Mt. Lookout Community Council. PO Box 8444. Cincinnati, Ohio 45208

MT. LOOKOUT
COMMUNITY
COUNCIL
CINCINNATI-OHIO

Oct. 7, 2020

Zoning Board of Appeals
c/o Kevin Tidd
Staff Attorney
City of Cincinnati Law Department
805 Central Avenue, Suite 500
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Re: Appeal of Decision, Case #ZH20200030, ZH20200031, 1009 – 1015 Delta Avenue

Dear Members of the Board of Appeals:

The Mt. Lookout Community Council opposes the appeal made by L&D Real Estate Holdings, LLC; Linwood Real Estate Holdings, LLC; and Center for Change on Delta, LLC; (referred to here as the "Applicant") to reverse the Zoning Hearing Examiner's July 22, 2020 decisions pertaining to the proposed redevelopment of 1009, 1011, 1013 and 1015 Delta Avenue in Mt. Lookout. Our objections to the appeal center on decisions related to Cincinnati Zoning Code Chapter 1437, Urban Overlay (UD) Design Districts, and the Mt. Lookout Urban Design Plan (MLUDP), attached.

The Zoning Hearing Examiner's decision rightly enforced Chapter 1437, particularly §1437-09, Development Standards in UD Overlay Districts and subsection N1: New Construction, which implement the policies adopted in the MLUDP. As required for validation, the MLUDP development process was managed by the City's then Office of Architecture and Urban Design, Division of Engineering, Department of Public Works and Department of City Planning in partnership with Mt. Lookout residents, property owners and its business community, and was approved by the whole of City Council.

With their appeal, the Applicant continues to disregard the purpose of Mt. Lookout's Urban Design Overlay District designation and its intention to regulate the pattern of development in the Mt. Lookout business district. The Applicant's proposed building is wholly unsuited to the district in terms architectural style, bulk, shape, massing, scale, and form. These six aspects are specified in §1437-09.N1 as criteria for new construction in Urban Design Overlay Districts and therefore must be satisfied in order to allow a proposed project to proceed. Testimony given by members of the Mt. Lookout community at the May 28, 2020 hearing quantifiably demonstrated the ways the Applicant's proposed development is not consistent nor compatible with the six strictures. Through his denial of the Applicant's request for relief from these standards, the ZHE confirmed that the proposed structure is not compliant. Overturning the decision and granting the Applicant's requested relief would permit the construction of a structure that not only ignores the Mt. Lookout Urban Design Plan but would also render §1437-09 ineffectual for all future development in Mt. Lookout by changing the character of the community and irrevocably redefining allowable limits for height, bulk, mass, scale and architectural style. It would also set precedent for disregarding §1437-09 and the underlying urban design plans for all 15 Cincinnati neighborhoods that have been granted an Urban Design Overlay District designation.

PURPOSE OF THE URBAN OVERLAY DISTRICT DESIGNATION

As stated in Chapter 1437, the purpose of a UD Overlay District is to "protect and enhance the physical character of selected business districts that have adopted Urban Design Plans," and "ensure that infill development does not adversely affect the physical character of the area."[1]

After experiencing the incursion of buildings and design elements that were diminishing the character of the business district,[2] the Mt. Lookout Civic Club (now known as the Mt. Lookout Community Council) proactively sought assistance from the City to designate Mt. Lookout Square as an Urban Design District to help the community "thoughtfully guide design issues in the business district,"[3] and "guide the physical development that occurs in the district."[4] The resulting plan clearly states that its purpose is to "establish a set of policies, guidelines and implementation strategies to direct future growth, development and preservation of the Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District."[5] Moreover, it states that implementing Urban Design District guidelines "is the first step in curbing this gradual erosion. Development controls will enable the community to positively direct changes in the built environment and maintain the desirable features of individual buildings, their location on the site and the general patterns of development for the district."[6]

The importance of these purposes and the community engagement behind them cannot be ignored. Their existence should have been thoroughly considered by the Applicant in not only their decision to purchase the properties, but also in the plans prepared for the proposed redevelopment of the properties. As it is, the Applicant purchased the properties; prepared a plan with no community input until after the majority of the plan had been completed; was rightly denied relief from the UD development standards; and is now appealing the decision in the service of their own individual goals rather than those of the community in which the properties are located. This defeats the purpose of the Urban Design Plan and Chapter 1437, and should not be permitted.[7]

In addition to the above statements, the following notes further rebut the Applicant's argument for reversing the ZHE decision:

The standards of overlay districts supersede any conflicting development regulations pertaining to the underlying zoning district. In their appeal, the Applicant states that the Subject Properties (1009, 1011, 1013 and 1015 Delta) are subject to three separate zoning schemes (CN-P, Hillside Overlay and Urban

[1] Cincinnati Zoning Code, §1437-01 – Specific Purposes

[2] Examples include the construction 1018 Delta and the Jiffy Lube Service station at 3151 Linwood Avenue, and façade modifications of the CVS and Proof Bar building, located at 3195 Linwood Avenue.

[3] MLUDP, Introduction, pg. 1

[4] As noted, the process to achieve the Urban Design Overlay District designation included a comprehensive community engagement process that defined the community's goals for the business district. The Introduction of the Mt. Lookout Urban Design Plan details the plan development process and the extensive level of community engagement that was involved.

[5] MLUDP, Executive Summary

[6] MLUDP, Façade Recommendations, pg. 32

[7] It should be noted that the community did not object the concept of redeveloping the Subject Properties; the community's objections centered on the sheer size, scale and design of the proposed structure.

Design Overlay) which "causes unique challenges for the site"[8] and "are sometimes competing."[9] However, §1437-09 states clearly:

> "These standards [referring to §1437-09] are intended to implement policies in adopted urban design plans. Whenever the standards conflict with the development regulations of the underlying district, these standards supersede those regulations."

§1433-07, Hillside Overlay District Applicability further states:

> "Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, all regulations of the underlying zone districts and other applicable overlay districts apply to and control property in a Hillside District; provided, however, in the case of conflict between the provisions of an underlying zoning district and the Hillside District, the provisions of the Hillside District govern."

As such, the UD Design standards are the standards that must be followed when considering redevelopment of the Subject Properties, not CN-P.

The Applicant's claim to have modified its plan based on community input[10] is disingenuous. When the Applicant first met with the community at the City's recommendation, they presented a nearly complete concept. With the exception of modifying the street level approach to the townhouses, and adding several parking spaces for guests, the Applicant largely ignored the community's overarching concerns regarding size, scale, massing, bulk and overall architectural style. Members of the Community Advisory Committee were also surprised to see general conversations held in meetings inaccurately represented by the Applicant as "suggestions." Through these actions, as well as their disregard for the development standards contained within the MLUDP, the intent of Chapter 1437 was dismissed by the Applicant.

The Applicant's purported rationale for a five-story building is flawed. The Applicant makes clear in their appeal that their primary justification for constructing a five-story building at this location is to provide on-site parking in the form of a two-story parking garage. They argue that because the lack of parking is a well-documented problem within the Mt. Lookout business district, they are mitigating the impact of their development by providing on-site parking and that this mitigation measure requires the apartments to be built on top of the parking garage. Thus, they must increase the total scale of the building to five stories, which in their words is a "bump in scale" that's "larger than average."[11] In fact, the total building height would be roughly 153% taller (in terms of occupied floors) than the average of all buildings in the district, 127% taller than the district's 10 largest buildings and 213% taller than the district's five landmark buildings,[12] as shown in Exhibit A. Regardless, their argument is flawed at its most elementary level. It is

[8] Applicant Appeal, Letter, section IV.B, pg. 11
[9] Applicant Appeal Letter, section I.A., pg. 2
[10] Applicant Appeal Letter, section II.A., pg. 4
[11] Summarized from the Applicant Appeal Letter, IV.C.iii, pgs. 20 – 21.
[12] These buildings include 3187 Linwood Avenue (The Redmoor), 1010 Delta Avenue (Mt. Lookout TV and Lash Boutique); 3210 Linwood Avenue (Million's Café) and 1000 – 1006 Delta Avenue (Muse, Sago, Vin Acco Time Repair and Keepsake Photography). MLUDP, Façade Recommendations, pg. 32

based on the premise that the proposed structure must contain 36 units. There is no directive that says how many units the building must contain:

- The number of units proposed is a choice that the Applicant has made, and therefore the need to construct a parking deck to support those units is a problem they created. It should not be considered a hardship that warrants consideration of relief from the zoning code.

- Were the proposed development restructured to focus exclusively on the townhouse segment alone (without the apartments), more than ample space for on-site parking would be available and the bulk, shape, massing and scale of the townhouses with parking accommodations would be much more in alignment with the development standards outlined for the Mt. Lookout business district. This has already been demonstrated as possible through the development of the Parkland View townhouses which are currently under construction on Linwood Avenue on the opposite side of the Mt. Lookout business district.

While on the topic of parking, it should be noted that the Applicant's appeal implies that their provision of parking for the complex helps mitigate the broader parking problems of Mt. Lookout Square. It does not. It merely accommodates the residents they would be adding and provides minimal parking spaces for resident's guests. None of the new spaces would be available to the public.

The Applicant's argument for appeal continues to deemphasize the staggering size and scale of the proposed structure and the redefining effect it will have on the character of the district. While the MLCC agrees that compatibility does not necessarily equate with "an exact match" of size and scale and has never stated as such, we do assert that compatibility means size and scale should be within a similar and reasonable range. However, the proposed development fails on that account. Instead, it would overshadow and overwhelm the existing buildings in Mt. Lookout Square and its proposed scale and height is a primary objection of the Mt. Lookout community.[13] Under §1437-09, "Architectural style, bulk, shape, massing, scale and form of new buildings and the space between and around buildings shall be consistent with the area and should be in harmony with neighboring buildings."[14]

As the MLCC has previously attested, the height of the Applicant's proposed structure is more than twice the average height (in terms of occupied floors) of the buildings in the UD District. While the top of the new building may be near to the same height of the house located immediately north (1017 Delta), as claimed by the Applicant and noted by the City's Building and Inspections Department, it must be noted that that house is a two-story American four-square home that is built on a hill which is located further uphill of the proposed development. A comparison of overall size of the two buildings shows that the Applicant's proposed structure is approximately 150% taller (in terms of occupied floors) than the neighboring house and more than 575% larger in overall footprint. The difference is even more drastic when considering the

[13] The Applicant's method of determining building height remains suspect. Their own renderings demonstrate that based on street-level measurements, the proposed building would exceed the CN-P limit of 50 feet. Supporting materials use a convoluted formula that defies layman understanding to bring the height of the proposed building to just under the 50-foot mark. However, that formula is based upon a point centered on a hillside that would cease to exist if the building is constructed and therefore should not be used to measure the finished height of the building. Further, because §1437-09 supersedes CN-P, the CN-P height limit is a moot point.

[14] This is repeated in standard #3 in the Location, Orientation, Size and Shape of Buildings section of the MLUDP, pg. 37

one-story UDF building located to the south of proposed structure. These height differences are illustrated in Exhibit B. No matter which way the terms consistent and compatible are defined, a building that so grossly overwhelms the size of all buildings in the district is neither consistent nor compatible in bulk and scale.

The Applicant's repeated assertion that "the size and scale of development is supported in part through specific mentions of developments near intersections" is non-sensical.[15] The clause they reference as their rationale for this statement is the last sentence of standard #3 in the Location, Orientation, Size and Shape of Buildings section of the MLUDP: "At street intersections, a building should emphasize its corner location with enhanced size, scale, height and massing."[16] This clause does not apply to the proposed structure because though it is located near an intersection, it is not located at the intersection. The building located at the intersection is a one-story United Dairy Farmers (UDF) building. If the UDF property were ever to be redeveloped, it too would be subject to the standards of the MLUDP, and the architectural style, bulk, shape, massing and scale of any new development on that property would still need to be consistent with the form of the area and in harmony with neighboring buildings.

It appears that the Applicant's argument rests on the premise that by allowing their structure to reach the scale and height they have proposed, they would "set up the corner" (their words) for any future development of the UDF property to adhere to the goal of enhancing the size, scale, height, and massing of new development at that corner location.[17] However, this goal can be fulfilled by constructing a two-story building on the UDF site and that increased height, size and scale would still be consistent and compatible with other buildings in the district. The Applicant's structure is not needed to facilitate this change and allowing it to be built to the size proposed would have the consequence of allowing the UDF property (and other properties near it) to also be redeveloped to an overwhelming scale. This is exactly the type of precedent that the MLCC and our community is seeking to prevent with the denial of the Applicant's appeal.

Despite the Applicant's position to the contrary, the Mt. Lookout business district does have an underlying character as evidenced by the development of the MLUDP and the City's approval of the plan. The Applicant's appeal continues to argue that there is no consistent style to Mt. Lookout's business district. Further, they repeatedly cite the singular opinion of their architect[18] as the basis for their design choices and refusal to entertain substantive and meaningful community input, as well as their insistence to introduce a new, modern style to the district. This violates a primary purpose of the UDP which is to "enable the community to positively direct changes in the built environment and to maintain the desirable features of individual buildings, their location on the site and the general patterns of development for the district."[19]

As the MLUDP describes, the business district "is a compact, cohesive business district nestled in a basin between two hillsides. Its architecture reflects the 1920's era in which it was developed, giving it a cozy,

[15] Applicant Appeal Letter, IV.C.iii, pg. 19
[16] MLUDP, Location, Orientation, Size and Shape of Buildings, pg. 37
[17] Applicant Appeal Letter, IV.C.iii, pg. 20
[18] Applicant Appeal Letter, IV.C.i, pgs. 16 -17
[19] MLUDP, Façade Recommendations, pg. 32

village-type atmosphere. Buildings are primarily two-stories in height…"[20] Similar references to the Square's character and scale are reflected throughout the plan including:

- "The Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District is small, compact, and possesses a diverse mix of businesses . . ."[21]
- "The group was directed to develop goals – strategies to maintain the village character of the district…"[22]
- "Vision: Image and Identity - Maintain the unique small-town character of the district."[23]
- "The Mt. Lookout Business District possesses a number of charming, intimately-scaled buildings that constitute the formative image of the Square."[24]

These descriptions together establish the aesthetic and baseline character of the Mt. Lookout business district, as illustrated in Exhibit C. Key descriptors include 1920's-era, small, compact, intimately-scaled, village, unique, two-story. The Applicant's proposed development not only is inconsistent and incompatible with these descriptors, it is the complete opposite. Its "soft-modern" design is boxy, oversized, industrial, lacks the detail and charm of Mt. Lookout's landmark buildings and completely lacks a sense of place.

In fact, the description that the Applicant's architect offers for the proposed development[25] can easily be used to describe the majority of the newer, grand-scale residential complexes that have been built in more highly-trafficked commercial zones located all over the city and communities beyond. Nearby examples include the Heritage on Madison Road in Oakley, the Madamore along Madison Road in Madisonville, and Delta Flats at the intersection of Delta Avenue and Columbia Parkway in Columbia-Tusculum. Exhibit D illustrates the obvious degree to which the proposed development is compatible and consistent with those other developments, but <u>not</u> with the Mt. Lookout business district.

Furthermore, while the stepped concept of the townhouses somewhat reduces the imposing nature of the building to those traveling on Delta Avenue, it does not change the fact that the overall structure remains a highly-visible, five-story structure that would tower over the district's one and two-story buildings and would have a footprint that is roughly 320% larger than the average footprint of all buildings in the business district, nor does it honor or respect the character of Mt. Lookout Square.

MLCC testimony as well as commentary offered by the Applicant in initial zoning hearing and in their letter of appeal confirms that the development's architect has designed multiple residential complexes that successfully reflect the character and scale of their home communities, several of which are included in Exhibit E. However, while diligent attention was paid to the surrounding community in designing those complexes, the same respect was not applied to the design prepared for Mt. Lookout. Rather than make amendments to conform with the UD Overlay District, the Applicant has made excuses.

[20] MLUDP, Study Area, pg. 3
[21] MLUDP, Executive Summary, Issues of Today
[22] MLUDP, Executive Summary, Mission
[23] MLUDP, Executive Summary, Vision
[24] MLUDP, Façade Recommendations, pg. 32
[25] Applicant Appeal Letter, IV.C.i, page 16

CONCLUSION

The preceding discussion outlines in detail the MLCC's reasons for opposing the Applicant's appeal for relief from Urban Design Overlay District development standards. The Zoning Hearing Examiner listened to the testimony of each witness and found, as we have quantifiably demonstrated, that the proposed development does not meet the standards in the Urban Design Overlay District for bulk, shape, massing and scale and that the development lacks cohesion and harmony with the architectural character and style of defining elements of the business district. Whereas the Applicant contends that the ZHE failed to acknowledge how the development meets the overall goals of Mt. Lookout's Urban Design Plan, the MLCC asserts that the ZHE saw and supported the broader scope and implications, and the Applicant themselves have failed to acknowledge where their proposed development falls short.

While the MLCC supports bringing more people and business into the Square and acknowledges that new development can help achieve this goal, we do not support doing so at the detriment of the character that makes Mt. Lookout Square one of Cincinnati's most distinctive business districts.

We furthermore believe that a middle-ground can be found. However, we advocate that this can more readily be achieved by the Applicant paying closer attention and more respect to the development standards established for the Mt. Lookout business district and involving the community much earlier in the project development process.

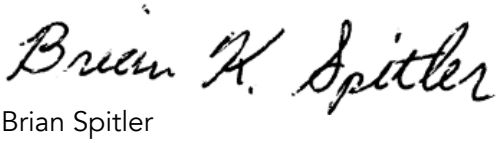
With these considerations in mind, the MLCC maintains that the Zoning Board of Appeals should deny the Applicant's appeal to reverse the ZHE's Urban Design Overlay relief decision.

We thank the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals for reviewing this information and considering our position.

Sincerely,



Dan Prevost
President, Mt. Lookout Community Council



Brian Spitler
Mt. Lookout Community Council and Planning & Zoning Committee Chair
R2 Community Advisory Committee Chair



Laura Whitman
Vice President, Mt. Lookout Community Council and Planning & Zoning Committee
R2 Community Advisory Committee member

EXHIBIT A

Building Size Comparisons

Compares existing buildings in Urban Design (UD) Overlay District with the proposed structure

Estimated dimensions were obtained from Google Earth and B&I Staff Report

Measurements were taken from widest and longest parts of buildings

Estimates include all of 3152 Linwood

All Buildings in UD Overlay District

	Width	Depth	Footprint	Occupied Floors
Approx. Average (43 Buildings)	53	68	3768	1.98
Approx. % Increase Compared with Proposed	224%	36%	320%	153%

10 Largest Buildings in UD Overlay District

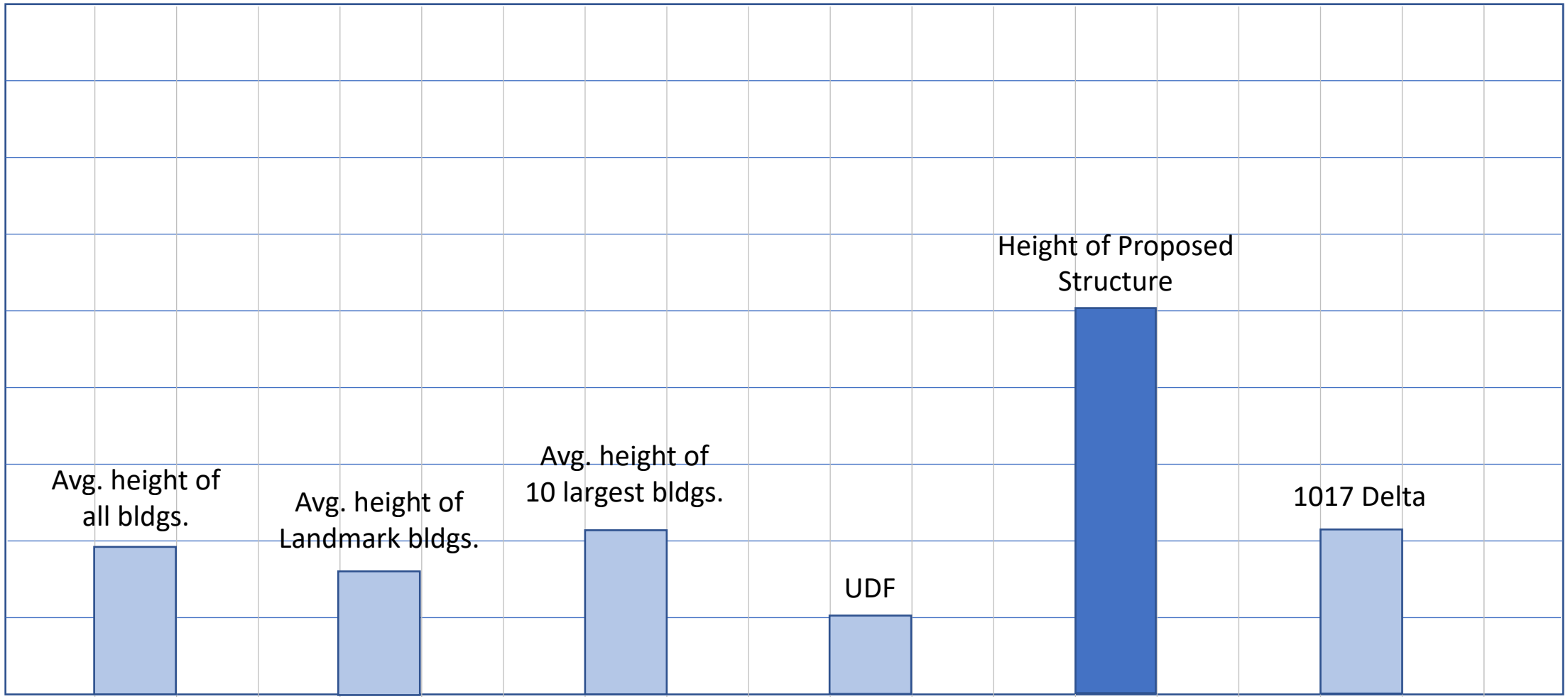
	Width	Depth	Footprint	Occupied Floors
Approx. Average (10 Buildings)	71	108	7603	2.2
Approx. % Increase Compared with Proposed	140%	-14%	108%	127%

UD Overlay District Landmark Buildings

	Width	Depth	Footprint	Occupied Floors
Approx. Average (5 Buildings)	55	87	4675	1.6
Approx. % Increase Compared with Proposed	207%	7%	238%	213%

Exhibit B: Comparison of Building Heights*
Within the Mt. Lookout Business District

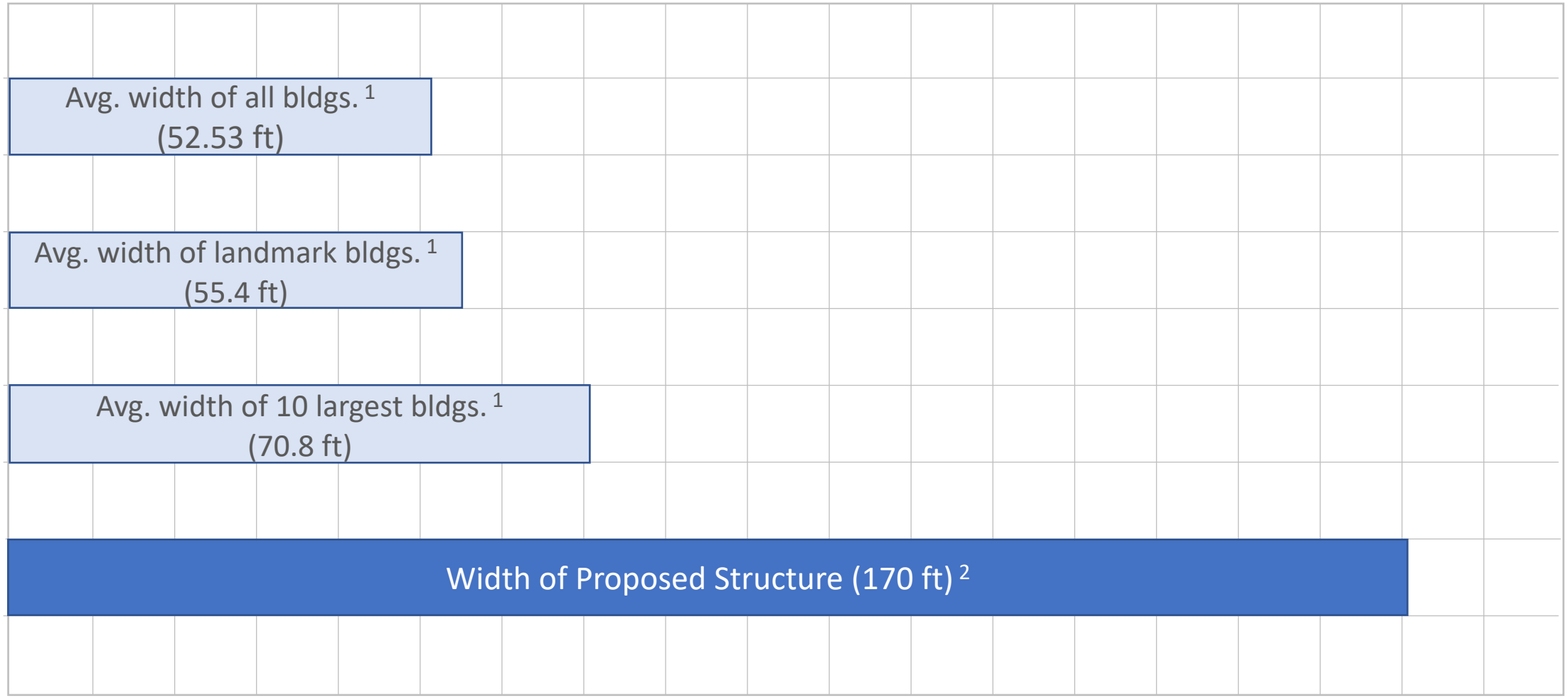
One box = 1 floor



* Average height is measured in terms of occupied floors.

Exhibit B: Comparison of Building Widths Within the Mt. Lookout Business District

One box = 10 ft



[1] Approx. dimensions of existing buildings were obtained from Google Earth; measurements were taken from the widest parts of the buildings.

[2] Dimensions of the Proposed Structure were obtained from the B&I Staff Report.

EXHIBIT C

ARCHITECTURE OF MT. LOOKOUT SQUARE

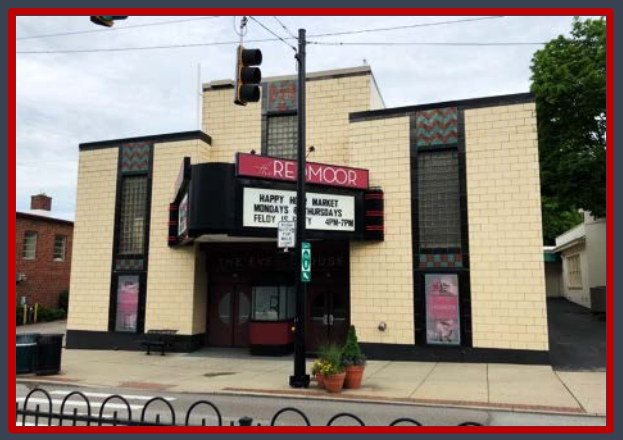
— Landmark Buildings











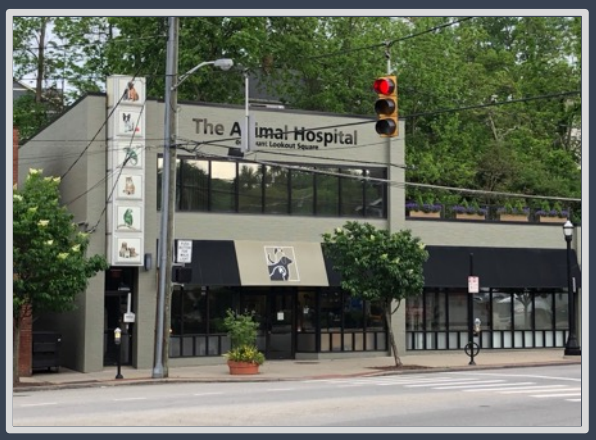












EXHIBIT D

BUILDINGS COMPATIBLE AND CONSISTENT WITH PROPOSED MT. LOOKOUT DEVELOPMENT



PROPOSED MT. LOOKOUT



DELTA FLATS, COLUMBIA TUSCULUM



MADAMORE, MADISONVILLE



THE HERITAGE, OAKLEY



NEWPORT, KY





THE HERITAGE, OAKLEY



WILLKOMMEN, OVER-THE-RHINE



LIVINGOOD PARK, MARIEMONT



MIAMI AVENUE, MARIEMONT



HAMPSTEAD PARK, MARIEMONT

EXHIBIT E

DESIGNS CONSISTENT AND COMPATIBLE WITH SURROUNDING COMMUNITY



WILLKOMMEN, OVER-THE-RHINE



ONE HIGHLAND, FT. THOMAS



URBAN DESIGN PLAN

June 1998
Final

Prepared for
Department of Economic Development
City of Cincinnati

Prepared by
Office of Architecture and Urban Design
Division of Engineering
Department of Public Works &
Department of City Planning
City of Cincinnati

mount **MT. LOOKOUT**
business district

The purpose of this urban design plan is to establish a set of policies, guidelines, and implementation strategies to direct the future growth, development, and preservation of the Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District.

Location

Mt. Lookout is located on Cincinnati's east side at the intersection of two major arterial streets, Delta Avenue and Linwood Avenue (Ohio Route 561). These streets converge within the basin created by two valleys to form the Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District.

Issues of Today

The Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District is small, compact, and possesses a diverse mix of businesses that principally serve the immediate neighborhood. The district is relatively vital and free of vacancies. It is, in many ways, the prototype from which to develop a new business district.

The problems present within the district are not unique. A lack of convenient parking, a cluttered appearance and image, and an oppressive traffic situation challenge the community. The topography of the district limits expansion opportunities for additional parking and/or development.

Mission

The Mt. Lookout Civic Club and the Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association initiated a process to retain businesses and develop the business district by enlisting assistance from the City of Cincinnati. The group was directed to develop goals - strategies to maintain the village character of the district and develop strategies and objectives to improve pedestrian safety, vehicular movement, district appearance, and the overall business environment.

Vision

Image and Identity - Maintain the existing, unique small town character of the district. Improve the overall visual appearance of the district.

Business Environment - Form a strong alliance between businesses and the community to promote a collective, coordinated approach to issues of marketing, identity, district operation, and safety.

Parking - Provide safe, adequate, and accessible parking convenient to customer destinations.

Safety - Provide a safe, secure pedestrian environment.

Vehicular Movement - Provide safe efficient movement of vehicles within the district without adversely impacting the pedestrian environment. Introduce mechanisms to reduce existing vehicular speeds within the district.

Zoning - Modify zoning to maintain the current diversity of uses and to discourage incompatible and undesirable uses.

MT. LOOKOUT
NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT
URBAN DESIGN PLAN
1998

NBD PLAN ADOPTED BY:
Cincinnati Planning Commission-APRIL 17, 1998
Cincinnati City Council-JUNE 10, 1998 (Ordinance #228-1998)

EQ-UD No. 13 APPROVED BY:
Cincinnati Planning Commission -APRIL 17, 1998
Cincinnati City Council -JUNE 10, 1998 (Ordinance #228-1998)

PREPARED FOR:
Economic Development Department -City of Cincinnati

PREPARED BY:
Office of Architecture and Urban Design, Engineering Division-Public Works Department
City Planning Department

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INTRODUCTION

Intent

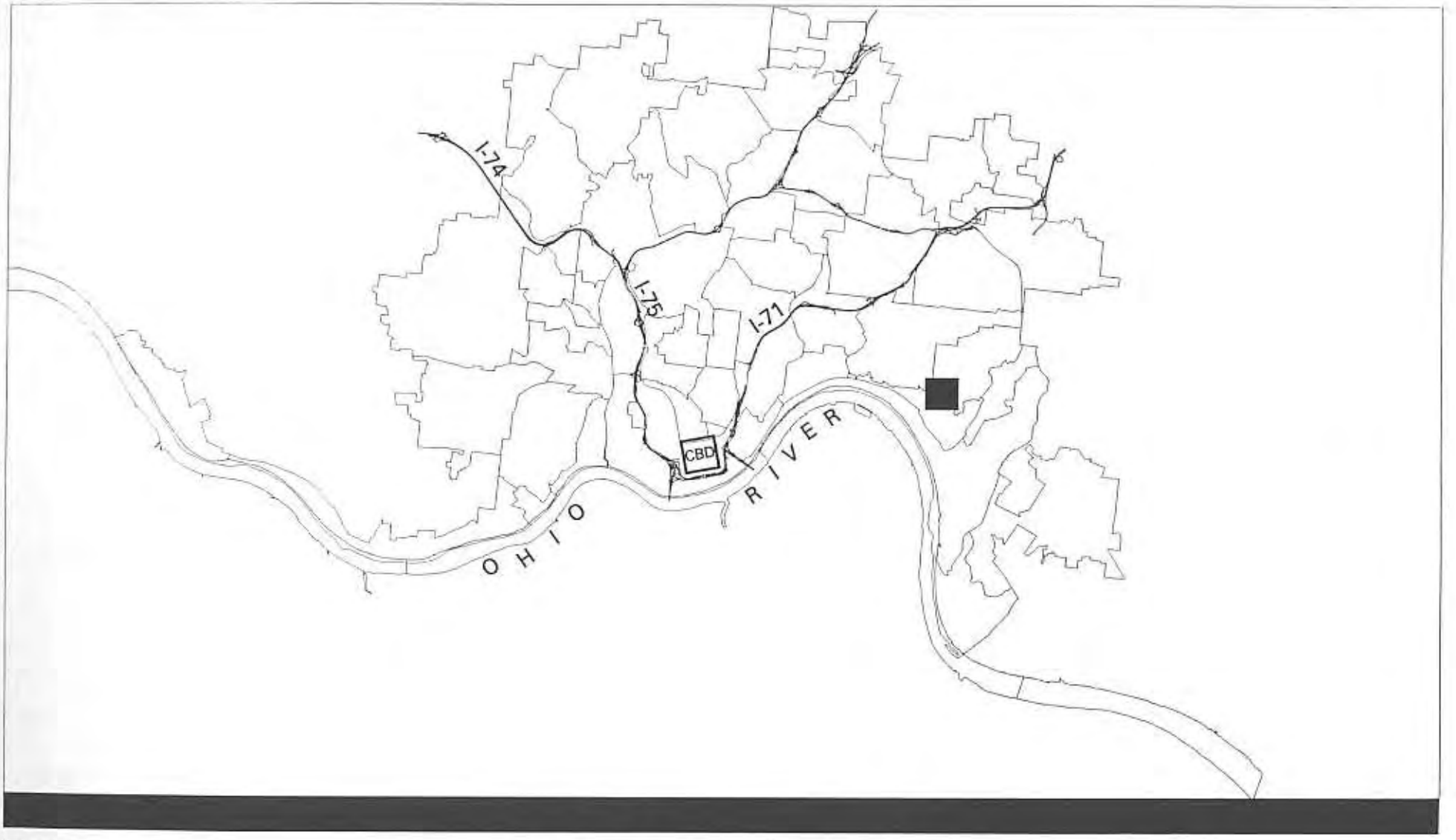
The purpose of this plan is to establish goals, objectives and strategies to help create a safe, attractive and vital neighborhood-oriented business district with a diversity of businesses and activities for Mt. Lookout Square. The plan has been prepared in response to the Mt. Lookout Civic Club's request for an Environmental Quality-Urban Design District to thoughtfully guide design issues in the business district.

An Environmental Quality-Urban Design District (EQ-UD) is a zoning overlay district which may be applied to a geographic area of the city exhibiting special and distinctive physical characteristics which are of significant value to the public. EQ-UD districts are often placed in areas of public investment where business district plans have been created to coordinate public and private investment. Although the establishment of EQ-UD districts are technically changes to the city's Zoning Code, they do not change or alter the uses permitted within the underlying zoning districts. The EQ-UD district's primary purpose is to guide the physical development that occurs in the district. Issues such as signage, building design and landscaping/site treatments are of primary concern. Each EQ-UD district that is established is created with its own set of guidelines developed specifically for that geographic area. These guidelines are created with public participation from the community's residents, property owners and business owners.

Process

The planning process included soliciting participation from the community to form a planning task force, reviewing previous plans for the area, analyzing existing conditions, obtaining community input, and identifying issues. City staff then worked with the task force to develop goals, objectives and implementation strategies for Mt. Lookout Square while formulating urban design policies to establish an Environmental Quality-Urban Design overlay district.

The planning task force consisted of Mt. Lookout business owners, property owners, residents and representatives of the Mt. Lookout Civic Club and the Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association. A business survey was distributed to help ascertain the needs of local business, while residents shared their ideas about the Square's strengths and weaknesses. Parking, pedestrian safety and building/signage attractiveness were issues of primary concern during planning meetings. The Task Force formulated goals, objectives and strategies for the Square and developed urban design policies in keeping with the Task Force's overall vision for the Square. The Task Force reviewed the goals, objectives, strategies and urban design policies and made changes where needed. To obtain additional community input, city staff presented a draft version of the plan to Civic Club Board members along with all business and property owners in the study area and made any necessary changes before taking the final plan to the Cincinnati Planning Commission and City Council.



Legend

Mount Lookout Square

0 5000 10000 20000

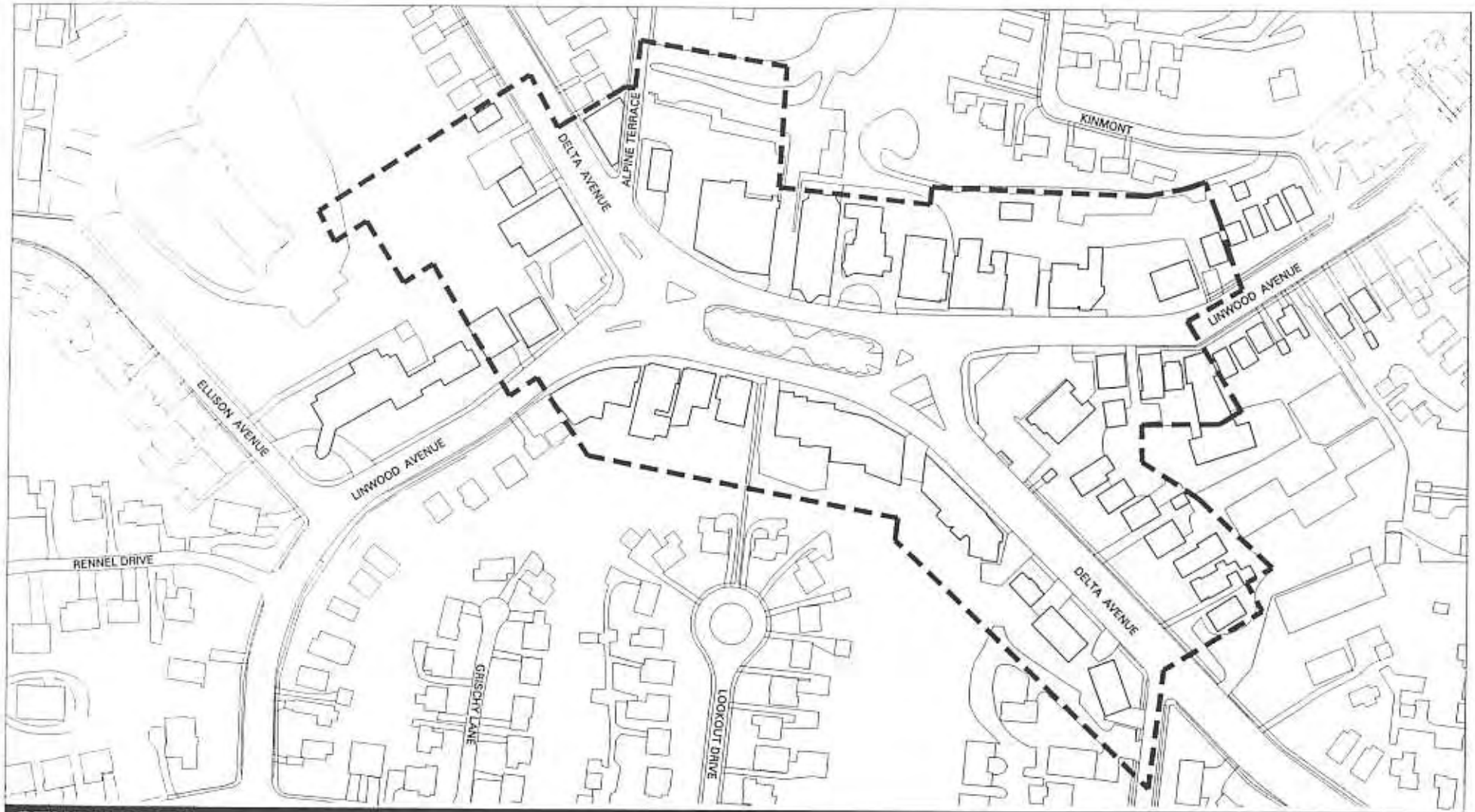
Scale: 1"=10,000'

N

mount MT. LOOKOUT business district

STUDY AREA

The Mt. Lookout neighborhood is located in the northeast portion of the city of Cincinnati. The Mt. Lookout Square business district is located at the intersection of Delta and Linwood Avenues. It is a compact, cohesive business district nestled in a basin area between two hillsides. Its architecture reflects the 1920's era in which it was developed, giving it a cozy, village-type atmosphere. Buildings are primarily two-stories in height with storefronts on the first level and apartments or professional offices above. Due to the area's topography, lots tend to be shallow in depth adding to the district's village-type atmosphere. Mt. Lookout Square is a thriving service and entertainment district for the Mt. Lookout neighborhood as well as the surrounding neighborhoods of Hyde Park, Columbia Tusculum, Linwood and Oakley.



STUDY AREA

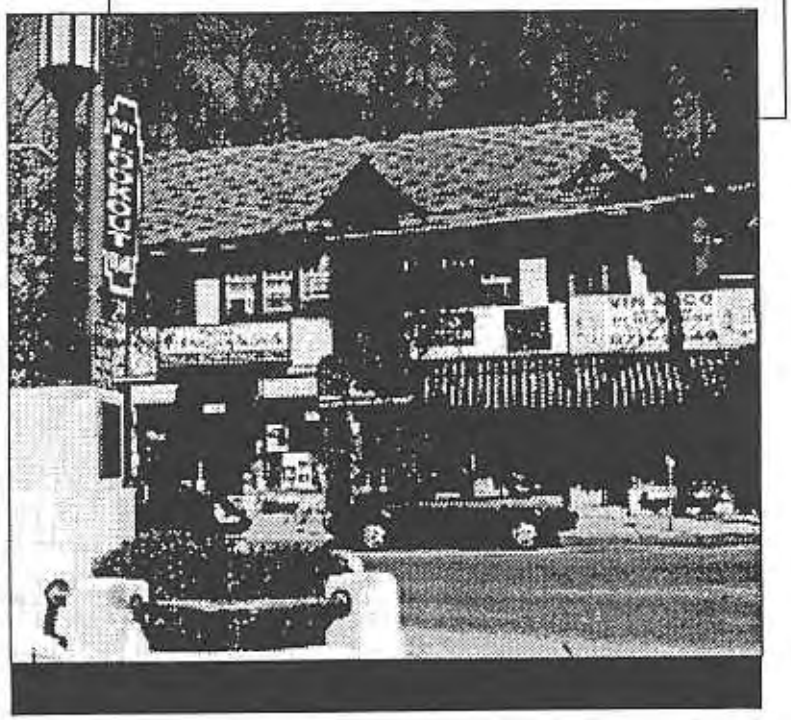
Legend

Urban Design Plan Study Area / Environmental Quality District Boundary

0 100 200 400

1"=200'

N



Existing Conditions

mount **MT. LOOKOUT**
business district

TOPOGRAPHY

The Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District is situated at the junction of two valleys. One valley, occupied by Delta Avenue, crosses from north to south through the Square in its long run along the former Crawfish Creek. The other valley, occupied by Linwood Avenue, runs predominantly east to west. The confluence of these valleys creates a compact, dense building area tightly bounded by green hillsides.

This particular topographic arrangement is both a blessing and a curse for the Mt. Lookout Square Business District. The surrounding hillsides create a compact, dense, walkable business district with a strong street orientation to its shop fronts. The hillsides above the district are covered with residential properties, providing a closely located core clientele for the neighborhood-oriented services of the Square.

These same hillsides restrict the continuing growth and development of the district. Expansion of flat ground for parking cannot be accomplished without expensive excavation and retaining structures. The long continuous downhill streets (southbound Delta Avenue, east and westbound Linwood Avenue) into the district aggravates the district's problems with excessive speed of automobiles entering the Square.



TOPOGRAPHY

Legend

Urban Design Plan Study Area

0 100 200 400

1"=200'

LAND USE

Mt. Lookout Square's land use is largely made up of community-oriented businesses surrounded by medium density residential development on the district's periphery. Most buildings are two stories in height with storefronts on the first level and apartments or professional offices above. There are professional offices on the north and south ends of the Square with service-type businesses in the central or core-area of the district. The Square has a nice mix of service-related, entertainment and professional businesses that complement one another. With the exception of the center parking island and on-street parking, all surface parking lots are privately owned and operated and few are shared.

There are approximately 104 businesses in Mt. Lookout Square. These include 46 professional offices, 16 service-type businesses (i.e. dry cleaners, TV repair, beauty salons, etc.), 14 bar/restaurants, 13 boutique/retail shops, and 11 doctor's offices, 2 auto service/gas stations, 1 bank and 1 funeral home. Approximately 10 occupied residences are located above the businesses. There are no vacancies at the storefront level and business retention is extremely high.



LAND USE

Legend

- Urban Design Plan Study Area
- Residential
- Mixed Use (Residential/Commercial)
- Commercial

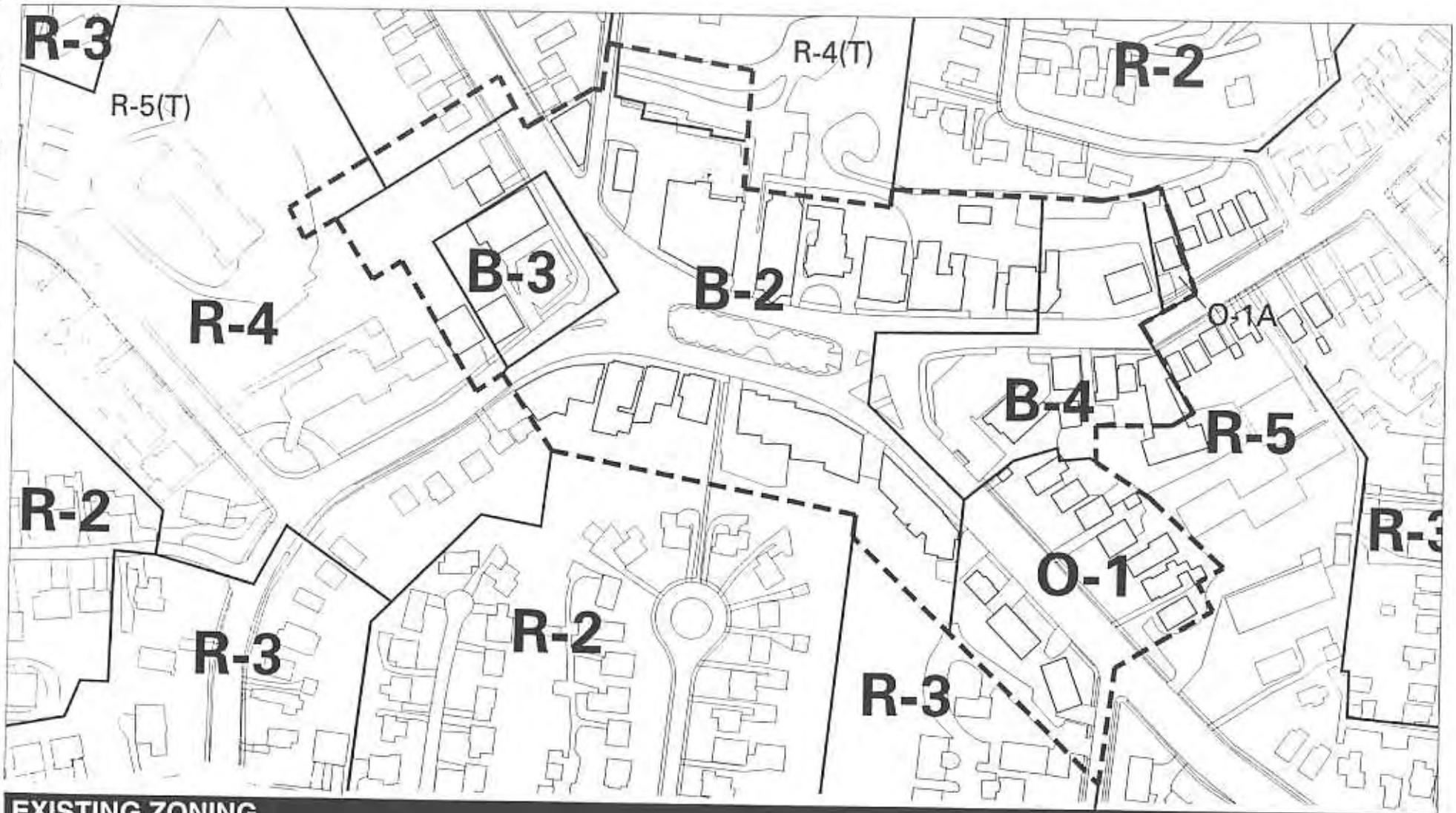
0 100 200 400

1"=200'

EXISTING ZONING

Mt. Lookout Square is primarily zoned B-2 (Community Business District) permitting uses such as offices, retail-sales, banks, theaters and eating and drinking establishments. There is a small pocket of B-3 (Retail-Wholesale Business District) zoning on the south end of the district permitting uses such as printing establishments wholesale distributors, warehouses and hotels and motels. The northwestern portion of the district is zoned B-4 (General Business District) permitting all types of automobile uses, contractors' yards and some light manufacturing. One parcel of O-1A (Suburban Low-Density Office District) zoning lies just west of the B-4 zoning, acting as a buffer between the business and residential areas. O-1A zoning permits low-density, multi-family, residential development as well as business and professional offices, banks and homes for adjustment. The northern section of the district is zoned O-1 (Suburban High-Density Office District) permitting uses such as high-density, multi-family residential development, business and professional offices, laboratories, homes for adjustment and hospitals.

Residential zoning of varying densities surround the business district. R-2 (Single-Family Medium-Density District) and R-3 (Two-Family Districts) surround most of the business district. R-4 (Multi-Family Low-Density) and R-5 (Multi-Family Medium Density) districts which permit apartment buildings, extend out along the northern and southern sections of the Square. These higher-density residential zoning districts are located primarily along Delta and Linwood Avenues, the major arterials which bring traffic in and out of the district.



EXISTING ZONING

Legend

Urban Design Plan Boundry

Zoning Legend

R-2	Single-Family Medium-Density District
R-3	Two-Family District
R-4	Multi-Family Low-Density District
R-4T	Multi-Family Low-Density Transitional
R-5	Multi-Family Medium-Density District
R-5T	Multi-Family Medium-Density Transitional
B-2	Community Business District
B-3	Retail-Wholesale Bulsness District
B-4	General Buisness District
O-1A	Suburban Low-Density Office District
O-1	Suburban High-Density Office District

0 100 200 400

1"=200'

PARKING & TRAFFIC

Mt. Lookout Square's 1980 planning effort identified traffic and parking as the primary problem for the district's continuing development. Subsequent improvements to traffic controls (roadway improvements, replacement of "stop" signs with signalization at intersections and crosswalks) have created safer. More orderly traffic movements through the square, although the heavy volume of traffic makes these improvements seem less impressive.

At that time, parking capacity was deemed adequate, if somewhat inconvenient for most shoppers. This assessment remains somewhat valid today; although with subsequent development, capacity may be less than adequate. The 1980 plan also recognized that a significant portion of this capacity is tied up in one large off-street lot. Should this property be developed and this lot eliminated, the Square would find itself in dire need of new parking resources.

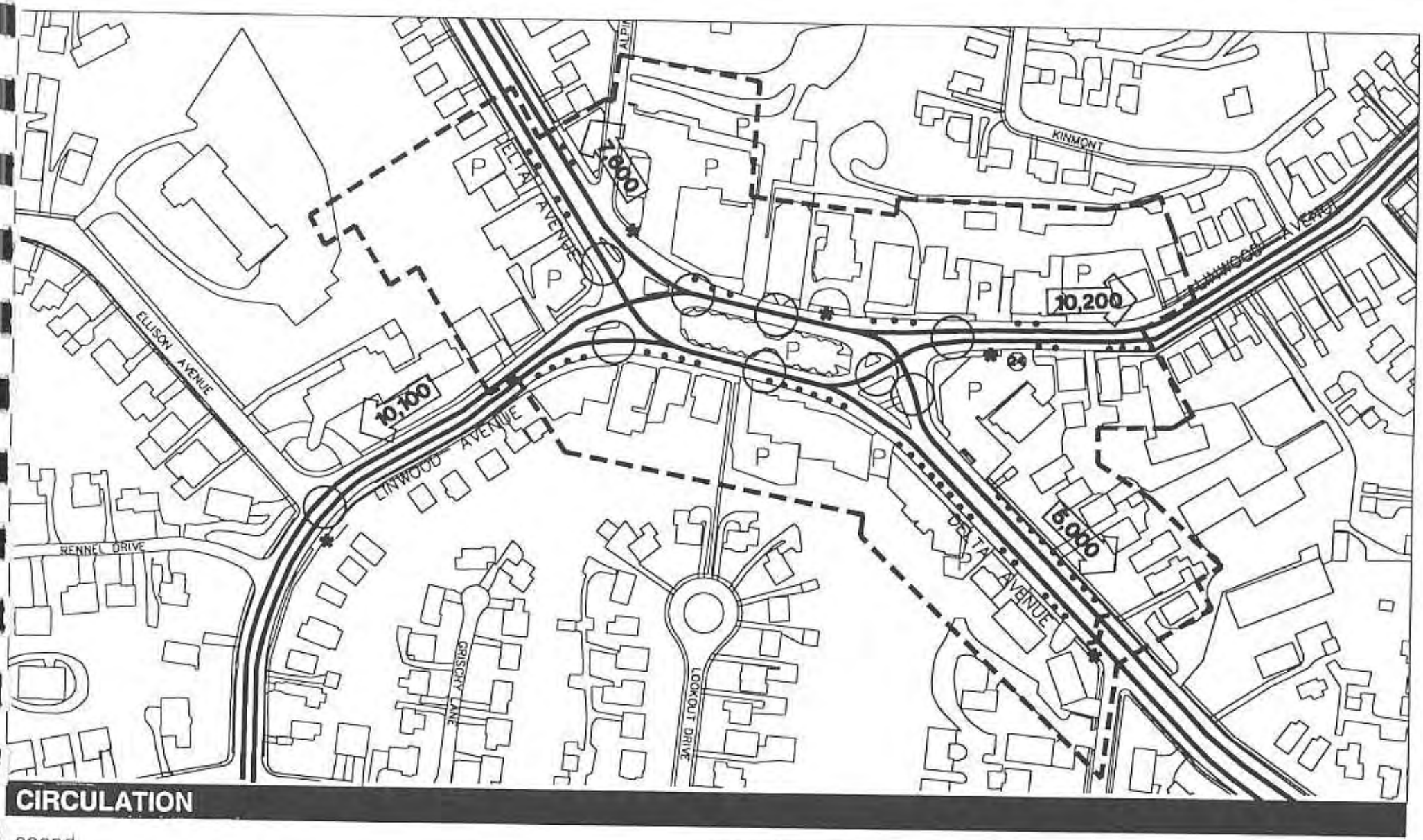
At present, traffic and convenient, accessible customer parking remains the most significant issues facing Mt. Lookout businesses. Few businesses have their own lots. Businesses with parking generally have small lots with 8 to 12 spaces. There are four notable exceptions: the United Dairy Farmers lot (20 spaces), the Bank One lot (15 spaces), 1018 Delta Avenue (16 spaces), and the lots on the Faber property behind Revco and Stereo Advantage (96 spaces). These lots are privately held, although Bank One shares its parking during hours of bank closure. The largest resource, the Faber lot, is not conveniently located for much of the business district, particularly establishments on the east side of the Square.

Given the physical constraints of the Square, an easy solution to creating additional parking opportunities is not available. Expansion of existing parking areas requires expensive excavation and retaining wall systems. Additional on-street parking opportunities are limited due to traffic volume and narrow rights-of-way. New parking areas convenient to all businesses could only be developed at the expense of scarce "green space" and through removal of existing structures and the acquisition of property.

Some short-term strategies to optimize existing resources can be implemented. Sharing of existing lots between businesses with different peak operating hours is one option already utilized by some of the businesses. Emphasis on employee and owner use of less conveniently located parking should be encouraged. Signage to parking areas would lessen driver confusion and help clarify available parking opportunities.

Long term strategies to deal with this issue can be defined through an in depth analysis and study of existing conditions, including peak/off-peak utilization, distribution of utilization, and a survey of parking user destinations.

Options may include construction of a two-tiered parking structure without interconnecting levels behind the Revco pharmacy (3195 Linwood Avenue). The structure could be accessed from Linwood Avenue (to the lower level) and from Alpine Terrace (to the upper level). This development would require purchase or long-term lease of the property from the owners. A community group would be developed to oversee ownership, construction, maintenance, operation of the facility and plan development. Potential funding could be acquired through the CNBDU/Department of Economic Development process, private contribution, and/or foundation grants.



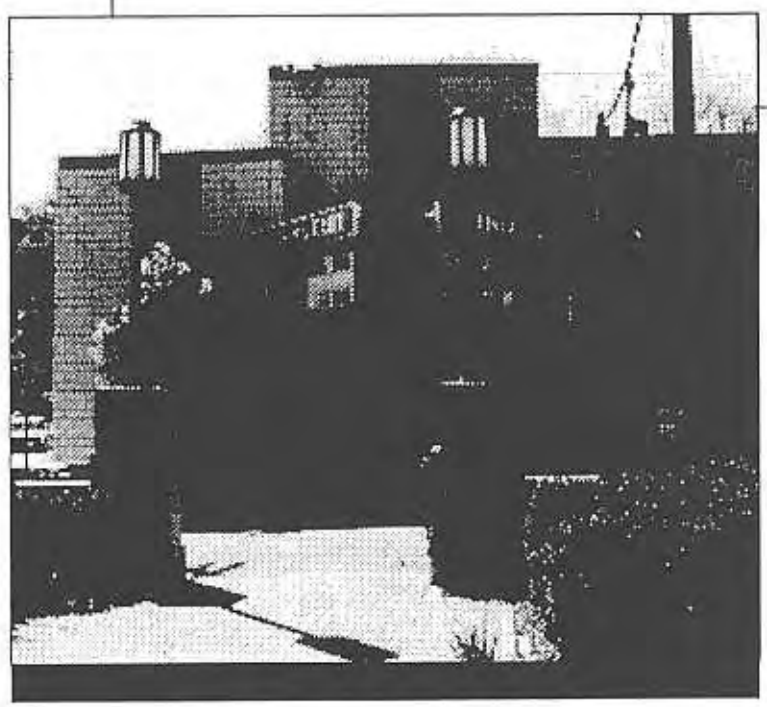
CIRCULATION

Legend

- Urban Design Plan Study Area
- (27) Bus Route
- 2,332 Daily Traffic Count
- ✱ Bus Stop
- • • • Parking Meter
- ◯ Traffic Signal

0 100 200 400

1"=200'



Urban Design Plan and Implementation

mount MT. LOOKOUT business district

GOAL:	OBJECTIVES:
Maintain and strengthen existing businesses and recruit new businesses that enhance the economic vitality of the square.	Encourage the development of neighborhood service oriented businesses.
	Market Mt. Lookout Square as a neighborhood shopping district.
	Promote and revitalize the Mt. Lookout Business Association.

STRATEGIES:	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SOURCE/ENTITY:	PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS*
Foster communication between businesses and property owners to increase awareness of location and expansion opportunities for businesses compatible with the district.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association.	N/A – Community Activity
Initiate a zoning study to change the B-3 and portions of the B-4 zoning districts to a B-2 zoning district to maintain and encourage uses compatible with the district.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - City Planning Department.	N/A – City Planning - Community Activity
Encourage retail shops to select and advertise common operating hours and to select one (or multiple) day(s) of the week where all businesses extend their hours.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association.	N/A – Community Activity
Encourage businesses to place group advertisements in community oriented news papers and bulletins.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association.	N/A – Community Activity
Encourage businesses to sponsor community-oriented promotions.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, Mt. Lookout Civic Club.	N/A – Community Activity
Conduct annual membership drives.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association	N/A – Community Activity
Increase Business and Professional Association involvement with Cincinnati Neighborhood Business Districts United by soliciting representatives to attend and participate in meetings and processes.	Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, Cincinnati Neighborhood Business Districts United.	N/A – Community Activity
Investigate the implementation of a Special Improvement District to fund Business and Professional Association activities and projects.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Economic Development.	N/A – Community Activity

NOTE! Certain types of improvement projects require private property owner participation through assessment or modification of utility Services. Each project must secure funding, coordinate with appropriate agencies, and integrate with the surrounding community. No City funding availability is implied in the development of this plan.

* All estimates are preliminary. Accurate field surveys, subsurface investigations, property owner participation, finalized scope, and design are required for final formulation of the construction budget.

GOAL:	OBJECTIVES:
Maintain an aesthetically attractive, pedestrian oriented, community business district with a desirable mix of uses and businesses.	Increase the visual attractiveness of streets and sidewalks through coordinated streetscaping and landscaping improvements.
	Retain and increase the opportunities for greenspace and landscaping within the Square without adversely affecting development opportunities.
	Increase the visual attractiveness of existing and new buildings through improvements to facades, signage, and building appurtenances.

STRATEGIES:	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SOURCE/ENTITY:	PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE COST
Design and implement a coordinated streetscaping system, including street furniture, paving, street, pedestrian lighting, and directional signage.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Office of Architecture & Urban Design, Department of Economic Development, Private Property Owners and tenants.	$528,000
Refurbish and supplement the existing street tree program within the district.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association. Funding Request to City of Cincinnati, Park Board - Urban Forestry.	$12,000
Refurbish and repair the existing traffic signal poles and signs, and parking area barriers.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association. Funding request to City of Cincinnati, Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering.	$24,000
Create and implement a planter program through the Square. Identify sources to maintain the program.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, Private property owners and business owners. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati – Department of Economic Development, City Gardens/Civic Garden Center, Private Foundations and grants.	$30,000
Identify sources to maintain the existing landscaped islands at the northern end of the Square.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, Private property owners and business owners, City Gardens/Civic Garden Center. Private foundations and grants.	N/A – Community Activity
Buffer all edges of off-street parking facilities, both public and private, adjacent to public rights-of-way with landscaping.	Private property owners, developers.	N/A – Community Activity
Create new "green" landscaped traffic islands at the south end of the Square where (and if) possible. Identify sources to provide maintenance for these new improvements.		$31,500
Establish an Environmental Quality Urban Design District for Business and Office Zoning Districts in the Square.		N/A – Community Activity
Create and implement a facade improvement and/or awning program for the district.		$44,000

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GOAL:	OBJECTIVES:
Create an attractive, positive image and identity for the Square.	Establish a unique, identifiable "personality" for the district based upon historic symbols and associations.
	Improve the overall visual image of the community by reducing the visual clutter of overhead wires, unorganized and excessive signage, traffic signals, etc.
	Maintain and improve the cleanliness of the Square.

STRATEGIES:	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SOURCE/ENTITY:	PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF PROBABLE COSTS*
Utilize physical improvements, community programs, and marketing strategies to comprehensively unify the district.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association.	N/A – Community Activity
Identify an icon, building, etc. to be utilized for the business district identity element. Utilize community based designers, open competitions, and/or community selection processes to choose the design element.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, Mt. Lookout residents, business owners, and property owners.	N/A – Community Activity
Design and implement a comprehensive system to organize and simplify traffic signals and signs, and directional signage.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati - Department of Economic Development, Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, and Engineering - Office of Architecture & Urban Design.	$30,000
Encourage utility companies to consolidate and relocate overhead utility lines underground when feasible and when funding is available.	Request to City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works, Cinergy, Cincinnati Bell, Warner Cable.	N/A
Establish and organize semi-annual clean-up campaigns in conjunction with city-wide clean-up activities.	Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, Mt. Lookout Civic Association, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association.	N/A – Community Activity
Install and/or replace approximately 30 waste receptacles at key locations.	Keep Cincinnati Beautiful, Mt. Lookout Civic Association, Mt. Lookout Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works – Sanitation. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/Department of Economic Development.	$21,000

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GOAL:	OBJECTIVES:
Increase the availability of safe convenient customer parking.	Increase the number of parking spaces.
	Encourage more efficient use of existing parking spaces.
	Improve the visibility of existing parking areas.

STRATEGIES:	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SOURCE/ENTITY:	PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE COST
Acquire additional properties and construct additional parking spaces. Set up and implement a committee or agency to operate and maintain parking lots.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati - Department of Economic Development, private property owners, business owners, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Engineering Divisions.	Costs vary according to project scope.
Acquire existing parking areas and construct multiple level structured parking. Set up and implement a committee or agency to operate and maintain the new parking facility.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati - Department of Economic Development, Private property owners, Business owners, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Engineering Divisions.	$250,000 (costs do not include property acquisition).
Work with Traffic Engineering Division to determine if additional on-street parking spaces can be created.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association.	N/A
Shorten meter times to encourage parking turnover.	Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering; Department of General Services - Parking Facilities.	N/A
Encourage business owners and their employees to park in designated employee parking areas to leave the most convenient spaces available for customer parking.	Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, Business owners.	N/A – Private property owner project.
Encourage businesses to share their "private" parking lots with other businesses during hours of closure.	Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, Private property owners, Business owners.	N/A – Private property owner project.
Encourage owners to pave and stripe their private lots to generate more efficient parking arrangements/layout.	Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, Private property owners, Business owners.	Costs vary according to project scope.
Consolidate existing small lots into larger, more efficient parking areas wherever possible.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati – Department of Economic Development, private property owners, business owners, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Engineering Divisions.	
Install directional signage to off-street public parking lots.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati – Department of Economic Development; Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, General Engineering, Office of Architecture and Urban Design.	$8,000
Improve lighting in off-street public parking lots.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/City of Cincinnati – Department of Economic Development; Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, General Engineering, Office of Architecture and Urban Design.	Costs vary according to project scope.

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GOAL:	OBJECTIVES:
Improve pedestrian and vehicular safety in Mt. Lookout Square.	Reduce the speed of vehicular traffic and the volume of truck traffic through Mt. Lookout Square.
	Improve pedestrian and vehicular traffic circulation.
	Improve safety and the perception of safety.

STRATEGIES:	POTENTIAL IMPLEMENTATION SOURCE/ENTITY:	PRELIMINARY ESTIMATES OF PROBABLE COST
Enforce current speed limit controls.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy Team (CNAS), City of Cincinnati - Department of Safety.	M/A – Community Activities
Re-route State Route 561 off of Linwood Avenue.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering and Highway Engineering.	N/A
Install alternative paving materials, "bump-outs" of the curb line, and improve striping at appropriate crosswalks to provide traffic calming through the square.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, Highway Engineering, and Office of Architecture & Urban Design.	$65,000 - $155,000 (varies according to materials, methods, and scope of work)
Improve pedestrian visibility at crosswalks by installing alternative paving materials, lighting, re-striping, and installing "bump-outs" of the curb line.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, Highway Engineering, General Engineering, and Office of Architecture & Urban Design.	$65,000 - $155,000 (varies according to materials, methods, and scope of work)
Improve the condition of existing traffic signage. Investigate the installation of a coordinated system of traffic signage. Remove superfluous city signs and relocate other signage to more appropriate or desirable positions.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering and Office of Architecture & Urban Design.	$35,000
Improve traffic signal coordination between vehicular signals at Delta and Linwood and the mid-block pedestrian crosswalk signals.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering.	N/A
Improve lighting on streets and sidewalks, and within existing parking areas by installing additional pedestrian lighting and area lighting.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Department of Public Works - Traffic Engineering, Office of Architecture & Urban Design. Request to Neighborhood Improvement Program/Department of Economic Development.	Included in coordinate streetscaping estimate
Eliminate loitering by teens by enforcing existing loitering and curfew laws.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club. Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy Team (CNAS), City of Cincinnati - Department of Safety.	N/A
Remove incidents of graffiti as soon as possible after its application.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club, Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, Cincinnati Neighborhood Action Strategy team (CNAS), City of Cincinnati Graffiti Eradication Team.	N/A
Create a buffer area between pedestrian traffic and vehicular traffic by installing additional street trees and plantings at appropriate locations. Establish maintenance program and funding source to maintain "non-street tree" plantings.	Mt. Lookout Civic Club. Mt. Lookout Square Business and Professional Association, City of Cincinnati - Park Board - Urban Forestry; Department of Public Works - Office of Architecture & Urban Design, City Gardens/Civic Garden Center. Private property owners, business owners, private foundations.	N/A

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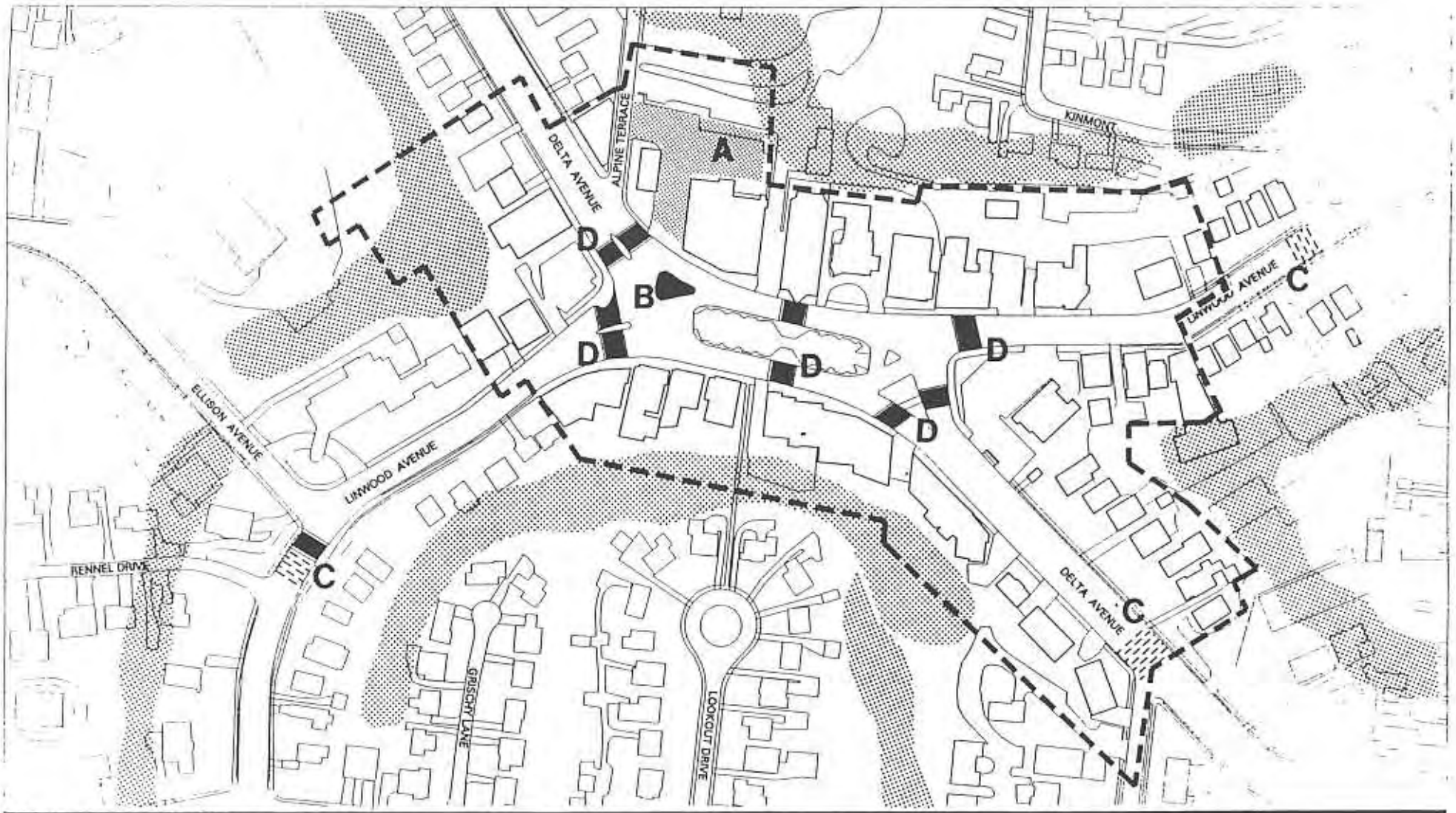


URBAN DESIGN PLAN

Legend

- - - - Urban Design Plan Study Area

0 100 200 400

1"=200'

A Potential Structured Parking Location
B Landscaped Traffic Islands
C Traffic Calming/Speed Reduction
D Crosswalk Enhancements

Wooded Hillside "Wall"

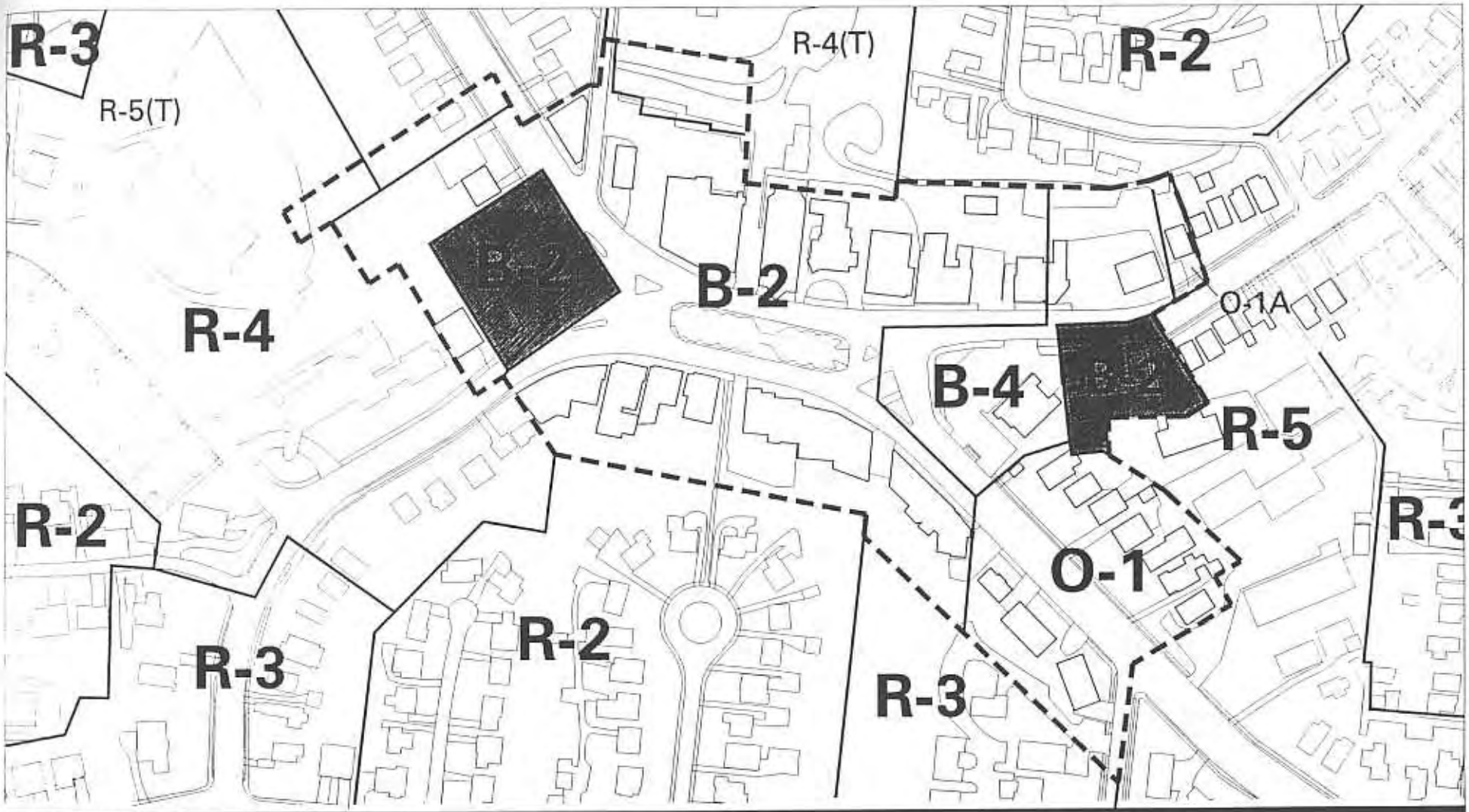
RECOMMENDED ZONE CHANGES

The task force recommends two areas for zone changes in Mt. Lookout Square. The purpose of these suggested changes is to encourage new business development that would compliment the existing balance of land-uses currently in the Square and not invite any incompatible business development.

The first zone change recommendation is for a small pocket of B-3 (Retail-Wholesale Business District) zoning at the Square's southeast corner. B-3 zoning permits uses more regional in nature such as printing establishments, wholesale distributors, warehouses and hotels and motels. Other uses such as drive-through restaurants would be allowed as a conditional-use. The task force determined that the majority of these uses would not be consistent with the type of land-uses desired for the Square and should not be encouraged. The current use for this property is a bank with a parking lot. This use would be permitted in less permissive business district zoning areas such as B-1 (Neighborhood Business District) or B-2 (Community Business District) zones, thereby not making the bank a Non-conforming Use. Given that the majority of the Square is zoned B-2, which permits a large variety of community-oriented businesses, the task force suggests that a zone change of the area from B-3 to B-2 be considered.

The second area suggested for a zone change involves the four (4) properties currently zoned B-4 (General Business) located at 3152, 3154, 3156 and 3164 Linwood Avenue. B-4 zoning permits all types of automobile uses, contractors' yards and some light manufacturing. Given the constraints caused by topography, it is unlikely that these parcels would ever be developed as B-4 uses without a great deal of land excavation. Most importantly, however, is the difficulty caused by B-4 uses directly abutting residential zones. Changing these parcels from B-4 zoning to more restrictive B-2 zoning would ease the transition between the business district and the residential area. All of the existing uses in this area are permitted in B-2 zones and, if changed, would not create any Non-conforming Uses.

NOTE: Approval of this plan does not imply approval of the zone changes. These are just recommendations and a formal zone change process must occur before these changes become effective.



ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

Legend

- - - - Urban Design Plan Boundry

Zoning Legend

R-2	Single-Family Medium-Density District
R-3	Two-Family District
R-4	Multi-Family Low-Density District
R-4T	Multi-Family Low-Density Transitional
R-5	Multi-Family Medium-Density District
R-5T	Multi-Family Medium-Density Transitional
B-2	Community Business District
B-3	Retail-Wholesale Buisness District
B-4	General Buisness District
O-1A	Suburban Low-Density Office District
O-1	Suburban High-Density Office District

0 100 200 400

1"=200'

FAÇADE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Mt. Lookout Business District possesses a number of charming, intimately scaled buildings that constitute the formative image of the Square. The theater (3187 Linwood Avenue), Bracke's (1010 Delta Avenue), Million's Café (3210 Linwood Avenue), and 1000 –1006 Delta Avenue form the benchmarks of the Square's architectural character and could be considered the landmark buildings of the district. However, these buildings, as with the district as a whole, are beginning to show the signs of their age.

While the Square is in good general repair and condition overall, there is evidence of erosion of the finer details and fabric of the district. Window replacements have neglected to respect the character and qualities of their precedents. Building materials reflecting the human scale of their construction methods have been covered over with more monolithic, 'modern' materials. Small intrusions such as window air-conditioners located on the street façade of the building and multiple types of awnings installed within the same storefront all contribute to the diminishment of the Square's Main Street atmosphere.

Implementation of the Environmental Quality – Urban Design District Guidelines is the first step in curbing this gradual erosion. Development controls will enable the community to positively direct changes in the built environment and to maintain the desirable features of individual buildings, their location on the site, and the general patterns of development for the district.

Other options exist to provide a comprehensive vision for the continued visual attractiveness of the Square. The business and property owners of the Square could adopt design guidelines supplemental to the EQ-UD Guidelines. These guidelines could be adopted through contractual arrangement between these parties, or through a "gentlemen's agreement". The enforcement capabilities of these two options vary widely, of course.

Improvements can be implemented through private property owner investment, a Façade Improvement Program or an Awning Program. These options can be funded through community request to the Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program. Such programs can take several forms: grants, low interest loans, or a combination of the two. Program particulars, including funding composition, funding sources, and private property owner participation, if any, should be included in the funding request.

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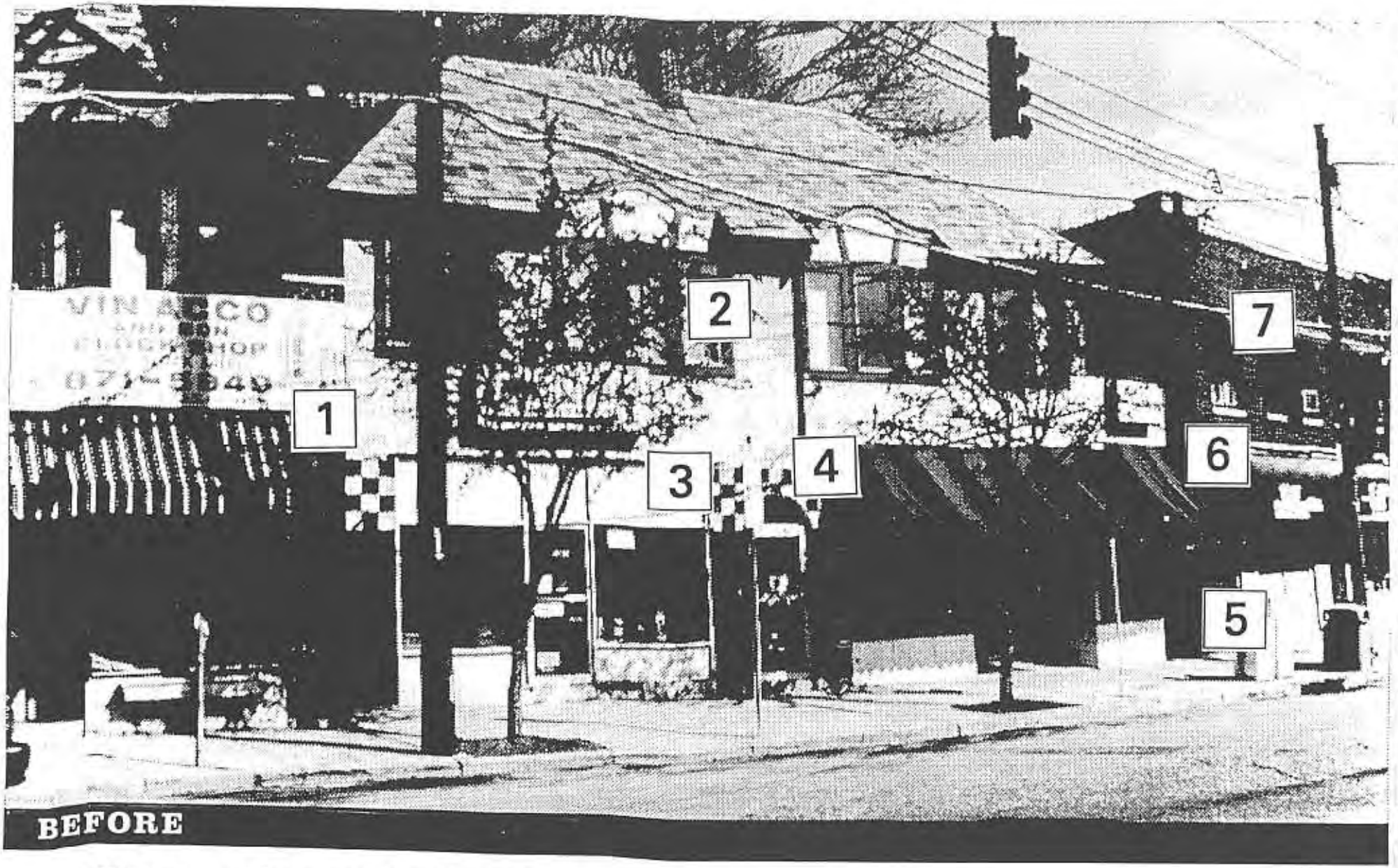
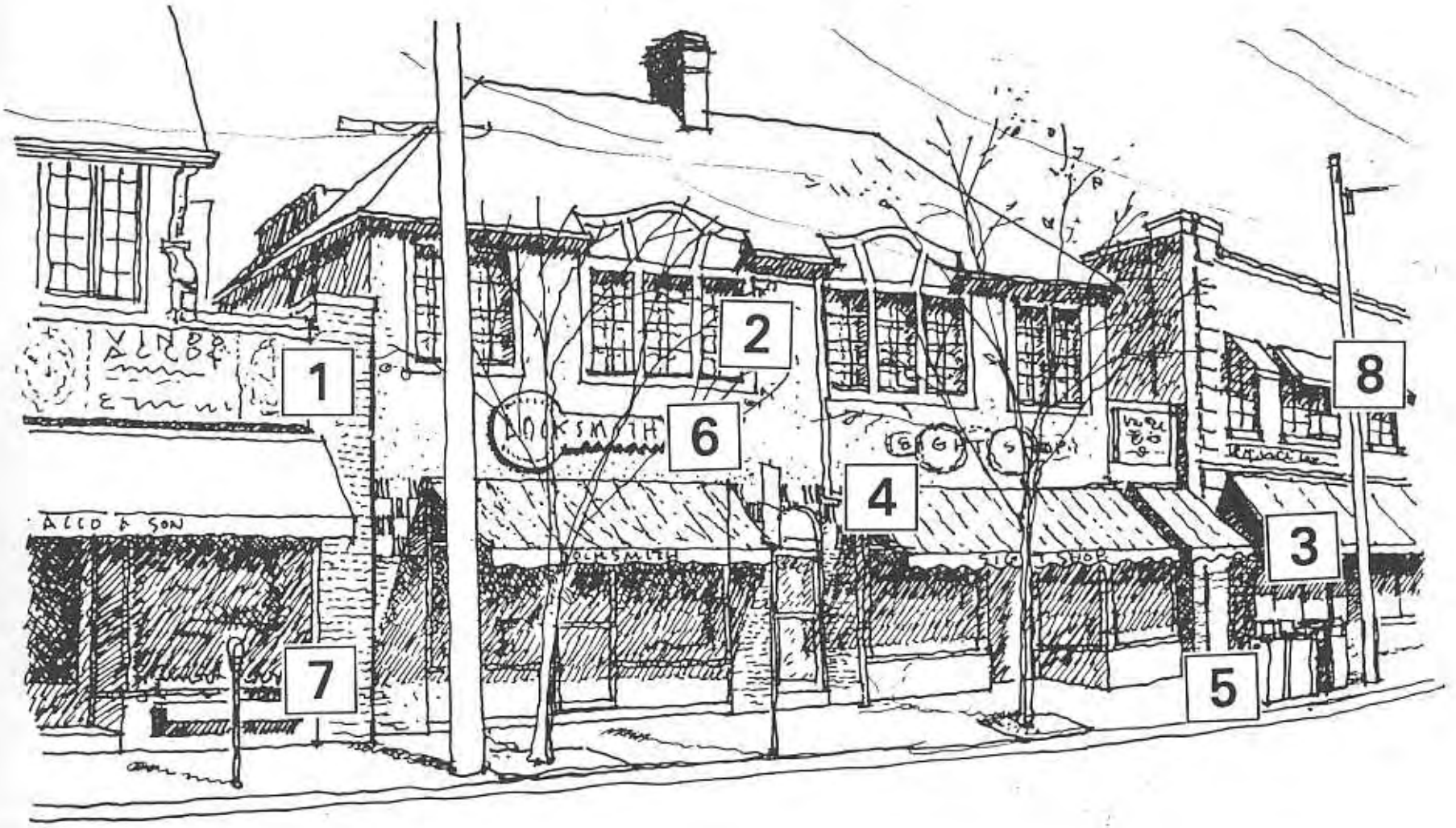


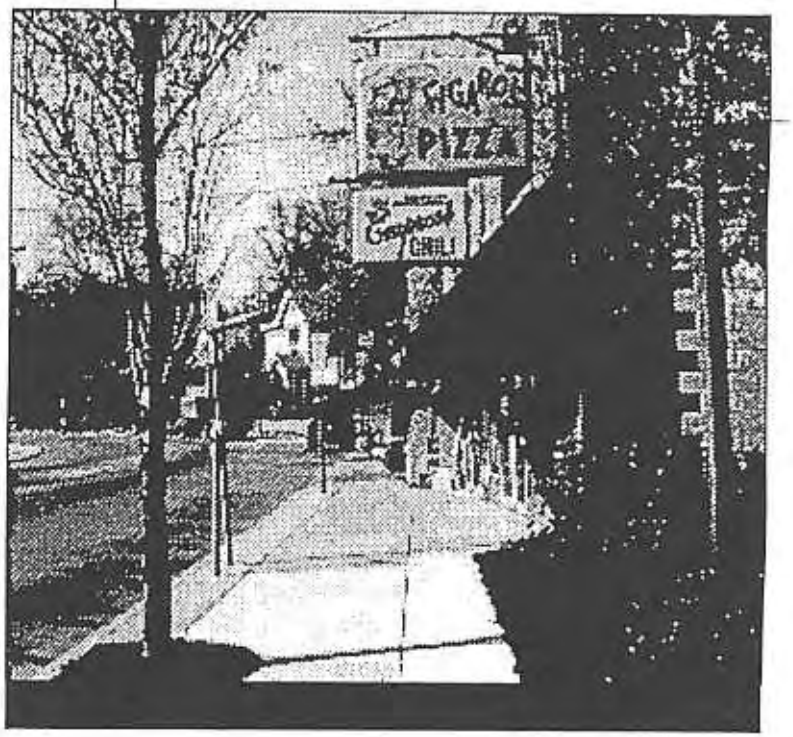
BEFORE

1 Signage not integrated with architecture
2 Lack small scale elements in replacement windows
3 Inconsistent treatment of storefronts
4 Awnings not integrated with architecture
5 Inconsistent organization of street amenities
6 Inconsistent awning treatments
7 Conspicuous placement of mechanical equipment



AFTER

1 Signage integrated with architecture
2 Replacement windows are compatible with small scale architecture elements
3 Consistent awning and storefront treatments
4 Awnings integrated with architecture
5 Comprehensive organization and design of street amenities
6 Trademark or Icon-oriented signage design
7 Storefront landscaping (window boxes and planters)
8 Inconspicuous placement of mechanical equipment (where possible)



Environmental Quality-
Urban Design District Policies

mount MT. LOOKOUT business district

LOCATION, ORIENTATION, SIZE, AND SHAPE OF BUILDINGS

1. New buildings should be constructed to the front building setback line. The siting of new and remodeled buildings should conform to setbacks from the side yard property lines similar to the setbacks of adjoining buildings.

2. The linear continuity of the street and of the square should be preserved by placing primary building facades parallel to the street and constructed to the property line, except for the minor variations needed to create pedestrian open spaces.

3. A new or remodeled building should be compatible with its surroundings in terms of architectural style, bulk, shape, massing, and scale. The form of a new or remodeled building and the space between and around the building should be consistent with the form and spacing of the area, and should be in harmony with neighboring buildings. At street intersections, a building should emphasize its corner location with enhanced size, scale, height and massing.

4. A new or remodeled building should reinforce the existing pattern of small storefronts facing the street. The building front should be visually open to provide interest and light to the street. The building should de-emphasize secondary rear or side door entrances to commercial space, unless the entrances are associated with public parking areas.

5. The front facade of a building should relate to neighboring buildings as much as possible. These relationships must take into account height, setbacks, materials, and architectural styles.

6. Rooftop utilities should be avoided, or screening and sound control should be provided or otherwise integrated them into the rooftop.

7. New buildings should respond to the pattern of window placement in the district. The design of new buildings should avoid long unrelieved expanses of wall along the street by maintaining the rhythm of windows and structural bays in the district. The preferred pattern of ground floor windows is open show windows with inset or recessed entryways.

8. The preferred pattern of windows for the upper floors of a building should be a rhythmic series of "punched" openings.

BUILDING MATERIALS AND APPURTENANCES

1. Any building renovation, alteration, or addition should be designed and executed in a manner which is sympathetic to the particular architectural character of the structure. Architectural elements should be sensitively designed to reflect detailing associated with the particular style of the existing building.

2. The architectural character and materials of a new or remodeled building should be harmonious with buildings in the district with special attention to adjacent buildings in color, texture, proportion, scale, directions, patterns, and opening sizes and shapes.

3. A building appurtenance or projection should be in scale with the total composition of the building itself. Building facades should be detailed to enhance the character of the street by adding visual variety.

4. The first floor building front or storefront should be visually open to the street to enhance pedestrian activity, and where practical, entrances should be recessed to provide sheltered pedestrian access.

5. Awnings, whether fixed or retractable, should be harmonious with the building on which it is located. The awning should not conceal any architectural features of the building. Awning color should be compatible with the colors of the building to which the awning is affixed and to adjacent awnings. The covering material or hood should be opaque and should restrict the passage of light through the material. Backlighting of awnings is prohibited. The awning should run parallel to the face of the building, should be consistent throughout a single building, and should not project more than two-thirds the width of the sidewalk. Awnings should be a traditional awning shape with a sloping top and with or without side panels or fringe flaps. Refer to signage policies for awnings used as signage.

6. Replacement windows should fit the size of the original openings. Window sash and glass color should be sympathetic to the building.

7. The character defining architectural elements of a building (the piers, spandrels, cornice, and lintels) should be restored or retained.

8. Mechanical equipment, including air conditioning, piping, ducts, and conduits external to the building should be concealed from view from adjacent buildings and/or street level by grills, screens, or other enclosures.

9. Modern materials from previous renovations that are incompatible with the character of the building or the district should be removed from the facade upon renovation of an existing structure.

10. Original window and door openings shall not be closed up on the street elevation. Where openings on the sides or rear of buildings are to be closed, the infill materials shall match that of the wall and be recessed three inches within the opening.

11. Renovation and restoration of older buildings should respect the original building design including structure, use of materials, and details. Original materials and detailing should not be covered by new materials and signs; natural materials (brick, stone, etc.) should not be covered over or painted.

SIGN POLICIES

1. Signs should be simple, legible, and designed to be harmonious with the business district's identity and marketing strategy.

2. Signs should be designed in character with the type of business to be identified. Trademarks or symbolic copy on signs are encouraged.

3. Signs should be designed to be harmonious with the architecture of the buildings on which they are located.

4. Signs should be in keeping with the character of the district and communicate to pedestrians and slow moving vehicular traffic.

5. All traffic and vehicular signage should be coordinated and organized through the streetscape/hardware system.

6. Wall signs should be limited to one square foot of area for each linear foot of the building's street frontage. Signs should be installed flat against the building without concealing any of the architectural features of the building. Signs should not project beyond the edges of the building.

7. Ground signs are preferred for commercial, retail, and service businesses which set back from the street (curb line) a distance of fifteen feet or more in lieu of wall signs. The maximum height, from sidewalk elevation, should not exceed seven feet. A ground sign should be no greater than one quarter square foot per sign face for each linear foot of a property's street frontage and should have no more than two faces. A property should be limited to one sign.

8. Roof mounted signs are not permitted unless other methods are not practical.

9. Projecting signs shall not be used except for small identification or trademark signs symbolic of the business identified. Projecting signs shall not exceed four square feet per sign face and shall not exceed eight square feet for all faces. Projecting signs should be located over entry doors or building columns or piers and should be limited to one projecting sign per building or tenant storefront. All sign supports shall be simple in nature, have no visible guy wires, and be made less obtrusive with a camouflaging color in harmony with the surrounding environment.

10. Flashing signs are not permitted, except for theater marquees and barber signs. Time and temperature displays are permitted, but are considered part of the total signage area and will be taken into account with respect to the overall signage area allowance.

11. Directional, on-premise instructional signage, or entry/exit signs are permitted in addition to other signs. These signs should be two square feet or less per sign face and are limited to one sign per curb cut for a property.

SIGN POLICIES

12. The maximum allowable signage area for all sign faces on a property should not exceed one square foot of signage area per linear foot of property frontage. Maximum signage area for corner properties should be based upon the longest street frontage of the property. The maximum allowable area should not exceed fifty square feet for all sign faces.

13. Off premises advertising signs are prohibited.

14. Mobile internally illuminated cabinet signs are not desired.

15. Businesses should be encouraged to use traditional symbols (such as a barber pole for a barber shop) or translate the nature of their business into a symbol which can be used as a sign.

16. Obsolete signs and unused sign supports should be removed.

17. If a business is located in an interior portion of a building or on the second or higher story of a building and does not have an exterior wall or window area, a sign no larger than six square feet may be affixed to the exterior of the building, at the first floor level identifying the uses of such space. This sign area shall be included in the maximum permitted area for signs for the entire property.

18. All sign lighting must have a low level of illumination. Where indirect lighting is used on signs, the light source must be concealed and all light be directed at the sign and not allowed to overflow beyond the sign.

19. Awning front or side panel fringe flap may be used for signs. Signs or copy placed on the awning roof, exclusive of the front or side panel fringe flap, will preclude the use of a flat sign on the building or a ground sign on the property.

20. No sign shall exceed the limitations set forth by the City of Cincinnati Zoning Code regulations applicable to the property.

21. Signs on the rear and/or sides of buildings are subject to all the guidelines, including the maximum square footage as set forth herein.

22. In the case where buildings have multiple storefronts occupied by different tenants, allowable signage area for each tenant will be calculated based upon the storefront street frontage in order to maintain a proportional distribution of signage area.

SITE TREATMENTS

1. Private pedestrian amenities such as benches, kiosks, and waste receptacles, should be designed to be in character with the overall theme of the district's public areas and located so as not to hinder pedestrian flow. Site amenities should be low maintenance and designed to discourage graffiti.

2. All trash containers, dumpsters, and similar ancillary storage areas shall be screened by opaque fencing and landscaping to promote a clean ordered environment, and should be located behind buildings whenever possible. Dumpsters and similar waste receptacles are not permitted in the front yard of a property.

3. Screen fences (solid, opaque screen, privacy, or stockade fences) are prohibited in the front yards of a property.

4. News racks should be grouped in no more than fours and installed according to the City of Cincinnati News Rack Policy. The groupings should be placed no closer than two hundred (200) feet apart.

5. Site amenities should not be placed to create concealed areas, but rather in the open to promote visibility and security. Unmarked benches should be placed in open areas and constructed and placed to discourage loitering.

LANDSCAPING AND PAVING POLICIES

1. Special paving treatments should be used to define the focus areas of the district, major pedestrian crossings, gateway points, and where significant pedestrian movement occurs.

2. The size and shapes of paving should relate to the pedestrian scale environment of the district. Large, unarticulated areas of asphalt and concrete are discouraged.

3. Private businesses should be encouraged to continue special paving to extend the areas of pedestrian movement.

4. Private paving improvements should be harmonious with right-of-way improvements in size, color, texture, and pattern.

5. Flower containers and shrubs should be used to highlight building entrances and to enliven/enhance large areas of paving and wall surfaces.

LIGHTING POLICIES

1. Private outdoor lighting should relate to public lighting in lighting level, color, intensity, scale, and quality.

2. Private lighting should be used for parking lots and walkways, and to highlight buildings and show windows. All lighting shall be low level and low illumination.

3. Lighting in parking areas should be designed to enhance security. Lighting should be sensitive to nearby residential areas in color, scale, intensity, and direction.

PARKING POLICIES

1. All parking areas should have hard surface paving and should be marked for easy circulation. Within the interior of large parking areas (greater than twenty spaces), there should be landscaping to break up large expanses of parking.

2. Parking lots should be shared and made more efficient through improved access, circulation, layout, and consolidation. Common employee lots should be established for businesses within the district to encourage the use of primary spaces by customers and patrons. Existing lots should be expanded rather than introducing additional small, separate parking areas.

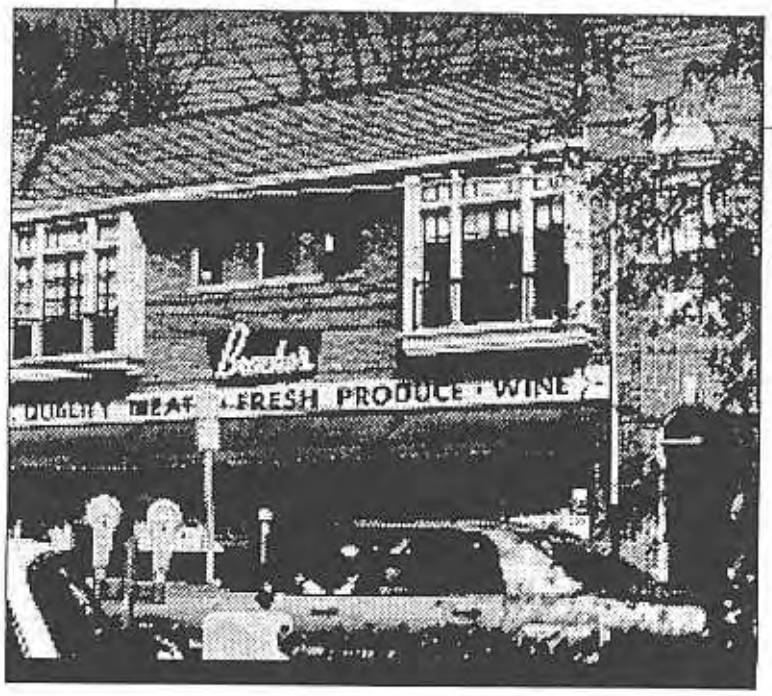
3. All parking areas should be landscaped and screened with trees, shrubs, and/or fencing to provide an effective buffer to adjacent properties and public rights-of-way, but allows observation of activities with the area.

4. Lighting for parking areas should be sensitive to nearby residences in color, intensity, scale, and direction.

5. Parking signs that clearly direct shoppers to off street opportunities should be provided (provided the signs meet the guidelines set forth in other sections of these policies).

6. Parking in the front yards of properties is discouraged. Parking areas adjacent to public rights-of-way should have screening that obscures the visibility of automobiles.

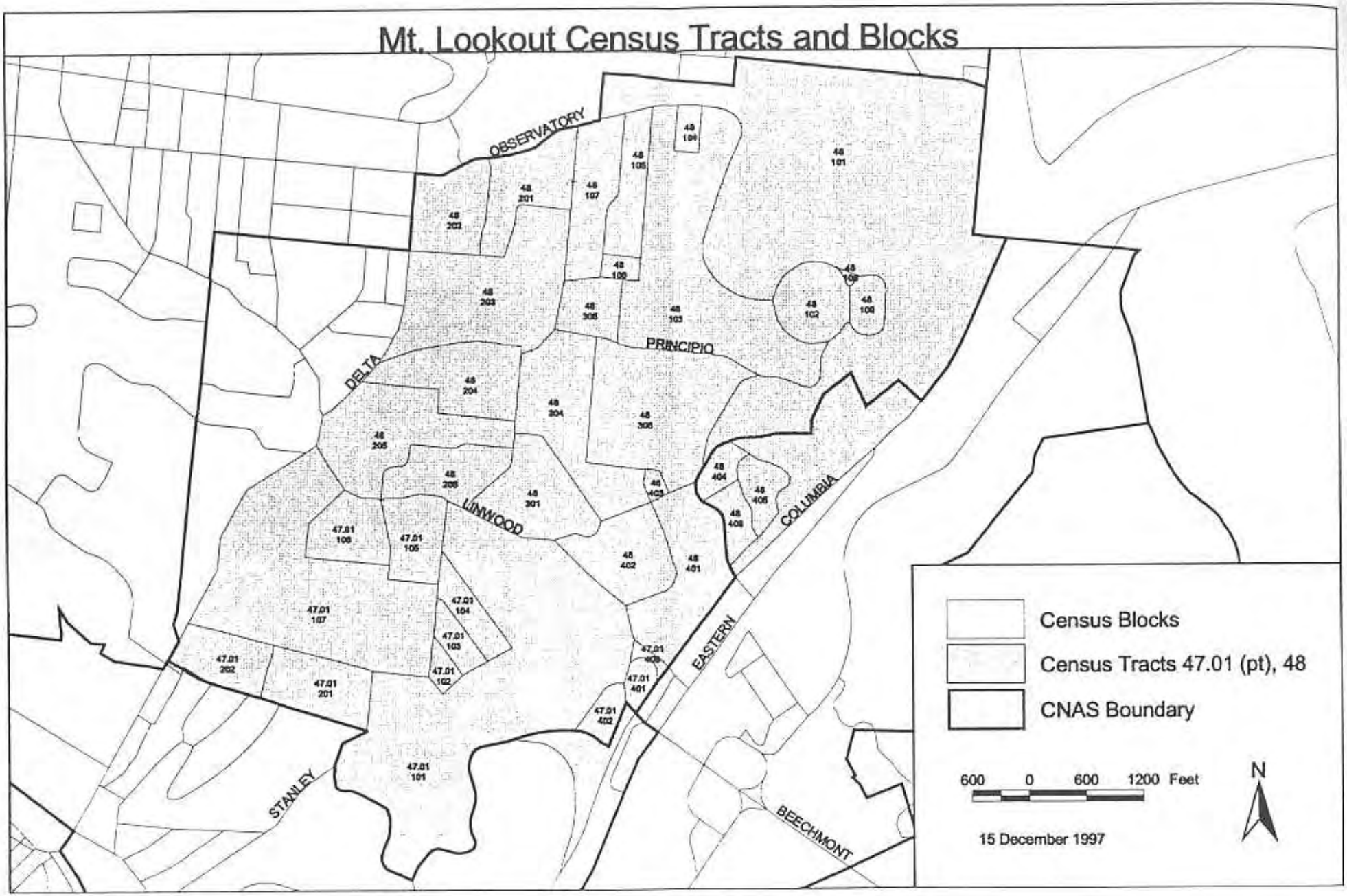
7. New curb cuts are discouraged.



Appendicies

Appendix A: Demographics (map)
Appendix B: Boundary Description
Appendix C: History
Appendix D: Business Survey & Results
Appendix E: Mt. Lookout Civic Club Letter of Support
Appendix F: Market Area Profile

mount **MT. LOOKOUT**
business district


Mt. Lookout Census Tracts and Blocks
OBSERVATORY
DELTA
PRINCIPIO
LINWOOD
COLUMBIA
EASTERN
STANLEY
BEECHMONT
Census Blocks
Census Tracts 47.01 (pt), 48
CNAS Boundary
600 0 600 1200 Feet
N
15 December 1997

DEMOGRAPHICS

APPENDIX A

Population:

According to the 1990 U.S. Census, Mt. Lookout's approximate population was 4,914.* This amounts to 1.3% of the city of Cincinnati's total population, but represents a decrease of 5% from 1980. The community is predominately Caucasian (98%) and upper-income. The largest segment of Mt. Lookout's population is between the ages of 25 and 64 years (59%), the next largest group are those 19 years old and younger (26%). 10% of the population is over 65 years of age, while only 5% are between the ages of 20 and 24 years old.

Households:

As of 1990, there were a total of 1,371 households in Mt. Lookout, an increase of 3% from 1980. 60% of those households are married couples (a 4% decrease from 1980), half with children, half without. 27% of Mt. Lookout's households are single person households (a 25% increase from 1980). Only 6% of all households are female head-of-household, and less than half of those had children.

Income and Labor Characteristics:

The 1990 median household income for Mt. Lookout was $58,901 (a 107% increase from 1980), compared to the City's median household income of $21,006 (an increase of 66% from 1980), and the county's of $29,498. 89% of Mt. Lookout's population 25 years and older have attended college (a 24% increase from 1980) and 99% are employed. 62% of those employed are in managerial and professional specialty occupations. While 29% of those employed are in technical, sales and administrative support-type occupations.

Housing:

In 1990 there were 1,439 housing units in Mt. Lookout (a 5% increase from 1980). 63% of those units were constructed before 1940 and 25% were built between 1940 and 1959. Only 12% of Mt. Lookout's housing units were built after 1960. Of the occupied housing units 76% are owner-occupied (a 6% increase from 1980), and 19% are renter-occupied (a 6% decrease from 1980).

*This population figure is comprised of Census Tract 48 (Mt. Lookout) and Block Group 1 and Blocks 201, 202 of Block Group 2 of Census Tract 47.01(Mt. Lookout-Columbia Tusculum). See census map in Appendix A.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

APPENDIX B

MT. LOOKOUT ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY-URBAN DESIGN DISTRICT

Situated in the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, State of Ohio and being more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the centerlines of Delta and Glengyle Avenues, said point being in the existing R-5 and 0-1 zone dividing line; thence eastwardly with the centerline of Glengyle Avenue and along said zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-5, R-3 and 0-1 Zone District, said point being the point of intersection with the centerline of Willbarre Street; thence southwestwardly with the centerline of Willbarre Street and along the existing R-3 and 0-1 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing 0-1, R-3 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence southwestwardly with said centerline and along the existing R-3 and B-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-3, R-2 and B-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-2 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence southwardly along the existing R-2 and B-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-2, R-4 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence westwardly and southwestwardly along the existing R-4 and B-2 zone dividing line to the centerline of Linwood Avenue; thence southwestwardly along said zone dividing line and said centerline to the point of angle in said R-4 and B-2 zone dividing line; thence southwestwardly; southeastwardly and southwestwardly along said zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing B-2, R-4 and R-5(T) Zone Districts; thence southeastwardly; southwestwardly and northwestwardly along the existing R-4 and R-5(T) zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-4, R-5 and R-5(T) Zone Districts; thence northwestwardly along the existing R-5 and R-5(T) zone dividing line to the centerline of Delta Avenue; thence northeastwardly with said centerline and zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-5(T), R-5 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence northeastwardly and northwestwardly along the existing R-5 and B-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing B-2, R-5 and R-4(T) Zone Districts, said point being in the centerline of Alpine Terrace; thence westwardly with said centerline and along the existing R-5 and R-4(T) zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-5, R-4 and R-4(T) Zone Districts; thence northwardly and eastwardly along the existing R-4 and R-4(T) zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-4(T), R-4 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence eastwardly, northwardly and westwardly along the existing R-4 and B-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing R-4, R-2 and B-2 Zone Districts; thence northwardly along the existing R-2 andB-2 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing B-2, R-2 and B-4 Zone Districts, said point being in the centerline of Crocus Lane; thence northwardly with said centerline and along the existing R-2 and B-4 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing B-4, R-2 and 0-1A Zone Districts; thence northwardly with the centerline of Crocus Lane and along the existing R-2 and 0-1A Zone Districts; thence northeastwardly and southeastwardly along the existing R-5 and 0-1A zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing 0-1A, R-5 and B-4 Zone Districts, said point being in the centerline of Linwood Avenue; thence southeastwardly, northeastwardly, southeastwardly and eastwardly along the existing R-5 and B-4 zone dividing line to the point in common with the existing B-4, R-5 and 0-1 Zone Districts; thence northeastwardly, southeastwardly, northeastwardly and southeastwardly along the existing R-5 and 0-1 zone dividing line to the point of intersection of the centerlines of Delta and Glengyle Avenues and the point of beginning.

MT. LOOKOUT HISTORY

Before the mid-nineteenth century, the area that later became Mt. Lookout and Hyde Park had only farms and a few scattered large estates. By the 1860's there was a small, incorporated village called Delta at the intersection of Crawfish Road (Delta Avenue), Linwood Pike and Red Bank Avenue. Residential subdivision development did not begin until Cincinnati annexed this part of Spencer Township in 1870. At that time the community stretched from Madison Road on the west to the intersection of Linwood and Herschel Avenues on the east, and as far south as Grandin Road.

After annexation in 1870, members if the Kilgour family, of real estate and banking fortune, purchased land north of the village of Delta and began subdividing it. This land was close to other Kilgour property including land they donated in 1872 as the new site for the Cincinnati Observatory, from which the subdivision took its name. The name Mt. Lookout was eventually applied to the entire area and surrounding village of Delta

In 1872, transportation improvements made the area more accessible. The Norfolk and Western Railroad ran a line through the area and later that year the Kilgours opened a narrow-gauge of the Cincinnati & Columbia Street Railroad that ran from Eastern Avenue north through undeveloped countryside along the banks of Crawfish Creek (Delta Avenue) to what is now Mt. Lookout Square. One year later the line was extended to Observatory Avenue.

Soon the intersection of Delta and Linwood Avenues became an important crossroads. In the 1880's, several buildings and a post office were scattered near the intersection. By 1887 Mt. Lookout had 1,000 residents, the Observatory, the Norfolk & Western Railroad, an amusement park, a Building & Loan, two churches, two factories and businesses including a grocery, clothing stores, barber shops and a flour and seed store.

It wasn't until after World War I that Mt. Lookout Square began to take shape. Commercial buildings were built at the intersection of Delta and Linwood Avenues and subdivisions were platted around them. The construction of Kilgour Elementary School in 1922 signaled the steady rise in population at this time.

By 1925 Mt. Lookout Square had about 29 businesses including a dry cleaner, two pharmacies, an undertaker's parlor, three groceries, a tinner, a filling station, a deli, a hardware store, medical offices, a shoe store and a beauty shop. In 1927, Christ the King Church was built at Linwood and Ellison with over 130 member families. Its parish school opened shortly thereafter with 108 students; however, ten years later a new school was built to accommodate more students.

In 1931 the City created a traffic island in the middle of the Delta & Linwood Avenue intersection and converted that area into a parking area in 1952. The intersection of Delta and Linwood Avenues, referred to by locals as Mt. Lookout Square, continues to serve as the focal point and vital commercial center of the Mt. Lookout community.

MT. LOOKOUT BUSINESS DISTRICT SURVEY

This survey is designed to obtain information to help the Mt. Lookout Neighborhood Business District Task Force and the City determine how to best stimulate economic development in the Mt. Lookout business district. All individual responses will be kept confidential and only reported as a group. Please answer all the questions. Thank you for your time and consideration.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name and position of person completing survey:

Name of Business: _____ Location:

City and State the owner resides in:_____ (City) _____(State)

Description of Business: ___ Locally operated ___ Regional Chain ___ National Chain ___ Franchise

Business Ownership: ___ Family Business ___ Sole Proprietorship ___ Partnership ___ For-Profit Corp. ___ Non-Profit ___ Cooperative

Own or Lease Facility: ___ Own ___ Lease

Firm established at its present location: (Year) 19__

Number of Employees: Full-Time ____ Part-Time ____

Hours of Operation: _____

Physical Improvements

1. Are you considering renovating or expanding your business? (Circle One) Yes or No

2. Are any of the following constraints to renovation or expansion:

___No constraints ___ Need financial assistance ___Insufficient space ___ Need planning assistance ___ Low interest rate loan
___ Other, specify_____

3. Rank the top five areas that need to be addressed or improved in the Mt. Lookout Business District: 1 means "most needed" 5 being "less needed":

___ Front entrances ___ Rear entrances ___ Interior building appearance ___ Street lighting ___ Conditions of sidewalks
___ Streetscape, including trees & lighting ___ Identity and physical unity ___ Parking ___ Facade improvement, including awning

4. Rank the top five related traffic issues that need to be addressed: 1 means most needed and 5 being less needed.

___ Congested streets ___ Pedestrian access ___ Speed limits ___ Inadequate parking ___ Vehicular access
___ Street lighting ___ Location of parking ___ Street maintenance

5. Do your customers/clients use your rear entrance? (Circle One) Yes or No. If no, why not?

_____

6. Would you consider using your rear entrance for access? (Circle One) Yes or No. If no, why not?

_____

7. Do you think your storefront or another part of your building requires any improvements to attract customers? (Circle One) Yes or No. If yes, please describe the needed improvements below:

_____

Business Location

8. Are you planning to relocate? (Circle One) Yes or No. If yes, answer "a" and "b" below.

a. When _____ b. To Where _____

9. Are you planning to permanently close or sell your business? (Circle One) Yes or No. If yes, answer "a" and "b" below.

a. When _____ b. Why _____

10. Are you currently considering opening another outlet for your business? (Circle One) Yes or No. If yes, answer "a" and "b" below.

a. When _____ b. To where _____

Business Environment

11. What type of business(es) is needed for the area?

_____

12. Are there any types of businesses you **would not** like to see in the area? (Circle One) Yes or No. If yes, what type(s)

_____

13. Over the last three years, have the following business factors increased, stayed the same or declined?

		Increased	Stayed the Same	Declined
1.	Number of customers	a	b	c
2.	Sales quantity volume	a	b	c
3.	Sales dollar volume	a	b	c
4.	Profit	a	b	c

14. What is your opinion for the changes indicated above?

_____

15. Your business comes from which of the following groups of people:

___% Mt. Lookout residents
___% Hyde Park residents
___% Cincinnati residents, excluding Mt. Lookout and Hyde Park residents.
___% Ohio residents, excluding Cincinnati residents
___% Kentucky residents
___% Other, specify _____

16. Rank your business days. Place a one (1) to the left of your busiest day and continue through to indicate your least busy day with a number seven (7).

___ Sunday___ Monday ___ Tuesday ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday___ Friday___ Saturday

17. Rank your business hours. Place one (1) on the line to the left of your busiest day and then continue through to indicate your least busy hours with a five (5).

___ Morning (before 11:30 AM)
___ Afternoon (1:30 PM - 6:00 PM
___ Night (after 9 PM)
___ Lunch (11:30 AM - 1:30 PM)
___ Evening (6 PM - 9 PM)

18. How important is it that the following issues are addressed as they relate to the Mt. Lookout Business district. Indicate importance by the following numbers: (1 Extremely important 2 Very important 3 Moderately important 4 Relatively unimportant 5 Not important)

___ Parking ___ Marketing ___ Cleanliness of the area
___ Business development ___ Appearance ___ Safety
___ Traffic flow (pedestrian) ___ Traffic flow (vehicular)

19. Would you like any of the following items in the district to be regulated or controlled? Yes or No (Circle One) If yes, check each one that you would like to see regulated.
___ Signs ___ Facade treatments ___ New development ___ Streetscape

20. Is safety for your customers or employees an issue that needs to be addressed? (Circle One) Yes or No

21. Do you share advertising expense? (Circle One) Yes or No.

22. Would you be willing to share advertising expense? (Circle One) Yes or No.

23. Are you interested in shared parking? (Circle One) Yes or No.

24. Please list up to three issues that you think are highly important to the economic growth and vitality of the area:

_____ _____ _____

25. What specific concerns would you like to see addressed? (These can include ones mentioned earlier)

_____

26. Are you interested in having information on any of the following: Check all that apply.

___ Available technical assistance
___ Business seminars
___ Low interest loan
___ other, specify _____

26. Would you participate in a Business Association for the purpose of improving and maintaining the business district? (Circle One) Yes or No.

Comments:

_____

_____

_____

MT. LOOKOUT SQUARE BUSINESSS SURVEY RESULTS

Sample Size: 56 surveys sent out, 20 responses (35.7% response rate)

General Information

Description of Business: 95% Locally operated -- Regional Chain 5% National Chain -- Franchise

Business Ownership: 40% Family Business 25% Sole Proprietorship 10% Partnership 20% For-Profit Corp. 5% Non-Profit -- Cooperative

Own or Lease Facility: 35% Own 65% Lease

Firm established at its present location: (Year) (1901-26) 20%, (1954-79) 35%, (1980-92) 45%

Number of Employees: Full-Time 3.5 (avg.) Part-Time 2.9 (avg.)

Hours of Operation:
Monday-Friday: Open: 65% (7-9 AM), 30% (10-11 AM)
Close: 76% (5-6 PM), 12% (9-10 PM)
Saturdays: Open: 18% (7-8 AM), 41% (9-11 AM)
Close: 6% (1PM), 35% (4-6 PM), 18% (10 PM-1 AM)

Physical Improvements

1. 25% of respondents are considering expanding or remodeling. (5 out of 20, 14 said they were not, 1 abstained.)

2. Of the respondents considering expansion and/or renovation, 5 said that insufficient space was constraining their renovation/expansion plans, 2 said it was due to insufficient parking, 1 said they could use financial assistance.

3. The top five areas that respondents said need to be addressed or improved in Mt. Lookout Square.

	Most needed	more needed	needed	less needed	least needed
Front entrance	-	-	3	4	4
Interior building appearance	-	-	1	2	1
Condition of sidewalks	-	2	5	3	1
Identity/physical unity	-	3	4	3	4
Facade/awning improvements	3	1	3	3	3
Rear entrance	-	-	-	1	2
Street lighting	-	-	1	2	4
Streetscape (trees, light)	-	6	3	4	4
Parking	14	3	1	1	-

4. Traffic-related issues that respondents said should be addressed.

	most needed	more needed	needed	less needed	least needed
Congested streets	1	4	6	2	3
Inadequate parking	14	2	2	-	-
Location of parking	3	8	3	1	-
Pedestrian access	2	1	-	4	3
Vehicular access	2	-	-	1	5
Street maintenance	-	-	2	7	1
Speed limits	4	1	3	-	3
Street lighting	-	1	2	3	3

5. 85% of the respondents said that their customers *do not* use their rear entrances.

6. 75% of the respondents said that they *would not* consider making the rear entrance available for customer use.

7. Roughly half of the respondents believe that their building needs some type of improvement in order to increase their customer base. Reasons why and how it may be done are as follows:
   - Improved location of signage
   - Better building maintenance and landscaping
   - Painting
   - Better signage, greenery, and awning/umbrellas
   - More unified appearance on front of building
   - Better cleaning and lighting needed
   - Insufficient identity and signage area with existing awning
   - Improved visibility of display windows needed

8. 90% of survey respondents said they are *not* planning to relocate their businesses.

9. 95% of survey respondents said they are *not* planning to close or sell their businesses.

10. 90% of survey respondents said they are *not* planning to open other outlets of their business.

11. Survey respondents' suggestions as to what types of businesses are needed in the area:
   - Exclusive "up-scale" boutique/specialty retailers
   - Service related businesses
   - Bakery
   - Music store
   - Retail oriented businesses
   - Hardware store
   - Book stores (2)
   - Stationery store
   - Women's clothing
   - Art gallery
   - "Anything"
   - What's here is fine.
   - Family oriented shops/restaurants
   - Night life
   - Clock sales/repairs
   - Driving range/bowling alley
   - More retail (3)
   - Printing company
   - Specialty boutiques

12. Types of businesses survey respondents ***would not*** like to see in the area.
   - More bars (6)
   - Fast food (4)
   - Gas stations, auto-related businesses (2)
   - More restaurants (2)
   - Chain discount stores or outlet stores (2)
   - Adult entertainment/night clubs (2)
   - Antique shops
   - Video stores.
   - Reds stadium

13. This chart illustrates how respondents listed how business factors have been affected over the past three years.

	Increased	Stayed the same	Declined
Number of customers	6	10	1
Sales quantity volume	8	6	2
Sales dollar volume	8	7	1
Profit	9	5	2

15. Survey respondents said that about 45% of their total business come from residents of the Hyde Park and Mt. Lookout communities.

16. The following chart shows the busiest days of the week for survey respondents. 1 being the busiest day, and 7 as the least busy day of the week.

	(Busiest) 1	2	3	(Average) 4	5	6	(Least busy) 7	Closed
Sunday	-	1	1	1	-	-	7	8
Monday	5	1	2	1	3	1	2	1
Tuesday	2	2	6	1	2	2	1	-
Wednesday		1	3	1	6	3	2	-
Thursday		1	1	5	3	2	3	-
Friday	2	7	2	2	3	-	-	-
Saturday	9	-	-	-	1	4	-	3

17. This chart shows the number of responses for the busiest times of the day. (1 indicating the busiest time of the day, 5 indicating the least busy)

	Most busy	More busy	Average	Less busy	Least busy
Morning (before 11:30 AM)	11	2	3	1	3
Lunch (11:30 - 1:30 PM)	2	4	10	1	-
Afternoon (1:30 PM - 6 PM)	7	8	2	2	-
Evening (6 PM - 9 PM)	3	4	-	7	1
Night (after 9 PM)	-	-	1	2	12

18. The following chart shows how important survey respondents feel that the following issues should be addressed in relation to Mt. Lookout Square:

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Relatively Unimportant	Not Important
Parking	18	-	1	-	-
Cleanliness	6	9	1	-	2
Traffic flow (pedestrian)	5	5	6	2	-
Safety	5	10	-	1	2
Business development	4	2	8	3	1
Traffic flow (vehicular)	4	7	4	2	2
Marketing	6	1	6	3	2
Appearance	7	7	2	1	3

19. 45% of those surveyed would like to see some sort of control or regulation of signs and new development in the Mt. Lookout Square area. 40% would like to see the same sort of regulation for façades of buildings and the streetscape.

20. Is safety for your customers or employees an issue that needs to be addressed?
    - Yes: 35%
    - No: 60%
    - Undecided: 5%

21. Do you share advertising expenses?
    - Yes: 25%
    - No: 75%

22. Would you be willing to share advertising expenses?
    - Yes: 60%
    - No: 35%
    - Undecided: 5%

23. Are you interested in shared parking?
    - Yes: 60%
    - No: 30%
    - Undecided: 10%

24. The following is a list of issues that respondents felt were vital to the economic growth and vitality of the area. Each survey asked for three responses:
    - Parking access, quantity, cost, and convenience (16)
    - Unified appearance and visual appeal of the area (4)
    - Traffic, congestion, and accessibility (4)
    - Community involvement, business owners working together, community identity and a solid plan
    - Attracting the right businesses, diversified businesses, variety of stores (3)
    - Residential stability and good schools
    - Upkeep of business district
    - Polite meter controllers and decreased ticketing of expired meters
    - Pedestrian issues
    - Streetscape
    - Stability

25. Other concerns respondents mentioned they would like to see addressed:
    - Parking (5)
    - Visual appeal and better use of property such as façade and sign regulation (7)
    - Traffic issues – enforce speed limits, reduce speed limits, pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows
    - District identity and character
    - Replace (not repair) existing water main
    - Creation of a consistent plan that does not change with administrations
    - Rude meter enforcement
    - Maintaining infrastructure in good working order
    - Maintaining green space

26. One respondent was interested in low interest loans, 4 were interested in business seminars, and 1 was interested in available technical assistance.

27. 60% of those who participated in the survey said they would be interested in participating in a Business Association whose purpose would be to improve and maintain the business district. 25% were undecided.

MT. LOOKOUT CIVIC CLUB
P.O. BOX 8444 • CINCINNATI, OHIO • 45208

April 7, 1998

Ms. Molly Henning
City of Cincinnati
City Planning Department
805 Central Avenue, Suite 720
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Dear Ms. Henning:

On behalf of the Mt. Lookout Civic Club, thank you for the presentation of the Urban Design Plan for the Mt. Lookout Business District made by you and Michael Moore at our meeting in February, 1998. We appreciate the time and effort you, Mr. Moore and many others at the City of Cincinnati have put forth working with the business and property owners and residents of our neighborhood to develop this comprehensive plan. We believe the plan is very thorough and is clear regarding its implementation over time. We are extremely pleased with and fully endorse the Urban Design Plan for Mt. Lookout currently under consideration for final approval by the City.

Again, thank you for your efforts in this important neighborhood endeavor. The approval and subsequent implementation of this plan will ensure Mt. Lookout is a better place to live, work, shop and play! I look forward to notification of acceptance of the plan very soon.

Sincerely,

Beth Townsend

Beth Townsend
President

CHAIRMAN BRIDGITT C. FAULY | PRESIDENT BETH TOWNSEND | 1ST VICE PRESIDENT JOHN E. SARKY | 2ND VICE PRESIDENT BOB WILLIAMS | SECRETARY SANFORD D. FAULY | TREASURER MARK TOWNSEND | ASST. SEC'Y TREAS. KENDRA BACH
SGT. AT ARMS PATT CURTIS | MEMBERSHIP CHAIR JOSEPH G. FREEMAN | DIRECTOR CHIP BACH | DIRECTOR ROBIN SUEDHOF | DIRECTOR CRAIG GUSTAFSON | DIRECTOR STEVE W. KING, DC | LIFE BOARD MEMBER HARRY C. HEEKAMP | EDITORS JOHN AND SARA HEYER

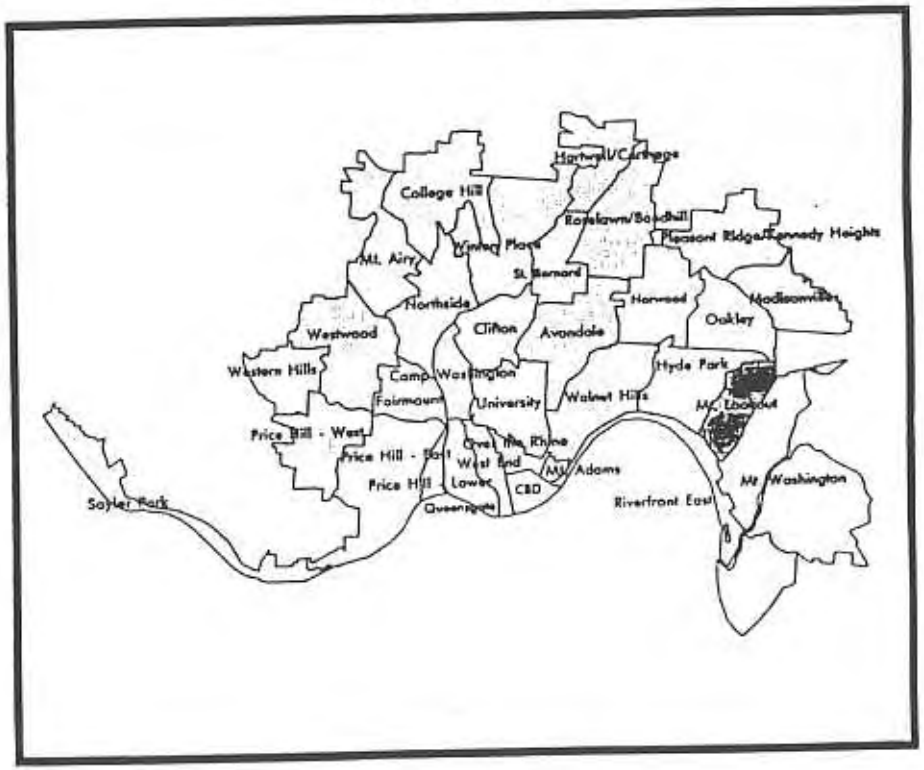
Project Market Decisions

635 West Seventh Street-Suite 305 Cincinnati, Ohio 45203-1548

Mount Lookout

MARKET AREA PROFILE

DRAFT



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CITY OF CINCINNATI

About the Market Area....

Mount Lookout is the wealthiest community in Cincinnati. Located at the cross roads of Delta Avenue and Linwood Avenue, Mount Lookout Square is a compact retail and service area serving the convenience needs of the neighborhood. Due to good signalization and a circular traffic pattern, traffic flow is smooth through Mount Lookout which serves as a transition between Columbia Parkway, Beechmont Levee, and Hyde Park Square. On-street parking is available at all times and additional parking is available in the center of Mount Lookout Square.

Merchandise mix offers a variety of goods and services, but there is no market anchor. Residents travel to Hyde Park to meet other shopping needs. Vacancy is low, with the exception of the old Mount Lookout theater, which has experienced a high turnover of tenants since the theater moved out, most likely due to inadequate parking relative to the size of the space.

This well designed area will remain stable, however, it is unlikely to expand due to the lack of available land for development.

NBC Characteristics

Anchor: None

Major Intersection:
Delta Avenue and Linwood Avenue

Traffic Count: 20,268

Parking: Adequate

Perception of Safety: Excellent

Key Demographic Indicators

The 1994 estimated Mount Lookout population of 6,425 is concentrated in 2,784 households. This represents a slight increase of 25 persons from a 1990 U.S. Census population count of 6,400. Average household size is currently estimated at 2.3 persons compared to the city average of 2.4 persons per household.

It is projected that the Mount Lookout population will decrease to 6,339 persons in 2,809 households through 1999. This represents a population decrease of 86 from 1994 to 1999. It is estimated that the average household size will remain stable at 2.3 persons per household through 1999.

Facts About Mount Lookout

Pop	6,400	6,425	6,339
Hou	2,725	2,784	2,809
Me	$47,141	$58,763	$72,860
Avg Ho Expe	$23,962	$25,831	$27,539

Median household income in the market area is estimated at $58,763 in 1994. This is a 24.6 percent increase over the 1990 median household income of $47,141. It is projected that the median household income will increase to $72,860 by 1999, an increase of 24 percent from the 1994 median. Mount Lookout has the highest median household income in the city.

Households in the Mount Lookout market area spent an estimated $71.8 million on retail expenditures in 1994. This is an average of approximately $25,831 per household and is an increase of 10 percent over 1990 expenditures. In 1999, it is projected that area households will spend close to $77.2 million on consumer retail expenditures. This represents an increase of 7.5 percent over 1994 expenditures levels.

Mount Lookout
Market Area

1 inch = 2,050 ft.



Market Key Businesses

	Eating Places	9	10555
	Used Merchandise Stores	7	7218
	Other Health Care Offices	7	6908
	Physical Fitness Facilities	1	4936
	Dairy Products Stores	1	3840
	Drug Stores & Proprietary	1	3570
	Dry Cleaners	1	3500
	Floor Covering Stores	1	3400
	Beauty Shops	6	3205
	Offices of Dentists	5	3106

NBC Anchors

- None

Life Style Clusters

The consumer characteristics of the Mount Lookout market area population have been identified through a consumer lifestyle cluster system known as Prizm which was developed by Claritas, Inc.

Sixty-two dominant lifestyle types, or clusters, have been identified throughout the United States. Each consumer cluster is composed of households that tend to exhibit similar lifestyles and to act uniformly and predictably in the marketplace. The 62 clusters are divided among 15 cluster groups which denote basic neighborhood types categorized according to geographic orientation and socioeconomic levels.

Examination of the data for more than 500 data variables at the census block group level indicates that of the 62 different cluster types identified in the U.S., only two are found in the Mount Lookout market area: Executive Suites and Blue Blood Estates.



Executive Suites, with 1,731 households, is the largest cluster group represented in Mount Lookout. It is typified by upscale white-collar couples. This cluster demonstrates a predominance of college graduates who now work in the professional realm. Many have married, and have bought their starter homes. This cluster is above average in pre-school children.

Blue Blood Estates, with 301 households, is the second cluster group represented in Mount Lookout. Blue Blood Estates is America's wealthiest cluster, not surprising to Mount Lookout with Cincinnati's highest median household income. This cluster is populated by families of very established executives, professionals, and heirs to "old money", who are accoustomed to privelege. Nationally, one in ten residents in this cluster is a multi-millionaire.

Mount Lookout Cluster Mix

by Number of Households (1994)



Cluster Type	Households
Executive Suites	1,731
Blue Blood Estates	301

Product-Service Preference Index (PSPI)

Introduction

This section describes the preferences for specific products and services among Mt. Lookout market area consumers. The summary below identifies the product and service items for which market area consumers exhibit high, as well as low purchasing preference. A complete listing of the market area preferences for nearly 400 products and services is included in the *Neighborhood Base Market Analysis of Cincinnati*.

The cluster composition of households in the Mt. Lookout market area are used for comparison with all United States households for the purpose of providing a ranking for each of the product-service items relative to the national norm. In this way, preferences scores reveal the unique lifestyle composition of the market area. All rankings are expressed relative to this national norm. For example, a ranking of 100 indicates a level of preference equal to the U.S. average. It should be noted that the rankings are of relative frequency of purchase and use, not level of expenditure.

High Preferences

The product-service categories with an index of 125 or higher indicate market area households have above average interest in these items. The particular index ranking appears in parenthesis the item. Market area consumers:

- Play racquetball (273) go sailing (229) scuba diving (198) and skiing (187)
- Own an Acura (279) Mazda (201) Mercedes (198) and Volvo (186)
- Rented a car for business last year (221) as well as for personal use (196)
- Go to ice hockey games (227) and professional football games (188)
- Travel to Western Europe (189) Japan-Asia (181) the Canbbean (175) and are frequent flyer members (236)
- Own an espresso/cappicino maker (241) home gym (175) hot tub/whirlpool spa (153) and personal computer (158)
- Own a burglar alarm (206) a car phone (204) and an auto security/alarm (161)
- Buy Dove ice cream bars (179) olive oil (172) pita bread (168) and low cal frozen diners (157)

Low Preferences

The product-service categories with an index of 75 or lower indicate market area households have below average interest in these items. Market area consumers show relatively low interest in:

- Chewing tobacco (63) or non-filter cigarettes (50)
- Taking a domestic trip by bus (65)
- Owning a Dodge truck (72) or camper (70)
- Buying canned stews (69) malt liquor (60) or Kool-Aid (62)
- Shopping at Walmart (59)
- Fresh water fishing (69)
- Eating at fast food fish restaurants (62)
- Buying disposable lighters (73)

Development Potential

Introduction

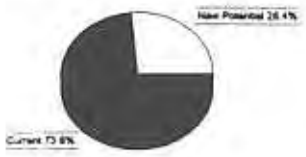
The development potential for the Mt. Lookout market area was generated using a proprietary demand model developed by *Project Market Decisions*. The model quantifies the demand potential for the market area by defining the relationship between the unique mix of households, lifestyle clusters, and each of the 75 establishment types analyzed in the base comparison area. This defined set of relationships is applied to the unique lifestyle characteristics of the market area being analyzed. An estimate is then produced of the total development which can be supported by the households in the market area. The current amount of supply in the market area by each of the 75 establishment types, is subtracted from the total development potential which provides an estimate of the net development potential for the market area.

A detailed explanation of the methodology, including identification of the comparison area, is included in the *Neighborhood Base Market Analysis of Cincinnati*.

Current Supply

The analysis of existing establishments in the market area identified 65 different businesses in the 75 retail and service establishment categories. These establishments account for an estimated 82,988 square feet of space. The market area contains 30 different establishment types out of the 75 types analyzed.

New Development Potential



Demand Potential

An examination of the detailed Neighborhood Market Area Development Potential, in the appendix of the *Neighborhood Base Market Analysis of Cincinnati*, indicates that there is a development potential in the Mt. Lookout market area to support an additional 29,700 square feet of retail-service space. It is estimated that this new potential would support the development of 11 new establishments in 9 different SIC types.

Development Potential for Top Establishment Types

SIC	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SQ FT
79XX	Recreation Facilities	7,200
5999	Miscellaneous Retail	6,700
5411	Grocery	6,500
8351	Day Care	2,800
6531	Real Estate	1,900
7299	Miscellaneous Personal	1,500
5992	Florists	1,200
5944	Jewelry	1,000
6141	Personal Credit	700

Observations

An analysis of the establishment types with potential in the market area, reveals a number of store types that could be appropriate for Mt. Lookout NBC. Some of these types are described below.

- Recreation - exercise facilities
- Day Care
- Eating - fast food and convenience
- Grocery - specialty and convenience

Mount Lookout Summary

This market area, located on the east side of Hyde Park, it is one of Cincinnati's wealthiest neighborhoods. The Mount Lookout business center is located at the crossroads of Linwood and Delta Avenues.

The market area has a population base of 6,425 persons in 2,784 households. The median income in the market area is significant at $58,763. The population counts in the market area are projected to decrease over the next five years, while households and incomes will increase significantly.

Neighborhood Business Center Evaluation Matrix

Population	
[illegible]	✓
[illegible]	✓
[illegible]	✓
[illegible]	✓
[illegible]	✓
Specialty	✓
[illegible]	✓
[illegible]	
Anchors	
Variety	
[illegible]	✓
Potential	✓

Strengths

Excellent design

Critical mass

Good merchandise mix

High traffic count, well controlled

Safe, clean environment

Weaknesses

Lack of parking

Expansion limited by topography and zoning

Opportunities

Limited development potential
Reuse of Mt. Lookout Theater

CREDITS

This plan was prepared for the Department of Economic Development by the City Planning Department and the Department of Public Works, Division of Engineering - Office of Architecture and Urban Design with the Mt. Lookout Square Neighborhood Business District urban Design Task Force. The Task Force consisted of the following individuals:

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Chip and Kendra Bach, Residents, Mt. Lookout Civic Club
Mary Cassinelli, Mary Cassinelli, Architect
Frances Faber, Property Owner, Resident
Doug Kalmey, Bank One
Kim Kolthoff, Keepsake Photography
Dave Makin, Property Owner
Greg Nicoli, Nic's Bar & Grill and Million's Cafe
Tim O'Leary, The Sight Shop
Tim Racer, Subway
Steve Rohde, Rohde Funeral Home
Mark Townsend, Resident, Mt. Lookout Civic Club
Greg Zimich, Blue Mountain Coffee Company

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