



# Paradigm *Shift* Back to Urbanism: Complete Neighborhoods for Cincinnati

## Citywide Form-Based Code Charrette: Summary Report

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## Introduction

# A



# Is Urban Cincinnati at a Tipping Point?

## Overview

Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods are at a tipping point. The City has lost 40% of its population since 1950 leaving suburban densities in the City's formerly urban neighborhoods. Many residential buildings and lots sit vacant or not being maintained, with over 10,000 historically contributing units in need of renovation. Neighborhood main streets have withered due to lack of people, competition from nearby big box stores, and bad thoroughfare design that speeds cars and potential customers through these neighborhoods rather than to them.

But Cincinnati has a tremendous opportunity. In these urban neighborhoods they already have what other cities want and are trying to build: A variety of urban housing types, including some of the best collection of Missing Middle Housing in the country; a network of neighborhood main streets ready to be revitalized; a rich, diverse, and well-built collection of historic architecture; and, easily accessible open space networks created by the topography that weaves throughout these neighborhoods.

One of the primary reasons for cities like Cincinnati to be optimistic has to do with the convergence of the two biggest population groups – the Millennials (Gen Y, ME generation) and the Boomers – that are both creating a strong and growing demand for living in walkable urban places. What the Millennials want, the boomers need: small, simple spaces for living, community/people/density, access to transit, and proximity to services and amenities (i.e. main streets and downtowns). The Queen City is positioning itself to capture this demand and to put a strategy in place that makes these neighborhoods Complete Places with everything urban neighborhoods have to offer.



The week of Saturday, April 28th, Cincinnati hosted a citywide charrette with a multi-disciplinary team that included Opticos Design, glaserworks, Urban Advisors, Hall Planning & Engineering, Brandt Retail Group, and The Wise Economy Group. The objective was to frame the City's opportunities and challenges and to strategize about how a Form-Based Code can be utilized as a tool to enable the City to capture the potential of their unique urban neighborhoods and achieve "Thriving Re-Urbanization," which is a primary goal of their newly drafted Comprehensive Plan. As part of this charrette, Opticos built upon months of field documentation, including many hours spent on Google Earth, mapping analysis, photography, and an assessment of the existing zoning code, in order to create an initial calibration of Cincinnati's Urban-to-Rural Transect.



## Challenges Facing Cincinnati

Cincinnati faces many challenges and issues, such as population decline of neighborhoods and an aging infrastructure.

### Population Decline

Cincinnati has lost forty percent of its population since 1950. The population loss has been from many different events over the course of the last sixty years. This population loss is the result of people moving away from the core of the city to neighboring suburbs and counties, as well as from people moving out of the region.

Many factors contributed to this population exodus, including FHA financing of new suburban homes only, not rehabilitation of older structures. Many automobile producers and retailers, in their own interest, influenced national transportation policy after 1924 to make room for motor vehicles for Cincinnati neighborhoods through demolition of old structures and the widening of existing thoroughfares.

This population loss has taken the population of the neighborhoods from an urban density – that supported thriving neighborhood main streets – down to densities that are more closely associated with auto-oriented suburbs that are not supportive of retail and services. Jobs followed the movement of people out of the City, as the areas around Cincinnati proved ripe for the suburban patterns of development with easy access to highways and freeways.

The size of Cincinnati's average family has decreased over the past few decades as well. Often, children of Cincinnati's families grew up and moved away to attend college or to form families of their own. Their parents often remained, reducing a household size that may have been 4 or more people down to 2 or fewer.

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### Connectivity

Cincinnati's rich history as a City that grew up with neighborhoods built around the streetcar system has proven to be both a strength and weakness of many of the neighborhoods. In many cases, the streetcar system was laid down to follow old dirt roads or wagon trails that radiated out of the City. These routes often took advantage of the valleys and streambeds to connect what were then towns and cities at the other edges of the City. The development patterns of this era of growth lent themselves to the building of complete neighborhoods where streetcars ran down neighborhood main streets. These main streets provided the majority of shopping, employment and services needed by the residents living within walking distance.

With the advent around 1920 of the affordable automobile, the pressure for changing urban patterns began to appear. Historian Peter D. Norton, in his book entitled "Fighting Traffic," says the following:

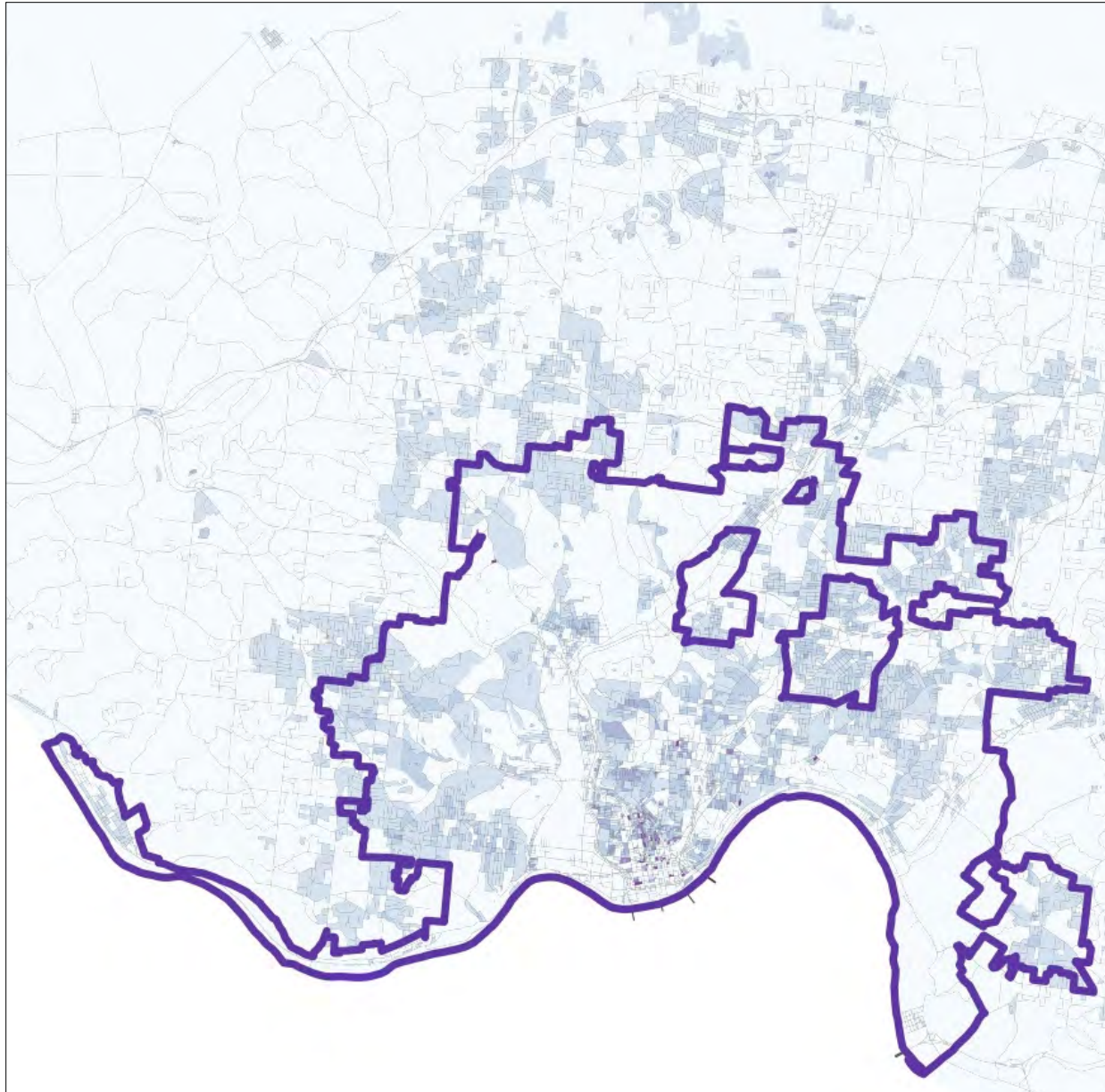
*"Around 1920, with the backing of local chambers of commerce, traffic engineers began to pursue ... social organization of city streets. Engineers formalized customary rules (vehicles should keep to the right of the center of the street...), urged better enforcement, and developed new rules... They narrowed the functions of both the sidewalks and the roadway. This formalization of traffic forever changed the character of city streets... Cincinnati's city manager Clarence Sherrill – a trained engineer – put the new principal this way: 'as traffic demands grow more acute the use of streets for other purposes must be more and more restricted... But, Cincinnati had an usually bad safety record. Like city people elsewhere, most Cincinnatians blamed motorists, and many were prepared to force them to limit the cars speed mechanically. In 1923, 42,000 people – more than 10 percent of the cities total population – signed petitions for a city ordinance requiring local motorists to equip their cars with governors that would shut their engines off at 25 mph."*

Fierce resistance by automobile interests and some citizens, however, defeated the proposed ordinance. Those wishing to maintain the pedestrian scale of downtown Cincinnati and the surrounding areas, lost out to other interests. The interests of efficiency lost to the freedom of the motor vehicle driver to use the open road. The same pressure led to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Interstate Highway System after World War II (interestingly the President strenuously opposed in city interstate sections but was politically overruled) and the streetcar system was replaced by rubber tired transit vehicles and cars. People began to move farther and farther from the City to essentially untested patterns of development that assumed no one would walk to satisfy daily needs. Inexpensive asphalt pavement, over abundant parking, and healthy gasoline tax revenues created the new, low-density, drive-only suburbs. The old downtowns were also changed. In the loop section of downtown Chicago, for example, on January 10, 1928 the City removed 1,743 curb parking spaces to ease motor vehicle flow. Neighborhood Main Streets, once the center of activity, became less relevant to meeting the retail and service needs of residents.

### Aging Infrastructure

Like many Mid-western cities, Cincinnati's aging infrastructure needs to be upgraded and modernized. This infrastructure includes streets and sidewalks, hillside steps, underground sewer (combined sanitary and storm), water, and an overhead electric system. Old conventional thinking must be refreshed via efforts to build more sustainability and must be advanced. Over 10,000 contributing historic buildings and structures are in need of renovation and rehabilitation before the effects of deferred maintenance and neglect take the structures beyond salvage.





**Household Density.** The graphic to the left illustrates household density for the city and the suburbs at the time of the 2010 Census. Light blue is the least density, shading through blue to purple for the highest density. Except for a very few places in downtown, density in the city is very similar to that found in the suburbs.

In 1950 the population of the city was over half a million and by 2010 had declined to just over 296,000 persons, a decline of 41 percent. The density map for the city in 1950 would have shown fewer areas of light blue and more of dark blue. A similar pattern is seen with employment, which was once almost entirely within the city and is now spread over both the city and the suburbs.

## Strengths and Opportunities

While Cincinnati's challenges and constraints might paint a very dark picture, the City is well positioned to take advantage of the many strengths and opportunities to be found.

### Good Bones

The City has what many planners, architects and urbanists refer to as "good bones." For a century after its founding in 1777, Cincinnati's population was confined to the basin and spread along the Ohio River. Early furniture making was augmented by a heavy meatpacking industry with associated candle, soap leather and lard processing. The desire to escape the industrial basin to higher elevations for fresher air created wealthy home sites on the ridges, initially only accessible by horse. Subsequent horse car lines, streetcar lines and inclines, allowed larger numbers of citizens to enjoy the health benefits of life at the higher elevations. Thus, many Cincinnati neighborhoods experienced the height of American city planning.

The period of the change from 19th to 20th century was called by Boston Journalist Sylvester Baxter, the "Great Civic Awakening," where reformers and designers sought to mitigate the effects of rapid growth and rampant industrialization. Streetcars linked the City with its early suburbs. What are now neighborhoods, were complete towns or cities organized around the streetcar lines that ran up and down ravines and easily accessible routes. The historic, gridded pattern of streets, interrupted only by the railroads, topography and the waterways, provide today's travelers an interconnected network that, when refurbished, allows balanced mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, automobiles, and transit. Many of the earlier transportation elements, such as the streetcar, sidewalks, and even inclines, should be reevaluated to determine their place in creating the multi modal balance desired today.

### Built Environment

Some Neighborhood Business Districts have remained healthy and others have reinvented themselves through tireless effort and resolve. The rich and diverse inventory of the built environment has what many other younger cities, or cities that have not fared as well as Cincinnati, strive for. Cincinnati still has beautiful tree lined streets, magnificent ridgeline vistas and a diverse housing stock at all price points and scales.

### Forward Thinking

The City and local agencies are proactively working to remedy many of the major infrastructure and neighborhood issues. The Metropolitan Sewer District and the City government are working to find regional, watershed, neighborhood and block-sized solutions to the issues of the aging, combined sanitary and stormwater sewer system. Cincinnati Center City Development Corporation (3CDC) is working with great success to reinvigorate downtown and the "Over the Rhine" neighborhood. Many local Community Development Corporations (CDC's) are working tirelessly to stabilize and repopulate neighborhoods like Northside, Camp Washington and others.



### The Next Demographic Wave

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These combined strengths and opportunities set the stage for Cincinnati to take advantage of a powerful emerging opportunity: the convergence of two groups representing approximately 47% of the US population. 76 million are Baby Boomers, the other 70 million are Millennials, and from opposite ends of the demographic spectrum these two clusters are about to converge in the urban living space – one driven by wants and the other by needs.

Baby Boomers, the generation presently leaving the work force the most rapidly, are also selling suburban homes in growing numbers and seeking their next, perhaps final, lifestyle opportunity. While many still wish to remain close to the neighborhoods in which they established and raised their families, others are choosing the convenience and community offered by reemerging urban locales. Aging-in-place is enhanced by walkability, proximate services and ease of access to shopping, dining and entertainment options. Smaller living spaces make lower maintenance demands and better suit defined incomes and those who may wish to travel or become snow birds. Public green space serves as a common, maintenance free backyard. Quality public transportation suits those for whom driving may no longer be desirable or even possible.

For Millennials – the generation most quickly moving into and up within the work force and the demographic most desired by forward thinking communities – those same Baby Boomer' needs translate into wants. A growing body of research reveals young people who actively choose against large homes, back yards, long commutes by car and the amenities of suburbanism previously so cherished by their parents. For this segment community and quality of experience are paramount, walking, biking and public transportation are preferred modes of commuting and mixed use living offers endless opportunities to connect, participate and engage.

Cincinnati is uniquely qualified to offer attractive opportunities to its share of this large populace pool. Walkable urban neighborhoods, beautiful historic buildings, a widespread and well maintained network of urban greenspace, and visionary leadership with the corporate community, as well as at both the governmental and community levels, offer a solid foundation to support a push toward reurbanization with the benefits that will attend success.



# Need for a Comprehensive Paradigm Shift



## Overview

For Cincinnati to best take advantage of its many strengths and opportunities, there must be a paradigm shift away from the conventional thinking of the past 60 years. This shift encompasses a wide gamut of topics and city departments, such as economic development, transportation, infrastructure, planning, zoning, as well as in decision making. The following are areas where this shift is necessary for Cincinnati to achieve its goals of "thriving re-urbanization."

### Refocusing Economic Development

Economic development is often seen as a marketing effort to attract new business and create jobs. Typical solutions in this type of effort have included industrial parks, finding tenants or headquarters businesses and attracting major industrial users with tax incentives. While all of these efforts can help, this idea of economic development differs from the ideas held by business. Most businesses are not interested in job creation; they are interested in productivity that leads to profits, and jobs are a result of profits that allow expansion. At the same time, gaining a headquarters office will add to downtown, but may do less to help retail and business in the rest of the City if the employees live outside the City in suburbs.

Many factors affect productivity, including location near resources or enabling infrastructure, proximity to markets or critical vendors and suppliers, and available space suitably zoned and permitted for the proposed use. One of the biggest contributors to productivity outside of these physical factors is the ability to attract and retain a labor force within close proximity to work and an environment with strong institutional support and educational partners to ensure long-term continuing education and skills development for all ages, both for children and for those in the labor force. The question of competing with suburban locations, then, becomes one of what community attributes will attract employees to live and work in a particular location?

Community attributes that can aid in attracting and retaining residents include a mix and range of housing suitable for varying income levels, and a mix and range of amenities close to home: retail and services, entertainment uses, a range of recreation options, educational infrastructure, natural and urban public open spaces, community authenticity and identity, and the perception of public safety.

When a prospective business evaluates the Cincinnati market, each of these attributes within the City will be considered in light of conditions in the suburban locations. Downtown Cincinnati is a successful and vital part of the City. When, however, the evaluation extends to the neighborhood areas, the comparison begins to suffer. Most of Cincinnati's neighborhoods have the attributes noted above, but suffer from perceptions of a lack of safety (which is mostly not the reality), a perception of lackluster primary and secondary education, dysfunctional retail districts and, because of past traffic improvements, a lack of character and walkability on formerly transit-oriented corridors.

At one time, the City of Cincinnati was the center of the region for both jobs and housing. Over time the City ceded importance to the suburbs and regional transportation engineering enabled the move to the suburbs while inserting suburban large-scale corridors into the hearts of

neighborhoods. As shown in the previous sections, both population and employment have moved from the City to the region. With the building of traffic moving systems, that were designed to get people out of the city quickly to suburban destinations, and the removal of the streetcar systems, the move of people to the suburbs resulted in a devaluation of properties in the City.

### To revitalize the City, you must revive the neighborhoods

Changing demographics, as outlined in the earlier section of this report, offer a unique opportunity for the City of Cincinnati that cannot be duplicated easily in suburban locations. Restoring walkability and transit to these neighborhood corridors will attract the younger population of millennials while fulfilling needs for older population cohorts. A singular advantage that these areas have in competition with the suburbs is their historic and authentic character and identity, at pricing that is attainable both by millennials and by seniors looking to relocate near services. Cincinnati's neighborhoods have most of the attributes that are desired by these age cohorts and if City redevelopment efforts are concentrated not only in downtown, but also in the neighborhoods, these areas, without adding significant density, can once again thrive. Capturing these shifting demographic groups to fill in the depopulated areas will provide the labor force and increase the potential for productivity for future employers.

This idea of economic development is a paradigm shift from a marketing model to a ground-up model, based on increasing the community attributes that engender labor force attraction, and to restore the neighborhoods and vitality that attract an educated labor force to assure potential employers that a location within the City offers significant advantages compared to the suburbs, both for their business and their employees.



**Parcel to Building Value.** This map shows a typical neighborhood corridor identified as one of the study areas (outlined in red). Parcels in grey and dark grey have building value greater than land value. Parcels in brown represent parcels where the building value is less than half of the land value. This is significant because a typical house will have a value of one to three times the lot value, and typical commercial buildings are often over five times the value of the land they occupy.

What is striking here is that the actual buildings in Cincinnati's neighborhoods are not of poor quality. Many of the existing buildings were built of brick and stone and of such quality that building to the same high standard now would be financially infeasible. These values are a result of the lowered demand that in turn is a direct result of suburban expansion and suburban scale traffic improvements through former streetcar neighborhoods. As such, this map represents opportunities that can be exploited for revitalization.

### A Case for On-street Parking on Warsaw Avenue

Although a wide, high-speed thoroughfare is easily understood as a major challenge to the establishment of a comfortable and successful main street environment, a common concern is the realistic effect on vehicular travel efficiency if any significant changes to the roadway would be attempted. If street changes are implemented to improve neighborhood centers, will commuter travel times be adversely effected? What are the real consequences of adding on-street parking, reducing numbers of travel lanes, reducing street widths, or reducing speeds in neighborhood business districts?

Initial analysis at the City-wide charrette quantitatively demonstrated that comfortable main streets and efficient vehicular travel were not mutually exclusive priorities. A transportation synchronization run studied the effects on travel times along a three-quarter mile stretch of Warsaw Avenue in the case of adding on-street parking and maintaining a 25-mile-per-hour speed, typical needs for a neighborhood main street revitalization. It was discovered that these changes would only add 45 seconds to the average vehicular travel time.

In exchange for only 45 additional seconds to one's commute time, the neighborhood could gain the means to revitalize and grow a successful main street. On-street parking and reasonable vehicular speeds offer a retail-friendly environment, with opportunity to provide more amenities for the community. In exchange for 45 additional seconds to one's commute time, vehicular commuters would also gain the advantage, through on-street parking, of easy and efficient means to stop for quick errands on the way home while supporting local neighborhoods and businesses.





### Circulation and Transportation

A paradigm shift is needed to rethink the circulation patterns and transportation options available to Cincinnati's citizens. Major thoroughfares that connect neighborhoods and also traverse neighborhood main streets must be rebalanced to become complete streets. They have the complex task of serving both the "through movement" automobiles, trucks and transit and providing significantly improved comfort and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists. Managed traffic speeds and compact urban scale are needed to help main streets become vibrant neighborhood centers again.

Current traffic management, however, undercuts walkability and removes parking options at times most important for merchant survival. So comprehensive analysis aimed at finding the means to rebalance priorities is needed, followed by a functional rebalance of these key thoroughfares. In reality minor changes can have major impact on district viability even while having a negligible impact on the overall travel time along any given corridor. However, without change many of these neighborhoods face an uphill battle that may never be won.

Changes in the functional balance of the thoroughfares between land access and mobility are not intended for the entire length of the corridor. Instead, the greatest focus occurs in the neighborhood core where the most walkable areas are designed. Often, efforts to rebalance the modes of the in-town thoroughfares make very small changes in the overall travel time along a corridor. Without this rebalancing of the modes – major thoroughfares through Neighborhood Main Streets – many of these neighborhoods face an uphill battle that may never be won.



### Neighborhood Business Districts

Cincinnati is rich in neighborhoods and each is a source of pride and passion to its residents. Even in those which face the most obvious and serious challenges there are committed citizen advocates. But advocacy without action can accomplish little, and certainly the City's overall population decline, felt in almost of these areas, has affected the viability of once thriving retail districts.

To bring back population, neighborhoods must recreate the range of amenities that historically made them so appealing. But can those amenities be put in place before that population arrives to support them, since only by attracting a steady stream of customers can any business succeed?

To meet this challenge there must be a comprehensive effort to establish a unique sense of place for each place; there must be a thoroughgoing effort to simultaneously populate, coordinate and manage that place and there must be a clear recognition of area strengths and weaknesses, as well as existing and projected commercial capacity within and without any community.

Moreover, there needs to be recognition of the symbiotic relationship between and among neighborhoods, as well as with the center City areas of Downtown and Over the Rhine. For any to thrive, all must strive and work together.



### Placemaking

Cincinnati is a city of neighborhoods. It is usually clear, even to visitors, when one passes from one neighborhood to another, and when one is occupying the "center" (cultural and symbolic if not geographical) of a neighborhood. These cues are physical, and usually a result of topography or historic development patterns. Despite severe disinvestment in some neighborhoods, these well-defined neighborhood patterns remain and are a very important asset to be leveraged in revitalization efforts.

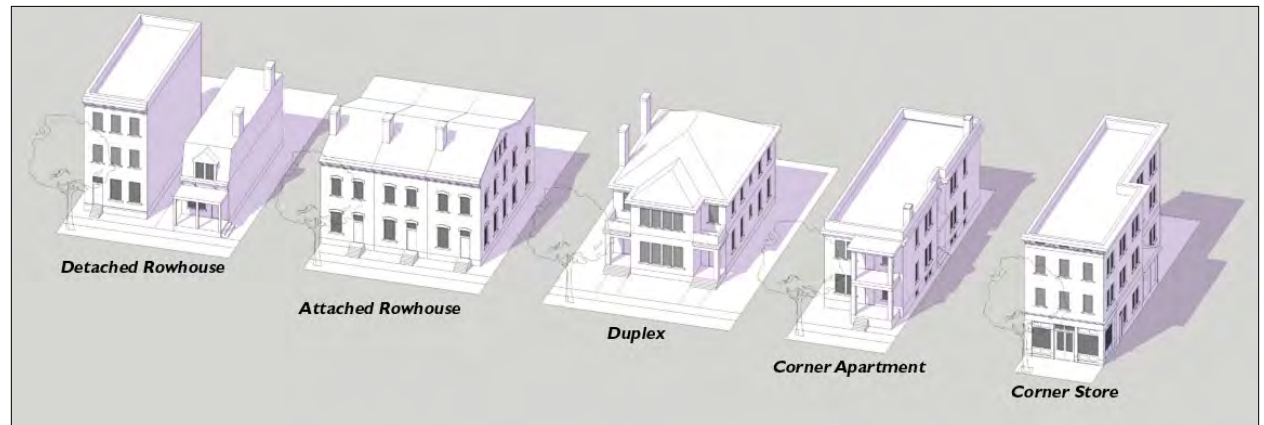
But in order for revitalization to be effective in Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods, larger-scale efforts are needed on the part of the City to truly have an impact. The current model of the CDCs is an important tool, but instead of remodeling a small handful of homes each year, the City should select a small handful of priority neighborhoods and make it a goal to revitalize hundreds of houses in each of them every year. This is what is necessary to have the catalytic impact that many of these neighborhoods need.

This will take some creative thinking on the City's part. For example, one strategy to consider might be to make it attractive for police officers and firefighters to move into these neighborhoods by providing them with either inexpensive renovated homes in solid, beautiful "historic" buildings or by giving them to the pre-renovated home for free or nearly free. The added bonus of an effort like this, in addition to having more people in the neighborhood and renovated homes, is that the presence of police and fire fighters within the community has proven to provide a stronger sense of safety for those living in or considering moving into a neighborhood.

### A Community Character-Driven Approach to Zoning and Subdivision

Currently many of the City's standards do not reinforce the physical characteristics and uniqueness of Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods; in fact, they often undermine those definitive aspects. Cincinnati's Zoning Code is a conventional, use-based Euclidian code, its street standards are dominated by the desire to move vehicles fast and to improve traffic flow, with little consideration for pedestrians or bicyclists, and its subdivision ordinance is driven by suburban standards. In addition, Cincinnati's zoning map is a patchwork that reflects estimated uses and occupancies of buildings that may no longer be accurate and often has no connection to Community Plans that have been created by each neighborhood. Also, within these maps, areas are often grossly and inappropriately zoned by any reasonable measure – a situation that appears only when a real estate developer proposes a development project. Lastly, Cincinnati's codes were created with the intent of regulating one building at a time, without regard to the public realm or to full streets, blocks and neighborhoods.

Cincinnati must change its regulatory framework to recognize and celebrate each neighborhood's unique community character and urban morphology and to consider how individual building designs and the design of the streets work in concert with each other to form great public places and a comfortable, vibrant public realm. Its codes must allow developers to build sensible residential and commercial densities where compact development will be most beneficial and appropriate, and prohibit higher densities where they are inappropriate or out of character. Cincinnati's codes should not only consider and categorize historic building form patterns, they should embrace those patterns and encourage future development to perpetuate those patterns while allowing contemporary interpretations in architectural detailing and materiality. Cincinnati's future codes should be an extension of Community Plans, and should be framed by the philosophy that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts." A Form-Based Code is the perfect zoning tool to do just that.



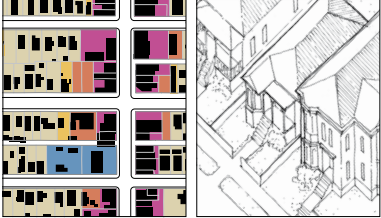
### Providing Housing Choices through Missing Middle Housing Types

With the changes in the post World War II age of American development came changes in both the development community and the financial lending systems. These changes lent themselves to models of development that were narrowly focused and targeted individual markets such as single-family homes on large lots, large apartment complexes, commercial strip centers and indoor malls. Each developed and placed in isolation in contrast to the older patterns of neighborhoods where single-family, multi-family and commercial were more integrated and mixed. The art of both mixing these kinds of development and the art of building smaller middle density types were lost.

Cincinnati's neighborhoods have a great history of these missing middle building types that were built before World War II. These building types included townhouses, duplexes, small four-unit apartment buildings and mixed use main street buildings. These "Missing Middle" building types provide a range of housing choices and provide a residential intensity that help support neighborhood main streets. These housing types also provide the housing that the two biggest population groups, the Millennials (Gen Y, ME generation) and the Boomers want in walkable urban places.

# What is a Form-Based Code?

B



DOWNTOWN MIXED USE MASTER PLAN


4

Form-Based Code

chapter

**Chapter 4: Form-Based Code**

**Town Core (TC) Standards**



**Town Core (TC):**  
The primary intent of this zone is to enhance the vibrant, pedestrian-oriented character of First Street. The physical form and uses are regulated to reflect the urban character of the historic storefront buildings.

**How mixed use is defined within this zone:** Mixed use within this zone primarily refers to vertical mixed use where retail or commercial are on the ground floor and residential or commercial are above.

**How "primary street" is defined within this zone:**  
The primary street is always First Street.

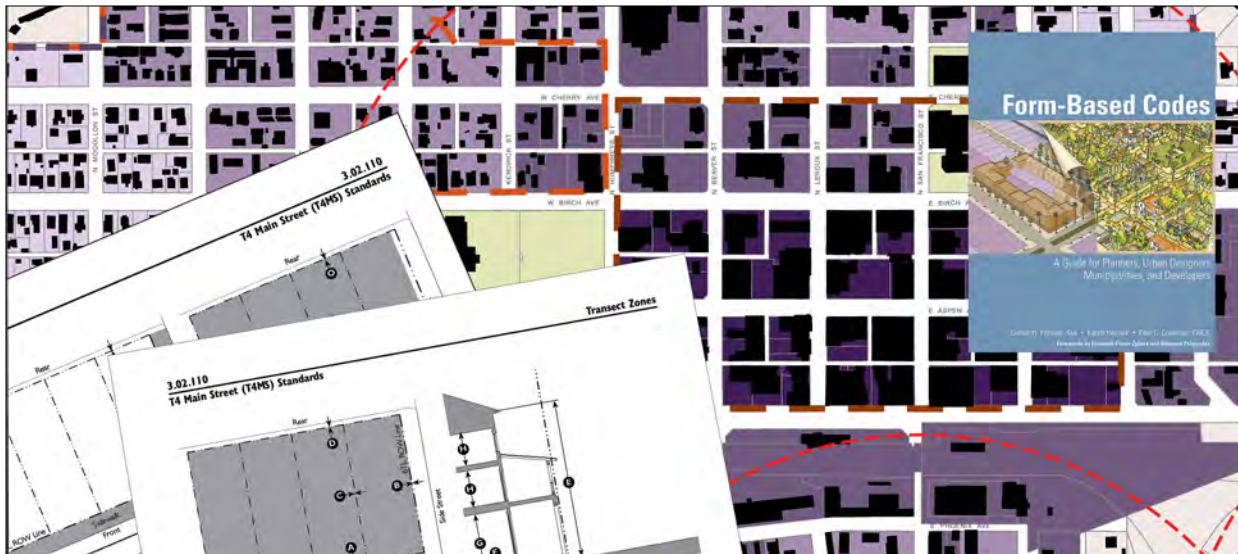
*Illustration examples of buildings in a Town Core area*

Downtown Mixed Use Master Plan  
Opticos Design, Inc.

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# Community Character-Based Approach to Zoning



## Why Form-Based Codes Are Needed

The current use-based zoning system is an outdated model that is creating polaroid camera era models of development in a digital camera era that is demanding vibrant urban places.

Form-Based Codes are providing the necessary paradigm shift in zoning by utilizing characteristics of urban places as the platform for development regulations and creating regulations that are effective in the creation, revitalization, and preservation of vibrant, walkable urban places. As Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk states in Form-Based Codes, “as Global Society swings into action to reduce carbon emissions, the data ever more clearly points to the need to reduce dependence on vehicular mobility and to remake the built environment as transit- and pedestrian-friendly places of dense economic and social interaction. Only the Form-Based Code can ensure such an urbanism.” Even developers are supporting this push for zoning reform; at the 2009 New Partners for Smart Growth Conference in Albuquerque, developer Rob Dixon presented his “Top 20 Ways to Make a Green, Smart City,” and “replace your Euclidean zoning with Form-Based Codes” was number two on his list.

As the market demand for walkable urbanism grows and demographics shift, Form-Based Codes, when created according to these best-practice standards, have proven to be an effective tool for breaking down the barriers to developing and revitalizing urban places and ensuring high-quality predictable built results.

## What is a Form-Based Code

Form-Based Codes are a zoning tool that utilize an unique characteristic of a community’s walkable urban development patterns, or the DNA of a place, as the framework for the code to ensure compatible, predictable, high-quality built results.

The Form-Based Code Institute defines Form-Based Codes (FBCs) as follows:

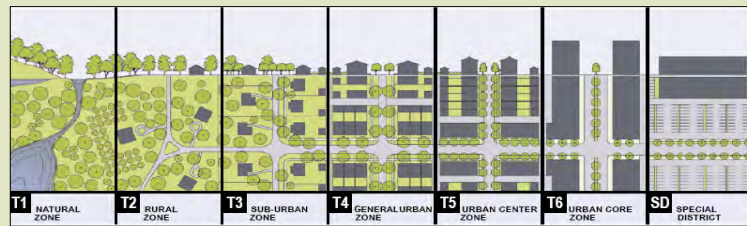
*Form-based codes foster predictable built results and a high-quality public realm by using physical form (rather than separation of uses) as the organizing principle for the code. These codes are adopted into city or county law as regulations, not mere guidelines. Form-based codes are an alternative to conventional zoning.*

The most important aspect of this definition in terms of differentiating FBCs from Euclidean zoning is that the intended physical form or desired place replaces use as the organizing principle, or framework, for the overall code. So instead of a zone being labeled “single-family residential,” it might be called “traditional neighborhood,” and instead of a zone being called “commercial,” it might be called “neighborhood main street.” The terms “neighborhood” and “main street” tie back into the intended physical form or place, both of which may include a mix of uses and different building types that create a vibrant walkable urbanism. The urban-to-rural Transect, which categorizes a spectrum of urban to rural contexts in six Transect zones (from the most urban T6 to the most rural T1) is a prominent organizing principle within Form-Based Code practice. The second important aspect of this definition is that FBCs replace zoning and are not merely design guidelines.

## Form-Based Code Components

Just like any proven recipe that has a set list of ingredients that must be carefully followed to achieve the high-quality end result, there is a list of Form-Based Code components (ingredients) that must be used to create an effective FBC. The components are: The Regulating Plan (which replaces the zoning map); Building Form Standards; Building Type Standards; Public Space Standards (which consist of Thoroughfare Standards and Civic Space Standards); Frontage Type Standards; Subdivision Standards; and, a clearly thought out administration component.

Just like when a recipe says, “add salt to taste,” or gives some optional ingredients that can be added based on the chef’s desire, there is also a list of supplementary components that are not mandatory for an effective code, but that can give further clarity to the intended type of place. The more of these components that you can include in your code, the more predictable the implementation will be. This list includes Architectural Standards, Landscape Standards, Sustainability Standards (such as, stormwater, alternative energy, greywater, etc.) and Green Building Standards.



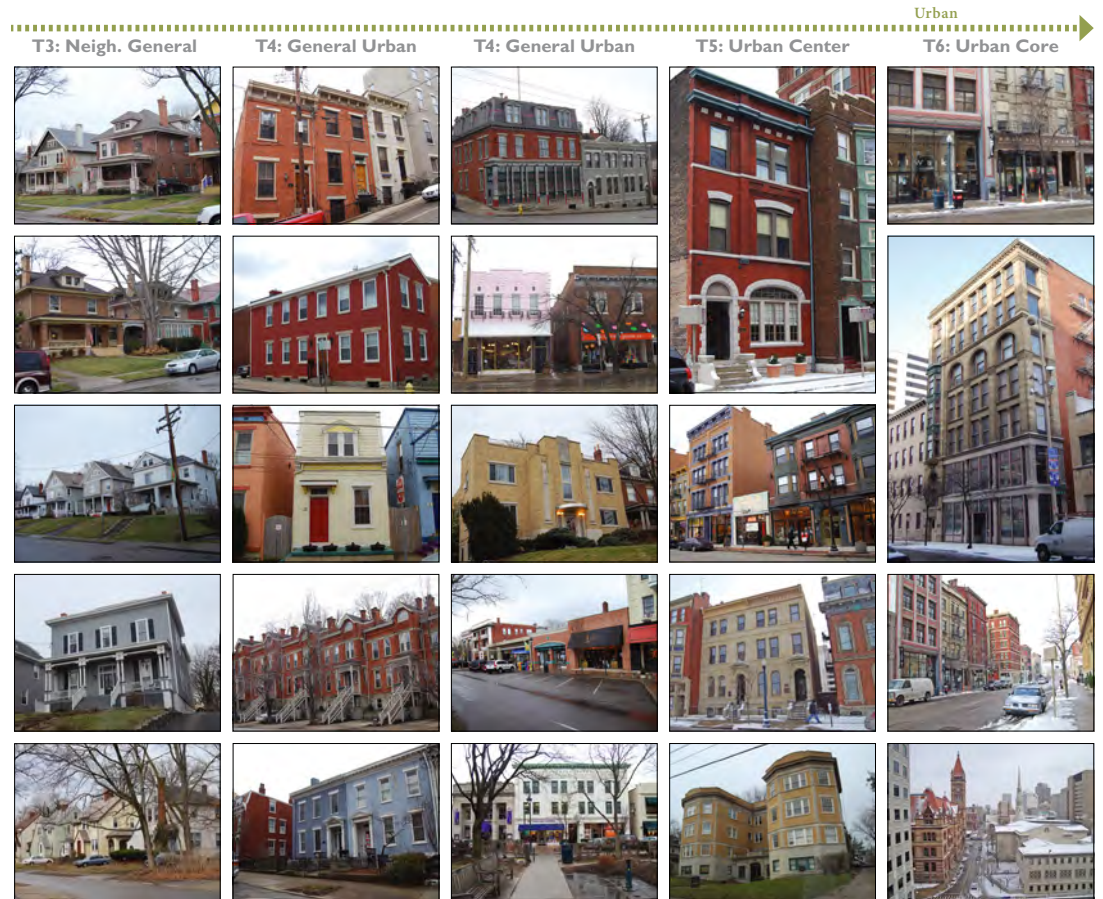
### What is the Rural-to-Urban Transect?

The rural-to-urban Transect is a means for considering and organizing the human habitat in a continuum of intensity that ranges from the most rural condition to the most urban. It provides a standardized method for differentiating between the intentions for urban form in various areas, using gradual transitions rather than harsh distinctions. The zones are primarily classified by the physical intensity of the built form, the relationship between nature and the built environment, and the complexity of uses within the zone.

While the origin of the Transect as a concept is in the biological and environmental analysis fields, it was first described and adapted for the purposes of Form-Based Coding by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ). The DPZ model Transect provides six zones: Natural (T1), Rural (T2), Sub-urban (T3), General Urban (T4), Urban Center (T5), and Urban Core (T6), together with a Special District (SD) designation for areas with specialized purposes (e.g., heavy industrial, transportation, entertainment, or university districts, among other possibilities). Each Transect zone, or T-Zone, has been designated a number. The higher numbers designate progressively more urban zones; the lower, more rural.

Further information on the Rural-to-Urban Transect is available at:

<http://www.transect.org/>



## The Transect as the Organizing Principle

### Rural-to-Urban Transect

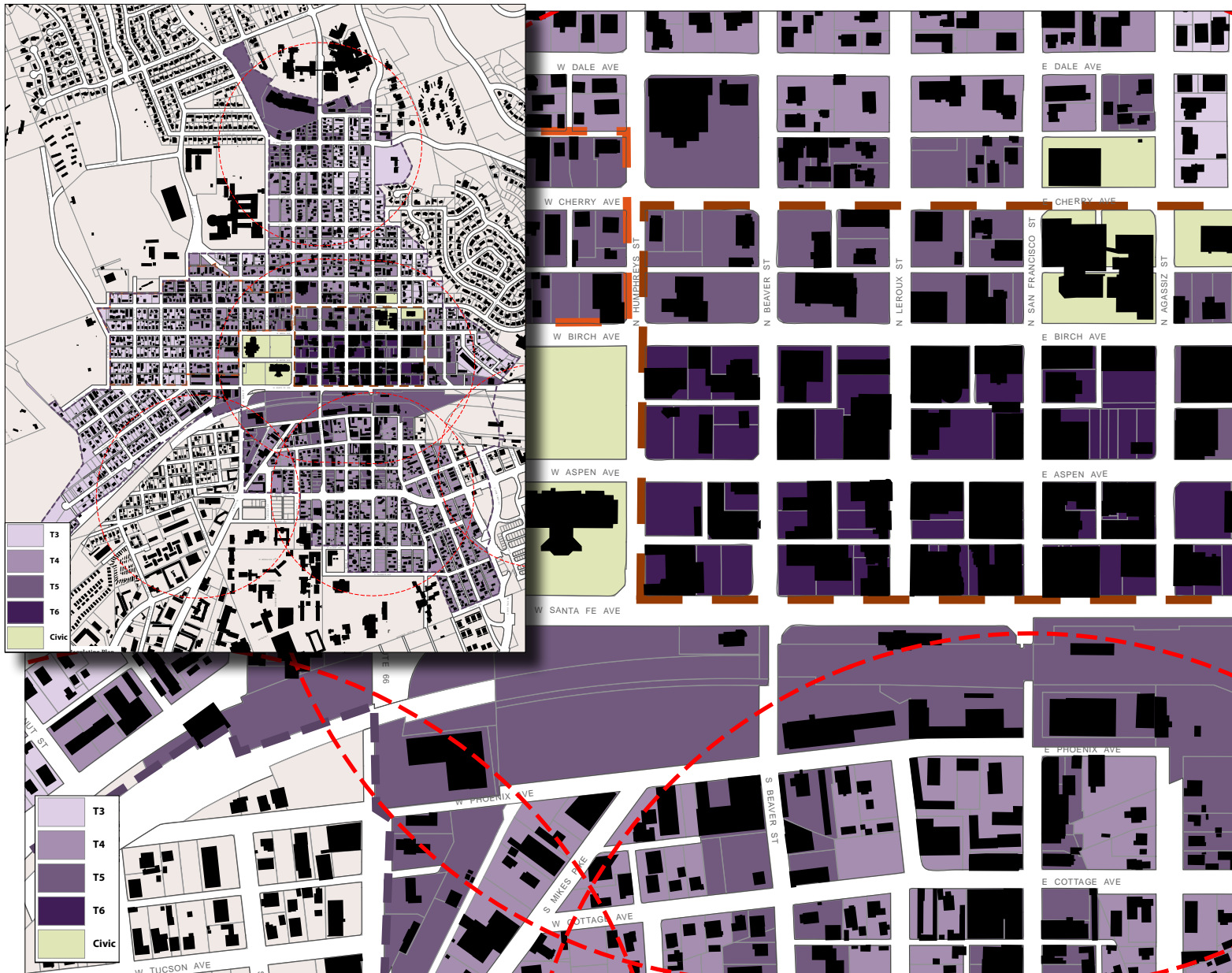
In a Form-Based Code, the Organizing Principle or framework of the Code is intended physical form or type of place rather than use. In this Code, the urban-to-rural Transect will provide the framework from which the Form-Based zones will be organized. The Transect simply establishes a hierarchy of places within a community from the most urban (downtown) to the most rural or natural.

### The Cincinnati Transect

The Rural-to-Urban Transect, as applied to Cincinnati, consists of the T3 Neighborhood General zone to the most urban T6 Urban Core.



# Components of a FBC



## The Regulating Plan

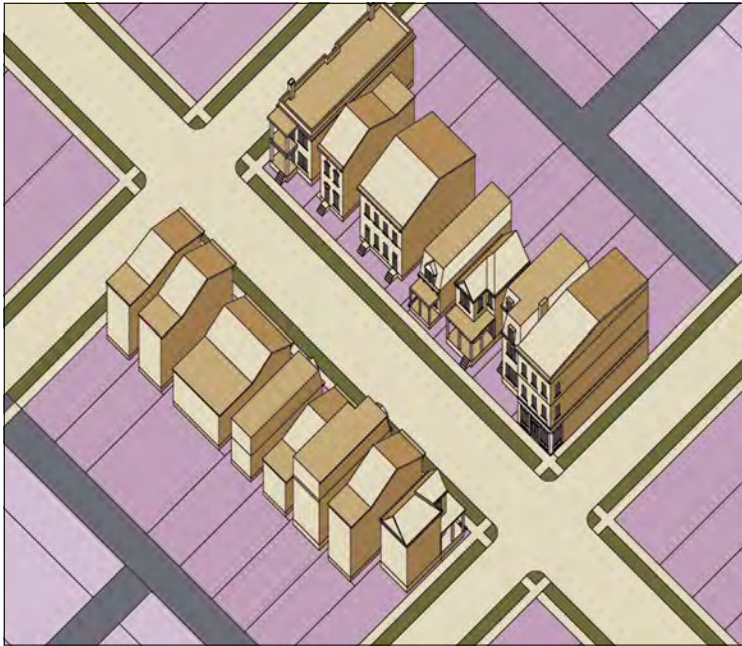
The Regulating Plan takes the place of the zoning map in Form-Based Codes. This map looks a lot like a zoning map at first glance, but upon further review it is clear that this map regulates with intended physical form and type of place as the Organizing Principle, which should be reinforced by form-based zone names that are not use based. Each neighborhood is composed of several different form-based or transect zones to reinforce the hierarchy within them.

## Specific to Transect Zones

1453.20.070

## T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)

1453.20.070 T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)



## A. Intent

To provide variety of urban housing choices, in small footprint, medium-to-high density building types, which reinforce the walkable nature of the neighborhood, support neighborhood-serving retail and service uses adjacent to this Zone, and support public transportation alternatives. The following are generally appropriate form elements in this zone:

Detached or Attached

Narrow-to-Medium Lot Width

Small-to-Medium Footprint

Building at or Close to ROW

Small to No Side Setbacks

Up to 2-1/2 Stories

Elevated Ground Floor

Primarily with Stoops and Porches

## B. Sub-Zone(s)

T4N.2-Open Zone (T4N.2-O)

The open sub-zone provides the same building form but allows for a more diverse mix of uses.

General note: The drawing above is intended to provide a brief overview of this Transect Zone and is illustrative only.

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

Draft: March 2012

1453.20-23

1453.20.070 Specific to Transect Zones																																																			
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Specific to Transect Zones

T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)

1453.20.070

L. T4N.2 Use Table

Use Type <sup>1</sup>	Specific Use	TH	TH
	Residential	TH	TH
Residential	P	P	
Dwelling	P	P	
Home Occupation	P	P	
Home Office	MUP	P	
Services	P	P	
Animal Services, except with the following features:			
Boarding	UP	UP	
Day Care Center	1453.50.100	P	P
Day Care Home	1453.50.100	P	
Adult			
Type A (7 - 12 Children)	UP	P	
Type B (1 - 6 Children)	P	P	
Lodging Bed & Breakfast	P	P	
Medical Services	—	P	
Chiropractic	—	P	
Doctor Office	—	P	
Office Professional	—	P	
Personal Services	—	P	
Recreation, Education, Public Assembly	UP	UP	
Cultural Institution	UP	UP	
Meeting Facilities	P	P	
Park, Open Space, Playground	P	P	
Public Safety Facility	P	P	
Recreational Facility			
Indoor	UP	UP	
Outdoor	UP	UP	
Religious Assembly	P	P	
School Public or Private	P	P	
Transportation, Communications, Infrastructure	UP	UP	
Utility-Misc.	UP	UP	
Wireless Telecommunications:			
Antenna < 20'	1453.50.100	P	P
Antenna > 20'	1453.50.100	MUP	MUP
Facility	MUP	MUP	

Key

P Permitted Use

MUP Minor Use Permit Required

UP Use Permit Required

— Use Not Allowed

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

Draft: March 2012

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## Building Form Standards

This is the component that most people visualize when they think about a Form-Based Code. This component has the primary role in defining and regulating the intended physical form. Typical elements within this component are building form, building placement, building height, general land use, parking location and requirements, encroachments, and allowed frontage types.

Building Types

Regulating by building type ensures that buildings of appropriate scale are built within a designated area. It also recognizes that zoning residential areas by density has not produced good results and provides an alternative method. Building Types are the DNA of vibrant, diverse and walkable neighborhoods. Every neighborhood will include a mix of building types.


The typical layout of Building Type Standards for each zone.

1453.30.100

Specific to Building Types

1453.30.100

Mansion Apartment



A Mansion Apartment, scaled to a medium-density neighborhood, with all units accessed from a central entry

A. Description

The Mansion Apartment Building Type is a medium structure that consists of three to six side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry of individual entries along the front. This Type has the appearance of a medium-sized family home and is appropriately scaled to fit in sparingly within primarily single-family neighborhoods or into medium-density neighborhoods. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.

T1

T2

T3

T4

T5

T6



Mansion Apartment with front entrance porch and balcony



Mansion Apartment with unique Art Deco entrance detailing

1453.30-18

Draft: March 2012

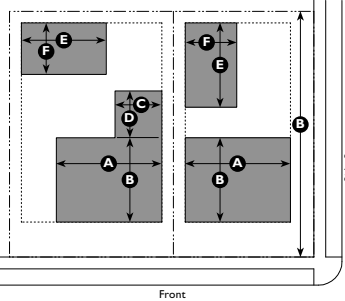
City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

General Note: Photos on this page are illustrative, not regulatory.

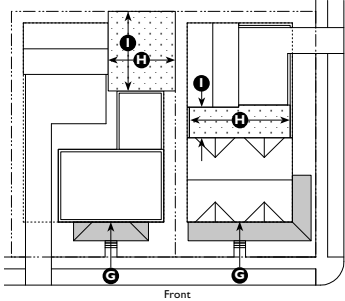
Specific to Building Types

1453.30.100

Mansion Apartment



Front



Front

Key

--- ROW / Property Line

--- Building

--- Setback Line

B. Number of Units

Units 3 min.; 6 max.

C. Building Size and Massing

Height

Per transect zone standards in Division 1453.20 (Specific to Transect Zones)

Main Body

Width 48' max. A

Depth 36' max. B

Secondary Wing(s)

Width 30' max. C

Depth 30' max. D

Accessory Structure(s)

Width 48' max. E

Depth 30' max. F

The footprint area of an accessory structure may not exceed the footprint area of the main body.

Key

--- ROW / Property Line

--- Frontage

--- Setback Line

--- Private Open Space

D. Allowed Frontage Types

Porch, Engaged

1453.40.060

Porch, Projecting

1453.40.050

Stoop

1453.40.070

E. Pedestrian Access

Main Entrance Location

Front

G

Each unit may have an individual entry.

F. Private Open Space

Width 8' min. H

Depth 8' min. I

Area 100 sf min.

Required street setbacks and driveways shall not be included in the private open space area calculation.

Required private open space must be located behind the main body of the house.

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

Draft: March 2012

1453.30-19

Citywide Form-Based Code Charrette: Summary Report | Cincinnati, OH  
Opticos Design, Inc.



Frontage Types

Frontages create an appropriate transition from the private realm (inside of a building) to the public realm (sidewalk or yard), providing a clear threshold for this mental transition to occur.

The typical layout of Frontage Type Standards for each zone.

1453.40.Sections		Specific to Frontage Types	
Table 1453.40.030.A: Frontage Types General			
The private frontage is the area between the building facade and the lot line.			
SECTION		PLAN	
LOT/PRIVATE FRONTAGE	R.O.W.	LOT/PRIVATE FRONTAGE	R.O.W.
<b>Common Yard.</b> The main facade of the building has a large planted setback from the frontage line providing a buffer from the higher-speed thoroughfares. The front yard created remains unfenced and is visually continuous with adjacent yards, supporting a common landscape and working in conjunction with the other private frontages.			
<b>Porch: Projecting.</b> The main facade of the building has a small to medium setback from the frontage line. The resulting front yard is typically very small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The projecting porch is open on three sides and all habitable space is located behind the setback line.			
<b>Porch: Engaged.</b> The main facade of the building has a small to medium setback from the frontage line. The resulting front yard is typically very small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The two adjacent sides of the porch are engaged to the building while the other two sides are open.			
<b>Stoop.</b> The main facade of the building is near the frontage line and the elevated stoop engages the sidewalk. The stoop shall be elevated above the sidewalk to ensure privacy within the building. Stairs from the stoop may lead directly to the sidewalk or may be side-loaded. This type is appropriate for residential uses with small setbacks.			
<b>Forecourt.</b> The main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line and a small percentage is set back, creating a small court space. The space could be used as an entry court or shared garden space for apartment buildings, or as an additional shopping or restaurant seating area within retail and service areas.			
<b>Key</b> Allowed  Not Allowed			
1453.40-2		Draft: March 2012 City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code	

Specific to Frontage Types		1453.40.1453.40.120			
Table 1453.40.030.A: Frontage Types General (continued)					
The private frontage is the area between the building facade and the lot line.					
SECTION		PLAN			
LOT/PRIVATE FRONTAGE	R.O.W.	LOT/PRIVATE FRONTAGE	R.O.W.		
<p><b>Dooryard.</b> The main facade of the building is set back a small distance and the frontage line is defined by a low wall or hedge, creating a small dooryard. The dooryard shall not provide public circulation along a ROW. The dooryard may be raised, sunken, or at grade and is intended for ground floor residential in flex zones, live/work, and small retail and service uses ≤2,500 sf.</p>					
<p><b>Lightwell.</b> The main facade of the building is set back from the frontage line by an elevated terrace or a sunken lightwell. This Type buffers residential or retail and service uses from urban sidewalks and removes the private yard from public encroachment.</p>					
<p><b>Shopfront.</b> The main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line with an at-grade entrance along the public way. This type is intended for retail use. It has substantial glazing at the sidewalk level and may include an awning that may overlap the sidewalk. It may be used in conjunction with other frontage types. Syn: Retail Frontage, Awning.</p>					
<p><b>Terrace.</b> The main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line with an elevated terrace providing public circulation along the facade. This Type can be used to provide at-grade access while accommodating a grade change. Frequent steps up to the terrace are necessary to avoid dead walls and maximize access. This Te may also be used in historic industrial areas to mimic historic loading docks.</p>					
<p><b>Key</b>  Allowed  Not Allowed</p>					
City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code		Draft: March 2012 1453.40-3			

1453.40.110

Specific to Frontage Types

1453.40.110 Shopfront

**Key**  
----- ROW / Property Line      - - - - - Setback Line/BTL

A. Description		
In the Shopfront Frontage Type, the main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line with an at-grade entrance along the public way. This Type is intended for retail use. It has substantial glazing at the sidewalk level and may include an awning that may overlap the sidewalk. It may be used in conjunction with other frontage types.		
B. Size		
Distance between Glazing	2' max.	A
Ground Floor Transparency	75% min.	
Depth of Recessed Entries	5' max.	
C. Awning		
Depth	4' min.	B
Setback from Curb	2' min.	C
Height, Clear	8' min.	D
D. Miscellaneous		
Residential windows shall not be used.		
Doors may be recessed as long as main facade is at BTL.		
Operable awnings are encouraged.		
Open-ended awnings are encouraged.		
Rounded and hooped awnings are discouraged.		
Shopfronts with accordion-style doors/windows or other operable windows that allow the space to open to the street are encouraged.		

An example of a shopfront with a recessed doorway

An example of a shopfront with formal pilastered bays

1453.40-12

Draft: March 2012

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

Thoroughfare Standards

In most cities, streets comprise nearly 25% of all space and make up a large percentage of provided public space as well. Therefore, in creating and reinforcing walkable urban environments, it is important to consider thoroughfares as a critical element. Also, details matter tremendously when it comes to thoroughfare design; therefore, the exact desired dimensional parameters for the retrofit of existing and creation of new thoroughfares should be included in a Form-Based Code.

TABLE 7. PRE-APPROVED ASSEMBLIES			
<div><div>KEY</div><div>ST-57-20-SH</div><div>Thoroughfare Type</div><div>Right-of-Way Width</div><div>Pavement Width (Based on 10' Minimum)</div><div>Transportation</div></div> <div><div>THOROUGHFARE TYPES</div><div>Avenue</div><div>Boulevard</div><div>Freeway</div><div>Commercial Street</div><div>Driveway</div><div>Street</div><div>Neighborhood</div><div>Roadway</div></div>			
<div><div>Assembly Designation</div><div>Thoroughfare Type</div><div>Transect</div><div>Right-of-Way Width</div><div>Pavement Width</div></div> <div><div>Transportation Way</div><div>Vehicular Lane(s)</div><div>Parking Lanes</div><div>Movement Type</div><div>Median Width</div><div>Median Planting</div><div>Median Surface</div><div>Target Speed</div><div>Bicycle Provision</div><div>Transit Provision</div></div> <div><div>Public Frontage</div><div>Assembly Width</div><div>Public Frontage Type</div><div>Transect</div></div> <div><div>Curbing</div><div>Type</div><div>Curb Cut</div><div>Radius</div><div>Width</div><div>Surface</div><div>Type   Size</div><div>Arrangement</div><div>Planter</div><div>Species</div><div>Spacing</div><div>Surface</div><div>Street Tree Size</div><div>Width</div><div>Verge</div><div>Lighting Type</div><div>Lighting Spacing</div></div>			
<div><div>ST-44-24</div><div>Street</div><div>T3, T4</div><div>44 ft</div><div>24 ft</div></div> <div><div>Yield Lane: Two way @ 16 ft.</div><div>One lane parallel @ 8 ft.</div><div>Yield</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>15 mph</div><div>Shared lane</div><div>n/a</div><div>D</div></div> <div><div>11 ft.</div><div>D</div><div>T3</div></div> <div><div>Vertical</div><div>Radius</div><div>10 ft.</div><div>5 ft.</div><div>Concrete</div><div>Continuous   6 ft.</div><div>Regular</div><div>Alternating</div><div>40 ft. o.c. avg.</div><div>Ground cover or grass</div><div>Medium Shade</div><div>3 ft.</div><div>Post</div><div>At Intersections</div></div>			
<div><div>ST-50-28</div><div>Street</div><div>T4, T5</div><div>50 ft</div><div>28 ft</div></div> <div><div>Two @ 20 ft.</div><div>One lane parallel @ 8 ft.</div><div>Slow</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>20 mph</div><div>Shared lane</div><div>n/a</div><div>D</div></div> <div><div>12 ft.</div><div>F</div><div>T4, T5</div></div> <div><div>Vertical</div><div>Radius</div><div>10 ft.</div><div>5 ft.</div><div>Concrete</div><div>Continuous   5 - 6 ft.</div><div>Regular</div><div>Alternating</div><div>30 ft. o.c.</div><div>Grate</div><div>Medium Shade</div><div>5 ft.</div><div>Post</div><div>At Intersections</div></div>			

PRE-APPROVED ASSEMBLIES CONT.			
<div><div>KEY</div><div>ST-57-20-SH</div><div>Thoroughfare Type</div><div>Right-of-Way Width</div><div>Pavement Width (Based on 10' Minimum)</div><div>Transportation</div></div> <div><div>THOROUGHFARE TYPES</div><div>Avenue</div><div>Boulevard</div><div>Freeway</div><div>Commercial Street</div><div>Driveway</div><div>Street</div><div>Neighborhood</div><div>Roadway</div></div>			
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<div><div>ST-60-36</div><div>Street</div><div>T4, T40, T5, T5L</div><div>60 ft</div><div>36 ft</div></div> <div><div>Two Lanes: Two way, one lane each way @ 10 ft.</div><div>Two lanes parallel @ 8 ft.</div><div>Free</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>25 mph</div><div>Sharrow</div><div>Bus route</div><div>D, F</div></div> <div><div>12 ft.</div><div>D</div><div>T4, T40</div></div> <div><div>Vertical</div><div>Radius</div><div>5 ft.</div><div>6 ft.</div><div>Concrete</div><div>Continuous   6 ft.</div><div>Regular</div><div>Alternating</div><div>40 ft. o.c. avg.</div><div>Ground cover or grass</div><div>Large Shade</div><div>6 ft.</div><div>Pipe, Column</div><div>80 ft. o.c.</div></div>			
<div><div>CS-55-36</div><div>Commercial Street</div><div>T40, T5, T5L</div><div>55 ft</div><div>36 ft</div></div> <div><div>Two Lanes: Two way, one lane each way @ 10 ft.</div><div>Two lane parallel @ 8 ft.</div><div>Free</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>n/a</div><div>25 mph</div><div>Sharrow</div><div>Bus route</div><div>F</div></div> <div><div>12 ft.</div><div>F</div><div>T40, T5, T5L</div></div> <div><div>Vertical</div><div>Radius</div><div>5 ft.</div><div>9.5 ft.</div><div>Concrete</div><div>Tree well   4 ft.</div><div>Regular</div><div>Alternating</div><div>30 ft. o.c. avg.</div><div>Pervious paving</div><div>Large Shade</div><div>6 ft.</div><div>Column</div><div>60 ft. o.c.</div></div>			

Signage Standards

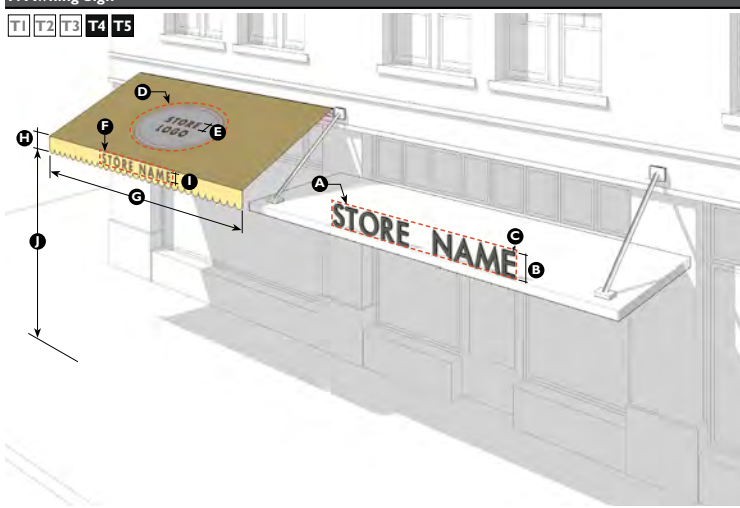
Signage is an important component of a vibrant walkable Main Street or Downtown. The standards provided in the Form-Based Code are calibrated for pedestrian scaled signage.

I453.50.070

Supplemental to Transect Zones

F. Awning Sign

T1T2T3T4T5



Description

The Awning Sign Type is a traditional shopfront fitting and can be used to protect merchants' wares and keep shopfront interiors shaded and cool in hot weather. Retail tenant signs may be painted, screen printed, or appliquéed on the awnings.

Standards

Size	
Projecting	
Signable Area	1 sq. ft. per linear foot of shopfront, max. A
Lettering Height	16" max. B
Lettering Thickness	6" max. C
Sloping Plane	
Signable Area	25% coverage max. D
Lettering Height	18" max. E

Standards (continued)

Size (continued)	
Valance	
Signable Area	75% coverage max. F
Width	Shopfront width, max. G
Height	8" min.; 16" max. H
Lettering Height	8" max. I
Location	
Clear Height	8' min. J
Signs per Awning	1 projecting, or 1 valance and 1 sloping plane, max.
Miscellaneous	
Only the tenant's store name, logo, and/or address shall be applied to the awning. Additional information is prohibited.	
Open-ended awnings are strongly encouraged.	
Vinyl or plastic awnings are strongly discouraged.	

I453.50-18

Draft: March 2012


City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

I453.50.070

Supplemental to Transect Zones

O. Wall Mural Sign

T1T2T3T4T5



Description


The Wall Mural Sign Type is a sign flat against a secondary facade, typically along a side street, alley, or paseo. These signs are typically painted directly on the building and contain a combination of text and graphic elements. These signs are intended to be visible from a greater distance and are accompanied by additional signage on the primary facade at the business entrance. Wall Mural Signs that provide off-site signage for a business or do not provide signage for a specific business (artistic wall mural) are subject to approval. Billboards are not considered wall mural signs and are prohibited within the Form-Based Code areas.

Standards

Size	
Signable Area	
Area	1000 sf max. A
Width	60' max. B
Height	50' max. C
Location	
Height above ground	3' min. D
Projection	8" max. E
Signs per Building	1 max.

P. Window Sign

T1T2T3T4T5



Description

The Window Sign Type is professionally painted consisting of individual letters and designs or gold leaf individual letters and designs, applied directly on the inside of a window. Window signs offer a high level of craftsmanship and visibility, and are often used for small professional offices.

Standards

Size	
Signable Area per Shopfront	15% max. A
Width	5' max. B
Height	36" max. C
Location	
Window Signs shall be placed 5'6" or above the sidewalk level.	
Window Signs shall be applied directly to the inside of the glass.	
Miscellaneous	
Applied plastic or vinyl cut letters are strongly discouraged.	
Window Signs shall have a clear background.	

I453.50-24

Draft: March 2012

City of Cincinnati Form-Based Code

### Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance

This portion of the FBC provides standards for the creation of new walkable neighborhoods on larger opportunity sites that the City has not yet applied the FBC to. This enables developers or property owners or the City to pull the FBC "off the shelf" to apply in a manner similar to a Plan Development (PD).

The standards provide for a mix of transect zones, the location of civic and retail uses and other standards that have to do with creating new walkable neighborhoods. Because the Form-Based Standards are already complete, it saves time for the developer and makes long-term administration easier for City Staff.

### Architectural Standards

Some communities and cities choose to add architectural standards that regulates the design of buildings beyond the placement and massing. Often these standards include more defined standards for roof pitches, roof overhangs, window and door details and materials and color. These standards can be used to promote compatible development in established neighborhoods with more traditional architectural styles or to promote a common buildings beyond vocabulary in situations where more contemporary architectural styles are desired.

A common analogy used to understand the relationship of the FBC and the architectural standards is a Mr. Potato Head. The FBC defines the basic shape and form of the potato and the architectural standards, if desired by the community, define which cap, eyes, nose, etc. go on that basic form to define the specific character or quality.

### Block and Lot Subdivision Standards

This is an important element to ensure that larger lots are broken down into a network of streets and blocks to further encourage connectivity.

This Element provides the principles for subdivision layout and design. Adherence to the standards of this Element ensures new subdivisions are consistent with the community-oriented character.

### Administration and Procedures

This Element sets forth the specific procedures, standards, and related information for each of the development applications reviewed.

### What about a Sustainability Element within a FBC?

Form-Based Codes at their core provide a basic level of sustainability through the reinforcing or creating neighborhoods that are walkable, bicycle friendly and transit supportive. By providing for a mix of compatible uses within the neighborhood and main streets.

### Stormwater Management

Stormwater management elements are often integrated in to a Form-Based Code at the Transect zone level. The elements are calibrated based on their appropriateness to the natural or built environment. The Form-Based Code must work closely with other National, State and local regulations concerning water quality and quantity, as well as any regulations concerning an potential grey water use applications.

### Renewable Energy Harvesting

Solar, wind and geothermal energy harvest systems are calibrated to the transect zones and the local environmental factors, much in the same way stormwater management elements are.

### Green Building Standards

Often municipalities will enact green building standards as part of the building code. Development under the Form-Based Code is required to meet the standards or incentives that are provided to meet Green Building Standards.

## Building a Solid Foundation





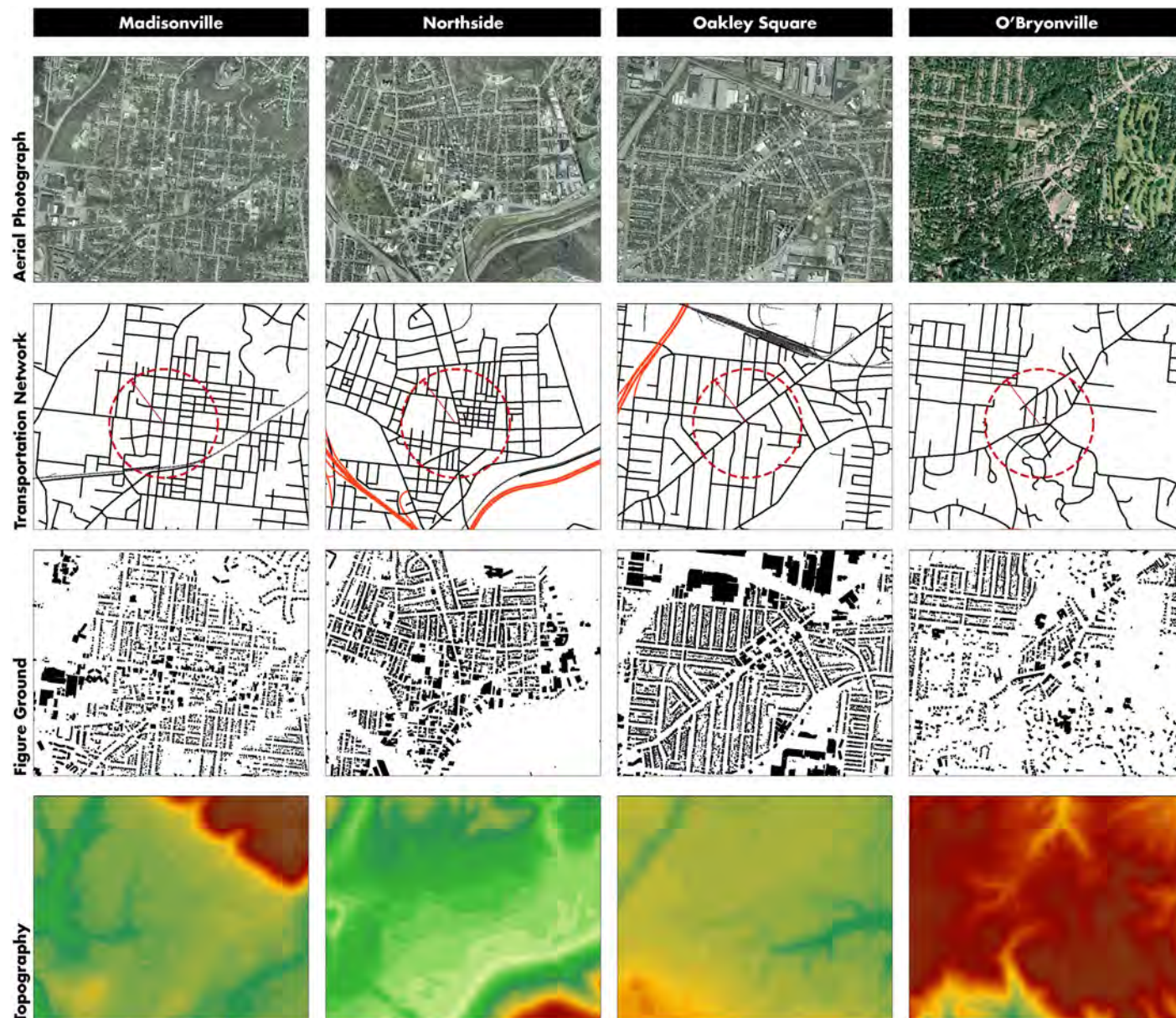
# Understanding Neighborhood Morphology

## Cincinnati's Diverse Neighborhoods

Character and individuality of a place starts at scales even as large as street networks, block sizes, figure-ground patterns, and relationships to natural features. In order to implement changes to Cincinnati's zoning that reinforced the best of the City's unique neighborhood assets and local character, it was necessary to first grasp a better understanding of the neighborhoods' various compositions on a macro-scale.

An extensive study of Cincinnati's neighborhoods was undertaken by a mapping analysis of fourteen Central Business Districts throughout the City. Neighborhood cores were compared side-by-side in aerial photographs, and street network, figure-ground, and topography diagrams. This exercise helped to clarify large-scale factors affecting neighborhoods' forms (such as, highways or landscape) and how neighborhoods worked uniquely from each other in terms of, i.e. settlement patterns, street connectivity, block patterns, and building densities.

To ultimately respond to each neighborhoods' specific needs in the city-wide Form-Based Code, this analysis attempted to discover community-affecting factors which required particular attention; current growth patterns which encouraged walkable versus drivable environments; and the various manifestations of local character at the neighborhood scale, to ensure that the Code update could reinforce rather than restrict the positive aspects of each unique neighborhood.







These fourteen neighborhood centers were also examined on an individual map basis, to more closely understand the composition, strengths, and constraints of each community.

An Existing Zoning Map suggests an idea of the intended growth for the neighborhood. Showing the figure-ground relationship of the existing buildings to the current zoning, it also shows what Euclidean zoning may encourage, or which older building patterns, it might threaten.

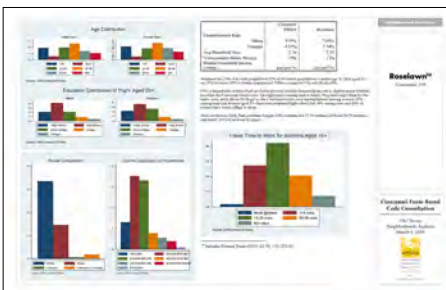


A Figure Ground and Districts Map shows patterns of the current built environment in relation to designated neighborhood cores.

A Street Network Map reveals the interconnectedness of the neighborhood's thoroughfares, both for the benefit of vehicles and pedestrians. It shows configurations and sizes of blocks. Also, the street connectivity within a quarter-mile walking radius centered on the neighborhood core – the typical distance one may cover in a five-minute walk – suggests the true "walkability" of a main street.

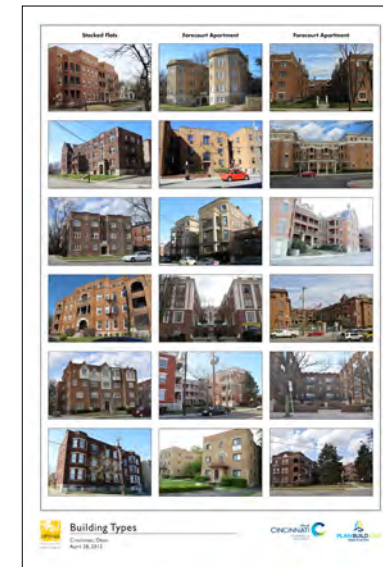
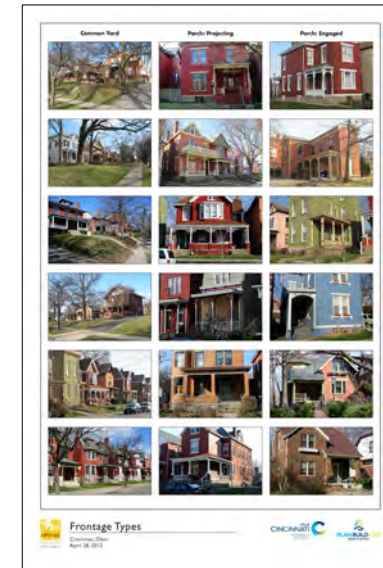
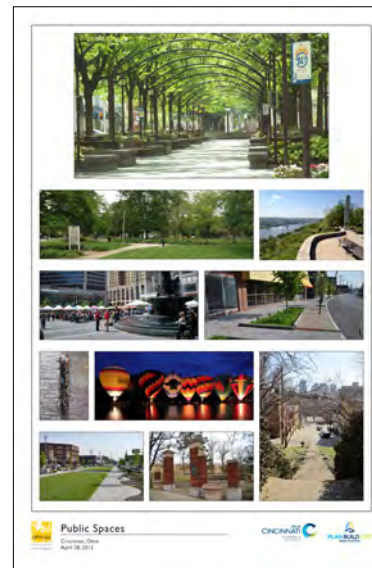
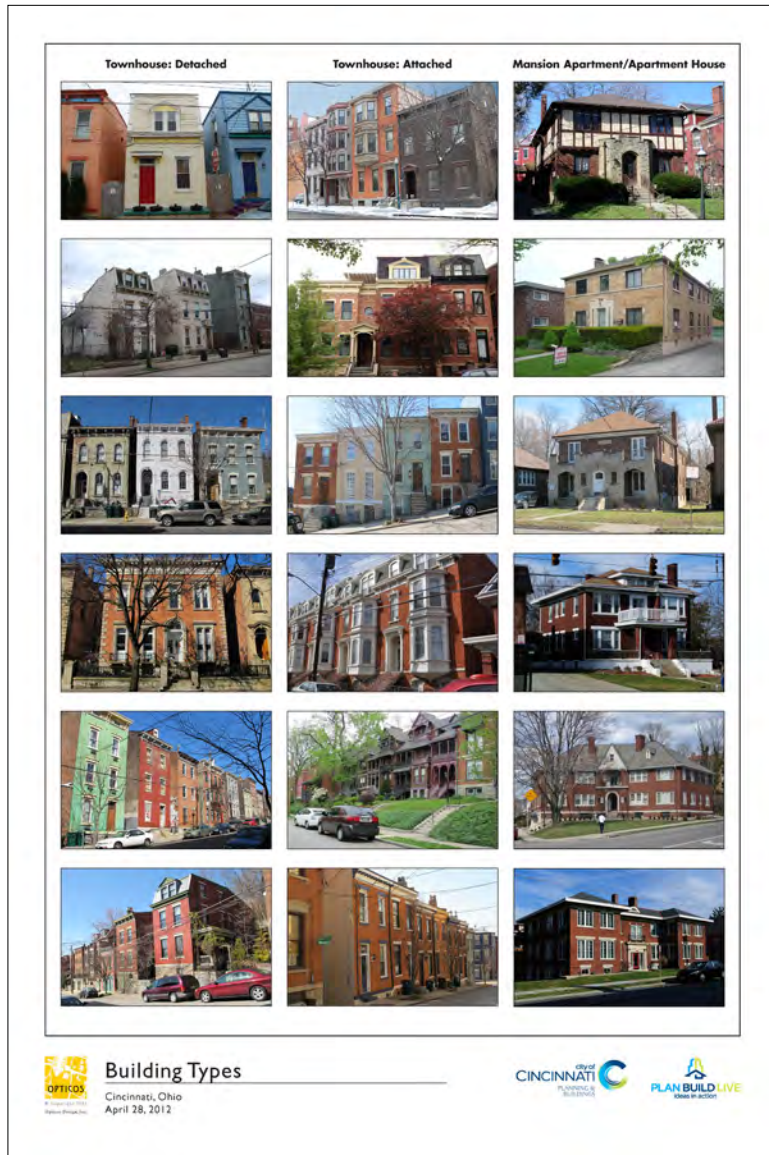


A final analysis reviewed social and economic compositions of each neighborhood. The demographics reviewed included age, race, income distribution, unemployment, education levels, and average travel time to work.





# Documenting the DNA of Cincinnati





## Documentation

After studying Cincinnati at the level of mapping complete neighborhoods, several tours of the City were specifically undertaken to study the local form and character of the built environment on the ground. Hundreds of photographs were shot and compiled to better understand the full range of public and private places found in the City; these included civic spaces, streets, frontages, and buildings.

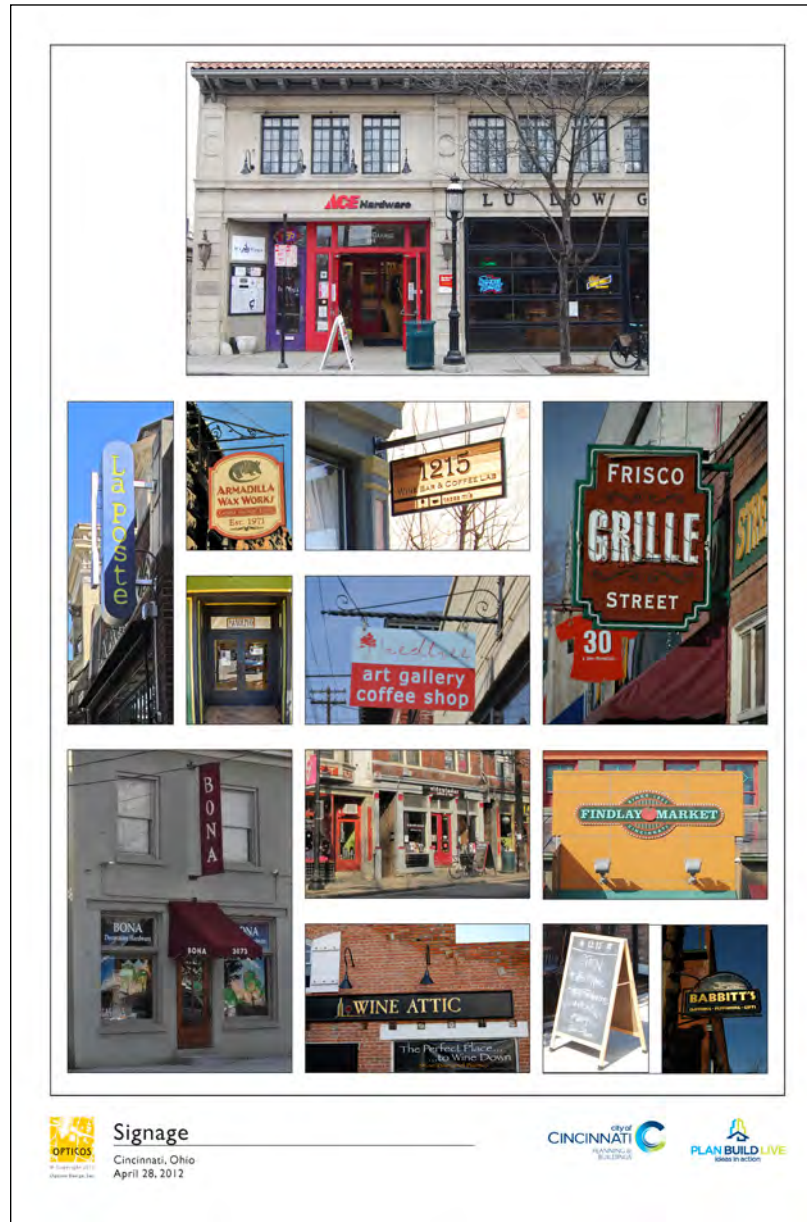
Successful main streets and neighborhood streets were documented, noting the elements which contributed to their viability, such as the quality and scale of the public street and sidewalk; frontages bridging the public and private realms; setbacks of buildings from the public realm; and scale and form of the buildings themselves.

Typical historic buildings were photographed to gain an idea of the City's traditional character of forms and materials, and to understand the various building types common throughout the City. Urbanistically effective contemporary buildings were also sought, as they reveal keys to what elements determine a successful response to Cincinnati's neighborhood identities and walkable places.

In organizing the various images and information gained during the documentation trips, a subtle distinction was also recognized between two types of walkable neighborhoods: Urban neighborhoods which developed as adjacent extensions of the downtown had slightly different building histories than those relatively independent walkable neighborhoods built along streetcar lines. The documentation process sought to further understand this relationship and differences between these types of walkable neighborhoods.

In compiling the best representative images of the documentation process into posters, photographs were organized by:

- Signage
- Public Spaces
- Walkable Neighborhoods
- Downtown & Urban Neighborhoods
- Character: Buildings
- Character: Materials
- Building Types
- Frontage Types



## Creating a Form-Based Comprehensive Plan

LOCATE  
WALKABLE  
URBAN PLACES



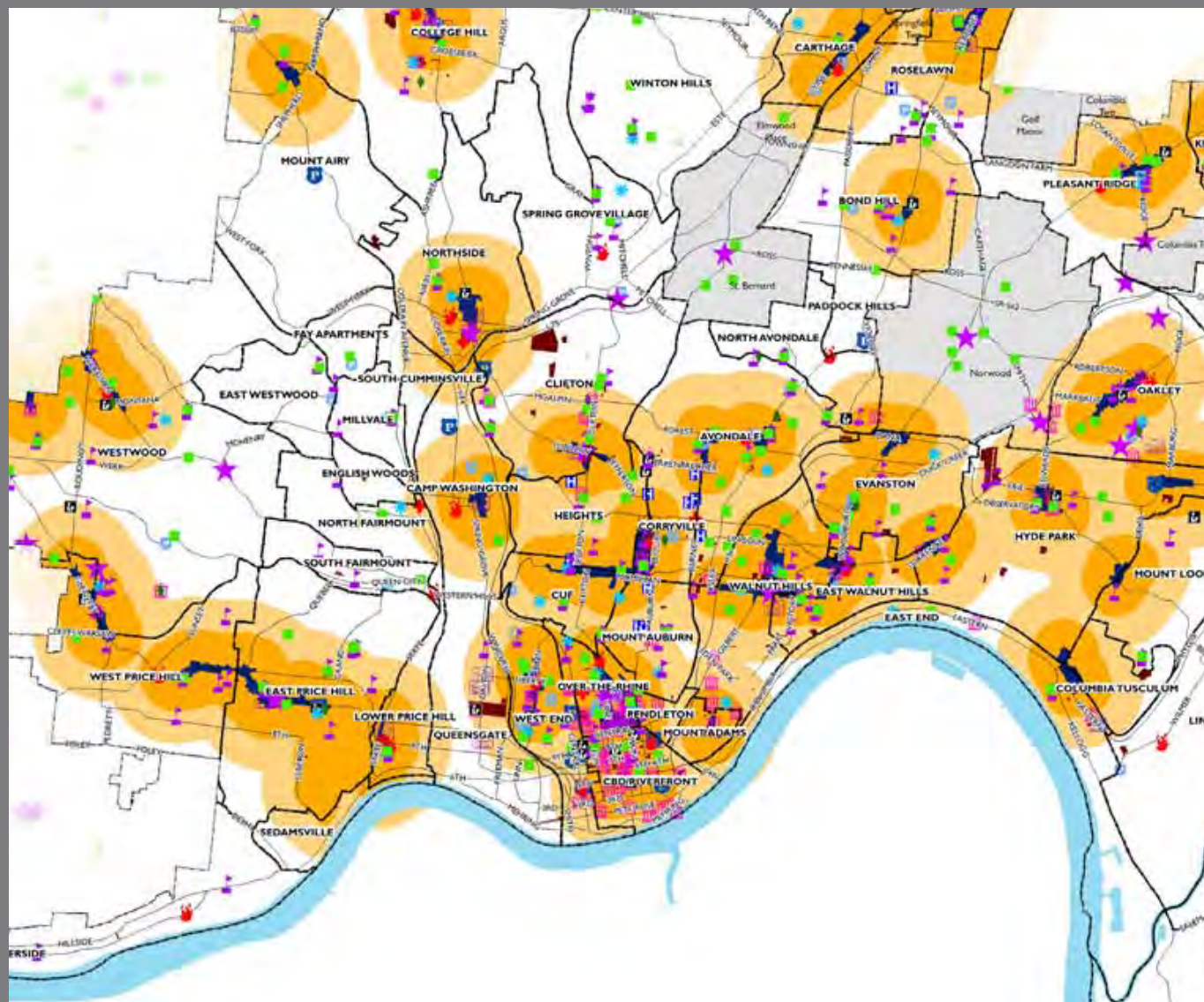
MAKE THEM A  
PRIORITY



DEFINE  
THEIR UNIQUE  
ASPECTS AND  
FORM



UTILIZE AS A  
FRAMEWORK



### Identifying Community Types

A Community Character Element introduced a community types/form-based approach into Cincinnati's Comprehensive Plan. The community character/community types map created for this element supplemented the Comprehensive Plan land use map, defining the areas in the City where walkable urbanism should be reinforced, and a form-based policy framework was established that can be utilized and applied on a neighborhood basis in future community planning efforts.

This form-based/community character-based approach to the Comprehensive Plan was necessary because a land use and policy-driven approach to comprehensive planning has proven to be ineffective for establishing policy and direction for walkable urban areas.

An overall visioning for future development of the City was undertaken that reinforced the framework of existing walkable urban neighborhoods. A form-based policy framework was then created that will be implemented and reinforced by neighborhood plans, zoning changes or the application of Form-Based Coding to these areas, as well as the creation of new thoroughfare policies and standards that will all work together to reinforce their unique qualities and character of each place.

The general intensity of a neighborhood within their Community Character Element was determined by the community type and the transect zones (form-based zones) that are inherent in their composition, with the intent that a more specific, lot-by-lot, intensity and mix of uses would be determined in the community plan and reinforced with Form-Based Code application to replace the existing zoning.

Community type application was intended primarily to distinguish areas where walkable urbanism exists or is intended from an area that developed as a drivable suburban place. In these cases, a land use and policy approach to comprehensive planning and use-driven conventional zoning has proven to be an effective tool for planning and regulation. To encourage the stability and growth of walkable urban areas, it was crucial to ensure different supporting policies and regulations than those for drivable suburban areas.

### Community Types Become a Planning Mechanism for:

- Supplementing a land use-based approach to planning with a more place-based or form-based approach.
- Reinforcing existing walkable urban areas through policy and regulation and allowing them to evolve and transform.
- Stopping the decline of these areas and encouraging reinvestment.
- Ensuring that the viability of commercial uses in walkable urban areas is not compromised by the location of drivable suburban commercial.
- Targeting the best location for growth:
  - Therefore preserving natural areas.
  - Determining the general form and intensity of this development.
- Creating form-based policy for creating walkable urbanism in these areas.
  - Thoroughfare types.
  - Form-Based Codes vs. conventional zoning.
  - Reduced parking requirements.
  - Civic space and open space standards.
  - Simplified land use tables.



# Form-Based Code Working Group



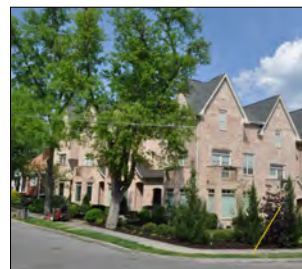
## FBC Working Group

Under the leadership of Vice Mayor Roxanne Qualls, the Form-Based Code Working Group was established in 2008 to build awareness of, and support for, the implementation of Form-Based Codes in Cincinnati neighborhoods.

### Working Group Members

The Working Group's membership has changed over time, but has generally consisted of volunteer neighborhood organization leadership, professional staff of organizations that address Cincinnati neighborhood issues (including the Community Development Corporations Association of Greater Cincinnati and the Local Initiative Support Coalition), and design and development professionals.

Leadership and staff from City Planning and Buildings, Community Development and Transportation and Engineering have participated in the working group, along with other community stakeholders.



### Efforts

Over the course of the past four years, the Form-Based Code Working Group helped lead and support efforts to raise the community's understanding of the opportunities presented by Form-Based Code approaches. The group met monthly to:

- Research form-based codes
- Organize walking tours through several neighborhood business districts
- Identify the four lead neighborhoods that will be the first to implement Cincinnati's form-based code
- Help raise funds to support both the citywide charrette in April 2012 and the upcoming neighborhood charrettes
- Promote the Citywide and Neighborhood Charrettes
- Engage a broad cross-section of the community through grass roots outreach, community newsletters, streetside public engagement through a method known as "Two Cent Coffees," and speak to the media.

### Outreach

Vice-Mayor Qualls has organized and hosted training sessions on form-based codes for interested neighborhood stakeholders, developers, City council members and City staff; this included the following:

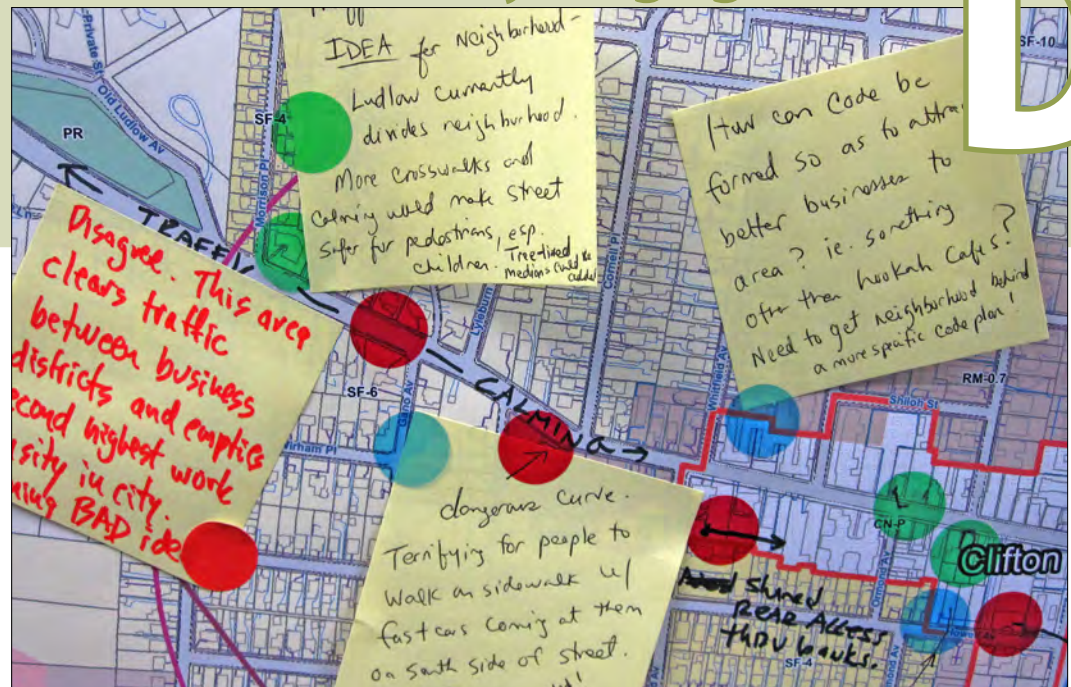
- 2008 - Present: Presentations at each annual Neighborhood Summit
- October 2008: Co-hosting sessions with the Cincinnati Form Based Codes Initiative and the local chapter of the Urban Land Institute including a two-day workshops on form-based codes
- Summer and Fall 2010: Hosting PlaceMakers' form-based codes webinar series for interested City staff and community leaders
- 2011 Urban Land Institute luncheon, featuring Shelley Poticha, Director of the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, Housing and Urban Development; Daniel Parolek of Opticos Design, and Rick Hall of Hall Planning & Engineering
- April and July 2011: Uptown Consortium meetings with Daniel Parolek
- September 2010: meeting with Urban Land Institute, local developers and Daniel Parolek
- October 2010: half-day training session with Daniel Parolek.

### Trips

Since 2008, Vice-Mayor Qualls has organized five delegations of neighborhood leaders, City staff and developers to travel to Nashville, Tennessee to see firsthand the results of Nashville's successful implementation of form-based codes and to better understand the opportunities that a Form-Based Code could present to Cincinnati. Participants met with Nashville planning staff and site developers who have used form-based codes.

The most recent trip in March 2012 occurred one month before the Citywide Charrette and drew the highest participation yet, with 67 participants, doubling the number of participants on previous trips and indicating the increasing interest and support for Cincinnati's form-based code.

# Community Engagement



# Stakeholder Interviews

## Pre-Charrette Interviews

Input from a range of stakeholders is essential in developing a Form-Based Code that meets the needs and expectations of the community of Cincinnati. The sessions provided a formal setting to gather feedback from stakeholders representing a variety of interests.

### Process

glaserworks hosted stakeholder interview sessions on February 28, 2012 and March 1 & 2, 2012 - one per each of the following six stakeholder groups:

- Real Estate Development Professionals
- Land Use Attorneys / Rights Advocates
- Design Professionals
- Thought Leadership
- Residents
- Businesses

The sessions were held at glaserworks' offices with 4 to 12 people in each interview. A total of 45 people attended the sessions.

glaserworks contacted 59 leaders of various organizations. The people contacted were either asked to attend themselves or to refer the invitation to someone in their group, who would be interested and available to attend. The initial method of contact was nearly always a telephone call followed by an e-mail. Each e-mail was personalized, as much as possible.

Jeff Raser, of glaserworks, led each interview session; participants were told that the interviews were conversational in nature and comments would be compiled and that these would NOT be attributed to individuals, so "participants should feel free to be candid."

### Summary

The discussions ranged from what Cincinnati's neighborhoods need in general terms, to what goals a new Form-Based Code should achieve. Participants offered that new codes should be easy to understand, results should be predictable, and the process should be quick.

Participants described places they liked to visit and how they felt what future neighborhood work should emulate. Participants overwhelmingly referenced places with a mix of uses in a walkable core as the most desirable places to live in, work in, and visit. One person commented that the most comfortable urban places have a "messy vitality" that Cincinnati's codes should allow and encourage.

The most vehement comments made by participants were about Cincinnati's administration and management of its current regulations. The opinion that Cincinnati's permitting process is difficult and highly interpretive was nearly universal. Objections ranged from the actual regulations to staffing. Currently many mistakes and misinterpretations are being made by City staff who review plans for approval, especially zoning approvals. One commenter, who admitted to being a proponent of Form-Based Codes ominously stated: "We should not bother creating a Form-Based Code until City staffing is right."



# 5-Day Citywide Charrette

## Citywide Charrette

As part of the planning process, a five-day public charrette on April 28 - May 2, 2012 was held on the fourth floor of Two Centennial Plaza to enable the community to direct the long-term vision and rezoning that will reinforce the vision and ensure a predictable implementation. A diverse mix of people participated and attended the various charrette events, with a total attendance of 700 people over the five days.

- The charrette kicked off with two opening presentations on Saturday, where participants were given an overview of the work the consultant team and City staff had done leading up to the charrette, and an outline of the work that would be done during the week.
- The studio was opened up Saturday through Tuesday for the public to come by and talk to the consultant team.
- Three lunchtime brown-bag presentations were given to discuss important topics that related to the charrette and Form-Based Code rewrite.
- An evening open houses on Monday night was held to discuss the in-progress work and to seek comments and feedback.
- A closing presentation was held on Wednesday evening, where the work completed during the five days was presented and discussed.



Opening remarks by Charles Graves, Planning Director, at the opening presentation



Citywide Charrette Opening Presentation.



Presentation of initial concepts at the Wednesday night midway presentation.

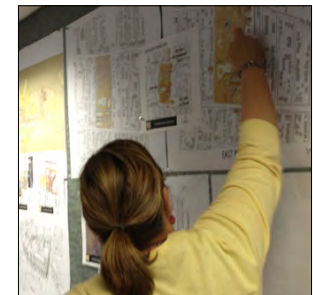
### What is a Charrette?

A charrette as defined by the National Charrette Institute is "a multiple-day collaborative design and planning workshop held on-site and inclusive of all affected stakeholders."

A charrette facilitates citizens, designers and others to collaborate on a vision for development by providing a forum for ideas and designs. It offers the unique advantage of feedback loops, where the community can give immediate feedback to the designers. This allows the design team and the public to work with one another on the vision in a short amount of time and build consensus. More importantly, it allows everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

Further information on charrettes is available at the NCI website:

<http://www.charretteinstitute.org>



Multidisciplinary consultant team in the process of creating, refining and testing the Form-Based Code standards.

	Friday April 27, 2012	Saturday April 28, 2012	Sunday April 29, 2012	Monday April 30, 2012	Tuesday May 1, 2012	Wednesday May 2, 2012
8:00 AM						
9:00 AM						
10:00 AM		Opening Presentation	Studio Open to Public	Studio Open to Public	Studio Open to Public	
11:00 AM		Studio Open to Public				
12:00 PM				Brown Bag Lunch: Complete Streets	Brown Bag Lunch: Urban Retail	Brown Bag Lunch: Economics
1:00 PM				Studio Open to Public	Studio Open to Public	
2:00 PM		Opening Presentation				
3:00 PM		Studio Open to Public				
4:00 PM						
5:00 PM						
6:00 PM				Midway- Presentation		Final Presentation
7:00 PM						
8:00 PM						
	Presentation	Studio Open to Public				
	Brown Bag Lunch Open to Public	Studio Closed to Public				
	Public Open House					

Schedule of community involvement opportunities during charrette week

## Charrette Interviews

During the Citywide Charrette additional stakeholder interviews were conducted.

- Opportunity Site Stakeholders
- Cincinnati Preservation Association and Historic Conservation Board
- Hillside Trust and Mill Creek
- Form-Based Code Working Group
- Developers
- Designers

- Department of Transportation & Engineering (City) and Urban Forestry
- Metropolitan Sewer District and Greater Cincinnati Water Works
- Cincinnati Fire and Police departments
- Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority and Metro
- Livable Communities
- Economic Development Division (City)
- Department of City Planning and Buildings (City)
- Other City Staff



Members of the public discuss the opportunities and constraints of one of the opportunity sites.



Members of the public discuss concepts presented at the Monday night midway presentation.

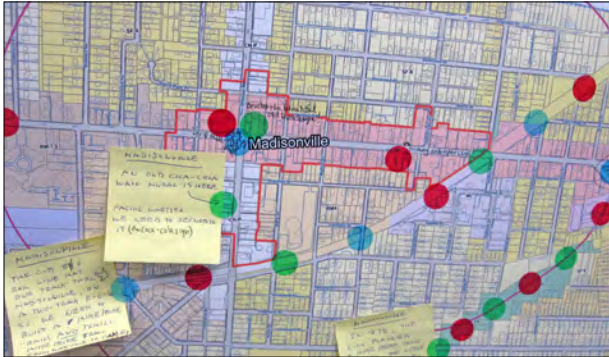


Members of the public discuss concepts presented at the Wednesday night final presentation.



Members of the public discuss concepts presented at the Wednesday night final presentation.





Maps of the different Neighborhood Business Districts (NBDs) were hung on the wall during the charrette to gather public input on the different NBDs and as a resource for the City staff and the consultant team to quickly and easily lookup information. The various photos on this page reflect some of the input gathered on different NBDs.



## Outreach

During the lead-up to the Citywide Charrette, the consulting team worked in partnership with City staff and the Form-Based Code Working Group to raise public awareness of the event and spread a broad invitation to participate. Efforts included the following:

- Banners inviting people to “Help Design Our Great Neighborhood” were placed in highly public locations in five neighborhoods.
- The consultant team and City staff held “Two Cent Coffee” events in Madisonville, Walnut Hills (twice) and Northside. These pop-up stations provided an opportunity for staff and neighborhood volunteers to discuss and share ideas regarding key issues relating to the Form-Based Code and the larger Plan Build Live initiative.
- More than 5,000 postcards and posters were distributed citywide.
- Banner advertisements for the event were placed in all City Metro busses.
- An extensive social media campaign leading up to, and during, the Citywide Charrette, primarily focused on Twitter and Facebook. Several YouTube videos of presentations were also posted during and after the Charrette.

## Online

The Citywide Charrette also benefitted from an extensive online participation platform tied to the project web site: [www.planbuildlivecincinnati.com](http://www.planbuildlivecincinnati.com). At the time of the charrette, over 120 persons had participated in online discussions and surveys relating to the Form-Based Code and other elements of the effort.

## Media

Local media coverage of the Citywide Form-Based Code Charrette included the following:

- “City Officials Ask Residents to Help Design Great Neighborhoods,” Cincinnati Herald | April 21, 2012
- “Plan, Build, Live Encourages Community Feedback,” Soapbox | April 24, 2012.
- “College Hill Considers New Development Code,” Cincinnati Enquirer | April 26, 2012
- “Cincinnati Moves Forward With Citywide ‘Complete Streets’ Initiative,” UrbanCincy.com | May 1, 2012
- “Workshop Sharpens City Neighborhood Quality of Life,” Cincinnati Enquirer | May 3, 2012.
- “Cincinnati Betting on New Development Code,” Cincinnati Enquirer | May 6, 2012.
- “Cincinnati Embraces the Form-Based Code,” Planetizen.com | May 7, 2012.

Members of the Form-Based Code Working Group and consultant team also appeared on the WVXU’s Impact Cincinnati show and the WKRC-TV’s Newsmakers show.



## Guiding Principles

# E





# 1

## Guiding Principles

# Take a Complete Places Approach to Revitalization

### Introduction

In order for Cincinnati's urban neighborhoods to compete as viable places to live, work, and play, a complete places approach must be taken to revitalizing each of them. A complete neighborhood must have all of the following components to be viable:

- A diversity of high-quality housing choices at urban densities;
- A vibrant main street within walking distance of residents that provides day-to-day commercial amenities, a place to socialize, and a place to incubate local businesses;
- High-quality public spaces and parks
- Access to transit options
- Walkability/Bikability for adults and children
- Public safety
- High-quality schools

The revitalization of each of Cincinnati's diverse neighborhoods must address all of these aspects in order to be successful. That being said, it is unrealistic to think this is going to happen in the short term to all of the neighborhoods. Therefore, a prioritization of walkable urban neighborhoods needs to occur. This prioritization should build upon the walkable urban community type designations within the comprehensive plan. Every City department should be coordinated in terms of their focus and priority on reinforcing the above components of a complete neighborhood with a direct focus on pre-designated priority neighborhoods. Only with this focused effort across all City departments will the revitalization efforts be successful.



**For the City to continue to revitalize,** it must recognize that the on-going efforts to revitalize Downtown must be applied to each of the neighborhoods within the City. For Downtown to thrive, the neighborhoods must thrive, and only by working together and looking comprehensively can this occur.

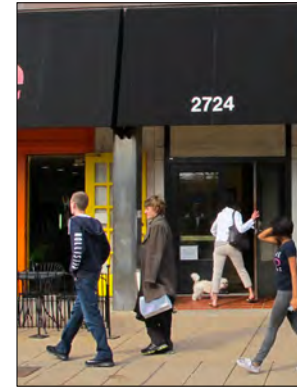




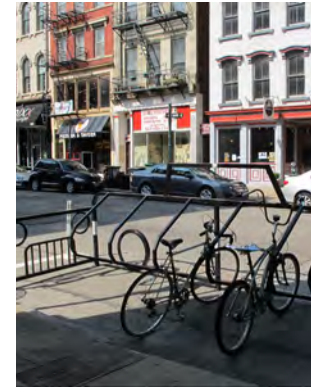
High-quality civic spaces



Vibrant retail



Pedestrian and Bicycle Amenities



**A Diversity of High-Quality Housing Choices at Urban Densities;**

Small medium-density buildings provide a buffer between commercial areas and single-family neighborhoods.



# 2

## Guiding Principles

# Make Vibrant Neighborhood Main Streets a Priority



### Introduction

Historically "Main Street" was both the commercial and community center of thriving neighborhoods. Even today, retail specialists talk about the best business location as being 'at the corner of Main and Main'. So it is shortsighted to imagine that Cincinnati's lovely neighborhoods can revitalize without the simultaneous recreation of vibrant main streets.

Each neighborhood has unique locational, historic, architectural or commercial assets on which to build, but few, at present, are doing a good job of using these to position themselves as a special, desirable place. And for all, the condition of Main Street, attractive or deficient, is a prime perception driver.

So Job One for getting people back into neighborhoods is commercial district revitalization and creation of the accompanying sense of a desired and desirable place, which is clean, walkable, populous, interesting and safe.

But make no mistake, achieving that positive outcome is truly a job and one that requires hard work and attention to every detail.

### A Vision Is Not Enough...

...though certainly it is where the road begins.

Many Cincinnati neighborhoods have community leadership teams in place and ongoing dialogue about the way forward. But oftentimes, locals, immersed in quotidian challenges, can become immune to their own best opportunities. It is not uncommon to believe that things, having worsened, can only continue to get worse. It is often suggested that there just isn't much left to work with, if indeed anything at all. And that is never true.

So, the first task is to refocus community energies on both the possible and the optimum. What might the future look like? What are the best assets on which to build? What are the obvious challenges to be overcome?

Most importantly, how can this neighborhood distinguish itself, attract homebuyers, renters, businesses and customers



that will cherish and enjoy its unique character. What are the characteristics of that target population and how do they match the available opportunities? What is the brand of this particular area and what are the essential pillars of that brand?

And, if Main Street is the starting point, what does the Main Street of tomorrow look like and what possibilities will that create for the entire surrounding area?

Vision is a map of the road to the future and the lens through which a sense of possibilities can be encouraged and enhanced.

### And Then A Plan...

With the elements of vision and brand defined, identification of key objectives is the next step. In this phase, specific opportunities are identified: existing businesses to be retained, sites to be renovated, restored and marketed, clean and safe projects to be initiated and/or supported, funding to be secured, key supporters to be enlisted, district marketing to begin.

Vision in a vacuum is conversational, but not transformational. So with planning comes the opportunity to conceive how vision will be realized, how long it might take, what it could cost, where it needs to begin, and who it needs to include.

### Plus a To Do List...

Identifying a goal and establishing objectives inevitably generates a multitude of tasks. It is only the completion of these tasks that ultimately leads to change.

In any conversation about the "to do" list of neighborhood revitalization, it is important to turn quickly to a discussion of who will do the doing. Community leaders, even with a high level of energy and commitment, are often volunteers with other obligations. Does the community need professional assistance? If so, what form should that take for maximum effectiveness?

Retail district revitalization is often tackled piecemeal, but this is rarely, if ever, the best approach. Commercial leasing

in neighborhood districts is both challenging and highly specialized. All the elements identified in the visioning and planning processes have to be accounted for: community brand and objectives, clean and safe, property owner engagement, district marketing, and more. But there also needs to be a vision-based tenant recruitment effort – both sustained and professionally managed.

In the implementation phase, even with growing success, temptations will abound. From a district that once believed it had no possibilities may emerge one convinced that possibilities are now endless. That also is never true. So it is important that even as turnaround occurs, community leaders stick to the plan (refining it as needed, say "no" to

opportunities that may tempt but not fit, grow systematically, and most importantly, develop a retention strategy that ensures continuing success.





# 3

## Guiding Principles

# Neighborhood Revitalization As Economic Development



The City of Cincinnati has implemented successful economic development initiatives in and near its downtown core resulting in a vital and vibrant downtown with increasing numbers of people who both live and work in the area. Despite these efforts, the City population declined between the year 2000 and the 2010 census. In order to increase the support for small businesses and retail and services, it is necessary to begin to repopulate the City so that employers will have a ready productive labor force with lower commute costs.

Employers will move to population centers that provide the best housing and neighborhood options for their employees and which best reflect the lifestyle that is desired by their employees. This trend allows employers to have a stable workforce and, increasingly in an age when so much is done with computing and remote access, to a specific physical location, because other factors, such as proximity to resources, have become less important. Aggregation of firm types is still important because it ensures a ready supply of skilled labor for the specific type of business. Many firms, including industrial classifications, are now closer to idea factories than actual manufacturing facilities and therefore can locate anywhere with the amenities that will attract and retain a specific labor force.

Over the past years since 1950, as population has moved outward from the City, employment has also shifted (as illustrated by the Census LEHD data shown in the earlier image on page A.3). The demographic wave that produced suburban lifestyles is receding. At this point, the two demographic groups that comprise the majority of the population nationally – the Millennials and the Baby Boomers – are both looking for similar characteristics in residential locations. According to research by RCLCO, an Orlando, Florida research firm, and published in the Wall Street Journal, 88% of Millennials want:

- Walkable, bikable neighborhoods and streets
- Amenities and work within walking radius
- Smaller houses or smaller units at lower cost
- An urban street environment
- Access to transit
- Access to nature and recreation
- A strong sense of community

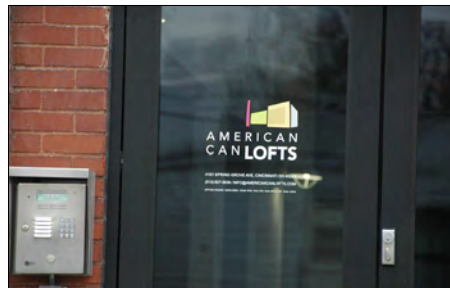


The suburban locations outside of the City will have a hard time inventing these desirable amenities while, for the most part, the neighborhoods within the City have many of these attributes now and as an added advantage also have housing stock of materials and workmanship, unavailable elsewhere in the region, at a cost that will enable young people access to the housing market.

What this means for the City is that, if neighborhood revitalization is pursued as aggressively as job creation, it can compete successfully with the suburbs to capture the coming demographic wave of Millennials, who will be the educated workforce needed for future employment. As such, this is an economic development strategy that complements existing economic development efforts with a ground-up emphasis to match the typical top down emphasis of attracting employers.

Revitalizing neighborhoods will require a rethinking of transportation priorities from primarily automobile to an equal consideration of all forms of transit. Elsewhere in the report, this has been referred to as creating "complete streets." Complete streets are integral to providing the required amenities and services that will attract and retain residents. The City of Cincinnati has this option, because so many neighborhoods have the other qualities listed above. Capturing future labor force by revitalizing neighborhoods is an economic strategy aimed at the future and whatever jobs and industries time may bring, because it addresses a fundamental need for all business productivity.

Examples of restored corner stores, erstwhile factory buildings repurposed as loft apartments, and contemporary homes filling in urban gaps - all capitalizing on the asset of great neighborhood fabrics.





# 4

## Guiding Principles

# Utilize and Build Upon Existing Rich Assets



Cincinnati has one of the richest collections of historic and contributing buildings of any City in the entire country, offering tremendous assets upon which to build. In addition, a rich history and diverse culture combine to form a strong city identity that should serve as a solid foundation for the revitalization of urban neighborhoods.

### Architecture

Throughout its neighborhoods, Cincinnati boasts a uniquely extensive and colorful collection of Italianate architecture that provides a distinctive built environment. Over-the-Rhine is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places, and regarded as one of the most intact historic neighborhoods in any American city; this rich architectural depth pervades the City's various neighborhoods, with countless examples of unique townhouses, forecourt apartments, and corner stores.

### History

Cincinnati owes much of its unusual identity to its location on the Ohio River, as early development and prosperity arrived by steam boat travel; it became one of the country's first major inland cities, leading some to consider this "Queen of the West" as one of the first purely "American" cities. Its location and trade relationships with both North and South also made it an important pivot point in American racial history; some residents became important abolitionists, and the City hosted several Underground Railroad stations. An extensive streetcar network further promoted the growth of a City of unique, independent neighborhoods linked throughout the hills.

### Culture

The City's culture first flourished through strong communities of German and Italian immigrants. Its location at the crossroads of northern and southern States also made it a crossroads in American culture. Its historic growth as a self-sustaining, working-class city built a committed, hard-working community attitude that pervades the City's culture today.







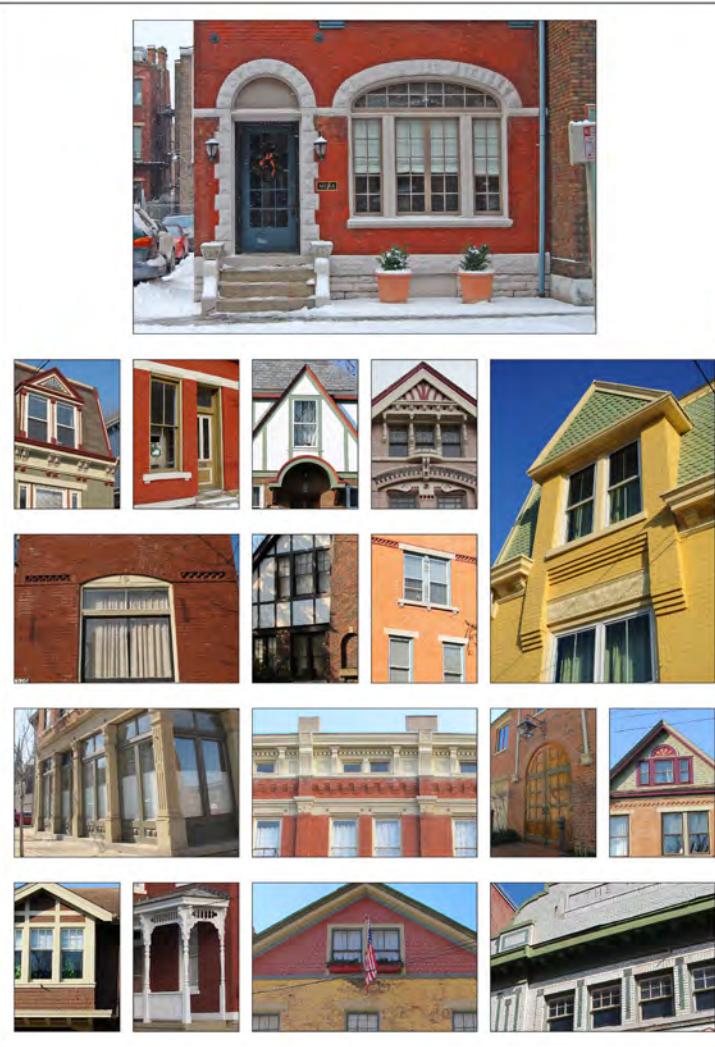
### Character: Buildings

Cincinnati, Ohio  
April 28, 2012



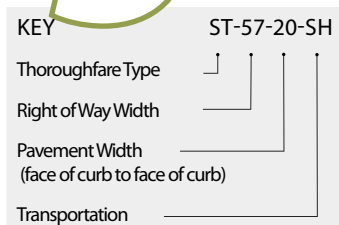
### Character: Materials

Cincinnati, Ohio  
April 28, 2012



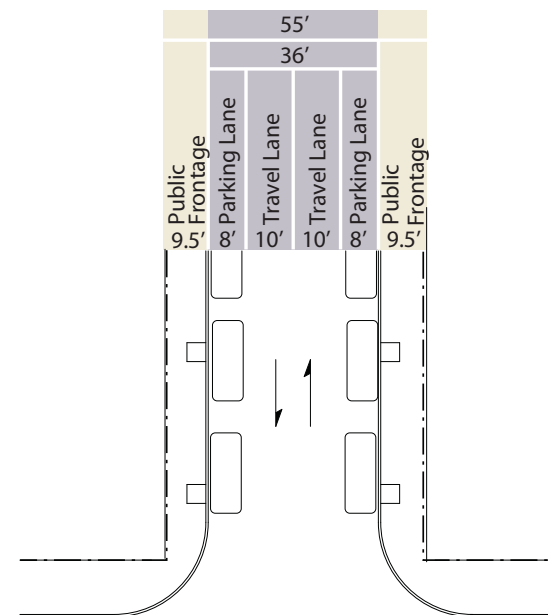
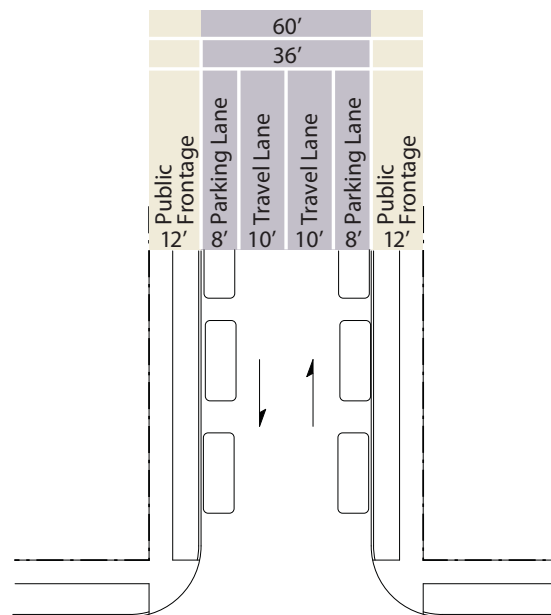
# 5 Guiding Principles

## Create Complete Streets



### THOROUGHFARE TYPES

Avenue:	AV
Boulevard:	BV
Parkway:	PW
Commercial Street:	CS
Drive:	DR
Street:	ST
Rear Alley:	RA
Rear Lane:	RL



### Assembly Designation

Thoroughfare Type

Transect

Right-of-Way Width

Pavement Width

ST-60-36

Street

T4, T4O, T5, T5L

60 ft.

36 ft.

CS-55-36

Commercial Street

T4O, T5, T5L

55 ft.

36 ft.

### Transportation Way

Vehicular Lane(s)

Parking Lanes

Movement Type

Median Width

Median Planting

Median Surface

Target Speed

Bicycle Provision

Transit Provision

Public Frontage

Two Lanes: Two way, one lane each way @ 10 ft.

Two lanes parallel @ 8 ft.

Free

n/a

n/a

n/a

25 mph

Sharrow

Bus route

D, F

Two Lanes: Two way, one lane each way @ 10 ft.

Two lane parallel @ 8 ft.

Free

n/a

n/a

n/a

25 mph

Sharrow

Bus route

F



## Reinforce a Fine-Scale Grid at Every Opportunity

A fine-grained network of streets, such as the classic “grid” with 300’-500’ block face dimensions, will create a high-volume traffic network with manageable vehicle speeds. This network will provide multiple routing options for pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle travel. Long, straight runs of thoroughfares can promote speeding, so care must be taken to interrupt the grid periodically. Livable thoroughfares necessitate the smallest workable lane dimensions (based on the design vehicle), and often traffic signalization as well, to keep vehicle speeds at 25 mph or less. These speeds are crucial to walkability as pedestrians are most comfortable with speeds below 30 mph.

### Do not close streets

Streets should not be closed or vacated except by extreme exception. Streets may be closed for major events such as the farmers markets, parades and other special events. Downtowns and neighborhoods depend on the small fine-scale grid of streets found in the older and historic neighborhoods. While there are many examples of pedestrian-only streets across the country and the world, they frequently depend on higher-density residential neighborhoods and tourists. More often than not, pedestrian-only streets fail to achieve the desired result of a vibrant pedestrian-only environment.

## Encourage Four Travel Modes for Sustainable Transportation

### Pedestrian: create active thoroughfare edges and do not create barriers to walkability

Active street-level frontages help provide a safer and more inviting pedestrian experience. Parking structures and lots should not front onto primary streets, but should be lined with active ground-floor spaces, either retail or commercial.

### Bicycle: share the road at low speeds, define lanes at high speeds

Bicyclists thrive in walkable conditions. Managed traffic speeds of 25 mph or less facilitate bicycle use and a fine-grained network provides for shorter routing for cyclists. Use the “sharrow” shared lane marking on the street, if desired, to indicate that cyclists are expected to share the lane with motorists.

On roads with speeds above 25 mph, bicyclists can be encouraged to share the road with motorists if roads are made safer to ride on. Special considerations must be made for bicyclists. The most important of these is to define lanes as being either for bikes or for cars. The easiest of these changes may be as simple as a painted stripe to define the bike lane and a bicyclist logo in the center of lanes that are to be used by bikes. It may also make sense to create a network of bicycle boulevards - a small number of streets that are emphasized primarily as streets for bikes rather than cars.

### Transit: make it easy to use

Transit ridership should be encouraged by making transit easily accessible, providing frequent service, and providing everyday shopping needs at key bus stops. Creating a safe and pedestrian-friendly environment can help to raise the levels of ridership on public transit. The addition of Neighborhood Main Streets, providing retail and commercial amenities at or adjacent to key neighborhood stops, can further encourage ridership.

### Automobile: manage traffic speed based on context and desired walkability

When it comes to posted speed, “twenty is plenty” in T-4 to T-6. The lower speed helps create a more inviting pedestrian environment and helps lower the potential for pedestrian fatalities in accidents.

# 6

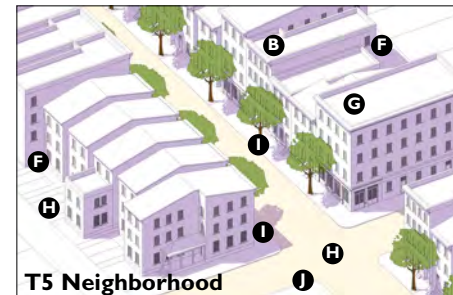
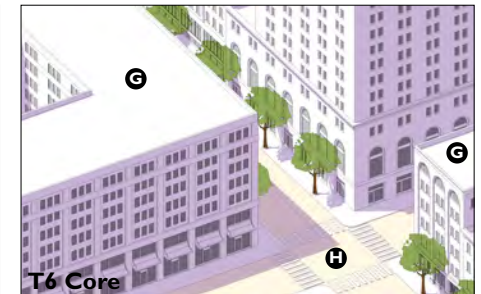
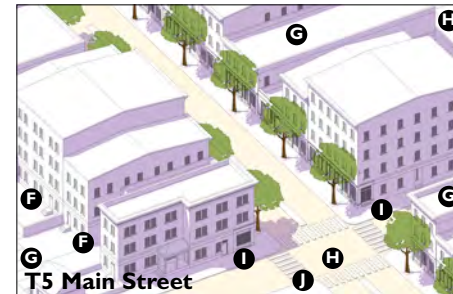
Guiding Principles

## Integrate Stormwater Management Across the Transect



E.12





**A**  
Lot Scale: Rain Barrels at Downspouts



**C**  
Block Scale: Biofiltration on the Sides of Streets



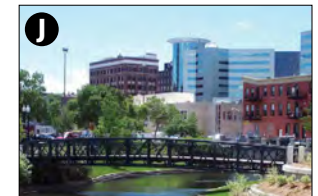
**E**  
Block and Neighborhood Scale: Biofiltration within Civic and Open Spaces.



**F**  
Lot Scale: Rain Barrels and Cisterns at Downspouts



**H**  
Lot and Block Scale: Permeable Pavers on Lots and Portions of Streets



**J**  
Block and Neighborhood Scale: Water Features within Civic and Open Spaces



**B**  
Lot Scale: Rain Gardens in Rear Yards



**D**  
Block and Neighborhood Scale: Biofiltration within Parks.



**G**  
Lot Scale: Green Roofs on Buildings



**I**  
Block and Neighborhood Scale: Biofiltration on the Sides of streets.



# 7

## Guiding Principles

# Incubate Local Businesses and Seed Reinvestment



### Corner Stores as Incubator Spaces

Corners stores are scattered throughout Cincinnati neighborhoods. These building types provide walkability at a finer grain than is provided by the neighborhood main streets and are often present at every street corner. These buildings should be preserved and their adaptive reuse incentivized.

Any regulations that provide obstacles for their commercial or retail use should be removed. These building types provide a great place for artists to live and work and are great incubators for small, local businesses.

Many of these buildings have been boarded up or have been converted to residential uses; therefore, it may be hard to imagine that the buildings provide a service to the neighborhoods in their current state, but the idea is to remove obstacles (regulations), incentivize small business or artisans, and to let the market determine their viability. These buildings can often incubate entire neighborhood revitalization.

## Introduction

There are 3 key areas in which seed investment can have a disproportionately positive effect on the reemergence of a neighborhood business district. Any financial incentives must be managed judiciously and monitored rigorously, but even such small amounts as \$5,000 – \$10,000 often can be powerful tools to get deals done and businesses up and running.

### Property

One of the challenges of revitalizing neighborhood retail districts is a lack of resources. Property owners are often under financial stress. In many instances, there has been a pattern of disinvestment. Landlords not only don't have the funds to supply tenant improvement dollars; they haven't even been able to keep pace with ordinary maintenance. As a result, available spaces are often unappealing, even deteriorated. Once glorious facades are faded and storefronts antiquated, upgrading use may trigger new code requirements and expenses. Such expenses, if impossible to meet, will kill a deal and keep a storefront empty or available for rent by a much less desirable tenant.

A simple tool such as façade grants will have an immediate positive impact on neighborhood visuals and add an all important curb appeal for prospective tenants. Loan or grant funds that can support tenant improvement contributions allow start-up dollars to go further. Pool funds for rent subsidy and low interest loans can have a similar impact.

### Product

On the tenant side, neighborhood retail districts are most often populated and invigorated by independent entrepreneurs. This merchant class is long on commitment and sweat equity, but just as likely to be short on capital.

Even in a clean well renovated space, incoming tenants have an almost endless list of purely practical expenses to start a business. Store display racks and cabinets, point of sale systems, signage, display lighting, and inventory are all items that fall on the tenant side of the ledger and represent expenditures well in advance of the first dollar earned.

For restaurants – often the most important early anchor of revitalization – the list is twice as long and four times as costly.

Good business owners make good plans and these include financial projections and funding options. But again, even such small amounts as \$5,000 – \$10,000 are meaningful and help to secure desired businesses as well as their future.

### Personnel

The best ground level contributors to neighborhood revitalization are those who are most invested in the neighborhood. It is not uncommon as business recruitment begins, to discover that there are those already in, or interested in, the neighborhood who have good ideas about how to fill a need. But what if a prospective entrepreneur has the will and the idea, but not the capacity?

Incubation and mentoring programs can supply the underpinnings to turn that energy into productivity. Again, dollars invested can be small, especially if paired with access to information, advice, and professional services, but they can give fledgling business owners both the courage and the tools they need to succeed.



# 8

Guiding Principles

## Develop an Aggressive Strategy to Bring People Back

"OVER 10,000  
HISTORICALLY  
CONTRIBUTING UNITS  
NEED TO BE RENOVATED"

SET A GOAL TO RENOVATE  
HUNDREDS OF HOMES PER  
YEAR

WORK TO HOUSE  
TEACHERS, POLICE AND  
FIRE FIGHTERS WITHIN  
NEIGHBORHOODS.

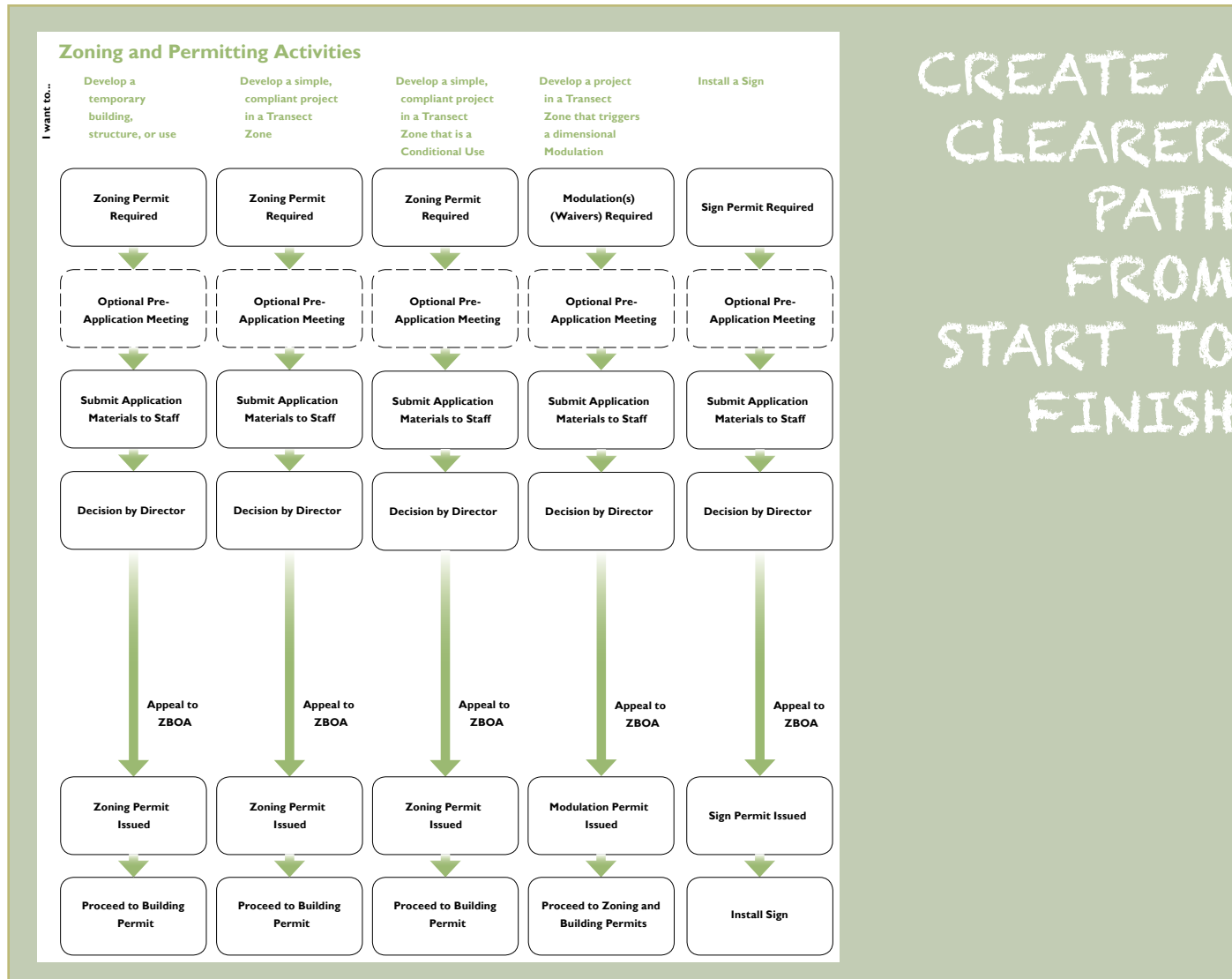




# 9

## Guiding Principles

# Create an Effective Administration Process



# 10

Guiding Principles

## Utilize FBCs For Effective Implementation



CLARITY OF INTENT

PREDICTABILITY  
FOR COMMUNITY AND  
DEVELOPERS/BUILDERS

EASE OF USE

REINFORCING  
CINCINNATI'S UNIQUE  
DNA

REMOVING BARRIERS  
FOR VIBRANT URBAN  
NEIGHBORHOODS

ENCOURAGING  
REINVESTMENT

## Initial Form-Based Code and Transect Calibration

F



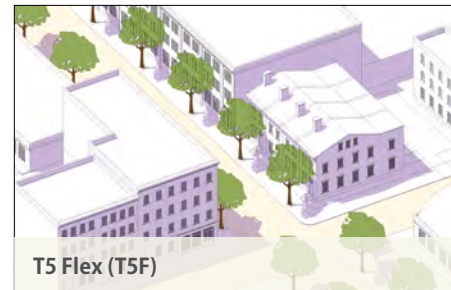




# Cincinnati's Transect Zones

## Setting Standards For Distinct Walkable Environments

A draft Division of the Form-Based Code provides regulatory standards governing building form and other topics, such as land use and signage, within the transect zones. The Form-Based Code is a reflection of the community vision for implementing the intent of the Comprehensive Plan to create places of walkable urbanism. These standards are intended to ensure that proposed development is compatible with existing and future development on neighboring properties, and produces an environment of desirable character.



## T3 Estate (T3E)



The intent of the T3 Estate (T3E) Transect Zone is to protect the integrity of existing, large lot, detached homes, to reinforce their role within walkable neighborhoods, and to allow new neighborhoods with this component.





## T3 Neighborhood (T3N)



The intent of the T3 Neighborhood (T3N) Transect Zone is to protect the integrity of existing, small-to-medium lot detached homes, to reinforce their role within walkable neighborhoods, and to allow new neighborhoods with this component.





## T4 Neighborhood Medium Footprint (T4N.1)



The intent of the T4 Neighborhood Medium Footprint (T4N.1) Transect Zone is to provide variety of housing choices, in small to medium footprint, medium-density building types, which reinforce the walkable nature of the neighborhood, support neighborhood-serving commercial adjacent to this zone, and support public transportation alternatives.





## T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2)



The intent of the T4 Neighborhood Small Footprint (T4N.2) Transect Zone is to provide variety of urban housing choices, in small footprint, medium-to-high density building types, which reinforce the walkable nature of the neighborhood, support neighborhood-serving retail and service uses adjacent to this Zone, and support public transportation alternatives.





## T5 Main Street (T5MS)



The intent of the T5 Main Street (T5MS) Transect Zone is to provide a flexible area that can accommodate a broad range of neighborhoods serving retail, service, and residential uses in a medium to high-density main street form. This Zone provides the ability for the retail and service area to mature over time, accommodating a range of building types, such as a forecourt and main street buildings.





## T5 Neighborhood (T5N)



The intent of the T5 Neighborhood (T5N) Transect Zone is to provide a walkable urban neighborhood that integrates a diverse range of residential uses in a compact urban form within walking distance to retail and service areas





## T5 Flex (T5F)



The intent of the T5 Flex (T5F) Transect Zone is to provide an urban form that can accommodate a very diverse range of uses, including some light industrial, to reinforce the pattern of existing walkable neighborhoods, and to encourage revitalization and investment.





## T6 Core (T6C)



The intent of the T6 Core (T6C) Transect Zone is to reinforce and enhance the vibrant, walkable urban, downtown and City core and to enable it to evolve into a complete neighborhood that provides locally and regionally serving service, retail, entertainment, civic, and public uses, as well as a variety of urban housing choices.



# Cincinnati's Building Types

## Reinforcing Local Building Character and Scale

A draft Division of the Form-Based Code sets forth the standards applicable to the development of each building type. These standards supplement the standards for each zone that the building types are allowed within. These standards are intended to ensure development that reinforces the highly-valued existing character and scale of Cincinnati's neighborhoods and downtown.



**Carriage House.** This Building Type is a secondary structure typically located at the rear of a lot. It typically provides either a small residential unit, home office space, or other small commercial or service use that may be above a garage or at ground level. This Type is important for providing affordable housing opportunities and incubating small businesses within walkable neighborhoods.



**Detached House: Village.** This Building Type is a medium-sized detached structure on a medium-sized lot that incorporates one unit. It is typically located within a primarily single-family residential neighborhood in a walkable urban setting, potentially near a neighborhood main street.



**Detached House: Cottage.** This Building Type is a small detached structure on a small lot that incorporates one unit. It is typically located within a primarily single-family residential neighborhood in a walkable urban setting, potentially near a neighborhood main street. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.



**Duplex.** This Building Type is a small- to medium-sized structure that consists of two side-by-side or stacked dwelling units, both facing the street, and within a single building massing. This Type has the appearance of a medium to large single-family home and is appropriately scaled to fit within primarily single-family neighborhoods or medium-density neighborhoods. It enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.



**Townhouse.** This Building Type is a small- to medium-sized attached or minimally detached structure that consists of three to eight dwelling units placed side-by-side. This Type is typically located within medium-density neighborhoods or in a location that transitions from a primarily single-family neighborhood into a neighborhood main street. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.

Syn: **Rowhouse**



**Mansion Apartment.** This Building Type is a medium structure that consists of three to six side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry or individual entries along the front. This Type has the appearance of a medium-sized family home and is appropriately scaled to fit in sparingly, within primarily single-family neighborhoods or into medium-density neighborhoods. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.



**Apartment House.** This Building Type is a medium- to large-sized structure that consists of seven to twelve side-by-side and/or stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry. This Type is appropriately scaled to fit in within medium-density neighborhoods or sparingly within large lot predominantly single-family neighborhoods. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.



**Stacked Flats.** This Building Type is a medium- to large-sized structure that consists of stacked dwelling units, typically with one shared entry. This Type is appropriately scaled to fit in within medium-density neighborhoods. This Type enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability in close proximity of main streets.



**Forecourt Apartment.** This Building Type is a medium- to large-sized structure that consists of multiple dwelling units accessed from a courtyard or series of courtyards. Each unit may have its own individual entry, or may share a common entry. This Type is appropriately scaled to fit adjacent to neighborhood serving main streets and walkable urban neighborhoods. It enables appropriately-scaled, well-designed higher densities and is important for providing a broad choice of housing types and promoting walkability.



**Main Street Mixed-Use.** This Building Type is a small- to medium-sized structure, typically attached, intended to provide a vertical mix of uses with ground-floor commercial, service, or retail uses and upper-floor commercial, service, or residential uses. Smaller versions of this Type include live/work units. This Type makes up the primary component of a neighborhood main street and portions of a downtown main street and, therefore, is a key component to providing walkability.



**Mid-Rise.** This Building Type is a medium- to large-sized structure, four to eight stories tall, built on a large lot that incorporates structured parking. It can be used to provide a vertical mix of uses with ground-floor commercial, service, or retail uses and upper-floor commercial, service, or residential uses. Or, it may be a single-use building, typically service or residential, where ground floor retail is not appropriate. This Type is a primary component of an urban downtown providing high-density buildings.



**High-Rise.** This Building Type is a large-sized structure, more than 8 stories tall, built on a large lot that incorporates structured parking. It is used to provide a vertical mix of uses with ground-floor commercial, service, or retail uses and upper-floor commercial, service, or residential uses. This Type is a primary component of an urban downtown providing high-density buildings.



## Initial Form-Based Code and Transect Calibration: Cincinnati's Building Types





Mansion Apartment/Apartment House



Stacked Flats



Forecourt Apartment



Main Street Mixed-Use



Mid-Rise



High-Rise





# Cincinnati's Frontage Types

## Transitioning From Public to Private Spaces

A draft Division of the Form-Based Code sets forth the standards applicable to the development of private frontages. Private frontages are the components of a building that provide an important transition and interface between the public realm (street and sidewalk) and the private realm (yard or building). These standards supplement the standards for each zone that the frontage types are allowed within. For each frontage type, a description, a statement of the type's intent, and design standards are provided. These standards are intended to ensure development that reinforces the highly-valued existing character and scale of Cincinnati's neighborhoods and downtown.



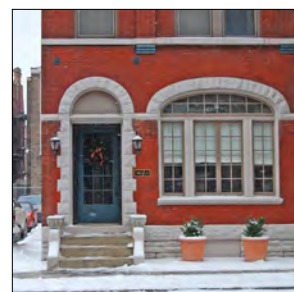
**Common Yard.** The main facade of the building has a large planted setback from the frontage line and provides a buffer from the higher-speed thoroughfares. The created front yard remains unfenced and is visually continuous with adjacent yards; it supports a common landscape and works in conjunction with the other private frontages.



**Porch: Projecting.** The main facade of the building has a small to medium setback from the frontage line. The resulting front yard is typically very small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The projecting porch is open on three sides and all habitable space is located behind the setback line.



**Porch: Engaged.** The main facade of the building has a small to medium setback from the frontage line. The resulting front yard is typically very small and can be defined by a fence or hedge to spatially maintain the edge of the street. The two adjacent sides of the porch are engaged to the building, while the other two sides are open.



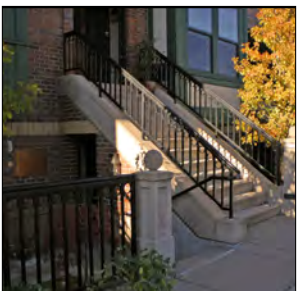
**Stoop.** The main facade of the building is near the frontage line and the elevated stoop engages the sidewalk. The stoop shall be elevated above the sidewalk to ensure privacy within the building. Stairs from the stoop may lead directly to the sidewalk or may be side-loaded. This type is appropriate for residential uses with small setbacks.



**Forecourt.** The main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line and a small percentage is set back, creating a small court space. The space can be used as an entry court or shared garden space for apartment buildings, or as an additional shopping or restaurant seating area within retail and service areas.



**Dooryard.** The main facade of the building is set back a small distance and the frontage line is defined by a low wall or hedge, which creates a small dooryard. The dooryard shall not provide public circulation along a ROW. The dooryard may be raised, sunken, or at grade and is intended for ground floor residential in flex zones, live/work, and small retail and service uses of greater or equal than 2,500 sf.



**Lightwell.** The main facade of the building is set back from the frontage line by an elevated terrace or a sunken lightwell. This Type buffers residential or retail and service uses from urban sidewalks and removes the private yard from public encroachment.



**Shopfront.** The main facade of the building is at, or near, the frontage line with an at-grade entrance along the public way. This type is intended for retail use. It has substantial glazing at the sidewalk level and may include an awning that may overlap the sidewalk. It may be used in conjunction with other frontage types.  
Syn: **Retail Frontage, Awning.**



**Terrace.** The main facade of the building is at or near the frontage line with an elevated terrace providing public circulation along the facade. This Type can be used to provide at-grade access while accommodating a grade change. Frequent steps up to the terrace are necessary to avoid dead walls and maximize access. This terrace may also be used in historic industrial areas to mimic historic loading docks.



## Initial Form-Based Code and Transect Calibration: Cincinnati's Frontage Types





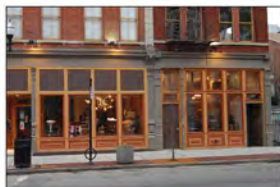
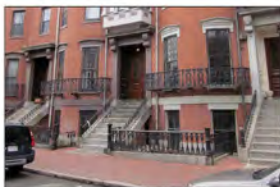
Lightwell



Shopfront



Terrace





# Cincinnati's Civic and Open Space Types

## Civic Space Types

This is an important element to ensure that a full menu of civic spaces is included in the Code and that the scale and design approach is calibrated according to where the space resides in the urban to rural continuum.

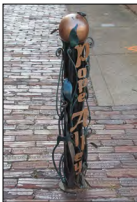
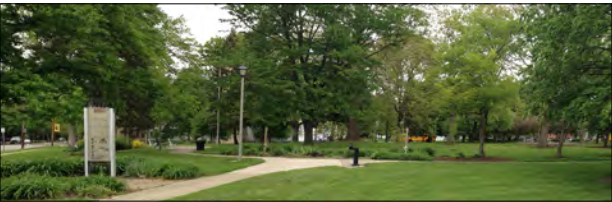


Table 1453.80.030.A: Civic and Open Space Type Standards												
Transect Zone	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6	T1 T2 T3 T4 T5 T6
Civic Space Type	Regional Park	Sport Complex	Community Park	Greenway	Green	Square	Plaza	Pocket Plaza	Pocket Park	Playground	Community Garden	
Illustration												
Description	A natural preserve available for unstructured recreation.	An open space that consolidates heavily programmed athletic fields and associated facilities.	An open space available for unstructured recreation and a limited amount of structured recreation.	A linear open space that may follow natural corridors providing unstructured and limited amounts of structured recreation.	An open space available for unstructured and limited amounts of structured recreation.	An open space available for civic purposes.	A formal open space available for civic purposes and commercial activities. Plazas are typically hardscaped.	A formal open space available for civic purposes and commercial activities. Pocket Plazas are typically hardscaped.	An open space available for informal activities in close proximity to neighborhood residences.	An open space designed and equipped for the recreation of children. A Playground should be fenced and may include an open shelter. Playgrounds may be included within other civic spaces.	An open space designed as a grouping of garden plots that are available to nearby residents for small-scale cultivation. Community Gardens may be included within other civic spaces.	

# Regulating Plan Drafts







## Design Studies/Opportunity Sites

# G





# Avondale Opportunity Site

## Reclaiming the Heart of a Neighborhood

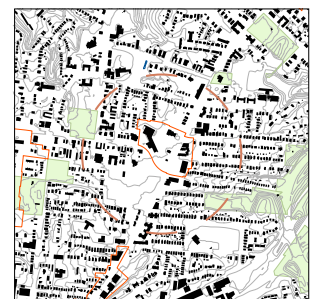
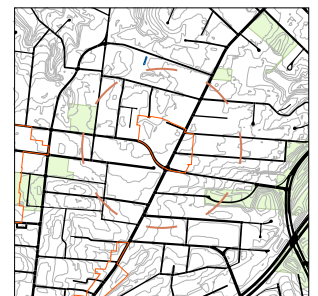
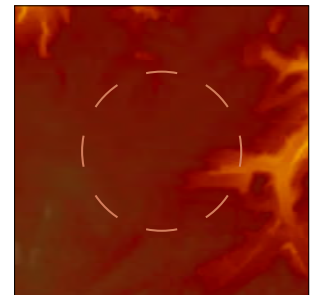
The once grand neighborhood of Avondale is currently economically depressed, and in an overall state of decay. One of Cincinnati's primary arterials, Reading Road (State Route 42), is Avondale's north-south circulatory spine. Due to past engineering of Reading Road and the suburbanization of private development along it, Avondale has become a place to drive through – not a place to drive to.

The intersection of Reading Road and Rockdale Avenue is the core of the neighborhood. Unfortunately, this intersection is populated with suburban-styled development. At this intersection's northwest corner is the largest contiguous property of the area (approximately 7 acres) and hosts a single-story, strip retail center fronted by a 3-acre parking lot. When this shopping center was built, Forest Avenue (a through street) was redirected to make a larger developable parcel for it. This had the effect of cutting off one half of another intersecting street, namely Rockdale Avenue.

Another corner of the Reading / Rockdale intersection has a smaller single-story, strip retail building, also fronted with a surface parking lot. A third corner of the intersection has a recently-built elementary school, but the school building is set back from the corner by approximately 300 ft.

Community representatives at the City's Charrette expressed a desire to repopulate their neighborhood with residents, businesses, and other institutions in a walkable environment. The design team responded by creating a strategy to calm vehicular traffic moving through the neighborhood and creating building sites along the primary streets.

G.2





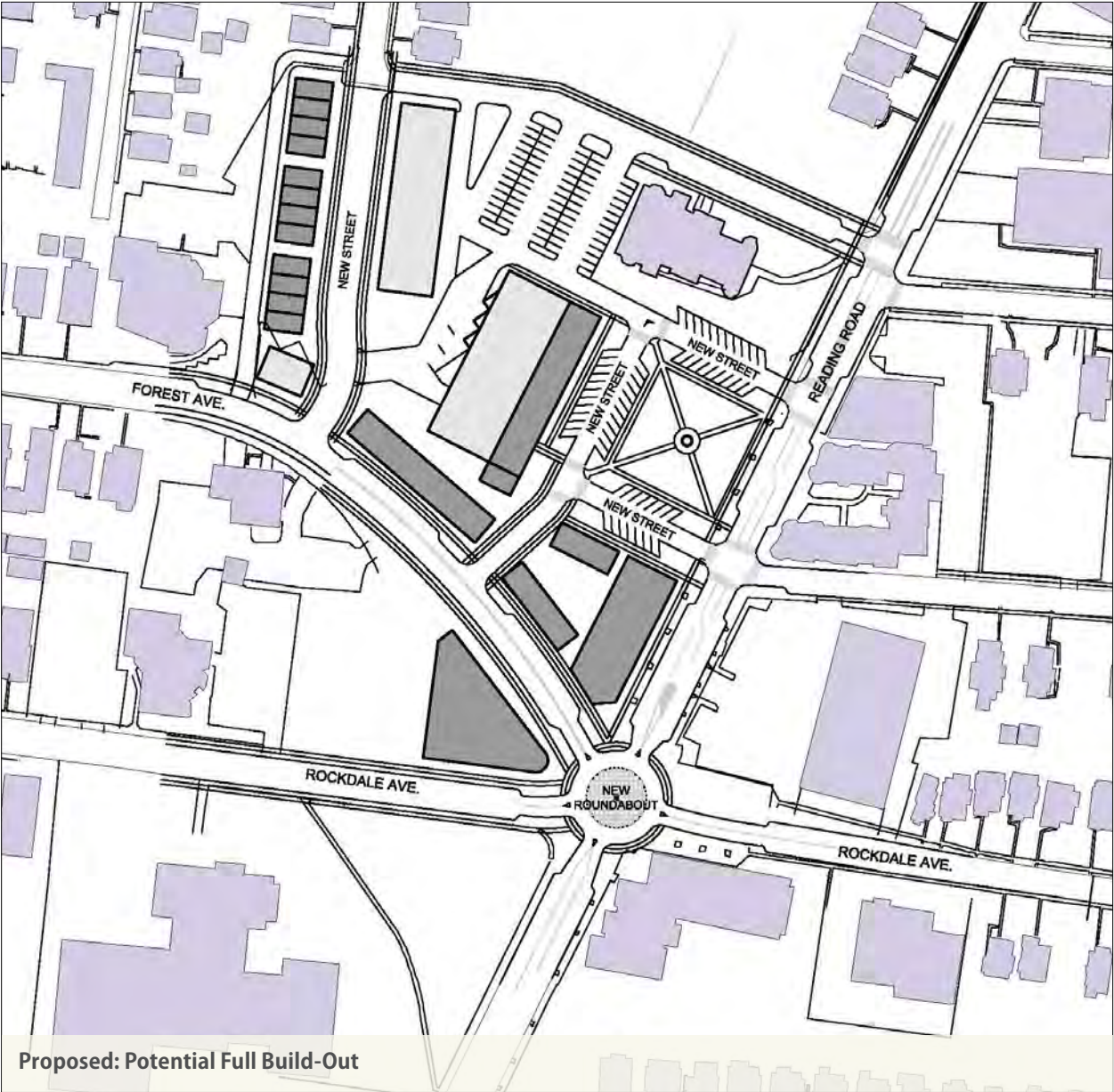
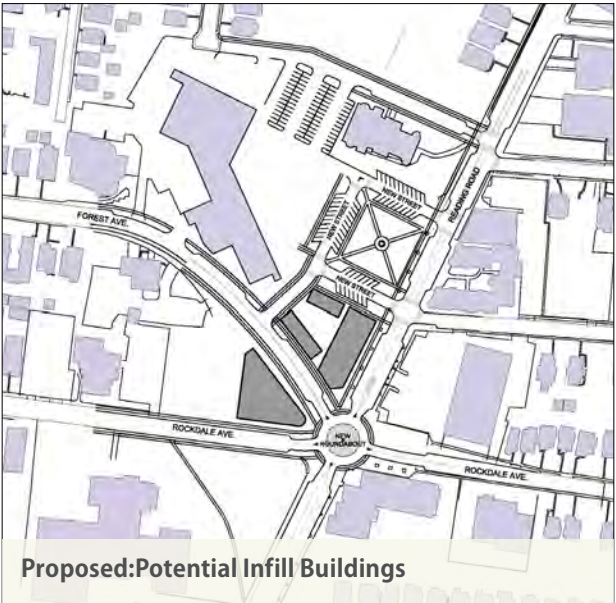
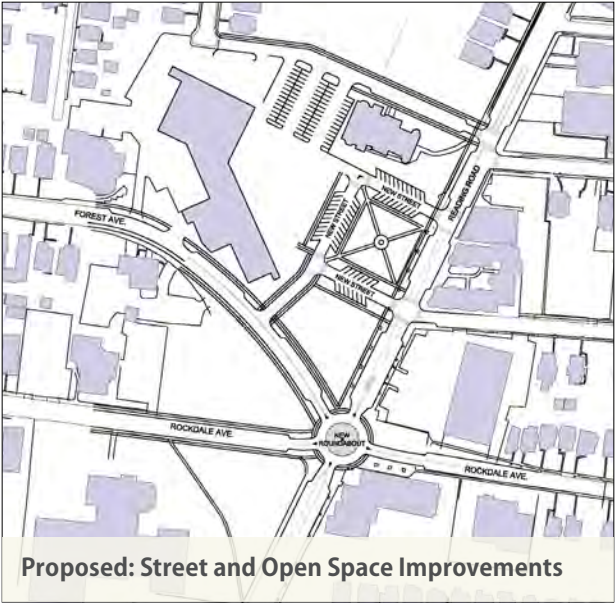


### Charrette Vision

The Vision Plan includes reduction of the number of travel lanes and introduces a roundabout at the Reading / Rockdale intersection. The community suggested placing a statue of Abraham Lincoln (currently located on the new school site) in the center of the roundabout. The Vision Plan also includes the development of a neighborhood square, lined with public streets that contain angled parking in order to serve new retail businesses.

The Vision Plan allows for phasing of the development so the owners of the retail center can develop new buildings on the site, while maintaining the strip center. The plan allows room for a 30,000 sf building to be built, eventually, at the location of the strip center. This building footprint faces the new neighborhood square, and could hold a grocery store.







# Bond Hill Opportunity Site

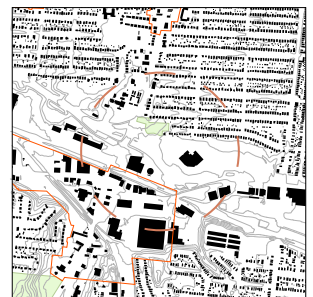
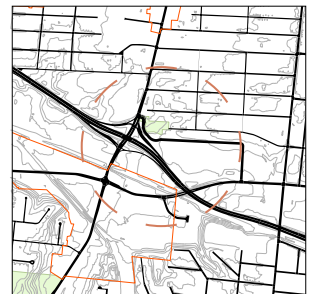
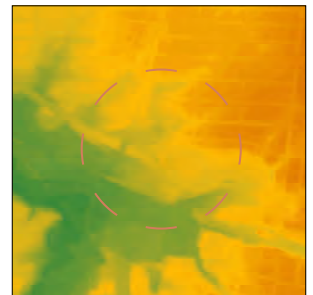
## Greyfield to Urban Office Neighborhood

A multi-screen cinema, and its large asphalt parking lot, once occupied this 30-acre site. The site is bordered by an elevated state highway and commercial / warehouse uses to the south and west, and a residential neighborhood to the north and east. The Corinthian Baptist Church currently owns the property and wishes to construct its new facilities there. The Port of Greater Cincinnati Authority may develop the site and sought planning consultation during the Cincinnati Form-Based Code Charrette.

The church would like a 78,000 sf building for its worship space, with another 90,000 sf Family Center. The Port Authority would like to develop more than 250,000 square feet of office space with other possible uses, such as residential and retail mixed in. A previous site plan for the church was given to the Form-Based Code design team; it showed a suburban styled site plan with the church and several 'out-buildings' surrounded by surface parking lots.

### Charrette Vision

The design team introduced the idea of making the church an integral part of a future, walkable neighborhood by placing it in a location of prominence, and creating a terminated vista with its most vertical element. The Conceptual Vision Plan includes the creation of a main street, which would be lined with multi-story buildings hosting a range of uses - primarily office. The main street would also have a large civic space median made up of greens and plazas. The streets would have on-street parking – angled and parallel – and would connect to perimeter streets in several locations.







## CONCEPTUAL VISION PLAN - BOND HILL; CINCINNATI, OHIO

glaserworks: Architecture & Urban Design

Port of Greater Cincinnati Development Authority  
Corinthian Baptist Church

May 2012

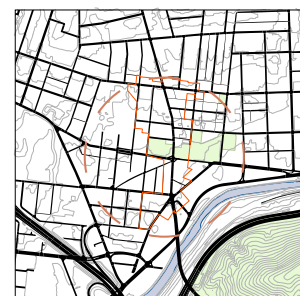
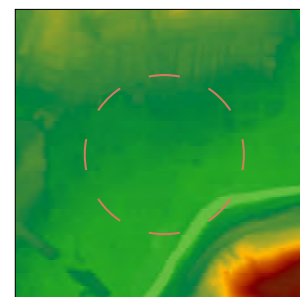


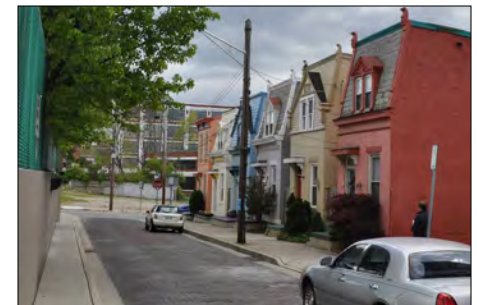
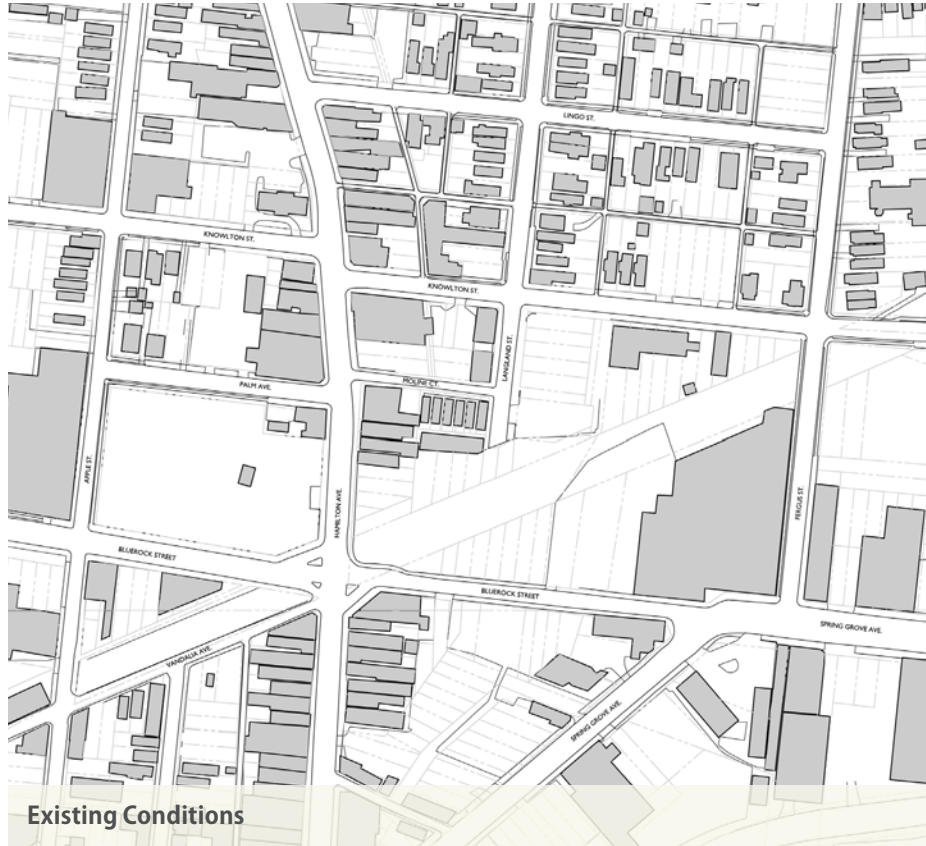
# Northside Opportunity Site

## Infilling a Block

The Northside neighborhood is an eclectic urban melting pot with a business district that is robust, but has periods of economic ebb. Architecturally, the business district is lined with 3- and 4-story historic buildings that are tightly sited. The main street is Hamilton Avenue; which is lined with facades forming a dense “street-wall.”

This street-wall has a large gap, however, at a site formerly occupied by a lumber yard. The lumber yard occupied part of a block that also held a large manufacturing building called the American Can Building. A rehabilitation project completed last year has resulted in a very successful residential reuse of this building. The vacant part of the block that held the lumber yard sits between the American Can Building and Hamilton Avenue.



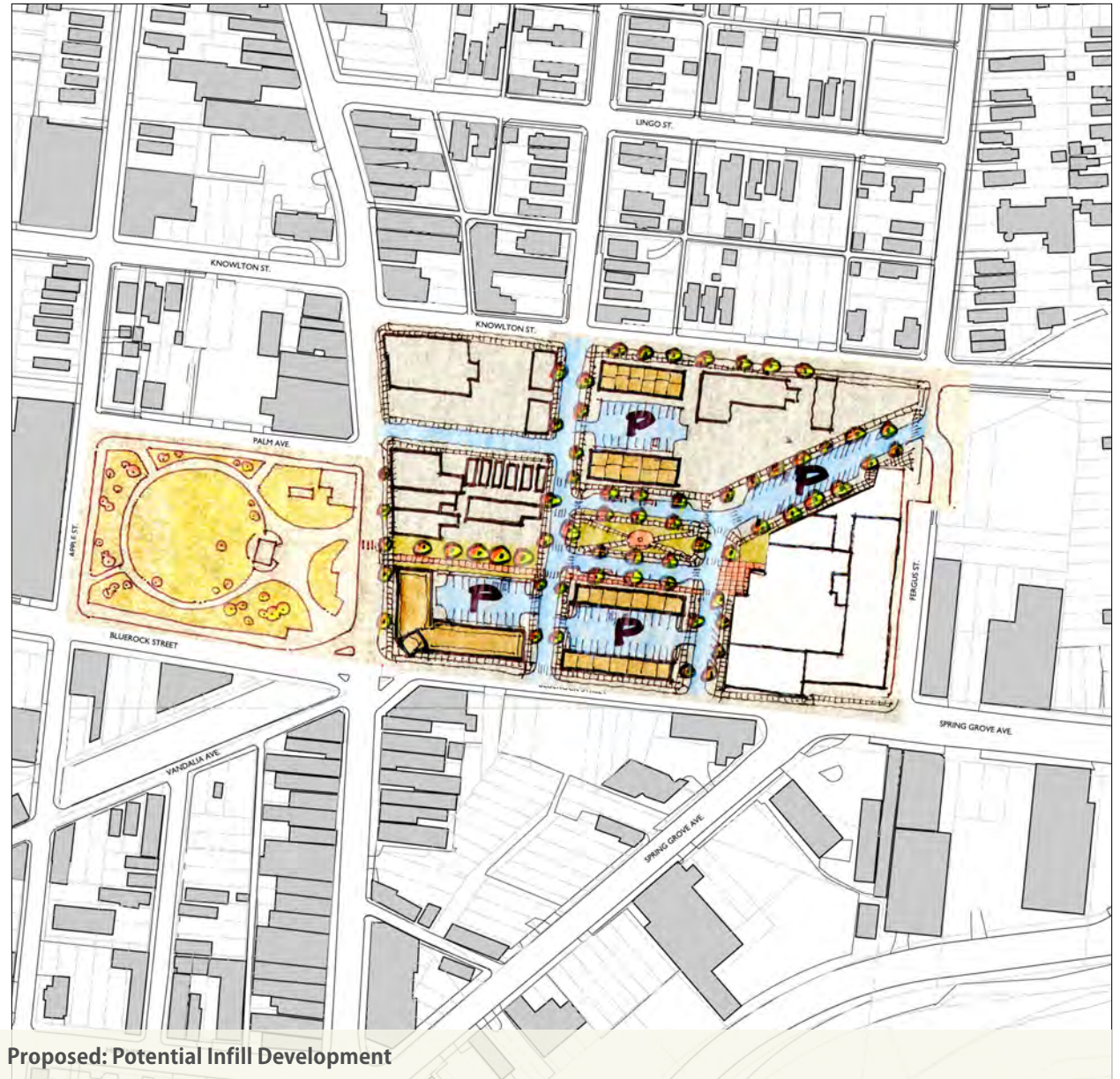






### Charrette Vision

Representatives from the neighborhood attended the Cincinnati Form-Based Code charrette and explained to the design team their desires for the site. The resulting Vision Plan is to construct new streets that dissect the site and help re-connect the American Building into the urban fabric. These new developable blocks give opportunities to develop a range of residential and commercial projects: apartments, rowhouse and mixed use buildings.



**Proposed: Potential Infill Development**

The charrette team suggests several steps in the process of revitalizing towns, main streets and business districts. These steps are best accomplished in the following sequence:

- First, establish the desired community character, structure and primary modes of travel for the area in question
- Choose thoroughfares from the approved list to help achieve the desired community character

If a compact urban character is desired by the community and established by policy, then motor vehicle speeds must be managed to yield pedestrian comfort on adjacent thoroughfares. A dozen additional design features are required to achieve truly walkable, bikable and compact urban Complete Streets. Many of these features are built into the thoroughfare assemblies available for use in the design process.

The Northside neighborhood was selected as a prototype community design effort to demonstrate the establishment of compact community character and complete streets. The test area is bounded by Hamilton Avenue on the west, Fergus Street on the east, Blue Rock Street on the south, and Lingo Street on the north. The urban design team established North side as having a main Street character along Route 127, Hamilton Avenue. Community transect zones were established and typical pedestrian scale mixed use buildings were drawn within the central area.

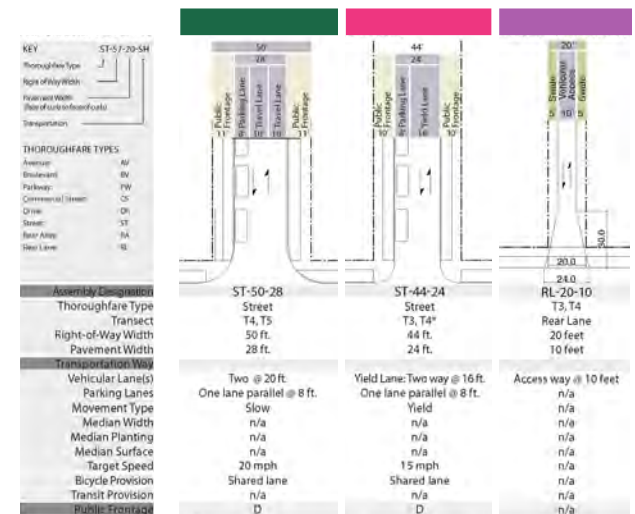
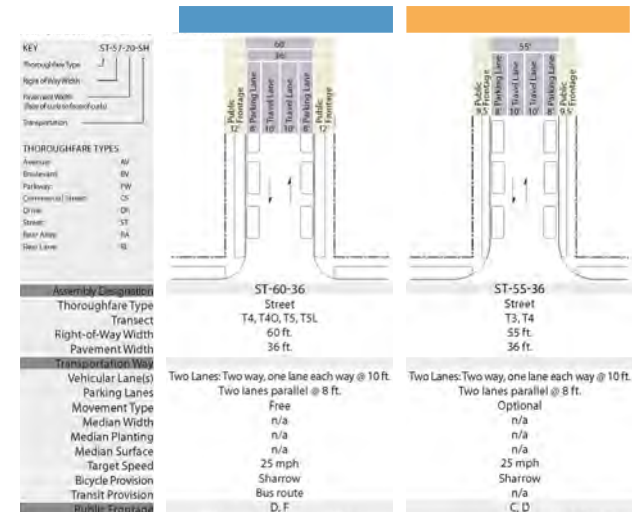
Based on the street's desired function and the right-of-way size available, Hamilton Avenue was assigned a CS 60-36 (60 ft of right-of-way and 36 ft of pavement) thoroughfare assembly cross section. This section consists of two 10 ft driving lanes, two 8 ft parking lanes and two X ft sidewalks on either side, for a total ROW of 60 ft. With trees planted along the 30 ft centers, in tree wells, this section has proven to help manage vehicle speeds to 25 mph.

Blue Rock Street, on the other hand, was designed as a CS 50-28 with parallel parking on one side only and with trees planted in tree wells. This continues the more formal Street pattern, indicating a prime shopping Street with adjacent mixed uses. Three of the side streets accessing Hamilton and Blue Rock were designed as ST 44-24 "yield streets" with only 16 feet of asphalt pavement for two-way traffic. This narrow street width maintains low speeds, even for cut-through traffic that avoids



high volumes during the routine peak hour trip congestion. The yield Street frontage has trees planted in simple grass strips to reduce cost and reflect the more casual nature of thoroughfare. A Park Street, PS 33-18, affords a measure of green environment within the core of these blocks, providing for parallel parking and a single one way Lane against an open park area. Again, the designs yield low speeds and maximum parking without violating the community context for walkability. Finally, the existing neighborhood streets to the north are assigned ST 55-36 assemblies to provide parking of 8 feet on each side and travel lanes of 10 ft each. The 9.5 ft width at Street should flex tight existing conditions where a 5 ft sidewalk and a 4.5 ft tree planting strip is designed. An 8-10-10-8 street configuration, with this type of enclosure and sufficient tree height, has been routinely measured an average speeds of 25 mph. The classic rear lanes are provided for utility and trash management behind the established homes. These rear lanes are quite valuable to walkability as many activities can take place in the rear Lane making walking a more pleasant experience.

Each of the compact walkable communities can be designed for and spent along these lines. Once the crucial context and character are established for the community as a whole. When the zoning ordinance in its form based code style is established, more clear guidance is provided for thoroughfares, designers and builders to achieve great walkability.





# Price Hill Opportunity Site

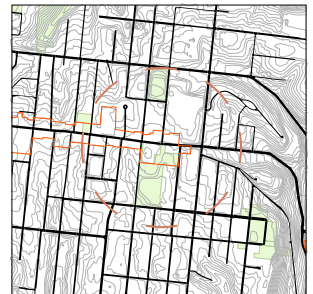
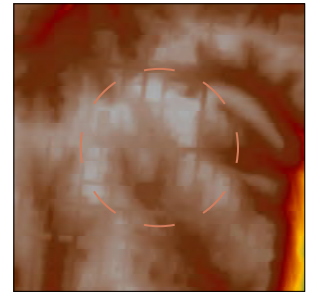
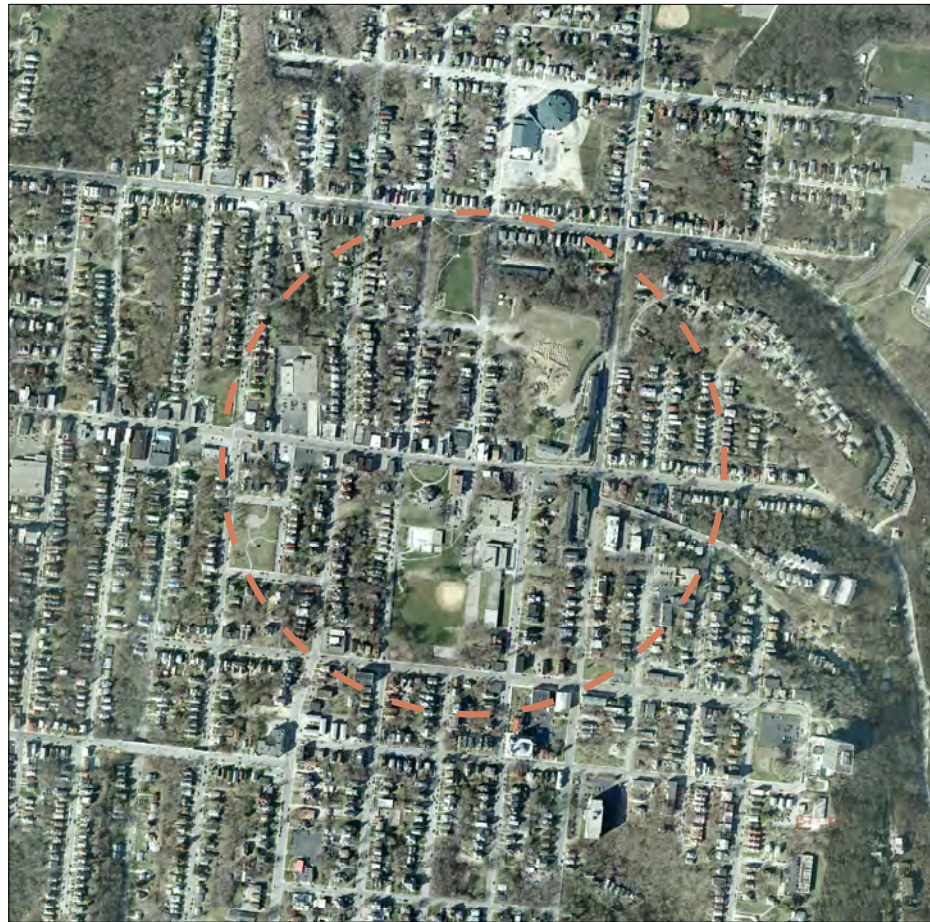
## Dempsey Playground Area

East Price Hill is a neighborhood on the west side of Cincinnati; its street network has primary east-west streets and secondary north-south streets. One of the primary east-west streets is Warsaw Avenue. Warsaw Avenue is a neighborhood “main street” that hosts 1 to 3 story buildings with commercial first floor uses and residential uses on upper floor levels.

The Dempsey Playground block also sits along Warsaw Avenue. Within this block, along the Warsaw Avenue side, are some commercial / mixed-use buildings and three key neighborhood institutions: the Price Hill branch Library; a neighborhood police station, and a recreation / senior center. The outdoor recreation area is sparsely used; a baseball diamond is often flooded in Spring and Summer months.

Representatives from East Price Hill attended the Cincinnati City-Wide charrette to discuss their desires for the Dempsey Playground area. They explained that they wanted to focus their efforts on making the portion of Warsaw Avenue along the Dempsey Playground block a vibrant street. They envision a neighborhood business district with arts-oriented retail uses, cafes and other stores to build upon the small restaurants and convenience store that already exist.

The community would like to re-shape the recreation area into one that is unique and useful. “Since the ballfield floods all of the time anyhow, why don’t we just make a lake out of it,” said one community participant.





### Charrette Vision

The plan created at the charrette encourages infill development of Warsaw Avenue. We designed a convenience store to replace the existing one, which moves the store up to the sidewalk of Warsaw Avenue and places parking at its rear side. We introduced new streets and a buildable area into the south end of the Dempsey Playground block. On these new blocks, developers can build rowhouses, single family detached, or even cottage housing. We designed Purcell Avenue, which borders Dempsey Playground on its west side, to have a sidewalk along the Dempsey Playground side (currently it has none).



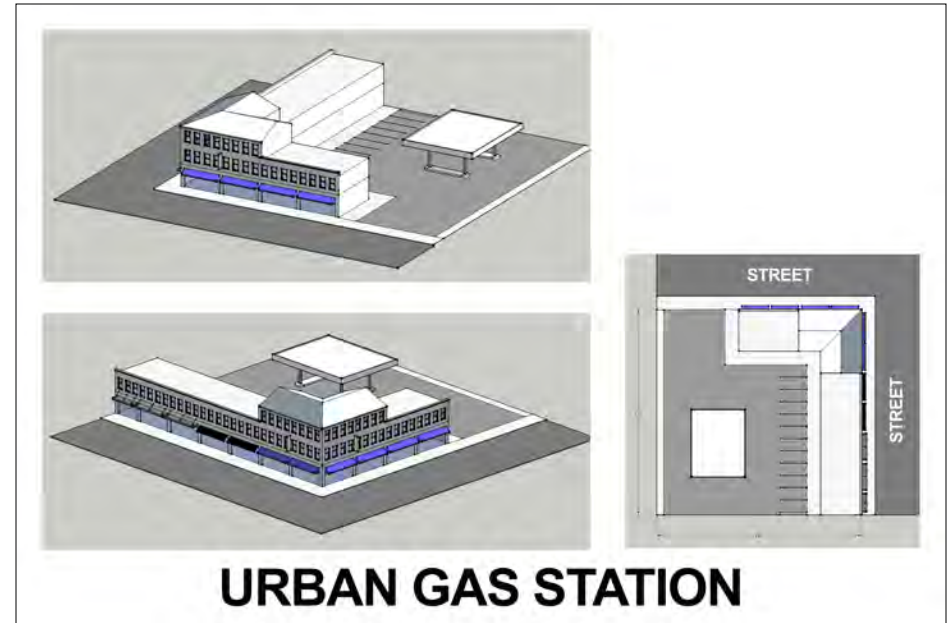
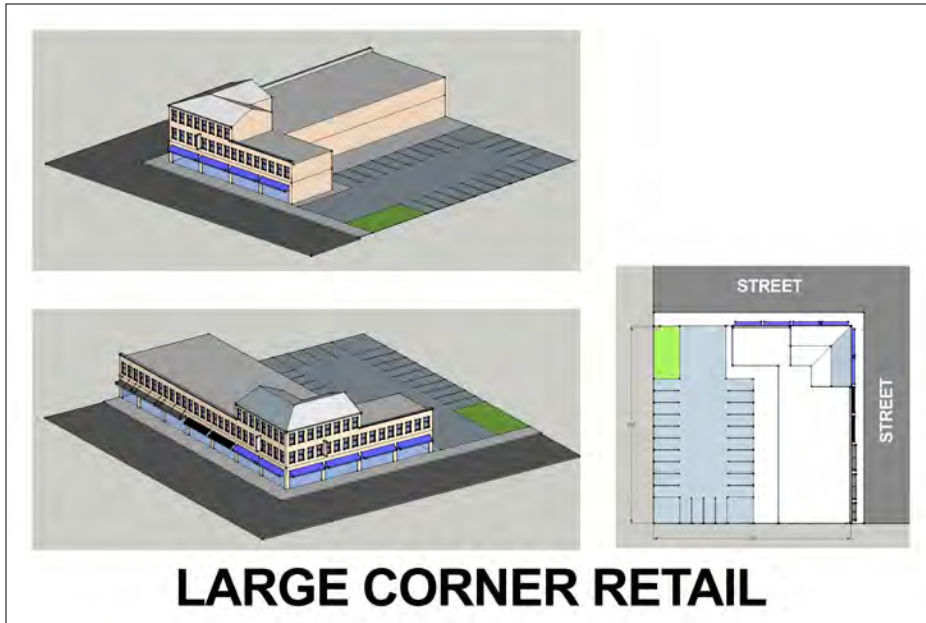
**Proposed: Potential Infill and New Development along Warsaw Avenue**





## CONCEPTUAL VISION PLAN - EAST PRICE HILL; CINCINNATI, OHIO

## Infill Development Studies



### Corner Retail and Urban Gas Station Studies

During the citywide charrette glaserworks studied potential infill buildings that would be allowed under the form-based code.

The studies found ways to allow larger footprint retail uses and gas stations to be incorporated in to the fabric in or adjacent to neighborhood main streets. By placing parkin in the back of the lot and providing access off an alley where available or a side street. The needs of a larger format retailer and those of a gas station could be met.



