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South Park Township LIBRARY CORRIDOR STUDY

Client

An economic development planning study to determine the highest and best use of land within the study area and to establish an economic development strategy for the corridor and its environs. Route 88 and Brownsville Road in the Library area of South Park Township.

Project Description

The Route 88 business district in Library has been in a state of decline for nearly 30 years. Although there is a significant amount of commuter traffic along the Route 88 corridor in Library, the business district suffers from an absence of convenient parking and pedestrian activity. As a result, many of the buildings are vacant or underutilized. Although some of the existing buildings are architecturally interesting, the visual environment along the corridor reflects physical blight and economic disinvestment. Another challenge involved the reuse of a large vacant tract of adjacent land known as the “bingo lots”. Fragmented ownership of small lots in this neighborhood resulted from the award of land as prizes in local games of chance.

Solution

Due to its overwhelming constraints, M&L de-emphasized the revitalization of the existing business district. Instead, the Port Authority’s light rail station and park ‘n ride facility on Brownsville Road provides the impetus for reinvestment in the study area. Light rail ridership is increasing and the local housing market is vibrant. The plan emphasized transit-oriented mixed-use redevelopment along Brownsville Road, including completion of the missing link of the Montour recreation trail that traverses this neighborhood. Zoning changes will be required in order to support mixed use development in the study area. M&L recommended the use of redevelopment powers to condemn the bingo lots in order to consolidate ownership and stimulate residential development of this property. The strategy for the Route 88 corridor involves widening the right-of-way and introducing a turning lane at the Brownsville Road intersection to overcome traffic congestion in the area.

Benefits

When the plan is implemented, the Township will benefit from an expanded tax base, an improved visual environment and less traffic congestion along Route 88.

Planning and Development Consultants

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