

**Tier 2 Characteristics:**

- Transit-oriented
- Mixed use
- Along Lancaster Avenue
- Serve township-wide needs
- Civic space
- Employment centers


# **ARDMORE**

**Location:** Lancaster Avenue from Chatham Road on the east to Wyoming Avenue on the west. The district extends north of Lancaster Avenue across the Keystone Rail Line to include Suburban Square and commercial properties along Montgomery Avenue.

**Economic Objective:** To work with Ardmore's existing structural fabric of eclectic, pedestrian-scale, and historic buildings to create a transit-oriented, mixed use community including unique public gathering spaces and pedestrian amenities.


## **Facts**

<b>Completed Studies</b>	<p><i>The Retail Report: Ardmore/Wynnewood Commercial District Primary Trade Area (1997)</i>  <i>Ardmore 2000 Business District Enhancement Plan (2000)</i>  <i>Ardmore Revitalization Plan (2001)</i>  <i>Ardmore Transit Center Conceptual Master Plan (2003)</i>  <i>Ardmore, Pennsylvania: A ULI Advisory Services Panel Report (2004)</i>  <i>Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plan (2005)</i>  <i>Ardmore Revitalization Plan Update (2005)</i>  <i>Ardmore Retail Strategy (2006)</i>  <i>Ardmore Storefront Guidelines (2006)</i>  <i>DVRPC US 30 Corridor Study (2011)</i>  <i>Ardmore Transit Center Development Plans (underway)</i></p>
<b>Zoning</b>	<p><b>Zoning Districts</b>  C1-Commercial, C2-Commercial, and CL-Commercial Zoning  Ardmore Special Development District (ASDD1, ASDD2) – <i>Adopted 1990</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote compatibility between the commercial district and adjacent residential neighborhoods</li> <li>• Improve economic vitality (foster enhanced mix of stores and services based on Ardmore Merchandising Mix Plan)</li> <li>• Allow uses that maintains cultural quality and unique character of the district</li> <li>• Encourage uses/architecture with pedestrian orientation</li> <li>• Encourage mixed uses (1<sup>st</sup> floor commercial, 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> floor residential/office)</li> <li>• Promote the beautification of the district</li> </ul> <p><b>Overlay Zoning Districts</b>  Mixed Use Special Transportation Overlay District (MUST) – <i>Adopted 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to all lots in the ASDD-1, C-1, C-2, and CL Commercial Districts within a 1,500 feet radius of the Ardmore SEPTA/Amtrak rail station.</li> <li>• Lots may be developed to underlying commercial district by conditional use</li> <li>• Encourage mixed-use, transit-oriented development to reduce automobile dependency and promote transit ridership</li> <li>• Encourage shared parking (promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings)</li> <li>• Prohibit auto-oriented businesses and drive-throughs</li> <li>• Design standards for architectural compatibility</li> <li>• Density bonuses for public gathering space and moderate-income housing</li> </ul> <p>The Historic Resource Overlay District - <i>Adopted 2000</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies to historically-designated properties (see Ardmore Commercial Center Historic District map below)</li> </ul>

<b>Historic Districts</b>	<p>Designated (see map)</p> 
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<p>The Ardmore Initiative  Civic associations: Ardmore Progressive; North Ardmore; Ardwood  First Friday Main Line (art and culture organization)  Ardmore Business Association (business networking and promotion)  SEPTA  Amtrak  Kimco Realty Corporation (Suburban Square), Fox Park Corporation (Greenfield Avenue), Stoltz Management (Ardmore West Shopping Center, Ardmore Theatre),  Dranoff Properties (Ardmore Transit Center Project)  Lower Merion Township (Administration &amp; Public Safety Building, public surface parking lots)</p>

## Observations

<b>Unique Features</b>	<p>Access to rail and bus transit. Ardmore Station serves both the Amtrak Keystone Line and SEPTA Paoli Thorndale regional rail line. The Keystone Line provides service from New York to Philadelphia and Harrisburg.  Location of the rail line bifurcates the commercial area and limits connections between Suburban Square and the businesses along Lancaster Avenue.  Municipal seat of Lower Merion Township  Commercial anchors: Suburban Square (1927), Ardmore West, Greenfield Avenue  Business Improvement District (Ardmore Initiative)  Ardmore Commercial Historic District  Ardmore Redevelopment Area certified in 2004 (Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, P.L. 991, No.385), which identified this area as in need of revitalization and established a process for developing a plan to revitalize this area.</p>
<b>Design</b>	<p>Comprehensive wayfinding and parking identification program implemented in 2002  Increased and consistent streetscaping could contribute to the pedestrian environment  <u>Ardmore Storefront Design Guidelines (2006)</u> – <i>should be implemented Township-wide</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orient window displays to the street</li> <li>• Awnings and signage proportional with building scale</li> </ul> Encourage façade improvements through grants or low-interest loans  Need enhanced public spaces and streetscape to create a unique niche</p>
<b>Market Area</b>	<p>Market area includes regional retail and serves local neighborhood and extends beyond Lower Merion Township</p>

<b>Retail Mix</b>	<p>ERA survey and recommendations (<i>Ardmore Retail and Merchandising Mix Strategy</i> 2006): Implemented by Township Retail Recruiter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service</li> <li>• Retail – build on housewares/furnishings stores</li> <li>• Restaurant – recruit a variety of restaurants</li> <li>• Office – second floor uses</li> <li>• Vacant – target small- to mid-size local/regional businesses</li> </ul> <p>ERA recommended four recruitment zones with specific appropriate retail categories:</p> 
<b>Relationship to Adjoining Neighborhoods</b>	<p>Many buildings along Lancaster Avenue are mixed use with residential above retail/commercial  Nonconforming commercial uses raise concerns of commercial creep into residential areas  Strong pedestrian connections exist between residential neighborhoods and commercial areas; the pedestrian environment needs improvement  Active civic associations</p>
<b>Relationship to Other Commercial Districts</b>	<p>Need to create stronger, more attractive pedestrian/bicycle connections between Ardmore and nearby commercial areas in Haverford and Wynnewood  Suburban Square will remain a regional draw for upscale shopping but downtown Ardmore can stand out by offering a more eclectic mix (e.g., pubs, unique restaurants and arts-oriented uses)</p>
<b>Parking</b>	<p>SEPTA parking at Ardmore Station is at capacity - 105 permit (\$20/month), 87 non-SEPTA (Kimco \$1/day); Six bike racks (12 spaces)  Eight Lower Merion Township surface, public parking lots (417 permit and metered spaces), plus on-street metered parking spaces  The Ardmore Redevelopment Plan recommended redeveloping several municipal surface parking lots as mixed-use, parking or open space. The redevelopment of the Cricket Lot site involving a public-private partnership with Dranoff Properties is underway.  Private parking is provided at Suburban Square, Greenfield Avenue and Ardmore West  “Ruby’s” (West) Lot on Anderson Avenue is owned and maintained by Suburban Square  Employees of businesses and retailers take up convenient customer parking  Township ordinance expands the number of public parking spaces that count towards the off-street parking requirement for buildings being converted to restaurants</p>
<b>Transportation</b>	<p>Access to Lancaster Avenue (U.S. Route 30), Montgomery Avenue, and transit routes  Ardmore Station (SEPTA Paoli Thorndale Line and Amtrak Keystone Line).  Walking distance to Norristown High Speed Line stop at Ardmore Junction  Numerous bus stops (Routes 44, 103, 105, 106)  Bicycle and pedestrian connections need improvement  This area is within the Lower Merion High School Walk Zone</p>

<b>Density/Intensity</b>	<p>The study area is substantially developed – redevelopment of underutilized sites into mixed use sites</p> <p><u>Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plans:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Ardmore Transit Center</i>: Replace existing surface commuter parking with proposed mixed use; develop new station facilities with retail, commuter pick up/drop off, parking garage.</li> <li>• <i>Cricket Avenue</i>: Replace existing surface parking, proposed mixed use (retail, residential, parking garage)</li> </ul>
<b>Open Space</b>	<p>Schauffele Plaza</p> <p>Ardmore and Lancaster Avenue Intersection Pocket Park</p> <p>Suburban Square Plaza</p> <p>Outdoor dining</p> <p>Walking distance to Linwood Park, Vernon V. Young Memorial Park, South Ardmore Park, Packer Park, Ardmore Avenue Community Center, PALM, Ardmore Public Pool</p>

### ***Existing Studies and Recommendations***

<b>Redevelopment Opportunities</b>	<p>Surface parking lots</p> <p>Train Station</p> <p>Underutilized commercial lots</p> <p>Improve quality of residential properties above shops along Lancaster Avenue</p>
<b>Existing Strategies</b>	<p><u>Zoning</u></p> <p>Ardmore Special Development district – <i>Adopted 1990</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster enhanced mix of stores and services</li> <li>• Encourage uses/form with pedestrian orientation</li> <li>• Encourage mixed uses</li> </ul> <p>Mixed Use Special Transportation Overlay District – <i>Adopted 2006</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage transit-oriented development and shared parking</li> <li>• Design standards</li> <li>• Density bonuses for public gathering space and moderate-income housing</li> </ul> <p><u>Design</u></p> <p>Implement storefront and signage design guidelines and additional business support programs to retain and develop a quality retail mix.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage façade improvements (grants, low-interest loans)</li> <li>• Enhance public civic spaces</li> <li>• Provide improved mix of upper floor and nearby residential development</li> <li>• Increased and consistent streetscaping</li> <li>• Gateway treatment at eastern entrance</li> </ul> <p><u>Transportation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activate and improve circulation around the train station</li> <li>• Install pedestrian amenities at all signalized intersections along Lancaster Avenue</li> <li>• Improve pedestrian and transportation linkages and connections</li> </ul>
<b>Potential Development Projects</b>	<p>Suburban Square</p> <p><u>Pending:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ardmore Transit Center project (train station, parking garage)</li> <li>• 112 Cricket Avenue (121 dwelling units)</li> <li>• 104 W. Lancaster Avenue at Anderson Avenue intersection (Rite Aid)</li> </ul> <p><u>Approved:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11-15 East Athens Avenue (33 dwelling units under construction )</li> <li>• 112 Sibley Avenue (48 dwelling units )</li> <li>• 100 St Georges Road – a.k.a. YMCA (31 dwelling units)</li> </ul>



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## COMMUNITY CHARACTER

