



**City of Cleveland Heights
Strategic Development Plan 2011
June 3, 2011**



CLEVELAND
HEIGHTS

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Development Plan 2011 has been prepared as a guide for action for the Planning Commission, Administration, City Council and all who invest and develop in Cleveland Heights.

Since the 1993 Strategic Development Plan, the City has seen investment in new housing and commercial development at an impressive pace. Over \$300 million of private investment has occurred. Both a summary and detailed description of development activities since 1993 are included in the appendices. Many of the 1993 goals remain critical to the City's prosperity.

It will be essential to continue to maintain, upgrade and promote our unique housing stock, to invest in our stable commercial districts, to retain and attract persons of diverse economic, racial and religious backgrounds, to support the arts, and to provide diverse recreational activities. A summary of existing conditions is included in the first part of this document.

However, the focus of the Strategic Development Plan 2011 is on goals and strategies to address the most critical challenges now facing our community. Unfortunately, the recent downturn in the economy is making it difficult to obtain financing for large and small development projects. The national financial crisis has dramatically impacted our housing market, resulting in foreclosed properties and a larger number of rental properties. The plan recommends development that provides significant tax revenues to the City. This increased tax revenue will be from new residents as well as redeveloped retail, housing and job creation districts.

This document provides perspective on how best to plan for, encourage and prioritize future development and community initiatives in conjunction with private investments. A strong public-private investment partnership that facilitates new development will work to augment the city's tax base and build upon our accomplishments. As a management strategy, the plan is envisioned to:

- Establish goals and tactics;
- Identify community and development issues;
- Prioritize these issues;
- Provide a vehicle for progress measurement and process monitoring; and
- Establish a time line and initiatives to move the city forward.

This plan is to be reviewed as needed, annually at a minimum to allow for adjustments due to changing conditions. It is also envisioned as one basis for measuring ongoing economic development activity and planning efforts.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Cleveland Heights is a suburb located adjacent to the cities of Cleveland, East Cleveland, University Heights, South Euclid and Shaker Heights. The City prides itself on a diverse and highly cultured and educated citizen profile. The City of Cleveland Heights is a racially and economically diverse community with strong municipal services and schools, unique commercial districts, diverse housing opportunities, and nationally recognized historic neighborhoods. Like many urban areas, decline in average household income, population loss with accompanying loss in income tax revenue, as well as federal, state and county cost-cutting, challenge the city's finances and services.

HOUSING

In the eight-square mile city, the majority of the real estate is composed of single- and multi-family residential development. The housing stock is mature, much built prior to 1930. Approximately 61% of the housing units are owner-occupied with 7,643 units being rental (39%). Rentals have been increasing in recent years and exceed the percentage of rental units in suburban Cuyahoga County (25%).

Many prospective homebuyers or renters are attracted to the charm of Cleveland Heights' older homes, classic architecture, tree-lined streets, and urban apartment neighborhoods with adjacent retail. The neighborhoods have been and continue to be attractive to homebuyers for the following reasons:

- Variety of housing types—apartments, two-family homes, condominiums, single-family homes, townhomes, cluster homes, and lofts
- Variety of styles and sizes ranging from bungalows to mansions
- Tree-lined streets
- Good city services
- Proximity to downtown Cleveland and the cultural, medical and educational institutions in University Circle
- An abundance of moderately-priced housing: 41% of the existing housing stock is valued between \$50,000 and \$99,000 and 35% of existing housing stock is valued between \$100,000 and \$149,000
- Variety of educational choices from public to private and parochial schools

Nonetheless, regional trends continue to impact the City. The greatest amount of new housing development has occurred in counties adjacent to Cuyahoga County. The occupancy of new homes in the outlying suburbs coincided with the decline in population of the center city and inner ring suburbs, including Cleveland Heights. A comparative analysis is shown below:

COMPARATIVE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA				
City of Cleveland Heights				
	1980	1990	2000	2008
Households	20,905	21,862	20,913	
Annual compound change %		0.5		
Median Household Income	\$21,108	\$36,043	\$46,731	\$47,974
Annual compound change %		5.5		
Median Age	31	33.7	35.2	
% White/Nonwhite	73/27	63/37	52/48	
Source: U.S. Census Orinsby & Co.				
Cuyahoga County				
	1980	1990	2000	2008
Households	563,478	569,000	571,457	
Annual compound change %		0.10		
Median Household Income	\$18,019	\$28,595	\$39,168	\$44,324
Annual compound change %		4.7		
Median Age	32.4	33.3		
% White/Nonwhite	72/25	73/27	66/34	
Source: U.S. Census Orinsby & Co.				
State of Ohio				
	1980	1990	2000	2008
Households	3,833,828	4,137,077	4,445,775	
annual compound change %		0.76		
Median Household Income	\$17,755	\$28,706	\$40,956	\$48,011
annual compound change %		4.92		
Median Age	29.9	34.3		
% White/Nonwhite	89/12	89/11	85/15	
Source: U.S. Census Orinsby & Co.				

New housing in outlying areas, declining population levels in the City and Cuyahoga County and no regional population growth result in an excess of older housing units. Existing houses with only one bathroom, outdated kitchens, detached garages and older electric, heating and plumbing systems have difficulty competing with the newer homes. Therefore, new strategies are needed to continue to address interior rehabilitation and modernization of housing stock.

The national financial crisis has dramatically impacted our housing market, resulting in foreclosed properties and more rental properties. Strategies are needed to deal with the large number of foreclosed houses, to foster successful homeownership, and to down-size or "right-size" the number and types of housing units.

To continue to provide excellent services, Cleveland Heights needs to remain competitive in the attraction of homebuyers. Because the city has been densely developed, very little land is readily available for development.

Since 2000, 248 new housing units have been constructed of which 191 have been sold. The city's implementation of tax abatement in 2001 on a case-by-case basis aided development.

Even with the average sale price exceeding \$300,000, the City has had to severely cut costs to balance its budget.

The recent foreclosure crisis has slowed redevelopment. Since 2005, over 2000 properties have had foreclosure filings. In the first quarter of 2010, there were 1388 vacant housing units, approximately 1000 of those single-family homes. Since 2006, there have been over 300 foreclosure filings each year. From November 2005 to January 2009, there were 2103 filings for all foreclosure actions and 2,054 Sheriffs Sales March 2000 – March 2010¹.

Even with these challenges, Cleveland Heights' location and quality of building design, the walkable neighborhoods, unique businesses and diverse populace provide the foundation on which to continue to plan and position the city for new investment and a sustainable future.

COMMERCIAL

Although there is no traditional downtown in the city, Severance Town Center, with its municipal, postal, commercial and residential activities, serves this function. At this point, the 607,580 feet of commercial space on the inside of the Severance Circle is 96% leased, though several out parcels are still available for restaurant development.

In addition, 12 traditional neighborhood business districts in varying degrees are composed of a combination of stores, restaurants, and other neighborhood service businesses such as hardware, dry cleaner, florist and drug store.

Since 1993, the Coventry, Cedar-Lee and Cedar-Fairmount districts have been Special Improvement Districts (SIDs), which allow the districts' building owners to tax themselves to pay for promotion, streetscape, and maintenance. The Department of Planning and Development has been implementing several development strategies to retain existing businesses and attract new tenants of higher quality and which add to the desired retail mix.

However, several of the other districts are older and in many respects do not meet contemporary retail market requirements. They lack sufficient, convenient parking. No centralized management entity assures adequate maintenance, balanced retail mix, and effective marketing. Store size and layout often do not meet current tenant and market needs. The city's commercial districts were created when people relied on walking and public transportation, counting on their local commercial district for most of their needs. Because of excess development, greater use of automobiles, and retailing trends, many small districts have lost grocery stores, hardware stores, banks, and other key businesses. Rents have fallen and less desirable uses have supplanted the historic mix. Generally, commercial districts at the southern portion of the city have seen more success and less vacancy, while the city's northern commercial districts have seen higher vacancy, loss of services and a less balanced retail mix.

Nonetheless, viable commercial areas strengthen neighborhoods and enhance their walkability. Strategies are needed to improve declining commercial areas where possible or to redevelop them into an alternative community asset.

¹ All statistics from NeoCando.

CLEVELAND HEIGHTS STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011 PROPOSED GOALS:

In 2009, the Planning Commission began work to create goals that could brand the basic identity of our community, enhance our city's tax base, create outstanding public places and spaces, and embody an environmentally sustainable ethic. Increased revenue and an expanded tax base are essential to our City's future. The highest priority should be placed on the goals and strategies that will increase population, average household income and commercial tax revenue while maintaining the City's affordable housing options.

We recommend City Council and staff aggressively pursue the following goals:

GOAL ONE: Substantially increase our tax base by fostering new development and investment consistent with the existing character of the community that attracts new residents and businesses.

GOAL TWO: Attract additional persons of diverse economic, racial and religious groups in order to maintain Cleveland Heights' unique community, specifically targeting University Circle institutions.

GOAL THREE: Take aggressive action to deal with the effects of the foreclosure crisis on neighbors, neighborhoods and the housing market.

GOAL FOUR: Renovate and upgrade the city's neighborhood housing stock and develop new housing for target markets.

GOAL FIVE: Strengthen and upgrade commercial districts to serve as regional draws and enhance surrounding residential areas. Address the viability and needs of struggling commercial districts and surrounding neighborhoods.

GOAL SIX: Significantly improve the city's infrastructure and its attractiveness to existing and potential residents, businesses and new development.

GOAL SEVEN: Encourage sustainable practices for development activities including energy strategies, green building designs and development practices (such as LEED programs).

GOAL ONE: SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE OUR TAX BASE BY FOSTERING NEW DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENT CONSISTENT WITH THE EXISTING CHARACTER OF THE COMMUNITY THAT ATTRACTS NEW RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES.

The City's future lies in relationships between existing residents, business owners, and potential investors. Adequate staffing is needed to:

- Maintain existing relationships and build new relationships;
- Highlight city assets to developers, entrepreneurs and investors; and
- Promote and position the City as an ideal location for investments, relocation and start-up.

The City should redevelop vacant parcels and buildings with outmoded uses, such as gas stations, excessive retail, underutilized parking lots, residential uses on the edge of commercial districts and vacant residential lots resulting from the foreclosure crisis, with respect to the architecture, scale and character of our existing neighborhoods. Development sites should always be evaluated to assess their impact on and compatibility with adjacent uses and best land use strategies.

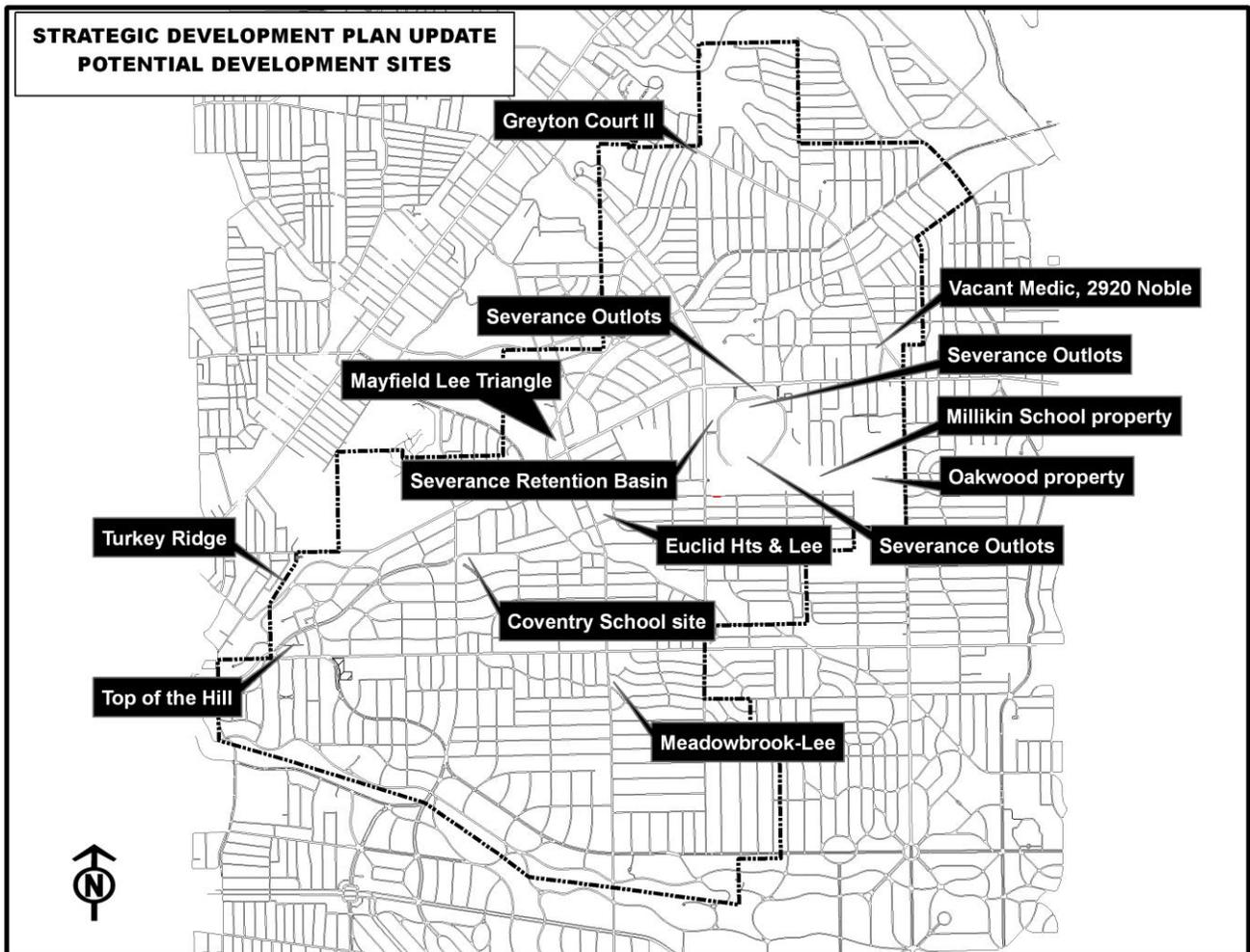
Roughly half of the City's General Fund comes from income tax collections. Major new development, business growth, and job growth will be required, as projects already in the planning stages will produce a maximum of \$1 million tax receipts.

Strategies:

- Provide dedicated Economic Development staff within the Planning Department including, as soon as possible, an Economic Development Director;
- Create and maintain an inventory of potential development sites and their critical statistics with specifics on cost to the City, possible incentives, projected revenues, size, location, adjacent uses, and zoning;
- Partner with private investors to expand their investment impacts;
- Cluster and expand City-owned land for larger development parcels where appropriate;
- Ensure development works in conjunction with its context and respects the character of the city;
- Assess existing regulations and consider implementing some strategic form-based zoning;
- Study services, incentives, and grants to balance development and tax revenue;
- Research best potential users of space with emphasis on emerging markets and the medical community;
- Actively engage communication with local businesses, University Circle, developers, real estate agents, stakeholders and other key players to discover what would attract development;
- Attract new businesses;
- Match potential users to potential development sites and go after the most likely prospects;
- Study the possibility of developing a source of private sector or non-profit funding specifically for development purposes to provide incentives for commercial development, purchase and renovate foreclosed properties, and offer other incentives for development; and
- Study feasibility of producing an overall City master plan, showing existing and proposed development, district development plans and infrastructure improvement plans connecting and supporting the amenities and attractions.

Potential development sites:

The concepts of development listed below and the specific dollar figures are benchmarks for future discussions. Economic, site planning, environmental considerations and neighborhood benefit are all considerations in assessing the appropriateness of any development. The projected value of property improvements, dwelling unit density and office building employment listed below are based on typical patterns of development and would vary depending on the specific land use, density and actual cost-per-square-foot. The numbers indicate a given site's potential for generating property and income tax revenue.



Meadowbrook-Lee – Develop City-owned 1-acre property and create \$12 million in property improvements with 40 to 90 dwellings above 15,000 square feet of commercial space. Estimated income tax of \$140,000 annually is created.

Top of the Hill – Develop City’s 3.5-acre property and create \$45 million in property improvements with 100 to 175 dwellings, 20,000 to 40,000 square feet of commercial space and 10,000 to 20,000 square feet of office space. Estimated income tax of \$300,000 annually is created.

Turkey Ridge – Develop City’s 1.7-acre wooded lot on Edgehill Road, north of nine existing Edgehill Townhomes in Cleveland and create \$8 million in property improvements and 15 dwelling units. Estimated income tax of \$60,000 annually is created.

Coventry School site – The City has helped the School District staff to adaptively reuse the building with tenants whose activities will benefit the City and immediate neighborhood. The playground and green space are important amenities that should remain.

Severance Outlots – Encourage owners of the redeveloped mall property to develop two more restaurants on the inside of Severance Circle per the approved development plan. Estimated income tax of \$8000 is expected from a fast food restaurant and \$10,000 from a sit-down restaurant. An office, bank, or mixed-use project should be developed on the wooded property along Mayfield Road between Baker’s Square and the bank property. If additional land is needed for a more ambitious development, the Baker’s Square site at 60 Severance Circle should be consolidated into the project. \$20,000 annually could be generated from a mixed-use development along Mayfield Road on a combined site.

Severance Retention Basin – Study the feasibility of housing at the City-owned retention basin, potentially creating a \$10 million apartment building with 50 suites. Estimated income tax of \$60,000 annually is created.

Oakwood Property (97 acres in Cleveland Heights) - When considering the policy for the potential reuse of the Oakwood Country Club property, several underlying principles for the future of Cleveland Heights, included in this Plan, are important to be prominently considered:

1. That more than 75% of the dwellings in Cleveland Heights are valued less than \$150,000;
2. That the City has an excess of housing units that lack the amenities sought by today’s buyers;
3. That the City needs to remain competitive to continue to attract new homebuyers;
4. That very little land is available for new residential development;
5. That important increases in tax revenue will be from new residents, predominantly in new dwelling units; and
6. Conversely, that new tax revenue from non-residential development will be primarily derived from the redevelopment or enhancement of existing commercial districts.

Given these parameters, the Oakwood site, a large property by Cleveland Heights standards, offers the opportunity to create an environment suitable and marketable for the desired new residential development (consistent with several of the important residential goals and aspirations set forth in this Strategic Development Plan) and to also preserve significant areas of open space.

Therefore, the residential development policy for the property has two options:

1. Continue to promote single-family development on the property consistent with the long-standing residential density (The AA District) that has been applied to this property.

Consistent with this policy, and as permitted under the current zoning, planned residential development is a preferred variation since it will provide for preserved, common open space, and utilize the clustering design to better buffer the new homes from Warrensville Center Road and any adjacent non-residential developments. To protect the value of existing abutting housing, buffers would also preserve the natural vistas enjoyed by existing adjacent homeowners to the west of the Oakwood property.

2. Higher density residential is a possible option when it's demonstrated that such higher density will: also meet the City's stated goals in its Strategic Development Plan; be arranged so that the higher density buildings will have minimal impact on adjacent residential areas; and, include the preservation of significant areas of common open space and natural areas.

Mayfield Lee Triangle - Create a research and technology campus bounded by Mayfield Road and Lee and Monticello boulevards. Replacing the vacant car dealership with an office building of comparable size to the May-Lee Building could add \$6 million in property improvements and 60 jobs with estimated income tax of \$60,000 annually. Redevelopment of all three properties would double or triple the tax revenue and jobs.

Greyton Court II - Creating a critical mass of new housing in the Noble-Nela district would require additional land acquisition. \$15 million in property improvements and 100 new residents in 70 dwelling units could be accommodated. Estimated income tax of \$160,000 annually is created.

Millikin School Property - Reuse of this building as a private school would minimize impact on the environment and the neighborhood, but would yield minimal additional tax revenue for the City. If the school served families from the neighborhood south of Severn Road, however, neighborhood walkability and cohesiveness would be strengthened. Development of housing on this site is not recommended because the woods are an important buffer between Severance Town Center and the abutting single-family homes.

Vacant Medic on Noble and Glenwood roads - Adaptively reuse or redevelop for offices, such as a business incubator, housing or other use.

Euclid Heights & Lee

Complete Phase 3 of Boulevard Town Homes in keeping with approved plans.

Vacant Properties - Each parcel's future use should be thoroughly assessed. Strategies for demolition and reuse of the vacant property should consider: property location, neighborhood vacancy rate, adjacency to other uses or vacant property, impact on City services and future development opportunities, and aggregation for future development. Possible permanent or temporary uses of vacant parcels include: community gardens, pocket parks, sale for creation of larger residential lots, pedestrian pathway connectors (like Bradford path), small-scaled urban farms or parking.

GOAL TWO: ATTRACT ADDITIONAL PERSONS OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN CLEVELAND HEIGHTS' UNIQUE COMMUNITY, SPECIFICALLY TARGETING UNIVERSITY CIRCLE INSTITUTIONS.

Cleveland Heights is an exciting and rich community because of our blend of diverse, interesting and talented people. The City should continue to do all things necessary and proper to secure for all citizens housing opportunities regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Activities such as the Heights Fund that is an incentive mortgage program designed to maintain racial integration, and education programs that address diversity issues and highlight the strengths and benefits inherent in such diversity should be continued.

Empty nesters, University Circle employees and recent college graduates are particular segments recommended for targeted retention and attraction. Aggressive action is needed on development projects to increase income tax and to raise the economic demographics of the City of Cleveland Heights to levels that allow the city to be financially sustainable, while continuing to maintain our affordable housing options.²

The City should continue to work with organizations and offer incentives to encourage integration, work with University Circle Inc. in a joint marketing campaign, and promote our city's unique diverse population. In addition, the following new strategies should be employed:

Strategies:

- Serve the needs of University Circle employees and be the best choice for the 10,000 new employees expected in next ten years;
- Identify Cleveland Heights residents who work in University Circle and ask for ideas and their active participation in attracting new hires here;
- Target the City's marketing to University Circle institutions;
- Create and promote a financial incentive for University Circle employees to purchase or rent homes in Cleveland Heights;
- Build on proximity to Cleveland State University, Case Western Reserve University, John Carroll University, Notre Dame College, Cleveland Institute of Art and Cleveland Institute of Music to attract recent college graduates and young professionals; enlist the support and assistance of employees of these institutions who live in Cleveland Heights to promote the community;
- Build on proximity to University Hospitals and Cleveland Clinic to attract medical professionals; enlist the support and assistance of employees of these institutions who live in Cleveland Heights to promote the community;
- Explore ways to promote openness to new ideas that attract the "creative class" at University Circle arts and cultural institutions; enlist the support and assistance of employees of these institutions who live in Cleveland Heights to promote the community;
- Provide financial incentives to retain and develop businesses;
- Add to the City's cultural infrastructure, such as cafés, walkable shopping districts and the arts scene;
- Work with public school officials to promote the accomplishments of our schools to the community, realtors and potential residents;
- Engage potential residents and developers from outside our community through a targeted marketing program coordinated with the city's overall marketing plan;

² Housing strategies will be described in *Goal #4, Maintain and upgrade the city's neighborhood housing stock and develop new housing.*

- Implement an annual Fair Housing Action Plan to ensure fair and open housing choice; and; and
- Work with University Circle to expand their regional awareness.

GOAL THREE: TAKE AGGRESSIVE ACTION TO DEAL WITH THE EFFECTS OF THE FORECLOSURE CRISIS ON NEIGHBORS, NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE HOUSING MARKET

Real estate transfer is common to every community, but recent turnover has been severely affected by the foreclosure crisis. From 2005-2010, over 2000 properties have had foreclosure filings. Of the properties that cannot be economically restored, the City must mitigate the negative effects of demolition with a well-conceived plan for the long-term health of a neighborhood. The City's use of federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program funding to rehabilitate housing, the interest shown by rehabilitators and residents willing to renovate and occupy homes is encouraging.

In 2010, the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) addressed 24 foreclosed properties rehabilitating 12 and demolishing 12. The County Land Bank's use of federal funds in Cleveland Heights will also address foreclosed properties. Home Repair Resource Center has rehabilitated a number of foreclosed properties, with more anticipated. While not always feasible, restoring occupancy is desirable. For example, if occupancy was restored to 500 vacant homes approximately 1000 additional residents would be added with an income tax benefit of \$400,000 to \$780,000 (based on household income of \$40,000 - \$78,000). The City should continue to work with other communities, organizations and regional governments to develop appropriate responses to deal with the foreclosure crisis.

Strategies:

- Evaluate foreclosed and vacant properties for best use to reduce impact on neighborhood: rehabilitation, demolition, land bank, community garden, increased lot width for adjacent properties, green space or clustering for future redevelopment;
- Study feasibility of tax abating substantial rehabilitation or other incentives for owner occupancy;
- Implement a training program to ensure fair appraisals of rehabilitated properties;
- Study potential to create privately funded revolving loan for improvements to residential properties;
- Prepare to work with developers to increase sales of partially completed or unoccupied new housing developments when the economy rebounds;
- Encourage targeted development in order to spur private investment in areas hard hit by foreclosures; and
- Bring neighbors together to celebrate rehabilitation of formerly foreclosed properties.

GOAL FOUR: RENOVATE AND UPGRADE THE CITY'S NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING STOCK AND DEVELOP NEW HOUSING FOR TARGET MARKETS.

Maintain and upgrade existing housing

Many homes are approaching the century mark and face challenges competing with new residential construction in outlying suburbs. Homebuyers seek large, amenity packed kitchens, first floor master suites, an office, and an attached two-car garage.³

The City's continued diligence with housing inspections has insured that most homes remain in good condition. The City should continue to refer residents to local non-profits and City-run maintenance programs, promote the HELP and Heritage Home Loan programs, and market our housing options.

Strategies:

- Complete a strategic neighborhood study to assemble available neighborhood data that can be used to shape local action;
- Developing incentives and encourage rehabilitation for today's buyers and current market demand; Encourage addition of first floor ½ bathrooms in existing homes;
- Meet with real estate agents to discover what would attract new residents;
- Study the increased number of renters and its impact on neighborhoods;
- Develop strategies to encourage renters to be engaged Cleveland Heights residents;
- Encourage owner occupancy;
- Assess feasibility of providing grants and tax credits to help home owners replace major systems;
- Consider rehabilitation or some redevelopment of North Coventry two-family district to encourage increased owner occupancy; target University Circle employees;
- Incorporate green improvements into City-sponsored housing rehabilitation projects to increase homes' resale value and reduce utility costs; and
- Consider addition of more off-street city parking lots as needed in dense residential neighborhoods.

In addition to maintaining and upgrading our existing housing stock, it is imperative to offer new housing options.

Provide new and competitive housing opportunities

The City began providing 50% property tax abatement for ten years on a case-by-case basis in 2003, changing it to 100% for 7 years in 2008.

National trends show that many people are moving back to cities for their amenities and services, putting Cleveland Heights in a prime location for future development. Nonetheless, the City must stay current on housing trends to remain competitive. Segments of the population demand new low-maintenance housing with state-of-the-art amenities and energy-efficient construction. New housing that appeals to young professionals, empty nesters and those with middle- to high-incomes should be prioritized.

³ AVID Ratings, Design Drivers Rally, PowerPoint presentation, January 19, 2010

Strategies:

- The strategy to use property tax abatement to accelerate sales adds population and increases income tax revenue and should be continued in neighborhoods where it is merited;
- Encourage completion of already started two- and three-bedroom cluster home developments;
- Encourage development of single-family detached and cluster homes, \$300,000+ with high quality design, materials and first floor master bedrooms to attract moderate- and high-income residents;
- Consider clustering residential lots together with foreclosed properties, allowing for larger development sites;
- Land bank vacant properties for future residential development;
- Leverage new residential development with land-banked lots and larger sites;
- Meet with prospective developers to better provide building sites that are congruent with market demands and respect the context;
- Combine new development with City-owned land and resources such as parking decks, parking lots and parks;
- Explore incentives for rehabilitation of existing apartment building and small, high-end apartment building construction in neighborhoods with existing shops, restaurants and other attractions sought by active, young professionals;
- Explore options to review zoning code to allow adaptive reuse of retail spaces for apartment buildings in commercial districts;
- Provide housing with elevator access or first floor master;
- Ensure that building codes require all housing, including low-income housing, meets ADA requirements; and
- Promote new developments via *Focus*, the City's cable channel, local realtors, city's website and other means that effectively reach target buyers.

GOAL FIVE: STRENGTHEN AND UPGRADE COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS TO SERVE AS REGIONAL DRAWS AND ENHANCE SURROUNDING RESIDENTIAL AREAS. ADDRESS VIABILITY AND NEEDS OF STRUGGLING COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS AND SURROUNDING NEIGHBORHOODS.

The City's twelve commercial districts offer varied services and attractions, with a wide range of vacancy and rental rates and strengths and weaknesses. The health of commercial districts is aided by Special Improvement Districts and the City's Storefront Program and Commercial Revolving Loan Program. These activities should be expanded because they leverage private investment, offer job creation, have beneficial impact on the retail mix and character of a district.

Strategies:

- Inventory and analyze current commercial parking demands and needs; use data to upgrade or repurpose each commercial district's parking to ensure the land is at its highest and best use;
- Conduct market analysis and assess neighborhood needs City incentives should be used to attract services and activities sought by the neighborhood;
- Focus City incentives to leverage private investment; frequently assess for effectiveness;
- Provide systematic inspections of commercial properties;
- Compile and monitor data on vacancies, with a goal of reducing existing vacancy; Track range of rental rates and vacancies by district as a barometer of desirability;
- Continue to encourage positive interaction between owners, businesses, organizations, residents and the police;
- Continue to monitor police data so that proactive strategies can be taken before neighborhood problems deteriorate;
- Encourage partnerships;
- Review amount of revenue collected from public parking lots as a barometer of activity level;
- Complete an Improvement Target Area study of commercial districts and invest CDBG funds to eliminate blighted conditions;
- Encourage Independent merchants to work together to sustain community character;
- Encourage merchants to work together on entrepreneurial activities, and plan common marketing and purchasing; and
- Encourage renewal of existing Special Improvement Districts (SIDS) and creation of new SIDS in all districts.

The districts listed below have lower vacancy rates, more vitality, a diverse retail mix and are, or have the potential to become, regional draws. The City should encourage the three existing SIDs (Coventry, Cedar Lee, Cedar Fairmount) to continue. Other districts should start or continue their merchant groups and, if appropriate, consider becoming a SID.

Cedar Fairmount

- Encourage development of Top of the Hill and other commercial properties in accordance with the City's Top of the Hill Development Guidelines;
- Explore the implementation of the Cedar Road traffic calming plan to improve pedestrian comfort; and
- Explore the development of a multi-modal transportation on Cedar Glen to link the district to the Rapid and University Circle; facilitate safe-passage of bikes/pedestrians from University Circle and Cedar Fairmount.

Cedar Lee

- Encourage mixed-use multi-story redevelopment of Meadowbrook and Lee;
- Partner with Cedar Lee to promote the completion of streetscape improvements according to 2008 plan by Studio Techne Architects, including identifying funding sources;
- Work to preserve the buildings at the corner of Cedar and Lee roads.
- Update and promote expansion of Adelsys site, 1921 Lee Road;
- Encourage additional amenities around Cain Park and add parking if it can be developed in keeping with the district's character;
- Consider development on the underutilized SBC parking lot leased by the City on Cedar Road between Edgewood and Oakdale roads; and
- Encourage housing and mixed-use redevelopment north of Cedar Road, including underutilized one-story buildings and auto uses.

Cedar Taylor

- Encourage property owners so they can attract businesses that complement and build upon the recent investments and mix of attractive businesses;
- Focus efforts on Cedar Taylor commercial district to advance it to a stable, regional draw;
- Work with property owners and merchants to encourage improvement of streetscape;
- Encourage merchants and building owners to collectively promote this district; and
- Monitor parking supply and demand; consider shared parking arrangements and adding new surface parking lots only if necessary.

Coventry

- Promote Coventry Street Fairs and community events;
- Encourage multi-story mixed-use redevelopment in keeping with the district's setbacks, scale and quality at Mayfield and Coventry roads;
- Encourage multi-story mixed-use redevelopment in keeping with the district's setbacks, scale and quality at the northeast corner of Euclid Heights Boulevard and Coventry Road; and
- Encourage redevelopment of Coventry School while encouraging preservation of a community playground and open space.

Fairmount Taylor

- Promote unified streetscape and identification signage improvements;
- Monitor parking supply and demand; and
- Promote public awareness of the district.

Severance Town Center

- Install additional pedestrian and bike friendly improvements;
- Explore removal of asphalt and add landscaping and parks in the oversized parking lots; Reduce excess parking to provide additional development sites;
- Encourage development of outlots with sit-down restaurants;
- Encourage dense retail and residential development to improve neighborhood character and increase activity;
- Encourage design improvements to visually tie properties on both sides of the ring road;
- Encourage additional investment by property owner to secure their market place; and
- Work with property owners and merchants to encourage improvement of streetscape.

The districts listed below have had not had the long-term success of the districts listed above and require attention to address vacancy and retail mix. Market studies for each district may be necessary to determine what uses would be successful.

Cain Park Village

- Work with property owners and merchants to encourage improvement of streetscape;
- Encourage new awnings and signage at Taylor Tudor Buildings;
- Assess Taylor Road Synagogue as a potential redevelopment site;
- Work with school district for adaptive reuse or potential redevelopment opportunities at Taylor Academy;
- Encourage storefront improvements; and
- Work to improve pedestrian and visual ties to shared parking lots.

Mayfield Lee

- Consider redevelopment of properties in Mayfield Road-Monticello Boulevard-Lee Boulevard triangle for technology, medical or business incubator campus;
- Target neighborhood for future technology/medical/healthcare-related development;
- Develop convenient parking: promote shared parking and improve pedestrian and visual ties to shared parking lots; and
- Monitor parking supply and demand; consider shared parking arrangements and add new surface parking lots only if necessary.

Mayfield Warrensville

- Encourage redevelopment of former Medic site at 2920 Noble Road; potential use as business incubator;
- Monitor parking supply and demand; consider shared parking arrangements and add new surface parking lots only if necessary;
- Work with property owners and merchants to encourage improvement of streetscape;
- Encourage restoration of Center Mayfield Theater marquee to highlight its historic architectural character; and
- Create distinctive City entrance sign.

Noble Road Corridor

- Encourage leasing that increases neighborhood services;
- Encourage rehabilitation or redevelopment of vacant and underutilized buildings, especially the two-story building at the southwest corner of Noble and Roanoke roads.
- Expand Greyton Court residential development;
- Encourage merchants' group to remain active;
- Consider coordinating strategies with East Cleveland and General Electric; and
- Consider redevelopment options and preferences with input from the neighbors.

GOAL SIX: SIGNIFICANTLY IMPROVE THE CITY'S INFRASTRUCTURE AND ITS ATTRACTIVENESS TO EXISTING AND POTENTIAL RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND NEW DEVELOPMENT

The City should continue using Community Development Block Grant funds in low- and moderate-income areas for infrastructure improvements. The City depends on county, state and federal funding to augment General Funds for maintenance of 128 miles of streets. City Council recently increased the property assessment to maintain a strong tree planting and maintenance program. The City recognizes that the experience of people in our neighborhoods and commercial districts is enhanced through improvements along the right of way. These types of improvements and amenities can attract development and can be offered as incentives to encourage development.

Strategies:

- Consider new gateway signs that are consistent at all entrances into the city;
- Find the means to accelerate replacement of curbs and resurfacing streets throughout the city, especially highly visible major arteries in serious disrepair;
- Insure proper maintenance of tree lawn trees;
- Promote planting of native plants whenever possible because they support the area's biodiversity, are accustomed to local conditions, and generally require less maintenance;
- Identify new areas for public landscape or green space; Encourage private and non-profit organizations to add public art;
- Remove utility poles as streets/sidewalks are repaired, if financially feasible;
- Study impact and cost of removing or upgrading on-street parking technology, such as updated meters or installing parking kiosks;
- Create multipurpose path on south side of Cedar Glen to connect to University Circle and the rapid transit station;
- Encourage development of Top of the Hill and other commercial properties in accordance with the City's Top of the Hill Development Guidelines;
- Explore the implementation of the Cedar Road traffic calming plan to improve pedestrian comfort;
- Explore the development of a multi-modal transportation on Cedar Glen to link the district to the Rapid and University Circle; facilitate safe-passage of bikes/pedestrians from University Circle and Cedar Fairmount;
- Encourage citywide development of "complete streets" for safe, convenient travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, bus riders and motor-vehicle drivers of all ages and abilities; implement plans as appropriate;
- Aggressively apply for grant funding for infrastructure improvements such as NOACA Transportation for Livable Community Initiative funding to plan for pedestrian, transit or bicycle routes on South Taylor Road from Cedarbrook to Euclid Heights Boulevard, on Mayfield Road and on Cedar Road;
- Identify locations where well-designed benches, waste receptacles, and bike racks could be added to improve pedestrian experience in commercial districts;
- Promote new technology and ensure that its installation blends without compromising the aesthetics of the neighborhood;
- Work with CH-UH School District to consider application and implementation of Safe Routes to School program;
- Research the viability of developing resources beyond county, state and federal funding to deal with highly visible major arteries in serious disrepair; and
- Continue implementation of capital improvement plans for water and sewer.

GOAL SEVEN: ENCOURAGE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUDING ENERGY STRATEGIES, GREEN BUILDING DESIGNS AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES (SUCH AS LEED PROGRAMS)

Sustainable new construction and retrofits are necessary for the future of our world. The City should promote and encourage residents to implement strategies which reduce carbon-based pollution and increase energy conservation. The City is taking a leadership position seeking alternative approaches to accomplish its activities with minimal impact on natural resources and the environment. In the coming months, the City will comprehensively revise our Zoning Code to include sustainable practices and discourage unsustainable development. The following would mitigate the undesirable affects of our existing densely developed city and of future development:

Strategies:

- Implement a sustainable Zoning Code that incorporates community standards;
- Develop policies that encourage sustainability, discourage waste, and conserve energy; use the City website, publications, lectures, public access channel, and other effective methods to increase public awareness of successful technologies including:
 - bioretention basins
 - geothermal heating and cooling
 - green roofs
 - green building materials
 - green streets
 - multi-modal streets
 - native species
 - permeable pavement
 - photovoltaic panels
 - rain barrels
 - rain gardens
 - solar power
 - straw bale construction
 - wind power
- Support the development of the First Suburbs Development Consortium’s “Solar and Geothermal SID,” a mechanism for interested households to join a Special Improvement District and assess themselves for the cost of a residential photovoltaic or geothermal installation;
- Require streets and parking lots to be designed to minimize their ecological impact;
- Encourage third-party-certified green construction, like the LEED system;
- Minimize energy consumption at City-owned buildings;
- Encourage permeable paving and bioretention basins in public and private parking lots;
- Promote shared parking so parking lots are used to their fullest extent, fewer buildings are demolished for surface lots, and tax revenues are maximized in a densely developed pattern;
- Encourage new development that combines building preservation and new construction to save embodied energy and improve buildings for 21st century lifestyles;
- Protect and restore natural streams, waterways and landscapes;
- Replace public area lighting with LED products to reduce energy consumption 80%, as economically feasible;
- Develop design guidelines for more ecological public infrastructure work;
- Work to implement the League of American Bicyclists’ recommendations to improve cycling in the community and become a designated Bicycle Friendly Community; and
- Develop a policy of incentives that are tied to green energy improvements such as photovoltaic and geothermal as well as LEED certified construction practices and design.

Appendix A
OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE 1993 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

OUTCOMES RELATED TO THE 1993 STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE

The City's 1993 Goals were established to guide housing and economic development so that a positive future could be realized. They are listed below along with the significant development activities that have occurred since the 1993 Strategic Development Plan Update⁴. The plan articulated that it was critical that both public and private sectors work toward these goals.

Goal: Retain and attract persons of diverse economic, racial and religious backgrounds

Census figures demonstrate that Cleveland Heights continues to be a diverse community. The total population of the city decreased, yet the percentages of various racial categories remain substantially the same.

Cleveland Heights Demographics	2000		1990	
Race:	Census	%Total	Census	%Total
One Race	48,806	98%	54,052	100%
White	26,229	53	32,534	60
Black or African American	20,873	42	20,054	37
American Indian & Alaskan Native	81	0	96	0
Asian	1,280	3	1138	2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5	0	-	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	1,285	3	230	0
Some other race	338	1	230	0
Two or More Races	1,152	2	-	0
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	791	2	582	1

An indicator of income is education attainment. Cleveland Heights residents age 25 and over with college diplomas was 50%, notably higher than the Ohio's 21.1%. This appears to show that Cleveland Heights continues to attract persons who can achieve higher incomes. However, at the same time, the percentage of persons living in poverty has also increased from 8.5% to 10.6%.

To support continued diversity and remain competitive with other communities, the City has:

- Expanded Community Center with Senior Center and expanded recreation opportunities;
- Used Heights Fund loans to support integrated neighborhoods; and
- Awarded CDBG funds to encourage diversity and fair housing within our community.

Goal: Maintain and improve the City's housing stock to make it competitive with newer housing being built in the region

- The linked deposit Home Enhancement Loan Program has funded 665 loans resulting in \$9,416,200 being invested in our residential neighborhoods.
- The Heritage Home Loan Program has made 87 loans resulting in \$3,045,000 of investment in the preservation and rehabilitation of our housing and offered free technical assistance to hundreds of residents.
- Federal programs administered by the City of Cleveland Heights including the Community Development Block Grant program, HOME Investment Partnership Act programs and the HUD-

⁴ A detailed report on development from 1993 – 2009 is included in Appendix B.

funded Lead Safe Cuyahoga have assisted over 5,000 housing units investing approximately \$19,600,000 into our housing stock.

- The City co-sponsored the Home Repair Fair where residents came to learn how to maintain and improve their homes.
- The Planning and Development staff offers residents guidance with questions related to preservation of their home. The City's contract with Cleveland Restoration Society makes that organization's staff available for on-site technical assistance for housing repair and rehabilitation questions.
- The City continues systematic exterior inspections of owner-occupied homes and systematic exterior and interior inspections of rental properties. All homes are inspected inside and at in the mandatory point-of-sale inspection.
- The Apartment Renovation and Rebate Program (ARRP) provided a dollar-for-dollar rebate for apartment owners who completed interior improvements to their rental units. \$693,650 in grants were made to improve 573 units.
- Heights Home Improvement Program (HHIP) funds were used to renovate two-family homes. \$668,000 in grants were made to improve 296 units.
- The City completed innovative rehabilitation to encourage increased owner-occupancy of existing two-family homes. Units have yet to sell.

Goal: Create opportunities for construction of new housing for owner-occupants and for renters.

In 2003, the City began offering 50% tax abatement for 10 years in designated neighborhoods to encourage new owner-occupied housing to stem blight. In 2008 the abatement became 100% for seven years. The aggregate sale price of 101 purchased tax-abated dwelling units is \$32,183,704. The average unit price of \$318,650 required a relatively high-income purchaser, resulting in significant income taxes to the General Fund.

Since 2001, the City has planned for an additional 358 new housing units in new residential developments. Of this number, 248 have been constructed with 179 of these sold, resulting in \$1,313,520 in increased real estate taxes and an estimated \$545,200 in increased income taxes. One hundred of those sold have been tax abated. The total project costs for these housing developments are \$90,515,000. A variety of new housing has been developed in Cleveland Heights:

- Homewood at Rockefeller Gardens assisted living units
- Townhomes, cluster housing and flats
- Belleshire Townhomes
- BlueStone
- Boulevard Townhomes
- Brownstones of Derbyshire
- Cedarmount
- Courtyards at Severance
- Fairmount Courts
- Greyton Court
- Kenilworth Mews
- Severance Place
- Villa Carabelli

The City acquired land and used Ohio E.P. A. Brownfield funds to create development opportunities at Meadowbrook Boulevard and Lee Road in the Cedar Lee commercial district. Due to the slowdown in the economy, there has been no residential development on this site.

County Brownfields funds were used to abate asbestos at the Severance Place development, 500-534 Severance Place Lane.

The City used CDBG and Section 202 monies to assist with creation of new senior housing at Margaret Wagner House.

Currently, there are 7,643 rental units in Cleveland Heights at all price levels. The City has held bi-annual seminars for both landlords and renters and has assisted potential renters through its Relocation Services office.

Goal: Maintain and improve stable commercial districts. (Coventry, Cedar Lee, Cedar Fairmount)

While these three districts were considered “stable” in 1993, the City and merchants worked hard to build on those successes. Coventry, Cedar Fairmount and the Cedar Lee Commercial Districts formed Special Improvement Districts, taxing themselves for promotions, streetscape improvements and maintenance.

The city realized the importance of vibrant public space to the viability of commercial districts and invested in streetscape projects in Coventry, Cedar Lee, Mayfield Noble, Noble Monticello, Cain Park Village, and Cedar Taylor. The city worked with landscape designers, architects and HeightsArts to encourage public art in districts and district-unique furnishings. In that same vein, merchants’ desire for outdoor dining resulted in the Department of Planning and Development’s update of the Zoning Code to encourage lively outdoor dining spaces. Since 1993, there has been an exponential increase in quality outdoor dining facilities, adding liveliness to the districts.

The city continues to use a portion of its CDBG funds in all districts for the Storefront Renovation Program. The program has helped to transform deteriorated storefronts in most commercial districts, undo insensitive alterations, and add character to utilitarian storefronts. These improvements add to the appeal of the commercial districts, the street experience and draw business to our retailers. The recent addition of experienced storefront consultants has resulted in storefront and sign design that has created exceptional, artistic facades that add vitality to the districts.

Coventry

The 1993 completion of the Coventry parking deck positioned Coventry to compete with other regional commercial districts, supported density and access and was welcomed by the merchants. The City has invested CDBG and Section 108 funds in extensive streetscape improvements in Coventry and improvements to the park area at the former Coventry School. Heights Arts added public art in the shape of the Coventry Arch, and later partnered with the Coventry SID and the City to create street signs, benches, and sculptural wrought iron unique to the district. The SID brought back the Coventry Street Fair, bringing thousands of people to the district. Coventry PEACE, a group initially founded to build the Coventry Playground, has sponsored outdoor movies in the park that also draw people to the district. The Coventry Theatre was rehabilitated into the Centrum Theatre, though later the space was adapted to house several restaurants.

Cedar Fairmount

The City extended the Fairmount median to eliminate paving and create a welcome entrance to the district. Cedar Fairmount has maintained a low vacancy rate and held a festival every August. Heights Arts partnered with the SID to add district signs, street signs and benches that highlight Cedar Fairmount’s distinctive architectural character. With NOACA’s Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative, the City recently completed a traffic and streetscape study of the Cedar Fairmount district. Staff and Planning Commission recently completed development guidelines for the premier Top of the Hill site.

Cedar Lee

The Cedar-Lee District was re-energized with numerous new restaurants and updated facades along Lee Road, earning it the reputation as Greater Cleveland’s “Restaurant Row.”

The Cedar Lee Theatre expansion was completed, Lee Road traffic calming was implemented from Superior Road to the southern city limits, a NOACA-funded streetscape improvements plan is being installed, the former YMCA was converted to the Library Activity Center with tenant

Dobama Theater, and Zagara's Marketplace replaced the city's Post Office which was relocated to Severance Town Center. New outdoor dining facilities were created up and down the street. In 2009, to better handle theater and restaurant activity and as part of a mixed-use development on the adjacent site to the south, the City developed a 375-space parking deck and positioned the district to compete with other regional commercial areas. This significant city investment has supported district density, improved access and was welcomed by the merchants. The adjacent vacant site is anticipated for future mixed-use redevelopment.

Since 1996, the Building Department has issued 2,336 permits to commercial structures citywide that reflects approximately \$280,260,000 of construction values.

Goal: Revitalize or redevelop deteriorated/obsolete commercial areas

Many of these districts were improved with grants and loans through the Storefront Renovation Program, and streetscape improvements projects in all commercial districts increased their vibrancy. The update of the Zoning Code to encourage outdoor dining was critical in adding lively outdoor dining in these districts.

Severance Town Center

The traditional interior Severance Mall was abandoned and re-invented as Severance Town Center in 1997, an outward-facing “Power Center” with national retailers including Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Borders, Office Max, Regal Cinema, and Finast (later Topps, then Dave’s Markets). The 4% vacancy rate is well below Greater Cleveland’s 19.2% for these types of centers. The Post Office, Kaiser Permanente, Courtyards of Severance, and Severance Place were added at Severance. Traffic calming with a continuous bike lane and pedestrian walkway was added, as was public art.

Noble Nela

In Noble Nela, the City acquired parcels at Noble and Nelaview for a park and the development of Greyton Courts. The City completed a district plan and assembled land for a second phase of Greyton Courts. Due to economic conditions, Phase II has not moved forward. Also in Noble Nela, staff assisted with the opening of Sav-a-Lot. In addition, Police Precinct 3 was established as a resource for Police vehicle maintenance.

Euclid Heights-Lee

The Euclid Heights-Lee commercial district was rezoned to MF-2 and its northeast corner was converted to a townhome development.

Cedar Taylor

The vitality of the Cedar Taylor district has been reinvigorated through City funds, including Commercial Revolving Loan, Storefront Renovation matching grants, and planned streetscape improvements and through the City’s recent investment of Storefront and Commercial Revolving Loan funds throughout the district.

Noble Monticello

In the Noble Monticello area, the City assisted with the development of Dogtopia, a pet care store and a former fire station is now the Cleveland Heights Police Academy.

Mayfield Warrensville

At Mayfield and Warrensville, the City purchased the former Yellow Cab and Hillside Dairy sites for much-needed public works facilities. The City sold the Hillside Dairy parking lot for a privately developed, architecturally interesting self-storage facility.

Mayfield Lee

The Civic was renovated by New Spirit Revival Center, Homewood at Rockefeller Gardens assisted living replaced the former Montefiore Home, the May Lee Building was renovated and renamed Rockefeller Pointe, and the Medusa Corporation relocated from the area—the building currently houses varied office tenants.

North Taylor

This small commercial district has struggled with high vacancy rates. Toddle Inn child care relocated here and went through the City’s Storefront Program.

Fairmount Taylor

The corner gas station was replaced with an upscale home furnishings store, Paysage and the district has had low vacancy rates and is known for providing upscale retail and services.

Goal: Foster new development and investment consistent with the existing character of the community

New Development

The City has encouraged development that complements the existing character of both our residential neighborhoods and commercial districts. New housing is developed in addition to, not at the expense of, the city's historic housing stock and unique commercial districts. Development sites have been located with careful attention not to damage the surrounding neighborhoods: vacant parcels and those whose use is outmoded are targeted for redevelopment. New development respects the scale and high quality of design and materials present in the community.

Commercial development has also resulted in \$137,000,000 of investment which, in turn brought net increase in payroll taxes of \$581,700. Major commercial developments include the Kaiser Permanente facility and expansion, the re-invention of Severance Town Center, and the new Zagara's Marketplace. Streetscaping and retail upgrades in our major commercial districts, such as Stone Oven, Anatolia Cafe, Panini's on Coventry, Nighttown's Stephen's Green Patio and Melt Bar & Grilled and significantly improved the districts in which they are located.

Parks

In 1996, a Recreation Bond issue was passed which funded the expansion of the Community Center, the rehabilitation and expansion of the War Memorial, and the adaptive use of the Superior Schoolhouse into a historical museum and archive.

In 1998 the city undertook a comprehensive master plan for Forest Hill Park, looking at its ecological and development potential. The existing Recreation Center was greatly expanded and developed into a Community Center, with a second ice rink, a Senior Center, Field House and Child Care areas. In 2002, a Clean Ohio Grant funded project constructed erosion control techniques resulting in wetlands that assist in reducing erosion and improving wildlife habitat and established walking paths. Asphalt paths were upgraded throughout the park.

In 1999, Denison Park was improved with a top quality soccer field with lights and bleachers which is used primarily by the high school soccer teams. The pool has lied dormant since 2008, a victim of reduced use and city cost cutting. Baseball fields, tennis courts, basketball courts and playground complete the active recreation opportunities.

CDBG funding provided by the City enabled the redevelopment of the Coventry PEACE play field/sledding hill and pathways, as well as Boulevard Elementary's playground redevelopment and expansion. The softball and soccer fields at this school are regularly utilized for City recreation programs.

Passed in 2004, the Issue 27 Recreation Bond Issue has funded many park rehabilitation projects, including the restoration of all the park pathways, the reconstruction of the WPA-built walls throughout Cain Park, reconstruction of the Cain Park Colonnade wall, upgrade of all playgrounds, the Cumberland Pool rehabilitation and the renovations in the bathhouse, the erosion control project at the Cain Park tennis courts, purchase of equipment for the fitness center, new backstops, fencing, benches at the ball fields, and resurfacing of all tennis courts.

CONCLUSION

Since 1997, the City has seen investment in new housing and commercial development at a staggering pace. Approximately \$300 million of private investment has occurred in the City thanks to a robust housing market and its location near University Circle. Recently, the downturn in the economy has made it more difficult to obtain financing for large and small development projects.

Cleveland Heights' location, architectural interest and diverse populace continue to provide cornerstones on which to continue to plan and position the city for new investment and a sustainable future. The challenge will be to reverse the trends of population loss and declining tax base and increase revenues sufficient to maintain a healthy and attractive city. That is the purpose of the 2010 Strategic Development Plan.

**APPENDIX B
DETAILED DEVELOPMENT REPORT
FEBRUARY 2009**

Detailed Development Report February 2009

Introduction

This document is a summary and analysis of the City's planning and development activities in the context of the 1988 Strategic Development Plan and its 1993 update. The intention is to provide perspective on how to best plan for the future, augment the City's tax base and build upon our accomplishments.

Housing development was recognized as the major asset of the City. The update stressed the necessity of maintaining our existing housing stock and creating new housing opportunities to meet the demands of an untapped market. Strategies were organized into three segments.

I. Administrative

Target neighborhoods for investment

The Heights Home Improvement Program offered interior and exterior grants for the renovation of two-family homes in the targeted neighborhoods of Coventry, North Coventry and Cain Park Village. 238 housing units were renovated between 1995 and 2003. The goal was to preserve the two-family housing and attract good tenants.

East Derbyshire Condominium Conversion Program offered grants to investors to convert their vacant two-family homes to for-sale condominiums. It also provided landscaping and a renovation grant to owner-occupants on the street. The City also acquired and renovated three homes for condominium purposes. CDBG funds, with a small amount of General Fund, were used for this program. It is ongoing.

Site assembly

The City has acquired dozens of commercial and residential parcels in order to eliminate blighted conditions and provide redevelopment opportunities. These parcels will be reviewed as specific development sites are discussed.

Provide low interest loans for residential renovation

The City has partnered with the Cleveland Restoration Society to offer residents the Heritage Loan Program, a reduced interest loan program for home renovations. The program has made 72 loans providing \$2.5 million since its inception in 2005. Cuyahoga County's Linked Deposit Home Enhancement Loan Program (HELP) made 652 loans providing over \$9.1 million since 1999.

Private investment in apartment buildings and additional parking in two- and multi-family districts

The City administered the Apartment Renovation Rebate Program to assist in the interior and exterior renovation of apartment buildings. ARRP provided landlords with a 50% matching grant on exterior improvements. It was later expanded to provide no-interest loans for interior renovations. Between 1995 and 2003, buildings housing



597 apartment units participated in the program. Program interest waned as the vacancy rates increased in the rental market. There was also a high demand for new vinyl windows, which is not permitted using federal funds. ARRP was discontinued in 2003 and the CDBG funds reallocated towards other activities.

Landmark support

The Landmark Commission has designated more than 50 Landmarks and a Landmark Register with photos and history of each property is kept on the city's website. The Landmark Commission, staffed by the Planning Department's Historic Preservation Planner, has published multiple neighborhood walking tours, created exhibits and presented lectures that educate the public about the city's valuable history and architecture.

In 2000, the city opened the Cleveland Heights Historical Center at Superior Schoolhouse which is home to an archival collection and museum committed to the presentation and preservation of Cleveland Heights history and architecture through documentation, exhibits, and special events. Each year the Landmark Commission teams with the non-profit Cleveland Heights Historical Society to present several free lectures about the city's history, architecture and its preservation. In 2008, the city made its collection of 600+ digitized historic photographs available on Cleveland State's Cleveland Memory website. Additionally, staff continues to build a database of all pre-1950 building permits, a valuable tool in assisting residents who are researching their home's history.

Planning Department staff has guided residents in listing the Euclid Golf, Ambler Heights, and Inglewood National Register Historic Districts. The Historic Preservation Planner is currently assisting neighbors interested in listing Grant Deming's Forest Hill neighborhood and Coventry Village's "Mayfield Heights" neighborhood.

The Landmark Commission is currently working on design guidelines that residents could consult when taking on rehabilitation of their home or business. This would help educate and guide residents to preserve the historic character of their buildings. These would be made available on the city's website.

The City has also taken care to preserve the historic structures it owns, including the rehabilitation of the Superior Schoolhouse, the World War II Memorial, the buildings in Cain Park and the Cumberland Bath House. These have been funded using the Recreation Bond Issue and Issue 27 funds, both approved by residents.

Rezone parklands to new park districts.

In June, 1993 the City created the Park District zoning classification. The parklands in the city were subsequently rezoned to reflect the new designation.

II. Residential Primary Sites

These three sites were highlighted, in order of priority, in the 1993 update.

Top of the Hill - Working with Planning Commission on development guidelines for the site, the City issued a Request for Proposals and Qualifications in September 2008. The financing market downturn shortly thereafter left developers cautious about starting any new projects in 2009. The City did receive one proposal and will be meeting with that developer next month.

Millikin/Severance - The Cleveland Heights-University Heights School Board placed this former elementary school and stables on the market in 2007. The high sales price and the re-use of the school building are conflicting. The 1993 update recommended rezoning the site to S-1, incorporating it into the Severance zoning. Staff agrees that greater flexibility is needed on the site, but any use of the property must be respectful of the adjacent single-family homes. The board has since refocused its efforts on the reuse of Coventry Elementary School. Currently zoned 'A' single family, the 9.2 acres is deceiving for a single-family housing development. If the setbacks to the adjacent properties are followed, few single-family homes could fit on the site, making it financially infeasible.

Montefiore - in 1996, American Retirement Communities acquired this 5-acre parcel for assisted living care. Homewood Residence is a two-building campus setting with an 88,000 sq. ft. assisted living facility as well as a 24,000 sq. ft. Alzheimer building. Its development is respectful of the adjacent Forest Hill neighborhood and continues to be an anchor for the Mayfield/Lee business district.
Estimated project cost of \$14million.
Annual real estate taxes: \$384,000.
Estimated annual income taxes: \$19,700.



As markets change and unanticipated opportunities arise, the City has found itself able to react to additional housing opportunities considered primary sites. Those are outlined as follows:

Courtyards at Severance - With the departure of the Austin Company to Mayfield Village, and little market interest in the campus for another office user, the City worked with Bren Schreiber Co. on a redevelopment plan that would accommodate the need for new housing to meet untapped market demands.

The result is the Courtyards of Severance, a 69-unit townhome development that began construction in 2002. Sales prices have ranged from \$250,000 up to \$399,000. The City acquired a portion of the land for a landscape buffer between the development and the single-family homes along Crest Road. Tax abatement in the



amount of 50% for 10 years was made available to buyers as well. **Upon completion, estimated project cost of \$17 million. Projected annual real estate taxes: \$385,000. Projected annual income taxes: \$179,000.**

BlueStone - The Jewish Community Center shuttered its doors in 2004 and placed this nearly 10-acre parcel on the market. Rysar Properties acquired the site and redevelopment began in August 2005. The 110 units include 39 cluster homes and 71 flats. The first group of seven clusters sold out immediately and construction was recently completed on the second cluster. The first of three buildings for the flats is nearing completion as well, with three units already sold. Sales prices range from \$269,000 to \$365,000. **Upon completion, estimated project cost of \$18 million. Projected annual real estate taxes: \$327,000. Projected annual income taxes: \$286,000**

III. Residential Secondary Sites

Southeast corner of Euclid Heights and Derbyshire - The City issued a request for proposals for this site in the mid-1990s. There was significant neighborhood opposition to the townhome proposals and City Council subsequently rezoned the parcel park district. The southwest corner, formerly a Lutheran church, was redeveloped in 2004 for housing. The Brownstones of Derbyshire reused the church for five housing units, as well as developed an additional sixteen townhomes. Sales prices ranged from \$175,000 to \$450,000. **Estimated project cost of \$7 million. Annual real estate taxes: \$214,000. Estimated annual income taxes: \$54,600.**



North side of Mayfield Road between Forest Hills Blvd. and Burlington Road - Zoned MF-1, multiple property owners own this 5-acre area. In 1995, one of the parcels was sold off for construction of a new single-family home.

Berkowitz/Kumin- It was thought that this vacant lot behind the Berkowitz-Kumin Funeral Home on South Taylor was an ideal site for new housing. It is landlocked by much needed parking for the school district building and funeral home. Its smaller size and setback considerations for the Antisdale Avenue residents may leave this site with only a few housing units after site planning.

Turkey Ridge - Building on the success of Edgehill Townhomes, in 2000 the City issued a Request for Proposals and Qualifications for this site. City Council chose not to pursue the proposals based on deed restrictions on the more developable parcel and opposition from the Little Italy neighborhood.

South side of Euclid Heights Boulevard between Mornington Lane and Derbyshire - In 2001, six townhomes were built and sold along Euclid Heights Boulevard, just west of Coventry Road. Belleshire Townhomes sales prices ranged from \$269,000 to \$310,000. Its proximity to the Coventry Village Business District and easy access to downtown were the two attributes to its success. The developer has acquired additional properties to undertake Phase II, but financial considerations have stalled that development. **Estimated project cost of \$4 million. Annual real estate taxes: \$59,000. Estimated annual income taxes: \$15,600.**

Cedar Road - Building on the success of the Cedar Circle cluster homes, two development projects were undertaken. Cedarmount is a seventeen unit development fronting Cedar Road as well as Fairmount Boulevard. Built in 2001, the six townhomes on Cedar sold on average for \$300,000. The eleven cluster homes on Fairmount Boulevard sold for up to \$679,000. **Estimated project cost of \$5 million. Annual real estate taxes: \$242,000. Estimated annual income taxes: \$44,200.**



Blanche/Andrews - This 4 acre, multi-parcel frontage along Oakwood Country Club is a very attractive site for upscale housing. Oakwood has acquired parcels as they have become available. Historically, Oakwood membership has been opposed to its development because it would restrict any reconfiguration of the golf course hole. In 2007 a developer submitted a proposal for the development of two- single-family homes on a portion of the site. That proposal was withdrawn based on neighborhood opposition to the removal of green space.

IV. Commercial Primary Sites

Severance Town Center - In keeping with its intent of having intense mixed-uses at Severance Town Center, new housing, retail and institutional uses have been created since 1993. Besides the Courtyards of Severance, other development projects have reinforced the idea of Severance being the City's largest economic generator. It continues to hold opportunities for additional investment with two vacant parcels remaining on the outside of the ring road.

Former Kaiser Permanente office building was fully renovated for 39 condominiums known as Severance Place. Sales prices for those units range from \$125,000 to \$250,000. **Estimated project cost of \$13 million. Annual real estate taxes: \$169,000. Estimated annual income taxes: \$101,000.**

Ownership of the mall itself has changed from Canyon Johnson to Pine Tree Realty Co., and investment continues with Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Borders, Office Max and Dave's Markets. **Estimated project cost of \$70 million. Annual real estate taxes: \$1,065,000.**

The City dedicated and completely upgraded Severance Circle. **Estimated investment of \$5 million.**

The US Postal Service constructed a new branch for the 44118 zip code. **Estimated investment of \$5 million.**

Most importantly, Kaiser Permanente built a new, \$40 million facility in 1999 and a subsequent \$13 million addition in 2007.

Annual real estate taxes: \$1.3 million.

Estimated annual income taxes: \$476,000.



Coventry - Coventry's success is largely due to the implementation of the 1990 Coventry Village Development Plan. Nearly every building in the district has undergone exterior renovations in the last fifteen years. This has resulted in attracting additional retailers such as American Apparel and the smaller, locally owned businesses including Brigade, Marc's and City Buddha. New restaurants have infused millions of dollars into the district, including Pacific East, Mint Café, Panini's, and Bodega. The north end of the district is the healthiest it has been in decades.

The Centrum Theater was graciously restored. Although the movie industry downsized and shuttered the screens once more, the theater was acquired and is reused as an entertainment facility and restaurant. The Grog Shop expansion into Coventry compliments that activity. The fire damaged building at the south end of the district was eventually demolished for a two-story building appropriately named the Courtyards on Coventry. Its tenants today include Bodega, Mongolian Barbeque, Phoenix Coffee, and McNulty's Pub.

Importantly, the City built and opened a new 269-space parking garage in the center of the district. The garage provides parking opportunities for district visitors, residents and employees that were not available before then. The 5,000 sq. ft. retail space on the first floor accommodated a green grocer up until a few years ago. The neighborhood has greatly benefited from the addition of Marc's variety of produce, grocery and pharmacy.

In the late 1990s, the City assisted the property owners in the creation of the Coventry Village Special Improvement District. The SID assesses property owners to raise additional funds for marketing, streetscape and maintenance of the district. In 2003, the City assisted the SID with a \$400,000 loan for the implementation of an award-winning streetscape plan. Its design has served as a model for other business districts in Northeast Ohio.

Cedar Lee - This district, also a Special Improvement District, runs along Lee Road, from Dellwood Road to Superior Road. The core district, from Dellwood to Cedar, has seen significant investment as well. Nearly all of the buildings on the east side of the street have undergone facade improvements in the last fifteen years. The Cedar Lee Theater still serves as an anchor to the district, making it a destination spot. Millions have been invested in the new area restaurants including Café Tandoor, Lopez, Lemon Grass, Dewey's, Stone Oven Café, Marotta's, Anatolia Café,

Jimmy O'Neil's, and Brennan's Colony continues to reinvent itself and added an outdoor patio in 2008. A few new retailers such as Petland, Revive, and HeightsArts gallery compliment the long-time existing businesses including Seitz-Agin Hardware, Bill's Dry Cleaning and Phoenix Coffee.

The City acquired the Marathon gas station at Dellwood Road to support additional parking for the library's expansion into the former YMCA building. In 2007, the City constructed and opened the new parking garage behind the theater. It offers a net-new 200 spaces to the district and provides covered parking for future mixed-use development projects. The City is still discussing development opportunities on the Meadowbrook/Lee block and will continue to pursue mixed-use options that add vitality and density to the district.

The 1993 update suggested a focus on attracting new neighborhood retail north of Cedar Road. Staff has been moderately successful in that attempt because of the attraction to the southern end of the district. Zagara's Marketplace, a 45,000 sq. ft. upscale grocery store has been the anchor of the north end since 2002. The City assisted with tax increment financing on the land acquisition to fill the financing gap.

Annual real estate taxes: \$169,000.

Estimated annual income taxes: \$86,000.



Locally owned Elgin Furniture filled the old grocery store space by opening a store in December, 2008. Progressive Urban Real Estate acquired a building and opened another sales office in 2007. Staff believes that smaller office users will continue to have affordable opportunities for space in this end of the district.

Cedar Fairmount - The emphasis on this district continues to be the development of the 5-acre Top of the Hill site. The district has continued to see high commercial and residential occupancy rates as a result of its proximity to University Circle. This district is the third to become a Special Improvement District in the city.

New housing opportunities continue to thrive in the district. The last decade saw the construction of Kenilworth Mews, a 17 unit cluster home development just north of the district. **Annual real estate taxes: \$188,362. Estimated annual income taxes: \$44,200.** Fairmount Hill, a 6 unit townhome development similar to Cedarmount was completed in 2008. **Annual real estate taxes: \$41,845. Estimated annual income taxes: \$15,600.** Both have created high-end housing options for this neighborhood.

South Taylor - The 1993 update was short on specifics for this district. It suggested providing ongoing attention to its vitality. As the district to the Orthodox neighborhood, retail and restaurant opportunities still exist. Anchors include Hebrew Academy and the Center for Families and Children. It's spattered with businesses such as Ungar's, Shimone's Poultry and Jacob's Books, as well as

Vanderbrook Florist and Sun Luck Garden. The Superior Park buildings, the historic mixed-use buildings, are suffering from higher vacancy rates in the commercial spaces. Parking is not the issue as much as the configuration of the older and smaller retail space. Staff continues to work with the building owners on marketing efforts.

Cedar Taylor - The municipal parking lot west of Taylor Road was redeveloped by Heights Garden Center. Heights Garden holds a niche for higher end landscape materials and supplies.

The district has seen much redevelopment on the University Heights side, with the construction of University Corners. On the Cleveland Heights side, a handful of buildings have had complete storefront renovations. Major anchors include Heights Garden Center, Supreme Window, The Wood Trader, Café Tandoor and the destination butcher Mr. Brisket.



Staff's focus will continue to be on the redevelopment of the northwest corner of the district. We continue discussions with the developer and prospective reuses that preserve the zero setback and pedestrian friendly site plan.

Noble Monticello - The 1993 update encouraged new storefront renovations as part of the maintenance of the district. Over the last decade the district has not seen the level of investment that the others have. The City did assist in the acquisition of the former Miracle Shield building that is currently home to DogTopia, a dog kennel and daycare, and Rainbow Vet Clinic. CVS built a new drug store, replacing the outdated one that had been there for decades. This prompted rival Rite Aid to build across the street, but then subsequently close a few years later. The Police Academy continues to be an anchor for the district.

Fairmount Taylor - This small, upscale district has seen growth with the acquisition and demolition of the gas station on the northeast corner. Paysage is a fine interiors store and compliments the other boutique retailers in the district including Paul Hamlin Interiors, You Too Clothier and On the Rise Bakery. The district only lacks sufficient parking to accommodate the uses on a busy weekend. Retailers continue to work with the Unity Church on shared parking arrangements.

Center Mayfield - This district contains the city's widest variety of zoning uses, including S-2, C-2, C-3 and MF-1. The departure of Hillside Dairy and Yellow Cab left the city with opportunities to expand its Public Works divisions in the C-3 districts. The former dairy parking

lot was sold for a new storage facility. The handsome building is reminiscent of a mixed-use building found in upscale urban areas.

The city's efforts remained focused on the re-tenanting of the Center Mayfield building since the departure of Hollywood Video last year. World Cars, Rich & Clark, and Bill's Diner continue to be anchors in the district. Further on Warrensville Center/Noble Road, McCarthy's Auto Body's building serves as an example for other auto related uses in the district. Storefront renovations are needed for Guggenheim's building, as well as the Center Mayfield Building.

Mayfield Lee - This district has significant potential for office users due to the acquisition and renovation of the former May Lee Building, now known as Rockefeller Pointe. Its ten minute location from University Circle could attract medical and technology companies seeking lower cost space, covered parking and convenience to shopping and the Community Center. The 70,000 sq. ft. building is home to smaller office users, but remains at 50% occupancy levels. Staff has encouraged



institutional uses, as well as medical uses, and recently made a loan to NeuroWave Inc. to assist in its expansion of medical devices. **Projected annual income tax: \$38,000.** Staff continues to work with all three property owners in the "Triangle" to create a comprehensive development plan that will enhance the City's tax based and take advantage of the Mayfield Road location.

Noble Nela - The strategic development plan was completed in 1994. It suggested that the cities of Cleveland Heights and East Cleveland consolidate the scattered retail and build new housing to compliment. The Noble Nela Merchant Association continues to be active in the district through neighborhood promotional activities. Cleveland Heights embarked on an extensive acquisition and demolition plan to strengthen both of those uses at our end of the district. To that end, Greyton Court, a 22-unit townhome development, was built in 2000. **Annual real estate taxes: \$74,400. Estimated annual income taxes: \$57,200.** It adds density and vitality to this high traffic street. The Randolph Road site owned by General Electric has yet to become available for new housing, as GE continues to want to hold that parcel with its remaining campus. Save-A-Lot has continued to be a strong anchor to the district, providing convenience groceries to the neighborhood. The City will continue to land bank as parcels become available in hope of providing additional new housing opportunities in the north end of the city.

Euclid Heights/Lee - Although not considered in the 1993 update, this commercial district was rezoned to MF-2, as City Council and staff recognized that retail would not continue to be a viable option. The City aggressively acquired eight properties

for demolition and sold them to a developer for Boulevard Townhomes.

Annual real estate taxes: \$61,000.

Estimated annual income taxes: \$39,000.

Built in 2001, Phase I's eight units were sold with little effort. Phase II, constructed in 2004, still has two units remaining unsold.

Phase III's seven units will remain unbuilt until the housing market rebounds.



V. Commercial Secondary Sites

Noble Warrensville - The city parcel, affectionately known as Burger Bob's, was sold to McCarthy's Auto Body for the construction of a new facility. It is considered an anchor in that end of the C-3 district.

Cedar Hampstead - This parking lot, just west of Taylor Road, was developed into Heights Garden Center.

The Civic - A non-profit was created to encourage the restoration and redevelopment of this National Register building. The dire financial situation of the building required the entity to sell it to New Spirit Revival, a tenant in the building, for church purposes.

Conclusion

Since 1997, the City has seen investment in new housing and commercial development at a staggering pace. Approximately \$300 million of private investment has occurred in the City thanks to a robust housing market and its proximity to University Circle. Certainly the downturn in the economy is making it extremely difficult to obtain financing for large and small development projects. Despite it, staff is encouraged and continues to position the City for new investment when the opportunity presents itself.