



East Hills

Community Visioning Plan



FINAL PLAN
FEBRUARY 2022



East Hills Community Visioning Plan Report

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to all that participated in the development of the East Hills Community Visioning Plan!

East Hills Consensus Group

Operation Better Block, Inc.

State Representative Gainey's Office

Councilman Reverend Burgess' Office

Office of the Mayor

Department of City Planning

Bureau of Police Zone 5

Upstream Pittsburgh

Rising Tide

Client



East Hills Consensus Group



Consultant Team



with assistance from



Introduction

Project Background

Community Visioning is both a process and a statement. The initial process includes discovering the kind of future that the East Hills neighborhood wants by giving their residents the opportunity to express their goals, objectives, and values in a honest and transparent way. Through this discovery, residents are given a platform to discuss what they would like their community to look and feel like within the next five to ten years and come to a mutually agreed upon Vision. A Vision statement captures what community members most value about their community, and the shared image of what they want their community to become. It inspires community members to work together to achieve the Vision.

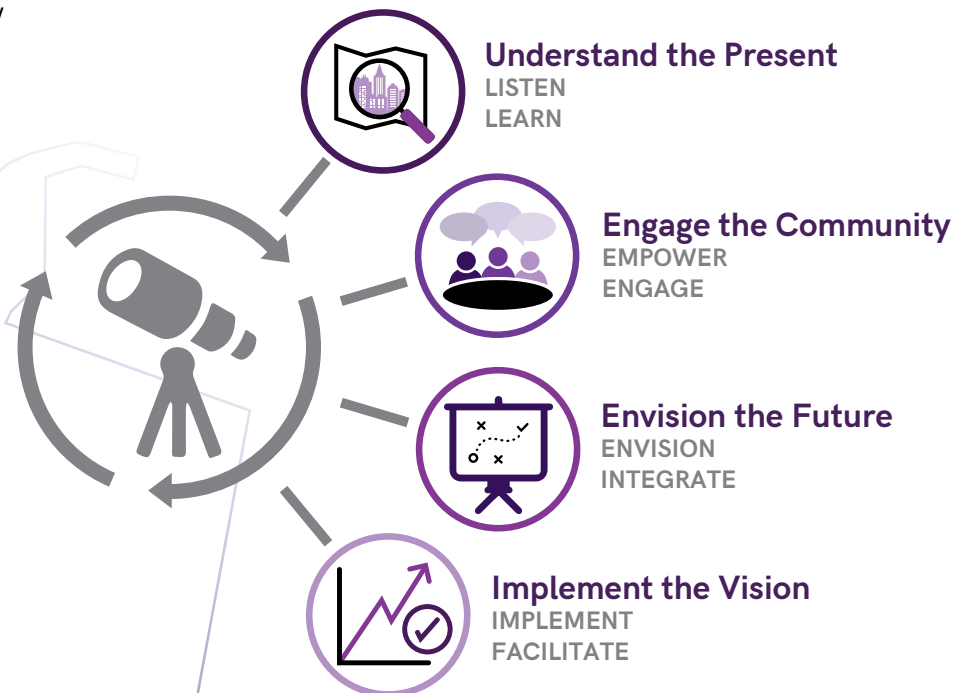
An inclusive vision statement empowers a community, helps rally resources and can be a catalyst for building capacity within the community's organization and leadership structure.

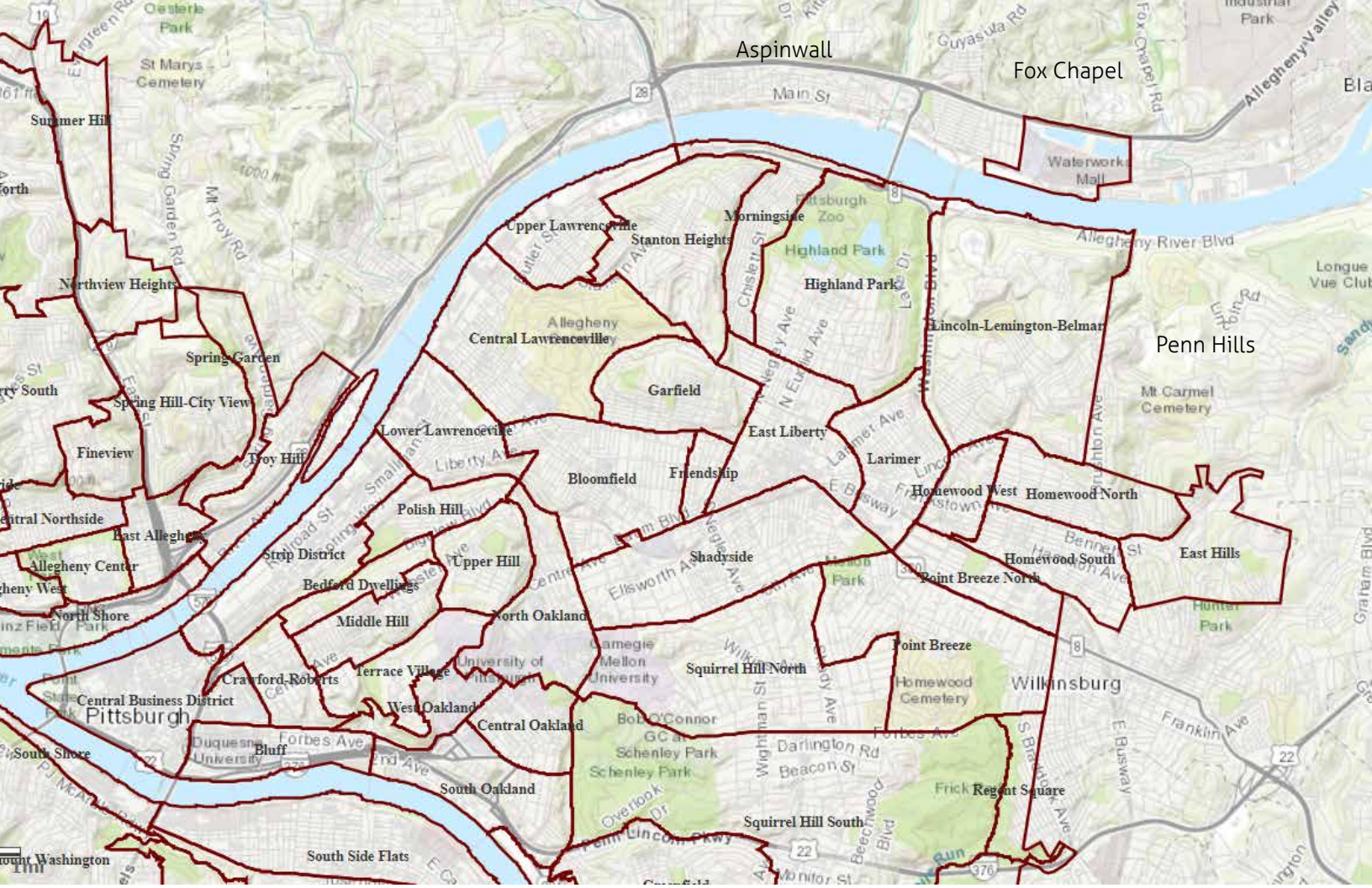
Community capacity building is the continuous process required to foster the pride and appropriate local leadership that allows communities, through their members, to take responsibility for their own development.

Project Goals

Beyond creating stronger connections with the community through the visioning process, engaging residents from day one leads to diversity, aligned goals, trust and belonging. The goals of this process were to:

- Find consensus about the values of different community groups and residents.
- Discover shared goals that align with community priorities.
- Identify neighborhoods with enough human capacity to co-lead the future planning process.
- Create a greater sense of belonging and trust with residents





Source: <https://pittsburghpa.maps.arcgis.com/apps/OnePane/basicviewer/index.html?appid=7b284a2998454505a6f000d24ee1ded5>

Neighborhood Context

East Hills serves as the gateway neighborhood to the City of Pittsburgh, sharing a border with Homewood North and South, Wilkinsburg Borough, and the Municipality of Penn Hills.

East Hills is part of the Homewood, East Hills, East Liberty, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and Larimer Protection Initiative (HELP), which is a comprehensive resident-driven initiative to protect, strengthen, and rebuild targeted East End communities. The guiding principles of HELP are that community planning is resident-driven; collaborating across neighborhood boundaries; replacing concentrated poverty with mixed-income communities; and avoiding displacement to protect low and moderate income families as the neighborhoods experience new investment.

The East End of Pittsburgh has some of the City’s fastest growing development corridors (East Liberty), the largest new public housing development (Larimer-Choice Neighborhoods), one of the greatest neighborhood concentrations of African-American homeowners (Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar) along with one of the City’s most blighted neighborhoods (Homewood).

Developing the Vision

East Hills Community Visioning Timeline



Working with the Community to Frame the Vision

To develop the vision for East Hills, the Department of City Planning and the East Hills Consensus Group worked with the planning team to revise the engagement plan due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All engagement efforts, between December 2020 and June 2021 were held online via Zoom or Teams. We held three community visioning workshops - one each month - to determine what the residents think, feel, and envision for their neighborhood. To publicize the workshops, a meeting advertisement was mailed to all households, as well as posted on the DCP Facebook page, the East Hills Consensus Group Facebook page, posted on the Engage PGH project page, distributed via email to all past participants, and flyers were posted around the neighborhood.

To supplement what was learned in the workshops, we also created a newsletter and utilized the Engage PGH project page to host online surveys. Paper copies of the survey were made available at a pop up tent as part of LOVE Day in East Hills, distributed at the July East Hills Consensus Group meeting, and distributed to homes along streets in target areas of the community (who were not represented at the workshops or pop up event).

The DCP, Mayor's Office, and Consensus Group organized a site visit with the planning team to highlight some of the priority issues and areas in need within the neighborhood.

Lastly, a community meeting was held (in person and streamed online via the DCP Facebook page) in September to present the draft plan.



East Hills Visioning Workshop #1

The first workshop was designed to introduce the Community Visioning project to East Hills residents and establish a baseline of information; specifically, to gather qualitative data that the existing conditions analysis could not gather. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, this meeting was held online via Zoom.

Participants were invited to answer a series of open ended questions covering topics such as what like about the neighborhood, what improvements are needed, what amenities they have and which they are lacking, and what might draw more residents to the neighborhood.

Main takeaways:

- Overall, East Hills is struggling with generational disinvestment. Residents often feel like the forgotten, neglected corner of the City.
- There are basic improvements to the built environment that are in serious need of attention, such as broken streetlights, cracked sidewalks, overgrown weeds, and lack of safe crosswalks.
- Although it is the gateway into the City from the East, there is nothing to welcome visitors into the City or let people know they are in East Hills. The neighborhood lacks branding.

Meeting Date

December 10th, 2021

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



via Zoom

- There is history that can be incorporated into branding, signage and public art.
- Safety is a concern, especially regarding speeding and roadways. Residents identified several roads that pose safety concerns, including Wilner, which provides access to the park. Better lighting and safer pedestrian access would allow more residents to utilize the park and open space.
- There needs to be better community services provided. Although parts of the neighborhood are well-served by events and services, they are only offered as part of individual housing developments. In particular, there need to be more activities for the youth – ages 14-20. Parks and recreation facilities need upgraded.
- There is opportunity for new development. Need more businesses, local entrepreneurs, and blight needs to be addressed throughout the neighborhood.

One word you would use to describe East Hills:

- Traumatized
- Struggling
- Resilient
- Family
- Disparities
- Forgotten
- Separated/Un-unified

Favorite Things about East Hills:

- Community Pride
- Community Events/Community Days
- Rural feel
- Entrepreneurs
- Parks

Needed Improvements:

- Safety (Lighting/Speeding Enforcement)
- Signage/Branding
- Streetscape Beautification
- Park Maintenance
- Football/Baseball Field(s) Maintenance

Amenities needed:

- Stores
 - Retail/Professional services
 - Restaurants
 - Grocery
- Basketball Court
- Park Upgrades
- Employment Opportunities
- Senior Center
- Youth Recreational Center
- Home Ownership Programs

East Hills Visioning Workshop #2

The second workshop (also held online) served to review what we have heard so far from residents and continue the visioning process. This meeting focused on identifying more specific locations that are areas of concern and/or opportunities for investment.

Key Visioning Themes:

The planning team presented the following draft key visioning themes that have been developed, based on public input received to date:

- Address safety concerns
- Improve parks, recreation and connectivity
- Create gateways and beautification of corridors
- Engage the community through events/activities
- Encourage more businesses/amenities
- Eliminate and redevelop blighted housing

Attendees agreed with the visioning themes, and also suggested adding another about the need to unify the community. There was a discussion on how the western portion of the neighborhood is comprised mostly of older homeowners and feels very disconnected from the eastern portion of the community. Many of the older residents in that area do not identify as living in East Hills.

The planning team led attendees through a visioning exercise using an interactive online mapping tool, which allowed us to plot specific locations as they were identified. The goal of this exercise was to identify targeted locations within the neighborhood that needed improvements in different categories. Participants were asked to think BIG & SMALL and collaborate on where they thought some projects could begin to take shape. The results of this exercise are shown on the map to the right.

Meeting Date

January 21st, 2021

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM






via Zoom

Main takeaways:

- Specific areas were identified that need weeding and rubbish from illegal dumping needs removed
- Park Hill Drive has a homeowners association that needs to better communicate with neighborhood officials.
- Signage should be installed at main entrances to the community:
 - Frankstown Road and East Hills Drive (welcome to the City of Pittsburgh/East Hills neighborhood)
 - Sunrise Avenue and Robinson Boulevard
 - Frankstown Road and Oakwood Street
 - Oakwood Street and Tioga Street/ Moosehart Street
- Residents identified specific areas that would benefit from speed bumps and pedestrian right-of-ways
- Sidewalks which need to be repaired were also identified in many areas
- Intersections where lighting is needed were also mapped
- Areas mainly around the center of the neighborhood were identified as prime locations for new businesses.

Public Input Survey East Hills

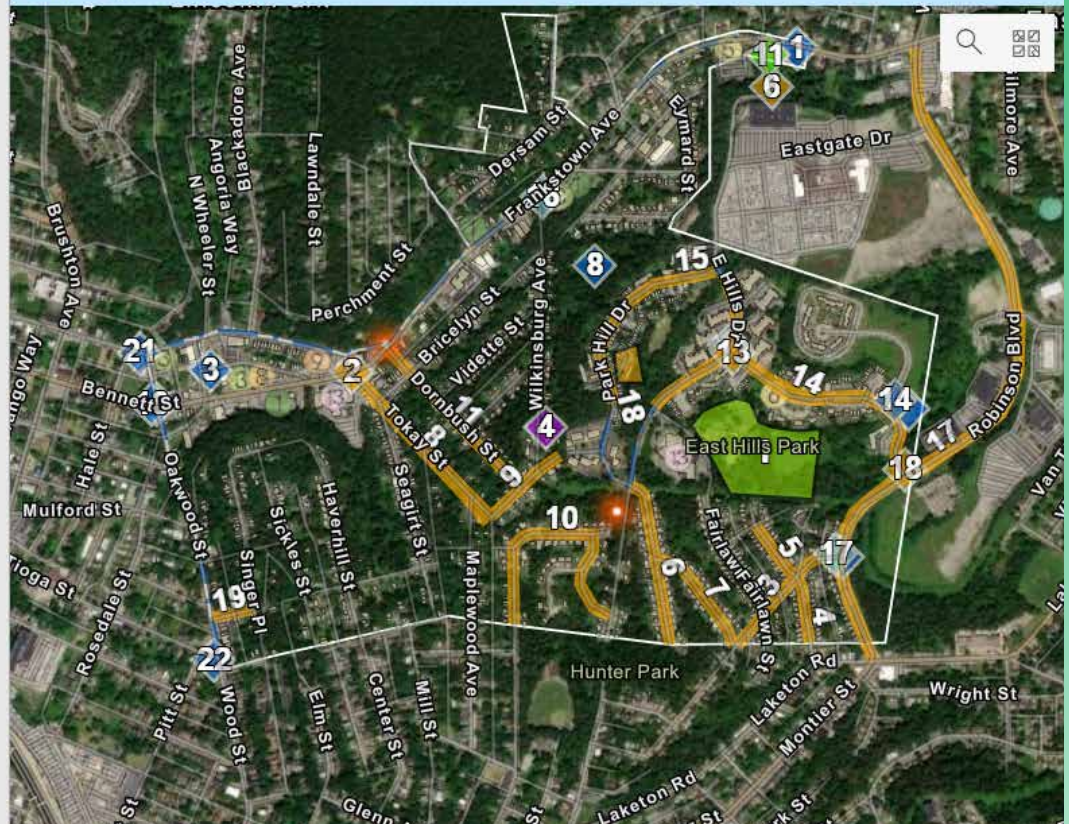
Points

-  Connectivity/Mobility
-  Economic Development
-  Housing
-  Parks/Open Space
-  Safety/Environmental
-  Vacant Lots/Redevelopment

Lines

-  Connectivity/Mobility
-  Economic Development
-  Housing
-  Parks/Open Space
-  Safety/Environmental
-  Vacant Lots/Redevelopment

This map shows the information mapped from the meeting on Thursday, 1/21. As the survey is filled out, additional points will be added to this map. You can also click on the points and read other responses submitted.



After the visioning workshop was concluded, the mapping exercise was made available on the City's Engage PGH project page. The public was able to go online and add new points and comments for areas where they wanted to see improvements.

East Hills Visioning Workshop #3

The final workshop (also held online) consisted of a presentation of the visioning results to date along with an interactive whiteboard exercise.

Vision Statement + Key Themes:

The following draft vision statement, along with revised key themes, were presented to the attendees for review and consideration.

"As the eastern gateway of the City of Pittsburgh, East Hills is a safe, vibrant and unified neighborhood, offering accessible parks, locally-grown businesses and a variety of housing."

- Address safety concerns
- Improve parks, recreation and connectivity
- Create gateways and beautification of corridors
- Engage the community through events/activities
- Encourage more businesses/amenities
- Eliminate and redevelop blighted housing
- Unify the community

The final visioning workshop focused on design improvements. The planning team engaged attendees in a whiteboard exercise, which allowed the design team to sketch concepts in real time to address the priority improvements related to community safety, connectivity, and parks and recreation.

Main takeaways:

- Gateways
 - Possible locations for gateways include Frankstown Road + East Hills Drive, Frankstown + Oakwood, Oakwood + Bennet, and Robinson + Sunrise.

Meeting Date

February 18th, 2021

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM



via Zoom

- There are no welcome signs or any "East Hills" identification signs now. Residents would like to see the neighborhood have an identity that is reinforced through gateway signs, landscaping, and public art.
- Safe Connections
 - High priority intersections include Wilner + Robinson Boulevard and Sunrise + Robinson.
 - There is a lack of sidewalks, bus shelters, safe crosswalks, and traffic calming (i.e. speed-bumps) throughout the neighborhood.
- Parks + Recreation
 - East Hills Park is the only public park located within East Hills neighborhood. It is a city-owned park and recent improvements include the spray park and renovated basketball court.
 - Improvements needed include lighting, signage, improved amenities and new facilities, programming, and connections to nearby streets and neighborhoods.
 - An updated community youth and senior center is needed.
 - It was noted that residents on the western side of the neighborhood don't consider themselves a part of East Hills and this create a divide and dis-investment.

East Hills Community Survey

Once the draft vision and key themes were prepared, we developed a community survey to validate what we heard at the visioning workshops.

The survey was available online at the Engage PGH website and publicized via direct emails and the East Hills Consensus Group Facebook page. We also printed paper copies and distributed at Love Day in East Hills, volunteers delivered surveys to homes in targeted areas.

Q1: Do you feel that the following vision statement accurately represents your goals for your community:

"East Hills residents are working toward building a safe, vibrant, and unified neighborhood, offering accessible parks, locally-grown businesses and a variety of housing."

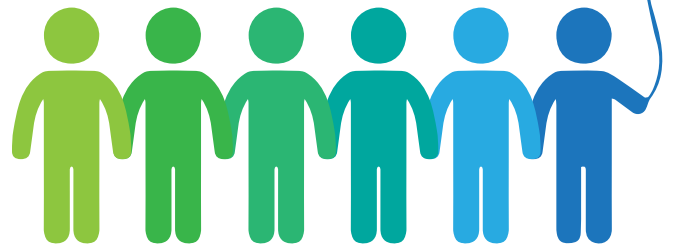
**72%
agree**

Q2: Rank the key themes in order of importance (1 is most important, 7 is least).

1. Improve public safety
2. Eliminate blighted housing
3. Unify the Neighborhood
4. Encourage more businesses/amenities
5. Improve parks, recreation, and access
6. Engage the community through events
7. Create gateways and beautification

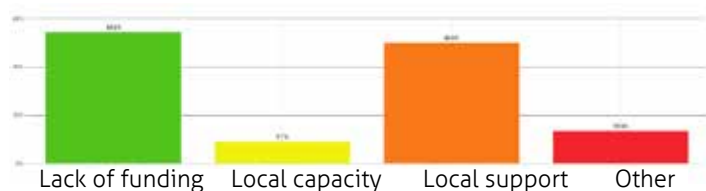
Q3: Are there any other issues that the Community Visioning Plan should address?

Additional Youth/ Young Adult Programs



- Community safety, health, involving residents
- Need more dumpsters, lighting, sidewalks, overgrown trees/weeds, parking areas, speed bumps
- Gun violence prevention
- Mentoring programs for young adults and youth
- Programming and productive resources for youth

Q4: What barriers might prevent us from implementing this plan?



- Residents don't always participate
- Better communication with resident council

Q5: Are you aware of the City's 311 Response Center to report non-emergent concerns/questions?



Q6: If yes, was your reported concern addressed?

- Yes (2)
- Yes, but it took years
- Yes, speeding along East Hills Drive
- No (3)

Q7: Please list potential organizations that should be involved in this plan.

- Consensus Group, Petra, East Hills Community Services, City Planning, Men Against Destruction, Defending Against Drug & Substance Abuse

Q8: Are you a member of East Hills Consensus Group?



Q9: Have you attended one of our online Community Visioning Workshops (December 2020, January 2021, February 2021)?



A Vision for East Hills

What is a Community Vision Statement?

A vision statement is meant to encapsulate what community members most value about their community and what they want it to be in the future. It is meant to inspire residents to work together to achieve the vision.

The vision statement for East Hills was crafted through the collaborative community visioning process, involving not only the leaders and members of the East Hills Consensus Group but also the neighborhood residents and stakeholders.

What is the purpose?

The purpose of the vision statement is to focus hopes and aspirations and frame the overall goal of the neighborhood. The vision statement is meant to reflect commonly held values and address quality of life areas.

It sets the forward looking strategic framework for the neighborhood so that community leaders can have the perspective necessary to make informed decisions on community issues as they arise and target high priority community investments.

"East Hills residents are working toward building a safe, vibrant and unified neighborhood to offer accessible parks, locally-grown businesses and a variety of housing."

VISION



What are the Themes?

To support the vision and organize the overall community goals, we identified key performance areas that if addressed effectively, they will “bend the trend” towards the desired future for

East Hills. After gathering all of the community input and research data, the goals and strategies for East Hills fall within the following three themes:

A unified neighborhood with more capacity



A unified neighborhood with more capacity.

Community unity was a major theme discussed during the visioning process. Residents talked a lot about how the neighborhood feels like two separate communities - split geographically in the middle. Many residents who live in the western half don't identify as living in East Hills. There are also a lot of questions and concerns around the capacity within the existing community organization's structure to take on projects and implement the overall vision and plan.

A safer community



A safer community.

The overall safety of living in East Hills was top of mind. Not only from a crime aspect, but also feeling safe as a pedestrian crossing the street, using areas of the park that are poorly lit, waiting for a bus along a street without a bus shelter or adequate sidewalks. We know that crime is more likely to occur when people are unable to meet their most basic needs: an education, a stable income, and access to the food and health care they need to survive. Investments that focus on addressing these underlying social needs can help strengthen public safety, as can investments that improve the physical environment in the community.

A healthier community that meets basic needs



A healthier community.

Finally, all residents are entitled to live in a healthy community. Land use affects people's health, so making sure that the residents have access to safe parks, healthy food, and affordable housing is a vital key performance area.



Clockwise from top left: East Hills Community Meeting September 2021, Love Day event June 2021, children's coloring of East Hills community map, residents participating in the community visioning study at Love Day, community visioning bus tour August 2021, community visioning site visit August 2021 (source: E. Holdings, Inc. 2021)

Neighborhood Snapshot

About

East Hills is the eastern-most neighborhood in the City of Pittsburgh. A small neighborhood, measuring just 0.541 square miles in total area it borders the Homewood neighborhood to the west, Wilkinsburg Borough to the south and the Municipality of Penn Hills to the north and east.

East Hills is accessible via PA 380/Frankstown Road and Robinson Boulevard (the Green Belt). The Port Authority of Allegheny County offers two bus routes, providing public transit access to Downtown and neighboring communities. In addition, East Hills is located close to the East Busway.

As part of a \$1.3 million YouthBuild grant secured with ACTION Housing that focused on the East Hills neighborhood, 80 youth received training in construction and also received basic educational services. YouthBuild programs in the United States and internationally help low-income young people learn construction skills to help build affordable housing and other community assets such as community centers and schools.

Land Use

There are three distinct neighborhoods within East Hills. The western half of the neighborhood, along with the portions of the Frankstown Road corridor, are similar to Homewood, with most of the housing built between 1900 and 1960 and fairly to severely blighted. The southwestern portion of East Hills is a small, mostly well-kept suburban neighborhood that is similar in design and form to neighboring Wilkinsburg.

Residential Uses

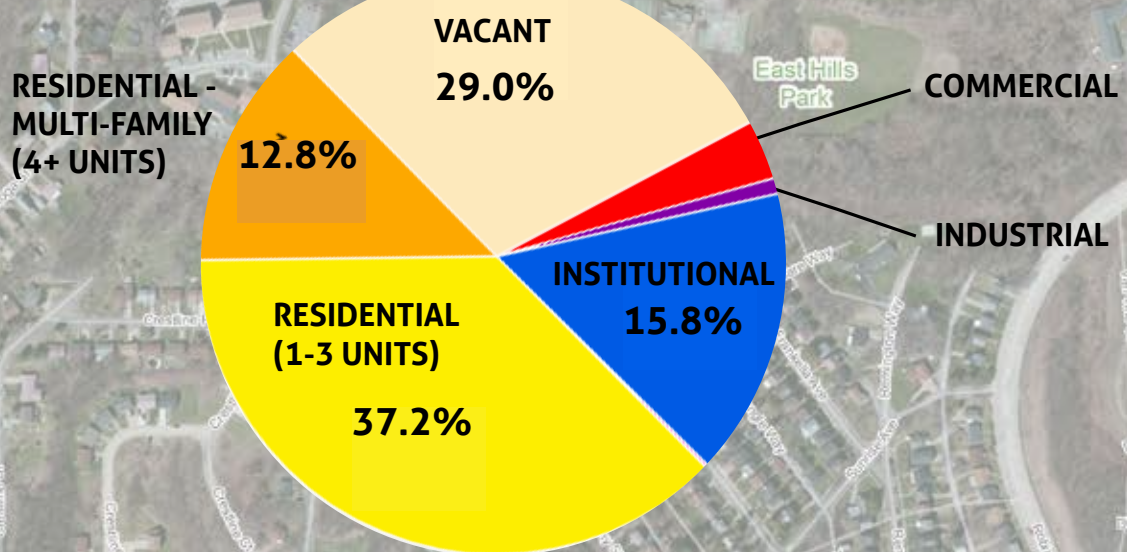
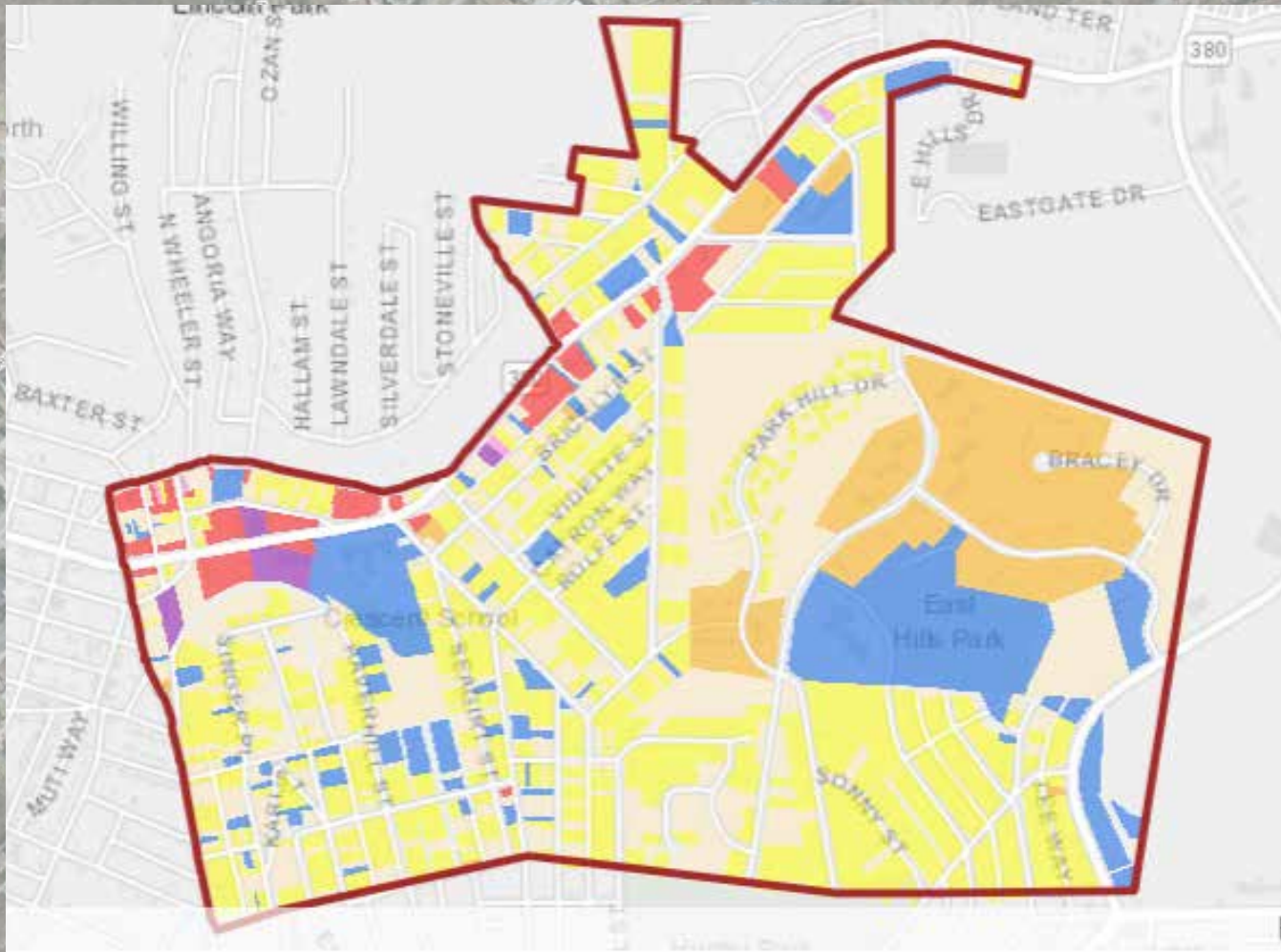
The neighborhood is primarily residential in nature with single family homes, townhouses and apartment buildings. There are 1,613 total housing units.

Much of the eastern part of East Hills was originally vacant land until it was purchased by ACTION Housing, Inc. in the early 1960s. The neighborhood has undergone three phases of development. The first phase consisted of 187 non-subsidized, individually owned townhouses and 91 subsidized rental units. The second phase contained 326 townhouses and apartments renting to low-income families. The third phase, completed in 1972, consisted of 140 subsidized units which were converted in 1975 from rentals to a resident-owned cooperative.

Commercial Uses

Frankstown Road serves as the commercial corridor in the neighborhood and connects it to neighboring commercial areas in Penn Hills. The East Hills Shopping Center is actually in Penn Hills, and offers a grocery store, retail stores and laundromat.

Existing Land Use



Institutional Uses

Institutional uses comprise 15% of all land area. The largest institutional uses include:

East Hills Park - located on Wilner Drive, this City park is home to an amphitheater, two basketball courts, a baseball field, a spray park and walking trails.

East Hills Community Center - The Center provides on-site license child care, children and youth after school programs, family mentoring, emergency food bank, transportation assistance, housekeeping classes, computer classes, free baked goods, employment training, job placement, senior services, tutoring, boy and girl scouts, GED preparation, party rentals, toys for tots, volunteer work, fitness center, field trips, life skills and job readiness.

Crescent Early Childhood Center - Pittsburgh Public School (PPS) offers early childhood education programs to provide early learning opportunities for children from infancy through five-years of age.

Imani Christian Academy - Imani Christian

1 <https://www.imanichristianacademy.org/history>

2 [https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/PRESERVEPGH - Adopted_07-24-2012 \(Library Version\).pdf](https://apps.pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/PRESERVEPGH - Adopted_07-24-2012 (Library Version).pdf)

Academy is a private, Christian school located on East Hills Drive, next to East Hills Park. There are approximately 200 students in grades PK, K-12. The school has a graduation rate of 100% (of all seniors), representing a remarkable post-graduation story, particularly since it is 100% minority enrollment and where nationally, less than 65% of African American males finish high school.¹

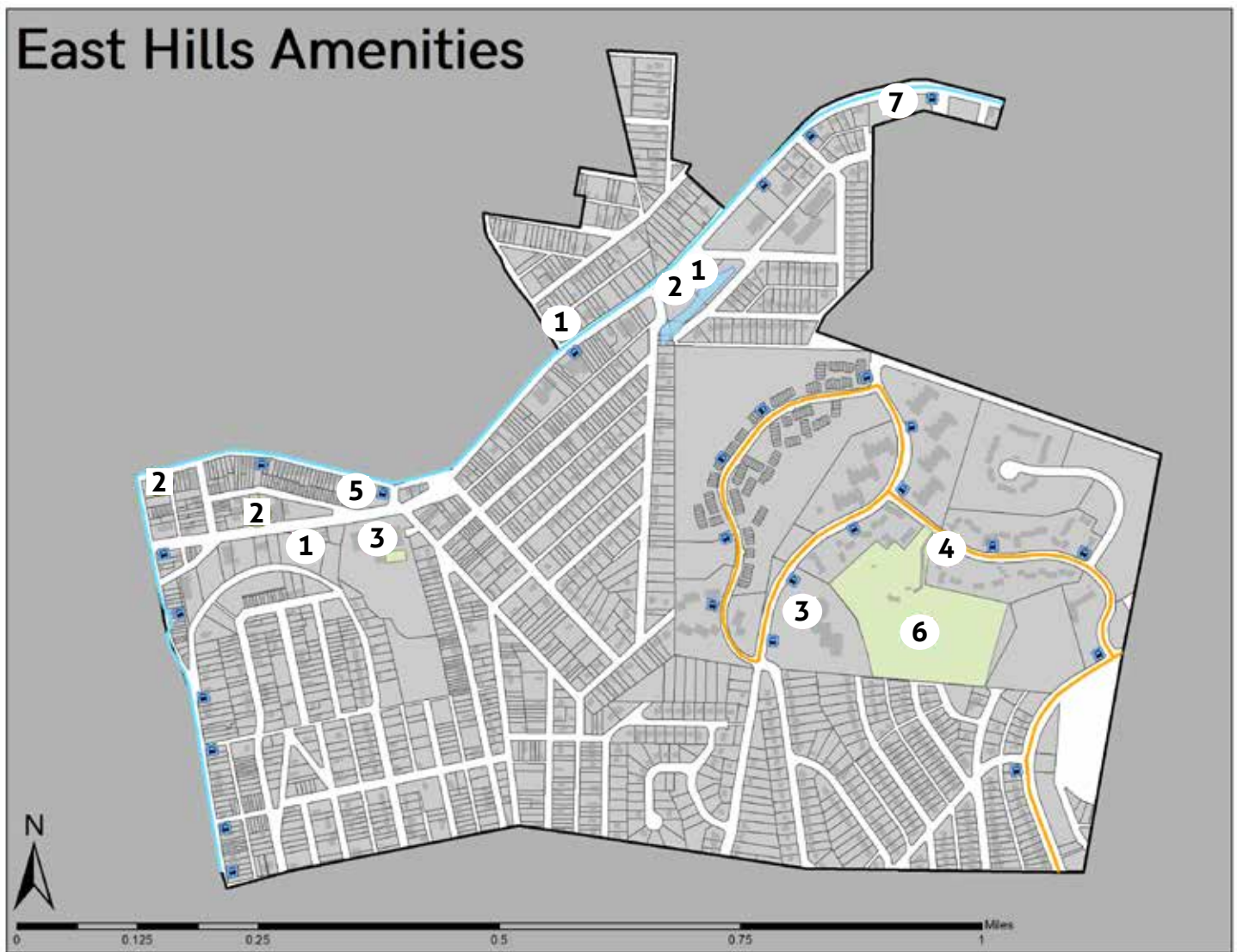
Historic Resources

PRESERVEPGH is the City's adopted preservation plan and includes opportunities and recommendations for the preservation of historic resources within the various City neighborhoods. The plan does not identify any historic resources within East Hills neighborhood.²



East Hills Park spray park (source: E. Holdings, Inc. 2021)

East Hills Amenities



- 1 Auto Body Shop
- 2 Bar/Restaurant
- 3 Church
- 4 Community Center
- 5 Convenience Store
- 6 Park



Bus Stops

77 - Penn Hills

79 - East Hills

This map shows field data collected as part of the visioning process including points of interest, including public buildings, parks, and active commercial businesses, along with bus routes and stops.

Who Lives Here?

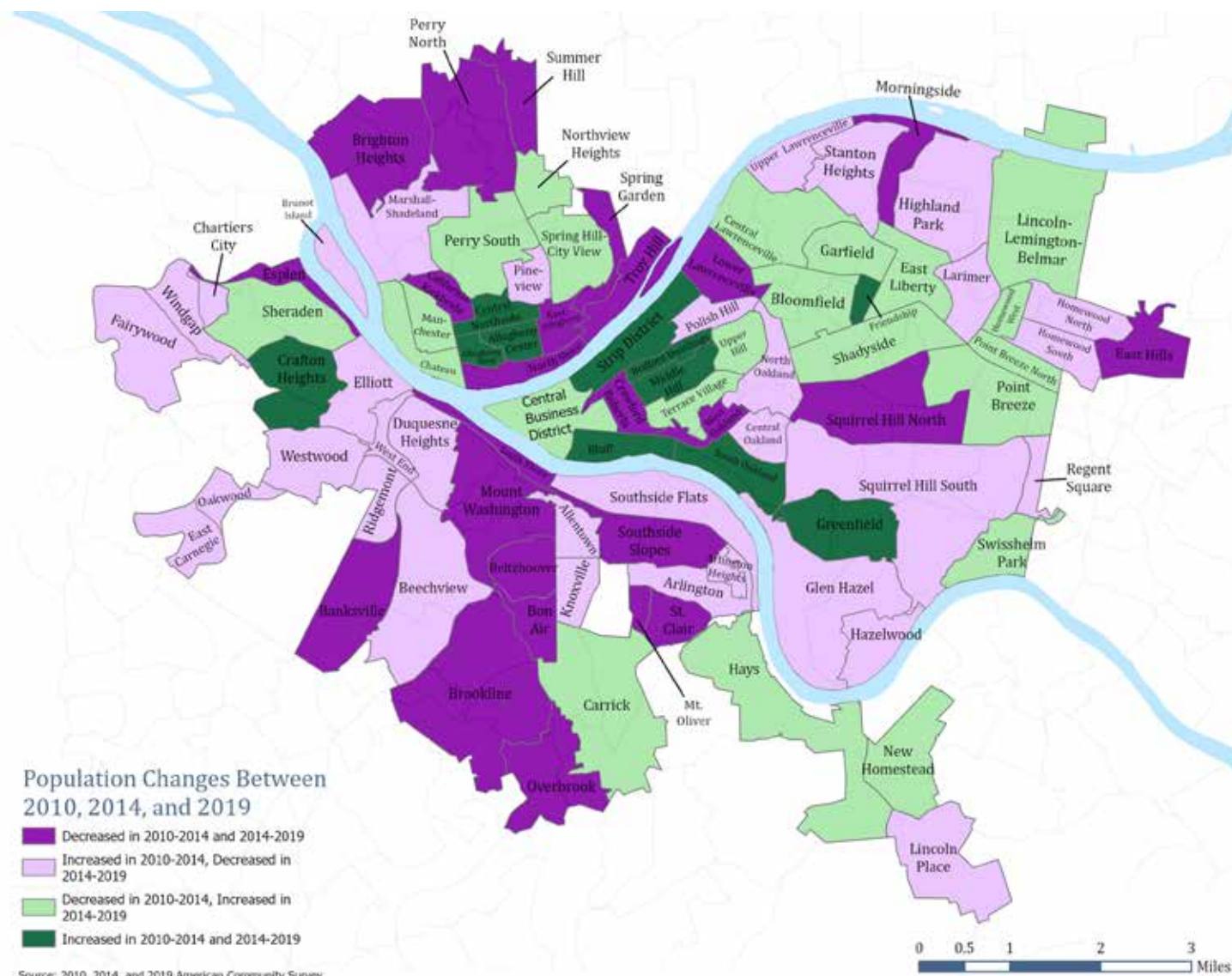
East Hills is one of the smallest City neighborhoods. At 0.54 square miles, East Hills is one of the smallest.

Population decreased by almost 10% between 2013 and 2018. Population decreased from 3,065 in 2013 to 2,761 in 2018 (-9.9%).

The City's overall population losses have stabilized; but the future is uncertain. The City is currently preparing ForgingPGH, the City's first ever comprehensive plan. The Conditions and Trends Report (March 2020) notes that some sources have the Allegheny County population forecast as continuing to lose population or start growing again.

The 2020 Census just released noted that Allegheny County added 27,230 residents during the past decade, for a 2.2% increase. The County's population is now just over 1.25 million people, and it represents the first increase in the county's population since 1960.

The City of Pittsburgh's population slid a little further — but by less than 1 percent — to land at 302,971. The East End neighborhoods have mostly continued to experience population decline. Other than Shadyside and Friendship, Homewood North and South are the only neighborhoods in the East End to see any population growth since 2010. East Hills has lost 10% of its population since then.



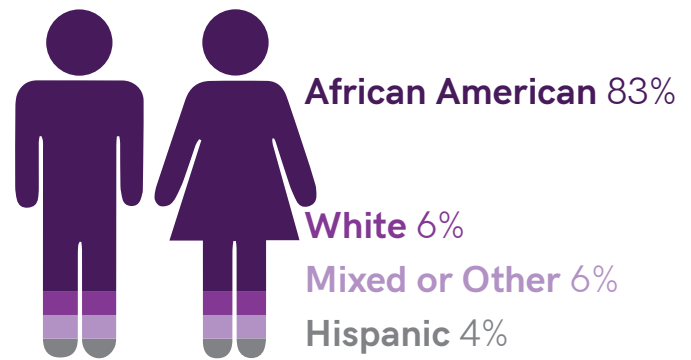
East Hills ranks 78 out of 88 Pittsburgh neighborhoods in terms of diversity, with a score of 22. Racial composition has remained constant, at 83% black, 11% white and 3% two or more races.

The City's African American population is decreasing, causing an increase in Allegheny County municipalities. The 2020 Census reports that the City's African American population is 13.4 percent lower than in 2010 — a drop of 10,660 people, to 69,050. At the same time, the African American population in the rest of Allegheny County grew by 12,477. In fact, 97 of its 130 municipalities saw increases. Taken together, the numbers offer strong proof that African American residents have moved across the city line and into nearby communities.

U.S. census reveal shows that of the 32 municipalities in Allegheny County with more than 10,000 residents as of 2020 — not including Pittsburgh — all but three saw their African American populations rise. In Penn Hills, the number of African American residents increased by about 14.5%, or 2,100 people. Monroeville also gained more than 1,000 new African American residents, a 32% increase from 2010. Also seeing sizable increases were Brentwood, Ross, Mt. Lebanon, North Versailles, Moon and Munhall.

While some African Americans might be leaving by choice - reasons including the quality of schools, community safety (real and perceived), and the availability of housing choices - more than likely, African Americans are being forced out to find cheaper housing. The City's East End neighborhoods account for a large percentage of the City's African American population and are particularly vulnerable to displacement.

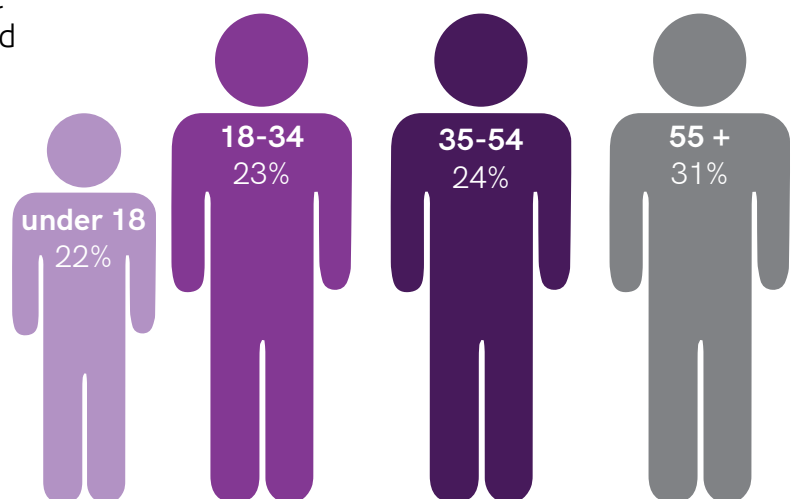
Racial Diversity



The neighborhood is getting older. The age cohorts of 18-24 and 65 and over saw increases (31% and 30% respectively) but all other age cohorts dropped. Most significantly, East Hills saw a 40% decrease in children under 18.

East Hills has seen a significant increase in the number of households since 2010 along with an increase in senior-led households (over 65 years of age) and millennial-led households (under 35 years of age). East Hills has a higher median age (35-45) than the City (32.9).

Many of the single-family homes are now occupied by older residents, whose families have moved out/away. The younger residents are renters, living in the apartment buildings in the eastern portion of the neighborhood.



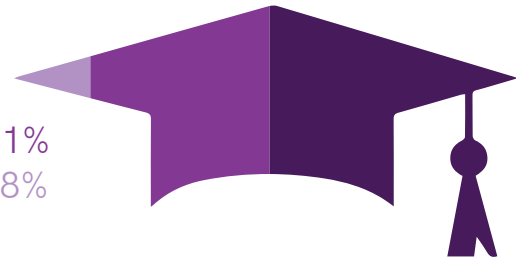
Educational attainment is

improving. The percentage of residents with a high school diploma or less has decreased over the years, while the rate of college degrees has increased. There was a 53% decrease in residents without a high school diploma and a 58% increase in residents with a Graduate or Professional Degree between 2013-2018.

The median household income is less than half of the City. Median household income in East Hills is just \$17,572, whereas the City of Pittsburgh is \$44,092. However, poverty levels have actually decreased, with a 60% decrease in persons living under 50% of the poverty threshold and a 16% decrease in those living under 100% of the poverty threshold. Approximately 51% of renters are considered cost-burdened, which are the most vulnerable of residents for potential displacement, compared

Education

High School or less: 51%
Some Higher Education: 31%
Post-Secondary Degree: 18%



Household Income



<\$25,000: 55%

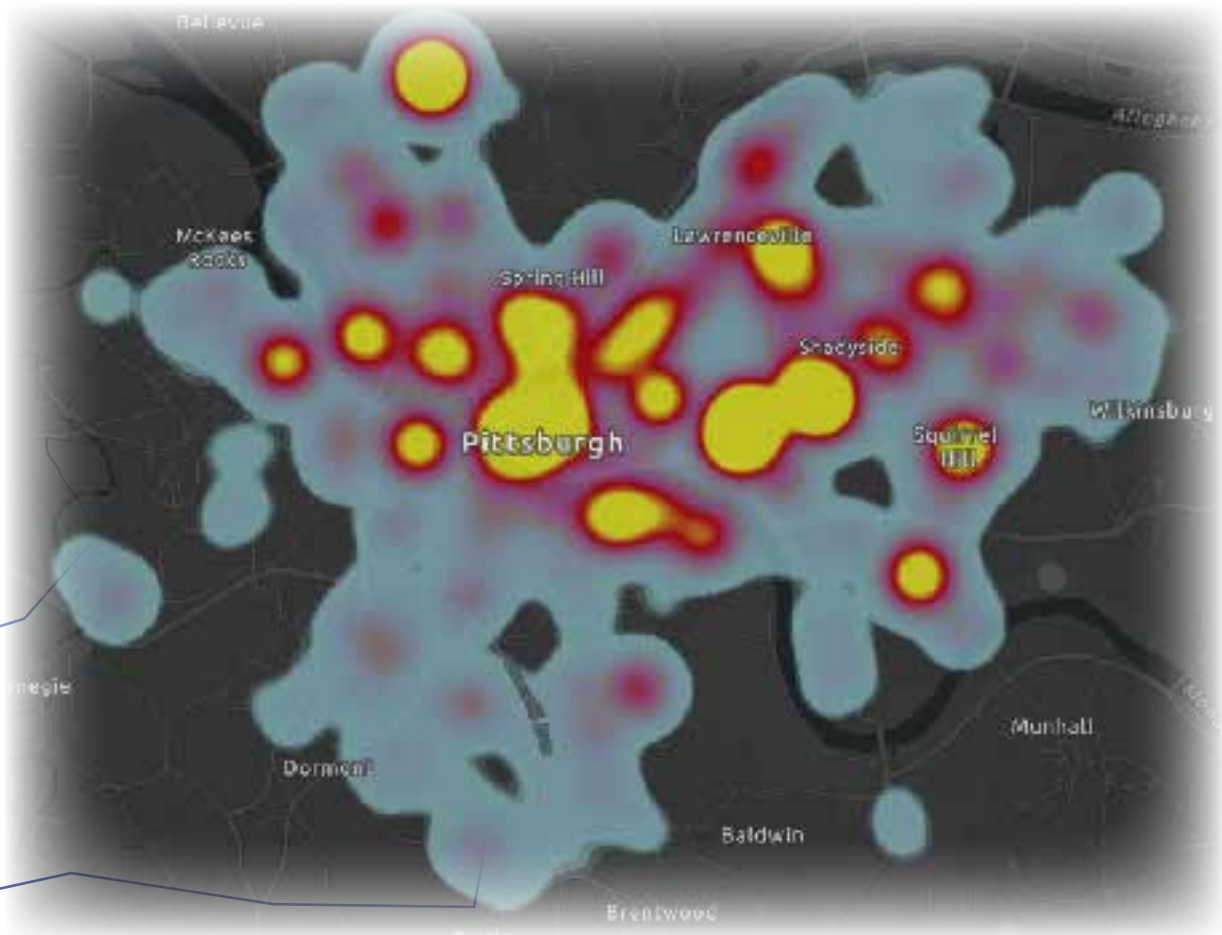
\$25-44,000: 15%

\$45-74,000: 15%

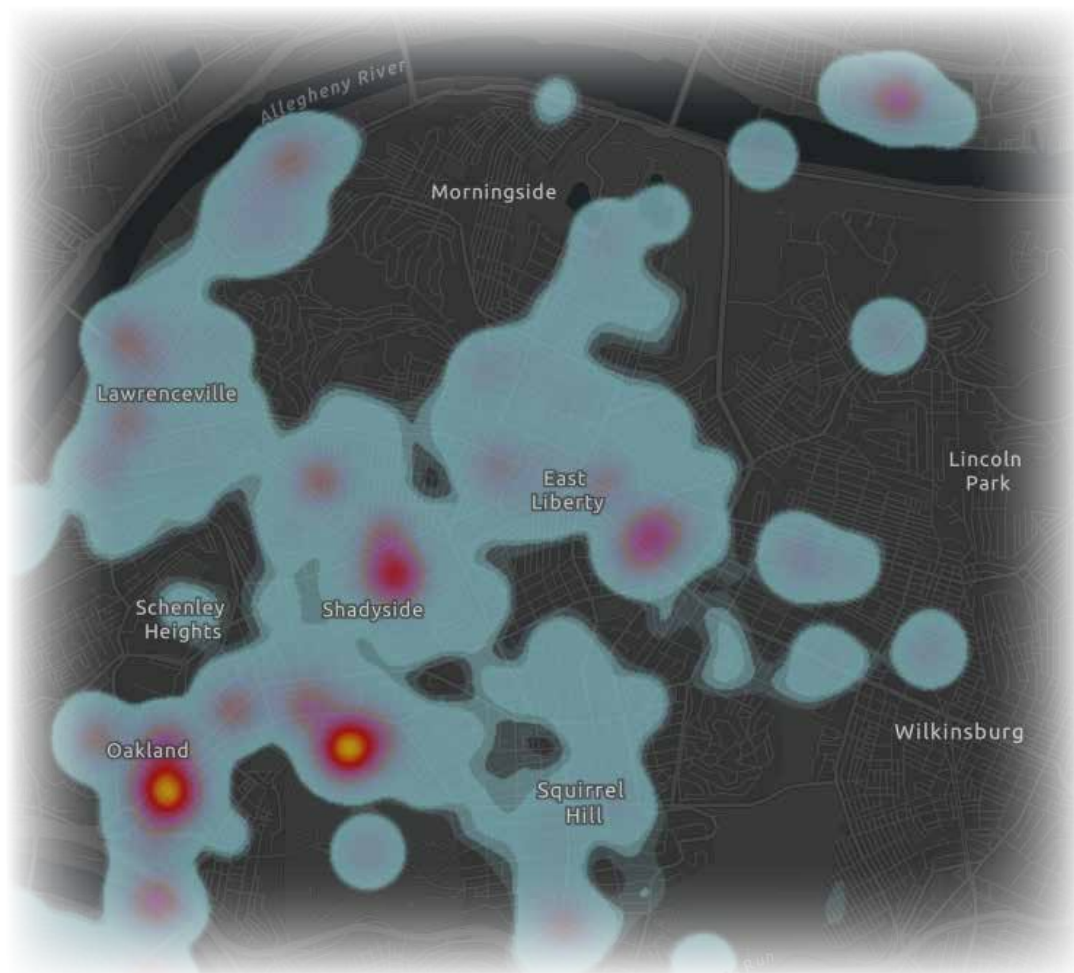
\$75,000+: 15%

to 20% citywide.

JOBS PER ACRE, FORGINGPGH MAP



**BUILDING PERMIT
VALUE 2013-2018,
FORGINGPGH MAP**



There are just 281 total jobs/employees in the East Hills neighborhood. With very limited employment options in the neighborhood, residents must go elsewhere for work. Healthcare is the primary industry in which residents work (27%), followed by hospitality (11%) and administrative services (9%).

Job growth in the City is concentrated near Downtown, the Southside and the East End. East Liberty is responsible for the majority of job growth in the East End since 2014. East Liberty and Larimer have benefited significantly in recent years as millions of dollars have been invested into Bakery Square and adjacent developments.

Recommendations

The Department of City Planning created a Neighborhood Plan Guide, outlining the framework for how they want to organize all of their neighborhood plans. The East Hills Community Vision Plan has been organized to follow this framework of a vision statement, goals, and policies, which then include projects, programs, and partnerships.

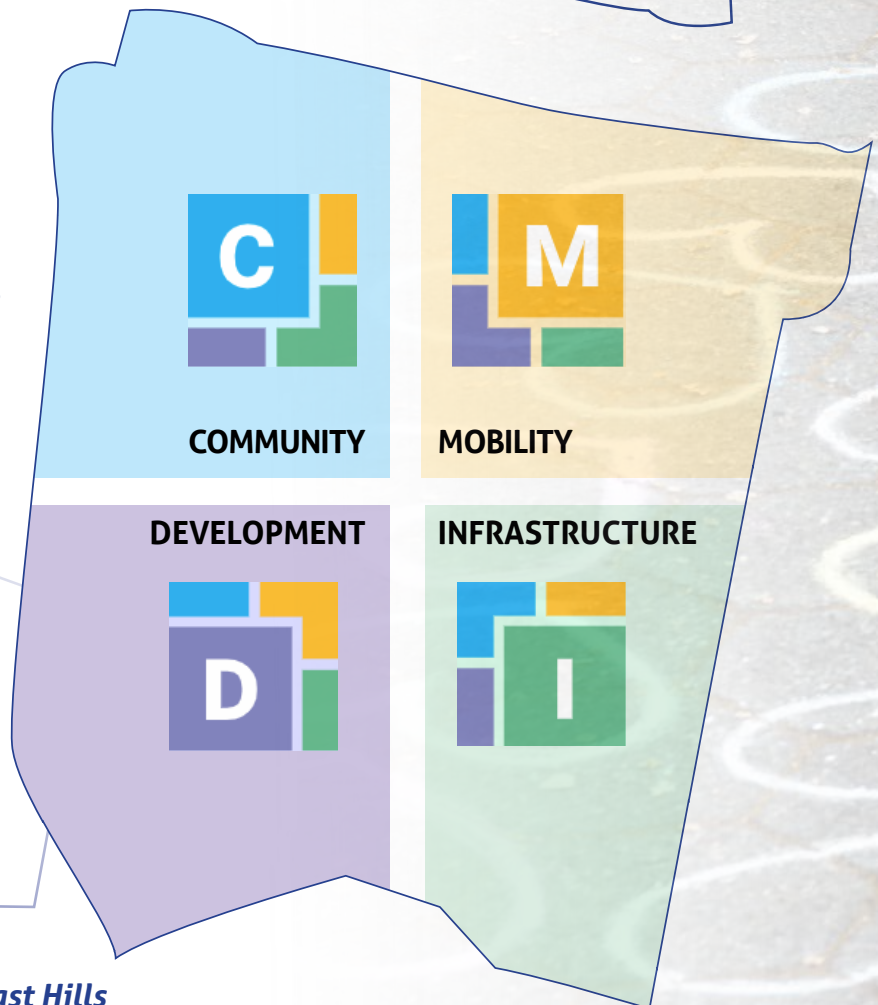
The Vision Statement provides a shared description of what the neighborhood will be in 10 years if the plan is successful. Recommendations were then developed to support the vision, organized into the City's four themes: Community, Mobility, Development,

and Infrastructure. Each of the four themes has corresponding goals and policies.

It is important to note that the vision statement, goals, and policies are what the Planning Commission will adopt as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. The projects, programs and actions will be reviewed, but will not be formally adopted to ensure that the plan is a flexible document that can respond to changes over time.



"East Hills residents are working toward building a safe, vibrant, and unified neighborhood, offering accessible parks, locally-grown businesses and a variety of housing."





The goals are long-term outcomes the plan will achieve by implementing programs, policies, and projects.



Set a preferred direction and describe what must be done to achieve the goals.



Projects

Are discrete actions for a list of implementation partners to take on and complete.



Programs

Are a set of activities that seek to realize a particular long-term aim



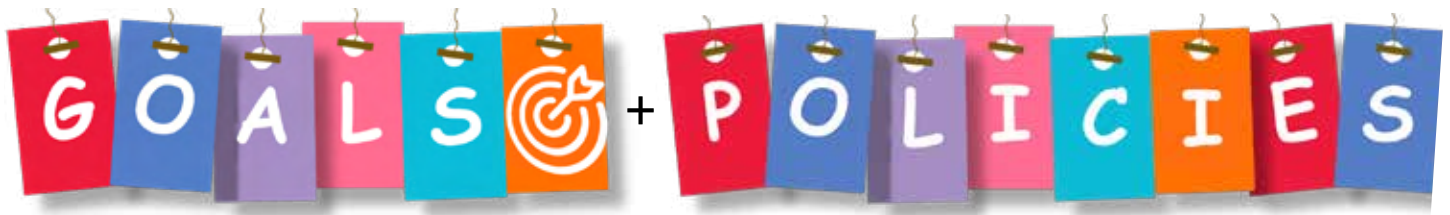
Partnerships

Are commitments by organizations to work together to advance an outcome.

COMMUNITY

A stylized graphic featuring a light blue hand with a purple outline, holding a bar chart. The bar chart has four bars of different colors: purple, green, orange, and blue. The blue bar is the tallest and has a white letter 'C' on it. The background is white with a light blue wavy line at the bottom.

The Community Chapter focuses on the existing residents, employees, students, and visitors of the neighborhood and how they can be better served.



Goal C1: We need more capacity.

- >**Strategy C1.1:** Establish the EHCG as the community voice by creating and leveraging partnerships..
- >**Strategy C1.2:** Prepare an organizational strategic plan.
- >**Strategy C1.3:** Recruit. Recruit. Recruit.
- > **Strategy C1.4:** Serve as a central clearinghouse for residents.
- Strategy C1.5:** Find a local resident to assist with grant writing.

Goal C2: We want to create a more unified neighborhood.

- >**Strategy C2.1:** Create gateways at key locations.
- >**Strategy C2.2:** Establish a public art program.

Goal C2: We want a safer community.

- >**Strategy C3.1:** Strategy C3.1: Continue to maintain a solid relationship with the Zone 5 Police Department and local community officers.
- >**Strategy C3.2:** Turn on our lights.



Goal C1: We need more *capacity.*

On the ground today...

> ***The East Hills Consensus Group is volunteer-based and is in need of more members.***

The East Hills Consensus Group (EHCG) is the Registered Community Organization (RCO) for the East Hills neighborhood.

The Consensus Group operates as a unified community collaboration that addresses concerns and issues within the community. The goal is to make East Hills one of Pittsburgh's most livable communities. Aiming to promote a positive image of the East Hills community, they want to address issues affecting residents of the community, including improving the quality of life, beautification, public safety, and youth.

The East Hills Consensus Group is the designated East Hills HELP Initiative representative.

Organizations involved in the EHCG include Cloaked In Favor Outreach Ministries, East Hills Homeowners Association, East Hills Residence Preservation and Development Group, East Tri-Borough Neighborhood Association, Healing Wounds Family Support Group, Petra International Ministries.

Currently, the EHCG partners with Operation Better Block, Petra, Neighborhood Partners, Rising Tide, PCRG, Zone 5 Police and the HELP Initiative.

The EHCG meets every third Thursday of the month at Petra International Ministries, located on East Hills Drive. The Visioning Plan revealed a gap in who the Consensus Group is able to reach. With assistance from the East Hills Residence Council, we are able to reach residents there. The challenge is in reaching the older residents, the homeowners in the western section of the neighborhood.



➤ *Strategy C1.1: Establish the EHCG as the community voice by creating and leveraging partnerships.*

Partnerships are key, especially when resources are scarce. The Consensus Group has an opportunity to leverage existing partnerships to help establish them as the community voice and help spearhead implementation efforts.

- HELP Initiative -the Homewood, East Hills, East Liberty, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and Larimer Protection Initiative (HELP) is a comprehensive resident-driven initiative to protect, strengthen, and rebuild targeted East End communities. <https://helppgh.org/>
- Neighborhood Partners <https://www.neighborhoodassociates.org/east-hills-1>
- Operation Better Block - Operation Better Block, Inc. (OBB) was established in 1970 to promote the revitalization of Homewood and works with surrounding neighborhoods. OBB also offers programs on outreach, safety, youth development, and community development (i.e. real estate development). <http://www.obbinc.org/>
- Petra International Ministries - Petra is located just outside East Hills boundary in Penn Hills, and has been a community partner and supporter of the East Hills Consensus Group. <https://petranation.org/>
- Pittsburgh Community Revitalization Group (PCRG) - PCRG is a a regional community development corporation that focuses on economic justice, equitable investment practices, and financial resources to revitalize communities throughout Allegheny County. CRG offers programs such as CRA Education & Advocacy, Community and Organization Development "Reimagining Communities Initiative" National Community Service Corp VISTA Program, Property Recycling and Blight Mitigation and Transit & Modality Education and Advocacy. <https://www.pcr.org/>
- Rising Tide - Rising Tide Partners collaborates with neighborhood organizations and residents to implement their community vision by employing restorative real estate practices, laying the groundwork for the wealth building and stability of residents who have suffered from systemic injustices in land-use decisions. <https://risingtidepartners.org/>
- Upstream Pittsburgh - Upstream works to engage communities and advocate for clean water and a healthy ecosystem as well as implement stormwater management and infrastructure projects. <https://upstreampg.org/>



What can we do?

>Strategy C1.2: Create neighborhood action teams.

Without strong leadership, there is concern that the Visioning Plan will not get implemented. City Planning has led the effort, but the Consensus Group is 100% volunteer efforts and no one has the capacity to take on major projects.

A community organization with capacity can provide community leadership, act as the community voice, and be responsible for the development and implementation of the Vision Plan.

- Continue to host regular community meetings. The EHCG currently meets at Petra, which is a great meeting space. However, it is not very accessible for residents without cars. The EHCG should consider finding alternative meeting space that is closer to the residential neighborhoods that is walkable for more residents.
- Establish regularly-scheduled discussions with City Councilperson Reverend Burgess and the Department of City Planning to ensure open lines of communication and collaboration on the implementation of the Vision plan.
- Advertise community meetings in print to reach residents without Internet access. Methods include flyers, door hangers, posters, window clings, temporary signs.
- Continue to actively use social media to alert the community about upcoming events and activities led by the Collaborative.
- Prepare and distribute a semi-annual community newsletter. Distribute it as a "welcome packet" for new residents – work with local realtors for distribution.
- Create a website for the EHCG that includes neighborhood information, registration to join the Group, upcoming meetings/events/projects, and other ways to get involved in the community.



>Strategy C1.3: Recruit. Recruit. Recruit.

A community group that represents community voices should be led by residents and invested stakeholders. The EHCG needs to recruit residents and subject matter experts to join the organization and help build its capacity and influence. Efforts to do so could include:

- Implementing a membership drive by attending local events, doing neighborhood canvassing or making requests on social media.
- Finding, recruiting, and leveraging local talent within the neighborhood. The EHCG needs to make specific requests and appeals to stakeholders and residents for committee help around grant writing, communications, and other professional services.

>Strategy C1.4: Serve as a central clearinghouse for residents.

The EHCG can serve as a central clearinghouse to help disseminate information to residents related to available programs. Many residents expressed a lack of knowledge about what programs might be available to help them with a myriad of issues - ranging from home repairs to business. These programs can be publicized via the Programs that are an immediate need include:

- Credit repair
- Home buying seminars
- Programming for seniors, i.e. where to go for help to maintain their homes; how to prepare a will; what happens to their property when they can no longer maintain it or pass away.

>Strategy C1.5: Find a local resident to assist with grant writing.

The EHCG needs funding if it wants to begin offering community programs/events and engage the community better. A community volunteer to help the Group build partnerships with other organizations as well as write grants to obtain funding would go a long way.



Goal C2: We want to create a more *unified* neighborhood.

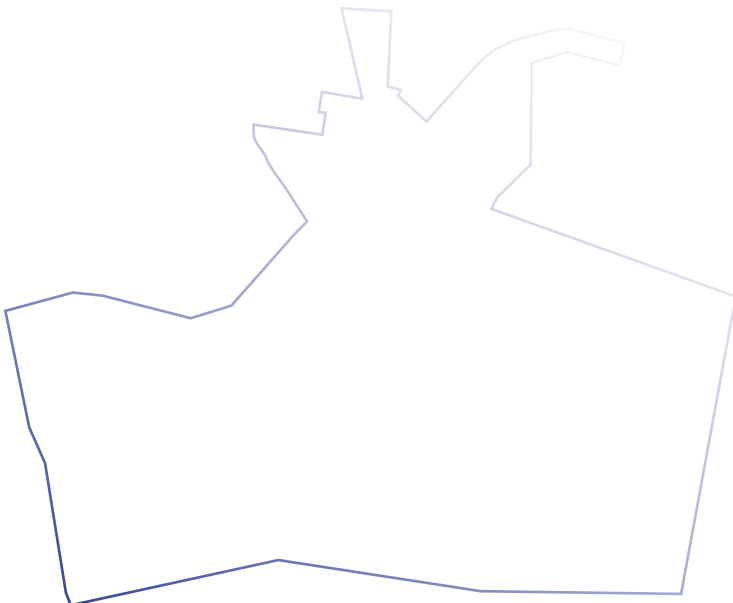
On the ground today...

> *Not everyone identifies as living in the East Hills neighborhood.*

East Hills is a small neighborhood, surrounded mostly by the suburban communities of Penn Hills and Wilksburg. The western portion of the neighborhood is comprised primarily of single-family homes and older residents. The eastern portion is mostly townhouses and apartment buildings (the majority rental units) and younger residents. Many residents brought up this divide during the planning process and stated that many people west of Wilksburg Avenue do not identify as living in East Hills (many say Homewood).

> *There is nothing on the ground now that lets you know that you are "here."*

Residents talked a lot about East Hills being the eastern gateway into the City of Pittsburgh; however, currently there is no signage or anything in place to note that you are in East Hills. The street signs do not have any neighborhood names. In addition, there are no welcome signs identifying the neighborhood at any of the entrances.



Existing Gateways into East Hills



Eastern entrance into the City of Pittsburgh/East Hills on Frankstown Road looking west



Western entrance into East Hills on Bennett Street looking east

What can we do?

>Strategy C2.1: Create gateways at key locations.

A gateway is a welcoming point into a community. Community gateways can help to build a community brand, beautify entrances, and help to generate community pride. Gateways do not have to always be located exactly at the neighborhood boundaries - but rather at locations deemed as important to the community.

It is important that the gateways reflect the community's self-image and what qualities it wants to portray to visitors. East Hills is the easternmost gateway into the City of Pittsburgh.

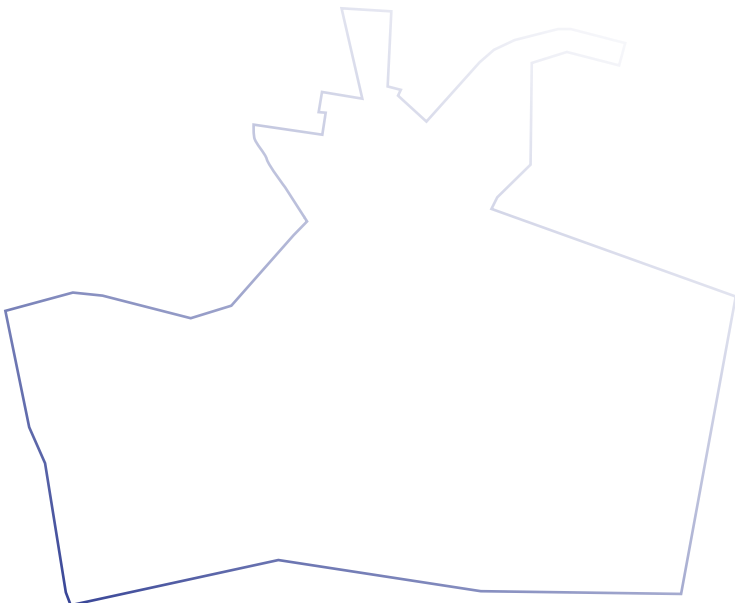
Signage and other architectural elements can not only help to create a sense of place, but they create pride of ownership, residents are proud to live here.

Residents of East Hills expressed the need for entryways and gateways at several locations where the community connects and converges. They identified the two priority entry points:

1. The intersection of Frankstown Road and East Hills Drive presents an opportunity for gateway improvements. The City could partner with Penn Hills to include signs for Penn Hills on the east and East Hills on the west.
2. The Oakwood Street and Bennett Street is another opportunity area for gateway improvements, including a welcome sign, landscaping, and intersection improvements.

Potential Partnerships:

- DCP, Petra International Ministries, the Street Ministry Institute, HELP Initiative, Neighborhood Partners, Operation Better Block



Creating UNITY through Gateways



Community gateway rendering prepared as part of the Community Workshop #3. Residents expressed a desire to create a new gateway entrance at Frankstown Road and East Hills Drive that includes signage, landscaping, and public art lining the sides of the roadway. Examples of gateway improvements in neighboring Highland Park include banners along Route 8 and a welcome sign into their historic residential district.



>Strategy C2.2: Establish a public art program.

Public art as placemaking offers so much more than just improving the appearance of a space. The Project for Public Spaces references a study that found the single-most important factor in differentiating levels of health from one neighborhood to another is “collective efficacy” - meaning the capacity of people to act together on matters of common interest. This made a greater difference in the health and well-being of a community - more so than wealth, access to healthcare, or crime.

As such, by investing in new gateways, community signage, and public art, the East Hills neighborhood can become a healthier community that offers opportunities through public spaces to celebrate culture and build social capital.¹

Public art in public space offers the following additional benefits:

1. Promote Interaction in Public Space
2. Increase Civic Participation Through Celebrations
3. Engage Youth in the Community
4. Promote the Power and Preservation of Place
5. Broaden Participation in the Civic Agenda

The Street Ministry Institute is working with Petra Ministries to create a gateway with public art and a mural in East Hills and expressed an interest in exploring ways to expand their concept into community art and gateways throughout the neighborhood. Their plan features life size inspirational art pieces featuring words like “love,” “peace,” and “hope.”

¹ <https://www.pps.org/article/artsprojects>

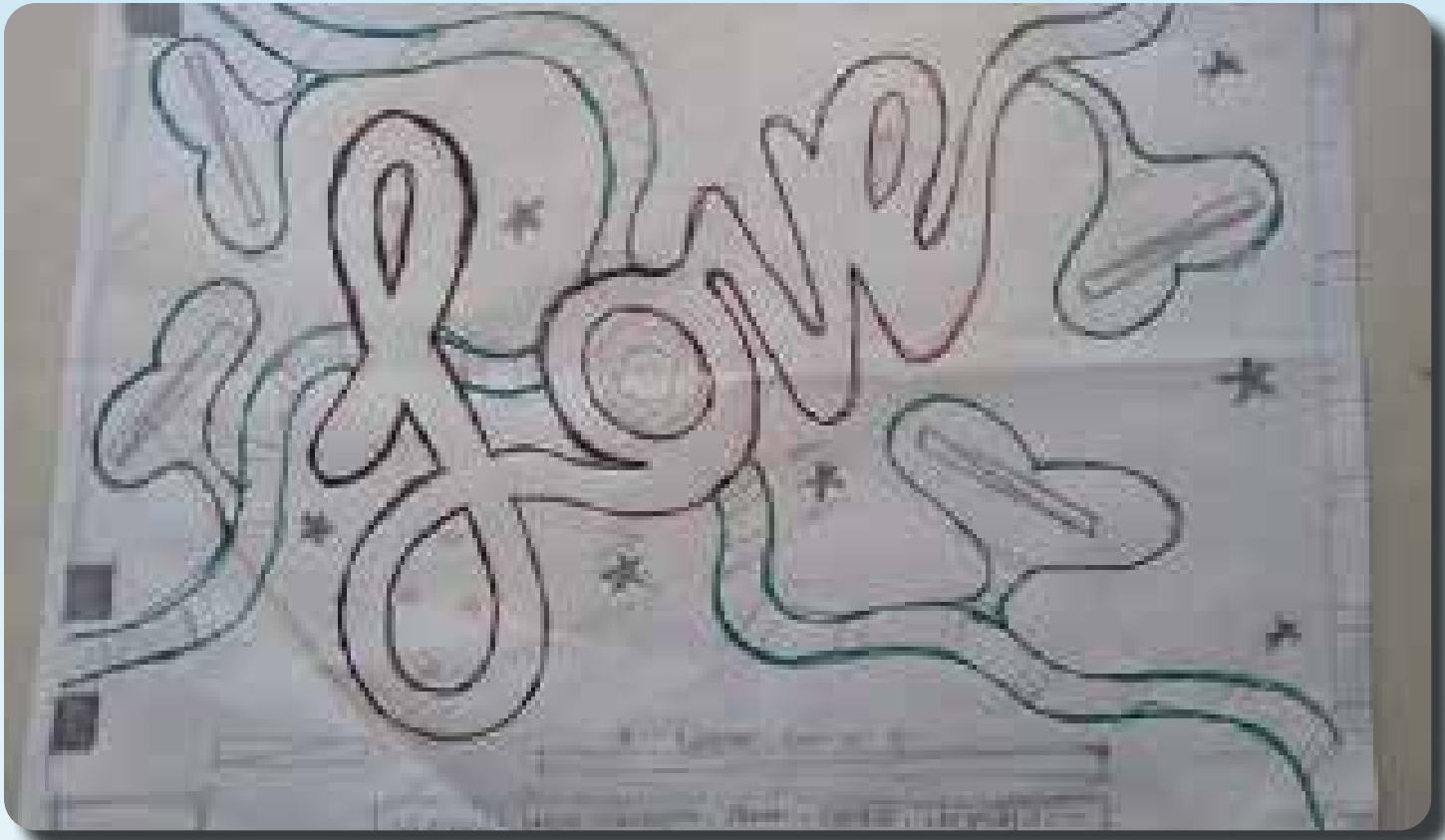
Nafasi on Centre is a community development initiative utilizing art as the vehicle and is a partnership between the Hill CDC and #ArtsinHD, an action planning group, and a subcommittee of the Hill District Consensus Group. Nafasi, which means “space” and “opportunity” in Swahili, is the first substantial project to emerge from the Hill District Arts Plan. There might be an opportunity to partner with the Hill CDC and/or Nafasi artists to help establish a local public art program in the East Hills neighborhood.

A funding resource, Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh, is a joint grant-making program created and managed through a partnership between the Pittsburgh Foundation and the Heinz Endowments. The program is committed to helping create a vibrant cultural life in Pittsburgh and the region (<https://pittsburghfoundation.org/advancing-black-arts-pittsburgh>).

Potential Partnerships:

- DCP, OPA, Petra International Ministries, the Street Ministry Institute

Creating UNITY through Public Art



The Street Ministry Institute is working with Petra Ministries to create a gateway with public art and a mural in East Hills and expressed an interest in exploring ways to expand their concept into community art and gateways throughout the neighborhood. Their plan features life size inspirational art pieces featuring words like "love," "peace," and "hope." (source: Anwan Wes, the Street Institute)





Goal C3: We want a *safer* community.

On the ground today...

> Community safety is the most pressing concern today.

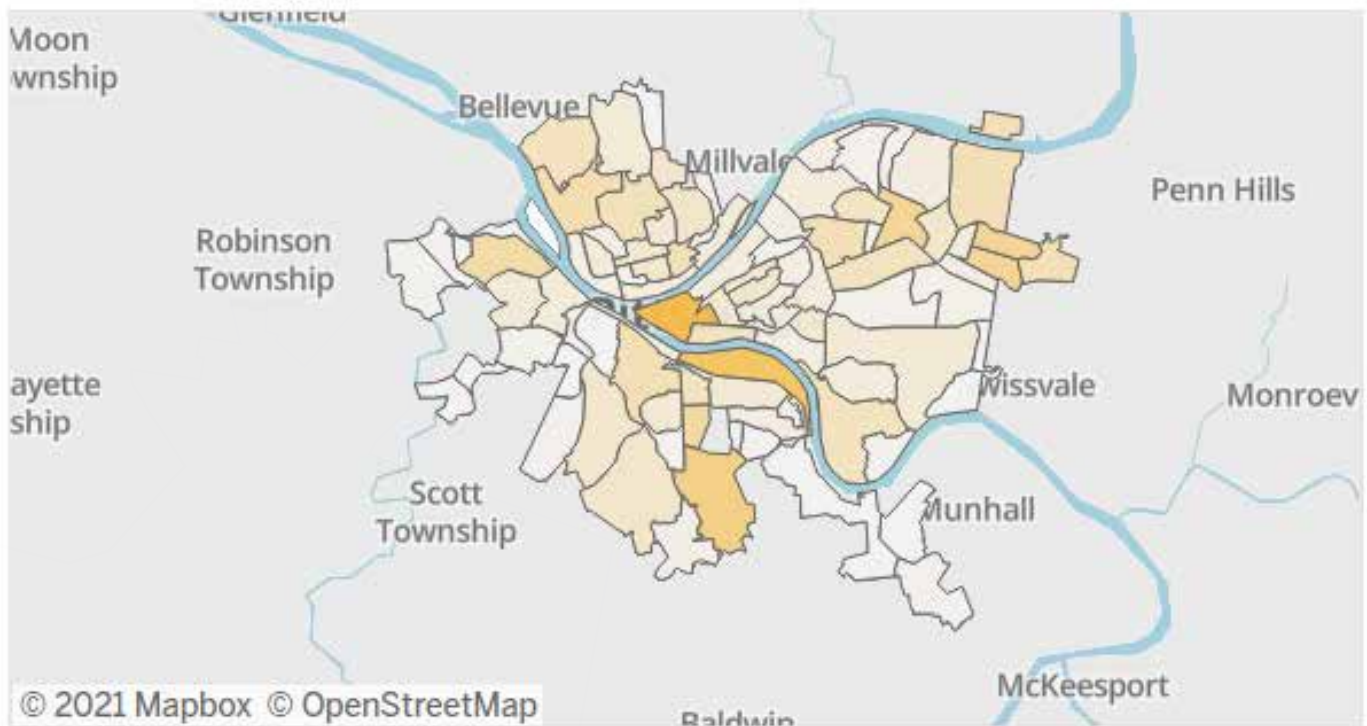
The City of Pittsburgh collects and reports to state and federal agencies under the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program from 2010 to the present and is available online via the interactive

crime dashboard.¹

Crime data is categorized by type of offense, year, and neighborhood. The more recent available data is through the end of June 2021. The neighborhoods experiencing the most violent crime include Downtown, Southside, and Carrick.

¹ https://tableau.alleghenycounty.us/t/PublicSite/views/CJ_UCR_PGH_8-22-17_v3/Home_1?iframeSizedToWindow=true&embed=y&showAppBanner=false&display_count=no&showVizHome=no&origin=viz_share_link

City of Pittsburgh Violent Crime Map (2011-2021)



Offense Count



Overall, crime in East Hills has been higher since 2014. Looking at crime data since 2020, most offenses in the neighborhood are assaults, theft, vandalism, and drug abuse violations.

When looking at just violent crime (assault, robbery, criminal homicide), 2014 was also the lowest (23 offenses), but typically accounts for between 30 and 55 offenses per year. The first half of 2021 was low (only 16 offenses), but there were several shootings over the summer (after this data was collected).

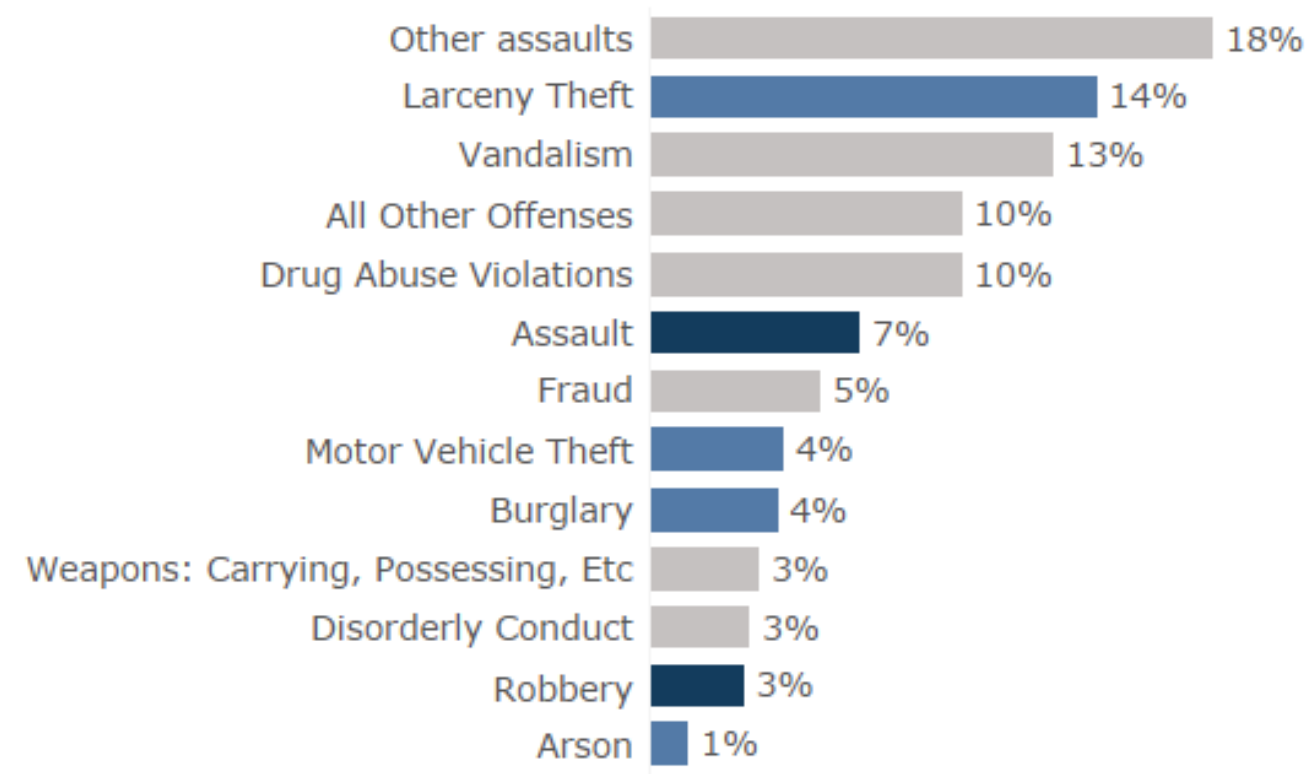
> **Continued deterioration of basic built environment leads to disinvestment and increased safety concerns.**

The public infrastructure in East Hills is in poor condition. Roads are lined with potholes; sidewalks, where they exist, are falling apart and often have weeds growing in them; bus stops consist of just a sign with no shelter or safe

crosswalks; and the park suffers from a lack of lighting and safe connections to the surrounding neighborhoods.

Decades of policy choices and insufficient public and private investment have made the infrastructure needs of low-income communities acute, especially in many communities of color where past policy choices affected by racism, combined with continuing racial bias and discrimination, have resulted in a lack of needed economic resources. New investments could expand low-income communities’ access to safe living conditions and economic opportunity.

East Hills Crime by Type (2020-2021)



What can we do?

>Strategy C3.1: Continue to maintain a solid relationship with the Zone 5 Police Department and local community officers.

East Hills Consensus Group meetings include police representatives, who provide monthly updates on community safety and incidents.

- Be an advocate. Serve as the local voice for political and social justice changes.
- Monitor residents feelings/opinions on community safety.
- Conduct annual surveys. Where don't people feel safe? Why? Is it improving or declining?

>Strategy C3.2: Turn on our lights.

Research shows that communities are safer when residents have access to stable jobs, high-quality schools and social services, and clean and vibrant public spaces.

Priorities include everything from improving the physical environment through vibrant communal spaces and security features such as exterior lighting and secure locks, to improving the opportunities available within the community through youth development programs and connections to neighborhood-based public benefits and supportive services.

- Report/replace streetlights that aren't working. Residents reported that many of the existing streetlights have not worked in years.
- Light East Hills Park. While there are existing light poles in the park, residents reported that they have not worked in decades. Not only do these need to be fixed so that they are working, but the overall lighting of the park needs to be addressed.



Improving SAFETY through better lighting



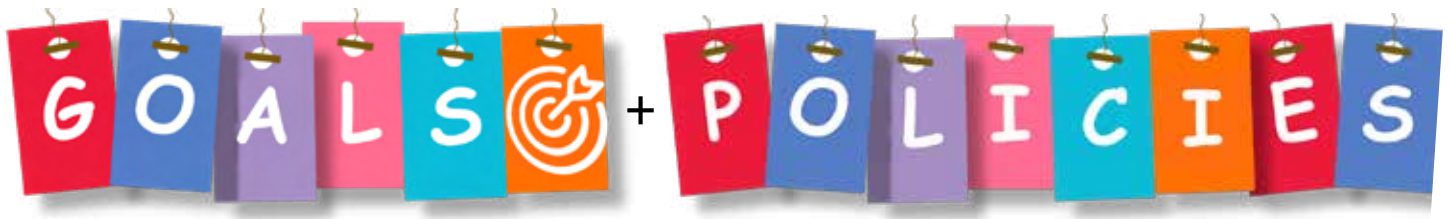
Crime is more likely to occur when people are unable to meet their most basic needs: an education, a stable income, and access to the food and health care they need to survive. Government investments that focus on addressing these underlying social needs can help strengthen public safety, as can investments that improve the physical environment in the community. When public places such as parks, sidewalks, or community centers are illuminated and maintained, they offer fewer opportunities for crime to occur. Residents are more likely to congregate and connect with one another in vibrant community spaces, and their presence can help deter crime in these locations.

Many residents expressed feeling unsafe in areas of East Hills due to no lighting or poor lighting. East Hills Park was specifically mentioned as a place that is in need of better lighting to encourage more people to use the park and feel safe while doing so. Proposed pedestrian pole lighting (concept) along main park pathways (see the East Hills Conceptual Park Plan on page 69 for more details).

MOBILITY

A stylized graphic featuring a light blue hand-like shape on the left and a yellow hand-like shape on the right. The yellow hand is holding a large orange square block with a white letter 'M' in the center. To the left of the 'M' block are smaller blocks in blue, purple, and green. The entire graphic is composed of simple geometric shapes and outlines.

The Mobility Chapter focuses on how people get around and will typically analyze ways to improve safety, reduce the negative impacts associated with traffic, and identifying more efficient and healthful modes of travel.



Goal M1: We need a more connected and walkable community.

- > **Strategy M1:** Implement a Complete Streets policy.
- > **Strategy M2:** Promote safe routes to schools/parks.



Goal M1: We need a *more connected and walkable* community.

On the ground today...

> East Hills is car dependent, has some transit, and is somewhat bikeable.



East Hills has a Walk Score of 37 (out of 100) places it as #64/90 City neighborhoods. A score of 25-49 means it is car-dependent; most errands require a car. East Hills has one of the highest rates of households without car ownership, at over 40%, and over half (51%) are non-auto commuters, meaning they use public transit (or walk/bike) to get to work.

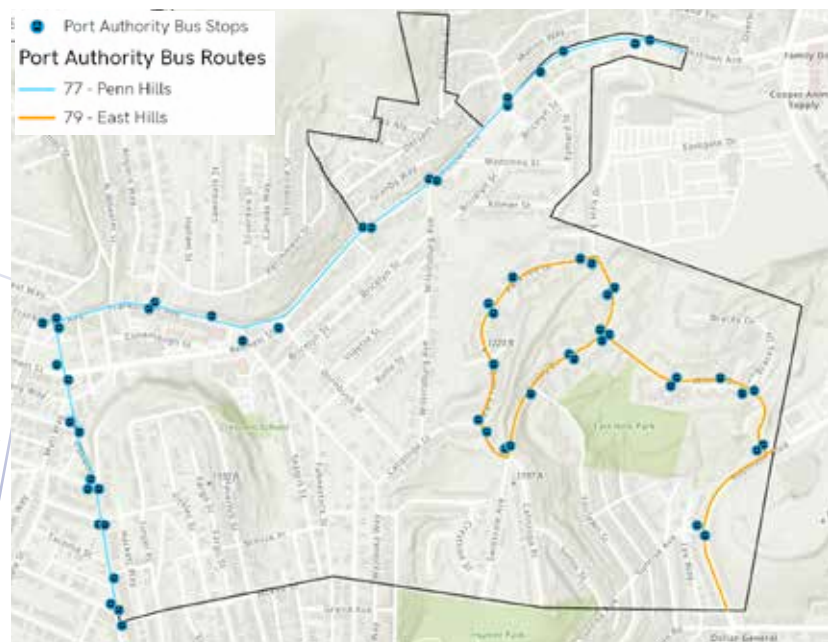
East Hills has a Transit Score of 46, which puts it in a similar category (25-49 has some transit; there are a few nearby public transportation options).

The PAAC operates service to East Hills via the 77 Penn Hills and 79 East Hills. Buses run generally once every 30-40 minutes. The 77 runs along Frankstown Road while the 79 serves Wilner Drive/East Hills Drive/Park Hill Drive, and provides access to the East Busway via Wilkinsburg Station.

ForgingPGH looked at transportation and equity, measuring the average time neighborhood residents spent commuting more than 30 minutes to work. East Hills had between 36-45% of its residents commuting at least 30 minutes to work daily.

The biggest concerns regarding transit raised by residents include longer walks to the bus stops (residents who live in the central part of the neighborhood have to walk to either Frankstown or Oakwood Street) and the lack of safe access - whether it be a lack of sidewalks, existing sidewalk conditions, a lack of safe pedestrian crossings at intersections, or a lack of bus shelters.

Finally, East Hills has a Bike Score of 32, which puts it as somewhat bikeable (0-49); there is minimal bike infrastructure. Within East Hills, Frankstown Road is the only identified bicycle-safe road per Google Maps, but there is no actual infrastructure.



> **Transportation costs outpace housing costs in East Hills.**

A monthly bus pass with the PAAC costs \$97.50, or \$1,072.50 annually. With an East Hills median household income of just \$17,000, this is 17% of household costs. Transportation costs are considered affordable if they are 15% or less of household income, or \$7,875/yr for the Regional Typical Household (PGH).

The Housing and Transportation Index (H+T Index) states that while housing alone is traditionally deemed affordable when consuming no more than 30% of income, the H+T Index incorporates transportation costs—usually a household's second-largest expense—to show that location-efficient places can be more livable and affordable.¹

In East Hills, most households have access to one vehicle; however, transportation is still costing as much or more of most residents' monthly incomes. In the eastern portion of the neighborhood, housing and transportation costs account for 32% of monthly income (Housing – 14%; Transportation – 19%). In the western portion, it's 44% (housing – 23%; transportation – 21%).

Example of typical sidewalk conditions in East Hills - they are often not continuous, overgrown, cracked, or just nonexistent.

(source: E. Holdings 2021)

> **Based on intersection density, East Hills is a “walkable” community; however, sidewalks are often overgrown, cracked, or missing entirely.**

The intersection density (number of road intersections per square mile) is higher than the city (185 vs. 173)², with much of the neighborhood connected to Homewood, Wilkinsburg and Penn Hills. However, sidewalks are not as prevalent in East Hills as some other City neighborhoods.

One of the top complaints we heard from residents during the planning process was the overall conditions of the corridors, in terms of sidewalks (missing/condition), safe pedestrian crossings, and speeding concerns. Complicating matters is the fact that many residents park their vehicles on the sidewalks, blocking access for pedestrians.



1 <https://htaindex.cnt.org/>

2 <https://forgingpgh.org/tools-and-resources/data-visualization/>

> **Street maintenance is the biggest need, according to 311 data.**

The City of Pittsburgh offers 3-1-1 for residents to call to report non-emergencies. The 311 Response Center is the City's gateway to city services and addressing concerns. Reports are sent directly to the appropriate agency for resolution (Department of Public Works, Department of Permits, Licenses and Inspections, Police, etc.). Callers may remain anonymous.

Residents may use 3-1-1 to report graffiti, litter, illegal parking, overgrown weeds, parking or traffic issues, pot holes. They can also use it to provide information on city events or neighborhood services.

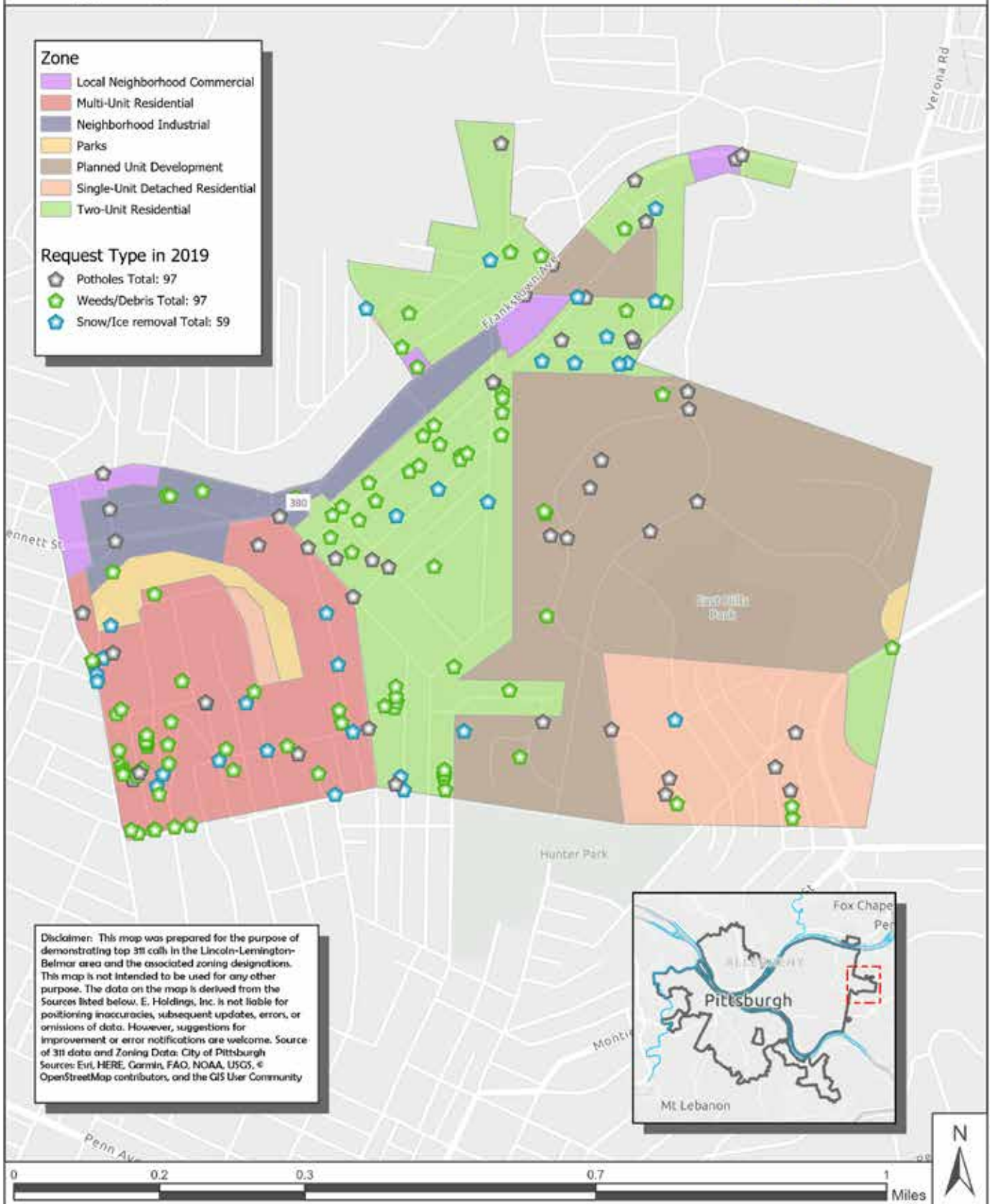
The public infrastructure in East Hills is in poor condition. Roads are lined with potholes and residents complained of speeding concerns on many of their main corridors. Often, low-income communities, particularly in communities of color, are most affected by a lack of public and private investment in basic infrastructure. Oftentimes, new investment to address basic needs is required in order to provide these communities with improved access to safe living conditions and economic opportunity.



	278 Street Maintenance	97 potholes 59 snow/ice 29 litter
	261 Permits/Licenses	96 weeds/debris 80 building maint./Vacant 19 illegal dumping
	31 Animal Control	17 rodent 7 dead
	31 Police	Abandoned vehicle
	25 Forestry	11 tree pruning 9 tree removal
	24 Paving Request	
	24 Traffic	replace/repair sign
	21 Refuse	11 Missed pick up
	16 City Const.	12 dead tree 4 steps repair

311 calls in East Hills

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania



Credited by Melissa Creighton 01/07/2019

What can we do?

> **Strategy M1.1:** Implement a Complete Streets policy.

"The impacts of dangerous streets are also felt more strongly within low & middle-income communities where streets have fewer design features that increase safety—like sidewalks, crosswalks, or street lights. By making streets safer and inviting for active transportation like walking and biking, Complete Streets policies can help improve people's health."¹

Residents expressed a feeling of being "forgotten" and overall disinvestment. Many residents are unable to dream of a brighter future for East Hills until their basic needs are met. Residents often raised concerns over the safety of the corridors in the neighborhood - related to speeding, safe pedestrian crossings, and shelters at bus stops. The overall goal should follow the Complete Streets model, whereby streets are redesigned to focus on accommodating pedestrians and bicyclists first, rather than vehicles.

While there are many areas where residents reported needing improved infrastructure, the City should focus on priority corridors (Robinson



This bus stop on Robinson Boulevard is similar to many existing bus stops in East Hills - no sidewalks, no pedestrian crossings, no safety area to wait/board the bus. (source: Google Streetview)

Boulevard, Frankstown Road, East Hills Drive).

The City's Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) operates a neighborhood traffic calming program. Eligible projects must be located on City-owned streets, have a maximum of two travel lanes, be a local, collector, or minor arterial, and have a roadway grade less than or equal to 13%.²

Corridor improvement projects should include:

- Install bus shelters at the most used bus stops. Priority locations should include Robinson Boulevard.



Following the Complete Streets model allows communities to improve overall health by encouraging safe pedestrian and bicycle usage of existing streets and reducing vehicle emissions. Complete Streets can include bike lanes, share the road designations, sidewalks, crosswalks, and shelters and safe waiting areas for transit users..

1 <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/cities-advance-complete-streets-policies/>
2 <https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/traffic-calming>



Renderings depicting potential traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements along Robinson Boulevard.

Michael Baker
INTERNATIONAL

Improving Robinson Boulevard

Robinson Boulevard was a high priority corridor identified as in need of improvements. Existing concerns include the lack of safety for pedestrians, particularly those who take public transit and utilize the existing bus stops. Possible improvements include the addition of bus shelters, lighting, crosswalks, islands (for beautification as well as a safe area for pedestrians crossing the four-lane busy road), as well as a possible gateway area that includes signage welcoming people to East Hills and public art.

- Replace broken/missing sidewalks.
- Encourage residents to report issues and concerns via 311. Not all residents are equally likely to request city support through mechanisms such as 311. A study of 311 call data in New York City found that higher-income areas and neighborhoods with a greater percentage of white residents were more likely to submit requests for government services.³

Potential Partnerships:

- DCP, DOMI, PAAC

> **Strategy M1.2:** Promote safe routes to schools/parks.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is an approach that promotes walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education, and incentives to encourage walking and bicycling to school. Nationally, 10–14% of car trips during morning rush hour are for school travel. ⁴The City of Pittsburgh offers a Safe Routes to School program.⁵

Recommended improvements:

- Request that the City install a school safety zone along Frankstown Road in front of Catalyst that reduces speed limits to 15 mph.
- Request that the City install school-related traffic control signs along Frankstown Road ("Slow Down School Ahead," school crossing signs, etc.)
- Request that the City install similar park-related traffic control signs for East Hills Park.



- Request that the City install signage for the parks throughout the neighborhood such as directional signs from main intersections and park entrance signs.
- Identify appropriate areas to request City of Pittsburgh Complete Street Bike Racks.

Potential Partnerships:

- DOMI, Safe Routes Partnerships (<https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/>)

³ <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/reports/2019/10/02/475220/neighborhoodstat-strengthening-public-safety-community-empowerment/>

⁴ <https://www.transportation.gov/mission/health/Safe-Routes-to-School-Programs>

⁵ <https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/srts>

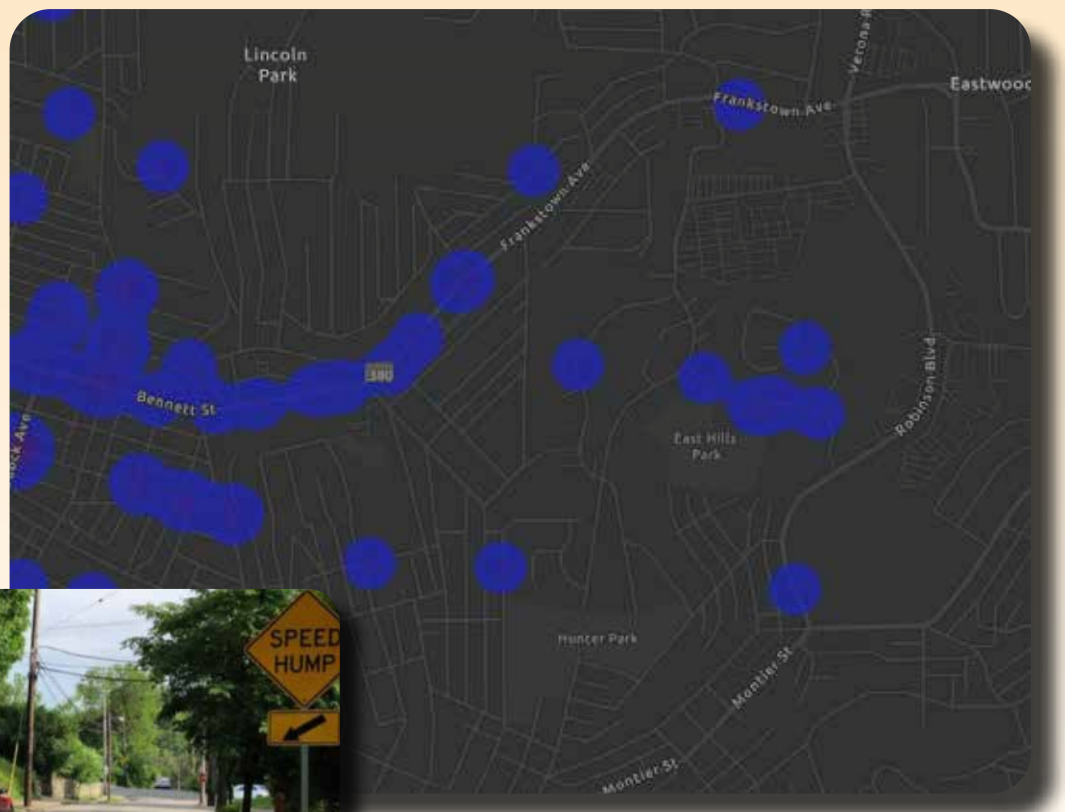
Improving Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety

Improving pedestrian and bicycle safety, particularly in areas closest to parks and schools, is a high priority for East Hills. The map depicts locations of traffic crashes involving pedestrians or bicyclists between 2003 and 2017 (source: <https://forgingpgh.org/tools-and-resources/data-visualization/citywide-data/>).

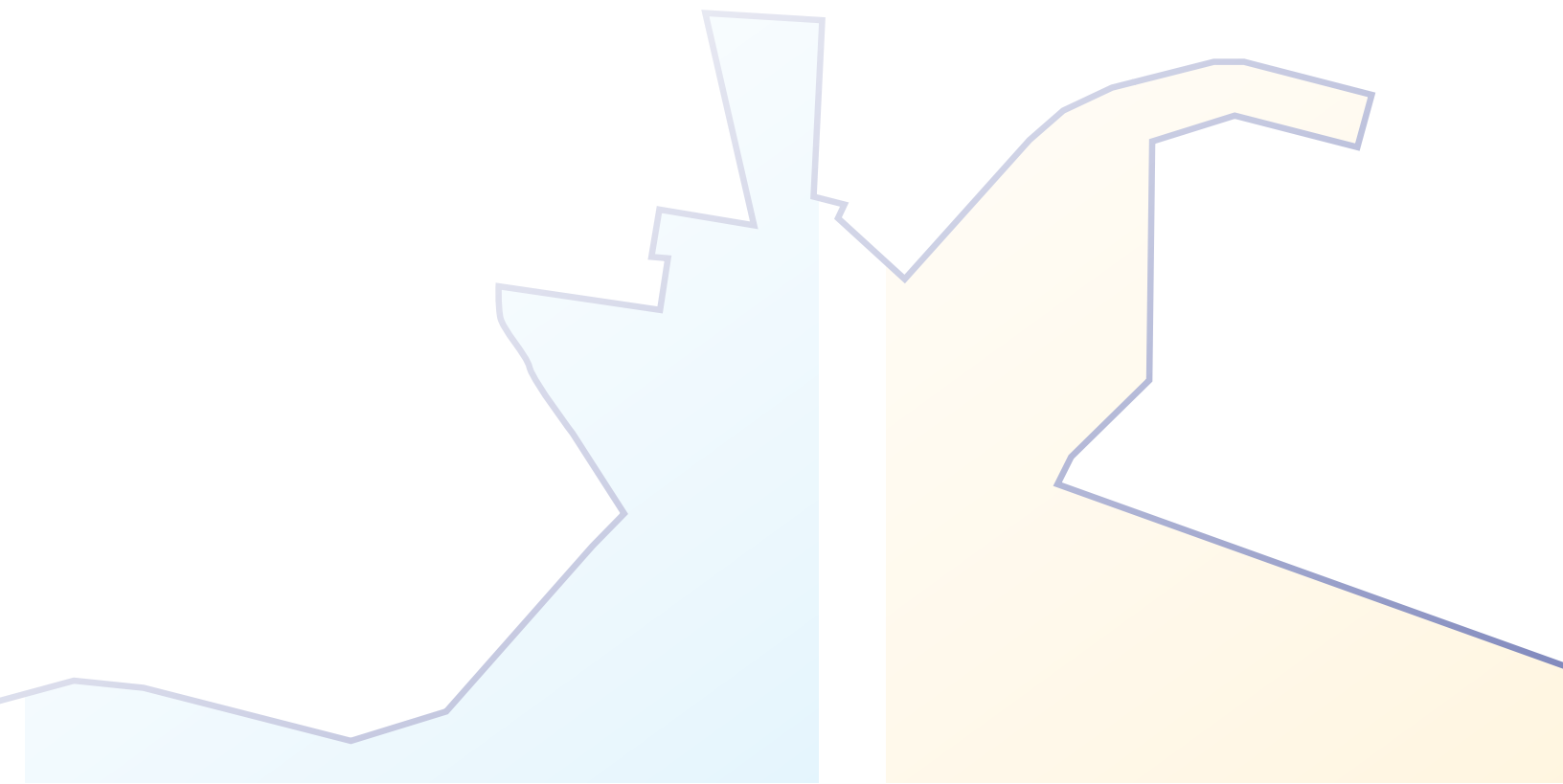
Frankstown Road and roads near East Hills Park (including East Hills Drive and Wilner Drive) have had the most accidents involving pedestrians and/or bicyclists.

In October 2021, the City announced the installation of traffic calming measures on East Hills Drive between Foch Way and Calistoga Place and on Wilner Drive from East Hills Drive to Bracey Drive. Data collected during the Spring of 2021 indicated that 54% of vehicles traveling on East Hills Drive exceeded the posted speed limit of 25 mph, with an 85th percentile speed of 33 mph. 61% of vehicles traveling on Wilner Drive exceed the posted speed limit of 25 mph, with an 85th percentile speed of 33 mph. Coupled with a long crash history, this rate of speeding indicated a strong need for traffic calming intervention. The project will include the construction of two speed humps on East Hills Drive and two speed humps on Wilner Drive. Permanent signage and pavement markings will be installed to alert motorists of approaching speed humps. Speed humps are midblock traffic calming devices that raise the entire wheelbase of a vehicle to reduce its speed

(source: <https://patch.com/pennsylvania/pittsburgh/city-pittsburgh-traffic-calming-installation-coming-east-hills-drive-wilner>).



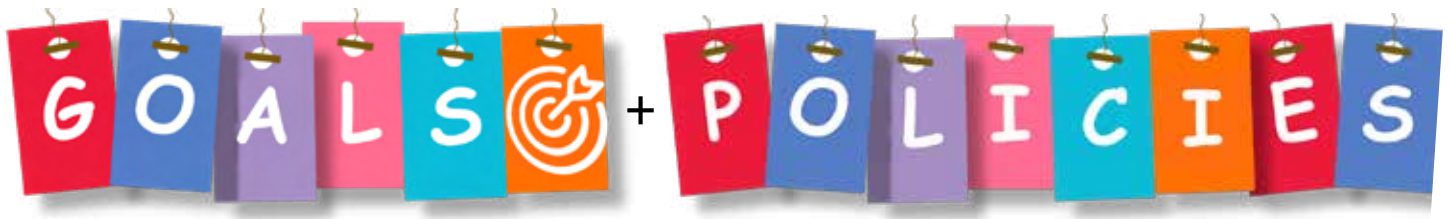
Example of a speed hump installed by the City of Pittsburgh Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI) (source: <https://www.pittsburghpa.gov/domi/traffic-calming>)



The Infrastructure Chapter includes all the non-transportation systems that nourish and maintain a neighborhood including how stormwater is handled, needs for open spaces, energy systems, and how waste is reduced and reused.



INFRASTRUCTURE



Goal I1: We want to build on our existing green infrastructure.

- > **Strategy I1.1:** Advocate for green infrastructure projects to help manage stormwater issues.
- > **Strategy I1.2:** Develop a plan for vacant lots.

Goal I2: Provide safe and attractive parks that meet our residents' needs.

- > **Strategy I2.1:** Improve East Hills Park.
- > **Strategy I2.2:** Consider installing a playground in the western portion of the neighborhood.

Goal I3: We need to improve our community health.

- > **Strategy I3.1:** Promote existing programs that improve community health.
- > **Strategy I3.2:** Consider developing mini parks.



Goal I1: We want to build on our existing *green* infrastructure.

On the ground today...

> *East Hills falls within both the Negley Run Watershed, a high priority, and Nine Mile Run Watershed.*

Negley Run is a large watershed that drains a diverse area of Pittsburgh's East End, including several neighborhoods that have suffered heavily from underinvestment in recent decades, such as Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar, and East Hills. Negley Run captures more water than any other watershed in Pittsburgh and is the single largest contributor of sewer overflow in the region. It also represents one of the most-urgent flood risk challenges in the City. Major rainfall events regularly lead to flash flooding along lower Washington Boulevard, a key roadway corridor that supports a high volume of commuter traffic from suburbs north of the Allegheny River.

The eastern portion of East Hills lies within the Nine Mile Run Watershed, a small urban watershed covering just 6.5 square miles. Upstream Pittsburgh, formerly Nine Mile Run Watershed Association, oversees many projects, including the largest urban stream restoration in the United States completed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

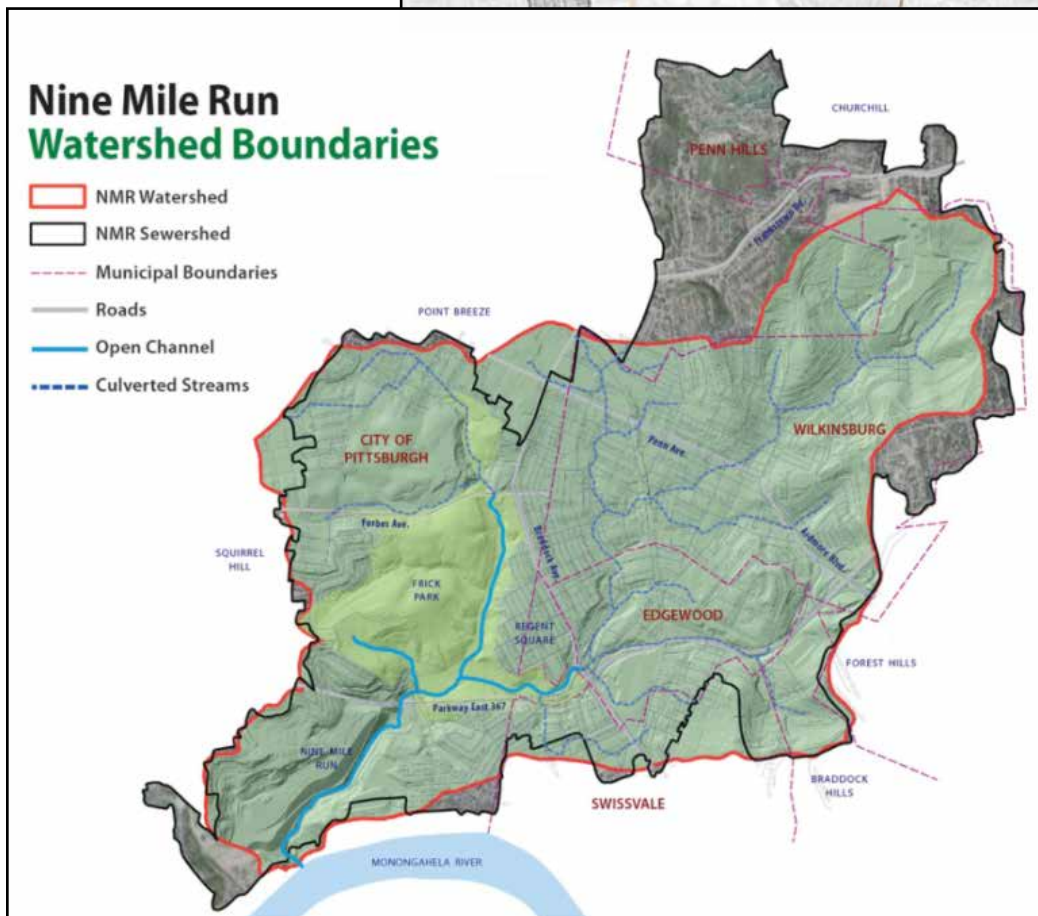
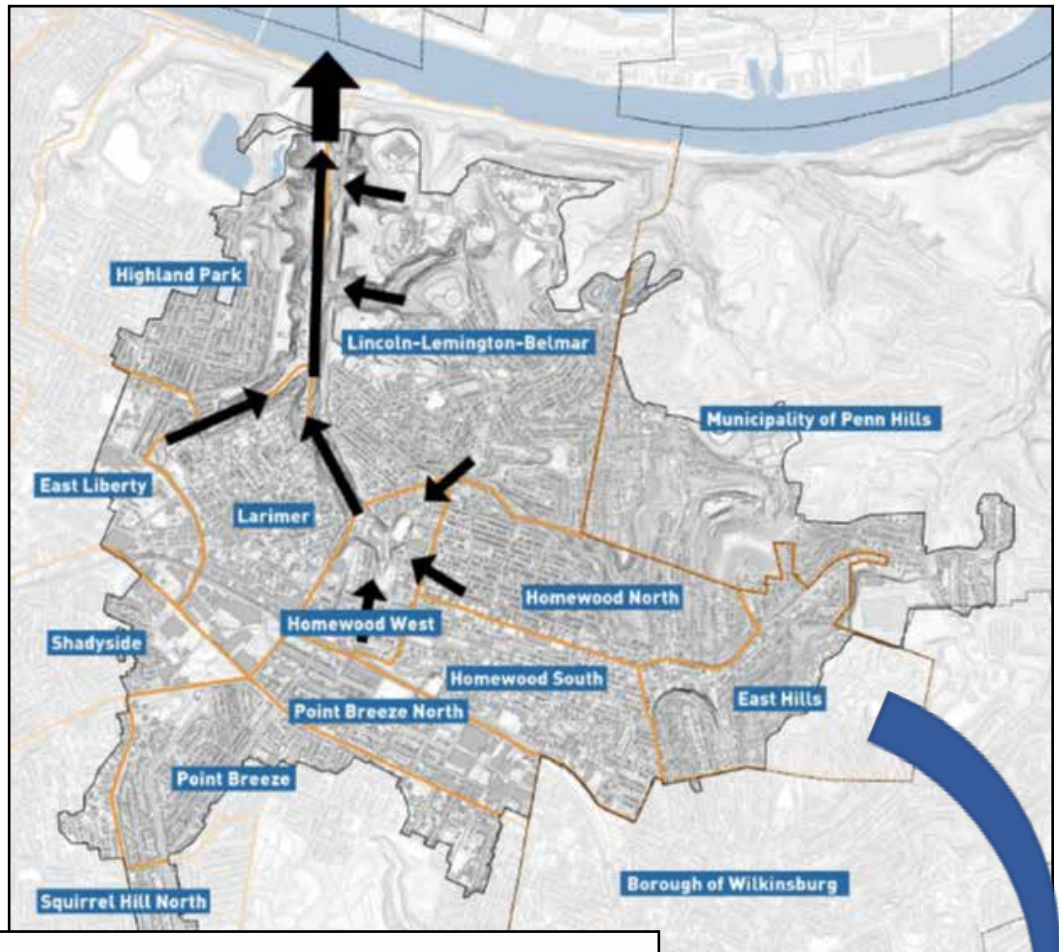
There have been a number of studies completed over the years that offer recommendations specific to addressing stormwater issues and green infrastructure that impact East Hills:

- [The Green First Plan: A City-Wide Infrastructure Assessment prepared for the Pittsburgh Water and Sewer Authority \(2016\)](#)
- [Allegheny Land Trust Transfer of Development Rights Feasibility Study \(2019\)](#)
- [Managing Heavy Rainfall with Green Infrastructure: An Evaluation in Pittsburgh's Negley Run Watershed by the RAND Corporation \(2020\)](#)
- [Negley Run Environmental Equity Study by Upstream Pittsburgh \(2021\)](#)
- [A Vision Plan for the Negley Run Watershed \(2018\)](#)
- [Engaging Communities with Green Stormwater Infrastructure by Grounded Strategies \(2018\)](#)
- [Controlling the Source: A Roadmap for Working Together on Impactful Source Control by ALCOSAN \(2020\)](#)

Negley Run Watershed

The East Hills neighborhood is divided into two watersheds: Negley Run Watershed (top map) covers the western half while Nine Mile Run Watershed covers the eastern half (bottom map).

(source: Negley Run Watershed <https://groundedpgh.org/news/press/can-reviving-a-120-year-old-stream-stop-dangerous-flooding-on-pittsburghs-washington-boulevard/>)
 Nine Mile Run Watershed <https://www.alleghenyfront.org/artist-wants-to-give-people-a-new-view-of-an-urban-stream/>)

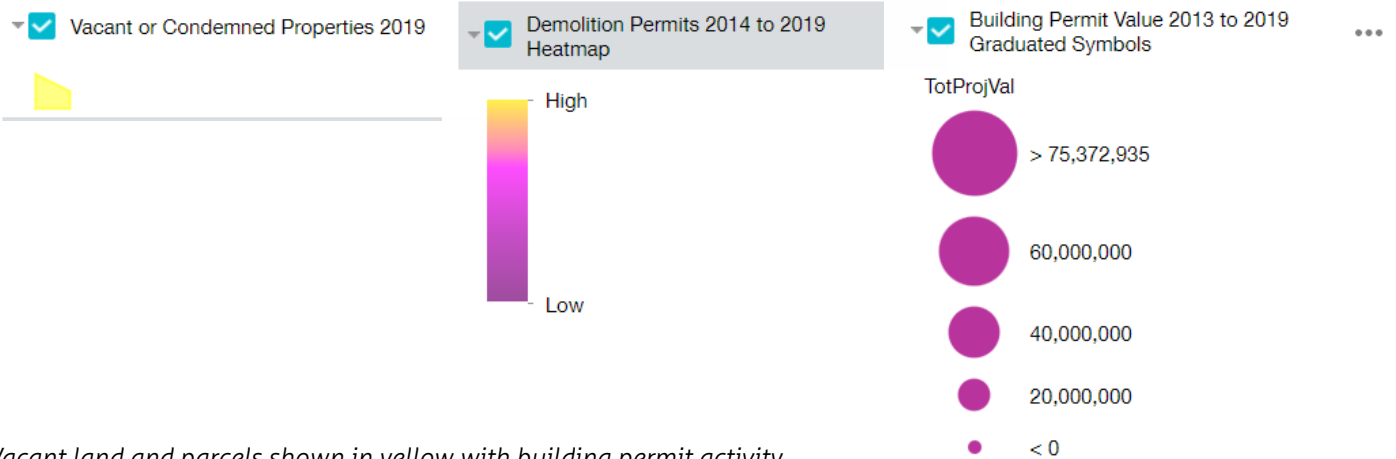
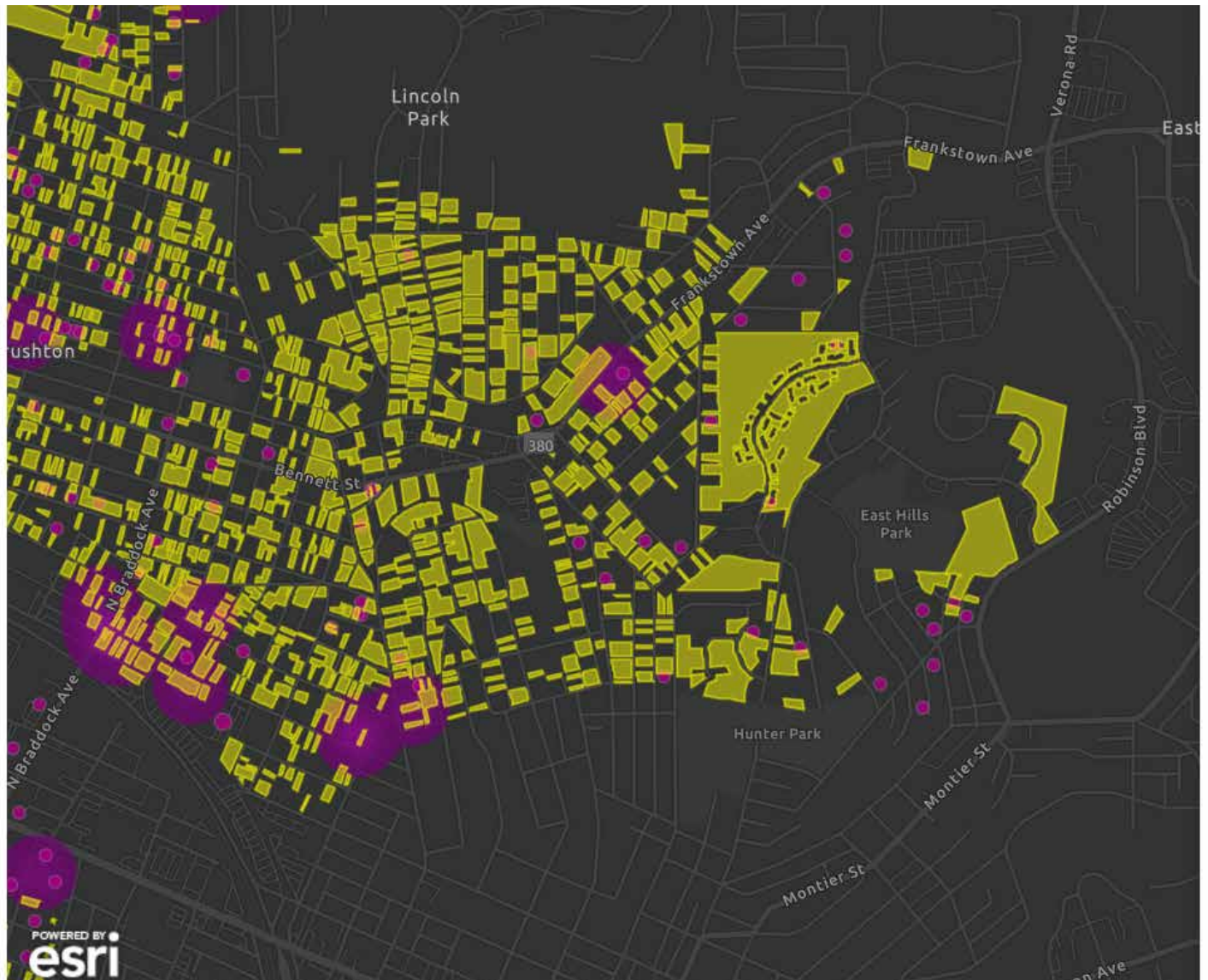


> East Hills has a large concentration of vacant lots.

East Hills is home to almost 80 acres of vacant land, which is 23% of the total land area. The map on page 61 depicts in yellow vacant parcels, along with building permit data in blue.



Photograph of vacant land in East Hills (source: E. Holdings, Inc. 2021)



Vacant land and parcels shown in yellow with building permit activity shown in blue.

(source: <https://forgingpgh.org/tools-and-resources/data-visualization/citywide-data/>).

What can we do?

> *Strategy 11.1: Advocate for green infrastructure projects to help manage stormwater issues.*

Runoff from steep hillsides onto roadways and downhill is a major concern. Upstream Pittsburgh installed a green infrastructure (GI) project at Crescent School already and is now working on second a GI project. This project is a rain garden, using vacant lots at the corner of Dornbush Street and Bricelyn Street. This site sits at the bottom of a very steep slope (adjacent to city steps) in an area with frequent flooding issues. There is an opportunity to continue working with Upstream Pittsburgh to educate residents about on-lot stormwater management as well as additional GI projects.

There have been several studies and plans that contain recommendations related to green infrastructure (GI) projects. In addition, Grounded Strategies has plans to reconstruct previously failed rain gardens in the Park Hill Drive community

Potential Partners:

- Allegheny Land Trust, Grounded Strategies, ALCOSAN GROW Program (<https://www.alcosan.org/our-plan/grow-program>), Negley Run Watershed Task Force

Upstream Pittsburgh Green infrastructure (GI) project. This project is a rain garden, using vacant lots at the corner of Dornbush Street and Bricelyn Street.



> *Strategy 11.2: Clean our green spaces and corridors.*

Illegal dumping and littering was a commonly heard complaint during the planning process and an issue found to be prevalent along many of the hillsides and corridors in the neighborhood.

- Continue to partner with UpstreamPgh to hold semi-annual cleanups to address illegal dumping and littering along key corridors and vacant lots.
- Report/replace streetlights that aren't working. Residents reported that many of the existing streetlights have not worked in years.
- Lobby DPW to cut back brush/weeds along the corridors.

- Continue to work with the City to remove abandoned vehicles throughout the neighborhood.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, DWP, UpstreamPgh, Allegheny County Cleanways, DPW



Illegal dumping and littering is a problem, particularly along hillsides where stormwater runoff causes issues as well. (source: E. Holdings Inc. 2021)

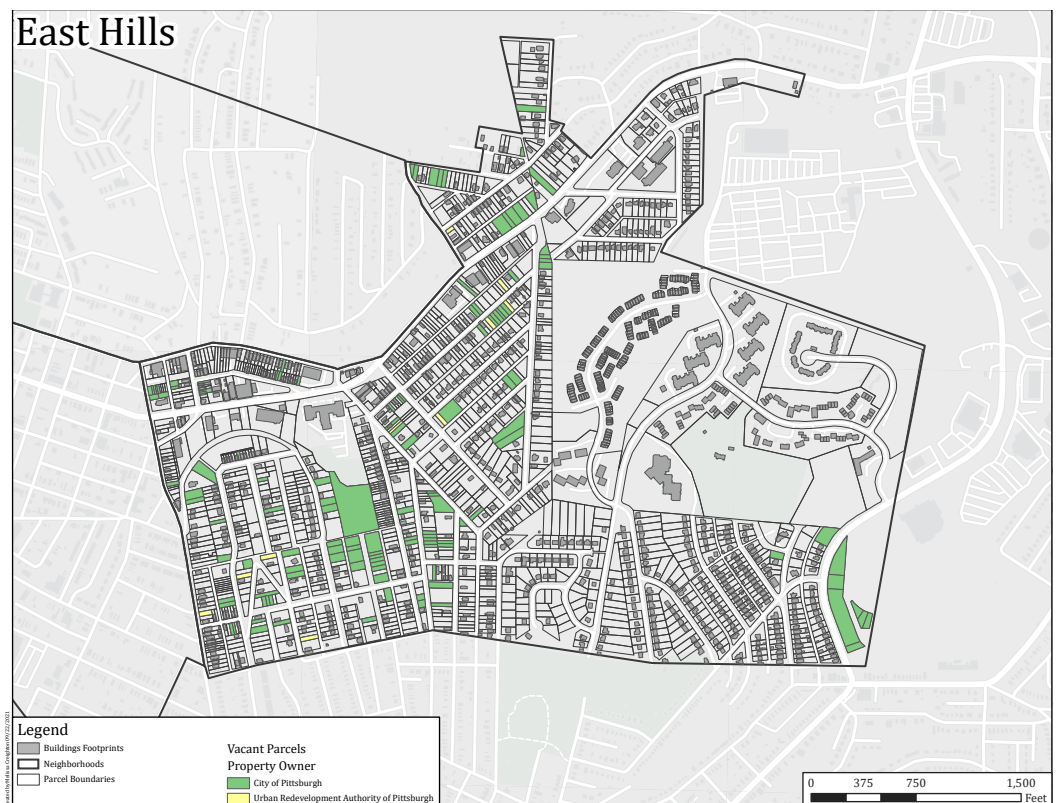
> Strategy I1.2: Activate our vacant lots.

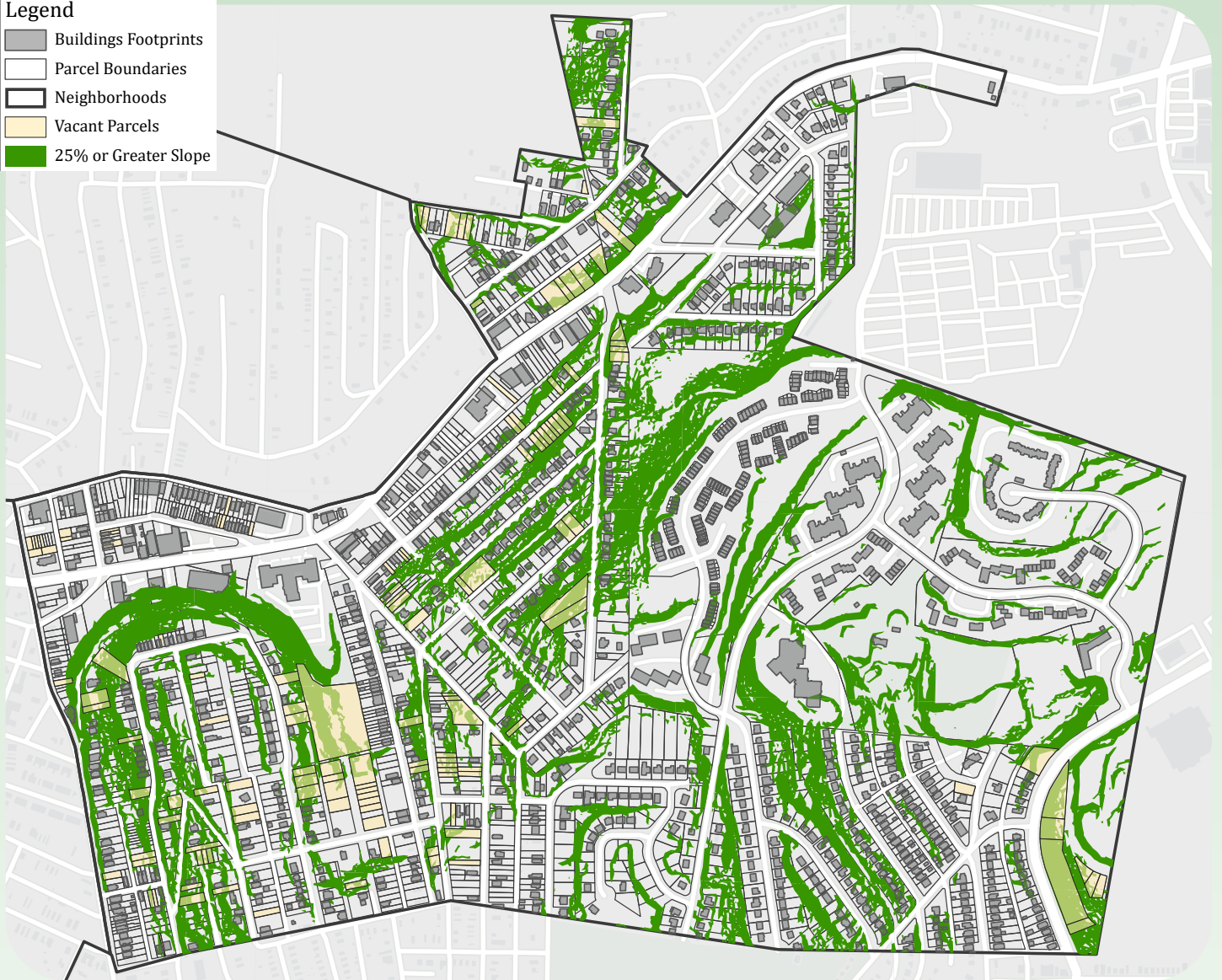
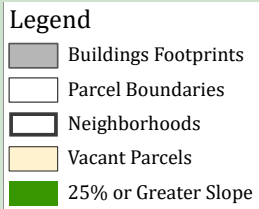
There are a number of vacant lots in East Hills that could be used for green infrastructure projects, mini pocket parks, or redeveloped. The top map on page 65 shows in green all parcels that are owned by the City of Pittsburgh while those in yellow are owned by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) while the bottom map shows the overlay between vacant parcels and steep slopes (over 25%).

Potential Partners:

- DCP, URA, Allegheny Land Trust, Grounded Strategies, Negley Run Watershed Task Force, UpstreamPgh

- Consideration should be given to maintaining the vacant lots with majority of steep slopes as open space, while other lots may present an opportunity to activate as residential side yards, community gardens, on lot stormwater management or maintain as part of an interconnected greenway.
- Publicize the City's Adopt A Lot program to encourage residents to take advantage of this program where possible. (<https://pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/adopt-a-lot>).





Stormwater runoff is a priority concern along roadways with steep slopes, such as Bricelyn Street, Wilkinsburg Avenue, Tokay Street, and Frankella Avenue. Green infrastructure projects in vacant lots, along with curbs along priority roadways, can help to alleviate these issues.



Goal I2: Provide safe and attractive parks that meet our residents' needs.

On the ground today...

> East Hills Park is a large neighborhood park, located in the eastern section.

The 11.1-acre East Hills Park is surrounded by residential development in the southeast corner of the East Hills neighborhood. The park is adjacent to the Imani Christian Academy with the primary park entrance located on Wilner Drive. Due to its location, the park functions as a local neighborhood park and includes a spray park, two basketball courts and an open grass field that can be programmed.

ForgingPGH identified East Hills Park as #8 on the City's top 20 list of parks for capital investment. A master plan would allow the residents to fully participate in a planning process to identify park needs, facility needs, and programming needs.





East Hills Park is home to a spray park, two basketball courts, and a large open field that used to be a baseball field.

(source: E. Holdings, 2021)



What can we do?

>Strategy I2.1: Improve East Hills Park.

In the short-term, there are basic improvements that the City and neighborhood can do to make the park a more user-friendly space. A conceptual site plan of short-term improvements was prepared as part of the Community Visioning Plan, as shown on page 69 and include the following:

Note: the improvements correspond to the letters on the Proposed Improvements Diagram.

A. Crosswalks. Pedestrian crosswalks with additional striping and signage for increased visibility are proposed along Wilner Drive to facilitate pedestrian access to the park, playground and community center located on the southern side of Wilner Drive. Raised crosswalks are encouraged to slow traffic along Wilner Drive and promote ADA access to these amenities.

B. Park Sign & Gateway. A new park sign on Wilner Drive and entry plantings will help to create a more visible and prominent park entrance.

C. Lighting. Pedestrian pole lighting along the main pathways is proposed to increase park visibility and comfort. The scale of the lighting should be in keeping with the park's pedestrian scale.

D. Benches. Currently the park incorporates minimal seating opportunities. Park benches are proposed along the main internal park pathways and are located adjacent to new park lighting.

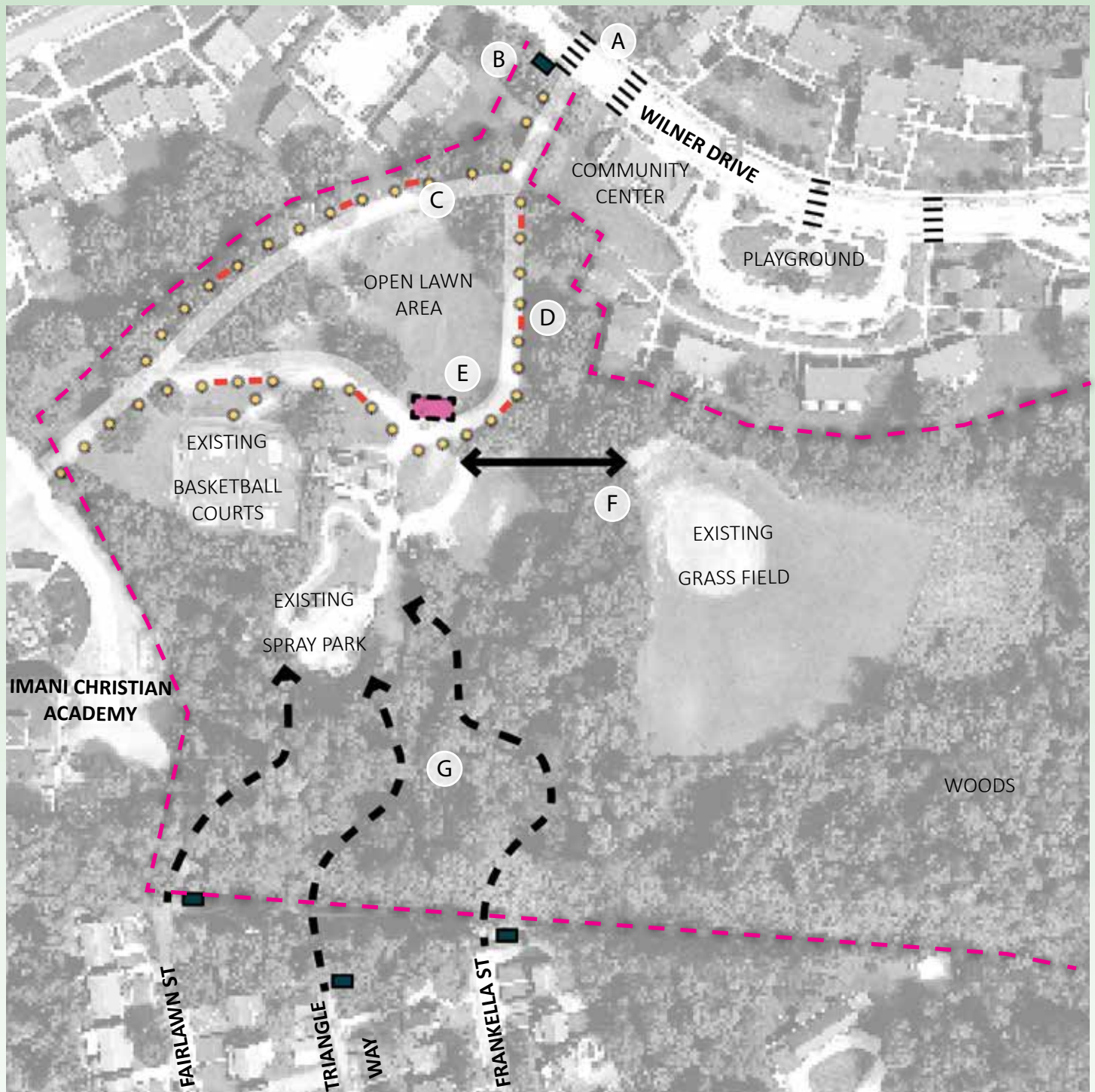
E. Park Shelter Improvements. In the center of the park, an existing concrete park structure is situated at the base of a grassy bowl that forms at the edge of the lawn. Upgrades to the existing shelter including electrical connections would enable this structure to function as a stage for informal community programming and musical performances. Additionally, as part of a neighborhood wide event to kick-off park improvements, the structure could be the foundation for a mural painted by the community.

F. Sidewalks. By adding an internal sidewalk connection to the existing grass field (once baseball field), access will be facilitated to the open, programmable lawn.



A. Proposed pedestrian crossing on Wilner Drive (near playground).

East Hills Park



East Hills Park: Proposed Improvements Diagram.

LEGEND

- A. Proposed Crosswalk Connections
- B. Proposed Park Sign & Gateway
- C. Proposed new pedestrian lighting
- D. Proposed Park Benches
- E. Proposed Community Mural on Existing Park Structure
- F. Proposed Sidewalk Connection to Open Field
- G. Proposed Trail Connections to Park

G. Trail Connections. Through the addition of trail connections at the southwest edge of the park, the park becomes increasingly more accessible to a greater portion of the East Hills neighborhood. Trail connections can potentially occur at the end of Fairlawn Street, Triangle Way and Frankella Street. Park entry signage should be located at each trailhead to direct users to the park.

Additional proposed improvements for East Hills Park include:

- Prepare a maintenance plan – residents discussed that ongoing maintenance of facilities is a priority. Make sure that the City and/or neighborhood can maintain any new facilities before construction.
- One of the biggest needs identified during the planning process is to provide some type of indoor space to allow for expanded recreation and community programs year-round. The Street Ministry Institute currently

operates programs at Petra Ministries and Imani Christian Center, but indicated a need for more indoor recreation space.

- A consideration could be to create a “sports bubble” to allow for year-round activities such as camps, after school programs, art shows, etc.
- An indoor facility could also serve as the home to the East Hills Consensus Group. Currently, the Consensus Group meets at Petra Ministries, but it would be better served to offer meetings where more residents could access on foot. Hosting the meetings at the park would not only draw residents to the park, but will also help to establish the park as a community park and resource.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, DPW, DOMI, Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy



C. Proposed pedestrian pole lighting (concept) along main park pathways.

E. Proposed community mural at existing park shelter. Concept shown. Graphic design per community input.



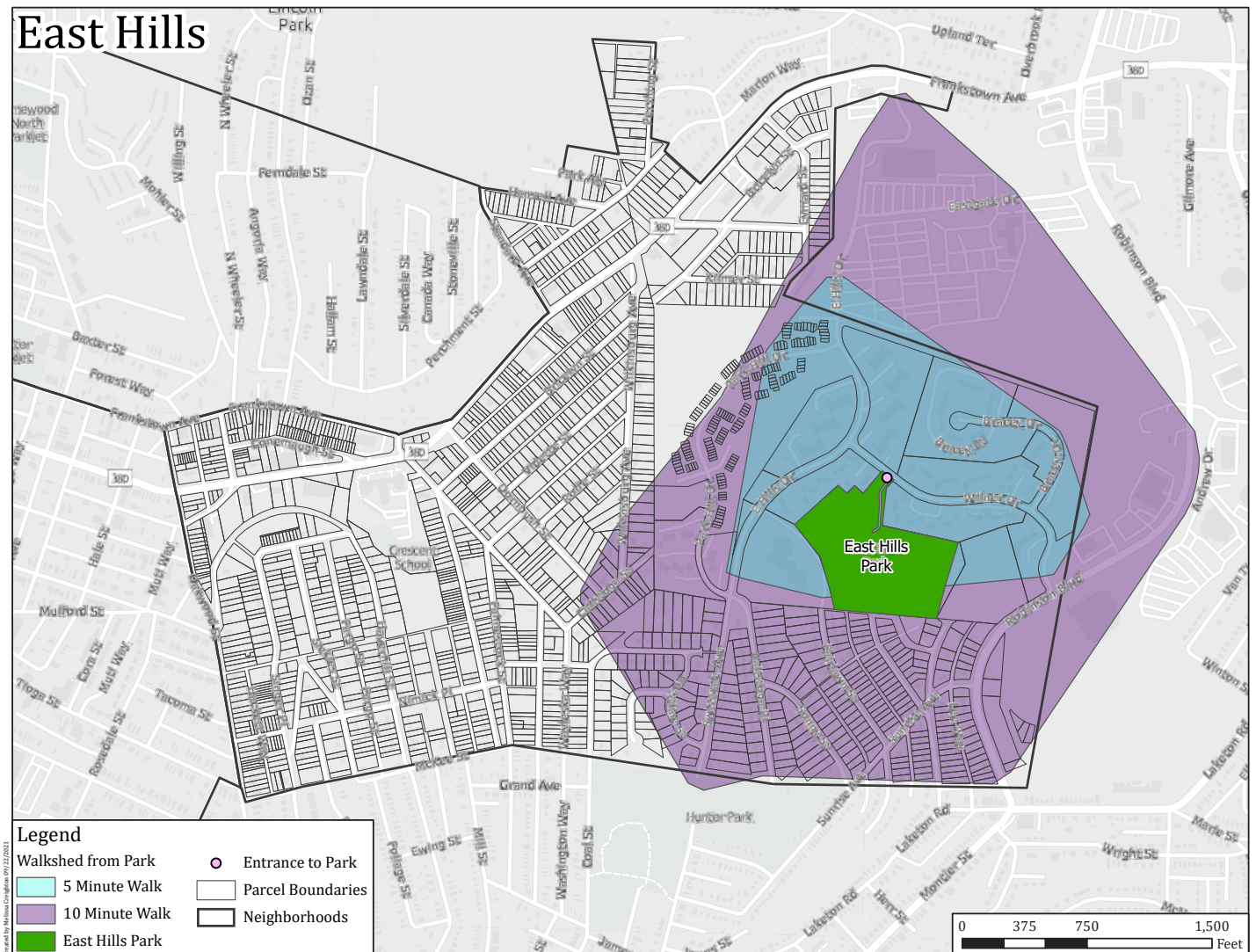
>Strategy 12.2: Consider developing mini parks.

Pennsylvania's outdoor recreation plan -- Recreation for All -- establishes an overall vision where "enjoyable outdoor recreation is welcoming to all and accessible in every Pennsylvania community." The plan recommends that all residents live within a 10-minute walk to a park.

The map below shows the walkshed for East Hills Park - both 5 minutes (in blue) and 10 minutes (in purple). The walksheds are based on the park entrance - which is located at the northern end of the park off Wilner Drive. Despite many homes in the south located along the park's border, their residents have a long walk because there

is no access to the south. Consideration should be given to creating formal connections to the south.

Residents who live in the western portion of the neighborhood have a much farther walk, and on roads that either lack sidewalks or are in poor condition. The neighborhood should consider developing mini parks in vacant lots that are easily accessible and located in highly visible areas.





Goal 13: We need to improve our community *health*.

On the ground today...

Research shows that communities healthy communities safely connect their residents and visitor to important to stable jobs, high-quality schools and social services, clean and vibrant public spaces, and access to healthy food.

> One in five Pittsburgh residents live with food insecurity.

That's 65,000 residents that don't have regular access to food. And since then, during Covid, that number is estimated to be more than one in three residents – as high as 40-45%, or 120,000 residents. In the East End communities, residents are particularly struggling. Within East Hills, 46% of residents are food insecure (DCP 2017).

The East End is one of the identified Healthy Food Priority Areas (HFPA) in the City's 2020 report "FeedPGH." HFPA are neighborhoods with acute food insecurity where investments need to be made to provide residents with access to healthy, adequate, and culturally appropriate food.

According to "A Menu For Food Justice" by Just Harvest (2013), "Pittsburgh's East End communities (East Hills, Homewood, Larimer, Lincoln-Lemington-Belmar) are home to high residential segregation, concentrated poverty, and located very long distances from supermarkets. However, the density and tight-knit nature suggest that the area is primed for

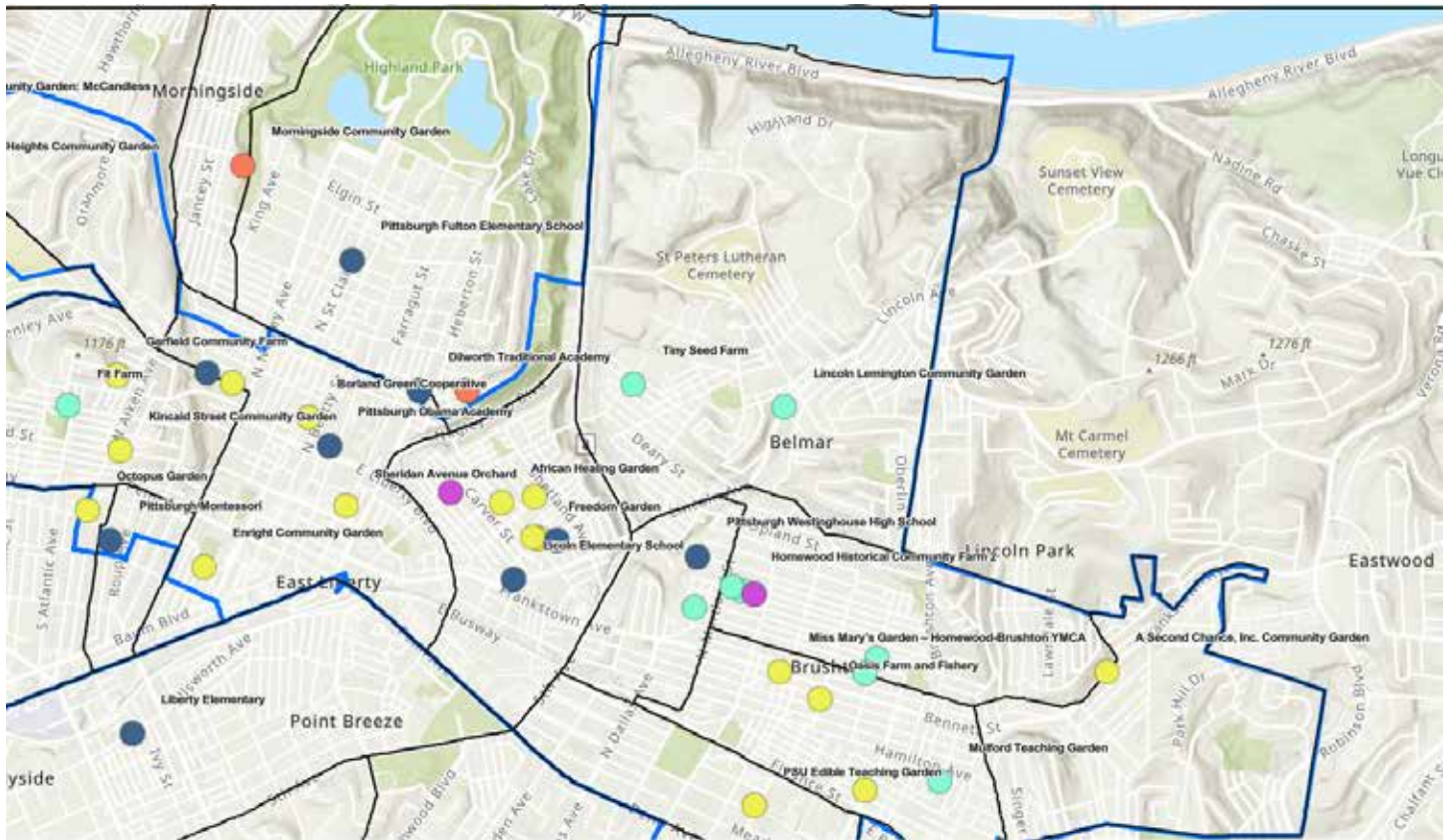
a full strategy using existing organizations and capacity to promote healthy food initiatives." East End residents are also particularly vulnerable to adult diabetes, heart disease, and obesity.

> The nearest grocery store is a bus ride away.

The nearest full-service grocery stores is the Giant Eagle on Frankstown Road in Penn Hills, which is about a 10 minute bus ride for most residents. More concerning is the lack of food, particularly fresh and healthy food, within walking distance of most residents.

> There is a community garden in East Hills.

The East Hills/Second East Hills housing development (managed by Telesis Corporation) operates a community garden.



Map of local community gardens (source: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/mapviewer/index.html?webmap=bd6fa826fe024f958f6fe3032cee62ea&extent=-80.1493,40.3464,-79.7895,40.5189>); photos of the Teles Development Community Garden and a green tomato (source: E. Holdings, 2021)

What can we do?

>Strategy 13.1: Promote existing programs that improve community health.

There is a clear need to provide residents with more opportunities to improve their health - whether it be through exercise or diet and access to healthy foods. The Consensus Group should work to promote existing programs to their residents, such as:

- Fresh Access Food Bucks - The Fresh Access program enables shoppers to use food stamps – as well as credit and debit cards – to buy fresh, nutritious, and locally-grown food at 14 farmers markets in the City of Pittsburgh May to November and one market December through March. Food Bucks give Fresh Access food stamp shoppers an extra \$2.00 to spend on fruits and veggies for every \$5.00 they spend in food stamps.
- Food programs available at the East Hills Family Support Center - Food Pantry on Wilner Drive and the Salvation Army Homewood Food Pantry on Franskstown Avenue.

Potential Partners:

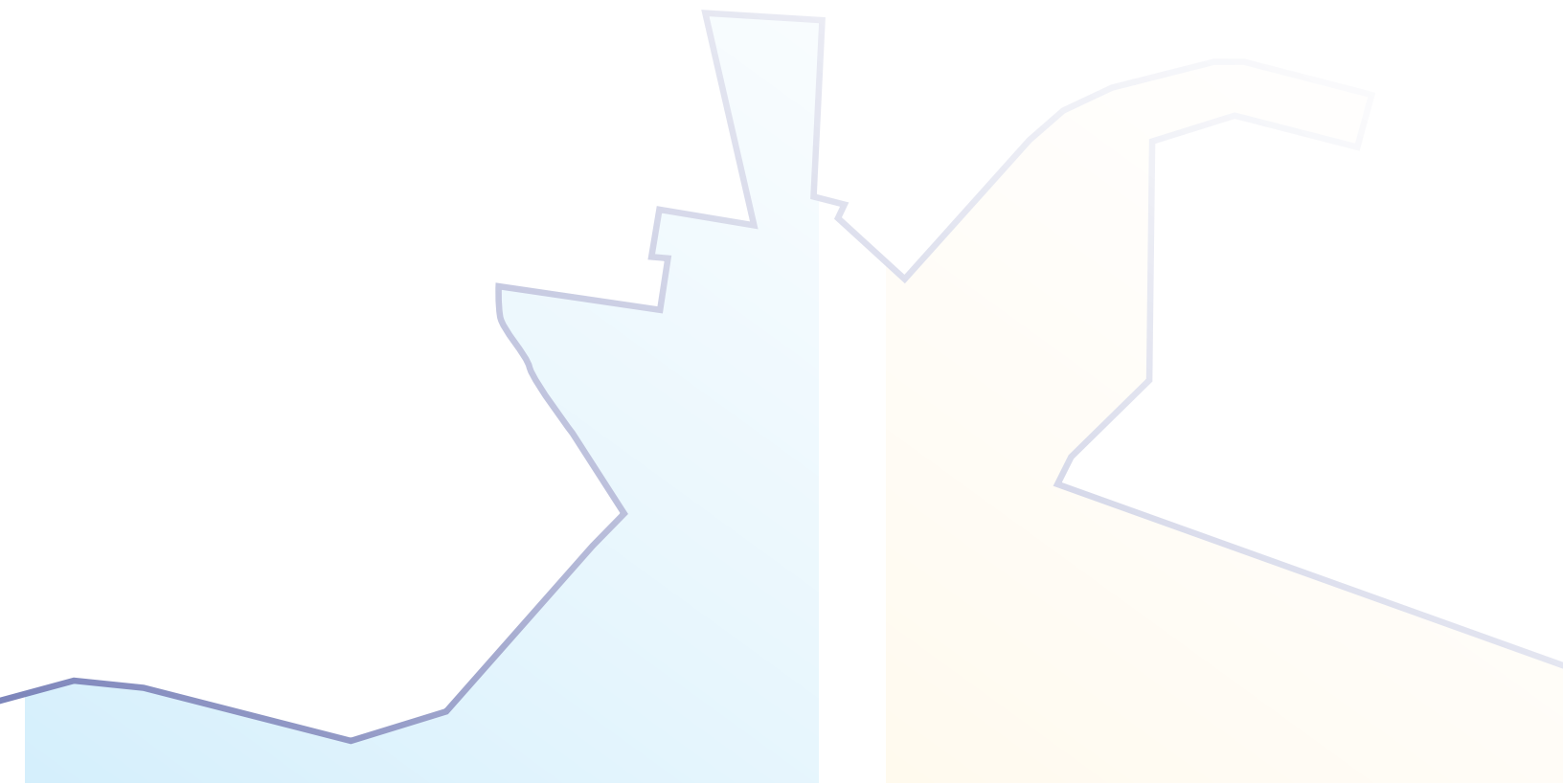
- DCP, T.H.A.W., Larimer Consensus Group, E.A.T. Initiative

>Strategy 13.2: Create a community garden.

Determine the interest in developing a community garden in the western section of East Hills for the residents outside of the one of Bracey Drive that is operated by the Telesis Corporation.

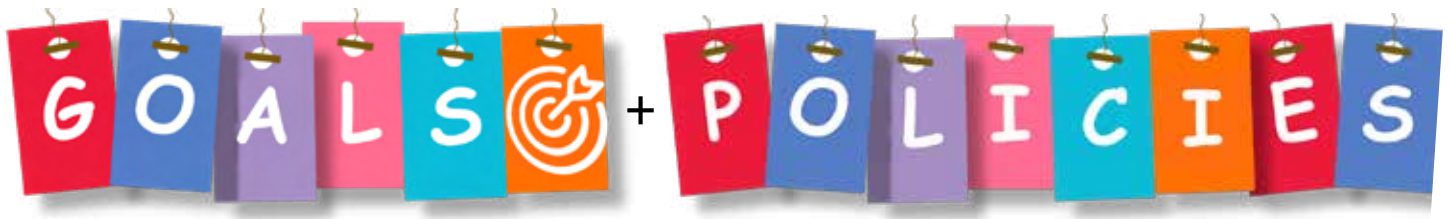
Potential Partners:

- DCP, Grow Pittsburgh, Operation Better Block, Inc., URA



The Development Chapter establishes the agenda for physical change to a neighborhood whether that be through new buildings, commercial corridors, or residential areas. Creating new affordable housing and commercial opportunities can also be addressed.

DEVELOPMENT



Goal D1: Eliminate blighted housing.

>*Strategy D1.1:* Develop a plan to address blighted housing.

>*Strategy D1.2:* Increase homeownership.

Goal D2: Encourage more businesses and amenities.

>*Strategy D2.1* Support infill development along/near Frankstown Road.

>*Strategy D2.2* Support local businesses and residents who want to become entrepreneurs/small business startups.

>*Strategy D2.3:* Review the City's zoning code.



Goal D1: Eliminate blighted housing.

On the ground today...

> The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Project ranks East Hills as “extreme disadvantage.”

The Pittsburgh Neighborhood Project is a local effort to understand the link between race, place, advantage, and disadvantage within the City of Pittsburgh.

“Disadvantage” is used to collectively describe the entrenched challenges, stressors (risk factors) and unequal conditions that some people are born into that are beyond their control, limit their opportunity and cause a wide range of adverse outcomes.

“Advantage” is used to describe the collection of sustained privileges, protective factors and favorable conditions that other people are born into that are also beyond their control, expand their opportunity and facilitate a wide range of positive outcomes.

Urban sociologists often refer to place-based disadvantage as concentrated disadvantage. The term disadvantage should not be viewed as a value judgment, but instead as concentrated challenges (and the absence of comparative advantages) that stem from decades of systemic and institutional racism.

The PNP specifically defines disadvantage as an index comprised of the following variables:

1. Percent of families living below the federal

poverty line (36%);

2. Percent of single mothers (49%);
3. Percent of men ages 20-64 who are unemployed or unattached to the labor force (47%);
4. Percent of those ages 25 and up without a Bachelor’s or more (85%);
5. Rate of gun shots reported/fired per 500 people (14.2); and
6. Average adult income rank for children born to parents at the 25th percentile of the income distribution from 1978-1983 (\$22,230).

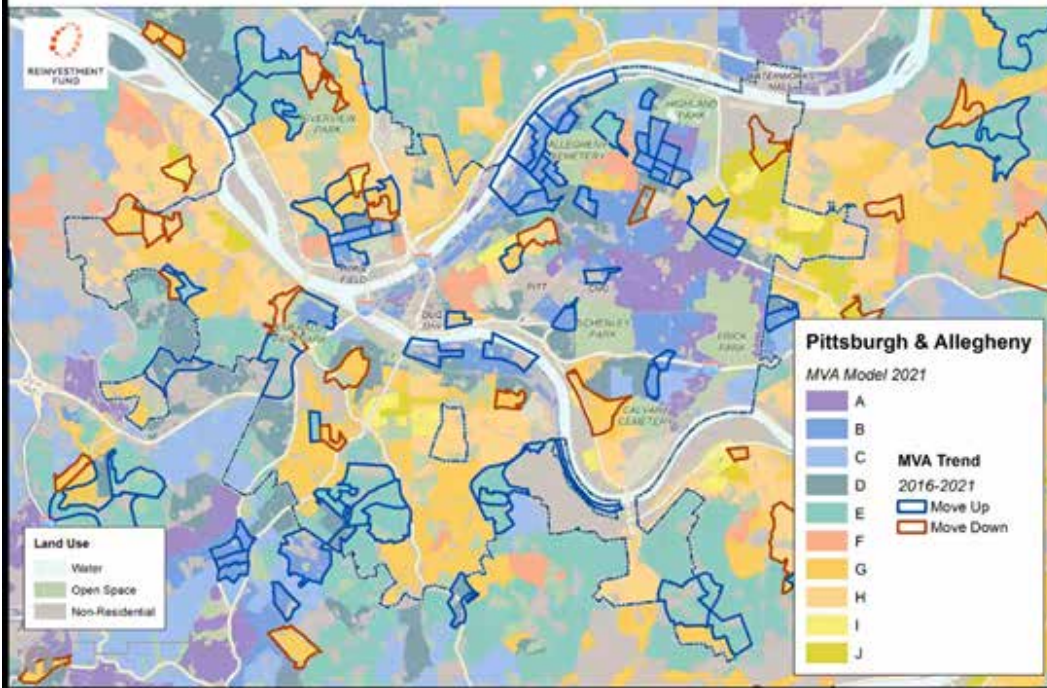
> East Hills has one of the highest concentrations of vacant or distressed properties in the City.

Data in ForgingPGH shows that East Hills (and surrounding neighborhoods) have one of the highest concentrations of vacant or distressed properties in the City.

The condition of dwellings, and continued disinvestment by property owners is a concern. This is especially concerning as homeowners are aging and in many cases, can’t afford maintenance/upkeep on their homes, leading to deteriorating conditions and decrease in value.

Per the 2021 Market Value Assessment (see top map on page 79), most of the blocks in East Hills

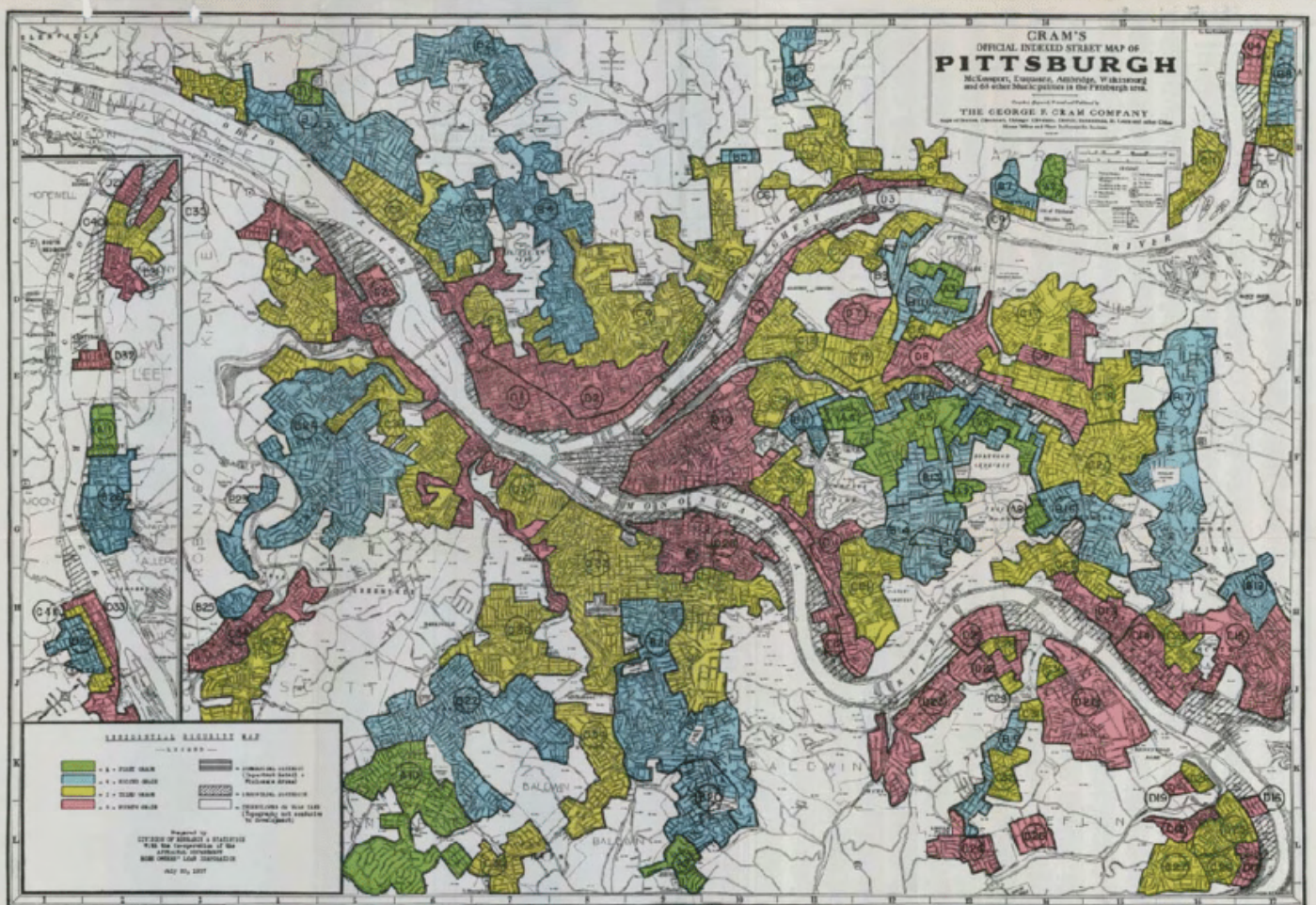
Change from 2016 to 2021 MVA



East Hills market value falls mostly in the range of "H" through "J." The market has not changed much within the last five years.

The map below is the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) Map for Pittsburgh from 1937. As stated in *ForgingPGH*, Pittsburgh ranked as the 17th most racially segregated city of the 50 U.S. cities having the largest population of Black residents.

This is in large part due to the redlining, an overtly racist policy that effectively limited non-White persons from buying homes in certain neighborhoods. Most of East Hills was classified as "Definitely Declining."



rate as either H, I, or J (where A is the best and J is the worst). These markets have a median sales price of less than \$35,000, homeownership rate under 50%, subsidized renters between 20-80%, vacancy rates between 8-14%, and a foreclosure rate between 2.4-2.7%.

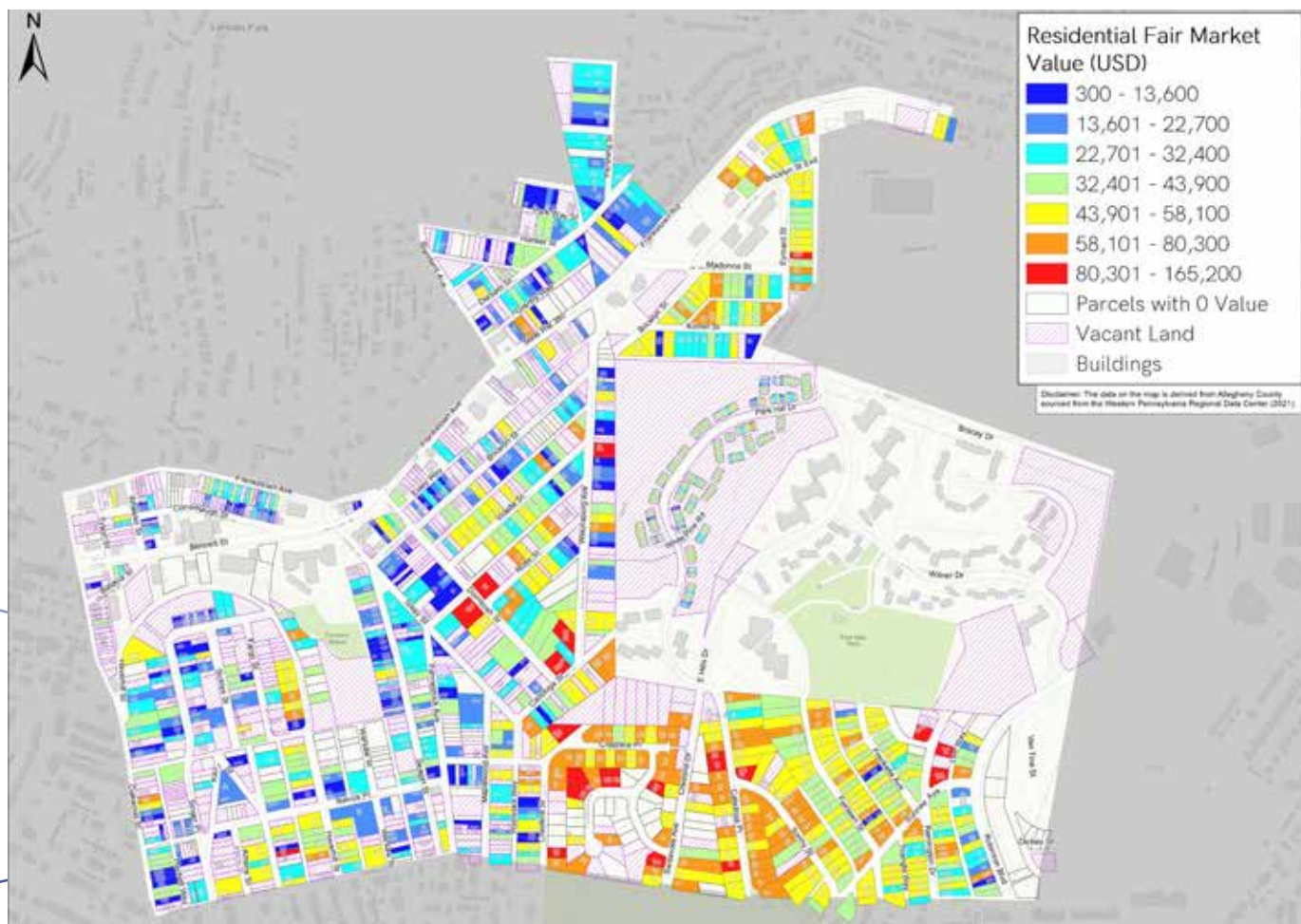
The highest valued housing is located in the southeastern portion of the neighborhood and in the areas close to East Hills Park. These areas are stable, while the homes in the western section are of lower value (see map below that depicts the residential fair market values).

ForgingPGH also discusses the lasting impacts of redlining (a method used by mortgage lenders in the mid-20th century to determine where to grant loans, based largely on race). The neighborhoods where Pittsburgh has lost the most population continue to be the “Definitely Declining” or “Hazardous” neighborhoods (see bottom map on page 79), which align with today’s neighborhoods that have the largest concentration of African Americans.

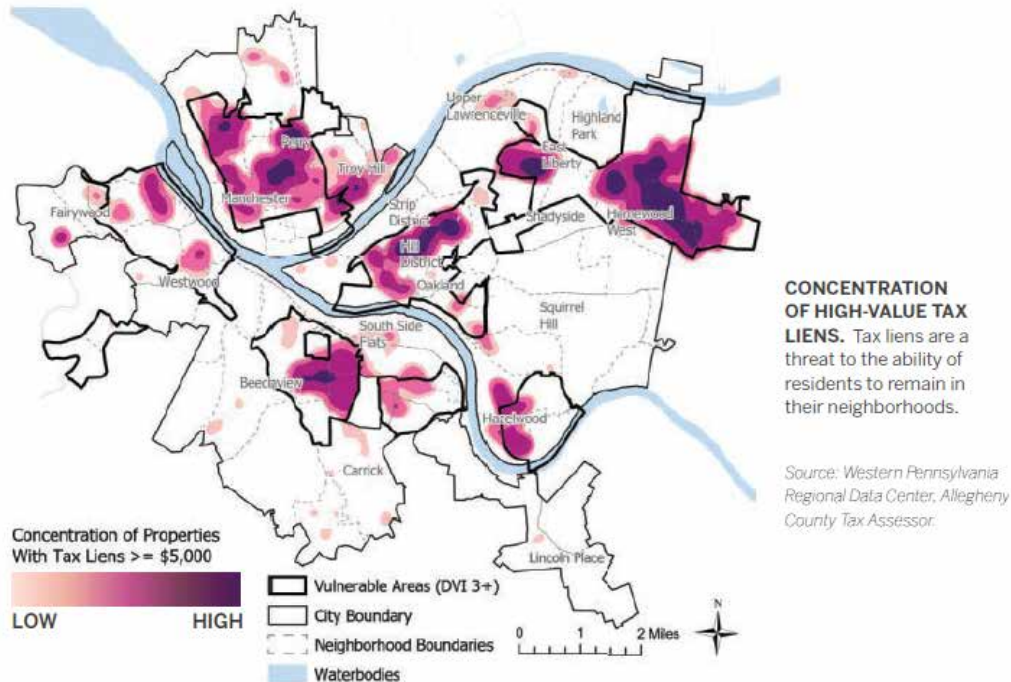
> East End communities are seeing decreasing rates of homeownership.

Of the East End neighborhoods, only East Liberty, Friendship and Homewood West saw increases in homeownership. East Hills experienced more than 25% loss of homeowners, thus a dramatic increase in rental occupancy. As renter rates increase, it becomes harder for families to build and maintain generational wealth.

As more homeowners become debt-burdened, they will be forced to sell their homes or fall under foreclosure. Foreclosure rates in the zip code containing East Hills (15221) are higher than most City neighborhoods. Surrounding neighborhoods outside of City (Penn Hills) are even higher.



The Burden of Debt



This map from ForgingPGH shows that East Hills has a high concentration of high-value tax liens, debts from unpaid bills to the County, City, school district, and water/sewer bills. High-debt liens are concentrated in neighborhoods already vulnerable to displacement.

> East Hills is “most vulnerable” per the Displacement Vulnerability Index (DVI).

The City’s Comprehensive Plan, ForgingPGH, measures the DVI for all City neighborhoods. At-risk residents include those who have lower incomes, less education, are a member of a community of color, or rent their home. Those considered more vulnerable have at least two of these characteristics.

Overall, Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) are heavily concentrated in the City. Neighborhoods with the highest total voucher units include the Lower Hill District, East Liberty, Homewood, and Carrick. For the most part, these same neighborhoods also had the highest increases in HCV, with the addition of Larimer. Neighborhoods losing the most HCV include Oakland, Shadyside, Lawrenceville, Downtown, New Homestead, Duquesne Heights, and the northside.

Low income housing tax credit projects are concentrated in the Hill District, north side communities, and East End. East Hills has three; of which two will reach year 15 by 2026. East Hills has some of the highest number of low income units of LIHTC projects in the City. Once these projects reach year 15, when the tax credits effectively end, questions raise about continued affordability.

What can we do?

>Strategy D1.1: Develop a plan to address blighted housing.

Establish an action committee within the EHCG to serve as the local task force with the responsibility of developing and implementing the Plan.

Strategic removal of blighted, deteriorated and dangerous properties. This would include working with City officials to prioritize such properties, notify owners, and actively implement the rehabilitation and demolition plan.

A heatmap (page 83) was created to identify the areas with the highest concentrations (in yellow) of poor, very poor and unsound buildings (Tax Assessment data). These areas should be the priority areas for housing rehabilitation programs.

- Park Hill, a 167-townhouse complex on the Pittsburgh side of the city's border with Penn Hills. Around one in five of the townhouses are vacant and have collapsing roofs, broken windows, missing front doors, and abandoned cars.
- Maple Ridge, a 91 unit, three-story apartment complex built in 1968, is in need of rehabilitation.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, URA, WAVE, HELP Initiative, Rising Tide, Neighborhood Partners, Operation Better Block, Pittsburgh Community Revitalization Group (PCRG)

>Strategy D1.2: Increase homeownership.

There is a need to not only help existing homeowners be able to remain in their homes, but also to help encourage existing residents to become homeowners. Home ownership can help avoid displacement, which East Hills is a highly vulnerable neighborhood.

- Encourage homeowners to voluntarily comply with building code. Maintenance for homeowners is a growing concern, particularly as the community ages. The Collaborative can assist with resources and possibly create a grass roots assistance program to homeowners to assist in efforts to address citations.
- Work with URA and other agencies to promote programs that support increased homeownership this would include helping existing homeowners with obtaining foreclosure assistance to keep their homes.
- Work with City Planning and other agencies to develop a housing development infill strategy for smaller, local developers to build affordable housing on areas recently demolished.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, URA, WAVE, HELP Initiative, Rising Tide, Neighborhood Partners, Operation Better Block, Pittsburgh Community Revitalization Group (PCRG)

East Hills



Rising Tide is working on addressing blighted conditions along Park Hill Drive and revamping the existing homeowners association. The Consensus Group should continue to partner with Rising Tide to identify additional areas where housing redevelopment is needed.



Goal D2: Encourage more businesses and amenities.

On the ground today...

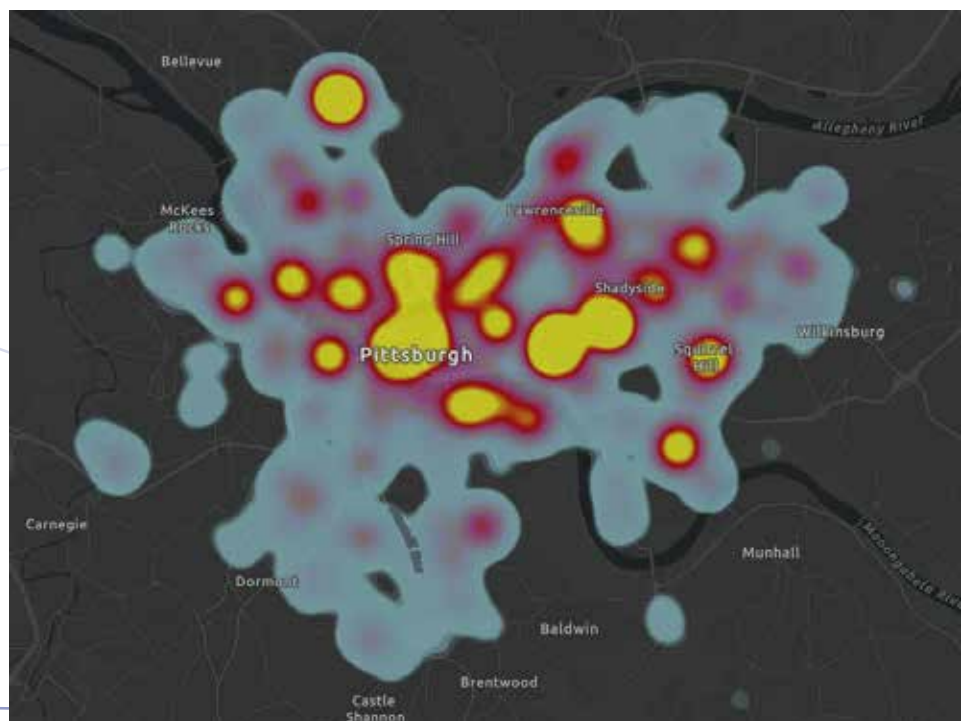
> East Hills is a part of the Homewood commercial district and Penn Hills.

most residents do their shopping at the nearby shopping centers in Penn Hills. During the planning process, residents expressed a need to encourage more local start-ups, particularly Black-owned businesses.

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) publishes annual business profiles for the City neighborhood commercial districts. East Hills does not have their own, but rather is included in the Frankstown and Brushton Avenue Commercial District for Homewood. Within East Hills, most of the active businesses are located on Bennett Street, whereas Frankstown Road is more residential and vacant storefronts. With the exception of the Family Dollar on Frankstown,

The job density map shows locations with the highest density of jobs per acre (yellow is the highest).

(source: <https://forgingpgh.org/tools-and-resources/data-visualization/citywide-data/>).



MARKET PROFILE

Frankstown and Brushton Ave Commercial District Homewood



2021 Business Summary (2 Minute Drive Time)

Number of Businesses:
113

Number of Employees:
738

Employees/Residential
Population Ratio*:
0.18:1

Major Commercial Industries:
Eating & Drinking Places, Food
Services & Drinking Places, Health
Care & Social Assistance

For more information on the
neighborhood, visit:



Marketplace Profile**	Retail Potential (Demand)	Retail Sales (Supply)	Retail Gap	Leakage/ Surplus Factor	Number of Business
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	\$6,590,993	\$0	\$6,590,993	100.0	0
Furniture & Home Furnishing Stores	\$1,067,288	\$0	\$1,067,288	100.0	0
Electronics and Appliance Stores	\$978,444	\$158,616	\$819,828	72.1	1
Building Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	\$1,765,753	\$0	\$1,765,753	100.0	0
Food and Beverage Stores	\$5,871,979	\$1,923,230	\$3,948,749	50.7	3
Health and Personal Care Stores	\$1,955,604	\$0	\$1,955,604	100.0	0
Gasoline Stations	\$3,214,844	\$768,625	\$2,446,219	61.4	1
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	\$1,635,321	\$185,343	\$1,449,978	79.6	1
Sporting Goods / Hobby / Music / Book Stores	\$848,790	\$0	\$848,790	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	\$4,558,213	\$0	\$4,558,213	100.0	0
Nonstore Retailers	\$614,740	\$0	\$614,740	100.0	0
Food Services & Drinking Places	\$3,054,713	\$2,294,890	\$759,823	14.2	8

**Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. The Leakage/Surplus Factor measures the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. The NAICS is used to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity.

*This ratio indicates the number of employees working in the area versus the number of residents. A higher ratio indicates more commercial presence.

Last Updated August 2021

What can we do?

>Strategy D2.1 Support infill development along/near Frankstown Road.

Focus on activating key intersections, such as Frankstown Avenue and Oakwood Street (see concept below of a new commercial or mixed use structure). This intersection is one of the primary gateways into East Hills from the west and should be a priority for new development as well as streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, grass strips, crosswalks, street lighting, and a bus shelter.

The Consensus Group could also maintain a list of vacant commercial buildings – contacts, cost, etc. - to help market as redevelopment opportunities to local residents who are interested in starting new businesses.

Facade improvements and vacant land/buildings - redevelopment priority. Create vibrant business district in this corridor. This is also a priority area for bus shelters - main route for PAAC and school bus stops.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, URA, DCP, HELP Initiative, Neighborhood Partners, Operation Better Block, Pittsburgh Community Revitalization Group (PCRG)

>Strategy D2.2 Support local businesses and residents who want to become entrepreneurs/ small business startups.

There is a strong desire to encourage local, black-owned businesses within the community. Need to investigate options to create a maker space and/or small business incubator.

The East Hills Consensus Group should serve as a resource – put residents in touch with local programs/options available (URA, City, etc.).

The Consensus Group could also offer advertising for a nominal fee to local businesses, the funds could then be used for local projects.

Potential Partners:

- DCP, URA, HELP Initiative, Neighborhood Partners, Operation Better Block, Pittsburgh Community Revitalization Group (PCRG)

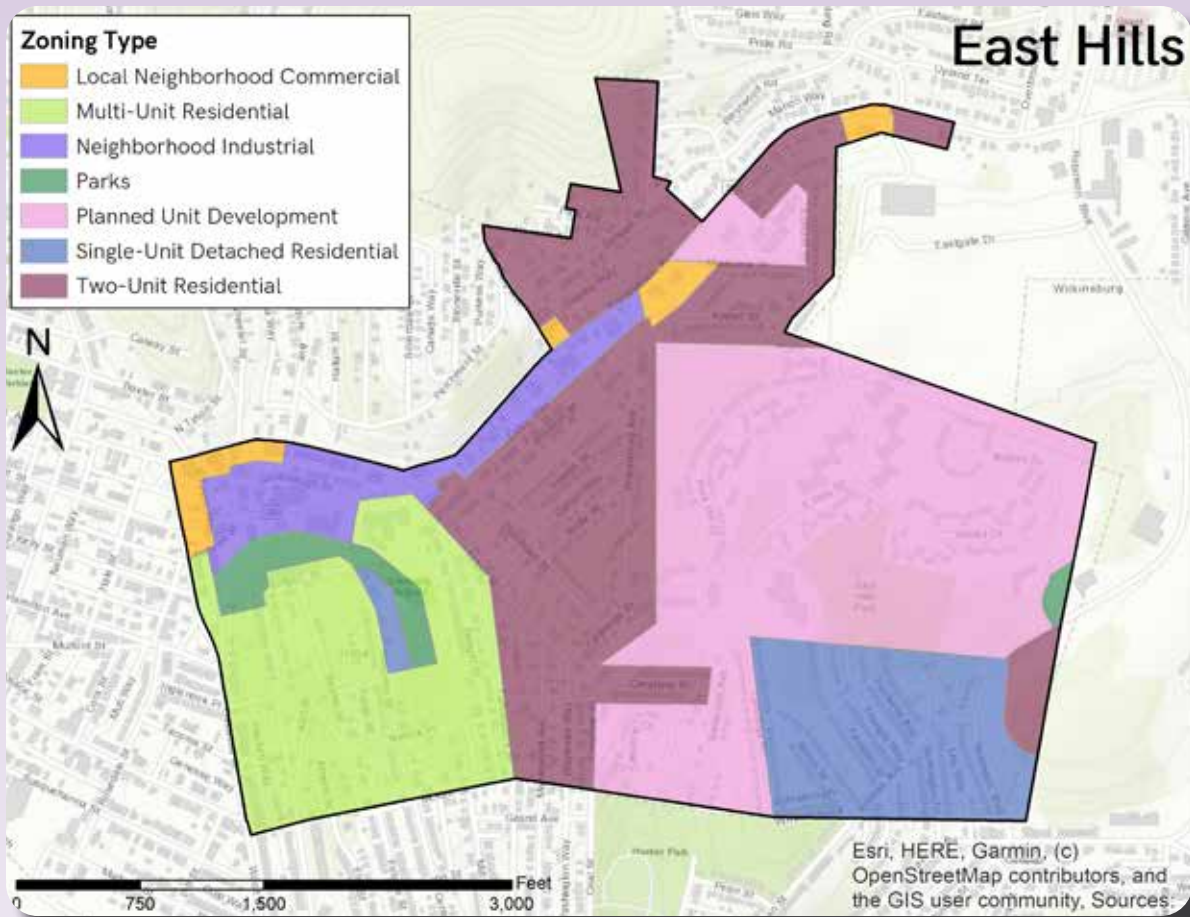
>Strategy D2.3: Review the City's zoning code.

For the most part, the City's zoning aligns with the existing and preferred land use for the East Hills neighborhood.

- The Frankstown Road corridor is a currently a mixture of commercial (mostly vacant) and single-family residential, but is zoned for neighborhood industrial.
- There are several home-based businesses in the community and more could be encouraged with a more flexible zoning code.
- Consideration should be given to expanding the multi-unit residential district to encompass the current single-family residential district. This could allow for existing homeowners to convert their single-family homes to multi-unit buildings.

Potential Partners:

- DCP



Conceptual rendering of new construction and streetscape improvements at the intersection of Frankstown Road and Oakwood Street (prepared by Michael Baker International at the February Community Workshop in 2021).

