Pittsburgh's Neighborhood Plan Guide - A Collaborative Framework for Sustainable Communities

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Stephanie Joy Everett, Senior Planner, City of Pittsburgh
Joseph Wingenfeld, Program Manager, Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh
Who are we? (Professionally)

Megan Zeigler

- Vice President of Planning and Policy at the Green Building Alliance
- Has worked in academia, local government, and non profit sectors
- Passionate about community development and how creating sustainable healthy spaces impact health of its users

Stephanie Joy Everett

- Senior Planner at the City of Pittsburgh, Department of City Planning
- 10+ years public service experience in community development and long-range planning
- International experiences in Curitiba, Brazil and Bangkok, Thailand
- Passionate about creating places for people to thrive

Joseph Wingenfeld

- Program Manager for 4.5 years at Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh
- Worked professionally in urban planning & community development for nearly a decade.
- Passionate about creating quality urban environments that are vibrant, sustainable, diverse, accessible and amenity-rich through creative partnerships and impactful real estate investments.
Overview

• City Planning in Pittsburgh
• EcoInnovation District Plan
• Plan Implementation
• Lessons Learned
• Neighborhood Plan Guide
Pittsburgh's Department of City Planning

“The Department of City Planning performs the processes and functions that create an orderly, timely, environmentally sustainable, and consistent development of public and private property within the City.” (+More)
Planning Framework

• Comprehensive Plan – citywide, major topics
  • Cultural Heritage & Historic Preservation
  • Open Space, Parks, & Recreation
  • Forthcoming: Land Use, Economic Development, Mobility

• Sets direction of city’s development for 10-20 year period through goals, policies, actions.

• Organizes City departments, programs, initiatives.
Planning Framework

• Neighborhood / District Plans
  • Community
  • Development
  • Mobility
  • Infrastructure

• Translate citywide policy and goals to a specific geography with unique context, conditions, opportunities.

• Often the basis of new zoning, projects, programs, used in the review of development projects.
Groundwork for Neighborhood Plan Guide

- Best Practices
  - Denver
  - Louisville
  - Columbus

- Public Engagement Strategy

- Registered Community Organizations

- Recent Neighborhood / District Plans
  - Uptown / West Oakland EcoInnovation District Plan
  - Manchester-Chateau Neighborhood Plan
  - Two others ongoing (Homewood, Hazelwood)
Registered Community Organizations

- Formalize the role of community organizations in the long-range planning process
- Raise the floor by formalizing the role of community organizations in development processes - a standard for notice and meetings
  - Development Activities Meetings
    - Advanced, timely notice and engagement necessary
    - City participates and/or coordinates an objective, informative meeting
    - Staff Report provided to Board / Commission
- Create a clear, defined community process for developers
Recent Neighborhood / District Plans

- Uptown / West Oakland EcoInnovation District Plan (adopted September 2017)
- Manchester/Chateau (adopted September 2019)
- Homewood (ongoing)
- Hazelwood (ongoing)
- Next: Hill District and Oakland
Uptown History

Uptown Present Day
Uptown History

• In 2007, to stay ahead of approaching market forces while addressing quality of life issues, a growing group of active neighborhood stakeholders—residents, business owners and representatives of Duquesne University and Mercy Hospital—formed **Uptown Partners of Pittsburgh**.

• In 2009, a community-wide, consensus-building planning process resulted in the **Uptown Vision Plan**.
Bus Rapid Transit: First Pass

- In the 2012-2013 Allegheny County and Port Authority proposed BRT through Uptown.
- Very top-down, limited community engagement, and no real City Planning process and involvement.
- Uptown doesn't have a Transit Problem
- No real benefits for the neighborhood and residents pushed back.
BRT V 2.0 - Uptown EcoInnovation District

• 2014 City re-engaged Uptown.

• Idea to create a holistic Uptown Neighborhood Plan combining BRT + Eco + Innovation District.

• Stakeholders took a trip to Portland to learn the EcoDistricts Protocol

• Uptown EcoInnovation District became the start of Pittsburgh's Official Neighborhood Planning Efforts
Opportunities
Study Area
Consistent with Other Efforts

OnePGH
p4 Initiative
Complete Streets
Bus Rapid Transit
PWSA Green First
DCP Comprehensive Plan
Pittsburgh 2030 District
Pittsburgh Innovation Corridor
Project Partners

PGH2O
PortAuthority
STAR TOWN

COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

RICH FITZGERALD
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

OPDC
Oakland Planning and Development Corporation

URA Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

UPMC LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

SUSTAINABLE PITTSBURGH
The Plan

The vision in the plan calls for an Uptown that:

• Repairs the environment and provides its residents with healthy activities and connections to nature;

• Allows everyone to benefit in the greening and growth of the district; focus on EQUITY

• Serves as a model for sustainable development and renewable energy systems; and

• Moves boldly forward while celebrating its history and unique urban character.
Uptown IPOD

- Adopted in 2015 to slow demolition on Community
- Required Design Review for all projects.
- Prohibited new commercial surface parking and any accessory parking fronting onto Fifth & Forbes Avenues.
- Required landscaping for all projects including vacant lots created through demolition.
- Required evidence of building safety issues before demolition would be permitted.
Significant Public Involvement
## Significant Public Involvement

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Plan Format
Top Priorities

• Mixed Income Housing Development
• Safe Sidewalks & Intersections
• Tackle Community Blight & Safety
• Improve Transit
• Housing Rehabilitation & Assistance
• New & Expanded Parks
Keeping Uptown a Mixed-Income Community

City's Edge Development
Creating a Safe and Livable Street Network

Improved Fifth & Diamond intersection
Tackle Vacancy & Safety
Building BRT to Serve Uptown

Green infrastructure, bike lanes, façade to façade replacement, street trees, and new bus shelters.
Neighborhood Scale Interventions

- BRT AND STREET IMPROVEMENTS
- HEALTHY, AFFORDABLE HOMES
- REDESIGNED TUSTIN STREET
- UPGRADED PARK, COMMUNITY GARDEN
- 3-5 MIN BY BUS: OAKLAND, SHADYSIDE, EAST LIBERTY, PGH TECH. CENTER
- 3-5 MIN BY BUS: DOWNTOWN, NORTH SIDE
- 5 MIN WALK: UPMC MERCY, VISION REHAB. HOSPITAL, DUQUESNE UNIV.

Tustin Smart Block
A Neighborhood Energy System
Parking That Serves the District
New Green Connections

Proposed Boulevard of the Allies
New Green Connections

FIGURE 81: PROPOSED COLWELL GREEN CONNECTOR

Proposed Colwell Connections
Problems with Previous Zoning District

Parking & height requirements inhibit development
Problems with Previous Zoning District

9 Zoning Districts: Confusing and not matching mixed-use vision.
Use new zoning to promote sustainable & affordable development

• Uses a performance based system to:
  
  • Encourage denser development that better utilizes limited lands
  
  • Create innovative new buildings that are highly energy efficient, produce energy on-site or connect to district energy systems, and/or capture and treat rainwater on-site using green infrastructure.
  
  • Provide affordable housing in new buildings.
  
  • Limited demolitions to encourage adaptive reuse of existing buildings that maintains the district's character.
New Zoning
Uptown EcoInnovation District Implementation

October 22, 2019
AGENDA

1. Uptown Task Force
2. Subcommittees
3. Uptown Development Guide
4. Development Impact
Every building and every community is sustainable so every person can thrive.
Uptown Task Force
Uptown Task Force Framework

- Framework developed over first 2 years of implementation
- Composed of 1-2 representatives from organizations in Uptown and others responsible for implementation
- Convened by Duquesne University
- Active participation required
Uptown Task Force In Action

- Coordination
- Project Review
- Support Letters
- Subcommittee and member updates
Subcommittees
Subcommittees

- Four Uptown Task Force
  - Community
  - Development
  - Mobility
  - Infrastructure

- Monthly meetings

- Collaboration between Subcommittee Chairs
Community

- Focus: Better serving existing residents, employees, students, and visitors and housing affordability
- Chair: Uptown Partners
- Partners: City Planning, Bureau of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Office of Community Affairs
- Discussion topics: Housing, community programs, cultural heritage and preservation, public art, and public safety
Focus: Establish agenda for physical change through new buildings, commercial corridors, residential areas, etc.

Chair: Avenu

Partners: City Planning, Urban Redevelopment Authority, and Housing Authority

Discussion topics: land use policy and regulations, urban sustainable design, equitable economic development, commercial corridors, and transit oriented development
Mobility

- Focus: How people get around including strategies for improving safety, reducing the negative impacts of traffic, and shifting trips to more efficient and healthful modes
- Chairs: Port Authority and Department of Mobility and Infrastructure
- Partners: City Planning, DOMI, Port Authority, and Parking Authority
- Discussion topics: transit, pedestrian access and safety, circulation, accessibility, bike infrastructure, traffic safety, and parking
Infrastructure

- Focus: All non-transportation systems including stormwater management, open space, energy systems, and waste management
- Chair: Green Building Alliance
- Partners: City Planning, Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, Department of Public Works, Citiparks, and utilities
- Discussion topics: stormwater management, open space, energy system planning, waste management, tree canopy, and habitat restoration
Uptown Development Guide
Development Standards

Improving the Street Environment

- Require building articulation and stepping back building height above 50 ft (Mixed Use Core) or 40 ft (Residential Core)

- Require 10 ft wide sidewalks with at least 5 ft of clear unobstructed

- No parking or structured parking on the ground floor of buildings on Fifth and Forbes Avenues

- Require active ground floor uses such as retail, office, residential, lobbies and bike facilities
Development Standards

Improving Environmental Performance

- Reduce threshold required stormwater management plans
- Establish a new and straightforward stormwater standard for small projects
- Require all new buildings greater than 10,000 sf or building additions greater than 5,000 sf to go through advisory green building review at pre-app stage (free of cost)
- Maintain Uptown IPOD restrictions on demolition when no replacement building is proposed and there is no verifiable argument that collapse is imminent
- Require developments to join the Pittsburgh 2030 District
The 2030 Challenge

EXISTING BUILDINGS

NEW BUILDINGS & RENOVATIONS
540 BUILDINGS COMMITTED

84.8M COMMITTED SQ FT
75.8% DISTRICT COMMITTED
Development Standards

Parking Requirements

- Eliminate minimum parking requirements
- Establish a cap on the building of parking to avoid over production and concentration of parking in specific areas
- Require new structured parking to be convertible to other uses in the future
- Require new large structured parking facilities to include community infrastructure amenities (e.g., recycling, composting, EV charging, bike storage or bike share, etc.)
Performance
Points
Performance Points

→ Flexible system that developers can incorporate into projects in a predictable way

→ For each goal, there are three levels of points with more points awarded for things that have a bigger impact.

→ Each point can be used to gain 15 ft of building height up to height limits set specifically for the two subdistricts.
  + On-site energy consumption
  + On-site energy generation
  + Affordable housing
  + Rainwater Management
  + Building Reuse
Performance Points – Energy Consumption

→ 1 point
  + EUI at AIA 2030 Commitment average savings
    - currently 44%

→ 2 points
  + EUI 70% below national median

→ 3 points
  + EUI 80% or more below national median
44% Reduction
1 point

70% Reduction
2 points

80% Reduction
3 points

Net Zero
Performance Points – Energy Generation

→ Need at least 1 point in energy consumption

→ 1 point
  + 25% of energy use generated on-site

→ 2 points
  + 50% of energy use generated on-site
  + Connecting to district energy

→ 3 points
  + 75% or more of energy use generated on-site
Performance Points – Affordable Housing

- For projects where 50%+ is residential
  - 1 point
    + 5-15% of rental units for 80% AMI (1 point)
  - 2 points
    + 5-15% of for sale units for 80% AMI
    + 5-15% of rental units for 60% AMI
    + 15-20% of rental units for 80% AMI
  - 4 points
    + 15-20% of for sale units for 80% AMI
    + 15-20% of rental units for 60% AMI
    + 20%+ of rental units for 80% AMI
  - 6 points
    + 20%+ of for sale units for 80% AMI
    + 20%+ of rental units for 60% AMI
Performance Points – Rainwater Management

→ Must use 50% native plants, payment-in-lieu option when not feasible
→ 1 point
  + 50% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured using green infrastructure
  + 15% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured and reused
  + Payment-in-lieu of $6 per gallon
→ 2 points
  + 75% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured using green infrastructure
  + 30% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured and reused
  + Payment-in-lieu of $9 per gallon
→ 3 points
  + 100% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured using green infrastructure
  + 45% of 1.5 in of rainfall in 24 hr period, including peak of 1.05 inches in 15 minutes or a 95th percentile rain event onsite (whichever is greater) captured and reused
  + Payment-in-lieu of $12 per gallon
Performance Points – Building Reuse

→ 1 point
  + Exterior design compatible with nearby structures more than 50 years old – including similar window and door sizes and materials, cladding materials, bays, cornices, and primary elements

→ 2 points
  + 75%+ of street facing building facades from structures more than 50 years old are restored and integrated into new development

→ 3 points
  + Existing building shell is restored and retained
A: 180' includes:
- Affordable housing
- Energy efficient
- Green roof

B: 90' includes:
- Building rehabilitation
- Energy efficient

C: 60' includes:
- Basic requirements for the mixed-use core

FIFTH AVE LIVING
775 Residential dwelling units
79,000 sqft of retail commercial space
Partnership between Department of City Planning and Green Building Alliance to discuss sustainability early in project

Pre-application meeting review + subsequent meetings and guidance

Need for a framework to guide process
Uptown Development Guide

→ Collaboration between Uptown Task Force Subcommittees

→ Provides overview of the District, performance points framework, information on a broad range of sustainability and high-performance topics, and appropriate points of contact for more information
Uptown Development Guide

- Bonus Points
- Energy
- Water
- Health
- Landscape
- Waste Management
- Affordable Housing
- Building Reuse
- Universal Design
- Review Process
- Uptown Architecture/Design Statement
Uptown Development Guide

- Formalizing document and adding example strategies
- Replication in other neighborhoods to bring Neighborhood Plans into action
Development
Impact
UPMC Vision & Rehabilitation Tower

- Required a revision of UPMC’s Institutional Master Plan in Uptown
- Opportunity to work with UPMC on enhancing performance
Reduced predicted energy consumption by 33%

Committed to a transportation demand management program

Added public art

Redesigned open space as a community and stormwater management amenity
Institutional Master Plan Performance Target Meetings

- Building on success with UPMC to work with all institutional master plans
- Three meeting series with each institution prior to presentation to Planning Commission and City Council
- Goes beyond what is required by code, inviting institutions to push the boundaries on what is possible for the future of their campuses
- Currently working with 3 institutions
Institutional Master Plan
Performance Target
Meetings

- Department of City Planning
- Department of Mobility and Infrastructure
- Pittsburgh Water & Sewer Authority
- Port Authority of Allegheny County
- Green Building Alliance
Duquesne University IMP

- Setting performance targets for energy, water, stormwater management, tree cover, etc.
- Added consultants to IMP team
- Still in progress
Goals of Neighborhood Plan Guide

• Integration with other City Plans
• Address formally adopted citywide goals
    • Pittsburgh Climate Action Plan 3.0 (2018) goals
    • Other Agency goals
• Align plans and outcomes with
    • EcoDistricts
    • United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
• Improve communication about neighborhood planning processes that will be led by the City and/or RCOs
• Clarify roles and responsibilities for all involved
• Share information with the public about neighborhood planning processes and what to expect from them
Co-Creation Approach

Agency staff involved in NPG development, provide advice. Agency staff will lead, facilitate discussions during planning process.

**Steering Committee**
- Residents
- Agencies
- Businesses
- Services
- Institutions
- Topic-based non-profits

**Action Teams**
- Community
- Development
- Mobility
- Infrastructure
Summary of Neighborhood Plan Guide

Guide will be produced as both a document and an interactive web-based guide.
## Plan Topics Overview: Community

### 1. Community

This chapter focuses on the existing residents, employees, students, and visitors of the planning area with proposals for how they can be better served by the district. This chapter also addresses housing affordability.

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<td>Housing</td>
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<td>Cultural Heritage and Preservation</td>
<td>Nuisance and Enforcement Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Art</td>
<td>Schools</td>
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<td>Public Safety</td>
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<td>Public Facilities and Services</td>
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Relevant Agencies: Department of City Planning, Bureau of Neighborhood Empowerment, and Office of Community Affairs.
Plan Topics Overview: Development

2. Development

This chapter establishes the agenda for physical change to a district whether that be through new buildings, commercial corridors, residential areas, etc. Creating new affordable housing and commercial opportunities can be addressed in this chapter.

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<td>Equitable Economic Development</td>
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<td>Schools and Related Programs</td>
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<td>Academic, Medical and Religious Institutions</td>
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Plan Topics Overview: Mobility

3. Mobility
This chapter focuses on how people get around and will typically include strategies for improving safety, reducing the negative impacts associated with traffic, and shifting trips to and from the planning area to more efficient and healthful modes of travel.

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<td>Bicycle Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Traffic Safety</td>
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Relevant Agencies: Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, Port Authority of Allegheny County, and Pittsburgh Parking Authority.
Plan Topics Overview: Infrastructure

4. Infrastructure
This chapter includes all the non-transportation systems that nourish and maintain a district including how stormwater is handled, needs for open spaces, the energy systems that serve all buildings, and how waste is reduced and reused. There are many opportunities for these projects to meet multiple objectives (e.g., open spaces that also manage stormwater).

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Relevant Agencies: Green Building Alliance (non-profit planning partner to the City), Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority, Department of Public Works, Citiparks, and relevant utilities.
The Planning Process Overview

24 months of planning
10 years of implementation

Steps for each Process Phase address:
- Description
- Public Engagement Toolkit Recommendations
- Tasks and Deliverables
Organize (4 months)

Planning partners are brought on board, roles and responsibilities are established for Steering Committee members, and background research is conducted. Establish a basic timeline and set a communications strategy.

Establish roles and responsibilities

Tasks and Deliverables
- Internal Meetings: Introduction to Planning Process (nonprofit community organizations, foundations, local agencies and authorities, and utilities)
- Formation of Steering Committee and/or other working committees
- Approved Public Participation Plan
- If necessary: RFP & Consultant Selection

Deal with the details

Tasks and Deliverables
- Gantt Chart
- Project Directory
- Website
- Plan Identity and Naming
Visualize (6 months)

Issues for the plan to address are identified based on analyses, a shared vision is established and goals for each chapter are set to guide the work of Action Teams in crafting policies and actions. Action Teams are created to work on plan details and report proposals back to the Steering Committee.

Understand the area

Task and Deliverables

- Existing Conditions Report

Set the vision

Task and Deliverables

- Public Meeting: Project Kickoff, Visioning, and Goals
- Draft Plan Section: Vision Statement and Goals
- Introduce EcoDistrict Imperatives as Lens for Action Teams

Focus the plan content

Task and Deliverables

- Public Meeting: Topics
- Final List of Topics with Objective Categories
- Formation of Action Teams and Setting First Meeting Date/Time
- Facilitator Training for Action Team Leaders
Strategize (10 months)

Action Teams explore topics in detail and develop policies and actions that use implementation resources to address issues. Creative engagement allows the community to contribute and feel ownership over the problems and solutions.

Study, Learn, Explore

Task and Deliverables
- Workbooks for Each Action Team that Capture Data, Case Studies, and Best Practices Used in the Drafting of Strategies
- Action Teams Meetings
- Draft Implementation Matrix and Accompanying Implementation Details

Develop Ideas and Recommendations

Task and Deliverables
- Public Meeting(s): Input on Action Team Recommendations
- Refined Draft Implementation Matrix and Accompanying Implementation Details
Formalize (4 months)

The plan is drafted, final analyses confirm proposals, and the document is reviewed publicly before being adopted.

Draft Plans
Task and Deliverables
• Discussion Draft Plan for Review by Steering Committee
• Proposed Draft Plan for Review by Public
• Recommended Draft Plan for Review by Planning Commission
• Draft Roadmap that organizes implementation into an action strategy

Adoption
Task and Deliverables
• Public Notice and Mailing
• Staff Report
• Presentation and Briefing at Planning Commission
• Public Hearing at Planning Commission
• Adopted Plan
• Document Publication (City Planning website, public libraries, other printed copies)
Realize (10 years)

The plan is **implemented** through projects, programs, investments, and the application of policies and regulations. Track success and make course corrections.

Implement (ongoing)

Monitor (biennial)

**Task and Deliverables**

- Biennial Audit
- Biennial Report
- Public Meeting: Progress Report
- Plan Addendum (as needed)
- Public Hearing for Plan Addendum (as needed)
Lessons Learned for Communities

- Identify & involve key stakeholders early on in your planning process. This will lead to deeper involvement and ownership.

- Make sure to identify implementation structure and resources while creating Neighborhood plan.

- If a neighborhood plan means major changes to your community considering creating a strategic and business Plan towards the end of the neighborhood planning process.
Lessons Learned for Nonprofit Partners

• **Collaboration is key** in aligning City and Authority budgets with identified priorities.

• This is a **model approach for** neighborhood development.

• **Scaling up impact** for achieving 2030 goals.

• **Giving clear focus and direction** for developers.
Lessons Learned for Local Governments

• **Start with** Action Teams of **implementers** to dive into topics and make proposals using identified resources.

• **Empower agency staff and community partners to lead the planning process** with consultants as technical support.

• **Use plans to implement City goals**

• **Start research and engagement before the planning process begins** to improve the value of early meetings.

• Recognize disagreements and conflict as opportunities for meaningful dialogue. **Plan for iteration.**
Questions?