



A rendering of an aerial view of the 30<sup>th</sup> St. Station District Plan  
Photo: Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP, with WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff, OLIN, and HR&A Advisors

## Philly's 30<sup>th</sup> St. Station District Plan gets put to public

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The fourth of five open houses took place Wednesday at 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station, gauging public reaction and feedback to a 25-year plan for the West Philly area.

In order to stay on par with the transportation hubs in other major cities on the east coast, Philadelphia's 30th Street Station is undergoing a major overhaul, and Wednesday marked the fourth of five public meetings to

devise a massive plan for the West Philly district.

Philadelphians at Wednesday's meeting seemed to feel it was high time the city get on board with transit progress seen throughout the rest of the nation.

"You could do that in Washington D.C. You could do that in Boston. You could do that in New York City, but you couldn't do that here, and it just makes us look small-time compared to the other major east coast cities," said Frank Innes of Philadelphia, a commuter and attendant at Wednesday's open house at 30th Street Station.

"I think it's great that this is happening. I'm really looking forward to being able to walk from here to the subway or the trolley without going outside. These are necessary improvements," he said.

The 30th Street Station District Plan was launched in the summer of 2014 and designed to be a long-range, master vision for the future of 30th Street Station led by Amtrak, Drexel University, Brandywine Realty Trust, the Pennsylvania Dept. of Transportation and SEPTA, to be completed in the year 2040.

Renderings released to the public Tuesday gave a glimpse at the plan.

Thus far, the plan's organizers have held four open houses since January 2015. The next step is to put out a final district plan this summer.

"This is extraordinarily positive," said David Niles, a resident of Marion Station.

"What I see here is more of a Union Station in Washington, D.C., which is an incredible facility. You get people to come and stay, versus passing through. Before Brandywine built Cira Centre, we were the last remaining major city in the country that didn't develop the western side of the river. We've got a lot of really interesting opportunity in this city and it's time to step it up a little bit."

The study boundaries encompass approximately 640 acres bounded by 22nd Street, Walnut Street, 36th Street, Spring Garden Street and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway.

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Craig Schulz, a spokesman for Amtrak, said there's not exactly a financing plan that's "ready for public consumption." It's still conceptual, he said.

"It's a two-year, long-range study that wraps up in the summer. The goal is to develop a long-term, comprehensive vision for the 30th Street Station district, including the rail yard.

"This is the fourth of five open houses where we've solicited feedback from the public – from the neighbors who live in the area, people who use the station, commuters, different stakeholders, and we've incorporated all those comments. It looks out onto a 25 to 40-year horizon and includes a mix of short-term, near-term immediate gratification projects that can be done in a short time frame...We've gotten to a point now where we're up to a draft vision and the next step is taking the feedback we get today and incorporating it into a final document."

*source: metro.us*