

CITY OF CINCINNATI
Neighborhood Business District Improvement Program
2016-2017 FUNDING REQUEST APPLICATION

WESTWOOD HISTORIC BUSINESS DISTRICT REVITALIZATION

Project Name: Westwood Historic Business District Revitalization: Traffic and Parking Study
Project Address: Harrison from Cheviot Border (Boudinot) to Kling, Intersecting streets: Harrison, Epworth and Urwiler; Montana, Harrison and Epworth (see map)
Neighborhood: Westwood
Development Corp: Westwood Community Urban Community Redevelopment Corp (WestCURC)
Community Council: Westwood Civic Association
Community Representation: Westwood Coalition (coalition of voting members representing Westwood Civic, WestCURC, Westwood Works, Westwood Historic and members of the business community)
Census Tract: 101
Empowerment Zone: No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Background

The Westwood Revitalization strategy began with the Plan Cincinnati process, when Westwood was identified as one of 4 key focus neighborhoods for revitalization, centered on the HBD. This is a multi-year project which restores the heart of the HBD into a vibrant, walkable, inclusive neighborhood which includes the implementation of the “Bow-tie” (creating Urwiler Plaza out of the closure of Urwiler, mirroring the Town Hall park); co-development of the Town Hall property as a flexible, attractive space for community gatherings and events; corollary streetscaping, traffic calming, and pedestrian accessibility; the attraction of new businesses and amenities attractive to both the local community and to visitors; and key nodes of development as catalytic change agents, beginning with the opening of Madcap Theater.

After a multi-year process of community engagement and consultation, the Westwood Coalition, representing the Civic Association, WestCURC, Westwood Works, Westwood Historical Society and leaders of the business community, issued a recommendation with the explicit revitalization objectives of creating a focal point for the community as a locus of activity, a safe and walkable district, and options for retail and dining. Other objectives include:

- provide traffic calming and safety measures and increase safety for pedestrians
- improved green space around Town Hall for community events and activities
- enhance the appeal of the HBD to visitors, residents and businesses
- respect, embrace and enhance the historic character of the district

Phase 1 of the Westwood Historic Business District Revitalization has been focused on the “Main and Main”, the intersection of Harrison, Epworth and Urwiler, and the area south of that - the triangle bounded by Montana, Harrison and Epworth. Since revitalization efforts began, Madcap Puppets has purchased and begun the renovation of the historic Bell building into the Madcap Center; the Ruehlman building at the corner of Montana and Harrison has been purchased and renovated, with the addition of new businesses, including Muse Café – a coffee house to open June 2016; WestCURC was awarded the bid for the purchase and renovation of the historic Firehouse on Epworth into a restaurant; opposite, across the Town Hall Park, a brewery is under development in the existing KSDesigns building; and the old Sontag building, just south of the Montana/Harrison intersection, has been purchased for renovation into a restaurant.

Project

In November 2014, the Westwood Coalition submitted to City Council their formal recommendation for the most significant physical component of the Westwood Historic Business District (HBD) Revitalization: the ‘square’ at the heart of the HBD. This ‘square’, referred to as “the Bowtie”, is comprised of two major components: the creation of the Urwiler Plaza through the closing of Urwiler between Epworth and Harrison and the redevelopment of the reflected triangle of the Town Hall Park. Corollary objectives in conjunction with the Bowtie are to improve pedestrian access and safety, traffic calming and additional parking to support the vision of a safe, walkable community.

In FY2015, the City of Cincinnati granted WCURC a capital request for the design development of Urwiler Plaza and Town Hall Park, and the initial closure of Urwiler between Harrison and Epworth. The design development work will be completed in October 2016. The closure of Urwiler will be completed June 2016. WestCURC is working with DOTE, engineering consultants and other partners to develop a multi-year federal, state, and local program for the traffic engineering, streetscaping and pedestrian access and safety.

Scope

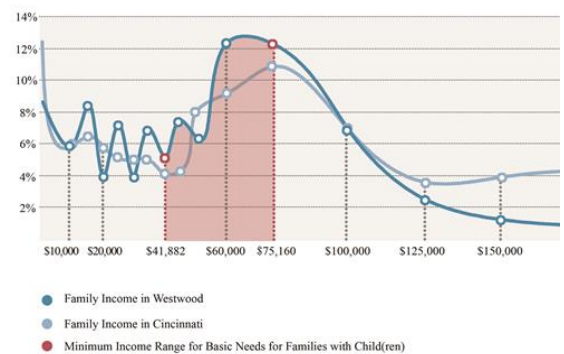
The scope of this request is for a traffic study and parking study to be completed by DOTE along the length of Harrison from the Cheviot border to Kling, and around the Town Hall property. This will allow for analysis of the impact of the closure of Urwiler (completed June 2016) and underpin a state Safety grant, OKI TA funding and the developments along the Historic Business District

Additional work, the construction Urwiler Plaza and the re-designed park, key catalytic developments and new business development, are outside of this scope.

Benefit to low to moderate income persons

Although demographically Westwood averages in the middle income range (median \$47k), the large scale of the neighborhood masks the wide distribution of income. As noted in the Social Areas of Cincinnati 2013 edition, Westwood contains both SESII (low education, high poverty, inadequate family income) and SES III (middle income enclaves). This characteristic can be seen as income clusters around \$20k and another cluster around \$60k. It

FAMILY INCOME, 2006 - 2010



also contains the 3rd largest concentration of female headed households below poverty.

The impact of the revitalization of the Historic Business district will have a two- fold effect on low to moderate income families. First, the focus of the revitalization on amenities for the community and visitors emphasize restaurant and retail (as oppose to professional or specialty services, which already occur in the HBD). These will create new local job opportunities for low to moderate income individuals. Second, as has already begun, the revitalization of the HBD will work towards enabling the re-integration of the neighborhood, increasing community participation and community pride across a diverse spectrum. Events in the HBD, such as the Art Show and the “Deck the Halls” Christmas choir events attract all ages, incomes and races and encourage inclusivity.

Application Responses

1. **Type of Project:** Minor
Amount \$30,000

2. **NBD Impact**

Throughout the community engagement process, many of the owners and operators of the surrounding businesses have positively expressed enthusiasm for revitalization program, knowing it will have a direct positive impact on their businesses by bringing more people to the HBD, improving the attractiveness and appeal of the HBD, increasing the foot traffic in front of their businesses, improving safety in the district and bringing more customers to the area.

Current Businesses Impacted directly:

Bass Cellars	Treasure Alley
Aztec Video	Bolton and Lunsford Funeral Home
Pullman's Upholstery	Tiny Tots Kiddie Care
Biosites	Henke's Winery
CMac Tax	Western Hills Honda/Yamaha
4 Seasons Yoga	

3. **Job impact**

The HBD has been in a long process of decline. Many businesses have closed their doors or moved locations, including the long-time movie theater, multiple restaurants and retail stores. The revitalization effort, led by the Madcap Center will retain business and jobs in the HBD and bring new jobs to the area. An economic impact study for Madcap Puppets determined that with 40,000 new visitors to the HBD each year, the spending potential could support 12 new jobs in the district, in addition to the 18 jobs created by the opening of the Madcap Center. The economic impact study was only focused on the percent of visitors to Madcap from outside the neighborhood and did not include the additional spending in the HBD by the local residents, which would increase the potential number of new jobs.

In addition to the Madcap Center, Phase 1 of the redevelopment includes the new Yoga studio and Carriage House Press which have opened in the past year; a planned restaurant in the Firehouse, the Westside Brewing Co, Necessities Market and a new restaurant in the former Sontag's are opening within the next year. We have actively sought tenants for the Ruehlmann building and the Muse Café is opening in June 2016. It is estimated these new businesses will create around 50 new jobs (47.9 – Hamilton County Census method/52.6 square foot estimate method).

This analysis also does not include jobs created during renovation and construction of the Town Hall property and surrounding streets and the development of new amenities (professional fees plus contract labor)

Jobs Retained 23

Jobs Created 68

4. Business Assisted

34

In addition to the businesses directly impacted by the creation of the Urwiler Plaza and the renovation and revitalization of the Town Hall Park and surrounds, the wider business district will be positively impacted. The 2013 edition of The Social Areas of Cincinnati identified Westwood as the neighborhood with the 6th greatest decline from 1970 – 2009 (-36). As the safety, vitality, attractiveness, events and amenities offered attract both local residents and visitors to the HBD on an ongoing basis, attention will be drawn to the existing businesses. With more foot traffic, walk-in customers will discover businesses which already have a niche market with regional appeal, yet with low local awareness. Furthermore, opportunities will be created for new businesses with a mix of job types and income generated. The retention and growth of existing business and the development of new opportunities will begin to reverse the process of disinvestment and decline Westwood has experienced.

A map of the HBD is provided and a complete list of businesses included in the Appendix.

5. Funding leverage : Westwood HBD Revitalization

Fund Source	Private	Public	Amount	Use of Funds
NBDIP 2102		X	\$340,000	Purchase of Bell Building for Madcap Center
Brownstone Realty	X		\$425,000	Purchase of Ruehlmann Building
LISC / ArtsWave 2013	X		\$13,000	Econ Impact/Longitudinal Study, School of Planning
NBDIP 2013		X	\$30,000	Parking lot improvements, Lot 1
Brownstone Realty	X		\$137,000	Renovations and improvements, Ruehlmann Building
TIFF 2013/2014		X	\$10,000	DOT development of 'square' variations
City 2014		X	\$500,000	Renovation of Bell Bldg
NBDSF 2014		X	\$4,600	consultation: business and community interest & feasibility
Madcap 2013-2016	X		\$550,000	Design development, permits
ATA Bielharz	X		\$14,700	concept drawings Town Hall Area Improvements
WestCURC 2015	X		\$3,000	CBI WestCURC Implementation Action Plan
WestCURC 2015	X		\$1,500	CED Application
Duke Energy URI FY2015	X		\$20,000	HCDC technical assistance: new small business owners
BB&T FY2015	X		\$4000	Technical assistance: Firehouse pre-development
City FY2015		X	\$250,000	design development Phase I: Urwiler Plaza & Town Hall Park / closure of Urwiler betw. Harrison and Epworth
Various 2015-2016	X		\$1,800,000	Acquisition/tenant improvements: 5 new retail/restaurants opening 2016-2015
WCURC 2016	X		\$1000	Acquisition of add'l parking, Montana Ave lot
NBDIP 2016 Major		X	\$240,000	Construction of Urwiler Plaza
NBDIP 2016 Minor		X	\$30,000	Traffic and parking study
TOTAL	\$2,969,200	\$1,404,600	\$4,373,800	

<u>future</u>				<u>not included in total</u>
WestCURC 2016-17	X		\$200,000	Firehouse acquisition and renovation (tenant ready)
Tenants (Cafeo)	X		\$250,000	Firehouse redevelopment
MadCap 2016-2018	X		\$3 mill	Renovation of Bell Bldg
2016-2018	X	X	\$3.9 mill	Phase I Urwiler/Park renovation/improvements*

6. Budget

Budget Cost provide by DOTE, see appendix.

A. Direct Project Costs:

1. Traffic Study – Consultant:	10,000
2. Parking Study– Consultant:	10,000
3. Sub-Total:	20,000

B. Supplemental Project Costs:

1. DOTE Project Mgmt Services:	
a. DOTE / TPUD / TP Staff	4,000
b. DOTE / TPUD / AUD Staff	2,000
c. DOTE / ENG / TE Staff	1,000
2. DCED Project Administration Services:	3,000
3. Sub-Total:	10,000

C. Total Summary:

1. Direct Project Costs:	20,000
2. Supplemental Project Costs:	10,000
3. Total:	30,000*

* Notes:

1. Estimate based on preliminary project concept only.
2. Final costs may vary contingent upon approved consultant proposal(s) and/or contract(s).

Schedule

June 2016 – Closing of Urwiler between Harrison and Epworth, with new signal, pedestrian crossings

July 2016 – September 2016 Traffic and Parking Study

7. Neighborhood Contribution

The revitalization of the Westwood Historic Business District has revitalized the passion, pride and commitment of the residents of Westwood. Over the past three years, an intensive program of community engagement around the adoption of Form Based Code and the recommendations for “the square” have created a groundswell of support and commitment to the existing associations, including a large contingent of new members to the Civic Association which includes many young professionals and young parents for the first time. To shepherd the process and lead the formal community engagement, a Coalition was

formed which represents all the associations and the business community as one voice. In addition, Westwood Works has gone through a process of board development, focusing on creating and managing events directly in support of creating vitality and pride in the community in collaboration with the other associations. Their events include the Art Show, “Deck the Halls”, the monthly pop-up beer garden and monthly community gatherings. They have also undertaken a series of community surveys and engagements to identify the desired attributes of a revitalized HBD. Westwood Civic is undergoing restructuring of bylaws and a new board is in place who are deeply committed to the revitalization program. Westwood leaders and citizenry have put in thousands of volunteer hours over the last few years to develop and implement their vision.

The WestCURC board is comprised of dedicated volunteers who have worked tirelessly to move forward the implementation of the revitalization strategy, including the successful bid for the redevelopment of the Firehouse, putting together the Community Entertainment District application, working with the College of Mt St Joseph on community surveys and reimagining the Town Hall, taking the Coalition recommendation into concept design, and working with the Community Building Institute on an action plan. In addition, board members have volunteered their time to help local businesses become successful. In an effort to maintain coordination, cooperation and communication, WestCURC’s board shares 4 members with the Civic Association and WestwoodWorks. The rest of the board is comprised of local business owners and professionals. The WestCURC Executive Director is a member of the Coalition’s “Infrastructure Committee” coordinating the vision and implementation of infrastructure and public improvements across the community.

8. Continuation of Previously Funded Project? Yes

Westwood Town Hall Area Improvements: \$250,000 City of Cincinnati FY2015. For 1) design development or Urwiler Plaza and Town Hall Park 2) closure of Urwiler between Harrison and Epworth.

9. Community Approved Plan? Yes

Westwood Strategic Plan 2010

Goal 3. Infrastructure, Facilities & Public Spaces

Maintain infrastructure, public facilities and open spaces in excellent condition, and explore appropriate improvements

Goal 4. Business Districts and Commercial Development

Revitalize Westwood business districts by attracting and supporting viable business and commercial development that will enhance the community

Goal 7. Historic Preservation

Advocate for the preservation of historic buildings, districts and properties especially if they are slated to be demolished, altered, developed or subdivided

Specific Project? Yes

Westwood Coalition Recommendation (submitted to City Nov 2014)

In addition to the recommendations noted at the beginning of the application, which includes the redesign and development of the grounds of Westwood Town Hall, the specific recommendation for the development of “the Square” as “the Triangle/Bowtie” option met the following criteria:

1. *The Triangle option creates a tangible, recognizable place, a focal point near the center of the business district with spaces that can function to support activities for Town Hall, abutting properties, and larger venues that can take place up and down Harrison Avenue.*
2. *A direct spatial connection to historic Westwood Town Hall grounds and to the surrounding buildings is created in the Westwood business district.*
3. *An extension and addition to the green space in Westwood, one of the community's long-held treasures, is inherent in the plan. Green space created is easily integrated into enhancements of streetscaping that can and should be planned along Harrison Avenue.*
4. *Pedestrian and vehicular safety of the focus intersection and Harrison Avenue is improved with the plan.*
5. *The plan is readily achievable from a transportation and engineering perspective.*
6. *Potential real estate development opportunities created on the western parcels can further support the business district.*
7. *A flexibility of uses of the outdoor spaces is afforded in the plan.*
8. *Streetscaping, historic street lighting, and other public improvements can be easily integrated into the plan.*
9. *The option respects, embraces, and enhances the historic character of the business district. Several historic landmark buildings in the historic district, most notably Town Hall, Westwood United Methodist Church, and the Madcap Center, are afforded improved vistas while improving their immediate surroundings.*
10. *The option appears less disruptive than other more intrusive solutions.*

Specific Project? Yes

WestCURC 2015-20120 Action Plan

Created with CBI and representative members of the Coalition and Civic, and adopted by the WestCURC Board in January 2015, the WestCURC Action Plan identified that successful revitalization encompasses a walkable, attractive business district; retail stores that offer a variety of consumer products and services with emphasis on local, regional or independent shops; an activated public or civic or green space; the availability of nearby parking; a number of options for casual and more elegant dining. This is achieved with public/private partnerships, a catalyst and a strong sense of identity/pride of place.

Specific goals for 2015-2016 were outlined including the implementation of *public improvements*, specifically *the Bowtie and Town Hall Park improvements*.

10. Letters

(forthcoming)

11. Maps

Attached following application

12. Project Coordinator and Main Contact

Elizabeth Bartley, Executive Director, WestCURC
 PO Box 112162
 Cincinnati, OH

bartley.westcurc@gmail.com

513-200-9782

Primary committee members

Larry Eiser, President

larry.eiser@aol.com

John Eby, Vice President

johneby@cinci.rr.com

Jack Conley, Treasurer

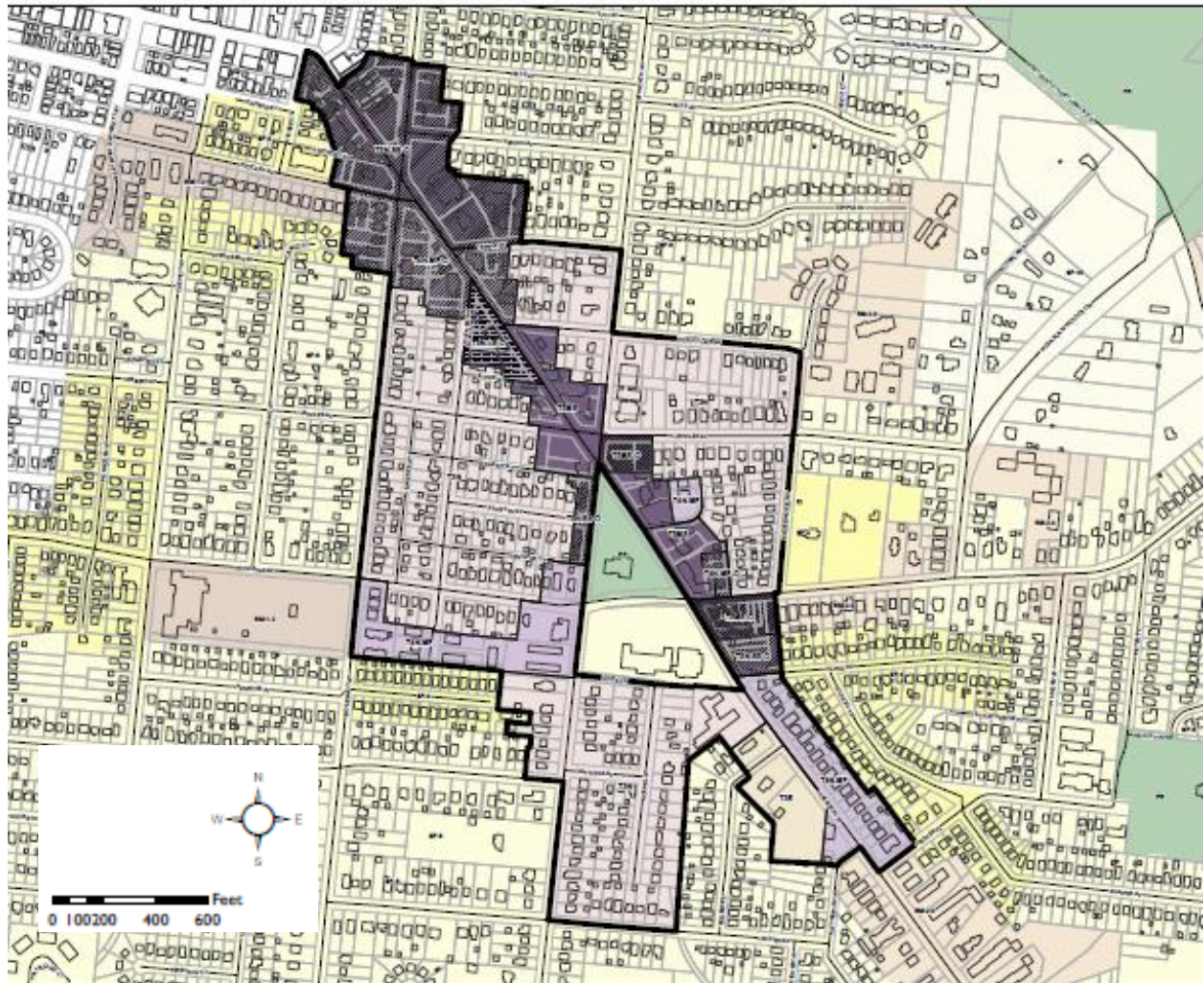
jconley@comey.com

Fred Berger, Real Estate Dev Chair

dsiltd@fuse.net

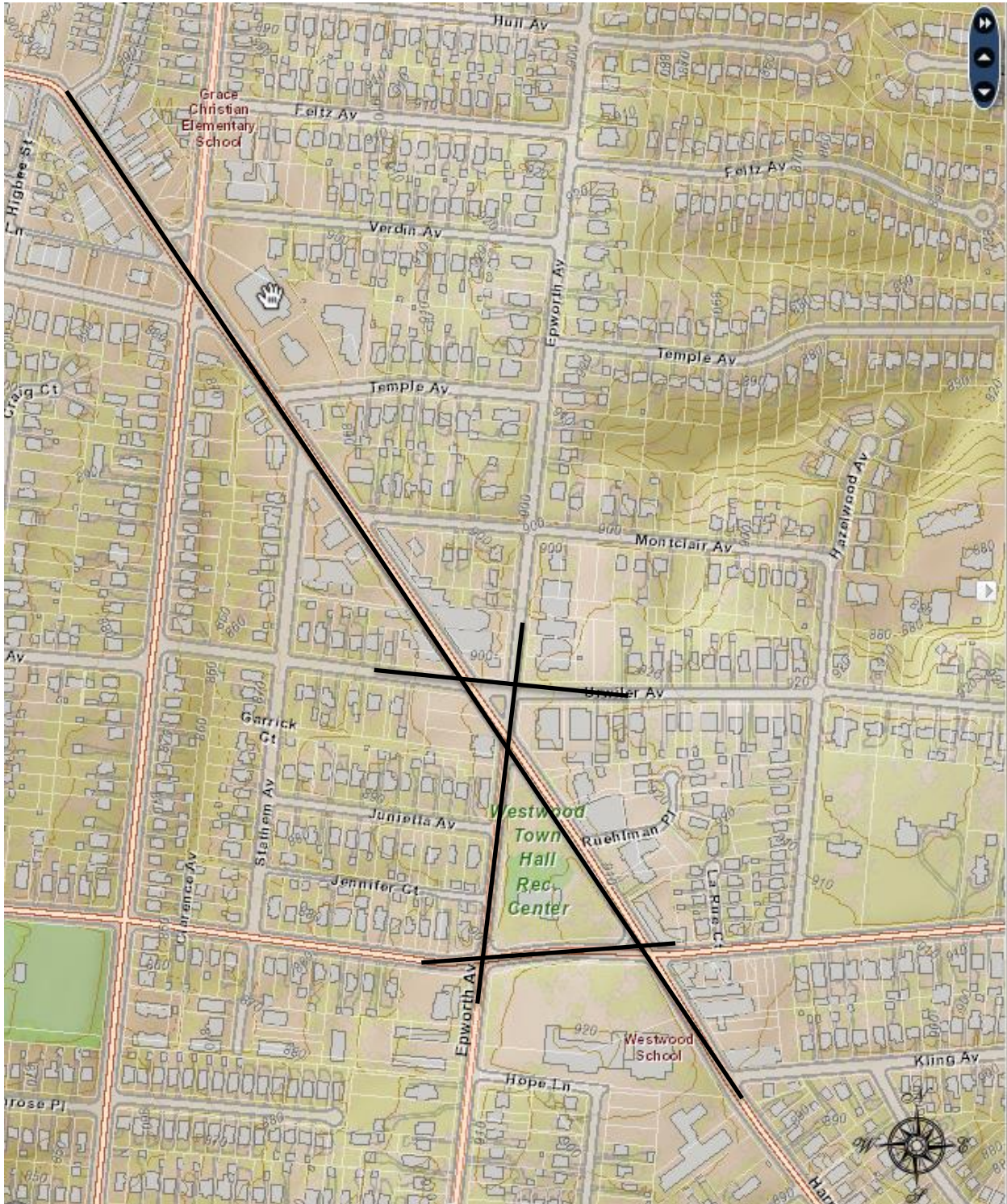
Maps

Westwood Historic Business District & Form Based Code area



Maps

Harrison and Town Hall streets for study



APPENDIX

Business Address list: affected businesses

	BUSINESS NAME	ADDRESS
1	POLLMAN'S CUSTOM UPHOLSTRY	2955 - 2959 MONTANA AVE
2	AZTEC VIDEO PRODUCTIONS	2967 MONTANA AVE
3	GOODWILL	2990 HARRISON AVE
4	HUNTINGTON BANK	3002 HARRISON AVE
5	UPSPRING	3002 HARRISON AVE
6	CINCINNATI BASS CELLAR	3010 HARRISON AVE
7	WM BIO SITES	2956 HARRISON AVE
8	STUDIO N PHOTOGRAPHY	3028 HARRISON AVE
9	4 SEASONS STUDIO	3030 HARRISON AVE
10	C-MAC TAX	3034 HARRISON AVE
11	TREASURE ALLEY	3036 HARRISON AVE
12	BOLTON & LUNSFORD FUNERAL HOMES	3042 HARRISON AVE
13	KS DESIGNS	3044 HARRISON AVE
14	TINY TOTS KIDDIE CARE	3050 HARRISON AVE
15	HENKE WINE LLC	3077 EPWORTH AVE
16	CARRAIGE HOUSE PRESS	3103 HARRISON AVE
17	DIANE'S CAKE, CANDY & COOKIE SUPPLY	3111 HARRISON AVE
18	WESTERN HILLS HONDA	3110 - 3118 HARRISON AVE
19	WUEST ELECTRIC COMPANY	3113 HARRISON AVE
20	G'S PERFECTION PLUS	3120 HARRISON AVE
21	EMMA'S ALL IN ONE OCCASIONS RESTAURANT & CATERING	3122 HARRISON AVE
22	HAIR TEMPTATIONS	3124 HARRISON AVE
23	SUBWAY SANDWICH SHOP	3134 HARRISON AVE
24	KIKI'S PLAYHOUSE (childcare)	3139 HARRISON AVE
25	KEIDEL SUPPLY COMPANY INC	3143 HARRISON AVE
26	KEIDEL -- WAREHOUSE	
27	MY NEIGHBOR'S PLACE	3150 HARRISON AVE
28	TOM BONHAUS AUTO SERVICE	3151 HARRISON AVE
29	H&R BLOCK	3154 HARRISON AVE
30	NEIDHARD MINGES FUNERAL HOME	3155 HARRISON AVE
31	FEDCO PRINTING	3156 HARRISON AVE
32	JOSEPH JACOB DENTIST	3157 HARRISON AVE
33	LEE'S FLOORING	3159 HARRISON AVE
34	THE CHAIR REPAIR SHOPPE	3165 HARRISON AVE

Date: April 20, 2016

To: **Gerald Fortson** - DCED
Elizabeth Bartley - WestCURC

From: Jeff Stine - DOTE / TPUD / AUD

Copy: **Matthew Andrews** - DOTE / TPUD
Martha Kelly - DOTE / TPUD / TP
File

Sub: **Westwood NBDIP Minor Project Application**

Re: **Traffic and Parking Study**

Item: Preliminary Cost Estimate Summary

A. Direct Project Costs:	
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