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# Fourth Street: A Bridge to the Future

## *A Conservation / Development / Design Strategy*

*Prepared for Public Review and Comment*

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*Presented by*

Cincinnati City Planning Department and  
Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board  
*October 1985*

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***"Cincinnati is a proud city, rich in heritage, in tradition, in quality of life. Its splendid heritage must be preserved; nothing in its future development must be permitted to diminish its high standards."***

*(Cincinnati 2000 Plan, "The Goal," Page 6)*

NOTE:

This report is intended to elicit public response to preliminary recommendations for the preservation of historic resources in the Fourth Street area, and for the preservation of the street's "special scale and character" as mandated in the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan*.

This document, along with responses received during the public review period, will be used by the City's Historic Conservation Board in drafting its final recommendations to the City Planning Commission and City Council.

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*Introduction*

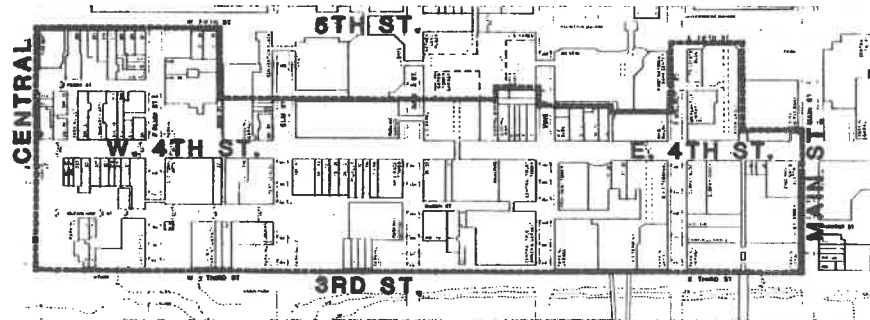


# INTRODUCTION

The Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board, with the publication of this report, invites citizens to consider a new vision for Fourth Street.

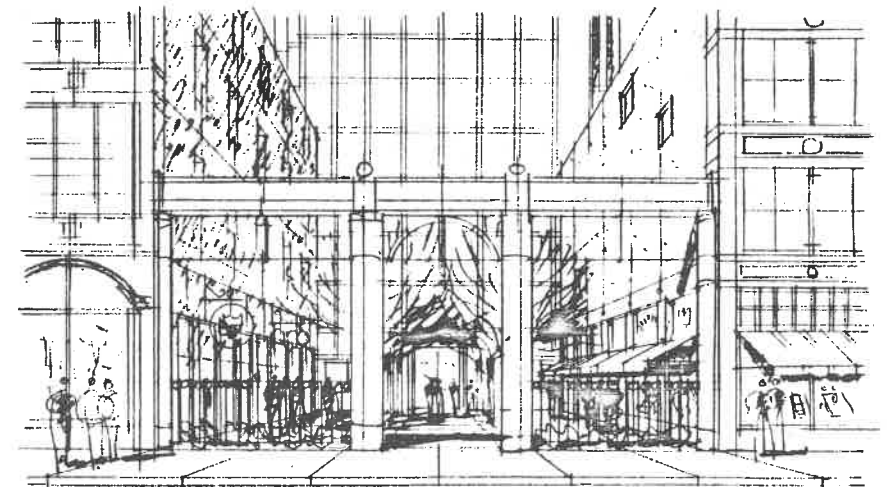
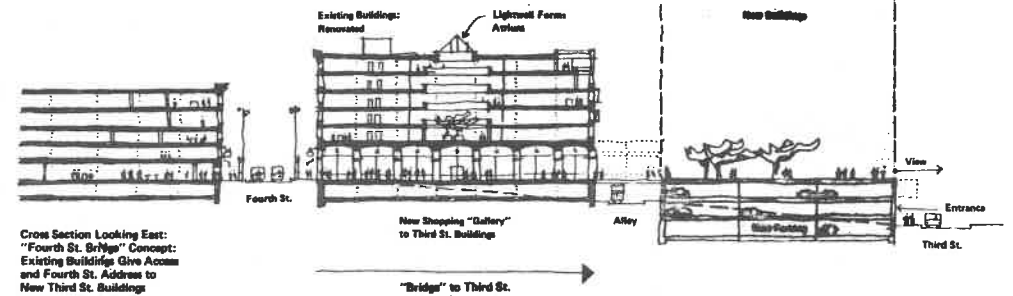
This magnificent street marks Cincinnati's emergence as a leading American city. Century-old businesses which grew up on Fourth Street remain there today. It has been, and remains, our premier shopping and financial center, and is regaining its early reputation as a fashionable residential area. It is home to some of our oldest institutions, finest stores and grandest works of architecture. The buildings lining Fourth Street symbolize and embody Cincinnati's tradition of excellence. They represent a city that cares about itself enough to have kept touch with the best of its heritage.

But Fourth Street is more than history and tradition. Its proximity to Fountain Square and its reputation as a "prestige" location make it an attractive street for major new investment. In a downtown which needs room to grow, Fourth Street is seen by many as the obvious area, after Fountain Square West, for the high-intensity development that will come in future decades.



Study Area

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These two views -- Fourth Street as a historic and architectural treasure that should be preserved for future generations, and Fourth Street as an under-developed resource needed for future generations' growth and expansion -- present instant controversy to those public and private decisionmakers whose actions will determine the future of the street.

The dilemma is heightened by the fact that Third Street -- where major development parcels do exist -- is seen as being outside the desirable central core. Fourth Street, elevated 20 to 25 feet above Third, is the southernmost active, pedestrian street in the core. In this way, Fourth Street acts as a physical and psychological terminus to development and is thus a barrier to an expanded downtown.

The need to address the apparent conflict between "preservation" and "development" views was a major concern to the Historic Conservation Board and City Planning Department as we began structuring this study. Our twofold assignment, taken directly from the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan* leaned toward the "preservation" side, since the Plan said we should find ways to "preserve the street's historic resources" as well as its "historic character and special scale."

Nonetheless, we understood that mandate to be within the larger aim of preserving adequate options for vigorous growth and development. We designed the study, therefore, to balance evenly all three goals (historic buildings, scale/character, and new development). Our desire to include development impacts in the study was strengthened after the Cincinnati Board of Realtors specifically requested to City Council that this study include economic impacts, including "the impact on surrounding areas (Third and Fifth Streets and other impacted areas)."

In the course of the study, we made an enlightening discovery -- that the apparent "preservation/development" conflict is *only* that: apparent. In reality, Fourth Street offers unparalleled opportunities for both preservation of this outstanding streetscape *and* room for new "landmark quality" buildings containing millions of square feet of development.

How can this be accomplished? By shifting the way we think about the street. Instead of continuing to perceive Fourth Street as a barrier, we can see it as a bridge.

Making this simple shift allows an entirely new vision of Fourth Street, and a new range of expanded options for the area's development. Arcades cut through existing Fourth Street buildings (or compatibly-designed new structures or entry gardens) can

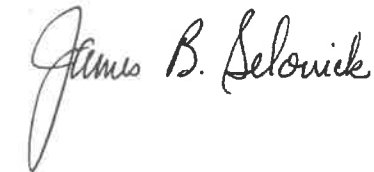
become literal bridges to high-density towers built on Third Street development sites. The new towers can thus have a Fourth Street address, but also, at the higher Fourth Street elevation, can offer commanding river views from lobbies connecting to Fourth Street "bridges." The new building can also take advantage of the 25-foot drop between Fourth and Third, and can incorporate several levels of parking, entered from Third, which can serve the new use as well a businesses along Fourth.

Existing Fourth Street buildings will in turn be enhanced by the increased activity on the street. Singly, or collected together to increase floor area, or joined at all floors with new structures behind them, the older buildings' renovation and reuse will be made more likely by their new "bridge" location. The bridge concept also opens the door to creative design solutions which truly weave old and new architecture into the city fabric.

This, then, is the "new vision" explored in this study. Without excessive demolition, without destroying the street's unique character, without disrupting the established pedestrian patterns so essential to the continued health of the street, and -- perhaps most important -- without relocating the strong businesses which now line Fourth Street, we can literally *stretch* our downtown toward the River to unleash new development potential. Looking at

Fourth Street with new eyes can produce results beyond Fourth: the parking supply can be enlarged; the viability of Third Street development sites can be enhanced; the Riverfront can be made to feel closer to downtown than it now seems.

Finally, the difficult assignment presented in the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan* -- preservation of Fourth Street's historic resources, its special scale and character, and its development options -- can be accomplished without the separation which has marked the issue in the past. The Fourth Street so valued in the *2000 Plan's* goals stands as testimony to those 19th and early 20th century leaders whose inventiveness, drive and community spirit built Cincinnati. It is our opportunity, now, to carry this legacy forward into the 21st century.



James B. Selonick

Chairman

Cincinnati Historic Conservation Board

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*Executive Summary*

Street View



Detail: Door



*Fourth Street: A Bridge to the Future* explores options and recommendations for achieving the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan's* goals for Fourth Street from Central Avenue to Main Street.

Pervading all aspects of the study is one central challenge: protecting Fourth Street's historic resources and unique character without sacrificing valuable opportunities for downtown's growth and new development.

The body of the report is divided into six sections:

● **2000 Plan Recap**

The starting point of the study was the adopted *Cincinnati 2000 Plan*; its Fourth Street objectives are reiterated here. Within the broad goal of economic growth and new, high-density development, the *Plan's* Fourth Street objectives are preservation-oriented: creation of a local "Old Town" historic district west of Race; protection of historic resources east of Race; and preservation and maintenance of the historic character and special scale of the Fourth Street streetscape.

● **"Special Character" is More Than the Sum of its Parts**

This analysis defines and illustrates Fourth Street's scale and character. The section makes clear the remarkable consistency of the streetscape from Central to Main, catalogues the features which appear in most buildings along the street, and articulates the *2000 Plan's* characterization of the street as "special."

● **Bankers, Retailers Forge the 20th Century City**

A section on historic resources shows the extreme importance of Fourth Street in marking Cincinnati's emergence as a major American city. Key decisions by leading retailers (Shillito, McAlpin, the Pogue brothers) and by major banks (First National and the predecessors of 5/3 and Central Trust) moved "downtown" from Third Street to Fourth and changed Cincinnati's skyline forever. The section summarizes a building-by-building analysis of 90 structures which notes their historic significance and contribution to the streetscape's scale and character.

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- **"Fourth Street Bridge" Can Expand Downtown Growth**

This section offers a new image of how conservation of Fourth Street's historic fabric can increase, rather than diminish, downtown development opportunities. The "Fourth Street Bridge" concept calls for existing buildings to be used for access (and a Fourth Street address) for major commercial developments on Third. The section makes the following points:

- Although the *2000 Plan* calls for major development on Third, not Fourth, development conflicts could arise in the future because Third Street is a less desirable site for large-scale, commercial development.
- If selective demolition and substantial renovation are allowed for Fourth Street buildings, dramatic connections can be made by creating shopping arcades, entry gardens and interior walkways directly from Fourth to Third Street buildings. Fourth Street access will make Third Street sites more desirable, and will encourage a type of development which is unique in Cincinnati.

- Feasibility of renovation will also improve dramatically if Third Street sites take advantage of the "bridge" concept. A new range of uses and activities will fill older buildings as the area's vitality increases.

- Given normal development patterns, demolition of Fourth Street buildings would net no appreciable gain in developed space on blocks with identified development sites.

- Fourth Street, as it now exists, is a "bird in the hand." It already embodies many of the key elements which the *2000 Plan* said should be sought for downtown's continued success. These elements should be retained.

- Compromise -- to allow selective demolition, to provide for substantial rehabilitation, and to encourage massive development only on Third Street sites -- will allow *all* Fourth Street goals outlined in the *2000 Plan* to be fully met.

- **Review Options Each Have Strengths, Weaknesses**

Explored in this section is the 2000 Plan's mandate that design guidelines be developed to protect the street's historic character and scale. In this summary of a detailed analysis, four existing review systems are measured against three objectives: protection of historic resources, maintenance of scale and character, and flexibility to respond to development opportunities. The analysis concludes that a historic district system best meets the three goals, but notes that the present system contains regulations that may be too restrictive for Fourth Street's special needs and potential.

- **"Historic District With a Twist" is Proposed for Fourth Street**

This final section includes proposals for a historic district on Fourth Street, the individual "landmark" designation of CG&E, and provisions which will greatly liberalize the district's demolition restrictions, thus making it easier to demolish historic buildings if future development proposals would provide greater benefit to the city. The new provisions, different from those in other historic districts, are needed to address Fourth Street's unique development potential. Also presented are proposed incentives for renovation of older buildings, streamlined review guidelines and measures by which the expertise of the City's Urban Design Review Board can be used to benefit the street.

Accompanying this report is an appendix including more detailed information. The Appendix has its own table of contents.



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*Conservation / Development / Design Strategy*

## 1 2000 Plan Recap

When City Council adopted the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan* in mid-1982, it set major new land use and development goals to guide the next two decades of downtown reinvestment. Permeating that adopted plan is the concept of a "design theme" which stresses deliberate action to insure a high-quality, humane, built environment: "convenience and economics are not sufficient ingredients for a plan ... a city fabric must be woven to create patterns of variety and beauty. People must feel enriched and civilized by their surroundings" (*2000 Plan*, Page 6). This theme makes itself most explicit in two major areas: an unprecedented mandate to preserve architectural and historic resources and an insistence on well-designed new buildings and public spaces.

**"...The 2000 Plan does not mince words about the importance of balancing the goals of economic growth, historic preservation and good new design..."**

The *2000 Plan* does not mince words about the importance of balancing the goals of economic growth, historic preservation and good new design:

"... Rather than encourage indiscriminate growth, the *Plan* calls for preservation of outstanding buildings and districts where the economic potential of new structures may be outweighed by the need to retain a sense of the City's past and a human scale ... Diversity is to be achieved ... A mix of old and new architecture, of small-scale and towering buildings is to be a deliberate thing" (*2000 Plan*, "The Goal," Page 6).

While these goals are stated throughout the *2000 Plan*, they are clearly brought home on Fourth Street. Specific language in the plan regarding Fourth Street's character went through several transformations between the consultant's first draft and City Council's final action. The subject was controversial within the Working Review Committee, which acted as an advisor to City Council. The final language, however, adopted by City Council, is shown below:

### 1) Local Historic District Central to Race, Fifth to Fourth

"Cincinnati's Local Historic Legislation affords greater protection to historic resources than does National Registration (*sic*). Under this legislation the Historic Conservation Board is empowered not only to recommend the designation of sites and districts, and to prepare conservation guidelines for historic areas; it is also empowered to modify zoning requirements where necessary to encourage preservation. For this reason the *Plan* proposes that the Oldtown ... (area is) appropriate for designation as (a) local historic district in addition to the national listing. All of the districts (recommended in the *Plan*) include some incompatible structures and underdeveloped land. Opportunities exist, therefore, for new building and development on a scale and of a design sympathetic to the overall character of the districts."

### 2) Preserve Historic Resources Race to Main (Consider Local District, Other Options)

"A number of historic resources are found along Fourth Street from Race to Main. These historic resources should be preserved. A local historic district should be considered as one of several options for preserving these resources."

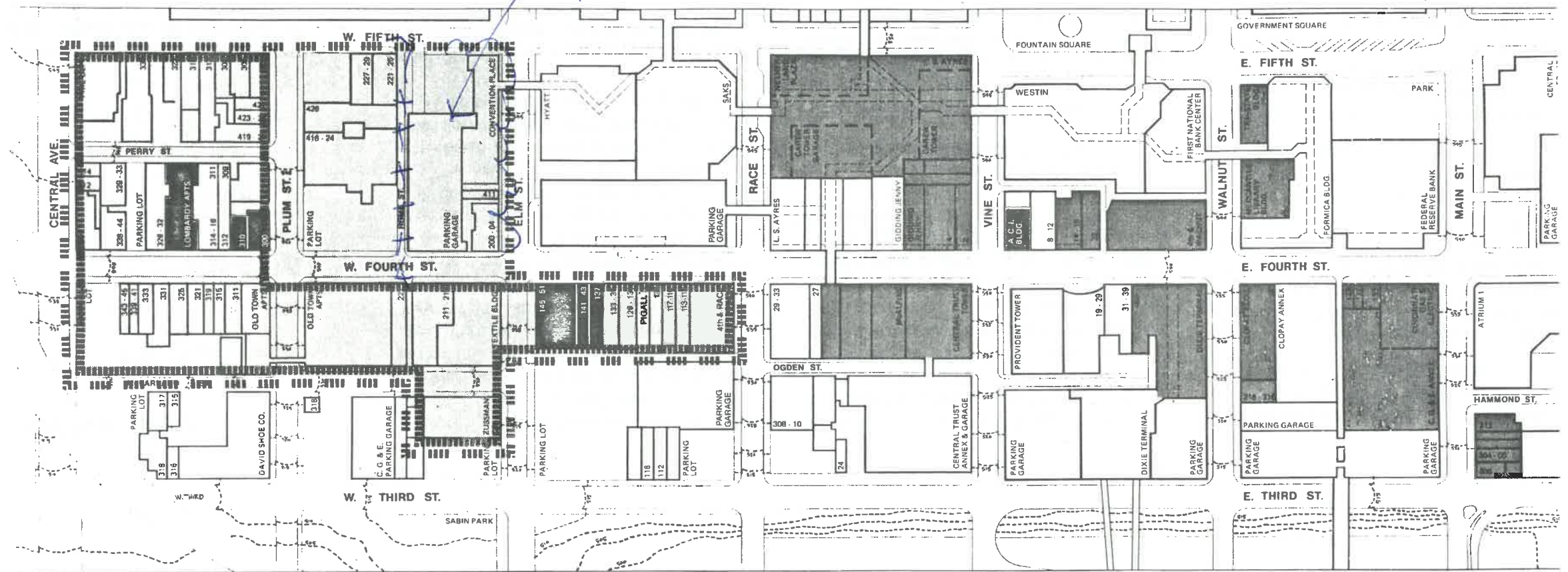
### 3) Preserve Historic Character / Special Scale of Fourth Street Streetscape

"In addition, the special scale of Fourth Street should be preserved. It is the responsibility of the Urban Design Review Board and the Historic Conservation Board to develop guidelines which maintain the historic character and special scale of the Fourth Street streetscape."






# 2000 PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

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*primarily new bldg.*

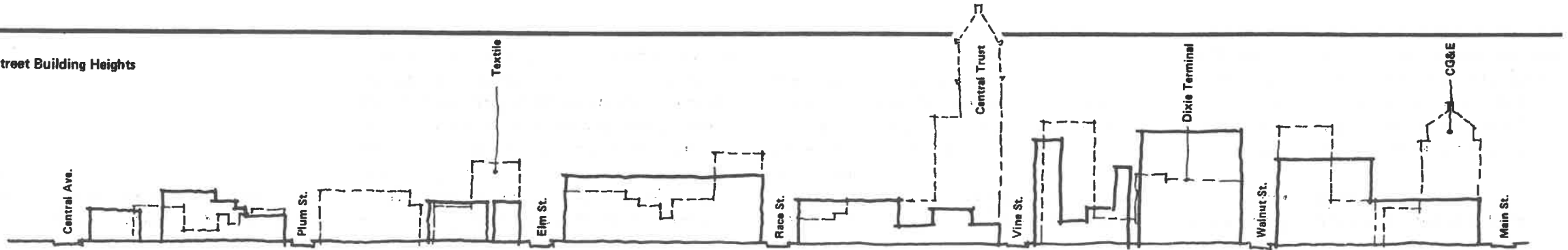


Note: This map differs slightly from that shown on Pg.36 of the Cincinnati 2000 Plan. The changes are corrections to minor graphic errors in the Plan.

	National Register Building		National Historic Site / District	↑ N	
	Historic Resource (Not on Nat'l Register)		Potential Local Historic District		



Fourth Street Building Heights



2 "Special Character" is More than the Sum of It's Parts

The 2000 Plan's references to "special scale and character" are perplexing to some Cincinnatians. "I know there is something special and distinctive about the way Fourth Street looks and feels," says one, "but I don't know if I could define it."

The subject is not as mysterious as it may seem. The definition starts with the street's consistency: It is comprised of many observable features, all there to be analyzed in a thorough look at the street.

First, the tone of the street is set by its older structures: only nine of the buildings that line the street were built in the last 50 years (hence, the 2000 Plan's reference to "historic character").

While building heights and sizes vary considerably between Central and Main Streets, no one block is without a variety of height (see Sketch No. ). Even the monumental buildings include structural divisions or decorative elements which break up their scale into smaller, "human-scale" components. This contributes to a remarkable consistency in the architectural character of the facades of the older (and some newer) buildings, whether large or small:

- All have large windows of similar size, with masonry or cast-iron piers or columns separating them.
- All the facades have some kind of special "base"-- where the first floors are different from the upper floors.
- Except for a few buildings which have been altered, all the buildings have large cornices at the top which project out over the sidewalk. These overhangs "finish" the buildings.
- All of the buildings have handsome ornamentation: columns, column capitals, detailed cornices, stone or metal trim around windows and doors, carved decorative flowers, animals, human faces, etc.
- The rhythms of sun and shadow are consistent throughout the length of the street: there are few "gaps" in the blockface.

- All of the older buildings are built up to the sidewalks, so the street has a consistent feeling of enclosure -- an outdoor "room." Also reinforcing this sense of enclosed space are these features: overhanging cornices, few gaps in the blockface, and buildings at all street corners. Note the dramatic change in feeling of the street at the Provident Tower and at the curved building next to Provident.

These characteristics -- common to 58% of the buildings which line the street, and which make-up a full 80% percent of the street frontage between Central and Main, are the essential ingredients of Fourth Street's special scale and character. Together, they make the whole of Fourth Street greater than the sum of its parts.

"... the street has a consistent feeling of enclosure -- an outdoor 'room'."

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Street View: Three Banks



Union Savings



### 3 Bankers, Retailers Forge the 20th Century City

#### How Are "Historic Resources" Defined?

Of the 115 buildings in the Fourth Street Study Area, 90 were assessed for their individual historic and architectural significance and for their contribution to the area's special scale and character. A remarkably high percentage of these structures were found to have made outstanding or significant contributions to Cincinnati's unique history and quality. Most of the buildings on the street were found to contribute to the "historic character and special scale" referred to in the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan*.

Criteria used in making these determinations were those established 20 years ago by the National Register of Historic Places, the official listing of the nation's historical, architectural, archaeological and cultural treasures.

The City of Cincinnati's criteria for local historic designation are identical to National Register criteria. Application of the criteria occurs at several levels: age, category, type of significance and integrity. Just because "George Washington slept here" does not make a building historic. Nor does the fact that a building is old. According to the standard criteria, to qualify for the National Register or local listing, a property:

- 1 should in most cases be at least 50 years old, and
- 2 must possess at least three "Integrity" indicators (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association).
- 3 must represent an identifiable theme and meet at least one of the following criteria:
  - a) Association with Events / Broad Patterns of History
  - b) Association with Prominent Persons
  - c) Architectural style; construction type, Period or Method; Work of a Master or High Artistic Merit; or having significance as part of a district
  - d) Source of information on History / Pre-history

The themes identified in item three above are developed through research of an area's background history -- its historical context. A theme is a means of organizing and grouping properties based on elements such as environment, technology, development patterns and influences, or political activities that have influenced the evolution of an area through various periods of history. The following history outlines the major periods of growth and development on Fourth Street.

#### History

Fourth Street reflects the height of the expansion of residential, wholesale, retail and banking activities within the Central Business District between 1850 and 1930. Clustered along the Fourth Street spine, the buildings form a cohesive enclave of late 19th century and early 20th century architecture. One fourth of the buildings in the area were architect-designed: the list includes numerous locally- and nationally-known architects. While a diversity of styles is represented, the area contains many unifying features (e.g., setback, massing, scale, and a significant proportion of stone facades). Together, these qualities imbue the area with a sense of permanence, monumentality and urbanity that mark the area as the heart of turn-of-the-century Cincinnati.

#### 1850-1869: Elegant Houses Mix With Small Shops

Development along Fourth Street chronicles the urban development of the city. In the first half of the 19th century, the commercial and industrial activity of the city was located south of Third Street by the river, with the residential area centered along Fourth Street and to the north. Fourth Street in the

*"Just because 'George Washington slept here' does not make a building historic."*



1840s was the "ultra-fashionable residence quarter of Cincinnati." By the 1850s and 1860s, however, some Third Street businesses began moving up the bluff, away from the waterfront activities and floods, and small retail shops and dry goods stores began to mix with the fashionable residences. In 1856, a new post office was built at the southwest corner of Fourth and Vine.

In 1857, the oldest store west of the Alleghenies, the John Shillito Company, hired prominent Cincinnati architect James McLaughlin to design its store at 13-17 West Fourth, later occupied in 1878 by McAlpin's Department Store. Already known in the 1850s and 60s as the "Broadway of Cincinnati," Fourth Street contained many residences, fine quality retail stores, the post office, opera houses and newspaper offices.

### **1870-1899: Major Stores, Industries Bring High Style**

In the 1870s to 1890s, major retailers and wholesalers (already fixtures along Fourth Street) were joined by the utilities and industry. The scale of the buildings became larger and the architectural styles more grand. In 1870, Cincinnati Gas Light & Coke Company moved into a building designed by James

McLaughlin at the southwest corner of Fourth and Plum. In 1873, James Keys Wilson was hired to design a new building for one of the largest furniture companies in the world, Mitchell and Rammelsberg, and the building boom was in full swing. The H&S Pogue Company joined the other major department stores by locating on Fourth Street in 1878, and the world's leading publisher of sacred music, the John Church Company, commissioned Samuel Hannaford to design its Hooper Building on the southeast corner of Fourth and Elm. Wealthy Cincinnati residents were moving into elegant apartments along Fourth Street, the first of which was Samuel Hannaford's 1875 Lombardy Building.

The printing and textile industry moved up the hill from Third Street at the turn of the century with the construction of the Textile Building in 1906. Designed by Gustav Drach, the structure consolidated a variety of textile-related industries and interests under one roof, a novel concept in the 1900s. The specialty printing trade was centered along Fourth Street as well, with the relocation to Cincinnati of the Methodist Book Concern. Its headquarters were housed on West Fourth Street until the construction, in 1914, of a factory around the corner on Plum. The Book Concern was a leader in the publication of religious books. In 1921, one of the oldest greeting card companies in the country, the

rapidly expanding Gibson Art Company, moved from Elm Street into its factory on Fourth and Plum, remaining there until the mid-1950s.

### **1900-1919: Banking Boom; Major Architects Dominate Early Years**

The opening years of the 20th century marked not only a consolidation of uses within the area; but a subtle change to larger-scale buildings along Fourth Street. The area began to emerge as banking headquarters and offices. Advancements in construction technology, employed in other cities beginning in the 1880s, now impacted Cincinnati, allowing for taller buildings to be constructed. Architects were increasingly employed and the richness of Fourth Street's architecture reflected the economic prosperity of the times. Chicago architect Daniel Burnham, one of the creators of the Commercial Style, designed four early skyscrapers, including Cincinnati's first skyscraper (now called the Fourth and Walnut Building). Erected in 1900 for Union Savings Bank, the building housed the first bank to relocate to Fourth Street from the traditional banking center on Third Street.

Another of Cincinnati's early skyscrapers, the 1902 Ingalls Building (ACI Building), has the singular distinction of being the world's first reinforced

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concrete skyscraper, and was designed and built by the local Cincinnati firms of Elzner and Anderson and the Ferro-Concrete Construction Company (now Turner Construction Company). The Mercantile Library Building, which dates from 1905, was the third building to house the library on this site since 1840, and represents the Mercantile Library's longstanding commitment to remain in the Fourth Street area.

The second decade of the 20th century, before World War I, brought to Fourth Street continued prosperity which was reflected in the magnificent architecture which appeared. Famed New York architect Cass Gilbert (who designed the Woolworth Building in New York City) was hired to design the Union Central Life Insurance Building (now Central Trust Tower) in association with the local firm of Garber and Woodward. Built in 1913, it was the fifth largest building in the world, the tallest building outside of New York City and, until 1930, the tallest building in Cincinnati. One of the premier buildings of Cincinnati, the tower is a landmark on the Cincinnati skyline. The Longwood Building (211-219 West Fourth Street), the Levinson Brothers Building (309 West Fifth), Otte Building (29-33 West Fourth), Security Savings Bank (308-310 West Fourth) and Newstedt-Loring Andrews Building (27 West Fourth) are all examples of the

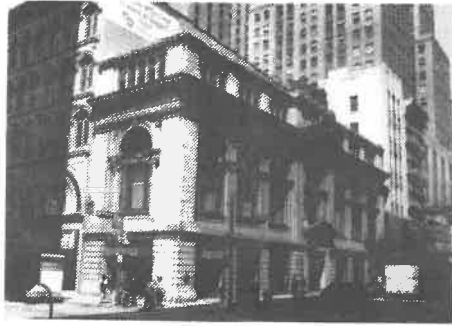
varied architectural styles of the 1910s that decorate the streetscape.

### **1920 - Present: Fourth Street Reflects Business Stability**

As the rest of the nation experienced economic uncertainties after World War I and during the Great Depression, major businesses in Cincinnati remained relatively sound. Business activity in the Fourth Street area was strong and the area was defined by its solid and unbroken commercial streetscape. The area continued to be the main banking and shopping district of the city and witnessed the construction of three more important buildings. The Dixie Terminal, with its spectacular two-story glass and marble arcade, was designed by Garber and Woodward and greatly improved interstate transportation by providing the Ohio terminus for Kentucky streetcars. The Insight Tower, designed by Tietig & Lee in 1927, was the home of the Chamber of Commerce and later the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. The 1929 Cincinnati Gas and Electric Company Building, designed by the nationally-known architect John Russell Pope (in association with Garber and Woodward), won recognition for architectural excellence in 1930 from the American Institute of

Architects, and is a landmark profile in Cincinnati's downtown skyline.

The greatest impacts on the Fourth Street area since 1935 have been the increasing use of the automobile and the city's concerted efforts to bring sports, entertainment and conventions downtown. Most of the physical changes brought about by these impacts occurred along the periphery of the area, but heightened the uniqueness of Fourth Street, which has been relatively unchanged in the past 50 years. While two parking garages and several new office buildings have been erected in the last 30 years within the area, it still retains its late 19th century, early 20th century commercial character.



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**SUMMARY: Fourth Street's Significance**

By studying this history and the individual buildings on the street significant themes for the development of Fourth Street emerge. Although seven themes are definitely represented five are particularly characteristic of the street. These themes are: Commercial Activities, 1850-1930; Urban Architecture, 1850-1930; Early 20th Century Skyscrapers 1900-1920; Early 20th Century Banking Activities; and Industrial Activity, 1850-1930.

An understanding of the relationship between the existing buildings on the street and Fourth Street's major historical, social, cultural and developmental themes gleans additional understanding of the street's importance. It adds a more dynamic sense of Cincinnati's people, activities and community character during our rapid growth years of 1850 to 1930, and of the forces that were then thrusting Cincinnati into its position as a leading American city.

**Outstanding (15 Buildings)**

These properties are those already listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, or buildings which Historic Conservation Office (HCO) staff determined could easily qualify for Register listing. They are of extreme importance architecturally and/or historically. They have undergone relatively little alteration since they were built, or the alterations themselves have gained significance.



**Significant (30 Buildings)**

Also of importance architecturally and/or historically, and may qualify for individual listing. Buildings were placed in this category when alterations diminished their architectural integrity without severely altering the overall character of the building or compromising its major significant features. Some significantly altered buildings were placed in this category because of overriding historical importance.



**Contributing (31 Buildings)**

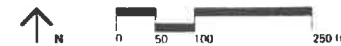
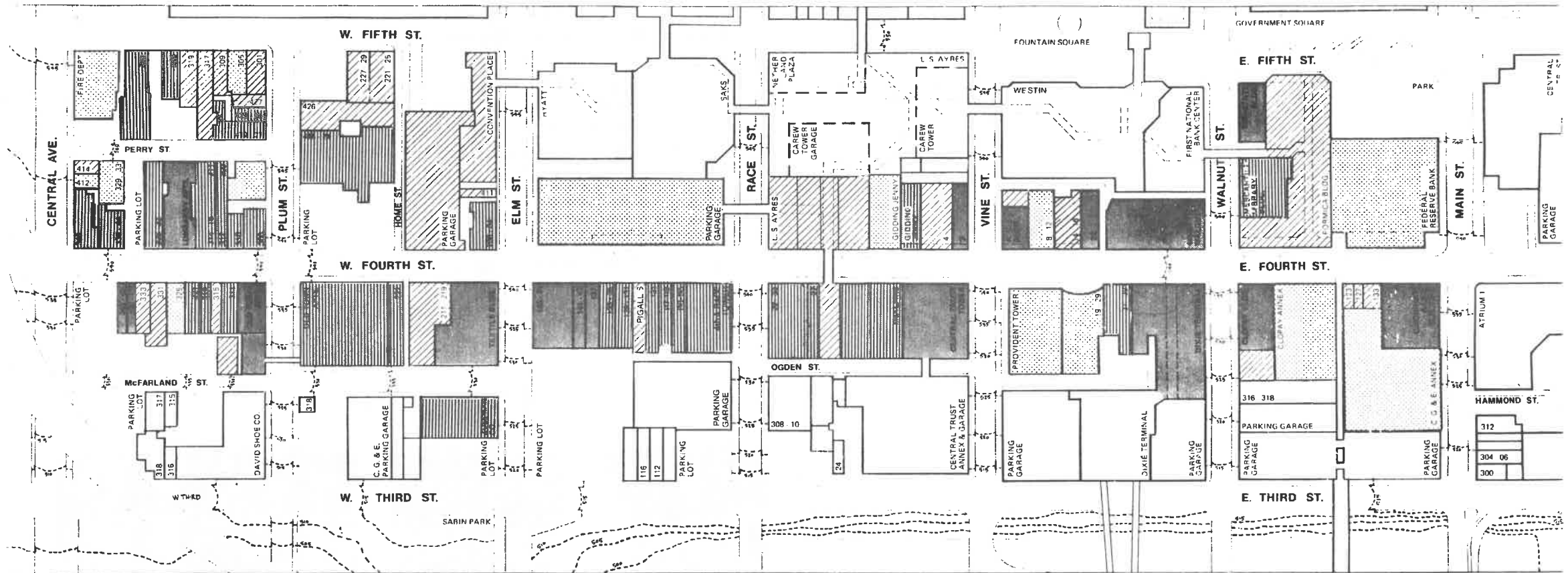
Buildings which contribute to Fourth Street's historic character and special scale and which contribute to historical context and development themes, but which may lack individual distinction. In most cases, alterations have been major. Three new buildings (see Appendix) are included.



**Non-contributing (14 Buildings)**

Buildings which do not possess those design characteristics (see Section 2) which contribute to Fourth Street's special scale and historic character.

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## 4 "Fourth Street Bridge" can Expand Downtown Growth

Fourth Street has been a prestigious business and shopping address for well over 100 years; it remains so today. Its success has not depended on new construction: major new buildings have occurred primarily on Fifth Street in the past 15 years, until recently concentrating around Fountain Square.

As the supply of Fifth Street sites diminishes, however, more attention will be focused on the redevelopment of Fourth Street. The street's historic preservation issues, therefore, must be addressed within the context of the City's larger economic development goals. Questions such as the following must be asked:

- How does the street, as it now exists, further development goals of the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan*? What is the feasibility of renovating existing buildings on Fourth and in the "Old Town" area?
- How does Fourth Street *function* within the CBD's activity patterns? Does it assist or hamper the City's growth objectives?

*"...without waiting for the year 2000, Fourth Street already embodies many of the key elements which the 2000 Plan seeks for the central business district."*

- Major development sites are south of Fourth. What would be the impact on those sites of a decision to preserve a large percentage of Fourth Street's buildings: the structures that create the "historic character and special scale" of the street? Are there other sites, previously unidentified, where market forces may add new development pressures?

Two frames of reference thus are needed: the street itself, and the street within a larger downtown context.

### Looking at the Street Itself

There is no question that Fourth Street now provides significant support to long-range CBD goals as itemized in the *2000 Plan*. The street is a major anchor for downtown retail operations, with unique shops and customer service providing a yardstick for quality shopping in the metropolitan area. Its bustling pedestrian flow bolsters downtown activity and security. Recent renovations have provided market-rate housing, convenience shopping and entertainment. A true arts district has emerged on West Fourth, the only one outside of Chicago in a five-state region. The street is a desirable location for businesses which need a downtown location, but cannot afford or don't want space in new office towers.

Fourth Street provides rich visual quality to the downtown. It is a prime example of the type of place the *2000 Plan* described as "woven to create patterns of variety and beauty," where people "feel enriched and civilized by their surroundings." Cincinnatians also gain from Fourth Street a sense of place and a feeling for the city's past -- another *Plan* goal.

This mix of activities, attraction and architectural quality benefits the tourism industry as well. Visitors to Fourth Street are offered a memorable experience, a sense of what makes Cincinnati different from all other major cities, and another reason to plan return visits to the Greater Cincinnati area.

With all those advantages, Fourth Street still has problems. While some large, older buildings (e.g., Central Trust Tower, Dixie Terminal, Textile Building) can continue to serve the requirements of modern office space, some smaller buildings are of awkward configuration or problematic construction (e.g., long, narrow buildings with windows only at front and back, no room for elevators, wooden structural elements, etc.). Renovating these structures to new office standards can be difficult and expensive. Recent uncertainties over federal tax policies on real estate investments (particularly those involving renovation) has shaken investor confidence, leaving many potential developers in a holding pattern.



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***"If all the Fourth Street buildings which are historic landmarks or which contribute to the streetscape remain unchanged, significant limitations will be placed on the Third Street development sites."***

Some buildings have been renovated with bland or visually jarring "cover-up" facades: these break the street rhythm which contributes to excellence in walking and shopping environments. The L.S. Ayres parking garage is a major visual and physical obstruction in the streetscape, tending to create the impression that there are "two Fourth Streets" -- one east of Race and one west of Elm. This perception subdivides downtown and discourages owner investment in the Race-to-Elm block. It has also slowed redevelopment west of Elm, a problem now being alleviated as the Convention Center Expansion provides a new magnet at Plum. Another dilemma, also temporary, has strong impacts at the moment: with the current large supply of office space, unusually attractive leases are being offered to prospective tenants in new buildings. According to some local realtors and developers, this puts historic buildings (even newly-renovated ones) at a greater competitive disadvantage because an abnormal market condition exists. As occupancies increase in new buildings, the process should correct itself.

In short, while Fourth Street has some of the problems common to many older streets, it already embodies -- without waiting for the year 2000 -- many of the key elements which the *2000 Plan* seeks for the central business district.

### Looking at How the Street Works

A look at how Fourth Street functions within the CBD indicates that when viewed within larger *growth* objectives, Fourth Street may act as a barrier to limit development.

The issue is not that huge, new buildings are planned for Fourth Street: the *2000 Plan* shows most major development leap-frogging across Fourth to Third Street and the Riverfront. Third Street, where massive development parcels exist, is not a prime location for major commercial development. Sitting 20 to 25 feet below Fourth Street, Third is still viewed as a buffer zone between the central core and the River. For most of its length, it is associated more with the hard-edged, auto-oriented Ft. Washington Way than with the attractive, pedestrian-oriented core. The Third Street development sites -- some large enough to hold parking for 700 cars plus 1.5 million square feet of development each -- are physically and psychologically blocked by the strong downtown edge of Fourth Street.

If all the Fourth Street buildings which are historic landmarks or which contribute to the streetscape remain unchanged, significant limitations will be placed on the Third Street development sites. Without a prestigious and convenient Fourth Street address, for instance, large-scale commercial development is unlikely to take place on Third. These key sites may only attract large parking garages (a 1500-space garage would fit on each of the large sites). While significant development of parking may indeed be useful for the CBD, parking *alone* does not meet the full potential for new uses and investment in the area. Devotion of Third Street exclusively to parking would also reinforce the perceived distance between the downtown and Riverfront West.

A decision to freeze Fourth Street in its present state, allowing no demolitions and no connections to Third Street, would work directly against the City's desire to grow and its intent to re-connect the downtown to the River. Underscoring Fourth Street as "barrier" would miss a dramatic chance for unique new development that can further many City goals at once.

*The answer is compromise: substantial renovation and selective demolition must be permitted for existing buildings."*

## "Bridge" Concept Serves Many Aims

If Fourth Street is not to be a barrier, how can larger development goals be met while still retaining the street's history, architecture, scale and character? The answer is compromise: substantial renovation and selective demolition must be permitted for existing buildings. With these changes, spectacular connections can be made directly from Fourth Street to Third Street, and an extraordinary variety of opportunities for development will occur.

Substantial rehabilitation will allow a shopping arcade to be built, front to back, through a historic building or collection of buildings, connecting to a new structure on a Third Street site. Selective demolition will provide space sandwiched between existing structures for an entry garden and views to a large, new landmark building behind. New in-fill construction, compatible with Fourth Street facades, could also replace a few narrow buildings to provide a shop-lined gallery leading to a new Third Street lobby, with the lobby itself looking out to the River.

With a Fourth Street address and access, commercial development of the large sites is much more likely. A typical large-site project could include office buildings (as much as 1.5 million square feet per block -- equal to two Atrium II buildings), or hotels (a 500-room hotel plus convention meeting areas plus one office tower could fit on one site). Two 250-unit apartment buildings could fit on one of the sites. With all of these uses, about 700 cars could typically be parked in a given block to serve the commercial uses above (and Fourth Street as well). Smaller development sites, such as the one south of Fourth at Central Avenue, could be expanded to wrap behind Fourth Street buildings for a parking structure or other uses.

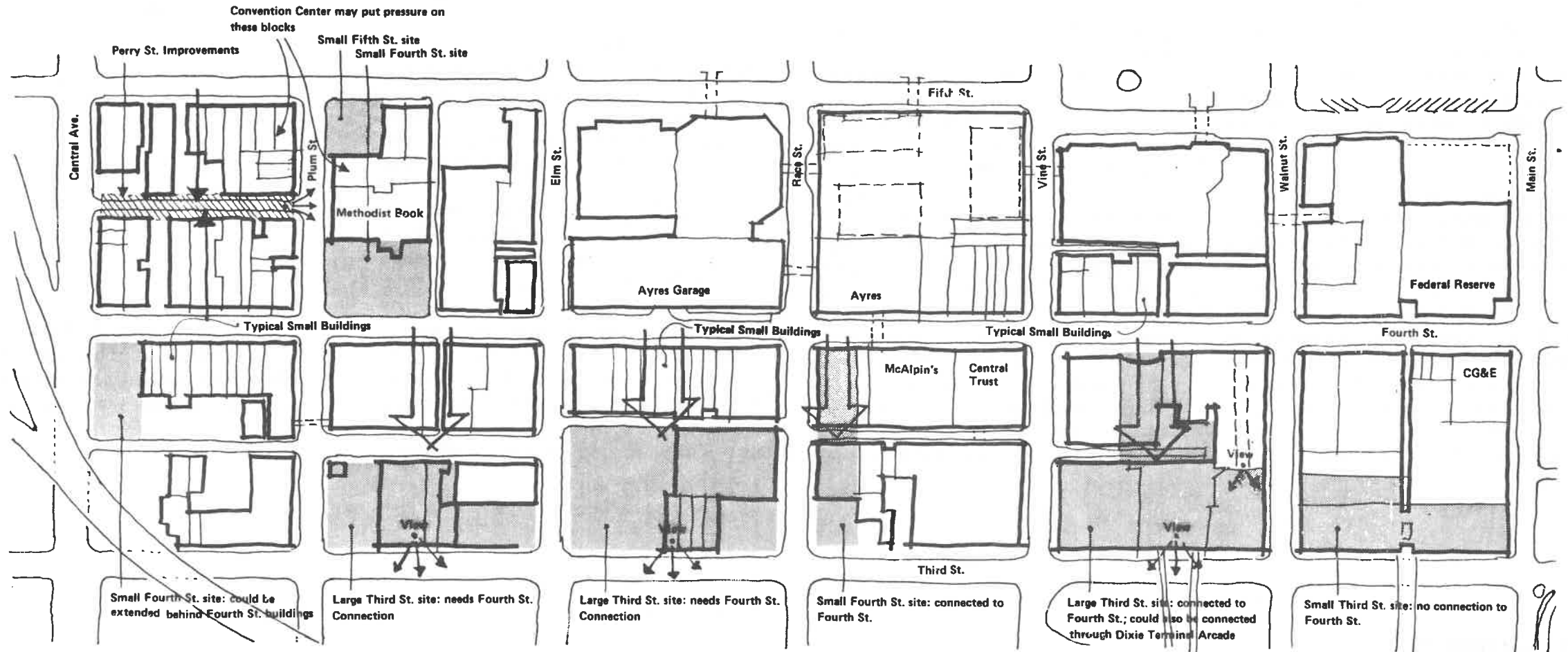
This kind of intense development will also bring increased vitality to the area, more shoppers and walkers on Fourth Street, and in turn more possible uses of existing buildings. Certain structures lend themselves to collection, to form larger, more typical, modern office space. The three-structure Hooper Building (once housing Swallen's) at the southeast corner of Fourth and Elm, is an example. Several years ago, this complex was felt to be infeasible for rehab, and private plans ensued to tear it down. Structural (party wall) complications foiled the plan. Now developers from San Francisco, specialists in historic rehabilitation, are planning its renovation and re-use.

The smaller individual buildings, besides being likely connectors to projects on Third, also provide opportunities for smaller investors and locations for specialized businesses. Architects, photographers, interior designers, other studios and related businesses are likely owners or tenants. Their presence will strengthen (and perhaps expand) the arts district. Special-theme, intimate restaurants will also be attracted to the unique smaller buildings to serve daytime lunch-goers as well as residents or tourists. As the prospect of dramatic change in the area increases, so will investment and the feasibility of renovation.

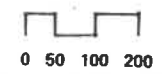
Renovation feasibility has been improved somewhat in the past year by the adoption of a rehabilitation chapter in national and Ohio basic building codes. The new chapter allows for substitutions to be made to achieve life-safety standards which are equivalent to new-building treatments. While many architects say the new chapter does not significantly reduce actual construction costs, the chapter does increase predictability: architects are not entirely dependent upon an appeals board to gain approvals.




# CONNECTIONS

# DRAFT



Possible Connections to 2000 Plan Development Areas



-  Development sites identified in 2000 PI
-  Connections to Third St.
-  Connections to Perry St.

***"The smaller individual buildings also provide opportunities for smaller investors and locations for specialized businesses."***

Federal tax policies, as of this writing, are still uncertain. Some Washington observers say the chances are poor for tax reform in the near future. An optimistic note for older buildings is that when the House Ways and Means Committee made its own counter-proposal to the Treasury Department's package, the rehab investment tax credits were one of only two ITC's that were not deleted entirely. By all accounts, the investment tax credit for renovation of historic buildings is the least threatened of any credits. Decisions to protect, or not protect, Fourth Street's buildings should not be made on something as ephemeral as federal policies and programs. The aim should be to count on incentives available locally and to use them only as needed to spur redevelopment.

***"Primary effort, however, should focus on invigorating the traditional market conditions and development climate to such a degree that the private sector, unassisted, can carry out Fourth Street's redevelopment. The 'Fourth Street Bridge' concept makes that approach possible."***

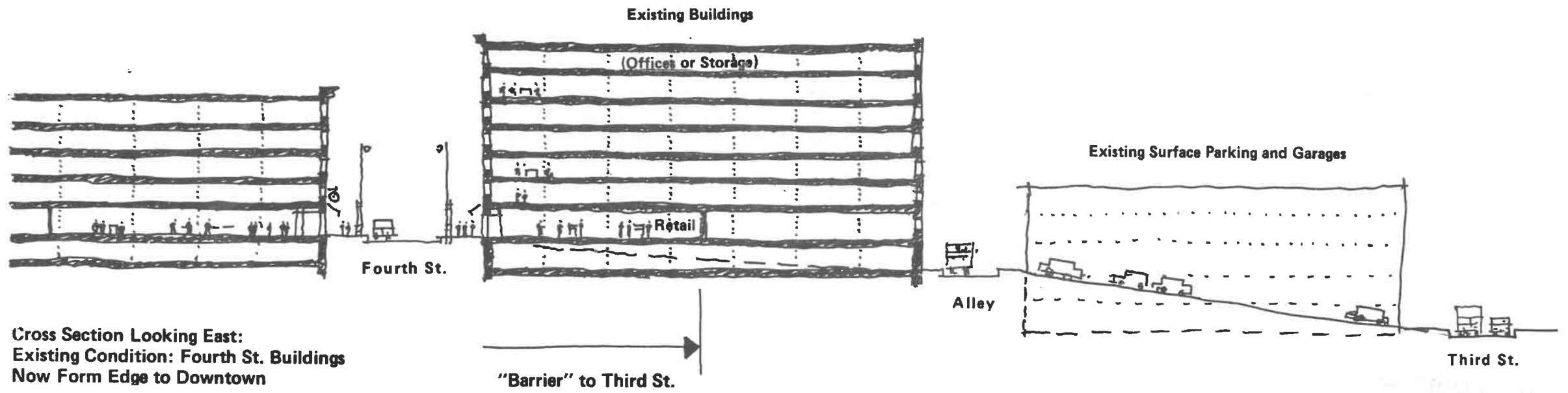
Primary effort, however, should focus on invigorating the *traditional* market conditions and development climate to such a degree that the private sector, unassisted, can carry out Fourth Street's redevelopment. The "Fourth Street Bridge" concept makes that approach possible. If the concept has wholehearted support of public and private leaders, minimal special assistance will be required to attract major private investment in the area.

*improvements*  
Public *works*, a traditional tool to encourage investment, is appropriate in the Fourth Street area. The City should consider placing high on its priority list the Perry Street Improvements plan, developed in the 1960's and endorsed by the *2000 Plan*. This scheme will encourage connections north to the Convention Center from the West Fourth Street National Register District. Buildings on the north side of Fourth Street in the "Gallery Row" block run all the way back to Perry, providing the opportunity for walk-through shops and galleries which open out onto a beautified Perry Street. The old Methodist Book Concern Building, on Plum at the end of Perry, provides a fine visual anchor for the Perry Street walkway and a sense of enclosure for the activities which may spill out onto the street from shops, galleries and cafes on the north and south. Another key to the success of the 300-block of West Fourth is the once-magnificent Lombardy building. Its location in the middle of the block, its outstanding architectural qualities, its suitability as a north-south axis from Fourth to Perry, and its present blighted condition make it a structure worthy of special attention.

The expansion of the Convention Center may place a demand for new uses on Fifth Street from Elm Street to Central Avenue, an area which was included in the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan* as part of the proposed "Old Town" historic district (West Fourth Street National Register District). While some uses (e.g., shops, restaurants, visitor-related services) could be incorporated into existing buildings, other uses, such as a hotel, may necessitate the demolition of existing historic buildings. Should a decision be made at a later date that the half-block would be better used for new construction, design review should pay special attention to the following issues: Does the Plum Street side of new structures encourage pedestrian use of Plum as a gateway to Fourth Street? Does the rear of the new building include active uses which can serve as a pass-through to the Perry Street development?

# EXISTING "BARRIER"

# DRAFT

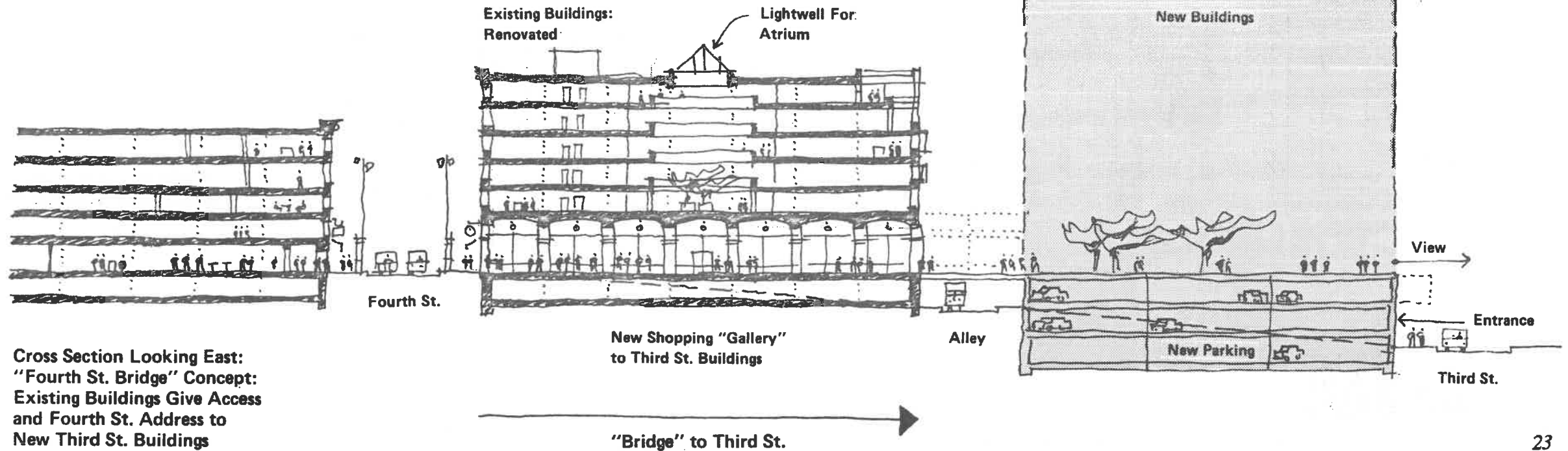


Cross Section Looking East:  
Existing Condition: Fourth St. Buildings  
Now Form Edge to Downtown



# POTENTIAL "BRIDGE"

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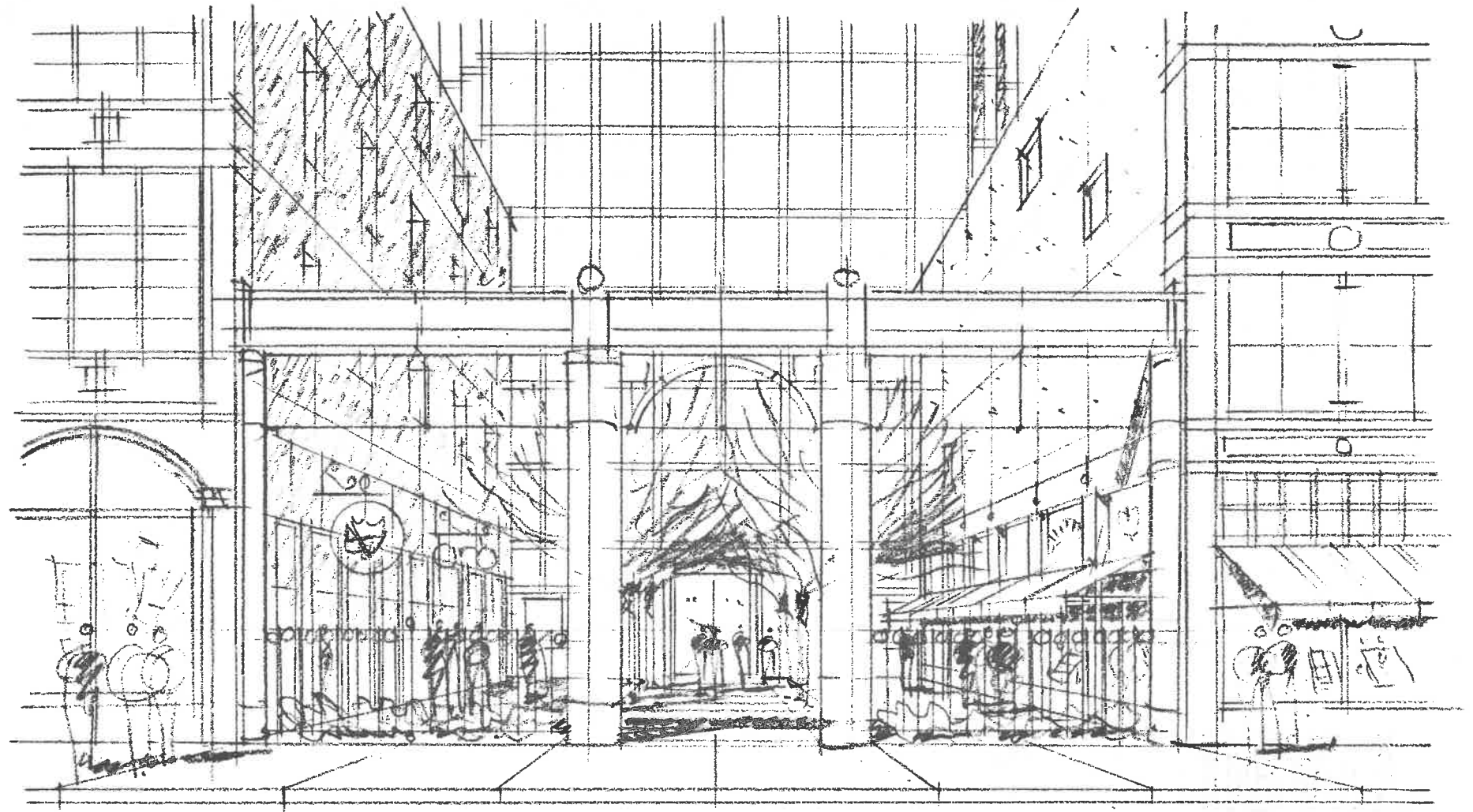


Cross Section Looking East:  
"Fourth St. Bridge" Concept:  
Existing Buildings Give Access  
and Fourth St. Address to  
New Third St. Buildings

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A Shopping Garden on Fourth St.:  
View to New Third St. Buildings

*"New in-fill construction,  
compatible with Fourth Street  
facades, could also replace a few  
narrow buildings to provide a shop-  
lined gallery leading to a new Third  
Street lobby, with the lobby itself  
looking out to the River."*



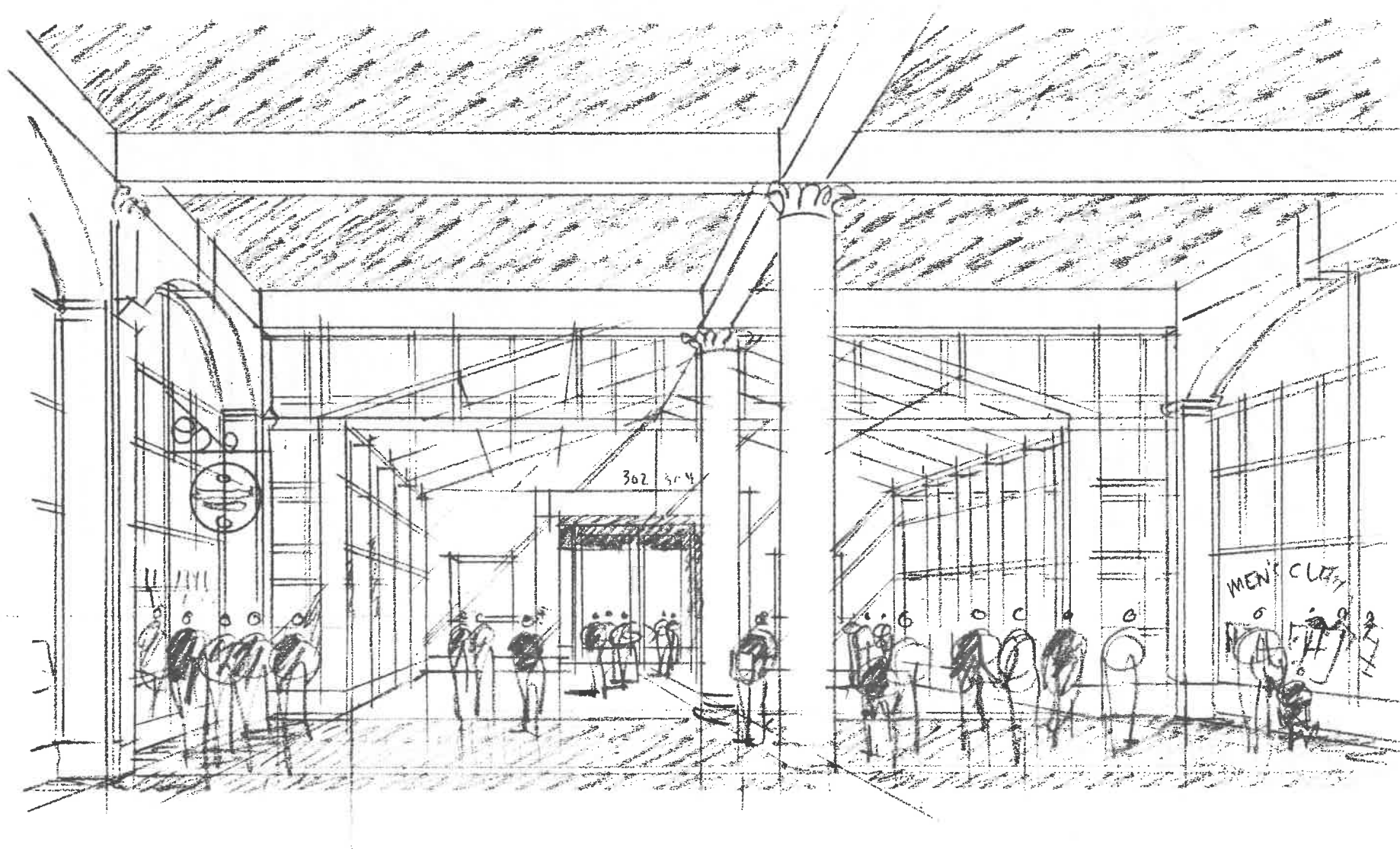
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**Perry St. Improvements:  
View to Methodist Book Concern**

*"A true arts district has emerged on  
West Fourth..."*



Shopping Gallery Within  
Existing Fourth St. Buildings:  
View to Bridge to Third St. site



*"It is unlikely that two buildings the size of Columbia Plaza would be built on the development site behind Pigall's or the Dixie Terminal, and that two more would be added to front on Fourth street."*

Similarly, two small development sites, one at Fifth and Plum and one at Fourth and Plum, were identified in the 2000 Plan. Neither is large enough for the kinds of development which the Convention Center might encourage. Should the Methodist Book Concern Building (416-424 Plum) be proposed for demolition, consideration should be given to permitting partial razing of the rear portion of the building. This would save part of a building ranked as "Significant" and would retain the Perry Street focal point, but would also make more likely the development of the large, vacant corner at Fourth and Plum. As with the Fifth Street site, design review must play a major role in assuring that new building creates positive visual links with the Convention Center, and that the new construction is compatible with Fourth Street buildings.

### **Demolishing Fourth Street Gains No Net Space**

Common logic, it seems, would dictate that the more cleared land a developer has, the more development that can occur. A conclusion of this logic is that if Third Street sites were developed with two major structures (whether offices, hotels or other uses), a third and fourth building of similar size could be built on the site of demolished Fourth Street buildings.

In this case, common logic is wrong. Even though a map might show room for the "footprint" of more large structures, actual development does not depend solely on available land area.

It is unlikely, for instance, that two buildings the size of Columbia Plaza would be built on the development site behind Pigall's or the Dixie Terminal, and that two more would be added to front on Fourth Street. Why? Because of the normal limitations which affect large, new buildings -- such things as enough space between structures to meet building codes; limitations on density included in the zoning code; access for firefighting equipment; provision of light, views and other marketing assets; access for necessary service to the buildings; parking requirements (dictated either by zoning or by marketing

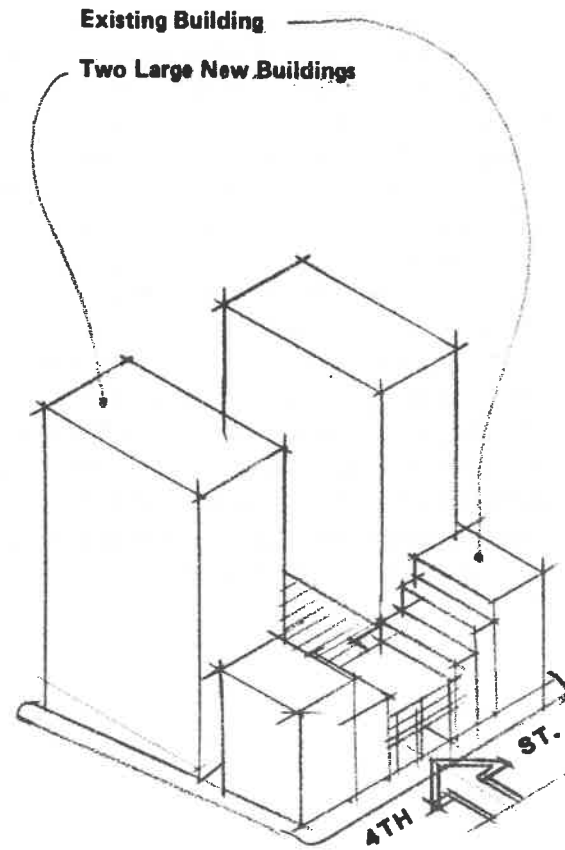
considerations). In Cincinnati, such natural or imposed limitations have resulted in new buildings that contain about 500,000 to 600,000 square feet, and usually no more than two such buildings per city block. Four is highly unlikely, especially when some available Third Street sites could accommodate, without significant demolition, even greater density (up to 1.5 million sf).

Generally, the limitations noted above are likely to put a "cap" on total development per city block of approximately 2 million square feet. If Third Street sites were fully developed (up to 1.5 million square feet), there would be little advantage in also replacing existing Fourth Street buildings with a new structure. Given the limitations on parking, light, view, service, fire, safety, etc., as noted above, the replacement structure would probably not exceed 500,000 to 700,000 square feet -- approximately the same amount of square footage already contained in existing Fourth Street buildings on a typical study area block.

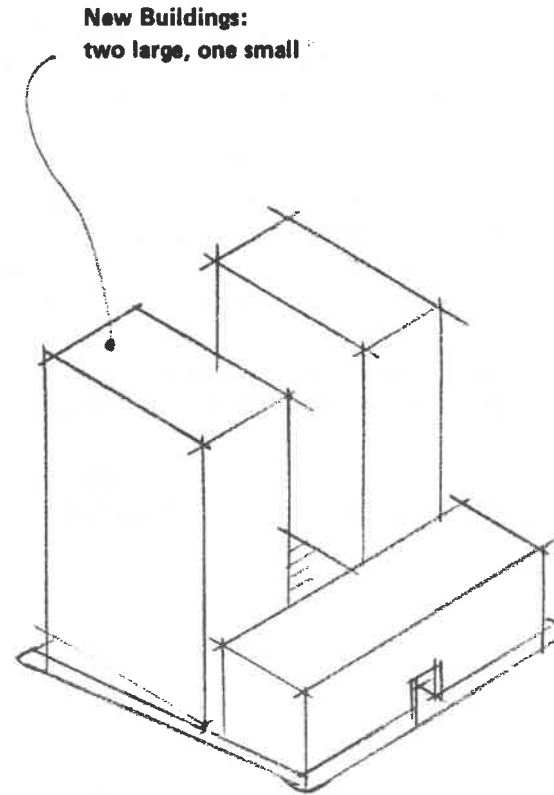


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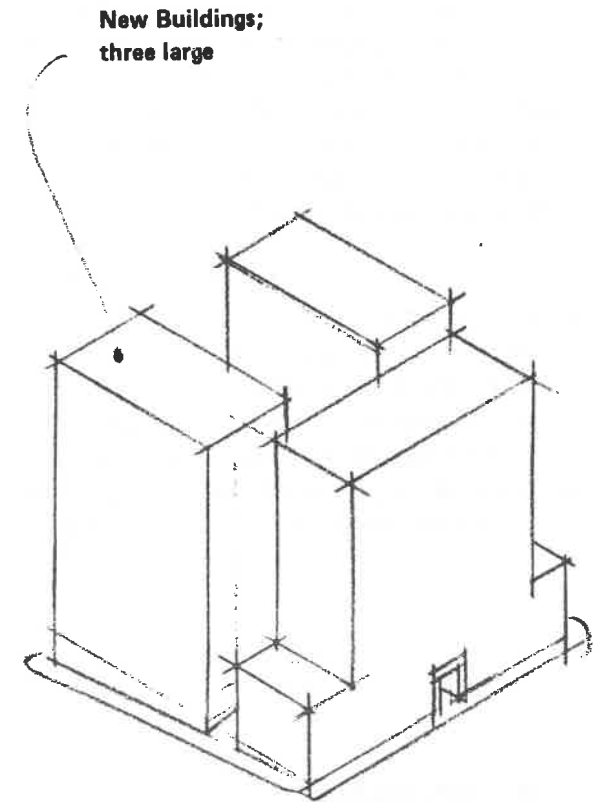
Alternate Possible Future Views of a "Typical" Fourth St. Block, Looking South



Existing Buildings Remain



Complete Demolition: No Net Gain of Building Area



Complete Demolition  
Too Crowded, Fewer Views



***"The transformation of Fourth Street from the 'edge' of downtown to a 'bridge' linking the CBD to Third Street can fulfill all of the Cincinnati 2000 Plan's Fourth Street goals."***

Perhaps Cincinnati will grow to the density of New York City, and development patterns will change. But based on the city's record over the past 15 years and on community expectations for acceptable density, the likelihood of such development is not great.

Tearing down all of the Fourth Street buildings would allow for new structures to be placed differently on the site. The results of the demolition, however, would be these: the historic buildings would be lost; the pedestrian patterns on the street would be disrupted; the street's scale might change dramatically; and existing businesses, which already meet the goals sought by the *2000 Plan*, would be relocated -- all for no net gain in developed space.



### Conclusion

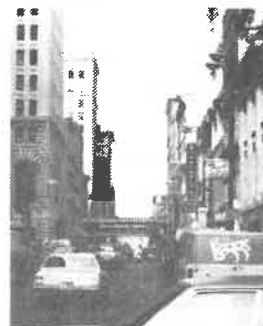
As can be clearly seen from the previous pages, an extraordinary variety of development options exists within the Fourth Street Study Area. Large- and small-scale renovations can foster a wide range of new uses and activities. New buildings cannot only offer great financial opportunities, but can be given positions of prominence: they can be "signature" buildings for the individuals or corporations that own them, can create a new "front door" for the CBD, and can turn the city's face back to the River.

It bears repeating that substantial demolition of the existing buildings not only destroy the historic character of Fourth Street, it does *not* offer additional development opportunities. Conversely, retaining the historic fabric through substantial rehabilitation and only limited demolition offers development opportunities unique in Cincinnati and perhaps the Midwest. The transformation of Fourth Street from the "edge" of downtown to a "bridge" linking the CBD to Third Street and beyond can protect historic resources, retain the street's scale and character and provide for new physical growth: without sacrifice of any aim, it can fulfill all of the *Cincinnati 2000 Plan's* Fourth Street goals.

Detail: Door



Street View



Street View



## 5 Review Options Each Have Strengths, Weaknesses

### Introduction

In order to meet the *2000 Plan* goal of preserving the historic character and special scale of Fourth Street, some application of design guidelines and demolition controls is necessary. Several existing tools were analyzed to determine how effectively they met *Plan* goals and how well they responded to individual owners' needs (For the complete analysis, see the Appendix):

- As-of-right and totally voluntary systems
- Four variations of historic designation
- Historic Conservation Easements
- Environmental Quality Districts
- City Development Contracts
- Informal Review by City Agency

*"The challenge, therefore, is to develop a careful balance between restriction and flexibility: to find a regulatory system which does not unreasonably inhibit opportunities for growth and new development."*

Two tools examined were quickly rejected: an as-of-right system and a voluntary review system. "As-of-right" is any system with no limitations beyond codified rules, and no review body. Owners have the right to build any project which meets all applicable code provisions. The as-of-right system would involve rigid anti-demolition rules and specific detailed guidelines for renovation and new construction within the Zoning Code. Such a system, while legally defensible, does not allow for individual judgments based on the developer's needs or changing market conditions, and it stifles design creativity. It was assumed unacceptable because of its rigidity. The opposite approach, a purely voluntary system, lacks the capacity to meet the public aims of the *2000 Plan* in any realistic or meaningful way.

Some form of regulatory design review is the alternative. The challenge, therefore, is to develop a careful balance between restriction and flexibility: to find a regulatory system which does not unreasonably inhibit opportunities for growth and new development.

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**Criteria**

The analysis of available tools was based on several questions: How effectively does the tool protect historic resources? How well does the tool preserve historic character and special scale? How effectively does the tool respond to owners' and developers' needs and growth opportunities? How well can the tool avoid excessive red tape and time delays, and how easy is the tool to understand and administer? These questions were broken down into eight criteria against which four existing review systems were evaluated (See Criteria in Appendix).

**Analysis**

**1 Historic Designation / Easements  
(District Meets 2 of 3 Goals)**

Several options under this tool were considered. These included individual designations, historic district(s) alternatives, combinations of individual "landmark" designations and districts, and individual historic conservation easements. The option of a single Fourth Street historic district fared best in the analysis. Its strength is its protection of historic resources and the streetscape's scale and character. Its weakness is its relative lack of flexibility in responding to growth opportunities.

**2 Environmental Quality District  
(Meets 1 1/2 of 3 Goals)**

EQ districts do not include restrictions on demolition but focus on design review of new construction. The strength of the EQ tool is its total flexibility in allowing new development. Its weaknesses are its red tape and its inability to protect the streetscape's scale and character.

*demo as part of EQD*  
*not reasons why streetscape can't be protected w/a plan -*

**3 Development Contract  
(Meets 1 of 3 Goals)**

Most major downtown development to date has relied on some form of city government financial participation. Contractual agreements between developers and the City usually contain design review provisions. The system is voluntary. The strength of this tool is its broad flexibility in responding to growth opportunities and developers' needs as well as its relative lack of red tape. Its weaknesses are its dependence upon city subsidy or other participation, and its inability to protect historic resources, character and scale.

*need not be*

**4 Informal Design Review  
(Meets 1 of 3 Goals)**

New construction and major alteration in the CBD are currently informally reviewed by a city department. The review is advisory. The strength of the tool is its total flexibility. Its weakness is its total inability to protect either historic resources or scale and character.

Combinations of some of the above tools were also examined but were found to be inherently confusing, difficult to administer, and no better able to meet plan goals and established criteria.

**Conclusion**

There is no single existing tool which entirely meets all three 2000 Plan goals as reflected in the eight criteria. The tool which comes closest is the designation of a historic district, which meets the two "protection" goals (historic resources; scale and character), but which falls short in meeting the third (adequate flexibility to respond to the Fourth Street area's development opportunities).

The "Recommendations" section of this report includes proposals which would, without changes to enabling legislation, increase a historic district's capacity to provide for growth opportunities.

## 6 "Historic District with a Twist" is Proposed for Fourth Street

The preceding analysis of design review tools concluded that the system which best met *2000 Plan* goals would be a local historic district. It noted, however, that the system has weaknesses in its ability to respond to new development opportunities.

The proposals in this section include measures which will correct those weaknesses and allow all the goals to be met. Recommendations include the following: 1) designation of a Fourth Street historic district and the individual designation of one building, 2) special rules which provide for demolition of historic buildings to achieve desired new development, 3) a process for coordinated actions by the Historic Conservation Board and Urban Design Review Board, 4) transfer of development rights from historic buildings to adjacent development sites.

### SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### 1) The Designation of a Fourth Street Historic District and the Designation of CG&E as a Historic Structure

A historic district is proposed for the Fourth Street area, extending generally from Central to Walnut. It would include buildings on Fifth

Street, though in a slightly smaller area than shown in the *2000 Plan* for the proposed "Old Town" local historic district. Boundaries would extend to include three buildings immediately east of Walnut Street.

The east side of Walnut Street was chosen as the eastern boundary because the historic character of the street -- its sense of time and place -- changes dramatically in the 200 block of East Fourth, which contains three major newer buildings. The three small, older buildings adjacent to CG&E are isolated by the newer buildings and are not of sufficient individual merit or historic integrity to justify the extension of district boundaries from Walnut Street to Main Street. Since a district boundary east of Walnut Street would leave the 1929 Cincinnati Gas & Electric building unprotected, there is also a recommendation for the individual historic designation of the CG&E building (excluding its annex) as a historic structure. Beyond the role it plays in the history of Fourth Street, it is an outstanding work of architecture.

#### 2) The Adoption of Special Provisions for Demolition

In all local historic districts, there are three standard conditions under which demolition *must* be allowed in historic districts: if the building is a safety hazard, if it does not contribute to the character of the district, or if no reasonable economic return can be gained from the building. (See Appendix for precise wording). Proposed for the Fourth Street district are two additional provisions. The first is that a group of 13 buildings (See Appendix for complete list) are approved outright for demolition. These include non-contributing buildings and buildings shown in the *2000 Plan* as development sites.

The second special provision, and the most radical, is that under certain conditions, *any* historic building can be demolished to allow for new development, even if a reasonable rate of return is possible for renovation. The conditions (See Appendix) are aimed at achieving trade-offs, such as permitting demolition for new construction if the project also results in rehabilitation of other buildings or the demolition will allow a significant project to be built at the rear of historic buildings. In all cases there is a provision to retain at least 75% of each blockface (both sides of the street) so that the scale and historic character are not significantly altered.

*only effective when built as 90% preservation*

**3) The Adoption of Streamlined New Construction and Rehabilitation Guidelines**

The proposed guidelines would give direction to owners, architects, and developers in making design decisions affecting Fourth Street. The guidelines would help insure compatible new buildings and alterations without limiting design creativity or development opportunities. The new construction guidelines address those design features which "make or break" Fourth Street's design character such as building height, setback, materials, and general composition. Rehab guidelines are basically simple, common sense rules.

**5) Transfer of Development Rights to Sites Adjacent to Historic Buildings**

One of the ways Fourth Street's historic character and special scale can be maintained is through the transfer of development rights from Fourth Street to Third Street sites, or to a development in the Fifth Street area near the Convention Center. This can also enhance development opportunities outside the district and at its edges. In exchange for preserving the historic buildings on Fourth Street, increases in available floor area would be granted to specific sites on Third or Fifth Street. The details of this proposal would have to be incorporated into the zoning code.

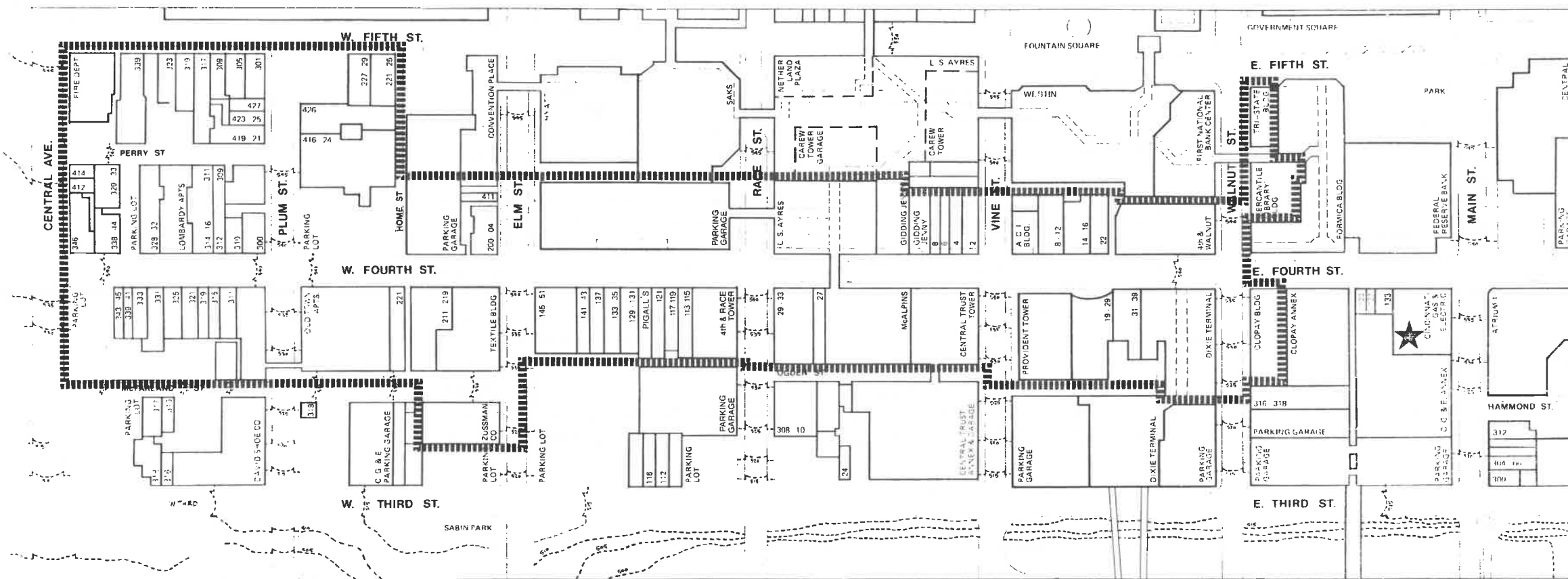
**4) Coordinated HCB & UDRB Reviews**



An agreement is proposed which would establish a new design review role for the UDRB within the proposed historic district, without changing the UDRB's existing makeup or procedures. In addition to current UDRB review of projects covered by development contracts, *all* new construction in the district would be reviewed by the UDRB as an advisor to the HCB.


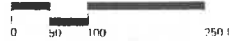
*plus UDRB in second class position.*



# RECOMMENDED DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

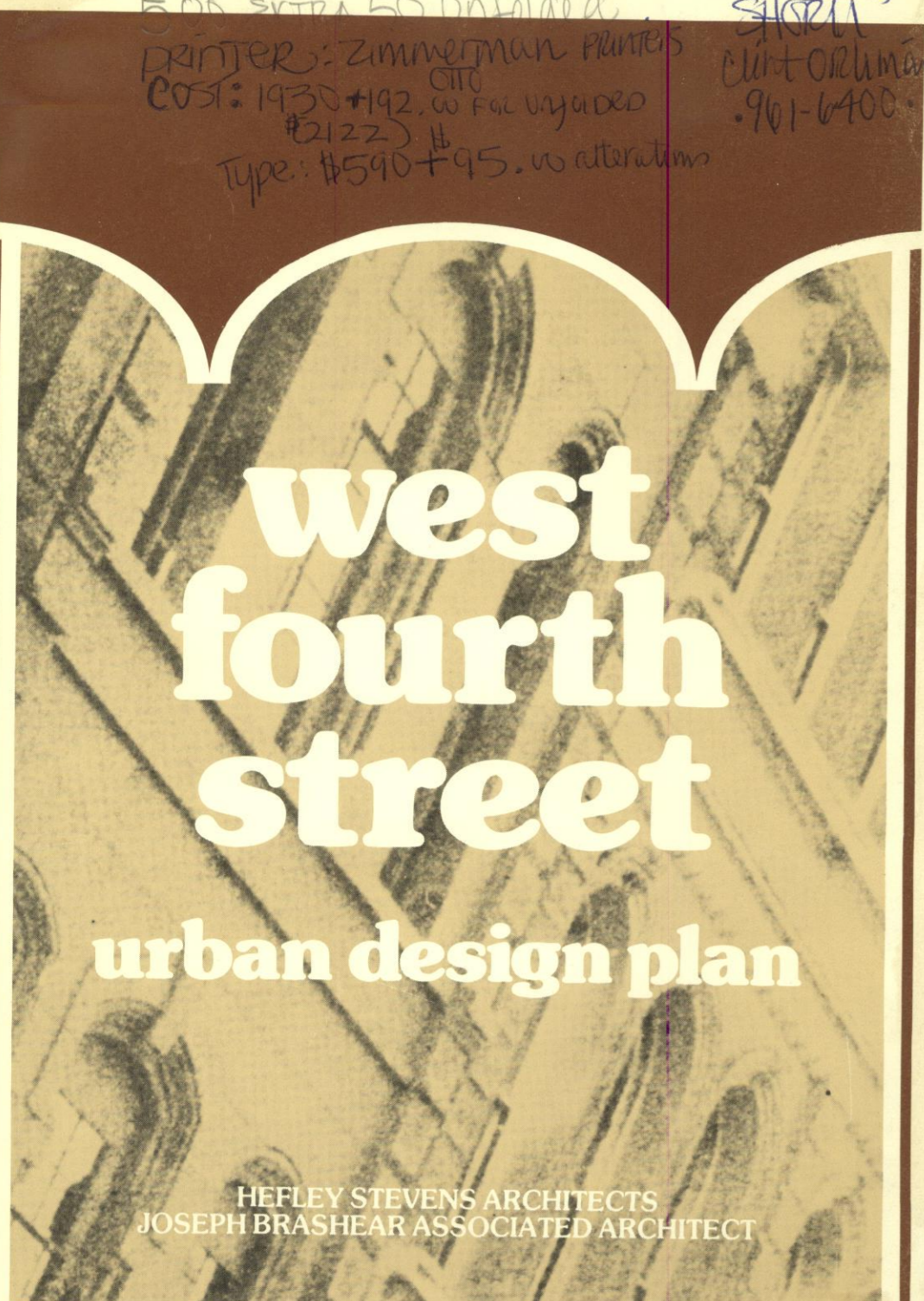
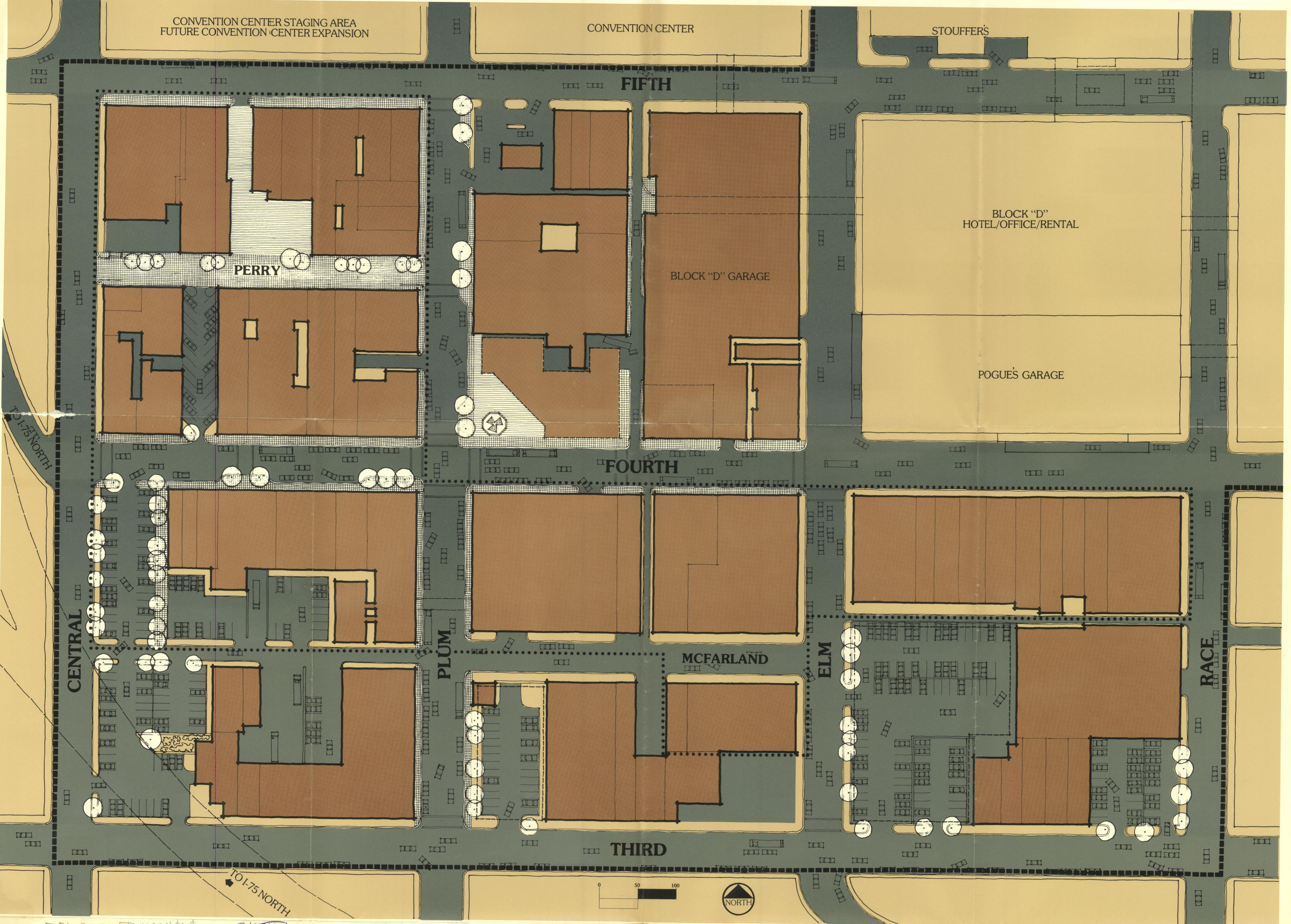


 Recommended District Boundaries  
 (CG&E recommended for Individual Designation)

 N  
 0 50 100 250 ft



# west fourth street urban design plan



**Introduction**  
The West Fourth Street Plan deals with an area in the southwest of the core of the Central Business District composed largely of an officially designated historic district. The buildings in the Plan area are mostly mid and late 19th Century vintage, and contain a variety of retail and commercial establishments on the ground floors, and offices, storage, and recently developed middle and upper income housing on the upper floors.

The area complements the larger retail, commercial, and office developments in the core. This Plan describes means by which this complementary relationship can be enhanced, including:

1. The clarification of the existing unique character of the area through appropriate private renovation and development, and the construction of appropriate public improvements.
2. The development of middle and upper income housing in appropriate buildings.
3. The improvement of pedestrian connections from the core in order to reinforce the viability of the existing retail, and to encourage new retail.
4. The maintenance of existing vehicular traffic volumes, while at the same time insuring a safe, secure, and inviting area for the pedestrian.
5. The establishment of policies for parking serving the West Fourth Street Area, and the establishment of relationships between parking which serves the larger retail and commercial establishments elsewhere in the Central Business District (CBD) and the facilities in the West Fourth Street Area.
6. The provision of an open-air crafts market in Perry Street to be operated and maintained by the adjacent property owners.
7. The provision of additional Class B office and studio space in the area.
8. The anticipation of expansion of the Convention Center.

**Housing**  
As revitalization of business activity in the area is the key to the area's economic viability, the development of additional significant housing will enhance the human viability and lend support to the business community here and elsewhere in the CBD. Existing housing is sparse and in many instances substandard. Much of it has carried over from the time when merchants lived above their shops and does not represent large numbers of dwelling units per building or nearly the density which will be warranted by land values as the area develops. However, there are a few buildings originally built as hotels or apartment buildings which would lend themselves to redevelopment as viable multiple-dwelling units. Several such buildings on the north side of Fourth Street between Plum and Central have already been committed in this direction by their owners. Other buildings in the area could develop into housing as market strength is demonstrated.

A project is currently underway to convert the Gibson Garage and the Cincinnati Gas, Light, and Coke Building to multiple dwelling housing with some retail at ground level and some off-street parking in the garage building. There is the possibility of developing additional housing on lots currently used for parking at Third and Plum Streets and at Third and Elm Streets. Housing development in the West Fourth Street Area should complement existing housing in other downtown areas and expand the housing market by offering types and sizes of dwelling units and rental rates not currently available in the downtown area. However, the type of housing developed and rental rates offered will be largely influenced by economic considerations as the area develops.

**Pedestrian Circulation**  
In support of existing and developing businesses and housing in the area, the Plan encourages ease of movement and concentrations of pedestrians on Fourth, Plum and Perry Streets by:

1. Maintaining street orientation of shops and emphasizing rear service access, separating pedestrian and service vehicular circulation as much as possible;
2. Improving pedestrian access to the West Fourth Street Area from East Fourth Street and from the hotel/convention center complex at Fifth and Elm;
3. Developing pedestrian connections from parking facilities along Third Street;
4. Encouraging development of well-lighted pedestrian areas to ensure security and encourage nighttime use of outdoor spaces;
5. Encouraging treatment of the Pogue's Garage arcade to better accommodate the pedestrian and soften the conflict here between pedestrian and automobile;
6. Encouraging extension of the second level skywalk through the proposed Block D West development to a terminus at Home Alley—developing Home Alley as a pedestrian connection from the walkway terminus to Fourth Street;
7. Developing a mid-block pedestrian connection from Fourth Street to Perry Street allowing the two to interact and reinforce one another;
8. Developing street amenities and adequate sidewalk widths to enhance the pedestrian environment with lighting, landscaping, graphics, canopies, signs and other amenities contributing to a pedestrian character;

**Vehicular Circulation**  
Fourth Street is a feeder for I-75 North and Plum Street is an important relief route for I-75 and Ohio River bridge traffic. These streets must continue to carry arterial traffic. Although all streets in the area are heavily travelled, Fourth Street and Plum Street are critical because Fourth Street is the major connection from the Central Business District and Plum Street is the primary approach to the area from the north. The intersection of these two streets occurs at the heart of the West Fourth Street Area and is the major vehicular and pedestrian circulation focus.

The Plan eliminates some on-street parking to accommodate increased peak hour traffic demands and to allow for pedestrian amenities on both Fourth Street and Plum Street. The Plan suggests the use of landscaping and the development of open space (widened sidewalks, etc.) to help separate vehicular circulation from pedestrian circulation. This separation and softening should extend to all streets in the area where possible. Pogue's Garage could benefit from such treatment.

The major bus stops on the north side of Fourth at Plum and on the west side of Plum between Fourth and McFarland should remain. For the Fourth Street stop a shelter should be provided as an integral part of the open space development shown on the plan.

To accommodate some reduction of vehicular service from the street side, the Plan encourages increased use of mid-block alleys and rear service access to commercial space.

**A Study of Parking—West Fourth Street Development Area**  
prepared for the City of Cincinnati Department of Development by Ralph H. Burke, Inc., Consulting Engineers, 1550 Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068, August, 1978, is incorporated in the Plan by reference.

**Future Parking**

1. Dual use of existing parking facilities should be encouraged. Negotiations should begin to accomplish dual use or sharing of Pogue's Garage, Convention Center Parking, Block D Garage, and other parking facilities.
2. The lot at Fourth and Central should be transferred from public to private ownership and be developed as a community parking lot to serve new and existing housing units.
3. The Plan indicates landscaping screening of parking facilities to enhance the pedestrian connection from parking facilities to shopping areas.
4. Parking off McFarland Street for employees of stores along Fourth St. should remain but should allow for increasing use of rear service entries as service from Fourth Street is decreased.

**Lighting**  
New lighting for the area should:

1. Provide adequate roadway illumination as determined by City standards for the West Fourth Street Area. This light should be sufficient so that drivers can see pedestrians in the roadway, and the fixtures should not pose a glare problem for motorists or residents of apartment units.
2. Provide illumination of parking and pedestrian areas sufficient to ensure security for the pedestrian. Such lighting should also contribute to the pedestrian scale and character of these areas.
3. Light special areas such as transit stops, crosswalks, and pedestrian focal points at which gatherings are likely to occur.

To provide the necessary roadway illumination with a minimum number of lighting structures, the Plan recommends lighting from one side of the street only with a luminaire mounting height of thirty feet and a fixture with a refractor lens which will develop a wide light pattern allowing maximum spacing between luminaires.

In areas such as the Perry Street Market, pedestrian connections from parking areas and secondary streets such as McFarland Street, where high intensity roadway lighting is not required and glare is not a problem for motorists, a low mounting height, decorative fixture could be considered.

The Plan recommends that any low level pedestrian or decorative lighting along primary streets should be accomplished within recessed entries and on building facades, and must be installed, owned and maintained by private owners.

Definition of special areas could be accomplished by the use of decorative luminaires mounted low and shading, where possible, mounting structures of high level roadway lighting. Such decorative luminaires must not pose a glare problem for motorists.

Energy consumption of new public lighting shall be consistent with downtown lighting standards.

**Image and Environment**  
The Plan encourages development of a major open space and focal point on the northeast corner of Fourth and Plum. This intersection is the functional and symbolic center of the West Fourth Street Area. The northeast corner lot is open and currently used for parking. If it receives a building in the future, provisions should be made to locate the building back from the corner and develop an open space to reinforce the focus and provide a place for gatherings of people. This would also serve as a visual element which could be seen from the major approaches from the east and north helping to draw pedestrians into the area.

Planting should occur in areas indicated on the Plan to receive widened sidewalks. This will allow placement of root systems into the grade without conflicting with basement spaces which extend under existing sidewalks. Above-grade planting of trees is inappropriate.

Special paving should occur within the areas indicated on the Plan to receive streetscape improvements. Such paving should be the brick paving system currently designated by the City for CBD sidewalks.

**Treatment of Facades**  
There are several visually and historically significant buildings in the area with a concentration on Fourth Street between Plum and Central.

The Plan encourages building owners to retain and repair original facades including cornices, fenestration, awnings, and visually appropriate fire escapes and balconies (such as on the Arcadia and the Baltimore Buildings). If new fire escapes become necessary, they should be designed and built in a manner sympathetic to existing elements and style. Inappropriate facade elements such as air conditioning units and vents should be removed.

Out of character storefronts should be replaced with materials and elements more appropriate to the overall facade. Where original fronts have been covered over with new, inappropriate materials, these materials should be removed to expose the original. Recessing storefronts or arcing (as has been done on the north side of Fourth Street between Vine and Race—Gidding-Jenny, Burkhards', Herschede's), where possible, would create inviting entries by providing pedestrian shelter and space for development of decorative lighting and signage for commercial establishments.

The Plan recommends the use of a mounting system similar to the Malt System currently employed in the Central Business District. Such a system will accommodate, in a clean framework, lighting, street equipment, and signage/signaling devices on a minimum number of structures.

**Controls**  
The West Fourth Street Area is part of the Central Business District Urban Design Plan, and therefore, is subject to the controls described therein for developments involving City participation. These controls include review of new developments and improvements by the Urban Design Review Board. In addition, special ordinances concerning sidewalk pavement material, signage, street trees, and parking in the CBD are applicable.

**Funding**  
Funding for public improvements totals approximately \$3,000,000.00. As private investment increases, public funding will be sought from Federal and City capital sources.

**Future Directions**  
The amount of public investment in the West Fourth Street Area will depend upon the amount of private investment in the area and the degree to which the private sector adheres to the policies described in the Plan.

If general economic growth and significant new development occur to a degree not anticipated within this Plan, the Plan shall be changed to accommodate this growth and development. The Plan may be modified in the future to acknowledge contingent developments such as:

1. If the West Fourth Street Area develops to the extent that sufficient pedestrian traffic is generated to justify the expense of skywalk construction and the modification of the proposed Block D West Parking Garage, the Skywalk system may be extended through the garage to connect with the West Fourth Street Area.
2. When necessary and justified by an economic feasibility study by the City's parking consultant, the City may participate in providing for parking to serve the area.
3. When the feasibility of such construction is indicated by responsible developers, the City may participate in and encourage construction of new office, housing, and retail buildings on Third Street as replacement for those buildings which do not relate to the existing fabric or which cannot be made economically viable.
4. McFarland Alley may be developed into a market court similar to that described for Perry Street in the Plan. Timing and feasibility for this project would depend upon the success of the Perry Street Market.
5. The density and quality of landscaping in the area to the south and east adjacent to the expressways may be significantly increased.

