

COATSVILLE AREA HOPE VI CHESTER COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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The Oak Street Revitalization Plan, for the Southeastern Pennsylvania communities of Coatesville and South Coatesville, was selected for funding in 1997 by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under its HOPE VI program. The program's goals are to:

- * Empower residents and encourage self-sufficiency;
- * Promote economic development;
- * Encourage neighborhood revitalization; and,
- * Change the physical shape of public housing.

The centerpiece of the Oak Street Revitalization Plan is the removal of a largely-abandoned public housing mega-project built on a prominent hill in the 1960s. In its place, a new neighborhood of tree-lined streets, porch-front homes, and a large neighborhood park are proposed. Infill housing would be similar in scale and architectural character to the area's existing housing stock. Homes would have pleasant front porches, sloping roofs, and eaves. Along with these new features, existing Woodland/Parkway townhomes in South Coatesville are to be renovated and privatized. In addition, the plan calls for the stabilization of surrounding neighborhoods, and the improvement of community services and housing for seniors.

Community passions about the development of the public housing site run high and a consensus-building workshop process was used to shape the ensuing debate. Citizens with differing opinions came together in groups during an intensive workshop session to try to articulate a common vision for the area. Key features that emerged from this process included the preservation of the top of the hill for recreational open space and adding several new community buildings in the immediate area, such as a daycare facility and multi-purpose activity center.

The HOPE VI Funds will be used to:

- * Demolish the Oak Street Housing Projects;
- * Stabilize existing neighborhoods through the construction of new housing on vacant lots and the rehabilitation of boarded up and "problem buildings;"
- * Improve community services within Coatesville and South Coatesville; and
- * Create convenient connections for seniors to the services they need.

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In addition, the HOPE VI Funds hope to:

- * Spur the revitalization of downtown Coatesville and South Coatesville;
- * Clear the path to self sufficiency by attracting new jobs and giving residents job skills;
- * Create safer streets and neighborhoods; and,
- * Increase transit service to the Coatesville area.

This planning effort recognizes that a single revitalization project, taken alone, often has only limited effect on the larger community. A single project implemented in concert with a wide variety of other public and private efforts, however, can produce dramatic results. In keeping with this holistic approach to community improvement, the Master Plan has identified several important strategies that take advantage of the community-wide revitalization that often accompanies the infusion of HOPE VI resources.



POST REVITALIZATION PLAN
Focus Area
OAK STREET - HOPE VI
Chester County, Pennsylvania

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