

SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT SITES

- Multi-story office building that will house the Community Action Agency at the Dyer School Site.
- Retain the three businesses on the northwest corner of Linn and West Court.
- Redevelop the Martin Luther King Shopping Center with Aldi's as an anchor supermarket, existing retail businesses, personal service businesses.
- Develop the corner of Ezzard Charles Drive and Linn Street for the relocation of the new Walgreens as per Anchor Associates guidelines, reinforcing the grand boulevard street character.
- Develop the Regal Theater as a Cultural and Civic Complex that would include an African-American Culture and Arts Center, a Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame, large and modernized facilities for the Arts Consortium.
- Improve and secure the play area on Linn Street between Findlay and York Street.
- Implement a façade program for all businesses in the Linn Street North Business District.
- Renovate the gas station and U-Haul company site at the corner of Findlay and Linn St.
- Develop scattered sites that are vacant or unused throughout the Linn Street Business District.
- Develop an auto-service/ supply repair shop or other light industry use at the Central Parkway and Charlotte Street site in the Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District.

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INTRODUCTION

The West End is a community rich in culture and heritage. It is located on a plain bounded by the Ohio River on the south and the Mill Creek on the west. The history of the West End begins as far back as the prehistoric mound builders who chose to live here due to the fertile earth and access to a variety of nearby conduits of water transportation. These features are also responsible for attracting European settlers to this community, centuries later. As Cincinnati grew rapidly in the early nineteenth century, the West End emerged as a prime location for housing. In the late 19th Century, a large number of German immigrants settled in Cincinnati and into the West End, bringing in a sense of community and true urban neighborhood spirit. Over time, the fabric of the West End began to change as the hills surrounding the valley developed. The large amount of demolition that occurred to make way for the development of public housing put a permanent tear in the fabric of the community. Urban Renewal split the West End in half, thus depleting the community of its social and commercial core. The western side of the West End was then fractured with the creation of the Interstate 75. As the number of remaining private housing sites decayed over time and the number of publicly funded living units increased, the economic stature of the West End declined as well.

Though considered by many to be a neighborhood in decline, the residents of the community feel differently. The residents feel that the West End has the potential to be the great community it once was. They see the West End as a place where growth and economic opportunities can occur. They have endured the many changes that have occurred in the West End. In spite of the changes, the residents have held on to the community. Their determination and love is what has been the driving force for the West End Neighborhood Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan.

Values

The greatest assets of the West End community are its culture, social, spiritual, and economic resources. Residents' values, hopes, and aspirations provide the foundation upon which the community stands. Research into the history of the West End has illustrated the many economic and social changes experienced by the community. Though faced with many obstacles, the compassion and desire of residents and businesses has helped the community to endure. Many of the families in the West End today have lived there for many generations. Because of this, strong family roots and alliances can be found within the community. Through the process of public meetings, interviews, focus group meetings, and surveys, it has become evident that people and businesses care about this community and are willing to invest in it and aid in its redevelopment. The West End Neighborhood Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan was born out of the compassion that residents, businesses, and organizations have for the community.

Participants

The West End Neighborhood Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan was initiated by community organizations such as the Community Council, and residents that coordinated efforts to solicit

the City of Cincinnati for funds in order to finance an economic development plan. The City responded and a contract was developed partnering the City of Cincinnati Department of Economic Development, Community Design and Development Center, University of Cincinnati, and the West End Strategic Plan Steering Committee whose mission was to ensure that community input is given throughout the planning and implementation process. The Committee consisted of representatives from the City, neighborhood organizations, residents, civic interests, and local businesses. It guided the direction of the study and the methods that would be used for the data gathering process. The goal of this partnership was to explore the economic needs of the community and to develop a Strategic Economic Development Plan in addition to an Urban Design Plan for the West End community.

Process

The West End Neighborhood Strategic Plan was developed over a four phase participatory process of (I) Partnering, (II) Data Gathering, (III) Analysis and Recommendations, and (IV) Strategic Plan and Urban Design Plan.

In Phase I, issues and concerns of community stakeholders were expressed. The agenda, project goals, and objectives from which the following phases would develop were established. The agenda was developed through a series of meetings held by the West End Neighborhood Strategic Plan Steering Committee.

The second phase focused on data gathering. The information accounted for is inclusive of historical information on several aspects of the West End, an investigation into the planning and land use history, real estate market research, and an economic market analysis that included surveys of both West End residents and businesses. The data gathered also includes surveys of the environment, property, accessibility, and infrastructure. A list of the current conditions was gathered through resident and business surveys, in addition to information shared at several focus group meetings. Current EPA environmental data on brownfield sites and environmental inventories of selected West End sites were collected to include: vacant lots, abandoned structures, greenspace, community institution locations, and transportation conditions and availability. Phase II was the most critical phase of the report. It provided information that helped determine which areas of the community and which issues needed the most attention and prioritization.

As the data for Phase II was collected, analysis for Phase III began. Recommendations from Steering Committee meetings, business and resident focus group meetings, and surveys were compiled. A list of community assets and detriments of the West End development were produced and a community vision plan was drafted (see Vision Plan map). The two focus areas of the West End Vision Plan indicated by the Steering Committee are the Linn Street Business District and the Dayton-Findlay Industrial District. Specific development recommendations such as development sites and infrastructure improvements have been developed for each of the focus areas and included in the final West End Neighborhood Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan (see map X).

Phase IV began with the redefining of the Vision Plan. This was done by Community Design and Development Center in conjunction with the Steering Committee. After the draft vision plan was reviewed and finalized, the Urban Design Plan for Focus Area 1 was developed. This plan includes incentives, restrictions, and recommendations for future urban renewal, development, and redevelopment projects. Implementation plans and development schedules were then created giving priority and an estimated time frame for developments. Funding sources that would support the proposed strategic developments, redevelopments, capital improvements, and public programs were developed.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

This section describes the goals, objectives, and strategies of the West End strategic and urban renewal plan. In Appendix, we have included supporting evidence from the *Economic Analysis for the West End Strategic Plan and Urban Renewal Plan*.

There are four main goals for the West End Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan. All objectives and strategies outlined within the plan will ultimately accomplish the following goals:

Goal 1: Promote business development, retention, expansion, and attraction efforts in the West End to strengthen the Linn Street Business District and the Findlay-Dayton Industrial Area.

Goal 2: Create jobs and improve job training programs for residents of the West End.

Goal 3: Improve existing public services and safety throughout the West End.

Goal 4: Improve neighborhood image and preserve the West End urban character.

Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Promote business development, retention, expansion, and attraction efforts in the West End to strengthen the Linn Street Business District and the Findlay-Dayton Industrial Area.

Objective 1: Develop an economically viable neighborhood business district along Linn Street.

Strategies:

- Make business development services available for West End and other City residents interested in starting their own business in the West End.
- Improve business retention efforts for successful West End businesses.
- Encourage and assist business expansion efforts in the West End.
- Initiate targeted business recruitment efforts for the Linn St. neighborhood business district and the Findlay - Dayton light industrial area.
- Locate commercial anchors to increase consumer traffic along Linn Street.

Objective 2: Decrease spending leakages of West End residents' income outside of the community.

Strategies:

- Foster business development that offers a variety of goods to West End residents.
- Increase the number of commercial businesses available in the community, such as grocery stores, retail stores, and banking.
- Improve the safety and security of neighborhood business establishments.

Objective 3: Target industries for economic development that build on the existing strengths of the West End's industrial make up.

Strategies:

- Target businesses in the communications industry for new development or expansions in the West End.
- Target businesses in the engineering and management services industry for new development or expansions in the West End.
- Target businesses in the nondurable wholesale trade industry for new development or expansions in the West End.

Objective 4: Target industries for economic development that provide services to existing West End businesses.

Strategies:

- Target businesses that produce the transportation related goods and services that are used by existing West End businesses.
- Market the West End as a site location for businesses that offer equipment maintenance services.
- Encourage the start-up of a neighborhood insurance company.
- Market the West End as a site location for a firm that supplies security services.
- Help West End companies that provide special materials to other businesses in the West End expand into the regional market.
- Market the West End as a site location for printing and paper supplies and services.

Objective 5: Establish a West End Chamber of Commerce to implement business and workforce development programs.

Strategies:

- Develop consensus among existing businesses.
- Work with the African American Chamber of Commerce.

Objective 6: Designate the West End Focus Areas I and II as a Community Reinvestment Area to maximize on incentives for investment and to link them to the Community Empowerment Zone Program.

Goal 2: Create jobs and improve job training programs for residents of the West End.

Objective 1: Decrease the barriers that West End residents face in training for and acquiring employment.

Strategies:

1. Develop a transportation infrastructure for working and job seeking families in the West End.
2. Develop a childcare infrastructure for working and job seeking families in the West End.

Objective 2: Provide West End residents with proper training that will increase their opportunity for employment.

Strategies:

- Train West End residents in basic employability skills.
- Create programs that provide West End residents with hands-on job experience as a way to increase skills.
- Train West End residents in transferable job skills that will meet the needs of businesses having difficulties hiring employees.
- Develop incentives for businesses to offer practical and advanced service and retail job training.
- Develop programs to keep West End young people in school, such as scholarships for education.
- For all strategies listed above, link with local welfare-to-work programs.

Objective 3: Match job opportunities in the West End with West End residents.

Strategies:

- Create a job referral service that introduces current West End and adjoining neighborhood business owners to West End residents looking for employment opportunities
- Find currently unemployed West End residents that meet the following job requirements and work with them to fill open positions in West End businesses:
 - One to two years of clerical experience and a high school degree
 - One to two years mechanical and special skills experience and a high school degree
 - High school degree and varying levels of factory experience, including no experience
 - High school degree and a current driver's license, and anywhere from zero to three years experience in a transportation-related field
 - Various education attainment levels (high school degree, some college, or a college degree) and from one to three years of experience in service occupations

Objective 4: Create new job opportunities in the West End that build on the current strengths of West End labor resources.

Strategy: Develop new businesses, staffed by West End residents, that offer childcare and other services for employees of neighborhood and downtown businesses.

Objective 5: Provide opportunities for West End residents to complete professional and managerial training programs.

Strategy: Provide information to West End residents about the professional and management training opportunities that are available to them. Encourage training to take place by making sure transportation and childcare services are available for training classes.

Objective 6: Foster a strong work ethic and positive education and career objectives in West End young people.

Strategies:

1. Develop a mentoring program based on the West End community council models that matches West End young people and teens with motivated West End adults.
2. Create incentives, rewards, and/or scholarships to keep enterprising West End young people in the West End.
3. Implement the Student Enterprise Program (StEP) through the Greater Cincinnati Center for Economic Education. The program's main theme is to engage all students of a school in the design and operation of their own functioning community. Students form their own government, have marketplaces for goods and services, and form student ventures in such professions as business, performing arts, manufacturing, and others.

Objective 7: Develop skills in West End residents that will allow them to meet the requirements for a successful career.

Strategy: Develop a mentoring program based on the West End community council models that matches West End young people and teens with motivated West End adults with emphasize put on developing motivation for a long-term career choice.

Goal 3: Improve existing public services and safety throughout the West End.

Objective 1: Increase safety and security monitoring throughout residential shopping areas.

Strategy: Improve visibility, lighting, infrastructure, police presence, increase pedestrian crosswalks signage, traffic lights, and speed bumps.

Objective 2: Increase safety and security monitoring throughout industrial areas.

Strategy: Improve visibility, lighting, infrastructure, police presence, increase pedestrian crosswalks signage, traffic lights, and speed bumps.

Objective 3: Improve the physical appearance in the West End.

Strategy: Trash collection, snow removal.

Goal 4: Improve neighborhood image and preserve the West End urban character.

Objective 1: Preserve the urban character of the neighborhood

Strategies:

- Retain density and use infill to develop vacant lots.
- Create development clusters with a mix of residential, retail, private service, and public service uses.
- Minimize resident displacement and relocation and maintain population density
- Promote Urban living by marketing the location of the community in relation to downtown jobs.
- Restore community gems, or historically significant structures i.e. Regal Theater.
- Address the future replacement of public school buildings along Linn Street.
- Rehab existing facilities or build new facilities that provide educational opportunities for members of the West End community as well as other African-American communities in the region.
- Foster the development of entertainment opportunities in the West End geared to regional African-American communities.

Objective 2: Develop Pedestrian Friendly Environment

Strategies:

- Improve existing public transportation shelters.
- Pursue a study of connecting the community to the proposed lightrail system.
- Improve existing greenspaces by including landscaping and outdoor furniture.
- Create a connection between public corridors and existing greenspaces and playfields.
- Increase streetscaping elements along Linn Street, Liberty, and Ezzard Charles.

Objective 3: Create an identifiable positive image of the West End neighborhood.

Strategies:

1. Create and promote cornerstones and community gateways at key entry points and locations.
2. Implement a facade improvement program for the businesses along Linn Street.
3. Improve existing public services, such as trash collection and snow removal.

VISION PLAN

Focus Areas

Two major areas of interest were identified where development/ redevelopment is likely to take place and therefore are targeted by this plan's recommendations.

Focus Area 1 - the Linn Street Neighborhood Business District, is comprised of the properties along Linn Street from Eighth Street to Central Parkway.

Focus Area 2 - the Dayton Industrial Development District, is the area east of Focus area 1, west of Central Parkway, north of Liberty Street, and south of Dayton Street.

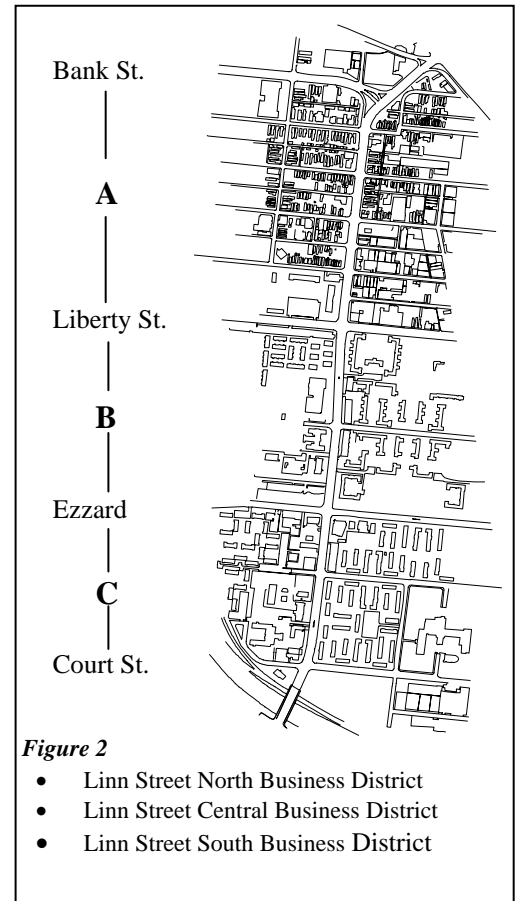
The Plan delineates revitalization and development opportunities within the framework of the existing Zoning and Land-Use regulations (see Appendix, Map X). Both Focus Areas have enough infill and redevelopment potential to accommodate the proposed action without encroaching on the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

The Linn Street Business Corridor

Existing Conditions

Focus area 1, the Linn Street Business Corridor, is the area of the West End with the highest concentration of commercial activity. The Linn Street Business District (LSBD) consists of roughly 89,000 gross leasable square feet.

The business anchors on Linn Street are Walgreens (8,000 square feet), the West End Health Center (14,000 square feet), and convenience grocery stores (10 convenience stores with over 13,000 square feet of retail space). Most of the business anchors are located within three blocks of each other. Convenience grocery stores represent a disproportionately large sector of the Linn Street Business District when compared to other business districts. A majority of store tenants in all three sub-areas compete for the same customers with similar products. The result is that the Linn Street Business District may be losing customers who need other products and services, and are forced to look for them in areas other than the West End. This is contributing to the "dollar leakage" from the area (as defined in the West End Consumption Report). The report states that there is an 'immense leakage of West End resident's income outside of the area for the purchase of goods and services. Leakage is estimated at \$22 million. Because of this, business opportunities within the West End are very large and



potentially profitable'. In order for the West End to benefit from this opportunity of keeping dollars in the community, it is necessary to increase the presence of commercial activity in this area. Doing this will require the use of scattered site development of vacant/unused lots to initiate infill and new business development and/or expansion. For more real estate information

regarding the Linn Street Business District refer to the *West End Neighborhood Strategic Plan*

To allow for a more detailed description of changes to occur, Focus area 1 has been broken into three sub areas as illustrated in figure 2.

Development and Redevelopment Areas

Linn Street North Business District

The Linn Street North Business District is the area of Linn Street stretching from Dayton Street to Liberty Street (See figure 3). From a passer-by's perspective, this part of Linn Street seems devoid of commercial activity. Many parts even seem to be abandoned. The Vision Plan notes the location of vacant buildings in this district (See Appendix for a map of the Vision Plan). Scattered site developments will establish a stronger presence of commercial activity and attract more customers to the Linn Street Business District. Other activities that will help in the redevelopment of this area include facade improvements and a storefront awning or signage program. Facade improvements will advance the area aesthetically by making the buildings appear to be more uniform and give the area a more secure and safe appearance. An awning or signage program will help in establishing a sense of continuity of commercial activities along the Linn Street corridor. Both of these programs combined can help not only residents but also those passing through, to better identify the location of businesses they may have interests in.

Potential Developments Sites:

1. Play area on Linn Street between Findlay and York Street (see Goals 3 and 4):

Improvements needed include:

- Planting grass/ landscaping
- Providing seating on the perimeter
- Fencing or topiary to create a barrier to the street
- Installing street lighting



2. Facade improvements of existing businesses; implementation of a facade program and a loan pool (see Goals 1 and 4).

3. Gas Station U-Haul Renovation (owner indicated interest). Located at the corner of Findlay and Linn Street (see Goals 1 and 2).

4. Redevelopment of the Fish House site on Linn Street for retail use

5. Scattered site development of vacant unused lots can be used as a way to initiate infill and business development and expansion (see Goals 1,2, and 4). Funding for scattered site developments can be



obtained through many of the City of Cincinnati Department of Neighborhood Service's housing programs. These include Housing Development, Housing Development Round, and the New Housing Program. Sites that apply may also receive money from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Brownfield Redevelopment Fund.

Linn Street Central Business District

The Linn Street Central Business extends approximately from Liberty Street to Ezzard Charles Drive (*See figure 4*). This district is the commercial core of the community. Its commercial potential, however, has not been reached yet. This neighborhood has been experiencing immense resource leakage. In order for this neighborhood to keep income in the community it is necessary for redevelopment of the commercial core to occur. Analyses in the West End Neighborhood Strategic Plan Scope of Services Phases 2 and 3 Reports shows that there is a need for commercial businesses in the West End which include but are not limited to grocery stores, clothing stores, and banks. The development of an open-air market along Linn Street fronting the Martin Luther King Shopping Center is strongly desired. Rehabilitation of the shopping center itself would include restoration of existing buildings, existing sidewalks, and streetscape to include bus stops, lighting, trees, planters, benches, new storefronts, and canopies or awnings. The other alternative would be to demolish existing buildings and create a new multi-story commercial strip with housing or office space above and shops below.

Potential Developments Sites

1. Town Center Community Service Complex (see Goals 1,2 and 4).

Redevelop and expand the Martin Luther King Shopping Center as a town center with an anchor supermarket (Aldi's), commercial services, and spaces for some public/private non-profit services, such as an Urban Training Center. A private non-profit economic development center, along with a business incubator, would constitute the West End Business Development Center (WEBDC). It will offer an array of economic development programs, small business loans through the SBA 504, State of Ohio 166, Microloan programs, and entrepreneurial assistance as well.



Potential commercial services are:

4. Supermarket
5. Bank branch
6. A new Aldi's and or Dollar General store

Potential public use facilities:

- Community Council meeting room
- Neighborhood business
association, a West End Chamber of Commerce
- Urban Training Center
- West End Business Development Center
- Expansion of the Arts Consortium programs

2. Corner of Ezzard Charles Drive and Linn Street (see Goals 1 and 4).

This site should be subdivided and prioritized as the location for a new Walgreens store and a future office building. Walgreens has expressed interest in developing this site for their 10,000 sq.ft new store. This development would help to reinforce the grand boulevard street character.

The area surrounding the new development can become urban greenspace with seating, trees, and fountains developed in conjunction with commercial and public spaces. This space could be used for public forums, neighborhood events, and provide a location for festivals. Information kiosks and bulletin boards would allow for postings of events and opportunities.

Linn Street South Business District

The Linn Street South Business district is the region of the West End that extends from Ezzard Charles Drive to W. Court Street (*See figure 5*). This district acts as the southern port of entry to the neighborhood. Though this district currently houses only a few businesses, it is an area with great potential for development and redevelopment to occur.

Potential Development Sites:

1. Dyer School Site (see Goals 1 and 2).

A professional multi-story office building is proposed for this site that would accommodate commercial and social services for the West End community. The Hamilton County Community Action Agency (CAA) has purchased this property and plans to locate their satellite offices on this site.

2. Northwest corner of Linn Street and West Court Street (see Goals 1, 3, and 4).

The primary objective here is the protection of the existing businesses (West End Food Mart, AAA Coin Laundry, and Shrimpy's Restaurant). These commercial establishments should be retained at the location or relocated along the northern portion of the Linn Street Business District.



3. Regal Theater (see Goals 1 and 4).

Given the landmark status of the Regal Theatre in the West End, a complete exterior restoration and interior renovation should be undertaken. Relocating the existing business in the rear and demolishing the existing structure would allow for expansion. The theater represents a missing link in the activities of the community. Renovating the structure as a cultural and entertainment establishment would provide a point of evening activity for Linn Street south of Ezzard Charles. The historical status of the Regal Theatre enables access to restoration funding available through a variety of historic preservation sources, and potentially the Cincinnati Preservation Association.



The theater should be developed and expanded as an African-American Culture Center or incorporate the relocation of the Arts Consortium to include:

- Jazz Hall of Fame, History of the Cotton Club
- An African-American Gospel Museum

- Office and exhibition facilities for the Arts Consortium
- Surface parking

Rhythm & Blues Hall of Fame / King studios recordings

- King Studios museum
- Modern recording studio for training technicians
- Rhythm and Blues Hall of Fame Museum
- Rhythm and Blues themed nightclub, restaurant
- Structured parking

4. Lincoln Community Recreation Center

The Lincoln Center has indicated an ability to operate a greater number of youth programs than it currently has. The Center is exploring a variety of opportunities, including the purchase of the church property directly adjacent to it. Any need to expand should be investigated with the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority and the Cincinnati Recreation Commission



Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District

Existing Conditions

The Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District, Focus area 2, is the northeastern corner of the West End (*See figure 6*). This area is home to many small industrial businesses and residents. Because of the vast amount of warehouse space, it has become home to many artists who seek studio space. The Northeast Quadrant is composed primarily of both large and small industrial and service related businesses. The companies vary greatly in terms of businesses types, number of employees, yearly sales, and buildings types. Most of the enterprises are generally positive about their location and many have been doing business there for over ten years. The advantages of the study area include proximity to the interstate system, immediacy to the Central Business District (CBD) and abutting neighborhoods (Queensgate and Over-The-Rhine); and the low-cost of business space (rental and for-sale). The negatives include visual appearance (litter and graffiti), age/condition of buildings, and lack of parking.

Developments and Redevelopment Areas

1. Corner of Central Avenue and Charlotte Street (see Goals 1 and 3).

This site's rehabilitation would include demolition of existing structures and construction of a new commercial structure, such as an Automotive Repair and Tire Recycling Facility that would include on site parking.

1. Scattered building renovation and adaptive reuse (see Goals 1, 3, and 4).

Old warehouses are a substantial portion of the area's existing building stock. Reuse or rehabilitation of these structures could be developed as follows:

- **Loft apartments.** The loft apartment model, similar to the lofts on Central Avenue, could be developed within this area. A typical market for this type of dwelling is a young adult without children.
- **Potential entertainment district.** The unique character of the warehouses as a building type could be used to attract people regionally, in newly developed restaurants, bars, nightclubs, breweries, etc. in an entertainment district similar to 'the Flats' in Cleveland.

VISION AND URBAN DESIGN PLAN

Create an Identifiable Character

The West End has always been an urban neighborhood, and the intention is to keep it as such. Empty or under-utilized areas are in contention with this goal. These areas must be given uses that have a positive effect on the neighborhood. We suggest that the density of the neighborhood should be maintained by use of infill projects to develop vacant lots and that under-utilized lots be redeveloped. During this process, it is strongly recommended that resident and business displacement and relocation be kept to an absolute minimum. Sites or institutions that have had a long or significant history in the West End, such as the Regal Theater, should be restored rather than replaced.

To emphasize the uniqueness of the West End, a cohesive language of design identity needs to be developed. The abstract aesthetics of Modernism as applied in the public housing projects and later developments did not fit into the lively urban form of the established community standards. The historic traditions of the West End call for innovative and free-spirited urban design and architecture, contributing to the versatility of the urban experience. First efforts in this direction should be made with improvements of the existing physical environment.

The businesses along Linn Street should be united by a common theme and scale. This can be accomplished through an awning or signage program and/or a coordinated facade improvement effort among all businesses.

To make the West End easily identifiable as a community, gateways and cornerstones should be introduced at essential locations in the neighborhood (see *Gateways and Cornerstones*). These gateways not only serve orientation purposes, but indicate key attractions in and around the neighborhood, as well as concentrations of business. Gateways can also elicit a sense of pride in a community because they demand a sense of acknowledgement and notice from outsiders. They help unify the community through identification.

In addition to facades and gateways, locally oriented design guidelines can be developed to encourage new construction and renovation, which would address the identity issues listed. Such an approach would ease the community involvement process by creating a basis for communication between design professionals, local groups and citizens, and would-be developers. It will also complement an educational process of restoring some of the lost traditional building craftsmanship and obtaining modern design knowledge, coherent with the existing one.

Develop a Pedestrian Friendly Environment

Linn Street is currently four lanes wide with parallel parking available along both sides. This configuration has resulted in a high-speed transit environment, highly unsafe for pedestrians and less friendly to commerce. In order to create a safer pedestrian environment and encourage shopping, it is necessary to introduce traffic calming devices such as:

- Re-timing traffic lights and slowing traffic with paving patterns to reduce speeds while limiting the effects on current traffic volume.
- On-street parking spots should be made available on Linn Street. Both sides of the street should have parking for the entire length of the street. Parking should be angled as opposed to the existing parallel. This will reduce the width of the street.
- Street islands should be constructed along Linn Street. These street islands could reduce the number of traffic lanes for Linn Street, effectively narrowing its width. They also provide a location for additional lighting, signage, and traffic control.
- Pedestrian crosswalks or stop signs should be implemented at intersections without traffic lights. This will further enhance pedestrian safety.
- Speed bumps and school zones should be provided as applicable around schools or businesses.
- Additional curb cuts should be provided in appropriate locations for handicapped accessibility.

The intention is to make it difficult for vehicles to reach high rates of speed. For an understanding of the existing rate traffic flow and traffic volume along Linn Street, refer to the traffic engineers report located in the *West End Neighborhood Strategic Plan Scope of Services Phase II Report*.

All street and sidewalk improvements (lighting, crosswalks, bike racks) are eligible to receive grant funds from the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP).

Improve Safety and Lighting

Safety is a major concern in the West End. As indicated in the above guidelines, safety issues must be addressed for the West End to prosper. Increasing safety would require lighting to be improved and increased where necessary, and places such as recesses, alcoves, and “out-of-sight” places to be minimized. Making connections between areas of varying activity levels can also help to improve safety. By increasing the connections between public corridors and existing pedestrian walkways, greenspaces and playfields, the level of activity is spread throughout the community thereby increasing safety. The introduction of improved street furniture such as planters, public transportation shelters and, benches and pedestrian lighting help to make the street not only more pleasant and attractive to the pedestrian, but also reduces safety concerns.

Provide Adequate Parking Opportunities

Currently, many of the parking lots available to residents and businesses are in front of the buildings which they serve. Parking, especially parking lots, which are visible from the street, encourage the perception of Linn Street as a high-speed corridor. They also disconnect the businesses from the street and the community. It is proposed that where possible, parking lots along Linn Street be eliminated and relocated behind the uses they are intended for. By doing so, the businesses along Linn Street should become more attractive to pedestrians and commuters alike. Existing and proposed parking lots should have park and ride designations and capabilities. With Linn Street being the face of the West End, the rest of the neighborhood is judged by the expression that is on that face.

Greenspaces and Streetscaping

By implementing a streetscaping and greenspace program, the environment of the Linn Street Business District should become more inviting to pedestrians, businesses and residents. Safety, windbreak, shade provision, property values, and recreational activities can all be enhanced through the following proposals:

Focus Area 1

- Linn Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Central Parkway to West Court Street.
- The proposed street islands should also be planted continuously with trees.
- The small park on the west side of Linn Street between Findlay and Poplar should be redeveloped and provided with enough greenery to connect it with the streetscaping along Linn Street. Playground equipment in the park should also be replaced.
- Street furniture along Linn Street should be improved or provided where none is available. Bus shelters and seating should be provided at the most often used bus stops as well as those that reside in front of businesses. Benches should be provided in front of businesses, the previously mentioned city park, and multi-family housing units along Linn Street. Where trees cannot be planted, planters should be provided in the same continuous manner as proposed for the trees. Mailboxes, fire hydrants, signage, and trashcans should be painted or replaced, and provided for where not available.

Focus Area 2

- Central Avenue should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Linn Street to West Liberty Street.
- West Liberty Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Linn Street to Central Parkway.
- Central Parkway should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Linn Street to West Liberty Street.

The streets are a major focus of the Urban Design Plan. A number of streets not located in a focus area are also proposed for landscaping:

3. West Liberty Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Linn Street to Winchell Avenue, continuing to the west what is proposed for West Liberty in Focus Area 2.

4. Central Parkway should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from the Brighton Access to 8th Street.
5. West Court Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Central Parkway to Winchell Avenue.
6. Central Avenue should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from West Liberty Street to 8th Street, continuing to the south what is proposed for Central Avenue in Focus Area 2. The landscaping should also continue to the west from Linn Street until it reaches Interstate 75.
7. Ezzard Charles Drive should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street from Central Parkway to Winchell Avenue.
8. Winchell Avenue should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along the east side of the street between West Court Street and Ezzard Charles Drive.
9. John Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street between West Liberty and Wade Streets, and again on the east side of the street only between Wade Street and Ezzard Charles Drive.
10. Bank Street should be landscaped continuously with trees planted along both sides of the street between Linn Street and Winchell Avenue.

Gateways and Cornerstones

Such elements not only indicate the boundaries of an area, but can also be vital in identifying the character of a community. They can take the shape of cornerstones, plaques, or monuments. The first goal here is to identify points of entry.

Focus Area 1

11. Two cornerstone monuments should be placed at the corner of Linn Street and Central Parkway. There should be one monument on the northwest corner and one on the southwest corner as well. These gateways could announce the entrance to the West End and/or the entrance to the Northern Linn Street Business District.
12. As Linn Street bends from southwest to south, there is an existing sign indicating the direction and proximity of the neighboring Dayton/Findlay Residential District. This sign should be maintained as necessary.
13. Two cornerstone monuments should be erected at the corner of Linn Street and West Court Street. These monuments will be located north of Interstate 75 just before Linn Street spans the interstate. There would be two monuments located on Linn Street south of the interstate as well. All of them combined determine the southern entrance to the West End and/or the entrance to the Southern Linn Street Business District.

Focus Area 2

- One cornerstone monument shall be located at the northwest corner of West Liberty Street and Central Parkway. This monument would help to establish another entry point into the West End as Central Parkway is the neighborhoods eastern boundary and West Liberty is one of its major thoroughfares.

There are several cornerstone monument sites proposed that are not located within one of the Focus Areas. These sites are considered vital entrances into the neighborhood and are usually located at the intersection of important thoroughfares.

- A monument will be located in the triangular street island on Ezzard Charles Drive just to the east of Interstate 75 before Ezzard Charles Drive crosses the interstate headed towards Union Terminal.
 - One cornerstone monument is to be located at the northwest corner of Central Avenue and West Court Street. This is not only an entrance into the southern part of the neighborhood but also a transitional area from Downtown Development to the residential areas of the southern West End.
14. One cornerstone monument will be located at the southwest corner of Ezzard Charles Drive and Central Parkway. Again, this cornerstone is located at an entrance to the neighborhood at the intersection of two major thoroughfares.
 15. One cornerstone monument is to be located at the southeast corner of West Liberty Street and Winchell Avenue. This is again an entrance to the neighborhood but only West Liberty Street could be considered a major thoroughfare.
 16. One cornerstone monument is to be located at the Brighton Access. This is a significant entry point into the neighborhood.

IMPLEMENTATION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Implementation Strategy

The Linn Street Business District revitalization effort will be successful if each business within the Focus area operates as a piece of a larger shopping area. Establishing a dialog between business and building owners therefore becomes the first priority leading to the formation of a coalition of businesses concerned with the implementation of the Plan. This could be a formal Merchants Association or a more loose agreement for collaboration in exploring the funding sources, seeking assistance, and representing the interest of the local business community.

Another important aspect of the implementation strategy is to make the improvement efforts as visible as possible thus attracting the City's attention and mobilizing community resources to aid the redevelopment process. Such efforts of a visible nature are the public street and public service improvements. More visible police presence and frequent trash removal are just some of the needs of the community.

Phasing

The West End Strategic Plan's implementation strategy is developed in three phases. The first two are intended to occur in two to five years, the last one – beyond the five-year limit. The following is an outline of the development phasing:

Phase I: Linn Street Central Business District and Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District

This phase referred to as the West End Renaissance Development includes:

- Relocation of the Walgreens facilities to the Ezzard Charles Drive and Linn Street site
- Redevelopment of the current Walgreens site for a new Aldi's grocery store
- Implementation of the façade improvement program
- Development of the Central Parkway and Charlotte Street site as a commercial auto service facility
- Development of an Urban Training Center adjacent to the new Aldi's store

Phase II: Linn Street South Business District and Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District

- Redevelopment of the Regal Theater site as a cultural center/ Arts Consortium
- Capital improvements along Central Avenue and Central Parkway in the Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District
- Redevelopment of the existing Dyer School site as the home of the Community Action Agency and a daycare center

**Phase III: Linn Street North Business District and
Findlay-Dayton Light Industrial District**

- Redevelopment of the existing Fish House site for retail use
- Implementation of the Cincinnati Public School Facilities Plan for demolition and new school construction at the existing Linn Street school site
- Continuing rehabilitation and renovation of existing residential and commercial properties

Future Directions

A more comprehensive plan needs to be developed to address future growth and sustainability factors in the context of Greater Cincinnati. Possible directions of study and future planning efforts are:

- Linkage to the Downtown and Over-the-Rhine development plans
- Linkage to future transportation plans
- Expansion of the Community Empowerment Zone to include the entire West End community
- Collaboration with the Cincinnati Public School Facilities Master Plan, the Cincinnati Museum Center, US Postal Office, and the Cincinnati Parks and Recreation Commission
- Economic analysis and impact study of the Hope VI project in the Lincoln Court and Laurel Homes housing projects
- Development of specific real estate and economic feasibility studies for all prioritized development sites
- Development and enforcement of more detailed Urban Design Guidelines to direct proposed business development and improvement projects

GENERAL PUBLIC FUNDING PROGRAMS

The following public programs can be considered potential funding sources in the development/redevelopment efforts of the West End community:

- **Electronic Village**

Electronic Village is a federal program that provides assistance in basic computer training of residents in a community. Initial capital investment can be subsidized through this program, including rehabilitation of structures as a new training facility.

- **Brownfields**

Brownfields are usually associated with distressed urban areas mostly in inner cities or previously heavy industrial suburbs that are now vacant. The U.S. EPA defines Brownfields as “abandoned, idled or under used industrial and commercial sites where expansion or redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination that can add cost, time or uncertainty to a redevelopment project.” The United States Office of Technology Assessment has redefined the term brownfield to include “a site whose redevelopment may be hindered not only by potential contamination, but also by poor location, old or obsolete infrastructure, or other less tangible factors often linked to neighborhood decline.”

- **Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)**

The emphasis of the ISTEA is on preservation, operation, and better management of transportation facilities in existence. One of the most important features of the ISTEA is the flexibility it gives State and local official in choosing among highway, transit, and other transportation alternatives. The legislation strengthened the emphasis on the environmental aspects of transportation decisions. Among other things, the economic, energy environmental, and social effects of transportation decisions must be considered in the planning process.

The Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot Program (TCSP) is a TEA-21 program which makes discretionary funding available “to plan and implement strategies which improve the efficiency of the transportation system, reduce environmental impacts of transportation, reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments, ensure efficient access to jobs, services and centers of trade, and examine the development patterns and identify strategies to encourage private sector development patterns which achieve these goals”. The activities and research funded under this program will develop, implement and evaluate transportation strategies that support transportation and community and system preservation practices. State agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and units of local governments that are recognized by a State as eligible recipients of TCSP grant funds are all eligible recipients of TCSP grants.

- **Business Incubators**

Business incubation is a dynamic process of business enterprise development. Incubators nurture young firms, helping them to survive and grow during the start-up period when they are most vulnerable. Incubators provide hands-on management assistance, access to financing and

orchestrated exposure to critical business or technical support services. They also offer entrepreneurial firms shared office services, access to equipment, flexible leases and expandable space-all under one roof. Possible areas of interest for business skills development indicated by the West End residents are:

Automotive Repair Incubator: According to a recent retail study there is a retail development potential of 122,320 square feet in the West End and 8.8% of it is automotive related. In addition, there are a number of buildings in the northeast quadrant that would be appropriate for this type of use. Some of them are older industrial buildings and former gas station sites. Assistance with job and business training, could be provided by the Cincinnati State University. The City of Cincinnati could also support the program with underwriting for equipment rentals.

Kitchen Incubator: The kitchen incubator program allows individuals to start-up a food service related business. That is, the incubator provides all the pots, pans, and cooking appliances necessary to start production. In addition, all of the ingredients would be purchased in the West End. This program could be marketed to area residents, similarly to the one started in Findlay Market.

- **City of Cincinnati Empowerment Zone Resources**

The West End neighborhood, as of October 1998, was nominated for the Federal Urban Empowerment Zone. The Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities (EZ/EC) is a Presidential initiative designed to afford communities real opportunities for growth and revitalization. Its mission: *To create self-sustaining, long-term economic development in areas of pervasive poverty, unemployment, and general distress, and to demonstrate how distressed communities can achieve self-sufficiency through innovative and comprehensive strategic plans developed and implemented by alliances among private, public, and nonprofit entities.* This is similar to Strategic Planning in that by designating the West End as an Empowerment Zone will bring funding and tax abatements to the community allowing the accumulation of start up capital for development and redevelopment projects.

- **Community Reinvestment Act (CRA)**

The CRA of 1977 requires banks and savings and loan institutions to take affirmative steps to help meet the credit needs of the communities they are chartered to serve, especially low-and moderate-income communities. The Act directs the four banking regulatory agencies (Federal Reserve Board, Officer of the Comptroller of the Currency, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and the Office of Thrift Supervision) to evaluate the extent to which these institutions are meeting local credit needs. Designation of the West End as a Community Reinvestment Area will allow the community to maximize incentives for private investors.

APPENDIX 1:

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES

This section describes the goals, objectives, and strategies of the West End strategic and urban renewal plan. In Appendix, we have included supporting evidence from the *Economic Analysis for the West End Strategic Plan and Urban Renewal Plan*.

There are four main goals for the West End Strategic and Urban Renewal Plan. All objectives and strategies outlined within the plan will ultimately accomplish the following goals:

Goal 1: Promote business development, retention, expansion, and attraction efforts in the West End to strengthen the Linn Street Business District and the Findlay-Dayton Industrial Area.

Goal 2: Create jobs and improve job training programs for residents of the West End.

Goal 3: Improve existing public services and safety throughout the West End.

Goal 4: Improve neighborhood image and preserve the West End urban character.

Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Promote business development, retention, expansion, and attraction efforts in the West End to strengthen the Linn Street Business District and the Findlay-Dayton Industrial Area.

Objective 1: Develop an economically viable neighborhood business district along Linn Street.

Strategies:

- i. Make business development services available for West End and other City residents interested in starting their own business in the West End.
 - ii. Improve business retention efforts for successful West End businesses.
 - iii. Encourage and assist business expansion efforts in the West End.
 - iv. Initiate targeted business recruitment efforts for the Linn St. neighborhood business district and the Findlay - Dayton light industrial area.
6. Locate commercial anchors to increase consumer traffic along Linn Street.

Objective 2: Decrease spending leakages of West End residents' income outside of the community.

Strategies:

2. Foster business development that offers a variety of goods to West End residents.
3. Increase the number of commercial businesses available in the community, such as grocery stores, retail stores, and banking.
4. Improve the safety and security of neighborhood business establishments.

Supporting Evidence

- Of the \$28 million that all West End residents are expected to spend on selected nondurable goods (groceries, clothing, etc.) in the year 2002, only 20 percent is estimated to stay in the West End. This reflects a leakage of \$22 million outside of the West End community.
- In 2002, we estimate West End residents to spend a total of \$12 million on selected durable goods (furniture, appliances, etc.), with only three percent of these purchases remaining in the West End.
- We expect for service expenditures on selected items to total \$18 million in 2002. Of these expenditures, we expect for approximately \$3 million (16 percent) to stay in the West End, for a leakage of \$15 million.
- West End residents shop in areas other than the West End because the goods and services they want to purchase are not available in the West End, the variety of goods in West End stores are not sufficient, and they are concerned about safety when they shop in the West End.
- In most cases, those who feel strongly about these reasons for not shopping in the West End would change their shopping behavior if conditions were improved.

Objective 3: Target industries for economic development that build on the existing strengths of the West End's industrial make up.

Strategies:

- Target businesses in the communications industry for new development or expansions in the West End.
- Target businesses in the engineering and management services industry for new development or expansions in the West End.
- Target businesses in the nondurable wholesale trade industry for new development or expansions in the West End.

Supporting Evidence

- The communication industry has one of the highest local-to-regional employment ratios (location quotient) in the West End, at 5.61. Six percent of all West End employment is in the communication industry (440 jobs) compared to one percent of all Greater Cincinnati jobs.
 - Seven percent of the West End's total sales in 1997 were generated from businesses within the communications industry.
 - Five communication establishments in the West End employ over 20 people each. This reveals that the local strength of this industry is diversified across a number of companies.
 - The communication industry has a relatively large impact on regional employment: for every job created in the communication industry, 2.98 jobs are created in Greater Cincinnati.
 - There are 739 jobs in the West End that are in the engineering and management services industry, which accounts for almost 11 percent of West End employment. Engineering and management services include businesses such as engineering and architectural services, accounting, management consulting, and public relations.
4. Five percent of West End sales in 1997 were generated from engineering and management services.
- Seven engineering and management establishments employ over 20 people each, reflecting the diversity of this industry across businesses.
 - Engineering and management service establishments have relatively large economic impacts on regional output: for every one dollar in direct output in this industry, total regional output increases by \$2.36.
 - The wholesale trade of nondurable goods is a strong industry in Greater Cincinnati, but it is even relatively stronger in the West End. Businesses within this industry include wholesalers of paper and paper products, apparel, packaged foods, beverages, and flowers. Employment in this industry accounts for nine percent of West End employment (611 jobs) and two percent of Greater Cincinnati employment.
 - Thirty-six percent of the West End neighborhood's \$1 billion total sales in 1997 were generated by businesses within the nondurable wholesale trade industry.
 - Seven nondurable wholesale trade establishments employ over 20 people each, reflecting the diversity of this industry across businesses.

Objective 4: Target industries for economic development that provide services to existing West End businesses.

Strategies:

- Target businesses that produce the transportation related goods and services that are used by existing West End businesses.
- Market the West End as a site location for businesses that offer equipment maintenance services.
- Encourage the start-up of a neighborhood insurance company.
- Market the West End as a site location for a firm that supplies security services.
- Help West End companies that provide special materials to other businesses in the West End expand into the regional market.
- Market the West End as a site location for printing and paper supplies and services.

Supporting Evidence

- Approximately 40 percent of West End businesses' expenditures for transportation related goods and services are provided by Greater Cincinnati businesses that are not located in the West End.
- West End businesses report large expenditures for equipment maintenance, with very little of this service being provided by West End businesses.
- None of the West End businesses surveyed purchase insurance from a West End insurance agency, and insurance is often cited as one of the top three business expenses.
- There is a potential market in the West End for supplying security services to West End businesses. Two companies report payments for security services are within the top three expenditures of their business.
- West End businesses supply other West End businesses with welding wire (50 percent of total welding wire inputs of the companies surveyed), pipe fittings (10 percent), and other raw materials (10 percent).
- Paper and printing supplies and services link some West End businesses, but most West End business purchases these items outside of the West End.

Objective 5: Establish a West End Chamber of Commerce to implement business and workforce development programs.

Strategies:

- Develop consensus among existing businesses.
- Work with the African American Chamber of Commerce.

Objective 6: Designate the West End Focus Areas I and II as a Community Reinvestment Area to maximize on incentives for investment and to link them to the Community Empowerment Zone Program.

Goal 2: Create jobs and improve job training programs for residents of the West End.

Objective 1: Decrease the barriers that West End residents face in training for and acquiring employment.

Strategies:

- 17. Develop a transportation infrastructure for working and job seeking families in the West End.
- 18. Develop a childcare infrastructure for working and job seeking families in the West End.

Supporting Evidence

- A greater portion of West End females with young children are not labor market participants, compared to other geographic areas.
- The percentage of people in the West End under the age of seven is twice as high as in other geographic areas.
- Sixty-seven percent of West End households did not have access to a vehicle in 1990. Because West End residents rely heavily on public transportation, transportation services must be effective in transporting people without jobs to the areas in the region that need employees.

Objective 2: Provide West End residents with proper training that will increase their opportunity for employment.

Strategies:

- Train West End residents in basic employability skills.
- Create programs that provide West End residents with hands-on job experience as a way to increase skills.
- Train West End residents in transferable job skills that will meet the needs of businesses having difficulties hiring employees.
- Develop incentives for businesses to offer practical and advanced service and retail job training.
- Develop programs to keep West End young people in school, such as scholarships for education.
- For all strategies listed above, link with local welfare-to-work programs.

Supporting Evidence

- A higher percentage of West End residents are unemployed and receive income from public assistance compared with people in other areas in the region.
- According to the U.S. Census, nearly half of West End residents over the age of 18 had not completed high school in 1990.
- The West End business owners surveyed are experiencing difficulty hiring and keeping employees due to dissatisfaction with the quality of the job applicants and the quality of work once hired. The biggest difficulties in hiring and keeping employees are poor attitude and/or work ethic, inadequate education, inadequate experience, inadequate skills, excessive absences, poor quality of work, and employee theft.
- Forty-two percent of West End business owners report that work ethic and/or attitude is a barrier to hiring West End workers. Business owners also report that job skills and adequate training is a problem with West End job applicants. Only eight percent report education as a problem, and eight percent report drug use as a barrier to employment.
- Most employers cite that the most important thing that could be done to provide “good” job opportunities for West End residents is to provide residents with job training. Other improvements include improving West End residents’ education, improving their work ethic and/or attitude, better transportation options, computer skills, and language skills.
- Nearly half of the West End residents survey respondents are interested in job training in service and retail occupations, and nearly half of the West End residents who are employed work in the service industry.

Objective 3: Match job opportunities in the West End with West End residents.

Strategies:

- Create a job referral service that introduces current West End and adjoining neighborhood business owners to West End residents looking for employment opportunities
- Find currently unemployed West End residents that meet the following job requirements and work with them to fill open positions in West End businesses:
 - One to two years of clerical experience and a high school degree
 - One to two years mechanical and special skills experience and a high school degree
 - High school degree and varying levels of factory experience, including no experience
 - High school degree and a current driver’s license, and anywhere from zero to three years experience in a transportation-related field
 - Various education attainment levels (high school degree, some college, or a college degree) and from one to three years of experience in service occupations

Supporting Evidence

- Our survey results on employment represent 17 percent of all jobs in the West End. However, West End residents hold only four percent of the jobs represented in our survey.
- Ninety percent of the West End business owners surveyed report that they expect sales to increase over the next five years. This will likely create new employment opportunities in the West End.
- Thirty-two percent of West End businesses surveyed have plans for expanding in the West End over the next few years, which will likely create more jobs in the neighborhood.
- Most of the 67 new jobs that will be created in the West End businesses surveyed are in the factory-related line of work. The second highest-growth occupation is the “non-classified” category, and the third highest is service occupations.
- The second most important concern to the West End business owners surveyed was employment conditions (following safety and security).

Objective 4: Create new job opportunities in the West End that build on the current strengths of West End labor resources.

Strategy: Develop new businesses, staffed by West End residents, that offer childcare and other services for employees of neighborhood and downtown businesses.

Supporting Evidence

- Occupations that West End residents likely have formal experience in include baby-sitting; cleaning; care for the elderly, sick, or disabled; sewing and mending; packaging and materials; typing and filing; food and beverage; and cooking and catering.
- Between 1999 and 2005, there will be a total of 44,744 job openings in Greater Cincinnati for service occupations.

Objective 5: Provide opportunities for West End residents to complete professional and managerial training programs.

Strategy: Provide information to West End residents about the professional and management training opportunities that are available to them. Encourage training to take place by making sure transportation and childcare services are available for training classes.

Supporting Evidence

- West End survey respondents report the most experience in professional, managerial, and clerical occupations.
- Nearly half of all West End survey respondents would like additional training in professional and management occupations.
- Between 1999 and 2005, there will be 93,744 job openings in managerial, professional, and clerical occupations in Greater Cincinnati.

Objective 6: Foster a strong work ethic and positive education and career objectives in West End young people

Strategies:

4. Develop a mentoring program based on the West End community council models that matches West End young people and teens with motivated West End adults.
5. Create incentives, rewards, and/or scholarships to keep enterprising West End young people in the West End.
6. Implement the Student Enterprise Program (StEP) through the Greater Cincinnati Center for Economic Education. The program's main theme is to engage all students of a school in the design and operation of their own functioning community. Students form their own government, have marketplaces for goods and services, and form student ventures in such professions as business, performing arts, manufacturing, and others.

Supporting Evidence

- Over half of our survey respondents have been employed in their current position for over five years.
- Most West End residents that responded to our survey are very satisfied with their current employment.
- The children who are raised in the West End or who have lived in the West End at one time tend to leave by the time they are of working age and available for full-time employment.

Objective 7: Develop skills in West End residents that will allow them to meet the requirements for a successful career.

Strategy: Develop a mentoring program based on the West End community council models that matches West End young people and teens with motivated West End adults with emphasize put on developing motivation for a long-term career choice.

Supporting Evidence

- According to business owners surveyed, West End residents typically fill the “non-classified” jobs than other occupation types, and these jobs pay between \$5 and \$15 an hour. Factory jobs, which account for most new jobs, pay the lowest rates at \$6 to \$9 an hour.
- When employers cite reasons for not keeping initial hires, they include reasons that suggest that employees do not stay in these jobs because they are not satisfied with them. For example, some business owners report that employees are not happy with the working conditions, do not return to work when given “constructive criticism,” and employees are not happy with the pay. West End residents that were surveyed ranked wage rates as their top reason for dissatisfaction with their current employment.

Goal 3: Improve existing public services and safety throughout the West End.

Objective 1: Increase safety and security monitoring throughout residential shopping areas.

Strategy: Improve visibility, lighting, infrastructure, police presence, increase pedestrian crosswalks signage, traffic lights, and speed bumps.

Supporting Evidence

- A total of 71 percent of West End residents surveyed agree or strongly agree that safety and security are reasons for shopping in areas other than the West End. Of these residents, 85 percent would shop in the West End if safety and security were less of a problem.

Objective 2: Increase safety and security monitoring throughout industrial areas.

Strategy: Improve visibility, lighting, infrastructure, police presence, increase pedestrian crosswalks signage, traffic lights, and speed bumps.

Supporting Evidence

- The top concern of West End business owners surveyed was safety and security. Seventy-three percent of business owners surveyed “strongly agree” that safety and security are a concern, and 20 percent “agree”.
5. In a focus group with Northeast Quadrant business owners, almost all had been robbed or vandalized within the past year. They also report that the security of employee cars and the safety of employees going and coming to work is a concern.

Objective 3: Improve the physical appearance in the West End.

Strategy: Trash collection, snow removal.

Supporting Evidence

- The third most important concern of West End business owners surveyed was neighborhood appearance. Fifty percent of business owners surveyed “strongly agree” that neighborhood appearance is a concern, and 20 percent “agree”.
- In the focus groups with business owners, the most often expressed concern regarding neighborhood appearance was litter control.

Goal 4: Improve neighborhood image and preserve the West End urban character.

Objective 1: Preserve the urban character of the neighborhood

Strategies:

- Retain density and use infill to develop vacant lots.
- Create development clusters with a mix of residential, retail, private service, and public service uses.
- Minimize resident displacement and relocation and maintain population density
- Promote Urban living by marketing the location of the community in relation to downtown jobs.
- Restore community gems, or historically significant structures i.e. Regal Theater.
- Address the future replacement of public school buildings along Linn Street.
- Rehab existing facilities or build new facilities that provide educational opportunities for members of the West End community as well as other African-American communities in the region.
- Foster the development of entertainment opportunities in the West End geared to regional African-American communities.

Objective 2: Develop Pedestrian Friendly Environment

Strategies:

- Improve existing public transportation shelters.
- Pursue a study of connecting the community to the proposed lightrail system.
- Improve existing greenspaces by including landscaping and outdoor furniture.
- Create a connection between public corridors and existing greenspaces and playfields.
- Increase streetscaping elements along Linn Street, Liberty, and Ezzard Charles.

Objective 3: Create an identifiable positive image of the West End neighborhood.

Strategies:

7. Create and promote cornerstones and community gateways at key entry points and locations.
8. Implement a facade improvement program for the businesses along Linn Street.
9. Improve existing public services, such as trash collection and snow removal.