

OGONTZ AVE.

**LIVE, LEARN, WORK,
SHOP & PLAY
IN THE 9TH!**

OGONTZ AVENUE:

***“PHILADELPHIA’S NORTHWEST
GATEWAY”***

9TH

**DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
CORRIDOR
PLAN**

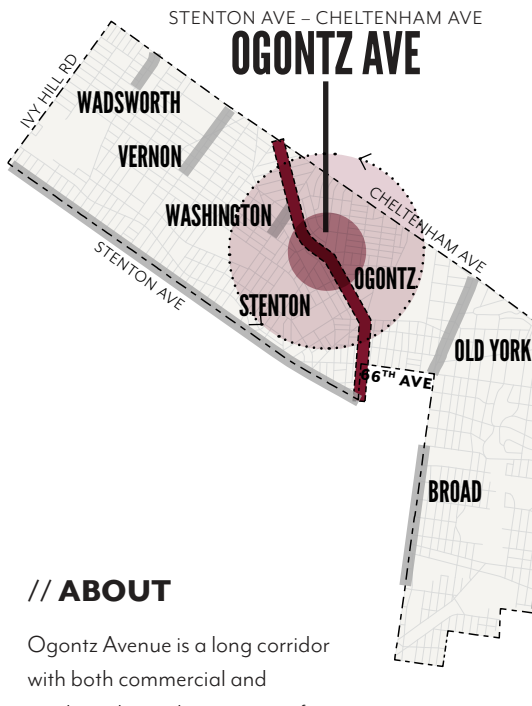
NOVEMBER 2019

Office of COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE PARKER

WRT

OGONTZ AVENUE

LIVE, LEARN, WORK, SHOP & PLAY IN THE 9TH!



// ABOUT

Ogontz Avenue is a long corridor with both commercial and residential stretches as it runs from the city line southward towards Center City. Trolley lines were established along this corridor between 1900 and 1910, and it eventually transformed into a commercial corridor between 1930 and 1950. Historic and significant assets include the William Rowen

School, which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1988, and Ogontz Hall, which was added to the same register in 1991.

// CURRENT CONDITIONS

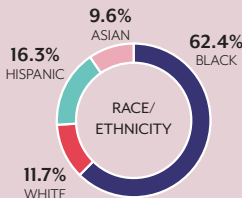
Ogontz Avenue runs through the communities of East Mt. Airy and West Oak Lane. These neighborhoods include long-term residents who are civically engaged,

9TH DISTRICT AT A GLANCE:

The 9th District includes a variety of diverse, family-friendly neighborhoods that are well-connected to city and regional transportation networks.

162,794

9TH DISTRICT POPULATION
IN 2016



The 9th District contains highly diverse neighborhoods with different ethnic and racial profiles.

Source: RES 2017 Estimates; RES



64.1%
OWNER-OCCUPIED



\$131,535
MEDIAN HOME VALUE



\$41,794
MEDIAN HH INCOME

contributing to neighborhood life and reinforcing the stability of the area. The mostly residential area includes a variety of housing types with single-family homes, twins, and attached row houses. These neighborhoods have very low vacancy.

Ogontz Avenue is a long corridor that has multiple commercial nodes along it, separated by stretches of residential blocks. Often, one side of the street has stores facing homes on the other side. This unique pattern gives the corridor a dynamic



OGONTZ AVENUE DELIVERS A VARIETY OF SERVICES, AMENITIES, AND EXPERIENCES ALONG ITS ENTIRE LENGTH.



and constantly changing feel, with services and amenities spread along the entire length of the street.

Much of the corridor is well-covered with street trees, some of them mature and offering ample shade to the sidewalks, which on certain blocks are very wide and inviting.

Some sections of Ogontz Avenue have experienced issues with nuisance businesses and loitering, with individual business owners often taking it upon themselves to address issues when they arise.

There is a business association, but it is less active than in past years. Business owners have expressed a desire to be more organized and connected to each other in order to tackle common issues.

EXPLORING THE CORRIDOR



// OLD AND NEW

Ogontz Avenue is anchored by a number of long-term businesses that have been there for generations. One such is Beale's Florist, now in its third generation of ownership. They are dedicated to improving and upkeeping their block of the corridor.

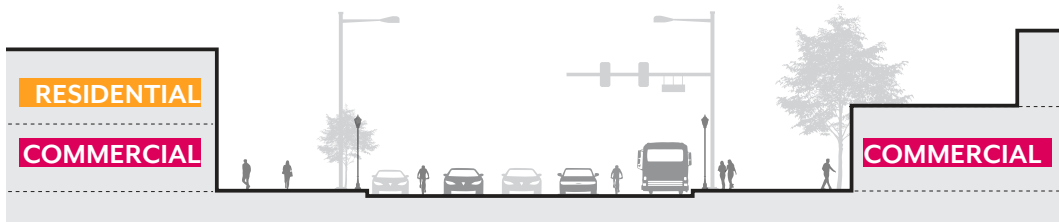
There are also many newer businesses, including Uptown BBQ & Grill, a recent family-run restaurant on the northern end of the corridor.

COMMUNITY ASSETS:

- » Simons Recreation Center & Ice Skating Rink (Rebuild Site)
- » West Oak Branch Library (Rebuild Site)
- » West Oak Lane Senior Center
- » Philadelphia National Cemetery
- » Northwood Cemetery
- » Cheltenham Hills Cemetery



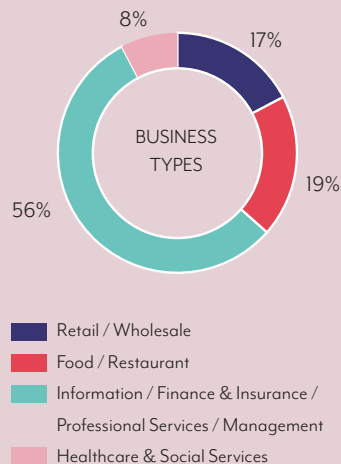
**SOME SECTIONS OF OGONTZ AVENUE
HAVE GENEROUS SIDEWALKS AND
MATURE STREET TREES.**



// SAMPLE OF EXISTING BUSINESSES AND SERVICES

Ogontz Avenue is a long corridor with multiple commercial nodes. The variety of businesses are vast and include too many to list here, but below is a sample of the types of stores and businesses you'll find:

- » Amy's Hair Braiding
- » BBQ Town
- » Beale's Florist
- » China House Restaurant
- » Citimed Pharmacy
- » Corrielus Cardiology
- » Crab & Claw
- » Creative Kids Educational Center
- » Danny's Auto Tags
- » Dawn's Breakfast
- » Erie Insurance
- » Essence Nail & Spa
- » Eva Donaldson School of Music
- » Golden Combs Barbershop
- » Hannes Fashions
- » Hong Kong Garden
- » Illusions Barber Shop
- » In & Out Pizza
- » O-Sunnyside Breakfast
- » Ogontz Family Medical
- » Papa Joe's Pizza
- » Peter's Steak House
- » Relish Restaurant
- » Tang Pharmacy
- » Uptown BBQ & Grill
- » Victoria's Kitchen Restaurant



// **STREET TREES**

Ogontz Ave has strong street tree coverage - some of the strongest within the 9th District. This helps to provide a comfortable, intimate and welcoming pedestrian environment along the corridor. Future streetscape improvements should build on this strength.



// **BUSINESS DIVERSITY**

An analysis of the level of business diversity on the corridors using the Shannon Index shows that the southern portion of Ogontz Ave exhibits low diversity. A close-up shows an oversupply of what are categorized as “other” business types: salons, laundromats, cleaning services, and other similar stores. This trend is seen on a number of other corridors as well, which echoes the concern of many residents that some commercial areas near them have too many of one or few things (particularly salons and daycares) and not enough of the things they really need.



Ogontz Ave: few restaurants & healthcare

- Retail / Wholesale
- Food / Restaurant
- Professional Services
- Entertainment & Recreation
- Healthcare & Social Services
- Other Services

*Nail / Beauty / Hair Salons, Laundromat, Cleaners
Services, Churches. Other Public & Private Entities*

// PRELIMINARY CORRIDOR STRATEGIES

Cheltenham Avenue between Pittville and N.19th Street is a short, one sided commercial corridor adjacent to the West Oak Lane neighborhood and across from Montgomery County. While the commercial uses along the corridor serve both adjacent residents as well as travelers along the highly trafficked Cheltenham Avenue, a number of improvements are needed to better integrate the commercial uses with adjoining residential neighborhood and

make it an attractive shopping destination including:

- » Enhanced streetscape and pedestrian safety features such as curb extensions and traffic calming that make it safer to cross the street.
- » Street furnishings that enhance the overall experience such as trash receptacles, benches, lighting, and branded banners.
- » Façade treatments that reduce cluttered signage and provide a uniform and cohesive character.
- » Street trees and planters to make a vibrant, more attractive streetscape.



Cheltenham Avenue, between Pittville Avenue and N. 19th Street

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

// OPPORTUNITIES

Ogontz Avenue already has a number of assets and positive qualities that could be enhanced and harnessed to benefit business owners and better serve potential shoppers. Reinvigorating the business association and adding additional pedestrian amenities will build on the inherent strengths of the corridor.

Nearly all of the Ogontz Avenue commercial corridor is located

within a Qualified Opportunity Zone, which is a new federal tax incentive program aimed at spurring development in distressed areas. This means vacant or outdated properties along Ogontz could more quickly be put back to productive use as neighborhood-serving amenities.

EXISTING



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERING OF CORRIDOR WITH PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Hire a dedicated corridor manager

Having one person dedicated to the many businesses on such a long corridor will better serve business owner's needs.

2 Re-engage existing organizations

Expand the existing Business Association by promoting it and finding ways for businesses to benefit from membership.

3 Involve residents in corridor revitalization

Form an organization to help manage corridor improvements, support existing businesses, and build cohesion.

4 Address the loitering issues and specific problem businesses

Partner with the local and state police and Licenses & Inspections staff to improve quality of life for shoppers and business owners.

5 Marketing strategy

Develop a marketing strategy that focuses on niche, unique retail and exceptional service to compete with adjacent shopping centers.

6 Small business incubator

A small business incubator helps locals to conceive of, test, and improve upon a business idea and then supports the start-up capital fundraising, launch, and growth of that business on the corridor.

7 Consistent signage and street trees

Adding more street trees and encouraging coordinated signage will give the corridor a more cohesive identity.

8 Add public space amenities

Further enhance the corridor with planters, hanging flower baskets, and benches.

9 Identify redevelopment opportunities for new retail and/or mixed use

Utilize the corridor's location within a Qualified Opportunity Zone to encourage new commercial and residential development in the area.

// COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR MANAGER

A Commercial Corridor Manager can help support the existing Business Association's revitalization and economic redevelopment initiatives and efforts. The Corridor Manager is responsible for interacting with the Ogontz business community and providing assistance to local businesses. They also act as a liaison between business owners/organizations and City departments (i.e. the Department of Commerce) to help businesses thrive.

RECOMMENDATIONS



New Mixed-Use Development



Facade Improvements

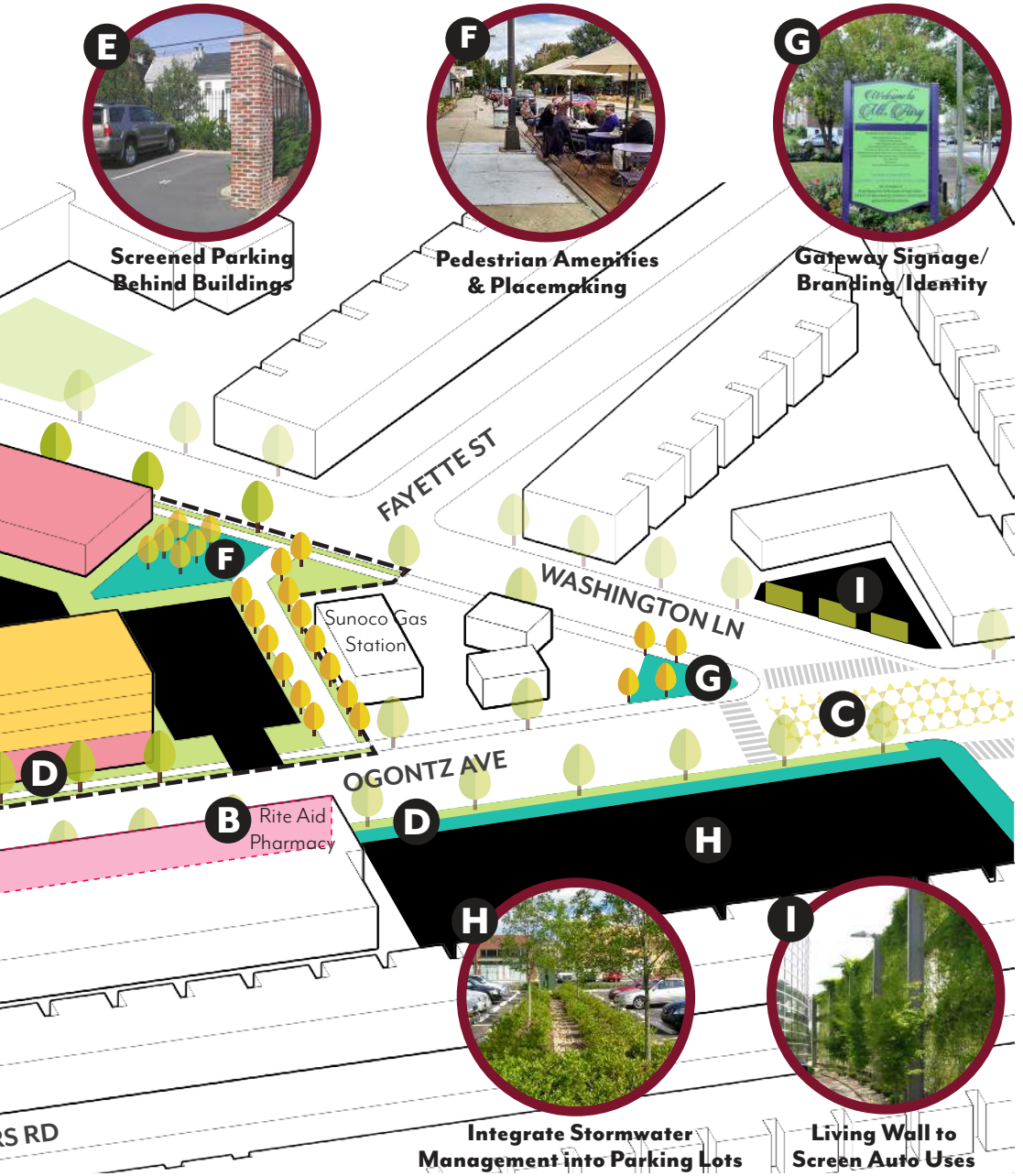


Improve Crossings & Placemaking



Streetscape Improvements





POTENTIAL PARTNERS & RESOURCES

// GETTING IT DONE

The following potential partners and resources can help residents and interested stakeholders achieve the vision for Ogontz Avenue.

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
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1. Hire a dedicated corridor manager

Philadelphia Department of Commerce

The Targeted Corridor Management Program is a grant program intended to help revitalize commercial corridors through economic development activities and help create safe, attractive, and welcoming places that benefit low to moderate-income residents. The Department of Commerce supports the redevelopment of commercial corridors by providing funding to select corridors and/or community-based development organizations to hire corridor management staff. There are four categories under TCMP: strengthening commercial corridors through planning and research; making commercial corridors more welcoming and viable through revitalization and elimination of blight; increasing availability of jobs and retail goods and services; and strengthening businesses on corridors through marketing, technical assistance and financing. Funding of \$75,000 (with potential for additional funding) is awarded through a Request for Proposals process. For more information, call (215) 683-2167.

2. Re-engage existing organizations

Philadelphia Department of Commerce

The City provides funding to select nonprofit organizations that help businesses, which is provided through the Business Technical Assistance Program (BTAP). BTAP helps organizations equip business owners with business skill training, lending, English language assistance, and legal aid. A list of Current BTAP providers can be found here: <https://www.phila.gov/departments/departments-of-commerce/supporting-business/one-on-one-business-support>.

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
3. Involve residents in corridor revitalization through volunteer efforts or formation of a CDC	Philadelphia Department of Commerce; OARC; West Oak Lane Business Association	The Neighborhood Economic Development Grant helps fund planning, pre-development, and development costs. Grants range from \$100,000 to \$500,000 and the Department of Commerce invests in opportunities that revitalize neighborhoods and provide employment opportunities. Grants are awarded through a yearly Request for Proposals process. For more information, call (215) 683-2167.
4. Address the loitering issues and specific problem businesses	Philadelphia Police Department; State Police; L&I	The Philadelphia Police Department holds regular Police Service Area (PSA) and Captain Town Hall meetings where the Lieutenants and District Captains have the responsibility to address community concerns. This can be a basis to address corridor safety issues as they arise.
5. Develop a marketing strategy that focuses on niche, unique retail and exceptional services	Philadelphia Department of Commerce	The Targeted Corridor Management Program is a grant program intended to help revitalize commercial corridors through economic development activities and help create safe, attractive, and welcoming places that benefit low to moderate-income residents. The Department of Commerce supports the redevelopment of commercial corridors by providing funding to select corridors and/or community-based development organizations to hire corridor management staff. There are four categories under TCMP, including strengthening businesses on corridors through marketing, technical assistance and financing. Funding of \$75,000 (with potential for additional funding) is awarded through a Request for Proposals process. For more information, call (215) 683-2167.

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6. Small business incubator

Philadelphia Department of Commerce; Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development; The Enterprise Center; IF Lab; 1776; Temple Small Business Development Incubator; Her Corner; Philly iHUB; The Institute of Hip Hop Entrepreneurship

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Elevate!, a program run by The Enterprise Center, is potential small business incubator model for the 9th District. It works with early-stage businesses that have been running for at least six months to grow their companies into profitable and sustainable businesses. This 12-month program provides Elevate! entrepreneurs with access to credit repair help, peer support, financing and workshops on sales, marketing, finance, and leadership, among other things. The program also provides workspace at The Enterprise Center's West Philly co-working space Venture Acceleration Center.

Other potential incubator and accelerator programs that could serve as resources to entrepreneurs in the 9th District are listed under Potential Partners.

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
7. Implement consistent signage and street tree planting		
	Philadelphia Department of Parks & Recreation; Philadelphia Water Department; Philadelphia Department of Commerce	<p>To get a free street tree planted in the right-of-way front of your home, business, or other property, contact Philadelphia Parks & Recreation at (215) 685-4363 or https://www.phila.gov/services/trees-parks-the-environment/tree-related-services/get-a-street-tree.</p> <p>The Storefront Improvement Program is a program of the Department of Commerce that provides eligible business and property owners grant money for facade improvements. Eligible improvements include masonry/brick pointing, painting, doors, windows, lighting, signage, and other details. The program can reimburse up to 50% of the cost of eligible improvements to a maximum of \$10,000 for a single commercial property, or up to \$15,000 for a multiple-address or corner business property. To find out if you can apply: Email SIP@phila.gov or call (215) 683-2025.</p>
8. Add public space amenities like murals, public art, and benches		
	Mural Arts	The Community Murals Initiative is a program put forth by Mural Arts Philadelphia that collaborates with community members to imagine and lead projects that build social capital, develop communal ownership, represent diversity, and empower people. Mural projects often highlight and respond to the area's history and current needs. Any community member or group can apply, and applications are open twice a year. For more assistance, call (215) 685-0750.
9. Identify redevelopment opportunities for new retail and/or mixed use along corridor		
	Local developers and property owners	Under the new federal tax bill, this census tract is designated as an Opportunity Zone, an effort to incentivize redevelopment and long-term investment in distressed census tracts using private investments. Individuals who invest in Qualified Opportunity Zones are eligible to benefit from capital gains tax incentives.



GET INVOLVED

CONTACT US @



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