



Imagine Pittsburg 2030

In the summer of 2010, business, education and community leaders in Pittsburg identified a need for a grassroots, citizen-driven visioning effort to strategically address the community's opportunities and challenges through the year 2030. Similar efforts in the past have proven fruitful, resulting in successful local initiatives to build the Family Resource Center and groundbreaking collaborations like the Business Education Alliance.

Background

A steering committee of fifteen local representatives from a wide variety of backgrounds was formed to lead the visioning effort. Pittsburg City Commissioner Marty Beezley and Dr. Brad Hodson were chosen to serve as co-chairs of the vision steering committee. As part of the information gathering process, this steering committee engaged The Bernard Consulting Group, a Kansas City-based consulting firm regarded as one of the nation's foremost experts in community visioning. To maximize community input, the steering committee and The Bernard Group conducted three town hall meetings, two online surveys and an identical hard copy survey mailed to all Pittsburg residents with a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope for return. The Bernard Group also conducted one-on-one interviews and thirteen focus groups with various targeted audiences from the community.

From this input emerged a common vision, along with four specific core areas of focus: Housing, Economic Development, Infrastructure and Public Wellness. In addition, a list of strategies with specific goals were identified for each area. These goals would serve as the action plan to support IP 2030.

From 2012-2017, Pittsburg experienced approximately \$400 million in planned or completed projects. Many of these were a direct result of community input received through the Imagine Pittsburg 2030 planning process.

Among the successes include:

- Construction of the \$80 million Kansas Crossing Casino project, along with new Hampton Inn & Suites and La Quinta Inn & Suites properties.
- Completion of the \$34 million Bicknell Family Center for the Arts and \$16 million Robert W. Plaster Indoor Event Center at Pittsburg State University.

- Continued growth in the medical sector, including multi-million dollar expansions at Via Christi Hospital, Community Health Center of Southeast Kansas and Pinamonti Wellness Center.
- Significant expansions at Masonite, Kendall Packaging Corporation, EaglePicher Technologies, CDL Electric, Miller's Professional Imaging and several other major employers.
- Considerable growth in the retail sector, including new locations for Buffalo Wild Wings, Rib Crib, Colton's Steakhouse, Gusano's, Domino's Pizza and more.
- The \$1.6 million Crawford County Career & Technical Education Center, a collaborative effort between the Bicknell Family Foundation, City of Pittsburg, Crawford County, USD 250, Pittsburg State University and the Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce, which will ensure that area residents have access to the skills required for the jobs of today and that area businesses enjoy a skilled, competitive workforce.
- A new City of Pittsburg Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan, which now serves as a crucial part of the City's annual budgeting process.
- Passage of a sales tax dedicated to enhancing public safety, which added more than twenty-five law enforcement officers and greatly improved forensic technology.
- Over 100 miles of fiber optic connectivity, along with four new telecommunications company franchise agreements providing high-speed service to Pittsburg businesses and residents (including 1GB to the home)
- Over \$3 million secured by the City in planned or constructed trails as a result of state and federal grants, safe routes to school grants, Sunflower trail grants and private donations.
- Streamlined City internal procedures for demolition of dilapidated structures and better coordination with the County for more frequent Sheriff sales of properties
- Adoption and implementation of the International Property Maintenance Code.
- A target industry analysis aimed better leveraging Pittsburg's resources and programs offered at Pittsburg State University to enhance economic development/business recruitment.

As the initial Imagine Pittsburg 2030 vision was unveiled in early 2012, the steering committee agreed that the document should be updated every five years.

A New Vision

In 2016, an expanded committee was planned to reach a more diversified audience and to begin the process of the first five year update. Although a few of the original steering committee members stayed on, leaders felt a broader perspective about the community vision would be beneficial. Joe Dellasega, Jeremy Johnson and Jeff Poe were selected as co-chairs.

The new steering committee was comprised of the following community members:

- Joe Dellasega, The Dellasega Group, co-chair
- Jeremy Johnson, Pittsburg city commissioner, co-chair
- Jeff Poe, Pittsburg State University, co-chair
- Monica Angeles, Century 21/Cobb Realty
- Marcee Binder, Wesley House
- Pat Cedeno, Watco Companies
- Brandee Johnson, LimeLight Marketing
- John Ketterman, Pittsburg city commissioner
- Mark Lehman, Family Life Assembly of God Church
- Shawn Naccarato, Pittsburg State University
- Leah Posterick, Signet Coffee Roasters
- Tawny Sandifer, Via Christi Hospital
- Mark Werner, Attorney at Law
- Daron Hall, Pittsburg city manager
- Jay Byers, Pittsburg assistant city manager
- Becky Gray, Pittsburg housing & community development director
- Cameron Alden, Pittsburg public works director/city engineer
- Matt Bacon, Pittsburg utilities director
- Blake Benson, Pittsburg Area Chamber of Commerce president

Individual task forces comprised of steering committee and community members updated each of the four areas of focus, as well as two new ones, education and marketing/branding. The task force members reviewed progress made on each of the initial Imagine Pittsburg 2030 priorities and recommended revisions back to the steering committee. They also looked forward to identify the next list of strategies and goals needed to continue the momentum for the next five years. This work spanned several months and periodically the subcommittees reported back to the larger committee as they completed their individual plans. Information received from numerous studies were available to assist in the goal setting process. These studies included:

- Housing Needs Assessment
- Commuter Study
- Retail and Hotel Study
- PSU Student Retail Study
- PSU (Dr. Michael Davidsson's) Housing Analysis
- Dr. Davidsson's Micropolitan Reports
- Target Industry Analysis
- Smart Growth America Fiscal Analysis and Downtown Study
- Mid-City Renaissance Market Analysis
- Atkinson Municipal Airport Master Plan

Several of these reports included significant citizen engagement which makes it important that the information is included in the 2030 plan going forward. Receiving input from the citizens was a core component of the original IP2030 initiative and it is critical that it remains a centerpiece of the continuing effort.

Citizen Engagement

To obtain this citizen input, the steering committee conducted a series of ten public presentations to unveil the updated draft document. These meetings were held at various locations throughout the community, including:

Meadowlark Elementary School

Pittsburg High School (town hall/USD 250 teacher assembly)

Pittsburg Law Enforcement Center (town hall/City Commission meeting)

Via Christi Hospital (Noon Rotary/Sunrise Rotary/Kiwanis)

Pittsburg Public Library (Pittsburg Area Young Professionals)

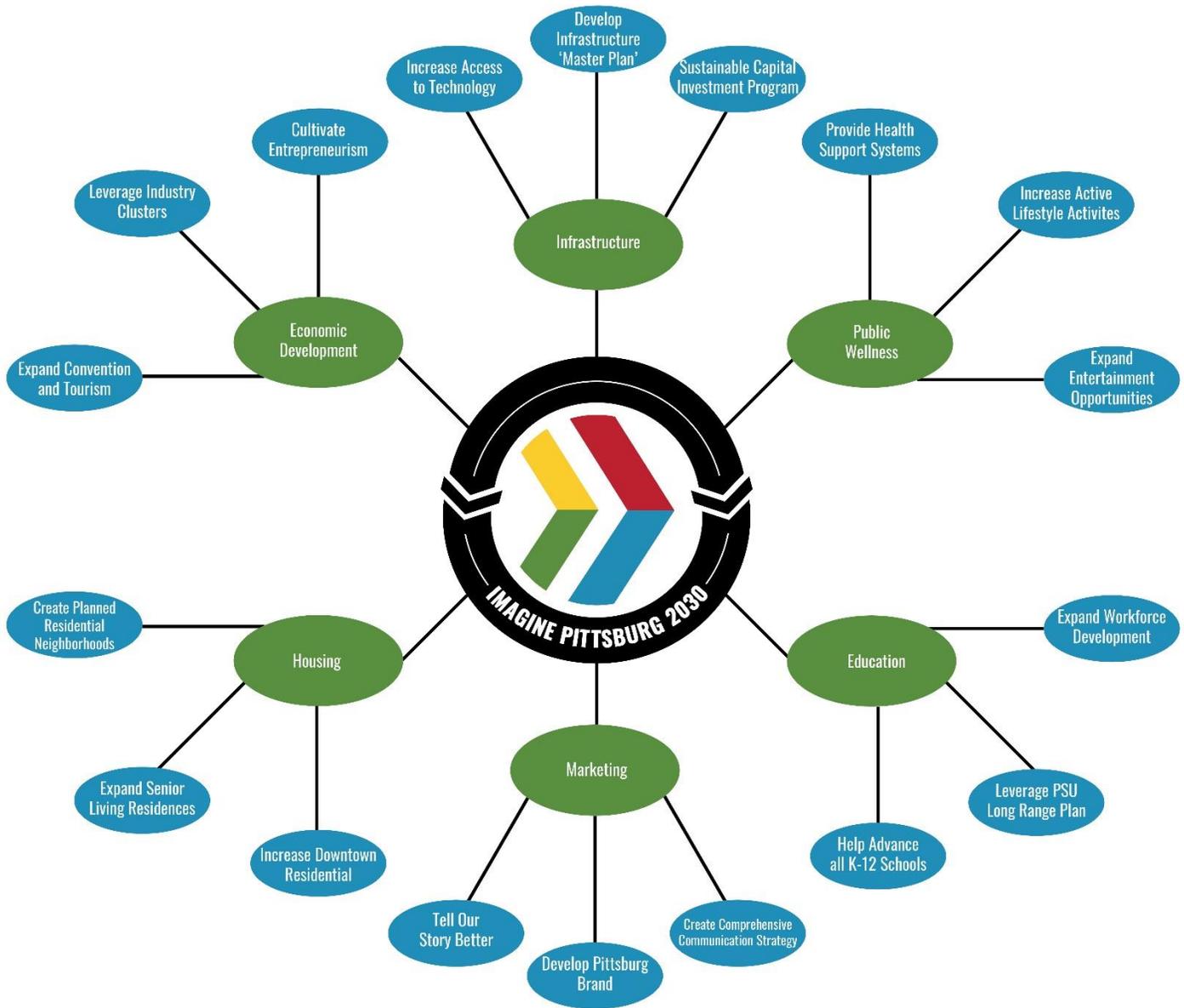
Homer Cole Community Center

These public presentations culminated with an address to the Pittsburg City Commission, which was also broadcast on the City's public access channel.

All told, more than 300 local residents heard the draft recommendations in person, along with countless others watching on television. Residents provided feedback on the draft recommendations, which were considered when developing the final plan.

In February 2017, the steering committee released a first draft of the new Imagine Pittsburg 2030 community vision strategy. This strategy identified the six areas of focus,

goals and individual tasks to accomplish the goals. The following diagram provides a comprehensive overview of the six areas of focus.



The Six Areas of Focus

HOUSING

The importance of housing cannot be overestimated. The primary measurement of growth is population. With over half of its housing stock over fifty years old and an average listing price of \$85,000, Pittsburg does not represent an attractive housing market. In Pittsburg, 27% of the houses were built before 1939 and 28% were built between 1940 and 1970, making over half the housing stock approximately 50 years or older.

A recent comprehensive housing study indicates housing needs across the entire spectrum including affordable, senior, moderate income, multi-family, and higher-end market rate, with an emphasis on the need for moderate to higher income houses in specific locations. Current estimates indicate over 400 acres of developable land within the city limits.

HOUSING – Increase Quality and Volume of Housing Stock in Support of IP2030

Create planned residential neighborhoods

- Build 50 housing units/year for 5 years beginning in year that ground is broken
 - Measure days on market
- Expand Senior Living Residences
- Encourage local lenders to participate

Infill Development

- Utilize Land Bank
 - Measure units put in land bank
 - Measure units that come productive by coming out of land bank
- Work with local builders
- Encourage local lenders to participate

Increase Downtown Residential

- Measure net new units “University Housing”
- Measure net new units not managed by PSU
- Complete Block 22
- Revitalize Besse Hotel
- Expand development of second floor space
- Attract developers

Develop “Supportive” Housing

- Housing that supports those recovering/living with addiction, mental disorder or recently released or being supervised by corrections.
 - Measure net new “supportive” units

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The engine driving vital communities is business. Communities that support economic activity are better able to sustain a successful population and increase community wealth. Pittsburg will be an environment that encourages entrepreneurial activity, supports business and creates jobs. Pittsburg will actively work to attract and retain a skilled workforce to meet the needs of its growing businesses. It will better leverage university talents and resources directed to support targeted industry clusters, and it will enrich its quality of place by focusing on improved cultural and physical amenities.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/IMPLEMENT THE COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Promote Local Entrepreneurship and Attract Jobs & Investment

- Build a coalition of support for entrepreneurship
- Effectively market Pittsburg to employers
- Market to targeted industries
- Mitigate local skills shortages

Attract and Retain a Skilled Workforce

- Utilize PSU to expand local industry clusters
- Seek new housing developments
- Strengthen connections between business community and educational institutions
- Make it easier for local employers to offer training

Better Leverage University Talents and Resources

- Find ways to expand research & Development activity associated with PSU's academic strengths
- Utilize PSU to expand local industry clusters

Enrich Quality of Place

- Incentivize reinvestment into downtown
- Promote a more walkable city center
- Invest and nurture local festivals and events

Expand Convention & Tourism Services

- Pursue convention space adjoined to one or multiple hotels
- Improve walkability from hotels in north Pittsburg to the northern retail district

PUBLIC WELLNESS

The health and safety of the people in Pittsburg is essential to maintaining a vibrant and growing community.

The citizens of Pittsburg have approved additional police officers and public safety equipment and technology and have invested in their physical security. The next step is to improve their overall health and increase activity levels. In addition to improving our services for the underserved and those struggling with their individual health, Pittsburg will create a built environment that encourages alternatives to automobiles and provides essential services for all of its citizens. Finally, by leveraging our current entertainment venues Pittsburg will position itself to become a regional destination for people to gather.

PUBLIC WELLNESS

Provide Health Support Systems

- Support programs for addiction and mental health
- Provide homeless shelter and related services
- Leverage healthcare resources in the community

Encourage Active and Healthy Lifestyles

- Employ Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan
- Create local food system
- Construct multi-use sports complex
- Revitalize Pittsburg YMCA
- Leverage parks and trails to improve walkability
- Promote outdoor recreation

Become Entertainment Capital of the Region

- Coordinate Bicknell Center, Plaster Center, Casino, Memorial Auditorium
- Construct youth sports complexes
- Bring festivals to Pittsburg

INFRASTRUCTURE

A strong infrastructure is a vital component of any community and Pittsburg's continued investment in this area will provide opportunities to both business and individuals alike. Huge advances have already taken place in the technology sector and as a community comprehensive master plan is completed further investments in our infrastructure will be identified and addressed.

These plans and the related projects will be critical as Pittsburg continues to attract new residents and business. Traffic flows and alternative transportation methods are a necessary part of having a friendly, livable community.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Advance Technological Systems within the Community

- Develop grid of fiber optic cable
- Increasing the connectivity within the built environment

Strategize Pittsburg's Infrastructure Future

- Create Pittsburg Comprehensive Plan
- Create Downtown Specific Plan
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan
- Create a sustainable electricity solution

Develop Sustainable Capital Improvement Program

- Ensure adequate funds are available for infrastructure maintenance
- Continue to invest in roads; Bypass, Quincy
- Expand treatment plants to match growth
- Invest in sidewalk and trails program

EDUCATION

A key component for any great community is a commitment to education. Pittsburg is fortunate to have an education system that not only provides quality at all levels, from Pre-K through 12 learning, but also a four-year University and a regional technical education center.

Education opportunities for everyone in our community, regardless of their individual needs will continue to attract industry, families and entrepreneurs. By partnering with our education institutions Pittsburg will prepare a workforce that is ready for any challenge, and provides a fun and exciting environment for those who are choosing a place to live and raise their kids.

EDUCATION

Workforce Development/Alignment

- Skills gap analysis (what businesses need) versus what skills/capabilities graduates have
- Strategic plan to address gap(s)
- CTEC challenge: bell schedule
- Identify discrete list/inventory of needs to support curriculum development
- Startup Genius
- Challenge: wage rates
- Student career planning - alignment with post-secondary education and workforce needs
- Opportunities for discouraged workers
- Hospitality curriculum

Advance all Pre-K through 12 schools

- Availability of quality child care and pre-K
- Increase K-12 education capacity
- How do schools fit into supporting regional hub?
- Expanded facilities to accommodate/support growth
- Junior achievement/Koch YE
- Focus on lifting families/children out of poverty, ex: communities in schools
- Engage/Utilize Business Education Alliance

Grow PSU (10,000) & Align/Leverage PSU long range plan

- Youth entrepreneurs program
- Retention of regional K-12 students, transition to PSU
- Better alignment with area community colleges (e.g. Fort Scott/CTEC/PSU)

MARKETING

As Imagine Pittsburg 2030 continues, the number of successes achieved by our businesses, institutions and citizens grows. Telling the story of how we are doing is an important part of this process. Communities constantly compete with one another. One of the simplest ways to effectively tell our story is to make a concerted effort to market our progress and specifically our successes.

While the initial Imagine Pittsburg 2030 initiative was largely a plan, the latest version includes not only a plan forward, but a summary of achievements and progress. The understanding that celebrating our successes with those outside our community is critical to growing Pittsburg will help us as we move *Forward Together*.

MARKETING

Develop Pittsburg Brand

- City of Pittsburg rebrand
- Create a continuous marketing effort for Pittsburg

Tell Our Story Better

- Create the position of public information officer at the City
- Design and execute a public information campaign
- Design and execute a public relations campaign

Partner with business community

- Identify resources to maximize our impact