Home to one of Pittsburgh’s largest and most active business districts along Liberty Avenue, Bloomfield, also known as Little Italy, attracts visitors not only from nearby neighborhoods but from the entire Pittsburgh region. The community has much to offer in its shops, Italian markets, restaurants, and beyond. Proud of their heritage, residents who represent generations of families are deeply rooted in the community, and will be an important factor in creating and implementing a successful plan for the Bloomfield Gateway and Streetscape Improvement project.

The Bloomfield Development Corporation, through a CDCP Grant and funding from the Office of Senator Ferlo and Mainstreets Pittsburgh, is seeking to improve four sites within the commercial corridor along Liberty Avenue in the Bloomfield neighborhood of the City of Pittsburgh. These sites include Liberty Avenue between 40th Street and the Bloomfield Bridge intersection; the current Shur Save grocery store site; the Bloomfield Bridge Intersection; and Liberty Avenue between Mathilda Street and Millvale Avenue in front of West Penn Hospital. In each area identified, this study focuses on enhancing the streetscape with special attention to improving pedestrian safety and traffic flow. This study also seeks to establish these areas as prominent gateways and portals to the Bloomfield business district corridor. Consideration of the Little Italy theme has been incorporated where possible.

ASSUMPTIONS
• Any development alternative beyond a replacement project will probably require the need for a parking garage to meet parking requirements for the use (Assume $40k per space below grade, $30k per space above grade deck)
• Any additional development on site will probably not meet the bulk requirements
• The prime marketable edges are: Liberty Ave, Howley Ave, and Ella (to the corner of Liberty)
• Any chosen path of development will require a full, in-depth traffic study
• The NW corner of the Shur Save site will remain residential
• Any chosen development will require a community review, planning review and design review
• Any major gesture at the Mathilda / Millvale section of Liberty will require a larger coordination effort between the business owners and the hospital
• Any major gesture to improve the flow at the Bloomfield Bridge intersection should be pursued only after a full, in depth traffic study of that area and in coordination with the City of Pittsburgh
FEEDBACK / COMMUNITY INPUT / PROJECT PROCESS

PROCESS

Burt Hill and transportation consultant, Wilbur Smith Associates, provided preliminary design services for the Bloomfield Development Corporation (BDC) to provide a gateway and streetscape improvement plan for four sites along Liberty Avenue, the main street of Bloomfield. This project included a number of community stakeholders as part of the design process. The client, a committee of the Bloomfield Development Corporation, the Community Design Center of Pittsburgh, Senator Ferlo’s Office, Mainstreets Pittsburgh, business owners, and members of the community helped to define the direction of the study. Public input was incorporated throughout the process.

Burt Hill conducted 3 meetings with the BDC Committee between June and August 2009 to discuss design issues. Burt Hill and Wilbur Smith presented their concepts to the Bloomfield community at 2 public meetings.

Project Committee Meetings were held on:
June 25, 2009
July 23, 2009
August 13, 2009

Community Meetings were held on:
June 30, 2009
August 25, 2009

PROJECT GOALS

Create new Gateway
Improve Identity of Bloomfield’s Main Street
Pedestrian Safety Improvements
Aesthetic Improvements
Maximize On-Street Parking
Define street parking through design elements
Maintain Existing Curbs
Reduce traffic congestion
Incorporate Bike Lanes
Re-knit Existing Building Fabric of Upper and Lower Liberty Ave.
SITE I & II
SHUR SAVE PARCEL AND THE INTERSECTION OF THE BLOOMFIELD BRIDGE, LIBERTY AVE, MAIN STREET, & HOWLEY STREET
CONSTRAINTS

Underutilized traffic lanes - Main St. “spur” & Liberty Ave. curb side “merge” lanes. Too much pavement - Heat Island Effect with dark asphalt pavement. Limited trees are planted. Unsightly utility poles and wires exist. Illegal or unsafe street parking occurs. Merging lanes backs up traffic. Long distance, ill-defined pedestrian crossings. Damaged pavement at center of lanes. Howley is a one way street only northbound.

OCCUPORTUNITIES

Generous width of sidewalks to accommodate new trees and new urban furniture. Retail & commercial typical at street level to blend with existing context. Plenty of pedestrians with mix of visitors and neighbors. Create a stronger identity. Introduce better pedestrian lighting. Introduce consistent banners for events. Reknit upper and lower Liberty through developing Shur Save site. Eliminate Main Street “spur” to increase development parcel of Shur Save site and “re-knit” building fabric of Liberty Ave.
Site I Shur Save Site - Existing grade slopes from Ella Street towards the intersection of Liberty Avenue and Main Street. This allows for an opportunity to place parking access from Howley Street and possibly Gangwish Street.

Longitudinal Liberty Street section of proposed development with existing context. Development will reknit the building fabric of upper and lower Liberty Avenue.

Development opportunities at Site I - Shur Save Parcel

Building massing opportunities at Site I - Shur Save Parcel
SITE I - DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT 1 (PREFERRED SOLUTION)

Development option with ground floor retail along Liberty Ave, select service hotel above, grocery store, townhomes facing existing housing fabric. Multi-level parking deck with access from Howley St. and Gangwish St. Bring development parcel and building edge to the sidewalk at Liberty Avenue where the Main Street “spur” lane once existed. This is the highest and best use of the property.

SITE I - DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT 2

Development option with ground floor retail and upper level condominiums fronting public greenspace area along Liberty Ave. Bring development parcel and building edge to the sidewalk at Liberty Avenue where the Main Street “spur” lane once existed. Grocery store at corner of Liberty Ave. and Ella Street. Parking deck is required to accommodate off-street parking requirements.
Development option with ground floor retail and upper level apartments fronting public greenspace area along Liberty Ave. Bring development parcel and building edge to the sidewalk at Liberty Avenue where the Main Street “Spur” lane once existed. Grocery store at corner of Liberty Ave. and Ella Street. Surface parking provided. This is not a highest and best use of the property but does incorporate added uses in addition to the grocery store fronting the main street.
SITE II - INTERSECTION CONCEPT 1 (PREFERRED SOLUTION)

This plan concept incorporates the following opportunities:
Decrease the crossing distance for pedestrians by shortening crosswalk distance. Decreases drive lanes along Liberty Ave. due to perceived underutilized lanes (Right inbound and outbound lanes). Eliminates the Main St. Spur in front of the Shur Save site. Improves crosswalk indicators/painting. Reduces illegal parking by defining parking locations with curb bump-outs. Remove corner curb cut at Gulf Gasoline Station to allow for pedestrian crosswalk (must be coordinated with parcel owner). Proposal to turn Howley St. into two-way street to Gangwish St., then one way only from Gangwish northbound. Improve lane designation of Main Street. Additional street trees helps to “green” Liberty Ave. No changes to Bloomfield Bridge.

SITE II - INTERSECTION CONCEPT 2

This plan concept incorporates the following opportunities:
Decrease the crossing distance for pedestrians by shortening crosswalk distance. Decreases drive lanes along Liberty Ave due to underutilized lanes (Right inbound and outbound lanes). Eliminates the Main St. Spur in front of the Shur Save site. Improves crosswalk indicators/painting. Remove corner curb cut at Gulf Station to allow for pedestrian crosswalk (must be coordinated with parcel owner). Proposal to turn Howley St. into two-way street to Gangwish St., then one way only from Gangwish northbound. Improve lane designation of Main Street. No change to Bloomfield Bridge. The boulevard scheme includes trees along the sidewalks and down the center median of the streets. This scheme introduces street parking only permitted at certain times of the day, most likely during off-peak traffic.
Streetscape improvements include the following: new curb bump-outs define parking spaces (1) and shorten crosswalk distance for pedestrians (2). Replace parking meters with more efficient pay and display system, place utility lines underground, provide new urban furniture including benches, trash containers, bike racks, and combined signal/light poles in lieu of existing cobra-head lights. Bus shelters should be placed in appropriate locations to prevent conflicts with visibility. Reinforce and high-light bike lanes inbound and outbound west of Bloomfield Bridge intersection (3a). Repaint combined traffic/bike “sharrow” lane markings east of Bloomfield Bridge intersection (3b). Street trees with a “vehicle-friendly” canopy are to be planted throughout the Liberty Ave. corridor (4). Crosswalks may be raised/textured and visible with new reflective paint and signage. Eliminate the Main St. Spur in front of the Shur Save Grocery Store site thus increasing development opportunities and relinking the building fabric of upper and lower Liberty Avenue (5). Reduce corner curb cut at Gulf Gasoline Station to allow for pedestrian crosswalk (must be coordinated with parcel owner) (6). Proposal to turn Howley St. into two-way street to Gangwish St. (7), then one way only from Gangwish St. northbound (8).
EXISTING STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Existing street conditions are as follows - 2 outbound lanes, 2 inbound lanes, 1 inbound turn lane to Bloomfield Bridge, 1 single Main Street “Spur” towards Main Street from Bloomfield Bridge intersection. Perceived underutilized right lanes due to merging traffic outbound and inbound. No street parking adjacent Bloomfield Bridge intersection on Liberty Ave. until east of Ella Street or west of Main Street for both inbound and outbound traffic.

PROPOSED STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Proposed street improvements are as follows - 2 outbound lanes and 2 inbound lanes, one of which will serve as a turning lane onto the Bloomfield Bridge. Eliminate the underutilized Main Street “Spur” to allow for additional real estate to develope the Shur Save Site Parcel and to better define and link future building fabric with both Upper and Lower Liberty Ave. This will depend on the city vacating their Right of Way. Provide street parking along inbound lane. Additional street trees help to green the street. Indicate combined drive/bike “sharrow” lanes.
EXISTING VIEW INBOUND TOWARDS MAIN ST. "SPUR" AND LANDSCAPED ISLAND AT IMAGE CENTER.

EXISTING VIEW OUTBOUND TOWARDS BLOOMFIELD BRIDGE INTERSECTION AND SHUR SAVE GROCERY STORE.

PROPOSED VIEW INBOUND ALONG LIBERTY AVE. TO INTERSECTION ADJACENT NEW STREET FRONTING GROCERY STORE.

PROPOSED VIEW FROM LOWER LIBERTY AVE. OUTBOUND TOWARDS THE BLOOMFIELD BRIDGE INTERSECTION.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Option</th>
<th>Grocery Store</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Parking</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Condo / Apartments</th>
<th>Townhomes</th>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development Option 1</strong></td>
<td>25,000 sq ft</td>
<td>150 keys</td>
<td>310 spaces / 3 story</td>
<td>10,000 sq ft</td>
<td>13 units</td>
<td>Multi-use, dense development</td>
<td>Required special exception application; 6 stories at SW Corner</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
<td>Max Buildout (8 ft)</td>
<td>Gateway opportunity</td>
<td>Potential for phasing</td>
<td>Below grade parking deck may be costly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>On site parking accommodated</td>
<td>Tie in to residential on Gangwish Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Townhomes</td>
<td>Reconnects Upper and Lower Liberty built fabric</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grocery Store</td>
<td>Highest and best use of site</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking Deck Below Grade</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development Option 2</strong></td>
<td>25,000 sq ft</td>
<td>220 spaces / 2 story</td>
<td>20,000 sq ft</td>
<td>66 units at 6 stories</td>
<td>Mixed use</td>
<td>Garage facing Gangwish Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
<td>Townhomes (6 ft)</td>
<td>On site parking accommodated</td>
<td>Zoning Variance may be required to allow for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Condominiums</td>
<td>Adds a new use to Bloomfield</td>
<td>Additional request for height variance due to proximity of residents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>Gateway opportunity</td>
<td>Below grade parking deck may be costly</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grocery Store</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parking Deck Below Grade</td>
<td>Extends commercial use to Main St</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Development Option 3</strong></td>
<td>25,000 sq ft</td>
<td>110 spaces</td>
<td>8,000 sq ft</td>
<td>20 units at 2 stories</td>
<td>Uses meet zoning code</td>
<td>Low scale development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed Use</td>
<td>Apartments (3 ft)</td>
<td>Potential for phasing</td>
<td>Limited retail</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apartments</td>
<td>Grocery connects to the residential corner</td>
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<td>Parking Deck Below Grade</td>
<td>Extends the business district</td>
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<td><strong>Zoning Points for LNC [904.02C]:</strong></td>
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<td>Site is zoned LNC</td>
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<td>LNC Max FAR: 2:1</td>
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<td>LNC Max Height: 40' tall not to exceed 3 stories within 50' of residential property line</td>
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<td><strong>Primary Uses [R11.02]:</strong></td>
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<td>Hotel, Grocery and Parking Garage are allowed by Special Exception</td>
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<td>Hotel height of 85' tall, 8 floors needs to be confirmed by zoning administrator</td>
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A traffic study and parking study will need to be provided to determine load of hotel and traffic patterns around site.
CONSTRANTS

Limited trees are planted. Unsightly & exposed utility poles and wires. Illegal or unsafe street parking. “Sharrow” bike lane markings are worn out and need repainted. Traffic queues at intersections due to double parked vehicles. Long pedestrian crosswalks. Illegal parking and spaces at intersections impairs sight distance especially for left turns. Sunoco corner curb-cut is close to intersection and is a safety concern.

OPPORTUNITIES

Increase vehicular visibility turning onto Liberty Ave. from Mahtilda and Millvale. Define parking and West Penn Hospital drop-off with bump-out curb-cuts. Generous width of sidewalks to accommodate new trees and new urban furniture. Create a stronger identity. Introduce better pedestrian lighting. Introduce consistent banners for events. Position urban street furniture to add to the character of the Bloomfield Main Street.
Streetscape improvements include the following: new curb bump-outs define parking spaces (1), the drop-off location at West Penn Hospital’s Liberty entrance (2), and shorten crosswalk distance for pedestrians (3). Replace parking meters with more efficient pay and display system (4), remove utility lines and place underground, provide new urban furniture including benches, trash containers, bike racks, and combined signal/light poles in lieu of existing cobra-head lights. Bus shelters should be placed in appropriate locations to prevent conflicts with visibility (5). Repaint combined drive/bike “sharrow” lane markings (6). Additional street trees with a “vehicle-friendly” canopy are to be planted throughout the Liberty Ave. corridor (7). Crosswalks may be raised/textured and made visible with new bright/reflective painting and on-street signage (8).
EXISTING STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Single drive lane in each direction shared with bicycle traffic. Limited street trees. Metered parking both sides of street.

PROPOSED STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Keep single lane traffic in each direction. Defined parking by bump-out curb cuts, introduce pay & display parking to maximize on-street parking, add street trees to both sidewalk and bump-out locations. Indicate combined drive/bike “sharrow” lanes with fresh paint and improved signage.
SITE III - BEFORE & AFTER CONCEPT PERSPECTIVES

Existing view inbound of West Penn Hospital Liberty Ave. entry. Existing street trees and parking spaces impairing view from Mahtilda towards Liberty Ave.

Proposed view inbound towards West Penn Hospital drop-off Zone. Proposed bump-out at S. Mathilda / Liberty Intersection to improve visibility and pedestrian safety.
SITE IV - SITE CONTEXT AND ANALYSIS

CONSTRAINTS

Traffic speed at 40th Street intersection is dangerous combined with change in street elevation. Limited trees are planted. Unsightly utility poles and wires exist. Illegal or unsafe street parking occurs. Merging & turn lanes back up traffic at rush hours. Crosswalks have faded markings.

OPPORTUNITIES

Generous width of sidewalks to accommodate new trees and new urban furniture. Retail & commercial typical at street level to blend with existing context. Plenty of pedestrians with mix of visitors and neighbors. Create a stronger identity. Introduce better pedestrian lighting. Introduce consistent signage or banners for neighborhood events. Opportunity to provide zones for permanent parking. Outdoor dining opportunities at wide sidewalks.
Streetscape improvements include the following: New curb bump-outs define parking spaces and shorten crosswalk distance for pedestrians (1). Replace parking meters with more efficient pay and display system (2), remove utility lines and place underground, provide new urban furniture including benches, trash containers, bike racks, and combined signal/light poles in lieu of existing cobra-head lights. Bus shelters should be placed in appropriate locations to prevent conflicts with visibility (3). Repaint bike lane markings (4). Additional street trees with a “vehicle-friendly” canopy are to be planted throughout the Liberty Ave. Corridor (5). Crosswalks may be raised/textured and made visible with new bright/reflective painting and on-street signage (6).
EXISTING STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Limited street trees. Metered parking both sides of street. Bike lane is not well defined.

PROPOSED STREET SECTION AND PARTIAL PLAN OF LIBERTY AVE.

Coordinate single lane traffic in each direction. Define parking with bump-out curb cuts, introduce pay & display parking to maximize on-street parking, add street trees to both sidewalk and bump-out locations. Indicate bike lanes with paint and improved signage.
View of new crosswalk, bump-out, street trees and bike lane at Liberty Ave. and Canoe Way

View north along Liberty Ave. adjacent future development along street edge with outdoor dining, new street trees, and new automobile/pedestrian light poles with banners.

Existing view inbound/north west at Liberty Ave. and Canoe Way

Existing view outbound/east at Liberty Ave. and Canoe Way
SITE IV - ADDITIONAL DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES

Improve access and signage to the new baseball field just south of Liberty Ave. by way of public art and improved pedestrian lighting.

Improve design of cobblestone areas adjacent Bloomfield Bridge / park entrance with new trees, bushes and groundcover. Introduce public art and pedestrian lighting.

Existing views of underutilized cobblestone spaces adjacent to Bloomfield Bridge along Liberty Ave.

Existing view east of baseball field entrance before Bloomfield Bridge on-ramp.

Improve access and signage to the new baseball field just south of Liberty Ave. by way of public art and improved pedestrian lighting.
All work is to be considered preliminary and not for construction purposes. Field dimensional verification and review of all applicable zoning, building and other municipal codes should be reviewed before final recommendations can be made.

Our preliminary streetscape improvement cost estimate per the recommendations outlined in this report is between $250k to $950k.
**MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENT IMAGES**

- Streetscape improvements via building signage
- Pay and display parking machine
- Street trees, pedestrian crosswalk, street lighting and upgraded pavement
- Bump-out curb cut along Forbes Ave. in Oakland
- Public Art streetscape improvements
- Bike lane marking
- Street level storefront transparency and building signage and lighting improves public realm of sidewalk
- Zip Car designated parking
- Crosswalk signage
The project team would like to thank members of the community that contributed their time and effort to this study. All comments were well received and appreciated. We would also like to thank again the Bloomfield Development Corporation, for the investment that they are making to their community.

Additional thanks to the following for their assistance and support:

Karla Owens – BDC Executive Director
Ben Forman – BDC, BBA President
Terry Aiello – BDC Member
Andrea Lavin - CDCP, Design Fund Manager
Joe Kramer – State Senator Ferlo’s Office
Dan Gilman – Office of Councilman Peduto
Sean Capparos – Office of Councilman Dowd
Amanda Broadwater - City of Pittsburgh Municipal Traffic Engineer
Patrick Roberts - City of Pittsburgh Transportation Planner
Stephen Patchan - City of Pittsburgh Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator
Shelly Martz - City of Pittsburgh Neighborhood Planner
Nancy Grover - West Penn Hospital Representative
Mark Davis – Business Owner
Dana Acton – Business Owner