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# **NORTH TRENTON/ BATTLE MONUMENT CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**

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NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN • DECEMBER 17, 2021



Submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, by the Trenton Housing Authority in partnership with

isles





# FOREWARD

On behalf of the Trenton Housing Authority and the City of Trenton, we proudly present the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan.

The Plan represents over 24 months of intensive engagement and collaboration amongst residents and a host of community stakeholders, which was achieved in the midst of a global pandemic.

Just like most Americans, many of our residents and stakeholders experienced tragedies during this pandemic, but despite this, our team remained unwavering in its commitment to developing a comprehensive transformation plan that will be the catalyst for positive change in the North Trenton / Battle Monument Neighborhood.

This plan envisions a safe, thriving, family-friendly, mixed-income neighborhood that builds upon its unique neighborhood assets—commercial corridors, schools, parks, churches, Capital Health, and many services, in addition to nearby amenities—Downtown Trenton, the D&R Canal, Ewing Township; and its human capital—youth, resident leaders, entrepreneurs, and business owners.

Collectively, residents and stakeholders envision a new and better future for North Trenton. The Plan is guided by firm principles voiced by Donnelly Homes residents and focuses on three main goals: Reversing, Reimagining and Rebuilding.

- **Reversing** – Change the decline of North Trenton through targeted demolition, stabilization, and infill investment.
- **Reimagining** – Reintegrate Donnelly Homes into the street grid, breath new life into the vacant Junior 1 School building, nurture local businesses, foster meaningful employment, enhance safety, strengthen connections to assets, and improve services in the North Trenton neighborhood
- **Rebuilding** – Generate wealth among North Trentonians by integrating homeownership opportunities in addition to new rental units through a 550-unit mixed-income, mixed-tenure, mixed-type housing plan for the neighborhood.

This Plan is entirely consistent with the City’s housing plan and Trenton250 and will play a key role in advancing these goals. The Housing Action Plan places a high priority on preserving and protecting long-term housing affordability through revitalization of developments like Donnelly Homes, which is one of the oldest and most challenged public housing complexes in Trenton.

The North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood is leveraging its rich history—preserving its cultural heritage while rebuilding for the future. We are proud to move forward with this investment in the neighborhood, while ensuring that affordable housing remains a top priority.

We would like to thank everyone that invested their time and energy to create this exciting and visionary roadmap, as well as our partners at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development who provided funding to support this planning effort through the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant program. We extend a special thank you to residents of Donnelly Homes, who have displayed a true spirit of collaboration and inclusion throughout the process working with all partners and the community at large.

We are extremely excited to support the evolution of North Trenton as a vibrant neighborhood of choice where all Trentonians can live an economically uplifting and stable life in a community that supports success.

Sincerely,



  
**Jelani B. Garrett**  
Executive Director  
Trenton Housing Authority



  
**Honorable W. Reed Gusciora, Esq.**  
Mayor  
City of Trenton

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**THE BATTLE MONUMENT MARKS  
THE ENTRANCE TO THE CHOICE  
NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMEMORATES  
THE DAY GEORGE WASHINGTON'S  
ARTILLERY FIRED UPON THE HESSIANS  
DURING THE BATTLE OF TRENTON ON  
DECEMBER 26, 1776.**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT FOR FUNDING THIS IMPORTANT PLANNING EFFORT THROUGH A CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS PLANNING AND ACTION ACTIVITY GRANT AND BY SHARING BOUNDLESS ENTHUSIASM AND KNOWLEDGE TO IGNITE LASTING CHANGE IN THE NORTH TRENTON / BATTLE MONUMENT NEIGHBORHOOD. IN ADDITION, WE OFFER A SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL OF THE DONNELLY HOMES AND AREA RESIDENTS WHO SHARED THEIR INSIGHT AND TIRELESS SUPPORT.**

## **STEERING COMMITTEE**

- City of Trenton Division of Planning
- City of Trenton Housing and Economic Development Department
- Donnelly Homes Resident Council President
- Donnelly Homes Resident Council Sergeant at Arms
- Grace Cathedral Fellowship Ministries
- Isles, Inc.
- Mercer County Community College
- Smith Family Foundation
- Trenton Housing Authority
- Trenton Health Team

## **RESIDENT AMBASSADORS**

- Dorothy Lang
- Virginia Marshall
- Shelly Robinson
- Darnella Coates White

## **HOUSING TASK FORCE**

- Donnelly Homes Residents
- Isles, Inc.
- NJ Housing & Mortgage Finance Agency
- Trenton Housing Authority (Lead)

## **PEOPLE TASK FORCE**

- Capital Area YMCA
- Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce
- Capital Health
- Christian Seix Academy
- The College of New Jersey
- Donnelly Homes Residents
- Isles, Inc. (Lead)
- Mercer County Community College
- Mercer County One-Stop Career Center
- Mercer Street Friends
- Smith Family Foundation
- Trenton Music Makers
- Trenton Health Team
- Trenton Public Schools
- Young Scholars Institute

## **NEIGHBORHOOD TASK FORCE**

- Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce
- City of Trenton Division of Planning (Lead)
- Donnelly Homes Residents
- Ewing Township Division of Planning and Zoning
- Grace Cathedral Fellowship Ministries
- Isles, Inc.
- Mercer County Planning Department
- New Jersey Dept of Community Affairs Local Planning Services
- New Jersey State Treasurer
- Trenton Police Department

## **ACTION ACTIVITY COMMITTEE**

- Capital Area YMCA
- City of Trenton Housing & Economic Development Department
- City of Trenton Department of Recreation, Natural Resources, & Culture
- Donnelly Homes Residents
- Isles, Inc.
- Trenton Neighborhood Initiative
- Smith Family Foundation
- Trenton Housing Authority

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- Greater Mt. Zion AME Church and Salvation & Social Justice (Dr. Charles F. Boyer)
- The Michaels Organization
- Antoinette Ritchie
- Algernon Ward

## **IN MEMORIAM**

- Seamon Smith

# GLOSSARY

**Action Activities** – This refers to a portion of a CN Planning and Action Grant that funds some physical neighborhood improvements immediately following the two-year planning process. Intended to start transformation, Action Activities respond to community needs and must be approved by HUD.

**Affordable Housing** – Housing is considered affordable if a family pays no more than 30% of its household income on housing-related costs.

**Anchor Institutions** – Anchor institutions are businesses and organizations firmly established within a neighborhood. They have regional significance and serve as economic and cultural drivers, generating jobs, creating local business opportunities, and contributing in significant ways to the development of human, social and cultural capital.

**Area Median Income (AMI)** – Area Median Income is the midpoint of a region’s income distribution – half of families earn more than the median and half earn less than the median. The median household income for the Trenton-Ewing New Jersey metro area was \$79,492 in 2019.

**CDBG** – HUD’s flexible Community Development Block Grant program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs.

**CN** – Choice Neighborhoods. Sponsored by HUD, Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that focus on three core goals: Housing, People, and Neighborhoods. To achieve these goals, communities must develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy or “Transformation Plan.”

**CNI** – Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

**DCA** – Department of Community Affairs responds to issues of public concern including fire and building safety, housing production, community planning and development, and local government management and finance.

**Early Action Activities** – Up to \$50,000 of CN Planning Grant funds can be used for limited physical neighborhood improvements during the two-year planning process.

**Evidence-based Practice** – This term refers to the use of the best available conclusions or findings from research and studies as a basis for determining the best practices and predictions of outcomes in a field.

**Extremely Low Income** – Households with an income under 30% of AMI.

**FEMA 100-Year Floodplain** – This refers to an area that has a 1-percent chance of flooding in any given year as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

**FQHC** – Federally Qualified Health Centers are community-based health care providers that receive funds from the HRSA Health Center Program to provide primary care services in underserved areas. They must meet a stringent set of requirements, including providing care on a sliding fee scale based on ability to pay.

**FMR** – Fair Market Rent is the rent amount, including utilities (except telephone), to rent privately-owned, decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of a modest (non-luxury) nature.

**HCV** – Housing Choice Voucher is commonly known as a Section 8 voucher. With a HCV, the participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects.

**Low Income** – Households with income between 30% and 60% of AMI.

**HUD** – US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**LEED** – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (a green building and neighborhood certification program).

**LIHTC** – The Low Income Housing Tax Credit provides a tax incentive to construct or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for low-income families. LIHTC subsidizes the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income tenants.



**9% Credits** – The 9% credit is a competitive tax credit allocation for the construction of affordable rental housing. It typically covers most of the cost of new construction. Tax credit units have set rents and prospective tenants must meet income limit requirements.

**4% Credits** – The 4% tax credit is not competitive, and does not cover the total cost of new construction. As a result it is typically claimed for rehabilitated affordable housing and new construction affordable units that are financed with tax-exempt bonds or other subsidies.

**Market Rate Housing** – Housing units unrestricted by income.

**NJHMFA** – The New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency invests in, finances, and provides access to affordable rental housing and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate-income families, older adults, and individuals with specialized housing needs.

**Non-Replacement Housing** – New housing proposed by the Choice Plan that is not intended to replace Donnelly Homes units.

**Part I Violent Crimes** – Aggravated assault, rape, murder, and robbery are classified as Part I Violent Crimes.

**Public Housing** – Public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly and persons with disabilities. Rent is 30% of income. All existing units at Donnelly Homes are public housing.

**PBV** – Project-Based Voucher units are part of the Housing Choice Voucher program, also known as Section 8. PBVs are tied to a unit.

**Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD)** – This HUD program allows Public Housing Agencies to convert public housing to project-based Section 8 housing.

**QAP** – A Qualified Allocation Plan describes the process of distributing LIHTC.

**Renewable Energy/Low Impact Design** –

Energy from natural resources such as sunlight and geothermal heat that is naturally replenished.

**Replacement Housing** – This refers to rental housing (section 8 housing and PBV housing) that will replace any Donnelly Homes units that are demolished, disposed of, or reduced.

**School Readiness** – This refers to a set of expectations, guidelines or developmental milestones that describe what all children need to know before entering kindergarten.

**TDC** – Total development costs.

**Tenant-Based Vouchers (TBVs)** – Tenant-based vouchers are portable, increasing the ability of families to choose and lease safe, decent, and affordable privately-owned rental housing. The tenant pays 30% of income for rent and the voucher makes up the difference up to FMR.

**Section 8 Housing** – Section 8 is a common name for the Housing Choice Voucher Program that allows private landlords to rent apartments and homes at fair market rates to qualified low-income tenants. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies with funds from HUD.

**Transformation Plan** – Communities that receive a CN Planning Grant from HUD must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy that addresses the three core goals of Choice Neighborhoods (Housing, People, Neighborhood). The Transformation Plan becomes the guiding document for the revitalization of the public and/or assisted housing units while at the same time, directing transformation of the neighborhood and creating positive outcomes for families.

**Workforce Housing** – Rental or homeownership housing targeting families who make 80% - 120% of AMI.

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**01/**

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**EXECUTIVE  
SUMMARY**









# 01/ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**A new story is taking shape in Trenton. The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood community will rise out of the pandemic stronger and more resilient. In one of the most difficult times in recent memory, community members and stakeholders stepped up to listen, to speak up, and come together around a collective vision.**

North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood will be a safe, thriving, family-friendly, mixed-income neighborhood that fully leverages its unique neighborhood assets—commercial corridors, opportunity sites, schools, parks, churches, service providers; proximity to adjacent assets - Downtown Trenton, Capital Health, Ewing Township; and its human capital—youth, resident leaders, entrepreneurs, and business owners.

This story is full of accomplishments. We figured out how to get things done while meeting virtually. We completed over 200 household surveys (60% of Donnelly households). We hosted multiple socially distanced in-person meetings. We graduated 18 residents from our first ever Choice Neighborhoods Leadership Series. We developed a housing vision for the neighborhood. We created an image of the larger neighborhood that leverages its unique assets. We formed a People Plan that takes full advantage of the rich ecosystem of service providers that exists in the Capital City.

**A NEW HOUSING STORY WILL BE GUIDED BY FIRM PRINCIPLES VOICED BY DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS AND WILL BE FOCUSED ON THREE MAIN PARTS –**

1. Reversing the decline of North Trenton via targeted demolition, stabilization and infill investment.
2. Reimagining the future of Donnelly Homes.
3. Rebuilding wealth among North Trentonians. The 567-unit mixed-income, mixed-tenure, mixed-type Choice housing plan includes re-imagining Donnelly Homes fully integrated into the North Trenton grid, a new life for the vacant Junior One school building, and options for new rental and homeownership units throughout the neighborhood and city.

**A NEW PEOPLE STORY WILL BE TOLD FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF PUBLIC HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS, FOCUSED ON ACCOMPLISHING THE FOLLOWING GOALS –**

**EDUCATION**

1. Increase academic performance for students and their families.
2. Increase access to affordable early childhood education and daycare.
3. Increase number of career or college and life-ready graduates.

**EMPLOYMENT**

1. Provide training for in-demand employment.
2. Support development and growth of local small businesses.
3. Expand re-entry employment training, placement and support.

**HEALTH**

1. Ensure access to health care services and insurance coverage.
2. Increase access to healthy food and recreational opportunities.

**A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD STORY WILL FOCUS ON**

1. Redesigning MLK Boulevard as a lively main street that exemplifies the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. Stemming the spread of neighborhood blight.
3. Distinguishing the area’s identity and character by celebrating the neighborhood’s layered history and deep sense of community.
4. Strengthening and improving physical connections to major assets and amenities.
5. Creating the physical environment for healthy living.
6. Increasing public safety through a coordinated approach based on trust, transparency, collaboration, and physical investments.

**> FIGURE 1. A VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF DONNELLY HOMES AND MLK BOULEVARD**







**This plan seeks to close the gaps and inequities between residents of Donnelly Homes and the Choice Neighborhood, and those of the City of Trenton.**



**POPULATION**



**AGE**

MEDIAN AGE  
 UNDER 18  
 18-24  
 25-54  
 55-64  
 65+



**RACE/  
 ETHNICITY**

AFRICAN AMERICAN  
 WHITE  
 OTHER  
 HISPANIC



**POVERTY RATE**



**UNEMPLOYMENT**



**HOUSEHOLDS**

# HOUSEHOLDS  
 AVG. HOUSEHOLD SIZE  
 SINGLE-MOTHER HH (2010)  
 MEDIAN HH INCOME



**HOUSING**

TOTAL # UNITS  
 HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE  
 VACANCY  
 MEDIAN HOME VALUE

**FIGURE 2. DEMOGRAPHIC COMPARISON**

SOURCE: \*2019 ESRI ESTIMATES BASED ON 2017 ACS DATA, DATA PULLED FROM ESRI BAO. ALL OTHER CITY OF TRENTON AND CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD DATA THAT IS NOT MARKED WITH AN ASTERISK IS PULLED FROM THE CHOICE APPLICATION. OTHER DONNELLY HOMES DATA ARE FROM THA (\*\* IS 12/5/2019, \*\*\* IS TIME OF APPLICATION) AND \*\*\*\*FROM DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY .



CITY OF TRENTON	CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD	DONNELLY HOMES
86,370	5,754	591**
34.2 24%* 10%* 45%* 11%* 11%*	34.4 26%* 9%* 41%* 12%* 12%*	31.9* 30%* 10%* 39%* 11%* 10%*
51% 25% 24% 38%	84% 6% 10% 14%	95% 4% 1% 5%
28%*	40%	N/A
9.2%*	9.1%*	15.5%****
28,628 2.82 45%* \$34,476	2,228 2.57 51%* \$23,961	327** 1.81** N/A \$9,828
33,438* 28.7% 14.2%* \$115,562*	2,708* 25.3% 23.0% \$105,065*	376*** NOT APPLICABLE 8.0%*** NOT APPLICABLE

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR NEW HOUSING



### DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE CHANGE AND BUILD TRUST.

One highlight is a new homeowner improvement program to assist 40 homeowners along MLK Blvd make necessary repairs.



### CULTIVATE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

The planning process involved a very successful 7-part Leadership Series. In addition, 14 youth planners developed a vision for a new park that they presented to the Trenton Planning Commission.



### FOSTER INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP BY LISTENING FIRST.

Adaptively reusing the beloved Junior 1 as a community gathering space and integrating a new youth-designed park for residents of all ages are just a few ways the plan responds to resident input.



### BUILD ON AREA ASSETS AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

The vision infuses MLK Boulevard with new life, and stitches 530 new mixed-income rental housing units into the community centered around Junior 1, MLK and Sweets Fountain parks and Battle Monument.



### BUILD WEALTH.

A minimum of 37 new affordable homeownership units will provide opportunities for residents to invest in their futures.



### CREATE A SAFE PLACE.

Reconnecting Donnelly Homes into the city grid will place more eyes on the street and generate activity while promoting safety. A new safety hub is also planned at Donnelly Homes.

## CATALYZING CHANGE

Donnelly Homes sits at the heart of the North Trenton/Battle Monument Neighborhood facing the main street of MLK Boulevard across from the beautiful Junior 1 Middle School that is now vacant. The physical and emotional prominence of this site in the community and the minds of residents presents a dramatic opportunity to reimagine not just Donnelly Homes but the entire neighborhood.

A reimagined Donnelly Homes involves far more than new housing; rather it will act as catalyst for neighborhood stabilization and growth, as reflected by the guiding principles to the left.

Redevelopment of Donnelly Homes and strategic infill development throughout the neighborhood will create a vibrant, stable, and engaged community. Achieving this transformation requires an ambitious yet implementable housing plan; one that responds to resident's needs and that can be developed with the support of partners such as Capital Health, NJHMFA, and other state agencies.

### **The basis of the Housing Plan is the one-for-one replacement and right of return to every existing unit and resident.**

It also responds to a Market Study conducted by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. that projects an annual potential of 1,150 units of new housing – 724 rentals and 426 for sale units over five years. Of the 724 new rental units, 197 units (27% of new rental demand) can be classified as market rate as defined by the CNI program.

The resulting housing plan is also informed by input gathered from multiple community outreach events, resident surveys, and task force conversations, and includes the following:

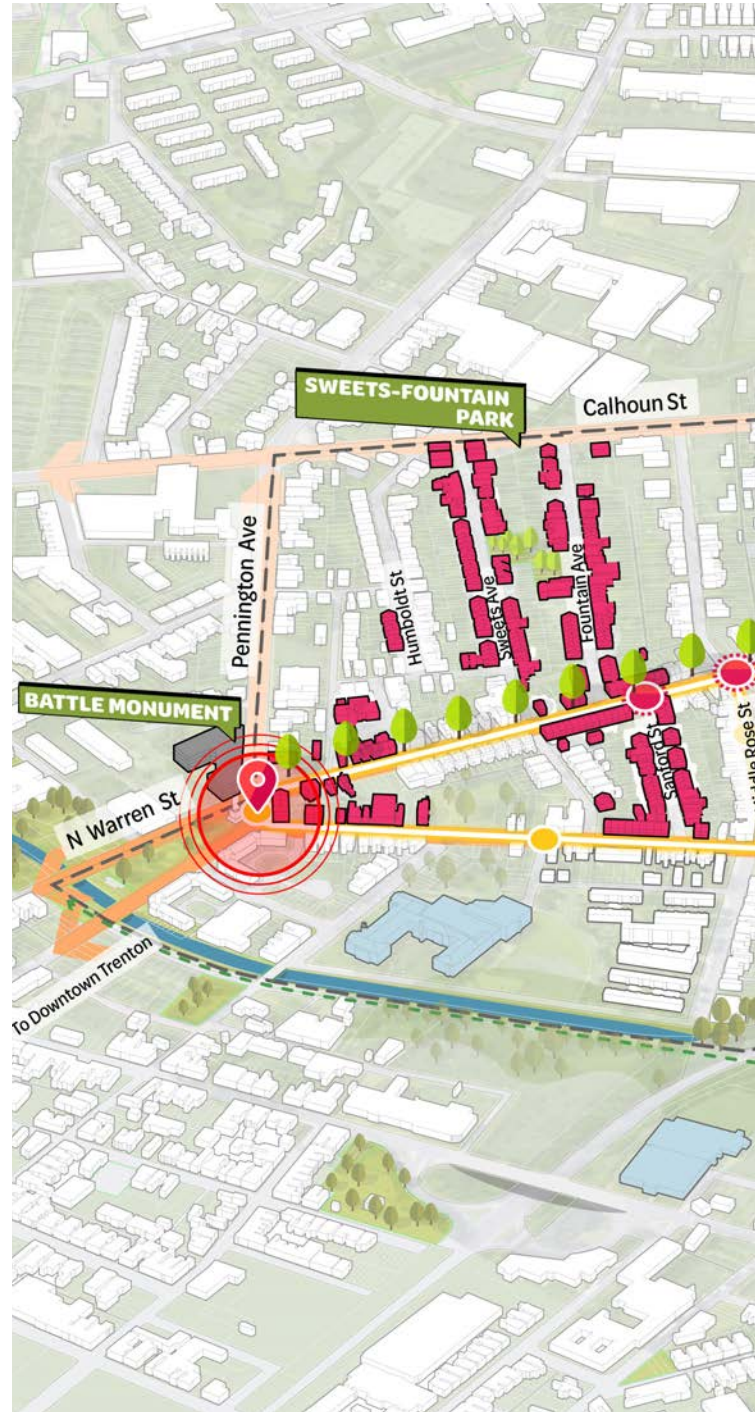
- ▶ 340 mixed-income units on-site
- ▶ 50 new mixed-income units off-site immediately adjacent to Donnelly Homes at Junior 1
- ▶ 177 units of neighborhood infill, including 37 new affordable homeownership units

The plan responds to residents' desire for reduced on-site density and a preference for townhome style units. Most new housing is in the form of townhome and stacked units that face reconnected neighborhood streets to reinforce safety. Along MLK Boulevard there are two mixed-use multi-story buildings that reinforce the gateway at Southard Street along with Junior 1.

Junior 1 will be preserved and adapted as a mixed-use building with 50 residential units and a variety of community spaces from a business incubator, performance space, resource / reading room that will breathe new life into the building.

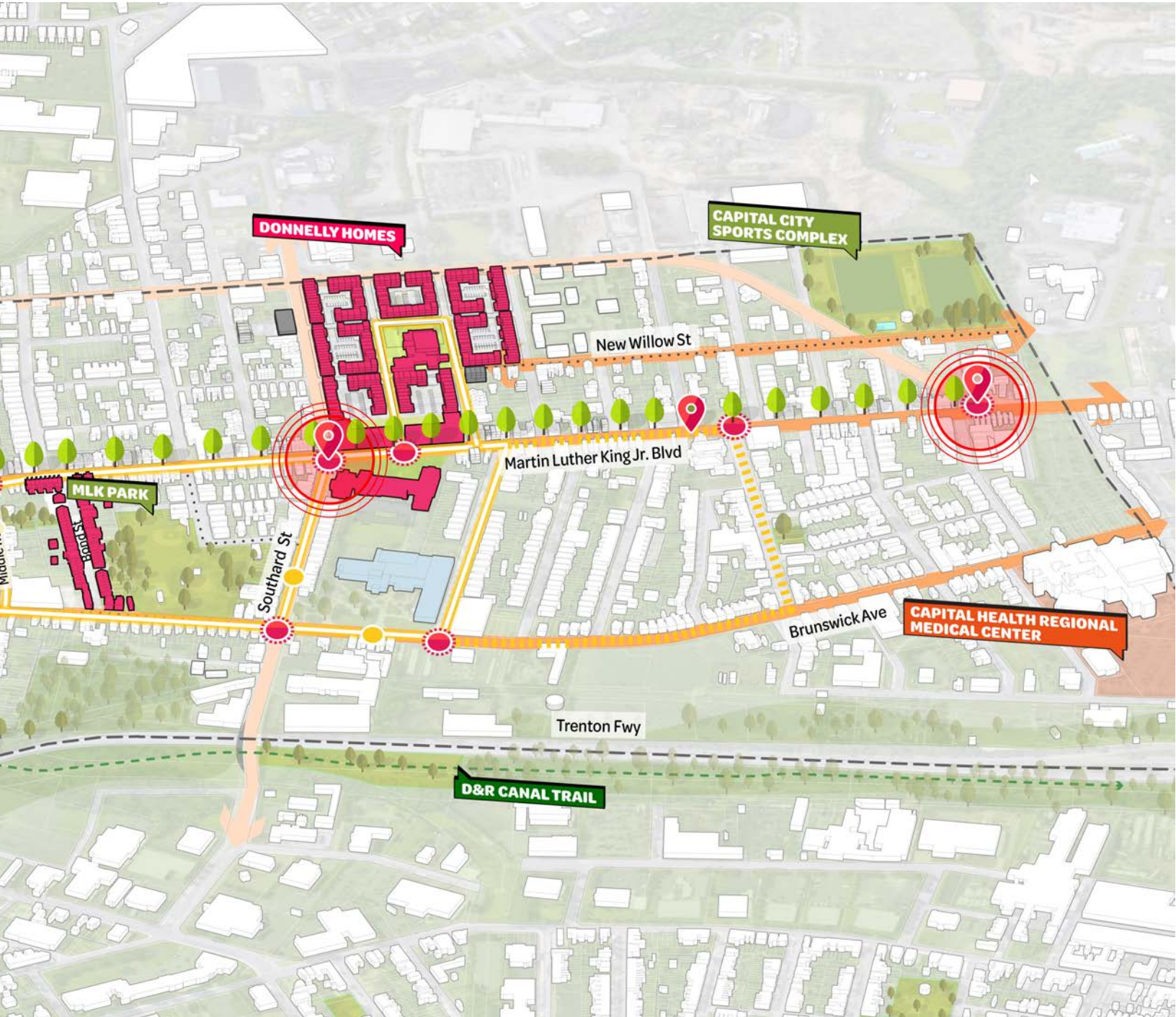
In addition to new housing on the Donnelly Homes site and Junior 1, the plan integrates 140 new housing units into two focus areas that currently have pockets of vacancies that will be filled in. These areas are clustered around Sweets-Fountain Park and south of MLK Boulevard from MLK Park to Battle Monument. In addition, 37 new homeownership units will create opportunities for residents to build wealth while stabilizing and transforming the neighborhood fabric.

**This plan will harness the deep sense of community and build on the foundational assets of the North Trenton and Battle Monument neighborhoods.**



^ **FIGURE 3. NEIGHBORHOOD VISION**





**LEGEND**

- |  |                             |  |                                  |  |                                |
|--|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
|  | Neighborhood Gateway        |  | Placemaking/Public Art           |  | Opportunity Site               |
|  | Neighborhood Infill Housing |  | Intersection Safety Enhancements |  | Schools                        |
|  | Placemaking/Public Art      |  | Enhanced Streetscapes            |  | Walking Loop/Areas of Interest |

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**02 /**

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**A STORIED  
HISTORY**









# 02/ A STORIED HISTORY

## HISTORY OF THE CITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD

One of the great strengths that the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood has to build on is its long and storied history, which mirrors national and regional stories but also tells a story of its own. North Trenton’s layered history, rich heritage and current identity is best understood through periods of development—each leaving their mark on the neighborhood, its traditions and its culture; and each deserving of its place in the stories people share about what makes this community unique, valuable, and deserving of the investment and support it has been denied for so long.

### EARLY SETTLEMENT & AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE ERA (1679 – 1800)

The first European settlers of the area that would become Trenton were English Quakers who arrived in 1679. About a century later, George Washington had his first victory in the American Revolutionary War at the 1776 Battle of Trenton. This is celebrated by the “Battle Monument” built in 1896 to mark the gateway to the neighborhood from Downtown Trenton. In the decades following the American Revolutionary War, Trenton briefly served as the U.S. Capitol and then the State Capital for New Jersey. During this time period, there was little development other than a few estates and two main roads, Princeton and Brunswick, which were built to connect Trenton to points north. These roads and the lines that divided private estates still form the backbone of the neighborhood—visible in the way they connect to their neighbors and the way that it’s eclectic housing styles shift from one block to the next.

### 19TH CENTURY INDUSTRIAL URBANIZATION (1801 – 1900)

This period of history brought a patchwork of industrial development to the sparsely developed, lowland marsh neighborhood. Disjointed street networks at the edges of the North Trenton/ Battle Monument neighborhood are a product of this era of development when industrial businesses

developed organically and independently without the shared infrastructure and planned road network that guided nearby residential development.

As the 19<sup>th</sup> century progressed, shipyards, brick factories, pottery factories, and nurseries clustered

A BIT OF HISTORY

**1679**  
First European settlers, English Quakers, arrive in the area that would become Trenton.

Citywide

**1776**  
Battle of Trenton, George Washington's first military victory.

**1784**  
Trenton briefly serves as US Capital

**1790**  
Trenton becomes the State Capital for New Jersey.

Neighborhood

**Battle Monument, memorializing the Battle of Trenton, opens almost a century later in 1896.** It becomes the namesake and gateway icon for the Five Points / Battle Monument neighborhood.

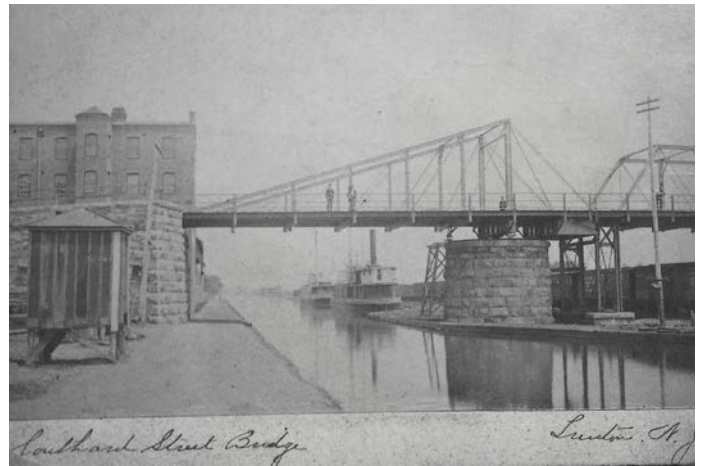
**EARLY SETTLEMENT + AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE ERA**  
1679 - 1800



along the canal, rail, and main roads, attracting new workers and residents that resulted in the development of this area as a true mixed-use neighborhood.

The Delaware and Raritan Canal was constructed in the 1830's to provide an efficient way to transport goods between Philadelphia and New York City, which it did during much of the 19th and 20th centuries. The canal runs through the Choice neighborhood and while no longer used to transport goods, it does provide access to over 70 miles of multi-use trails with opportunities for walking, cycling, kayaking, and enjoying nature.

By 1880, residential development in North Trenton picked up the pace as the trolley system expanded



**THE D&R CANAL WINDS THROUGH THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD (CIRCA 1880 AT SOUTHARD STREET)**

SOURCE: IMAGE COURTESY OF THE DELAWARE AND RARITAN CANAL COMMISSION; DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION WWW.NJ.GOV/DEP/DRCC/

<p><b>1812</b> Trenton's first textile mills establish a mill district at the mouth of the Assunpink Creek.</p> <p><b>1834</b> Delaware and Raritan Canal completed, <b>establishing Trenton as a key trade stop.</b> Trenton and Phila railroad also arrives leading to population boom.</p> <p><b>1849</b> Roebing Steel Wire Company is founded, inspires <b>"Trenton Makes, the World Takes"</b> slogan.</p> <p><b>1850s</b></p>	<p><b>1880-1920</b> Trenton's pottery industry leads in sanitary earthenware such as toilets and bath tubs.</p> <p><b>1920s-1940s</b> The Great Migration of African Americans from the South to Northern cities begins in the 1920s. Trenton's Black population grew from 2,500 in 1910 to 8,000+ by 1930, 9,340 in 1940 and then 14,352 in 1950.</p> <p><b>1945</b> Trenton Committee on Unity established to ease post-war racial tensions.</p> <p><b>1968</b></p>
<p>Surge in Trenton Pottery Industry begins along the new canal and existing rail lines.</p> <p><b>1847</b> The North Ward's largest + most prominent brickyard is founded at 1001 Princeton Ave.</p> <p><b>1892</b> New trolley to Downtown sets the stage for residential growth.</p> <p><b>19TH CENTURY INDUSTRIAL URBANIZATION</b> 1801 - 1900</p>	<p>Five Points' <b>Spring Street</b> emerges as the heart of the new middle class Black community.</p> <p><b>1939</b> Areas of sub-standard housing are cleared, and new Lincoln + Donnelly Homes are built.</p> <p>Race riots erupt in Trenton's Downtown and Five Points neighborhood following the assassination of MLK Jr.</p> <p><b>THE GREAT MIGRATION + DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION</b> 1901 - 1980</p>

and new schools were built. Former estates and scattered homesteads gave way to more organized development with “rows” of housing that shared design elements and were clustered along one (often new) long, continuous east-west street or “row” connecting the major north-south arteries (Princeton and Brunswick avenues).

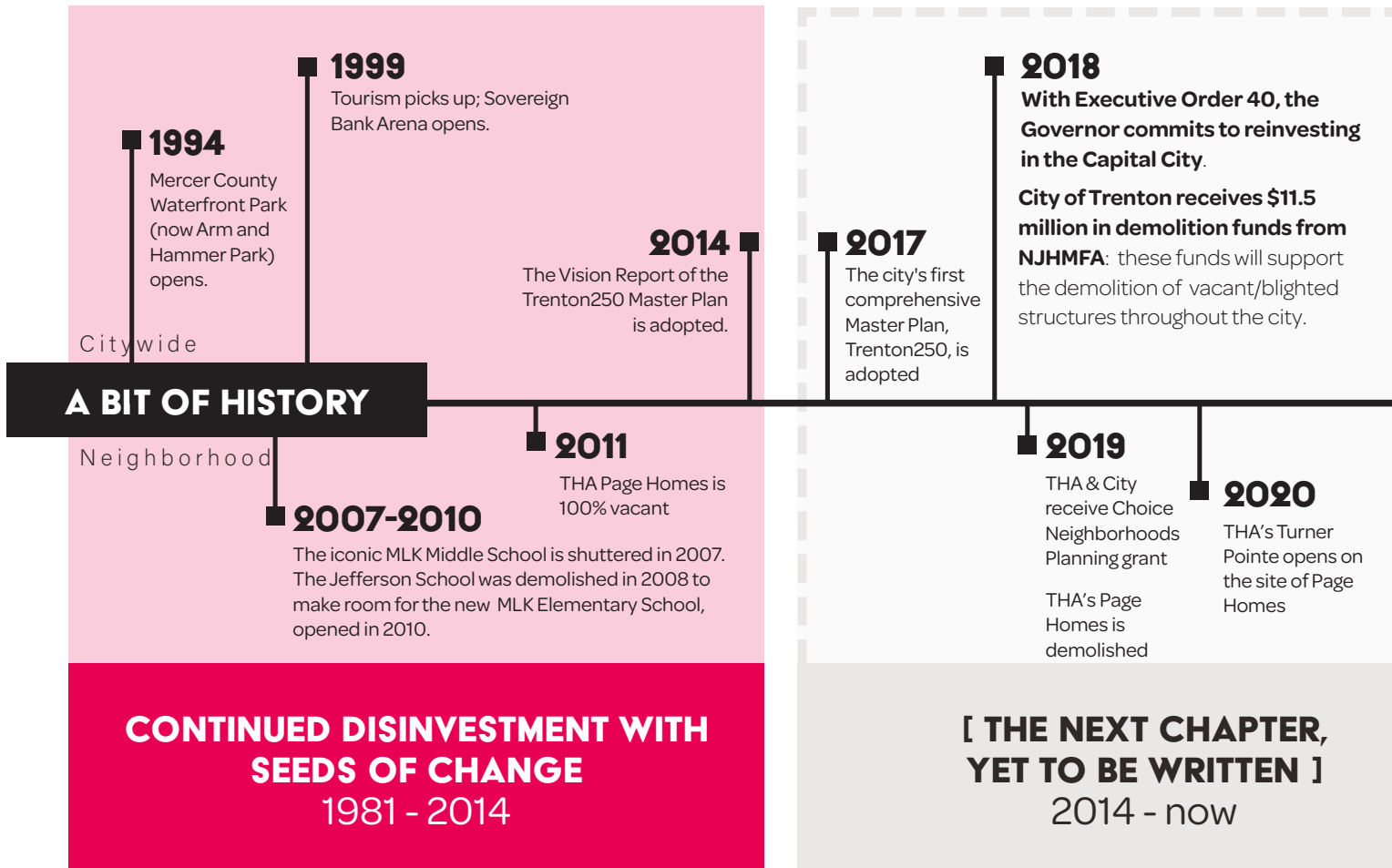
This period of development gave the neighborhood its characteristic mix of housing styles and also saw the foundation of an impressive variety of Black social, cultural and educational institutions that helped anchor a growing Black cultural elite who made their home in the North Ward of Trenton.

**THE GREAT MIGRATION & DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION (1901 – 1980)**

The Battle Monument neighborhood fills out in the early decades of this time period and links North

Trenton’s characteristic diversity of architectural styles and mixture of residential and industrial land uses with Downtown Trenton’s office and commercial district. It also becomes the home to the City’s first Junior High School (Junior No. 1), which was later renamed Martin Luther King Junior High. This beautiful Gothic building remains a very visible landmark in the neighborhood on MLK Boulevard.

Throughout the middle of this period, North Trenton experiences dramatic growth and becomes the cultural and economic hub of Black life in Trenton as the city grows and evolves with the influx of new residents from the Great Migration (1920s-1940s). Spring Street—located just outside of the Choice neighborhood—becomes the backbone of the North Ward’s Black social and cultural life. The Great Migration coincides with the neighborhood



becoming home to the City's first public housing sites—Lincoln and Donnelly Homes.

Throughout this time period, North Trenton was known as one of the most racially integrated neighborhoods of Trenton, a place where neighbors of different races not only shared space but also respected one another and got along. The legacy of this racially integrated period of time for North Trenton is still a source of pride today and something some residents hope to restore in the decades to come.

As this period comes to a close, North Trenton faces economic instability and rising racial tensions as the nation and industrial cities like Trenton are forced to adjust to a cascading set of changes in the basic economic structure and social norms that communities were used to. Among these changes, the industrial base diminished dramatically and those who could afford it moved to the suburbs.

As in most U.S. cities, Trenton was shaken by civic uprisings in 1968 following the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. The heaviest damage and long-term divestment fell on the North Ward's Battle Monument neighborhood and parts of Downtown Trenton. The civic uprisings of the 60s highlighted the incredible suffering and struggle that Black residents in particular endured as they worked to find stability, safety and opportunity in the changing economic and social order.

### **CONTINUED DISINVESTMENT WITH SEEDS OF CHANGE (1981 – 2014)**

During this era, Trenton's economy continues to face challenges. Declining property values and the large proportion of properties owned by tax-exempt government and non-profit organizations detract from the City's financial health and hinder its ability to provide basic services. This trickles down to the North Trenton/Battle Monument neighborhood where widespread vacancies and divestment increase, impacting the quality of life and any chance of economic vitality. Gang activity also feeds an increasingly territorial understanding of the city with wards and families accumulating an



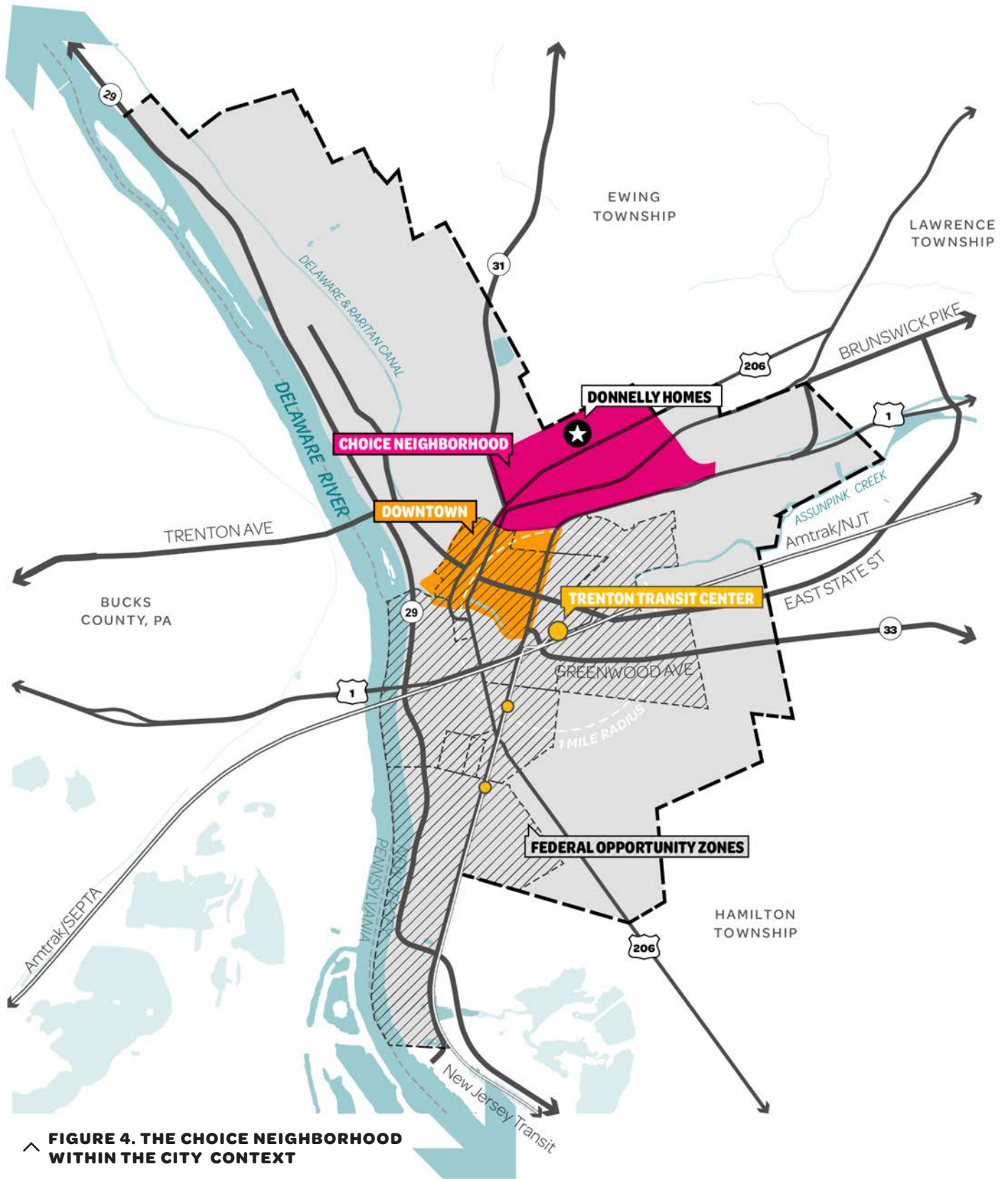
### **MANY FEEL THE CITY HAS NOT YET RECOVERED FROM THE 1968 RIOTS**

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.COMMUNITYNEWS.ORG/TOWNS/TRENTON-DOWNTOWN/TRENTON-PROJECT-REMEMBERS-TRENTON-S-PAINFUL-NIGHT-APRIL-9-1968/ARTICLE\\_455A80D6-C108-5311-AC12-9EC43FD10C27.HTML](https://www.communitynews.org/towns/trenton-downtown/trenton-project-remembers-trenton-s-painful-night-april-9-1968/article_455a80d6-c108-5311-ac12-9ec43fd10c27.html)

antagonistic relationship to one another as they each struggled to survive through the economic hardship and shrinking opportunities available to Trentonians with those that were closest to them.

### **THE NEXT CHAPTER: REINVESTMENT.... (2014 – NOW)**

Today the North Trenton/Battle Monument neighborhood retains the framework of a truly mixed-use neighborhood with a blend of residential, commercial, and industrial areas. It reflects a strong sense of community that stems in part from its legacy of racial integration and also from its role as a hub for Black and African American culture in Trenton. It is this framework that the Choice Neighborhood Plan strives to build upon in restoring the vitality of this neighborhood and reshaping how people tell its story and what it is known for.



**FIGURE 4. THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD WITHIN THE CITY CONTEXT**

SOURCE: NJGIN



## **FINDING INSPIRATION IN A RICH HISTORY OF AFRICAN-AMERICAN LEADERSHIP**

As the page turns to the next chapter of the North Trenton and Battle Monument neighborhood, there is tremendous inspiration to build upon for this predominantly African-American community.

Since the Colonial period, African Americans have played a significant role in shaping the history of Trenton. Highlighted here are descriptions of just a handful of black leaders whose achievements and contributions have impacted the city and the neighborhood. Their stories represent a strong foundation to celebrate and extend into the future.

### **ROBERT QUEEN (1884-1960)**

Mr. Queen earned a law degree from Howard University in 1915, and later opened an office in Trenton where he became one of the city's leading attorneys. He successfully argued against the segregation of the swimming pool at Trenton Central High School before the New Jersey Supreme Court, and later represented Gladys Hedgpeeth and Berline Williams in the landmark desegregation case (described below).

### **NEEDHAM ROBERTS (1901-1949)**

In 1917, this Trenton native enlisted in the U.S. Army and was assigned to the 369th Infantry Regiment. This African-American infantry was known as the Harlem Hellfighters, which were among the first American troops to arrive in France during World War 1. Mr. Roberts and a fellow soldier were awarded the Croix de Guerre by the French Government for their bravery, becoming the first Americans to receive this prestigious honor.

### **DR. HENRY J. AUSTIN (1888-1959)**

Undoubtedly, Dr. Austin's name is familiar to nearly every Trenton resident. His devotion to the health and wellness of city residents continues to this

day in health centers across Trenton. Dr. Austin graduated from Lincoln University and earned an M.D. from Howard University before his successful career as a physician in Trenton. He also served as president of the Trenton chapter of the NAACP.

### **GLADYS HEDGEPEETH (1901-1956) AND BERLINE WILLIAMS (1907-1968)**

These mothers filed and won a suit against the Trenton School Board when the new Junior High School #2 was built a few blocks from their home and their 12-year old children were not able to attend. Instead, they were required to go to the segregated Lincoln School (now the Rivera Middle School), two miles away. This landmark New Jersey Supreme Court Case ended the school system's segregation policy. A decade later, the historic ruling was cited by the U.S. Supreme Court in the Brown vs. Board of Education case, which required the integration of schools across America.

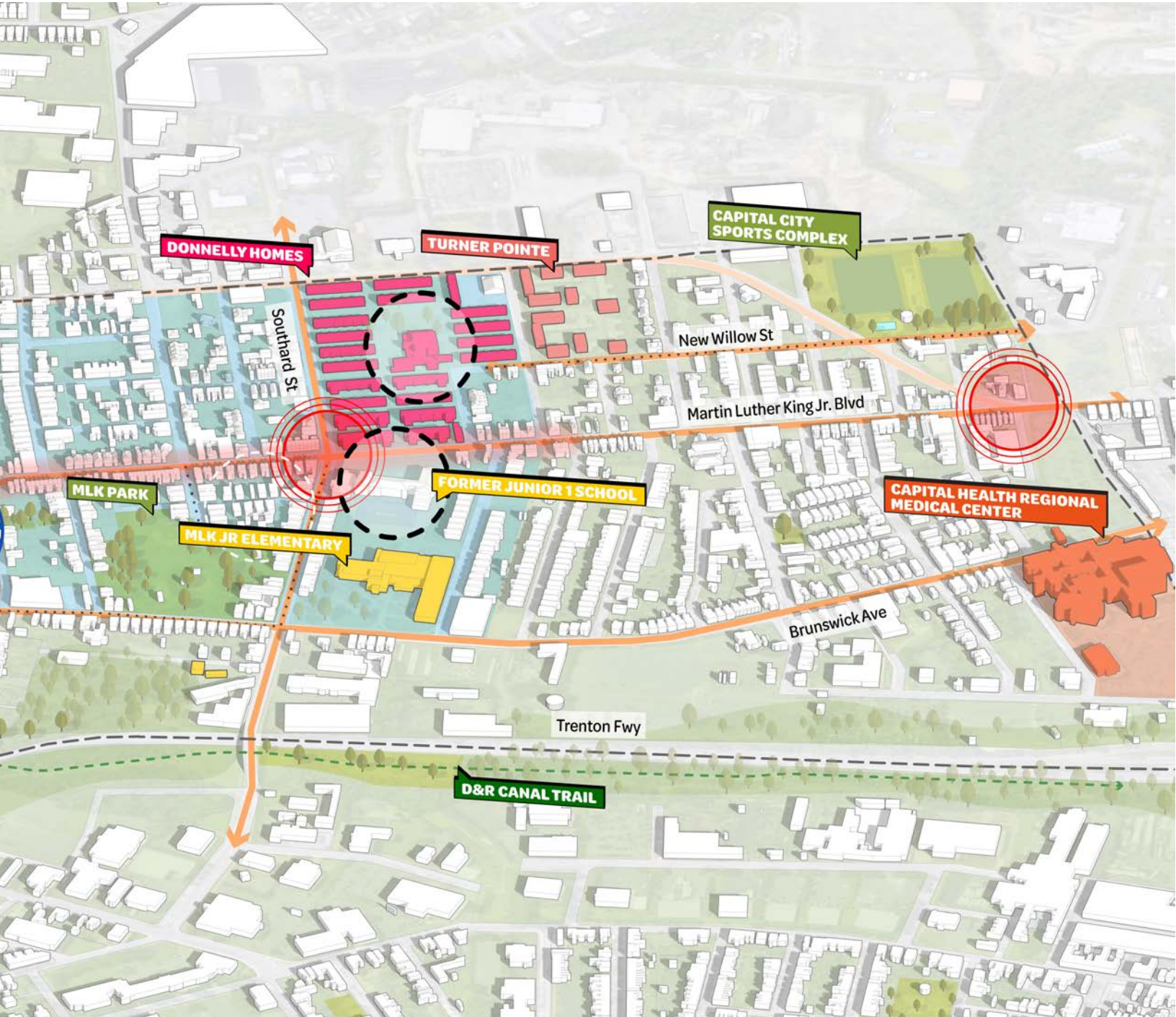
### **S. HOWARD WOODSON, JR. (1916-1999)**

For over 50 years. Mr. Woodson was pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church. He was very active in the civil rights movement as president of the local branch of NAACP. Among his accomplishments, he advocated for progressive housing legislation against the practice of banks denying mortgages to minority applicants. In 1962, Mr. Woodson became the first African American elected to office (Trenton City Council) and two years later was elected to the New Jersey General Assembly. In 1974, he was elected Speaker, becoming the first African American ever to hold that position in any state in the country.







**IT IS HOPED THAT THESE STORIES CAN BE CELEBRATED AMONG MANY OTHERS IN THE INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE, GATEWAYS, AND EXHIBITS ANTICIPATED TO BE REALIZED THROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD GOAL 1.**







**LEGEND**

-  NEIGHBORHOOD GATEWAY
  -  ANCHOR ASSETS WITH SIGNIFICANT REDEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL
  -  REDEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA
-  OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE STREETScape FOR BIKES/ PEDESTRIANS
  -  SAFE ROUTES
  -  FOCUSED COMMERCIAL ACTIVITY
  -  INFILL DEVELOPMENT AREA



**A VIEW FROM BATTLE MONUMENT SHOWS THE CLOSE PROXIMITY TO DOWNTOWN**

SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON

## GETTING TO KNOW THE NEIGHBORHOOD TODAY

Like many early colonial industrial American towns, Trenton was designed with the pedestrian in mind. Modest-scaled buildings run along tree-lined streets and walkable blocks, arranged in a grid, with a variety of goods and services nearby.

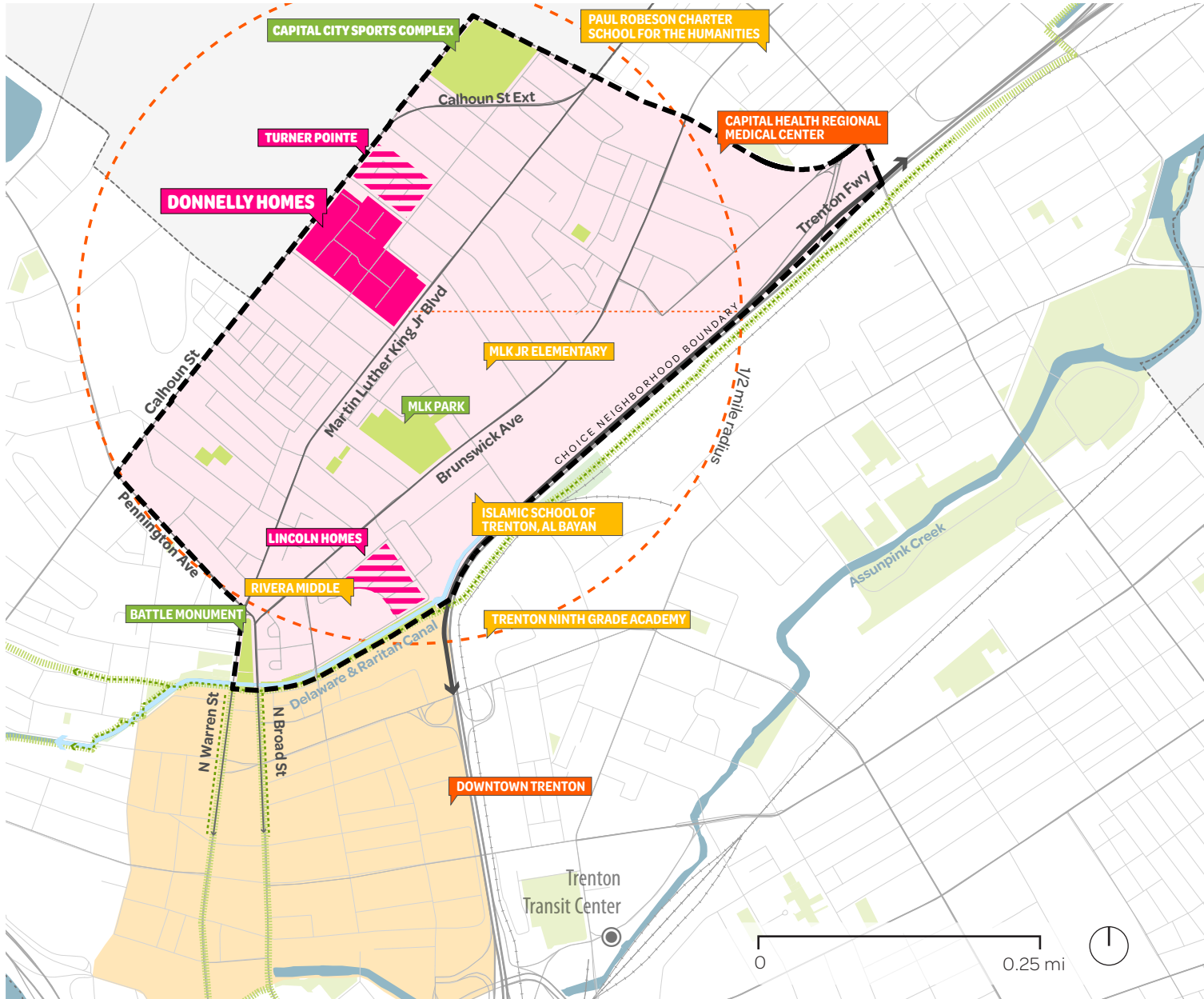
This urban framework remains in place in the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood, where Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) Boulevard runs through the center and forms a direct connection from downtown to Princeton and New Brunswick. With small corner stores and historic brick buildings that are built right up to the property line, MLK Boulevard wants to serve as the neighborhood’s “main street” but like much of the neighborhood, the street is disjointed by buildings that in poor condition or vacant.

## GATEWAYS, PARKS, TRAILS

The Battle Monument is surrounded by a green plaza at its base, which marks the gateway to the neighborhood with a sense of historical grandeur. The Delaware and Raritan Canal runs just south of Battle Monument and while no longer a water transit route, it is a scenic greenway that provides access to over 70 miles of walking and biking trails. This underutilized resource has tremendous potential to become a valuable urban amenity for residents of the neighborhood to enjoy recreation and relaxation.

There are two large parks and a few smaller parks in the neighborhood. MLK Park and Pool is one of the larger green spaces in the heart of the community with a playground, baseball and softball fields, and a pool. At the edge of the neighborhood, Capital City Sports Complex offers a football field, soccer field and pool.





^ **FIGURE 6. NORTH TRENTON/BATTLE MONUMENT CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**

The Choice Neighborhood is anchored by Donnelly Homes. It's tree-lined, pedestrian-friendly streets, variety of housing, access to 70 miles of trails, and proximity to downtown are features that communities across the country would love to have.

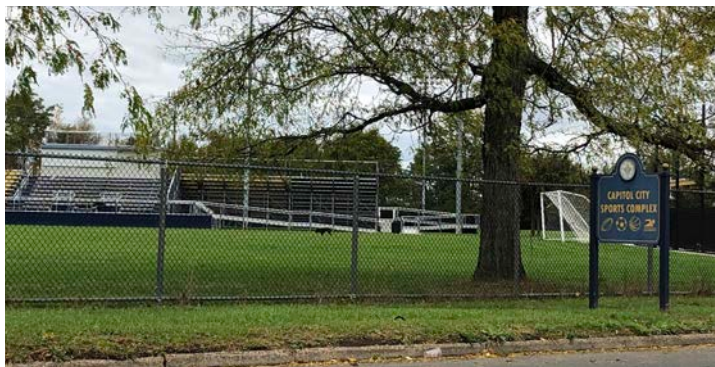




**BATTLE MONUMENT PARK LEADS INTO DOWNTOWN**



**HISTORIC HOMES JUST PAST BATTLE MONUMENT**



**CAPITOL CITY SPORTS COMPLEX**



**MLK BOULEVARD FORMS THE CENTRAL SPINE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND HAS MANY BASIC BUILDING BLOCKS TO BECOME A VIBRANT MAIN STREET**



**MLK PARK OFFERS A GREEN RESOURCE IN THE HEART OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD**



**DELAWARE & RARITAN CANAL**



## HOUSING

The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice neighborhood is primarily residential in nature with some industrial and commercial activity. Most houses are single-family detached but reflect a wide variety of shapes, sizes, and styles, many with unique historic details like decorative cornices, dormers, arched windows with keystones, porches, bay windows and pitched roofs.

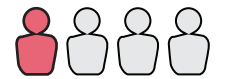
With a high rate of vacancy, 23.0%, and low rate of homeownership in the neighborhood, 25.3%, many properties are looking tired and in need of maintenance and repair. Unfortunately, the low rate of homeownership is not surprising given the the median household income is \$23,961 and the median home value is \$105,065.

The neighborhood benefits from three Trenton Housing Authority housing sites—Turner Pointe, Lincoln Homes, and Donnelly Homes.

Lincoln Homes was built in 1940 and restored in 2004. It is comprised of 118 apartments, in a combination of townhomes and three-story walk-ups offering one to three-bedroom units.

### HOUSING IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD

**2,708** total housing units



**25.3%** home ownership rate



**\$105,065** median home value



**\$23,961** median household income

SOURCE: \*2019 ESRI ESTIMATES BASED ON 2017 ACS DATA, DATA PULLED FROM ESRI BAO.

Turner Pointe was completed in December 2020, offering a total of 77 new affordable townhome-style apartments. It replaced the former George W. Page Homes complex, a site that was built in 1954 and had been vacant for several years. Redevelopment included demolition of the old buildings and construction of the new apartments



**THE NEIGHBORHOOD BOASTS A RICH VARIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES AND DETAILS**



**TURNER POINTE SITS ADJACENT TO  
DONNELLY HOMES**

with modern amenities and energy-efficient appliances. Turner Pointe is now fully leased, including a handful of qualified residents from Donnelly Homes across the street.

**DONNELLY HOMES | FOCUS OF CNI**

Donnelly Homes anchors the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood and is the focus of this neighborhood plan. The site comprises 21 residential buildings on a 13-acre site in the heart of North Trenton. Originally constructed in 1939, Donnelly Homes is one of the oldest public housing complexes in the City of Trenton, built originally for Whites only.

The complex exhibits fundamental design deficiencies of a nature that would require

substantial reconstruction to fully address – most notably, inadequate room sizes, lack of accessible routes and units, and structural deficiencies. The site is organized in a “superblock” that disrupts the historic neighborhood grid. Additionally, N. Willow Street is intentionally closed off on-site for security purposes, cutting off the one opportunity for neighborhood connectivity.

These site layout creates a disconnect from the neighborhood fabric and a sense of isolation. Similarly, the buildings are in sharp contrast to the single-family homes, twins and rowhomes that characterize the North Trenton/ Battle Monument neighborhood.





DONNELLY HOMES

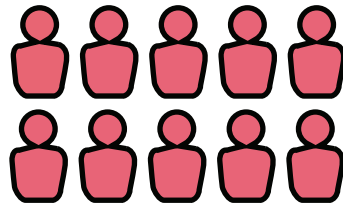
## “Tell me a little about Donnelly Homes”

SOURCE: THA

**376**  
TOTAL  
HOUSING  
UNITS



**591** RESIDENTS



**36%**  
of residents  
are under 18



**13** 2-STORY & **8** 3-STORY  
APARTMENT BUILDINGS



**1939** YEAR THAT  
DONNELLY HOMES  
WAS BUILT

**50%** of residents  
have lived in Donnelly  
homes for  
**7 or more years!**



# REIMAGINING JUNIOR 1

## BRAINSTORMING TOGETHER

### HOW TO REUSE JUNIOR 1 AS A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY HUB!



#### HISTORY

The beautiful Junior 1 Middle School sits across the street from Donnelly Homes with a strong presence on MLK Boulevard. Long vacant, the building is calling out for reuse and residents are to.

Designed by architect William A. Poland, Junior 1 Middle School was built in 1916. The main three-story school building was designed as a social center as well as a school, visible in the community-facing auditorium. A one-story shop building sits behind at the rear of the school. Although deteriorating, the building has many beautiful spaces that could be restored, including the auditorium, library, and two gymnasiums.

#### ENGAGEMENT

Ideas for reimagining Junior 1 were gathered throughout the planning process starting with the needs assessment survey, and again in greater depth during a workshop at the Community Barbeque in June 2021.

#### COMMUNITY IDEAS

- ▶ Artist lofts and / or senior housing
- ▶ Performing arts space
- ▶ Library or reading room
- ▶ Business incubator
- ▶ Shared commercial kitchen
- ▶ Programming such as GED, literacy, and vocational training
- ▶ Community space that can be rented for yoga classes, events, etc.
- ▶ Exhibition space for art
- ▶ Lounge area with wifi and café to reuse the beautiful fireplace
- ▶ Daycare center
- ▶ Health center / on-site clinic
- ▶ Outdoor programming – lawn games, farm stand
- ▶ Keep the swimming pool!



What would you like to see at the former MLK Middle School site?

53%

**COMMUNITY AMENITY**  
(park, community center or recreational facility)

45%

**HOUSING**



# INSPIRATION – THE BOK SCHOOL

## THE PAST:

Funded by FDR's Public Works Administration, Bok Vocational High School was built in 1936 to accommodate 3,000 students from across Philadelphia studying subjects from wallpapering to cosmetology to auto mechanics to bricklaying. The 340,000-square foot building spans an entire city block in South Philadelphia. In 2013, the School District of Philadelphia closed the school and put it up for auction.

## A NEW VISION:

In 2014, Scout, a female-owned design and development firm, created a vision to reuse the building as an affordable work space. Scout's approach is to respect and repair the building's found condition and reuse as much as possible. In the rear of the building, the old tool library has been transformed into a coffee shop. The former Le Bok Fin culinary training kitchen provides infrastructure for a local catering company. Wood-shop classrooms with high electrical capacity have been utilized by tenants in need of extra power.

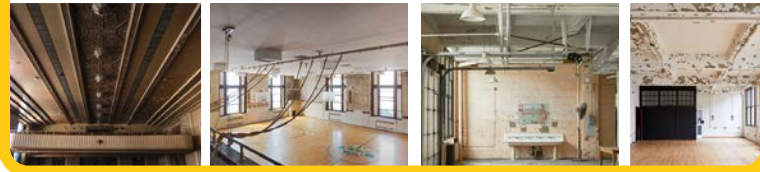
## THE PRESENT:

Today, Bok houses close to 150 businesses, artists, makers, entrepreneurs, and non-profits – ranging from fashion designers to filmmakers to glassblowers to architects to woodworkers, and even a wholesale bakery. Bok is also home to a daycare, a hair salon, ESL classes, a tattoo parlor, a coffee shop and an award-winning rooftop bar.

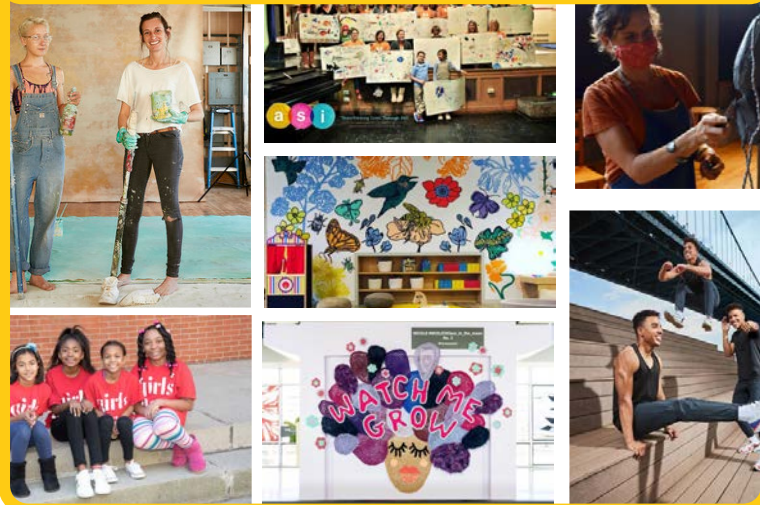
## ABOUT THE TENANTS:

- 70% Residents of South Philadelphia
- 48% Women-run Businesses
- 80% Self-owned Businesses

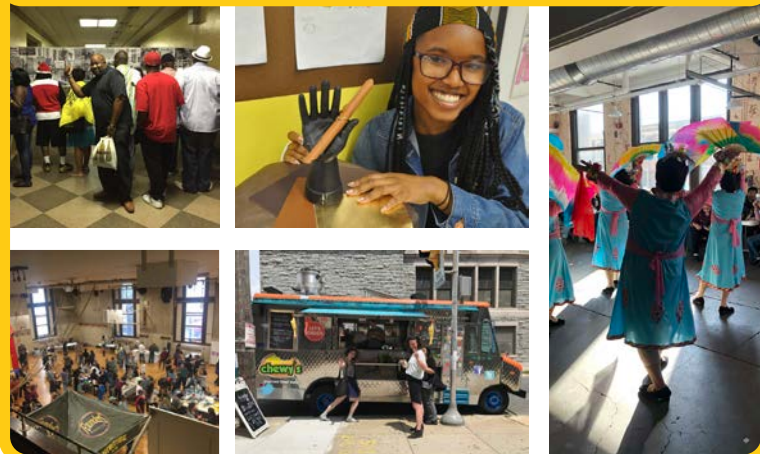
## A HISTORIC HIGH SCHOOL



## RENEWED WITH LIFE & CREATIVITY



## FOSTERING CULTURE & COMMUNITY





**MLK ELEMENTARY, BUILT IN 2010, IS A 5-10 MINUTE WALK FROM DONNELLY HOMES**

## **SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Research conducted in recent years shows it is increasingly clear that early childhood learning programs—more so than conventional daycare or childcare programs—provide a critical foundation that children rely on to navigate and make the most of later years of education. Currently, there are two Early Head Start programs located north and east of Donnelly Homes—one in Ewing Township and one in Trenton along Calhoun Street past Pennington Avenue. The only nearby Head Start program is located in Downtown Trenton near the intersection of State Street and Montgomery Street. As part of the redevelopment of Donnelly Homes, locating a high-quality early childhood learning program on-site would have a significant impact on children at Donnelly and within the larger Choice neighborhood.

The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood is fortunate to have two public

schools, both of which are well located and an easy walk to most of the neighborhood. Dr. Martin Luther King Junior Elementary School was built in 2010 for students in kindergarten through fifth grade and integrates a visual and performing arts program and science and technology program.

The Luis Munoz Rivera Community Middle School for grades 6-8 has a unique partnership with Mercer Street Friends to provide therapeutic services to students and also works with parents and families. The school is in the process of creating an Innovation Lab and Culinary Center. The afterschool program through the Boys & Girls Club offers tutoring, STEM-based activities and sports.

All students in the district go to the 9th Grade Academy just outside of the Choice Neighborhood and then to Trenton Central High School.

### **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

Overall, the Trenton Public School system is challenged by high numbers of economically-disadvantaged students as well as significant



	MLK JR ELEMENTARY	LUIS MUNOZ- RIVERA MIDDLE	9TH GRADE ACADEMY	TRENTON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
Total #	837	519	751	1,709
Black	46%	60%	38%	44%
Hispanic	52%	39%	60%	55%
Home Language: Spanish	44%	22%	41%	31%
English Learners	41%	13%	24%	20%
Economically Disadvantaged	78%	75%	59%	48%
With Disabilities	12%	23%	17%	17%
In Foster Care	0.4%	1%	0.5%	0.2%
Homeless	3.3%	3.5%	1.1%	1.6%

	MLK JR ELEMENTARY	LUIS MUNOZ- RIVERA MIDDLE	9TH GRADE ACADEMY	TRENTON CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
Student:Teacher Ratio	17:1	13:1	13:1	11:1
Absent 15 Days +	35%	24%	40%	42%
Chronically Absent	30%	21%	39%	39%
Graduation Rate	-	-	-	81.6%

**Class of 2018 ▲**

51.5% post-secondary enrollment (30.6% 2-year, 20.9% 4-year)

<b>NJ Assessment Percentile 2018-19</b>	<b>% Proficient</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% Proficient</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% Proficient</b>	<b>Target</b>	<b>% Proficient</b>	<b>Target</b>
English Language Arts	Not met	20.7	Not met (22.8)	24.8	15.8	N/A	Not met (20.5)	24.2%
Math	Not met	17.5	Not met	15.3	N/A	N/A	Not met	15.8%

## ^ **FIGURE 7. PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROFILE & PERFORMANCE**

SOURCE: STATE OF NEW JERSEY SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT

numbers of students with disabilities, students for whom English is a second language, and students who are homeless or in foster care.

School budgets are so tight that most students are not allowed to bring textbooks home because there are not enough textbooks for each student to have their own. It is therefore, no surprise that Trenton's public schools demonstrate low test scores and poor outcomes. None of the public schools that students in the Choice Neighborhood attend met proficiency standards in English Language Arts or Math in the 2018-2019 academic year.

Chronic absenteeism is also very high, with a rate of 30% at MLK Elementary and 21% at Rivera.

The planning process revealed that generational

**30%**  
of students at MLK  
Elementary &  
**21%**  
of students at  
Rivera Middle School are  
chronically absent

trauma among parents who had bad educational experiences growing up contributes to a lack of belief in the importance of education.

**SAFETY & OTHER CONCERNS**

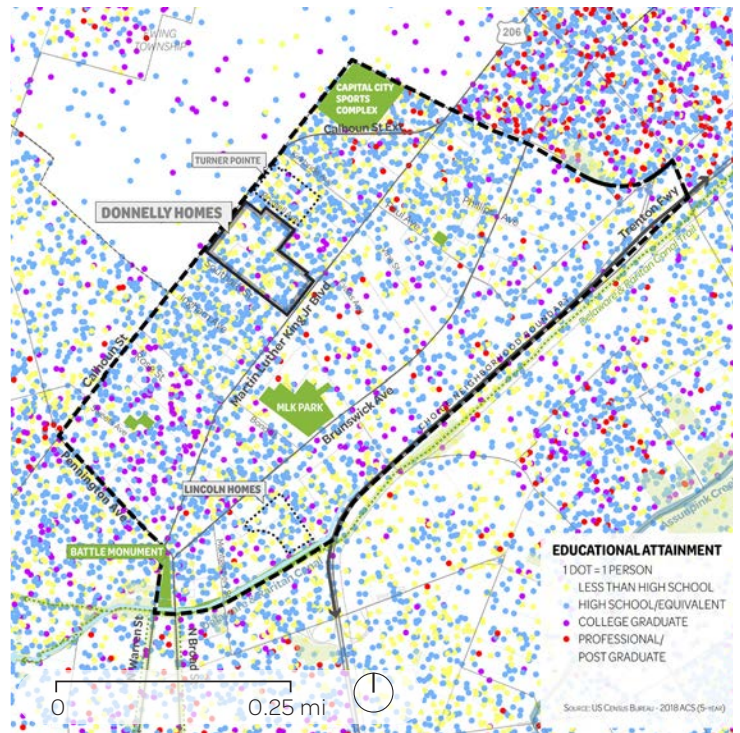
During the planning process, parents shared concerns about it being unsafe for students to travel to and from school, as well as concerns about fights and violence at school.

**only 14%**  
of Donnelly Homes  
parents feel it is safe  
for children to walk to  
and home from school,  
contributing to the  
challenge of absenteeism

Parents also shared that turnover in leadership at Trenton School District and generational trauma experienced by parents has eroded their belief in the importance of school. The challenges related to the school system itself is compounded by the inability of many parents to fill in for or make up for the shortcomings of the public education their children are getting—30-40 percent of our neighborhood is made up of single parent families and many parents have low education levels and so are not able to help with homework and instruction outside the classroom. This number is even higher at Donnelly Homes where 61 percent of households have at least one child under the age of 18 and yet 76 percent of heads of households are single, separated, divorced or widowed.

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

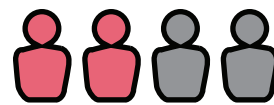
The dot diagram in Figure 6 illustrates educational attainment across the neighborhood. The majority



**FIGURE 8. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU - 2018 ACS (5-YEAR)

of blue dots indicates high school or the equivalent. Those with a college degree (purple) or higher (red) are much fewer, in sharp contrast to the neighborhood just north of the Choice Neighborhood.



**only 51.5%**  
of students in Trenton  
Public School's class  
of 2018 enrolled in  
college



## COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL ACTIVITY

Scattered across the Choice Neighborhood is a light mix of commercial and retail services. Most Donnelly Homes residents surveyed and likely most neighborhood residents go out of the neighborhood for their basic shopping needs because options in the immediate neighborhood are limited. Many services are available, however, just beyond the neighborhood boundary.

Capital Health Regional Medical Center, which is one of the largest employers in the area other than the State of New Jersey, is situated at the far edge of the Choice Neighborhood. The Center provides a wide range of medical services in addition to potential employment for residents of the area.

Running along the eastern edge of the Choice Neighborhood is an industrial corridor that offers many incentives to businesses in addition to easy access to Route 1, Downtown, and regional metro hubs surrounding Philadelphia and New York City.

During the planning process, Donnelly Homes residents and key partners expressed an interest in attracting new “clean and green” industrial development and more active local businesses. With the incentives offered through the U.S. Foreign Trade Zones and New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zones, combined with tools like zoning and redevelopment areas, the Choice Neighborhood has the potential to attract dynamic, innovative new businesses.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT + JOB GROWTH

Trenton’s economy has long been rooted in two pillars – government and industry. Government remains significant but manufacturing jobs have diminished in number and evolved to require more education and technological know-how. In present-day Trenton, the biggest sectors are healthcare and



**THE CAPITAL HEALTH COMPLEX ANCHORS THE EASTERN CORNER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

social assistance, followed by educational services and public administration. This begins to suggest a new center of gravity for the local economy – one that more closely reflects the “Eds & Meds” (education and medical) pairing that many US cities rely on to anchor the local economy.

## Employment status of Donnelly Homes residents surveyed:

**43% ARE RETIRED OR UNABLE TO WORK**

**15% OF RESIDENTS ARE UNEMPLOYED**

**42% ARE EMPLOYED, AT LEAST PART TIME**

of those employed, **only 13%** are employed by the State of New Jersey **and 13%** are contract employees for the State

## PEER CITY COMPARISON

To get a sense of what that economic development strategy could look like for Trenton and North Trenton in particular, the planning analysis examined fellow mid-sized capital cities in former manufacturing regions – Albany, NY; Providence, RI; and Hartford, CT – whose economic profiles provide some insight into the types of opportunities Trenton might be well suited to attract. To validate that these can in fact be considered “peer cities” we pulled data on poverty rate, median household income, age mix and racial and ethnic mix, and despite slight variations, the key comparison statistics overall validated that these are relevant peer cities for Trenton.

Like in Trenton, for many of these cities a majority of workers are White whereas the city populations show higher percentage of Black and Hispanic residents.

When comparing Trenton against these fellow capital cities, a few differences stood out:

- ▶ Trenton residents are under-represented in local jobs: 13.5% of Trenton residents are employed in the city versus 30% - 45% of peer city residents being employed in their city. This means reverse commuting is the norm for Trenton residents.
- ▶ Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services and Public Administration all show up as major economic drivers for the peer cities – this means that these sectors are likely to continue being important employers locally and it is important that Choice residents are equipped to work in these dominant fields.

		ALBANY, NY		PROVIDENCE, RI	
Size (sq mi)		21.9		20.6	
Population		97,279		179,335	
Poverty Rate		23.8%		26.0%	
Median Household Income		\$45,500		\$42,158	
Age Mix		RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES	RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES
	29 OR YOUNGER	27.6%	19.6%	29.9%	21.5%
	30-54	52.6%	55.7%	52.1%	53.5%
	55 OR OLDER	19.8%	24.8%	18.0%	25.0%
Racial + Ethnic Mix		RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES	RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES
	AFRICAN AMERICAN	30.3%	12.8%	20.9%	9.8%
	WHITE	60.2%	79.9%	68.0%	83.2%
	OTHER	9.4%	7.3%	11.1%	7.0%
	HISPANIC	8.3%	5.5%	33.8%	14.2%



- Several peer cities have a stronger representation of city residents in sectors that have under-representation of Trenton residents, despite being dominant sectors in Trenton - Public Administration and Educational Services sectors stand out as having under-representation of city residents. This gap could be remedied through a combination of workforce development programs and incentive programs that encourage employees in these sectors to live in the city.
- Many peer cities have a more significant number of local jobs in Manufacturing and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services sectors, which could be growth areas for Trenton.

**13.5%** of Trenton residents are employed in the city versus **30% - 45%** of peer city residents being employed in their city

**HARTFORD, CT**

**CITY OF TRENTON**

**18.1**

**8.2**

**122,587**

**83,974**

**30.1%**

**28.4%**

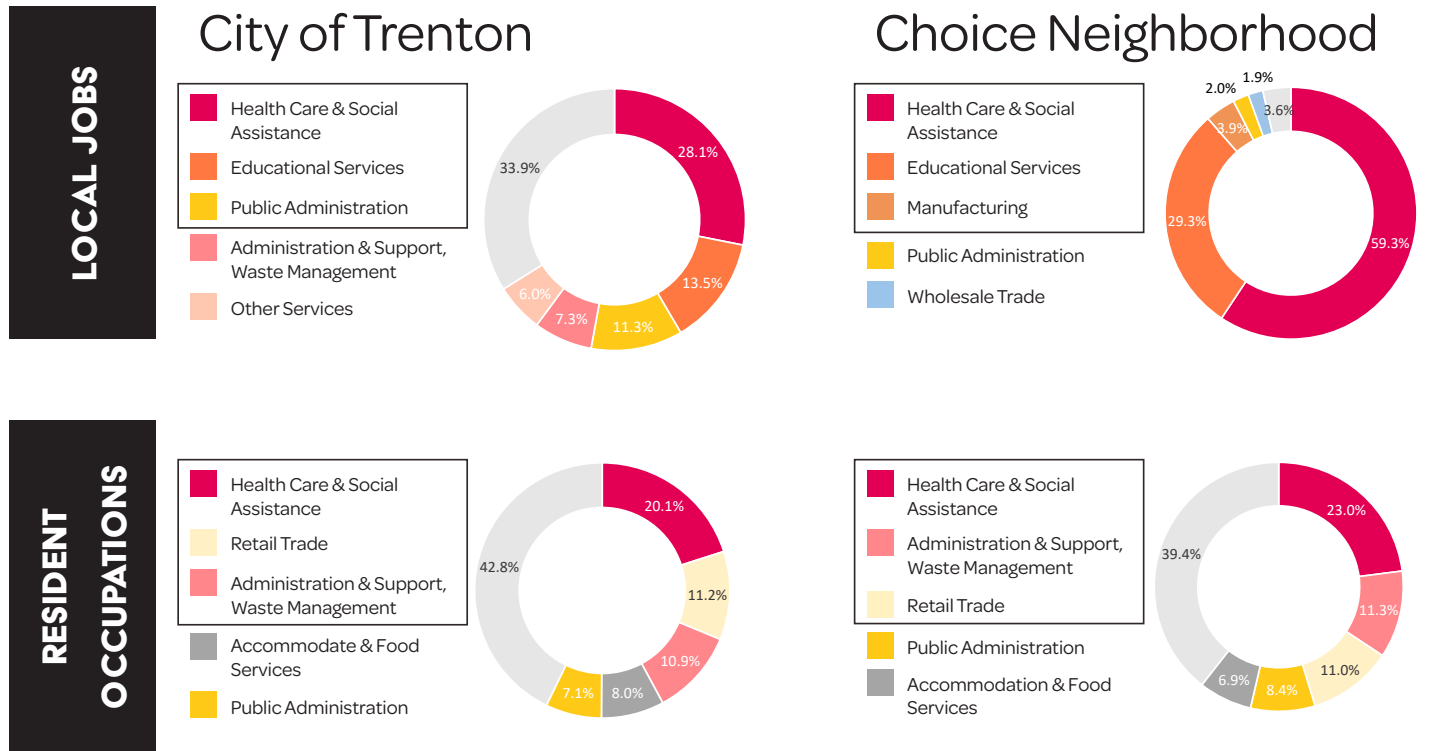
**\$34,338**

**\$35,387**

HARTFORD, CT		CITY OF TRENTON	
RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES	RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES
<b>28.9%</b>	<b>16.4%</b>	<b>25.8%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>
<b>42.7%</b>	<b>57.9%</b>	<b>54.9%</b>	<b>55.8%</b>
<b>17.9%</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>19.3%</b>	<b>28.0%</b>

HARTFORD, CT		CITY OF TRENTON	
RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES	RESIDENTS	EMPLOYEES
<b>43.3%</b>	<b>17.4%</b>	<b>53.4%</b>	<b>29.2%</b>
<b>48.8%</b>	<b>74.5%</b>	<b>40.7%</b>	<b>62.3%</b>
<b>7.9%</b>	<b>8.1%</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>36.5%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>24.9%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>

**89%** of Donnelly Homes residents surveyed earn below the Trenton Median Household Income



**FIGURE 9. WORKFORCE COMPARISON** THIS SHOWS THE TYPES OF JOBS AVAILABLE IN THE CITY AND CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD (TOP) COMPARED TO THE TYPE OF JOBS RESIDENTS ACTUALLY HOLD (BOTTOM). THE DIFFERENCE SUGGESTS LOCAL RESIDENTS ARE NOT HOLDING LOCAL JOBS.

SOURCE: LEHD DATA

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Creating a stronger workforce within the Choice neighborhood will require better alignment with existing dominant employment sectors and new sectors Trenton is best positioned to attract. Dominant local job sectors currently are Health Care, Education and Social Assistance. Professional, scientific, technical, and educational services sectors are all underrepresented within City of Trenton and Choice Neighborhood resident occupations. In contrast, the dominant Choice Neighborhood resident occupations include Health Care and Social Assistance, Retail Trade, Waste Management and Administration and Support, and Transportation and Warehousing.

Beyond the overall citywide employment disconnect, there is also a particularly severe disconnect for Choice neighborhood residents. VERY few - only 3% - of Choice Neighborhood residents work in the neighborhood. Jobs in the Choice Neighborhood seem to require more education and have higher earnings than city and county.

One of the most significant barriers that prevents Choice neighborhood residents from securing fulfilling and stable employment in higher-wage industries is the low educational attainment throughout the neighborhood. The highest level of educational attainment for most of the Choice neighborhood is high school.





## TERRACYCLE

**Terracycle was named No. 10 in Fortune's Change the World list. This sustainability innovator is based in the Choice neighborhood and should serve as a source of inspiration for the local economy.**

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.CORE77.COM/POSTS/59460/EMPLOYER-SPOTLIGHT-TERRACYCLE](https://www.core77.com/posts/59460/EMPLOYER-SPOTLIGHT-TERRACYCLE)

**GETTING AROUND—  
TRANSPORTATION, STREETS AND  
THE PUBLIC REALM**

Within the Choice neighborhood, the major roads that define and connect the neighborhood are the original main roads—Calhoun Street, MLK Jr. Boulevard, Brunswick Avenue and Pennington Avenue – with Southard Street serving as an important connecting cross-street at the center of the neighborhood, where many of the public institutions and amenities are clustered.

**WALKABILITY**

The neighborhood has the bones to be a very walkable neighborhood because of its pedestrian-scaled streets and extensive network of sidewalks and marked crosswalks along all the main roads. Unfortunately, the condition, cleanliness, poor lighting and safety of the network is a different story. Donnelly Homes is a 15-20 minute walk from downtown yet residents surveyed repeatedly indicated that they do not feel safe as a pedestrian because of the way that drivers speed through the area and because of the lack of adequate signage, lighting and traffic calming. Additionally, the general sense that it is not safe to be outside in the neighborhood – day or night – because of gun violence severely limits residents’ ability to take advantage of the opportunity to walk around the neighborhood, whether for errands or exercise, to get to school or work.

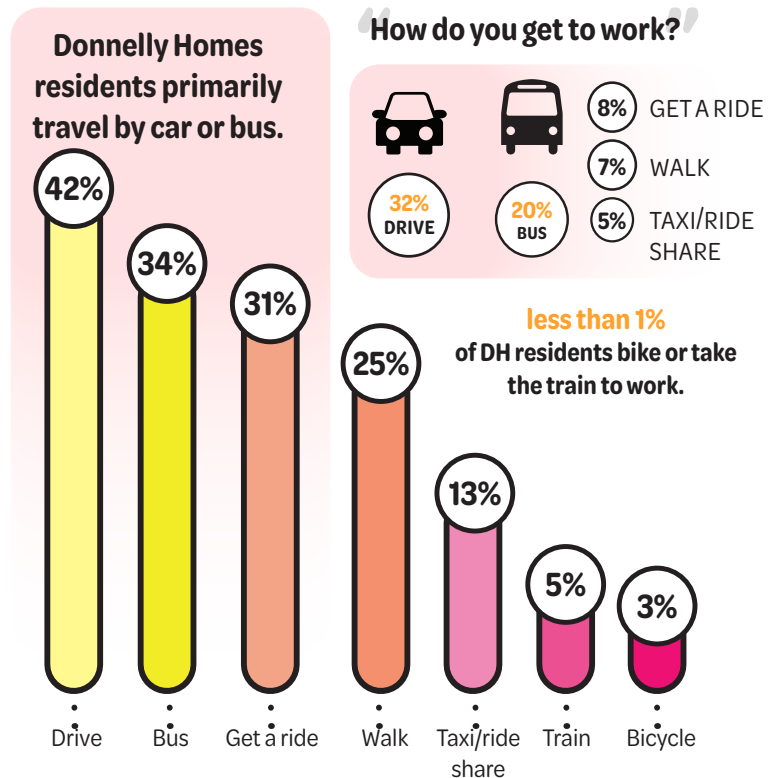
**BUSES & BIKES**

Four bus routes serve the neighborhood (603, 606, 607, and 613), and three of those four run past Donnelly Homes (603, 606, 613), with most residents within a 5-minute walk of a bus stop. However, the existing bus routes do not directly serve preferred suburban shopping and work destinations for residents, meaning that they have limited use within the neighborhood. It is also noteworthy that there is no bus route along

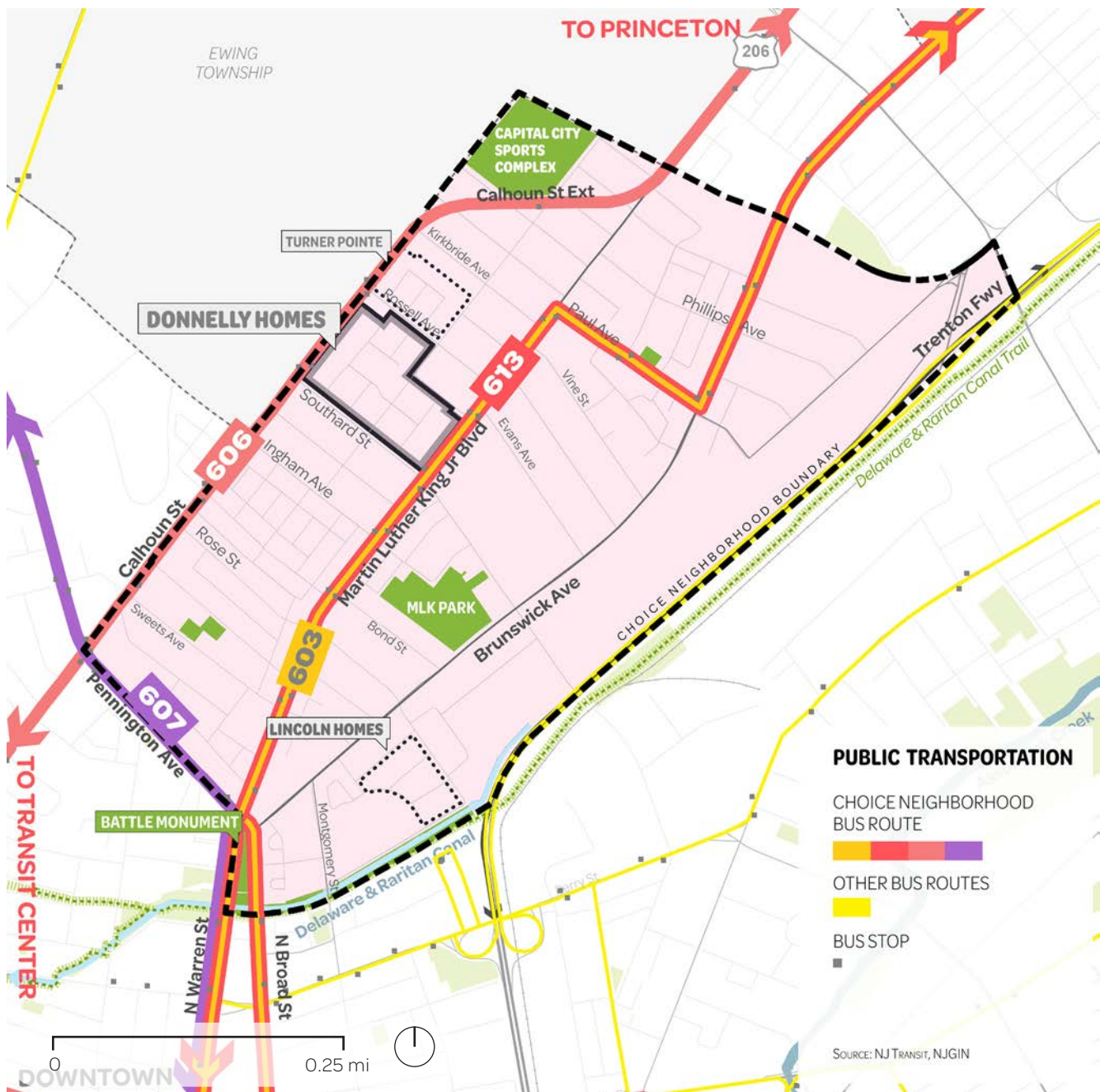
Brunswick Avenue between Pennington and Paul avenues, even though MLK Park and the Elementary School sit along this stretch of road and city’s comprehensive plan identifies this stretch as a main commercial corridor. Desired improvements to the bus stops such as well-lit, covered seating areas could make the current bus service an even more valuable amenity for the neighborhood.

The Choice neighborhood does not currently enjoy an established bike network. Trash and debris on the streets also make it hazardous for residents to use a bicycle to get around the neighborhood. That being said, the majority of the neighborhood is within a mile or less of Downtown, which equates to a 6-minute bike ride so investments in safe bike lanes could add another valuable transit option.

Limited safety, comfort, and convenience measures for transit-users, pedestrians and cyclists combined with many residents employed outside of the city explain why the majority of residents travel by car alone or in a carpool to get to and from work.







**FIGURE 10. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**

SOURCE: TRENTON 250, NJGIN

**Donnelly Homes is a 15-20 minute walk to downtown. Traveling within, to and from the Choice Neighborhood could be much improved by safe bus shelters, additional bus stops on Brunswick Avenue, bike lanes, and clearly marked crosswalks.**

## **PUBLIC SAFETY**

Public Safety is one of the most pressing issues for the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood and city as a whole. Taking measures to improve safety are necessary to realize a more healthy, vibrant, and opportunity-rich community.

At the core of the public safety challenges in the neighborhood is the legacy of gang violence that emerged during desperate times when the neighborhood and the city were coping with the effects of de-industrialization and white flight. Trenton today continues to have an intense territorial identity and rivalries. There is a need for healing, reconciliation and conflict management, especially for youth who may have lost a family member or friend to gang violence.

On top of the underlying territorialism and grudges that motivate much of the violence, residents trust in the police has diminished for a variety of reasons, which has further eroded an already weakened system of enforcement. More broadly, there is a lack of accountability and consistency in the relationship between the community and the police and a sense that people can get away with many crimes because of the inconsistency of enforcement.

Donnelly Homes residents surveyed share a relatively uniform sense that the whole neighborhood is not safe, and that Donnelly Homes in particular is not safe. Data collected from the Trenton Police reveal the following findings:

- ▶ **Call-For-Service:** The major call-for-service areas are just outside Donnelly Homes and Lincoln Homes along MLK Blvd and around MLK Park.
- ▶ **Arrests:** The arrests rate north of Lincoln Homes is the highest within the neighborhood. Otherwise, arrests cluster along MLK Blvd and MLK Park.
- ▶ **Firearm Discharges:** This type of crime distributes evenly within the neighborhood and

generally is lower than other citywide hot-spots. The area between Donnelly Homes and MLK Park has relatively higher rate.

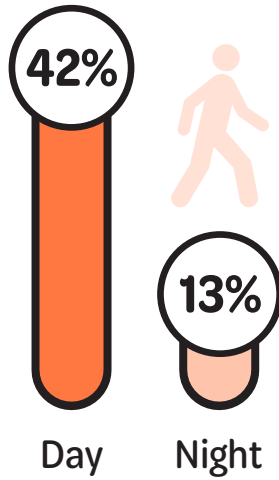
- ▶ **Violent (Part 1) Crimes:** Violent crimes are relatively evenly distributed within the neighborhood. However, near Donnelly Homes along MLK Blvd and surrounding Rossi Park are relatively higher. MLK Blvd + MLK Park both have the potential to be neighborhood gathering places, but safety MUST be addressed first.

Lastly, Donnelly residents surveyed also feel less safe in the neighborhood because of poor lighting (especially along MLK Boulevard, Southard and Calhoun streets) and vacant buildings and lots, which make residents feel unsafe due to the poor visibility and tendency to attract unwanted or unlawful behavior.

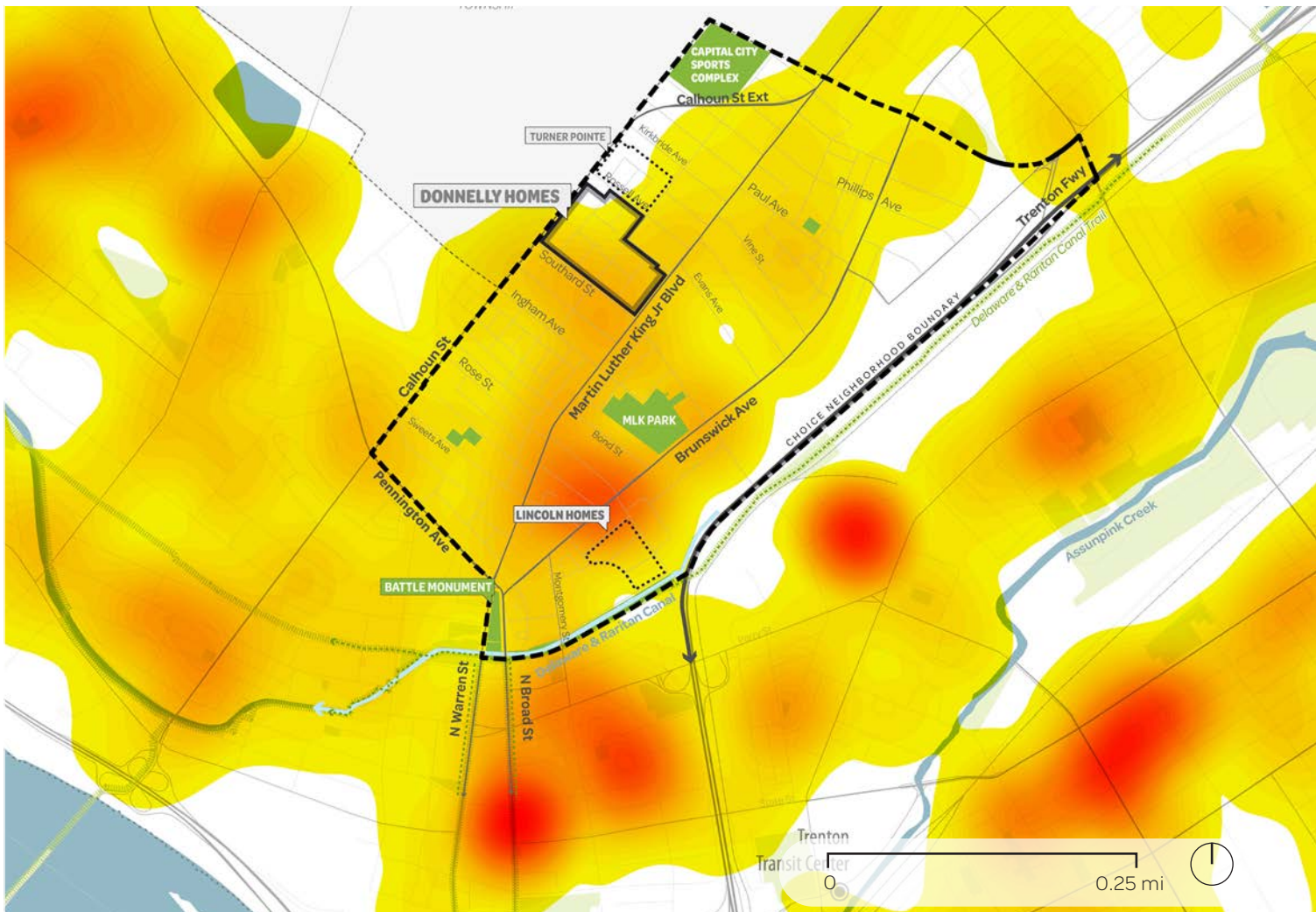
Traffic safety issues mentioned in the previous section also prevent “eyes on the street” by reducing the number of people walking, biking and waiting for buses in the neighborhood. As a result, it is easier for individuals to get away with bad behavior because none of their neighbors or peers are “watching” them and creating that sense of peer pressure to do the right thing. Parents’ fear that trips to and from school and after-school programs and activities is unsafe—both from a traffic and from a violence perspective—also means that youth are more isolated, bored and lack access to mentorship, learning, recreational and social opportunities because their safety is at risk every time they leave their home.



While **42%** feel safe to walk in the neighborhood during the day, only **13%** feel safe to walk at night.



only **14%** feel it is safe for children to walk to & home from school



^ **FIGURE 11. OCCURRENCE OF ARRESTS IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**

SOURCE: TRENTON NEW JERSEY



## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

It is difficult to fully understand the health and well-being of residents in the Choice neighborhood without looking at it through the lenses of public safety, environmental justice, and social determinants of health. Many residents of Donnelly Homes, and of the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood more generally, are working to overcome multi-generational trauma, economic instability, poor education, food insecurity, and chronic disease. These intersecting issues all, in one way or another, make it difficult for residents to reach their full potential and make them more susceptible to mental health crises that often are dealt with through the Police rather than through healthcare providers and social workers.

Many of these challenges are not specific to North Trenton, but are in fact patterns of hardship and poor health outcomes that are common throughout the City of Trenton, as documented in the Trenton Health Team’s 2019 Trenton Community Health Needs and Assets Assessment (2019 Trenton CHNA Report).

The 2019 Trenton CHNA Report highlighted eight priority health concerns, all of which appear to be consistent with the experiences and challenges Choice neighborhood residents are facing in their lives:

- Housing quality and cost,
- Racial/ethnic Inequities,
- Adverse childhood experiences,
- Mental health and substance use disorders,
- Community safety,
- Food insecurity, access and nutrition,
- Chronic disease, and
- Maternal and child health.

## Many of these inter-related challenges are magnified in the Choice Neighborhood.

For instance, the City of Trenton has a 28.4 percent poverty rate and in the Choice neighborhood there is a 40 percent poverty rate.

The 2019 Trenton CHNA Report highlighted high rates of childhood lead poisoning and asthma along with a 10.8 percent rate of asthma among adults—conditions that are generally associated with poorly maintained housing conditions (peeling lead paint, contaminated soil, and un-addressed mold). These housing and environmental factors are compounded by broader issues around public safety, trauma, mental health and substance abuse, and lack of economic opportunity which all make housing instability an even more common stressor for Trenton residents.

Of respondents for the 2019 Trenton CHNA Report, many had a history of childhood trauma, 22.5 percent do not feel safe in their neighborhoods, and 28.5 percent indicated that housing instability and cost negatively affect their health.

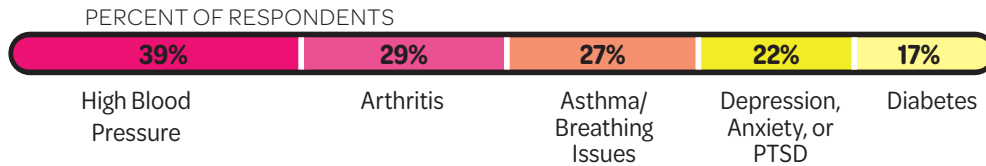
Trenton residents also suffer from higher rates of chronic disease than the county, state and nation. For residents of Donnelly Homes, many of the top health conditions identified through the Needs Assessment reflect living conditions in the neighborhood. Top issues are 1 – high blood pressure, 2 – Arthritis, 3 - Asthma/breathing issues, 4 – Depression, anxiety, or post-traumatic stress, and 5 – Diabetes.

## COMBATING CHRONIC DISEASE THROUGH ACTIVE LIFESTYLES, FOOD AND NUTRITION

While many factors influence the rates of chronic disease in any community, two factors are intimately related to the physical environment—



## Donnelly Homes residents surveyed reported being diagnosed with:



**90%** of adults &  
**91%** of children  
in Donnelly households  
surveyed have health  
insurance

access to fresh, affordable and nutritious food and access to exercise and recreation amenities that support an active lifestyle. The City of Trenton is considered a food desert and while the Choice neighborhood has better access than some areas of the city, it is not well served by providers of healthy and nutritious food within walking distance for most residents.

**The Choice Neighborhood is not well served by providers of healthy and nutritious food within walking distance for most residents.**

Except Supremo Foods on Pennington Avenue, all other grocery stores are beyond a 1/2-mile walking distance from Donnelly Homes. While MLK Boulevard has several corner stores, convenience stores and bodegas, these smaller shops do not tend to sell fresh and nutritious food.

Lastly, improving public safety and continuing to invest in improvements to the pedestrian and bike network, and parks and trails will make it easier for residents to enjoy an active lifestyle in their neighborhood. Basic improvements like better lighting, street cleaning, safer crosswalks and sidewalk repair will make a big difference in residents' ability to enjoy a daily walk around the neighborhood.



**90%**

of residents have an **ANNUAL CHECK-UP (WELL VISIT)**



**84%**

of residents have **AT LEAST ONE DENTAL CLEANING A YEAR**

### ACCESS TO CARE & MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

The 2019 Trenton CHNA Report found that 16 percent or more of Trenton residents lack health insurance. Based on the Needs Assessment survey, this number is better for Donnelly Homes residents, where approximately 90 percent of adults and 91 percent of children have health insurance. Fortunately for Donnelly and Choice neighborhood residents, the Capital Health Regional Medical Center and Henry J. Austin Health Center are just a few blocks away. This may explain the high number of survey respondents who have an annual well visit (90%) and at least one dental cleaning within a typical year (84%). Residents did note, however, that access to more specialized services such as mental health, physical therapy, ob-gyn services, and domestic violence services are not readily available. Contributing to this is a significant lack of awareness of existing local health facilities.

At the city level, Trenton had six times more teen births than the State of New Jersey and many residents never had an initial prenatal appointment. Poor access to family planning, maternal and child health support is not just about where individuals live in New Jersey. Throughout New Jersey, Black mothers are twice as likely to die in pregnancy, delivery, or postpartum as any other race or ethnicity. The Choice Neighborhood has better physical access to care than many neighborhoods in Trenton, but bureaucratic, logistical and financial barriers are such that many residents often are not able to make full use of local health care providers.

**Residents need support navigating the complexities of healthcare and insurance systems in order to access the preventative care they need.**

Community anchors like THA, the schools, community centers and faith-based organizations all have a critical role to play in connecting residents to the supportive resources that will enable them to receive the care they need.

**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, RACIAL INEQUITY & SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH**

Finally, it is important to specifically acknowledge the role of pervasive discrimination and racism in causing disparities in health outcomes for residents of New Jersey, Mercer County and Trenton, in particular. The 2019 Trenton CHNA Report found that there were racial disparities in chronic disease, maternal health, and cancer, as well as racial disparities in health outcomes for individuals with the same health condition. Additionally, 25 percent of respondents to that survey indicated that

discrimination and racism had a major impact on their health and well-being.

Race and ethnicity should never determine health outcomes, but it is very clear that for residents of Trenton, and nationwide, race and ethnicity does determine health outcomes.

This plan alone cannot reverse or systematically address these racial and ethnic health disparities – that work is much larger in scale than this neighborhood alone – but this plan does aim to change some of the environmental factors (like housing, food access, access to recreation and open space amenities, public safety and access to healthcare) and strategically enhance the supportive services in the neighborhood so that residents have a stronger foundation from which to pursue health and wellness in their everyday lives.







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**03/**

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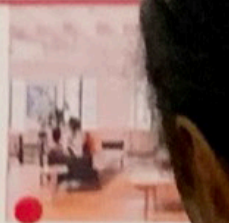
**WRITING  
THE NEXT  
CHAPTER**

NORTH TRENTON/BATTLE MONUMENT CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD  
**STATION 2: HOUSING PLAN**  
CHANGES COMING OUR WAY!

**OUR BIG GYM!**

TODAY A BLANK  
TOMORROW A LAKE

100	200	300	400	500
600	700	800	900	1000
1100	1200	1300	1400	1500
1600	1700	1800	1900	2000



**COVERT**

There is a big space. How  
could we use it? Maybe half of it could  
be a library. There could be  
a community space with  
tables for family gatherings.



**DO YOU LIKE TO SEE? DRAW  
OR ADD A POST-IT!**



# 03/ WRITING THE NEXT CHAPTER

The City of Trenton's Division of Planning recently guided residents in developing a community-driven vision for the future of the City that resulted in the Trenton250 Master Plan. The City is now hard at work realizing this comprehensive plan and the many initiatives that came out of the planning effort, promoting sustainable communities, strategic growth, and transit-oriented development. The North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan aligns with and builds upon this vision.

## TRENTON250

Trenton250 is the City's latest comprehensive plan, which will guide development through 2042, when the City will celebrate its 250th birthday. It also forms the basis for the ongoing update of the Land Development Ordinance (LDO) and Redevelopment Plans. The Vision Report of the Trenton250 was adopted in 2014 and adoption of the full plan followed in 2017.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Eight guiding principles form the basis of Trenton250. All of these principles directly shaped the Choice Neighborhood Plan, and include:

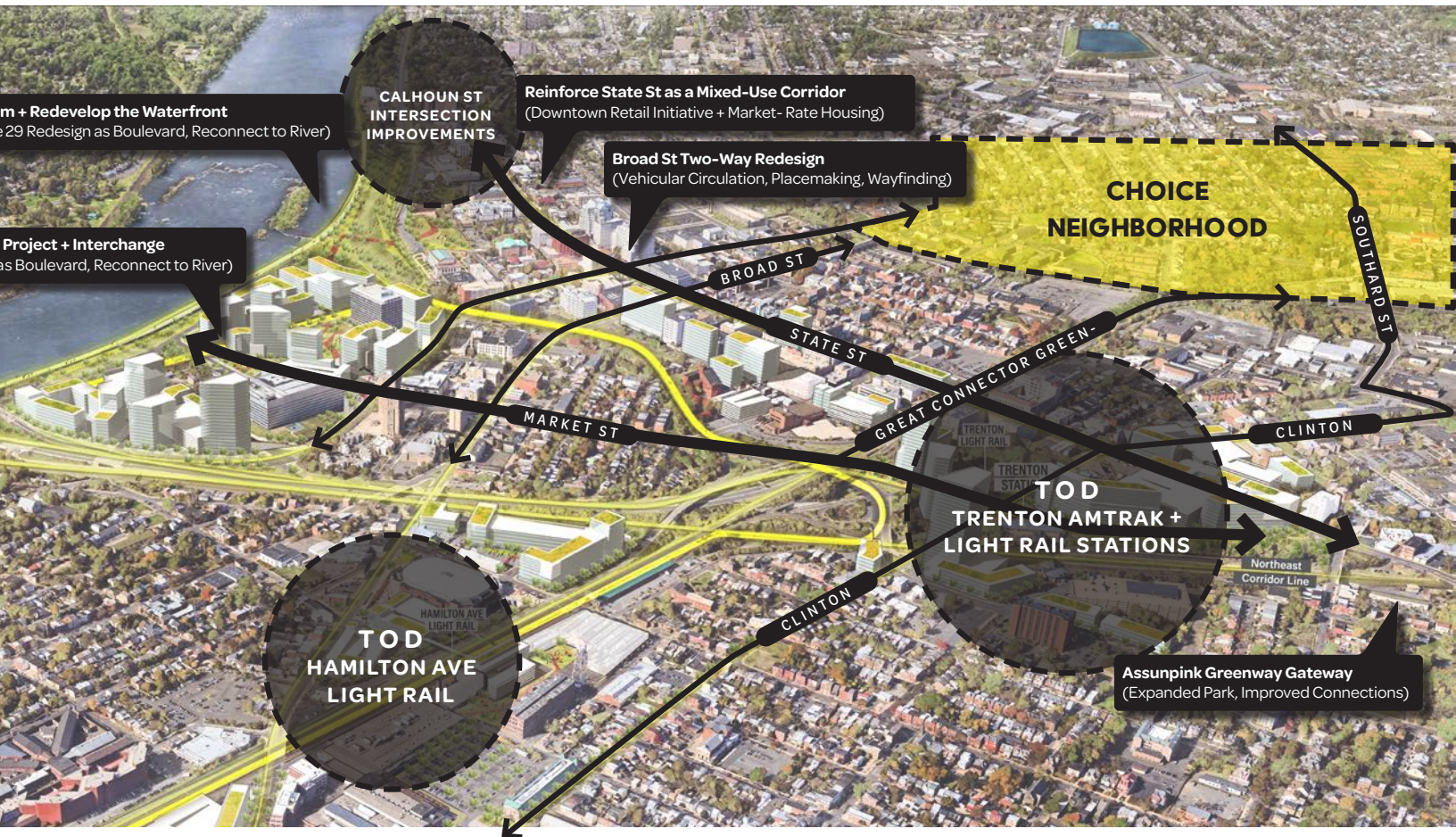
- Foster social opportunity and a vibrant economy through education.
- Establish a preeminent arts and culture destination.
- Build a safe city.
- Advance good governance.
- Promote civic unity and pride.
- Cultivate a healthy city.
- Reinforce high-quality neighborhoods and a 24/7 downtown Trenton.
- Capitalize on location and urban form to support a multi-modal transportation network.

Each guiding principle has a series of goals that describe desired outcomes. The Plan also includes initiatives and actions that outline how to make these outcomes a reality for the City and its partners.



**Looking ahead to the 250th Anniversary of the City's founding in 2042, Trenton has set an ambitious goal of becoming a premier economic and cultural center built on arts, industry, and education.**





^ **FIGURE 13. A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN TRENTON**

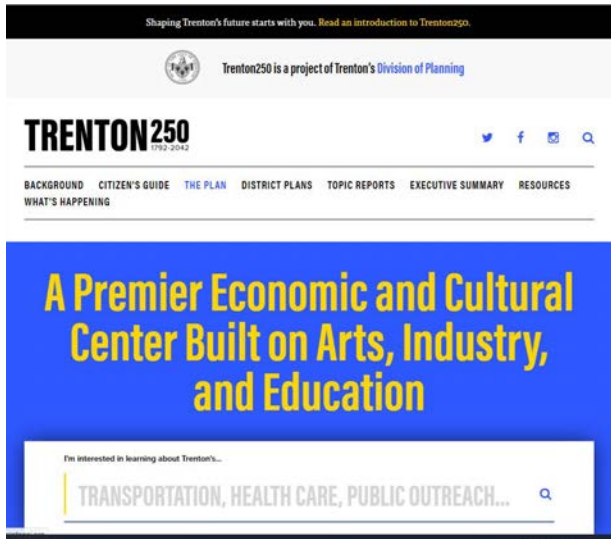
Some of the citywide initiatives identified in Trenton250 and their relationship to the Choice Neighborhood.

### NORTH DISTRICT

Trenton250 includes five district plans (Downtown, West, East, South, North) that highlight specific initiatives and actions related to each district. The Choice Neighborhood falls largely within the North District plan, which calls for a coordinated effort

to strengthen connections to Downtown, Cadwalader Park and the trail network. The area also falls within one of 20 sub-neighborhoods in Trenton identified as “very weak,” where vacancy and abandonment exist in the highest concentrations. The long-term vision is for these areas to evolve into vibrant residential neighborhoods. The goal in the short term is to reduce





**FIGURE 14. TRENTON250 WEBSITE**

The entire comprehensive plan is available online at: [www.trenton250.org](http://www.trenton250.org)

the impact of the weak housing market on residents while stabilizing the housing stock so that it is ready for private sector investment when the housing market does improve.

Also of particular relevance to the Choice Neighborhood Plan is an emphasis on improving Trenton’s existing industrial areas like that on the southeastern edge of the Choice Neighborhood, to attract industry and create a more sustainable economy in the City with new employment opportunities.

Soon after adoption, the Governor of New Jersey signed Executive Order 40, a commitment to reinvest in the Capital City, including making funds available for targeted demolition to restore stability and confidence in Trenton’s neighborhoods and make way for a brighter future.

## OTHER RELEVANT PLANS

Since adoption of Trenton250, the City has embarked on several initiatives and plans called

for in the Master Plan, starting with the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Strategic Plan, adopted in December 23, 2019. The TOD Plan aims to coordinate public investment and encourage private sector investment, compact mixed-use development, multi-modal linkages and equitable access in and around the Trenton Transit Center and the three River LINE stations. When implemented, this plan will undoubtedly attract more residents and investment to the City, which could spillover to North Trenton.

Of greater relevance to the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan are two more recent efforts described below.

## TRENTON250 COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS PLAN

The Community Health and Wellness Plan (adopted in January 2021), recognizes that the design of communities has a direct impact on the health of residents, and therefore should be an integral part of the comprehensive plan.

According to multiple community health assessments, Trenton’s health challenges are inter-related—from high rates of violent crime leaving residents feeling unsafe, subject to trauma, and unable to recreate safely outdoors; to adverse childhood experiences; food insecurity; chronic disease; substance abuse; and behavioral health. Housing poses another challenge related to the stress of high costs and the conditions of poor housing stock. Racial and ethnic disparities further compound these issues.

The Health and Wellness Plan focuses on four major goals, all of which have corresponding goals and strategies in the Choice Neighborhood Plan:

1. Increase access to healthy foods & nutrition.
2. Increase physical activity among Trenton residents.

3. Improve access to healthcare and health literacy.
4. Promote healthy housing conditions.

## **COMPLETE STREETS RESOLUTION**

In 2012, the City of Trenton adopted a Complete Streets resolution, committing the City to build a “comprehensive, integrated, connected street network that accommodates all road users.”

Trenton250 reiterated this commitment through one of the main guiding principles – Build a Safe City – which involves not just safe auto traffic but multiple modes of transit including trails, sidewalks, in-road bike networks and public transit.

**Complete Streets are designed to accommodate the safe movement of all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists, regardless of their age and ability.**

The next step toward realizing Complete Streets in Trenton involved the creation of a Complete Streets Design Handbook, published in 2021. The Guidebook explains that complete streets aim to address historical imbalances in the planning and provision of infrastructure between drivers of vehicles and all other road users. In Trenton, this is especially important since many residents do not own cars.

There are other benefits as well. The Handbook notes that bike lanes benefit cities by helping companies attract skilled workers, increasing retail sales, making workers more productive and healthier, and helping neighborhoods attract redevelopment without needing major transportation investments like new transit

stations or lines. This is documented in the 2016 Urban Land Institute report, *Active Transportation and Real Estate: the Next Frontier*.

Increasingly, Complete Streets integrate green stormwater infrastructure such as rain gardens, trees, and vegetated buffers. Green infrastructure offers a range of benefits that include managing and cleaning stormwater runoff, reducing flooding, providing shade and reducing carbon, and enhancing the visual appearance of neighborhood streets.

The Handbook is intended to provide guidance on how to put the city’s Complete Streets resolution into practice by providing recommendations for specific streets in Trenton based on their existing and desired characteristics. It provides best practices and illustrates the appropriate infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists for each of these street types.

## **COMPLETE STREETS IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**

Trenton250 highlights both MLK Jr. Boulevard and Brunswick Avenue as “Potential Complete Streets,” although the city does not currently have a plan to implement construction of Complete Streets.

To help make MLK Jr. Boulevard safer, more attractive and more walkable for Choice neighborhood residents, the plan proposes transforming MLK Boulevard from Battle Monument to Calhoun Street into a Complete Street. It could serve as a pilot project for the rest of the city and also integrate features such as interpretive signage, street furniture like benches and decorative lampposts, and trees to create a welcoming sense of place.



## IMPROVING THE HOUSING STOCK IN NORTH TRENTON

### HOUSING OVERVIEW & TYPE MIX

The North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood contains an eclectic mix of housing stock—a result of waves of population growth over an extended history. In 2019, the neighborhood contained 2,708 housing units. Approximately a quarter of the housing units in the neighborhood are owner occupied. Fifty-six percent of all housing units are rental while the remaining 19% are vacant structures. The block group that contains Donnelly Homes and Turner Homes has an unsurprisingly high rental rate of 92%. The rental rate of surrounding block groups in the neighborhood are more stable, ranging from 50-60%. The block groups sandwiching Donnelly Homes contain some of the most stable owner-occupied units in Trenton. Adjacent Ewing Township boasts an extraordinary low rental rate. Apart from Trenton Housing Authority sites, most of the housing stock in the neighborhood are attached single family homes.

### VACANCY & BLIGHT

Housing vacancy and associated blight are the biggest deterrents to private investments in the North Trenton Choice Neighborhood. There is a significant cluster of vacant buildings and lots between Calhoun Street, Pennington Avenue and MLK Boulevard. Another stretch of vacant buildings and lots exists between MLK Boulevard and Brunswick Avenue. Vacancy and blight are more prominent west of Donnelly Homes than east of the site. There are a few large vacant industrial lots along the D&R Canal. The most prominent vacant building (and most promising adaptive reuse opportunity) in the neighborhood is the former Junior No. 1 school across MLK Boulevard from Donnelly Homes.

### NEED FOR HEALTHY HOMES

There is a general need city-wide in Trenton for healthier homes. Based on a community health needs assessment conducted by the Trenton Health Team in 2019, over 90% of all homes in Trenton were constructed before 1978 when lead-based paint was prohibited. Many homes in Trenton, including structures in North Trenton, are highly likely to contain lead-based paint, which can cause lead poisoning in children. It is estimated that more than 50% of Trenton school children have a level of lead in their blood that affects their learning and behavior<sup>1</sup>.

Asthma affects Trentonians in higher numbers than national/county averages. Poor housing conditions with dust and mold are triggers for asthma-related incidences. Pediatric asthma is of high concern, particularly as it affects Black children at twice the rate of other children<sup>3</sup>.

### SENIORS & AGING IN PLACE

The highest population of seniors in the neighborhood is in the central to northeast of the neighborhood from MLK Boulevard to the highway. This is an important neighborhood demographic being considered in the potential of rehabilitating Junior No. 1 (vacant middle school) in part for new senior housing along with community services and amenities.

### SUPPORTIVE MARKET STUDIES

Based on a Downtown Trenton residential market study conducted in 2018, there was an unmet demand of 760 market-rate units. (Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc. 2018) The southern portion of the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood will benefit from this market demand in the near term due to its proximity to Downtown Trenton. One desired outcome of the proposed Choice plan is to pull this market potential northward into the neighborhood to benefit Donnelly Homes residents

<sup>1</sup> Trenton Community Health Needs and Assets Assessment, Trenton Health Team, Inc., June 2019



^ **FIGURE 15. VACANCY IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**

SOURCE: TRENTON 250, NJGIN

who desire a more mixed-income community. The recent completion of adjacent Turner Point provides market confidence that new LIHTC units can work in the neighborhood. The market study completed for that project found that there is minimal competition for LIHTC product in the neighborhood, and demographic scan indicates

ample supply of “income-eligible” residents. Additionally, the market study confirms that there is a shortage of quality housing products. To that end, a Market Study was commissioned by Zimmerman/Volk Associates to inform the Choice housing plan. Findings and recommendations follow.



**CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL MARKET STUDY**

An analysis of the residential market potential of the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood shows an annual potential of 1,150 units of new housing – 724 rentals and 426 for sale units over five years. Of the 724 new rental units, 197 units (27% of new rental demand) can be classified as market rate as defined by the CNI program. It is important to note that the remaining 527 rental units (73% of new rental demand) does not account for the induced demand as a result of the eventual redevelopment of Donnelly Homes. (376 replacement units). Based on ZVA’s analysis, a majority of the for-sale units will have to be subsidized at various levels.

Who are the households that represent the potential market for new housing units within the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Study Area?

As determined by the target market analysis, the general market segments, by lifestage, that represent the potential market for new housing units in the Study Area include:

- ▶ Younger singles and childless couples—54.3 percent;
- ▶ Empty nesters and retirees—26.1 percent); and
- ▶ Traditional and non-traditional family households—19.6 percent

With a share of more than 54 percent, younger singles and couples are the largest market for new housing units in the Study Area. A significant percentage of these younger households hold lower paying service and retail jobs. Approximately 37.4 percent of the younger households have incomes below 30 percent AMI (less than \$22,850 for a one-person household to less than \$26,100 for a two person household); another 19.5 percent have incomes ranging between 30 and 60 percent AMI (between \$22,850 and \$45,700 to between \$26,100 and \$52,200); 14.7 percent earn between 60 and 80 percent of the AMI (between \$45,700 and \$54,950 to between \$52,200 and \$62,800); just 11.7 percent have incomes between 80 and 100 percent AMI (between \$54,950 and \$76,100 to \$62,800 and \$87,000); and the remaining 16.6 percent earn over 100 percent of the AMI (over \$76,100 to over \$87,000).

	<b>Below 30% AMI</b>	<b>30% to 60% AMI</b>	<b>60% to 80% AMI</b>	<b>80% to 100% AMI</b>	<b>Above 100% AMI</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>
<b>Multi-Family For-Rent:</b>	275	144	108	83	114	<b>724</b>
<b>Multi-Family For-Sale:</b>	32	18	14	11	21	<b>96</b>
<b>Single-Family Attached For-Sale:</b>	73	44	33	29	41	<b>220</b>
<b>Single-Family Detached For-Sale:</b>	28	22	15	14	31	<b>110</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>1,150</b>
<i>Percent:</i>	<i>35.5%</i>	<i>19.8%</i>	<i>14.8%</i>	<i>11.9%</i>	<i>18.0%</i>	<i>100.0%</i>

^ **FIGURE 17. ANNUAL MARKET POTENTIAL FOR HOUSING IN CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD**



Empty nesters and retirees comprise the second largest share of the potential market for new housing in the Study Area, at just over 26 percent. Some of these older singles and couples are retired or have never worked, although many are still actively working in lower-paying service jobs. The older singles and couples are comparable in their income ranges to the younger singles and couples, although their distribution differs somewhat: 31 percent have incomes that fall below 30 percent AMI, 17.3 percent have incomes between 30 and 60 percent AMI, 14 percent between 60 and 80 percent AMI, 13.3 percent between 80 and 100 percent AMI, and 24.3 percent earn more than 100 percent of the AMI.

At 19.6 percent, the smallest group, the family-oriented households that represent the potential market for new mixed-income housing units in the Study Area, are a mix of smaller, compact

families and non-traditional families. Some of these households are headed by single parents, with one to four children. Thirty-six percent have incomes below 30 percent AMI (less than approximately \$29,350 for a three-person household to less than \$35,250 for a five-person household); 24 percent have incomes ranging between 30 and 60 percent AMI (between \$29,350 and \$58,700 to between \$35,250 and \$70,500); 16 percent earn between 60 and 80 percent of the AMI (between approximately \$58,700 and \$70,650 to between \$70,500 and \$84,800); 10.7 percent have incomes between 80 and 100 percent AMI (between \$70,650 and \$97,900 to between \$84,800 and \$117,400); and the remaining 13.3 percent earn over 100 percent of the AMI (over \$97,900 to over \$117,400).



## UNDERSTANDING LAND USE & ZONING

Developing an effective vision for redevelopment of the neighborhood requires an understanding of how land is used and zoned. Land use characterizes how land is used such as residential, industrial, agricultural. A Future Land Use map illustrates a vision of how a city or town would like to develop by showing the desired types, intensity and spatial arrangement of land uses. Related to this is zoning, which controls the physical development of the land by defining what uses are permitted on a property. This may include design and development guidelines.

### EXISTING LAND USE + ZONING

Currently, the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice neighborhood is mostly residential with pockets of commercial, institutional, and industrial uses along the main corridors and at the edges of the neighborhood. Unfortunately, the zoning and land use are not fully aligned to support a vibrant, walkable community.

In such a dense, pedestrian-scaled neighborhood, everyday services such as a barber, hairdresser, restaurant and bakery, coffee shop, daycare, and dry cleaners, would be expected nearby and would add to the area's liveliness and attractiveness. The main corridors along Brunswick Avenue and MLK Jr. Boulevard, however, lack consistent, contiguous commercial land uses so current retail does not benefit from the added attraction, visibility and stability associated with a better-defined commercial corridor.

Trenton250 took important steps towards creating a more cohesive and strategic vision, especially for Downtown Trenton, but in the North Ward, there remain a few inconsistencies. Trenton250's Future Land Use vision (Figure 16) makes it clear that the city expects this neighborhood to continue

to be primarily residential with mixed-use areas along Pennington Avenue and Brunswick Avenue. However, the Future Land Use vision shows no mixed-use or corridor areas along MLK Boulevard. The area surrounding the hospital in the north east is exclusively commercial, which runs the risk of cutting off or isolating the two residential neighborhoods from one another.

The Future Land Use map reinforces the observation that Southard Street serves as a natural boundary between industrial and non-industrial uses. Trenton250's Zoning, however, does not reinforce Southard Street as a boundary for industrial land uses, allowing them to extend behind the residential and commercial uses lining Brunswick Avenue, and effectively cutting those residential areas off from accessing the Delaware and Raritan Canal trail more safely and directly from the intersection of Southard Street and Brunswick Avenue. This is just one of several instances where the zoning is not yet in sync up with the intended land use.

Most of Brunswick Avenue, Pennington Avenue, and Calhoun Street is zoned as business and some sections of MLK Boulevard are zoned as business, but none of them are treated as a corridor with continuous mixed-use zoning. Donnelly Homes and the adjacent area is zoned as mixed use despite their predominantly residential character while obvious mixed-use corridors are kept to more restrictive residential or commercial zoning categories.

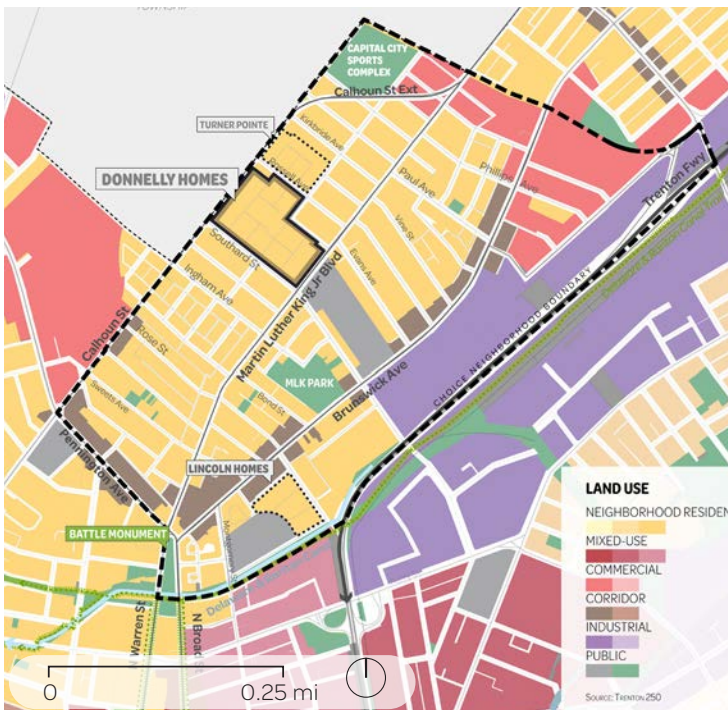
To create more of a "main street" along MLK Boulevard to serve the local neighborhood and perhaps over time attract diners and shoppers from other parts of the city, the Choice neighborhood plan recommends aligning the zoning to support the vision.



The large amount of yellow shows that the Choice Neighborhood is mostly residential with a few scattered pockets of commercial use (in red), largely on Calhoun Street, and institutional uses such as the schools (in blue).

^ **FIGURE 18. EXISTING LAND USE**

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU - 2018 ACS (5-YEAR)

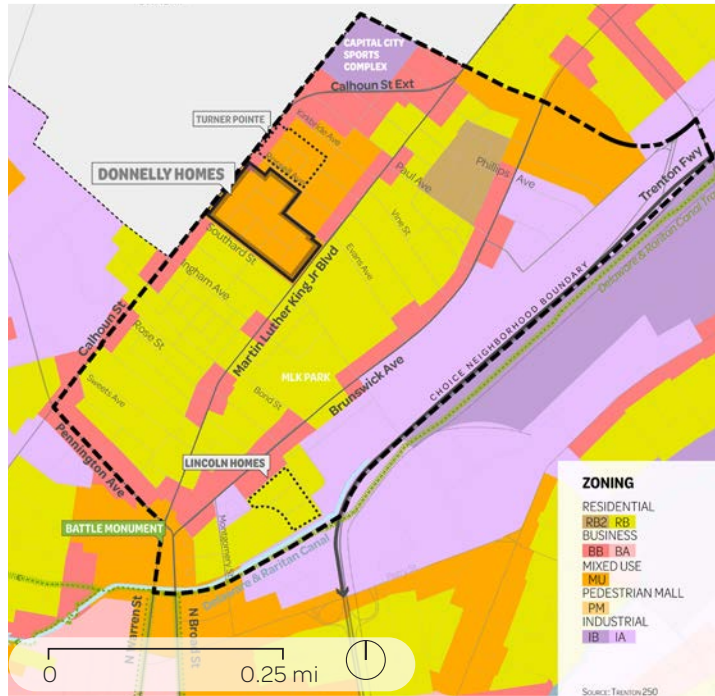


The future vision for the neighborhood maintains the residential character (in yellow), while enhancing Brunswick Avenue and Pennington Avenue as corridors (dark grey). The industrial area and commercial area around Capital Health are both expanded.

^ **FIGURE 19. FUTURE LAND USE**

SOURCE: TRENTON 250





This zoning map illustrates what can be developed on the land. While MLK Boulevard is a natural “main street” given its central location, it is not currently zoned for business from one end to the other.

**FIGURE 20. ZONING**

SOURCE: TRENTON 250

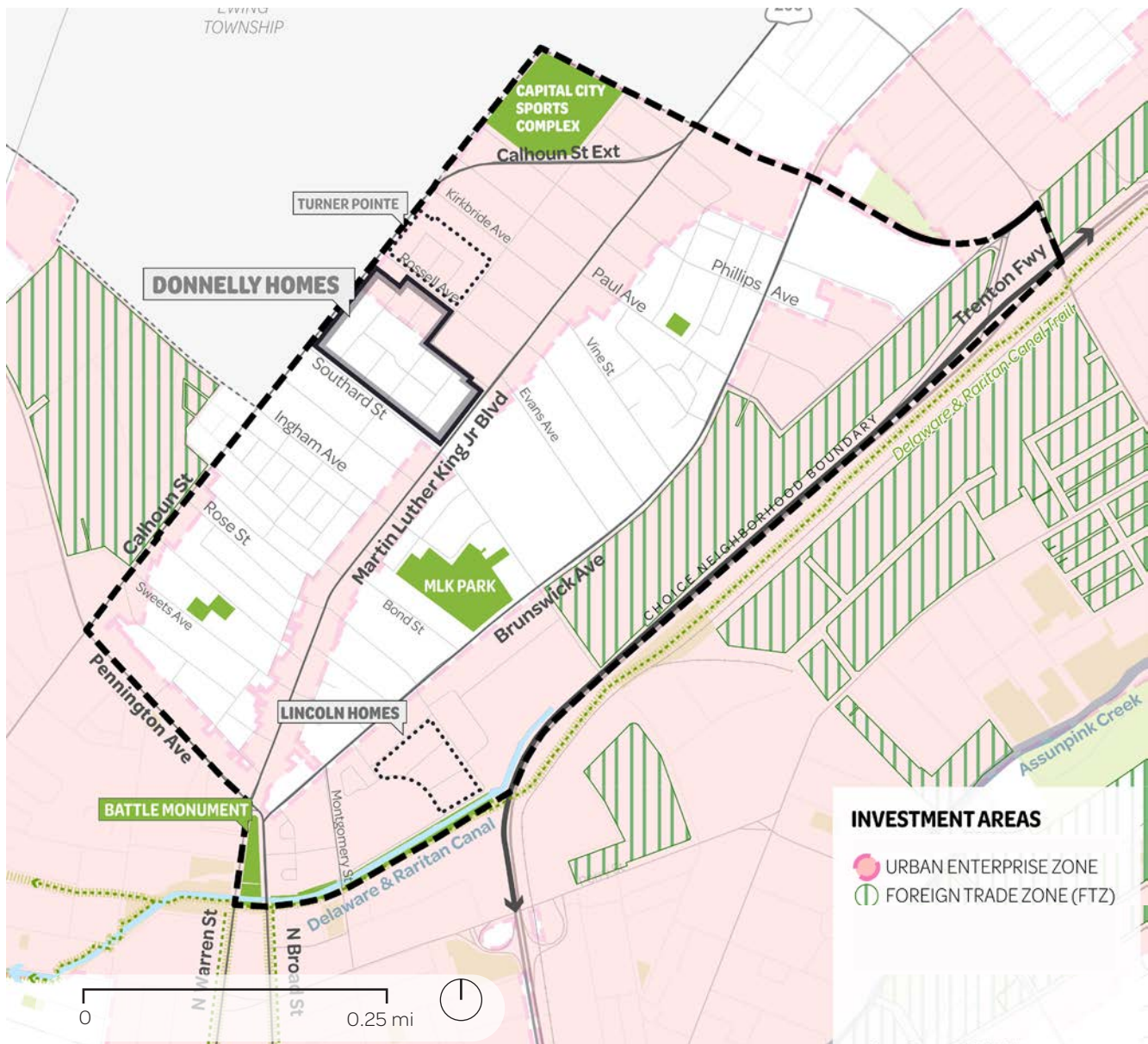
## INVESTMENT AREAS & REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Regulatory and financial tools such as redevelopment areas, enterprise zones and foreign trade zones are often needed to stimulate significant reinvestment and redevelopment in a deteriorated area such as the North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood.

There are two investment zones that overlap the Choice Neighborhood:

- Urban Enterprise Zones (UEZs):** New Jersey’s Urban Enterprise (UEZ) Program, enacted in 1983, is designed to encourage businesses to locate, invest, and grow in urban communities. This program is also designed to blend public and private investment to create new private sector jobs in urban communities. The specific benefits to businesses located in a
- Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs):** U.S. Foreign Trade Zones are secure geographical areas located in or near U.S. ports that provide reduced customs duties and taxes on international imports to businesses operating in that area. This national designation treats activities within FTZs as if they are outside national borders and is designed to encourage U.S. trade and

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nj.gov/dca/affiliates/uez/>;



^ **FIGURE 21. INVESTMENT AREAS**

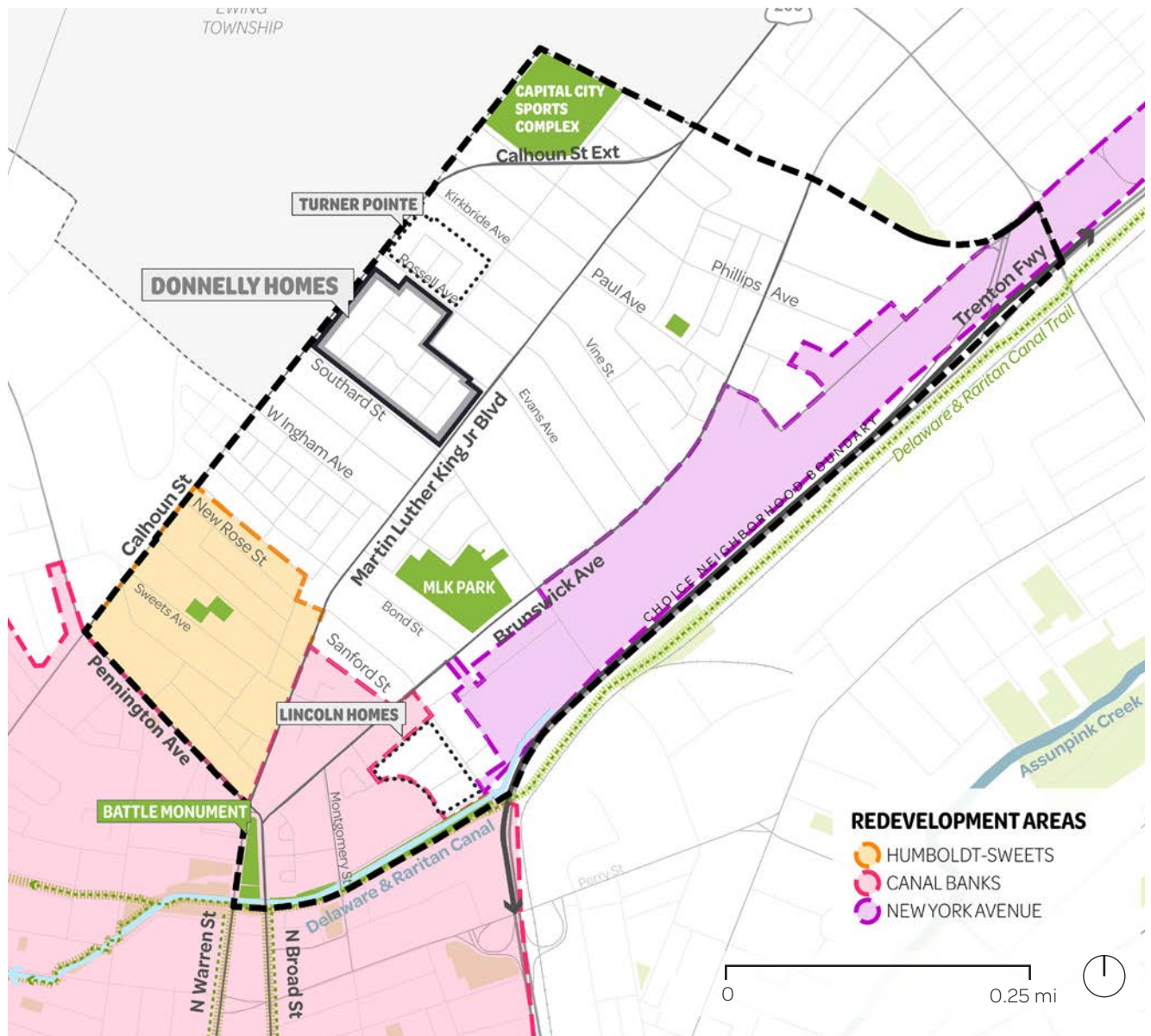
SOURCE: TRENTON 250, NJGIN

value-added production activity by helping U.S. companies compete with the pricing of foreign alternatives.<sup>2</sup> The historic industrial canal and rail corridors along the southern border of the

neighborhood are still recognized as sites of industrial and foreign trade activity and can be leveraged to attract more jobs to the area.

<sup>2</sup> <https://enforcement.trade.gov/ftzpage/info/zone.html>; <https://www.panyj.gov/port/en/doing-business/foreign-trade-zone-49.html>





^ **FIGURE 22. EXISTING REDEVELOPMENT AREAS**

SOURCE: TRENTON 250, NJGIN

## REDEVELOPMENT AREAS

Several redevelopment areas overlap the Choice neighborhood boundary but a large part of the neighborhood is not subject to redevelopment incentives. The three Redevelopment Areas touching the Choice Neighborhood—New York Avenue, Humboldt-Sweets, and Canal Banks—each have a different focus and have had varying degrees of success but also offer opportunity to advance the vision of the Choice neighborhood.

- **Humboldt-Sweets** - Consistent with Trenton250, the intent of this redevelopment area is to create affordable housing opportunities with new single family and multi-family housing. It also aims to reduce blight and non-conforming uses and upgrade streetscapes.
- **Canal Banks** - This is a priority plan for updating, has shown some progress, and is consistent with Trenton250. It calls for a linear park along the D&R Canal, an open space network, and creating new opportunities for housing including rental and homeownership.
- **New York Avenue** - This plan has shown little progress but is consistent with Trenton250. It calls for redevelopment of vacant properties for light industrial/office or entertainment, recreational or commercial uses as well as redevelopment of small portions of the area as housing to blend with surrounding neighborhoods.

As part of Trenton250 and ongoing Land Development Ordinance Update, the City is reviewing the effectiveness of the existing Redevelopment Areas to eliminate, combine, and simplify them to the extent possible with the goal of strengthening their capacity to stimulate investment and redevelopment.

The corridors and industrial areas of the Choice neighborhood are generally well-covered by

specialized investment areas (such as Urban Enterprise Zones, Foreign Trade Zones and Redevelopment Areas), but most residential areas have very few if any tools to help incentivize economic development and investment.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

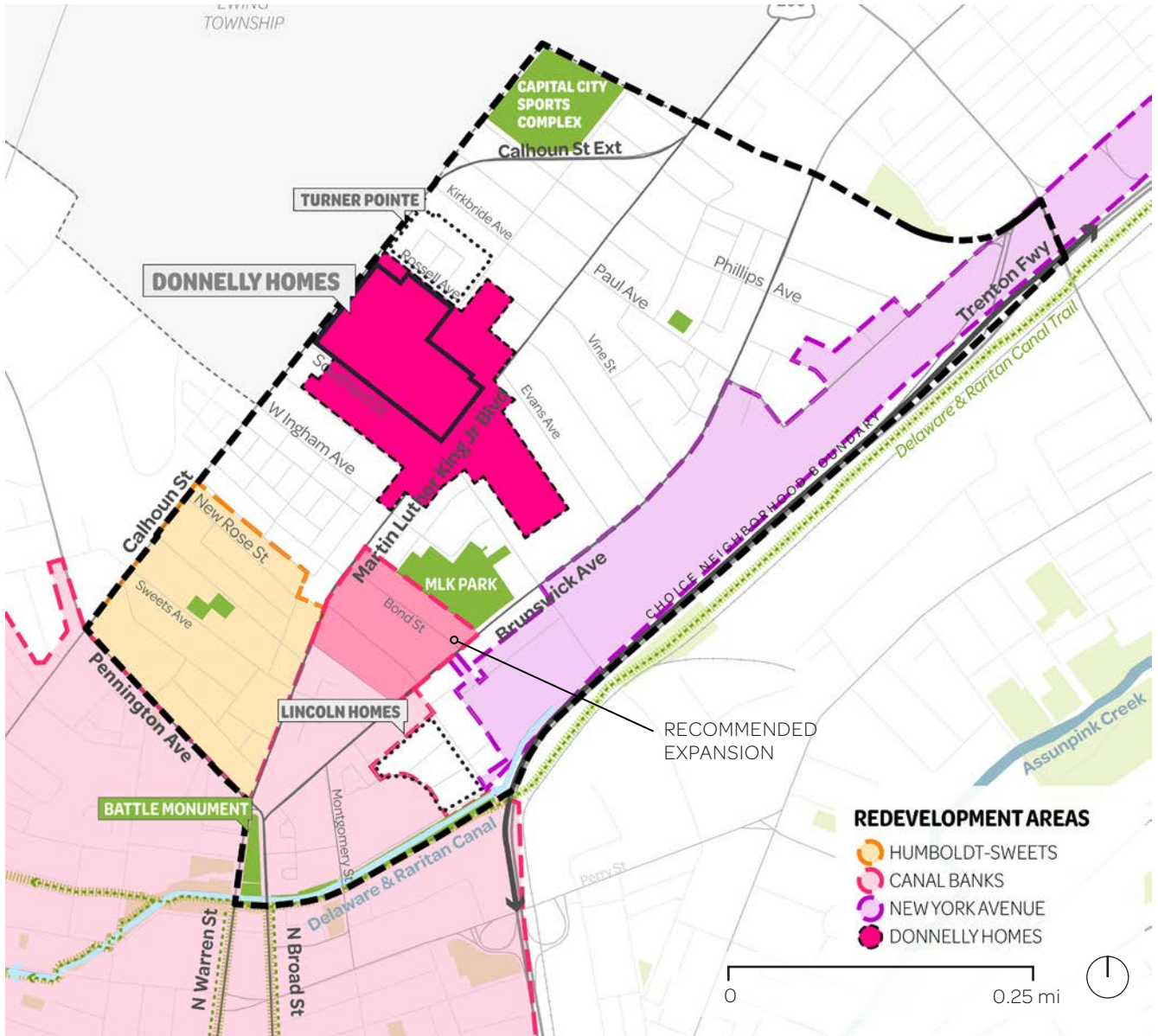
Two recommendations resulted from the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice neighborhood planning process. **The first recommendation is expansion of the Canal Banks Redevelopment Area and the second is the creation of a new redevelopment area surrounding Donnelly Homes.**

- **Canal Banks** - The northern boundary of the Canal Banks Redevelopment Area runs along Sanford Street yet there are significant vacancies on the northern side of the street, which fall outside the boundary. In addition, there is a significant pocket of publicly-owned and privately-owned vacant land in the area surrounding Bond Street and next to MLK Park, which is one of the major assets in the community. The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan recommends expanding the boundary of the redevelopment area along MLK Boulevard to the edge of MLK Park and along Brunswick Avenue.

Expanding the boundary of Canal Banks would make it easier to assemble contiguous properties, which is more cost-effective to redevelop rather than one property here and there. This approach also will have a greater impact on the overall appearance of the neighborhood by redeveloping longer stretches of blighted properties and filling in vacant lots

- **Donnelly Homes Redevelopment Area** - The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan also recommends the creation of a new redevelopment area surrounding the existing Donnelly Homes site,





^ **FIGURE 23. RECOMMENDED EXPANSION OF CANAL BANKS REDEVELOPMENT AREA & NEW DONNELLY HOMES REDEVELOPMENT AREA**

including the former Junior 1 Middle School. Establishing a new redevelopment area will make it easier to acquire long vacant and dilapidated properties so that the overall impact of the redevelopment of Donnelly Homes and Junior 1 will be even greater.

**Sweets-Fountain Park (right) will enjoy a series of improvements through the CN effort, providing green space and recreation that will anchor redevelopment in this part of the Choice Neighborhood.**







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**04/**

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**PLANNING  
PROCESS**

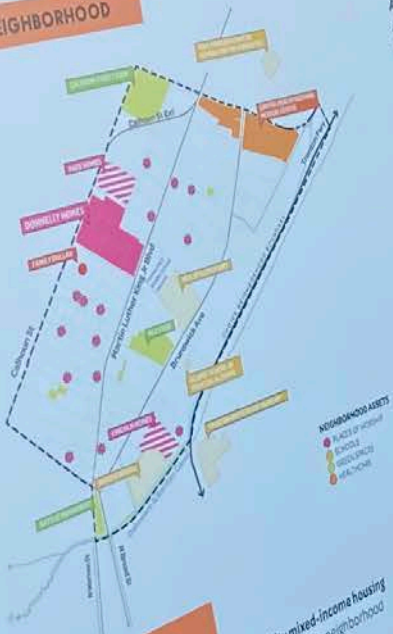
# TRENTON LITTLE MONUMENT

Share your thoughts about the Trenton Choice planning process and tell us your priorities!



## IS THE TRENTON CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE?

### NEIGHBORHOOD



### WHAT WILL THIS PLAN LEAD TO?

A COMPREHENSIVE ROAD MAP TO ACHIEVE THE COMMUNITY'S VISION FOR MEANINGFUL CHANGE.

It will include:

- actionable goals
- timeline for implementation
- metrics to measure progress

### HOW WOULD DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS BE AFFECTED?

- **RIGHT TO RETURN**  
Regardless of how the Donnelly Homes site is redeveloped, all Trenton housing Authority residents in good standing will have the right to return.
- **ONE-FOR-ONE REPLACEMENT**  
For every unit of public housing that is demolished, a new unit will be re-created within the neighborhood.

### HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

**ATTEND A TASK FORCE MEETING**

Meetings and agenda items:

- Thursday, October 20: 6:00pm - 8:00pm
- Wednesday, October 21: 6:00pm - 8:00pm
- Thursday, October 22: 6:00pm - 8:00pm

### AND ONLINE!

- [Trenton Choice Planning Process](#)
- [Trenton Choice Facebook](#)
- [Trenton Choice Twitter](#)
- [Trenton Choice Instagram](#)



**TIMELINE**

## WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Place a dot next to the goals that you want the plan to address.

HOUSING	HEALTH
<p><b>HOUSING GOALS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>3. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>	<p><b>HEALTH GOALS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>3. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>
NEIGHBORHOOD	PUBLIC SAFETY
<p><b>NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>3. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>	<p><b>PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>2. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>3. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> <li>4. Increase the number of affordable housing units in the neighborhood.</li> </ol>





# 04/ THE PLANNING PROCESS

**No one knows the community better than the people living there. Residents of Donnelly Homes were at the forefront of the planning and engagement process as members of the Steering Committee, every Task Force, and even the Developer Selection Committee. Neighborhood residents were also invited to participate so that together, the community could share their insight on the process and help write the next chapter of the North Trenton/Battle Monument neighborhood.**

**A mix of housing and open spaces; roadways and sidewalks that allow traffic to flow while pedestrians and cyclists are safe; places for education, employment, worship and fun; strategies to attract businesses and keep crime to a minimum; and that little extra something that gives a community its own sense of place or identity... These are just some of the pieces that can make a neighborhood flourish. Our team brings together all of these disciplines to help the community heal, to brush off layers of deterioration, and make it attractive and inviting again, recreating a place where people come to live, work, and thrive.**

## OUR TEAM

### OUR PARTNERS

The Trenton Housing Authority (THA) led the North Trenton-Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Planning process by bringing together residents, city leaders, neighboring townships, and local anchor organizations.

#### TRENTON HOUSING AUTHORITY (THA)

For over 80 years, THA has provided thousands of Trenton families with safe, affordable housing and the tools necessary to become self-sufficient. Today, THA manages 11 housing developments with close to 1,700 residences that are home to approximately 3,200 residents. Setting its sights on an even more ambitious goal, THA is aiming to be a leader of neighborhood revitalization efforts in Trenton, recognizing that quality affordable housing, in safe neighborhoods, with access to opportunity, is a cornerstone of building healthy and vibrant communities. In addition to overseeing the planning process and chairing the Steering Committee, THA led the Housing Task Force.

#### CITY OF TRENTON DIVISION OF PLANNING

The Division of Planning promotes sustainable communities, strategic growth, transit-oriented development, and comprehensive, consensus-based planning for the City. It also establishes policies and zoning regulations so that development is carefully coordinated. The Division of Planning recently completed Trenton250, the City's comprehensive plan to guide development through 2042. The Division played an integral role in the Choice Neighborhood planning process as the lead of the Neighborhood Task Force.

#### ISLES, INC.

This Trenton-based community development and environmental organization fosters self-reliant families and healthy, sustainable communities through a number of programs and initiatives. These include a Youth Institute, urban agriculture, financial training and wealth building programs, as well as community planning and development. As the lead of the People Task Force, Isles drew upon its many relationships with neighborhood partners to develop people-related strategies that foster self-sufficiency and wellness through sound education, meaningful employment, and access to a full range of healthcare services.



#### HUD SITE VISIT

**One of the first milestones in the planning process was a visit with HUD, our planning partners, and residents.**

#### RESIDENT COUNCIL, FSS PARTICIPANTS, AND AMBASSADORS

A Resident Council was re-established at Donnelly Homes as the Choice planning effort began. Around the same time, THA received a Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) grant. The majority of the FSS participants are from the Donnelly Homes development and were very active in the Choice planning process. Three Council officers and one FSS participant served as Ambassadors for the Choice Neighborhood Plan to share information with their friends and neighbors and encourage their participation in meetings, activities, and events. Council officers, FSS participants and ambassadors also served as members of the Steering Committee, all Task Forces, and the Action Activity Committee.

#### TRENTON NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE

Recognizing its role as an anchor institution in Trenton, Capital Health decided to embark on a

significant project to invest in the greater well-being of the neighborhood where Capital Health Regional Medical Center is located. The Trenton Neighborhood Initiative (TNI) recognizes the importance of addressing the social determinants of health for residents and seeks to bring meaningful solutions, in a highly effective and comprehensive program, that complement the health care services Capital Health provides at its Brunswick Avenue campus.

Identifying an ambitious multi-year plan, Capital Health approached Trenton Health Team, a valued community partner, to work with them on the initiative's development. Four key strategies were developed, based on information that had already been collected - including through the Choice Neighborhoods planning process - identifying opportunities for impact in the area. Specifically, the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative will focus on programs supporting home ownership, job training and employment, digital equity, and





healthy beginnings for families and young children. Additional details are outlined in Chapter 8: Implementation.

### TRENTON HEALTH TEAM

The Trenton Health Team (THT) is an innovative, multi-sector partnership dedicated to the health and well-being of the greater Trenton community. THT understands the overlap between the built environment and public health. Serving Trenton for over a decade, THT applies a broad lens to health and well-being that considers several determinants, including:

- Healthy Environment and Housing
- Vibrant Public Spaces
- Growing Economy

- Healthy Food
- Improved Safety
- Equity and Social Cohesion
- Quality Healthcare

## TEAM ORGANIZATION

### STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee was set up to oversee the progress of the planning process, to review the recommendations of the Task Forces and Action Activity Committee and to make sure the vision outlined by the plan reflects the aspirations of Donnelly Homes residents and the surrounding community.

## TASK FORCES

Three working groups or “task forces” focused on the three elements of the plan—Housing, People, and Neighborhood. These task forces were responsible for identifying the community’s priorities and then shaping goals and strategies for the plan. They also collected and recommended ideas for potential Action Activities.

Members of the task forces included Donnelly Homes residents, non-profit organizations, city partners, and health and education representatives. The task forces reviewed the existing conditions analysis prepared by WRT, assembled questions for the Needs Assessment Survey, later discussed the findings of the Needs Assessment, and then assembled a long list of challenges that the plan should address. In response, they developed strategies to tackle the challenges along with a set of goals and an overarching vision. Subsequently, they worked with the community to refine and prioritize the goals and strategies.

## ACTION ACTIVITY COMMITTEE

In addition to the funding for development of a Neighborhood Plan, THA also received funding for Action Activities. These activities are limited to physical neighborhood improvements that will be implemented immediately following the plan. The Committee gathered ideas from the survey, the Task Forces, and community events to determine which action activities should be developed and prioritized. **See Chapter 8** for more information on these activities.

## PLANNING TIMELINE

**The COVID-19 pandemic stretched around the globe in March of 2020, forcing people behind masks and into quarantine. The pandemic required patience, safety, and new tools to connect with Donnelly Homes, area residents, and planning partners.**

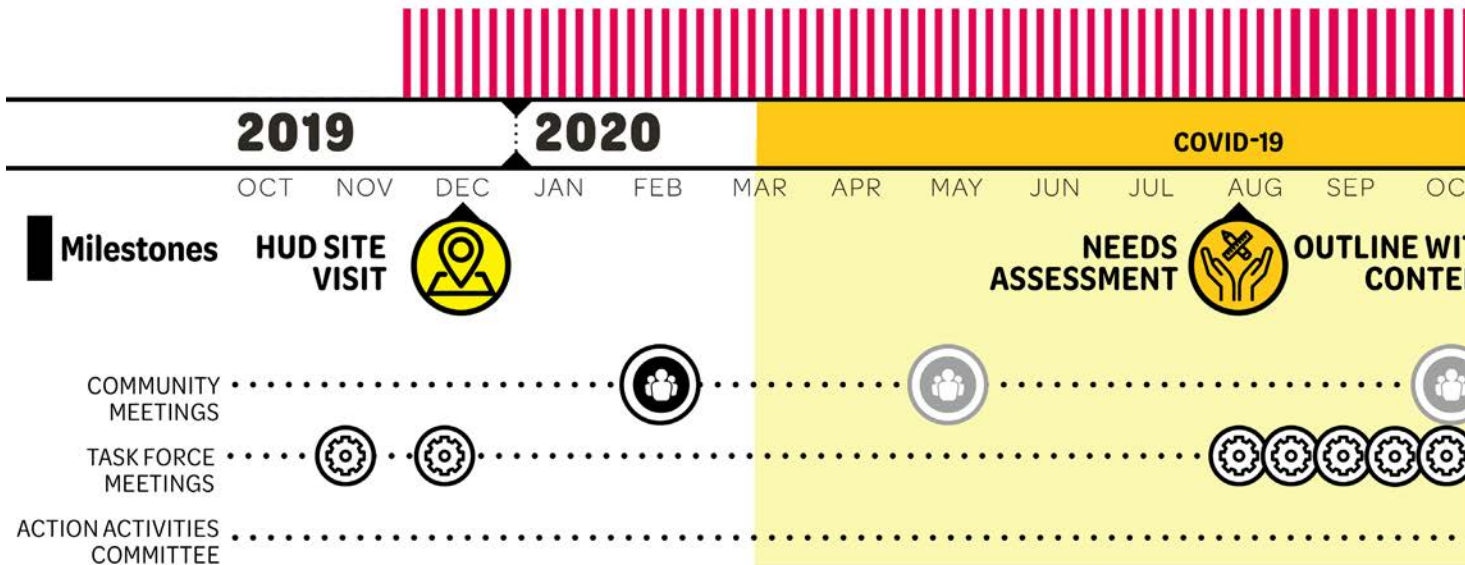
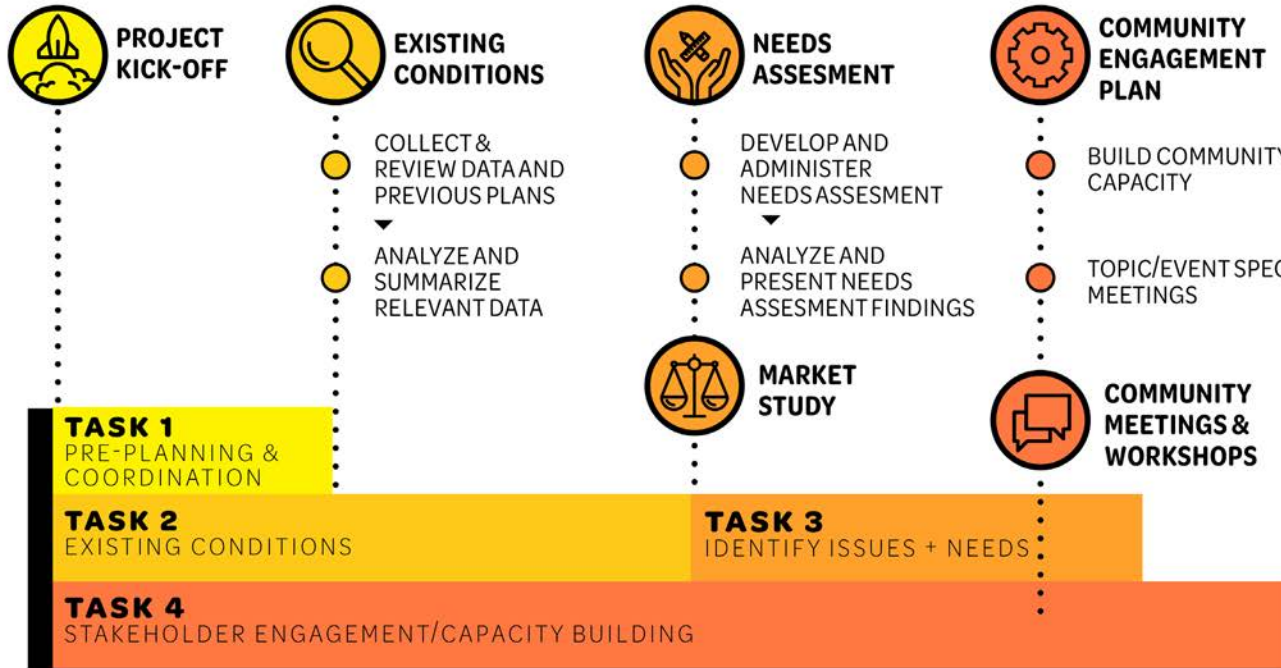
Although the pandemic added a hurdle to the planning process, it only caused a brief delay and the overall planning process spanned just over two years. The phases of the planning process are illustrated on the following page.



# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## PROJECT TIMELINE + ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

### Planning Timeline



DURING THIS TIME PERIOD, THE PLANNING PROCESS WAS CONSTRAINED BY ADVERSE IMPACTS OF COVID-19. PUBLIC MEETINGS WERE NOT HELD. STEERING & TASK FORCE MEETINGS WERE COMBINED TO MAXIMIZE ENGAGEMENT WITH A SMALL GROUP OF RESIDENTS GATHERING ON-SITE AT DONNELLY HOMES.



### PLAN DEVELOPMENT

- DEVELOP CHOICE HOUSING TRANSFORMATION PLAN
- DEVELOP CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION PLAN
- DEVELOP CHOICE PEOPLE TRANSFORMATION PLAN
- FIRST PHASE DUE DILIGENCE



### IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES

- PLAN, DESIGN, AND IMPLEMENT EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES
- ESTABLISH ACTION ACTIVITY CRITERIA AND IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PROJECTS
- SUBMIT RECOMMENDED ACTION ACTIVITIES FOR HUD REVIEW AND APPROVAL



### CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD TRANSFORMATION PLAN

- SELECT MASTER DEVELOPER/ HOUSING DEVELOPER
- OUTLINE WITH CONTENT
- DRAFT TRANSFORMATION PLAN
- FINAL TRANSFORMATION PLAN

**TASK 5**  
DEVELOP STRATEGIES AND PLANS - HOUSING, PEOPLE, NEIGHBORHOOD

**TASK 6**  
ACTION ACTIVITIES

**TASK 7**  
TRANSFORMATION PLAN

IMPLEMENT ACTION ACTIVITIES

**2021**



OF THE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH AND ECONOMIC CRISIS, LARGE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION, HYBRID MEETINGS WERE HELD USING ZOOM WITH A



ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

**CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY IN CREATIVE WAYS**



**ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN AN UNCOMMON TIME**

**SAFE ENGAGEMENT DURING QUARANTINE**

At the start of the planning process, all sorts of in-person activities were envisioned... But the year 2020 had other ideas.

At first, most task force meetings were held virtually. Large community meetings and small pop-up events could not be held. Moving into 2021, a hybrid approach allowed residents to gather in person at a safe distance on-site at Donnelly Homes while other participants continued to tune into meetings virtually. Some meetings used feedback boards that remained on display for several days to gather as much resident input as possible. Zoom calls also maximized features such as chat rooms, and online tools like Jamboard and Miro, enabled us to collaborate in a virtual workspace.

In-person activities finally started to resume in late spring 2021 with the arrival of the vaccine but even then we proceeded cautiously with just a few events (described later in this section).

**MEETING RESIDENT NEEDS FIRST**

The pandemic disproportionately impacted low-income minority communities like North Trenton, putting them at greater risk for serious illness and for deeper struggles with quality health care, job losses, housing and food security, children’s education, and childcare. For this reason, our efforts focused on assisting Donnelly Homes residents.

COVID-19 turned the world upside down right after we launched the Needs Assessment Survey in February, forcing many children to learn from

home. THA had partnered with T-Mobile to provide a free tablet and 6 months of free internet access to every Donnelly Homes household that completed a survey. THA continued to make the tablets available, which proved to be a lifesaver for many families.

THA also assembled care packages for every household filled with much needed and not-so-easy-to-find personal protective equipment such as masks and hand sanitizer. These greatly appreciated packages included another opportunity to collect surveys from residents and share information about the Choice neighborhood.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

The Needs Assessment Survey was one of the most effective ways to learn about the challenges residents face day in and day out as well as their aspirations for their community, their families, and their future. It was also one way to connect with a wide number of residents who did not have time or the desire to participate in meetings or events.

The Steering Committee and all three Task Forces developed the questions for the Needs Assessment survey tool. The survey was launched on Saturday, February 8, 2020, during a neighborhood festival held at Donnelly Homes with music and activities celebrating Black History Month. The survey was offered on paper and online through August 4, 2020.

**Just over 60 percent of households at Donnelly Homes, 212 in total, completed a survey.**

Results of the survey were presented and discussed with the community during a series of six Task Force Meetings to ensure the findings were generally consistent with residents' experiences and to



## PUTTING RESIDENTS FIRST

**Every Donnelly Homes household that completed a survey received a mobile tablet. Special packages with masks and hand sanitizer were also given out at time when those supplies were hard to find.**



## THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

## WHAT DID THE SURVEY ADDRESS?



### SECTION 1 NEIGHBORHOOD



### SECTION 2 HOUSING



### SECTION 3 PUBLIC SAFETY



### SECTION 4 EMPLOYMENT & INCOME



### SECTION 5 CHILDREN & EDUCATION



### SECTION 6 HEALTH, WELLNESS & NUTRITION



### SECTION 7 TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATIONS



### SECTION 8 THE FUTURE



### SECTION 9 DEMOGRAPHICS



**Findings from the survey are described and illustrated in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.**

identify issues to explore further. A summary report was prepared by WRT and shared with planning partners, Task Forces, and is available to the community on THA's website.

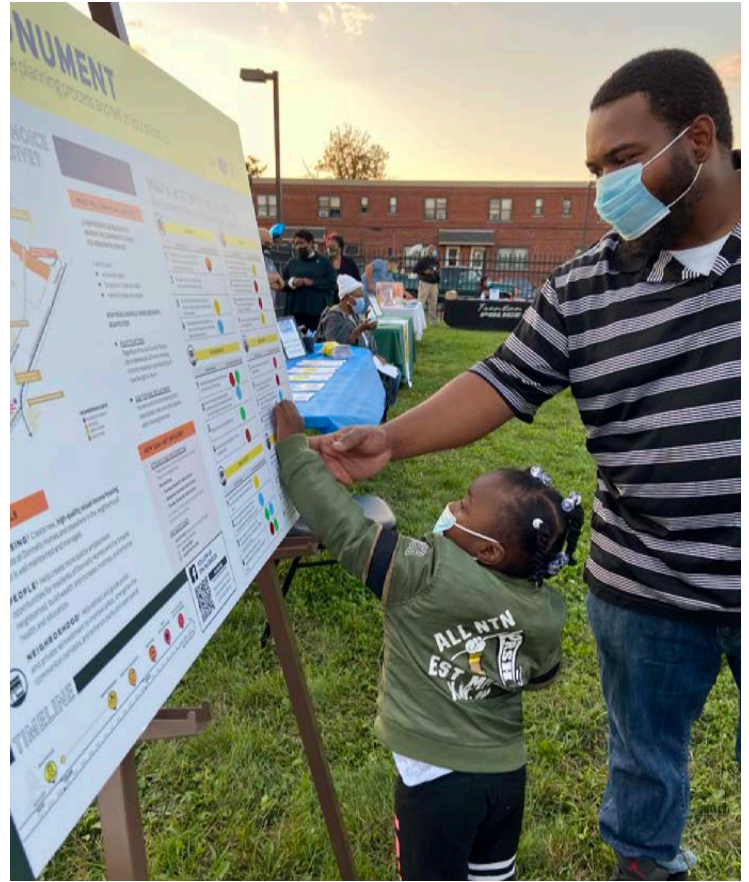
## COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The first big event for the community centered around the **official launch of the Needs Assessment**. The event celebrated Black History Month in February 2020 with activities for children, youth dancers and musicians, African-American history, service providers, and food.

The next time the community felt comfortable coming together in person was **National Night Out** on October 6, 2020. Held outside at Donnelly Homes, residents joined Trenton's Mayor Gusciora at a safe distance to share ideas about the Choice neighborhood.

A highlight of the planning process was the **Neighborhood Leadership Series**, which ran from March 24 - May 5, 2021. A series of seven virtual sessions brought community residents together to develop and refine their leadership skills with regard to community development efforts. Each session focused on a different topic and featured local speakers. Details of the Leadership Series are described later in this section.

On June 16, 2021, the Housing Authority hosted a **Community Barbeque** to share the vision, goals, and strategies that form the basis of the Draft Plan. Participants were given a passport to a series of exhibits that invited feedback. Two workshops were also held. The first "Reimagined Junior 1," the long vacant middle school across the street from Donnelly Homes. The second workshop, "Redesigning MLK Boulevard," guided attendees through a hands-on placemaking exercise, exploring opportunities for public art, safe street crossings, a walking loop, and pocket parks.



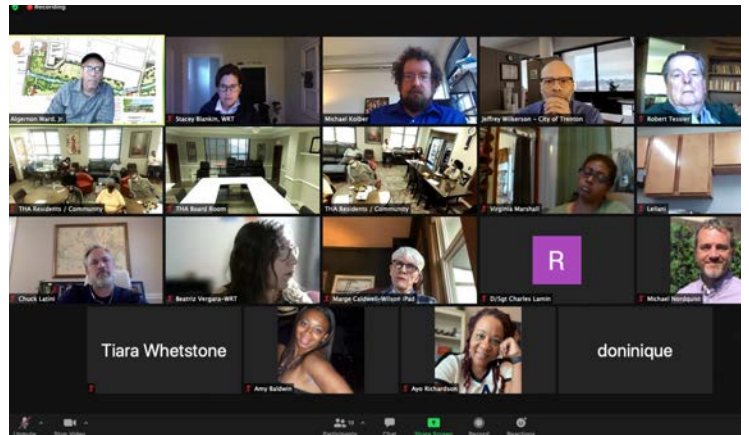
**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT**

Even the community's youngest members were ready for a night out with family and friends while sharing their ideas!



**NEEDS ASSESSMENT LAUNCH EVENT**

To kick-off the survey, THA hosted a fun-filled event celebrating Black History Month with young dancers and musicians, games and a bounce house, exhibits, art activities, and food.



**TASK FORCE MEETINGS**

One of many task force meetings that took place digitally over zoom, allowing the process to continue.





**JUNE 2021 COMMUNITY BBQ**

At the barbeque, residents provided feedback on the draft plan goals and strategies, participated in workshops, and took time out to build (photo on opposite page).

One idea considered for an Action Activity was a multi-generational park where children could play safely and parents, grandparents, and caregivers could socialize. To help design the park, the planning team turned to the specialists—children! The Center for Community Planning offered a **Youth Planning Camp** in July 2021 in conjunction with THA’s summer camp. Learn more about the camp and the vision for the park later in this section.

With COVID cases beginning to rise again at the end of the planning process, a small in-person dinner was held on December 1, 2021 to thank the planning ambassadors, to celebrate the conclusion of the planning process, and to share highlights of the final plan.

**GETTING THE WORD OUT**

Sharing information about the planning process took on many forms—from traditional printed materials such as flyers, brochures, and posters to social media posts and an online video.

THA’s website hosted an online resource hub with information about the Choice Neighborhood planning effort. This page provided an overview of the CNI and contained meeting materials and presentations, offering a great way to get familiar with Trenton Choice. THA’s facebook page posted information about upcoming meetings, events, and opportunities to get involved.

To help spread the word about Choice activities, THA distributed hundreds of flyers to Donnelly Homes residents and included updates in its monthly newsletter. Resident Ambassadors also helped generate interest and encourage participation by sharing updates with their friends and neighbors. On the following, please enjoy highlights of the engagement process.

 [HTTPS://WWW.THA-NJ.ORG/  
CHOICE-NEIGHBORHOODS-  
PLANNING-INITIATIVE/](https://www.tha-nj.org/choice-neighborhoods-planning-initiative/)

 [HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/  
TRENTONHOUSING/](https://www.facebook.com/trentonhousing/)







# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## PRINTED MATERIALS

To reach as many residents of Donnelly Homes and the surrounding neighborhood, we developed an eye-catching brand that has been integrated into flyers, brochures, and handouts that explain the Choice effort, ways to get involved, and upcoming events.

### CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD EXPLAINER PAMPHLET

### FLYERS & HANDOUTS









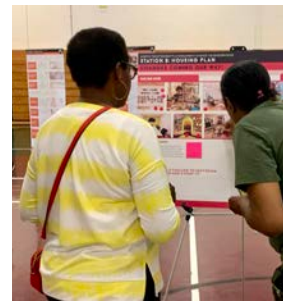
# NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS

Highlights of the planning process include our Needs Assessment Launch that celebrated Black History Month. Other events included National Night Out, a Leadership Series, and a Community Barbeque.

## NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



## COMMUNITY BARBEQUE



## PPE CARE PACKAGES



## NEEDS ASSESSMENT LAUNCH





# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES

The Neighborhood Leadership Series was designed to bring together like-minded, civic-oriented residents and assist them in developing their leadership skills. The seven part series ran from March to May 2021 with one interactive session a week. Participants could attend virtually on Zoom or in-person at Donnelly Homes, where dinner was offered. Local practitioners led the sessions, covering a variety of topics. The goal was to help participants become more familiar with the community planning process and to encourage local leaders to become stewards of the Choice Neighborhood Plan. The final session included a graduation ceremony. [See curriculum to the below.]

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #1**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 24<sup>TH</sup>**  
**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**  
Join us at Donnelly Homes at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

**INTRODUCTION, HISTORY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD**  
Speakers: Freedom Green, THA; Algernon Ward, Trenton Historical Society; Karl Flesch, Ellarslie Museum

*Speakers: Algernon Ward, Board Member, Historical Society of Trenton; Karl Flesch, Ellarslie Museum*

All cities have their challenges. But often the building blocks of change are right outside the door. This kick-off session explored what makes the neighborhood special beginning with its history. Mr. Algernon Ward, a long-time resident of the neighborhood, shared his first-hand account of the 1968 race riots and how the city has changed. Mr. Flesch shared his research into the now closed Junior 1 Middle School, whose stunning gothic architecture sits across the street from Donnelly Homes, calling out for a new use

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #2**  
**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31<sup>ST</sup>**  
**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**  
Join us at Donnelly Homes at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

**LEADERSHIP, COMMUNITY ORGANIZING, & SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
Speakers: Freedom Green, THA; Caitlin Fair, East Trenton Collaborative

*Speakers: Caitlin Fair, East Trenton Collaborative; Freedom Green, THA*

There is no need to wait to improve your community! This session offered dozens of ideas and lessons learned from the East Trenton Collaborative (ETC) to bring vitality, economic opportunity, and equitable growth into the community. Ms. Fair guided participants through a deliberative problem-solving activity, illustrating her collaborative approach to addressing neighborhood challenges. Building on the inspiration, Mr. Green sent a call to action to Donnelly Homes residents to participate in the planning process and be the change they want to see.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #3**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7<sup>TH</sup>**  
**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**  
Join us at Donnelly Homes at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT & PLANNING PROCESS**  
Speakers: Jeffrey Wilkerson and Michael Kolber, Trenton Division of Planning

*Speakers: Jeffrey Wilkerson and Michael Kolber, Trenton Division of Planning*

Why is planning important for our community and for people to participate in the process? This session provided an overview of planning at the city level and how Trenton 250, the City's master plan will guide development until 2042. Participants then rolled up their sleeves and proposed development scenarios for a specific vacant site in the neighborhood.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #4**  
**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14<sup>TH</sup>**  
**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**  
Join us at Donnelly Homes at 5:00 pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

**TRAUMA & RESILIENCE**  
Speaker: Kimme Carlos, CEO and Founder of Kimme Carlos Motivational Speaking & Consulting, Co-Founder of Sister Wellness Retreats, and Founder of the Urban Mental Health Alliance

*Speakers: Kimme Carlos, Founder of Urban Mental Health Alliance*

Ms. Carlos led a deeply moving session designed to help participants be their best selves by drawing upon her own personal journey. Ms. Carlos has been a force behind mental health awareness in Trenton and honored by numerous awards for her efforts. She is CEO and Founder of a motivational consulting firm and Co-Founder of Sister Wellness Retreats.



**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES GRADUATION**

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #5**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21<sup>ST</sup>**

**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**

Join us at *Donnelly Homes* at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

SPONSORED BY  
**BATTLE MONUMENT**

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION & TEAM BUILDING**

Speakers: Bruce Boyd, Jr., B.O.Y.D., Anita Wemple, Isles

*Speaker: Bruce Boyd, Jr., B.O.Y.D; Anita Wemple, Isles*

What is important to you and at what cost are you willing to pay to for those values? These are a few questions that Mr. Boyd had participants consider as he stressed the importance of building “bridges” or relationships and nurturing those relationships regularly to keep them standing and strong. Ms. Wemple complimented the discussion with tips and tricks to navigate challenging issues and resolve conflict.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #6**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28<sup>TH</sup>**

**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**

Join us at *Donnelly Homes* at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

SPONSORED BY  
**BATTLE MONUMENT**

**HOW TO START A SMALL BUSINESS OR NON-PROFIT**

Speakers: Dominique J. Carroll, Esq., Fox Rothschild and Member of Board, Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce

*Speakers: Dominique J. Carroll, Esq., Fox Rothschild and Member of Board, Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce*

Mr. Carroll provided a detailed yet practical how-to workshop for existing and aspiring business owners. His informative session covered all of the necessary legal basics of setting up a business.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES**

**SESSION #7**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 5<sup>TH</sup>**

**5:30 TO 7:00 PM**

Join us at *Donnelly Homes* at 5:00pm for dinner and conversation (socially-distanced)

SPONSORED BY  
**BATTLE MONUMENT**

**VIRTUAL TOUR OF TRANSFORMED CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS & GRADUATION**

Speakers: Woo Kim, Principal and Stacey Blankin, Associate, WRT

*Speakers: Woo Kim, Principal, WRT*

Sometimes it is hard to imagine what neighborhood change might look like. Originally planned as a bus tour, this virtual tour guided attendees through two neighborhoods that were very similar to North Trenton and Battle Monument not long ago. Today, they are undergoing substantial transformation through large and small investments in new housing, childcare facilities, job training programs, and creative placemaking. [See more details...]



# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP SERIES

### HISTORY, COMMUNITY & EMPOWERMENT



Neighborhood resident and historian Algernon Ward shared his account of the 1968 race riots but noted that the loss of the industrial base in Trenton had begun to erode the quality of life in the city years before.

#### Trenton Choice - Neighborhood Leadership Series Community Engagement

##### Why is Community Engagement Essential?

- Conversation between technical experts and community experts – You are the experts on your community!
- Community knowledge, local history
- Community preferences on projects

A Plan's purpose is to provide guidance for community decisions, and it sets forth:

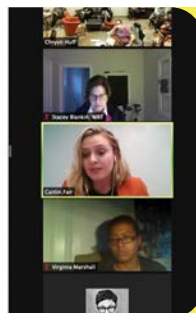
- ☐ A Vision
- ☐ Goals
- ☐ Objectives
- ☐ Strategies/Actions
- ☐ Recommends policies and programs to address issues related to a particular community.

The City's Planners emphasized the importance of planning and community participation.



Building bridges and community cohesion under the direction of Mr. Boyd.

- 2020 Progress Cont'd
- 11 Streets Repaved
- 6 Abandoned Property Rehab's
- 6 Open Streets Events
- 10,600 Meals provided to East Trenton residents
- \$1.5 Million for Library Renovation
- \$30K for Lead Line Replacements



Caitlin Fair inspired everyone with the accomplishments of the East Trenton Collaborative, which included everything from stipends for youth to work at area businesses, a bike giveaway, small business support grants, and open-street events.

## VIRTUAL TOUR OF OTHER TRANSFORMED COMMUNITIES

Seeing is believing. As part of the Leadership Series, residents took a (virtual) trip to two communities much like North Trenton that went through the Choice Neighborhood Planning process and are now in the process of significant transformation.

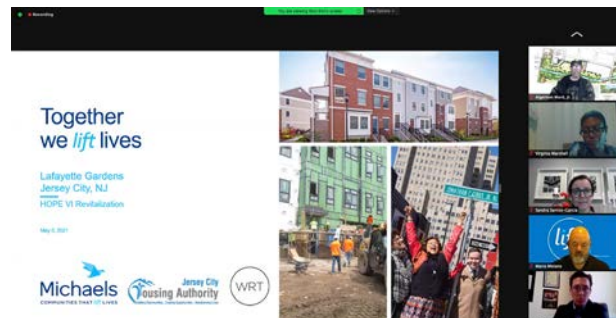
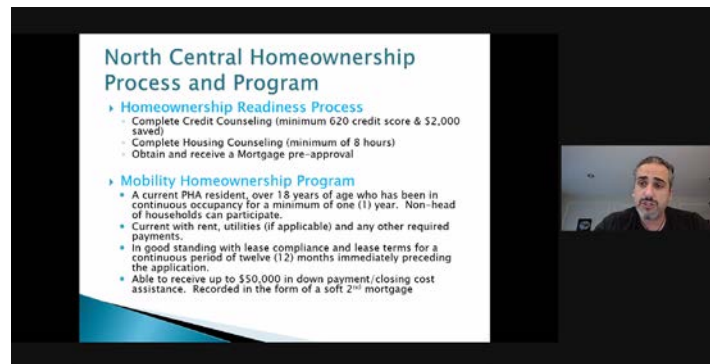
### North Central Choice Neighborhood

First stop was the North Central Choice Neighborhood (Norris Homes) in Philadelphia, PA. Representatives of the Philadelphia Housing Authority and Philadelphia Department of Housing & Community Development

presented details on the planning process, the development phases and financing, supportive services and homeownership process. The highlight was hearing from resident Ms. Donna Richardson, who inspired Donnelly residents to get and stay involved.

### Bergen-Lafayette Neighborhood

Next, residents visited the Bergen-Lafayette Neighborhood (Lafayette Gardens HOPE VI) in Jersey City, NJ. Presenters include the Jersey City Housing Authority, the Michaels Organization, and Better Tomorrows.



**Ms. Donna Richardson, Norris Homes resident, shared her experience as a resident going through the Choice Neighborhood Planning and Implementation process in North Central Philadelphia.**



# ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

## YOUTH PLANNING CAMP


### CREATING A VISION FOR ATHING MU PARK



In July 2021, 14 children, aged 9 - 13, had a special opportunity to participate in the Trenton City Planning Institute Youth Camp. Over several days, the children learned about the profession of planning and why it is important to plan. Then they picked a vacant site for their own park, researched ideas, and as a team developed a vision for their park.

**Who we are**

*"We are Trenton students, ages 9-13 from all different parts of the city. We want this park to show little kids that they can build their dreams too."*



**Trenton Housing Authority campers**

- ❖ Lauren
- ❖ Caila
- ❖ Malia
- ❖ Matias
- ❖ Ayden
- ❖ Jaziya
- ❖ Charles
- ❖ Musa
- ❖ Shakoi
- ❖ Nydia
- ❖ Destiny
- ❖ Ubada,
- ❖ Jonathan
- ❖ MaKenzie



## A PARK UNLIKE ANY OTHER

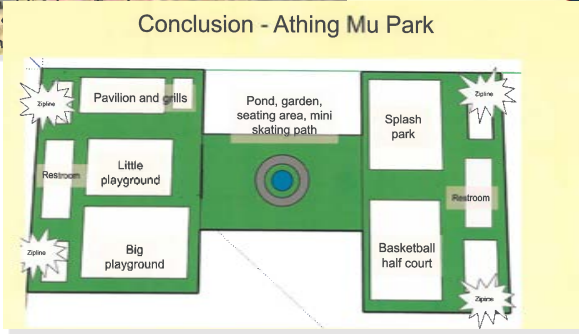
**What we are doing**

We are designing a park to propose to our Mayor and elected officials. Our reasons for wanting to design a park are:

- Trenton doesn't have quality parks
- People deserve good, quality parks that can keep kids occupied and give parents a break.
- A place to relax
- Athing Mu
  - Honor the Olympian gold

**Park Highlights**

- Handicap accessible equipment and seating
- BLM Theme
- Black, green, red and yellow color scheme to honor the African American community
- Large adult sized games throughout the park
- Chess tables
- WiFi access
- Charging stations



The children dedicated the park to Athing Mu, the Trenton resident who won two gold medals at the 2020 summer Olympics, which coincided with the camp. At the end of the project, they presented their park concept to the City of Trenton Planning Board, which passed a unanimous resolution in support of the park's realization.

## VISITING CITY HALL & PRESENTING TO THE PLANNING BOARD





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**05 /**

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**A NEW  
STORY:  
HOUSING**









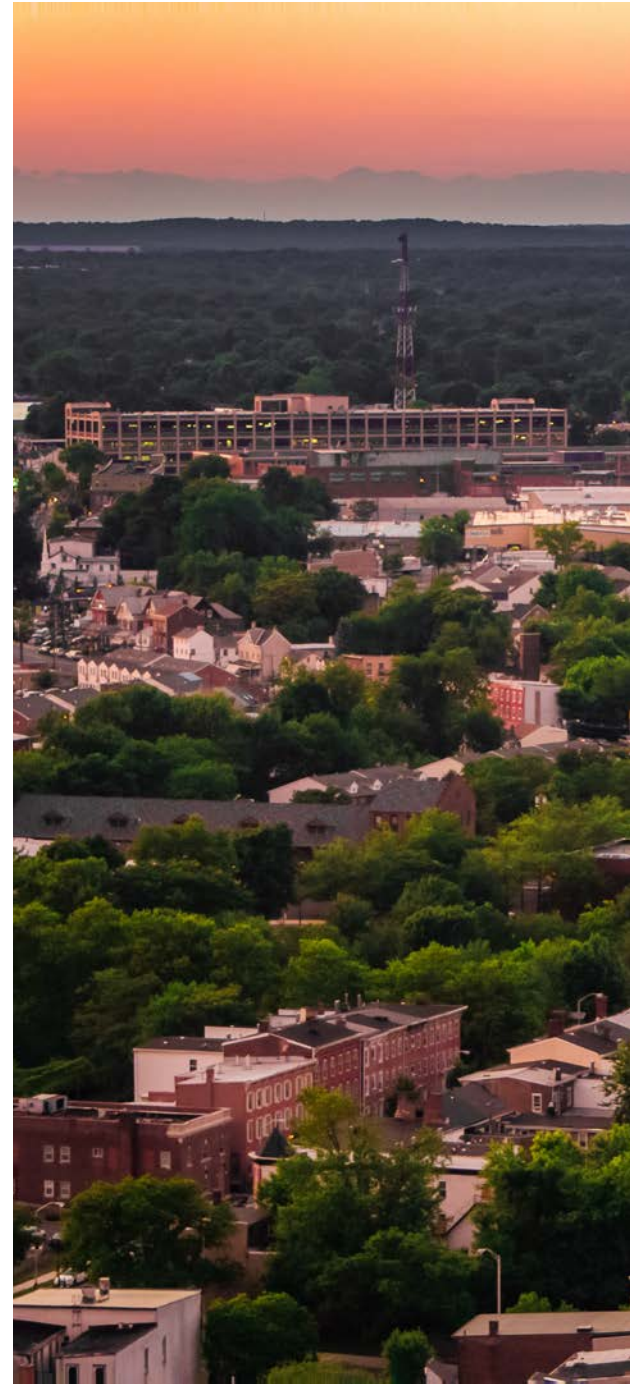
## 05/ A NEW STORY: HOUSING

As the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood turns the page on a new chapter, it has a lot to build on, from a rich history that is intertwined with the nation's to the character of its tree-lined streets and beautiful architectural details. The neighborhood is a short walk from the heart of Trenton, and a short train ride New York City and Philadelphia. It inherited a tradition of creativity, industriousness and productivity, but perhaps its greatest source of strength is the sense of community.

Unfortunately, it is hard not to notice how the neighborhood has deteriorated on a quick walk or drive along a main street like MLK Boulevard that leads to downtown. Buildings are crumbling, boarded up, and covered in weeds, and the streetscape is interrupted by empty lots and rumples sidewalks. Few shops seem to be open for business and even fewer people are walking about.

In contrast, the parking lot at Donnelly Homes is lively as people are coming and going. This is a reflection of the stabilizing force Donnelly Homes plays in the neighborhood; a frequent place for people to come to hang out. Because it is an anchor of the community, the site is a critical piece in the revitalization of the neighborhood.

In 2021, the Trenton Housing Authority procured the Michaels Organization—a nationally-renowned affordable housing developer in Camden, NJ, to serve as master developer for the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood and begin the process of transformation.







## THE HOUSING STORY

### SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Above all else, Donnelly Homes is a community. And it would like to be recognized as such across the city. Too many times, a negative incident happens nearby and it is mistakenly connected to Donnelly Homes. Donnelly Homes is a bright spot in the community and a source of pride for those living there. An overwhelming number of residents (89%) who took the Needs Assessment Survey would like to return and live on-site if Donnelly Homes is rebuilt and feel the redevelopment should foster this sense of community.

### VIOLENCE AND SAFETY

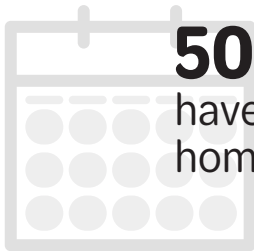
Concerns about crime and safety enter every conversation about the Choice Neighborhood whether the topic is education, open space, exercise, wellness, or housing. In Task Force discussions, residents mentioned that walking used to be their main form of exercise but they no longer feel comfortable doing that. Similarly, children attending the neighborhood public schools do not have access to transportation and only a small percentage of parents feel comfortable letting their children walk to and from school, which contributes to very high rates of absenteeism.

It is clear that to stabilize the neighborhood and make it attractive to new residents and visitors,

**“Would you like to return to new housing on the redeveloped Donnelly Homes site?”**



**87%**  
Say “Yes”



**50%** of residents have lived in Donnelly homes for

**7 or more years!**

SOURCE: DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY

**“How do you feel about creating a mix of housing on-site at Donnelly Homes to attract residents with a mix of incomes?”**

“I LIKE THE IDEA OF A MIXED-IN-COME COMMUNITY AS LONG AS THERE IS STILL PLENTY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING”



“SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA”



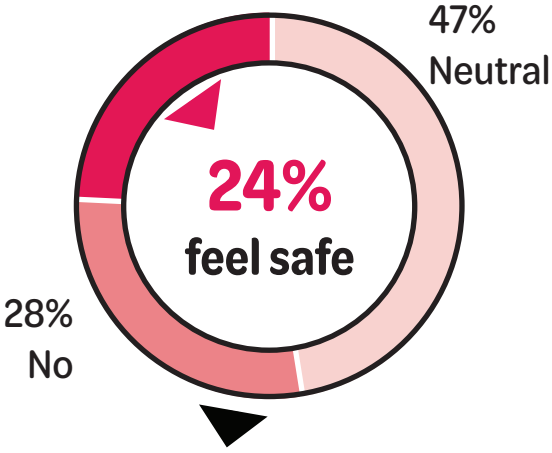
“I WOULD PREFER ONLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON-SITE AT DONNELLY”



every effort must be made to improve the sense of safety. The COVID pandemic has brought with it an uptick in violent crime in the neighborhood and across the city. Recent incidents on and near Donnelly Homes underscore the urgent need to reconfigure the superblock layout of the site to better define public and private realms.

This also includes re-orienting the buildings with more windows overlooking the streets. Lighting on site at Donnelly Homes and throughout the neighborhood must be enhanced, as well as traffic calming, and stronger collaboration and transparency has to happen with the local police. This will begin with a new mini police station at

### Do you feel safe in Donnelly Homes?

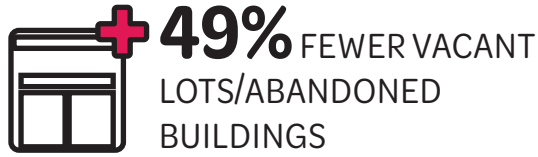


**77%** feel crime and safety is the neighborhood's biggest challenge





“What would make the neighborhood feel safer?”



SOURCE: HUD MAPPING TOOL



SOURCE: ESRI

**46%** OF RESIDENTS WOULD LIKE TO WORK TOWARDS OWNING THEIR OWN HOME



SOURCE: UNLESS NOTED, DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY

Donnelly Homes in January 2022, in addition to a series of new initiatives resulting from the planning process. See more details about the Public Safety Strategies at the end of Chapter 7.

**BLIGHT AND VACANT/ABANDONED BUILDINGS AND LOTS**

Widespread blight and vacancies also go hand in hand with discussions of the Choice neighborhood, housing, and crime. Residents are frustrated and unnerved by the condition of the day to day living environment, which seems to attract and promote troublesome behavior. Abandoned buildings and vacant lots were among the top three safety concerns of Needs Assessment Survey takers along with gun violence and gang activity. But there is also great interest in reusing these sites as public gardens, play spaces, dog parks, and picnic areas.

**WEALTH BUILDING**

It is not surprising that with a high rate of poverty in the Choice neighborhood (40%), the rate of homeownership is low (25.3%). Homeownership stabilizes neighborhoods as owners generally want to care for and protect their investments. Homeownership also provides a path to build wealth and pass it along to subsequent generations. There is a strong interest among Donnelly Homes residents who participated in the Needs Assessment to work towards buying a home, which could go hand-in-hand with efforts to stabilize the Choice neighborhood and increase resident incomes by creating more opportunities for homeownership.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Along with the strong ties of community, a sense of “pride in where we reside,” and a desire to empower residents through redevelopment is a plea for a civic engagement framework. Housing Task Force discussions centered around overlapping goals of building trust, and creating opportunities for children and young adults to learn leadership skills through mentors and intergenerational activities.









## GUIDING PRINCIPLES



### DEMONSTRATE POSITIVE CHANGE AND BUILD TRUST.

One initiative is a new homeowner improvement program to assist 40 homeowners along MLK Blvd make necessary repairs.



### CULTIVATE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

The planning process involved very successful 7-part Leadership Series and 14 youth planners presented their vision for a new park to the Trenton Planning Commission.



### FOSTER INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING AND YOUTH LEADERSHIP BY LISTENING FIRST.

Adaptively reusing the beloved Junior 1 as a community gathering space and integrating a new youth-designed park for residents of all ages are just a few highlights.



### BUILD ON AREA ASSETS AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

The vision infuses MLK Boulevard with new life, and stitches 530 new mixed-income rental housing units into the community centered around Junior 1, MLK and Sweets Fountain parks and Battle Monument.



### BUILD WEALTH.

A minimum of 37 new affordable homeownership units will provide opportunities invest in their futures.



### CREATE A SAFE PLACE.

Reconnecting Donnelly Homes into the city grid will place more eyes on the street and generate activity to promote safety.

There is an overwhelming interest in giving youth the belief and confidence that they can be the change they want to see and that coming together and building on the community's assets and strengths is the way to build community wealth.

## TURNING CHALLENGES INTO OPPORTUNITIES

### OVERARCHING GOALS

Based on findings from the Needs Assessment, discussions during Task Force Meetings, and feedback gathered through special events, the Housing Task Force assembled a set of Guiding Principles (listed to the left) that are intended to create a framework for the Housing Plan.

The Housing component of the Choice Neighborhood Plan responds to residents' desires by focusing on three main goals:

1. Reimagine Donnelly Homes as a safe, vibrant, mixed-income intergenerational community that anchors North Trenton with a strong sense of civic engagement.
2. Stabilize North Trenton through strategic demolition and investments in infill development.
3. Provide opportunities to build community wealth and prosperity.

# GOAL 1: REIMAGINE DONNELLY HOMES AS A SAFE, VIBRANT, MIXED-INCOME INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY THAT ANCHORS NORTH TRENTON WITH A STRONG SENSE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT.

- A.** Redesign Donnelly Homes so that it is more integrated with the street grid and orient buildings to the street to support safety.
  - » The existing layout of Donnelly Homes in a superblock interrupts the existing street grid, creating a number of challenges. The layout isolates the site from the rest of the community; creates pockets of dead space that are not easy to secure; and prevents pedestrian traffic from flowing through the site. Breaking down the scale of the site, re-establishing the street network, and designing the buildings to face the streets and overlook public spaces will encourage foot traffic and put more “eyes on the street” to discourage misconduct.
- B.** Clearly define public and private spaces to protect safety of residents.
  - » Many people hang out at Donnelly Homes who do not live there, at times swelling to large numbers that often make residents feel uncomfortable and unsafe. The design of the reimagined site will clearly distinguish public from private spaces to protect residents and make it obvious where non-residents are welcome.

## GOOD IDEA!



### PREVENTING CRIME THROUGH DESIGN

The concept of Crime Prevention through Environment Design was introduced by criminologist, C. Ray Jeffery in the 1960s and focuses on the idea of “defensible space.” He explained that neglected areas and those without clear ownership are more susceptible to crime. The redesigned Donnelly Homes site will incorporate many CPTED principles that include:

- A.** Placing windows and doors of buildings overlooking streets with clear lines of sight;
- B.** Ensuring all areas are well lit;
- C.** Using fencing, shrubs, and walkways to define entrances and direct visitors in a way that keeps people away unless they have reason to be there;
- D.** Clearly defining public and private areas;
- E.** Carefully maintaining the property to reinforce the fact that the area is cared for and watched.



SOURCE: WRT



**C.** Create indoor and outdoor gathering spaces to foster a sense of community at Donnelly Homes.

- » The sense of community is what bonds the North Trenton/Battle Monument neighborhoods together. In the needs assessment survey and throughout the planning process, Donnelly Homes and neighborhood residents repeatedly noted a desire for places to get together with friends and family.

This strategy will go hand-in-hand with Neighborhood Strategy 3A and integrate a series of seating areas, pocket parks and civic spaces on-site at Donnelly Homes, where residents of all ages can interact and socialize comfortably and safely. These spaces will take the form of small play areas and gathering spaces.

**D.** Design Donnelly Homes so that it is well-lit and comfortable for walking.

- » Safety and crime are far and away the top concern for residents in the Choice neighborhood, adding a persistent level of stress and anxiety. Many parents will not let their children play outside and only 13 percent feel it is safe to walk outside at night. Better street and site lighting is the top feature requested by residents to make the area safer. This must be a top priority for the Donnelly Homes site, which will also be designed to incorporate a walking route that is also well-lit with safe sidewalks and street crossings.

**Is it safe for children to walk and play outside?**



**51%**  
Say "No"

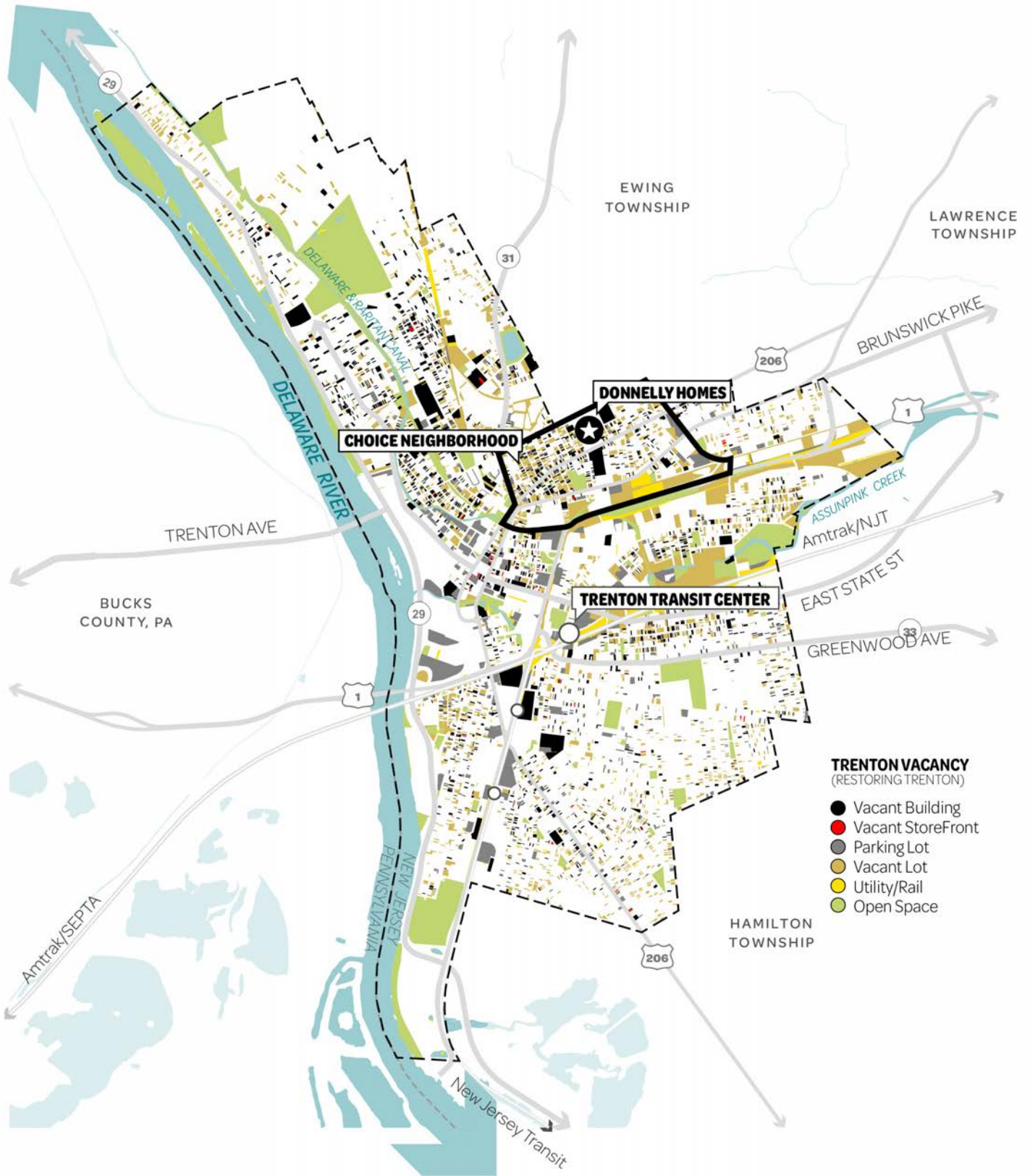


only **14%**  
feel it is safe for children to walk to & home from school



feel crime and safety is the neighborhood's biggest challenge  
**77%**

SOURCE: DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY



**FIGURE 26. VACANCY IS WIDESPREAD ACROSS THE CITY OF TRENTON**

SOURCE: 2019 RESTORING TRENTON



## **GOAL 2:** STABILIZE NORTH TRENTON THROUGH STRATEGIC DEMOLITION AND INVESTMENTS IN INFILL DEVELOPMENT.

- A.** Identify key opportunity sites for new infill housing in the Choice Neighborhood focused on enhancing the quality and availability of affordable rental housing.
  - » As part of the Housing Plan, 140 new replacement units of rental housing will be built within the Choice Neighborhood.
  - » These units will help fill in gaps in the existing fabric and will be targeted around Bond Street and Sanford Street in the Canal Banks Redevelopment Area and also along MLK Boulevard, Sweets and Fountain avenues in the Humboldt Sweets Redevelopment Area.
- B.** Identify key opportunity sites that can be used for new infill housing dedicated to homeownership.
  - » The planning process identified several vacant parcels in the Humboldt-Sweets Redevelopment Area and around Battle Monument in the Canal Banks Redevelopment Area that would be attractive locations for homeownership.
  - » Many of these opportunity sites are close to Sweets-Fountain Park, which will be expanded and improved as a result of the Choice neighborhood planning effort. The park provides valuable green space and a play area in this end of the neighborhood.
  - » In the Humboldt-Sweets area, the vacant parcels are large enough to support duplex units with off-street parking.
  - » The homeownership units by Battle Monument are envisioned as larger units with off-street parking in the rear.
  - » Currently, a total of 37 homeownership units are planned.
- C.** Establish a program to assist homeowners with necessary repairs.
  - » The intent of this strategy is to help existing neighborhood residents make necessary repairs to their homes so that they may remain in their homes. It also aims to improve the overall appearance of the neighborhood.
  - » This strategy also falls under the Neighborhood Plan Strategy 2B. Please see description on page 178 for more details.
- D.** Encourage state employees to participate in the initial phase of a new program providing incentives to rent or purchase a home in the Choice Neighborhood.
  - » According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 13.5% of Trenton residents actually work in Trenton. This is surprising given that Trenton is both the state capital and county seat. It is also in sharp contrast to peer cities such as Providence, RI, or Hartford, CT, where 30 – 40% of residents are employed in their city.\*
  - » Greater Trenton and NJHMFA are in the process of launching a pilot state employee homeownership program. The intent is to incentivize a portion of the over 20,000 State employees, who currently work in the City of Trenton to live and work in Downtown Trenton.
  - » This initiative would create a more vibrant downtown core with new residents generating demand for new retail, entertainment and arts uses and simultaneously creating a safer and more secure community. Other benefits include reduced traffic and congestion; reduced employer-provided parking; reduced

carbon footprint; and ultimately, reduced State-provided transitional aid to the City of Trenton as the City’s tax base is increased and diversified and new businesses open from the increased demand generated.

- » The Choice neighborhood is a stone’s throw from downtown and will extend the boundary of the pilot program to include the Choice neighborhood.
- » This strategy aims to have 20 employees participate in an initial phase of renting or buying a home in the Choice neighborhood over five years.

**E. Incentivize residents of the Choice Neighborhood and employees of Capital Health to buy homes in the neighborhood.**

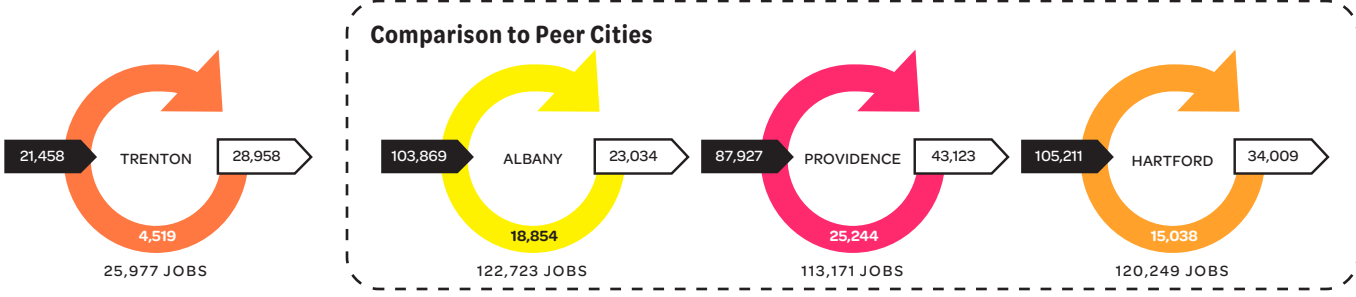
- » The Trenton Neighborhood Initiative, which grew out of the Choice Neighborhood Planning process to jumpstart implementation of many of the goals,

recognizes the importance of increasing the stability of the neighborhood.

- » As part of TNI, residents of the Choice neighborhood and income-qualified employees of Capital Health will be offered incentives to purchase homes in the neighborhood.
- » Capital Health is a major employer in the City and a significant anchor that occupies the eastern corner of the Choice neighborhood.
- » The goal of this strategy is for residents and/ or employees to purchase 10 homes in the Choice neighborhood per year over five years.

**According to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 13.5% of Trenton residents actually work in Trenton.**

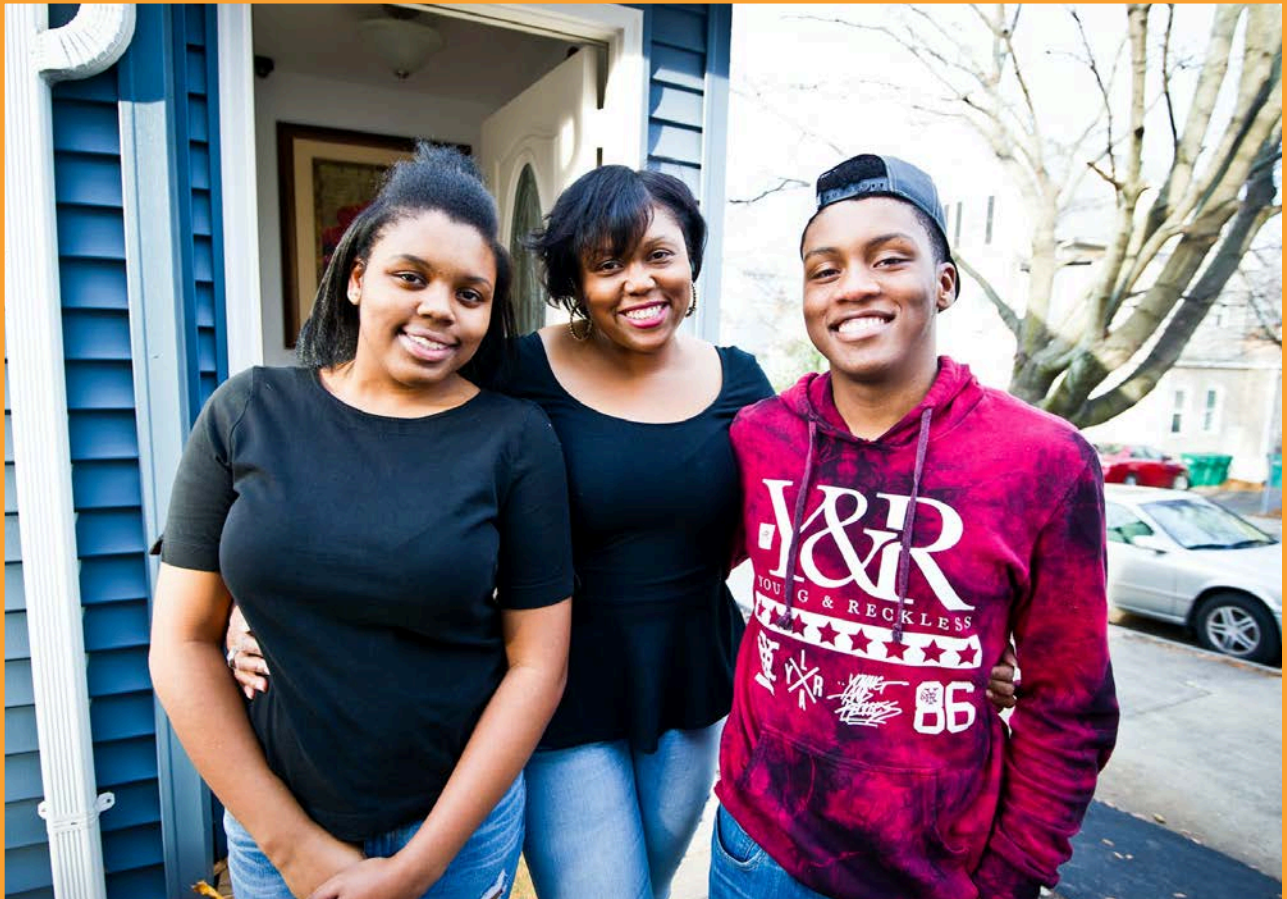
**INFLOW / OUTFLOW OF JOBS**



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, ONTHEMAP APPLICATION AND LEHD ORIGIN-DESTINATION EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS (BEGINNING OF QUARTER EMPLOYMENT, 2ND QUARTER OF 2002-2017), 2017 - ONTHEMAP.CES.CENSUS.GOV



**GOOD IDEA!**



SOURCE: [HTTPS://SOCIALINNOVATIONSJOURNAL.ORG/](https://socialinnovationsjournal.org/)

## **THE FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY PROGRAM (FSS)**

The Family Self-Sufficiency Program (FSS) promotes independence, self-sufficiency and goal setting among THA residents. The program includes one-on-one counseling and referrals to supportive service providers. The mission of the program is to help THA residents set and achieve short- and long-term goals, one family at a time.

Some of the goals set by residents include obtaining stable employment, budgeting and saving, achieving homeownership, purchase of transportation, pursuing vocational training or higher education, and much more.

## GOAL 3: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD COMMUNITY WEALTH AND PROSPERITY.

- A.** Identify existing neighborhood homes that could be renovated and identified for homeowners.
- » This strategy aims to pave a way forward for local homeowners and at the same time stabilize some of the existing housing stock. THA, the City and Trenton Neighborhood Initiative will aim to identify and renovate 10 homes in the Choice Neighborhood over five years.
- B.** Increase participation THA's new FSS program to assist Donnelly Homes residents to work towards buying a home (with programs for credit repair, balancing finances, job placement, etc.)
- » The voluntary Family Self-Sufficiency Program assists residents of Donnelly Homes (and THA properties) in working towards economic independence. It is a relatively new opportunity for residents and therefore, not yet well known. THA will actively work to promote the program and strive to increase participation so that 30 Donnelly Homes residents are participating in the program every year.
- C.** Establish a program to assist Choice neighborhood residents to move from renting to owning a property.
- » Although there are tools available for people to work towards homeownership, finding guidance to navigate the programs can be challenging.
  - » To support this strategy, the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative will sponsor a certificate program and host programs to assist Choice neighborhood residents interested in purchasing a home, including offering downpayment assistance.
  - » Custom tailored programs will also support new homeowners in how to perform routine maintenance.
  - » TNI will support potential homebuyers in evaluating and applying for any other
- homeownership support programs for which they qualify, like the NJHMFA state-wide Down Payment Assistance Program (DPA), which provides \$10,000 for qualified first-time homebuyers to use as down payment and closing cost assistance when purchasing a home in New Jersey. The DPA is an interest-free, five-year forgivable second loan with no monthly payment.
- D.** Partner with neighborhood anchors to invest locally in redevelopment.
- » Realizing the scale of transformation envisioned by the Choice Neighborhood plan requires the collective participation of many partners. The planning process strengthened existing partnerships and identified new partners.
  - » An objective of this strategy is to create and Advisory Panel comprised of local stakeholders, City departments, Donnelly Homes and other neighborhood residents as well as area anchors such as Capital Health and Trenton Health Team (through the TNI) and the Greater Mt. Zion AME Church. The Panel would meet regularly to collaborate on community-based economic development and redevelopment efforts.



## HOUSING PLAN OVERVIEW

This housing plan seeks to provide the framework for a reimagined Donnelly Homes that will anchor development and act as catalyst for neighborhood stabilization and growth. As described in Housing Goals 1 and 2, redevelopment of Donnelly homes and strategic infill development throughout the neighborhood will create a vibrant, stable, and engaged community. Achieving this transformation requires an ambitious yet implementable housing plan; one that responds to resident’s needs and that can be developed with the support of partners such as Capital Health, NJHMFA, and other state agencies.

The basis of the Housing Plan is the one-for-one replacement and right of return to every existing unit and resident. Informed by the input gathered from multiple community outreach events, resident surveys, and task force conversations, the resulting plan includes the following:

- ▶ 340 mixed-income units on-site
- ▶ 50 new mixed-income units off-site immediately adjacent to Donnelly Homes
- ▶ 177 units of neighborhood infill, including 37 new affordable homeownership units

The plan responds to resident’s desire for reduced on-site density and a preference for townhome style units. Most new housing is in the form of townhome and stacked units that face reconnected neighborhood streets. Along MLK Boulevard there are two mixed-use multi-story buildings that reinforce the gateway at Southard Street along with Junior 1.

Reflecting a desire for safe and vibrant public spaces, this plan includes a revamped green space adjacent to the existing community building that is augmented by an “apron” of play streets that expands programming and further reinforces

pedestrian safety. Additionally, as requested by Donnelly residents, the site plan includes expanded green spaces in the form of deep back yards and smaller pocket parks.

New connections and open spaces will have housing frontage to ensure eyes are overlooking the street. Along MLK Boulevard, the new mixed-use multi-family buildings will create a vibrant and secure gateway into the site while also complementing the redeveloped Junior 1 site across the street.

Connections to nearby schools, open spaces, Battle Monument, and Downtown will feature new and enhanced pedestrian facilities. These features such as trails, sidewalks, and street crossings will create safe and strong connections to jobs and amenities in the neighborhood and nearby downtown.

## RESPONDING TO THE MARKET

This housing plan conforms to the parameters of the local market as supported by a market study conducted by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc.

### WHO ARE THE HOUSEHOLDS THAT REPRESENT THE POTENTIAL MARKET FOR NEW HOUSING UNITS WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

As indicated in the target market analysis the potential market for new housing in the neighborhood is comprised of three main groups:

- ▶ Younger singles and childless couples—54.3 percent;
- ▶ Empty nesters and retirees—26.1 percent); and
- ▶ Traditional and non-traditional family households—19.6 percent.

Of the three segments represented, each has a significant need for affordable housing, with many earning below 60-80% AMI. This need is strongest in the group comprised of younger singles and childless couples where approximately 69% of households earn below 80% AMI.

## **HOUSING STRATEGY**

Alternatives for the target housing site, Donnelly Homes, were considered but not pursued because (1) rehabilitation cost exceeds \$66 million – over 66% of the Total Development Cost of the entire site – determining that it is not economically viable to rehabilitate Donnelly Homes. (2) Residents repeatedly expressed concern over existing walk-up building prototype – particularly regarding public safety as a result of indefensible spaces. (3) Building a 376 unit multi-family community elsewhere in Trenton is unrealistic in an urban city such as Trenton, NJ.

## **DEVELOPER SELECTION**

To create a transparent and inclusive selection process for a development partner, THA set up an Evaluation Committee made up of residents, TCHRC Trustees/THA Board Members, community partners, THA staff, a Redevelopment Consultant, and City of Trenton staff. The rigorous evaluation process included in-person interviews; tours; and presentations.

Ultimately, the Committee selected the Michaels Organization as the Choice Neighborhood private development partner (Co-Developer). This developer was well prepared, knew the neighborhood, and did research on the Trenton Choice Neighborhood Plan. Residents felt that this developer cared as they listened to residents' ideas and held one-on-one conversations. The tour of their development site provided insight on both the construction of the housing development and the great relationships that they have established with their tenants.





## SUMMARY OF HOUSING PROGRAM

Currently, there are 640 bedrooms in 376 units at Donnelly Homes. The Housing Plan proposes a total of 530 new units of housing, comprising 1,126 bedrooms. Additionally, this plan provides for up to 7% of new units to be homeownership, or 37 total units, responding to the interest of nearly half of Donnelly residents sharing their interest in homeownership. New housing will be located on-site and off-site within the Choice Neighborhood.

This plan has identified 9 areas throughout the Choice Neighborhood as potential areas for housing beyond the target housing site. The following list corresponds to the areas illustrated in Figure 25.

- 1) Battle Monument– 2.5 acres
- 2) Sweets/Fountain– 10.4 acres
- 3) Sanford Street– 5.2 acres
- 4) Bond Street– 9.0 acres
- 5) Junior High School One – 13.2 acres
- 6) Southard Street– 3.4 acres
- 7) Rossell/Evans– 2.7 acres

These areas were chosen for their potential to stabilize and enhance the neighborhood with infill housing. Boundaries were drawn based on factors such as the percentage of vacant and publicly-owned land, proximity to major job centers, and ability to create gateways to the neighborhood.

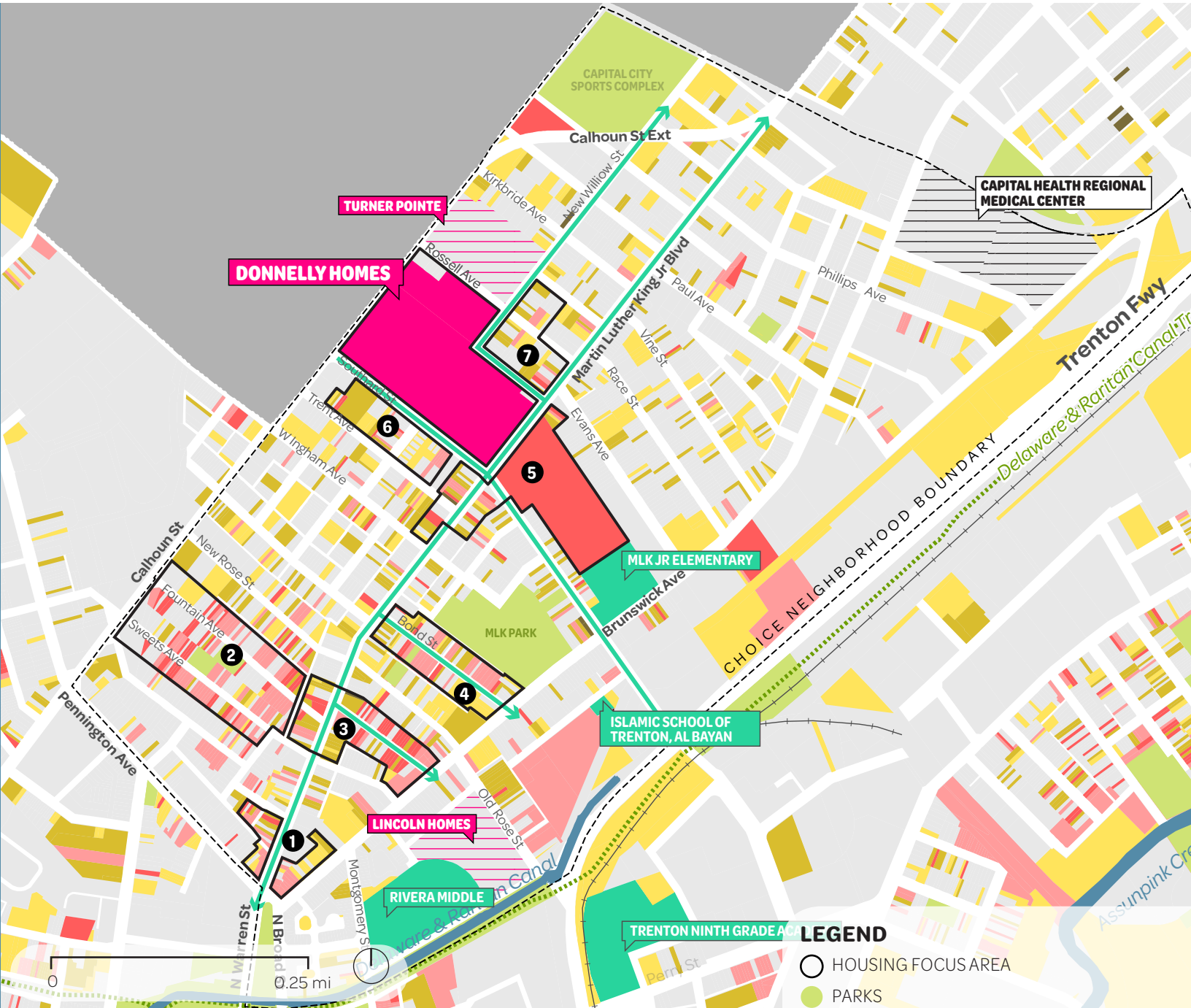
## ON-SITE AT DONNELLY HOMES

The Housing Plan proposes 340 new residential units on the Donnelly Homes site.

Responding to the desire of current residents to live in townhomes, the plan proposes a total of 77 townhome style units, and 182 stacked townhome units. The two proposed mixed-use multi-family buildings along MLK Boulevard have a total of 80 apartments and up to 12,000 of non-residential space.

The basis for the unit mix was informed by the market analysis as well as the needs and preferences of current Donnelly Homes residents and the surrounding neighborhood. The housing plan reduces the density of the current target housing site by 10%.

In response to the 1 out of 4 residents who expressed a need for handicap accessible housing, up to 47% of the planned units could be made accessible. In addition, the plan proposes a parking multiplier of 0.75 space for every unit on either off-street lots or on-street in newly dedicated spaces.



^ **FIGURE 27. ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR NEW HOUSING BASED ON CLUSTERS OF VACANCIES**

**LEGEND**

- HOUSING FOCUS AREA
- PARKS
- SCHOOLS
- ➔ CLEAN, GREEN, & SECURE PED. ROUTES
- TARGET HOUSING SITE
- VACANT LAND- PUBLIC
- VACANT BUILDING- PUBLIC
- VACANT LAND- PRIVATE
- VACANT BUILDING- PRIVATE
- VACANT STOREFRONT- PRIVATE



# DESIGN FRAMEWORK RETHINKING DONNELLY HOMES

## A FRAMEWORK FOR THE NEW DONNELLY

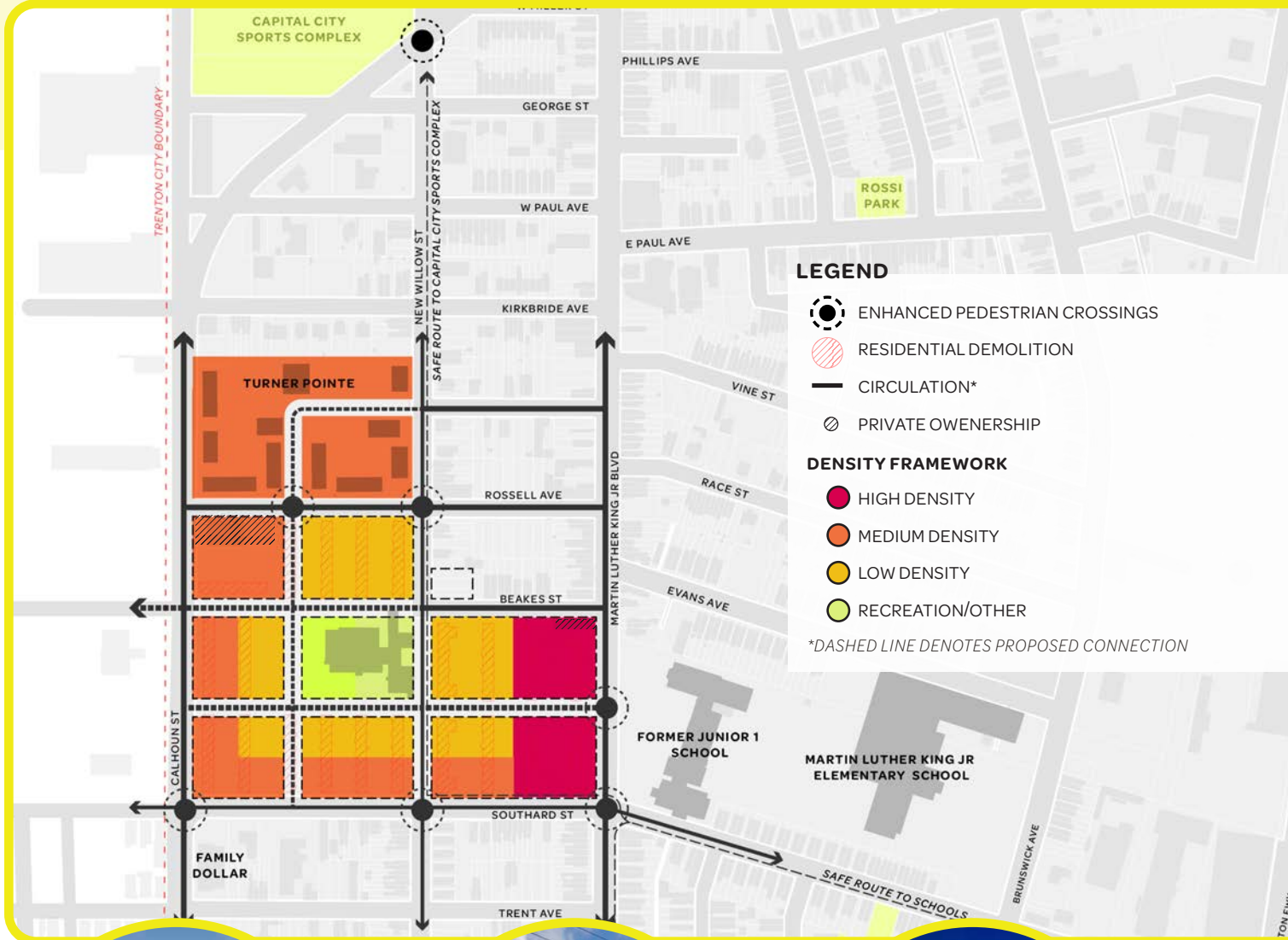
### RECONNECTING TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD



The framework of the conceptual housing design is built on the goal of reimagining Donnelly Homes as a safe, vibrant, mixed-income intergenerational community that anchors North Trenton with a strong sense of civic engagement.

To accomplish this, the conceptual design re-integrates the neighborhood street system and provides contextual and diverse building types that create a sense of place and the feeling of a traditional Trenton neighborhood.

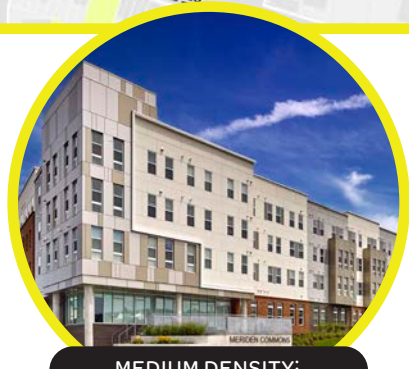
# COMPLEMENTING THE EXISTING FABRIC



LOW DENSITY:  
**ROWHOMES**



MEDIUM DENSITY:  
**STACKED ROWHOMES**



MEDIUM DENSITY:  
**MIXED-USE/  
MULTI-FAMILY**



# DESIGN FRAMEWORK RETHINKING DONNELLY HOMES

## PROVIDING A DIVERSE ARRAY OF HOUSING

### PROVIDING A WIDE RANGE OF HOUSING CHOICES

The housing plan incorporates an array of housing types to accommodate the varying needs of new and potential residents. Over the course of the planning process residents and stakeholders have had the chance to comment and craft the framework for the type and style of units to be included in the redeveloped Donnelly Homes. The primary housing types included in this plan are as follows:

#### TOWNHOMES



PHOTOS OF OBERY COURT | ANNAPOLIS, MD

TYPICALLY **2-3 STORY BUILDINGS** WITH **PRIVATE ENTRANCES** FACING ONTO THE STREET. TOWNHOMES ARE **ATTACHED SINGLE-FAMILY** HOMES USUALLY SHARING ONE OR TWO WALLS WITH ADJACENT HOMES.

#### STACKED FLATS



PHOTOS OF PACIFIC COURTS LAFAYETTE GARDENS | JERSEY CITY, NJ

TYPICALLY **3-4 STORY BUILDINGS** WITH **PRIVATE ENTRANCES** FACING ONTO THE STREET OR GREENSPACES. STACKED FLATS TYPICALLY HAVE AN ACCESSIBLE **APARTMENT ON THE FIRST FLOOR WITH A TOWNHOME STYLE UNIT ABOVE.**

# WHAT WE HEARD:

Gathering feedback during Housing Task Force meetings and community engagement events.



**RESIDENTS LIKE CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE, WITH TRADITIONAL ELEMENTS. STOOPS, PORCHES, MATERIAL VARIETY, AND FACADE ARTICULATION ARE ALL IMPORTANT.**

Exploring Residential Unit

### TYPOLOGIES

**MULTI-FAMILY-RESIDENTIAL**  
1-2 BEDROOMS UNITS

no to the walkup! They are difficult to defend the staircases.

YES, LET'S CONSIDER THIS

Consider green roofs

TELL US WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT

Concerned about gathering and safety in the hallways

Concerns about the mixing of commercial and residential areas making for more traffic.

HERIDEN CHOICE | HERIDEN, CT

COONVILLE HOPE VI | PATERSON, NJ

Love the mixture of colors

North Central Choice | PHILADELPHIA, PA

PASCO VERDE | PHILADELPHIA, PA

This look/design may not be best for the neighborhood.

Will be nice to have something outside to walk through. I like the look but wish the entry other could really design around it.

Exploring Residential Unit

### TYPOLOGIES

**TOWNHOMES**  
2-3 STORY | 2-4 BEDROOMS

too blocky.

YES, LET'S CONSIDER THIS

TELL US WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT

Really like the porch area

I like the varied look of top right and bottom left.

I like the porches

I like the raised 1st floor with porch and stairs

NORTH CENTRAL CHOICE | PHILADELPHIA, PA

DUET | ANNAPOLIS, MD

VILLAGE AT PARK RIVER | HARTFORD, CT

OBERY COURT | ANNAPOLIS, MD

I like the mix of materials/finishes

Exploring Residential Unit

### TYPOLOGIES

**STACKED FLATS/TOWNHOMES**  
3 STORY | 1-4 BEDROOMS

All look great on this slide!

YES, LET'S CONSIDER THIS

TELL US WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT

The large townhomes look too similar to Middle Homes

I like the stairs

I like this more traditional look with mixtures of materials and colors.

I like the different design between the two. I like the look of attached townhomes but only attached townhomes are great.

LAFAYETTE GARDENS HOPE VI | JERSEY CITY, NJ

HERIDEN CHOICE | HERIDEN, CT

VILLAGE AT PARK RIVER | HARTFORD, CT



# DESIGN FRAMEWORK RETHINKING DONNELLY HOMES

## PROVIDING A DIVERSE ARRAY OF HOUSING

Multi-family buildings provide efficient and accessible units near transportation, services, and community spaces.



### NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL & ADAPTIVE REUSE



PHOTO OF PROJECT HOME | PHILADELPHIA, PA

INFILL UNITS ARE TYPICALLY TOWNHOMES OR STACKED UNITS **BUILT ON VACANT LOTS**. INFILL UNITS GENERALLY **KEEP THE SAME NUMBER OF STORIES AS THEIR NEIGHBORS** TO FILL IN GAPS AND **CREATE A MORE COHESIVE BLOCK**.

REHABILITATION (REHAB) BUILDINGS ARE **EXISTING STRUCTURES** THAT ARE **RENOVATED OR REPURPOSED** TO HOUSE NEW USES. THESE CAN RANGE FROM LARGE PROJECTS SUCH AS **CONVERTING AN OLD SCHOOL** (LIKE JUNIOR 1) INTO HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SPACES, TO **RENOVATING A VACANT ROWHOME**.



### MIXED-USE MULTI-FAMILY



MERIDEN CHOICE | MERIDEN, CT



PASEO VERDE | PHILADELPHIA, PA

TYPICALLY **3-5 STORY BUILDINGS** WITH A **SHARED BUILDING ENTRANCE**. MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS CONTAIN **APARTMENT UNITS ABOVE A NON-RESIDENTIAL GROUND FLOOR**. TYPICALLY THESE BUILDINGS **CONTAIN ELEVATORS**.



## **ST. LUKE'S MANOR**

CLEVELAND, OHIO

### **A NEW LIFE FOR AN HISTORIC HOSPITAL**

Once a neighborhood icon, the historic Saint Luke's Hospital sat vacant for over a decade following its closure in 1999. Today, Saint Luke's is teeming with life and hope after its transformation into a multigenerational living and learning campus.

The effort was ignited by the community. The Cleveland Public School System and Cleveland Public Library each built new facilities on properties next to Saint Luke's to encourage new activity in the building. Residents also displayed their support, eventually leading to the redevelopment of old Saint Luke's. The building which is on the National Historic Register now houses 137

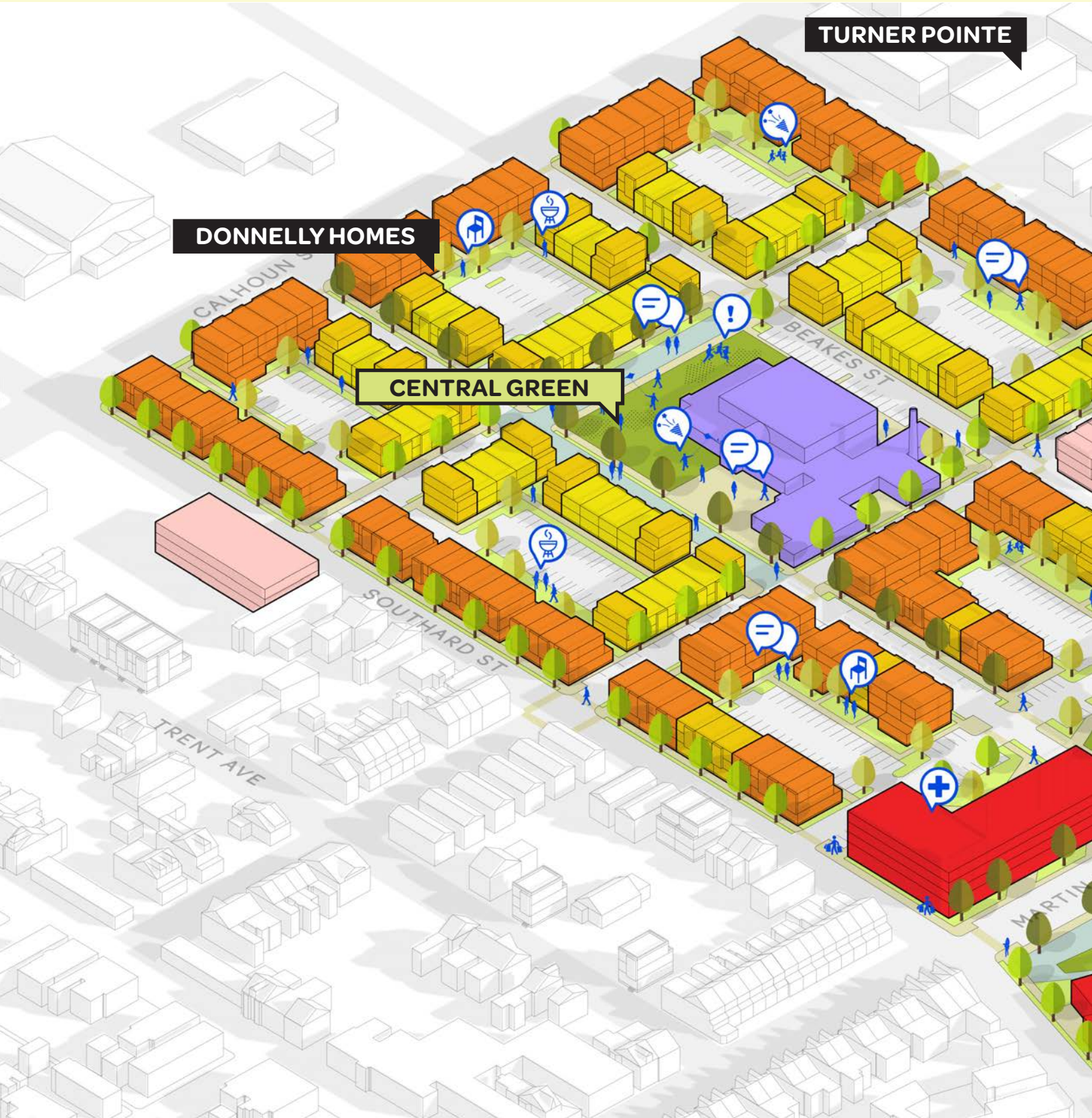
affordable senior apartments, two market-rate apartments and a 70,000-square-foot Learning Campus with commercial and office space. The Learning Campus provides space for Saint Luke's Foundation, Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, the Boys and Girls Club, the Intergenerational School, and the November Early Childhood Learning Center.

Once a symbol of urban blight, the renovated Saint Luke's is now the centerpiece of an ongoing community revitalization effort in the Buckeye-Shaker neighborhood.

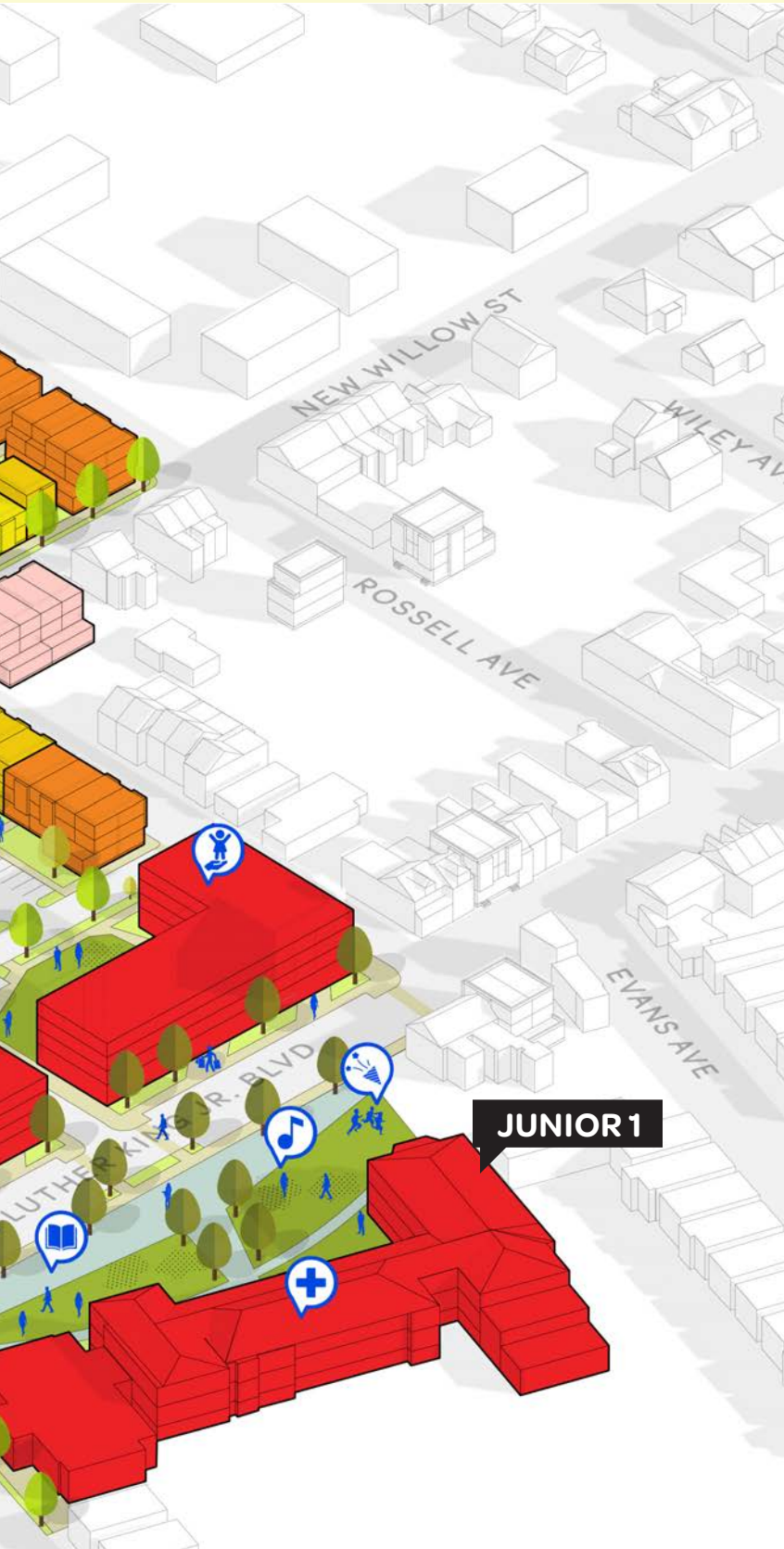


# DESIGN FRAMEWORK RETHINKING DONNELLY HOMES

## CONCEPTUAL MASSING DIAGRAM







## UNIT TYPES

- **TOWNHOMES**  
2-3 STORY | 2-4 BEDROOMS
- **STACKED FLATS/TOWNHOMES**  
3 STORY | 1-4 BEDROOMS
- **MULTI-FAMILY: RESIDENTIAL**  
1-2 BEDROOMS UNITS
- **MULTI-FAMILY: FLEX**  
NON-RESIDENTIAL SPACE
- **ADMIN/RECREATION**  
EXISTING GYM AND MAINTENANCE FACILITIES
- **OPEN SPACE**  
PASSIVE AND ACTIVE RECREATION AREAS,  
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, LANDSCAPING
- **POTENTIAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY**

## HOUSING PROGRAM

### Donnelly Homes Area – On-Site\*

Unit Type	Total
Multi-Family Residential	80
Stacked Townhome	182
Townhome	78
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>340</b>

\* Small portions of Donnelly Homes redevelopment are not under Trenton Housing Authority ownership.

### Donnelly Homes Area – Off-Site

Unit Type	Total
Junior One Adaptive Reuse	50
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>50</b>



### HOUSING FOCUS AREAS IN THE CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD

Building off the analysis presented in Figure 25, the proposed housing program focuses on three main areas for off-site development.

- **TARGET HOUSING SITE ADJACENT-**  
Areas immediately surrounding the target housing site, including Junior 1.
- **HUMBOLDT-SWEETS AREA-**  
Locations for potential neighborhood infill housing including Sweets and Fountain avenues.
- **CANAL BANKS AREA-**  
Locations for potential neighborhood infill housing near Battle Monument. Locations for potential neighborhood infill on Bond Street.

### SUMMARY HOUSING PROGRAM

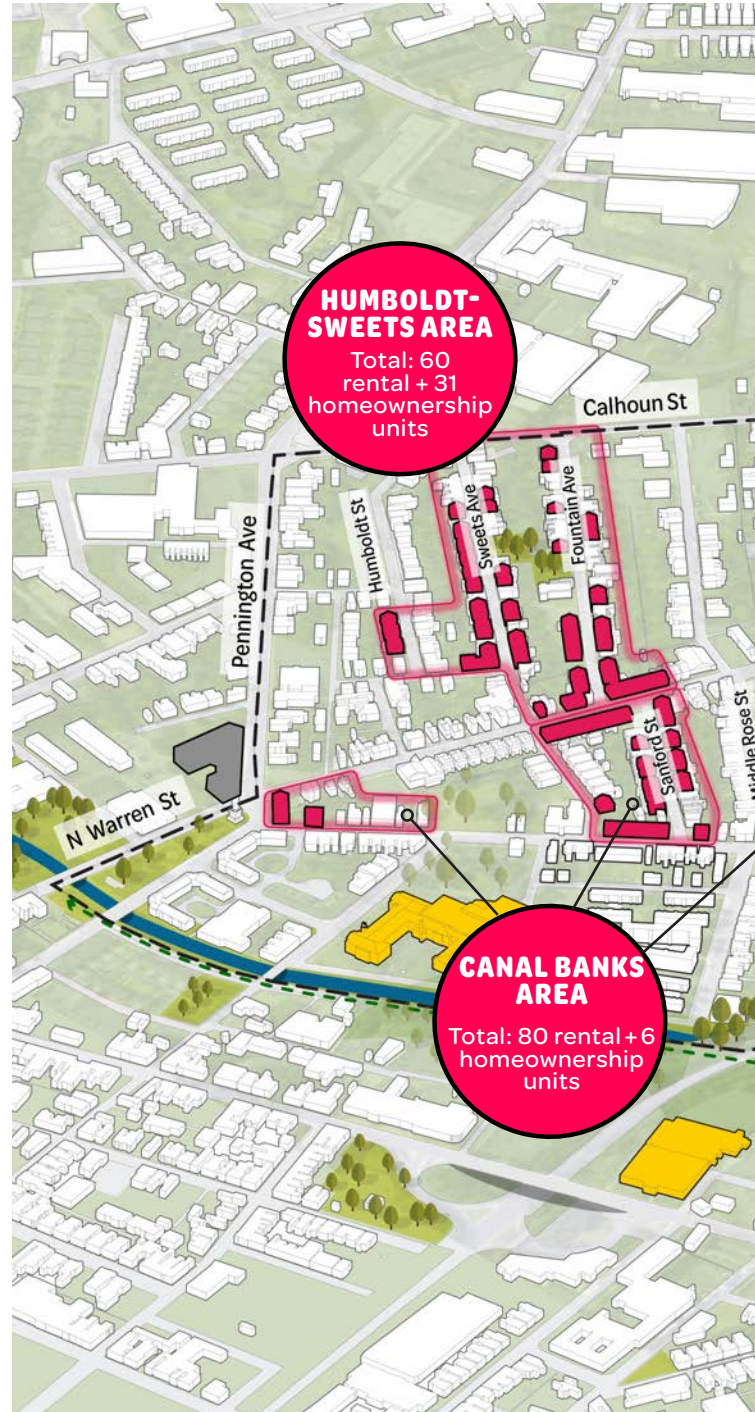
Donnelly Homes Area – On-Site*	
Unit Type	Total
Multi-Family Residential	80
Stacked Townhome	182
Townhome	78
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>340</b>

\* Small portions of Donnelly Homes redevelopment are not under Trenton Housing Authority ownership.

Neighborhood Off-Site	
Unit Type	Total
Junior One Adaptive Reuse	50
Neighborhood Infill	140
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>190</b>

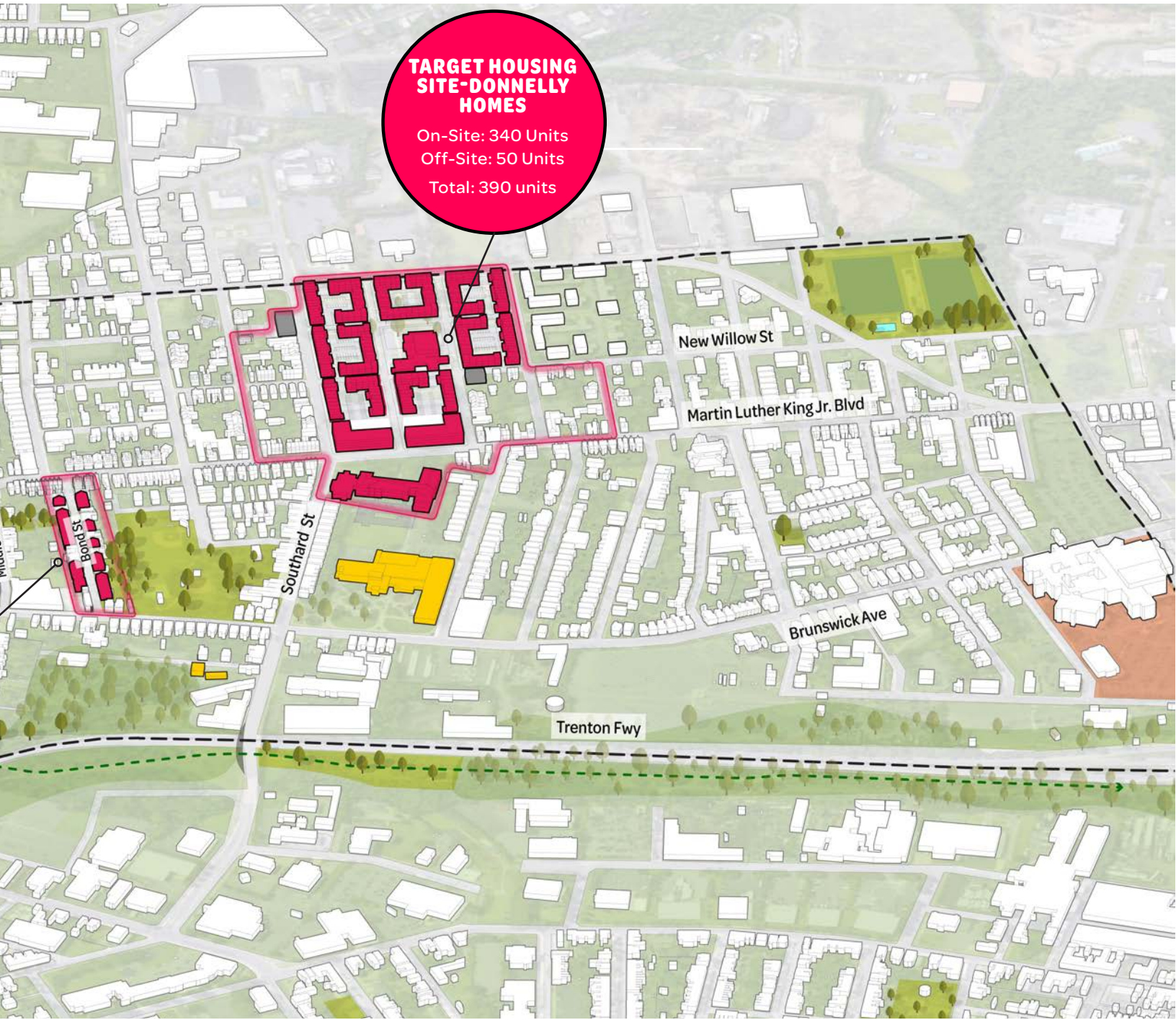
Homeownership	
Total Homeownership Units	37

Total Housing Program	
Total Housing Program	567








^ FIGURE 28. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING PLAN





**LEGEND**

-  CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY
-  HOUSING FOCUS AREA
-  SCHOOLS
-  PROPOSED HOUSING
-  OPPORTUNITY SITE



When asked what type of housing is needed in the neighborhood the 3<sup>rd</sup> most requested unit type was new housing for seniors. This plan identifies the former Junior One school (if acquired) as the location of up to 45 new units of senior housing as part of a rehabilitation that will include spaces for community resources and gathering.

**AFFORDABLE REPLACEMENT VS. AFFORDABLE NON-REPLACEMENT**

Of the units proposed on-site at Donnelly Homes, 69% are designated to be replacement units - preserving their affordability for extremely low-income Trentonians. 71% of the total rental housing program (376 units) are designated as replacement units. The remaining 29% (154 units) are designated as non-replacement units - both non-replacement affordable and non-replacement unrestricted.

**PROPOSED BEDROOM MIX RATIONALE**

The proposed housing plan is designed with a new bedroom mix that is right-sized to meet the needs of Donnelly Homes residents as well as the demand identified by the Trenton Housing Authority’s waiting list.

**PARKING RATIONALE**

The housing plan includes properties within the Humboldt-Sweets and Canal Banks Redevelopment Areas. Parking requirements for new housing will be governed by the language in the Redevelopment Area Plans and LDO requirements. Where off-street parking is provided it shall be screened and located behind buildings where feasible.

**LEED FOR NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND ENTERPRISE GREEN COMMUNITIES**

The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood was planned to meet the basic

requirements of the US Green Building Council’s LEED-ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development) certification. LEED is the world’s most widely used green rating system.

The analysis is based on several assumptions, which are outlined in the Appendix. The plan has the potential to exceed basic certification depending on additional decisions that will be made as the plan moves closer towards implementation.

In additional, all residential units and apartments will be designed to meet the standards of Enterprise Green Communities and all appliances will be ENERGY STAR certified.

Bedroom Summary of Rental Units		
BR Type	Units	%
1 BR	137	26%
2 BR	209	39%
3 BR	165	31%
4 BR	19	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>100%</b>

Income Summary for Rental Units		
Income Level	Units	%
Replacement Units	376	71%
Non-replacement - Affordable	100	19%
Non-replacement - Unrestricted	54	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>100%</b>





^ **FIGURE 29. INFILL HOUSING PROPOSED FOR HUMBOLDT-SWEETS AND CANAL BANKS REDEVELOPMENT AREAS**

Off-Site Infill Rental Housing Tranche 1					
BR Type	R U	Non R U	Market	Total Units	%
1 BR	5	1	1	7	10%
2BR	15	5	2	22	31%
3 BR	30	4	4	38	54%
4 BR	0	2	1	3	4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

Homeownership	
Total Homeownership Units	<b>37</b>

Off-Site Infill Rental Housing Tranche 2					
BR Type	R U	Non R U	Market	Total Units	%
1 BR	5	1	1	7	10%
2 BR	15	5	2	22	31%
3 BR	30	2	4	36	51%
4 BR	0	4	1	5	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>



**FINANCING STRATEGY**

Executing the transformation of Donnelly Homes and new housing stock in the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhoods will require a variety of financing sources and capital partners. Furthermore, the financial tools available helped to inform the size and unit mixes of the four phases. The primary financing mechanism will be the 4% and 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, made available by the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJ HMFA). The NJHMFA also issues tax exempt bonds, instrumental for 4% Tax Credit execution, and a special needs financing program for households that qualify for special needs.

Each project will be able to leverage a substantial first mortgage, due in part to the new HUD RAD and RAD/Section 18 split program. Other financing sources will include Federal Home Loan Bank’s AHP funds, federal historic tax credits (particularly for the adaptive reuse of the Junior 1 School), Sellers notes, City of Trenton HOME funds and State Housing Choice funds.

If awarded, Choice funds will be a source on each project, however, regardless of an award, the housing team will work to find creative ways to finance this transformation including but not limited to the New Jersey’s ASPIRE program and the Neighborhood Homes Reinvestment Act, two new sources of funding that will surely join others that the State and local governments avail to make housing a possibility.

**Phase I**

<b>Sources</b>	
4% Tax Credit Financing	\$19,314,000
9% Tax Credit Financing	\$0
Federal Historic Tax Credits	\$9,247,000
First Mortgage	\$9,380,000
Sellers Note	\$2,000,000
Federal Home Loan Bank - AHP	\$1,700,000
NJ HMFA - Special Needs Funding	\$0
Deferred Fee	\$3,605,000
Choice Neighborhood Funding	\$21,121,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$66,417,000</b>

<b>Uses</b>	
Acquisition	\$2,000,000
Hard Cost	\$46,478,000
Soft Cost	\$14,293,000
Financing Costs and Reserves	\$3,646,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$66,417,000</b>

**Phase II**

<b>Sources</b>	
4% Tax Credit Financing	\$0
9% Tax Credit Financing	\$16,098,000
Federal Historic Tax Credits	\$0
First Mortgage	\$6,158,000
Sellers Note	\$0
Federal Home Loan Bank - AHP	\$0
NJ HMFA - Special Needs Funding	\$0
Deferred Fee	\$1,366,000
Choice Neighborhood Funding	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,622,000</b>

<b>Uses</b>	
Acquisition	\$300,000
Hard Cost	\$14,962,000
Soft Cost	\$6,575,000
Financing Costs and Reserves	\$1,785,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,622,000</b>

**Phase III**

<b>Sources</b>	
4% Tax Credit Financing	\$0
9% Tax Credit Financing	\$16,098,000
Federal Historic Tax Credits	\$0
First Mortgage	\$6,158,000
Sellers Note	\$0
Federal Home Loan Bank - AHP	\$0
NJ HMFA - Special Needs Funding	\$0
Deferred Fee	\$1,366,000
Choice Neighborhood Funding	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,622,000</b>

<b>Uses</b>	
Acquisition	\$300,000
Hard Cost	\$14,962,000
Soft Cost	\$6,575,000
Financing Costs and Reserves	\$1,785,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$23,622,000</b>

**Phase IV**

<b>Sources</b>	
4% Tax Credit Financing	\$28,806,000
9% Tax Credit Financing	\$0
Federal Historic Tax Credits	\$0
First Mortgage	\$31,395,000
Sellers Note	\$0
Federal Home Loan Bank - AHP	\$1,175,000
NJ HMFA - Special Needs Funding	\$1,000,000
Deferred Fee	\$4,388,000
Choice Neighborhood Funding	\$10,874,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$78,213,000</b>

<b>Uses</b>	
Acquisition	\$500,000
Hard Cost	\$52,867,000
Soft Cost	\$19,355,000
Financing Costs and Reserves	\$5,491,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$78,213,000</b>

**Homeownership Units**

<b>Sources</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>per Unit</b>
FHLB NY - AHP	\$1,480,000	\$40,000
DCA - Housing Choice Funds	\$2,000,000	\$54,054
City of Trenton HOME Funds	\$2,000,000	\$54,054
Sales Proceeds	\$4,625,000	\$125,000
Choice Neighborhood Funding	\$3,005,000	\$81,216
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,110,000</b>	<b>\$354,324</b>

<b>Uses</b>		
Acquisition	\$25,000	\$676
Hard Cost	\$9,250,000	\$250,000
Soft Cost	\$3,085,000	\$83,378
Financing Costs and Reserves	\$750,000	\$20,270
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$13,110,000</b>	<b>\$354,324</b>

**Development Timeline Summary**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Phase Detail</b>	<b>Total Units</b>	<b>Phase Start</b>	<b>Phase Completion</b>
P I	Junior 1 & Multi-Family	130	2023	2025
P II	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	70	2023	2025
P III	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	70	2024	2026
P IV	On-Site Townhomes	260	2025	2027
<b>Total</b>		<b>530</b>		





^ FIGURE 30. ILLUSTRATIVE SITE PLAN OF DONNELLY HOMES & JUNIOR 1





LEGEND

- 1 OUTDOOR PLAZA
- 2 PLAYSPACES
- 3 COMMUNITY SPACES
- 4 SHARED STREET (GREEN APRON)
- 5 BBQ/SITTING AREA
- 6 MURAL
- 7 HEALTH & WELLNESS SPACE
- 8 EARLY HEAD START (TENTATIVE)
- 9 DECORATIVE CROSSWALKS
- 10 DECORATIVE STREETLIGHTS
- 11 HISTORIC SIGNAGE/PUBLIC ART
- 12 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE
- 13 SHARED BIKE LANE
- 14 BIKE SHARE STATION
- 15 THA GYM/ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
- 16 JUNIOR 1
- 17 TURNER POINTE









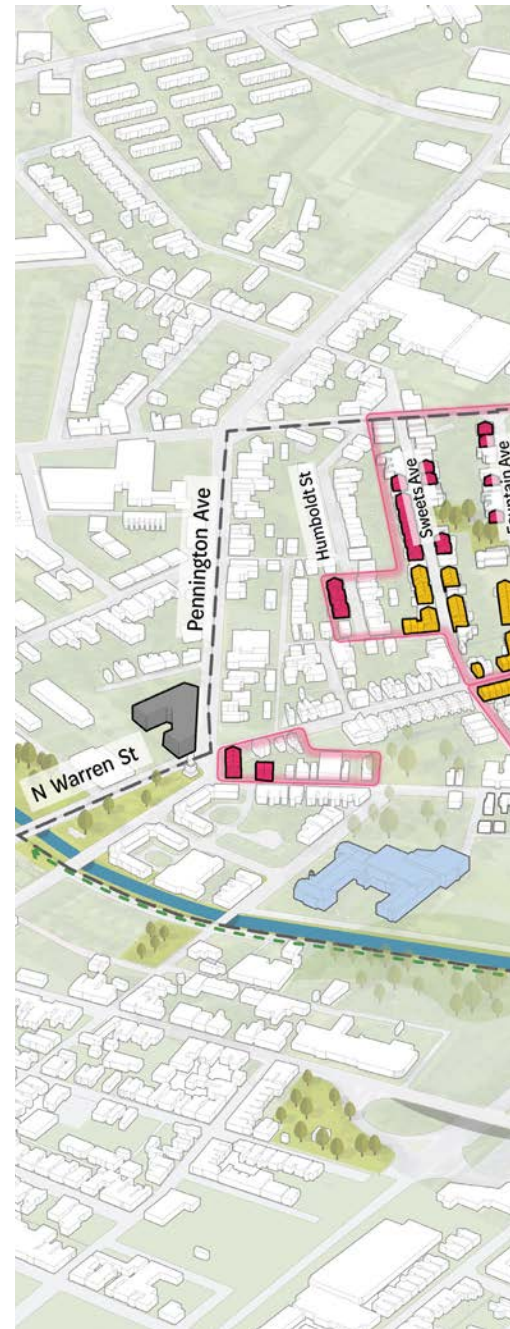


### ANTICIPATED PHASING

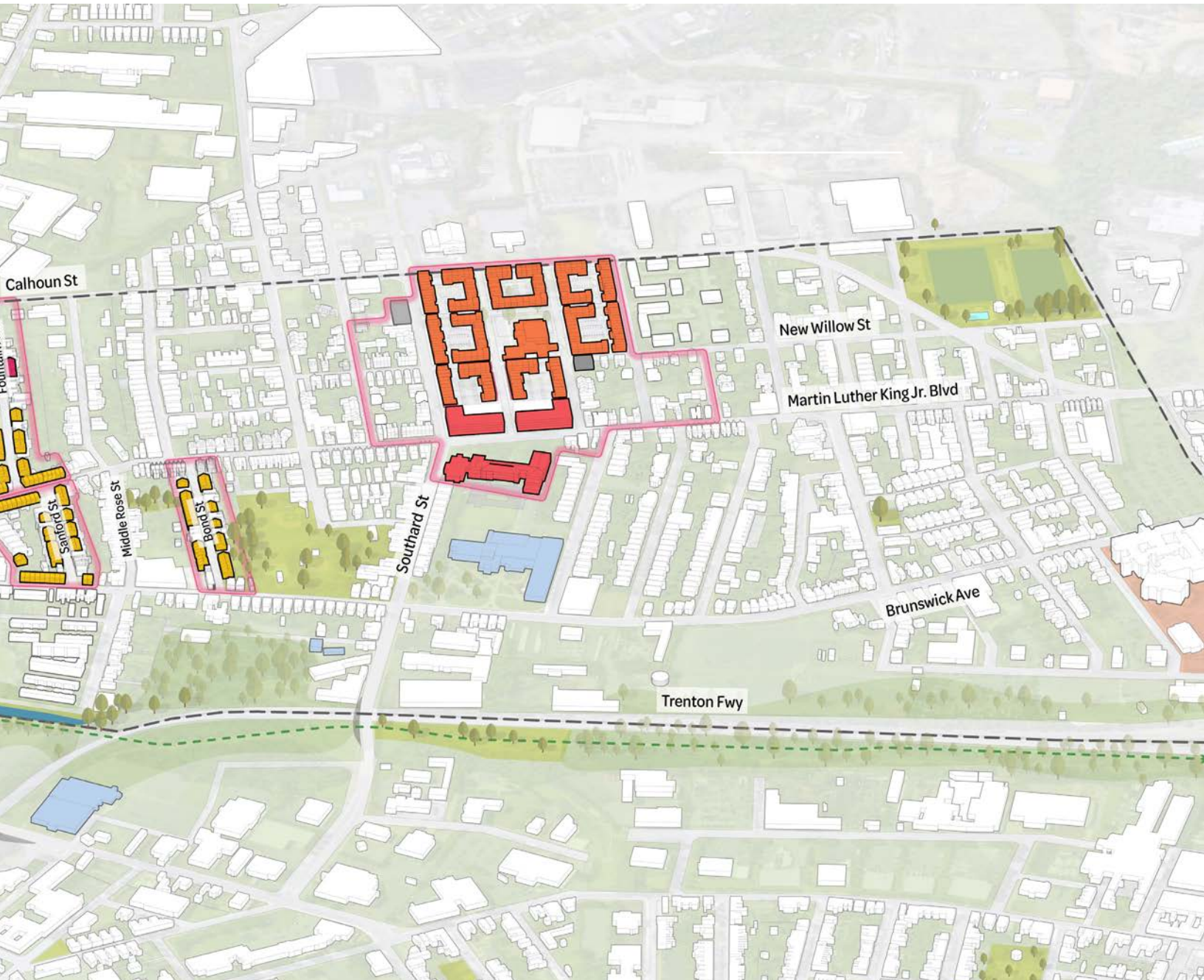
As noted above, the Housing Plan is currently anticipated to involve four phases. The first phase will focus on the Donnelly Homes site along MLK Boulevard with two multi-family buildings in addition to the adaptive reuse of the former Junior 1 School. The second and third phases will focus off-site and fill in vacancies in the neighborhood with new rental units clustered around the Sweets-Fountain Park, and Sanford Street and Bond Street south of MLK Boulevard. The final phase will complete redevelopment of the Donnelly Homes site.

Phase & Unit Summary						
Phase	Phase Detail	Tax Credit	R U	Non RU	Un-restricted	Total Units
P I	Junior 1 & Multi-Family	4% Tax Credit	107	11	12	130
P II	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	9% Tax Credit	50	12	8	70
P III	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	9% Tax Credit	50	12	8	70
P IV	On-Site Townhomes	4% Tax Credit	169	65	26	260
<b>Total</b>			<b>376</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>530</b>









Income Summary by Phase				
Phase	Phase Detail	Affordable 30%-60%	"Workforce" 60%-80%	Unrestricted (Market)
P I	Junior 1 & Multi-Family	80%	10%	10%
P II	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	80%	10%	10%
P III	Humboldt-Sweets/Canal Banks	80%	10%	10%
P IV	On-Site Townhomes	80%	10%	10%



^ **FIGURE 31. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING PLAN ANTICIPATED PHASING**



**LEGEND**

-  CHOICE NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY
-  HOUSING FOCUS AREA
-  SCHOOLS
-  OPPORTUNITY SITES
-  PHASE I
-  PHASES II & III
-  PHASE IV
-  HOMEOWNERSHIP



## RESIDENT RELOCATION

The Housing Plan calls for the demolition of all the existing 376 units at Donnelly Homes. THA plans to replace every public housing unit, one for one. The replacement units will be developed back on-site and off-site in the surrounding community. Every resident will be offered the right to return to a newly developed unit.

The new units will be built in four phases. The THA team will have dedicated relocation staff that will work with Donnelly families both collectively and individually so that an overall Relocation Plan is finalized with maximum resident involvement and that each individual household has a plan that fully meets its needs. The relocation staff will fully apprise each household of all its replacement housing options and benefits so that informed choices can be made.

### RESIDENT TRACKING

The THA will have a tracking system for the residents at Donnelly. The system will be used to both ensure all households are informed of the construction schedule of the replacement housing, the tracking of any and all temporary moves. It will also allow for follow up on referrals made for a variety of supportive and mobility counseling services that will be developed and made available to the residents. This tracking will ensure the seamless re-occupancy of the newly developed community.

### RELOCATION SUPPORTIVE SERVICE PLAN

Working with the residents and local community organizations and service providers, the THA will develop a comprehensive and coordinated Relocation Supportive Service Plan. Counseling and other support services will be offered during the initial engagement on relocation, through any temporary moves and into the re-occupancy of

new permanent relocation units. A full household assessment will be made and all relocation options and benefits will be explained, discussed and reviewed as to temporary and permanent relocation. Relocation staff will be available to provide support and assistance directly throughout the process and referrals to agencies in the community will be made when appropriate. The relocation staff, contractors and development partners will coordinate re-occupancy schedules with the residents.

To assist in the location of housing, THA will identify each household's needs, which will include such things as accessibility, transportation, etc. Options will be made available to each household based on the household needs, not just the permanent move but for a temporary move, if appropriate.

The THA does not have a Section 8 Voucher program of its own but will partner with another Authority to be the contract administrator for the Section 8 Tenant Protection Vouchers (TPV) that will be made available. TPVs will allow residents to relocate to market rate units in the community or other parts of the City if that is the desire of the resident. The resident will have the option of using the TPV for a temporary or a permanent relocation option. All residents choosing Section 8 will receive a full briefing, detailing all aspects of the program from the Section 8 Contract administrator. This briefing will include how to locate housing, including in other high opportunity areas, and how voucher portability works, and fair housing laws and regulations will also be reviewed.

**Phase I** - Residents who live in the four walk up buildings along Route 206, between Southard Street and Beakes Street will be relocated. These residents will be relocated in the following ways: (1) Relocated to vacancies within the site; (2) Relocated to vacancies at other THA properties; (3) Receive a voucher to move to a privately owned property.

**Phase II** - Phase II will be built off-site. No residents need to be relocated for the construction of these units.

**Phase III** - Phase III will be built off-site. No residents need to be relocated for the construction of these units.

**Phase I** - Phase I and Phase II units become available for move in. Residents who were relocated for the construction of Phase I will be have the opportunity to move into newly built units in Phase I and Phase II.

**Phase IV** - Relocate residents on Donnelly Homes to any additional vacant replacement units available in Phase I and Phase II.

**Phase IV** - Phase IV demolition and relocation. Residents will be relocated in the following ways (1) relocated to vacancies at other THA properties; (2) Receive a voucher to move to a privately owned; (3) Relocated to available replacement units on Phase I and Phase II.

**Phase III** - As Phase III units become available some residents who relocated from Donnelly can choose to move to replacement units on Phase III.

**Phase IV** - As Phase IV units become available residents who relocated from Donnelly can choose to return on-site to replacement units built on Donnelly.

## PRE-DEVELOPMENT DUE DILIGENCE

Phase 1 Environment Assessments have been conducted for the Donnelly Homes site. THA has also contacted the State Historic Preservation Office to inform the office that it is developing a plan for the redevelopment of Donnelly Homes.



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**06 /**

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**A NEW  
STORY:  
PEOPLE**





# 06/ A NEW STORY: PEOPLE

The people of Donnelly Homes, North Trenton, and the Battle Monument neighborhoods are what make the neighborhood and homes come to life, and they are a vibrant, proud, and vocal group. Talking with the people of this neighborhood reveals a tightly knit community of new and long-term residents dedicated to improving their homes and lives, and to making those improvements happen.

In particular, the People Plan focuses on three areas—education, employment, and health—recognized as the key factors necessary to push and pull this neighborhood forward. Combining information gathered from the needs assessment survey of Donnelly Homes residents, Task Force meetings, and conversations with residents and neighbors during engagement activities, the most pressing and potentially transformative goals and strategies are outlined below.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES:



LIVE HEALTHY LIVES, MAINTAIN THEIR HEALTH, AND LIVE, WORK, AND PLAY IN HEALTHY, SAFE PLACES IN AND AROUND THEIR HOMES



ENGAGE IN AND VALUE AN EDUCATION THAT PREPARES CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR LIFE-LONG SUCCESS



WORK AND BUILD WEALTH LOCALLY THROUGH FULFILLING EMPLOYMENT WITH LIVABLE WAGES









## EDUCATION

**Donnelly Homes residents recognize that education is essential for the success of people of all ages. With children under the age of 19 in approximately 62 percent of households at Donnelly Homes, residents were passionate about finding ways to improve educational opportunities and outcomes for their families. Only 63 percent of residents feel their children receive a high-quality education at school, and only 58 percent of residents believe that school is preparing their children to meet their expectations. Although they recognize the limitations that their current schooling opportunities provide for their families, they are committed to finding ways to improve and further these opportunities.**

Early childhood education and access to childcare were identified as key areas of concern for residents. Childcare is too expensive for many, and almost all the residents know of someone who has opted to stay home with a child instead of work due to childcare costs. Childcare is also not perceived as readily available in the neighborhood, creating a vicious circle that prevents parents who might want to work and advance their careers from entering the job market.

A common refrain from residents has also been about parent engagement: successful kids have parents who are engaged with their children's education, but many parents lack the resources, background, or education to support their children

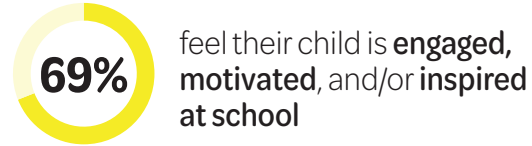
effectively. There is a great need for programs to prepare and support adults to be able to help their children succeed in school, and to communicate the importance of attending and completing their primary and secondary education. Parents and residents also emphasized the importance of having the schools be an essential actor, anchor, and resource in the neighborhood. The Choice neighborhood has two public schools—MLK Elementary and Rivera Community Middle School—which serve many Donnelly Homes and area children. However, the schools are seen as an untapped opportunity to provide community spaces and activities, as well as consistent after-school programming.

Additional concerns were raised around the safety of schools, both inside the schools and going to and from school. The perception of the schools is that they are unsafe, either internally due to bullying and gang activity, or from external sources such as lockdowns and unsubstantiated bomb threats. As a consequence, and related to the health concerns expressed above, nearly all students are witnesses or survivors of violence and have dramatic mental health needs that prevent them from succeeding in school and being college- or career-ready, let alone graduating. The schools are seen as great potential resources, and the education they could provide is consistently seen as a potential asset of the Choice neighborhood and the city as a whole.

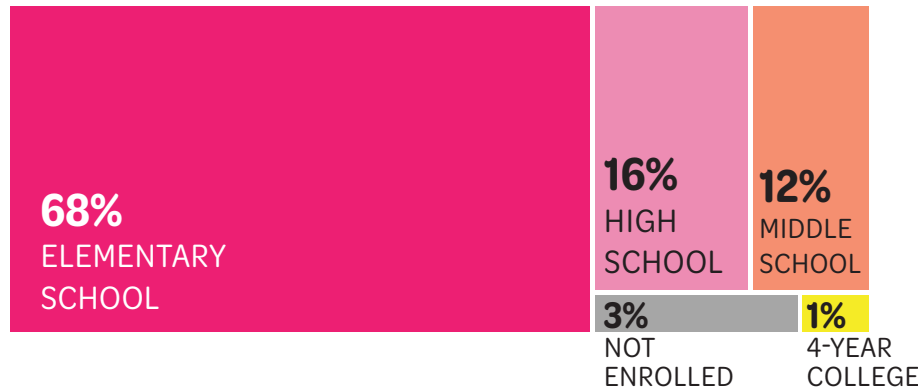
## GUIDING VISION

**EDUCATION VISION: ENGAGE IN AND VALUE AN EDUCATION THAT PREPARES CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FOR LIFE-LONG SUCCESS.**

## Quality of Education:



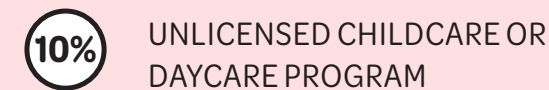
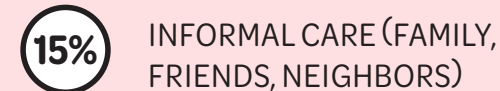
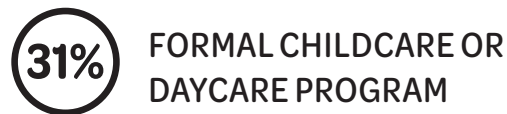
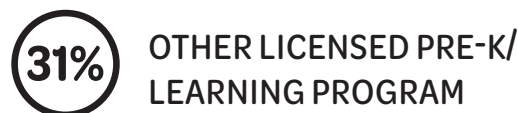
## School enrollment for children aged 5-19



## Is school preparing children to meet their expectations?



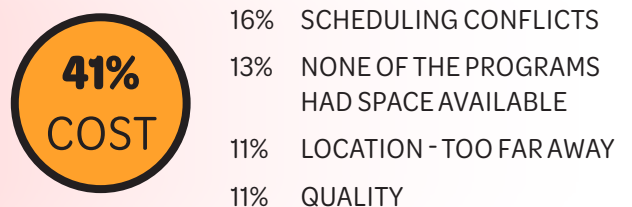
## Head Start / Early Childhood Learning Program Enrollment:



## What additional services would help children do well in school?

- SUMMER PROGRAMS
- HOMEWORK CLUB ON-SITE AT DONNELLY HOMES
- INDIVIDUAL TUTORING
- ADDITIONAL AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING
- BEHAVIORAL COUNSELING

## Reasons why children do not attend an early childhood learning program?



SOURCE: DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY



## EDUCATION

**GOAL 1:** INCREASE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Multiple factors impact whether students are able to succeed in school, and many of those factors exist outside the school setting. Surrounding students with a robust network of support is essential to their success, and residents recognize the necessity of investing in youth support networks so their children can thrive.



SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON

Residents described the deep need to address the traumas that many of their children witness or directly experience if they are to thrive in school. The lasting impact of these traumas, particularly on youth, has been shown to curtail future life opportunities, as described by the Adverse Childhood Experiences framework, and to depress academic performance. Providing more expansive resources and opportunities for youth to receive mental health support will allow them to develop processing and coping strategies and in turn, allow them to focus on their academics.

Schools within the neighborhood—Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School and Rivera Community Middle School—are seen as underutilized assets of the community, both in terms of buildings and programming. Parents, students, and alumni talked about how important the schools are to the neighborhood, and how they would like to see more interaction between residents, school administrators, teachers, students, and community organizations. Increasing engagement and interaction among all stakeholders will increase communication, trust, and performance at schools.

- A.** Provide ACEs training to organizations, community members, school staff, and agencies providing services in the neighborhood.
  - » Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are traumatic experiences that prevent youth from thriving and succeeding in school, career, and personal life. Examples include homelessness, domestic or community violence, death of a loved one, imprisonment of a parent or guardian, and drug and alcohol use. Training and educating service providers to be aware

of the impact these experiences have on students, and to provide concrete strategies to support students with multiple ACEs, will provide a more supportive and understanding academic environment, and reduce unnecessary disciplining of youth. The Smith Family Foundation has been providing these trainings to agencies already, and plans to train over 100 individuals annually and host at least 2 trainings annually at Donnelly Homes.

- B.** Expand Trenton Public Schools' Parent Connect program and host parent liaisons at regular community events.
- » Grandparents, parents, guardians, and elders all shared how important education is for their loved ones, but they also recognized that ensuring youth are engaged, active, and focused is difficult in the 21st century, particularly with the amount of screens and devices available, and especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. A key factor mentioned was the role of parents and guardians in youth education, and the concern that some parents and guardians may not know how to best support their students. To address this, Trenton Public Schools started Parent Connect, a series of workshops and trainings for parents highlighting resources and strategies for parents to use to support their youth, to encourage them to attend and participate at school, and to connect with services when they need them. Trenton Public Schools will be expanding the programming and support provided by Parent Connect and help parents and guardians ensure their young students can succeed at school by hosting at least 2 Parent Connect sessions at Donnelly homes with at least 20 families participating in these or other Parent Connect activities.



**GOOD IDEA!**



SOURCE: TRENTONK12.ORG



## PARENT CONNECT

Parent Connect is a valuable online tool for parents and guardians to get involved in their children's education, and find school and community resources. Through Every Day Matters, the new Parent Connect site, families can keep up to date with children's attendance, grades, school notifications, etc. They can also find different videos on how to strengthen the relationship between school and home, how to support students during online learning, mental health support, how to establish routines for a healthy environment at home, and also connect with the parent liaison at every school. Parent liaisons facilitate parent-school communication and help navigate the different resources available.



To learn more, go to

<https://www.trentonk12.org/Connect.aspx>



**C.** Expand tutoring and homework support at Donnelly Homes.

- » The Trenton Housing Authority currently provides an after school program that provides tutoring services to approximately 30 students consistently. Through a proposed partnership with Bonner Scholar volunteers from The College of New Jersey who will provide tutoring services and other after school programming, an additional 15 students will be provided academic support, ensuring that all students who need tutoring and academic support outside of school are able to receive it.

**D.** Increase access to and use of mental health resources.

- » Many families noted the need for additional mental health services provided for school-aged children. While directly supportive of academic success, strategies to support this objective are outlined in Neighborhood Plan Goal 6: Public Safety. Improvements to public safety are a precursor to increasing students’ ability to perform in K-12 schools.

	MLK Elementary		Rivera Middle		9 <sup>th</sup> Grade		High School	
	School %	State%	School %	State%	School %	State%	School %	State%
<b>2018-2019 School Year</b>	KG: 39%	13%	6 <sup>th</sup> : 25%	8%	39%	11%	10 <sup>th</sup> : 33%	12%
	1 <sup>st</sup> : 32%	10%	7 <sup>th</sup> : 16%	9%			11 <sup>th</sup> : 40%	14%
	2 <sup>nd</sup> : 26%	8%	8 <sup>th</sup> : 23%	10%			12 <sup>th</sup> : 44%	19%
	3 <sup>rd</sup> : 24%	7%						
	4 <sup>th</sup> : 21%	7%						
	5 <sup>th</sup> : 43%	8%						

^ **FIGURE 32. CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM 2018-2019**

## EDUCATION

## GOAL 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO AND AWARENESS OF AFFORDABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DAYCARE.

**Early childhood education and childcare were repeatedly named as obstacles to families, particularly single mothers. This prevents parents from pursuing their professional goals, limits structured educational activity for youth, and often reduces the beneficial social interaction that youth experience in educational settings. Ensuring that families have access to affordable early childhood education is essential to strengthening the neighborhood and creating successful futures for young children.**

- A. Develop an Early Head Start facility at Donnelly Homes.
  - » Residents and neighbors frequently said that they did not feel comfortable going outside their immediate neighborhood for childcare. Childrens Home Society, the local provider of Early Head Start and Head Start services in Trenton recognizes the need for a facility in the North Trenton/ Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood. It has the resources to operate an Early Head Start location out of a redeveloped Donnelly Homes to serve at least 24 infants and toddlers. Establishing a childcare center will ease the burden on parents for locating reliable and safe childcare, and provide additional employment opportunities for residents.
- B. Partner with Childcare Connect to provide referral and matchmaking services for those seeking childcare.
  - » Residents also said they did not know about available childcare options, did not know if they could afford it, and were not sure what options were available. Childcare Connect, the county-based childcare referral and recommendation office, has agreed to provide focused direct referral and connection services to Donnelly Homes and neighborhood residents. This includes regular on-site presentations and consultation hours, and providing updated information on childcare options and financial support for childcare to THA staff and residents.



SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON



EDUCATION

# GOAL 3: INCREASE NUMBER OF CAREER- OR COLLEGE-READY GRADUATES

Over and over, we heard that youth who graduated from local schools did not feel ready for a job or college, either because they did not know what was out there or they were not provided the skills or direction to find a meaningful path. Providing examples of what can be next for youth and connecting them with key organizations and agencies to help them achieve what is next, will help inspire and prepare youth for jobs and continued education.

**GOOD IDEA!**



## ISLES FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS (IFS)

Some things are not taught in school like managing a budget. Isles IFS programs offer financial coaching to assist individuals in learning how to better manage money, make and keep a budget, and save for their family's future. Through the program, Isles can help individuals pay off high-cost debt through credit builder loans.



To learn more, go to <https://isles.org/our-approach/build-wealth/isles-financial-solutions/>

**A.** With local colleges and employers, introduce youth and residents to potential educational career paths and feature local 'success stories' that provide positive, relatable examples.

» A common theme from youth participants and from Trentonians overall was that they do not know, or do not see, what people like them can achieve; they do not have many role models or guides to learn from and act like. Meeting with local alumni and touring local colleges, including The College of New Jersey, Princeton University, Rider University, and Mercer County Community College, will show neighborhood residents what is possible, and encourage them to explore different options. Providing shadowing opportunities with local employers, such as the City, County, State, and healthcare providers, will give a taste of what jobs and careers are available in the community and may open up youth perspectives to what success can look like. The College of New Jersey and Mercer County Community College will highlight Donnelly Homes and neighborhood alumni and each institution's respective credentialing and career pathways through information fairs and panels at Donnelly Homes.

**B.** Provide Reengagement Center services to Donnelly Homes and neighborhood residents.

» Approximately one quarter of Donnelly Homes residents do not have a high school diploma or the equivalent, and

more than a third of survey respondents said they would like to see a high school equivalence program available to them. Through its Trenton Reengagement Center, and working with THA resident services staff, Isles will connect with and provide support services to at least 20 individuals annually at Donnelly Homes and in the neighborhood to ensure they enroll in an high school equivalence or career training program. The Reengagement Center provides individualized case management and goal identification, and ensures that youth and their families follow through on their plans to achieve their educational and career goals.

- C.** Provide financial skills education, including credit building/repair, first-time homebuyer workshops, and long-term planning.
- » Forty-six percent of residents would like to work towards buying their own home, and many residents are in need of credit repair or credit building support. Isles Financial Solutions provides free financial capabilities training, which includes budgeting, credit repair, managing money, and goal setting, as well as first-time homebuyer workshops and housing counseling. Isles currently provides this service as part of THA's Family Self-Sufficiency Program to approximately 25 residents annually, and Isles will work reach at least 40 families annually and ensure that at least 80% of participants achieve their goals. Regular workshops on-site at Donnelly Homes will empower Donnelly residents to achieve their financial and homeownership goals.



**GOOD IDEA!**



## ISLES YOUTH INSTITUTE (IYI)

IYI engages out-of-school youth ages 16-24 that seek to take control of their own lives and improve their communities. Participants attain a high school equivalency diploma, job training, and life skills, which they use to solve challenges in their own neighborhoods. The IYI mission of "self-reliance through education" is furthered by opportunities for leadership development, financial and health education, service learning, and pathways to higher education. For more information,



To learn more, go to

<https://isles.org/our-approach-educate-and-train-isles-youth-institute/>



## EMPLOYMENT

Residents of this neighborhood are challenged when seeking out meaningful and livable employment opportunities. Well-paying positions can be difficult to secure for many residents as they lack the required credentials, certifications, or experiences traditionally required for these positions. Many neighborhood residents also have criminal records that may prevent them being offered a position. However, as the state capital and county seat, and with a robust healthcare and education industry, residents need greater support and opportunities to be able to take advantage of the local and regional job market.

Of the 57% of residents who are able to work, more than a quarter of them are unemployed, many of whom see no immediate prospects for work and are not enrolled in school or job training. Only 7% work in the neighborhood, and just over half (55%) work in the city of Trenton. 89% of residents earn below the Trenton median household income (approximately \$30,000), which is less than half of the county median income (approximately \$78,000). Job satisfaction is, not surprisingly, quite low.

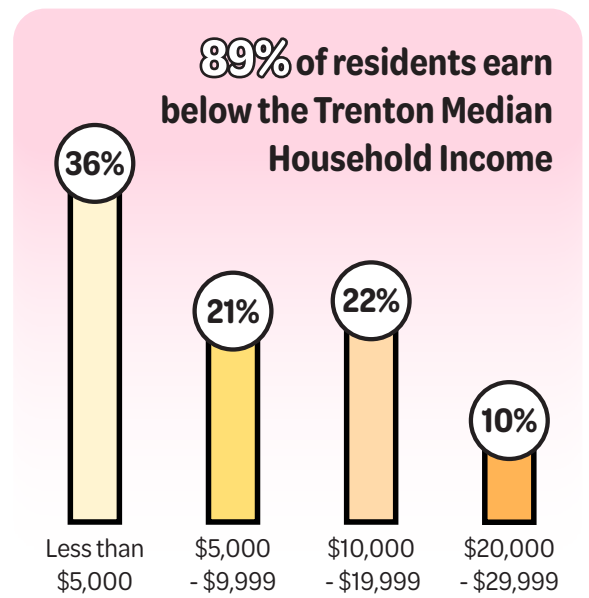
However, residents have been clear about their priorities for improving this situation: support local small business development; provide clear pathways and models for youth and returning residents; and match skills and training with local jobs and employers. These themes repeatedly surfaced in our discussions and surveys, and a clear commitment to the resources and assets present in Donnelly Homes and the neighborhood—mainly, the innovative, entrepreneurial, and proud people who live here—was evident in discussions about moving this community forward.

## GUIDING VISION

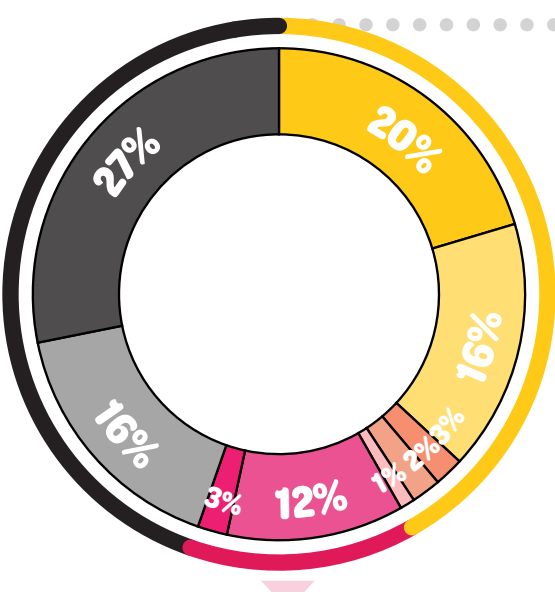
**Work and build wealth locally through fulfilling employment with livable wages.**

## Current Employment Status:

- EMPLOYED, FULL-TIME
- EMPLOYED, PART-TIME
- EMPLOYED, TEMP/SEASONAL
- EMPLOYED, MULTIPLE JOBS
- EMPLOYED, PART-TIME & LOOKING FOR FULL-TIME WORK
- UNEMPLOYED, LOOKING FOR A JOB
- UNEMPLOYED, NOT LOOKING FOR A JOB
- RETIRED
- UNABLE TO WORK



SOURCE: DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY



**43% OF RESIDENTS ARE RETIRED OR UNABLE TO WORK**

**42% OF RESIDENTS ARE EMPLOYED, AT LEAST PART TIME**

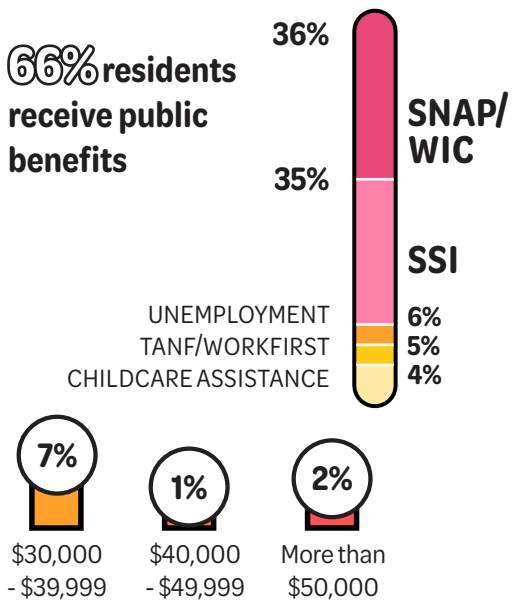
of those employed, **only 13%** are employed by the State of New Jersey **and 13%** are contract employees for the State

**Overall job satisfaction is relatively low.**

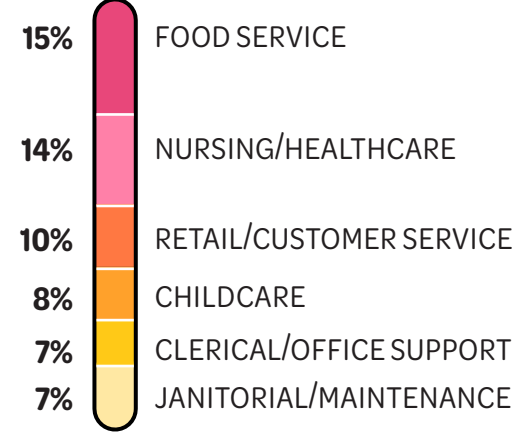


- 36%** ARE **SATISFIED** WITH THEIR JOBS
- 39%** FIND THEIR WORK **FULLFILLING**
- 29%** HAVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR **ADVANCEMENT & PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**
- 21%** HAVE JOBS THAT **MEET THEIR FINANCIAL NEEDS**

**15% OF RESIDENTS ARE UNEMPLOYED**



**In what sector do you work?**





## EMPLOYMENT

**GOAL 1: PROVIDE TRAINING FOR LOCALLY- AND REGIONALLY-IN-DEMAND JOBS.**

Although the Trenton and Mercer County job market is relatively strong, neighborhood residents are often overlooked for open positions due to limited training or education. As the state capital and the county seat, and with a strong healthcare industry, well-paying jobs exist in the community, but are inaccessible to residents. 64% of residents also shared that they are unsatisfied with their current job, and continuing education for certification was listed as a top priority among survey respondents. Connecting local employers with local residents will require investment in residents in the neighborhood, and will lead to a more livable, economically thriving community.



SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON

- A.** Build training and job pipeline in healthcare and public administration with educational institutions, employers, and public agencies.
  - » Local colleges and non-profits provide vocational training in a variety of fields, but are often limited to entry level skills and professions or have associated costs that create barriers. The Trenton Neighborhood Initiative, with support from Capital Health, plans to provide training for in-demand healthcare-related jobs to at least 30 neighborhood residents a year, feeding a pipeline to employment in the Capital Health hospital system. In addition, TNI aims to provide scholarships to neighborhood residents to support their post-secondary education goals, giving a leg up to Donnelly and North Trenton residents in earning credentials for good-paying jobs. Partnering with these providers and employers to develop affordable and accessible certifications and programs to better prepare residents for local jobs will lead to greater career options for residents, with better pay.
- B.** Increase number of Donnelly Homes residents participating in OneStop and MCCC trainings and certifications.
  - » The Mercer County OneStop Career Center and Mercer County Community College offer a wide range of certifications in job skills including computer skills, customer service, culinary arts, and certified nurse aides, all of which are in demand locally. MCCC and OneStop will host information sessions at Donnelly Homes and in the neighborhood, enabling more residents to achieve their career goals locally.

## EMPLOYMENT

**GOAL 2: SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES.**

The local economy of the North Trenton / Battle Monument neighborhood is dominated by small businesses. The backbone of economic development in the neighborhood, these small businesses would benefit from additional technical and financial assistance to increase their revenue and to attract additional customers. In addition, many young residents have creative ideas for new businesses that they would like to start, but they too, need additional support to make their dreams a reality. Investing in existing businesses, and creating an environment supportive of start-up businesses, will lay the groundwork for a thriving and vibrant commercial corridor in the neighborhood.

**A. Partnering with the Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce and Smith Family Foundation, provide business planning and implementation workshops and trainings.**

- » Many residents have the passion and the ideas to start a business or a non-profit to contribute to the revitalization of their neighborhood, and local small business owners and entrepreneurs are eager to be able to get their businesses to the next level. However, both potential and existing businesses need technical assistance and guidance to develop business plans or expand their customer base and revenue. To support these efforts, the Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce will provide at least 2 annual workshops on the basics of how to start a business or non-profit and the steps needed to make their dreams a reality. The Smith Family Foundation will be developing a business incubator program, and they will pilot their programming at Donnelly Homes and in the neighborhood. Working with local business owners and potential business owners to strengthen and develop business plans, models, and budgets will support businesses new and old in the neighborhood's commercial corridors.

**B. Highlight and promote neighborhood businesses**

- » The businesses of the neighborhood have limited marketing and outreach, and would benefit from additional recognition and promotion in the neighborhood and the city at large. The City of Trenton's Division

of Economic Development has agreed to highlight and promote neighborhood restaurants through its "Trenton Eat Local Club" program throughout 2022, hosting an annual eat local event at a neighborhood restaurant. In addition, the Division of Economic Development will highlight neighborhood businesses through its "Shop Trenton" program, promoting local businesses through its social media outlets and newsletters.

**C. Connect small businesses with improvement incentive programs.**

- » Many businesses in the neighborhood need infrastructure improvements, but most businessowners are unaware of programs available to them. The City of Trenton's Division of Economic Development has committed to conduct focused outreach to neighborhood small businessowners to introduce them to various incentive programs that cover business improvement costs, and to work with them to apply for funding. The Division of Economic Development will work with at least 10 business owners annually.



## EMPLOYMENT

**GOAL 3: EXPAND RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT TRAINING, PLACEMENT, AND SUPPORT.**

Individuals returning from the criminal justice system face unique challenges in securing and retaining employment. From discrimination in applications to passing background checks, returning citizens need support and employment to reduce their chances of reentering the criminal justice system.

**A.** Host expungement workshops and assistance sessions

- » Expunging a criminal record, which removes or seals a criminal record, allows returning citizens more options for career paths and removes a major obstacle to employment. A local advocate has agreed to host two workshops annually at Donnelly Homes and in the neighborhood, making this essential service closer and more convenient for neighbors with criminal records and open up additional doors to employment. The workshops will be scheduled along with other recreational and social activities to reduce the stigma of attending.

**B.** Provide focused supportive services for formerly incarcerated individuals through the Trenton Free Public Library's Fresh Start program.

- » Job placement and job readiness training for individuals with records is essential to allow them achieve self-sufficiency. The Trenton Free Public Library, in partnership with the New Jersey State Library, operates the Fresh Start program, which provides personalized support and employment referrals for previously incarcerated individuals. Fresh Start will provide services to at least 25 neighborhood residents, and will host at least 2 information sessions and workshops at Donnelly Homes.

ACCUREX







SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON

## HEALTH

Health is a priority for Donnelly Homes and North Trenton/Battle Monument residents. Ninety-two percent of residents have health insurance, 90 percent of residents have had an annual wellness check-up, and 84 percent of Donnelly Homes residents have had a dental cleaning in the past year. Donnelly Homes residents take their health seriously and are committed to maintaining and improving their individual and community health.

However, residents perceive multiple barriers to maintaining and improving their health. They worry that not enough places are available for recreation and exercise, and that public safety concerns prevent them from utilizing what outdoor and public resources are available to them. They want

greater access to affordable, healthy food, and they want younger generations to learn and practice the skills of healthy food selection and preparation. They want access to information and resources to be able to make informed and supported decisions regarding starting a family, and they want to make sure the youngest in the families receive all the medical attention they may need.

Finally, many residents expressed concern about the confusing nature of health insurance, and difficulty in knowing what services were available to them, what was covered, what providers would be covered by their insurance, and how to enroll in appropriate insurance plans. A real need exists for support in navigating and understanding health insurance, coverage, and covered care.

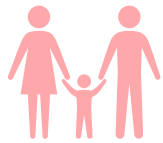
## GUIDING VISION

**Residents of the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood live healthy lives, maintain their health, and live, work, and play in healthy, safe places in and around their homes**

## “Do you have health insurance?”



**92%** have health insurance **FOR THEMSELVES**



**87% OF ALL ADULTS** in households have health insurance

**91%** of households **WITH CHILDREN** have health insurance

## What are the main reason members of your household don't have health insurance?



**#1 COST**



**#2 DIFFICULTY BEING APPROVED**



**#3 UNSURE OF HOW TO GET INSURANCE**



### Things that are good:

- Availability and affordability of high-quality fresh fruits and vegetables
- Several affordable healthcare facilities nearby



### Things that can improve:

- Places to exercise (gyms, parks, playgrounds)
- Walking in the neighborhood
- Safety
- Cleanliness
- Air quality
- Green spaces and trees throughout

## How could your access to quality healthcare be improved?

# OF RESPONDENTS



**#1 LOCATING MORE HEALTHCARE FACILITIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

**#2 EMPLOYING STAFF AT HEALTHCARE FACILITIES WHO UNDERSTAND ME, ARE CULTURALLY COMPETENT AND SENSITIVE TO MY CIRCUMSTANCES/HISTORY**

**#3 PROVIDING A SHUTTLE TO MAJOR MEDICAL FACILITIES**

**#4 EXTENDING THE HOURS OF HEALTH-RELATED FACILITIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**

PROVIDING MORE SERVICES

OTHER

SOURCE: UNLESS NOTED, DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY



## HEALTH

**GOAL 1:****ENSURE RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO FAMILY AND CHILDRENS' HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.**

**Although health insurance coverage is relatively high (approximately 92%), understanding insurance coverage and accessing available medical services remain a challenge for residents. In particular, residents were not aware of, and not taking advantage of, locally available reproductive health services or maternal and newborn health resources. Increasing support for residents to use local health care resources, and to understand and use health insurance coverage, is necessary for improving the preventative healthcare of residents and neighbors.**

- A.** Integrate a designated space at Donnelly Homes and in the Junior 1 School building where a medical professional can provide health and wellness services within easy access of residents.
  - » This strategy aims to bring medical service to residents to help remove barriers posed by trying to find a healthcare professional or to find transportation by locating a facility on site that can also provide referrals to additional, more specialized services. The designated space will provide privacy and ready access to medical check-ups, preventive care services, and health and nutrition education, as described in Health Goal 2A.
- B.** Increase access to appropriate and accurate reproductive health information and services.
  - » Reliable and factual information about reproductive health, including birth control and sexually transmitted diseases, is not consistently available in schools or the community, reducing the ability for young adults to make informed decisions about when they may want to become parents. Henry J Austin Health Center provides mobile health services including vaccinations, consultations, HIV/STD testing, and will be starting mobile Pap smear tests in 2022. The Center also provides reproductive health information, contraception, and health education regarding starting a family, and their services are available to insured and uninsured individuals.
    - » Henry J Austin will conduct at least two annual mobile visits to Donnelly Homes starting in 2022, and will provide at least two pregnancy and parenting sessions as part of already scheduled events.
- C.** Provide wrap-around services to expecting and new parents and their children.
  - » Maternal health and newborn health are priorities for Donnelly residents, but mothers and infants have not had ready access to essential services. Trenton Health Team will be kicking off a new Family Connects initiative, a universal nurse home visiting program to families who live in Mercer County and whose children are delivered at Capital Health hospitals, where most newborns in the region are born. This service will provide in-home visits to new mothers to provide holistic assessments of the family's needs, and connect them with appropriate resources.
  - » Trenton Neighborhood Initiative will provide additional wrap-around services to at least 250 Family Connects families from the North Trenton and Battle Monument neighborhoods over five years..
  - » In addition, Greater Mount Zion AME Church and Salvation & Social Justice, in alignment with the First Lady of New Jersey's Nurture NJ black maternal health initiative, will offer multifaceted maternal health services at their campus in the Choice neighborhood. These services will



SOURCE: GREATER TRENTON

include group-based midwifery, maternal health education, Circles of Support for expecting families, and referrals to doulas, midwives, and other health professionals of color.

- » Greater Mount Zion seeks to serve at least 30 Donnelly Homes and neighborhood residents annually through these programs.

**D.** Host two annual health fairs with insurance navigators to support residents during and after open enrollment

- » Residents expressed feeling overwhelmed by insurance options and coverage, not understanding how insurance works, what is covered, and how to ensure costs are covered. Providing two annual health fairs, with NJ-Certified health insurance navigators to support and educate participants will improve understanding

of insurance systems and increase confidence in utilizing insurance and the health system. We aim to have more than 50 participants at each fair, with dozens of vendors and organizational representatives.



HEALTH

**GOAL 2:** INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES.

Residents consistently shared that they wished they had more access to better outdoor active and passive recreational activities. Many residents recalled taking long walks through the neighborhood to other neighborhoods, but safety and infrastructure discourage them from doing that today. Additional recreational assets, in particular the Delaware & Raritan Canal Trail, which is a tremendous regional asset that provides miles of walking and biking trails, are nearby, but are not connected directly or conveniently to Donnelly Homes or the neighborhood.

Similarly, fresh foods and vegetables are available nearby, but residents do not have transportation or easy access to get them. In addition, many families are not familiar with how to prepare food in delicious and nutritious ways, making healthy food choices difficult or daunting. Addressing the joint issues of access to recreational opportunities and healthy fresh food, as well as knowledge and skills on how to prepare that food, will lay a solid foundation for improved health and well-being for Donnelly and neighborhood residents.

**GOOD IDEA!**



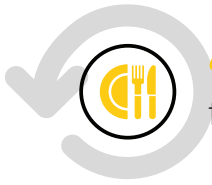
**GREENWOOD AVENUE FARMERS MARKET**

Greenwood Avenue Farmers Market is an invaluable resource for Trenton residents, providing healthy, farm fresh, and culturally-appropriate food while building a sense of community. The Market helps families and individuals stretch their dollars by participating in government assistance programs and nurtures local farmers, growers, and entrepreneurs. Run by the Capital Area YMCA and located behind the Trenton Transit Center, the Market also hosts health screenings, nutrition education, and fun-filled fitness activities.

- A. Provide healthy eating, cooking, and nutrition classes on site.
  - » Isles currently provide healthy cooking workshops and classes for students groups and in schools. In the coming years, Isles will annually host at least 4 healthy eating, cooking, or nutrition workshops at Donnelly Homes, integrating local and fresh food from the community garden (see below) into culturally appropriate recipes. We will also have a nutritionist available for consultation during workshops. Hosting a healthy cooking series and having a nutritionist with regular consultation hours at Donnelly Homes would provide the skills and knowledge for residents to eat healthier, learn new recipes, develop new friendships, and expand their diet.
- B. Expand community garden at Donnelly Homes with support of Isles.
  - » In 2020, three raised beds were installed at Donnelly Homes at the request of residents and with the support of Isles. In 2022, Isles will expand the size of the fledgling

## WHAT WE HEARD:

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS



**40%** do not have enough food more than once a week

community garden and provide regular educational workshops on site. As part of its Isles Garden Support Network, Isles staff will educate residents and neighbors on effective gardening and harvesting techniques, and help troubleshoot any growing issues that may emerge. As part of the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative, Isles will also identify at least two additional neighborhood sites for development of a larger community garden, providing recreational opportunities, community engagement, and healthy food.

- C.** Increase access for Donnelly Homes residents to safe recreation and activities.
- » A common concern raised among parents and elders was the absence of safe, nearby playground equipment and recreational opportunities for Donnelly residents. Although MLK park is nearby, travel to and from MLK is perceived as unsafe, and until planned improvements are made to the park, it is not seen as an attractive play to play or socialize. To address this need in this neighborhood and elsewhere, Isles developed T-Recs—Trenton mobile Recreational unit—which provides portable yard games and recreational programming in underutilized and underserved public spaces. T-Recs will host at least 28 sessions at local parks in the warmer months, and in the gymnasium at Donnelly in the colder months, annually for the next three years, providing safe, supervised, active play for kids and adults alike.



**34%** of residents feel high-quality, fresh fruits are widely available and affordable.



**GOOD IDEA!**



## TUCKER STREET GARDEN AND INCUBATOR

The Tucker Street Garden, run by Isles, is a valuable resource for the community to gain access to fresh food and learn about gardening and environmental stewardship. The half-acre garden near the Battle Monument serves as a demonstration, production, and training site for gardeners of all skill levels. Isles also offers hands-on gardening instruction through its Incubator Garden program. The incubator provides workshops, leadership training, planting space and one-on-one assistance.



To learn more, go to

<https://www.trentonk12.org/Connect.aspx>



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**07/**

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**A NEW  
STORY:  
NEIGHBOR-  
HOOD**









# 07// A NEW STORY: NEIGHBORHOOD

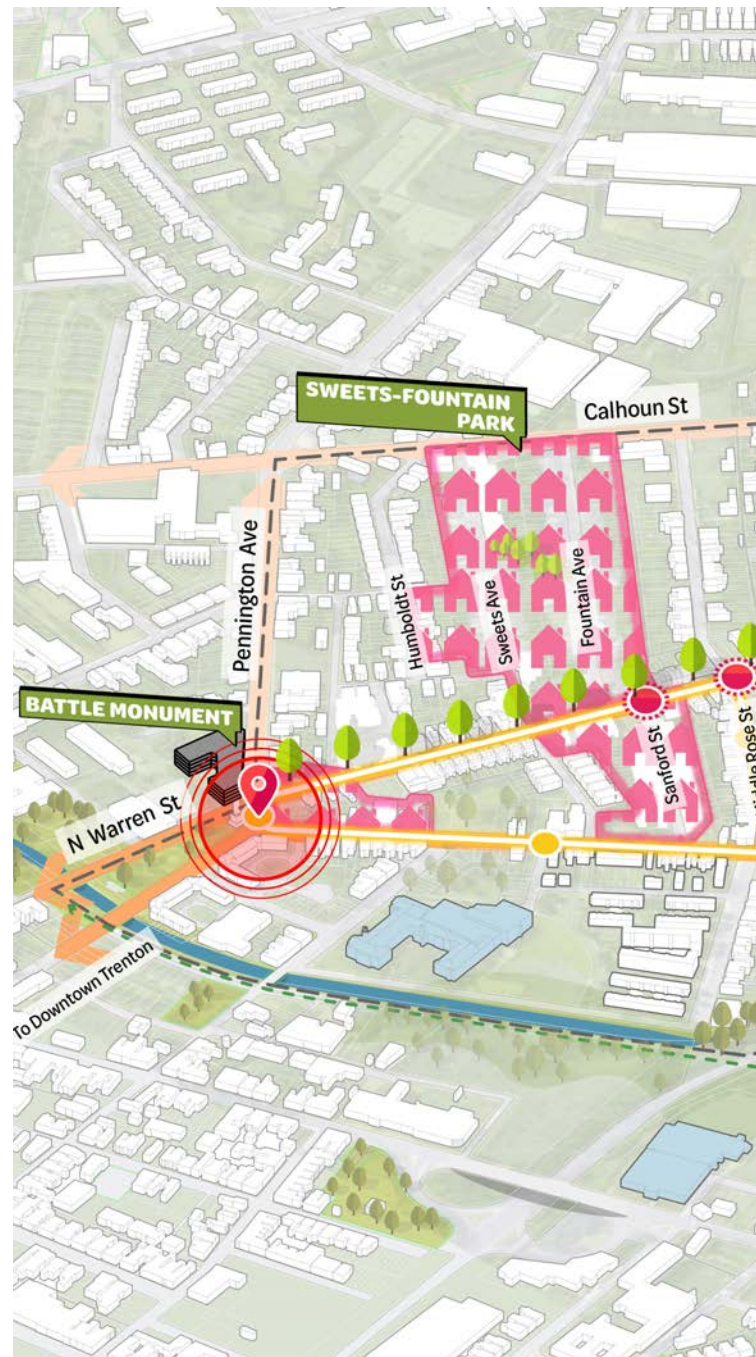
The basic principles of good urban design are centuries old. The North Trenton / Battle Monument Choice neighborhood has all of the building blocks in place that make a community livable and inviting. This includes tree-lined streets organized in a walkable grid, housing of different types and sizes, a mix of uses with schools, a hospital, churches, parks, and a handful of stores, as well as public transportation, and potential employment nearby.

The “neighborhood” part of the plan builds on all of these strengths and aims to turn many of the existing challenges—widespread vacancies, abandoned buildings, and unsafe streets—into opportunities. Thinking about the Neighborhood Plan involves thinking about the glue that holds everything and everyone together. It forms a backbone or framework for a community to blossom.

Because vacancies and disinvestment impact nearly every block in the Choice neighborhood, the focus of this plan is to concentrate revitalization efforts on the blocks immediately surrounding Donnelly Homes and in a few strategic locations so that the impact is more visible and it is clear that change is beginning to occur.

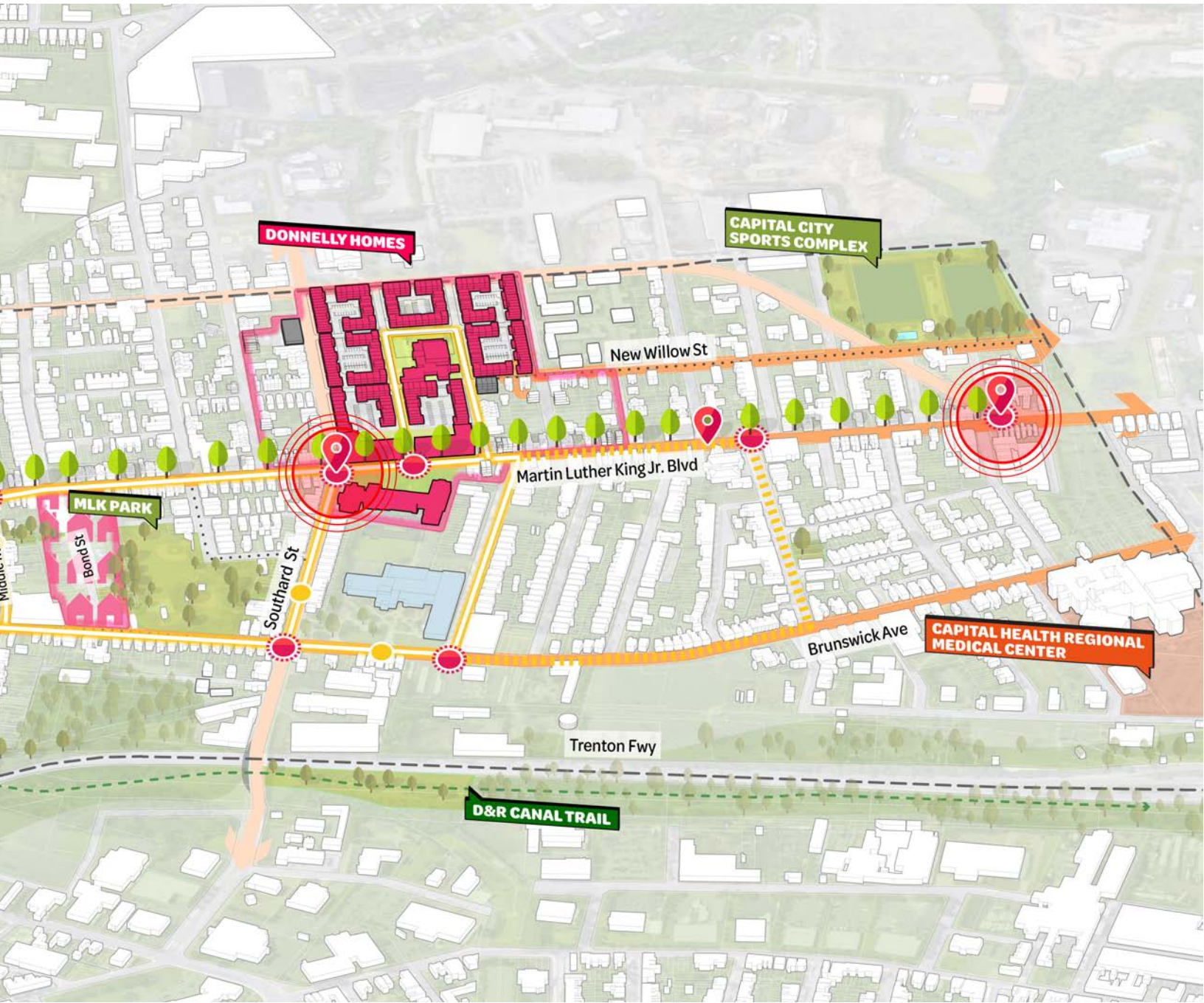
## VISION

MLK Boulevard is a main artery running through the center of the Choice neighborhood into the heart of Downtown Trenton. The location, scale, appearance, and mix of small businesses make it a natural main street, ripe for reinvestment. The significant street frontage of Donnelly Homes along MLK Boulevard offers a timely opportunity to redesign the site’s relationship to the street. Directly across the street is the beautiful former Junior 1 Middle School that frames a prominent corner at MLK Boulevard and Southard Street.



▲ **FIGURE 33. NEIGHBORHOOD VISION**





**LEGEND**

- |  |                             |  |  |
|--|-----------------------------|--|--|
|  | NEIGHBORHOOD GATEWAY        |  | PLACEMAKING/PUBLIC ART                     |
|  | NEIGHBORHOOD INFILL HOUSING |  | INTERSECTION SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS           |
|  | HOUSING FOCUS AREA          |  | INTERSECTION SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS           |
|  | SCHOOLS                     |  | ENHANCED STREETScape FOR BIKES/PEDESTRIANS |
|  |                             |  | OPPORTUNITY SITES                          |



## What stores & services are available within walking distance of your home?

The majority of residents get their basic shopping needs from:



ShopRite (in Ewing)  
Walmart (in Hamilton)  
Capital Plaza

LAUNDROMAT / DRY CLEANERS  
PERSONAL CARE SERVICES  
GROCERY STORES



RESTAURANTS AND CAFES  
PHARMACY



GENERAL STORES  
CLOTHING STORES  
GROCERY STORES

BANKING

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE  
CHILDCARE



## What are the neighborhood's biggest challenges?

77%

CRIME AND SAFETY

46%

LOITERING / PEOPLE HANGING OUT

34%

LITTER IN PUBLIC AREAS

13%

of residents feel this is a great neighborhood or that it is clean

## Missing activities / organizations in the neighborhood:



48% LIBRARY OR READING ROOM



48% CENTRAL GATHERING PLACE



28% COMMUNITY GARDEN / GARDEN PLOTS

40% do not have enough food more than once a week

### because:

- CANNOT AFFORD IT
- DIFFICULT TO GET TO STORE
- TOO BUSY
- FOOD STAMPS RUN OUT
- COVID19

SOURCE: CN DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENT SURVEY

Long vacant, the school is calling out for reuse and new energy to activate this corner and create a safer and more vibrant street life.

Since the Choice neighborhood has many community anchors like MLK Jr. Elementary School, Rivera Middle School, the Capital Health Regional Medical Center, MLK Park, the Capital Sports Complex, and Battle Monument, the neighborhood plan focuses on enhancing connections to these facilities. This includes establishing safe routes to the schools, improved lighting, clear sightlines, cleaning and greening of vacant lots, and infill development to replace missing “teeth” and reduce dark, untended spaces.

The plan builds on pockets of stability including THA’s new Turner Pointe Homes and the Humboldt-Sweets area, roughly bordered by Pennington Avenue, Calhoun Street, MLK Boulevard, and Southard Street. Another area of potential for concentrated investment is a cluster of vacant buildings and lots located near the Battle Monument between MLK Boulevard and Brunswick Avenue extending up to the Junior 1 site. Improvements will strengthen and clarify the identity of the Brunswick Avenue corridor from Battle Monument to Southard Street.

## GUIDING VISION

Donnelly Homes residents would like this neighborhood to be known as a safe, stable, and family-friendly neighborhood.

## SUMMARY OF KEY OPPORTUNITIES

To maximize every available effort and dollar of investment, the Neighborhood Plan focuses on a few key opportunities with goals and strategies that compliment and reinforce one another as well as the Housing and People plan goals. These include:

- **Main Street:** Strengthening, restoring, and concentrating activity and investment along MLK Jr. Boulevard to provide some critical mass of much-needed services and things to do for residents and visitors of all ages.
- **Character and Image:** Building on the rich history, culture, and strong sense of community to distinguish the neighborhood and raise its profile as a welcoming place to live and interesting place to visit.
- **Real Estate:** Reducing blight and vacancies through targeted infill development and cleaning and greening.
- **Infrastructure and Services:** Improving connections to existing assets, services, and amenities so that people can reach them safely at any time of day—including sidewalks, bus routes, and traffic patterns.
- **Healthy Living:** Creating a healthy community with safe spaces to walk, bike, and exercise and easy access to fresh, affordable food and medical services.
- **Public Safety:** Increasing everyone’s safety using a variety of tools including physical design improvements, lighting, traffic calming, community conversations with the police, and violence intervention.



## **GOAL 1:** FOCUS REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON MLK BOULEVARD TO EXEMPLIFY THE LEGACY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SO THAT IT BECOMES A FOCAL POINT OF ACTIVITY FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH NEW BUSINESSES, RESTAURANTS, HOUSING, AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES.

**With an urban framework in place, the Choice neighborhood has tremendous potential to become a more active, walkable, livable community.**

The majority of Donnelly Homes residents travel outside of the neighborhood for their basic shopping needs and repeatedly expressed the desire for more stores and services within walking distance. At the top of the list are restaurants and cafes, a pharmacy, clothing stores, and a bank. These simple services are also important to generate more activity in the neighborhood and to attract visitors and new residents that may be local employees of an anchor institution like Capital Health or the government. Similarly, residents would like to see MLK Boulevard live up to its name and for there to be more things to do and more places to socialize, which in turn can stimulate economic development and further reinvestment.

- A. Transform Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard into a Complete Street that incorporates public art, interpretive signage, history and culture, and green infrastructure, emphasizing MLK Boulevard/Southard Street and MLK Boulevard/Calhoun Street as gateways.
  - » The City recently released a Complete Streets Design Handbook, taking another step closer to developing a network of safe streets for all users. This strategy aims to install the first Complete Street in the city along MLK Boulevard, serving as a pilot project.
  - » The intent is to increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, riders of public transit, as well as drivers. In addition, green infrastructure such as trees, streetscaping, signage, and street furniture will create an inviting place where people will want to be and like to go to shop, to eat, to walk, and spend time with family and friends.
  - » This strategy is the focus of an Action Activity to jumpstart transformation. **See Chapter 8: Implementation for more details.**
  - » Three highly visible locations were identified as important gateways to the Choice neighborhood that will be marked and celebrated through landscaping, art, and/or signage. These include: MLK Boulevard and Southard Street, MLK Boulevard and Calhoun Street, and Battle Monument and MLK Boulevard.
  - » Mount Zion AME Church | Salvation and Social Justice will seek support from the New Jersey Historical and Preservation Commission to design a variety of programming centered around the rich

history of Greater Mount Zion AME Church and the African American community, including interpretative signage, walking tours, exhibits, school programs, and digital content.

- B.** Redesign and reorient the Donnelly Homes site so that it embraces MLK Boulevard and activates the street life.
- » The existing layout of Donnelly Homes disrupts the small-scale grid of the surrounding neighborhood, creating large open spaces that are not well used and not defensible, making them unsafe. Redesigning the site presents many opportunities – to reintegrate the site with the surrounding streets, to create more interest and activity along MLK Boulevard, and to improve the safety of Donnelly Homes and the community by placing more eyes overlooking the street and clearly defining public and private spaces.
  - » Reconnecting to the street grid can be achieved by breaking down the superblocks that currently make up Donnelly Homes and realigning the blocks with existing streets. This also helps break up “dead space” in between buildings that does not have a clear use and tends to attract litter or mischievous activity.
  - » Creating visual interest along MLK Boulevard can be achieved by introducing other uses on the ground floor such as a coffee shop or café, office space, commercial gym, or medical office that generate foot traffic. The design of the new buildings facing MLK Boulevard incorporates space on the ground floor for non-residential uses.
  - » Outdoor benches and gathering spaces can add to the vitality and encourage social interaction. These same spaces can host pop-up events including art, music, yoga, movie nights, or even a mobile library.

## GOOD IDEA!



SOURCE: DUTCHKILLS GREEN, NYC, WRT

## COMPLETE STREETS

Complete Streets are designed to accommodate the safe movement of all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists, regardless of their age and ability. Elements vary but may include sidewalks, bicycle lanes, bus lanes, public transportation stops, crossing opportunities, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, and even green infrastructure such as rain gardens.



**C.** Adaptively reuse Junior 1 Middle School as a mixed-use development incorporating community services and amenities.

- » The beautiful gothic architecture of the former Junior 1 Middle School frames the corner of MLK Boulevard and Southard Street, which forms a natural gateway in the heart of the community.
- » The school closed in 2007 and now sits vacant. Not a single meeting was held during the planning process without Junior 1 coming up in conversation.
- » Preserving and reusing the building to provide community services and housing is a priority. Among the uses desired are housing, a reading room, performance space, business incubator/makerspace, and farm market. Please see pages 36-37 for the community's vision for the future of Junior 1.

**D.** Establish a local business incubator and/or makerspace that nurtures entrepreneurs and provides micro loans and grant money for small diverse businesses with programming, mentorships, and youth programs.

- » From the outset of the process, it became evident that there are many small business owners and contractors living at Donnelly Homes and in the Choice neighborhood. At the same time, un- and under-employment is a significant challenge for Donnelly Homes residents. Only 42 percent are employed at least part time and 79 percent have an annual income of less than \$20,000.
- » Among the top career development programs desired by Donnelly Homes residents are career counseling and mentoring, job fairs, and the opportunity to complete their high degree/GED at Donnelly Homes.



**ACTIVATING THE STREET WITH PLACES TO GATHER INCREASES SAFETY AND ADDS VITALITY**

SOURCE: [HTTPS://WWW.UNIVERSITYCITY.ORG/EVENTS/PORCH](https://www.universitycity.org/events/porch)

- » **The business incubator is envisioned as one of the community spaces that will fill the former Junior 1 Middle School building.** The one-stop business incubator/co-working space will provide access to mentors and career counseling, and resources to support small and emerging businesses such as access to printers, copiers, notary, and meeting rooms. It could also integrate programming and training for entrepreneurs and youth. The hope is that establishing a local business hub will nurture skills and ideas that could begin to take the shape of pop-ups events and eventually fill vacant storefronts.

The Smith Family Foundation, an active partner in the planning process, will lend their support with programming and administration of the business incubator. The Smith Family Foundation is a private grant-making institution committed to empowering the community, cultivating leaders, and transforming lives.

Implementation of this strategy will begin with some programming at Donnelly Homes in the short term with the intent of growing into space at Junior 1 to serve residents of Donnelly Homes, the Choice neighborhood and the city.

- E.** Promote the City's business improvement incentive program and available tools for area businesses with an annual walkabout.

- » The City of Trenton currently offers prospective and existing retail businesses that are planning to make building improvements, grants of up to 50% of the total project cost. The grant amount

**GOOD IDEA!**



SOURCE: NEWPORT NEWS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

## **THE OFFICES @ TWO FIVE & J (NEWPORT NEWS, VA)**

The Offices @ Two Five & J came about through the Marshall-Ridley Choice Neighborhood planning process in response to residents' desire for an entrepreneurial hub. The Offices provides a shared co-working space for local entrepreneurs and small businesses that encourages networking and idea sharing, and provides supportive services at all stages of development. Facilities include a shared open area, a conference room, dedicated desks, as well as shared and private office options. The goal is to create and grow locally-owned businesses and stimulate a neighborhood economy.



To learn more, go to  
[www.theoffices25j.com](http://www.theoffices25j.com)



# RE-DESIGNING MARTIN LUTHER KING JR BLVD

## BRAINSTORMING TOGETHER

Gathering ideas to improve MLK Boulevard was the focus of a community-driven exercise during the Neighborhood Leadership Series and a separate workshop held during the Community Barbeque in June 2021.



### MOST POPULAR IDEAS:

- ▶ A Connection to the D&R Canal
- ▶ Decorative crosswalks
- ▶ Decorative streetlights
- ▶ Gateways
- ▶ A Grandmother's Park
- ▶ Historic signage
- ▶ Museum/Welcome Center at Battle Monument
- ▶ Murals
- ▶ Pedestrian trail/walking loop
- ▶ Plaza/Seating Areas
- ▶ Trashcans
- ▶ Water Feature

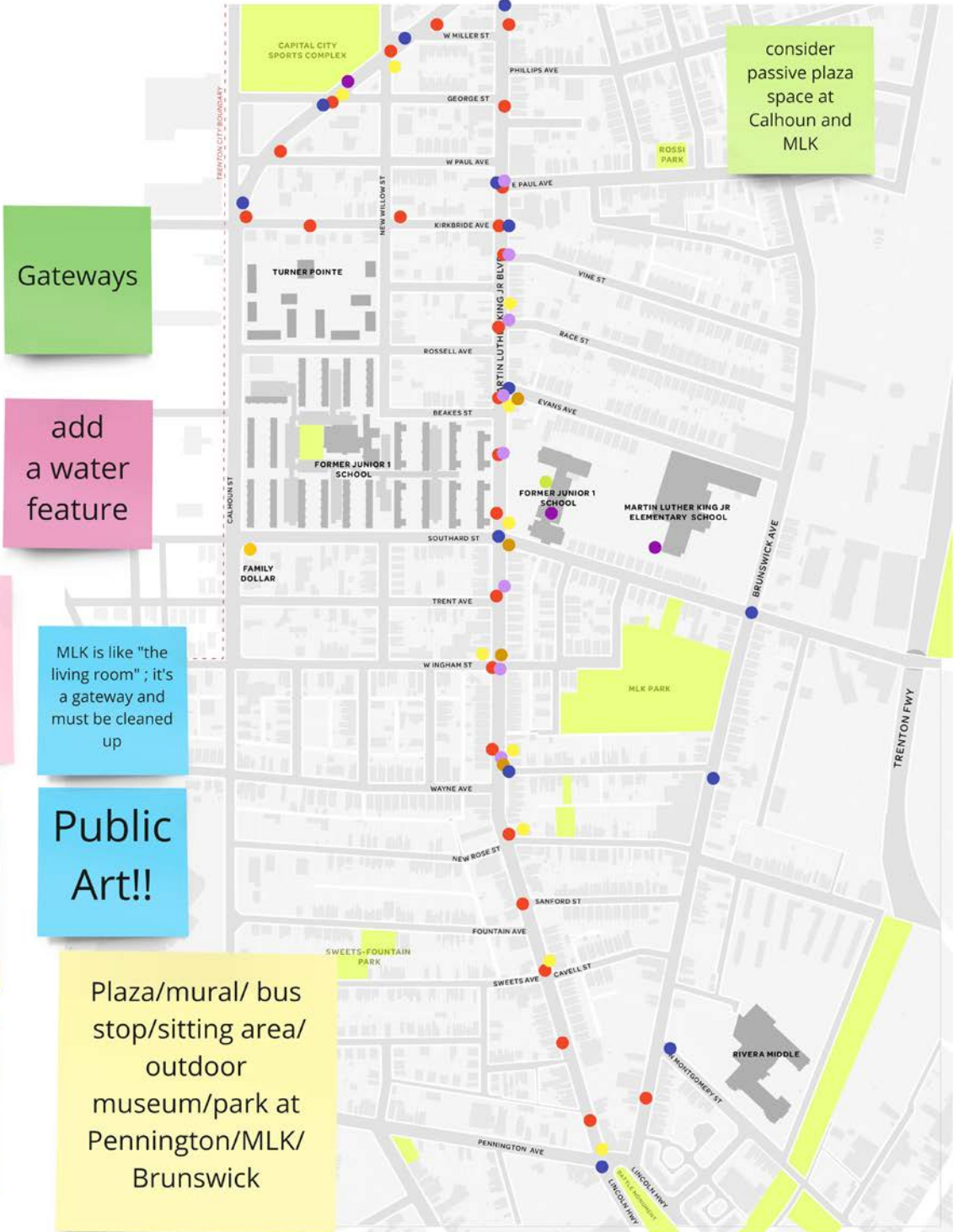
### LEGEND (FOR ACTIVITY AT RIGHT)

- DECORATIVE CROSSWALKS
- TRASH CANS
- DECORATIVE STREETLIGHTS
- HISTORIC SIGNAGE
- BANNERS
- MURALS
- PLAZA/SITTING AREA
- BIKE SHARE STATION

How can we make MLK boulevard live up to its name?

Instructions:

1. Taking the initiatives from the last exercise, place a color dot on the map, showing where you would like that to happen! You can add more than one.
2. Write on a yellow sticky note any other initiatives you would like to see on the area.



We do have a canal - link?

add a water feature

Grandmother's Park

MLK is like "the living room"; it's a gateway and must be cleaned up

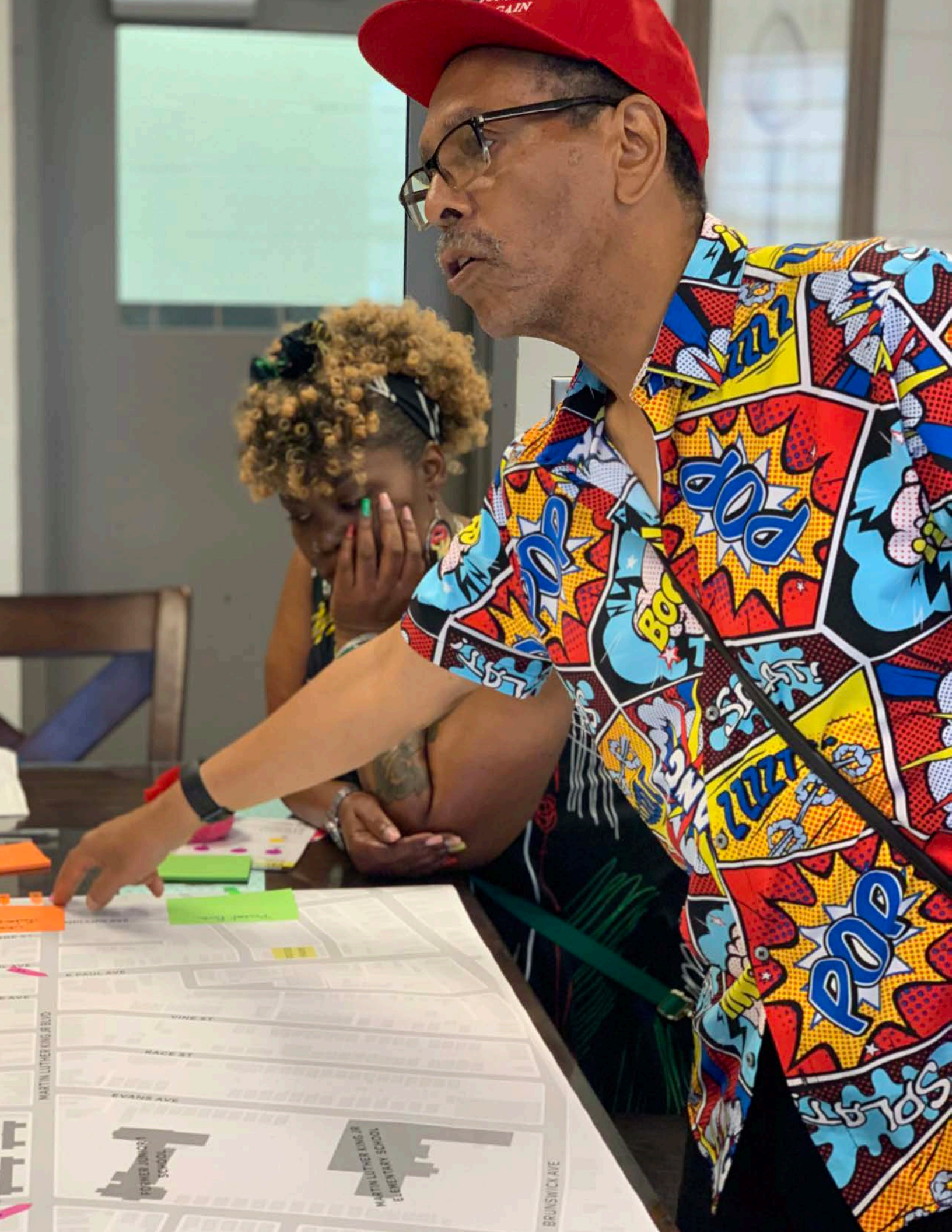
Keep the same theme throughout the area

Public Art!!

Artistic value, since it is the gateway to the city

Plaza/mural/ bus stop/sitting area/ outdoor museum/park at Pennington/MLK/ Brunswick





cannot exceed \$20,000, with a minimum project cost of \$5,000. This is a useful tool for neighborhood businesses seeking to enhance the appearance of their storefronts.

- » Another opportunity many Choice neighborhood businesses can take advantage of is a 3% interest business loan of up to \$250,000 for 10 years. This is for businesses located in an Urban Enterprise Zone (which covers most of the businesses along MLK Boulevard and Brunswick Avenue). The loan can be used for almost anything – payroll, utilities, rent, equipment – and part of the loan can be forgiven if the business hires Trenton residents.
- » To make businesses aware of these and other opportunities, the Department of Economic Development will plan an annual walkabout in the Choice neighborhood to meet in person with business owners.
- » Other tools for local businesses to highlight their services:
  - Shop Trenton: City Hall maintains a Shop Trenton Facebook group for businesses to post to reach Trenton-centric customers.  
Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/972739619504751/>
  - Eat Local Club: Every month, City Hall organizes a group of locals to dine in a different spot to explore and support Trenton restaurants.
  - Black Wall Street Trenton: To spotlight black-owned businesses, the City maintains a Facebook group for black-owned businesses to post about their businesses.  
Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/844566242376085/>

**F.** Encourage participation of Donnelly Homes and CN residents in the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative’s training and financial assistance to prospective and existing business owners.

- » In response to needs identified through the Choice planning effort, the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative (TNI) will strive to strengthen the local business ecosystem by providing trainings tailored to the needs of existing business owners. TNI will also offer small grants for façade improvements or other improvements.

The goal is for 100 businesses or residents to participate in the training programs and for 20 businesses to receive grants over five years.



## GOAL 2: STOP THE SPREAD OF DETERIORATION AND VACANCIES.

Among the biggest neighborhood challenges cited by residents are crime and safety, loitering, and litter in public areas. And in nearly every task force meeting and community discussion, residents expressed sadness and frustration over the condition of the buildings and streetscape in the neighborhood.

According to a recent study called the “Effect of Greening Vacant Land on Mental Health of Community-Dwelling Adults” by researchers at the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine and Columbia University, **physical neighborhood conditions including vacant and dilapidated spaces, trash, and lack of quality infrastructure such as sidewalks and parks, are associated with depression.** These spaces are widespread in low-resource communities like North Trenton and a constant source of stress for residents.

- A. Identify vacant lots for the Clean & Green program to demonstrate that they are watched, secured, and maintained, beginning with lots along the main corridors.
  - » Isles’ Clean & Green program targets underserved neighborhoods where it is implementing long-term revitalization initiatives. The program organizes community clean-ups; clears, cleans, and maintains vacant lots; and installs parklets, flower planters, and green infrastructure

such as rain barrels, rain gardens, and pollinator meadows.

- » As part of the plan’s Action Activities, this strategy will clean up and stabilize 15 lots in the neighborhood in year one and another five over five years. In addition, four of the lots will be activated and maintained with ongoing activities.

### WHAT WE HEARD:

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS

### What are the neighborhood’s biggest challenges?





SOURCE: PHILADELPHIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



**ADOPT-A-LOT TRENTON**

SOURCE: ISLES



- » Residents should also take note of the City’s Adopt-A-Lot program, passed by ordinance in 2020. Residents can apply to become an “Adopter” to maintain one of over 1500 vacant lots, which involves cutting the grass and keeping the yard free of trash, debris, and refuse. Vegetable and/or flower gardens are permitted, provided they are kept nice and neat, watered as necessary, and removed if/when they die at the end of the growing season. The Adopter must enter into a two-year contract, which can be extended upon mutual agreement.

**B. Establish a program to assist homeowners with necessary repairs.**

- » According to the Market Study prepared for this plan by Zimmerman/Volk Associates, Inc., only 35 percent of the housing units in the Choice neighborhood are owner-occupied, slightly lower than the city-wide rate of 38 percent, and overall a very low rate. The challenge of a low homeownership rate is that residents who rent tend not to have the same commitment to the long-term maintenance and stability of the neighborhood. And for those unable to purchase a home, they do not have the opportunity to develop equity and build generational wealth for their families.
- » To stabilize the Choice neighborhood, help decrease further deterioration of the existing housing stock, and support existing homeowners, the plan is launching a Homeowner Improvement Program that will launch as part of the plan’s Action Activities.
- » The project will begin with a focus on residential properties along the 600 block of MLK Boulevard, offering grants of up to \$20,000 to homeowners for exterior repairs such as siding, pointing, roof repairs, and windows.

- » Interested homeowners will also be considered for assistance through Isles’ weatherization and lead assessment and abatement programs.
- » The goal is to assist 40 homeowners with exterior improvements and to complete 40 Healthy Homes Assessments.

**C. Clean, clear, and complete site preparation of missing “teeth” particularly along main arteries and highly visible locations like MLK Boulevard, to facilitate infill development.**

- » To simulate reinvestment along MLK Boulevard, the city will demolish and clear a total of 53 city-owned properties that take away from the overall appearance of the neighborhood and make it difficult to see the possibilities for redevelopment.
- » **Forty six of these have been demolished during the planning process, representing a \$1,404,973 investment to date.**
- » Of these properties, 17 are located on MLK Boulevard. Six of the properties fall within the proposed new redevelopment area surrounding Donnelly Homes, 25 fall within the Humboldt-Sweets redevelopment area, and 2 within Canal Banks redevelopment area, all focus areas for infill housing.



 **GOOD IDEA!**

SOURCE: ISLES, CLEAN & GREEN PROGRAM

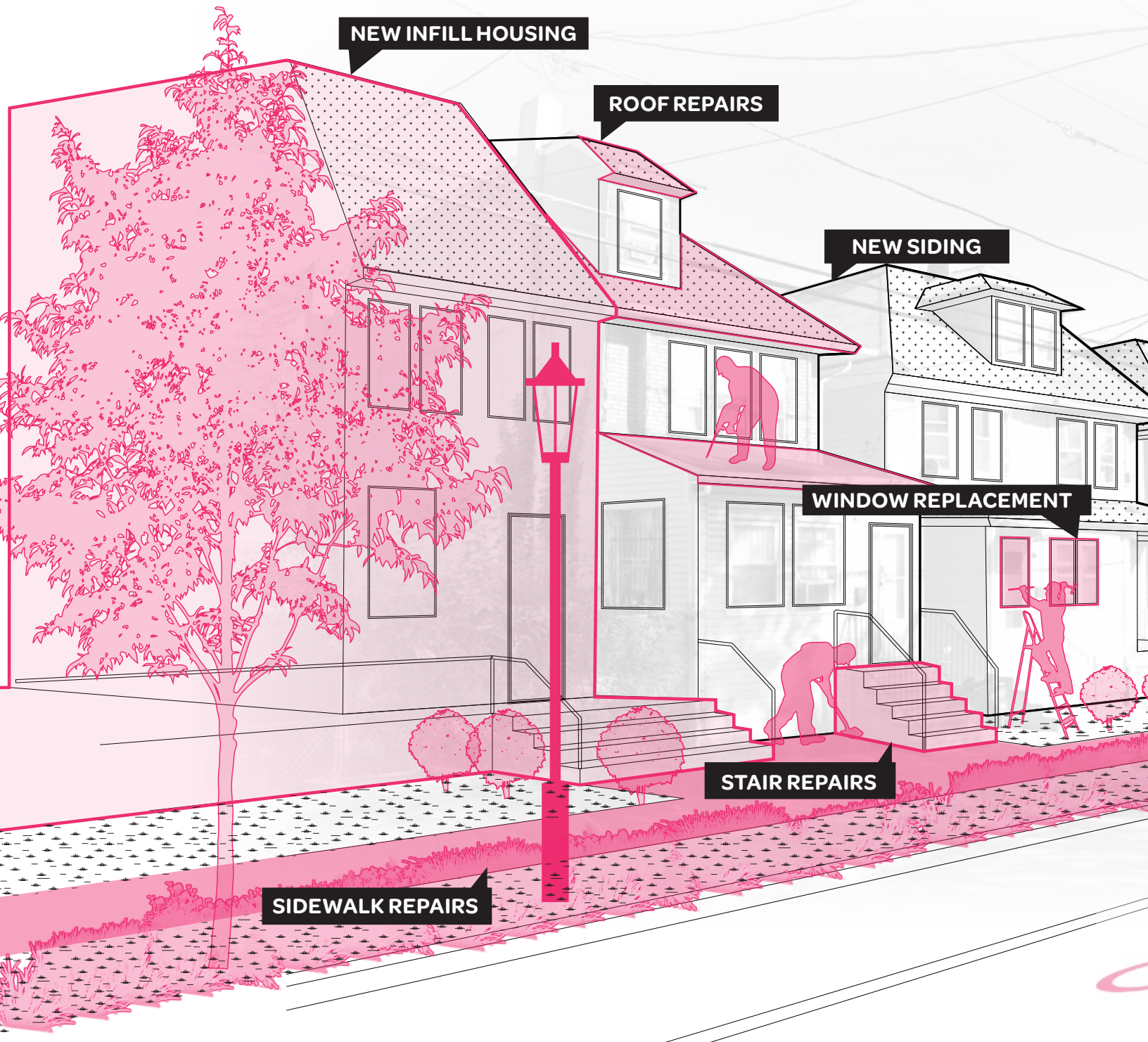
### THE IMPACT OF CLEANING AND GREENING

In a pivotal study, researchers analyzed the impact on nearby residents of cleaning and greening vacant lots by removing trash, grading the land, planting new grass and a few trees, installing a low wooden perimeter fence, and performing regular maintenance. The study found that as a result of these efforts, residents living nearby experienced the following:

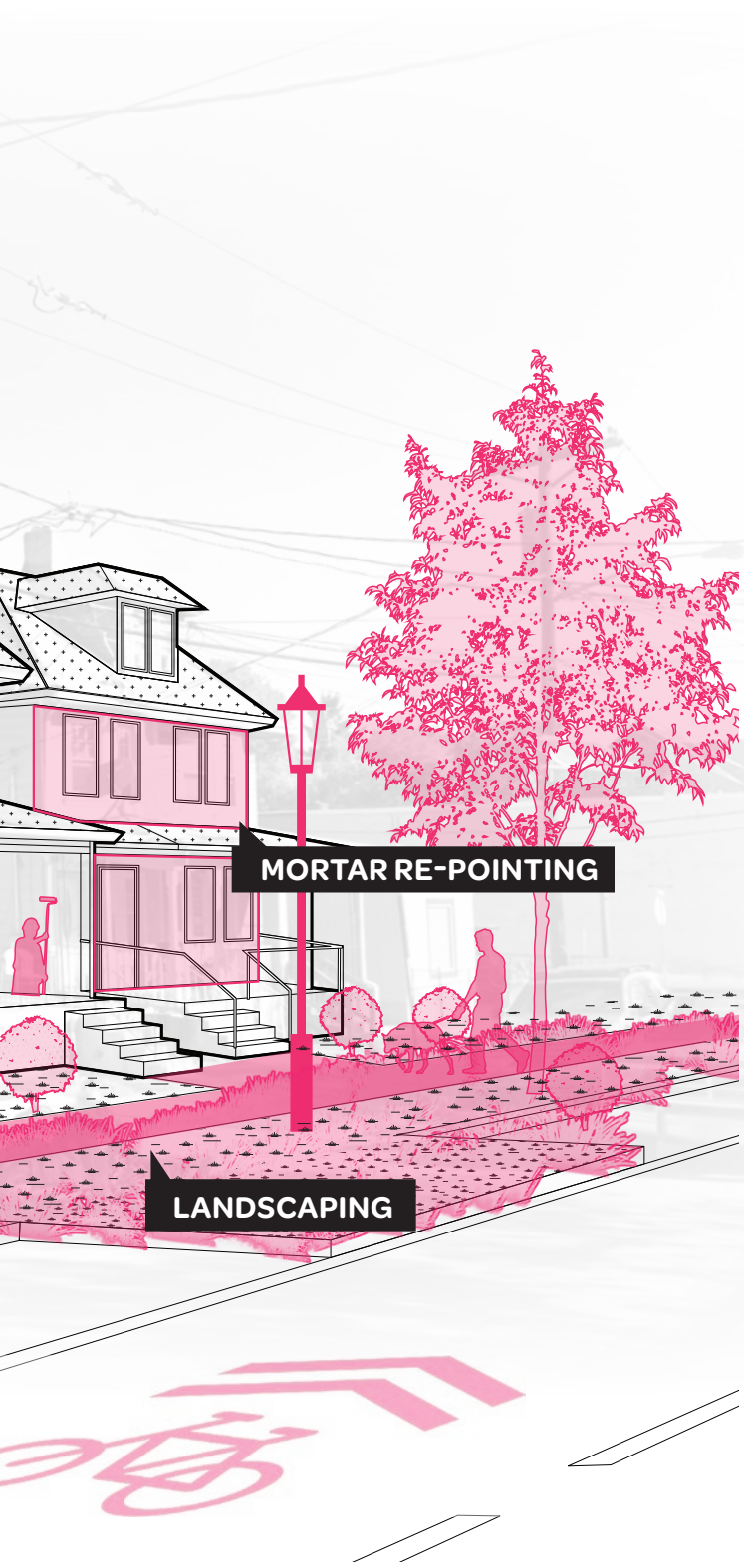
- ▶ Decrease in gun assaults of 29% (in neighborhoods below poverty line):
- ▶ Increase of 75% of people more likely to go outside to relax and socialize
- ▶ Decrease of 41% of people feeling depressed
- ▶ Decrease of 63% of people experiencing bad mental health

SOURCE: EFFECT OF GREENING VACANT LAND ON MENTAL HEALTH OF COMMUNITY-DWELLING ADULTS: A CLUSTER RANDOMIZED TRIAL | DEPRESSIVE DISORDERS | JAMA NETWORK OPEN | JAMA NETWORK BY EUGENIA C. SOUTH, MD, MD, BERNADETTE C. HOHL, PHD; MICHELLE C. KONDO, PHD





^ FIGURE 34. HOME AND STREETScape REPAIRS ON MLK BOULEVARD



**Block by block, the plan aims to restore the fabric of the neighborhood through small but impactful improvements.**



# GOAL 3: DISTINGUISH THE AREA'S IDENTITY AND CHARACTER BY CELEBRATING THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S LAYERED HISTORY AND DEEP SENSE OF COMMUNITY.

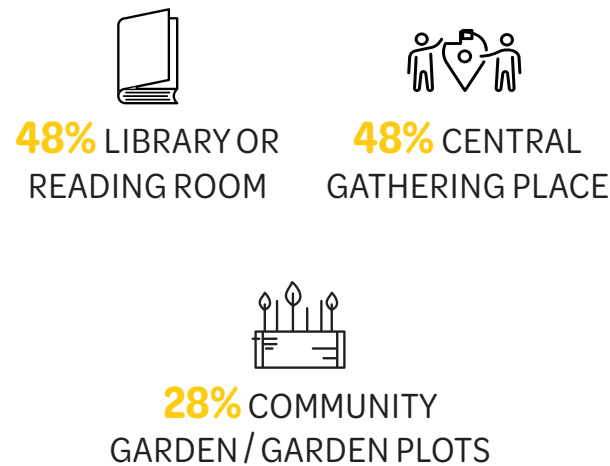
## WHAT WE HEARD:

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS

### Amenities that could enhance the neighborhood

- 1 ATHLETIC PLAYING FIELDS
- 2 GROCERY STORE
- 3 LIBRARY
- 4 PLACES TO EAT
- 5 PLAYGROUND/TOT LOT

### Missing activities / organizations in the neighborhood:



**A.** Integrate a variety of safe, programmed gathering spaces—large and small—on-site at Donnelly Homes and throughout the neighborhood to encourage social interaction.

» Social spaces are important for relaxation, community cohesion, and mental health. When Donnelly Homes residents were asked how the many vacant lots in the neighborhood could be reused, their overwhelming response was as social spaces – as playgrounds, athletic fields; spaces with picnic tables and grills with places to sit that could be used for family gatherings. And when asked what’s missing in the neighborhood, the top response was a central gathering space and a library.

» This strategy overlaps with Housing Strategy 1C, which focuses on integrating social gathering spaces on the Donnelly Homes site. This strategy focuses on similar types of spaces in the larger Choice neighborhood.

» In addition, this strategy will aim to create at least one public plaza on the Donnelly Homes site to encourage social interaction in addition to a series of smaller green spaces that may serve as play areas or BBQ areas.

**B.** Establish a space at Junior 1 (or Donnelly Homes) that offers community resources that serves as a community hub.

» There is a strong desire to reuse Junior 1 not just for housing but also as a central gathering space with a variety of uses that preserve the architectural features of the building.

» Currently, there is not a library in or near the Choice neighborhood. The planning process also discovered that children in

the public school system are not allowed to take their textbooks home overnight.

The aim of this strategy is to create a dedicated, comfortable, safe reading room that inspires readers of all ages, provides access to limited library services, and that could serve as a place for book clubs and a homework club.

- » Other uses such as a business incubator, community kitchen, auditorium/performance space, and classrooms would further support the community's aspirations.
- » The beautiful lawn in front of the Junior 1 Middle School building stretches along MLK Boulevard, presenting tremendous potential to transform the space into an

outdoor gathering place as part of the larger renovation of the former school.

- » Integrating public art, interpretive signage celebrating neighborhood history, and a civic plaza could activate this important corner and celebrate it as a gateway to the community.
- » The space could host movie nights, festivals, art exhibits, small concerts, a farm market, and special events. The design will also work in tandem with the design of the redeveloped Donnelly Homes site across the street.



**MOBILE LIBRARY** Mobile libraries like the one shown here could be considered to nurture readers at Donnelly Homes and in the neighborhood until a more permanent space is developed.

SOURCE: FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA - PASSYUNK POST





# GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS TO MAJOR ASSETS AND AMENITIES.

The North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice neighborhood is inviting in part because of the pedestrian-scaled blocks that make it very walkable, if residents feel safe. This overarching goal compliments Goal 1 and focuses efforts on improving connections to the neighborhood’s major assets such as schools, parks, and MLK Boulevard – through enhancements like improved sidewalks, lighting, tree trimming, and vacant lot stabilization.

## WHAT WE HEARD: RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS

### Transportation Infrastructure Challenges:

#### TOP ISSUES:



#### SOMEWHAT CHALLENGING:



- A. Implement safe routes, including traffic calming and well-marked crosswalks, along streets leading to the schools, parks, Capital Health Medical Complex, and commercial corridors.
  - » While Goal 1 of the Neighborhood Plan focuses on enhancing safety for all users by transforming MLK Boulevard into a complete street, this strategy goes a step further by improving safe access to MLK Boulevard, the area’s “Main Street,” and to other key assets in the neighborhood.
  - » This strategy will include a Safe Routes to School audit for MLK Elementary. The recommendations will then be implemented.
  - » As part of the complete streets project along MLK Boulevard major intersections will be improved to enhance safety for users.
  - » Five additional major intersections will be improved across the Choice neighborhood with features such as well-marked crosswalks and traffic calming measures such as curb bump outs and speed humps.
- B. Trim trees and shrubs at entrances to and within parks so there are clear lines of sight across the parks.
  - » The Department of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture will work to clean up and maintain the entrances to the neighborhood parks, including MLK Park and Sweets Fountain Park, to ensure they are safer for park users of all ages.



# GOAL 5: CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT ENCOURAGES HEALTHY LIVING BY MAKING IT EASY TO EXERCISE, EAT WELL, AND ACCESS SERVICES TO HEEL THE MIND AND BODY.

**GOOD IDEA!**



## TRENTON CITY PLANNING INSTITUTE YOUTH TEAM

Fourteen participants in the Trenton Housing Authority’s summer camp took part in a special planning camp taught by the Center for Community Planning in the summer 2021. Campers aged 9-13 learned about the profession of city planning and designed a park for the Choice neighborhood. The children dedicated the park to Athing Mu, the Trenton resident who won two gold medals at the 2020 summer Olympics, which coincided with the camp. At the end of the project, they presented their park concept to the City of Trenton Planning Board, which passed a unanimous resolution in support of the park’s realization.



To learn more, go to [www.centerforcommunityplanning.org](http://www.centerforcommunityplanning.org)

- A. Create a new playground either at Donnelly Homes or nearby in the spirit of Athung Mu.
  - » Thirty percent of Donnelly Homes residents and 26 percent of neighborhood residents are under 18. Sadly, 51 percent of Donnelly Homes residents do not think it is safe for children to play outside. Like adults, children need to interact with their peers and build friendships. They also need exercise. Installing a creative play space at or near Donnelly Homes for the youngest residents would satisfy this need and desire.
  - » Young campers in THA’s summer camp created a vision of their desired park in honor of Athing Mu, the 19-year-old Olympic gold medalist who grew up playing in Trenton parks. **To learn more about their vision, see Chapter 8: Implementation.**
  - » MLK Park is a popular city park just two blocks from Donnelly Homes and within walking distance for older children. It will receive upgrades that include new batting cages, a concession stand, and a clubhouse. Sweets Fountain Park is located in the Humboldt-Sweets area of the neighborhood and a focus area for infill development. The Park will be expanded and renovated as a major amenity to complement the anticipated redevelopment.
  - » Another popular recreational amenity in the neighborhood is an indoor batting cage at 685 MLK Boulevard, run by the Department of Recreation. It will receive a much-needed interior renovation and exterior façade improvement to create a more welcoming appearance and place more eyes overlooking the street.

**B.** Improve connections to the local D&R Canal Trail network.

» The D&R Canal trail network extends from Bull’s Island, 25 miles north of Trenton, to New Brunswick, 30 miles northeast of Trenton, providing over 70 miles of trails and historical features. Although the trail passes within a quarter mile of Donnelly Homes along the border of the Choice neighborhood, few neighborhood residents take advantage of this amenity. Increasing signage and programming to better connect the trail with the neighborhood will increase recreation and usage of the park. It also connects to Battle Monument and could provide an alternative mode of transportation to downtown for work or play.

**C.** Create a fitness center at Donnelly Homes

» More than two-thirds of residents said that having a fitness center available at Donnelly Homes would increase the likelihood of them exercising more frequently. The establishment of a fitness center at or near Donnelly Homes, with regular and affordable programming and membership, will reduce the barriers to residents and neighbors of maintaining their health and fitness.

**WHAT WE HEARD:**

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS



“Is it safe for children to walk and play outside?”



**ONLY 22%**

**Use Battle Monument Park and the Delaware & Raritan Canal Trail**

**What would make it easier for people to exercise in the neighborhood?**

- 68%** GYM/INDOOR FITNESS
- 55%** GREATER FEELING OF SAFETY TO BE ABLE TO WALK OR JOG



# GOAL 6:

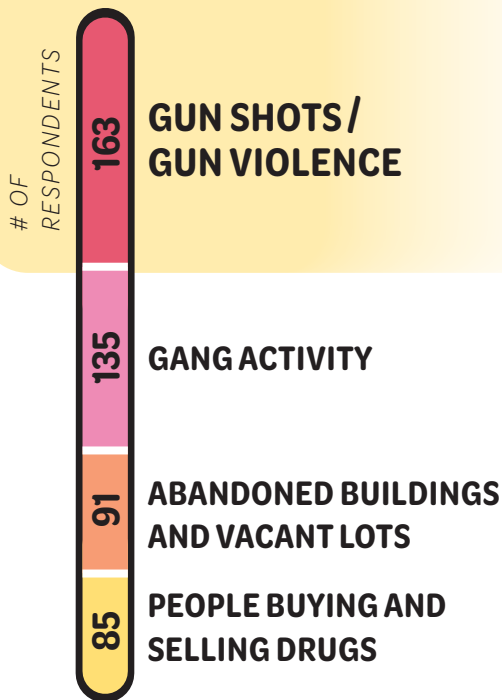
**INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGH A COORDINATED APPROACH BUILT ON TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY, COLLABORATION, AND SUPPORTED BY PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS.**

## WHAT WE HEARD:

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS

**77%** feel crime and safety is the neighborhood's biggest challenge

### What are the neighborhood's top safety concerns?



- A.** Create a public safety hub at Donnelly Homes.
  - » To restore a sense of accountability, transparency, and trust between the community and the police, THA and the Trenton Police Department will set up a public safety hub in early 2022, in a highly visible vacant unit at Donnelly Homes.
  - » The hub will provide a designated space for Trenton Police officers to touch down on site and enhance their visibility.
  - » Trained volunteers through Street Teams will also be able to use the space for local outreach.
  
- B.** Hold a monthly public safety meeting at Donnelly Homes led by a Community Affairs officer.
  - » This regularly scheduled forum will serve as a two-way communication tool, allowing residents to share issues of concern with the police and police to share information with residents. At least 8 meetings will occur each year so that residents and police can work together to develop solutions.
  
- C.** Redesign Donnelly Homes to promote safety and visibility, and clearly define public and private spaces.
  - » The current layout of Donnelly Homes is very difficult to monitor and is not designed to provide “natural surveillance,” meaning there are many pockets of the campus that are not clearly visible to people walking by.
  - » Donnelly Homes will be redesigned so that the buildings overlook walkways and common spaces (placing more “eyes on the street”). The design will carefully integrate pedestrian and site lighting, and encourage activity through activated spaces such as playgrounds, picnic/BBQ areas, and gardens. The goal is to reduce safety incidents by 50% over five years. (Please see Housing Strategy 1A for more details.)

- D.** Enroll Donnelly Homes youth residents in the Trenton RISE program.
- » Each year, 10 slots will be set aside for Donnelly Homes youth to take part in the Trenton RISE program. Transportation will be provided to/from the youth center, where “Risiers” can relax in a safe environment and receive academic / career advising and a warm meal while taking part in art, recreation, and meditative programs.
  - » “Trenton RISE” (Resilience Increases Success & Excellence) is a youth violence prevention/intervention plan, and uses the culturally specific Empowerment Based Youth Development Model (EMPYD) by Travis and Leech (2013) as its framework to address the ongoing epidemic of youth violence in the City of Trenton. This evidence-based model focuses on seven dimensions (competence, confidence, connection, caring, character, sense of community, and engaged citizenship) that lead to positive youth development.
  - » The Trenton RISE program is a collaboration between the Trenton Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture Department, The Trenton Police Department, and The College of New Jersey Department of Counselor Education.
- E.** Increase academic performance and decrease disciplinary actions of Donnelly Homes youth participating in the Trenton RISE program.
- » The academic and disciplinary performance of “Risiers” will be monitored with professional assistance provided to help youth progress. The goal is for Risiers to increase their scores on standard math and reading tests by at least 10%.



## TRENTON RISE

Trenton RISE is a community based youth center for children aged 12-18, designed to provide a safe, comfortable, and enriching environment. “Risiers” have access to formal tutoring, hot meals, a place to do laundry, and a variety of programs aimed at personal development.

Programs will include computer programming classes, career/college advising, and a variety of activities to relax and de-stress, from acapella, fitness classes, meditation sessions, and book club to video games, board games, cooking lessons, and physical activity.



To learn more, go to  
<https://www.trentonrise.org/>



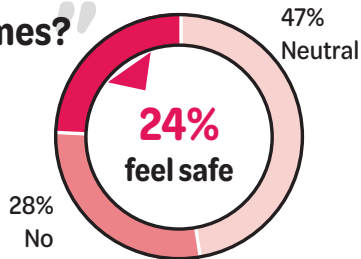
## WHAT WE HEARD:

RESULTS FROM SURVEY OF 212 DONNELLY HOMES RESIDENTS

only **14%** feel it is safe for children to walk to & home from school



### Do you feel safe in Donnelly Homes?



**49%** of Donnelly respondents want to be involved with making the neighborhood safer

F. Tap into Street Teams program by identifying and training Outreach Workers and Community Sentinels.

» Trenton Street Teams trains and deploys non-traditional leaders from within the community to serve as Outreach Workers with the goal of intervening and mediating conflicts among youth and increasing awareness of healing and recovery services through direct services, advocacy, and public educational forums.

» Outreach Workers receive 40 hours of training focused on community-based gang-outreach intervention strategies, violence deterrence and crisis abatement training, hard-core gang intercession, proactive scenario-based training, scene management and supervision, crisis prevention and holistic response preparation.

» Community Sentinels are trained as first responders to low-level, quality of life issues such as loitering, school disputes, and personal disputes within a 4-block radius of community hotspots. Street Teams will recruit and train the sentinels.

## What would make the neighborhood feel safer?



**57%** BETTER STREET & SITE LIGHTING



**54%** SECURITY CAMERAS IN PUBLIC SPACES



**51%** BETTER EMERGENCY RESPONSE & ASSISTANCE



**38%** POLICE ENGAGING WITH AT-RISK YOUTH



**36%** STRONGER PARTNERSHIP/ COMMUNICATION WITH TRENTON POLICE



**28%** NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAM/ BLOCK CAPTAINS

» This strategy will aim to train 4 Outreach Workers & 5 Community Sentinels from Donnelly Homes annually.

**G.** Have Outreach Workers focus on Donnelly Homes youth, providing them with case management, mentoring, and violence interruption.

» The Outreach Workers will focus mentoring efforts on youth at Donnelly homes with a goal of engaging 10 youth and conducting 3 neighborhood interventions annually.

**H.** Set up and train Community Safe Passage Teams at MLK Elementary and Rivera Middle School.

» The Safe Passage program will deploy Outreach Workers in teams at key exit and entry points of the school, bus stops, stores, and intersections where youth congregate in and around the schools. The aim is to develop relationships with youth, intervene and mediate potential conflicts to ensure students arrive at school safety and at home in a safe and timely manner.

» The program is being piloted at the High School and depending on its success, teams will be set up at MLK Elementary and Rivera Middle School.

**I.** Hold an annual community walk starting at Donnelly Homes to identify neighborhood challenges and safety concerns.

» Donnelly Homes and local residents will be invited to join the Trenton Police Department and area partners on an annual walking tour of the neighborhood to identify and discuss health and safety hazards that need to be addressed.

**J.** Host an annual golf tournament or other event to raise money to provide student scholarships to college for Donnelly Homes students.

» THA will partner with the Capital YMCA to host an annual event to support and encourage Donnelly Homes students to pursue higher education.

**K.** Broaden civic engagement opportunities starting with a leadership program for adults and youth.



**49% FEWER VACANT LOTS/ABANDONED BUILDINGS**



**47% LESS TRASH & ILLEGAL DUMPING**



**42% MORE VISIBLE POLICE PRESENCE**



**25% BETTER TRAUMA SUPPORT SERVICES**



**20% INCREASED AWARENESS OF ANONYMOUS TIP LINE**



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**08/**

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**IMPLEMENTATION**









# 08/ IMPLEMENTATION

**It's exciting to dream of the possibilities; to imagine what could be if a few major changes were made; to think what could happen if ideas, passion, partners and funding could all fall into place.**

**The intent of this plan is to turn these ideas into reality. The planning process successfully brought together local residents and area partners to carefully shape aspirational yet implementable goals and strategies for the Choice Neighborhood Plan that already have momentum behind them and a team committed to their realization.**

## LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATION

### STEERING COMMITTEE

The Trenton Housing Authority will continue to build on the foundation of relationships strengthened during the planning process to realize the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan. THA has established a Steering Committee to guide and coordinate implementation. The Committee is made up of THA, Isles, the City of Trenton, Trenton Neighborhood Initiative, and the Michaels Organization. The Steering Committee will meet regularly starting in January 2022 to develop a more detailed timeline, fill out the larger implementation team, and define clear roles and responsibilities.

### IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

The Implementation Team will meet monthly at first as the effort transitions from planning into the implementation phase. The Implementation Team will include residents of Donnelly Homes and the surrounding neighborhood in addition to many of the partners involved with the plan, including the Smith Family Foundation and Capital Area YMCA, along with newer partners such as Greater Mt. Zion AME Church and its partner organization Salvation & Social Justice.

### DEVELOPER SELECTION

Toward the end of the planning process, THA solicited qualifications statements from real estate developers to act as a private development

partner with the Housing Authority, in collaboration with the City, to undertake the development and implementation of the Choice Neighborhood Transformation Plan.

To ensure that the selection of the development partner was inclusive of all stakeholders, THA established an Evaluation Committee made up of residents, TCHRC Trustees / THA Board Members, community partners, THA staff, a Redevelopment Consultant and City of Trenton planning and development staff.

The evaluation committee developed a rigorous evaluation process. The selection process involved in-person interviews; tours of similar development projects including conversations with residents and community members; presentations to the THA Board; and written responses to a list of established development questions. The Evaluation Committee used the scoring criteria in the RFQ to finalize its recommendation of The Michaels Organization.

At the end of this process, the evaluation committee selected the developer that they felt would fit Trenton best. This developer was well prepared, knew the neighborhood and did research on the Trenton Choice Neighborhood plan. The residents felt that this developer cared as they listened to residents' ideas and held one-on-one conversations. The tour of their development site provided insight on both the construction of the housing development and the great relationships that they have established with their tenants. This developer seemed very passionate and invested in building a better community here in Trenton.



SELECTING A DEVELOPER PARTNER



Moving forward, the Michaels Organization (TMO) shall be the Authority’s partner in the implementation of the Housing component of the Transformation Plan.

**PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

The scope of work included as part of the selection of a Master Developer for the redevelopment of Donnelly Homes includes property management. THA and Michaels Management will jointly manage the new developments.

Michaels Management (formerly known as Interstate Realty Management Company) provides exceptional property management services to a diverse range of communities by employing a variety of best practices and expert procedures to maintain and operate its communities for long-term success. A member of The Michaels Organization, Michaels Management, holds nearly four decades of experience managing public housing, Section 8, LIHTC, and mixed income communities. The average occupancy rate across portfolio units exceeds 95%.

Serving more than 145,000 residents in 400 communities across 35 states, Michaels Management’s top priority is resident satisfaction, while delivering the results that property owners expect: high occupancy levels, top-notch facilities upkeep and maintenance, innovative marketing, and financially sustainable communities.

For more than 45 years, Michaels Management has provided outstanding customer service to all residents and has faithfully executed their fiduciary duties to owners. Michaels Management provides property management services to The Michaels Organization’s entire portfolio and fee-manages for other private owners and non-profit organizations. Michael’s experience includes repositioning troubled assets, brand new lease-ups, and developing in-depth resident relocation plans for communities undergoing renovations

and redevelopment. Services run the gamut of property types from affordable and mixed-income to student, military and luxury communities. Additionally, Michaels Management has earned the prestigious Accredited Management Company (AMO) designation from the Institute of Real Estate Management, placing it in an elite group (top 1%) of management companies in the country. The designation recognizes Michaels’ industry-leading best practices and its commitment to the AMO Code of Ethics.

**TRENTON NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE (TNI) | PEOPLE LEAD**

As described in Chapter 4, the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative is aligned with many of the goals and strategies of the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan. Going forward, **TNI will play a significant role in the implementation of the plan as the People Lead**, through which it will draw upon its strong network of partners and funding streams to advance the plan.

Capital Health’s ambitious multi-year plan identified four key strategies, which were developed, based on information that had already been collected—including through the Choice Neighborhoods planning process—identifying opportunities for impact in the area. In addition to coordinating the People Task Force, TNI will focus on programs supporting homeownership, job training and employment, digital equity, and healthy beginnings for families and young children.

Along with providing its own significant financial support for the project, Capital Health is launching an ambitious campaign to further gain financial backing for the project from corporate and community supporters.

Long-term, with community and partner input and involvement, the program will seek to strengthen job training aligned with employment opportunities at Capital Health, provide scholarships, and

support area businesses. It will help support homeownership and home rehabilitation, as well as healthy homes through lead remediation. The Trenton Neighborhood Initiative will also support streetscaping projects.

For the community's youngest residents, TNI will provide support for mothers who deliver their babies at Capital Health by providing critical wrap-around services, and it will support programs related to overcoming childhood trauma. TNI will also work to improve digital equity, connecting residents to technology and internet access.

## EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES

Jumping into action! Starting with the Needs Assessment survey and then through Task Force meetings and community events, the planning team helped the community identify several activities that could be completed during the planning process or soon after to address urgent neighborhood-based challenges. These involve physical improvements to enhance the quality of life and include.

- Demolition of 46 blighted city-owned properties on MLK Boulevard and in the Humboldt-Sweets and Canal Banks redevelopment areas to clear the way for redevelopment. An additional 7 properties are contracted for demolition. This represents a \$1,404,973 investment to date.
- A new mural at Donnelly Homes (planned for Spring 2022)
- Six raised garden beds at Donnelly Homes (3 are already installed)
- 10 T-Recs events held in the neighborhood parks in summer and fall of 2021
- A Public Safety Hub at Donnelly Homes (planned for Winter 2022 - see Public Safety Goal for more details)



## NEW MURAL FOR DONNELLY!

The mural will be a tribute to Poor Righteous Teachers, a Trenton-based hip-hop group that achieved critical acclaim and commercial success throughout the 1990s. PRT was at the helm of the conscious, pro-Black movement in 1990s hip-hop, and Donnelly Homes is mentioned in their lyrics and serves as a setting for one of their music videos.

The mural will be designed and painted with Donnelly residents, and local mural artists Sophie Ban and Leon Rainbow. Youth will have an opportunity to collaborate with the artists and learn about career paths in the arts.

SOURCE: THIS IMAGE IS OF A MURAL IN NASHVILLE. ([HTTPS://WWW.CAMELSANDCHOCOLATE.COM/BLACK-LIVES-MATTER-MURAL-NASHVILLE/](https://www.camelsandchocolate.com/black-lives-matter-mural-nashville/))





## ACTION ACTIVITIES

As part of the HUD Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, THA and the City of Trenton received special funding to implement Action Activities that are to be completed within 1.5 years following the planning process.

**Action Activities are innovative community and economic development activities that help communities build momentum and accelerate change in the neighborhood.** The funds cannot be used for housing development activities and cannot be used for non-physical uses, such as supportive services, administrative costs (e.g. staffing, meeting space), and marketing.

In response to all of the information gathered from the community during the planning process, the Action Activities Committee has identified four Action Activities, that have been submitted to HUD for review and approval.

### HOMEOWNER REPAIR PROGRAM

This activity will leverage existing programs and partnerships to provide housing stability to existing neighborhood residents, allowing them to stay in their homes and enjoy positive improvements associated with the transformation of the

neighborhood. The repair program will target approximately 40 homes along the 600 and 700 blocks of Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, from Southard Street south to New Rose/Middle Rose Street. Exterior improvements will focus on repairing roofs, replacing windows, updating siding, re-pointing mortar, repairing sidewalks and/or steps, and landscaping.

In addition, all participating properties will receive a Healthy Homes Assessment from planning partner, Isles. This assessment examines the health and safety, energy efficiency, and lead conditions of a home, and identifies the most cost-effective remedies to address dangerous and inefficient conditions. Depending on the conditions identified, lead remediation, weatherization, and health and safety improvements will be completed with funding from the City of Trenton, Isles and the Trenton Neighborhood Initiative.

### MLK BOULEVARD COMPLETE STREETScape

This Action Activity aims to make a series of improvements to enhance the appearance, safety, character, and sense of place of MLK Boulevard in response to residents' desire for the street to "live up to its name" and become a beautiful, vibrant main street of which residents can be proud. This Activity aligns with many goals of the North Trenton/

Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan and the City's Trenton250 Comprehensive Plan.

The project will begin with a Complete Streets transformation of MLK Boulevard stretching from the Battle Monument to Calhoun Street. This project will be the first Complete Street in Trenton and serve as a pilot project.

Improvements will increase safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus riders and include new sidewalks, pedestrian-friendly crosswalks, traffic calming, and sharrows to mark shared bike routes.

To make MLK Boulevard more inviting, additional improvements will include new decorative lighting, planters, benches, and landscaping which might include green infrastructure to improve stormwater management and add visual appeal.

Lastly, the project will aim to add interpretive signage in several locations celebrating the rich history of the neighborhood. This could include the ongoing struggle for equality and civil rights dating back to George Washington and in the 1960s during the race riots after the death of Martin Luther King, Jr. Other opportunities include sharing the stories of prominent African-American residents who have and continue to shape the the history of Trenton. (Please see page 27 for a few of these inspiring stories.)

### **THIS LOT IS LOVED!**

Across the neighborhood and the city, there are many vacant lots that are overgrown with weeds and filled with trash. Simply cleaning, greening and putting a fence around empty lots has all sorts of positive benefits including big decreases in stress, feeling depressed, and even gun assaults. This action activity will reverse the blight that vacant lots often attract by "cleaning and greening" at least 10 city-owned vacant lots, providing activities on at least 4 vacant lots, and providing consistent recreational activity in the neighborhood.



**THE CITY'S COMPLETE STREET HANDBOOK (TOP)  
AND AN EXAMPLE OF INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE**





### Project Overview

Look at places in Trenton that might be a good place for a park. Brainstorm and vision what a great Trenton Park should look like. Design it! Present it to the people in charge of making decisions in your community.



### What is City Planning???

- Deciding where things should go
    - Buildings, schools, stores, roads
  - Deciding what programs and services should be in a neighborhood
    - Jobs, busses, food
  - Deciding what parts of the city should be protected.
    - Really old things, things important to nature
- DECIDING WHERE PARKS GO AND WHAT SHOULD BE IN THEM!!!!**



All lots that are part of this action activity will have a coordinated 'This Lot is Loved!' branding or signage to connect the varied efforts across the neighborhood, and specific activities and amenities for lots will be based on resident and community input.

Isles, a Trenton-based non-profit with 40 years of experience working to create healthy, sustainable communities, will coordinate This Lot is Loved! activities, including hiring staff and development of plans for lot activation with the Trenton Health Team's Trenton Neighborhood Initiative.

### ATHING MU PARK

This activity responds to residents desire for safe places for their children to play as well as places for adults to socialize while watching their children and grandchildren. The vision for the park was created by 14 THA campers who participated in the Trenton City Planning Institute Youth Camp.

The design includes a small and large playground, ziplines, basketball courts, splash park, garden and pond, and many more exciting activities. The Athing Mu park is filled with many attributes that reflect the lives of the young designers such as Black Lives Matter art, African art and colors. They even selected flowers to be planted the color of the African flag.

The children dedicated the park to local Olympian, Athing Mu, who played on the playgrounds of Trenton. (For more details see pages 94-95.)

## PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The matrix below will be used to track the progress of realizing the goals and strategies of the North Trenton/Battle Monument Choice Neighborhood Plan, including progress toward the Action Activities.

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

### HOUSING

#### GOAL 1: REIMAGINE DONNELLY HOMES AS A SAFE, VIBRANT MIXED-INCOME, INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY.

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Redesign Donnelly Homes so that it is more integrated with street grid and orient buildings to street.	Redeveloped Donnelly Homes.	THA, TMO	LT	
B. Clearly define public and private spaces to protect the safety of residents.	Decrease in safety of 10%.	THA, TMO	LT	
C. Create indoor & outdoor gathering spaces to foster a sense of community at Donnelly Homes.	Multiple social gathering spaces on the redeveloped DH site.	THA, TMO	LT	
D. Design Donnelly Homes so that it is well-lit and comfortable for walking.	Redeveloped Donnelly Homes.	THA, TMO	LT	



**GOAL 2: STABILIZE NORTH TRENTON THROUGH STRATEGIC DEMOLITION AND INVESTMENTS IN INFILL DEVELOPMENT**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Identify key opportunity sites for new infill housing in the CN focused on enhancing the quality and availability of rental housing.	Build 140 units over 5 years, a portion of them being replacement units.	THA, City Housing & Econ. Dev. Dept., The Michaels Organization	ST-LT	
B. Identify key opportunity sites in the CN for new infill housing dedicated to homeownership.	Develop 37 new homeownership units over 5 years.	THA, City Housing & Econ. Dev. Dept., The Michaels Organization	ST	
C. Establish a program to assist homeowners with necessary repairs. <i>Note: this is an Action Activity and overlaps with Neighborhood Strategy 2B.</i>	Assist 40 homeowners with exterior repairs.	THA, Trenton Neighborhood Initiative, City Housing & Econ. Dev. Dept.	ST	TNI, Action Activity Funds
D. Encourage state employees to participate in the initial phase of a new program providing incentives to rent or purchase a home in the Choice Neighborhood.	20 employees participate in initial phase of renting or buying a home.	Greater Trenton, NJHMFA	LT	
E. Incentivize residents of the Choice Neighborhood and income-qualified employees of Capital Health to buy homes in the Choice Neighborhood.	10 homes per year over 5 years.	TNI	ST-LT	TNI

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

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**GOAL 3: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD COMMUNITY WEALTH AND PROSPERITY.**

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Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Identify existing neighborhood homes that could be renovated and identified for homeowners.	10 homes over 5 years.	TNI, City Housing & Econ. Dev. Dept., THA	ST-LT	TNI
B. Increase participation in THA's new FSS program to assist Donnelly Homes residents to work towards buying a home.	30 participants over 5 years.	THA	ST-LT	TNI
C. Establish a program to assist Choice neighborhood residents to move from renting to owning a property.	20 participants per year in certificate program.	THA, City Housing & Econ. Dev. Dept., NJHMFA, TNI	ST-LT	TNI
D. Partner with neighborhood anchors to invest locally in redevelopment.	Creation of Advisory Panel to guide neighborhood redevelopment.	THA, TMO, TNI	LT	

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## PEOPLE - EDUCATION

### GOAL 1: INCREASE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Provide ACES training to organizations, community members, and agencies providing services in neighborhood.	100 people receiving ACES training annually. 3 annual trainings on site at Donnelly Homes.	Smith Family Foundation	ST	Smith Family Foundation
B. Expand Trenton Public Schools' Parent Connection program, and host parent liaisons at regular community events.	At least 2 Parent Connect sessions provided at Donnelly Homes. 20 families participating in Parent Connect activities.	Trenton Public Schools	MT	Private Foundations
C. Expand tutoring and homework support at Donnelly Homes and the schools.	15 additional youth participating in after school tutoring and programming. 3-5 regular TCNJ Bonner volunteers providing tutoring at least 3 days a week.	THA	ST	THA, TCNJ
D. Increase access to and use of mental health resources. <i>Note: See Public Safety goals in the Neighborhood section.</i>				

Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years

Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years

Long-Term (LT): 5+ years

**GOAL 2: INCREASE ACCESS TO AND AWARENESS OF AFFORDABLE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DAYCARE.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Develop Early Head Start site at Donnelly Homes.	24 additional early head start slots available on site.	Childrens Home Society, THA	MT	State/Federal Early Head Start
B. Partner with Childcare Connect to provide matchmaking services for those seeking Childcare.	30 families receiving referral services from Childcare Connect. 20 families successfully enrolling children at referred sites.	Childcare Connect, THA	ST	THA

**GOAL 3: INCREASE NUMBER OF CAREER- OR COLLEGE-READY GRADUATES.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Introduce youth and residents to potential educational career paths and feature local 'success stories' that provide positive, relatable examples.	3 career and education panels annually at DH. 2 information fairs annually at Donnelly Homes featuring career and credential offerings at MCCC.	Isles	MT	TCNJ, MCCC, City/County/ State
B. Provide reengagement center services to Donnelly Homes residents.	20 residents receive reengagement center services. 10 residents reenter school to complete their high school education.	Isles, MCCC	ST	Private Foundation/Isles
C. Provide financial skills education, including credit building/repair, first-time homebuyer workshops, and long-term planning.	At least 40 residents receive financial capabilities coaching. 80% of participants meet their identified goals (improve credit, increase wealth, buy home, etc.)	Isles	ST	HUD, NJHMFA, FSS, LISC, TNI



**PEOPLE - EMPLOYMENT**

**GOAL 1: PROVIDE TRAINING FOR LOCALLY- AND REGIONALLY-IN-DEMAND EMPLOYMENT.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Build training and job pipeline in healthcare, light industrial, logistics, and public administration with educational institutions, employers, and public agencies.	Number of employers and agencies participating.  Number of residents employed locally.	City of Trenton, THA, TNI, local unions	MT	County, RWJF, Private foundations
B. Increase number of Donnelly Homes residents participating in OneStop and MCCC trainings and certifications.	Number of residents receiving training and certifications from OneStop and MCCC.	One Stop, MCCC	ST	WIOA, NJ LWD

**GOAL 2: SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF LOCAL SMALL BUSINESSES.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Provide business planning and start up workshops and trainings	2 workshops start up workshops annually  Run pilot business incubation program at Donnelly"	Capital Region Minority Chamber of Commerce  Smith Family Foundation	ST - LT	SBDC Private Foundations
B. Highlight and promote neighborhood small businesses.	Feature neighborhood restaurants through Trenton Eat Local Club, with annual event in neighborhood  Promote at least 10 neighborhood businesses annually through Shop Trenton program	City of Trenton Division of Economic Development	ST	

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

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C. Connect small businesses with improvement incentive programs	At least 10 businesses annually apply for funding	City of Trenton Division of Economic Development	MT	City of Trenton/CDBG
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**GOAL 3: EXPAND RE-ENTRY EMPLOYMENT TRAINING, PLACEMENT, AND SUPPORT.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
Host expungement workshops and assistance sessions	2 annual expungement workshops hosted at Donnelly Homes, with at least 20 participants at each	THA	ST	State County
Provide focused services for formerly incarcerated individuals through the Trenton Free Public Library's Fresh Start program	At least 25 neighborhood residents receive services through Fresh Start  2 annual Fresh Start workshops and information sessions at DH	Trenton Free Public Library	MT	State County

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**PEOPLE - HEALTH**

**GOAL 1: ENSURE RESIDENTS HAVE ACCESS TO FAMILY AND CHILDRENS' HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Integrate a designated space at Donnelly Homes and in the Junior 1 School building where a medical professional can provide health and wellness services within easy access of residents.	Establishment of designated spaces to provide medical services to residents.	TMO	MT	
B. Increase access to appropriate and accurate reproductive health information and services.	2 annual visits to DH by Henry J Austin's mobile reproductive health unit. 2 annual information sessions.	Henry J Austin, THA	ST	Henry J Austin
C. Provide wrap-around services to expecting and new parents and their children.	At least 20 Donnelly Homes and neighborhood expecting families receive wrap-around services. At least 30 DH and neighborhood expecting families participate in Greater Mount Zion AME's maternal health initiative.	TNI, Greater Mount Zion, AME/Salvation & Social Justice	ST	TNI
D. Host two annual health fairs with insurance navigators to support residents during and after open enrollment.	2 annual health fairs with insurance navigators, insurance providers, and healthcare providers. 50 participants at health fairs.	THA	ST	THA, Capital Health, Family Resource Network

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

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**GOAL 3: INCREASE ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

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Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Provide healthy eating, cooking, and nutrition classes on site.	4 classes offered per year. 40 participants annually.	Isles	ST	Isles
B. Expand community garden at Donnelly Homes.	Install 3 additional raised beds at Donnelly. At least 2 neighborhood community gardens established. 20 participants annually in utilizing raised beds and/or in related programming.	Isles, THA	ST	TNI, Isles
C. Increase access for Donnelly Homes residents to safe recreation and activities.	Consistent T-RECS programming at Donnelly Homes or neighborhood at least 25 times annually for 3 years.	Isles	ST-MT	TNI, Isles



**NEIGHBORHOOD**

**GOAL 1: FOCUS REDEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON MLK BOULEVARD TO EXEMPLIFY THE LEGACY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. AND BECOME A FOCAL POINT OF ACTIVITY FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH NEW BUSINESSES, RESTAURANTS, HOUSING AND INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Transform Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard into a Complete Street that incorporates public art, interpretive signage, green infrastructure, emphasizing MLK/Southard and MLK/ Calhoun as gateways.	MLK is renovated as a complete street integrating green infrastructure, safety enhancements and public art.	Department of Public Works and Department of Housing and Economic Development, Smith Family Foundation, Greater Mt. Zion AME	ST	NJDOT local aid, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, CDBG, Choice
B. Redesign and reorient the Donnelly Homes Site so that it embraces MLK Boulevard and activates the street life.	Redesign and reorient the Donnelly Homes Site so that it embraces MLK Boulevard and activates the street life.	THA and The Michaels Organization	MT-LT	
C. Adaptively reuse Junior 1 Middle School as a mixed-use development incorporating community services and amenities so that it serves as a central gathering place for the neighborhood.	Junior 1 renovated and adaptively reused as community hub & housing.	THA, The Michaels Organization, Trenton Public Schools, Department of Housing and Economic Development	LT	
D. Establish a local business incubator that nurtures entrepreneurs and provides micro loans/grants and programming, mentorships, and youth programs.	Creation of an incubator (ST - programming at Donnelly Homes).	Department of Housing and Economic Development, Smith Family Foundation	ST-LT	Smith Family Foundation

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

E. Promote the City’s business improvement incentive program and available tools to area businesses with an annual walkabout. *Note: Cross-reference with People Employment Goal 2C*

Annual walkabout to business by DHED to share info; At least 5 businesses use improvement incentive.

Department of Housing and Economic Development, TNI

ST-LT

Business improvement incentive

F. Encourage participation of Donnelly Homes and CN residents in TNI’s training and financial assistance to prospective & existing business owners.

100 businesses or residents participate in training, and 20 businesses receive grants over 5 years.

TNI, Department of Housing and Economic Development

ST-LT

**GOAL 2: STOP THE SPREAD OF BLIGHT AND VACANCIES.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Identify vacant lots for the Clean and Green program to demonstrate that they are watched, secured, and maintained, beginning with main corridors.	10 lots in year 1, with a total of 15 over 5 years will be cleaned, greened, maintained. 4 lots will be activated with 28 activities.	Isles, TNI	ST-LT	Choice and CDBG
B. Establish a program to assist homeowners with necessary repairs. <i>Note: this is an Action Activity.</i>	40 renovated residential facades; 40 Healthy Homes Assessments.	THA, TNI, Isles, Department of Housing and Economic Development	ST	Choice, City, TNI, Isles
C. Clean, clear, and complete site preparation of missing “teeth” particularly along main arteries and highly visible locations like MLK Boulevard, to facilitate infill development.	53 properties demolished and the sites prepared for redevelopment.	Department of Public Works, Department of Housing and Economic Development		CDBG



**GOAL 3: DISTINGUISH THE AREA’S IDENTITY AND CHARACTER BY CELEBRATING THE NEIGHBORHOOD’S LAYERED HISTORY AND DEEP SENSE OF COMMUNITY.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Integrate a variety of safe, programmed gathering spaces—large and small—on-site at Donnelly Homes and throughout the neighborhood to encourage social interaction.	Develop at least two programmed spaces.	THA, The Michaels Organization, Isles	ST-MT	
B. Establish spaces either at Junior 1 (or Donnelly Homes) that offers community resources (reading room, performance space, community kitchen, classroom space, civic plaza with art ) that serves as a community hub.	Creation of dedicated community spaces.	THA, The Michaels Organization	MT	

**GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN AND IMPROVE PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS TO MAJOR ASSETS AND AMENITIES.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Implement safe routes, including traffic calming and well-marked crosswalks, along streets leading to the schools, parks, Capital Health Medical Complex, and commercial corridors.	Conduct Safe Routes to School Audits for MLK Elementary & Rivera Middle School (ST); Implement SRTS recommendations (MT); Improve five other intersections in the CHOICE neighborhood using safe routes strategies.	Department of Public Works, Department of Housing and Economic Development	ST-LT	NJDOT, Trenton Complete Streets Team, DVRPC Greater Mercer TMA
B. Trim trees and shrubs at entrances to and within parks so there are clear lines of sight across the parks.	Trim and maintain four park entrances.	Department of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture	ST	

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

C. Prioritize implementation of “Complete Streets” along MLK Boulevard, to the schools, and to the Delaware & Raritan Canal Trail that is part of the East Coast Greenway.

Improve five intersections in the CHOICE neighborhood using strategies identified in the Trenton Complete Streets Design Handbook.

Department of Public Works, Department of Housing and Economic Development

MT

NJDOT, Trenton Complete Streets Team, DVRPC

D. Work with NJ Transit to develop a more comprehensive design for bus stops including lighting and shelter, and seating.

Install one sheltered bus stop.

Department of Public Works

MT

NJDOT

**GOAL 5: CREATE A COMMUNITY THAT ENCOURAGES HEALTHY LIVING BY MAKING IT EASY TO EXERCISE, EAT WELL, AND ACCESS SERVICES TO HEEL THE MIND AND BODY.**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Create a new playground either at Donnelly Homes or nearby in the spirit of Athing Mu Park, envisioned by youth.	Installation of one new playground.	Department of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture, Trenton Housing Authority	ST	Choice, and City of Trenton
B. Improve connections to the local D&R Trail network through signage and bike lanes.	Increased usage of D&R Trail by 10% over 5 years; Signage in CN directing to D&R Canal.	Department of Recreation, Natural Resources & Culture, NJ State Parks	MT	State of NJ, City of Trenton
C. Create a fitness center at Donnelly Homes.	Establishment of fitness center. Number of resident who use facility annually.	THA, The Michaels Organization	LT	THA



**GOAL 6: INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGH A COORDINATED APPROACH BUILT ON TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY, COLLABORATION, AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION/INTERVENTION, SUPPORTED BY PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS. .**

Strategies	Metrics	Lead Agency & Partners	Timeframe (ST, MT, LT)	Leverage Resources
A. Create a public safety hub at Donnelly Homes.	Opening of Safety Hub.	Trenton Police, THA	ST	NJ Office of Attorney General, Private donations
B. Hold monthly public safety meeting at Donnelly Homes, led by a community affairs officer.	At least 8 meetings per year.	Trenton Police, THA	ST-LT	NJ Office of Attorney General, Private donations
C. Redesign Donnelly Homes to promote safety and visibility, and clearly define public and private spaces.	Redesigned Donnelly Homes; 50% reduction in incidents over 5 years.	THA, Developer	LT	
D. Enroll Donnelly Homes youth residents in Trenton RISE program.	Engage 10 DH youth in RISE program annually.	Trenton Police, THA	ST-LT	
E. Increase academic performance and decrease disciplinary actions of DH youth participating in Trenton RISE program.	10% increase in math and reading scores of DH youth enrolled in Trenton RISE.	Trenton Police, THA	ST-LT	
F. Tap into Street Teams program; identify & train outreach workers & community sentinels.	Train 4 Outreach Workers and 5 Community Sentinels from DH annually.	Trenton Police, THA	ST-LT	NJ Office of Attorney General

**Short-Term (SL): 0-3 years**  
**Mid-Term (MT): 3-5 years**  
**Long-Term (LT): 5+ years**

<p>G. Have Outreach Workers focus on DH youth, providing them with case management, mentoring, violence interruption.</p>	<p>Engage 10 DH youth and conduct 3 neighborhood interventions annually.</p>	<p>Trenton Police, THA</p>	<p>ST-LT</p>	<p>NJ Office of Attorney General</p>
<p>H. Set up &amp; train Community Safe Passage Teams at MLK Elementary and Rivera School.</p>	<p>Establish 2 Safe Passage teams.</p>	<p>Trenton Police, THA</p>	<p>LT</p>	
<p>I. Hold annual community walk starting at DH to identify neighborhood challenges &amp; safety concerns.</p>	<p>Annual walk.</p>	<p>Trenton Police</p>	<p>ST-LT</p>	
<p>J. Host an annual golf tournament or other event to raise money to provide student scholarships for college.</p>	<p>Annual event.</p>	<p>THA, Capital YMCA</p>	<p>MT</p>	
<p>K. Broaden civic engagement opportunities starting with a leadership program for adults and youth.</p>	<p>Two leadership programs / workshops annually.</p>	<p>THA, Smith Family Foundation</p>	<p>MT</p>	





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