HARTWELL
NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT
FOCUS AREA
URBAN DESIGN PLAN

Prepared for
City of Cincinnati
Department of Development

Prepared By
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Special Consultant
BAILEY'S MARKETING TO META MARKETING

JANUARY 1980
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HARTWELL NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT FOCUS AREA
URBAN DESIGN PLAN

INTRODUCTION
The Hartwell Neighborhood Business District comprises a relatively narrow strip of land located on both sides of Vine Street extending north from the B & O Railroad overpass to Hillsdale. Approximately half of the business district is located in Hamilton County outside the City of Cincinnati's jurisdiction. The City's corporation line runs down the center of Vine Street. The west side of Vine is in Springfield Township, while the east side of the street lies within the City. The only exception is the Roselawn Playground which is located on the west side of Vine below West Galbraith Road, which lies within the City of Cincinnati's corporation limits.

For planning purposes, the business district was treated as a unified whole, irrespective of the jurisdictional dichotomy of the district. The Urban Design Plan, therefore, includes both sides of Vine Street, recognizing, however, that the City can adopt policies and plans affecting only that portion of the business district which lies within its political jurisdiction. The Plan and its implementation strategy, therefore, includes separate program policies for both jurisdictions. Consequently, the adoption and implementation of the design plan by the City is interdependent upon a corresponding response on the part of Hamilton County and Springfield Township.

The northern section of the Vine Street business district is the focal area of the retail activities in Hartwell. The
southern portion of the commercial district, on the other hand, comprises a compilation of uses consisting primarily of used car lots, automobile service garages and repair shops, intermingled with retail, residential, and light industrial uses.

This southern area of the business district is substantially blighted. Revitalization of this area is not a viable option for the City to pursue at this time, unless the City, together with the County, is prepared to undertake a major urban redevelopment program for the area south of Glendale. Moreover, it is clear from economic and land use analysis of the Hartwell Business District, that the revitalization program will need to start in the northern sector of the district, and work southward.

The Urban Design Plan for the Hartwell Business District extends southward from Hillsdale to the south side of Glendale and includes a major portion of the Roselawn Playground. The Galbraith Avenue, Vine Street intersection is considered an important entranceway to the business district from the south and is therefore included in the urban design plan focus area.

HARTWELL ECONOMIC CONDITION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

The Hartwell Market area has been shown to be quite strong, and is expected to continue to grow in population and purchasing power over the next five years. Market and economic analysis of the business district indicates, however, that the Hartwell business district has been unable to capture the full potential of its natural market. Thus
far, the Hartwell NBD has failed to generate the volume of sales which the market survey implies should be available to local merchants.

There are several specific factors that have contributed to the poor sales performance of the NBD. First, the NBD lacks an identifiable commercial core. The area north of Compton Road contains the majority of neighborhood retail type uses. However, that area is interrupted by inappropriate uses, such as auto repair shops, and gasoline stations. More importantly, the physical arrangement of buildings is such that a shopper cannot easily move from shop to shop. The inadequacy of parking and the intrusiveness of heavy traffic volumes on Vine Street create an unpleasant shopping environment.

Apart from the physical and environmental deficiencies of the business district, there are also a number of retail gaps and deficiencies that will need to be filled in order for the district to improve its market penetration. There is a need to establish a concentration of retail activities sufficient to draw more shoppers to the area. Based upon an economic base study and market analysis of the Hartwell NBD, the following improvements are found to be needed:

- There is a need to diversify the commercial mix of the NBD Core, to include convenient and specialty shops.

- There is a need to increase and expand the existing retail space to provide new retail functions.

- There is a need to provide high quality specialty shops and boutique shops to attract the market's higher income residents.
- There is a need to concentrate the physical improvements within the business district to the segment of the district which lies north of Galbraith Road.

- The commercial core of the business district will need to be revitalized and redeveloped with added retail space, additional parking, and improved circulation.

**URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT**

The essence of the urban design concept is to make the Hartwell neighborhood business district an attractive and vital retail environment, through revitalization and redevelopment of the present uses within both the City's and County's jurisdiction. The urban design concept recognizes as its most basic premise that revitalization of the Hartwell business district can only be achieved by considering, in a coordinated manner, the redevelopment of retail uses along both sides of Vine Street. This is envisioned to be accomplished through an adaptive re-use approach and with no expansion and impact on the adjacent residential areas.

**URBAN DESIGN CONCEPT OBJECTIVES**

1. Utilize an adaptive re-use approach to the redevelopment and revitalization of the business district.

2. Develop a harmonious neighborhood shopping center within the business district by unifying both physically and functionally the retail uses along both sides of Vine Street between Compton Road and the Hillsdale.

3. Integrate the business district with the surrounding neighborhood, and limit the business area within the
proposed boundaries without further expansion into adjacent residential area.

4. Minimize the negative influence that Vine Street exerts on maintaining an automobile-oriented shopping district.

5. Develop a clear physical image which provides for functional cohesiveness in building form, which results in a new retail environment with a strong identity, and pedestrian orientation.

URBAN DESIGN PLAN

The proposed urban design plan and its structure suggests an arrangement of physical activities toward which the business district's form and function should evolve. The emphasis of the design plan is to develop a strong core retail area - "a super block shopping area" - between Compton and the Wyoming jurisdiction, through revitalization of the present retail activities. This is proposed to be accomplished through re-use of vacant sites and redevelopment of several non-conforming sites.

A pedestrian network interspersed with public amenities will be utilized to link the retail uses proposed in the core retail area. Vehicular movement will be coordinated with increased parking opportunities and attractive, definable parking entry points.

The area along both sides of Vine Street, between Compton Road, to just below Galbraith Road, will retain its present structural program, additional parking, public amenities, and facade improvements.
DOMINANT ELEMENTS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PLAN

- The creation of a unified shopping center as the retail core of the business district.

- A well-defined pedestrian network linking all retail activities and providing for a continuous retail function within the business area.

- Defined parking areas serving the retail components of the core shopping area through increased parking, defined entries, and landscaping.

- Development of new small scale retail uses for filling open voids to create a necessary building mass. This is accomplished by new development along Vine Street, opposite the Fidelity Shopping Plaza, so that a stronger physical connection can be made between both sides of Vine Street. Street crossing and defined pedestrian entries will provide a movement system linking the existing and proposed uses. New development is also proposed off Compton Road in order to define this edge of the retail core and serve as a major entry to the Shopping Center.

- Expansion of retail uses at the eastern side of Vine Street by redeveloping the area between Sheehan and the Big Melon.

- Improved vehicular circulation through and within the business district.
- Unified streetscape improvements throughout the business district.

RECOMMENDED MAJOR CHANGES

The urban design plan proposes certain changes that need to occur in the Hartwell business district:

1. The closing of Mary Street and utilization of this public right-of-way for shopper parking and additional new retail development.

2. The redevelopment of the property at the corner of Locust Street and Compton Avenue for a parking facility to primarily serve the office building and Krogers.

3. The redevelopment of the property that occupies the northeast quadrant of Sheehan and Vine Streets for new commercial space.

4. Reorganization of the present parking system in order to serve specific subareas within the shopping core area.

5. Redevelopment of the area between Burger Chef and existing Mary Street with new retail uses.

6. Elimination of all present store front parking which requires backing onto Vine Street.


8. The demolition of the property at 8401-8419 Vine Street for redevelopment as a parking facility.

Circulation Policies - Vehicular

The plan recommends that the following traffic circulation improvements be made within the business district:
- Improve the signalization at Compton Road and Sheehan and provide a new traffic light at Vine Street and Hillsdale.

- To improve the existing circulation pattern to utilize secondary streets for ingress and egress to the area's major off-street parking lots.

- Reduce the number of curb cuts (driveways) along the Vine Street right-of-way corridor.

- Improve the visual clutter and confusion of competing public and private signs.

Circulation Policies - Pedestrian

Vine Street is the major arterial highway that carries traffic into and through the business district. The business district in Hartwell is extremely dependent upon, and is orientated exclusively to the automobile. Pedestrian access to the business district is quite limited. Moreover, the neighborhood's residential densities adjacent to the commercial district are not sufficient to support a high level of pedestrian penetration of the district. However, future conditions are expected to be substantially different in the 1980's. It can be reasonably expected that pedestrian travel to and from the NBD will increase considerably in the future, though still below the level of many existing urban-orientated neighborhood business districts. Equal in importance, however, will be the ability of people, regardless of how they arrived at the business district, to be able to circulate freely and conveniently throughout the retail center. The design plan attempts to link the major components of the areas physical retail structure with a pedestrian circulation system in order to maximize the
accessibility of the district to its uses. The design plan attempts to create both the climate and the avenues for pedestrian circulation within the focus area.

Improved pedestrian crosswalks are proposed at Vine and Hillsdale, at Vine and Sheehan, at Vine and Ferndale, and at Vine and Galbraith. In addition, the urban design plan proposes the following improvements:

- Sidewalk material should be used to distinguish the pedestrian zone from the automobile zone, and to encourage pleasant and easy walking. Sidewalk materials should be used in alteration so that they add texture, color, and scale to the ground plane.

- Proposed crosswalks between parking entry points should be paved with the same material as the sidewalk, so that the pedestrian zone is emphasized in a continuous manner and call attention to the automobile driver.

- Appropriate street furniture should be utilized to enhance the functional and visual aspects of the NBD. Pedestrian seating, lighting, waste receptacles and information signs should be designed so that they keep with the visual theme and character of the business district. The material of street furniture should be coordinated with their design and location to promote visual cohesiveness.

- Street trees should be planted at designated locations in the ground and protected by tree grates. Trees should be used selectively to emphasize a visual con-
tinuity and rhythm along Vine Street, as well as to indicate pedestrian focal points.

- Trees and other plantings should be used for screening and defining parking areas from pedestrian places as well as parking areas adjacent to the NBD residences. In such cases, evergreens should be used for year round buffering.

PARKING

The business district focus area presently is deficient in the total number of off-street spaces needed to sustain a viable and expanded business center. Detailed parking surveys conducted in business indicate that the available number of parking spaces in a number of locations are insufficient. Given the zoning standard of one parking space per 250 square feet of commercial floor space, approximately 235 additional spaces are needed. The urban design plan proposes to improve and expand the number of off-street parking spaces within the focus area toward meeting the design goal of one space per 250 square feet of commercial space. The Liberal, Kroger, Super-X, and medical arts parking areas, have the greatest need for additional parking.

The design plan proposes to improve, upgrade, and redesign the existing parking areas within a coordinated design layout of the total area, which would take advantage of areas that are presently under utilized. Three new parking areas are proposed. The plan also proposes to redesign the circulation pattern with the parking area, providing new points of access to and from the commercial area, linked by an integrated pedestrian system to facilitate pedestrian

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access to and within the commercial center. In addition, a new 44-space parking area is proposed at the corner of Locust and Compton which is occupied by the blacksmith shop situated between the Medical Arts Building and the Kroger's store. The proposal design layout increases the total number of parking spaces from 372 to 454.

A second area of improved parking is proposed for the east side of Vine Street between Sheehan and Hillsdale. The parking lots in this area are designed and organized to facilitate access, convenience, and improved circulation within that segment of the commercial district.

A third parking area improvement program is proposed for the west side of Vine Street between Compton Road and Pfau Street. This area presently has a total of 159 parking spaces. The central and lower part of the area is extremely deficient in parking which has been a major deterrent to the economic viability of the area. A new off-street parking lot is proposed to be developed opposite Ferndale, on the west side of Vine Street. The new lot will require removal of the former Big Melon building, and will provide approximately 20 additional parking spaces serving 5,000 square feet of commercial retail space.

**APPEARANCE AND BUILDING FACADE IMPROVEMENTS: POLICIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The present land use structure and dynamics in the Hartwell NBD Focus area, together with the transportation arterial function of Vine Street, are the primary determinants of the area's environmental quality and appearance.
Underlying the NBD's negative appearance and physical structures is the lack of a clear identity and image beyond its strong orientation to the automobile. Throughout the NBD there is an evident decline in appearance and neighborhood character. The loose relationship between buildings and open parking lots adds to the area's low attractiveness and lack of pedestrian amenity.

The NBD lacks continuity in its shopping building fabric along Vine Street. The ad hoc placement of existing buildings in relation to one another and the street, creates a non-cohesive disjointed environment. This is further emphasized by the presence of unattractive building facade characteristics, colors, materials, etc.

The degree of appearance change to the NBD's will be determined on the type of improvements used, the degree of their intensity and boldness, and their conformance with the guidelines established in the design plan. The major effort of the design program should be to thrust a visual theme into the process of revitalization and development which will underlie and unify the incremental private and public improvements throughout the NBD retail environment. The present appearance of the NBD focus area and the rate of its deterioration warrant strong commitments and action aimed toward positive changes.

Objectives

1. The visual impact of the revitalization of the NBD should consider the major traffic arterial function of Vine Street and the influence it exerts towards the
maintenance of an automobile oriented shopping district. Improvements to the appearance and environmental quality of the NBD should strive towards counteracting the traffic related influence through appropriately bold visual change.

2. Building improvements and streetscape changes should strive toward reinforcing the visual appearance of a continuous building form along Vine Street, so that a "tighter", more cohesive NBD can emerge, creating a new identity to the area.

3. A unified visual theme should be established and applied throughout the building improvements, streetscape elements, luminaries, signage, etc.

4. Within the visual retail environment, unified efforts should be made in maintaining a harmonious and consistent contrast in building texture, color, and form, in order to minimize the linear impact of Vine Street.

Guidelines

The following are recommended to serve as guidelines for improving the visual quality and appearance of the Hartwell NBD focus area.

Storefront and Building Facade Improvements:

1. Original building surfaces should be maintained through restoration and clean-up of facade material.

2. Individual building fronts should be kept visually accessible to the shoppers; and street visual attractiveness should be increased through coordinated building facade treatment, window displays and signage.
3. Entrances of new buildings should relate to the pedestrian retail mall and should provide for a transition between the exterior and interior space through recessed entrances; where possible, architecturally and graphically defined doorways and display areas, and the use of signs and awnings.

4. Any new building or building improvements should use exterior building materials in harmony with surrounding buildings and the overall accepted visual theme.

5. A compatible color scheme should be utilized for painting buildings of clapboard, brick, or other masonry construction. Utilize relatively dark colors for buildings with volumes and form that need to be de-emphasized. An approved list of materials and color samples should be developed. Bright and contrasting paint colors should be used to create a sense of vitality.

6. Facade treatment to the upper stories of a building with materials other than the original facing should be avoided.

Signs

1. All outdoor advertising signs should be placed parallel or perpendicular to the buildings. They should be designed so that they relate to and enhance the building, its function, scale materials, details, and color.

2. Signs should be consistent and should be visible to pedestrians and legible to motorists.

3. Businesses should be encouraged to use traditional symbols (such as barber pole for a barber shop) or translate the nature of their business into a symbol or logo. The predominant copy of all signs should
identify the business on the premises, or its principal produce or service.

4. The number of signs placed on building facades should be limited to the minimum number necessary to adequately identify the building's principal function.

5. Window graphics should not cover more than forty (40) percent of the window surface. Window areas should be used for promotion of merchandise (displays).

Awnings

1. Encourage the utilization of awnings rather than other sun screening and weather protection material. If possible, utilize canvas awnings of a color to match the overall NBD visual theme, yet provide for an architectural and aesthetic contrast to the overall colors and forms. In addition, utilize awnings together with false painted windows on large wall surfaces to break down the impact of the building mass.

2. Awnings should run parallel to the face of the buildings and provide for a continuous covering along the sidewalk as opposed to small entry awnings over doors, windows, etc.

3. Awnings should not cover significant architectural features of the building and should not project more than six feet from the face of the building.

Outdoor Lighting

1. Lighting should be used to create a human scale and reduce glare from widely-spaced high intensity lamps
on tall poles. In addition, lighting should be in scale with the overall NBD building height.

2. A uniform design of luminaires should be established according to the NBD visual theme. Light fixtures could be on free standing poles or mounted on buildings if necessary. The overall lighting level of pedestrian spaces should be determined by considering all lighting sources in the street, sidewalks, and window displays.

3. Lighting should promote a safer and more secure feeling to pedestrians. In parking lots in rear building areas, lighting should also be used to define secure building and alleyway entry points.

4. A clear hierarchy of luminaires should be established for proper light distribution from pedestrian areas to roadways. High mast luminaires should only be used for roadway lighting.

IMPLEMENTATION AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Implementation of this NBD plan assumes a coordinated City-County-private joint development process which will be phased over an eight-year period. The initial development phase should be devoted to organizing the infrastructure appropriate to carry out a long-term joint development process. A second phase should emphasize the common streetscape program and a building renovation program. The final phase of development should renew the NBD core area. Early stages of implementation should emphasize projects which are highly visible and which encourage public and private participation.
It should be noted since much of the proposed redevelopment activities are concentrated along the Hamilton County side of Vine Street, County and Springfield Township will need to assume major responsibility for redevelopment of the NBD in this area. While redevelopment could be designed to encompass only that segment of the NBD which lies within the City of Cincinnati, any successful revitalization scheme must recognize that the Kroger-Liberal-Super-X complex is a primary activity center and an integral part of the NBD. Redevelopment, which only includes those activities on the City side, cannot adequately perform the kind of restructuring which is necessary in the Hartwell NBD. The overriding concern of the design plan has been to find a means of coalescing the existing neighborhood retail activities together into a well-defined and vital shopping core. The best means of accomplishing this objective is to merge the two sides of Vine Street into a unified shopping district.

A more detailed discussion of the urban design implementation strategy is provided in the Hartwell NBD Technical Appendix accompanying the Urban Design Plan.

HARTWELL NBD DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION DEVELOPMENT PHASES

Phase I (1980-1982) Organizational Phase Development Tasks
--Creation of a Hartwell Business Association
--Adoption of the Final Design Plan by City Council
--Organization of Hartwell NBD Task Force
--Creation and initiation of an NBD "Clean-Up" and "Fix-Up" campaign
--Establish a Building Rehabilitation Program
Phase II (1982-1985) Aesthetic Improvement Phase

--Initiation of the Streetscape Program
--Street improvement at the intersection of Compton & Vine
--Curb and gutter improvement on Locust Street
--Acquisition and clearance of 8343-49 Vine Street
--Initiation of Building Rehabilitation Program
--Acquisition, relocation and clearance of #14 and #30 Compton Road
--Closure of Mary Street
--Creation of NBD parking at #30 Compton Road and at 8343-49 Vine

--Expansion of Big Mellon Complex acquisition of three parcels in the northeast corner of Vine Street and Sheehan Streets

Phase III (1985-1988) NBD Core Development

--Acquisition of parcel segments at 8401, 8415, and 8419 Vine Street
--Site preparation
--Redevelopment of the Big Mellon Complex
--Construction of new commercial space at #14 Compton Road and in the right-of-way of Mary Street
--Construction of the pedestrian interface between existing establishments and the new construction
--Completion of NBD parking lot development at 8401-8419 Vine Street
### HARTWELL NBD
**URBAN DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**
1982-1988

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### TASK: PROJECT AREA TWO

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**TOTAL DEVELOPMENT COST**

$1,912,388
HARTWELL ZONING

It is recommended that the implementation of the Urban Design Plan for the Cincinnati portion of the Hartwell Neighborhood Business District Focus Area include the creation of an Interim Development Control (IDC) District, in order to protect the integrity of the plan and to prevent any new uses or development that would be inconsistent with the Urban Design Plan. The Interim Development Control District would in effect create an overlay district on top of the Urban Design Plan for a period of twelve (12) months, during which time an Environmental Quality District amendment, or alternative zoning measure, could be instituted for the Neighborhood Business District consistent with the design principles and guidelines promulgated in the NBD Urban Design Plan.
HARTWELL

LEGAL BASIS FOR PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Under Chapter 725 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code it was found that "blighted, deteriorating, and deteriorated areas" exist within the City which "contribute to the spread of disease and crime, . . . ; constitute an economic and social liability; and impair . . . the sound growth of the community." It was also found that this blight and deterioration could not be controlled by private enterprise alone. In order to remedy this situation Chapter 725 authorized the City to expend funds to eliminate blight and deterioration and -- towards this end -- to acquire private property.

In order to expend funds for urban renewal the City must first prepare an urban renewal plan which defines the area which is blighted or deteriorating, states the reasons for defining the areas as blighted or deteriorating, and recommends a certain course of action to redevelop or rehabilitate the area. When City Council approves the plan, thereby declaring the subject area to be an "Urban Renewal Area," the City administration is formally authorized to carry out the activities recommended in the plan.

Under Chapter 725 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code an Urban Renewal Area "shall mean a blighted or deteriorating area which is appropriate for redevelopment or rehabilitation as defined in paragraph (a) of Section 725 - 1-U." The City of Cincinnati, for the purposes of this particular plan, therefore, declares that the Hartwell Business District, Focus Area, more particularly defined in Boundary Description of the Urban Design Area is an Urban Renewal Area. Within
the Hartwell Focus Area Neighborhood Business District there exist blighted areas in which a majority of the structures are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, by reason of age, obsolescence, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, mixture of incompatible land uses, a lack of ventilation or sanitary facilities or any combination of these factors, or there exist deteriorating areas which because of incompatible land uses, non-conforming uses, lack of adequate parking facilities, faulty street arrangement, inadequate community facilities, increased density of population without commensurate increase in new residential buildings and community facilities, high turnover in residential or commercial occupancy, lack of maintenance and repair of buildings, or any combination thereof are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, and which will deteriorate, or are in danger of deteriorating, into blighted areas. Through the adoption of this Urban Renewal Plan by City Council, the City Manager is authorized to acquire any property in the area defined in the Urban Design Area, the acquisition of which is necessary in carrying out the Urban Renewal Plan.

Further, the Hartwell Neighborhood Business District Urban (Urban Renewal) Plan conforms to the Master Plan of the development of the City. The City has established a feasible method for the relocation of any families, individuals or businesses that shall be displaced from the area by any Federally funded public development action.
HARTWELL NBD BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (MUNICIPAL PORTION ONLY)

Beginning at a point, said point being the intersection of the centerlines of Vine Street and Glendale Avenue, thence moving westwardly a distance of 565 feet to a point, thence, moving northwardly a distance of 545 to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of West Galbraith Road and Pfau thence moving eastwardly to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of Pfau Street and Vine Street, thence moving northwardly along the centerline of Vine Street to a point, said point being the north parcel line of Hamilton County Auditor's parcel 245-3-1, thence moving eastwardly along the north line of said parcel to a northeast corner of said parcel; thence, moving southwardly along the east property of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcels 245-3-1, 245-3-2, and 245-3-3 to a point, said point being the centerline of Hillsdale Avenue and the east parcel line of Hamilton County Auditor's parcel 245-3-133; thence, southwardly along the east parcel line of said parcel and continuing southwardly along the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcels 245-3-28, 245-3-29, 245-3-30, 245-3-31, and 24503-134 to a point, said point being the centerline of Herford Avenue; thence, moving southwardly from said line intersected by the east parcel line of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcel 245-3-139, and continuing southwardly along the east property lines of parcels 245-3-139, 245-3-81, 245-3-82, 245-3-143; 245-3-140, and 245-3-136 to a point, said point being the centerline of Sheehan Avenue intersected by the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcel 245-6-153; thence, southwardly along the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's parcels 245-6-145, 245-6-141, 245-6-67, 245-6-92, 245-6-93, and 245-6-94 to a point, said point being the centerline of Ferndale Street; thence eastwardly along the centerline of said street to a point, said point being the centerline of Ferndale Street intersected by the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcel 245-5-34; thence, moving southwardly along the east property
line of Hamilton County Auditor's Parcels 245-6-34 and 245-6-5 to a point, said point being the centerline of East Galbraith Road intersected by the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's parcel 244-5-5; thence, moving southwardly along the east property line of Hamilton County Auditor's parcels 244-5-5 and 244-5-17 to a point, said point being the centerline of Glendale Avenue to the point of intersection of the centerline of Vine Street, and the place of beginning.