

We Are Mantua!
CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE

Mantua Transformation Plan

Outline Document

Submitted To:
HUD - Dept. of Housing and
Urban Development

Grantee:
Mt. Vernon Manor, Inc.

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“We are Mantua!” Choice Neighborhoods Initiative

Mantua Transformation Plan

Outline Document

Submitted: June 29, 2012

Prepared By: Kitchen & Associates

On behalf of: Mt. Vernon Manor Inc.

Acknowledgements

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We are Mantua! Steering Committee

Paulette Adams, People's Emergency Center
George Bantel, West Philadelphia Real Estate
Todd Baylson, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Jim Brown, Mantua Advisory Council
Jim Brown, Presbyterian Apartments
Tracy Broyles, Spiral Q
Enrico Crispo, Philadelphia Housing Authority
DeWayne Drummond, Ward Chairman, Resident
Jamie Gauthier, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Branon Gilmore, Caring People Alliance
Donna Griffin, Community Engagement Consultant
Iola Harper, Sustainable Communities Initiative (SCI)-West
Andy Jenkins, Resident
Greg Karns, HUD (Regional Office)
Lucy Kerman, Drexel University
Henry Nesmith, Resident
Andrew Maloney, Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Richard Purdie, Mantua Haverford Community Center
Andi Schaeffer, Diamond and Associates
Michael Thorpe, Mt. Vernon Manor, Inc
Joe Walker, HUB Coalition
Rick Young, MCIC
Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell

TASK FORCES

Education

Shannon Morris-Bates/Co-Chair, Resident
Dr. Junon Berry/President-University High School Alumni
Michele Brownlee/State Representative
Lucy Kerman/Drexel University
Eleanor Childs/Montessori School, Resident
Vanessa M. Pembleton/Resident
Gwen Morris/Retired School District Administrator, Resident
DeWayne Drummond/Co-Chair, Ward Chairman, Resident
Stephen Jones/Villanova University, Resident
Veronica Scott/Executive Board-University High School Alumni, Resident

McMichael Matters! Education Task Force Sub-Committee

Gwen Bailey/Youth Services, Inc.
Pastor Claude Barnes/Church of Faith
DeWayne Drummond/Ward Chairman, Resident
Olga Gibb/Caring People Alliance
K. Rose Samuel Evans/Metropolitan Baptist Church
Donna Griffin/Community Engagement Specialist
Lucy Kerman/Drexel University
Wanda Mial/Fairmont Ventures
Shannon Morris-Bates/Resident

Vanessa Pembleton/Resident
Michael Thorpe/Mt. Vernon Manor
Bernadette Wyche/Ward Leader, Resident
Rick Young/Mantua Community Improvement Corporation

Physical Development

George Bantel/West Philadelphia Real Estate
Jamie Gautier/Co-Chair LISC
Jesse Lawrence/Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
Jana Mossey/Drexel University
Rebecca Rose/Resident
Dan Roukous/Resident
John Theobald/Kitchen and Associates
Gerald Washington/Co-Chair, Resident
Sylvester Wright/Resident

Health and Wellness

Claire Baker/Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
Zamir Cobb/Stakeholder, Caring People Alliance
Harold Davis, Resident
David Ebaugh/Drexel University
Margaret James/Resident
Annie Kegarise/Co-Chair, Resident
Ryan Kuck/West Philadelphia Fresh Food Hub

Workforce, Economic Development & Supportive Services

Claudia Bitran/Kitchen and Associates
Enrico Crispo/Philadelphia Housing Authority
Harold Davis/Stakeholder
Mary Jean DeCarlo/Drexel University
Iola Harper/Co-Chair, SCI-West
Maurice Harris/Resident
Chris Holmes/Resident
Henry Nesmith/Co-Chair, Resident

Safety

Katrina Brown/Resident
Jackie Galloway/Resident
Lois Grady/Resident
Donna Griffin/Co-Chair, LISC Community Engagement Consultant
Andrew Jenkins/Co-Chair, Resident
William “Clutch” Robinson/Resident
Virginia Teague/Resident
James ‘Smokey’ Willoughby/Resident

Youth & Recreation / Youth Development

Sunnie Dumas/Resident
DB4 members (asked to weigh in on needs and goals)
Clarence Jones/Resident

Bryan Sheed/Resident
Joe Walker/Co-Chair/HUB Coalition

Civic Association

Obadiah Anderson/Resident
Evette Banfield/Facilitator (LISC Consultant)
Clarence Jones/Resident
Brenda Mears/Resident
Albert Moore/Resident
Martha Moore/Resident
Gwen Morris/Resident
Rev. Lola Munroe/FBO Stakeholder
Henry Nesmith/Resident
Brandon Pembleton/Resident, Youth
Francis Smith/Resident
Joseph Walker/Resident
Gerald Washington/Resident

DB4 Youth Advisory Committee

Marcus Albrittrb/Resident
Rachel Briggs
Tykeem Bond/Resident
Quintessa Boone/Resident
Andrew Clemons

Vinte Clemons/DB4 Leader, Resident
Harper Jackson
Jalen Jacobs
Marcus Jenkins
Brandon Lambert
Donte Lambert
Stephen Lassiter
Quadria Martin/Resident
Brandon Pembleton/Resident

Planning Team

Claudia Bitran/Kitchen and Associates
Donna Griffin/Community Engagement Specialist (consultant)
Lucy Kerman/Drexel University
Andi Schaeffer/Diamond & Associates
Michael Thorpe/Mt. Vernon Manor, Inc.

Mt. Vernon Manor Board of Directors - Grantee

Bianca Hart – Secretary
Karim Purdie – Assistant Treasurer
Charlene Rawlinson – Vice-President
Michael Thorpe – Chairman
Joe Walker – Treasurer
Larry Wilson – President

Key Partners

Drexel University
LISC Philadelphia
Philadelphia Housing Authority

Consultant Team

Diamond & Associates (Planning Coordinator)
Kitchen & Associates (Planning Coordinator / Project Planner)
Evette Banfield (Civic Association Task Force Facilitator)
Donna Griffin (Community Engagement Specialist)
Real Estate Strategies (Real Estate Market Analysis)
Penn Project for Civic Engagement

Mantua Residents

Paulette Adams
 Karen Ali
 Latoya Anderson
 Madeline Arrington
 Jerome Auty
 Denise Bacon
 Lovey Bland
 Quintessa Boone
 Arnetta Bowden
 Deobrah Brown
 Helen Brown
 State Rep. Michelle Brownlee
 Creswell Burch
 Ron Burnett
 Cassandra Carney
 Elsie Carter
 John Carter
 Michael Carter
 Patience Carter
 Dawanda Chavis
 Eleanor Childs
 Annette C. Collier
 Ronald Crisden

Cathy Garrett-Davis
 Timothy Davis
 Dan Dougherty
 Christine Douglass
 Nathaniel Douglas
 DeWayne Drummond
 Scott Drummond
 Starr Dumas
 Sunnie Dumas
 Traci Dumas
 David Duggins
 Johnnie Durham
 William Edwards
 Maurice Ellis
 Erik (Artist)
 K. Rose Evans
 Kate Fortune
 Joachin Fundenberg
 Jacqueline Galloway
 Kathy Galloway
 Olga Gibbs
 Erma Gillard
 Lucinda Glen
 Allen Grant

Tracey Gordon
 Barbara Hall
 Misty Halloway
 Juanita Hampton
 Keith Hanton
 Roderick Hanton
 Anthony Hargen
 Maurice Harris
 Gwen Hart
 Tamara Hawkins
 Wayne Hawkins
 Jerwayne Haywood
 Muhammad A. Hlahir
 Donald Jackson
 Margaret James
 Andrew Jenkins
 Sandie Jervay
 Lorenzo Johnson
 Clarence Jones
 Peggy Jones
 Michael Karp
 Andrew Keaton
 Anne Kegarise
 Tanya Kennor

Don L
 Linda Lanier
 Ray Lanic
 Brenda Lewis
 Doris Lewis
 Angi Maurey
 Annie McKeehan
 Odessa Mitchell
 Albert Moore
 Martha Moore
 Martha Moore
 S. Monroe
 Gwen Morris
 Wilton Morris
 Alexis Moses
 Leroy Myers
 Franklin Nelly
 Henry L. Nesmith
 Daniel Ordonan
 Jerry Owens
 Carolyn Paskay
 Darnell Pembleton
 Vanessa Pembleton
 Elisha Pender

David Purdie
Sia Rah
Clarence Redding
Allen Redic
Willette Reid
Myrtle E Rigg
Renita Robinson
Stephen Robinson
William Robinson
Rebecca Rose
Dan Roukous
Patricia Rugar
Michelle Sampson
Joseph Samuel
Samantha Samuel
Nadine Sanders – Clergy
Reggie Sapp
Veronica Scott
Katie Sewell
Beulah Sheppard
Bryan Sheed
Leon Sheridan
Pearl Shinhelster
Lorraine Simms

Albert L. Smith
Christopher Smith
Frances Smith
Gerald Smith
James M. Smith
James Smith
James Smith
Mae Smith
Pastor E. Andre Stanton
Danell Steed
Naomi Steel
Deborah Stephens
Nathan Stewart
Dorio Taylor
Ellen Tiberino
Diane Thomas
Eli Muttaqi Thomas
Lamont Twyne
Raymond Veney
Donna Waller
Gerald Washington
Geraldine Mitchell
Gerald Washington
Patricia Watkins

Christine Williams
Mary Williamson
James Willoughby
Cheryl Wright
Sylvester E. Wright
Bernadette Wyche
Nick Young
Rick Young

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In recent years, a trend of disinvestment has been reversed for many of the neighborhoods adjacent to Philadelphia's Center City. Population increase and new investment have transformed these formerly depressed communities into small oases of residential life. Mantua, with a significant amount of vacant land, easy access to public transit, and close proximity to some of the City's most important destinations, is prime for renewed growth.

Current demographic and market trends, along with citywide planning initiatives make planning for Mantua's future a critical task for today. The Mantua community, with a strong history of civic engagement -- personified by the Mantua City Planners motto "Plan Or Be Planned For" --, has embraced the opportunity to envision a new future. Community leaders and residents, in partnership with local stakeholders and city agencies, have informed a comprehensive planning process that looks to guide the neighborhood's future development and ensure a better quality of life for current and future residents alike.

As the centerpiece of this planning effort, Mt Vernon Manor Apartments sets the stage for the neighborhood's transformation by preserving affordability while significantly improving living conditions for its residents.



Part I:
Introduction



Introduction

This report is the first product of a community-driven planning effort carried out by the Mt Vernon Manor Board of Directors and its partners under HUD's Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI). It provides HUD, elected officials, City agencies, stakeholders and the overall Mantua community with an Outline of the main findings, goals and strategies targeting the revitalization of Mt Vernon Manor Apartments and the surrounding neighborhood. This is the first milestone of a process initiated in the Summer of 2011 which will culminate with the complete Mantua Transformation Plan, due December of 2012.

Mantua, with Mt Vernon Manor Apartments as the centerpiece of this initiative, was one of the first communities nationwide selected to receive a CNI Planning Grant for the development of a neighborhood transformation plan. The newly created federal program presented the community with a unique opportunity to engage in a comprehensive planning process structured around three key goals:

- HOUSING: Improve the living environment at Mt Vernon Manor Apartments.
- PEOPLE: Expand opportunities for an improved quality of life for individuals in the community and their families.

- NEIGHBORHOOD: Make it a viable and well-functioning community, with good housing opportunities, access to services, high-quality learning institutions and access to jobs.

Mantua has a wonderful tradition of community planning. In the early 1970s, under the auspices of another HUD initiative – the Neighborhood Development Program - engaged Mantua leaders and local organizations formed the Mantua Joint Workshop. In partnership with the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority and the Philadelphia Housing and Community Development Agency, the Workshop worked to tackle local problems with a multi-faceted approach, addressing housing, economic development, physical development, health, education and social issues. The resulting “Plan for Mantua” guided public investments in the neighborhood for several years and shaped what would later become some of Mantua’s major assets: community centers, playgrounds and recreation spaces. The very development plan for Mt Vernon Manor Apartments was conceived at that time and realized with funding associated with that effort.

Over 40 years later, Mantua’s youth, families and senior citizens have embraced the opportunity to, once again, have a proactive role in shaping the community’s future while addressing present



- Mt Vernon Manor
- Park/Open Space
- Community Center

Neighborhood Map

day challenges. Residents have volunteered their time to inform the planning team about issues and concerns currently affecting the community; they have worked collaboratively with local stakeholders, City agencies and partners such as Drexel University, LISC, PHA and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society to identify most critical needs and the short and long-term solutions required to address those needs; finally, they have engaged in concrete efforts to see that implementation of the Plan would start now, during the planning process with positive outcomes along the way.

Early Steps, Early Victories

A lot has been accomplished over the past year. The CNI planning effort – baptized “We Are Mantua!” or “WAM!” – unlocked a variety of opportunities for the community. Most of all, it established the framework for this Plan’s successful implementation:

- WAM! provides an open and ongoing platform for communication between the community and organizations investing in Mantua.
- WAM! re-energized the community by engaging and connecting residents and establishing an environment for new leadership opportunities.
- WAM! refocused attention on Mantua by City agencies,

funding agencies and organizations

During this first year of planning activities, WAM! and the community worked on a series of early action steps that pave the way for future, long lasting neighborhood interventions. The list below summarizes some of the key efforts:

Community engagement and leadership initiatives

- Youth Advisory Group (DB4): established in February 2012 and supported with a grant from Drexel University, this team of young Mantua leaders works in partnership with WAM! and other Mantua groups to address topics of interest to local youth, including health, education and job opportunities.
- Mantua Civic Association Task Force: identified as an early action step during the planning process, it was established in April 2012 and meets regularly towards the creation of the Mantua Civic Association.
- Home and School Association: established in June 2012 to work for improved success at Morton McMichael School.

We Are Mantua!

WHERE 33rd and Wallace Playground

SPRING PARK SPRUCE-UP
Supporting Partners

PAINTING
FLOWER PLANTING
WEEDING

TIME 9:00AM – 12:30PM

DATE FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2012
RAIN DATE: FRIDAY APRIL 27, 2012

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

LITE BREAKFAST AND BOXED LUNCHES WILL BE PROVIDED

CALL 610.608.0475 TO REGISTER TO VOLUNTEER

Community Events

- HIV / AIDS Testing events hosted by DB4. A total of 50 residents of all ages were tested in two events. (April 2012)
- Community meetings hosted by “We Are Mantua!” to review proposed multi-family development on Spring Garden St. 60 residents attended the meeting and provided developers with input and feedback. (April 2012)
- Community Day of Service hosted by WAM! and LISC at 33rd and Wallace Playground (April 2012)
- Event hosted by WAM! And Education Task Force to address current concerns associated with Morton McMichael Elementary School. Over 50 Mantua residents were in attendance and supported the establishment of Community, Home and School Association. (June 2012)

Programs and Activities

- Mantua in Action: Partnership between Drexel University, Custom ED and DB4 for Summer Youth Sports opportunities to local children from 4th to 8th grades. Program includes a variety of sports such as squash, tennis, fencing, lacrosse, wrestling and long distance running.

Funding Applications

- DOJ/Bryne Criminal Justice Innovative Grant – funding application with a focus on crime hot spots in Mantua, youth prevention and intervention services. Submitted in June 2012.
- NIH Grant Proposal: Greener City – Healthier Bodies: Neighbors Partner to reshape the Built Environment with the goal of improving health and reducing obesity in Mantua. Submitted in June 2012

Mantua In Action

SUMMER 2012 Sports & Playwriting Programs

Middle School Students in Mantua (Grades 4-8)

You now have an incredible variety of sports and enrichment programs to choose from this summer. Mantua In Action is a new collaboration between Drexel University, Philadelphia Youth Sports Collaborative (PYSC), Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, DB4, We Are Mantua, Mantua Community Improvement Committee (MCIC), and CustomED.

Program Choice

Students will get to choose from the following sports:

- Tennis (3 days per week)
- Fencing and Lacrosse (3 days per week)
- Squash (2 days per week)
- Wrestling (2-3 days per week)
- Long Distance Running (2 days per week)

We also have an intense playwriting program for a select number of students (2-3 days per week).

Meals & Hours

Breakfast and lunch will be provided for students on the days they participate in the program. Transportation will not be provided to school, however, we will organize walking groups from the James Wright Recreation Center to school as needed. Most of the programs will run 3-5 hours on each day they are scheduled.

Registration

Registration will open on June 8th online at www.MantuaInAction.org. Paper registration forms will be available from 2PM until 4PM at the James Wright and Allen Block Recreation Centers. Please see www.MantuaInAction.org or call 857-294-8367 for more information.

June 25 - August 10, 2012

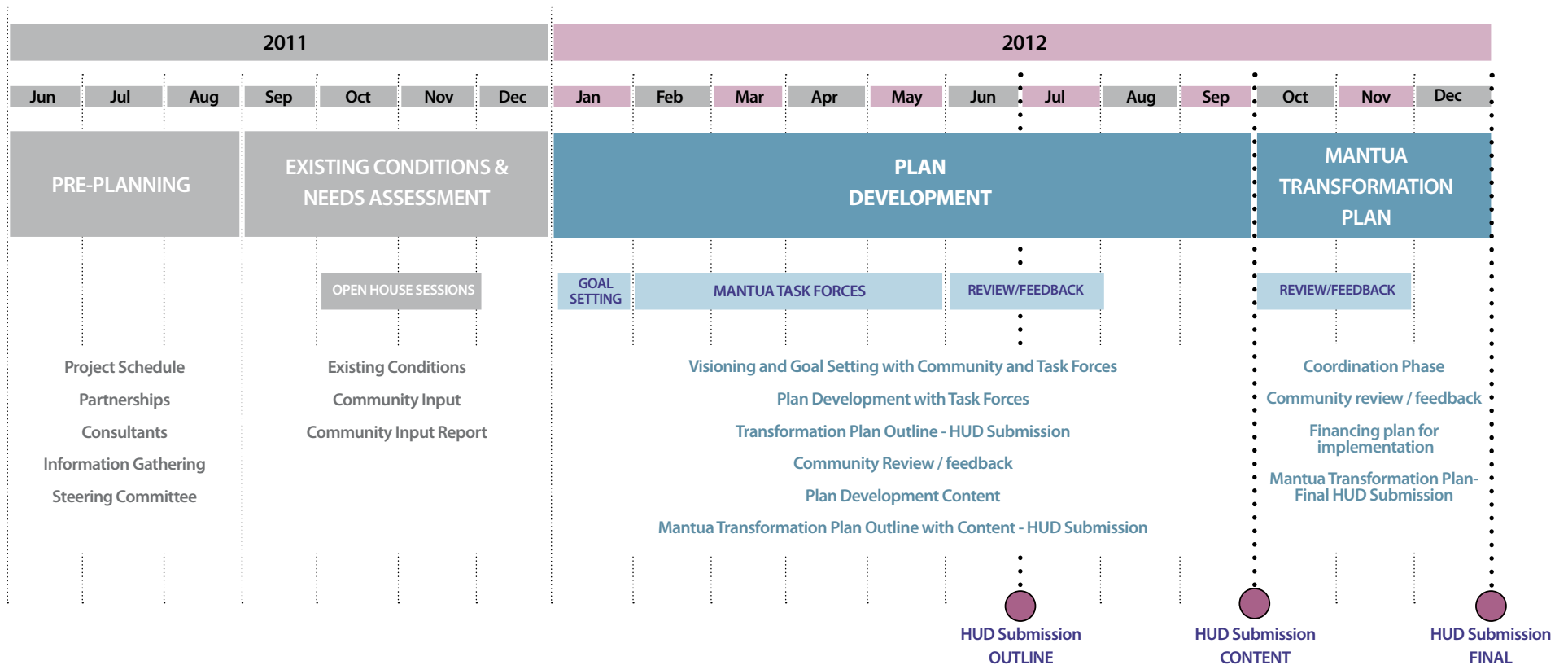
Mantua In Action will start as a 7-week summer program beginning on June 25th. The first week of activities will take place at Drexel University. During the first week, students will get to try each of the six sports programs, and participate in health and nutrition workshops. At the end of Week 1, each student will be enrolled into a specific program for the remaining six weeks.

Weeks 2-7 (July 2-August 10) will take place at James L. Wright Recreation Center, Allen Block Recreation Center, Drexel University, and several tennis courts in the area. Each program will meet on different days and times. There will be a Family Celebration evening during the final week.

Logos: LISC, PYSB, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, DB4, CustomED.

Planning Process

The planning process for the Mantua Transformation Plan began in June 2011 with completion anticipated for December 2012.



Community Engagement

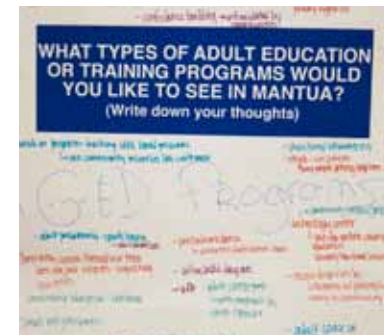
A successful neighborhood plan requires open and ongoing dialog with residents and community stakeholders from within and outside the community. This planning process established the following venues for community input and dialog:

- Mantua Steering Committee: brings together Mantua leadership, local residents, and representatives from City agencies and organizations actively involved with projects and programs in the neighborhood. This group contributes a variety of perspectives and areas of expertise and helps advance communication and coordination efforts towards implementation of short-term and long-term initiatives. The Steering Committee held 3 meetings to date.
- Open House Sessions: A series of 3 sessions were held in the Fall of 2011 to gain residents' input about key neighborhood issues. Over 100 residents attended these sessions and shared their experiences, concerns and ideas for Mantua. This process also offered residents with opportunities for further involvement in the planning process by signing up for task forces based on 8 neighborhood themes: supportive services, capacity building, physical development, education, youth & recreation, health & wellness, workforce development and safety. Details about the Open House Sessions can be found on Attachment A – Community Input Report.
- Resident Surveys: Completed by those residents who attended the Open House sessions, the surveys provided additional information about residents' satisfaction with existing services and amenities. A total of 47 questionnaires were completed. Results from resident surveys can be found on Attachment A – Community Input Report.
- Task Forces: comprised of members of the Mantua Steering Committee and community residents, task



forces focused on topics associated with each one of the eight neighborhood themes previously identified in this planning process. Each team met on a regular basis for a period of four months and developed a set of priority goals and initial strategies for their specific theme. Two progress meetings were held with all task force chairs and co-chairs to inform progress and allow for coordination. Task forces were also tasked with identifying recommendations for short-term implementation, many of which have already been completed or are underway (early action steps). The work completed by task forces frame this Transformation Plan. A summary of the work completed by each Task Force can be found on Attachment B – Mantua Task Forces

- Ongoing Outreach Efforts: a variety of communication methods were utilized throughout the process to ensure information and resident participation:
 - » We Are Mantua! blog (www.wearemantua.com)
 - » Flyers
 - » Direct phone calls
 - » Email communication



Part I:
A Vision for
Mt Vernon Manor
Apartments



Housing Vision

History of Mt Vernon Manor

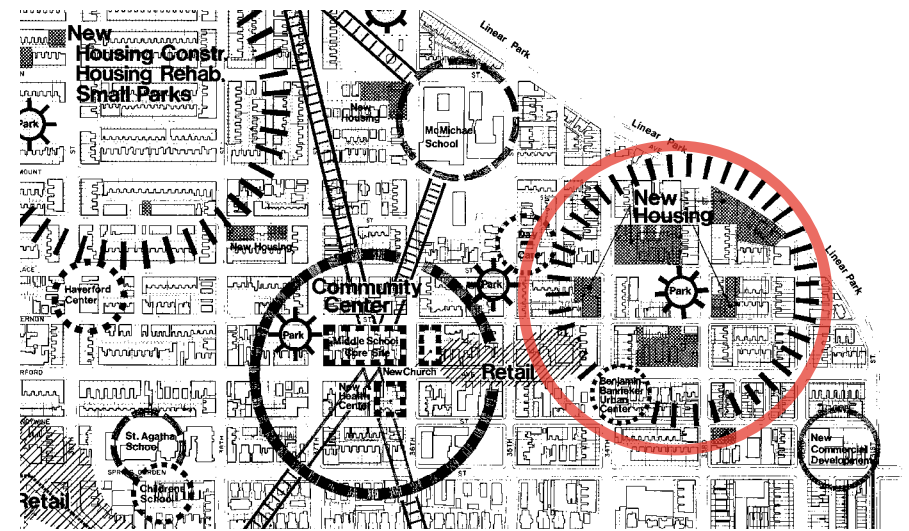
Mt Vernon Manor was built in 1978 as an affordable housing development funded through HUD’s FHA 236 Program. With nine structures and a total of 125 units, this project was the result of a collaborative effort between a group of concerned Mantua community leaders and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority.

The opportunity for an affordable housing development in Mantua was first identified in the early 1970s, under the Urban Renewal Plan for Mantua. A 1970 report prepared by the Mantua Joint Workshop (1) describes the proposed development as “122 units of new rental apartments to be built over five parcels of land located in eastern Mantua”. Due to a federal moratorium on the production of new public housing, the project was delayed until early 1977. The complex was completed and occupied in 1978.

Thirty five years later, Mt Vernon Manor still provides much needed affordable housing to Philadelphia’s citizens and families. Despite its poor physical conditions, the development still remains attractive due to its’ prime location within the Philadelphia region and close proximity to regional job centers, health and higher education



Mt Vernon Manor sites



1970 Mantua Plan identifies the site for Mt. Vernon Manor apartments

institutions, transit and services. Revitalized, Mt Vernon Manor will continue to provide a highly desirable housing alternative to low-income individuals and families.

Mt. Vernon Manor Today

As of June 2012, Mt Vernon Manor was only partially occupied (55 occupied units). Severe site and building deficiencies have impacted livability at residential units: issues associated with water infiltration, mold and mildew have made most ground floor units uninhabitable; roof leaks, damaged gutters and downspouts have caused critical damage to upper floor units. Most apartments are also impacted by a combination of aging and inefficient mechanical systems with poor thermal insulation, resulting in poor heating/cooling performance and high utility bills. Vandalism, illegal activities and an overall perceived lack of safety have only added to the many factors contributing to push residents away from Mt Vernon Manor and detract from this otherwise desirable rental community.

Current Unit Mix at Mt Vernon Manor Apartments		
Unit Type	Unit SF	Number of Units
One Bedroom	603 sf	14
Two Bedroom	717 sf	96
Three Bedroom	1,002 sf	14
Total		125





Left: Damaged roof and gutters contributes to water problems both inside and out. Signs of mold and mildew are evident along the exterior of the buildings.

Opposite Page: Windows at ground level create damp conditions inside units creating conditions which promote the growth of mold and mildew. The at-grade windows also cause concerns for privacy and security



Far left: Damaged gutters dump water at the foundation of the buildings, undermining the structural stability



Left: Units are accessed by stairs, posing problems for aging and disabled residents

Housing Vision and Goals

1. **Preserve affordability**
2. **Improve living conditions for residents and neighbors**
 - » Create livable units
 - » Make it energy efficient and sustainable
 - » Ensure accessibility
 - » Integrate into the neighborhood fabric
3. **Provide replacement units through coordinated neighborhood revitalization strategies:**
 - » Keep all units in Mantua
 - » Create new housing while revitalizing distressed areas of Mantua.
 - » Provide subsidized housing in the context of mixed income housing opportunities.



Illustrative rendering

Housing Strategy

The current strategy for the revitalization of Mt Vernon Manor Apartments is based on a two-phase development effort focused on the rehabilitation of all 21 buildings within the complex. Under the circumstances of the current economic environment, where funding options for affordable housing are limited and extremely competitive, rehabilitation was identified as the most appropriate way to address immediate physical distress of the housing units in a cost-effective way and with minimal impact to current tenants and neighbors of surrounding blocks.

The proposed rehabilitation effort builds on the opportunity to reuse existing foundation systems, exterior walls, flooring systems and roof structures as solid “bones” for the new residential buildings. The scope of rehabilitation includes an extensive list of improvements targeting the site, individual units, common areas, building facades, as described below:

- Improved living conditions at individual units:
 - » Improved unit layout with adequate living spaces, circulation and storage
 - » New kitchen appliances
 - » New bathroom fixtures
 - » New heating / cooling systems
 - » Wiring for telephone, data, digital cable



- Improved safety conditions at buildings throughout the site
- Maximized opportunities for individual entrances from the street: Wherever grading allowed, individual entryways and porches were added to ground floor units. That solution minimizes the use of common halls while enhancing the building's presence on the street and maximizing

- pedestrian traffic around the perimeters of the building.
- Buildings integrated to surrounding context: Attention has been given to the need to break down the massing of buildings to a scale more consistent with that of surrounding neighborhood fabric, composed primarily of rowhomes. Careful selection of exterior materials and design elements will contribute to make the buildings blend with the surrounding environment.
- Improved accessibility at units and throughout all Mt Vernon Manor sites
 - » Accessible units with accessible exterior access and accessible parking spaces
 - » Adaptable / visitable units
 - » Accessible community spaces including management office, community room, laundry and outdoor recreation area

Phase I - Getting Started

In the summer of 2011, Mt Vernon Manor succeeded in securing an allocation of 9% low-income housing tax credits for the rehabilitation of 75 units (Phase I). Construction is scheduled to start in 2012 with completion date anticipated for 2013. Phase I will target households with incomes at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI), according to the following breakdown:

A total of 55 units will continue to receive Section 8 project-based vouchers through HAP Contract (Housing Assistance Payment Contract). These HAP units will remain affordable to households earning up to 50% AMI for a period of 20 years with potential renewal for another 20 years. The remaining 43 units will remain affordable to households earning up to 60% AMI for a period of 15 years.

Target Population Information for Affordable Units			
% AMI (2012)	Income Limit	Number of Units	Period
60	\$48,240	20	15 years
50	\$40,200	55	20 years with 20 year renewal option

Phase I rehabilitation efforts include 6 structures and 13 buildings (see map highlighting Phase I). Construction work will be phased – 6 units at a time --, starting with currently vacant units. This process will ensure that every resident currently living at Mt Vernon Manor remains on site during construction and is required to move only once, from his / her current unit to a newly renovated unit.

Financing: Phase I rehabilitation brings together federal, state and City resources.

- City of Philadelphia – NSP2 Program (\$3.7 Million)
- Federal funding – IRP Loan and others (\$1.0 Million)
- State funding – PHFA Tax Credits (\$1.2 Million)

Key project amenities anticipated for Phase I include:

- On-site management office (2,400sf)
- Maintenance space and storage
- Laundry facility adjacent to community room
- Supportive services office
- Community Room
- Parking at a ratio of one space / unit
- Site improvements (lighting, landscaping)
- Outdoor recreation space adjacent to community room

Green / Sustainable design features include:

- Asset Preservation: The preservation and rehabilitation of existing structures represents a key sustainable feature of the project. Significant savings for avoiding demolition and reconstruction of structural systems.
- Thermal insulation: The entire perimeter envelope of all buildings – exterior walls, flooring systems and roof

structures - will receive new thermal insulation inclusive of areas where no insulation existed originally. All existing windows will be replaced with energy efficient windows

- Energy efficient systems and appliances: All mechanical, plumbing and electrical systems will be replaced with new, state of the art systems. All units will receive Energy Star labeled residential appliances, light fixtures and equipment. Low flow plumbing fixtures will be installed at kitchen and bathrooms.
- Alternative energy sources: Solar panels will serve hot water and electricity needs at common areas including management office, community and laundry spaces.
- Green materials: Use of formaldehyde free composite woods for cabinets; low VOC materials; recycled materials.
- Use of native, drought tolerant landscape planting



Example of scattered site infill housing

Phase II – Alternative strategies

While units upgraded during Phase I will contribute to significantly improve living conditions at Mt Vernon Manor, a lasting & positive impact of this effort will only be felt throughout the neighborhood when all sites are addressed and buildings upgraded. Phase II of this revitalization effort will build upon the success of Phase I by completing the remaining 8 buildings in 3 separate structures, totaling 48 units.

The current strategy for Phase II follows the rehabilitation approach adopted for Phase I: preservation of existing structures with key units upgrades, green/sustainable features, improved accessibility

and a design approach aimed at making buildings blend with the neighborhood character.

At the moment, no funding has been committed to the completion of the project. The key strategy under consideration is to again apply for funding from PHFA for low-income housing tax credits. It targets the rehabilitation of forty-eight (48) units and new construction of 2 infill units to replace two apartments converted during Phase I for community purposes. Phase II will serve 12 units at 20% AMI, 17 units at 50% AMI and 21 units at 60% AMI. A total of 23 units will continue to receive Section 8 project-based vouchers through a HAP Contract (Housing Assistance Payment Contract). A Phase II funding application was submitted to that agency earlier in 2012 but not selected, and is pending re-submission in the next funding cycle.

Replacement Housing

The strategy for replacement units will be determined by the direction taken for Phase II units. Under a scenario of rehabilitation funded through tax credits, a total of 50 units will be required as one-to-one replacement units. This requirement will be met through a combination of off-site strategies within the neighborhood boundaries and in coordination with ongoing efforts promoted by City agencies and initiatives by local organizations. The following



options are currently under consideration:

- Scattered Infill Development: An approach to infill housing will advance this Plan's key neighborhood goal of restoring residential blocks on the west end of Mantua while expanding housing opportunities to former Mt Vernon Manor residents. This may be achieved through a coordinated effort with PHA as the agency moves to expand affordable rental opportunities in Mantua.
- Rehabilitation of vacant structures: A coordinated effort between the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, Philadelphia Housing Authority and local not-for-profit organizations focused on affordable housing will create opportunities for the rehabilitation of vacant residential structures located in otherwise solid residential blocks. Such initiative advances this Plan's goals of promoting training and employment opportunities in construction trades.

Left: Rehabilitation of existing housing stock removes blighted properties from the neighborhood and can provide an affordable option to residents

People Vision

Introduction

Parallel to the housing strategy outlined above, this Transformation Plan establishes specific strategies aimed to improve quality of life and expand opportunities for **current and future individuals and families living in Mt Vernon Manor**. To that end, the planning team prepared and administered a comprehensive survey with residents who currently live in the complex to establish a baseline understanding of their demographic characteristics and needs.

Resident Survey Process

The survey questionnaire was prepared in collaboration with the Philadelphia Housing Authority and covers general demographic data as well as topics related to health, education and employment. Also included were a general assessment of residents' satisfaction and needs with respect to services and community amenities. Partial data was received to date. Results will be analyzed upon completion of all 55 questionnaires, anticipated by July 2012.

Supportive Services | Goals & Strategies

In accordance with requirements established by the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency, the Mt Vernon Manor Board of Directors and its partner Diamond & Associates have contracted with

Diversified Community Services (DCS), a local community based organization, to provide case management and coordinate services for residents at Mt Vernon Manor. The strategy targets initially residents moving to units rehabilitated in Phase I, but it is expected to be expanded to all 125 households with the completed revitalization project, subject to funding availability.

DCS has developed 4 initial goals for the services to be provided to Mt Vernon Manor residents:

- Provide a variety of services to ensure residential stability and prevent homelessness
- Promote self-sufficiency through education and skill building
- Create economic opportunities through job training and employment opportunities
- Promote the well being of families through integrated education initiatives and programs for children, youth and parents.

To achieve those goals, a conceptual set of services and outcomes have been outlined. Results from the survey will help confirm / adjust the initial program. In addition to these basic services, a detailed needs assessment will be performed with residents to identify the specific needs of each household and its members:

- **Financial Literacy and Budgeting**
Measurable Outcome: All heads of households will have attended counseling sessions and developed a household income / expense budget and a savings plan.
- **Employment Training and Information / Referral**
Measurable Outcome: All residents will have attended orientation sessions focused on employment training options, job openings and job fairs.
- **Case Management services**
Measurable Outcome: Every household will have met with the case manager and discussed family issues, needs, goals and action steps. An individualized Family Plan will be prepared and monitored on a regular basis.
- **Parenting Education**
Measurable Outcome: At least 50% of households with school age children will attend a parenting education program. Progress with key issues will be closely monitored on a regular basis.
- **Child and youth development enrichment programs**
Measurable Outcome: At least 50% of households with children under 18 will have enrolled in pre-school or after-school programs run or referred to by the service provider
- **Establishing Tenant Council**
Measurable Outcome: A Tenant's Council should be established within a period of 6 months from the date of occupancy, with established leadership and a means for dialogue with the Mt Vernon Manor board.

Access to Neighborhood Services and Opportunities

In conjunction with the specific strategies outlined above, neighborhood efforts associated with topics of education, employment, safety, health, youth development and recreation will support positive outcomes for Mt Vernon Manor residents. DCS and Mt Vernon Manor Board of Directors will work closely with organizations representing the broader Mantua community to ensure awareness and residents involvement with initiatives and programs promoted at the neighborhood level. Further information regarding these initiatives is described on Part II – Neighborhood Vision.

Part II:
**A Vision
for Mantua
Community**



Neighborhood Vision

Vision Statement

“Mantua looks to the future as a community with **a strong sense of identity**, an **engaging civic life** and a **safe and healthy environment** that allows individuals and families to thrive as active members of society. Mantua is a place where long-term residents **choose and are able to stay**, a place that supports families raising **children** and provides opportunity to its youth. It is organized from within but connected to the City beyond.

Mantua is **proud of its history** and builds on its strengths to improve and expand opportunities for **self-sufficiency** among its residents. Strong learning institutions, access to employment, a healthy lifestyle and improved connections to resources will be the building blocks of a positive future for current and future members of the community.

This vision will be achieved through **collaborative work** involving residents, local organizations, institutions and partners in the private and public sector.”

Guiding Principles

Build on Mantua’s strengths

Mantua has a wealth of physical, social and individual assets with positive impact for the community. These can become the seed of greater organizations, institutions and opportunities for community and individual development.

Focus on youth

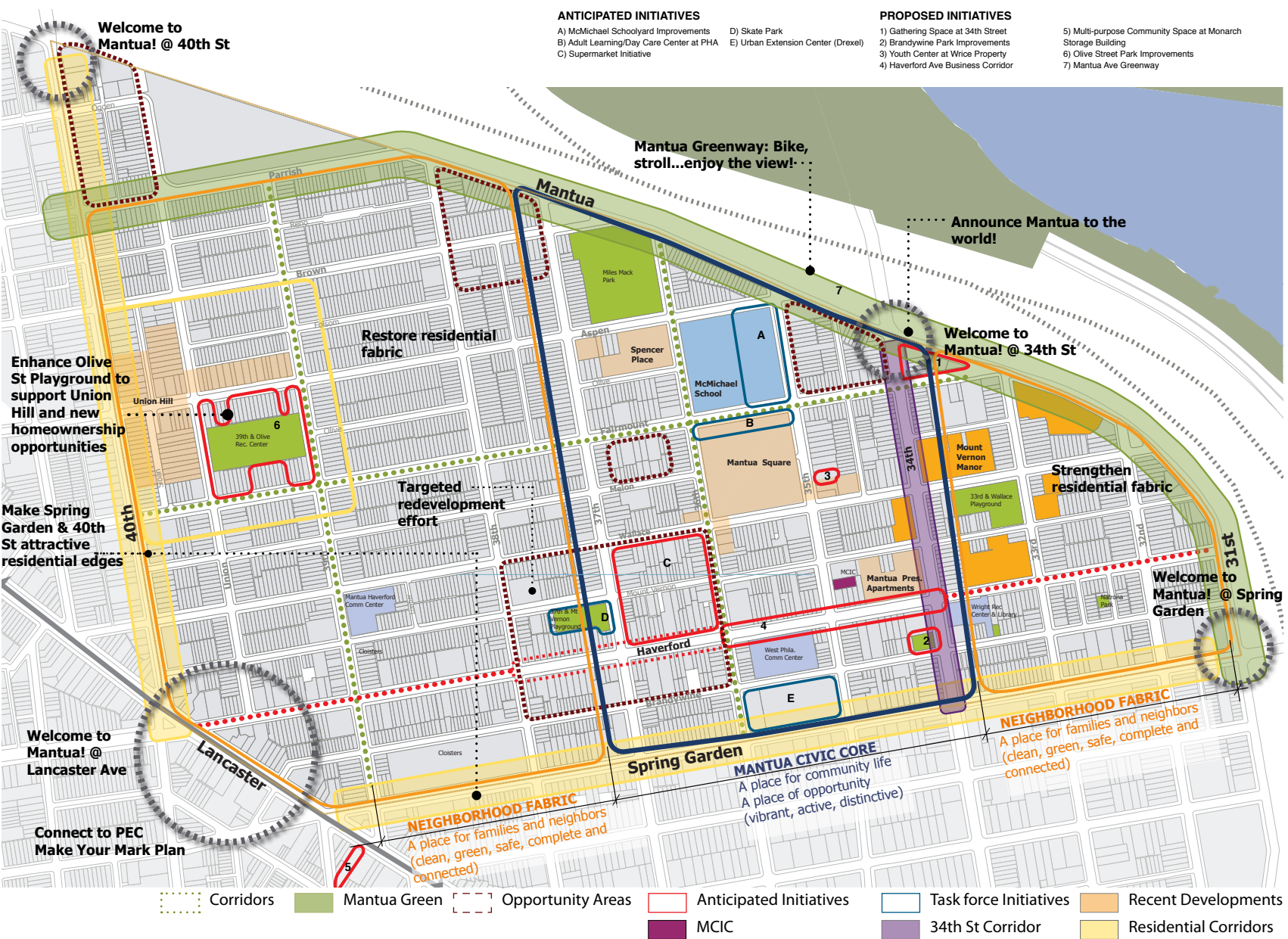
Provide opportunities for today’s children and young adults to develop into community leaders of tomorrow with a place in Mantua’s future.

Connect people to people, to resources, to places

There is a wide gap of information about resources already available within Mantua and citywide. Improved connections to these resources will benefit all Mantua residents.

0 250 500 1,000 FEET

Vision



A Whole Community

This Transformation Plan envisions the rebuilding of Mantua's physical and social fabric into a coherent whole: a community that is safe for residents, inviting to visitors and easy to navigate; an engaged community where local organizations work together and residents are kept well informed and connected to opportunities.

Restoring Mantua's physical environment and building better links, physically, and culturally between organizations and residents will knit Mantua back together as a whole and complete community. A place that reflects the intense pride and sense of individuality expressed by residents throughout the community visioning process and provides opportunities for individuals and families to thrive socially and economically.

Mantua Civic Core, the nucleus of community life

The section of Mantua defined by 34th and 37th streets, Spring Garden and Mantua Ave presents a unique opportunity to create a strong, identifiable center for the neighborhood. A significant concentration of existing and proposed community facilities, recent housing investments and a central location already make this area the place where much of the community life takes place. Bringing these assets together through physical, social and organizational connections will strengthen the character of this area as the heart of Mantua: a place for gathering, learning, shopping and social activities; a place where people come and go, day and night, the "buzz" area of Mantua.

A strong residential fabric, the place for neighbors and family life

Strengthening the residential fabric east and west of the core will complete the neighborhood's revitalization. New housing opportunities, community gardens, healthy corner stores will complete the residential blocks. Improved playgrounds and recreation areas become important neighborhood nodes. Strong connections to the core enable residents to be fully engaged in community life.

■ Make it Safe

- » Improve lighting
- » Establish a Drug Free Zone
- » Improve policing

■ Make it Accessible

- » Sidewalks
- » Crosswalks
- » Access to buildings

■ Make it Vibrant

- » Highlight landmarks
- » Add signage, wayfinding
- » Add public art

■ Make it Informative

- » Add bulletin boards
- » Establish a NAC office

■ Make it a Network

- » Bring stakeholders together
- » Establish a Civic Improvement Alliance

■ Make it playful

- » Improve facades
- » Add color

■ Make it Home

- » Create new infill housing
- » Create opportunities for ownership
- » Support existing owners

■ Make it Green

- » Green Playgrounds
- » Add trees
- » Promote side yard initiative
- » Create community gardens

■ Make it Connected

- » Define edges and gateways
- » Improve Streetscape

■ Make it Social

- » Establish friends groups for public spaces
- » Organize block activities
- » Create community gardens





Mantua Regional Context

Mantua is home to 5,924 residents. Its 80 block area is bounded by 31st and 40th streets, Spring Garden and Mantua Ave. Location is one of Mantua’s key assets. Some of the most important City destinations are located just within a one-mile radius from the neighborhood. Easy access to transportation corridors and public transit connect the neighborhood to the region.



Mantua: Neighborhood Timeline



1690: Welsh Friends lay beginnings of Lancaster Pike
1795: Lancaster Pike opens as the only turnpike in the country.



1809: Judge Richard Peters divides and sells a portion of his Belmont Estate for real estate development. The appropriated land is called Mantua after the town of residence of ancient Italian author Virgil
1812: Spring Garden Bridge, designed by German engineer Lewis Wernwag, opens, offering direct access to center city and increasing the residential appeal of Mantua



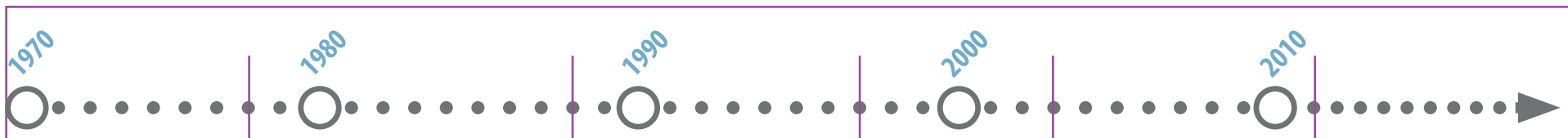
1858: Trolley lines are first extended to West Philadelphia. The railroad is rerouted across the Northern edge of Mantua to parallel the river down to market street
1870: University of Pennsylvania moves to West Philadelphia
1891: Drexel Institute of Science, Art and Industry is opened



Early 20th Century: Mantua is a well established community of Irish working class families whose presence lends the nickname “Cork Town” after County Cork, Ireland. Local residents also sometimes call the area “The Bottoms”, a term not intended to be derogatory
1920’s: Mantua experiences an influx of African Americans migrating from the south. These residents find employment in manufacturing, railroading, construction, clerical work and other office/service support jobs



1950: Mantua hits peak population of 19,394 residents
1950’s: Drexel begins expansion into the residential area of Mantua
1960: 18-story Mantua Hall is constructed, reflecting the trend of public housing “projects”
1963: West Philadelphia Redevelopment Area is certified
1964: Herman Wrice forms the Young Great Society with the goal of inspiring the youth of Mantua to be leaders within the community



1970: Herman Wrice Establishes the Urban Leadership Training Program

1970: *Mantua Urban Renewal Plan:* Establishes the Neighborhood Development Plan (NDP) and spells out community development initiatives

1971: *Planning for Mantua,* prepared by The Mantua Joint Workshop is submitted to Philadelphia RDA

1978: Mount Vernon Manor Apartments are completed



1980: Mantua population drops to 9,112 a decrease of 53% from peak

1980's: Mantua sees a rise in drug-related crime and violence

1988: Herman Wrice establishes Mantua Against Drugs. He organization demolishes or boards up numerous known drug houses



1992 - 1993: Cloisters and Cloisters I homes are constructed

1994: *Plan for West Philadelphia* attempts to address areas of Mantua that were overlooked in previous redevelopment efforts.

1997: Establishment of the University City District (UCD)

1997: Spencer Place Townhomes constructed



2003: Mantua Community Improvement Committee (MCIC) is founded by Rick Young in an effort to keep the streets of Mantua clean and safe

2008: Mantua Hall is demolished



2010: Union Hill development completed

2010: Mt Vernon Manor Inc. is awarded a HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant

2011: Mantua Square development is completed by the PHA

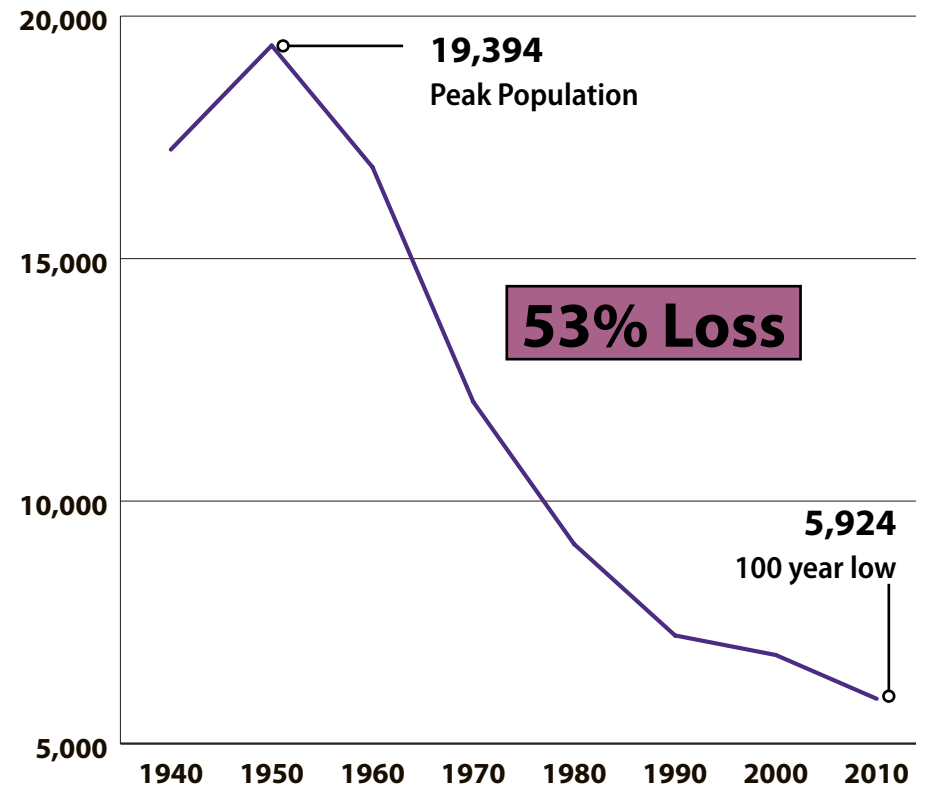
Mantua Facts & Trends

This section provides a brief overview of the neighborhood based on US Census data. It includes figures from the two most recent Census efforts (2000 and 2010) as well as estimates provided by American Community Survey 2005-2009. Demographic data was gathered for Census Tracts 108 and 109.

A 60-Year Trend Of Population Loss

In 2010, there were 5,924 people living in Mantua. As Philadelphia experienced a slight gain in population over the past 10 years (0.5% for the entire City), Mantua lost 13.2% of its residents in that same period. These figures reinforce a 6 decade trend of population loss and bring the current population to 1/2 of the number of residents in 1970 and less than 1/3 of the population it had in 1950, when it reached a peak number of 19,394 residents.

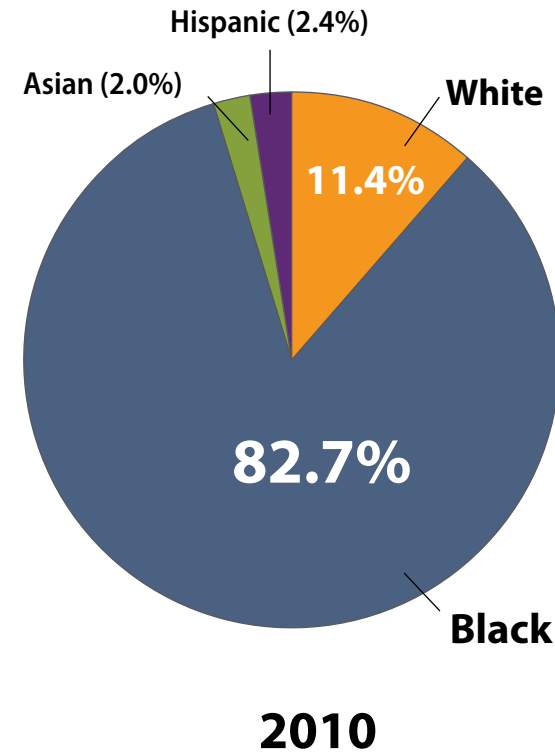
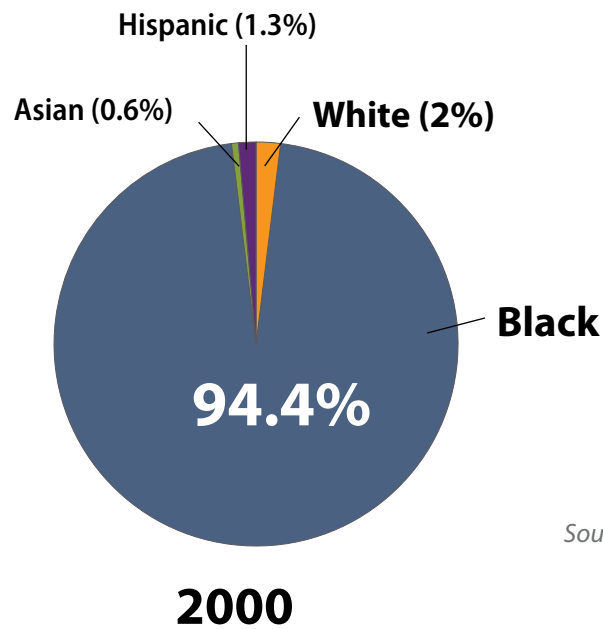
Population Change



Source: U.S. Census

Growing Racial Diversity

With population decrease, came a significant shift in race and ethnicity: the 2010 Census reports growing diversity with an increased percentage of white residents (11.4% in 2010, up from 2.1% in 2000) and a noteworthy presence of Asians and Hispanic residents.

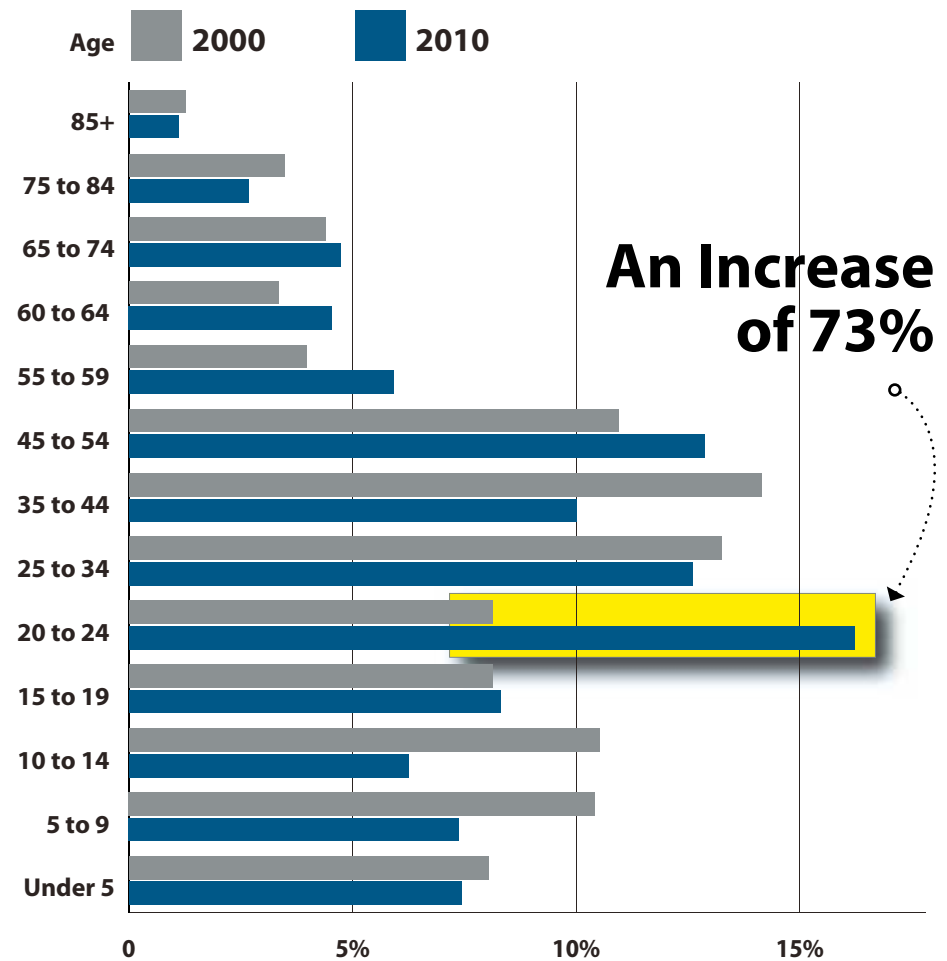


Source: 2000 and 2010 U.S. Census

Less children, a growing number of adults and seniors

In 2010, Mantua had less children, a growing number of adults and seniors, and a significant growth in the number of young adults, reflecting a growing number of university students who have established residence in Mantua in recent years.

Age Distribution



One Third Of Residents Do Not Have A High School Degree

31% of Mantua's adults did not have a high school diploma, a rate significantly higher than the City's rate of 21%. Educational attainment differs significantly between the western and eastern sections of Mantua: the eastern section shows a higher concentration of high-school graduates (78%) and individuals with bachelor's and professional degrees (8%), which can be explained primarily by the presence of college students in the area.

Household Income Is 47% Below City Average

The median income for Mantua households in 2009 was \$19,700. Citywide, the median income was \$36,700. Approximately 27% of all households in the neighborhood live with an annual income of less than \$10,000 while 85% live with an income of less than \$50,000 annually. Only 5% of all households have incomes of \$100,000 or more.

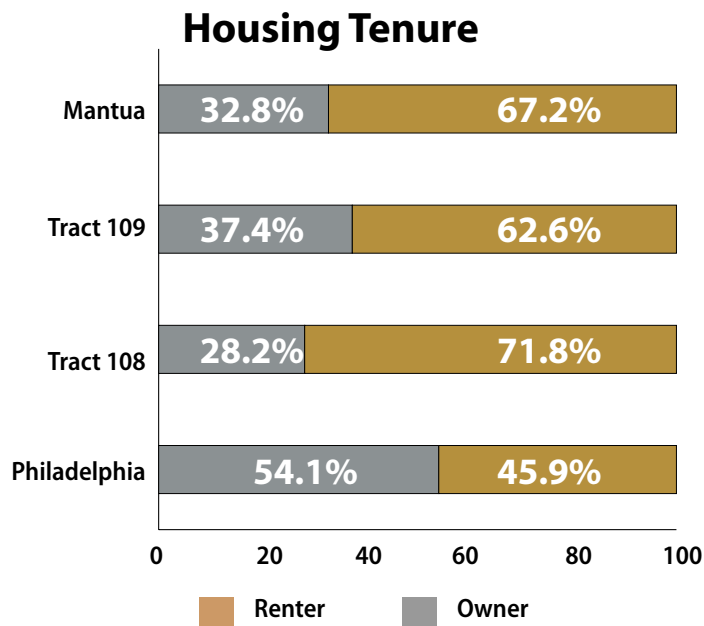
High Levels Of Poverty And Public Assistance

Approximately 54% of all Mantua residents live below poverty level, with poverty rates particularly high for children under 5 years (96.4%) and children under 18 (75%). These rates are significantly higher than city-wide figures of 24% for all residents with 34% for children under 18 and 37% for children under 5. Approximately 40% of senior Mantua residents live in poverty.

The great extent of poverty in Mantua is also reflected by the numbers reported for public assistance, which are significantly higher than overall Philadelphia rates. Household public assistance was used by 17% of Mantua households (citywide rate was 7.4%) while food stamps were used by 39% of all households (16% for the city). These rates are significantly higher for the western section of the neighborhood.

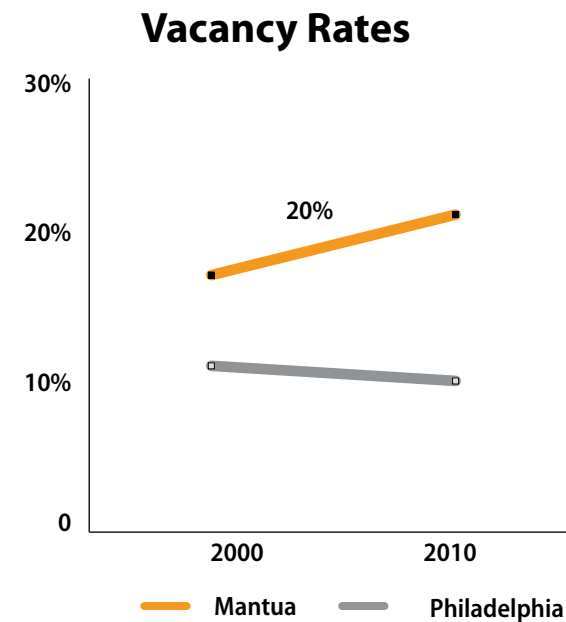
One Out Of Every 3 Houses In Mantua Is Owner Occupied

In 2010, homeownership has gone down from 42.2% to 33.8%, well below the City's rate of approximately 54%. Figures broken down by census tracts show a very low rate of owner occupied units on eastern the section of Mantua (28.2%) and a significant decrease in homeownership in the western section (37.4% in 2010, down from 42.2% in 2000).

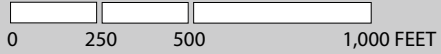


Vacancy Rates Increased by 4% in Mantua

Between 2000 and 2010 vacancy rates in the Neighborhood climbed from 17% to 21%, despite a drop in the total number of dwelling units. This is in contrast to the City, which saw a 1% drop in vacancy rates .



Neighborhood Assets



Heavily used community centers and playgrounds are primary assets for Mantua. A wealth of murals enhances the community and speaks of its pride in the past and hopes for the future. Lancaster Ave, at the neighborhood's southwest corner is the closest commercial corridor.



Source: Site Survey

- Mural
- Fire Station
- Community Center
- Playground/Park
- Lancaster Ave Comm. Corridor
- Retail Space
- School
- Church

Community Assets

Open spaces

1. Miles Mack Playground includes a multi purpose field, playground, basketball courts and a small community building. The site is under consideration for the development of a skate park. Miles Mack hosted a “skate day” there in 2010. (2.24 acres)

2. 39th and Olive St Playground: includes a basketball court, playground structures and a swimming pool. It was built in 1972 in partnership between the Parks Department and Mantua City Planners. (1.24 acres)

3. 33rd and Wallace Playground: includes play areas for children. The space was fully upgraded in 2007, with new pavement, lighting and equipment. Recent shootings and reports of illegal activities have left residents wary of the space, particularly during evening hours. Poor lighting in and around the playground contributes to a perception of danger in the area. (0.5 acres)

4. 37th and Mt Vernon Playground: Constructed in 1972 by the Recreation department in collaboration with Mantua City Planners. The playground features a singular basketball court and a small area with obsolete children’s play equipment and benches. This site was also identified as a possible location for the skate park. (0.35 acres)

5. 34th and Brandywine Pocket Park: Dedicated in 1975 the park is currently neglected and in a state of disrepair. Planting beds and an iron fence remain from the parks original structure. (0.11 acre)

6. Natrona Street Park: Neighbors on Natrona Street recently worked to clean and restore the space. The space was never placed in Parks and Recreation inventory and receives no regular maintenance from the city

Community Centers

7. Mantua-Haverford Community Center: plays a vital role in Mantua’s civic life. The 23,000 sf facility includes an Indoor Basketball Court, Classrooms, Commercial Kitchen, and a paved recreation yard. Programming includes Daycare, sports programs, computer classes, and health awareness education.

8. West Philadelphia Community Center: is owned and operated by the Caring People Alliance. It offers a broad array of after-school programs targeting the broader West Philadelphia area. The facilities are the most extensive in Mantua including a competition swimming pool, gymnasium, classroom and conference facilities. Programming focuses heavily on afterschool activities for young children.

9. Wright Recreation Center: provides one of the only indoor spaces dedicated to teenagers in Mantua. Limited hours and programming impact its effectiveness.

10. Charles Durham Public Library: is a critical resource for children and seniors in Mantua providing educational programs and serving as an important point for information sharing.

11. Wrice property at 35th St: currently out of use, is the former site of Herman Wrice's Young Great Society Center. The Wrice family is dedicated to working with the community and bringing the building back into community service.

Churches

There are 26 churches in Mantua. The "We Are Mantua" planning process has made a concerted effort to engage local organizations in this planning process and leverage their commitment with the community to provide services that meet residents needs.

Community Organizations

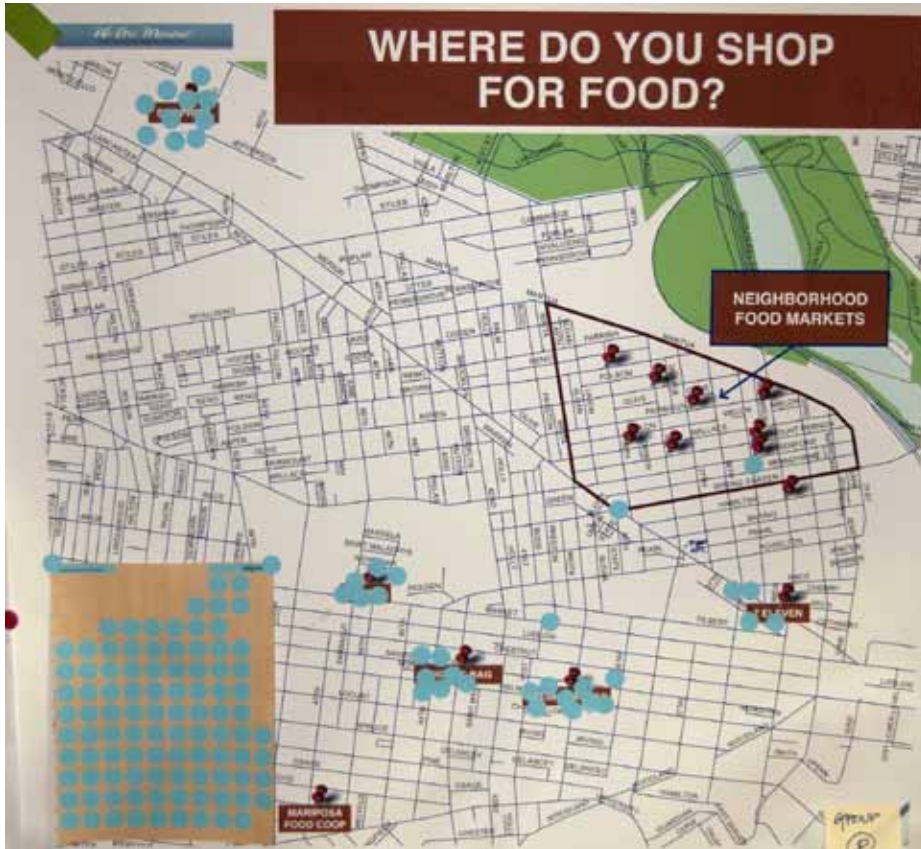
Mantua is served by a number of community groups focused on addressing various needs in the neighborhood. From recreation programs, to street cleanup, prisoner re-entry and food programs, these groups stepped in to fill a gap of services not available to

residents otherwise.

- Mantua Community Investment Committee
- HUB Coalition
- Mantua Haverford Community Center
- People's Emergency Center
- Mantua Community Planners
- MASCO

Schools

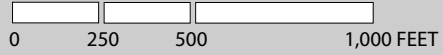
Mantua is served primarily by two elementary schools and one high-school. Only one of them – Morton McMichael Elementary – is located within the boundaries of the neighborhood. McMichael serves approximately 330 K-8 students. Despite residents' concerns about the school with respect to performance and student achievement, the school, located right at the heart of the neighborhood and within walking distance from residences, constitutes a major community asset with great potential for positive impact.



Responses received at community open house sessions

Neighborhood Retail

There are a total of 46 active retail businesses in Mantua. Mini-markets and beauty salons comprise the majority of businesses, followed by a few food delivery establishments and other various services. Haverford Ave, once a thriving business corridor, has lost much of its retail base over the years but some commercial activity remains in the segment of the avenue between 34th and 36th streets. Lancaster Ave constitutes the primary shopping destination for Mantua residents. Located on the southwestern edge of the neighborhood, that corridor contains a more diverse retail mix but it is considered too remote from some areas of the community.



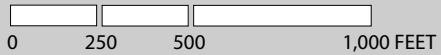
Land Use

Mantua is comprised primarily of single-family rowhomes. Conversion into multifamily apartment buildings has been a trend of recent years, taking place primarily on the east end of the neighborhood. Redevelopment has brought some higher-density residential uses, including Presbyterian Apartments and Mantua Square. Recreation spaces accounts for approximately 4.5 acres of land.



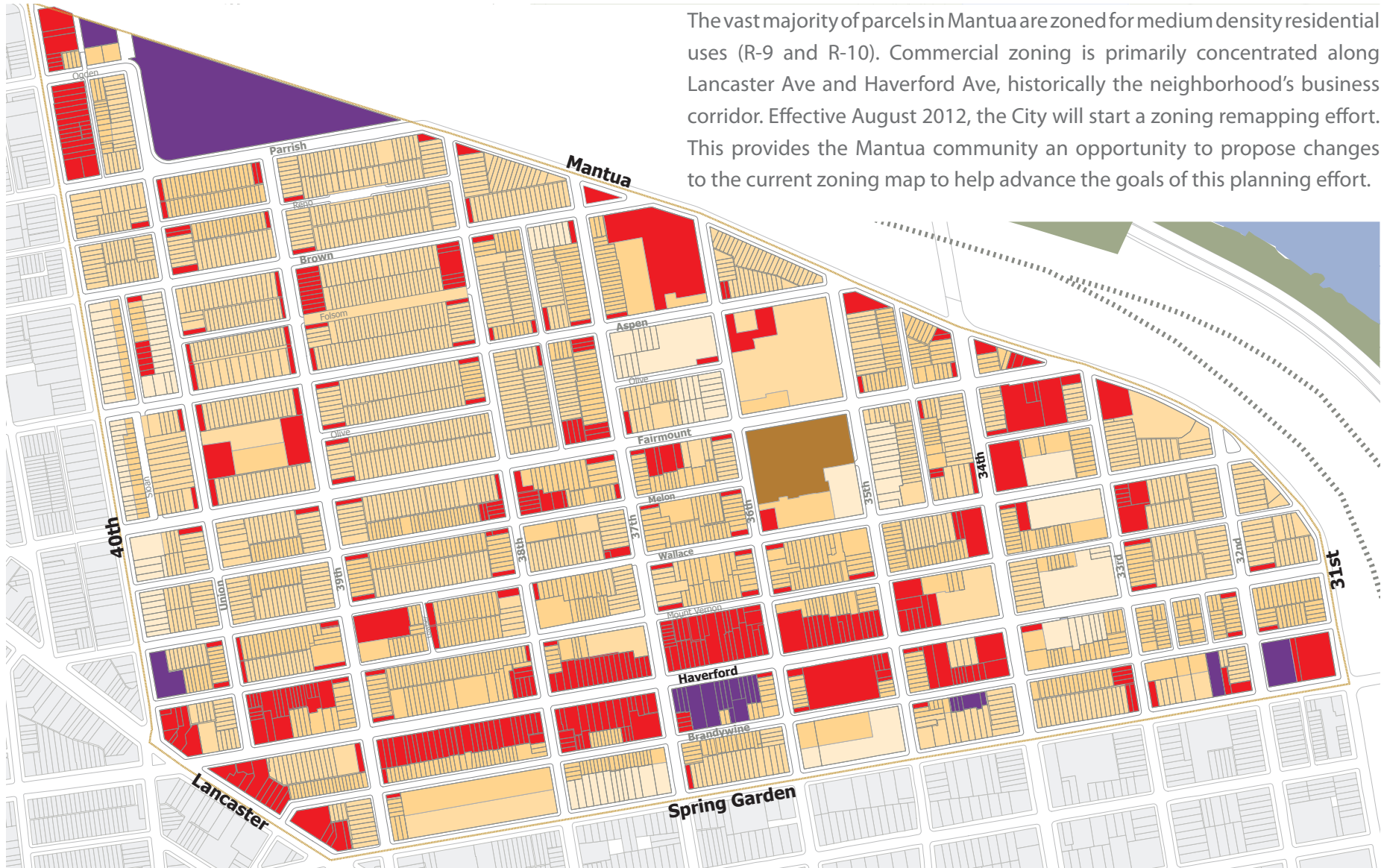
Source: City of Philadelphia





Zoning

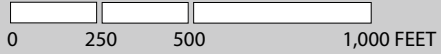
The vast majority of parcels in Mantua are zoned for medium density residential uses (R-9 and R-10). Commercial zoning is primarily concentrated along Lancaster Ave and Haverford Ave, historically the neighborhood’s business corridor. Effective August 2012, the City will start a zoning remapping effort. This provides the Mantua community an opportunity to propose changes to the current zoning map to help advance the goals of this planning effort.



Source: City of Philadelphia

-  R14, Residential
-  R10, Residential
-  R9, Residential
-  R5, Residential
-  G2, Industrial
-  C2, Mixed-Use Commercial

Transportation

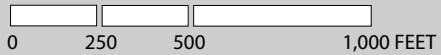


Four bus routes and one trolley route serve Mantua. The combination of public transit options helps connect the neighborhood with the education and job centers of University City and Center City.



Source: City of Philadelphia

- Trolley Route 10
- Bus Route 43
- Bus Route 38
- Bus Route 40
- Bus Route 31
- Mt Vernon Manor Sites



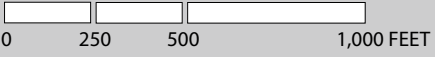
Vacancy

There are approximately 1000 vacant parcels in Mantua comprising 36.5 acres or 1/3 of the neighborhoods land area and 1/3 of all the parcels in Mantua. 43% of these parcels are owned by City agencies, including PRA, PHDC and PHA.



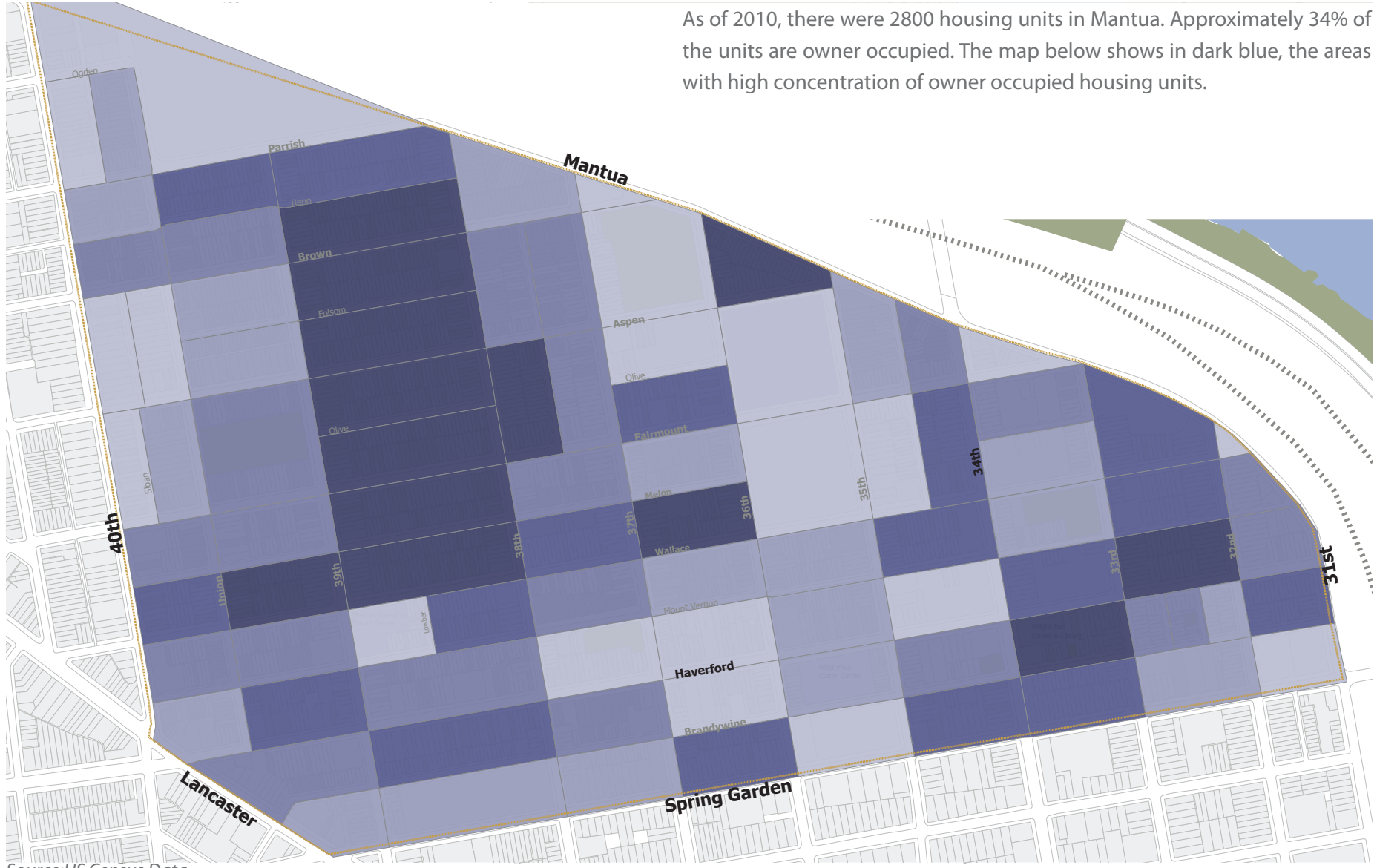
Source: Site Survey

 Publicly Owned Vacant land  Privately Owned Vacant Land



Homeownership

As of 2010, there were 2800 housing units in Mantua. Approximately 34% of the units are owner occupied. The map below shows in dark blue, the areas with high concentration of owner occupied housing units.



Source: US Census Data



Key Neighborhood Priorities

Improve Education and Recreation Opportunities for Mantua's Youth

Promote Economic Opportunities for Adults

Make Mantua a Safer Place

Promote a Healthier Lifestyle

Expand Housing Opportunities for All Income Levels

Improve Access to Retail and Services

Revitalize Mantua's Physical Environment

Improve Capacity for Civic Engagement

The following pages outline Goals and Strategies for this Transformation Plan. Over the next few months, the Planning Team will be working with City agencies, organizations and the community to identify the partnerships and resources required to implement proposed initiatives.

1 *Improve Education and Recreation Opportunities for Mantua's Youth*

Input received from residents during the planning process indicates that Mantua's school-age children attend a number of public and charter schools in West Philadelphia. Morton McMichael, the local elementary school, is attended by a significant number of Mantua's children but is not considered a school of choice among parents, due to ongoing challenges associated with the school's performance. Recent measures outlined by the Philadelphia School District to reorganize the City's school system have made uncertain the future of the school. Under this planning effort, the Education Task Force has worked closely with the community to ensure that the school gets the improvements needed to maximize opportunities for students to excel. Out of this effort, was established the McMichael Community Home and School Association. Drexel University is a key partner in this process and has an ongoing commitment to support the school's improvement.

The community identified the following issues as key topics of concern with respect to education:

- Lack of funding at the City level for education
- High percentage of high school drop outs
- Poor information about the importance of early head start and pre-school for young children
- Poor information among parents about programs that support youth learning
- Bullying and peer pressure as factors contributing to discourage school advancement



PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Support early childhood education**
Inform and connect parents to resources available in West Philadelphia and throughout the City
- 2 Extend operating hours at McMichael School to expand before and after school programming.**
- 3 Improve parents' involvement with their children's education**
Establish Home and School Association
- 4 Establish youth mentoring program**
- 5 Expand recreation and youth programs**
Expand services and hours at existing community centers and recreation center
Implement Skate Park
Promote summer sports activities
Connect local youth to regional cultural and recreation resources: (Zoo, museums, parks)
Establish Youth Center at Wrice property (35th Street)

2 *Promote Economic Opportunities for Adults*

According to 2005-2009 income data, the median household income in Mantua was \$19,700, well below the City's median income of \$36,000. Along with educational attainment data, which shows that over 30% of residents, do not have a high school degree, these figures reinforce the need to address employment and adult education/training issues as a top priority for Mantua residents.

Input received from the community indicated two key challenges in the pursuit of employment opportunities: lack of job skills and lack of information about programs and available resources.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Develop residents skills in construction trades**
Develop Home Building Program for training and skill building
Connect PHA residents of Mantua to existing program already offered by PHA
Establish local partnerships to expand PHA's program to all residents of Mantua
- 2 Prepare residents in career opportunities of high demand in the region**
Link residents to job training programs available throughout the City
Connect residents to career counseling services
- 3 Strengthen residents skills to successfully pursue employment opportunities**
Connect residents to programs citywide focused on assistance with job search
Establish a resource / counseling center in Mantua
- 4 Expand employment opportunities through Section 3**
Establish partnerships with local education and medical institutions
Inform and prepare residents for Section 3 employment opportunities
- 5 Support entrepreneurship**
Establish a venue in Mantua (Mantua Business Institute) for ongoing education and training
- 6 Expand access to adult learning opportunities,**
GED programs
Life skills
Basic computer technology

3 *Make Mantua a Safer Place*

As a key indicator of quality of life for families and communities, safety features as an issue of top priority in Mantua. Residents and the Safety Task Force identified the following as topics of key concern:

- Poor safety conditions at playgrounds and public spaces
- Hot-spots for drug activity
- Nuisance properties
- Insufficient street lighting
- Vacant lots and abandoned buildings as a heaven for illegal activities

Recent crime data reinforces these concerns. From May 2011 to May 2012, 267 Part I crimes were reported in Mantua with 61 arrests made. Drug activity plays a role in stimulating crime and takes place in the entire neighborhood. Over the past year, 192 incidences of drug activity were reported. However significant these figures may be, they only reflect reported events. Too many incidences go unreported as residents, out of fear of retaliation, choose to remain silent about illegal activities witnessed around the neighborhood.

In 2011, current City policing was reinforced by patrol services provided by the University City District. Although services are limited to x neighborhood blocks, they have contributed to improve the perception of safety in the portion of the community they serve.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Improve nighttime lighting conditions**
Prioritize areas around playgrounds, community centers and the recreation center
Prioritize key neighborhood corridors and connectors
Establish porch light initiative
- 2 Address hot-spots for drug activity**
- 3 Establish a neighborhood watch program**
- 4 Encourage anonymous crime reporting at Mt Vernon Manor Apartments**
- 5 Reinforce and expand Drug Free Zone** to include the Civic Core and other community facilities in the neighborhood

4 Promote a Healthier Lifestyle

Among the issues identified by residents with respect to Health and Wellness, the following ranked as high priority topics:

- Limited variety of food options in the neighborhood
- Limited mobility and transportation for seniors and residents who do not own a vehicle
- Limited access to information about chronic diseases and preventive health care
- Limited opportunities for exercising among seniors
- Need for basic healthcare services in the neighborhood

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Expand access to affordable and diverse food options**
 - Connect residents to grocery stores and shopping and recreation destinations outside of Mantua
 - Connect local businesses to Healthy Corner Store Initiative
 - Expand options of healthy prepared foods
 - Attract mobile food stores
 - Develop local food market
- 2 Improve access to basic healthcare services in Mantua**
 - Encourage health providers to deliver services at community events
 - Host regular workshops related to health topics and focused on different age groups
- 3 Expand opportunities for affordable exercising activities in the neighborhood**
 - Re-establish programs for seniors at local community centers
 - Install outdoor fitness equipment along proposed Mantua Greenway
- 4 Support and promote food growing in Mantua**
 - Support individual gardening initiatives
 - Establish community garden initiative associated with youth development

5 *Expand Housing Opportunities for All Income Levels*

The housing market in Mantua is marked by growing demand for rental units and an eroding homeownership. This dynamic is determined by a number of trends including the conversion of single family homes into multifamily apartment buildings and the new construction of rental units. Affordable housing and student housing represent two key markets in the area and have seen intense development over the last 5 years. At the same time, homeownership is challenged on a few fronts: on one side, high costs of maintaining and repairing aging structures, together with a growing market pressure for rental units, have made it difficult for current homeowners to preserve their homes. On the other side, partially successful initiatives to bring new affordable homeownership opportunities suggest that the area is yet not attractive to the market. Union Hill, a 52-unit for-sale development located on the west end of Mantua, has seen slow sales since its completion in 2010, even with attractive sales prices. Homeownership has gone down from 42% to 34%, well below the City's rate of approximately 54%.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Preserve existing homeownership**
Homeowners assistance with energy efficiency,
home repairs and legal resources
- 2 Expand affordable homeownership opportunities**
Rehabilitate vacant structures
Build new units
- 3 Expand opportunities for higher density, mixed
income housing**
Consider senior apartments
Focus new development on key opportunity sites
(as identified on Vision Plan)



6 *Improve Access to Retail and Services*

Population decline, safety issues and a changing economic environment left Mantua with empty storefronts, deteriorating buildings and a community largely underserved with essential goods and services. Over fifty percent of the parcels originally zoned for commercial use are found vacant or occupied by abandoned structures. Less than 25% of the parcels have active businesses. Small corner stores with a limited but expensive selection represent the majority of Mantua's retail base. To meet essential needs such as grocery shopping, banking and pharmacies, Mantua residents rely primarily on retail and services found outside of the neighborhood. While many of these services are located within less than a mile from the Mantua, access constitutes a challenge for many residents, especially for those with limited mobility options. Over 50% of Mantua residents do not own a vehicle. Multiple transfers, travel time and convenience constitute an obstacle to using public transit, especially when it comes to food shopping.



PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Enhance and expand Mantua's businesses**
 - Support Healthy Corner Store Initiative
 - Establish a business group / association
 - Improve safety around businesses
 - Support residents who look to start a business in the neighborhood
 - Attract new retail and services to Haverford Ave
- 2 Connect residents to businesses and services outside of Mantua**
 - Grocery shopping trips for senior residents
 - Organized trips to shopping districts

7 *Revitalize Mantua's Physical Environment*

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

1 **Improve and expand Mantua's existing network of Open Spaces**

Create "friends of" groups to maintain and advocate for Mantua's spaces

Create new gathering space at 34th St and Mantua Ave Gateway

Create skate park

Expand Olive St playground

Restore open space at Brandywine St

2 **Improve Mantua's streetscape to create a safe and attractive public realm**

Create a vibrant and distinctive Civic Core

Extend the West Bank Greenway through Mantua

Reinforce neighborhood edges and gateways

Expand Olive St playground

3 **Develop a comprehensive vacant land strategy**

Encourage homeowners' acquisition of small vacant lots through City's Side Yard Program

Support infill housing development to fully restore residential blocks

Work closely with the community and City agencies to identify appropriate development opportunities associated with areas with a large concentration of contiguous vacant lots.

8 *Improve Capacity for Civic Engagement*

Mantua will require an engaged community and a strong organizational structure to advocate for the neighborhood and advance the goals of this Transformation Plan. A multilayered approach to capacity building will help establish this structure and create opportunities for new leadership to emerge.

PRIORITY STRATEGIES

- 1 Establish Mantua Civic Association**
- 2 Cultivate tomorrow's community leadership**
Establish Youth Advisory Board
Connect youth to leadership training opportunities
- 3 Revive block captain system**
- 4 Establish Neighborhood Advisory Committee**

Alignment with Existing Efforts

Drexel University Initiatives

The 2012 Campus Master Plan guides the University's physical expansion to take place primarily within the boundaries of the existing Campus. New student housing will be focused on Chestnut Street and around the 30th St Station. Demand for housing in neighborhoods surrounding the University will continue to grow, primarily for graduate student housing.

The Employee Home Assistance Program provides forgivable loans to University employees for the purchase and renovation of homes in Mantua and surrounding neighborhoods. This program provides a potential boost for private housing market in Mantua.

The Urban Extension Center, still in early planning stages, will provide a central location for Drexel's community services and outreach programs. Located on Spring Garden St, it is envisioned as a University-Community resource. The UAE has the potential to become a venue for a wide variety of community resources identified through this planning process. It will be a critical asset for "Mantua's Civic Core" and will establish an important link with the Powelton Village community.

Lower Lancaster Revitalization Plan / Make your Mark

A collaborative planning effort led by PEC addressing the neighborhoods surrounding Lancaster Ave between 37th and 48th streets. Due to significant overlap between the study areas covered by that initiative and the "We Are Mantua" effort, a Mantua Collaborative group including partners involved in both planning efforts was established to ensure coordination and information sharing. A draft version of the plan was released on May 2012.



LISC / SCI-West

SCI-West’s 2013 Work Plan sets out community development goals for portions of West Powelton, Belmont and Mantua. The plan has LISC, PEC, UCD, Partnership CDC as key local stakeholders and covers an area from Westminster to Parrish Street, Mantua Ave to Pine Street. Broadly oriented to topics associated with economic and social development, this initiative focuses its efforts in Mantua on efforts addressing crime, housing and community building. The work plan will serve in concert with the development and implementation of the “We Are Mantua” CNI Plan. SCI-West has recently held a Green Block Party in Mantua working with local homeowners to provide home repairs, energy efficiency upgrades and block wide greening and beautification.

Mantua Square and PHA housing initiatives

Mantua Square represents a successful model of affordable housing with positive impact to public housing residents and the

surrounding community. In addition to new housing opportunities, Mantua Square includes community spaces: an adult learning center and daycare center to be located on Fairmount Ave. These initiatives make Mantua Square a significant contributor to the “Civic Core” envisioned by this planning effort.

PHA also owns several scattered site properties within Mantua and controls a portion of Mantua’s vacant land. PHA is an active partner in this planning initiative, and has worked with local stakeholders to coordinate strategies for housing and vacant land.

Greenworks Philadelphia

The Greenworks Philadelphia Plan is a city-wide initiative to address sustainability through a variety of programs. Stated goals of the plan include retrofit 15% of housing stock; stormwater Federal Compliance (Green City Clean Waters); park and recreation amenities within 10 minutes walk; access to local food; infrastructure repair; green jobs; 500 acres of new park land (Green



2015); increased tree coverage.

The We Are Mantua! plan harnesses these objectives and utilizes “Greenworks” initiatives to forward the neighborhood goals and objectives identified through the community planning process.

PRA “Front Door”

The City of Philadelphia has streamlined the process for purchasing and leasing publicly owned land by creating a singular reference point and process. Official policies have been put in place to allow community groups and homeowners who live next to vacant lots to purchase land at discount price.

PRA Front Door establishes an opportunity and clear path for the use of vacant land as private side yards and community gardens. It also streamlines the process of public land acquisition by developers and not-for-profit organizations.

Zoning Reform & Remapping

In August 2012 Philadelphia will adopt a new zoning code and will begin the process of remapping the city, district by district. Zoning remapping will be an opportunity for the community to advance goals and objectives established under the “We Are Mantua” planning effort.

Connect the Circuit

Collaborative effort by non-profit organizations, foundations and public agencies to complete and expand the network of recreation trails in the Philadelphia region. The Mantua Greenway discussed in this document is identified as the Westbank greenway, connecting different portions of the Fairmount Park system. “We Are Mantua” will work together with Connect the Circuit to implement its “segment” of the trail system.



Philadelphia School District

The School district of Philadelphia is currently undergoing significant re-structuring with impact to Mantua's McMichael Elementary School and other public schools attended by Mantua's children. The uncertain environment has made it difficult to determine a clear path for the school's improvement.

School District of Philadelphia – Facilities Master Plan

The School District of Philadelphia Facilities Master Plan looks to increase efficiency in use of school facilities and adjust the districts property portfolio to current needs. The plan includes the closure of several facilities and consolidation efforts. Under that Plan, the Drew School K-8, located in Powelton Village has been permanently closed. While the school is not within Mantua, its closing has caused students to be re-assigned to other schools in the area.

University City - Special Services District

UCD special services district is a consortium of educational institutions and other stakeholders in the University City area of West Philadelphia. UCD focuses on quality of life issues throughout its service area. Recently, community based policing services have been extended into Mantua from Spring Garden St through Wallace Street.

Attachments