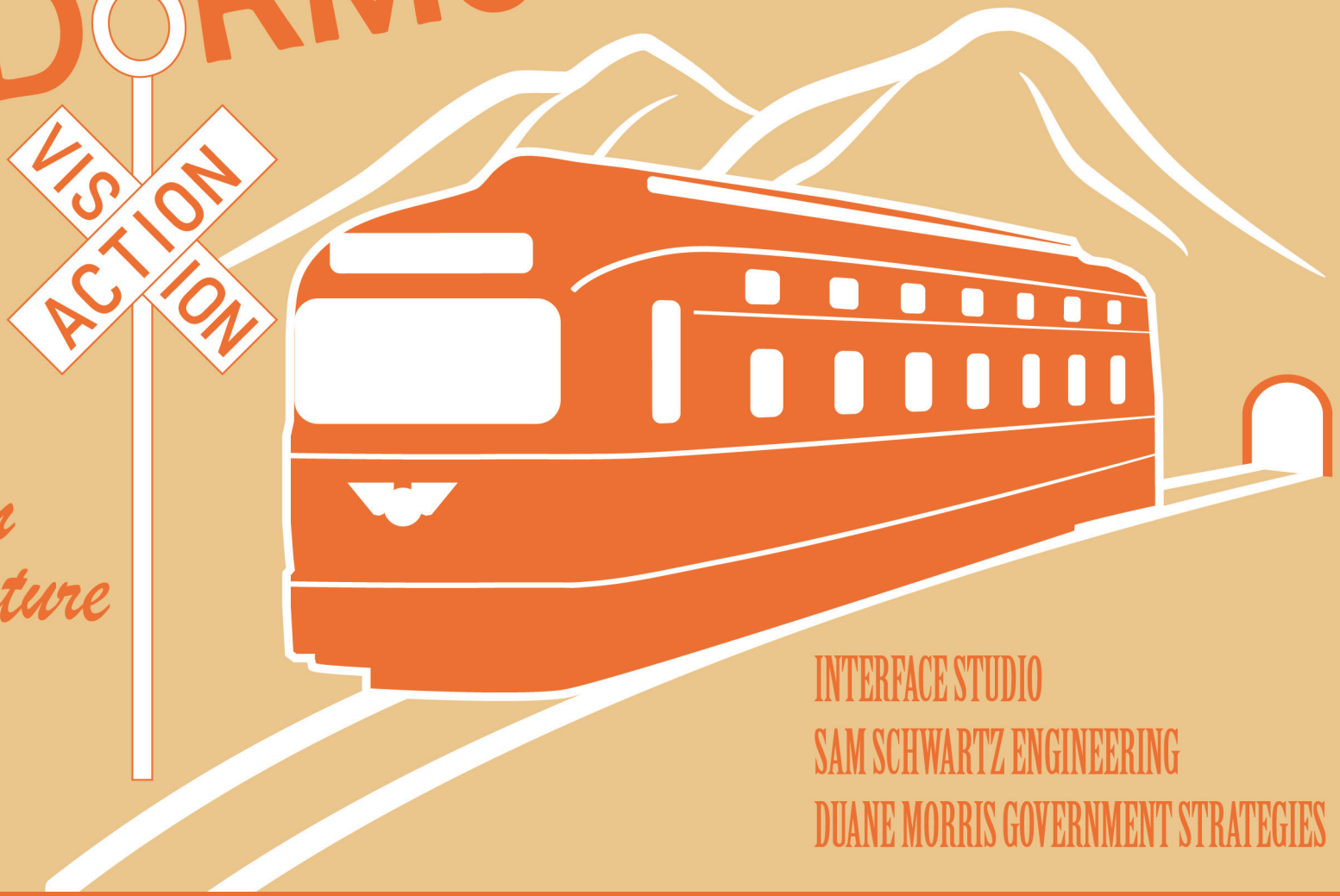
DREAM DORMONT



A Direction for the Future

INTERFACE STUDIO
SAM SCHWARTZ ENGINEERING
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BOROUGH OF DORMONT
2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Dream Dormont Leadership

The Dream Dormont Comprehensive Plan was led by the Borough of Dormont and a committed Steering Committee comprised of local residents and stakeholders. The Steering Committee not only provided guidance on the plan's content but also volunteered for major Dream Dormont events.

To assist the Borough, Steering Committee and residents with data collection, public engagement and the development of strategies, a team of consultants was retained and led by Interface Studio.

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PREFACE

In January of 2012, the voters of Dormont elected a new Council majority. That majority determined that the Borough needed to catch up where behind and move forward in as many areas as possible. They started this with certain key hirings of their Solicitor and Manager in 2012. But they quickly shifted their focus to planning for the Borough's future in 2013. That planning includes the Borough's Strategic Plan and this Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is a catch up item in that the last time it was done was 1995 and it is supposed to be done every 10 years. And it is a moving forward item as it will set the tone and direction for the Borough for the next 10 years.

The Borough wishes to thank the members of the Steering Committee and the residents and business owners who participated in this Comprehensive Planning process to make this document possible.

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INTRODUCTION

"A GOAL WITHOUT A PLAN IS JUST A WISH."

The Dormont Comprehensive Plan Update, more commonly known as Dream Dormont, is a necessary document to direct policy, investment and borough activities. It is also long overdue. The last Comprehensive Plan was completed in 1995. Much has changed since that time within the Borough, region and state that impacts the Borough's future. Since the last Comprehensive Plan, many studies have been completed targeted toward addressing specific issues. This plan recognizes the good work already complete and builds upon these initiatives to form an inclusive lens through which to see the Borough's challenges and opportunities today. This short introductory chapter provides background on the state requirements for a Comprehensive Plan but also a summary of relevant plans that impacted the strategies contained within this document.

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PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

In Pennsylvania, comprehensive plans must be updated every 10 years, as required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. The development of a comprehensive plan helps a community to:

- Develop a vision for what it wants
- Establish priorities
- Encourage dialogue and action
- Guide decision making
- Determine how best to allocate limited resources
- Raise money for improvements

Data analysis and a community's ideas for the future are combined and turned into action areas of the plan.

The focus areas of this comprehensive plan stem from a rich and interactive public process. The chapters in this plan are comprised of actionable strategies to improve the Borough through targeted investments and new or updated policies. Specifically, the plan is organized into six interrelated chapters:

1) ***Your Home Sweet Home*** focuses on improving housing and residential neighborhoods;

2) ***Move Around*** focuses on addressing the transportation and parking concerns frequently raised in public forums;

3) ***Bring in the Business*** focuses on promoting Dormont's local economy, in particular the business districts along Potomac and West Liberty;

4) ***Dream Green*** focuses on enhancing open space and the environment;

5) ***Lead Progressively*** focuses on Dormont becoming a leader in efficient and forward-thinking borough management

6) ***Zone for the Future*** focuses on progressive land use and zoning policy

The overlapping strategies outlined in these six chapters will help further transform Dormont into an environmentally and fiscally-sound mixed-use community.

Existing development in Dormont is consistent with that of contiguous municipalities (Mount Lebanon and Pittsburgh) and with the county comprehensive plan. In terms of development, the focus of this plan is on redevelopment and revitalization of the business district. As such no development is proposed in this comprehensive plan; however, the impact of the TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) projects at Dormont Junction Station (proposed) and Potomac Station (conceptual) was taken into account in this plan. These proposed and potential developments are within borough boundaries and consistent with previous planning efforts. These efforts include the *South Hills Transit Revitalization Investment District Planning Study* (2008), which identifies the Dormont Junction and Potomac T stations as a major TOD opportunities in addition to the Mount Lebanon station.

The strategies outlined in this plan furthermore complement those in *Allegheny Places* (2008), the first comprehensive plan for Allegheny County. Its focus areas include: historic and cultural resources, economic development, housing, resource extraction, agricultural resources, community facilities, transportation, utilities, environmental resources, energy conservation, and parks, open space, and greenways. Among the plan's key strategies is the support of TODs, which bring together several of the focus areas of the plan, including economic development, transportation, and housing, among others. Municipalities have an important role in implementing the county's strategies: *Allegheny Places* outlines an outreach process to municipalities through Councils Of Governments (COGS). It is important to note that state funding will prioritize those projects in line with county comprehensive plans.

The focus areas of this plan are also in line with the general goals of the comprehensive plans in neighboring municipalities. The City of Pittsburgh is in the process of developing its first comprehensive plan, PlanPGH. Its general goals are to:

- Strengthen Pittsburgh's position as a regional hub and enhance its global significance
- Provide equal access and opportunities for all to live, work, play, learn, and thrive
- Grow and diversify Pittsburgh's economy and its tax base
- Foster a sense of Citywide community while strengthening neighborhood identities
- Capitalize on Pittsburgh's diverse natural and cultural resources
- Respect and enhance the relationship between nature and the built environment

With their focus on the local economy as well as neighborhood and community identity, among other areas, the goals of PlanPGH are complementary to the goals for Dormont, outlined in Chapter IV (Vision and Goals).

In addition, Mount Lebanon recently released its 2013 comprehensive plan, the goals of which are to:

- Further enhance community character
- Maintain a high quality community for residents and businesses
- Improve walkability within the community
- Raise the bar for environmental sustainability within Mt. Lebanon

Specific strategies supporting these goals include: leveraging investment from TOD projects, increasing the frequency of code enforcement, adopting a Complete Streets policy, and improving parking communications and technologies. These and other similar strategies play a significant role in supporting the goals of the Dormont Comprehensive Plan as well.

PREVIOUS PLANS + STUDIES

Previous plans and studies that helped to inform the creation of this plan include the most recent comprehensive plan in addition to several subject-specific reports:

***Borough of Dormont 1995 Comprehensive Plan Update (1995)* prepared by Roberta J Sarraf, AICP**
Many of the issues faced by the Borough today were present at the time this previous update to the comprehensive plan was written. Although an overarching vision statement is not included in this plan, it outlines goals, objectives, and recommendations for implementation to address the issues faced by each of its focus areas: community facilities and services, housing and neighborhoods, the business district and parking, and land use. Municipal services in need of improvement included parking enforcement, code enforcement, and traffic enforcement. Property maintenance and street maintenance were additional concerns relating to community facilities.

Issues confronting housing and neighborhoods included a lack of home ownership in certain areas, narrowness of streets, and an aging housing stock. Façade improvements, diversification of retail, signage, and attracting customers and parking were areas of concern for the business district. Among the most critical issues regarding land use was the intensity of development, a product of small lots, narrow lot widths, minimal front yard setbacks, and high percentages of lot coverage.

The Dream Dormont plan seeks to build off these as well as offer new goals, objectives and recommendations. Among the areas of overlap in recommendations are: the delivery of services, code enforcement, community pride activities, recreational programming, marketing of the Borough, zoning amendments, signage and aesthetics in the business district, residential and commercial parking, and the Dormont Junction TOD.

***Master Park Site Plans for Beggs Snyder Park and Dormont Park (1999)* prepared by Environmental Planning + Design**
Guiding principles for the site plans for Beggs Snyder and Dormont parks include: conserving natural resources and respecting cultural history, reflecting the desires of the community, practicality and flexibility in light of potential demographic and economic changes, and feasibility considering the existing tax base.

Major recommendations for Beggs Snyder included a small, reoriented soccer field, renovating the Illinois Avenue parking area and extending Illinois Avenue. Dream Dormont builds off these recommendations by suggesting additional uses for the park, as well as suggestions to increase visibility, safety, and accessibility.

Major recommendations for Dormont Park include physical improvements such as paved trails with benches (completed), new play areas (completed), picnic pavilions, and an expanded parking lot at the recreation center, among others. In light of many of these physical additions, Dream Dormont focuses primarily on programmatic improvements to the park.

***South Hills Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID) Planning Study (May 2008)* prepared by DMJM+Harris**
The planning study explores the opportunity for development at three light rail (LRT) stations in the South Hills area: Dormont Junction, Potomac, and Mt. Lebanon. The TRID Enabling Act allows governments and transportation agencies to create value capture areas with the aim of facilitating TOD and transit utilization. These districts would provide a mechanism to finance improvements to public transportation, site development, infrastructure and maintenance. In light of its analysis of existing conditions and the market, the study hones in on strategic opportunity sites for development within a half mile radius of these stations. Of the two stations in the Borough, the Dormont Junction TOD is further along in the planning process. Dream Dormont takes this redevelopment into account in its objectives relating to the West Liberty commercial corridor as well as multifamily housing, which is clustered along the LRT line, among others.

***Swimming Pool Feasibility Study: Dormont Community Pool (September 2008)* prepared by Wade Associates LLC and Pashek Associates**
This study evaluates existing conditions at the pool and makes recommendations to improve the pool and its facilities as well as encourage additional use. Recommendations regarding increased use focus on improvements to the pool itself, including a water slide, pool heaters, and lighting. The study also discusses specific needs to upgrade pool facilities, including the bathhouse/recreation center. Some of the study's recommendations are problematic to move forward because they require ripping up the existing concrete structure. If this happens, the pool would lose its "grandfather" status with the State and open itself up to other regulatory challenges. Dream Dormont suggests a range of ideas to encourage use that include "soft" options like programming and physical upgrades that retain the pool's grandfather status.

***The Proposed Dormont Redevelopment Area Basic Conditions Report (May 2011)* prepared by Urban Design Ventures**
This report defines the area around the Dormont Junction station as "an area in need of redevelopment" so that the Redevelopment Authority may then plan for its future development. As mentioned, TOD options at the station are being analyzed. Study of the existing conditions is necessary to enable the Authority to examine the use of tax increment financing (TIF) to facilitate redevelopment of this area.

***Allegheny Together: Dormont Design Guidelines (June 2011)* prepared by Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation and Town Center Associates**
The guidelines in this report address storefronts (signs, facades, and lighting), new construction and renovations, and streetscaping (benches, trash cans, lighting, bike racks) with the general goal of enhancing the appearance of the business district. These guidelines can be followed to implement some of the suggestions outlined in the Dream Dormont plan. For example, the details of the report on streetscaping will be useful for the implementation of the objectives relating to the business district in the Borough. The report also includes suggestions for improving the economic health and safety of the commercial corridors in Dormont, such as promoting retail and improving pedestrian safety around Potomac station.

***Allegheny Together: Dormont Strategic Plan (August 2011)* prepared by Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation**
The strategic plan offers an assessment of commercial offerings in the Borough, a description of market potential, parking and traffic analysis, and revitalization strategies. Strategies focusing on Potomac Avenue include improving the area around the T station to improve the pedestrian experience and encourage T ridership. Strategies concerning West Liberty Avenue include façade improvements, adding crosswalks, improving signage, and creating a buffer along sidewalks, e.g. planters, to improve pedestrian safety. All of these suggestions are built upon in Dream Dormont.

***Dormont Parking Study: Quantifying and Characterizing Street Parking (May 2013)* prepared by Carnegie Mellon University**
The recommendations outlined in this study are to: update one- and two-way street designations, expand and amend residential permit parking area requirements, create 'flexible' permit areas in the business district, update the residential permit application process, increase the residential permit fee, install a smart meter system in the commercial business district, and promote walking and transit usage. All of these recommendations are contextualized in Dream Dormont and incorporated into its objectives.

DORMONT THEN + NOW

"A GREAT LITTLE TOWN TO LIVE IN WITH SOME CHALLENGES TO MEET."

Dormont has a rich history of which its residents are proud. Rooted in its access and proximity to Pittsburgh, the history of the Borough shapes many of the opportunities and challenges Dormont faces today. Each chapter in this plan includes a review of key data concnering a particular theme. The following is a brief overview of Dormont yesterday and today that identifies a few key trends that shaped the development of the plan's strategies. Apologies in advance to the history buffs who would like to see a richer description of the Borough's history. This is not the context for a full history lesson, but we encourage all residents to spend time at the Historical Society, which has a treasure trove of Dormont information, pictures and memorabila.

OVERVIEW

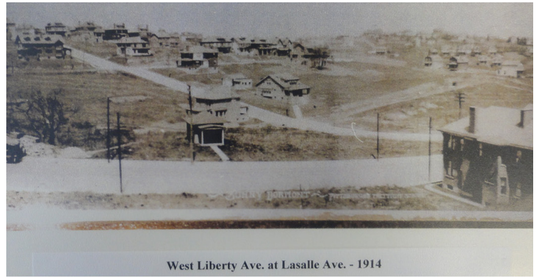
"DORMONT USED TO HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE SHOPPING DISTRICT. IT PROVIDED EVERYTHING YOU NEEDED".

Dormont was incorporated in 1909 from several townships. After incorporation, the area formerly comprised of farmlands quickly grew into a compact, walkable town characterized by housing, businesses and community events. The Borough saw a rapid building of homes in its early years that were held to aesthetic standards: an ordinance passed required that all houses be built of brick, brick veneer, or stone. The Borough also saw substantial improvements to infrastructure early on, including the widening and paving of Potomac Avenue. In 1914, Pittsburgh Railways added regular service to Potomac Avenue, which increased the appeal of the Borough to prospective homeowners. The opening of the Liberty Tunnels in 1924 and the Liberty Bridge in 1928 connected the Borough to the City of Pittsburgh, with the north-south state route 19, or West Liberty Avenue, becoming the primary vehicular route. In 1928, the Dormont Pool was built, and at the time was the second largest in the state.

Dramatic increases in population accompanied these developments. The Borough experienced an increase in population by almost fivefold between 1910 and 1920 and twofold between 1920 and 1930, when it reached 13,190 residents. Population growth then leveled off, with its peak occurring in 1957 with over14,000 residents.

As primary transportation arteries, West Liberty and Potomac Avenues became the main commercial corridors of the Borough. Many of the Borough's earliest businesses located at the intersection of these streets. Lined with drug stores, a jewelry store, dry cleaners, hardware store, a 5 and 10 store, and grocery store, among others, the business district was described by residents as a place where you could go to get everything.

With its diverse commercial offerings, transportation connections, and quality housing stock, the 0.7 square mile area became a vibrant, small town that continues to have appeal to prospective residents. The Borough is described today as a close-knit, friendly, active, and safe place. Young professionals are a significant and



The corner of West Liberty at Lasalle Avenue seen from similar vantage points illustrates the rampant growth of the Borough in its early years. Photo courtesy of the Dormont Historical Society.

POPULATION CHANGE SINCE 1910

Source: Decennial Censuses of Population, 1910-1990; 2000 & 2010 census summary file 1

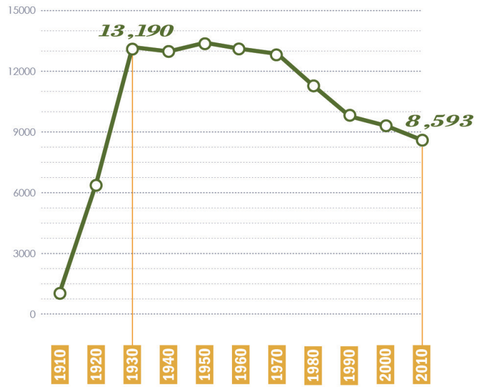


Figure 1: *Population growth graphic.*

The population of Dormont grew 469% in its first decade after incorporation. The highest documented population of the Borough by the Census was 13,405 in 1950.

growing group in Dormont. The affordable and diverse housing stock in the Borough, in addition to its walkability, amenities and proximity to Pittsburgh are cited as draws. The Borough is well-positioned with respect to its neighbors, with a median income on the higher end relative to the county and nearby communities of a similar size and character.

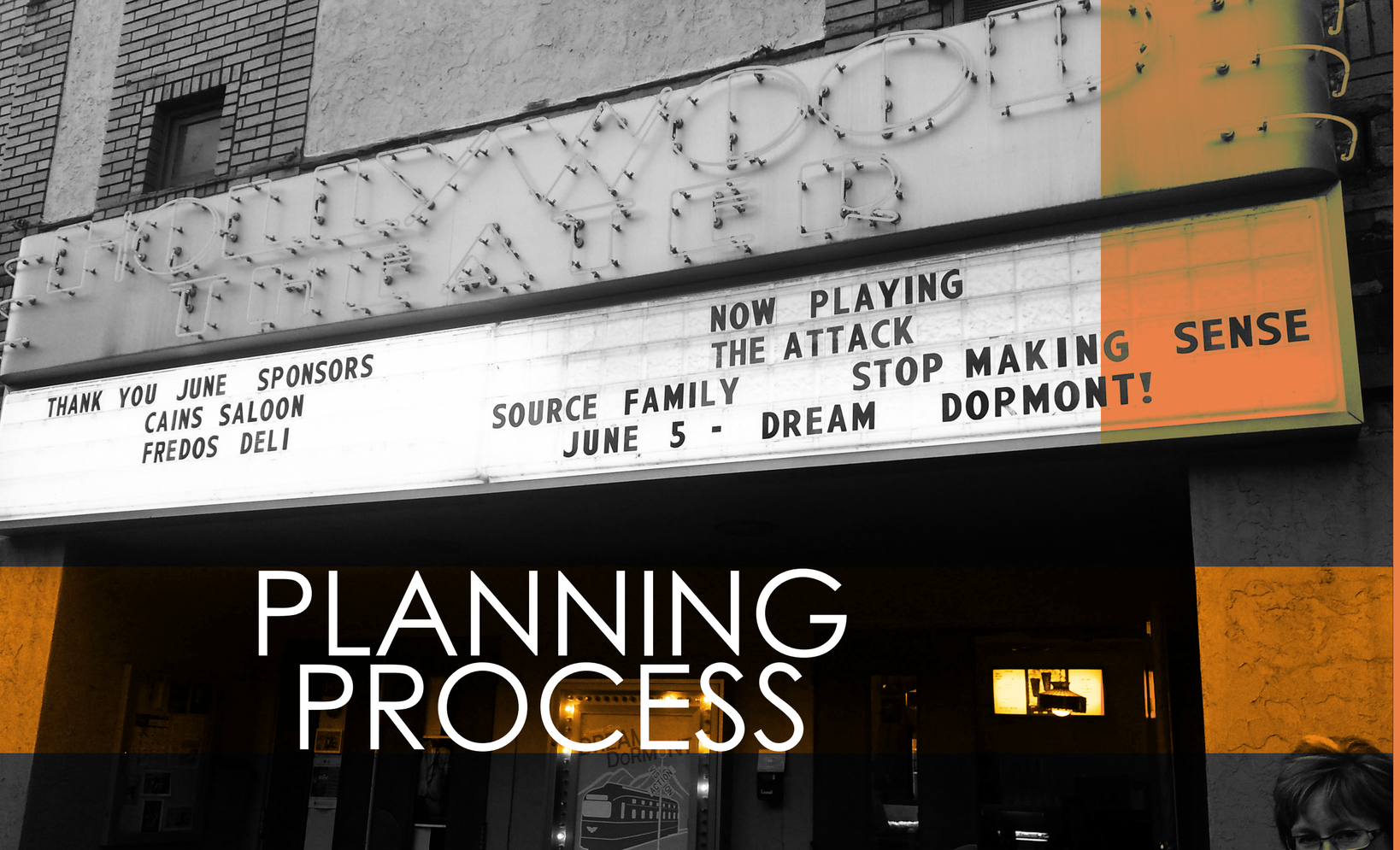
The Borough faces challenges as well. There is a trend of smaller households in the Borough, which is likely the result of families leaving the Borough once they have children of school age for areas with more youth programming, better schools, and more open spaces. Dormont also has a lower proportion of seniors compared to Allegheny County, likely due to its limited senior housing options. Residents of Dormont express a strong connection to their past and history. For some, this connection can also mean a resistance to change. This is perceived as a potential barrier to future improvements, as is a lack of a defined vision and identity of what Dormont wants to be.

"THE BEST COMMUNITY IN THE SOUTH HILLS."

TIMELINE

- **1904** Mount Washington Trolley Tunnel opens
- **1909** Dormont is incorporated
- **1913** The first Dormont Day is held
- **1914** Pittsburgh Railways adds regular service to Potomac Avenue
- **1922** Dormont High School is dedicated
- **1924** Opening of Liberty Tunnels
- **1928** Liberty Bridge opens; Dormont pool and bath house are built
- **1933** The Hollywood Theater is built as an RKO Stanley Theater
- **1939** By this date, most of the homes in Dormont are built
- **1940** The Fetterman house, Dormont's pioneer landmark, is razed for the building of Dormont Village
- **1964** Dormont, Green Tree, and Castle Shannon are incorporated as the Keystone Oaks School District
- **1969** Keystone Oaks High School is dedicated
- **1985** The "T" begins operation
- **1991** The Castle Playground is built by over 1,000 volunteers
- **1999** The Dormont Municipal Center opens in the renovated Hillsdale School building
- **2009** The Borough celebrates its centennial

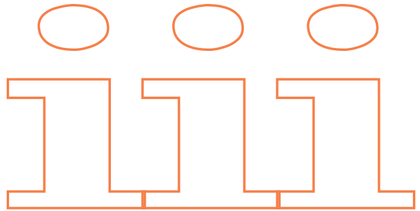
Photos courtesy of the Dormont Historical Society.



PLANNING PROCESS

"A VERY WELCOMING TYPE OF TOWN. BEST DESCRIBED AS 'A TOWN I WOULD HAVE MY CHILDREN GROW UP IN.'"

Plans need to reflect the values of those who live and work in a place. For this reason, an extensive public process was designed to put together Dream Dormont. The process tapped the knowledge of local experts but also encouraged new voices to participate. At the same time, its not enough to simply listen. An understanding of the facts on the ground and the constraints that shape the Borough's future is essential to arrive at strategies that are grounded in reality. This process of engagement and data collection spanned 10 months and is summarized on the following pages.



TIMELINE

The full planning process for the update of the Dormont Comprehensive Plan, from public engagement and data collection all the way through to the production of the plan, took 12 months:

Phase 1: February - July 2013

- Research and analysis of existing conditions
- Meetings with the steering committee
- Interviews with community stakeholders
- Interviews with focus groups
- Collaborative map exercise
- First public meeting

Phase 2: August – October 2013

- Summarization and analysis of first public meeting results
- Preliminary recommendations
- Second public meeting

Phase 3: October 2013 – February 2014

- Summarization and analysis of second public meeting results
- Refining of recommendations based on public input
- Production of final plan

Dormont as seen by the planning team during their windshield survey.

RESEARCH + ANALYSIS

The planning team conducted field surveys of Dormont in February and March of 2013 to look at the housing, open space, businesses, and street conditions. It also compared Dormont's demographic profile with neighboring communities to better understand its unique assets and challenges. The findings of this analysis were summarized and made available to the public at the first Dream Dormont public event in June and also posted on the Dormont Borough website for download.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach involved a variety of approaches in order to get a wide range of ideas and perspectives, which in turn were incorporated into the analysis of existing conditions, recommendations, and methods of implementation for the comprehensive plan.

STEERING COMMITTEE:

The steering committee has served as a driving force behind the Plan. Members attended committee meetings, weighed in on the design of the planning process to ensure maximum public input, and offered feedback on the analysis and potential strategies detailed in the plan. The steering committee publicized the two Dream Dormont public events through posting flyers and handing out postcards at the Dormont Pool and local businesses. Members of the committee also volunteered at the event itself. Going forward they will help ensure the momentum exists to implement the Comprehensive Plan's initiatives.

The Hollywood Theater graciously hosted both the June and October public meetings.

INTERVIEWS:

The planning team conducted individual interviews with 21 community stakeholders to gain a deeper knowledge of the Borough as part of the data collection and analysis phase of the plan. Interface Studio interviewed council members, representatives from borough departments, representatives from community groups, residents, and business owners. The local knowledge gained from the interviews was folded into the analysis of existing conditions.

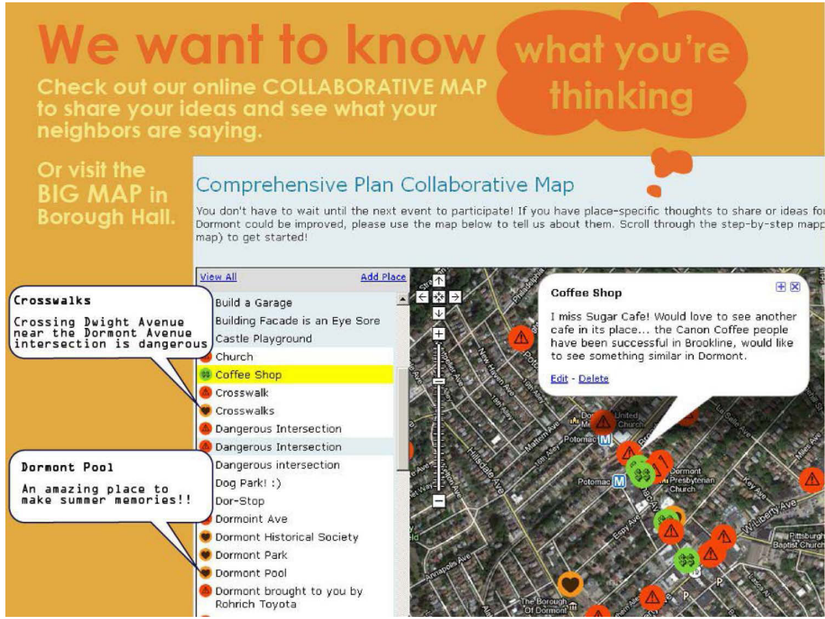
COLLABORATIVE MAP:

Interface Studio installed a large-scale six-foot by six-foot map in Borough Hall for residents to share place-specific observations about the Borough - from the places they like best to those areas that need some work - as well as their ideas for how to make Dormont better. An online, interactive version of the map was also available for input on the borough website. Both maps were open for comments from March to June 2013.

These maps yielded a total of 278 comments. Almost half of the comments had to do with transportation and infrastructure, mainly safety and enforcement, road repair, and parking. These were dispersed throughout the Borough. Parks generated a quarter of total comments, mostly for Dormont Park and Pool, and Beggs Snyder Park. Over 30% of the comments were focused on the business district streets: Potomac and West Liberty avenues, almost half of which regarded transportation and infrastructure.

FOCUS GROUPS:

The planning team met with four different focus groups representing businesses, parks, transportation, and youth respectively to gain additional insights and suggestions on these topics. The local knowledge gained from these meetings helped guide the creation of preliminary recommendations.



(Left): The collaborative map hanging in Borough Hall.
(Right): The interactive version of the collaborative map hanging out in cyberspace.

PUBLIC EVENTS:

The planning team designed two open house-style public events which took place at the Hollywood Theater in June and October of 2013. Instead of a traditional public meeting, which offers limited opportunity for meaningful input and interaction, the events focused on interactive activities.

At the first public event, 85 people signed in, although even more attended. Participants watched a slideshow on existing conditions and some of the issues Dormont faces today. They then had a chance to tell the planning team through interactive activities about Dormont's identity, what issues its streets face, what shopping is like in the Borough, how they would spend the Borough's budget, and what their one big idea is for how to improve the Borough.

"A WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOOD WITH GREAT CHARACTER. KIND OF A SECRET."

Residents made good use of Post-its by choosing a few words to describe Dormont today and tomorrow.

June Public Meeting Activities:

WHAT IS DORMONT'S IDENTITY?
Residents described in one word or phrase what Dormont is today and what it could be tomorrow.

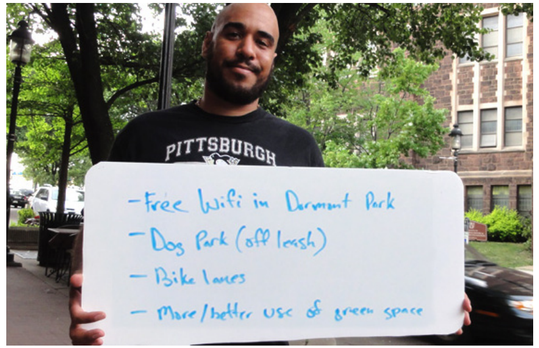
SHOPPING IN DORMONT
Participants described shopping in Dormont back in the day (for long-time residents) and what it could be in the future.

STREETS IN DORMONT
Residents were asked to explain issues with streets in Dormont and what they think of "Complete Streets" treatments used to make streets safer for all users.

TAKE CHARGE OF THE BUDGET
Participants were given fake money (one each of $1, $5, $10, and $20 bills) and asked where they would spend it. The business district, infrastructure, and public safety garnered the greatest amount of funding, both in terms of total amount spent and the number of high denomination bills spent.

WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA?
The final activity at the Dream Dormont public forum asked residents to dream big for the future of Dormont. Major themes were: more businesses, better maintenance and greening, and a strong and engaged community.

"GREAT COMMUNITY FOR YOUNG ADULTS AND FAMILIES OF OLDER GENERATION BUT IT NEEDS NEW INVESTMENT IN HOMES AND BUSINESSES."



A resident offers his "Big Idea(s)" for Dormont on the way out of the June public meeting.

At the second event, 91 people signed in, although even more attended. The activities were also brought to the seventh annual Dormont Street Fair and Music Festival, where roughly 36 more people participated in the activities, with additional passersby who read the activities but did not participate. Participants watched a slideshow on the preliminary vision, goals, and ideas for the plan. They then participated in activities to give feedback on preliminary objectives for parks, recreational facilities, environmental efforts, residential streets and alleys, and the business district. On their way out, they filled out a card with any additional thoughts or concerns.

WEB/SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES:

The borough website and Facebook page served as platforms to advertise the public events and post summaries of their results.

(Left) Participants at the October public meeting engage in the interactive activities.

(Right) Residents responded positively to the ideas for activating Potomac Avenue.

October Public Meeting Activities:

Participants were asked to place smiley stickers on two objectives that they liked and a star sticker on one objective that raised a concern or question. They then filled in comments on cards to explain their choices.

DREAM GREEN

Residents were asked for their feedback on objectives regarding Dormont's parks, recreational facilities, and environmental efforts. Participants were also asked to describe in one word or phrase what their vision for Beggs Snyder Park and the passive park would be.

ENLIVEN YOUR STREETS

Participants were asked for their feedback on objectives relating to neighborhoods, residential streets, and alleys in Dormont.

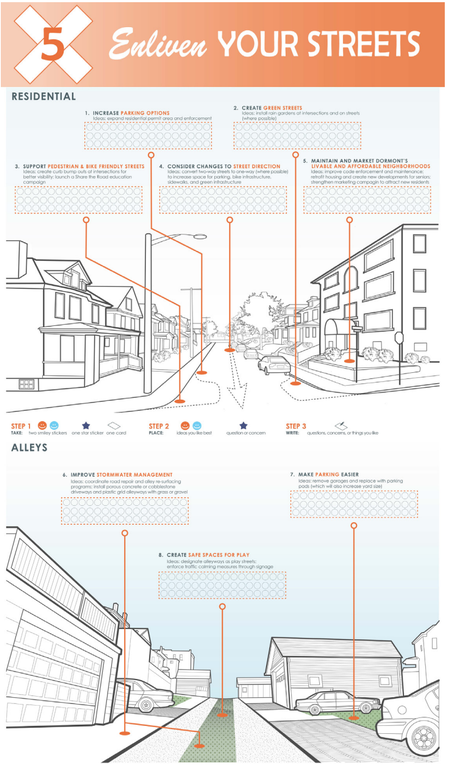
BRING IN THE BUSINESS

Residents weighed in on objectives dealing with the business district.

WHAT DID WE MISS?

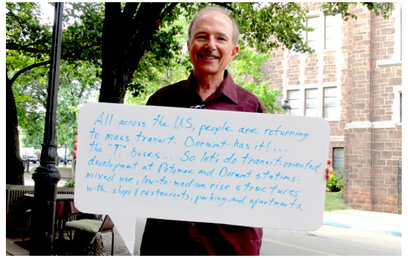
Participants offered any additional thoughts or concerns on notecards on their way out.

"WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT THAN OTHER COMMUNITIES TO MAKE US STAND OUT."


5 Enliven YOUR STREETS
RESIDENTIAL
1. INCREASE PARKING OPTIONS
Ideas: expand residential permit areas and enforcement
2. CREATE GREEN STREETS
Ideas: install rain gardens at intersections and on sheets
3. SUPPORT PEDESTRIAN & BIKE FRIENDLY STREETS
Ideas: create curb bump outs at intersections for better visibility; launch a Share the Road education campaign
4. CONSIDER CHANGES TO STREET DIRECTION
Ideas: convert two-way streets to one-way (where possible) to increase space for parking, bike infrastructure, sidewalks, and green infrastructure
5. MAINTAIN AND MARKET DORMONT'S AFFORDABLE AND AFFORDABLE NEIGHBORHOODS
Ideas: improve code enforcement and maintenance; retrofit housing and create new developments for seniors; strengthen marketing campaign to attract new residents
STEP 1 TASK: two smiley stickers, one star sticker, one card
STEP 2 PLACE: Ideas you like best
STEP 3 WRITE: questions, concerns, or things you like
ALLEYS
6. IMPROVE STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
Ideas: coordinate road repair and alley re-surfacing programs; install porous concrete or cobblestone driveways and plastic grid driveways with grass or gravel
7. MAKE PARKING EASIER
Ideas: remove garages and replace with parking pads (which will also increase yard size)
8. CREATE SAFE SPACES FOR PLAY
Ideas: designate alleyways as play streets; enforce traffic calming measures through signage

More Shopping and Clothes Stores!!

Neighbors Bring More Neighborly! Simple Respects will carry Adam Day!

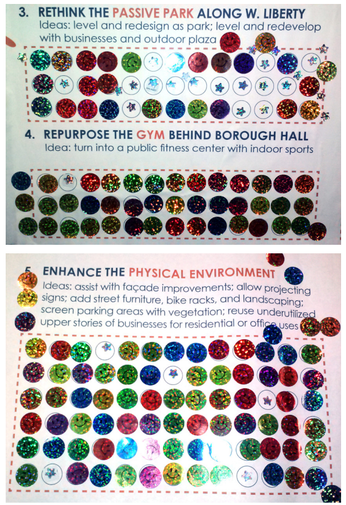

All across the US, people are returning to mass transit. Dormont has it!... development at Potomac and Dormont stations: mixed use, five to medium rise structures with shops & restaurants, parking, and apartments.

STRONGER CODE ENFORCEMENT WITH LARGER PENALTIES
GREEN SPACE, LANDSCAPING
PARKING GARAGE
MORE DESTINATION BUSINESSES, LIKE A COFFEE SHOP

Let's prove that being "hip" doesn't mean that we care less - about the environment, about education, about business.
Let's grow, Dormont!

DREAM DORMONT
activity checklist
PICK UP CHECKLIST
1. SIGN IN AND SIGN UP
2. DORMONT TODAY SLIDESHOW
3. WHAT IS DORMONT'S IDENTITY?
4. TELL US ABOUT YOUR STREETS
5. TELL US ABOUT SHOPPING
6. TAKE CHARGE OF THE BUDGET
7. SHARE YOUR "BIG IDEA"
Thank You!

MAY THE BEST MAN LIVE
Take charge of the BUDGET


3. RETHINK THE PASSIVE PARK ALONG W. LIBERTY
Ideas: level and redesign as park; level and redevelop with businesses and outdoor plaza
4. REPURPOSE THE GYM BEHIND BOROUGH HALL
Idea: turn into a public fitness center with indoor sports
5. ENHANCE THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT
Ideas: assist with façade improvements; allow projecting signs; add street furniture, bike racks, and landscaping; screen parking areas with vegetation; reuse underutilized upper stories of businesses for residential or offices

WHAT DID We Miss?

VISION

"A COMMUNITY POISED ON THE VERGE OF CHANGE."

The rich public process resulted in hundreds of ideas. Despite the range of ideas, many key themes emerged consistently from one conversation to the next. These are the community's vision and goals for Dormont.

Define Dormont

The convenience of city living with small town values – a place imbued with memories and historic charm that also embraces the next generation and progressive ideas.

"PART OF DORMONT'S PROBLEM IS THERE IS NO DEFINITION OF WHAT WE WANT TO BE."

Vision

OUR DREAM FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY CALLS FOR A DORMONT THAT IS:

Historic – with events and programs that help residents cherish their heritage

Healthy – with socially and economically healthy environments

Walkable – with a community that walks to transit, local services, and stores

Thriving – with a vibrant business district that offers variety and a unique personality

Progressive – with leadership that efficiently uses land, infrastructure, public facilities, and services in a sustainable manner

"WE CAN MAKE DORMONT A DESTINATION."

Goals

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME
(HOUSING + NEIGHBORHOODS)

Housing in Dormont should continue to serve and attract residents at different stages of life, including youth, young professionals, families, and retirees.

MOVE ABOUT
(TRANSPORTATION + PARKING)

All streets in Dormont should achieve a balance between different users of the road. Their design should enable convenient navigation and parking throughout the Borough while also creating safe, inviting, and livable streets.

BRING IN THE BUSINESS
(BUSINESS DISTRICT)

The business district in Dormont should build on its Main Street-style core and promote an attractive and walkable commercial environment. The district should seek to diversify its offerings to serve local needs while becoming a retail and entertainment destination for visitors.

DREAM GREEN
(OPEN SPACE + THE ENVIRONMENT)

Through its well-maintained open space, diverse recreational offerings, and active environmental initiatives, Dormont should promote a healthy, committed, and engaged community.

LEAD PROGRESSIVELY
(GOVERNMENT)

Progressive and thoughtful leadership guides Dormont in the efficient management and improvement of its infrastructure, public facilities, and services and inspires an engaged and active community.

ZONE FOR THE FUTURE
(LAND USE, ZONING, + FUTURE DEVELOPMENT)

Land use and zoning policy is responsive to the current needs of the community and forward-thinking in the consideration of its future direction.

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME

"A WALKABLE, FRIENDLY COMMUNITY WITH HISTORIC HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOOD PRIDE."

Residents in Dormont are proud of the historic housing stock that exists. However, there are also concerns regarding housing maintenance as well as whether the Borough's housing stock offers enough options to adequately meet the needs of all of its residents and families. Home Sweet Home includes an overview of housing data and presents key strategies to better maintain what we have, retain residents of all ages, and attract new residents and families.

1

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME

Dormont is a residential community that enjoys a stable and affordable housing market. While housing stock consists of mostly single-family detached homes, there is a diversity of housing options, including a significant proportion of multi-family, such as apartment buildings. Roughly half of all housing is owner-occupied. With 96% of houses built before 1980, many homes have a historic character. Homes in Dormont have a higher value than comparable boroughs, and sales prices have been rising. Dormont is mostly built-out and has low residential vacancy (9%); thus future housing opportunities will involve infill, retrofitting, and redevelopment. This is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan of *Allegheny Places*, which indicates development in the Borough primarily as infill.

There are three residential designations in the zoning code: R-1 (single-family residential district), R-2 (1- and 2-family residential district), and R-3 (multifamily residential district). The majority of the Borough's residential land use falls into the R-2 category. It is important to note that the aim of the R-2 designation is to strictly regulate further conversion of single-family units into two-family units and restrict converting single-family dwellings into multifamily. The purpose of the R-1 district is to preserve the single-family land use in those neighborhoods, and the purpose of the R-3 residential district is to ensure opportunities for multifamily housing development along arterial roads, near light rail transit, and adjacent to commercial corridors.

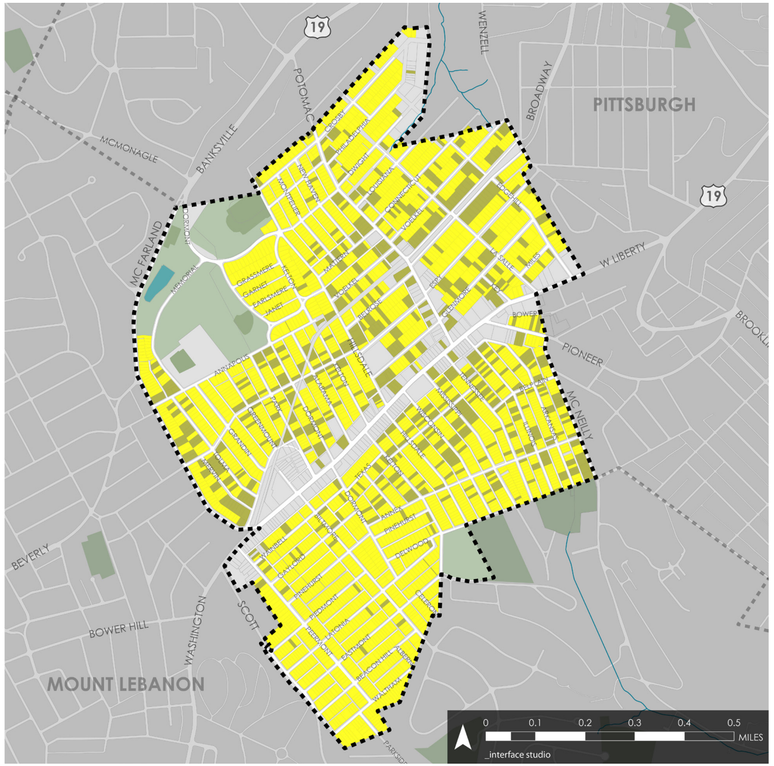
> "A community with a lot of charm and a lot of potential due to location and walkability."

> "The housing stock is sturdy, it needs some work, but the homes can stand for a long time. We have good bones."

Within the Borough, 39% of housing units are multi-family and 61% are single-family. Based on an exterior survey of land use, the main clusters of multi-family buildings are along the LRT corridor including Broadway Avenue and the northern half of Potomac Avenue. The southeast portion of the Borough bordered by West Liberty to the north and Kelton Avenue to the west also contains a high concentration of multifamily units. This portion of the Borough was identified in the 1995 comprehensive plan update as having the greatest challenges relating to housing and neighborhood conditions, citing the narrowness of lots and streets, a high proportion of multi-family structures, lower rate of home ownership, and older housing stock as primary contributors. The primary issues relating to these challenges are maintenance and code enforcement. This is a particular concern regarding rental properties with absentee landlords.

There is a need for more effective marketing of the many assets Dormont has to offer that could attract new residents, including its walkability, housing diversity, historic housing stock, and convenient access to transportation. Residents also express a need for expanded senior housing options so residents can age in place.

The following objectives address housing options, the housing stock, and reaching out to new residents. All recommendations are consistent with the Housing Element in *Allegheny Places*.



Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

4,334 HOUSING UNITS TOTAL

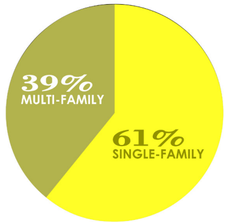


Figure 2: *Map of distribution of single-family and multi-family homes*

OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

The housing stock in Dormont should continue to serve and attract residents at different stages of life, including youth, young professionals, families, and retirees.

LIVE IT UP: ENSURE ADEQUATE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR A DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTS

- **Encourage rehabilitation of multi-family units, especially adjacent to transit**

WHY: Housing next to transit is in a prime location, as it is in close proximity to a valuable amenity. Rehabilitation will improve the quality of this housing to reflect this prime location, better serve residents, and attract newcomers. Another outcome will be an increase in property values and broadening of the tax base for the Borough.

HOW: The creation of a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) District for all multi-family properties in the Borough could help facilitate rehabilitation. The LERTA would provide a temporary real property tax exemption to a portion of the assessed value of improvements to these facilities. Preferential terms could be offered for more substantial projects involving a large number of units, affordable housing, or significant project cost.

Additional funding opportunities exist through state and local agencies that seek to encourage the development of affordable rental units. The Pennsylvania Housing Finance Authority (PHFA) offers low income housing tax credits, taxable/tax exempt bond financing and below market rate construction loans. Allegheny County Economic Development's (ACED) Housing Division provides gap-financing support for multi-family projects based on tenant income. The Housing Development Fund channels various state and federal funding sources for facility rehabilitation depending on eligibility parameters. Assistance is usually provided in conjunction with agencies such as PHFA and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). At the federal level, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 221 provides insured mortgages that can be used for rehabilitation projects. The program improves access to capital by allowing for long-term mortgages (up to 40 years) that can be financed with Government National Mortgage Association (GNMA) Mortgage Backed Securities.

Dormont offers a diversity of housing options, including single-family homes, duplexes, and apartment buildings.

- **Retrofit existing homes for seniors and develop senior housing**

WHY: With only one dedicated senior housing facility, there is currently a lack of housing for the elderly in the Borough meaning that many leave Dormont when they require special services or housing. In addition, seniors who are homeowners may experience limitations in their ability to maintain or retrofit their own homes and therefore need assistance in doing so. For those that would like to age in place, Dormont should offer housing options to do so.

HOW: Senior housing facilities are eligible under most of the programs detailed above. Specifically, HUD offers the Section 202 program which provides interest-free capital advances to finance the development of supportive housing for the elderly. Opportunities in the Borough should be marketed to local developers, including non-profits, who specialize in these specialized development projects.

- **Pursue new mixed-use development, especially around transit**

WHY: A vibrant mixed-use locus has the potential to create a regional draw. Development around transit also promotes public transit usage and thus reduces automobile dependence and traffic congestion. Diversifying existing retail and potentially adding office space will strengthen the commercial corridors proximate to the T stations. The provision of a wider array of goods and services will better serve the local population, and therefore dollars currently spent outside of borough boundaries could be kept local.

The area immediately adjacent to the Dormont Junction station is one of the few undeveloped portions of the Borough. It therefore presents a great opportunity for progressive development with increased retail, housing, and parking options in a borough largely comprised of historic housing stock and small footprint commercial uses.

The area immediately adjacent to the Potomac Station includes several underutilized commercial properties. A TOD at this station presents a great opportunity to fill in the remaining blanks along the Potomac Avenue commercial corridor through additional commercial offerings. Infusing the area with additional residential uses would enhance the function of Potomac Avenue as a community corridor, a place where residents like to sit, stroll, and shop.

Finally, mixed-use developments around transit can serve as catalysts for community revitalization. For example, through funding mechanisms such as a TIF, the increased tax revenue resulting from the TOD can be invested elsewhere in a given community. This objective is consistent with the goal in *Allegheny Places* of providing mixed-use development around existing stations.

Figure 3: *Potential TOD areas*

HOW: Utilize tools such as a TIF or TRID to incentivize potential TOD and other significant mixed-use redevelopment projects. Examine a 'district-wide' approach to incremental value capture as opposed to a 'site specific' focus. Additional revenues can be applied to necessary off-site improvements that improve connectivity, enhance the public realm and further revitalization efforts. Amend the zoning code to include a TOD overlay district or separate zoning designation (see Chapter 6 – Zone for the Future).

- **Convert underutilized upper floors in commercial buildings into housing and/or office space**

WHY: Currently, the commercial districts only account for approximately 13% of the assessed valuation of Dormont. A high percentage (approximately 37%) of these properties can be classified as underutilized by their land to building assessment ratios. There is a potential to generate significant new tax revenues through revitalization of these buildings. Further diversification of the tax base will enhance fiscal sustainability.

As the Borough is largely built out, infill is one method to capitalize on the existing, albeit limited, vacancy in the Borough. Attracting additional residents and employees to the central business districts will positively influence the local market. Dormont will become a more viable business location as economic activity increases. Upper floor spaces are ideal for young professionals and entrepreneurs; their conversion to residential use will augment the housing stock and increase property values. Those closer to transit stations could also be suitable for office uses, thus broadening the economic base of the Borough.

HOW: Change the zoning code to enable these conversions (see Chapter 6- Zone for the Future). The creation of a Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) District for these upper story conversions in commercial buildings could help facilitate rehabilitation. The LERTA would provide a temporary real property tax exemption to a portion of the assessed value of improvements to these facilities. Incentivize improvements by offering a 10-year abatement on the portion of new taxes resulting from improvements to properties. Benefits should start at 100% of new taxes and decline 10% annually. Allow eligibility for the full 10-year exemption for any property applying within seven years after establishing the LERTA. It is also important to note that active marketing to property owners is crucial to the success of the tax abatement district.

Historic buildings in Dormont's business district present an opportunity for live/work housing for young professionals.

BUFF AND POLISH: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE HOUSING STOCK

- **Improve code enforcement**

WHY: Improvements to code enforcement will increase quality of life for existing residents and attract new residents. The overall improved condition of the housing stock will also serve as a source of community pride.

HOW: The Borough recently appointed a code enforcement officer, whose duties previously fell to the building inspection and zoning officer. A data-driven approach could help to augment the capacity of this officer. The Borough could team with local universities to integrate code violation data

from Dormont Delivers, PublicStuff, physical reports, and other sources into a database system. This could be studied with GIS to detect violation patterns and suggest optimal resource allocations. The current database system is difficult to use and access and should be updated in 2014.

- **Encourage property owners to invest in and maintain their properties**

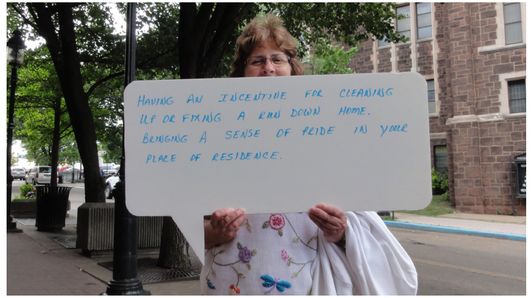
WHY: Poorly maintained properties can result from neglect by absentee landlords or barriers experienced by those who require assistance with maintenance and improvements, including seniors and low-income residents. Well-maintained properties improve the quality of life of residents and encourage potential newcomers to move to a given neighborhood.

HOW: Use code enforcement to issue fines to owners whose properties are in violation of the code. The Borough could notify residents first of the impending increase in enforcement and potential fines and could offer an initial grace period. The County Act 42 from the Allegheny County Office of Property Assessments details regulations regarding the abatement of Allegheny County Real Estate Taxes on the first $36,009 in value on improvements to homes. While the act is only in effect through 2013, if it were to be extended or reinstated, it is important to increase awareness of the abatements among residents.

INVITE THE PARTY: ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS

- **Strengthen marketing campaign of Dormont's livable and affordable neighborhoods**

WHY: An influx of diverse residents bolsters community character, increases the tax base, and supports economic growth



Many residents expressed the need for better maintenance of properties and improved code enforcement.

through the introduction of new consumers, entrepreneurs, and business owners, and others.

HOW: Strengthen marketing campaign of Dormont's livable and affordable neighborhoods. Hire a marketing consultant to develop targeted branding strategy for different groups, e.g. existing renters, students, outside potential buyers, and real estate agents, and others. For example, draw the attention of local developers who specialize in senior housing, e.g. ACTION Housing, Falbo, amRodriquez, Trek Development, to the need for senior housing. A targeted marketing strategy for young professionals should emphasize that there are lower-cost housing options in Dormont as compared to Pittsburgh as well as convenient access to transit and jobs.

SUMMARY

HOME SWEET HOME	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
ENSURE ADEQUATE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR A DIVERSITY OF RESIDENTS					
Strategies:					
> Encourage rehabilitation of multi-family units, especially adjacent to transit	LERTA, ACED, HUD, PHFA	High	$$$$	some	long-term
> Retrofit existing homes for seniors and develop senior housing	HUD SECTION 202, private equity	high	$$$	a lot	long-term
> Pursue new mixed-use development especially around transit	TIF / TRID, private equity	high	$$$$	a lot	ongoing
> Convert underutilized upper floors in commercial buildings into housing and/or office space	LERTA, private equity	high	$$$	some	mid-term
BUFF & POLISH: MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE HOUSING STOCK					
Strategies:					
> Improve code enforcement	Borough staff	high	$$	a lot	ongoing
> Encourage property owners to invest in and maintain their properties	County Act 42 (if extended), staff time	medium	$$	some	mid-term
INVITE THE PARTY: ATTRACT NEW RESIDENTS					
Strategies:					
> Strengthen marketing campaign of Dormont's livable and affordable neighborhoods	Planning grants, Borough	low	$	some	mid-term

MOVE ABOUT

"15 MINUTES FROM ANYWHERE."

Transportation (and parking of course) is a frequent topic of conversation in Dormont. As many residents emphasize, the Borough is indeed walkable with ready access to the T. Despite these attributes, the high level of car ownership and limited space to park them (both on-street and off) creates continuous issues with respect to traffic, safety and parking. With streets dominated with parking and car traffic, many feel uncomfortable walking or bicycling (even where its flat enough to do so). This chapter, Move About, includes a number of policies and actions to help balance Dormont's streets, improve safety and better manage traffic and parking.

2

MOVE ABOUT

TRANSPORTATION

Access to the T is a major asset to Dormont, allowing its residents to reach downtown Pittsburgh in roughly 20 minutes. As such public transportation use is a popular mode of commuting to work for Dormont residents, as is walking.

STREETS

The character and function of streets in Dormont can best be understood through three categories:

> ***Borough Access*** streets provide the primary means of access into the Borough from regional roads. These streets are two-way, are generally wider, and have a higher concentration of commercial and institutional uses.
>
> ***Neighborhood Connectors*** enable travel within the Borough, connect the different neighborhoods of Dormont, and provide access to and from local destinations such as schools and parks. Most of these streets are two-way and may have restricted on-street parking (on one or both sides) to enable this two-way access.
>
> ***Local Streets*** provide access to homes and properties. There is a mix of one-way and two-way streets; most of the latter are queuing streets.

(Above): West Liberty Avenue, a 'borough access' street
(Middle): Memorial Drive, a 'neighborhood connector'
(Bottom): A typical residential street, or 'local street,' with parking on one side only

ISSUES

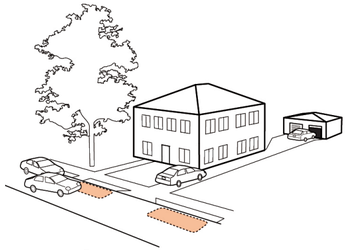
In some instances, the function of streets in the Borough is not harmonious with their design. For example, due to its location between Pittsburgh and outer lying suburbs, Dormont experiences a high volume of regional through traffic, in particular on its commercial corridors, which fall under the category of borough access streets. This traffic, coupled with narrow sidewalks and impaired visibility at crosswalks on West Liberty, creates unfriendly and at times unsafe conditions for pedestrians. This discourages walking along the primary commercial corridor in the Borough, and thus could also deter potential patrons. Moreover, with approximately 650 vehicles during the peak traffic hour passing through Dormont along West Liberty Avenue (from Pioneer to McFarland), some adjacent neighborhood streets experience cut-through traffic from drivers looking for 'short cuts' in the Borough.

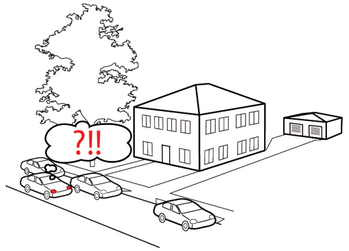
Regarding local streets, residents have expressed concern over speeding in residential areas of the Borough. Although radar data indicates that violations are less common than perceived, the concern of residents over speeding suggests that speed limits may simply exceed their comfort level. Put differently, the streets are being used differently (faster traffic) from their intended design (slower local street). An added drawback of the perception of speeding is that it may discourage walking and biking.

Narrow sidewalks on West Liberty next to high volumes of traffic can create unpleasant conditions for pedestrians.

> "By the early 1940s it was apparent that the "migration" had begun and would continue because space was not available for bigger homes with a garage that would house the newest of possessions – the automobile. Residential parking continues to be an ongoing problem." - *Dormont Historical Society*

(Above): Parking on local streets is often only on one side. On two way streets, this results in parked cars apparently butting heads by not all facing the same way.





(Above): Ideally there is enough room for everyone. (Below): Many driveways and garages aren't used for parking, so on-street space is tight.

PARKING

Commercial Parking restrictions on West Liberty Avenue to accommodate additional peak-direction travel lanes to and from Pittsburgh currently make a different number of parking spaces available based on the time of day (see right).

Residential The majority of residential streets have on-street parking on one side only. Most residences have access to a garage, either through a driveway in front or alley in back. The Borough operates a zoned residential parking program with permits available for ten dollars. These permit zones, however, cover only about half of the on-street parking spaces in Dormont. This lack of full coverage weakens the ability of the Borough to manage supply and demand and furthermore is a lost revenue stream for the Borough.

ISSUES

Residents and business owners have expressed that the alternating side parking situation on West Liberty can be confusing and that the speed of traffic makes it difficult for customers to pull-in and stop. Off-street parking is underused in residential areas; many residents opt for on-street parking, as many garages are in poor condition, too small, and hard to access from narrow driveways or alleys. Throughout the Borough, residents cite a lack of traffic and parking enforcement. Finally, there is a need for streetscaping and stronger visual announcements upon entering the Borough.

The following objectives address the appearance and functionality of both streets and alleyways. They emphasize safer streets through a Complete Streets policy, which is in line with the Transportation Element in *Allegheny Places* and the *Active Allegheny* commuter transit plan. Other areas addressed include public transit usage and parking.

A traffic sign on West Liberty indicates that the parking lane is unavailable during rush hour on weekdays.

OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

All streets in Dormont should achieve a balance between different users of the road. Their design should enable convenient navigation and parking throughout the Borough while also creating safe, inviting, and livable streets.

SAFETY FIRST: MAKE STREETS SAFER FOR ALL USERS

- **Adopt a Complete Streets policy**

WHY: A Complete Streets policy will offer guidance and help bring consistency to the Borough's efforts to improve its streets. According to the National Complete Streets Coalition:

> *Complete Streets are streets for everyone. They are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets make it easy to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to work. They allow buses to run on time and make it safe for people to walk to and from train stations.*

Complete Streets therefore improve the efficiency of existing roads and reduce traffic congestion. Complete Streets can lead to positive economic impacts as well, including job creation and the promotion of business corridors through increased pedestrian traffic. Again according to the National Complete Streets Coalition:

> *Building more sidewalks and striping bike lanes has been shown to create more jobs than traditional car-focused transportation projects.*

HOW: Establish an advisory board to discuss purpose and elements of Complete Streets that are fitting to Dormont. Incorporate Complete Streets elements into design guidelines, and develop and adopt the conceptual cross-sections recommended in this plan as borough standard designs.

- **Incorporate elements of Complete Streets into Dormont streets to make it easier and safer to bike and walk**

WHY: Currently one in four people in Dormont either walk to work or ride the T, which typically involves walking to and from the station. Enabling safe access for all users will help improve the experience for these residents and help make alternatives to car travel more attractive. Bike amenities, such as bike racks at neighborhood destinations, and safety measures like sharrows support and further encourage cycling. While most residential streets are assumed to be shared streets (with bikes), bike amenities are needed on other streets to demonstrate the recommended riding position and remind drivers to be aware of cyclists. Increasing the safety and visibility of intersections will draw attention to pedestrians and encourage walking by creating a safer, more pleasant pedestrian experience.

HOW: Include signage (e.g. 'Share The Road,' 'Bicycles May Use Full Lane') and sharrows on non-residential, less narrow, and less hilly streets. At intersections, add or improve striping, enforce daylighting, create curb bumpouts, and raise intersections. Couple these efforts with improvements to enforcement through additional traffic enforcement officers and/or speed enforcement cameras. Double up safety and traffic-slowing measures in areas with fast cut-through traffic, e.g. at Annex, Potomac, Park, Dell, Annapolis, and Dormont, especially around the Park and School. Potential funding assistance for Complete Streets measures are the PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Program and the Multimodal Fund, which is administered by PennDOT and PA DCED. Combine street repairs with Complete Streets measures, e.g. sharrows and improved crosswalk striping. Coordinate streets treatments

SAFE & SLOW STREETS

SLOW ZONE

SPEED HUMP

DAYLIGHTING

"LIVING STREET"

Examples of Complete Streets treatments

PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

ENHANCED CROSSWALK

BULBOUT

STOP FOR PEDESTRIAN SIGNAGE

HIGH-INTENSITY SIGNAL

BICYCLE INFRASTRCUTURE

STANDARD BIKE LANE

BUFFERED BIKE LANE

BIKE BOX

BIKE BOULEVARD

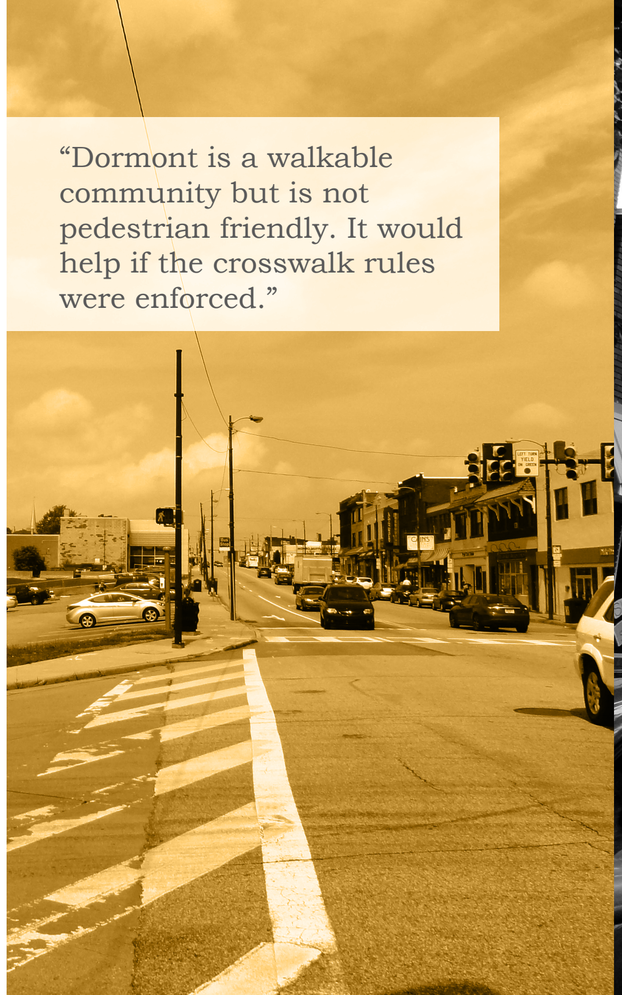
between residents, borough commissions and the Complete Streets advisory board, as well as the police, fire, and public works departments.

- **Launch a safety campaign**

WHY: Drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians engage in unsafe behaviors such as speeding or crossing mid-street even when they are proponents of safety. Providing consistent reminders and information as well as encouraging community involvement will help discourage these behaviors.

HOW: Get the word out by placing campaign posters in public facilities and inviting businesses to display in their windows. Pursue outreach online as well, e.g. through mailing lists and an online platform like 311 to facilitate reporting violations. Involve local government and the community by including safe street topics on borough meeting agendas, in particular in meetings with the traffic and parking planning commission. Encourage involvement from schools, youth programs (such as safe streets ambassadors) and other community members. Draw from existing campaigns such as Share the Street (www.sharethestreet.org) and the Slow Down Campaign (www.safercommunity.net/slow_down_campaign.php)

Worn crosswalks can pose safety challenges, as they are less visible to drivers.



"Dormont is a walkable community but is not pedestrian friendly. It would help if the crosswalk rules were enforced."

"Kids want to ride bikes safely, adults too- as of now there is no way to do this in the borough."

ACTIVATE YOUR AVENUES: IMPROVE THE FUNCTIONALITY OF STREETS AND ALLEYWAYS

- **Adopt treatments catered to different street typologies**

WHY: The form and function of streets throughout the Borough are not in harmony with each other in all instances. For example, West Liberty is the primary commercial corridor in the Borough, yet its traffic and narrow sidewalks create an environment that is at times unpleasant and unsafe for pedestrians, who also could be potential patrons. Improving the functionality of streets and alleyways will provide a safe and convenient system for moving around the Borough.

HOW: Treatments can be implemented incrementally from pilot projects to actual reconstruction. Starting with a lower-cost, DIY option will help test and illustrate how well a measure can work in a given area and allow for adjustments.

Coordinate streets treatments between residents, borough commissions and the Complete Streets advisory board, and the police, fire, and public works departments. Set a goal for implementing a model street by 2018.

Regarding many of the recommendations in this section, the Borough may want to consider adopting a Public and Private Improvements Code (PPIC) and amending its Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) to codify any street design changes into the Borough's code.

(Near right): The primary goals and tools of each street typology
Figure 4: *(Far right) Street typology map*

Borough Access

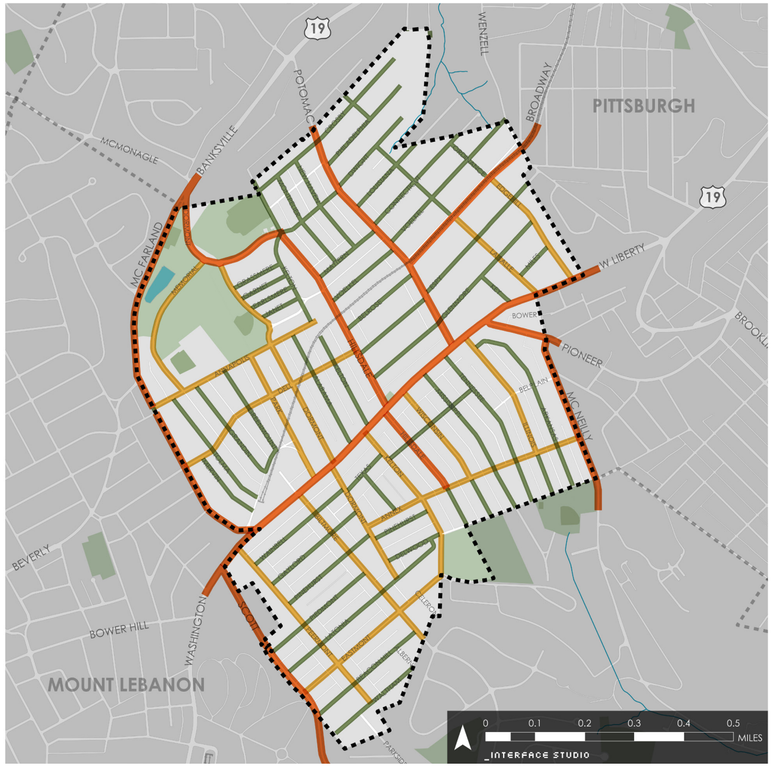
GOALS	TOOLS
• traffic calming	- decorative crosswalks
• direct travelers to amenities	- curb bump outs
• showcase Borough	- bike lanes/sharrows
	- signage
	- public art
	- landscaping

Neighborhood Connectors

GOALS	TOOLS
• traffic calming	- visible crosswalks
	- rumble strips
	- bike lanes/sharrows

Local Streets

GOALS	TOOLS
• traffic calming	- curb bump outs
• manage stormwater	- raingardens
• create safe play spaces	- landscaping
	- signage



Source: Sam Schwartz Engineering

BOROUGH ACCESS
NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTORS
LOCAL STREETS

BOROUGH ACCESS
lead in & out of Borough
higher proportion of commercial and institutional use than other streets

NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTORS
connect to Borough Access streets
alternative routes to Borough Access streets

LOCAL STREETS
narrower and less conducive to traffic than Neighborhood Connectors

- **Redesign West Liberty Avenue**

WHY: Both travel and parking are difficult on West Liberty Avenue. The alternation of a parking lane can be confusing to non-residents. Parked cars block lanes even during periods when they have shifted from parking back to travel lanes. Providing dedicated parking and turning lanes will streamline traffic flow and parking. Widening the sidewalk and improving crosswalk conditions will enhance pedestrian visibility, reduce crossing time, and improve access to businesses. There are many precedents for these types of improvements on roads with less than 20,000 cars a day. West Liberty currently carries approximately 16,000 cars a day according to . Key components of the proposal are:

- Include two (2) travel lanes, one (1) continuous center turning lane, and one (1) dedicated parking lane
- Install bumpouts at crosswalks and improve striping and signage at crosswalks
- Widen sidewalk on northwest side and realign poles, hydrants, etc.

Resident input expressed strong support for this idea. Many felt that wider sidewalks and a "facelift" is precisely what West Liberty needs to support existing businesses and attract new ones. 54% of residents at the Dream Dormont event at the Hollywood Theater expressed a strong desire to see this happen. The overwhelming majority of comments from the other 46% expressed support for the idea but asked simply if it could really work. More information is needed to test the full feasibility of this concept.

HOW: The first step is to undertake a detailed traffic study that outlines the specific improvements that could be achieved within the context of existing traffic flow and parking. This study should help to answer many questions about how this new street would function, particularly at intersections, but also how the construction could be phased to minimize disruptions to existing businesses. Should the traffic study support the feasibility of this concept, potential funding sources include the PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank, and the FHWA Transportation, Community, and System Preservation Program. The Borough could also work with PennDOT and SPC to include a future project in the Transportation Improvement Program.

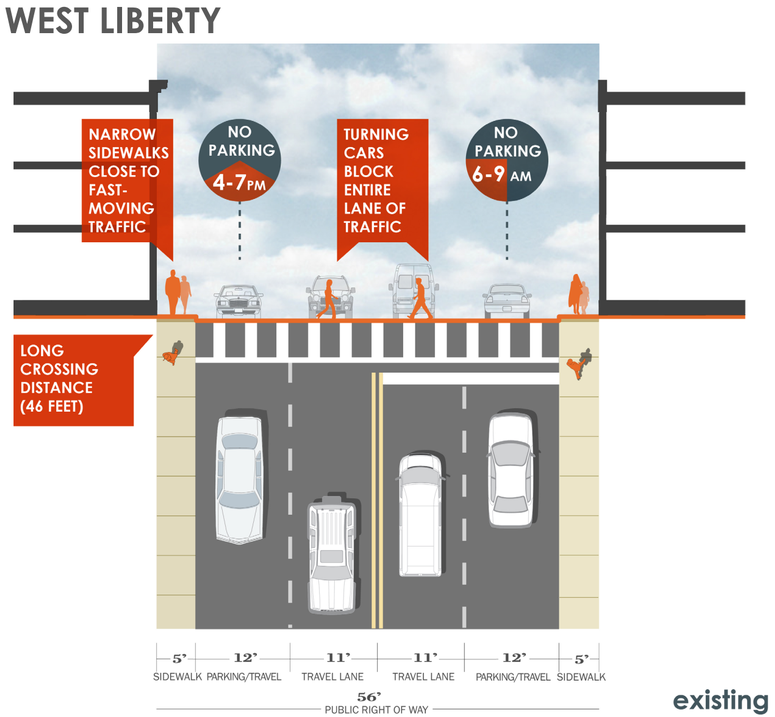


Figure 5: *Section of West Liberty (existing)*

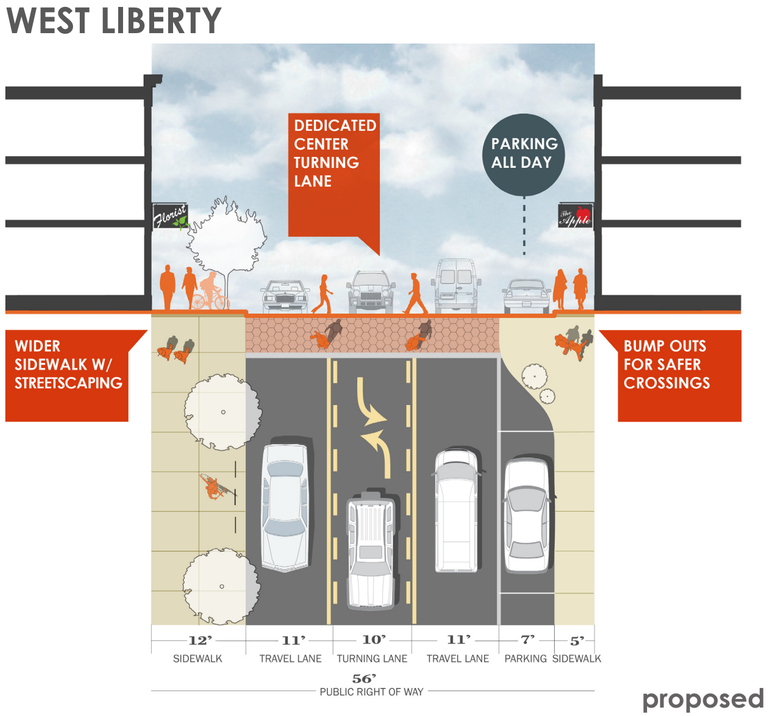


Figure 6: *Section of West Liberty (proposed)*

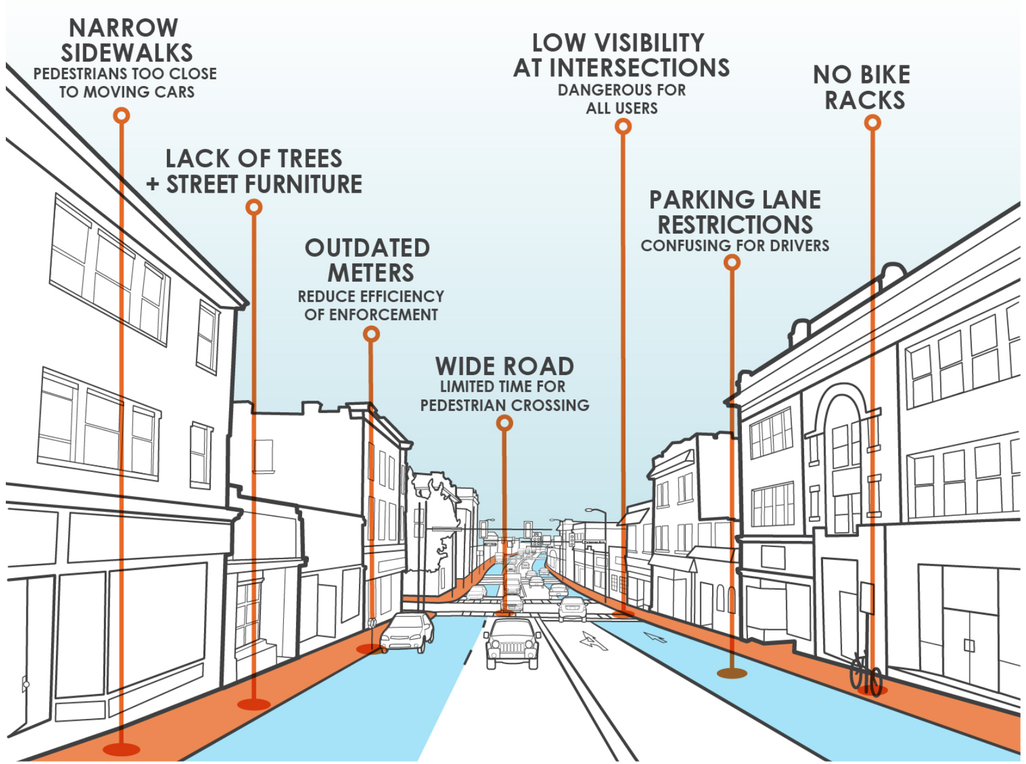


Figure 7: *Diagram of current issues along West Liberty*

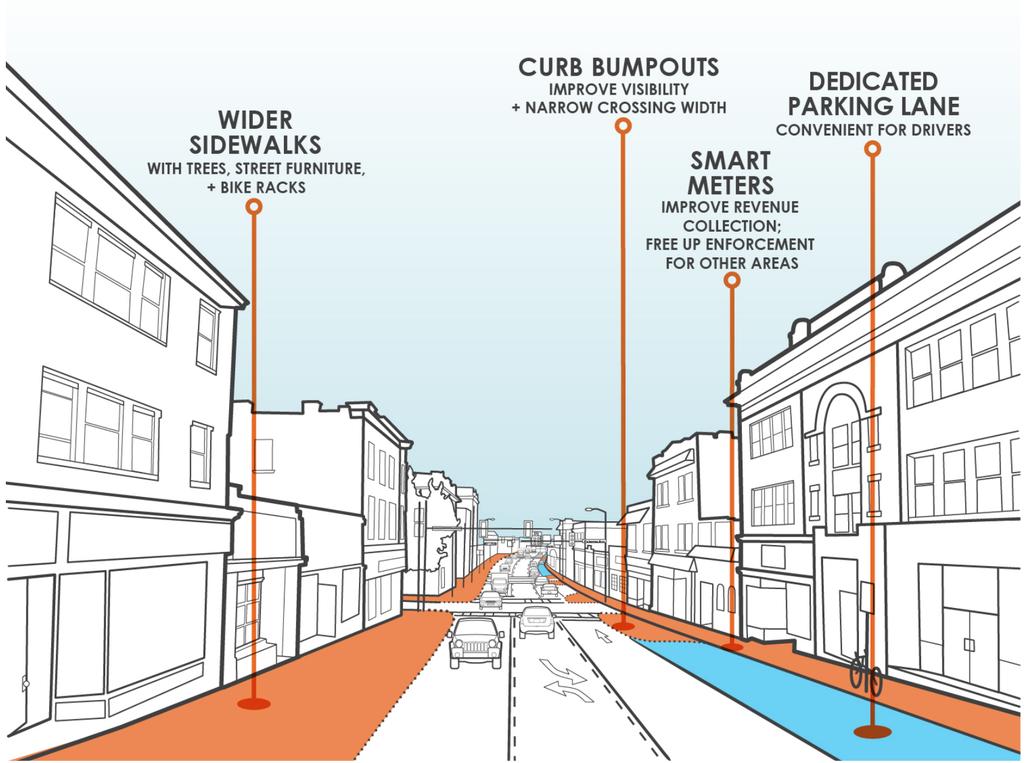


Figure 8: *Diagram of proposed improvements for West Liberty*

- **Use Potomac Ave more frequently as a town plaza for special events like festivals, farmer's markets, and performances**

WHY: Dormont needs a centrally-located plaza in its business district, yet there is no clear opportunity for the development of one. As a place where people like to sit, stroll, and shop, Potomac Avenue serves a function similar to a town plaza. The small scale of the street creates an intimate living room environment; however the main detractor from this is the high volume of cut-through traffic.

While the avenue is used on occasion for special events like the Dormont Street Fair, it could be used in this way more frequently to become a community plaza. More frequent events will serve to create buzz, foster community cohesion and pride, attract families, and benefit local businesses through increased activity.

HOW: Create an events board working under guidance of recreation director. Invite members of the community including business owners on Potomac Avenue to participate in the board.

(Near right): Potomac Avenue today
(Far right): Potomac Avenue programmed with additional festivals but also improvements that make the best use of the unique tree canopy

" This would be cool. It would enliven the street, create a fun place to be. "

" Potomac is so underutilized- *promote* events and showcase businesses, currently the streets 'roll up' at 6 pm . . . "

BROADWAY

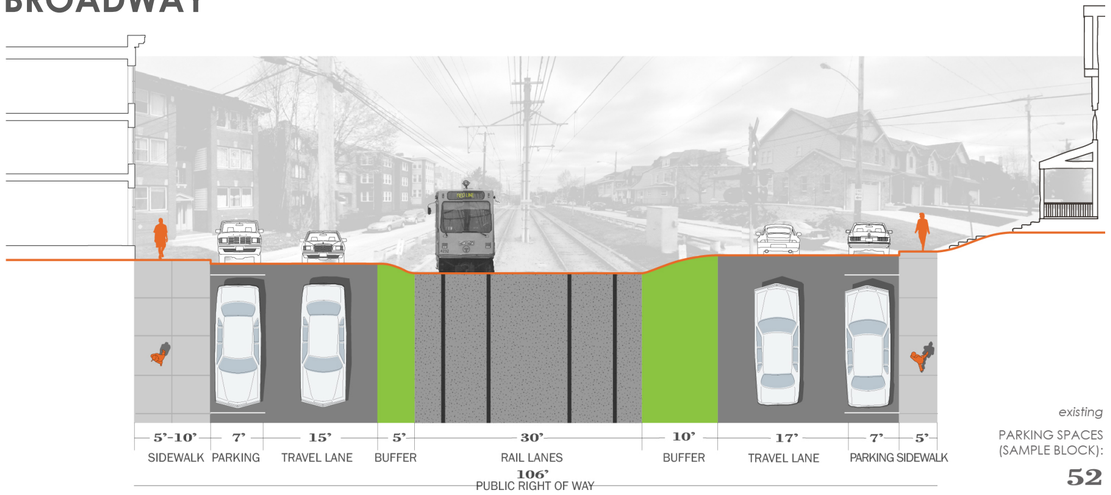


Figure 9: *Section of Broadway Avenue (existing)*

- **Add bike lanes to Broadway Avenue**

WHY: The travel lanes on Broadway Avenue are wider than needed, which encourages speeding, and the sidewalks are narrow, which creates unpleasant and unsafe pedestrian conditions. The addition of bike lanes would be a low-cost option to narrow traffic lanes and improve the safety of the street to make it more accommodating for a variety of users.

In addition, Broadway Avenue is an ideal candidate for bike lanes because its topography is conducive to cycling. Moreover, bike lanes are proposed for Broadway in the Beechview neighborhood that borders Dormont. Finally, as a main arterial that connects Dormont to Pittsburgh and through which the T runs, the avenue serves as an opportunity to showcase the Borough.

BROADWAY

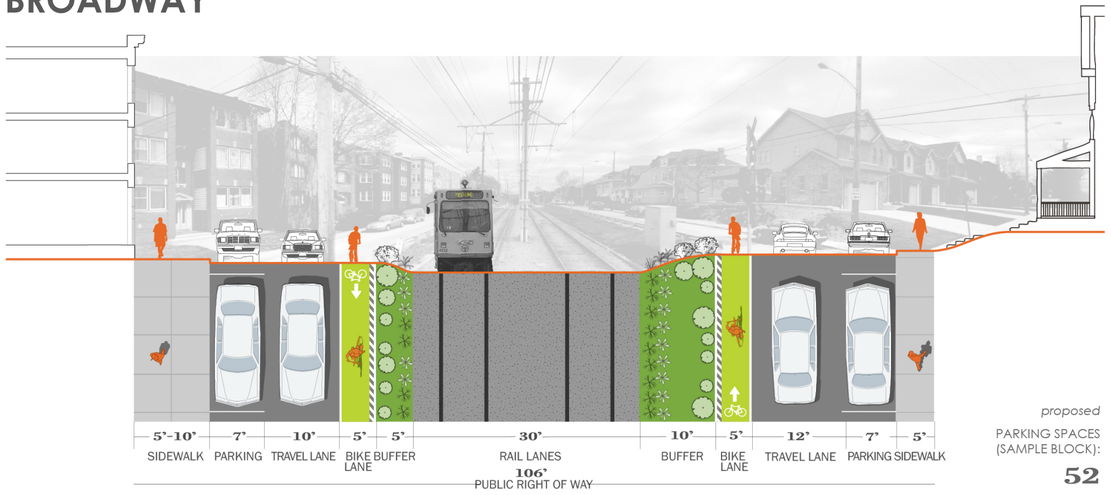


Figure 10: *Section of Broadway Avenue (proposed)*

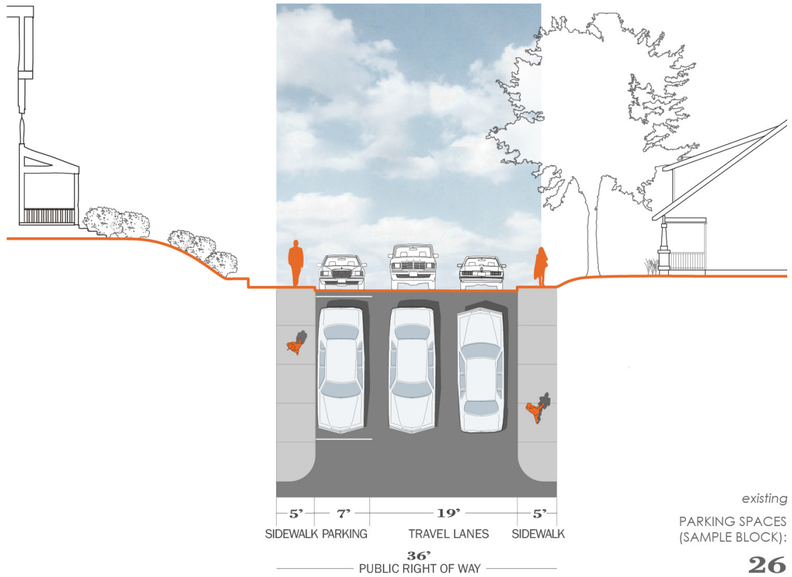
HOW: Potential sources of funding are Allegheny County's Community Infrastructure and Tourism Program or PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Program. Funding could also be tied to the development of a new TOD at Potomac/ Broadway as an off-site improvement.

- **Consider changes in street direction on residential streets**

WHY: Parking is a problem for many residents- a product of small, outdated, and hard-to-access garages as well as narrow, two-way streets. Converting the existing street direction where applicable from two-way to one-way would open up the possibility for parking on both sides of the street. This conversion would also improve traffic flow and safety, as many two-way streets are queuing streets. The result is more parking and safer streets through the integration of curb bumpouts with rain gardens at intersections. A recent study by Carnegie Mellon students recommended a comprehensive overhaul of the Borough's streets to rely on one-way pairs. However, every street is different and any potential conversion requires the approval of the Borough Fire and Police Departments to ensure that the design addresses any concerns regarding access and operations.

" Depends on street. Would not work for some areas. "

LOCAL STREET



existing

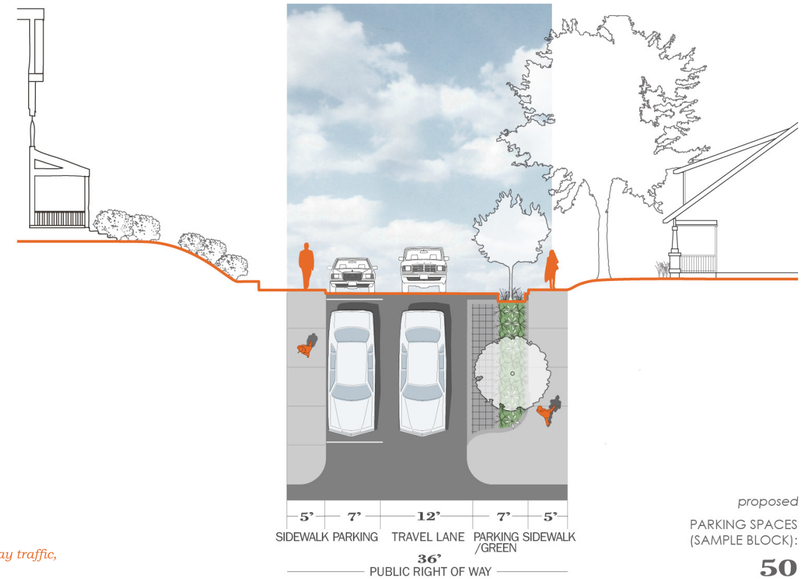
PARKING SPACES (SAMPLE BLOCK): **26**

Figure 11:
Section of a typical residential street (existing)

HOW: Conduct an engineering study to determine feasibility of the conversion of streets from two-way to one-way. Couple conversions where possible with elements of Complete Streets and stormwater infrastructure, such as bumpouts or rain gardens, Coordinate with public works, fire, and police departments as well as PennDOT. Look into Allegheny County's Community Infrastructure and Tourism Program, PennDOT Transportation Alternatives Program, or a CDBG.

" I feel this would have an immediate impact (positive) on parking…There would be more! One-way streets would also be safer! "

LOCAL STREET



proposed

PARKING SPACES (SAMPLE BLOCK): **50**

Figure 12:
Section of a residential street (proposed) illustrating one-way traffic, added parking and greening at the intersections

- **Create safe spaces for play in alleyways (where possible)**

WHY: Most houses in Dormont have limited yard space, and many are not within close proximity to a park. Alleys present an opportunity to serve as backyards for interested residents. Moreover, many alleys are in disrepair; conversions to play streets could be coupled with resurfacing efforts and the installation of green infrastructure to improve their condition and create greener playspaces.

HOW: Create a borough program that coordinates interested residents with the public works department to determine the feasibility of creating a play street, including the resurfacing of their alley and addition of green infrastructure. Couple designations with traffic calming measures and a future maintenance plan. Funding possibilities include the Allegheny County Conservation District Grant Fund, the Charette Program (EPA), the Watershed Restoration Protection Program (CFA), Growing Greener Grant II (PENNVEST), and the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County.

(Above): Street sign indicates to drivers that children could be at play in the alley.
(Middle): An alley in need of resurfacing in Dormont
(Bottom): A play street in the Netherlands

SHOW OFF YOUR GOOD SIDE: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF STREETS

- **Create green streets/green alleys (where possible)**

WHY: As evident by flooding issues, there is a need to improve stormwater management in the Borough. Streets and alleys are vast areas of impermeable surfaces that channel runoff and contribute to flooding; as such they are also great opportunities for the mitigation of stormwater issues.

HOW: Coordinate road repair and alley re-surfacing programs with installation of green infrastructure, e.g. rain gardens coupled with bumpouts at intersections and on streets ; plastic grid alleyways with grass and gravel and porous concrete or cobblestone driveways. Solicit volunteers from school and organizations to assist with tree planting, landscaping, and the creation of rain gardens.

(Right): A "country lane" alley in Vancouver composed primarily of permeable plastic grids.
(Below): Bumpouts can take many forms, starting at lower-cost plastic bollards.

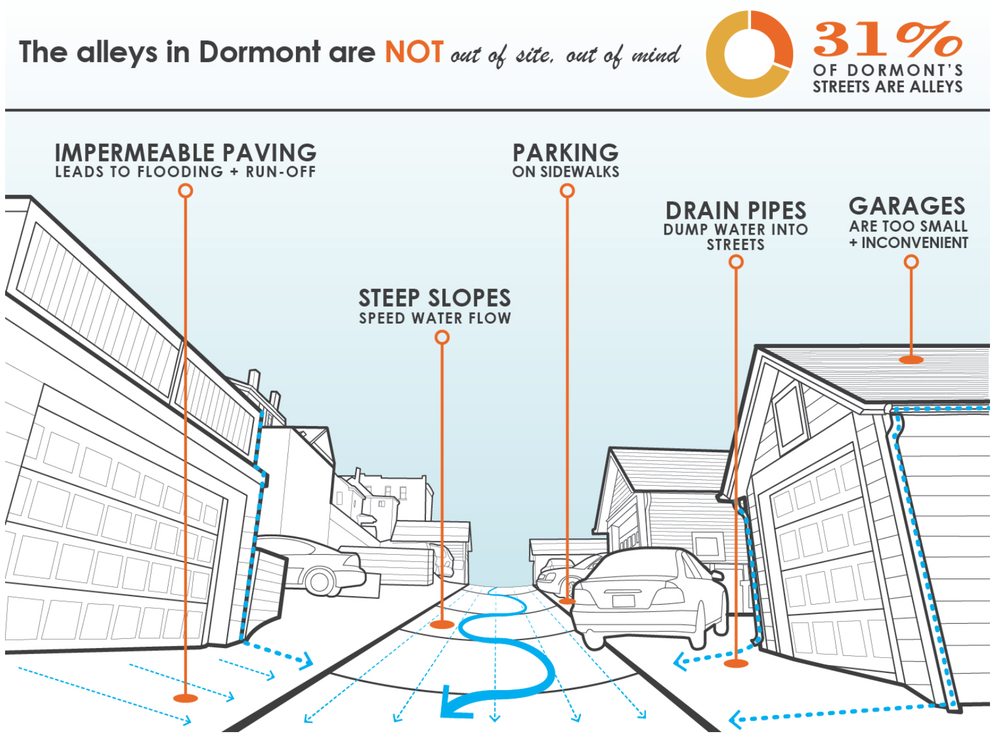


Figure 13: *Diagram of current issues in Dormont's alleys*

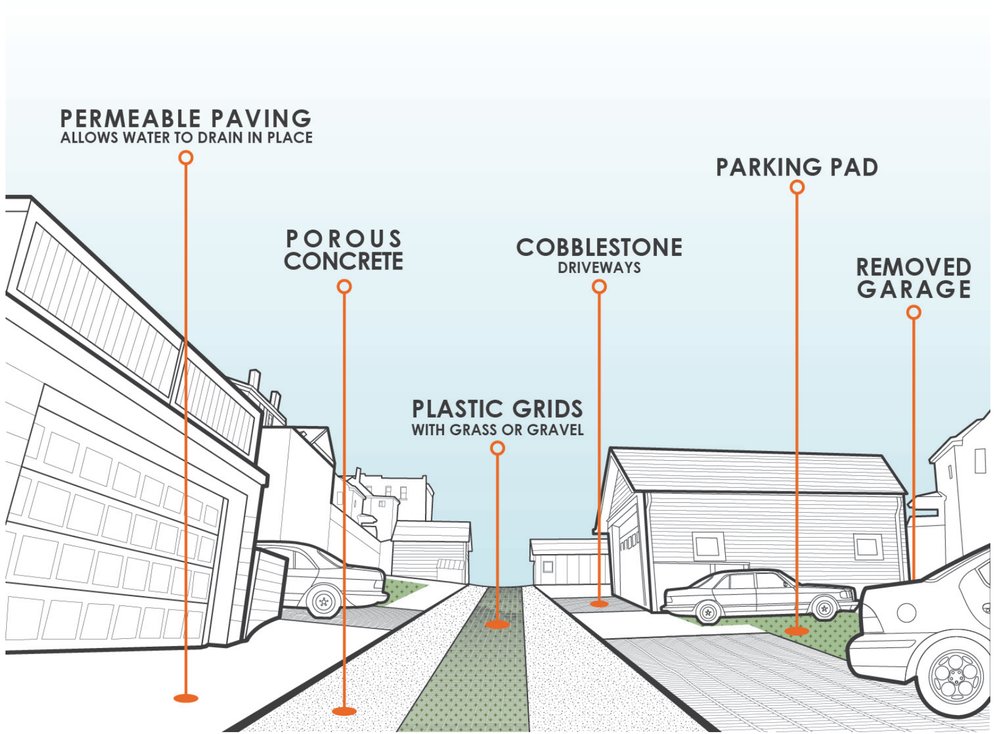


Figure 14: *Diagram of potential solutions for upgrading Dormont's alleys*

- **Improve gateways into Dormont**

WHY: The boundaries of Dormont are not readily discernible on all roads entering the Borough: it's easy to cross the border without even realizing it. Gateways are an opportunity to create a positive first impression on visitors, market the Borough to potential new residents, and foster pride among existing residents.

HOW: Include more prominent signage and attractive landscaping at entrance points to the Borough, e.g. at Potomac/Banksville, Dormont/Banksville, both ends of West Liberty, and Wenzell/Broadway. Increase landscaping on Broadway to improve viewshed from the T. Gateways could also benefit from additional public art and lighting. The mural at Wenzell/Broadway, should be expanded to all neighboring surfaces (the underpass, rail bridge, etc.). The underpass itself could benefit from creative lighting as well. In addition, plant landscaped buffers around parking lots fronting on main streets and create an attractive screening for the salt pile on Dormont Avenue. The Borough should explore the possibility of contracting with local landscapers and artists for this type of work where possible.

The mural at Broadway and Wenzell could be enhanced through additional public art and lighting.

Figure 15: *(Right) Map of Dormont's key gateways*

"T" TIME: ENCOURAGE TRANSIT USE

- **Encourage biking/walking to stations**

WHY: This will reduce local Park and Ride needs, free up parking for other users, and diminish traffic congestion on West Liberty and Potomac.

HOW: Post information at stations, by fare kiosks, and on the Port Authority and ConnectCard websites

- **Improve stations and station areas**

WHY: Better-maintained stations with amenities for a variety of users encourage ridership.

HOW: Add public art, benches, and bike racks and improve crosswalks and maintenance at stations. Add signage to the central business district and Park and Ride lots in the station area. Incorporate station and station area upgrades into TOD projects and the potential funding assistance pursued for those projects.

More visible crosswalks would improve the visual appeal of the station area around Potomac and make for safer pedestrian conditions.

PARK SMART: IMPROVE PARKING METERS, ENFORCEMENT, SIGNAGE, AND INFO IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- **Improve information for drivers**

WHY: Directing travelers to availability will decrease congestion caused by drivers looping around trying to find a space. Easier parking throughout the Borough will also encourage repeat visits and thus bolster the local economy.

HOW: Signage efforts should be coordinated with the public works department. Online parking maps should be put on the borough website and include real-time information on availability, which could be provided through products like smart meters from Streetline (see below). These maps and information on availability should also be available as a smartphone application. The Borough could team with local universities to analyze parking data with GIS to detect patterns and suggest solutions.

- **Install Smart meters and/or or automated kiosks**

WHY: Both smart meters and automated kiosks will improve revenue collection and free up meter monitor to patrol residential areas. Further, the rates of these meters can be more readily adjusted. Higher rates demanded in prime locations in the business district and during special events will encourage turnover to make sure a space is always available for a potential customer and thus bolster revenue. Moreover, through increased efficiency of parking, smart meters have the potential to save the Borough money.

HOW: While there is likely a limited opportunity for third-party funding, the savings gained through increased efficiency should cover a portion of the cost.

Examples of smart meters and parking signage from other towns

SPACE FOR ALL: ACCOMMODATE THE PARKING NEEDS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF USERS

- **Introduce flexible parking opportunities around West Liberty and Potomac**

WHY: This will provide more short-term parking for visitors closer to businesses while avoiding residential streets.

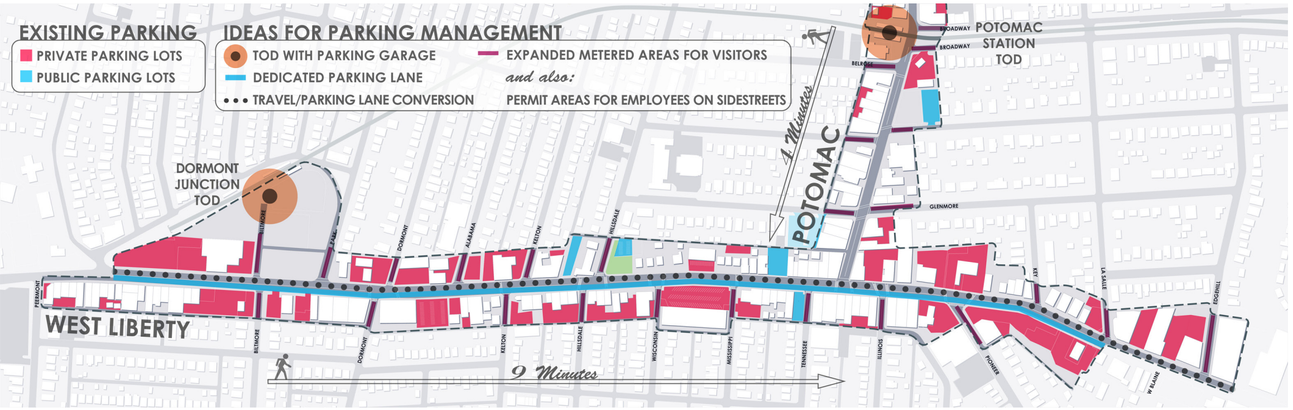
HOW: Expand metered areas one block off commercial corridor along commercial parcels on cross streets. Residential parking permits can be provided in these areas in any instance of overlap so nearby residents do not have to pay metered parking.

- **Provide daytime parking permits for employee use on residential streets**

WHY: Options for employee parking are limited; increasing parking options during working hours for employees takes advantage of spaces left by commuting residents and frees up spaces closer to businesses for customers, e.g. on-street parking or private lots.

HOW: The Borough could consider issuing employee parking permits.

Figure 16:
Summary map of ideas to manage parking within the business district



- **Offer public parking in TOD garages**

WHY: Accommodating commuters encourages public transit usage, and accommodating customers by supplementing on-street or lot parking options along West Liberty and Potomac with structured parking will in turn support local business. Centralizing business district parking while simultaneously improving the walking environment on West Liberty Ave through streetscaping can help create a walkable commercial strip where people "park once."

HOW: The TOD developer and the Borough should coordinate on accommodating different users in the TOD parking garage.

- **Remove garages and replace with parking pads**

WHY: This would create additional off-street parking spaces for residents who find their garage is outdated or hard to access.

HOW: Incentivize the removal of outdated garages where possible to enable residents to take advantage of the updated borough code. The code was amended 1/3/2011 to increase the maximum lot coverage to 45% in R2 zones. This was done to allow residents to expand their garages or replace them with parking pads. Parking pads receive an exception for up to 200 sq. ft. relative to the 45% coverage requirement.

- **Expand residential permit area and enforcement**

WHY: The lack of full coverage weakens the ability of the Borough to manage supply and demand and furthermore is a lost revenue stream for the Borough.

HOW: Coordinate with the police department on permits .

Ouch. My car hurts.

SUMMARY

MOVE ABOUT	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
SAFETY FIRST: MAKE STREETS SAFER FOR ALL USERS					
Strategies:					
> Adopt a Complete Streets policy	Borough staff	high	$	minimal	near-term
> Incorporate elements of Complete Streets into Dormont streets to make it easier and safer to bike and walk	PennDOT Trans. Alternatives Program; Multimodal Fund	high	$$	some	mid-term
> Launch a safety campaign	Borough staff	low	$	a lot	mid-term
IMPROVE THE FUNCTIONALITY OF STREETS AND ALLEYWAYS TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND CONVENIENT SYSTEM TO MOVE AROUND THE BOROUGH					
Strategies:					
> Adopt treatments catered to different street typologies	Borough staff, grants	medium	$$	some	mid-term
> Redesign West Liberty Avenue	Trans. Improvement Program; PA Infrastructure Bank; PennDOT Trans. Alternatives Program, FHWA TCSP Program	high	$$$$	a lot	long-term
> Use Potomac Ave more frequently as a town plaza for special events like festivals, farmer's markets, and performances	Borough staff, Main Street Dormont, grants	medium	$$	some	mid-term
> Add bike lanes to Broadway Avenue	PennDOT Trans. Alternatives Program; TOD related funding	high	$	some	mid-term
> Consider changes in street direction on residential streets	Borough staff, grants PennDOT Trans. Alternatives Program	high	$$	a lot	long-term
> Create safe spaces for play in alleyways	Residents with support from Allegheny County Conservation District Grant Fund, the Charette Program (EPA)	medium	$	some	long-term

MOVE ABOUT	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF STREETS					
Strategies:					
> Improve gateways into Dormont	Private grants	medium	$$	some	mid-term
> Create green streets/green alleys	Allegheny Co Conservation District Grant Fund, EPA Charette Program, CFA Watershed Restoration Protection Prgm, Growing Greener Grant II (PENNVEST), Allegheny County RDA	medium	$$$$	a lot	long-term
"T" TIME: ENCOURAGE TRANSIT USE					
Strategies:					
> Encourage biking/walking to stations	Borough, Port Authority	low	$	minimal	near-term
> Improve stations and station areas	Borough, Port Authority, private investment through TOD	high	$$$$	some	long-term
IMPROVE PARKING METERS, ENFORCEMENT, SIGNAGE, AND INFO IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT					
Strategies:					
> Improve information for drivers, e.g. signage directing to off-street lots, online maps, and real-time information on availability	Borough	high	$$	a lot	mid-term
> Install Smart meters and/or or automated kiosks	Borough	high	$$$	a lot	long-term
ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENT USERS: RESIDENTS (LONG-TERM), EMPLOYEES (LONG-TERM), CUSTOMERS (SHORT-TERM), COMMUTERS (LONG-TERM)					
Strategies:					
> Introduce flexible parking opportunities around West Liberty and Potomac	Borough staff	low	$	minimal	near-term
> Expand metered areas one block off commercial corridor along commercial parcels on cross streets. Residential parking permits can be provided in these areas in any instance of overlap so nearby residents do not have to pay metered parking. Provide daytime parking permits for employee use on residential streets	Borough capital program	low	$$	some	mid-term
> Offer public parking in TOD garages	Private investment	medium	$	minimal	mid-term
> Remove garages and replace with parking pads	Borough capital program	medium	$$$	a lot	long-term
> Expand residential permit area and enforcement	Borough staff	medium	$	a lot	near-term

BRING IN THE BUSINESS

"I BELIEVE A TOWN IS AS GOOD AS ITS 'MAIN STREET.'"

Historically, Dormont's business district along West Liberty and Potomac Avenue offered the full range of stores and services that were supported by local residents. But as our lifestyles changed, we no longer shop the way we used to. We shop close to where we work, make special trips to large retail destinations like malls or simply seek out business districts that offer a specific store or restaurant that appeals to us. What it means is that Dormont's business district faces significant competition and, in order to compete, needs to change how it looks and functions. This is more than marketing. West Liberty and Potomac offer opportunities to become unique retail destinations with the right investments. This chapter is dedicated to outlining strategies that will help to support existing businesses and attract a greater range of stores.

3

BRING IN THE BUSINESS

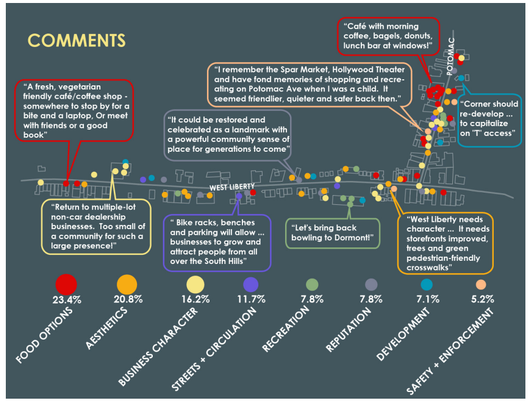
The two main commercial corridors in Dormont are West Liberty Avenue and Potomac Avenue. Stretching over three-quarters of a mile from McFarland Road to Edgehill Street, West Liberty Avenue has a diversity of commercial uses, including small footprint shops, restaurants, a strip mall, and auto dealers. Potomac Avenue is smaller in scale, stretching three-and-a-half blocks from West Liberty Avenue to the south and Broadway Avenue to the north. Consisting mostly of smaller-footprint commercial uses, its look and feel is that of a traditional main street. Both corridors have accessible public parking: three lots can be found off Potomac, and four lots are along West Liberty. There is very limited observed vacancy in either business district.

Figure 17:
Diagram of business district characters zones (existing)

Potomac Avenue has the look and feel of a quaint business district geared toward pedestrians. Its small scale is complemented by decorative streetscaping, including trees, pedestrian-oriented streetlights, benches, and planters. By contrast, West Liberty Avenue is of a larger scale, has car-oriented streetlights, and lacks decorative streetscaping elements.

Access to transit positions the business district in the Borough favorably. The two commercial corridors are bookended by T stops: Dormont Junction Station lies at the westernmost end of West Liberty and Potomac Station lies at the northern end of Potomac Avenue. As addressed above (Chapter 1 – Home Sweet Home), TODs have the potential to infuse these corridors with a new energy and additional commercial offerings. Mt. Lebanon offers successful destination retail; the Dormont TODs have the potential to complement this success and attract visitors on their way from Pittsburgh to Mount Lebanon.

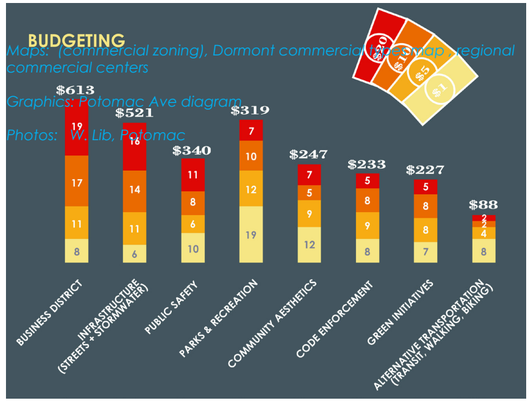
Several issues confront the business district in Dormont. The Borough experiences competition from its neighbors, including nearby large footprint suburban shopping malls and major destinations in the city of Pittsburgh. The business district in Dormont has potential to attract outside visitors with its portions of main street charm, yet there are several barriers to this. As described in Chapter 2 - Move About, West Liberty and Potomac function as through streets with high volumes of traffic that raise safety concerns. In addition, numerous private parking lots in addition to the four public parking lots interrupt the cohesion of a street wall along West Liberty.



Both corridors are in need of general aesthetic improvements, including better façade and property maintenance as well as more visually-appealing storefront signs. Coupled with the aforementioned lack of streetscaping and high volume of traffic, the narrow sidewalks on West Liberty compromise the pedestrian experience. Residents express a need for increased parking options and commercial offerings, in particular restaurants and cafes. Finally, the zoning code incorporates these two avenues into one commercial district: C (General Commercial District), although they do not appear or function as such.

The objectives discussed below address the apperance of properties, streetscaping, and strengthening local business.

(Below): Results from the public engagement process. Residents believe that what the business district needs most are more food options and a "makeover." When asked how to spend money, investing in the business district was the #1 priority.



OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

The business district in Dormont should build on its Main Street-style core and promote an attractive, walkable commercial environment. The district should seek to diversify its offerings to serve local needs while becoming a retail and entertainment destination for visitors.

GET SPIFFY: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF PROPERTIES IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- **Help businesses with improvements to façades, signs, and window displays**

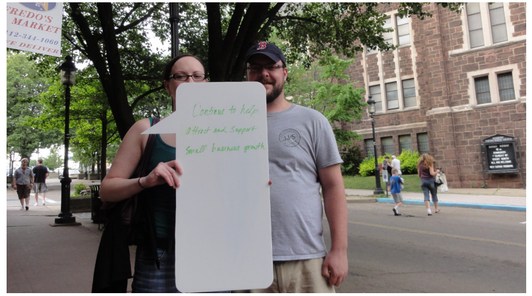
WHY: The physical appearance of the business district is a first impression to potential consumers. Exterior improvements also foster community pride.

HOW: Use the 2011 Dormont Design Guidelines as a resource for facades and signs. Pursue funding through the Allegheny Restores Façade Improvement Program and matching funds from the Borough. Target investments in priority areas: West Liberty between Hillsdale and Arkansas and Potomac between West Liberty and Voelkel.

- **Allow projecting signs**

WHY: Projecting signs are more visible and thus serve as better advertisements for businesses while making it easier for people to find stores.

HOW: Update the zoning code(see Chapter 6 – Zoning for the Future).



(Above): Resident ideas for the business district
(Near right): Examples of projecting signs in Philadelphia- simple and effective
(Far right): Existing facades in need of improvements

- **Establish a LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) tax abatement district to facilitate improvements to commercial properties**

WHY: As mentioned, the Borough tax base is heavily dependent upon residential assessments. Most of the commercial assessed value comes from the new CVS and the large auto uses along West Liberty. While stable in terms of vacancy, many properties in the business districts are underutilized and not generating enough tax revenue. Several buildings could benefit from rehabilitation, especially where vacant upper floor space can be converted for residential/office use.

The property tax burden resulting from improvements to a property often create a financial constraint, especially where local market rent levels cannot support planned investment.

HOW: Incentivize improvements by offering a 10-year abatement on the portion of new taxes resulting from improvements to properties. Benefits should start at 100% of new taxes and decline 10% annually. Allow eligibility for the full 10-year exemption for any property applying within seven years after establishing the LERTA. It is also important to note that active marketing to property owners is crucial to the success of the tax abatement district.

One quarter to no more than half of the new incremental borough taxes received from this increase in investment can be diverted into a revolving loan fund. This program can help further facilitate key redevelopment opportunities as a match to Allegheny Restores. Further, revenues from the fund can be invested into necessary shared infrastructure improvements to further facilitate revitalization efforts.

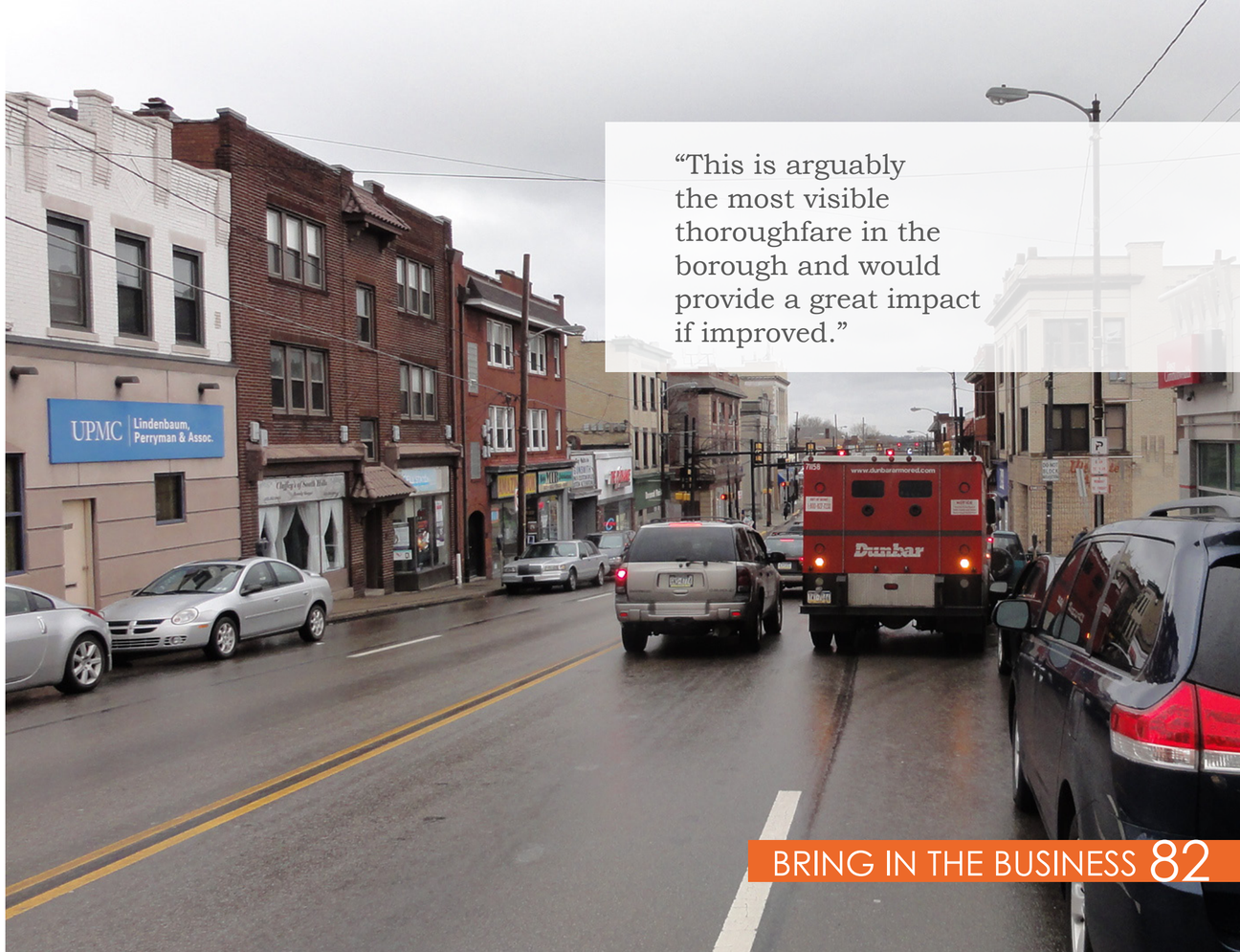
- **Pursue the redevelopment over time of key buildings and sites**

WHY: Dormont is mostly built-out, but over time properties may be sold and available for redevelopment. Redevelopment presents the opportunity to transition the business district from the auto-dependent uses that enhance its main street character and function. The redevelopment of key buildings and sites is appropriate for a mostly built-out community and furthermore is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan of *Allegeny Places*.

HOW: Amendments to the zoning code should facilitate a more pedestrian-oriented type of development with a continuous or near-continuous street wall. As such, front parking lots currently permitted in the commercial zoning district should be restricted. Chapter 6 – Zone for the Future will provide further details on this.

New Market Tax Credits are an option for larger redevelopments in certain portions of the Borough as well. Census tract 4723, which is bordered by Kelton and West Liberty Avenues to the west and north and the borough boundaries to the south and east, is an eligible Census tract under the program.

> "Our business district should be shining, and we've allowed it to be going the other way."



> "This is arguably the most visible thoroughfare in the borough and would provide a great impact if improved."

SITTING (AND WALKING) PRETTY: PURSUE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT

- **Upgrade street furniture and add decorative/holiday lighting in trees on Potomac Avenue**

WHY: The streetscaping on Potomac is somewhat outdated in its appearance and heavy given the small scale of the street.

HOW: Install lighter street furniture to open the street and create more space along the sidewalk. Decorate the trees with lighting to help foster a "living room" plaza-like feel in the street.

Today, Potomac has heavy street furniture but beautiful trees.

> " Potomac has such natural beauty in the business district, especially when the trees are in bloom. Would love it to reach its full potential."

(Below): Potomac today
(Right): Potomac at night with streetscaping improvements

- **Add street furniture and landscaping to West Liberty**

WHY: Wider sidewalks resulting from the redesign of West Liberty will be able to accommodate space for walking and also sitting. Landscaping will create a more pleasant main street shopping experience and enhance the appearance of the Borough along its primary commercial corridor.

HOW: Coordinate streetscaping efforts on West Liberty with Potomac Avenue to ensure a compreshensive approach. Replace trash cans and install benches and bike racks. Consider engaging artists from the community and surrounding area to weigh in on and/or contribute to their design. Work with the Shade Tree Commission and solicit local volunteers to plant appropriate trees and plants. A potential source of funding is through the DCED (Department of Community and Economic Development) Keystone Communities designation program. This option should be examined further to determine its applicability to the Borough. Additional tax revenue generated by new investment in LERTA Districts is another potential source of funding. The Borough may also consider partnering with the Business Development Divison of ACED for streetscaping efforts for both West Liberty and Potomac Avenue.

(Above): West Liberty today with tiny sidewalks and limited street activity
(Right): The potential along West Liberty by re-designing the street (as described in Chapter 2- Move About) and adding street furniture

FLEX YOUR ECONOMIC MUSCLE: STRENGTHEN LOCAL BUSINESS AND BUILD ON NEIGHBORING ASSETS

- **Attract a greater range of retail services**

WHY: At the time of the 2008 South Hills TRID study, grocery stores, for instance, were undersupplied in the Potomac, Dormont, and Mt. Lebanon station areas. In addition, there was an apparent opportunity for health and personal care retailers in the Dormont Junction area. Capitalizing on these market opportunities will help dollars stay local.

HOW: While it is difficult for municipalities to sway the market, it is possible to create a more favorable business climate through physical improvements that attract visitors, such as the streetscape improvements listed above. The possibility of offering targeted business loans through the Borough should also be examined.

- **Encourage collaboration with neighboring Mt. Lebanon and Beechview business districts as a South Hills Transit Corridor**

WHY: A collaborative commercial corridor would share the purchasing power of residents from Mt. Lebanon and the 'up-and-coming' Beechview neighborhoods. These business districts are not only contiguous but also share connectivity through the T which could be built upon.

HOW: Connect and collaborate with local resources e.g. the Mt. Lebanon Main Street Coordinator. Consider partnering with the PAAC for promotional events, e.g. one ticket allows you unlimited use for one weekend, perhaps around the holidays, when traveling between stations in the South Hills.

SPREAD THE WORD: IMPROVE MARKETING OF AND INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESSES IN DORMONT

- **Generate activity and showcase local businesses**

WHY: Dormont has a lot to offer, but not everyone may know it. Highlighting local business through events, promotions, and marketing will help residents find what they are looking for and keep their dollars local. Promotions, e.g. special coupons to local business for T riders, can support local business and other causes, such as alternative transportation usage, in tandem. Finally, increased information on what is available in the business district may underscore what is missing to those who are looking to start their own business.

HOW: Build off existing events such as Taste of Dormont to create new ones, e.g. a "Best Pizza Contest" or seasonal block parties. Encourage local sourcing for borough, school district, and community events, as well as other public occasions. Offer promotions, such as a special coupon/discount to be used locally for new residents, cyclists, T riders, community volunteers, and others. Strengthen the buy local marketing campaign by using the current Buy Local Dormont logo (or give it a new look!) on additional swag, e.g. shopping bags and T-shirts, and a variety of media platforms, e.g. the web, social media, posters, Dormont newsletter, and advertisements in the T. Update online resources that promote local business.

(Right): Pizza contest!

- **Market Dormont as a destination for diverse and unique retail and services**

WHY: Marketing distinct commercial districts will help potential customers find what they are looking for. It is also important to distinguish the offerings in Dormont from those in Pittsburgh or outer lying suburbs to show that it has something different to offer.

HOW: Define and market distinct commercial districts (see below): Main Street (pedestrian-oriented portions of West Liberty), Living Room (Potomac Avenue), and Drive-through (auto-oriented businesses bookending West Liberty). Maps of these different commercial rooms along with a business directory should be available on the borough and Dormont Main Street websites. They should also be posted and/or offered as flyers throughout the business district. In the business directory, highlight new businesses and special promotions, link to Facebook for up-to-the-minute event information and communication among Dormont Main Street members.

Figure 18:
Diagram of business district character zones (proposed)

(Right): Illustration of what makes Potomoac unique. These are the elements to build upon.

SUMMARY

BRING IN THE BUSINESS	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
GET SPIFFY: IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF PROPERTIES IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT					
Strategies:					
> Help businesses with improvements to façades, signs, and window displays	Allegheny Restores Façade Improvement Program	high	$$$	a lot	mid-term
> Allow projecting signs	Borough	medium	$	minimal	near-term
> Establish a LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance) tax abatement district to facilitate improvements to commercial properties	Borough	medium	$	minimal	near-term
> Pursue the redevelopment over time of key sites and buildings	New Market Tax Credit, Borough staff	high	$$$$	a lot	long-term
SITTING (AND WALKING) PRETTY: PURSUE STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS ALONG POTOMAC AND WEST LIBERTY THAT RECOGNIZE HOW EACH STREET IS UNIQUE					
Strategies:					
> Upgrade street furniture and add decorative/holiday lighting in trees on Potomac Avenue.	DCED, LERTA, Borough capital, grant for public art	high	$$	some	mid-term
> Add street furniture and landscaping to West Liberty	DCED, LERTA, Borough capital	medium	$$	a lot	mid-term
FLEX YOUR ECONOMIC MUSCLE: STRENGTHEN LOCAL BUSINESS AND BUILD ON NEIGHBORING ASSETS					
Strategies:					
> Attract a greater range of retail services	Borough revolving loan fund	medium	$$	some	mid-term
> Encourage collaboration with neighboring Mt. Lebanon and Beechview business districts as a South Hills Transit Corridor	PAAC, Pittsburgh URA, Borough	low	$	minimal	near-term
SPREAD THE WORD: IMPROVE MARKETING OF AND INFORMATION ABOUT BUSINESSES IN DORMONT					
Strategies:					
> Market Dormont as a destination for diverse and unique retail and services	Main Street, local businesses, Borough	low	$$	minimal	ongoing
> Generate activity and showcase local businesses	Main Street grants, local business support, Borough staff	medium	$$	minimal	mid-term

DREAM GREEN

"LEADING THE WAY ON GREEN COULD MAKE DORMONT STAND OUT AND [BE] UNIQUE."

Dormont's parks and open space are valued by community members who volunteer year after year to make improvements and organize recreational programs. The Dormont Park and Pool, in particular, are distinctive assets that help to distinguish the Borough from other municipalities. But for many, Dormont Park is too remote to use on a day to day basis. Residents expressed a need for better open space and expanded recreational programming throughout the Borough but also for a committed effort to green streets and stormwater management. Dream Green is focused on further transforming Dormont into a green, active and sustainable borough.

4

DREAM GREEN

Dormont Park is roughly 24 acres with a ball field, creative play area, picnic pavilions, tennis courts, street hockey court, basketball court, horseshoe courts, walking trail, and restroom facility, in addition to the Dormont Pool and Recreation Center. The park was the most loved place in Dormont per feedback on the collaborative map, with residents citing its trees, trails, places for sledding, playground, and pavilions, among others, as elements of it that they enjoyed. In addition to the Dormont Pool and Recreation Center, community recreation facilities include the gymnasium behind the Borough Hall, which is primarily used for indoor sports, including basketball and cheerleading. In addition, the gymnasium can be rented out for parties during the weekends.

Beggs Snyder Park is roughly 5.5 acres with a ball field, two peewee soccer fields, a locking pavilion, restroom and concession building, playground equipment, and passive park areas. Beyond Dormont Park and Beggs Snyder, the other open space is a small passive park recently developed on West Liberty Avenue. Less than a sixth acre in size, it contains a sunflower garden, two benches, and six trees.

There is limited open space in the Borough (less than 7% of land area) almost all of which is concentrated in Dormont Park and Beggs Snyder Park. For this reason, accessibility of open space is a major issue, as not everyone is within a short walk of usable open space. Both parks require investment to meet their potential and maintenance is a constant struggle. Many residents have noted that while there are a lot of programs and events at the recreation center in Dormont Park, there is limited outreach regarding these offerings, which limits their use by residents.

Beggs Snyder faces several issues which contribute to its lack of use. The park has extremely limited road access, and its parking lot is used primarily by nearby residents. The main access point from McNeilly is barely visible and does not welcome residents or visitors to the park. Further, the grass is poorly maintained and the park's steep slopes result in frequent flooding, which renders the fields unusable at times. The basketball courts are cut off from the rest of the park and, because the park is basically a bowl with limited visibility, it has become a great place for teens to congregate, litter and sometimes misbehave. There is real opportunity to transform Beggs Snyder but any initiative will have to be a joint effort between Dormont and Mt. Lebanon due to the fact that while it is managed by Dormont, the park is in Mt. Lebanon.

One primary issues with the passive park on West Liberty is its steep slope, which blocks the relationship between the park and the street. As such, there is rarely anyone using the space except during planting days. Space is limited for additional amenities, as a parking lot takes up the other half of the park. There is no footpath between the park and parking lot.

The most prominent environmental concern affecting the Borough in general is flooding, a common issue for cities today that stems from old infrastructure combined with steep slopes and heavier rain events. Coupled with concerns about flooding, data collected for this plan reinforces a concern residents have consistently raised - the lack of street trees and greenery. While it is not possible to create new recreation spaces due to limited land availability and high cost, there are opportunities to thread greening throughout the Borough. An investment in new trees and landscaping will help to slow traffic, clean the air, improve housing values and improve the identity of Dormont.

The following objectives address the performance of parks, borough facilities, and stormwater management. The Borough may want to consider updating its parks plans to incorporate these additional suggestions prior to applying for funding for improvements.

(Right): Beggs Snyder Park

"They need to get this park cleaned up so it's usable again." (Beggs Snyder)

"We have too much hardscape. There's nothing that's green."

OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

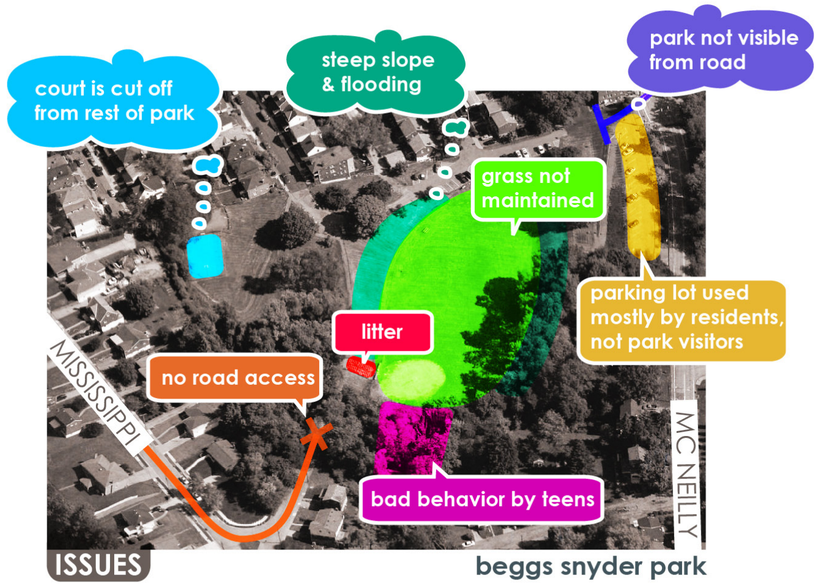
Through its open space, recreational offerings, and environmental initiatives, Dormont should promote a healthy, committed, and active community.

PLAY IT UP: IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF PARKS IN THE BOROUGH

- **Activate Beggs Snyder**

WHY: Activating Beggs Snyder Park will help transform it from its current state of underutilization and lack of maintenance to better serve local residents.

HOW: Increase the amenities offered in the park: consider adding a skate park, dek hockey, tot lot playground, gardens, dog park, and games like chess or ping pong. Improve visibility, safety, accessibility, and maintenance: add public art and signage by the entrance off McNeilly Road; enforce visitor-only parking in lots; and create a slow street connection completing Illinois Avenue (as recommended in the 1999 plan) enforced with signage and distinctive paving. Consider removing the fence along the Illinois Avenue footpath to allow for sledding and thus help activate the park during the winter season. The PA DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program is a potential source of funding for these improvements.



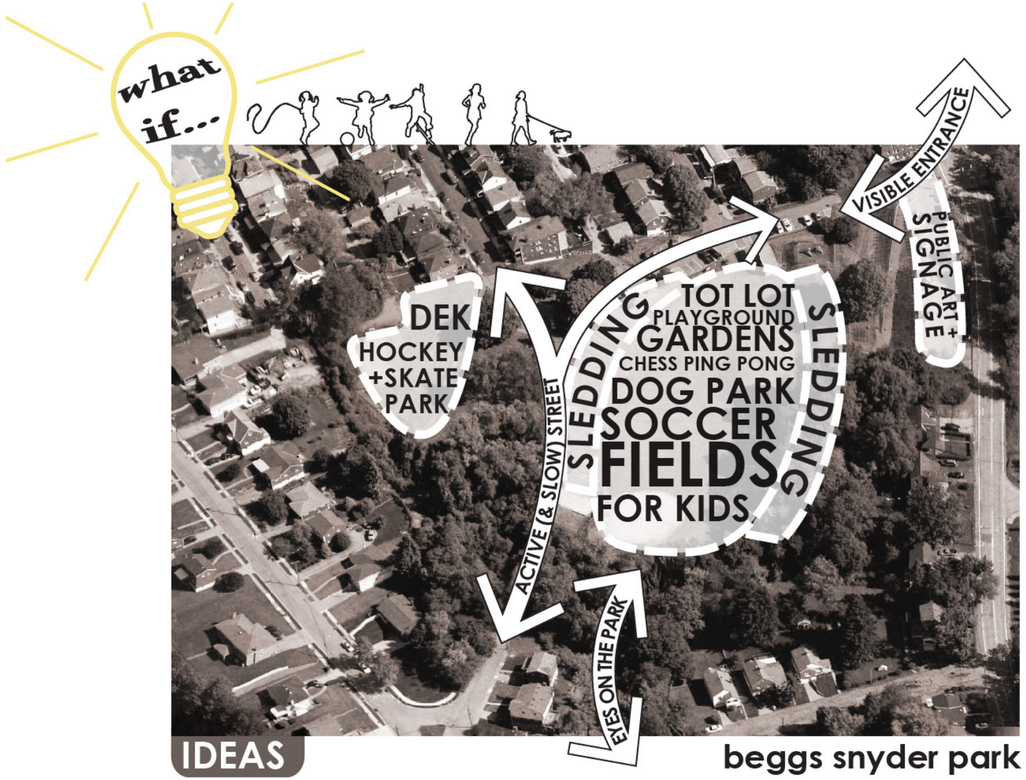
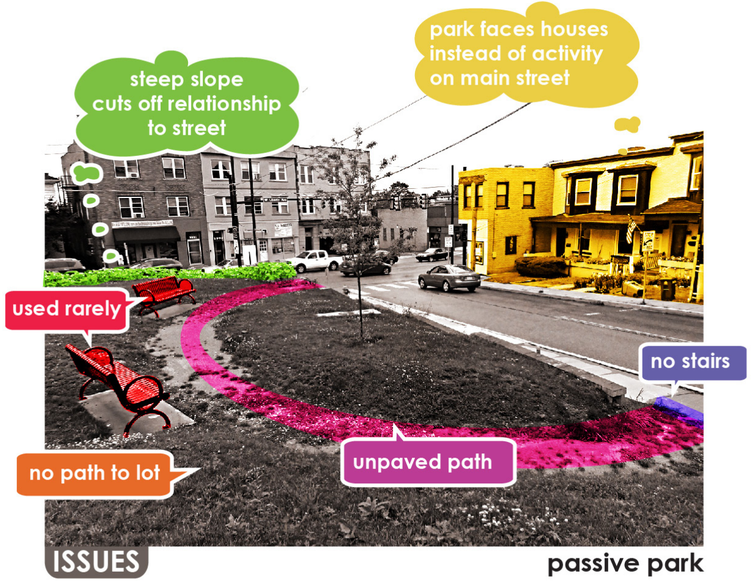


Figure 19: *(Above) Diagram of issues in Beggs Snyder Park*
Figure 20: *(Right) Diagram of potential improvements to Beggs Snyder over time*

- **Rethink the passive park along West Liberty**

WHY: The passive park along West Liberty is underperforming as a park due to its location, topography, and lack of furniture and paths. It has no connection to West Liberty and adds no value to surrounding businesses in its current state.

HOW: Level and redevelop the passive park with businesses and a small outdoor commercial plaza. Sell the land below market rate to incentivize a redevelopment project that will serve to benefit the Borough through new taxes and commercial offerings. The LERTA for commercial properties would also benefit any new construction on the site. An alternative is to level and redesign as a park at grade with West Liberty but this is a very costly endeavor without the ability to capture future revenues to offset the cost.



(Left) A member of the planning team notes that there is no path from the parking lot to the passive park.

Figure 21: *(Above) Diagram of issues in the passive park*

Figure 22: *(Right) Diagram of two approaches to transforming the passive park*

- **Add new programming to Dormont Park**

WHY: Dormont Park is quite popular with residents yet could benefit from additional programming.

HOW: Find an ideal location for a dog park, an amenity which generated substantial enthusiasm among residents during public outreach. Coordinate with schools and local groups to organize outdoor movies, performances, storytelling hours, and other events that cater to different groups.

(Below): Many residents would like official space made for dogs in Dormont Park. (Right): Transformation of the gym behind Borough Hall into an active, fitness facility could be a major benefit for residents.

- **Improve maintenance of parks facilities**

WHY: Play equipment, benches, and restrooms are in need of more attention. Improved maintenance of these facilities will help the parks better serve as community amenities that could furthermore attract new residents.

HOW: The Borough just hired a landscaping company to maintain borough facilities and grounds which will enable the existing two park employees to devote more time toward maintaining the park. Work closely with the Parks Commission to continue to involve the youth and community groups for seasonal or annual cleanups.

REV UP RECREATION: INCREASE THE PROGRAMMING AND OFFERINGS OF BOROUGH FACILITIES

- **Repurpose the gymnasium behind Borough Hall**

WHY: The gymnasium is currently used by youth groups but is in somewhat poor condition. No public gym is available to Dormont residents, and private fitness clubs are not conveniently close to the Borough.

HOW: Turn the gym into a public fitness and recreation center open to all residents of the Borough. Form a local task force to support the recreation director in coordinating the conversion of this facility.

As with the improvements to Beggs Snyder Park, the PA DCED Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program is a potential source of funding for these improvements. The Borough may only apply for one project at a time, however. Another option is for residents to pay a small fee and non-residents to pay a slightly higher fee. The revenue gained from these fees could support the operation of the facility. Additional options are to pursue funding through the Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund or the Gaming Economic Development Fund, both of which are programs of Allegheny County.

- **Upgrade the Dormont Pool and add uses**

WHY: The pool is close to the hearts of many residents yet could benefit from some improvements that respect its history and build off its assets while addressing modern preferences.

HOW: Potential improvements range from softer programming to physical upgrades. The sizable parking lot is an ideal space for larger fairs, festivals, or farmer's markets that may not work as well on Potomac Avenue. The pool itself could also accommodate popular winter uses, such as ice skating.

Closer consideration should be given to the redesigning and modernizing of the pool to compete with surrounding communities. The minimum level of physical improvements should address upgrades to the locker rooms in the bathhouse and the enhancement of the concession stand. One means of support for these improvements would be an increased fee for non-residents.

- **Expand information and services at the recreation center**

WHY: The offerings of the recreation center are limited and could be expanded to better serve the more diverse interests of the community.

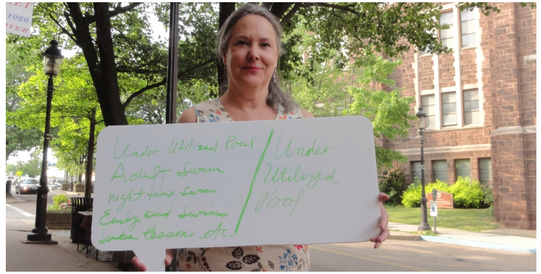
HOW: Improve marketing for events. Revamp the format of the class schedule and add a calendar to website. Consider renting the facility for meetings and other events.

- **Encourage healthy programs**

WHY: Dormont has a walkable environment, a noticeable level of community spirit, and access to sizable green space. All of these qualities position the community well for health-related programs and events.

HOW: Organize run/walk/bike events, including a revival of the Dormont Dash.

(Below): Resident ideas to ramp up programming
(Right): Maintenance of the Dormont Pool



GO GREEN (AND BLUE)!: ENCOURAGE GREEN AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES AND PRACTICES

- **Develop a tree planting plan**

WHY: Tree coverage is somewhat limited in the Borough. Adding trees to streets helps mediate high summer temperatures, offers shade, and creates a more inviting aesthetic.

HOW: Work with the Shade Tree Commission to select street tree and yard tree species. Promote the benefits of tree planting to residents and businesses. Organize a community planting day to implement the tree planting plan. The planting of native trees should be encouraged, in particular along West Liberty Avenue. A potential source of funding is a Community Grant through TreeVitalize, a DCNR and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy partnership that also offers advice on tree maintenance.

(Left): Summer rain caused a washout of the mulch in the Castle Playground in 2013.
(Right): Resident suggestions for more trees, landscaping and gardens

- **Use stormwater management best practices**

WHY: Stormwater management practices are needed in urban areas to reduce runoff and flooding.

HOW: Green infrastructure should be encouraged throughout the Borough. In residential areas, residents should disconnect roof leaders and use rain barrels. This water can in turn be used for gardens or in the home, e.g. in washing machines. Residents removing their garages should consider using permeable materials to pave their parking pads. Commercial and institutional properties should install pervious parking pavement when creating new parking areas or resurfacing existing lots. These properties should also include swales and rain gardens where possible as well as capture roof runoff. The encouragement of green infrastructure is consistent with the stormwater management goals of *Allegheny Places*.

The Borough should incorporate green streets/green alleys into projects when possible, perhaps through the creation of play streets, as discussed above (Chapter 3 – Move About) . All of these efforts can be spearheaded through demonstration projects that serve as opportunities to educate property owners.

Grants are available for green stormwater infrastructure through several options: Allegheny County Conservation District Grant Fund, The Charette Program (EPA), The Watershed Restoration Protection Program (CFA), Growing Greener II Grant (PENNVEST), the Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund (Allegheny County), and the Gaming Economic Development Fund (Allegheny County).

Coordination of these stormwater management practices should take place between residents, businesses, schools, local organizations, and the public works department.

The Borough should also consider creating a Stormwater Authority, which could be a joint effort between the Borough and neighboring municipalities. This authority would be tasked with assessing, maintaining, monitoring, and improving the storm water system, among other responsibilities. It would be able to charge a minimal user fee that could be used for stormwater management operations, e.g. street cleaning, and new stormwater projects.

Finally, the County is in the process of developing a countywide stormwater management plan and welcomes the involvement of the Borough in this process.

(Right): Examples of rain gardens, rain barrels and composting bins
(Below): Flooding on LaSalle Avenue in July 2013

- **Encourage green practices**

WHY: Green practices improve quality of life and can help property owners and the Borough save money. Dormont is also of a scale that it can strive to become a model green community, which in turn benefits government operations, supports the local economy, and improves the appearance of the Borough.

HOW: Implement energy-efficient improvements in homes and businesses, including water conservation efforts, installing white roofs and composters, and reducing the use of pesticides and lawn chemicals. The Borough should install smart meters to maximize parking efficiency and reduce impermeable pavement by switching to permeable pavement when repaving streets and alleys. Dormont should also strive for achieving Southwest PA Sustainable Community Essentials Gold Certification (www.sustainablecommunityessentials.org). Potential sources of funding include the CFA Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program and the DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program.

Green streets and block beautification programs

SUMMARY

DREAM GREEN	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
IMPROVE THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PARKS IN THE BOROUGH					
Strategies:					
> Activate Beggs Snyder Park	DCED Greenways Program, DCNR, private sponsorship, Borough	high	$$$$	a lot	long-term
> Add new programming to Dormont Park	Borough, private sponsorship	medium	$$	a lot	near-term
> Rethink the passive park along West Liberty	Borough, private investment	high	$$$	some	mid-term
> Improve maintenance of park facilities	Borough	medium	$$	a lot	ongoing
INCREASE THE PROGRAMMING AND OFFERINGS AT BOROUGH FACILITIES					
Strategies:					
> Repurpose the gymnasium behind Borough Hall	DCED Greenways Program, user fees, Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund, Gaming Economic Development Fund	high	$$$	a lot	long-term
> Upgrade the Dormont Pool and add uses	DCED Greenways Program. Borough, private sponsorship	high	$$$	a lot	mid-term
> Encourage healthy programs	Volunteers	low	$	minimal	ongoing
> Expand information and services at the recreation center	Volunteers	low	$	minimal	near-term
GO GREEN (AND BLUE)					
Strategies:					
> Develop a tree planting plan	Borough	high	$	some	near-term
> Use stormwater management best practices	Allegheny County Conservation District Grant Fund, The Charette Program (EPA), The Watershed Restoration Protection Program (CFA), Growing Greener II Grant (PENNVEST), the Community Infrastructure and Tourism Fund, and the Gaming Economic Development Fund	medium	$$$	a lot	mid-term
> Encourage green practices	CFA Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program, DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program	medium	$	some	near-term

LEAD PROGRESSIVELY

"EVERYBODY SHOULD TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR TOWN"

Dormont's future will be defined by quality leadership. To accomplish the strategies outlined in this plan, progressive leadership must be maintained to raise revenue, manage expenditures, effectively organize staff and coordinate with local non-profit and civic organizations. This chapter identifies the actions Borough leadership needs to take to drive implementation of Dream Dormont forward.

5

LEAD PROGRESSIVELY

Borough Management

COMMISSIONS, BOARDS, AND DEPARTMENTS

The Borough departments which most directly relate to the comprehensive plan are public works, building and zoning, code enforcement, and recreation:

Public Works
The Department of Public Works consists of eight employees. The Borough also has a full-time engineer to work on street design, stormwater systems, and improvements to infrastructure.

Building and Zoning
There is one building inspector. Previously, this officer also was responsible for code enforcement and zoning. More acute violations, such as dangerous building conditions, take priority, and hence relatively minor infractions take longer to address.

Code Enforcement
The Borough now has a full-time code enforcement officer working under the supervision of the Borough Manager. As building, zoning, and code enforcement duties no longer fall to just one person, conditions are improving.

Parks + Recreation
The Borough has a park superintendent who among other things is responsible for the maintenance of recreation facilities and parks. Recreation programs for the Borough are managed by the Recreation Director. There is also a recreation board with seven members who serve a term length of three years.

In addition, the Borough has five commissions and boards:

A civil service commission, which has the power to provide examination of applicants for positions and promotions, establish minimum qualifications for positions, test applicants for appointment, and provide hearings in cases of dismissals or reductions in rank for the police and fire departments.

A planning commission, which recommends changes to the Borough's master plan, makes recommendations on rezoning, and reviews development and site plans.

A recreation board, which determines the amounts and kinds of recreation most needed, coordinates the use of borough facilities, and develops future recreation programs.

A traffic and parking planning commission, which works in an advisory capacity to make recommendations on issues related to traffic and parking problems.

A zoning hearing board, which hears appeals on the validity of the zoning ordinances and has the power to grant variances and special exceptions to the ordinance.

NON-PROFIT GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Several non-profit groups and organizations help support the functions of the departments of the Borough and promote the assets of the community. These include:

Allegheny Together, which began in 2007 and aims to support and promote pedestrian-friendly business districts in Allegheny County through investment and data-driven planning (www.towncenter.info/downtown/allegheny_together/index.aspx).

Dig Dormont (10-15 members), which works to green and beautify Dormont.

Dormont Athletic Boosters Association (DABA), which does fundraising and organization for youth programming and athletics, including baseball, softball, youth and flag football, and cheerleading, as well as field maintenance and improvement (www.dormontboosters.com).

Dormont Main Street, which started in 2006 with the goal of revitalizing the commercial corridors in the Borough. The Dormont Community Development Corporation (DCDC), a non-profit, now manages the program (www.dormontmainstreet.org).

Friends of Dormont Pool (20-25 members), a nonprofit that works to raise funds for the ongoing maintenance of the pool and future improvements (www.friendsofdormontpool.org).

A resident works on a planter bed on Potomac Avenue during Fall Clean-Up Day with Dig Dormont in November 2013.

Friends of the Hollywood Theater (11-member board), which was formed in 2010 as a non-profit to re-open the theater and create a community center for festivals, concerts, and special events (www.thehollywooddormont.org).

Historical Society, which was established in 1999 and has over 30 businesses and organizations as members in addition to its private members (www.dormont-history.webs.com).

Shade Tree Commission (3 members), which per the Dormont Borough Code has "exclusive custody and control of the shade trees on the streets and highways of the Borough as well as trees in areas zoned as parks."

The Hollywood Theater is operated by the Friends of the Hollywood Theater. It is among the few remaining single-screen movie theaters in the Pittsburgh area.

Borough Finances

In 2008, a study completed by the Local Government Academy warned of fiscal problems that would result from ongoing expenditure increases, especially annual debt service. Meeting financial obligations would become more difficult with limited tax and fee revenue growth. Dormont residents would be faced with service reductions unless trends were reversed. A structural deficient was projected for 2012.

Fortunately, the forecasted crisis was averted. Borough finances and the budgeting process have greatly improved in the past five years. Council and the Borough administration have worked diligently to ensure fiscal integrity remains a top priority. Challenges remain with limited opportunities for revenue growth, but the Borough remains committed to the provision of high quality services.

Dormont's budget includes the following four fund accounts:

- General Fund – the provision of most services (police, fire, parks and recreation, etc)
- Highway Aid Fund – road maintenance, traffic signalization and traffic calming
- Sewer Fund – deliver of wastewater services
- Capital Reserve Fund – multi-year capital improvements (construction and major equipment)

In the 2013 annual budget, the Borough realized just under $10 million of revenues and authorized a slightly lower amount of expenditures across these four accounts. The General Fund accounts for over 75% of both revenues and expenditures. Other funds have specific sources of revenue and allowable uses.

The 2013 total assessed value of Dormont's taxable property is in excess of $380 million. Real property taxes account for nearly half of the Borough's annual General Fund revenues, and have remained stable the past five years. The property tax rate includes a specific dedication of revenue (dedicated millage) for the Borough library, the fire department and debt service. It is estimated that nearly 90% of these property tax revenues come from the assessment of residential property within the Borough.

As previously discussed, Dormont is primarily built-out so the generation of additional property tax revenues must come from infill development and revitalization of existing properties (especially in light of the fact that Allegheny County does not regularly reassess properties). Diversification of the property tax base through the growth of commercial assessed values will greatly enhance the Borough's long-term fiscal sustainability.

The remaining revenues of the Borough General Fund come from a combination of other local taxes, fees and transfers. For the largest categories, revenues have not fluctuated greatly over the past five years. The attraction of residents and business in the Borough will increase other tax revenues as well. Increases in revenues from fee rate increases must take into account any negative impact on residents, businesses and visitors.

Dormont is organized into various departments to deliver services and carry out local policies. These are funded via expenditures of the General Fund. Major categories include: police, debt principal repayment, employee benefits, public works, fire and parks and recreation. Public safety spending is necessary to maintain the Borough's livability, and has remained consistent over the past five years. Recent investments in more efficient administration and public infrastructure include a full time borough engineer, code enforcement, IT upgrades, parking meters, the swimming pool and public works equipment.

Capital investment will remain a top priority in the Borough. As the Borough's level of outstanding debt is being reduced, funds will be released for these expenditures. Officials can also examine the ability to lower the tax burden, but must balance the two initiatives. Future millage reduction can come from growth in commercial assessed value, gains in efficiency and alternative revenues.

Recently, the Borough 2013 millage rate was decreased to 8.97 mills from 14 mills. This translates to a property tax rate of $8.97 per $1,000 of assessed valuation. This millage reduction reflected the reassessment of all property in Allegheny County. Under State law communities and school districts in Allegheny County were only allowed to have a millage rate that brought in the same revenue as in 2012 plus 5% upon approval of the Borough Council. The reduction has made Dormont's tax rate more competitive, but the tax burden in the Borough remains higher than comparable communities.

Largest Sources of Revenue (outside of real property tax which accounts for nearly 50%):

- Intergovernmental Revenue
- Transfer Taxes
- Parking Meters
- Rentals
- Recreation
- Licenses and Permits

Largest Expenditures:

- Police
- Debt Principal
- Employee Benefits
- Public Works
- Fire
- Pool, Parks, and Recreation

OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

Progressive and thoughtful leadership guides Dormont in the efficient management and improvement of its infrastructure, public facilities, and services and inspires an engaged and active community.

Recommendations for leadership and community involvement appear above throughout the "how" sections of the plan. They are also listed below with their target actor or action:

GET INVOLVED: CREATIVELY MANAGE FOR RESULTS

YOUR HOME SWEET HOME

- **Hire a marketing consultant**

WHY: Dormont has many attractive qualities that could be of interest to potential homeowners, yet the Borough may not be on their radar due perhaps to its size and lack of clear boundaries/gateways.

HOW: Put out a request for proposals (RFP) to marketing consultants.

- **Team with universities for data management**

WHY: Code violation data filed by the Borough could be harnessed to improve its level of service.

HOW: Students from local universities could help integrate these data from Dormont Delivers, PublicStuff, physical reports, and other sources into a database system. These data could be studied with GIS to detect violation patterns and suggest optimal resource allocations.

(Above): Dormont houses on hillside
(Below): Resident idea for ramping up community engagement

MOVE ABOUT

- **Involve local government in safe streets campaign and create an advisory board for Complete Streets**

WHY: Complete Streets and the safe streets campaign should be a joint effort between the Borough and community members.

HOW: Include safe street topics on borough meeting agendas, in particular in meetings with the traffic and parking planning commission. Invite members of the community, including representatives from various age groups, to join the Complete Streets board for safety.

- **Coordinate streets treatments between residents, borough commissions and the Complete Streets advisory board, and the police, fire, and public works departments**

WHY: Complete Streets involve interrelated elements and as such require the input of all members of the community. In addition, certain streets treatments, such as playstreets, may not become policy but should be an available option for residents.

HOW: The public works department should work with the advisory board for Complete Streets to determine which measures are appropriate for Dormont. Combine street repairs and conversions of streets from two-way to one-way with green infrastructure, such as bumpouts coupled with rain gardens, in addition to Complete Streets measures, such as sharrows and improved crosswalk striping. The police and streets departments should coordinate on expanded permit and metered areas.

Create a borough program that coordinates interested residents with the public works department to determine the feasibility of creating a play street by resurfacing their alley with permeable paving, including highly visible signage, and developing a future maintenance plan.

Residents indicate to drivers that kids are at play on their street.

- **Create an events board working under guidance of recreation director**

WHY: Additional special events in Dormont will foster community pride and activate the community. An events board will help coordinate and create new events to meet the interest of the community in having more events.

HOW: Invite members of the community including business owners on Potomac Avenue to participate in the board.

Dormont has a strong history of local events that bring residents out in force.

- **Team with universities to address parking**

WHY: Data on parking availability could be analyzed to understand trends and consider solutions to significant and recurring problems.

HOW: The Borough could team with local universities to analyze parking data with GIS to detect patterns and suggest solutions.

- **Hire an additional traffic enforcement officer to target problem areas**

WHY: Problem areas pose threats to safety; targeting these areas first will have the greatest impact safety.

HOW: Add one extra meter person to the 2014 budget to ensure that parking meters are enforced the full 60 hours a week. The extra revenue will pay for the position.

DREAM GREEN

- **Re-allocate maintenance staff of parks facilities**

WHY: There is a clear need for increased capacity in the maintenance of parks in Dormont beyond that which the park superintendent and DABA are able to dedicate.

HOW: Hiring a landscdaping company to take on maintenance of key Borough facilities will enable existing employees to better maintain local parks.

The Borough maintains Beggs Snyder Park, but many residents feel more is needed.

- **Form a Fitness Center Task Force**

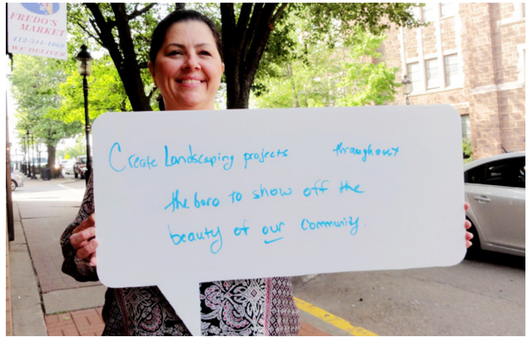
WHY: A task force can support the recreation director in the coordination of converting the gymnasium into a public fitness and recreation center.

HOW: Invite the Recreation Board to spearhead the task force.

BRING IN THE BUSINESS

- **Connect and collaborate with neighboring towns**

WHY: Collaboration would share the purchasing power of residents from nearby communities such as Mt. Lebanon and the 'up-and-coming' Beechview neighborhood. It furthermore supports an important goal in *Allegheny Places* to encourage multi-municipal cooperation.



Resident idea for borough beautification.

HOW: Collborate with local resources, e.g. the Mt. Lebanon Main Street Coordinator and the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County (RAAC). Host regular meetings and include members of Main Street Dormont.

ESTUTE ECONOMICS: PLAN AHEAD ON BOROUGH FINANCES

- **Continue financial planning efforts**

WHY: In 2008, the Borough faced a situation where dramatic service reductions were a possibility as rising expenditure levels were not being met with offsetting revenue increases. A structural deficient was projected for 2012. Faced with a stagnant property tax base, Dormont's millage rates continued to climb to generate necessary revenue.

Forecasted problems did not materialize as Council and the administration focused on the Borough's fiscal integrity. The Borough recognized that financial sustainability relied on sound and prudent management of assets. Thus, the formal written Financial Policies and Procedures were crafted in 2013.

Sound, long-term decision making depends upon the flow of information at all levels from elected officials to department heads and staff.

Written policies and procedures improve accountability, transparency and level of service to residents.

HOW: Maintain a balanced budget, and seek to build reserve from excess revenues above expenditures. Match revenues from borough services to planned expenditures for continued sustainability. Stabilize borough finances through cash flow and debt management. Ensure the Reserve Fund equals three months of borough expenditures per GFOA. Continue to provide budget briefing to residents to raise stakeholder involvement. Revise and amend the financial plan in the future to ensure policies and procedures remain up to date.

- **Implement department specific budget requests and prioritization of expenditures**

WHY: Focusing on recognized department priorities during the budgeting process will result in the more efficient provision of services.

HOW: Continue with recently implemented policy whereby the borough manager meets with department heads to commence the annual budgeting process. Evaluate Department past budget performance. Analyze return on investment across expenditure categories to better allocate resources.

- **Develop and maintain a 5-year capital improvement plan**

WHY: The CIP is a critical component of the new financial plan of the Borough, and will ensure continued improvement in the delivery of public services.

HOW: Follow the established departmental investment priority criteria.

  - Inventory and assess capital assets to plan for maintenance and/or replacement.
  - Invest in roads, streetscape, parks/recreation and stormwater to maintain quality of life.
  - Utilize savings as debt is retired in part to fund necessary capital improvements.
  - Limit exposure to new debt while balancing investment needs.
  - Increase utilization of Commonwealth and Federal Funding for capital improvements to lessen pressure of borough revenue stream.

- **Examine new revenue sources**

WHY: The Borough will continue to be limited in its ability to raise significant new tax or fee revenues from existing sources.

HOW: Examine a potential stormwater management fee. Dedicate millage for road improvements similar to specific rate for the library and fire department. Better manage parking assets and pricing policy to raise revenues and improve service within business districts. Evaluate usage fee structures such as those for parks and recreation and increase where applicable (fees for non-residents). Seek corporate sponsorship opportunities.

SUMMARY

PROGRESSIVELY LEAD	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
CREATIVELY MANAGE FOR RESULTS					
Strategies:					
> Hire a marketing consultant	Borough	low	$	minimal	near-term
> Team with universities for data management	Borough, universities	medium	$	minimal	near-term
> Involve local government in safe streets campaign + create an advisory board for Complete Streets	Borough	medium	$	a lot	near-term
> Coordinate streets treatments between residents, borough commissions and the Complete Streets advisory board, and the police, fire, and public works departments	Borough	medium	$$	a lot	mid-term
> Create an events board working under guidance of recreation director	Borough, volunteers	medium	$$	a lot	near-term
> Team with universities to address parking	Borough, universities	low	$	minimal	near-term
> Hire an additional traffic enforcement officer to target problem areas	Borough	medium	$$	minimal	ongoing
> Re-allocate maintenance staff parks facilities	Borough	medium	$$	a lot	ongoing
> Form a Fitness Center Task Force	Borough, volunteers	medium	$	some	near-term
> Connect and collaborate with neighboring towns	Borough	low	$$	some	mid-term
PLAN AHEAD ON BOROUGH FINANCES					
Strategies:					
> Continue financial planning efforts	Borough Manager	medium	$	a lot	ongoing
> Implement department specific budget requests and prioritization of expenditures	Borough Manager	medium	$	a lot	near-term
> Develop and maintain a 5-year capital improvement plan	Borough Manager	medium	$	some	near-term
> Examine new revenue sources	Borough Manager	high	$	a lot	ongoing

ZONE FOR THE FUTURE

"I'D JUST LIKE TO SEE DORMONT GROW AGAIN."

Zoning for the future in Dormont means accommodating growth and new uses while preserving what makes Dormont unique and livable today. The Borough's zoning code is quite straightforward. While its simplicity has its benefits, the code currently fails to address certain trends and needs in the community. Changes to the zoning code could support commercial health, encourage residential growth, improve parking, and enhance the appearance of the Borough.

6

ZONE FOR THE FUTURE

Zoning

The zoning code for Dormont is very straightforward. Areas of the code which this plan will address are:

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

There is only one commercial district: C (General Commercial District). Conditional uses of note are garden apartments, mid-rise or high-rise apartments, and planned mixed-use development. Uses by special exception include apartment above office or retail. As the Borough is largely built out, the commercial district presents an opportunity for the addition of residential uses in the of upper-story conversions and planned mixed-use development.

RESIDENTIAL DESIGNATIONS

There are three residential designations in the zoning code: R-1 (single-family residential district), R-2 (1- and 2-family residential district), and R-3 (multifamily residential district). The majority of the Borough's residential land use falls into the R-2 category. It is important to note that the aim of the R-2 designation is to strictly regulate further conversion of single-family units into two-family units and restrict converting single-family dwellings into multifamily. The purpose of the R-1 district is to preserve the single-family land use in those neighborhoods, and the purpose of the R-3 residential district is to ensure opportunities for multifamily housing development along arterial roads, near light rail transit, and adjacent to commercial corridors.

With regard to controlling conversions and preserving land use and character of a given neighborhood, the Borough may want to consider a form-based zoning approach with respect to its housing stock in order to regulate aesthetics and ensure compatability of alterations or new construction with existing structures.

SIGNS

The portion of this section of the zoning code that is of particular relevance to this plan regards projecting signs, which are termed "overhanging signs":

> *A sign, other than a wall sign or arcade sign, affixed to a building or wall whose leading edge extends beyond such building or wall more than six inches, including awnings, marquees or similar structures used for business identification.*

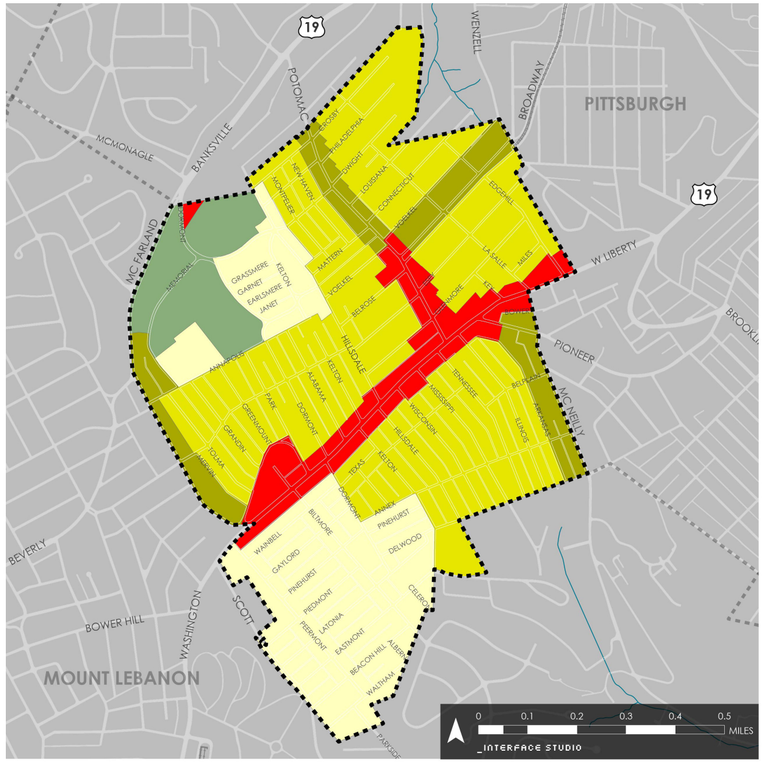
These are currently restricted in the Borough.

Land Use

There is minimal discrepancy between the zoning code and actual land use in the Borough. An exterior survey of land use suggests there are roughly 30 multifamily parcels in the R-1 zone, most, if not all, of which are two-family dwellings.

The future land use map (following spread, right) depicts land use in the Borough that would reflect the suggested changes to the zoning code outlined in this chapter.

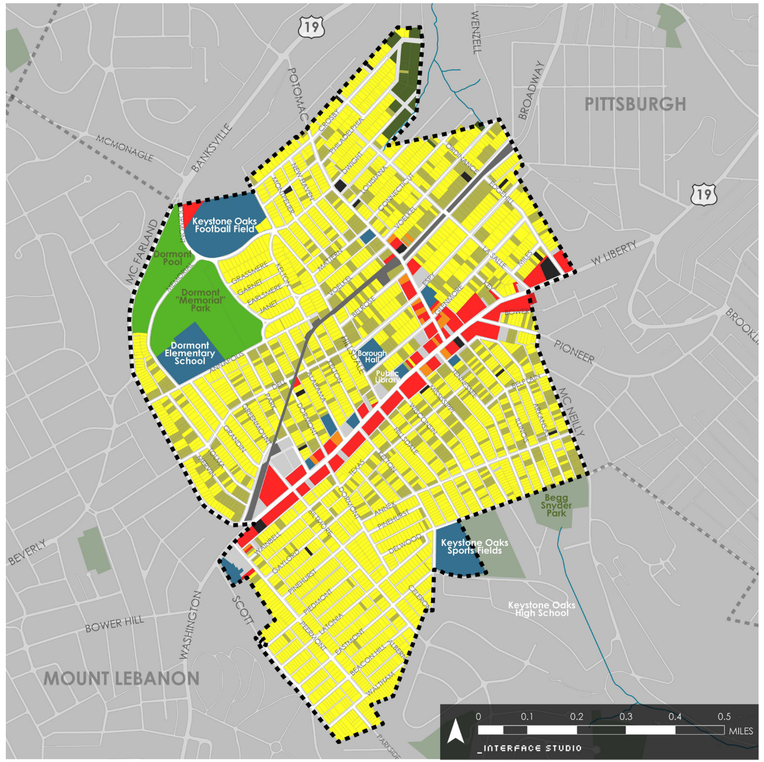
The objectives for outlined in this chapter regard commercial and residential zoning, sign regulations, parking, and loading.



Source: Dormont Borough

- C: GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
- P1: PARK DISTRICT
- R1: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R2: 1-AND-2-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R3: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

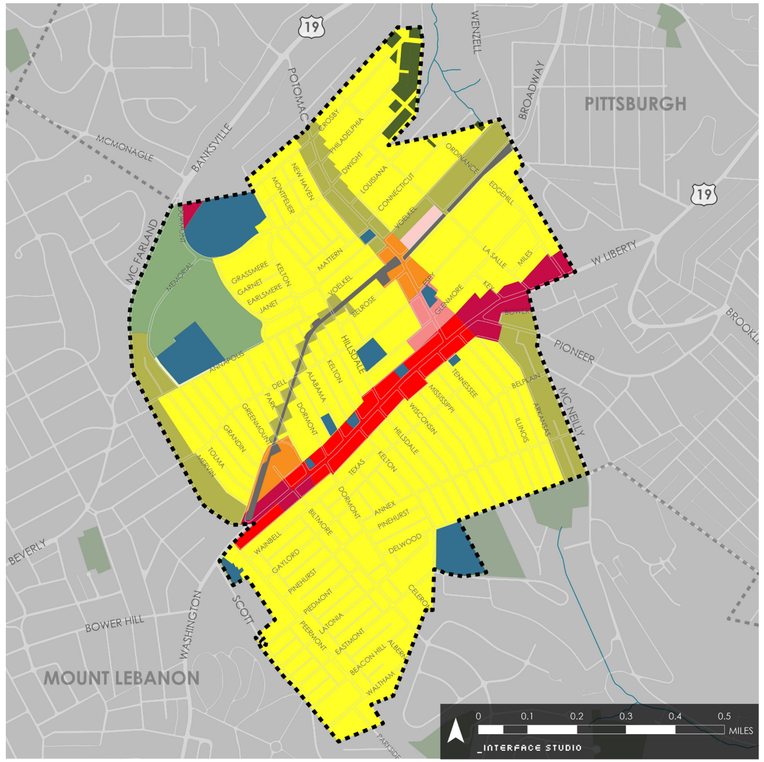
Figure 23: *Map of existing zoning in Dormont Zoning throughout the Borough focuses primarily on preserving its predominantly single-family character.*



Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- MIXED COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY
- INSTITUTIONAL
- PARKING
- UTILITIES
- PARK/OPEN SPACE
- STEEP SLOPE
- VACANT

Figure 24: *Map of existing land use*
Dormont is mostly residential with little vacancy.



Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- DRIVE-THROUGH COMMERCIAL
- MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL
- LIVING ROOM COMMERCIAL
- CORNER COMMERCIAL
- TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
- INSTITUTIONAL
- UTILITIES
- PARK/OPEN SPACE
- STEEP SLOPE

Figure 25: *Map of future land use*
Future land use in the Borough will reflect its growing diversity in both commercial and residential uses.

OBJECTIVES + RECOMMENDATIONS

Land use and zoning policy is responsive to the current needs of the community and forward-thinking in the consideration of its future direction.

Recommendations for land use and zoning appear above throughout the "how" sections of the plan. They are also listed below with their appropriate heading from the zoning code.

GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT ZONING

BOLSTER BUSINESS: DIVERSIFY COMMERCIAL ZONING

- **Create three new commercial districts**

WHY: Diversifying commercial zoning by creating additional commercial district designations will support and encourage diverse commercial character.

HOW: Create additional commercial designations to replace the existing commercial district (C): drive-through (C-1), main street mixed use (MU-1), and living room mixed-use (MU-2). Differences with the existing zoning for the commercial district (C) are as follows:

Drive-Through (C-1):

- Same as existing commercial district but should allow vehicle sales and service to be a permitted use (as opposed to special exception)

Main Street: mixed use (MU-1)

- Permit upper-story residential as-of-right
- Allow shared parking between residential and commercial uses
- Restrict front parking lots (currently permitted in C)
- Increase height limit of principal structures from 3 stories (current) to 5 stories (proposed) to allow for apartments to be built on top of commercial

Living Room: mixed-use (MU-2)

- Same as MU-1 with the exception of height limits: from 3 stories (current) to 4 stories (proposed)

Figure 26: Diagram of business district character zones (proposed)

Broadway is a unique street in Dormont and needs its own zone to guide investment.

- **Rezone Broadway Avenue**

WHY: If significant momentum builds along Potomac Avenue and the TOD area, additional commercial uses could be allowed on Broadway to support it. These should remain conditional to first respect further commercial development on Potomac Avenue and in the TOD. This rezoning is consistent with the goal in *Allegheny Places* of providing mixed-use development around existing stations.

HOW: Create an additional commercial zoning designation (MU-3). This could initially just extend along Broadway from the intersection with Potomac Avenue to La Salle Avenue. Differences from the current R-3 designation are as follows:

Corner Commercial: mixed use (MU-3)

- Allow first-floor commercial as a conditional use

The T stations are opportunities for new mixed-use development that should be encouraged by local zoning.

- **Create a separate TOD designation**

WHY: Planned mixed-use development is currently a conditional use of the general commercial district.

HOW: Zone Dormont Junction and Potomac Avenue station areas under a new designation: transit-oriented development (TOD). This is consistent with the goal in *Allegheny Places* of establishing a TOD in Dormont. Use current borough guidelines for planned mixed-use development (section T, 201-62) with the following alternations:

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

- Use "shared parking" standards to minimize the space dedicated to parking
- Allow for greater densities and mix of uses

DOWN BY THE T: EXPAND RESIDENTIAL ZONING

- **Include the LRT corridor west of Potomac in the R-3 district**

WHY: Among the purposes of the R-3 district is to provide opportunities for multifamily development "in appropriate location," including near the light rail transit line. There are several apartment buildings immediately proximate to the LRT line, however, that are zoned in the R-2 district.

HOW: Expand R-3 designation to those areas currently zoned as R-2 to include parcels contiguous with the LRT line.

POST IT: AMEND SIGN REGULATIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT BUSINESS

- **Allow overhanging signs as signs authorized in commercial districts**

WHY: Signs along commercial corridors make stores more visible to motorists and passersby, and thus promote business. As indicated in the design guidelines for the Borough, they also can increase the visual appeal of commercial corridors. Changes to zoning should allow for signs that maximize visibility to pedestrians and motorists while respecting the aesthetics of the Borough's commercial corridors

HOW: Remove overhanging signs from restricted signs.

To improve West Liberty Avenue, parking lots need adequate and attractive buffering.

SCREEN AND GREEN: ADJUST OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING CODES

- **Encourage the removal of obsolete garages**

WHY: Replacing garages with pads would provide more parking opportunities for many residents.

HOW: Create a clear description of the Borough's guidelines for lot coverage and the process necessary to seek approval for this action.

- **Require screening and landscaping of all parking spaces containing more than five parking spaces**

WHY: Existing front yard lots interrupt the unity of the street wall. Screening and landscaping of these lots will help connect the lots to the general streetscape of the corridors.

HOW: Amend the code by removing the requirement that this occur only along residential districts.

SUMMARY

ZONE FOR THE FUTURE	What are the potential FUNDING SOURCES?	What is the potential IMPACT?	What is the relative COST?	How much STAFF TIME & EFFORT will this take?	WHEN COULD IT HAPPEN?
DIVERSIFY COMMERCIAL ZONING					
Strategies:					
> Create three new commercial districts	n/a	high	$	some	near-term
> Rezone Broadway Avenue	n/a	medium	$	some	near-term
> Create a separate TOD designation	n/a	high	$	some	near-term
EXPAND RESIDENTIAL ZONING					
Strategies:					
> Include the LRT corridor west of Potomac in the R-3 district	n/a	medium	$	some	near-term
AMEND SIGN REGULATIONS TO BETTER SUPPORT BUSINESS					
Strategies:					
> Allow overhanging signs as signs authorized in commercial districts	n/a	high	$	some	near-term
ADJUST OFF-STREET PARKING AND LOADING TO IMPROVE HOMES AND BUSINESSES					
Strategies:					
> Encourage the removal of obsolete garages	n/a	medium	$	some	near-term
> Require screening and landscaping of all parking spaces containing more than five parking spaces	n/a	medium	$	some	near-term

APPENDIX

"DORMONT IS A SMALL PLACE WITH A BIG HEART."

This appendix contains graphics and maps on existing conditions that do not already appear in the body of the plan. The analysis of existing conditions information from a variety of sources serves to ground a data-driven understanding of the Borough and its context.

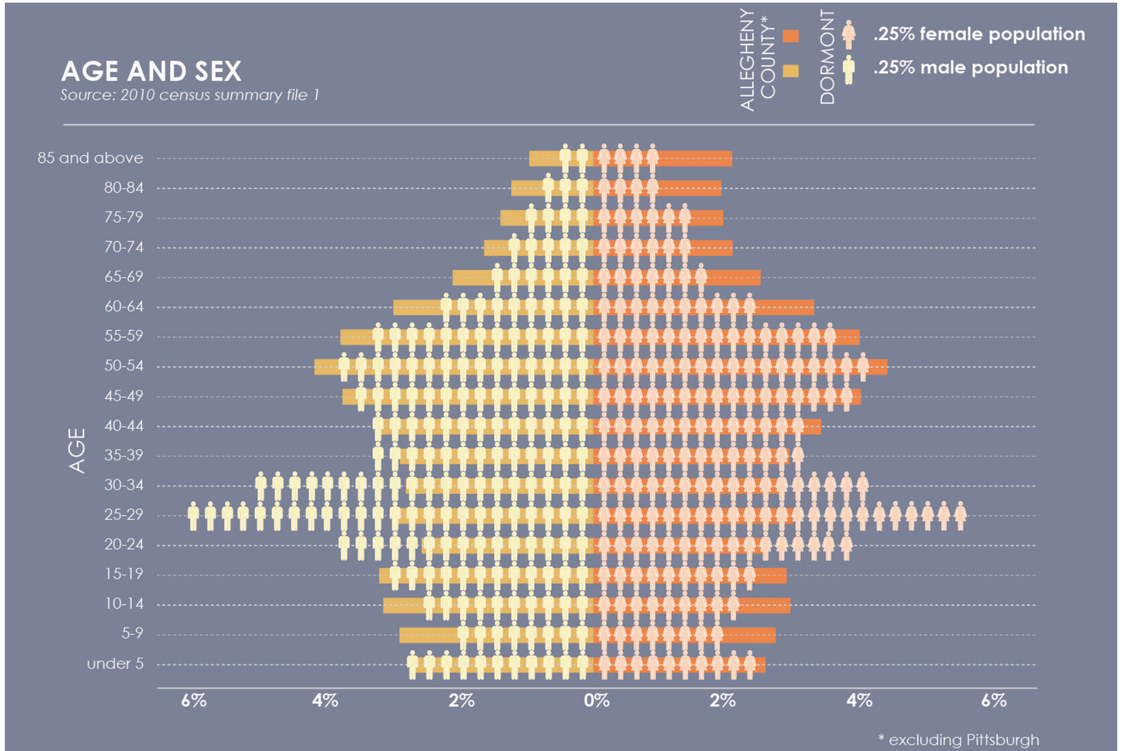
Demographic data came from the US Census Bureau Decennial Censuses, the American Community Survey, the Pennsylvania Spatial Data Access (PASDA), and the University Center for Social and Urban Research at the University of Pittsburgh (UCSUR). The sources of data relating to crime were the FBI and the Dormont Borough Police Department.

Land use data were collected through windshield surveys performed in the winter of 2013. Additional land use and zoning information was provided by the Borough of Dormont and PASDA. The Port Authority of Allegheny County provided data relating to transit. Pennsylvania School Boards Administration and Keystone Oaks School District were sources of information relating to education.

a

AGE AND SEX

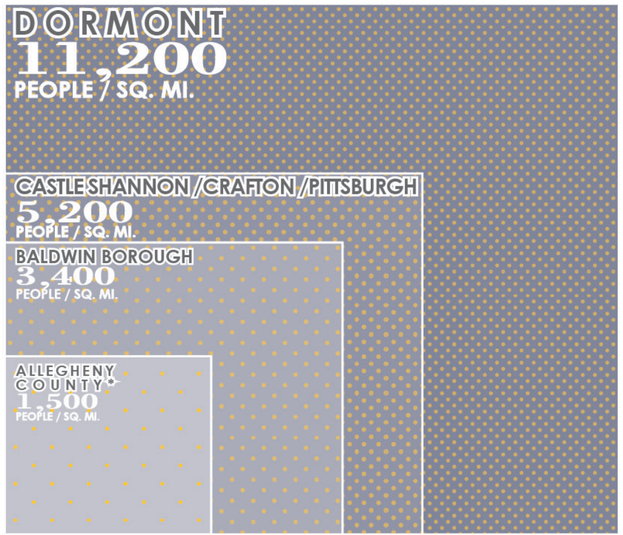
Source: 2010 census summary file 1



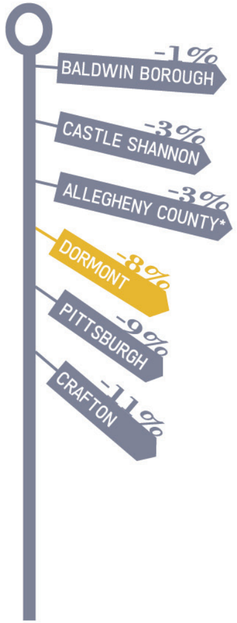
Dormont has fewer school-aged kids as well as seniors than Allegheny County. Compared to the county, it attracts more young professionals (ages 25-34).

POPULATION CHANGE and DENSITY

Source: Decennial Censuses of Population, 2000 & 2010 census summary file 1; PASDA



2010
POPULATION DENSITY



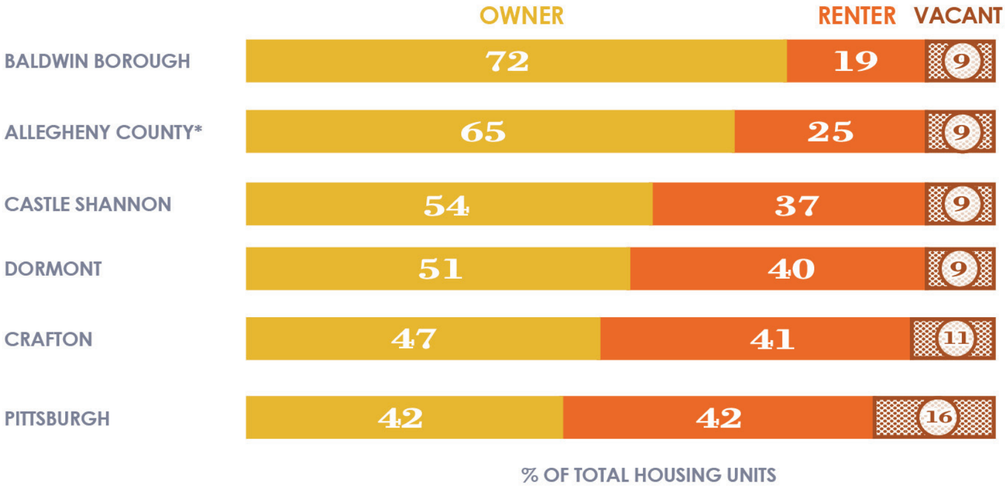
2000-2010
POPULATION CHANGE

* EXCLUDING PITTSBURGH

The population density of Dormont is twice that of Pittsburgh. The Borough's recent population decline is likely attributable to smaller household size.

HOME OWNERSHIP RATES

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year Estimate

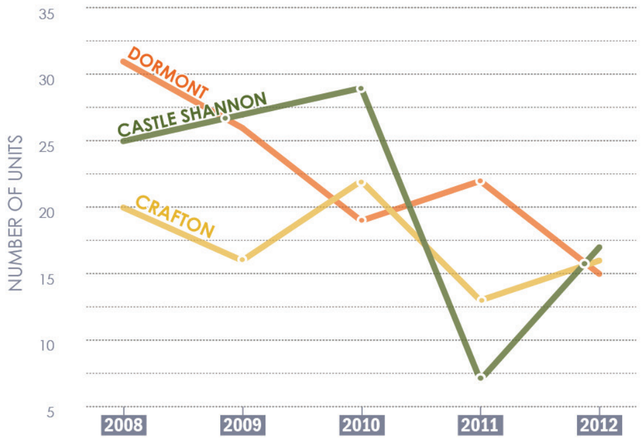


* excluding Pittsburgh

The Borough has a balance between owner-occupied and rented homes.

FORECLOSURES

Source: UCSUR – Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System

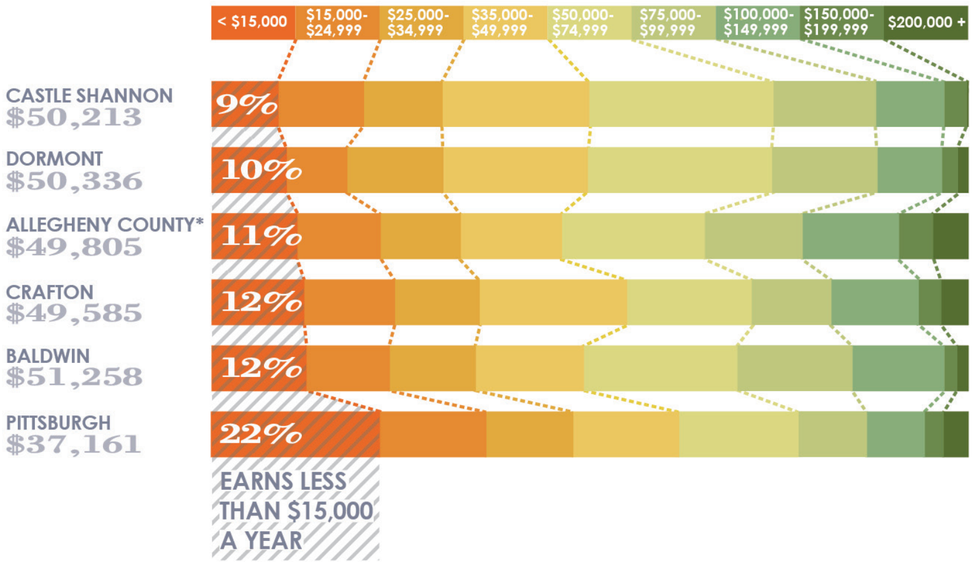


2011 FORECLOSURE RATES

The housing market in Dormont has been relatively stable with a very low foreclosure rate that is declining.

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year Estimate

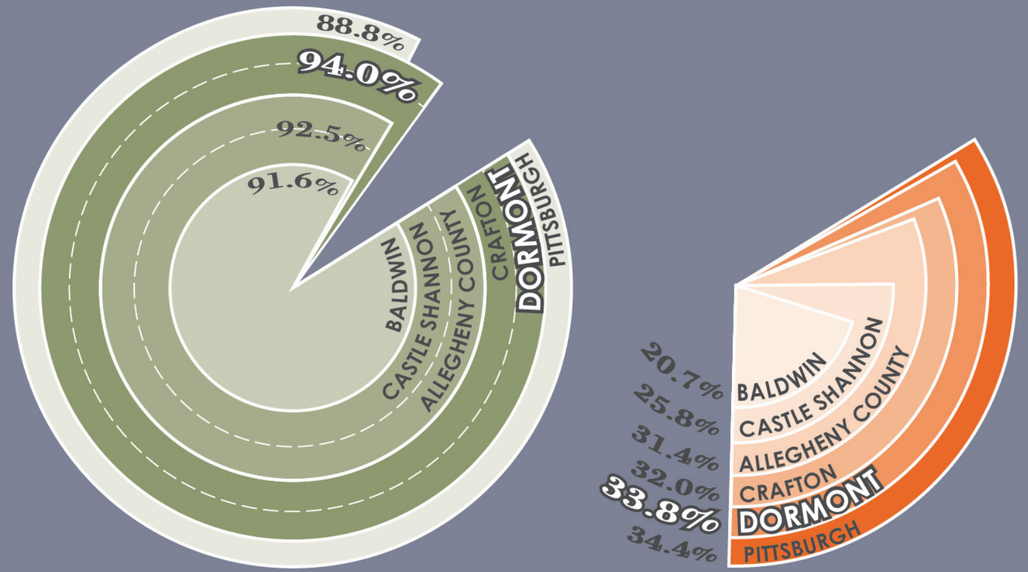


* including Pittsburgh

Median income earned by residents of Dormont is higher than that of the county.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year Estimate



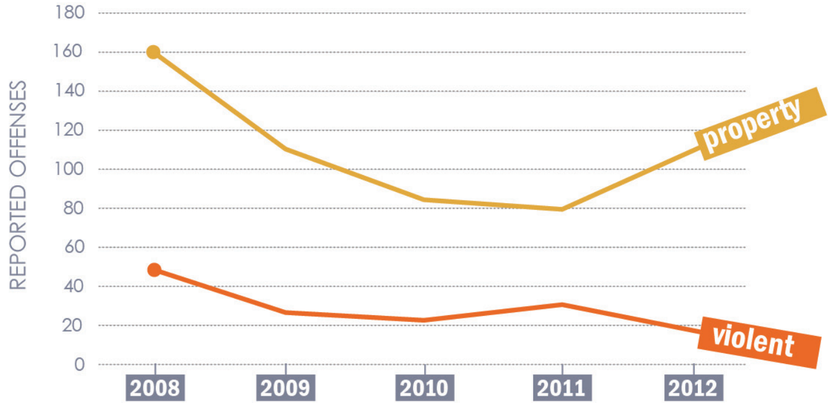
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER

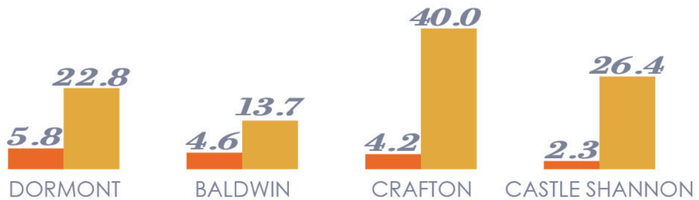
BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER

Dormont's population is highly educated.

CRIME

Source: Dormont Borough Police Department Uniform Crime Reports; Pennsylvania Uniform Crime Reporting System



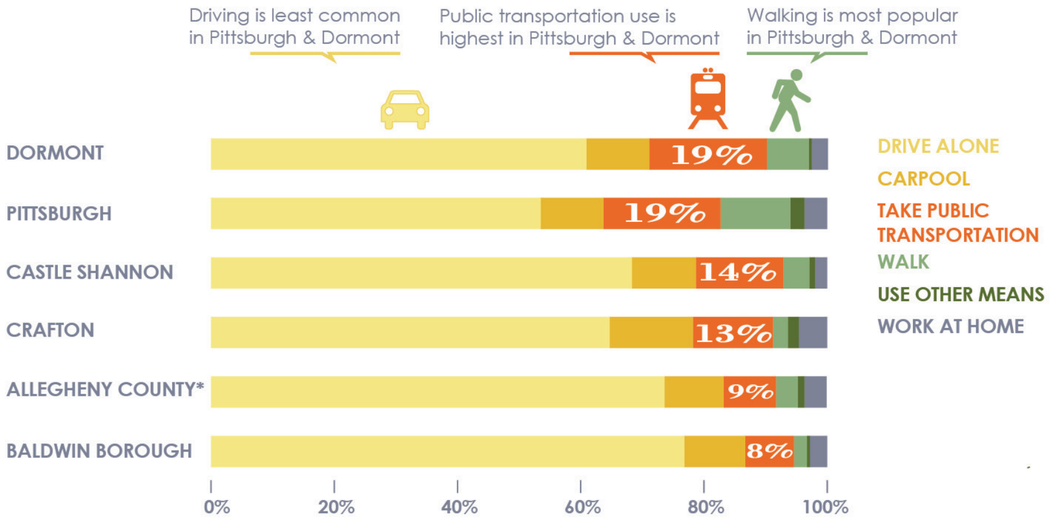


2012 REPORTED OFFENSES PER 1,000 POPULATION

Dormont is quite safe. The greatest concerns related to crime focused on its bars.

COMMUTE TO WORK

Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011 Five-Year Estimate



* excluding Pittsburgh

Transit use is higher in Dormont than most of its neighbors.

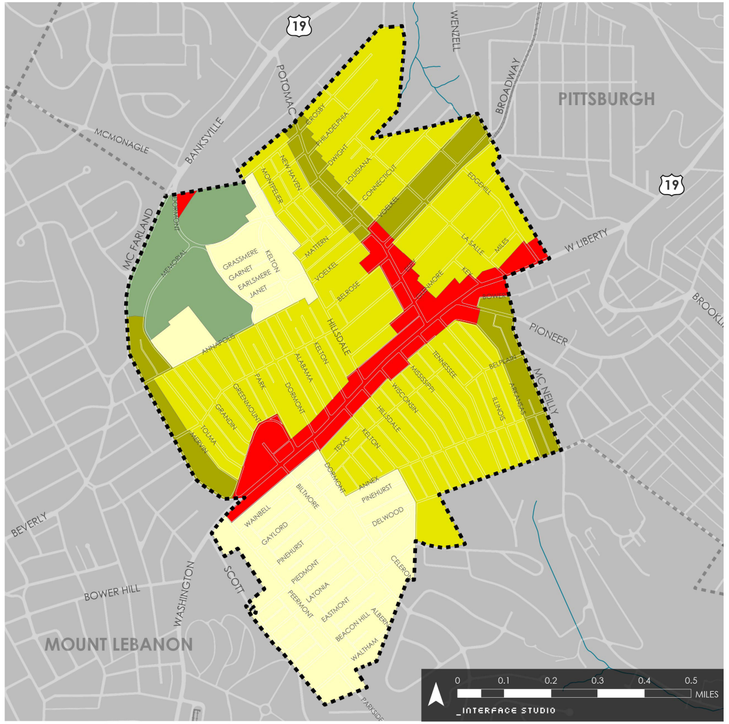
FIGURE GROUND

Source: Allegheny County (PASDA)

BUILDING

Dormont's boundaries with Pittsburgh and Mount Lebanon are not well-defined, but the Borough does have its own character.

ZONING

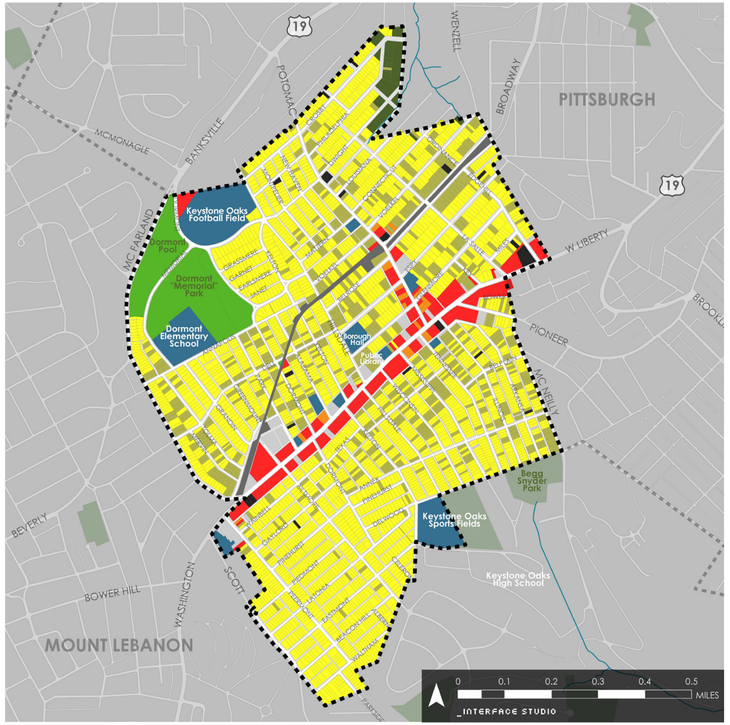


Source: Dormont Borough

- C: GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT
- P1: PARK DISTRICT
- R1: SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R2: 1-AND-2-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT
- R3: MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Zoning in Dormont is straightforward. Its primary focus is to maintain its mostly single-family character. All commercial uses are grouped into one category.

LAND USE

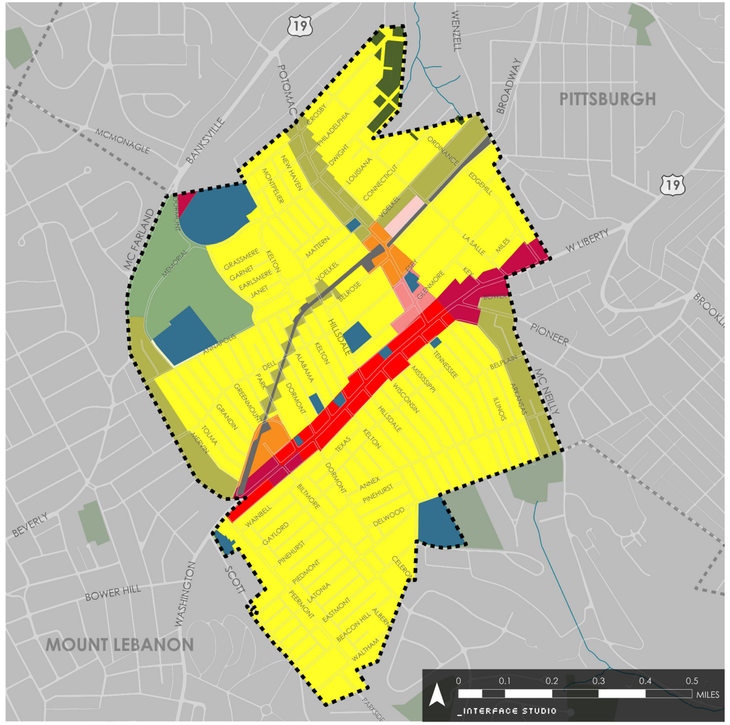


Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- MIXED COMMERCIAL/MULTI-FAMILY
- INSTITUTIONAL
- PARKING
- UTILITIES
- PARK/OPEN SPACE
- STEEP SLOPE
- VACANT

Dormont is mostly residential with low vacancy.

FUTURE LAND USE

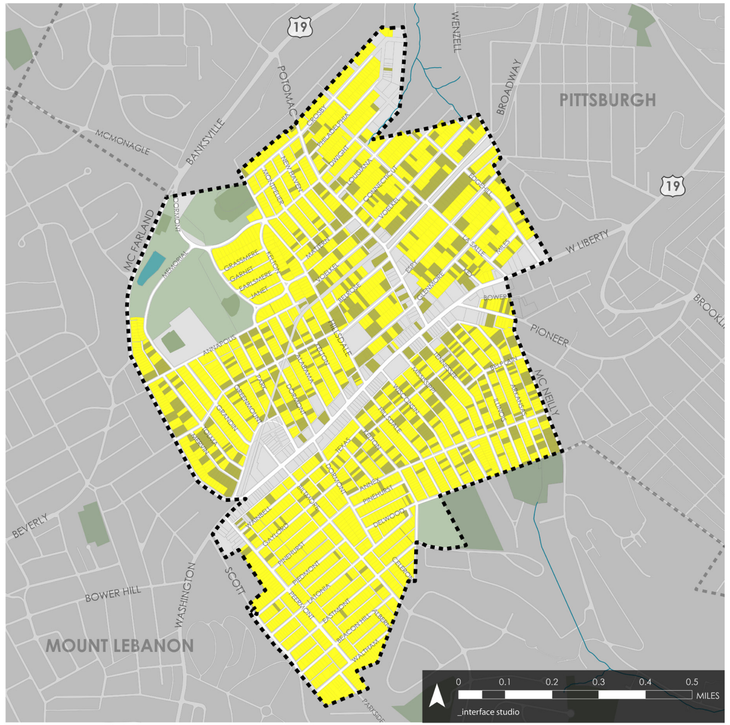


Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- DRIVE-THROUGH COMMERCIAL
- MAIN STREET COMMERCIAL
- LIVING ROOM COMMERCIAL
- CORNER COMMERCIAL
- TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT
- INSTITUTIONAL
- UTILITIES
- PARK/OPEN SPACE
- STEEP SLOPE

Future land use in the Borough will reflect its growing diversity in both commercial and residential uses.

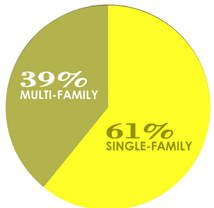
HOUSING



Source: Interface Studio Survey; Dormont Department of Building and Zoning

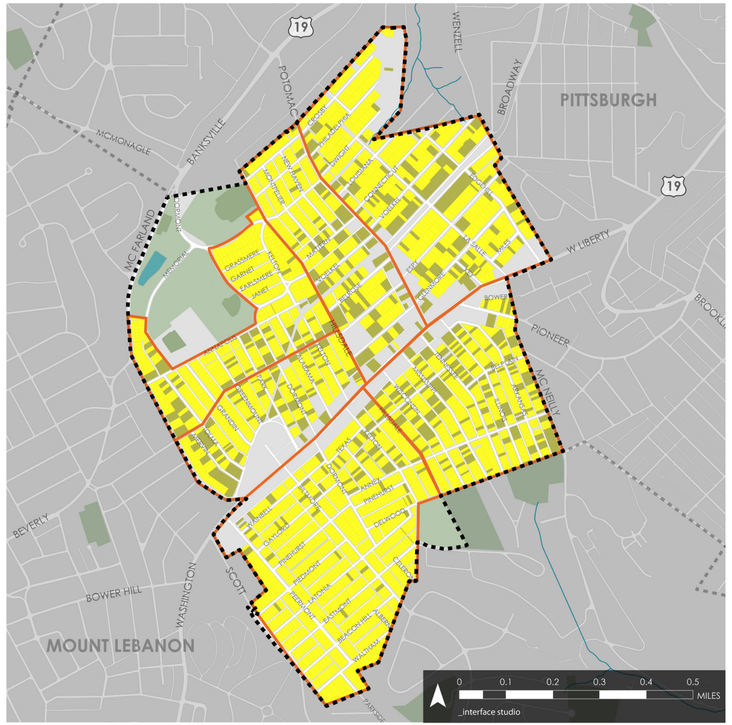
- SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL

4,334 HOUSING UNITS TOTAL



Housing types are split between multi-family and single-family, with the latter comprising over three-fifths of all units.

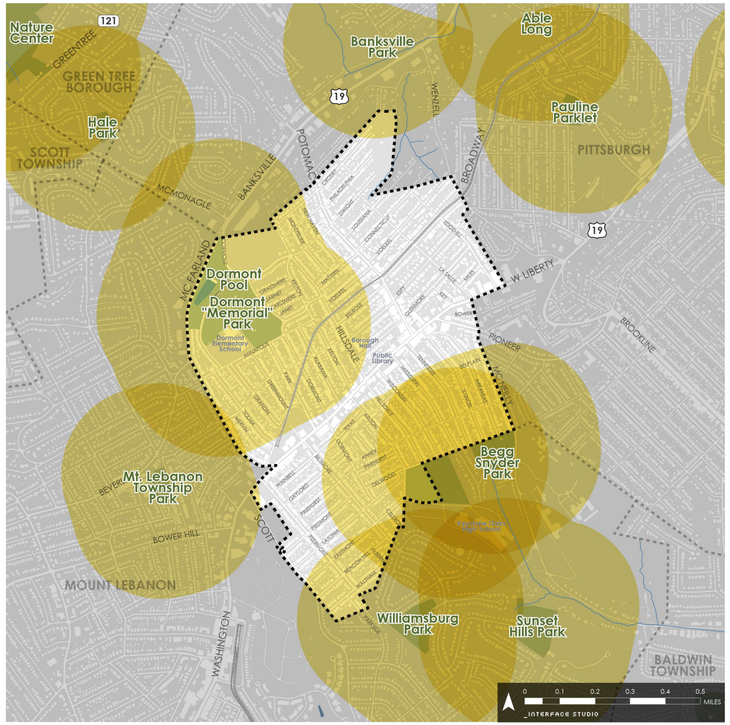
NEIGHBORHOODS



- NEIGHBORHOOD AREAS

The diversity of housing options creates areas with distinctive characteristics.

ACCESS TO OPEN SPACE

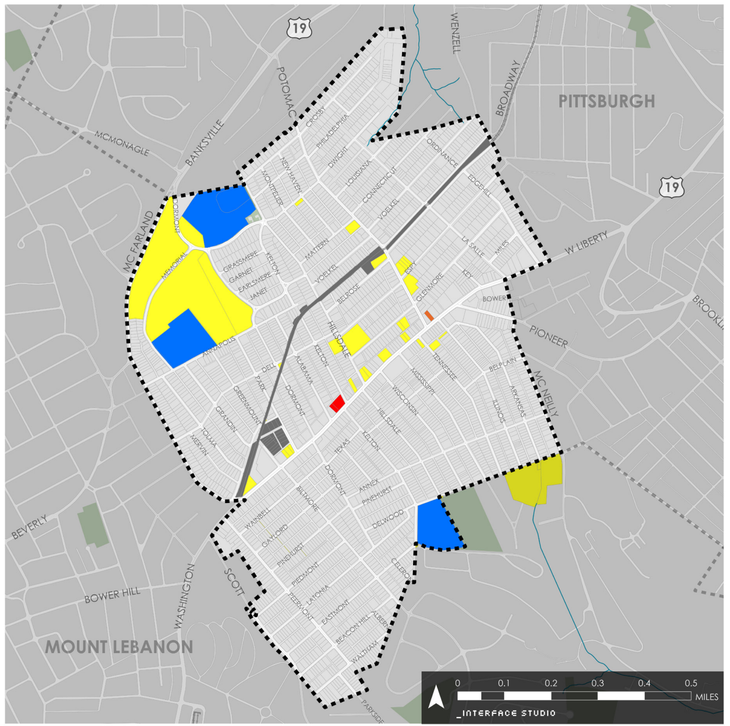


Source: Allegheny County (PASDA)

NEIGHBORHOODS WITHIN A 5 MINUTE WALK RADIUS OF OPEN SPACE

Residents in the northeastern and southwestern portions of the Borough are not within a short walk to open space.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

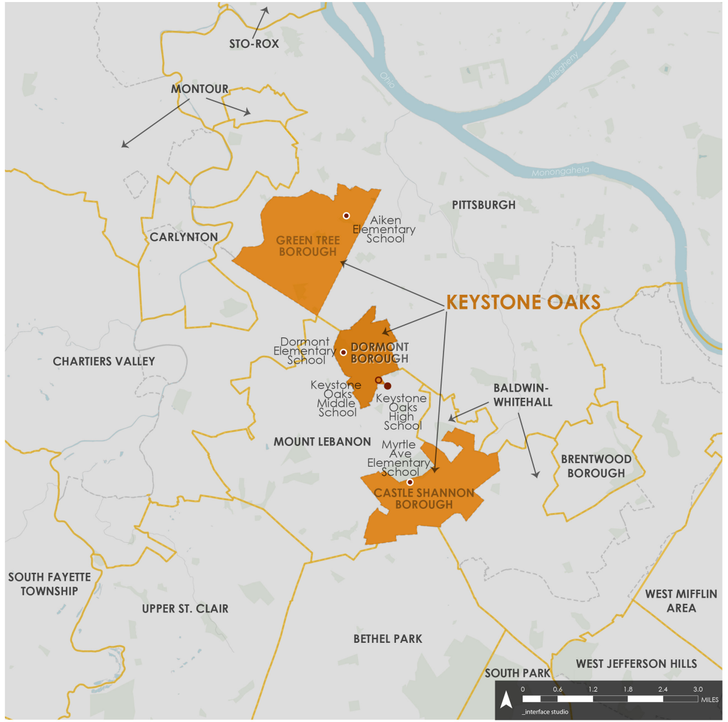


Source: Dormont Depatment of Building and Zoning

- BOROUGH OF DORMONT
- KEYSTONE SCHOOL DISTRICT
- CITY OF PITTSBURGH
- PORT AUTHORITY
- USPS

Public ownership of land is concentrated mostly in its business district and the peripheries of the Borough.

EDUCATION

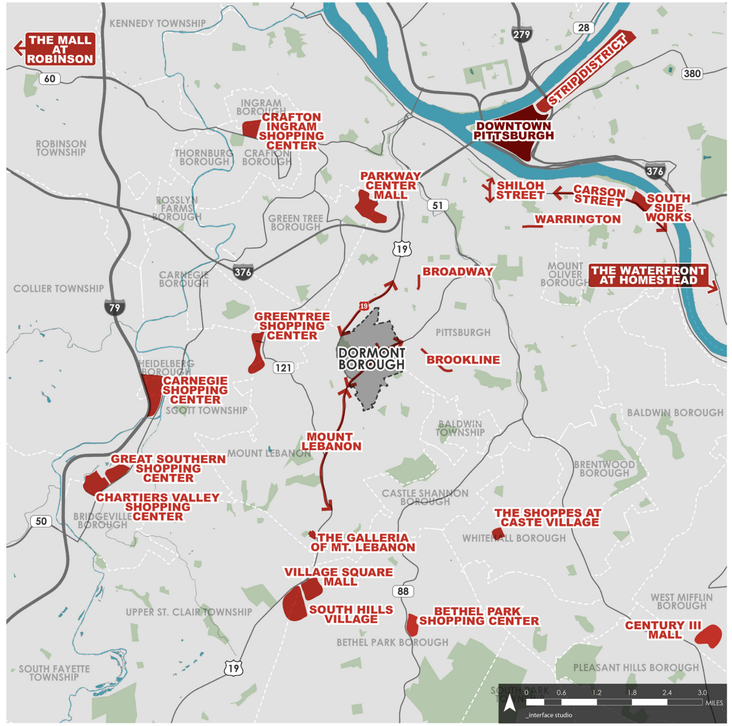


Source: Pennsylvania School Boards Administration; Keystone Oaks School District

- KEYSTONE OAKS SCHOOL DISTRICT
- OTHER SCHOOL DISTRICT
- ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- MIDDLE SCHOOL
- HIGH SCHOOL

The quality of schools in the Borough is a concern among parents of school-aged children.

COMMERCIAL CENTERS

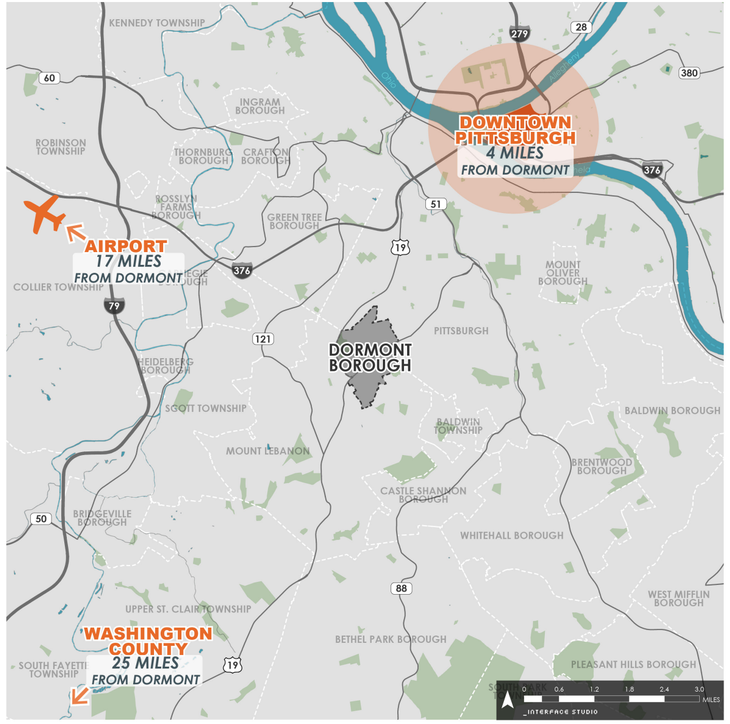


Source: Allegheny County of Pennsylvania; Google Maps

- SHOPPING CENTER OR DISTRICT
- SHOPPING CORRIDOR

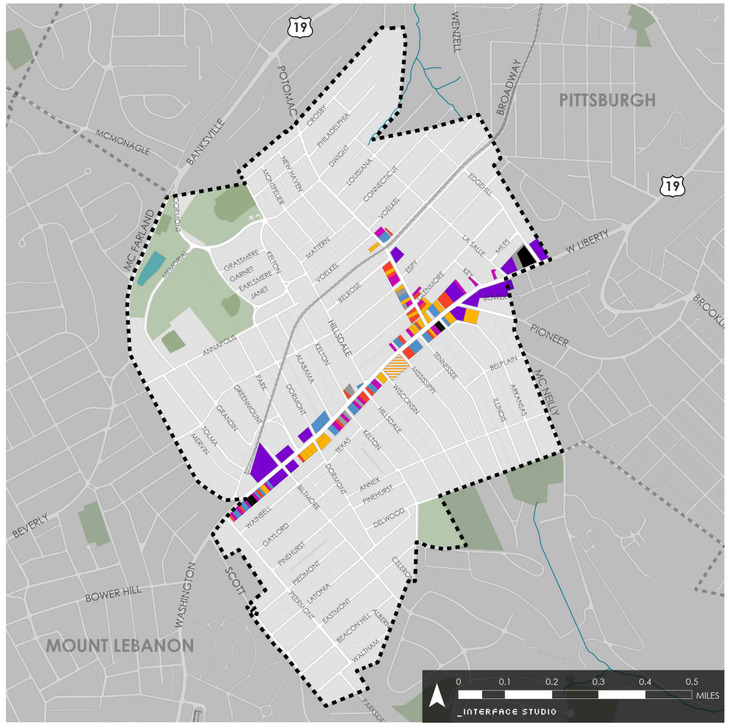
While Dormont enjoys proximity to the downtown and outlying suburbs, this also creates commercial competition.

EMPLOYMENT HUBS



Dormont is at the center of several major employment hubs.

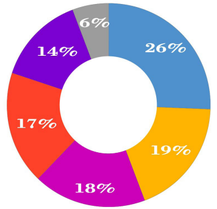
COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS



Source: Interface Studio Field Survey February 2013

TOP COMMERCIAL TYPES

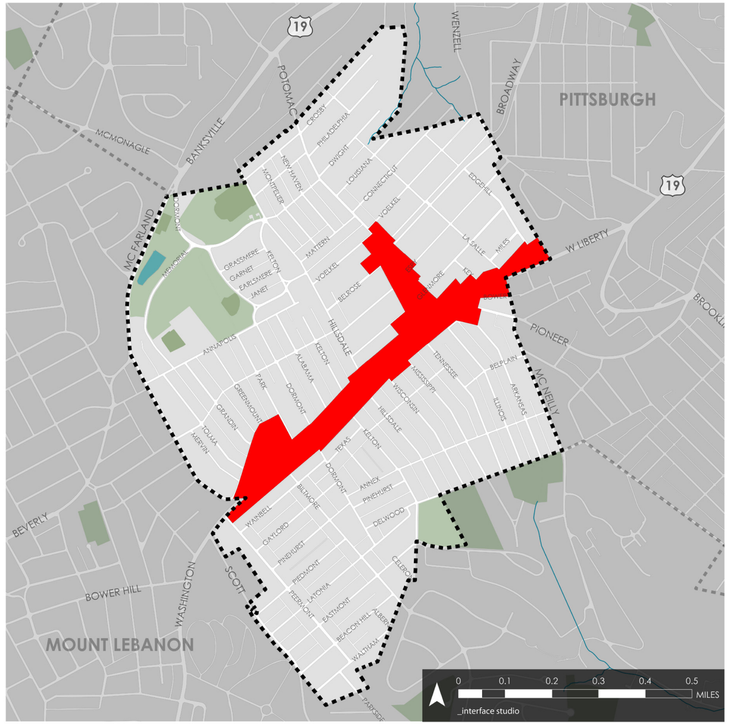
1. SERVICES
2. RETAIL
3. OFFICE
4. RESTAURANT/BAR
5. AUTO



- AUTO
- OFFICE
- RESTAURANT/BAR
- RETAIL
- SHOPPING CENTER
- SERVICES
- UNKNOWN
- VACANT STOREFRONT

Auto-oriented commercial uses dominate the ends of West Liberty. Other commercial uses are split between services, retail, office, and restaurants/ bars.

COMMERCIAL ZONING

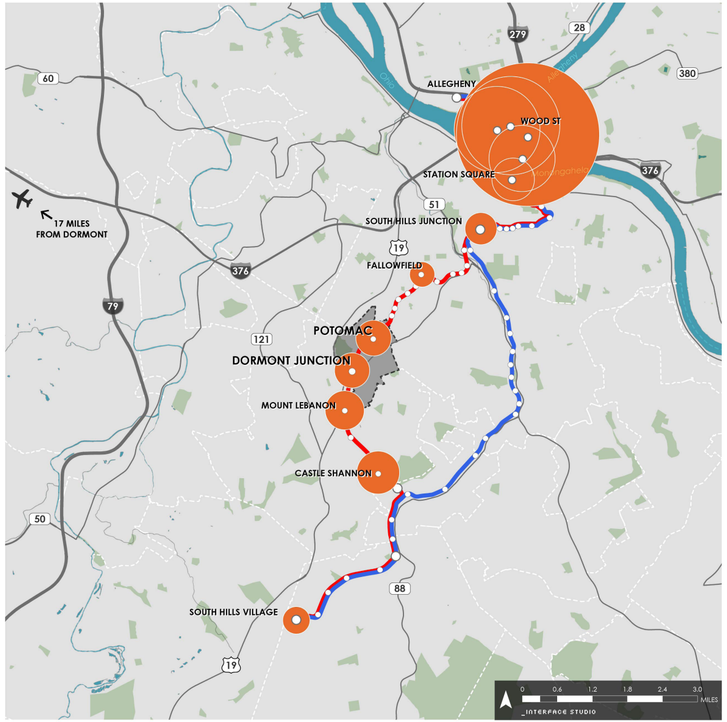


Source: Dormont Borough

C: GENERAL COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

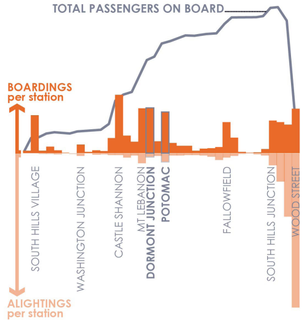
The types of businesses in the Borough are varied, but the zoning for these commercial corridors does not.

T RIDERSHIP: RED LINE INBOUND



Source: Port Authority of Allegheny County

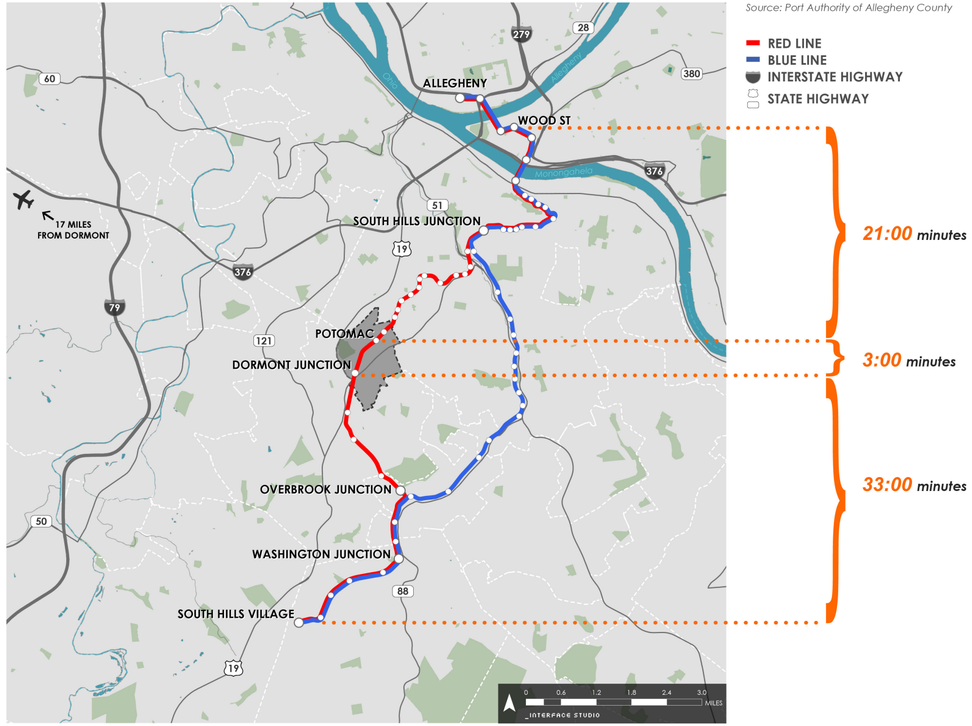
RED LINE
BLUE LINE
INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
STATE HIGHWAY



Source: Port Authority, 2008

The Dormont Junction and Potomac light rail stations are important nodes for commuters and other travelers headed for downtown Pittsburgh.

TRANSPORTATION

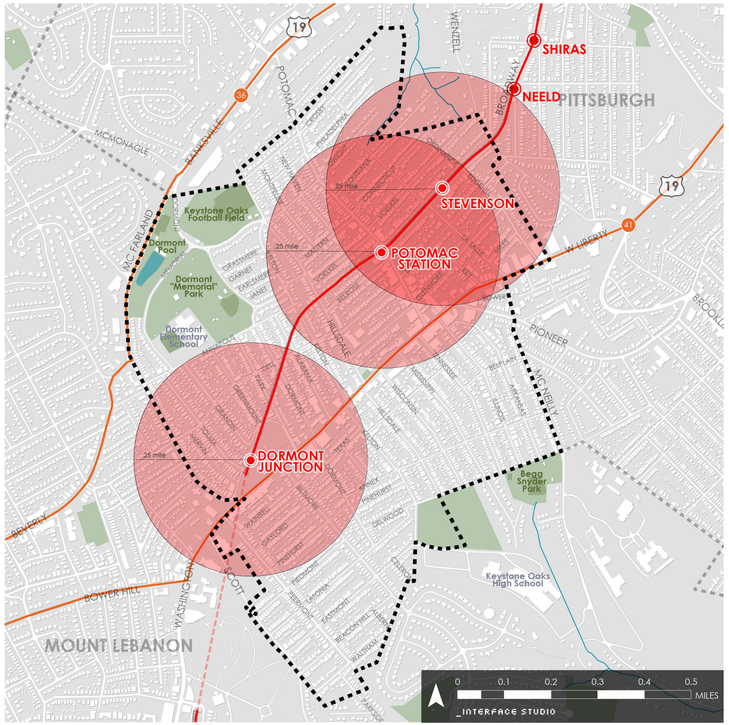


Source: Port Authority of Allegheny County

- RED LINE
- BLUE LINE
- INTERSTATE HIGHWAY
- STATE HIGHWAY

Downtown Pittsburgh is only a 21 or 24 minute ride from the Potomac and Dormont Junction stations respectively.

TRANSIT

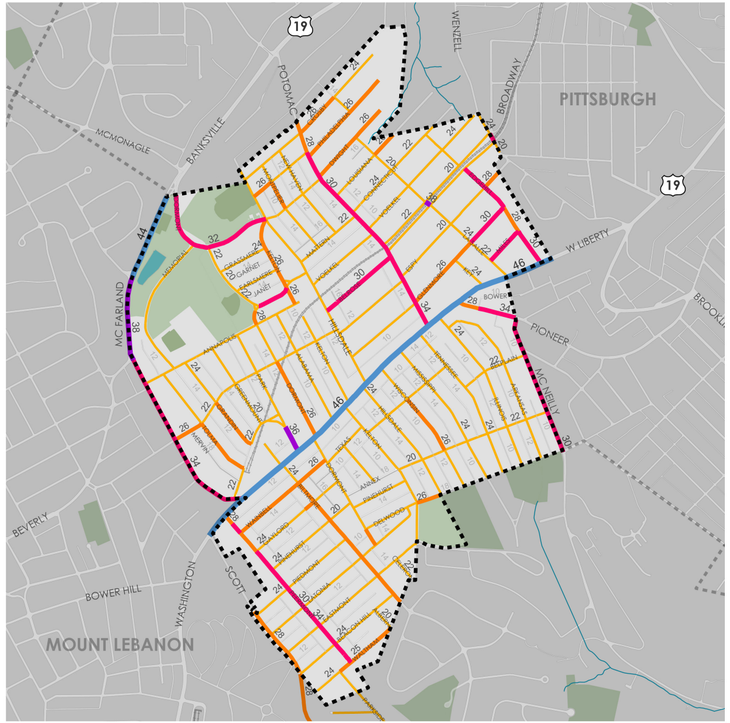


Source: Port Authority of Allegheny County

- RED LINE
- BOWER HILL: DOWNTOWN TO MT. LEBANON-BRIDGEVILLE
- BANKSVILLE: DOWNTOWN TO SOUTH HILLS VILLAGE

Residents in the southern, southeastern, and northwestern portions of the Borough live more than a five-minute walk from its T stations.

STREET WIDTHS

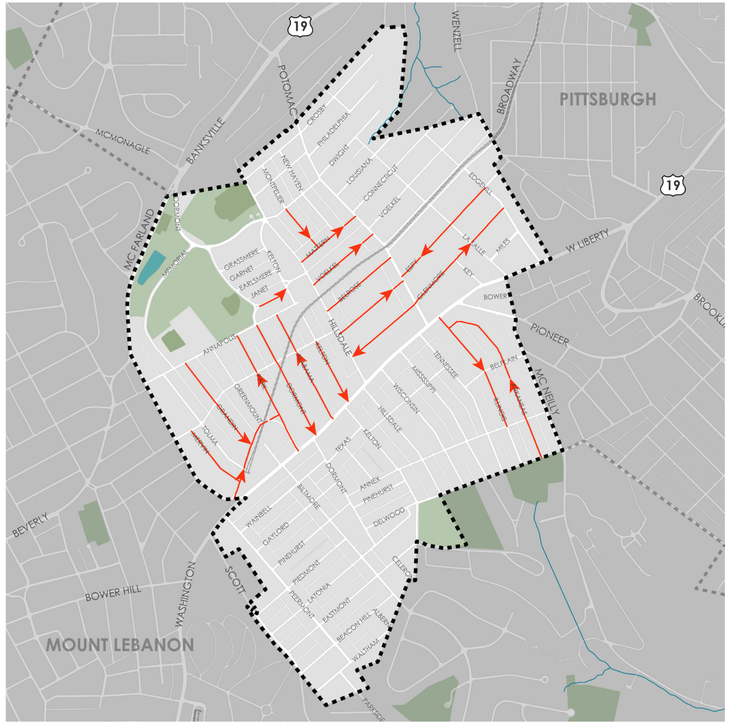


Source: Dormont Borough

- 44 - 46 FT.
- 36 - 38 FT.
- 30 - 34 FT.
- 26 - 28 FT.
- 20 - 24 FT.

The majority of streets in the Borough are quite narrow.

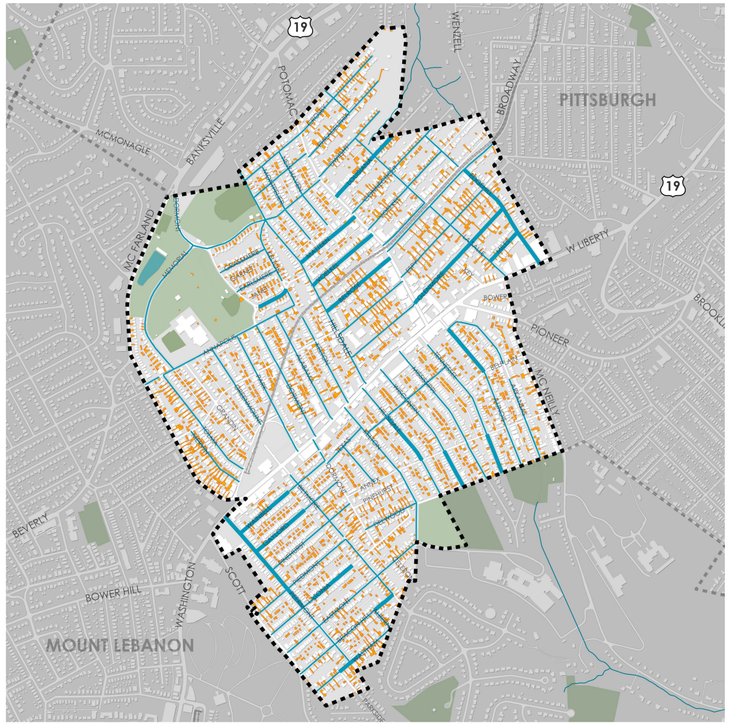
STREET NETWORK



→ ONE-WAY STREET

Most of the Borough's streets are two-way.

RESIDENTIAL PARKING



Source: Borough of Dormont

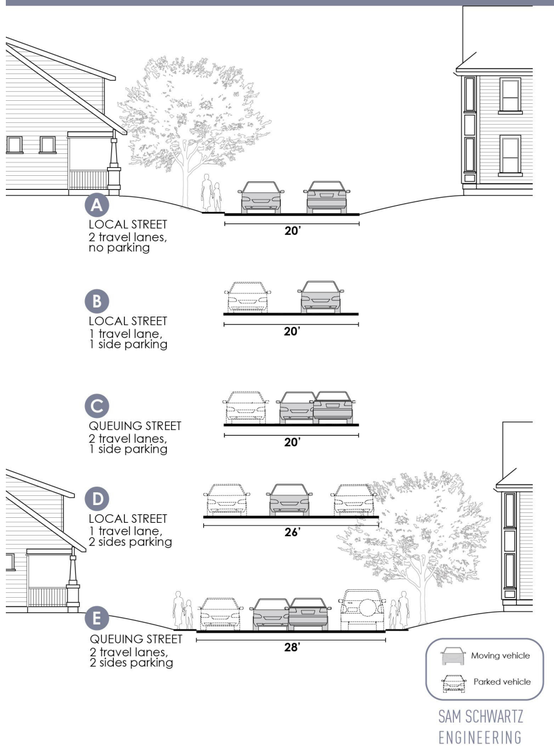
THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 5266 CARS (BASED ON CENSUS ESTIMATE OF 1.3 VEHICLES/HOUSEHOLD)

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 3894 OFF-STREET RESIDENTIAL PARKING SPACES AND MOST RESIDENTIAL STREETS ALSO HAVE ON-STREET PARKING.

- OFF-STREET PARKING (GARAGES, DRIVEWAYS)
- ONE-SIDE ON-STREET PARKING
- TWO SIDE ON-STREET PARKING

The majority of residences have access to off-street parking. Many opt for on-street parking instead, however, which is limited because most streets have on-street parking on only one side.

NARROW STREET TYPOLOGIES



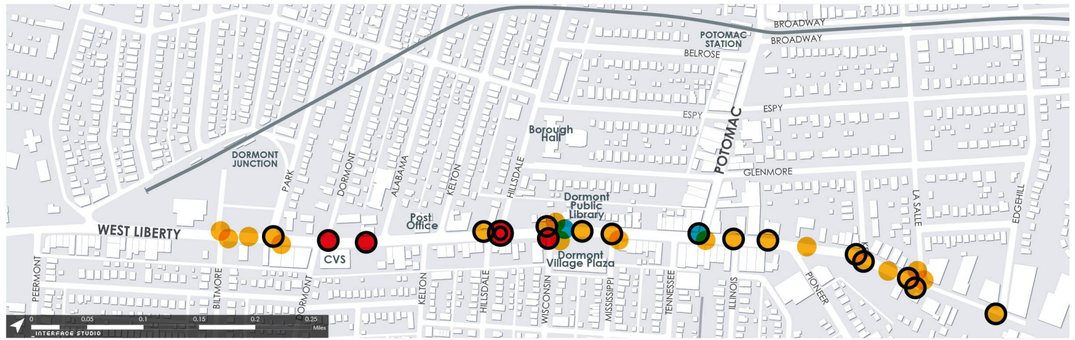
B 1 TRAVEL LANE, 1 SIDE PARKING

C 2 TRAVEL LANES, 1 SIDE PARKING

D 1 TRAVEL LANE, 2 SIDES PARKING

Since there are different types of streets in Dormont, there is no "one size fits all" approach.

WEST LIBERTY COLLISIONS



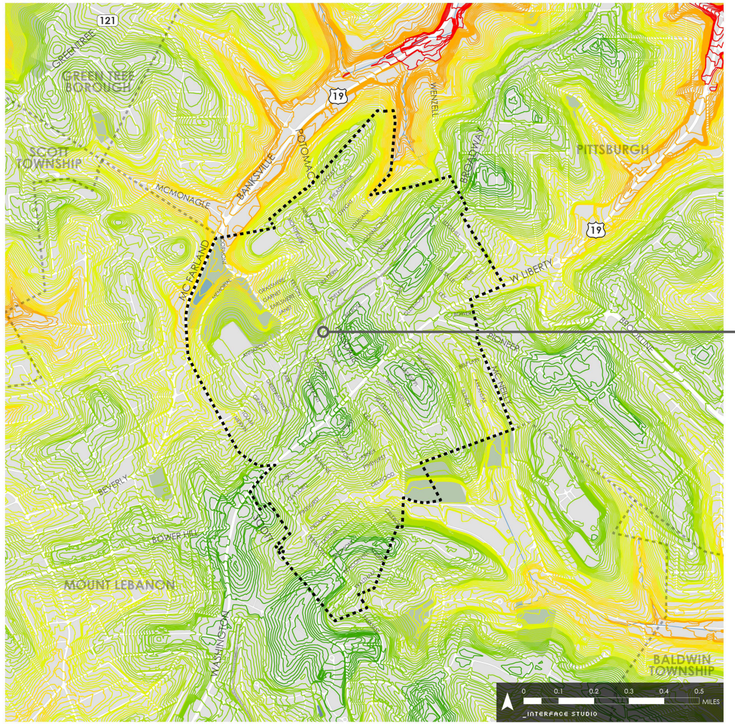
COLLISION TYPE:

Source: PennDOT 2007-2011

- VEHICLE/VEHICLE
- VEHICLE/PEDESTRIAN
- VEHICLE/FIXED OBJECT
- INJURY
- FATALITY

Crash rates along West Libery are close to state averages and in some cases lower, but there are some dangerous spots.

TOPOGRAPHY



Source: Allegheny County (PASDA)

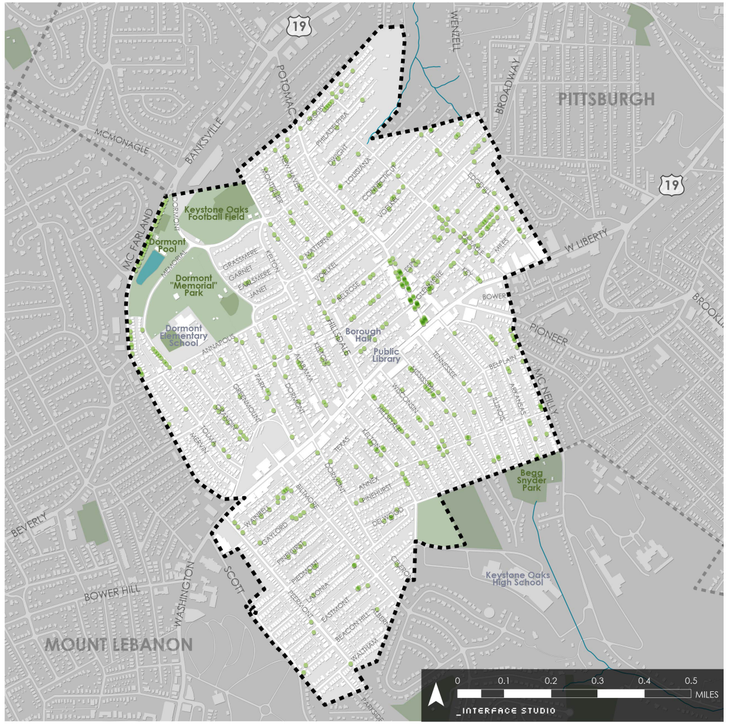
ELEVATION IN FEET
(5-foot contour lines)

- 925-980 **LOW POINT**
- 985-1040
- 1045-1090
- 1095-1140
- 1145-1185
- 1190-1230
- 1235-1395 **HIGH POINT**

RIDGE

The center of Dormont sits on a ridge.

TREE COVER



Source: Borough of Dormont

If you're not in a park, tree coverage is limited.

1948