

STENTON AVE.

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

*STENTON AVENUE: “A
BUSTLING AND VIBRANT
CONNECTOR”*

9TH

DISTRICT
COMMERCIAL
CORRIDOR
PLAN

NOVEMBER 2019

Office of COUNCILWOMAN CHERELLE PARKER

WRT

STENTON AVENUE

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

“A BUSTLING AND VIBRANT CONNECTOR”



// ABOUT

Stenton Avenue is a two-mile long corridor with both commercial and residential stretches as it runs southwest towards Center City. It also constitutes the border of the 9th Council District. It currently functions as a high-traffic arterial road connecting residents from Broad Street west to points beyond city limits.

The surrounding neighborhoods are home to Ivy Hill Cemetery, founded in 1867, and community parks such as Finley Recreation Center, where major playground renovations were recently completed. Further east, Martin Luther King High School sits on the southern side of the street.

// CURRENT CONDITIONS

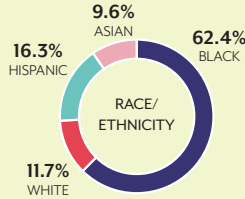
Stenton Avenue runs through the West Oak Lane and East Mt. Airy neighborhoods. These neighborhoods include long-term residents who are civically engaged,

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.

The Stenton Avenue area is not served by any nearby transit lines; however, two SEPTA bus lines run along the corridor. While many of the residential sections of the street boast mature trees, there is often a lack of street trees, trash cans, and benches on the commercial nodes.



STENTON AVENUE IS A CONNECTOR STREET WITH POCKETS OF NEIGHBORHOOD-SERVING RETAIL.



Nearby Martin Luther King High School creates substantial foot traffic with high school students connecting to adjacent neighborhoods. However, the fast-moving traffic combined with minimal sidewalk widths make the Stenton Avenue corridor feel unsafe for pedestrians. Traffic calming and additional pedestrian amenities will help make it safer for all modes of transportation.

Stenton Avenue is in a unique position because there are multiple local elected officials representing this corridor. Improvements can be maximized along the entire corridor with an effective partnership between local and state elected officials, as well as business and nonprofit stakeholders.

EXPLORING THE CORRIDOR



Many blocks of Stenton Avenue are comprised of shopping center-style buildings with multiple storefronts. Some blocks feature angled parking in front of the stores.



// CHARACTER

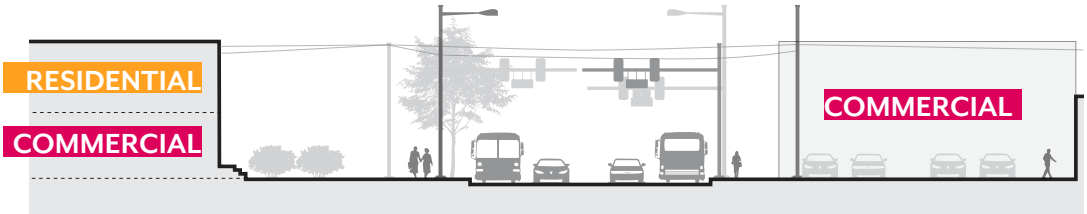
Stenton Avenue contains a mixture of small businesses and larger national chains, including CVS, AutoZone, and others. Many of the larger stores are configured in an auto-oriented manner with parking in front, while other blocks of the corridor maintain a traditional urban storefront design. Some sections have angled parking in front the shops, which is more efficient and safer for pedestrians than traditional parallel street parking.

COMMUNITY ASSETS:

- » Finley Recreation Center
- » Simons Recreation Center
- » West Oak Lane Branch Library
- » Philadelphia National Cemetery
- » Cheltenham Cemetery
- » Ivy Hill Cemetery



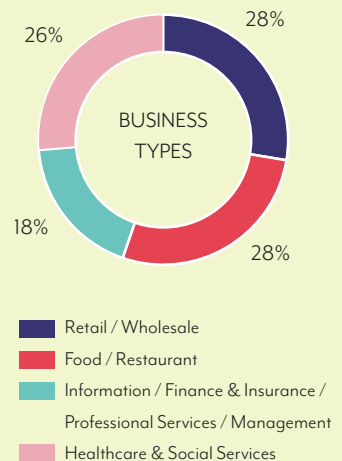
**STENTON AVENUE IS A MAJOR
CONNECTOR STREET WITH MULTIPLE
BUS LINES ALONG IT.**



// SAMPLE OF EXISTING BUSINESSES AND SERVICES

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

- » Barry's Clothesline
- » Brother Produce Market
- » Cho Grill Master Deli
- » Craven Dental Association
- » Ellet Cleaners & Tailor
- » Excel Medical Center
- » Genesis Optical
- » Gilben's Bakery and Specialty Sandwich Shop
- » Golden Restaurant
- » Hope Rising Child Learning Center
- » June's Restaurant
- » Knight's Beauty Supply
- » Mt. Pleasant Health Center
- » Nancy Le Nails
- » Optima Vision Center
- » Queen Express Pizza
- » Rally's Hamburgers
- » Rocco's Italian Ice
- » Rose Flower Shop
- » Stenton Cleaners
- » Wow Hardware & Discount Store
- » Young's Deli



VISION FOR THE FUTURE

// OPPORTUNITIES

There are a lot of opportunities to improve the aesthetics and function of Stenton Avenue's commercial nodes. In more auto-oriented areas, trees and greenery can act as buffers between the sidewalk and surface parking. In areas with traditional urban storefronts, elements like facade improvements, trees, pedestrian amenities, and greening can create a more inviting atmosphere for all shoppers, but particularly for pedestrians.

With the corridor currently serving primarily as a connecting arterial road, interventions will be needed to turn it into more of a commercial destination. Traffic calming and placemaking elements can help achieve this goal. A redesign of a challenging intersection at 66th and Wister could be an excellent placemaking opportunity if the intersection is simplified and more space is given over to pedestrians.

EXISTING



ILLUSTRATIVE RENDERING OF CORRIDOR WITH PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Streetscape Improvements

Physical interventions like street trees, planters, trash cans, and benches will make the corridor more inviting.

2 Facade Improvements

Utilize available resources to improve storefront signage and create a cohesive feel along the corridor.

3 Small Business Incubator

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

4 Street Trees & Greening

Certain parts of the corridor already have a number of mature street trees, but enhancing the green quality of the street in its commercial sections will make it more welcoming for shoppers.

5 Traffic Calming

Implement physical interventions along the corridor to slow cars while allowing safe traffic flow.

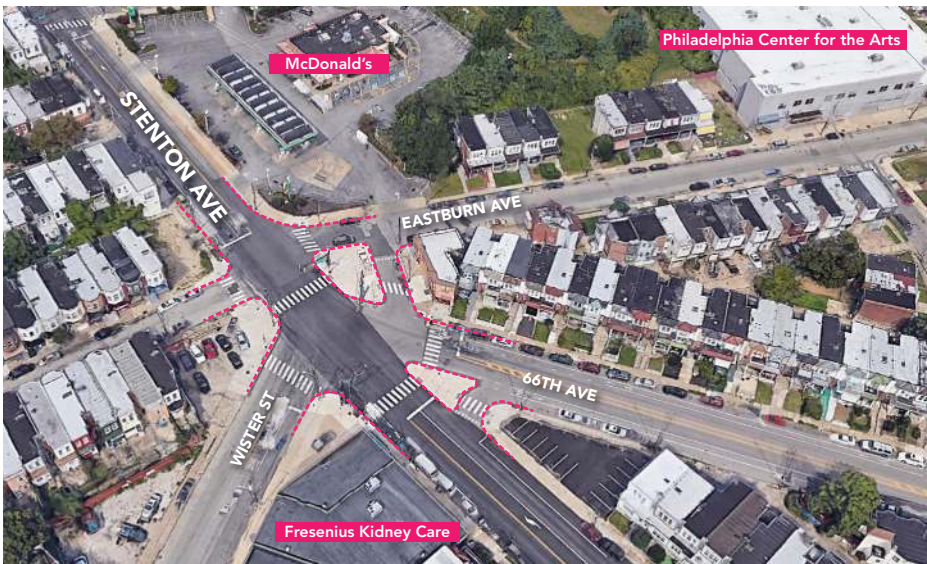
6 Rationalize 6-way Intersection of 66th and Wister

The intersection of Stenton, 66th, and Wister is confusing and dangerous. Further study is needed to redesign the intersection to make it safer and incorporate placemaking elements.

7 Parking Space Re-configuration and Placemaking

The 7400 block of Stenton has potential to include outdoor seating for businesses, as well as reconfigured angle parking to enhance safety for all.

CHALLENGING 6-WAY INTERSECTION



// STREET TREES

Stenton Ave has some areas with weak street tree coverage that need to be improved upon. Street trees are critical to provide a comfortable, intimate and welcoming pedestrian environment along the corridor. Future streetscape improvements should help re-establish a strong tree canopy along the corridor.



TREE PLANTING ALONG COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

PLANTING THE RIGHT TREES

While mature trees provide shade, clean the air and bring value and attractiveness, large roots can often lift sidewalks, cause tripping hazards, impeding seniors and others with limited mobility. Selecting the right tree species for the unique urban environment along neighborhood streets and commercial corridors is important for a number of reasons including:

- » *minimizing root problems,*
- » *ensuring visibility, and*
- » *providing shade for pedestrians, and ensuring the trees planted can thrive.*



▲ Mature street trees along Vernon Road.
WRT

Tree Philly offers a number of resources for planting and maintaining street trees.
<http://treephilly.org/street-trees/>

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICTS (BIDs)

WHAT IS A BID?

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a formal, legally approved way for the stakeholders within a business district to cooperatively improve the area. Each property owner pays a annual fee to support the district. In Philadelphia, BIDs require the formal authorization by the City through City Council. In addition to the property assessment, BIDs can support their operations through grants, parking revenue, and other income-producing activities. Owners of properties that are exempt from real estate taxes, such as churches and nonprofit organizations, are not subject to the BID assessment but may contribute to the BID through a voluntary agreement.

HOW IS A BID MANAGED?

Each BID is independently governed by a Board of Directors comprising owners, business people, representatives of institutions within the district, and other individuals.

WHAT DO BIDS DO?

BIDs deliver a range of services including sidewalk litter and graffiti removal, capital improvements (streetlights, custom trash receptacles, directional signs, street furniture), and landscaping (planting trees and flowers).



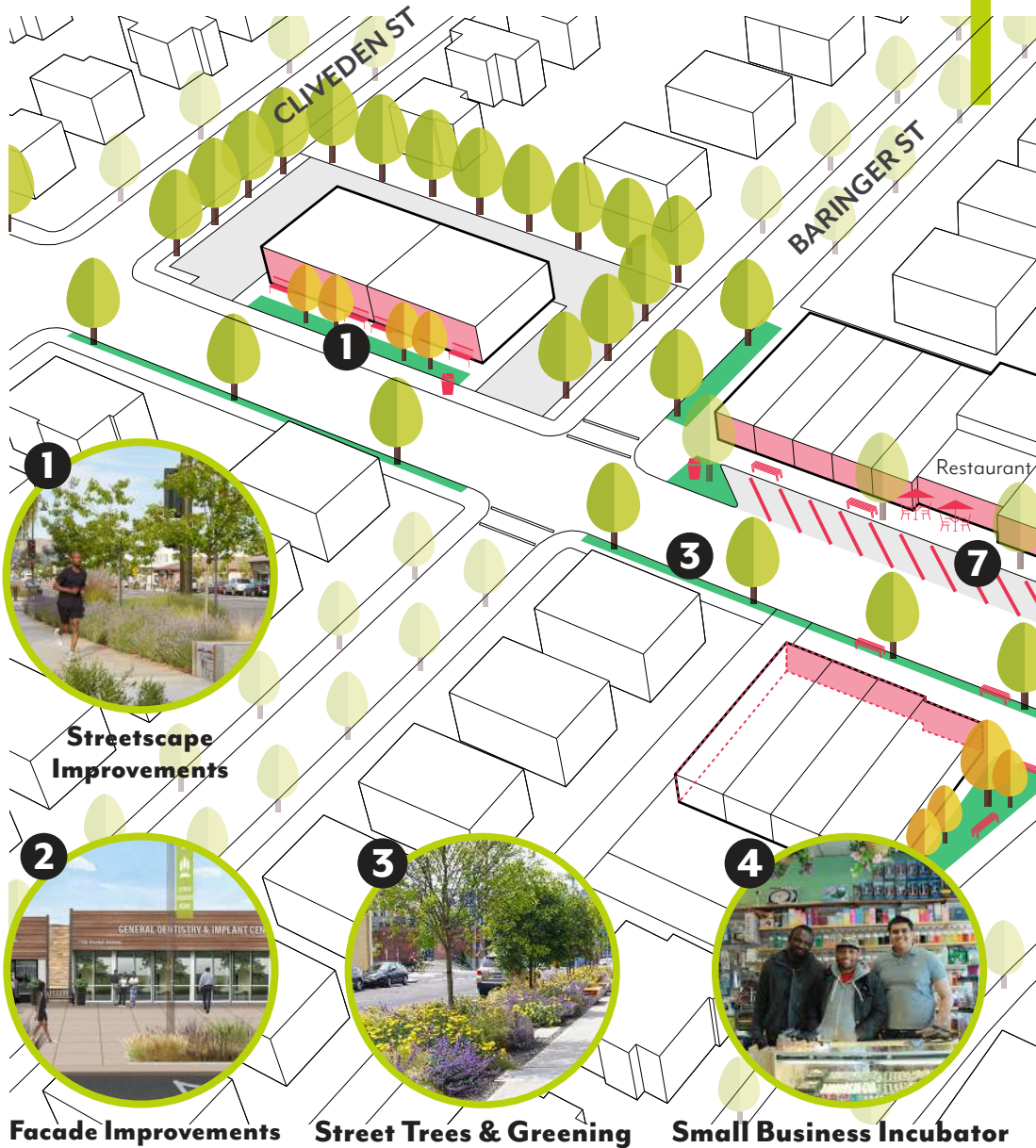
- ▲ The Mount Airy BID provides cleaning services for the corridor 6 days a week, installs flower baskets and holiday decor, and has installed Big Belly Solar trash and recycling bins, as well as energy efficient lighting fixtures along the corridor.

WHAT ARE LOCAL EXAMPLES?

Chestnut Hill, Mount Airy, and Roxborough each have established BIDs.

For more information on creating BIDs in Philadelphia: <https://business.phila.gov/media/Starting-A-BID-in-Philadelphia-FINAL.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS





POTENTIAL PARTNERS & RESOURCES

// GETTING IT DONE

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

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
----------	--------------------	--------------------

1. Streetscape Improvements

Streets Department, Philadelphia Water Department

The Philadelphia Water Department's Green Stormwater Management grant program is an opportunity to reduce stormwater bills, add new landscaping, fix drainage problems, and improve the appearance of properties. The grant covers up to 100% of the cost to design and construct a stormwater retrofit project, small or large, on non-residential properties. After a project is complete, the property owner qualifies for lower stormwater charges. To find out if your property is eligible, visit [phila.gov/swgrants](https://www.phila.gov/swgrants) and select "Parcel Viewer" from the Grant Applications Resources menu. For more application information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/water/wu/stormwater/Pages/Grants.aspx>.

2. Facade Improvements

Philadelphia Commerce Department

The Storefront Improvement Program from the Department of Commerce 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.

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
3. Small Business Incubator	Philadelphia Commerce Department, 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	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Other potential incubator and accelerator programs that could serve as resources to entrepreneurs in the 9th District are listed under Potential Partners.</p>
4. Street Trees & Greening	Streets Dept, Philadelphia Water Department, Parks and Recreation, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development	<p>The Philadelphia Water Department's Green Stormwater Management grant program is an opportunity to reduce stormwater bills, add new landscaping, fix drainage problems, and improve the appearance of properties. The grant covers up to 100% of the cost to design and construct a stormwater retrofit project, small or large, on non-residential properties. After a project is complete, the property owner qualifies for lower stormwater charges. To find out if your property is eligible, visit phila.gov/swgrants and select "Parcel Viewer" from the Grant Applications Resources menu. For more application information, visit: https://www.phila.gov/water/wu/stormwater/Pages/Grants.aspx.</p> <p>To get a free street tree planted in the right-of-way in 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>

Strategy	Potential Partners	Existing Resources
----------	--------------------	--------------------

5. Traffic Calming

Philadelphia Streets Department, PennDOT multimodal grants	The Traffic Calming & Safety Plan is an initiative aimed at reducing serious injuries and fatalities through the three Es: engineering, education, and enforcement. Efforts include implementing road right-sizing, traffic controls, and pavement undulations on problematic streets. Residents can submit requests for traffic calming measures to see if their block qualifies, and if a study reveals that it does, a petition requesting traffic calming measures must be signed by 75% or more of the properties whose address falls on the block. Visit: https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/traffic-and-lighting/traffic-calming-policy-information .
--	---

6. Rationalize 6-way intersection of 66th and Wister

DVRPC	The DVRPC Transportation and Community Development Initiative is a grant program that supports local development and redevelopment efforts. The program provides funds to undertake planning, analysis, or design initiatives for projects or programs that enhance development or redevelopment and enhances or improves the efficiency of the transportation system. TCDI applications are made by the local government or county, and funding ranges from \$25,000 to \$150,000. For more information, visit https://www.dvrpc.org/TCDI .
-------	---

7. Parking Space Re-configuration and Placemaking

Streets Department	The Traffic Calming & Safety Plan is an initiative aimed at reducing serious injuries and fatalities through the three Es: engineering, education, and enforcement. Efforts include implementing road right-sizing, traffic controls, and pavement undulations on problematic streets. Residents can submit requests for traffic calming measures to see if their block qualifies, and if a study reveals that it does, a petition requesting traffic calming measures must be signed by 75 percent or more of the properties whose address falls on the block. For more information visit https://www.philadelphiastreet.com/traffic-and-lighting/traffic-calming-policy-information/
--------------------	--

BUSINESS TYPES THAT CAN COMPETE IN PHILADELPHIA CLOSE TO THE CITY LINE

What type of businesses will complement the existing business mix on Stenton Ave as the neighborhood works to attract and incubate new businesses?



CHALLENGE

The entire retail sector is undergoing dramatic changes as e-commerce captures demand formerly served by bricks and mortar stores.

POTENTIAL

The sectors that continue to thrive nationwide include:

- » **food** - restaurants and specialty food
- » **fitness**
- » **entertainment and wellness/beauty** - doctors, dentists, salons, etc.



WHY DO SOME BUSINESS TYPES THRIVE WHILE OTHERS STRUGGLE?

The categories of businesses that thrive on Philadelphia's urban commercial corridors are typically ones that emphasize experiences and are less impacted by the sales tax differential between Philadelphia and adjacent Montgomery County and that require consumers to visit the establishment making these businesses resistant to the impact of e-commerce.

Unique, specialty and destination businesses (for example a store providing supplies for a specific hobby) also can succeed in close proximity to chains, particularly in parts of the 9th District with higher household incomes.



GET INVOLVED
CONTACT US @



// KYASHA TYSON

Director of Community & Economic Development

Councilwoman Cherelle L. Parker - 9th District

1538 E. Wadsworth Avenue

Philadelphia, PA 19150

Tel: (215) 686-3454

Fax: (215) 685-9271

Email: kyasha.tyson@phila.gov