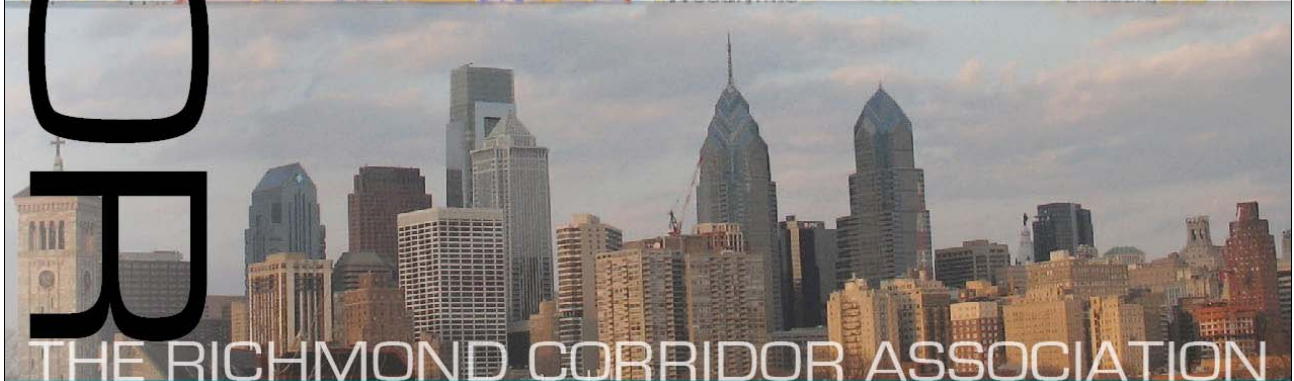
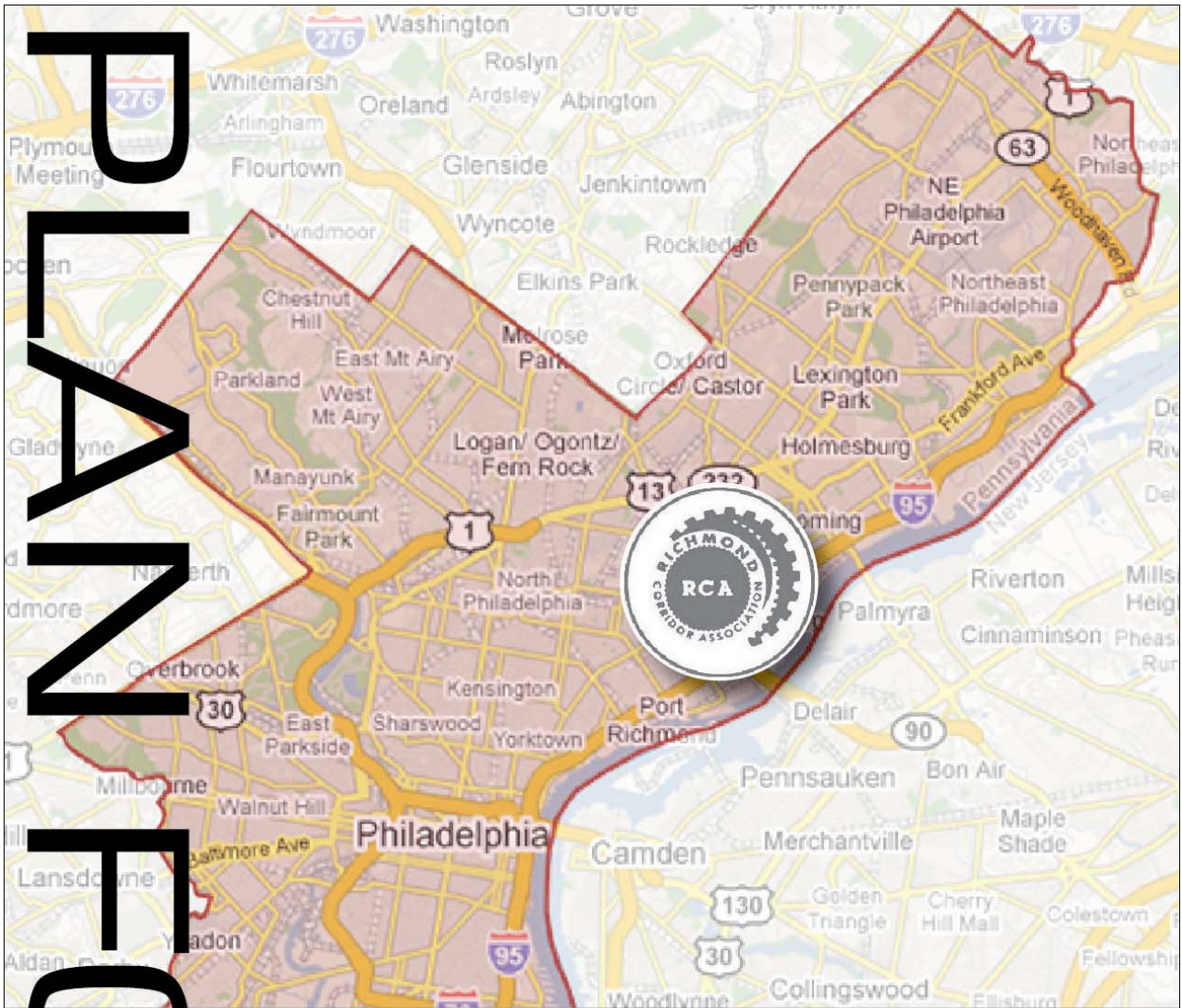


PLAN FOR



THE RICHMOND CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION

Developing a Vibrant Philadelphia Industrial Community

Five Year Strategic Plan 2012 - 2017

MISSION STATEMENT

The Richmond Corridor Association (RCA) is the local catalyst to drive dramatic improvement in Port Richmond so that businesses and the neighborhood will thrive.

RCA's mission is to improve and enhance the business climate and quality-of-life throughout the area. RCA seeks to sustain and grow existing businesses and create an environment that attracts new businesses.

By achieving our mission, the group will create new job opportunities within the community and improve neighborhood security and infrastructure, all while promoting an environment conducive to the unique nature of our industrial business base.

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ABOUT RCA

The Richmond Corridor Association (“RCA”) was founded in 1998 by like-minded, progressive business leaders who desired to improve the local industrial and residential communities. Since its inception, the RCA’s primary goal has been to revitalize and improve the industrial businesses neighborhood and manufacturing business communities of Port Richmond. This goal has remained constant; in the past 13 years we have made significant strides through many unique and innovative initiatives over the years.

RCA is comprised primarily of industrial companies with a mixture of small businesses and distributors. The term “industrial” refers to businesses that manufacture, assemble, process, or distribute products. The entire district includes over 70 businesses that employ more than 2000 people. The RCA area of Philadelphia is approximately two square miles and located just north of Center City. The area is centered generally along Richmond Street from Allegheny Avenue extending just past Wheatsheaf Lane.

One of the critical reasons for founding and sustaining the RCA is that while historically industrial businesses have contributed tremendously to the tax base of the City of Philadelphia, they have not spoken with a unified voice and generally have been under-represented in the decision-making processes of politicians and policymakers.

A recent Brookings Institution report titled “The Federal Role in Supporting Urban Manufacturing” (2011) calls urban manufacturing “a powerful economic engine.” It is largely occupied by decentralized, interdependent networks of small, specialized companies located in America’s cities. However, urban manufacturers face obstacles in their efforts to innovate and grow.

The goal of the RCA is to maintain and improve this area of Port Richmond so our members can realize collective benefits while focusing on their core businesses. We have accomplished this by improving security and infrastructure while reducing illegal trash dumping and graffiti and promoting an environment that is supportive of industrial businesses and the unique nature of their operations.

The RCA gives its members a voice on issues that affect their business, advocates in their interests, and improves the neighborhood. City politicians and policymakers listen because the RCA brings together many businesses, both large and small, as one unified group with common goals and objectives. RCA collaborates with many agencies, including the Manufacturing Alliance of Philadelphia, the neighboring Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise, City agencies, and elected officials.

This five year strategic plan grows out of the need to update and modify our first strategic plan titled "Plan for the Richmond Corridor Association," which was formulated in 2001. A new five-year strategic plan will provide direction to the RCA for growth and resource allocation while further optimizing collective strengths to take advantage of opportunities as well as addressing weaknesses, challenges and threats directly.

With the help of a Steering Committee of business operators and the RCA membership, we are proud to present a new strategic plan that the RCA will implement over the next five years. Throughout 2010, the Strategic Planning Committee met numerous times, and, after many hours of hard work, completed this five year plan, which was adopted in July 2011.



Figure 1: At work at Neatsfoot Oil Refineries, located in the RCA area

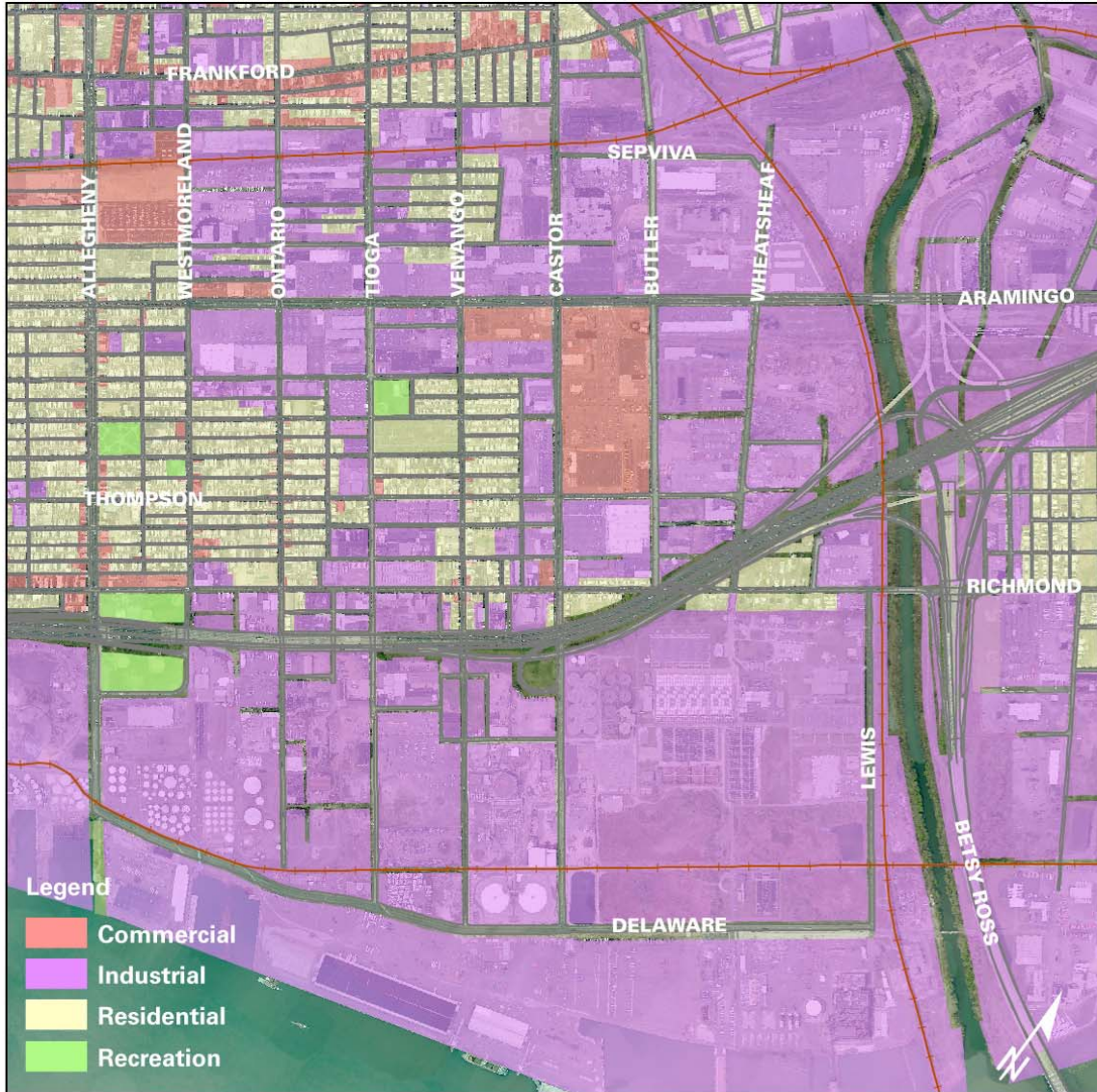
RICHMOND CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION - AREA MAP

1,000 Feet



RICHMOND CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION - AREA ZONING

1,000 Feet



STRATEGIC PLAN SUMMARY

The RCA has developed a five year plan that includes addressing the central challenges to improve quality of life and enhance the competitiveness of doing business within the City of Philadelphia. The following is a summary of this strategic plan:

1. BUSINESS RETENTION & ATTRACTION

- a. Create a Marketing Kit
- b. Amplify RCA's Web Presence
- c. Convene a Forum for Realtors

2. CLEAN-UP, ENFORCEMENT & PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

- a. Clean-Up Land Owned by Utility and Transportation Companies
- b. Public Realm Improvements
- c. Maintain and Enhance Monitoring and Enforcement of Illegal Dumping

3. SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN PARKS & RECREATION

- a. Support the East Coast Greenway
- b. Support Further Investment in Pulaski Park
- c. Reclaim Frankford Creek

4. WAYFINDING & ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

- a. Design a Highly-Visible Graphic
- b. Develop Destination Directional Sign System
- c. Develop Business Directional Signs
- d. Create Additional Environmental Graphics

5. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

- a. Advocate for the RCA During I-95 Reconstruction
- b. Create a Truck Staging Area
- c. Identify a Preferred Truck Route
- d. Create Additional Parking for Trucks and Employees
- e. Improve Traffic Flow

6. MANAGING RCA

- a. Hire a Director/Manager

7. PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

- a. Gather Baseline Data
- b. Start a Campaign for Environmental Sustainability
- c. Develop Targets
- d. Solicit and Provide Technical/Financial Assistance
- e. Link Sustainability with Strategies in Other Parts of this Plan
- f. Link Sustainability with Ongoing and Future Development

RICHMOND CORRIDOR ASSOCIATION - PLAN SUMMARY

1,000 Feet



RCA'S SUCCESSES

During its first decade, the RCA undertook several successful projects based on the first strategic plan: *Plan for the Richmond Corridor Association: Sustaining a Philadelphia Industrial Community* (2001).

SIGNS & WAYFINDING

A good signage system imparts a sense of confidence to the visitor and creates a unified visual statement that is easily recognizable and imparts a sense of community. A unified sign system communicates that a committed business community is actively encouraging investment, seeking a quality workforce, and is interested in the area's transformation and growth. The system should direct visitors to Port Richmond, announce arrival, and direct the visitor to a specific destination. The system should be clear, simple, and durable, as well as easily maintained and updated.

- **I-95 Access Signage.** Signs designate access to destinations. The previous Allegheny Avenue and Aramingo exit signs were modified per DOT standards to read "Port Richmond" as a destination. I-95 exit signs were added at Allegheny and Aramingo Avenue North and Southbound to better inform traffic entering Port Richmond.
- **Street Signs.** Street signs were adapted to the standard street sign type that are situated above traffic signal posts, increasing legibility and visibility to motorists. These signs are located at major intersections along Aramingo and Richmond Streets. These signs were installed in 2006. As a result, navigating within the RCA's area is easier.
- **Neighborhood Arrival Markers.** These gateway signs mark the entry points into a neighborhood. They tie in thematically with the sign system and express the identity of Port Richmond. Neighborhood arrival markers were installed to identify the major entrances to Port Richmond and enhance the visitor's experience. These markers are located at the base of Allegheny and Aramingo Avenue exit ramps and at the intersection of Richmond Street and Westmoreland Street.

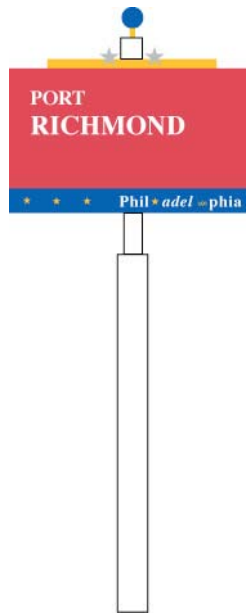


Figure 2: A Neighborhood Arrival Marker based on the City's DirectionPhiladelphia wayfinding system

SECURITY CAMERAS

In 2007, the RCA and neighboring Port Richmond Industrial Development Enterprise (PRIDE), with the assistance of the Urban Industrial Initiative (UII), outfitted the RCA area with three fixed security cameras and four mobile cameras. These cameras were procured specifically to deter “short dumping” occurring within the Port Richmond area. After the initial \$80,000 investment in the cameras themselves, the RCA supports the cost of the maintenance and care of these cameras. The cameras have been highlighted in the newspaper and in the television media as a program that has succeeded in reducing short dumping, providing safety to the community, and serving as a deterrent to more serious crimes. Despite the successes, however, illegal dumping still persists and requires continual vigilance.



Figure 3: Security cameras mounted on a business property

LOCAL PROCUREMENT

It is surprising how often a company or individual buys something from an out-of-the-area vendor when equivalent products can be purchased locally, cheaper and with faster delivery. The RCA has made great strides in connecting business partners which, in turn, strengthens the RCA mission. RCA supports the buying, selling and promoting of products within the membership and local community.

NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN UP/BEAUTIFICATION EFFORTS

The RCA area businesses and residents have always understood the importance of “sweat equity” as a important way make the neighborhood an attractive place to work and live. To that end, they have teamed up for more than a decade to conduct a semi-annual clean-ups and tire round-ups throughout community. In cooperation with a wide array of partners, the businesses have regularly volunteered to clean illegal dump sites, major thoroughfares, backstreets and vacant lots. In addition, the organization has utilized some limited public funds in the past to create landscaped gateways into the area. This effort coupled with video surveillance aims to reduce the prevalence of this chronic problem.

BUSINESS SURVEY RESULTS

Although manufacturing and distribution continue to operate in Port Richmond, overall the community continues to experience a steady decline in businesses and jobs. This was abundantly clear during the recession of 2008-2009. The goal of this plan is to devise a roadmap of strategic initiatives that will guide the organization to meet its objectives. The RCA has identified many improvements that can create a more hospitable environment for business operations and their workers.

The RCA recognizes that the community has many assets, but those assets are not well-promoted. We asked Port Richmond's industrial business-owners about the strengths and weaknesses of the community today. They identified the following strengths:

- Excellent location (i.e., proximity to I-95, bridges, etc.)
- Multimodal transportation options (e.g., truck, rail, international cargo)
- The port facility (e.g., Tioga Marine Terminal)
- Residents, the workforce, work ethic, successful job fairs
- Low cost of property acquisition
- Safety of the neighborhood

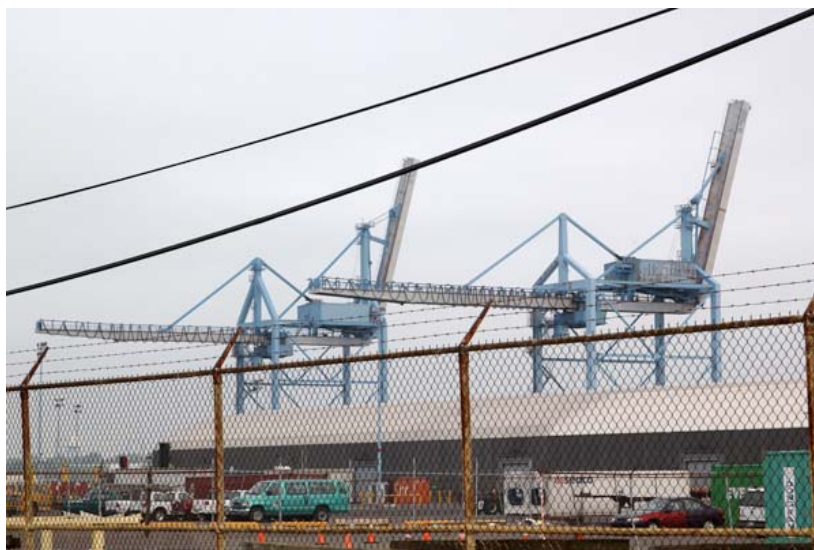


Figure 4: The Tioga Marine Terminal

Business-owners identified the following challenges and threats to the community:

- Illegal dumping
- Graffiti
- Insufficient parking
- Existing infrastructure is not compatible with modern urban industrial needs
- Philadelphia wage tax
- High transportation costs, including tolls
- Increased stormwater costs
- Loss of industrial land to retail and residential development
- Existing infrastructure not conducive to truck movements
- Overall appearance leaves poor impression on clients and prospective employees



Figure 5: Illegal dumping is a major issue in the RCA area

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Port Richmond developed initially as a critical transfer point for coal and goods between ships and rail in the 1800s. Since the mid-1900s, this area has been a center of industry, supporting a remarkable community that still includes manufacturing plants, residences, schools, shops, churches, and parks. Port Richmond weathered the two economic storms that devastated many “rust belt” communities: 1) the incremental abandonment and obsolescence caused by the decline of manufacturing in the U.S; and 2) the dwindling resources available to maintain and modernize public infrastructure and streets (while development of industrial parks and subdivisions on formerly rural land was subsidized by state and federal investment).

THE CHALLENGES

Urban industrial areas like Port Richmond present a particular problem for business operators, policymakers, developers, and real estate brokers. They are not stand-alone industrial parks that can be easily marketed. They are not farmland that can easily be bulldozed for new buildings. They are also not exhausted industrial sites that can be cleared and completely redeveloped. They are complex patchworks of residential homes, vital businesses that need to be retained, empty buildings that should be marketed, and vacant structures and property that should be demolished and prepared for redevelopment and reuse.

These conditions do not make it impossible to promote and redevelop urban industrial areas, but they do demand a new approach that focuses on retention, expansion, attraction, and re-use of vacant and under-utilized sites, all intertwined within a community of residential, retail, and commercial businesses and aged infrastructure.

Besides these structural challenges, quality-of-life issues are also paramount. The vacant properties and the trash-strewn “in-between” areas along the rail lines and beneath the elevated highway cast a poor impression of the area, one of neglect and deterioration. This is far from the positive message RCA businesses and the City of Philadelphia want to share with prospective businesses, clients and employees.

According to Alan Berg, President of Neatsfoot Oil Refineries and a long-time member of the Board of Directors of RCA, “in this environment, these quality-of-life issues are absolutely critical. Keeping the area clean and safe is important for attracting and retaining businesses and workers.” With these challenges in mind, the RCA has developed strategies to change the business climate as well as perceptions about the neighborhood.



Figure 6: An illegal dumper caught in the act receives a citation from the police

OPPORTUNITIES

A recent report published by the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation “An Industrial Land & Market Strategy for the City of Philadelphia” (September 2010) studied industrial land uses in Philadelphia and made several key recommendations:

- *Zoning for Modern Industry.* This study proposes that the ten industrial zoning classifications in Philadelphia’s current code be consolidated into four classifications. The four classifications include a utilities and transportation infrastructure category that would separate critical long-term public infrastructure from private market industrial activity. Other districts include heavy industrial, general industrial, and light industrial. Two new mixed-use districts would permit low-impact industrial uses to intermingle with commercial and residential uses.
- *Positioning Industrial Land for Investment.* This protects industrial land by discouraging spot zoning for commercial uses. It also recommends industrial intensification areas and industrial protection areas.
- *Additional Strategies for Retaining & Expanding Industry.* This includes a marketing strategy and programs to green industry.

As an advocate for the future success of this area, the RCA has several key initiatives that will enable this area to compete for new jobs and investment dollars in the coming years. These initiatives are organized into the following categories:

1. **Business Retention & Attraction.** Promote existing and create new financial incentives that can help businesses with expansion, acquisition, hiring, technology-share, energy sharing, demolition, clean-up and construction costs. Engage city agencies and real estate professionals to assemble and market underutilized parcels of public and private industrial ground.
2. **Clean Up, Enforcement & Public Realm Improvements.** Rail, highway, and port facilities combined with the holdings of public gas, water and electric utilities, control a substantial proportion of the land in and immediately

adjacent to the area. For Port Richmond to become competitively attractive to new or expanding businesses there must be a commitment to a long term strategy to transform, maintain, and manage the appearance of these properties and the quality of the public infrastructure.

3. **Support Investments in Area Parks & Recreation.** The East Coast Greenway will bring a multi-use trail and landscape improvements to Allegheny Avenue, which will complement efforts to improve the appearance of the area. Furthermore, it will expose the public to the businesses in the RCA area. Pulaski Park, another recreational resource in the RCA area, is becoming a lively destination. RCA supports these recreational resources, as well as the Frankford Creek Greenway project.
4. **Wayfinding & Visual Graphics.** As stated earlier, a good signage system imparts a sense of confidence to the visitor, creates a unified visual statement that is easily recognizable, and helps create a sense of a distinct community. A unified sign system communicates that a committed business community is actively encouraging investment, seeking a quality workforce, and is interested in the area's transformation and growth. The next investments in environmental graphics should build on the progress already made.
5. **Infrastructure Reinvestment.** People and products travel between their business destinations and I-95 access ramps along Port Richmond streets. A handsome and well-tended "public realm" of sidewalks roadsides, fences, murals, parking lots, and other proactive approaches will communicate to the visitor that the Port Richmond business community is vital and productive. A workable plan is needed to establish a viable public landscape based on this community's operational structure and capabilities. Local businesses also need to establish design standards to guide sidewalks, fences, landscape, lots, buildings and signage. Furthermore, a well-planned lighting system can improve safety, security, economy, and aesthetic image. Each of these elements of design shares equal importance in creating an impression of a well-cared-for destination that works both for industry and for the residential neighborhoods.

6. **Transportation Improvements.** Port Richmond is located in an ideal geography for many industries. Trucking is the lifeblood of industry and Port Richmond has access to major highways running in all four directions. The logistic attributes combined with favorably-priced and available real estate, in addition to a collaborative business atmosphere, are clear advantages for companies to be in our district. These advantages, however, are compromised when trucks are delayed by circuitous routing or by waiting trucks blocking roadways and loading areas. Also, some streets west of I-95 are too narrow to provide places for trucks to wait. A central, cooperatively managed “staging area” will allow the arrival of material to be efficiently managed from the loading dock and a call to the driver will tell him when the way is clear.

7. **Managing RCA.** The RCA is administered by owners, managers, and staff from RCA businesses who volunteer their time. This strategic plan is a comprehensive series of strategies that will take significant time and energy to implement. Therefore, the RCA would benefit greatly by having a paid and dedicated manager to administer the organization and play a role in managing the implementation of this strategic plan.

8. **Promote Environmental Sustainability.** RCA can play a key role in encouraging businesses to adopt environmentally-sustainable business processes, starting with collecting baseline data. With the support of governmental and non-governmental agencies, RCA can become a model for collective efforts to become a more sustainable industrial district.



Figure 7: The poor condition of many streets, sidewalks, curbs, and other public realm elements such as fencing will require significant investment to upgrade. But the investment will be well worth improving the RCA for its membership and to attract new businesses and workers.

THE STRATEGIES

1. BUSINESS RETENTION & ATTRACTION

Early detection is the most important first step in a business retention strategy. A successful strategy requires as a baseline an annual survey of businesses (i.e., “early warning”) to identify potential movers as well as a tight knit business community who know each other and can assist each other in times of need (or expansion). When a business lists a lot of new complaints or considers the prospect of relocation a red flag will go up triggering a process. This red flag is the first step. A prompt visit by a local business delegation to explore possible remedies is the essential second step. The third step involves working with public sector resources to produce sufficient positive changes or to introduce new opportunities to avert the business loss. The fourth step is monitoring to assure that the promised remedies actually occur.

This strategy is an expansion and refinement of the successful work stimulated in the early 1980s by (the then) New Jersey Bell Telephone Co. One key feature of that model was business-to-business attention. Merely sending a hired hand or making a telephone call to the working business leader produced unsatisfactory results. Often the potential mover is not aware of the planned improvements or of resources from which he or she may benefit. Almost always, the visit produces a more positive attitude. Business team members often report that the potential mover said it was the first attention anyone had ever paid to his needs. He had assumed the city didn’t care if he stayed or left.

Realtors who work with industrial properties have the ability to steer prospects to popular sites where, in all probability, the fee for a successful deal will be higher than in the RCA area. Realtors also tend not to be aware of any strategic plan for the area, the strength of the business community, the existence of RCA, RCA’s successes, RCA’s advocacy for businesses and the collective political strength the RCA can yield on a members’ behalf or remedial initiatives/actions that are underway. They need to be regularly reminded of current assets such as the potential for selling products to one another. They also may not know of funded commitments to important changes in truck loading opportunities or employee parking. The full implications of the I-95/Aramingo connecting ramps

may not be appreciated. While they can probably recall who has left the area in the past few years, they probably aren't aware of who remains. In short, the area needs to be known to the real estate industry, not for the site of a disastrous tire fire, but for a series of new and exciting business opportunities. The message needs to be repeated continuously.

The most important ingredient in a successful marketing strategy is the leadership and commitment of the men and women who own and operate RCA businesses. This evidence of business commitment is our most important asset. RCA should develop the following marketing tools:

a. Create a Marketing Kit. Create a marketing kit that identifies clearly and concisely what makes this a place where manufacturing/industrial businesses can flourish. In addition to highlighting available parcels, area data and business facts, the material should feature individual business operators and their contact information.

b. Amplify RCA's Web Presence. RCA currently has a basic website that provides information on the organization, a membership listing, and access to meeting agendas and minutes. RCA will invest in an amplified web presence so that it becomes both an information portal and a marketing tool. RCA could create video clips that show off the area's best advantages, featuring leaders of individual businesses reporting on their experience and satisfaction with the RCA area.

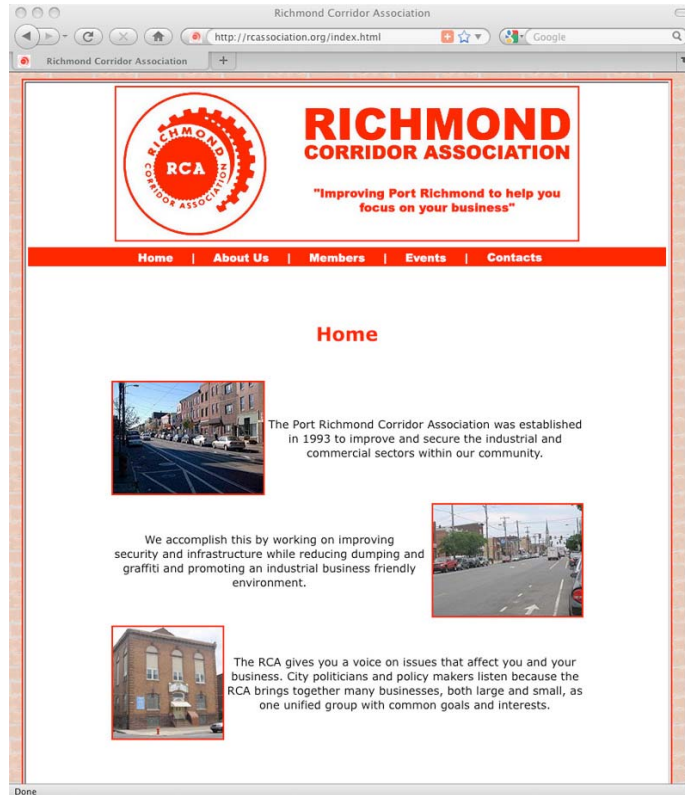


Figure 8: RCA's existing website needs to be overhauled to be a tool to market the area to new businesses and to draw new business members

c. Collect Property Information and Improve Communications with Realtors.

RCA should be very familiar with the status of industrial properties in the area and should conduct an annual property survey to update its records. Key available properties should be marketed in the RCA website. Furthermore, RCA should improve communications with realtors. Every year, there should be a breakfast or after-work reception for real estate brokers, perhaps in conjunction with RCA's annual meeting. Business and government officials should speak of plans and accomplishments and the latest information should be available in the marketing folder. The intention is to keep this sector informed and give its members an opportunity to see first hand the enthusiasm and commitment of the RCA non-profit corporation members. It is possible that some of this might be done in conjunction with neighboring business associations. Recordings should be available for the second annual meeting with real estate professionals. It should be possible to secure sponsorship for this project or to share the costs among local companies or with the City. The advantages of the area are considerable, although they constitute a virtual secret.

2. CLEAN UP, ENFORCEMENT & PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS

a. Clean-Up Land Owned by Utility and Transportation Companies. RCA has identified several trouble spots that require immediate attention. Most of these involve land in the public domain, such as parts of Aramingo Avenue, the SEPTA bus loop at Richmond and Westmoreland, and areas adjacent to rail lines, beneath the I-95 elevated interstate highway, alongside highway access ramps, beside athletic fields, and along Frankford Creek.

While the impact of these sites is profound, we recognize that in order to accomplish our goals we will need full cooperation from large public agencies such as PennDOT, Conrail (or its parent companies), SEPTA, the Streets Department, the Department of Parks & Recreation, the Philadelphia Water Department, PECO, and PGW.

b. Invest in Public Realm Improvements. The proposed design solutions are aimed at making the visitor/customer/employee experience pleasant, ensuring that a feeling of safety and enabling everyone involved with receiving and shipping to be as efficient as possible. The following are some key areas for public realm investments:

- *I-95 Access Ramps and Aramingo Avenue.* Clean up and attractively landscape the roadway shoulders at the new I-95 access ramp and along both sides of Aramingo Avenue. The east side north of Wheatsheaf is particularly problematic, where a depressed rail right-of-way is overgrown and trash-strewn. This needs to be cleaned up, along with the rail area between Wheatsheaf and Butler.



Figure 9: The access ramps to I-95 from Aramingo Avenue

- *Railroad Bridges.* Paint and illuminate the railroad bridge that runs over Aramingo Avenue just south of the creek, along with the bridge located on Richmond Street by the Betsy Ross Bridge entrance.
- *East End of Ontario Street.* Clean up the area in the vicinity of this dead end at the rail crossing.
- *Design Standards for Lighting.* Establish design standards for lighting parking areas and workyards.
- *Additional Lighting.* Provide additional lighting for sidewalks and building facades along Richmond Street as well as W heatsheaf, Venango, Tioga, Ontario and Westmoreland Streets and expand the residential lighting program.

b. Maintain and Enhance Monitoring and Enforcement of Illegal Dumping. RCA has identified several trouble spots that require more immediate attention. Most of these focused on land in the public domain, such as parts of Aramingo Avenue, the SEPTA bus loop at Richmond and Westmoreland, and areas adjacent to rail lines, beneath the I-95 elevated interstate highway, alongside highway access ramps, along athletic fields, and along Frankford Creek. Purchasing and installing additional security cameras will help improve the range of area that is under surveillance. We will continue to work closely with the 24th District Police to alleviate illegal dumping as much as possible.

3. SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN AREA PARKS & RECREATION

a. Support the East Coast Greenway. The development of a section of the East Coast Greenway through the RCA area along Allegheny Avenue, by the Delaware River City Corporation (DRCC), will complement RCA's overall efforts to enhance the business climate and quality of life throughout neighborhood. Consider a partnership role in trail maintenance. More than \$2.5 million in federal funds have already been allocated the section of the East Coast Greenway along Delaware Avenue from Allegheny Avenue to Lewis Street. Construction is slated to begin in 2012.

b. Support Further Investment in Pulaski Park. Pulaski Park, an abandoned pier-turned-park located in the RCA area, has been revitalized through partnerships with community groups and businesses. Regular events now include clean ups and an annual picnic and fishing tournament. PA DCNR and the City Department of Parks & Recreation have appropriated \$300,000 for future park improvements.

c. Reclaim Frankford Creek. Frankford Creek is a hidden asset. The banks should be reclaimed to create an attractive pollution mitigating, waterway, that could be enjoyed by the public. Support the Frankford Creek Greenway project.

4. WAYFINDING & ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS

a. **Design a Highly-Visible Graphic.** We propose that RCA invest in designing a highly-visible graphic image, such as a billboard along heavily-trafficked I-95, that announces the presence of this area and draws people's interest. Pennsauken, New Jersey uses billboards along I-95 to attract people from Philadelphia). "Port Richmond Works" is a strong slogan, as is "Come Grow With Us!"

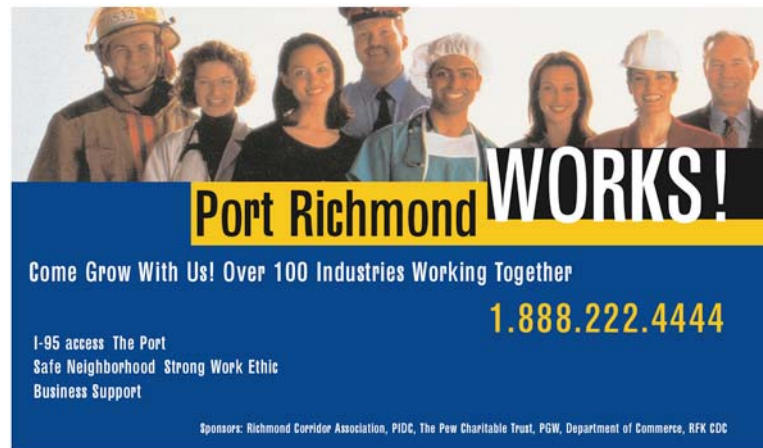


Figure 10: A concept for a large-scale graphic

b. **Develop Destination Directional Sign System.** These signs direct motorists from the interstate or primary arterials to the primary Port Richmond destination points. The Direction Philadelphia system could also be adopted for these sign types. They are typically aluminum single-sided signs mechanically fastened to extruded aluminum or steel posts in a concrete footing. Existing poles may be utilized where feasible to reduce costs and the number of obstructions. The sign panels are a combination of paint, silkscreen and/or reflective copy; with a painted or anodized post. These signs would direct and alert the motorist along primary arterials in the RCA area to approaching intersections.

c. **Develop Business Directional Signs.** These signs would direct and alert the motorist along primary arterials in the industrial district areas to approaching businesses.



Figure 11: Concept designs for directional signage for the RCA area

d. Create Additional Environmental Graphics. Designing and installing environmental graphic elements would enhance the visitor’s experience, serve as gateways, destination arrival markers, and promote Port Richmond’s identity. Identify several of Port Richmond’s bland-walled buildings, tank structures, or highway billboards for a positive, graphically-compelling message about Port Richmond. Railroad trestles could carry the Port Richmond logo and “*Port Richmond Works*” slogan. Long fences along Castor Avenue on the east side could serve as a destination marker branded with “*Port Richmond Industrial Park East.*” Large signs with the RCA logo could be attached to chain-link fences.



Figure 12: An image (right) showing an idea for creating a highly-visible gateway into Port Richmond using the existing gasometer (left).

5. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

a. Advocate for the RCA During I-95 Reconstruction. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) using Federal Transit Authority (FTA) funds has been in the process of completely rebuilding the entire stretch of I-95 between Race Street and Academy Road since 2004. The section of the project that will most impact the RCA area spans from Ann Street (south) to Bridge Street (north). The new engineering and design strategy is to reconfigure Richmond Street and make significant changes to the height and width of the main interstate roadway. This project will add new traffic lanes and make major changes to the exits/interchanges around Allegheny Avenue. Over the next five years, some businesses will be forced to either relocate and/or redesign their properties while other firms will have to alter their travel plans. Throughout the reconstruction period, it will be crucial that businesses and residents have full access to the network of streets/roads and public transit lines throughout the area. The lifeblood of the RCA is transportation. RCA will need the full cooperation of all stakeholders, in both the public and private sectors, to move quickly to address and mitigate any and all issues/problems that could negatively impact the business and residential communities on an ongoing basis. RCA recommends that PennDOT and the highway construction firms performing the actual on-site work set up a satellite office in Port Richmond to make sure there is good communication and cooperation throughout the entire process. RCA will continue to closely monitor the project website: www.95revive.com.

b. Create a Truck Staging Area. Trucking dependent businesses need a place for trucks and loaded trailers to “standby.” Truckers often arrive at their destinations in the early morning hours after driving most of the night. Presently they must line up along busy neighborhood streets blocking traffic, while waiting for a turn to unload. A central cooperatively managed “staging area” will allow the arrival of material to be efficiently managed from the loading dock—a call to the driver will tell him/her when the way is clear. A similar facility will be constructed on Ontario Street, west of Aramingo Avenue in the nearby PRIDE industrial district.

c. Identify a Preferred Truck Route. Trucks are an essential part of the industrial environment, but in Port Richmond, where industrial, residential, and retail uses

coexist closely, it is important to look at ways to mitigate the impact of trucks on non-industrial areas. One way to do this is to identify truck routes that largely avoid non-industrial areas. RCA should work with local agencies to prepare a truck routing map and signs that companies will be encouraged to use when directing traffic to and from their facilities. This will be especially important during the I-95 reconstruction.

d. Create Additional Parking for Trucks and Employees. Like many Philadelphia neighborhoods, Port Richmond was designed for a time when people walked to work, and when deliveries were made by train. Many older buildings have little parking, and today's car-reliant, truck-reliant society is a challenge for these businesses. RCA should comprehensively examine the parking needs of businesses and look for opportunities to create new parking. Possibilities include shared lots on vacant ground, parking underneath I-95, or the elimination of underused sidewalks in order to create parking lanes.

e. Improve Traffic Flow. There are several immediate improvements that can greatly facilitate traffic flow through the area.

- *Tioga Street.* At the East end of Tioga Street, the street needs to be widened and repaved between Balfour Street and Delaware Avenue.
- *Richmond & Allegheny.* Create a left-turn lane and install a left turn light southbound at the intersection of Richmond Street and Allegheny Avenue.
- *Sepviva Street.* Repave, widen, and improve the lighting on Sepviva Street between Castor and Wheatsheaf.
- *Aramingo & Wheatsheaf.* Create a left-turn lane at the intersection of Aramingo Avenue and Wheatsheaf Lane southbound.
- *Ontario Street.* At the east end of Ontario Street, open the street through to Delaware Avenue. Create a truck route to draw truck traffic down off at Richmond and Ontario Street.

6. MANAGING RCA

RCA is currently run by an all-volunteer board and administrative duties are taken on by staff from existing companies.

a. Hire a Director/Manager. Given the larger future responsibilities, RCA needs to hire a manager to undertake a wide range of duties, including most of those duties currently being undertaken by existing RCA company staff.

7. PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Businesses are increasingly realizing the economic, social, and environmental benefits of adopting policies and investing in processes that aim to reduce or eliminate impacts to the environment. As a collective organization, RCA can play a unique role in guiding and supporting area businesses to become more environmentally sustainable and in promoting those that have made significant or innovative strides in this realm. This campaign might require hiring an additional mid-level staffperson to work on a full- or part-time basis to assist in outreach and communications.

a. Gather Baseline Data from Businesses. Retrieve baseline information from companies on various elements such as energy consumption/billing, solid waste generation/collection, and stormwater impacts/fees. Information on existing sustainability programs should also be collected.

b. Start a Campaign for Environmental Sustainability within RCA. This could be called "RCA Green" or another name. RCA area business will be asked to commit to the campaign, although participation would be voluntary.

c. Develop Targets. Based on conversations with and information from businesses, establish general targets for the various aspects of the campaign to make RCA businesses more environmentally sustainable.

d. Solicit and Provide Technical Assistance. Solicit participation from state and regional agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private sector firms that could provide technical assistance to RCA and its participating businesses in adopting environmentally sustainable initiatives.

e. Link Sustainability with Strategies in Other Parts of this Plan. Opportunities abound for including environmental sustainability measures into the infrastructure projects listed throughout this plan. For example, lighting can be solar-powered or have energy efficient lamps; future parking areas can be designed with green stormwater management features.

f. Link Sustainability with Ongoing and Future Development. Any new development and site work in the RCA area can be designed and built with systems, products, and parts that are environmentally sustainable.

ESTIMATED LEVELS OF INVESTMENT

Implementing this strategic plan will involve a combination of funds from various sources, including state and local government grants, contributions from RCA businesses, City capital funds, and foundation support. The following are estimates for the levels of investments for each category of strategies, based in part on more detailed line-item estimates provided by the first strategic plan: *Plan for the Richmond Corridor Association*.

- 1. BUSINESS RETENTION & ATTRACTION** **\$40,000**
 - a. Create a Marketing Kit
 - b. Amplify RCA’s Web Presence
 - c. Convene a Forum for Realtors

- 2. CLEAN-UP, ENFORCEMENT & PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS** **\$1,000,000**
 - a. Clean-Up Land Owned by Utility and Transportation Companies
 - b. Invest in Public Realm Improvements
 - c. Maintain and Enhance Monitoring and Enforcement of Illegal Dumping

- 3. SUPPORT INVESTMENTS IN PARKS & RECREATION** **\$150,000**
 - a. Support the East Coast Greenway
 - b. Support Further Investment in Pulaski Park
 - c. Reclaim Frankford Creek

- 4. WAYFINDING & ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS** **\$175,000**
 - a. Design a Highly-Visible Graphic
 - b. Develop Destination Directional Sign System
 - c. Develop Business Directional Signs
 - d. Create Additional Environmental Graphics

- 5. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS** **\$450,000**
 - a. Create a Truck Staging Area
 - b. Identify a Preferred Truck Route
 - c. Create Additional Parking for Trucks and Employees
 - d. Improve Traffic Flow

6. MANAGING RCA **\$300,000**
a. Hire a Dedicated Staffperson/Manager

7. PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY **\$100,000**
a. Gather Baseline Data
b. Start a Campaign for Environmental Sustainability
c. Develop Targets
d. Solicit and Provide Technical/Financial Assistance
e. Link Sustainability with Strategies in Other Parts of this Plan
f. Link Sustainability with Ongoing and Future Development

TOTAL = \$2,215,000

RCA STEERING COMMITTEE

Bruce Richman, S.D. Richman & Sons, Inc.

Mark Kochanowicz, Coating Development Group Inc.

Lisa Charlton, J. Cummings Construction Company, Inc

Lou Lessen, Sosmetals Products Inc.

Alan Berg, Neatsfoot Oil Refineries Corp.

William Parker, William Parker Associates Inc.

Jim Doherty, III, Weber Display & Packaging Inc.

Dave Keiser, Tioga Pipe Supply Co. Inc.

Martha Doulos, Regal International Leathers, Ltd.

Steve Jurash, Manufacturing Alliance of Philadelphia

Steve Horton, Urban Industry Initiative

Neil Desai, Brown & Keener Urban Design

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maps and graphics by Brown & Keener Urban Design; cover design by Weber Display & Packaging Inc.
strategic plan support provided by Brown & Keener Urban Design*