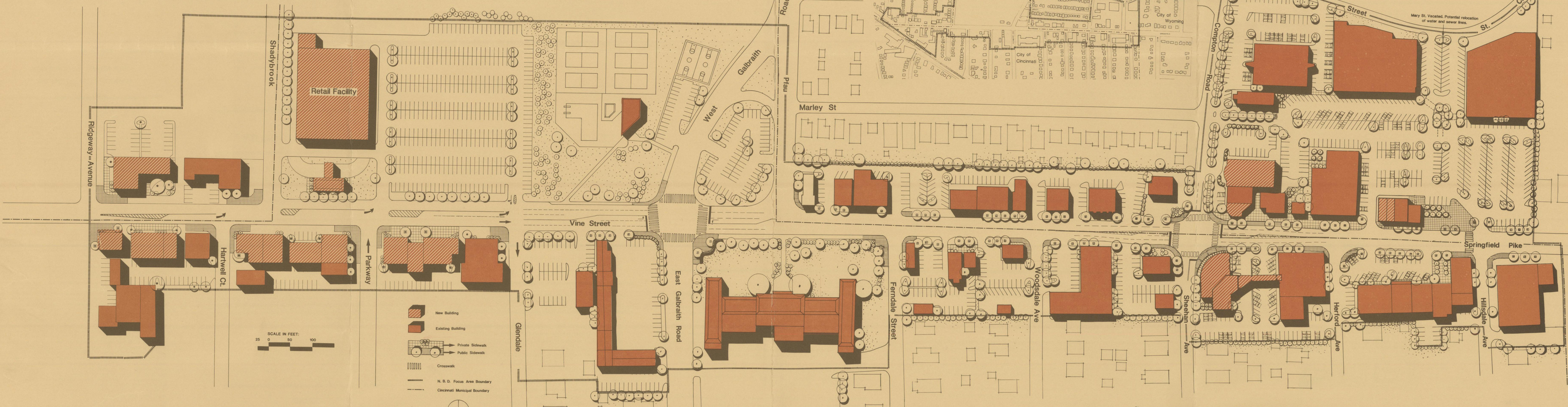


HARTWELL

Neighborhood Business District

URBAN DESIGN PLAN



- There is a need to concentrate similar ancillary uses within relatively well-defined nodes or activity centers.
- The commercial district will need to comprise two major focal points, located at opposite ends of the NBD.

One of the major problems that has long confronted the Hartwell Business District has been the lack of new investment and/or support for new commercial development relative to the district's market potential. As stated in the preliminary Urban Design Plan, the Hartwell Business District had clearly failed, as a district, to take advantage of the retail market opportunities that exist there. In this respect, the Kroger superstore facility will tend to affirm the potentialities of Hartwell's natural market.

This new economic statement that Kroger's or any other similar retail facility is making at the southern end of the NBD, relative to the economic viability of the Hartwell natural market, should have a positive effect on the commercial viability of the business district as a whole. It is assumed that major changes generated by the Kroger development will take place in the general area of the new site. However, given the market potential of the business district, the beneficial impact of the Kroger facility, as intended in this Design Plan, attempts to extend the emerging economic development potential to virtually all the district.

Within this emerging economic development potential, the Urban Design Plan establishes a physical framework which is intended to achieve the following:

- Establish two commercial core areas, one at each of the southern and northern NBD areas;
- Each of the commercial core areas to have its unique market orientation;
- Each of the two areas to be compatible with each other, in support of their economic market orientation and not in competition;
- Recognize the establishment of the southern commercial and economic development potential as a catalyst for revitalization of that portion of the Hartwell NBD, which previously was found to be unattractive due to blighting conditions;
- In a similar manner, recognize the establishment of the southern commercial area as a catalyst for the re-definition and redevelopment of the northern core area as a vital neighborhood retail center, thus allowing the northern area to take advantage of this new economic development potential;
- Allow for the selective re-definition and redevelopment of the strip-retail area between the two commercial core areas to begin to take place within the emerging market dynamics afforded throughout the Hartwell NBD.

ECONOMIC CONDITION AND FUTURE DIRECTION

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

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

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

- There is a need to diversify the commercial mix of the NBD Core, to include convenient and specialty shops.
- There is a need to increase and expand the existing retail space to provide new retail functions.
- There is a need to provide high quality specialty shops and boutique shops to attract the market's higher income residents.
- The whole length of the NBD cannot be considered as a single unified district of like functions.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to present and describe the Urban Design Plan for the Hartwell Neighborhood Business District (NBD). The long-term plans of the Kroger Company to build a new superstore in Hartwell has necessitated a re-evaluation and redesign of the recently proposed preliminary 1980 Urban Design Plan for the Hartwell Business District, with one issue being that of the potential impact of the planned superstore on the Hartwell NBD. This Urban Design Plan is recommended in consideration of the opportunities and constraints that will emerge, assessment of the consequences and redefinition of the new role of the Hartwell NBD, and in realization of the need to articulate the growth potential with respect to land use redevelopment, development, and implementation mechanisms.

From the outset, it is important to emphasize that the planned Kroger superstore or another use of similar caliber is a given variable with respect to the analysis, evaluation, and formulation of the Urban Design Plan. Therefore, recommendations with respect to the decision for locating or not locating such a facility in the designated site are beyond the scope of the Study and Urban Design Plan.

The planned relocation of the Kroger grocery store from its present location just north of Compton to a new site at Shadybrook and Vine Street represents more than merely moving 2,000 feet south, down Vine Street. For one thing, the shift represents a doubling of Kroger's facility size, while greatly expanding its merchandise line. At one level of consideration, the Kroger move represents the equivalent of adding a second Kroger store to the Hartwell Business District. At a second level, the relocation represents shifting a large segment of the grocery business away from the northern section to the southern sector of the Hartwell business district.

The impact of this shift is expected to cause some movement of change in the physical and economic make-up of the entire business district. While such a possibility and potential were not a reality during the preparation of the earlier proposed Urban Design Plan for the Hartwell NBD, the present Urban Design Plan and recommendations have been developed by considering as their key determinant this emerging potential for economic and community development. In addition, this new potential sets forth the debating point for the re-definition of Hartwell and sets forth the debating point for a new and expanded role in the Cincinnati area. Unlike most business districts in Cincinnati where urban design plans define and set boundaries between the business and residential environments and, therefore, interrelating development and redevelopment activities, this emerging role of the Hartwell NBD provides opportunities for growth and appropriate expansion within the established business and community boundaries.

Specifically, with respect to the impact of the proposed facility, the Urban Design Plan addresses the following:

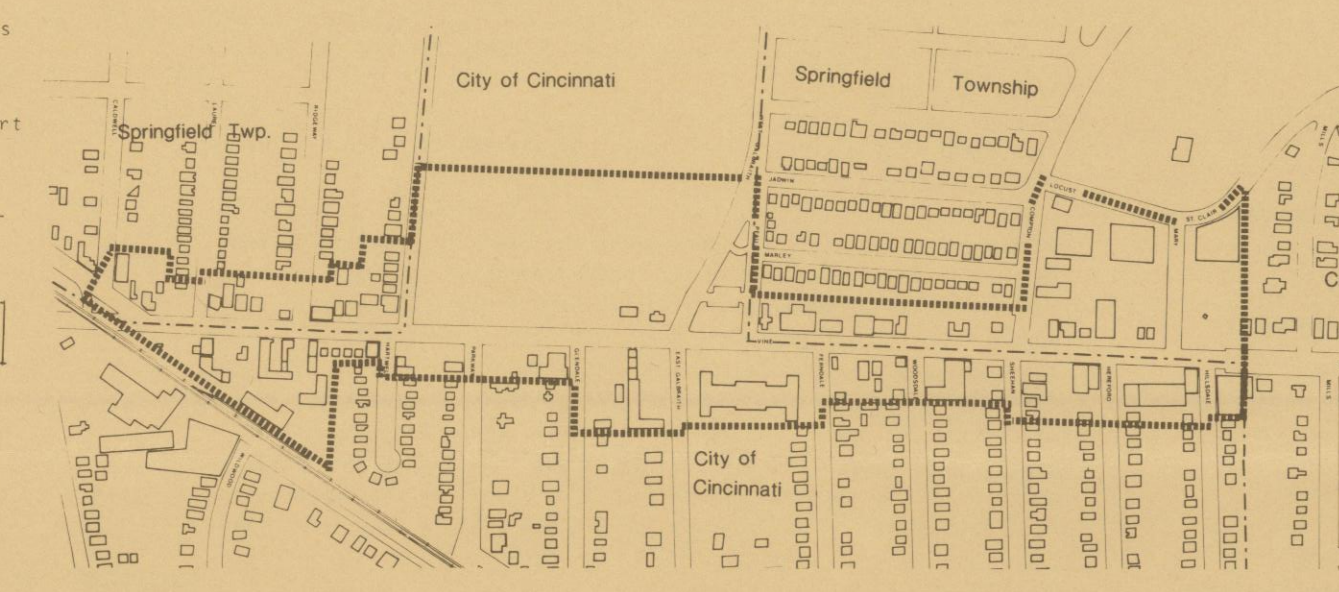
- defines the types of retail use changes that the planned facility will set in motion;
- proposes a development and reinvestment strategy that can best maximize the beneficial aspect of such changes;
- provides a set of regulatory and design measures for mitigating negative consequences of the shift with respect to vehicular and pedestrian traffic, functional and aesthetic land use compatibilities, streetscape visual quality and maintenance of a desired livability level;
- sets forth an incremental development process to serve as a framework for decision-making by local businesses and the City of Cincinnati;
- establishes a physical framework for development and re-development to be used in concert with the incremental public and private decisions;
- establishes a basis for ongoing maintenance of new improvements by the private sector; and
- establishes a basis for private funding participation in support of improvements and revitalization activities.

GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

The Hartwell Neighborhood Business District comprises a relatively narrow strip of land located on both sides of Vine Street extending north from the B & O Railroad overpass to Hillside (Figure 1). Approximately half of the business district is located in Hamilton County outside the City of Cincinnati's jurisdiction. The City's corporate line runs down the center of Vine Street, therefore, the west side of Vine is in Springfield Township, while the east side of the street lies within the City. The only exception is the Hartwell Playground which is located on the west side of Vine below West Galbraith Road, which lies within the City of Cincinnati's corporate limits.

For planning and economic development purposes, the business district is treated as a unified whole, irrespective of the jurisdictional dichotomy of the district. The Urban Design Plan, therefore, includes both sides of Vine Street, recognizing, however, that the City of Cincinnati can adopt policies and plans affecting only that portion of the business district which lies within its political jurisdiction. The Plan and its implementation strategy, therefore, includes separate program policies for both jurisdictions. Consequently, the adoption and implementation of the Urban Design Plan can begin independently of a formal response from the governments of Hamilton County and Springfield Township. Yet, the Design Plan strongly recommends the initiation and establishment of a partnership between the City and the other two levels of government in order to capitalize on the mutually beneficial economic and community development opportunities.

FIGURE 1 STUDY AREA BOUNDARY



IMPACT ASSESSMENT AREAS

The existing land use and transportation system in the Hartwell NBD planting area dictate the delineation of three subareas (Figure 2), in order to specifically address development and design issues and recommendations. Later in this report, these three areas are described with respect to their legal boundary and are considered as a whole in forming the Hartwell NBD.

FIGURE 2

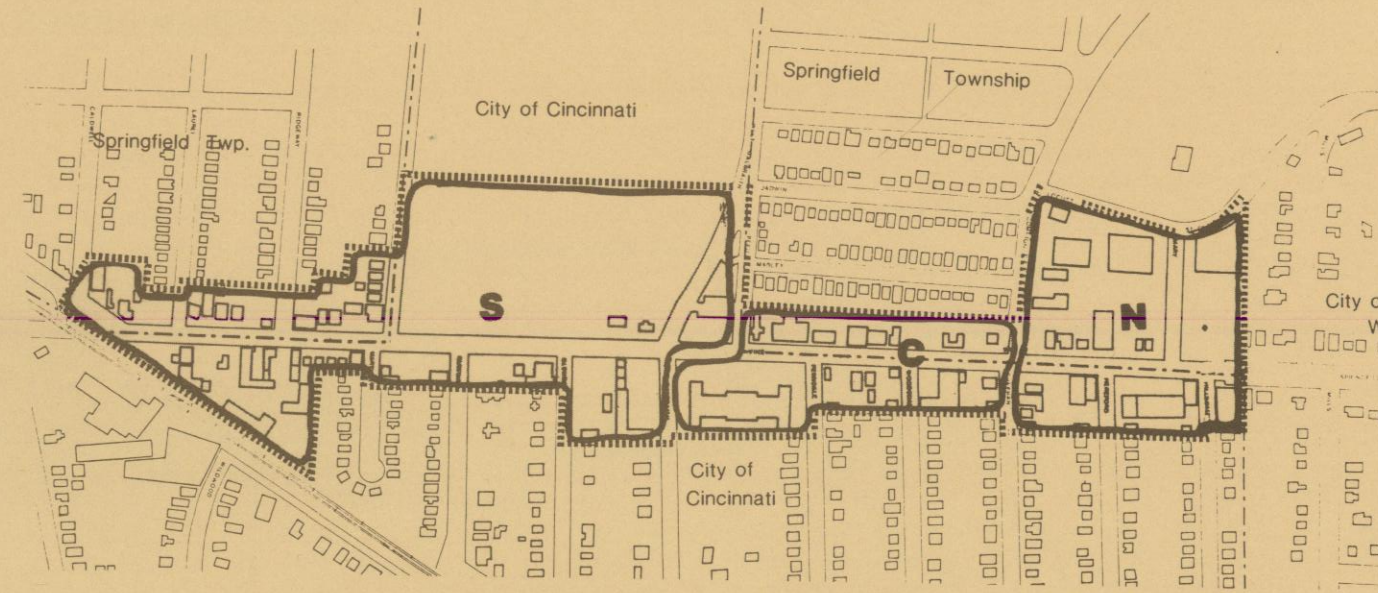


TABLE 1: IMPLEMENTATION EVENTS AND ACTIONS

Event and Action	Cost	Agent
• Creation of a Hartwell Business Association		Private
• Adoption of the Urban Design Plan by City Council		City Council
• Organization of Hartwell NBD Task Force		City Council
• Creation and initiation of an NBD "Clean-up" and "Fix-up" Campaign		City Council
• Initiation of the redevelopment and construction of the Kroger Superstore		Kroger
• Initiation of the Kroger Superstore development and adjacent street improvements		Kroger
• Initiation of the streetscape improvement program for the central and northern core areas	205,100	Private
• Street intersection improvement at Compton/Shawna	98,450	Public
• Curb and gutter improvement on Locust Street	9,000	County
• Acquisition and clearance of 833-89 Vine Street	55,100	City/County
• Initiation of Building Rehabilitation Program	215,000	Private
• Acquisition, relocation and clearance of #14 and #30 parcels	100,000	City/County
• Closure of Mary Street (Relocation of water lines)	35,000	City/County
• Elimination of NBD parking at #30 Compton Road and #34-49 Vine	26,312	Private
• Creation of the Big Melon Complex acquisition of three parcels in the northwest corner of Vine Street and Shewan	378,500	City
• Acquisition of parcel segments at #801, #815, and #819 Vine Street	79,800	City
• Site preparation	5,000	City
• Redevelopment of the Big Melon Complex		Private
• Construction of new commercial space at #14 Compton Road	265,000	Private
• Construction of the pedestrian interface between existing establishments and the new construction	139,000	Private
• Completion of NBD parking lot development at #801-819 Vine Street	36,000	City
• Development of public amenity space along western side of Vine Street	60,000	Private

PHASING

The first phase of the development program will need to concentrate on organizing the necessary support facilities appropriate to carry out a long-term joint development process. The second phase should emphasize the development of the Hartwell public recreational facility complex and the proposed commercial development on the adjoining site. The third phase of the development program should emphasize a common streetscape program for the northern section of the NBD. The final phase of development should renew the northern town center focus area. Early stages of implementation should emphasize projects that are highly visible and which encourage public and private participation.

With respect to the evolution of the Hartwell Urban Design Plan, the development process for the entire NBD area should be envisioned as a set of events, of public and private decisions and commitments in response to the emerging economic development vitality. Tables 1 and 2 list the implementation events and actions with respect to costs, responsibility for execution, and timing.

TABLE 2: PHASING OF EVENTS AND ACTIONS

Event and Action	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88
• Creation of a Hartwell Business Association								
• Adoption of the Urban Design Plan by City Council								
• Organization of Hartwell NBD Task Force								
• Creation and initiation of an NBD "Clean-up" and "Fix-up" Campaign								
• Initiation of the redevelopment and construction of the Kroger Superstore development and adjacent street improvements								
• Initiation of the streetscape improvement program for the central and northern core areas								
• Street intersection improvement at the intersection of Compton and Shawna								
• Curb and gutter improvement on Locust Street								
• Acquisition and clearance of 833-89 Vine Street								
• Initiation of Building Rehabilitation Program								
• Acquisition, relocation and clearance of #14 and #30 parcels								
• Closure of Mary Street								
• Creation of NBD parking at #30 Compton Road and #34-49 Vine								
• Redevelopment of the Big Melon Complex acquisition of three parcels in the northwest corner of Vine Street and Shewan								
• Acquisition of parcel segments at #801, #815, and #819 Vine Street								
• Site preparation								
• Redevelopment of the Big Melon Complex								
• Construction of new commercial space at #14 Compton Road								
• Construction of the pedestrian interface between existing establishments and the new construction								
• Completion of NBD parking lot development at #801-819 Vine Street								
• Development of public amenity space along western side of Vine Street								

DESIGN CONCEPT

The essence of the urban design concept is to make the Hartwell Neighborhood Business District an attractive and vital retail environment on both the City and County sides of Vine Street. The Urban Design Concept recognizes as its most basic premise that revitalization of the Hartwell Business District can only be achieved by considering, in a coordinated manner, the redevelopment of commercial property along both sides of Vine Street.

CONCEPT OBJECTIVES

- Maximize the economic investment and redevelopment opportunity that generated the new Kroger superstore.
- Promote through orderly redevelopment the transformation of lower Vine Street, from used car lots to a new general commercial 8-2 retail district keyed to the new Kroger superstore complex. This will require the re-opening of affected property in the City from 8-4 to 8-2, as well as an affected property in Hamilton County from residential to planned retail zoning.
- Develop a harmonious neighborhood shopping center within the northern sector of the business district by unifying both physically and functionally the retail use along both sides of Vine Street between Compton Road and Hillside.
- Utilize an adaptive re-use approach to the redevelopment and revitalization of the business district within the northern retail core.
- Integrate the business district with the surrounding neighborhood, and limit the business area within the proposed boundaries without further expansion into adjacent residential area, except in extreme cases.
- Minimize the negative influence that Vine Street exerts on maintaining an automobile-oriented shopping district by strengthening existing opportunities for organized on- and off-street parking.
- Develop a clear physical image which provides for functional cohesiveness in building facades and form, which results in a new retail environment with a strong identity, and pedestrian orientation.
- Promote supportive office and residential development opportunities in the central core area within a negotiated redevelopment process.

FIGURE 3 ECONOMIC/COMMUNITY BASE - DESIGN CONCEPT

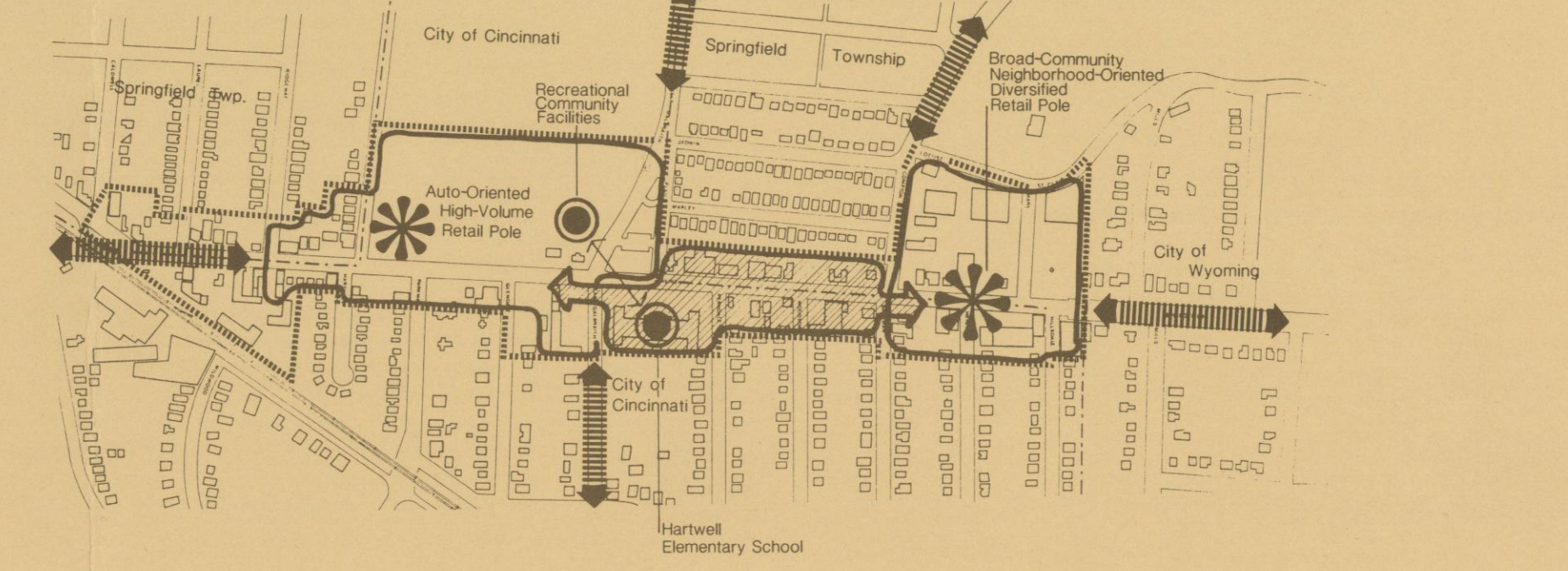


Figure 3 shows the conceptual economic base for the formulation of the Urban Design Plan.

URBAN DESIGN PLAN

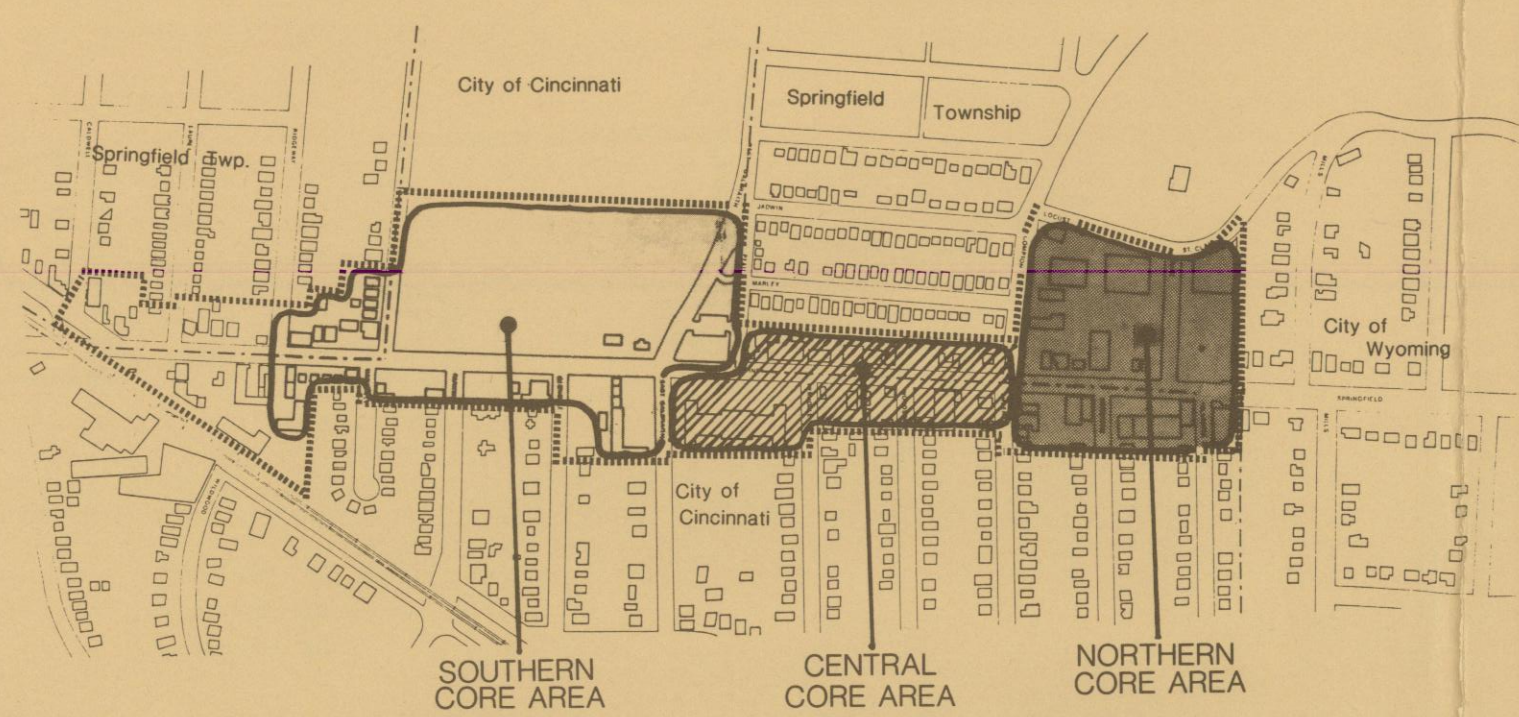
The Urban Design Plan proposes a comprehensive revitalization strategy for the entire business district. The plan attempts to transform a blighted commercial corridor into a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented business district. The principal design strategy of the plan is intended to maximize the full potential of the district's natural retail market, while at the same time, it proposes to take full advantage of the economic reinvestment potential which is being set in motion by the inclusion of a new Kroger superstore in Hartwell.

The Urban Design Plan for the Hartwell Business District extends southward from the existing municipal line at Hillside, to the center of the intersection of Vine Street and Ridgeway. The area south of this intersection on the city side of Vine Street is essentially light industrial and automobile repair and is not consistent with the notion of neighborhood retail. For this reason, the Urban Design Plan does not include the area south of Ridgeway.

The design plan deals individually with three separate geographic subareas that collectively comprise the NBD. Each subarea is proposed to develop a distinct function division of specialized services. Moreover, each subarea is intended to be mutually compatible within the context of the total business district.

As previously stated, the design framework attempts to create two distinct commercial core areas, located at opposite ends of the business district: A northern core area located between Compton Road and the City of Wyoming and including both sides of Vine Street; and a southern core area located between Galbraith and Ridgeway.

FIGURE 4
NBD URBAN DESIGN SUBAREAS

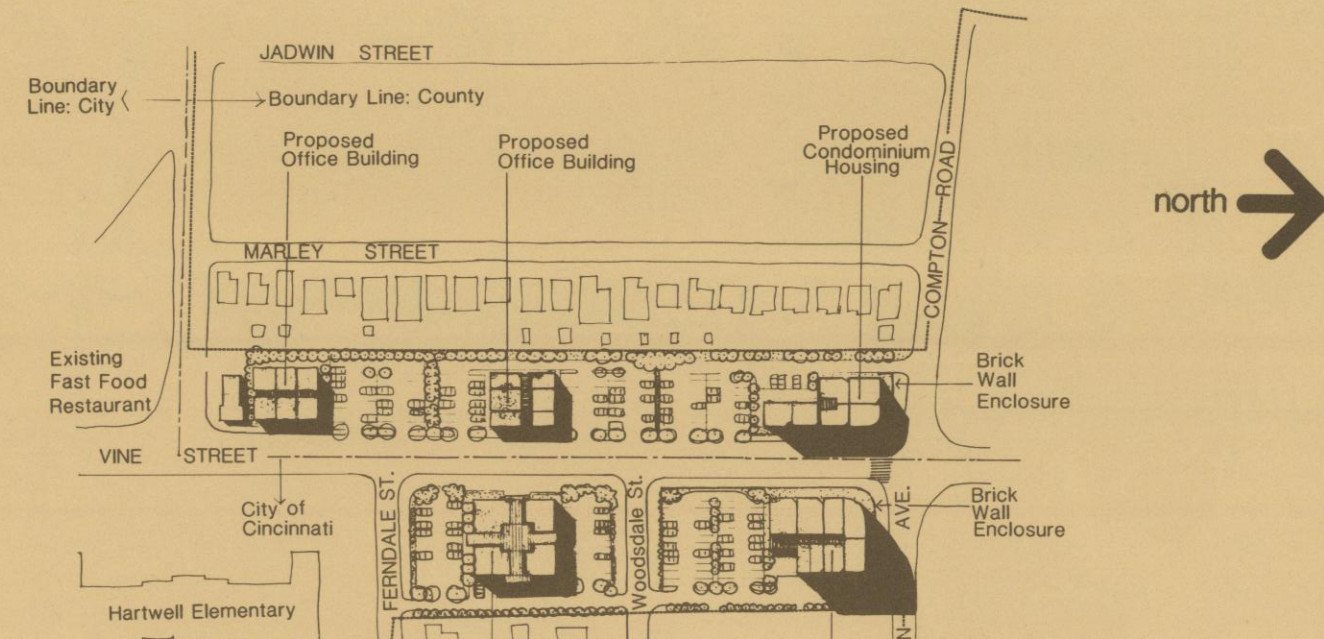


CENTRAL CORE AREA

The central Vine Street core area lies between Sheehan and Compton and Galbraith along both sides of Vine Street. This section of the central business district has been the focus of many of the northern core area section of the neighborhood business district. The total area is approximately three blocks in length. The Hartwell Elementary School, however, consumes one block, leaving the City side of Vine Street with two commercial block faces. The major issues that have confronted this particular section of Vine Street have been inadequate parking, the shallowness of commercial lots, particularly on the County side, the problem of vehicular parking access to specific buildings. The area generally characterizes an obsolete roadway oriented commercial strip. Observations of the area consist basically of two types. First, it is obsolete in terms of the type and character of many of its buildings, including disinvestment, and second, it is obsolete in terms of the character of the area relative to increased traffic volumes on Vine Street. Many of the buildings and functions within this section of Vine Street are out of sink with area changes, and represent a different period, which is becoming increasingly dysfunctional as a business area. The area represents a very weak transitional district, where there has been some changes toward more conventional strip commercial. So far, the process has been marginal and somewhat chaotic.

The urban design plan shows the recommended improvements for the central core area with respect to streetscape, curb cuts, and coordinated parking access, as well as the development of additional parking. The plan assumes that the use of the buildings in this area will be determined through the market forces as it will be regulated under the existing zoning regulations.

FIGURE 5



NORTHERN CORE AREA

The revitalization strategy for the northern core area is predicated on a need to redirect its commercial orientation from general convenience to higher specialized retail, while increasing its commercial diversity.

The design plan, by restructuring the northern core area's commercial orientation, attempts to create a whole new set of opportunities consistent with its market potential. That is, the plan proposes a development scenario that would internalize the market's externalities, while creating an environmental quality characterized by the Compton/Galbraith Road area. The plan proposes a neighborhood-oriented diversified retail pole which would include commercial, retail, entertainment, and office uses. Principally, the two major grocery stores located on the west side of Vine Street would be reassembled to accommodate small units of specialty retail shops and/or larger commercial units, such as furniture, appliances, hardware-type uses.

The following uses are proposed for the northern core area:

- An entertainment/retail/office zone at the corner of Compton and Vine, including a movie theater, the existing fast-food restaurant, a new coffee/ice cream parlor, the two existing small retail units along Vine Street, and the existing retail/office building;
- Office uses in the existing medical office building;
- The inclusion of the existing community use building;
- A cluster of five new commercial units (approx. 9,500 sq. ft.) along the northern end of the core area;
- The reuse of the presently used by Kroger and Thriftway structures into smaller unit retail space and/or such uses as furniture stores, appliances, hardware, etc.;
- The expansion of retail space for the Big Melon at the corner of Compton and Vine at the present location of the service station;
- Improvements along the facades and streetscape of Fidelity Shopping and Furniture Store;
- Coordinated parking and circulation plans, as well as emphasis on pedestrian movement and facilities;
- Improvements for sidewalks, building facades, signage, etc.

During the early phases of redevelopment, the Urban Design Plan can be implemented by focusing on the retail use east of Vine Street by appropriately reusing the two large buildings through interior changes by renovating these structures to accommodate smaller shops, and by improving the parking, vehicular/pedestrian circulation and streetscape areas.

Following is a sequence of events with respect to the evolution of the Urban Design Plan in the northern core area (See also the Urban Design Plan).

- Urban Design Plan adoption;
- Organizational arrangements, roles and responsibilities;
- Re-use, redevelopment and improvements of the portion of the area along the eastern side of Vine Street, including the expansion of the Big Melon;
- Re-use of the present Kroger Store for retail uses (i.e., furniture, appliances, etc.) or via remodeling to smaller units for specialty stores;
- Implementation of streetscape improvements along the same eastern side of Vine Street;
- Street and traffic engineering improvements at the intersection of Vine and Compton, including pedestrian crossings;
- Parking and pedestrian circulation improvements along the same eastern side of Vine Street;
- Demolition of marginal use structures for temporary use as parking areas;
- Selective parking improvements at the portion west from Vine Street;
- Streetscape improvements and cosmetic treatment of the Drugstore Building, office, and community buildings;
- Re-use of the Thriftway Store (if necessary) into smaller retail units;
- Redevelopment of the portion along the intersection of Compton and Vine for entertainment/retail uses by developing a new structure next to the fast food restaurant;
- Implementation of necessary streetscape, parking, circulation and pedestrian improvements;
- Redevelopment of the public amenity space along Vine Street;
- Development of additional small commercial units at the vicinity of the public space;
- Completion of all streetscape improvements.

SOUTHERN CORE AREA

The southern commercial core area centers on Vine Street and Shadybrook and includes the area that has recently been rezoned B-2, general commercial. The rezoned site is expected to be developed by the Kroger facility for a 42,000 square foot "superstore". The development of the Kroger facility would constitute a significant change in the land use and economic investment pattern of the immediate and general area. It is anticipated based on other similar situations, that the superstore facility will generate additional new off-site development activity within the Vine Street corridor. Such development normally tends to be high volume retail and discount stores, banking and savings institutions and fast food restaurants. There are a number of other factors that also influence the development pattern of such an area, including traffic volume, site location and highway access and zoning. However, a superstore facility of the magnitude proposed for the area in question will generate renewed investment interest, particularly within the lower half of the business district. In this respect, the lower portion of the Vine Street corridor has a very real potential for revitalization due to the development of Kroger facility. The design plan shown in Figure 6 proposes the establishment of adequate development and design standards to foster the physical and economic revitalization of lower end of Vine Street, while at the same time preventing that section of Vine Street from becoming a haphazard commercial strip.

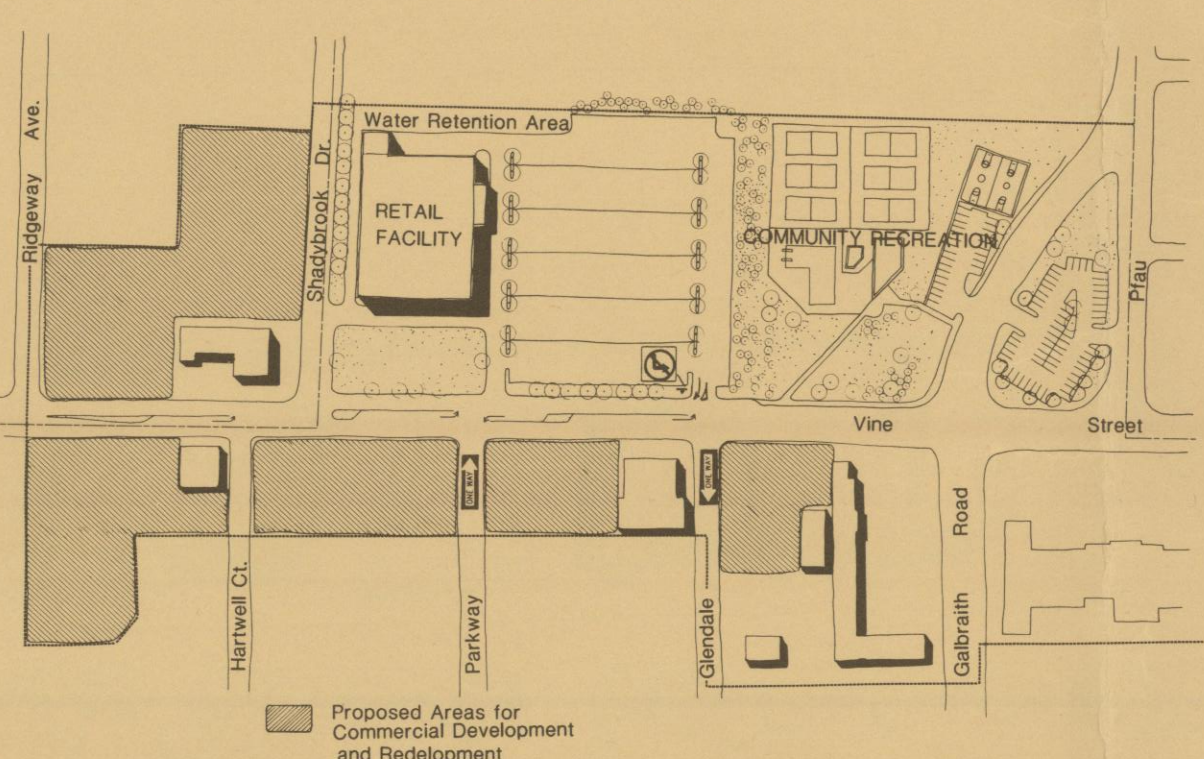
The design plan proposes that the east side of Vine Street from Glendale Street south to the point opposite the centerline of the intersection of Vine and Ridgeway, be designated as a B-2, in order to control the redevelopment of the area as specifically indicated on the design plan.

It is recommended that an Interim Development Control (IDC) District be imposed on the City portion of the NBD, while specific design standards are being formulated as part of an overlay environmental quality district to be imposed later. The Design Plan proposes that specific development controls be developed for each section of the NBD, as opposed to developing a single set of controls for the NBD as a whole.

The present zoning of the lower sector of the NBD is zoned B-4, Heavy Commercial.

It is recommended that the development standards for the I.O.D. are designed to foster the commercial redevelopment of the Southern core area and that such development is of a nature that will not generally compete with the Northern core area. The development and design standards should encourage high volume discount-type stores, including home furnishings, hardware, appliances, gardening, auto parts, paint stores, and the like. The design standards should also establish necessary guidelines for site design layout relative to the design character of the southern core area. Such standards should encourage the redevelopment of large areas, comprising a block face at a time.

FIGURE 6



CIRCULATION POLICIES

VEHICULAR

The Design Plan recommends the following traffic circulation improvements to be made within the business district:

- re-alignment of the intersection offset of Compton Road/Sheehan Road and Vine Street and provide left turn stacking lanes on Vine for north and southbound traffic;
 - wide Vine Street to allow north and southbound turn lanes at Hillside, and at proposed entrance to the Northern core shopping center;
 - wide Vine Street to allow northbound left turn lanes at Shadybrook, and at the proposed entrance points to the new Kroger facility, opposite Glendale and Parkway.
- Improve and widen Shadybrook from the rear property line of the proposed Kroger site to Vine Street.

- sidewalk material should be used to encourage pleasant, easy walking and should be used in alteration so that they add texture, color, and scale to the ground plane.
- Improve the existing circulation pattern so as to minimize the impact on the secondary residential street system as shown on the Design Plan.
- reduce the number of curb cuts and independent driveways along Vine Street right-of-way by consolidating parking areas, and eliminating off-street front-in parking.
- utilize or eliminate the visual clutter and confusion of competing public and private signs within the streetscape right-of-way.
- provide solutions to the Parkway and Glendale roadway problems through the utilization of one-way traffic flows and/or the use of cul-de-sacs.

PEDESTRIAN

Vine Street is the major arterial highway that carries traffic into and through the business district. The business district in Hartwell is extremely dependent upon, and is oriented exclusively to the automobile. Pedestrian access to the business district is quite limited. Moreover, the neighborhood's residential densities adjacent to the commercial district are not sufficient to support a high level of pedestrian penetration of the district. However, future conditions

PARKING POLICIES

The Hartwell business district is deficient in the total number of off-street spaces needed to sustain a viable and expanded business center. Detailed parking surveys conducted in the business district indicate that the available number of parking spaces at a number of locations are insufficient. Given the zoning standard of one parking space per 250 square feet of commercial floor space, approximately 235 additional spaces are needed for the northern half of the NBD alone. The Urban Design Plan proposes to improve and expand the number of off-street parking spaces within the district toward meeting the design goal of one space per 250 square feet of commercial floor space. The Town Center District has the greatest need for additional parking followed by the Vine Street center between Sheehan and Galbraith.

The design plan proposes to improve, upgrade, and redesign the existing parking areas with a coordinated design layout for both areas, which would take advantage of existing space that is presently under-utilized. New parking areas are proposed for the entire NBD area.

as opposed to a lot-by-lot redevelopment process. The I.O.D. should have sufficient flexibility in establishing a commercial mix of uses with adequate development controls and density design standards. Such standards should, for example, determine not only the type but the number of uses permitted within each segment of the business district. Both sides of Vine Street (i.e., the County side as well as the City side), should be rezoned for B-2 type uses. The establishment of B-2 type uses will also aid in maintaining a relative degree of compatibility between retail uses and the surrounding community. Opposite the Kroger store across Shadybrook, the plan recommends that should this area be developed for uses other than residential development, such development should be a commercial Planned Unit Development (PUD) for similar uses cited above.

In tandem with the redevelopment of the southern half of the business district, the plan proposes the following specific guidelines applicable to both sides of Vine Street:

- landscaping between building and off-street parking should be part of the amenity package of each site development scheme;
- landscaping, and the planting of trees, should be encouraged both within the public sidewalk right-of-way, as well as along the side and rear boundary lines of the business district;
- adequate landscape screens should be created between and along the district boundary to minimize disruption to adjoining residences;
- all parking areas should have a permanent hard surface and should be adequately laid out and marked;
- parking areas with more than 15 spaces should provide landscaped islands, of five feet in width; and to be planted with durable types of trees of not less than 2 inch calipers;
- common parking areas should be encouraged and consolidated where appropriate;
- individual buildings should be designed and arranged in a manner complementary with its surroundings, existing or proposed, and should minimize its position relative to parking and vehicular circulation and access; and
- the design character of new and/or existing buildings should attempt to improve and upgrade the visual and business image of the area.

DOMINANT ELEMENTS OF THE URBAN DESIGN PLAN

The following are the dominant elements of the Design Plan for all three areas:

- Recommend the establishment of two major commercial retail centers, located opposite each other at either end of the Vine Street Business District.
- Propose a division of specialization, relative to each commercial center.
- Propose the redevelopment and revitalization of the Vine Street commercial corridor from Ridgeway north to the City of Wyoming.
- Propose the development of a unified streetscape design program throughout the Business District.
- Recommend improved vehicular circulation via proposed roadway widening for turning movements and storage lanes for Vine Street and improved parking and driveway access.
- Propose improved pedestrian circulation, via upgraded sidewalks and crosswalks, and expanded internal pedestrian circulation systems.
- Recommend the elimination of marginal and blighting features of the physical environment.

RECOMMENDED MAJOR CHANGES

The Urban Design Plan proposes that certain changes need to occur in the Hartwell Business District:

- The redevelopment of the property at the corner of Locust Street and Compton Avenue for a parking facility to primarily serve the Northern Core Area retail uses.
- The redevelopment of the property that occupies the northeast quadrant of Sheehan and Vine Street for realigning the Sheehan/Compton Road intersection, and for new commercial expansion.
- Reorganization of existing parking areas to serve specific subareas within each shopping core area.
- Redevelopment of the northern core area, between Burger Chef and existing Mary Street, for new commercial/entertainment development.
- The demolition of the property at 8401-8419 Vine Street for redevelopment as a parking facility.
- Elimination of all present storefront parking which requires backing onto Vine Street.
- Roadway widening and improvements made to Locust and Compton Roads.
- Roadway widening of Vine Street for left turn lanes as indicated on the Urban Design Plan.
- The designation of Glendale Street as one-way heading east and the designation of Parkway Avenue as one-way heading west. As an alternative option, both streets would become cul-de-sacs where they intersect with Vine Street.
- Extending Burns Street northward to connect Ridgeway with Shadybrook.
- Redevelopment of the Hartwell recreation area.
- The widening and upgrading of Shadybrook to accommodate increased traffic volumes.

OBJECTIVES

- The visual impact in the revitalization of the NBD should consider the major traffic arterial function of Vine Street and the influence that it exerts on the maintenance of an automobile-oriented shopping district. Improvements to the appearance and environmental quality of the NBD should strive towards counteracting the traffic-related influence through appropriately bold physical and visual change.
- Building Improvements and streetscape changes should strive toward reinforcing the visual appearance of continuity of buildings form along Vine Street, so that a more cohesive NBD image can emerge, creating a new identity for the area.
- A unified visual theme should be established for each subarea, and applied throughout the building improvements, streetscape elements, luminaires, signage, etc.
- Within the visual retail environment, unified efforts should be made in maintaining a harmonious contrast in building texture, color, and form, individually for each subarea in order to minimize the linear impact of Vine Street.

GUIDELINES

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

STOREFRONT AND BUILDING FACADE IMPROVEMENTS

- Original building surfaces should be maintained through restoration and clean-up of facade material.
- Individual building fronts should be kept visually accessible to the shoppers; and street visual attractiveness should be increased through coordinated building facade treatment, window displays and signage.
- Entrances of new buildings in the northern core area should relate to the pedestrian retail mall, and should provide for a transition between the exterior and interior space via recessed entrances. As approved, use of materials and color schemes should be developed, where possible, architecturally and graphically defined doorways and display areas, and the use of signs and awnings.
- Any new building or building improvements should use exterior building materials of the type which will be in harmony with surrounding buildings and the overall accepted visual theme. Where possible, brick and/or other masonry buildings should be retained in their natural state.
- A compatible color scheme should be utilized for painting within each core area. Utilize relatively dark colors for buildings with volumes and form that need to be de-emphasized.
- Facade treatment to the upper stories of a building with materials other than the original facade should be avoided.

LEGAL BASIS FOR PROPERTY ACQUISITION

Under Chapter 725 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code, it was found that "blighted, deteriorated, and abandoned areas which constitute a public health, safety, and general welfare, and which constitute an economic and social liability and impair the good growth of the community". It was also found that city blight and deterioration could not be controlled by private enterprise alone. In order to remedy this situation Chapter 725 authorized the City to expend funds to eliminate blight and deterioration and to award this end - to acquire private property.

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

Under Chapter 725 of the Cincinnati Municipal Code, an Urban Renewal Area "shall mean a blighted or deteriorating area which is appropriate for redevelopment or rehabilitation as defined in paragraph (a) of Section 725 - 1-01". The City of Cincinnati, for the purposes of this particular plan, therefore, declares that the Hartwell Business District Area, more particularly defined in Boundary Description of the Urban Design Area is an Urban Renewal Area. Within the Hartwell Business District Area, there exist blighted areas in which a majority of the structures are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, by reason of age, obsolescence, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty construction, or other factors, or a lack of ventilation or sanitary facilities or any combination of these factors, or there exist deteriorating areas which because of inconvertible land use, non-conforming uses, lack of adequate parking facilities, faulty street arrangement, inadequate community facilities, increased density of population without commensurate increase in new residential building, non-conforming facilities, high turnover in residential or commercial occupancy, lack of maintenance and repair of buildings, or any combination thereof are detrimental to the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare, and which will deteriorate, or are in danger of deteriorating, into blighted areas. Through the adoption of this Urban Renewal Plan by City Council, the City Manager is authorized to acquire the property in the area defined in the Urban Design Area, the acquisition of which is necessary in carrying out the Urban Renewal Plan.

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

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION (MUNICIPAL PORTION ONLY)

URBAN ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Underlying the NBD's negative appearance and physical structure is the lack of a clear identity and image beyond its principal orientation to the automobile. Throughout the NBD there is an evident decline in appearance and neighborhood character. The loose relationship between buildings and open parking lots adds to the area's low attractiveness and lack of pedestrian amenity.

The NBD lacks continuity in its commercial building fabric throughout the Vine Street commercial corridor. The ad hoc placement of buildings in relation to each other, and to the street, creates a non-cohesive, disjointed environment. This is further amplified by the presence of unattractive building facades, colors, materials, signs, etc.

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

ZONING

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

The Urban Design Plan further proposes, as recommended on page 26 through 36, to downzone from B-4 to B-2 a section of the east side of the Vine Street commercial district that lies between Glendale Avenue and south to the projected centerline of the Ridgeway/Vine Street intersection.

CREDITS

The Hartwell Neighborhood Business District Urban Design Plan was prepared for the City of Cincinnati, Department of Development, NBD Commercial Division, by:

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February, 1981

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