

The Tyler Street Transformative Development Initiative Pittsfield, Massachusetts



2017



List of Acronyms

BCF: Berkshire Children and Families
BCRHA: Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority
BCC: Berkshire Community College
BHDC: Berkshire Housing Development Corporation
BIC: Berkshire Innovation Center
BMC: Berkshire Medical Center
BRPC: Berkshire Regional Planning Commission
BRTA: Berkshire Regional Transit Authority
DCD: Department of Community Development
ESBCI: Elder Services of Berkshire County Inc
GIS: Geographic Information System
MSI: Morningside Initiative
OLLI: Osher Lifelong Learning Institute
PEDA: Pittsfield Economic Development Authority
PERC: Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation
PPD: Pittsfield Police Department
TDI: Transformative Development Initiative
TSBG: Tyler Street Business Group
WSBP: William Stanley Business Park

Acknowledgements



City of Pittsfield:
Linda Tyer, Mayor
Janis Akerstrom, Director of Community Development
Cornelius J Hoss, AICP, LEED, City Planner



Tyler Street Business Group Inc:
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Report Objective

This report presents a coordinated program of investments and projects for the Tyler Street District in the City of Pittsfield, Massachusetts. Over the last year this program emerged from: public input including stakeholder interviews; and the analysis of population trends, regional economic conditions and the public policy climate. This Tyler Street program describes a coordinated approach to: improve the quality of life for residents, expand the local economy and attract new investments to the neighborhood. Implementing the report strategies have the potential to transform the Tyler Street TDI into a vibrant and contributing economic player within Pittsfield and the surrounding region.





“MassDevelopment, the state’s economic development and finance agency, works with businesses, nonprofits, financial institutions, and communities to stimulate economic growth across the Commonwealth. Through these collaborations we help create jobs, increase the number of housing units, revitalize urban environments, and address factors limiting economic growth including transportation, energy, and infrastructure deficiencies.” MassDevelopment created the Gateway Cities program in 2008 to help midsized cities transition from a manufacturing based economy to a knowledge and service based economy. Pittsfield is one of the ten original Gateway Cities designated to receive enhanced technical and financial support from MassDevelopment as part of the TDI program.

“The vision for Gateway Cities is that they actively participate in, and contribute to, the Commonwealth’s overall economic success by taking advantage of their distinctive ability to be desirable locations for innovators, entrepreneurs and businesses and places where people with choices choose to live. As this vision is achieved, our Gateway Cities will not only prosper, they will provide a distinctive competitive advantage for the Commonwealth as a whole. Our work to achieve this vision has four guiding

principles:

- 1) A successful strategy for our Gateway Cities will be fundamentally based on an economic development agenda for the Commonwealth as a whole: making long-term investments in education, innovation and infrastructure, with special attention to the growth potential of our entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- 2) A successful strategy for our Gateway Cities will take full advantage of their distinctive assets, including their educational, medical and cultural institutions, and their historic buildings and neighborhoods.
- 3) Although our Gateway Cities will be centers of economic activity, they will not succeed in isolation and must be well connected to other centers of economic activity, within the Commonwealth and beyond.
- 4) Success requires a true city-state partnership, with each party accepting and executing its respective responsibilities.”

In 2014, MassDevelopment unveiled the Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) to support the Gateway Cities program, “...a redevelopment program for Gateway Cities designed to enhance local public-private engagement and community identity; stimulate an improved quality of life for local residents; and spur increased investment and economic activity. TDI is an integrated systems approach to investment and urban redevelopment on a scale that can amplify and accelerate revitalization. Along with the new tools in the Commonwealth

of Massachusetts’ Transformative Development Fund, we will utilize additional existing finance products, and coordinate with private- and public-sector partners, to encourage development activity by private landowners, enterprises, and investors.”

As an additional layer of support MassDevelopment launched the TDI Fellows program in 2015. The TDI Fellows are community development and planning professionals hired by MassDevelopment on a three year contract and assigned to a TDI district in one of the Gateway Cities. In 2015 Pittsfield submitted a successful application to designate the Tyler Street District as a TDI District.

MassDevelopment hired Elan Planning Design and Landscape Architecture as the Planning Consultant and the Tyler Street Development Initiative commenced in the summer of 2015. In 2016 Tyler Street received a TDI Fellow.



Vision Statement

The vision statement for the Tyler Street TDI District reflects the desired outcome for the neighborhood’s future. It represents the preferred scenario for change. The following vision statement should serve as an overall policy objective for city government and all stakeholders, residents and businesses alike, engaged in shaping the future of the Tyler Street District.

“The Tyler Street District is a unique blend of age, ethnicity and socio-economic diversity that reflects its industrial roots in a modern and creative way. It’s a signature neighborhood that’s become a desirable place to live, work and play due to its hip and eclectic style.”



Goals

These goals developed by the TDI Committee serve as guiding principles for the future of the Tyler Street TDI District. The goals were developed with considerable public participation, including: stakeholder interviews, business group meetings, and input from City of Pittsfield representatives.

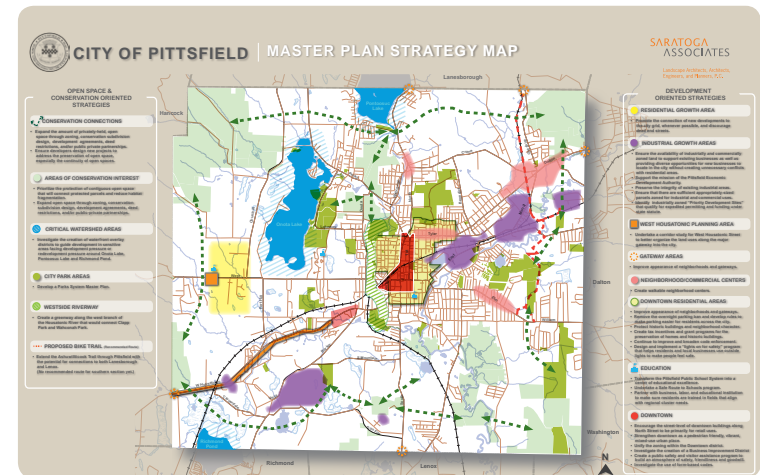
- 1) Create a multi-modal network that comfortably and conveniently supports the needs of the community.
- 2) Foster a continued mix of uses by preserving important historic buildings, and guiding the sensitive design of new ones.
- 3) Support growth with improved streets, additional open space, and other elements of “Complete Communities”.
- 4) Develop the District as a local and regional destination, attracting visitors and residents alike to bolster the image of Pittsfield as a desirable place to live, work, and visit.
- 5) Encourage economic development that fosters collaboration across sectors for education, community engagement, access to fresh produce, and job training for residents.
- 6) Create a broad mix of housing choices throughout the District to serve a diverse population and workforce.



Existing Plans and Relevant Studies

As a city, Pittsfield has spent a considerable amount of energy planning for its future. However, this is the first plan to chart a specific coordinated, strategic approach to revitalize the Tyler Street District. The Morningside Initiative, started in 2004, was the last community effort to focus on a neighborhood. However, the Morningside Initiative is more limited in its aims and goals than the catalytic interventions presented by the Tyler Street TDI Initiative. Other recent plans focusing on the areas surrounding the Tyler Street District include the; William Stanley Business Park Plan, Springside Park Plan, and Downtown Pittsfield Plan. The following plans informed and contributed to the development of the Tyler Street TDI Plan.

- William Stanley Business Park of the Berkshires Master Plan (2003)
- Morningside Neighborhood Action Plan (2006)
- Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority Annual Report (2015)
- Berkshire County Community Health Needs Assessment (2015)
- BRPC Berkshire Public School Enrollment Trends (2015)
- Pittsfield Housing Needs Analysis and Development Recommendations (2009)
- City of Pittsfield Master Plan (2009 and 2014 updates)
- Berkshire Advanced Manufacturing Study (2013)
- Morningside Walkability Audit (2014)
- Downtown Pittsfield Strategic Plan (2010-2015)
- Sustainable Berkshires (2014)
- Pittsfield Walk Bike Assessment (2015)
- Berkshire County Age Friendly Communities Survey (2015)
- Springside Park Master Plan (2016)
- Berkshire Regional Transportation Plan (2016)



Walk and Bike Assessment
Pittsfield, MA

Prepared for the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Awareness and Encouragement Program in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health

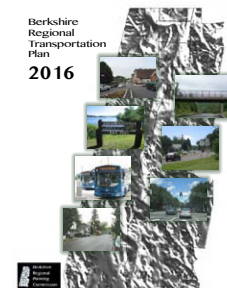


Housing Needs Analysis & Development Recommendations
Westside and Morningside Neighborhoods

August 2009

Prepared for:
City of Pittsfield
Department of Community Development

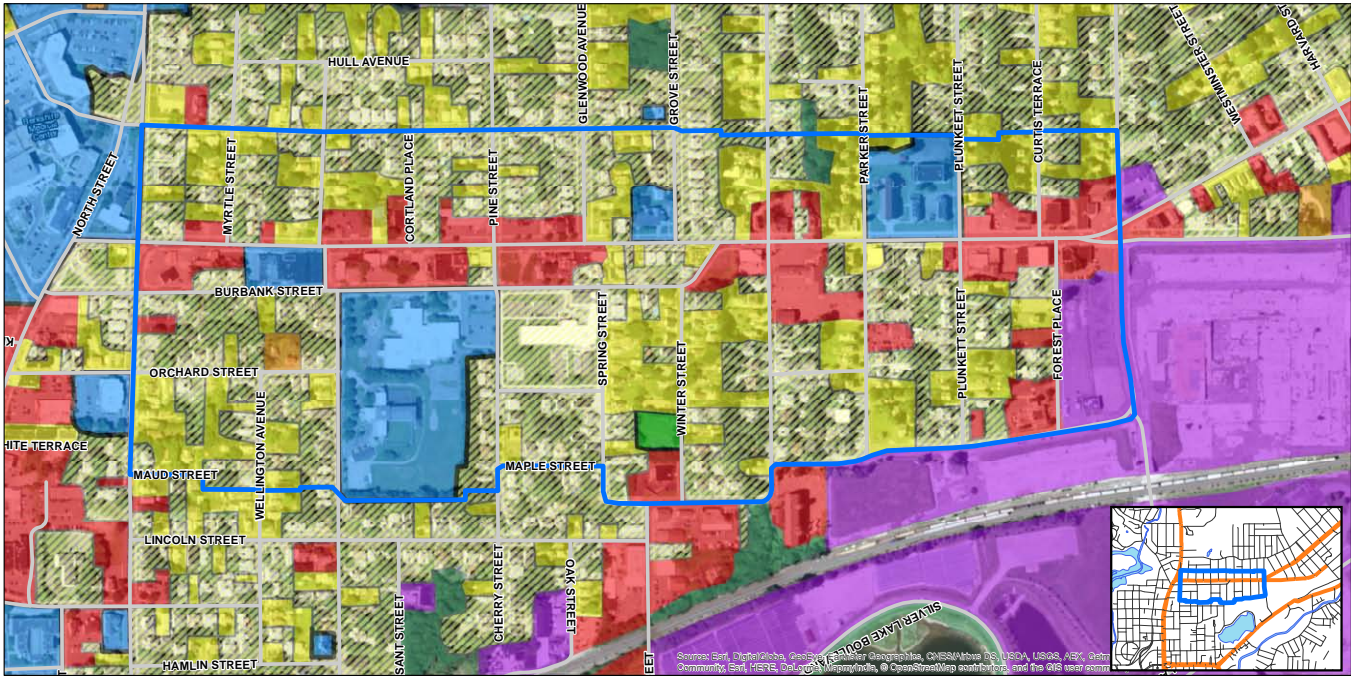
GLC DIETZ & COMPANY ARCHITECTS



Land Use

The land use within the Tyler Street District reflects the industrial legacy of the neighborhood. During the time of Pittsfield’s peak population in the mid-twentieth century, the Tyler Street District provided workforce housing for the adjacent General Electric (GE) campus. GE began Pittsfield operations in 1903, long before the widespread use of automobiles. Out of necessity, the vast majority of GE employees lived within walking distance to their employment at, what is now known as, the William Stanley Business Park. Today this pedestrian connectivity is evident in the Tyler Street TDI District and residential housing is still the primary (67%) land use, with one, two and three family homes lining the gridded, street network. To the southeast of the district on the border of the William Stanley Business Park are some light warehousing operations and commercial structures. Tyler Street itself is a collection of one and two story commercial and residential structures. Some of these uses still cater to the neighborhoods pedestrian-oriented legacy, while others have shifted to become more auto-oriented.

Land Use	Percent	Area (Acres)
Multi-Family Residential	42.2%	47.7
High Density Residential	23.7%	29
Commercial	16.6%	20.3
Urban Public/Institutional	13.1%	16
Industrial	3.1%	3.8
Participation Recreation	0.5%	0.6
Medium Density Residential	0.4%	0.5
Total		122.2



Tyler Street TDI Investment Strategy
City of Pittsfield

Land Use

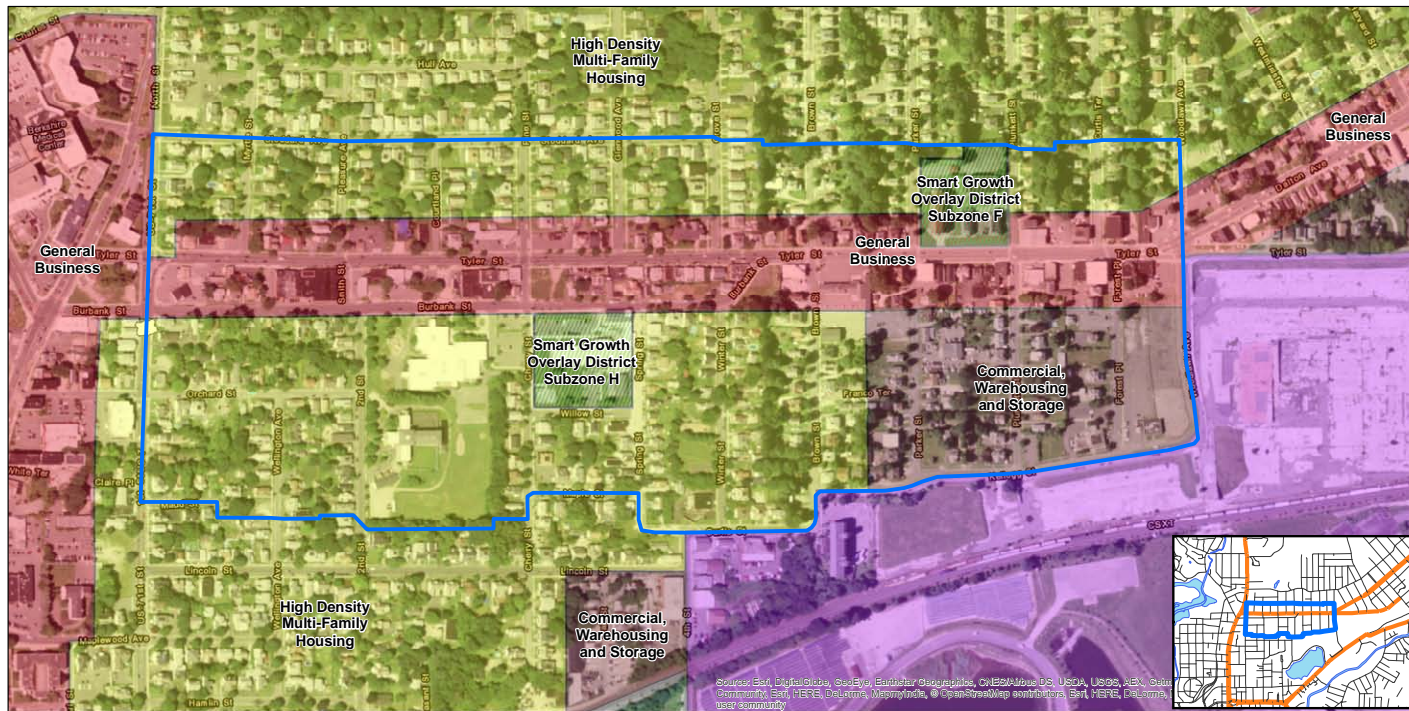
- Commercial
- Forest
- High Density Residential
- Industrial
- Medium Density Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Participation Recreation
- Urban Public/Institutional

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

DATE: FEBRUARY 2016
 SOURCE: ESRI, MASSGIS LAND USE COVERAGE DATASET 2005, CITY OF PITTSFIELD

Zoning

Zoning in the Tyler Street TDI District is a mix of residential and commercial designations. Parcels on Tyler Street are zoned “General Business District”. Current General Business District parking and setback requirements result in new construction more suited to suburban strip development than to a pedestrian oriented environment. The neighborhoods within the TDI District and adjoining Tyler Street are primarily zoned “High Density Multi-Family Housing.” The southeastern portion of the TDI District is zoned “Commercial, Warehousing and Storage.” While there are a few businesses located on the southern edge of this zoning designation, most of the zoning area is residential. A comprehensive overhaul of zoning in the TDI district should be undertaken with revisions reflecting the area as a pedestrian oriented, mixed use neighborhood.



Zoning in TDI District		
Zone	%	Area (Acres)
High Density Multi-Family Housing	59.7%	72.9
Commercial, Warehousing and Storage	13.8%	16.8
General Business	26.5%	32.4
Smart Growth Overlay District (not included in total)	4.67%	5.7
Total	100%	122.1

Tyler Street TDI Investment Strategy
City of Pittsfield

Zoning

- TDI District
- Commercial, Warehousing and Storage
- General Business
- General Industrial
- High Density Multi-Family Housing
- Smart Growth Overlay District Subzone F, Smart Growth Overlay District Subzone H

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

Date: February 2016
Source: ESRI, MassGIS, City of Pittsfield

Transportation: Road Network

Tyler Street is a heavily trafficked corridor for motorists commuting to Berkshire Medical Center, visiting downtown, passing through to other regional destinations or to the cluster of ‘big box’ retail to the east. (See Appendix X “Traffic Counts”)

Both Gateway intersections to the TDI District present traffic problems and potential pedestrian/ motorist conflicts. Streetscape improvements are underway to improve the North / Tyler Intersection on the west end of the district.

The Woodlawn Bridge, in the southeast corner of the district, reopened in 2016 after a decade of closure. The traffic impacts of this new bridge have not been fully studied but it is anticipated that through traffic along Tyler Street will be reduced as a result of the new bridge.

Pittsfield’s road network was built to accommodate a larger population with financial support from a larger tax base. To illustrate this point, a recent city-wide road inventory suggests that municipal spending increase by 30% over current levels just to maintain the road network.

Tyler Street is a two lane roadway, roughly 45 feet wide from curb to curb, with parking on both sides. Off Tyler Street, the gridded street network in the residential neighborhoods absorb traffic heading south and east. The railway to the south of the district disrupts the grid system and funnels traffic onto 4th and 1st streets.

These current condition presents opportunities to incorporate features to improve all modes of travel (walk, bike, bus and automobile) and to slow traffic. Residents of Pittsfield and the Tyler Street District depend more heavily on transportation options other than personal cars. These factors call for future transportation investments to enhance all modes of travel.



The intersection of Tyler Street and 1st Street, facing North

Transportation: Pedestrian and Bike Network

The Tyler Street District is a walkable neighborhood. The traditional grid layout that is typical of dense residential neighborhoods allows for a fairly connected pedestrian network. Sidewalks line most streets throughout the district. In many areas the quality of sidewalks is poor with breaks, bumps and overgrown vegetation. (See images)

The City of Pittsfield over the past decade has recognized the connections between walking, economic activity and public health. The result is a series of walking loops throughout the City. The Morningside Loop is a 2.74 mile pedestrian way that will connect the Tyler Street District with the Downtown Walking Loop.



While the walking loops in Pittsfield are useful tools to engage recreational walkers, some improvements could be made to the network to better suit the needs of residents who walk for other purposes. Cut-troughs or 'informal paths' along vacant lots indicate the preferred paths of pedestrians, such as the Hess Station and areas around Rice Silk Mill.

The "Morningside Walkability Audit" (2014) and the Pittsfield "Walk and Bike Assessment" (2015) explored options for improving the pedestrian environment and the Tyler Street Corridor in particular. Both reports noted that better bike and pedestrian facilities were needed. Additionally, the 2015 report recommended:

- Traffic calming with curb extensions
- Installing bus stops and signs
- Improved sidewalk maintenance
- Removing some parking for designated bike lanes
- Changing pedestrian signalling to allow for more crossing time
- Installing bike racks
- Better parking enforcement
- Better lighting

These recommendations are supported by public feedback, stakeholder interviews and field visits conducted throughout this project and will be an important part of neighborhood revitalization.



Encroaching vegetation



Field observations of informal pedestrian route through the Hess Station parking lot

Demographics

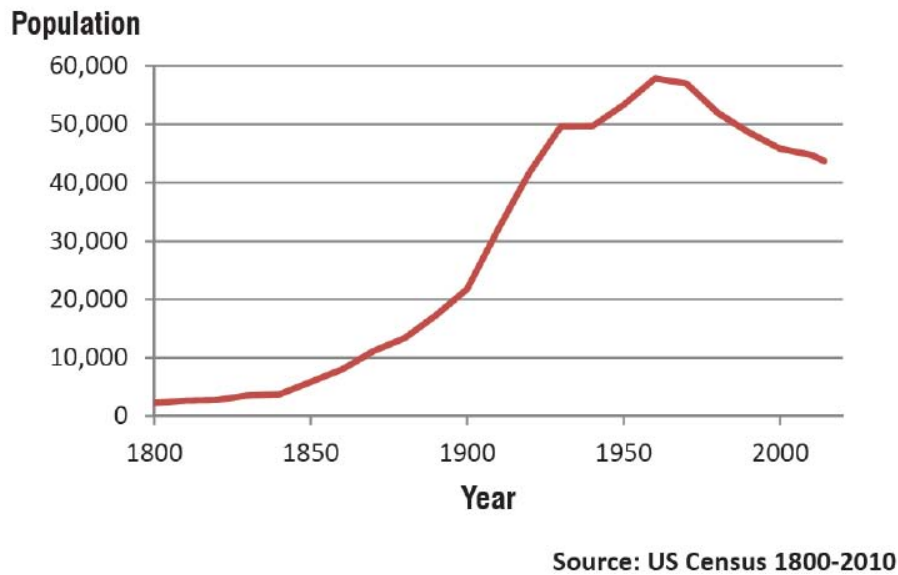
The Tyler Street District represents the new face of the urban Berkshires. While regional trends indicate an aging population of retiring Baby-Boomers, the Tyler Street District population is young and diverse relative to the rest of Pittsfield and Berkshire County. Pittsfield was designated as a Gateway City due to median household income and educational attainment levels below that of the state average. Within the Tyler Street District these indicators of low educational attainment and low earnings are even more pronounced. But the Tyler Street District has a unique combination of age, income, and race that make it a special place.

Key Takeaways

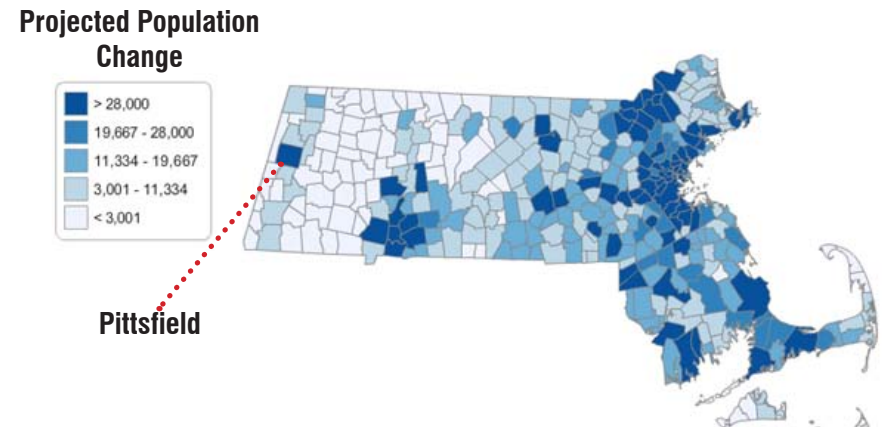
- The TDI District is home to more renters than homeowners; many residents are living in older multi-unit structures.
- Residents of the TDI District have lower levels of educational attainment; the rate of high school graduation is particularly low.
- Residents of the TDI District make less than other residents of Pittsfield and Berkshire County.
- The neighborhood has sustained population losses for decades but the rate of loss may be declining.
- While there are many new renters living in the district, there is a sizeable number of homeowners who have lived in the District for decades.
- The new population of the TDI District is far more diverse than the rest of the City and Berkshire County.

Population Trends

The approximately 2,359 people living in the Tyler Street TDI District account for 5.4 percent of Pittsfield's total population. Over the past twenty years the population of the Tyler Street TDI District has decreased more rapidly than the rest of Pittsfield and the Berkshires. This corresponds in part with General Electric's gradual withdrawal from what is now the William Stanley Business Park.



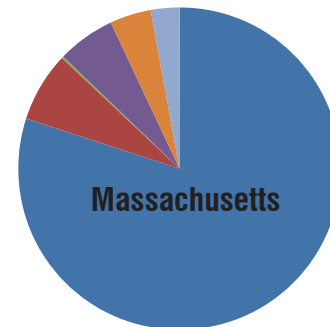
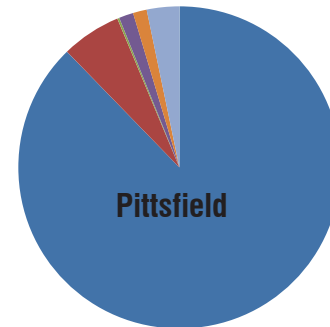
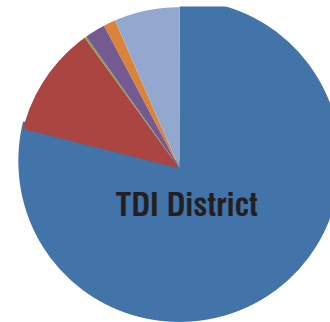
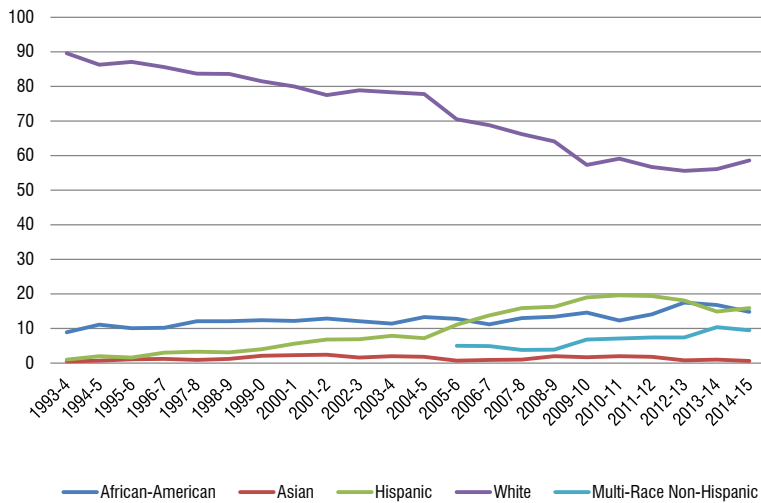
Population projections conducted by the UMass Amherst Donahue Institute predict a 7 percent population increase for the City of Pittsfield by 2035. By contrast, the rate of growth for the adjacent region of Berkshire and Franklin counties is projected at only 0.4% by 2030. Statewide, growth is anticipated to occur mainly in the eastern half of Massachusetts centered around Boston. Pittsfield's projected 7 percent population growth is the largest predicted increase west of Springfield and Holyoke. The possibility of stabilizing population loss and realizing population growth is promising to a community witnessing continuous population loss for the past 40 years.



Racial Characteristics

The Tyler Street District is more diverse than the rest of Pittsfield and Massachusetts as a whole. The Hispanic population is almost twice that of the City of Pittsfield and the Asian and Black populations are significantly larger as well. Block group level data from the American Community Survey shows the racial composition of the entire population. The data suggests that the older population is primarily white and the younger population is more diverse. This racial diversity could be a key economic generator for the neighborhood, with unique restaurants and cultural events catering to the diversity of its residents.

Racial Composition of Morningside Community School (1993-2015)



Ethnicity	TDI	Pittsfield	MA
Hispanic	8.3%	5.3%	10.2%

- White Alone
- Black or African American
- American Indian and Alaska Native Alone
- Asian Alone
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander
- Some other race alone
- Two or More Races

Source: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)

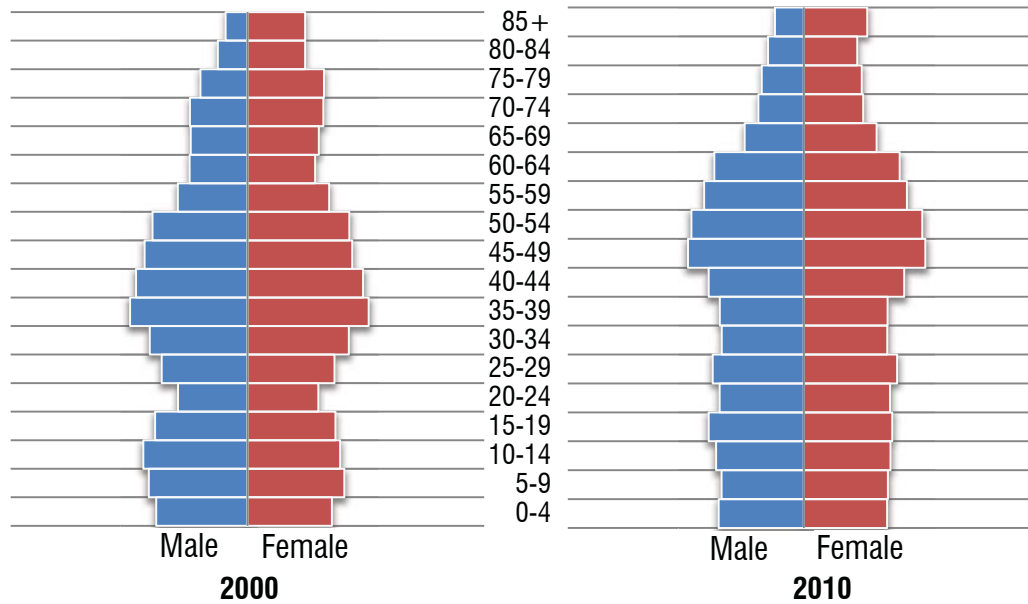
Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2009-2014

Age Distribution

The population of the Tyler Street TDI District is significantly younger than that of Pittsfield and Berkshire County as a whole. The graphic below shows age pyramids of men and women from 2000 and 2010. Note the large bubble in 2000 around the younger middle age 35-45 year olds. By 2010 this cohort has moved into the middle stages of life, the 45-55 year age group. This 'middle aged' group typically own their residences, have stable employment, and are building families. However, other socio-economic indicators do not match what many people experience in this stage of life. The median age chart, below, shows the TDI resident is much younger than the city and county. This youthful neighborhood can help define the types of businesses and amenities to be fostered in the TDI District. For example, young, growing families could be attracted to the TDI if it had a healthy network of greenspace and playgrounds. Daycare or even immediate access to

healthy foods could be other amenities that attract younger residents.

Age and Sex Profile of Tyler Street TDI District 2000 & 2010



The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) predicts a major demographic shift as Baby Boomers retire to the Berkshires. This presents an opportunity for the young and underemployed in the TDI District to develop jobs skills targeted toward elder care.

Median Age

	TDI District	Pittsfield	Berkshire County
2010	29.8	37.2	44.7
2000	29.6	39.6	40.5

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census (Block Level Data)

Source: 2000 & 2010 US Census

Income and Employment

Residents of the Tyler Street TDI District earn considerably less than other residents of Pittsfield and their earnings are also far below statewide and regional averages. Of particular note is the almost complete absence of high income earners, or households making \$75,000 or more annually. The lower earnings are correlated to the lower educational attainment levels of neighborhood residents. Enhancing access to educational and allied services leading to employment opportunities are important program elements to the revitalization of the Tyler Street TDI District.

43% of Households in the TDI District earned less than \$25,000 annually



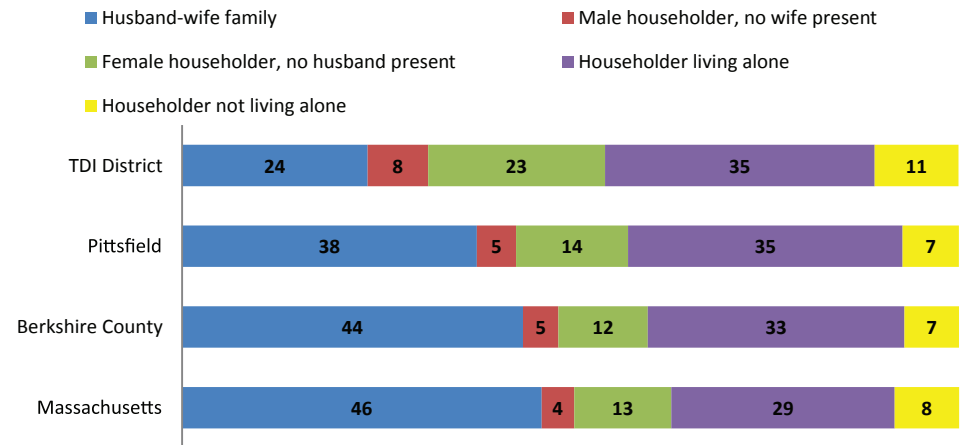
The lower income has negative impacts on the district. When landlords cannot find tenants capable of paying rents high enough to maintain their rental properties, routine maintenance is deferred. This begins a downward cycle of deteriorating properties that are less and less likely to attract moderate income renters.

Neighborhood businesses suffer as well. With little capital flowing into the district, there are fewer opportunities for small local businesses to establish themselves. Fewer neighborhood businesses means fewer employment opportunities for residents.

Families and Housing

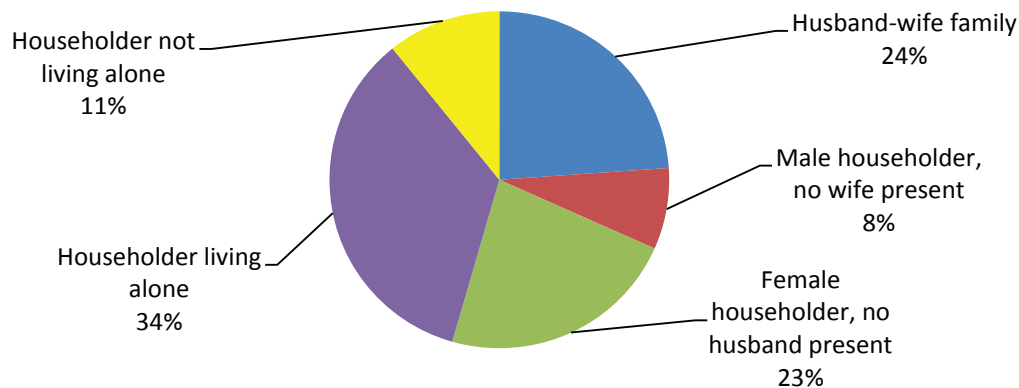
According to the 2010 Census the Tyler Street TDI District (blocks 2, 4, 5, & 6 of tract 9002) contained 1,177 households. Of those households the most common type was householders living alone (34%). The next most common type was split between husband and wife families (24%) and single female householders (23%). Household composition trends in the rest of the region (Pittsfield and Berkshire County) and the state tend to include more married couples and far fewer single female, head of household.

Regional Household Composition



Source: Block Group Data, 2010 US Census

Household Composition TDI District



Source: Block Group Data, 2010 US Census

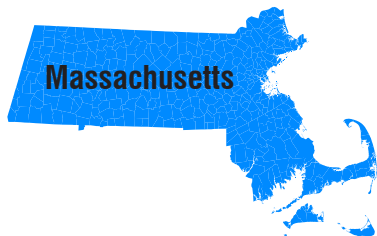
Employment



In the TDI District 56.1% of its population is in the workforce, 89% of whom are employed.



In the City of Pittsfield 64.7% of its population is in the workforce, 89.3% of whom are employed.



In the State of Massachusetts 67.6% of its population is in the workforce, 91.6% of whom are employed.

Only one out of two persons living in the TDI District is employed. This significantly limits revenue from flowing into the district. Consequently, paying for housing, transportation, childcare, etc. is a daily struggle when residents are heavily dependent on public assistance.

This pronounced deficit of employed residents in the TDI District was a recurring concern throughout the public input process. Low educational attainment rates in the Tyler Street TDI District are a serious detriment to labor force participation. Approximately 13% of adults over the age of 25 having less than a high school education is a significant hurdle to employment.¹ Locally and regionally strong industry clusters including “Educational Service Industry,” “Health Care and Social Assistance Industry,” and “Professional, Scientific and Technical Services,” typically require some type of secondary education. 42% of jobs in advanced manufacturing (an industry cluster long targeted for growth by the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation and Pittsfield Economic Development Authority) are anticipated to require some postsecondary education or a degree.² Recent Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation (PERC) studies reveal that a lack of skilled workforce in the area is a hurdle to attracting the types of advanced manufacturing firms that the WSPB would like to attract.³

¹ 2009-2013 American Community Survey

² Carnevale et al. (2011) Career Clusters: Forecasting Demand for High school Through College Jobs. Washington DC.

³ Berkshire Advanced Manufacturing Study (2013) UMass Donahue Institute for PERC



Community Engagement

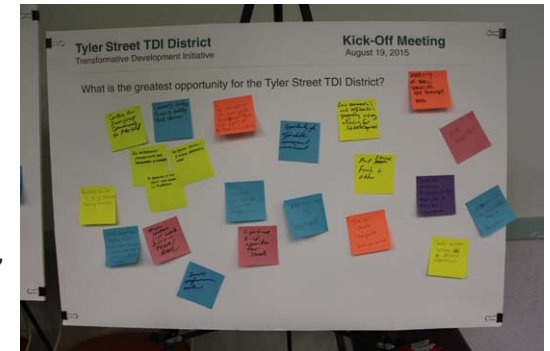
The Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) is a ‘place-based’ approach to neighborhood revitalization. Contrasting traditional, top-down approaches to revitalization; the TDI understands to have an impact, plans must be formulated at the local level by residents. This approach creates a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the place where the revitalization efforts will be created. This approach is further supported by MassDevelopment’s Transformative Development Initiative commitment to provide technical support where needed, and to establish a network of Gateway Cities who share experiences, and connect local organizations with expanded financial tools.

The approach to developing this plan included the solicitation of broad and general public feedback at the onset, followed by a series of targeted focus group interviews. After compiling the information from the public sessions and group interviews, the public was then presented with the initial findings and asked for their thoughts, reactions and comments. This feedback was used to guide further research and to develop a set of recommended policies and actions forming the rest of this document. The process is iterative and reflective.



Kick-Off Meeting August 19, 2015

The Tyler Street Transformative Development Initiative officially commenced with a Kick-off Meeting in August 2015. Members of the public were invited to give their impressions of the district and to get familiar with the process and expected outcomes of the planning process. Representatives from the City of Pittsfield, MassDevelopment, the Tyler Street Business Group, and Elan Planning, Design and Landscape Architecture each presented in turn about their respective roles in the district. Attendees were asked to mark on aerial maps their favorite places, the places facing challenges, and the greatest opportunities in the district. This geographically-based line of questioning helped the project team determine how residents encounter and navigate the Tyler Street TDI District.



Community Engagement

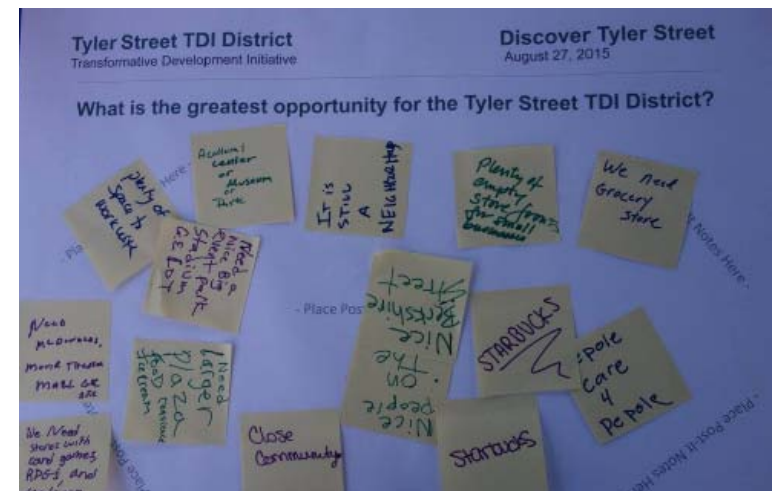
Discover Tyler Street August 27, 2015

On the heels of the Kickoff Meeting the Tyler Street Business Group (TSBG) held its annual “Discover Tyler Street” event. The event is a celebration of the “future of arts, food and innovation,” and serves to generate exposure for existing Tyler Street Businesses and to build community pride. Elan Planning, Design, and Landscape Architecture provided materials for the TSBG to gather public input about the Transformative Development Initiative. Foam boards holding large printed posters asked the same questions as the Kick-Off meeting. This exercise, conducted on a smaller scale than the Kick-off and Open House meetings, engaged residents and introduced a larger segment of the District’s population to the project.

The challenges and opportunities identified at the Discover Tyler Street Fair closely echoed the results of the kick-off meeting.



All Photos Credit: Suzanne Engels TSBG



Common themes from Discover Tyler Street included a desire for more businesses on Tyler Street, an appreciation for the sense of community, and concerns over public safety and negative portrayals of the neighborhood and attitudes regarding the Tyler Street District.

Focus Groups: October 8-9, 2015

In October 2015 representatives from Elan Planning Design and Landscape Architecture spent two days interviewing community stakeholders organized in focus groups. The stakeholders were compiled by the Tyler Street Business Group, Elan, and the steering committee. The focus groups were organized on the basis of interests. Each group of interviewees was asked a series of questions (see appendix “Public Input”) often referred to as a “SWOT Analysis,” (or a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis). From these varied perspectives the interviewers explored common trends and outlying responses.

Additionally, interviewees used an aerial map of the Tyler Street District to highlight opportunities and to focus the committees attention. Information from this round of interviews provided a richness of understanding about the Tyler Street District that could only be gleaned from a group of committed individuals. Thirty-eight people were interviewed in groups ranging in size from 1-4 persons. Over the course of two days seventeen separate focus group sessions were held.



Common Themes from Focus Groups:

Challenges:

Perception of neighborhood, land-lord accountability, job opportunities, lack of good housing

Opportunities:

Walkability, proximity to employers, affordability, housing stock

Places:

St. Mary's, Rice Silk Mill, Morningside Community School, Fire House, Goodwill, County Sheriffs Facility

Wants:

Arts focused development, community center, streetscape and lighting improvements, neighborhood scale dining/ shopping, greenspace, youth engagement, continuing education

Tyler Street TDI Investment Strategy
City of Pittsfield

Date: October 2015

Business Community Interviews: January 5, 2016

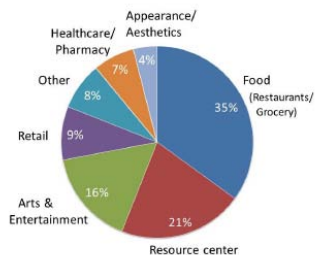
Engaging the business community is vital to understanding the challenges and opportunities facing a neighborhood. Business owners have 'skin in the game'. Before the TDI process beginning, business owners are contemplating the needs of the Tyler Street TDI District. Shop-owners are often the most engaged "eyes on the street" and have a unique understanding of local needs and opportunities, through their observing the comings and goings of passerby and customers.

Representatives from the following groups were interviewed:

- Berkshire Medical Center, the region's largest employer
- Goodwill, a community focused not-for-profit
- Berkshire Wine and Liquor, an independently owned retailer
- Martino Glass, an independently owned auto-repair shop
- Hot Harry's, a small franchise eatery

Online Outreach: Ongoing

Question: What types of businesses and services should we work to attract to the Tyler Street District? Think broadly: health services, child care, variety of retail & professional services.



The Tyler Street Business Group (TSBG) maintains a strong online presence. Their website and Facebook page have served as useful engagement tools throughout the TDI process. TSBG initiated a series of informal online polls to collect feedback from the public. There is TSBG interest in reusing vacant structures and developing more food and dining options.

Question: What are some of the existing assets that we can build around?

TOP RESPONSES

1. Tyler St. Firehouse
2. St. Mary's
3. Springside Park
4. North Little League Park
5. Morningside Elementary School
6. Berkshire Medical Center
7. Williams Stanley Business Park
8. Solid Historic Building Stock

Open House: February 3, 2016

The February 2016 Open House presented background research, including demographics and physical layout of the neighborhood, and solicited additional public feedback on specific topics. This meeting was open from 11am to 7pm to reach the greatest possible audience, and was held at the Union Hall on the East side of the TDI District. The environment was very relaxed and did not involve any formal presentations.

Over 20 different stations were set up. Participants were asked to share feedback with post-it notes. Over 100 people attended and provided valuable feedback. Members of the media were encouraged to come and their subsequent reporting reached a regional audience.



Common Themes from February Open House: Challenges:

Crime & Perception of Crime, Lack of Community center, Joblessness, Imbalance between renters/owners

Opportunities:

Diversity, walkability, proximity to employers, affordability, housing stock

Places:

St. Mary's, Rice Silk Mill, Morningside Community School, Fire House, Goodwill, County Sheriffs Facility, Ray Crow Park

Wants: Arts focused development, community center, streetscape and lighting improvements, neighborhood retail services, youth engagement, continuing education, access to fresh food, better mass transit, ethnic restaurant enclave





An individual's path to self-improvement typically begins with a hard look in the mirror. A neighborhood is no different. Understanding the challenges and issues facing a neighborhood is essential to developing a strategy for change.

A year of public meetings, site visits, stakeholder interviews, demographic analysis and review of relevant planning documents informed the Tyler Street TDI District Committees decision-making process. After developing this understanding of the issues confronting the district, only then was the Committee able to formulate a strategy to address them. Many of the challenges such as, crime, joblessness, and low rates of home-ownership have been quantified. Using benchmarking techniques the project partners will be able to track their progress toward creating a vibrant and successful community.

Challenges

- 1) Perceptions of Crime
- 2) Vacancy and Blight
- 3) Low home ownership rates
- 4) Streetscape (Lighting and Sidewalks)
- 5) Inefficient Public Transportation

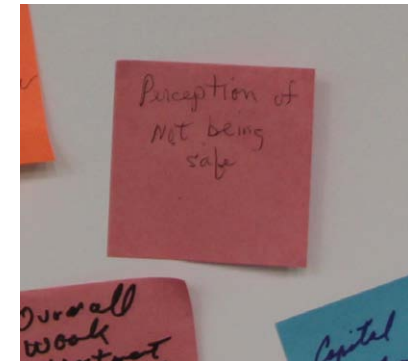
Opportunities

- 1) Tyler Street Business Group & Morningside Neighborhood Association
- 2) Connection to Art and Culture Attractions
- 3) Available space and affordable real estate
- 4) Close knit and diverse community
- 5) Walkability
- 6) Proximity to BMC, WSBP and BIC

1) Perception of Crime

At public sessions the single most cited challenge to the Tyler Street TDI District was not crime itself, but the perception of crime. The Tyler Street TDI District was reeling from a series of high profile crimes at the time of the initial Kickoff Meeting and the Discover Tyler Street Fair. According to the Pittsfield Police Department's CityStat reports, the city as a whole has seen a slight uptick in crime over the past 5 years.

But as one interview subject noted about the Tyler Street District in particular, "No one has really looked at the statistics." Geographic Information System (GIS) was used to map and compare the number of emergency calls and responses from the Pittsfield Police Department between the years 2013, 2014 and 2015. Overall there was a 5.8% decrease in police incidents within the TDI District. Despite overall downward trend in crime, a few high profile cases seem to be skewing perceptions.



2) Vacancy

Vacancy is a common issue in industrial cities across the northeastern US. Pittsfield and the TDI district have not been spared. The Tyler Street TDI District's proximity to the massive GE brownfield exacerbates the issue in the neighborhood. Pittsfield has long struggled with the issue of too many houses and not enough people. Affordable rents and low demand leaves a surplus of housing on the market. The age of the surplus property and the harsh New England winters results in a supply of housing mismatched with the financial ability of residents to repair and maintain them. Blight is expensive both socially and financially. Blight results in higher costs for the city, in the form of police and fire calls and demolitions. These costs add up considerably and are passed onto taxpayers.

Homes are conservatively estimated to lose **3.15%** of value within 500 feet of a tax foreclosed or delinquent residential structure and **1.12%** of value within 500 feet of a vacant residential structure.¹ The problem of vacancy and blight is concerning, and establishing the actual number of vacant properties within the district has proven a challenge.



1 Immergluck, D (2016) Center for Community Progress



3) Low Homeownership Rates

Increasing homeownership rates has long been upheld as a central pillar of neighborhood revitalization. Homeownership allows families to build inter-generational capital and to invest in their community. Typically, homeowners stay in the neighborhood longer, perform necessary property maintenance, and help bring up neighborhood property values. The Tyler Street District homeownership rate of just under 33% is remarkably low compared to the national rate of about 63%. Unfortunately, buying a home is becoming harder and harder as the cost of housing has risen and real income has shrunk, and fewer and fewer young people are buying homes.

Low homeownership rates are often associated with shorter tenure of residence. As low income residents face uncertain financial futures and substandard housing conditions they tend to move between residences more frequently. This can disrupt the community fabric and children's educational performance. Of the renters in the Tyler Street District, 52% moved into their current dwelling within the past 15 years (2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates).

4) Streetscape (Lighting and Sidewalks)

Stepping outside during an open house, a Tyler Street business owner pointed up the street at a crooked, weathered lamp post overhanging Tyler Street. The leaning lamppost summed up most shop-owners impressions of the streetscape along Tyler Street -- the whole corridor is in need of a touch-up.

The lack of an attractive streetscape is apparent to both the outside observer and the daily user of Tyler Street. While many neighborhoods suffer from a lack of vibrancy due to under-use, the Tyler Street District is well used, but the streetscape here doesn't support the current level of use.

What is a streetscape? A streetscape, like a landscape, is in a basic sense the physical layout of a street. The streetscape is both observed on a visual level and experienced on a functional level. Streets were at one point the most public and used places in cities and their value as civic institution was represented in the care of their design. As the automobile became the dominant form of transportation in America, the needs of the motorist trumped the needs of the pedestrian. The social, physical and financial impacts of accommodating the car over the pedestrian have been exhaustively studied. These studies recommend that streets should accommodate the needs of all users. This realization resonated throughout the Tyler Street public input sessions and stakeholder interviews.



A street designed for cars, not people



No trees, long crossing and many curb cuts

5) Inadequate Public Transportation

The Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) Bus System serves the Tyler Street District residents. Public input and stakeholder interviews indicate bus service timing and supportive infrastructure (e.g. bus shelters) are lacking. Convenience, safety and affordability are key to public transportation.

The current 6 day a week service and the limited hours of bus service pose a challenge to low-income employees working more than one job. This is particularly true for single parents with children who need reliable transportation to access child care. Well documented research shows that low-income mothers in the workforce tend to hold multiple jobs, work irregular hours, lack benefits, and are very susceptible to weekly and seasonal variations in scheduling. Particularly for this segment of the population, access to reliable, comfortable and flexible public transportation is a lifeline.¹ 23% of households in the TDI District are single mother families.

Additionally, access to educational opportunities at the Berkshire Community College on the west side of Pittsfield is very limited by lack of evening bus service.

¹American Public Transportation Association (2008)



Above: Passengers wait in the cold at a makeshift bus stop. This stop has been replaced by a parking lot

1) Tyler Street Business Group and Morningside Neighborhood Association

The Tyler Street Business Group and the Morningside Neighborhood Association have been active champions for the TDI District long before its designation. TSBG, an all-volunteer business organization works to: actively build community spirit; support existing businesses and establish new ventures; beautify the corridor; lobby for Tyler Street at city hall; and seek creative solutions to district challenges.

The Morningside Neighborhood Association is an active group of residents who have been engaged in the district for decades. In the past they have come together to address youth violence, CDBG project requests, strategic planning, and school issues. The group is well versed in listening to residents and bringing their concerns to city council.

2) Connection to Arts and Culture Attractions

Pittsfield is in the process of becoming the cultural hub of the Berkshires. For decades the region has hosted seasonal performance artists, galleries, and shows. Pittsfield's 2009 Masterplan emphasizes the need to develop its status as an art and culture destination. Seven years later, the City has proven that it is willing and able to use its assets to promote business growth, tourism, and downtown revitalization. The Tyler Street TDI District is adjacent to downtown, has ample space to host artists, and has a stock of commercial properties lining the main corridor that could easily be utilized as part of the city's overarching arts and culture vision.

3) Available and Affordable Real Estate

Property in the Tyler Street District is fairly affordable. Compared to commercially zoned properties in other regional cities of the same size, the Tyler Street District offers real estate at lower than average rates, giving smaller, locally owned stores a boost.

4) Close Knit and Diverse Community

While many residents are more recent additions to the neighborhood, a large contingent still exists, who have lived in the Tyler Street TDI District for decades. Even though General Electric moved its operations elsewhere, many former employees live comfortably on company pensions in the District. The long term residents refusing to move elsewhere, in spite of the negative trends, are fiercely committed to the Morningside Neighborhood they once knew. These residents bring a sense of stubborn optimism to a community that could sometimes use a little cheering up.

5) Walkability

For thirty years neighborhood selection for home ownership was greatly influenced by the convenience of car commuting to work and shopping. Decisions today, in addition to automotive considerations, place a growing emphasis on “walkability”, or the practicality and convenience of navigating a place on foot. Since the Tyler Street neighborhood was built before cars were so prominent, it is a very walkable place. Enhancing this asset is an excellent opportunity to make the TDI District a more liveable, sustainable, healthy, attractive and safe place.

6) Proximity to Willam Stanley Business Park, Berkshire Medical Center & Downtown

The City of Pittsfield’s 2009 Masterplan recognizes its industrial heritage has been diminished but still remains a viable industry cluster. The Berkshire Innovation Center (BIC), slated for construction in 2017, is a state of the art technology research center bringing together advanced manufacturing companies and educational institutions in one place. The William Stanley Business Park (WSBP) on the former GE campus is a 52-acre park intended for advanced industrial development. WSPB receives business recruitment support from the Pittsfield Economic Development Agency (PEDA) and is anticipated to become home to a multitude of high-tech companies. Berkshire Medical Center is the region’s largest employer and has been expanding its operations in recent years. It provides a range of jobs from low to high skilled and brings thousands of workers and visitors to the district on a daily basis. Tapping into employment opportunities and the customer base provided by BMC is an excellent opportunity for the Tyler Street District.



BIC Floorplan: from berkshireinnovationcenter.com

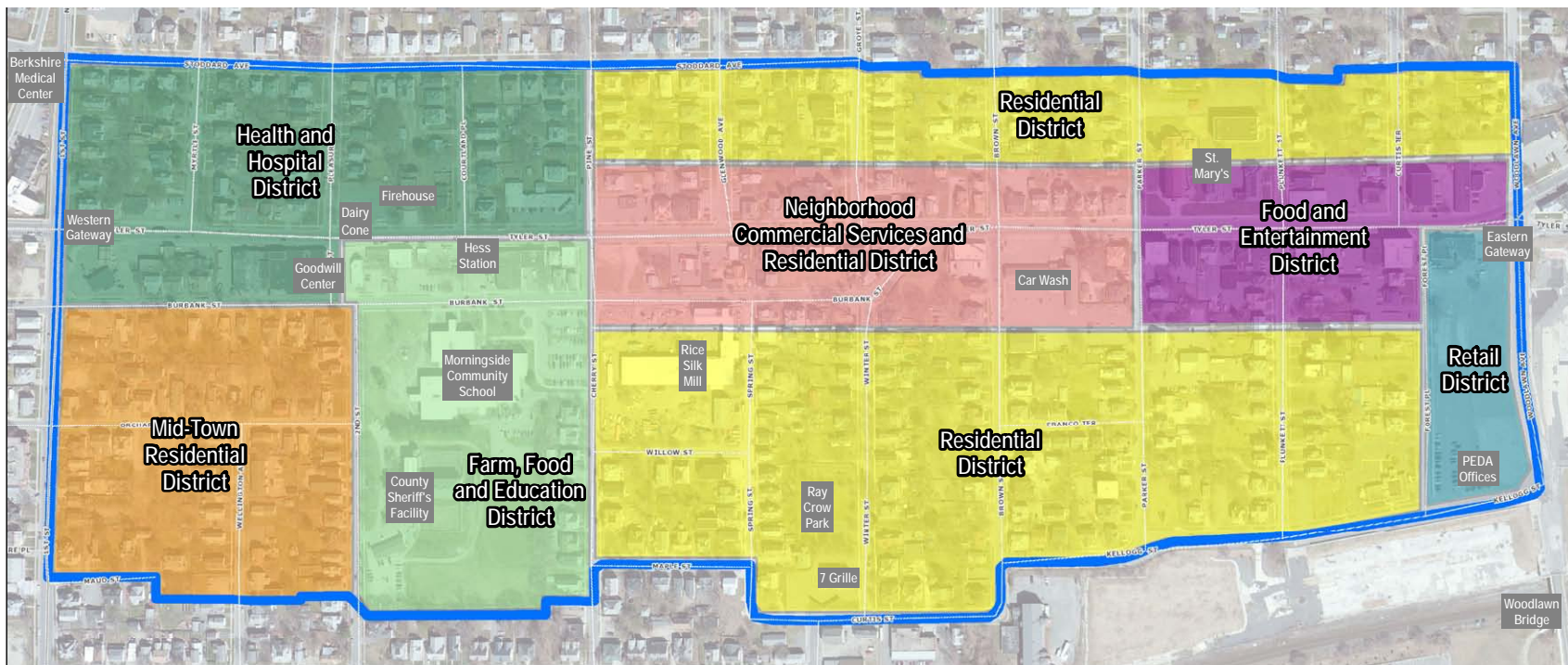
Recommendations

Total Housing Units in TDI District: 893
Acres: 122

The following recommendations provide a realistic and implementable set of actions for decision-makers. The “Implementation Matrix,” summarizes the recommendations and gives each recommendation a priority, identifies “Project Champions,” and lists potential funding sources. The implementation matrix will be a useful tool to periodically evaluate efforts to revitalize the Tyler Street TDI District.

The Tyler Street TDI District encompasses a large area and not all portions of the district are the same. Different portions of the TDI District have different opportunities and assets to build upon. To account for this variety the TDI District is sub-divided into eight smaller sub-districts. The following recommendation section begins with a set of actions for the entire district and then addresses each distinct sub-district.

Strong community cohesion, a unique mix of cultures and civic pride bolster the Tyler Street TDI District in spite of its challenges. As residents and community leaders anticipate improvements, there is a common hope and desire that progress will not result in displacement, and that quality affordable housing and employment opportunities will be within reach for all. This plan outlines important changes and further represents a roadmap for investments and preservation for the future of the Tyler Street TDI District. Success will require collaboration and commitment by a variety of entities.



District-wide Recommendations

District-wide recommendations are applicable throughout the TDI District. Many of the recommendations are larger policy level actions that will require direct involvement from the City of Pittsfield. The Tyler Street TDI District represents a small portion of the City of Pittsfield but hosts a cross-section of problems shared by all residents. Many of these district-wide recommendations presented here could serve as a model for other neighborhoods throughout the city.

DW-1: Develop housing strategy based on overall branding of neighborhood. Identify new funding resources and incentive structures to foster neighborhood stabilization and residential revitalization

DW-1: The Tyler Street Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) District is the largest TDI District in the state and contains the largest amount of residential land. Stabilizing the neighborhoods that have seen decades of population loss and disinvestment is crucial to the success of the district.

The “Implementation Matrix” outlines the potential funding sources and programs available to the City of Pittsfield and stakeholders in the District. The matrix also ranks each recommendation in this report as a high medium or low priority action and outlines a time-frame. The Implementation Matrix will serve as an accessible ‘roadmap’ to achieving the Vision for the Tyler Street District

DW-2: Evaluate zoning districts and uses and make revisions as necessary to encourage new infill development consistent with the vision and goals of the TDI plan.

Updating the zoning in the City of Pittsfield is a long-standing goal. The 2009 Pittsfield Master Plan recommended updating the land-use ordinance to more closely reflect its stated vision of becoming an arts and culture focused city. The City Zoning Ordinance was periodically updated (2012, 2014, 2015) to reflect some of these recommendations. The 2014 Downtown Pittsfield Parking Plan recommended adjusting parking standards, reducing the number of allowable curb cuts and encouraging shared parking among the zoning updates. Completely overhauling a zoning code that has been periodically modified over the years can be costly and politically contentious. But as many cities are realizing, updating zoning to emphasize all modes of transportation can yield financial returns. In fact, a 2012 study conducted for the Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium found that pedestrians and bicyclists make more frequent trips to restaurants, entertainment, and local retail establishments than automobile users.¹ Further, modern zoning practice has developed strategies to encourage infill development of existing urban neighborhoods like the Tyler Street TDI District. Cleveland, Ohio in its “Connecting Cleveland 2020 Plan,” has an overarching goal to enrich the lives of Clevelanders and strengthen economic vitality by establishing Cleveland as a world-class center for the arts. One strategy to accomplish the goal, establishes a Live-Work Arts District Overlay in which old, architecturally significant structures were targeted for adaptive reuse.²

The paper, “Routes To the Renaissance for Pittsfield, MA” (2015) was authored by students from the UMass Amherst Landscape and Regional Planning Program as a Studio and Student Research project. The Tyler Street Corridor was selected for study due to its historic nature and zoning conditions. The paper identifies over 20 ‘split-zoning parcels,’ or parcels located in two or more districts. The inconsistencies between zoning district requirements creates a disincentive to attracting private investment. Reconciling differences between zoning district requirements hinges on the willingness of the zoning board to grant variances to accommodate proposed uses. This uncertainty deters potential buyers.

Updating zoning city-wide, or more focused in neighborhoods such as the Tyler Street TDI District, is necessary to achieve elements of this plan and to spur private investment. One of the most pressing actions is to update the General Business zoning along Tyler Street to achieve infill redevelopment and a mix of uses.

1 “Consumer Behavior and Travel Mode Choices” (2012) Clifton, et al.
2 Cleveland Planning Commission

DW-3: Develop Commercial and Mixed-Use Design Policies Specific to the Tyler Street Corridor

Design policies, in the form of standards or guidelines, should be put in place to ensure new development along the Tyler Street corridor is contextually sensitive, enhances the pedestrian environment, fosters community pride and encourages economic revitalization. New development along Tyler Street has not always been reflective of its location and sensitive to the neighborhood history. Design policies establish minimum criteria that new development and substantial redevelopment projects must meet, typically in regard to: building placement, sidewalks, parking locations, vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, lighting and pedestrian frontages. Design policies should be crafted in such a way that developers have flexibility in meeting them.

Establishing design policies is a proactive way to prevent developers from taking advantage of Tyler Street's affordable real estate to construct unappealing structures. Design policies for the Tyler Street District should not mirror the design guidelines in the Downtown district. Nor should they, since Tyler Street is seeking to establish its own unique identity. The design standards should emphasize the pedestrian environment to ensure connectivity, sense of safety and general comfort. In doing so, the built environment is more supportive of transit, enhancing resident's mobility and visits from elsewhere in the city. Further, the process of developing design policies should engage the public in express their desires for the neighborhood.

To outsiders, Tyler Street is 'off the beaten path.' To those who live here it is a unique neighborhood that is home to a great diversity of people and cultures. The district's connection to its industrial, working-class heritage is still intact. Unlike downtown, which has always been the center of government and home to entertainment destinations, the Tyler Street TDI District is a grittier place. The faded storefronts and blossoming ethnic restaurants give the district a funky feel that can be developed into a real asset through 'place making'.

DW-4: Maintain continuous dialogue with area developers to encourage investment in the TDI District.

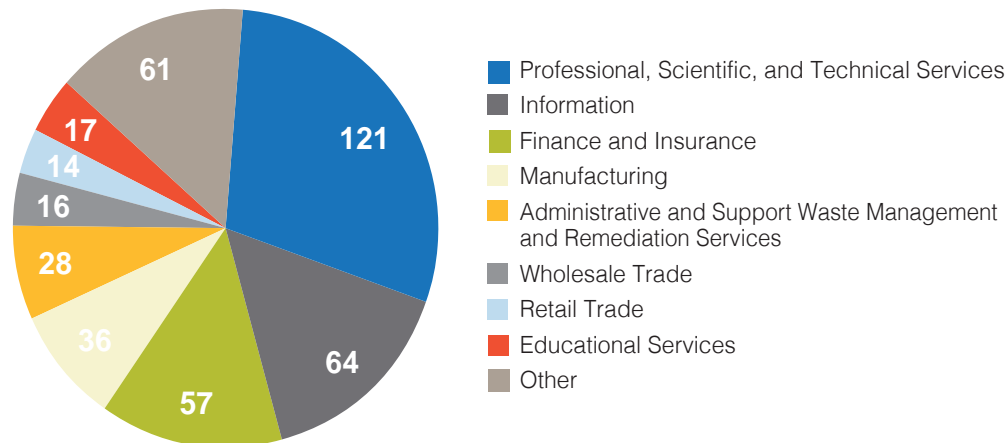
Establishing a dialogue with area developers will help promote the Tyler Street TDI District's assets. Giving the private market a kick-start will help spur the momentum needed to revitalize the district. Thus far, most recruitment efforts have been focused on the periphery of the TDI District in the William Stanley Business Park. The scope of the recruitment efforts should expand to include the available space within the District.

A recent report by Smart Growth America titled, "Core Values: Why American Companies are Moving Downtown," (2015) reveals that an enormous diversity of businesses are choosing to locate in downtowns and urban cores all across the country. The report analyzes 500 companies who deliberately moved from suburban settings to urban settings and finds that the average Walk Score of companies previous locations was 51; the average Walk Score of the companies new locations is 88. WalkScore is a measure of how walkable a place is from a point. The score is generated by analyzing roadways, proximity to amenities, population density and more -- a higher score denotes a more walkable and less car dependent location. Similar increases were noted in their Transit and Bike Scores. Promoting the TDI at an annual, regionally based developer forum would help highlight the neighborhoods assets and potential. The WalkScore on Tyler Street is roughly 48. As more neighborhood amenities are developed this score will rise.

The graphic below shows the types of businesses that have moved to more urban-style locations. As the City of Pittsfield, PEDA and the Tyler Street Business Group continue business recruitment efforts they should be aware of and promote the Tyler Street TDI Districts locational advantages and the types of businesses attracted by its assets.

Companies moving and expanding downtown, by industry⁸

Industries with fewer than 10 instances within the sample have been categorized as "Other."



Source: Core Values (2015) Smart Growth America

DW-5: Market the Tyler Street TDI Plan to encourage public and private investment inclusive of investment prospectus and marketing brochure.

In conjunction with recommendation DW-4, a thorough inventory of available spaces should be conducted and the results maintained and then posted on PEDA and City websites for any interested parties looking to invest in the Tyler Street TDI District. While stakeholders in the TDI District are aware of the location of vacant storefronts and available space, outsiders do not benefit from the same local knowledge. People driving by a parcel may just see boarded up windows instead of an opportunity in a historic building. A parcel profile documenting the zoning, required permits, site history, current owner, any liens and potential environmental contamination should be developed for all available properties.

DW-6: Annually coordinate with the City Community Development Office to understand potential CDBG program applications within the District.

Developing a bottom up approach to prioritizing community development projects takes energy. But the benefits of engaging the community and acting on their wishes builds the momentum of revitalization efforts. Transparency can get 'buy-in' from residents and boost the confidence of private investors.

Having an established community plan that dovetails with the most current trends in CDBG funding priorities will help secure grant money. Coming together as a community on a regular basis to determine the most pressing needs and relevant conditions for grant opportunities will make the neighborhood more competitive. Additionally the periodic review of the "State of the Neighborhood" will help build social capital and capacity.

DW-7: Identify areas for strategic tree plantings in accordance with the Greening the Gateway Cities Program (GGCP)

Greening the Gateway Cities Program (GGCP) is an effort by the Commonwealth to increase the tree canopy by 10% in selected Gateway neighborhoods. The Tyler Street TDI District is eligible and would benefit from the energy savings due to additional street trees. Urban trees lower heating and cooling costs for residents by providing shade in the summer, and breaking up wind in the winter. In addition to energy savings communities will see a reduction in stormwater runoff, improved air quality, an increase in property values and tax receipts, and a safer, healthier environment for residents. As an example, Chelsea, Massachusetts's participation in GGCP resulted in the planting of over 1,200 trees -- at no cost to the municipality.

GGCP targets high density residential blocks for tree planting to achieve maximum benefits per tree. Visually displaying tax assessor data from the City of Pittsfield reveals that there are many streets with large numbers of high density residential units where this program would have the greatest impact. The Mid-Town Residential District and the Residential District directly south of Tyler Street have a larger share of multi-unit housing, matching the GGCP funding priorities.



Potential, high density residential GGCP target areas in the TDI District.

DW-8: Inventory vacant and blighted properties within the district

Focus group interviews, public input sessions and discussions with city staff indicated shared concern over the presence and impact of blight and abandoned structures in the TDI District. Once a property is abandoned there is a complex process of navigating tax foreclosure laws, property liens, and establishing receivership. But the first step is simply to know which properties *are* vacant and abandoned.

Current methods to determine vacancy rates (Valassis Lists, US Census, USPS) are useful on a regional scale, but do not provide data precise enough to guide local strategies. The best technique is to conduct a thorough field observation of the entire district. In places like Detroit this has involved groups of citizen planners who have a smartphone and a passion for their neighborhood. Citizens gather data and submit it to the city Planning Department or the regional planning commission. In Pittsfield, college students and neighborhood groups could conduct much of the field work.

Chapter 3 1/2 of the Pittsfield City Code requires that vacant non-owner occupied residential structures register with the city Department of Health. Vacant commercial structures are subject to similar regulation. Just how many property owners have complied with this program is uncertain.

The city of Minneapolis has adopted a proactive approach towards blight; owners of vacant structures are required to pay an annual fee to cover the basic services, administrative and physical, provided by the city. The properties are registered and mapped allowing city government to prioritize blight initiatives.

Conducting an audit of funding Pittsfield commits annually to nuisance properties will help determine whether developing a more robust database of vacant and abandoned properties is feasible. Without solid data, the City cannot make informed policy decisions regarding vacant properties.

Landbanks are some of the most efficient entities dealing with abandoned property. But, the state of Massachusetts has not legislatively authorized land banks, as of yet. However, as the Tyler Street TDI Initiative moves forward, the city of Pittsfield should consider investigating ways to develop the framework necessary to support the establishment of a land bank, including an inventory of abandoned properties.

DW-9: Consider establishing a home buying “one stop shop”

There are a large number of not-for-profit and public agencies tasked with connecting potential homebuyers with the technical and financial resources they need. Providing a physical space within the TDI District for current and potential residents to explore the resources available to them, could make homeownership more attainable. Different housing organizations within the Berkshires perform different functions in different places. Without guidance potential homeowners may not be accessing everything that is available to them.

The Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority (BCRHA), Berkshire Housing Development Corporation (BHDC), Department of Community Development (DCD), MassHousing Partners and the HAP Housing and Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC) all share an interest in assisting low and moderate income families in the home-buying process. Turning this shared interest into a more formalized collaboration may make more efficient use of resources.

Establishing a larger presence in the TDI District would address transportation and work scheduling issues preventing TDI District residents from exploring assistance options available to them. In addition to a physical presence in the TDI District, the housing groups could build off of branding efforts to reach a larger, regional market.

DW-11: Explore Rental Property Stabilization Program

Most residents of the Tyler Street TDI District are renters. The rental properties they live in were mostly built as workforce housing when General Electric was still a major presence in Pittsfield. When General Electric left, jobs left with the company, but the housing stock remains. The housing is affordable, but aging. This situation has provided opportunity for landlords to purchase homes at a low cost and rent to low income residents. This has created an imbalance of home ownership versus renter occupied housing. Ensuring that rental housing is clean, safe and healthy will require a coordinated effort between landlords, not for profits like the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, the City, residents and the Rental Housing Association of Berkshire County. Unfortunately, a slow housing market in the TDI district coupled with regional population loss conspires against depending strictly on market forces. A creative intervention that brings property owners to the table and informs them of ways to improve their housing stock while not losing money will be necessary. Previous studies like the “City of Pittsfield Housing Needs Analysis & Development Recommendations: Westside and Morningside Neighborhoods,” (2009) brought stakeholders together to discuss the issue. Their findings are still as relevant and perhaps even more pronounced today.

The long term goals of maintaining affordability and stimulating the private market to upgrade housing stock with public subsidy are difficult to balance. Housing alone will not serve as a silver bullet to neighborhood revitalization but in conjunction with efforts to improve education and employment opportunities it is an essential element.



Tyler Street Corridor Recommendations

“The greatest opportunity for creating and sustaining public safety is to design communities that are supportive of families, diversity, and multiple generations- the ‘village’ can only occur if the built environment supports the needs of people.”

-Zelinka and Brennan, in “Safescape” (2001)

The Tyler Street Corridor is highly travelled and home to a variety of commercial establishments. In it’s hey-day it supported far more businesses than it currently does. Creating a more attractive place where people want to visit and do business again begins with improving public spaces- including the roadways, sidewalks, and lighting.

Tyler Street is not without its challenges. Crime and the perception of crime were the most common responses to the question: “What is the greatest issue facing the Tyler Street District.” Decades of study have been directed towards identifying and addressing the physical elements that contribute to a sense of insecurity and the conclusion is simple- if busier streets are safer, make the streets comfortable and convenient for more people to use.

Catalytic public investments along the Tyler Street Corridor will boost community morale and signal to the private market that Pittsfield and its residents are committed to making the district a vibrant, safe and successful place. Drawing businesses to an area with tax breaks and financial incentives is no sure bet for long term revitalization, but investing in the public realm to support business *and* existing residents is. Improving the quality of life in the neighborhood as a way to attract new residents without giving away potential tax revenue.



High quality public spaces can bring a neighborhood to life



TS-1: Install Unique Pedestrian Scale Lighting

The provision of adequate lighting was a need repeatedly mentioned during public comment. Adequate lighting is vitally important to public safety and pedestrian activity. Installing regularly spaced pedestrian scale lighting along Tyler Street will help address public safety concerns. Installing pedestrian scale street lights presents an opportunity to showcase a neighborhood's unique character and history. Lighting can double as public art. Care should be taken to avoid generic street-lights or imitating Downtown Pittsfield.



TS-2: Strengthen the Pedestrian Environment

Well-maintained sidewalks are of central importance to a walkable community. They allow people of all ages, incomes and abilities to navigate their environment with dignity. Sidewalks should not be interrupted by too many curb cuts, they ideally have a buffer between traffic and the walkway, and they should be maintained. Sidewalks should be wide enough to accommodate foot traffic in both directions and possibly the installation of outdoor seating for restaurants in commercial areas, especially the Food and Entertainment District.

Sidewalks are the The 2015 Aging Communities Survey conducted by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission as designed by the AARP found that an overwhelming number of respondents were interested in having walkable communities. Enhancing the Tyler Street TDI District's walkability could attract retirees to buy homes in the neighborhood.



Source: localecologist.org

TS-3: Create Landscape Buffers Between Parking Areas and Pedestrian Walkways

Parking was a repeated concern throughout the public input process. Pending the results of a parking audit (TS-4) there may be a need for more off street parking. If more parking is provided, it should not detract from the streetscape. Vegetative screening or landscape buffers enhance the streetscape by shielding unsightly parking lots from view and providing shade. The vertical element of trees also provides a sense of 'enclosure,' making the street more comfortable and attractive. In no instance should auto area be allowed to freely flow into the pedestrian realm, such as at the Patriot Car Wash. This creates both a public safety concern for auto pedestrian conflicts and breaks up the visual integrity of the corridor.



TS-4: Conduct a Parking Audit

Most new commercial construction along Tyler Street has resulted in a loss of the traditional store-lined streetscape. Of the 15 structures fronting Tyler Street built after 1950 more than half have replaced retail facades with parking lots. As builders attempt to account for a neighborhood built before the advent of near-universal personal automobile ownership the resulting lot layouts detract from the Districts appearance.

Public input and interviews with business owners indicate a need for a parking solution. Tearing down historic facades that lend to the character of the district should not be part of the solution. Instead, a parking audit, completed by an impartial consultant or qualified city staff should be conducted to assess the available parking and outline strategies. Funding for a Parking Audit may be available from Smart Growth America (SGA). A parking audit will identify and quantify parking needs within the TDI District.

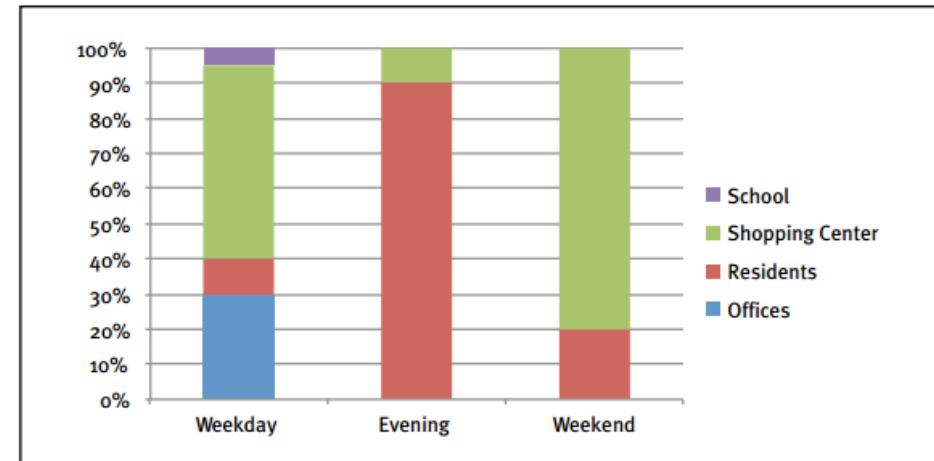


Stakeholders indicated that parking is an issue.



Poorly managed parking in the Retail District.

Example of shifting parking demands throughout the day and week



The table illustrates how 100 parking spaces in a mixed-use district can be distributed based on usage at different times.

Graphic Source: ITDP.org

TS-5: Actively Pursue Alternative Transportation Infrastructure Connections

Transportation impacts where people work, obtain childcare, access medical services, educational opportunities, places of worship and more. Residents of the TDI District walk and bike to work at almost triple the rate of all residents of Pittsfield and Berkshire County. They also earn far less than the average Berkshire County resident, making purchasing and maintaining a private automobile a difficult goal.

Enhancing the public transportation facilities along Tyler Street is a high priority project. Making these improvements are critical to meeting basic community development goals. Tyler Street residents interested in pursuing higher and continuing education at Berkshire Community College at the western side of Pittsfield are often unable to take night classes due to lack of service and have difficulty making it to classes on time due to inconsistent pick up times.

As the population ages, their ability to safely operate a motor vehicle diminishes. Ensuring safe and comfortable public transit that connects riders to places like the downtown Intermodal Transportation Center and the Berkshire Medical Center will make the Tyler Street District an attractive place to age. Tyler Street TDI District residents are cut off from employment opportunities due to inadequate public transit facilities and service. According to the American Community Survey a higher percentage of residents work in the retail and service industries. These industries require flexible schedules and weekend shifts. The BRTA buses do not operate most holidays, on Saturday evenings, and all Sundays.

Increasing the number of people utilizing non-motorized modes can potentially lead to improved outcomes in public health, safety, and economic development; promote resource efficiency; strengthen inclusive neighborhood relations; and bolster public transit services.¹ The city should coordinate with the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) as they have expressed willingness to work with the City of Pittsfield to establish sheltered bus stops.

¹ Sandt et Al. (2016) Pursuing Equity in Pedestrian and Bicycle Planning



BRTA Bus and passenger facilities in Williamstown Source: Williams.edu

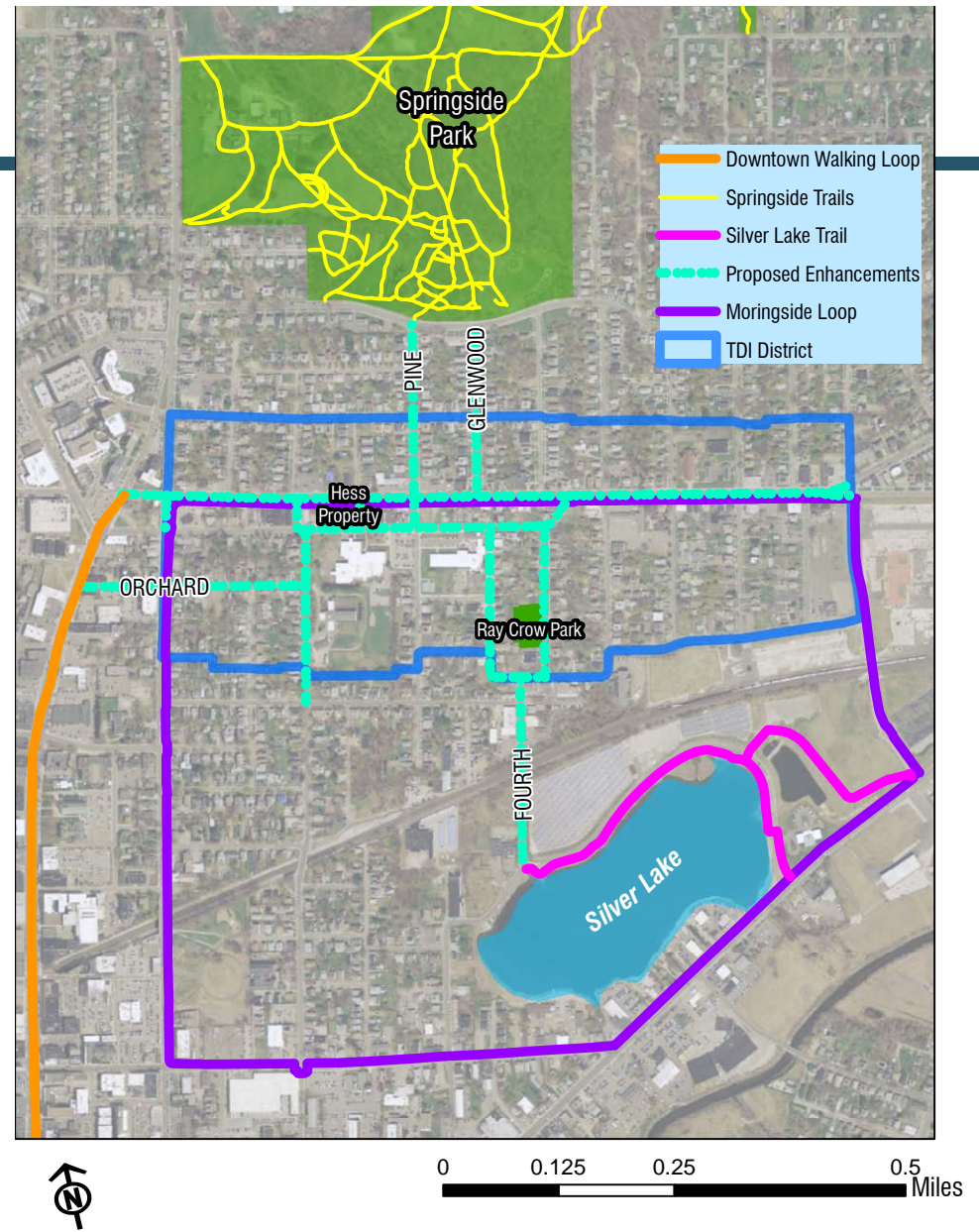
TS-6: Further Incorporate the Tyler Street TDI District into the existing open space network with enhanced pedestrian connections

The Tyler Street TDI District is the missing link in the active transportation network between Springside Park and Silver Lake.

The 237.5 acre Springside Park is the largest park in Berkshire County. The 2016 Springside Park Master Plan carefully inventoried all existing foot-trails, revealing incredible opportunities to connect residents with existing amenities. Enhancing connections to Springside Park via Pine St and Glenwood Ave would increase residents quality of life and bolster property values.

The Morningside Walking Loop spearheaded by Be Well Berkshires was completed with the reconstruction of the Woodlawn Avenue Bridge. This successful program to encourage walking should be continued with enhanced north south pedestrian connections through the Tyler Street TDI District. Improvements will be required between Tyler Street and the western end of the Silver Lake Trail. Ray Crow Park can serve as an attractive waypoint between the two areas.

Recommendation FFE-1 calls for the redevelopment of the Hess Property into a multi-use public space and pedestrian-way. The property could become an important link in the open space network especially with strong connections to Springside Park.



The Public Realm

What is the public realm and why it is so important in the Tyler Street TDI District?

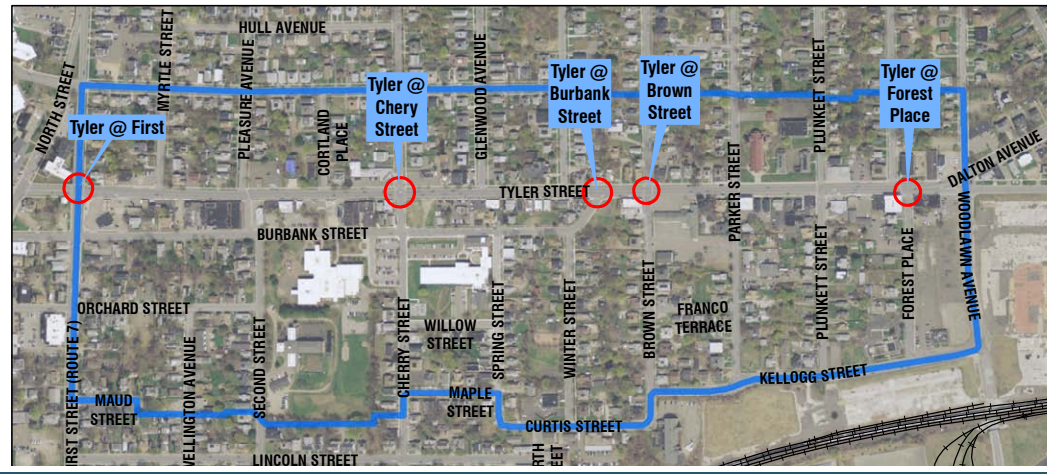
The public realm is where people interact with one another and define themselves as members of the community. It is the system of roadways, pedestrian routes, street trees, parks, open space, storefronts and landmarks. A high quality public realm can anchor commercial and residential developments and build a sense of community. The Tyler Street TDI District’s vision to become a vibrant and unique place that celebrates its cultural diversity and the arts should be reflected in the public realm. As public and private investments are made in the District, the public realm must be shaped to meet the residents vision of the TDI District

There are aesthetic and practical reasons to improve the public realm. Everyone’s quality of life is improved by attractive and user-friendly roadways. Enhancing transportation facilities for pedestrians, bikes and the user of mass transit can expand educational and employment opportunities. Installing pedestrian scale lighting adds charm to a street, but lighting also provides the sense of security needed to draw families and the elderly back into the public realm.

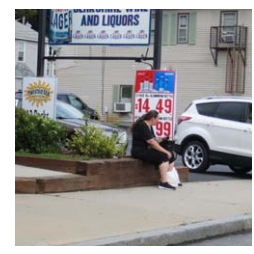
A ream of planning, transportation and public health documents make the case for enhancing the public realm. The Morningside Walkability Audit (2014)- Conducted by the BRPC, Be Well Berkshires and the Tyler Street Business Group is an evaluation of the walking infrastructure for the Morningside Walking Loop. In addition to recommending a variety of physical improvements, the The Pittsfield Walk/Bike Assessment (2015) was conducted in to evaluate walking and biking infrastructure in around high-risk intersections and to make policy and physical improvement recommendations. The 2016 BRPC Regional Transportation Plan highlights the top 50 most dangerous intersections in Berkshire County, 5 of which are along Tyler Street. The report shows that for a neighborhood that hosts a larger proportion of walkers, bikers and public transportation users , residents of the District are subject to disproportionately dangerous public roadways. Improving the roadways is not simply an economic development issue, but an environmental justice imperative.

In addition to the immediate physical risk posed by dangerous roadways there are myriad public health benefits to encouraging walking. The Berkshire County Community Health Needs Assessment (2015) found that, “circulatory diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, nervous system diseases and mental disorders,” were the top causes of mortality in the county. The report found that top three disease categories can be significantly affected by health behaviors, social and economic factors, and physical environment. Improving the Public Realm in the Tyler Street TDI District is an opportunity to address long identified neighborhood needs.

Five of the Top 50 Most Dangerous Intersections in Berkshire County



CCW from Left: Better signals for car and pedestrians are needed at crosswalks. Bikes on the sidewalk pose a danger to pedestrians and cars. Lack of benches and bus shelters force people to use private space.



Recommendations for The Public Realm

Parklets are small parks created by transforming on-street parking spaces into an extension of the sidewalk. Large planters or other barriers are used to block off a section of parking from automotive traffic and decking is put in place to bring up the level of the asphalt to that of the curb. Once in place parklets can be used as an extension of a restaurant to provide al fresco dining or as public places open to all. Along the Tyler Street Corridor there are at least 5 restaurants that could possibly benefit from the installation of parklets. Parklets could also serve as: temporary mass transit waiting areas by including benches; or as places for bike storage by outfitting them with bike racks. It may also be possible to use the parklet concept as a community engagement technique, where residents can crowdfund parklets in different places and contribute to their installation and design.



Source: San Francisco Department of Public Works

Signs can define the character of a neighborhood. They are an important design element that can improve the District's visual quality and passerby's perceptions of the area. While design guidelines can take a long time to develop, a basic sign ordinance can be enacted far more quickly. Even a placeholder sign ordinance that includes language to regulate window signs, the square footage of signs on storefronts, and to possibly ban signs obscuring architectural elements, etc. could start the regulation process and prevent new businesses from contributing to visual pollution. Roof mounted signs are particularly damaging to the public realm since they are designed only for automotive traffic and do not respect the views of pedestrians.



Providing the public space is the first step, programming those spaces with engaging events and activities bringing together residents and visitors is the next step. The Tyler Street Business Group already organizes the annual Discover Tyler Street event and the Halloween Parade. They have the proven capacity to engage the public in community building activities. As more public space is developed (potentially at the Hess Station, the County Sheriff Facility, the expanded Ray Crow Park, or parklets) activities should emphasize developing and supporting the Tyler Street TDI District vision.

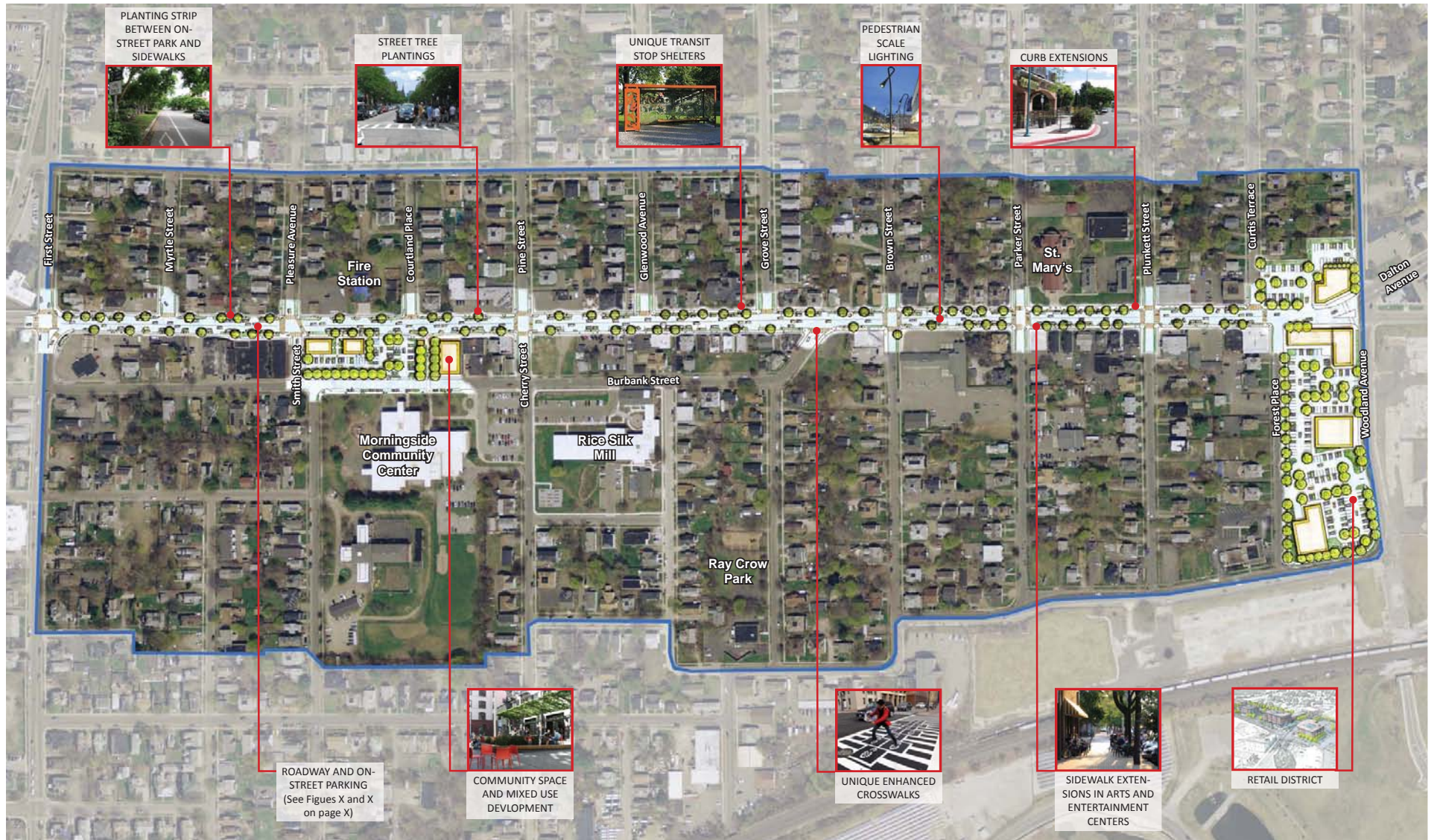


Source: www.pedbikeimages.org/LauraSandt

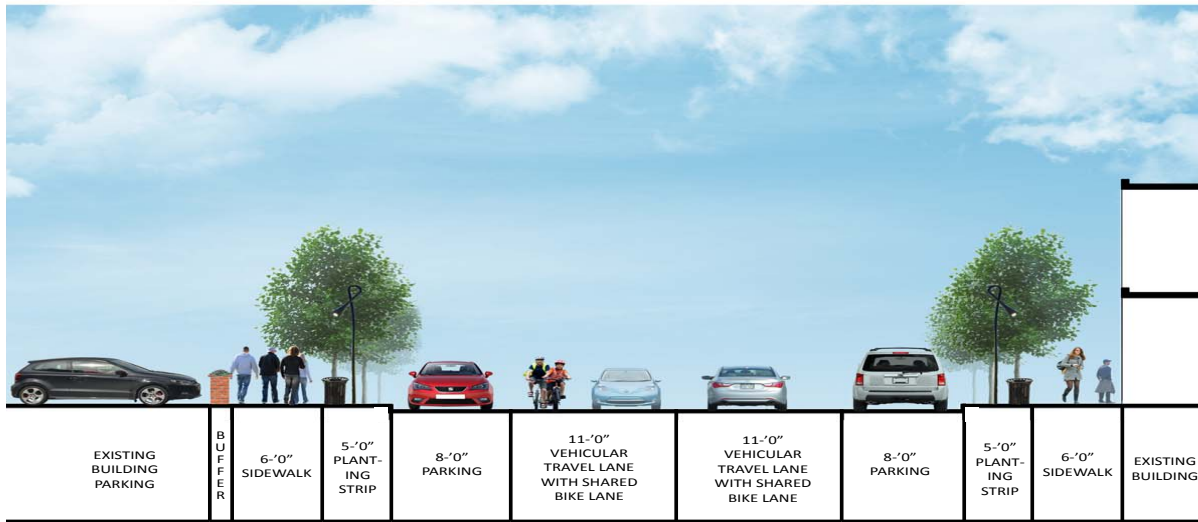
The Tyler Street TDI District would benefit from a modern wayfinding system. Wayfinding is how we navigate from place to place. Wayfinding is an essential part of everyday life making it possible for us to move about in and engage with our communities. It's more than just signage and includes developing an identity, or brand, which is essential for successful wayfinding and place-making. Wayfinding combines marketing, consensus building, planning, function, and design. It is a process of navigating through public and private spaces and maximizing that experience by explaining the environment ahead.



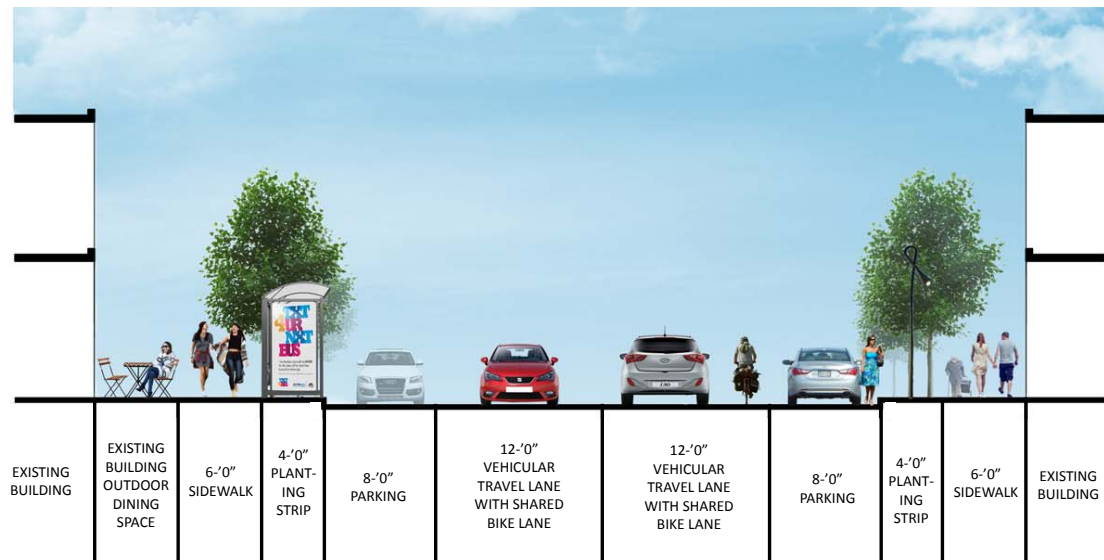
Streetscape Enhancements



Streetscape Enhancements: Cross-Section A



Streetscape Enhancements: Cross-Section B



Streetscape Enhancements

Tyler Street runs approximately .75 miles through the core of the TDI District. There are two travel lanes and some areas include on-street parking. Pursuing “Complete Street” policies in the corridor would improve the overall livability of the district.

The road configuration could be adjusted to accommodate a wider range of users. The two cross-sections represent potential arraignments of street trees, pedestrian infrastructure, bike lanes and parking. The illustrations bring together the findings from the following plans:

- Pittsfield Walk Bike Assessment (2015)
- Morningside Walkability Audit (2014)
- Berkshire County Age Friendly Communities Survey (2015)
- Berkshire County Community Health Needs Assessment (2015)
- Berkshire Regional Transportation Plan (2016)

Cross-Section A shows two 11’ wide travels lanes and on-street parking on both side of the street. Reducing the width of travel lanes calms traffic and allows for wider sidewalks. A 5’ planting strip will accommodate street furniture, transit shelters and trees.

Cross-Section B shows two 12’ travel lanes and narrower (4’) planting strips between the on-street parking lanes and the sidewalks.

Both cross-sections illustrations how walkability, public safety, aesthetics and public transportation improvements could be made along Tyler Street.

Mid-Town Residential District- MT

Sub-District Description

The Mid-Town Residential District is one of the densest residential areas of the Tyler Street TDI District. Poised between the developing Downtown and the Tyler Street TDI District this area provides housing with access to everything Pittsfield has to offer. As under-utilized and vacant spaces are turned into greenspace and dated housing is rehabilitated, existing and future residents will have an attractive place to call home. The traditional neighborhood design provides the physical layout for walkability and a close knit community anchored by the Morningside Community School.

This area was highlighted during community outreach as having more code-enforcement and demolition related concerns. Research of existing data supports these perceptions as housing values are decreasing.

Data from the Massachusetts Historical Commission reveals that there are 10 structures of historic significance in the Mid-Town residential district.



Total Housing Units: 138
Acres: 13.5

MT-1 Targeted CDBG and other State funding



Boarded up residential structure on Orchard Street

For decades, Pittsfield has been a shrinking city. In post-industrial cities and distressed neighborhoods, the reason for stalled redevelopment isn't for lack of ideas, but often for the lack of resources caused by a shrinking tax base and aging infrastructure. As recommended policies and programs stack up, the amount of funding available for each gets smaller. Volunteer committees and not-for-profit groups can only commit so much time to a project. Selecting the most catalytic initiatives will make revitalization a more manageable endeavor. This will require periodic returns to previous studies and plans and reassessing community priorities as some goals are met and new opportunities present themselves.

Community Development Block Grant funds and other state grant funding programs are moving targets. New requirements are announced every cycle and new grant programs are developed. Staying engaged with the neighborhood to align their projects with state funding priorities will help win more grant money. This will require regular dialogue between the Department of Community Development, neighborhood groups (Morningside Initiative and the Tyler Street Business Group) and city council representatives.

MT-2

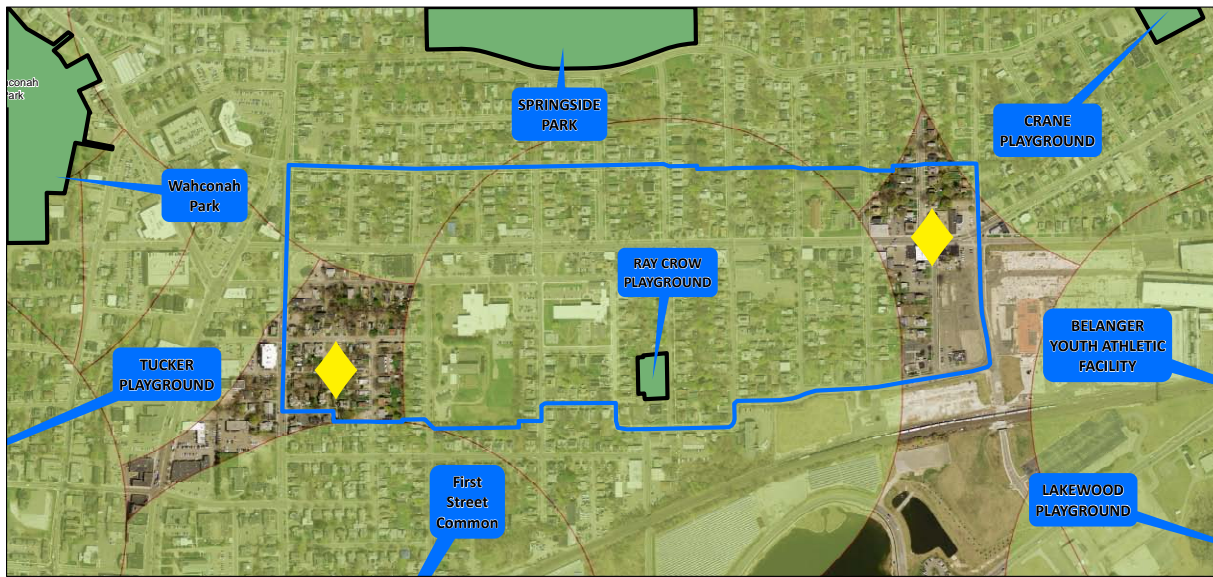
Consider a small pocket park to service this neighborhood

Accessible open space in the Midtown Residential District is deficient. Most Midtown residents are not within a ¼ mile walk to a park of any size. Typically a small park is considered accessible if it is within a 5-minute walk from home. The large number of young families and multi-unit rental properties exacerbate the need for outdoor public space. The previously published, "Housing Needs Analysis and Development Recommendations," (2009) urges the development of a pocket park on Orchard Street . The 56 and 60 Orchard Street parcels at the time of the 2009 report contained two soon to be demolished structures. Today the lots are empty and used by residents for off street parking. Provide municipal parking and developing a pocket park should be investigated for the 56 and 60 Orchard St. parcels.



Underutilized lots along Orchard Street

Proximity to Open Space

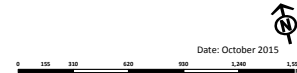


56 & 60 Orchard Street



Tyler Street TDI Investment Strategy
City of Pittsfield

Legend
 .25 Mile Buffer



◆ = Area under-served by parks

MT-3

Undertake Street Improvements along Orchard Street to connect the downtown/ North Street on the West and Morningside school to the East



Orchard Street is a recognized pedestrian thoroughfare connecting the Tyler Street TDI District with Downtown and to the Morningside School. As streetscape improvements move towards Tyler Street along North Street from downtown, ensuring connectivity will be vitally important.

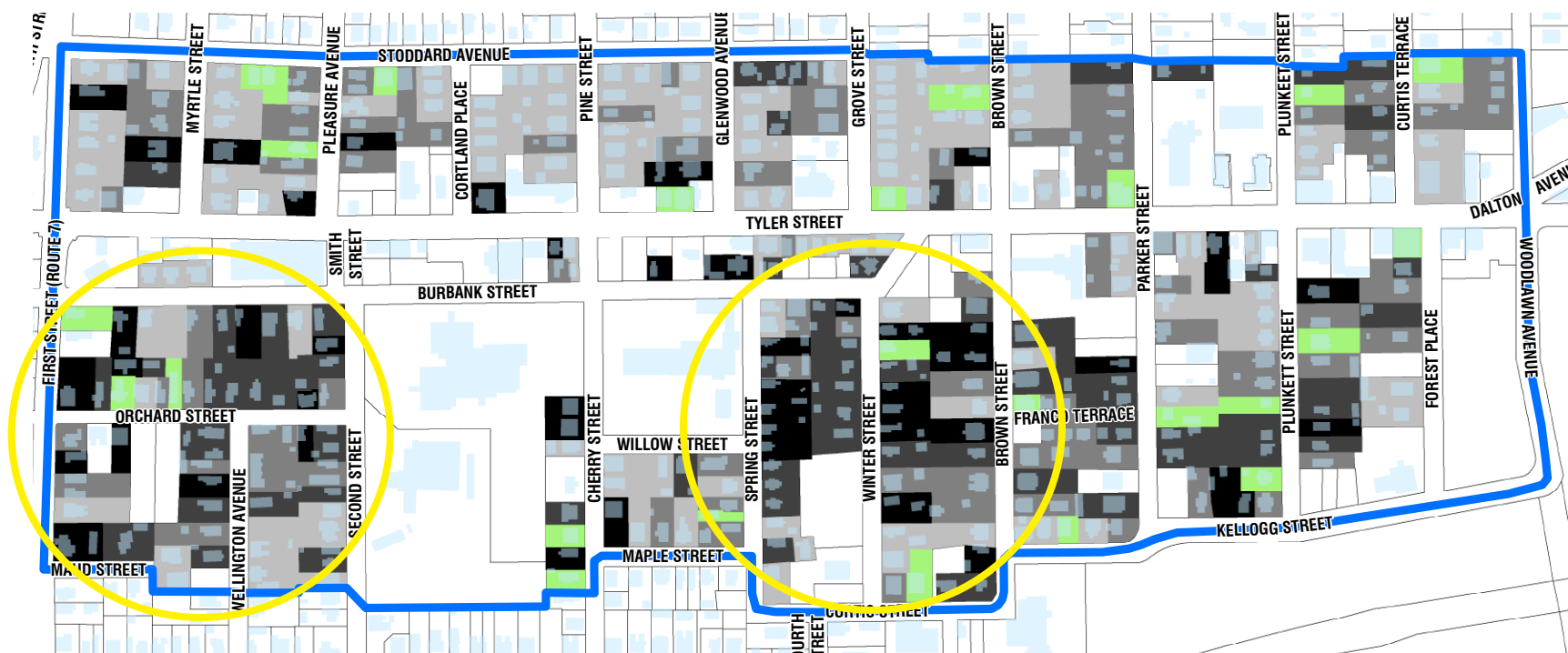
The logical automotive gateway to the Tyler Street District from downtown is from North or First Streets onto Tyler. This is not the ideal pedestrian connection due to longer walking times, more interaction points with automobiles and a larger elevation change. Improvements along Orchard St. should include new sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting, street trees, and clearly defined pedestrian crossings, all consistent with Safe Routes to School principles.

MT-4 Consider targeting City demolition program to this neighborhood for one year and identifying an end use that is beneficial to the neighborhood.

Vacant structures and abandoned land in a community has negative impacts on residents quality of life. Their presence have a chilling effect on potential investors as it sends the message that no one cares about the neighborhood. Vacant properties also impose large costs on municipalities in the form of increased police calls, arson risks and illegal dumping. Properties are vacated or abandoned when the costs of maintaining them is greater than their potential value. If left unchecked the spread of blight can spiral out of control in a neighborhood. The TDI Initiative plans on reversing the trend of abandonment by eliminating abandoned properties from the neighborhood.

Percent Change in Residential Property Valuation between 2010-2016

Source: 2010 & 2015 Tax Assessment Data, City of Pittsfield



Percent Change and (Parcel Count)

Black	-84% - -12% (50)
Dark Gray	-11.99% - -8% (74)
Medium Gray	-7.99% - -5% (93)
Light Gray	-4.99% - 0% (118)
Light Green	+0.01% - +106% (25)

Population and job loss are typically faulted for blight. But, research on blight in Philadelphia shows that the presence of abandoned buildings in a neighborhood increases the chances that more abandonment will follow.¹ Properties in the Mid-Town Residential District collectively lost 14% value between 2008 and 2016. The time is now for a strategic intervention. In addition to addressing areas of extreme decline, residents in neighborhoods of relative stability should be engaged to prevent the downward spiral of blight before it occurs.

¹ Whitman (2001). Blight Free Philadelphia: A Public Private Strategy to Create and Enhance Neighborhood Value.

MT-5 Targeted Code Enforcement

The City of Pittsfield needs to develop a robust tracking system for problem properties. This includes logging the number and type of police calls and code violations, regular updates to the vacant commercial property registry, and tax delinquencies.

While this data already exists, it will be necessary for city and county departments to coordinate on a regular basis. This coordination may be as simple as a standardized data report on a monthly basis, or more in depth face to face meetings between departments.

This recommendation will require the compilation and organization of an initial database most likely based on tax parcel data. Field surveys to confirm building conditions, abandoned property locations, and number of units will be necessary.

MassDevelopment has the technical capacity to launch a program of this nature. The City of Pittsfield has an existing Geographic Information System Department and maintains the software appropriate to establish a database. The Pittsfield Police Department maintains records of all emergency calls in database format. If the Code Enforcement Office records data in a similar database format it will simply be an issue of regular reporting.

Once the program is established and roles are assigned, it may be appropriate to make monthly reports to city government and periodically at neighborhood group meetings.

This recommendation also applies to the Tyler Street TDI District as a whole, but is of critical importance here.

Basic Property and Neighborhood Datasets

CATEGORY	KEY INFORMATION	DATA SOURCE
Basic Property Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic property characteristics (lot and building size, number of units, year built, land use) Ownership (public, private, private – absentee) Owner vs. Renter-occupied Assessed value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and County property records Auditor, Treasurer or Assessor U.S. Census PolicyMap
Sales and Mortgages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual single family sales Annual home purchase mortgages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City and County Property Records Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data PolicyMap
Tax status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax arrears Tax exemptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Auditor, Treasurer or Assessor Tax Claim
Mortgages, other liens and foreclosure filings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mortgage and tax foreclosure filings Lien amount and status Sheriff's sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sheriff Auditor, Treasurer or Assessor
Building/Housing/ Code Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building Permits Complaints Citations Condemnations Nuisance abatement actions taken by type Receivership status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building, Housing and Code Enforcement Departments
Vacancy and abandonment (for both lots and structures)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utility shut-offs Mail stops and forwarding Visual evidence of neglect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public utilities U.S. Postal Service U.S. Census PolicyMap Surveys or citizen reports
Crime and Fire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crime and fire reports at specific addresses and by block 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Police Departments Fire Departments
Redevelopment or other formally-designated districts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City/County planning and economic development CDCs and other nonprofits

Source: Center for Community Progress (2014)

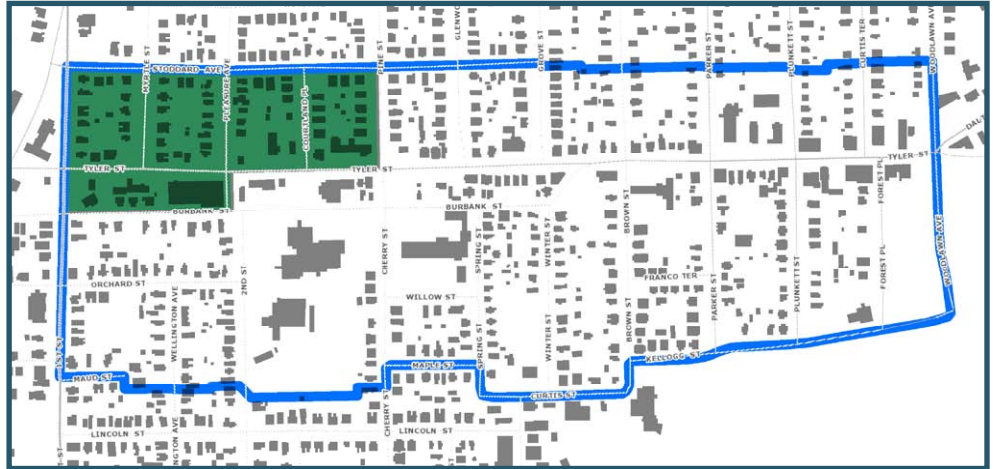
Health and Hospital District- HH

Sub-District Description

The Berkshire Medical Center (BMC) is the region's largest employer. As the North Street streetscape improvement project moves towards the junction of North Street and Tyler Street there will be an opportunity to leverage those improvements to enhance the Tyler Street District Gateway.

Stakeholders from the Berkshire Medical Center recognize that providing worker housing is a pressing need. The mix of older, traditional housing between First Street and Pleasure Avenue can help meet that need. Adaptive reuse of existing structures in combination with selective demolition will allow the BMC to improve its facilities and strengthen investment in the neighborhood. Interest in community health and elder care have prompted health providers to emphasize the importance of the built environment and its interaction with healthy lifestyles. Focusing on integrating health care programs into a walkable community with access to a variety of services will build the connections between the Tyler Street TDI District and the BMC.

As the Tyler Street TDI plan unfolds, opportunities such as using community gardens for fresh hospital food, and developing shopping and dining options for hospital workers and visitors will become neighborhood catalysts.



Intersection of 1st Street and Tyler Street

Total Housing Units: 119
Acres: 17.3

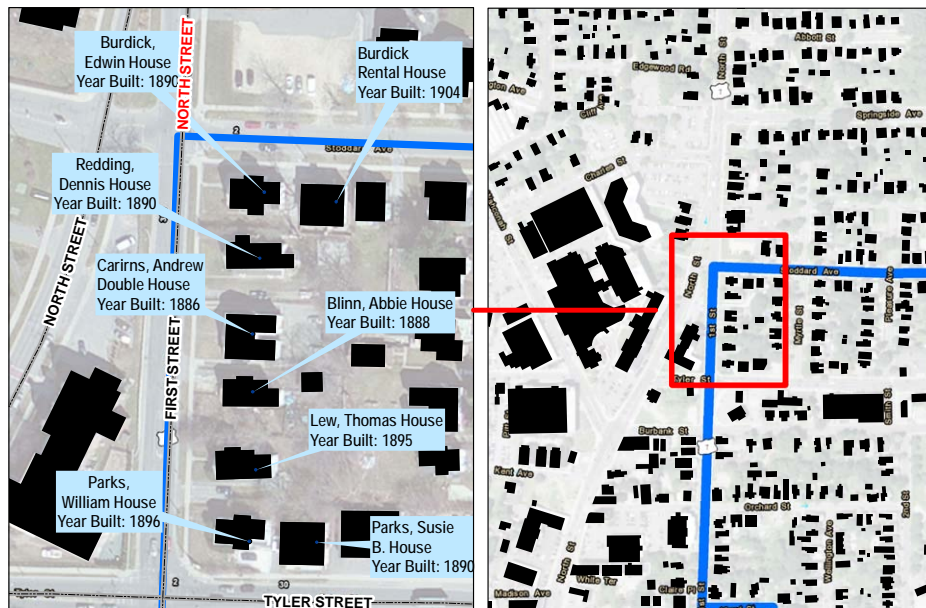
HH-1 Retain and Repurpose Existing Homes Along First Street. Encourage Reuse as Professional Office to Compliment Hospital

The Berkshire Medical Center is a proven, committed member of the community. Interviews with BMC staff and administration indicate an opportunity to expand its community partnership; preserving aging structures of historic significance to meet their expanding office and housing needs.

BMC has been growing and as the regional population ages there will be ever increasing demands on the facility. Using the row of buildings along First Street for offices, staff housing, or community health care facilities would further integrate BMC into the fabric of the community. BMC has an excellent opportunity to help stabilize this subdistrict and strengthen their role as a committed community partner.

Redeveloping the existing historic buildings will contribute to the heritage and character of the Tyler Street District. This historic preservation will connect the community with its past and creates a greater appreciation and understanding of the area.

Large institutions like the BMC have the resources to anchor a community in a contextually sensitive manner. An excellent example is the adaptive reuse of existing structures in Albany, NY by the College of Saint Rose. Three decades of concerted effort by the St. Rose administration has developed facilities that respect the surrounding community. Communication and patience have been key to its success. Today, passerby to the St. Rose campus walk between commercial nodes and residential districts without even noticing the interjection of administrative offices and small dormitory buildings.



Structures of Historic Significance from Massachusetts Historical Commission



Adaptive Reuse in North Adams, MA



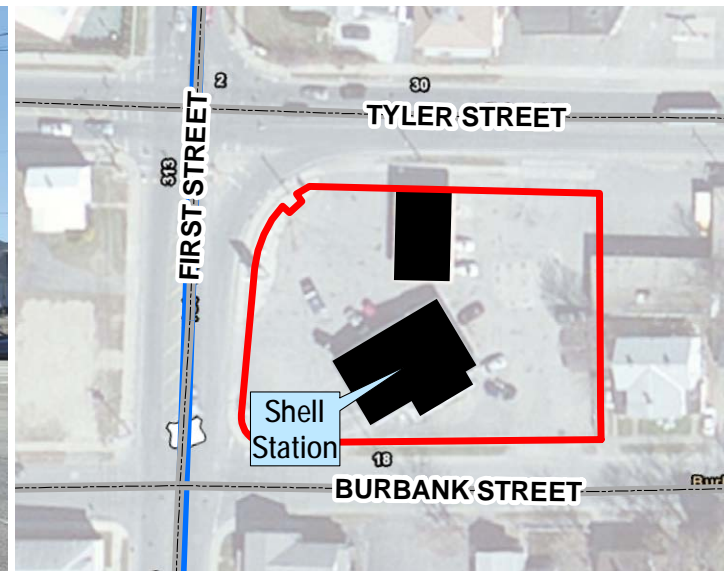
Homes converted into dormitories by the College of St. Rose, Albany, NY

HH-2 To encourage private redevelopment, build off of Tyler Street streetscape improvements by extending onto Myrtle and Pleasure Avenues

The TDI program emphasizes catalytic investments that will have an immediate, transformative impact on the neighborhood. But the anticipated wider effects of the TDI program will spread further than the initial investments. Myrtle and Pleasure Streets, perpendicular offshoots from Tyler Street, are lined by architecturally interesting residential structures. The neighborhoods proximity to both BMC and Springside Park make this a prime location for future development and the city should consider improving the streets to leverage further private investment. Public investments in the streetscape here will make the neighborhood more attractive and build off of investments discussed in HH-1.

HH-3 Work with property owner on southeast corner of Tyler and 1st (Shell) to create welcoming gateway landscaping and signage.

First impressions are everything. As people encounter Tyler Street coming from downtown they are greeted by a vast swath of uninterrupted asphalt surrounding a small gas station and convenience store. The gateway to the Tyler Street District should reflect the districts unique and funky character and leave a lasting positive impression on visitors. Gateway design elements that convey the districts uniqueness could include landscaping, public art and special design guidelines.



HH-4 Conduct a feasibility study on the Goodwill building to determine reuse potential. Possible uses could include grocery store, community health center.

The Goodwill building at 158 Tyler Street is a brick building built in 1955. Goodwill actively uses the building for worker training, donation processing, and community services. However, interviews with stakeholders and representatives from the organization indicate that Goodwill is interested in exploring a change of location. If the .83 acre parcel became available for redevelopment, its prime location could allow it to serve as a neighborhood anchor. The one story structure presents a blank brick facade to Tyler and Smith Streets. The building could be renovated to interact with the streetscape, or into a mixed use multi-story structure. Community input has indicated the need and support for a community gathering point, a health clinic or a grocery store.

Exploring the buildings reuse as a mixed use facility would help restore some of the traditional neighborhood fabric of Tyler Street.



The Goodwill Building could improve its street frontage to interact with the street more

HH-5: Explore potential for independent senior living

Berkshire County has one of the largest and fastest growing elderly populations in the state.¹ The need for senior friendly housing is a growing concern. The Health and Hospital District is a unique opportunity to leverage its locational advantage to both benefit seniors and stabilize the neighborhood.

Programs to house the elderly are moving towards an “aging in community model” that emphasizes the importance of deinstitutionalizing elder care and allowing seniors independence. This approach is a modification of the “age in place” approach that attempts to keep seniors in their own homes for as long as possible. “Age in place” efforts often result in seniors occupying oversized family homes.

Some factors important to “age in community” facilities are: access to public transportation, a walkable neighborhood, proximity to passive recreation opportunities and proximity to cultural amenities. The Health and Hospitals connection to downtown, its proximity to BRTA routes, Springside Park and the Berkshire Medical Center make the sub-district an ideal location to explore innovative senior housing programs.

- Housing the elderly in the community can provide employment opportunities for skilled and unskilled workers.
- The elderly can contribute to the community and stay socially active by donating volunteer hours.
- Community gardens at the site of the Sheriff Facility could provide food and activities for the elderly residents of the Health and Hospital District.
- Housing seniors close to mass transit will reduce the number of senior specific transit services needed.
- Proximity to the hospital will allow nurses to visit patients in their residences allowing health care to be provided on a preventative basis.

The Age Friendly Berkshires - Vision 20-20 Initiative task force works to find ways to smoothly accommodate the growing elderly population in the region. Working with this task force to develop senior housing in the Health and Hospital District could have multiple layers of benefits and should be pursued as part of the overall revitalization strategy.

1 Berkshire Regional Planning Commission “Aging in Place Forum Report, July 2016”



*Senior housing located in walkable neighborhoods reduces the cost of care and could help stabilize the district.
Photo Credit: _MV_ on Creative Commons*

Farm, Food and Education District- FFE

Sub-District Description

Residents of the Tyler Street TDI District are proud of the Morningside Community School. The area holds extraordinary opportunity to develop the school and surrounding facilities into a unique community anchor. By integrating the underutilized parcels along Tyler Street into a node of activity that invites residents and visitors towards the school and the redeveloped Sheriff's County Jail facility creates a truly transformative aspect of the plan.

The potential to convert a large swath of underutilized land into a community asset is exciting. Engaging neighborhood groups and the Morningside School in the process of reusing the County facility could result in a project that adds substantial value to the neighborhood and encourages positive impressions of the district on a regional scale.

Further, the vacant Hess Property provides an excellent opportunity to reuse the land for a public space and enhance both the Tyler Street corridor and the Morningside Community School.



Total Housing Units: 36
Acres: 14

FFE-1 Explore possibilities to transform the Hess property into a multi-purpose public space

For years the Hess Station at 250 Tyler Street has sat vacant, attracting vandalism, illicit behavior and blighting surrounding properties. The Environmental Protection Agency's defines 'Brownfields' as 'real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.' Under this definition the Hess property would be considered a brownfield. MassDEP oversaw the successful removal of 3 underground fuel tanks in 2013 and considers the site clean. Despite this, the parcel has sat vacant and for sale for years. The parcels surrounding the Hess property have become underutilized as a result.



The Hess Property sits vacant and overgrown.

The property location in front of Morningside Community School makes this an even more pressing issue deserving immediate attention. Schools serve as community gathering places that build social capital between parents, students, and teachers. Morningside School's ability to serve as a community anchor should be bolstered by a quality built environment allowing parents and children to take pride in their neighborhood.

The site has the potential to be redeveloped for a combined parking lot and festival space. To foster sustainable, context sensitive design, redevelopment should include green infrastructure elements. The site also lends itself to create a strong pedestrian connection between Tyler Street and Morningside School. A bus shelter should be considered for the eastern edge of the property. There are also opportunities for public art at the site.



Concept sketch of Hess property as a public parking lot/ pedestrian way



Liquor bottles litter the vacant property just steps away from the Morningside School

FFE-2 Conduct transportation circulation analysis in the Morningside School area to determine priority improvements

Stakeholders at public meetings indicated that traffic around the Morningside School was often problematic. Parents dropping off children and busses navigating the area are met with snarled roadways. Additionally, drivers use this segment as a short-cut around stop lights on Tyler Street. Particularly in light of recommendation FFE-3 the traffic conditions and road configuration should be analyzed to prevent exacerbating current traffic issues. A circulation study will identify where problems exist and provide a variety of solutions. Potential solutions will be prioritized, the costs of which will be estimated, and alternatives will be provided. Improvements could include a variety of solutions, but the circulation study needs to be completed to best understand overall network implications.

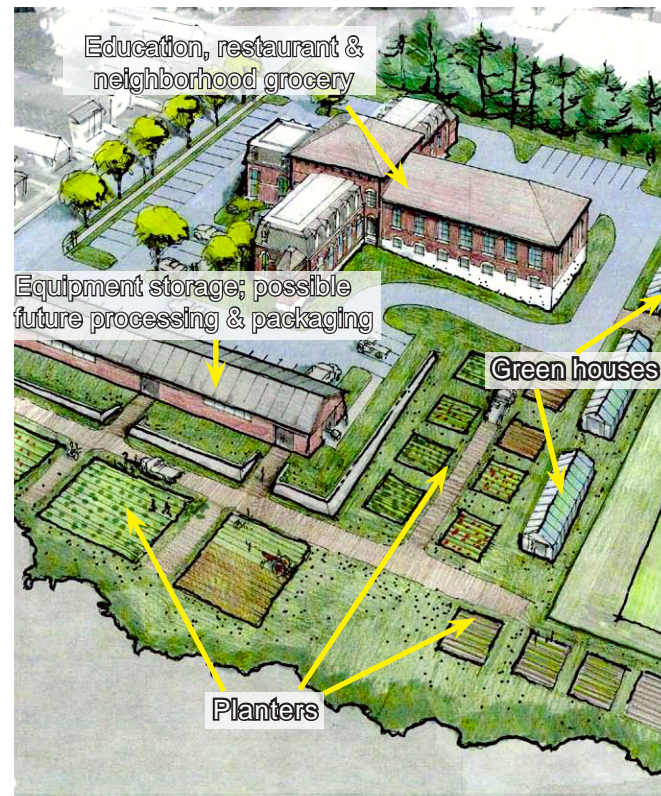
FFE-3 Conduct a Feasibility Study to understand reuse program for County Jail Facility

The former Berkshire County Jail and House of Corrections on Second Street between Burbank and Lincoln Streets is a looming neighborhood presence. Until recently the historic structure served as an administrative outpost and juvenile detention facility for the Berkshire County Sheriff's Department. Today it is largely vacant.

The large brick structure surrounded by open fields presents a unique opportunity within the neighborhood. Determining how the structure can be reused, by whom and for what purposes are important questions requiring considerable investigation.

Adaptive reuse is not a new concept in Pittsfield, the Rice Silk Mill is a testament to the city's ability to rally public and private interests to creatively recycle vacant buildings.

A feasibility and conceptual planning and design study is recommended to understand the physical condition of the structure, the community's preferred future for the property and to assess the business potential of the site.



Conceptual rendering of County Sheriffs Facility

This study would include analysis of the local and regional business climate, interviews with stakeholders in Pittsfield, a public survey, site visits and architectural and engineering assessments. The end product would be a Conceptual Reuse Plan for use by the city or property owner in subsequent steps, such as, developer Request for Proposals, grants and general marketing.

One idea discussed as part of this process was the development of a multi-purpose Food Innovation District. Interest in local food systems is growing as communities realize that public health and social capital can be improved with urban agricultural initiatives. The County Sheriff's facility's unique layout could serve as a regional "Food Innovation District," a place where local foods, education, and small businesses come together. Initial stakeholder interviews support the idea of using urban agriculture to train residents to work at BMC and area restaurants to strengthen the regional tourism industry; this idea should be explored further. Partnerships could be formed with Berkshire Community College to provide educational space for a new Urban Agriculture track within the existing Hospitality Program.

Neighborhood Commercial Services & Residential District- NC

Sub-District Description

This section of the Tyler Street District is home to a number of neighborhood retail establishments that service a long-standing residential neighborhood bordered to the north by the Spring-side Park. There is a smaller concentration of businesses along this stretch of Tyler Street, located mainly on the south side of the street. This section of the TDI District will benefit from streetscape and pedestrian infrastructure improvements that strengthen the human scale and retain the existing character.



Total Housing Units: 83
Acres: 14.2

NC- 1: Maintain and strengthen existing character as new properties are developed and existing properties are redeveloped.

There are a variety of mechanisms available to the City of Pittsfield for development that strengthens the neighborhood character. For example, the **city** Design Review Committee is responsible for design review for parcels owned by the city or projects using city funding. As of March 2016 the committee was inactive. The membership of the 5 member board consists of: an architect, a City Council member, the chair of the Planning Board and two mayoral appointed positions. This committee should be reactivated and possibly serve in an advisory capacity for other projects that may not be city funded, but directly impact the public realm.

Two options for consideration could include form based code or design policies. Adopting a form based code (FBC) can allow for a wider range of allowable uses in a neighborhood while maintaining the fabric of a community. The existing zoning in the TDI district is Euclidian, meaning that residential and commercial uses are kept separate. Co-locating low impact businesses and residential uses is a technique to increase vibrancy and street life. The 2009 City Master Plan identifies FBC adoption as a potential zoning update but notes the higher financial commitment required to develop the regulations is prohibitive.

In cities throughout the commonwealth Design Standards have been adopted to ensure new development in historic neighborhoods, like Morningside, is in keeping with the existing character. Design Standards in conjunction with flexible zoning regulations are a powerful tool to encourage a wide variety of development. See Recommendation DW- 3.



This structure, built in 1977 does not reflect the Tyler Street Districts architectural heritage.



Built in 1986, this car wash encourages space consuming, auto-centric uses not in keeping with the traditional character of the neighborhood.

Food & Entertainment District- FE

Sub-District Description

The Food and Entertainment District, anchored by St. Mary's and a collection of locally-owned ethnic restaurants has the potential to become a local and regional destination. Restaurants celebrating the diversity of the Tyler Street TDI District and small shops using the existing storefronts will provide jobs and liveliness to the area. Coupled with gateway enhancements that signify the entrance to the district and pedestrian infrastructure improvements, this area will be one of the central activity nodes of the TDI District.



Total Housing Units: 93
Acres: 8.3

FE- 1: Create marketing campaign around existing restaurant character to become a regional destination for ethnic restaurants

Tyler Street is host to a number of successful restaurants and is one of the most culturally diverse areas of Pittsfield and the region. Restaurants like La Fogata, Hot Tomatoes and Mezzie's offer unique ethnic food and attract Pittsfield residents and out-of-town visitors to the area. Tyler Street has ample commercial space available to develop into additional restaurants as well as a growing population of ethnically diverse residents. Developing these assets further will connect residents with employment and leverage the City's wider efforts to become a regional arts and culture destination.

The Tyler Street TDI District should market its unique dining offerings to a wide audience and further establish its reputation as a dining destination. This will increase visitor spending and enhance the overall tourist experience in Pittsfield.

FE- 2: Incentivize redevelopment of properties for restaurant and cultural development by providing education and/or loan programs and assistance with building codes.

The many vacant commercial parcels within the Food and Entertainment District should be incentivized for redevelopment. The City of Pittsfield should recognize the potential of the Food & Entertainment District as a dining and cultural destination using incentives. Working with the Pittsfield Economic Revitalization Corporation and Department of Community Development interested investors should gain access to things like low/no interest long term loans and technical support.

The City of Pittsfield and neighborhood groups like the Tyler Street Business Group can keep a list of shovel ready and turn-key development sites. At the same time business groups and community organizations can identify and recruit small business owners and budding entrepreneurs who are looking for space.

Establishing a restaurant in an older building can be a challenge on multiple fronts. First, the building physical layout can make the kitchen and other renovations cost prohibitive to accomplish. Second, navigating the web of health, safety and other regulations, and obtaining the required commercial licensing is daunting, even for the experienced restaurant owner. Groups like the Massachusetts Small Business Development Center (MSBDC) exist to provide financial and technical support to new and established businesses. Stakeholders in the Tyler Street District should continue to work with MSBDC to develop business plans, conduct feasibility studies, explore financing options and develop marketing plans that are specifically catered to the Tyler Street District.

FE- 3: Identify zoning and incentives for the development of St. Mary's property with a mix of uses

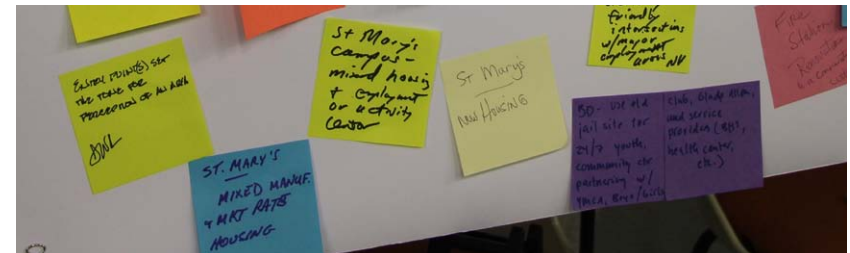
The St. Mary of the Morning Star Church (completed 1943) was once an important gathering point in the Tyler Street District. The large brick structure located at 653 Tyler Street is part of a two parcel campus containing four structures. In 2008 the church was decommissioned and the 2.6 acre property has been vacant since. Recent development proposals for the parcel included plans to demolish some of the structures and were met with neighborhood resistance. Concerned residents and ex-parishioners formed “Friends of St. Mary the Morning Star Ad Hoc Committee” in 2014 to support the repurposing of the church as opposed to demolition. The parcel is zoned with a Smart Growth Overlay District as part of the 40-R program. This zoning overlay allows for flexible uses and higher residential densities.

Residents and stakeholders voiced intense support for the adaptive reuse of the St. Mary's church and supportive buildings. Potential uses that were identified included, senior housing, a brewery, mixed-use developments, a community center, and educational center, a performing arts center, and more.

The City of Pittsfield should work with community groups and state agencies to secure financing and further zoning mechanisms to incentivize the parcel's redevelopment in a way that respects its architectural and cultural significance.

Reusing spaces left vacant by religious institutions has ample precedent in Massachusetts. In the Oakley Neighborhood in the Town of Belmont the Our Lady Mercy church property was put up for sale in 2007. Belmont and the Oakley Neighborhood Association (ONA) worked together to establish a 40R zoning district and create Design Standards for the parcel's redevelopment. Today the property is used for housing.

In addition to the 40-R program, Pittsfield may want to explore the Commercial Area Transit Node Housing Program (CATNHP) which offers cash incentives for Transit Oriented Developments in commercial areas.



Community input strongly favored the re-use of St. Mary's Campus for a mix of uses.



FE- 4: Provide for and encourage public art and entertainment infrastructure



Public installations encourage people to linger and explore an area
Photo Credit: Brian Pickings on Pinterest

Public art contributes to a neighborhood's 'sense of place' and attracts visitors. As an economic development strategy, encouraging public art and can lead to visitor spending and private investment in the neighborhood. Public art can highlight a cities' commitment to a neighborhood and it's residents sense of ownership.

Pittsfield, in the heart of the Berkshires, is at the center of a thriving arts scene. Over the course of decades the Berkshires have become an internationally renowned arts destination, drawing visitors from around the world. Activating public space along the Tyler Street corridor with open air arts displays would connect District residents with the regional economy and instill community pride. Examples of successful public art abound in downtown Pittsfield where the monthly "First Friday Artswalk," transforms restaurants and businesses into art galleries and the "Pittsfield Paintbox Project" has residents paint utility boxes.

In addition to programs that encourage residents to create art, physical space should be provided for interactive art performances and displays. This would help provide the critical mass required to develop the Tyler Street District's identity as eclectic arts and entertainment destination. As streetscape enhancements and investments in the Tyler Street District move forwards, there should be a deliberate effort to cultivate space for public art and performances.

The Food and Entertainment sub-area could pursue something like the Market Street Prototyping Festival in the city of San Francisco. The ongoing "Festival" consists of interactive displays that are updated on a regular basis. The "prototypes" encourage pedestrians to explore art, create music and meet strangers.



A 'prototype' on Market Street, San Francisco
Photo Credit: Patricia Chang



An interactive musical fountain at the Ontario Science Centre
Photo Credit: Wikiwand

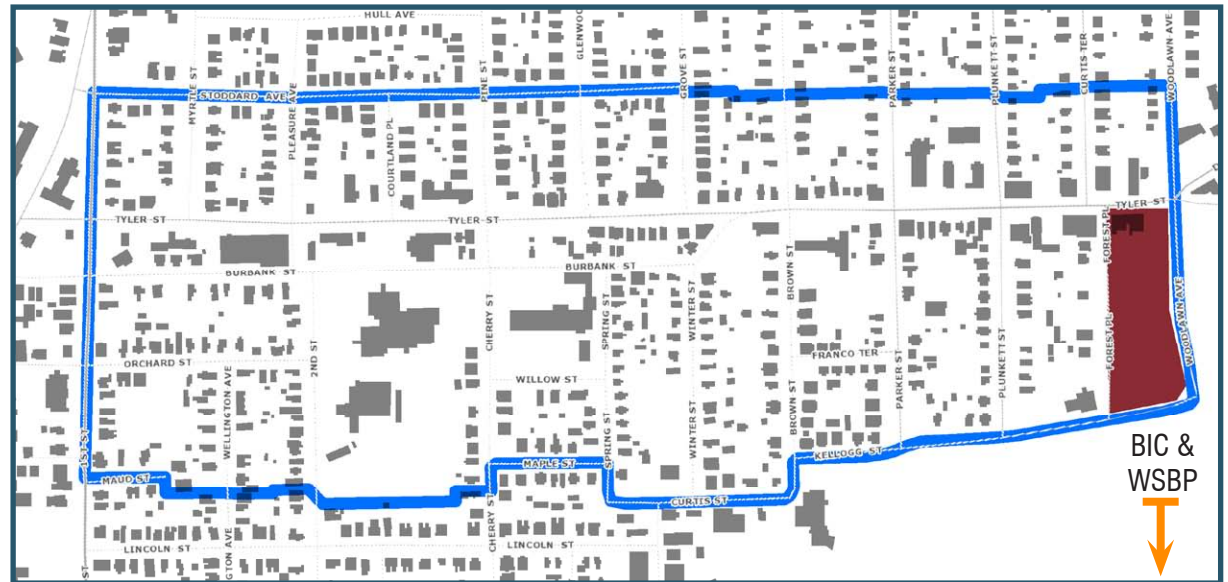


Street performers bring life to a street
Photo Credit: John Fowler, Creative Commons

Retail District- RD

Sub-District Description

Capturing the benefits from the William Stanley Business Park and the Woodlawn Extension Bridge this under-utilized section of the Tyler Street TDI District will inject vibrancy and employment opportunities into the neighborhood. The area will serve to define one of the edges of the TDI district that currently peters out towards the former General Electric campus. Existing large lots facilitate site assembly. PEDAs continues efforts to market the area to potential industries.



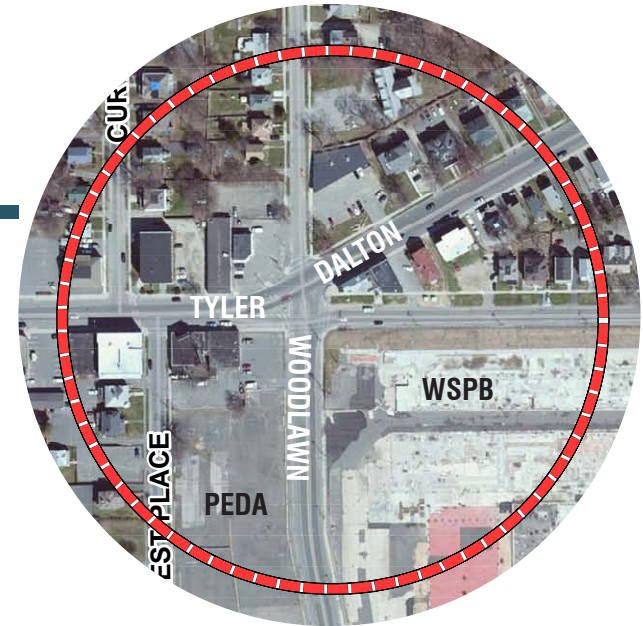
Total Housing Units: 0
Acres: 3.9



Looking Northwest from the Southeast corner of Retail District

RD - 1: Study Tyler/ Dalton/ Woodlawn Intersection

The recently reopened Woodlawn Bridge that connecting East Street to the Tyler Street District will impact traffic patterns at this intersection. Even before the bridge was re-opened this intersection was highlighted as problematic by a variety of stakeholders. The intersection is neither automobile nor pedestrian friendly. Investigating ways to manage traffic at this location can: enhance accessibility to the area; support development of retail establishments, and improve public safety.



RD - 2: Develop and release RFP for PEDA-controlled property along Woodlawn Ave.

Based on the vision for the Tyler Street TDI District and the William Stanley Business Park a Request For Proposals (RFP) should be prepared for the PEDA controlled property in the Retail District. This RFP can be developed in keeping with the commercial design standards from recommendation DW-4, or as a master planned development. Commercial development in this area should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood fronting the west side of the PEDA property on Forest Place and retain the street edge to preserve the pedestrian environment.



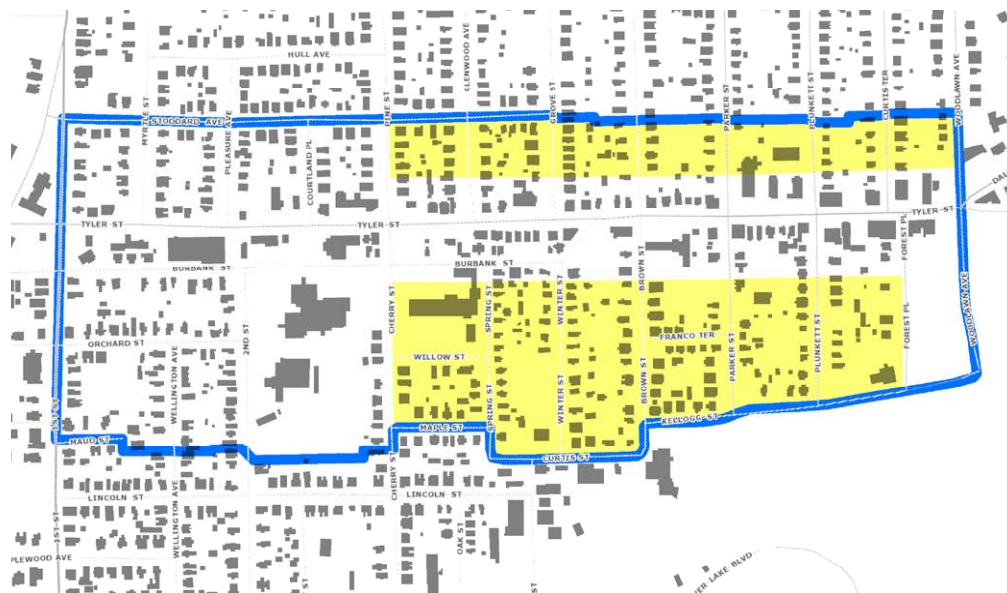
Conceptual rendering for PEDA property redevelopment and the property at the east side of Woodlawn and Dalton

Residential Districts- RES

Sub-District Description

This area abutting the Farm and Food area to the west and the commercial strip of Tyler Street to the north has long been a dense residential neighborhood. The small blocks and traditional housing stock lend the area a sense of community not found in the suburbs. However, over a century has passed since most of the structures in this neighborhood were constructed. The need for quality parks and updated housing stock is apparent here.

When the William Stanley Business Park and Berkshire Innovation Center are developed and the Woodlawn Extension Bridge is completed residents of these neighborhoods will once again have a strong connection between the local and regional economies.



Total Housing Units: 424
Acres: 44.5

RES - 1: Advocate for street improvements based on recent city street inventory

The city of Pittsfield hired a consultant to inventory the condition of the municipal road system in 2014. The report found that, “the City’s current budget of \$2,100,000 is not sufficient to maintain the City’s pavement network to its current condition over the next 5 years. The City’s 5-year plan produced a lower overall network OCI (Overall Condition Index) than is desirable, largely due to budget constraints restricting the amount of rehabilitation and preventative maintenance to be performed relative to what the network needs. It is recommended that the City increase the annual pavement maintenance budget to a minimum of 3.5 million dollars to address more critical repairs and maintain/improve the current network condition and achieve a targeted road condition.” Raising the street maintenance budget by a minimum of \$3.5 million, an increase of 30%, as the report called for is financially challenging. As the city prioritizes which roads to maintain, this plan should be considered.

To reduce costs and meet equity goals, street improvement policies should include a strong emphasis on demand reduction in the form of multi-modal infrastructure investments.

RES - 3: Work with local and regional real estate agents to promote the neighborhood to potential homeowners seeking urban amenity lifestyles

Building a stronger housing market is a key element of neighborhood stabilization, not only as a way to attract new home buyers but to retain existing ones. Groups like the Tyler Street Business Group and the Morningside Neighborhood Association will need to collaboratively promote the District. This means sending out positive stories to the media, inviting real estate agents on tours of the district, and working with the groups like the Berkshire Realtors. A key part of building the housing market is signalling to potential buyers that the neighborhood has a community supported revitalization plan and an attractive list of amenities, including safe streets, modern parks and neighborhood services.

RES - 4: Strengthen bike and pedestrian connections to Springside Park

Urban parks like Springside Park are important amenities in the housing market, as are walkability and bikeability. By playing off of these assets not only will the Tyler Street District become more attractive to new residents, it will enhance the quality of life for existing residents. Getting more people out of their homes and onto the street is also a basic and time tested crime reduction strategy, and a way to strengthen the bonds of neighbors.

RES - 5: Reinvest in Ray Crow Park with short and long-term improvements

Ray Crow Park is a neighborhood park located along Winter Street. Recent investments have been made in the park, yet it still remains significantly underutilized. Further, crime data from the Pittsfield Police Department indicates higher concentrations of police calls to the area. One potential reason for both its underutilization and higher incidence of police calls could be related to its “tucked away” orientation. Ray Crow Park has the potential to grow from a neighborhood scale park to a regional scale park with expansions.

Initial recommendations to improve the park are:

- Improve signage at the park entrance and incorporate wayfinding signs for the park elsewhere in the Tyler Street TDI District.
- Better lighting throughout the park to enhance the feeling of security.
- Landscaping at the park entrance to help convey that Ray Crow Park is a safe place open to people of all ages and abilities.
- Conduct regular community programming in Ray Crow Park (arts and crafts, theatre, games) to engage residents.

Long term recommendations to improve the park are:

- Engage the property owners adjacent to the western edge of the park to negotiate property acquisition for park expansion.
- Create pedestrian and bike path connecting Spring and Winter Street via Ray Crow Park.
- Enhance bike connections between Silver Lake and Ray Crow Park to provide a complimentary user experience.



Concept drawing of potential park improvements and expansion

District & Recommendations		Project Champion	Potential Partners	Immediate	Short-Term	Medium-Term	Long-Term	Ongoing	First Steps & Potential Funding Opportunities
HEALTH & HOSPITAL DISTRICT									
	Retain and repurpose existing homes along First Street. Encourage reuse as professional office to complement hospital.	City & Berkshire Health Systems partnership	MassDevelopment; Mass Dept. of Public Health; private sector developer; City Historic Preservation			H			· Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund · Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey and Planning Grant Program
	Encourage private redevelopment, build off of Tyler Street streetscape improvements by extending onto Myrtle and Pleasure Streets.	City Engineer	City Community Development; City Finance Department				L		· Housing Stabilization Fund (HSF)
	Work with property owner on southeast corner of Tyler and 1st (Shell) to create welcoming gateway landscaping and signage.	City Community Development	Tyler Street Business Group; City Engineering; MassDOT	M					Coordinate with DOT in reconstruction plans for North/Tyler/1st
HEALTH & HOSPITAL DISTRICT ADDITIONAL STUDIES									
	Conduct a feasibility study on the Goodwill building to determine reuse potential. Possible uses could include grocery store, community health center.	Goodwill Industries of the Berkshires, Inc	City Dept. of Community Development; MassDevelopment; Berkshire Immigrant Center						
	Explore potential for independent senior living based on "Green House Project" model	Age-Friendly Berkshires	City Community Development; MassDevelopment; MassHousing; City Council on Aging; AARP; Age-Friendly Berkshires; private sector senior home care providers						Sponsor developer forum with senior housing developers
MID-TOWN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT									
	Targeted CDBG and other state funding	City Community Development	Morningside Neighborhood Initiative; City Council						· Economic Development Fund · Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) · Housing Development Incentive Program · Housing Stabilization Fund (HSF)
	Consider a small pocket park to service this neighborhood	City Parks & Recreation Department	Morningside Neighborhood Initiative; Healthy Pittsfield				L		· Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities Program (PARC) · Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program · Land and Water Conservation Fund · Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity Program (LAND)
	Undertake street improvements along Orchard Street to connect to the downtown/North Street on the west and Morningside School to the east	City Engineering	Morningside Neighborhood Initiative; MassDOT				L		MassWorks
	Consider targeting City demolition program to this neighborhood for one year and identifying an end use that is beneficial to the neighborhood	Code Enforcement Team	Morningside Initiative (report on properties), Working Cities, Central Berkshire Habitat, Tyler Street Business Group & Rental Housing Association	H					Pitch Strategy to Mayor & City. Also look for alternative follow on with Elan presentation to mayor about blight reduction strategies.
	Targeted Code enforcement	Code Enforcement Team	Williams College, Morningside Initiative (report on properties), Working Cities, Central Berkshire Habitat, Tyler Street Business Group & Rental Housing Association	H					Have Williams College students conduct a vision inspection of housing stock that includes a standardized scoring scale for residential sub-districts. Pitch Strategy to Mayor & City. Also look for alternative follow on with Elan presentation to mayor about blight reduction strategies.

FARM, FOOD & EDUCATION						
Explore possibilities to transform the Hess property into a multi-purpose public space	City Community Development	City Engineering; MassDevelopment; Tyler St. Business Group; Morningside School	H			MassDevelopment to investigate property ownership; MassDevelopment will investigate property ownership. · Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities Program (PARC) · Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program · Land and Water Conservation Fund · Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity Program (LAND)
Conduct transportation circulation analysis in the Morningside School area to determine priority improvements	City Community Development	City Engineering; MassDevelopment; Tyler St. Business Group; Morningside School		H		
FARM, FOOD & EDUCATION ADDITIONAL STUDIES						
Conduct a Feasibility Study to understand reuse program for County Jail Facility	City Community Development	MassDevelopment; County Sherriff; Berkshire Regional Planning Commission; Berkshire Food Network; US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development; IS 183; BCC; BHS; private sector developer.	H			Study needed
NEIGHBORHOOD, COMMERCIAL SERVICES AND RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT						
Maintain and strengthen existing character as new properties are developed and existing properties are redeveloped	City Community Development	Design Review Committee; Tyler St. Business Group		M		Utilize design guidelines that are being prepared for Tyler Street Corridor
FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT						
Create marketing campaign around existing restaurant character to become a regional destination for ethnic restaurants	City Community Development	Tyler Street St. Business Group; Small Business Development Center Network; PEDAs	H			MassDevelopment-follow-on technical assistance.
Incentivize redevelopment of properties for restaurant and cultural development by providing education and/or loan programs and assistance with building codes	PERC, PEDAs, & City Community Development	Tyler Street St. Business Group, Small Business Development Center Network, 1Berkshire, Codes Enforcement	H			Convene a restaurant association for Tyler Street. Small Business Fund to develop general business incentives. City/ PERC to take on at end of PERC strategic planning process. Fellow will follow up with Springfield TDI for best practices for developing a dining district-
Identify zoning and incentives for the development of St. Mary's property with a mix of uses to potentially include housing, cultural, community, services.	City Community Development	Mass Office of Sustainable Communities; Berkshire Housing Authority; IS 183; Friends of St. Mary's	H			Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund pending the outcomes of Dunkin Donuts application to Zoning Board and City Council.
Provide for and encourage public art and entertainment infrastructure (i.e. "creative kiosks")	City Community Development	IS 183; Pittsfield Cultural Council; Berkshire Jazz Inc., Arts Walk coordinators, City Engineering				L
RETAIL DISTRICT						
Study Tyler/Dalton/Woodlawn intersection	MassDOT	City Engineering				Could be completed with FFE-3 as part of overall transportation circulation analysis.
Develop and release RFP for the PEDAs-controlled property along Woodlawn Ave.	PEDAs	City Community Development; City Engineering; MassDevelopment		H		This is focused on supporting PEDAs and their efforts to redevelop the retail property.

RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS							
Advocate for street improvements based on recent city street inventory	Pittsfield Engineering Department	MassDOT; City Community Development; BRTA; Morningside Neighborhood Initiative					Every year at inventory time coordinate with Pittsfield Engineering Department
Consider focused efforts (code enforcement, demolition, improvements) to concentrate resources	City Community Development	Code Enforcement; Police Department; Fire Department; Morningside Neighborhood Initiative	H				See MT-5 & MT-6 - yes but worth reiterating here
Work with local and regional real estate agents to promote the neighborhood to potential homeowners seeking urban amenity lifestyles	Tyler Street Business Group	Rental Housing Association of Berkshire County, Morningside Neighborhood Initiative, Berkshire Housing, Central Berkshire Habitat, & Berkshire Housing	M			M	Establish relationship after branding efforts complete. Extended Partners: Morningside Rental Association (marketing), Berkshire Housing (education/ financing), Habitat (education/ financing); explore traditional channels to realtors.
Strengthen bike and pedestrian connections to Springside Park (Pine & Grove Streets)	Tyler Street Business Group	Friends of Springside, Berkshire Medical Center, Be Healthy Pittsfield,					MassWorks, City Capital Dollars
Re-invest in Ray Crow Park with short improvements	City Community Development & Parks Commission			M			
Re-invest in Ray Crow Park with short- and long-term improvements	Pittsfield Parks Commission	Morningside Neighborhood Initiative; Be Healthy Pittsfield; City Community Development				L	Gateway Cities Parks Grant Program; · Gateway Cities Parks Grant Program · Parkland Acquisition and Renovations for Communities (PARC)
DISTRICT-WIDE							
ZONING							
Evaluate the Smart Growth Overlay Zoning District (40-R) to update and apply to selected sites within the TDI District	City Community Development				M		· Urban Planning and Technical Assistance Grants · Planning Assistance Towards Housing Awards (PATH)
Implement and/or amend the UMass Zoning Study to create Design Standards to encourage good site planning for new projects along Tyler Street	City Community Development		H				· Urban Planning and Technical Assistance Grants · Planning Assistance Towards Housing Awards (PATH)
Evaluate zoning districts and uses and make revisions as necessary to encourage new infill development consistent with the vision and goals of the plan	City Community Development		H				Pending MassDevelopment funding as well as other grant monies.
Develop Commercial Design Standards	City Community Development			M			Pending MassDevelopment funding as well as other grant monies.
MARKETING/PROMOTION							
Maintain continuous dialogue with area developers to encourage investment in the TDI District	City Community Development	Berkshire Realtors Association, Morningside Neighborhood Initiative, Tyler Street Business Group, Greylock Federal Credit, 1Berkshire, PERC, & PEDDA.	H				Launch developers forum in September in collaboration with Elan.
Market the Tyler Street TDI Plan to encourage public and private investment inclusive of investment prospectus and marketing brochure	City Community Development	Berkshire Realtors Association, Morningside Neighborhood Initiative, Tyler Street Business Group, Greylock Federal Credit, 1Berkshire		H			Massachusetts Downtown Initiative (MDI) (This is an opportunity replacement to free up funds from downtown to apply to the Tyler Street Initiative)

MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS							
Annually coordinate with City Community Development Office to understand potential CDBG program applications within the District		Morningside Neighborhood Initiative; Tyler St. Business Group; neighborhood Council representatives		H			
Identify areas for strategic tree plantings in accordance with the Greening the Gateway Cities program	City Parks Commission	Dept. of Conservation and Recreation		H		· Urban and Community Forestry Challenge Grants · Greening the Gateway Cities Program	
Inventory vacant and blighted properties within the District	City Community Development	Umass Amherst - Studio project or Williams College Urban Studies program		H		Consider utilizing Williams College students; · Urban Planning and Technical Assistance Grants · Planning Assistance Towards Housing Awards (PATH)	
Consider establishing a home-buying "one stop shop"	City Community Development	Morningside Neighborhood Initiative			M	M	· Collaborative Workspace Program
Encourage multi forms of residential - student housing, market rate ownership, and rental units	City Community Development	MassHousing; Mass Housing Partnership; Berkshire Housing; Pittsfield Housing Authority; BCC; CDBG Funding					
Explore rental property stabilization program	City Code Enforcement	Center for Community Progress; MassHousing Partners; Berkshire Housing Authority; Mass Housing & Economic Development					A study is needed to do this; that's why it was not ranked. Study needs to be done in at the same time as recommendation HH-C4. however, techniques may be slightly different. Start with existing programs to determine if they are sufficient.

OTHER							
Develop a coordinated branding and marketing strategy (i.e. Morningside Neighborhood Initiative and Tyler St. Business Group)	Tyler St. Business Group and PEDDA	Berkshire Community College, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, Williams College, 1Berkshire		H			TSBG will follow-up with MCLA about business student coming on as intern.
TYLER STREET							
Install unique pedestrian scale lighting	City Engineering Department	Tyler Str. Business Group			M		
Strengthen the pedestrian environment (cross-walks, bus shelters, sidewalks, etc.)	City Community Development & Tyler Street Business Group	BRTA; Parks Commission; Council on Aging; MassDOT; Be Well Berkshire		H			
Create landscape buffers between parking areas and pedestrian walkways	City Community Development						M
Conduct Parking Audit for Tyler Street Corridor	Parking Commission	Tyler St. Business Group; BRTA			M		STUDY NEEDED. Smart Growth America and American Planning Association PAS report EIP-24 (2009). Could be done with volunteers in conjunction with transportation study around Morningside School
Actively pursue alternative transportation infrastructure connections along Tyler Street Corridor	City Community Development and TSBG	BRTA; MassDOT		H			STUDY NEEDED.