Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary

2018 - 2019
Allentown Comprehensive + Economic Development Plan
Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary

2018 - 2019
Allentown Comprehensive + Economic Development Plan
This document is an appendix for the 2018-2019 Comprehensive and Economic Development Plan for the City of Allentown.

ALLENTOWN VISION 2030 STEERING COMMITTEE

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Allentown Vision 2030 team would like to thank City of Allentown staff, our public, private, nonprofit, and institutional partners, the generous hosts of our Community Collaboration Meetings – the East Side Youth Center, South Mountain Middle School, JCC of the Lehigh Valley, and St. Luke’s Sacred Heart Campus - and the participants of the Allentown Vision 2030 Community Ambassador Program for your support and participation in the Allentown Vision 2030 plan development process.

Finally, we would not have the Allentown Vision 2030 Plan without the incredible participation of our Allentown community – residents, workers, youth, and all those who engaged with the plan development process through meetings, at the Community Engagement Hub, our community survey, and the many other events held throughout the planning process. Thank you for your time, your participation, your ideas and sharing your VOICE to create a shared vision and plan for the future of Allentown!
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Community Collaboration Meeting 03  
Build Sessions  
Jewish Community Center, West Allentown  
June 18th, 2019  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

BUILD SESSIONS

The third Allentown Vision 2030 Community Collaboration Meeting took place on June 18th, 2019 from 6-8PM at the JCC of the Lehigh Valley located in the West Allentown. The focus of Community Collaboration Meeting #3 was to begin to identify and prioritize the actions for Allentown Vision 2030. In addition to prioritizing actions, community members were asked to evaluate what these actions looked like across the different areas and neighborhoods in Allentown.
ACCESSIBILITY + CONNECTIVITY
The accessibility and connectivity in Allentown’s services, and amenities can help contribute to economic growth. Making it easier for people to access services and amenities can help create a more equitable and thriving city. Making it easier to move around the city - whether walking, by car, bike, or public transit - can contribute to our quality of life.

TO ACCESS OUR ZONE IN THE COMPASS/PLAN IT IS IMPORTANT TO...

1. TO A 3-way Road Conversion
2. To make sidewalks safer
3. Crosswalk improvements
4. To promote the use of public transit
5. To implement safe and efficient bike routes

01 MEETING AGENDA PAMPHLET
Attendees were given a passport or meeting agenda to encourage active listening
- general project information
- contact information
- online portal+social media handles

02 PRESENTATION
Attendees received a comprehensive summary of results from Community Collaboration Meeting 01+02 earlier in the process. Attendees were then introduced to the 5 'Urban Systems' that support Allentown’s future planning, and were created from the data and community feedback collected thus far.

03 POSTER
The community was introduced to the meeting content as they found their way into the cafeteria. Maps and analyses were mounted along the walls as a primer to the content that would be the theme for the night. It allowed for people to read through the content, verify the data and provide initial feedback on the findings.

PRIORITIZING ACTIONS
Attendees were given a set of stickers based on their self-identified ‘area’ of Allentown (i.e. East, West, Center, South) and asked to prioritize actions for Allentown’s future that relate to the 5 Urban Systems - Economic Development, Living Systems, Connectivity + Accessibility, Housing, and Services + Amenities.

ASSET MAPPING
We asked the community to tell us the places that were important to them in Allentown. This gives us a sense of perceived physical and spatial assets that they identify with the city and provide us with an inventory of significant places. During the meeting participants were given a set of stickers that represented the different types of community assets. The categories are not exhaustive, but serve as a starting point for thinking about significant places in the city. They were also encouraged to give us details about the place they are noting. Some of the things included were
- landmarks and places
- community organizations
- projects and initiatives
- festivals, events and programs
04 ACTIVITY - DISTRICT VISIONS

Community participants were seated in groups of 6 to 8 where a meeting facilitator introduced a series of activities.

1. They discussed the vision and urban systems content shown during presentation.
2. They shared strategies that they felt would best satisfy common goals.
3. They came to a consensus around a prioritized approach to one of the four district vision scenarios.

ALLENTOWN STORY MAPPING

Participants were seated in groups of 6 to 8 where a meeting facilitator introduced the icebreaker activity. Each person was asked to tell a personal story related to an important place in Allentown.

IMAGINE A FUTURE...

The responses from the ice breaker activity set the stage for thinking at the district-scale in the Main Activity. Each group was given two future scenarios describing the potential future for areas of Allentown. On each board was a set of three vision statements for one of the four areas (i.e. East, Center, West, South) of Allentown. A separate board had the following prompt:

“How/where would this change occur?”
“What would accelerate this change?”
“What would inhibit this change?”

As a group, community members were asked to respond to each of the above questions and come to a consensus on community priorities for the areas of Allentown being discussed in their group.

CENTER ALLENTOWN

IMAGINE A FUTURE...

THE AREA IS AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND LARGE ENTERPRISES

Center Allentown is a place of economic opportunity for all. ENTERPRISE SMALL BUSINESSES in the historic areas serve local residents and attract visitors to their unique offerings.

The DYNAMIC CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT serves as a major employment center, a hub for entertainment and culture, and the region’s economic driver.

IT IS A SAFE AND VIBRANT AREA TO LIVE, CLOSE TO SERVICES

The area welcomes new residents who connect to STRONG SCHOOLS AND RELIABLE SERVICES, empowering the next generation of Allentownians.

The historic housing is revitalized to provide HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING in walkable and safe neighborhoods.

THE WALKABLE STREETS GIVE PEOPLE MOBILITY CHOICES

Two of the city’s major commercial corridors, Hamilton and 7th Streets, are regional destinations attracting people for daytime and evening activities. New connections like the REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION HUB link the two corridors and provides connections across the region and to major metro areas.

ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS invite the people to explore the center of the city and surrounding historic neighborhoods and connect to new and existing green spaces.

CENTRAR ALLENTOWN

IMAGINATE UN FUTURO DONDE...

LA ZONA ES UN MOTOR DE OPORTUNIDAD ECONÓMICA PARA EMPRESAS PEQUEÑAS Y GRANDES

Center Allentown es un lugar de oportunidad económica para todos. IMPRENDEDORES PEQUEÑOS en las áreas históricas dan servicios a residentes locales y atraen turistas con su carácter único.

EL CENTRO ES DINÁMICO y sus negocios lo convierten en un centro de trabajo y zona de diversión, cultura y es un motor económico para la región.

ES UNA ZONA SEGURA Y DINÁMICA DONDE UN PUEDE VIVIR CERCA DE SERVICIOS

La zona atrae nuevos residentes y tiene buenas CONEXIONES A LAS ESCUELAS, SERVICIOS y APOYÁ el desarrollo de la nueva generación de Allentownians.

Las viviendas históricas son reconstruidas para proveer CASAS ECONÓMICAS en una vecindad segura donde uno puede caminar y disfrutar los servicios y amenidades.

LA CALIDAD DE LAS CALLES OFRECE A LAS PERSONAS OPORTUNIDADES PARA ANDAR A PIE

Las vías de Hamilton y 7th street son zonas de mayor comercio en la ciudad y abren la puerta para actividades por día y noche. NUEVAS CONEXIONES como el TRANSPORTACION REGIONAL, conecta a las dos vías y provee conexión a la región y a zonas metropolitanas mayores.

CARRILES MEJORADOS PARA PEATONES invitan a la gente a explorar el centro de la ciudad y conectar a la gente a los parques y zonas naturales.

Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary
Urban System

**ACCESSIBILITY+CONNECTIVITY**

The accessibility and connectivity to Allentown's services and amenities (i.e. parks, community centers, etc.) contribute to one's quality of life. Making it easier to move around the city - whether by walking, car, bus, or bike - and improving access to essential services and amenities can help create a more equitable and thriving city.

### Will the Following Strategies Address Our Vision for Allentown's Future?

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<td>Visible Gateways</td>
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Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary
Urban System

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Entrepreneurship is an important aspect of economic development; it creates new jobs, diversifies the local economy, and brings new life to older commercial areas. As Allentown and the region’s economy grows, there is a recognition that changes in technology and shifts in major industries may require new skills and different spatial needs of major businesses and industries.

NOTES

- Businesses to uplift an area: ie breweries, REI, Wegmans, trader joe’s
- Lower School tax on retirees
- “more organic/authentic (unique to place) development
- do more to help small folks not just big developers to create places people want to be and feel included in and proud of - not “”manufactures”” and cold corporate development”
- Housing Development as Economic Development
Urban System

**HOUSING**

Discussions about housing in Allentown are related to much more than just physical buildings; housing, and whether it is available, directly impacts the population of the city. With so much change in Allentown and the Lehigh Valley, there is a significant need to ensure a variety of different housing types that will serve all members of the population.

**NOTES**
- change zoning to include tiny houses and green building
Urban System

LIVING SYSTEMS

Allentown has already taken steps to preserve and enhance its natural systems, such as implementing a stormwater fee and investing in parks. The intersection of our natural and built environment - issues with air quality, brownfields, and noise pollution - is important to the health of our whole community.

WILL THE FOLLOWING STRATEGIES ADDRESS OUR VISION FOR ALLENTOWN’S FUTURE?

| Parks + Open Space | 46% |
| Neighborhood Clean-Up | 41% |
| Urban Ag.+Community Gardens | 36% |
| Climate Action Study | 34% |
| Energy Efficiency Programs | 30% |
| Stormwater Management | 29% |
| Design for Public Safety | 29% |
| Alternative Energy Sources | 28% |
| Green Infrastructure Planning | 27% |
| Urban Greenways | 25% |
| Green Jobs Training Program | 25% |
| Neighborhood Health Centers | 25% |
| Green Infrastructure Fund | 22% |
| Noise Pollution Mitigation Program | 20% |
| Community Health Program | 18% |
| Floodplain-zoning Alignment | 10% |

% of Participants who Prioritized this Category by Area

- Parks + Open Space: 22%
- Neighborhood Clean-Up: 20%
- Urban Ag.+Community Gardens: 20%
- Climate Action Study: 19%
- Energy Efficiency Programs: 18%
- Stormwater Management: 18%
- Design for Public Safety: 17%
- Alternative Energy Sources: 16%
- Green Infrastructure Planning: 15%
- Urban Greenways: 14%
- Green Jobs Training Program: 14%
- Neighborhood Health Centers: 13%
- Green Infrastructure Fund: 12%
- Noise Pollution Mitigation Program: 12%
- Community Health Program: 11%
- Floodplain-zoning Alignment: 10%

NOTES

- climate vulnerability assessment
- coordination on regional actions on stormwater and climate
- Do what Easton is doing to lessen the feral population - provide free spray/neuter for ferals caught humanely in human traps
- The Greenest building is the one that already exists! maintenance of existing building is critical to reducing demolition debris
Urban System

SERVICES+AMENITIES

A Neighborhood is a place where community identity is cherished and individuals are valued, respected and able to thrive. We aim to create better coordination, collaboration, and awareness between neighborhoods/neighborhood groups. There is an identified need to connect people to resources - whether physically or digitally - that address job training and job availability.

### Will the Following Strategies Address Our Vision for Allentown's Future?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>High Priority</th>
<th>Medium Priority</th>
<th>Low Priority</th>
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<td>Youth Leadership Programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homelessness Support Programs</td>
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<td>Entertainment Spaces</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plazas + Playgrounds</td>
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<td>Neighborhood-scale Planning</td>
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<td>Neighborhood Partners</td>
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<td>Non-profit Facilities</td>
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<td>Multicultural Coordinator for new + existing residents</td>
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<td>Re-entry Programs</td>
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<td>Expand Multicultural Programming</td>
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<td>Expand Multicultural Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>Financial Empowerment Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Access Programs</td>
<td>18</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Notes

- indoor playground for when it snows or rains

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Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary

### Percent of Participants who Prioritized this Category by District

- **EAST**: 24%
- **SOUTH**: 25%
- **WEST**: 27%
- **CENTER**: 12%
- **ALLENTOWN**: 20%
- **HIGH**: 40%
- **MEDIUM**: 30%
- **LOW**: 10%

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### Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary

- **High Priority**: 10
- **Medium Priority**: 20
- **Low Priority**: 40
- **Not Applicable**: 0

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**ALLENTOWN**

- **EAST**: 43
- **SOUTH**: 38
- **WEST**: 37
- **CENTER**: 30
- **HIGHEST**: 24%
- **MEDIUM**: 25%
- **LOWEST**: 12%
Imagine A Future in

EAST ALLENTOWN

Where...

CORRIDORS CREATE A TRANSIT-RICH DISTRICT
People move to the East Side of Allentown for the EASY ACCESS to the centers of Allentown and Bethlehem. The TRANSIT SERVICE on Hanover and Union increases due to higher ridership demand, and DIVERSE CORRIDOR BUSINESSES thrive and serve both the local community and the regional economy.

NEW DESTINATIONS STRENGTHEN A SENSE OF PLACE
There are more stores, businesses, and places to live near to the Hanover and Union corridors as large, underutilized parcels can be redeveloped into MIXED USE DEVELOPMENTS.

REDEVELOPMENT BRINGS AMENITIES AND IMPROVES THE ECONOMY
Large development areas like the Allentown State Hospital bring ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY AND AMENITIES, like schools, housing, commercial space, and leisure activities and connects the East Side to parks and greenways.

The new development catalyzes the adjacent community and provides ADDITIONAL REVENUE for the city.
How + Where Does the Neighborhood Change

Below is a summary + map of the participants’ ideas and priorities recorded from the “Imagine a Future” Activity for East Allentown.

HOUSING
- Mixed income housing
- Rehab old buildings
- Home ownership programs
- Affordable housing
- Control in rental increase
- Landlord training and protecting renters from abusive landlords

SAFETY AND SECURITY
- Lights in alleys and safety concerns for women at night
- Patrol and police
- Police hubs with easy access to reporting issues
- Security cameras and patrols in the streets

REVITALIZATION
- Blighted property with incentives for revitalization
- Redevelopment of factories along Front St
- Rehab for historic buildings
- Fill all buildings

TRANSPORTATION
- Improve traffic flow
- Use river as mode of transportation
- Better public transport options
- Enclosed bus terminal to include local and out of town buses

SCHOOLS + EDUCATION
- Partnership between school and community
- Connect with colleges to get more people employed
- LCTI and LCCC to offer good paying jobs and new common academy

TRANSPARENCY

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT
- Create more jobs for locals
- Local businesses
- Grocery stores
- Connection to the river, not just the waterfront
- Get access and enjoyment out of the river
- Create more business opportunities
- Offer jobs, STEM education and training, and attract visitors + businesses
WHAT COULD ACCELERATE THE CHANGE?

• Enforcement
• Thoughtful design for parking, people and connection to neighborhoods
• Transportation and people flows
• Skill training
• Funding + investment + grants
• Youth center for mentoring
• Public input, not private corps -> involving the community
• Strong campaigning programs tackling sexual harassment, rape culture, etc
• Renter’s association
• Waterfront development along river with commercial + residential + recreational
• Educational activities
• Social mobility -> remove barriers
• Smaller venues and more affordable PPL
• Increase trust
• Communication between different groups and getting rid of invisible neighborhood lines
• Working together

WHAT COULD INHIBIT THE CHANGE?

• Perception
• Resistance to change
• Better understanding of how to get around and use the parks
• Lack of investment and money
• Unattractive schools
• Hopelessness
• Shootings lack of safety?
• Not taking action and partnering together
**District Systems Strategies**

Below are the top 5 strategies for each Urban System as identified by participants thinking through the needs of East Allentown.

### URBAN SYSTEMS - OVERALL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<td>ACCESSIBILITY+CONNECTIVITY</td>
<td>Trail + Bikeway Systems</td>
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<td>Safe Routes To School</td>
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<td>Clusters of Services + Amenities</td>
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<td>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Youth Leadership Programs</td>
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Imagine a Future in
SOUTH ALLENTOWN
Where...

The South Side is a place to call home
The South Side is a community where residents connect to resources and each other and put down roots. It is known as a connected and diverse community with diverse housing and plentiful opportunities for first-time homeownership.

Redevelopment opportunities create a new neighborhood center
There are more places to work, live, and shop as the former building and parking lots on the South 4th Street Corridor are redeveloped.

W Emam Avenue and W Susquehanna Street are gradually infilled with medical offices, maker spaces, and additional service-oriented businesses that serve local residents and communities beyond city limits.

The South Side is desirable because it is well connected
The South Side residents are well connected to downtown jobs and regional employment centers via major highways, transit, and trail routes.

Safe pedestrian and bike routes connect residents to Center City Allentown, and improvements to the parks and trails connect the neighborhood to the Little Lehigh Creek and rail-to-trail regional pathways.

Community Priorities
1. Affordable Housing Fund
2. Pathways to Homeownership
3. Youth Leadership Programs
4. Homelessness Support Programs
5. Shelters
6. Cultural Spaces
7. Urban Ag.+Community Gardens
8. Climate Action Study
9. Parks + Open Space
How + Where Does the Neighborhood Change
Below is a summary + map of the participants’ ideas and priorities recorded from the “Imagine a Future” Activity for South Allentown.

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES**
- More green spaces
- Halt development to maintain space for wildlife
- City parks for animals
- Sustainable Buildings and more communal spaces.
- Coca Cola Park and surroundings

**IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE**
- Affordable homes - for ownership and rentals
- Compost Toilets - Aesthetically pleasant designs
- Proper protection of existing green spaces and wildlife
- Financial Education for youth, Youth Centre

**INCREASE IN ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES**
- More shops, restaurants, parkways and state hospital
- Bike trails
- Boating facilities in existing water bodies

**REVITALIZATION**
- Painting jobs for existing facades
- Keck Park improvements
- Union Boulevard set up for tourists

**TRANSPORTATION**
- Access to transit, direct routes to jobs
- Improved bike trail
- Better sidewalks on roads, more crosswalks
WHAT COULD ACCELERATE THE CHANGE?

- Creation of new reservoir
- Prevent overbuilding
- Community repair hubs that repurpose items
- Better roads - dedicated bike lanes, clear signage, pedestrian friendly
- Subsidies for transit users
- More on street surveillance
- Public educational institutions
- Grocery stores, farmers markets, neighborhood gardens
- Hanover Ave + American Plaza need speed bumps to slow down traffic
- More pocket parks
- Pedestrian bridges over Hanover
- Use railroad row for better connection from south A-town to Bethl. (light rail)

WHAT COULD INHIBIT THE CHANGE?

- Lack of funding
- Limited water resources/sewer infrastructure
- Unplanned zoning changes
- Buying properties designated to be sanctuaries and parks and converting them
- Poor construction in the name of affordability
- Loss of potential at Allentown Centre (State Hospital) due to state interference
- Resistance from current residents
- Railroad right of way issues
- Abandoned buildings
- Cost for developing water-sewer services
Below are the top 5 strategies for each Urban System as identified by participants thinking through the needs of South Allentown.

### ACCESSIBILITY+CONNECTIVITY
- **Trail + Bikeway Systems**: 7
- **Safe Routes To School**: 6
- **Clusters of Services + Amenities**: 5
- **Complete Streets Program**: 5
- **Streetscape Improvements**: 4

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- **Training+Education Programs**: 6
- **Cultural Districts**: 6
- **Retail Pop-ups**: 6
- **Office Co-ops**: 6
- **Activate Public Places**: 5

### HOUSING
- **Affordable Housing Fund**: 9
- **Pathways To Homeownership**: 6
- **Shelters**: 6
- **Single Family**: 5
- **Multi-family Housing**: 5

### LIVING SYSTEMS
- **Parks + Open Space**: 8
- **Urban Ag.+Community Gardens**: 8
- **Climate Action Study**: 8
- **Neighborhood Health Centers**: 7
- **Alternative Energy Sources**: 6

### SERVICES+AMENITIES
- **Youth Leadership Programs**: 11
- **Homelessness Support Programs**: 11
- **Cultural Spaces**: 9
- **Expand Multicultural Programming**: 7
- **Food Access Programs**: 7
Imagine A Future in **WEST ALLENTOWN**

Where...

The area is known for innovative arts, education, and medicine

People come to West Allentown for its **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER, WELCOMING NATURE,** and its **ACCESSIBILITY** to community institutions and local businesses and services.

The area hosts **PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT INNOVATION** in education, medicine, and the arts.

The West End is connected with new infrastructure

New businesses and residences are woven into the neighborhood fabric with **SAFE, WALKABLE, AND BIKEABLE** connections and a greenspace network.

On the corner of 17th St and Chew Street is a new **MULTIMODAL HUB** that encourages pedestrians, cyclists and public transit use.

There are places for creative culture to thrive

West Allentown celebrates the city’s culture with **AFFORDABLE AND ACCESSIBLE CREATIVE SPACES** for residents and visitors.

The Theater District is vibrant with new offices, co-op spaces, and creative production/maker venues in existing and new buildings.
How + Where Does the Neighborhood Change

Below is a summary + map of the participants’ ideas and priorities recorded from the “Imagine a Future” Activity for West Allentown.

HOUSING
- Mixed income housing
- Rehab old buildings
- Affordable housing
- Control in rental increase
- Landlord training and protecting renters from abusive landlords
- Divided opinions on % of homeowners and rentals

INCREASE IN ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES
- Non profit art spaces. Art trails
- Theatres
- Community centers for senior citizens with organized activities

IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE
- Assets, educational institutions in neighborhoods
- Expand arts district - Integrate with neighborhoods up to Sumner Ave
- Continued growth of Muhlenberg is a possibility

REVITALIZATION
- Revitalization of blighted properties
- Expand streetscape investments (beyond 19th st)
- Preserving community identity
- Revamp farmer’s market area
- Cleaner streets, less littering

TRANSPORTATION
- Cohesive integration of all areas
- Bike + bus transit improved esp. to downtown - frequent and convenient
- Bike tours to center city

SCHOOLS + EDUCATION
- Assets, educational institutions in neighborhoods

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT
- Increase density in business districts
- Convert vacant business spaces to incubators

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION WEST TO CENTER CITY “RENTABLE SCOOTER?”

NEED GREENSPACE+PARK

BAD INTERSECTION

HOW TO CONNECT TO THEATER DISTRICT?

PARKWAY SPEED BUMPS?

HOW DO WE MAKE THIS CONNECTION?

CLEAN UP PARKS: BASKETBALL SAVES UP BREY
WHAT COULD ACCELERATE THE CHANGE?

- Increased traffic on 22: improved intersections
- Community + schools working together to develop pride in the neighborhood
- New cultural hub
- Restoration of the fair ground stores
- Better connectivity to non vehicular spaces
- Shuttle services, bike lanes, more frequent buses
- Additional playgrounds for children
- Pedestrian safety passes and crosswalks
- Smaller grocery in the neighborhood
- Frequency of transport
- Homelessness rescue services
- Incentivize affordable housing with portable state or federal economic development funding pools
- Landlord training programs
- Change policy on tree maintenance - shift responsibility to city
- Neighborhood cleanups incentivized for residents and students
- More community use of university facilities
- Work with Allen high school to help build out cultural and maker spaces in district

WHAT COULD INHIBIT THE CHANGE?

- Fear of unstable elements moving through southside
- Lack of funding
- Bureaucracy issues
- Socio economic disparity
- Lack of affordability
- Lack of community Vision and Support
- Poor management of housing facilities
- Poor code enforcement
- Vacancy along Fairground on Liberty
- Improper management of parking with expansions
District Systems Strategies
Below are the top 5 strategies for each Urban System as identified by participants thinking through the needs of West Allentown

**URBAN SYSTEMS- OVERALL**

**ACCESSIBILITY+CONNECTIVITY**
- Trail + Bikeway Systems
- Safe Routes To School
- Smart City Equipment
- Streetscape Improvements
- City-wide Mobility Study

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**
- Training+Education Programs
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- Adaptive Reuse
- Opportunity Zones
- Second Language Programs

**HOUSING**
- Affordable Housing Fund
- Affordable Housing Overlay
- Senior Housing
- Single Family
- Multi-family Housing

**LIVING SYSTEMS**
- Climate Action Study
- Stormwater Management
- Green Infrastructure Planning
- Energy Efficiency Programs
- Parks + Open Space

**SERVICES+AMENITIES**
- Homelessness Support Programs
- Youth Leadership Programs
- Community Leadership Training
- Cultural Spaces
- Plazas + Playgrounds

**Appendix:** Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary
Imagine A Future in
CENTER ALLENTOWN
Where...

THE AREA IS AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR SMALL BusINESSES AND LARGE ENTERPRISES
Center Allentown is a place of economic opportunity for all. ENTERPRIISING SMALL BUSINESSES in the historic areas serve local residents and attract visitors to their unique offerings.

The DYNAMIC CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT serves as a major employment center, a hub for entertainment and culture, and the region’s economic driver.

IT IS A SAFE AND VIBRANT AREA TO LIVE, CLOSE TO SERVICES
The area welcomes new residents who connect to STRONG SCHOOLS AND RELIABLE SERVICES, empowering the next generation of Allentownians.

The historic housing is revitalized to provide HEALTHY AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING in walkable and safe neighborhoods.

THE WALKABLE STREETS GIVE PEOPLE MOBILITY CHOICES
Two of the city’s major commercial corridors, Hamilton and 7th Streets, are regional destinations attracting people for daytime and evening activities. New connections like the REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION HUB links the two corridors and provides connections across the region and to major metro areas.

ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS invite people to explore the center of the city and surrounding historic neighborhoods and connect to new and existing green spaces.

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES
1. Neighborhood Clean-Up
2. Parks + Open Space
3. Community Educational Facilities
4. Youth Leadership Programs
5. Urban Ag.+Community Gardens
6. Plazas + Playgrounds
7. Neighborhood-scale Planning
8. Entertainment Spaces
9. Trail + Bikeway Systems
10. Community Leadership Training
11. Non-profit Facilities

Allentown Comprehensive and Economic Development Plan
How + Where Does the Neighborhood Change
Below is a summary + map of the participants’ ideas and priorities recorded from the “Imagine a Future” Activity for Center Allentown.

HOUSING
- More residential units - mixed use over only businesses
- Re-purpose buildings to provide housing for low income individuals

INCREASE IN ENTERTAINMENT ACTIVITIES
- Dog parks
- Water Park
- Community Centre
- Improve parks

IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE
- Health Care
- Industrial land use for jobs
- 78 highway entrance needs a grander entrance.
- More welcoming neighborhoods

SAFETY AND SECURITY
- Better sidewalks on roads, more crosswalks
- Better signage regarding stop signs, speed limits etc

REVITALIZATION
- Reviving the southside mall
- Beautification of existing parks
- Make the area look more appealing because of the number of businesses
- Empty stores in strip malls

TRANSPORTATION
- Connectivity of the airport to the city
- Access to transit, direct routes to jobs
- Dedicated bike lanes
- Better sidewalks on roads, more crosswalks
- Sharrows more bike friendly

SCHOOLS + EDUCATION
- Public schools
- Computer labs

BUSINESS AND DEVELOPMENT
- Walkability to businesses and restaurants
- Local employment opportunities

NEW SCHOOL, CRACKDOWN ON CRIME, INSPECTING HOUSES, UPGRADE AND ENFORCE CODE AND QUALITY OF LIFE, THERE IS OPPORTUNITY BUT ALSO ISSUES A FEW BLOCKS AWAY

MORE DIVERSE SHOPPING AND CLOTHING
WHAT COULD ACCELERATE THE CHANGE?
• Have a distinct outside identity for the community
• Political role and collaboration
• A south Allentown high school
• Placing more successful businesses in needed areas
• Improved housing with affordable payments
• Repurpose old vacant buildings
• Investors
• Work with businesses to promote aesthetic building or add murals
• Take advantage of grants from state + federal governments
• More partnerships with local organizations and agencies
• Youth counseling programs
• Suggestions for use of empty structures as high ROI opportunities
• Involving and communicating with locals
• Support on low interest loans to homeowners for improvements
• Opening up waterfront for community
• Creative uses for air field
• Community gardens
• Activating the streets with benches and similar interventions
• Communal activities organized periodically

WHAT COULD INHIBIT THE CHANGE?
• Lack of funding
• Condition of the river road
• Lack of cooperation and involvement
• Fear of change
• Effects on online industry on retail
• Traffic gridlock
• General negativity in the community
• Senior Leadership shifting focus from mission to control
• Lack of commitment
• Reputation of Allentown regarding crime rates
• Vast vacant areas in strip town
District Systems Strategies

Below are the top 5 strategies for each Urban System as identified by participants thinking through the needs of Center Allentown

### ACCESSIBILITY+CONNECTIVITY
- Historic Preservation Tax Credits
- Pathways To Homeownership
- Neighborhood Clean-Up
- Community Educational Facilities
- Plazas + Playgrounds

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
- Innovative Housing Fund
- Elderly Housing
- Design for Public Safety
- Parks + Open Space
- Second Language Programs

### HOUSING
- City Wide Mobility Study
- Complete Streets Program
- Affordable Housing Fund
- Mixed-use Housing
- Energy Efficiency Programs

### LIVING SYSTEMS
- Trail + Bikeway Systems
- Safe Routes To School
- Streetscape Improvements
- City-wide Mobility Study
- Complete Streets Program

### SERVICES+AMENITIES
- Citywide Mobility Study
- Complete Streets Program
- Affordable Housing Fund
- Mixed-use Housing
- Energy Efficiency Programs

### SERVICES+AMENITIES
- Community Educational Facilities
- Youth Leadership Programs
- Entertainment Spaces
- Plazas + Playgrounds
- Neighborhood-scale Planning

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Appendix: Community Collaboration Meeting 03 Summary
Asset Map

IN ALLENTOWN...

The Asset Map reflects community input from Community Collaboration Meeting #1 (November 2018), Community Collaboration Meeting #2 (February 2019) and Collaboration Meeting #3 (June 2019). The areas that have the most responses reinforce feedback from other investigative exercises: there is a large emphasis on Hamilton Street, mainly in the downtown area between 12th and 4th Streets which encompasses many of the City’s services and larger entertainment spaces (i.e. PPL Center, Symphony Hall, Art Museum, and Public Library) as well as the NIZ. The Allentown park system has been emphasized as a resource and asset in neighborhoods across the city.

There were some clusters taking shape that show places outside of the downtown and the parks system that are also significant to the identity of the City. The area around Tilghman and 7th Streets noted a few assets for the community and families. Hanover Avenue on the East Side also had a few notes, particularly around the East Side Youth Center.

Overall there seems to be a good mix of asset types around the city; however, there is notably less quantity and variety on the East and South sides. This doesn’t speak to an inherent lack, but rather a possible disconnect between participants and these areas. It is interesting to note that some assets listed are not within the Allentown City limits, supporting the idea that Allentown encompasses more than what is within the municipal boundary.
ARTS AND CULTURE
This category generally spoke to the places that artists display their work but only had one comment about the production of art. It was also one of the more geographically specific category. There is a strong cluster in the Arts District about Court Street that is the result of new capital funding via the NIZ. There is a second cluster in the West End Theater District on 19th Street.
1. I love the Davinci Science Center
2. West Park
3. I love the 19th Street Theater
4. Artist Studio
5. Art Museum
6. Wonderful Museum
7. Alternate Gallery: bring more events and funding
8. America on Wheels
9. Art Museum
10. Arts Walk
11. Love the Art Museum
12. Light + Art Walkway or Street Musicians
13. Saved theater civic restored
14. Great cultural site

COMMUNITY AND FAMILY
This category was by far the most varied in terms of what was noted but they can be categorized into two groups. The first is civic institutions such as parks, and libraries that allow for passive activities and are free. The second group includes institutions that support more active events and activities such as the YMCA, sports clubs, or concerts. Most of this category was located in Center City within the NIZ but also at 7th Street.
1. YMCA
2. YMCA
3. -
4. -
5. Community Sports
6. -
7. Park and Library
8. -
9. -
10. -
11. Boys and Girls Club: brings everyone together
12. Community Bike Works
13. -
14. -
15. -
16. -
17. Library
18. Church and Family
19. Art Walk Weekly: bring cultural festival
20. Community
21. 3rd Day Worship Center
22. Love my Midway Manor Camry Community
23. I love Coca-Cola Park!
24. Community Bike Works East Side
25. Phantoms Hockey
26. Allentown Rescue Mission
27. The Caring Place Youth Mentoring
28. Boys + Girls Club
29. Boys + Boys + Girls Club
30. Bring more family friendly events-free
31. -
32. -
33. -
34. -

MAINSTREET AND STREETSCAPE
This category pointed out anchor institutions and characteristics that defined major throughways in the city.
1. Franklin Park
2. -
3. Bridge has a good amount of foot traffic
4. A&C
5. Sacred Heart
6. 3rd Day Worship Center
7. American Parkway Welcoming
8. Night Vibes in Architecture
10. Diversity
11. -

RETAIL AND BUSINESS
This category also reinforces Hamilton Street and 7th street as commercial corridors. It is interesting to note that other than Assembly 88, almost all the things highlighted were food related. The presence of smaller but more customer oriented retail seems to be the clearest indicator, for the public, of economic activity.
1. Luna’s Bakery
2. Giant Supermarket Plaza
3. Assembly 88
4. More Business Opportunity
5. Aci Halal
6. I love Hijinx Brewery
7. Actlalal Turkish Food
8. Readren Supports local Farm Community
9. Shanish Bakery Coal. good diversity
10. -
11. -

RECREATION AND GREENSPACE
This category was probably the most straight forward in terms of the areas that were called out. It is clear that the parks in Allentown are an ingrained part of the City’s identity. So much so that most of the comments went beyond an inventory of existing assets, but strong sentiments about how to improve on those assets. The most frequent requests being greater connectivity, maintenance, and the introduction of more activities.
1. Lehigh Parkway: running, biketrails
2. <3 Rose Garden
3. -
4. Cedar Beach Park
5. Love Trexler Park
6. Important because it seems to attract use
7. Water! want to get here easier
8. Cedar Beach Park
9. ESYC
10. Roosevelt Park
11. Parks- Safe + Outstanding
12. Keck Park
13. Buckey Boil Park
14. Stevens Park
15. Trexler Park Bring Events + Concerts/Connect Rose Garden + Trexler- Build sidewalks
16. A Fantastic Park
17. Lehigh Parkway trails/ Biking
18. Parkway- Want to connect here
19. Lights on the Parkway
20. Sleigh Riding should be developed
21. Playground broken swings need to be fixed
Allentown

STORY MAPPING

CENTER CITY
I love the diversity that I experience just in the few blocks around my neighborhood. Seeing neighbors hangout on their steps and porches.

CENTER CITY - BETWEEN OUR APARTMENT AND DOWNTOWN
I love the diversity my husband and I experience when we walk our dogs in our neighborhood. Children playing in the alleys. Families playing cards on their front porches. Different languages and styles of music.

ALLENTOWN FARMER’S MARKET
Food, merchants, bargains, unique, vibrant, historic, community

CIVIC THEATRE
Movies (not run of mill), ambiance, historic, community

WEST PARK
Band, concerts, ambiance, historic, community

SAFE+WELL LIT PARKS+RECREATION AREAS
As I walk around Center City I miss the beautiful parks where they are well lit and have lots of children + adults enjoying the outside.
Perhaps during the holiday set up vendors in tents to emphasize where the parks are located!
People working downtown need a safe + bucolic neighborhood park they may visit

WEST END
Love the west end (and Allentown) park system. My wife and I walk through the Rose Garden and see people from all neighborhoods enjoying the space.
*Thank you Generi/Trexler!

East Side Parks
SouthSide Culture
DEDONA PARK
This is a beautiful park, but surrounding it aren't great walkways. Esp. on Reading Rd. Needs to be safer for children. And the park should have more activities for them and the community.

South  More large production with jobs and manufacturing
East  Waterfront Activities. Boating?
East  Spat Hotel @ Mental Hospital

HOME
I like my home because in my house I live with my little brother and bigger sister mom and dad and I feel safe at home with my turtles and I love them so much.

COMMUNITY BIKE WORKS
My Allentown Story is about how so many people - of all ages, races and genders - come together to learn from each other and build a better community. We are working in our near west neighborhood to build bikes, and also build connections that will help create more homes for people, including all families, who need it most.

DIERUFF COMMONS AREA
I like the commons because there is a lot of stories to be told there is a lot of different opinions and visions to see.

COMMON/SIMPLICITY
I go all over the city. It’s home. It’s common place.

COMMUNITY BIKE WORKS
Once upon a time, doing bikes

EAST ALLENTOWN
My east Allentown story how i like there is parks in the neighborhoods.

MIDWAY MANOR- EAST SIDE
First home w/family

THE LIBRARY/ PARKS
Lots of great programming I always loved the libraries because of the blessing of so many books to choose from, but now there’s socrates cafe and so many other events as well.

I love the parks and the overwhelming amount of free concerts

LEHIGH PARKWAY + PARKS (ASSORTED)
I am a runner/walker and enjoy running/ walking along the river and through/ around the parks. We are blessed to have these beautiful spaces in our city

DOWNTOWN
I love to see the (Grease?), but I’m disappointed in the Palclub. I love all the activity, the new storefront on 7th st. makes me feel like a growing community.

REFUGEE COMMUNITY CENTER
2015  When the Episcopal Church of the Mediator was looking for a new ministry in our neighborhood, we learned that there were quite a few refugees in our neighborhood. Now every Tuesday and Thursday morning and evening refugees from Syria, Sudan, Eritrea, Afghanistan ... (incomplete)

CENTER CITY ALLENTOWN ART MUSEUM
First full time position in my field

PARK SYSTEM
Parkway: Work out, run, enjoy large park within large city, fresh water fishing, truly a resource for the community. Provides green space.

LA FITNESS (SAUNA)

SACRED HEART HOSPITAL
A place where community SVC agencies and groups can schedule forums, mtgs, and workshops free of charge

SLIGHTLY WEST OF CENTER CITY
I was raised in North-Center City, but would love to walk westward for middle + HS. I always imagined living on the West End

Growing up North Center City every Saturday walking to town- Hessie, Lehie, Zollingere Nice to see downtown thriving again

CHURCH
Most of the time after work it’s church. My first one was on Turner St between 2nd and Ridge Tt. My recent is in the South Side.

Church for me is important because in many ways you contribute to your community better and serving the lord’s commission too.

D+L TRAIL
It’s where I run and bike by myself + with friends. It’s where we’re to connect to other areas of the city and Lehigh Valley. It’s where we can provide a safe, enjoyable place to recreate and see one another.
CENTER CITY (PUERTO RICO)
I’m part of the Puerto Rican diaspora that’s currently living in the US because of the fiscal crisis in the island.
I moved to Allentown in the summer of 2016, lived in NY for a year and moved back. My goal is to serve my PR community here since I can’t do it at home.

PARKWAY
Live riding my bike on trails. Great nature setting. Tons of animals. Love the green space/fresh air.

ALLENTOWN MASONIC TEMPLE
I first started going here in 1975, when I joined Allentown Demolays of Masonic Youth group that met in the building. In 1980 I was a state officer for PA Demolay and in 1982, I became a Mason and an advisor for the Demolay chapter. In 2015, I became chairman of the advisory council. Now, 4 yrs later, I am still involved in activities there.

Center City  a vibrant creative bustling city of arts, business, shopping + recreation
East  a self contained city within a city
South  a green reserve of recreation and community

CENTER ALLENTOWN
Riding my bike

RIDGE - IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Living in the deep west end (30th st) it was very different and an immersive experience going to church on Sundays on Ridge St between 1st + 2nd. A very different landscape compared to my home. People, buildings, streets, food signs, etc. Culture change form my norm. That church was where my parents were married. Where we went to street fairs. Socialized. Had family functions. And put me into downtown Allentown and broadened my horizons.

(NEW?) ALLENTOWN
When my mom was too sick to take care of me (I was locked out) I was walking home from there. My friends pulled up at 2 am offered me a place and a ride and food. It let me know even if things are bad- there’s still a silver lining

ALLENTOWN (RLCC)
Pops
C4C
I joined RLCC because I looked after my pops. While looking after him I become enrolled with C4C and started my community work. RLCC is in the heart of Allentown is all about + for the community.

RECIROCITY RESOURCE CENTER
For the past 17 years I had a vision to create a community resource center. As of the past year and a half we have been providing tons of youth & family resources & rehoused 6 displaced individuals & currently are serving over 15 families. Currently working on serving individuals in recovery.

TROUT CREEK PARK
When I was younger my dad would take my brother and I on bike riding trails. It was fun to be outside and enjoy riding around especially through the creek. Now I wish they would add more trails.

MY HOME
I was born in the home I in now. Although I moved away to college + (?) lived in (north then?) for 20yrs. My mom lived in this home + I often come home on weekends. When my mom passed she left me the home + I have lived there for 20 years. My roots, my anchor, a sense of place and safety +(?)

FRONT STREET - UKRAINIAN CLUB AREA
My great great grandfather came from the Ukraine to help build St. Mary’s Orthodox Church. My grandparents, and great uncles helped build the Ukrainian Club. When I was a child, I would hang out with the Babas while they decorated eggs or made pierogies. From there I learned about my heritage but also about Neuweiler Brewery, Egypt Star Bakery, swam in the lehigh river, fished in the lehigh canal, and eventually bought groceries at Elias Market. The Ukrainian club was my childhood gateway to some of Allentown’s iconic placed outside of Hamilton St.

Many migrant families arrive around Front St and move westward as they the social ladder.
CANNON’S @ 9TH & LIBERTY
Not a remarkable place to look at, but was Maxim Magazine’s “Best Dive Bar in America” circa 2002(ish)
Authentic places that embody the vibe of a neighborhood or place grow - they can’t be made by a developer.

UNION BAPTIST CHURCH
The open door for the community throughout the 73rd year, for eating, sharing and living to the community wide not only for the congregation of Union, but most importantly the community at large.

WEST END
I enjoy walking my community, walking to the people and simply enjoying the city.

RIVERFRONT CIVIC ASSOC. (1 & 6 WARDS)
Unique combination of cultures, churches, schools, history

WEST END
Born + Raised here, shopped downtown with mom, lived in various suburban areas
The revitalization of downtown is important to me. Would like to be able to enjoy downtown like the old Hess’s + Leh’s days
I want to see the west end preserved and not go down hill like the other areas

PARKING HOUSING
I live Leigh Pwy Mullewberge w.a-town. N.12th st.

JCC
Our children were raised in this building, starting as babies, to nursery school + Kindergarten. They played sports here + went to camp. Also, we’ve had many family events here.

TREXLER PARK
I have run, walked and sar in Trexler Park. I sit on the overlook and “talk” to General Trexler - thank him for the park and the trust dollars to keep it beautiful. I always wanted to have a piece of land - Trexler Park fits that need for me- without the maintenance work.

TREXLER PARK, CEDAR BEACH, LEHIGH PARKWAY
The opportunity to have large, green, public open spaces within walking distance (or a very short drive) of out home is a huge priority for me. These spaces prove a place to walk, experience nature and calm. They also provide valuable habitat (somewhat interconnected) for wildlife. I also appreciate that while some of these areas are landscapes and “manicured” others are very natural.

SCHOOLS - MUILENBERG, TREXLER, ALLEN
Our son went through the ASO. The schools were a very important part of his life (as well as ours)
Civic theater has been an integral part of our lives.

SAINT MARY & ST. BISHOP COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH - SCHWARTZ BY THE (?) CENTER, AMC.
I love going to church every Saturday evening to prepare and bare the holy bread for the kids to have before sunday church.
I love helping out with landscaping and cleaning the church
Meeting friends, pray, and have fun
Prepare for each year’s festival. Make food & share.

CEDAR BEACH PARK + OUR HOUSE IN SOUTH STREET
It’s the first park I ever visited in the USA since I got married and came to live here
It’s the first place I lived in after I got married

RIVERFRONT CIV ASST 1+6 WARDS
Coming from a big city like Philly, Allentown is more of a town

UNTITLED
When I visit Allentown I for impress with the agriculture, park and museum and the diversity

ALLIANCE HALL
Alliance hall is a place in Allentown that is a 2nd home for me. We host our leadership workshops there. I have the privilege of working with our youth inside the walls of alliance hall. We laugh, we have fun, we cherish each other and we educate our youth.
CEDAR CREST PARK
Walking in the park activities at Cedar Beach + Cedar Crest College

UNTITLED
I love to walk the parks, walk to groceries and restaurants and bike to work. Allentown West End is a wonderful place to live! Great neighbors, neighborhood picnics and caring people

LEHIGH PARKWAY - FISH HATCHERY
I have always enjoyed the Fish Hatchery and taking my children and grandchildren there to spend time outdoors. I was a short drive and it was a beautiful place to go.

LCCC
Why this place.. Easy. When I came here from PR I was speaking only English bit when I went to LCCC I learned how to communicate and also opened doors for me better.

AS + KID WEST END
Love our city! Enjoy the access to many things, places and markets/
Our church is in center city. Even though, I no longer reside in the city I’m frequently here.

:) Alex

DOWNTOWN ALLENTOWN
Grew up in Emmaus
Came to Allentown to shop, eat, go to YWLA & JCC
Remember hot fudge sundaes @ Dolly Madisons

{atio
Hesis windows
Love to see that continue to develop a;; over Allentown. Want people to come & do things these things

NEUWEILER BREWERY
It saddens me with how bad the building looks. Every time you go past it there is more destruction.

MY HOME!
I picked my home because it’s what I call my safe space and a place where I can be me or become the person that I strive to be. I live about a block away on 22nd in Liberty and this is my home, I love the view and the people but most of all I love the feeling of being safe but not with all the fences and cameras. Safe because it’s a choice that we made for each other as a community.

LEHIGH VALLEY
I live in Bethlehem, but have worked in East Allentown, and engages with churches/groups around Allentown/
Currently work with POWER/end mass incarceration, and Lehigh Conf. of Churches/Just & Advocacy.
Bus transportation inadequate. Services for people leaving jail too scattered. Need central services.

ALLENTOWN FARMERS MARKET
Been shopping the farmers market forever. Always exciting to see how much is a melting pot of the community, with the start ups and first time entrepreneurs.

ALLENTOWN PARKS
Looking out for the quality of the parks ecosystems. Trees- streams -plants.

12TH ST - 15TH ST / UNION - LANDEN
I bought my home in 1987. In the past 4-6 years quality of life has gone way down.
Multi-unit absentee landlords:
• Loud music (rap, hip hop, lax-)
• Trash/Recycle
• Parking
• Properties - shabby

Good: crime down but the residents have been allowed to run around. Not enough sweep officers. No “pride of space”. Walk our streets. They are filthy. not enough because grass mismanagement

“Affordable Housing” ___ expected to sell my house “cheap” so someone can “afford a house?” or will “affordable” housing be (grut?): sponsored - my tax dollars??

ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

J BERNIE CRUM STADIUM

UNTITLED