

Your Brentwood Plan

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
FINAL EDITION



acknowledgements

The preparation of this Implementable Comprehensive Plan would not have been possible without the leadership and contributions of Brentwood Borough's elected officials, staff and this project's Steering Committee. Most of all, the participation of hundreds of residents, business owners and other community members helped shape this plan. Thanks and recognition to everyone who devoted effort to helping chart a course for Brentwood's future.

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The plan was prepared with assistance from

PASHEK  **MTR**

contents

INTRODUCTION

- Resolution
- Using the Plan
- Creating the Plan
- Storylines

02

BROWNSVILLE ROAD

- Introduction
- Key Issue Strategies
 - 01: Upgrade the streetscape
 - 02: Develop a façade program
 - 03: Enhance crossings

16

DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Introduction
- Key Issue Strategies
 - 01: Build capacity for economic development
 - 02: Foster high-quality mixed-use development
 - 03: Encourage high-impact redevelopment
 - 04: Seek partnership for a farmers market

40

PARKING

- Introduction
- Key Issue Strategies
 - 01: Monitor parking issues
 - 02: Continue the conversation about a residential permit program
 - 03: Hold the line on enforcement
 - 04: Promote reporting
 - 05: Define spaces

56

PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY

- Introduction
- Key Issue Strategies
 - 01: Upgrade public stairs
 - 02: Double down on the sidewalk program
 - 03: Continue to advance the Brentwood Hollow Trail
 - 04: Pilot a “neighborways” program
 - 05: Advocate for safety along Route 5
 - 06: Monitor GAP connection opportunities

70

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Introduction
- Key Issue Strategies
 - 01: Refresh Brentwood’s municipal branding
 - 02: Make a slogan or tagline happen
 - 03: Plant the place brand seed
 - 04: Reinforce local identity in the public realm
 - 05: Boost public events with sponsorship
 - 06: “Sell” the community to likely audiences

86

OTHER ISSUES

APPENDICES

104



THE BOROUGH OF BRENTWOOD

MUNICIPAL BUILDING – 3735 BROWNSVILLE ROAD

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RESOLUTION NO. 2024-39

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOROUGH OF BRENTWOOD, COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY AND COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA, AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF AN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, Article III of the Municipalities Planning Code authorizes and directs municipalities to develop, adopt, and implement a Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, Borough Council authorized the most recent Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Brentwood in 1997, and, while a number of facets of this document were subsequently implemented, many of its contents are no longer germane to Borough operations or the vision for the community's future; and

WHEREAS, Council recognizes the importance of comprehensive planning as a tool for assessing public priorities and for implementing long-range community development goals that serve to manage future growth and to preserve a municipality's key characteristics; and

WHEREAS, an updated Comprehensive Plan has been developed under the direction of a Steering Committee that was appointed by Borough Council and through the assistance of Pashek+MTR Consultants; and

WHEREAS, the Brentwood Planning Commission recommended adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan, which is officially titled as "Your Brentwood Plan," at its July 17, 2024 business meeting; and

WHEREAS, after soliciting written commentary through the comprehensive planning process, Council held a public hearing on August 19, 2024, in order to provide a final opportunity for members of the public to provide formal comments on said Comprehensive Plan; and

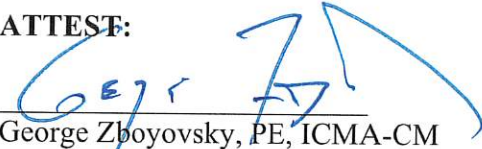
WHEREAS, as part of the notification process, a copy of the Comprehensive Plan was provided to the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development and to the municipalities that adjoin Brentwood Borough; and

WHEREAS, Council has reviewed and considered the Comprehensive Plan and desires to adopt the same pursuant to the powers granted by the Municipalities Planning Code; and

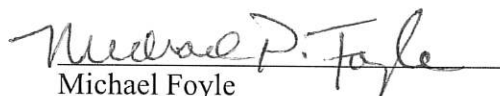
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the Borough of Brentwood, County of Allegheny and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, that the document entitled "Your Brentwood Plan" is hereby adopted as the official Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Brentwood in accordance with the terms of the Municipalities Planning Code, and with a true and correct copy of such document attached here to as **Exhibit A**.

RESOLVED AND ADOPTED by the Council of the Borough of Brentwood, County of Allegheny, and Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, meeting in regular and public session, this **19th** day of **August 2024**.

ATTEST:


George Zboyovsky, PE, ICMA-CM
Borough Manager

BOROUGH OF BRENTWOOD


Michael Foyle
President of Council

8/28/2024



INTRODUCTION

Using the plan

AN IMPLEMENTABLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Your Brentwood Plan is the officially adopted policy guidebook for Brentwood Borough. The Pennsylvania State Municipalities Planning Code requires boroughs such as Brentwood to review their Comprehensive Plans every 10 years to chart an intentional course for the future, with regard to land use and development, community facilities and services, infrastructure and other topics of public importance. This plan will provide a guide for Borough Council, staff, partner agencies and others in setting priorities and making decisions to achieve long-term shared visions.

Your Brentwood Plan is a practical workbook that will guide the Borough in delivering a decade of projects, including practical next steps, references and strategies. It memorializes momentum and decisions made during the planning process, as the Steering Committee, staff and elected officials interpreted the results of multiple forms of public engagement. Above all, while it is designed to capture the aspirations of those who participated, it is also rooted firmly in practical reality, focused on strategies and action steps that are achievable.

INSIDE THIS DOCUMENT

Your Brentwood Plan is organized as follows:

INTRODUCTION

This section lays out the background, including the planning process that resulted in this workbook.

KEY ISSUES

The plan is built around five Key Issues, each of which has its own chapter. These chapters contain strategies to address the needs and opportunities that Borough residents and stakeholders identified as being the most important for the community during the coming decade.

OTHER TOPICS

Beyond the plan's five Key Issues, this section touches on other topics that are important to include in the Comprehensive Plan but required less detail and focus. It outlines how the plan complies with the state Municipalities Planning Code.

APPENDICES

This section includes additional and/or more detailed information that helped shape the plan and may serve as a reference as officials and staff begin the work of leading implementation.



12-MONTH START-UP TO-DO LIST

So the plan is adopted. What's next? The following action steps — in no particular order — represent practical ways for Brentwood Borough to kick-start implementation during the first year.

EARLY ACTION STEPS

1. Work with the Borough Solicitor to review sign regulations and amend if needed. (p. 38)
2. Evaluate strategies for building economic development capacity and select a path forward. (p. 49)
3. Convene local business and property owners and related groups with Borough staff and/or officials to build mutual understanding of challenges and growth opportunities. Review the strategies in this plan with them. (p. 51)
4. Coordinate with the school district on redevelopment opportunities at former elementary sites. (p. 53)
5. Continue to hold the developer of the former Borough Building site to a high standard of care and quality per stated goals. (p. 52)
6. Approach potential partners about finding a location for a farmers market. (p. 54)
7. Monitor the results of increased parking enforcement. (p. 61)
8. Continue creating the Brentwood Hollow Trail. (p. 79)
9. Publish the Connectivity Map. (p. 84)
10. Dedicate funding to a community branding refresh. (p. 93)
11. Finalize an official community slogan and use it consistently in publications, social media and event promotion. (p. 95)
12. Add prime Brentwood events to regional events calendars. (p. 102)

WHY IS TAKING ACTION IMPORTANT?

- Residents shared their time and insight to help create the plan. They expect follow-through.
- Making changes has costs (time, money, effort). Doing nothing also has costs (citizen resentment, development inconsistent with vision, environmental deterioration, missed opportunity).
- Adopting a new plan built on a foundation of public engagement opens funding opportunities to the Borough in delivering on a vision officials can trust is important to many.

Creating the plan

Brentwood Borough created this plan in the Implementable Comprehensive Plan model, recognized statewide as a planning best practice. By contrast to a traditional comprehensive plan, an implementable plan dives deep on a limited set of Key Issues discerned through intensive community engagement. The plan's recommendations are strategy-driven and take into account the unique advantages and limitations each community has, in terms of financial resources, capacity, partnerships and political environment.

To create a solid foundation for the plan, the first half of the process centered on public and stakeholder engagement. Outreach began in 2022 with the collection of input to identify the most pressing and relevant community issues. In seeking to discern and understand the Key Issues to build this plan around, the project team asked:

What kind of place is Brentwood? What kind of place should this become? How can Brentwood become an even better place to live, to work, to play and to invest?



A resident adds a vision idea to the mix during Community Day.



Coming up:

Public open house

Thursday, November 2

Brentwood Library Community Room

Stop by anytime between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m. to review and

YourBrentwoodPlan.com provided information and updates on the project throughout its timeline.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Borough Council appointed a Steering Committee to provide direction for public engagement, to analyze input results and discern Key Issues, to devise and discuss priorities and to ensure that strategies are well calibrated for the local landscape. Members included elected and appointed officials, staff, representatives of the business community, real estate professionals, residents and others who provided a rich variety of perspectives and thorough discussion. The committee met at milestones throughout the development of the project.

PROJECT WEBSITE

The project website, *YourBrentwoodPlan.com*, was live from the start of the project, serving as a central clearinghouse for project updates and input opportunities. It contained background information, survey results, descriptions of the plan's Key Issues as they formed, the Community Questionnaire and ways to subscribe to follow the project or submit feedback. The plan draft will be posted on the website with a comments form and broadly distributed for public review prior to Council considering the plan for adoption.

To date, more than 1,000 unique visitors have used the site, with traffic arriving primarily through users typing in the address, through Facebook links and linked via the Borough website. More than half of site visits occur on a smartphone.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

The project team conducted stakeholder interviews with key people suggested by the Steering Committee, Borough staff and interviewees. Participants reflected a variety of perspectives, including elected state officials, public safety leaders, business owners, long-term residents and representatives of local institutions and nonprofit agencies. The purpose during the initial phase of the project was to gain context on potential Key Issues. Accordingly, questions focused on strengths to build on, problems to solve and opportunities to address for the future of the Borough. Later, interviews provided insight specific to plan recommendations and implementation strategies. Stakeholders emphasized the following issues:

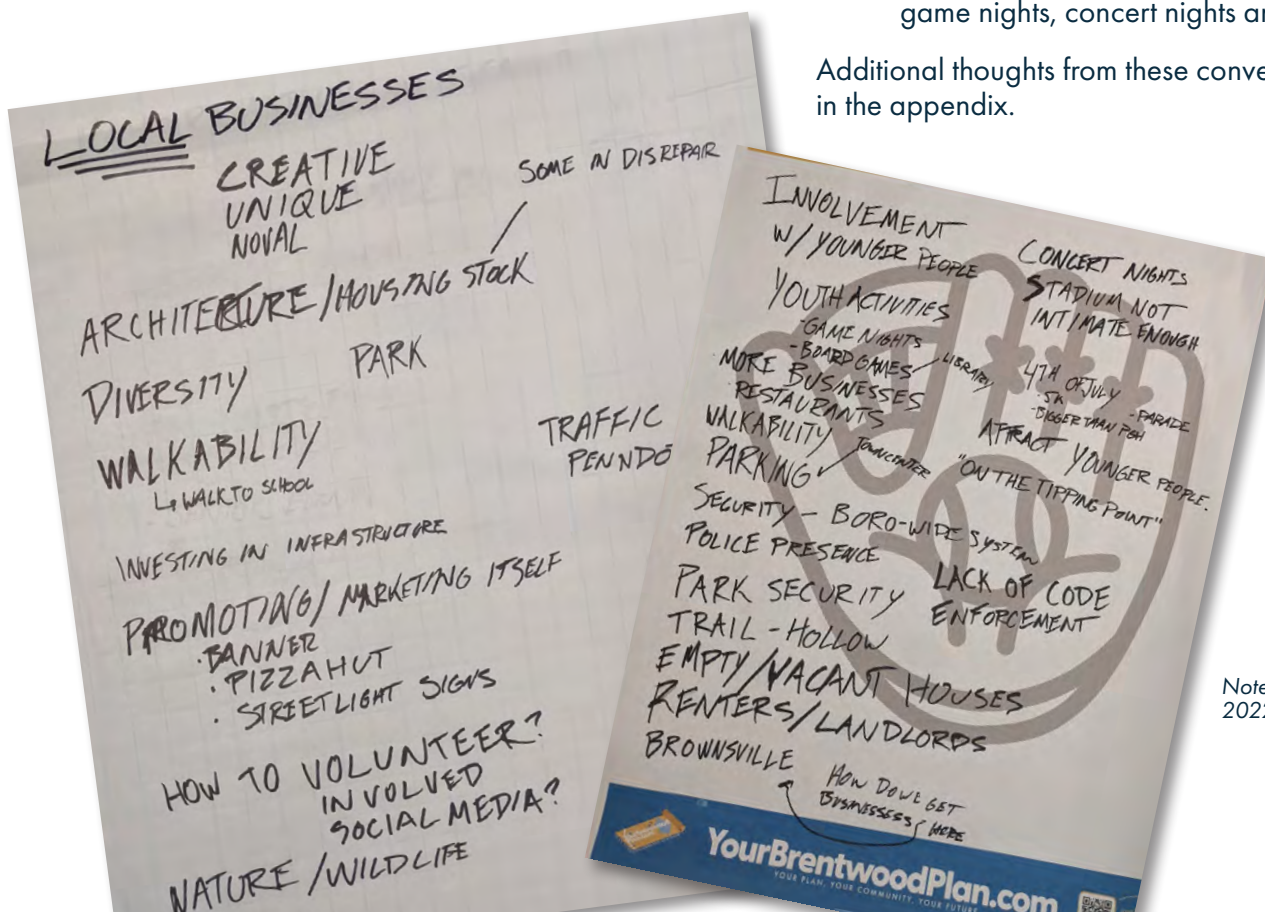
- Public safety and services
- Creating a more vibrant Brownsville Road and Route 51
- Neighborhood stability and property maintenance
- Recreation, walking, and biking
- Marketing and communications
- Support for seniors, youth, and diverse populations
- Development and redevelopment

KICKOFF PUBLIC MEETING: LET'S PLAY BALL, BRENTWOOD!

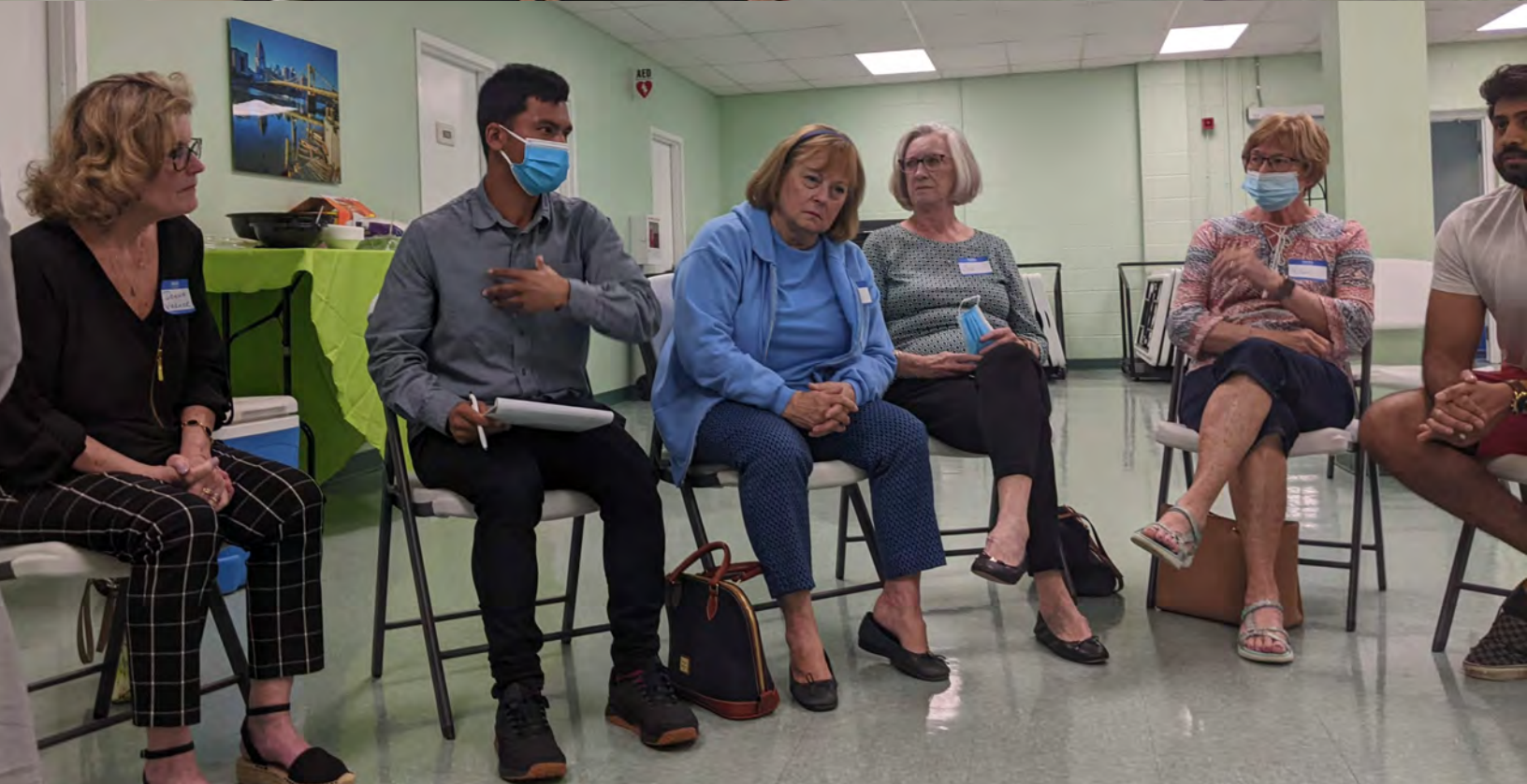
In May 2022, the project team staged an evening open house public meeting at Brentwood Library. All were invited to come learn about the project and get involved in shaping the plan. A series of interactive games around the room provided a platform for conversation about the community and what residents would like to see happen in the long term. More than 30 attendees shared ideas, among which were:

- Residents enjoy the convenience and walkability of Brentwood.
- The community is friendly and neighborly.
- Major assets include the park and pool, Towne Square, library and public services.
- The 4th of July parade is a treasured tradition.
- Property maintenance and code enforcement deserve attention.
- The Borough should work to attract and sustain more small businesses, particularly along Brownsville Road.
- The Borough social media accounts can help promote and sell Brentwood.
- There is desire for more events for all community members to enjoy, such as family game nights, concert nights and senior events.

Additional thoughts from these conversations appear in the appendix.



Notes from the May 2022 Public Kickoff event



Scenes from the May 2022 Public Open House



COMMUNITY QUESTIONNAIRE

The community questionnaire was open between May 2022 to October 2022 and received 630 responses. The Borough publicized the opportunity to participate on its website and social media, in multiple articles in the community magazine, in a bill mailing insert, robocall and informational materials posted and distributed broadly, as well as through the networks of committee members who helped to promote participation.

The detailed results, which appear in the appendix, provided a great deal of insight on potential Key Issues, as well as hundreds of open-ended comment responses that added color and context.

Some takeaways included:

- Residents valued the safe feel of the community, the excellent public services, the quality school district and the walkability of Brentwood.
- The community's top three priorities, per questionnaire responses, were to:
 - Provide a greater mix of local retail, services and restaurants
 - Preserve and beautify the traditional single-family suburban neighborhood pattern
 - Further activate the Brownsville Road and Route 51 commercial areas as vibrant destinations and places for community members to spend time
- Residents also prioritized the following:
 - Increasing walkability by improving sidewalks and creating walkable destinations
 - Stricter enforcing of parking ordinances and increasing the supply of parking
 - Fostering diversity, civic pride and engagement
 - Preserving green space

“
**The community
feel of Brentwood
is what makes us
want to continue
to live here and
proud to be from
Brentwood.**”

— Questionnaire
response



COMMUNITY DAY

The project team staged a pop-up activity at Brentwood's popular Community Day event in June 2022. This was an opportunity to connect with people incidentally, reaching those who might be less likely to attend an official public meeting. The purpose was to encourage participation in the questionnaire and build excitement and momentum for the project.

The booth asked residents to write down a vision for Brentwood in six words or less, then hang it for others to see. Input ranged from recreation aspirations to accessibility needs to community support. One card described Brentwood as "Best South Hills community :)"



Scenes from Community Day outreach

RECOMMENDATIONS OPEN HOUSE

The Steering Committee met several times to review and interpret public and stakeholder input across all sources, eventually settling on Key Issues. Once a vision and recommendations started to take shape to address each, the project team staged a public open house at the library in November 2023 to invite everyone to receive an update and re-engage in helping to refine the plan. Stations around the room presented draft visions, recommendations and interactive activities to encourage attendees to provide feedback, including assessments of priority and feasibility for each proposed recommendation. Many of the suggestions from this meeting are reflected in the plan.



Residents helped workshop recommendations at the November 2023 public open house.

Storylines

Public input helped define three vision storylines that run through each chapter of this Comprehensive Plan. These three themes are entwined, yet each manifested distinctly and repeatedly at each stage of outreach and idea generation. They rose from the way that Brentwood residents relate to their community, and they helped define and frame the recommendations of this plan.

1 COMMUNITY SPIRIT

There's nowhere like Brentwood on July 4. The Borough's parade has achieved iconic status as a regional holiday attraction, known for the lawn chairs that begin to line the route days in advance. The parade is a deeply beloved community tradition that dates back to 1915. It's only one of the events in the Borough's July 4 lineup: An annual Night at the Races event brings people together to raise funds, the Firecracker 5K celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2023, and the fireworks display in Brentwood Park creates a spectacular finish for a day spent enjoying the community with family, friends and neighbors. When this community comes together, magic happens.

The planning process reiterated how important it is to honor and build upon Brentwood's neighborliness and sense of community. The Borough plays a role in keeping residents engaged, socially connected and active with public amenities that support a healthy and vigorous community. By continuing to invest in facilities, programs and events that enhance civic life, Brentwood provides a platform for community to grow and enrich the lives of everyone involved.

- 
- 1 COMMUNITY SPIRIT
 - 2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE
 - 3 YOUR AMERICAN DREAM



“It’s a great day to
be alive, you’re in
Brentwood on the
4th of July!”
— Jack Morgan



2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE

Brentwood Borough is committed to stewarding public resources in a responsible and strategic way. The Borough strives to provide a high-functioning, exceptionally professional local government operation that meets the needs of current and future residents through proactive planning and diligent, efficient delivery. Brentwood prioritizes public safety by maintaining a well-trained police force, values the property rights of its citizens, and enforces property codes in a fair and assertive manner.

Additionally, Brentwood Borough operates transparently with an accessible staff and diligent, organized record keeping and sharing, which reinforces public confidence. These characteristics are exemplified in the recent 2024 “Borough Official of the Year” awarded to Borough Manager George Zboyovsky. Brentwood residents have high expectations of their public servants, and staff consistently delivers. Plan input emphasized the importance of sustaining great local public services and facilities.



#BrentwoodDoesItBetter



3 YOUR AMERICAN DREAM

Much of the public engagement in Brentwood pointed to the pride residents have for their community, particularly as a safe, quality place to live, raise a family or own a home. The opportunity available within the Borough, as well as its access to the City of Pittsburgh, makes it an ideal place for entrepreneurial and cultural growth.

As an early 20th century suburb, Brentwood Borough exudes character, with an expansive tree canopy, single-family homes of varied architectural styles and walkable, centrally located assets. With home prices considered mid-range in the Pittsburgh region, it can both attract young families and retain older residents, sustaining a truly intergenerational community. The Borough creates programs and supports policies that welcome newcomers, encourage mutual consideration and foster community interaction and a neighborly vibe.

WHERE DO THE STORYLINES LEAD?

These three vision storylines represent shared community values as revealed through the various stages of public and stakeholder engagement. These are Brentwood's stories, characteristic local points of pride that should power the Borough's continued prosperity. They also help inform the Key Issues and Community Development Objectives in this plan.

These storylines describe both current and aspirational conditions for Brentwood's identity and character. Aligning future actions, decisions and initiatives with them speaks to the heart of the community as described by those who live and work here.

BROWNSVILLE ROAD



Introduction

FRAMING THE ISSUE

Brownsville Road serves as a gateway to Brentwood, a thoroughfare for residents and visitors and as a reinforcing element of the community's identity and character. Most of this plan's Key Issues touch on Brownsville Road, including recommendations for the local business environment, redevelopment opportunities and connectivity. This chapter focuses on practical improvements to the Brownsville Road public realm, the space between buildings where community happens.

A major throughline across all public and stakeholder engagement has been a desire for more local places to meet, eat and gather within Brentwood. The experience and environment that a street space creates is a critical element in attracting and sustaining foot traffic in a local-scale business district. While larger market forces are always in play, the Borough can increase the competitive appeal of the Brownsville Road business district by further enhancing its public realm. The goal is to create an attractive, comfortable and exciting place where people want to spend time and money. This benefits the residents who want more local dining and shopping options, as well as the businesses who aim to sustain profitable operation. It also benefits the community overall, as strengthening a local business district enhances local resiliency and a sense of pride in place.

Further improving Brentwood's most visible streetscape will also build on and enhance its identity as a walkable community. Walkability emerge as an important priority during the planning process, a quality appreciated by the majority of residents. Reshaping the Brownsville Road corridor to be even more welcoming and safe for pedestrians will build on the quality of life in Brentwood and further establish the Borough as a destination for walkable suburban living.

VISION

The Borough will enhance conditions along Brownsville Road, the arterial at the community's heart, to catalyze further development of a thriving local business scene that meets the needs of residents and attracts visitors

TALKING POINTS

- Brownsville Road runs through the community's heart in more ways than one. This local corridor runs from the Borough's border with the Carrick neighborhood of Pittsburgh south to intersect Route 51. Along the way, it connects homes, local businesses, the Towne Square and a variety of important attractions and destinations.
- Within Brentwood, Brownsville Road has five character segments, each of which involve their own design considerations:
 - **Sankey Road to Bellecrest Avenue**, a commercial stretch connecting to Carrick
 - **Bellecrest Avenue to Garden Road**, a short residential stretch with bungalow homes and steep downhill side streets
 - **Garden Road to Willock Road**, a commercial/civic/education hub that includes the former Borough Building site, several large apartment buildings and stately older single-family homes
 - **Willock Road to Towne Square Way**, a section that is almost entirely residential with a wide variety of single-family home types
 - **Town Square Way to Route 51**, a commercial area with some vacancy serving as a gateway for northbound drivers
- The Borough has already installed many attractive design elements along Brownsville Road. Consistently expanding these elements in targeted areas will enhance the area's overall appeal.
- New construction of an elementary school and mixed-use redevelopment along Brownsville Road present an opportunity for the Borough to capitalize on walkability.
- Prioritizing the pedestrian experience is part of building on the value that Brownsville Road already brings to the community.
- The business district area shared between Carrick and Brentwood represents an important opportunity for enhancement through collaboration.
- For the greatest efficiency and use of resources, future pedestrian infrastructure and streetscaping improvements may be timed to coincide with other capital projects.

People are more likely to choose to walk if that walk feels safe, comfortable, interesting and useful.¹ The Borough plays a key role in meeting these four conditions, especially along Brownsville Road, since this is a road that the Borough owns and maintains. The figure below illustrates how these elements work together in making a walk enjoyable.

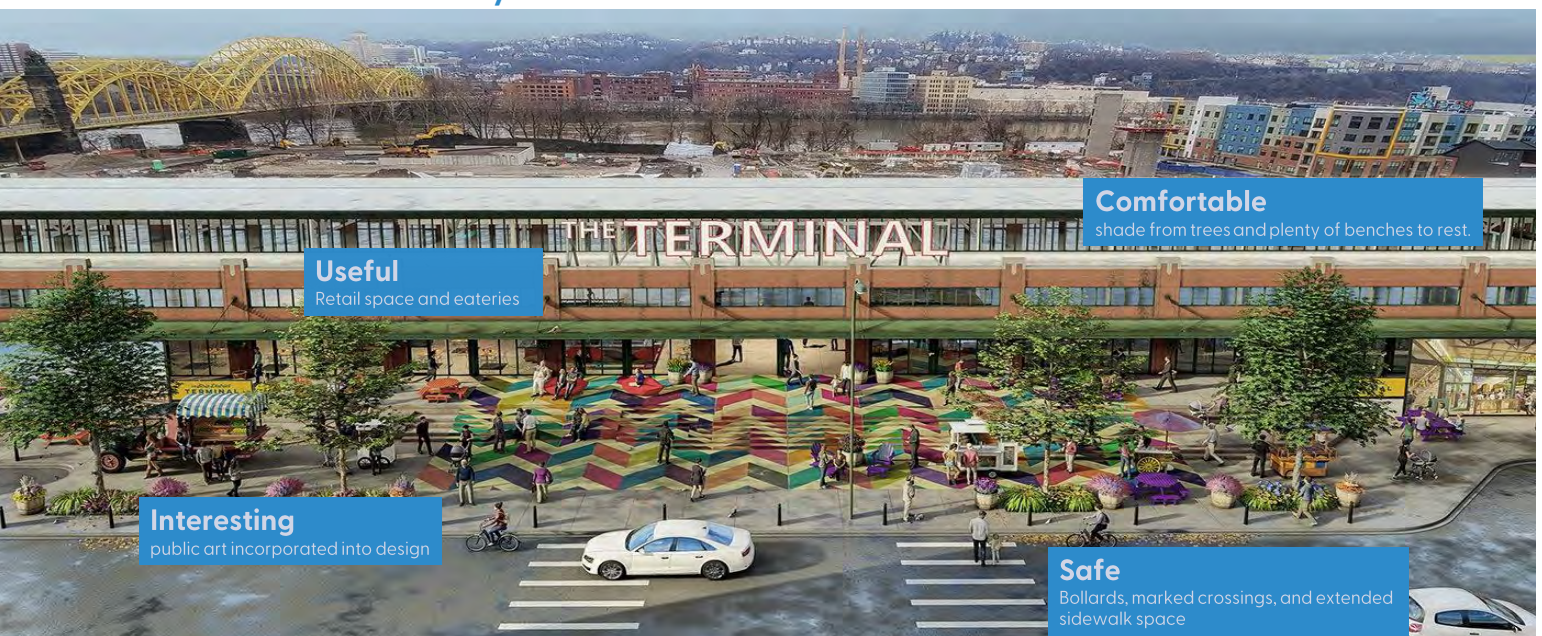
Plans are underway to build a new public elementary school along Brownsville Road, and the Borough continues to advance mixed-use redevelopment of the former Borough Building property. The Borough can capitalize on the addition of these destinations by making walking in this central node of the community feel more comfortable, interesting and safe.

¹ Speck, Jeff. Walkable City: How Downtown Can Save America, One Step At a Time. New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012

“it is important to attract smaller businesses to Brownsville Road as well as make that entire stretch more attractive and enticing for people to want to walk and shop this area.”

— Questionnaire comment

Elements of walkability



Base image: Pittsburgh Produce Terminal, rendered by Antunovich Associates

Key Issue Strategies

STRATEGY 01:

Upgrade the streetscape

The planning process generated a list of priority areas along Brownsville Road where investing in streetscape enhancements will make the environment more comfortable and cohesive for pedestrians in particular, reinforcing the Borough's identity and sense of community. This builds on attractive design elements that the Borough has already installed.

The concepts included in this chapter reflect a review of streetscape design across South Hills municipalities and best practices overall. The intent is to support and encourage local economic development through making public spaces, particularly in commercial areas, more inviting, safe and engaging.

PRIORITY AREAS

BUSINESS DISTRICT BETWEEN SANKEY AND BELLECREST AVENUES

This southernmost section of the Carrick/Brentwood business district is a highly trafficked and visible section of Brownsville Road due to the nature of some of the business here and the presence of a Pittsburgh Regional Transit bus turnaround. Extending the Brownsville Road streetscape as it exists and as it is envisioned in the renderings in this chapter will improve the overall feel this block and provide a more defined transition between the commercial and residential portions of this part of Brownsville Road.

Priority design elements here include brick or brick-like materials between the curb and sidewalk as well as similar design of pedestrian crossings consistent with other crossings along Brownsville Road.



Above: Carrick/Brentwood business district

Below: Streetscape elements worth repeating, from the Garden to Willock segment: Brick and brick-colored stamped concrete crosswalks and sidewalk strips, accessible crossing features, beautiful shade trees



PRIORITY AREAS

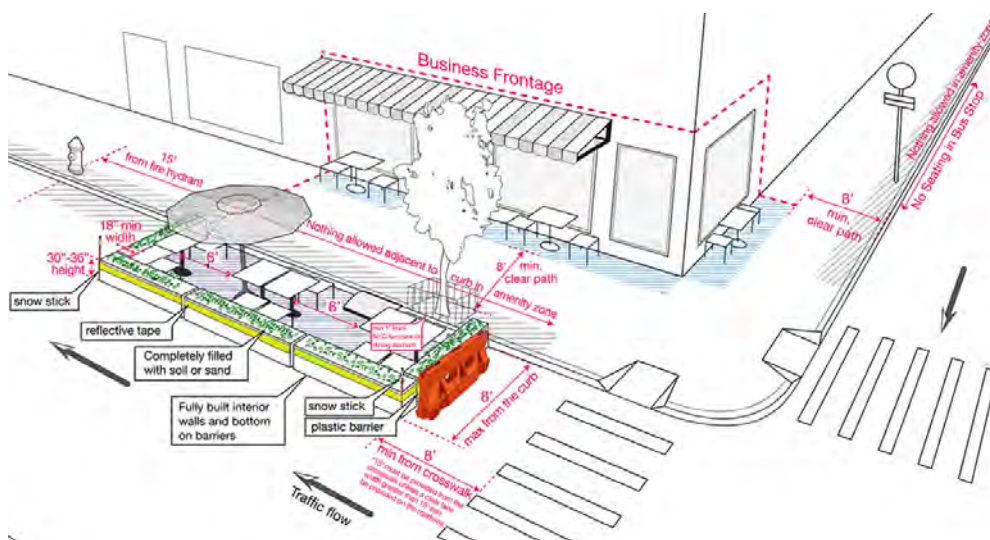
SEGMENT BETWEEN BRENTWOOD HIGH SCHOOL AND NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

This section of Brownsville Road is already home to some of the community's important attractions, soon to be more: a new elementary school and mixed-use development at the former Borough Building site complement the location of the new Borough Building, Brentwood High School and other amenities. Creating an environment that encourages students, their families, other residents and visitors to access these civic hub sites on foot will enhance their experience of place as well as continue to strengthen the area's viability as a walkable base for local business development.

TOWNE SQUARE VICINITY

This gateway into Brentwood from Route 51, a transition from regional to local and from highway orientation to human scale, is a particularly important location for character expression. It is also often a community gathering space as a location for the Taking it to the Streets event. Brentwood Towne Square is privately owned, so the improvements envisioned here for its thoroughfares will require coordination with the property owner. Working together to enhance the streetscape here may help address storefront vacancy, an aim shared by both the property owner and the Borough.

Priority additions for this segment include street trees along the Towne Square frontage to match what's across Brownsville Road; a brick-appearance pedestrian crossing at the central entrance to the Town Square; and evaluating whether space currently allocated to street parking could be reconfigured for other uses, such as outdoor dining. Using a street parking space or two for outdoor dining can be tested as a temporary pilot project. The sketch below illustrates the concept.



Source: NYC Temporary Open Restaurants Program

PHASING PLAN:

☐ 1. THREADING TOGETHER BRICK FEATURES

Borough staff should consult the Borough Engineer to determine how brick and/or brick-colored stamped concrete can be more consistently integrated with future sidewalk upgrades in targeted commercial areas. This might look like a Borough-funded project to upgrade certain segments (which then become the maintenance responsibility of adjacent property owners) or a coordinated effort to share upgrade costs with owners, though the latter approach will require more time and negotiation.

☐ 2. CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS

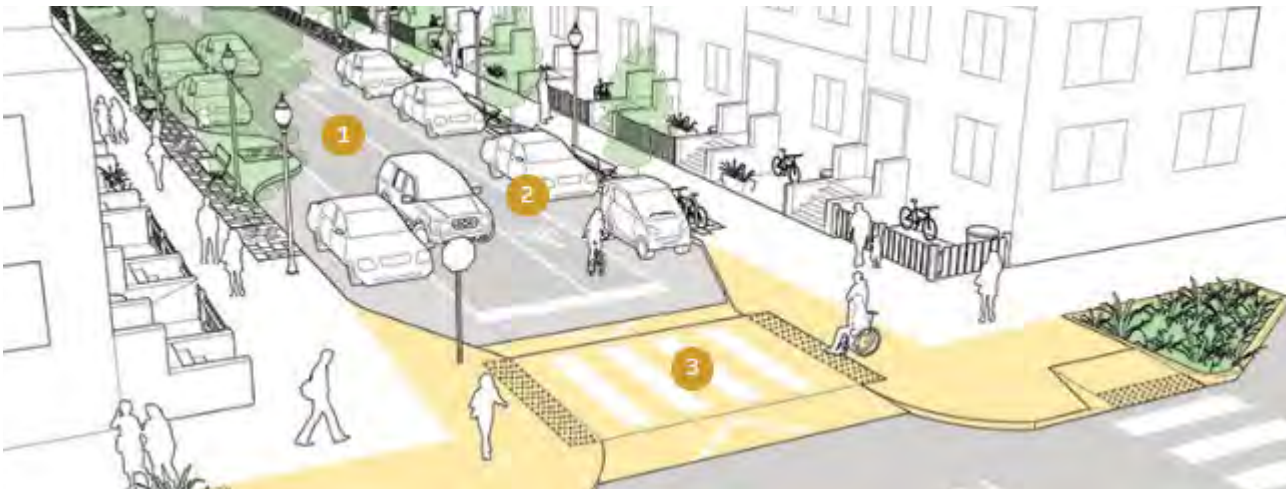
A secondary phase of streetscape improvements relates to other pedestrian improvements in this chapter. Upgrade the design and pedestrian function of existing crosswalks as needed before adding crossings in new locations.

☐ 3. BUMP-OUTS

The following concept drawings include bump-outs, which are traffic calming features designed to improve safety for all users and especially the pedestrian experience. These can be coordinated with the Borough's road maintenance program if doing so provides an efficiency or cost advantage. See below for an illustration of the general concept.

☐ 4. STREETSCAPE AMENITIES

A third phase could involve adding features such as tree pits, planters and street furniture, as well as updating parking meter technology. New features should complement and achieve consistency with the style choices of existing streetscape features, reinforcing the Borough's municipal brand and quality standard.



Source: National Association of City Transportation Officials

BROWNSVILLE ROAD STREETSCAPE BRENTWOOD IMPLEMENTABLE PLAN

Sankey Avenue to Bellecrest Avenue



EXISTING COMMERCIAL



PROPOSED COMMERCIAL

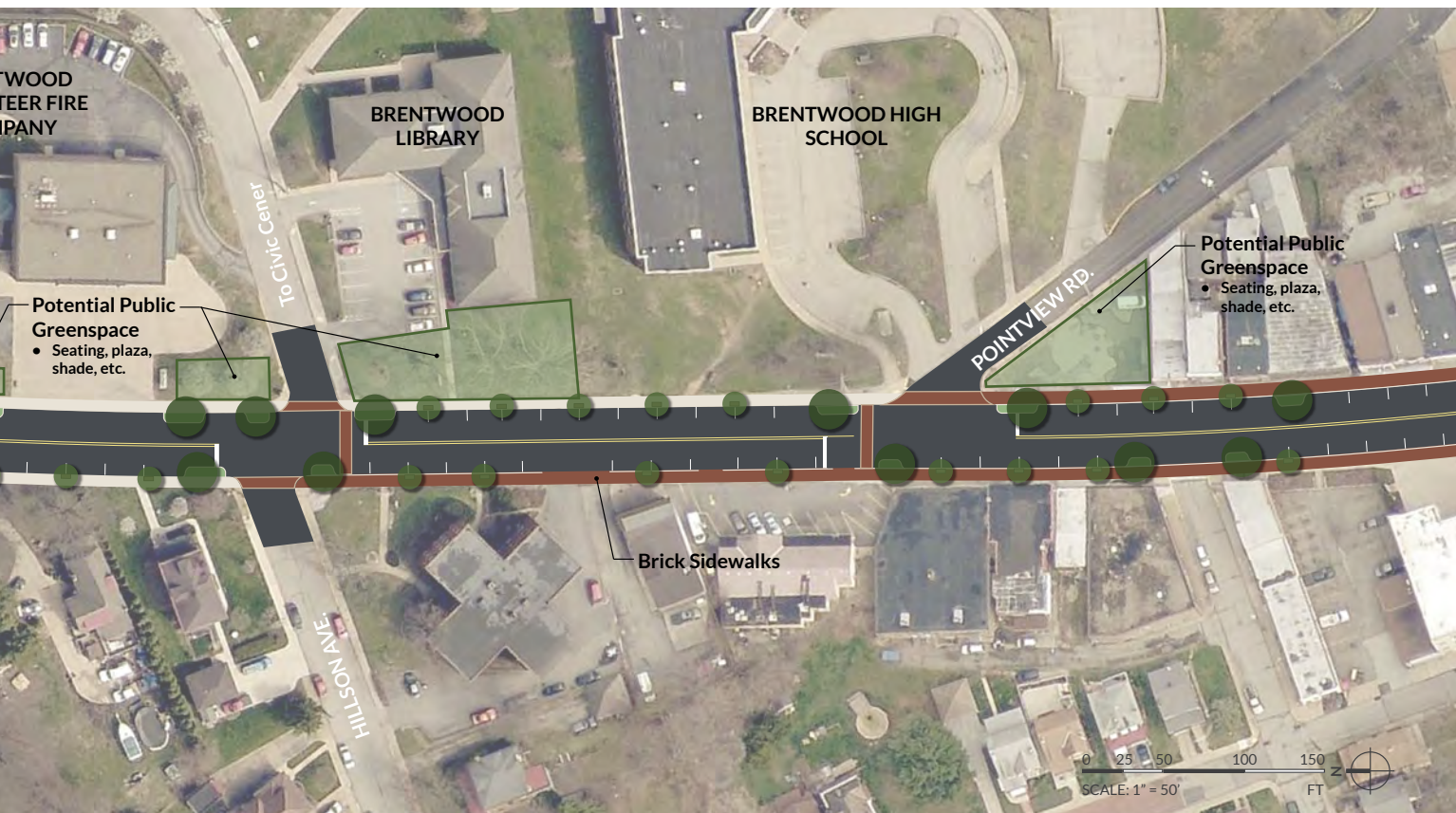


PROPOSED COMMERCIAL - PLANTER BUMP OUTS

BROWNSVILLE ROAD STREETSCAPE BRENTWOOD IMPLEMENTABLE PLAN

Garden Road to Willock Road





BROWNSVILLE ROAD STREETScape

BRENTWOOD IMPLEMENTABLE PLAN

Garden Road to Willock Road - Sections



EXISTING COMMERCIAL



PROPOSED COMMERCIAL



PROPOSED COMMERCIAL - PLANTER BUMP OUTS



EXISTING RESIDENTIAL



PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL

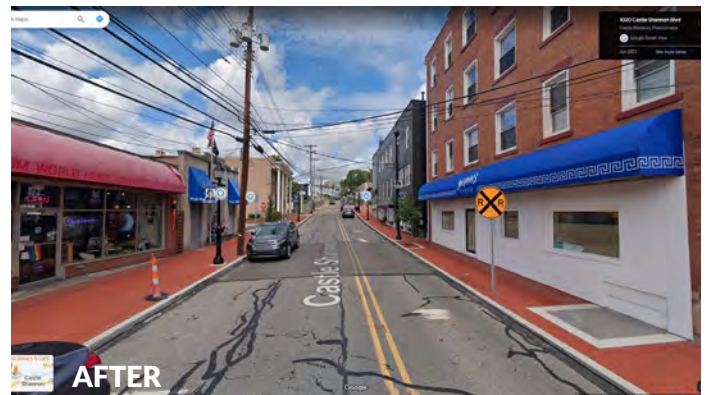
BROWNSVILLE ROAD STREETSCAPE BRENTWOOD IMPLEMENTABLE PLAN

Precedent Images

ALLENTOWN



CASTLE SHANNON



DORMONT



MT. OLIVER



Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

Streetscape Upgrades, Pointview Road to Willock Road

Item description	Quantity	Unit	Unit cost	Total item cost
General				
Mobilization	1	LS	\$15,000	\$15,000
Pedestrian and vehicular traffic controls during construction	1	LS	\$10,000	\$10,000
			Subtotal	\$25,000
Brick sidewalks and tree pits				
Brick sidewalk, approx. 9' wide	975	LF		
Removal of existing concrete paving	975	SY	\$30	\$29,250
Installation of concrete paver base	975	SY	\$100	\$97,500
Installation of brick pavers	975	SY	\$150	\$146,250
Tree pits, approx. 3'x6'	14	EA		
Excavation of tree pit, 6' depth	56	CY	\$25	\$1,400
Gravel and drainage at base of pit, 12" depth	14	CY	\$65	\$910
Soil, mix of topsoil and compost	50	CY	\$50	\$2,500
Tree, 2" caliper min.	14	EA	\$700	\$9,800
Tree grate	14	EA	\$4,000	\$56,000
			Subtotal brick sidewalks and tree pits	\$343,610
Furnishings and lighting				
Lighting				
Repair and paint existing street lights	1	LS	\$5,000	\$5,000
Replace existing street lights, if needed	2	EA	\$12,000	\$24,000
Furnishings				
Benches, borough standard	5	EA	\$2,500	\$12,500
Trash receptacles, borough standard	5	EA	\$2,000	\$10,000
			Subtotal furnishings and lighting	\$51,500
Crosswalks				
Brick crosswalk, approx. 8' wide	204	LF		
Sawcut and remove existing paving	182	SY	\$30	\$5,460
Concrete border	45	SY	\$100	\$4,500
Brick crosswalk, stamped concrete 8"	140	SY	\$400	\$56,000
Crosswalk signals - countdown sign	2	EA	\$25,000	\$50,000
Crosswalk signals - flashing sign	4	EA	\$6,000	\$24,000
			Subtotal crosswalks	\$139,960

Item description	Quantity	Unit	Unit cost	Total item cost
Tree pits along concrete sidewalks				
Tree pits, approx. 3'x6'	30	EA		
Sawcut and remove existing paving	60	SY	\$30	\$1,800
Excavation of tree pit, 6' depth	120	CY	\$25	\$3,000
Gravel and drainage at base of pit	30	CY	\$65	\$1,950
Soil, mix of topsoil and compost	105	CY	\$50	\$5,250
Tree, 2" caliper min.	30	EA	\$700	\$21,000
Tree grate	30	EA	\$4,000	\$120,000
Subtotal tree pits along concrete sidewalks				\$153,000
Planted bump-outs and parking striping				
Planted bump-outs (Standard 6'x20')	2	EA		
Sawcut and remove existing paving	28	SY	\$30	\$840
Concrete curb	64	LF	\$70	\$4,480
Excavation of planting area, 6' depth	54	CY	\$25	\$1,350
Gravel and drainage at base of pit, 12" depth	8	CY	\$65	\$520
Soil, mix of topsoil and compost	46	CY	\$50	\$2,300
Tree, 2" caliper min.	2	EA	\$700	\$1,400
Shrubs/groundcovers	220	SF	\$20	\$4,400
Planted bump-outs (Large, at corners 6'x28')	5	EA		
Sawcut and remove existing paving	95	SY	\$30	\$2,850
Concrete curb	200	LF	\$70	\$14,000
Excavation of planting area, 6' depth	190	CY	\$25	\$4,750
Gravel and drainage at base of pit, 12" depth	30	CY	\$65	\$1,950
Soil, mix of topsoil and compost	160	CY	\$50	\$8,000
Tree, 2" caliper min.	5	EA	\$700	\$3,500
Shrubs/groundcovers	800	SF	\$20	\$16,000
Planted bump-outs (Small 6'x15')	5	EA		
Sawcut and remove existing paving	50	SY	\$30	\$1,500
Concrete curb	135	LF	\$70	\$9,450
Excavation of planting area, 6' depth	100	CY	\$25	\$2,500
Gravel and drainage at base of pit, 12" depth	15	CY	\$65	\$975
Soil, mix of topsoil and compost	85	CY	\$50	\$4,250
Tree, 2" caliper min.	5	EA	\$700	\$3,500
Shrubs/groundcovers	400	SF	\$20	\$8,000
Parking Striping				
Remove existing striping	1	LS	\$500	\$500
Paint new striping to delineate parking in commercial areas	1	LS	\$750	\$750
Subtotal planted bump-outs and parking striping				\$97,765

Item description	Quantity	Unit	Unit cost	Total item cost
Subtotal, Pointview to Willock Road Segment				\$810,835
Engineering, design, engagement, approvals/permitting			15%	\$121,625
Construction Subtotal				\$932,460
Contingency			20%	\$186,492
Grand Total: Streetscape upgrades, Pointview Road to Willock Road				\$1,118,952

Notes: This Opinion of Probable Construction Costs was developed as a planning level of detail, meaning that it reflects a cursory review to establish order of magnitude costs. Additional analysis and engineering studies will be required to establish actual cost for implementation.

This Opinion of Probable Construction Costs is made based on the experience and qualifications of Pashek+MTR, Ltd and represents reasonable judgement based on familiarity with the industry. Pashek+MTR, Ltd has no control over costs, or availability of labor, materials or equipment, or over market conditions or the provider's method of pricing. Pashek+MTR, Ltd cannot and does not guarantee that the opinion of probable cost provided to the Owner will not vary from the actual cost experienced by the Owner.

FUNDING THE STREETScape UPGRADE

The following funding sources could support the Borough's efforts to implement this strategy:

- **Safe Routes to Schools: PennDOT**
 Offers funding for pedestrian and bicycle improvements to make it safer for students to travel to schools. This program is primarily aimed towards improvements in downtowns, older commercial areas and other areas near schools. Municipalities, school districts or non-profits can apply. Requires a 20 percent match from other sources (such as local funds or other grants).
- **Federal Transportation Enhancements Program: PennDOT**
 Provides grants of up to 80% for: facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites, development of scenic or historic route programs, landscaping and other scenic beautification along highways, historic preservation, restoration of historic transportation facilities (such as canals), preservation of rail corridors (particularly for bicycle/walking routes), control and removal of outdoor advertising, archeological research, and mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff. All projects must have a direct relationship to transportation.

■ **Main Street Program: PA DCED**

In the downtowns of designated “Main Street Communities,” provides initial planning grants and administrative grants over a 3 year period to pay a large share of the costs of a professional manager to coordinate downtown revitalization efforts. May receive matching grants for facade restoration and other design improvements. Usually limited to municipalities of 5,000 to 50,000 persons. The Downtown Reinvestment and Anchor Building components use business district strategies to support commercial-related projects in a central or neighborhood business district.

■ **Keystone Communities Program: PA DCED**

Keystone Communities Program is a flexible Commonwealth grant tool for a variety of uses including planning activities, façade grant programs, accessible housing programs, and development grants.

■ **Multimodal Transportation Fund: PA DCED**

The Multimodal Transportation Fund provides grants to support economic development and transportation projects. Grants can fund development, rehabilitation, and enhancement of multimodal transit assets and provide funds for streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development.

■ **Multimodal Transportation Fund: PennDOT**

Established by Act 89, the Multimodal Transportation Fund provides funding for bicycle and pedestrian improvements and target funding for priority transportation projects in any mode.

■ **Transportation Alternative Set-Aside: PennDOT**

PennDOT provides construction funding for transportation alternatives such as on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities; infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility; community improvement activities; environmental mitigation; trails that serve a transportation purpose; and safe routes to school projects.

STRATEGY 02:

Develop a facade program

Private property owners are responsible for maintaining business facades, and many of them contribute to a vibrant business district environment with high-quality materials, inviting entrances, windows providing interaction between the interior and street and tasteful, engaging signage. Others do not.

Improving the quality and appearance of commercial storefronts along Brownsville Road (and overall) was highly important to residents and business owners who participated in the planning process. While private property owners bear responsibility for making these improvements, municipalities such as the Borough have options to incentivize them. Communities across the region use facade improvement programs to offset the cost of storefront improvements through matching grants or revolving loans, often in exchange for design meeting standards that will enhance the public realm.

ACTION STEPS:

1. DETERMINE FUNDING OPTIONS

Borough staff, in coordination with Council and the Brentwood Business Owners Association and any other interested groups, should determine goals and parameters for a facade improvement program, particularly which areas it will target and whether it should involve design standards.

Several federal and state funding sources are available to seed and supplement such local programs, including the PA Department of Community and Economic Development's Keystone Communities Program. A private funder or foundation could also make a serious difference. In establishing a new municipal facade improvement program, Mt. Lebanon is combining a KCP award with a local match to seed a revolving loan fund, which business owners may access to complete specified improvements consistent with local design standards.

2. SECURE FUNDS, ADMINISTER PROGRAM

The Borough is the most likely source of capacity to apply for such a grant and then administer any facade improvement program the funding creates. Another chapter of this plan recommends adding economic development capacity to staff for purposes such as this. In lieu of additional capacity, the Borough could partner with the Chamber, a neighboring community or other equipped party to deliver the program. Program administration will include developing standards and application materials, recruiting participants, overseeing funded work and maintaining necessary documentation.

STRATEGY 03:

Enhance crossings

Given the presence of several important community destinations within the civic hub of Brownsville Road — and especially the development of the new elementary school and mixed-use site — the Borough can reasonably anticipate sustained and increasing foot traffic. Enhancing pedestrian crossings in this area will encourage more people to access destinations on foot and will better serve those who already do.

ACTION STEPS:

1. UPGRADE FEATURES

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are a common tool used to improve pedestrian safety and prioritize walkability by offering a highly visible advance warning to drivers. These systems are pedestrian-activated and particularly useful at improving the safety of multi-lane crossing on roads with a speed limit of less than 40 mph. These devices are usually installed at “uncontrolled” intersections, such as four-way stops, as well as mid-block crossings. Brownsville Road has several such locations where this device could improve safety:

- Owendale Avenue
- Garden Road
- Sceneridge Avenue
- Kauffman Avenue
- Brednick Avenue
- Pointview Road, across from the high school, where there currently is no crossing
- Meadowbrook Boulevard at Brentwood Towne Square, where there currently is no crossing

The average cost of an RRFB system is around \$22,500, inclusive of labor and materials.



2. **MONITOR AND IMPROVE BUSY INTERSECTIONS**

Staff should monitor the condition and operations of Brownsville Road's highest-traffic intersections, including Willock Road, Hilson Avenue and Towne Square. Identify opportunities for improvements that could be grant funded, such as through PennDOT's Green Light-Go program, which provides assistance for local governments to study and/or improve intersections.

3. **COORDINATE ON THE CARRICK END**

The northern end of Brownsville Road connects in to the City of Pittsburgh's Carrick neighborhood. Thus, conditions on the Carrick side impact Brentwood, and vice versa. For example, the City approved development plans for a mixed-use senior housing project about 800' from the Brentwood border, which potentially adds local clientele for the businesses in that vicinity. Since the boundary between the two communities is not obvious to visitors, the health of the Carrick-side business district is important to the Brentwood side, and collaboration can be an advantage in improving the appearance and function of both.

As the Borough advances its own plans for improving that end of the street, including any streetscaping or business district investments, staff or Council should connect with Pittsburgh Council District 4, which includes Carrick, to determine how to coordinate improvements across both neighborhoods. The council person can direct requests for City follow-up through the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure, Public Works, City Planning or other appropriate channel.

4. **REVIEW SIGN REGULATIONS**

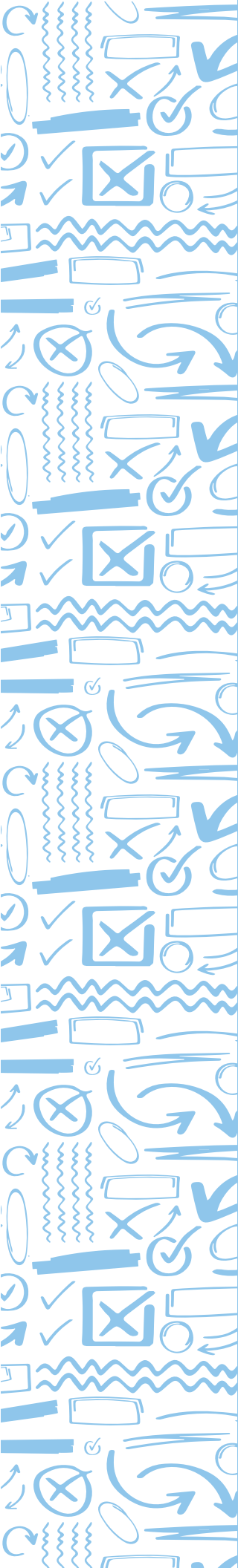
Borough staff and/or Planning Commission should review the sign regulations chapter of the Zoning Ordinance, possibly with input from the Brentwood Business Owners Association and/or other end users with insight. Compare provisions with the Montgomery County Model Sign Ordinance to determine whether the Borough's regulations allow for the right types of signage for a vibrant local-scale business district along Brownsville Road. The ordinance should relegate automobile-oriented (read: large, loud and bright) signage to Route 51 and focus on allowing a wide variety of human-scale sign types in local business areas: sandwich board signs, awning signs, window signs, wall signs. Lighting regulations should allow for tasteful modern technology appropriate for this type of district. If necessary, consult the Borough Solicitor and follow the PA Municipalities Planning Code procedure for amending the sign section of the Zoning Ordinance.



STORYLINE TIE-IN: **Brownsville Road and Local Government Excellence**

This chapter focuses on improvements to the built environment within the public realm on Brownsville Road that will enhance the Borough's major local thoroughfare as a comfortable, beautiful and safe walking environment that supports bustling local business districts. The connection between this Key Issue and community spirit is fairly obvious, as is the connection with neighborhood quality. What may be less obvious but is equally important is the connection between this Key Issue and local government excellence.

Brentwood is considered to be a premier South Hills community. What the Borough can do to further elevate its competitive position, and therefore its ability to attract investment from future residents and business owners, and *therefore* ensure a stable long-term tax base, is to cultivate memorable, enjoyable shared spaces where people are drawn to spend time and money.



DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT



Introduction

BUILDING ON SUCCESS

Brentwood's residents deserve and desire a robust and vibrant local business scene. The Borough is a historically family-oriented community where residents would especially like to see local businesses flourish among several distinct commercial districts.

Residents, business owners, committee members, and staff who participated in the planning process all emphasized the importance of taking intentional action to jump-start the local business environment and promote Brentwood's overall reputation as a destination to live, work, invest and play. When asked to rank the most important issues facing the Borough during the next 10 years, Community Questionnaire respondents put "Providing a greater mix of local retail, services, and restaurants" at the very top of the list. Similarly, "further activating the Brownsville Road business district" ranked as the third most important issue.

This chapter breaks down a few approaches to economic development, some of which the Borough already has underway.

VISION

The Borough will fortify its tax base through contextually supportive development at key sites, while preserving and enhancing the quality of its neighborhoods, and strategically advancing economic development.

“Brentwood needs gastropubs, microbrewery and restaurants. Brentwood Square has too many building vacancies.”

— Questionnaire comment

TALKING POINTS

- The Borough has proactively advanced redevelopment of the former Borough Building site to achieve its highest and best use. The location of the site along Brownsville Road, right at the heart of a concentration of civic and business attractions, makes the site a great fit for new mixed-use investment. Architectural and landscape design should reinforce a beautiful, walkable public realm that further enhances Brentwood's built environment.
- Residents and officials care deeply about the priority of attracting and sustaining additional local business development, particularly places to meet, eat and shop.
- Currently, the Borough does not have a thorough inventory of local businesses and the spaces that are available for future investment, nor the capacity to proactively connect with and support entrepreneurs. Coordination with the Brentwood Business Owners Association and Chamber has been very helpful in advancing some initiatives, but there is still a need to deepen economic development capacity.
- Local businesses are not always fully in sync with Borough events and undertakings. One example would be some stores closing during Taking It to the Streets events, thereby missing the chance to boost sales and marketing by creatively engaging with thousands of attendees. There is an opportunity to further engage business and property owners in elevating the success and scale of events from which they can also benefit.
- As the Brentwood Borough School District consolidates two elementary schools into a state-of-the-art new school located along Brownsville Road, the future use of the former elementary schools represents an opportunity to further elevate neighborhood character, provide a full array of housing options and support the local tax base.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Brentwood has four distinct business district areas:

NORTH END OF BROWNSVILLE, NEAR CARRICK BORDER

This district extends roughly between Sankey and Bellecrest Avenues. Despite the municipal border falling along Brownsville Road in this segment, the majority of commercial storefronts are located within the Borough, along the eastern side of Brownsville Road. The building stock here is largely older, more traditionally urban one- and two-story structures. Parking here is mostly on-street.



VICINITY OF HIGH SCHOOL AND FORMER BOROUGH BUILDING

This segment of commercial activity along Brownsville Road is between Hilson Avenue to the north and Marylea Avenue to the south. While there are many commercial uses in this stretch, the high school and library represent important civic uses. This area will also be home to mixed-use redevelopment at the former Borough Building site. Brentwood's new elementary school will also be very close by. This part of Brentwood has potential to further become a real community hub as new development brings increased foot and car traffic as well as new opportunities for businesses to be located here.



SOUTH END OF BROWNSVILLE ROAD AND TOWNE SQUARE

The southern end of Brownsville Road and Brentwood Towne Square represent the most concentrated area of commercial activity in the Borough. It also has significant parking capacity and is where many of Brentwood's "Take it to the Streets" events take place. As both a community gathering place and perhaps the Borough's greatest local economic engine, continued business development will go a long way toward establishing places where residents can meet, eat and play.



ROUTE 51

This state route is a tremendously high-volume auto-centric highway corridor lined by many businesses, many of which are formula retail or service (chains). PennDOT owns and maintains this road and controls access via highway occupancy permits. The Borough has limited influence on roadway design or on what private property owners do with their land. However, the Borough does control zoning and can influence business development through policies and programs.

New development within Brentwood's stretch of Route 51 tends to be more attractive and functional than sites developed in decades past, thanks to zoning and other requirements that have been more recently imposed. However, most of the public comments about Route 51 center on its poor aesthetics and dangerous traffic conditions, especially for anyone outside of a vehicle. Improving the mix of businesses along this stretch, and especially improving the quality of the buildings they occupy, is a long game that requires a high degree of coordination.

“Route 51 is
an eyesore.”

— Questionnaire
comment



COMMERCIAL GOALS

All four business district areas have unique challenges and characteristics. More broadly, the strategies in this chapter are designed to contribute to economic and business development across the Borough.

The following list includes goals that rose to importance during the planning process, representing a starting point that can help staff and officials orient policies, programs and investment during the next decade.

With regard to economic and business development, the Borough aims to:

- Cultivate a thriving local business scene.
- Improve communication and relationships with current business owners.
- Encourage/incentivize commercial building upkeep and aesthetic improvements.
- Attract local restaurants.
- Develop a strong reputation as destination in the South Hills.
- Improve occupancy at Towne Square
- Make Borough events desirable sponsorship opportunities.
- Improve conditions along Route 51, particularly the aesthetics of existing buildings and reducing vacancy.
- Develop a more complete picture of economic context in the Borough, including existing commercial real estate inventory, gaps/opportunities in the market and capacity to more directly market available spaces.

Key Issue Strategies

STRATEGY 01:

Build capacity for economic development

The results of public and stakeholder engagement in this planning process make a strong case to intensify Borough efforts to grow and strengthen business districts. This necessarily involves tasks that are outside of the capacity of existing staff, in terms of workload — this type of work typically requires dedicated support. Tasks might include, but are not necessarily limited to:

FIRST UP:

- Creating and maintaining an inventory of existing businesses (with contact people) and commercial spaces within the Borough
- Assessing and pursuing grant opportunities

ADDITIONALLY:

- Working with commercial real estate professionals to actively market available properties and/or reach out to desired potential businesses
- Developing and implementing specific promotions and events that increase the excitement and appeal of business districts
- Connecting business and property owners with information on available programs and services and funding sources
- Developing and administering a facade improvement program
- Serving as a liaison between the business community and local government

ACTION STEPS:



1. SELECT A PATH FORWARD

The Borough has several ways to build economic development capacity, either as a part of its own staff, as a position shared with another agency or community or through consulting services. Borough Council and staff should evaluate the pros and cons of each option and select the most advantageous way to proceed.

a. HIRE A MAIN STREET MANAGER TO LEVERAGE STATE GRANT FUNDING

If feasible, this would be the gold-standard strategy, unlocking state funding to support the efforts of a full-time main street manager. Information on the Keystone Communities Program appears on the following page. A full-time Economic Development and Commercial Districts Manager from a neighboring community, interviewed for this plan, covers responsibilities that easily require full-time dedication.

b. CREATE A PART-TIME POSITION

Alternately, the Borough could outline responsibilities for a part-time main street manager position to get underway on priority economic development initiatives at a lower cost.

c. CREATE A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

Another strategy would be to share costs and administration responsibilities for a part- or full-time economic development role with a neighboring municipality or other organization. Following initial meetings to level-set on priorities and desired job functions, negotiation would need to sort out the many details of how this would work and what Brentwood would receive in return for any budget or in-kind investment.

d. CONTRACT WITH AN EXPERT THIRD PARTY

Finally, the Borough could also get underway on these tasks by contracting with a qualified external consultant, ideally with proven accomplishment revitalizing main street business districts. This could also be an interim step to make short-term progress while the Borough evaluates the feasibility of sustaining a longer-term position.

FUNDING DETAILS: KEYSTONE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

This program, administered by Pennsylvania's Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), is likely to see substantially increased funding, according to the governor's proposed budget. In that proposal, it manifests as the **Main Street Matters** program, which builds upon and upgrades Keystone Communities.

According to current program guidance, there are several ways municipalities may benefit from Keystone Communities, among which the **Keystone Main Street** designation aligns most closely with Brentwood's goals.

A few pertinent details:

- Designation is centered around preservation-based economic development. Strategies might include preserving and strengthening existing retail and business centers; improving the quality of life by making the downtown area a more attractive place to live and work; developing and maintain continuous contact with main street businesses; and/or assisting local government and small businesses in developing technology and/or solutions to business opportunities.
- Participation is long-term, requiring "organizational sustainability" on the part of the applicant and a funding stream to employ a full-time position for at least five years. The applicant can request that up to 40% of work activities be spent on other (non economic development) community-based tasks.
- The person in the funded position receives training and technical assistance from DCED and the Pennsylvania Downtown Center.
- The funding application requires demonstrating revitalization need, a five-year strategy for revitalization efforts and identification of funding sources.
- The first step is a meeting with the regional DCED office to discuss the potential application and suitability.

2. SET UP AN INVENTORY

This action step could be an initial task for a person hired to focus on economic development; alternately, it could be project led by Planning Commission or a purpose-appointed advisory board and assisted by volunteers.

Attracting local and small businesses is a top priority for Brentwood. A key piece of being able to do this is knowing exactly what kind of commercial space the Borough has to offer. An important first step is to develop and maintain a working list of commercial space in Brentwood with information on the amount, type, condition and availability of commercial space. While much of the commercial building stock is under the control of property owners, maintaining this type of inventory will help the Borough play matchmaker, connecting potential business owners with landlords or reaching out to outside businesses that the Borough would like to attract.

3. OPEN COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

This planning process revealed room for improved communication between the municipality and local business and property owners. Better understanding conditions on the ground will help staff and Council develop and implement policy, and better understanding Borough resources and priorities will help business owners take advantage of all the community has to offer. Mutual exploration of challenges and growth opportunities may lead to great ideas for future advancement.

Council and the Brentwood Business Owners Association, potentially also the Chamber, should schedule roundtables or similar events to bring public and private perspectives together.

STRATEGY 02:

Foster high-quality mixed-use development

The Borough has played a hands-on, strategic role in ensuring that 3624 Brownsville Road, the site of the former Borough Building, is redeveloped to achieve the highest and best use. Borough goals for the redevelopment are as follows:

- An innovative development which builds upon Brentwood's character, contributes to the sense of place and serves as a model for future (re) development in Brentwood's business districts along Brownsville Road and Route 51
- A market-rate rental apartment community with ground floor retail, preferably some type of restaurant
- Plan for vacating and incorporating Pary Street, which traverses the site
- A proposed parking plan that incorporates a combination of on-site parking, street parking, and/or the use of additional Borough property.

- Pedestrian-friendly design of all street frontages
- A financial return for the Borough for the sale of the Property, as well as the future property taxes and earned income taxes generated by the development of the property and the renters
- A Project Labor Agreement (PLA) between the Developer and the Pittsburgh Regional Building and Construction Trades Council.

The current design for this \$15 million project, well underway, prioritizes complementing and enhancing Brentwood's character with quality new construction, encouraging additional investment in the Brownsville Road business district. It will maintain pedestrian scale, walkability and highlight transit access.

As the design makes its way to reality, Borough officials should continue to hold the developer accountable to a high standard of care and quality to ensure that the most is made of this substantial opportunity.



Concept design for 3624 Brownsville. Source: Massaro Properties, LLC

STRATEGY 03:

Encourage high-impact redevelopment

Exciting changes are coming to the Brentwood Borough School District. As the Borough designs and builds a new state-of-the-art elementary school located along Brownsville Road, two elementary schools that will merge into the new facility leave behind buildings and sites that represent future redevelopment opportunity. School officials indicated that the district is committed to finding a deal to allow these parcels to return to the property tax rolls. The district is open to exploring all options as it negotiates with potential seller agents.

Beyond sale for demolition and redevelopment as single-family homes, the Borough and district might consider the potential advantages of retrofitting one or both elementary schools as senior or multi-family housing. The density of this option offers greater tax-base potential, as well as expanding the supply of smaller housing options that are increasingly in demand among seniors and others who need or prefer less maintenance. There is good precedent for this in the region, with conversions of architecturally significant schools in Hazelwood and Homestead receiving national recognition. Given the comparative stability of its neighborhoods, Brentwood would appear to be an even more advantageous environment for this type of conversion.

ACTION STEPS:

1. CHECK IN WITH THE DISTRICT

Borough staff and/or officials should arrange a meeting with school officials to discuss options for the site, including the feasibility of multi-unit conversion. The Borough may be able to offer the district insight or expertise in issuing an RFP for redevelopment proposals, if desired, or can help ensure that the right zoning regulations are in place for the highest and best use to proceed.

2. OFFER PARTNERSHIP

Following an initial conversation, the Borough should keep the lines of conversation open and offer support where needed to encourage Council's preferred redevelopment vision for each site.

STRATEGY 04:

Seek partnership for a farmers market

Engagement results suggest that a regular farmers market would be popular among Brentwood residents. This would give both residents and visitors a place to convene, socialize and enjoy a local shopping experience, as well as offer an additional source of healthy, primarily locally grown food. These types of events can provide opportunity for local vendors and creators and further raise the profile of the community as a whole.

While initial analysis of available sites did not reveal a prime candidate location, working with a private entity could help identify a place to stage this activity.

ACTION STEPS:

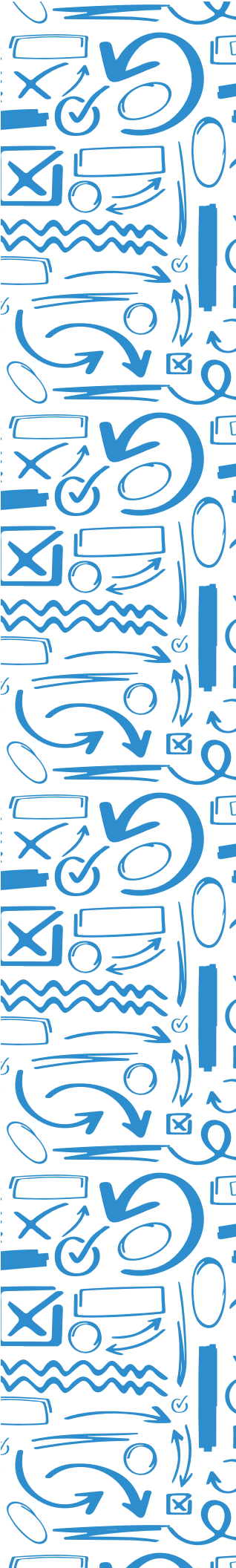
- ☐ **1. IRON OUT THE DETAILS**
Identify a potential location, desired frequency (weekly?), and feasible initial size for this event. Determine potential cost to the Borough to facilitate this event and whether local businesses, foundations or other funders (perhaps, for instance, a regional hospital system with local representation) would be willing to sponsor the event on a one-off or ongoing basis.
- ☐ **2. RECRUIT VENDORS**
Identify desired vendors, among the many who frequent public farmers markets around the area or otherwise, and coordinate their participation. Seek to achieve a mix of local food growers and harvesters as well as bakers, craftspeople and others whose wares will attract residents to a rich shopping experience.
- ☐ **3. STAGE A PILOT EVENT, ADJUST, REPEAT**
Plan the details to advertise and stage a trial or pilot farmers market event, allowing time afterward to reflect and assess where adjustments might be needed for greater reach and success. Incorporate any changes in planning for a recurring event series.



STORYLINE TIE-IN: **Future Development and Community Spirit**

Brentwood Borough is mostly built-out, from a future development perspective. The Borough has very few greenfield areas left where development is desired, so its greatest development opportunities take the form of redevelopment and reinvestment to achieve revitalization. Accordingly, the Borough must approach redevelopment opportunities — particularly those on publicly owned sites! — with special care and respect for the influence they have, positive or negative, on reinforcing community values.

As a community, Brentwood cares deeply about walkability, neighborhood quality and further growing vital, exciting business districts that sustain local entrepreneurship. Redevelopment initiatives such as those underway at the former Borough Building and both elementary school sites have the potential to fortify shared values about place and signify points of public pride.



PARKING



Introduction

PARKING PROBLEMS

Parking emerged at the top of the list during the planning process as a high-priority issue for the community. Concerns from residents ranged from parking supply to enforcement, and parking was a hot topic of conversation during all public engagement efforts. These concerns extended across the Borough, with residents identifying overcrowding on residential streets, cars interfering with sidewalks and parking issues for commercial activity along Brownsville Road. The Borough has installed electronic parking meters along some sections of Brownsville Road to replace older, coin-operated meters. While most of the publicly owned commercial district parking is on-street, there are multiple, dedicated-use free parking lots, such as at the Brentwood Library and Brentwood Park.

In some residential areas, topography and narrow streets limit on-street parking. But primarily, the perception of parking scarcity relates to an issue plaguing many older, built-out communities.

Brentwood's housing stock was mainly constructed in the early to mid-20th century, before vehicles became as large and numerous as they are today. Brentwood homes often have no garage or a garage built according to older (smaller) demand, along with driveways that aren't large enough to store all of a household's vehicles. Additionally, some originally single-family homes have now converted to multi-family use, which translates to more vehicles associated with the same structure. About 20% of homes in the Borough are in multi-family units, as of the 2022 American Community Survey.

Some residents report that commercial area parking overflows into residential areas, and employees leave vehicles all day directly near businesses in spaces that should turn over more often to provide customers access. Others are worried that Brentwood's proximity to the city and public transit access make it a convenient option for non-residents to leave their vehicles, which strains available supply. And while the observations may hold some truth, they only reflect a portion of the full picture.

VISION

The Borough will optimize the use of parking in both residential and commercial areas, setting in place rules that ensure best possible use of public space devoted to this purpose and right-sizing the requirements for off-street parking.

Vehicles per Brentwood household

	Households	% of HHs
No vehicle available	768	17%
1 vehicle available	1,932	43%
2 vehicles available	1,385	31%
3 vehicles available	354	8%
4+ vehicles available	29	1%
Total households	4,468	100%

Source: 2021 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, Five-Year Estimates

TALKING POINTS

- Brentwood's neighborhoods were built at a time when households owned fewer and smaller vehicles. Almost 10% of households now own three or more vehicles, intensifying competition for limited curb space in residential areas where streets are narrow and garage structures are small.
- Many drivers will park their vehicles on sidewalks, crosswalks or other areas not dedicated to parking, creating issues for walkability and safety.
- Residents overwhelmingly support walkability and consider it a defining characteristic of the community. Asked directly whether the Borough should prioritize walkability or ample parking supply when the two are directly at odds, 59% of 630 total Community Questionnaire respondents chose walkability. This is an important policy distinction for suburban communities and one that supports Brentwood's traditional built environment. (By contrast, a community that prioritized ample parking supply might impose significant off-street parking requirements that resulted in the demolition of buildings in a business district to create more lot space.)
- Land is a valuable resource to any community, especially one that is highly built out, as Brentwood is. The Borough should conduct a comprehensive parking study to better understand current parking demand and to inform future decisions regarding parking management and allocation.
- A residential parking permit system could be highly effective in reducing parking issues near residents' homes. Many communities maintain paid parking permit systems, such as the Borough of Edgewood, which has a population one third of Brentwood's.



Private surface lots serving retail uses, such as this one at Brentwood Towne Square, are designed to prioritize high turnover

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The economic forces of supply and demand are very much in play when it comes to parking. Residents or would-be business district visitors feel frustrated when they perceive that supply is not available to meet demand. This results in their circling around looking for space, parking farther away than they would prefer or parking illegally. For business district visitors, it might look like giving up and returning at a different time or using a different form of transportation. Parking scholar Donald Shoup has estimated that 30% of more of traffic in a built-up area consists of drivers cruising around in search of a space to park. In residential areas, parking demand is related to car ownership, with peak demand occurring in the middle of the night. Residential parking demand is less elastic: At the end of the day, people who own vehicles have to store them somewhere.

Parking management constitutes its own field of study, and it is centered on striking an optimal balance between supply and demand so that 85% of on-street parking spaces in a given area are occupied at any given time. This is the magic number, the percentage at which parking supply is most efficiently used. An 85% parked block leaves enough spaces available to avoid drivers cruising in search of space. Contrary to popular perception, achieving parking nirvana is often not about adding more parking spaces to a business district. It's about creating a parking management program that causes existing spaces to be used more efficiently.

WALKABILITY VS. PARKING

The residents of Brentwood appreciate the walkability of their community. More than half of Community Questionnaire respondents rated walkability as one of the “very important” factors that contribute to the quality of life in the Borough. Brownsville Road and adjacent residential areas boast walkable Borough connections to popular destinations such as the park and library. Indeed, Brentwood positions itself as an attractive, dense and walkable suburb.

Creating space for pedestrian infrastructure and parking can be at odds. Useful and comfortable pedestrian connections require some level of density, with origins and destinations arranged within reasonable distances. Large surface parking lots tend to disperse density, creating expanses that feel less safe and interesting to traverse on foot. In Brentwood, 58.5% of survey respondents believe that the Borough should prioritize walkability over providing ample parking when the two conflict, which helps to provide insight on future decision-making.

“Something needs to be done about the parking asap. You have people with driveways and they don't use them. Also, no one should have 5 to 7 cars for a single-family home.”

— Questionnaire comment

CURRENT BOROUGH PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Parking is currently not allowed:

- On a sidewalk
- On a crosswalk or within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection
- At any place where official signs prohibit stopping
- In front of any public or private driveway
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant
- Within 30 feet upon approach to any flashing signal, yield sign or stop light

In December 2023, the Borough adopted a new ordinance to crack down on sidewalk parking, articulating an intention to cite and fine offenders. The ordinance states the **Borough's commitment to "ensuring safe and convenient pedestrian access to local schools, shops and transit stops."**

The Borough also regulates the parking of vehicles that load, unload or deliver goods during certain hours and vehicles that have a gross weight of at least 7,000 pounds.

WHAT'S THE MOVE?

Creating a well-calibrated parking management program can serve a few purposes in tackling the challenges that pain Brentwood residents and business owners most. In commercial districts, creating higher turnover supports businesses by providing convenient parking for their customers and reducing the time they spend circling. It can also improve the efficiency of on-street parking in residential areas through program development, policy update, communication and enforcement. Overall, a parking management program helps to improve the experience of living in and visiting a community while preserving walkability and the quality of its built environment.

The strategies in this chapter represent local perspectives on the issue from community engagement, as well as the expertise of staff and officials. This includes lessons learned in the many public conversations that have taken place on this topic over the years, as well as the experience of developing and enforcing various parking management programs and policies. The strategies also reflect planning best practices, which respect the issue as an economics problem with an actual solution that needs to be tailored for the right fit to any given place.

Key Issue Strategies

STRATEGY 01:

Monitor parking issues

Within the last year, the Borough has communicated and followed through on increased enforcement of parking rules, particularly the prohibition on sidewalk parking. In the coming year, the Borough can evaluate the results of this policy change on driver habits, which will help determine whether further intervention is needed.

Beyond that, analyzing updated data on how people use spaces would help to refine a parking management program to address problems specific to different areas of Brentwood. In addition to knowing the numbers for available parking supply, the Borough must understand demand in the form of utilization — How long are on-street spaces occupied, and how often do they turn over? This provides insight on which types of parkers are using which locations, which informs the policy and programs that follow. For instance, a parking study might prove that a perceived parking shortage in a commercial area is due to employees leaving vehicles for eight-plus hours at a time, leaving few or no spots available to visitors. Once the problem is clearly defined, appropriate solutions become clear.

ACTION STEPS:

1. DETERMINE APPROACH

Should the Borough go the route of further study, the Borough should evaluate whether it is possible to recruit volunteers to collect utilization data, which looks like visiting an assigned area with a spreadsheet and a pencil at regular intervals on specific days. This could help reduce the cost of a parking study. Either way, the Borough may choose to find a local parking expert or engage a firm with this specialty to guide data collection and analyze the results. Parking study costs range by scope and the size of the subject area, falling anywhere between \$10,000 and \$80,000.

2. COLLECT AND ANALYZE INFORMATION

With a sense of approach in hand, the Borough should develop a request for proposals to complete the study, specifying whether volunteers will be available to collect data. The scope of services should specify that the Borough seeks detailed, site-specific recommendations on policy and program changes to address identified problems, down to such details as hourly meter/kiosk pricing and whether/where street design should be reconfigured. Appoint a committee to provide direction for the effort.

STRATEGY 02:

Continue the conversation on a residential permit program

A residential parking permit program (RPPP) gives residents priority access to on-street parking locations in front of their homes in exchange for securing a permit from local government, either for free or for a (usually annual) fee. The City of Pittsburgh's program prohibits vehicles from parking in designated areas for more than two hours without a residential parking permit. In considering its own RPPP, Brentwood should establish specific street/block zones, likely with insights derived from a parking study, within which only residents and permit holders should be allowed to park.

The Borough previously explored the possibility of creating an RPPP in 2016, but ultimately no action was taken. This plan confirms that the approach is in keeping with best practices and is the most effective available approach to managing parking utilization in residential areas, especially those near other destination areas such as business districts.

Given the importance of this issue to residents, the Borough should continue evaluating whether such a program could work for Brentwood, with sensitivity for the cost impact on households, particularly those on fixed incomes. A fee structure outlines the cost of a permit for each additional car in a household. This program may limit the number of vehicles allowed on a permit or increase the cost for each additional car beyond the first. In many communities, the fee for the first car is often minimal, between \$20 and \$40 per year. Escalating fees for additional vehicles reflects the high value of curb space and encourages multi-car households to find alternatives, such as cleaning out a garage to park or using a driveway. Guest passes could be modeled after the City of Pittsburgh's (one free guest pass per permit holder household) or the Borough of Edgewood's (\$20 per visitor parking pass).

A more aggressive permit system would also include an ordinance that limits the number of vehicles per household. For example, New Hope Borough in Bucks County allows one permit per house with only two cars per permit. Another example of this is Denver, CO, which designates different kinds of RPPPs and how many a household may obtain. The RPPP may also have special restrictions, such as restricting commercial parking or trailer parking overnight.

ACTION STEPS:



1. DESIGN THE PROGRAM

Staff should make recommendations to Council on the extent of a new Residential Parking Permit Program, including how it will be administered and enforced. Accurately assessing the staffing needed for a permit program is essential to establishing funding levels. Communications strategy will also be critical in educating residents on proposed policy changes and gaining public buy-in.

If a parking study is conducted, use the results to determine zones, blocks or streets where on-street parking permits are necessary.



2. ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

Council should workshop the proposed program details in public conversations, allowing residents the opportunity to respond and suggest ideas.



3. MAKE THE RPPP OFFICIAL

Follow all applicable procedural requirements in updating the Borough Code to incorporate requirements of the new program. At a minimum, this should include permit requirements and provisions, permit exceptions, fees, administration and penalties/fines for violation. Determine a strategy for initiating enforcement (i.e. setting an effective date, whether there are warnings only for the first several months to one year).



4. DEVELOP THE ROLL-OUT

Create a communications strategy and implementation plan to educate drivers. In the past, the Borough has been successful sending postcards to residents or placing them on cars parked on the street. Households in all RPPP zones will need to understand the requirement to obtain and display permits.



5. POST CLEAR NOTIFICATION

Design and install on-street signage (and pavement markings, if appropriate) in affected areas to clearly designate resident-only parking areas.

STRATEGY 03:

Hold the line on enforcement

The Borough has elevated enforcement of parking violations, along with raising awareness of the rules in place. This has made an immediate impact on the frequency of sidewalk parking. The Borough should continue serious enforcement of its parking laws and seek opportunities to keep residents aware of their importance. Sidewalk parking obstructs safe and easy pedestrian pathways, especially for those with mobility difficulties.

Other issues include vehicles parked in clearly designated “no stopping” zones. This form of illegal parking obstructs walkable routes and creates hazards where vehicles block clear sight lines. Enforcement is a key component in addressing these concerns.

ACTION STEPS:

1. ADD PROHIBITIONS TO CODE

At present, the Borough Code lists categories of streets where parking is prohibited. The Borough should amend the Code to prohibit parking in “yellow paint” zones and specify and enforce fines set for any parking violation.

2. CREATE A PARKING AUTHORITY

Consider a long-term goal of creating a Borough Parking Authority to administer and enforce the Borough’s parking management program. Currently, Borough Police handle enforcement. Funding for this effort could come from enforcing modernized street-metered parking and/or the RPPP.

A parking authority or dedicated civil parking enforcement officers designates staff to enforce parking violations and assist with parking education and problem-solving. Strict enforcement of parking violations encourages compliance, reducing the occurrence of issues. This also frees police officers to focus on other priorities.



For example the City of Meadville (with only 2,698 more residents than Brentwood) has “peace officers” authorized to regulate parking and direct traffic. The peace officers report to the chief of police and are required to obtain information on the location of any parking violation, the date and hour of the violation, the state license number of the vehicle and any other relevant facts.

STRATEGY 04:

Promote reporting

The Borough already has a Google form for residents to submit complaints. Expanding on this service offers the Borough a chance to collect in-depth information about where problem areas occur most frequently and enhance enforcement. The City of Pittsburgh has a 311 line where residents can submit non-emergency concerns or issues for response as the appropriate department is available. Requests can be sent anonymously (if a response isn't needed), and otherwise all requests are given a service order ticket number.

ACTION STEPS:

-  **1. EXPAND THE ISSUE REPORTING FORM**
The Borough should modify its existing Google form to include parking enforcement complaints. The link to the form should be accessible from the Borough website and publicized as a service. The Borough should also strive to keep this data organized so it can be useful if needed in the future.
-  **2. PARTNER TO GROW CAPACITY**
The Borough should explore connection with partners, such as the South Hills Council of Governments (SHACOG) or with CONNECT (Congress of Neighboring Communities) to create a joint 311 or non-emergency response app or website.

STRATEGY 05:

Define spaces

As part of the public outreach in the planning process, residents were extremely supportive of more clearly delineating parking spaces and other parking design best practices in residential areas and in business districts. Borough Code specifies minimum dimensions for parking stalls, but curbside space is not always used efficiently in areas without pavement markings.

Education and outreach is an important component of this work, as the total number of vehicles that can fit in a space may change if paint defines stalls according to the minimums in Borough Code.

ACTION STEPS:

-  **1. MARK PAVEMENT IN A PILOT PRIORITY AREA**
Add parking-space pavement marking in problem areas to delineate existing parking capacity, clarify no-parking areas and improve the efficient use of space. Paint striping can help safely account for the number of spaces available and force drivers to park within an appropriate amount space. This could be introduced with a pilot program in a neighborhood or section of streets to help identify how well it works. A public survey for the pilot program should go out to residents or business owners in the area.
-  **2. PROTECT PRIORITY SIDEWALKS**
Consider raised curbs or protected sidewalks (tree lawns or other physically barrier between the curb and sidewalk) to discourage vehicles rolling up onto sidewalks. Raised curbs can be added around intersections to enhance pedestrian protection.
-  **3. ADD ON-STREET PARKING REGULATIONS**
Develop on-street parking regulations as part of any update to the Borough Code specifications for parking. The Code should include the zones of paid parking and describe meter installation and use, overtime violations, days and hours of operation and accessible spaces.

STRATEGY 06:

Incorporate best practices

The following action steps are worth consideration as the Borough takes an analytical look at the relationship between parking supply and demand and how it can most efficiently strike the right balance.

ACTION STEPS:



1. CONTINUE METER MODERNIZATION

The Borough began to use new meters on Brownsville Road a few years ago but has not yet replaced all coin meters to modern meters yet. Electronic parking meters that work with parking apps or QR codes are current standards. Because there is no clear evolution cutoff point for when new standards may be developed, the Borough should plan to continue the process of replacing coin meters to the modern meters currently in place along Brownsville Road. Having parking utilization data from modern meters can help manage parking and inform future decision-making.



2. PROMOTE SHARED PARKING

The Borough should consider incentivizing and streamlining shared parking arrangements. Many communities write such provisions into the off-street parking minimums section of the zoning ordinance. For example, private lot space near the business districts could potentially be used for employee parking, reducing competition with customers for relatively inexpensive metered space. The Borough has already identified parking lots off Brownsville Road that may be suitable for a situation like this.



3. ENCOURAGE MODE SHIFT

To decrease parking demand for vehicles throughout the community, the Borough should aim to make active modes of travel more safe, appealing and convenient. This would include working with Pittsburgh Regional Transit to improve transit access, stops and nearby walking routes; installing bicycle parking in commercial areas; and improving pedestrian amenities as suggested in other chapters of this plan.



4. AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Zoning ordinances typically specify a number of minimum off-street parking spaces that a property developer must create for each land use (business, residence, etc.). Minimum parking requirements in zoning ordinances often reflect pseudoscience — whether they are carried forward from decades long past, copy-pasted from a neighboring municipality or even written in direct reference to the latest traffic generation estimates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers, these numbers almost certainly do not reflect the real-life traffic generation of a given land use of a given size and intensity in a given neighborhood context.

Many communities across the county have decided to instead let the market decide how much parking a use needs. The advantage of this approach is that it avoids overbuilding parking to meet requirements, which drives up land consumption, exacerbates stormwater issues and increases the cost of whatever use is built on the site. Eliminating parking minimums does not eliminate parking; it instead allows developers to determine how to best lay out a site and meet user needs. During a future zoning update, Brentwood should consider whether this approach could advance local goals and, if so, amend the ordinance to reflect it.

Additionally, the Borough should consider limiting or prohibiting the conversion of single-family homes into multiple housing units. There is profit incentive for landlords to rent a single home to multiple households, but the effect is often the deterioration of housing stock and, as cited in this chapter, an increase in vehicles competing for limited curb space. Sustaining the Borough's supply of affordable housing remains an important aim; permitting a scale-appropriate variety of housing types is a better way to accomplish this than converting existing stock.

RIGHT-SIZING PARKING: A GROWING MUNICIPAL TREND

Increasing walkability and reducing parking demand can help address some of the parking challenges that Brentwood faces. To date, than 50 cities and towns across the country have thrown out parking minimums to help address housing affordability, walkability and traffic congestion.

Auburn, Maine needed to attract new businesses after several restaurants and small businesses closed. To reduce up-front costs for new businesses and expansions, they eliminated parking minimums in commercial areas. This targeted approach had an immediate impact on the community. It brought in new restaurants and helped to improve the public realm.¹

Parkingreform.org chronicles case studies for communities that have eliminated parking minimums for similar purposes.

¹ Spivak, Jeff. American Planning Association, 2022. <https://www.planning.org/planning/2022/spring/a-business-case-for-dropping-parking-minimums>



STORYLINE TIE-IN: **Parking Management and Your American Dream**

Getting the balance of parking supply and demand right in different areas of Brentwood is about more than making sure that curb space is efficiently used and people are spared the frustration of cruising for parking spaces. It's also about ensuring that ever-escalating parking demand doesn't translate to neighborhood deterioration. Everyone wants to park overnight close to home, yet no one wants to see sidewalks obstructed by F-150s.

This planning process indicated that the community's traditional neighborhood fabric and walkability are highly important to Brentwood's identity and quality of life. Therefore, parking policies and programs think beyond the easy answer — consuming additional space to lay down more asphalt — and engage with the more nuanced challenge of influencing demand and utilization.



CONNECTIVITY



Introduction

LINKING PLACES AND PEOPLE

There is a growing recognition in many communities of the benefits of physical connectivity and walkability. By providing various options for walking, using public transportation, engaging in outdoor activities and cycling, communities can create a network that is well-connected and reduces traffic congestion and fatalities. This approach can enhance access to economic opportunities, encourage physical activity and improve health and strengthen the social fabric of the community. By prioritizing physical connectivity and walkability, communities can improve the quality of life for their residents, promote a sustainable, healthy and vibrant environment.

Physical connectivity is closely linked to other Key Issues in this plan, such as reducing parking demand and promoting community development. Improving safe and convenient ways for residents to get where they need to go increases foot traffic, which will benefit the development and vitality of business districts. And, with the increasing ownership of e-bikes nationwide, hilly topography is no longer the barrier it once was for cyclists. Brentwood residents prioritize walkability, and public engagement results support continued investments in infrastructure that facilitates pedestrian activity, as this enhances the community experience.

Physical connectivity should prioritize pedestrian safety and comfort, a design imperative that tends to end up enhancing safety for all users regardless of mode. During the public engagement for this plan, many residents said better sidewalks, increased accessibility and safer street crossings are key for improving the overall walkability of the Borough. More information on crosswalk safety appears in the Brownsville Road chapter of this plan.

VISION

The Borough will build upon a network of safe, convenient and pleasant routes to travel on foot or bike, enhancing its status as a walkable community and increasing trail connections within and beyond the community's borders.

“One of the best things about Brentwood is its walkability.”
— Questionnaire comment

TALKING POINTS

- The Borough's approach to physical connectivity should focus on residents of all abilities, making streets safer and the community more active. Doing so enhances the quality of life for everyone.
- With Brentwood leading many of the South Hills communities in home ownership by younger people, continuing to attract young families requires aligning with community values they seek. Walkability is one of those strengths.
- Because the Borough is close to the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP Trail), the Borough should support creation of a connecting trail if opportunities for collaboration arise.
- Creating sidewalk and stairs upgrade programs in the Borough is key in enhancing overall connectivity. Sidewalk repair programs help support property owners who may not have financial resources to put toward such work, and stair upgrade programs help public ways within the Borough.
- Brentwood Hollow is a prime location for creating connections in the Borough, providing active transportation opportunities and recreational hiking and biking.
- Neighborways are an effective way to promote outdoor recreation and foster community spirit. These can be supported by minimal infrastructure and grant funding.
- The Borough has already begun projects to improve connectivity, including a trail in Brentwood Hollow and the Dewalt Avenue Streetscape Project.

SETTING THE PRECEDENT

About 20% of homeowners in Brentwood are over the age of 65, compared to 33% across Allegheny County. On the flip side, Brentwood's southern Census tract leads the South Hills in home ownership by those under age 35, at 16%.¹ Connectivity is key to continuing to attract younger people to the area, which provides a strong reason to continue building on existing levels of green space, trail creation, and safety enhancements.

TRAIL CONNECTIONS

During the planning process, many emphasized the importance of physical connectivity in relation to trails, particularly the Greater Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail. The project team investigated two options, presented later in this chapter, to improve connectivity in and out of Brentwood, connecting with the popular biking and hiking trail. Both options required multi-jurisdictional participation and extensive resources. Should an opportunity arise to pursue either route in partnership with other municipalities or by grant funding, the Borough should support the effort.



¹ Fourth Economy. 2022. "Surprise in the Suburbs: Economic Mobility & Homeownership."

Key Issue Strategies

STRATEGY 01:

Upgrade public stairs

Networks of sidewalks that include stairways provide essential pedestrian connections, especially in communities such as Brentwood, characterized by dramatic topography. These networks connect commercial, residential and civic amenities and natural spaces within a municipality, benefiting physical and mental health. The Borough has already made improvements to public stairs in specific locations, including those at Kaufmann Avenue and Olancho Avenue. Strategizing future improvements can make spending more predictable and help the Borough address deteriorating infrastructure before repairs become impossible and more expensive replacement infrastructure is required.

ACTION STEPS:



1. DETERMINE APPROACH

Create a dynamic inventory of publicly owned right-of-way staircases. The Borough should document all existing public staircases in the Borough and note their condition, the last date improvements were made, and rank their connectivity importance. This type of project is well suited to an intern (such as those partially funded by the Local Government Academy) or volunteer. Borough staff could set up the effort by providing mapping to annotate and coordinating data entry with the Borough Engineer.

□ 2. PRIORITIZE PROJECTS

Based on the inventory results, the Borough should begin implementing priority improvements, such as stair repair, landscaping upkeep and/or feature upgrades such as railings or bicycle push ramps. Some potential improvement targets are listed below and shown on the Connectivity Map on the following page. However, the results of the inventory and analysis should guide decision-making.

- Between Brentwood Park and East Garden Road, including the graded walking path alongside the steps
- Lachman Way and Grossman Place
- Oakton Road to Woodrow Ave
- Sceneridge Ave and Pary Ave to Outlook Street

□ 3. FACTOR INTO CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Create cost estimates for the highest priority projects and add them as budget line items for improvements in a future year. Note that grant funding may be available to help cover the costs.



CONNECTIVITY MAP

BRENTWOOD BOROUGH

Legend

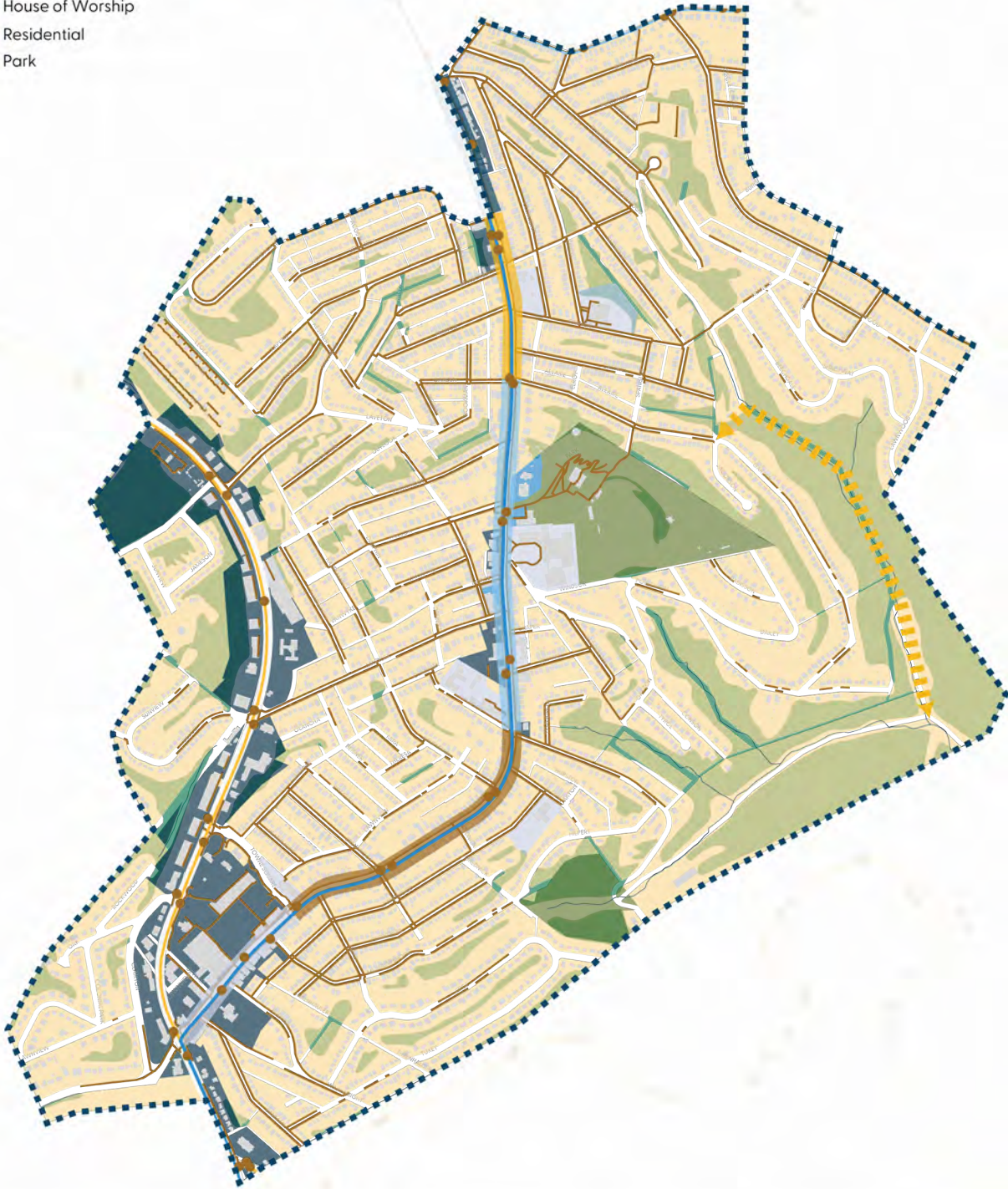
Landscape Features

- Woodland
 - Stream
- #### Community Features
- Commercial
 - Government
 - School
 - House of Worship
 - Residential
 - Park

- Proposed Brentwood Hollow Trail
 - Sidewalks
- #### Pittsburgh Regional Transit
- Carrick
 - Knoxville
 - Flyers
 - Transit Stops

Brownsville Road

- 1 Sankey-BellecrestCommercial
- 2 Bellecrest-Garden Residential
- 3 Garden-Willock Civic-Ed-Commercial
- 4 Willock-Towne Square Residential
- 5 Towne Square-Route 51 Commercial



STRATEGY 02:

Double down on the sidewalk program

The safety and completion status of the sidewalk network impacts residents who walk for recreation or transportation purposes. As one resident asserted in an interview, “sidewalk improvements would make Brentwood a walking community again.”

The Borough currently adds or repairs sidewalks on streets where it is completing roadway resurfacing projects and offers a sidewalk improvement program that provides some financial assistance to property owners.

The ordinance requires all land or property owners to maintain the sidewalk that borders their property or parcel. Sidewalks should be in a state of good repair, free from defects or debris, and paved according to specifications. If an owner fails to maintain the sidewalk within 30 days of receiving a letter from the Borough notifying the owner of a deficiency, they will be liable for the total cost plus 10%. Before a property owner installs sidewalk themselves or through a contractor, they must obtain a permit from the Borough code enforcement officer, and the work must be carried out in compliance with the current specifications.

The cost of repairing sidewalks can be a financial burden for some owners, and piecemeal repairs can lead to poor accessibility and sidewalk quality. Through its existing program, Brentwood offers residents the opportunity to participate in a cost-sharing program in which the Borough pays half the cost of repairs of sidewalks that are deemed deficient. Currently, the Borough assesses the condition of sidewalks on the streets it will be repaving in a given year and notifies owners of any deficiencies and the cost-sharing program.

ACTION STEPS:

1. CONTINUE/EXPAND COST-SHARING

Continue or expand the sidewalk improvement cost-sharing program that helps homeowners repair their sidewalks. The Borough could expand this program by adding sidewalk projects at a greater pace outside of the street repaving program and focusing on high-priority sidewalks that connect to transit stops, schools, parks and important civic or commercial spaces.

2. ADDRESS HIGH-PRIORITY NEEDS

Adopt an ambitious repair schedule for high-priority sidewalks that are owned by the Borough — or possibly even by businesses or residents. Create or maintain a dynamic list of needed sidewalk improvements on high-priority routes, such as those connecting to parkland or prime community assets such as the library, commercial areas, transit stops or Brentwood Towne Square. The Borough should address problems at these high-priority locations at an accelerated pace, either via the aforementioned cost-sharing program or through direct Borough funding, under the assumption that their importance requires action. Grant sources could amplify the impact of this work.

3. WAIVE SIDEWALK CONSTRUCTION PERMIT FEES

Remove sidewalk expansion construction permit fees. The Borough Department of Building and Code Enforcement mandates a permit for any construction work, and there is a standardized application for it. The cost of the permit is \$39 for work that costs under \$1,000, with an additional \$9 fee for each additional \$1,000 in cost. By waiving the cost of the permit specifically for sidewalk projects, the Borough can encourage more residents and business owners to consider sidewalk expansion.



STRATEGY 03:

Continue to advance the Brentwood Hollow Trail

A priority connection identified during this planning process is the area between the easternmost dead end of Brentwood Avenue and Brentwood Road through Brentwood Hollow, and a potential connection from the intersection of Jacobson Drive and East Garden Road. The route connects residential neighborhoods in the far eastern corner of the Borough to the park and library.

The Borough has plans for the trail through Brentwood Hollow, including transforming an access point for utility infrastructure into a permanent trailhead. Borough Council has stated an intention to ensure that the property remains available for pedestrian use.

ACTION STEPS:



1. CONTINUE PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Borough should fund and continue the implementation of this proposed project, which has a budget of \$570,000, including \$70,000 in grant money for design and preparation of documents leading to construction.



2. CONNECT JACOBSON DRIVE

The Borough should explore connecting the Hollow with the Jacobson Drive-East Garden Road neighborhood by acquiring a trail easement through private property. The 0.06 of a mile connecting pathway is already used as a desire path but borders private homes. Extending the project will increase the number of residents who can access the trail, as well as into the neighborhood that borders Brentwood Park. The Borough should erect "respect private property lines" signs in this portion of this pathway.

STRATEGY 04:

Pilot a “neighborways” program

Neighborways are roads with low traffic volume that communities transform to prioritize pedestrian and cyclist activity using signage and traffic calming installations. The primary aim of implementing a neighborway program is to create a safe shared space that fosters a sense of community while offering a benefits such as traffic calming, increased recreation opportunities and promoting social connections among neighbors. By providing a safe network for pedestrians and cyclists, neighborways encourage outdoor activities and play, leading to an increase in physical connectivity. This approach has the potential to transform the way communities approach transportation and can play a vital role in promoting healthy and active lifestyles.

ACTION STEPS:

- ☐ **1. ACCEPT APPLICATIONS**
Advertise the opportunity for residents to nominate a local residential neighborhood street for a pilot project.
- ☐ **2. PLAN A PILOT PROJECT**
Select and plan the pilot project location and contact residents of the area. The Borough will need to determine the duration of installation (likely one spring or summer season), how to receive feedback on the project and other considerations, such as how street grade may impact the program.
- ☐ **3. INSTALL FEATURES**
Install temporary or movable features that have notifications of the program and/or directional signage. Features might include sandwich boards or temporary pavement markings. There may be grant funding available to enhance the program further, adding features like street furniture or public art.
- ☐ **4. EVALUATE RESULTS**
Evaluate the results of the program after the demonstration period and survey residents. These results will inform whether to broaden the program.

STRATEGY 05:

Advocate for pedestrian safety along Route 51

While the Borough does not have control over the Route 51 corridor because it is a PennDOT road, the community's connectivity is impacted by anything that happens on the road or with it. The Borough should monitor any betterment projects planned for Route 51 and use that moment to advocate (with the district and/or with state-level elected officials) for improved pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity. Amenities for these improvements might include pedestrian push buttons, sidewalks/sidewalk repairs, ADA curb cuts and high-visibility crosswalks.

Among the potential locations for pedestrian improvements on Route 51 are these, although other sites may also be desirable:

- **Route 51 and Brownsville Road** – existing sidewalks, pedestrian push buttons, and curb cuts line the four-way intersection. High-visibility crosswalks would enhance pedestrian safety.
- **Old Clairton Road and Towne Square Way** – There are two entrances to Brentwood Towne Square from Route 51, with bus stops located at these intersections. Improving conditions for transit riders would have additional benefits.
- **Greenlee Road** – This intersection is the major connection to Allegheny Health Network Brentwood neighborhood hospital.

ACTION STEPS:



1.

STAY ABREAST OF PENNDOT PLANS

Use PennDOT Connects channels if a betterment project is listed for Route 51 in Brentwood and advocate for the community's desired pedestrian improvements. When warranted, approach state-level elected officials with any especially pressing concerns or requests to enlist their help in advocacy.



2.

CONSIDER LOCAL CONTRIBUTION

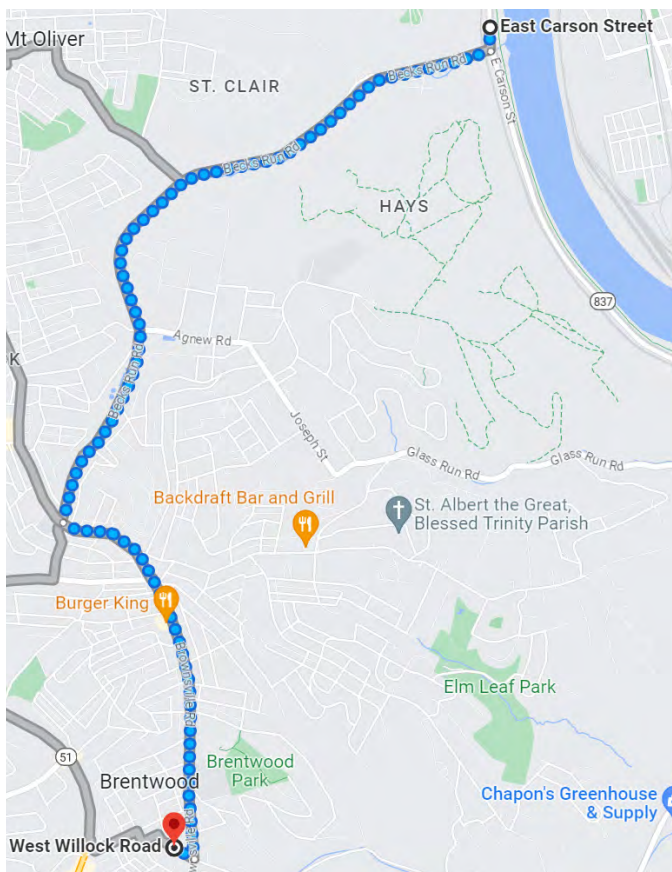
In some cases, the Borough is responsible for the maintenance of traffic control equipment even on roads it does not own or maintain. In the same regard, PennDOT may be more interested in negotiating desired improvements with the Borough if there is a municipal contribution.

STRATEGY 06:

Monitor GAP connection opportunities

The Borough should continue to monitor the feasibility of trail connections to the GAP trail should opportunities arise. Both potential routes identified during the planning process provide connectivity to Brentwood High School, Brentwood Park and the Brentwood Library. This could offer high-quality routes for the area and its surrounding localities. Additionally, both routes have the advantage of possible further connections to Hazlewood Green. Route 1 connects Brentwood to East Carson Street (which connects to the GAP trail, while Route 2 connects Brentwood directly to the trail.

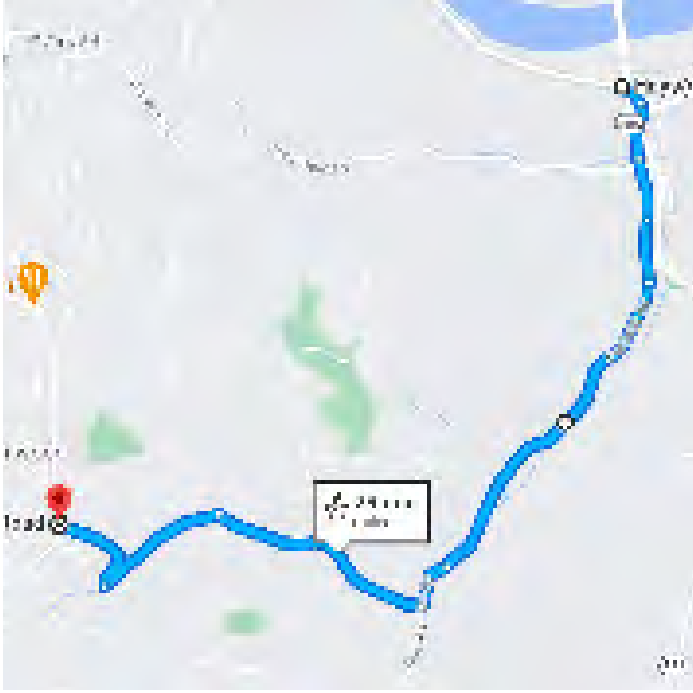
OPTION 1 EAST CARSON VIA BECK'S RUN ROAD



This route totals approximately 3.5 miles of trails and takes about 30 minutes on a bike.

- This route requires less mileage of trail development than Option 2, but does not connect to the GAP trail (only to East Carson Street) because there is no access point over the train tracks.
- It is an additional 10-minute bike ride from this proposed trail start (the intersection of East Carson and Beck's Run Road) to the GAP trail via the Hot Metal Bridge. However, the East Carson Street segment connecting the two points is not currently bike-friendly.

OPTION 2 GAP TRAIL VIA BALDWIN ROAD



This route totals approximately 4.5 miles of trails and takes about 30 minutes on a bike. This route has less elevation change than Option 1.

- The benefit of this route is that it is mainly flat, making it a viable route for both experienced and inexperienced bikers.
- This route connects to the proposed trail design in Brentwood Hollow, between East Garden Road and Beechdale Street.
- It offers an opportunity to collaborate with Baldwin Borough and utilize some of the natural wooded areas between the municipalities. It also offers an opportunity to explore "Rails with Trails."

ACTION STEPS:

☐ 1. EXPLORE PARTNERSHIPS

The Borough should discuss with Baldwin Borough and Whitehall Borough whether the municipalities are interested in collaborating to create a bike trail. If these municipalities are interested, the City of Pittsburgh would be the next partner discussion. BikePGH is a local nonprofit organization that could offer expertise on partnership development and trail feasibility.

☐ 2. MONITOR GRANTS

Should recreational grants become available, the Borough should be ready to work with any interested partners to develop a proposal and pursue funding.

STRATEGY 07:

Publish the connectivity map

The Borough can enhance walkability by encouraging residents and visitors to explore walking loops of different lengths throughout the community. Staff should upload the map on page 72 to the Borough website, and (potentially with volunteer help) to an application such as AllTrails.

ACTION STEPS:



1. GET THE MAP OUT THERE

Decide the best medium to publish the connectivity map and upload it for walkers to use.



2. UPDATE THE MAP AS NEEDED

In coordination with the Borough Engineer, identify any additional walking loops or paths and update the mapping files as needed, then update the online map version and/or app data.

STRATEGY 08:

Enhance pedestrian accommodation

Safe, comfortable, and enjoyable pedestrian experiences are at the heart of connectivity in a community. Improving sidewalks so that they are free of obstacles or debris, creating an engaging walking experience, and expanding the pedestrian network will help Brentwood achieve its connectivity goals. While many of the connections in the Borough already exhibit many of these qualities, these intentions should be asserted during upgrades or new developments. Priority locations for pedestrian improvements are near high-activity areas such as schools, parks, along Brownsville Road and transit stop connections.

ACTION STEPS:



1. MAINTAIN THE STANDARD

Should development or street enhancement projects near high activity areas occur, the Borough should implement state standards for high-visibility crosswalks, pedestrian push buttons, ADA curb cuts and sidewalk width.



2. INTEGRATE ART

Identify areas for projects that enhance the pedestrian experience, such as parklets or public art.



STORYLINE TIE-IN: **Connectivity and Your American Dream**

As became relevant to several Key Issues within this plan, walkability is an important part of life in Brentwood, a defining community characteristic to many who live here. The Borough's sidewalk network and transit connections make it possible to live here without owning a vehicle, which is a significant affordability advantage. When vehicle dependency is not a requirement, residents have more choice: Whether to incorporate exercise into dinner plans, whether to buy an e-bike and reduce emissions for short trips, whether to quickly stop into a local store while incidentally walking by. In this way and so many others, a strong and safe active transportation network enriches a community's quality of life.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS



Introduction

FRAMING THE ISSUE

Reviewing Community Questionnaire results early in the planning process, the project Steering Committee arrived at a conundrum. People who live in Brentwood tend to appreciate all it has to offer, taking pride in a high-quality single-municipality school district, an expansive leafy tree canopy, walkability, stable traditional neighborhoods, convenient city access and a high-performing local government that provides a competitive array of amenities and services at a reasonable cost. **So where is the hype?**

Compared to other South Hills neighborhoods and communities, Brentwood flies low on the radar, a gem hidden to many who don't know better. Many residents who completed the questionnaire reported having been rooted here for a long time, due to having grown up in the area or otherwise having family history here. Fewer (but present) are newer residents who discovered Brentwood and chose to settle here within the last five to 10 years. Younger people and entrepreneurialism seem to flock to Mt. Oliver, to Allentown, to Mt. Lebanon, motivated by a *cool factor* that eludes Brentwood. The Borough offers a set of assets and advantages that would make it more competitive — if only they were better known. This chapter frames the issue as a matter of discerning and strategically communicating what kind of place Brentwood is and what is possible here.

Increasing the Borough's profile is important for a few related reasons:

- Adding to a sense of pride and value among the residents and business owners already located here, encouraging them to stay and engage

VISION

The Borough's reputation will grow as a great place to live, work, visit, and invest. Through solidifying its unique local identity and promoting its comparative advantages, the Borough will tell a story that captures the region's attention.

- Attracting additional business investment, which public input indicated is very important to residents. This was the highest-ranking priority in the Community Questionnaire: Providing a greater mix of local retail, services and restaurants. Reinforcing Brentwood's reputation as a desirable place will increase the marketability of its commercial real estate for business owners.
- Sustaining a richly diverse population at every life stage requires attracting young residents. As older homeowners turn over single-family homes, the Borough can sustain the stability of neighborhoods and its tax base by ensuring demand among a new generation of owners and renters.

The task at hand, then, is determining how to best tell Brentwood's story to those who need to hear it.

TALKING POINTS

- There are so many things to love about this community. Continuing to find ways to get the word out to residents and visitors will help the borough raise its profile.
- As Brentwood strives to increase its visibility, it can adopt more effective ways of touting its fundamental strengths, which residents see as:
 - Brentwood's convenience and walkability
 - Its friendly and neighborly feel
 - Its amenities and services, including the park and pool, Towne Square, library and public services
 - Exciting
- Brentwood is home to terrific community events. Developing additional sponsorship opportunities attractive to both local and outside businesses will allow the Borough to sustain and grow its already impressive array of public programming.
- Municipal branding and place branding are distinct elements of marketing and promoting a community. Using both in an intentional way is crucial to improving the overall effectiveness of the Borough's marketing and communications.
 - Municipal branding comprises the consistent use of selected identifiers, such as the borough's logo, colors and official or unofficial slogans.
 - Place branding is the how the community — beyond Borough government — articulates its sense of itself.
- Branding plays a role in the borough's physical appearance. An intentionally communicated local identity should inform design choices in the Borough's selection of public amenities, such as its light poles, decorative banners, benches and trash receptacles, and other items within the public realm.

EXPRESSIONS OF PLACE

In a community with such a long, storied and respected history as Brentwood, it is not difficult to find symbols of civic identity past and present. The blue and gold colors are proudly emblematic of both the Borough and the Brentwood Borough School District that shares its boundaries. The Borough logo appears in both physical and virtual spaces, on flags and signs in public spaces and on the Borough's website and social media. The logo is relatively complicated by today's design standards, incorporating several themes of identity that may be harder to read at smaller scale, but the pride it conveys is clearly legible. Reinforcing consistency and recognition of the municipal brand might involve setting more specific design standards for where and how the logo appears, as well as affirming that it simply captures and conveys community identity themes that are most important today.



WHAT IS BRENTWOOD'S BRAND?

The term branding gets used a lot these days. Generally, it is the process of giving meaning and identity to a specific organization, a place, a thing, a service or an idea. There are two main types of branding that Brentwood Borough (as a local government) and the community as a whole can utilize to elevate and promote Brentwood across the region.

MUNICIPAL BRANDING

Official Borough communications are the target for municipal branding. These should have a coherent, consistent and very intentional design ethos — including color palette, typography, logo, slogan and iconography — as part of a Borough brand. While a local government's brand identity contributes to the community's sense of place, it is a more specific package of materials and design elements that strategically work across all forms of media to raise the profile of both the municipality and the community it serves.

PLACE BRANDING

The community's place brand is broader and more dynamic than a logo and set of communications materials. Simply put, it does not belong solely to the municipality. A place brand should reflect a set of ideas a community has about itself and a story it wants to tell. This story should come from and be promoted by community members so that it evolves on its own as residents, businesses, and community organizations put their own spin on it.

The comprehensive planning process can serve as a powerful jumping off point for establishing a place brand, because the plan reflects where Brentwood has been and its vision for where the community will go in the next decade.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The City of Tulsa's municipal brand appears below in contrast to its unofficial place brand. City government uses the top brand package, while local businesses, residents and organizations have made the bottom branding concept their own expression of pride in place. What could a place brand for Brentwood look like?

Municipal brand:



Place brand:



TAKING THE PULSE

The project team plugged the Community Questionnaire results into a framework for determining **heartbeat words** for Brentwood Borough. Residents and other interested parties submitted hundreds of comments about what makes this place special and assets to preserve and capitalize on. Distilling common motifs down to a few words helps to take the “pulse” of the community and get a clear sense of what is most important to its people.

Details on this exercise appear in the appendix. Each pulse word appears here with a value proposition and value statement to provide context on their intent. The Borough can carry forward the results of the exercise in continuing to refine and advance municipal and place branding.

Pulse words for Brentwood were as follows:

ASSETS

gathering places, draws, anchor points

Value proposition: Enjoyable places to go and things to do – with others or alone – all in our Borough.

Value statement: Brentwood Borough helps its residents to stay engaged, socially interconnected and active with public assets and amenities that support a healthy and vigorous community. The Borough invests in programming and infrastructure that enhance civic life, community engagement and human interaction. It provides scheduled activities and parkland, recreation options and convenience to schools and other places that are important to residents. These community offerings help people to engage with each other, the natural world and their own well-being.



Word cloud for Community Questionnaire comments

CONVENIENT

access, location, proximity

Value proposition: Find the things that make Brentwood your home right nearby.

Value statement: Brentwood Borough recognizes that a mix of public amenities and commercial offerings contributes to a sense of community that residents highly value. Convenient assets include walkable neighborhoods and commercial areas; schools; access to park and recreation facilities; and venues for leisure and entertainment. The Borough seeks this balanced mix of community assets to foster easy and convenient access to social and economic activity, community identity, and resident satisfaction.

FUNCTIONALITY

services, performance, smooth-running

Value proposition: Brentwood Borough runs well and maximizes every tax dollar.

Value statement: Brentwood Borough takes seriously its responsibility to spend tax money wisely and carefully. It places its highest priority on public safety through a well-trained police force. It respects the rights of property owners while also providing fair but assertive property code enforcement. It operates in a transparent, inviting manner, with a highly accessible staff.

Borough communications should consciously employ the words and phrases that best describe its current and aspirational conditions, as stated by residents via public input.

- In communications about business opportunities, vacancies and key site visions, the language presented here helps describe “who we are.”
- In communications with residents and business owners, the language demonstrates the stated intention to be transparent and welcoming.
- The Borough should consciously embed its heartbeat words or amplifiers in routine communications and public notifications.

The Borough can employ the language with real estate agents at annual roundtables, encouraging them to articulate community character in these ways as appropriate.

When feasible and appropriate, the borough should tie actions, decisions and initiatives to the value propositions and value statements. These can help articulate the “why” that residents need to know.

CONGENIAL

personality, sense of community, easy-going

Value proposition: You have a place in Brentwood Borough.

Value statement: As an early 20th century suburb, Brentwood Borough exudes character, with big trees, single-family homes of varied architectural styles, and centrally located assets reachable on foot. With home prices considered mid-range in the Pittsburgh region, it can attract young families and retain older residents, creating a vibrant, engaging mix of generations. The Borough creates programs and supports policies that welcome newcomers, encourage mutual consideration and foster community interaction and a neighborly vibe.

Key Issue Strategies

STRATEGY 01:

Refresh Brentwood's municipal branding

The Borough's new website, *brentwoodpa.gov*, adds both aesthetic polish and well-organized functionality to an important platform for resident communication. Header homepage video footage featuring drone flyover highlights of treasured community assets provides an instant impression to the viewer of all there is to enjoy in Brentwood. A user-friendly financial dashboard makes complex accounting transparent to taxpayers. The Borough can build upon this significant communications advancement by conducting an intentional review of municipal branding across the board, to make sure — in the same manner — that all expressions across digital and print media, as well as impressions made around the community, tell the story of Brentwood as a special place with tremendous opportunity for all.

ACTION STEPS:

1. ESTABLISH BUDGET AND SCOPE

Borough Council should dedicate funding to a branding refresh, carrying forward the heartbeat words, amplifiers, value propositions and value statements developed during the Comprehensive Plan. These articulate the community's unique local identity and comparative advantages in the eyes of residents.

Expect that engaging a professional firm to assist with a branding update could cost \$5,000-\$10,000, though volunteer contributions and the progress made during the plan could offset cost. The desired end product might be a set of design alternatives and ultimately a branding toolkit/package with a set of guidelines for how it can be used and/or modified. Consider the full range of applications: Municipal signage, vehicle decals, social media and web use, letterhead and business cards, etc.

2. **APPOINT AN AD HOC WORKING GROUP**

Borough Council can start this process by appointing an ad hoc advisory working group of five to seven volunteers, ideally involving residents with professional expertise in graphic design, marketing, strategic communications and/or similar fields. This group would help assess existing branding, provide input on any new materials that develop and make recommendations to Council.

3. **TAKE STOCK OF EXISTING BRANDING**

Compile a review of all current Brentwood Borough branding elements, the current uses of municipal branding and any policies governing use and application of the logo and any associated branding materials.

4. **VET ALTERNATIVES**

Evaluate any resulting design alternatives in light of the storylines in this Comprehensive Plan: How can municipal branding reinforce what is special about this place and honor the pride in place its residents already have? Consider involving the public in later stages of review prior to officially selecting and/or refining an alternative.

5. **DEVISE AN EFFICIENT ROLL-OUT PLAN**

Once a branding toolkit and strategy is selected, establish a plan for integrating the new materials that minimizes financial impact. For instance, prioritize digital rollout and replace existing materials with new as they need to be reordered or reach the end of their useful life.

STRATEGY 02:

Make a slogan or tagline happen

The social media hashtag **#BrentwoodDoesItBetter**, which has started to appear on Borough accounts, is a brief and memorable capture of the storylines at the heart of this plan. Brentwood stages events as a dynamic, exciting platform for inclusive community. Brentwood achieves local government excellence. Brentwood neighborhoods are the types of places people dream of living. In short, whatever “it” might be referring to in any given case, it’s no stretch to claim that the Borough does it better.

Using a tagline supports local pride in place and — who knows? — may result in unofficial uptake as place branding, should someone like the idea enough to emblazon it on T-shirts or bumper stickers.

ACTION STEPS:

1. FORMALIZE A TAGLINE, CONTINUE USE

Where appropriate, such as when promoting community events or sharing Borough news online, officials, volunteers and staff should look to incorporate **#BrentwoodDoesItBetter** or a similar local slogan. Using a tagline as a hashtag has the advantage on social media of becoming a searchable term, thus people searching it will see an array of posts highlighting exciting local happenings. The tagline could also be incorporated into newsletters, flyers or other communications in creative ways.

Note that there is always the possibility of unintended use — picture someone posting a pothole photo with the hashtag **#BrentwoodDoesItBetter**. This is not necessarily a negative, as any uptake of the tagline broadens the recognition it receives.



#BrentwoodDoesItBetter

□ 2. FEATURE THE TAGLINE AT EVENTS

Existing community events offer an opportunity to further elevate local identity and reputation, and incorporating a tagline is a relatively simple way to accomplish this. Finding ways to feature the tagline in event promotion and day-of materials would make it more recognizable, especially where events create great moments that reinforce its meaning.

□ 3. ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO MAKE IT THEIR OWN

Another way to encourage uptake of the tagline is to organize a giveaway promotion or competition that encourages people to creatively use the hashtag, perhaps in the design of place branding materials. This could be a feature of an existing event, such as Community Day or Taking it to the Streets. For instance, challenge residents to come up with the best design for a tagline shirt, poster or bumper sticker and put the results up for a community vote online, then distribute or sell swag with the winning design at a future event. Local businesses may be willing to help make this happen.



Color cohesion between school district and municipal branding goes a long way toward reinforcing common community pride.

Source: Ryan Reax, ryanreax.com

STRATEGY 03:

Plant the place brand seed

Expressions of a place brand can help Brentwood capture the elusive “hip factor.” These expressions might include materials gathered or developed in advance that depict Brentwood as it wants to be known, ideally developed organically by people who care deeply about this place.

It can benefit the community for the Borough to be public about its desire to develop and share its storylines and sense of place. Opportunities to help place brand grow organically could take the form of working with a vendor to produce a Brentwood-specific item, hosting a contest or promotion to engage people in creatively expressing pride or other initiative to get people excited about celebrating and communicating about their place.

The South Hills has several fun examples of this working. A limited run of T-shirts featuring a Dormont map has created a coveted collector’s item worn proudly by civic die-hards. In Mt. Lebanon, a local screenprinter has created a line of its own “LEBO” designs, including its own take on the school district’s blue devil mascot. Relatively inexpensive, community-minded promotions can go a long way in helping residents and businesses represent a place in which they already have pride.

ACTION STEPS:

1. SEEK OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

Building relationships with existing local businesses and strategically recruiting new investors (see the Development & Redevelopment chapter) should involve exploration of how the Borough and business can work together to promote one another. Could a local brewer or distiller create a limited edition Brentwood-themed product? Could local restaurants use drink coasters promoting Borough branding or events with a QR code link? Would property owners participate in a themed crawl-style event to draw additional foot traffic?

“

We noticed that the Mt Lebanon Blue Devils never seemed to use the same icon - there was always clip art or something stolen from the web or another team...and we just didn't feel right about it...so we created BLUE LOU...the Mt Lebanon Blue Devil...and hope all of Mt Lebo embraces him as their own.

”

— Commonwealth
Press

STRATEGY 04:

Reinforce local identity in the public realm

The term “urban fabric” can be used to describe the collective spatial and physical characteristics that make up a community. Its buildings, street layout, sidewalks, landscaping, and the spatial relationship between these features all work together to make up its urban fabric.

Brentwood has many distinctive features or characteristics that currently define and enhance the urban fabric, such as Brentwood Park, the Borough’s rich mix of architectural styles and the streetscaping along Brownsville Road.

This strategy centers on the Borough using the public realm to reinforce community identity. It includes recommendations on design elements such as street furniture and other ornamental pieces that relate to the community’s sense of place. These contribute to the overall urban fabric of the Borough but also tie into elements of Brentwood’s municipal brand. (Recommendations about the design and function of roads, sidewalks, and other infrastructure components are covered in the Brownsville Road Key Issue chapter.)

ACTION STEPS:

1. DEVELOP EVERGREEN “LIBRARIES” OF USEFUL CONTENT

Develop base graphic design elements for Taking It to The Streets and other annual community events so that promotional materials can be quickly developed with little additional staff time commitment.

Assemble and organize a library of stock photographs and videos to be used from one year to the next for events or general promotions. An intern could develop a cloud- or server-based file management system so content can be easily accessed. Consider recruiting students or other community volunteers to gather good drone footage (lawfully), or other “evergreen” images and video.

2. INCORPORATE BRANDING IN NEW BANNERS

Street banners represent an opportunity to introduce and reinforce updated branding concepts. New designs for installation should incorporate any updated branding, as well as capitalize on opportunities here and there to remind those passing through the space that #BrentwoodDoesItBetter.

GOLD STRANDS FOR BRENTWOOD'S URBAN FABRIC

Elements of streetscaping and other features currently establish a visual setting for the public realm, particularly along Brownsville Road. Future investments should support a cohesive, unified statement of identity through public improvements through incorporation of like colors, materials, styles and treatments.



3. REVIEW AND IMPLEMENT DESIGN STANDARDS

Council should direct the Planning Commission to work with the Borough Engineer in reviewing the street furnishing specifications contained in the ordinance, which reflect conflicting design languages in some cases. Consider updating to specify more closely matched styles, considering affordability, durability and availability. The design of much of the street furniture already in place can serve as inspiration, with a focus on matching style and aesthetic for future improvements.

STRATEGY 05:

Boost public events with additional sponsorship

Brentwood's calendar of public events is among the strongest of any municipality in the South Hills. Staff and community members work together throughout the year to organize and stage these events, which draw thousands of residents and build the Borough's reputation as a destination and gathering place. As the Borough looks to build on its success, this plan recommends developing a suite of sponsorship packages for some of its key events. This will help improve the Borough's ability to further grow events and elevate their profile.

The following action steps lay out a systematic approach to developing sponsorship packages, setting price points and maximizing value for both sponsors and the community. The Borough's ability to grow and manage events, especially if sponsorship packages include additional benefits for sponsors, will depend to a large extent on the capacity of staff and volunteers to handle additional responsibility.

ACTION STEPS:

1. COLLECT THE DATA

Staff and officials, especially those who have been involved in securing sponsorship for past events, should develop a working list of all Borough events that could benefit from sponsorship, information about past event funding and a set of goals the Borough would like to achieve for sponsorship. Specifying goals will help clarify the scope and scale of the work to do, which may inform who is involved in carrying it out. For instance, goals might be a specific funding target, engaging new local businesses, rolling out new sponsorship strategies and/or attracting investment from outside the Borough.

This will also involve collecting data, such as past event attendance estimates and number of views for social media posts, email blasts, etc. Potential sponsors use this data to evaluate opportunities. If an attendance estimate is lacking for a certain event, approximations can be made through photograph analysis — for instance, counting the number of attendees within a certain known area or distance depicted in a photo, then multiplying that area or distance across the total area or distance. Attendance clickers can be useful at events with a controlled point of entry.



Residents and visitors line the route of the 2019 July 4 parade.

2. DETERMINE ADVANTAGEOUS SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

For each event that could benefit from additional sponsorship, devise a set of exposure options and/or other considerations that will make sponsorship appealing to the target vendors or organizations. Some may prioritize brand visibility and will be willing to pay for logo inclusion on banners, posters, event promotion materials, T-shirts or other merchandise. Others may be most interested in interfacing with attendees or speaking to the crowd.

Assign prices for graduating sponsorship levels according to the value of exposure or opportunity that comes with each. The Borough could also consider offering event naming rights at the highest sponsorship level or customize sponsorship opportunities according to specific event or vendor.

As a point of comparison, Cranberry Township (about three times Brentwood's population) offers Easter Egg Hunt event sponsorship at \$1,250, which includes an on-site booth; logo on all event correspondence; materials displayed at the event; social media recognition and tagging; and website logo with link and direct email blast recognition. A "supporting sponsor" level for its more visible Concerts in the Park event series costs \$2,000, whereas a booth-only sponsorship is \$500 and "presenting sponsor" is a presumably exclusive higher tier.

3. EXPAND OUTREACH TO POTENTIAL SPONSORS

Engage volunteers in brainstorming and building out a list of potentially interested sponsors for each event. Where a staff member, official or volunteer has a personal connection, employ this in sending out information about new sponsorship opportunities. When in doubt, send it out.

STRATEGY 06:

Methodically “sell” the community to likely audiences

Brentwood can raise its profile in the Pittsburgh region by taking these steps (and brainstorming others).

1. GET ON THE CALENDAR

Add prime Brentwood events to the *Visit Pittsburgh* events calendar and other selected calendars, such as those of young professional associations or university alumni groups

2. CREATE A PROMO VIDEO

Use drone footage and other video from special days in Brentwood to tell the community’s story. Make this video available on the Borough’s website and share the link with real estate agents, the school district and others.

3. CONTINUE SOCIAL MEDIA “EVENTS”

Continue consistently creating social media event pages that people can follow and use to signal interest or attendance plans. These are easily shared and will remind those who interact as the event approaches. They are also platforms to communicate developing event details or associated opportunities.

4. PITCH THE STORY

Develop and maintain a list of news reporters’ contact information for pitching unique stories or to contact in the event of an emergency (to provide official statements or information). Reach out to establish a Borough point of contact. The source-reporter relationship is mutually beneficial.

5. CONNECT WITH REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS

Host annual roundtables with local real estate brokerages or firms to communicate municipal initiatives and learn what they are hearing from customers.



STORYLINE TIE-IN: **Sponsorships and Local Government Excellence**

In collaboration with partner organizations and volunteers, the Borough already works hard to organize and stage a lively and popular series of community events throughout the year. While the sponsorship expansion action steps in this chapter do represent a significant amount of work, the results would help lift some of the cost burden off the Borough and could have exponentially beneficial impacts on raising the community's profile.

A key part of building up a successful sponsorship package will be collecting information about sponsor's return on investment. Keeping lines of communication open both before and after events take place will help the Borough evaluate the success of its sponsorship offerings and allow it to build relationships and collect testimonials for future marketing purposes.

OTHER ISSUES



Introduction

WHAT ABOUT _____?

Brentwood created this plan in the Implementable Comprehensive Plan model recognized by the state Department of Community and Economic Development as a best practice. Accordingly, this plan is built around a limited handful of Key Issues that public and stakeholder engagement determined would be the most important for Brentwood Borough to address during the next decade. Rather than issuing surface-level recommendations for every possible topic — an old-school planning approach that did not engender much action — the Implementable Comprehensive Plan focuses limited resources on deep-diving to build capacity and strategy for progress on a smaller set of focused Key Issues.

This chapter captures items that are important for the plan to memorialize, but:

- Are broad in nature, not really fitting into any of the Key Issue categories
- Did not rise to the level of a Key Issue, or
- Would be a Key Issue if the community had enough control to make an impact.

The issue of Route 51 falls into the latter category. This auto-centric corridor and its many problems surfaced many times throughout public and stakeholder engagement. However, PennDOT controls what happens within the right-of-way, and private property owners primarily control what happens along it. Because this wasn't an issue on which the Borough would be able to develop strategies to really move the needle, it falls into this chapter — important to address, though a bit beyond Borough reach. Borough officials and staff can use the Route 51 vision in this chapter to continue their advocacy work, demonstrating a broad base of support for transforming the road into a safer and more pleasant route.

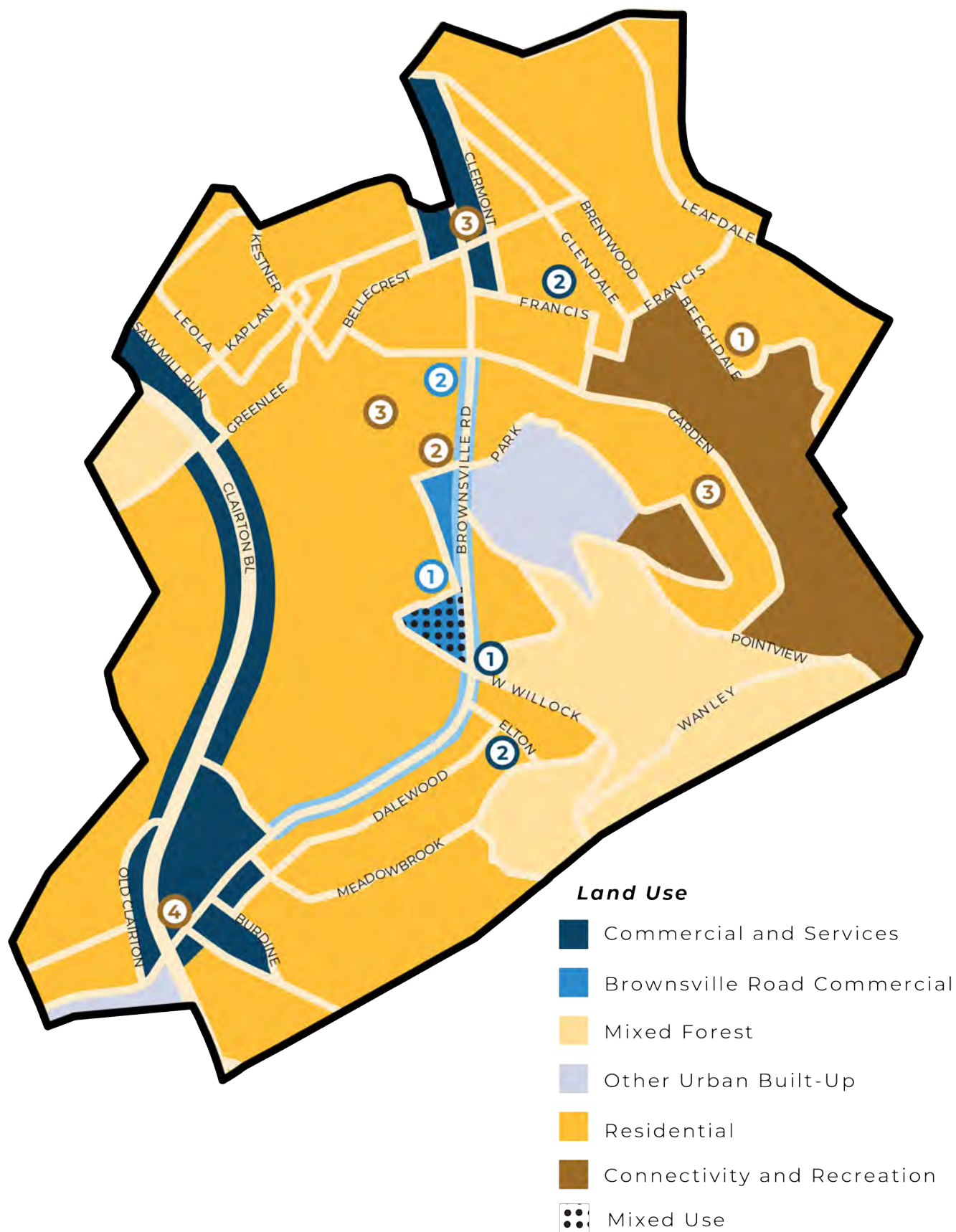
Route 51

This state route is arguably the worst driving experience in Allegheny County, with regular heavy traffic volume alternating between hard acceleration and short stops within narrow lanes, vehicles entering and exiting unexpectedly through curbless stretches, a loud proliferation of discordant signage, frequent storm flooding, a lack of continuous sidewalks or even road shoulder for pedestrians and cyclists who brave the route, and a mishmash of building styles and conditions with no cohesive orientation to the road or one another. For everyone except those in the market for a used vehicle from one of Route 51's many sales lots, this corridor is mostly just a frustration to endure on the way somewhere else.

This was not lost on the 600+ residents who completed the Community Questionnaire, many of whom shared a desire to see this important corridor within Brentwood become more safe, functional and attractive. The Borough does what it can, in that regard: It does not control road design or maintenance, access management or pedestrian facilities, but it enforces a well-crafted zoning overlay district and capitalizes on opportunities to advocate for better conditions. Along the roadside, the Borough has also explored its options for compelling the revitalization of particularly run-down commercial buildings, recognizing that beyond code enforcement, this will require cooperation.

What this plan can do to support better conditions along Route 51 is reaffirm the Borough's vision for its future. Brentwood's Route 51 should be a reliably safe thoroughfare that balances the needs of all road users, an attractive and functional public realm that incorporates green infrastructure to manage stormwater and extends the Borough's tree canopy. Property owners maintain and improve their buildings, lots and landscaping to achieve a high quality standard and reinforce Brentwood's storied sense of identity. Redevelopment should introduce order and beauty, inspiring drivers to slow down and experience community along the way.

Future Land Use Map



Future land use

As a substantially built out municipality, Brentwood Borough offers a variety of stable neighborhoods featuring a variety of housing types, high-quality recreation and civic amenities and several business districts. While this plan does not envision sweeping land use changes, future site-specific investments are very important to this plan and are illustrated in the map on the previous page. The Borough will hold future redevelopment accountable, to the extent possible, to reinforcing and enriching the built environment and public realm of each neighborhood, while providing equitable opportunities for people to live, invest, play and grow in this proud and vibrant Borough.

Color categories in the Future Land Use Map correspond to general types of land use or development, whereas numbered sites are explained in the legend below, which refers to strategies throughout this plan.

Site-Specific Recommendations

Physical Connectivity

- ① Brentwood Hollow Hiking Trail
- ② Pedestrian Improvements along Brownsville Road
- ③ Priority Stair Upgrades
- ④ Route 51 Pedestrian Improvements

Brownsville Road

- ① Site of Old Borough Building
- ② Brownsville Road Streetscaping

Development and Redevelopment

- ① Site of new Brentwood School Building
- ② Redevelopment of former Elementary School Sites

High-quality facilities

The Borough is known for exceptional public facilities, from its iconic swimming pool complex to beautiful parks and other gathering spaces. Public engagement during this planning process affirmed that the Borough should continue to invest in sustaining and improving these assets. Needed projects in coming years include increasing the accessibility of sports fields and making capital upgrades to the library. Other such future investments are consistent with the vision and engagement developed during this plan.

Community development objectives

The community development objectives that underpin Brentwood Borough's current Zoning Ordinance are as follows:

- Distribute land uses to meet the physical, social, cultural, economic, and energy needs of present and future populations;
- Ensure that new development and redevelopment of existing properties is compatible with surrounding development in use, character and size;
- Provide for land uses that serve important public needs including a variety of housing options and employment generators;
- Protect and enhance property values; and
- Protect natural, historic and environmental resources.

These objectives remain relevant, and many of this plan's strategies will work to address them. This plan adds:

- Maintain and expand safe, efficient and comfortable pedestrian routes;
- Enhance local entrepreneurial opportunity, particularly through strengthening fine-grained business districts characterized by a high-quality public realm; and
- Prioritize sustainable approaches, design and practices.

Consistency

This Comprehensive Plan is required to achieve consistency with Allegheny County's comprehensive plan, *Allegheny Places*, and it must meet the requirements of the state's Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) Article III, Section 301. The following is a summary of those MPC requirements and a reference for how this plan addresses them.

MPC requirement	Where it appears in the Comprehensive Plan
Statement of community development objectives	Page 104
Plan for land use	Page 102
Plan to meet housing needs	Statement in CDOs on page 104, recommendations in the Development and Redevelopment chapter
Plan for movement of people and goods	Related recommendations are focused in the Physical Connectivity and Brownsville Road chapters, as well as scattered strategies for Route 51.
Plan for community facilities	Interwoven throughout, with specific references in Brownsville Road, Development and Redevelopment and Marketing and Communications, as well as a statement in CDOs on page 104
Statement of interrelationship among various plan components	The nature of the Implementable Comprehensive Plan model is to focus on intersecting major issues in the community. Each issue tends to address multiple planning elements in an integrated manner. For example, Brownsville Road improvement strategies in the plan involve economic development, placemaking, infrastructure, environmental considerations, community facilities, branding and marketing.
Short- and long-term implementation strategies	Found in each chapter for the specific issue.
Statement that existing and proposed development is compatible with existing and proposed development in adjacent communities and consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan	The strategies in this document are consistent with "Allegheny Places," the county comprehensive plan. The county's plan identified the Route 51 corridor as a major thoroughfare, with some flood-prone nearby areas as Greenprint. Nearby is a corridor "Place" in neighboring Whitehall. The Borough's strategies, particularly for revitalizing its historic Brownsville Road business district as a walkable hub, incorporate strategies found in "Allegheny Places." The Borough routinely coordinates plans with neighboring communities and has identified no potential conflict with this plan.
Plan for protection of natural and historic resources	The protection of natural resources and green space is embedded throughout plan strategies, particularly as the Borough looks to protect and enhance its impressive tree canopy and continue to protect and preserve the historic assets that make it a special place.
Plan for reliable supply of water	Pennsylvania American Water (PAWC) Pittsburgh provides water to Brentwood Borough's homes and businesses. No change in capacity is anticipated. In 2020, Brentwood became the first smaller community in Allegheny County to sell its sanitary sewer system per Act 12 of 2016.

