40th & Market Streets
Creating a Civic Vision
Dear 40th Street Stakeholders and Concerned Residents,

We are pleased to present this draft Report to the Community following the recent Creating a Civic Vision for 40th and Market Streets public process. The August 2006 public forum was quite successful, with over 100 citizens participating, and we have been working diligently since then. We incorporated the results of the civic engagement work from the forum as the basis upon which to reimagine design and planning aspects of the intersection of 40th and Market Streets in West Philadelphia. The result is a series of phased planning and design ideas for the intersection that give voice to the concerns of the stakeholders. This way, citizen concerns, solutions and goals may continue to play a role in future development efforts, though the market is moving very quickly.

These concepts received a warm reception when we presented them at the September 2006 Friends of 40th Street general meeting. We now offer these phased plan ideas and recommendations to the community and hope you will give us your feedback. Please submit suggestions using the feedback forms left at this location, or email Penn Praxis at praxis@design.upenn.edu.

We will continue to work to create opportunities to publicly discuss these ideas - bringing the community voice to bear on matters that impact the quality of life along the 40th Street corridor.

Yours,

Harris Steinberg, Penn Praxis
Harris Sokoloff, Center for School Study Councils
Facilitators, Friends of 40th Street

Alisa Orduna-Sneed
Executive Director, Partnership CDC
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### Project Team

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Executive Summary

In August 2006, the Friends of 40th Street, in partnership with The Partnership CDC and Penn Praxis, gathered community stakeholders together to create a shared civic vision for 40th and Market Streets and the surrounding area.

- Over 100 people attended the initial public forum and discussion session on August 22, 2006, and 25 participated in a subsequent working session with planning professionals to formulate the principles into actual urban design recommendations on August 28, 2006.

The result was a three-phase plan: “Preening and Greening;” “Renovate and Refurbish;” and “Town Center.” Although each phase is designed to be implemented independently, they leverage each other powerfully when considered as a comprehensive effort.

- “Preening and Greening” focuses on pedestrian-scale, physical improvements, such as better signage, street trees, a green median on Market St, and pedestrian lighting that can be implemented in the near term.

- “Renovate and Refurbish” emphasizes using available grants and funding to upgrade the existing building stock through façade improvements and redesigned signage.

- “Town Center” advocates reshaping Market Street into a denser urban environment by building mixed uses on existing parking lots and reconstructing underutilized areas, namely ‘The Market’ as a 9-10 story housing building with a farmers’ market on the ground, and the southeastern green space as a Town Square in the Philadelphia tradition of Rittenhouse Square.

- Penn Praxis presented these concepts to the Friends of 40th Street on September 29. The group will now begin receiving public feedback, and will update the ideas as necessary.

- Next steps include revisions to the design according to the comments received, and continued discussion of the plan with institutional stakeholders who have the organizational capacity and fund-raising capability to support this plan into reality.
“Creating a Civic Vision for 40th and Market Streets”
Charrette and Public visioning Process
Final report

Introduction

Creating a Civic Vision for 40th and Market Streets seeks to put forth a civic vision and give voice to the existing area stakeholders in the inevitable process of change that is occurring at this crucial intersection in West Philadelphia. The Friends of 40th Street advocates the creation and implementation of an inclusive vision of the block that ensures that ongoing development will benefit all area groups.

Creating a Civic Vision for 40th and Market Streets grew out of a larger civic engagement project around similar issues in 2004. The University of Pennsylvania recognized that the success of the redevelopment of the 40th Street Corridor depended on the communities surrounding it, so it worked with Penn Praxis — the not-for-profit clinical outreach arm of Penn’s School of Design — to organize a series of workshops to involve the community in the ongoing development of the corridor. Those stakeholders who attended articulated a set of principles to guide the future activity on 40th Street. Also born from those workshops was the Friends of 40th Street, made up of a diverse group of individuals who have continued the dialogue and the advocacy of the planning principles.

Many residents also live on the corner itself. University Square Apartments at 3901 Market Street, a 19-story high-rise apartment building for seniors, houses 480 residents. Directly across Market Street are the University City Town Homes, an architecturally award-winning residential complex that houses hundreds more low-income residents. The area is also home to the world-renowned Philadanco (Philadelphia Dance Company) and Elwyn, a social service agency for the disadvantaged and disabled. The Partnership Community Development Corporation has signaled its commitment to the area by locating its offices on the south side of the 4000 block of Market and building a new $3 million technology and job training center on the north side of the 4000 block of Market. The University City District is also located within the project area and actively provides security and ongoing public realm maintenance.

Still, few people except area residents can form a concrete image of the intersection and its surrounds. To most, the area is perceived as unclean, unsafe, and unattractive. The current mix of goods and services has limited appeal. The corner is dominated by the fortress-like inward-facing
Existing Conditions

The Market, a fortress-like legacy of urban renewal, has deadened a once-thriving corner at 40th and Market Streets.

Market at University Square, an underused green space, and a bleak transit stop. Importantly, the intersection has become known as sites of major drug activity. It is an area to pass through but not to linger.

The intersection bears the troubled scars of the urban renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s. It is the western end of the area once known as the Black Bottom—an historic African-American community that was cleared and leveled to make room for the creation of the University City Science Center and the institutional expansion of the University of Pennsylvania and Drexel University. Photographs taken in 1964 by the noted urban planner Denise Scott Brown shows a richly vibrant streetscape that was leveled in the name of progress. These memories resonate today and this planning process aims to restore the civic voice to the shaping of the public realm.

Though Market Street’s barren streetscape still exhibits the legacy of urban renewal, recent development a stone’s throw away has affect positive growth in the neighborhood. In 1999, due to the efforts of Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell, the City of Philadelphia implemented new streetscape improvements—pedestrian lighting and street trees—along 40th Street from Chestnut Street north to Filbert Street. In 2000, redevelopment of the northwest corner of Walnut and 40th Street was completed with the opening of Fresh Grocer and a parking garage. In 2002, the redevelopment of the southwest corner of 40th and Walnut was completed with the opening of the Bridge, a movie theater and entertainment complex.

The stately Carnegie Walnut West branch of the Free Library on the southeast corner was completely renovated and reopened to the public in October 2004, a renovation also made possible by the councilwoman. Along Chestnut Street, the new UCD headquarters, the 18th District police substation (2001), and the relocation of Penn’s Police Department to the west (1998) have brought new activity and safety to the corridor. Currently on the northeast corner of Chestnut and 40th Street, a nine-story commercial and residential complex is under construction. The Science Center has ambitious plans for expansion of the area on Market Street between 36th and 39th Streets. Property values in the adjoining neighborhoods are skyrocketing.

Given recent neighborhood change and the corner’s important position as the community’s transit stop, redevelopment of 40th and Market is inevitable. The question now is how this development will happen and who will benefit from it. The voices of area residents, merchants, and employees must be represented to bring urban vibrancy back to this area. The civic visioning project sponsored by the Friends of 40th Street ensures their needs, hopes, and dreams will be heard. Working in partnership with Penn, Councilwoman Blackwell, the Partnership CDC, the University City District, UC Green, and other area organizations, the Friends of 40th Street will advocate for the redevelopment of the area according to the community vision.
Comparative Views of the Intersection

1964

Looking West: Corner of 40th Street and Market

2004

Looking East: Corner of 40th Street and Market

February 2004

Looking West: Corner of 40th Street and Market

1964 Photos: Denise Scott Brown

2004 Photos: Matt Conti
Comparative Views of the Intersection

1964

Looking South: 40th Street Just North of Market

South East Corner of 40th Street and Market
1964 Photos: Denise Scott Brown

2004

February 2004

South East Corner of 40th Street and Market
2004 Photos: Matt Conti
Comparative Views of the Intersection

1964

Looking East: Corner of 40th Street Market

Looking West: Corner of 40th Street Market

2004

Existing Conditions
Goals

Based upon the work of the citizens in the public forums, the goals of the project can be described as:

- Create a ‘Cosmopolitan Canopy,’ the highest quality public environment where people of all races, abilities, income levels, and cultures are welcomed and embraced.

- Give voice to the existing community residents and business owners through a series of public conversations.

- Integrate the concerns of the existing community residents, business owners and other stakeholders in the ongoing evolution of the 40th Street corridor.

Mr Sleepyhead: the Venue for the public design forum.
Photo: Michael Nairn

The forum brings many participants from the Community.
Photo: Dave Hood

Harris Sokoloff: the Venue for the public design forum.

Harris Sokoloff leads a breakout session on goals and principles
Photo: Dave Hood

Harris Sokoloff provides direction as residents gather around a map of 40th and Market.
Photo: Patrick Blair
40th Street Planning Principles
Creating unity while maintaining diversity

40th Street: The following is a summary of the principles developed during a month-long community engagement process in the winter of 2004, with suggested revisions from the summer of 2006. As a set, these principles represent a coherent image for the evolution of 40th Street in West Philadelphia between Lancaster and Baltimore Avenues. The Friends of 40th Street grew out of the community forum process and has assumed the responsibility for advocating for these principles in the ongoing evolution of the 40th Street corridor.

The many faces of 40th Street
Enhance the urban character of 40th Street by promoting and sustaining a rich urban blend of culture, class, age, race, and gender along 40th Street with shops, services, arts, and culture that reflect a vibrant sense of place. Aim for a mix of uses, such as residential living above small-scale retail that will enhance the innate character of this very public and urban thoroughfare.

Here, there, everywhere
Celebrate the rich diversity found on 40th Street. 40th Street is a living, social and cultural corridor. It is a place where many traditions merge and blend, a place where differences are respected and a place for people to feel welcome along its entire length.

To market, to market
Encourage development by balancing a strong sense of social responsibility towards existing and new local businesses and jobs with free market economics. It must reflect daily local needs, as well as the larger social and cultural identities of University City.

It’s our house
Make 40th Street clean, safe, attractive, and accessible. Create and sustain the highest quality public street life on 40th Street from Lancaster Avenue to Baltimore Avenue. Design the street so that street life reflects the vibrancy and values of the community.

Destination 40th Street
Build on the diversity of uses and customers on 40th Street that change throughout the day, week, and year. Think of 40th Street as both a local street and a unique destination where community meets campus with a rich offering of commerce and culture reflecting the surrounding neighborhoods.

Building community
Keep the dialogue going. Citizens of University City want to enlarge the public conversation about 40th Street and create a community-based process that will ensure continued consultation, communication, dialogue, and promotion among the stakeholder groups aimed at sustaining a viable vision for the future.

40th Street Green
Think globally, act locally. Make 40th Street a leader in demonstrating how urban neighborhoods can promote environmental sustainability practices. Promote and increase the use of the existing public transportation infrastructure. Encourage green building practices and recycling. Reduce energy consumption, stormwater runoff, and waste streams. Make 40th Street a more responsible and better place for everyone.
List of Suggested Design Elements
Developed during the 2006 Public Forum

Transportation and SEPTA
  Protected transit stops
  Bus shelters
  Subway head houses with inviting architecture
  Welcoming and covered entryways

Circulation and Parking
  Traffic calming
  Longer lights for safe crossing of Market Street
  Larger sidewalks at corners
  Parking space for handicapped vans
  Relocate surface parking that fronts the street
  Bike lanes and stations

Streetscape and Amenities
  Pedestrian lighting
  Bathrooms (well maintained)
  Signage
    University City District information kiosk
    Vehicular
      Direction Philadelphia
    Pedestrian
      Walk Philadelphia
  Landscaped median strip on Market Street
  Paving materials
    Level pavements
  Benches
  Greening
    Street trees
    Flower boxes
    Planters
  Welcoming building entrances

Urban Design
  Construct a dense urban fabric
  Southeast corner identified as site for major improvement
  Buildings should face the street
  ‘The Market’ identified as site for major architectural improvement
  Eliminate setbacks such as at Eckerd Pharmacy
  Sidewalk access and handicapped accessibility
  Environmentally-friendly “green” design
    Solar panels
    Green roofs
  Encourage renovation of existing buildings
    Restore original building materials
  Signage
    Retain human scale matching the 4-5 story existing buildings
  Create a variety of housing types and architectural styles
  Create inviting public spaces for all stakeholders

Retail and the Mix of Goods and Services
  Encourage a mix of uses with retail on ground floor and residential uses on upper floors
  ‘The Market’ identified as site for major improvement
  Emphasis on uses with lots of walk-in traffic, outdoor seating
  Larger retail uses

Community Uses and Services
  Develop seating and spaces for community gathering
  Uses that can integrate community instead of further separate them
  Establish play space for local children of all ages
  Create a community green space

Crime and Safety
  Increase enforcement