

LINKING LOGAN:

Reconnecting the Logan Triangle

Logan Triangle APA Design Competition
Kansas State University

February 24th, 2023



PROJECT VISION STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is to reinvigorate the Logan Neighborhood through the revitalization and reengagement of the Logan Triangle. Through traditional row housing, multi-family apartment complexes, investments in local businesses with prime retail space; combined with a multi-faceted community center, exceptional amphitheater space, and extensive greenspace, we look to turn Logan Triangle from a blighted oversight into a point of pride for the Logan Neighborhood.

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Introduction

ASSESSMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

When assessing the comprehensive plan for the Logan Neighborhood it is evident what the neighborhood not only means to the city, but especially to the community that lives within it. Located less than six miles north of downtown with accessible public transit, and a rich history the Logan neighborhood has a lot to be proud of. The 1.5 square mile area is home to 28,674 people concentrated in 9,738 homes. While the 54% homeownership rate is on par with the rest of the city. The 18% unemployment rate and \$3,500 less than the citywide median income shows a neighborhood that is possibly struggling to find its footing. However, with over 41% of

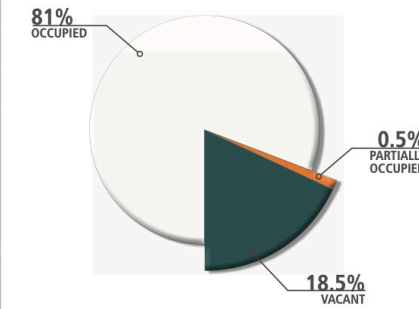
the population under the age of 24, there is reason to be optimistic about the future of this historic Philadelphia neighborhood. One of the best places to start when visioning the future of the Logan Neighborhood is to start with the strengths. Logan has endured decades of decline, yet many of the residents have endured those long years and have recognized the power in coming together and reversing course and helping the neighborhood return to what it once was, a strong, stable neighborhood. While the neighborhood is predominately residential it is also home to many of the City's most prominent institutions, including the Einstein Medical Center, LaSalle University, and other prominent schools. However, one of the black

eyes of the neighborhood has consistently been the Logan Triangle. This 35-acre triangle included multiple city blocks of homes that were built in the 1920s on unstable soil. A gas explosion in 1986, alerted the city that there was a serious problem and that many of the homes were sinking. Through eminent domain, all of the parcels of land were purchased, and although there have been suggested developments since, there has not been anything successfully developed, and the site is now home to considerable amounts of illegal dumping.

OCCUPANCY STATUS



Parcel Survey, Summer 2013.



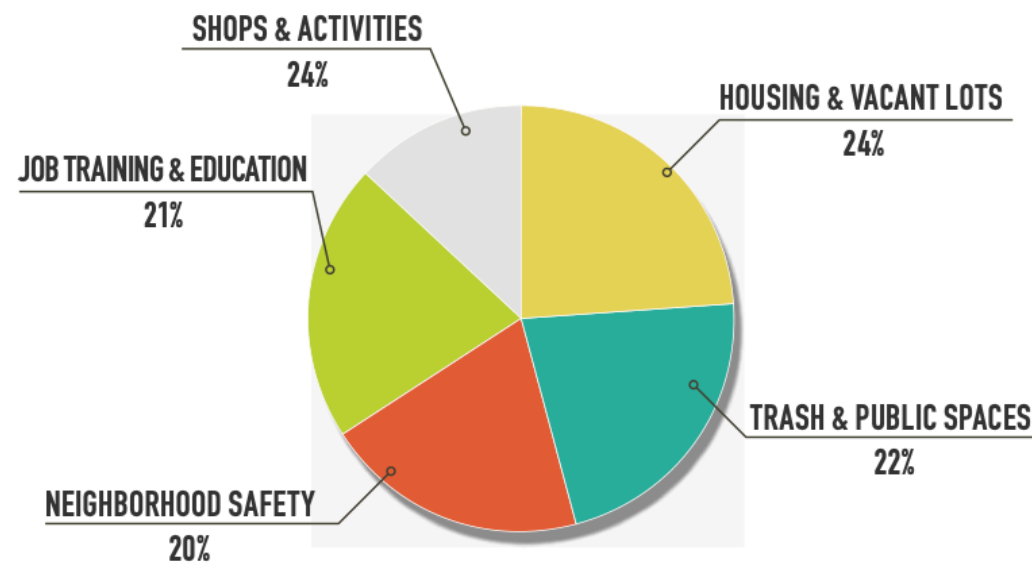
Occupancy

18.5% of the lots in the Logan Neighborhood are vacant. The majority of the vacancy is located in the Logan Triangle. Through development of the vacant lots with a diverse housing options, commercial and retail space, and greenspace and amenities, we aim to not only cut down on the number of vacant lots, but use this opportunity to incentivize people to live, invest and stay in Logan.

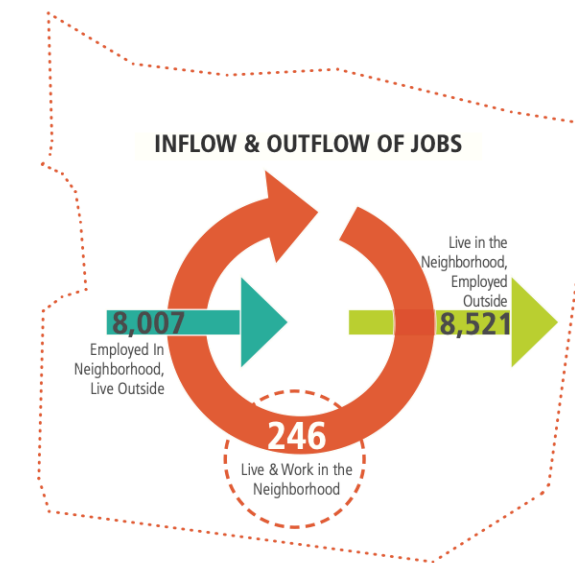
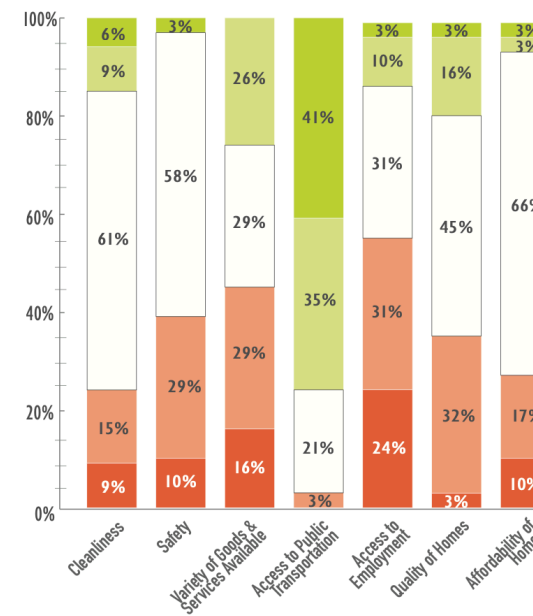
Resident's Priorities

In our proposal, we hope to address many of the changes that community members would like to see. Providing diverse house options, increasing commercial and retail space, providing a community center that can be home to classes and help people with job training and education, while also providing a place for youth and the community as a whole to come together while also feeling an overall sense of safety. Lastly, cleaning up the Logan Triangle and providing clean and well maintained public space will instill a sense of pride and hopefully help change Logan for the better.

What Would You Change?



How Would You Rate Your Neighborhood?



Jobs

Residents are most satisfied with public transportation, which abounds in the area, but are dissatisfied with access to employment. This is evident through the graphic showing that most workers who live within the Logan neighborhood are employed outside of the neighborhood, while those who are employed within the neighborhood do not currently reside within Logan. Through an increase in commercial and retail space, the building of a community center, and financial incentives for current residents of the neighborhood we hope to keep jobs and employees in Logan, and see a steady increase in local live and work residents.

All graphics on this spread courtesy of The Logan Comprehensive Plan

Existing Conditions

LOGAN TRIANGLE

Logan Triangle is a 35-acre tract of vacant land located in Philadelphia's Upper North District. The site is zoned CMX-3 for commercial and mixed use. Previously, the site was home to Wingohocking Creek, which was funneled into a pipe underground for development on the site. The site was loosely backfilled with ash and cinder to facilitate the development of nearly 1,000 single-family homes in the 1920s. However, the loose backfill led to many of the homes having sinking foundations. The issues of the site were further complicated by a gas line explosion in 1986, after which all of Logan Triangle's occupants were relocated and homes were razed by the Logan Assistance Corporation. Currently, most of the site is under the control of the Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority. Two churches are located on the edge of the site that front Roosevelt Blvd. Directly surrounding the site are Philadelphia row homes to the North and West and Roosevelt Blvd to the South. Part of the site bordering Roosevelt Boulevard is across from Hunting Park, which is an active city park with recreational activities. The site is ideally located in terms of access to the regional transportation network, and it is well integrated into the public transportation network with several bus routes and a subway station all within walking distance. Traffic volumes on Roosevelt Boulevard, adjacent to the site, reach around 85,000 vehicles per day. Broad Street, which is a major connector to Philadelphia's Center City, receives traffic volumes of around 40,000 vehicles per day. The surrounding neighborhood is home to over 20,000 residents, a large portion of which being African American or Hispanic.



Local Restaurants

The Logan neighborhood teems with authentic, international restaurants. This is a strength we hope to build on through our mixed use development and local business incentive program.



Corner & Large Grocery Stores

Logan has several corner stores in the neighborhood that, with some rehabilitation and subsidizing, could become bodegas and create a culture of fresh food and access to daily needs. Our proposal celebrates the corners created in the new Logan Triangle, and hopes to continue this neighborhood tradition.

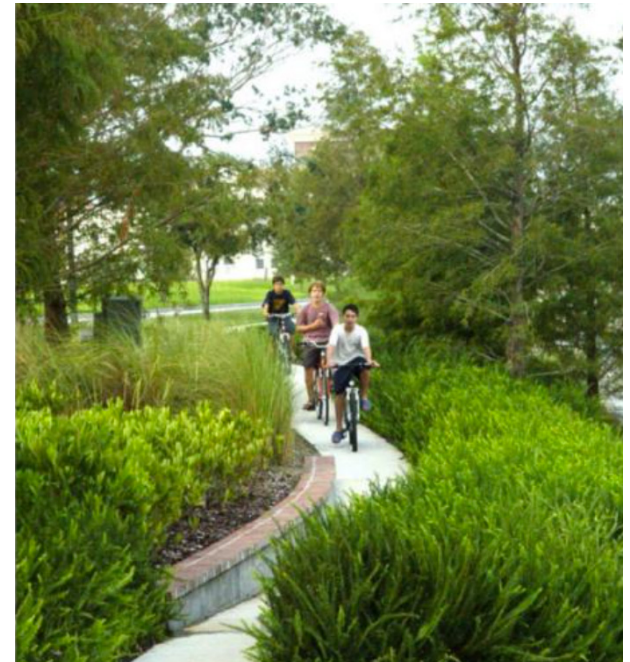


Green Connections

Natural paths of currently unkempt grasses and trees cross through the neighborhood going north and south. Each time a street intersects these green ways, there are heavy barriers to accessing the natural spaces. This proposal offers to landscape these areas and create a green recreational path through the neighborhood. This could connect on to parks and trails outside of the neighborhood.



Some of the current 'entries' to the potential greenway. There is no easy access from the street level, and no maintenance. Images from Google Maps.



Potential trails via greenways. Photo courtesy of Baldwin Park Development Co., and RA Photo, from CNU Public Square.

Design Proposal

Our aim is to wholistically improve parts of the neighborhood. We recommend a mix of public and private funding to create this vision. Public funds will be utilized for remediating the lead, repairing roads, and constructing the public buildings. Working with one or multiple private, local, community focused developers to build the private functions of the site will be critical.

Clinic and Pharmacy

With the implementation of a health facility in the neighborhood, the main goal is to improve access to health care for the residents of the area. This will hopefully call memory to the one of the last buildings that existed in the neighborhood - Courtland Street Medical Office. To build on the strength of Einstein Medical Center, we propose the hospital establish a free or low cost clinic in this neighborhood to better serve the citizens who live there.

Community Center

A community center would provide the neighborhood with a large public space that can be used for social, recreational, and other purposes. Incorporating a community center into this neighborhood creates a welcoming, high-quality environment that allows for youth and families of the neighborhood to come together. The goal is to create an environment that encourages physical, social, and mental health through the provision of space to be active and engaged in the community. The proposed design includes an indoor multi-purpose floor, indoor meeting spaces, an indoor workout room, and outdoor sport courts. A bus stop is included for the site by the community center to connect the site with the extensive regional transportation network.



Highlighting Corners

Taking inspiration from Logan's existing corner stores, the new area will ensure commercial space is available at prime real estate - the street corner. Here, residents can gather and fulfill their daily needs plus enjoy specialty local stores.

Ampitheatre and Lawn

An outdoor ampitheatre can serve as a theatre, concert venue, meeting space, or lounging area. A design element that captures the grasses beyond can indicate space for picnics, farmer's markets, or whatever the community needs on a beautiful summer day. The ampitheatre is positioned to be visible from Roosevelt Boulevard, attract new visitors into Logan to see a show, then spend money in the neighborhood, and become a local landmark.

Rainwater Retention

Small ponds will be implemented for rainwater retention, increased biodiversity, recreation and educational areas.

History and Preservation Trail

Signage with facts, stories, and imagery will be installed along a recreational trail that partly follows the path of the old river that ran through the neighborhood. This read-along trail will go through the history of the neighborhood, the injustices the residents faced, and how modern technology is working to remediate the land. This trail will be accessible for wheelchairs and strollers, and connect to other green areas on either end of the neighborhood.



Precedent image for the Logan Community Center. Rendering by LMS Architects, from sfyimby.com



Precedent image for the Logan Outdoor Ampitheatre. Jay Pritzker Pavilion. Photo from Wikipedia.

Green Space

With the addition of a large expanse of green space in the neighborhood, members of the community would have increased access to public green space with improved opportunities for recreation and social activities. With our design, we propose the implementation of a community amphitheater, a story-walk trail of the history of the site, community garden spaces for better access to healthy foods, playground equipment for youth, and other amenities. Recently, there has been grassroots redevelopment in Logan Triangle, including a gardening project by local elementary school children. This shows an area ripe for redevelopment and a community ready to support it.



Local 5th graders plant on raised beds in Logan Triangle. Photo courtesy of Friends Select.



Proposal image of Housing and Corner Store Bodega in Logan Triangle.



Housing Rehabilitation. From Logan Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan

Housing

One of the main strategies of the Logan Neighborhood plan is to reintegrate Logan Triangle back into the fabric of the neighborhood through the provision of a diverse housing stock. Providing new residential development adjacent to the existing homes would anchor the site as a part of the neighborhood. In addition, we are also promoting the rehabilitation of existing housing in the surrounding area, as the comprehensive plan mentions. For Logan Triangle, we propose a mix of housing

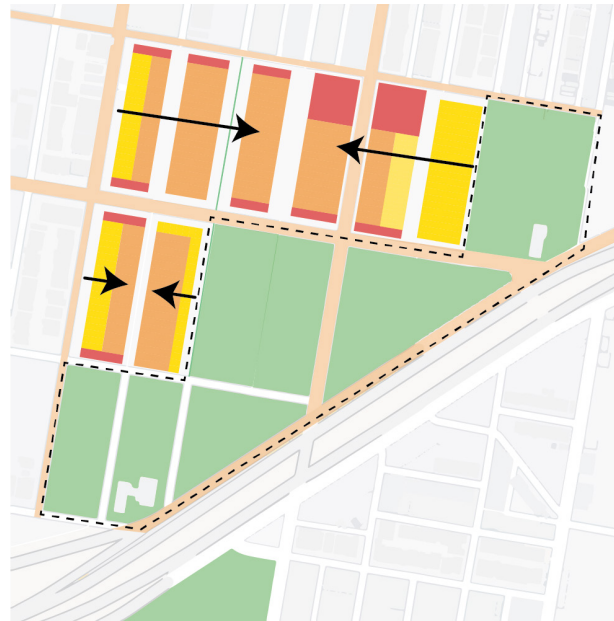
options to provide for both housing diversity and affordable housing options. We propose Philadelphia row homes to connect to the surrounding neighborhood and honor the site's history. We also propose multi-level apartment buildings to increase the density of the area and provide more affordable housing options. Lastly, we propose mixed-use buildings with commercial space on the first floor and housing on the upper floors.

A Mixed Use Neighborhood

By implementing mixed use buildings, we look to support existing businesses and also bring in new businesses to support the local economy. This would support the creation of a thriving commercial corridor that will benefit Logan's existing low-income residents. The implementation of mixed use buildings would also provide apartment style housing on the upper floors of the building. This densification and mixing of uses will provide Philadelphia with the necessary push for future neighborhood improvements and make Logan Triangle a catalyst and a prototype. With commercial/office space, we look to further support existing businesses and also bring in new businesses to support the local economy. This would support the creation of a thriving commercial corridor that will benefit Logan's existing low-income residents.

Complete Streets

With the implementation of complete streets in the neighborhood, vehicles would still be able to use the main roads although priority would be given to pedestrians and cyclists. This allows businesses to thrive in an area where people can also live and feel safe and secure. The addition of bike lanes, greenery, and extended sidewalks will increase pedestrian safety and slow the speed of traffic in the neighborhood. Complete streets create an identity for a place and improve the walkability and therefore economic opportunities for the neighborhoods in which they are used. Complete streets would help turn Logan Triangle into a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly, and welcoming extension of the existing Logan Neighborhood.



Density and Structure Height

With row housing on the edges of the new development and taller apartment buildings in the core, the site gradually grows more dense and rises in height from either side. This was done to blur the line between existing and new development while still creating an exciting scene to bring people into the area.



Complete Streets in Logan Trianlge

Transportation

A bus stop is included by the community center to connect the site with the regional transit network. This will allow for the community center, clinic, ampitheatre, park space, and businesses to be accessible to all residents of the neighborhood and Philadelphia area.

Lead Remediation

Initially, lead and other toxin measures ought to be taken on the site to establish current toxicity. Assuming there is still excessive lead in the soil, we recommend removing and replacing it. Funding for this remediation process is available through the EPA. Additionally, certain plant species may be introduced to continue to purify the soil. These new plantings and trees along with new topsoil would populate the green space. We would recommend any community garden be planted in raised beds, for extra precautions, and that toxin measures continue

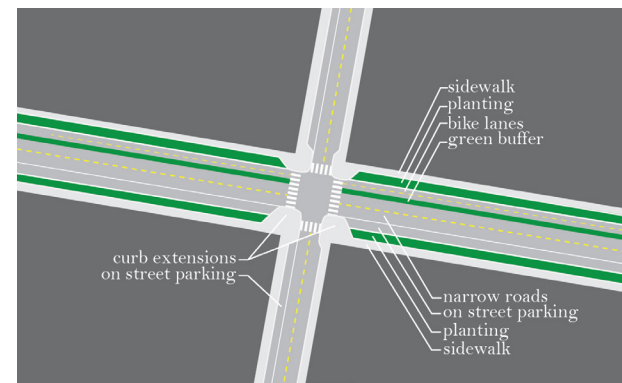


Photo by John F. Martin for General Motors from urbangardensweb.com

to be taken regularly even after development is completed. The precedent image below from Detroit shows how partnering with a large company interested in community development can continue positive initiatives.

Policy Changes

With our vision for Logan Triangle, we first propose the creation of a special use district for Logan Triangle. The site needs flexibility given the special circumstances with the history and environmental damages. Additionally, densifying the site will allow Logan Triangle to serve as a prototype of what the rest of the Logan neighborhood could look like. The taller building mass will create a barrier between the highways and the rest of Logan while also providing a backdrop for the new larger park space. The special use district will also allow for rent restrictions to be put in place. The recommendation would be for 40% of the housing to be rent restricted which would keep units affordable. Other changes would include creating an incentive program to encourage small local businesses to locate in the area through tax breaks and then reassessing in five to eight years to determine if the program should be continued or discontinued in favor of tax increment financing.



Complete Streets Plan

Phasing

PHASE ONE - YEARS ONE TO THREE

Remediation of the lead found in the soil throughout the site

- Digging up of toxic soil and replacement with new soil, with increased focus on the area along the southwest edge that is nearly 30 feet deep.
- Consistent reevaluation of lead levels, to make sure we are addressing the problem in its entirety and that future and current residents will be safe from all prior contamination
- Working with the EPA and other environmental agencies to secure adequate funding and make sure state and federal guidelines are being followed.

Assessment of existing infrastructure on the site and plan what will be needed for future phases

- Make sure that building foundations will be structurally sound in the immediate and distant future, to insure the longevity of future infrastructure
- Install adequate electric and plumbing infrastructure in anticipation of future phases.
- Evaluate current road and sidewalk quality, and make improvements as necessary in order to take immediate steps in improving

Incentive programs to attract a variety of business owners to the area

- Actively engage with local business owners, to envision what retail and commercial space would look like for them.
- Implement a tax break and/or special district incentives for residents to establish businesses in their community. With the plan to evaluate incentives every 2-3 years in order to make sure they are meeting the needs of the community at that time and consistently embrace a growth mindset.
- Make sure we are providing a diverse set of businesses, in order to meet the needs of the diverse population present in the Logan Neighborhood.

PHASE TWO - YEARS FOUR TO SIX

Implementation of green space

- Trails, ponds, plentiful tree coverage, and green space
- Connectivity to future housing and commercial area to create fluidity

Development of the Logan Triangle Community Center and amphitheater

- Fitness center with conference rooms for community activities with outdoor playground, basketball, and tennis courts
- Mentoring and career development programs for all ages
- Amphitheater for dramas, movie showings, and community use
- Bus stop to provide access for everyone

First development of new row housing and mixed-use in the triangle

- The development will show the community what the future brings in terms of housing, commercial, and retail availability.
- Housing diversity and affordable options
- Philadelphia row homes connect to the surrounding neighborhood and honor the history of the site, with multi-level apartment buildings to increase the density of the area.
- Mixed-use buildings with commercial and housing

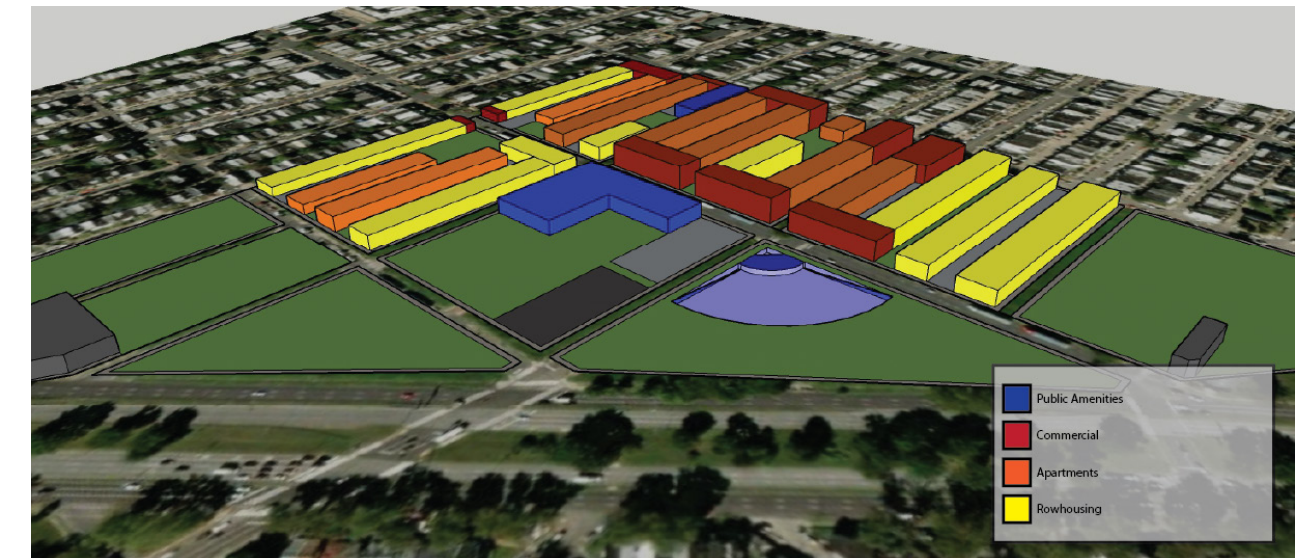
PHASE THREE - YEARS SEVEN TO TEN

Reintegrate Logan Triangle back into the fabric of the neighborhood through the provision of a diverse housing stock

- We also propose multi-level apartment buildings to increase the density of the area and provide more affordable housing options.
- Local clinic and pharmacy
- Multiple pocket parks and community gardens to integrate green spaces throughout the entire space and provide cheap/free local produce through community gardens
- Great way to bring the community together
- Commercial corridor through 9th street
- Bring in local restaurants and business owners. They will have more drive to make the triangle a successful vibrant place within the greater Logan neighborhood



Phase Two



Phase Three

CITATIONS

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PROJECT TEAM

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