

Harrisburg 2.0

A Vision for a New Harrisburg.

Written by Mayoral Candidate Jason N. Smith

What is Harrisburg 2.0?

Harrisburg 2.0 (or H20) represents a revolutionary new way of looking at public engagement and urban renewal in Harrisburg. As much a process as it is a plan, H20 provides the approach we need to transform our city from a place of unfulfilled potential and unfocused development to a place that offers residents a true urban lifestyle, attracts the right businesses, and entices visitors to areas of interest throughout our city.

H20 is not a tourism development plan. That effort will be conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and funded through Wild West artifact sales. The plan will recommend strategies on how to market current attractions to potential visitors.

H20 will envision *new* attractions—renewed neighborhoods and commercial corridors offering a range of residential, retail, and entertainment options. The goal of H20 is to improve life in Harrisburg for every single resident and visitor. Moreover, we will turn every resident into a tourist—by giving them the opportunity to make and spend their money close to home.

H20 is comprised of three interwoven ideas:

1. We will transition our City Government Center from a place of bureaucracy to a place of innovation and collaboration. The goal: relocate city hall to the site of our failed and economically draining Civil War museum, forming a true civic center where public forums, community meetings, cultural events, and a customer-focused city government come together.

2. We will think broadly and focus narrowly in our quest to renew Harrisburg. The goal: Establish a series of “development beachheads” where public-private partnerships

will be focused on localized challenges—creating areas of distinction, each with its own blueprint for ongoing renewal.

3. We will create active, livable neighborhoods for every resident. Life in our city should be more than a home, a sidewalk, and a street—we can get that in the suburbs. The goal: provide opportunities for culture and convenience that we can't get anywhere else—as well as distinguishable attractions that make each urban community unique.

To build a better Harrisburg, we must creatively reframe the debate about our city's future.

When we talk about reducing crime, we are really talking about increasing economic opportunity. When we talk about improving education, we are really talking about giving kids the kind of lives that liberate them to focus on their future. When we talk about fighting ignorance, we are really talking about turning cultural differences into assets.

All of these ideas tie together: smart development of our community has the power to bring in new residents, create new jobs, and improve the lives of everyone in Harrisburg. Much grander than a museum dropped from the sky or even Restaurant Row, H2O can enable us to think proactively, creatively, boldly—and to welcome our entire city to a conversation on our future.



H2.0 | A New City Hall
SMITH FOR MAYOR

1. A new city hall

Let's envision a city hall that overlooks our city, rather than our citizens.

Background

Creative solutions have a way of sneaking up on you.

For many years, the people of Harrisburg have scratched their heads over the Civil War Museum. We've wondered why the mayor secretly and illegally spent \$12 million on Civil War artifacts. We've wondered why such a museum is appropriate here in Harrisburg, distant from Gettysburg and on a site that is difficult for non-residents to find. We've shaken our heads at "The Civil War Museum is in Harrisburg, PA" billboards. And we've shrugged our shoulders hearing that the museum has lost hundreds of thousands—nearly \$400,000 in 2002 alone—forcing annual bailouts from the County and even the Congress (plus an attempted \$100,000 City bailout, hidden in the mayor's 2004 budget under the misleading heading "Grants to Other Units.")!

Unlike most city residents, I have been to the Civil War museum, and was struck nearly as much by the tragedy of the museum as by the tragedy of the war.

Meanwhile, our downtown city hall leaks every time it rains. Our city council has offices in a dark basement. Space is awkward—meeting rooms shaped like triangles and a city council chamber with the proportions of a locker room and no space for large, town-hall style meetings. Golden shovels and yellowed newspaper clippings crowd narrow balcony/hallways. Parking is limited—and people are not greeted and assisted when they enter the building. Many feel that our city places its emphasis on downtown rather than our

neighborhoods—and with city hall where it is, these feelings are reinforced.

One of my personal mottos is: From limitations come inspirations. Here we are, a cash-strapped city with a population just over that of York, carrying \$740 million in debt with a dying \$47 million museum, a city hall that leaks, and a population that feels cut off from the workings of their government. What to do?

Since John Luciew of the Patriot-News reported my idea to move city hall to the site of our failed Civil War museum, the idea has caught on like wildfire. Everywhere I go, in every neighborhood, people tell me they like the concept.

Vision

Moving city hall to Reservoir Park would create a true civic center for the people of Harrisburg. Accessible and with ample parking, the site could enable such amenities as:

- A clear point of welcome with single-stop access to any city-related question.
- Televised town hall meetings on topics including school district progress, the County prison system, AIDS awareness, neighborhood renewal, and more.
- Rotating display space for local artists or to tell the story of Harrisburg.
- A small gift shop to sell Harrisburg branded merchandise.
- The office of the mayor and the offices of city council on the same floor, joined by a meeting space for frequent meetings to brainstorm ideas and build consensus.

- City offices clustered together to encourage better communication, cross-germination of information, and a sense of common purpose.
- The police department in its own wing, coordinating neighborhood substations throughout the city.
- Wi-Fi internet access throughout the site for public use.
- A privately operated on-site cafe.
- Rentable event space for community events.

Moreover, all of Reservoir Park (perhaps renamed “The People’s Park”) would be used for community-minded purposes. Building on the park’s current uses, I envision:

- Two major new festivals per year located in the park rather than the riverfront.
- Major parades beginning in the park.
- A Harrisburg Symphony lawn concert.
- A summer outdoor film series.
- Launching 4th of July fireworks from the park (people can lie in the grass and look up, just as our elderly residents remember from the 1950s).

Some of the existing civil war displays and artifacts could be preserved for use in the

Camp Curtin Corridor (described later). The rest would be dismantled and sold to fund the renovation and reduce city debt. The current city hall building would also be sold, creating further income as well as a site for construction (favoring local workers) and a new office, creating new jobs (and new residents).

Logistics

Moving city hall to the new civic center would be accomplished over several years.

While the relocation occurs, we would make the best of the current city hall—moving city council to “higher office”, providing a single-stop answer area in the atrium, and in all ways working to make the facility as user-friendly as possible.

Meanwhile, a substantial planning phase would be required where public input would be sought and interviews with all departments and council would occur. A professional interior design would be developed and approved, and a relocation plan would be created.

Once renovations and the move is completed, the existing city hall would be sold and developed.

2. Development beachheads

To renew our city, we must think broadly and focus narrowly.

Background

When one looks at our city government's efforts to renew our neighborhoods, one sees a basic disconnect. There are plenty of programs spending tens of millions in city, state, and federal funds spread all over the city. Façade improvements here, a mural there, a renovation here, a new business there. But all of it seems to lack a grand design.

Developers I talk with are frustrated because the city keeps the plans it does have secret—or leads them to believe one thing and then does another. Residents are frustrated by the lack of basic services like bulk pickup and emptied city trash cans—but they are even more bothered that Harrisburg lacks the kind of pedestrian-friendly urban culture they've seen elsewhere.

Those who choose to live in the city make that choice because they believe city life can be enriching—and they yearn for a Harrisburg filled with culture and convenience, not one that always seems to do things halfway, with a mayor who tells us this is as good as it gets.

When the city does have a plan, it is often just for individual projects. Although a forward-thinking land use plan existed in 1998, created by consultants from Urban Research and Development Co. of Bethlehem PA, the plan was replaced by a more bureaucratic, less ambitious one that few have seen.

Moreover, the people of Harrisburg often feel cut off from any kind of public process. This

was made clear in February 2005 when residents gathered at a planning meeting were told that no public comment would be allowed on the city's role in preserving historically significant homes in the 2900 block of Front Street and elsewhere. No explanation. No setting of another date to discuss the issues. No, "Here's my phone number." Just: no.

And as for marketing the city, well, there's no plan at all for that. As the Patriot-News editorial board put it on March 21, 2005: "no broad or long-range plan has ever existed, except maybe in the mayor's mind."

Could it be possible to address our urban renewal issues, quality of life issues, public process issues, and long-term marketing with one solution?

Yes. I think so.

Vision

The idea is to create a series of "Development Beachheads" in the city, centered around areas of need and focused on a key creative idea. In my business, we use a creative idea, or "concept" to give each advertisement or publication an "edge"—making things simple, memorable, and meaningful. Harrisburg needs that, too.

I call them beachheads because I believe that if you want to tackle a problem, you need a base of operations. Before we reclaimed France in WWII, we first established a presence on the beaches of Normandy. Then, we moved purposefully inland, not giving an inch, until we attained our objectives. The war on poverty needs beachheads. Urban development needs beachheads. No more random firing into a general area. Time for the assault.

We must do three things to set the groundwork before any beachheads can be developed:

First, the zoning codes of our city must be open to dynamic mixed use in every commercial corridor and underdeveloped neighborhood. That means live-work options, mixed office use in traditionally residential areas, and more.

Second, we must ensure our tax abatement program reaches all areas of our city and consider reinstating the ability to purchase homes owned by the city and the Redevelopment Authority for one dollar each, provided the new owner agrees to rehabilitate them.

Third, we must clearly and evenhandedly communicate the services of our city so that investors fully understand all programs and can easily navigate the process.

We must provide these three tools to empower our investors with the flexibility and financial cushion they need for urban renewal.

Logistics

Here's a six-step process the Mayor's Office of Community and Economic Development would follow to form a Development Beachhead:

1. Select the area. A development beachhead should have a shape determined by the streetscape, culture, and need of a particular area. A beachhead is larger than a single project, smaller than an entire region of the city. It is a place of contiguous character that has the potential to be redeveloped as a whole, providing for the needs of the entire

surrounding residential base.

2. Get focused. Each Beachhead needs a core, driving concept that gives it an identity and a sense of community. The general plan should be professionally developed (building on experiences elsewhere in the nation) to a point where it can facilitate public discussion and should be compiled in a printed form that can be widely shared.

3. Involve the stakeholders. Community forums should take place to expand, revise, and strengthen the plan. The public process is not a rubber stamp—it is as crucial to urban renewal. The bottom line is that the problems of our city are far greater than the government's ability to solve alone. For the beachhead to succeed, the stakeholders must take ownership of the idea and private investment must be tapped. Based on this input, the plan is revised.

4. Spark ideas. Involving local architecture and planning firms as well as architecture students, such as the Urban Architecture Studio, a series of specific ideas is generated. These can be ideas for a mural park or an open-air market, way-finding signage, businesses, open-air theatre, lighting solutions, and more—all tied to the revised plan.

5. Create social contracts. Social contracts are agreements between all stakeholders—city and state government, the business community, residents, investors, community groups—that each entity will commit to a certain activity, provide a professional service, spearhead a government program, or donate materials or goods for the cause (receiving a tax credit under the state's Neighborhood Assistance program). These are written contracts. (The idea for this stems from an idea forwarded by Fred Clark in Midtown. Although the idea did not take hold in Midtown, I suspect it was because steps 2 and 3 above were skipped. But Fred was onto something and he deserves the credit.)

6. *Market the beachhead.* Good public relations will of course be a part of every step of the process. But at this phase, with development underway, the beachhead must be vigorously marketed to potential developers, businesses, and homeowners. The right kinds of businesses should be sought—to fit with the overall plan, and even the audience for residential ownership can be focused. For example, we could target empty-nesters and government employees, or younger families, or a combination of audiences. (I might add that a mayor who has owned his own ad agency is well suited to lead the charge on marketing not only a beachhead, but the entire city. As mayor, I would be an urban evangelist on every level.)

Only by engaging in a full and open process can we truly gain a foothold in the war against low expectations for Harrisburg. Only by building a strong mental model of what we aim to accomplish—and committing to make it happen—can we reduce the risks for investors and arrive at the kind of comprehensive solutions we desire.

What follows are initial concepts for four Development Beachheads in the City of Harrisburg.



H2.0 | A Barrio District on Allison Hill

SMITH FOR MAYOR

Beachhead #1:

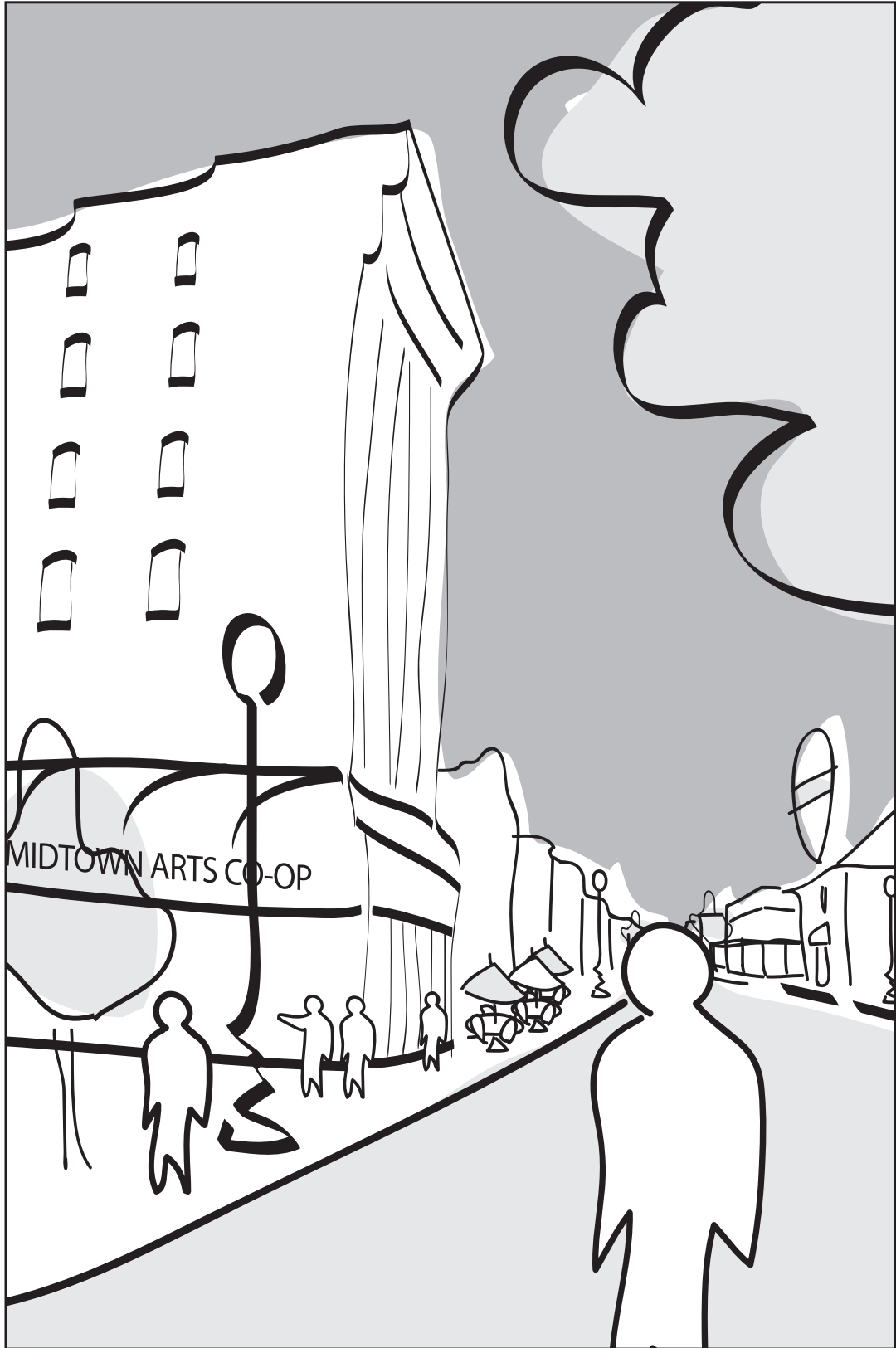
A Barrio District on Allison Hill

Harrisburg's Latino population stands at over 5,700 people. That's one Latino for every two Caucasians. A small but thriving Latino community is already rooted on Allison Hill, in the Mount Pleasant area centered on South 13th and Derry Streets. The Mount Pleasant Hispanic American Center, located at 301 South 13th St. is a natural anchor in this community and offers numerous social services to assist the Spanish-speaking community, including language classes, small business development, fellowship, and more. The Center also coordinates the annual Festival Calle Treze (13th Street Festival). The Community Action Council is also here, another key partner. And PNC Bank has recently signed on to create a branch right in the heart of this community at 13th and Derry—a bold move that represents the kind of activist investing Harrisburg needs more of.

The raw components are in place to create a coherent and distinctive Barrio District in Harrisburg. The Barrio (which means “neighborhood” in Spanish) would include not just the commercial corridor, but would extend several blocks in every direction, including garbage-strewn back yards, numerous abandoned buildings, and small, graffiti filled side streets (like the street with no name—Thompson Street—discussed in my February 23rd campaign newsletter). Let's reclaim this entire area and create a safe, business and investment friendly attraction noted for its Latino culture.

When city residents have a desire for Latino food or merchandise, they will think of the Barrio District. When Spanish classes need an immersive language experience, they will go to the Barrio District. And when Spanish-speaking immigrants need a welcoming home in Harrisburg and a hand up to a better life, they, too, will go to the Barrio District.

I believe this neighborhood could become a major cultural destination for our city and region.



H²0 | A Gaslight District in Midtown
SMITH FOR MAYOR

Beachhead #2: **A Gaslight District in Midtown**

The New Midtown, a region stretching from Forster to Maclay, Front to Seventh, has seen residential investment in the last two decades. Yet the commercial corridor on 3rd St. is sadly underutilized. Moreover, the Broad Street Market—a development anchor in Midtown—has struggled with a decrease in use and has been tarnished in recent months by internal disputes between vendors and the Broad Street Market Board, which administers the facility.

A brief aside...

As a founding member of Friends of Midtown and as former chair of that group's redevelopment committee, I have developed ideas for turning Midtown around. One of those ideas was to create an African American Heritage Center in the site of the Furlow Building and the building owned by the Historic Harrisburg Association. To that end, I discussed the concept with Fred Clark, chair of the African American Museum Board, and provided a 3-d rendering which was approved by the board and featured in the Patriot-News.

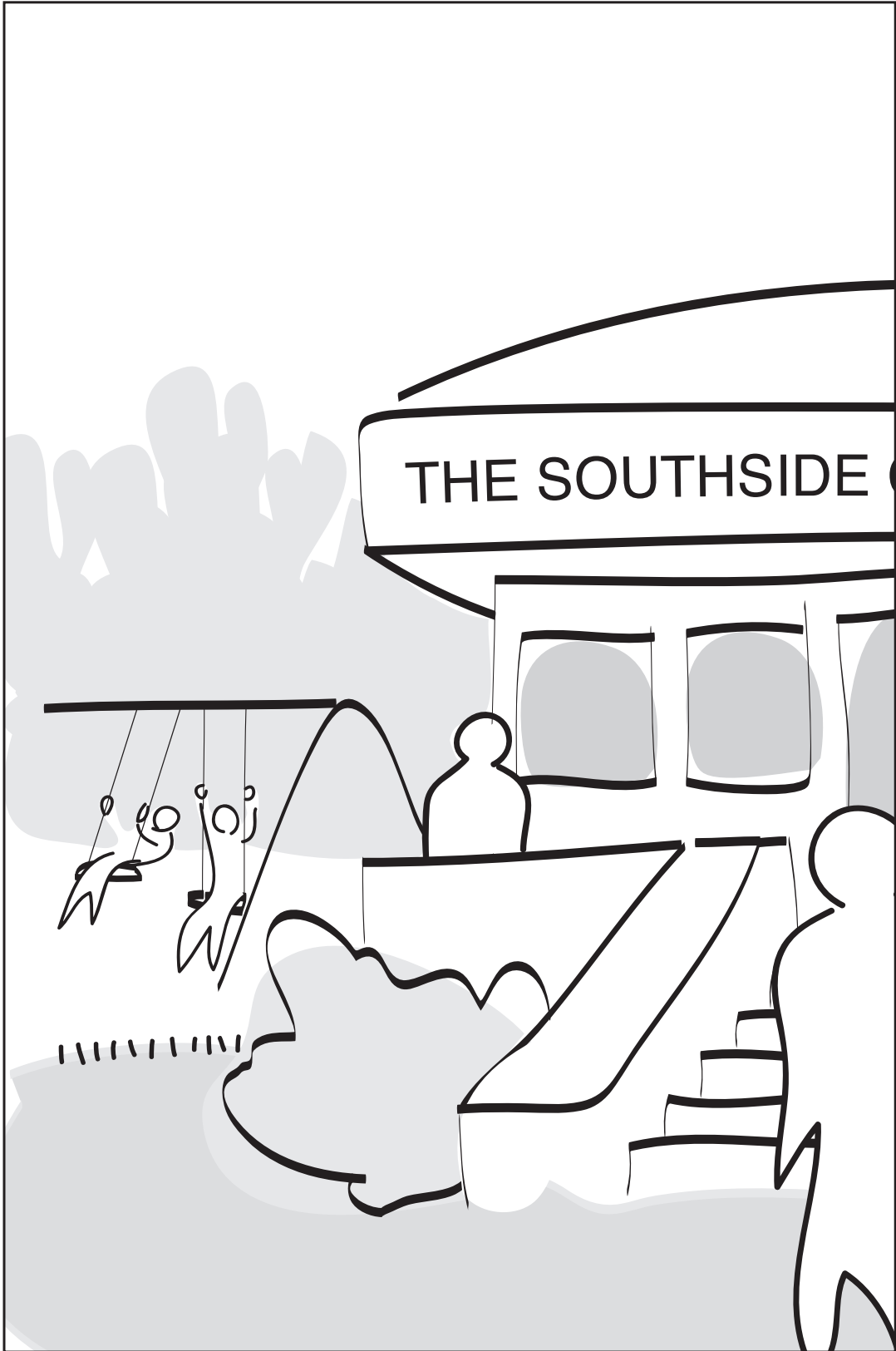
However, the broader thinking of Harrisburg 2.0 has caused me to rethink that plan, and I have a better idea which I will reveal in the section on the Camp Curtin Corridor.

I believe that Midtown's 3rd St.—or “Cultural Corridor” as Friends of Midtown calls it—should become a gaslight district, forming an avenue of the arts where cultural venues such as blackbox theatre, art galleries, coffee shops, smoke-free restaurants, antiques stores, books stores, and a wide range of specialty shops may be found.

I envision gas lamps at the intersection of 3rd and Verbeke Streets, and I envision a tasteful and appropriately scaled parking structure across from the Broad Street Market. I believe the Furlow Building should be an arts co-op on the first floor where numerous micro-galleries can become established—an arts parallel to the Broad Street Market across the street. Above would be high-end apartment or condominium housing as well as perhaps lower cost artist studio housing. I envision a fine restaurant in the former bank building, run perhaps by a successful local restaurateur who has already expressed interest in that venture. And I envision the Historic Harrisburg Association perhaps relocating to the rarely visited National Fire Museum, which could become a community center for the Midtown neighborhood.

Moreover, I envision a revitalized Broad Street Market that is integrated into the new Gaslight District—a market with two parts; one a traditional market with traditional hours, and another open into the early evening. I also envision a Broad Street Market that acts as a small business incubator, where businesses that wish can “graduate” to permanent locations on 3rd Street.

Finally, I envision that some of 3rd Street might be closed to vehicular traffic after 6PM, creating a walking district and encouraging a cultural nightlife in Midtown.



H2.0 | A Community Center in Southside
SMITH FOR MAYOR

Beachhead #3:

A Community Center in Southside

Resting under the shadow of our unfortunate city incinerator, Southside Harrisburg is a place that, amazingly, many city residents don't even know exists. Home to the largest housing project in the city, Hall Manor, Southside is also home to increasing drug-related crime. Sadly, the city police substation in Southside is not seriously manned, and drug use in a Hall Manor playground prompted the city to close and dismantle the playground. Rather than solve the real problem, we blamed the see-saws. There have even been calls by some in the administration to close the Cloverly Heights Pool for the same reasons.

But there are beacons of hope. A small clinic, a small Community Action Council storefront, a Boys & Girl's Club, and Just 4 Kidz led by community activist Richard Soto that offers local kids hope through opportunities like playing flag football while keeping their lives on track. Beginning with a pep rally at St. Paul's Baptist Church, the team recently returned from Florida with a championship win.

My March 4th newsletter detailed some of my experiences in Hall Manor. I will never forget when Luz Granado-Sagardia pointed through her window at a plywood-covered bar at the edge of the projects and said, "That is the community center in this place."

We can do better.

We will establish a Development Beachhead encompassing all of Hall Manor. We will bring back the police, improve relations with parole officers, and provide the training residents need to make Hall Manor a first step and not a last one. We will do this by planting a community center in Southside, with classroom and fellowship facilities, as well as other functions deemed necessary by local stakeholders.

And we will rebuild the playground and feature the successes of our quiet heroes in our city publications.

As we succeed, we will facilitate home ownership and rental opportunities in redeveloped properties throughout the city.

Government exists to do what private industry cannot. Giving hope to Southside and other fractured communities may seem impossible to some. But to me, this is our city's greatest calling.



H².0 | The Camp Curtin Corridor
SMITH FOR MAYOR

Beachhead #4:
The Camp Curtin Corridor

Sixth Street Uptown, from Maclay to Division, is an area not unlike Midtown's cultural corridor in terms of potential. Yet this long stretch of street has suffered from years of abandonment. Homes are collapsing in on themselves, roofs are falling off, walls sagging towards the street. Some businesses, like the Camp Curtin Barbecue, are beacons of hope that better days may be ahead. But not without a focus and a commitment on every level to turn 6th Street around.

There is a great irony on 6th St. While our present mayor planted his Civil War museum on Reservoir Park, it was 6th Street, the site surrounding the Camp Curtin monument, that really holds claim to Civil War history. This was the site of one of the largest encampments in the Civil War—the place where regiments were gathered and supply lines coordinated—as well as the site of a major hospital.

Now, I return to my concept for the African American Heritage Center. The Center was to house a museum on African American History. The Civil War Museum contains some excellent exhibits on the African American experience in the war—as well as an entire panorama of Civil-War era Camp Curtin. Why not recycle these exhibits and bring them to a Heritage Center Site located on what I call the Camp Curtin Corridor? The African American Heritage Center can provide the development anchor 6th Street lacks—and can provide a community center and base of operations for renewing 6th St.

I envision a 6th St. that is thriving with small businesses, filled with restaurants, distinctive housing, and shops—as well as murals and outdoor statues, gardens, and installations that celebrate the African American experience and teach us about the underground railroad, black historical figures, and more. I envision outdoor performance space and streets closed

for multicultural festivals.

I seek only to tantalize at this point—the final form of the Camp Curtin Corridor and the Heritage Center would come about through the Six-Step Development Beachhead process I described previously.

It seems clear to me that the Development Beachhead model may be exactly what 6th St. needs—and what our city needs, too, if we are to turn urban tragedies into areas of profound possibility and economic opportunity.

The renewal of Harrisburg will require a new way of looking at development. In the next and final section, I will overview the philosophy of Smart Growth that will undergird our city-wide efforts.

3. Livable communities

Harrisburg will adopt a policy of Smart Growth for every neighborhood.

Background

Smart Growth was the creation of a network of non-profit and government organizations, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It presents city planners with a series of principles for urban renewal that fight suburban sprawl and make our cities the communities of choice for homeowners and businesspeople.

I believe that the principles of Smart Growth should be the guiding principles of Harrisburg's revised zoning codes, and the ever-present framework for our Development Beachheads.

In this final section of Harrisburg 2.0, I will provide an overview of Smart Growth principles.

Smart Growth Principles

1. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.

Harrisburg wishes to remain competitive in terms of its housing options—and that means choices. We need housing that meets the varied needs of potential residents—condominiums, garden apartments, lofts, stately homes, urban bungalows, even car-free streets with flowers down the middle and parking in the back yards. We must think boldly about our “product” and offer potential residents as many options in Harrisburg home-shopping as in shopping for a new car.

2. Create walkable neighborhoods.

One of the beauties of urban living *should* be the ability to walk to most of what one needs—to markets, churches, schools, jobs, shops, parks, libraries and more. Doing this means building in compact ways that mix land uses and provide a high density of interesting options—provided in a spirit of organized chaos, organically growing to meet the needs of the community. Long tunnels of single-use does not facilitate walkability (nor, I might add, do crosswalks that have not been repainted in 15 years).

3. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.

We must provide opportunities for citizen engagement in our planning process. The Development Beachhead approach does this in focused areas of the city. But the same spirit must pervade all city planning. Although citizen participation can be time-consuming, by involving the public in planning, Harrisburg can create partners who buy in to plans and invest themselves—and their resources—in the community.

5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.

Harrisburg must not be a bland mash of largely historic properties with the same flavor, stronger or weaker, in every area. We must capitalize on what makes every part of the city unique—whether that is an abandoned anchor building, an interesting crossing of streets, a nearby school, a creek, a cluster of related businesses, or a sense of ethnic pride. We must build on our strengths, keep our eyes open to the opportunities under our noses. Again, the Development Beachhead plan will help us to do this.

6. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective.

The funds needed to renew Harrisburg are staggering and far exceed our city, state, or even federal government's resources. If we are to reclaim our city, it will be through private investment—enticing developers and residents to sink their resources into Harrisburg. We

must do all that we can to encourage them by providing open communications of city plans, streamlined services, and fair and equal application of city programs. Again, the Development Beachhead plan provides the blueprint we need to entice investors and give them the service they deserve.

7. Mix land uses.

By mixing land uses, we can create more variety in our neighborhoods and commercial corridors. That means more amenities close to home, reduced parking issues, and opportunities for entrepreneurship such as a home-based office. Commercial uses in close proximity to residential use generally increase property values and enable people to live close to where they work, increasing their quality of life and the perceived value of urban living. Harrisburg adopted its zoning ordinance in 1950 and has amended them in a hodge-podge fashion for half a century. It is difficult for the city staff to administer and is confusing to investors. It is time to throw out our city zoning ordinances and start over. This may seem like a tall order, but our city staff has ideas and simply needs a mayor who will listen to them and who will open a public process to get the job done.

8. Preserve open space.

This Smart Growth principal has fewer applications in Harrisburg, but it does have some. For example, we must be sure that Reservoir Park does not get turned into a cluster of buildings. We must protect Riverfront Park. Not over-develop City Island. Now, when it comes to the rolling fields of 6th St. Midtown, I believe that we can do with a little *less* open space!

9. Provide a variety of transportation choices.

How many times have you seen a poor soul on a bicycle weaving dangerously into traffic, or skipping out onto the road to avoid a snowbank? Have you ever wondered whether all those Restaurant Row partiers are really sober when they get in their cars to drive home?

Have you thought it odd that the proposed light rail system touches on downtown but avoids the rest of the city? In our planning for Harrisburg 2.0, we must be open to supporting various modes of transportation in Harrisburg. (And, incidentally, we should seriously consider the viability of a regular shuttle service to our various commercial corridors, an idea under consideration for perhaps a decade).

10. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.

Although development in open areas—or knocking down neighborhoods to replace them with new, vinyl alternatives—may be the most cost-effective way to develop, we should embark on a path to guide developers toward redeveloping the buildings that already exist. And we should encourage the salvage of architectural elements—even whole façades—to retain a sense of place and capitalize on the treasure of our architecture. I am not saying preserve everything exactly as it is. I say let's always adapt, but let's not bulldoze our resources. Revised zoning and providing tax and purchase incentives forms part of the answer to this initiative.

11. Take advantage of compact building design.

By building up rather than out, and by providing integrated parking solutions, we can preserve greenspace and create a denser, more interesting, pedestrian-friendly environment. We should consider new homes in empty neighborhood lots that offer new options and include parking. We should not be afraid to develop attractive multistory apartment and condominium facilities in empty sites—although we should do this to diversify housing stock, not compete with renewal of existing housing or in-fill possibilities.

In all we do, we should attempt to fill our streets with a lushness and a diversity that provides new options for our residents and additional opportunities for our entrepreneurs.

And finally, let's plant more trees and put the lids back on our trash cans, as required by law.

4. The point of it all: our kids

By renewing our city, we provide the life environment our kids need to succeed.

H20 is a plan dealing with urban renewal on every level. When we succeed in renewing our city, the result is safer neighborhoods, stronger communities, economic opportunity, and a sense of hope.

Even as we strive to improve our schools, we must keep in mind that our community produces the conditions for success or failure in the classroom.

The culture of blame engendered by the current administration—criminalizing and segregating our kids—may appear to control the situation in the short term, but to what end?

Under my administration, school reforms will continue and expand, but in a new spirit of cooperation and compassion. The goal will be empowering teachers and parents, and returning our schools to home rule as quickly as possible.

The goal will also be to gain efficiencies to enable a reduction of school taxes (22 mills of our total 36 mills goes to our district) and a commensurate increase in city taxes—moving realized school surpluses to broad-based urban renewal in the areas around our schools themselves, in our Development Beachheads, and in every neighborhood.

We pay an astronomical \$110 million each year for our schools and just \$64 million for all other city services. It's time we paid attention to the real priorities and give our kids the *lives* they deserve.

5: Next Steps

If you like my vision and think that—after a quarter century of the same mayor—change is overdue in Harrisburg, the next step is:

Vote SMITH on May 17th.

As your mayor, I will look at the big picture and will not hoard power nor exclude people from the process.

Together—and only together—we can usher in a new era, a new Harrisburg: Harrisburg 2.0.

Thank you for reading this document. If you would like to have me over for coffee to meet with you and a few neighbors to talk about these ideas, you can reach my campaign staff at customerservice@smithforharrisburg.com, by leaving a phone message at 232-0267, or by visiting www.smithforharrisburg.com and clicking on the Contact Us link. (If you accidentally click on the “Donate Online” link, that’s OK, too).