



# Park Heights... “A Community of Choice”

Baltimore, Maryland

January 21-22, 2009



**ULI Baltimore**

A ULI Advisory Services

Technical Assistance Panel Report

## About ULI Baltimore

ULI Baltimore is the local District Council for ULI – The Urban Land Institute. ULI Baltimore is a 501(c)3, and serves Central Maryland and various other parts of Maryland through its outreach efforts. As a trusted convener for sharing knowledge, and as an unbiased source for timely land use information, ULI Baltimore provides a critical link to improving state and local land use policy and development practices.

ULI is a nonprofit research and education organization supported by its members. Founded in 1936, the institute now has more than 40,000 members worldwide, representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines in private enterprise and public service.

As the preeminent, multidisciplinary real estate forum, ULI facilitates the open exchange of ideas, information and experience among local, national and international industry leaders and policy makers dedicated to creating better places.

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide.

## About the Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) Program

The objective of ULI Baltimore's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program is to provide expert, multidisciplinary advice on land use and real estate issues facing public agencies and nonprofit organizations in the Greater Baltimore Metropolitan Region. Similar to other ULI District Councils throughout the country, ULI Baltimore utilizes its broad membership base to administer one and one-half day panels, offering objective and responsible advice to local stakeholders and decision makers on a diverse set of land use and real estate issues. These issues can range from site-specific projects to public policy strategies. The unique flexibility of the TAP program allows for a customized approach to specific contextual issues related to urban development.

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## Acknowledgments

ULI Baltimore would like to thank the TAP Committee that worked diligently to make this study possible: Caroline Moore (Ekistics Capital Partners, LLC); Aaron Wade (Alex Brown Realty, Inc.); Bryce Turner (Brown Craig Turner Architects & Designers); Roland Campbell (The ROC Realty Group); Jennifer Kilpatrick (Brown Craig Turner Architects & Designers); Pauline Harris (SPIN, LLC); Lisa Norris (SPIN, LLC); and Robyn Eason (Planning/Real Estate Consultant).

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The panelists and ULI Baltimore TAP committee would like to thank Baltimore City and the Park Heights Renaissance for requesting the panel's assistance in crafting an implementation strategy for the 2006 Park Heights Master Plan. Specifically, the panel would like to thank Phil Croskey—Park Heights Renaissance Acting Executive Director and Seema Iyer and Sara Paranilam—Baltimore City Department of Planning for their assistance with initiating the panel, preparing the briefing materials, and providing onsite support. Special gratitude is extended to our sponsors—Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP, The Reznick Group, STV, Park Heights Renaissance, Baltimore City Department of Planning, Baltimore Development Corporation, Urban Land Institute Baltimore District Council—for their generous contributions. Additionally, the panel thanks Vic Frierson and Shirl Curtis of the Park Heights Community Health Alliance for their gracious hospitality, allowing ULI Baltimore to use the community room as its workspace for the duration of the panel. The panel also appreciates the participation of the various key stakeholders in the roundtable discussions and final presentation.

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# Introduction

## History

Park Heights is one of Baltimore's oldest neighborhoods with roots dating as far back as the early 19th century. At this time, the city's economy centered around its port activity and Reisterstown Road was a major transportation route for wheat and corn from the inland farms. As streetcar routes were established along Park Heights and Belvedere Avenues, settlement by European and Jewish immigrants occurred to take advantage of growing economic opportunities. Commercial and retail nodes eventually emerged as a result, turning Park Heights into a full-fledged "streetcar suburb". Major destinations such as the Pimlico Fairgrounds (now Pimlico Racetrack) also spurred development of nearby hotels, restaurants, and entertainment venues.

Migration into Park Heights continued until it was largely built out by the 1950s. However, similar to many other Baltimore neighborhoods, a major population shift occurred in Park Heights with much of the white population moving out of the city during the 1970s.

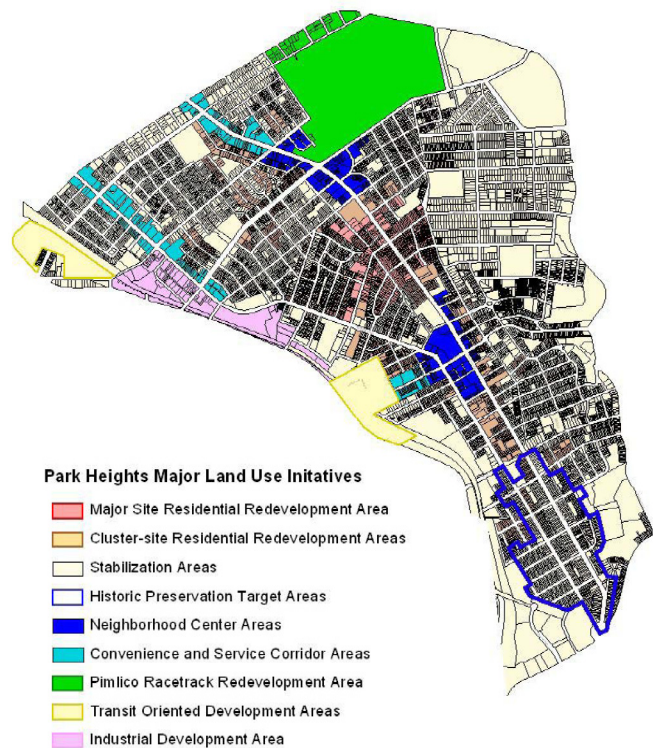
According to the 2006 Park Heights Master Plan, Park Heights today is largely poor and more than 96-percent African American. The median household income of Park Heights residents is nearly \$7,000 less than that of the city overall and more than \$26,000 less than that of the region. Only 30 percent of residents have any education beyond high school. While there are pockets of strong and stable residential areas, more than 2,000 vacant lots and buildings exist in Park Heights.

## Park Heights 2006 Master Plan

In 2003, with the help of outside experts, the Baltimore City Department of Planning initiated an extensive master planning process for Park Heights. The purpose of this effort was to create a detailed and implementable urban development strategy to revitalize the neighborhood. The City and its consultants conducted several public meetings, design workshops, calls for input, and stakeholder

interviews to produce a plan that incorporated the community's thoughts and concerns into a final set of recommendations. These recommendations ranged from transforming the marketplace for residential and commercial redevelopment to considerations on health, public safety, education, open space, and community leadership. In February 2006, the Park Heights Master Plan was adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission.

## Physical Attributes



Source: 2008 Park Heights Master Plan

As defined in the Master Plan, Park Heights is a 1,500-acre community containing approximately 30,000 residents. The neighborhood lies approximately 10 miles northwest of Downtown Baltimore and within two miles of the Baltimore County line. It is bounded on the south by Druid Park Drive, on the west by Wabash Avenue, on the east by Greenspring Avenue, and on the north by Northern Parkway. Interstate-83 is less than one half mile to the east.

Two major roadways — Park Heights Avenue and Reisterstown Road — run north-south through Park Heights, serving as the neighborhood’s “Main Streets” as well as commuter corridors. Two major Metro stations are situated on the western edge of the neighborhood, with two light rail stations less than one mile east of Greenspring Avenue. An extensive network of bus lines, stops, and shelters also serves the neighborhood. The transportation system is made more complex by the high volume of pedestrians, and to a limited extent, bicyclists who also share these resources.

Limited commercial uses — primarily retail — are scattered along the main arterials, while there is also some industrial activity on the neighborhood’s western edge. Residential is the primary land use in Park Heights, ranging from areas hosting a rich historic housing fabric to established areas with tree-lined streets to entire blocks of abandoned houses and lots.



Neighborhood Synagogue

Source: Unknown



Neighborhood Housing Styles

Source: 2006 Park Heights Master Plan



Corner Vacant Lot

Source: 2006 Park Heights Master Plan



Auto Services

Source: 2006 Park Heights Master Plan

Major health care, educational, and social service institutions are located throughout the community, serving as the area’s primary employers. These include Life Bridge Health, and one of Baltimore’s and the State of Maryland’s most well-known landmarks, Pimlico Racetrack.



## The Panel's Assignment

Baltimore City, through its affiliation with the Park Heights Renaissance (PHR), has identified Park Heights as an area it would like to see revitalized into a flourishing retail, commercial and residential corridor.

After approval of the Park Heights Master Plan, Baltimore City began assembling and acquiring land throughout the neighborhood in an effort to oversee a full-scale renaissance of the area. At present, the City plans to accumulate 60 acres of mostly contiguous vacant and/or abandoned properties along and abutting Park Heights Avenue (see map below).

The Urban Renewal Plan was passed in Fall 2008, allowing the City greater flexibility in acquiring properties needed to redevelop specific areas. At this point, the City and PHR approached ULI-Baltimore in regards to organizing a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to assist them in an efficient and effective plan of action. A redevelopment strategy had been created via the Park Heights Master Plan, but PHR was effectively seeking guidance from private sector real estate and land use experts on the implementation of it. They also charged the panel to think comprehensively about revitalizing Park Heights beyond the 60-acre redevelopment area. The City and Park Heights Renaissance presented the panel with several key questions concerning their urban renewal strategy

for Park Heights, given its ever-changing market conditions. These key inquiries include:

What, if any, aspects of the Park Heights Master Plan can be modified to enhance development within the neighborhood?

How can Park Heights best utilize its assets to ignite and sustain any redevelopment momentum?

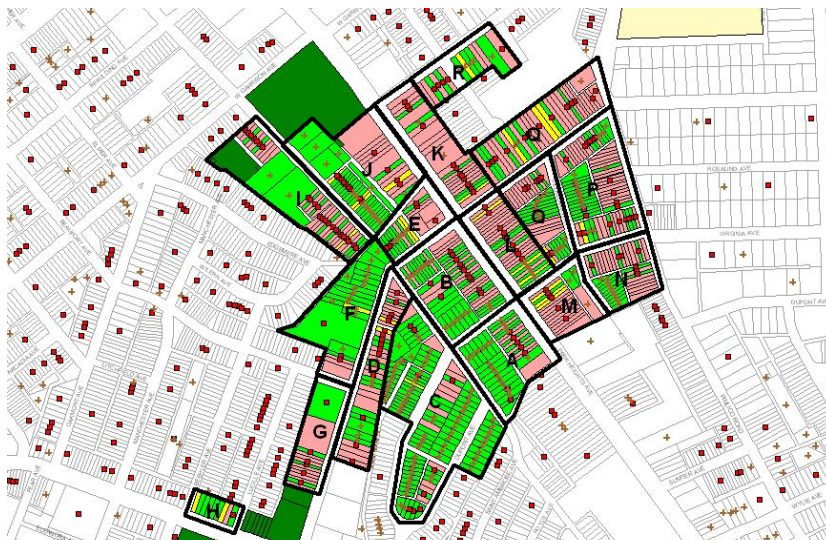
What kind of pre-development initiatives or action items need to occur in order to incentivize redevelopment and attract the private sector?

How should the City of Baltimore continue to strategically acquire and assemble properties?

How can the City of Baltimore encourage owners of occupied and vacant properties to improve the appearance of their homes?

What non-development-related items (e.g., public safety, beautification, public school system, etc.) need to be addressed to further attract investment?

With these questions in tow, the panel embarked on a one and one-half day work session, meeting with a diverse cross-section of stakeholders, touring the Park Heights neighborhood, engaging area residents, and disseminating and discussing land use and real estate information provided by the City.



Park Heights 60-acre Redevelopment Area

Source: Baltimore Housing



## Executive Summary



In January 2009, a group of 15 panelists came together to explore opportunities to revitalize the Park Heights neighborhood in Northwest Baltimore, Maryland. This exercise was in response to a request by Baltimore City and the Park Heights Renaissance to better understand the potential to redevelop vacant and abandoned properties acquired in Park Heights since the approval of the 2006 Park Heights Master Plan. Offering a diverse set of backgrounds, these panelists toured Park Heights, conducted several roundtable discussions with area stakeholders, consulted with city representatives, and vetted ideas on how the neighborhood should move forward. The panel ultimately settled on a two-pronged approach for the redevelopment of Park Heights:

**A Strategy for Today:** A comprehensive short-term strategy that considers action items reachable in the next 12 to 18 months.

**A Concept for Tomorrow:** A detailed long-term strategy that proposes a sustainability theme for the neighborhood and considers a multi-faceted, multi-layered redevelopment approach to Park Heights based on its strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities.

### **A Strategy for Today**

The short-term set of recommendations set forth by the panel focused on residential preservation, maintenance and pre-development; workforce development; public safety; beautification; civic

space/public realm improvements; marketing; and additional strategies. Such recommendations should be understood as pre-development measures that can “set the stage” for additional growth and future market appeal of Park Heights.

*Residential Preservation, Maintenance and Pre-development Initiatives* suggest neighborhood improvement mechanisms such as aggressive code enforcement and extensive homeownership counseling to mobilize the community.

*Workforce Development Initiatives* deal with jobs skills and training congruent with jobs in demand in the local community, particularly for youth.

*Public Safety Initiatives* emphasize necessary measures like increased police presence, crime “hot spots” targeting, and neighborhood watches as ways to combat and decrease unwanted activity.

*Beautification Initiatives* identify the importance of the neighborhood’s image and ways to uplift the current perception and instill more community pride.

*Civic Space/Public Realm Initiatives* consider methods to capitalize on assets like Druid Hill Park and strong neighborhood culture to enhance market appeal.

*Marketing Initiatives* explore how the neighborhood can reposition itself through branding efforts, documentation of revitalization milestones and progress, and the establishment of collective partnerships.

### **A Concept for Tomorrow**

The panel’s long-term concept for Park Heights has an overarching theme of reestablishing an active street network and putting the “Park” back into Park Heights by promoting green and sustainable strategies throughout the neighborhood.



This theme not only deals with improving and redirecting the physical Park Heights landscape to create value and attract investment, but it also promotes improved health benefits and stronger social ties associated with walkable, interconnected neighborhoods. Several nodes of activity throughout the community are identified and innovatively linked to promote a greener, safer, and healthier Park Heights. These nodes center on existing economic engines that currently serve or can be enhanced as notable hubs of activity. In one exercise, the TAP envisioned Park Heights Avenue becoming the central, celebrated spine of the neighborhood through widening the median, installing beautiful streetscape, and incorporating wind turbines as both a local energy generator and an iconic landmark for the community.

In addition, the TAP suggested a series of activities that should be taken in order to make the Park Heights corridor as attractive as possible for residential and commercial developers. By taking steps to minimize approval and development impediments, as well as initiating capital improvement projects critical to future development, Park Heights Renaissance can lay the foundation for a redevelopment proposition

appealing to the private sector.

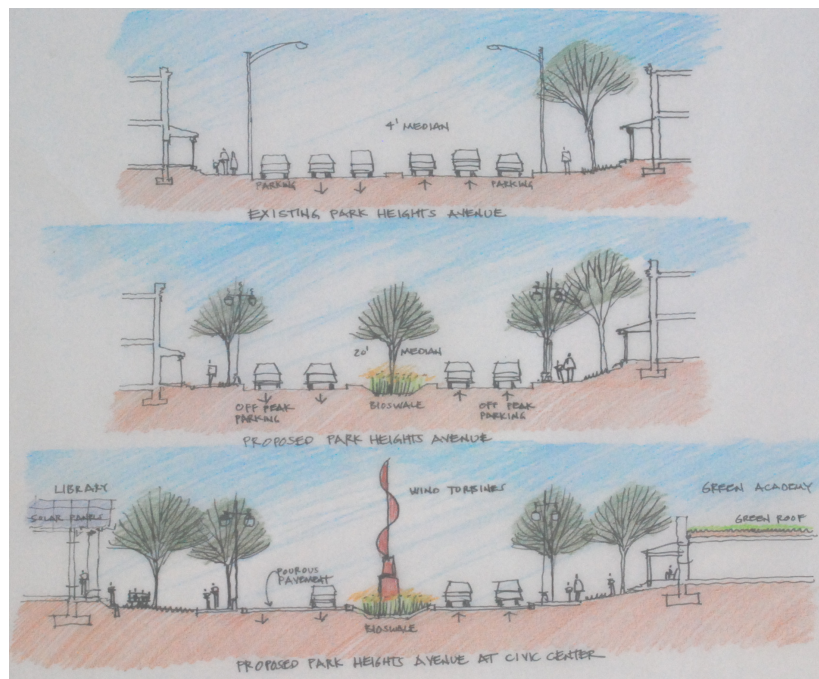
Four detailed strategies deliver primary recommendations on achieving a better Park Heights over the mid- to long-term. These include:

*Sense of Place strategies* that focus on the ability for Park Heights to re-brand itself as a community of choice and enhance its competitive edge.

*Residential strategies* that examine the ability for Park Heights to restructure its residential areas prior to private sector involvement through infrastructure improvements, additional strategic acquisition, and the creation of civic amenities.

*Commercial strategies* that realistically consider the best options for value-added retail and services in lieu of the surrounding competition

*Transit-Oriented Development strategies* that center on Park Heights's ability to take advantage of its transit accessibility, maximize its transit stations as community assets, and foster a more integrated street and path network.



Section Details of Proposed Park Heights Avenue Scheme

## Assets, Challenges, and Opportunities

Park Heights, like any neighborhood, has its share of strengths, challenges, and opportunities. Enlightened by discourse at the roundtable sessions, on-the-ground assessments of Park Heights from the panel tour, and a well-informed understanding of the neighborhood's history and recent revitalization efforts, the panel discovered and discussed a multitude of existing assets, liabilities and opportunities in Park Heights.

### Assets

Major Employment Centers: Park Heights has several major employers in the healthcare, educational, institutional, and industrial job sectors that have consistently provided a steady source of wages for residents within Park Heights and beyond.

Proximity to Downtown Baltimore: Less than seven miles from the downtown central business district, Park Heights offers a convenient commute to the tens of thousands of downtown

workers. Additionally, recreational activities located in and around the Inner Harbor area are also a quick drive.

Druid Hill Park: As the fourth largest park in the nation, it hosts the Maryland Zoo, the Baltimore Conservatory, the Palm House, and Druid Hill Lake.

Existing Community Facilities: Park Heights has several historic churches actively engaged in the local community, the Magna Technical Training Center that teaches employable job skills to adults, the Pimlico Multipurpose Center that offers several community health-related services, and a plethora of other well-utilized, community-serving institutions.

Pockets of Thriving and Stable Residential Areas: As indicated in the Master Plan, Park Heights has several residential areas with few vacancies, well-managed properties, and a rich historic fabric. These areas serve as neighborhood strengths upon which to build.



Stable Residential Area in Park Heights

Source: 2006 Park Heights Master Plan

Great Existing Architecture: Given its deep historic roots, Park Heights embodies an abundance of unique architectural elements that contribute to its identity and image.

Great Community Spirit: Evidenced by the large participation in the master planning process and this TAP effort, Park Heights is characterized by a solid, active community dedicated to protecting and uplifting the neighborhood as a community of choice.

Transit Accessibility: Park Heights is served by several Metro stations, light-rail stops, major transportation arterials, and bus lines.

Attraction to the Broader Market: Burgeoning interest from a target market base within and beyond Park Heights in recent months is a positive indication of the neighborhood's short-term and long-term redevelopment potential.

## Challenges

### Lack of Viable Commercial Centers or Activity Hub:

No major entertainment destination, central shopping core, or retail diversity within Park Heights has led to shoppers traveling outside the neighborhood to buy goods and services. A lack of retail may be partially due to Mondawmin Mall which serves the southern boundary of Park Heights with Big Box retail and some smaller mall retailers. The uncertain future of the Pimlico property also stalls investment, as it is a logical site for commercial development.

Concentration of Low Income: Park Heights is well below the city average in area median income, which can hinder its ability to attract residential and commercial investment.

Concentration of Substandard Businesses: A number of substandard establishments attract and exacerbate unwanted activity within the neighborhood.

Underutilization of Druid Hill Park: The expansiveness of Druid Hill Park lends itself well for active programming and community gatherings among Park Heights residents.

Yet, the park currently does not operate as an activity generator.

Persistent Quality of Life Impediments: Pervasive issues such as crime and drugs continue to plague Park Heights and contribute to a negative public perception.

Community Divisiveness: Division among community groups in different portions of Park Heights can impede progress.



Pimlico Stadium

Source: Unknown

## Opportunities

Pimlico Racetrack: At 140+ acres and owned by one single entity, Pimlico Racetrack presents a unique opportunity to create immense value in Park Heights as a destination hub. Though market forces will ultimately dictate the timing of this transformation, it remains one of Park Heights' signature landmarks.

Pockets of Publicly-owned Land: Continued strategic property acquisition by Baltimore City and large acres of land owned by other public agencies will ultimately assist in luring investment into Park Heights in the mid- to long-term.

Economic Catalysts: Strong activity centers such as Life Bridge Health are key economic engines for this region of the city. The eventual need for expansion as well as the new addition of the Social Security Administration (SSA), relocating less than a mile north of Park Heights, will contribute to area's competitive advantage.



## A Strategy for Today



The TAP panel developed a two-pronged approach to redevelopment in Park Heights. Given the neighborhood's many complexities, the panel first focused on short-term action items that could be immediately achieved over the course of 12 to 18 months. This set of recommendations focused on residential preservation, maintenance and predevelopment, workforce development, public safety, beautification, civic space/public realm improvements, marketing, and additional strategies. Such recommendations should be understood as pre-development measures that can "set the stage" for additional growth and future market appeal of Park Heights. In addition, quick and meaningful activity will allow citizens inside and outside of Park Heights to observe that positive changes are beginning to occur.

### **Residential Preservation, Maintenance & Pre-Development**

Adopt a comprehensive homeownership counseling program, focusing on credit and budget counseling, homebuyer workshops, anti-predatory lending, foreclosure prevention, and pre-purchase, pre-closing, and post-purchase guidance

Encourage and collaborate with major employers to participate in the State's "Live Near Your Work" Program

Aggressively pursue code enforcement in order to create a cleaner and more attractive environment

Encourage and begin targeted acquisition along Park Heights Avenue in order to direct growth as a prominent corridor

Utilize the City's pending landbanking authority (or create a third party entity) to continue to acquire and dispose of properties in a manner that fosters quality redevelopment

Consider a "Great Home Sale" program that markets Park Heights' vacant housing inventory as opportunities for small-scale revitalization

### **Workforce Development**

Set up an active Park Heights workforce program that links skills learned with jobs created from Park Heights revitalization efforts

Support and create a summer jobs program for youth

Develop a streetscape strategy to adopt in the City's Capital Improvements Program (CIP)

### Public Safety Improvements

Implement a "Clean & Safe" Program similar to the Baltimore Downtown Partnership that engages the local community and youth

Focus on crime "hot spots" and utilize the Weed & Seed program to target criminal activity

Endorse more police presence such as bike ambassadors

Document and broadcast improvements in crime statistics over time as mechanism for tracking progress

### Beautification

Restore Park Heights' neighborhood identity with banners on light poles, bumper stickers, and/or colorful signage at gateways

Collaborate with students from local art institutions to aesthetically improve vacant properties (i.e. artwork on doors/windows of boarded up homes)

Utilize "free human capital" (AmeriCorps, area schools and universities, etc.) to assist with neighborhood improvements



Caribbean Storefronts

Source: Unknown

### Civic Space / Public Realm Improvements

Better utilize Druid Hill Park as an active events space by hiring an events planner

Establish youth sports leagues via churches and community organizations to further foster community pride and identity

Engage the Caribbean community for active cultural programming for Druid Hill Park and local community events

### Marketing

Create an identity such as a logo uniquely identifiable to the Park Heights neighborhoods

Document all revitalization efforts with pictures and posters to measure and brand progress

Discuss the appropriate timing to launch a full-fledged Park Heights marketing campaign to encourage investment

### Additional Strategies

Make sure linked public entities (HUD, Baltimore Housing, Baltimore City Department of Planning, etc.) know of Park Heights Renaissance's initiatives for various areas so as not to impede progress or pursue conflicting objectives

Adopt a Tax Increment Financing Overlay District to fund necessary infrastructure improvements

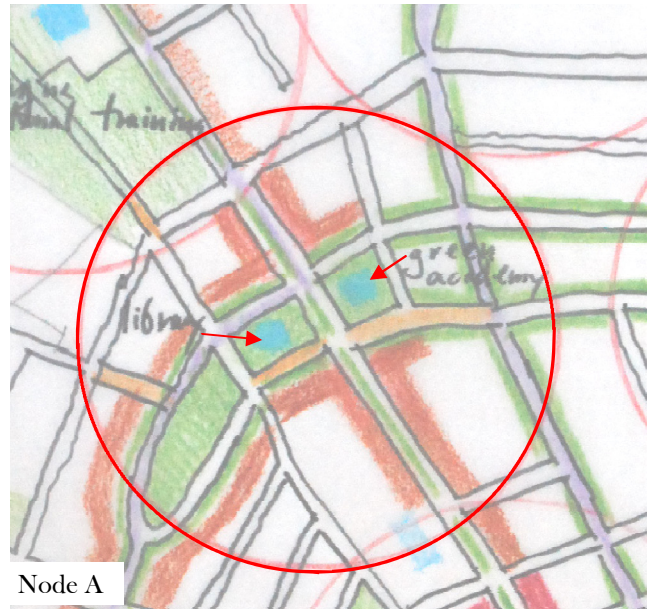
Engage foundations and corporate executives for additional financial support for community initiatives

## A Concept for Tomorrow

In addition to short-term strategies, the panel focused efforts on creating a long-term concept plan for the Park Heights community to consider as revitalization efforts continue. This concept plan is shown and described below, followed by detailed recommendations for residential, commercial, sense of place, and transit-oriented development strategies that provide more specific insight as to the steps required to achieve such a plan.

### Park Heights Concept Plan

While the Park Heights Master Plan laid the foundation for a development layout, the TAP took its general framework to another level. Using the original plan as a template, the TAP sought to create greater connectivity while also putting the “Park” back into Park Heights. Both of these could generally be achieved by realigning specific road configurations, while also promoting green and sustainable strategies throughout the neighborhood. This theme not only deals with improving and redirecting the physical Park Heights landscape to



Node A

create value and attract investment, but it also promotes improved health benefits and stronger social ties associated with walkable, interconnected neighborhoods.

The concept plan denotes several nodes of opportunity within Park Heights. Node A straddles Park Heights Avenue at Virginia and Dupont Avenues (Blocks A, C, M, & N – refer to map on page 12) and represents the potential as a distinctive, new civic hub. It extends Dupont Avenue northeast across Park Heights Avenue to Pimlico Road, allowing for better access and connectivity. The two blocks abutting Park Heights Avenue contain a new library and a green academy that could prepare youth



Park Heights Concept Plan

Source: ULITAP



Passive Park in Node A

Source: ULITAP

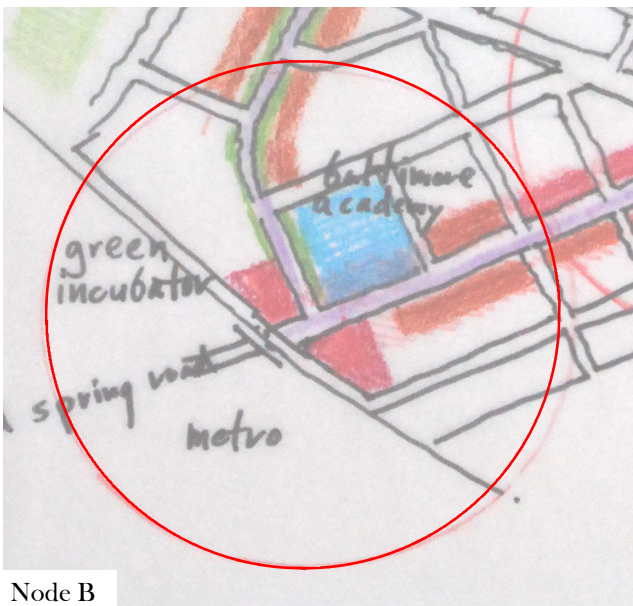




Sketch of new rowhomes surrounding passive park & new library

and adults for jobs in the environmental and energy industries. Behind the library, a passive, pocket park is proposed for parcels between Virginia and Dupont Avenues, that could serve new rowhomes built on the outer edges. Not only would the new park be an amenity to the new residences, the rowhomes could also serve as the “eyes and ears” of the park, ensuring safety and fostering community.

Node B lies just south at West Cold Spring Lane and East Wabash Avenue. This node encompasses the existing Baltimore Academy, the existing recycling facility near railroad tracks, and the West Cold Spring Lane Metro Station. It proposes the



Node B

continuation of Virginia Avenue, which currently ends abruptly, to connect with East Wabash Avenue, thereby creating a better street network and alternative route to West Cold Spring Lane. These improvements create a physical connection among nodes and a link among the neighborhood’s potential sustainable industries, particularly if the recycling center can transform into a job incubator for green industries. Due to proximity, such potential could also create synergy with any development at the West Cold Spring Lane Metro Station.

The remaining activity nodes center around specific neighborhood assets (e.g., existing elementary schools, Sinai Hospital, Magna Technical Training Facility, etc.), which could collectively be linked by an electric shuttle to further promote the theme of a sustainable, healthy neighborhood.

Lastly, there is an opportunity to make Park Heights an urban boulevard, widening the median and using the end lanes for temporary or permanent parking. The portion of Park Heights Avenue between Virginia and Dupont Avenues could host decorative wind turbines in a celebrated, landscaped median



Section Details of Proposed Park Heights Avenue Scheme

and serve as a source of energy for the neighborhood. The wind turbines could also be decorated with a community logo and serve as an iconic landmark within the Park Heights neighborhood.

### Sense of Place Strategy

Central to this strategy is the ability for Park Heights to re-brand itself as a community of choice and enhance its competitive edge. Rejuvenating an image that instills community pride for existing residents and appeals to new residents is critical to the neighborhood's revitalization. Specific recommendations include:

Select a "Park Heights" identity, logo, and/or slogan that conveys the neighborhood's identity and unites the community

Re-establish a vital institutional and social base through the enhancement or construction of public educational facilities, libraries and community gathering places

Establish ongoing community mobilization that includes not only local stakeholders, but also key regional players that can influence current neighborhood conditions

Institute neighborhood-wide cleanup measures to improve neighborhood image

Focus on and enhance key areas such as Park Circle as a gateway and Park Heights Avenue as an "urban" or "green" boulevard with a celebrated median

### Residential Strategy

This strategy examined the ability for Park Heights to restructure its residential areas prior to private sector involvement. Note that since it is difficult to predict market behavior for a long-term strategy, a comprehensive, detailed residential approach for all of Park Heights, or key portions within, could not be outlined. However, the specific recommendations below address several important factors to influencing the private market over the mid- to long-term.

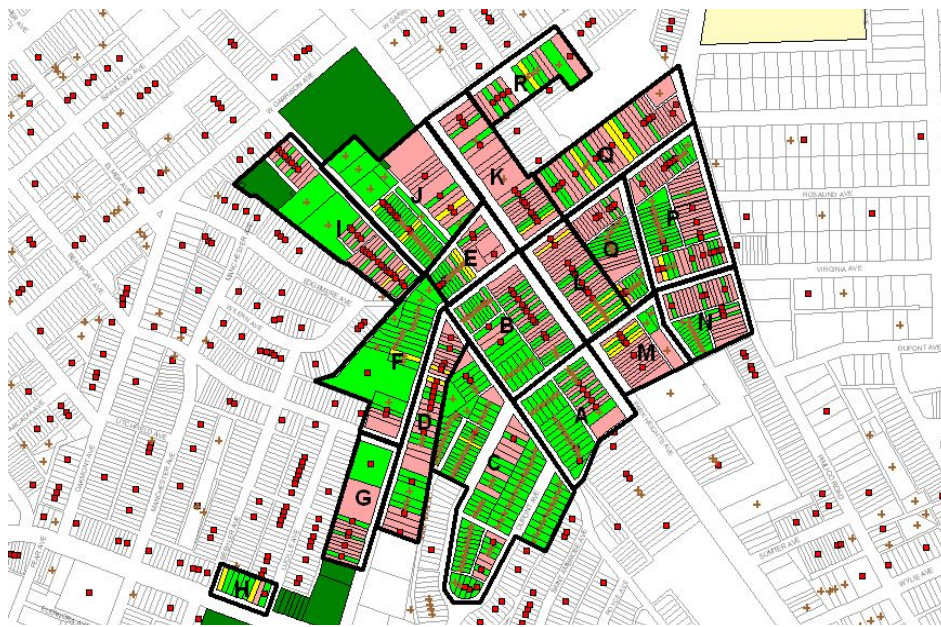
Create a comprehensive land use plan that proposes an "inside-out" strategy, leveraging strong and thriving communities along Park Height's borders

Target blocks "A" and "C" within the 60 acre urban renewal area for initial acquisition followed by parcels "B" and "D" (refer to map below)

Establish a realistic and aggressive timetable for implementation

Commence predevelopment initiatives such as street and infrastructure improvements to potentially entice private investment and to calm traffic by reducing travel lanes

Determine street alignment and infrastructure improvements that will improve development



Park Heights 60-acre Redevelopment Area

Source: Baltimore Housing





potential of area. Once identified, earmark funds and begin approvals for each capital improvement project

Send out a Request for Proposal (RFP) to developers once park in blocks “A” and “C” is complete and the library is under construction. Focus on acquiring a critical mass, so initial redevelopment will be large enough to sustain on its own until future development occurs

Encourage local businesses to promote home and façade improvements in areas closest to their operations, starting with Sinai Hospital and along southern Park Heights Avenue near Park Circle

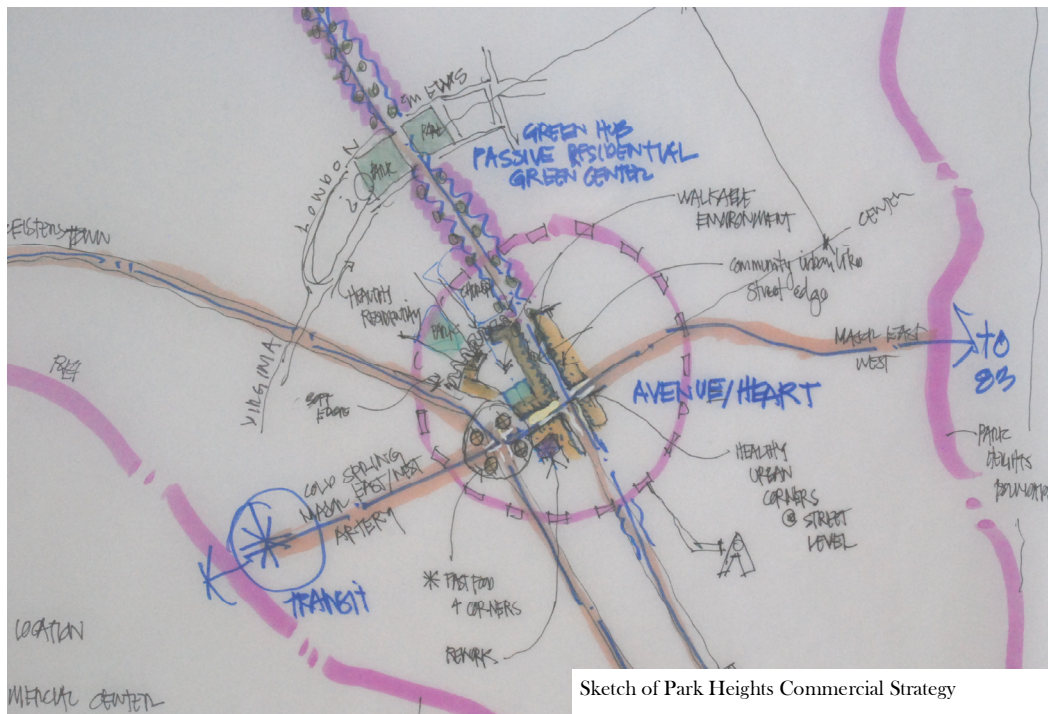
Begin planning for improved connectivity from strong adjacent neighborhoods surrounding Park Heights, as well as Druid Hill Park

Focus and enhance property tax incentives and zoning for new construction and rehab in targeted areas

Be patient – current market conditions will not translate into significant interest in the immediate future. Leverage the current economic downturn to acquire remaining necessary properties

### Commercial Strategy

The commercial strategy required the panel to consider the complex challenges related to the idiosyncratic nature of the retail sector. In doing so, it was first imperative to acknowledge that the Pimlico Racetrack may eventually emerge as the large retail/mixed-use center for Park Heights (as the market is not currently strong enough for major mixed-use redevelopment) and that Mondawmin Mall is the existing “big box” retail location. With this understanding, the panel focused their attention on next best opportunity for new retail—Park Lane Shopping Center. The recommendations below outline targeted strategies to transform this property into a more viable operation to meet the needs of Park Heights residents.



Sketch of Park Heights Commercial Strategy



Improve grocery store across from Park Lane through renovation, subsidy, or replacement

Maintaining fast food stores currently on site

Consider retail uses and façade improvements across Park Heights Avenue to get double-sided retail

Consider a “slip street” akin to Stoneleigh or Charles Village for ease of access to new on-street parking

Enhance the streetscape and landscape attributes and establish standards for street and parking lot lighting

Provide better community retail in the short-term, while a long-term strategy could include a mixed-use urban village development due to transit proximity and key arterial intersection, including the block on east side of Park Heights Avenue across from Park Lane Shopping Center

#### **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy**

This strategy focuses on Park Heights’ ability to take advantage of its transit accessibility, maximize its transit stations as community assets, and foster a more integrated street and path network. Specific recommendations include:

##### *For Coldspring Avenue at Wabash Avenue*

Strengthen connection between West Cold Spring Lane Station and the major redevelopment area along Virginia Avenue (with a possible southern extension of Virginia Avenue)

Strengthen the connection between West Cold Spring Station and Park Lane Shopping Center along West Cold Spring Lane through sidewalk improvements and street tree improvements

Improve recycling facility at Virginia Avenue to create a better street edge

##### *For Rogers Avenue at Northern Parkway*

Capitalize on stable neighborhoods and activity generated from new Social Security Administration headquarters

Consider a development program for Metro Station that is primarily residential in nature with minimal commuter-serving retail and allows for replacement parking for the station; Also consider an office use or job generator if feasible

Improve pedestrian connections toward the Park Heights Community, Northwest Plaza Shopping Center, and senior housing on Northern Parkway

Calm traffic on Wabash Avenue via bump-outs and other mechanisms

Administer cleanup of surrounding properties or assertively enforce property code compliance

Collaborate with the Maryland Transit Administration to reissue RFP for Metro Station development

## Conclusion and Final Thoughts

Despite the many complexities of Park Heights, the panel saw tremendous potential for the neighborhood to reignite its competitive edge and take advantage of the momentum already set in place by the master plan. With continued involvement from a variety of influential players -- including the existing residents, public officials, nonprofit providers, local business community and private sources, Park Heights can certainly witness a transformation.

Although the panel did not specifically address a human development component in its recommendations, it would like to acknowledge and emphasize it as a critical piece in the revitalization of Park Heights. Both are intricately linked and one cannot happen without the other. The panel also appreciates the importance of an equitable, responsible and respectful process for the relocation of families (if necessary) and for the provision of jobs for minorities, youth and women within the community.

As with any revitalization effort, the transition must fairly accommodate and protect existing residents, while also invite new members into the community to contribute to the stability of the neighborhood.

Redevelopment of the Park Heights community will be a challenging task, and undoubtedly will take adequate time and preparation. Incentivizing residential and commercial developers to return to the community will require effort from both local citizens and the government. The enthusiasm and passion for the task exhibited by stakeholders, as well as the Park Heights Renaissance team, gave the panel reason to believe the desired objectives can be achieved.



A Proposed Revitalization Scheme for Belvedere Avenue

Source: 2006 Park Heights Master Plan