

November 17th, 2025

To: Markiea Carter, Director, Department of Community & Economic Development
From: Katherine Keough-Jurs, FAICP, Director, Department of City Planning & Engagement
Subject: Community Engagement Meeting Summary – Northside White Castle Lot TIF Request

On Wednesday, November 12th, 2025, the Department of City Planning & Engagement (DCPE) hosted a Community Engagement Meeting regarding the proposed use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) funds for the acquisition of the former Northside White Castle lot located at 4000 Spring Grove Avenue and 3940 Old Ludlow Avenue in Northside.

Mailed notices were sent to 55 property owners within 400 feet of the subject property and the Northside Community Council. The notices included a QR code to register for the meeting and a link to the DCPE website where additional information about the proposed project could be found: <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/planning/community-engagement/upcoming-community-engagement-meetings/>. Several social media posts were posted on DCPE's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The meeting was conducted virtually on Zoom at 5:30 p.m. Staff from DCPE and the Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) were present. The facilitation of the meeting was carried out by a Community Engagement Specialist in DCPE.

A total of 13 community members attended the meeting. All attendees had the opportunity to hear from the applicant team and learn about the proposed acquisition and the next phase of the project. Attendees were also provided with an opportunity to ask questions. For detailed questions and concerns raised during the meeting, please refer to Attachment 1, labeled as Additional Information. Additionally, you can find the PowerPoint presentation used during the meeting in Attachment 2.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Additional Information
- Attachment 2: PowerPoint Presentation

Proposed Use of TIF Funds for the Acquisition of Former Northside White Castle Lot

This document outlines information shared during the Community Engagement Meeting on Wednesday, November 12th, 2025. This document is intended as a summary and not as meeting minutes.

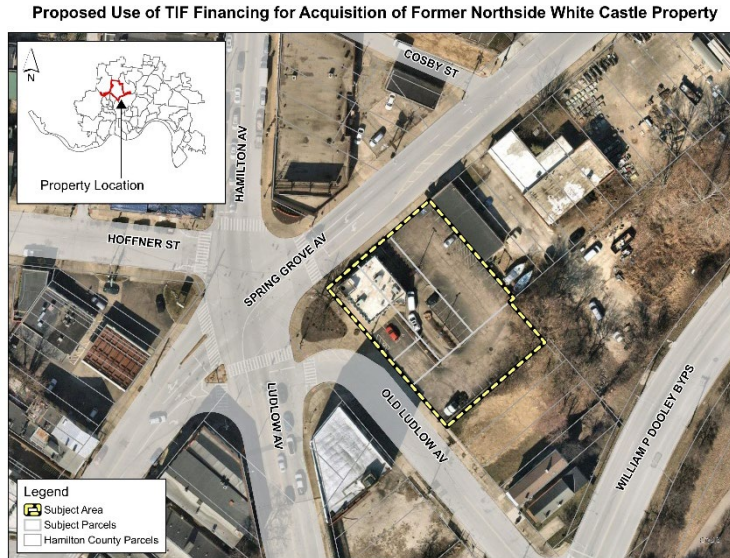
Background

Northsiders Engaged in Sustainable Transformation (NEST), the Northside community urban redevelopment corporation, is a nonprofit focused on community development for Northside. NEST has entered into a sale agreement with the landowner, contingent upon securing financing. White Castle's corporate entity has applied to raze the former restaurant and parking lot; they received Historic Conservation Board approval in late October 2025.

The project involves acquiring approximately half an acre at 3940 Old Ludlow Avenue and 4000 Spring Grove Avenue, currently zoned CC-M-T and located in the Northside Historic District and the Hamilton Avenue Neighborhood Business District (NBD). The site is currently owned by 3940 Old Ludlow LLC, which has leased to White Castle for over 50 years. There is currently no definite plan for these parcels. However, the parcels are at a key six-way intersection known as Knowlton's Corner, which serves as a gateway to Northside.

The parcels might be used to help make a more intentional connection between the NBD and the nearby Mill Creek Greenway Trail, a community asset that is being developed by Tri-State Trails in partnership with The Port and City. The parcels can also strengthen the historic Knowlton's Corner, a community gathering space and key intersection for over 200 years. NEST seeks a grant from the Northside TIF district funds for the property purchase and related expenses, totaling around \$450,000 or less.

Location and Existing Site



Notice

The Department of City Planning and Engagement (DCPE) sent out notices to 55 property owners within 400 feet of the subject properties and the Northside Community Council.

Meeting Requests and Attendance

18 people requested the meeting link for the Community Engagement Meeting, and 13 community members were in attendance. Demographic data was captured for the 13 attendees using an online QR code to request the meeting link.

Represented neighborhoods	Relationship with the City	Race/Ethnicity
Northside: 11 Dayton, KY: 1 Other: 1	Business Owner: 0 UC Student: 1	White/Caucasian: 11 Asian: 2

Meeting Q&A Notes:

The following comments and questions were received during the question-and-answer portion of the meeting.

Community Member 1: Stated that the property was a vital property within the district and shared their support. They asked if the additional \$25,000 loan would be necessary.

Applicant: Responded that she was confident that they could get the closing completed and not need the additional \$25,000 loan.

Community Member 2: Commented on the importance of this corner/gateway and shared their support.

Community Member 3: Shared her support and reiterated that this request received unanimous support from the Northside Community Council.

Meeting adjourned.



Proposed Use of TIF Funds for acquisition of former White Castle in Northside

Community Engagement Meeting | November 12, 2025

Welcome & Housekeeping

1. Welcome & Housekeeping
2. Brief presentation
3. Question & Answer
 - Please save all questions/comments until Q&A
 - Staff will call on participants to unmute one at a time
 - You may use “raise hand” function in the chat bar if you have a follow-up question



Dariah Williams

Community Engagement Specialist

Welcome & Housekeeping

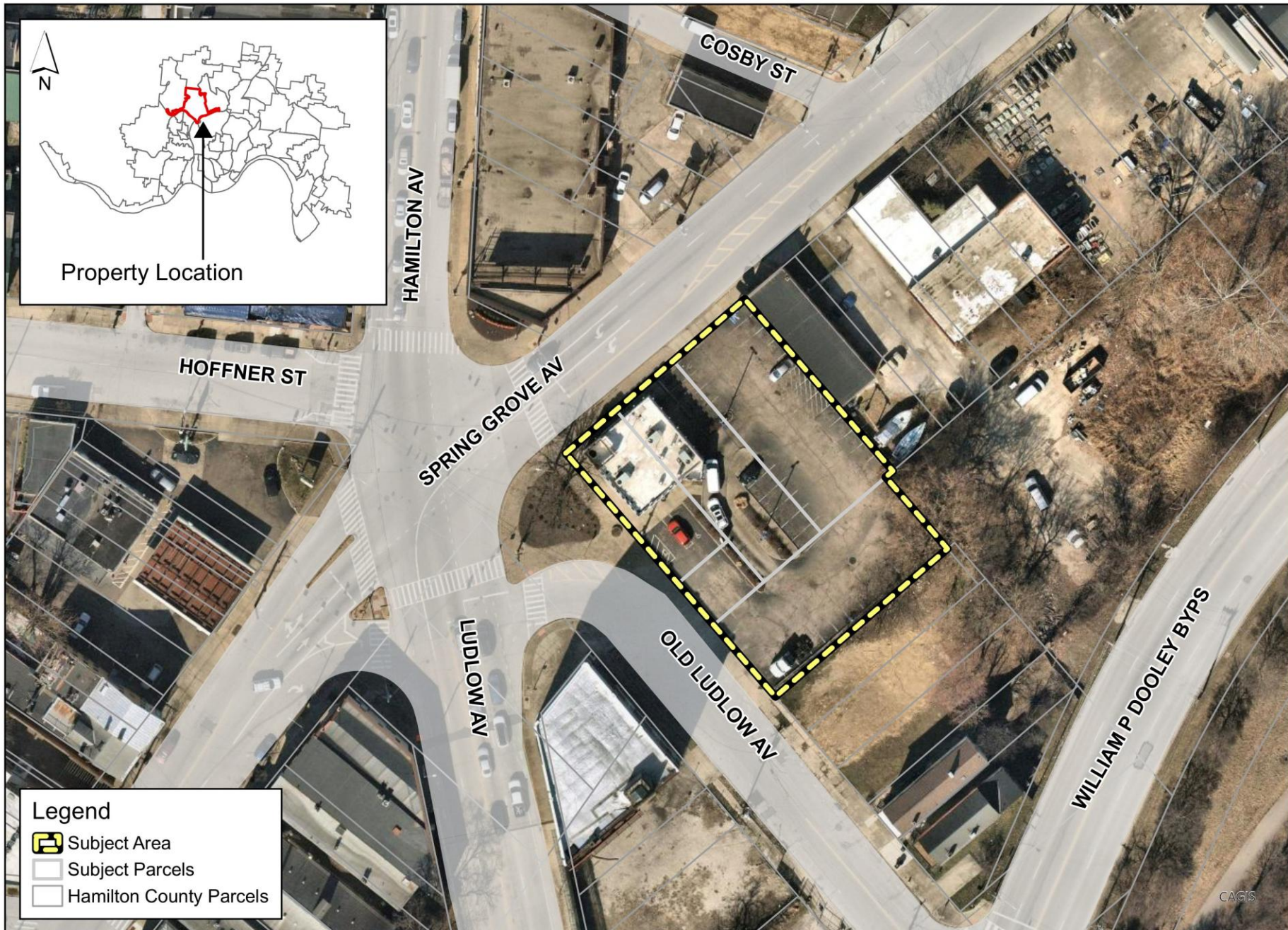
- Please remain muted.
- Chat Bar
 - Use the chat bar for tech-related issues or questions
 - Do not use the chat bar to ask project-specific questions

Purpose of Meeting

This is a public meeting to discuss the proposed use of TIF funds for acquisition of the Former White Castle Lot in Northside.

- Dariah Williams is here to facilitate the meeting.
- Stacey Hoffman is here to capture notes/comments brought up during the meeting
- Greg Koehler from the Department of Community and Economic Development is here to answer any TIF related questions.
- Rachel Hastings from Northside Community Development Corporation (NEST) is here to answer any project related questions.
- **No decisions are being made at this meeting**

Proposed Use of TIF Financing for Acquisition of Former Northside White Castle Property



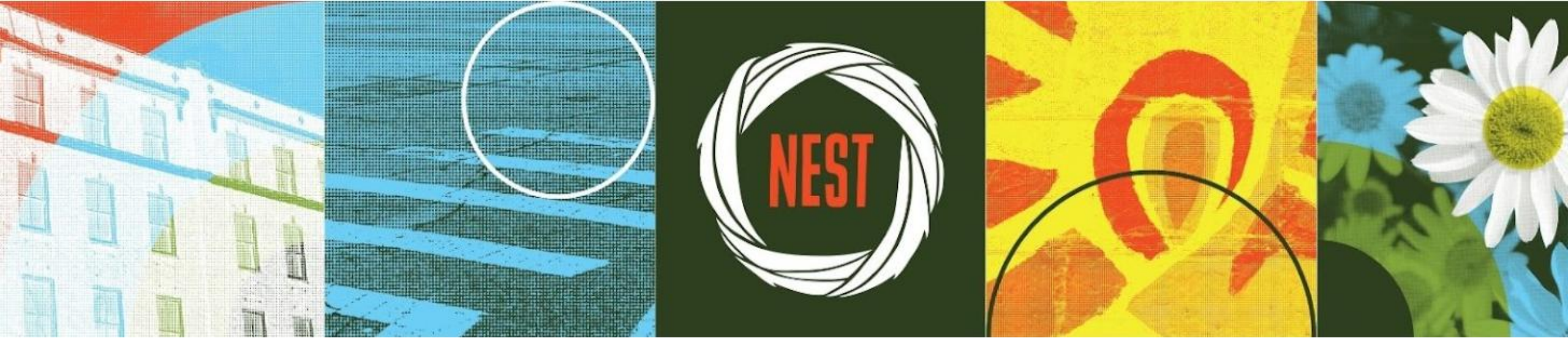
Background

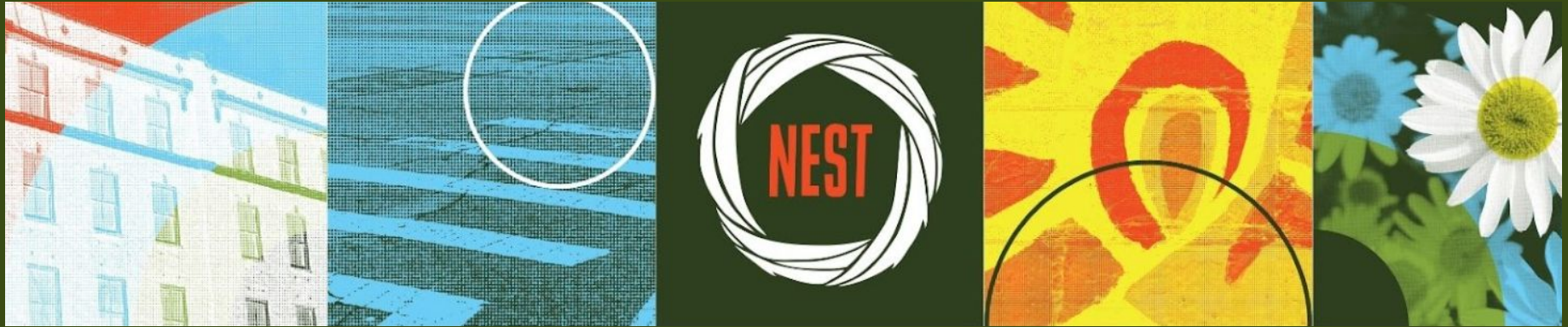
- NEST is the nonprofit community development corporation for the Northside neighborhood.
- The former White Castle site is at Knowlton's Corner, the historic six-way intersection that welcomes visitors and neighbors to Northside. This site has been called out for redevelopment in the Northside Comprehensive Land Use Plan and the Knowlton's Corner and Beyond Area Plan. The site is also called out in the Northside Historic District as a key property for redevelopment.
- The funding request is solely for the acquisition of the property.
- Do not currently have a definite plan for these parcels.
- Approximately \$450,000 funds from the Northside District Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for acquisition and acquisition related expenses regarding the property.

Location and Existing Site:

- 3940 Old Ludlow and 4000 Spring Grove

Presentation





Former White Castle Lots Acquisition
3940 Old Ludlow + 4000 Spring Grove

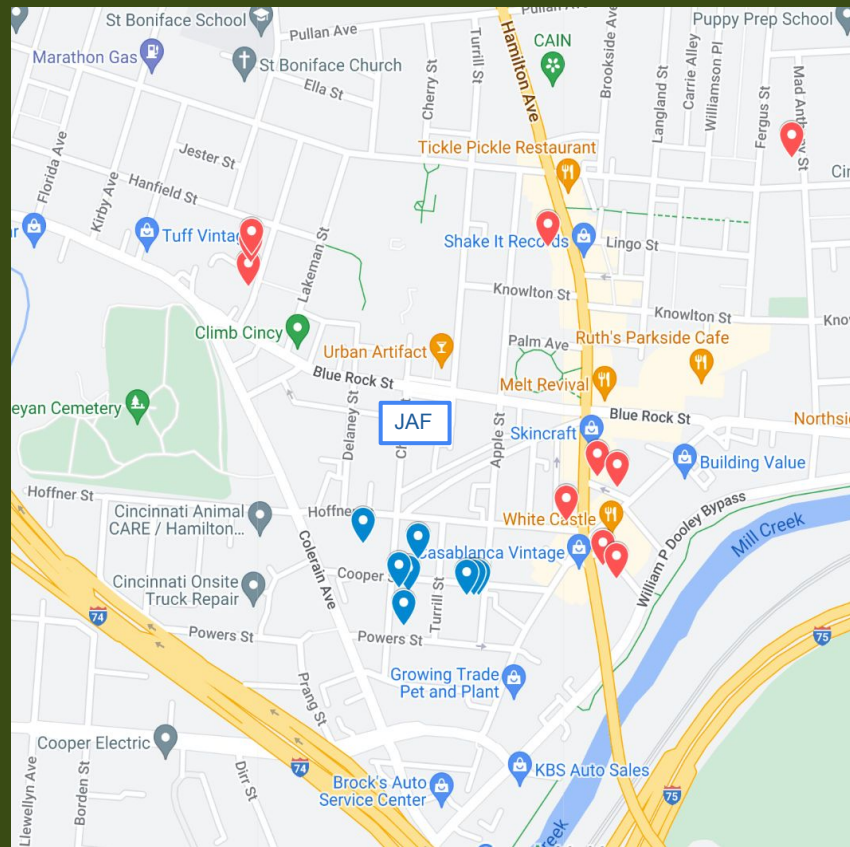
TIF Funding Request: up to \$450,000



For Northside, By Northside

Founded in 2006, NEST is Northside's nonprofit community development corporation.

Our mission to ensure Northside endures as a thriving and vibrant community by revitalizing the built environment and improving neighborhood livability.

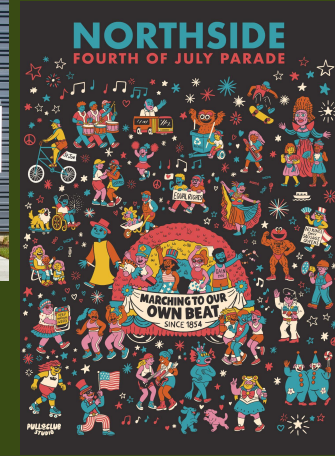


Map shows current NEST projects with red and blue pins. John Arthur Flats (JAF) is noted in a white box with a blue outline.

NEST Organizational Capacity



- Completed \$1.2M renovation of 4024 Hamilton, with Dean's Mediterranean Table and 2 office spaces
- Developed, co-developed, and/or sold 42 single-family home parcels
- Building \$180,000 Spring Grove Pocket Park
- Stabilizing long-vacant 4001 Hamilton in fall 2025
- Stabilizing former Park Theatre in spring 2026
- Co-developing \$26M Northside Gateway mixed-use, affordable, Transit-Oriented Development (with Urban Sites and OTRCH)
- Managing \$415,000 "REFRESH" exterior improvement program, 17+ businesses directly improved
- Managed 7 Hamilton Avenue Murals and 6 murals at Vandalia Point
- Managed \$295,000 in pedestrian safety improvements
- Developed \$14M John Arthur Flats senior, affordable, LGBTQIA+ friendly housing





Former White Castle Parcels

- Restaurant was in operation since 1967
- White Castle corporate decided to shutter location on June 28, 2025
- White Castle corporate received City permission to raze their building, parking lot, and curb cuts on October 20, 2025 - demo should happen soon
- Land is owned by a separate private entity
- Land is located at Knowlton's Corner, a key six-way intersection and gateway to Northside for over 200 years
- Purchase price is \$355,000 (equal to fair market value)
- Closing between December 10 - 31, 2025
- Located within Northside Historic District
- Zoned CCM-T



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4000 Spring Grove + 3940 Old Ludlow



Public Purpose



- Site identified for redevelopment in the Northside Comprehensive Land Use Plan (2006/2014) and the Knowlton's Corner and Beyond Area Plan (2023)
- Site identified in the Northside Historic District as a property key for neighborhood revitalization
- City Ordinance #189-1982, the enacting legislation for the Northside Historic District, shows that the site at Knowlton's Corner has been a topic of community conversation for over 40 years:

Lower Hamilton Avenue retains its scale and density. The buildings are sited on the sidewalk, as are the buildings on upper Hamilton Avenue. Knowlton's Corner is a landmark for the community, but its character has been substantially altered by new construction at three of its six corners, including a gas station and a White Castle. Community concern was expressed over the possibility of more inappropriate alterations or demolition on lower Hamilton Avenue and further erosion of Knowlton's Corner. There was also concern about district boundaries reinforcing a perceived split in the business district at Blue Rock which divides upper Hamilton Avenue from the lower Avenue.

Staff has proposed a single historic district encompassing all of Hamilton Avenue from Knowlton's Corner to Chase Avenue. It is historically a single business district and its establishment should reinforce efforts to upgrade lower Hamilton Avenue and create a more appropriate entrance to Northside.



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Due Diligence + Acquisition Budget

PREFERRED PLAN:

Purchase Price	\$355,000
Environmentals	\$17,300
Title Exam/Insurance, Survey, Closing Costs	\$7,980
City Administrative Fee	\$20,000
NEST Project Delivery Fee	\$20,000

TOTAL \$420,280



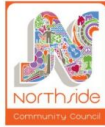
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BACKUP PLAN TO MEET SELLER TIMING REQUIREMENT:

** Cincinnati Development Fund Bridge Loan ADD \$25,450
(interest carry, legal fees, origination fee)

TOTAL \$445,730

Northside Community Council



October 27th, 2025

Rachel Hastings, Executive Director
NEST CNCURC
1546 Knowlton St
Cincinnati, Ohio 45223

Dear Mrs. Hastings,

It is my honor to provide you with this letter of support from the Northside Community Council.

Monday, October 20th, 2025, the Northside Community Council, at its monthly meeting of the general council voted unanimously in favor of passing the following motion:

Motion

Northside Community Council moves to provide a letter of support for NEST's use of TIF funds, in an amount reasonably consistent with the proposal presented, for the acquisition of the property formerly occupied by White Castle.

Northside Community Council's support of NEST's acquisition affirms both our partnership and our trust in their work to ensure that development in our neighborhood reflects our collaborative commitment to the community's shared values. NEST has consistently demonstrated its stewardship of the long-term character of our historic business district while advancing development that responds to real needs in the neighborhood.

We welcome this opportunity for the site's future to be shaped by Northsiders through open community input, transparency, and accountability.

I am available for any questions and/or concerns most efficiently via email at president@northsidecouncil.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Briana Moss".

Briana (Bree) Moss
President, Northside Community Council
513-402-2733



Thank You!

www.northsidenest.org



Reminder

Everyone will be asked to unmute one-at-a-time. Due to the number of speakers, please limit your time to two (2) minutes. There will be time at the end for any questions/concerns that were not addressed

- Use “raise hand” function if you have a follow-up question following your initial question
- Do not use the chat bar for project-related questions (tech issues only)

Contact

Department of City Planning & Engagement

Dariah Williams, Community Engagement Specialist

Dariah.williams@cincinnati-oh.gov

Written comment must be submitted by 5pm on Friday, November 14, 2025, for inclusion in the public engagement summary.



Thank you for coming!