



Upside Allentown Year 4 Accomplishments 2017 - 2018

HOUSING

- Identified a number of blocks in the *Upside Allentown* program area for the new housing revitalization initiative being developed by CACLV that will perform property-by-property rehabilitation in targeted, pre-selected blocks for income-eligible homeowners.
- Hired a consultant to develop standard operating procedures for the new housing revitalization initiative in the program area.
- Through NHS (535 North Fifth St.) and HADC (425 North Sixth St., 427 North Sixth St.), three other homes were rehabbed and sold for homeownership within the program area.
- Completed over 700 code inspections of rental units through the city's systematic inspection program.
- Completed the homeownership transfer of four vacant/blighted properties to local citizens and developers for rehabilitation (two more will be completed by year-end), through the city's Redevelopment Authority.

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND DESIGN

- Completed nine residential façade improvements.
- Completed five commercial façade improvement projects.
- Installed pedestrian street lighting, street trees, and ADA-compliant curb ramps on Gordon Street (between Sixth and Seventh Streets), improving connectivity with commercial areas on Seventh Street and downtown.
- Widened tree wells in the 500 and 600 blocks of North Sixth Street to level sidewalks and improve pedestrian safety.
- Completed the master plan to redesign Valania Park, following a series of community meetings to solicit public input for the park layout.



- Identified strategic locations for additional trash bins and new neighborhood banners in Center City, in coordination with city staff.
- Installed ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps in several major intersections in the *Upside Allentown* program area, through the city's Public Works Department.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

- Launched a new Start Your Business module class format, providing comprehensive entrepreneurial training to individuals interested in starting a new business or expanding an existing business; 91 students enrolled, 75 students (82%) completed the module in which they enrolled; eight businesses were started and ten jobs were created.
- Provided technical assistance to 26 existing or prospective entrepreneurs not participating in the Start Your Business course. Six jobs were created; four businesses were launched; and 18 businesses were sustained as a result of this service.
- Conducted a small business survey with 53% of respondents reporting they added employees; 73% of respondents reporting that their business had an increase in sales; and 93% of respondents reporting their business was profitable.
- Supported The Literacy Center's efforts to increase residents' self-sufficiency, where 41 students attended ESL classes and 42 students attended GED classes and earned their GED.
- Created several "I Am Allentown" videos, featuring businesses in the *Upside Allentown* footprint, along with several videos of residents talking about working and living in Center City.
- Provided guidance to five new and existing businesses going through the licensing, permitting, and general approval process with the City of Allentown.
 - Urban Yoga (542 Hamilton Street)
 - Pho Lee (447 N. 7th Street)
 - BeSkintiful Makeup & Facial Bar (513 W. Linden Street)
 - Smoothie Queenz (104 N 9th Street)
 - Revolution Recovery (644 South 10th)
- Collaborated with the Allentown Chamber of Commerce to fund several community related events (Blues, Brews & BBQ; New Year's Eve Celebration; First Monday; Allentown BeerFest; Tree Lighting, Classics and Cruisers, etc.), through the city's Office of Business Development.



PUBLIC SAFETY

- Supported the deployment of 40 bicycle patrol officers and 43 walking patrol officers from the Allentown Police Department in *Upside Allentown* for 981 hours during the spring/summer months.
- Supported the enrollment of 51 middle school students in the two-week Allentown Police Youth Academy to develop interest in law enforcement careers and create positive relationships with law enforcement.
- Provided the matching funds needed for the Allentown Police Department to purchase a sophisticated training simulator to better train officers on appropriate force response, through DACDI.
- Upgraded traffic signals and controllers and improved crosswalk markings at several intersections in the *Upside Allentown* program area to improve pedestrian safety and traffic flow.
- Replaced sodium-vapor lamps with LEDs for street lighting, which improved nighttime visibility and increased the perception of safety in Center City.
- Secured grants to improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic in areas affecting three schools in Center City (Building 21, The Arts Academy, Roberto Clemente).

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Collaborated with over 30 local organizations and social service providers to support Jordan Heights's Annual Community Day held at Stevens Park, which attracted over 400 residents who received information about *Upside Allentown* and its projects along with resources available to residents.
- Initiated weekly visits by the "Fruit & Veggie" truck to all city playgrounds and other community sites (including locations sites in the Upside Allentown area), benefitting about 250 children in the neighborhood with over a thousand healthy food servings, through the city's Health Bureau.



- Began a weekly farm stand at Alliance Hall that offers a selection of fresh, organic, locally grown produce, in addition to the weekly, summer-long open-air farmers market on Hamilton and Seventh Street, through the sponsorship of Rodale Institute.
- Supported the Allentown Police Department’s Community Engagement 365 initiative by purchasing T-shirts and small items to present to residents as part of daily, positive relationship building interactions.
- Supported the Old Allentown House Tour, which featured 12 beautifully restored homes that helped showcase the *Upside Allentown* area as a good location to purchase a home and raise a family.
- Funded a combination of 12 neighborhood grants that fostered resident and community engagement, including summer camps, sporting and recreational competitions, block parties and community fairs that served over 2,500 residents.
- Increased social media activity on *Upside Allentown*-related pages. *Upside Allentown’s* Facebook page now has more than 5,039 followers, an increase of 247 (5%) since March 2017. Additionally, Upside Allentown’s Twitter has over 304 followers, an increase of 135 (44%) from a year ago, and over 490 Instagram followers, an increase of 73 (15%) from a year ago. The email open rate averages at 17.3%.
- Organized neighborhood clean-ups that generated numerous volunteers, through the city’s Recycling Bureau and local neighborhood groups.
- Continued to support Community Conversations that provide neighborhood residents with useful information and resources, which included a session on Entrepreneurship, through DACDI funding.

ARTS AND CULTURE

- Expanded Arts and Culture’s Third Thursday Arts experience by increasing the number of partnerships with local arts and civic groups and increasing customer traffic to local retailers and restaurants during events.
- Created a mural featuring the Allentown’s “Queen City” theme along with historical Center City landmarks at 33 North Ninth Street that included training opportunities for two developing muralists.



- Launched the first “Fence Art” project on the 900 block of Hamilton Street, featuring unique creations by local arts that were unveiled during a press event held on site.
- Conducted the Artist-In-Residence program with artist Jack Myers to design wayfinding signage and banners for *Upside Allentown* neighborhoods. This effort was funded in part by a grant from Pennsylvania Department of Comment and Economic Development (DCED).
- Coordinated numerous artistic projects and new initiatives, including “Youth Street Art” during Blues, Brews and BBQ Festival with 140 youth participants and a “Paper Making” project at McKinley Elementary School with 65 total participants, including 46 students.
- Supported local cultural festivals and events, including the Puerto Rican Festival on July 28 at Jordan Park with over 5,000 attendees; the India Festival on August 19 at Arts Park, featuring traditional music and dance from India performed by professional dancers; and Harrison Morton Middle School’s Street Festival on September 1 with over 100 youth performers.
- Completed the formation of the Cultural Coalition of Allentown non-profit organization to support long-term arts and culture initiatives and event offerings.
- Continued funding part-time staff support for the implementation of the Arts & Culture 20:21 Plan.

EDUCATION

- Launched the Allentown School District (ASD) Parent Network as key component of the new ASD Strategic Framework developed in 2017. The Parent Network was modeled after the highly successful Detroit Parent network and launched as a resource network that will promote self-advocacy and personal growth to the Allentown community.
- Developed the K-12 Insights project, a “customer service” initiative designed to increase ASD’s response rate to family, community, and staff inquiries. Equally as important, this project will upgrade the methods used by the ASD to effectively manage and communicate crisis situations.
- Structured ASD “rebranding” by creating promotional videos that featured 14 teachers, seven middle school students, four families, and one Allentown School District Alumni.



- Conducted SAT Boot Camps, in partnership with CareerLink and ASD, that prepared 25 students for college by improving their performance on the mandatory SAT test for college admissions.
- Coordinated college tours for SAT Boot Camp participants with input and planning from college admissions staff. Colleges visited included Franklin & Marshall College, West Chester University, and Cheyney University of Pennsylvania. Parents coordinated local tours of Lehigh Valley area colleges.
- Funded Building 21 students as scholars to the Penn State Teen Entrepreneurship Summer Challenge Program, through DACDI.



The Upside Allentown area has benefitted from the concentrated investment of numerous foundations, trusts, private funders, and non-profit agencies. The following partner organizations have contributed significantly to *Upside Allentown*:

HARRY C. TREXLER TRUST

- Invested over \$4.6 million in the City of Allentown. Approximately \$2.66 million that was provided to culture; education; healthcare; and youth, elderly, and disadvantaged charitable organizations and approximately \$1.97 million was awarded for the improvement, extension, and maintenance of the city's parks.

THE CENTURY FUND

- Invested over \$1.9 million in the City of Allentown with nearly \$1 million for Center City residents. Century Fund renewed its commitment to CADCA's Start Your Business program for three years and continued its support of the arts (Symphony's Lyric Room and the Civic Theatre's capital campaign). Additionally, The Century Fund continued to support education, youth, seniors, housing, healthcare, community development, historical programs, and social services.

LEHIGH VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

- Invested \$1,646,159 in the City of Allentown through 199 grants made in the areas of arts, culture, and history; community development; education; health care; and human services.
- The Community Foundation marked its 50th anniversary with a year of special "Spark" grants and continued to widen its support of Allentown through the administration of several charitable funds that included the BB&T Economic Growth Fund of the Lehigh Valley, the Downtown Allentown Community Development Initiative Fund, and the Bastian Fund, among others.



Upside Allentown Year 5 Activities 2018 – 2019

HOUSING

- Carry out the new housing revitalization initiative in the *Upside Allentown* program area by performing property-by-property rehabilitation in targeted, pre-selected blocks for income-eligible homeowners in order to revitalize distressed neighborhoods.
- Conduct outreach to homeowners and prospective homeowners, through CADCA's Community Liaison and CACLV's Housing Coordinator, regarding the new housing revitalization initiative and encourage their participation. Qualify applicants for the project, through CACLV's Intake Specialist and Administrative Secretary, and receive inquiries about the housing rehab program and provide residents who do not meet the eligibility requirements (i.e. income and place of residents) with all available housing options/programs in the City, through CACLV's Information and Referral Specialist.
- Continue identifying blighted properties for housing rehabilitation.
- Continue implementing the homeownership assistance programs (Live Near Your Work, Allentown CDBG and Allentown HOME).

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENTS AND DESIGN

- Continue to complete eligible residential and commercial façades through the Residential and Commercial Façade program.
- Continue to provide streetscape improvements in support of the new school on West Gordon Street and the targeted housing rehabilitation projects by securing grants through the city.

PUBLIC SAFETY

- Continue to support the Community Crime Suppression Unit by sustaining the increased deployment of Allentown Police Department uniformed officers on bicycles and foot patrol in order to continue decreasing Part 1 and 2 crimes, including conditions conducive to crime, code violations, parking violations, and Disruptive Conduct Reports issued.



- Continue to support the Allentown Police Department Police Youth Academy, allowing students to learn about the role of police officers and encouraging students to transition to the Lehigh County Technical Institute program.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT

- Initiate a Business Outreach Program to identify and attempt to address needs and challenges of businesses, while developing critical relationships with small businesses in the *Upside Allentown* area.
- Continue supporting The Literacy Center's ESL and GED classes in order to develop literate and workforce-ready citizens. ESL classes will assist Upside Allentown residents to develop their English reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. GED classes will assist residents by preparing them for the GED exam.
- Continue supporting CADCA's Start Your Business program to increase entrepreneurs in Allentown, ensuring that new businesses will be started and that these businesses will be profitable, jobs will be retained, commercial vacancy rates in the *Upside Allentown* area will decrease, and commercial property values will increase.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Continue to engage neighborhood residents through participation on the *Upside Allentown* steering committee and sub-committees.
- Increase posts to targeted zip codes and increase the number of residents signing up for *Upside Allentown's* newsletter.
- Maintain a social media presence for *Upside Allentown* by increasing social media activity (likes, comments, shares) and increase the amount of new weekly content over the course of the year by continuing the "I Am Allentown" series.
- Provide funds to community organizations for a variety of neighborhood-based activities including neighborhood-based streetscaping, farmers' markets, workshops on financial literacy and leadership, block parties, neighborhood meetings, house tours, and many others.
- Continue funding the Community Conversation Program, through DACDI.

ARTS AND CULTURE



- Continue implementing the Artist-in-Residence program by increasing participation in arts and culture activities; the quantity and quality of arts and culture activities in the *Upside Allentown* geographic area; the number of residents and visitors attending arts and culture activities; the number of artists- and arts-institution-led collaborative activities engaging arts and culture entities, businesses, government, and education partners; and the foot traffic at local retail and restaurants from arts and culture activities.

EDUCATION

- Continue implementing the Allentown School District Parent Network by creating community forums that help families and partners articulate what they want to see take shape in the ASD and what resources they need to help make that happen. Additionally, partner organizations will be identified that can support the Parent Network.
- Continue the development of the K-12 Insights project by creating a Customer Service Audit that will act as a baseline, along with an implementation plan and recommendations for the project. Additionally, training effectiveness ratings, a building readiness rubric, shared goals metrics, and a dashboard with shared partner goals and metrics will be created. Finally, customer satisfaction survey data will be gathered.



Corporate Investors

| Contributor | Amount |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| BB&T | \$150,000 |
| TD Bank, N.A. | \$100,000 |
| PPL | \$100,000 |
| Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. | \$50,000 |
| City Center Investment Corporation | \$50,000 |
| Alvin H. Butz, Inc. | \$50,000 |
| Lafayette Ambassador Bank | \$50,000 |
| TOTAL | \$550,000 |



UPSIDE ALLENTOWN

care of the Community Action Development Corporation of Allentown
523-525 North Seventh Street, Allentown, PA 18102

Upside Allentown Program Area

