



Summary of Comments from Public Meeting #1 September 23, 2015

ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

1. Business Development/Recruitment

- Attract new businesses that meet various retail and service needs of the community
- Attract employers that pay living wages

2. Entrepreneurship

- Promote a culture of entrepreneurship
- Create home-based businesses
- Assist entrepreneurs develop businesses plans

3. Local Business Participation

- Gather and disseminate information about businesses operating in the area (e.g. to encourage the residents to support local products and stores)
- Encourage more engagement from the business community
- Promote communication and cooperation among businesses
- Promote local hiring practices

4. Supportive Services

- Need high-quality, affordable childcare services
- Community resource connection so that residents can locate services that are already being offered (e.g. access to healthcare, economic support services, etc. Explore opportunities with Lancaster Unity)
- Offer multilingual courses in ESL, financial management, etc (Explore opportunities with Brightside Baptist)
- Advocate for improvements in public transit (e.g. longer hours, more routes)
- More banking services
- Improved access to food banks

5. Workforce Development

- Develop jobs skills (e.g. computer training, etc.)
- Training in non-violent communication and other “softer skills”
- Connecting people to employers

6. Misc

- Better presence of colleges in the area (e.g. Millersville, F&M, etc.)
- Dispel misrepresentation of the area
- Maintaining affordable rent

HOUSING

1. Assets

- Diverse community
- Architectural integrity
- Good location (walkable to downtown)
- People look out for each other
- Public elementary schools work with the community
- Affordable to own
- Sense of community pride
- Having churches in the neighborhood
- Near Brandon Park and other open spaces

2. Code Enforcement

- City not enforcing regulations
- Landlords don't pay fines - difficult to enforce
- Building permits - difficult to obtain, so many don't bother to get one
- There's overcrowding in some apartments
- Some rentals operate without licenses
- Some rentals operate as boarding houses

3. Landlord Issues

- Landlords that do not take care of their properties, or make necessary investments
- Absentee landlords don't respond to concerns, many don't live in the city
- Some property management companies don't care about the community and hard to contact
- Hard to get problem tenants evicted
- Some landlords don't properly screen their tenants

4. Maintenance & Upkeep

- Properties adjacent to problem properties are negatively affected
- Stormwater runoff from poorly maintained properties
- Large trees need to be cut down
- Historic designation makes it difficult/costly for property owners
- "Condemned" houses are blighting influence
- There are holes in the sidewalks
- Prevalence of trash
- Garages to the side of properties are not maintained well

5. Market Conditions

- Rents are not affordable
- As rents decrease, incentivize deconversion to homeownership
- Excessive paperwork to purchase foreclosure properties

6. Resident Relations

- Some renters are disrespectful of neighbors
- Renters are not active in the community
- Explore possibility of expanding patrol areas for neighborhood ambassadors

7. Misc

- Lack of sufficient off-street parking
- There's drug activity - even on majority good blocks

QUALITY OF LIFE

1. Crime

- Concern about safety in general
- Need better street lighting
- Need visible police presence (currently police respond slowly or not at all)
- Curb vandalism and other criminal activity, such as gambling
- Need to organize a community watch program

2. Nuisance Activities

- Excessive noise (motorcycles, cars, young kids yelling/fighting at night, religious functions)

3. Public Safety Concerns

- Sometimes there's traffic but other times cars drive way too fast through the neighborhood.
- Install signs or some device to protect children on the streets

4. Public Spaces

- There's not enough greenery in the neighborhood
- Prevalence of trash
- People don't always pick up after dogs
- Garbage trucks forget trash or make a mess on the street during pickup

5. Resident Engagement

- Use neighborhood block parties and supper clubs to get residents to interact
- Distribute resources available from schools

6. Youth Activities

- Lack of positive activities for kids (especially structured activities)
- Need improvements to the recreation space and park equipment
- Children need additional green space
- Offer mentorship opportunities to kids

7. Misc

- Need more parking
- Better access to healthy food
- Transportation to schools
- There's a vibrant art scene
- Senior citizen center