

FINAL REPORT

Village of Lincoln Heights ULI Cincinnati Technical Assistance Panel

TAP - June 25, 2019

Presentation – November 12, 2019



Village of
LINCOLN HEIGHTS



Urban Land
Institute
Cincinnati



Hamilton
County



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Urban Land Institute Cincinnati convened a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) on June 25, 2019, with local government, real estate and development experts assembled to discuss challenges and opportunities related to the economic development of Lincoln Heights. After local official presentations, Village tours, questions, answers and deliberation, the panelists agreed upon four primary strategies for implementation. For each strategy the specific actions and benefits are presented in this report, but the success of implementation lies in collaboration and coordination. This report summarizes the Village history, basis for the strategies and recommendations, but also builds-in flexibility for change and annual renewal by stakeholders and partners. ULI Cincinnati is pleased to offer this comprehensive plan to the Village of Lincoln Heights and looks forward to working with the Village as needed during implementation.

The Village of Lincoln Heights has a rich African American history and is in a prime location with exposure and access to I-75. Neighboring communities, Evendale and Woodlawn, have seen consecutive years of economic growth, while Lincoln Heights is struggling with many vacant lots and businesses. Housing values in the Village declined by 76.4% (2007-2013), resulting in nearly a 33.04 % decline in the property tax base (2008-2017)¹.

The downward trajectory of Lincoln Heights could be considered predestined as a result of decades of systemic injustices. Lincoln Heights first tried to incorporate in 1939 but incorporation did not occur until 1946 after long legal battles between the African American resident, neighboring local governments, area business leaders and Hamilton County. By the time the Village was finally incorporated, it was about 10% of its original size (one square mile) due to annexations by neighboring communities. The newly incorporated village had few industrial properties and hence had no substantial tax base. In the absence of a tax base to support the strong residential community, and no established revenue-sharing agreements with its now growing neighbors, Lincoln Heights was set for a struggle.

A 2016 study² shows that Lincoln Heights' neighbor, Evendale, has the highest per capita earnings tax revenue in the region, at \$5,608 per year. That revenue comes primarily from employment at the General Electric (GE) Aviation facility - land that was part of the original Lincoln Heights incorporation application. Today, Lincoln Heights has an earnings tax revenue of \$166 per capita per year, the second lowest in the County.

The Village of Lincoln Heights is also currently struggling in population and job growth and home values. The Village's population at 3,336 has declined nearly 60% from the 1960s. Jobs in the Village have declined dramatically and the median value of a home in the Village

¹ 2016 study by Tom Carroll, Silverton Village Administrator and International City/County Management (ICMA) Fellow

² 2016 study by Tom Carroll, Silverton Village Administrator and International City/County Management (ICMA) Fellow

is \$85,000, substantially lower than median home values in other areas of Hamilton County or Ohio.

In 2018, Lincoln Heights requested \$300,000 from Hamilton County to demolish the former high school building on Lindy Avenue. The Community and Economic Development Assistance Program (CEDAP) Advisory Committee reviewed the request, determined that the proposed \$400,000 budget would not be adequate for full demolition and remediation, and that the proposed end use of a community and job training center was not necessarily feasible or the best use for the Village. The Advisory Committee recommended, and the County Administration awarded a \$200,000 grant to evaluate and remediate hazardous materials, conduct environmental Phase I and II studies as needed, and possibly demolish part of the high school building. The Advisory Committee also recommended, and the County awarded a \$20,000 grant to conduct an Urban Land Institute Cincinnati Technical Assistance Panel.

In June 2019, the TAP comprised of experts from a broad array of fields ranging from developers, academics, planners to brokers spent a day at the Village of Lincoln Heights to discuss the challenges and opportunities outlined in the TAP scope (see Appendix, Part 1). After a facilitated process, the panelists proposed the following four strategies:

Strategy 1: Partnerships, Patience and Public Ownership

Attracting investment and development into the Village would greatly increase the tax base, provide jobs and increase the quality of life in the community. Despite being located within the desirable I-75 beltway, the Village has been unsuccessful in attracting development. Based on the panelists' experiences, they agree that changing the trajectory of a community is possible through a long, intentional process. This starts with building consensus among internal stakeholders as well as building key public and private partnerships.

By partnering with entities like the Hamilton County Landbank, The Port, brokers and banks, the Village could explore public control of key sites and attempt to remove impediments to development. A few near-term wins will create momentum and impetus both in the community and in the surrounding communities. By patiently building consensus internally, and building stronger relationships with advocates in allied sectors, the Village can recast their trajectory.

Strategy 2: Lindy Avenue Corridor

The Lindy Avenue Corridor is the geographic center of the Village of Lincoln Heights, with two historical properties, the elementary school and the high school. The panelists recommended that the Village work with its partners to create an action plan for demolition of the Village-owned high school, over the next two years, and gain control of the elementary school

building, currently privately-owned. Once the sites are development ready, they can be marketed as opportunity zone projects with the option to pursue historic tax credits for the elementary school. In addition to the redevelopment of the two sites, some panelists recommended embarking on a market analysis or other study to convert the Lindy Avenue Corridor into the Village's Main Street. Such a study will test the long-term viability of a "Main Street" concept.

Strategy 3: Visioning, Gateways & Corridors

Despite its rich history, heritage and access to the I-75 corridor, the Village of Lincoln Heights is a well-kept secret. Many in the region and even in Hamilton County do not know the historic significance of the founding of the Village. To change the narrative of the community from one of deficits back to the hope and possibilities of its founding, the community should go through a healing/visioning process. Healing/visioning can bring awareness to the impact of systemic racial injustice in our community and the resulting economic implications on Lincoln Heights.

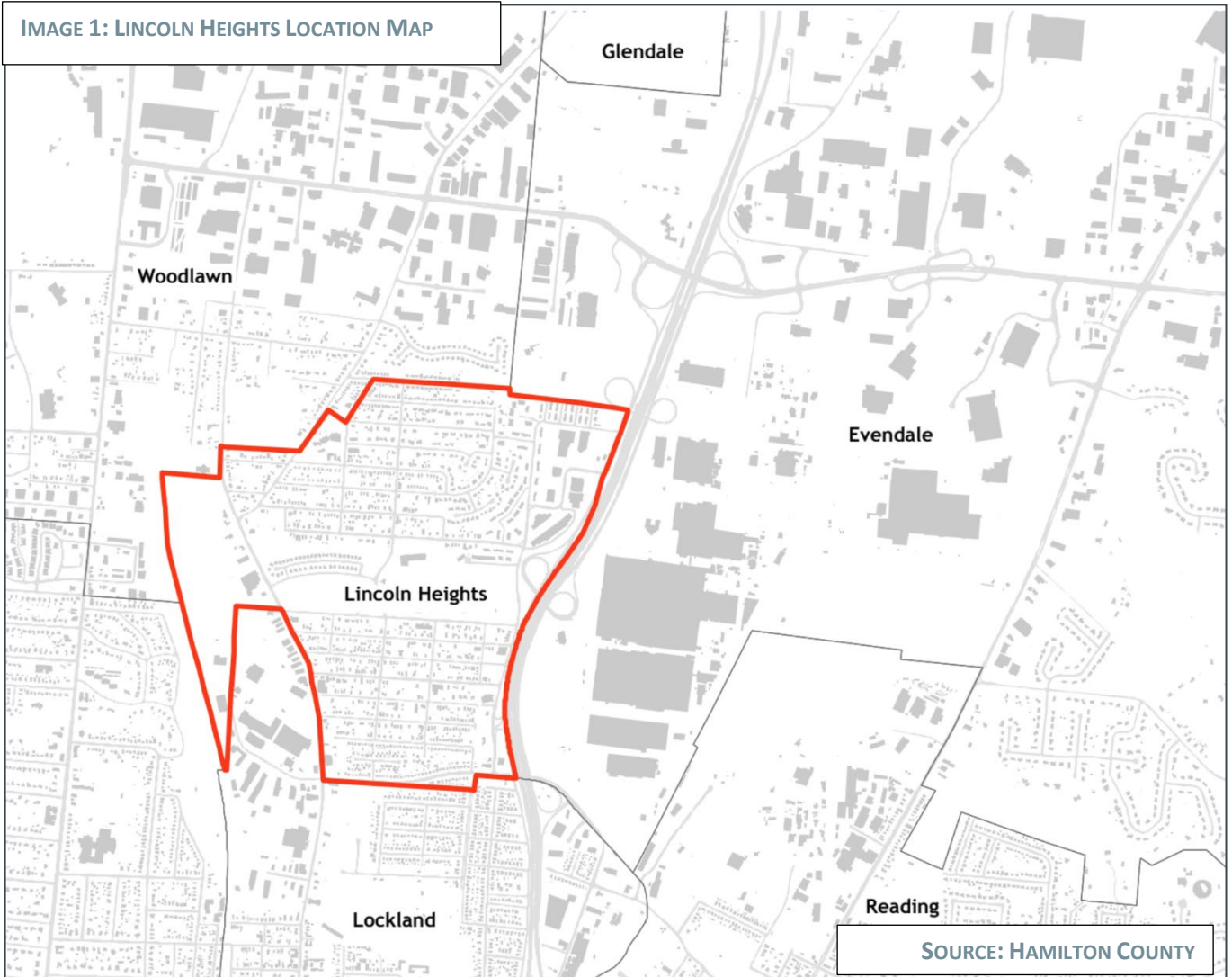
The visioning process will bring the Village together to celebrate its history, envision the future and create a foundation for a vibrant Village marketing campaign used for gateways and corridors. Focusing on the rich history could make the Village a destination and attract development into the region.

Strategy 4: Advanced Manufacturing

State dollars are being invested in the region for advanced manufacturing, especially along the I-75 corridor. The Aero Hub project pulled a variety of partners in the region together to capitalize on these investments. If Lincoln Heights collaborates and builds regional partnerships with Evendale and explores synergies with the former Stearns & Foster site in Lockland, these efforts could be early catalysts for Lincoln Heights commercial/industrial development.

The following report expands on this summary and provides action plans for improvement.

IMAGE 1: LINCOLN HEIGHTS LOCATION MAP



SECTION 1 – TAP SESSION

The Village of Lincoln Heights is in the Mill Creek Valley just west of Interstate 75 and across from the General Electric (GE) Aviation facility in the Village of Evendale. Lincoln Heights is also bordered to south by the Village of Lockland, to the west by the City of Wyoming and to the north by the Village of Woodlawn. The City of Reading lies just east of the GE Aviation facility and is bordered by Evendale to the north and Lockland to the west.

ULI Cincinnati's Technical Assistance Panel was tasked to provide an action plan to revitalize the Village's economy. The first half of the TAP session was devoted to understanding the challenges and opportunities of Lincoln Heights. The panelists took a brief bus tour of the Village, followed by a short presentation by the Village Mayor, Interim Village Administrator and a few Council Members.

The tour and the presentation explained several challenges the community is facing. Despite being located along I-75 where there is demand for industrial land, the Village hasn't attracted investments or developments. Key indicators in the community, such as population, tax per capita, housing values, and employment are all trending downward. The Mayor and Council Members expressed their commitment to the Village and openness to guidance from TAP panelists and the subsequent report.

The panelists formally convened after the presentation and spent the rest of the day developing actionable strategies for community redevelopment. The panelists discussed precursors to development and identified development ten scenarios for the Village given the strengths and opportunities in and around the community. Of these ten scenarios, the panelists identified four strategic priorities and created recommended action steps for those strategies.

Sponsor and TAP Panelists

<p>SPONSOR</p> <p>Funded by Community and Economic Development Assistance Program (CEDAP) managed by Hamilton County Planning + Development and HCDC</p> <p>CLIENT/STAKEHOLDERS</p> <p>VILLAGE OF LINCOLN HEIGHTS</p> <p>Ruby Kinskey-Mumphrey Mayor</p> <p>Jeannie Stinson Vice Mayor</p> <p>Donna Pope Village Administrator</p> <p>Daronce Daniels Council Member</p> <p>Kathy Goodwin-Williams Council Member</p> <p>Linda Childs-Jeter Council Member</p> <p>Laverne Mitchell Council Member</p> <p>ULI CINCINNATI COMMITTEE</p> <p>Deepika Andavarapu, AICP, PhD ULI Cincinnati Writer</p> <p>Kim Fantaci ULI Cincinnati District Council Coordinator</p> <p>Lydia Jacobs-Horton ULI Cincinnati District Council Executive Director</p> <p>Jim Zentmeyer Civil & Environmental Consultants</p> <p>Darin Hall Civitas Development Group</p>	<p>PANEL MEMBERS</p> <p>Yvette Simpson CEO, Democracy for America</p> <p>Sean Balnes Founder/CEO, Red Tiger Investments</p> <p>Tom Carroll Village Manager, City of Silverton</p> <p>Vince Terry Director of Cincinnati Operations, Moody Nolan</p> <p>Greg Koehler Economic Development Analyst, City of Cincinnati</p> <p>David Kirk President and CEO, DNK Architects</p> <p>Jeff McElravy Managing Director, Saint Francis Group and Neyer Holdings</p> <p>Jason Ulmenstine Director Business Development, J.S. Held LLC</p> <p>Megan Meyer Associate Director, UC Real Estate Center</p> <p>Braden Trauth Adjunct Professor, University of Cincinnati, College of Design, Art, Architecture + Planning</p> <p>Gregg Hothem Project Executive, HGC Construction</p> <p>Derek Peebles Founder, Neighborhoods Grow</p>
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IMAGE 2: TAP SESSION IN PROGRESS



SECTION 2 – HISTORY OF LINCOLN HEIGHTS

To understand the current situation, we must understand the history. The Village of Lincoln Heights faced multiple social injustices since its beginnings in the early 1920's, and the implications of those decisions can still be felt by the community today. Challenges include inadequate infrastructure dating back to the original subdivision (prior to incorporation), obstructions to incorporation attempts, and partial annexation by neighboring communities resulting in a lack of an industrial base which limited community jobs and revenue.

Over the years, the history of Lincoln Heights was captured in multiple articles and even a book. The book by Smith³ titled "Lincoln Heights" was published in 2009 and provides a comprehensive history of the Village and discusses the challenges with incorporation. The Young, Love and Ondja⁴ publication titled, 'The Neighborhoods of Cincinnati: A Spatial Evolution,' is a great resource about the evolution of neighborhoods in the region. The chapter on Lincoln Heights is another comprehensive and factual accounting of the Village's history.

One of the more contemporary analyses of Lincoln Heights is a 2015 article by Alana Semuels in the *Atlantic* magazine⁵. Semuels (2015) traces the current decline of the Village back to the struggles of incorporation decades ago. The Wikipedia entry on Lincoln Heights is a composite collection of all the research and writing on Lincoln Heights⁶.

The following provides a historical summary:

In 1923 Chicagoland speculators Livingston and Haley purchased 45.57 acres of land in the Mill Creek Valley. Livingston and Haley subdivided and sold land specifically targeting black residents and southern black migrants to the Cincinnati Area. Several other land-speculators joined Livingston and Haley in targeting subdivisions to African American households. These subdivisions were often referred to as the "Subs", they were *"designed to maximize profit to the developers and seldom included necessities such as running water, sidewalks, paved streets or utilities"*⁷.

Despite the inadequate infrastructure, the "Subs" were very attractive to the black families since redlining and other restrictive zoning laws prohibited black families from buying homes in many of the County's neighborhoods. These lots of unincorporated land north of Cincinnati

³ Smith, C. F. (2009). Lincoln Heights. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Pub.

⁴ Young, Love, Ondja, Village of Lincoln Heights in 'The Neighborhoods of Cincinnati: A Spatial Evolution.' Retrieved at http://homepages.uc.edu/~youngbd/Documents/Course%20Work/Dynamics%20of%20Human%20Settlement/Final_Master.pdf on July 13, 2019

⁵ Semuels, Alana, "The Destruction of a Black Suburb," The Atlantic, July 13, 2015

⁶ Wikipedia article on Lincoln Heights accessed on August 31, 2019 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_Heights,_Ohio

⁷ Young, Love, Ondja, Village of Lincoln Heights in 'The Neighborhoods of Cincinnati: A Spatial Evolution.' Retrieved at http://homepages.uc.edu/~youngbd/Documents/Course%20Work/Dynamics%20of%20Human%20Settlement/Final_Master.pdf on July 13, 2019

were a great opportunity for black buyers since they were one of the few paths to homeownership in the segregated North⁸.

The residents of Lincoln Heights first tried to incorporate in 1939, by filing applications with Hamilton County. White residents in the neighboring Lockland filed an objection. This initial application included land that would eventually make up large parts of what are now the neighboring Villages of Woodlawn and Evendale (Young, Love & Ondja, ND). The Village's attempts to retain industrial property was in conflict with the desires of surrounding communities who were trying to establish their own tax-base at the same time⁹.

Adding to this opposition, the Wright Aeronautical plant which was located on the land Lincoln Heights wanted to incorporate, opposed the incorporation and asked the County to delay the application further¹⁰. The County gave much of the eastern part of the proposed Lincoln Heights boundary to a new town called Evendale, including the land where the Wright Aeronautical plant was located. The County gave much of the western part of the proposed Lincoln Heights land to Woodlawn.

The County finally incorporated the Village in 1946, with an area of about 10% of the original application (one square mile). The newly incorporated village had no industry, hence had no substantial tax base. In the absence of a tax base to support a growing residential community, and no established revenue-sharing agreements, Lincoln Heights' future became more challenging. The implications of this land distribution can be felt today. A 2016 study by Tom Carroll, Silverton Village Administrator and International City/County Management (ICMA) Fellow, shows Evendale's revenue is \$5,608 per capita per year while Lincoln Heights' revenue for the same period is \$166 per capita per year, the second lowest in the County.

In the 1940's, Lincoln Heights was the only black municipality north of the Mason-Dixon line. But even post-incorporation, annexation did not stop. In 1945, the federal government built housing to support the needs of the Wright Aeronautical Plant workers. This housing development, named Valley Homes was meant to provide temporary housing with redevelopment to occur in the future. In 1951, the Village of Evendale was incorporated and the Valley View subdivision was incorporated into the Village of Evendale. The Valley View subdivision was later part of the G.E Aircraft Engines site (Young, Loe & Ondja, ND).

⁸ Semuels, Alana, "The Destruction of a Black Suburb," The Atlantic, July 13, 2015

⁹ Young, Love, Ondja, Village of Lincoln Heights in 'The Neighborhoods of Cincinnati: A Spatial Evolution.' Retrieved at http://homepages.uc.edu/~youngbd/Documents/Course%20Work/Dynamics%20of%20Human%20Settlement/Final_Master.pdf on July 13, 2019

¹⁰ Semuels, Alana, "The Destruction of a Black Suburb," The Atlantic, July 13, 2015

IMAGE3: FIRST COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE OF LINCOLN HEIGHTS JANUARY 1, 1947



SOURCE: EXCERPT FROM SMITH, C. F. (2009). LINCOLN HEIGHTS. CHARLESTON, SC: ARCADIA PUB

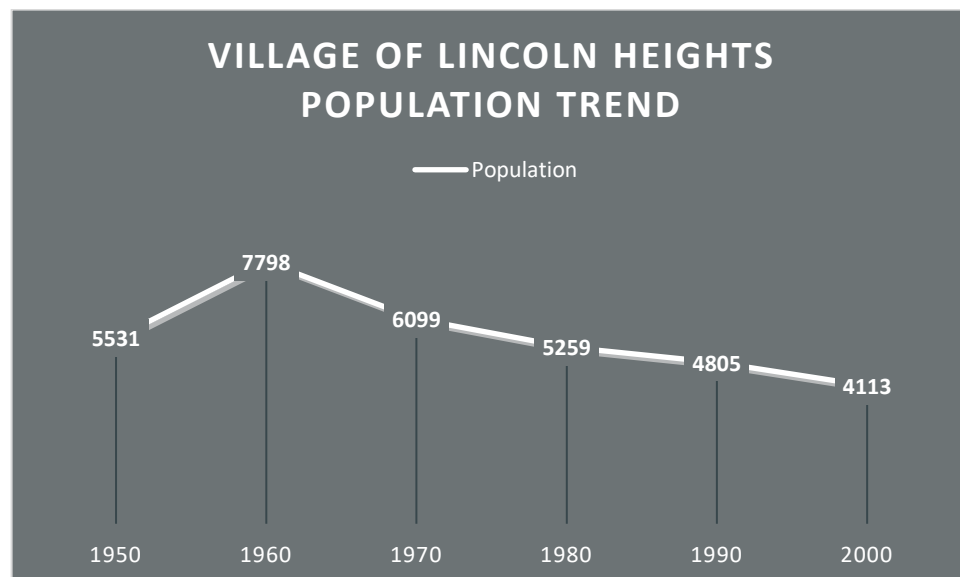
In spite of set-backs, in 1950s, the Village gained the status of a City since its population grew over 5,000, around the same time the Hamilton County Board of Education redrew the Woodlawn School District boundary. The new boundary no longer included the incorporated City of Lincoln Heights. Since Lincoln Heights was a City, its school district was no longer under the umbrella of the County (Young, Love, Ondja ND).

The Hamilton County Board of Education consolidated the Woodlawn, Glendale, Springdale, Crescentville, Sharonville, Runyan, Stewart and Evendale School Districts into the Princeton School District in 1953. Lincoln Heights was not included in that consolidation. In 1957, under the New Foundation Law, Lincoln Heights was required to provide educational service to its residents from elementary through high school or get out of the business of education. The community decided to continue local educational programs and Lincoln Heights was granted a High School Charter in 1958. That year Lincoln Heights High School opened to 240 students (Young, Love, Ondja ND).

The Wikipedia article reports that the Post-World War II period through the 1960's were the halcyon days of Lincoln Heights. As seen in the graph below, the population of Lincoln Heights had grown to 5,531 by 1950 and peaked at 7,798 in the 1960's. But, population in

Lincoln Heights has declined since 1960 and in 2017 the Village's population was 3,336, down 57.2%. The tax base of the city decreased each year, making it difficult to maintain community programs, perpetuating an economic decline.

IMAGE 4: POPULATION TREND OF THE VILLAGE



SOURCE: EXCERPT FROM YOUNG, LOVE, ONDJA, VILLAGE OF LINCOLN HEIGHTS IN THE NEIGHBORHOODS OF CINCINNATI: A SPATIAL EVOLUTION

As seen in the key demographics (Appendix - Part 2), the Village continues to be a majority-minority community, nearly 85% of its population is African-American, and over 64% of the households are female-headed households. Between 2007 and 2013 the value of houses in Lincoln Heights declined by 76.4%¹¹ which has led to a nearly 33.04 % decline in the property tax base (2008-2017)¹². The median home value in the Village is \$85,000, substantially lower than the median home value in Hamilton County or Ohio. The number of jobs in the community have steadily declined.

¹¹ Wikipedia article on Lincoln Heights accessed on August 31, 2019 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_Heights,_Ohio

¹² 2016 study by Tom Carroll, Silverton Village Administrator and International City/County Management (ICMA) Fellow

SECTION 3 – TAP RECOMMENDATIONS

The TAP panelists were asked to recommend development scenarios for the Village based on best practices, potential opportunities, surrounding communities and other considerations. The panelists identified 10 scenarios for economic development. They then distilled the scenarios to four strategies for actionable improvement.

Potential Development Scenarios

The following 10 scenarios were suggested by the TAP panelists		
1.	Residential Mixed Use	The residential character along the central corridor (Lindy Avenue) should be retained. Propose uses that create and maintain the residential character in that corridor. However, the central corridor provides the largest parcels of land for all redevelopment. Mixed use options should be explored as well.
2.	Stabilizing Existing Housing Stock	Grant opportunities and homeowner repair programs should be identified to stabilize the existing housing stock which are in various states of disrepair. Continue property maintenance and code enforcement for all property owners.
3.	Land Acquisition	Control of land is a critical piece of the puzzle; the Village should not shy away from accumulating debt if that is what is needed to acquire land.
4.	STEM Workforce Development	The Village should build partnerships with the Princeton School District to spearhead STEM workforce development for the Village and high school students. AeroHub partners should be part of these conversations.
5.	Industry Clusters	Industrial kitchens with a retail element are in high demand in the region. Given the community's location close to General Electric and other employers, an industrial kitchen cluster could be an impetus for lunch and dinner restaurants and retail redevelopment.
6.	Shooting Range Relocation	The Village should lead and partner with its neighbors to address the detrimental effects of the shooting range in this residential area; it is likely to require political leadership from all local governments involved including Cincinnati and Evendale.
7.	Multi-Family Housing	Multi-family housing for families, seniors, persons with disabilities would be a good option at the Lindy Avenue site. The redevelopment can incorporate key architectural pieces of the historic buildings. This can include affordable and market rate housing. Retaining the existing high school building would not be economically practical nor the highest and best use of that site.
8.	Gateways & Corridors	Given the visibility from the I-75 corridor, it's imperative for the Village to capitalize on the access and visibility. The new interchange to be completed in 2020 will open access as well. A well-defined and coordinated plan is needed before this scenario is initiated.

9. Land Use Plans	The community, as a whole, has to determine the right balance of residential versus non-residential uses in order to build the tax base in a strategic manner.
10. Aviation-Advanced Manufacturing	A designated spokesperson from the Village should tap into the existing conversations in the region with regards to AeroHub and GE Aviation. The Village should capitalize on these existing investments.

Strategies for Village Action

TAP panelists proposed four strategies distilled from the list of potential development scenarios for Village action.

Top Strategies		
1.	Partnerships, Patience and Public Ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Build consensus and partnerships b) Eradicate problem properties c) Acquire strategic property d) Identify transformational projects
2.	Lindy Avenue Corridor	e) Redevelop public space
3	Visioning, Gateways & Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f) Community healing and visioning g) Marketing plan, gateways and branding
4	Advanced Manufacturing	h) Capitalize on regional momentum
A multi-cultural lens and historical messaging should overlay all strategies.		

Strategy 1: Partnerships, Patience and Public Ownership

Changing the development trajectory of a community will be a long intentional process, it starts with building consensus among internal stakeholders, developing partnerships, addressing problem properties, strategic property acquisition and agreeing on transformational projects. Together these actions will create the momentum needed to change the development trajectory.

a) Build consensus and partnerships

By partnering with entities like the Hamilton County Landbank, The Port, brokers and banks, the Village could explore public control of key sites and attempt to remove impediments to development. A few near-term wins will create momentum and impetus both in the community

and in the surrounding communities. By patiently building consensus internally, and building stronger relationships with advocates in allied sectors, the Village can recast their trajectory.

While the public investment will provide the catalyst for redevelopment in the community, the Village also needs to invest time into developing relationships with key players in commercial and industrial real estate. Having an ongoing conversation with brokers, realtors, banks and other investors will position the Village as an interested and active party.

Action Steps:

- Conduct a comprehensive inventory of land in the Village.
- Identify sites that have the required infrastructure for redevelopment.
- Partner with The Port, HCDC, REDI, and the Hamilton County Landbank to determine the right partner for each set of properties.
- Create the right zoning, identify tax exemptions and other incentives available to the developers.
- Identify a minimum of three shovel ready sites.
- Create one-page summaries of these shovel ready sites and market these sites with real-estate brokers, Colliers, REDI, HCDC, Hamilton County, and other stakeholders across the region.
- Use development agreements, long-term leases and other models to control the land development and allow for the highest and best use.

b) Eradicate problem properties

TAP panelists unanimously agree that cleaning up and/or acquiring the Roger Bien property and working with stakeholders of the Cincinnati Police Department Shooting Range are critical for the redevelopment of the Village. The panelists recommend the Village use its political clout and identify strategic partnerships to address these long-standing issues.

Roger Bien Property

Roger Bien owns over 15 properties in five Hamilton County jurisdictions outside of the City of Cincinnati and many of these properties are used for vehicle repair and/or storage. Each of his properties are maintained poorly, with repeated zoning, building and environmental violations. The Bien property in Lincoln Heights is one of the largest industrial sites in the Village. The site has great access to I-75 and the railroad system. The property has over 2,000 junk vehicles, some of which are parked in the right of way, and likely contaminating the site with hazardous waste; this is certainly not the highest and best use of the site. The current usage of the property is negatively affecting the surrounding businesses and character of the community and detracts from attracting business or residents.

This site is separated from the residential part of the Village, making it ideal for industrial development or advanced manufacturing. Cleaning up the site and making it shovel-ready could bring more jobs and income to the community. The Port offered the owner \$500,000 for the property, but the offer was ignored. Additional stakeholders, such as HCDC, The Port, REDI and the Millcreek Alliance will be asked to assist in clean-up and potential redevelopment. The panelists recommend making this nuisance property a priority for the Village, including establishing a lead contact who can work tenaciously on the issues, such as bringing in the Village's code enforcement staff, Hamilton County Sheriff Deputies providing patrol in the Village, and working with Hamilton County Planning + Development staff in zoning and building code enforcement. The Village will learn from other villages and townships what work to cite Bien property violations and use all civil powers to ensure continued compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations. Actively collaborating with other local governments and partners will make a larger impact and more progress towards making the property shovel-ready.



City of Cincinnati Police Department Shooting Range

The northeast part of the Village is residential in nature with multi-family units including the Marianna Terrace Apartments owned by Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA). Immediately north of these homes, the City of Cincinnati Police Department owns and

operates a shooting range located in the Village of Evendale. The shooting range has plagued the community for over 30 years. Lincoln Heights residents and elected officials view the shooting range as a social injustice issue that is affecting the community and desensitizing youth to gun violence.

The Village of Woodlawn on the west side of the shooting range, also has residential neighborhoods which are equally affected by the shooting range. The panelists believe that Lincoln Heights and Woodlawn could gain economically through redevelopment of the shooting range land. The relocation of the shooting range will only help to make both Villages attractive for new housing or/or commercial development. The Lincoln Heights leaders and leaders of other communities in the Valley have drafted a letter to the City of Cincinnati outlining the negative impact of the shooting range on their quality of life. The panelists recommend that the Villages continue these conversations with the City, but also launch a political and social media campaign to highlight the environmental injustices that Valley residents continue to endure with the location and operation of the shooting range. The Village should also partner with EPA, REDI, and Jobs Ohio to investigate the environmental contamination of the shooting range. Woodlawn and Lockland officials, CMHA and all property owners will be critical partners in these efforts.

The opportunity for restorative justice exists and the conversations should be attempted at the right time with the right partners. Since these are sensitive conversations, the Village is advised to handle them with discretion and patience to avoid shutting down conversations.



c) Acquire strategic property

Cincinnati neighborhoods like Bond Hill and Evanston were able to leverage development by acquiring and redeveloping properties strategically with assistance of the Hamilton County Landbank and The Port. They identified properties, such as those in high crime zones, nuisance buildings or strategically located buildings, then redeveloped these properties one at a time. They completed enough development projects to change the housing market and streetscape and correct the development trajectory of those communities. Prior to investment in 40 vacant homes in Evanston near its 5 way-intersection at Gilbert, Montgomery and Woodburn, there had not been a market rate housing transaction in the neighborhood in years. Not only did this effort spur market development, it improved the look and feel of the neighborhood.

Action Steps:

- Build partnerships with the Hamilton County Landbank and The Port.
- Investigate successes and pitfalls from similar neighborhoods.
- Get control of strategic properties and begin to catalyze redevelopment; release unbuildable lots through a vacant lot program.

d) Identify transformational projects

When industries co-locate together and share resources, they create synergistic harmonies and can transform the Village into a destination. There is a need in the region for industrial kitchens with a retail component. The Findlay Market Kitchen is a food business incubator that helps food business enthusiasts start their own small businesses. The entrepreneurs who succeed often want to get their own brick and mortar stores once they outgrow the Findlay Market Kitchen. Three businesses - a coffee roaster, a cheese maker and a kombucha bar - are currently located in the industrial park on Shephard which is partly in Lockland and partly in the Village. The businesses are La Terza Coffee, My Artisano, and Fab Ferments. Industrial kitchens can become destination spaces especially if they have a retail component and are heavily focused on giving back to the community; this would be a great fit with Lincoln Heights.

Action Steps:

- Identify the needs of industrial kitchens through conversations with existing businesses in the area.
- Identify sites in the Village that would be suitable for industrial kitchens.
- Partner with The Port, REDI, and other public entities to build the infrastructure to attract these companies and proactively move their businesses into Lincoln Heights.
- Nurture the relationships for long term growth.

The AeroHub, discussed later, is another potentially transformational project that will require focused attention. As with all of these action steps, assigning a single dedicated leader for each strategy or sub-strategy to pursue the actions will be key for success.

Strategy 2: Lindy Avenue Corridor

e) Redevelop public space

The Village applied for the Hamilton County Community and Economic Development Assistance Program (CEDAP) funding which is managed jointly by Hamilton County Planning + Development and HCDC. Local governments who participate in the County's grant programs from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) can receive up to \$300,000 per project. In 2018, Lincoln Heights requested \$300,000 to demolish the former high school building on Lindy Avenue. However, the Village's \$400,000 estimate for demolition did not consider the removal of hazards, including asbestos, lead-based paint and mercury, nor did it address other challenges involved in demolishing historic buildings. The CEDAP Advisory Committee reviewed the request, determined that the proposed \$400,000 budget would not be adequate for full demolition and remediation, and that the end use of a community and job training center was not necessarily feasible nor the best use for the property. The Advisory Committee recommended, and the County Administration awarded a \$200,000 grant to evaluate and remediate hazardous materials, conduct environmental Phase I and II studies as needed, and fund a portion of the demolition costs. The Advisory Committee also recommended, and the County awarded a \$20,000 grant for this ULI TAP process and report.

The Village CEDAP application proposed an end use of a community center similar to the one operated 20 years ago by the YWCA and other agencies that would include job training and supportive services; however, funding was not identified for redevelopment or operation of a center. After initial work began on the project, the County was contacted by village residents who had submitted National Register Preliminary Questionnaires to the State of Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) for the former high school and the South Woodlawn Public School (1200 Lindy Avenue). A Preliminary Questionnaire is the first step in nominating a property to the National Register in Ohio. Both schools appear to be potentially National Register eligible for their contribution to local patterns of history.

Since the project involves federal funding, the County will need to take into account any impact work may have on historic properties, including the two former schools. The County, working with The Port staff, solicited and received an asbestos and hazardous materials study for the former high school. Bids are being sought to remove all hazardous materials. The effect of this work must be considered. Therefore, the County will be sending these results to the OHPO to see if removal of the identified hazards compromises the building's

integrity. Similarly, possible demolition of the former high school must also be evaluated. Demolition may still be allowed even if the OHPO concurs that former high school is eligible for the National Register, but this adverse effect would need to be addressed in some manner that mitigates the loss of a historic building.

The Panel recommended that preserving the building will not allow for vertical development. They recommend that the village should redevelop the site with a nod to the past:

“If you do not tear it down, you cannot build up vertically; you cannot create ingress and egress through it; you cannot make it something new. Do you want this to be a center of the community with a nod to the past, [so that] you can celebrate the past and incorporate some architectural elements into it?”
--- Comment by Panelist Yvette Simpson

The panelists recommend that the Village raze the High School building, over the next two years, and gain control of the elementary school building as well. Once the site is shovel-ready it can be marketed as an opportunity zone project with historic tax credits layered on top of it. In addition to the redevelopment of the two sites, some panelists recommended converting the Lindy Avenue site into the Village’s Main Street. The Lindy Avenue site is the geographic center of the community and if designed well can become a destination for the Village and visitors. Panelists recommend using signage, monuments and strategically located public spaces to pay homage and celebrate the Village’s rich history and heritage.

Strategy 3: Visioning, Gateways & Corridors

While the Village of Lincoln Heights has a rich history, it is a well-hidden secret. Its exceptional access and frontage on the I-75 corridor is also currently underutilized. Changing the narrative from one of deficiencies to one of possibilities is critical to the growth of Lincoln Heights.

f) Community healing process and vision

The Village must come to terms with systemic racial injustices that it has faced and create an exciting vision for the future. The Village should partner with organizations that are trying to build awareness and understanding around racial equity and change perspectives. Organizations such as the Freedom Center, the YWCA, the Greater Cincinnati Foundation and Mayerson Academy (Strong Cincinnati) are partners to explore. This healing process can provide the space for the community to come together, celebrate their past and envision their future. This process can also build awareness around the history of the Village and bring much needed recognition to significance of Lincoln Heights’ founding.

Action Steps:

- Identify community stakeholders for the visioning activity.
- Develop a partnership with the Freedom Center and/or others to celebrate the Village of Lincoln Heights and create a vision for the future.
- Identify potential funding sources.¹³
- Establish a marketing and branding plan with the help of private partners.

g) Marketing Plan, Gateways and Branding

With an exciting vision in mind, the right marketing plan should include a well-designed summary of incentives available such as opportunity zones, CRA, historic tax credits, etc. The marketing and improvement plans can also position the Village to receive impact investment dollars and other patient investments to ensure the strategies can be executed over time.

The Village of Lincoln Heights has two key corridors: the I-75 Shepherd Lane industrial corridor and the I-75 Lindy Avenue (new I-75 exit) corridor. Each of these corridors are distinctly different and serve unique purposes. It is critical to separate the manufacturing traffic from the residential traffic and preserve the two land uses. Branding can be used to enhance the residential gateway. The Lindy Corridor should be identified as a residential mixed-use corridor with office and retail, a strong walkable hub, a sense of a history/community and attractive to visitors.

ODOT conversation - as I-75 is being realigned along the Village of Lincoln Heights, ODOT has given an option to the Village to buy a few acres after the realignment. If the acreage along I-75 is maintained as green space, the Village doesn't have to pay for the property. However, if the Village wishes to develop the property, they have to purchase the property. The TAP panelists believe that given the history of Lincoln Heights and the need for economic development in the Village, the Village can lobby to get the land for a reduced price or no cost. The property would be initially maintained as green space with the potential for future development. Mayor Finley of Evendale is known to have contacts with ODOT and can be an ally with the Village in these conversations. Strategically developing the frontage along I-75 would be beneficial and could be used to brand the Village and create a gateway into community redevelopment.

¹³ Greater Cincinnati Foundation's Grants for Strengthening Communities through Organizing & Advocacy
https://www.gcfndn.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/2019_Organizing_Advocacy_RFP_FINAL1.pdf

The panelists and current business owners agree that one of the greatest assets of the Village is industrial access and visibility from the I-75 corridor. Increasing the manufacturing footprint is possible by marketing properties along Shepherd Lane, as they have a direct route to I-75. The panelists recommend that the Village request assistance from Hamilton County Planning + Development and real estate brokers for a comprehensive study of signage, gateways and corridors which will lead to marketing industrial possibilities along Shepherd Lane and other sites as they become available.

Strategy 4: Advanced Manufacturing

h) Capitalize on momentum

Based on the current growth projections, the Cincinnati and Dayton Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) will be combined in the 2020 census. This will make the Greater Cincinnati-Greater Dayton MSA one of the top 15 metropolitan districts in the country, and the largest MSA in the State of Ohio. The size of the metropolitan region is one of the first criteria that national site selectors use to make decisions because it is significant for companies looking for federal incentives. The potential timing for the MSA aligns well with action plans in this report. Lincoln Heights will be ready to position itself as a destination with ready sites.

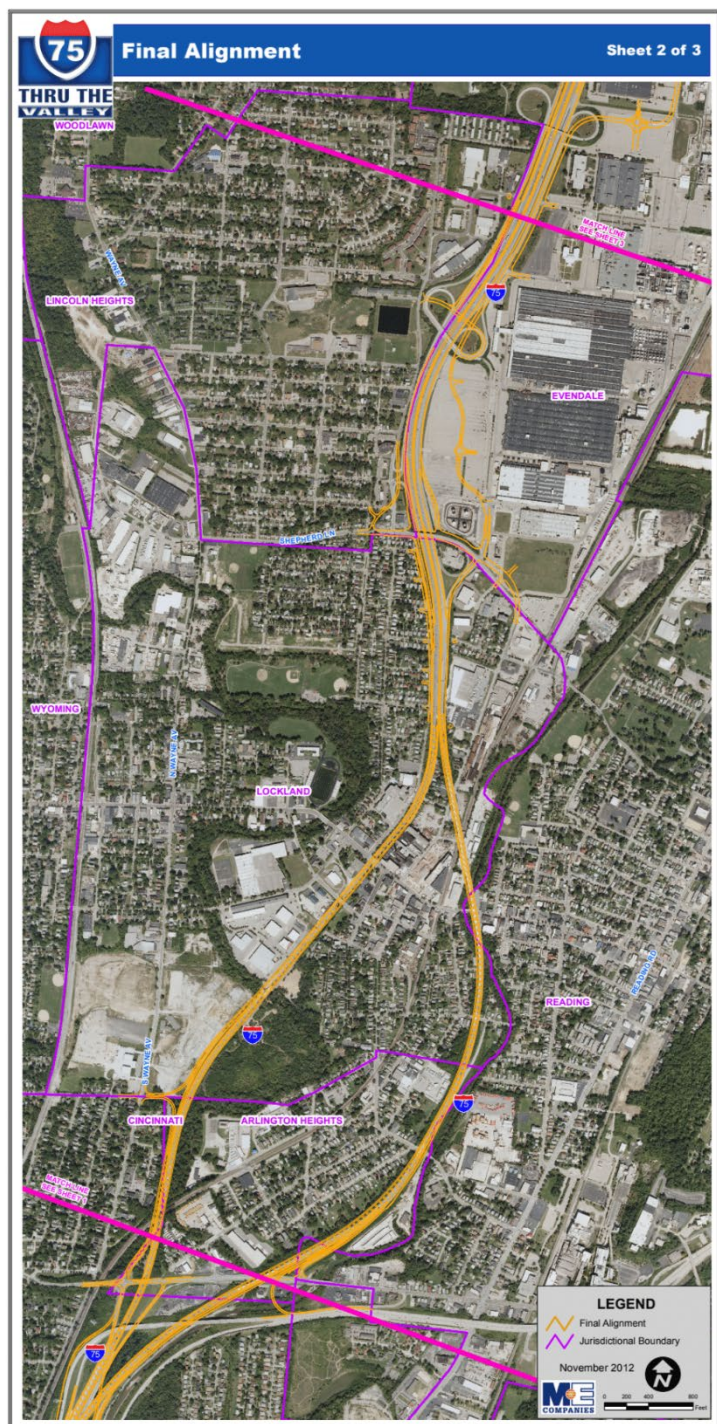
Communities in the region such as Evendale are researching how they can capitalize on the investments being made into the I-75 corridor. State dollars are being invested into the region around advanced manufacturing. Over the past few years, Evendale has strategically acquired 50 acres of land and is working with a multitude of partners including the University of Cincinnati Research Institute, Cincinnati State Workforce Development, HCDC, Princeton School District, Techsolve and Butler Tech Workforce Development on an advanced manufacturing strategy. These efforts are considering the entire I-75 corridor and other regional plans. The AeroHub Master Plan grew out of these multiple conversations across the region; the plan sets the expectations and vision of the community for developers. The first company has already broken ground in the Village of Evendale at the AeroHub Project on a 40,000 square foot building¹⁴.

Sean Baines of Red Tiger Investments had the following recommendations:

“Lincoln Heights should collaborate with the regional partners and understand the advanced manufacturing plans for the region. Having a full understanding of what’s happening all along the corridor is a starting point. The progress that AeroHub has made; what Lockland is doing with Sterns Foster site how that could be a catalyst for their community. The AeroHub boulevard is currently planned to come through Evendale and Glendale and will tie to the Northern Lights District (of Sharonville). The idea is to see what the neighbors have and what you have and leverage of those assets.”

¹⁴ Based on the company’s current projections they might grow to be a \$100,000 sq. ft building.

In addition to developing relationships with Evendale related to AeroHub, Glendale and other communities along the I-75 corridor, the Village should also build relationships with Techsolve, Butler Tech, Cincinnati State and most importantly the Princeton School District to identify synergies to create an advanced manufacturing training hub on the Lindy site or other sites. The Village can conduct a study to identify the trainable workforce and establish a training hub in the Village and school district. This action will bond Lincoln Heights with its neighbors and position itself as a forward thinker in advanced manufacturing.



CONCLUSION

The ULI Cincinnati Technical Assistance Panel was asked to review and analyze potential redevelopment opportunities for the Village of Lincoln Heights and identify the barriers to economic growth. The Village has a rich African American history and is located in a prime area with exposure and access to I-75. Despite its central location and access to employers such as General Electric, the Village is struggling with over 130 vacant lots and businesses. The quality of housing stock is declining, and subsequently, Village revenue is declining.

After local official presentations, Village tours, questions, answers and deliberation, ULI Cincinnati panelists distilled four primary strategies from a list of potential development scenarios. For each strategy, specific actions and benefits are presented in this report.

Top Strategies		
1.	Partnerships, Patience and Public Ownership	a) Build consensus and partnerships b) Eradicate problem properties c) Acquire strategic property d) Identify transformational projects
2.	Lindy Avenue Corridor	e) Redevelop public space
3	Visioning, Gateways & Corridors	f) Community healing and visioning g) Marketing plan, gateways and branding
4	Advanced Manufacturing	h) Capitalize on regional momentum

Each strategy and its action plans reinforce the need for internal stakeholder collaboration and coordination with other entities across the region. ULI Cincinnati is pleased to be a collaborative partner with the Village of Lincoln Heights and looks forward to working with the Village as needed during its implementation.

APPENDIX

Part 1 – ULI Cincinnati Technical Assistance Panel

ULI Cincinnati is the local District Council of the Urban Land Institute (ULI), the premiere research and education organization, with nearly 42,000 members worldwide representing the entire spectrum of land use and real estate development disciplines working in private enterprise and public service. ULI is the world's thought leader in promoting sustainable, thriving communities. With approximately 270 members throughout the region, ULI Cincinnati pursues its vision by:

- Engaging people through active dialogue;
- Delivering unique experiences to a diverse membership;
- Capitalizing on ULI's global resources; and
- Building strategic relationships with regional stakeholders and leaders.

ULI Cincinnati's Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) program brings expertise in real estate, urban planning, design, engineering and finance to provide analysis and recommendations to overcome land use planning and development challenges. For a TAP, ULI Cincinnati assembles an interdisciplinary team of established local and area professionals for a site/project review and brainstorming session.

This team of experts meets with stakeholders, visits a site, and examines the challenge from all angles. After a TAP session, ULI presents its findings to the client to illustrate potential responses to project challenges with a focus on practical and feasible options often driven by market demand/conditions. For this advisory service, a fee is customarily charged, though panel members are not compensated for their time.

The sponsor of the TAP will typically request the services of a ULI TAP to address a specific issue that may be evaluated using the expertise of a panel of experts over the course of a day or two. After working with the appropriate District Council to refine the scope of the TAP topic, the panel is selected, and a date is set. Next, the sponsor works within ULI guidelines to assemble appropriate background information and disseminate it to the panelists in advance of the site visit and review session.

Depending on the nature of the TAP topic, the panel may convene in advance of the working session in order to visit the subject site, possibly led by the sponsor to provide background and commentary. The panel will then convene. Depending on resources, availability and the nature of the project, a TAP may meet for a number of hours for discussion and brainstorming, or up to a couple of days on a charette-style convening. At the conclusion of the TAP, a report will be prepared, either written and/or oral, and presented to the sponsor as a take-away

deliverable. In some instances, the reporting can be augmented with visuals, renderings or preliminary concept plans to support the discussion findings.

Lincoln Heights TAP Overview

The Client is looking for a Village wide market study for the Village of Lincoln Heights that also includes a site-specific component for the property at 1100 Lindy Avenue.

The TAP is intended to assemble a team of local and area experts to:

- Review existing recent studies for the Village;
- Study the characteristics of the Village and surrounding areas to develop options as to what the market will sustainably support where opportunities for redevelopment may exist;
- Research and analyze upcoming opportunities with new interstate exchange along I-75 and other developments;
- Identify best practices that are successful elsewhere, including potential opportunities for support, concepts, and connectivity with the community; and
- Develop and evaluate conceptual development scenarios for the sites.

Part 2 – Key Demographics

All the data shown in this section is derived from the Mysidewalk platform. Data for Lincoln Heights can be accessed at <https://reports.mysidewalk.com/0c8b0a22a4#c-270921>

Population



3,336

People

Total Population

Lincoln Heights, OH

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

480.28

Acres

Total Area (acres)

Lincoln Heights, OH

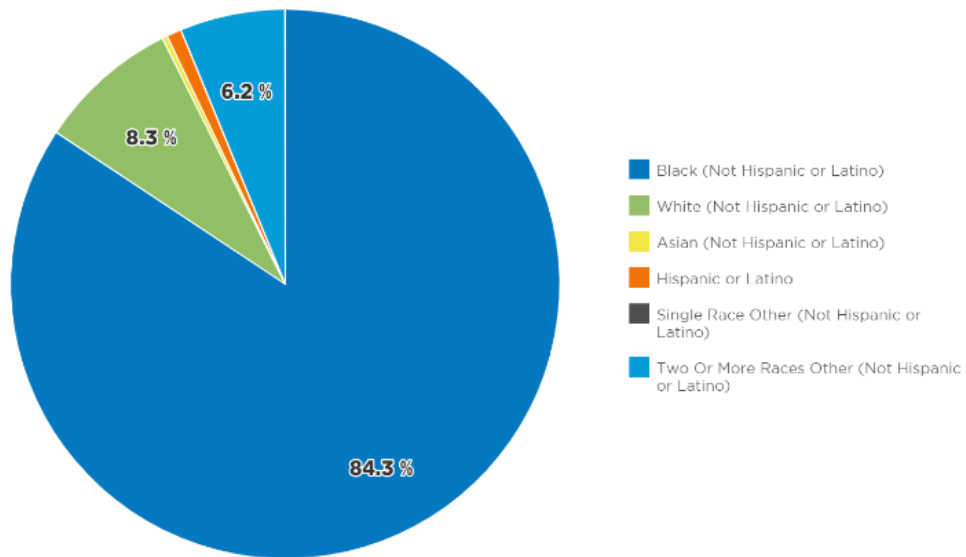
Sources: US Census; US Census 2013-2017 ACS

6.95

Total Population per acre

Lincoln Heights, OH

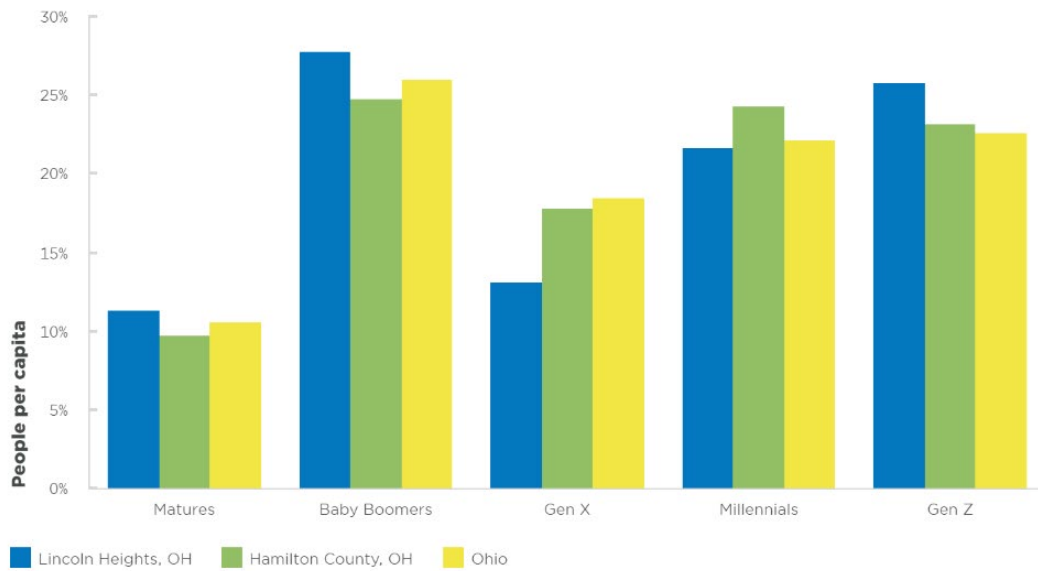
Race/Ethnicity Totals



Lincoln Heights, OH

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

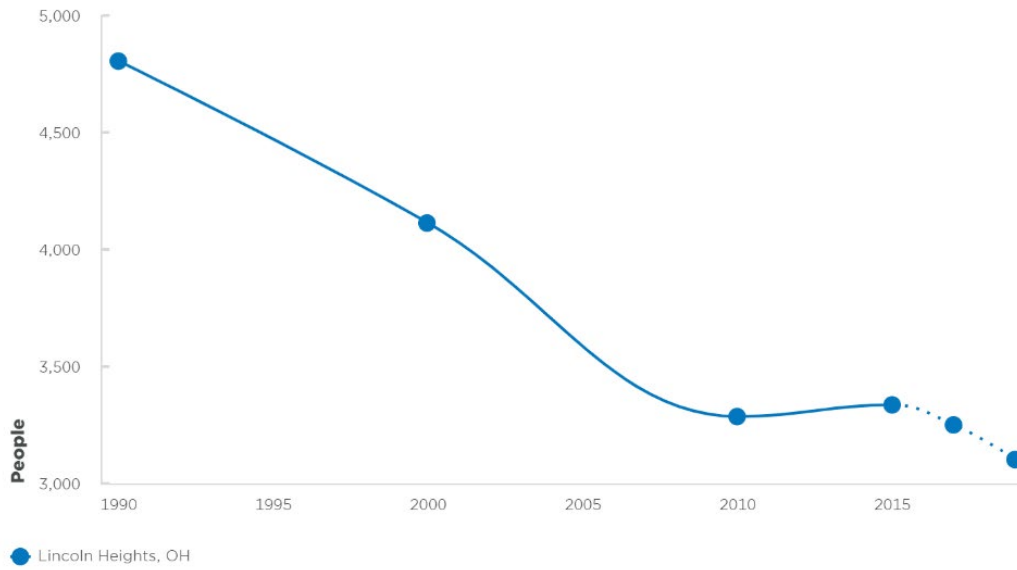
Generations



Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

How has the residential population in your community changed over time?

Total Population



Sources: DC 1990, 2000, 2010, ACS 2017; US Census 2000; US Census 2010; US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Housing



1,778

Housing units

Total Housing Units

Lincoln Heights, OH



\$81,500

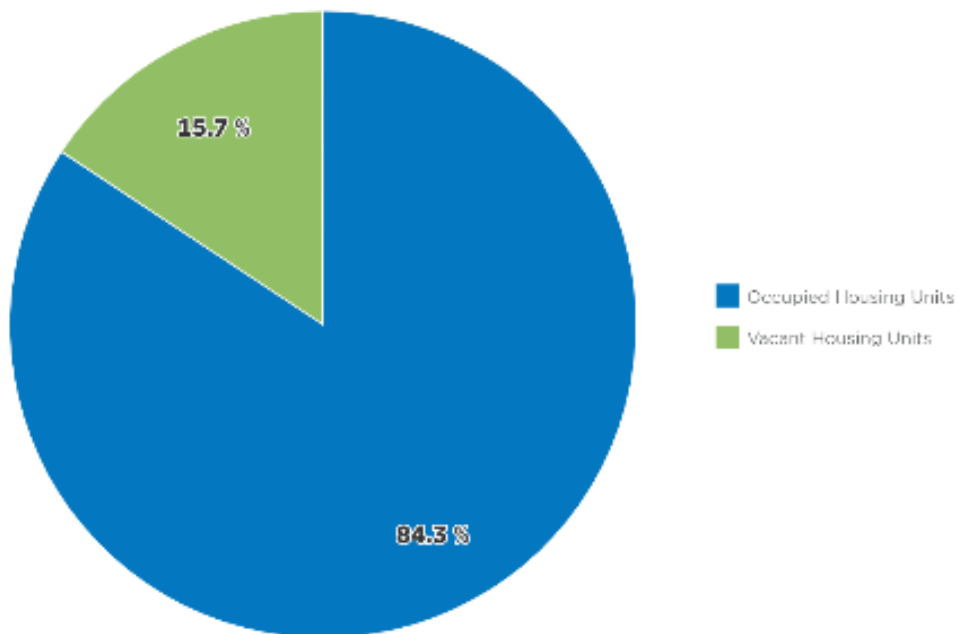
USD

Median Home Value

Lincoln Heights, OH

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Vacant vs Occupied Housing Units



Lincoln Heights, OH

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

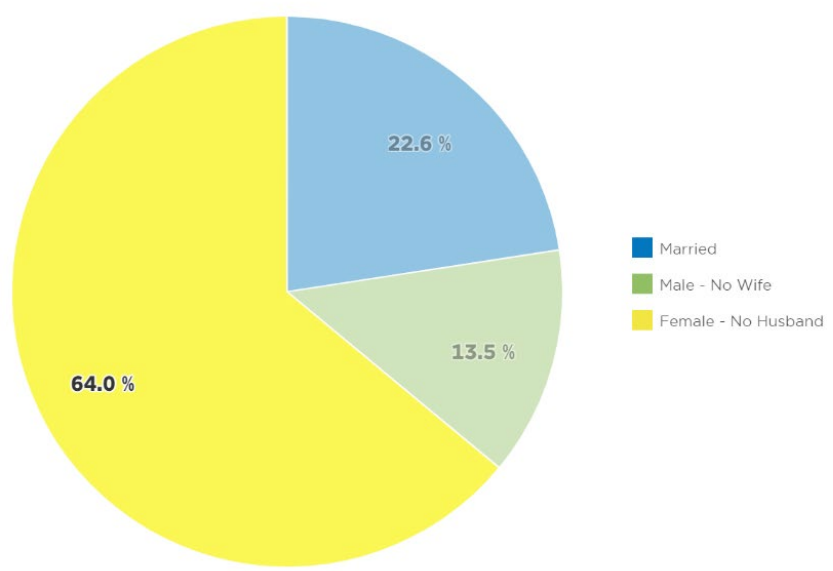
Families

 **1,499**
Households
Total Households
Lincoln Heights, OH

 **2.23**
People
Average Household Size
Lincoln Heights, OH

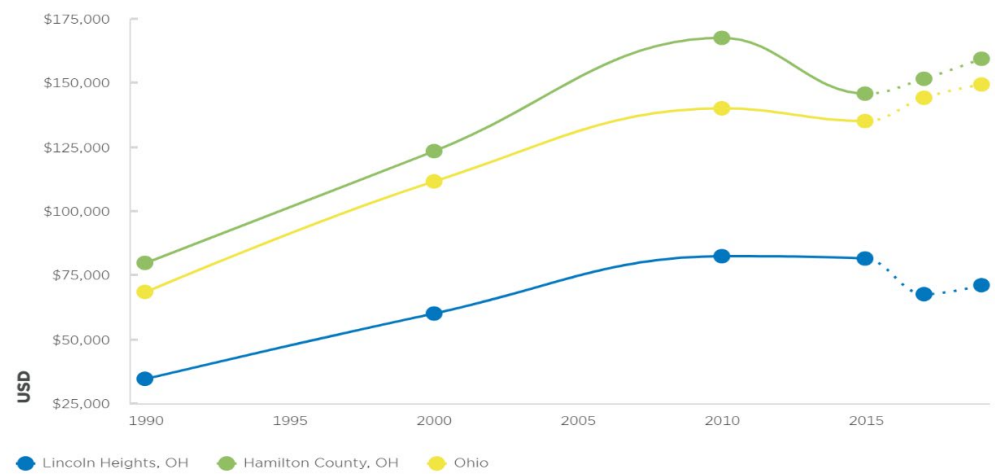
Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Family Household Status



Lincoln Heights, OH
Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Median Home Value



Sources: DC 1990, 2000, 2010, ACS 2017; US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Economy



Per Capita Income

\$12,985

USD

Lincoln Heights, OH

\$32,638

USD

Hamilton County, OH

\$29,011

USD

Ohio

Median Household Income

\$24,055

USD

Lincoln Heights, OH

\$52,389

USD

Hamilton County, OH

\$52,407

USD

Ohio

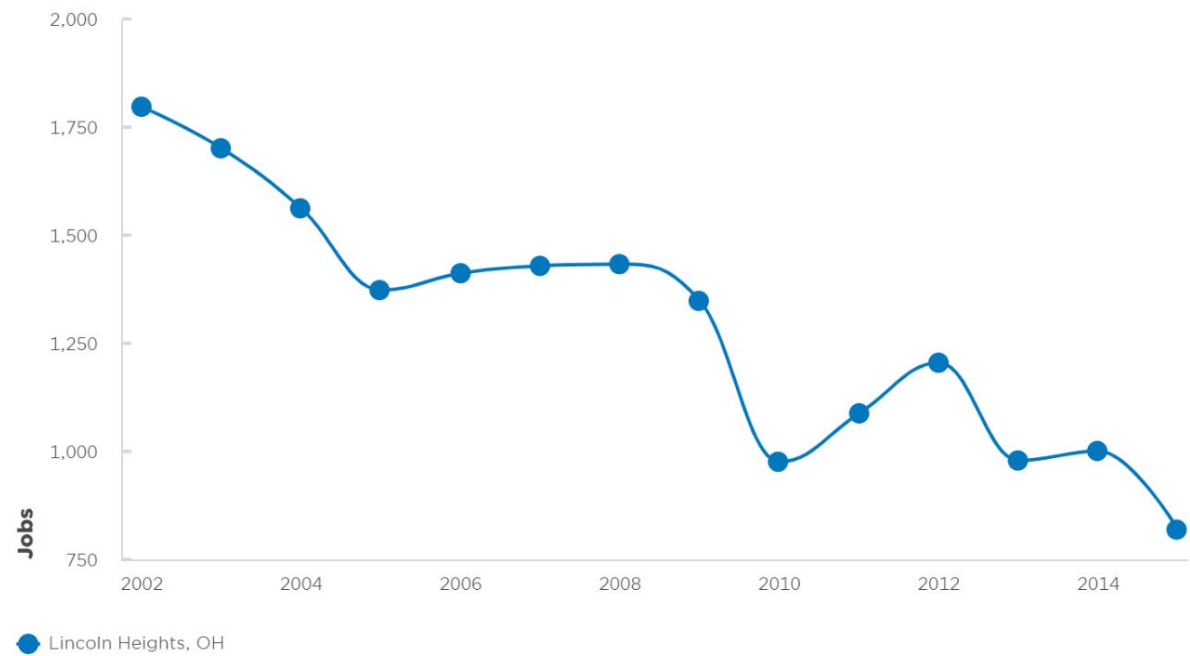
Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Household Income



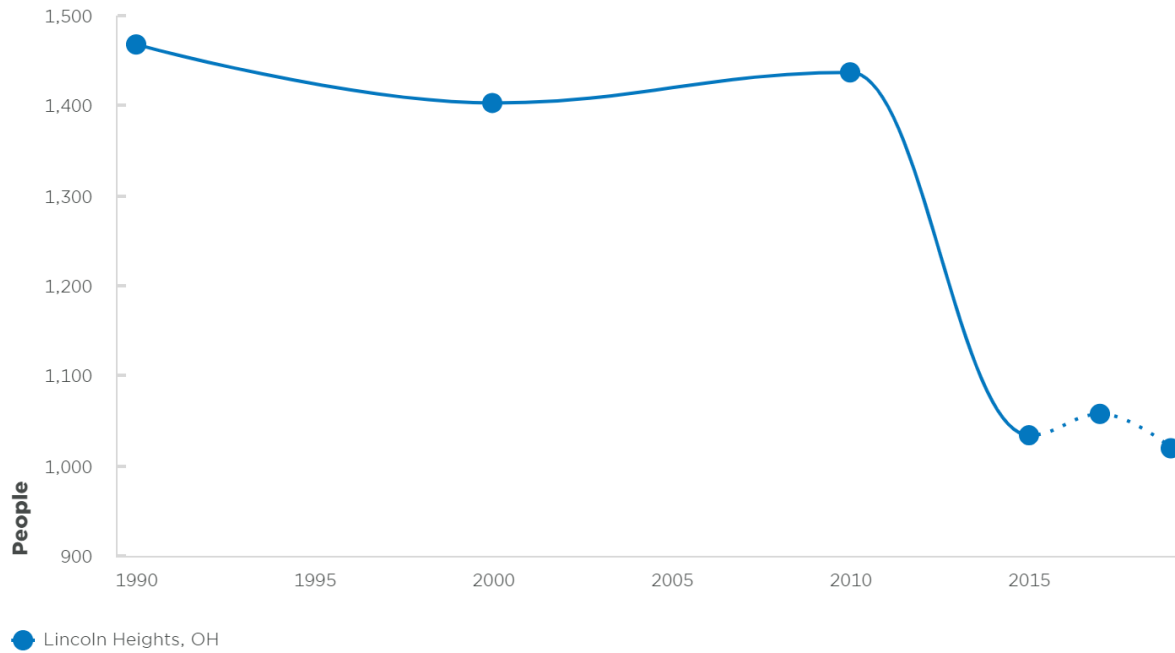
Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Number of Jobs



Sources: LODES Version 7.3

Time Series: Total Employed Population



Sources: DC 1990, 2000, 2010, ACS est

Poverty



Percent of Families Below Poverty Level

36.37%

Lincoln Heights, OH

12.23%

Hamilton County, OH

10.8%

Ohio

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Population by Income to Poverty Segments

Lincoln Heights, OH	People
Income to Poverty Ratio: 49% and below the poverty level	418
Income to Poverty Ratio: 50% to 99% the poverty level	978
Income to Poverty Ratio: 100% to 124% the poverty level	127
Income to Poverty Ratio: 125% to 149% the poverty level	341
Income to Poverty Ratio: 150% to 184% the poverty level	595
Income to Poverty Ratio: 185% to 199% the poverty level	69
Income to Poverty Ratio: 200% and over the poverty level	808

Sources: US Census 2013-2017 ACS

Income to Poverty Ratio

This dataset represents the income to poverty ratio. The data values are the count of people classified into categories relative to the poverty level. Ratios below 100 percent of the poverty level are below the official poverty definition.