

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PHILADELPHIA
2035

CENTRAL > DISTRICT PLAN



CENTRAL DISTRICT

Building on Our Strengths

A Strong Metropolitan Center

The Central District covers 5.67 (6.4 with water) square miles and has a total population of 117,132, according to the 2010 census. The Central District —also commonly referred to as Center City—is a part of the region’s metropolitan center, which also includes a portion of University City. Center City is a highly dense, compact, mixed-use area that is the primary hub of the region’s economic, educational, and cultural activities. Center City is the home of Philadelphia’s historic core, as well as a dynamic area of growth that is attracting new residents, businesses, and visitors to the city.



A Growing Population

Philadelphia’s Central District has cemented its stature as a residential destination of choice over the past ten years. Its ability to attract new residents has transformed not only the neighborhoods within the district boundaries, but also Philadelphia’s entire population outlook. Population forecasts show that the trend will continue, with the Central District attracting 20,000 new residents over the next few decades.

The Central District grew by approximately **17,000** residents since 2000



“Eds and Meds” make up one-third of all jobs in the Central District

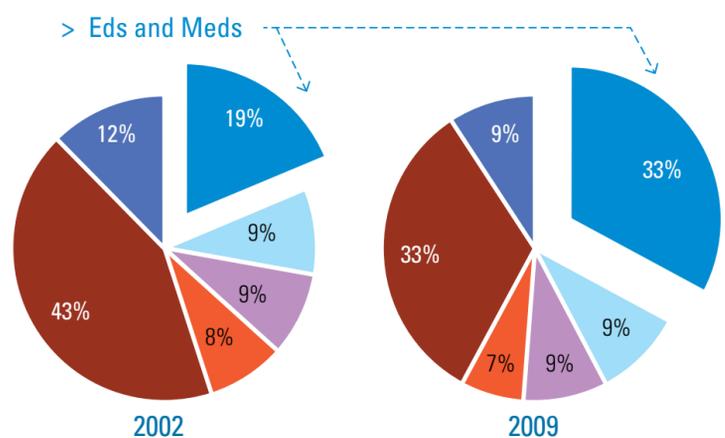
Center City and University City contain **51%** of all jobs in Philadelphia

A Changing Economy

The Central District’s economic profile bears little resemblance to the positive story of residential growth over the last ten years. Despite the growth of the Metropolitan Center as a whole, over the last few decades the Central District has seen a decline in the number of office jobs as companies have moved to the suburbs or other parts of the city.



30% of all Central District residents walk to work



- Eds and Meds
- Culture, Recreation, and Hospitality
- Industrial, Industrially-related
- Retail Trade, Other Services
- Private, Office-based Services
- Public Administration

A Diverse Transportation System

The nexus of the city and region’s transportation system sits within the Central District with all modes moving through or connecting within parts of the district. The 17th-century street grid, as first designed by William Penn and Thomas Holme, creates an environment perfectly scaled for pedestrians. Layered onto this grid are two major highways (I-95 and I-676), a growing network of bike lanes, and a public transit system that includes trains, subways, trolleys, and buses.

Legend: Central District (light blue), Citywide (dark blue). Data Sources: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Priority Recommendations

THRIVE

Center City THRIVES by providing varied housing options in diverse, mixed-use neighborhoods, strengthening its commercial corridors, and right-sizing capital facilities to serve the growing Central District population

Neighborhoods



Build a new, combined 6th and 9th Police District building on a major street north of City Hall to replace inadequate facilities

- Incorporate the Probation Office
- Include adequate structured parking to accommodate police vehicles

Expand facilities for the Free Library

- Build an addition to the Central Branch to provide additional programming space
- Move the Independence Branch to a location on Market East
- Move the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped to a new location

Land Management



Create a “No Use --> New Use!” Task Force to marshal the forces of various city offices to compel owners of high-profile, chronically vacant properties to improve or sell for development



CONNECT

Center City CONNECTS workers, residents, and visitors to places where they live, work, and play with a modern and efficient transportation infrastructure that accommodates all users—pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers

Transportation



Create a Cultural Corridor Transit Line that connects the Delaware Waterfront to the Centennial District, utilizing the City Branch Cut

Upgrade the physical appearance of 19th and 22nd Street trolley station entrances

- Prioritize real-time travel information as part of physical improvements
- Install canopies and highlight entrances

Install real-time and route information kiosks to improve the user experience at transit stations and bus shelters

Rehabilitate City Hall/15th Street subway station

Implement a bikeshare program

Re-evaluate and institute parking maximums for zoning classifications CMX-3, CMX-4, and CMX-5



RENEW

Center City RENEWS its resources by providing access to its waterfronts and recreational facilities and preserving its cultural, historic, and architectural assets

Open Space



Install new neighborhood parks and recreation facilities in underserved areas

- Create playgrounds in the Callowhill-Chinatown North / Old City area to accommodate all ages
- Support the creation of the Chinatown Community Center at 10th and Vine Streets

Rehabilitate the elevated portion of the Reading Viaduct into a neighborhood park

Historic Preservation



Invest in and rehabilitate City Hall to a level commensurate with its National Historic Landmark status

- Hire an “Architect of City Hall” to oversee all changes/renovations to the building
- Clean and restore the four entrance portals and corner stair entrances
- Explore opening some of the ground floor space for commercial use to generate revenue and animate the area

Public Realm



Extend existing streets to reinstate grid connections

- Prioritize Noble Street in Callowhill and Cherry Street from 7th to 8th Streets

Improve pedestrian connectivity around Franklin Square

- Narrow Race Street and expand sidewalk
- Improve connections to Old City (under the I-676 bridge to Wood Street)



Transforming West Callowhill's Connections

Focus Area Goals

- > Leverage transit access provided by the proposed Cultural Corridor Line to guide new development
- > Establish a consistent urban scale in the area
- > Modify key intersections to improve pedestrian access
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- > Prioritize the Callowhill Street-Pennsylvania Avenue corridor for local commercial and retail development

Revitalizing Ridge Avenue and North Broad Street

Focus Area Goals

- > Improve the public realm
 - Enhance the quality of the streetscape
 - Green the Ridge Avenue corridor
 - Build distinctive identity
- > Reinforce and leverage existing assets
 - Encourage density around transit stations
 - Position Ridge Avenue as a viable commercial corridor
 - Adaptively reuse existing buildings
 - Define connections to existing anchors



New transit line and development at Baldwin Park



Potential new development along Ridge Avenue



Redesign Reyburn Plaza to attract users



Activate City Hall Courtyard



Narrow Race Street for wider sidewalks

Unifying and Energizing City Hall Square

Focus Area Goals

- > Create a cohesive network of public spaces
- > Build on recent successes and investments: Lenfest Plaza, Dilworth Plaza, Sister Cities Park
- > Provide spaces and programs that appeal to every user group
- > Create safe environments that are active throughout the day and into the night

Connecting Chinatown to Franklin Square

Focus Area Goals

- > Restore pedestrian connections
 - Reintroduce streets
 - Narrow crossings
 - Improve crossings
- > Encourage appropriately scaled urban infill
 - Introduce a variety of parcel sizes and frontages
 - Introduce shared parking
 - Restore street walls and urban enclosures
 - Encourage street-activating ground floor uses

CENTRAL DISTRICT

> MAKING IT HAPPEN

The Central District Plan recommends next steps that Philadelphia government and its many partners can take to transform our city according to the vision set forth by *Philadelphia2035*. The City has numerous tools at its disposal to implement plan recommendations, including **zoning**, blight certifications, historic designations, grant programs, partnerships with a variety of private and nonprofit entities, and the capital budget process. The Planning Commission coordinates the creation of a six-year Capital Program each year which includes the following year's capital budget and five additional years of priority investments. *Philadelphia2035* District Plans can inform this annual process and help the city allocate resources to maximize efficiency and long-term impact.



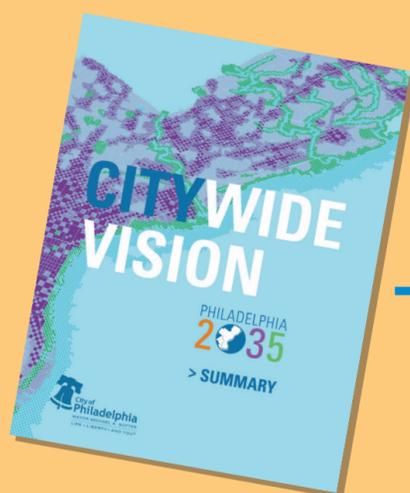
The full *Citywide Vision* and District Plans can be downloaded at www.phila2035.org

Zoning is the Planning Commission's most direct tool for influencing future development patterns and fulfilling its City Charter obligation to "guide the orderly growth of the city." After four years of input from thousands of Philadelphians, City Council implemented a more modern and predictable zoning code in August 2012. City Council and the Planning Commission can now work together and use this new code to remap areas of the city where current zoning does not align with current and future land use, and community and economic development goals. The chart below describes the major zoning recommendations of the Central District Plan.

Zoning Summary		
	Areas for Zoning Remapping	Reason for Remapping
Corrective Zoning	Multiple Areas	Align zoning to the existing land use. These areas are where the "mismatch" may cause unnecessary zoning variances or certificates, or allow an inappropriate use.
Zoning to Advance the Plan	Second Street in Northern Liberties	Create density along corridor to support commercial activity
	Callowhill Street in Logan Square	Continue development momentum with mixed uses
	Callowhill-Chinatown North, Old City, Washington Avenue	Transition from formerly industrial areas to mixed uses
	Poplar, Francisville	Create density along commercial corridor to preserve single-family areas
	Southwest Center City	Require commercial uses to preserve corner stores
	West Market Street	Allow greater density within the core of the Central Business District
	East Walnut and Chestnut Streets	Right-size development to better transition from high-rise Market Street to the rowhouse neighborhood
	Spring Garden and Girard El stops; Fairmount and Lombard-South subway stops	Support affordable housing and reduce parking in transit-oriented districts

PHILADELPHIA2035 A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION



Phase 1



Phase 2

