



CLIENT

CLIENT

Pennsylvania Economy League
Suite 3130
1700 Market Street
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Econsult Corporation was retained by the Pennsylvania Economy League – Eastern Division (PEL) to develop a Commercial Corridor Assessment Strategy (CCAS). The goal of the project is to develop a strategic framework for investment that will help guide efforts to revitalize and reposition Philadelphia’s commercial corridors. This framework will be developed in concert with a range of local stakeholders and made available to the public in the summer of 2003.

THE CCAS WILL BUILD ON THE WORK DONE FOR NTI

In 2001 the Mayor of the City of Philadelphia announced the Neighborhood Transportation Initiative (NTI), an ambitious plan to revitalize the City’s deteriorating neighborhoods. While it is in the early stages of implementation, NTI represents a culmination of years of commitment, trust building, organizing, and planning. Funded by a planning grant from the William Penn Foundation (WPF), our project will build on this foundation.

WHAT ARE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS?

Many groups define commercial corridors differently. This study will use the definition of retail “centers” employed by the Philadelphia City Planning Commission (PCPC): centers that contain more than 10,000 square feet of total gross leasable area.

These centers range from neighborhood shopping strips and clusters to region-serving malls and downtown districts, and from eclectic entertainment districts to stand-alone supermarkets. In the most recent inventory conducted by the PCPC (1996), Philadelphia contained 258 commercial corridors with a total of 37 million square feet of gross leasable area and 17,388 retail units.

KEY QUESTIONS

In support of efforts to revitalize the city’s commercial corridors this project will address a number of questions:

- What are the potential roles of commercial corridors in today’s economy?
- What types of information can be used to measure the performance of corridors?
- How do we evaluate the future potential of commercial corridors?
- What are the most effective strategies/policies used for revitalizing commercial corridors?
- How can the success of these efforts be measured/determined?

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With the support of PEL, Econsult Corporation will provide a framework for answering these questions. More specifically, PEL and Econsult will interview key players involved with commercial corridors and review the relevant literature and programs. Additionally, four commercial corridors will be selected and evaluated in detail. This will involve identifying, auditing, and updating existing data on the selected commercial corridors, as well as developing measures to evaluate corridor performance. The ultimate aim of the project is to develop a framework for evaluating the merits and prospects of efforts to revitalize Philadelphia’s commercial corridors.