



FRANKFORD AVENUE ARTS CORRIDOR

Frankford Avenue had long been home to mixed-use structures where businesses intermingled with residents and flourished on the first floor and people lived above storefronts. After years of divestment, many of these buildings had been converted into residences, torn down or boarded up. Basic neighborhood retail services were all but absent. A strategy was needed to help redefine and develop this commercial corridor.

While it is not our only approach, art lies at the heart of our economic development efforts. Recognizing that artists often take risks and are heavily involved in community revitalization, NKCDC was determined to capture, direct and support this momentum. From this, our economic development efforts were borne. The Frankford Avenue Arts Corridor Plan was developed to draw arts-related businesses and revitalize the commercial corridor while maintaining a sense of authenticity the community values. A series of community-driven design charettes produced a strategic business attraction plan in 2004 which more recently resulted in the completion of an artistic streetscape improvement plan. As Frankford Avenue begins its renaissance, there is a renewed interest in reverting these ground floors into commercial spaces once again. In the meantime, early action strategies have been implemented to maintain the momentum, including ArtRacks, artistic benches and murals, and the redevelopment of a vacant building which now houses the Bambi Art Gallery. In the past three years thirty new businesses have located to the corridor and over forty vacant parcels have been presented with redevelopment plans that complement the vision to support the commercial and retail needs and desires of this community.

To date, this planning has leveraged over \$2million in infrastructure improvements. Special thanks to the William Penn Foundation, the Wachovia Regional Foundation, the State of Pennsylvania Hometown Streets funding and the countless other partners and volunteers who have lent their time and support.