



**SHARSWOOD
BLUMBERG**

**NEIGHBORHOOD
TRANSFORMATION PLAN**

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Executive Summary	2
Plan Overview	3
Chapter 1: Planning Process	7
Chapter 2: About The Neighborhood	11
Chapter 3: People Plan	21
Chapter 4: Neighborhood Plan	28
Chapter 5. Housing Plan	36
Chapter 6: Implementation Strategy	48
Appendix A – Market Study	
Appendix B – Geotechnical Studies	
Appendix C – Needs Assessment Survey	
Appendix D – Obsolescent Test Assessment	
Appendix E – Evidence of Community Engagement	
Appendix F – Other Community Plans and Initiatives	
Appendix G – Sharswood/Blumberg Housing Plan	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Choice Neighborhoods Initiative Planning Grant was awarded to the Philadelphia Housing Authority by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development in December of 2013. PHA would like to thank the numerous elected officials, public and private partners, Edgemere Consulting, and Wallace Roberts & Todd for their contributions to the development of this plan.

Elected Officials:

- Mayor Michael Nutter
- City Council President, Darrell L. Clarke
- State Representative, Donna Bullock

Plan Partners:

- Beech Interplex, Incorporated (Neighborhood Lead)
- Youth Advocate Programs, Incorporated (People Lead)
- Philadelphia Housing Authority (Housing Lead)
- The University of Pennsylvania (Education Consultant)
- Blumberg Apartments Resident Council – Family Building
- Blumberg Apartments Resident Council – Senior Building
- Brewerytown Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Citizens Bank
- City of Philadelphia – Department of Behavioral Health & Intellectual Disability Services
- City of Philadelphia – Department of Commerce
- City of Philadelphia – Department of Human Services
- City of Philadelphia – Department of Licenses and Inspections
- City of Philadelphia – Department of Parks and Recreation
- City of Philadelphia – Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity
- City of Philadelphia – Office of Housing and Community Development
- City of Philadelphia – Planning Commission
- Child Care Information Services North (CCIS)
- ClariFi
- Columbia North YMCA
- Community Service and Trinity Inc.
- The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation
- Girard College
- Habitat for Humanity, Incorporated
- Honickman Learning Center Comcast Technology Labs
- Childcare Information Services North
- Jeff Brown Stores (ShopRite)
- Jefferson Center for Urban Health
- Opportunity Inc.
- Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging
- Philadelphia Horticultural Society
- Philadelphia Housing Authority Development Corporation
- Philadelphia Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC)
- Philadelphia Police Department 22nd District
- Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
- Philadelphia Works, Incorporated
- Philadelphia Youth Network
- Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative
- PhillySEEDS, Incorporated
- Project HOME
- Public Health Management Corporation
- Robert Morris Elementary School
- Santander Bank
- School District of Philadelphia
- Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA)
- Wells Fargo Bank

Community Residents and Leaders:

- Community Leaders Training Program Participants
- Blumberg Resident Council Representatives
- Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood Residents and Stakeholders

Planning & Consultant Team:

- Real Estate Strategies
- Wallace Roberts & Todd
- The Enterprise Center Community Development Corporation
- Edgemere Consulting

Executive Summary

In 1966, the Philadelphia Housing Authority (“PHA”) began erecting the Norman Blumberg Apartments on an eight-acre site in North Philadelphia, adding 510 units of public housing to the City’s inventory. The newly constructed Blumberg Apartments were an anchor in the mixed income Sharswood neighborhood, that also included an elementary school across the street, a vibrant small business commercial corridor on Ridge Avenue, a mix of homeowners and renters, a diverse population, and a high school just four blocks from the Blumberg Apartments. These assets and amenities produced a neighborhood of opportunity and prosperity for residents who chose to live in the Sharswood/Blumberg community.

Nearly 60 years later, PHA’s Blumberg Apartments have become the City’s symbol for highly concentrated poverty, drugs, truancy, illegal guns, and criminality. As Philadelphia precipitously lost population during the 1980s and 1990s, residents abandoned Sharswood, disinvestment took hold, businesses closed on Ridge Avenue, and Blumberg Apartments became home to a high concentration of the City’s poorest families, with hundreds living in high-rise towers that are unsuitable for families with children. Plagued by vacant lots, abandoned homes, the death of commercial activity, and closure of an elementary school and high school, the remaining 5,100 families that call Sharswood/Blumberg home are experiencing deep and sustained poverty. Some residents remained because they could not afford to leave, but some have remained because they maintained hope for the revitalization of their neighborhood.

Today, the City’s population is once again growing; urban living is now sought after by a generation that wants to be

close and connected to their neighbors, to transverse the City by bike and public transit, and to live in racially and economically diverse neighborhoods with access to a flourishing Center City. The Fairmount and Brewerytown neighborhoods immediately adjacent to Sharswood/Blumberg are experiencing a dramatic transformation, as evidenced by new and rehabilitated housing, a thriving retail and restaurant scene, vibrant community life and infusion of new investments.

Despite its many challenges, there is enormous resilience and optimism among community residents, coupled with the commitment of major institutions and other stakeholders to directly confront and resolve the problems of the Sharswood/Blumberg community. Over the past year, a comprehensive planning process was undertaken, with financial assistance from a Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant funded by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The planning process focused on assessing the underlying causes of the neighborhood’s distress, identifying community needs and strengths, articulating a vision for positive change and revitalization, and developing a realistic roadmap for moving forward to implement the community’s vision.

The results of this comprehensive and broadly inclusive community planning process are summarized in this Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood Transformation Plan (the “Plan”). The Plan presents a detailed framework to help guide the collective actions of community residents and key stakeholders over the coming months and years. It also serves as a call to action and a clear, unambiguous statement of intent to muster the energy and resources needed to transform Sharswood/Blumberg into a true neighborhood of opportunity and choice.



Figure 1: Lower North District Plan
Image Source: WRT

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

The urban revitalization momentum sweeping through Fairmount, Brewerytown and other Philadelphia neighborhoods has stopped at the borders of the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood due in large measure to the overwhelmingly negative impact of public safety concerns and the large concentrations of high-rise and other public housing in the area.

This Transformation Plan lays out a framework to make revitalization a reality for the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood, through a set of coordinated goals, strategies and planned outcomes that focus on Housing, Neighborhood and People. Included in this framework are six high-impact catalyst activities that collectively will help spur additional public and private investments to transform both the community and the larger communities image of the neighborhood.

Plan Overview

Neighborhood Needs

The City of Philadelphia has an alarming poverty rate of 26.3%, and the 24th lowest median income of the 25 largest cities in the nation. The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood is one of the City's most distressed communities. The poverty rate in that neighborhood is 52.5%, and over 45 percent of the residents are youth under the age of 18. Decades of disinvestment and abandonment woefully define this neighborhood, the results of which are included over 1,300 vacant parcels, two vacant public school buildings, a depressed commercial corridor, and a frail system of social services.

The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood that is the focus of the plan is bound by 19th Street on the east, 27th Street on the west, by Cecil B. Moore Avenue at the north, and by Poplar Street to College Avenue on the south. The abandoned commercial corridor on Ridge Avenue, transverses the east end of the neighborhood. Girard College, an independent boarding school for students in grades 1 through 12 from families with limited financial resources, is located at south end of the neighborhood. The college has been an institutional anchor in the neighborhood since 1833, and rests on 43 acres enclosed by high walls surrounding the campus.

The Blumberg Apartments, which are near the center of the Sharswood neighborhood, complex consists of two 18-story high-rise multifamily apartment buildings, one 15-story high-rise senior apartment building, and 15 low-rise three-story town homes. The complex sits on a superblock bounded by W. Oxford Street on the north, 22nd Street on the east, W. Jefferson Street on the south, and N. 24th Street on the west; it will turn 60 years old in 2016, and has nearly \$84.7 million in unmet

Six Catalysts of Revitalization

1. Transform the existing Blumberg Public Housing site through demolition of existing family housing units, Rehabilitation of the existing Senior Tower, and reconfiguration of street layouts and redevelopment of new lower-density, energy efficiency units (Goal 1 of the Housing Plan);
2. Revitalize commercial activity on the Ridge Avenue Corridor (Goal 5; Neighborhood Plan);
3. Establish an achievement model that integrates social service, adult education, and workforce training (Goal 3, People Plan);
4. Establish a Comprehensive Public Safety program that reduces crime (Goal 4, Neighborhood Plan);
5. Work with Public Health Management Corporation to develop an innovation campus that will bring job training programs, social services, and over 500 jobs to the neighborhood (Goal 3, People Plan); and
6. Reopen a high-performing elementary school in collaboration with University partners (Goal 1, People Plan).

capital and maintenance needs. The physical, social, and economic distress of Blumberg Apartments has been a cause of the downward spiral of this neighborhood over the last 30 years.



Figure 2: PHA Norman Blumberg Development
The Blumberg site sits in the middle of the neighborhood in a superblock out of character with the walkable neighborhood fabric of the rest of the community.
Image Source: PHA

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figures 3-1 & 3-2: Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood
The Sharswood/Blumberg Plan envisions a revitalized Ridge Avenue Corridor and housing.

The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood is located in the City’s 22nd Police District, which is one of Philadelphia’s highest-crime areas. The Sharswood/Blumberg community has high incidents of child abuse and neglect, domestic abuse, drug sales, and youth violence. The statistics in Figure 5 evidence the urgent need to lower the crime rates and improve public safety in this community for all residents in the 22nd Police District.

Figure 4: Community Snapshot Compared to City of Philadelphia

	City	Sharswood
Poverty rate	26.3%	52.5%
Unemployment rate	8.4%	80%
Vacancy rate	13%	36%
Homicide Per 1,000 People	0.15	5.5

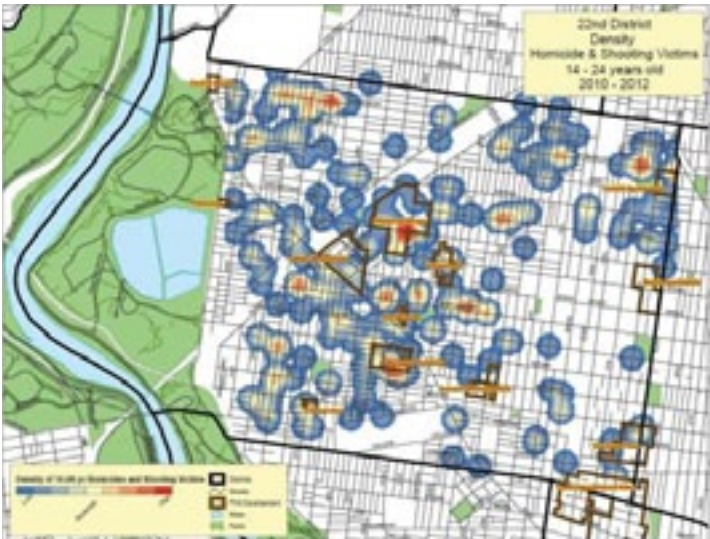


Figure 5: 22nd Police District Crime Map
The above map depicts the geographic density of crime hotspots with one of the centers being the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood.
Image Source:

Nonetheless, the neighborhood’s proximity to the thriving Center City District (a 10-minute drive) and to the surrounding redevelopment efforts on its south, east, and west ends creates a high potential for commercial and residential revitalization. The southern boundary that separates Sharswood/Blumberg from Center City is home

to the communities of Fairmount and Francisville. Over the last decade, these neighborhoods have experienced substantial redevelopment from private investments leveraged with public funds, transforming them into neighborhoods of choice for families of various income levels. To the west of Sharswood/Blumberg is Brewerytown, which is emerging as a vibrant residential and commercial area, and to the east is the outer rim of housing revitalization for Temple University students and faculty.

Neighborhood Assets

During the past five years, the location of the Sharswood neighborhood has attracted assets that support residents and will complement the six catalysts of revitalization. These neighborhood assets include the following. In April of 2015, a local community development corporation, Project HOME, opened the Stephen Klein Wellness Center on 21st Street. The Sharswood Apartments located between 21st and 22nd Streets were developed to provide 120 affordable rental units. Ridge Avenue was designated as a Keystone Opportunity Zone and a Philadelphia Empowerment Zone, which provides state and local tax incentives to businesses that open shop along the depressed commercial corridor. Haven Peniel, a local church, developed a HUD-supported Section 202, 54-unit senior residence on 23rd Street. In late 2014, plans were announced for a privately funded mixed-use development on 27th Street, and, in January 2015, PHA initiated the condemnation of 1,300 parcels, including 900 vacant lots and 400 primarily abandoned structures.

Despite these assets, vast swaths of vacant parcels or abandoned inhabitable structures plague the neighborhood. From 2004 to 2007, the City of Philadelphia, under the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (“NTI”), invested \$295 million city- wide, with millions of dollars being used to demolish vacant structures in the Sharswood area. The NTI program removed dangerous structures in the community, created open green spaces, and reduced the costs of future revitalization efforts that would be developed through a comprehensive, community-driven planning effort. The map in Figure 6 shows the location of nearly 1,300 vacant parcels within the 35-acre targeted area.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

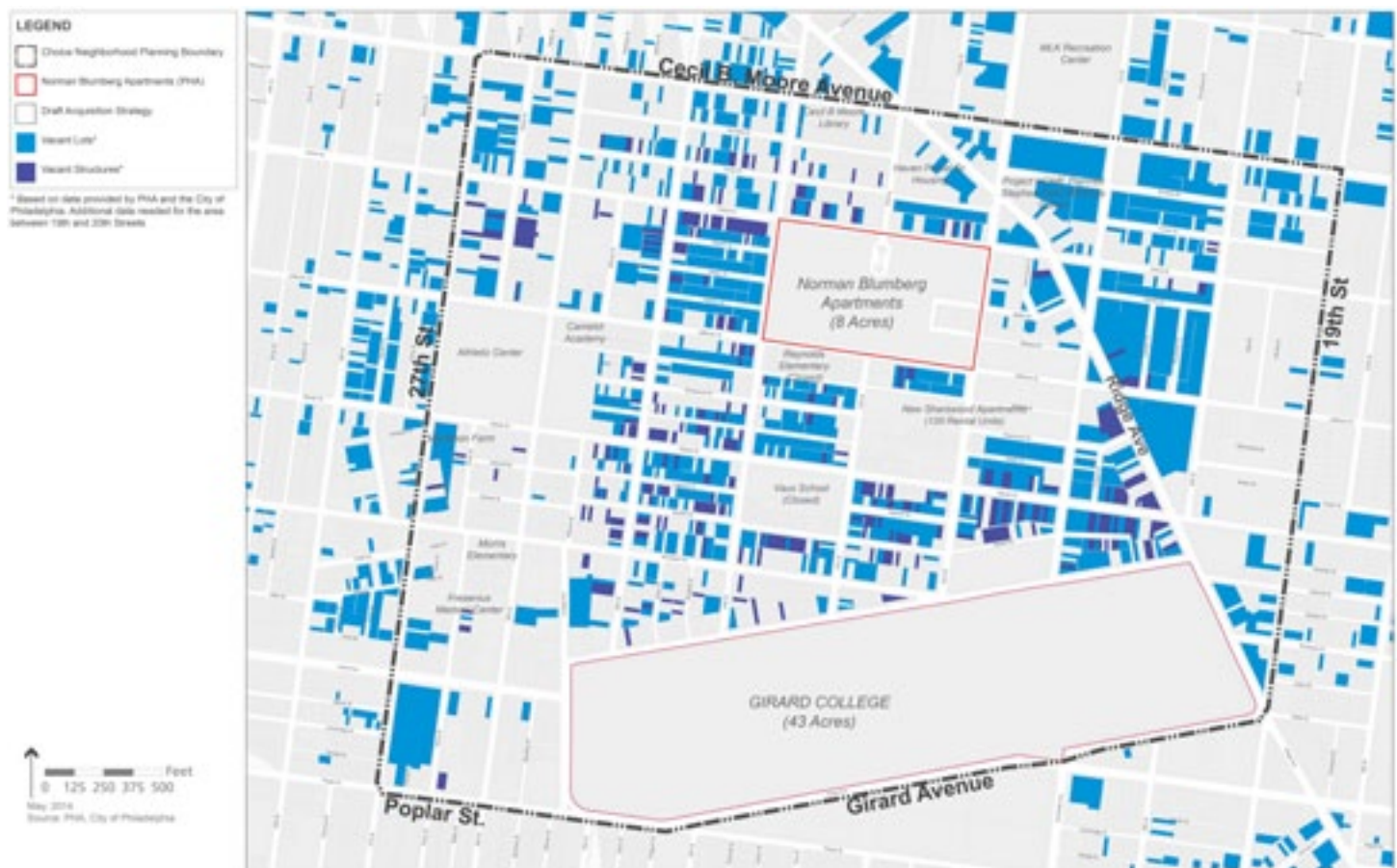


Figure 6: Vacant parcels in the Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood
The highest concentration of vacant parcels are those immediately adjacent to Blumberg Apartments.

Community Input

The transformation planning process included extensive community engagement for the development of People, Neighborhood, and Housing strategies which included 39 community and Taskforce meetings and the interactive website www.sharswoodblumberg.com as well as interaction through [Twitter@SharsBlumCN](https://twitter.com/SharsBlumCN). To ensure accessibility during the planning process for the vast number of community residents with limited literacy levels and/or access to technology, the planning sessions were interactive meetings and idea sessions at varied times and locations in the community such as Haven Peniel Baptist Church, Girard College, the Sharswood Apartments Community Center, and the Blumberg Apartments Community Center. The sessions addressed a wide range of topics, including health and wellness, housing, social service needs, economic development, job training, education and schools, public safety, community gardens, and green space.

Community Vision

The global community vision was developed through a collaborative effort with the Sharswood and Blumberg residents and stakeholders to articulate the principles on which this Transformation Plan is based. Each chapter of the People, Housing, and Neighborhood strategies opens with a vision statement that has guided the shared collaborative planning effort.

Global Community Vision Statement

“Through the collaboration of residents and stakeholders and the removal of physical and social barriers, the neighborhood will evolve to be a thriving, prosperous, self-reliant community grounded in health and wellness, alternative resources, quality education, career planning, recreation, and employment for generations to come.”



Figure 7: Meeting

Plan at a Glance

The Transformation Plan is based on a comprehensive needs assessment and community-focused planning process that addresses the community's priority focus areas: Education and Job Training, Public Safety and Youth Violence Prevention, Housing and Blight Elimination, Economic Development and Employment, Access to Supportive Social Services, and Amenities. The goals detailed in this Plan are anchored by the six catalysts for of redevelopment.



Synopsis - People Plan

Goals

1. Improve the delivery of public school education to all youth in the neighborhood
2. Improve health and wellness programming operating in the community
3. Establish an achievement model that integrates social service, adult education, and workforce training



Synopsis - Neighborhood Plan

Goals

1. Empower residents through comprehensive workforce development and small business assistance
2. Preserve existing neighborhood fabric and create a walkable community
3. Promote green infrastructure development and sustainable open spaces
4. Establish a comprehensive public safety program that reduces crime
5. Redevelop commercial and residential anchors in the neighborhood



Synopsis - Housing Plan

Goals

1. Transform the existing Blumberg public housing site through demolition of existing family housing units, rehabilitation of the existing senior tower, reconfiguration of street layouts and redevelopment of new lower-density, energy efficient units
2. Assemble public and privately owned parcels to streamline future housing and commercial development activity
3. Revitalize the neighborhood and increase additional private investment through development of replacement units and other rental housing using an infill strategy
4. Create affordable homeownership opportunities

Figure 7: Plan Process Organizational Structure
Image Source: WRT

Chapter 1: Planning Process

The Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) program supports communities throughout the United States in building a comprehensive approach to neighborhood transformation that addresses neighborhoods struggling with distressed public or HUD-assisted housing. The program focuses on fostering local strategies driven by local leaders, residents, and stakeholders. The goal of the grant funding is to enable communities to come together to create and implement a plan that transforms distressed HUD-assisted housing and addresses the challenges in the surrounding neighborhood. The program is designed to catalyze critical improvements in neighborhood assets, including vacant property, housing, services and schools.

In 2011, following decades of disinvestment, the City of Philadelphia Planning Commission began holding community meetings with residents in Sharswood to develop the Lower North District Land Use Plan. Building on this work, the Philadelphia Housing Authority applied for a \$500,000 Choice Neighborhoods Initiative “CNI” Planning Grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development “HUD” in 2012 to develop a Transformation Plan for the Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood of Lower North Philadelphia. PHA’s first two previous applications were denied, but with the support of the City, community residents, and organizational partners, PHA raised \$700,000 in leveraged funds and submitted a third application that was successful and awarded in December of 2013. The grant was used to develop this comprehensive Transformation Plan for the Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood by identifying Housing, People, and Neighborhood strategies to transform this community into a neighborhood of choice for existing and new families with incomes at all levels. PHA engaged Edgemere Consulting to assist with articulating the strategies for transforming this community and the planning firm of Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT) to lead the resident-driven neighborhood planning process with community stakeholders.

Planning Organizational Structure

The organizational framework established to develop the Transformation Plan, depicted in Figure 8, was based on the goal of maintaining opportunities for continuous community input, and recognizing that certain plan components were further along in the process than others due to previous or ongoing efforts that focused on the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. Residents and planning partners established a set of Task Force working groups to build on existing work by working together to establish an overall vision for the future of the neighborhood, identify key issues and obstacles to achieving that vision, and develop a set of strategies that everyone can work toward implementing.

Leadership Team

A leadership team includes People Lead, Youth Advocate Programs(YAP), a nationally recognized nonprofit organization

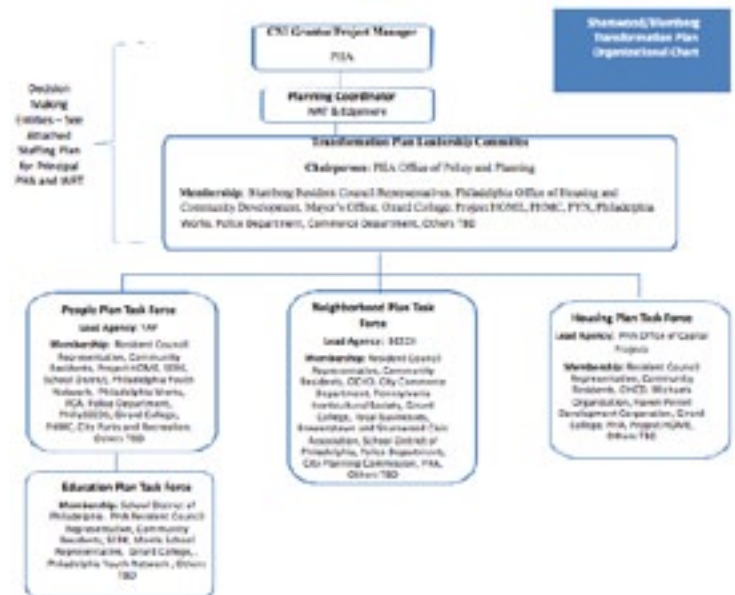


Figure 8: Organizational Chart

committed to the provision of community-based alternative to out-of-home care through direct service, advocacy and policy change. The Neighborhood Lead, Beech Interplex is a non-profit organization that has leveraged over \$1 billion in community reinvestment funds in North Philadelphia community and has successfully completed numerous development projects promoting community empowerment, neighborhood revitalization, entrepreneurship, and advocating for the need of housing rehabilitation and homeownership; and the Philadelphia Housing Authority's Department of Development and Capital Planning is the Housing Lead. The leadership team engaged numerous other partners to share information, de-brief on broader engage forums, and to identify next steps throughout the planning process.

Task force Working Groups

The Task Force working groups focused on the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative's broad goals for Housing, People, and Neighborhoods and were organized to leverage local capacity in specific topic areas. Task Force leaders were identified by PHA to facilitate the working groups, provide its professional expertise, and organize the outcomes into an actionable set of strategies. Each Task Force working group had the opportunity to organize their own meeting formats and agendas—with some groups choosing to hold several daytime and evening meetings, while others focused their efforts into a more extended workshop/ charrette format.

Residents, local stakeholders, and community leaders were encouraged to participate in these working group meetings, with the goal of bringing the agencies and service providers who make up the plan partnership together with the individuals who are the focus of the planning effort in this neighborhood. The planning team, including PHA officials, community partners, and municipal agencies, helped prepare meeting presentations, facilitate discussions, and worked with residents to identify strategies to achieve the Sharswood/Blumberg vision.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

The process for each Task Force working group varied, but each group was provided an outlined set of steps that mirrored the larger overall planning process:

1. **Organize Task Force Membership :** Identify additional stakeholders, develop a meeting schedule, and coordinate with other working groups.
2. **Document Existing Conditions and Opportunities:** Review existing plans for the area and surrounding neighborhoods, identify strengths and weaknesses, and determine existing obstacles facing the community (environmental conditions, access, perception, etc.) and interview stakeholders.
3. **Develop & Review Needs Assessment:** Review the needs assessment questions and assist with administering the survey to residents and businesses within the community.
4. **Analyze Findings:** Synthesize the data from existing conditions and needs assessment; identify potential connections with other working groups and Transformation Plan components; research best practices; and identify potential case study examples.
5. **Develop Strategies:** Create methods that address community needs and identify goals to achieve community vision; link strategies to other Transformation Plan components; work with stakeholders to identify partnerships and resources for implementation; and develop timelines for completion.
6. **Prepare the Plan Document:** Outline plan components; summarize findings, strengths, deficiencies, and opportunities; develop recommendations, priorities, and implementation; include key strategies, timelines for completion, responsible parties, and resources; develop draft plan, review community comments; submit final plan in November 2015.

Stakeholders

In addition to Sharswood and Blumberg residents, key stakeholders in the planning effort include the Brewerytown/Sharswood Community Civic Association, Blumberg Multifamily and Senior Resident Councils, City of Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development, Philadelphia Police Department 22nd District, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, City of Philadelphia Commerce Department, Girard College, and regional businesses who were potentially seeking to establish a presence in the neighborhood such as a grocery store and health and wellness centers. These stakeholders brought a wide array of expertise and ensured the development of the People, Neighborhood, and Housing Plans that focused on access to high-quality public schools, improved public transportation, improved economic opportunities, and expanding the social service system and housing opportunities in the neighborhood.

At the outset, twenty-three partner agencies committed to actively engaging in the planning and implementation processes for Sharswood/Blumberg. Each partner was representative of various interests, perspectives, and expertise. It was intended that every partner be involved in one or more Task Force working groups to assist in documenting community needs and assets, identifying vision and measurable outcomes for each Plan area, assessing best practices, and recommending implementation strategies. During the initial phase of the planning process, and periodically throughout, PHA and the Planning Team identified additional partners and established a plan to recruit them. The partnerships were

coordinated through an outreach campaign and social media.

Planning Schedule

PHA, its strategy consultant Edgemere, and Planning Coordinator WRT initiated an 18-month planning process with the Task Forces and working groups, as outlined below.



Figure 9: Planning Process Timeline
Image Source: WRT

During Phase I, the planning team coordinated team members, gathered publicly available data, conducted site visits, and began other information-gathering activities. PHA worked with the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy and Planning to develop a statistical baseline across multiple measures and disciplines including but, not limited to: health and birth statistics, participation in government subsidy programs, educational performance, family composition, and health of residents in Sharswood and Blumberg.

Phase II began the resident and community engagement and outreach process with kick-off meetings of the three primary Task Forces—Housing, People, and Neighborhood—and development of additional issue-specific task forces, working groups, and recruitment of additional partners.

Phase III included a comprehensive needs assessment survey, including a detailed public housing resident survey, cataloguing of neighborhood assets, undertaking market and other studies, and research into neighborhood data. A neighborhood-wide Market Study was also launched during this phase to provide supply, demand, pricing, unit mix, and other critical information to inform the Transformation Plan.

Phase IV began the development of the Transformation Plan Vision, which entailed conducting focus groups, interviews, and establishing best practices for each of the three plan components: Housing, People, and Neighborhood, in addition to the “Doing While Planning” activities for the formation of the draft outline.

Phase V focused on creating conceptual development plans, which were used to gather community feedback on their desires for the neighborhood and develop the draft transformation plan.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

During Phase VI, the lead partners collaborated on a draft transformation plan that reflects the vision and goals of the resident community. A more detailed community engagement summary is included in Appendix E.

Capacity Building

In designing this process plan, the planning team sought to create meaningful engagement opportunities for residents and partners developing their skills needed to lead the process. As part of the commitment to capacity building, the EnterpriseCenter Community Development Corporation (TEC-CDC) implemented a Community Leaders Program for up to thirty (30) community members. This program has a proven track record, having been implemented successfully in other neighborhoods. Over a nine-month period, community residents and other stakeholders were trained to conduct surveys; provide timely, relevant connections to social services; extend the local outreach capacity of public education campaigns; and develop new initiatives to improve their neighborhood.

In addition - a consulting firm – Rivera, Sierra & Associates, was engaged to focus on building the capacity and leadership skills of the Blumberg Apartments resident council. Mr. Rivera provided the duly elected Resident Councils with training on communications, council management, community outreach and partnership with the Sharswood residents, and strategies for effectively articulating their interests during the planning process. The outcomes of this training directly enhanced the Choice Neighborhoods planning process by providing participants the necessary skills to become more fully engaged and effective in important activities such as the needs assessment survey, neighborhood asset catalogue; visioning; and strategy development. Several participants have maintained their engagement throughout the planning process and have continued to remain committed to the neighborhood through their participation with the local civic association and resident councils.

Since the leadership program included neighborhood participants with a wide range of interpersonal abilities, education, experience, and employable skills, specific outcomes ranged from an individual setting up a bank account, to a group organizing a community-wide Unity Day event and information fair. Regardless of any individual's level of competency, each Community Leader now has an established connection with neighbors who they had not met before, new skills and experience, and access to a new network of resources through the Enterprise Center CDC.

Resident and Community Involvement

The goal of the planning process was to create a resident driven transformation plan that will navigate the revitalization of the Sharswood/Blumberg community to create a neighborhood of choice.

The resident and community engagement strategy involved two levels of outreach: engagement of residents in the Blumberg public housing development, and engagement of the broader neighborhood community. The planning team engaged these groups in every element of the plan development and adoption process. Additional steps were taken to ensure that difficult to reach populations—including seniors, individuals with limited mobility, non-English speaking groups, and youth—were involved, including focus group discussions with stakeholder groups. Blumberg residents and community leaders were committed to working with the planning team throughout the process.

Task Force working groups hosted informational meetings open to all community members at key points in the planning process, as well as meetings specifically for residents of Blumberg Apartments. These meetings served to update residents on the status of planning activities, as well as provide a forum to solicit community feedback.

WalkShops took the conversation out into the neighborhood to engage residents in the issues facing the community and explore its assets and challenges, with three Walkshops held during the planning process. This was another effective tool for the community and residents.

Finally, Taskforce Meetings took place throughout the planning process to keep public housing residents engaged and informed about the planning process and to raise and discuss specific concerns.

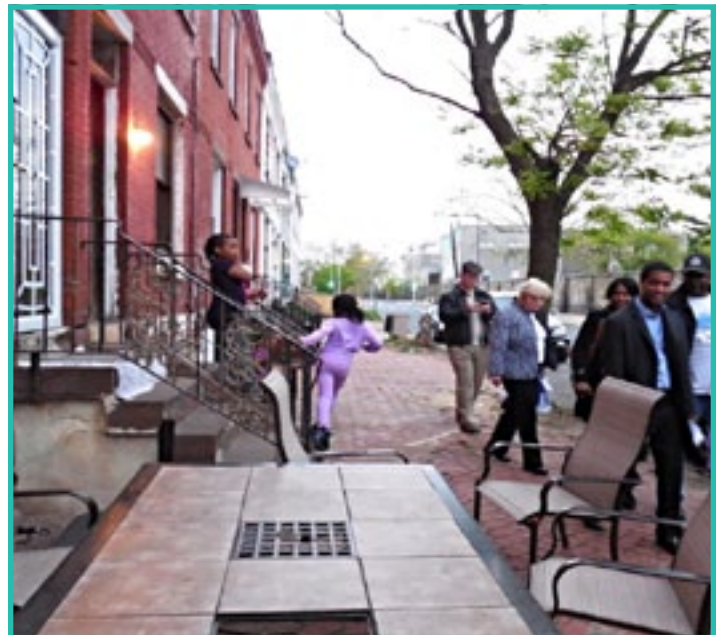


Figure 10: Walkshops

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood is a peaceful, loving, family-oriented residential community where all residents can take pride in its unique history, cleanliness, attractive housing, great schools, and thriving commercial corridor filled with local businesses.”

—Housing Plan Vision

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhood is a gateway into our neighborhood’s core vision - where residents and stakeholders work in partnership and collaboration to grow generations to come, with dignity, safety, and pride by removing the physical and social barriers to create a thriving, prosperous, self-reliant community rounded in health and wellness with alternative resources, quality education, career planning, recreation, and employment.”

—People Plan Vision

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhood will be re-establishing into a community that is safe, with access to high quality public schools, services, public assets, transportation, and variety of vibrant businesses and improved access to employment.”

—Neighborhood Plan Vision

This Plan is viewed as a living document and will be revised as the neighborhood, its residents, and leaders push forth with the revitalization on the community.



Figure 11: Housing Task Force Meeting

Chapter 2: About The Neighborhood

The focus area for this Transformation Plan is the Sharswood neighborhood of Philadelphia, which surrounds the PHA Norman Blumberg Apartments. It includes (as per Census Tracts 9 and 25) area totals 0.7 square miles, and is located in Lower North Philadelphia, which is north of Fairmount, east of Brewerytown, and northwest of the Franciscville neighborhoods.

The boundaries of the neighborhood are Poplar Street and College Avenue to the south, 19th Street to the east, Cecil B. Moore Avenue to the north, and 27th Street to the west.

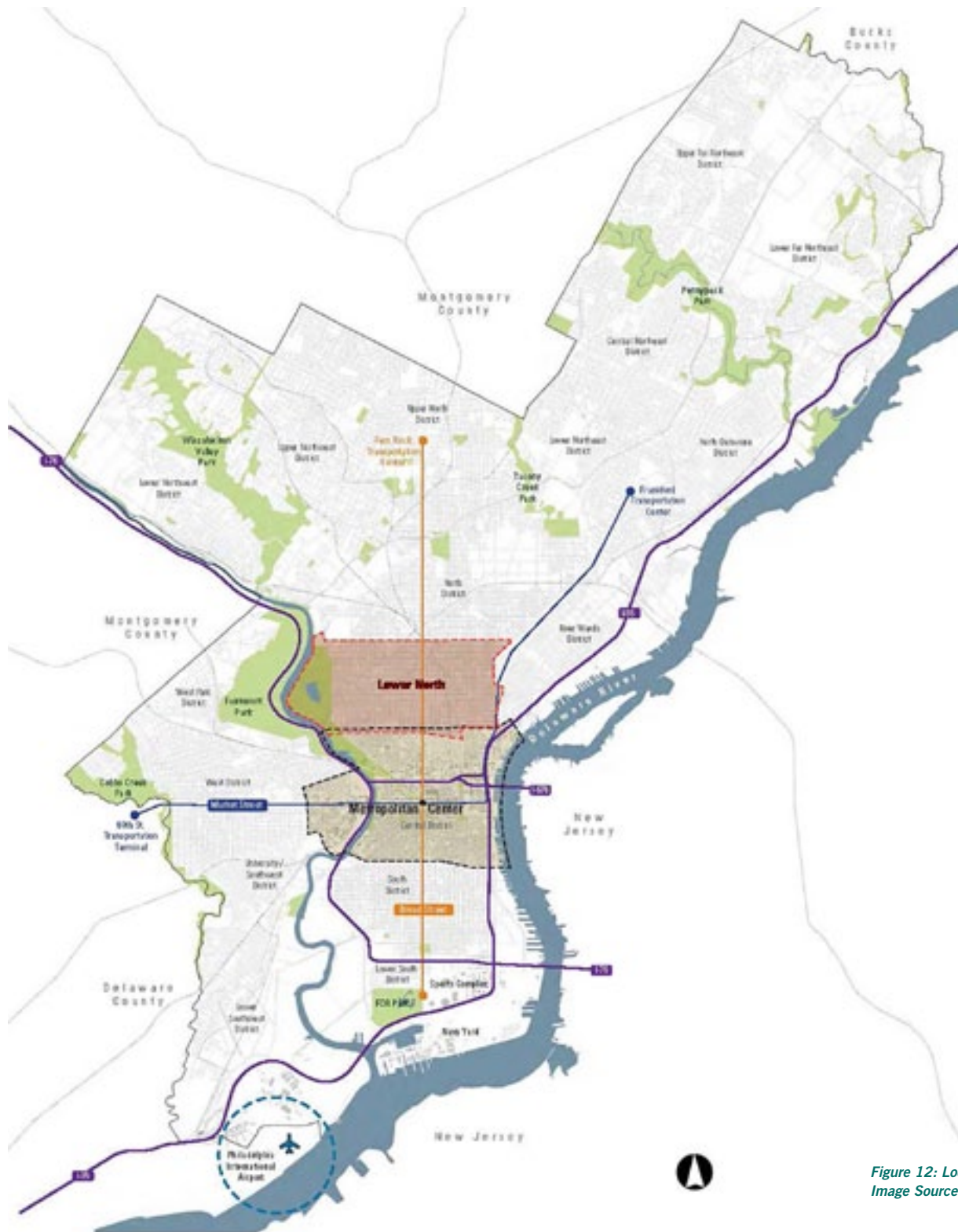


Figure 12: Location in City of Philadelphia
Image Source: PCPC

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figure 13-1: Closeup



Figure 13-2: Choice Neighborhood Boundaries

Brief History

Sharswood has a history similar to many working-class communities in Philadelphia. In the 1850s, the area around Sharswood was undeveloped and Ridge Avenue, a former Native American trail, was used to allow travel from Philadelphia to surrounding towns. Development began in Sharswood after the founding of Girard College, through a bequest from Philadelphia philanthropist Stephen Girard in 1832 for a school dedicated to the education of poor, orphaned Caucasian boys in grades 1 to 12. As the campus for Girard College developed, so did the community of Sharswood.

By the end of the nineteenth century, post Civil War, migrants from the south moved to cities in the north, including Philadelphia, and settled in working-class neighborhoods near manufacturing jobs and decent housing. As the neighborhood grew, Ridge Avenue became an important commercial corridor connecting Center City to the northern neighborhoods. The existence of a strong commercial spine, steady manufacturing jobs in the community, a stable and growing housing stock and the creation of schools and other institutions allowed Sharswood to thrive becoming a mixed-income community of laborers and professionals.

By the early twentieth century, Philadelphia continued to grow, but unemployment during the Great Depression redefined the working-class neighborhoods in the City, including Sharswood. Beginning in 1948, the Philadelphia City Planning Commission declared much of North Philadelphia an area of blight and subject to urban renewal projects. As a result, public housing became a major new element in Sharswood and other similar communities. In 1966, the Philadelphia Housing Authority began construction on the Norman Blumberg Apartments. During the same time, after a prolonged civil rights protest, Girard College admitted its first African-American students. The walls surrounding the college campus remained and Sharswood continued its community and economic decline.

From the late 1970s through the 1990s, middle class residents left Sharswood, and residents who stayed behind watched a once-thriving neighborhood become a haven for crime and abandonment. Unemployment and poverty increased substantially. A large number of homes in Sharswood were abandoned because of disinvestment, neglect, and loss of population. The noise of economic activity on Ridge Avenue became silent.

In the early 2000s, the City administered the Neighborhood Transformation Initiative "NTI", which had the goal of facilitating new development and making the area more attractive for private investors. NTI resulted in a large scale demolition of vacant homes and land acquisition by the City, including hundreds of parcels in Sharswood. During the same period, the physical and social conditions at the Blumberg Apartments continued to decline, and the complex became the center of criminal activity. Today, Sharswood remains a stagnant neighborhood with vacant parcels, crime, and sustained poverty.

After years of low enrollment and significant budget shortfalls, in 2013 the School District of Philadelphia closed both the high school of Roberts Vaux Promise Academy, located at 24th and Master, and the elementary school of General John F. Reynolds School, located at 23rd and Jefferson, as part of a large school closure initiative that closed twenty-three schools throughout the District. Reynolds, built in 1926, is on the National Register of Historic Places, remarkable for its Art Deco style, and served as an elementary school. Vaux, built in 1938, is a striking Art Deco landmark in the community, is on the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Places, and, before closure, had multimillion-dollar improvements.

Both properties present significant potential for reuse. PHA has purchased the Reynolds building from the School District.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

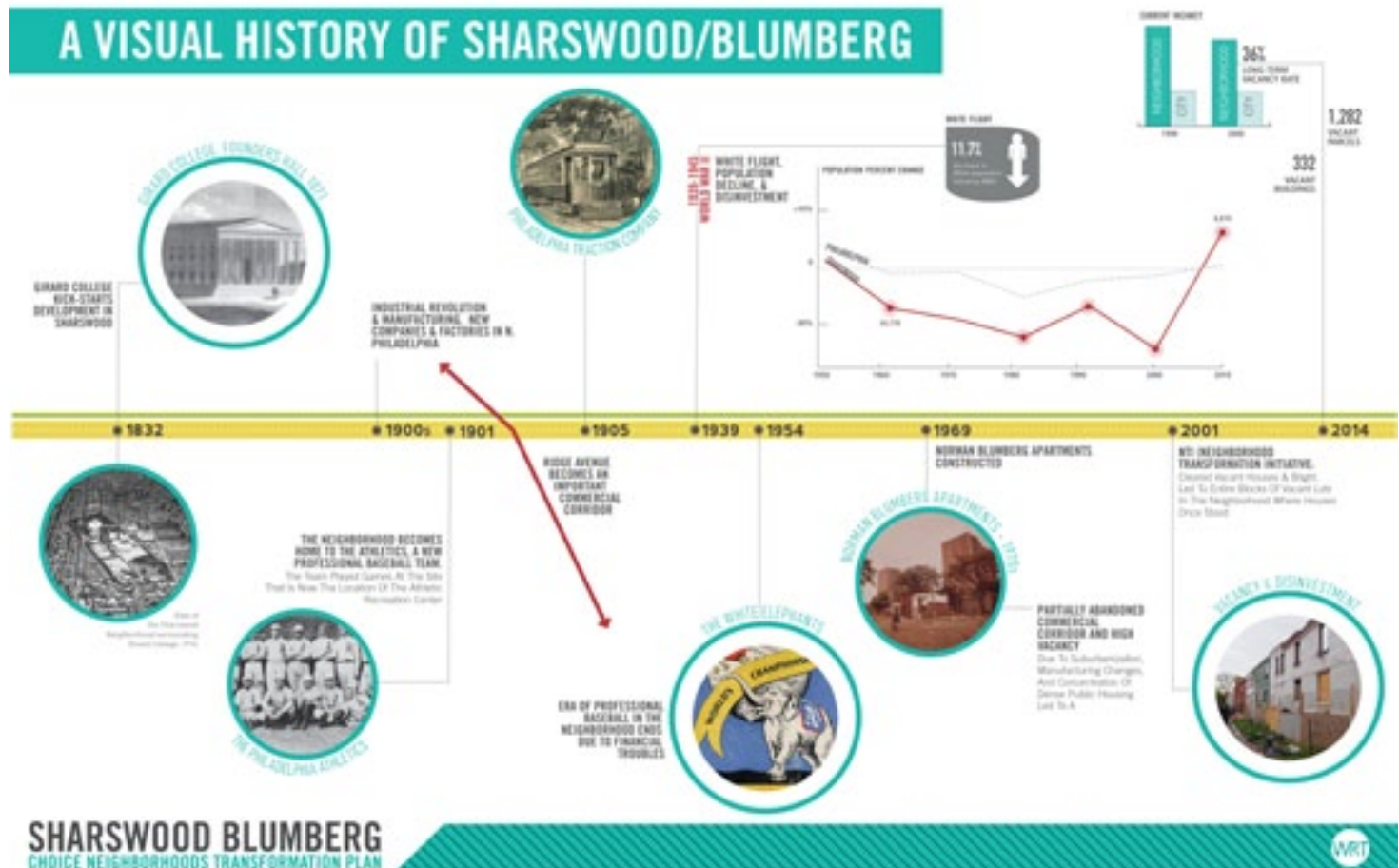


Figure 14: A Visual History of Sharswood/Blumberg
Image Source: WRT

Identified Community Needs

As part of the Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, the planning partners conducted a comprehensive needs assessment survey to document existing conditions in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood and to identify residents' priorities for the future. The primary goal of the needs assessment was to gather qualitative data from a broadly representative and inclusive sample of the community, and to obtain information that cannot otherwise be collected through publicly available and/or partner databases. The needs assessment survey instrument was completed in January 2015, and included 657 participants.

A copy of the full Needs Assessment can be found in Appendix C, which includes a summary of the findings presented under the following categories.

- **Affordability and Stability**
- **Safety and Accessibility**
- **Workforce Development**
- **Education and Youth Programs**
- **Community Health**

Physical Needs Assessment

A Physical Needs Assessment "PNA" for Blumberg Apartments was conducted in 2012. Based on this PNA, it was deemed that the living conditions of the site were substandard. Blumberg Apartments contains units that are inadequate in room sizes and configuration. Units do not meet HUD's minimum size standards and, in most cases, rooms within the units do not meet the minimum size requirements of current building codes.

For instance, kitchens have limited counter area and do not allow for proper food preparation and updated kitchen appliances. Cabinet space is minimal, leading some residents to store food and other kitchen items in paper bags and/or unsecured plastic containers, creating health and safety risks for small children and infants. In 2015, the Blumberg multifamily apartments met the obsolescence test and were approved for disposition and demolition. The obsolescence analysis is in Appendix D.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Neighborhood Assets and Opportunities

Sharswood is home to a committed and passionate community. Many of its community members have lived in Sharswood for decades and have seen the neighborhood transition over the years, witnessing an increase in crime, disinvestment in properties, population loss, school closure, and other setbacks. Many residents have been involved in grassroots initiatives to bring prosperity back to the neighborhood and are fully engaged in enabling the Transformation Plan to become a reality, with significant community involvement.

Recently, there has been some stabilizing of housing stock in the neighborhood. In 2006, the Michaels Corporation developed Sharswood Townhouses I and II with the support of Low-Income Housing Tax Credit "LIHTC". The site has a total of 131 units for families with low incomes and it accepts holders of HUD Housing Choice Vouchers. The design of the units features peaked roofs, vinyl siding, and front porches. The site is well maintained and includes on-site amenities such as community rooms and play areas. In addition, PHA will close on July 31, 2015 for the development of 57 affordable housing units with the support of a 9% LIHTC.

In addition, PHA will take advantage of the high number of parcels in Sharswood that were demolished and vacated under NTI. By using its powers of eminent domain, PHA is condemning nearly 1,300 parcels to create opportunity for redevelopment in areas that have previously been cleared. The Philadelphia Land Bank, currently underway, also presents an opportunity for neighborhood revitalization through its proposed streamlined development and site control process. The Land Bank, established in 2014, is a new agency whose mission is to return vacant and tax delinquent property to productive reuse, by working to consolidate many of the land acquisition and disposition processes of the City under one umbrella, making it easier for private individuals and organizations to acquire properties that contribute to neighborhood disinvestment and turn them into assets for the community in which they are located. The Land Bank can:

- 1. Acquire tax-delinquent properties through tax foreclosure;**
- 2. Clear the title to those properties so that new owners are not burdened by old liens;**
- 3. Consolidate properties owned by multiple public agencies into single ownership to speed property transfers to new, private owners; and**
- 4. Assist in the assemblage and disposition of land for community, non-profit and for-profit uses.**

The land in Sharswood has great potential as an asset. Putting all the vacant parcels aside, approximately one third of the parcels in the Sharswood neighborhood are either publicly owned or under institutional control. Project HOME, an institution dedicated to alleviating poverty and homelessness, has long been active in the community. In 2015, the group opened the Stephen Klein Wellness Center, located on Cecil B. Moore Avenue. The new facility will provide shelter for the homeless as well as primary care, behavioral health, dental care, a pharmacy, YMCA branch, and childcare— all services which are badly

needed in the community and will support current and future residents.

Public transportation access is an asset. Nearly all of the community is within a quarter mile of a transit stop, which is an approximately five minute walk. Transportation routes include the 15 trolley on Girard Avenue, as well as buses on Poplar Street, 27th Street, 19th Street, Cecil B. Moore Avenue, 22nd Street, and Ridge Avenue. Transportation access is essential for providing access to places of work, educational institutions, and amenities for neighborhood residents.

Sharswood's proximity to Center City Philadelphia is one of its greatest assets. Residents rely on this proximity for access to regional transit, goods, and services. In addition, private commercial and residential investment to the south, east, and west creates significant opportunity for community and economic revitalization.

At the center of the neighborhood's economic revitalization is the Ridge Avenue Corridor. The Cecil B. Moore/Ridge Avenue Business Association focuses on revising commercial life on Ridge Avenue. The group has sponsored events such as "Ridge on the Rise." The Association estimates that the 68 businesses on Ridge Avenue provide jobs for 201 employees (as of August 2014) with yearly sales of \$32 million. However, market analysis suggests that \$79 million could be potentially achieved, illustrating a retail gap of \$47 million. Ridge Avenue is a busy transportation route, with 13,728 average daily vehicular trips to Cecil B. Moore. It is also served by public transit route numbers 3, 33, and 61, with total average daily ridership of 30,000. This traffic creates commercial opportunity

Currently there are 44 vacant buildings, 129 vacant lots, and 30 Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) lots located on Ridge Avenue. A Keystone Opportunity Zone is a program unique to Pennsylvania, that defines a set of parcels where property owners and/or businesses can enjoy waived or reduced state taxes. The total KOZ parcels amount to 213,466 square feet, or 4 acres. The tax burden may be reduced to zero through exemptions, deductions, abatements, and credits. The length of tax relief in this zone is 10 years. The KOZ parcels in the Sharswood neighborhood are being assembled by PHA.

NEIGHBORHOOD ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER



Figure 14: Neighborhood Architectural Character
Image Source: WRT

Neighborhood Challenges

PHA's most distressed high-rise property, Norman Blumberg Apartments, occupies the center of the Sharswood neighborhood and looms large over the community. The apartments sit on a dense 8-acre site, consisting of 510 units in three 18-story towers housing both families and seniors and 15 adjacent barracks-style, low-rise buildings. It is home to 1,249 residents. Density is greater than 60 units per acre, and the high-rise buildings tower over the neighboring community of 2 to 3-story homes. Outdoor spaces, playground, and recreational facilities located on the site are inadequate for the young population of over 600 residents. The housing complex creates a superblock resulting in minimal street connectivity for many of the buildings within the complex. In addition, the high-density design of the complex exacerbates many of the adverse conditions in the surrounding neighborhood. The entire complex is surrounded by fencing which further isolates Blumberg residents from the neighborhood. Below is a summary of the existing units.

Figure 15: Norman Blumberg Apartments Unit Mix

Building	# of Units	Number of Bedrooms				
		0	1	2	3	4
Family High-rise	306 units	34	136	136		
Senior High-rise	96 units	4	92			
Townhouses (family)	108 units			20	88	
TOTAL UNITS	510 units					

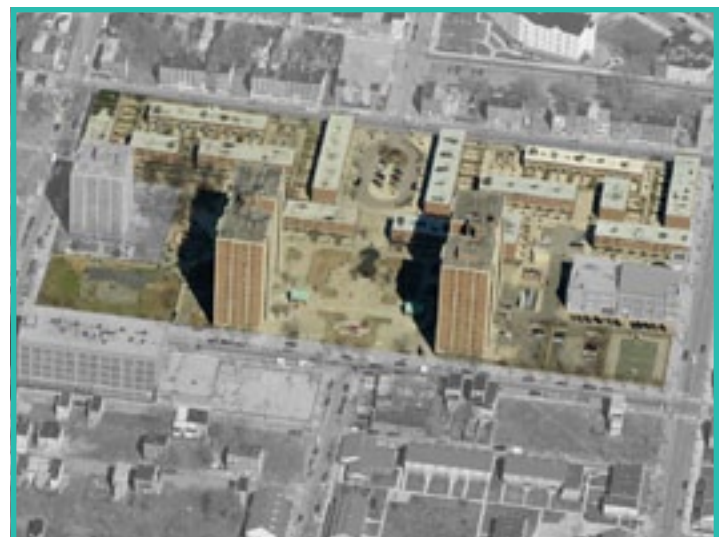


Figure 16: PHA Norman Blumberg Development
The Blumberg site sits in the middle of the neighborhood in a superblock out of character with the walkable neighborhood fabric of the rest of the community.
Image Source: PHA

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

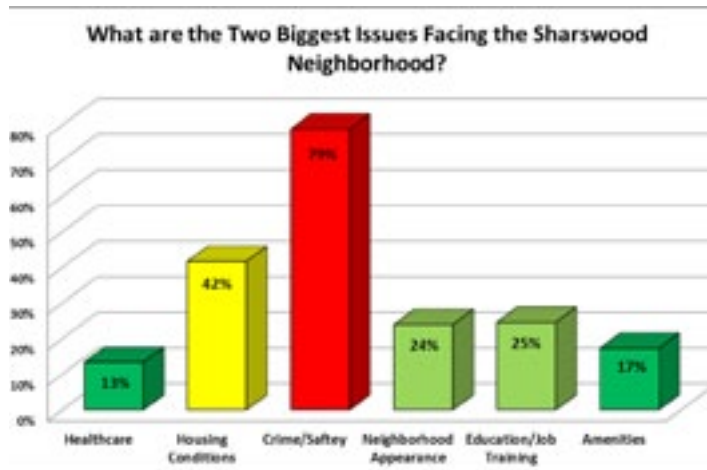


Figure 17: Demographic Snapshot

Planning Area: Demographic Snapshot



Figure 18: Demographic Snapshot

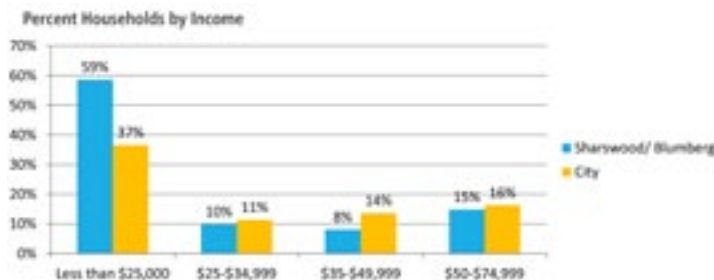


Figure 19: Percent Households by Income

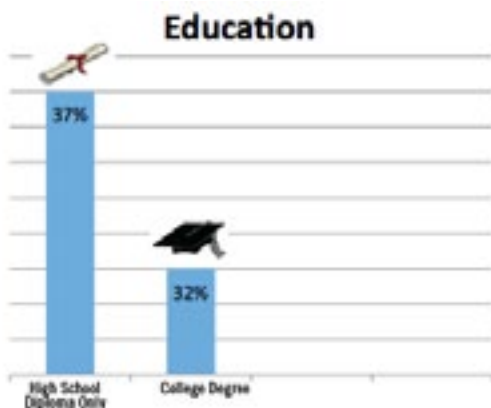


Figure 20: 68% of the residents in the neighborhood lack the education needed to compete in today's economy

Sharswood is home to approximately 5,800 persons living in 2,114 households. It is clearly distressed, with a poverty rate of greater than 50%, high unemployment, high incidences of Part I and II violent crimes, and a 35% long-term housing vacancy rate – all of which exceed the citywide averages. Median household income of \$15,454 is less than half that of the city as a whole. Approximately 85% of neighborhood residents are African-American compared to 43% citywide. Approximately 5% of residents are Hispanic, compared to 12% citywide.

The neighborhood's educational attainment is lower than the average for the City of Philadelphia. Only 37% of residents in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood have a high school diploma. The neighborhood lacks educational opportunities, with closed schools and no local job training or vocational programs. The high concentration of poverty and low educational achievement fostered years of low-wage, entry-level jobs and high unemployment.

Over 26% of the housing units within this neighborhood are currently vacant, compared to 13% citywide. The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood contains 1,282 vacant parcels and 332 vacant buildings, representing an area of over 35 acres or 26 football fields. The long-term vacancy rate of 36% is well above that of the City.

Long-term vacancy and the amount of abandoned lots has led to a neighborhood-wide trash and dumping issue. Many vacant lots throughout the neighborhood, which are not maintained by a city agency or a neighbor, become hot spots for dumping (e.g., construction materials, tires, and other trash) and illegal activity. These lots not only contribute to the blighted appearance of the neighborhood, but they also increase the perception of crime and lack of safety in the neighborhood.

Many of the neighborhood's 332 vacant buildings are structurally potentially dangerous and unstable. Without demolition or rehabilitation, they may cause damage to neighboring, occupied houses or pedestrians (for example, residents are wary of falling pieces from a building facade on Ridge Avenue).

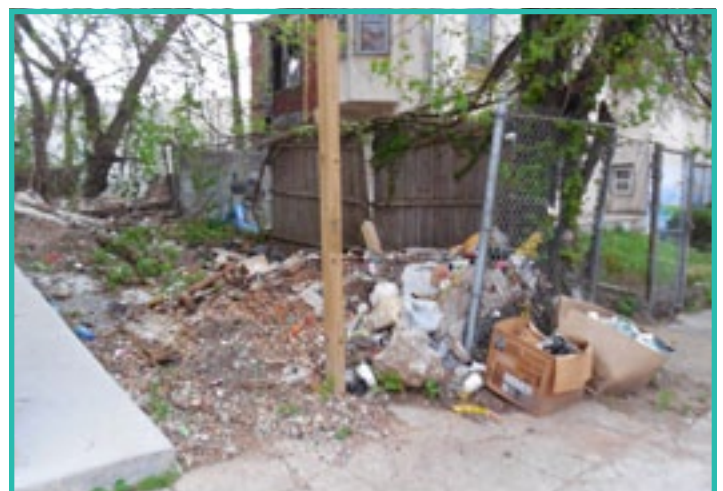


Figure 21: Neighborhood Vacancy & Blight

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Some areas of the neighborhood are more stable, with more long-term residents and higher levels of homeownership as shown in Figure 22. Many homeowners in the neighborhood are interested in making necessary repairs to improve the condition and appearance of their homes, but without financial assistance, many are unable to do so. Also, the concentration of rental units at Blumberg and around the neighborhood has limited the potential for a more diverse mix of incomes and residents.

Public Safety

PHA has been working closely with the 22nd Police District and community policing officers to tackle drug trafficking and gang violence in the neighborhood. Based on data from the 22nd Police District, activity at the Blumberg site has contributed to the neighborhood's crime problems. During the period between 2010 and 2012, the Blumberg site had 64 reported cases of aggravated assault, compared to 20 at Norris Homes, another PHA site that is less than 2 miles away. The youth and young adults at Blumberg exhibit the effects of growing up around violence, including high rates of criminal and delinquent behaviors. Many residents in the neighborhood cited their criminal record as a reason for being unable to find permanent employment.

Social and Supportive Services

Compared to other neighborhoods in Philadelphia, the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood has a thin system of social services. Residents often travel several miles, incurring transit costs, or taxi fares for doctors, case workers, or healthcare providers.

Education

As part of recent School District closures, two of the three neighborhood public schools (Vaux High School and Reynolds Elementary School) have been closed, and student performance was well below the city wide averages. School performance is affected by the socioeconomic conditions of the neighborhood, with a high percentage of economically disadvantaged students (85%). As a result of the school closures, neighborhood youth attend a number of schools beyond the borders of the neighborhood, posing a significant challenge to students' safety on their way to and from school and increasing opportunities for truancy. The needs assessment survey highlighted the challenges with education in the neighborhood. Out of 657 surveyed residents, 76% rated the quality of early childhood education as fair to poor.

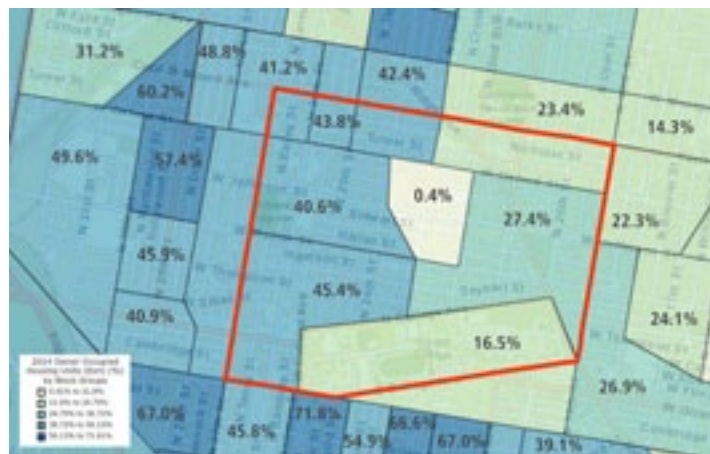


Figure 22: Percent Owner Occupied Units 2014

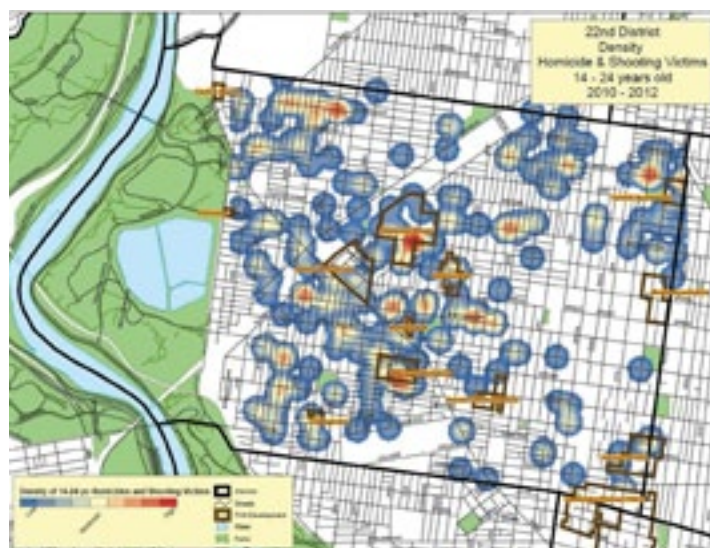


Figure 23: Crime Maps

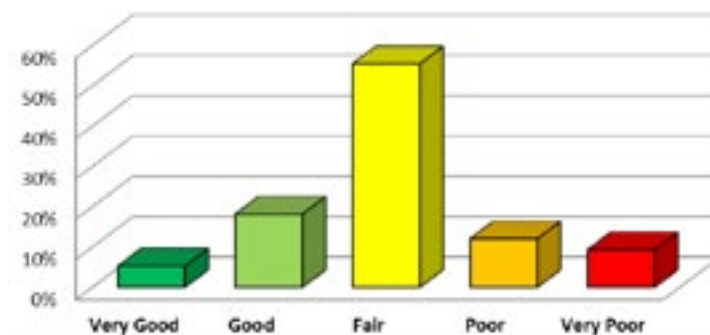


Figure 24: Assessment of early childhood education in Sharswood



Figure 25: Neighborhood School Locations

Are you or other adult household members employed?	
Yes	29.3%
No	69.5%
Not Sure	1.2%

Figure 26: Residents Response to the Community Needs Assessment concerning Education and Employment.

What barriers, if any, make it difficult for you or household members to find employment?	
Need Education/Job Training	19.5%
Need Access to Computer/Internet	10.1%
Need Childcare	7.0%
Transportation	12.5%
Health	30.3%
None	36.3%

Figure 27: Residents Response to the Community Needs Assessment concerning Education and Employment.

Employment

The lack of education and skills attainment, criminal history, behavioral challenges, and limited employment options within the neighborhood have contributed to a high unemployment rate for the Blumberg site and the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood has an unemployment rate of 16%, well above the City’s unemployment rate of 6%. However, the Blumberg site has a staggering 84% unemployment rate, with only 103 of 635 able-bodied residents currently working. High unemployment translates to the neighborhood’s high poverty rate (44%) and low median household income \$21,021 for the neighborhood and \$11,552 for Blumberg site residents. The community need assessment survey confirmed the statistical facts of high unemployment, and highlighted the barriers to employment as seen by the residents, as showcased in figure 26 and 27.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Community Facilities

The neighborhood has community facilities that serve residents on a daily basis. These facilities are illustrated in Figure 28. The Athletic Recreation Center, located at 27th and Master, is a 4.8-acre recreation area on the historic site of Jefferson Park, the former home of the Philadelphia Athletics (now the Oakland Athletics). The recreation facility has a pool, two ball fields, three sports fields, and six basketball courts, as well as a popular boxing program and day camps throughout the year. The facility is owned and operated by the Philadelphia Parks and Recreation Department and is open into the evening hours.

Project HOME opened the Stephen Klein Wellness Center on Cecil B. Moore in 2015. The new facility provides a variety of community health programs such as primary care, behavioral health, dental care, and a pharmacy. Other Facilities are detailed in Figure 28.

The neighborhood is in the 22nd Police District. The neighborhood is served by the Philadelphia Fire Department Engine 34 located at 1301-7 North 28th Street. The station also includes Medic Unit 36, which provides EMS service to the surrounding community. There are no hospitals, job training, or social service organizations in the targeted area.

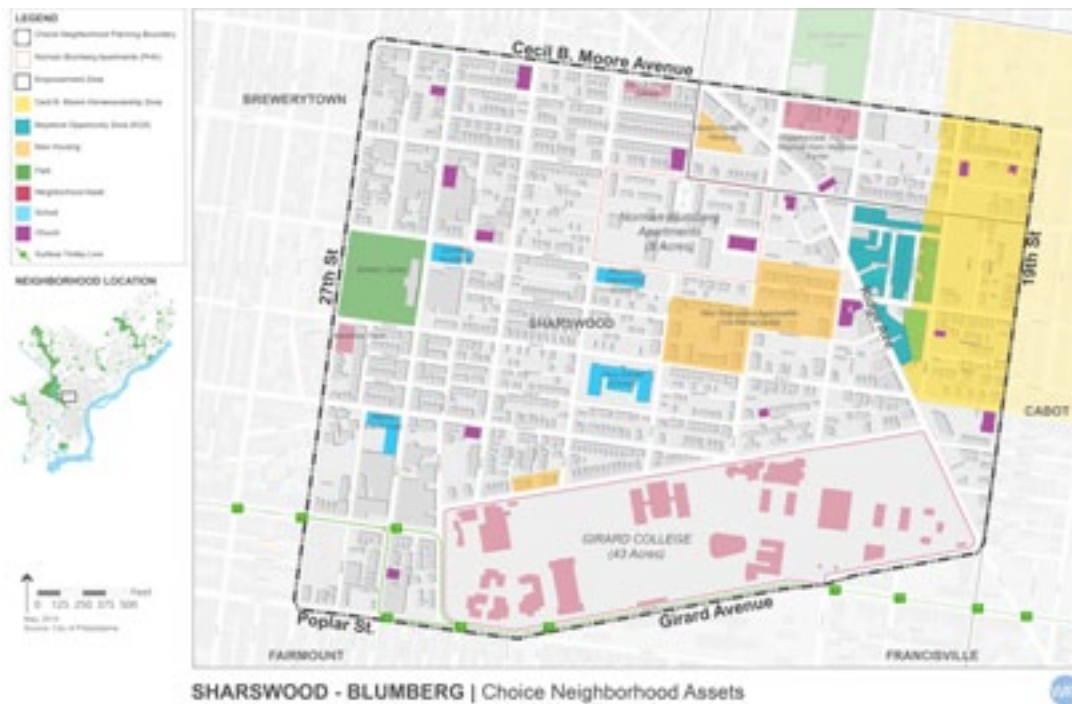


Figure 28: Community Facilities

Physical Fabric

The architectural landscape reflects the predominate land use in the neighborhood, which is primarily residential, with a substantial amount of institutional uses. Residential uses make up 37% of the neighborhood, 25% of which is medium density townhomes typical of Philadelphia, 7% is high density, and 4.5% is low density. The high density housing comprises Blumberg Apartments and other apartment sites. The low density housing is located mostly in the recently-constructed detached townhomes between 19th and 20th Streets north of Master Street. While increased housing options, including the rehabilitation of existing housing options, is desired, there is a fear that units will be geared towards student populations. PHA has assured the residents that students are not the focus of the housing plan.

The remainder of land use types includes commercial, industrial, and recreational and open space uses. Roughly 6% of land use is commercial in nature, clustered along Ridge Avenue and immediately west of Girard College between

Poplar and Thompson. Industrial uses, which make up 2.7%, are immediately west of Girard College, between Poplar and Thompson, and between Oxford and Jefferson between 25th and 27th. These industrial uses are mostly light industrial garages and supply companies. Just under 4% of land use is recreation or open space, and 19% is vacant. The zoning districts, shown in Figure 29 show the allowable uses in the neighborhood, which are generally reflected by the existing land use.

In addition, Sharswood is also a half mile from Fairmount Park, located due west of the neighborhood. Opportunities to provide visible connections to the Park through "green streets" throughout the neighborhood include more plants and trees that promote healthier, more verdant neighborhoods, which enjoy a higher quality of life.

Tree coverage in Sharswood, as shown in Figure 31, is at 10.5%, which is below the City of Philadelphia average, but higher

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

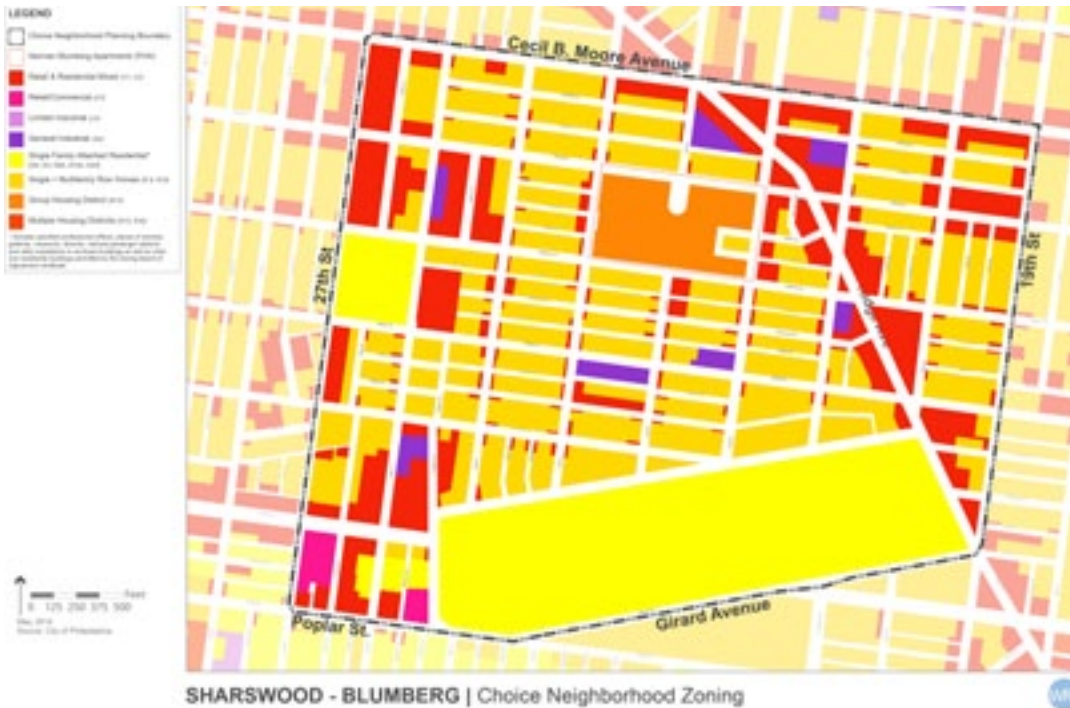


Figure 29: Zoning
Image Source: WRT

than other parts of Philadelphia such as South Philadelphia. Nearby Germantown and Chestnut Hill have a 38.3% tree coverage ratio. Tree coverage is important because it provides shade, creates character, and heightens property values due to enhanced aesthetic appearance. Trees also improve air quality and reduce the urban heat island effect.

Neighborhood landscape benefits from decent connectivity and transportation access. Public transit bus lines (including routes 7, 3, 61, 33, and 32) and surface trolley line 15 on Girard Avenue service the neighborhood. Bicycle routes are located on Cecil B. Moore Avenue, Poplar Street, and Ridge Avenue. Nearly the entirety of the community is within a quarter mile, or a five-minute walk, of a transit stop, which is optimal for public transportation access. The neighborhood is also easily accessed via car, with Poplar Street, Girard, Ridge, and Cecil B. Moore Avenues serving as major transportation corridors through the city. See the transportation map in Figure 30.



Figure 30 Transportation Access
Image Source: WRT

The Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood has significant challenges to rebuilding a community of hope and prosperity. The strategies for People, Neighborhood, and Housing will build on the existing assets and opportunities but the community's revitalization needs a spark and a few champions to usher in a wave of opportunity for all current and new residents to achieve prosperity. The plans for people, neighborhood and housing contain comprehensive strategies that will turn Sharswood into a neighborhood of choice.



Figure 31: Tree Coverage

Chapter 3: People Plan

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhood is a gateway into our neighborhood’s core vision - where residents and stakeholders work in partnership and collaboration to grow generations to come, with dignity, safety, and pride by removing the physical and social barriers to create a thriving, prosperous, self-reliant community rounded in health and wellness with alternative resources, quality education, career planning, recreation, and employment.”

—People Plan Vision

The Sharswood /Blumberg People Plan seeks to address the complex social challenges residents in the community face, including high poverty, low educational achievement, and limited access to services that promote health and wellness.

The Plan is designed to ensure that the revitalized Sharswood/Blumberg community will enjoy a better quality of life and have access to organizations providing supportive resources, and improving education, workforce training, health and wellness. Education is the cornerstone for community revitalization, and the most difficult challenge. Surveyed residents overwhelmingly reported that the quality of schools and college preparation was “very poor.” In 2013, the School District of Philadelphia closed 23 public schools throughout the City, including two of the three neighborhood schools serving the Sharswood/Blumberg community. Statistical data shows only 63% of residents only have a high school diploma or equivalent. This low level of educational achievement creates serious barriers to securing sustainable careers. The Sharswood/Blumberg community suffers from a 60% unemployment rate and lacks job training and

vocational programs for local residents. The redevelopment effort, coupled with expanding services in the neighborhood, can be a catalyst for increasing economic prosperity for families living in the community.

In addition, high poverty and limited community resources also adversely affect the health and wellbeing of children, adults, and seniors in Sharswood/Blumberg. Fortunately, there are some neighborhood assets in place to help address health concerns such as Project HOME’s new Stephen Klein Wellness Center, a major community resource. However, many more services are needed to serve the 5,100 families in the community.

Collaborating with other organizations with expertise and experience in education, workforce training, and health and wellness are critical to the successful implementation of the People Plan. The following goals and strategies will require resources, strong partnerships, shared vision and commitment from the community, city government and other stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation and achievement of outcomes.

People Goals

Goal 1: Improve the Delivery of Public School Education to all Youth in the Neighborhood

Goal 2: Improve Health and Wellness Programs Operating in the Community

Goal 3: Establish an Achievement Model that Integrates Social Services, Adult Education, and Workforce Training

Goal 1: Improve the Delivery of Public School Education to all Youth In the Neighborhood

Community residents were surveyed about education in the neighborhood, including their perceptions of the quality of schools, availability of early childhood education programs, safe routes to school, after-school programs, and preparation of students entering college. As discussed in Chapter 2, respondents think the total quality of education is, overwhelmingly, fair to poor. The results are highlighted in Figure 24 on page 17. Furthermore, Sharswood/Blumberg lost two major neighborhood assets with the closing of Reynolds Elementary School and Vaux High School in 2013. The key stakeholders of the Education Taskforce seek to educational opportunities for youth beginning at early childhood to post-secondary achievements. Increasing access to quality education is the cornerstone for opening door to opportunity, for social and economic mobility of residents, as well as making Sharswood a more attractive place for families to live, work, and play.

In order to achieve this goal, the Education Taskforce is collaborating with residents and key stakeholders, including Temple University, the University of Pennsylvania, Community College of Philadelphia, Girard College and the School District of Philadelphia to develop a model neighborhood

public school. These institutional anchors and subject matter experts will play a critical role in improving the developmental and educational outcomes for neighborhood youth.

The five strategies detailed below are cornerstones for the revitalization of high-quality education - from pre-natal through the completion of high school - in Sharswood/Blumberg. The strategies guided the creation of four-part blueprint on the development of the Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood School. The four components of the blueprint are:

1. Conceptual Design;
2. Curriculum Design;
3. Facility, Legal and Financing Structure; and,
4. Achievement Network Cyber High School

The complete blueprints are available at www.sharswoodblumberg.com. Below is a brief synopsis of each blueprint.

The Conceptual Design calls for the integration of technology to all parts of the STEM focused curriculum, a universal provision of

social services from cradle to graduation, and comprehensive philanthropic support for the development of a neighborhood public elementary school. The school will be designed to provide extended days and academic year to mitigate or eliminate the “summer slump” in academic performance. Every child in the community will have access to early childhood education programs, and the school will be positioned as a focal point for the delivery of comprehensive social services to the family. Teacher-to-student ratios will be kept low through the incorporation of teacher aides, and differentiated education will be provide in each grade. Local Parent and Community Council will be established to act as an advisory board to the School Principal.

The Curriculum Design calls for a Response to Instruction and Intervention model that ensures the academic growth of each student from Pre-Kindergarten through eighth grade. The comprehensive curriculum will blend direct instruction, inquiry-based instruction, and digital learning within the science, technology, engineering and math focus. High performing and average performing students will be tiered but share the same classrooms to improve the performance of all students. Parent and community involvement will be integrated into the extended day curriculum.

The Facility, Legal and Financing Structure blueprint calls for creation of non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation that will oversee the creation of both the neighborhood public elementary school

and the achievement cyber high school. The neighborhood public elementary school will be housed in a state-of-the art 60,000 square foot modular building, which can hold up to 450 students from Pre-Kindergarten to eight grade. The building will include an Early Childhood Center, Parent Community Center, Drop in Learning Lab, and a Community Digital Access Center. The total construction is estimated at \$24 million. Financing will come from variety of sources including local, state, federal government, bond issuance, philanthropic grants and the School District of Philadelphia.

The Achievement Network Cyber High School blueprint calls for alternative paths to a diploma by creating Individualized Learning Plans for each student that include vocation and technical skills for young people ages 16 to 22 years old that have dropped out or been expelled from high school. The school will be integrated with services provided to young adults re-entering society and returning to the Sharswood neighborhood, and with the Career and Technical Education programs administered by the School District of Philadelphia. The students will be able to receive the education from home, detention centers, libraries and the Community Digital Access Center at the elementary school. Prior to graduation each student will complete an internships, conduct an employment search and hopefully, find job placement.

The complete blueprints, which are built under the strategies detailed below, are available at www.sharswoodblumberg.com.



Strategy 1: Expand and Strengthen Early Childhood Education in Sharswood

- 1.1 Improve the quality of Early Childhood Educational Programming in the neighborhood and expand the number of available slots to meet community demand.
- 1.2 Expand access to affordable, quality in-home and out-of-home childcare to support existing providers and attract new ones.
- 1.3 Develop or partner with an organization to provide parental training classes that educate new parents and other caregivers on the

importance of providing a stable and supportive home environment for their children.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of parents successfully completing the parental training classes
- Total participants enrolled in the Early Childhood Educational Programs and total retention

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Strategy 2: Develop or Expand Access to High-Performing Elementary and Middle Schools

- 2.1 PHA will complete acquisition of the Reynolds property from the School District and secure agreements with key partners to support the development of a school. Partners include the William Penn Foundation, the University of Pennsylvania, the Green Light Foundation, and others.
- 2.2 The new school will be independently managed under a formal agreement with the School District and structured to be able to support students with special needs.
- 2.3 The curriculum will emphasize CSTEM (Computer Science Technology Engineering & Math) Education and Related Programming to prepare students for higher education and careers.
- 2.4 Emphasis will be given to providing access for middle school students to participate in academic enrichment activities and college prep programming.



Figure 32: School

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number and Percentage of resident children enrolled in the new elementary school
- Number and/ or Percentage of students at or above grade level (proficient or above) according to reading and/or math assessments in at least grades 3 through 8
- Number and/or percentage of Youth enrolled in programs academic enrichment and college prep programming

Strategy 3: Cultivate a Comprehensive Mentoring Program to Support Continuing Education

- 3.1 A mentoring program will connect youth with volunteer tutors/mentors and establish supportive relationships. Potential tutors/mentors include parents, as well as high-performing older youth who can serve as peer mentors to younger students.
- 3.2 The program will expose participants to new experiences outside of their neighborhood, and potential career paths

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Percentage of youth promoted to the next grade level each year
- Ratio of number of older youth mentors to mentees (1:1 is ideal)
- Percentage of teachers reporting improved attitude toward school
- Percentage of mentors reporting improvement in self-confidence
- Reduced rates in truancy

Strategy 4: Increase Rate of High School Graduation

- 4.1 Counseling will be provided to high school freshmen and their parents to empower them to make informed decisions during high school and educate them about the value of preparation for college or vocational training.
- 4.2 Teens will be connected to comprehensive support systems to maximize school retention efforts and keep students in high school through graduation.
- 4.3 Local universities will participate in the development of college-bound programs for high school students (e.g. Temple University Upward Bound Program).

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- A significant increase in high school or equivalency completion
- Percentage of students promoted to next grade level each year
- High school graduation rates
- College acceptance and attendance rates
- Reduce rates of truancy

Strategy 5: Support Out of School Youth with the Completion of High School or Equivalency Program

- 5.1 Implement reintegration programs that provide paths for alternative high school completion for disconnected youth.
- 5.2 Create comprehensive childcare programs that will allow young working parents to maintain participation in alternative high school completion programs.
- 5.3 Connect out of school youth with vocational and entrepreneurial training programs upon completion.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- The total number of youth out-of-school over the total number participating in an alternative completion program
- Total number of youth completing alternative high school completion programs
- Percentage of young working parents referred to childcare programs

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Partners

In order to achieve this goal, partnerships with the key stakeholders are needed. Below is a listing of primary organizations that will may play a critical role in improving the developmental and educational outcomes of neighborhood youth.

- Youth Advocate Programs (YAP)
- The School District of Philadelphia
- Girard College
- Parents
- Child Care Information Services (CCIS)
- Public Health Management Corporation(PHMC)
- University of Pennsylvania
- Robert Morris School
- Columbia North YMCA
- Community College of Philadelphia
- Boys and Girls Club
- Honickman Learning Center/Comcast technology labs
- Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN)

Goal 2: Improve Health and Wellness Programs Operating in the Community

Residents in the community reported needing better access to health care, and drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs. Availability of healthy food at affordable prices was a high priority for many, with residents reporting needing to go half a mile from home for fresh produce and meats. Other identified needs and opportunities included access to mental health and dental clinics, access to recreation amenities, improved coordination of health care services, and expanded services for disabled residents.

The opening of Project HOME's Stephen Klein Wellness Center in Sharswood is a major milestone and starting point for improving health and wellness in the community. The new federally qualified health center provides much-needed services to both the homeless population and residents living in poverty. Partnerships with the Department of Public Health, Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services, and Public Health Management Corporation will also help create a continuum of services.

Strategy 1: Establish a Continuum of Care for Seniors

- 1.1 Partner with the Stephen Klein Wellness Center to create and sustain a culture of wellness for seniors through outreach and provision of services.
- 1.2 Provide behavioral and psychological health services to seniors, including establishing an Adult Day Center in the renovated Blumberg Senior Building and working with health care institutions to provide house calls to elderly and disabled residents.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of neighborhood participants in Klein Center program
- Total number of participants at the Adult Day Center
- Total number of house calls

Strategy 2: Coordinate and Promote Supportive Services

- 2.1 Expand community access to prenatal care and developmental health screenings for young children.
- 2.2 Establish trained Health Navigators to connect residents to local supportive services and help them enroll for health coverage.
- 2.3 Increase awareness of health and sex education programming to decrease teenage pregnancy rate.
- 2.4 Promote health education for families to understand risks, signs, and symptoms of long-term illness, such diabetes and heart disease.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Prenatal health assessments
- Rate of teenage pregnancy
- Total number of Health Navigators serving the neighborhood



Figure 33: Business

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Strategy 3: Address Youth Violence through Trauma-Informed Care

- 3.1 Coordinate with the City's Youth Anti-Violence campaign in the 22nd District and identify resident youth that have been victims of, or witnesses to, violence and connect them to youth trauma services.
- 3.2 Provide after-school programming during the peak hours of youth violence (between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. on weekdays).

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of youth residents identified as victims of, or witnesses, to violence
- Total number of after-school programs administered in the neighborhood between the hours of 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Total number of youth and percentage of youth participating in after-school programming

Partners

In order to execute on the supporting strategies to achieve this goal, the People Taskforce members identified the following list of partners that will be critical to expanding services for health and wellness programming:

- Project HOME
- Public Health Management Corporation
- City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health
- City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services
- Jefferson University Center for Urban Health
- Drexel University Health and Trauma Counseling Clinic
- Brewertown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- City of Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative
- Philadelphia Police Department 22nd District

Goal 3: Establish an Achievement Model That Integrates Social Services, Adult Education, and Workforce Training

An overwhelming number of Sharswood residents reported that obtaining employment was a challenge. Residents and stakeholders consistently voiced the need for opportunities to become gainfully employed, concerns about employment prospects for their children, and a strong interest in benefiting from the neighborhood's revitalization. Residents also asked for informational career workshops for adults and children with professional speakers who reflect the neighborhood's cultural makeup, and could be positive role models for young men and women in the community. During the People Planning Taskforce meetings with residents, there was a persistently expressed need for supportive services in the areas of continuing education and job training programs.

The strategies for improving economic opportunities for families focus on programs designed to provide support and re-sources to prepare for, find, and retain employment that will foster the long-term stability of households in the neighborhood. The achievement model will integrate community social services into adult education programming and workforce training by going beyond training for employment to encouraging the application of job skills to the upkeep of the home, financial stability, and neighborhood investment.



Figure 34: Supportive Services Round Table Meeting
Image Source: WRT

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Strategy 1: Develop a Support Network for the Entire Family

- 1.1 Provide access to services centered around “Vision Planning” to connect families and individuals within the community to resources that will support its execution.
- 1.2 Provide educational advancement programs for low literacy adults and seniors.
- 1.3 Host community events and create a Speakers Bureau to facilitate continuous community engagement in education programs and workforce training programs.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of families in the community (post redevelopment)
- Percentage of families in community with Vision Plans and benefitting from the plan
- Total number of community events and participants at each event

Strategy 2: Empower Residents to Overcome Barriers to Employment

- 2.1 Address individual barriers to employment from hard skills (education and training) to life skills and daily challenges (travel, childcare) by providing training programs and identifying funding to provide transportation vouchers for working parents.
- 2.2 Partner with area employers to provide workforce development programs through internships or apprentice opportunities.
- 2.3 Connect residents with financial literacy education programs to improve credit scores.
- 2.4 Provide a listing of Section 3 employment opportunities to residents for employment in the neighborhood’s redevelopment.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Community unemployment rate
- Total number of local employers providing internship or apprentice opportunities
- Total number of participants enrolled in job training or other workforce development programs
- Total number of residents employed through Section 3 job placement

Strategy 3: Establish a Youth Apprentice and Training Work Program

- 3.1 Connect neighborhood youth with the Philadelphia Youth Network to encourage youth empowerment, employment, and job training.
- 3.2 Develop after-school programs and activities that emphasize CSTEM training and skills such as application development. There will also be programs that emphasize trade skills training (i.e. woodworking, handyman, electrician, automotive, recreation) for youth that is connected to job placement.
- 3.3 Recruit neighborhood and nearby businesses to host internships/vocational training opportunities for youth during the summer and school year to provide hands-on learning experiences.

- 3.4 Provide programs for entrepreneur training and self-employment to encourage development of small businesses in the neighborhood.
- 3.5 Work with Peace Park, BSCCA, PHS, and other neighborhood and City-based organizations to provide part-time employment for vacant lot management.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Neighborhood youth unemployment rate
- Total number of youth employed 6 months or longer
- Total number of CSTEM program participants

Strategy 4: Provide Counseling and Support to Youth and Adults Re-entering the Community After Incarceration

- 4.1 Create a partnership with the Mayor’s Office for Reintegration Services (RISE) and a community-based organization that will focus on providing second chance services to adults and youth.
- 4.2 Connect families of returning youth and adults to supportive services.
- 4.3 Partner with area law school Expungement Projects to decrease barriers to employment and help restore parental rights of parents whose children who were put into the foster care system.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of returning citizens to the community
- Total number of second chance program participants
- Total number of expungements and restored parental rights

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Partners

To develop a model that integrates community social services into Adult Education Programming and workforce training the community of residents identified the following list of partners for this goal moving forward.

- The Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc.
- Philadelphia Youth Network
- The Mayor's Office of Reintegration Services
- Philadelphia Family Court
- Philadelphia Department of Human Services
- JEVS Human Services
- Temple University School of Law
- Philadelphia Horticultural Society (PHS)
- Philadelphia Works, Incorporated
- Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity
- Philadelphia Public Defenders Association (Juvenile & Adult Divisions)
- Orleans Technical School
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Philadelphia Horticultural Society (PHS)

People Plan Implementation

People Lead

Successful implementation of the People Plan goals will require resources, strong partnerships, shared vision and commitment from the community, the city government and other government and in order to achieve this goal, partnerships with the key stakeholders are needed. Below is a listing of primary organizations that will may play a critical role in improving the developmental and educational outcomes of neighborhood youth.

Stakeholders

Youth Advocate Programs will establish working teams for each of the People Goals to ensure successful implementation, on time and within budget.

Budget and Financing

The estimated implementation budget for all people strategies is approximately \$12.4 million. It is anticipated that funding will be provided through the City of Philadelphia, foundations, providers, and choice neighborhoods funding. Further budget information can be found in the Implementation Chapter of this plan.

Education	Health Wellness	Supportive Services
The School District of Philadelphia	Project HOME	The Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc.
Girard College	Public Health Management Corporation	Philadelphia Youth Network
Parents	City of Philadelphia Department of Public Health	The Mayor's Office of Reintegration Services
Child Care Information Services (CCIS)	City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services	Philadelphia Family Court
Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC)	Jefferson University Center for Urban Health	Philadelphia Department of Human Services
University of Pennsylvania	Drexel University Health and Trauma Counseling Clinic	JEVS Human Services
Robert Morris School	Brewerytown Sharswood Community and Civic Association	Temple University School of Law
Columbia North YMCA	City of Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative	Philadelphia Horticultural Society (PHS)
Boys and Girls Club	Philadelphia Police Department 22nd District	Philadelphia Works, Incorporated
Honickman Learning Center/Comcast Technology Labs		Mayor's Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity
Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative		Philadelphia Public Defenders Association (Juvenile & Adult Divisions)
Philadelphia Housing Authority		Orleans Technical School
Brewerytown Sharswood Community and Civic Association		Brewerytown Sharswood Community and Civic Association
Philadelphia Youth Network (PYN)		Philadelphia Housing Authority
Community College of Philadelphia		The Mayor's Office of Reintegration Services

Figure 35: Stakeholder chart

Chapter 4: Neighborhood Plan

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhood will be re-establishing into a community that is safe, with access to high quality public schools, services, public assets, transportation, and variety of vibrant businesses and improved access to employment.”

Neighborhood Plan Vision

During, the Neighborhood Taskforce meetings, residents expressed a strong interest in being a part of and benefiting from the redevelopment efforts that will be guided by this plan. The residents welcomed investments in the community, but want the economic development to benefit and support existing residents, not just persons drawn to the community by the employment opportunities. Preservation of the neighborhood’s heritage while targeting investments in the sustainable redevelopment of the local economy were guiding principles in the development of this Neighborhood Plan. In addition, residents universally accepted the fact the Sharswood neighborhood’s high crime rate hampered business investments, and a reduction in crime is an absolute driver of local economic development. Safe streets allow residents the opportunity to patronize shops and reduce the risks of owning and operating a small business in the community. The high rates of criminal activity were discussed in Chapter 2.

The plan to revitalize the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood was developed by the Neighborhood Taskforce, residents and the community partners through a variety of neighborhood gatherings including resident meetings, Walkshops, and work sessions held by the Neighborhood Taskforce, led by Beech Interplex and the BSCCA. The discussion about reviving the economic vibrancy in Sharswood began prior to the start of this planning process with the City Planning Commission’s 2035 Lower North District Plan. Ideas raised and discussed during the Commission’s planning for the broader Lower North District were folded into the discussion for revitalizing the Sharswood neighborhood. In all, there were approximately 10 neighborhood gatherings to discuss the Neighborhood Plan for economic revitalization of the Ridge Avenue commercial corridor. Basic quality of life amenities such as grocery stores, dry cleaners,

and local restaurants were components of that revitalization, along with the need to develop sustainable uses for the vast concentration of vacant parcels in the community and the two school buildings, Vaux and Reynolds, closed by the School District. Given the low-income levels in Sharswood, much of the discussion about revitalizing the neighborhood included the need for jobs in the community, which is a topic addressed in Chapter 3 of the People Plan.

Each goal and supporting strategy centers on achieving the four outcomes listed below that will make the community’s vision a reality.

- 1. A Restored Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor
- 2. Sustainable Economic Growth through Resident Empowerment
- 3. Improved Links with Anchor Institutions
- 4. Repurpose the Abandoned School Buildings

Neighborhood Goals

The Neighborhood Plan Task Force and residents developed the following five goals to guide the precise strategies for improving the opportunities for residents to achieve prosperity:

- Goal 1: Empower residents through comprehensive workforce development and small business assistance
- Goal 2: Preserve existing neighborhood fabric and create a walkable community
- Goal 3: Promote green infrastructure development and sustainable open spaces
- Goal 4: Establish a comprehensive public safety program that reduces crime
- Goal 5: Redevelop commercial and residential anchors in the neighborhood

Goal 1: Empower Residents Through Comprehensive Workforce Development and Small Business Assistance

Throughout the neighborhood planning process, residents expressed a strong interest in sustainable economic development. Residents also wanted to maintain the fabric of the community, which means strong participation from residents and resident-owned businesses in growing the local economy. The community needs assessment data showed a great interest in entrepreneurial training and local development. The four strategies listed below reflect those objectives.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Strategy 1: Build the Organizational Capacity of the Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic Association

Convert a loose association of civic-minded citizens into developers and service providers in the neighborhood

- 1.1 Partner with Beech Interplex who will provide staff training on housing, small business, and job development, as well as resident leadership.
- 1.2 Rehabilitate a vacant property on Ridge Avenue to be used as a multi-purpose office building for the Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic Association.
- 1.3 Establish a Neighborhood Advisory Council through the BSCCA for Sharswood and develop a Strategic plan for the organization.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Establishment of an office for the Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic Association
- Total funds raised to complete the rehabilitation of the office
- Date of completion for the Strategic Plan



Figure 36: B.S.C.C.A.

Strategy 2: Establish partnerships with organizations that provide Job training opportunities

- 2.1 Work with PHA and the City to identify a comprehensive provider of job training and resident services that can operate programs in the community.
- 2.2 Work with the Public Health Management Corporation to develop an innovation campus that will bring job training programs, social services, and over 500 jobs to the neighborhood.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number enrolled in job training or other workforce development programs
- Number of residents that completed job training or other workforce development programs
- Number of job training attendees placed in jobs

Strategy 3: Establish opportunities for property owners to invest in the rehab of their homes to preserve the character of the neighborhood

- 3.1 Work with Beech Interplex to provide residents with information about the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency's Keystone Renovate and Repair Loan Program.
- 3.2 Coordinate with Habitat for Humanity to provide residents with the Home Repair program.
- 3.3 Establish a partnership with local banks to provide homeowners with opportunities for low interest loans and housing counseling programs.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of residents participating in property maintenance and rehab programs

Strategy 4: Develop a small business loan fund to support resident business development on Ridge Avenue

- 4.1 Draft a listing of neighborhood-based or resident-owned businesses that seek investment and growth.
- 4.2 Partner with a local bank to develop a loan fund dedicated to supporting resident-owned small businesses on Ridge Avenue.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number of new resident owned businesses in the neighborhood
- Number of existing resident owned businesses redeveloped as part of Choice Neighborhoods

Partners

The following is a listing of partners that community residents identified as key to empowering residents to develop sustainable economic growth while preserving the existing neighborhood fabric:

- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- City Planning Commission
- University of Pennsylvania School of Planning and Urban Design
- Beech Interplex
- City of Philadelphia Office of Housing and Community Development
- Public Health Management Corporation
- Habitat for Humanity
- Citizens Bank
- Santander Bank
- The Enterprise Center

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Goal 2: Preserve the Existing Neighborhood Fabric and Create a Walkable Community

One of the challenges faced by the Task Forces and working groups during the planning process was the lack of multipurpose communal space and open spaces to hold meetings and convene for Walkshops in the neighborhood. Residents noted that all of the indoor meeting spaces (i.e. the Sharswood Apartments Community Center, Haven Peniel Church, Girard College and

the Blumberg Apartments Community Room) were constructed without green principles. In addition, areas that allowed for a natural gathering of residents for fellowship and community did not exist. The strategies and actions items below will assist in creating an environment sustainable for open spaces and green infrastructures for benefit and use of the community.

Strategy 1: Establish Public Spaces that are Accessible to All Residents

- 1.1 Establish a “Town Hall” space for resident gatherings.
- 1.2 Develop communal programming to improve informal connection among residents.
- 1.3 Partner with the Fairmount Park Commission and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Increase the walkability score by 10% via walkscore.com
- Total number of public space available within the defined boundaries of the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood

Strategy 2: Coordinate Community “Clean Sweep” Programs

- 2.1 Develop a Neighborhood Improvement District.
- 2.2 Clean and green lots and communal spaces.
- 2.3. Develop a partnership with the Community Landcare Program.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Percentage of residents report to feel safe within the neighborhood
- Percentage of residents, reporting good physical health
- Increase in neighborhood outdoor activities

Strategy 3: Work with Residents and Community Partners to Maintain Character of the Housing Stock

- 3.1 Collaborate with Habitat for Humanity to expand programming for the maintenance of existing housing in Sharswood.
- 3.2 Work with the planning commission to develop an overlay plan for rezoning the Sharswood neighborhood.
- 3.3 Work with Beech Interplex to provide residents with information about the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agencies’s Keystone Rennovate and Repair Loan program.

- 3.4 Expand the influence of the BSCCA on the character and design of housing development projects.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Percentage of homeowners that utilize home improvement programs
- Percentage of homeowners enrolled in loan repair programs

Partners

The following is a listing of partners that community residents identified as key to empowering residents to develop sustainable economic growth while preserving the existing neighborhood fabric.

- License and Inspections
- Beech Interplex, INC
- Green Philadelphia Environment Network
- City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Plan Philly
- Philadelphia Bike Share
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Habitat for Humanity

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Goal 3: Promote Green Infrastructure Development and Sustainable Open Spaces

The history of Philadelphia is one steeped in production factories, which mirrors the past of Sharswood, as discussed in Chapter 2. Today, the City of Philadelphia is a leader in the development of environmentally friendly buildings and city infrastructure. Much more work needs to be done to foster a truly green city, but, during planning exercises with neighborhoods throughout

the City, the Planning Commission, residents, and city planners agreed on the need to advocate for and incentivize green development. The residents of Sharswood/Blumberg also pushed for environmentally friendly development in the plans for the Lower North District and this Transformation Plan.

Strategy 1: Use Green Infrastructure and LEED-ND Principles in the Neighborhood Development Efforts

- 1.1 Educate residents about sustainable uses of open spaces.
- 1.2 Advocate for application of Green Infrastructure Principles of Street and Storm Water Management Projects.
- 1.3 Encourage property owners to apply green principles to home improvement projects.
- 1.4 Promote LEED-ND for all housing development projects.
- 1.5 Promote environmentally friendly landscaping projects in the community.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of energy efficient non replacement units that meet Energy Star standards for new construction
- Total number of green open spaces and landscaping projects
- Total number of energy efficient units constructed regardless of certification



Figure 37: Green Infrastructure Plan
Image Source: WRT

Strategy 2: Promote Pedestrian-Friendly Neighborhood Design

- 2.1 Discuss with PHA the need for improved lighting, benches, and crosswalks to enhance the pedestrian experience.
- 2.2 Identify opportunities for bike lanes.
- 2.3 Break up the Blumberg Apartments complex by reconnecting 23rd Street.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of new bike lines created and pedestrian friendly amenities



Strategy 3: Mitigate Environmental Hazards During Demolition and Construction

- 3.1 Partner with environmental groups to expand the knowledge of the Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic Association on the environmental impacts of demolition, preservation, and rehabilitation of buildings and infrastructure.
- 3.2 Discuss resident concerns about the environmental impact of demolishing the old Blumberg towers with PHA.

- 3.3 Educate investors in the community about resident interests in limiting the environmental impact of their redevelopment plans.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- (Not Applicable)

Partners

The following is a list of organizational partners that the Sharswood community views as important to the promotion of green infrastructure development/redevelopment:

- The Mayor's Office of Sustainability
- Green Philadelphia Environment Network
- City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- City of Philadelphia Office Licenses and Inspections
- City of Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Goal 4: Establish a Comprehensive Public Safety Program That Reduces Crime

Public safety was at the top of the residents' concerns about the present and future of the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. The neighborhood is located in the 22nd Police District, which has the highest number of incidents of criminal activity in Philadelphia. Blumberg Apartments is well known for high incidents of drug sales, illegal guns, assaults, gangs, and prostitution. The community Needs Assessment Survey showed that residents believe crime is persistent and increasing.

Sharswood's plight with crime and drugs, particularly among youth, led to the City of Philadelphia's development of a Strategic Plan to Prevent Youth Violence in the 22nd Precinct. PHA participated as a partner in the development of the strategies for youth violence prevention. This goal and supporting strategies build on and focus the work of the Strategic Plan for the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. The Neighborhood Health & Safety working groups held a joint session on Public Safety on August 19, 2014, which led to the development of five strategies that are discussed below.

Strategy 1: Use Technology as a Tool for Crime Prevention

- 1.1 Install call boxes and smart lighting systems along neighborhood streets.
- 1.2 Install a text message alert system to warn residents about criminal activity.
- 1.3 Expand the number of closed circuit television cameras in the neighborhood linked to the City's system.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Reduction in total number of assaults

Strategy 2: Increase Cooperation Between PHA and City Police Departments to Reduce Illegal Drug Activity

- 2.1 Increase cooperative police patrols in the neighborhood.
- 2.2 Station police vehicles in the community during the start and end of the school day.
- 2.3 Share data and intelligence on gangs and gang members participating in illegal drug sales.
- 2.4 Conduct cooperative investigations into gang-related drug sales.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of part 1 violent crimes committed in the CN grant neighborhood

Strategy 3: Establish Programs to Engage Residents in Efforts to Improve Public Safety

- 3.1 Establish a Town Watch Program.
- 3.2 Develop a local security escort service for youth and elderly residents.
- 3.3 Identify funding for the purchase of walkie-talkie radios to connect residents with police.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Reduction in the number of assaults and robberies
- Number of students who feel safe traveling to and from school

Strategy 4: Establish a Strong Police Presence on Ridge Avenue

- 4.1 Coordinate with the 22nd District to install bike patrols on Ridge Avenue.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number of residents report feeling safe in their neighborhood

Strategy 5: Provide Counseling and Support to Youth and Adults Re-Entering the Community After Incarceration

- 5.1 Establish a Reentry Program for youth returning from juvenile incarceration.
- 5.2 Coordinate with the City on the creation of a community-based detention diversion program.
- 5.3 Develop after-school programs that provide mentoring and organized recreation during peak times of youth violence (between the hours of 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.).
- 5.4 Create an anti-bullying campaign to raise awareness in the community.
- 5.5 Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) design guidelines in all redevelopment projects within the neighborhood.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total number of participants in the Reentry Program
- Total number of participants in after-school programs
- Total number of students reported feeling safe at school

Partners

The following listing of partners were identified by residents and stakeholders as important points of collaboration for establishing a comprehensive public safety program that reduces crime:

- City of Philadelphia Youth Violence Prevention Collaborative
- Philadelphia Police Department 22nd District
- The PhillyRising Collaborative
- Philadelphia Juvenile Court
- Department of Human Services
- The Boys and Girls Club of Philadelphia
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Philadelphia Housing Authority



Figure 38: Public Safety

Goal 5: Redevelop Commercial and Residential Anchors in the Neighborhood

One of the hallmarks that define a neighborhood is homeownership. The vast swaths of vacant parcels create an opportunity to re-anchor residents who will invest in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. People are further engaged with their neighborhood when they have access to retail amenities that make daily life easier and provide informal opportunities to engage with neighbors. Reviving the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor will expand opportunities for residents to invest in the commercial vibrancy of Sharswood.

In addition, several institutions and buildings anchor the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood, as well as the broader community. Chapter 2 of this Plan discussed the lack of connections between residents and the anchor institutions

in the community, such as Girard College or Project HOME’s Stephen Klein Wellness Center, and the need to repurpose Vaux and Reynolds, the abandoned school district buildings that have become eyesores. Residents have expressed a goal of improving and enhancing the physical connections between them and community landmarks because those buildings and institutions have a strong visual and social presence in the community.

Therefore, the strategies listed highlight a desire to expand resident engagement with Girard College to limit the physical and social barriers between the neighborhood and the College, and to repurpose available school buildings.

Strategy 1: Advocate for the repurposing of the Reynolds and Vaux Buildings to serve and support residents

- 1.1 Work with PHA to repurpose the Reynolds School for senior housing and Adult Day Center services.
- 1.2 Discuss with the School District opportunities to repurpose and revive activity in the Vaux School Building.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number of new neighborhood amenities developed since award of the CN grant

Strategy 2: Revitalize Commercial Activity on the Ridge Avenue Corridor

- 2.1 Work with PHA to bring a grocery store to Ridge Avenue.
- 2.2 Work with the Philadelphia Department of Commerce and PHA to develop retail stores on Ridge Avenue.
- 2.3 Work with the Enterprise Center, local banks, and other partners to develop a small business development fund for Ridge Avenue.
- 2.4 Educate residents on programs and funding opportunities for small businesses to locate on the corridor.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Number of new neighborhood amenities developed since award of the CN grant

Partners

The following is a listing of partners that community residents identified as key to empowering residents to develop sustainable economic growth while preserving the existing neighborhood fabric:

- Current Businesses on the corridor
- Beech Interplex
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community and Civic Association
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- PhillySEEDs, Incorporated
- Santander Bank
- Public Health Management Corporation
- Brown Grocery Stores
- Philadelphia Housing Authority Development Corporation
- The Enterprise Center
- Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development



Figure 39: Residents participating in landscaping
Image Source: WRT

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figure 40: 22nd Street and Ridge Avenue (Existing conditions)
Image Source: WRT



Figure 41: 22nd Street and Ridge (Future condition)
Image Source: WRT

Neighborhood Plan Implementation

Neighborhood Lead

Beech Interplex is a nonprofit organization that is uniquely positioned in the North Philadelphia community and will lead the implementation of the Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood plan. Beech Interplex has leveraged over \$1 billion in community reinvestment funds for the North Philadelphia community and was successful in completing numerous development projects promoting community empowerment, neighborhood revitalization, entrepreneurship, and advocating for the need of housing rehabilitation and homeownership.

Stakeholders

The following is a list of organizational partners that the Sharswood community views as important to the implementation of the Neighborhood development and redevelopment plan:

- The Mayor's Office of Sustainability
- Green Philadelphia Environmental Network
- City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation
- Pennsylvania Horticultural Society
- Plan Philly
- Philadelphia Housing Authority
- Habitat for Humanity
- Brewerytown-Sharswood Community Civic Association (BSCCA)

Budget and Financing

The total budget for all Neighborhood Improvements is approximately \$61 million. It is anticipated that funding will be provided through federal, state and local agencies. Further budget details are included in the Chapter 6.

Chapter 5: Housing Plan

“The Sharswood/Blumberg Neighborhood is a peaceful, loving, family-oriented residential community where all residents can take pride in its unique history, cleanliness, attractive housing, great schools, and thriving commercial corridor filled with local businesses.”

—Housing Plan Vision

Major challenges confronting the Sharswood/Blumberg community include large swaths of vacant and underutilized land, low rates of homeownership, a lack of private investment and the blighting influence of the existing Blumberg public housing development, especially the family high-rise towers. Working in tandem with the Neighborhood Plan and People Plan components, the Housing Plan as developed through the community planning process is designed to transform the 3 of quality, safe, and accessible housing for both existing and new residents and paving the way for future private investments.

With a focus on rebuilding, the Housing Plan outlines a process to convert the Blumberg development and other privately

and publicly-owned distressed residential areas and vacant land within Sharswood into an energy-efficient, mixed-income community with a range of building and unit types that expand housing choices for current and future residents, and build off of the distinct character of the neighborhood. Developed through working group meetings with community leaders, residents, and stakeholders, this plan identifies a set of outcomes that the underlying goals and strategies aim to achieve.

The Housing Plan uses a phased approach to focus on new housing development in areas with commercial investments, convenient transportation access, open space, and enhanced neighborhood amenities. This strategy responds to a market study, and is consistent with the overall neighborhood design that will revive the sense of place and commercial activity along the neighborhood’s historic core of Ridge Avenue. Within this framework, opportunities for mixed-income housing are created, with market rate units, as well as maintaining affordability through PHA replacement units within the neighborhood.

Housing Plan Principles

In developing the Housing Plan, a series of planning principles emerged through dialogue with community residents and stakeholders including the following:

- The Housing Plan should provide for a mix of rental and homeownership housing options, energy efficient and sustainable design, and a diversity of incomes and family types.
- Housing development should be accomplished by a diverse group of qualified public, private and non-profit entities with an emphasis on facilitating the involvement of community-based, minority-owned and other groups that are representative of the current community.
- Existing neighborhood residents need to be directly involved in the design and implementation of future housing development plans.
- Housing development planning should be based on quantitative and qualitative input from housing market studies of the neighborhood and surrounding areas.
- Current conditions at the Blumberg public housing site pose the primary obstacle to neighborhood transformation and, therefore, revitalization of the site should be the top priority for the Housing Plan.
- There should be one-for-one replacement of any units that are demolished at the Blumberg public housing site, preferably at locations within the Sharswood-Blumberg target neighborhood.
- Temporary relocation should be managed in a manner that minimizes the need for multiple moves, ensures that residents have access to needed services during and after the relocation periods, and provides compensation for reasonable moving and related costs.

These planning principles underlay all of the Housing Plan goals and strategies described below. Other key considerations noted during the planning process and as discussed below relate to the following identified priorities:

- Develop housing designed to respond to a range of family needs
- Utilize infill housing development activity in a way that helps to catalyze additional investment
- Incorporate design that blends with and enhances the existing neighborhood
- Create a marketing strategy for the neighborhood
- Develop a housing program that responds to market demand
- Create homeownership opportunities



Figure 42: Illustrative Master Plan
Image Source: WRT



Sharswood / Blumberg Revitalization
The Philadelphia Housing Authority
June 2015

Figure 43: Opportunities for Replacement and Other New Housing
Image Source: PHA

Developing Housing Designed for a Range of Family Needs

The new public housing proposed under the Transformation Plan housing program is designed to meet the demands of a range of household types, and maintain a level of quality that is consistent with new market-rate units. New townhomes will be designed with various unit configurations that include ground floor visitable (to include features such as being wheelchair accessible) units, stacked 2 and 3 bedroom units, and a roof design with structural capacity to implement PV panels on the roof. Building heights will be designed to maintain a consistent roof-line along blocks with existing occupied homes.

The sizes and configurations of row-homes for sale will vary based on the existing lot sizes and configurations and will be designed to relate to the existing context of two to three story brick row homes in the neighborhood. Walkup units will be limited to three stories, and focus will be on maintaining the scale and urban fabric of the neighborhood, with frontage along larger through-streets. These designs and

the overall housing strategy are consistent with the City of Philadelphia's efforts to affirmatively further fair housing and aim to alleviate the identified impediments to fair housing choice, including an inadequate number of accessible and affordable housing units for the disabled, deteriorating affordable homeownership housing, and an inadequate amount of affordable rental housing.

Utilizing a Strategy to Provide Infill Housing That Catalyzes Investment

Infill housing (generally, the use of land within a built-up area for further construction, such as filling in a row home where the prior structure has been demolished) in the Sharswood neighborhood must serve the need to maintain affordability, but also catalyze future private investments. The design and phased construction of infill housing will leverage the neighborhood plan investments, and establish a housing market as part of the Keystone Opportunity Zone develop-

ment along Ridge Avenue. This project, anchored with a new supermarket and PHA Public Safety headquarters as discussed in the Neighborhood Plan, will support both new affordable housing units, as well as market-rate rental and home ownership units. As the market grows from this concentrated investment, additional phases of infill housing projects will proceed along with the redevelopment of the Blumberg site, attracting private investment and integrating higher-income residents as the market grows.

Incorporating Design That Blends Into and Enhances the Existing Neighborhood

One primary design flaw of the current Blumberg Apartment site is its imposing and conspicuous form. The incongruous high-rise towers create an uncomfortable design conflict, and serve as a physical reinforcement of an unhealthy “us and them” mentality regarding public housing. New housing within the plan is designed to incorporate the architectural scale and style of the historic neighborhood, while also demonstrating a fresh and renewed investment in the area. With the goal of developing all of the proposed housing to be indistinguishable—between the replacement housing, home ownership, market-rate and affordable units—the design focuses on maintaining a scale and density that is consistent with the existing residential neighborhood.

It is important that the construction of housing as part of this plan not only blend into the existing neighborhood, but also reflect a level of design and quality of material that is consistent with current construction in Philadelphia. As transformation continues beyond the scope of this Plan and additional residential development occurs, these homes will exist within the context of the current neighborhood historic structures, and also its new properties.

Creating a Marketing Strategy to Attract Investment

The 1,203 new housing units, 100,000 square feet of new office, and nearly 500,000 square feet of new commercial space, represent a total investment of \$529,000,000 in the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood. These resources, which are primarily public dollars, must be leveraged with private investments in order to have a meaningful and lasting impact that actually transforms the community from its current condition into a neighborhood of choice. Attracting this investment will require a marketing strategy that complements the housing program, and rebrands the neighborhood from one of disinvestment into one of opportunity for economic growth.

The theme of “Putting Unity back in Community” has remained relevant through the planning process, reflecting the current

residents’ efforts to support neighborhood cohesion and their unified support for quality redevelopment. The marketing strategy for private sector investments needs to convey the positive sense of community that defines the neighborhood, flip the perception of blight to one of opportunity and be at a level consistent with the neighboring Brewerytown, Francisville, and Fairmount communities, which have benefited from private residential investment.

Develop a Housing Program That Responds to Market Demand

According to the 2015 Market Study completed by Real Estate Strategies, strong market support exists for the 57 units proposed in Phase 1 and the renovations to the existing 96-unit building are likely to improve occupancy. Past this initial phase, additional demand exists for senior housing, primarily for low income residents with rents at 30% of income. As evidenced by fully occupied housing complexes charging 30% of income, as well as PHA's average wait time of over 8 years at most properties, there is ample market demand for affordable rental housing.

The market rate for the unsubsidized rental units and new construction homeownership proposed within the neighborhood will rely on building a market at an area with significant investments, and grow from there. Building this market will rely heavily on successful implementation of the Neighborhood Plan, including new amenities and open spaces, vacant lot stabilization, and the development of the mixed-use PHA headquarters along Ridge Avenue. Establishing this critical mass within the neighborhood will build the market in this neighborhood and allow future redevelopment phases to succeed.

Creating Homeownership Opportunities

Expanded opportunity for home ownership in the neighborhood was expressed as a priority throughout the Housing Task Force working group meetings. Current residents supported the construction of new for-sale homes in the area, and according to the Needs Assessment, 43% of residents expressed an interest in purchasing a home within the neighborhood. Increasing the proportion of home owners will help the neighborhood maintain a level of stability that many areas currently lack. The housing program includes 420 new homeownership units, including 100 market rate homes. These units are proposed for the later phases of the development program, as the market is established, and new demand for housing grows. According to the market study, new housing within the neighborhood holds the potential to be competitive within a mixed-income setting, pricing should be competitive in relation to the Art Museum area and Northern Liberties, and the homes should attract families with members who work in Center City.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Goals and Strategies of the Housing Plan

Overall, the Housing Plan envisions a development period of at least 8 years of 1107 new construction rental and homeownership units and the rehabilitation of an additional 96 rental units. In addition, the community's goal is for substantial additional housing investments to be made in the area as the neighborhood transformation proceeds, including the improvements to commercial corridors, neighborhood infrastructure and public

safety discussed above. The tables below are a summary of the Housing Plan activity. Given the many variables at play in a multiyear effort of this scale, the table presents a series of goals for unit numbers and types that can be expected to evolve over time in response to changing market conditions and other opportunities:

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5	Phase 6	Phase 7	Phase 8	Phase 9	Phase 10	Total Count
Total - All Units - By Phase	57	96	100	158	177	223	100	70	70	152	1,203
Projected Cost	\$22,800,000	\$39,360,000	\$33,600,000	\$59,340,000	\$85,360,000	\$110,700,000	\$46,000,000	\$32,900,000	\$33,600,000	\$74,480,000	\$529,099,257

Figure 44: Housing Development Program Unit and Affordability Mix

The income tiers identified for each component of development will serve households in need of affordable rental and home ownership housing, and provide opportunities to expand the existing market into more workforce and market-rate housing at the higher end of the income mix as shown below on Figure 45.

Description	Number of Units	AMI Range	Source	Projection
Phase I	57 New Rental Units	20% to 30%	RAD Units	\$21,036,383
Blumberg Senior	96 Existing Rental Units w/ Building Rehab	20% to 30%	4% LIHTC	\$61,050,000
			9% LIHTC	\$77,172,000
Phase II & Later	630 Rental Units (Approximate)		PHA - RHF/DDTF	\$49,845,874
	• 530 Affordable	50% to 80%	PHA - MTW Funds	\$89,980,000
	• 100 Market Rate	80% to 120%	PHA - CFFP	\$33,015,000
Phase II & Later	420 Homeownership (Approximate)	50% to 120%	City (HOME/CDBG)	\$9,400,000
	• 320 Affordable		Private/Other Financing	\$150,080,000
	• 100 Market Rate*		PHA 29% Construction Subsidy	\$37,520,000
	1,203 Total New Units		TOTAL FUNDS - ALL SOURCES	\$529,099,257
	(65% rental/35% homeownership)		TOTAL FUNDS - PHA	\$210,360,874

Figure 45: Housing Development Program Unit and Affordability Mix
*Market rate is defined as unrestricted housing

Figure 45-1

Goal 1: Transform the Existing Blumberg Public Housing Site Through Demolition of Family Housing Units, Rehabilitation of the Senior Tower, Reconfiguration of Street Layouts and Redevelopment of New Lower-Density, Energy Efficient Units

As currently configured, the Blumberg Apartments present the single most significant obstacle to revitalization of the broader Sharswood neighborhood. The Housing Plan envisions a complete transformation of the site to create a lower density, higher quality mix of rental and homeownership units occupying a site that has been reconfigured to promote walkability and enhance transportation access.

Strategy 1: Demolish Blumberg Apartments Low Rise and Family High Rise Structures

- 1.1 Two family high-rise towers and all low-rise towers will be demolished to make way for redevelopment.
- 1.2 Families occupying any units slated for demolition will be relocated in advance, and will receive case management assistance and relocation support pursuant to PHA's Relocation Plan.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Total distressed units demolished
- Total households successfully relocated and provided with ongoing relocation support services

Strategy 2: Reconfigure Street Grid to Support Neighborhood Connections and Defensible Site Design

- 2.1 Following demolition, the development of new on-site housing has been designed to provide the necessary right-of-way through the center of the site to allow North 23rd Street to continue and connect Oxford Street with Jefferson Street.
- 2.2 The design also provides additional housing frontage along Bucknell Way, adding another north-south through connection. A new East-West connection has been designed with housing fronting along an extended Bolton Street, with access between 22nd and 23rd Streets.

- 2.3 As part of the re-introduction of streets into the network, PHA has coordinated with the Philadelphia Streets Department and SEPTA to incorporate the right-of-way, and identify opportunities for enhancing transit access through the neighborhood.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- Reconfiguration of street network completed

Strategy 3: Develop 140 Replacement Rental Housing Units On-Site

- 3.1 The initial phase shown on Figure 39 will consist of 57 rental units financed with 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) awarded in 2014, PHA funding and a first mortgage from Wells Fargo. The development will be PHA's first Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) site, resulting from the conversion of demolished public housing unit Annual Contributions Contract authority to project-based assistance. Construction is projected to begin in the summer of 2015.
- 3.2 A planned second phase will consist of 83 replacement rental units projected to begin construction in 2017. This phase will also involve project-based assistance with financing from LIHTC, PHA MTW funds and a first mortgage.

- 3.3 Units will be designed according to the energy efficiency, sustainability and accessibility standards detailed below.
- 3.4 All RAD regulations pertinent to resident rights, responsibilities and protections will apply.
- 3.5 PHA plans to utilize a master developer approach in order to provide expanded opportunities for involvement by minority-owned businesses and other small, locally owned entities.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- 140 units of energy efficient, sustainable and accessible replacement housing developed

Strategy 4: Preserve 96 Units Through Rehabilitation of Existing Blumberg Senior Tower

- 4.1 In the spring of 2016, rehabilitation of the existing 96 unit senior building is slated to commence. The planned construction includes installation of air conditioning, roof replacement, system upgrades, new entry and minor upgrades to dwelling units. See Figure on the next page.
- 4.2 This phase will also involve conversion to project-based assistance under the RAD program with financing from LIHTC, PHA MTW funds and a first mortgage.

- 4.3 Seniors will be relocated in advance of the construction activity, and will receive case management assistance and relocation support pursuant to PHA's Relocation Plan.
- 4.4 All RAD regulations pertinent to resident rights, responsibilities and protections will apply.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- 96 rental units preserved through rehabilitation

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Goal 2: Assemble Publicly and Privately Owned Parcels to Streamline Future Housing and Commercial Development Activity

As shown in Figure 6, the Sharswood neighborhood has some of the highest concentrations of vacant land in the City of Philadelphia. Combined with the negative impacts of the distressed Blumberg public housing development, the proliferation of these abandoned properties has been causing neighborhood blight and safety issues for decades and poses a significant obstacle to future revitalization. The large scale revitalization of the neighborhood housing market that is envisioned will require streamlining the vacant property acquisition process to pave the way for future homeownership and rental development efforts by private, public and non-profit entities including development of additional replacement housing units by PHA.

Strategy 1: Acquire 1,300 Public and Private Properties Under Common Ownership Structure

- 1.1 As part of the transformation planning process, PHA coordinated with the Neighborhood and Housing Task Force working groups and the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority (PRA) to identify properties within the planning area for acquisition.
 - 1.2 Starting in 2014, a total of 1,300 targeted properties (approximately 500 in public ownership and 800 in private ownership) were identified. Through an acquisition process including condemnation. The properties will be organized under common ownership by PHA and allow for larger consolidated parcels to be structured in a way that facilitates future redevelopment efforts for housing, mixed-use and neighborhood amenities. Working through PRA, the acquisition process is underway with an anticipated completion date of fall 2015.
 - 1.3 With substantial swaths of vacant and underutilized properties under consolidated ownership, PHA will be able to move forward with implementation of the proposed redevelopment in stages. The staged implementation allows for working with residents and partner organizations to manage the remaining undeveloped properties until future phases begin. These properties may serve as temporary or permanent open spaces, community gardens, dog parks, play areas, or provide other opportunities for residents to enjoy maintained communal space.
- Performance Indicators and Metrics
- Total number of parcels assembled under PHA ownership

Strategy 2: Implement Request for Development Proposals Processes for Assembled Parcels

- 2.1 A conceptual approach to organizing the assembled parcels into a series of buildable sites which includes both planned PHA replacement infill housing sites and other sites that will be available for development by qualified development entities, which may include local community development organizations and/or other non-profits.
 - 2.2 Over an approximate 8+ year period, PHA will work with the City, community residents and other stakeholders to establish and implement a phased approach to identifying qualified development partners that share the community's vision for a mix of affordable, energy efficient and sustainable rental and homeownership units.
 - 2.3 Intensive efforts will be undertaken to identify financial resources and other incentives from public and other sources to help spur developer interest.
 - 2.4 Request for Development Proposals evaluation criteria will incorporate community priorities related to design, energy-efficiency and sustainability, property management standards and amenities.
 - 2.5 It is expected that the Request for Development Proposals, and the type of resources and incentives needed to attract qualified developers, will evolve over time in response to improving market conditions within the neighborhood.
- Performance Indicators and Metrics
- Request for Development Proposals issued



Figure 46-1 & 46-2: Proposed Layouts

Goal 3: Revitalize the Neighborhood and Catalyze Additional Private Investment Through Development of Replacement Units and Other Rental Housing Using an Infill Strategy

The consolidation of vacant and underutilized parcels throughout the neighborhood will pave the way for a coordinated development strategy designed to generate new energy efficient and sustainable rental and homeownership units at strategic locations throughout the Sharswood-Blumberg area. Planned activity includes development of an additional 229 replacement housing units by PHA, consistent with the goal of one-for-one replacement for the units demolished at the Blumberg site. Developer proposals will be sought for an estimated 318 additional mixed income rental units, for a total infill goal of 547 new rental units. The infill strategy is supported by the housing market analysis conducted during the planning process. As this activity proceeds, there is an expectation that current property owners will begin to reinvest in their properties as the market potential of the neighborhood emerges.

Strategy 1: Develop 229 Replacement Rental Housing Units Off-Site Using an Infill Strategy Implemented by PHA

- 1.1 The development of 229 units is projected to involve a three-phase approach at multiple locations within the neighborhood. The initial off-site replacement housing phase is projected to begin in the 2017-2018 time period, with future phase taking places through 2021-2022. The size and location of each replacement phase will be determined based on further planning and input from the community.
 - 1.2 The units will be subsidized with project-based assistance with financing from LIHTC, PHA MTW funds and a first mortgage.
 - 1.3 Units will be designed according to the energy efficiency, sustainability and accessibility standards detailed below.
 - 1.4 PHA plans to utilize a master developer approach in order to provide expanded opportunities for involvement by minority-owned businesses and other small, locally owned entities.
- Performance Indicators and Metrics
- 229 units of energy efficient, sustainable and accessible replacement housing developed off-site

Strategy 2: Develop 273 Mixed Income Rental Housing Units Off-Site Using an Infill Strategy Involving Qualified Developers

- 2.1 The plan envisions that the units will be constructed at three different locations within the neighborhood over an 8+ year period; however, the specific phasing and sizing approach of each site may vary depending on developer interest, real estate economics and other factors.
 - 2.2 Construction of an initial 121 units is planned to begin in 2016-2017. Of the total units, 100 will be funded through LIHTC and other sources, with a planned 21 units with no income restrictions.
 - 2.3 An additional 144 units will include 104 funded through LIHTC and other sources, and a planned 40 units with no income restrictions.
 - 2.4 The final phase will involve 55 mixed income units targeted for occupancy by households earning between 50-120% of Area Median Income.
- Performance Indicators and Metrics
- 273 units of energy efficient, sustainable and accessible mixed income rental housing developed off-site

Goal 4: Create Affordable Homeownership Opportunities

As previously noted, planning process participants felt strongly that the future health and vitality of the Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood rely on strengthening the homeownership market and increasing the overall number and relative percentages of homeowners within the area. This is consistent with the norms for other revitalizing neighborhoods within Philadelphia, where revitalization is heavily driven by households who buy into the neighborhood, making a long-term investment and commitment to its future. There is a large and growing demand for workforce housing near to Center City. The consolidation of vacant and underutilized parcels throughout the neighborhood will pave the way for development of both new rental and homeownership opportunities. Planned activity includes development of 68 homeownership units on the revitalized Blumberg site, to be undertaken by PHA, and an additional 352 mixed income homeownership units at infill locations throughout the neighborhood, to be undertaken by other qualified development entities.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Strategy 1: Develop 68 Affordable Homeownership Units On-Site

- 1.1 Development of the 68 affordable homeownership units by PHA is slated to begin in 2017, concurrently with the second phase development of 83 rental units described in Strategy 3.
- 1.2 Affordable homes will be marketed to families with incomes up to 80% of Area Median Income.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- 68 homeownership new construction units developed

Strategy 2: Develop 352 Mixed Income Homeownership Units Off-Site Using an Infill Strategy Involving Qualified Developers

- 2.1 The plan envisions that the units will be constructed at two different locations within the neighborhood over an 8+ year period; however, the specific phasing and sizing approach of each site may vary depending on developer interest, real estate economics and other factors.
- 2.2 Construction of an initial 203 units is planned to begin in 2018-2019. Of the total units, 163 will be targeted for households earning up to 80% of Area Median Income, with a planned 40 homes with no income restrictions.

- 2.3 An additional 149 units will include 89 units targeted for households earning up to 80% of Area Median Income, and 60 homes with no income restrictions.

Performance Indicators and Metrics

- 352 units of energy efficient, sustainable and accessible mixed income homeownership developed off-site



Figure 47: Proposed Infill Housing

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figure 48: Existing Blumberg Senior Tower First Floor Plan
Image Source: PHA

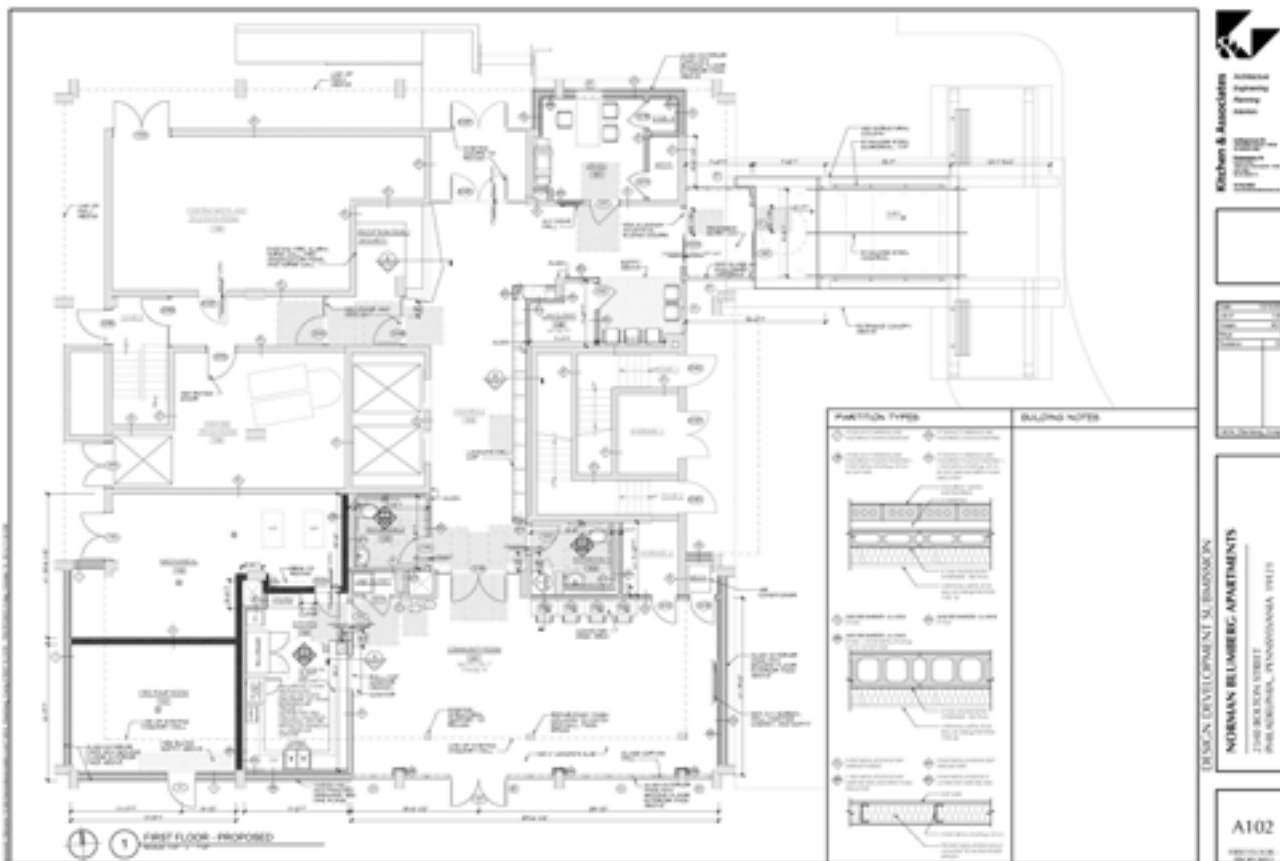


Figure 49: Proposed Blumberg Senior Tower First Floor Plan
Image Source: PHA

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figure 50: Blumberg Apartments Site Plan
Image Source: PHA

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan



Figure 51: Blumberg Phase I
Image Source: KSK



Figure 52: Blumberg Phase I
Image Source: KSK

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Resident Relocation

The Housing Plan calls for the demolition of 414 of the 510 total units at Norman Blumberg Apartments. The units to be demolished will be the distressed family high-rise and low-rise buildings, while the remaining senior tower consisting of 96-units will be rehabilitated and converted to project-based assistance under the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program.

PHA has committed to one-for-one replacement of all public housing units that will be demolished or disposed of. The Housing Plan narrative provides details on the phasing and unit counts for replacement units to be developed at both on and off-site Sharswood neighborhood locations. Relocation Coordinators will work closely with impacted families to ensure that they fully understand their replacement housing options, and that they have the tools and resources needed to make informed choices.

PHA will also track residents and keep them informed of construction progress and the availability of replacement housing throughout the temporary relocation period. Relocation Coordinators will work to ensure that re-occupancy of replacement units proceeds smoothly and with a minimum level of disruption to the returning families.

Services

Blumberg Apartments resident families who live in units slated for demolition under the Housing Plan will be provided with comprehensive and coordinated relocation services by PHA's Relocation Department. Counseling and other support services will be offered both during the temporary relocation and reoccupancy periods to help with the moving process and ensure a minimum level of disruption to families. Residents will be provided with all notices and benefits as required under the relevant regulation and/or statute including payment for moving and associated costs.

Record Keeping

PHA has an extensive track record of providing effective and resident-sensitive relocation services, and this experience will be used to help ensure a successful effort at Blumberg Apartments. Relocation Coordinators will meet with families well in advance of the move to complete a family assessment, explain relocation benefits, and to discuss temporary and permanent relocation options and other relevant issues. They will be available to provide assistance and support to residents throughout the relocation process, communicating relevant information on reoccupancy schedules and the like on a regular basis.

Alternate Housing

PHA will assist in identifying units that meet each family's needs including accessibility needs as appropriate. Options that

will be available and offered to residents include temporary relocation to another PHA public housing unit until replacement units are ready; permanent relocation to another PHA public housing unit; and, temporary or permanent relocation to a private market unit using a Housing Choice Voucher where such vouchers are funded by HUD. Residents who use vouchers will be provided with a detailed briefing on key aspects of how the voucher program works, including counseling on identifying housing units in high opportunity areas, how voucher portability works, and fair housing laws and regulations.

Housing Implementation Plan

Housing Lead

The Philadelphia Housing Authority's Department of Development and Capital planning will lead the implementation of the Sharswood/Blumberg Housing plan. PHA in collaboration with Sharswood and PHA residents, constituents of the community, and stakeholders of the boarder community has formulated a thoughtful and achievable plan to implement the Sharswood/Blumberg Housing Transformation Plan.

Developer Team

The housing component of Sharswood/Blumberg transformation plan will be carried out by a joint venture comprised of the local non-profits with extensive housing development experience

The following is a list of organizational partners that the Sharswood community views as important to the implementation of the Housing development and redevelopment plan:

Partners

- City of Philadelphia Department of Commerce
- Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority
- Citizens Planning Institute
- Community Ventures
- Office of Housing and Community Development
- Brewertown-Sharswood Civic Association
- Philadelphia Housing Authority

Budget and Financing

The mixed-use development envisioned in Sharswood/Blumberg neighborhood transformation plan is projected to cost over \$581 million. It is anticipated that funding will be provided through federal, state and local agencies. Further budget details are included in the Chapter 6.

Chapter 6: Implementation of The Plan

The Housing, Neighborhood and People components of the Transformation Plan identify an overall vision for change, and include a series of ambitious goals and strategies that are designed to spur revitalization of the entire Sharswood/Blumberg community. The tough, long-term work of implementing the Plan has already begun, with much more to be accomplished in the coming months to secure additional resources, build and strengthen key partnerships, and continue to continuously engage the community. As this work progresses, the key stakeholders all recognize that changes to the Plan will inevitably occur during the implementation phase in response to changing conditions, funding and other opportunities. As such, the Plan serves a framework that can be expected to evolve over time.

Governance Structure

The Philadelphia Housing Authority will continue to serve in a leadership role for the Transformation Plan during the implementation phase, supported by a broad network of stakeholders including public housing and other community residents, the Sharswood Civic Association, YAP and other local non-profits, Beech Interplex, business owners, City departments including the Police and School District, local elected officials and others.

As owner of the Norman Blumberg Apartments, PHA is the largest property owner in the neighborhood and has organized the neighborhood-wide Choice Neighborhoods Planning grant process that led to development of the Transformation Plan. During the initial phases, PHA is also expected to be a primary change catalyst, providing and/or facilitating a large portion of the financial and staff resources needed to spur revitalization of the Blumberg public housing site, the Ridge Avenue Commercial Corridor and other parts of the neighborhood through its replacement housing and office development activities as defined in the Housing and Neighborhood Plans.

The planning process has also identified three Lead Partner entities that will help guide and direct the major components of the Plan:

- **Beech Interplex will serve as the Neighborhood Lead.** It will work closely with the community, the City and PHA to help make the goals and strategies of the Neighborhood Plan a reality. This will involve efforts to secure additional funding, build new partnerships, focus on public safety improvements, help strengthen the capacity and role of the Sharswood Civic Association and other initiatives.
- **PHA will serve as the Housing Lead.** Working closely with the other Lead partners, residents and all major stakeholders, PHA will focus its efforts on securing the resources needed to achieve full implementation of the Housing Plan at both Blumberg on-site locations and at infill sites throughout the neighborhood. In this role, PHA will also help organize efforts to recruit qualified private and/or non-profit developers to build additional affordable and market rate housing on vacant and

underutilized sites that have been assembled by PHA.

- **YAP will serve as the People Lead, providing leadership and direction to help bring the community's vision of a healthy and vibrant community with a full range of supportive services and high quality education to life.** Working closely with PHA, Beech Interplex and the community, YAP will bring its extensive experience to bear in identifying resources, expanding partnerships and other efforts to implement the People Plan.

Early on during the implementation phase, a memorandum of understanding will be developed that defines the roles, responsibilities and commitments of the three Lead Partners.

Resident and Community Participation

PHA and all the Lead Partners are committed to involving public housing residents along with other community residents and stakeholders in an ongoing, meaningful way throughout implementation. At a minimum, this translates as a commitment to mutual respect, continuous communication with the community and openness and transparency regarding project plans, strategies and resources.

Effective communications are key to this effort. The existing SharswoodBlumberg.com website will continue to be operated and updated regularly, regular open meetings will be conducted, and targeted outreach and other communications will be undertaken as needed to ensure that impacted residents and business owners have an opportunity to share their views and that they are kept fully informed of plans and initiatives.

Data Collection, Tracking and Evaluation

Recognizing the need to track, monitor and evaluate Transformation Plan initiatives, the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy has entered into an agreement with PHA to establish project baselines and provide continuous evaluation throughout the project implementation period. Penn researchers will establish a statistical baseline for the targeted area across multiple criteria including: social, economic, health, employment, educational, behavioral, and safety. They will collect data annually on the community and project initiatives as the neighborhood redevelopment proceeds, which will be used to help refine and improve program strategies. A final report will be issued that documents qualitative and quantitative changes to the neighborhood and its residents as a result of the Transformation Plan effort.

Resources and Leveraging

Efforts are proceeding to secure the resources necessary to fully implement the Transformation Plan. The completion of the Plan itself is an important component of the fundraising effort in that there now exists a comprehensive document which

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

can be shared with potential funders that describes the goals, strategies and outcomes proposed for the neighborhood.

In working to secure new resources, PHA has committed its own MTW Block Grant funds to the Housing Plan, and has already achieved initial success in leveraging funding through the award of 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) for Phase 1 of the on-site Blumberg redevelopment effort. PHA's \$6.5 million in Replacement Housing Factor funds will leverage an estimated \$12 million in private investor equity through the LIHTC award. PHA has also committed its own funds to acquire vacant underutilized parcels in the neighborhood for future development, to support rehabilitation of the Senior Tower, and to secure leveraged funding for all future replacement housing phases.

Efforts to secure new funding will be able to build off these substantial commitments as well as the accomplishments already achieved through early start Transformation Plan activities.

Early Start Accomplishments

As the planning process proceeded over the past eighteen months, the key players were working hard and with a sense of urgency to respond to the enormous level of distress within the community. As a result, the Transformation Plan is already much more than a "vision" in that there have been a number of important activities that have started and begun to yield measurable results. Some of these accomplishments are:

- For the Housing Plan, PHA is preparing to close in July 2015 on Phase 1 of the Blumberg public housing on-site redevelopment effort. Phase 1 involves 57-units of energy efficient, sustainable housing to be built to LEED standards. As noted above, PHA has secured 9% LIHTC for this project, and is currently working with HUD on approvals required for conversion to project-based assistance under the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) program.
- PHA has also developed plans for rehabilitation of the 96-unit Senior Tower at Blumberg, which is the only existing structure that will remain on-site, and is working with HUD to secure RAD conversion approvals. The goal is to complete the rehab by 2017.
- Relocation planning for the entire Blumberg site is proceeding in anticipation of HUD approval of PHA's application for demolition/disposition approval. Current plans call for relocation during the summer of 2015 and a demolition of the Towers in the fall.
- The pending demolition of Blumberg is viewed as one of the most important milestones for the Transformation Plan initiative in that it will remove the single most important blighting factor in the neighborhood, providing a sign of hope and renewal to both public housing and community residents. Of equal importance, as with PHA redevelopment efforts at other distressed public housing sites, the demolition and follow up revitalization of Blumberg is expected to catalyze major new investments in the neighborhood, further the goals of creating a diverse mixed income community.

- The process of consolidating vacant and underutilized land to pave the way for new mixed income rental and homeownership housing has already begun. Working in collaboration with the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, the condemnation process is underway, with approximately 1300 property owners having received notifications. Acquisition negotiations have also begun with a goal of consolidating these properties by October 2015.
- Under the People Strategy, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), has developed a pilot project to help strengthen the social service delivery system in the neighborhood. YAP began its engagement by developing a resources manual that was distributed to residents at public meetings, posted online at SharswoodBlumberg.com, and made available to residents during one-on-one counseling sessions.
- YAP is now testing a holistic family support services model involving a small number of neighborhood families that volunteered to participate. These families work with YAP to develop a family vision, receive intensive support to aid the families connection to continuing education, job training or placement, substance abuse counseling, and are given other tools and resources to improve family communication.
- Beech Interplex, the Neighborhood Lead, is administering a pilot project to encourage and provide support to existing homeowners so that they will remain in Sharswood during the upcoming redevelopment years. Resident homeowners who choose to remain in the community will be given assistance in applying for low interest loans to make capital improvements to their homes.
- PHA has developed a formal partnership with Habitat for Humanity to provide an opportunity for very low income homeowners to repair and make façade improvements to their homes.

The above provides only a partial list of early start accomplishments to date. There are numerous other activities that are in process including efforts to attract a national supermarket chain to Ridge Avenue; the potential relocation to Ridge Avenue of a major local non-profit which if it occurs will move hundreds of jobs into the neighborhood; and, efforts to re-open a neighborhood elementary school and develop an Innovation Campus.

Land Use Approvals

The Housing Plan envisions the creation of new mixed income rental and homeownership housing on both the site of the existing Blumberg Apartments and at strategic locations throughout the Sharswood neighborhood. PHA currently owns and has site control over the Blumberg site. For off-site parcels, as noted, a process is currently underway to consolidate ownership of hundreds of vacant and underutilized parcels as a precursor to future development. The project has the active support of the City of Philadelphia. All required land use approvals are expected to be in place prior to the start of construction activities.

Sharswood/Blumberg Choice Neighborhoods Transformation Plan

Sharswood-Blumberg Transformation Plan Implementation Budget

The following chart provides an initial estimate of the costs associated with implementing the People, Neighborhood and Housing initiatives described in the Sherwood-Blumberg Transformation Plan. All estimates are preliminary and subject to changes based upon further refinement of the Plan strategies. Further detail on Housing plan estimates is included in the Housing Plan chapter.

HOUSING	
Site Acquisition (Off-site parcels)	\$44,000,000
Demolition	\$7,000,000
Residential Construction (All phases)	\$530,000,000
Sub-Total	\$581,000,000
NEIGHBORHOOD	
Small Business Assistance	\$500,000
Neighborhood Capacity Building	\$250,000
Neighborhood Recreation and Greening	\$2,000,000
Public Safety Initiatives	\$500,000
Ridge Avenue Commercial Redevelopment	\$55,000,000
Development of a new education facility	\$24,000,000
Sub-Total	\$82,250,000
PEOPLE	
Relocation	\$1,500,000
Case Management	\$875,000
Workforce Development & Training	\$5,000,000
Educational Initiatives	\$3,000,000
Health and Wellness Initiatives	\$2,000,000
Sub-Total	\$12,375,000
TOTAL	\$675,625,000