

BAUM/CENTRE PLANNING INITIATIVE  
FRIENDSHIP SWOT ANALYSIS  
JUNE 26, 2003

Strengths

- The abutting neighborhoods are strong but the connections need to be better and safer
- ABC Parklet and W. PA Conservancy flower bed are assets
- Neighborhood servicing businesses are an asset
- Baum Boulevard is a highway commercial corridor with related uses and faster traffic
- Centre Avenue is more a mixed-use (neighborhood commercial/residential) corridor with slower traffic. This street is more pedestrian friendly.
- Entertainment venues are a plus

Weaknesses

- Much of the corridor is not pedestrian friendly
- There are major north/south conflicts with cars and bikes/pedestrians
- The corridor divides the neighborhoods
- The choice of materials of the new Marriott is not in scale with surrounding buildings.
- Parking in the front of buildings acts like another lane of traffic for pedestrians, e.g., Giant Eagle
- Commuters drive through the Friendship neighborhood for short cuts, particularly in the a.m.
- The traffic signals along the corridor need to be timed
- There are too many bus stops on Centre

Opportunities

- Bike lanes or other accommodations for bikes are needed
- Green spaces, landscaping/trees, gardens, trellis, street furniture and outside eating areas need to be incorporated
- A better connection needs to be developed with what is happening on Penn Avenue
- The new developments and renovations may leverage other building improvements
- Baum and Centre should be treated differently in terms of scale, signage, materials, speed of traffic
- All buildings should maintain a strong relationship to the street with parking on the side or in the rear
- Wayfinding signs are needed
- Baum presents an opportunity for an urban, landscaped boulevard
- The utilities are already underground. Build on this amenity.
- Look at Washington, D.C (Connecticut and Wisconsin Avenues) for benchmarking examples.
- Residential Permit Parking helps to manage the parking problem
- Bike parking should be incorporated into both existing and new developments
- A graffiti writing location needs to be found

### Threats

- There are concerns with the possible traffic impacts and scale of the proposed Giant Eagle expansion
- Traffic will continue to move too fast on Baum
- Much of the new construction is out of scale
- The existing concrete traffic islands are inappropriate and need to be renovated/removed
- There are concerns with continued expansion into the residential districts
- Some of the new developments have adopted a suburban approach
- Residential property has been purchased for speculation
- Too many cars, not enough capacity
- Too many employees, not enough space
- Developers are using the proximity/access to the busway as a way of limiting parking spaces

### Themes

- Better and safer connections need to be made to the abutting neighborhoods
- There is an opportunity for creating a green, urban boulevard
- The two streets require different treatments in terms of use, materials, scale and speed of traffic
- In all cases, the buildings along the corridor must maintain a direct relationship to the street with parking on the side or in the rear
- Encroachment into the abutting residential areas must be contained