



Sharp-Leadenhall



January 2004

Acknowledgments

ABC Box Company
ArchPlan
Hilgartner Natural Stone
Baltimore Housing
Department of Transportation
Downtown Foot Locker
Ebenezer A.M.E. Church
French Development Company
Legal Aid Bureau
Mayor's Office of Community Investment
Megaphone Project
Police Athletic League
Recreation and Parks
Sharp-Leadenhall Courts Tenants Council
Sharp-Leadenahall Planning Committee
Sharp-Leadenhall Youth and Sports Activities
Saint Stephens and James Lutheran Church
South Baltimore Station
Struever Brothers, Eccles, and Rouse
Timberland



*Martin O'Malley
Baltimore City Mayor*



*Otis Rolley, III
Director
Baltimore City Dept of Planning*

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
History	5
Existing Conditions	8
Land Use and Zoning	9
Housing	10
Corridors and Gateways	15
Open Space	16
Youth and Community Building	18
Recommendations	20
Land Use and Zoning	21
Housing	22
Corridors and Gateways	26
Open Space	27
Youth and Community Building	27

Introduction

Planning Mission Statement

To provide the highest level services and leadership in urban and strategic planning, historical and architectural preservation, zoning, design, development, and capital budgeting to promote the sustained economic, social, and community development of the City of Baltimore.

Summary

This master plan is one component of Mayor Martin O'Malley citywide initiative to improve Baltimore's older neighborhoods by strengthening their character, quality, and livability to benefit existing residents and attract new private investment.

Disinvestment and resident displacement have left their mark on Sharp-Leadenhall. Today, however, the concerted efforts of long-time residents, and private and government partners have helped stabilize the neighborhood, while South Baltimore's resurgence has created pent-up demand for new development.

This plan analyzes existing conditions and extensive input from residents and other stakeholders, focusing on land use, the housing market, open space, and youth opportunities in the area. Based on this analysis, the plan recommends strategies to help existing residents stay in the neighborhood; to create housing opportunities for a broad mix of incomes and backgrounds; and to improve the quality-of-life for everyone in Sharp-Leadenhall.

Planning Process

Working closely with the Sharp-Leadenhall Planning Committee, the Department of Planning launched the master planning process for Sharp-Leadenhall in June, 2004. Residents, business owners, and church leaders attended several community workshops, including:

July--established Goals and Visions for the neighborhood

September--worked with City agencies to develop strategies to improve the neighborhood and achieve the goals and visions

November-December--met several times with Sharp-Leadenhall Courts Tenant Council and the general public on strategies to preserve affordability in the neighborhood

Jan, 2005--presented a draft Plan to the community; the Plan was adopted by the Baltimore City Planning Commission



Citywide context

History

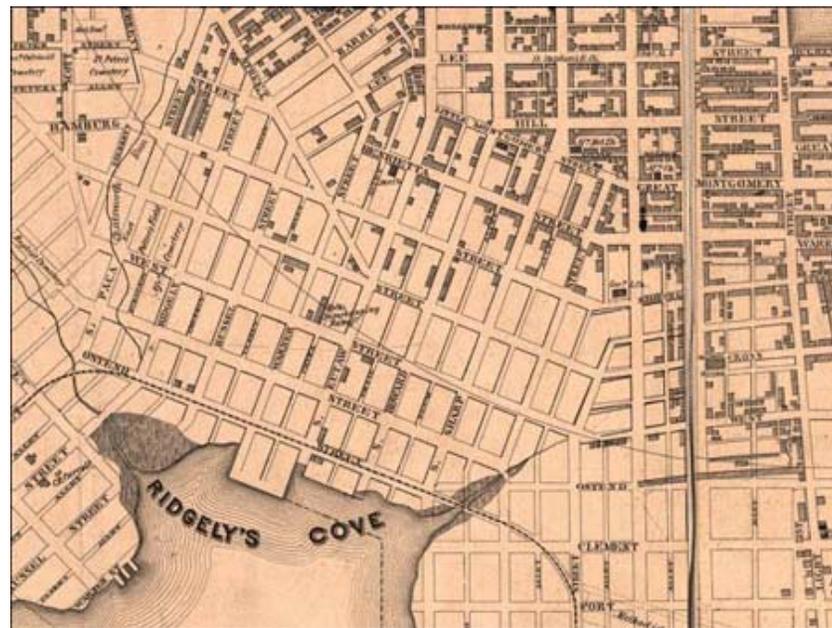
Present day Sharp-Leadenhall was largely undeveloped land until the 1850s. But the historical trends and events that led to Sharp-Leadenhall's development—and influence the neighborhood even today—can be traced back to the late 1700s and involve the larger South Baltimore community.

Throughout the 19th Century, South Baltimore was a place where Quaker abolitionists, German immigrants, industrial entrepreneurs, and free African Americans rubbed shoulders, often living and working side by side at a time when the City itself was booming. A strong anti-slavery movement and a thriving industrial trade lay in an area just north of present day Sharp-Leadenhall, shaping the people and the land for decades to come.

From 1790 to 1800, the City's population doubled from 13,503 to 26,514. During the same period, Baltimore's African American population increased from 1,578 to 5,614, while the number of free African Americans grew from 323 to 2,771. African Americans settled throughout the City, but some of Baltimore's most influential African American institutions emerged along Sharp Street, spanning a stretch from what is now downtown to the current-day Sharp-Leadenhall.

During this time, a group of prominent Baltimoreans supported the growing African American population. Founded in 1789, the Maryland Society for the Promotion of the Abolition of Slavery (also known as the Baltimore Abolitionist Society) was the first of its kind in the South and drew members from a multid denominational alliance that included Quakers, Methodists, German Lutherans, and Baptists, centered around what is now the Inner Harbor and Otterbein. There is also some evidence that South Baltimore (and the Sharp Street corridor in particular) may have been a hub of the Underground Railroad, the secret social network that helped guide fugitive slaves to their freedom.

In 1797, at the corner of Pratt and Sharp Streets, the Abolitionist Society opened the African Academy of Baltimore, the first African American school in the south and the first purpose-built African American school in the country. The founding of the Academy and the presence of numerous churches leading the abolitionist cause drew many African Americans to the area.



1851 map of Baltimore City

BG&E significantly expanded its presence at Spring Gardens (south of Sharp Leadenhall) in 1902 and 1945. The B&O Railroad also underwent major expansion between 1900 and 1905. Around 1913, the Hamburg Street and Ostend Street viaducts were built, and in 1914 the Hanover Street Bridge was opened. Truck and automobile traffic arrived in Sharp Leadenhall. Building off of this industrial activity, the City made Sharp Leadenhall a favored 'zone' for industry. In 1931, officials amended the comprehensive zoning ordinance to zone the area for heavy industrial use. Many industries acquired adjacent properties to expand and residents began leaving the area.

After World War II, highway engineers began drawing plans to build limited access highways into and through Baltimore. The planning process and the construction of I-395 greatly accelerated deterioration of the neighborhood. The planning process relocated hundreds of African American families in South Baltimore. In 1966, the City demolished 360 houses and relocated 3,000 residents. Other relocation projects occurred. Between 1968 and 1974, approximately 620 families were relocated in which over 80% were African Americans.

Sharp-Leadenhall residents responded to these tumultuous times with extraordinary efforts. Local resident Mildred Mae Moon (1941-1992), joined a citywide coalition that squelched a proposed new highway that would have demolished buildings throughout south and southeast Baltimore. Moon also helped secure federal Urban Renewal funds to build a 77-unit Senior housing midrise project and 100 townhomes. In April of 1993, the Hamburg Street Bridge on Sharp-Leadenhall's western border was dedicated to Mildred Mae Moon.

Today, the neighborhood is leading a revitalization effort that has created a coalition of city officials, neighborhood residents, nonprofit developers, and citizen activists.

FOCUS AREA: Churches

Throughout Sharp-Leadenhall's history, churches have been at the heart of the neighborhood's social and political life. German immigrants, who in 1870 made up 62% of South Baltimore's foreign-born population, built two churches in the area: St. Stephens' and James' German Evangelical Lutheran Church at Hanover and Hamburg, which dates back to 1884; and St Martin's Lutheran church (known now as the Martini Lutheran Church) at Hanover and Henrietta.

In 1873, a small Baptist congregation that had been meeting in a blacksmith's shop raised the funds to build the Leadenhall Baptist Church, which immediately became a community landmark.

Numerous South Baltimore churches joined the struggle to abolish slavery, as well as protest movements that halted highway construction in the 1960s that would have destroyed South Baltimore neighborhoods.



Leadenhall Baptist



St Stephens and James

Existing Conditions

Assets

Affordable housing options

Historic housing stock

New housing investments

Hamburg Street Light Rail Station

Solo Gibbs Park

Sharp Leadenhall Elementary

Institutions (e.g. Post Office, Mercy Hospital clinic)

South Baltimore Station (transitional housing)

churches

businesses

Population: 788

Area: 45 acres



light rail



South Baltimore Station



- 1 M&T Bank Stadium
- 2 Otterbein Swim Club
- 3 Sharp-Leadenhall Courts
- 4 Solo-Gibbs Park
- 5 PAL Center
- 6 Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary
- 7 MD State Arts Council
- 8 Post Office
- 9 Mercy Southern Medical Clinic
- 10 Cross Street Market
- 11 Inner Harbor/MD Science Center
- 12 The Yards at Federal Hill
- 13 79-83 W. West Street
- 14 133-137 W. West Street
- 15 1209 Light Street

● Light Rail Station

— Light Rail Line

Land Use and Zoning

Sharp-Leadenhall is home to a wide range of uses, but these uses are not well-integrated. From east to west, the strong residential fabric of rowhouse blocks breaks down at Race Street and shifts to non-residential uses such as the Stadiums, parking lots, highway overpasses, the light rail, and industrial land. The Park is relatively isolated, with few homes bordering it on only one side. The blocks on which industrial businesses are located feel desolate.

In recent years, abandoned or obsolete industrial land has been converted to other uses throughout South Baltimore. There are still viable industrial businesses in Sharp-Leadenhall; ABC Box Company, for instance, is considering expanding to adjacent properties. However, there are a several underutilized buildings as well, including (1) the Union Brothers/Plymouth Wallpaper building at 37-41 Cross St and (2) the Maryland Box Company building at 180-188 West Ostend Street (see map at right).

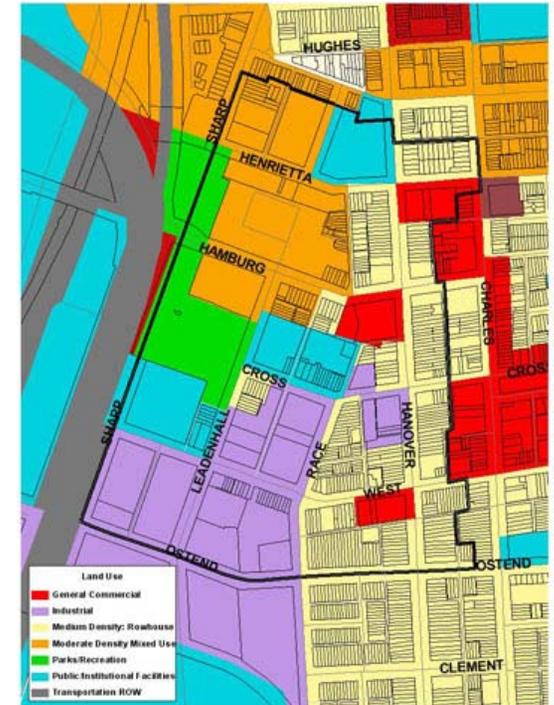
A number of properties and buildings that are zoned for industrial use have been adapted to other uses. The office complex at 175 Ostend Street, for example, is zoned for industry but in fact is an office complex, with tenants including the Maryland State Arts Council.



Union Brothers



underutilized



land use



State Arts Council

Land Use	Acres	%
Residential	14.9	29.7
Industrial	11.9	23.7
Public	10.7	21.2
Mix	10.0	19.9
Commercial	2.8	5.5

Existing Conditions

Housing

Housing: Urban Design

Like many of Baltimore's central neighborhoods, Sharp-Leadenhall was built at a very high density. Some of the original alley homes remain today on Bevan and Creek Streets. Although citywide few of these buildings have survived, in Federal Hill and Fells Point alley homes on narrow blocks are thriving. These homes serve an important niche in the housing market and preserve centuries of history that cannot be replaced in new structures.

New construction and residential additions in other parts of Sharp-Leadenhall follows modern standards--larger footprints, taller buildings, with new roof or rear decks and other structures. On West Street, for instance, older industrial uses have given way to new townhouses.

In addition, renovation activity has skyrocketed throughout South Baltimore. Each year, the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZA) hears hundreds of cases from property owners seeking a zoning variance--essentially an exception to the rule--to build rear and rooftop additions. As with new construction, additions have an impact on the scale of buildings on a block and on the light and air reaching neighboring buildings.

At the request of the BMZA, in the summer of 2004 the Department of Planning began developing guidelines for residential additions. The planning process involved representatives from more than 30 South and East Baltimore community associations, architectus, developers, and lawyers. A summary and excerpt from the guidelines submitted to the BMZA are included in the Recommendations section.



Bevan Street



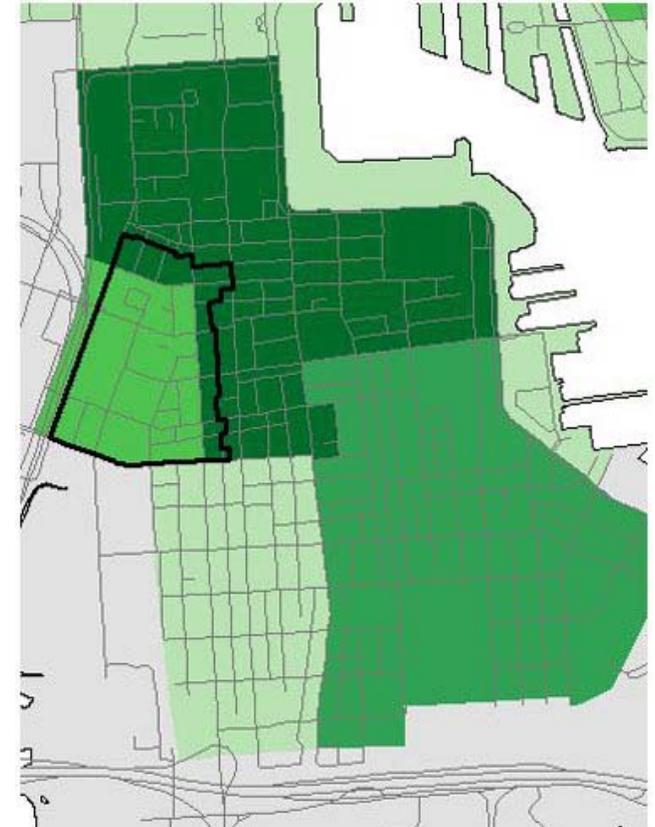
West Street

Housing: Markets and Affordability

Unique to South Baltimore, the housing market in Sharp-Leadenhall is extremely nuanced. Surrounded by neighborhoods with extremely high housing values, Sharp-Leadenhall has numerous buildings and lots that have stood vacant for years. At the same time, following area trends, housing values have begun to increase, and new residents have begun occupying formerly abandoned homes. From 1990 to 2000, Sharp-Leadenhall's population decreased from 881 to 781, but in contrast to citywide trends the number of abandoned units decreased (from 68 units to 57 units) and the number of owner-occupied units increased (from 58 to 73 units).

The neighborhood has significant affordable housing assets, some of which Baltimore City controls, some of which are privately-owned and may be converted to market-rate.

	Federal Hill		Otterbein		SharpLeadenhall	
	Median Sales Prices	Units Sold	Median Sales Prices	Units Sold	Median Sales Prices	Units Sold
1998	\$130,000	55	\$192,500	35	\$49,500	6
1999	\$144,500	81	\$184,000	46	\$70,000	7
2000	\$169,000	69	\$193,000	44	\$105,000	14
2001	\$186,000	77	\$284,000	52	\$128,000	9
2002	\$214,000	93	\$227,500	38	\$150,500	12
2003	\$219,000	90	\$256,000	56	\$132,000	17



FOCUS AREA: The Yards at Federal Hill

1300 Race Street

18 market rate townhomes and adaptive re-use of existing warehouse building for 23 condominium apartments. Starting prices listed at \$500,000.



Median Home Value



The median home value in 2000 was \$69,100.

Existing Conditions

Housing

FOCUS AREA: Affordability

The most common definitions and measurements of affordability relate to income and are established by the federal government. Affordability guidelines usually refer to a percentage of the area median income (AMI) for a given area: for the Baltimore region in 2004, for instance, the AMI for a family of four is \$68,800. For a family of four, the following income levels apply:

80%	\$54,880
60%	\$41,160
50%	\$34,300
40%	\$27,440
30%	\$20,580

Typically, public housing residents' incomes are well below 30% of AMI, although families can be eligible for public housing as long as their income does not exceed 80% of AMI. Similarly, Section 8 vouchers (housing choice vouchers issued to families and project-based Section 8 vouchers issued to rental property owners) are available to families whose income does not exceed 80% of AMI. Housing financed with low-income housing tax credits must meet one of the following conditions: at least 20% of the units must be occupied by households whose income is less than 50% of AMI, or at least 40% of the units must be occupied by households whose income is less than 60% of AMI. The majority of Sharp-Leadenhall residents living in subsidized rental housing earn less than 30% of AMI.

City, State, and Federal policy encourages a mix of incomes in subsidized housing developments and neighborhoods in general, rather than a concentration of any one income level. Sharp-Leadenhall has 213 affordable units; this is roughly 58% of the total number of housing units in the neighborhood. Of these, 192 are within Sharp-Leadenhall Courts. Tenants at Sharp-Leadenhall Courts are concerned that a change of ownership could affect their ability to remain in the complex. However, this complex is subject to agreements with three government agencies-- Housing and Urban Development (HUD) at the Federal level, Community Development Administration (CDA) at the State level, and the Mayor and City Council.



Senior mid-rise units at Sharp-Leadenhall Courts

Affordable Units

Sharp-Leadenhall Courts

Owner: Aimco

I: 155 units, Section 236

75 midrise, 80 townhomes

II: 37 units, Section 8

Housing Authority of Baltimore City

(HABC) : 24 units

St Ambrose: 4 units

(900-904 Bevan, 920 Bevan)

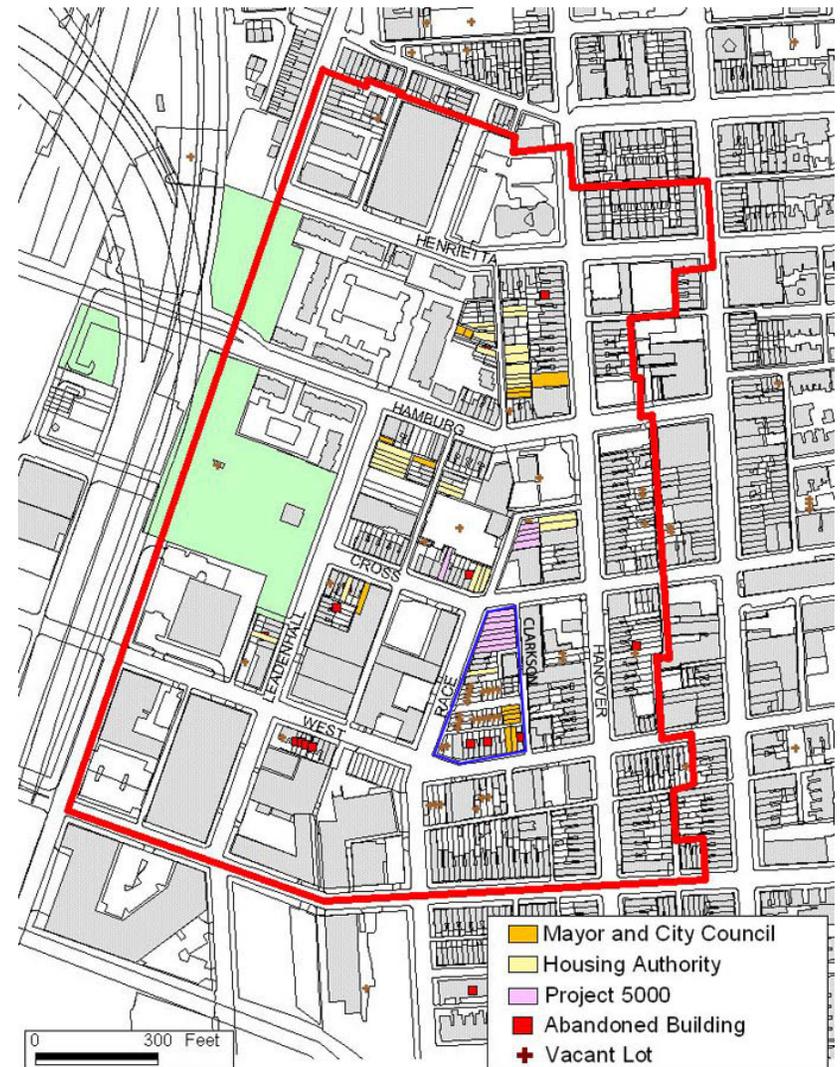
City-owned properties: Request For Qualifications (RFQ)

Throughout the City, Baltimore City moves quickly to turn over City-owned properties to individuals or developers. In Sharp-Leadenhall, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) owned and operated 24 scattered-site, subsidized properties. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) also controlled a handful of vacant lots, while still other vacant lots are owned by private properties. Where property owners have not paid taxes on vacant properties, the City attempts to seize them through a citywide program known as Project 5000 (P5K). Where local government has site control or the ability to obtain it, properties can be reserved and assembled for use as affordable housing when combined with appropriate subsidies.

The City sought to bring these properties back to productive use while strengthening its commitment to affordable housing in Sharp-Leadenhall. In 2003, the Housing Authority of Baltimore City issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit proposals for the HABC and HCD properties, as well as P5K properties the City hopes to acquire from negligent private owners. The RFQ was awarded to the French/Sharp-Leadenhall LLC, a partnership between the Sharp-Leadenhall Planning Committee (the local umbrella community association) and the French Development Company.

The map at right shows the HABC properties, HCD properties (Mayor and City Council), Project 5000 properties, and additional abandoned buildings and vacant lots in Sharp-Leadenhall. In Phase I, the development team is seeking Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, which will be supplemented by HABC Capital Funds. The HABC properties will be renovated and offered to people on the HABC waiting list. The HCD properties will be built for people at a range of income levels.

The HCD properties, in particular, pose a challenge to the development team because several of the lots are small. However, there is a concentration of vacant and underutilized properties in the large block bounded by Race and Clarkson (highlighted in blue) that offer additional opportunities for redevelopment based on the principles outlined above: mixed-income housing with a strong commitment to affordability.



Abandoned and vacant properties

Existing Conditions

Housing

Housing: Preservation

Many of Sharp-Leadenhall's homes and industrial buildings are more than a century old and have significant historic value. The following eleven buildings are eligible for listing on the Baltimore City Local Landmark List:

- **St Martini's German Evangelical Lutheran Church**, 837 Sharp St.
- **Public School #126**, 823 Sharp St.
- **Gaines McHale Antiques** (J.E. Smith and Co), 836 Leadenhall St.
- **Whole Meats**, Charles G. Kriel Pork Packer, 23 West Henrietta St.
- **Saint Stephen's and James' German Evangelical Lutheran Church**, 938 Hanover St.
- **Union Brothers Furniture Factory** 37-41 W. Cross St.
- **Engine House # 6**, Northeast Corner of Hanover and Ostend Sts.
- **Engine House #126** Northwest Corner Leadenhall and West Sts.
- **Durapak Company**, 150 West Ostend St.
- **Maryland Paper Box Company** 180-188 West Ostend St.
- **Phoenix Manufacturing Company**, 1201 Sharp St.

In addition, Sharp-Leadenhall has a rich history that could be an educational resource and inspiration for current residents and future visitors alike.

As staff to the Commission on Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP), the Department of Planning has been working with the Sharp-Leadenhall Neighborhood Association and neighborhood residents to determine whether or not a local historic district should be created. Such a district would recognize the historic significance of the neighborhood, allow property owners to apply for historic tax credits, and institute a number of design guidelines for new construction and rehabilitation.

A complete historic resources guide is included as Appendix A of this Plan; the following passages are only a few noteworthy buildings in the neighborhood.

Maryland Paper Box Company Factory (180-188 West Ostend)

Originally built circa 1896, when Baltimore was a national leader in paper box production, this building was renovated throughout the 20th century. Today, the structure displays numerous architectural styles from several periods.



Race Street

Built around 1880, these five houses are some of the most unique rowhouses in Baltimore. The lot lines and facades are set obliquely to the street, and the bulging, two-story bay windows with extravagant Italianate cornices create a step-like pattern.



Bevan Street

Built on a former brick yard in the late 18th-Century, many of these two-story, gabled-roof rowhouses were originally inhabited by free African Americans. This type of alley block is now extremely rare in Baltimore.



Corridors and Gateways

Public Transportation

A key underutilized asset for the neighborhood is the Hamburg Street Light Rail Station, which currently operates only for Baltimore Ravens home games. Baltimore City promotes maximizing usage of public transportation as a vital link to jobs and amenities. The Sharp-Leadenhall Planning Committee has received letters of support from a number of local stakeholders, including local businesses and the Ravens, for opening the station year-round and the Maryland Transit Administration has committed to doing so.

Corridors and Gateways

Although Sharp-Leadenhall is only a block away from Cross Street Market, one of the City's commercial and arts and entertainment hubs, this activity ends at Hanover Street, giving way to auto-oriented uses such as repair shops, gas stations, and parking lots. Cross Street terminates at Solo Gibbs Park, which would be an appropriate landmark with which to anchor a potential future Cross Street corridor. Hamburg and Ostend Streets are major east-west gateways to the neighborhood that connect West and South Baltimore. As West Baltimore neighborhoods such as Washington Village, Hollins Market, and Poppleton revitalize, these streets will likely see additional traffic. At the same time, the intersection of Hamburg and Leadenhall is an informal neighborhood gathering area, and will be increasingly important to pedestrians walking to Solo Gibbs Park and the light rail station.

At the heart of Sharp-Leadenhall, on streets where homes and industrial businesses converge, residential amenities such as continuous sidewalks and streetscaping are absent. Because these areas lack on-street activity or other elements that make streets attractive, they feel like abandoned, "dead" spaces.

Safety

Sharp-Leadenhall's residential area is densely settled, with streets that vary in width, sometimes even along the same street; West Street, for instance, narrows dramatically travelling west to east at Race Street. These conditions result in a number of intersections where vehicle and pedestrian conditions are unsafe.



Broken sidewalk on Race Street between West and Cross



Minimal planting on West Street between Race and Hanover

Existing Conditions

Open Space

Open Space

Along with Federal Hill Park and Riverside Park, Solo Gibbs Park in Sharp Leadenhall is one of three major open spaces in central South Baltimore.

In recent years, the Department of Recreation and Parks has worked with private partners (including Downtown Foot Locker; Lorenze Landscaping; Streuver Brothers, Eccles, and Rouse; and Timberland Boots) and volunteers to make significant investments in Solo Gibbs Park. These are detailed below:

Action Item	Cost
New playground and basketball courts	\$120,000
Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary playground equipment and installation	\$ 72,000
Trees and plant materials	<u>\$ 10,000</u>
TOTAL	\$202,000

A key challenge in maintaining Solo Gibbs is the lack of consistent residential buildings bordering the park. On the western edge, for instance, highway overpasses and numerous parking lots that are used only during Ravens or Orioles home games, create a large “dead space” with no activity or people looking over the park. However, there are numerous nearby institutions and businesses that could contribute to monitoring and maintaining the park.

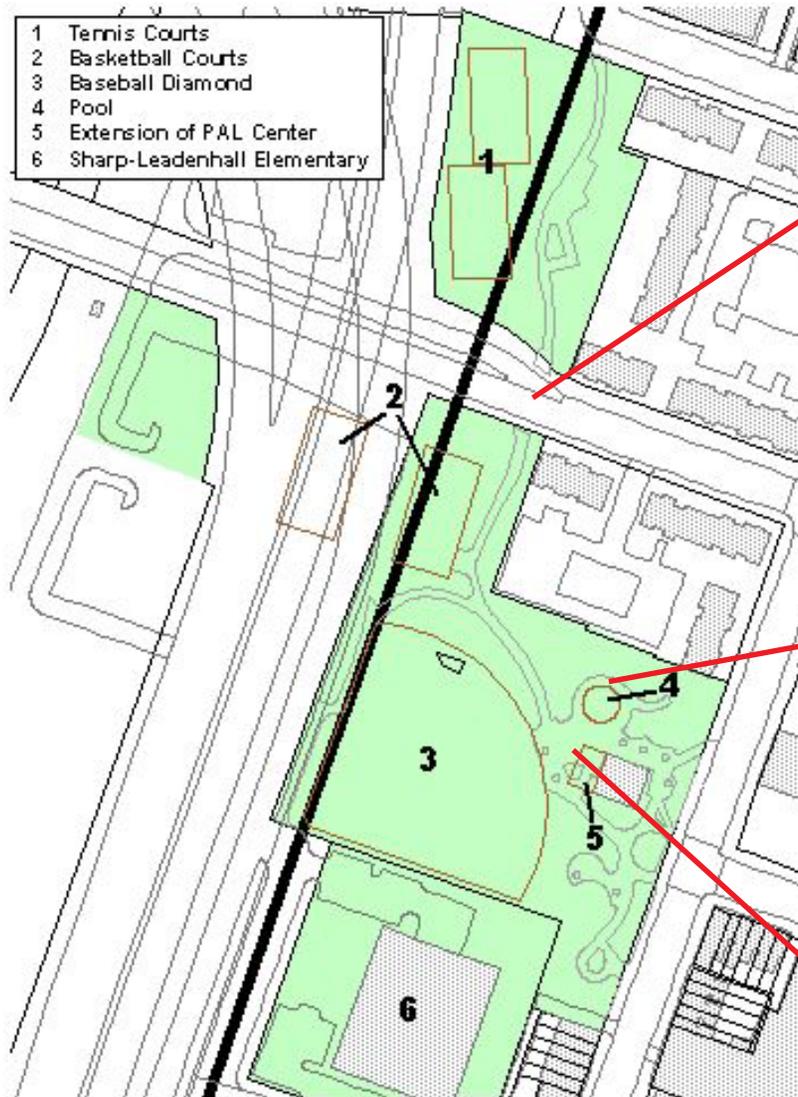


park border: highway overpass



South Baltimore regional park map

PARK	SIZE
Riverside Park	17.9 acres
Federal Hill Park	9.6 acres
Solo Gibbs Park	5.2 acres



Solo Gibbs Park

If private and institutional partners can be enlisted for park improvements, the following issues should be prioritized:

Large traffic lights, concrete barriers, and fast moving cars cut off the northern end of the park from the southern end.



The wading pool does not operate and attracts litter.



The Police Athletic League (PAL) building extension is deteriorated. It is also surrounded by what appears to be an unnecessary fence.



Youth and Community Building

Residents highlighted the importance of providing opportunity for young people to learn and play. A number of programs exist already--such as a day camp and pre-school programs. For other key services, residents must leave the neighborhood.

There are three playgrounds in the neighborhood--one at Martini Lutheran Church at Henrietta and Hanover Streets and two new City playgrounds-- one at Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary School and one in the northernmost area of Solo Gibbs Park.

Recreation and sports

Light Street Recreation Center

The center provides after-school care which some neighborhood youth attend. Basketball is available for a fee.

Sports Leagues

Adult volunteers from the neighborhood once organized football and baseball games for young people. But residents say that the activities dwindled due to both lack of interest among the youth and scheduling conflicts. Some older youth play basketball at school No. 84 (Thomas Johnson Elementary on Heath Street) and at Solo Gibbs Park.

Swimming

The Otterbein Swim Club is beyond the means of most neighborhood families. Some youth go to Riverside Park to use the public pool, which charges a small fee.

Christ Lutheran Church

About 10 children from Sharp-Leadenhall attend the church's after-school program.



PAL Center

The PAL Center attracts mostly young children who come to do homework and play video games. Residents would like to work with PAL Center staff to offer organized programs, such as classes and sports.

Enoch Pratt Library/Light Street Branch

The library has 5 public computers, a child librarian, a young adult specialist, and a "Kids Corner" with a computer designated for young children. The library also hosts regular programs for children and young adults, including story hours. The library is open Monday through Saturday.

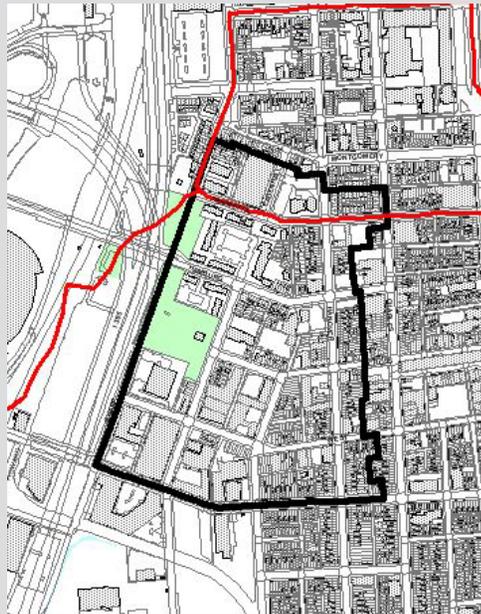
South Baltimore Learning Center

The center targets people age 16 and older. Programs include one-on-one tutoring, basic computer classes and GED prep classes. A public computer lab is available. Children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

The Sharp-Leadenhall Youth Activities Committee organizes numerous social activities and outings.

FOCUS AREA: GWYNNS FALLS TRAIL

The Gwynns Falls Trail is a 14-mile hiker-biker trail from Northwest Baltimore to South Baltimore and downtown. In Sharp-Leadenhall, the Trail will run through Solo Gibbs Park and Henrietta Street, connecting Ravens Stadium to the Inner Harbor. Construction is due to be completed in spring 2005.



Gwynns Falls Trail from M&T Bank (Ravens) Stadium, through Solo Gibbs Park, on to Henrietta Street, and to the Inner Harbor.

Recommendations

Summary

Based on the preceding analysis of existing conditions and stakeholder input, the following section makes recommendations for improvements to the area.

1. **Encourage current residents to stay.**

With concerted efforts by residents, City agencies, and other partners, and with a strong South Baltimore housing market that stimulates private investment, Sharp-Leadenhall is revitalizing. A top priority of this plan is to create new market-driven development opportunities in the neighborhood while using all available methods to allow current residents to remain in the neighborhood and reap the benefits of a thriving community.

2. **Improve Sharp-Leadenhall's connections to South Baltimore and other areas while preserving and enhancing the neighborhood's unique assets.**

Sharp-Leadenhall should be considered a treasured South Baltimore neighborhood and destination, by current and new residents and visitors alike. Sharp-Leadenhall should have the strong neighborhood fabric that it once had and that other South Baltimore residents enjoy. New trail and transit opportunities such as the opening of the Hamburg Street Light Rail station and the Gwynns Falls Trail will better link residents to jobs and open space amenities, and help bring new activity and people to the neighborhood.

As Sharp-Leadenhall integrates with surrounding communities, its revitalization should be based on its own unique strengths. Sharp-Leadenhall's critical mass of affordable housing and rich history should be the foundation for years to come of a mixed-income, diverse community.

3. **Improve neighborhood infrastructure and quality-of-life**

This plan identifies numerous specific action items--from street resurfacing to park improvements to social service collaborations--designed to make it easier, safer, and more rewarding to live, work, learn, and play in Sharp-Leadenhall.

FOCUS AREA: Urban Renewal Plan

The planning process that produces a master plan must be implemented in order to realize the vision and goals outlined in the plan. One of the key tools to accomplish this is the existing Urban Renewal Plan.

Urban Renewal Plans give the City authority to change zoning and land uses, establish design and development guidelines, and acquire and dispose of property. Sharp-Leadenhall's Urban Renewal Plan was created in 1974. The City will continue working with the Sharp-Leadenhall Planning Committee and other stakeholders to amend the Urban Renewal Plan.

Land Use and Zoning

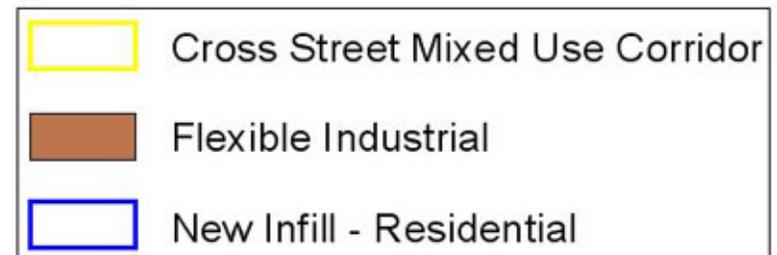
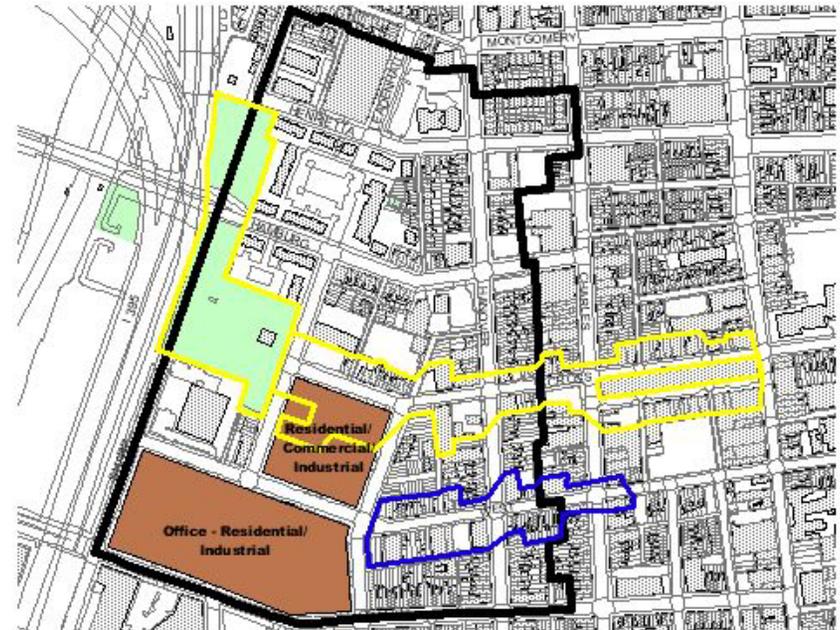
1. Amend the the Sharp-Leadenhall Urban Renewal Plan to maximize the flexible use of industrial parcels.

Sharp-Leadenhall should continue to be a place with a diverse mix of uses. The Urban Renewal Plan should be amended to modify existing zoning categories to give property and business owners the flexibility to respond to market conditions. This would allow thriving businesses to stay and underutilized buildings to be adapted for other uses.

2. Strengthen the neighborhood fabric

a. Encourage the creation of a pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use Cross Street corridor connecting the public market to Solo Gibbs Park and the Light Rail station . Allow rezoning along Cross Street to allow for a broad range of uses, including light industrial, residential, commercial, and office.

b. Encourage the creation of a mixed-use Ostend Street corridor that accomodates both vehicular and pedestrian traffic. Allow rezoning along Ostend Street to allow for a broad range of uses, including light industrial, residential, and office.



Recommendations

Housing

Housing

1. Preserve existing affordable units.

Existing tenants at Sharp-Leadenhall Courts should be allowed to stay at their current rent levels through long-term continuation of existing rental subsidy levels and programs.

2. Require that new housing construction include an affordability component.

Baltimore City has made a strong commitment citywide and particularly in Sharp-Leadenhall to create or preserve mixed-income neighborhoods that include new market-rate units as well as opportunities for low-income residents to remain in their neighborhoods and live at affordable levels.

The affordability requirements in the RFQ is one of the strongest signs of the City's commitment. Where possible, the City will acquire additional vacant property in the neighborhood and establish similar affordability goals and requirements. The concept plan at right shows the potential of such development that augments investments in the first phase of the RFQ redevelopment project. Finally, the existing Sharp-Leadenhall Urban Renewal Plan will be amended to require affordable units be included with new residential development projects above a certain size.

3. Encourage good urban design for residential additions and new construction.

- Respect the character of surrounding blocks and buildings.
- Encourage high-density infill construction, bringing more residents to the neighborhood and creating opportunities for affordable units, while maintaining the existing fabric.
- Create attractive and defensible open spaces as part of new development wherever possible and have buildings contribute to the social space of the neighborhood (fronting on public streets, including porches or stoops)



Concept plan (above) and illustration (below, viewed from the intersection of Cross and Race Streets) of new, mixed-use Cross Street Corridor and infill housing with new open spaces, resurfacing of Seldner Place, and adaptive re-use of the Plymouth Wallpaper building

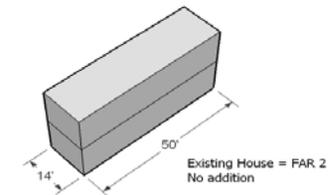
FOCUS AREA: Residential Additions

In December, 2004, the Department of Planning presented draft guidelines to the Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZ) to help board members determine if zoning appeals for residential additions should be approved. The draft guidelines acknowledge the unique historic character of Baltimore's residential blocks and building. At the same time, the guidelines recognize that the City's building stock has always evolved over time and must continue to do so to meet modern needs and markets, and that residential additions signify property owners' investment and commitment to stay.

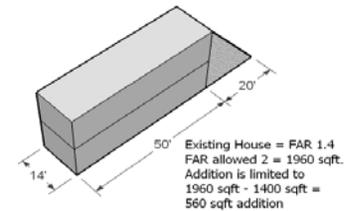
The BMZA voted to adopt the draft guidelines and use them for a 6-month trial period before evaluating the guidelines for permanent adoption. An excerpt is reprinted at right. The full document will be available on the Department of Planning website shortly (www.baltimorecity.gov).

GENERAL

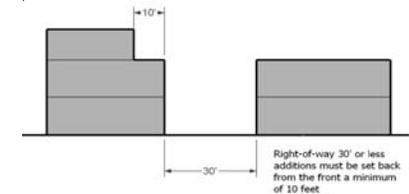
- 1. To help regulate the bulk and massing of**



- 2. Additions should generally be architecturally**



- 3. Third floor additions or decks on houses on**



- 4. Limit the square footage of roof access enclosures to 75 sqft or 25% of roof area —**

Recommendations

Housing

4. Enhance historic neighborhood resources

a. Complete community process on local historic district.

CHAP will continue working with residents to determine whether or not there is support for creating a local historic district. If the petition process among property owners is successful, CHAP and the neighborhood can create boundaries for a local historic district.

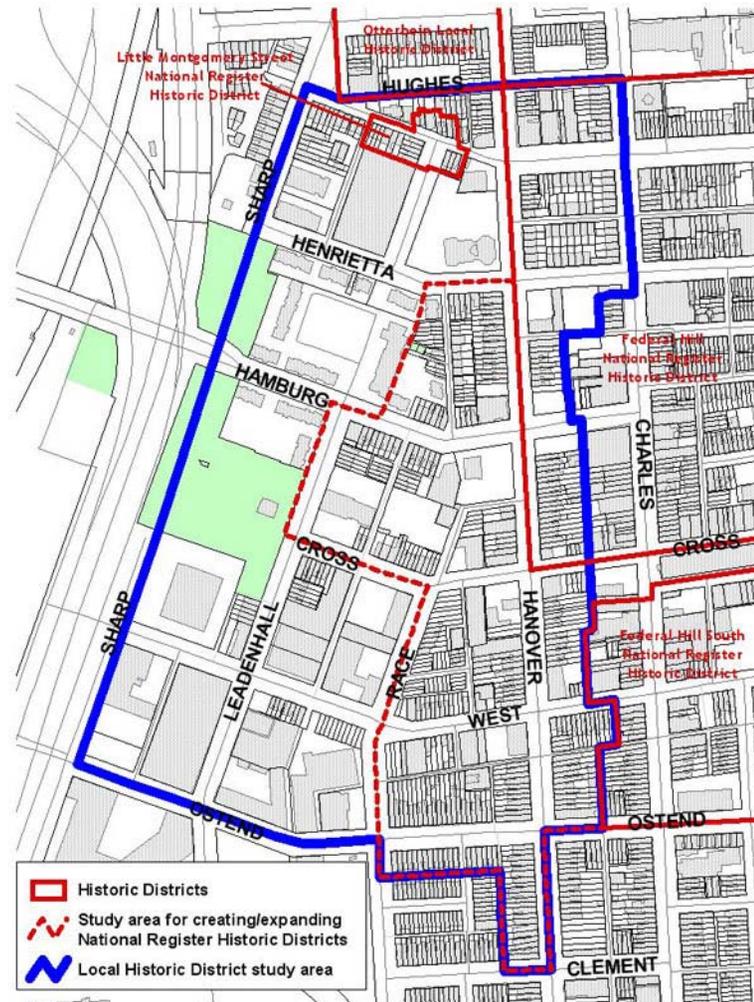
b. Create a local National Register historic district

Due to the loss of many historic buildings during the last thirty years, Sharp Leadenhall as defined by the urban renewal ordinance would not meet National Register criteria for designation as a neighborhood. However, there are intact blocks within the neighborhood that would be eligible for becoming a National Register historic district. Two possible National Register historic districts could be created and one existing National Register historic district could be expanded:

Create a National Register historic district that abuts the Federal Hill national register district on the east and the Little Montgomery national register historic district on the north. The western boundary would zigzag down the rear lot line of the west side of Bevan Street, capture the historic rowhouses on both sides of W. Hamburg Street, capture the east side of the 1000 block of Leadenhall Street, head east for one block on Cross Street, then capture the east side of the 1100 and 1200 blocks of Race Street. At Ostend the boundary would capture both sides of the 100 block W. Ostend Street. (see map)

· Create a National Register historic district to capture the southwest area of South Baltimore that was not listed in the recent South Federal Hill National Register Historic District.

· Expand the South Federal Hill National Register Historic District to include some portions of Sharp Leadenhall and other logical areas in South Baltimore.



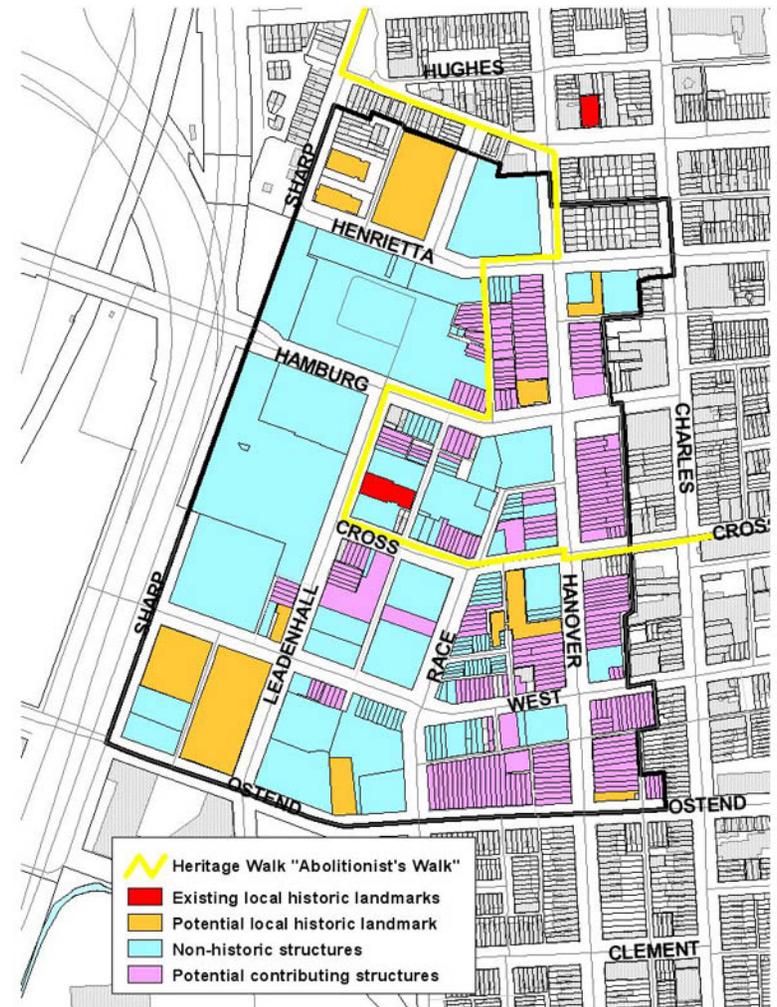
3. Create a heritage trail focusing on Sharp-Leadenhall.

Explore the feasibility of developing an interpreted heritage trail (as part of the Baltimore Heritage Trail system) that highlights the neighborhood's rich cultural heritage and stories, including abolitionism and the Underground Railroad. The trail route and opportunities for guided and self-guided tours should be designed to reinforce community assets and revitalization goals.

Landmarks that could be highlighted include: Moses Sheppard's Counting House, Otterbein Church, several blocks on the east side of Sharp Street, John Wesley United Methodist Church, Ebenezer A.M.E. Church, St. Stephen's and James' Evangelical Lutheran Church, Little Montgomery Street, Bevan Street, Hamburg Street, Leadenhall Baptist Church and Cross Street Market.

5. Create a Sharp-Leadenhall Oral History program

Interview residents and former residents of Sharp Leadenhall and the parishioners of the neighborhood churches.



Corridors and Gateways

1. Support the opening of the Hamburg Street light rail station year-round.

If the station is opened, access to and from the neighborhood should be improved by such improvements as wider sidewalks along Hamburg Street west of Leadenhall Street and signage or other wayfinding devices. Encourage gameday vending opportunities and temporary events such as Farmer's Markets on the surrounding parking lots.

2. Develop corridor and gateway elements

a. Support the creation of a Cross Street corridor by prioritizing future streetscaping elements such as period lighting, trees, and decorative elements.

b. Place neighborhood signs or other landmarks at key entrances to the neighborhood such as Ostend and Hamburg Streets, and plant trees wherever possible within neighborhood.

3. Develop and implement traffic calming strategies at key intersections.

a. The Department of Transportation has completed a study that recommends making West Street full stop control.

b. The Department of Transportation will replace existing pedestrian signs with high intensity fluorescent signs along Hamburg Street

c. The Department of Transportation will re-paint crosswalk and lane lines at Hamburg and Leadenhall.

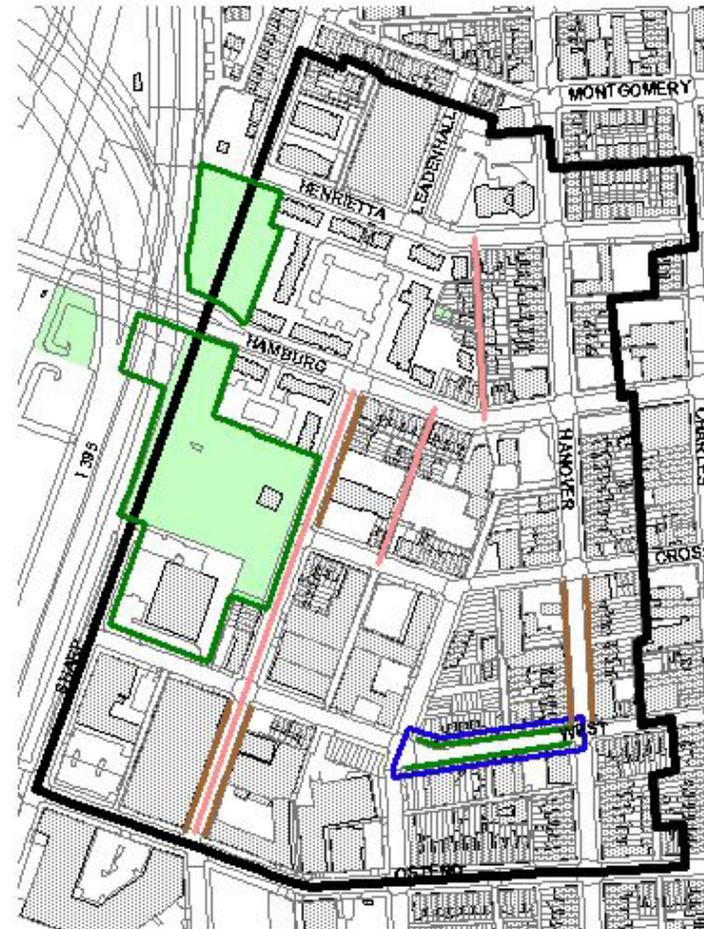
4. Resurface key streets.

Prioritize Bevan Street, Creek Street, and Leadenhall Street for resurfacing. Target Race Street, Seldner Place, and Clarkson Street for future resurfacing in conjunction with new development.

5. Repair sidewalks

Hanover between West and Cross and Leadenhall between Ostend and West and Cross and Hamburg should be priorities.

6. Residents should determine if Residential Parking Permits (RPP) are appropriate for Cross Street, Leadenhall Street, and Race Street.



Open Space

1. Establish public-private partnership for maintenance and improvement of Solo Gibbs Park.

a. The Office of Partnerships within Recreation and Parks will convene a meeting between residents and local stakeholders. Priority improvement areas include the wading pool along Leadenhall Street, the PAL Center extension building, the continuation of the Park across Hamburg Street, and the Stadium parking lots at the western edge of the Park.

b. Explore the potential for entrepreneurial opportunities (e.g. vending) during ballgames and temporary events such as Farmer's Markets on the Stadium parking lots.

2. Residents should work closely with Gwynns Falls Trail Council on the opening of the Trail through the neighborhood.



Hamburg St passage from light rail station. Sidewalks should be widened, signage added, and concrete walls beautified.

Youth and Community Building

1. Develop stronger partnership between Police Athletic League (PAL) Center, Sharp-Leadenhall Planning Committee, and residents.

a. Neighborhood parents will volunteer at PAL Center to help supervise young people.

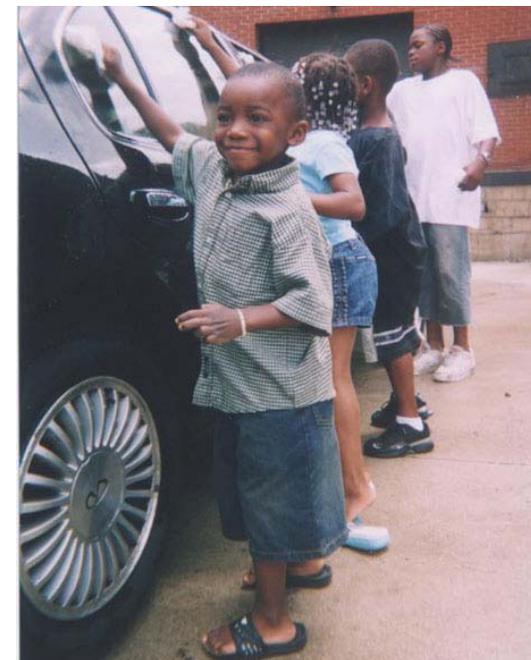
b. Residents will help Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary and PAL Center staff manage their after school program.

c. Develop future scenarios for maximizing use of PAL Center.

2. Explore the potential for community-based activities at Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary

Begin discussions with Baltimore City Public School Systems (BCPSS) and staff at Sharp-Leadenhall Elementary about making the school more of a community center.

3. Encourage existing program leaders to conduct more neighborhood outreach/recruitment.



Neighborhood kids at a car-wash fundraiser