

Philadelphia's Industrial Development Strategy

In 2010, the City of Philadelphia released its Industrial Land and Market Strategy to guide updates to the city's zoning code, the Philadelphia2035 comprehensive plan, and the strategic investments being made by the city on job growth and land improvement. People often think of Philadelphia as post-industrial, but the market-driven data provided by this study indicates that one in five jobs here are related to the industrial sector. These jobs are well-paying, family-sustaining positions that allow for long-term employment and growth within a company, and are assets to Philadelphia's employment base. Over a three-month period in 2010, nearly 90 percent of industrially zoned land in the city was surveyed and categorized into 15 districts.

The strategy recommends a focused approach adding 22,000 industrial jobs over the next 20 years through more intensive use of well-located, but currently underutilized, industrially zoned land. The city used market data, land surveys, and interviews with key businesses and real estate professionals to guide the strategy. The emphasis was to produce a plan that is both rational and feasible to accomplish. New areas close to the Lower Schuylkill and Delaware rivers have been identified for future industrial intensification, as well as public investment to encourage and leverage private industrial development. An inventory of brownfield sites was developed which provides information about remediation activities in progress or completed.

Philadelphia was known at the turn of the 20th Century as the Workshop of the World based on its large and innovative manufacturing base. Philadelphia's current industrial attributes feature a transportation infrastructure including a sophisticated highway network, passenger and freight rail, an international airport and the largest freshwater port in the world. Philadelphia's location at the center of the Northeastern region; its companies, buoyed by the smart people that live, work and attend school there; and the continued investments by both the public and private sectors make Philadelphia a smart choice for modern industry. Today the city's industrial base includes traditional manufacturing, ranging from food to fashion to helicopters; advanced manufacturing such as pharmaceuticals; and transportation and logistics to support global enterprises. Underutilized properties can be transformed into modern industrial land, occupied by laboratories, flex space, warehouses and distribution centers, or purpose-built manufacturing buildings.

The Philadelphia Planning Commission, Commerce Department and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corp. participated in this study. The 100-page report can be found at this link: http://www.pidc-pa.org/userfiles/file/PIMLUS_Report_September_2010.pdf

Information on land available for development can be viewed on the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation's website at: <http://www.pidc-pa.org/available-properties>.



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