



# Larimer Community Plan



BUILDING A STRONG COLLABORATIVE FOR CHANGE

FALL 2008

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**Beginning in the Fall of 2007**, over 125 residents, business owners, community organizations and partners in the Larimer neighborhood provided leadership and input to create an updated community plan. Through more than 100 one-on-one interviews including 30 residents, 3 collaborative innovation sessions, community meetings, weekly team meetings over 11 months, and the development of the first ever community-based Action Teams, the neighborhood of Larimer has come together to develop a shared understanding of its own strengths and challenges, and a unified strategy for creating the kind of community we all want to be a part of.

With funding from the Urban Redevelopment Authority and support from Senator Jim Ferlo, a team of community partners including East Liberty Concerned Citizens Corporation and the Kingsley Association provided the resources, capacity and expertise to help prepare this plan and further the process of realizing Larimer's community-driven vision.

After 30 years of decline and multiple past planning initiatives, the citizens and partners of Larimer are organizing to create projects that will change our community from the inside out—and in the process, we're learning to work together, build trust, create immediate results and position community members as leaders in the future development of our neighborhood—all of which will be needed to attract the resources necessary for a strong, vibrant and safe place to work, worship and raise our families.

## Planning Partners

- Larimer residents
- Larimer business owners
- Larimer faith community
- Larimer property owners
- Larimer youth
- East Liberty Concerned Citizens
- Kingsley Association
- Urban Redevelopment Authority
- City Planning
- Senator Jim Ferlo
- Councilman Ricky Burgess
- Representative Joe Preston

**We're calling on everyone who reads this plan, on everyone who has a stake in the future of Larimer, to become actively involved in moving our neighborhood forward.**

Whether it's picking up trash, or attending neighborhood meetings, joining a community Action Team, or working with our kids, the time is now to create real change and build on the momentum we've worked so hard to create. *The only direction is forward. The only way is together.*

**→ We are Larimer united for change.**

**Based on community input, this plan is designed to be short, to the point, and a call to action. It is only as useful as we make it.**



Detailed planning support documents available on-line at [www.larimerplan.org](http://www.larimerplan.org)

While Larimer faces many challenges, what's important is that we focus our assets and opportunities to directly address our most critical issues and meet basic needs.

**To make a difference, we must call on our own inherent strengths as individuals and as a community.**

### CHALLENGES

- High percentage of vacant houses and lots
- Decaying housing stock with weak market value
- Litter & trash
- History of drug related crime and poor safety image
- Residents struggling & out of work; many seniors; many on fixed income
- Limited opportunities for youth
- Isolated from other neighborhoods
- Minimal outside investment
- History of neighborhood in-fighting and mistrust
- Little appeal for visitors or new home-owners

### ASSETS

- Strong dedicated group of residents, business owners & organizations
- Proximity to East End development
- Some of the best available flat land & affordable real estate in Pittsburgh
- Existing street & transit corridors
- Small but mighty group of neighborhood based businesses
- Lots of opportunity for development
- Active youth population
- Interest from City Planning and the URA to move Larimer forward
- Committed political partners
- Citizen based Action Teams working from the ground up



### Action Teams

#### REDD UP

Clean up & fix up

#### GREEN UP

Greening & beautification

#### WORK & WELLNESS

Healthy prosperous residents, families & community

#### ONE VOICE

Unity, partnerships, clarity, awareness & communication

#### CELEBRATE

Pride in Larimer, community building events

### Larimer Action Teams are essential to community success!

The Action Teams serve as a critical resource to increase capacity, achieve immediate outcomes, build community expertise and ensure direct community involvement in implementing the community plan.

First areas of focus include community clean-ups of vacant lots, several community gardens, a neighborhood newsletter, a community website, a community block party, a vacant property inventory and a job training fair.

## COMMUNITY GOALS

### Place & Environment

- To stabilize, clean-up and beautify our vacant property & neighborhood streets
- To create a detailed, equitable land-use plan for future housing, business development and green space allocation: fix what we can, tear down what we can't, & identify best areas for growth
- To educate our community about complicated development and planning issues
- To create a neighborhood that is attractive to outside resources: funding, investment, businesses, visitors and new residents
- To take advantage of the increasing market for green development & transform vacant property into green space where possible
- To improve & redevelop community gateways

### Community & Organizations

- To increase community involvement to include all residents, business owners and partners
- To create short-term successes within our community via our Action Teams
- To create a community development collaborative with representatives from lead community organizations, to build strength through unity and to be jointly responsible for moving our vision forward to implementation
- To expand the professional capacity of ELCCC to succeed in attaining measurable successes and to attract the resources needed to support its role
- To transform Kingsley Association into the city's premier community center that directly addresses the needs of the local neighborhood and attracts customers from around the region
- To develop consistent, transparent communication regarding neighborhood planning activities and ways to get involved
- To become partners with neighboring community organizations, learn from their experience and leverage their success

### Human Needs

- To increase resident ownership of vacant property, foster equitable development and serve basic community health and human needs as a core principal of redevelopment
- To actively address the needs of existing residents via housing, education and job opportunities
- To increase opportunities and activities for Larimer youth & resources for seniors
- To empower ourselves through education and action to be key leaders and investors in the future development of our community

### Community Vision

***A safe, clean, strong, diverse, vibrant, healthy & attractive community—with a renewed sense of pride, that is a model for inner-city revitalization.***



# →→ Larimer Community Plan



BUILDING A STRONG COLLABORATIVE FOR CHANGE

## What It Will Take...

*Commitment to action and positive outcomes*

*Putting the neighborhood first and letting go of the past*

*A strong neighborhood collaborative organization with expanded professional capacity*

*Active community leaders and political leaders*

## How We'll Get There

Our strategy for moving forward will be to focus first on the goals we can accomplish ourselves as means to attract the resources needed to continue our growth. Cleaning up our community, strengthening our community organizations, educating ourselves about development policy and procedures—as well as creating clear means for organizing and communicating within our neighborhood—will be critical to achieving our long-term vision of a thriving community.

## OUR PRIORITIES

### YEAR 1

*Building trust and capacity from within*

### YEARS 2 - 4

*Increasing human needs and service resources; securing and stabilizing vacant property, attracting additional capacity, investment, funding and beginning first redevelopment projects*

### YEARS 5 - 10

*Second phase development and green space projects, new business and resident recruitment*

## → What's Next: 2009 Focus

Successful implementation begins with accomplishing key tasks on schedule in Year 1

### The Neighborhood

**Collaborative** will include residents and organizations and will serve as a neutral umbrella group to implement the plan.

### What You Can Do

Tell your neighbors

Join an Action Team

Check the website often

[www.larimerplan.org](http://www.larimerplan.org)

**JAN** Completion of 1st Action Team projects & Action Team plan for 2009  
Establish neighborhood development collaborative  
Hire community organizer for human services / vacant property support  
Hire Project manager to support Larimer plan

**FEB** Market analysis, sustainability analysis and human services assessment

**MAR** Identify property owners for side-lot program and home-face grants

**JUN** Develop land use plan

**NOV** Develop yearly plan and schedule for Years 2 - 5

**DEC** Assess Year 1 outcomes and report to community