

# Weigh in on Southside planning

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [Southside](#) April 29, 2021

 *The latest in a series of posts on the Southside* 

## Community Action Development Corporation of Bethlehem

Lot's going on on the Southside — weigh in!



New  
Neighborhood  
Plan 2021-2027

Part 1   Part 2  
Part 3 – Available 4.29.21  
4.27.21 Community Presentation

We propose a unifying community empowerment effort that will enhance the quality of life and build a meaningful relationship between the community and south Bethlehem's continued development.

This approach seeks to preserve and enhance housing affordability and quality, public and green spaces, and youth engagement and programming by providing avenues that engage, connect and embolden residents to participate in the flourishing of their community and increase feelings of self-efficacy.

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selections from *Charles Malinchak, “South Bethlehem’s 6-year neighborhood development plan proceeds to finalization.” Morning Call, April 28, 2021.*

The next six years could see a south Bethlehem with improved playgrounds, more activities on the Greenway and rehabilitated housing in a plan discussed Tuesday night by representatives of the Community Action Development Corporation of Bethlehem.

The plan is called the Neighborhood Partnership Program, which works with city officials and resident input to design a six-year revitalization program to guide development of not only buildings but also amenities to neighborhoods.

The virtual discussion was designed to gain further input from residents and business owners on the plan, which has been in the creation phase since last year.

Besides what was discussed, Yari Colon-Lopez, director of the Community Action Development Corp of Bethlehem said the plan already includes several proposed projects.

“Keep in mind that this will be a plan and theme for the next six years ... and what we want to know is, Does this address the community’s concerns?” Colon-Lopez said.

The concerns already provided from residents through surveys are: affordable housing, improving youth engagement in the community, having more events or festivals, small business development and retaining those businesses.

She said another element expressed by residents is, “A general concern is change is happening and they [residents] may not have a voice in this change.”

Emily Folenta, senior planner for the Community Action Committee of the Lehigh Valley, said the plan will be available for public view on the CADCB website, but some examples contained in the plan include:

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- Buying buildings to create landlords invested in the community.
- Rehabilitating renter-occupied or private homes.
- Improving playgrounds and other public places.
- Expand the farmers market on the Greenway.
- Arrange affordable family events on the Greenway and other public places.
- Improve neighborhood walkability and lighting.
- Improve streetscapes.
- Develop a partnership with organizations to help resolve food insecurity.
- Create youth education programs to develop workforce skills.
- The public is encouraged to provide input to the plan on the CADCB website or in-person at its Bethlehem headquarters at 409 E. Fourth St., until May 4. The plan is expected to be finalized by May 12 or 13.