



## **FLOURTOWN-ERDENHEIM VISION PLAN**

Prepared for the Flourtown-Erdenheim Enhancement Association  
Flourtown, Pennsylvania

Carter van Dyke Associates  
Urban Partners  
Carroll Engineering Corporation  
Runyan & Associates Architects

Winter 2003

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## INTRODUCTION

Bethlehem Pike between Flourtown and Erdenheim represents one of the oldest commercial corridors in the Delaware Valley. What makes the area unique is that many of the inns and mill buildings that tell the history of the early development of the corridor still remain, providing a unique identity to the corridor. A rich resource of available historic properties within the corridor provides an exciting foundation for rehabilitation of the corridor. However, despite these resources, what remains is fragmented with large separations between historic properties and commercial enterprises. Consequently, as trends change, the economic vitality of the corridor has suffered as newer markets in the region have begun to attract business from the corridor.

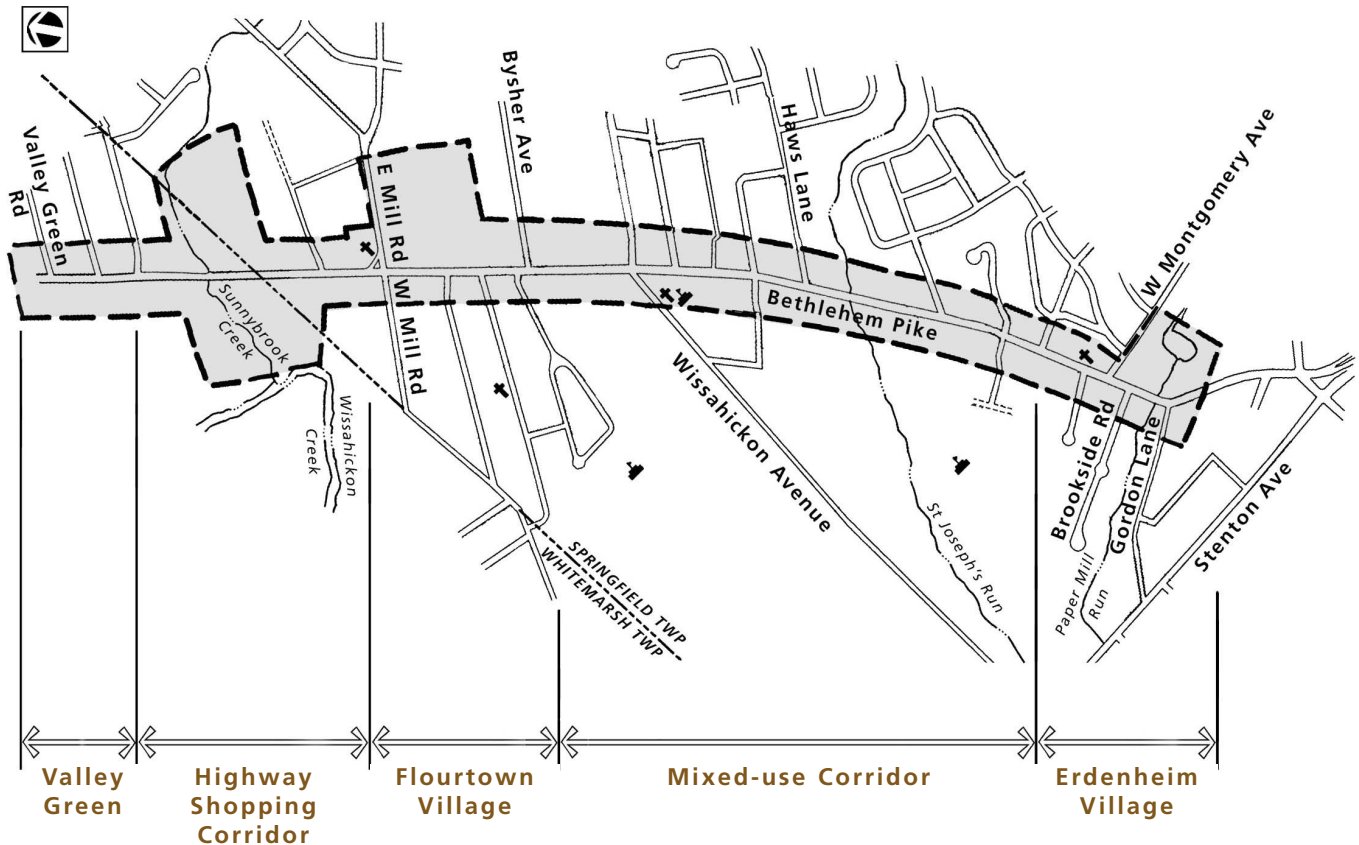
Recognizing that the Flourtown and Erdenheim corridor was not operating at its full potential, a group of business people and neighbors banded together to form the Flourtown-Erdenheim Enhancement Association (FEEA). After extensive research, they coordinated with the governing bodies of Springfield and Whitmarsh Townships to raise both private and public funds to hire a team of consultants to develop a new vision for the corridor. The team chosen was composed of economic planners, transportation engineers, architects, planners and landscape architects. Together they provided the necessary direction to develop the vision for the revitalization of the corridor. After extensive public participation to review the issues and alternatives, this vision plan evolved.



Built in 1811, the Springfield House in Flourtown has been serving travelers along the pike for almost two centuries.



Located at 529 Bethlehem Pike, the Wheel Pump was built c. 1735 and was continuously operated as an inn until the present day. William Harmer purchased the land in 1715 from William Penn. In Colonial times, the village that surrounded the inn was called Wheel Pump, later Heydrick's Hollow, Heydrick's Dale, and finally Erdenheim.



## THE STUDY AREA

The Flourtown-Erdenheim Vision Plan includes the Bethlehem Pike Corridor within Springfield and Whitemarsh Townships. The study area is bounded on the north by Valley Green Road, where Bethlehem Pike continues toward Fort Washington, and to the south by Bell Mills Road where the study area abuts the border of Chestnut Hill in the City of Philadelphia. The study area is limited to properties fronting on the east and west sides of Bethlehem Pike. The area is dominated by adjacent pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhoods. A number of residences still remain within the study area. However, the focus of this study is the revitalization of the commercial pockets along the corridor.

For the purposes of this study, five distinct and separate commercial districts were defined. The areas themselves fall into three “theme” categories, based on the type of buildings, businesses, traffic concerns, etc.: gateways, highway corridors, and villages. Both the districts and themes will be explained more completely in the report that follows because there are different approaches to planning and redevelopment for the different areas.

### Valley Green

Located in Whitemarsh Township, the Valley Green Gateway runs between Valley Green Road and Sunnybrook Avenue. Valley Green is characterized primarily by commercial uses with a few offices and residences. Bethlehem Pike in this district has many curb cuts for access into businesses. The road consists of one travel lane in each direction with a center two-way turn lane and no on-street parking.

**Highway Shopping Corridor**

Located in Springfield Township south of Valley Green, the Highway Shopping Corridor runs along Bethlehem Pike from Valley Green Road to Mill Road. The Pike has two travel lanes in each direction and on-street parking allowed in sections at designated times, yet it is uncomfortable for both drivers and pedestrians. This district consists of a mix of office, commercial, and civic uses. Commercial uses are spread apart and require driving for multiple shopping stops.

**Flourtown Village**

The Flourtown Village area is identified by mixed uses combined with an historic village character. This district, located along Bethlehem Pike from Mill Road to Bysher Avenue includes a concentration of present retail land uses. The district’s physical center is defined by the cluster of buildings facing Bethlehem Pike and it features sidewalks connecting the retail businesses. There are areas of Bethlehem Pike where no on-street parking is present as well as areas where on-street parking is allowed during certain times of the day.

**Mixed-use Corridor**

The Mixed-use Corridor begins at Bysher Avenue in Flourtown and continues south to Windsor Road in Erdenheim. The district is distinguished by residential and office uses with few retail commercial businesses. The majority of the office uses are located within former residences. Many of the buildings in this district are mixed-use, with commercial or retail on the ground floor and residences on the upper floors. Bethlehem Pike in this area has two travel lanes with zones of parking allowed during certain times of the day and no parking zones as well.

**Erdenheim Village**

The center of commerce and retail closest to Philadelphia is located within Erdenheim between Gordon Lane and W. Montgomery Avenue. Erdenheim Village is directly adjacent to Cisco Park with its picturesque pond and creek. The area’s natural topographic change acts as a gateway to the district.



## DEFINING ISSUES AND GOALS FOR FLOURTOWN-ERDENHEIM

Based upon input from public meetings and observations from the consultant team, the primary challenges for the revitalization of the Flourtown-Erdenheim corridor are outlined within the following goals and objectives:

- Develop economic strategies to support the commercial districts of Flourtown and Erdenheim
- Protect residential quality of life
- Strengthen the identity and sense of place for Flourtown and Erdenheim
- Analyze economic strengths and weaknesses of the business district to guide individual business plans and strategic planning throughout the area
- Assess commercial vacancies to guide and recruit new businesses that complement the commercial district strategies
- Enlist the participation and support of both Springfield and Whitemarsh Township leaders
- Expand the entertainment, restaurant and recreation opportunities available to families, especially during evening hours.
- Identify opportunities to create and enhance public plazas and open space along the corridor to enhance the economy and livability of the area
- Create a quality public environment where attractive streets, buildings, signs and landscapes enhance the caliber of individual businesses and the district
- Preserve historic buildings and properties along the corridor where economically feasible, while recommending appropriate adaptive reuse strategies
- Capitalize on the increased traffic projected on Bethlehem Pike during the Route 309 construction process.

- Enhance the viability of the road network and parking resources
- Enhance SEPTA bus service as an amenity for employment and shopping
- Enhance the commercial tax base for the area
- FEEA should establish continuity and sustain the commercial revitalization process

## THE VISION

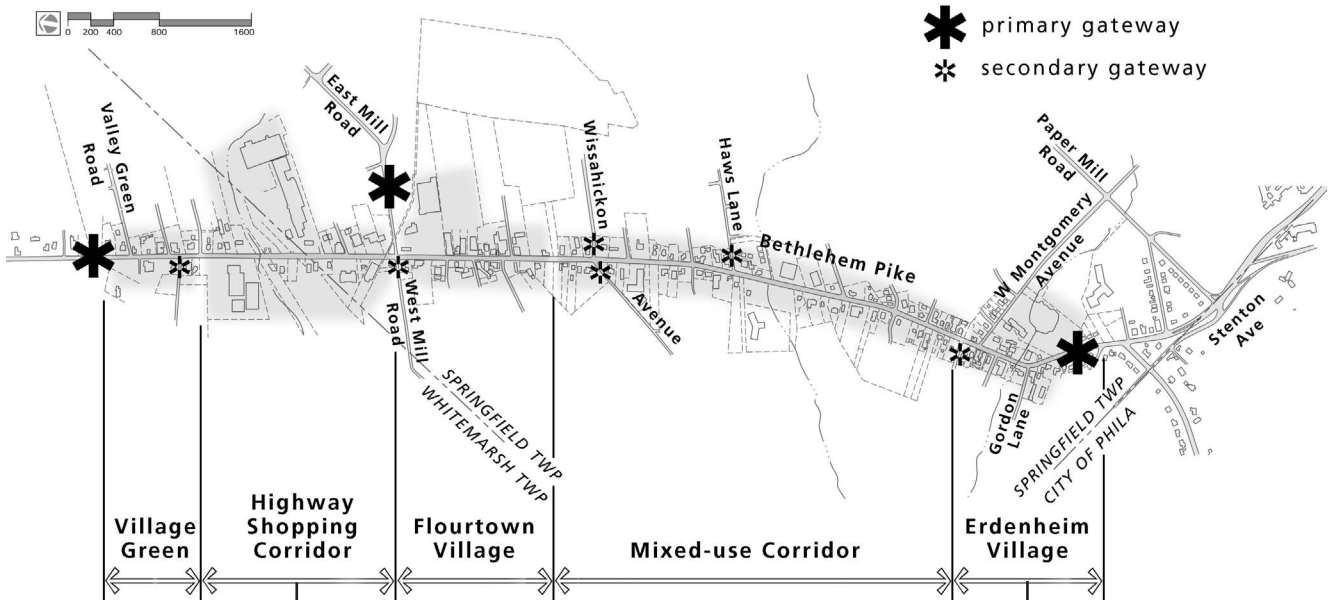
The Flourtown-Erdenheim Vision Plan builds upon the area's existing strengths as an historic corridor with the existing mixture of commercial nodes. The plan promotes a vision that improves the commercial districts by developing the following interrelated initiatives:

- economic development strategies
- transportation improvements to improve parking, provide traffic calming, and increase pedestrian safety
- streetscape enhancements which help to define gateways and a sense of place
- recommendations and examples for architectural enhancements that will improve the value of commercial properties and develop a unifying theme to the character of the area

Each of these initiatives needs to be implemented for this plan to succeed. The interrelationship of the separate strategies is critical. Implementation of the initiatives involves both public and private participation to provide the necessary policy and zoning changes, incentives for new development and redevelopment, and funding for the work. This plan is the starting point of an ongoing process to make Flourtown and Erdenheim unique destinations and remarkable places to live.



# Vision Plan Summary



## Valley Green

- Create clear and attractive gateway
- Rehabilitate existing residences and commercial properties
- Use streetscape enhancement for traffic calming and pedestrian safety
- Connect to regional trail system

## Flourtown Village

- Create Town Green
- Add new infill retail
- Make area pedestrian-oriented
- Centralized parking encourages pedestrian-activity
- Add civic, cultural, and recreational uses

## Mixed-use Corridor

- Encourage office, commercial, and residential revitalization
- Establish design standards
- Encourage shared parking
- Maintain and restore historic facades
- Add on-street parking
- Incorporate traffic calming and safe pedestrian walks

## Highway Shopping Corridor

- Addition of new anchor store
- Encourage commercial revitalization
- Establish new design standards
- Use continuous streetscape theme
- Buffer existing front yard parking

## Erdenheim Village

- Create gateway
- Create new pedestrian street
- Redevelop former bus depot
- Encourage safe pedestrian connections
- Screen front yard parking and auto repairs
- Enhance the existing creek

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

### BACKGROUND

The Bethlehem Pike Commercial Corridor encompasses retail, service, and office activity from Gordon Lane to Valley Green Road. Included along the Corridor are two older retail nodes, in Erdenheim between Gordon Lane and Montgomery Avenue and in Flourtown between Bysher Avenue and Mill Road, each with a cluster of small retail stores fronting directly on the Pike. The Flourtown node also includes the newer Flourtown Plaza development anchored by Acme and the larger Flourtown Shopping Center (Genuardi's and the recently closed K-Mart), located independently farther north. Additional scattered retail activity occurs elsewhere along the Pike, interspersed with office commercial development.

The southern gateway to the Corridor enters at the Erdenheim node, while the northern gateway is north of the Flourtown Shopping Center in the Valley Green area.



The Flourtown Shopping Center is in need of a new anchor store and new signage

The historic character of the Pike is present in the four historic inns that recall the area's significance as a nineteenth century stopping place for travel coaches leaving Philadelphia. Two of these inns are used as restaurants today, while a third operates as a lamp and furniture store.

Bethlehem Pike currently hosts 74 retailers, mostly auto-oriented businesses with very little opportunity or appeal for shoppers to linger or walk from store to store. 64% of all retail space is occupied by the 25 businesses located in Flourtown Plaza and Flourtown Shopping Center. The 74 retailers provide products and services in 37 different retail categories, chiefly serving Flourtown, Erdenheim, Oreland, Wyndmoor and Chestnut Hill in addition to drawing some customers from Glenside, Fort Washington, Ambler, Lafayette Hill, Blue Bell, and Plymouth Meeting. This total retail trading area had a year 2000 population of 93,691 spending \$1.4 billion on retail goods annually. However, Bethlehem Pike stores are capturing only 8% of this market (\$115.8 million in sales). On the positive side, retailers report that sales volume has grown over the past five years, supported by the high volume of traffic bringing customers through the area, store visibility from the Pike, public transit access, the large retail anchors which draw customers, the diversity of businesses and architecture, and the Corridor's ability to draw lunchtime sales from the large medical office and Fort Washington Industrial Park employee market.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Commercial district enhancement in Flourtown-Erdenheim is based on an approach that recognizes the significant market opportunities available while respecting the physical constraints of retail development on Bethlehem Pike. The economic basis for revitalization of the Pike draws on four enhancement strategies:

**Diversify the range of shopping goods and freestanding retailing within the context of the existing small village store space.**

New small-scale retail development can occur despite physical space constraints with proper consideration for customer parking needs. The Pike includes a reasonably diverse array of shopping goods stores, but notable gaps exist in the mix. Bethlehem Pike as a whole is only capturing 5% of shopping goods purchases, but certain categories such as cameras, videos, miscellaneous home furnishings, paint and wallpaper stores, antique shops, and art dealers are performing at much higher levels. All these store categories tend to attract single-destination customers, suggesting that strong individual stores can be effective in attracting large numbers of customers to themselves and to the Pike.

Under this enhancement strategy, perhaps a dozen smaller shops totaling up to 35,000 SF of space would be added, providing a more complete array of apparel, home furnishings, and other shopping goods. These smaller shops would include retail types not currently found on the Pike, as well as other categories present on the Pike but capturing a very small percentage (less than 5%) of the overall trade area demand. Store recruitment candidates under this strategy include clothing boutiques (men's, women's, children's, uniforms, work gear, shoes, jewelry); another optical store; a sewing and fabric shop; a musical instrument store; a CD/tape store; and one or two gift shops. These smaller shopping goods stores, as well as additional smaller freestanding retailers (garden center, florist, pet supply, etc.) could reinforce a village atmosphere. This strategy will be most effectively implemented in the current Flourtown and Erdenheim retail nodes.

**Enhance the Flourtown-Erdenheim Commercial Corridor as an evening and weekend restaurant and café destination.**

Good quality restaurant operations can be added in multiple locations; in recent years, Starbucks, Halligan's, and Fairlane Grill have been successful in



Starbucks is an example of new infill development

developing niches that draw customers from a wide geographic range. Significantly increasing the number of full-service restaurants and cafés and encouraging nearby businesses to extend evening hours-of-operation will create an after-work and evening destination for trade-area residents. Full-service restaurants currently capture only 9% of trade area purchases, while limited-service restaurants capture a mere 5%. The district could certainly increase its capture of these restaurant sales to 15% given the Pike's current success in attracting the same nearby trade area customers to supermarkets (25%+ sales capture), specialty food vendors, beverage distributors, hair salons, and dry cleaners. At a modest target capture rate of 15%, 19,000 SF of additional full-service and 18,000 SF of limited-service restaurants could be added. These restaurants would help intensify retail activity in the Flourtown and Erdenheim retail nodes and would also be appropriate as freestanding enterprises in the Valley Green area.

**Upgrade the overall draw of the district through the addition of anchor stores and larger freestanding stores.**

A third enhancement strategy would broaden the overall customer draw to Flourtown-Erdenheim by recruiting additional regionally-drawing shopping goods anchors to the district. Prime candidates for which there is sufficient market demand and limited specific competition within the trade area include up to two 30,000 SF family clothing stores (Marshall's; T.J. Maxx), a 30,000 SF furniture store, or a 10,000 SF high-end electronics store such as

Tweeter. These viable anchors could ultimately add up to 100,000 SF of store space in the district. The most likely locations for these anchors are as replacement users for the closed K-Mart at the Flourtown Shopping Center or as new anchors for expansion of the Flourtown Plaza within the Flourtown retail node.

In addition, there is market potential to add up to 61,000 SF of larger anchor-like freestanding stores including up to two 15,000 SF pharmacies, a larger hardware store, and another auto parts store. Only a 25% capture of trade area purchases would be necessary for these stores to be successful. The greater challenge will be finding appropriate sites for such facilities.

**Expand office and other commercial activity along the Pike, especially in locations less conducive to concentrated retail activity.**

Bethlehem Pike has proven attractive for several forms of commercial activity apart from concentrated retailing. Office users, banks and other financial services institutions, new car dealerships, auto service facilities, and other commercial users have also been successful here. Further expansion of these activities, especially commercial businesses requiring office space, will be an effective strategy to utilize and enhance properties outside the Pike's concentrated retail nodes and single-owner shopping centers.

In some cases, second floor office use may also be an attractive development component in the planned retail nodes. However, the parking needs of these uses must be balanced with the needs of retailers and shoppers there. This can be effective where there are concentrations of full-service restaurants that have peak parking requirements in the evening. In these cases shared parking arrangements with office users can be developed.

## TARGETED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Applying these enhancement themes to the various locations along Bethlehem Pike suggests specific development strategies for the five individual areas.

**Encourage appropriate redevelopment of the Valley Green Gateway area.**

This strategy involves gateway enhancement and private development to create a clearer and more attractive gateway to the Corridor at Valley Green.

Key activities within this strategy would include:

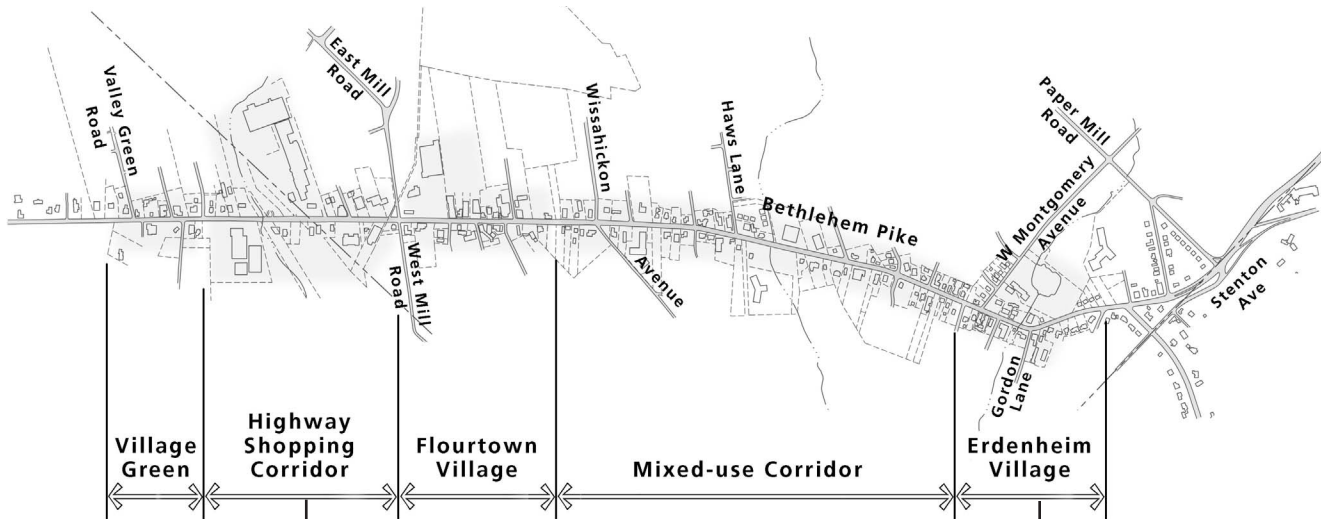
- Creating a clear perception of this location as the Valley Green Gateway. Developing and installing landscaping and signage marking this gateway to the Bethlehem Pike Corridor.
- Encouraging pedestrian-friendly new infill retail store development and/or redevelopment of parcels along the west side of the Pike. Appropriate uses might include such freestanding retailers as a full-service restaurant, garden shop, or pet supply store.

**Upgrade the Highway Shopping Corridor with the addition of anchor and larger freestanding stores.**

The third enhancement strategy of recruiting new anchor and large freestanding stores is especially appropriate to the Highway Shopping Corridor, where the Flourtown Shopping Center is located. The Center offers both sufficient space and need for a replacement for the closed K-Mart. Specific strategies for the Corridor districts are covered in more detail in the Mixed-Use Corridor recommendations that follow.



# Economic Development Strategies Summary



## Valley Green

- Create a clear perception of Valley Green as a gateway entrance to the Corridor with new landscaping and signage
- Encourage development/redevelopment of pedestrian-friendly/accessible retail along west side of site

## Flourtown Village

- Create the sense of a village center
- Create a centralized parking facility
- Encourage and recruit new infill retail
- Make area pedestrian-oriented
- Support mixed-use development
- Add civic, cultural, and recreational uses

## Mixed-use Corridor

- Encourage office, commercial, and residential revitalization
- Establish design standards
- Encourage shared parking; add on-street parking
- Maintain and restore historic facades
- Recruit appropriate office and commercial uses
- Incorporate traffic calming and safe pedestrian walks

## Highway Shopping Corridor

- Addition of new stores and replacement of closed anchor store
- Encourage commercial revitalization
- Establish new design standards
- Encourage shared parking

## Erdenheim Village

- Create the sense of a gateway and destination by new landscaping and signage
- Create a new retail complex
- Upgrade pedestrian connections
- Recruit appropriate new businesses
- Screen auto repair shops
- Make the creek an asset

### **Evolve the blocks north of the Black Horse Tavern site to Mill Road into the Flourtown Village Center.**

This strategy would involve several private development, civic investment, business recruitment, and public infrastructure elements intended to create a pedestrian-oriented retail district combining an expanded array of full-service restaurants with smaller shopping goods boutiques and freestanding shops. This collection of stores might be further enhanced through expanding development of the Flourtown Plaza property to provide space for larger stores such as a family clothing anchor, an electronics store, or a hardware store.

Key activities within this strategy include:

- Creating a clear perception of this node as Flourtown Village Center. Developing and installing imagery and signage (such as a Township sign) emphasizing the Village Center character of the location. Adjusting on-street parking, pedestrian crossings, and traffic flow to encourage store-to-store pedestrian activity.
- Negotiating a central parking facility to support village businesses. To help facilitate the new parking development, the landowners of the parking facility could lease parking spaces on an annual basis to new businesses or a parking corporation.
- Redeveloping the Bethlehem Pike frontage of the Flourtown Plaza property to create a collection of smaller Pike-oriented shops and restaurants that will still maintain clear visibility for the Acme Supermarket. This development could include expanding the Flourtown Plaza center to provide space for larger stores such as a family clothing anchor, an electronics store, and/or a hardware store or considering the relocation of the Wawa to the Flourtown Plaza side of the Pike to become a center of village activity.
- Encouraging new infill retail store frontage along the west side of the Pike between Mill and Grove.
- Recruiting additional full-service restaurants, smaller shopping goods boutiques, and freestanding shops to Flourtown Village Center

- Supporting two-story mixed use development where possible. Encourage second floor office or apartment uses.
- Adding more civic, cultural, and recreational uses within the Flourtown Village area. This might involve developing a range of family-oriented recreation uses at the north end of the Fire company property and Township Country Club to enhance Flourtown's role as a civic center. Potential uses could include an arts center/playhouse or a year-round recreation uses—possibly including a community recreation center or YMCA facility. This would also involve evaluating civic/retail uses at the Carson Valley School site on Bethlehem Pike and potentially adding a public band shell at Bysheer Park (possibly to be named McCloskey Park at Bysheer Avenue).
- Negotiating with the vehicle service operators of the gas stations in this area so that auto repair activities and car storage parking can occur off the Pike and the portions of Pike frontage that are devoted to driveways can be reduced.
- Creating a Town Green along Bethlehem Pike in front of the Acme between new infill buildings to establish a town center image and a public space for special events.

### **Encourage office, commercial, and residential revitalization in the Mixed-use Corridor between the Erdenheim and Flourtown Village Center.**

This strategy would involve design standards, zoning, and private revitalization efforts to preserve and enhance the architectural and landscape features of this area.

Key activities within this strategy include:

- Establishing design standards for residential, office/commercial, and institutional properties. Encouraging property owners to maintain and upgrade their properties in accord with these standards.
- Encouraging shared parking arrangements wherever possible.

- Encourage restoration of historic facades and enhancement of other facades in sympathy with nearby older properties.
- Recruit office and other commercial users that can effectively utilize and enhance the existing building stock.
- Expand the commercial center at the Flourtown Farmers Market and connect it to nearby business activity.

**Redevelop and revitalize properties in the Rittenhouse Lumber vicinity into the *Erdenheim Village Center*.**

This strategy would involve private redevelopment, civic investment, business recruitment, and public infrastructure elements intended to create a compact pedestrian-oriented retail district emphasizing apparel and gift boutiques and small specialty-interest shops (sewing, musical instruments, CDs, collectors items). One or two additional full- or limited-service (ice cream, coffee) restaurants could also complete this mix (see attached Table for recommended store types).

Key activities within this strategy include:

- Creating a clear perception of this node as Erdenheim Village Center. Developing and installing imagery and signage emphasizing the Village Center character of the location, as well as marking the gateway to the Bethlehem Pike Corridor.
- Jointly redeveloping the Rittenhouse Lumber property and the School District bus operations property to create a complex of retail shops benefiting from their adjacency to Hillcrest Park. This effort would include adapting existing Rittenhouse Lumber buildings to specific retail uses and constructing new buildings to create a

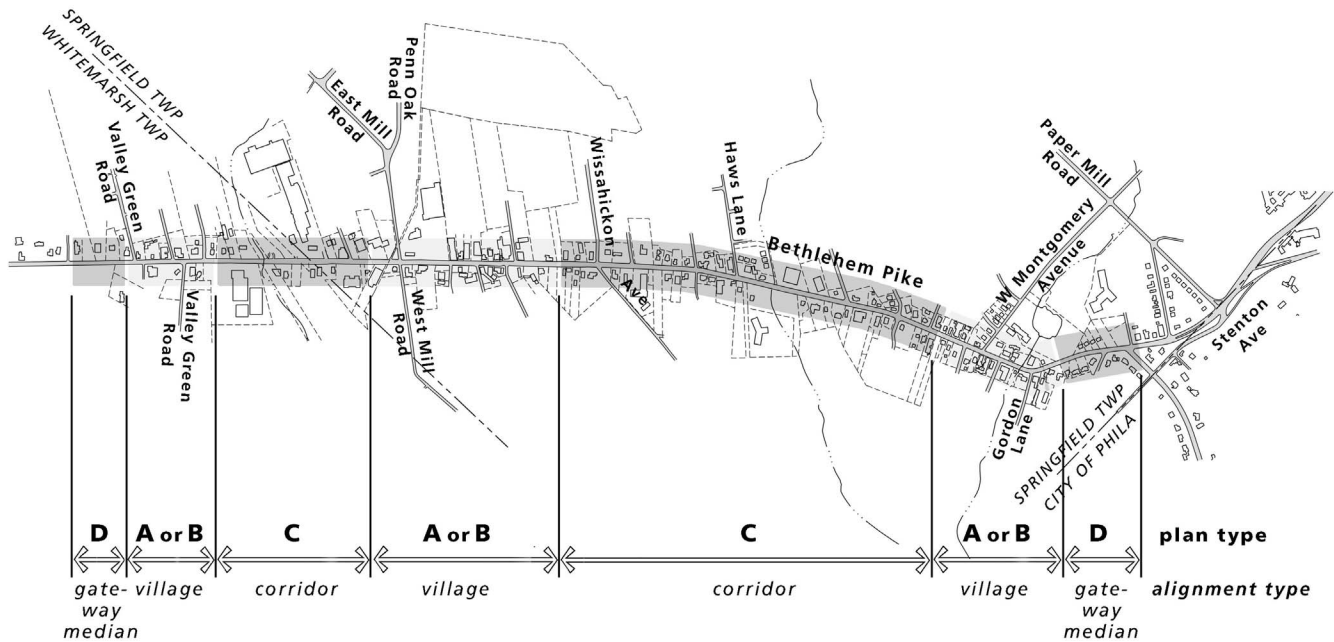
village-like orientation within the property (visible from, but off the Pike). To accomplish this, School District bus operations would need to be relocated elsewhere. One or two smaller adjacent commercial properties should also be revitalized and reoriented to coordinate with this redevelopment focus.

- Upgrading pedestrian connections from this property to businesses on the west side of the Pike (crossing at Montgomery).
- Recruiting apparel and other shopping goods boutiques, as well as targeted restaurants to meet the desired programming of Erdenheim Village Center.
- Effectively screening auto repair activities within the village area.
- Upgrading the appearance of the creek in this area to turn it into an asset for the shops.
- Adapting the 600 Bethlehem Pike property so that it is incorporated into this new village approach.



Typical existing streetcape

# TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING STRATEGIES



**Proposed Bethlehem Pike road configuration plan**

## NEW TRAFFIC STRATEGIES

Currently Bethlehem Pike is a forty-four foot wide four lane regional highway with very little on-street parking. Because of multiple turning movements along the road to access adjacent properties or side streets, the road network functions like a two lane road. The motorist is constantly weaving between these two travel lanes to negotiate between cars making a right or left turn. The following recommendations are designed make the Bethlehem Pike transportation corridor more efficient, provide for on-street parking, and allow for traffic calming that will make it safer for pedestrians, all advancing the goals of the Vision Plan.

## Proposed Road Reconfigurations

The “alignment types” in the proposed road configuration graphic above correspond to the basic study areas that were defined for this report: gateway, village, and corridor. Four road plans (A, B, C, and D) are recommended for the reconfiguration of Bethlehem Pike traffic. These road patterns address the various issues of each of the study areas (commercial and residential density, pedestrian traffic, parking needs, etc.) and will further help to differentiate the physical locations of the five specific areas.



**Village Areas**

**Road Plan A**

Within the village areas of the corridor, Bethlehem Pike should be reconfigured from a forty-four foot wide four-lane roadway to three-lane roadway with on-street parking on each side (See Plan "A"). The village area cross section of the Bethlehem Pike includes a center lane for left turns or for passing cars that are parking. The cartway (the entire road width) would remain at forty-four feet and would include two 7' parking lanes, two 10' travel lanes and a 10' center left lane.

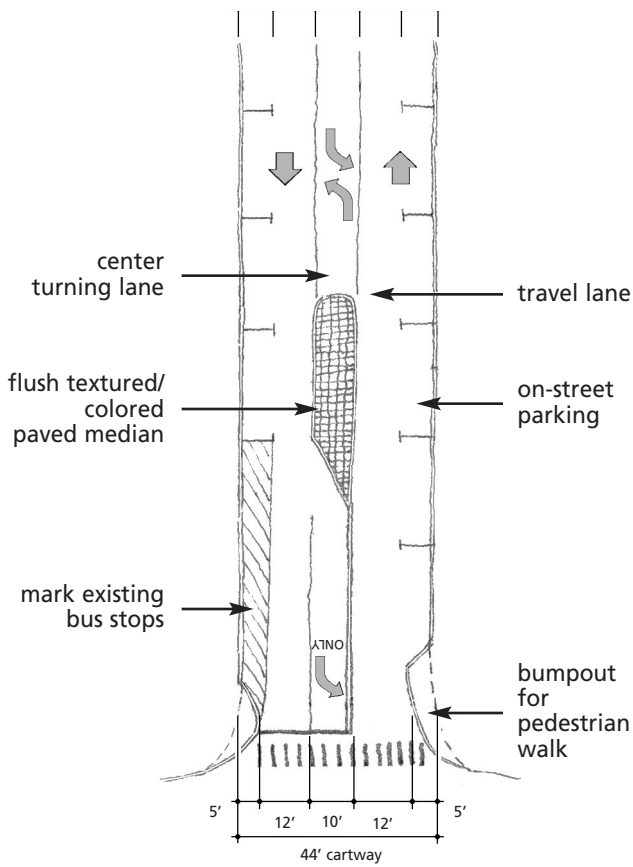
This cross-section is proposed for the Flourtown Village area and the Erdenheim Village area from

Gordon Lane north, matching the existing three-lane configuration at Valley Green Road in the Valley Green area. This traffic pattern is similar to the new road configuration in Hatboro Borough, which has been well received by the public and emergency services within that community.

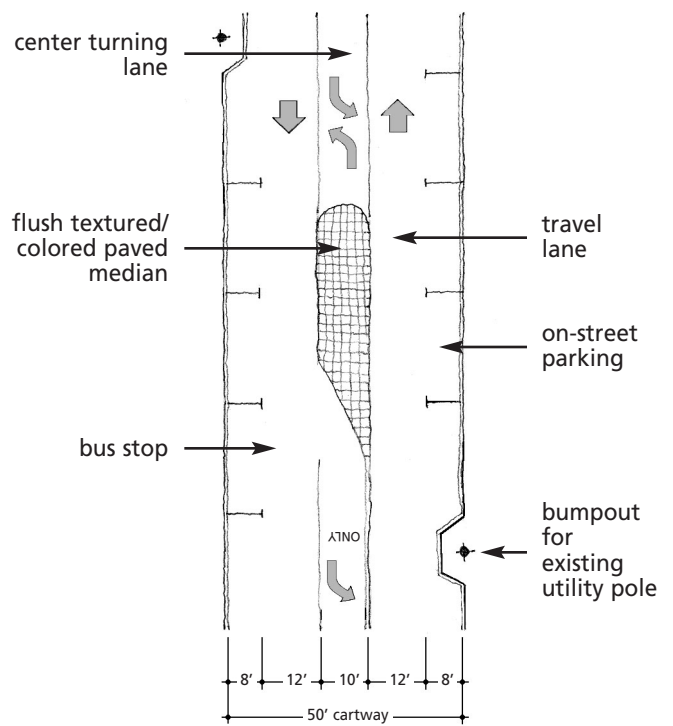
**Road Plan B**

An alternative within the village areas could include a wider fifty-foot wide, five-lane section. This would include two 8' parking lanes, two 12' travel lanes and one 10' center turn lane. However, this would require additional expense due to widening of the curb and would have to be carefully worked in around existing utility poles and fire hydrants.

**Plan A:  
Typical Road and Parking with  
Center Turning Lane**



**Plan B:  
Typical Road and Parking with  
Expansion and Center Turning Lane**



## Highway Corridors

### Road Plan C

A third road configuration is recommended for the Highway Shopping Corridor and the Mixed-use Corridor areas located between the village areas. As an alternative to the aforementioned three-lane plus two parking lane section (Road Plan A), a four-lane forty-four foot wide section incorporating parking on only one side could be installed. It is possible for the parking to switch from one side of the road to the other, thereby creating a traffic calming opportunity. *Note:* We recommend this as a cost-effective first phase to the Bethlehem Pike improvements since it involves only restriping and new signalization and signage.

In addition to the above reconfiguration of the cross section of the Bethlehem Pike roadway, there are a number of detailed design recommendations that are necessary to insure that the road network and design can contribute to the successful rehabilitation of the study area. The following design elements are important to establishing the

sense of place and pedestrian safety without sacrificing road capacity or emergency accessibility:

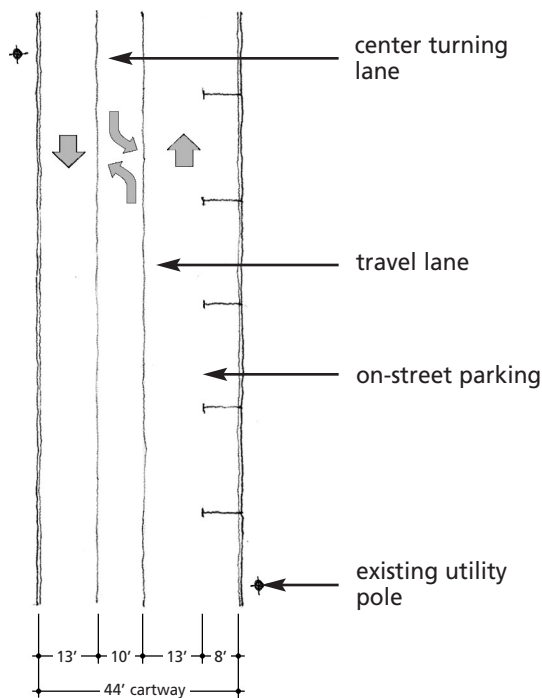
### Gateways

In order to best define the study area and to begin the traffic calming necessary for the success of the corridor, two primary gateways have been proposed with “boulevard” style landscaped center medians: north of Valley Green Road and south of Gordon Lane to the Springfield Township/Philadelphia Line. These are the north and south entrances of the Flourtown-Erdenheim corridor.

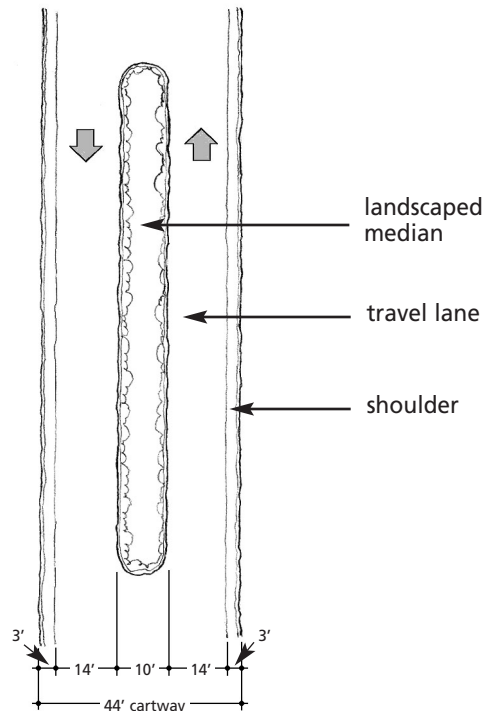
### Road Plan D

The typical cross-section for this scenario has two 3' shoulders, two 14' travel lanes, and a 10' wide landscaped traffic median down the center of the Pike. These areas with the landscaped center island medians will define the corridor and help reduce traffic speed. One additional primary gateway median is proposed at the intersection of E. Mill Road and Penn Oak Road. Here a triangular shaped landscaped median to create a gateway and promote traffic calming is recommended.

**Road Plan C:  
Typical Road and Parking on  
One Side of Street**



**Road Plan D:  
Typical Road and Gateway Median**



## Traffic Calming

A reduction in vehicle speed along Bethlehem Pike can have the following effects: less noise and air pollution, fewer accidents, less severe accidents, improved pedestrian circulation, and improved visibility of the adjacent stores for improved sales. Traffic calming is brought about by a coordinated effort that includes streetscape and architectural improvements (addressed in a later section), as well as the physical changes to the roadways described below.

One technique of traffic calming is to reduce the speed at which automobiles travel by altering the roadway design. There are several methods available for reducing vehicle speed, the key ones being on-street parking and narrowing lane widths. These methods would be used in conjunction with the recommended redesign of Bethlehem Pike into the proposed “boulevard” style medians at the gateways to the area.

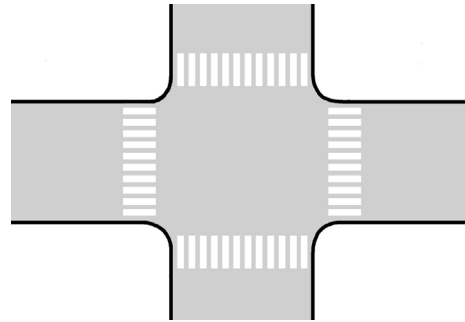
A second technique is to alter the alignment of the road. In sections of the corridor where it is appropriate to have only one parking aisle, it is possible to alter the parking aisle from one side of the street to the other, weaving the travel lane through the corridor instead of remaining straight and forcing motorists to slow down.

A third technique of traffic calming is to change the psychological feel of the street through design of streetscape elements. Specifically, design elements such as street lights, street trees, interesting pavement, and street furniture all contribute to creating visual friction along the side of the street which serves to slow the traffic. This technique creates a sense of place along the road, rather than just a channel for traffic to pass through.

## Gordon Lane Realignment

Bethlehem Pike makes an uncharacteristically sharp turn at Gordon Lane. It is recommended that Bethlehem Pike be realigned at this location with a landscaped center aisle median in order to improve the safety of both vehicles and pedestrians. The pedestrian crossing in this area should be enhanced by adding a continental style crosswalk from Gordon Lane to the proposed redevelopment and

improvements at Erdenheim Village adjacent to Hillcrest Pond.



A continental style crosswalk can help slow vehicle speeds by alerting drivers to the pedestrian crossing

## Coordination with PennDOT

Bethlehem Pike is currently owned and maintained by PennDOT; we recommend that it remain so. However, because of the reconstruction of Route 309, these proposed lane configurations for Bethlehem Pike may need to wait until the completion of that project for PennDOT approval. Further traffic analysis should show that these improvements will maintain the same roadway capacity and greatly increase safety throughout the corridor. Upon receipt of these further studies, we believe that PennDOT will be receptive to the proposed configurations.

## NEW PARKING STRATEGIES

### Expansion of protected parallel parking

Creating available parking within the corridor is a key element to the successful revitalization of the corridor. The first component of the parking revitalization plan is the expansion of protected parallel parking along Bethlehem Pike. Currently there are very few on-street parking spaces, which has a negative impact upon businesses. The new parallel parking spaces would be set within the landscaped bump outs, which would protect the parking spaces from oncoming vehicles. Providing safe new on-street parking is an integral part of the Flourtown-Erdenheim Vision Plan for many reasons. On-street parking will create an overall traffic calming effect by reducing speeds along the road, it will act as a buffer between pedestrians and

the ongoing traffic, and it will provide additional parking to help revitalize the small businesses in the community. But most importantly, it will provide the perception that shoppers will always be able to park in front of their chosen destination.

The short-term solution to providing additional parking includes making parking available all day in areas where parking is currently allowed on a limited basis only. This should be done in conjunction with the redesign of Bethlehem Pike with the new protected parallel parking. This would open up many areas of additional parking to customers at all times of the day and promote pedestrian access to many of the smaller businesses along Bethlehem Pike. For example, the vehicles parked along Weiss Avenue for the Sunoco property could be relocated to the rear of the Sunoco building or to other locations on the existing Sunoco property, making more parking spaces available for the general public. This applies to other businesses as well.

**Shared parking**

A second component to the parking revitalization plan is shared parking. Several locations where shared parking may be viable have been identified by FEEA. This option would benefit the several small businesses along East Mill Road, which backs up to the Acme parking lot. Consolidated parking on the Acme property may be a viable option for the commercial properties along Mill Road. One large entrance at the front of these small businesses would make sense if joint parking were provided behind the buildings, either in a consolidated lot on

existing property, or by connecting to the Acme parking lot. Other areas where shared parking may be possible includes adjacent to the Swim Club, south of College Avenue on the west side of Bethlehem Pike, between Brookside Road and Gordon Lane and adjacent to Cisco Park.

**Linking existing parking**

A third component is linking existing parking facilities, which makes them more efficient. Other parking locations that can be linked to area streets have been identified by FEEA. The most notable area is connecting East Mill Road with the ACME shopping center to create more of a town center shopping area. It is also possible to link Bysher Park with the proposed recreational center near the swim club with pedestrian access ways, and therefore sharing parking between the two community centers, creating a larger shared community space.

**Driveway Consolidation**

In order to create additional areas where parallel parking would be allowed along the Bethlehem Pike corridor it will be necessary to consolidate driveway access curb cuts servicing the fronting properties. By merging the curb cuts, and creating one entrance to the Wawa and Halligan’s Pub, additional on-street parking can be accommodated on Bethlehem Pike in front of these establishments. An assessment of the corridor indicates that there are as many as nineteen curb cuts that could be eliminated within the study area. It is also recommended that the steep cross slope of the driveways be reduced to make access to these properties smoother for drivers exiting off Bethlehem Pike into the driveways. Currently, the driveways are so steep, motorists must slow almost to a complete stop to comfortably turn into the driveways.



Acme parking lot

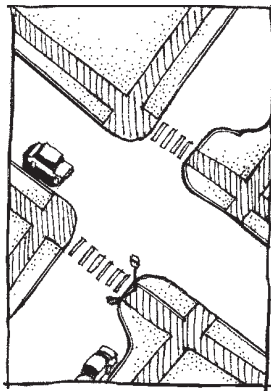
## Pedestrian Safety and Mobility

An evaluation of the SEPTA locations along Bethlehem Pike was conducted, including the use of bus turnouts. Bus turnouts are not recommended along Bethlehem Pike because they make it very difficult for busses to return to the main flow of traffic, causing transit delays. All bus stops should be marked, which is not the case today.

### Crosswalks

As part of the Vision Plan, we recommend enhanced pedestrian crosswalks and signals at the following intersections:

- Valley Green Road
- Flourtown Shopping Center
- Mill Road
- Weiss Avenue
- Bysher Avenue
- Wissahickon Avenue
- Haws Lane
- W. Montgomery Avenue
- Gordon Lane



Pedestrian bumpout

A crosswalk is recommended at Weiss Avenue in Flourtown Village. All the pedestrian crosswalks along Bethlehem Pike should be consistent in order to make a greater impact on drivers. Pedestrian bumpouts should be developed at all intersections in order to minimize the length of

the cross walk. Curb bumpouts may cause a problem with commercial traffic turning off of Bethlehem Pike, but this issue can be prevented by making new curb radii large enough to accommodate the average size truck that would be making deliveries to the affected commercial areas.

In addition, longitudinal 24” white pavement markings spaced 4 feet center-to-center should be used as it is currently used at the Haws Lane intersection. This type of crosswalk is highly visible to drivers and will reinforce the new “feel” of Bethlehem Pike as a community, rather just a place

to pass through. Safety striping encourages caution and slowing and should be placed in the travel lane before all crosswalks. Upon entering the corridor new signs should be placed to warn motorists that they must yield to all pedestrians. Finally, flexible “Yield to Pedestrian” signs should be placed within each cross walk for pedestrian safety.

The installation of mid-block crosswalks with refuge islands is generally not recommended by PennDOT. With the development of other traffic calming alternatives, however, this may not be necessary.

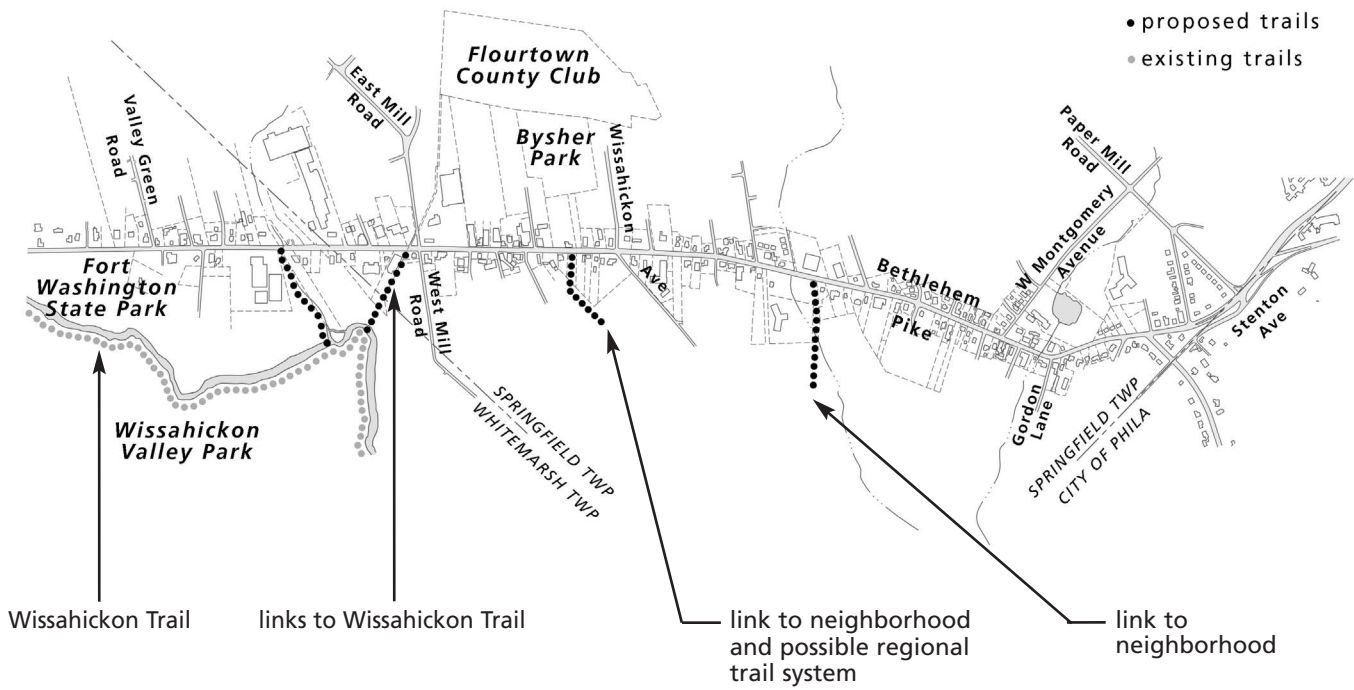
A pedestrian crossing is recommended at Gordon Lane to safely move pedestrians to a proposed town center area to the east of Bethlehem Pike in that area.

### Other Safety Issues

The possible installation of an emergency access signal at the Flourtown Firehouse has been investigated. According to PennDOT Publication 201 “Engineering and Traffic Studies”, emergency traffic signals are warranted if a street meets the required minimum volume or the intersection has a sight distance problem. A review of the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commissions AADT data and PennDOT Traffic Count data for Bethlehem Pike shows that the road does meet the minimum volume to warrant an emergency signal. Therefore, it is recommended that an emergency signal be placed mid-block at the location of the Flourtown Firehouse.

Due to complaints about through-traffic and adjacent residential neighborhoods, there have been requests to consider the closure of or one-way access to the following streets: Rose Lane, Yeakel Avenue, Jones Avenue, and Sunnybrook Avenue. The solution to the problem may be simpler: for example, limiting turns in and out during rush hour to eliminate cut through traffic.

## Pedestrian and Recreational Trails



### NEW TRAILS STRATEGY

As part of the overall pedestrian strategy, new trails should be established to link the study area with the surrounding parks and open space. The opportunity exists to connect The Green Ribbon Trail, which exists through the adjacent Wissahickon Valley Park to Bethlehem Pike in two locations. One connection along Sunnybrook Creek and one connection at the target open space along the abandoned rail line, in Springfield Township.

Although Springfield Township has no existing trails, the opportunity exists within the Flourtown-Erdenheim Study Area at two target open space lands, as noted in the Wissahickon Riparian Restoration Trail Link Master Plan, to connect to existing trail systems. The opportunity exists to connect to the existing Fairmont Park Trail in the city of Philadelphia at both Carson Valley School and Mt. St. Joseph's Academy.

# STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES

Streetscape enhancement is the coordinated planning of gateway entrances, street trees, planting areas, streetlights, street furnishings, crosswalks and sidewalks. The goals of streetscape enhancement for the Flourtown-Erdenheim Community is to strengthen the quality of the street experience to increase pedestrian-oriented and friendly shopping, to enhance pedestrian networks, and to link villages and community together with a common theme. When implemented successfully, these strategies can improve retail revenue and increase the Flourtown-Erdenheim corridor's viability as a place for office development. Streetscape enhancement also plays a vital role in calming traffic speeds and creating the sense of place that is essential in successful communities.

The new streetscape enhancements include special colored and textured paving at driveways, village style and pedestrian-scale streetlights, street trees, street banners, graphically bold crosswalks with pedestrian signals, overhead utilities relocated to poles at the rear of properties, shared parking in the rear of properties, hedges and fences as a buffer where front yard parking exists, and special colored and textured paving medians for automobile turning lanes.

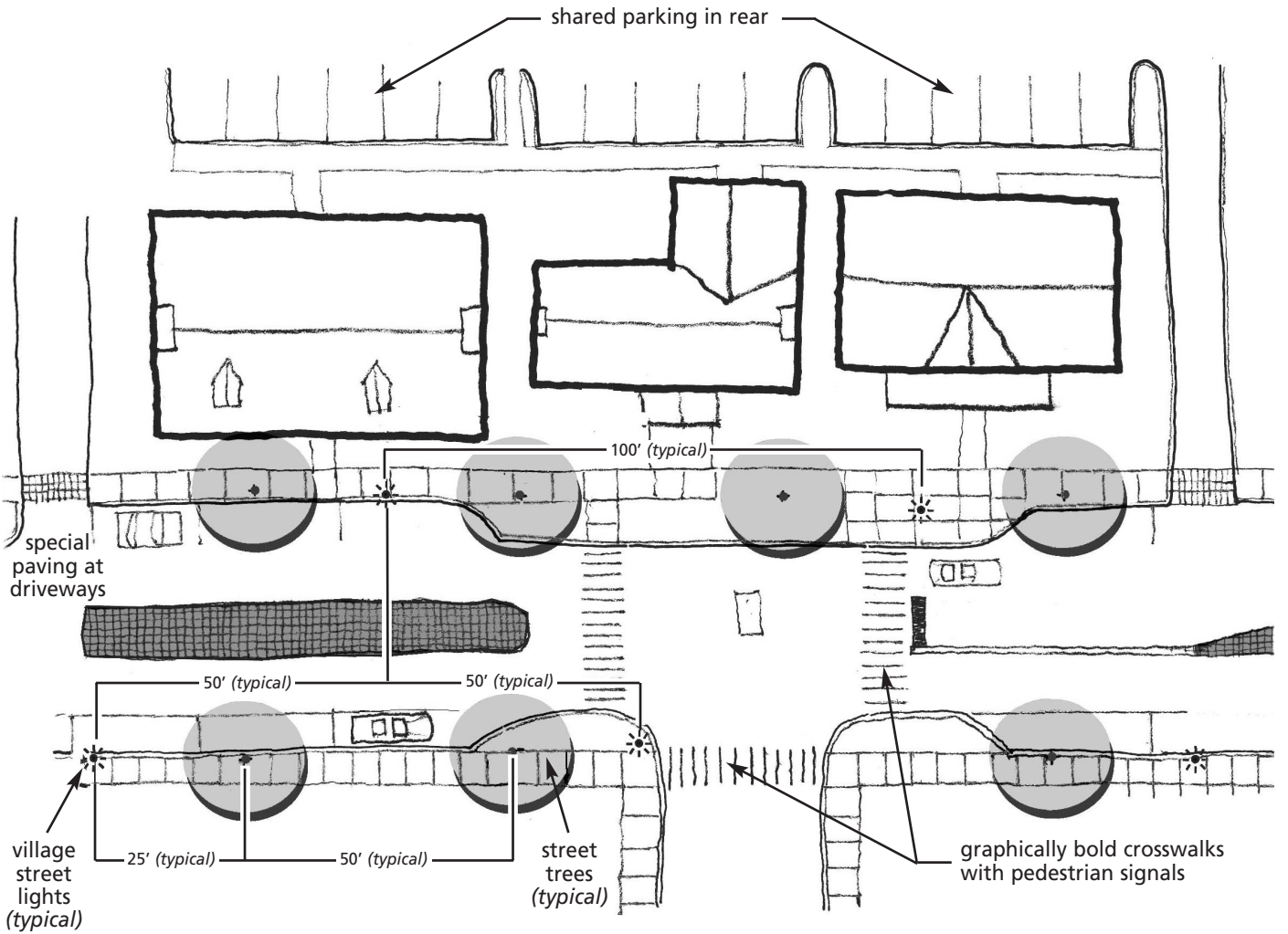
## GATEWAYS

The Flourtown-Erdenheim community has a number of superb opportunities to celebrate arrival to the district. At the **north** entrance of the study area (Valley Green) at Bethlehem Pike architectural piers with a District entrance sign and low landscaping in combination with street trees would create a welcome district entrance. At Flourtown's **east** entrance at E. Mill Road and Penn Oak Road a gateway park including a District identification sign along with planting a stately oak tree would highlight the importance of this entrance where the historic oak tree used to stand. At the **south** entrance on Bethlehem Pike (Erdenheim), architectural piers which include a Township and District entrance sign in conjunction with a double row of street trees would enhance this important gateway.

The secondary gateways into the community should also be accentuated. At key locations from the east and west District Directional signs and low landscaping would further strengthen the identity of the district. Once in the center of Flourtown, a town green and district signs in combination with site features such as a sculpture or fountain and a sitting area can further establish the sense of place and identity for Flourtown.



# Village Streetscape Theme



**Above:** Elevation view typical of Bethlehem Pike in the **Village Streetscape**

**Below:** Plan view typical of Bethlehem Pike in the **Village Streetscape**

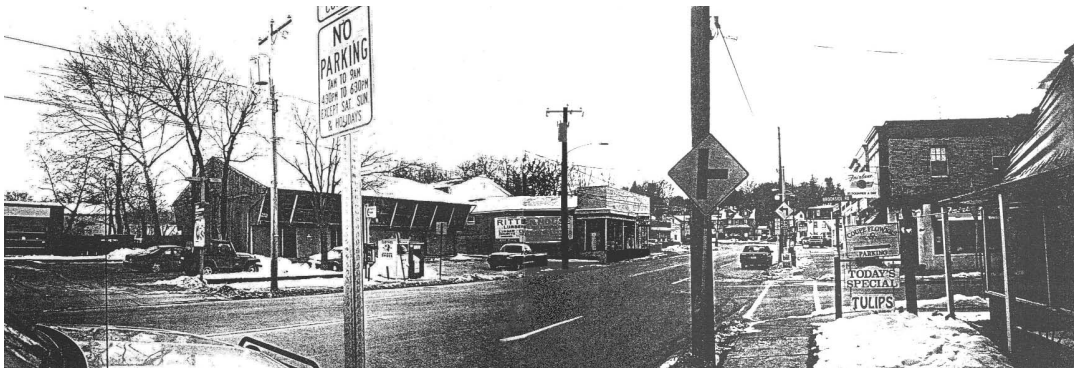


## STREETSCAPE ELEMENTS

The Flourtown-Erdenheim Commercial Corridor extends 1.5 miles along Bethlehem Pike, too great a distance to function as a single pedestrian-oriented district since this constitutes a thirty-minute walk. Two streetscape environments, corresponding to the corridor and highway road alignment types detailed in the *Traffic and Parking Strategies* chapter, are recommended to alternate along the length of the corridor. Each theme will have a slightly different landscape treatment to provide visual variety along the corridor and a degree of unity within each study area, and to lessen the perception of the distance. These design themes are the Village Streetscape and the Corridor Streetscape.

## Village Streetscape Theme

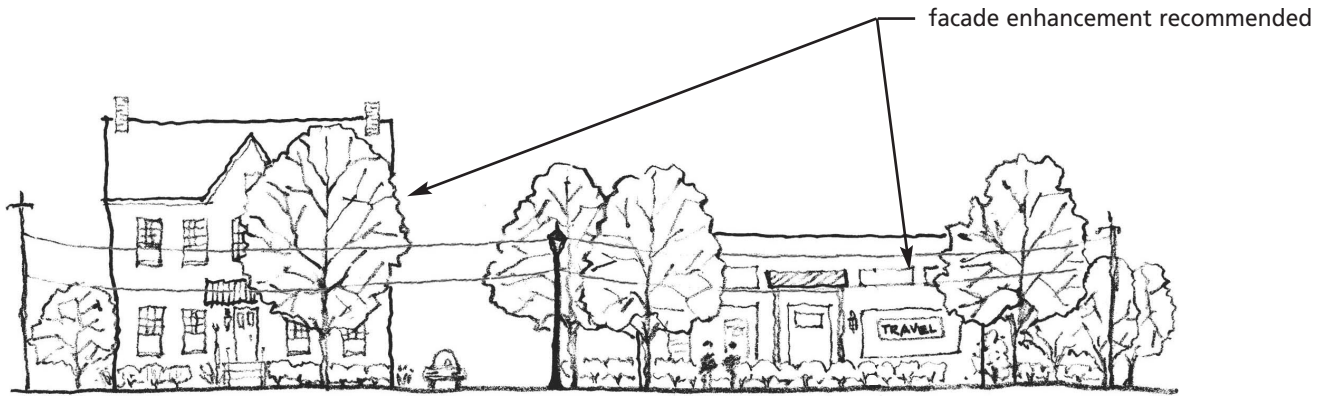
This area will feature street trees on both sides of the street, pedestrian scale street lighting, a strong relationship between the street and the building, and overhead utilities relocated to the rear to encourage slower traffic speeds and enhance the pedestrian experience and provide a positive first impression of these village districts. This area will also have on-street parking with pedestrian curb bumpouts at corners, graphically bold crosswalks, and a textured center median which will encourage a safer and more attractive commercial district. A full range of pedestrian-oriented shopping and outdoor plaza experiences will also be featured.



**Above:** Photo montage of existing streetscape in Erdenheim

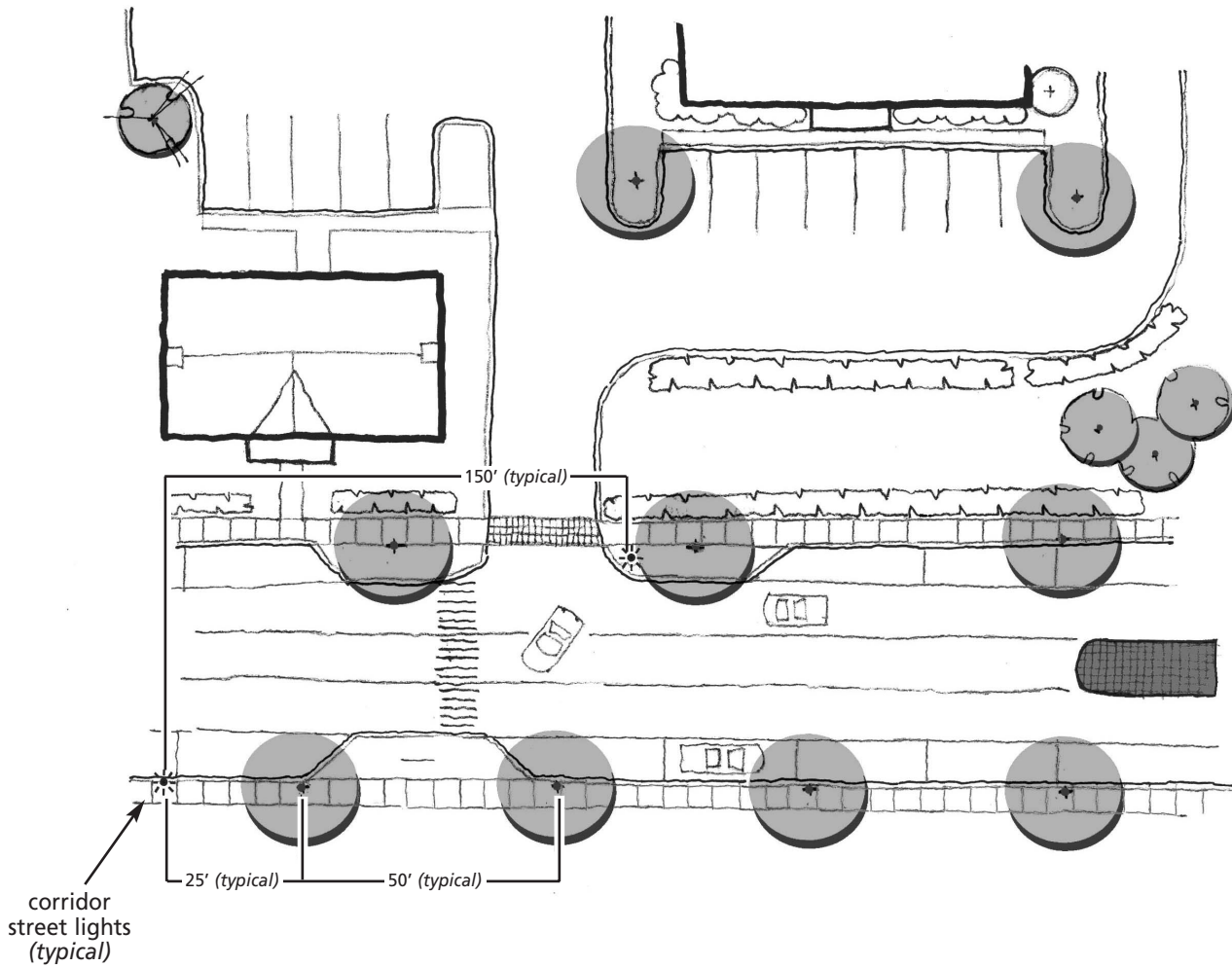
**Below:** Perspective view of the **Village Streetscape** with on-street parking and streetscape enhancements

# Corridor Streetscape Theme



rear or side parking required for new land development

front yard parking permitted where it presently exists; however, additional hedges and fences are required as buffers



**Above:** Elevation view typical of Bethlehem Pike in Corridor District

**Below:** Plan view typical of Bethlehem Pike in Corridor District

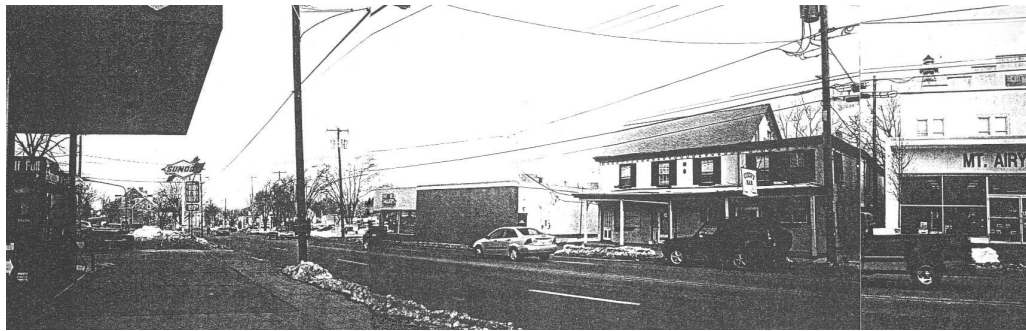
### Corridor Streetscape Theme

The corridor theme also features street trees on both sides of the Pike. The trees need to be selectively placed; a species that will not conflict with existing utility wires such as the Japanese Tree Lilac is recommended. Within the corridor lighting will be a taller streetlight that is consistent with the village theme to create a sense of consistency while distinguishing the different district themes. Street trees, streetlights and improved pedestrian crosswalks are all designed to slow traffic, encouraging a safe, more attractive mixed-use district. Low hedges and fences are recommended as a buffer for off-

street parking. This is predominantly a car-oriented environment but, in time, we expect it to become more welcoming to pedestrians.

### Additional Landscaping

In addition to the street trees the plan provides for some type of hedge or landscaping to screen all parking areas from the street and adjacent sidewalks. Within the **Village** areas a volunteer based program should be developed to plant and maintain hanging baskets and window boxes. This will establish needed uniformity and color for the village areas.



**Above:** Photo montage of existing streetscape

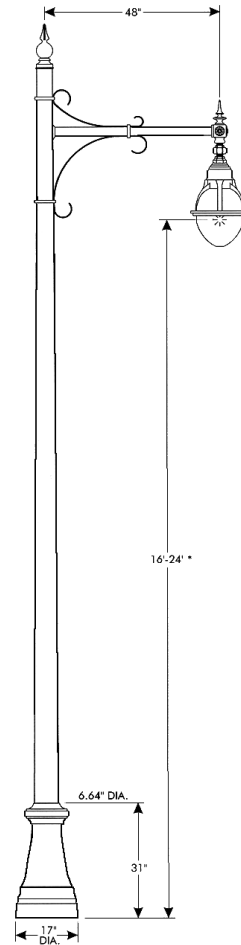
**Below:** Perspective view of streetscape with curb bumpouts combined with streetscape elements

## Lighting Themes

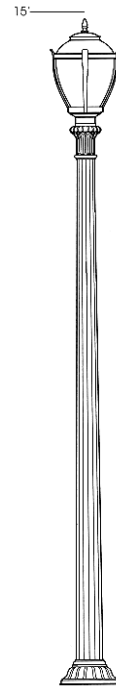
Within the Corridor areas of Bethlehem Pike we recommend that the streetlights be tall overhead antique light fixtures. These would be placed on the opposite sides of the street in staggered rows set one hundred fifty feet apart (see page 22). Within the vicinity of the village areas of Bethlehem Pike it is recommended that pedestrian scale antique lights be proposed. These would be placed on the opposite sides of the street in staggered rows set one hundred feet apart (see page 20).

## Additional Streetscape Enhancements

In addition to the street trees the plan provides for some type of hedge or landscaping to screen all parking areas from the street and adjacent sidewalks. Within the village areas it is recommended that a volunteer based program be developed for hanging baskets and window boxes. This will establish needed uniformity and color to the village areas. In addition to the streetscape elements listed above, we recommend a range of benches, trash and recycling receptacles, and fabric banners all complementing the theme, along the entire Flourtown-Erdenheim Commercial Corridor to provide other unifying elements. Recommended sign types include directional, identity, street, and traffic.



Decorative Corridor Street Light

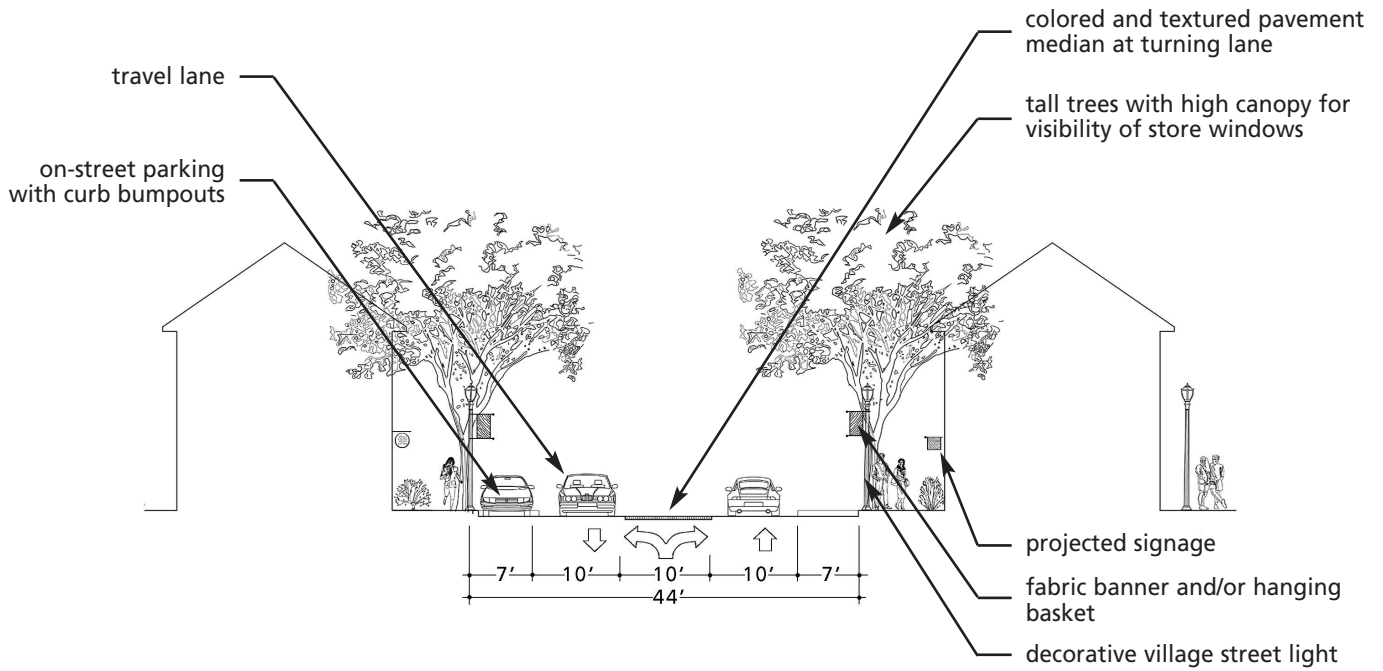


Decorative Village Street Light

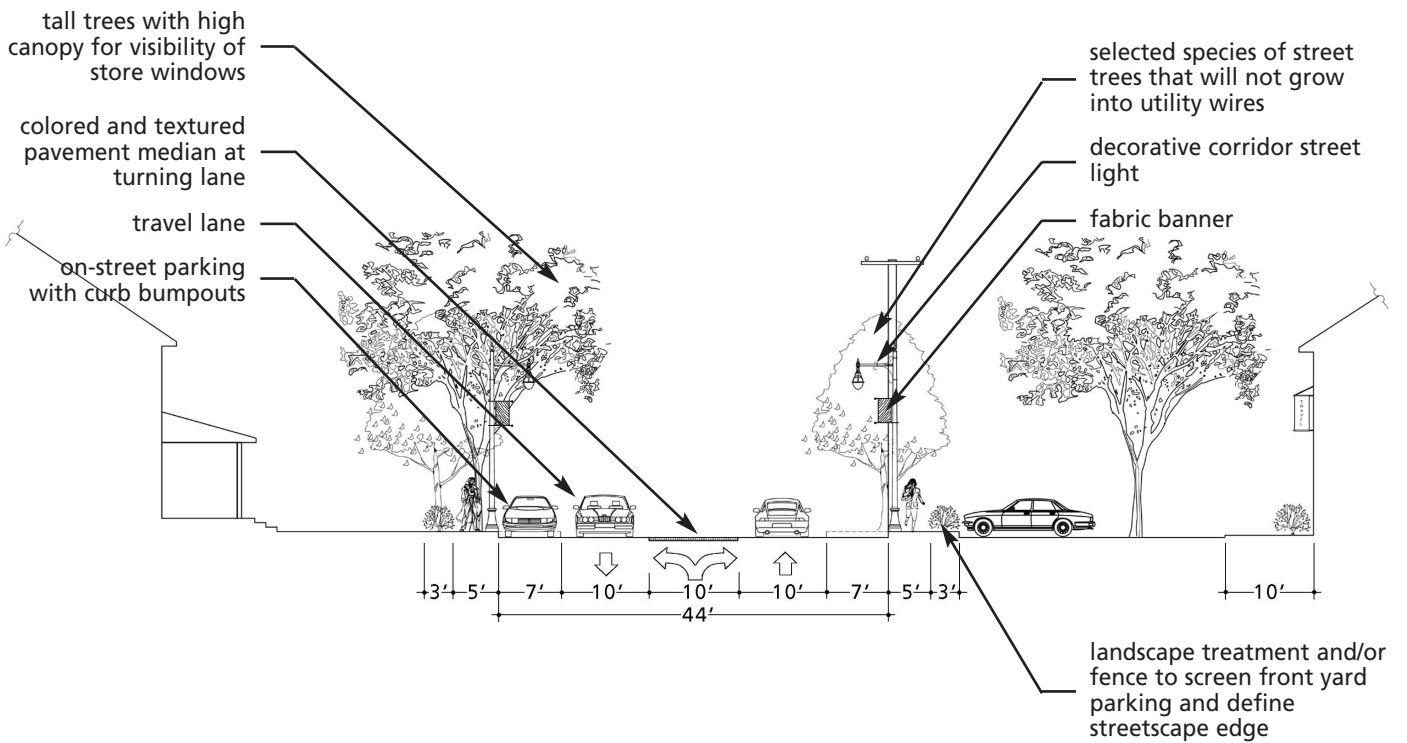


**From left to right:** typical Streetscape banner, hanging basket, bike rack, bench

## Typical Cross-section View of Bethlehem Pike: Village Theme



## Typical Cross-section View of Bethlehem Pike: Corridor Theme



## ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The following Architectural Design Guidelines have been developed to assist the Townships and individual business owners in making key architectural design decisions for both new construction and improvements to existing construction. The determination of which guidelines should be considered for a specific storefront must ultimately be based on appropriate architectural planning and design. Proper attention to these guidelines will improve the value of individual properties and enhance the corridor as a whole.

### GENERAL BUILDING CHARACTER, SCALE AND RHYTHM

**The construction and renovation of buildings should either promote the architectural traditions of Bethlehem Pike or create landscape screening to minimize the visibility of incompatible structures.** The architectural traditions along Bethlehem Pike feature pitched roof buildings; buildings located within 40 feet of the Pike; entries and porches facing the Pike; stone, clapboard, brick or stucco exterior surfaces.

**Buildings with a footprint of less than 5,000 SF should feature traditional pitched roofs.** For buildings of 5,000 SF or greater flat roofs are permitted; however the parapets and walls should demonstrate a rhythm of horizontal and/ or vertical shifts. These parapets should be interrupted with vertical shifts, horizontal setbacks, and/or pitched roofs.

**Building height in comparison to neighboring buildings.** Building facades should introduce cornice lines, overhangs, or changes of material to generally reflect the scale of neighboring buildings within 100 feet—especially historically significant buildings. Where building height exceeds the dominant pattern for adjacent buildings, consistent cornice lines between buildings or building setbacks

for upper floors should be created to reduce the scale of the building.

**Building separation in comparison to neighboring buildings.** Except where open space corridors and vistas have been identified, the separation between the buildings should be designed to promote the continuity of the street wall and create a continuing rhythm of spaces between buildings. Buildings of 2 to 3 stories are strongly encouraged to create a well-defined street edge.

**Facades should be designed with architectural features at the human scale.** The impact of large facades should be minimized by designing with respect with the human scale and classic proportions and compatible with the architectural traditions of the Pike. Human scale detailing is the treatment of elements of a building facade at a smaller scale based on human vision, proportion, height and rate of movement to add interest to the pedestrian passerby. Examples include patterned tiles, textured stone or brick, carved wood, or decorative metalwork.

**At least thirty percent of primary building facades should front along public streets and create a street wall** that extends the dominant pattern of front yard setbacks for adjacent properties. This frontage should feature architectural detailing, arcades, dormers, entrances and/or gables toward the public street. Continuity of the street wall edge is more important than an actual dimension; therefore front yard averaging will be permitted and encouraged. Where the ideal front yard build-to line cannot be achieved, secondary structures such as trellises, porches, towers, awnings, trees or decorative fences (less than four feet high) should be located along this frontage to reinforce the street wall edge.

**Facades should be articulated with vertical divisions to reduce the scale and uniformity of large-scale buildings.** Street-side building facades should be designed to reflect the community's identity, character, and scale as well as the human scale. Where building facades exceed 100 horizontal feet, vertical divisions every 20 to 40 feet shall be designed on all street-side building facades. Vertical divisions may be defined by wall plane projections no less than 4 feet in depth featuring a combination of piers, projecting bays, arcades, or changes of roof configuration.

**Facades should be articulated with horizontal divisions to reflect the traditional building elements of cap, wall and base.** The cap should feature either pitched roofs or articulated cornices and a change of color and material. The wall should include a horizontal division for the top of the ground story. The base traditionally includes a watercourse line and is often a more durable material that articulates how the mass of the building meets grade.

**Well-defined entrances approximately every 50 feet on street frontages.** In successful pedestrian oriented places, the continuity of regularly patronized entrances enhances the viability of a place. Where large-scale retail businesses are proposed, place smaller in-line tenants along the front façade with the large-scale retailer behind or above these tenants. This will allow the primary tenant to occupy less frontage while maintaining the continuity of entrances.

**Rear Facades in Public View.** Where facades other than the street-side facades are in Public View, the architectural treatment should be consistent with the street-side facades, however it may be less detailed.

**Screen Mechanical Equipment, Storage Areas and Trash Storage.** Nuisance views of mechanical equipment, storage areas or trash storage areas should be screened and buffered by the use of architectural enclosures and landscape buffers.

## DETAILED ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

### Walls

#### Use and/or Consider

- Preservation / rehabilitation and use of traditional materials such as brick, stone, stucco, wood shakes / shingles and horizontal wood siding
- Materials consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings, such as concrete siding
- Materials that complement existing and surrounding buildings
- Existing materials of fine detail and architectural character should be retained and preserved, or modern low-maintenance replacement materials that are architecturally accurate
- Awnings for providing a visual focus to windows/ entrance, weather protection, concealment of security gratings, and coordinated signage

#### Avoid

- Blank facades on any stories facing streets or public ways
- Materials that appear temporary or artificial such as aluminum and vinyl siding—these can cause damage to underlying materials
- Materials that are of limited durability and difficult to maintain such as exterior finish systems incorporating foam insulation in areas of moderate to heavy use

### Roofs

#### Use and/or Consider

- Roof slopes of 8 in 12 minimum to 12 in 12 maximum wherever possible.
- Roof forms and materials consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings
- Traditional materials such as tile, slate, and wood or asphalt or concrete shingles/shakes that complement existing and surrounding buildings or materials that are close in visual appearance

- Recreating original roof forms that have been modified or removed
- Gutters and downspouts of traditional shapes and materials
- Restoring original cornices and roof features such as dormers

#### **Avoid**

- Flat roofs wherever possible
- False mansards and other roof shapes out of character with the district
- Materials that appear temporary or artificial such as thin low grade asphalt shingles
- White aluminum gutters and downspouts; “K” gutters
- Unsightly roof objects, mechanical & electrical equipment, vents, hatches, etc. exposed to streets and public ways
- Covering existing original features such as cornices, dormers and wood trim with aluminum, vinyl or other contemporary materials, which can rot underlying wood and cause structural damage
- Materials that are difficult to maintain

### **Windows/Doors**

#### **Use and/or Consider**

- Windows / doors consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings
- Multi-paned windows and doors with true divided lights
- Untinted glass: keep glass clean
- Window/door designs that are simple, well proportioned, fill all of the building’s original window openings and are appropriate to the overall architectural character of the building
- Attractive, well lit merchandise displays with displays to the front; use the full extent of the glass for displays
- Fully accessible entrances that are inviting to all shoppers and meet all applicable accessibility standards

- Displaying merchandise in vacant upper-story windows
- Window planter boxes

#### **Avoid**

- Contemporary materials that appear artificial such as vinyl and aluminum
- Snap-in window and door muntins (grilles)
- Tinted or opaque glass
- “Strip” windows (continuous horizontal)
- Exposed exterior security gratings and coil boxes
- Blank facades on any story facing the street

### **Scale and Proportion**

#### **Use and/or Consider**

- Façade dimensions and proportions that are consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings
- Façades divided into smaller scale widths not exceeding the typical district commercial façade width
- Facades incorporating the rhythm of window, door and structural bay of existing historic or architecturally significant buildings

#### **Avoid**

- Building fronts wider than typical width in district
- Building setbacks from street greater than typical setback in district
- Theatrical effects or giant features

### **Color**

#### **Use and/or Consider**

- Colors that are consistent with the historic architectural character of Bethlehem Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings
- Colors that are considered carefully so as to produce a unified but appropriately varied effect throughout the district

#### **Avoid**

- Inconsistent colors on different facades.



## Lighting

### Use and/or Consider

- Lighting design and fixtures that are consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike and compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings
- After hours lighting on timers to encourage window shopping
- Lighting to highlight significant building features

### Avoid

- Unshielded security lighting
- Excessive interior lighting

## Signs

### Use and/or Consider

- Signs that are consistent with the historic architectural character of the Pike, compatible with historic or architecturally significant buildings and compliant with Township ordinances
- Colors: Signs of generally darker backgrounds with text of lighter colors.
- Distinctive sign letters, logos and artwork specific to the store
- Limiting number of signs to three per business
- Moderately sized and attractive sign design for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic
- Signs integrated within a building's overall appearance; work within existing architectural features
- Short and simple sign text
- Pedestrian-scale letters on glass; limit window signs to about 30% of glass area
- Sign light sources hidden from view; the lighting should be shielded so that no direct light shines onto sidewalks, streets, or adjacent properties. Back lit signs are not recommended.
- Banners and flags specific to the store
- Small pedestrian-scale projecting or freestanding signs may be permitted provided that they are no larger than six square feet in area per each side.
- Signs constructed of natural materials. Modern plastic materials should not be used.

- Awning signs should not be permitted

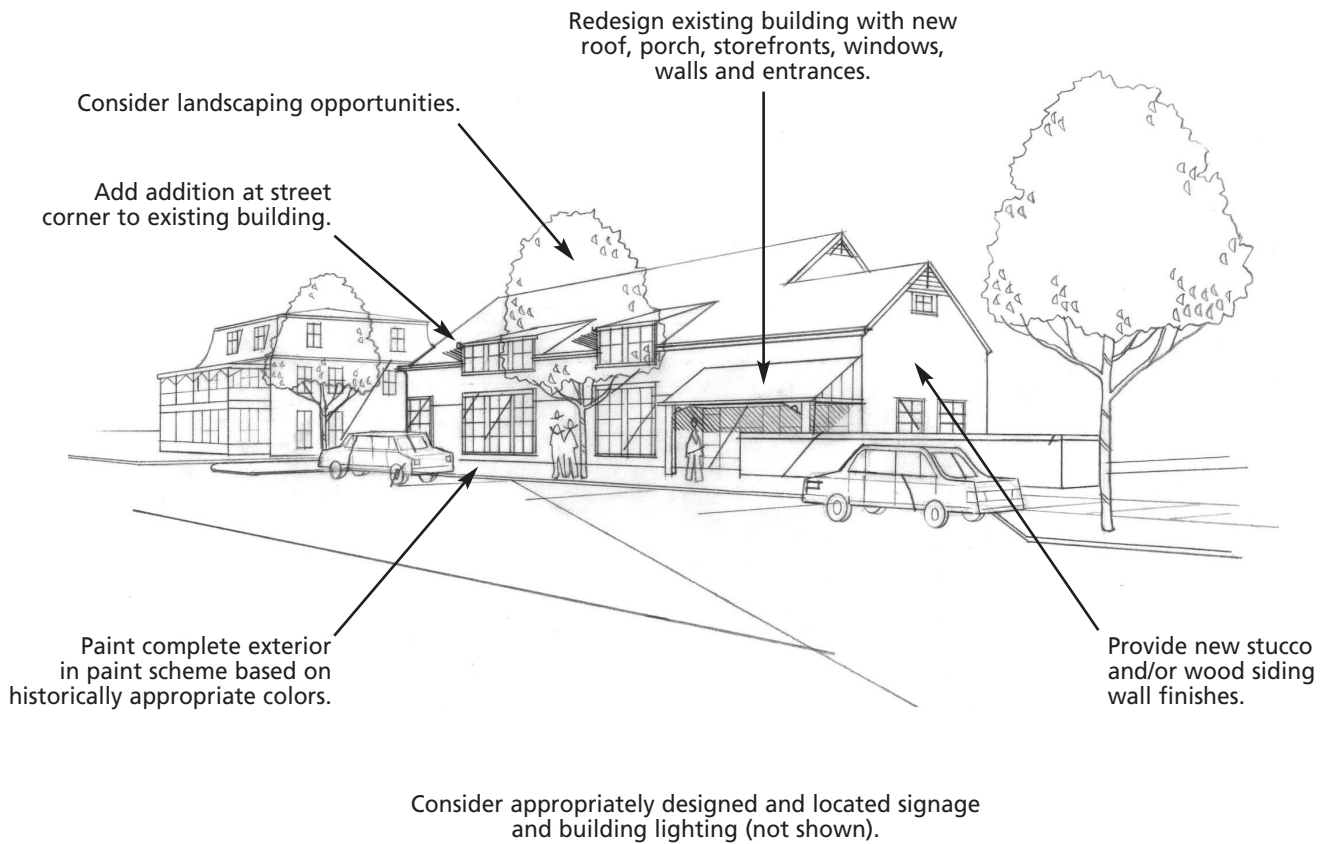
### Avoid

- Using more than three signs per business
- Colors: Signs of generally lighter backgrounds with text of darker colors.
- Box signs
- Paper signs on windows
- Temporary or portable signs; freestanding and on building facades
- Internally illuminated signs, except possibly at large shopping centers
- Wall signs above first floor levels, except for small projecting signs
- Rooftop signs
- Free standing signs; consider only when mounted sign cannot be used and consider grouping several store signs together; maintain low height
- Long and complicated sign texts
- Signs painted on facades
- Signs covering important building features
- Revolving signs
- Projected V-shaped signs without roof or ceiling
- Signs on utility poles
- A-frame signs
- Signs projecting over public property or legal right of way
- Unused sign standards, mechanical equipment, etc.

## EXAMPLES

The following photos and sketches illustrate the application of the architectural guideline principles to a sampling of buildings from the study area.

## 601 Bethlehem Pike



## 629-631 Bethlehem Pike



Where required, repair/replace existing roofs, gutters and downspouts; use appropriate shingles and half round gutters and downspouts (dark brown or weathered copper finish); avoid white or light colored gutters and downspouts.

Where required, repair/replace existing building cornices and trim; avoid vinyl and aluminum cornices and trim.

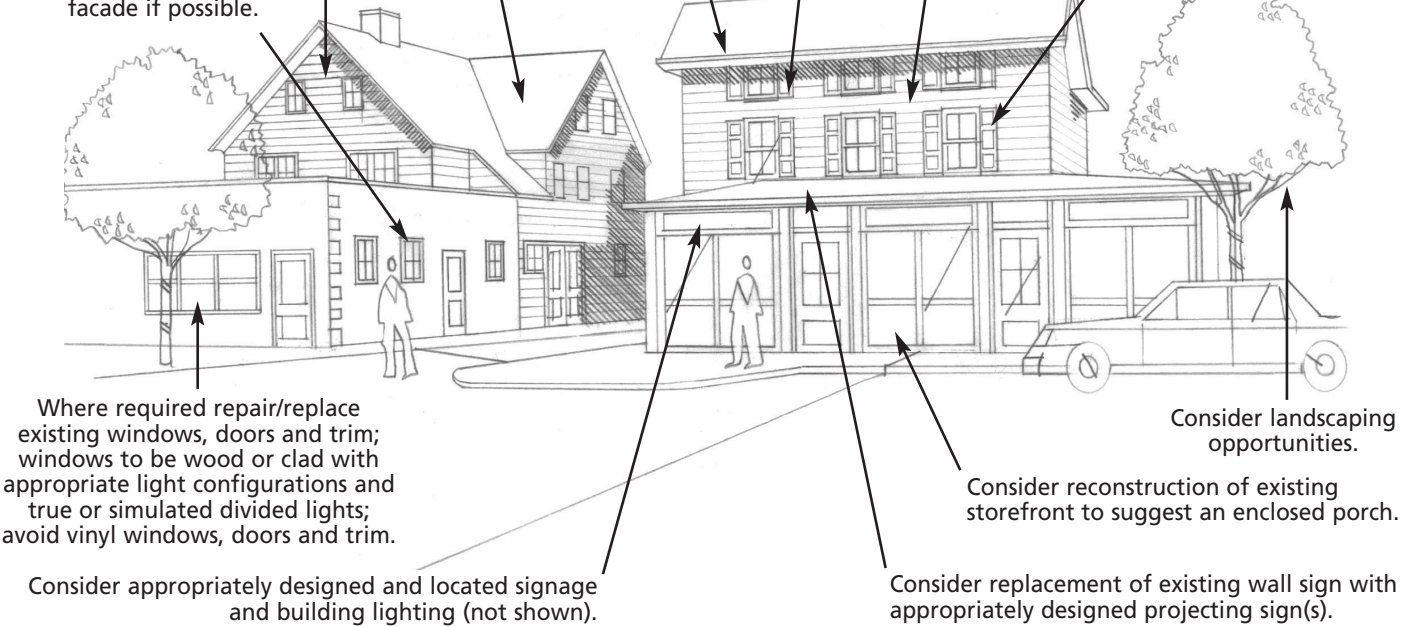
If complete painting of exterior is contemplated, develop paint scheme based on paint sample analysis or on historically appropriate colors; point storm windows to match sash and trim.

Replace existing siding with siding to match adjacent twin and repair stucco.

Replace existing siding with wood bevel or drop siding; avoid vinyl or aluminum siding.

Relocate window air conditioner away from side and front facade if possible.

Add wood shutters of appropriate size, style and hardware; avoid vinyl shutters without hardware.



Where required repair/replace existing windows, doors and trim; windows to be wood or clad with appropriate light configurations and true or simulated divided lights; avoid vinyl windows, doors and trim.

Consider landscaping opportunities.

Consider reconstruction of existing storefront to suggest an enclosed porch.

Consider appropriately designed and located signage and building lighting (not shown).

Consider replacement of existing wall sign with appropriately designed projecting sign(s).

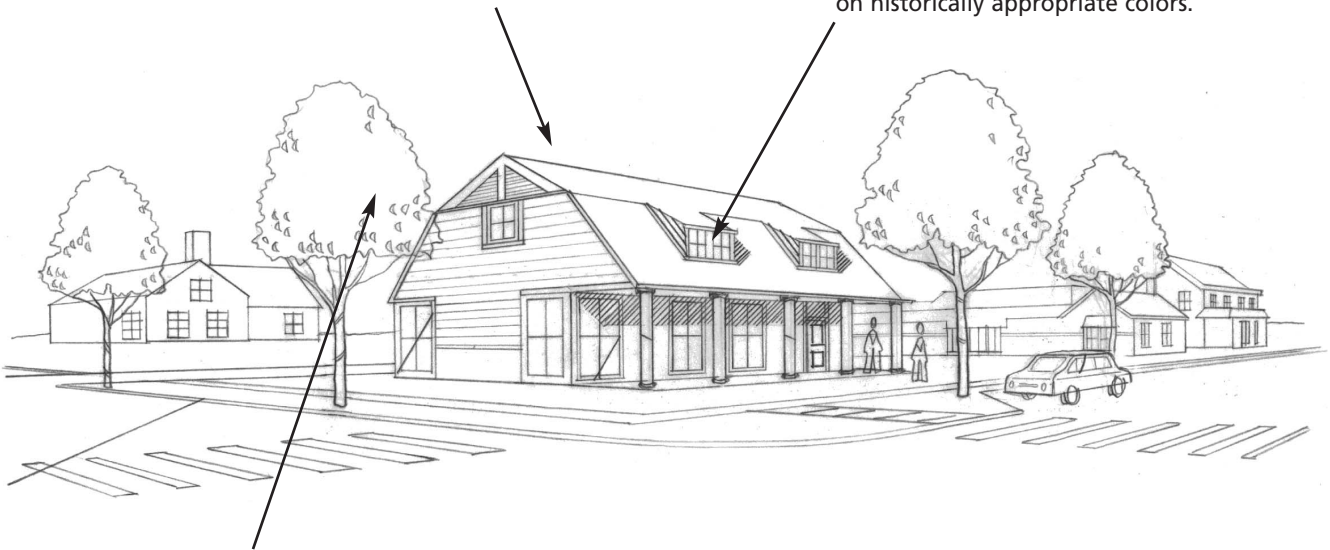
**Rehabilitate existing structure through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values. Rehabilitate to include appropriately designed building features as based on historical research.**

## 735 Bethlehem Pike



Replace existing building with new building.

Paint complete exterior in paint scheme based on historically appropriate colors.



Consider landscaping opportunities.

Consider appropriately designed and located signage and building lighting (not shown).

# 1107 Bethlehem Pike

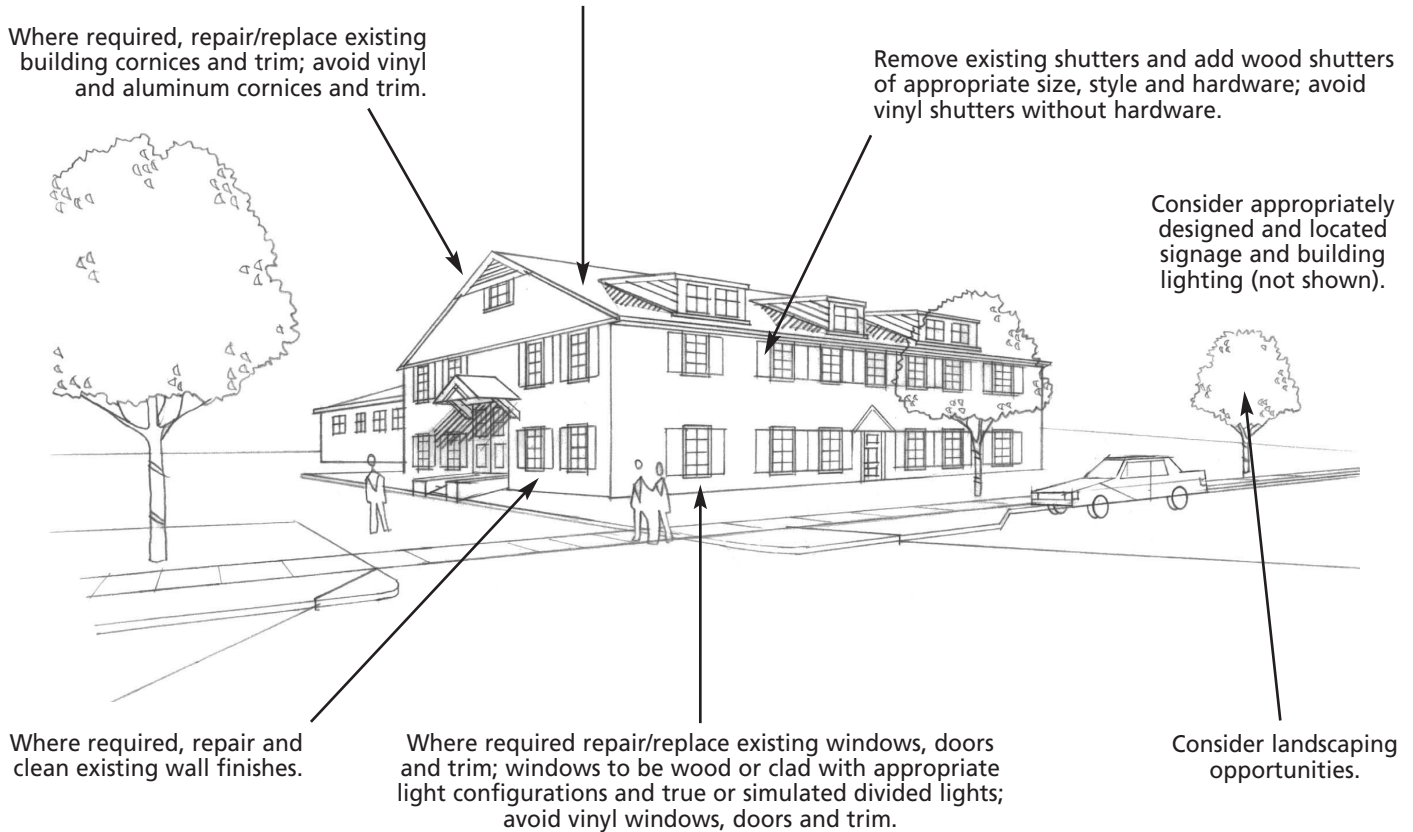


Where required, repair/replace existing roofs, gutters and downspouts; use appropriate shingles and half round gutters and downspouts (dark brown or weathered copper finish); avoid white or light colored gutters and downspouts.

Where required, repair/replace existing building cornices and trim; avoid vinyl and aluminum cornices and trim.

Remove existing shutters and add wood shutters of appropriate size, style and hardware; avoid vinyl shutters without hardware.

Consider appropriately designed and located signage and building lighting (not shown).



## 1225-1301 Bethlehem Pike



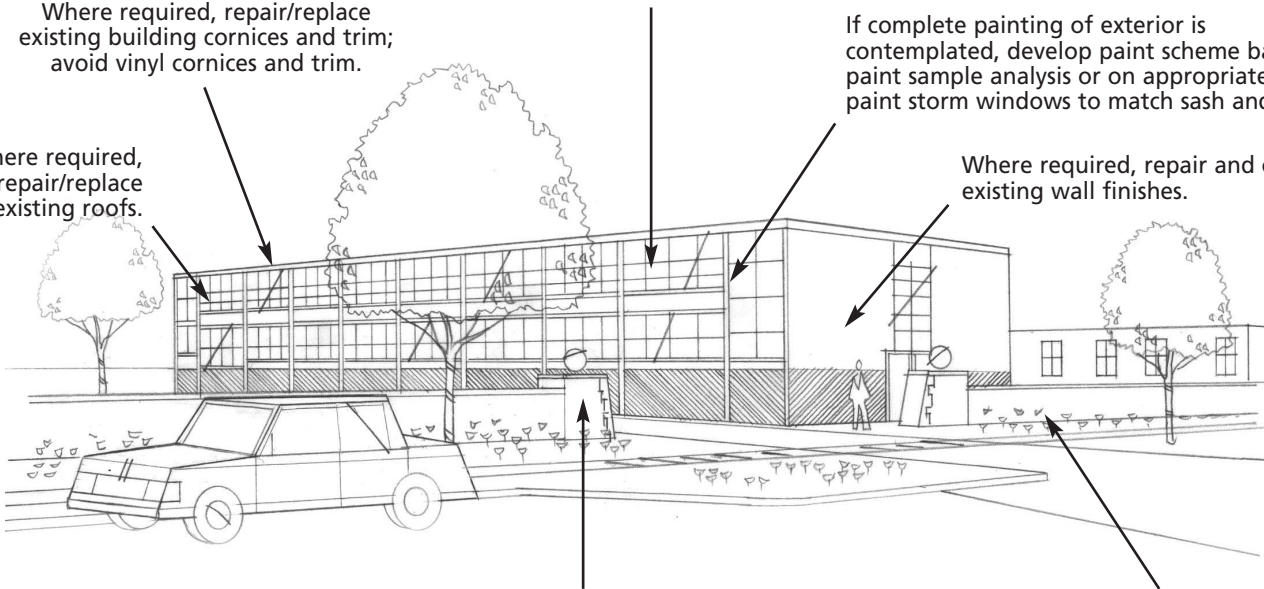
Where required repair/replace existing windows, doors and trim; windows to have appropriate light configurations and true or simulated divided lights; avoid vinyl windows, doors and trim.

Where required, repair/replace existing building cornices and trim; avoid vinyl cornices and trim.

If complete painting of exterior is contemplated, develop paint scheme based on paint sample analysis or on appropriate colors; paint storm windows to match sash and trim.

Where required, repair/replace existing roofs.

Where required, repair and clean existing wall finishes.



Consider new masonry walls at street line and piers at site entrances/exits.

Consider landscaping opportunities.

**Rehabilitate existing structure through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values. Rehabilitate to include appropriately designed building features as based on historical research.**

Consider appropriately designed and located signage and building lighting (not shown).

## 1409-1411 Bethlehem Pike



Where required, repair/replace existing roofs, gutters and downspouts; use appropriate shingles and half round gutters and downspouts (dark brown or weathered copper finish); avoid white or light colored gutters and downspouts.

Where required repair/replace existing windows, doors and trim; windows to be wood or clad with appropriate light configurations and true or simulated divided lights; avoid vinyl windows, doors and trim.

Where required, repair/replace existing building cornices and trim; avoid vinyl and aluminum cornices and trim.

Paint complete exterior in paint scheme based on historically appropriate colors; paint storm windows to match sash and trim.

Add wood shutters of appropriate size, style and hardware; avoid vinyl shutters without hardware.

Consider replacement of existing storefront and doors; avoid aluminum or vinyl.

Remove pent roof and add cornice. Replace existing wall signs with appropriately designed signs.

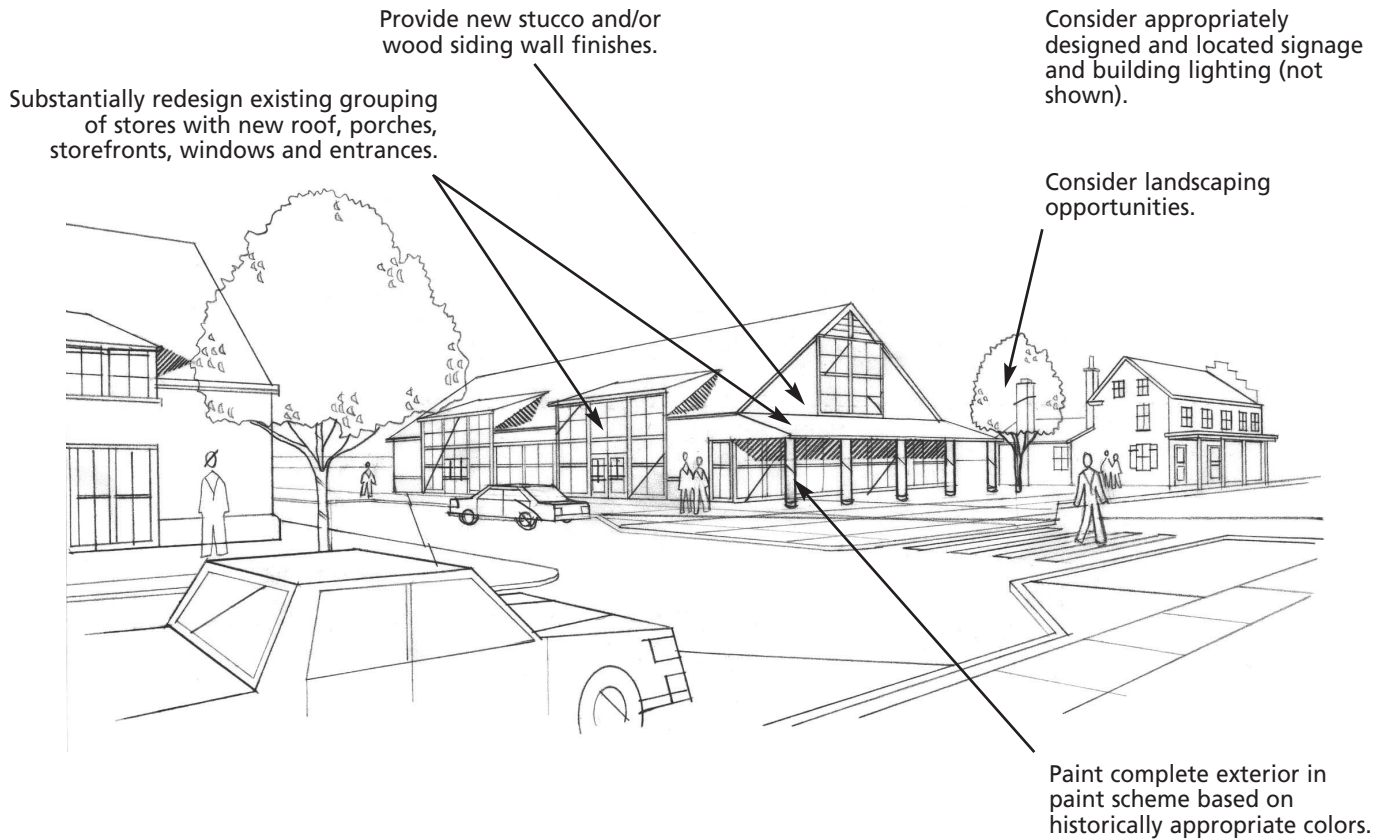
Consider appropriately designed and located yard signage and building lighting (not shown).

Where required, repair/replace existing siding with wood bevel or drop siding.

**Rehabilitate existing structure through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values. Rehabilitate to include appropriately designed building features as based on historical research.**

Consider landscaping opportunities.

## 1600 Bethlehem Pike





## 1800 Bethlehem Pike • Sorella Rose Cafe



Where required, repair/replace existing roofs, gutters and downspouts; use appropriate shingles and half round gutters and downspouts (dark brown or weathered copper finish); avoid white or light colored gutters and downspouts.

Where required repair/replace existing windows, doors and trim; windows to be wood or clad with appropriate light configurations and true or simulated divided lights; avoid vinyl windows, doors and trim.

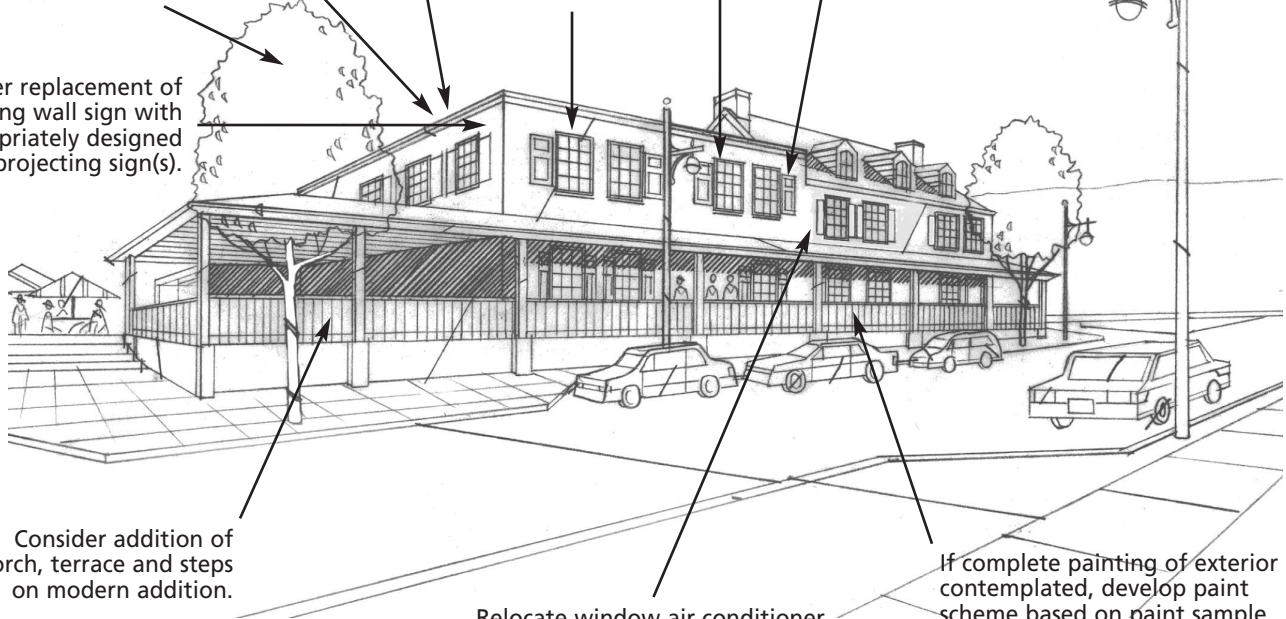
Where required, repair/replace existing building cornices and trim; avoid vinyl and aluminum cornices and trim.

Consider landscaping opportunities.

Consider replacement of existing wall sign with appropriately designed projecting sign(s).

Where required, repair existing wall finishes.

Remove existing shutters and add wood shutters of appropriate size, style and hardware; avoid vinyl shutters without hardware.



Consider addition of porch, terrace and steps on modern addition.

Relocate window air conditioner away from front facade if possible.

If complete painting of exterior is contemplated, develop paint scheme based on paint sample analysis or on historically appropriate colors; paint storm windows to match sash and trim.

**Rehabilitate existing structure through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features which convey its historical, cultural or architectural values. Rehabilitate to include appropriately designed building features as based on historical research.**

Consider appropriately designed and located signage and building lighting (not shown).

## SPECIAL STUDY AREAS

The following three areas, Valley Green, Flourtown Village, and Erdenheim Village, were developed in further detail to illustrate the key strategies for these locations, but also to give an example of how these concepts can be developed elsewhere.

### VALLEY GREEN CENTER

In order to enhance the western gateway into the corridor, the recommendations include:

- Establish gateway medians and new street trees to delineate the entrance to the corridor
- New buildings and building additions are recommended to create more of an edge and defined corridor
- Facade enhancements are proposed along all commercial properties facing Bethlehem Pike
- Streetscape improvements should include pedestrian-scale light fixtures that will make the corridor more pedestrian-friendly
- Parking lots should be interlinked to increase the efficiency of the parking
- Create linkages to the network of regional trails

### FLOURTOWN VILLAGE

The intent of this plan is to create some infill development with a town green that will create a greater sense of a destination and a downtown center. The special recommendations include:

- Encourage new building development on East Mill Road, Bethlehem Pike, and in front and along the side of the existing Acme store to create shops that are linked by pedestrian walks
- Encourage the Fire Company to create a separate green with a new building that will house antique fire fighting equipment below with a new banquet facility above
- Create a small Town Green along Bethlehem Pike that will be used for community events, the Town Sign, and casual gathering
- Develop a plaza for a restaurant in front of the building just east of the proposed Town Green

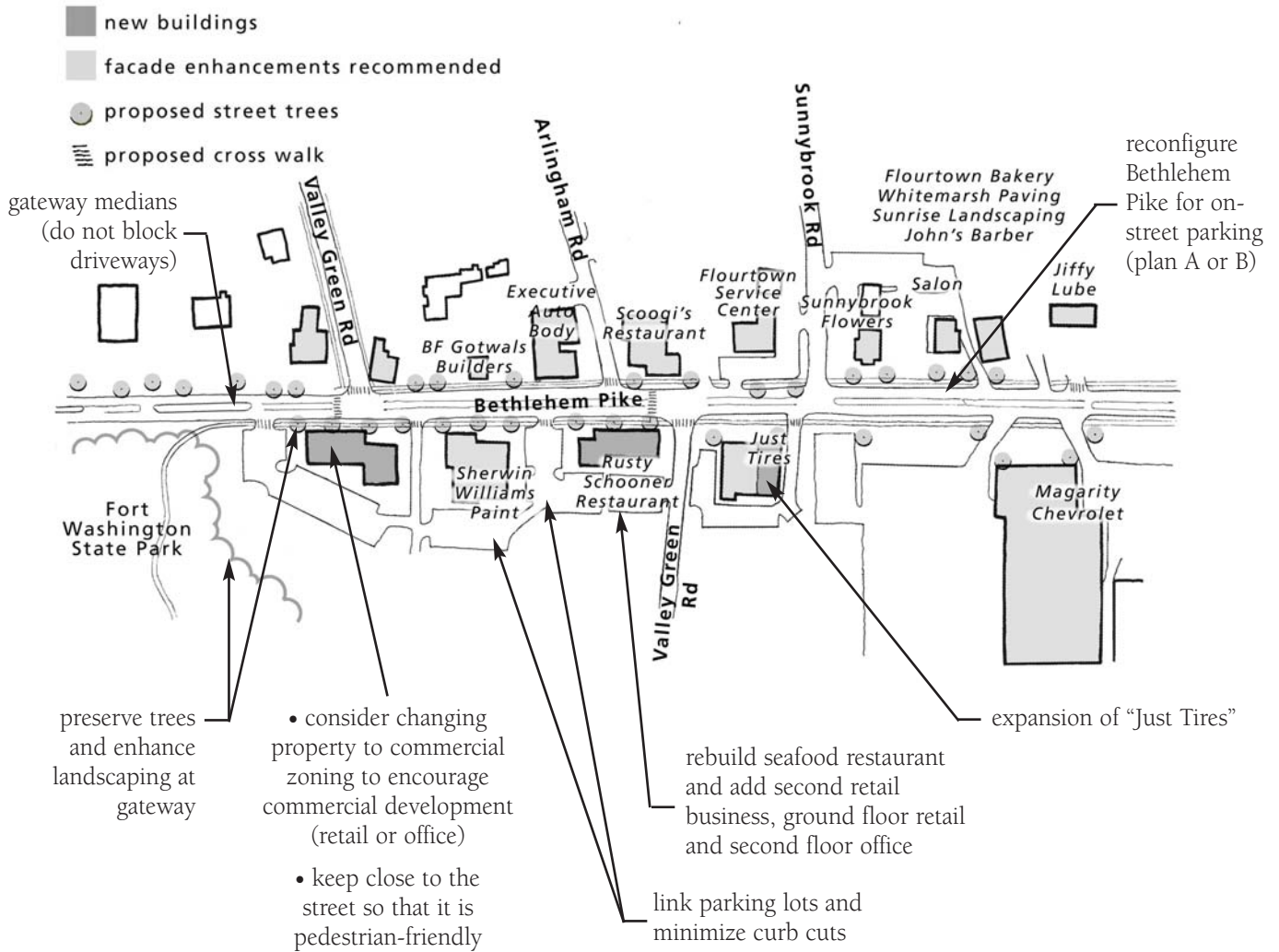
- Facade enhancements are proposed along all commercial properties facing Bethlehem Pike
- Coordinate with the Fire Company to permit a lease arrangement to allow for the expansion of the parking for the new retail facilities
- Reconfigure Bethlehem Pike to allow for on-street parking that will expand parking within the area
- Provide for streetscape improvements, such as banners, hanging baskets and pedestrian-scale light fixtures that will make the corridor more pedestrian-friendly

### ERDENHEIM VILLAGE

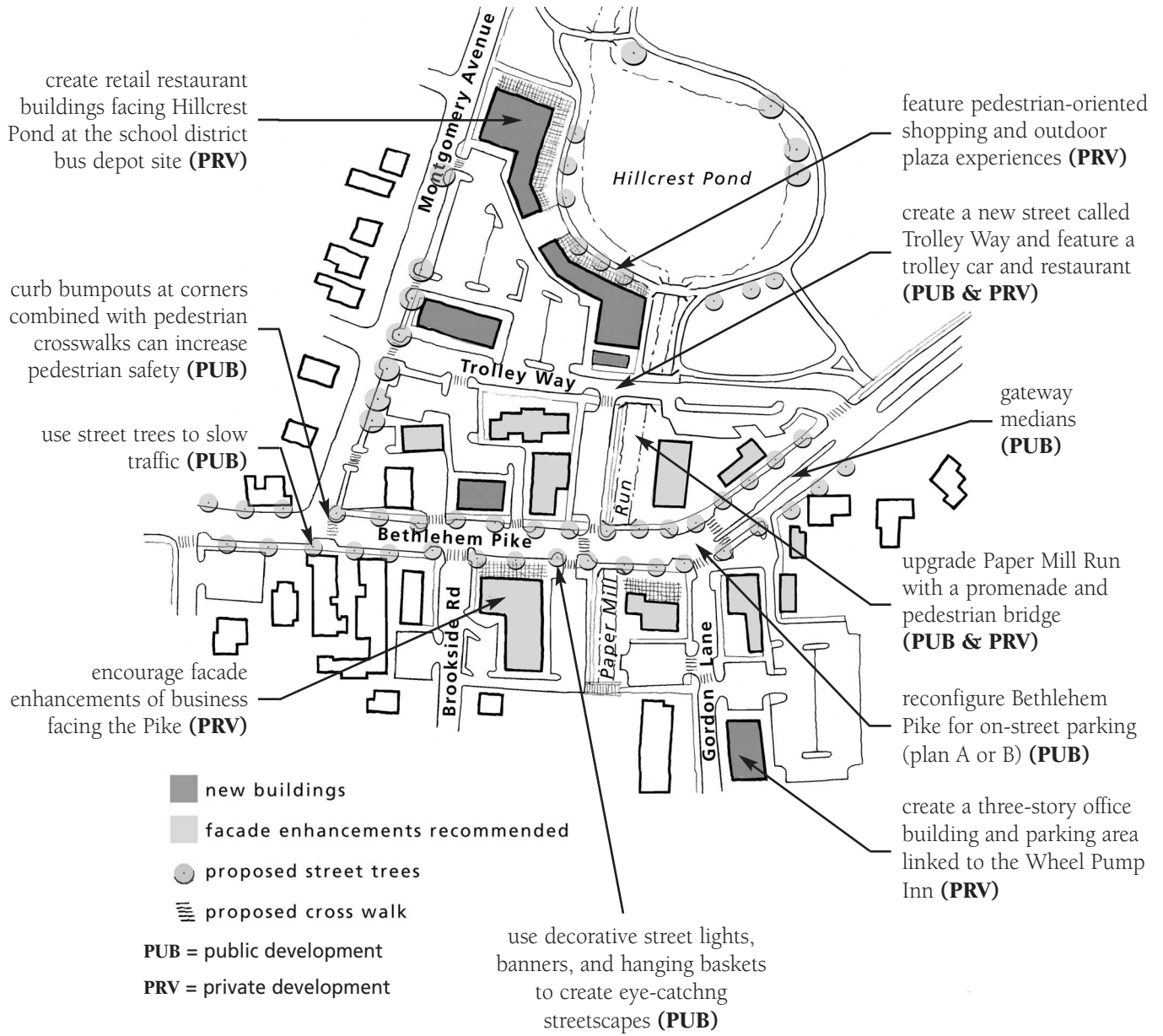
The Erdenheim Village recommendations are intended to take advantage of the existing park and the underutilized lands owned by the school district to create a destination.

- Establish gateway medians and new street trees to delineate the entrance to the corridor
- Work with the school district to eliminate the school bus depot and create in its place an exciting retail facility with pedestrian walkways facing Hillcrest Pond
- To highlight that this was once a trolley stop, create a new road called Trolley Way that provide access to other new retail development and will feature a trolley and a restaurant
- For a greater sense of destination and linkage with the adjacent park, Paper Mill Run should be improved with a pedestrian promenade and bridge
- Facade enhancements are proposed along all commercial properties facing Bethlehem Pike
- Reconfigure Bethlehem Pike to allow for on-street parking that will expand parking within the area. Curb bump-outs and street trees will also help to slow traffic
- Provide for streetscape improvements, such as banners, hanging baskets and pedestrian-scale light fixtures that will make the corridor more pedestrian-friendly

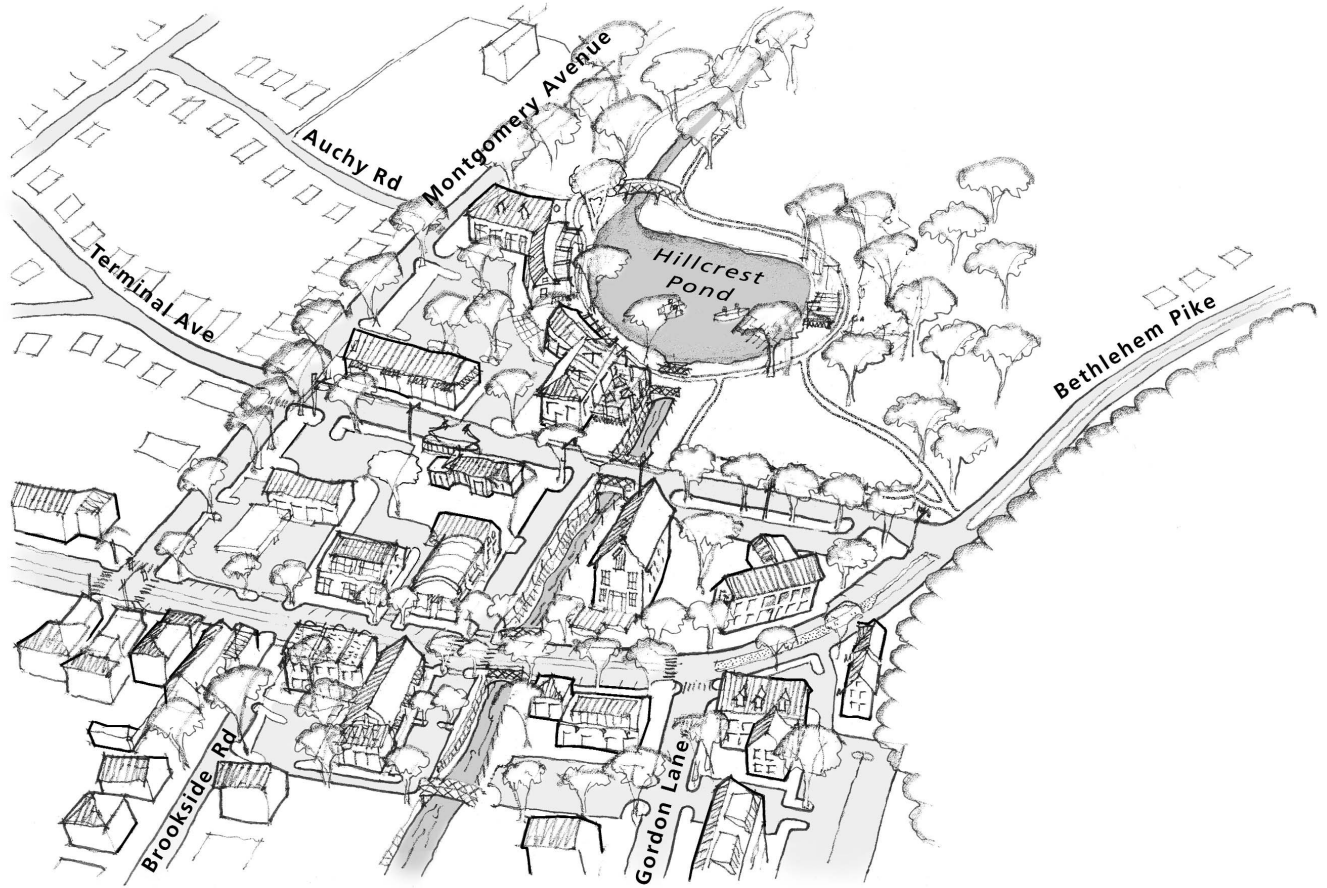
# Vision Plan for Valley Green Center



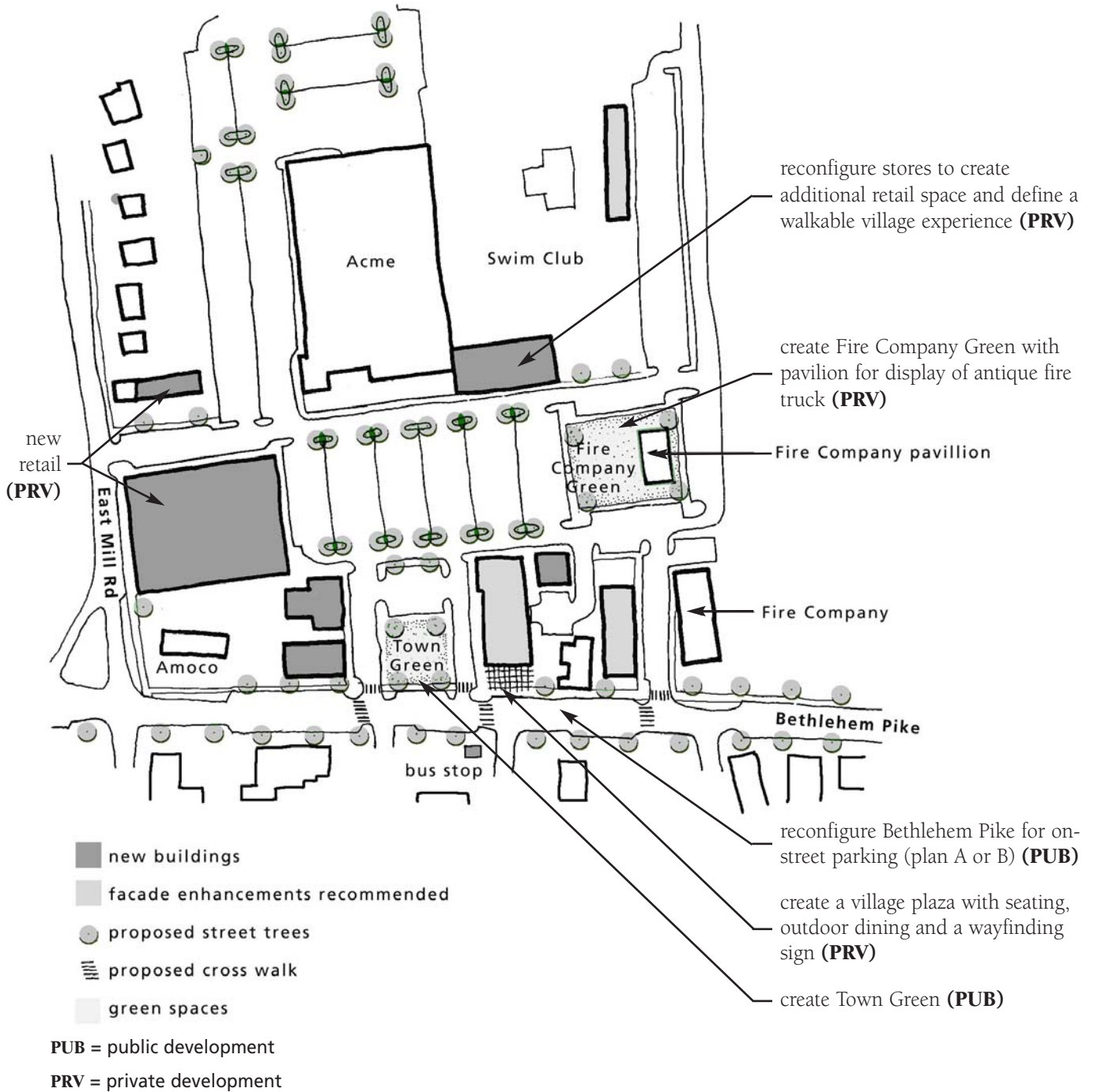
# Vision Plan for Erdenheim Village



## Aerial View of Erdenheim Village



# Vision Plan for Flourtown Village



# IMPLEMENTATION

## POLICY ISSUES

The economic development strategies identified in this plan involve five types of actions: 1) public infrastructure investment, 2) private investment in specific development and redevelopment projects, 3) civic/governmental participation in specific development projects, 4) public policy regarding zoning, design standards, historic preservation and other public regulation of development, and 5) private recruitment of retail and office tenants.

Each of these actions will be looked at in more detail and will be followed by an *Implementation Plan* that indicates the specific tasks and phasing needed to bring about the goals for Flourtown-Erdenheim's revitalization.

## PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

There are two basic areas of public infrastructure investments to be made: 1) roadway adjustments, streetscape enhancements, gateways; and 2) park and recreation facilities

*Lead participants:* the two municipalities

*Funding:* various state & federal programs; private contributions; township capital investment

*Key issues:* recreation needs programming and planning process; the need to develop phasing of improvements because the municipalities will probably need to raise money over a long period of time.

## PRIVATE INVESTMENT AND CIVIC/GOVERNMENTAL PARTICIPATION

There are several smaller opportunities for private investment, but the two key activities are the development of the front portion of the Flourtown Plaza property and the Rittenhouse Lumber property.

For the Flourtown Plaza property, the participation of the Fire Company in providing parking needs to be negotiated for lease. Then, Springfield Township needs to determine how it will modify zoning/parking/design requirements to allow extensive additional development by the Flourtown Plaza owner. This probably involves an overlay zoning initiative or some other kind of extensive control mechanism so that the nuances of the desired design and tenancy are incorporated in the development. Finally, the owner needs to recruit tenants and build the new development per the Vision Plan.

For the Rittenhouse Lumber property, the School Board needs to determine whether it will make its parcel available and when. Then a developer should be recruited to develop the two properties together. Springfield Township will need to develop guidelines with that developer to assure that the desired benefits of the project occur. It is recommended that the School Board only give the developer an option contingent on the developer getting Township concurrence with a specific site plan. Again, an overlay zoning ordinance would have to be developed.

Private investment should be able to meet the funding requirements of these two projects and also provide sufficient financing to build the parking facility in Flourtown on the Fire Company property and to beautify the creek in Erdenheim.

An additional issue is the Carson Valley School property. Planning for this property should be coordinated with Springfield Township's recreation activities plans to create a comprehensive entertainment/cultural/recreational program for the Flourtown Village Center. Financing of this project may require a public/private fundraising campaign, but that is difficult to predict at this point.

## PUBLIC POLICY

The public policy zoning strategy involves two municipalities. Public policy involves the following initiatives: recommended changes to each municipal zoning ordinance, incorporation of design standards, incorporation of an historic district, recommended changes to the subdivision and land development, and implementation through the subdivision and land development review process.

### Zoning Recommendations

In order to help facilitate the themes and design standards proposed within this Plan, the following zoning amendments should be made to each of the municipal zoning ordinances. Since many of these recommendations are specific to this area of the Township, it may be appropriate to address all of these changes within an overlay district. The overlay district standards can be designed to allow positive incentives with bonus development standards, provided that the design and architectural guidelines within this Plan are met. Standards should be designed to respond to the desired scale and purpose for commercial, office and residential uses in each area. To create a successful mixed-use shopping, office and residential district, the use of Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) principals is encouraged.

In order to adopt these changes it is recommended that each municipality adopt this Revitalization Plan as an addendum to their Comprehensive Plan so that it can become an official document. Then, upon review by each Planning Commission for each municipality, zoning amendments can be drafted for review and recommendation to their respective governing body for adoption.

Within **Springfield Township**, the following zoning changes should be made:

*Service Uses:* The by-right uses within the B-2 district permit and encourage automotive, mechanical service, and non-retail service uses within two locations that are most appropriate for pedestrian oriented village retail commercial uses. These uses within Erdenheim and south of the Flourtown Shopping Center appear incompatible with the goal of establishing a village commercial

area. These uses should be either eliminated from this district or permitted only by conditional use, special exception, or as part of an overlay district.

*Shopping Centers:* Within the Shopping-S District, if the maximum lot coverage of 30% includes all impervious surfaces, then this restriction may be unnecessarily tight. In addition, the minimum side yards for adjacent commercial districts seem unnecessarily wide.

Within **Whitemarsh Township**, the following zoning changes should be made. The by-right uses within the CR-L district permit mechanical service and non-retail service uses within locations more appropriate for pedestrian oriented village retail commercial uses. These uses should be either eliminated from this district or permitted only by conditional use or special exception.

Within **both** municipalities the following zoning recommendations apply:

*Excessive Parking Ratios:* Regarding parking requirements, most of the proposed parking ratios appear excessive and should be evaluated for reductions, especially in conditions where pedestrian access to businesses, shared parking and other multi-modal transportation methods are in use. For example, retail parking should be in the range of 4 to 5 per 1000 s.f. (not 10 per 1000), offices should be 3 to 4 per 1000 s.f. (not 5 per 1000) and restaurants should be 10 spaces per 1000sf (not 20 per 1000). The effect of overstating parking requirements is to discourage renovations and expansions and undervalue commercial real estate. It also destroys the character of the corridor.

*On-Street Parking:* At present the ordinance does not appear to offer full credit for on-street parking spaces along a property line towards fulfilling the off-street parking ratios. This is essential for many small and impulse oriented retail and restaurant purchases. In addition, there should be provisions for leasing parking from non-adjacent properties within a commercial district.

*Excessive Front Yards:* The minimum front yard setback of 50 feet appears excessive. In most cases, parking should be prohibited from the front yards and required at the side or rear. A build-to line of 10 to 30 feet is preferable in settings such as this.



This will also discourage parking in the front of the building, which is very destructive to the pedestrian character of the streetscape. In most cases the setback between adjacent buildings should be with 5 to 10 feet of the adjacent front building facade.

*Building Design Standards:* Adopting this report as an addendum to each municipal plan will allow the municipality to use these architectural design and sign standards by reference in a future overlay zoning district.

### **Historic Preservation**

The Flourtown-Erdenheim area should be included within an historic district that is administered by a local Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB). The advantages include: an overview organization (the Historic and Architectural Review Board) to provide technical support and ensure adherence of the architectural design guidelines that are recommended within this Plan; a process to limit the demolition of historic properties that may contribute to the character of the corridor; the opportunity for individual historic properties to qualify for up to twenty percent Federal tax credits for the restoration of commercial buildings; and an ultimate increase in property values.

Each municipality must complete an historic inventory of historic properties per the guidelines of the State Historic and Museum Commission in Harrisburg. Once the boundaries of the district have been approved by the state the National Park Service should be petitioned for possible inclusion as a National Register District, which is a necessary certification to qualify for the tax credits. Then upon acceptance by the State and Federal agencies, each municipality must adopt an ordinance to create the designated historic district as an amendment to the zoning ordinance and establish the Historic and Architectural Review Board.

### **Establish Funding Sources for Preservation**

The following funding strategies and sources should be evaluated to accomplish the preservation recommendations:

- Implement a Revolving Low-Interest Loan Program to create the necessary incentives for major renovation to existing buildings in need of renovation and rehabilitation
- Implement a Maintenance Grant Program to comply with the Design Guidelines and to be administered by the FEEA or the Townships
- Matching Grant to fund the premium costs associated with historically appropriate façade enhancements
- Investigate additional funding strategies for preservation and maintenance of historic properties
- Federal Tax Credits to property owners

### **Prepare and adopt amendments to the Subdivision and Land Development Regulations**

Each municipality should revise aspects of the regulations to include appropriate village buffer standards between parking and adjacent residential uses, and improved stormwater management that will preserve the village character. For example, it is recommended that all new stormwater management devices be placed underground in seepage beds so that they are not visible. This will preserve the historic character of the corridor and not create unsightly stormwater detention pits that are not suitable for pedestrian movement.

### **TENANT RECRUITMENT**

This is a private obligation. In the economic development portion of this report there are many recommendations for the type of successful tenants that should be groomed for this corridor.

## GETTING STARTED

There are many small steps that can initiate the implementation process, even before specific government action is taken. FEEA can meet with the owners of smaller properties in both Townships to encourage compatible redevelopment. This would be especially useful in the Valley Green area and between the two Village Centers. Area realtors and developers could aggressively begin compatible tenant recruitment. Individual arrangements for shared parking could be negotiated and implemented.

### Building Facades and Signs

A coordinated program of signs, facade enhancement grants, and voluntary design guidelines will assist Flourtown-Erdenheim businesses in creating and sustaining an effective sense of place that will appeal to patrons. The following policies should be adopted:

- Encourage each Township to adopt District Architectural Design Guidelines for buildings and signs.
- Initiate a facade improvement program for existing businesses. State-funded programs allow businesses to qualify for up to fifty percent of the cost of a facade improvement up to a maximum of \$5,000 per each five years.
- Strongly encourage businesses to adhere to the architectural design guidelines for all new construction.

The development of a signage program which better announces the existence of retail locations to drive-by and walk-by traffic will greatly improve the marketability of these properties and the ability of businesses to attract customers to these sites. This represents a small investment for the retailer, but the impact upon businesses and the community is major.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE FLOURTOWN-ERDENHEIM VISION PLAN

The *Implementation Strategies* Table is provided as an initial outline, with the expectation that ongoing changes will be made by the various Township

administrations to respond to community concerns, sequential construction and available funding.

### Phasing Strategy

The phasing strategy is designed to accomplish two goals: 1) Identify easily achievable projects that will have a high and visible impact upon the short term, and 2) Identify the important phases of the more ambitious projects that will require many years to implement. The project years in the phasing plan will begin once this Plan is adopted. The project years in the following table indicate the year the task will begin. As with any large multi-tasked project, the key is to enlist partners early, keep people informed, and adjust the schedule as necessary to address changing priorities.

### Implementation Partners

To coordinate implementation activities for the Plan, the following groups have been identified as potential partners with the Township:

- Springfield Township Commissioners
- Springfield Township Manager and Assistant Manager
- Whitmarsh Township Supervisors
- Whitmarsh Township Manager and Assistant Manager
- Flourtown-Erdenheim Enhancement Association (FEEA)
- Montgomery County Commissioners
- Montgomery County Planning Commission
- Local State Representative
- Local State Senator
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- Pennsylvania State Historic and Museum Commission
- Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
- National Park Service
- Federal Transportation Enhancement Programs
- Local lenders and developers
- Private land owners and business owners
- Township residents

## STEP-BY-STEP IMPLEMENTATION

It is anticipated that the bulk of the implementation strategies described within this report may take upwards of ten or more years. It is not uncommon to reevaluate the implementation plan and strategies within five year periods. Market trends will dictate changes to some of the public/private initiatives as described within this Vision Plan. Ownership changes and reinvestment of private property will also set in motion changes that will enhance the overall impact of this Plan. Even if all of the tasks defined within this report are completed, there will still be a need to continue to define new projects and further upgrade the study area.

The following is a step-by-step approach for implementing the plan.

### Year One

**Goals:** Set into motion some cost effective improvements that are readily seen so that people know the new changes are underway. Start planning the process toward a first phase of the major public improvements. Complete the regulations that will improve the opportunities for private investment.

#### 1. Planning:

**1.1 Organization:** The first objective is to organize FEEA into various working organizations that are necessary to implement the Vision Plan. It is recommended that the following sub-committees be developed. Each of these sub-committees will then report to the full board of FEEA on a monthly basis.

- *Capital Improvements Committee:* The role of this committee is to recommend contracts for professional services, such as engineering of the roadway improvements, landscape architectural design of the streetscape enhancements and town center, design of the banners, etc., coordinate and review the design details of all improvements, and review the work in progress.
- *Architectural Design Committee:* Membership of such a committee should include a realtor, architect, business owner, resident, and at least three members of the Flourtown-Erdenheim Enhancement Association (FEEA)

and a representative of the manager's office from each municipality. The role of this committee is to market the grants for façade improvements, review and further develop guidelines for architectural façade enhancements, review all grant applications for façade improvements and review the work in progress, assist in the development of an inventory of historic properties for historic preservation, coordinate with the State Historic and Museum Commission in the certification of the historic district, lobby businesses and the townships for the adoption of the establishment of an historic district and establishment of a historic and architectural review board, and review all recommendations for zoning amendments per the vision plan.

- *Economic Enhancement Committee:* The role of this committee is to set up a program to market the Flourtown–Erdenheim Corridor to the public and to prospective commercial businesses and developers. Flyers should be developed to identify all of the businesses and special events. It will be their role to identify the types of businesses that should be attracted to the corridor and work with landlords to make affordable space available. This committee may hire the services of a Main Street Manager. It will also be their role to work with area properties, the school district and each municipality to facilitate the new development recommendations identified within the Vision Plan.
- *Finance Committee:* The role of this committee will be to organize fund raising events, petition businesses and individuals for banner and lighting programs, assist with grant writing, and lobby municipal, county and state agencies for funds.
- *Improvement Committee:* The role of this committee will be to coordinate with each Townships' Shade Tree Commission on the planting of the shade trees and take ownership of a hanging basket program, banner program, and seasonal decorations.

**1.2 Revise Ordinances:** As noted within the Plan it will be necessary to revise the zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances for each of the municipalities in order to foster private development and enhancements. This should be done as soon as funds are appropriated.

**1.3 Engineering:** It is recommended that the first phase of the public street improvements include only restriping, signals, and signs. This is a cost effective method of obtaining on-street parking, even if it will be on only one side of the street. The engineering for this first phase will require three separate tasks: conceptual engineering, construction documentation, and funding coordination.

**1.4 Historic District Designation:** Each municipality should seek funds for professional assistance to develop the necessary inventory of historic properties within the Vision Plan Area. While most of this work can be achieved through the assistance of volunteers, the professional assistance will help in facilitating the process so that it is completed within the first year. Once the work is complete and the district has been approved by the State Historic and Museum Commission and the National Park Service, then each municipality will have to adopt an ordinance to create the historic districts and establish an Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) to administer the permit process.

## 2. Marketing:

**2.1 Grant Writing:** This will involve contacting county and state sources for implementation funds. Grants for economic development and street trees can be made to the county. Grants for the street, sidewalk, and streetscape enhancements should be made to PennDOT with the assistance of the local State Representatives and Senators.

**2.2 Fundraising:** There are a number of fundraising initiatives that can be developed by the community. As described above, it is recommended that there be a campaign to sell streetlights that would acknowledge the donor.

Other campaigns would be to solicit local businesses to fund street trees or hanging basket programs.

**2.3 Market the Facade Improvements:** FEEA needs to set up a sub-committee to set up the grant program with the State ( Note: This may have to be in conjunction with the Town Manager of each Municipality), begin to market the grant aspects of the façade improvements, and set up procedures for reviewing the grant requests. FEEA should also encourage businesses to contact an architect to develop the necessary documentation to obtain bids from reputable contractors and apply for a grant. As improvements are underway, make certain that it is written up in the local newspaper.

**2.4 Market New Development:** Begin the process of encouraging new businesses to implement some of the private improvements that are recommended within the Plan. It may take years to show the fruits of this labor, so it is important to plant the seed early in the program.

## 3. Implementation:

**3.1 Banners:** Design and install banners at Flourtown Village Center and Erdenheim Village Center. It is recommended that these be canvas banners at this time. It will be necessary to coordinate this with PECO since they will be installed on their utility poles.

**3.2 Street Trees:** Each municipality should apply to Montgomery County for grants for tree installation or use general funds. A goal of ten to fifteen trees per year should be set for each municipality. The first trees should be placed in those areas where the street will not require widening. If each municipality has a Shade Tree Commission, it is recommended that this work be coordinated through the individual Shade Tree Commission upon review and coordination of a Capital Improvements Subcommittee of FEEA.

**3.3 Lighting:** The community should initiate a campaign to start the installation of street lights. At a cost between \$4,000 to \$5,000, depending upon the type of light, individuals and businesses should be contacted to dedicate a

light. In addition, each municipality should have a policy to require any application for a permit for improvement or redevelopment include the installation of new light fixtures and trees as part of the improvement process. It is anticipated that approximately ten to twenty lights could be initially purchased in this method. Again, the placement of the lights should be limited to those areas where it is certain that the street will not require later widening.

## **Year Two**

**Goals:** Continue some cost effective improvements that are readily seen so people know the new changes are ongoing. Start construction of the first phase of the transportation improvements. Begin to implement the grants for façade improvements and have the HARB actively review all building permits.

### **1. Planning:**

**1.1 Engineering:** This will include construction observation for the first phase of construction.

**1.2 Architectural Review Committee:** Architectural Review Committee to review and approve grant requests for façade improvements.

**1.3 Historic District Designation:** The Historic and Architectural Review Board (HARB) to administer the permit process.

**1.4 Landscape Architecture:** Develop plans for town signs and the gateways.

### **2. Marketing:**

**2.1 Grant Writing:** This will involve contacting county and state sources for implementation funds. Grants for economic development and street trees can be made to the county. Grants for the street, sidewalk, and streetscape enhancements should be made to PennDOT with the assistance of the local State Representatives and Senators.

**2.2 Fundraising:** Continue fundraising initiatives that can be developed by the community. Target funds for two community signs; one at Flourtown and the second at Erdenheim.

**2.3 Market the Facade Improvements:** Begin the first facade improvements. As improvements are underway, make certain that it is written up in the local newspaper.

**2.4 Market New Development:** Encouraging new businesses to implement some of the private improvements that are recommended within the Plan.

### **3. Implementation:**

**3.1 Street Trees:** Continue to meet the goal of ten to fifteen trees per year to be set by each municipality. These trees should be placed in those areas where the street will not require widening.

**3.2 Lighting:** Continue the campaign for the installation of street lights. Continue the policy for each municipality to require that any application for a permit for improvement or redevelopment include the installation of new light fixtures and trees as part of the improvement process. Again, the placement of the lights should be limited to those areas where it is certain that the street will not require later widening.

**3.3 Striping, Signals, and Signs:** Coordinate with PennDOT for the new striping, coordination of the signals, and new signs for on-street parking and new pedestrian crosswalks. (Note: This would be for two dedicated travel lanes, one median lane, and one parking lane that would alternate from one side to the other.)

**3.4 Design and install the Township signs.**

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES FOR THE FLOURTOWN-ERDENHEIM VISION PLAN

Item	Initiatives/Tasks	Estimate of Prob. Cost	Responsible Organizations			Start of Task
			Sprfld Twp	Whmtrsh Twp	Organization	
<b>1.0 Planning/Engineering/Landscape Architecture Initiatives</b>						
<b>1.1 Promote the Plan</b>						
	Task 1A: Market landlords & businesses	\$8,000	●	●	FEEA	Winter 2003-ongoing
	Task 1B: Fundraising	\$16,000	●	●	FEEA	Winter 2003-ongoing
	Task 1C: Organize implementation		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Winter 2003-Spring 2004
<b>1.2 Engineering: Task One: Restriping, Signals, and Signs</b>						
	Task 2A: Phase One– Concept engineering	\$10,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Winter 2003-Spring 2004
	Task 2B: Phase One– Engineering plans	\$15,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2004
	Task 2C: Phase One– Funding coordination	\$2,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2004
<b>1.3 Engineering: Task Two: Gateway Medians</b>						
	Task 3A: Phase Two– Concept engineering	\$8,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Fall 2004
	Task 3B: Phase Two– Engineering plans	\$8,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Fall 2004
	Task 3C: Phase Two– Funding coordination	\$5,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Fall 2004
<b>1.4 Engineering: Task Three: Parking and Pedestrian Enhancements</b>						
	Task 4A: Phase Three– Concept engineering	\$8,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2006
	Task 4B: Phase Three– Engineering plans	\$12,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2006
	Task 4C: Phase Three– Funding coordination	\$5,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2006
<b>1.5 Engineering: Task Four: Paper Mill Canal Redevelopment</b>						
	Task 5A: Phase Three– Concept engineering	\$30,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2009
	Task 5B: Phase Three– Engineering plans	\$90,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2009
	Task 5C: Phase Three– Funding coordination	\$10,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2009
<b>1.6 Engineering: Task Five: Flourtown Village Storm Water Management</b>						
	Task 6A: Phase Three– Concept engineering	\$25,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2010
	Task 6B: Phase Three– Engineering plans	\$50,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2010
	Task 6C: Phase Three– Funding coordination	\$5,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2010
<b>1.7 Planning</b>						
	Task 7.1: Revise ordinances	\$8,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps PC	Fall 2003-Spring 2004
	Task 7.2: Historic District survey and certification	\$12,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps PC	Fall 2003-Spring 2004
<b>1.8 Landscape Architecture:</b>						
	Task 8.1: Phase One– Banners	\$400	●	●	FEEA	Spring 2004
	Task 8.2: Phase Two– Gateways and Town Signs	\$7,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2004
	Task 8.3: Streetscape design development	\$30,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Fall 2005
	Task 8.4: Streetscape construction documents	\$35,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2006
	Task 8.5: Streetscape funding coordination	\$5,000	●	●	FEEA & Twps	Spring 2006
<b>2.0 Public Infrastructure Initiative</b>						
<b>2.1 Bethlehem Roadway Improvements</b>						
	Task 1A: Phase One– Restripe, signals, signs	\$74,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Fall 2004
	Task 1B: Phase Two– Gateway medians	\$146,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2005
	• Design and construct Penn Oak Plaza		●		FEEA & Twp Mgr	Spring 2005
	Task 1C: Parking and pedestrian enhancements	\$891,000			FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Fall 2007
	• Reconfigure Bethlehem Pike roadway and on-street parking		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Fall 2007
	• Realign road and crosswalks in paint		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Fall 2007
	• Realign curbs, center islands, pedestrian signals		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Fall 2007

<b>2.2 Bethlehem Streetscape Enhancement Improvements</b>		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	
• Street trees	\$122,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2004-2010
• Village street lights	\$405,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2004-2010
• Corridor street lights	\$132,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2004-2010
• Banners	\$32,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2004-2010
• Planting baskets	\$48,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2005-2010
• Street furniture	\$18,000	●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2005-2010
<b>2.2 Erdenheim Enhancements:</b>				FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2008
Task 2A: Paper Mill Canal redevelopment	\$844,000	●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2008
• Rebuild Paper Mill canal paths and bridges		●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2008
• Acquire, subdivide and build the street for Trolley Way		●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2008
<b>2.3 Flourtown Village Enhancements:</b>				Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2010
Task 3A: Storm water management and Plaza	\$551,000	●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2010
Task 3B: Springfield Avenue area		●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2010
Task 3C: Sunnybrook Creek area			●	Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2010
Task 3D: Haws Lane area		●		Twp. Mgr. & FEEA	Spring 2010

### 3.0 Private Development Initiative

#### Task 3.1: Flourtown Village Center

Task 3.1A: Acme vicinity		●		FEEA	2004-2006
Task 3.1B: Fire Company vicinity		●		FEEA	2004-2006

#### Task 3.2: Erdenheim Village Center

Task 3.2 A: School Bus Depot vicinity		●		FEEA/School Dist./Twp	2006-2008
Task 3.2B: Rittenhouse Lumber vicinity		●		Township, Land Owner	2006-2008
Task 3.2C: Cisco Park vicinity		●		Township	2006-2008

#### Task 3.3: Valley Green Road Area

Task 3.3A: Trail connections			●	Township	2006-2008
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### 4.0 Recreation Initiative

Task 4.1: Rehab. Black Horse Inn for Twp. recr. uses		●		Township	2004
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### 5.0 Facade Enhancement Initiative

Task 5.1: Create Facade Enhancement Program		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Winter 2003
Task 5.2: Publish Facade Enhancement Guidelines		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Winter 2003
Task 5.3: Prequalify contractors for facade enhancement		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Spring 2004
Task 5.4: Establish facade enhancement Funding sources		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Winter 2003
Task 5.5: Establish a Design Review Process		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Winter 2003

### 6.0 Economic Development Initiative

Task 6.1: Identify suitable tenants for target properties		●	●	FEEA	Ongoing
Task 6.2: Meet with employers to coord. business retention		●	●	FEEA	Ongoing
Task 6.3: Encourage development		●		FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Ongoing

### 7.0 Public Service Initiatives

Task 7.1: Maintain communication with Penn DOT		●	●	FEEA & Twp Mgrs	Ongoing
Task 7.2: Support School District development		●		FEEA & Twp Mgr	Ongoing
Task 7.3: Support Fire Department development		●		FEEA & Twp Mgr	Ongoing

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**Totals: \$3,667,400**

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## Years Three through Ten

**Goals:** Continue ongoing improvements that are readily seen so people recognize that this is part of an ongoing process. Start the engineering of the next phase of the road improvements. Continue to implement the grants for façade improvements and have the HARB actively review all building permits. Expand the street tree planting, hanging basket program, street light and banner programs

This Implementation Plan shows how the projects can be developed over a ten year period. This schedule should serve as a guideline only and should be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

## Potential Funding Sources for Streetscape Improvements

Many of the streetscape improvements recommended for the projects identified above will require the expenditure of public money. Appropriate sources of these funds include the federal government—through PennDOT. For example, the first phase of the street improvements, such as the striping, signalization and signage, may be possible through an annual maintenance budget or through the trading of services with PennDOT with the two municipalities. Additional funding sources include the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Montgomery County, Springfield and Whitmarsh Townships. Efforts should be made through the State Representative’s office to identify commercial district streetscape improvements to be given priority for federal and state financing through the Transportation Enhancement program. Grant requests are due by end of October. State grants that could facilitate part of the effort are the Community Conservation Partnership Program with a 50% match for Planning to a maximum of \$50,000.00 or a 50% match construction to a maximum of \$200,000.00, Urban and Community

Forestry Grant can provide a 50% match for trees, Neighborhood Assistance Program, a tax credit per year to a business that sponsors a neighborhood organization in a revitalization effort.

The cost of some streetscape improvements may be significantly lessened if completed with townships’ existing road crews and equipment. A financing approach that would not require a private assessment process is for Whitmarsh and Springfield Townships to invest in certain improvements and lease them back to area merchants or property owners as a way to help cover its debt service obligations. Ornamental street lights could be purchased and installed by the Townships and the lights leased on a monthly or yearly basis to commercial district merchants in order to help recoup debt service costs. This cost-sharing approach also allows retail tenants to participate in area infrastructure improvements that their landlords are unwilling to finance. The debt service on one ornamental lighting fixture could be financed through a thirty-year tax-exempt bond.

Many of the recommended physical improvements—banners, street trees and shrubs, benches, bollards, etc.—are relatively inexpensive items that can be financed by individual participants or project sponsors.

Many of the property improvements recommended for Flourtown-Erdenheim will require the direct participation of independent, small business entrepreneurs. In order to support these efforts, it is necessary to make available affordable financing for start-up ventures and expansion/improvement projects. A below-market interest rate loan pool should be established through a local financial institution for these purposes. Private bank financing can be augmented by the Small Business Administration’s available programs, which can easily be incorporated into banks’ small business lending program.



### Potential Funding Sources for Shared Parking

The coordination of shared parking is recommended as a means to improve the access to and appearance within the Flourtown and Erdenheim areas. These types of arrangements require the joint participation of several property owners and the determination of how any improvement costs are to be distributed. In some cases, such as at the Acme site, Township participation may be required to finance necessary improvements. Local financial institutions should be approached by the Townships to determine their interest in developing a special loan program for such shared cost projects. By creating a method through which financing for a particular project is underwritten as a single loan to multiple property owners—with each participant responsible for his proportionate share of the project's cost—local banks can help expedite the process which would, typically, require each participant to individually seek his share of project financing. Additionally, this package lending approach may meet Community Reinvestment Act requirements, especially if offered at slightly discounted interest rates.

### SUMMARY

Experience in Philadelphia and other cities show that dramatic effects on retail sales have been made when improvements to property by private store owners are combined with enhancements via public investments.

What is set forth within this report is a master plan that identifies recommendations and strategies for the revitalization of the Flourtown–Erdenheim corridor for both the private and public sectors. The final design and the details of these recommendations and strategies still need to be developed as part of an ongoing process. The report identifies many new committees that will be necessary to shepherd the revitalization through the many years that it will take to implement this plan. The end result is that the Flourtown and Erdenheim communities will significantly improve their physical, economic and community value. Studies have shown that not only the businesses along the corridor are the benefactors, the adjacent residential neighborhoods benefit as well with increased property values.

