# DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES FOR THE CENTER OF EAST LIBERTY



Submitted to the City Planning
Commission by the East
Liberty Development, Inc.

May 2004





Funded by generous grants from:
Local Initiative Support
Corporation/East End Growth Fund
Pittsburgh Partnership for
Neighborhood Development
Pittsburgh Department of City Planning

Additional Assistance was provided by: Community Design Center of Pittsburgh East End Main Street Program East Liberty Development Inc. East Liberty Chamber of Commerce



PREPARED BY:

ROTHSCHILD DOYNO ARCHITECTS PC

**BREAN ASSOCIATES** 

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

East Liberty is a focus for regionally significant development. In anticipation of this increase in activity and change, these development guidelines were created with the intention of fostering development that balances community needs, physical goals, and market opportunities.

<b>Executive Summary</b>	Development Guidelines		
Project Statement	1	Initial Review	12
Vision Description	3	Design Review	13
		Summary of Design Standards	14
<b>Development Vision</b>		Corridors & Districts	
Corridors, Districts & Neighborhoods	4	East Liberty Square: The Center	15
Community Vision	5	Penn Avenue: Regional Main Street	17
Green Paths & Places	6	Centre Avenue: Transit-Oriented Development	19
Parking Zones	7	Baum Boulevard: Art & Technology	21
New Roads & Traffic Patterns	8	Broad Street: Neighborhood Main Street	23
		Highland Ave: East End Connector	25
<b>Existing Conditions</b>		Neighborhoods	
Current Road Network	9	Pennley Park	27
Current Use & Prior Zoning	10	East Friendship	29
IPOD Boundary & Landmarks	11	New Centre Avenue	31



#### Reader's Guide Note:

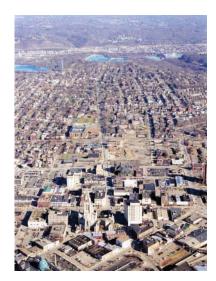
If you are interested in determining whether East Liberty is the market and development location for you, please read the Executive Summary (page 1-3) followed by the Development Guidelines (starting on page 12).

If you are interested in a particular development site, please read the Development Guidelines (starting on page 12) first. Identify your parcel/property and familiarize yourself with the specific corridor description and recommendations. The remaining portions of the report will provide background and rationale.

#### **Contacts:**

Rob Stephany
East Liberty Development Inc.
115 ½ North Highland Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
ph: (412) 361-8061

Ken Doyno, AIA Rothschild Doyno Architects PC 1112 South Braddock Ave, Ste. 202 Pittsburgh, PA 15218 ph: (412) 242-5000



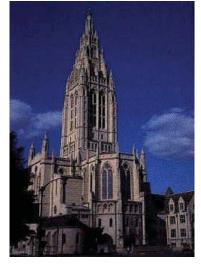
#### **Around the Center**

East Liberty's Central Business District, once the third largest concentration of commercial activity in Pennsylvania, is poised for renewal. The **central location in Pittsburgh's East End** has recently attracted two national retailers. The periphery of the Central Business District is experiencing significant renewal, including the continued success of Walnut Street and Ellsworth Avenue in Shadyside, Whole Foods and the Hillman Cancer Institute on the high-density Center Avenue/Baum Boulevard corridor, and the Pittsburgh Glass Center and Penn Avenue Arts Initiative.

Housing markets to the North (Highland Park) and the South (Shadyside) are among the strongest in the City. To the West, reinvestment in Friendship and Garfield is reaching a critical mass. Major initiatives to transform the adjacent housing areas of East Liberty into attractive mixed use/ mixed income communities is underway.

# East Liberty will benefit from the current development climate.

With vision-driven change, these can be shared and multiplied across the entire community. In anticipation of change, a development vision was created for East Liberty that balances community needs and market opportunities, while addressing local and regional issues. The goal of this vision plan is to accelerate and assure the renewal of East Liberty as a dense, connected Urban Center.

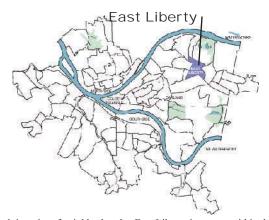


# **Reinvesting in our Community**

Efforts to civically engage and improve our existing communities has been recognized as vital to the commonwealth, economic future, and competitiveness of the region. Sprawl is recognized as being wasteful and deleterious to the environment while the continued extension of infrastructure threatens our region's economy. Our region, once a nexus of imigration, now lags far behind in its ability to break down social and racial boundaries. Urban communities, such as those that are centered in the East End of Pittsburgh, have been recognized as critical social, cultural, and economic generators for the region.

Renewal of East Liberty depends upon encouraging the business and residential diversity that has long been the appeal of city living. The strength of the core will rest on the concentration of residential, retail, service, civic, and business uses in the area. The architectural character and infrastructure necessary for a vital

neighborhood are largely intact, but a critical mass of activity and green spaces are lacking and awkward traffic patterns and vacuums of activity result in a disconnected community. By extending the hours of street activity, developing defined public spaces, clarifying road patterns, assuring pedestrian friendly environments, connecting to public parks, and creating urban living opportunities **East Liberty will again become a more thriving and active community center**.



Pittsburgh is a city of neighborhoods. East Liberty is a town within the city

# People and Neighborhoods: The Keys to the City

In spite of the long period of decline, many individuals, businesses and organizations have remained fiercely loyal to East Liberty. Much of the remarkable historic architecture within the Central Business District remains. Surrounding neighborhoods are in demand. Some of the most successful and desirable commercial and residential real estate in the region is within and immediately adjacent to East Liberty.

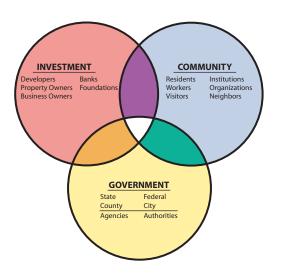
# **This Report**

Built upon a long-range community visioning process, housing strategies and traffic redesign studies, a steering committee engaged Rothschild Doyno Architects and Brean Associates to study the conditions and prepare vision-based development guidelines.

#### **Civic Consensus**

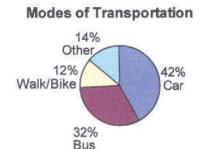
Stakeholder meetings were held to determine the needs and concerns of different community groups. Consensus was formed about where common and individual interests overlap.

Survey results from an intercept survey, conducted in the spring of 2002, showed strong support for an urban core reflecting a broad mix of uses. Fifty percent of those surveyed were in East Liberty because they worked or lived nearby. In addition, the survey showed an opportunity to capture suburban and downtown shoppers by incorporating a broader variety of stores, particularly restaurants, durable goods, and clothing.



#### **Transit**

East Liberty can leverage its strength as a transit hub at the center of a walkable community. Second only to Downtown Pittsburgh in the frequency and routes, the opportunity for Transit-Oriented-Development would be enhanced greatly by the conversion of the busway corridor to light rail or similar premium fixed transit.



#### Roads

Converting Penn Circle into conventional two-way city streets will be critical to connecting the Central Business District to surrounding neighborhoods. The extension of Centre Avenue to Washington Boulevard will create a major portal to the East End. The restoration of Euclid and Rural Avenues will complete the erasure of Penn Circle. Returning Broad Street to a pedestrian-friendly, continuous two-way road will create a diverse neighborhood mainstreet.

High automobile use underscores the importance of integrating parking with commercial and office development. The number of walkers and cyclists will increase as the housing, parks, and the commercial core are reconnected.

# Sustainable Development and Smart Growth

Western Pennsylvania has established itself as a leader in sustainable building. Smart Growth principles guide us to use existing infrastructure, public transit, higher density mixed uses, and defined parks and open space. Local efforts to support sustainable architecture and land use planning have been gathering momentum, East Liberty will be a model for neighborhood renewal.

#### **Development Guidelines**

These Development Guidelines articulate goals for the corridors, districts, and neighborhoods in East Liberty, with the goal of spurring thoughtful development in the community. The Guidelines are intended to facilitate the review process for new development. Years of planning, reflected in a single document, will encourage developers to consider opportunities that reflect community goals and expectations, allowing lead projects to reduce their risk of isolation. Similarly, government agencies can respond to opportunities with confidence and clarity.

# Corridors, Districts, & Neighborhoods

**Corridors** were identified as major roadways by which the Central Business district is perceived and connected to the region and other areas of the City. Each corridor's unique attributes were studied to understand their strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for driving change.

**Districts** were understood as distinct areas within, between, and around the major transportation corridors. East Liberty has a unique opportunity to bring these corridors and districts together into a vibrant, active, diverse, and thriving Central Business District.

Three distinct residential **neighborhood** areas must flow seamlessly into the Central Business District.

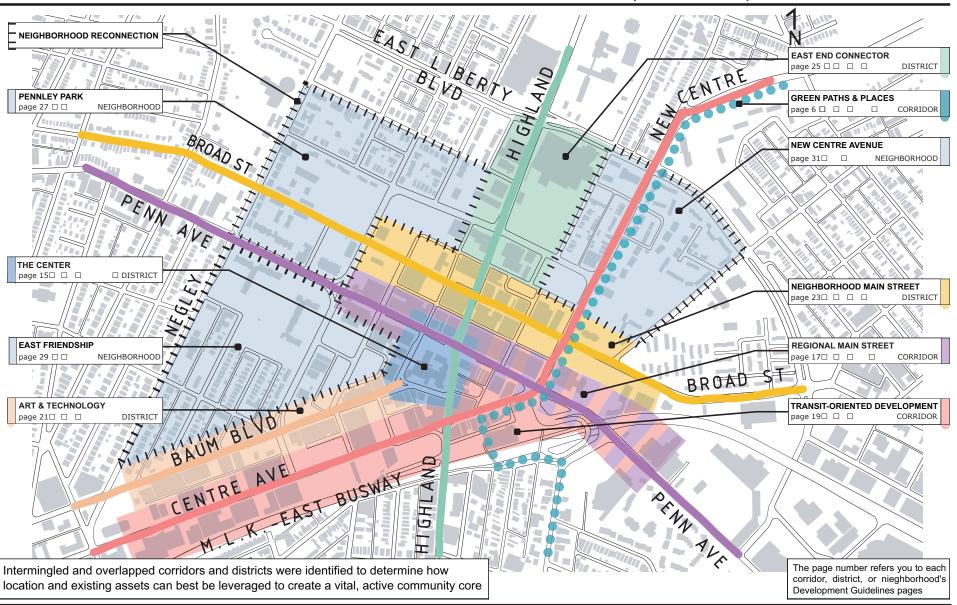
# 

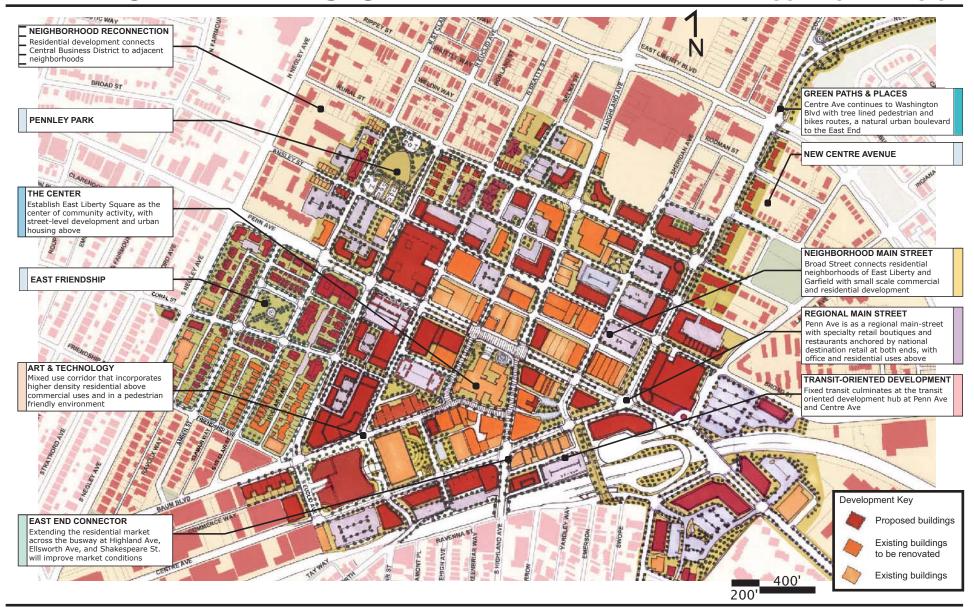
#### **Dynamic Communities**

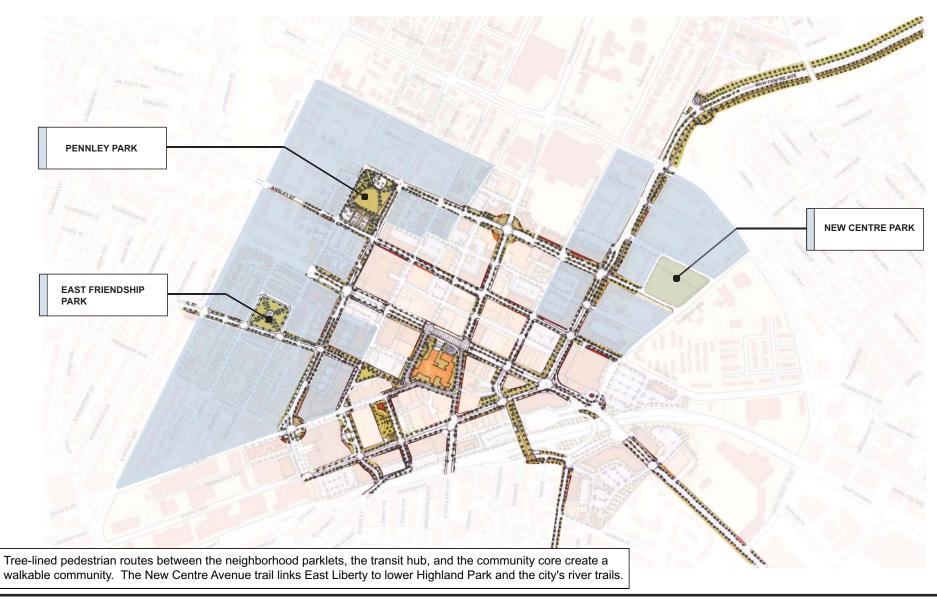
Our regional leaders are recognizing the need to foster diverse, authentic communities in order to attract and maintain entrepreneurs. East Liberty, adjacent to universities and medical centers, is an important part of this strategy. Planned infrastructure improvements, great transit access, committed institutions, as well as a dedicated and diverse community have come together to envision this future for East Liberty. With stunning architecture, incredible resources, and a market clamoring for stores and housing, the burgeoning Central Business District of East Liberty is ready to rise again.

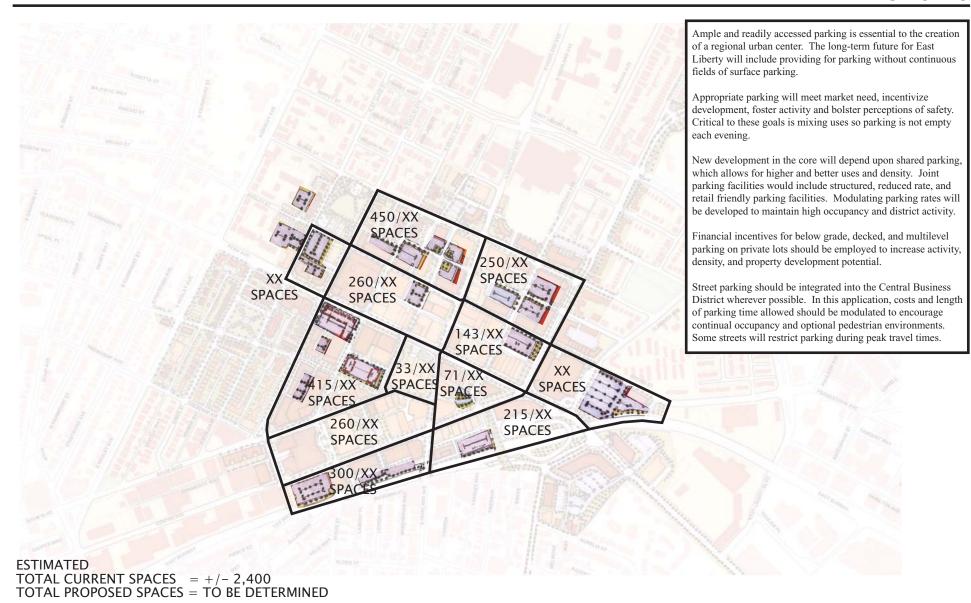
# **DEVELOPMENT VISION**

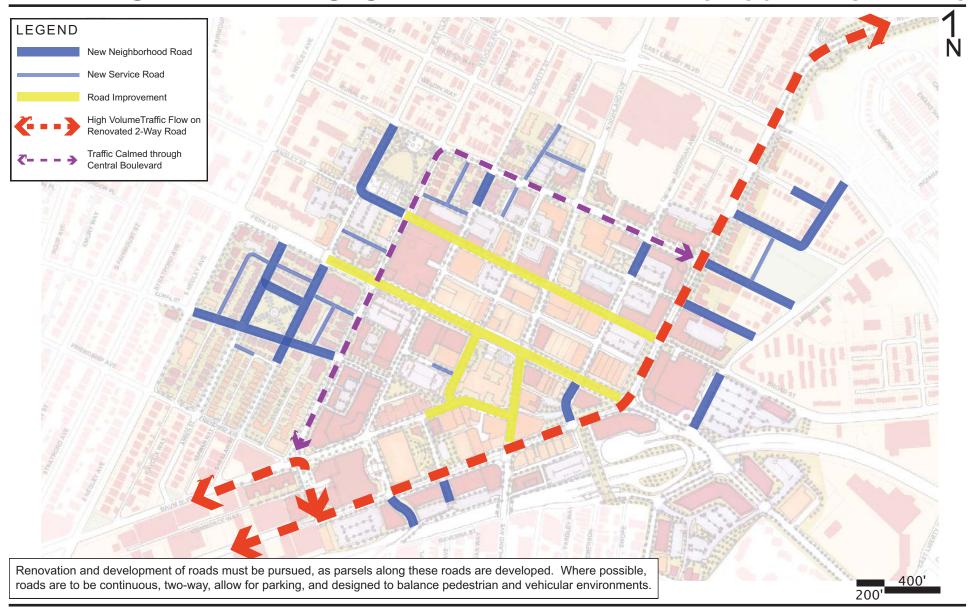
# CORRIDORS, DISTRICTS, & NEIGHBORHOODS

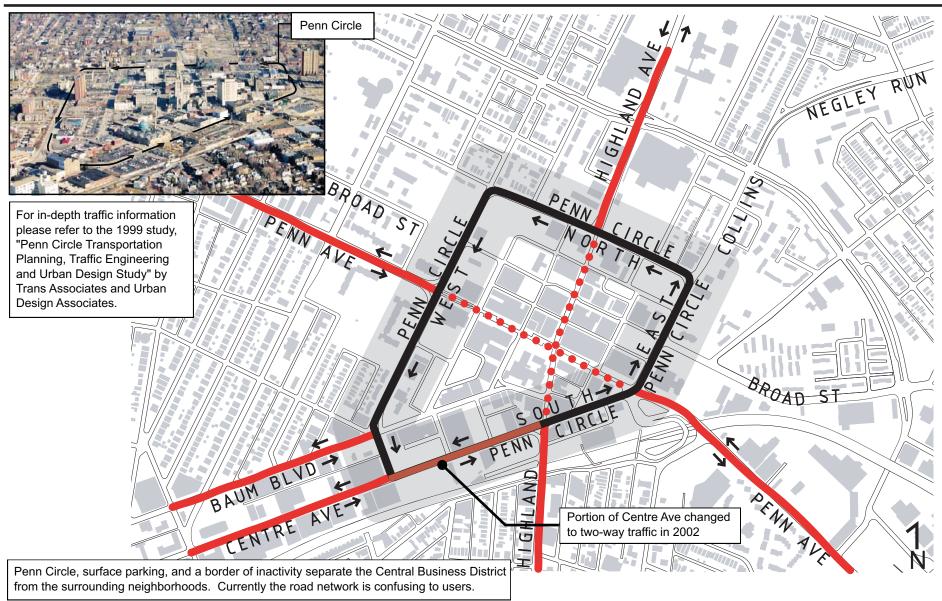


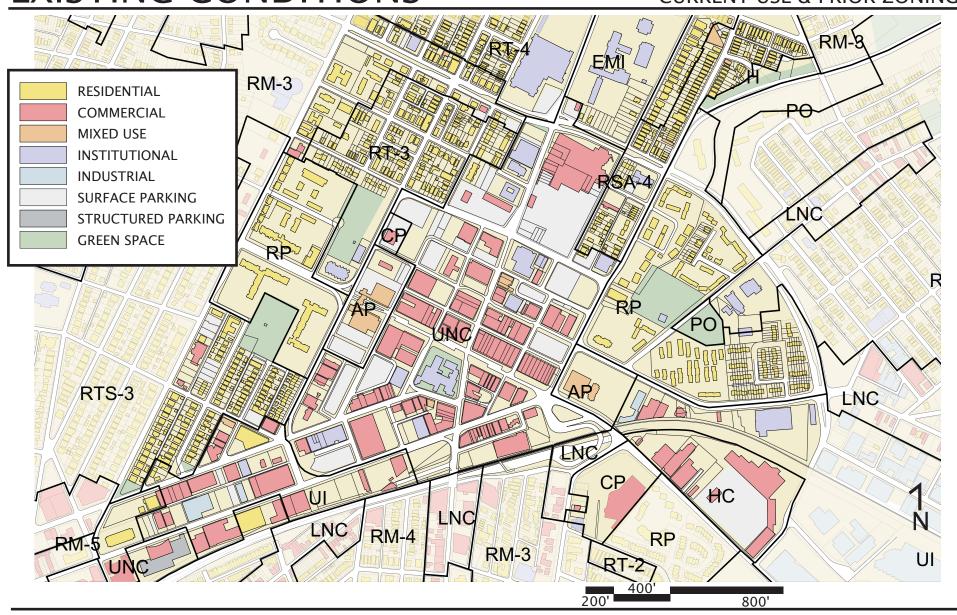






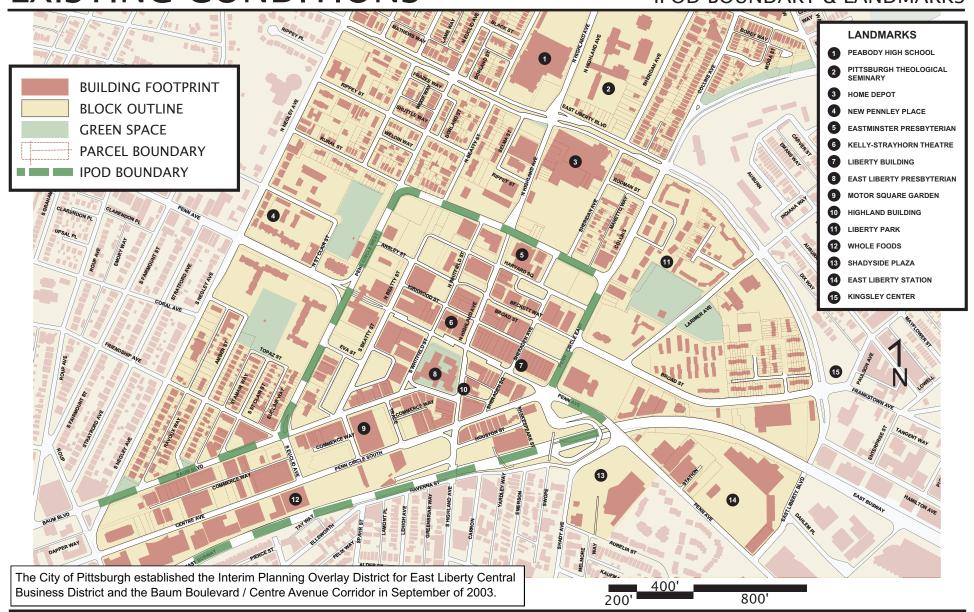






# **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

# **IPOD BOUNDARY & LANDMARKS**



**Development Guidelines** articulate specific goals for corridors, districts, and neighborhoods so individual developments can play a role in creating the best overall future for the Central Business District of East Liberty.

# STEP 1

Using the *Corridors, Districts, and Neighborhoods* diagram (page 4), determine in which corridor, district, or neighborhood the location under consideration resides. In the case of locations in multiple districts review all districts.



# STEP 2 Review the Development Guidelines - Vision and determine how this compares with the development intentions. \*\*CONTRACTOR OF THE PROPERTY OF THE PROPE

A VISION FOR THE CENTER OF EAST LIBERTY

# STEP 4

Pursue initial review of *Design Standards* to determine if these are copacetic with the development intentions.



# STEP 5

For larger scale sites and projects that will impact roads, parking or abut green pathways, it will be essential to review these issues in relation to on-going initiatives, infrastructure, and other public investment. This review can be initiated by contacting the City Planning Department or East Liberty Development, Inc.

Character considerations and

determine if these parameters

intentions. Photographs identify

align with the development

buildings to be considered in

design of infill sites.

# STEP 6 - Introduction

This review is intended to establish parameters for design of architecture and the public realm in order to create connected, intricate and compelling urban places. The Design Guidelines require that developers articulate the manner in which these issues have been addressed in their proposed design. Issues to be addressed will be as follows:

# A - Development Imperatives

These text notes establish important location specific goals considered to be critical to improving the Central Business District of East Liberty.

# **B** - Urban Context

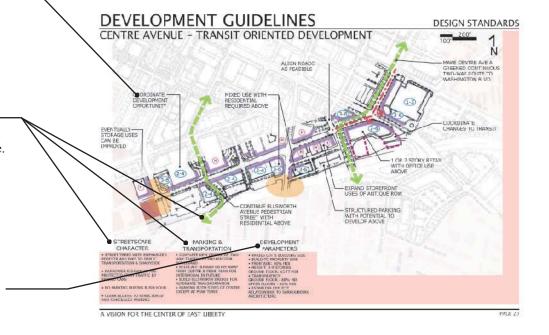
Location specific site conditions must be reflected in proposed development. These include responding to visual axes, gateways, and green pathways described on next page.



# C - Building Context

Location specific building design criteria must be reflected in proposed design. These include maintaining street edge, designing interesting facades, minimum and maximum height requirements, and historic building identification described further on the next page.

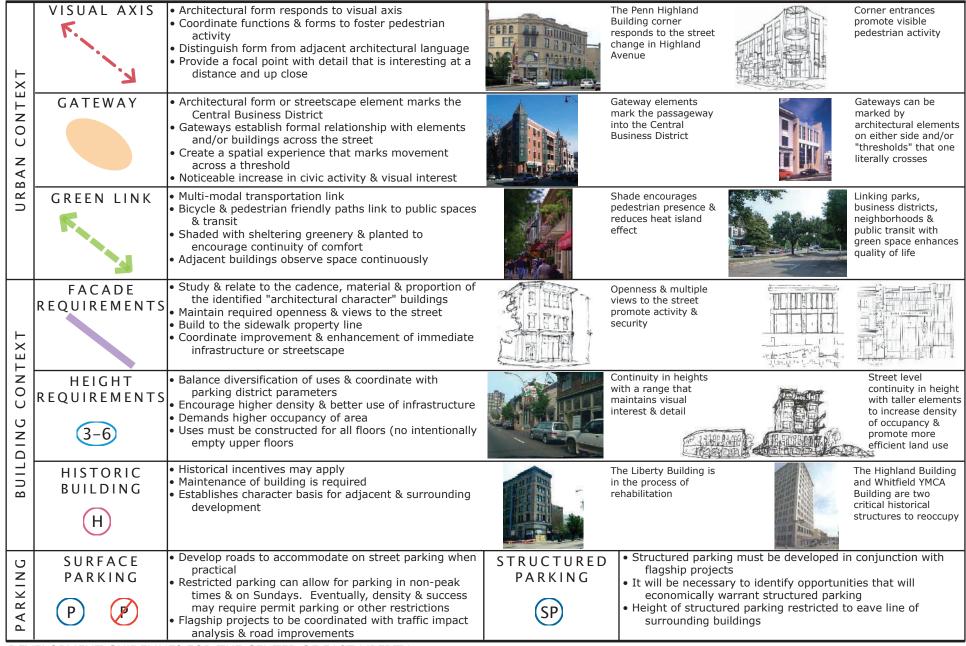


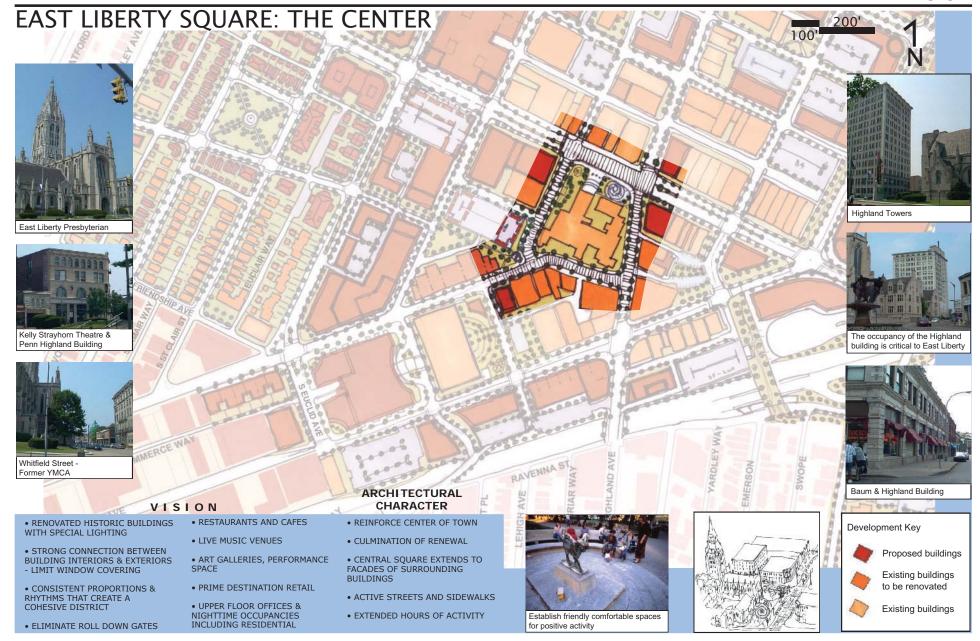


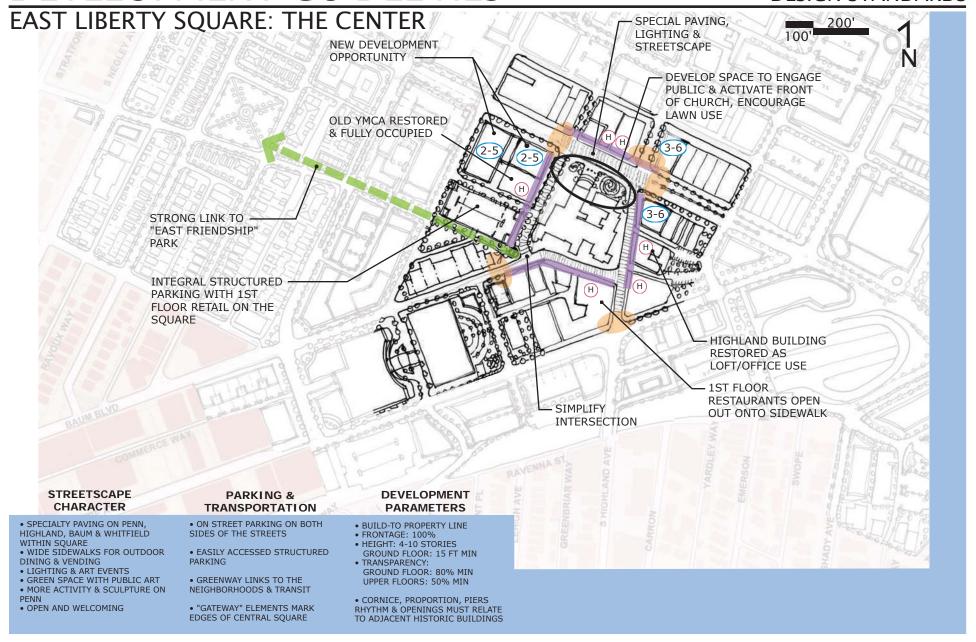
The goal of these development guidelines is to outline parameters for development and design that will improve the urban and civic environment, improve the market environments, encourage reinvestment, foster new investment, protect individual property investments, guide new individual investment, and honor and improve that which we have inherited and that which we hold in common.

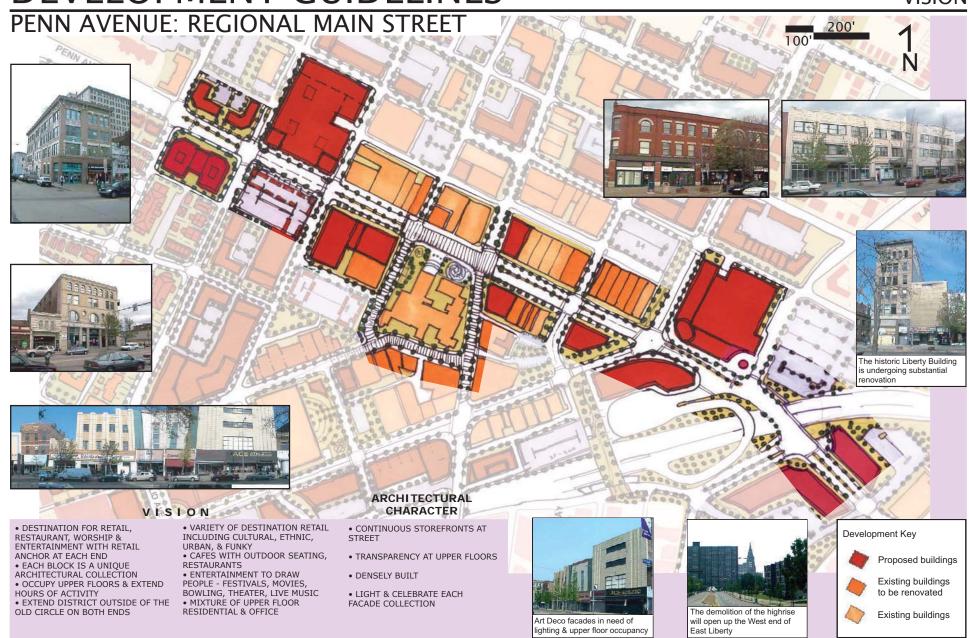
# **DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES**

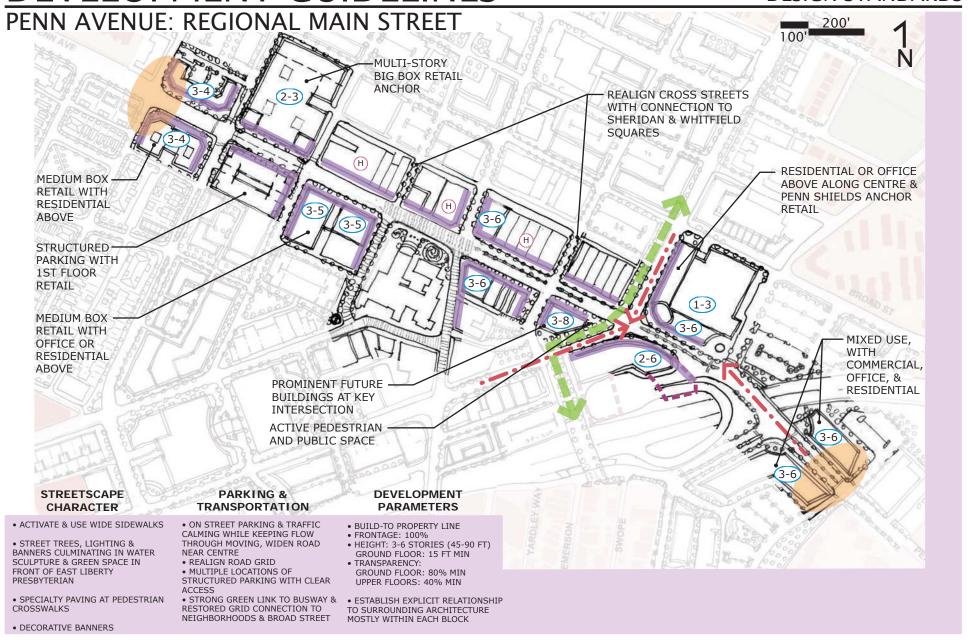
# SUMMARY OF DESIGN STANDARDS

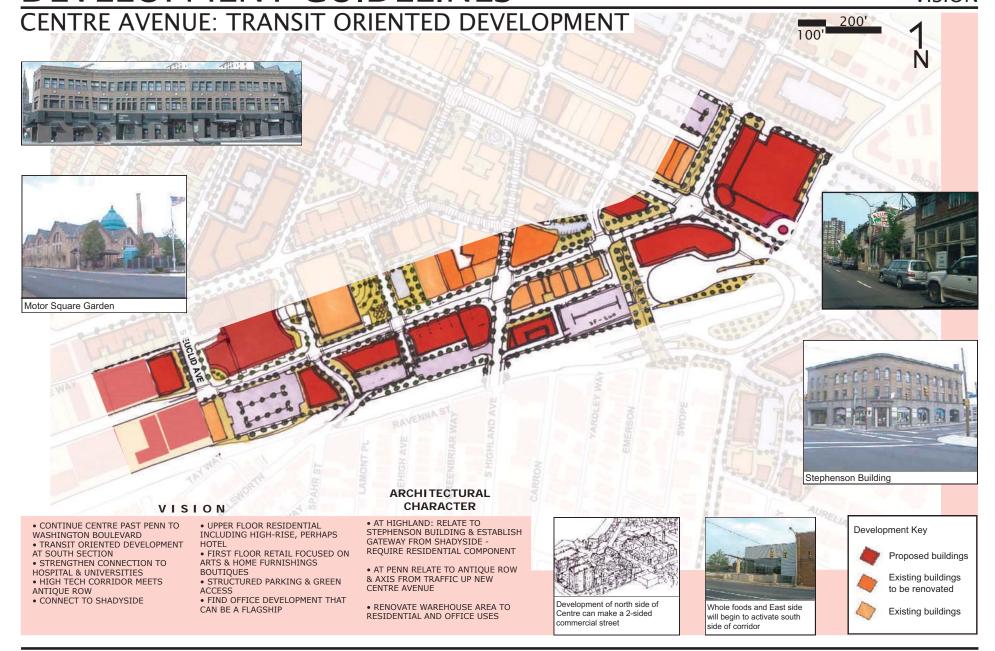


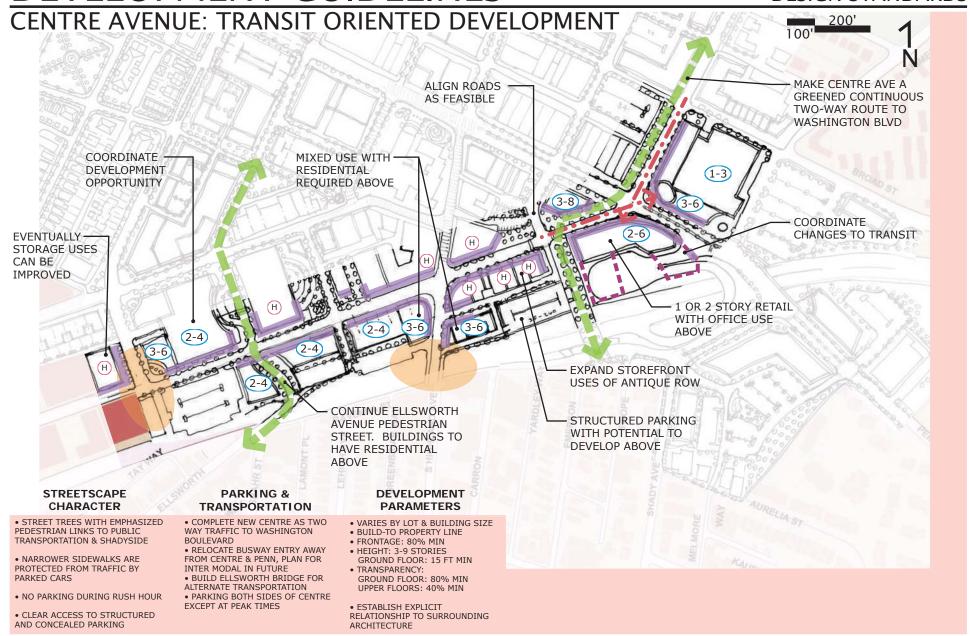


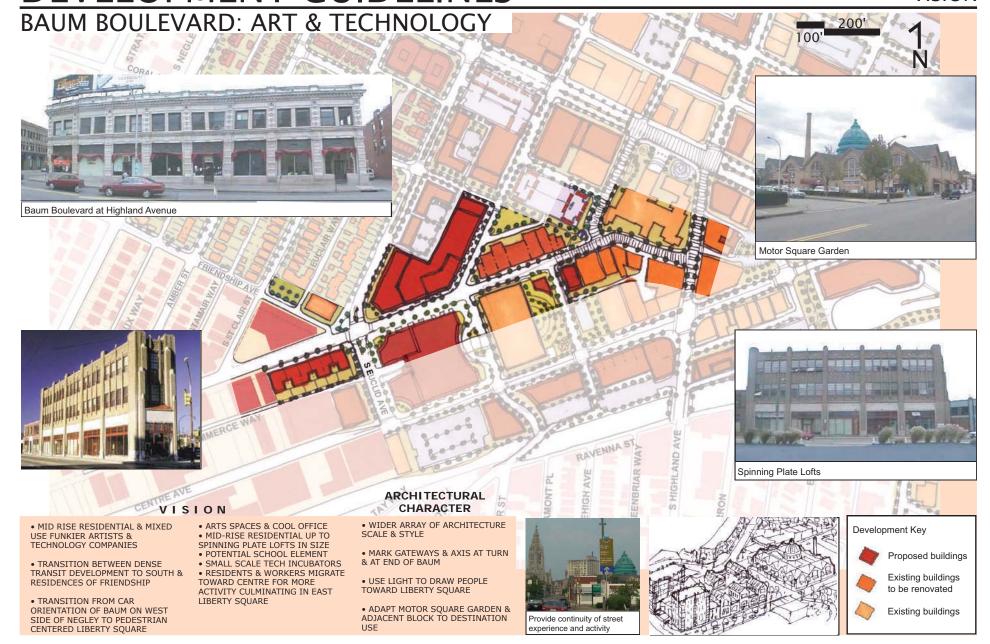


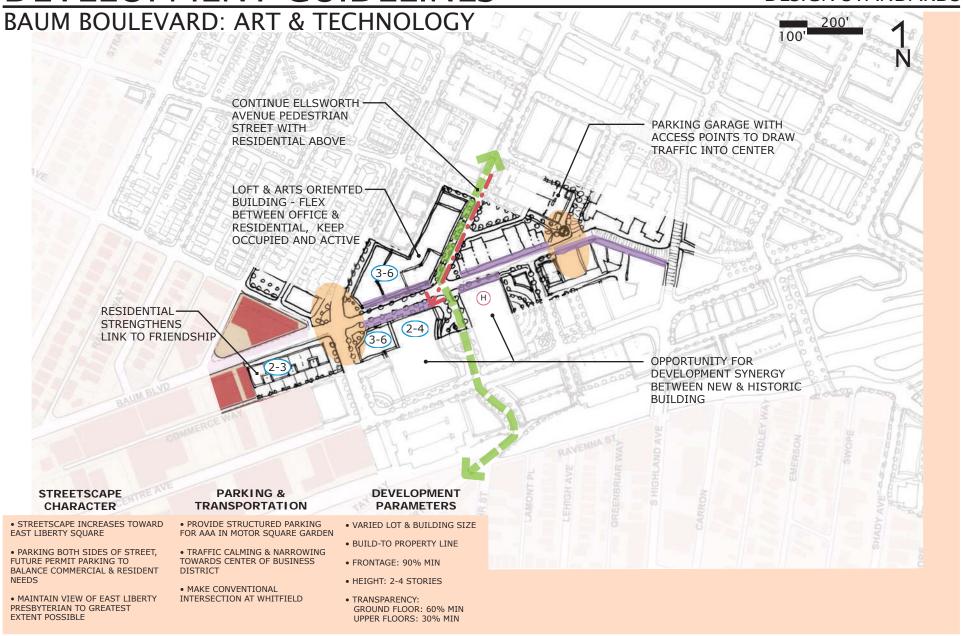




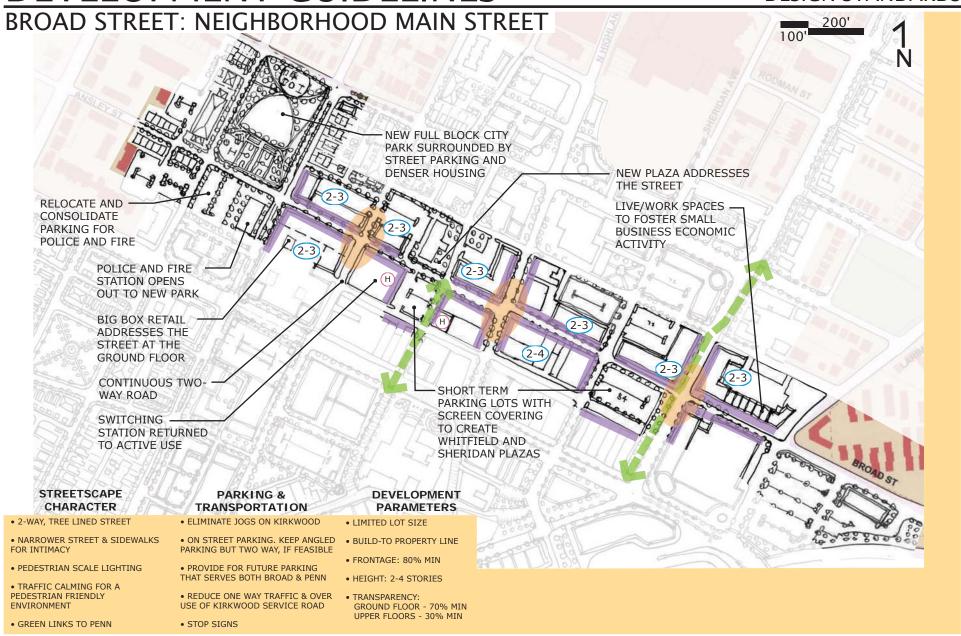




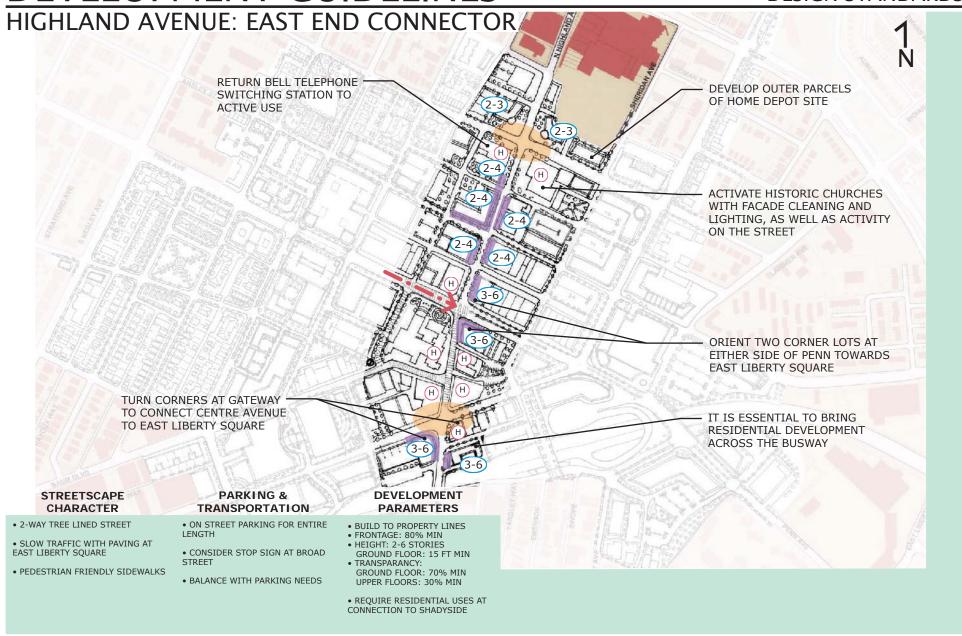




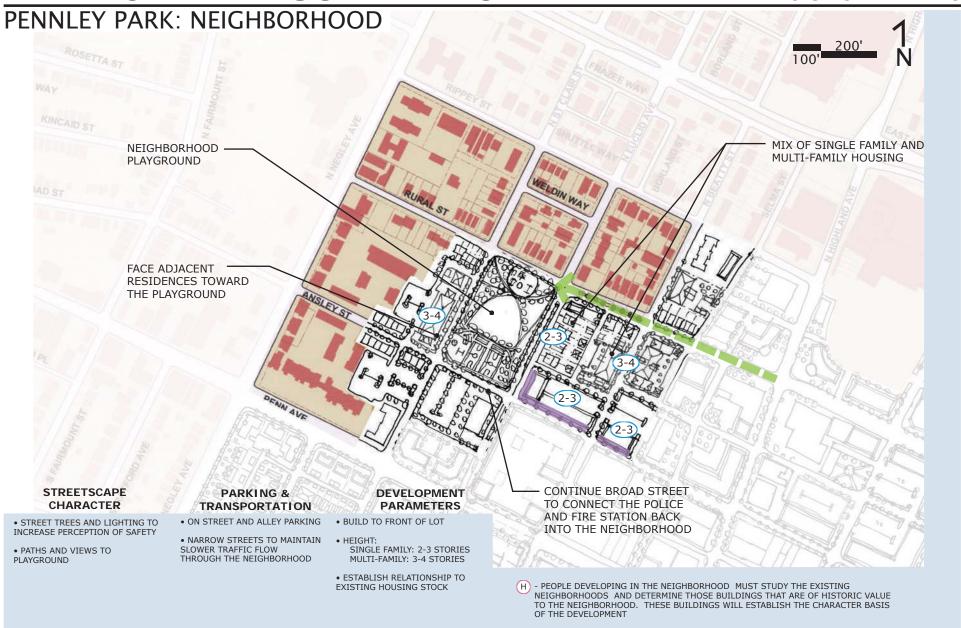














DISTRICT

