

# AUGUSTA, GA SDAT REPORT





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## INTRODUCTION

## THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

With nearly 300 state and local chapters and over 76,000 members, the American Institute of Architects serves as the voice of the architecture profession and the resource for its members in service to society. The AIA has a 44-year history of public service work. Through the Center for Communities by Design, the AIA has engaged over 1,000 professionals from more than 30 disciplines, ultimately providing millions of dollars in professional pro bono services to more than 200 communities across the country, and engaging thousands of participants in community-driven planning processes. Its projects have led to some of the most recognizable places in America. In 2010, the AIA received the *Organization of the Year* Award from the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), recognizing its program impact on communities and contributions to the field.



- **Regional and Urban Design Assistance Teams (R/UDAT):** Created in 1967, the AIA's R/UDAT program pioneered the modern charrette process by combining multi-disciplinary teams in dynamic, multi-day grassroots processes to produce community visions, action plans and recommendations.
- **Sustainable Design Assessment Teams (SDAT):** In 2005, in response to growing interest and concern about local sustainability planning, the AIA launched a companion program to the R/UDAT that allowed it to make a major institutional investment in public service work to assist communities in developing policy frameworks and long term sustainability plans. During the first 7 years of the SDAT program, the Center for Communities by Design has worked with over 50 towns, cities and regions.



The Center's Design Assistance Team programs operate with three guiding principles:

- **Multi-disciplinary Expertise.** Each project is designed as a customized approach to community assistance that incorporates local realities and the unique challenges and assets of each community. As a result, each design assistance team includes a multi-disciplinary focus and a systems approach to assessment and recommendations, incorporating and examining cross-cutting topics and relationships between issues. In order to accomplish this task, the Center forms multi-disciplinary teams that combine a range of disciplines and professions in an integrated assessment and design process.
- **Enhanced Objectivity.** The goal of the design assistance team program is to provide communities with a framework for action. Consequently, each project team is constructed with the goal of bringing an objective perspective to the community that is outside of the normal politics of public discussion. Team members are deliberately selected from geographic regions outside of the host community, and national AIA teams are typically representative of a wide range of community settings. Team members all agree to serve pro bono, and do not engage in business development activity in association with their service. They do not serve a particular client. The team's role is to provide an independent analysis and unencumbered technical advice that serves the public interest.
- **Public Participation.** The AIA has a four-decade tradition of designing community-driven processes that incorporate substantial public input through a multi-faceted format that includes public workshops, small group sessions, stakeholder interviews, formal meetings and presentations. This approach allows the national team to build on the substantial local expertise already present and available within the community and leverage the best existing knowledge available in formulating its recommendations.



## THE AUGUSTA SDAT PROCESS

In November 2011, Augusta, Georgia submitted an application to the American Institute of Architects for a Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) project. As the application stated:



“The SDAT process will assist the Laney Walker/Bethlehem revitalization team in developing a sustainability plan for the community, while also considering its historical and cultural foundation. The technical assistance provided by the SDAT process would allow the development team to build on our current efforts in the design and construction fields: energy and water efficiency, xeriscaping, solar

orientation, water efficient landscaping, and light pollution reduction. Our goal is to translate these efforts in the construction field into a larger sustainability framework for the two neighborhoods, taking into consideration the larger triple bottom line. Although we’ve made a concerted effort to address sustainable principles and sustainable practices, these initiatives remain disconnected from each other. It is our goal to coordinate existing initiatives into a cohesive framework for sustainable development tying the two neighborhoods to the greater downtown redevelopment efforts. This framework should be based upon planning efforts that have already begun, as well as efforts that we would like to implement in the future.”

The application was accepted in December, and in March 2012, an initial visit to the community was conducted to determine the project scope and identify the expertise needed for the project. In June 2012, a six-member SDAT team conducted a three-day charrette with the community to assess current conditions, listen to resident input, analyze constraints and opportunities, and form a series of key recommendations for the city moving forward. The charrette process included tours of the project area, targeted meetings with public officials and stakeholders, a public workshop, and studio design sessions. At the conclusion of the charrette, the team presented its recommendations at a community meeting.

The following report contains a narrative summary of the team’s findings, with additional information and resources.





THE BIG PICTURE

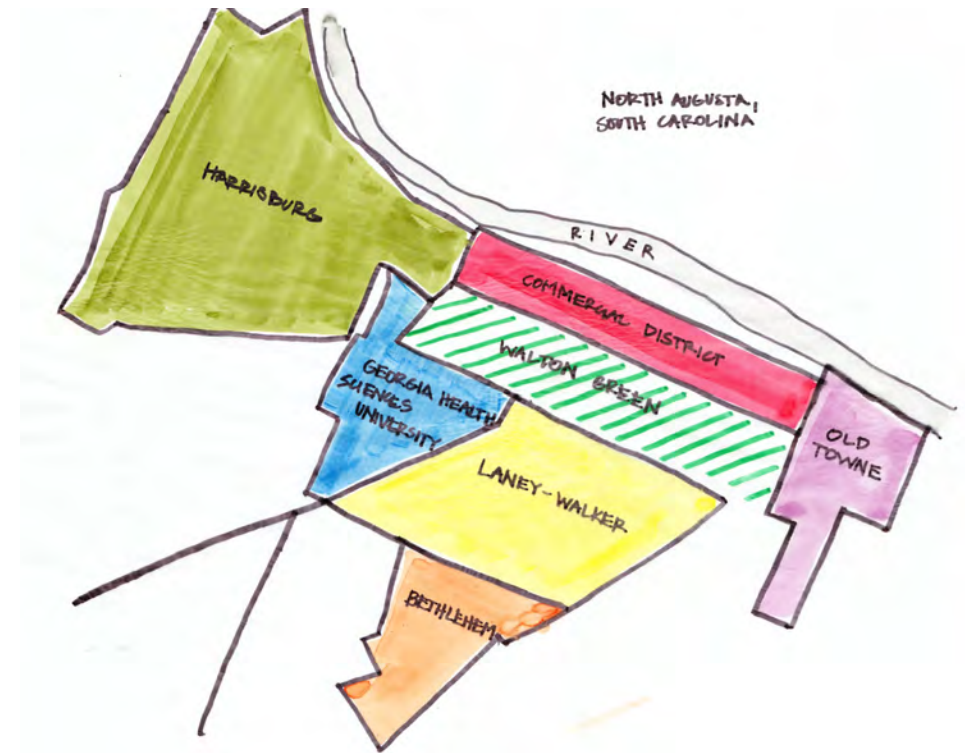


## THE LANEY WALKER/BETHLEHEM NEIGHBORHOODS

The Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhoods represent approximately 1,020 acres and approximately 3,300 parcels south of downtown Augusta. The neighborhoods feature a range of building types and land use, including residential, industrial, commercial and recreational. The predominant land use in the study area is residential (82%) with commercial (7%) and public institutions (6%) representing supplemental uses.

### HISTORIC CONTEXT

With a population that is 94 percent African-American, the Laney Walker and Bethlehem neighborhoods have an historic place in the Augusta community. Today, both Laney Walker and Bethlehem serve as important historic districts in the Augusta community. While their history goes all the way back to figures that include Charles T. Walker, Lucy Laney, and Bethlehem's historic families, these neighborhoods have produced a number of notable individuals. As the neighborhoods' website explains, "If you were to ask someone to describe Laney Walker Boulevard in the 1960s you would hear conversations about jamming with James Brown or taking in a movie or a live performance at the Lenox Theatre. The community was thriving with single-family homes and people walking the sidewalks on Laney Walker Boulevard from 15th Street down to the Lenox Theatre on 9th."





## EXISTING CONDITIONS

As the SDAT application explains, “Once vibrant African American neighborhoods, Laney Walker and Bethlehem became neglected and fell into disrepair.” The legacy of segregation and the corrosive impact of sprawl have had a profound influence on the neighborhood. Augusta’s application describes the resulting dynamic:

“As the 1980s approached, residential construction and economic development migrated to the suburbs, leaving Laney Walker/Bethlehem with reduced traffic and closure of many places that were community traditions. People moved away as well, and in the decades that followed, the area’s population declined dramatically—with a 3% annual decrease between 1990 and the mid-2000s.”

Today, the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhoods can be characterized by the following conditions, as noted in the Blight Findings Report commissioned by the City:

- **Loss of Population.** The total population in the area steadily declined from 1990 to 2000 (–16.4%), while the population in the City of Augusta increased at a rate of 5%.
- **High Unemployment.** Unemployment in the neighborhood increased almost 17% between 1990 and 2009.
- **Poverty.** A total of 84% of neighborhood residents earned less than the median household income of \$33,222. The average household income within the redevelopment area for 2009 was \$15,359. Approximately 47% of the families are living below poverty level as compared to approximately 16% in the greater Augusta-Richmond area.
- **Vacant and Abandoned Housing.** As observed in the Blight Findings report, “Vacant parcels, either abandoned, or underutilized are found throughout the Urban Redevelopment Area. In many cases demolition is the only option where properties do not meet code and are too costly to bring into compliance.” According to the report, the Bethlehem neighborhood has had one of the highest rates for city-initiated demolitions since 1998, a total of 102 homes. Laney Walker had 66 demolitions.
- **Deteriorated Housing.** The report also cited that 71 percent of the existing housing supply is “deteriorated and dilapidated compared to 29 percent which are either in good, fair or poor condition.”
- **Safety Perceptions.** While the City has made significant progress in addressing issues regarding crime in the neighborhood, the area’s image remains one that is challenged by concerns regarding personal safety.





## A TURNING POINT

In 2008, the prospects for revitalization in the area received a major boost, when the Augusta City Council passed a \$1 dollar hotel-motel fee, which made approximately \$750,000 available annually over a 50-year period to finance future redevelopment projects. As the application states, "The blight and disinvestment in Laney Walker/Bethlehem has happened slowly over several decades, with little to no investment by the private sector. At the request of community leaders, the City stepped in, with the Housing and Community Development Department serving as master developer, to jumpstart revitalization and create opportunities for private investment in these neighborhoods. The Housing Department has selected over two dozen developers, contractors, engineers and architects to work on priority projects within the revitalization area." The funding mechanism has allowed the City to resource activities such as land banking, real estate acquisition, planning, construction and other physical improvements. According to the City's application, "the Augusta Housing & Community Development Department has developed an overall master plan for the area to shape development, a financial incentives program, and a branding and marketing plan to promote the overall effort, and the selection of pre-qualified vendors (developers, builders, architects, engineers) to focus on early-phase catalytic construction."

## THE NEED FOR A SUSTAINABLE REVITALIZATION STRATEGY

The SDAT application frames the central sustainability challenge facing the initiative currently, in the following terms:

"In order to pursue the issuance of bond financing for project development, a number of plans were created. Such plans include an Urban Redevelopment Plan, a Blight Findings Report, a Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood Plan, and a Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Plan. While these plans have been instrumental in the city's revitalization efforts, there has yet to be a cohesive plan that addresses sustainability and green design."

As the City explains, "While we are dedicated to creating sustainable communities, there is currently no framework in place that provides the technical assistance necessary for implementing a long-term model of sustainability." The framework for a successful sustainability strategy is articulated in the remainder of this report, which details key elements concerning urban design and planning, green infrastructure and urban forestry, economic development and energy efficiency, as well as a civic process for sustained revitalization and community building.



## URBAN DESIGN & LAND USE



## DESIGN PRINCIPLE: A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

The team noted that the new housing developments in Laney Walker/Bethlehem, led by the Augusta Department of Housing and Community Development, represent a step in the right direction. The planning and design assistance from its consultant team, led by APD, has been exemplary. However, it was recognized by all parties that the process of housing production that has been put into place has two primary shortcomings:

- The current development projects cannot transform the whole study area into a 'complete community';
- The current development projects are producing primarily single-family homes, which limits the potential impact on repopulating the neighborhood and producing a diverse, vibrant mixed-use area.

In order for Laney Walker Bethlehem to reach its potential as a vital, desirable, historically-rich residential neighborhood supporting and sharing in Augusta's collective growth, the economic, social, and environmental imperatives of sustainability must be achieved. Laney Walker Bethlehem must become a 'complete community.'

In a physical, land use and development sense, a complete Laney Walker/Bethlehem community will include high-quality housing, a mix of other uses, strong connections to downtown, enhanced open space, and improved transit and green infrastructure. The team's questions, then, were:

- If, in order to be a complete community, the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood needs a greater diversity of land uses providing a more complete program of urban amenities and functions, where can these amenities and functions be located?
- If, in order to equitably share in the financial and cultural benefits of the greater Augusta metropolitan area, the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood needs stronger physical and infrastructural connections to both the Court Street business district and the Georgia Health Sciences University campus, how can those connections be made?
- If, in order to grow sustainably, the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood needs to have a clear and unique sense of place, how can that sense of place be established?

## COMPLETE COMMUNITY: A DEFINITION

A Complete Community is one that provides housing, jobs, education, shopping and services, culture, basic needs and recreation for people at all ages and socioeconomic levels. Most importantly, a complete community provides opportunities for residents and businesses to improve themselves, work together, and invest in their collective vision for the future of the neighborhood.





## EXISTING CONDITIONS

As reported in the Blight Findings report map prepared by APD Urban Planning and Management, in association with Contente Consulting, Inc., in February 2010, many of the small single-family homes within the study area are dilapidated beyond renovation and should be removed.

Beyond this conclusion, the team made the following additional observations about current conditions in the neighborhood:

- There are many underutilized former industrial sites in the area;
- There are some natural features of note;
- The area lacks a critical mass of commercial building use;
- The area has poorly defined walkable routes for pedestrian connectivity;
- The area has a lack of useable open space – recreational or civic.



## PRIOR PLANNING WORK

Although some of our land use recommendations differ from what has been recommended previously, the work of the SDAT team was greatly enhanced by the preceding processes and studies completed by ADP and others, including the following:

- *COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & VISIONING (2008 – 2009)*
- *LANEY WALKER/BETHLEHEM NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN (July 2008)*
- *NEIGHBORHOOD STRATEGY (June 2009)*
- *RESIDENTIAL & RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS (June 2009)*
- *PATTERN BOOK (August 2009)*
- *BLIGHT FINDINGS REPORT (February 2010)*
- *URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN (March 2010)*
- *RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS FOR WRIGHTSBORO ROAD CORRIDOR (November 2010)*
- *LANEY WALKER/BETHLEHEM GREEN STRATEGY (January 2011)*





A hand-drawn map of the Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium area, showing various urban planning features and landmarks. The map is oriented with North at the top. Key features include:

- Georgia Health Sciences University:** Located in the upper left corner.
- Heritage Trail:** A green line running diagonally from the top left towards the center.
- Gate Way:** A road running horizontally across the top of the stadium area.
- Wash Greene:** A road running horizontally across the top right of the stadium area.
- Landmark:** A red building located near the top right corner.
- Canal:** A blue line running vertically along the right edge of the stadium area.
- CSA 1, CSA 2, CSA 3:** Three distinct areas within the stadium complex, each outlined in purple.
- Bethlehem:** A large area outlined in purple, located in the center of the stadium complex.
- Clean Energy Solar Farm:** A green area located in the lower left corner.
- Building Materials Recycling Facility:** A green area located in the lower left corner, adjacent to the solar farm.
- Urban Forestry:** A green area located in the lower right corner.
- Stadium:** The central area of the map, outlined in purple, representing the stadium complex.

## LAND USE

- **YELLOW** space on the plan indicates single-family residential use at a density that approximates that of the new buildings being developed for the Heritage Pines sites. This density should be approximately 8 to 10 dwelling units per acre. It is our recommendation that the bulk of the land in the Laney Walker Bethlehem study area (all parcels that should not support alternative uses) should be new or renovated single-family residences.

- **GOLD** indicates greater density residential uses with multi-family dwellings and/or multi-storied buildings at between 10 and 15 dwelling units per acre. This denser residential use should be concentrated around major connecting boulevards, public transportation, and neighborhood-oriented commercial uses.

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- RED indicates recommended zones for first-floor commercial uses such as locally-owned restaurants and cafes, small grocers, specialty food markets such as bakeries or butcher shops, convenience stores, banks, personal care retailers, hardware and home furnishing stores, and upper-floor office use. These uses should be concentrated around major connecting boulevards and public transportation routes, but commercial development should also form an urban “edge” to the neighborhood along Walton Way and R. A. Dent Boulevard.

- GREEN indicates either dedicated public recreational open space such as parks or playgrounds (lighter green) or income-generating urban farming zones such as community-supported agricultural (CSA) cooperatives or urban forestry (darker green).

- GREY parcels within the study area indicate abandoned industrial sites that are appropriate for new light-industrial or business uses such as renewable energy (solar power) generation, shade-crop farming, and recycled and salvaged building material sorting, storage, and re-sale.

- Streets with green dots along them (indicating street trees) represent major connecting boulevards meant to concentrate commercial activity, public transportation, green infrastructure and public realm improvements such as ornamental street lighting and district-wide identity signage.

- Circles on the map indicate important intersections or nodes that should receive special design attention in the form of public investment in crosswalks, ornamental light poles with banner hardware, street signs, district-wide identity signage, and public art that celebrates the neighborhood’s historical significance.

**Important land use note:** Many of the uses that resident participants in the SDAT team’s stakeholder interviews described as being highly desirable such as artists’ live/work space, performing arts venues, movie theaters, student residence halls and (most overwhelmingly) a grocery store would require large buildings with great transportation impact. Although the “complete community” metric would certainly support having any or all of these uses within easy access to the residents of Laney Walker/Bethlehem, our assessment of the potential infrastructure capacity and ideal neighborhood scale within the study area led us to look outside the study area to find sites for these uses.





We felt the best location for these uses was between Walton Way and Green Street on or between 12th Street and James Brown Boulevard in an area we referred to as “Walton/Green”. Driving these kinds of larger-scale development activities to Walton/Green would not only serve to further strengthen the connection between Laney Walker/Bethlehem and Augusta’s Central Business District, it could create a new arts and culture district for Augusta and enhance the desirability of Laney Walker/Bethlehem as a destination in itself.

## ‘GATEWAY’ ENTRY NODES & EDGES

When entering Laney Walker/Bethlehem, it should be made obvious to visitors, residents and workers alike that this neighborhood - as the historic center of greater Augusta’s African-American cultural heritage - is both unlike any other part of Augusta and critically important to Augusta’s growth and prosperity. To accomplish this, four critical entry points and two important edges were identified by the SDAT team. Our recommendations for these places are:

1. Where James Brown Boulevard and 12th Street intersect with Walton Way should be considered “gateway” entry nodes for people coming into the neighborhood from the Central Business District.

A typical gateway intersection should be a place where a unique palette of district-wide signage, graphics, and streetscape furniture are first visible. Special attention to land uses on the south sides of Walton Way at these intersections should permit a widening of the public way and ornamental landscape planting to be introduced. Crosswalks and crossing signals should ease the passage of pedestrians. A slogan such as “Welcome to Laney Walker Bethlehem: Augusta’s African-American Heritage Neighborhood” should be developed by the community and emblazoned on banners and eye-level gateway structures at these intersections.

2. Where Laney Walker Boulevard intersects R. A. Dent Boulevard should also be considered a “gateway” entry node for people working in the Georgia Health Sciences University facilities and living or shopping in Laney Walker Bethlehem.



In addition to receiving the same typical gateway intersection design treatment as described above, this intersection should be specifically studied to improve pedestrian crossings. The “extra” intersecting street (Augusta Avenue) further complicates vehicular activity. Its termination should be considered. A planted pedestrian median between the westbound and eastbound lanes of Laney Walker Boulevard east of R. A. Dent should also be considered, and the rail spur on the east side of R. A. Dent should be decommissioned and redesigned as described in a later section of this report.

3. Where Wrightsboro Road meets R. A. Dent Boulevard east of the 15th Street overpass is perhaps the most important gateway to the neighborhood, and the most challenging to solve. Where Laney Walker Bethlehem intersects the City’s master planning work for the 15th Street Corridor, this node has the potential for being the most visible, most iconic intersection in the district. In order for this node to reach its potential, we recommend the following:

- Railroad Avenue be closed;
- The rail spur along R. A. Dent be decommissioned;
- A multi-story commercial development on this corner of greater scale and density than is currently being considered in the plan called “Foundry Place” west of McCauley Street should be considered. Multi-story commercial, medical, or research & development office space over ground-floor retail would be preferable to rental housing on this site. A building on this site should be scaled to “compete” visually with the College of Dental Medicine across the street in order to signal to travelers on 15th Street that private commercial development activity has taken hold in Laney Walker Bethlehem;
- A major traffic circle or landscaped island with a piece of culturally significant public art should be designed for this intersection in addition to the typical gateway intersection design treatment described above.

4. Walton Way, as an important edge for this neighborhood, should receive the same level of public investment as described in “Connecting Boulevards” to follow. Commercial uses should be the dominant land use for the southern side of Walton Way with building footprints and storefront entries brought as close to the property lines as possible.





5. R. A. Dent Boulevard itself - perhaps the most important urban edge to this neighborhood - should be re-imagined as a vital two-sided urban commercial street. This new streetscape, which anticipates the de-commissioning of the rail spur and the introduction of local streetcar traffic, a bicycle trail, and several blocks of locally-owned multi-story commercial and mixed-use development would significantly change the relationship between Laney Walker Bethlehem and the Georgia Health Sciences University.

Understanding that the neighborhood has a legitimate and well-founded concern that the GHSU should not be allowed to cross R. A. Dent and begin to displace potential neighborhood residential, commercial, and institutional uses, the barrier that R. A. Dent currently presents serves no-one's interests - except the railroads.

## CONNECTING BOULEVARDS

Laney Walker Boulevard (primarily) and Wrightsboro Road (secondarily) are being imagined as wide, tree-lined avenues allowing pedestrian and vehicular traffic to flow east and west connecting the neighborhood with the Georgia Health Sciences Campus and beyond. These streets are imagined to have enhanced public realm features such as benches, trash receptacles, ornamental light poles, and enhanced sidewalk paving patterns. They are also being planned for "green infrastructure" features to enhance their stormwater management capacity and for improved public transportation and bicycle lanes.

In as much as possible, commercial development should also occur on these connecting boulevards bringing storefronts as close to the property lines as possible and locating parking (if necessary) behind the buildings. This desired use is highly feasible on Laney Walker Boulevard from 12th Street west, but much less so on the narrower and more residentially-oriented Wrightsboro Road.





It is our recommendation that this level of attention should also be given to the north/south connections between Laney Walker Bethlehem and Augusta's Central Business District. Of these roads, we feel that 12th Street and James Brown Boulevard are the most likely candidates. A critical mass of commercial uses on these streets will be important to making these north/south connections happen. We are optimistic that several parcels north of Laney Walker Boulevard could support commercial foot traffic although the scale and character of these streets becomes more residential as one approaches Wrightsboro Road.

In addition, Martin Luther King Boulevard should also be considered a connecting boulevard. Small-scale neighborhood-oriented commercial parcels should be created or re-developed wherever feasible along this street to ensure that much-desired commercial uses are also within walking distance of the residents of Bethlehem. We specifically recommend that the intersection of Twiggs Street, Picquet Avenue, Martin Luther King Boulevard and Old Savannah Road – if it is to be reconfigured as shown on the “Twiggs Circle” development proposal – be designed in a way to create numerous neighborhood-scaled commercial parcels so that this node becomes the beginning of a lively commercial district.

## OPEN SPACE

This study area is currently critically underserved by public recreational open space. The pocket-parks, street trees, bioswales and landscaped buffers to private homes being planned for development proposals to date will certainly enhance the livability of this neighborhood and should be built. But every resident of this neighborhood should have a park within walking distance. A complete community the size of Laney Walker/Bethlehem needs several open spaces of the size of the playground on James Brown and D'Antignac to support its resident population.

We have identified locations for two public parks that would also serve as “common grounds” for this neighborhood. If properly designed, these open spaces can become the figural town centers where merchants and residents meet, where history is celebrated, and a vitally important “sense of place” is established. These spaces would be the “there” that residents currently wish they had available to walk to and congregate.







Laney Walker Common should be located on Laney Walker Boulevard somewhere between 12th Street and James Brown. The site identified on the conceptual plan is the full block between 11th and 10th Streets. The common should be surrounded by one or two-story commercial buildings serving as a prime location for the goods and services that support a residential neighborhood. This land use recommendation varies significantly from what is shown on the planning initiative called “The Boulevard”, but we feel these spaces are critical to Laney Walker/Bethlehem’s success.

Laney Walker Common should be designed for active but unstructured recreational use. Rather than being defined by playing fields or courts, the space should have crisscrossing paths for family play. The common should not be gated or fenced but open on all sides. Shade trees and flowering plants should describe the edges of the space and every opportunity should be taken to tell the story of Laney Walker/Bethlehem’s African-American heritage through plaques, sculptures, exhibits, and public art.

Bethlehem Common should be located on Wrightsboro Road, although a specific recommendation for a site was harder to establish. Bethlehem Common need not be as large or as figurally strong as Laney Walker Common, but a critical mass of nearby commercial space and a similar design approach should be taken.

We also strongly recommend that the banks of the Augusta Canal be investigated as a potentially beautiful landscaped amenity. As it crosses Walton Way and traverses many city blocks to the southwest, the canal already has a very romantic, although underutilized, character and could be a front yard to a new pedestrian “greenway” and commercial activity.

Finally, we have located several other recreational open spaces and at least two sites for Community Supported Agriculture within the study area. The exact location of these public facilities is less important than the critical need that they exist.



# RENEWABLE (SOLAR) ENERGY GENERATION AND A NET ZERO ENERGY NEIGHBORHOOD

Renewable energy is power that is produced from a fuel source that will never run out, such as the sun's rays and wind. Renewable energy is also known as "green power" because using these fuels does not produce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses or particulate substances that are considered pollutants. And unlike fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas, these energy sources are obtained free of cost.

Utility-scaled solar power generation with photovoltaic panels (PVs) could someday be a business opportunity that would fit very easily on a former warehouse or industrial site in the Laney Walker Bethlehem neighborhood. But unfortunately, “green power” is generally more expensive to generate today than old-fashioned grid-source electricity from coal-burning power plants. And although the public utility that serves Augusta – Georgia Power – does currently offer rebates for energy efficiency improvements made to private homes or business, the state’s laws currently do not allow utility-scaled solar power generation (“distributed generation”) to exist.

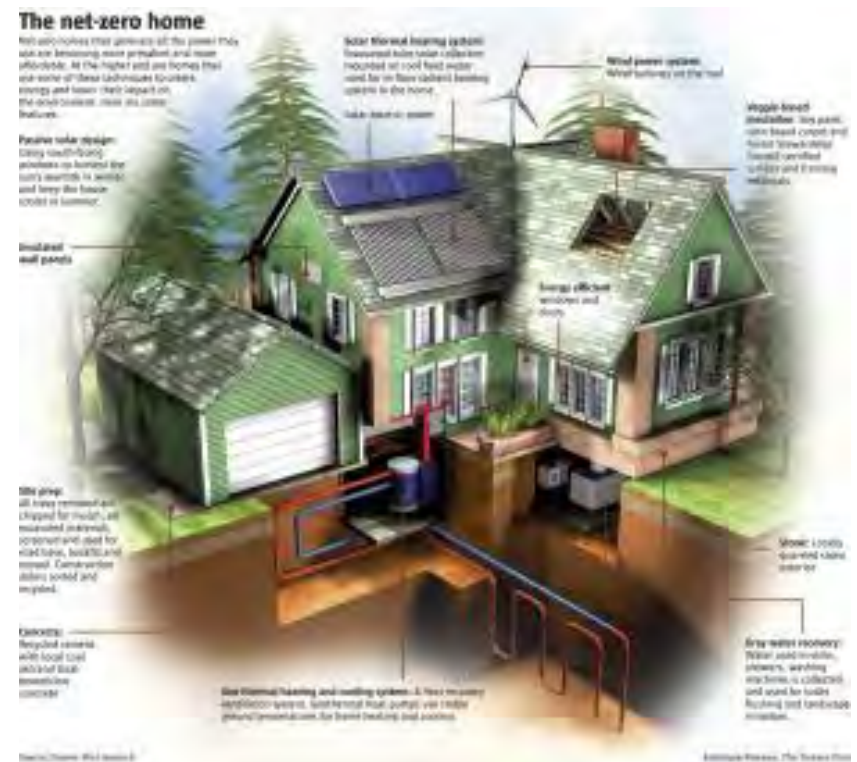
It is now legal in Georgia to build solar and wind power facilities, to generate electricity privately and to either use it or sell it back to the utility. The current legal limit of 10KW for a domestic renewable energy generation system (such as rooftop PVs) is adequate for a single family home. However, the 100KW maximum legal non-residential system size is far too small to serve a neighborhood. Many other US states have adopted 2 to 5 Megawatt limits to non-residential distributed generation facilities. A 5 Megawatt utility-scaled solar power plant could supply electricity to a significant portion of Laney Walker/Bethlehem. However, Georgia's laws regulating distributed generation of power must be changed first.

## Net Zero Energy

When a building produces as much energy as it uses over a period of time that building is considered to be “net zero” in its energy use. A net zero energy building is not “off the grid” or disconnected from the electric utility because at times (evening hours or in winter) it will need to buy power while at other times (summer or mid-day) it will need to sell power back to the utility.

A net zero energy house is first very energy efficient, and also has photovoltaic panels on the roof. A net zero energy neighborhood would be a group of homes and businesses served by a utility-scaled neighborhood-owned solar energy business where the total power needs of the community are served by the generation capacity of the solar energy business. This community would minimize the environmental impact of its prosperity, better-manage the cost of its electricity, and reduce the “export” of its power purchasing dollars.

Link: Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency  
<http://www.dsireusa.org>



*A Model Net Zero Home illustrated in The Denver Post*

## COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

A CSA (Community-Supported Agriculture) is a non-profit neighborhood-based organization that operates a professionally-run farm dedicated to supporting its host community. Often organized as a cooperative, neighbors buy “shares” in a CSA as a pledge to support the farm’s operations. The farm, in turn, rewards the shareholders with portions of whatever food products it has produced over the course of a growing season. A CSA will connect people in urban neighborhoods directly to food production and often take on an education component to their missions teaching shareholders about organic and sustainable farming methods. In turn, the farmers are guaranteed a market for their labors and are relieved of marketing, transportation and distribution costs. Urban CSAs can exist on as little as one or two acres of land.

Link: USDA National Agricultural Library:  
<http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csadef.shtml>



*A family plot at a community garden in downtown Newport, Vermont*



*Community garden in the Highpoint neighborhood in Seattle.  
Highpoint re-envisioned public housing projects as a sustainable  
neighborhood model.*





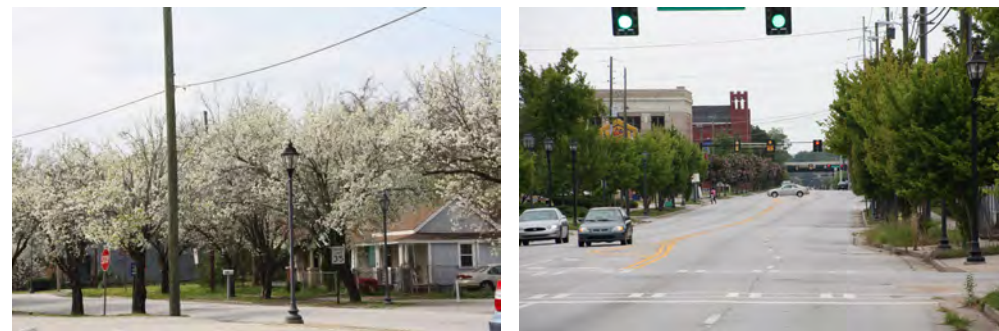
## URBAN FORESTRY

## URBAN FORESTRY AS AN INTERIM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The team believes that urban forestry can serve as an effective interim strategy to encourage sustainable development in the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhoods. Urban forestry can be used in the Laney Walker/Bethlehem community to provide temporary green space and planting material for later phases of project development. Most importantly, it can serve as a means of local employment by which residents can be trained and paid to plant and maintain trees that would otherwise be planted by a contractor or other service. Providing trees as part of this urban setting is essential to improving the environment and critical to the health and sustainability of the urban infrastructure. While it is proven that trees provide the physical benefits of shade and natural beauty, they also provide other social, environmental, and economic benefits. Studies have shown that a lack of green space correlates to urban poverty, which is often connected to poor health. Neighborhoods with trees, most often, house residents in better health and with less stress. This is due to the spaces for recreation and mediation that green places provide. The environmental benefits of trees include reduced energy consumption, from the cooling of structures, cleaner air, and the absorption of sunlight and UV rays. The economic benefit of urban forestry, as mentioned, includes the employment of residents. However, the community as a whole benefits with the increased property values that trees bring to a neighborhood. It is often the case that the greener the neighborhood, the more valuable the prevailing real-estate and rents will be.

There are challenges that the implementation of an urban forestry program will bring to the Laney Walker/Bethlehem community. These include maintenance, management, and weighing the benefits against the cost of implementing a program. The following goals must be addressed:

- The community must gather support and stewards to ensure adequate funding.
- Adequate staff must be employed for planting and maintenance of trees.
- Suitable sites, both temporary and permanent, must be found for growing masses of trees, and the planting of trees to create streetscape and landscape areas.



*Urban forestry and other green infrastructure interventions should be integrated in the overall planning for Laney Walker/Bethlehem. This will help to ensure a livable and sustainable community.*





GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

## WHAT IS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE?

Green infrastructure includes constructed natural areas, like vegetated medians, street tree trenches, urban gardens and urban forestry, that mimic nature's processes for storm water management. In the natural cycle some rain water soaks into the ground; some is taken up by trees and other vegetation; some evaporates into the air; and still more runs off into rivers and other waterways. This natural process contributes to improved air and water quality, mitigation of urban heat islands, and reduced energy costs; consequently, green infrastructure is a cost effective and environmentally preferable means to manage storm water.

It has been shown that public interest in green infrastructure is enhanced by exposure to successful green infrastructure installations as well as an affiliation with individuals and organizations that support green infrastructure. Therefore, public investments in small urban parks like green community or civic space can spur private residential scale investments like rain barrels and yard rain gardens. Examples of green infrastructure include green roofs, street trees, increased green space, rain barrels, rain gardens, and permeable pavement. These interventions have several key benefits, including the following:

- They beautify neighborhoods;
- They help cool urban heat island effects and cleanse the air;
- They have public health benefits, including reducing asthma and heat-related illnesses;
- They help lower heating and cooling energy costs;
- They help create local jobs and provide economic benefits.

The Natural Resource Defense Council (NRDC) has identified six key steps cities can take on green infrastructure:

- Develop a long-term green infrastructure plan to lay out the city's vision, as well as prioritize infrastructure investment.
- Develop and enforce a strong retention standard for stormwater to minimize the impact from development and protect water resources.



- Require the use of green infrastructure to reduce, or otherwise manage runoff from, some portion of impervious surfaces as a complement to comprehensive planning.
- Provide incentives for residential and commercial property owners to install green infrastructure, spurring private owners to take action.
- Provide guidance or other affirmative assistance to accomplish green infrastructure through demonstration projects, workshops and "how-to" materials and guides.
- Ensure a long-term, dedicated funding source is available to support green infrastructure investment.





*Laney Walker Boulevard envisioned as a Complete Street*

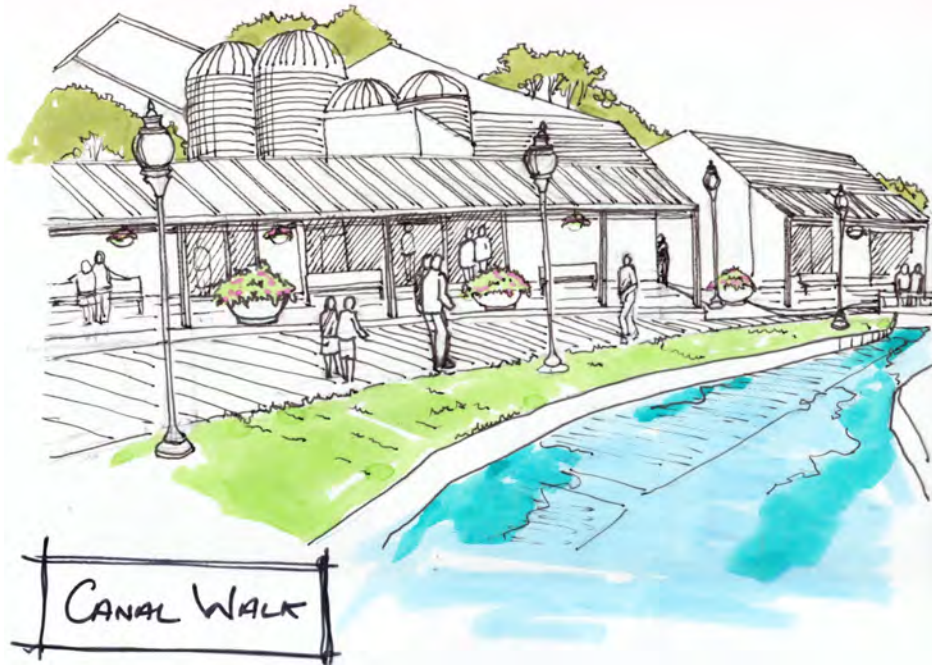
## COMPLETE STREETS

ADP Urban Planning and Management and Augusta Housing and Community Development have shown a commitment to preserve the culture and character of the Laney Walker and Bethlehem neighborhoods, as evidenced by the proposal for a Heritage Trail. The heritage trail pays homage to the local culture and expresses the community identity through the built environment, through the identification of historic structures and historic places, as well as the installation of plaques, monuments and art. A local competition for art installations would invite community residents to play a role in the promotion of neighborhood identity. The heritage trail experience may be greatly enhanced by the complete streets concept, which accommodates bus, bike, and walking tours, aesthetically-pleasing, working landscapes, and clearly, identifiable recreational trail mile markers.

## THE MARKET FOR GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

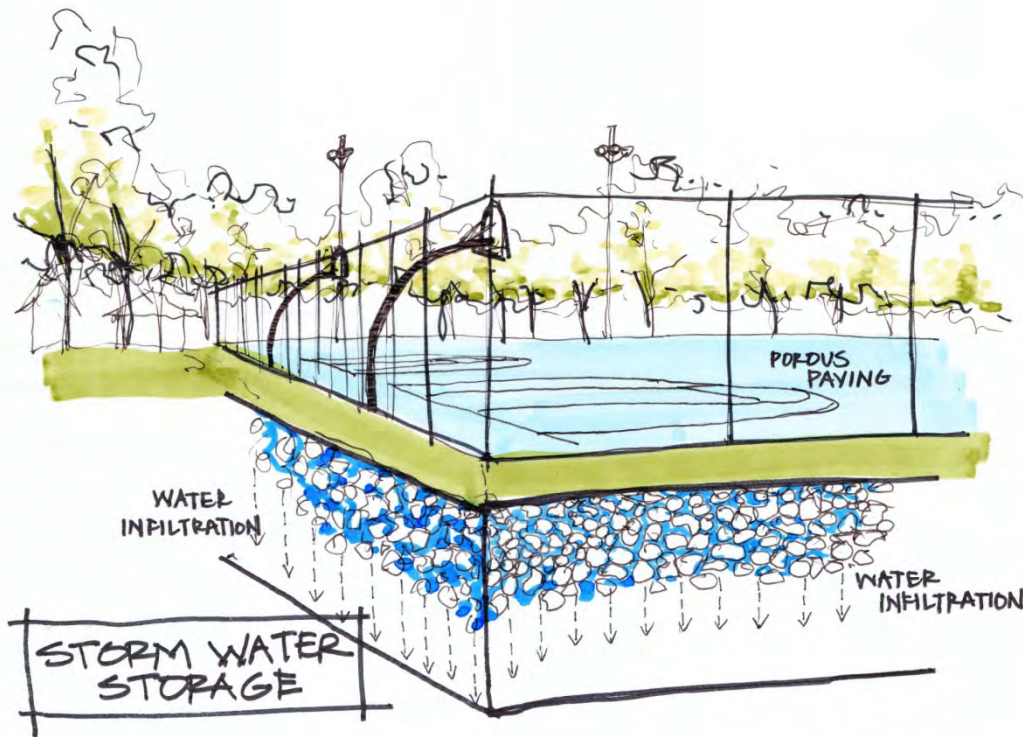
According to the Natural Resources Defense Council, the potential market for stormwater retrofit investment is large. As NRDC states, “Nearly 800 communities, such as Philadelphia, have Clean Water Act obligations to reduce raw sewage overflows from combined sewer systems, which are triggered by excess stormwater runoff. Thousands of municipalities have separate stormwater sewers that are also regulated under the Clean Water Act; an increasing number of these communities are subject to requirements to reduce polluted runoff from existing developed areas, including by retrofitting impervious areas. In Philadelphia alone, we estimate a potential market for third-party investments in stormwater retrofits on the order of \$376 million. Given the substantial gaps nationwide between water infrastructure funding needs and available local, state, and federal funds, cities all around the country will increasingly seek to leverage private financing to meet their needs.”

In 2010, the Philadelphia Water Department initiated a new stormwater rate structure that applies to all parcels, both publicly- and privately-owned, except residential buildings of four units or fewer. Together, these properties cover more than 14,000 acres of impervious area—about 50 percent more than the total amount of impervious area that the PWD is required to retrofit under its 25-year Green City, Clean Waters plan.



*Re-envisioning vacant canal-front properties as part of a central green spine*





Example: Dyess Recreation Center, Innovative Stormwater Storage (Source: [phillyriverinfo.org](http://phillyriverinfo.org))

## STORMWATER INTERVENTIONS USING GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Resurfacing the basketball court at the Dyess Recreation Center with porous paving provides an opportunity to store stormwater in the wastewater system until after a storm event and therefore reduce flooding events. The side by side performance of porous paving compared to traditional paving is readily apparent in the image of the Mill Creek Porous Paving Basketball Court in Philadelphia, PA.

As NRDC observes, “traditional solutions that rely solely on fixing or expanding existing sewer and stormwater infrastructure can be extremely expensive and fail to address the root cause of the problem: impervious spaces in the built environment that generate 10 trillion gallons of untreated runoff per year.”

Philadelphia encourages property owners to install green infrastructure techniques with an innovative stormwater billing structure that includes a significant credit (up to nearly 100 percent) for non-residential owners if they manage to keep the first inch of rainfall on their property rather than letting it runoff into storm drains. Using creative approaches to green infrastructure can help facilitate billions of dollars in private investment in stormwater retrofits, saving on public infrastructure costs while cleaning waterways and greening communities. Philadelphia’s stormwater billing structure lays the groundwork for innovative financing mechanisms that can underwrite the capital costs of green infrastructure retrofits.



TRANSIT



## THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSIT

Adequate transit in Laney Walker/Bethlehem can provide access and mobility to residents by creating a means of travel to work, school, shopping, and other desired destinations. In the redevelopment of Laney Walker/Bethlehem it would be misguided to assume that everyone is using an automobile. A plan that incorporates transit and walkable communities is essential.

Transit thrives in a particular urban form, both shaped and sustained by increased population and density. The physiography and potential density of Laney Walker/Bethlehem is right for sustaining public transit. Implementing transit in Laney Walker/Bethlehem, which now suffers from low density and insufficient land use, can be a catalyst for new development and increased density. Transit infrastructure requires stops with amenities and the physical and design improvements to support them, including walkable connections. These improvements can also include transit-oriented development. Transit-oriented development is residential or commercial development designed to maintain access to public transportation, and often incorporates features like public green spaces, parks, public art, housing, offices and neighborhood retail. Many of these improvements are already included in the planning for Laney Walker/Bethlehem. Transit will only enhance their existence. A transit-conducive community and the infrastructure that it requires are instinctive to a livable urban community. These include:

- Walkability
- Connectivity
- Mixed-used and diversity
- Mixed housing types
- Quality architecture
- Traditional neighborhood structure
- Increased density

The configuration of urban form and land use patterns, characterized by diversity, density, design, etc., is likely to influence travel behavior. Increased densities result in more public transit (Furth et. al, 2007). In locations of higher





frequencies of service. It is also more cost efficient to provide increased service with increased use. Pedestrian and transit oriented design is characterized by small block sizes, complete sidewalk systems, the absence of cul-de-sacs and limited residential parking. These features discourage car use and facilitate transit use.

There will be challenges to providing increased transit in Laney/Walker Bethlehem. These include quality of life issues that often lead individuals to oppose transit. Cultural themes, such as anti-urbanism, the dominance of the automobile, and the thought that transit is for “others”, are often hurdles to overcome. There are also the issues of cost and utility, crime, property values, and fear of the city. Also, those with cars feel that transit is not a necessity and don’t see the benefits to all, but many community and collective purposes can be served by transit that is implemented smartly.

To create successful urban transit the following should be implemented:

- Ensure transit will not be impeded by car traffic
- Transit stops should be far apart for speed and frequency but close enough to provide walkable spacing
- Provide safe ways for pedestrians to cross the street.
- Provide adequate sidewalk widths (Walker, 2012)

The urban design, land use and transit should be planned together for Laney/Walker Bethlehem. This will ensure that transit levels and types are located in the correct places to enhance quality of life without negatively impacting neighborhood character. The key components to the creation of a sustainable, thriving, and accessible community include urban planning that incorporates pedestrian linkages to transit and safe street crossings.

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1. Furth, Peter G. and Maaza C. Mekuri. 2007. Parcel Level Modeling to Analyze Transit Stop Location Changes. Journal of Public Transportation, Vol. 10, No 2. pp. 73-91.
2. Walker, Jarrett Walker, How Clear Thinking about Public Transit Can Enrich Our Communities and Our Lives. Washington, DC: Island Press, 2011





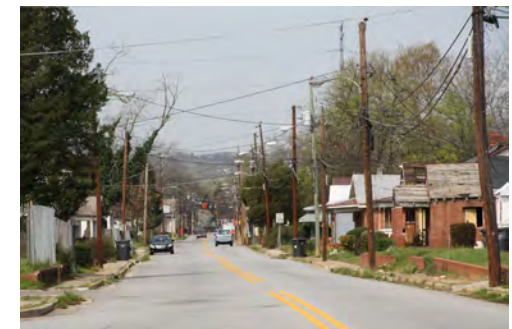
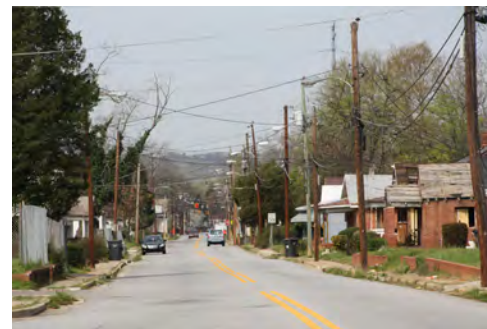
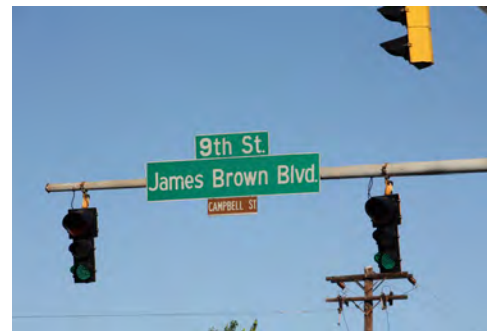
SUSTAINABILITY

## CREATING AN ECODISTRICT

Due to the extensive scope, ambition, and needs of the Laney Walker and Bethlehem neighborhood revitalization effort, the team believes the City of Augusta and its residents in and around the neighborhood have a unique opportunity to address sustainability and implement a practical sustainability agenda that addresses buildings, infrastructure and community action.

Our recommendations build on the work of Augusta Tomorrow's 2009 Master Plan for the metro region, the City's 2010 Sustainable Development Agenda that emphasizes sustainability and creating a shared vision of the future (Westobou Vision), and the Laney Walker/Bethlehem Neighborhood Plan that carefully lays out a revitalization strategy that is currently under way.

After reviewing planning and redevelopment documents, interviewing key community and public sector stakeholders, and touring the neighborhoods, it was clear that there is a tremendous opportunity to create a more ambitious and integrated sustainability agenda for Laney Walker/Bethlehem. Such a strategy would include adopting a comprehensive sustainability framework and performance metrics to guide neighborhood investments (e.g. EcoDistrict performance areas) and adopting an implementation strategy (e.g. four step EcoDistrict approach) that more explicitly links city and private sector investments to community engagement and action.





## A SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

To address the need for creating a stronger sustainability framework for Laney Walker Bethlehem, we recommend that the City and ADP incorporate a “complete community” strategy that uses the Portland Sustainability Institute’s EcoDistricts implementation framework and performance metrics to guide the current workplan. Such a framework suggests the creation of a more robust and sustained engagement strategy and governance model with the community in rebuilding these important neighborhoods. A complete community includes the following attributes:

- Healthy: Quality housing, safe, active residents
- Inclusive: Racial, age, social, lifestyle diversity
- Integrated: Schools, churches, community centers, daycare, shops and services
- Connected: Transit, trails, safe streets that prioritize walking, biking, play
- Prosperous Community: Locally owned businesses, workforce training

In 2009, the Portland Sustainability Institute developed EcoDistricts, a comprehensive implementation framework to help communities incorporate sustainability into neighborhood planning, infrastructure investments and revitalization. Incorporating sustainability metrics and outcomes into neighborhood revitalization requires a comprehensive approach in the areas of community participation, assessment, project finance, and public policy.

EcoDistricts bring together neighborhood stakeholders, property developers, utilities and municipalities to create neighborhood sustainability innovation with a range of outcomes, including improved environmental performance, local examples of emerging technologies, equitable distribution of investments, community participation, new patterns of behavior, economic development for local businesses and job creation.





EcoDistricts create a foundation for a range of strategies that can be applied at several different scales. Within an EcoDistrict, there will be catalytic projects at the site and block scale, as well as larger-scale infrastructure investments. The EcoDistricts approach centers on the implementation of a comprehensive four-step process that includes:

1. **Engagement & Organization:** Residents, business leaders, and other stakeholders organize to create a shared vision and governance structure to ensure that a neighborhood has the capacity and resources to implement its vision. Success relies on community engagement and active citizen participation to develop a governance structure that represents the community and can work effectively with relevant city agencies. Outcomes include the creation of a governing and funding partnership between the City and community based stakeholders through a written Memorandum of Understanding and the creation of a neighborhood-based governing entity with the explicit charge to manage district sustainability, and the next steps of EcoDistrict formation, over time.

2. **Assessment:** The EcoDistricts framework includes eight rigorous performance areas (see below) to guide and shape projects and to measure success against over time. Each district conducts a neighborhood assessment to identify and analyze the impacts of the most promising project priorities based on neighborhood interests and conditions. The outcome is the development of a detailed project roadmap to guide implementation over time.

3. **Project Development:** Once key project opportunities are identified through assessment, they require deeper feasibility to determine overall viability and cumulative impact. District stakeholders work together to conduct further business analysis and develop an implementation and funding strategy for priority projects. Successful EcoDistrict projects require careful alignment and coordination between district stakeholders, private developers, public agencies and utilities. The outcome is a set of EcoDistrict projects that could be led by the City, the EcoDistrict governing entity (including an aligned community based organization), a developer or major property owner, or a local public or private utility provider.



## ECODISTRICT PERFORMANCE METRICS

The EcoDistrict Performance Areas were developed to help guide neighborhood-scale sustainable development implementation. The eight Performance Areas each include a vision and a set of specific goals, targets and indicators. They include:

### 1. Equitable Development

*Goal: Promote equity and opportunity and ensure fair distribution of benefits and burdens of investment and development.*

#### Objectives:

1. Ensure neighborhood investments provide direct community benefit through job creation and investment opportunities
2. Provide quality and consistent local job opportunities through EcoDistrict projects
3. Mitigate the forced displacement of existing residents and businesses
4. Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement in all EcoDistrict activities and decision making

### 2. Health + Well Being

*Goal: Promote human health and community well being.*

#### Objectives:

1. Provide access to safe and functional local recreation and natural areas
2. Provide access to healthy, local and affordable food
3. Ensure safe and connected streets
4. Expand economic opportunities to support a socially and economically diverse population
5. Improve indoor and outdoor air quality

### 3. Community Identity

*Goal: Create a cohesive neighborhood identity through the built environment and a culture of community.*

#### Objectives:

1. Create beautiful, accessible and safe places that promote interaction and access
2. Foster social networks that are inclusive and engaged
3. Develop local governance with the leadership and capacity to act on behalf of the neighborhood

### 4. Energy

*Goal: Achieve net zero energy usage annually*

#### Objectives:

1. Conserve energy use by minimizing demand and maximizing conservation
2. Optimize infrastructure performance at all scales
3. Use renewable energy

### 5. Access + Mobility

*Goal: Provide access to clean and affordable transportation options*

#### Objectives:

1. Provide accessible services through mixed-uses and improved street access
2. Prioritize active transportation
3. Reduce vehicle miles traveled
4. Use low and zero emission vehicles

### 6. Water

*Goal: Meet both human and natural needs through reliable and affordable water management*

#### Objectives:

1. Reduce water consumption through conservation
2. Reuse and recycle water resources wherever possible, using potable water only for potable needs
3. Manage stormwater and building water discharge within the district

## 7. Habitat + Ecosystem Function

*Goal: Achieve healthy urban ecosystems that protect and regenerate habitat and ecosystem function.*

### Objectives:

1. Protect and enhance local watersheds
2. Prioritize native and structurally diverse vegetation
3. Create habitat connectivity within and beyond the district
4. Avoid human-made hazards to wildlife and promote nature-friendly urban design

## 8. Materials Management

*Goal: Zero waste and optimized materials management.*

### Objectives:

1. Eliminate practices that produce waste wherever possible
2. Minimize use of virgin materials and minimize toxic chemicals in new products
3. Optimize material reuse and salvage and encourage use of regionally manufactured products or parts
4. Where opportunities for waste prevention are limited, maximize use of products made with recycled content
5. Capture greatest residual value of organic wastes (including food) through energy recovery and/or composting

## A FOCUS ON SOCIAL EQUITY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Given the concentration of poverty and lack of basic needs in Laney Walker/Bethlehem, it is important to emphasize equity and community health when designing the neighborhoods' sustainability strategy. While the social determinants of health and equity are implicit in most of the EcoDistrict performance areas, they are explicit in the areas that address Equitable Development, Health + Well Being and Access + Mobility. The objectives under these performance areas are:

- Access to safe and functional local recreation and natural areas
- Access to healthy, local and affordable food
- Safe, connected streets
- Economic opportunities to support a diverse population
- Improved indoor and outdoor air quality
- Active transportation
- Beautiful, accessible and safe places that promote interaction and access
- Accessible services through mixed-use and improved street access





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABILITY & JOBS

### Characterizing the Laney Walker/Bethlehem Market

In analyzing the current market, the neighborhood exhibits the following characteristics:

- It is a comparatively small market. The market size in 2010 included only 1,180 households, compared to 2,428 households in 2000 – a decline of 51 percent.
- It is a more diverse market than average. The current market is represented by largely by African-American families (94 percent) and includes just 4 percent non-Hispanic white households.
- It has a higher average household than it did a decade ago. Household size is growing, and the average size is now 2.22 compared to 1.90.

MARKET SIZE	2010		2000		% Change
	#	% of total	#	% of total	
Households	1,180		2,428		-51%
Population	2,923		4,758		-39%
per Household	2.22		1.90		17%
Male	1,476	50%	2,227	47%	-34%
Female	1,447	50%	2,531	53%	-43%
Average Age	43		40.1		0.1
Diversity Index	0.90		-		-
Hispanic	25	1%	9	0%	178%
White (non-Hispanic)	109	4%	52	1%	110%
Black (non-Hispanic)	2,757	94%	4,643	98%	-41%
Asian (non-Hispanic)	6	0%	8	0%	-25%
Other (non-Hispanic)	26	1%	46	1%	-43%

## CURRENT LANEY WALKER/BETHLEHEM ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

The team assessed the current market size and analyzed the potential economic impact of the current revitalization activities:

- Currently, the Laney Walker/Bethlehem market has a \$28.1 million aggregate income. (2010)
- With the ongoing revitalization activities associated with the neighborhood's new development, the team projects that the future market size will be \$35 million aggregate income upon completion of the initiative. This estimation assumes an average of \$30k income, with 500 new residents of which 50% are working, at the current dollar value.

Based upon these calculations, the team concluded that current revitalization activities are insufficient to produce the neighborhood transformation that community leaders would like to realize.

MARKET STRENGTH	2010	2000	% Change
Median Household Income	\$15,056	-	-
Average Household Income	\$23,815	\$23,178	3%
Aggregate Household Income	\$28.1 Million	\$56.3 Million	-50%

MARKET CHANGE			% Change from 2000
USPS Delivery	All ('06-'09)	-25.9%	
Addresses	Res. ('08-'09)	-7.7%	
% Change	Bus. ('08-'09)	0.0%	
New Home	2006	\$47,484	105%
Buyers' Average	2007	\$35,017	51%
Income	2008	\$31,196	35%



## MINING FOR GREEN: A NEIGHBORHOOD ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

Given current market characteristics and neighborhood conditions, the team believes that Augusta could take advantage of a 'green strategy' to produce workforce development opportunities and neighborhood jobs. By creating a green strategy that utilizes deconstruction, rather than demolition, the community can simultaneously serve several complementary goals. Building materials reuse is one growth industry that has the added benefit of enhancing sustainability. Deconstruction is the practice of disassembling a building with methods that are designed to preserve the materials (joists, flooring, siding, fixtures, and more) for reuse in new construction. Deconstruction is a cost competitive alternative to conventional building demolition, and while it is more labor intensive, many existing homes have more valuable material components than their contemporary replacements, making the business case for a more sustainable practice.

By implementing a deconstruction initiative, the community can address several needs:

- It can improve current neighborhood conditions, and the image of the area, by more aggressively addressing the volume of vacant properties. This activity would have an immediate impact on the visual experience of the area and improve community pride while making the neighborhood more attractive for private investment;
- Augusta can incubate new businesses through the initiative by creating demand for deconstruction and reclamation services, as well as create value-added markets from waste materials;
- Produce immediate jobs in the neighborhood. According to existing research, deconstruction typically creates 3-6 jobs for every one job in typical demolition.
- The community can implement a robust workforce development initiative as a complementary program to provide opportunities for local residents. Deconstruction is well suited for workforce development programs in construction trades. Taking down a building is an excellent way for a worker to learn how to put a building up. Unskilled and low-skilled workers can receive on-the-job training in use of basic carpentry tools and techniques, and develop viable careers in these fields as a result.

- Address sustainability goals for the city. Deconstruction and reclamation have a significant impact on the reduction of consumption of new resources, and help minimize the amount of landfill waste and pollution. By reusing materials in new construction, developments can apply for LEED ratings and meet other efficiency goals more easily.

The team calculated a renovation target of 647 homes, and a deconstruction target of 429 structures. Based upon these numbers, a green strategy could produce over 30 new jobs for the neighborhood.

	OCCUPIED	VACANT
Undesirable Condition	647	429
Good and Fair Condition	799	40
TOTAL	1446	469





## IMPLEMENTING A LOCAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

In the long-term, the team felt that Laney Walker/Bethlehem would benefit dramatically through enhanced relationships with major employers on the neighborhood's periphery, as well as stronger relationships to downtown. These employers are job-rich and accessible, but will require focused workforce development in order to produce jobs for local residents. Hiring persons from the communities where green infrastructure is to be implemented requires mechanisms to address a myriad of barriers to employment. Additional research is necessary to establish the relationship between unemployment, educational attainment, criminal records, and others conditions. The team recommends a comprehensive, integrated approach to education that includes the following elements:

- Local Servicing Schools
  - Develop public private partnerships (businesses) with the local community servicing schools
  - For mentorship, exposure to job opportunities, vocational training linkages
  - Open up the local school for community use
- Magnet schools
  - increase connections with local serving elementary and middle school
- Vocational Training/Adult Education
- Support the development of an Augusta Tech Downtown campus

The kind of economic transformation desired will take years to accomplish, but by investing now in building the critical community relationships and programming, the neighborhood can be well-positioned to take advantage of existing economic opportunities and grow new economic opportunities in the future.





COMMUNITY

## IMPLEMENTATION: TAKING REVITALIZATION TO SCALE

### *What Characterizes Successful Communities?*

The design assistance program has worked with hundreds of communities across the country. Through this work, we have identified several commonalities for success, regardless of local contextual differences. This combination of elements represents a community's civic capacity. While each community has its own sense of exceptionalism in confronting its challenges, and local context is always important, our experience with the design assistance program has proven that there are also the following common elements for success.

- **Broad Community Engagement.** Successful communities excel in their ability to engage the whole community in public work, identify common purpose, and build vibrant partnerships. The ability to supply a range of access points and a broad platform for participation enhances their ability to leverage partnerships. These community processes stress the civic realm over the political realm. They are able to transcend conventional roles and dependency on the public sector by forming broad-based, cross-sector approaches to common issues.
- **Civic Leadership and Intermediary Institutions.** In successful communities, civic efforts held more weight than purely political or governmental responses to the challenge at hand. As a result, they involved a broad approach to community problem solving that leveraged a variety of local resources and assets. One of the most important developments in many of these communities has been the presence of civic intermediaries who are playing a critical role in imparting facilitative leadership to the broader community. These civic intermediaries are playing roles as both conveners and focal points for implementation.
- **Vision.** It takes a vision. Successful communities are defining collective visions of their future, and working together deliberatively to realize those visions.
- **Public-Private and Cross-Sector Partnerships.** Successful communities have the capacity to build novel partnerships, convene broad-based stakeholders, and involve institutions in cross-sector collaborations to achieve success. They are adept at employing a range of public processes to identify key partnerships for implementation. Process and partnerships lie at the center of the effort. Successful communities recognize that sustainability is a communitywide endeavor, and they mobilize all of their existing assets in pursuit of public work.

## AUGUSTA'S CIVIC CAPACITY

Vision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Civic Leadership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Intermediary Organizations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Public-Private Partnerships	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Social Capital and Inclusion	?
Civic Engagement	?

## GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

The team viewed Augusta's civic infrastructure on generally optimistic terms. Many key elements for success are in place in Augusta, and the community has demonstrated significant civic capacity with its ongoing public work.

### *Vision*

There is a well-articulated aspiration for the Laney Walker/Bethlehem area, defined on the city website for its revitalization initiative:

"Walk around Laney Walker/Bethlehem, and you'll sense a pride of place everywhere you go. People like George and Octavia, Cleveland and Oscar will come up and tell you: We want our community to be reborn, to become the great place it used to be. That is the vision."

This is a grassroots vision, one that comes directly from residents of Augusta, and one that city leaders have responded to with new leadership



and investment in the area.

“City leaders have taken their cue, breathing new life into these two historic African-American neighborhoods and laying the groundwork to transform Augusta’s entire urban core into a model city for the 21st century.”

The Laney Walker/Bethlehem Pattern Book further articulates what the future neighborhood should become: “The vision is to create vibrant, safe, and walkable communities while developing a sense of place and continuity with the heritage of the area. It is also important for the future of the neighborhoods to protect its natural resources and become sustainable communities.”

Furthermore, the vision for Laney Walker/Bethlehem is complementary of an existing communitywide vision for Augusta. A product of the 2010 Masterplanning process, the “Westobou Vision,” serves as *“Augusta and North Augusta’s shared vision for the area that encourages a spirit of collaboration and cooperation across this river, devoid of political, special interest or proprietary boundaries.”*

#### **Civic Leadership in Augusta**

The team noted strong evidence of civic leadership beyond the local government in Augusta. Augusta Tomorrow, the organization that led the masterplanning process, is a significant community resource and mediating institution that has successfully convened the community for dialogues about its future. Augusta Tomorrow’s stated mission is as follows: “To serve the community at large by planning, promoting, and implementing the development of Augusta with particular emphasis on the city center.” In fact, at a larger community scale, Augusta is realizing notable success. The City has been recognized a number of times for its initiatives, including receiving a state planning award for the Laney Walker/Bethlehem initiative.

#### **Partnerships**

While the team found that the presence of broad and diverse partnerships was less evident in Augusta, we noted that the Laney Walker/Bethlehem initiative represents a significant and innovative attempt to engage the private sector in neighborhood revitalization with sustained public investment. If successful, this initiative will have wide-ranging positive effects on future partnership efforts across the community, and as such, it represents a potential game-changing effort for Augusta.



## CHALLENGES

Several concerns were evident from the team's observations and community dialogue.

### **Civic Engagement**

The SDAT process lent itself to an assessment of participation in public work in Augusta, and the dialogue during the process uncovered several key themes regarding community health as a whole. While Augusta has held successful public processes, there have been uneven efforts and continuing trust issues across sectors of the community. The public participation in the SDAT process was relatively poor when compared to similar communities, and participants raised a number of concerns about civic participation more generally. These concerns related to trust in local government, perceptions about unequal access to influence in the decision-making process for powerful stakeholders, and a lack of information and transparency regarding public work. Many of these concerns related to long-standing trust issues in the Augusta community, both a legacy of the era of segregation and a reflection of contemporary issues working together in Laney Walker/Bethlehem.

### **Community Building and Social Capital**

In more general terms, it was evident from the dialogue during the SDAT process that Augusta has a larger community building challenge. The levels of social capital and trust, particularly across race, are not sufficient to build the significant civic collaborations necessary for revitalization. There is a need for a concerted community building effort that transforms some of the balkanized thinking about Augusta's community landscape today and builds the important relationships that form sustained collaborations over time.

### **Governance and Political Paralysis**

The current Weak-Mayor System of government in Augusta has led to the perception (and sometimes, the reality) that representative government is stymied by political paralysis. A Strong-Mayor system or Council-Manager form of government would serve the city better, but given the history of conflict and contemporary tensions that break down by race and class, the current system is understood as a means to ensure equal representation and encourage compromise and collaboration.

The team heard a lot of input from the community concerning the current racial politicization and balkanization of community decision-making around competing constituencies. To be successful, Augusta will have to build the relationships necessary to transform this dynamic into one that is more inclusive, participatory, and effective. It will also have to build upon the Augusta Tomorrow efforts with sustained civic leadership outside the realm of city government to build an authentic community-wide process.

### **Compromise versus Partnership**

The Laney Walker/Bethlehem initiative was described to the team several times as a "compromise" among competing interests on the City Council, rather than a partnership of the whole community. The team understood that passage of the bond issue allowed for both revitalization of the neighborhood and financing for the new convention center. These items should not be seen as separate, nor should they be seen as serving separate constituencies – everyone should be involved in the success of both efforts. Much has been made in this report concerning the needed connections (both physical, and social) between the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood and the wider community, and this issue lies at the core of Augusta's challenges moving forward.

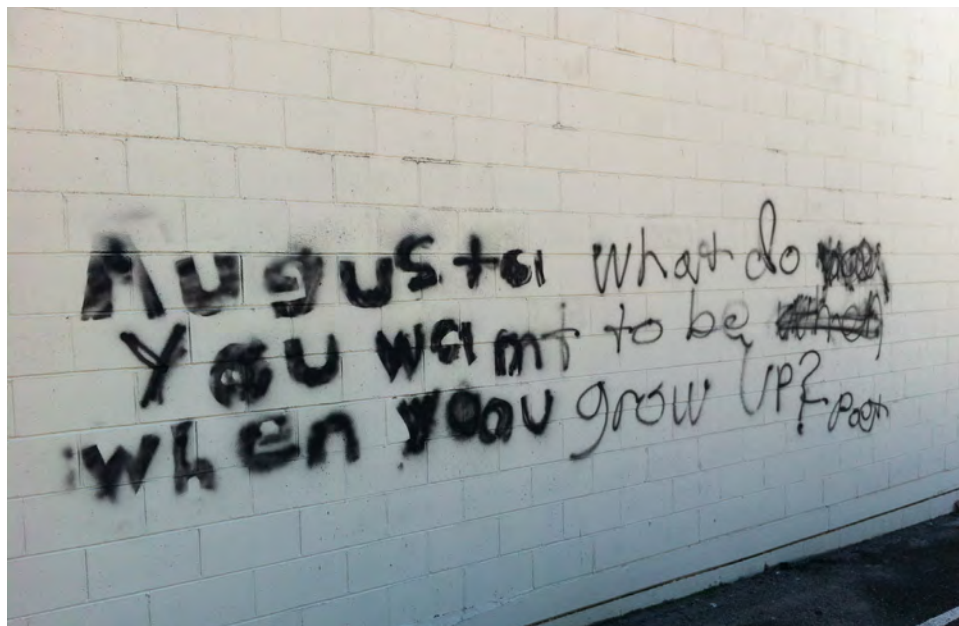
### **Inclusion and the Future of Laney Walker/Bethlehem**

*"Key leaders build their lives in this community when they easily could seek fortune elsewhere. Newcomers want to stay.... there's magic here."-  
2009 Augusta Master Plan*

Cities are, by definition, dynamic places that are constantly changing. During the 21st century, the ethnic profile and makeup of cities and regions are destined to change given the increased mobility of populations. The Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood has a long history as an African-American community that must be respected, honored, and nourished. Similarly, the community must create opportunities for potential new residents to move to the area and contribute to the life of the community and greater good. The work of the future will be centered on how to integrate long-standing residents and others seeking a comparable



quality of life with different housing, commercial buildings, transportation opportunities, and the public facilities required to reposition the neighborhood in both perception and reality. The central question, (“who is the neighborhood for?”) should not have a monolithic answer. In order for the neighborhood to be successful, current strategies must seek to attract new residents by creating a place and lifestyle that they find attractive. Therefore, the repopulation of the neighborhood must seek to fulfill multiple roles for a diverse population. Augusta must work diligently to honor the historic fabric and foundations of the neighborhood while also adapting it to suit contemporary lifestyles. The answer lies in giving the collective neighborhood a voice in its destiny, and empowering all residents to work toward the vision for Laney Walker/Bethlehem together.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Activating the Vision

#### *The Comeback Revitalization Narrative*

*“Laney Walker/Bethlehem: Two historic neighborhoods coming together to regenerate Augusta’s urban core: a transformation few people ever imagined.”*

Without a doubt, Laney Walker/Bethlehem has an aspirational narrative of what it wants to become. There is some question to how widely held that vision is, but the larger question relates to how the community can activate its vision with continuous, tangible actions toward the realization of the collectively held goal: the revitalization of the neighborhood. In an ideal scenario, the vision for Laney Walker/Bethlehem acts as a basis for daily action toward the creation of a virtuous, self-nourishing cycle of improvement. The goal is to leverage many investments and actions together to create momentum for private investment.

### Neighborhood Revitalization as a Process

Successful neighborhood revitalization in Laney Walker/Bethlehem will require many investments, both small and large, and they must all link effectively to one another to create an environment that is attractive for more of the same, creating a virtuous cycle that builds continued momentum. It is a complete myth to think that there is a single transformational investment that will serve as a catalyst for area-wide revitalization. It will require a process where both small and large investments carry importance, and feed the overall vision. Some communities have a tendency to be dismissive of perceived “smaller ideas” such as community gardens and public spaces. Some residents might consider these kinds of actions too insignificant to matter, and so unrelated to revitalization as to be unworthy of consideration. However, the experience in other cities provides evidence that each community must follow a process by which sequential actions leverage the following ones, scaling upward and outward to eventually create the desired environment. The immediate goal must be focused around creating an environment that is an attractive place for investment, thereby leveraging current modest public investments for exponentially larger private investments.

## Civic Leadership

*“This is an opportunity...no, it’s a calling. It’s a responsibility, our responsibility to make this vision happen. Our job is to create a community that knows no bounds.” – Fred Russell, City Administrator*

The transformation must be holistic, involving not only a physical change, but social and environmental transformations. The most important of these changes regards community-building efforts. Partnerships are critical for this initiative to succeed, whether they be neighbor-to-neighbor, public-to-private, or business-to-business. Cross-sector collaboration will also be necessary. Existing barriers to such partnerships must be transcended to achieve long-term success. Broad, diverse, and sometimes unconventional partnerships lie at the heart of many successful revitalization efforts. While Augusta’s city government has taken a leading role in the transformation of Laney Walker/Bethlehem through sustained public investments, it is important to note that it *cannot accomplish this task alone*. Neighborhood revitalization will require a community-wide effort, and it should be viewed as a broadly shared investment in Augusta as a whole. As the team noted during its visit, “as goes Laney Walker/Bethlehem, so goes Augusta.” Therefore, the team believes that Laney Walker/Bethlehem efforts require a broader constituency, and one that is inclusive of every sector of the community. One way that the neighborhood could encourage greater collaboration and shared leadership would be through the use of a Community Advisory Board model for the revitalization initiative. The Community Advisory Board could carry a mandate to lead coordination efforts for a holistic approach to neighborhood revitalization. It could include diverse representatives from the community, including neighborhood representatives, city officials (housing, schools, police, and others), non-profit organizations, representatives of major employers adjacent to the neighborhood, businesses in the area, and developers. Early indicators of success might include the raw numbers of residents involved in volunteerism, the number and extent of public-private partnerships, and the breadth of civic action in the neighborhood.

## An Asset-Based Approach to Revitalization

*“We are all faced with a series of historic opportunities, brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.”-John W. Gardner*

The team believes that Augusta has much good work to build upon in its efforts to reposition Laney Walker/Bethlehem as a vibrant and thriving neighborhood. In addition, the neighborhood has plentiful assets, that when re-imagined, can serve the revitalization goals of the area well. The key to success will be to reconceive of these assets and to leverage them in new and sometimes unconventional ways. For instance, much has been made in this report of the need to reconsider underutilized properties for potential public space uses or community gardens. In both cases, these suggestions are tied to existing public assets that can be rethought for greater impact in creating a vibrant environment.

## Democratizing Revitalization

There is an entire body of work in the field of urban revitalization that is now commonly referred to as ‘tactical urbanism.’ Tactical urbanism embodies a range of strategies to employ often-temporary interventions that remake use of the public realm. These efforts are often citizen-led, by neighborhood groups, non-profit organizations, and other entities outside of government. They may receive support from government, but many of them are grassroots in nature. Many of these interventions are experimental, but often have a catalytic impact on their surroundings by activating previously underutilized space. Some of these strategies have included:

- ‘Guerilla Gardeners’ – organized citizen groups who have planted vacant lots with flowers and landscaping.
- ‘Pop-up Retail’ – temporary programming of vacant storefront retail space to house local artisans and activate a main street commercial district at minimal cost.
- Public Parks and Community Gardens – transforming vacant parcels or parking lots into community gardens or public parks, creating active public space from formerly derelict sites.
- Participatory Art Projects. Engaging neighborhoods in visible art projects that enhance sense of place and local identity.



## LESSONS FROM THE DESIGN ASSISTANCE EXPERIENCE

These kinds of aspirational projects, in combination with other investments, can indicate a strong market interest in reinventing Laney Walker for people, and can make it an attractive site for future investment. More specifically, when strategically linked to one another, simple interventions can have a catalytic impact and draw more substantial private investment. Because they are low cost, and take advantage of volunteer efforts, they can be implemented quickly. They can also serve experimental purposes, with the more successful projects transitioning to long-term uses. Most importantly, they provide visible, tangible evidence that the neighborhood is making progress towards its goal, and they infuse community pride and broaden ownership in the larger efforts toward revitalization.



*One neighborhood in Seattle decided to envision what kinds of shops they wanted on a vacant block, and completed a life-sized public mural of their vision. It created so much excitement in the neighborhood that a developer decided to make it a reality.*



*Downtown Port Angeles - Before & After*

The design assistance program has witnessed successes in similar contexts all over the country. The following examples capture the nature of a revitalization process that scales upward and outward.

### **Port Angeles, Washington (population: 17,000)**

#### *Building Community Pride through a Public Revitalization Process*

Port Angeles, Washington provides an example of how to inspire pride in change by creating a truly public revitalization process. Their success has been built around involving everyone in the process.

In 2009, Port Angeles hosted an SDAT to focus on downtown revitalization and waterfront development. Port Angeles had suffered declining fortunes as the result of mill closures and reduced productivity from natural resource industries. The three-day charrette process created enormous civic energy to pursue a vision for the city's future. "Just two weeks after the SDAT presented more than 30 recommendations, the Port Angeles Forward committee unanimously agreed to recommend 10 of those items for immediate action," said Nathan West, the City's Director of Community and Economic Development. "Public investment and commitment inspired private investment, and, less than a month later, the community joined together in an effort to revamp the entire downtown, starting with a physical face-lift. Community members donated paint and equipment, and residents picked up their paintbrushes to start the transformation."

During the first summer of implementation, over 43 buildings in the downtown received substantial upgrades, including new paint and other improvements. This effort led to a formal façade improvement program that extended the initiative exponentially. The city dedicated \$118,000 in community development block grants (CDBG) for the effort, which catalyzed over \$265,000 in private investment. The city also moved forward with substantial public investment in its waterfront, which had a dramatic impact in inspiring new partnerships and private investment. Three years later, the city had over \$75 million in planned and completed investments and had turned the corner by producing huge civic momentum across the community. In June 2012, Port Angeles was recognized with a state design award for its waterfront master plan, designed by LMN Architects. The city will break ground on construction in the fall.

## **Newport, Vermont (pop. 5,000)**

### *The Power of Leveraged Actions*

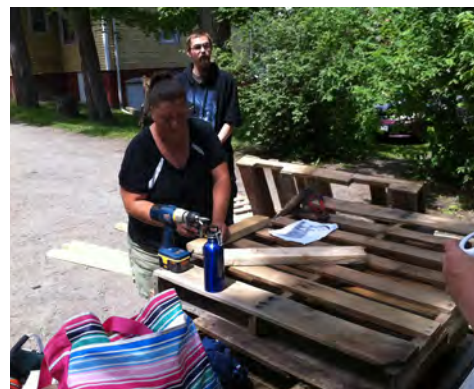
In 2009, Newport, Vermont brought a Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) to town to help build a revitalization strategy. Patricia Sears, the Executive Director of the Newport Renaissance Corporation, described the town's dilemma a few years ago: "We were the last city in Vermont to achieve downtown designation from the state. We had some of the highest unemployment in the state. We decided we were done being last. We decided, 'we are going to be *first*.'" Newport hosted the first R/UDAT in state history. Hundreds of residents and stakeholders participated in the process. As Mayor Paul Monette said, "it wasn't the usual political process. Everyone was heard during the R/UDAT."

Within two years of the project, the R/UDAT had built so much momentum that the town had over \$250 million in new and pending investment, including 2,000 new jobs in a town of just 5,000 – an incredible achievement in the midst of a severe national recession. Like Port Angeles, Newport was able to achieve success through broad partnership and involvement. It also leveraged small actions to build momentum for larger investments. For example, the R/UDAT team included a recommendation to create community gardens, something that has been suggested for Augusta as well. Newport created a community garden with over 32 organizational partners. They took advantage of existing capacity – a downtown parking lot that was donated – and not only created a garden, but programmed it to have a transformational impact. Out of the community garden, the "Grow a Neighborhood" program was created, teaching neighborhood residents about urban agriculture, providing space for family plots, and engaging local restaurants in a farm to table initiative. Six new restaurants opened in the downtown during the first two years of implementation. Newport also took advantage of widespread community participation in the R/UDAT to engage citizens in code changes, designing a participatory process to create the first form-based code in the state. New investments include boutique hotels, a tasting center featuring regional agriculture, and a waterfront resort. The city also created the state's first foreign trade zone, attracting a Korean biotechnology firm and other businesses.

The City has undergone a fundamental shift in its thinking since the R/UDAT process. In 2009, the public dialogue was dominated by nostalgia about the city's past. As one resident exclaimed, "I've seen Newport come, and I've seen it go." Two years later, the R/UDAT team conducted a follow up visit to assess progress in the community. As the Mayor stated, "I attribute our success to the successful R/UDAT in 2009 followed by the great public/private partnerships which have developed." The sense of change reaches all levels of the community. A citizen described the civic "attitude adjustment" that had occurred: "When you have people working together, things can happen and do happen. That's the most important change that has occurred – a change in attitude. All of a sudden, nothing is impossible." Today, communities across New England are visiting Newport to learn the 'secrets' of its success.



*Construction Kick-Off Party for New Resort Development*



*'Chairbombing' Volunteers engage in tactical urbanism*



*Family Garden Plot*



### ***Birmingham, AL (pop. 212,413)***

#### ***Building a Community-wide Revitalization Effort***

In 2011, Birmingham, Alabama was struck by a devastating tornado, leveling much of the city's historic Pratt City neighborhood. In response to the storm, city officials invited the American Institute of Architects to form a R/UDAT team to work with federal disaster officials and the community to build a sustainable recovery strategy. Over 450 residents participated in the public process. Mayor William Bell praised the R/UDAT plan, remarking that "It is truly a comprehensive plan and beyond the expectations that many people had and I believe that it will be the blueprint by which we can not only rebuild this community but spread all throughout the city." City Council President Roderick Royal added, "I think they have a wonderful plan, a very workable plan." One local resident who participated in the process observed that, "For those people who are holding federal aid or insurance checks to see what to do, I think this is going to make a difference." An editorial in the Birmingham News one week later called the R/UDAT "a model for other Birmingham neighborhoods to follow."

Like Augusta, Birmingham has faced challenges building diverse collaborations that cross race and class in the past, given the city's history. However, in the first year following the project, the City made transformational progress, building a community wide collaboration focused on revitalization. Within the first two months of implementation, the City was able to leverage over \$8 million in federal disaster funding to begin rebuilding important public facilities and support new neighborhood housing. Six months later, Birmingham was awarded a \$10 million TIGER grant from the Department of Transportation to focus on repairing street networks, and adding pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the Pratt Community. A federal official was quoted as saying, "The coalition of communities and organizations that have come together behind this grant is incredibly impressive. I think we all know we are working in an environment of finite resources, so from a federal standpoint it is always extraordinarily helpful to see a large commitment from the local community, the private and public sector and the region as a whole behind one project." As the Birmingham News reported, "The compilation of the grant application was spearheaded by the Freshwater Land Trust, the non-profit land conservation organization. The Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham and a constellation of donors large and small pledged local match money to the project. UAB and the School of Medicine pledged money. The Jefferson County Health Department, which already had supported the development of a master plan for greenways in Jefferson County as part of its campaign to reduce obesity, also pledged \$1 million.

CSX railroad offered to sell abandoned railroad right-of-way that could be used to develop a greenway at a \$250,000 discount in recognition of its employees living in the Pratt City area. Big business and environmental groups wrote letters of support." "This is really a celebration of our collaborative effort," said a local official.



*Storm Damage in the Pratt Community*



*The Sloss Factory, a former steel mill, is now a museum*



*The planning process engaged over 450 residents*





*Vacant Properties in the Fifth Ward*



*Community Art Celebrating the Heritage of the Neighborhood*



*The Fifth Ward "Community Jam" ampitheater created by local artists with reclaimed housing materials, has become the centerpiece of the neighborhood*

***Houston, Texas (population: 2,145,146)***  
*Leveraging Partnerships for Revitalization*

In July 2012, the AIA conducted a project in Houston's Fifth Ward. Like the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood, the Fifth Ward was once a thriving African-American community. It was home to such notable figures as Barbara Jordan, Mickey Leland, George Forman, and Carl Crawford, among others. Today, the Fifth Ward faces a host of issues. The poverty level is over 60 percent in the area. Like Laney Walker/Bethlehem, vacant lots and distressed properties present a challenge - within the narrow Lyons Avenue sub-district, as of 2012, there were over 550 vacant house lots; and over 125 physically distressed and tax delinquent houses. Like Laney Walker, the neighborhood faces perception issues regarding personal safety. Some residents in Houston refer to the Fifth Ward as "the bloody nickel." In similar fashion to Augusta, local leaders have been working on revitalization of the area for years. Kathy Payton, President of the Fifth Ward Redevelopment Corporation, observed that, "after 23 years, and the construction of over 350 homes and hundreds of multi-family housing units, it is hard to see the evidence of change." Scattered site development has dissolved the impact of housing investments in the community. The AIA project focused on building a strategy for the long-term revitalization of this area. Since the project, the Fifth Ward has already leveraged one major partnership for immediate and tangible impact. In October, through a partnership with Starbucks, the City of Houston hosted the corporation's global leadership conference, and welcomed 9,000 volunteers to the city to engage in a variety of service projects. The volunteer efforts were valued at over \$1 million. In the Fifth Ward, over 5,500 volunteers engaged in a number of projects over a weekend through partnerships with local organizations ranging from Habitat for Humanity to Kaboom!, to revitalize homes, create parks and public spaces, build community gardens, and give the area a volunteer-driven "facelift." This effort is a great example of the kind of leveraged partnerships Augusta could pursue as it implements revitalization efforts in Laney Walker/Bethlehem.



## CONCLUSION: THE COMMUNITY GOAL

*"The goal is not to achieve wholeness by suppressing diversity, nor to make wholeness impossible by enthroning diversity, but to preserve both. Each element in the diversity must be respected, but each element must ask itself sincerely what it can contribute to the whole. I don't think it is venturing beyond the truth to say that 'wholeness incorporating diversity' defines the transcendent task for our generation."*

*-John W. Gardner*

At its most fundamental level, the revitalization of the Laney Walker/Bethlehem neighborhood is not only about repositioning the area for success; it is about redefining and reaffirming the meaning of community for the entire city of Augusta.

It will require a critical transformation in how the city views itself, from the bottom up. On an individual level, it will require changes in how neighbors relate to each other, and on a broader level, it will require changes in how the collective citizenry mobilizes itself to work together for common purpose.

This is a generational challenge. It will require time, and contributions from across the city. It is not fundamentally a neighborhood revitalization initiative – it is a communitywide effort. However, it has the potential to serve as a dynamic vehicle for the city to achieve success, and remake its identity while preserving its heritage. The team believes that all of the elements are present for Laney Walker/Bethlehem, and therefore Augusta at large, to realize success. Its civic capacity is evidenced in multiple areas. The challenge will be to harness this collective energy in an integrated effort that realizes exponential returns. The team believes that the city is positioned for success if it can accomplish this goal.



A hand-drawn map in the background of the slide. It features a grid of yellow and red rectangular blocks. A prominent purple line runs diagonally across the map. A blue line runs horizontally across the middle. A black circle is drawn around a specific intersection. Various green areas represent parks or fields. There are some handwritten labels: 'CSA 2' in a green box at the bottom, and 'LAN' in the middle right. There are also some small blue and red markings.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



## Acknowledgements

The Augusta SDAT process was the product of public collaboration among many organizations and individuals. The team would like to thank the many public officials, civic leaders, business representatives and residents who participated in the process. In particular, the team would like to thank the following individuals, without whose leadership the process would have been impossible:

**Mayor Deke Copenhaver**  
**Fred Russell**, City Administrator

### Steering Committee Members:

**Chester Wheeler**, Director Augusta Housing and Community Development  
**Jesse Wiles**, ADP Urban Planning and Management  
**Hawthorne Welcher**, Assistant Director, Augusta Housing and Community Development  
**Glenda Matute**, APD Urban Planning and Management  
**Abbie Rickoff**, APD Urban Planning and Management  
**Hameed Malik**, Assistant Director of Traffic Engineering  
**Paul Decamp**, Planning Manager of Augusta's Planning and Development Department  
**George Patty**, Director of Augusta's Planning and Development Department  
**Scylance B. Scott Jr.**, Antioch Ministries, Inc. (CHDO)  
**Beverly Wright**

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**Elizabeth J. McGee**, LEED AP - CES Architects  
**William J. Palladino**, LEED AP - CES Architects





THE SDAT TEAM



## THE SDAT TEAM



Mike Davis, FAIA, LEED AP  
(Boston, Massachusetts)  
*SDAT Team Leader*

Michael R. Davis, a Principal and Vice President at Bergmeyer Associates, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts, is a practicing architect, and educator, and an advocate for sustainable public policy. He is 2012 Vice

President/President-Elect of the Boston Society of Architects and Co-Chairs the AIA Massachusetts Government Affairs Committee. Mr. Davis advises the Boston Redevelopment Authority as Chair of the Boston Civic Design Commission has served on the Boston Mayor Menino's Green Building Task Force, Massachusetts Governor Patrick's Net Zero Energy Building Task Force and is currently on the Advisory Board of the Boston Foundation for Architecture. For the American Institute of Architects, he has participated in three (2010 - 2012) and led two Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) charrettes in Ithaca, NY, DeKalb County, GA, and Augusta, GA.

Mr. Davis specializes in designing new and adaptively-reused commercial buildings, multi-family housing, and commercial architectural interiors. His expertise is in creating meaningful, relevant and innovative design through the analysis of context, program and public process. Some of his recent design work includes the master plans for the adaptive reuse of the LePages' Factory in Gloucester and the Boston Specialty and Rehab Hospital in Mattapan as workforce housing. Current projects include a new facility for Hostelling International Boston in an adaptively-reused historic building and a deep-energy retrofit of public housing units for the Boston Housing Authority at the Cathedral Family Development.

Mr. Davis is a Member of the Faculty of the Boston Architectural College, is serving his third term as a BAC Overseer, and was a member of the BAC Thesis Committee from 1996 to 2005. He currently teaches Graduate Research and Writing at the BAC and has taught at the Tufts University Experimental College. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Architecture from the Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Architecture from Yale University.



Don Edwards  
(Washington, D.C.)  
*Civic Engagement*

Don Edwards is Justice and Sustainability Associates founder, principal and CEO. In that capacity, he designs, facilitates, mediates and documents land use decision-making processes for federal, municipal and neighborhood revitalization throughout the Metropolitan Washington region and in other U.S. cities.

Civically active, Don serves as a member of the Corporate Environmental Advisory Council of The Dow Chemical Company, the Board

of Directors of the Casey Trees Endowment, the Board of Directors of the Humanities Council of the District of Columbia and the Board of Directors of the George Washington Chapter of Lambda Alpha International. Furthermore, Don is a faculty member of the DC Neighborhood College, a program of the George Washington University's Center for Excellence in Public Leadership.



Laureen Boles  
[Philadelphia, Pennsylvania]  
*Green Infrastructure*

Laureen M. Boles is a civil engineer and environmental planner at the City of Philadelphia, where she specializes in sustainable community development. Her projects include the implementation of green infra-

structure, growth of green jobs, use of renewable energy, climate change adaptation, advancement of environmental justice, and transit-oriented development. As a member of the Environmental Justice Leadership Forum on Climate Change and the Greater Philadelphia Green Economy Task Force, she presented Philadelphia's green economy success stories at the Executive Offices of the White House. Ms. Boles is also a board member of the Pennsylvania Energy Development Authority, and the Pennsylvania Governor's Climate Change Advisory Committee. Laureen earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Howard University and a M. S. in Environ-

mental Planning from the University of Pennsylvania. She also teaches neighborhood planning at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Design.



Alyssa Lee

(Washington, D.C.)

#### *Economic Development*

Alyssa Lee is Social Compact's President and CEO. Alyssa removes barriers in investment decision-making and defines market solutions for individuals and communities. Alyssa brings cross-sector expertise from the private sector, government, and not for profit sectors. She has worked with a range of organizations from

small consultancies to large organizations such as Cushman & Wakefield, as well as federal government and nonprofits such as the Brookings Institution.

She holds a Master of City and Regional Planning with distinction from the Georgia Institute of Technology. She received a double Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and Urban Studies from Northwestern University. She is a licensed investment professional in addition to her market analytics capabilities.



Rob Bennett

(Portland, Oregon)

#### *Sustainability*

Rob is the founding executive director of the Portland Sustainability Institute. He comes most recently from the Clinton Climate Initiative, where he was the residential and cities policy

manager, developing comprehensive residential pilot programs for the cities of Houston and Chicago. In that role, Rob also provided technical assistance to cities throughout North America in the areas of climate change reductions and building performance policy.

Prior to that, he spent eight years working directly for the cities of Vancouver, B.C. and Portland, OR. He led the development of Vancouver's comprehensive Green

Building Strategy and facilitated the green building and infrastructure activities for the Southeast False Creek redevelopment – better known as the 2010 Olympic Village. In Portland, Rob founded the City's Green Building Program, G/Rated, and led conservation program and policy development in the areas of energy efficiency and corporate sustainability.

Rob is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts–Amherst School of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning. He has served on the boards of the Cascadia Region Green Building Council and REACH Community Development.



Diane Jones, ASLA, RLA

(Baltimore, MD)

#### *Connectivity and Placemaking*

Diane Jones, ASLA, RLA has 25-years of diverse experience in private and public practice focused on the areas of land use design/planning, transportation planning, and large-scale residential and park design projects. Jones has worked in numerous landscape architecture/planning firms and public agencies around the country and was principal of her own professional practice, TerraDesigns Inc. in New Orleans, LA, for 11-years. Diane is currently Principal Landscape Architect with Design Jones, LLC, and an assistant professor in the Graduate Department of Landscape Architecture at Morgan State. She teaches design studios, environmental design seminars, and contemporary landscape history. Ms. Jones holds a Master's of Landscape Architecture (MLA) from the University of California at Berkeley and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) from the Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri. She is currently a doctorate student in Civil Engineering at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. The framework of emphasis that guides all aspects of Ms Jones' research is environmental justice, especially as it affects minority and urban communities, from a physical planning perspective. She recently collaborated on a joint studio effort with Louisiana State University to serve as a critical catalyst in the rebuild of the Du Centre-Ville Historique de Jacmel, Haiti in a manner that empowers the Haitian people of Jacmel, through participation with the Mayor's Office of the City of Jacmel, the Haiti Ministry of Tourism, the major property owners, the Louisiana/Haiti Sustainable Village Project, the Port of Jacmel, the Jacmel Chamber of Commerce and a host of concerned Haitian business owners and citizens.



## AIA STAFF:

Joel Mills

*Director, Center for Communities by Design*

Joel Mills is Director of the American Institute of Architects' Center for Communities by Design. The Center is a leading provider of pro bono technical assistance and participatory planning for community sustainability. Through its design assistance programs, the Center has worked in over 200 communities across 47 states. Its processes have been modeled successfully in the United States and across Europe. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

Joel's 18-year career has been focused on strengthening civic capacity and civic institutions around the world. This work has helped millions of people participate in democratic processes, visioning efforts, and community planning initiatives. In the United States, Joel has worked with over 100 communities in over 30 states, leading participatory initiatives and collaborative processes that have facilitated public-private partnerships and led to hundreds of millions of dollars in new investment. His work has been featured on ABC World News Tonight, Nightline, CNN, The Next American City, Smart City Radio, The National Civic Review, Ecostructure Magazine, The Washington Post, and dozens of other media sources. He is also a member of the International Association for Public Participation, the American Planning Association, and the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation (NCDD).

Erin Simmons

*Director, Design Assistance*

Erin Simmons is the Director of Design Assistance at the Center for Communities by Design at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC. Her primary role at the AIA is to provide process expertise, facilitation and support for the Center's Sustainable Design Assistance Team (SDAT) and Regional and Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) programs. In this capacity, she works with AIA components, members, partner organizations and community members to provide technical design assistance to communities across the country. Through its design assistance programs, the AIA has worked in 200 communities across 47 states. In 2010, the Center was named Organization of the Year by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) for its impact on communities and contributions to the field.

To date, Erin has served as staff lead on over 45 design assistance teams. Prior to joining the AIA, Erin worked as senior historic preservationist and architectural historian for an environmental and engineering firm in Georgia, where she practiced preservation planning, created historic district design guidelines and zoning ordinances, conducted historic resource surveys, and wrote property nominations for the National Register of Historic Places. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in History from Florida State University and a Master's degree in Historic Preservation from the University of Georgia.

