK YOU!



Thank You!



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ECONOMY

PRINCIPLES
**ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Increase the tax base

Increase local employment

Foster small business growth + entrepreneurship

Connect to adjacent markets

Increase access to educational opportunities

PRINCIPLES
HOUSING

Increase local ownership & encourage first time homebuyers

Improve + increase quality of housing stock

Bridge income housing expense gap

PRINCIPLES
**ACCESSIBILITY+
CONNECTIVITY**

Increase access to the city

Connect places in the city

Decrease auto dependency with affordable and diverse mobility choices

Create safe and efficient routes

Enhance digital access and inclusion

PRINCIPLES
**SERVICES+
AMENITIES**

Create access to clusters of local essential services + amenities

Encourage the development and support of neighborhood businesses

Develop neighborhood identity and organizational capacity

Respect and appreciate cultural diversity

PRINCIPLES
**LIVING
SYSTEMS**

Improve community health outcomes

Increase environmental stewardship

Create productive and connected urban landscapes

Foster a culture of sustainability and resilience