



# ENVISION HILLTOP

A COMMUNITY PLAN  
FOR SHARED SUCCESS



Learn more about this project online: [envisionhilltop.org](http://envisionhilltop.org)

# ENVISION HILLTOP

January 2020

The Neighborhood Design Center, consultant to:  
The City of Columbus, Department of Neighborhoods  
Columbus, Ohio

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# Acknowledgements

## Residents first.

The Hilltop Community Plan public engagement process was driven by dedicated residents who met monthly to discuss problems and pursue solutions. The planning team designed exercises to solicit feedback and learn from the lived experiences of residents. The ideas represented in the plan were created either by residents themselves or in response to concerns voiced by residents over the year-long engagement period.

## Thank you to stakeholders.

The Hilltop Community Plan public engagement process was facilitated by a committed group of local institutional stakeholders. The Boys & Girls Club of Central Ohio graciously offered the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club for each monthly Envision Hilltop event, ensuring that residents were consistently meeting at the same time and location throughout the duration of the process.





## Committed Neighbors & Stakeholders.

The following individuals donated their time, perspective, knowledge, and lived experience to the creation of the Hilltop Community Plan. The plan is based directly on their feedback and many of their responses are included in this document. This project owes much gratitude to their commitment and optimism!

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- Jenna Wolfe
- Autumn Yasher





## Project Team

The project team for the Hilltop Community Plan included a group of consultants and partners, led by the Neighborhood Design Center. The contributions of each partner was critical to creating the document and the plan recommendations and strategies.

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## Advisory Committee

Completing a strategic community plan with the Hilltop community required a team effort. To support the content creation and help guide preliminary development of recommendations, an advisory committee was formed in February 2019. Made up of key community stakeholders and subject matter experts, the committee helped inform and shape the final recommendations of the plan.

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# A message from Mayor Andrew J. Ginther

Dear Neighbors,

Strong and vibrant neighborhoods are the backbone of our great city. They are where we connect and live our lives. While all of our neighborhoods have changed and evolved over time, one basic fact remains the same: strong neighborhoods are places where we feel at home.

It is my pleasure to present Envision Hilltop, our comprehensive community plan for a stronger Hilltop. This plan will be our roadmap to revitalization and will set the framework for long-term transformation. Developed through a process driven by the community, it truly embodies the aspirations of Hilltop residents, provides data-driven and sustainable recommendations, and places the needs of the Hilltop front and center.

My vision is to make Columbus America's Opportunity City, a city where residents are more likely to move from poverty to the middle class and beyond than any other city our size. We cannot achieve this goal until every family in every neighborhood shares in the success that is Columbus.

Since the beginning of my administration the Hilltop has been a priority neighborhood, and this plan charts a course for the shared success of the community in the future. The story of Columbus cannot be told without the rich history of the Hilltop, a neighborhood full of pride, determination, and resilience. I know the Hilltop's best days are ahead.

Columbus and Central Ohio are experiencing unprecedented growth, and for that to continue we must plan accordingly for our neighborhoods. It is more important than ever to look to the future and create a vision that solidifies our success and builds on our growth. That is why this strategic and comprehensive neighborhood planning process is vital to the future of the Hilltop. This plan contains a range of metrics, strategies, and recommendations that work in an integrated way to address key issues impacting people, place, and home. I strongly believe the goals and recommendations of this plan will advance the needs of Hilltop residents and better prepare the community for the growth and changes that continue to shape neighborhoods throughout Columbus.

Each of our neighborhoods helps make up the fabric of who we are, which is what makes Columbus a special place. Strong and vibrant neighborhoods do not become great by accident, but are the result of vision, planning, leadership, and sense of community. I am proud of the work we have accomplished together in this Envision Hilltop community plan, and I'm excited about the next chapter of the Hilltop that we will write together.

**MAYOR ANDREW J. GINTHER**  
**CITY OF COLUMBUS**

JANUARY 2020

# executive summary



**PEOPLE**



**PLACE**



**HOME**

The Hilltop Community Plan took approximately 20 months to complete, with a substantial public engagement period, followed by a conceptual visioning period and intensive data evaluation and analysis. The plan offers objectives in nine major areas that work together to address the primary obstacles to neighborhood stability. This executive summary captures the essence of the public planning process and communicates the primary recommendations of the plan.

# Envisioning a Stronger Hilltop

The Hilltop Community Plan is a guiding document for investments in physical infrastructure and human capital development, created with Hilltop residents at the center. The plan is intentionally broad, covering topics from health and wellness to transportation and housing. Recommendations included in the plan are sometimes aspirational and sometimes immediately actionable. First and foremost, they reflect the thoughts and experiences of the residents who participated in the planning process from May 2018 through November 2019.

Many recommendations focus on well-known problems of the plan's focus area, like litter, illegal dumping, crime, and prostitution. Some recommendations center around leveraging existing assets of the Hilltop, like its unique topography, convenient location, and the Camp Chase Trail. Together, the recommendations present a comprehensive approach to improving the quality of life for Hilltop residents by addressing current challenges while also building on neighborhood strengths.



Hilltop residents put sticky notes on an aerial map of Sullivant Avenue.

## Plan Structure

This document presents an abbreviated history and context for the Hilltop area, followed by detailed data about existing conditions of the neighborhood. The planning process is captured in the next section with detailed results of activities and information about community outreach and engagement. Goals and recommendations of the plan are presented next. The three pillars of the plan—**people, place, and home**—are divided into three subsections each. Under these, individual recommendations are offered using numbered proposals, 1.1 through 27.3. Each subsection also offers case studies or research examples, as well as visionary concepts. Following the recommendations is a narrative about implementation strategies, followed by an appendix. There is more information at [envisionhilltop.com](http://envisionhilltop.com).



Residents vote on land use and density at a March 2019 event.



**PEOPLE**  
Health & Recreation  
Employment & Income  
Education



**PLACE**  
Business  
Safety  
Mobility



**HOME**  
Mixed-Income & Affordability  
Quality  
Homeownership



Monthly public meetings were held at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club, located at 85 Clarendon Avenue. A full dinner and dessert was provided at all Envision Hilltop hosted events.

12 public meetings hosted

30 events attended

50 hours of public review

## Context & Data

The rich heritage of the Hilltop is difficult to convey in a few pages, but the Context & Data section captures some highlights and trends experienced since the neighborhood's development in the nineteenth century. A few of the major forces in the legacy of the Hilltop have been the National Road (West Broad Street), construction of the Columbus State Hospital and Columbus State Institute, the availability of living-wage blue-collar jobs at nearby factories, and the impact of racial discrimination on real estate and development in general. These themes are discussed in detail in the section, as well as trends that have destabilized the Hilltop in recent decades.

**Existing Conditions.** Data is critical, but not the sole vehicle to understanding the needs of the Hilltop community. Through a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, an Existing Conditions subsection illustrates the current reality in the Hilltop focus area. The statistics and maps are a snapshot to help understand of patterns and trends in a variety of sectors.

### Data Sections

- **Employment & Income**  
Unemployment rate, median household income, where residents work, jobs by industry, other income sources
- **Health & Wellness**  
Financial access, infant mortality, medical facilities, comparative statistics, opioid epidemic, tree canopy, religious land-use, SNAP recipients and food access.
- **Education**  
Educational attainment, drop out rate, graduation rate, school building grades from Ohio Dept. of Education
- **Schools**  
Public schools located in the focus area geography, select school building data, map of educational facilities, non-public schools, school enrollment patterns and figures, childcare facilities, feeder pattern
- **Safety & Crime**  
Violent crime data, recurring locations of crime, top 911 calls by type, residential nuisance abatements, property crime by type, judicial involvement data
- **Businesses**  
Historic context, current data, retail centers, vacancy, contributing buildings
- **Mobility**  
Bus lines, commuting data, car ownership, bus ridership, street data, traffic counts, collision analysis
- **Recreation**  
Parks in the focus area, park access map, community centers/amenities
- **Mixed-Income Housing**  
Analysis of household income, historical comparison and context
- **Homeownership & Housing Quality**  
Owner-occupied data, analysis of select streets and estimated price for housing interventions, code enforcement request analysis, county auditor quality ratings
- **Housing Affordability & Instability**  
Housing-cost burdened households, monthly rent, historical value analysis, homelessness data, current programs, eviction filing data
- **Subsidized Housing**  
Housing Choice Voucher analysis, and subsidized housing developments
- **Real Estate & Housing Market**  
Rental registration data, permit activity, parcel ownership, and tax delinquency
- **Retail Study**  
Recommendations from market analysis, business data on market demand, retail trends, and map of current businesses



The primary role of the  
planning team was to  
ask, amplify, and synthesize  
public feedback.

## The Planning Process

The Hilltop Community Plan public engagement process was designed to be comprehensive, resident-driven, and transparent. At the core of this process were monthly resident meetings, where residents participated in individual and group activities designed by the planning team. The activities ranged from discussion-based brainstorming to mapping exercises, always with the goal of gathering concrete opinions and recording results in a thorough—yet concise—way.

In addition to monthly meetings, there was a Kickoff Event on Sept. 24, 2018, and a Winter Workshop on Feb. 23, 2019. All events, except for the Winter Workshop, were hosted at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club at 85 Clarendon Avenue, a central and accessible Hilltop location. Keeping the location consistent throughout the planning process was an intentional strategy designed to keep the process predictable and familiar to residents.

Outside of monthly meetings, the planning team organized focus groups with relevant stakeholders to allow for pointed discussions with experienced professionals. These were highly valuable events that contributed greatly to the planning team's understanding of the Hilltop focus area. A less formal approach to public engagement were the "pop-up planning" events throughout Summer 2018 and into 2019. These were existing community events attended by the planning team to hear perceptions and ideas about the focus area. This was also a critical component of building an audience, establishing relationships, and gathering contact information that was used for the duration of the engagement period.

Creating a community plan requires consistent public engagement, a process that lasted more than a year on the Hilltop. With the goal of building a framework for future investments, the plan relies on the meaningful input received from residents and stakeholders through dozens of facilitated exercises and conversations. Creating authentic relationships with Hilltop residents was vital to establishing trust and communication. This consistent and sustained resident interaction helped identify and elevate community values. These values, then, have intimately shaped the Hilltop Community Plan.



## Public Outreach

To reach as many people as possible, two rounds of postcards were delivered to each residential and business address within the focus area. The first set was delivered before the Sept. 24, 2018, event to 7,782 addresses, and the second was delivered to an increased number of 9,929 addresses the first week of January 2019 to announce upcoming events. Additionally, two banners were placed in the plan's focus area. The first was outside the fire station at 2250 West Broad and the second was at the police substation at 2070 Sullivant. Recent combined traffic counts for these two locations total around 35,000 vehicles daily.

For more personal outreach, the planning team attended 15 events on the Hilltop from June 2018 through February 2019 to speak with people one-on-one about the planning process. The idea of "pop-up planning" is to build on the momentum of existing community events by attending and speaking informally with residents. Conversations sought insight from neighbors and shared details of the process. An approximately 450-person contact list was created primarily from connections made at pop-up planning events. Digital engagement was also used; a community Wikimap allowed 100 unique individuals to add 357 points with 843 interactions on a dynamic map of the neighborhood to mark issues or leave positive comments. The [envisionhilltop.com](http://envisionhilltop.com) website also presented several opportunities for input throughout the process.

## Guiding Principles

For each topic area, a guiding principle was developed in conjunction with residents. The principles are intentionally broad, visionary, and ambitious statements that provide a framework under which recommendations were developed. Drafts of the guiding principle statements were sent to residents via email in advance of the Jan. 10, 2019, meeting and were discussed and edited at that event in three groups.

### Health & Recreation

Every person deserves unrestricted access to high-quality physical, mental and emotional healthcare, including addiction, rehabilitation services, and primary care.

### Business

The Hilltop will support and sustain a variety of businesses to create a foundation of amenities and economic activity for residents and visitors.

### Mixed-Income & Affordability

The Hilltop will be home for a range of incomes, while staying true to its diverse heritage.

### Education

All children will be prepared for diverse living-wage jobs by integrating workforce development with academic and vocational experience.

### Safety

The Hilltop will be a safe, secure, and inviting community for residents.

### Quality

Housing on the Hilltop will be safe inside and out, and properties will be well-maintained.

### Employment & Income

Opportunities and assistance for living-wage employment will be accessible, achievable, retainable, and include the ability for advancement.

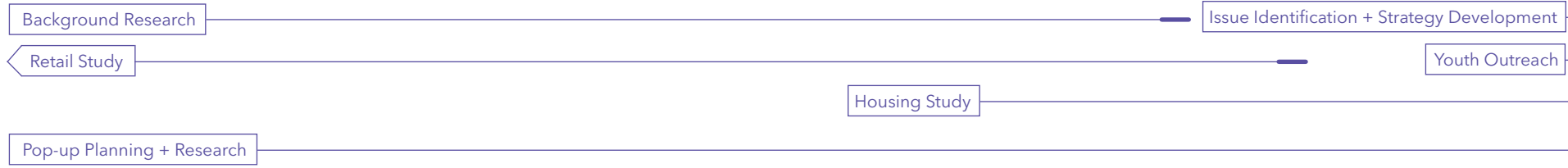
### Mobility

Hilltop infrastructure will embrace a multi-modal transportation network that is responsive to the needs of the community today and in the future.

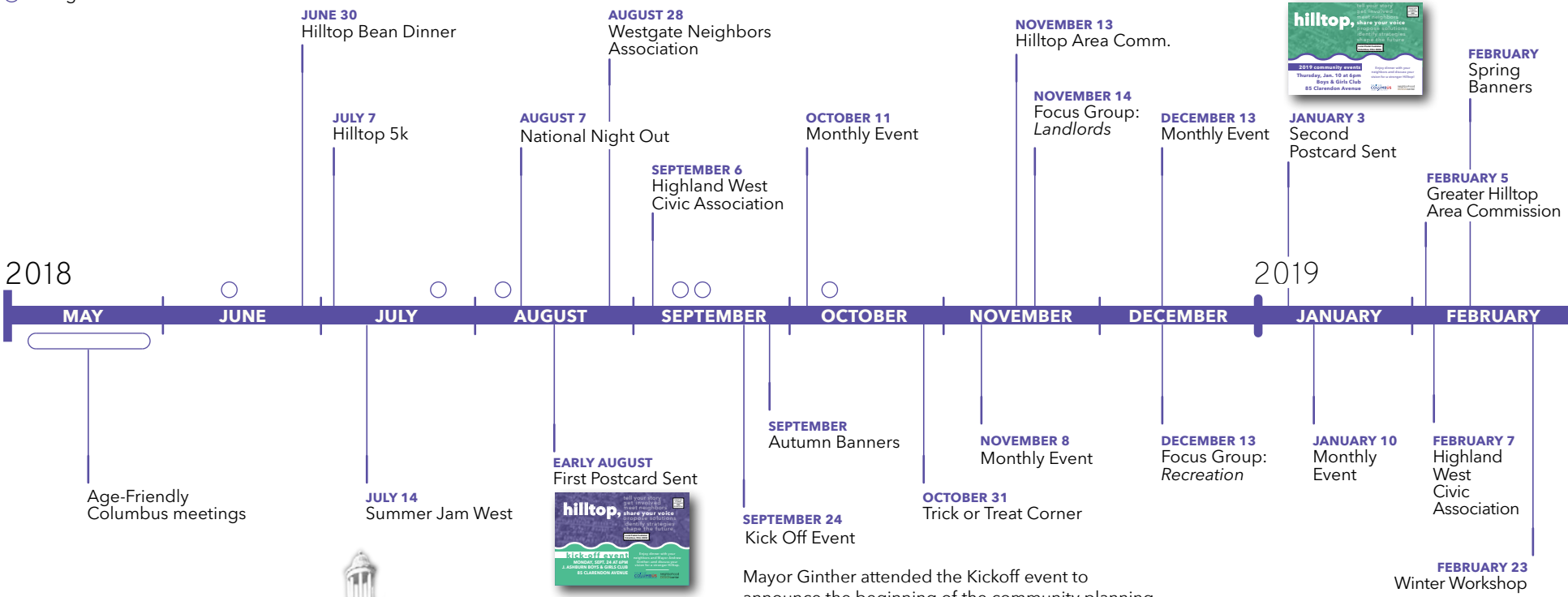
### Homeownership

People will be encouraged and empowered to buy homes for neighborhood stability and community pride.

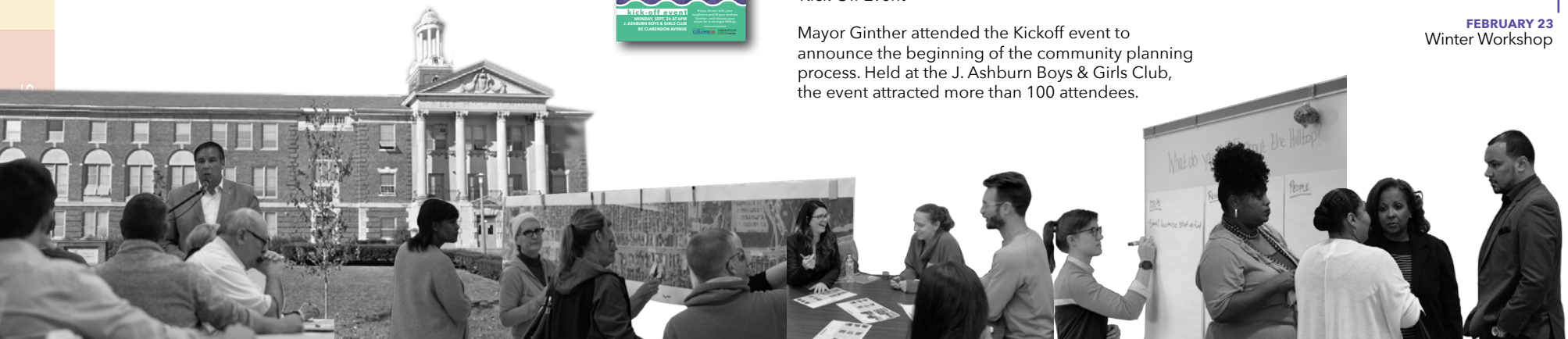
# Planning Process Timeline



○ Westgate Farmer's Market



Mayor Ginther attended the Kickoff event to announce the beginning of the community planning process. Held at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club, the event attracted more than 100 attendees.





Document Drafting

Revision + Final Production

**MARCH 5**  
Focus Group:  
*Social Services*

**MARCH 25**  
Focus Group:  
*K12 Professionals*

**MAY 9**  
Monthly  
Event

**JUNE 13**  
Focus Group:  
*Legal Aid Clinic*

**AUGUST 6**  
National  
Night Out

**SEPTEMBER 30**  
Plan Draft

**NOVEMBER 7**  
Highland West  
Civic Association

**DECEMBER**  
Plan  
Completed

MARCH      APRIL      MAY      JUNE      JULY      AUGUST      SEPTEMBER      OCTOBER      NOVEMBER      DECEMBER

**MARCH 14**  
Monthly Event

**APRIL 11**  
Monthly Event

**JUNE 29**  
Hilltop Bean Dinner

**MAY 7**  
Greater Hilltop  
Area Commission

**NOV. 12-22**  
50 hours of Open Hours at the  
Hilltop Library for public  
comment





## Synthesizing Public Input

The extensive input received during the year-long public engagement process was carefully reviewed to create the plan goals, objectives, and action steps. Throughout the year, resident feedback was consistently concentrated on the pressing issues of housing, employment, and crime. The interconnectedness of nearly all challenges facing the neighborhood presented both advantages and disadvantages to understanding resident input. Residents often expressed strong feelings about problems that might alternatively be considered symptoms of larger problems. The planning team worked to strike a balance between addressing both the causes and effects of problems, not simply the existence of issues. Moving toward a preventative approach is the paramount goal of the strategies and recommendations presented in this plan. Carefully designed exercises sought to determine the top priorities of Hilltop residents without oversimplifying issues. The planning team synthesized the results of group discussions, votes, exercises, and individual comments into the final action steps and divided them by category.

## Community Priorities

After collecting resident input for eight months, the planning team asked the 51 participants at the January 2019 monthly meeting to prioritize the issues that had been raised. Each person ranked five issues under each category, resulting in a collectively ranked priority list. The top three issues *across all categories* are shown in **bold** below.

### Health

- **Drug addiction and trafficking**
- Mental health
- Financial wellness
- Infant mortality
- Primary care

### Education

- Parent engagement
- High school graduation
- Career training
- Kindergarten readiness
- Divided school boundaries

### Employment & Income

- **Living-wage jobs/training**
- Transportation
- Develop “soft skills”
- Wealth-building programs
- Shared equity businesses

### Business

- Trash and litter
- Local businesses
- Weak market conditions
- Streetscape
- Customer access

### Safety

- Violent crime
- Surveillance/responsiveness
- Proactive policing
- Speeding vehicles
- Inadequate sidewalks

### Mobility & Recreation

- Resident engagement and socialization
- Access for elderly/disabled
- Infrastructure for walking or biking
- Bus routes/shelters
- Recreational amenities/programs

### Mixed-Income & Affordability

- Diverse portfolio of affordable housing
- Rehabilitate historic housing
- Prevent displacement
- Create smaller districts
- More housing and density

### Housing Quality

- **Home repair, maintenance, curb appeal**
- Infrastructure: Fix flooding issues, more trees, streetlights
- Aging in place
- Encourage compatible new construction/remodel
- Leverage rental registry

### Homeownership

- Create attractions/amenities to draw new homebuyers
- Tax abatements for home improvement
- Incentivize redevelopment for homeownership
- Increase rate of owner-occupied tax credit
- First-time buyer assistance

*Categories are shown here as they were voted on by residents in January 2019, but recreation was added to health shortly after this meeting.*

## Plan Objectives

The plan objectives were developed using public input and analysis of the data presented in the context and data section. Each pillar—**people, place, and home**—has three topic areas, and each topic area has three primary goals. In the plan section, action steps are presented under each goal. The action steps (not shown here) explain how to achieve the goal in more real, tangible terms.

### PEOPLE

#### Health & Recreation

- Improve conditions, amenities, programs, and access to parks and community centers
- Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community
- Increase access to mental, physical, and financial wellness opportunities

#### Education & Schools

- Position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services
- Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare quality
- Improve college and career readiness

#### Employment & Income

- Use education and training programs to prepare people for employment
- Incentivize higher wages and offer more robust employee benefits
- Consider wealth-building opportunities

### PLACE

#### Business & Economy

- Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood
- Use existing contributing structures and encourage new development in historic business district at catalyst sites
- Increase local employment options that pay a living wage

#### Mobility

- Prioritize active and shared mobility
- Address hazardous vehicle behavior
- Improve access to employment centers

#### Safety & Crime

- Focus on crime prevention by investing in people
- Address physical environment attributes that contribute to criminal activity
- Expand proactive and community policing techniques

### HOME

#### Housing Quality

- Promote quality management and maintenance of rental properties
- Incentivize rehabilitation and renovation of properties
- Ensure units meet the changing needs of tenants

#### Mixed-Income & Affordability

- Offer a variety of housing at levels affordable to multiple incomes
- Stabilize housing and prevent displacement
- Concentrate housing investment and reduce barriers to development

#### Homeownership

- Expand financial capacity for current and prospective homeowners
- Support a culture of shared homeowner prosperity to build community pride
- Enhance and add amenities to draw new homebuyers

# Plan Goals & Action Steps

The Hilltop needs coordinated intervention to emerge as a stable neighborhood. The scale of challenges facing the neighborhood is great, which demands a wide-ranging approach to intervention strategies. Each of the nine topic areas contain goals accompanied by action steps. The plan recommendations are divided into 27 goals, each with at least two action steps. Each goal is classified as either short-term or long-term, and is described as a project, policy, program, or an integrated approach. Case studies support specific ideas, and visionary concepts provide inspiration for bringing action steps to life.

## Goal 1 Improve conditions, amenities, programs, and access to parks and community centers

- 1.1 Expand and standardize hours at recreation centers.
- 1.2 Improve Wrexham, Glenwood, and Holton Parks.
- 1.3 Increase access to programs.

## Goal 2 Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community

- 2.1 Focus on addiction prevention, harm reduction, and treatment.
- 2.2 Empower people to escape sex work and human trafficking.
- 2.3 Provide more support services for families who lose people to addiction, such as guardianship options for substance use disorder and intensive case management.

## Goal 3 Increase access to mental, physical, and financial wellness opportunities

- 3.1 Expand access to trauma and mental health treatment.
- 3.2 Increase access to primary care and physical wellness options.
- 3.3 Offer financial coaching, savings incentives, and credit score assistance.

## Goal 4 Position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services

- 4.1 Offer support services for parents and adults.
- 4.2 Host and facilitate community events that build trust and relationships between school and community.
- 4.3 Offer clinical resources for mental and physical health, including dental and vision.
- 4.4 Offer a comprehensive program for parent engagement.

## Goal 5 Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare quality

- 5.1 Build a pre-K center on the Hilltop.
- 5.2 Co-locate and coordinate wraparound services for families.
- 5.3 Engage, educate, and inform parents.

## Goal 6 Improve college and career readiness

- 6.1 Align after-school and summer programming with academic experiences.
- 6.2 Increase 4-year high school graduation rate.
- 6.3 Reduce high school dropouts.

## Goal 7 Use education and training programs to prepare people for employment

- 7.1 Reduce employment barriers for restored citizens.
- 7.2 Provide construction training and employment to young adults.
- 7.3 Provide housing assistance to low-income heads of household working to reach educational milestones.

## Goal 8 Incentivize higher wages and offer more robust employee benefits

- 8.1 Continue using tax abatements to negotiate higher wages.
- 8.2 Consider benefits agreements with businesses to offer non-wage benefits.
- 8.3 Reduce impact of the "benefits cliff."

## Goal 9 Consider wealth-building opportunities for Hilltop residents

- 9.1 Offer IDAs, bonds, and savings incentives for training completion.
- 9.2 Fund and support start-ups and local entrepreneurs with technical assistance and micro-lending.
- 9.3 Invest in educational achievement incentives for public school students.

## CASE STUDIES

Each topic area features at least one case study that expands on an idea presented in the goals and action steps. The case study illustrates a program, policy, or project that has been successful in the past and could serve as a model for the Hilltop focus area.

## RESEARCH SHOWS

Some topic areas feature research studies that show the impact of a certain policy, practice, or program. The research typically highlights best practices in a certain field, like education or public safety.

### Goal 10 Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood

- 10.1 Offer creative programming for vacant and/or underutilized sites and spaces.
- 10.2 Encourage exterior building improvements.
- 10.3 Beautify streets, eliminate litter, create public art and wayfinding campaign.
- 10.4 Ease customer access to the Hilltop through route improvements and navigation changes.

### Goal 11 Use existing contributing structures and encourage new development in historic business district at catalyst sites

- 11.1 Increase resources to support adaptive reuse of existing buildings, from acquisition to build-out.
- 11.2 Institute a commercial vacancy tax to bring buildings back into use and discourage blight.
- 11.3 Continue improving streetscapes along historic business corridors to attract businesses and customers.

### Goal 12 Increase local employment options that pay a living wage

- 12.1 Draw new employers to the neighborhood.
- 12.2 Increase opportunities for residents to be employed at large employers in the area.
- 12.3 Improve business development services for entrepreneurs.

### Goal 13 Prioritize active and shared mobility

- 13.1 Adjust crosswalk signal timing, improve signage, and invest in potential conflict points.
- 13.2 Improve sidewalk and pedestrian amenities.
- 13.3 Create and then connect people to shared mobility options to reduce car dependence.

### Goal 14 Address hazardous driver behavior

- 14.1 Reduce vehicle speed.
- 14.2 Ensure consistent stop control and convert one-way streets where feasible.
- 14.3 Offer tactical urbanism resources for citizens.

### Goal 15 Improve access to employment centers

- 15.1 Encourage employers to locate near high-frequency transit lines.
- 15.2 Incentivize reuse of underutilized big-box centers on the West Side.
- 15.3 Fill in transportation access gaps through employer-paid services.

### Goal 16 Focus on crime prevention by investing in people

- 16.1 Offer emergency support services for families and individuals.
- 16.2 Fund intensive street outreach for sex workers and human trafficking victims.
- 16.3 Increase penalties for and enforcement of drug trafficking offenses.

### Goal 17 Address physical environment attributes that contribute to criminal activity

- 17.1 Improve and increase street, alley, and porch lighting.
- 17.2 Ensure vacant properties are secured.
- 17.3 Reform illegal dumping enforcement.

### Goal 18 Expand proactive and community policing techniques

- 18.1 Continue and expand bike patrols.
- 18.2 Incentivize public safety personnel to live in Columbus and on the Hilltop.
- 18.3 Continue and expand john school and increase penalties for repeat offenders.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

Visionary concepts are ambitious ideas that suggest how recommendations can be achieved. The ideas can be programs, policies, or projects that would help further the goals and action steps they are connected to. Each topic area features one to three visionary concepts.

### Goal 19 Promote quality management and maintenance of rental properties

- 19.1 Connect rental property owners to property management resources and best practices.
- 19.2 Provide incentives for responsible landlords.
- 19.3 Explore creation of a rental registration and/or licensing program.
- 19.4 Require vacant property registration.

### Goal 20 Incentivize rehabilitation and renovation of properties

- 20.1 Create a revolving fund for acquisition and/or renovation of market-rate affordable rental housing.
- 20.2 Provide support for energy efficiency upgrades.

### Goal 21 Ensure housing units meet the changing needs of occupants

- 21.1 Support the senior village concept to help people age in place.
- 21.2 Support tenants' right to safe housing.

### Goal 22 Offer a variety of housing at levels affordable to multiple incomes

- 22.1 Support the development of affordable rental housing.
- 22.2 Explore expanding and adapting the land trust program to the Hilltop.
- 22.3 Incorporate affordability restrictions into new incentive programs.

### Goal 23 Stabilize housing and prevent displacement

- 23.1 Reform the eviction process.
- 23.2 Allow creative methods to mitigate property taxes.
- 23.3 Provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction.

### Goal 24 Concentrate housing investment and reduce barriers to development

- 24.1 Relax red tape on housing construction.
- 24.2 Encourage higher-density development along and near transit routes.
- 24.3 Mitigate market pressure on the Hilltop to house lower-income households.

### Goal 25 Expand financial capacity for current and prospective homeowners.

- 25.1 Increase access to homeownership counseling and financial literacy resources.
- 25.2 Pilot an appraisal gap second mortgage program for buying and renovating existing homes.
- 25.3 Expand home repair assistance for low-income homeowners.

### Goal 26 Support a culture of shared homeowner prosperity to build community pride

- 26.1 Consider shared equity homeownership options.
- 26.2 Fund and facilitate initiatives that honor high standards of home maintenance.
- 26.3 Organize events that unify diverse residents and increases community connectedness.
- 26.4 Expand proactive code enforcement coupled with resources to address problems.

### Goal 27 Enhance and add amenities to draw new homebuyers

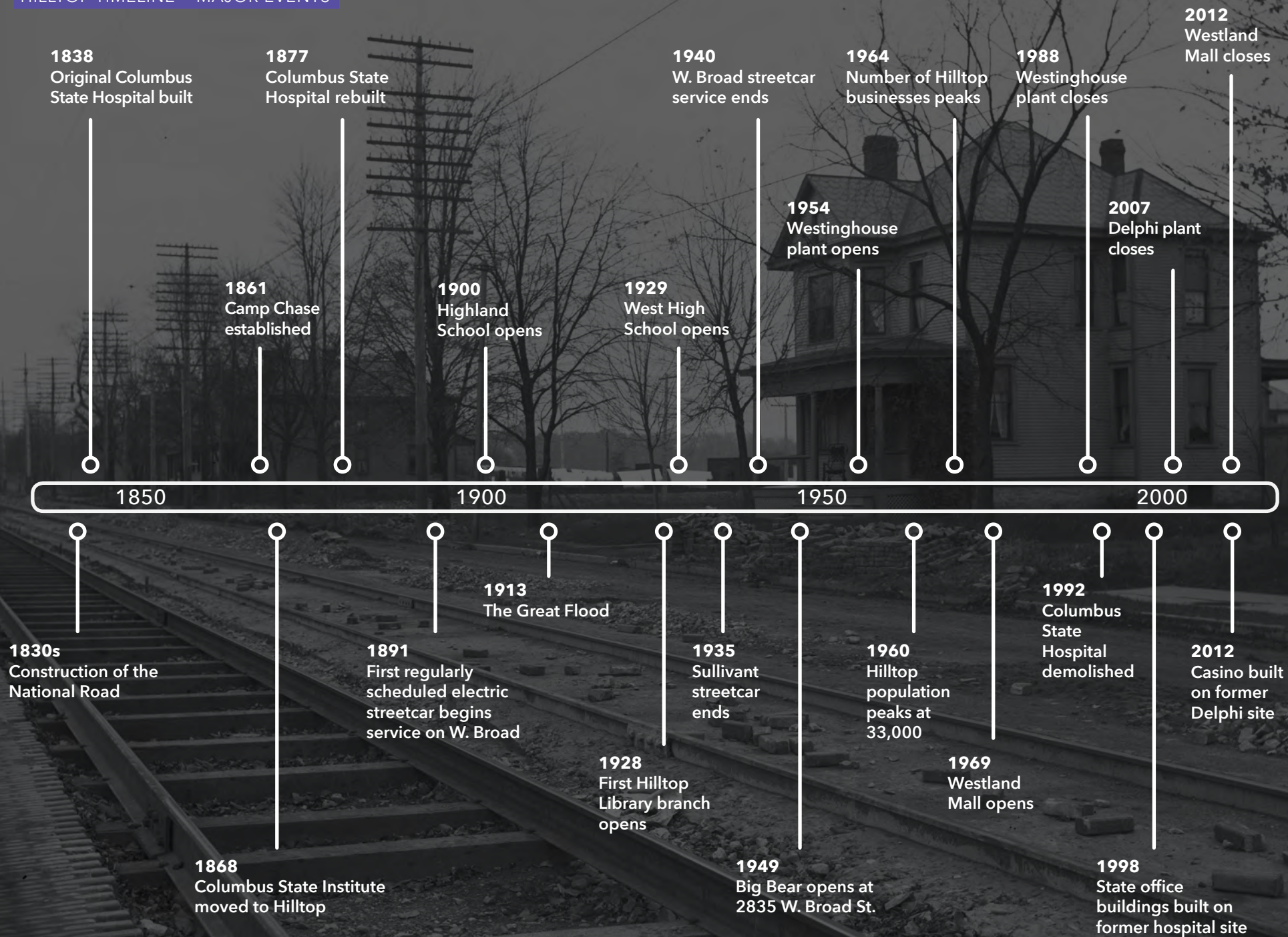
- 27.1 Capitalize on Camp Chase Trail and other natural features.
- 27.2 Increase access to green space.
- 27.3 Offer unique programs with a Hilltop-coordinated network of activities.



# context & data

The Context & Data section places the Hilltop focus area within the setting of the City of Columbus and Franklin County. Using history, current data, previous plans, and the experiences of some Hilltop neighbors, a snapshot of the community is presented here. Data alone cannot provide a complete picture of the needs of the Hilltop community, but this section offers a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, statistics, and maps to demonstrate patterns and trends in a variety of sectors.

## HILLTOP TIMELINE – MAJOR EVENTS





# Welcome to the Hilltop!

A few miles west of downtown Columbus, the Hilltop is one of the primary historic residential sections of the city. The area was originally attractive for its elevation—safe from floods—and for its location “high and dry away from the smoke and dust of the city,...an ideal place for a suburban residence.”<sup>1</sup> The neighborhood grew as streetcars offered an easy route to and from downtown along Broad and Sullivant. This proximity to transit was a major factor in the Hilltop’s early growth.

But today the Hilltop is experiencing significant distress. Population loss, urban disinvestment, and economic growth on the periphery of the city have contributed to the area’s decline. Still, the sense of community pride on the Hilltop among long time residents is strong. Hilltoppers are resilient. Where numbers point to challenges, many residents point to opportunity for growth.

With a strong historic heritage, unique housing stock, intriguing topography, and robust mobility options, the Hilltop is well-positioned to recover as trends turn toward urban reinvestment. Nationwide,

a renewed interest in urban living has transformed diverse neighborhoods and brought new energy to de-populated areas. Two commercial corridors offer the Hilltop the potential for expanding economic activity. Leveraging the high daily traffic volumes on West Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue could provide valuable retail opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs.

The community plan, first, captures the sentiment of Hilltop residents who participated in the year-long public engagement process. Listening to the community allowed the most pressing concerns to rise to the top and gave residents the power to drive the process. Second, the plan offers a package of objectives and recommendations to help stabilize the neighborhood and improve the quality of life for residents. These were formulated based on the resident feedback and direction provided through dozens of formal meetings and informal interactions. The Hilltop Community Plan is a document to help chart a course for the future shared success of the Hilltop neighborhood.

1. Columbus Dispatch, Sept. 17, 1890. Page 8.

**19,445**  
POPULATION

**8**  
PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS

**6,667**  
NUMBER OF  
HOUSEHOLDS

**2**  
ZIP  
CODES

**2.89**  
AVERAGE  
HOUSEHOLD  
SIZE

**3**  
SQUARE  
MILES

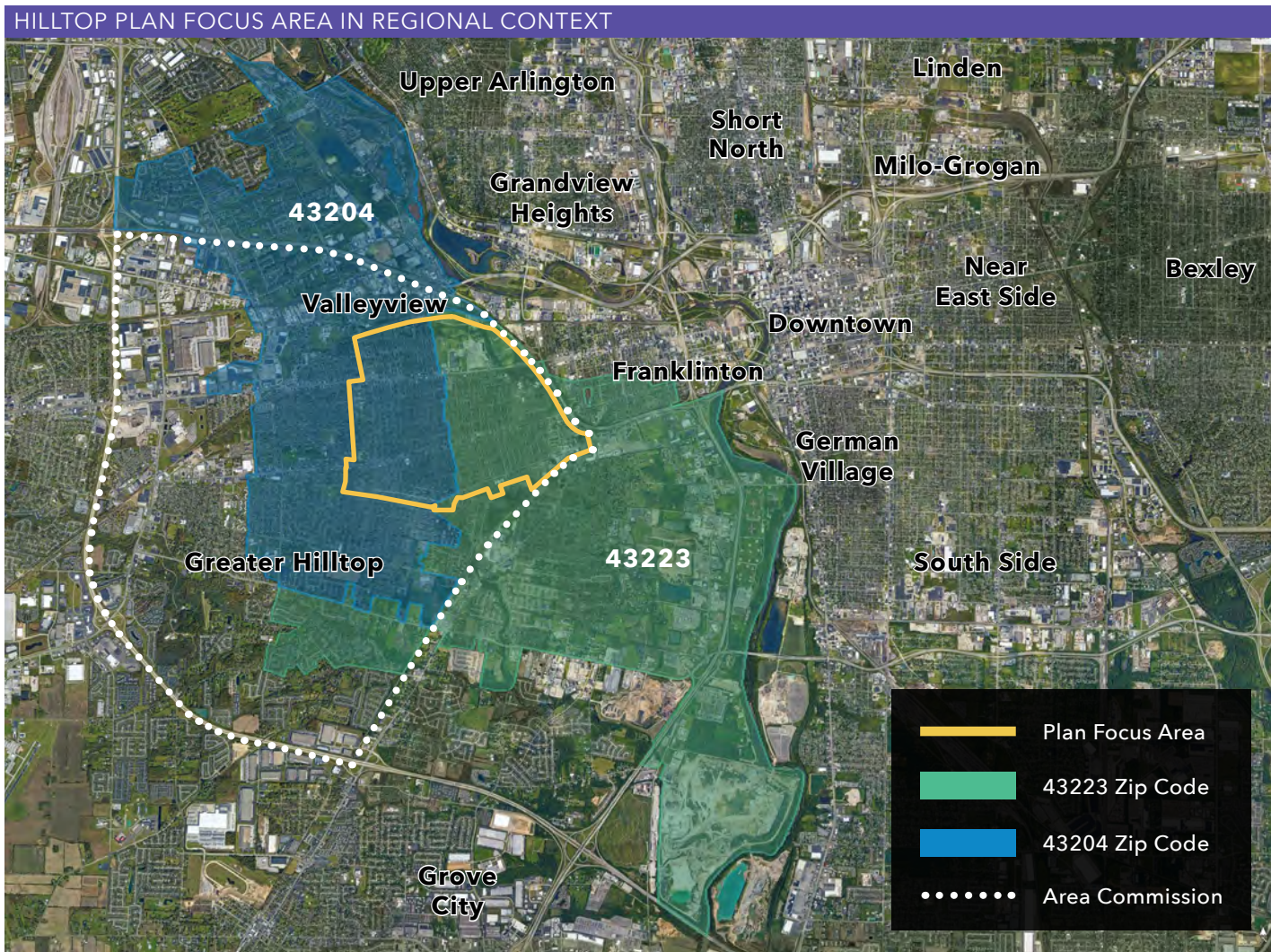
Data is for the Hilltop focus area, using 24 census block groups.



# The Focus Area

The Greater Hilltop is a very large expanse—nearly the entire southwest quadrant of the City of Columbus. This plan is directed at a smaller area within the Greater Hilltop, which is the older section of the Hilltop. The focus area, which extends from I-70 on the east to Hague Avenue on the west, then south along Roys and Binns to Mound Street, also represents the area of highest need in the

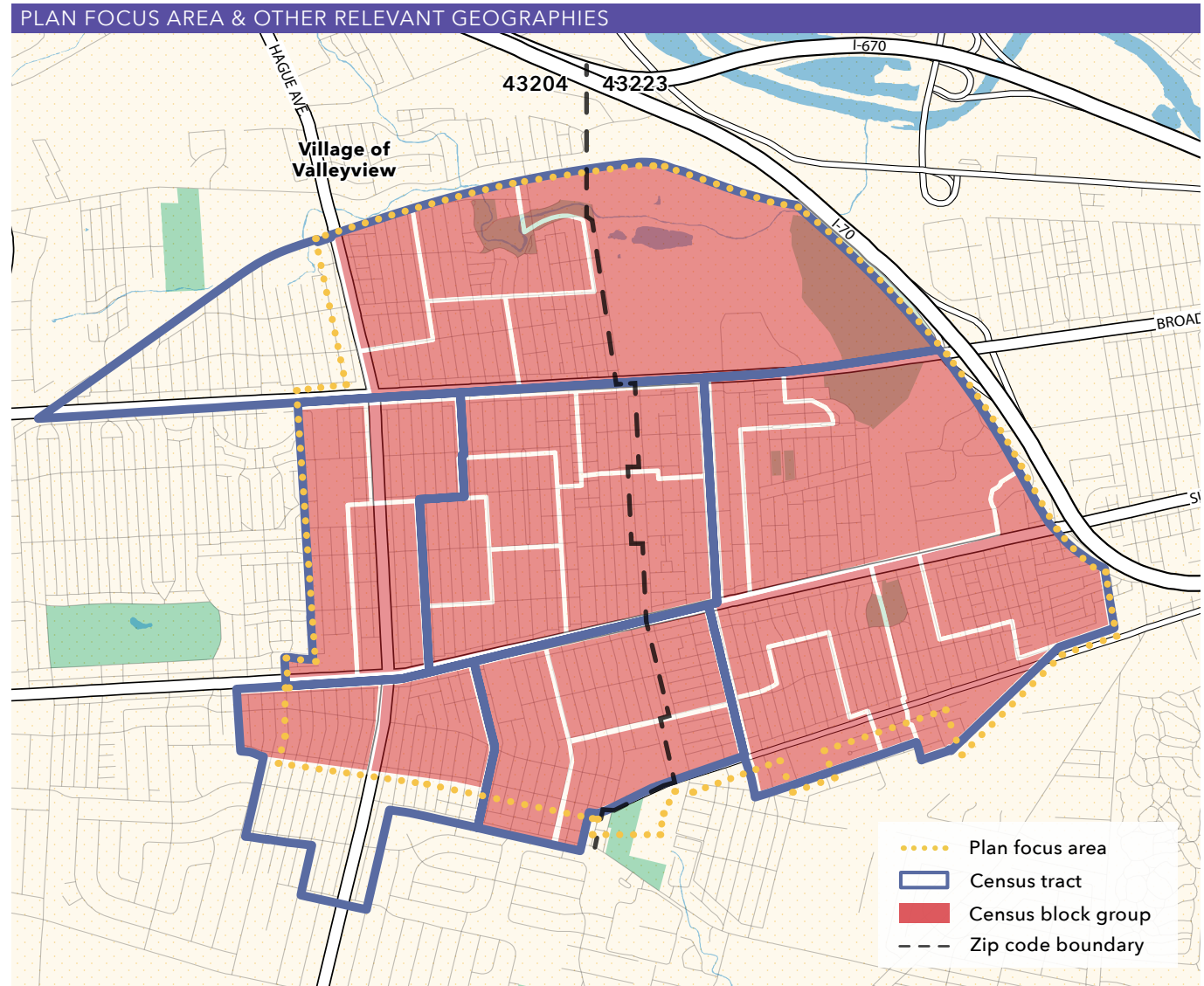
larger neighborhood. The north is bound by railroad tracks, while Mound Street forms the southern border, except for extensions to include public schools. Important indicators in the focus area set it apart from other sections of the Greater Hilltop as more distressed: more violent crime, more structural vacancy, and prevalent substandard housing conditions, to name a few.



### Conflicting Boundaries.

The focus area of the Hilltop Community Plan represents what some think of as the historic core of the Hilltop neighborhood—but not the entire Hilltop as it is known today. From east to west, the focus area is bound by Interstate 70 and extends to a jagged boundary of Hague and Roys. On the north, the boundary is the railroad track separating Columbus from the Village of Valleyview, and the southern boundary is Mound Street.

Data for this plan was collected based on available geographic levels. Census data was collected based on block groups and tracts (shown on the map). Some data was collected by zip code, but these data are not accurately representative of the Hilltop focus area due to the large area of the zip codes. Despite this, some data is only available by zip code and must be displayed as such. Different terms may be used to refer to areas for which data is being presented. The “Hilltop focus area” refers to the area inside the yellow dotted line on the map, approximated by the 24 census block groups.



Conflicting boundaries and incongruous data-collection geographies present difficulties when comparing data. In this document, data sources and scopes are labeled to be explicit about the area(s) and time periods represented. If data refers to the Hilltop, it is referring to the focus area for this community plan, not the Greater Hilltop. If data refers to the Hilltop “area,” it relates to an area larger than the focus area, and may even be referring to the area represented by the 43204 and 43223 zip codes.

**A Neighborhood in Distress.** The Hilltop suffers from many inter-related issues that plague historic urban neighborhoods across the country. Decades of disinvestment in housing and businesses has left the neighborhood with a reduced economic base, a smaller network of residents, and hundreds of vacant structures. These conditions present multiple obstacles to creating a healthy and stable community.

More recently, the impact of the nationwide opioid addiction crisis has been felt. The Hilltop is a major hot spot for opioid addiction, which fuels unhealthy behaviors and illicit activity. Many crimes are driven by addicts' need to feed their addiction. The presence, and reputation, of crime then furthers disinvestment by deterring people from moving to or opening businesses on the Hilltop. This creates a cycle where the existence of crime and blight contributes to desperation and lack of economic opportunity for families—especially impacting the development of children. The harsh realities faced by many residents create a vicious cycle of neighborhood decay that has multiple inputs and even more complex outputs, making it difficult to pinpoint specific causes and solutions. The interventions to mitigate these effects must be coordinated and substantial.



Some properties along West Broad Street are overgrown, abandoned, and deteriorating. This retail space near Lechner & Broad was home to a confectionery, a carpenter, and a florist shop, but was vacant by the 1970s.

HILLTOP*	COUNTY	HILLTOP*	COUNTY
<b>IN POVERTY</b>		<b>OWNER-OCCUPIED UNITS</b>	
42%	17%	37%	54%
<b>NOT A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE</b>		<b>GROSS RENT AS % OF ANNUAL INCOME</b>	
28%	9%	40%	28%
<b>MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>		<b>MEDIAN OWNER-OCCUPIED HOME VALUE</b>	
\$27,000	\$56,000	\$63,000	\$158,000

\*Based on 2017 data for 24 census block groups most closely aligned with focus area, not census tracts.



**People & Perception.** The reputation of the Hilltop is dominated by images of crime and urban decay, due partly to the real challenges plaguing the area—crime, drug use, violence, and vacancy—but also to geographic oversimplification and media attention. Neighbors on the Hilltop struggle to bring positive stories to the surface.



Joe Argiro, Highland West

“When I moved to Highland West in 2016 and got involved with the civic association, I quickly became aware of the rich history of families, architecture, businesses, diversity, and community involvement that built this historic Columbus neighborhood. Highland West has a strong housing stock, multiple recreation centers, quick access to the bike path, Olentangy, and Scioto greenways, multiple parks, is close to downtown with access to public transportation, and is poised for a renaissance in the economic core along West Broad Street. I was intrigued by the opportunity to bring people together and advocate for our neighbors. My vision is of a safe, clean, diverse, and exciting neighborhood with regular opportunities for people to come together, quality education, well-paying jobs, housing affordable to people across the income spectrum, and access to green spaces. We are working towards that goal everyday!”



Lisa Boggs, South of Sullivant

“The Hilltop has a proud history of honest, decent and hardworking people who only desire a safe, clean place to live. Its diversity and openness will inspire the growth and change needed to improve our little corner of this earth. I envision a thriving community that explores new ideas to improve our neighborhoods and look forward to us enjoying the fruits of our hard work! One change I’d like to see is a new police substation and community center to help bring our police and community closer together—and that’s what we need right now, some closeness. Another issue dear to my heart is the overwhelming trash and litter in our neighborhood. The trash gives off a vibe that entices criminals to come here and do whatever they want. Most importantly we need to work to improve the situation for the children, because children are always observing. They’re watching the prostitutes go down the street. They’re watching the drug dealers. We just want the crime, the drugs, and the trash out of the Hilltop area.”

Examples of media stories about the Hilltop

**NBC4.com**  
**19-year-old man dead after Hilltop neighborhood shooting**  
Anyone with information regarding this incident is asked to contact the Columbus Police Homicide Unit at (614) 645-4730 or Central Ohio ...  
Mar 21, 2019

**The Columbus Dispatch**  
**Rodent infestation closes Dollar General in Hilltop**  
A rodent infestation forced a Dollar General store in Columbus' Hilltop neighborhood to remain closed on Tuesday, according to city health ...  
1 month ago

**NBC4.com**  
**Columbus Police identify man killed in Hilltop shooting**  
COLUMBUS (WCMH) — Police are investigating after a shooting in the Hilltop area left one person dead. According to Columbus Police, Stacie ...  
2 weeks ago

**ABC6OnYourSide.com**  
**Neighbors want police to crackdown on prostitution in the Hilltop**  
COLUMBUS, Ohio — Calls have been made for a crackdown on prostitution in one Columbus neighborhood where some believe it's gotten ...  
2 weeks ago

**10TV**  
**Police: 2 injured after shootout at Holton Park in Hilltop**  
COLUMBUS, Ohio - Two people walked into local hospitals after a shootout at Holton Park in the Hilltop area of Columbus, according to police.  
Apr 22, 2019

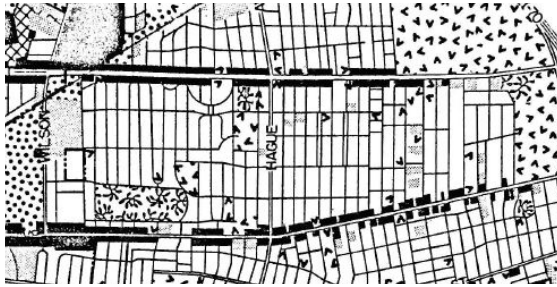
**10TV**  
**1 taken to hospital following stabbing in Hilltop**  
One person was taken to the hospital following a stabbing in the Hilltop, according to Columbus police. It happened just after 4:40 p.m. ...  
May 22, 2019

**10TV**  
**Police searching for suspects in 2 robberies in Hilltop area**  
Police searching for suspects in 2 robberies in Hilltop area ... Columbus Police Robbery Unit at (614) 645-4665 or Central Ohio Crime Stoppers ...  
Apr 2, 2019

**ABC6OnYourSide.com**  
**Three Hilltop homes boarded up by city after reported illegal drug activity**  
COLUMBUS, Ohio — For the first time, Columbus city officials shut down three suspected drug houses in one day using emergency court ...  
2 weeks ago

**ABC6OnYourSide.com**  
**City of Columbus shuts down drug house in Hilltop**  
COLUMBUS, Ohio — Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced on Thursday that the city has shut down a drug operation in the Hilltop.  
2 weeks ago

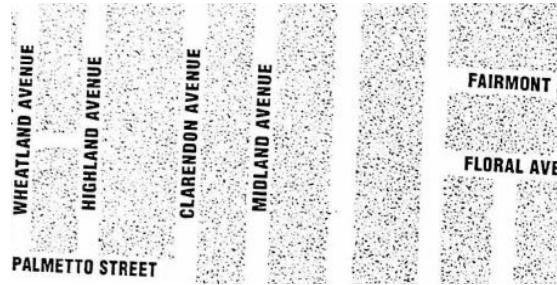
## Previous Plans & Studies



### Hilltop Area Plan

1974

This plan is one of a series of 38 Columbus neighborhood plans that discuss major resources and potential problems and offer recommendations to improve them. The majority of the document is a summary of the existing conditions of the Hilltop neighborhood, leading into specific recommendations. There are detailed descriptions and maps of land use and zoning, transportation access, parks and recreation, water facilities, schools, and police and fire coverage. Recommendations include: updating the north-south transportation network; improving intersections and railroad crossings; building more neighborhood parks and police substations; additional neighborhood parks in older areas; recreation for the elderly; and the widening of arterial streets, along with a prohibition of street-parking. Programs recommended include a tool library, home repair, and housing code enforcement.



### Greater Hilltop Reinvestment Plan

1994

This plan has two focus areas chosen using criteria developed by the Housing and Neighborhood Development Committee. Hilltop I & II were among six areas chosen for reinvestment throughout Columbus in this process. The criteria included themes such as residential and stakeholder involvement, community-based planning, and signs of decay and distress, with priority given to areas with history and culture that were once thriving. The plan gives a detailed overview of the Hilltop's history, highlighting the historic significance that makes it a viable reinvestment area. It also goes into depth about the planning process, including feedback received from community and stakeholder outreach efforts. Public outreach identified problem areas such as social services and housing, which are each given their own action plan consisting of numerous activities and those who will lead them, such as the City of Columbus or the Hilltop Civic Council.



### Greater Hilltop Plan Amendment

2010

The Plan Amendment focuses on land use and urban design, with recommendations such as community-scale mixed-use development, emphasizing land use for industrial areas to increase employment opportunities, and design guidelines for new commercial and residential development. Several development opportunities are identified along W. Broad and Sullivant, such as facade improvements and live/work units. The amendment addresses a wide range of issues such as traffic and circulation, housing, economic development, community service, facilities, and parks and recreation. It also provides a thorough analysis of the land use, zoning, and natural environment of the study area. Public input is summarized before recommendations are offered. A plan implementation strategy explains organization, education, and outreach for the plan, as well as action-oriented recommendations that are proactive in nature.

## W. Broad Economic Development Plan

2005

The development plan discusses the types of businesses that could develop on the Hilltop, with a specific focus on Broad Street between Highland and Terrace due to the high number of existing multi-story buildings that have an appropriate scale for mixed-use. It suggests strategies that will strengthen and build community, such as creating a commercial district where businesses can thrive and improving the public realm to help make the Hilltop a special and attractive place. This plan was meant to be a revitalization blueprint that could be replicated in other areas with mixed-use development potential.

## Final Hilltop NSP Report

2009

This report was a culmination of five weeks of study, research, identification, tracking, and evaluation of the impacts of the foreclosure crisis on a specific study area in the Hilltop. The Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) sought to stabilize the housing market through the acquisition and redevelopment of 18 properties, available through the city's land bank. Three strategies are offered, each describing properties that qualify for either rehabilitation, demolition, or land banking; an acquisition plan and budget are also detailed. The action plan summarizes how 5% of NSP funds will be allocated to the Hilltop in order to help revitalize it.

## Highland West Visioning Charrette

2006

This charrette focused on improvements and repurposing of underutilized spaces in the Highland West area along West Broad Street. The renderings suggest multiple uses that could develop, as well as other improvements, such as murals, coffee shops, and youth centers. Each rendering has a photo of current conditions, which allows the viewer to understand all the changes illustrated in the rendering and how even simple design interventions can have a significant impact on the quality of a space. The charrette illustrates streetscape improvements, bus stops, senior housing, pocket parks, and other possible improvements or redevelopment of vacant or underutilized buildings.

## West Broad Traffic Study

2010

This study, part of the Hilltop Community Mobility Plan, focuses on creating a "road diet" to enhance flow and improve safety for all forms of mobility to "encourage balanced transportation." The study outlines existing policies and plans addressing traffic, such as a Bicentennial Bikeways Plan that calls for creating separate bike lanes on West Broad and offers a collision analysis showing a high number of bicycle crashes. After analyzing previous plans and summarizing public input, the study recommends the "Parking South Side with Bike Lanes" alternative, which reduces six lanes on Broad to four along a certain stretch that would include street parking, a left-turn lane, and bike lanes on both sides of the street.

## Other Documents

Many people and organizations have studied the Hilltop over the years. From academic research projects to formal municipal plans, residents and stakeholders have been engaged in planning exercises for decades.

- Hilltop Retail Market Study (2018)
- Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership Report (2017)\*
- Hilltop Community Mobility Plan (2010)
- Hilltop Heroes & Sheroes: The African-American Legacy Memories of World War II (2004)
- Imagine Hilltop USA (2000s)
- Building for Our Future: ODOT/ODPS: The Hilltop Project (1997)
- An Evaluation of the Citywide Delivery System for Affordable Housing and of Revitalization Strategies for the Hilltop, Mt. Vernon, and South Linden Neighborhoods (1992)\*
- Hilltop, U.S.A.: Report of the Greater Hilltop State Lands and Facilities Commission (1990)
- 1986 Needs Survey: Franklinton/Hilltop Report. Metropolitan Human Services Commission. Franklin County, Ohio. (1986)
- Hilltop USA: History & Homes (1984)
- Hilltop Information Profile: Community Planning Area 15 (1976)
- A Summary of Property Rehabilitation Financial Assistance Under the Code Enforcement Program Ohio E-14 (Hilltop area) (1975)
- Hilltop: The Fast Growing Western Suburb of Columbus. Lewis Garrison, Publisher. (1930)

To learn more, visit [envisionhilltop.com](http://envisionhilltop.com) or [issuu.com/envisionhilltop](http://issuu.com/envisionhilltop).

\*Summary located in appendix.

## Hilltop History

The Hilltop was a small but vibrant community in its early days. But as farms were subdivided and sold for housing development between 1885 and 1895, it began to evolve from a rural community into a more suburban setting. By 1900, there were over 2,000 residents on the Hilltop, with many families migrating from Virginia and Pennsylvania as well as Wales, England, and Germany. In the 1910s and 1920s, the number of community facilities and organizations mushroomed, community pride flourished, and the Hilltop was regarded as one of the most desirable areas to live in Central Ohio. The area became even more desirable after the Flood of 1913, which drew many Franklinton residents to its elevated terrain. By 1924, Broad Street through the Hilltop had over 50 businesses.<sup>1</sup>

Though not segregated by law, the Hilltop was segregated in practice by real estate agents, developers, and likely neighborhood civic organizations. African-Americans were largely limited to certain streets—Wayne, Oakley, Wheatland, Highland, and Clarendon, south of Broad Street.<sup>2</sup> Jesse Owens, four-time gold medalist in the 1936 Berlin Olympics, lived on South Oakley as a student at Ohio State because he was disallowed from living on campus due to his race.<sup>3</sup>

In 1923, the creation of Broadview Addition (eastern portion of Westgate today) and the West Gate Lodge's announcement to build a permanent home were significant events because many members of the fraternal organization would want to live nearby, as social schedules were often devoted to fraternal activities. The West Gate Lodge was a significant social center and meeting place for Hilltop movers and shakers. These included City Council members, County Commissioners, Columbus Board of Education members, and political party officers. Westgate and the area west of Hague would later be home to three Columbus Mayors: Floyd F. Green, Maynard E. Sensenbrenner, and W. Ralston Westlake.<sup>4</sup>

1. City of Columbus, Greater Hilltop Reinvestment Plan. 1994.
2. Hilltop Heroes & Sheroes: The African-American Legacy Memories of World War II. 2004.
3. Mike Hardin, Columbus Dispatch, May 17, 1995.
4. Original research, historian Jennie Keplar.

“Where you will be delighted to make your home among the best people of Columbus.”

“Where the water is good, the air is pure and bracing.”

“Fifteen minutes’ ride from the State House by rapid transit.”

COLUMBUS DISPATCH, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1890.

# HIGHLAND PARK!

**London & Smith's**  
Second Subdivision  
To the City of Columbus, Ohio.

“People on West Road St. in this subdivision are at other parts of the city.”

“The proposed terminus of the new Electric Street Railway.”

“Fifteen minutes’ ride from the State House by rapid transit.”

“Twenty minutes’ drive by carriage over a fine bricked paved street.”

**EVERY MAN AND WOMAN ON EARTH OUGHT TO SECURE A HOME!**

Why pay Rent when Lots can be Bought so Cheaply?

Special Inducements are Now being Offered to All!

**HIGHLAND PARK** as the name indicates is on the high lands of the West side of Columbus, in the middle of natural growth timber to be found anywhere in the city. The soil is supposed to be the highest in the West side and its rolling landscape is unexcelled in beauty and attractiveness, and is only to be seen to advantage. It is elevated so much over the surrounding lands, that perfect drainage is assured to overcome every difficulty in this respect, and the very air seems to breathe the life-giving spirit of the hills. It is a beautiful spot with magnificent views, and it is a desirable place for a suburban residence.

**DELAYS ARE DANGEROUS.**

Select your lot early, or with all the time you wish, with amount of first payment, to suit your convenience, to select your lot.

**PRICES.**

These beautiful lots are on sale at the low price of **\$150 to \$500** Each, according to size and location.

**TERMS.**

Three per cent. cash, and one per cent. per week, until paid for. This is a \$500 lot requires \$5.00 cash and \$2.00 per week, a \$1,000 lot requires \$10.00 cash and \$4.00 per week until paid for, cash for lot as an inducement.

**REMARKS.** We furnish each purchaser with abstract of title free of cost.

**OAKLEY.**

We also have a few lots in OAKLEY, adjoining Highland Park, that are now ranging in price from \$100 to \$500.

We would be pleased to show you any lot either in Highland Park or Oakley. Call at our office or write for full information, plans, etc. Office open during the day, and in the evening from 7 to 9 o'clock.

**LOUON & SMITH,**  
Pioneer Block, Room 8,  
COLUMBUS, OHIO.

**REFERENCES:**  
MERCHANTS AND MANUFACTURERS BANK, Columbus, Ohio.  
Col. R. F. DYER, Warden Ohio Penitentiary, Columbus, O.  
First National Bank, Columbus, O.  
The HARRY BELFORD AND LOAN CO., Georgetown, O.

S. ALLEN ST.		S. VIOLET ST.	
104	105	104	105
106	107	106	107
108	109	108	109
110	111	110	111
112	113	112	113
114	115	114	115
116	117	116	117
118	119	118	119
120	121	120	121
122	123	122	123
124	125	124	125
126	127	126	127
128	129	128	129
130	131	130	131
132	133	132	133

**BROAD ST.**



Quotations above pulled from this advertisement from Sept. 17, 1890.

Photo credit (bottom right): Alex Campbell. columbusneighborhoods.org



**Public Lands.** One of the most prominent institutions in Columbus—and in the entire state—was the Columbus State Hospital, located on the eastern edge of the Hilltop where the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) now stand. It figured significantly in the social and economic life of the neighborhood until it was shut down in the 1980s, when the model of psychiatric care shifted to a more dispersed approach. This caused the number of institutionalized persons on the Hilltop to drop dramatically, and without long-term housing for those suffering with mental illness, prison populations began to swell. Court officials “trace[d] the increase in mentally ill inmates to cutbacks of federal funding for community mental health centers and to the continuing ‘deinstitutionalization’ of the mentally ill from state hospitals.”<sup>1</sup>

The land owned by the State of Ohio west of I-70 in the Hilltop area amounts to about 330 acres. Today, much of that is occupied by offices and surface parking for ODOT and ODPS. In the early 1990s when officials were considering the impact of relocating thousands of state jobs from downtown to the Hilltop, they claimed that the new offices would have a positive effect on the area. The state architect commented, “Look at the economics of 2,500 white-collar workers shopping in the area, eating in the area. That has to be a benefit to the community.”<sup>2</sup> An editorial in *The Dispatch* called the relocation of state offices “an economic bonanza for the Hilltop,” writing that “the state’s Hilltop redevelopment will give the area an economic shot in the arm, attracting restaurants, shops and homebuyers.”<sup>3</sup>

Nearby is Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare, one of six regional psychiatric hospitals operated by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. The facility provides short-term, intensive treatment to patients from across Ohio in both inpatient and community-supported environments, as well as serving patients committed by criminal courts. To the southeast, the Columbus Developmental Center is located between W. Broad and Sullivant Avenue. It serves 107 people in a campus setting, with the majority of people diagnosed with severe and profound challenges. In addition, there are two additional publicly-owned structures north of the ODOT building. The first—to the west—is a helipad for Columbus Police. The second—to the east—is the Moritz Forensic Unit, a maximum security building for the Twin Valley hospital.

1. Columbus Dispatch, April 22, 1982.  
2. Columbus Dispatch, May 23, 1995.

3. Columbus Dispatch, May 31, 1995.  
4. Columbus Dispatch, January 1, 1991.



Built in 1877, the Columbus State Hospital was originally known as the Lunatic Asylum of Ohio and was later called the Central Ohio Psychiatric Hospital. It had expansive grounds for recreation, including an ice skating pond.



The Central Ohio Psychiatric Hospital used a variety of techniques to treat mental illness, including lobotomies, sedation, and electroshock therapy. It was demolished in 1991.

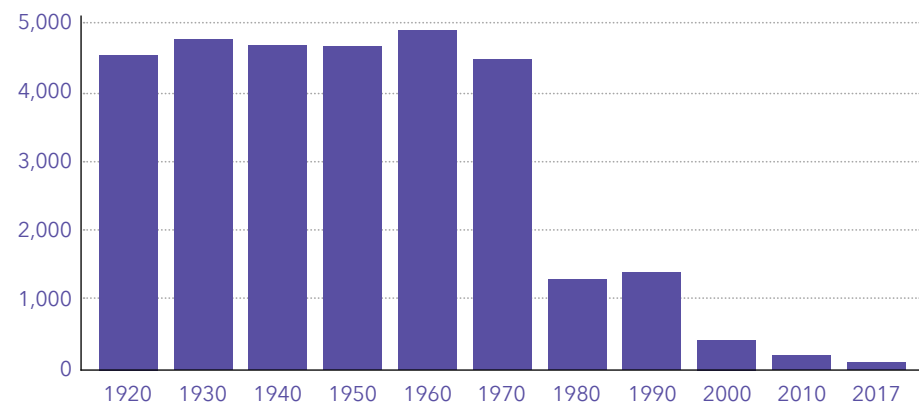


A 1989 report said lack of maintenance by the state had resulted in serious structural deterioration, with restoration costs estimated from \$50-\$80 million.<sup>4</sup>



Construction of the new state office buildings began in October 1995, with employees moving into the \$109 million, two-building complex starting February 1998.

### INSTITUTIONALIZED HILLTOP POPULATION



**Historically Working Class.** The Hilltop is still known as a middle or working-class neighborhood, and some of that legacy may be attributed to its strong heritage as such. Academic research in the early 20th century, from a 1918 sociology report by McKenzie to a 1922 geography thesis by Blanchard, repeatedly categorizes the Hilltop as middle class.

An analysis of 295 households from the 1940 U.S. Census (pictured below) showed median household income and professions of heads-of-household on selected streets. It was common for extended families to live together—nieces and nephews, in-laws, or grandchildren often lived under one roof. Of the 503 income-earners recorded, only 147 were women, 29% of whom did not report employment. However, many women showed some additional income without formal employment. Women who were formally employed typically worked as stenographers, nurses, teachers, and secretaries. Men often worked in construction or as mechanics, engineers, machinists, or railroad workers.

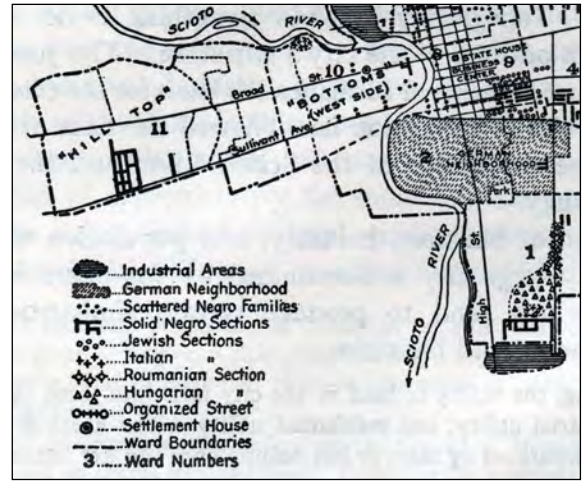
“Beginning at Wheatland and continuing west to Eureka is located the most prosperous business community of the Hilltop. Serving a fairly large region of middle class people and being high and healthy, this retail section presents a good appearance.”

U.S. CENSUS RECORD EXCERPT, HARRIS AVENUE, 1940

LOCATION	HOUSEHOLD DATA	NAME	RELATION	PERSONAL DESCRIPTION	EDUCATION	PLACE OF BIRTH	RESIDENCE, APRIL 1, 1940
HARRIS AVENUE	4210	HOON, EDWARD S.	HEAD	M W 37	M 12	OHIO	Same House
		— DAVE D.	WIFE	F W 37	M 12	KENTUCKY	Same House
		HUNTER, MYRA E.	SISTER	F W 37	W 14	KENTUCKY	Same House
		— BARBARA H.	WIFE	F W 4	S 10	OHIO	—
	4210	GIBSON, HAROLD H.	HEAD	M W 32	M 12	WEST VIRGINIA	CHARLES W. West Virginia
		— IAN C. B.	WIFE	F W 24	M 10	WEST VIRGINIA	CHARLES W. West Virginia
		— MARJORIE M.	DAUGHTER	F W 4	S 10	WEST VIRGINIA	—
		— CURTIS H.	SON	M W 2	S 10	OHIO	—
		— PATRICIA H.	DAUGHTER	F W 10	S 10	OHIO	—
		— GRACE E.	SISTER	F W 10	D 10	WEST VIRGINIA	CHARLES W. West Virginia
4210	WELCH, HAROLD J.	HEAD	M W 34	M 12	WEST VIRGINIA	BRADSHAW West Virginia	
	— LUCIA	WIFE	F W 34	M 12	WEST VIRGINIA	BRADSHAW West Virginia	
	— FERNANDEZ, FRANK	NEAR	M W 37	M 12	OHIO	Same House	
	— FRANK'S	WIFE	F W 37	M 12	OHIO	Same House	
	— JAMES, JULIAN	WIDOW	M W 69	W 10	OHIO	Same House	

\*Forest Ira Blanchard. An Introduction to the Economic and Social Geography of Columbus, Ohio. Thesis (M.A.), Ohio State University, 1922.

Right: This 1918 map by sociologist R. D. McKenzie illustrates residences of ethnic and racial groups in Columbus. A few streets between W. Broad and Sullivant were inhabited by Black people, while the rest of the Hilltop was white.



Below: McKenzie used economic data by ward to demonstrate relative wealth of Columbus residents. In 1918, the wealthiest section was the Franklin Park area. The Hilltop was near the middle, ranked 10th of 16.

Average Personal Property 1918 v. Median Income 2017

Ward #	Approximate Area	1918 PPR**	2017 Median Income	1918 Rank	2017 Rank
Ward 5	Franklin Park	\$220	\$36,393	1	10
Ward 4	Old Town East	\$203	\$48,311	2	6
Ward 16	Clintonville	\$176	\$93,602	3	1
Ward 15	Victorian Village/Circles	\$147	\$72,663	4	3
Ward 6	Woodland Park/Eastgate	\$139	\$38,182	5	9
Ward 7	Mt. Vernon/Bronzeville	\$112	\$27,449	6	12
Ward 3	Near South/Driving Park	\$93	\$24,692	7	14
Ward 1	South Side	\$92	\$46,469	8	8
Ward 13	Weinland Park/Milo-Grogan	\$86	\$27,040	9	13
<b>Ward 11</b>	<b>Hilltop</b>	<b>\$85</b>	<b>\$27,712</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
Ward 8	Downtown	\$81	\$47,127	11	7
Ward 14	Flytown/Goodale Park	\$71	\$69,227	12	5
Ward 2	Brewery/German Village	\$68	\$84,566	13	2
Ward 12	Near North/Italian Village	\$67	\$69,676	14	4
Ward 10	Franklinton	\$55	\$20,160	15	15
Ward 9	Downtown West	\$34	\$10,403	16	16

\*\*Personal Property Returns (PPRs) were filed by households in the early 20th century. Homes with less than a certain amount were exemption from taxation.

**Streetcars and Segregation.** The Hilltop was originally a streetcar suburb, where residents could get away from the bustle and grime of downtown while still having easy access to jobs there. Streetcars allowed travel throughout the neighborhood as well as outside of it. Horse-drawn streetcars were introduced in 1863; the first electric streetcar began running in 1891 along West Broad Street to the Columbus State Hospital (also known as the Central Ohio Psychiatric Hospital). An electric streetcar along Hague Avenue was abandoned in 1939 and was covered with asphalt instead of being removed. This was forgotten for many years until Hague Avenue was excavated in 2016 to be rebuilt and the old tracks were revealed under the asphalt. All streetcar service in Columbus ended in September 1948.

Except for a few streets, however, the majority of the Hilltop area was reserved for whites only. Segregation was enforced both formally and informally by restrictive covenants on homes, selective steering by real estate agents, and general racial intimidation. Occasionally, reports of overt racist acts made the news. One such incident was in 1996 when an African-American woman “was greeted with spray-painted racial slurs and racist signs left at her home” after moving to South Burgess Avenue.<sup>1</sup> Some homes in the focus area also display confederate flags. Despite this, the neighborhood has become one of the most racially diverse in Franklin County. Nearly 19% of focus area residents are African-American, a figure which approaches the county percentage of 22%. For comparison, just 1.8% of Clintonville residents are African-American and 72% of South Linden residents are African-American. These figures indicate residential racial segregation. The Hilltop focus area, is racially similar to the county average of 22%.

1. Columbus Dispatch. June 4, 1996.

Bed Rms., No.	1	Parochial Sch.	1	Churches	1	Stores	0	Roof	comp-2 yrs	Sold			
REMARKS: will not sell to colored-both owners													
Address	576-578 South Oakley			Type	dble	Age	25	Units	2	Rms.	10	B. Rms.	4

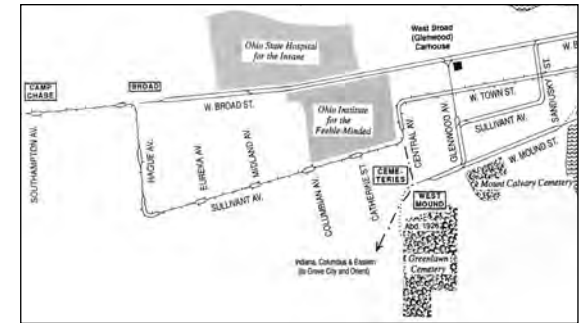
Bed Rms., No.	4	Parochial Sch.	0	Churches	2	Stores	0	Roof	COMP	Sold			
REMARKS: This home is clean as a hounds tooth South of Sullivant in White Area.													
Address	555 Oakley Ave			Type	1-flr	Age	6	Units	1	Rms.	4	B. Rms.	2

Bed Rms., No.	1	Parochial Sch.	1	Churches	1	Stores	0	Roof	COMP	Sold			
REMARKS: wall to wall carpeting. Venetian blinds. (White only)													
Address	608 S. Oakley Ave.			Type	2-sty	Age	1	Units	5	Rms.	5	B. Rms.	2

Bed Rms., No.	0	Parochial Sch.	0	Churches	0	Stores	0	Roof	COMP	Sold			
REMARKS: South of Sullivant All white on block													
Address	524 S. Oakley			Type	1 floor	Age	1	Units	4	Rms.	4	B. Rms.	2

Bed Rms., No.	0	Parochial Sch.	0	Churches	0	Stores	0	Roof	COMP	Sold			
REMARKS: VERY CLEAN FOR COLORED													
Address	295 SOUTH OAKLEY			Type	1 FL.	Age	2	Units	1	Rms.	5	B. Rm.	3

In the 20th century, real estate agents used paper index cards to track properties on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS). These cards often contained notes that indicated if properties should be sold or rented to white or Black people. The examples above are from Oakley Avenue in the focus area and demonstrate the pervasive racism in the housing market at the time. (Images provided by the Columbus Metropolitan Library.)



Streetcars on Sullivant Avenue helped facilitate the development of the neighborhood.



The Home Owners Loan Corporation produced maps that graded the quality of homes. The Hilltop focus area contained three grades: red, yellow, and blue. Red areas were unlikely to qualify for mortgage loans.

ness of an obnoxious or offensive kind or character or detrimental to a good residence neighborhood, or manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors.

6. At no time prior to Dec. 31, 1983, shall any part or interest in said premises be leased, rented, sold/conveyed to any person or persons of any race other than Caucasian; nor shall any such person or persons be permitted to occupy said premises during that period as the principal occupants thereof.

It is further expressly agreed by and between said grantor and said grantee their heirs successors and assigns, that the aforesaid conditions, restrictions and provisions are con-

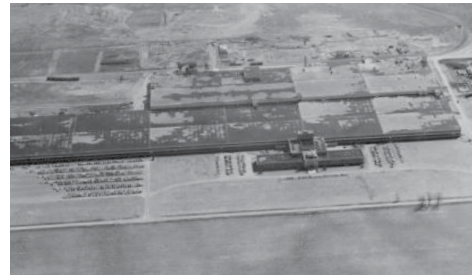
This excerpt from a deed on a property in the Wilshire Heights Addition sold in 1926 shows the restriction against nonwhite inhabitants. Restrictions like these were extremely prevalent at the time.

**Declining Employment.** After World War II, manufacturing in Columbus was strong. The resulting opportunities for living wage jobs allowed many to rise into the middle class, and affordable homes on the West Side encouraged people to live nearby. This combination of steady employment and proximate housing produced a stable community on the Hilltop for decades. By the 1980s, however, the Hilltop core began to suffer as jobs were off-shored to emerging global economies, and urban sprawl pushed amenities and housing farther west and north.

Manufacturing facilities like White-Westingshouse and Fisher Body General Motors (later Delphi) were integral to creating growth and stability in the post-war years. Operating from 1946 until 2007, the Delphi plant was demolished and replaced with the Hollywood Casino. Opened in 2015, the casino employs about 2,000 people—compared to 5,500 at the peak of Delphi’s employment.<sup>1</sup>

The casino cost \$400 million to build, and the site underwent \$25 million in clean-up. Over 45,830 tons of soil contaminated with solvents, chemicals, and fuel oils from the Delphi factory were removed. The foundation of the casino was built on top of a plastic-coated membrane to prevent any remaining chemical vapors from penetrating the building.<sup>2</sup>

The Westland Mall also had a major impact on the Hilltop area from its establishment in 1969. About 3 miles west of central Hilltop along West Broad Street, Westland was a fixture of shopping and retail employment opportunities for decades. The 860,000-square-foot mall had more than 100 active merchants at its height.<sup>3</sup> Many attribute Westland’s demise to the construction of the Mall at Tuttle Crossing in 1997, which captured many consumers who would have previously shopped at Westland.



The Westinghouse plant at 300 Phillipi Road employed 4,000 people in 1965. It manufactured appliances and became known as White-Westingshouse after being purchased by White Consolidated Industries in 1975.<sup>4</sup>



Opened in 1946 by General Motors, the Ternstedt plant employed about 5,500 at its peak. Originally a plant for the Fisher Body division, it was transferred to Delphi Automotive Systems in 1999.<sup>5</sup>



Opened in 1969 as an open-air shopping center, Westland Mall’s original anchors were Lazarus, Sears, JC Penney, and Woolworth. The mall was enclosed in 1982.<sup>8</sup>



The White-Westingshouse plant employed just 300 by the 1980s, when it was sold to Big Lots liquidation stores.<sup>4</sup> The 175,000 sq. ft. Big Lots headquarters were located here until 2018, but the facility still serves as a distribution center today.



By the early 1990s, the 1.7 million-square-foot GM facility employed only 2,000 people<sup>5</sup> and in fall 2005, Delphi declared bankruptcy.<sup>6</sup> The maker of door-latch parts employed just over 400 by 2007 when it closed.<sup>7</sup>



In 2003, “excluding anchor merchants, Westland [was] 59% occupied.”<sup>9</sup> The mall closed in 2012, with its last remaining anchor, Sears, closing in 2017.

1. Columbus Dispatch, Dec. 16, 2007.  
2. Columbus Dispatch, Oct. 21, 2012.  
3. Columbus Dispatch, Oct. 13, 2013.

4. Columbus Dispatch, May 25, 1988.  
5. David Lucas Collection, CML My History.  
6. Columbus Monthly, Dec. 22, 2014.

7. Columbus Dispatch, June 23, 2007.  
8. Labelscar: The Retail History Blog. [www.labelscar.com/ohio/westland-mall](http://www.labelscar.com/ohio/westland-mall).  
9. Columbus Business First. March 3, 2003.

**Post-Industrial Period.** The loss of major employers was extremely detrimental to the economic stability of the Hilltop. From the factories to the medical institutions in the state lands along I-70, major employers closed due to economic and social changes far beyond the neighborhood. With the loss of this employment base, many Hilltop residents re-located elsewhere, perhaps closer to new employment opportunities. Because adapting old factories and retail centers to new uses can be difficult, many properties sat vacant for years—contributing to blight and an overall sense of disinvestment on the West Side.

**“The Hilltop has always been a blue-collar neighborhood, and it’s hard to be a blue-collar neighborhood without a factory.”**

Source: Columbus Monthly, Dec 22, 2014.

Without industry to provide employment, the Hilltop lost retail amenities that residents relied on. Without important retail assets—laundromats, groceries, pharmacies, hardware stores, and others—the neighborhood became less attractive to potential residents. This cycle of disinvestment is difficult to escape. Today, the primary assets of the Hilltop focus area are its historic housing stock and its location. Housing trends are pointing to a shift from suburban expansion to urban reinvestment. For example, a 2007 survey by the National Association of Realtors found that 51% of respondents would prefer to live in multi-family housing if located in a walkable urban neighborhood close to work. This compares to just 45% in 2015—highlighting a growing demand for compact urban living. With smaller homes and a walkable built environment, the Hilltop area is poised for reinvestment if current trends hold.

**“[The Hilltop] subsisted 35 years ago on jobs in nearby factories that offered numerous unskilled and semiskilled jobs. Now that those factories have mostly closed, opportunities for stable employment have diminished.”**

Source: Columbus in 1980, 2015, and 2050. Bill LaFayette, Ph.D. 2015.

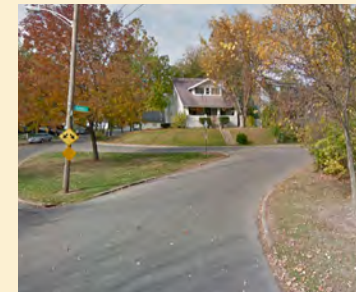
## Then & Now: Hilltop in Photos

A 1922 thesis by Forest Ira Blanchard contains many photographs from around Columbus. Inspired by the Chicago School of Sociology, he studied the city’s racial composition, focusing on the role of transportation in shaping the urban landscape.



### **W. Broad Street & Burgess Avenue** – looking east

With its streetcar removed and many of its homes demolished, W. Broad has experienced great change. Despite this, the area remains recognizable.



### **N. Terrace & Eldon Avenues** – looking west

Certain areas have hardly changed in nearly a century. Here, the growth of trees illustrates the passage of time.



### **S. Highland & Sullivant Avenues** – looking east

Sullivant Avenue has also lost its streetcar line. Where a home once stood, a one-story retail building is now found.

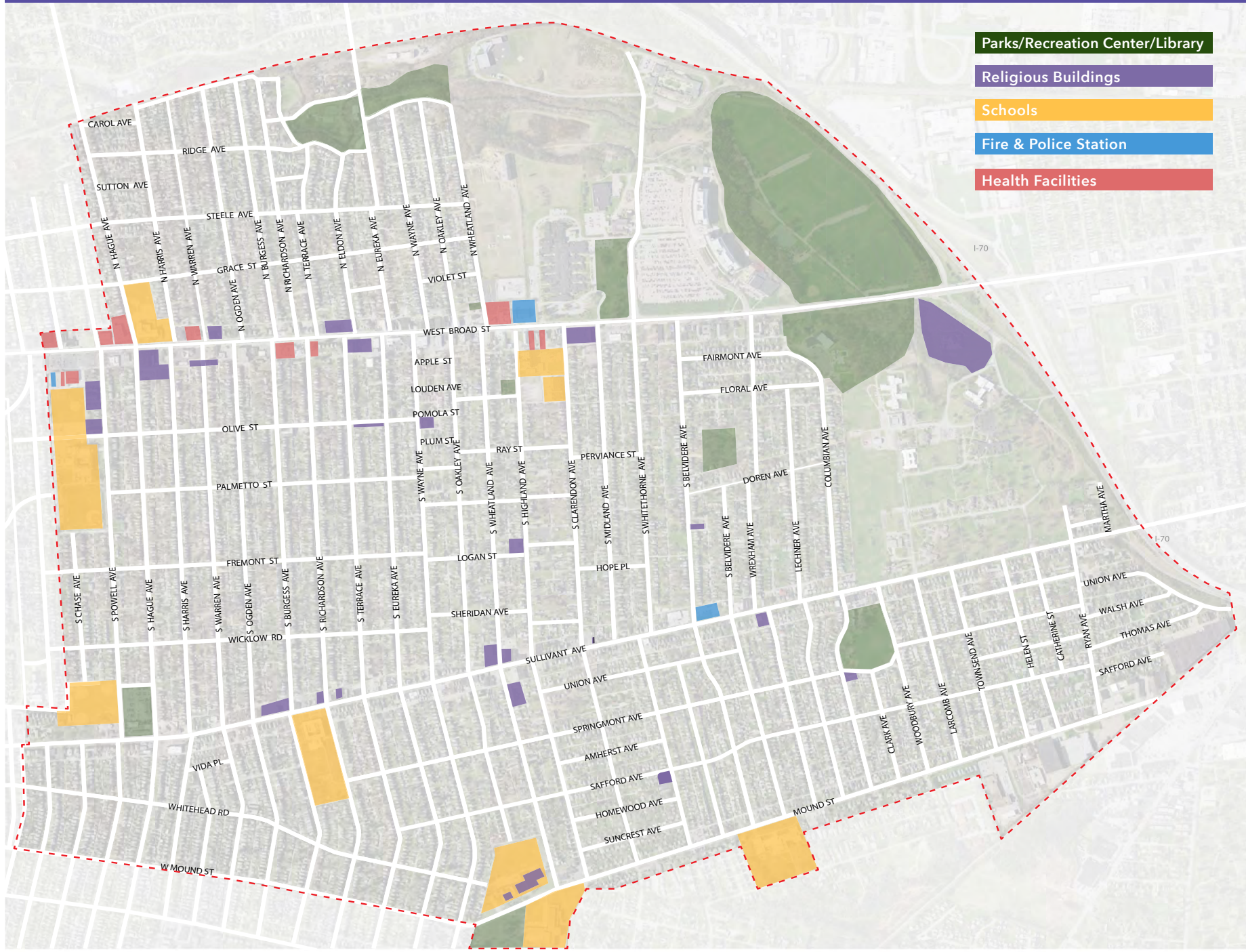
TABLE OF SELECT CENSUS FIGURES, 1940 to 2017

	1940		1960		1980		2000		2010*		2017	
	Hilltop	County	Hilltop	County	Hilltop	County	Hilltop	County	Hilltop	County	Hilltop	County
<b>Total Population</b>	28,272	388,712	32,279	682,962	25,081	869,132	22,911	1,068,978	21,276	1,163,414	20,608	1,253,507
<b>People per Square Mile</b>	8,606	715	10,143	1,257	8,175	1,600	7,526	1,980	6,946	2,186	6,731	2,355
<b>White</b>	94.8%	89.9%	87.4%	88.1%	81%	83.5%	74.6%	75.5%	68.7%	69.3%	71.7%	67.7%
<b>Black</b>	5.2%	10.0%	12.5%	11.8%	18%	15.1%	18.7%	17.9%	21.6%	21.3%	18.8%	22.0%
<b>Other Race</b>	-	-	0.1%	0.1%	1%	1.4%	6.7%	6.6%	9.7%	9.4%	9.5%	10.3%
<b>Median Age</b>	-	-	-	-	28.64	28.20	31.8	32.5	34.8	33.4	35.1	34.0
<b>Not in Labor Force</b>	56.8%	48.8%	51.3%	-	52.8%	44.8%	37.8%	29.4%	30%	38.54%	45.4%	30.2%
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	6.9%	8.5%	3.6%	-	7.7%	5.6%	7.7%	4.2%	15%	8%	6.8%	5.7%
<b>Housing Units</b>	6,764	109,737	9,151	-	9,514	347,019	9,359	471,016	9,432	523,581	9,378	546,040
<b>Occupied Units</b>	97.9%	96.4%	96.6%	-	93.4%	93.0%	90.5%	93.2%	79.3%	87.4%	76.7%	90.9%
<b>Vacant Units</b>	2.1%	3.6%	3.4%	-	6.6%	7.0%	9.5%	6.8%	20.7%	12.6%	23.3%	9.1%
<b>Owner-Occupied Units</b>	56%	42.6%	68.0%	-	64.3%	57.0%	57.0%	56.9%	51.7%	57.3%	39.4%	53.6%
<b>Renter-Occupied Units</b>	44%	57.4%	32.0%	-	35.7%	43.0%	43.0%	43.1%	48.3%	42.7%	60.6%	46.4%
<b>Foreign-Born Population</b>	809	13,830	459	59,239	296	23,947	538	64,487	563	101,511	1,118	126,270
<b>Median Household Income**</b>	-	-	\$6,481	\$6,425	\$13,186	\$17,081	\$30,889	\$42,734	\$32,370	\$49,087	\$29,814	\$56,319
<b>Below Poverty</b>	-	-	-	-	10.2%	12.3%	19.8%	11.7%	31.1%	17.0%	37.7%	16.7%
<b>Median Gross Rent</b>	\$37	\$32	\$92	-	\$217	\$230	\$558	\$595	\$775	\$764	\$819	\$903
<b>Less than H.S. Diploma</b>	46.9%	44.8%	42.9%	-	22.2%	12.1%	34.2%	14.3%	30.7%	11.1%	27.2%	9.4%

Data based on census tracts: 44, 45, 47, 48.1, 48.2, and 49  
Dollar figures not adjusted for inflation.  
Historic U.S. Census data accessed through IPUMS NHGIS.  
University of Minnesota, www.nhgis.org.

\*Using 2010 Census and 2010 ACS 5-year Estimates  
\*\*Based on U.S. Censuses of Population and Housing: 1960 (PHC 1-32).  
Columbus, Ohio. U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

HILLTOP FOCUS AREA MAP, SHOWING SELECT LAND USES BY COLOR



- Parks/Recreation Center/Library**
- Religious Buildings**
- Schools**
- Fire & Police Station**
- Health Facilities**

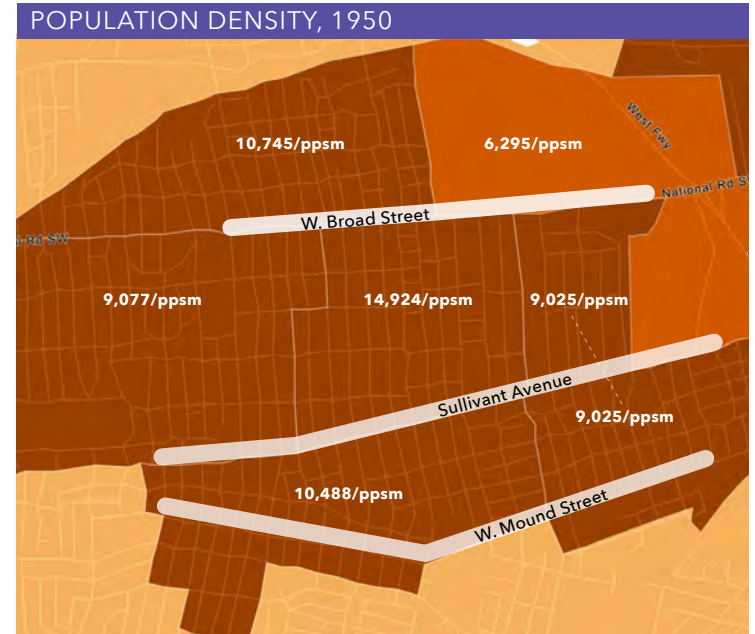
**Lost Population, Lost Energy.** Today the Hilltop area—like many core urban neighborhoods—has a fraction of the population it previously supported. With fewer people living in the area, a domino effect occurs that impacts many areas of life. Fewer people means fewer customers for neighborhood businesses, which may result in their closure or re-location. This begins to create a vicious cycle wherein potential new residents may not want to choose the neighborhood due to a lack of amenities. This further deteriorates the neighborhood and leads to social and economic isolation with many obstacles to recovery.

A **decrease in population density** has been primarily caused by residents leaving the focus area for other neighborhoods. This leaves unoccupied housing units abandoned or demolished. Another factor contributing to density reduction is a decrease in household size, or the number of people living in one household. In 1950, the average household size in the Hilltop area was 3.88. Today that figure is 2.89.

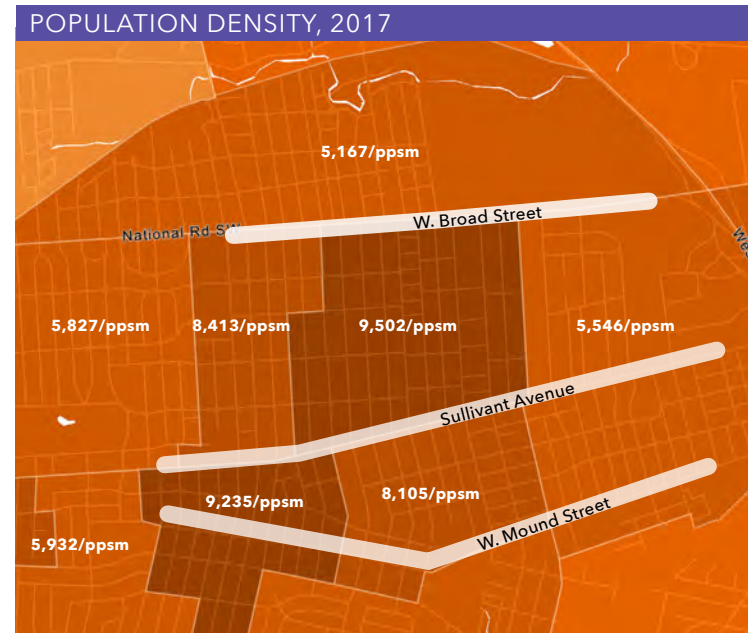
Fewer people also means fewer neighbors, with less opportunity for resident interaction and creation of the social bonds that bring stability to residential areas. With more vacant lots and abandoned homes, the opportunity for crime also increases. Less activity and energy on the street and sidewalk contribute to a feeling that no one is watching, which may encourage criminal activity. Overall, the impacts of depopulation should not be underestimated. The path to revitalization will include inviting more neighbors in, helping to restore energy and activity to this once-thriving area.

	HOUSEHOLD SIZE	VACANT HOUSES	POPULATION	RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS
<b>YEAR 1950</b>	3.88	88	31,398	30%
<b>YEAR 2017</b>	2.89	2,644	20,608	61%

Based on 1950 census tracts converted to 2017 tract area. Data reflects census tracts: 44, 45, 47, 48.1, 48.2, and 49.



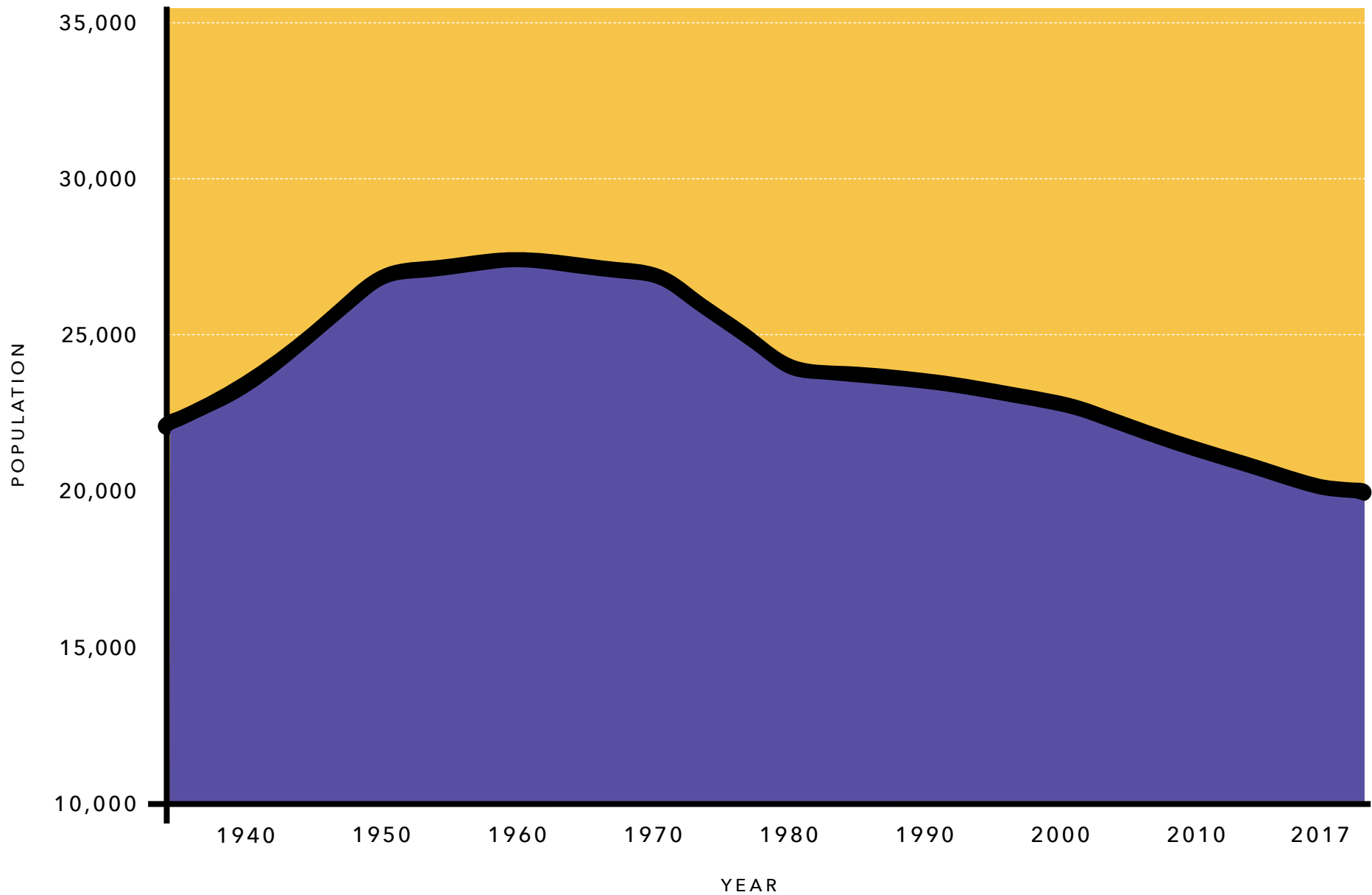
ppsm: people per square mile



ppsm: people per square mile



## HILLTOP FOCUS AREA POPULATION, 1940–2017



Census Tracts: 44, 45, 47, 48.1, 48.2, 49. Graphic based on interpretation of change between select data years (listed as years). Based on data from six census tracts. This is different from the Hilltop Focus Area. Figures exclude institutional population, which was significant until the 1990 census. See page 23 for more information.

## What's a Community Plan?

Early efforts at city planning resulted in engineering feats, transportation projects, and zoning classifications—all of which ignored human experiences like employment, recreation, and housing. By the 1920s, in the wake of the Beaux Arts and city beautiful movement, the persistence of social ills prompted a shift in the planning approach.

**“Community planning” is a planning approach that incorporates both physical and social considerations while relying on guidance from residents and stakeholders throughout the process.** The term arose around 1919 as “an embodiment of human aspirations based upon a truly democratic conception of legality.”<sup>1</sup> In the years following, there were efforts to integrate physical and social planning<sup>2</sup> to help “create a new institutional framework through which the social architect and planner formulated urban physical and social goals.”<sup>3</sup>

The community planning concept surged in popularity during the building boom after World War II. In 1944, the National Committee on Housing urged builders of growing communities to avoid economic segregation and income stratification. Later, some called zoning a “device for economic segregation” and said that “planners should do all they can to combat these trends as un-American and undemocratic.”<sup>5</sup> Community planning was seen as an opportunity to create visions of community that were inclusive of different income and social groups—using their input and lived experience to guide plans.

1. American Institute of Architects, Proceedings of the Fifty-Second Annual Convention of the American Institute of Architects, Washington, D.C.: Board of Directors, American Institute of Architects, 1919.  
2. Roy Lubove, Community Planning in the 1920s: The contribution of the Regional Planning Association of America, Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963, 43.

“If democratic health is to be maintained, no community should consist exclusively of a single income group...[D]iversification is an essential element of safety for all concerned—the developer, the owner, the storekeeper, the municipality, the school system and our political system itself.”<sup>4</sup>

– National Committee on Housing, 1944

Many previous planning efforts have quantified the value of communities using financial metrics, home values, and identification of pervasive social or public health conditions: what proponents of the rational model could term “objective” measures. These measures became a justification for widespread demolition and population resettlement. Urban renewal is a typical expression of this model and today is widely criticized as contributing to poverty concentration and racial and economic segregation.

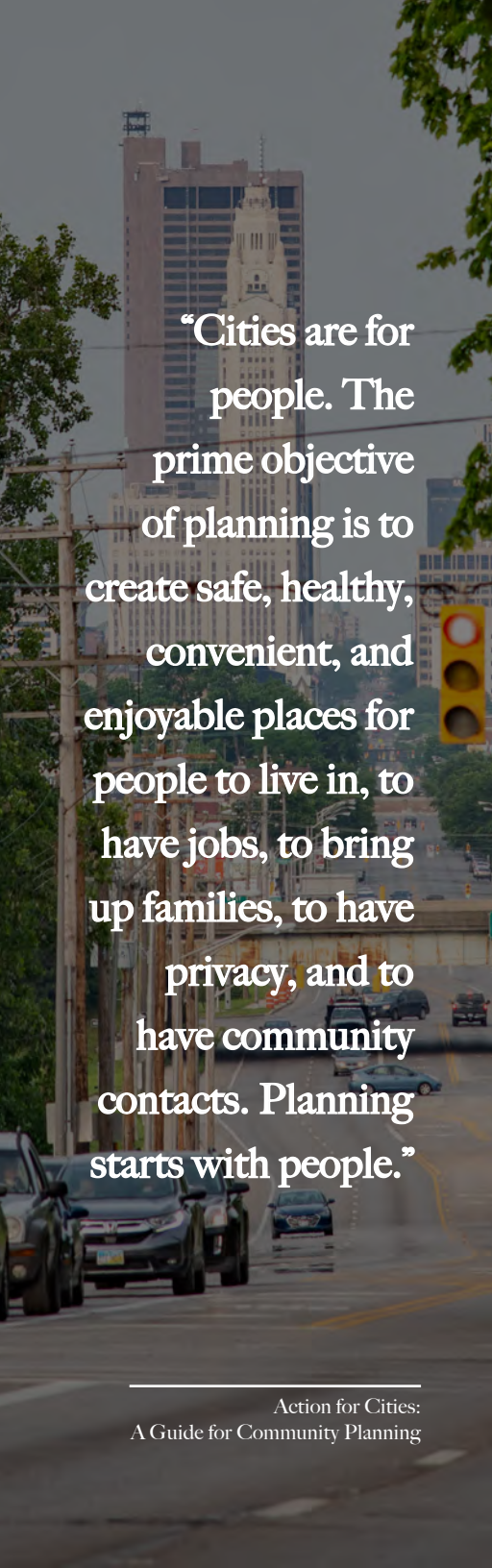
One primary question of the community-driven planning movement is **how to create viable community planning structures that share power and decision-making authority among contending interests.** This challenge holds true today. The central tenet of community planning—and of this Hilltop community plan—asserts that “when people participate directly in determining policies that affect their lives, the decisions are more likely to produce support and commitment than when policies are determined for them.”<sup>6</sup> The Hilltop Community Plan demonstrates a commitment to community involvement, resident engagement, and citizen participation that speaks to the community planning model.

3. Ibid.

4. National Committee on Housing, Your Stake in Community Planning, New York: National Committee on Housing, Inc., 1944, 14.

5. Herbert L. Marx, Community Planning, New York: H.W. Wilson Co., 1956, 83-84.

6. Girbert & Specht, Dynamics of Community Planning, Balinger Publishing Co., 1977, 36.



“Cities are for people. The prime objective of planning is to create safe, healthy, convenient, and enjoyable places for people to live in, to have jobs, to bring up families, to have privacy, and to have community contacts. Planning starts with people.”

Action for Cities:  
A Guide for Community Planning

# Existing Conditions

In order to know what the most pressing needs are in the Hilltop focus area, we must first understand the current realities. Through a combination of U.S. Census Bureau data, proprietary research databases, public records requests, and data shared by various nonprofit organizations and institutions, this section illustrates a depth of information and statistics that describe the existing conditions in the focus area. Data is organized into the following areas:

- Employment and income
- Health and wellness
- Education
- Safety and crime
- Business and commercial
- Mobility
- Recreation
- Mixed-income housing
- Homeownership
- Housing quality
- Housing affordability
- Housing instability
- Subsidized housing
- Real estate conditions
- Housing market
- Retail opportunities

## FOCUS AREA HIGHLIGHTS

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

\$30,000

### INFANT MORTALITY RATE

20% higher than Franklin County

### HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT A VEHICLE

18%

### LIFE EXPECTANCY

8 years less than Franklin County

### PEOPLE WITH BACHELOR'S DEGREES

7%

### YEAR 2018 NARCAN ADMINISTRATIONS

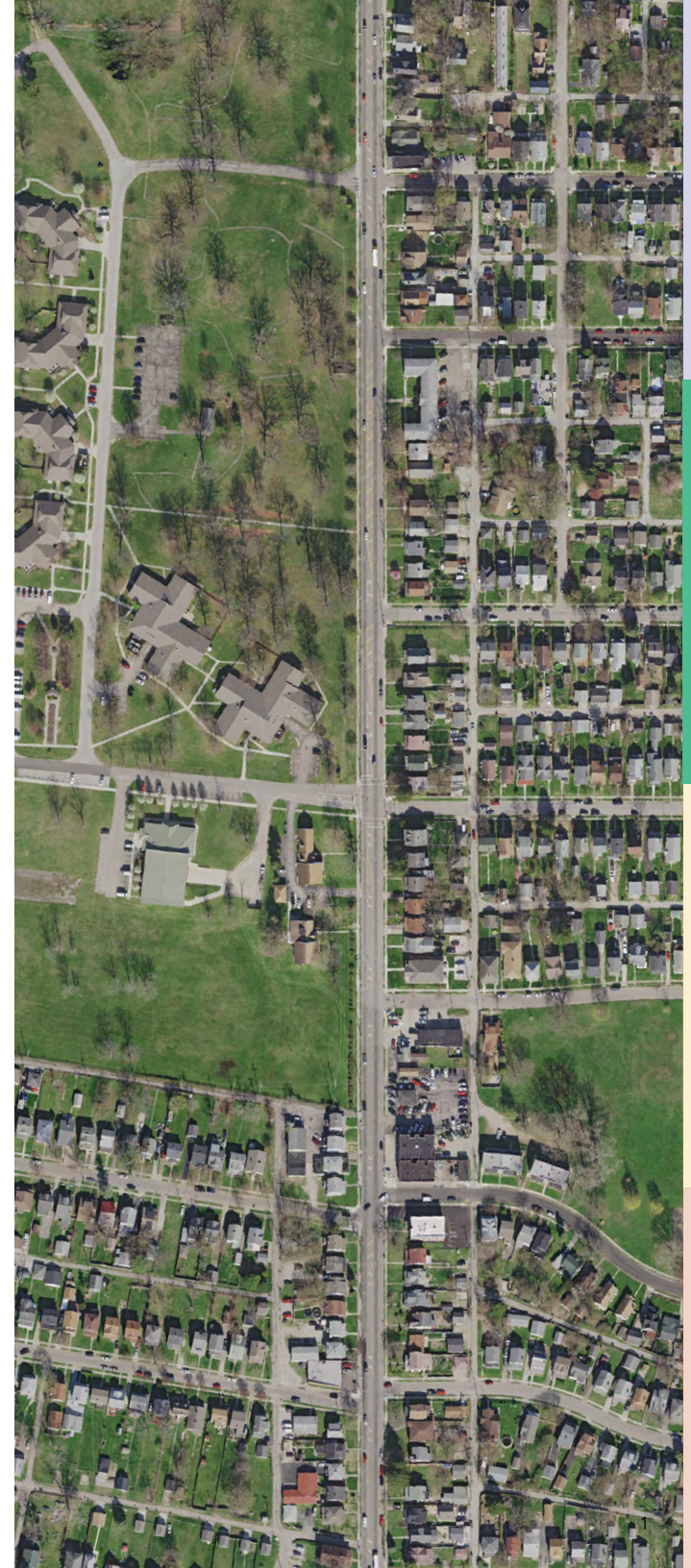
307

### SINGLE-FAMILY OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES

2,912

### HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVING SNAP

37%



## Employment & Income

The focus area has a lower median household income than the city and county, at \$30,000 compared to \$56,000 for Franklin County. Adjacent neighborhoods such as Westgate and Georgian Heights show a higher median household income than the focus area, except for the South Franklinton area. Unemployment rates from the U.S. Census Bureau show a relatively wide range throughout the focus area. Some block groups show a healthy unemployment rate of less than 2%, while others exceed 10%. On average, the area shows a 6.6% unemployment rate—higher than the city and county averages, although not significantly.

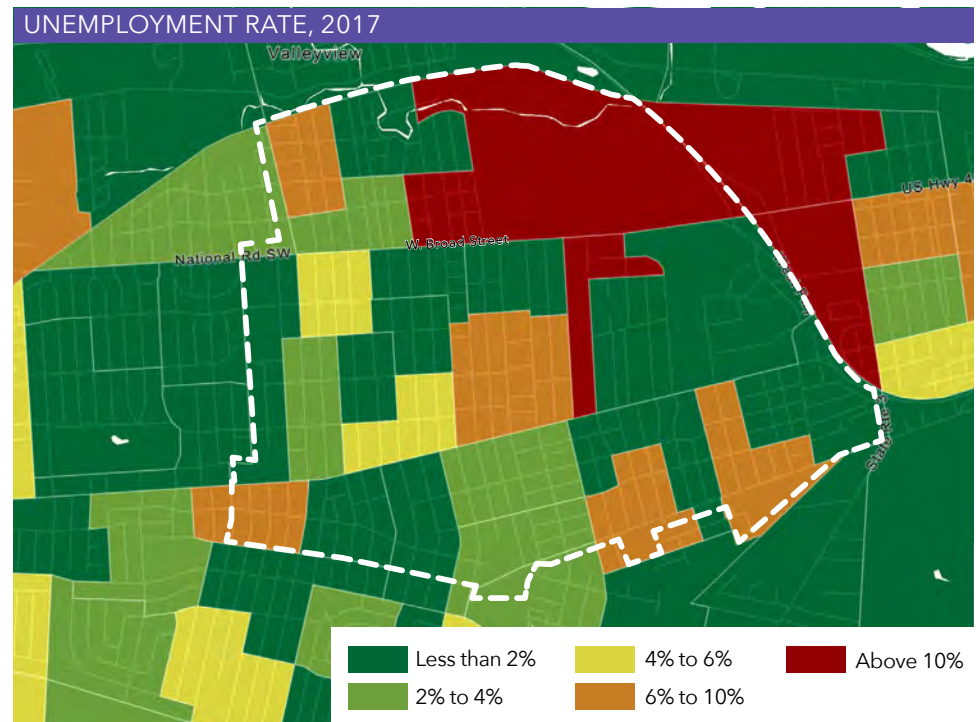
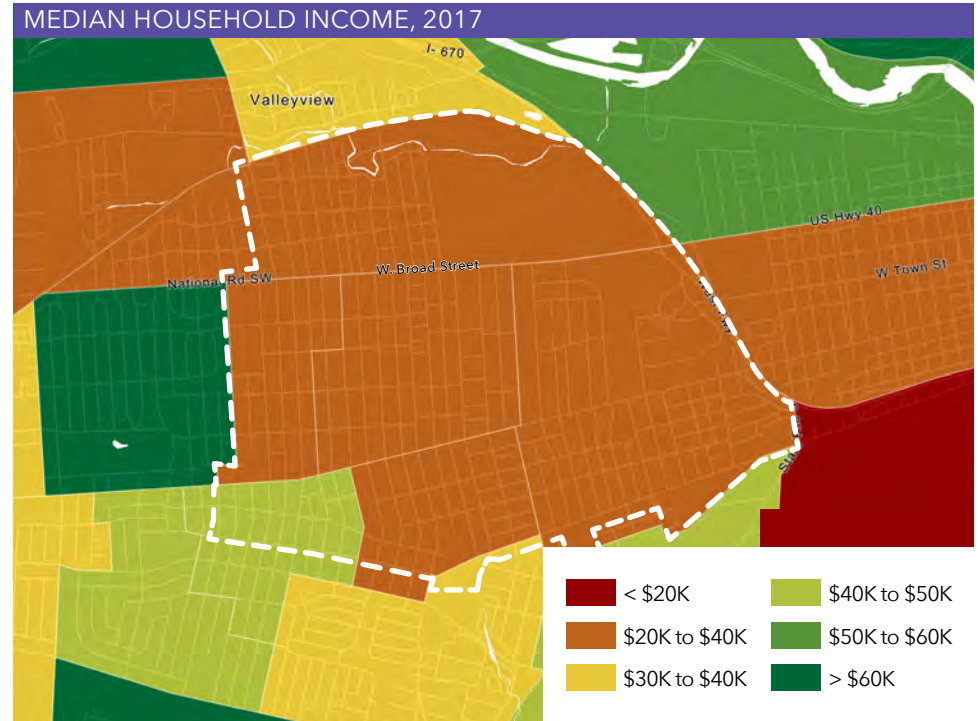
The Hilltop has historically been a working-class neighborhood, and that is still true today. Light industry and logistics are still present along Fisher Road to the northwest of the Hilltop focus area, providing a large employment base for residents. Very few Hilltop residents work in their immediate neighborhood, since job opportunities are quite limited and the types of jobs in the focus area are mismatched for most residents. The Ohio Department of Transportation on the eastern edge of the neighborhood, for example, mostly employs residents from other areas of Central Ohio.

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2017

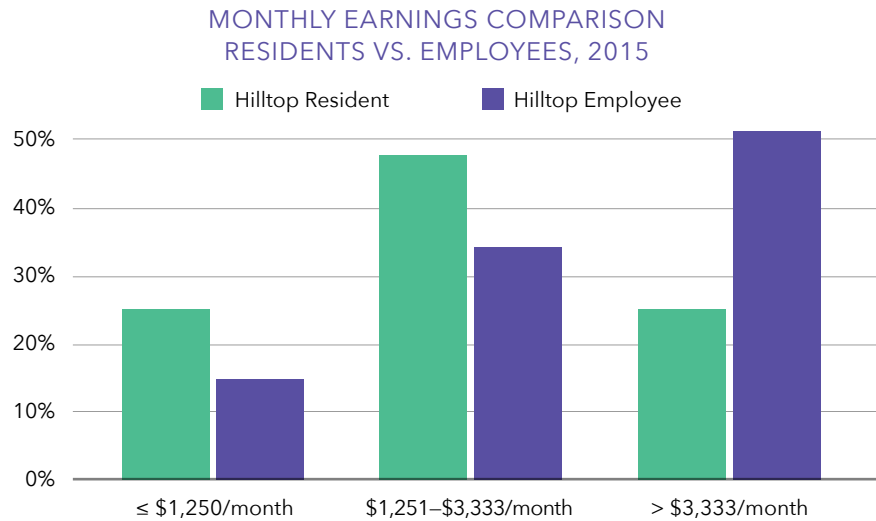
<b>\$30K</b>	<b>\$38K</b>	<b>\$56K</b>
<b>Hilltop Focus Area</b>	<b>Greater Hilltop</b>	<b>Franklin County</b>

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2017

<b>6.6%</b>	<b>6.3%</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>Hilltop Focus Area</b>	<b>City of Columbus</b>	<b>Franklin County</b>

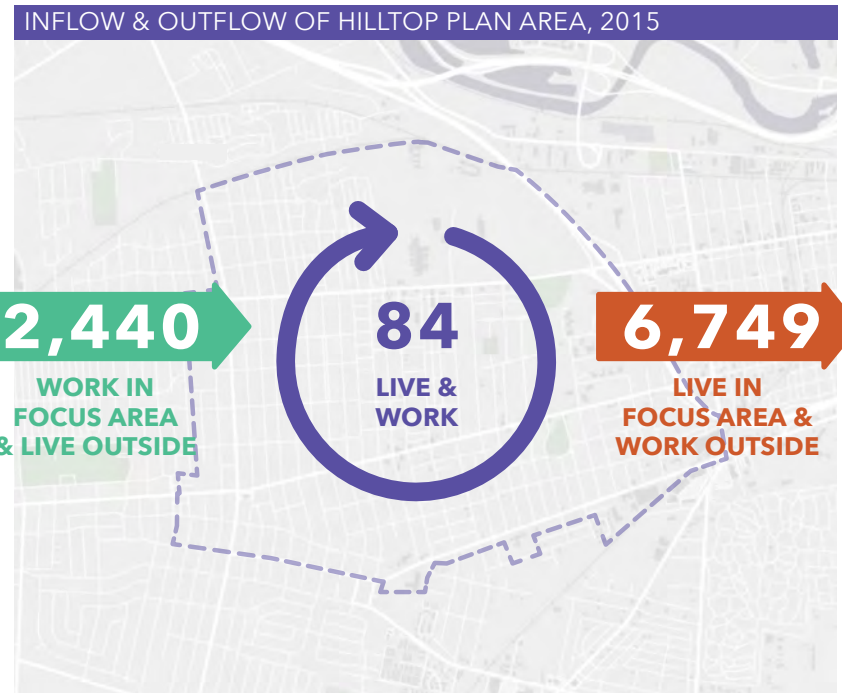
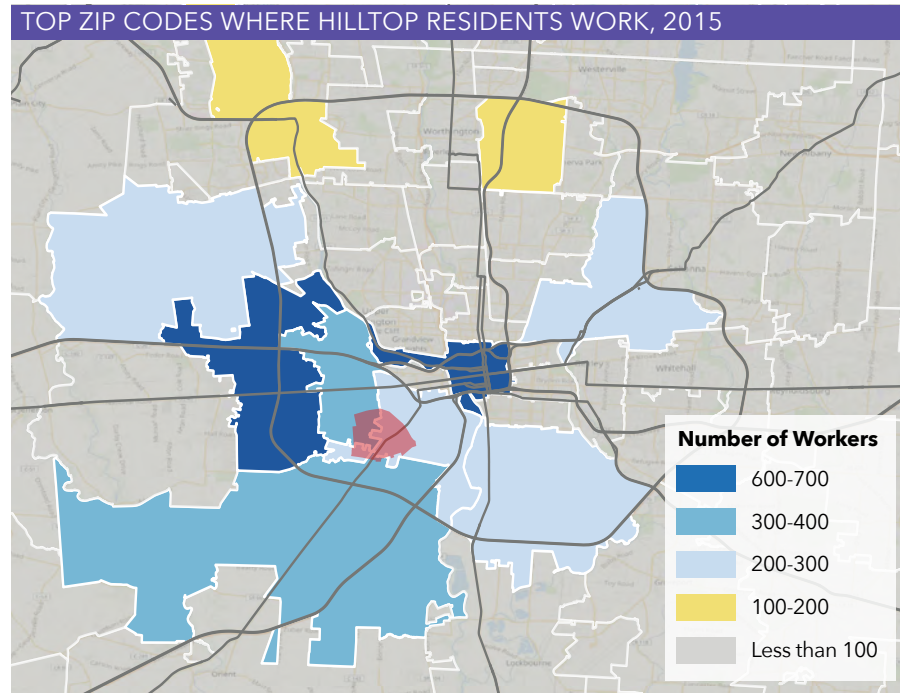


**Monthly Earnings.** Data shows 6,833 primary job holders in the Hilltop focus area in 2015, with over half of those jobs providing more than \$3,333/month for income.



**Inflow/Outflow.** According to figures from the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) survey, there are just 84 employees working in the Hilltop focus area who also live in the focus area. This potentially demonstrates a mismatch between employment opportunities in the focus area and the skills of focus area residents for available jobs. LEHD data shows that 2,440 employees in the focus area live outside of the area, likely represented primarily by larger employers like the Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Public Safety, Columbus Developmental Center, and Twin Valley Behavioral Healthcare Hospital.

Of the approximately 2,500 people employed on the Hilltop but living outside of the area, 50% do not live within the City of Columbus. In fact, 28% of Hilltop employees do not live in Franklin County. This indicates that area employers draw people from regional destinations, not the immediate area.



Employment data based on Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Learn more at <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov> and <https://lehd.ces.census.gov>.

**Jobs by Industry.** The primary industries employing focus area residents are shown in the adjacent illustration. Many are employed in social assistance and retail.

**COMPARED TO FRANKLIN COUNTY, HILLTOP RESIDENTS WORK IN THESE INDUSTRIES...**

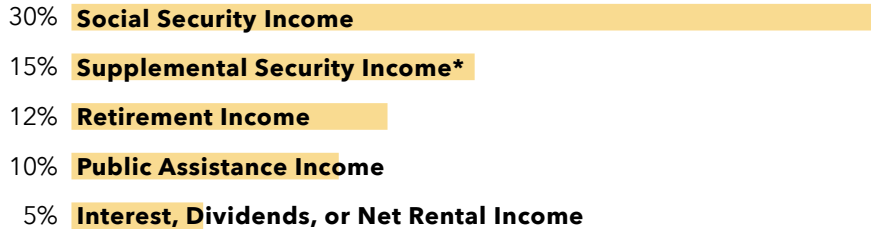
**MORE OFTEN**

- +6% Construction
- +3% Retail trade
- +3% Arts, hospitality/food service
- +2% Manufacturing
- +1% Transport/warehouse/utilities

**LESS OFTEN**

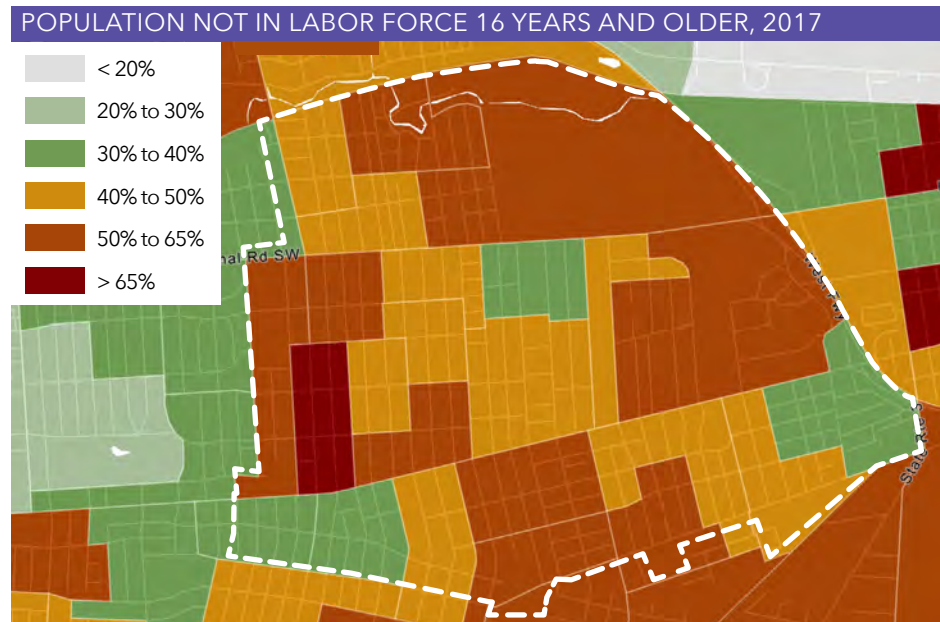
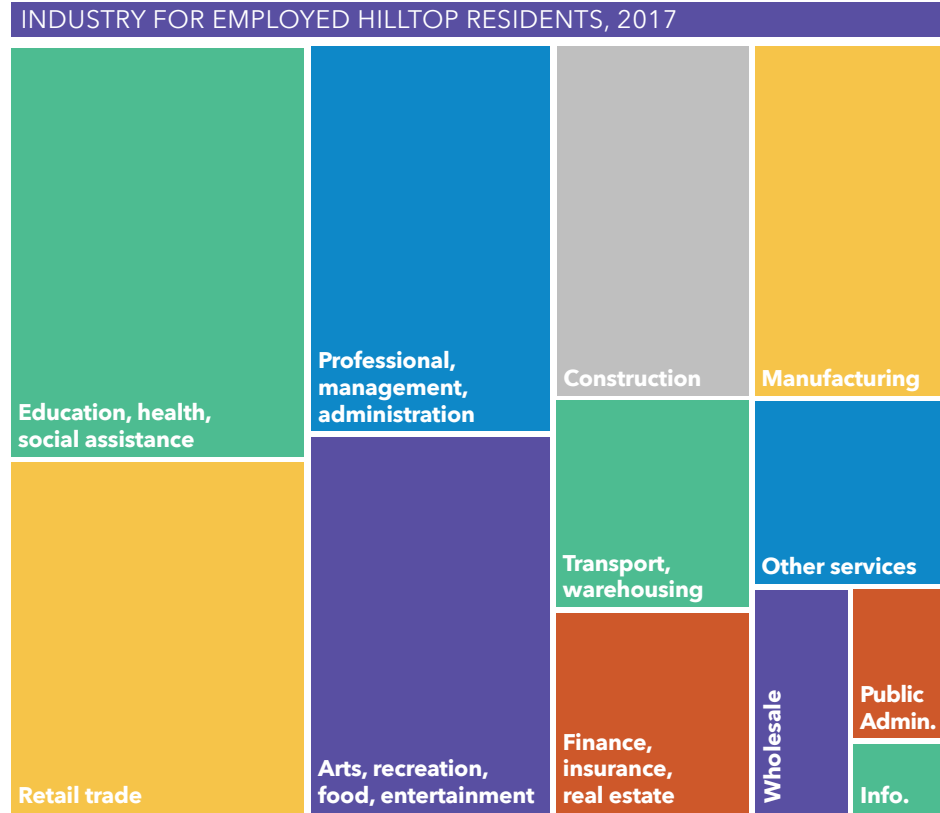
- 7% Education, health, social service
- 4% Finance, insurance, real estate
- 2% Public administration
- 1% Information

**Other Income & Finance.** Residents not in the labor force due to a variety of reasons may rely on other sources of income such as social security, public assistance, and retirement funds. Thirty percent of focus area households have Social Security Income, while only 5% have income from interest, dividends, or rental units.



**Labor Force Participation Rate.** Though employment conditions are dynamic and ACS Census data often trails by 12 to 18 months, it is still significant that based on focus area census tracts, 40% of residents age 25-44 were not in the labor force in 2017, compared to only 14% of this cohort not in the labor force citywide.

\*Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal income program funded by general tax revenues (not Social Security taxes). It is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income. SSI provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.



## Health & Wellness

Residents of the Hilltop focus area are less likely to have insurance, more likely to suffer from chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease, and have a shorter life expectancy than county averages. A combination of factors contribute to these reduced health outcomes.

**Financial Access & Health.** The Hilltop focus area has only two financial institutions, both located to the far southwest. A Huntington Bank at Central and Mound (1436 W. Mound) is the only full-service bank, and nearby is a check cashing facility (1397 W. Mound). A 2017 study by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) estimated that 5.5% of the Columbus region was “unbanked,” meaning without access to a checking or savings account at an institution. Without a bank account, employees cannot receive pay via direct deposit—making them reliant upon either paper checks or payroll cards, which can have fees for inactivity, balance inquiries, and other actions. According to the FDIC survey, reasons for being unbanked include inability to maintain minimum account balances, a desire for privacy, a lack of trust in banks, and high account fees.<sup>1</sup> Data from ESRI shows that the average amount in the cash accounts of Hilltop residents is \$2,018, while the value of stocks is \$2,107. The average retirement plan value is just under \$11,000.

- The **infant mortality rate** for the Hilltop is 30% higher than the rate for Franklin County.
- Babies born on the Hilltop are more likely to be premature and have lower birthweight than those born in Franklin County.
- More than twice as many babies are born to teen mothers on the Hilltop area compared to the county, despite a decline for both over the last 5 years.
- Mothers who are pregnant on the Hilltop are nearly three times more likely to smoke during their pregnancy compared to the Franklin County.

INFANT MORTALITY RATE, 2014-2018		
Area*	Zip Code(s)	IMR
Hilltop	43204	10.5
Franklinton	43222, 43223	10.0
Linden	43211	17.9
Near East	43203, 43205	15.3
Northeast	43219	13.1
Northland	43224, 43229	10.2
South Side	43206, 43207	11.3
Southeast	43227, 43232	11.12

\*Using CelebrateOne to define neighborhoods, reflecting five years of data.



Nationwide Children’s Hospital (NCH) operates the Hilltop Primary Care Center at 2857 W. Broad, near the intersection with Hague Avenue. Walk-in access for same-day service is offered for about 11 hours weekly, Monday through Friday, 12:45pm to 3pm. Outside of those hours, only pre-scheduled patients may be seen. NCH also has mobile care locations throughout the area.

### NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S MOBILE LOCATIONS

- Fresh Start Leaning Center
- Hilltonia Middle School
- Bridgegate Community School
- Highland Elementary School
- West Side Free Store
- Moms2B – Mount Carmel West

### NCH HILLTOP PRIMARY CARE TOP VISIT ISSUES, 2018

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Well-child exam                       | 5. Asthma                               |
| 2. ADHD/other behavioral health disorder | 6. Middle ear infection                 |
| 3. Acute Upper Respiratory Infection     | 7. Overweight/obesity                   |
| 4. Immunization                          | 8. General symptoms/signs               |
|  | 9. Allergic/chronic Rhinitis            |
|  | 10. Dermatitis/eczema (skin conditions) |

1. Chris Moon. The Problems of Being Unbanked. Value Penguin. Nov. 28, 2016.

**Comparative Health Figures.** The Hilltop area shows reduced health quality when compared to Franklin County. The Office of Epidemiology of Columbus Public Health provided the following data for 2015 to 2017, reflecting the Hilltop area as represented by zip code 43204.

- Accident death rates in the Hilltop area are twice as high compared to Franklin County rates.
- Cancer death rates in the Hilltop area are three times those for the county.
- Rates of death from heart disease are 42% higher and rates of cancer deaths are about 39% higher in Hilltop when compared to Franklin County.
- Life expectancy for those living in the Hilltop area is about 8 years less than Franklin County.

Additionally, there is a higher percentage of people who are uninsured and a high number of emergency department visits. Health facilities are present in the Hilltop focus area, but the quality of the facilities was not evaluated.

#### LIFE EXPECTANCY 2013–2017

**69.4**  
Hilltop

**77.5**  
Franklin  
County

#### DRUG POISONING\* 2015–2017

**56**/100,000  
Hilltop

**26**/100,000  
Franklin  
County

#### LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH, 2015–2017

CAUSE	Hilltop (43204)		County	
	Total CASES	Average CASES/Year	ADR	ADR
Cancer	269	89.7	230.4	167.6
Diseases of the Heart	261	87.0	240.2	173.5
Accidents	123	41.0	101.4	55.6
Chronic lower respiratory disease	76	25.3	67.5	45.4
Strokes	53	17.7	53.3	44.4

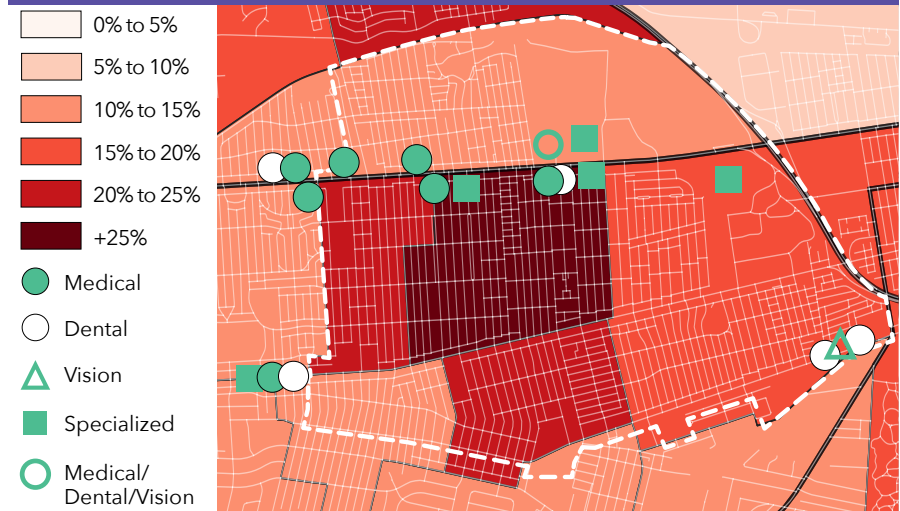
Source: Ohio Vital Statistics System, analyzed by Columbus Public Health, Office of Epidemiology.

Based on the number of deaths within the designated time period. For this table, the Leading

Causes for Hilltop (43204) are presented with the Franklin County ADR as comparison.

\*ADR: Age Adjusted Death Rates (The number of deaths per 100,000 population.) This is a way to standardize death rates to minimize the effects of differences in age compositions when comparing the death rates for different populations.

#### UNINSURED POPULATION, 2017 AND HEALTH FACILITIES, 2019



#### EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT VISITS BY ZIP CODE, 2018

Zip Code	Area	Number of Visits
43228	Far West	40,990
43207	Obetz/Far South	39,725
43232	Eastland	39,014
43229	Northland	36,363
43204	Hilltop	36,351
43223	Hilltop/Brown Rd.	34,897
43224	North Linden	34,123

Data provided in Franklin County HealthMap 2019 report, page 39. Showing data for Central Ohio hospital emergency departments, based on patient zip code of residence.

#### PRIMARY ONE HEALTH DATA, 2018

Diagnosis/Visit Type	Number of Visits	Payer Type	Percent
Tooth decay/cavities	3,417	Commercial	9.3%
Tobacco use	1,332	Medicaid	1.5%
Hypertension	1,576	Medicaid HMO	34.9%
Hyperlipidemia	1,813	Medicare	1.9%
Depression	1,547	Medicare HMO	2.6%
Diabetes	1,164	Uninsured	49.8%

Data provided by Quality Improvement Manager at PrimaryOne Health, July 2019.

Total 100%



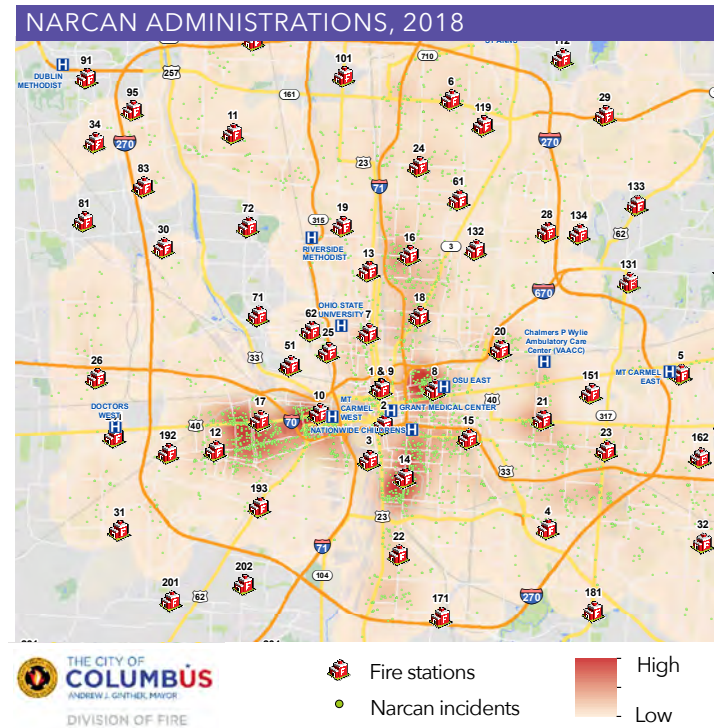
**Opioid Epidemic.** Central Ohio is currently struggling with an opioid epidemic, and the Hilltop has been especially affected. The number of unintentional drug overdose deaths among Franklin County residents has increased 143% from 196 in 2013 to 479 in 2018. The rate of unintentional drug overdose deaths is more than two times higher in the Hilltop area (43204) compared to Franklin County. As shown in the map to the right, Narcan use in 2018 was very high in the Hilltop area. Narcan is used to treat narcotic overdoses, so it is deployed most often in areas with the highest levels of drug abuse. It can reverse overdoses caused by a range of opioids such as heroin, oxycodone, and fentanyl by restoring breathing and blocking the effects of the drug on the brain. In addition to being carried by firefighters and police officers, it is also available without a prescription at many pharmacies and clinics.

Over 25% of the doses delivered by firefighters in 2015 were delivered in just two precincts, one of which was Precinct 19 on the Hilltop. This prompted police officers to begin carrying Narcan in their cruisers in mid-2016. According to 2016–2018 data, the rate of Narcan use on the Hilltop is 3.9% when compared to the population. This rate is below that of the Franklinton and South Side areas, but still high. Among those who died from an overdose in 2017, the most common zip codes of residence (not overdose location) were 43207, **43223, 43204**, 43211, and 43232—both **Hilltop zip codes** are included here in this list. The opioid crisis is complex and multi-faceted, involving more than simply the end drug user. Between 2006 and 2012, Cardinal Health alone shipped more than 10 billion opioid pills—and in 2008 the Drug Enforcement Agency brought a case against the company for shipping million of doses without alerting the agency. The case was settled by Cardinal Health paying a fine of \$34 million and promising to improve monitoring.\*

\* Theodore Decker. "Birds of a feather flocked to the money in opioid epidemic." Columbus Dispatch. July 30, 2019.  
 1. Columbus Public Health, Office of Epidemiology. July 2019.

**OVERDOSE DEATHS BY SUBSTANCE, 2018**  
 FRANKLIN COUNTY

- 67%**  
Fentanyl
- 36%**  
Cocaine
- 16%**  
Heroin
- 14%**  
Carfentanil
- 5%**  
Methamphetamine



- Unintentional drug deaths increased from 2013-17 in both the Hilltop area and the county.
- In the Hilltop area, unintentional drug deaths increased 63% in that 5 year period.
- In 2017, the rate of unintentional drug deaths was more than 2.5 times higher in the Hilltop area than in Franklin County.<sup>1</sup>

**NARCAN ADMINISTRATIONS BY YEAR & AREA COMMISSION (AC)**

Geographic Area	2016	2017	2018	Total	Population (2017)	Rate
Hilltop Focus Area	165	278	307	750	19,445	3.9%
Greater Hilltop AC	333	506	561	1,400	60,126	2.3%
North & South Linden AC	182	239	309	730	40,825	1.8%
Franklinton AC	157	290	264	711	8,132	8.7%
South Side AC	237	396	514	1,147	28,244	4.1%
Near East Side AC	139	287	166	592	18,271	3.2%
Clintonville AC	22	42	33	97	31,805	0.3%
<b>Columbus Total</b>	<b>2,350</b>	<b>3,366</b>	<b>3,355</b>	<b>9,071</b>	<b>852,144</b>	<b>1.1%</b>

**Community Health.** The health of the community can be measured in more ways than physical well-being. Asking if the Hilltop is a healthy community requires more answers than statistics about diseases and death. A community can demonstrate health through environmental conditions, through social interconnectedness, and economic mobility. Trees, for example, have the ability to improve health by increasing shade, cooling neighborhoods, reducing energy bills, and reduce particulate pollution in the air—not to mention emotional benefits.<sup>1</sup> The public street tree canopy on the Hilltop has room for improvement, but generally appears adequate according to recent city data.

Another aspect of healthy neighborhoods is a robust social life, part of which can be worship. Records show 101 parcels in the Hilltop focus area owned by religious groups. The map to the bottom-right illustrates that most of these are between Broad and Sullivant.

#### EXEMPT CHURCH PROPERTY OWNERS, MAY 2019

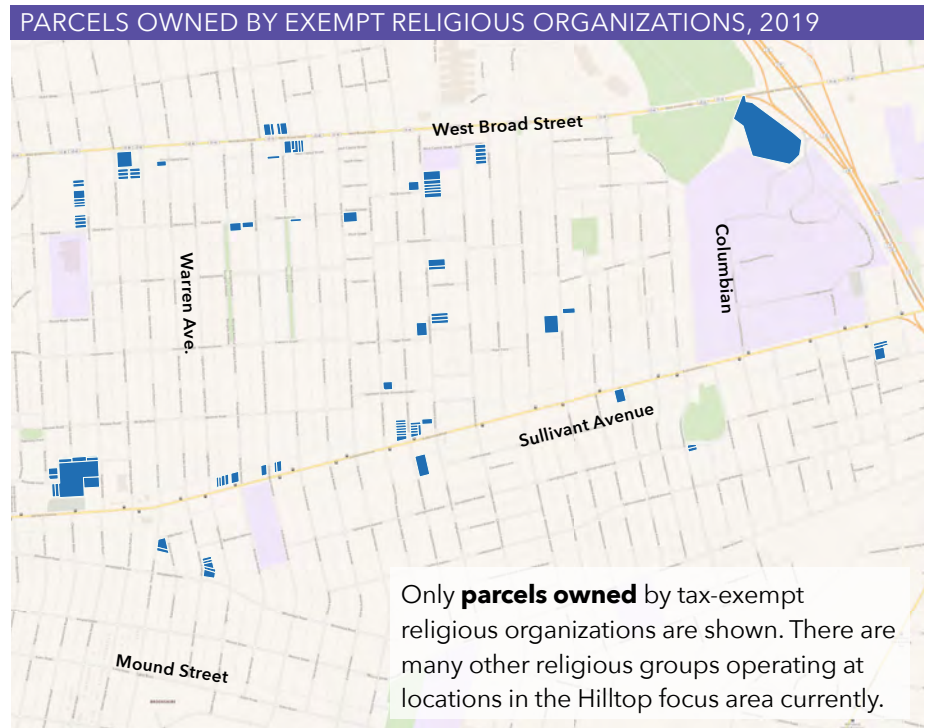
According to data from the Franklin County Auditor, there are 101 tax-exempt parcels that show 24 listed owners with religious-related names.

- Seventh-Day Adventists, Allegheny West Conference
- Christian Holiness Church
- Apostolic Assembly of The Faith In Christ Jesus
- Bible Way Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- Community Christian Church
- First Church of God
- First Pentecostal Philadelphia Church
- First United Brethren In Christ Church of Columbus
- Fountain of Salvation Christian Churches
- Friendship Missionary Baptist Church
- Catholic Diocese of Columbus
- Hillcrest Baptist Church
- Iglesia Pentecostal Refugio de Santidad
- King Matt King Heather Gonzales
- Mt Pisgah Baptist Church
- Mt. Zion Apostolic Holiness Church
- Oakley Avenue Baptist Church
- Ohio Valley District of the Christian and Missionary Alliance
- Peace123 Investment
- Second Community Church Of Columbus Ohio
- St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
- Jehovah Shammah Pentecostal Ministries
- Veritas Community Church
- Westgate Evangelical United Brethren Church

1. [www.citylab.com/environment/2012/07/case-more-urban-trees/2768/](http://www.citylab.com/environment/2012/07/case-more-urban-trees/2768/)



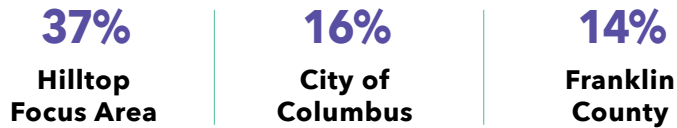
Each circle represents one public tree.



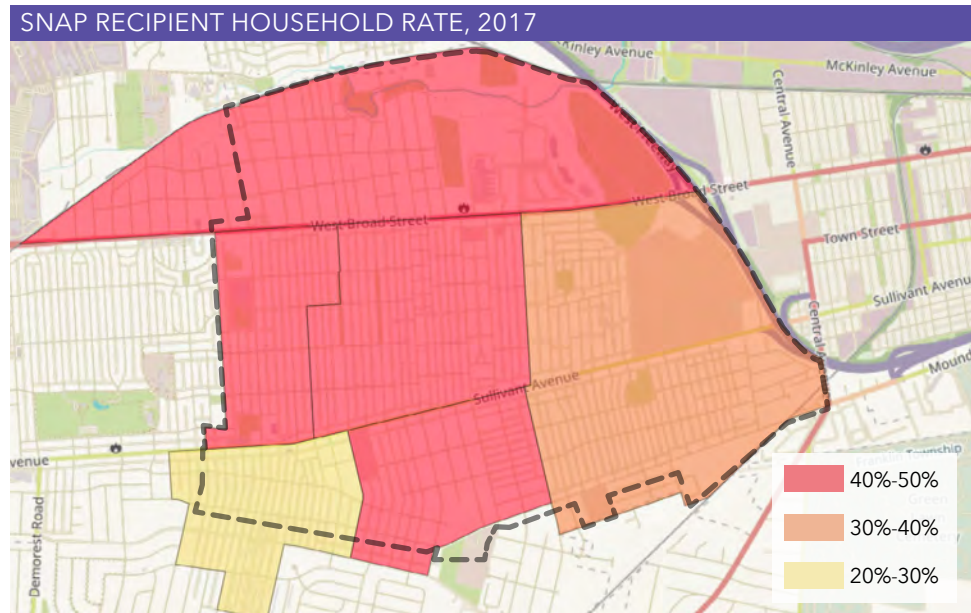
Only **parcels owned** by tax-exempt religious organizations are shown. There are many other religious groups operating at locations in the Hilltop focus area currently.

Benefits from the **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**, also known as food stamps, are frequently utilized in the Hilltop focus area. They can be used to purchase most food items and prevent many families from going hungry. As shown in the map to the right, in most of the neighborhood, particularly the western part, close to half of households receive SNAP assistance. The highest rate is in census tract 46.2, where 43% of households receive SNAP. The average rate for Franklin County is 14%, while the average for the City of Columbus is 17%. At an average of 37% across census tracts in the Hilltop focus area, the rate of SNAP receipt in the focus area is significantly higher than county and city averages.

**SNAP RECEIPT BY HOUSEHOLD, 2017**

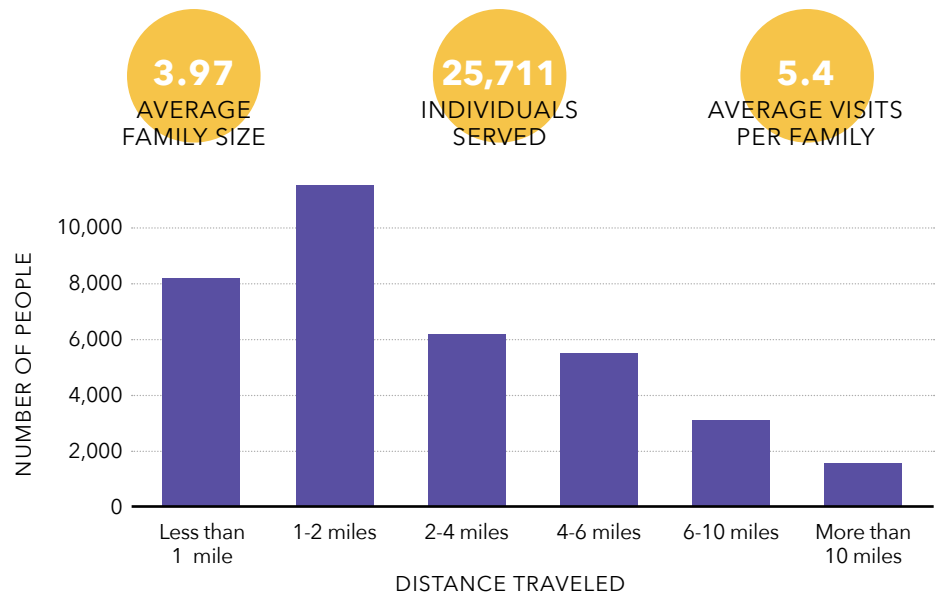


The high rate of SNAP use in households in the focus area shows that **food insecurity** is a serious problem in the community. With limited income, families are stretched to pay for transportation, housing, and food. Often, families skip meals or purchase food with low nutritional value when money is tight. The closest full-service grocery to the focus area is Aldi at the intersection of Mound Street and Central Avenue. The next closest full-service grocery is at Wilson Road and West Broad Street. To help serve families experiencing hunger, the **Mid-Ohio Food Bank** handles more than 66 million pounds annually and provides more than 140,000 meals every day across central and eastern Ohio. The most recent data available from the Food Bank for the Hilltop area shows most people are traveling to food distribution sites from areas nearby, and that on average a family makes between 5 and 6 visits per year.



SNAP data only available at the census tract level, not block group.

**MID-OHIO FOOD BANK, FIGURES FOR HILLTOP SERVICE AREA, FY 2017**



The Mid-Ohio Food Bank defines their Hilltop Service Area for their Integrated Response to Hunger work as a large portion of the Greater Hilltop and including portions north, up to the intersection of Trabue & McKinley.

## Education

Compared to the county averages, the Hilltop has lower rates of high school completion and college attainment. Nearly 30% of adults in the focus area do not have a high school diploma, while just 7% have at least a bachelor's degree. The high school dropout rate is also significantly higher, at 14.2% compared to just 3.2% for the county. These factors illustrate a population that faces multiple and persistent barriers to achieving educational outcomes.

However, some trends seem to be improving. In 2000, 36% of adults in the focus area did not graduate high school—down from 44% in 1980. Though high school completion is becoming more common in the focus area, the four-year graduation rate is still significantly lower than the rest of Columbus. Moreover, the high school dropout rate is alarmingly high in certain parts of the focus area. Residents with less than a high school diploma will struggle significantly to obtain employment, especially a job that pays more than minimum wage that will allow them to support themselves and their families.

### PEOPLE WITH BACHELOR'S DEGREES, 2017

**7%**  
Hilltop  
Focus Area

**35%**  
City of  
Columbus

**39%**  
Franklin  
County

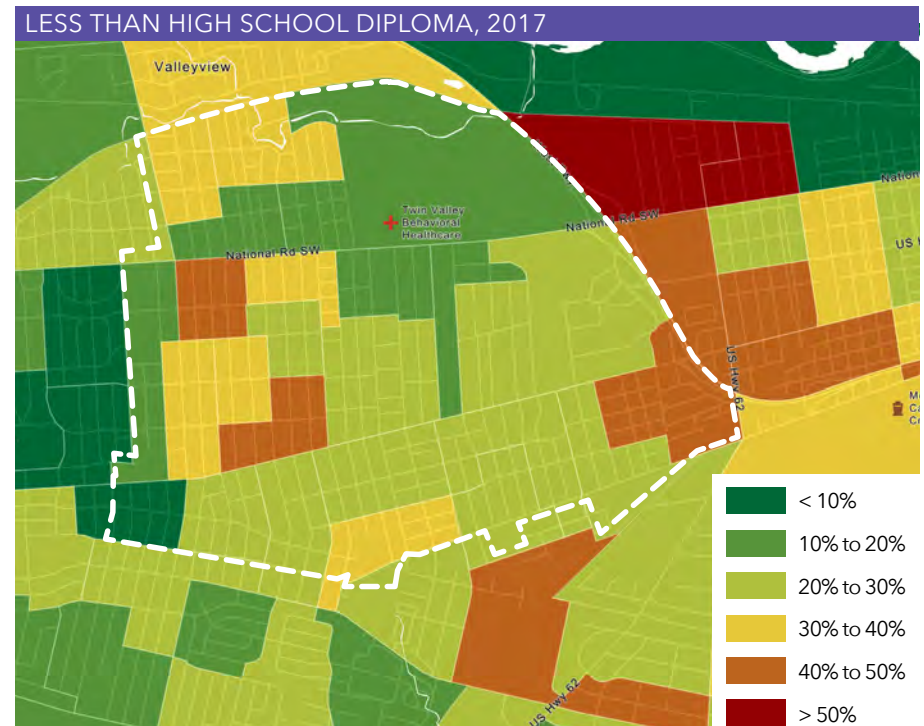
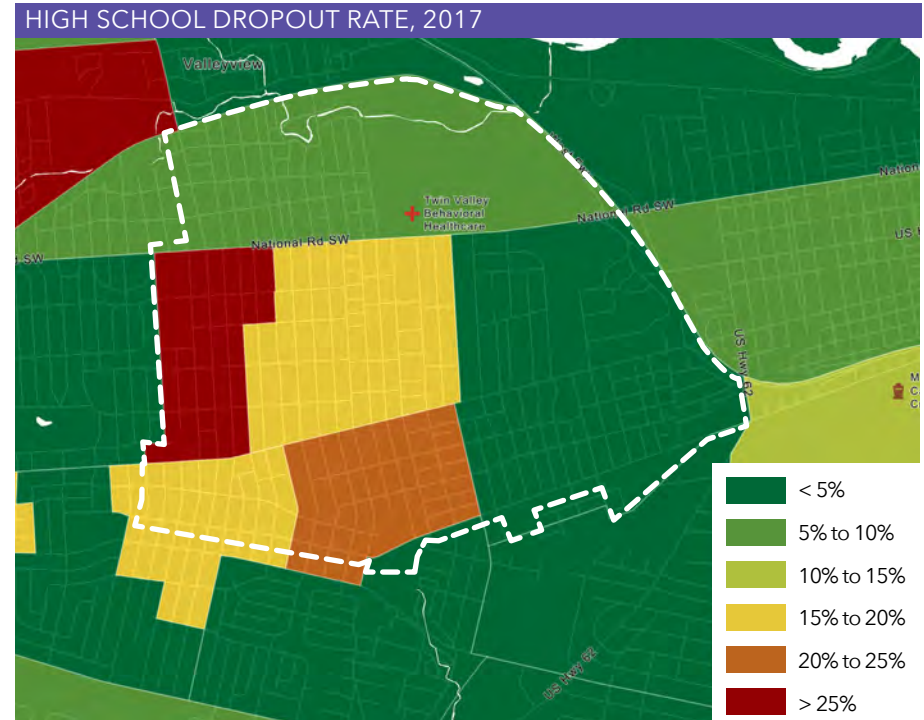
### HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATE, 2017

**14.2%**  
Hilltop  
Focus Area

**3.5%**  
City of  
Columbus

**3.2%**  
Franklin  
County

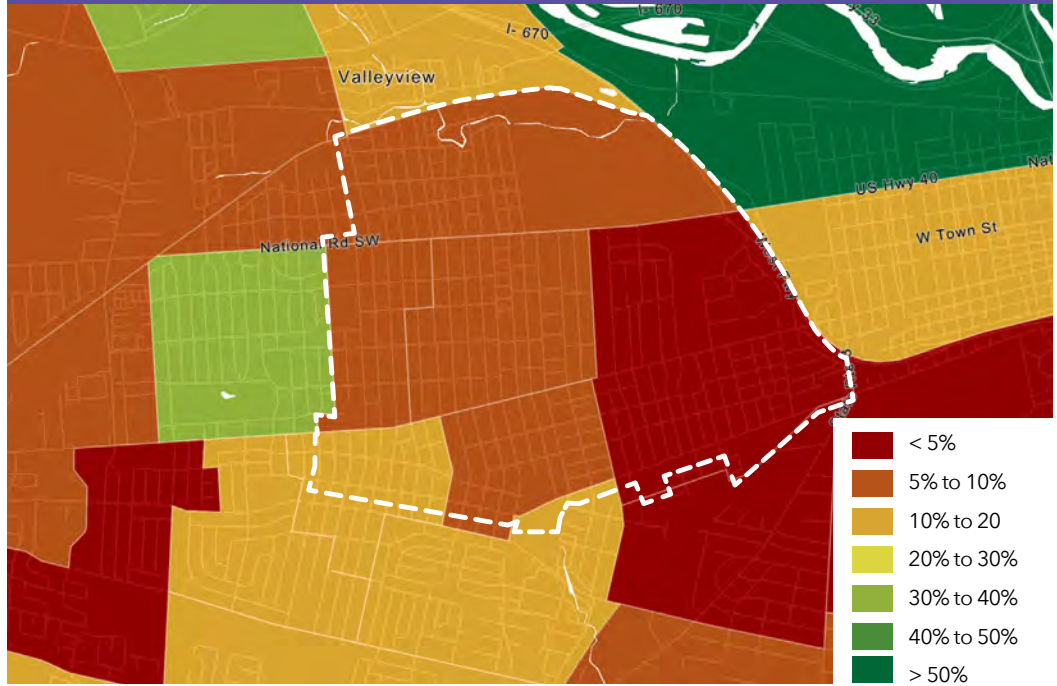
Dropout: Age 16-19, not high school graduate, not enrolled. Source: U.S. Census



Educational attainment varies throughout the focus area. The majority of residents do not have at least a bachelor's degree, yet there are pockets of higher attainment. Adjacent to the focus area, Westgate is the clear outlier, with 30-40% of residents having at least a bachelor's while the surrounding area is mostly 5-10% or less. The southernmost and northernmost parts of the Hilltop also have slightly higher educational levels than the focus area.

As shown in the chart below, the Hilltop is behind Franklin County in educational attainment in many ways, but not all. There are some hopeful statistics, such as 23% of Hilltop residents having some college experience compared to 27% of Franklin County residents. However, the Hilltop still has significantly high numbers of residents without high school diplomas and low numbers of residents with college degrees.

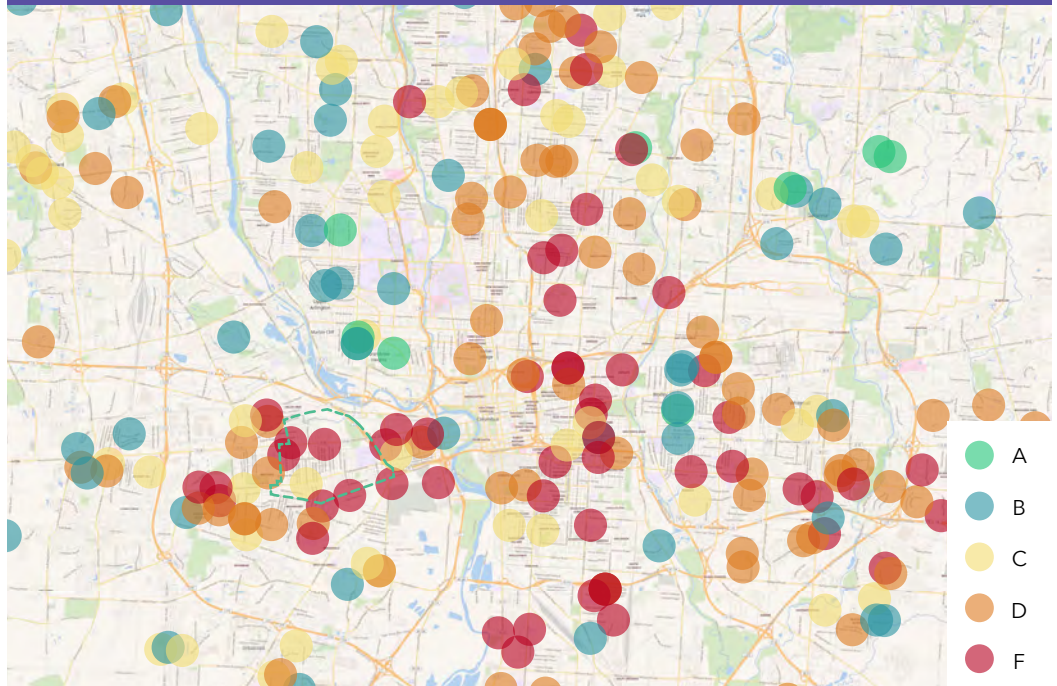
POP. 25 YEARS AND OVER WITH AT LEAST BACHELOR'S DEGREE, 2017



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, +AGE 25, YEAR 2017

	Hilltop Area		Franklin County	
	Count	%	Count	%
<b>Population +25 Years</b>	<b>12,413</b>	-	<b>830,824</b>	-
Less than High School	3,494	28%	77,764	9%
High School Grad/GED	5,131	41%	208,107	25%
Some College	2,857	23%	223,662	27%
Bachelor's Degree	672	5%	203,292	25%
Master's Degree or more	259	2%	117,999	14%

OVERALL GRADE BY SCHOOL BUILDING, 2017-2018



4-YEAR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE, 2018

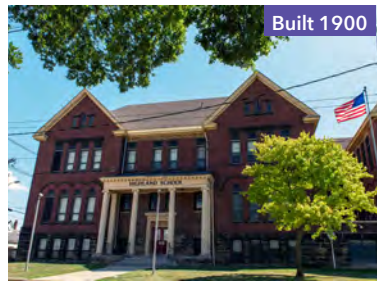
<p><b>78%</b></p> <p><b>West High School</b></p>	<p><b>75%</b></p> <p><b>Briggs High School</b></p>	<p><b>85%</b></p> <p><b>Statewide Average</b></p>
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**Public schools.** As a historic neighborhood, the Hilltop has several architecturally significant school buildings, particularly the iconic West High School and Highland Elementary School buildings. Built in 1929, West High School was one of four new schools built with large auditoriums and was inspired by a New England town hall—complete with red brick and a cupola. The cost was about \$590 per pupil in 1929. It was originally built to hold 1600 pupils; it now has only 875.

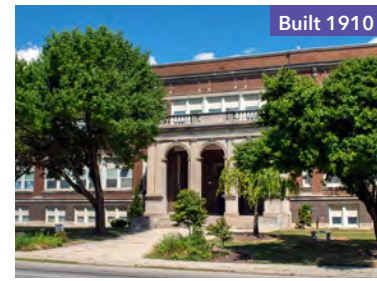
In the focus area, there are six public schools. However, the focus area intersects with the attendance boundaries of eight elementary schools, four middle schools, and two high schools. This indicates that many children are leaving the focus area to attend school.

Overall, schools serving the Hilltop focus area are not rated well by the Ohio Department of Education. The highest-rated schools are Burroughs Elementary, Valleyview, and Binns Elementary Schools, with an overall grade of C.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS LOCATED IN THE HILLTOP FOCUS AREA



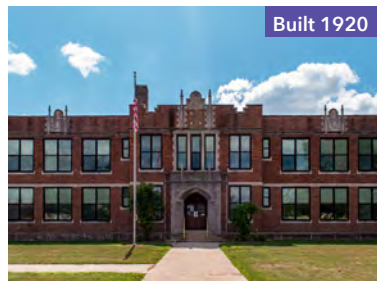
**Highland Elementary** is the oldest Hilltop school building; it was remodeled in 1950 and 1996. Before West High was built in 1929, Highland temporarily served as West Junior High.



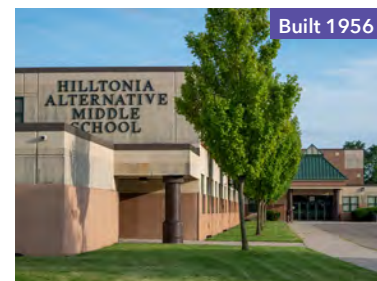
**West Broad** was first called Hague Avenue Elementary and in 1910 was “the most modern school” in Ohio, complete with a master clock system, automatic bells, and self-regulating heating.



**West High** cost \$943,953, which today would be around \$14 million. It was originally located in the former Starling Junior High. It is built in a New England style, featuring a cupola.



Named after a famous naturalist, **John Burroughs Elementary** was originally to be named after Rev. Washington Gladden. The grounds were originally 7 acres, with a 6-acre park.



**Hiltonia Middle School** was built to handle rapid growth. It was state-of-the-art at the time of construction—a 1958 *Dispatch* columnist stated “I nearly gasped when I entered this lovely school.”



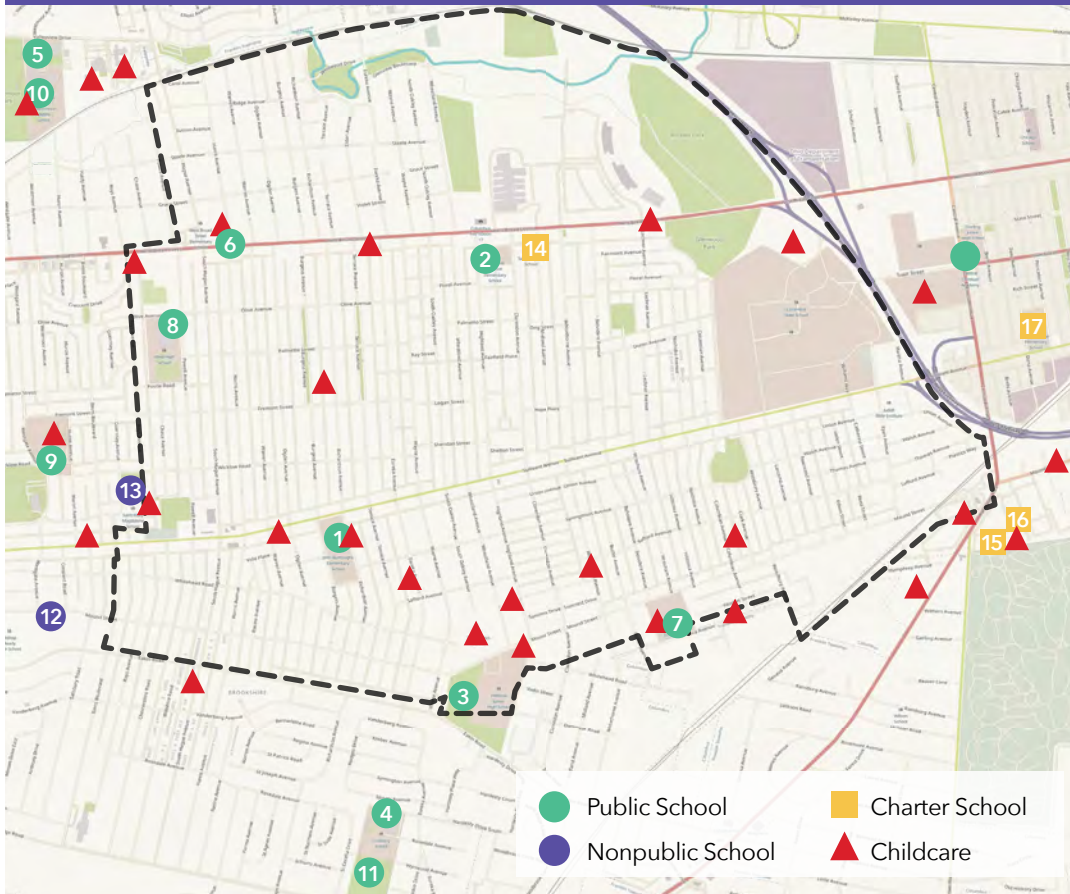
Originally built in 1952, **West Mound Elementary** fell into disrepair and was replaced in 2006. It cost nearly \$9 million and was part of a half-billion-dollar project to open 35 new and renovated schools.

## SELECT SCHOOL BUILDING DATA, 2018–2019

Building Name	Overall Grade	Chronic Absenteeism	% 3rd Grade Reading*	Building Name	Overall Grade	Chronic Absenteeism	% 3rd Grade Reading*
<b>Binns Elementary School</b>	C	30%	86%	<b>Valleyview Elementary School</b>	C	37%	85%
<b>Briggs High School</b>	F	67%	-	<b>Wedgewood Middle School</b>	D	40%	-
<b>Burroughs Elementary School</b>	C	45%	64%	<b>West Broad Elementary School</b>	F	45%	83%
<b>Highland Elementary School</b>	D	39%	100%	<b>West High School</b>	F	64%	-
<b>Hiltonia Middle School</b>	F	65%	-	<b>West Mound Elementary School</b>	F	52%	78%
<b>Lindbergh Elementary School</b>	F	36%	100%	<b>Westmoor Middle School</b>	F	65%	-

\*Percent of 3rd graders meeting third grade reading guarantee

## MAP OF EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES



**Nonpublic Schools.** In addition to the public schools in and adjacent to the focus area, there are also nonpublic educational options. St. Mary Magdalene is a Catholic elementary school on the western edge of the focus area, and Bishop Ready is a large Catholic high school just southwest. There is one charter school in the focus area.

The Educational Choice Scholarship (EdChoice) program, administered by the Ohio Department of Education, provides students from underperforming public schools the opportunity to attend participating private schools. The maximum award amount for the EdChoice voucher is \$4,650 for grades K-8 and \$6,000 for grades 9-12. EdChoice will pay either the scholarship amount or the private school's actual tuition amount, whichever is less. In 2017-2018, there were 143 students in the EdChoice program from zip codes 43223 and 43204. The nonpublic schools attended by these students include:

- St. Mary Magdalene Catholic School 38 students
- Bishop Ready Catholic High School 31 students
- Grove City Christian School 21 students
- Trinity Catholic Elementary School 14 students
- Cypress Christian Schools 11 students

## SCHOOLS SERVING THE HILLTOP FOCUS AREA

School Name	Type	Status			
1 Burroughs Elementary	Elementary School	Public	9 Westgate Alternative Elementary	Elementary School	Public
2 Highland Elementary	Elementary School	Public	10 Westmoor Middle	Middle School	Public
3 Hilltonia Middle	Middle School	Public	11 Briggs High	High School	Public
4 Lindbergh Elementary	Elementary School	Public	12 Bishop Ready (Catholic)	High School	Nonpublic
5 Valleyview Elementary	Elementary School	Public	13 St Mary Magdalene (Catholic)	Elementary School	Nonpublic
6 West Broad Elementary	Elementary School	Public	14 Educational Academy for Boys & Girls	Conversion	Charter
7 West Mound Elementary	Elementary School	Public	15 Harrisburg Pike Community School	Startup	Charter
8 West High	High School	Public	16 Capital High School	Dropout Recovery	Charter
			17 Columbus Collegiate Academy	Startup	Charter

**School Enrollment Patterns.** The Hilltop has a high rate of departure for Columbus City Schools (CCS) students. Departure means that CCS students are choosing to go to schools outside of the Hilltop, but still within CCS, rather than attend the CCS school they are assigned based on their home address. For example, 284 students assigned to Highland Elementary chose other CCS schools during the 2017-2018 school year. This compares to an enrollment of 340, meaning that if all “departing” students from Highland Elementary stayed at Highland Elementary, the total student population there would be 624. Out of the potential 624 students assigned to Highland, 284 are electing to go elsewhere—a rate of 45% departing students out of the potential total. Out of all CCS schools serving the focus area, 2,410 students are departing (attending schools to which they are not assigned). Out of these, 53% stay on the Greater Hilltop, while 47% leave the area altogether.\*

**Childcare Facilities.** Step Up To Quality is a five-star quality rating and improvement system administered by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. All Early Childhood Education (ECE) and Preschool Special Education (PSE) programs funded by ODE are mandated to participate in Step Up To Quality and are required to achieve a rating of 3, 4, or 5 to maintain state funding.

Type of Childcare Center	# in Focus Area
• Licensed Child Care Center	17
• Licensed Type B Family Home	5
• ODE Licensed School Age Childcare	2
• Registered Day Camp	3
• ODE Licensed Preschool	7

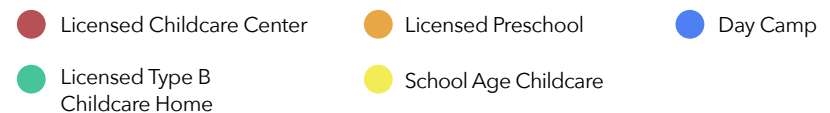
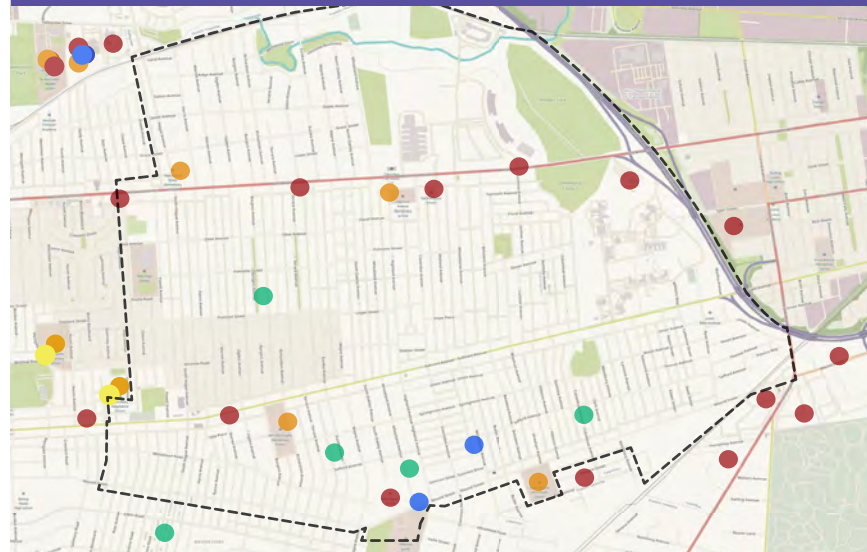
The average Step-Up to Quality Rating for Hilltop focus area programs is 2.39, while the average for Franklin County is 1.13. In the focus area, 35% of the 31 programs are 5-star rated, compared to just 13% of the 1,180 programs in Franklin County.

\*For a complete table of CCS departure data, see appendix.

### STUDENT ENROLLMENT BY BUILDING

Building Name	2014-2015	2018-2019	% change
Binns Elementary School	336	386	14.88%
Briggs High School	897	927	3.34%
Burroughs Elementary School	444	451	1.58%
Highland Elementary School	313	316	0.96%
Hilltonia Middle School	473	515	8.88%
Lindbergh Elementary School	249	300	20.48%
Valleyview Elementary School	293	267	-8.87%
West Broad Elementary School	498	480	-3.61%
West High School	755	879	16.42%
West Mound Elementary School	479	420	-12.32%
Westgate Alternative Elementary	338	331	-2.07%
Westmoor Middle School	528	514	-2.65%

### CHILDCARE FACILITIES, 2019





**WEST HIGH SCHOOL**

**Westmoor Middle School**

- West Broad Elementary
- Highland Elementary
- Valleyview Elementary
- Westgate Alt. Elementary

**Starling K8**

- Avondale Elementary
- Sullivant Elementary

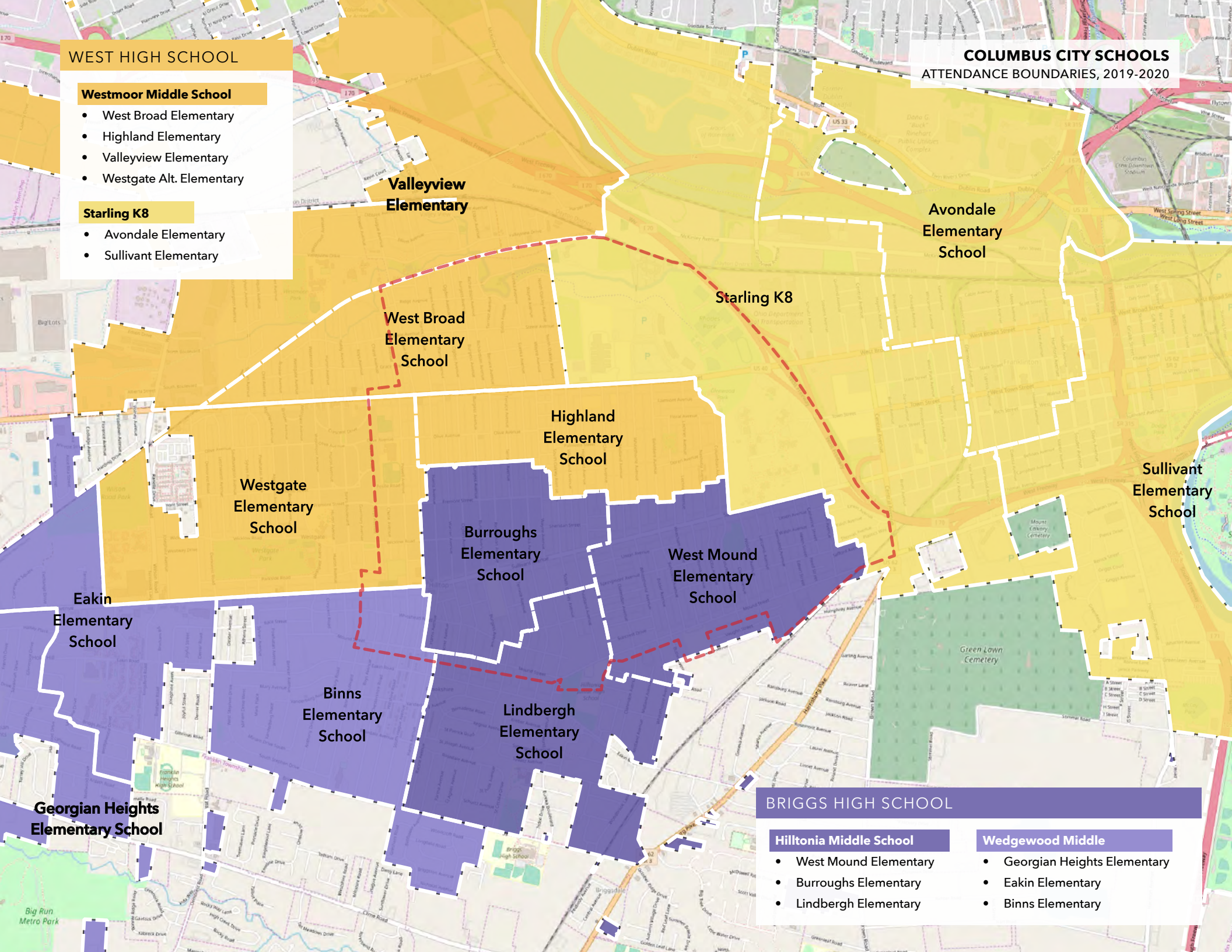
**BRIGGS HIGH SCHOOL**

**Hilltonia Middle School**

- West Mound Elementary
- Burroughs Elementary
- Lindbergh Elementary

**Wedgewood Middle**

- Georgian Heights Elementary
- Eakin Elementary
- Binns Elementary



## Safety & Crime

Crime is a major challenge facing the Hilltop. It was the deadliest neighborhood in Columbus in 2018, with a total of 16 homicides.<sup>1</sup> There are several hot spots for crime in the neighborhood, eight of which are labeled in the table to the right. Most are intersections along Sullivant Avenue, either near convenience stores or gas stations that are open late or near vacant lots or abandoned buildings.

From 2015 through 2018, the most frequently reported violent crime was robbery, followed by aggravated assault, sexual assault, and homicide. Hilltop businesses and residents have seen the impact of the opioid epidemic

on the streets of the neighborhood, and reflected through an increase in crime.

"I see the needles everywhere. I see people staggering through the streets and talking to themselves," one business owner said to the Columbus Dispatch. "It's definitely something that's not in the dark anymore."<sup>2</sup>

Shoplifting and break-ins are crimes often spurred by drug use, which then impact the retail and business environment. A 2018 study of retail noted crime and safety among the top challenges to the Hilltop's retail potential.<sup>3</sup>

### RECURRING CRIME LOCATIONS

Intersection	Nearby Establishments
1 Sullivant & Clarendon	N&N Market
2 Sullivant & S. Highland	Food Mart/Sunoco
3 Sullivant & S. Terrace	Rosco's Market/parking lot
4 Sullivant & S. Warren	Food Mart Express
5 Sullivant & S. Harris	Unknown
6 Sullivant & Hague (two)	UDF and Family Dollar
7 West Broad & S. Ogden	Mobil gas station
8 West Broad & Powell	Buckeye Ranch/Marathon

Locations with at least 10 violent crimes between 2015 and 2018 displayed on map on opposite page.

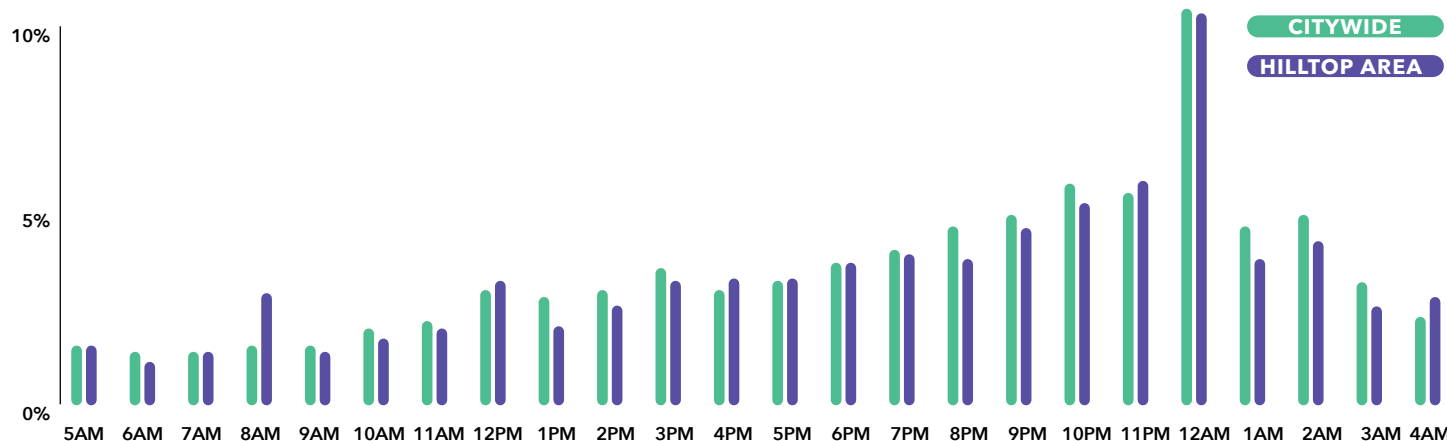


The intersection of Sullivant Avenue and Clarendon Avenue is a hot spot for recurring crime, according to data from 2015 to 2018.

1. Bethany Bruner, Columbus Dispatch. "First-quarter homicide rate up slightly from 2018, nearly half cases closed." April 14, 2019.
2. Esther Honig, WOSU. "From The Hilltop, Columbus' Crime Spike Comes As No Surprise." Nov. 27, 2017.
3. Mark Ferenchik, Columbus Dispatch. "Hilltop must address crime to attract business, consultant says." March 16, 2018.

### VIOLENT CRIME BY TIME OF DAY

Showing % of all recorded violent crimes, 2015 through 2018



### TOP 911 CALL TYPES

#### Hilltop Focus Area, 2018

1. Disturbance
2. Unknown complaint
3. Domestic violence
4. Domestic dispute
5. Burglary alarm
6. Suspicious person
7. Information / assistance
8. Person with a gun
9. Check on well being
10. Burglary report

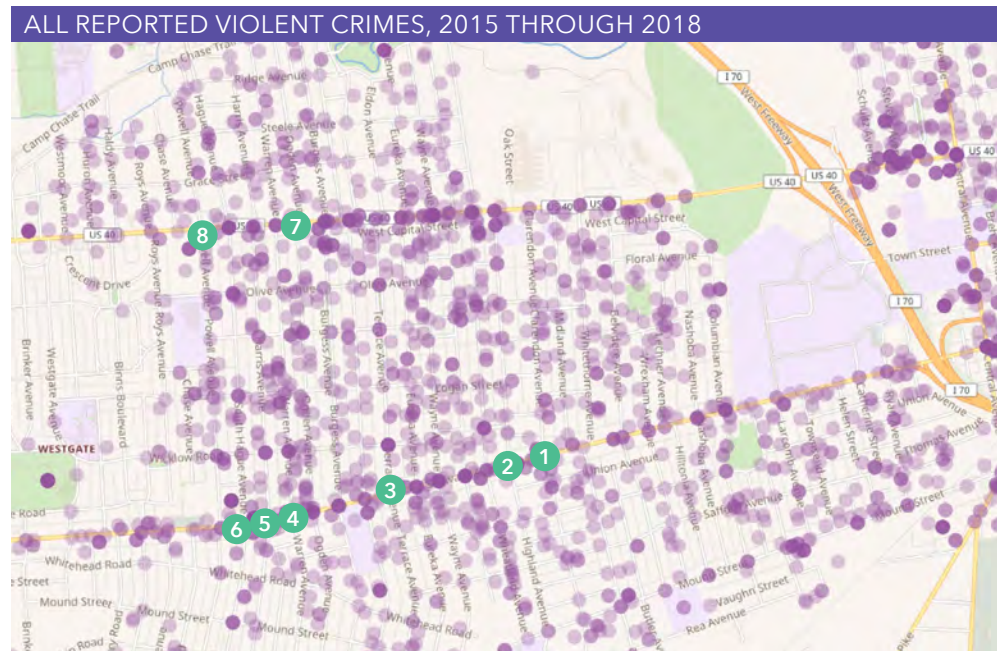
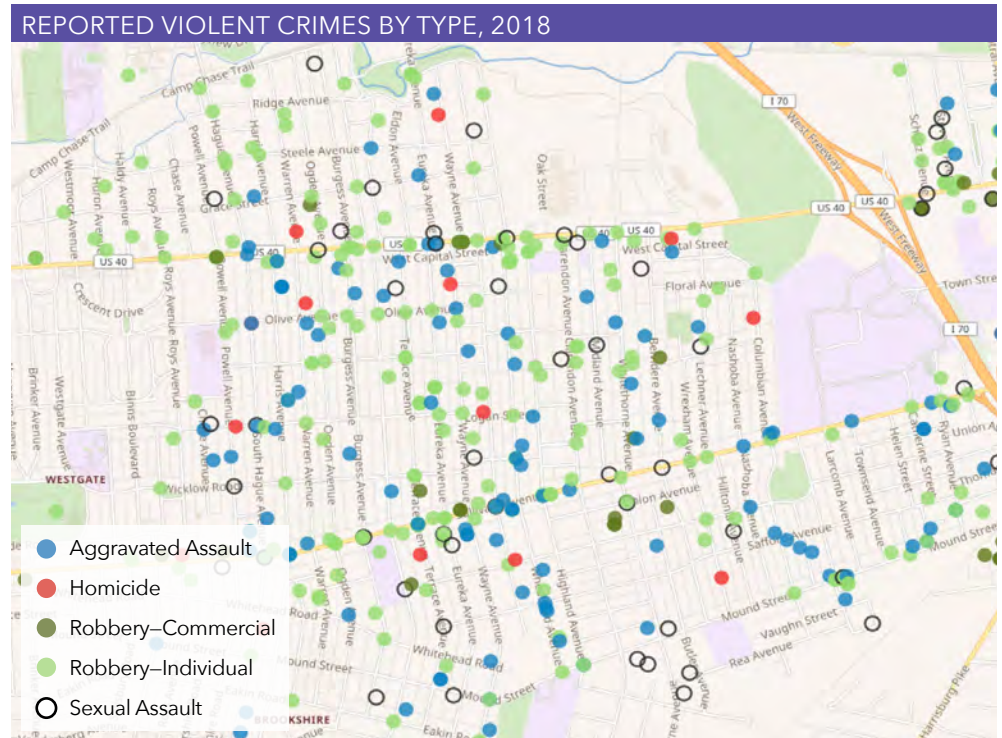
Individual robberies are the most commonly reported crime in the neighborhood; there were over 800 between 2015 and 2018. They appear most prevalent along Broad and Sullivant, where commercial robberies occur as well. Aggravated assaults are spread throughout the focus area. Generally, all types of violent crime are concentrated along and between Broad and Sullivant. The map to the right shows reported violent crimes just for 2018.

**Residential Nuisance Abatement.** The Columbus City Attorney works with law enforcement to build cases against residences where crime is occurring. The cases combine criminal investigations with civil litigation to shut down nuisance properties, generally where there are recurring issues with guns, drugs, and violence. Often, drugs are being sold in homes—and sometimes there are weapons offenses as well as other types of criminal activity. The following addresses were declared a public nuisance in 2019:

- 524 S. Oakley
- 674 S. Oakley
- 102 Midland
- 1915 W. Mound
- 1717 Union

One property had 47 police runs on complaints of overdoses, sexual assault, stolen vehicles, domestic violence, and robbery in a span of just two years.

The map to the right shows all reported violent crimes from 2015 through 2018 using dots with a 10% transparency, creating darker spots where more crimes were reported. In the far west and southwest section of the focus area, as well as north of Broad and south of Sullivant, the concentration of violent crime is less when compared to between Broad and Sullivant.



Green circles denote locations with at least 10 recurring violent crimes between 2015 and 2018. For specific information, see table on opposite page.

## PROPERTY CRIME BY TYPE, 2015–2018

	Hilltop Focus Area		City of Columbus	
	#	%	#	%
Assault - Other	2,843	16.1%	36,101	12.9%
Theft	2,785	15.8%	61,732	22.1%
Burglary - Residential	2,445	13.9%	31,278	11.2%
Vandalism	2,054	11.6%	33,216	11.9%
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,504	8.5%	16,966	6.1%
Burglary from Vehicle	848	4.8%	34,387	12.3%
Drug/Narcotics Violation	758	4.3%	6,122	2.2%
Burglary - Commercial	109	0.6%	3,131	1.1%

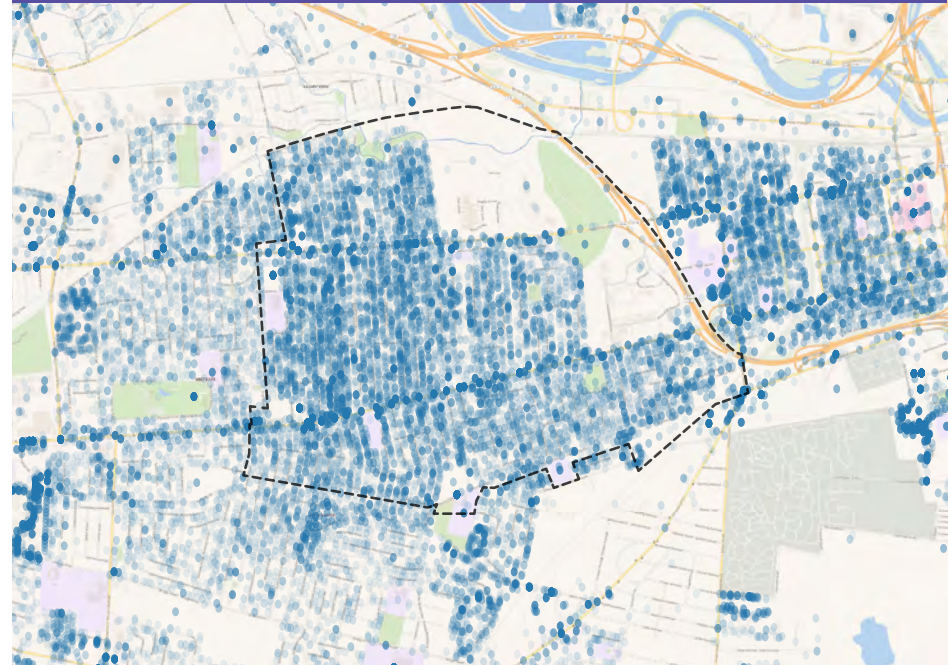
*Excluding uncategorized property crimes and those representing less than 1%*

The map at bottom right shows the high number of Hilltop residents who are involved in the justice system. This means that they have either previously been convicted of a crime, been arrested, or are currently on trial. Although there are a few small areas of concentration, it is clear that residents in all parts of the Hilltop are involved in the justice system. Many are due to drug-related arrests, as drug abuse is prevalent. An analysis of the data by area commission boundaries found that the overall judicial involvement rate for the Hilltop focus area was about 24%, the second highest of the areas analyzed. This figure adjusts for the estimated population of the commission areas, creating a rate to compare across neighborhoods.

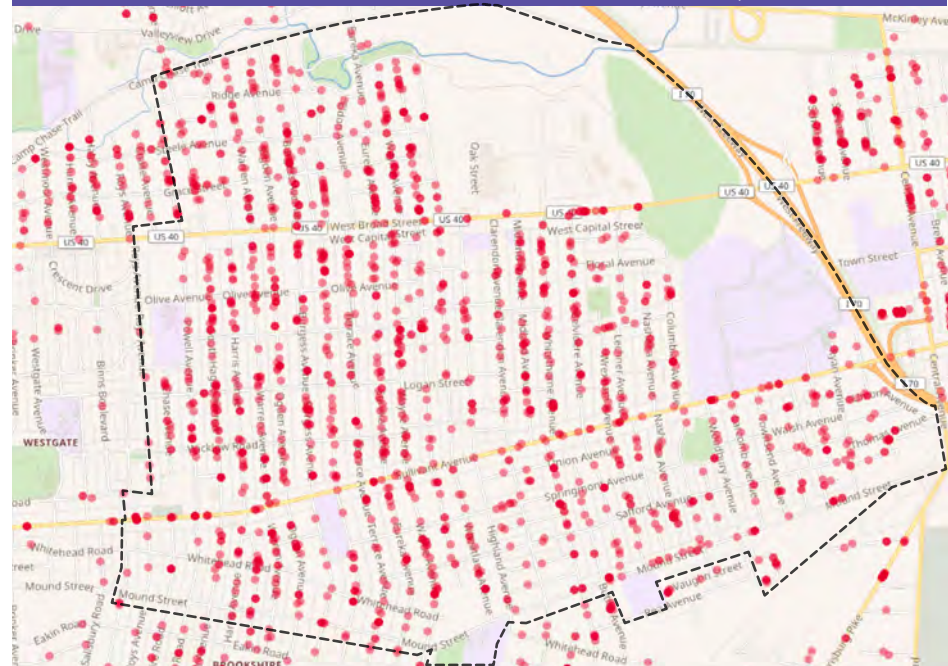
## JUDICIAL INVOLVEMENT BY AREA COMMISSION

Neighborhoods	2010, 2015, and 2017 Incarcerations	Population (2017)	Judicial Involvement Rate
Hilltop Focus Area	4,577	19,445	23.5%
Greater Hilltop AC	8,521	60,126	14.2%
North & South Linden AC	5,578	40,825	13.7%
Franklinton AC	2,848	8,132	35.0%
South Side AC	4,907	28,244	17.4%
Near East AC	3,328	18,271	18.2%
Clintonville AC	520	31,805	1.6%

## PROPERTY CRIME REPORTS, 2015–2018



## ADDRESS OF INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN JUSTICE SYSTEM, 2017



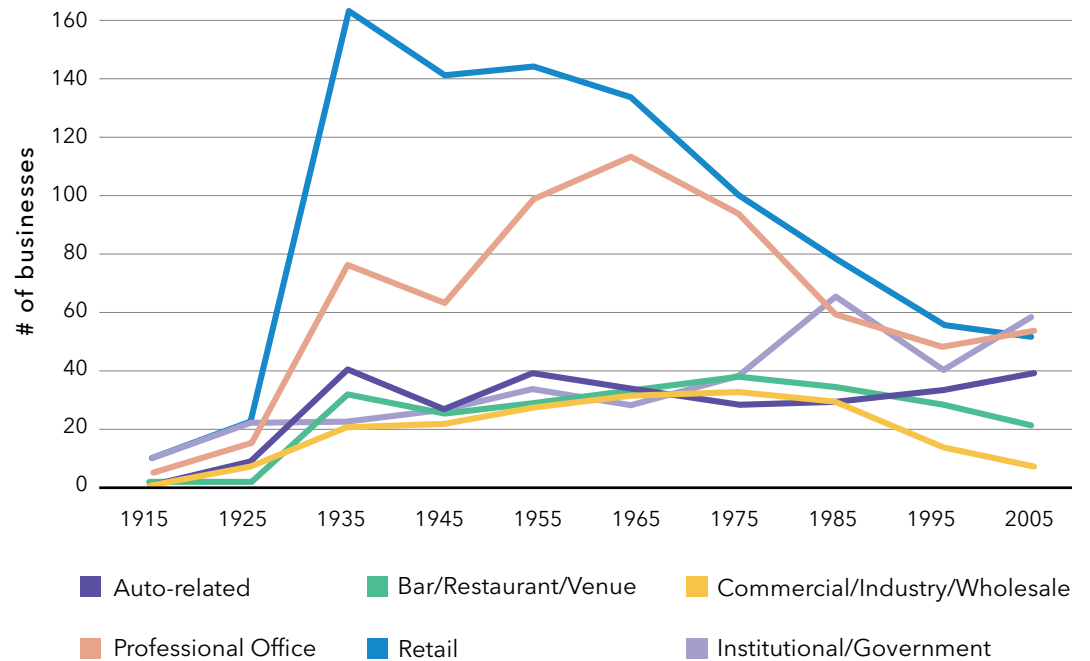
## Businesses

Using 10 selected years of Columbus City Directories produced by the Polk Company, the planning team recorded all businesses along Sullivant Avenue and West Broad Street in the Hilltop focus area. Data on business listings from the year 1915 to 2005 were collected in the address ranges of 1400 to 3000 Sullivant Avenue and 1700 to 3000 West Broad Street. The location, name, and type of business were recorded for a span of nearly 100 years. Out of the 10 individual years recorded, the number of Hilltop businesses was highest in 1964, when there were 371 businesses along these two sections of roadway. By 1996, that number had decreased to 220, and it only slightly increased in 2005.

The business decline occurred primarily in the 1980s and 1990s. Despite a slight increase between 1996 and 2005, the number of businesses in 2005 was only 230—a 38% drop from 1964. This decline was much more significant in certain business categories, such as retail. The retail category encompasses a variety of “walk-in” business types, including but not limited to: shoe stores, drug stores, barber shops, food markets, and florists.

Until around the 1970s, the Hilltop supported a healthy variety and volume of businesses. Groceries/markets reached their peak in 1935 with 31, then decreased to 12 in 1964 and 7 in 1975. Other types of retail also experienced major decline, such as laundromats, which decreased from 16 in 1964 to only 6 in 1975. In that same decade, gas stations decreased from 22 to 13. The biggest drop was in physicians/healthcare practitioners, which decreased from 43 to 27—a 37% reduction in only a decade. However, a few business types did experience increases, such as specialty/hobby shops, auto sales/rentals, and churches. For a more detailed analysis and full data, visit [envisionhilltop.com/business](http://envisionhilltop.com/business).

NUMBER OF BUSINESSES BY CATEGORY



**Business Types, 1964-2005.**

Partly due to a change in how retail functions in the economy, and partly loss of population, daily amenities in the Hilltop neighborhood have been declining for decades. Certain business types have experienced significant changes between the Hilltop’s peak years and the past few decades. To the right is a comparison of the number of certain business types between 1964 and 2005 in the Hilltop Community Plan focus area.

Business Type	1964	2005
Grocery/Markets	12	10
Pharmacies	8	3
Florists	4	0
Gas Stations	22	5
Hardware Stores	3	1
Barber/Salon	26	10
Restaurants/Cafes	28	12
Clubs/Bars	0	7
Churches	9	12
Healthcare	43	21

The primary commercial corridors of Broad and Sullivant on the Hilltop are home to the majority of businesses in the focus area. With high traffic volumes, the potential for customers is higher along these streets than on interior residential streets. Historically, the business district of the Hilltop was along W. Broad Street, with Sullivant Avenue retaining a lower density.

Today, figures show 237 total businesses in the Hilltop focus area, employing just over 3,000 people. This brings the daytime population of the focus area to around 17,000 people. The industry with the highest number of employees in the focus area is Healthcare & Social Assistance, followed closely by Public Administration. The industry with the highest number of businesses in the focus area is Retail Trade—representing 18% of all businesses in the area.

One trend present on the Hilltop is the growth of discount retailers, also known as dollar stores. The focus area is home to four dollar stores—three Family Dollars and one Dollar General.

**Retail at Mound & Central.** Two strip retail centers at the intersection of Harrisburg Pike, W. Mound, and Central Avenue are the largest concentration of stores in the focus area—or adjacent. The area around the intersection has a variety of establishments, including: fast food restaurants, Rent-A-Center, ALDI, Save-a-Lot (grocery), a thrift store and pawn shop, cell phone stores, tax preparation service, check cashing, and a gas station. The area is separated from the focus area by railroad tracks and lacks safe non-motorized access for Hilltop residents, creating barriers to access. The shopping centers are also auto-oriented, which could discourage non-motorists and put them at risk while traveling. The travel distance from the northwest corner of the focus area to this shopping area is 3.5 miles, compared to just 3 miles to Georgesville Road from the same location.

## ALL BUSINESSES IN HILLTOP FOCUS AREA

**237**  
TOTAL  
BUSINESSES

**3,032**  
TOTAL  
EMPLOYEES

**17,135**  
DAYTIME  
POPULATION

## BUSINESSES IN HILLTOP FOCUS AREA BY TYPE, 2018

Showing categories with at least 100 employees.

NAICS Code	Number of Employees	Percent
Health Care & Social Assistance	876	29%
Public Administration	827	27%
Educational Services	373	12%
Retail Trade	291	10%
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	138	5%
Nonstore Retailers	137	5%
Accommodation & Food Services	117	4%

Showing categories with at least 10 businesses.

NAICS Codes	Number of Businesses	Percent
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	43	18%
Retail Trade	42	18%
Health Care & Social Assistance	29	12%
Construction	18	8%
Public Administration	16	7%
Food/Beverage Stores	14	6%
Accommodation & Food Services	12	5%
Food Services & Drinking Places	11	5%

**What is a NAICS Code?** The North American Industry Classification System is the standard used by federal statistical agencies to classify businesses for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data.



Harrisburg Point Shopping Center was built in 1966 and is approximately 80,000 sq. ft. on about 5 acres of land. In 1955, it was home to a new Big Bear grocery store. Central Point is older, built in 1953.

**Vacant Commercial Properties.** Structural vacancy plagues both the Broad and Sullivant corridors, contributing to an appearance of disinvestment and blight. A survey conducted in October 2019 shows 19 visually vacant commercial structures along West Broad Street between Roys Avenue and Whitethorne Avenue. Along Sullivant Avenue from Huron Avenue to Townsend Avenue, there were 12 visually-vacant commercial structures.



Buildings known as the “Bank Block” on West Broad Street, at the intersection with Wayne Avenue.



A section of deteriorating buildings on W. Broad at the intersection with Eureka Avenue.



One-story commercial buildings at the intersection of Sullivant Avenue and Richardson Avenue.

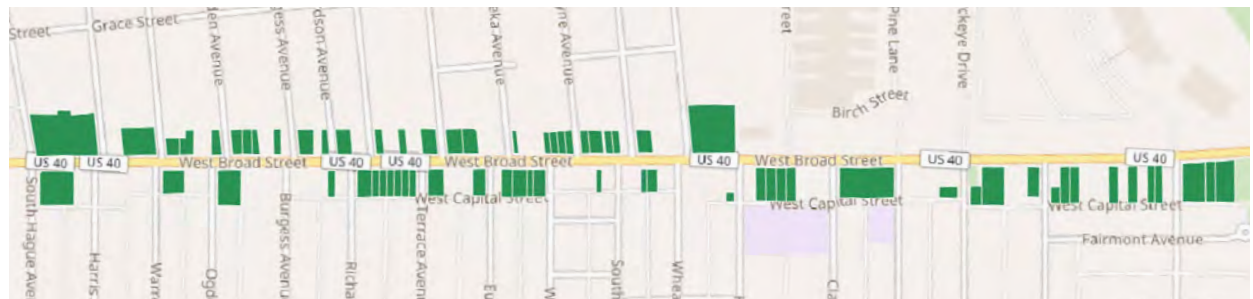
RETAIL/COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES ON W. BROAD STREET, 2019



RETAIL/COMMERCIAL STRUCTURES ON SULLIVANT AVENUE, 2019



**Contributing Buildings.** The Planning Division of the City of Columbus worked with the Historic Preservation Officer to determine which structures in the Broad and Sullivant corridors are considered “contributing” to the historic architectural fabric of the community. This designation does not prevent demolition, but it acknowledges that preserving the historic character of the Hilltop is important.



In the focus area, there are 68 parcels considered contributing to the historic nature of the Broad St. corridor. Along Sullivant, there are 52.

## Mobility

The Hilltop is well-served by two major arterial east-west corridors, but lacks north-south connections. Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue are the primary roadways leading people to and through the neighborhood, along with Mound Street to the south. Mound Street is more suburban in character and lacks the commercial activity of Broad and Sullivant. Despite this, all three roadways provide relatively unhindered access eastbound to Franklinton and Downtown. But the Hilltop is significantly isolated from areas to the north—namely Grandview Heights and Fifth by Northwest. For example, the Ohio Department of Transportation is just 1 mile from McKinley Field Park in Grandview Heights, but the trip is 3.2 miles by car. The Scioto River, I-670, and I-70 create a significant barrier between the Hilltop and affluent, amenity-rich areas to the north.

The 1908 Columbus Plan advocated for extending Grandview Avenue south to Broad Street, creating a better connection to the Hilltop and Franklinton and reducing isolation. In 1986, the proposal was brought up by Hilltop residents, but the idea has not gained traction.<sup>1</sup> “Hilltop officials have been frustrated for years by the fact that motorists on Grandview Ave. can see W. Broad St., but can’t get there without traveling several side streets,” said the county engineer at the time. “I could see where it would have quite a bit of function.”

The neighborhood is served by three COTA bus lines, the #10 (W. Broad), the #6 (Sullivant), and the #9 (Mound). Again, north-south service is an obstacle for transit-dependent people. The nearest north-south line is the #5, running along Wilson Road to the west, followed by the #21 along Hilliard-Rome Road. Otherwise, bus riders have to go downtown to transfer to different lines for wider connectivity.

1. Columbus Dispatch, December 24, 1986.

### HOW PEOPLE GET TO WORK



**Drive Alone**  
78% | 5,182



**Bus**  
6% | 381



**Carpool**  
14% | 915



**Bike/Walk**  
2% | 128

### CAR OWNERSHIP BY HOUSEHOLD



**No Car | 18%**  
1,084 households



**Two Cars | 27%**  
1,771 households



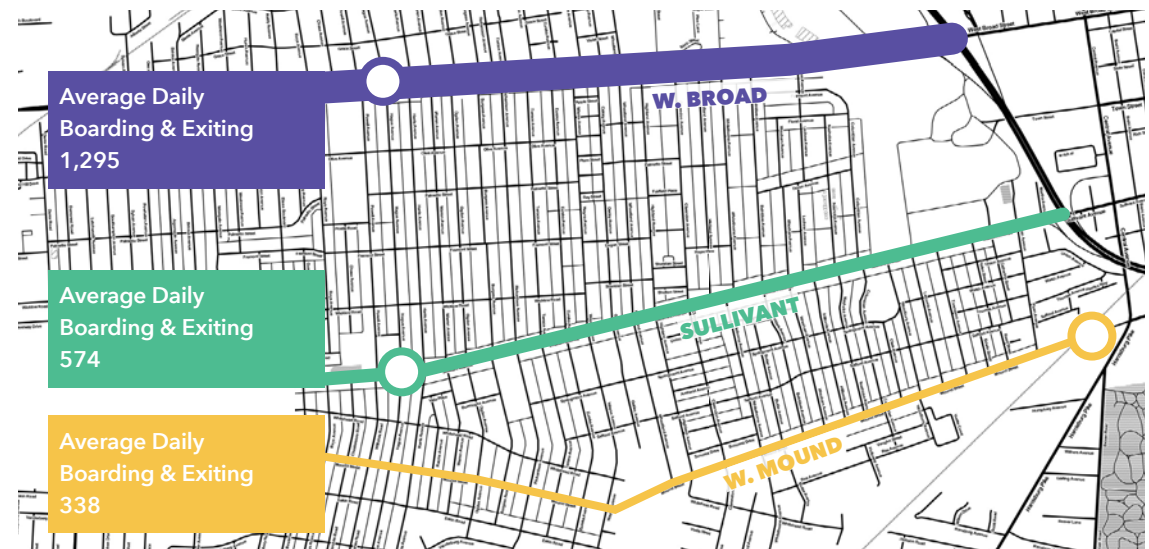
**One Car | 44%**  
2,860 households



**Three Cars or more | 13%**  
849 households

### COTA RIDERSHIP (CENTRAL OHIO TRANSIT AUTHORITY)

Average daily weekday ridership for the period of July, August, and September 2018.



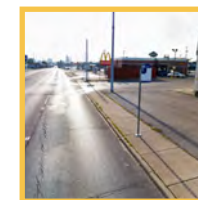
### BUSIEST STOP ON EACH ROUTE\*



**Route #10**  
Broad & Hague  
263 daily trips



**Route #6**  
Sullivant & Hague  
72 daily trips

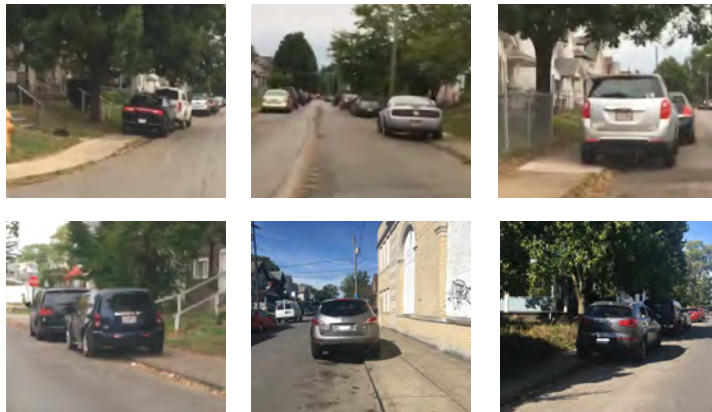
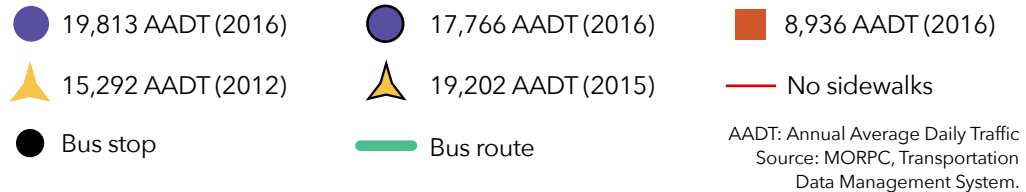
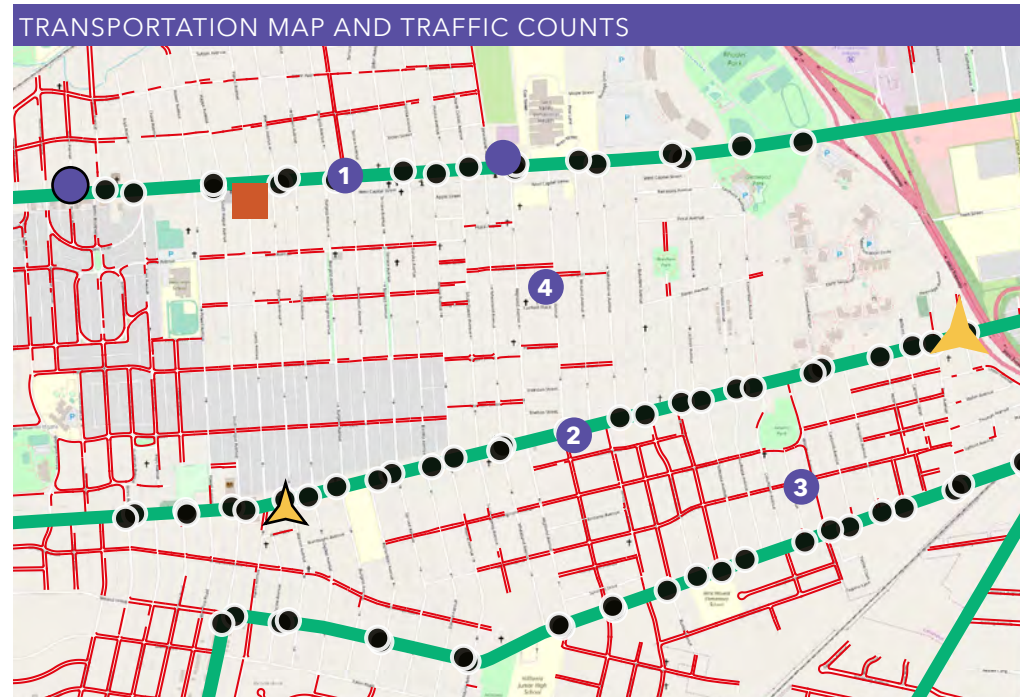


**Route #9**  
Mound & Central Point  
93 daily trips

\*Average daily boarding and exiting in both directions per stop pair



Cars are the dominant mode of transportation on the Hilltop, made easy by car-oriented infrastructure and road design. This creates barriers for the 1,084 households without access to an automobile, as well as for the 2,860 households that have access to just one vehicle. Together, this means 61% of households have no or limited car access. Despite this, the Hilltop focus area does not have complete sidewalk coverage, posing significant danger to non-drivers. Sidewalks are especially lacking south of Sullivant. Furthermore, the most recent data available shows that drivers routinely exceed posted speed limits. Drivers may feel comfortable speeding due to outdated roadway design standards and lack of law enforcement. Sidewalk obstructions are also common in the focus area, with vehicles frequently parking on sidewalks—perhaps motivated by fear of having their car side-swiped by passing drivers. When cars park on sidewalks, the street seems wider and may encourage faster driving. These circumstances make walking more hazardous and create pinch points which may be impassable for wheelchair users, forcing them to use the roadway rather than the sidewalk.



**SELECT 85TH PERCENTILE SPEEDS** (See map for locations)

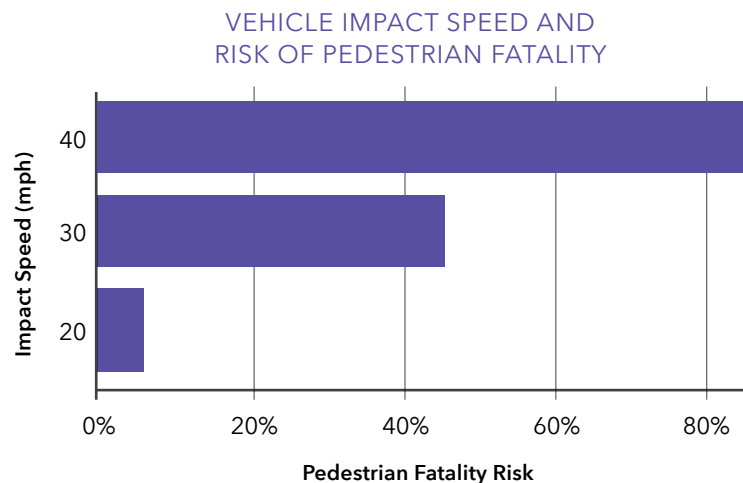
<p><b>1</b> Location: <b>W. Broad &amp; Burgess</b> Date: 5/9/2016 Speed Limit: 35mph 85%: 39mph</p>	<p><b>2</b> Location: <b>Sullivant &amp; Clarendon</b> Date: 10/8/2014 Speed Limit: 35mph 85%: 38mph</p>
<p><b>3</b> Location: <b>Columbian &amp; Safford</b> Date: 5/25/2016 Speed Limit: 25mph 85%: 32mph</p>	<p><b>4</b> Location: <b>Highland &amp; Palmetto</b> Date: 2/6/2017 Speed Limit: 25mph 85%: 34mph</p>

Source: MORPC, Transportation Data Management System.

<b>31</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1.75 miles</b>	<b>2.13 miles</b>
One-Way Streets	Two-Way Streets	W. Broad Corridor	Sullivant Corridor

**What is 85th percentile?** The speed at or below which 85% of all vehicles are observed to travel under free-flowing conditions. Traffic engineers use this to set the speed limit to promote uniform traffic flow, based on the 1964 “Solomon Curve,” which instructs that speed limits should be set at what 85% of drivers think is healthy. However, the National Transportation Safety Board recently recommended to revise traditional speed-setting standards to balance 85 percentile approaches with approaches that better incorporate crash history, and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. “In general,” the report states, “there is not strong evidence that the 85th percentile speed within a given traffic flow equates to the speed with the lowest crash involvement rate” (Pg. x). Source: [www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf](http://www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf)

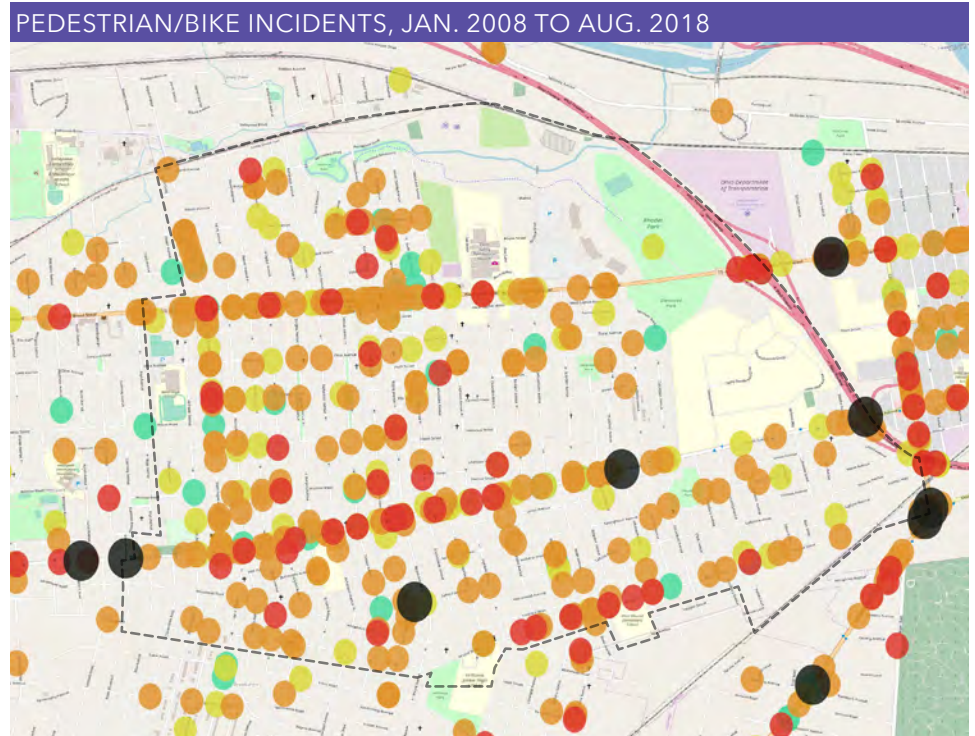
Non-motorists in the Hilltop focus area have experienced significant violence, injury, and death in recent years. An analysis of incidents from 2008 to 2018 shows fatalities along Sullivant Avenue and Mound Street, as well as a concentration of serious injuries along Broad and Sullivant. Serious injuries are more common along corridor streets, but also occur on interior residential streets. High motorist speeds (as shown on the previous page) contribute to the risk of pedestrian fatality, with the risk doubling between 30mph and 40mph.



Source: <https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/research/pub/hs809012.html>

**Analysis of Vehicle Collision Types.** The Hilltop has a lower percentage of rear end collisions than Franklin County, yet has more than twice the rate of angle collisions and substantially more parked vehicle collisions. The rate of pedestrian incidents in the focus area is 3.9%, compared to just 1.5% for the county.

In 2016 and 2017, the focus area had 82 reported pedestrian- and bicycle-involved incidents, a combined rate of 5% compared to a rate of 2.2% for Franklin County. A higher rate of non-motorists in the Hilltop focus area likely contributes to the higher incident rate.



● Property Damage Only/No Injury     ● Possible Injury  
● Visible Injury     ● Serious Injury     ● Fatal

**HILLTOP FOCUS AREA, 2016-2017**

Top Incidents	Count	Percent
Angle	352	21.4%
Sideswipe - Passing	316	19.2%
Rear End	264	16.0%
Parked Vehicle	239	14.5%
Left Turn	121	7.4%
<b>Pedestrian/Bicycle</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Pedestrian	64	3.9%
Pedalcycles	18	1.1%

**FRANKLIN COUNTY, 2016-2017**

Top Incidents	Count	Percent
Rear End	23,205	32.4%
Sideswipe - Passing	11,972	16.7%
Left Turn	8,146	11.4%
Angle	7,271	10.2%
Fixed Object	6,677	9.3%
<b>Pedestrian/Bicycle</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Pedestrian	1,083	1.5%
Pedalcycles	528	0.7%

## Recreation

The Hilltop focus area is home to seven public parks and two community centers. Westgate community center is also accessible to residents from its location just a half-mile outside the focus area. In total, there are around 100 acres of parkland that offer a variety of different activities—open fields with soccer goals, picnic areas and shelters, and recreation centers. Holton Park, in the northern section of the focus area, has a creek (Dry Run) running through wooded areas, in addition to a basketball court and play equipment. Wrexham Park is likely the most under-utilized park in the focus area, due to its position behind homes and adjacent to an alley. Its interior has many mature trees and a walking path. Rhodes Park, leased by the City of Columbus from the State of Ohio, has more of a regional draw than the Hilltop's other parks. Featuring many sports fields and plenty of space for parking, Rhodes regularly hosts large tournaments that attract visitors from around Columbus. Glenwood, which has a relatively new recreation center, is a hub for neighborhood activities and offers an outdoor pool. Hilltonia Park, on the southern edge of the focus area, is adjacent to Hilltonia Middle School and includes baseball diamonds, basketball, a playground, and picnic tables.

The focus area has access to the Camp Chase Trail, dedicated bike lanes, and some roads that are considered "bike-friendly."



**Wrexham Park** is a 2.16-acre residential park in central Hilltop, largely hidden by surrounding houses. Its two main entrances are on Wrexham; it features a circular walking trail with a small playground at its center.



Just south of Sullivant Ave., **Hauntz Park** is 5.67 acres with a large mown sports field at its center. At the southwest corner, there is a small open shelter, a variety of paved courts for basketball and hopscotch, and a playground.

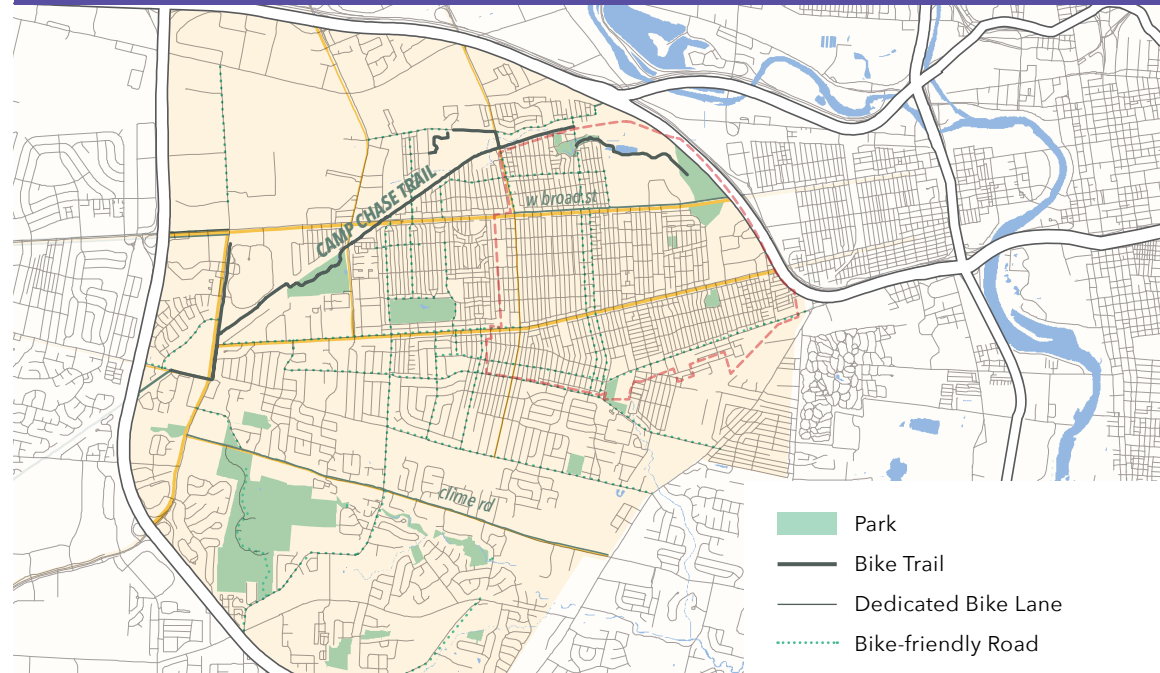


**Holton Park** offers a nearby recreation center, an open shelter, picnic tables, basketball and tennis courts, a playground, and parking. It is accessible from Westwood Drive, which extends between Eureka & Richardson Ave.



Together, **Glenview and Holton Parks** make up 15.21 acres and connect to Rhodes Park via the Sullivant Trace Trail. Glenview is a pastoral expanse on the east side of Eureka. Homes face the park along Glenview Blvd.

### BIKE FACILITIES & REGIONAL GREENWAYS, HILLTOP AREA



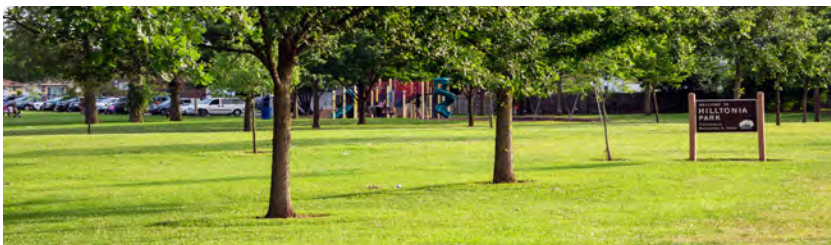
**Access to Park Space.** While nearby park access is prevalent throughout most of the Hilltop, there is a sizeable portion of the neighborhood that lacks it. Green space and playgrounds at public schools are not formally considered parks, and are excluded from the park access calculation. However, Columbus City Schools playgrounds are sometimes informally used by residents and are not typically secured to prevent access. Other green spaces exist as well, like wide grass medians in a few spots in the neighborhood. One particularly scenic location is the grassy area near Holton Park, where Dry Run Creek flows through and houses overlook the meadow from the hillside.



**Rhodes Park** is 51.1 acres used for active sports and features a running track, basketball court, various athletic fields, an ADA field for people with disabilities, playground, shelter house, picnic tables, and parking lots.

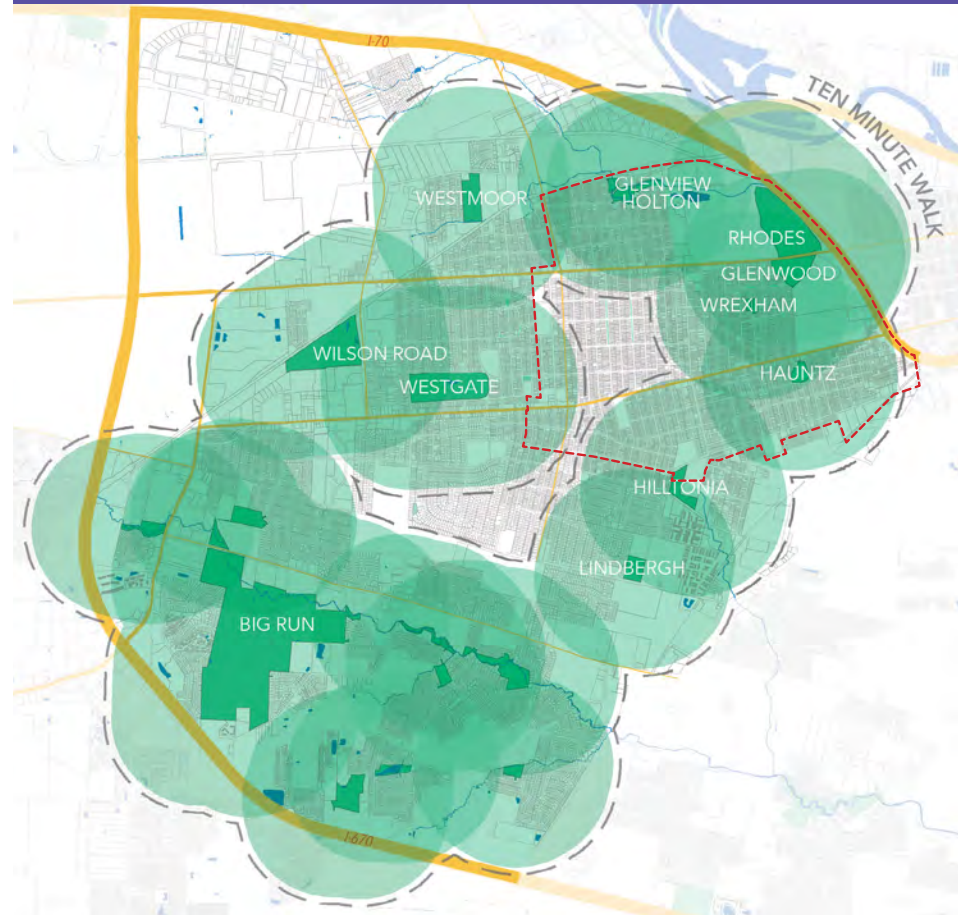


Located immediately south of Rhodes Park, **Glenwood Park** is 15.67 acres and features a recreation center, outdoor pool, playground, basketball and tennis courts, a large wooded area, and parking lot.



Located immediately south and west of the Hilltonia Middle School, **Hilltonia Park** is 11.5-acres and features a large, open lawn that accommodates both baseball and football, an open shelter, and playground.

## PARK ACCESS MAP – GREATER HILLTOP AREA



In the map above, each park was drawn with a buffer of 1/2 mile to approximate an average 10-minute walk. Thus the areas in green and within the gray-dotted border are within about a 10-minute walk to a public park. Based on an analysis of the “gap” area within the red-dotted focus area, there are an estimated 4,500 individuals living more than a 10-minute walk from a public park. Additional, or expanded, park facilities could help improve access for the thousands of residents within this gap area.

Median parkways provide opportunities for recreation and leisure. In the focus area, there are three examples of green medians: Floral, Terrace, and Burgess Avenues.



**Community Centers & Amenities.** The Hilltop is fortunate to be served by a number of recreational and community facilities. In the focus area, there are two City of Columbus community centers—Glenwood and Holton. Nearby, Westgate Community Center offers additional activities and hours. As shown in the chart below, there are facilities open every day of the week, for many hours of the day—even on Sunday. This means there is high accessibility for residents, and that working parents who need activities for children have at least some options nearby. These facilities offer a variety of different programs, classes, and amenities, such as childcare, weight rooms, pottery classes, and highly valuable services such as English as a Second Language classes. Having

places for children to go that are supervised and offer structured recreation and learning activities is crucial and can offer a safe place for youth. The facilities considered for the chart below include the following:

- Holton Recreation Center
- Glenwood Recreation Center
- Westgate Recreation Center
- Hilltop YMCA
- Boys & Girls Club—J. Ashburn
- Greater Hilltop Shalom Zone
- Columbus Metropolitan Library—Hilltop Branch

There are additional facilities in the focus area that have programming for youth, but only locations with open drop-in hours are listed here.



Opened in 1975, **Holton Recreation Center** cost \$235,000 to build (\$1.1 million in 2019). It was temporarily closed in 2009 to reduce an \$83 million budget shortfall.

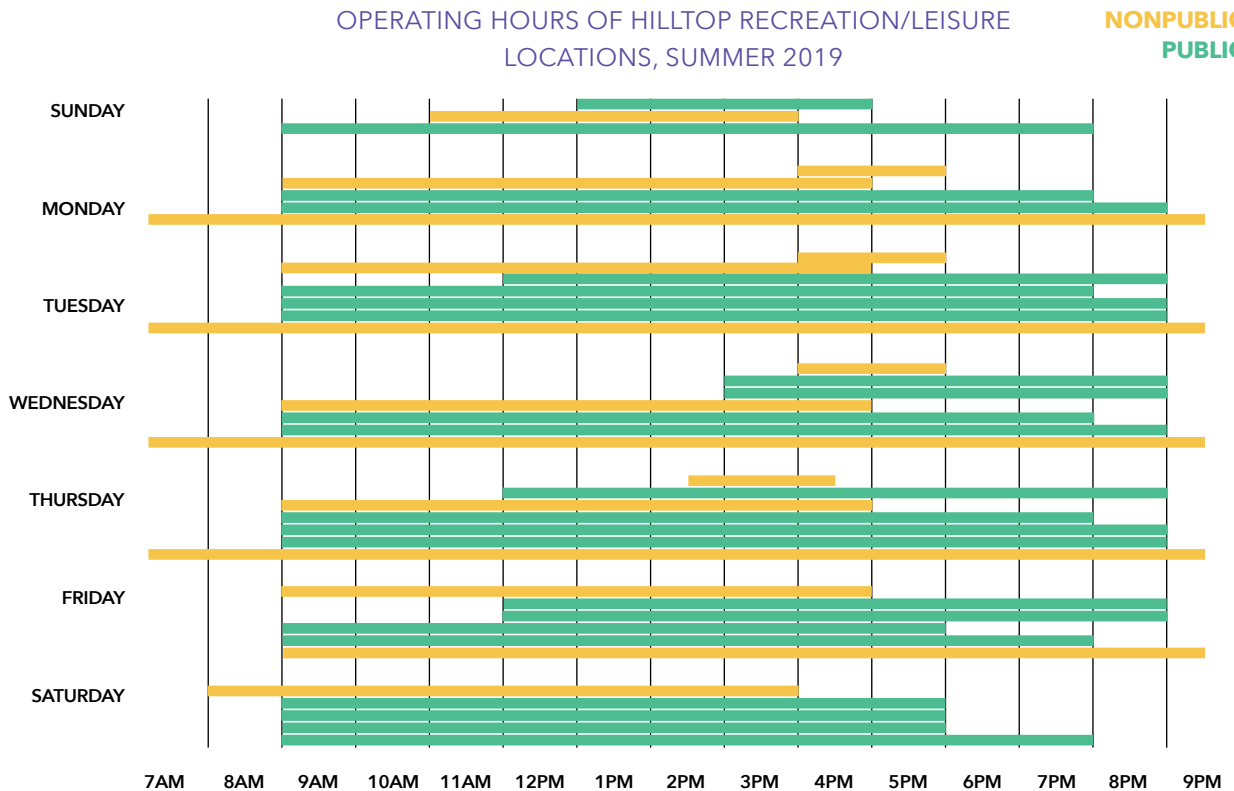


The original **Glenwood Recreation Center** opened in 1963, but by the 2000s it was deteriorating. It was demolished and rebuilt in 2016 at a cost of over \$7 million. It features a gym, ceramics/arts rooms, fitness, and more.



Built in 1959, the **Hilltop YMCA** cost \$277,016 to construct (\$2.7 million in 2019). Throughout the 1970s it was the weekly meeting place of the Hilltop Kiwanis before it became open to women in 1987.

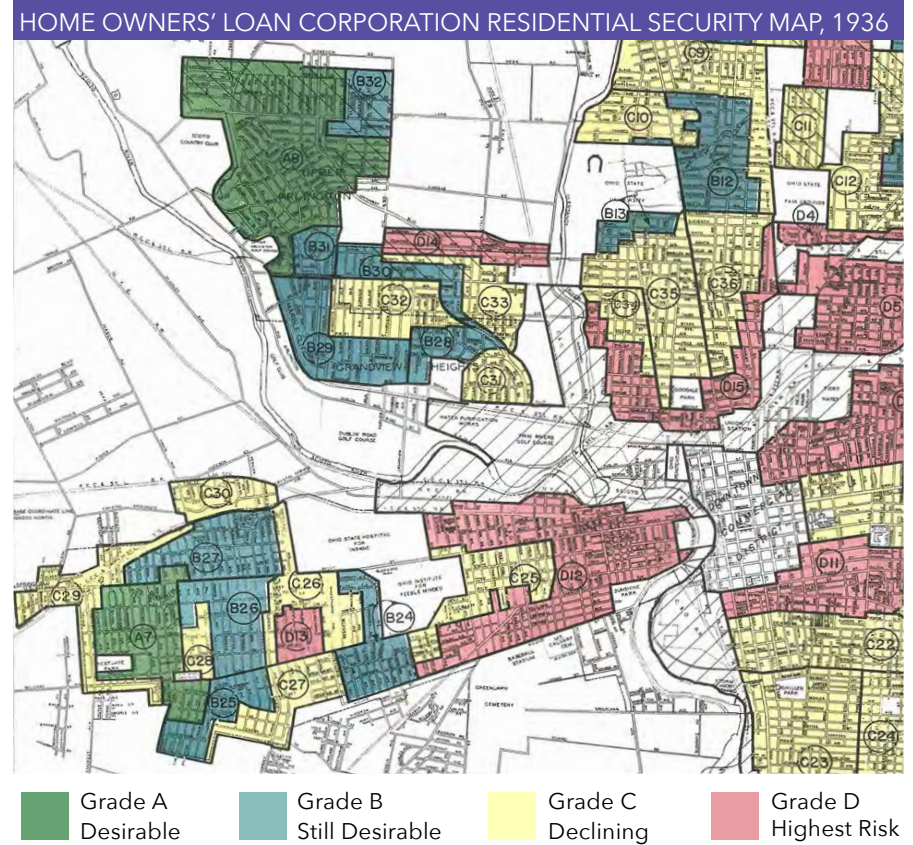
OPERATING HOURS OF HILLTOP RECREATION/LEISURE LOCATIONS, SUMMER 2019



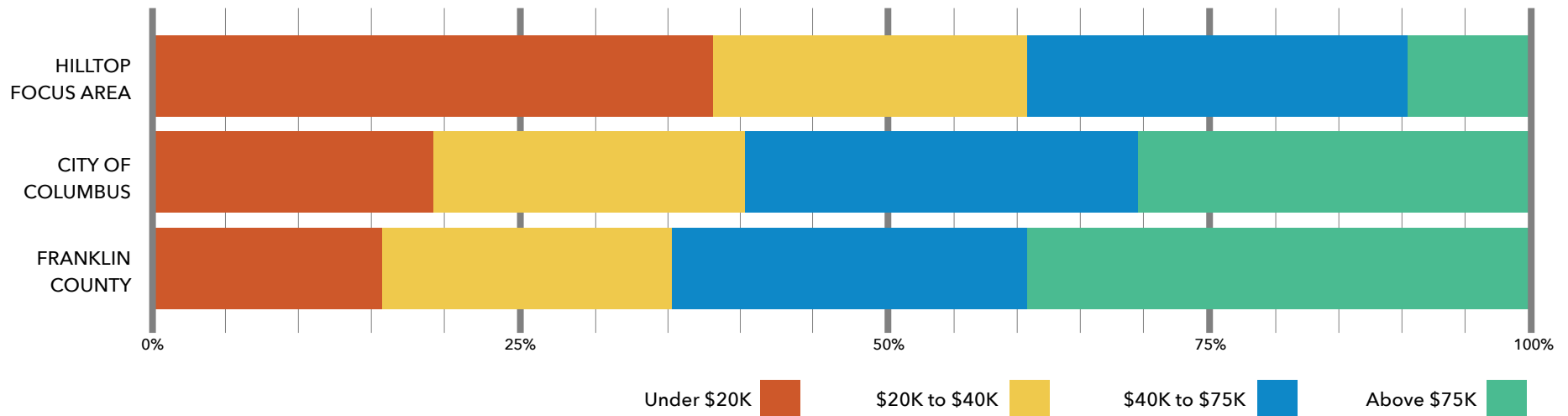
## Mixed-Income Housing

Historically, the Hilltop focus area contained housing for different income levels, though it was predominantly classified as a middle-class housing area.

In the 1930s, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) created a system of classifying residential areas that unfairly targeted minority and low-income neighborhoods and reduced access to mortgage financing. The HOLC was created by Congress in 1933 to refinance troubled mortgages to prevent foreclosures, and in 1935 "residential security maps" were created to indicate the safety level of real estate investment. Racially segregated, more affluent areas received the highest rating—green—while older and more racially integrated areas received the lowest rating—red. The red areas were considered the riskiest for mortgage support due to "inharmonious" inhabitants, which blocked many minorities and low-income borrowers from accessing home mortgages and business loans because the loans would not be guaranteed by the federal government. The term "redlining" refers to the practice of classifying certain areas as too risky for investment. In a 1936 map, the Hilltop focus area contained three classifications of security risk: red (highest risk), yellow (declining), and blue (still desirable).



HOUSEHOLD INCOME QUANTILES SHOWN BY SELECT GEOGRAPHIES, AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) 2017

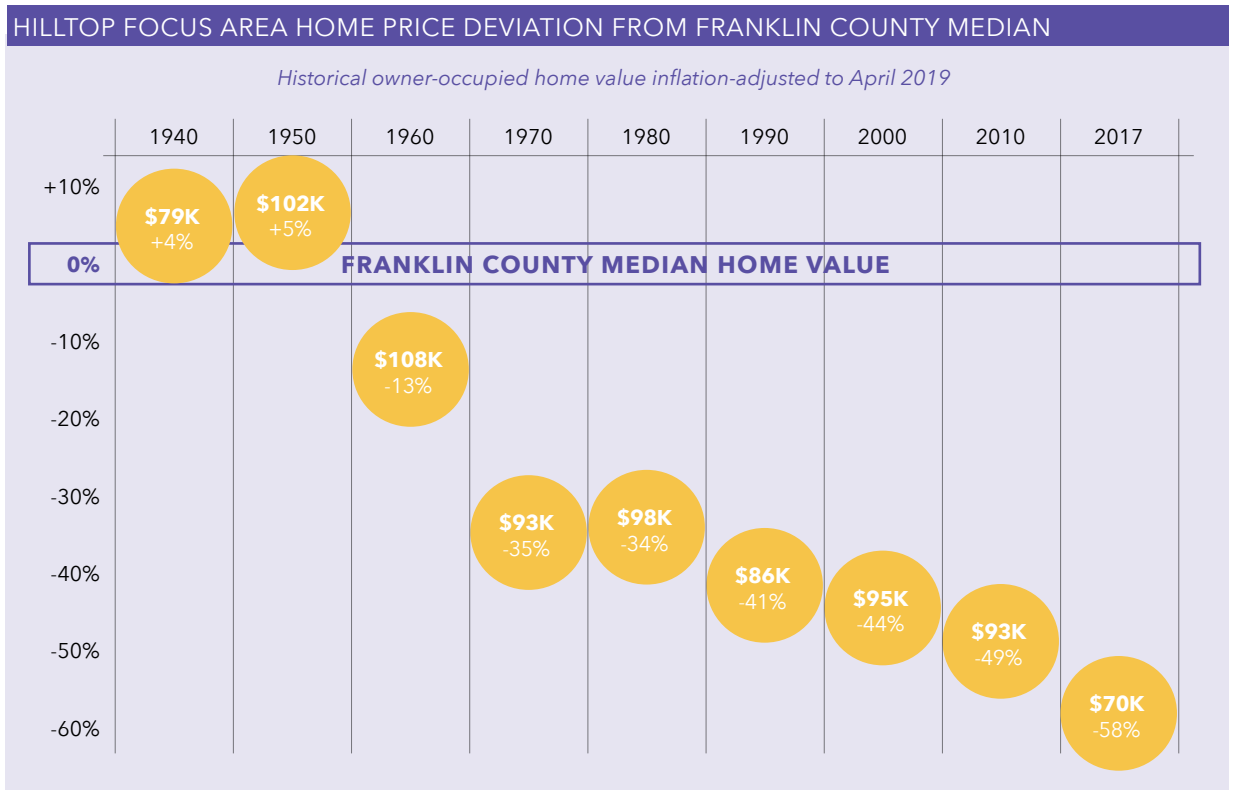
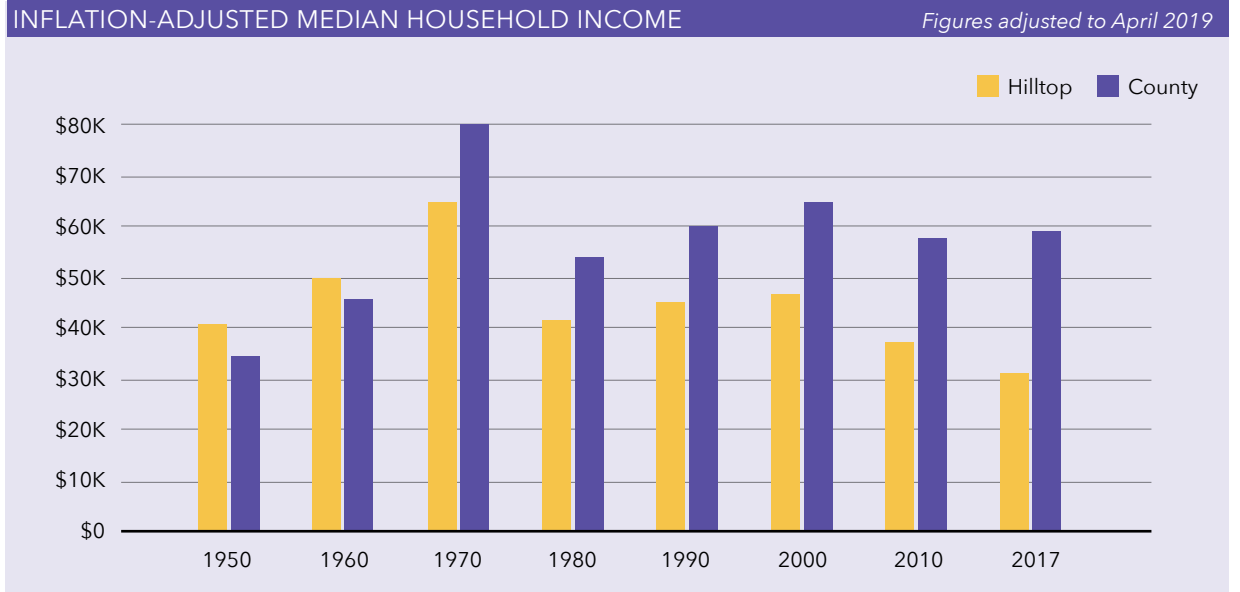


**Comparative Historical Context.** The Hilltop has historically been a working-class neighborhood, but residents previously earned living wages working in construction, plumbing, automotive technology, or manufacturing.

The median household income in the focus area was higher than the Franklin County average in each census until 1970. Thus, the 1960s were the last decade that the Hilltop’s median income surpassed the county average. Median income decreased significantly between 1970 and 1980 and continued to decline in the following decades.

The historic, sometimes stately, homes of the Hilltop were once of higher value than the county average, but that ended in 1960 and values swiftly began to decline. A large drop occurred between 1960 and 1970, as well as between 2010 and 2017. The chart to the right illustrates the price deviation of Hilltop owner-occupied homes from the county average from 1940 to 2017, adjusted for inflation. For example, the average price of a Hilltop home in 1940 was \$4,328—compared to a county average of \$4,179. Adjusted for inflation, \$4,328 is about \$79,000 today. The average Hilltop home in 1940 was selling for about 4% higher than the county average.

For more context, between 1960 and 1970 the median household income decreased and the poverty rate increased from 31% to 38%.



## Homeownership

The Hilltop was a majority owner-occupied community through the 2010 U.S. Census. After that, rates of owner-occupied housing declined; today an average of 39% of households across the focus area are occupied by homeowners. While homeownership exceeds 50% in some census block groups, there are other areas where it is 30% or below. The street with the highest number of owner-occupied parcels in the focus area is Burgess, but the highest concentration of owner-occupied homes is in the far southwest of the focus area, in the Wilshire Heights subdivision. The area between Broad and Sullivant has a lower rate of owner-occupancy than north of Broad and south of Sullivant. Despite this, there are a number of owner-occupants between Broad and Sullivant, near Glenwood Park. **City Housing Programs.** The City of Columbus' Housing Division works to create decent, safe, and sanitary housing opportunities by collaborating with federal, state and local government housing agencies to target resources for neighborhood investment.

### NUMBER OF UNITS USING PROGRAMS IN HILLTOP FOCUS AREA BY YEAR

Program Type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	Total
American Dream Downpayment	3	6	2	4	2	17
Better Municipal Care for Vets	2	1	1		3	7
Citywide Roof Replacement	1		1		4	6
Emergency Repair Program	19	24	12	11	7	73
Hilltop Home Repair	31	28	8	18	7	92
Home Safe & Sound				1	1	2
Homeownership Development		3				3
Lead Safe Columbus	17	10	16	13	12	68
Tax Abatement	1		44		3	48
Vacant Property Prevention	1			1		2
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>318</b>

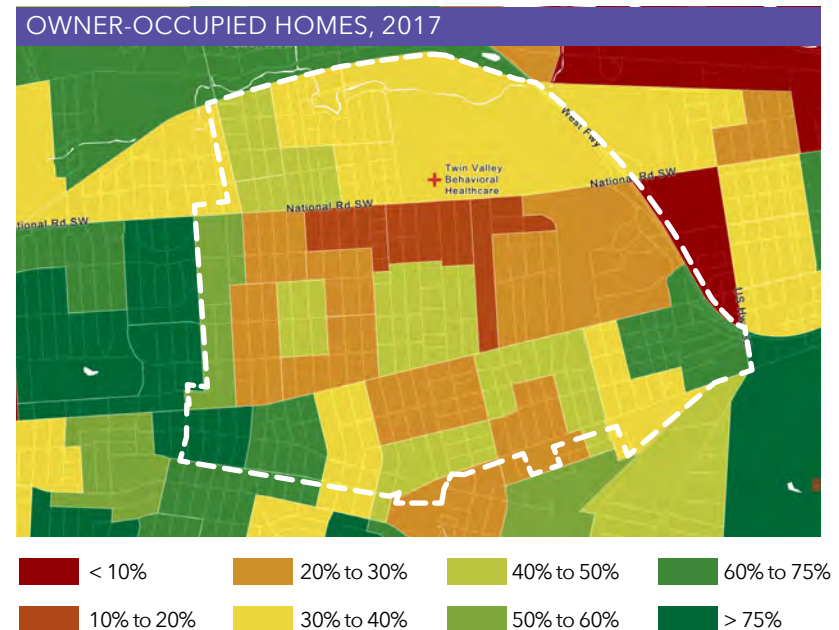
A thorough explanation of these programs can be found online: <https://www.columbus.gov/development/housing-division/Homeowner-Assistance/>

### THE FORECLOSURE CRISIS

The foreclosure crisis hit the Hilltop hard as well. As one resident described the continuing fallout, "There's a lot of dynamics going on... economy declined, middle class got slammed, mom lost job, dad got downsized, the spiral starts, there's no way to catch up. Even now. ... Tough for a lot of families. The fact that now it's very difficult to get a loan... because you have to have money in the bank, good credit score."

Source: Housing in the Hilltop, Creating a Baseline Typology to Guide Investment. Kirwan Institute Report. The Ohio State University. June 2015, Jason Reece, et al.

### OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES, 2017



### STREETS WITH MOST OWNER-OCCUPIED HOMES, JUNE 2019

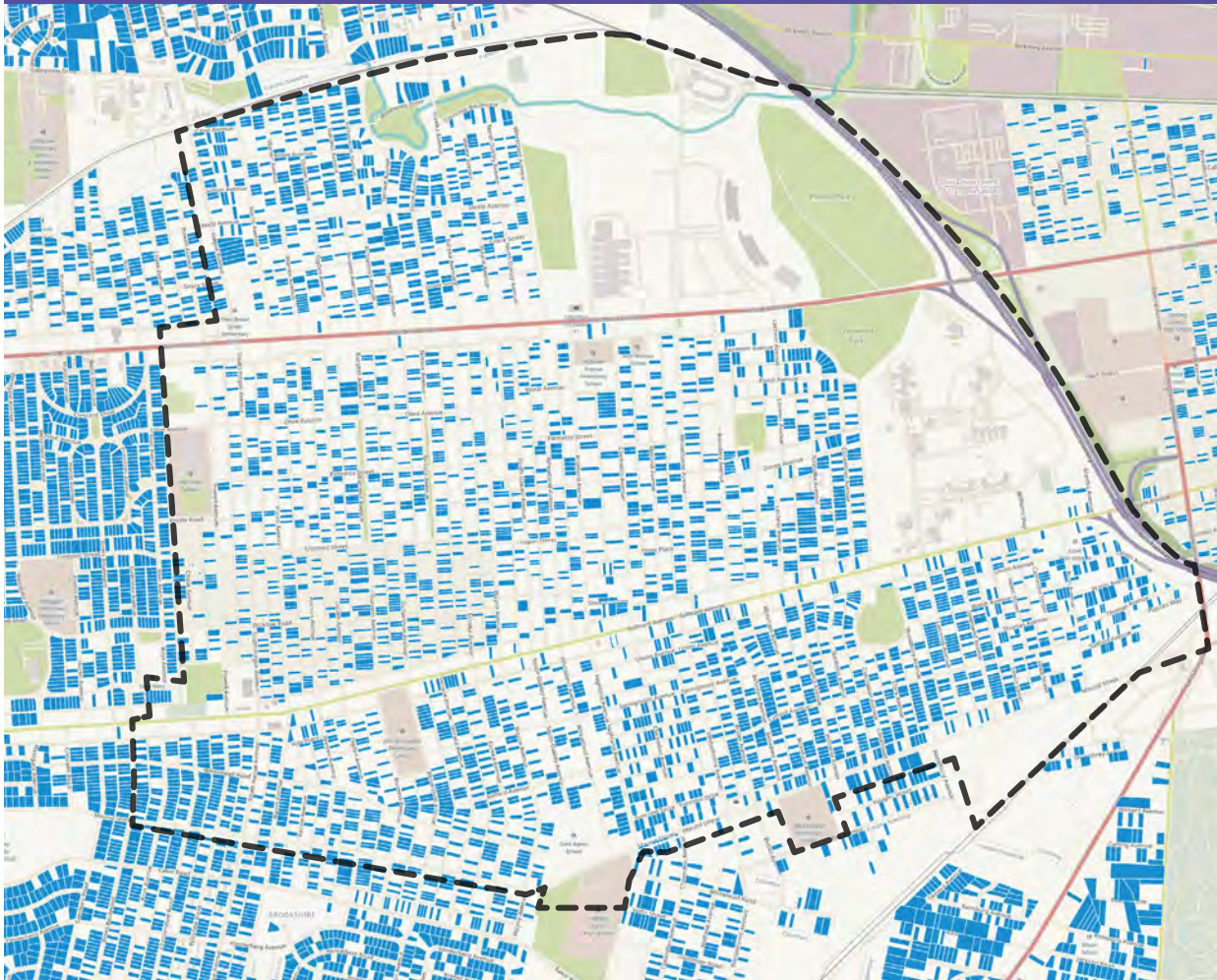
Street Name	# of Parcels	Street Name	# of Parcels
Burgess	155	Wayne	129
Ogden	149	Eureka	126
Terrace	147	Richardson	109
Warren	143	Hague	97
Harris	141	Roys	96



Chestershire Road near Whitehead Road has a very high rate of owner-occupied homes. This is part of the Wilshire Heights neighborhood within the Hilltop.



## OWNER-OCCUPIED PARCELS, JUNE 2019



Since 1995, Habitat for Humanity MidOhio has built about 40 homes in the Hilltop focus area. In addition, 17 residents have received home repair and rehabilitation services since 2015. Starting in 2021, Habitat is planning to construct a 12-home project in the focus area, enabling new families to call the Hilltop their home.

One of the Hilltop's greatest assets is its historic housing stock, with 1929 as the average year a home was built. However, these historic homes also present challenges, especially for low-income residents. They can be expensive to maintain and can have components like lead paint and asbestos that are harmful to residents' health and costly to remove. The median transfer year of 2007 indicates a high turnover rate for homes, where few have been owned long-term. An analysis of Franklin County Auditor transaction data found the average sale price of a single-family owner-occupied home to be about \$55,000, after excluding values below \$10,000. Renovated homes in the focus area are on the market for much higher. Depending on the condition, homes on the upper end of the market may sell between \$100,000 and \$150,000. However, compared to the Columbus-area median home price of \$220,000 in August 2019, homes in the Hilltop focus area are significantly less expensive.

## KEY DATA: OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING

**2,912**

Single-Family Owner-Occupied Homes

**\$55,048**

Average Sale Price\*

**1929**

Average Year Built

**2007**

Median Transfer Year

**1,246 sq. ft.**

Average Home Size

**C-1 (Average)**

Average Structure Quality Grade\*\*

\*excluding parcel sales below \$10,000

\*\*out of 31 possible ratings from Superior to Poor by the county auditor

## Housing Quality

Home quality is difficult to judge without interior inspection, but a team of graduate students at Ohio State University used visual assessments to create an analysis tool to estimate the investment required to improve the appearance of Hilltop homes. As part of the community planning studio in the City & Regional Planning section at the Knowlton School of Architecture, students then worked with the planning team to select areas for analysis and devise a system that would be useful to guide future investment decisions.

While housing quality grades from the Franklin County Auditor's Office are available, those assessments are performed infrequently and through inspection of photographs. The students explored the neighborhood on foot, evaluating each segment of roadway to get a detailed understanding of the physical condition of each property.

Each property was evaluated based on multiple criteria:

- Doors
- Windows
- Siding and facade
- Roof
- Foundation
- Yard and fence
- Drive or pathway
- Porch

The results of each visual inspection were combined to create a rating of 1 through 4, with one being the highest quality. Each property was assigned a monetary value of estimated repairs based on each evaluation. The highest cost was a property on North Wayne, estimated at \$22,850 to repair. Overall, the area with the highest quality rating was the Hauntz Park area, with an average rating of 1.14 and a per-structure repair cost of just \$678.

### STREET SEGMENTS ANALYZED, SPRING 2019



Selection/Segment Areas	Structures Evaluated	Average Rating	Total Segment Cost	Average Price per Structure
S. Hague Avenue	80	1.41	\$125,270	\$1,716
Hauntz Park Perimeter	34	1.14	\$22,370	\$678
S. Terrace Avenue	43	1.56	\$107,305	\$2,617
Wayne Avenue	75	1.75	\$271,011	\$3,872
N. Wheatland Avenue	54	1.19	\$108,755	\$2,939
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>1.44</b>	<b>\$634,711</b>	<b>\$2,499</b>

Students used the True Cost Guide offered by HomeAdvisor.com to estimate project costs. The Guide uses real costs from real home projects, includes local and national cost data, and updates project costs daily. The average costs are based on projects reported in that zip code, bringing the Hilltop-level data as close as possible to true estimates.

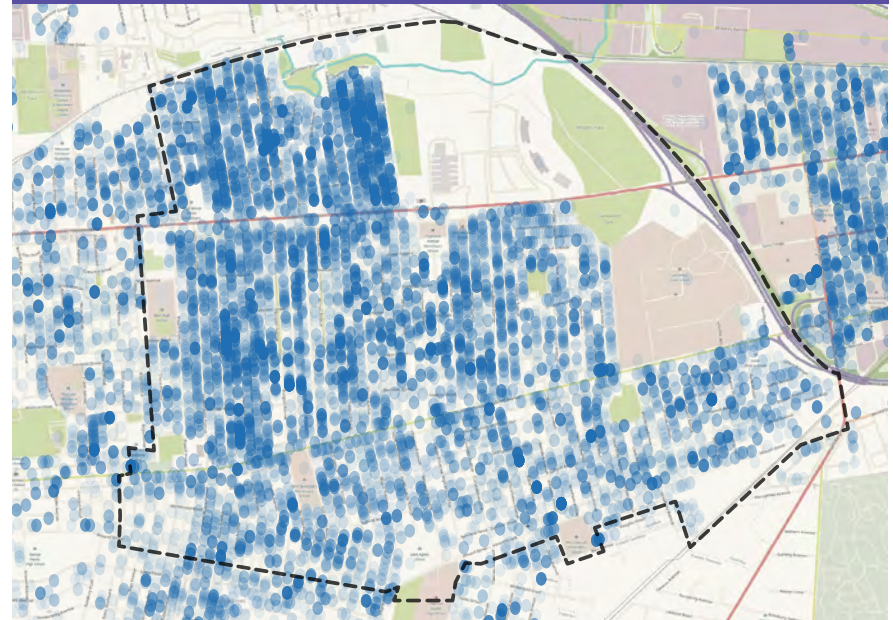
**Code Enforcement Requests.** City of Columbus Code Enforcement is responsible for enforcing the Housing Code, the Zoning Code, the Nuisance Abatement Code, the Health, Sanitation, and Safety (Environmental) Codes, the Graphics Code. Six years of code enforcement data on the Hilltop illustrate a high concentration of requests coming from the area just south of Glenview Park and north of West Broad Street. Generally speaking, the north of Broad section received a higher number of requests over the period analyzed.

#### CODE ENFORCEMENT REQUESTS, 2018

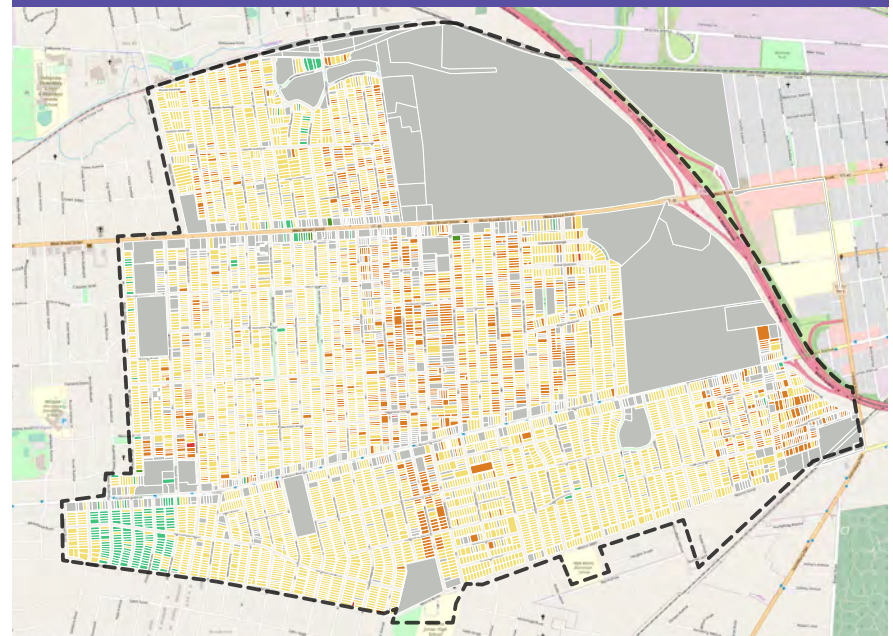
CODE CATEGORY	FOCUS AREA		COLUMBUS	
	#	%	#	%
Trash/debris in yard	582	24%	6,083	20%
Weeds/high grass on property	567	24%	9,913	33%
Occupied structure dangerous	291	12%	1,650	6%
Housing—general	174	7%	2,611	9%
Junk vehicles on property	155	7%	1,500	5%
Vehicle parked on grass	151	6%	1,325	4%
Vacant structure dangerous	91	4%	1,000	3%
Zoning—general	56	2%	1,093	4%
Car repair business in residential area	38	2%	254	1%
Animal feces/unsanitary conditions	31	1%	200	1%

**Housing Quality Ratings.** The Franklin County Auditor uses alpha-numeric property grades for the application of an estimated new construction cost, indicating the quality of construction of a dwelling or commercial property. This rating has no bearing on a property's condition, as that is a separate rating. The map at right shows a vast majority of properties rated "average," followed by "below average." The southwest corner of the focus area—Wilshire Heights—has many properties rated "above average." There were no structures rated superior, excellent, outstanding, or very good in the focus area.

#### CODE ENFORCEMENT REQUESTS, 2013–2018



#### FRANKLIN COUNTY AUDITOR HOUSING QUALITY RATINGS, JUNE 2019



## Housing Affordability

The Hilltop is considered one of the most affordable neighborhoods in Columbus, with a median gross rent of nearly \$100 less than the county average. In online rental listings for Hilltop properties, a three-bedroom house on Clarendon Avenue was listed for \$700/month in July 2019—but also offered no appliances and would not accept housing vouchers, evictions within the past five years, or a history of violent felony convictions. Finding housing, as this demonstrates, is about more than simply being able to afford the rent.

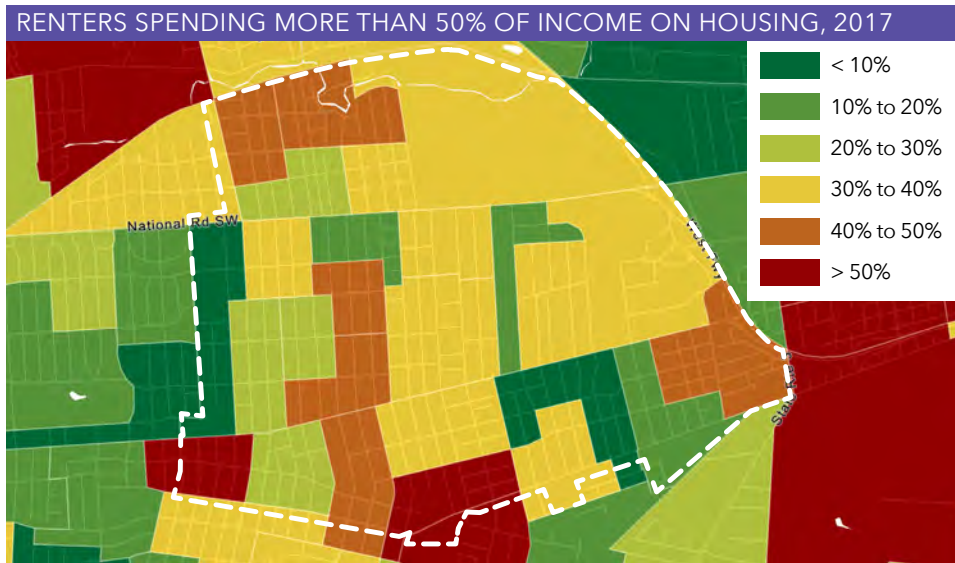
**50% of Hilltop households are housing-cost burdened.**

With few subsidized housing developments and a low rate of housing voucher use, most of the housing on the Hilltop is market-rate. Much of this market-rate housing could be considered “naturally occurring affordable housing,” or residential rental properties that maintain low rents without federal subsidy. Typically, naturally occurring affordable housing tends to be older, less well cared for, and/or not in the most desirable neighborhoods compared with the housing that is only accessible to higher income families.<sup>1</sup> However, general trends toward urban living may impact affordability in the future. In a recent profile of “house flipping,” the 43204 zip code—which includes parts of the Hilltop—was identified as an area with increasing activity.<sup>2</sup>

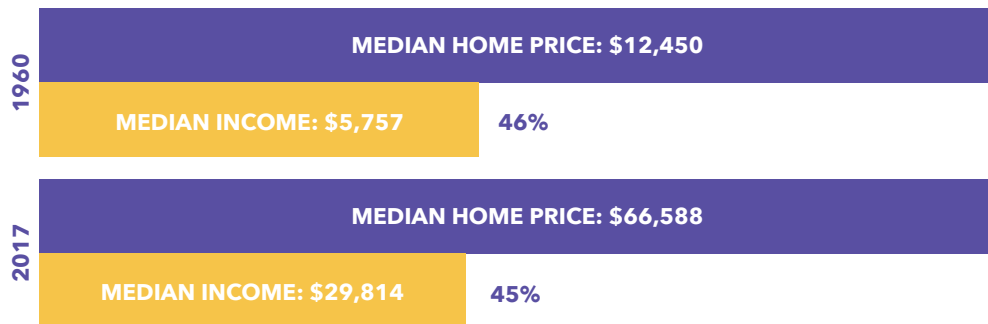
### MEDIAN GROSS RENT, 2017

<b>\$806</b> Hilltop Focus Area	<b>\$889</b> City of Columbus	<b>\$903</b> Franklin County
---------------------------------------	-------------------------------------	------------------------------------

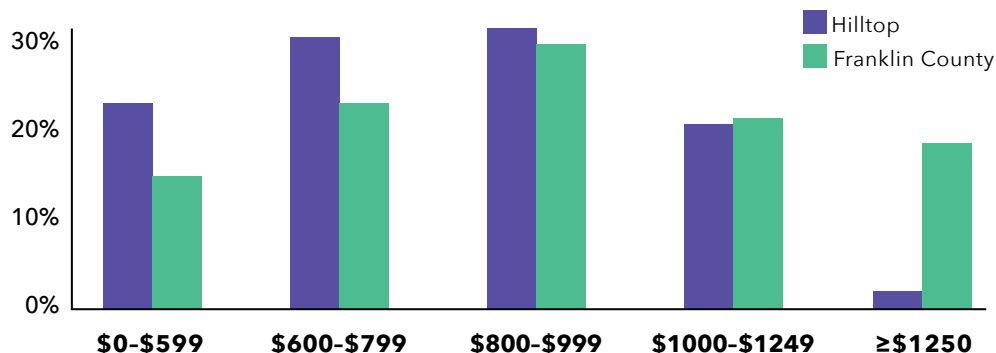
1. Rachel Quednau, “17 Head-Scratcher Housing Terms.” Strong Towns, April 3, 2018.  
2. Jim Weiker, Columbus Dispatch. June 29, 2019.



### FOCUS AREA INCOME TO HOUSING RATIO, 1960 AND 2017



### HOUSING UNITS BY MONTHLY GROSS RENT



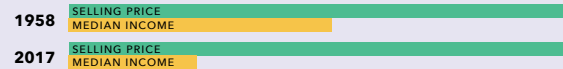
**Historic Context.** Over the years, the sale price point of Hilltop homes in relation to the county average has declined substantially. When historic Hilltop homes were new, they sold for amounts that would attract middle to upper-middle class families. But as housing stock aged and new areas developed, the relative attractiveness of Hilltop homes began to decline. Trends of suburbanization, white flight, and concentrated poverty also took root in urban areas—leaving the neighborhood's property devalued.

The three examples shown here illustrate the journey of these homes from sales in the 1960s to their most recent sales. The sale price is considered in relation to the median income of the Hilltop area in both time periods. The results demonstrate that these houses' values once significantly exceeded the median income. Even though median income was relatively higher then than it is now, the houses were worth much more. Two of the houses sold in 2017 for only a fraction of their 1960s selling price, whereas the one on North Oakley Avenue actually sold for more.

For the examples on Lechner and Woodbury, however, the inflation-adjusted cost of the homes in 2019 is more than the 2017 sale price, showing that the value of some Hilltop homes has not kept up with inflation—indicating they would not have been a good tool to build equity and generational wealth, as housing can often be.

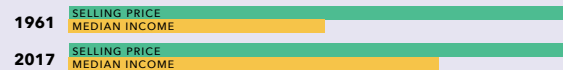
### 153 North Oakley Avenue

- Sold for \$10,500 in October 1958
- Price inflation-adjusted to 2019: \$94,846
- 1960 Hilltop median income was 55% of the selling price
- Sold for \$120,000 in June 2018
- 2017 Hilltop median income was 25% of the selling price



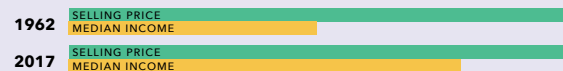
### 145 Lechner Avenue

- Sold for \$11,000 in June 1961
- Price inflation-adjusted to 2019: \$94,330
- 1960 median income was 52% of the selling price
- Sold for \$42,000 in June 2017
- 2017 Hilltop median income was 71% of the selling price



### 494 Woodbury Avenue

- Sold for \$12,700 in April 1962
- Price inflation-adjusted to 2019: \$107,466
- 1960 median income was 45% of the selling price
- Sold for \$36,100 in September 2017
- 2017 Hilltop median income was 83% of the selling price



## Housing Instability

While the Hilltop may have housing options affordable to a range of incomes and median rents below the city and county averages, that does not necessarily mean that everyone in the neighborhood has stable housing. According to the Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio, a worker in 2017 in Franklin County would have to earn \$17.04 an hour to afford the market rent of \$886 for a two-bedroom apartment— more than double the minimum wage. The burden of housing cost is disproportionately in households with lower incomes. Just 2 of the 10 most common jobs in Ohio pay enough for a worker to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment.<sup>1</sup>

Low wages are just one factor in a tenant's inability to pay rent, which can lead to eviction. Within the Hilltop focus area, there were 1,011 evictions filed in 2017 alone. Out of 4,205 renter-occupied households in the focus area, 25% experienced eviction in one year.<sup>2</sup>

**Homelessness.** According to data from the Community Shelter Board, the Hilltop area zip codes have a high representation in emergency shelter provided by the organization. The figures increased significantly between 2014 and 2016 for these zip codes, indicating that housing insecurity is likely a major problem in the focus area.

EMERGENCY SHELTER BY ZIP CODE				
	ZIP	2014	2016	% increase
Hilltop	43204	59	84	42.4%
Hilltop/Franklinton	43223	81	110	35.8%
Near Southside	43206	74	77	4.1%
Linden	43211	121	123	1.7%
Whitehall/Far East	43213	75	75	0%

Source: Community Shelter Board. Only the top five ranked zip codes are displayed in this table.

1. Rita Price, Columbus Dispatch. June 13, 2018.

2. Stephanie Casey Pierce, doctoral student, Glenn College, Ohio State University, 2019.

## CURRENT TENANT SUPPORT PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Each day in Franklin County about 75 families face eviction and 30-40 come to court needing legal advice or representation—indicating a critical need for eviction prevention and legal representation. There are two primary sources of assistance for tenants facing eviction, in addition to informational resources. First are financial resources from government entities. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) offers the Prevention Retention Contingency (PRC) program to households receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefits. The PRC program offers services like one-time emergency rental funds and security deposit assistance, and gives tenants a county representative at court. The second primary option for assistance is from the nonprofit sector. Community Mediation Services is a nonprofit providing landlord-tenant mediation both inside and outside of the courthouse. Additionally, the Legal Aid Society of Columbus provides legal services to tenants and offers a daily onsite clinic outside the eviction courtroom through the Tenant Advocacy Program (TAP). The TAP program is staffed by two attorneys and supplemented by non-lawyer volunteers.

Without providing direct legal representation, the Coalition on Housing and Homelessness in Ohio offers tenant advocacy and information on tenant-landlord law for people across the state. Their informational services help tenants understand the process for retrieving security deposits, filing rent in escrow, and going through the small claims court process.

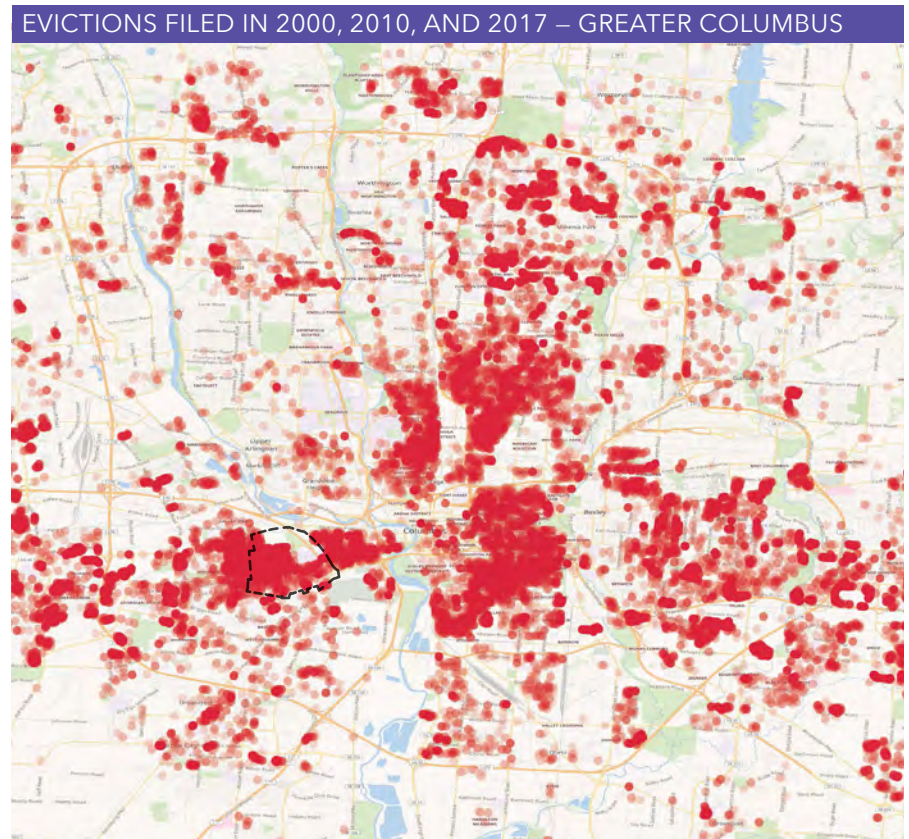
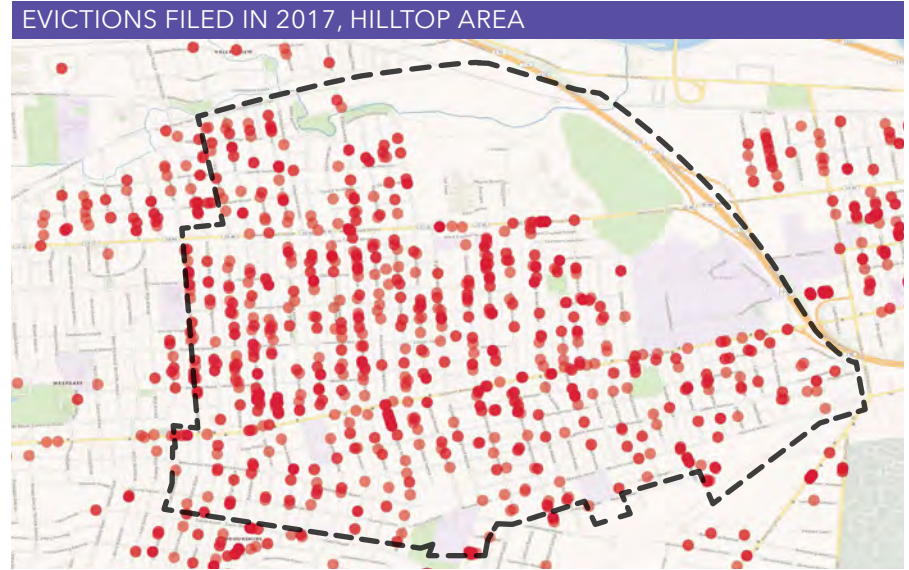
The Columbus Women's Commission is focusing efforts on improving the judicial eviction process in Franklin County and is interested in making changes such as requiring landlords to be present for hearings and coordinating the eviction prevention response across agencies.

The Columbus Urban League (CUL) Financial Services program improves asset-building options by providing housing counseling and financial capability services. As a HUD-approved housing agency, CUL provides counseling and mediation between landlords and tenants to resolve conflicts and prevent homelessness; fair housing education; and the investigation of potential housing discrimination complaints. In addition, individuals in need of emergency assistance can submit a PRC application on site, which is then submitted to ODJFS.

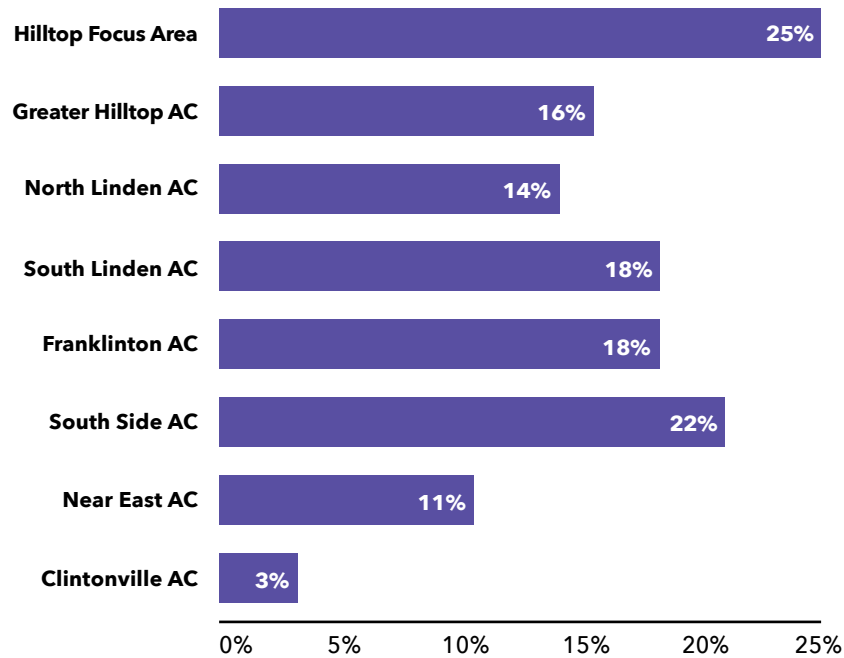
With funding from the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and others, CelebrateOne developed the Healthy Beginnings at Home (HBAH) pilot, a partnership between the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority, CelebrateOne, and the Homeless Families Foundation. HBAH provides rental assistance and wrap-around services to 50 Medicaid-enrolled pregnant women in unstable housing situations, with the goal of improving perinatal outcomes among women experiencing housing instability.

An analysis of Franklin County Municipal Court eviction filings shows that the Hilltop focus area is a major hot spot in the county for evictions. In fact, of the geographies analyzed, it showed the highest rate when compared to selected area commission boundaries. The extent and frequency of eviction in the focus area illustrate the impact of housing instability and reflect the state of crisis in which many families exist.

In the year 2000, the focus area had just 493 evictions; there was a major increase from 2000 to 2017. Unsurprisingly, the map of evictions filed in Franklin County illustrates that neighborhoods with higher rates of crime, poorly-rated schools, vacant homes, lower educational attainment, and lower median income also show higher rates of eviction. These neighborhoods include the Hilltop, Linden, the Near East Side, and the South Side.



EVICTION FILING RATE, 2017 by Area Commission boundary

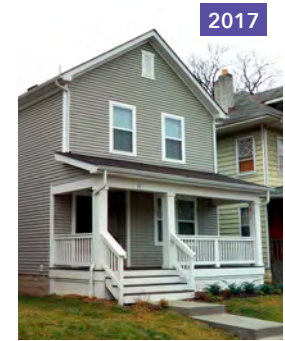
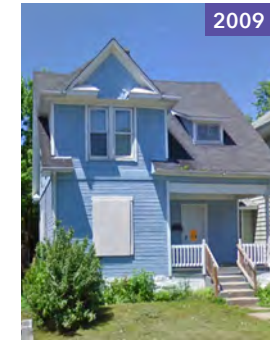


Showing rate of evictions filed using the number of renter-occupied households in the most representative census block groups, 2017 ACS.

## Subsidized Housing

Unlike other Columbus neighborhoods, the Hilltop did not historically have public housing or neighborhoods classified as “slums” during the urban renewal era of the 1960s. In recent decades, however, subsidized housing has moved toward a voucher system and away from directly providing shelter. Selected recipients may apply a voucher to their housing costs if the unit is approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and if the property owner chooses to accept payment by voucher. An analysis of Housing Choice Vouchers (the most common type of voucher) shows that 9% of rental housing in the Hilltop focus area is paid for using the voucher, compared to 19% in South Linden and 14% on the Near East Side. Other subsidized housing includes projects

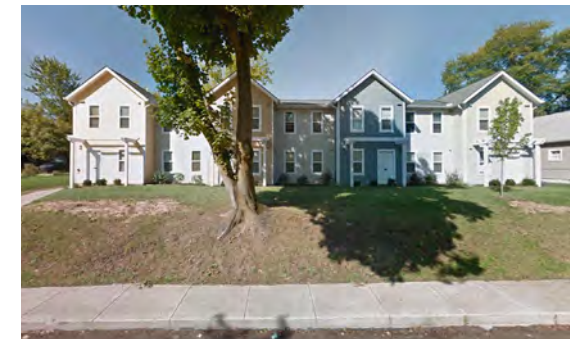
that receive tax credits for development. One major program for home construction was the Neighborhood Stabilization Program, and another is the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). On the Hilltop, projects funded with these tools have been scattered throughout the neighborhood in the form of smaller apartment buildings and single-family houses. One exception is the new Wheatland Crossing building and additional planned construction at the site on the east side of Wheatland Avenue north of Broad Street. Scattered-site homes have been constructed by non profit organizations like Homeport, Habitat for Humanity, and Homes on the Hill. These homes come with income restrictions for buyers and may eventually return to the open real estate market.



A new home at 99 S. Ogden was built by Homeport with Neighborhood Stabilization Program II funds after demolishing the previous home.



Wheatland Crossing I, with LEED Platinum certification, is a 42-unit, \$8.6 million building for residents age 55 and over who earn no more than 60% of the area median income.



This 15-unit building at 117 Belvidere was built in 2007 by Community Housing Network (CHN). Prior to 2007 there were four two-family buildings on the site. CHN purchased them in 1989 and occupied them for 18 years before demolishing them to build this project.

### RATE OF HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS, SELECT AREAS (DEC. 2018)\*



### FEDERALLY ASSISTED HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS, HILLTOP FOCUS AREA

Property Name	Property Address	Funding Type	# Units	Funding Year
Network Housing 05	117 Belvidere	Permanent Supportive Housing	15	2007
CHN West	1561 Sullivant	Permanent Supportive Housing	65	2015
Hilltop Homes II	Scattered Site	NSP	39	2015-16
HDP/CHDO/HOTH/04-01	77 N. Wheatland	HOME Funds	1	2004
Wheatland Crossing I	216 N. Wheatland	LIHTC Senior	42	2015-16
Wheatland Crossing II	158 N. Wheatland	LIHTC Family & Disability	64	2018

\*Showing percent of renter-occupied units using Housing Choice Voucher. Out of 10 census tracts in Clintonville, only 1 showed more than 10 vouchers in use—a rate of 2.5%. That figure is rounded to 3% here. In Greater Hilltop, only 1 tract showed less than 10 vouchers.

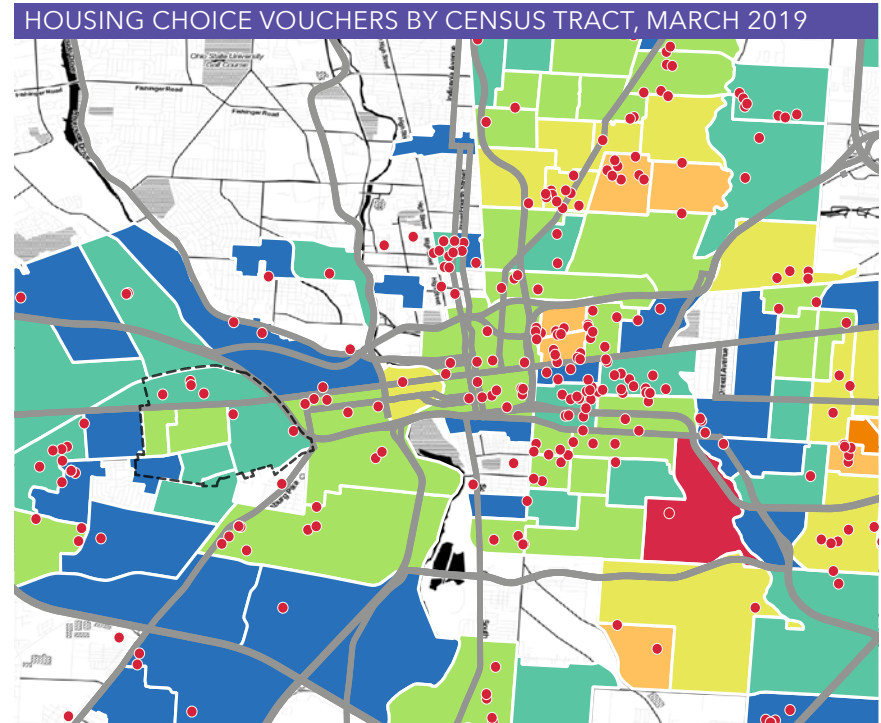
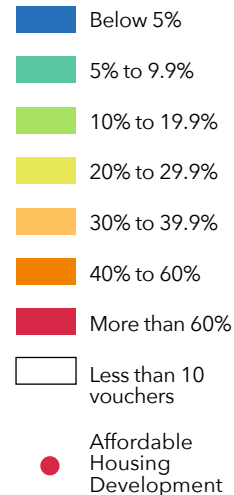


In the map at right, data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development shows the rate of Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV) used in each census tract, with the most recent data being **December 2018**. The HCV program is the federal government's chief program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled in affording decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Since housing assistance is provided on behalf of the voucher recipient, participants find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments. Participants are free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program and is not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects, but property owners are also free to reject tenants using a HCV. This leads to a concentration of HCV use in areas where landlords choose to allow voucher occupants.

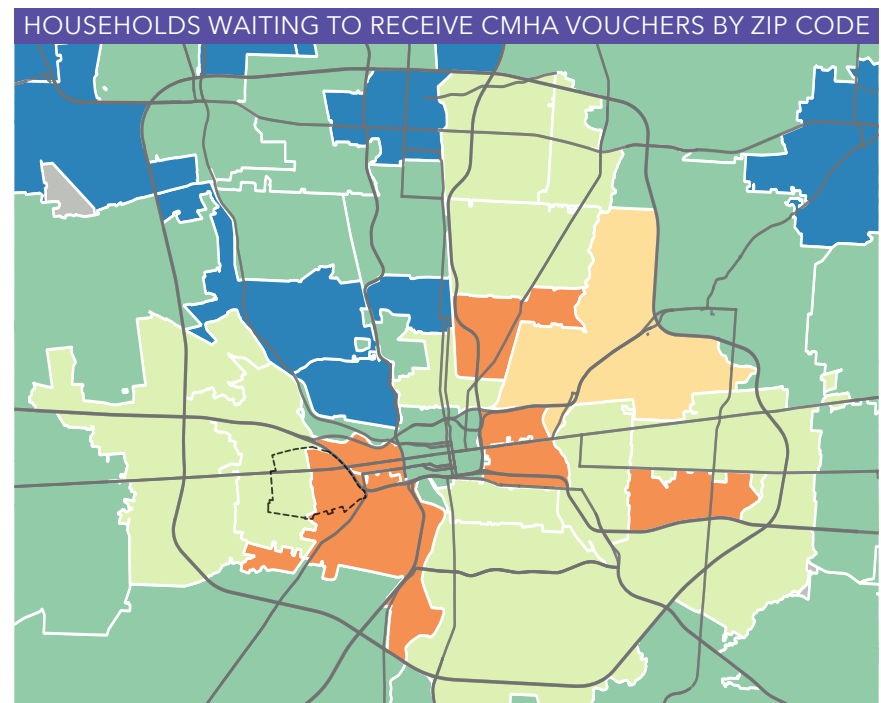
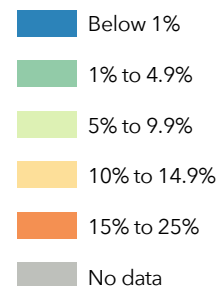
The HCV location map (top right) shows that many areas have less than 10 vouchers, but certain tracts show a much higher rate of voucher use—like the Deshler Park area near Alum Creek Drive. The Hilltop focus area shows rates from below 5% up to 20%, with higher rates between Broad and Sullivant. Affordable housing developments are also shown in red circles, using location data from the National Housing Preservation Database. This inventory of federally assisted rental housing in the U.S. is one of the only comprehensive sources of federally subsidized housing data. The largest concentration of projects can be observed on the Near East Side, between I-670 and I-70, just east of I-71. The Hilltop focus area has been the recipient of just a handful of federally-subsidized housing projects, according to the data.

The lower map (right) shows the rate of households waiting to receive housing vouchers from the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) as of May 2019 by zip code. One Hilltop focus area zip code, 43223, shows a rate of 15% to 25%, indicating a high need for housing support.

Showing the percentage of households, out of all occupied households in the census tract, using a federal HCV in March 2019.



Showing the percentage of households, out of all occupied households in the zip code, on the list to receive a housing voucher from CMHA in March 2019.



## Real Estate Conditions

The real estate market in the Hilltop focus area is distressed, but not inactive. An analysis of 268 dwellings sold in the focus area from June through August 2019 shows that 47 were single-family owner-occupied parcels with transaction amounts above \$0. Of these 47 parcels, 16 are now owned by limited liability corporations (LLCs). The parcels with the five highest sale prices are shown in this table. Four of these are south of Broad, while one is north. In general, home prices for owner-occupied structures in the focus area have been higher north of Broad and south of Sullivant.

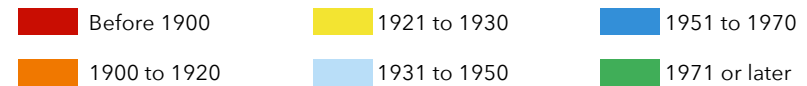
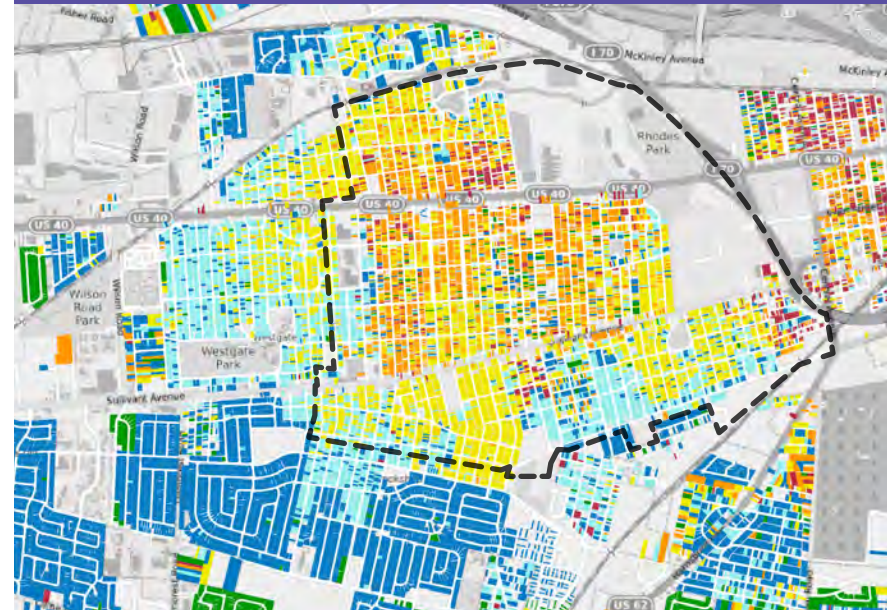
### FIVE HIGHEST OWNER-OCCUPIED TRANSACTIONS, JUNE–AUG. 2019

Street	Sale Date	Sale Price
S. Burgess Ave.	7/16/19	\$185,900
S. Richardson Ave.	8/12/19	\$130,000
S. Warren Ave.	7/25/19	\$130,000
N. Warren Ave.	6/14/19	\$127,775
S. Hague Ave.	7/18/19	\$125,000

**Rental Registration.** Residential rental property, except for hotels or college dormitories, must be registered with the Franklin County Auditor as required by Ohio Revised Code Section 5323.02. The owner(s) of residential rental property must file their name, address, and phone number with the county auditor within 60 days of property transfer or property tax bill receipt, or when any information changes. An owner outside Ohio must designate an individual who resides in the state as a contact. Failure to comply with the initial filing or updating of the information is considered a violation of the law, and each property is then subject to fines of \$150 per tax year.

In the Hilltop focus area, there are 1,347 unique phone numbers of rental registration contacts. Phone numbers are used as a proxy for names due to formatting discrepancies in names. The data also show 3,439 registered rental units, with the average parcel being constructed in 1929 and having a quality rating of Average (C-1) out of 31 possible ratings from Superior to Poor by the county auditor.

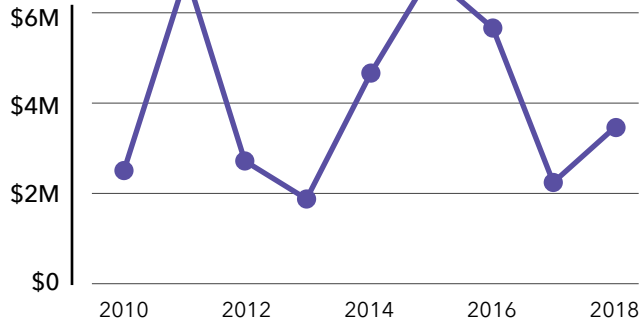
### YEAR OF PARCEL CONSTRUCTION, SEPT. 2018



### TOP 10 ZIP CODES OF RENTAL CONTACTS, MAY 2019

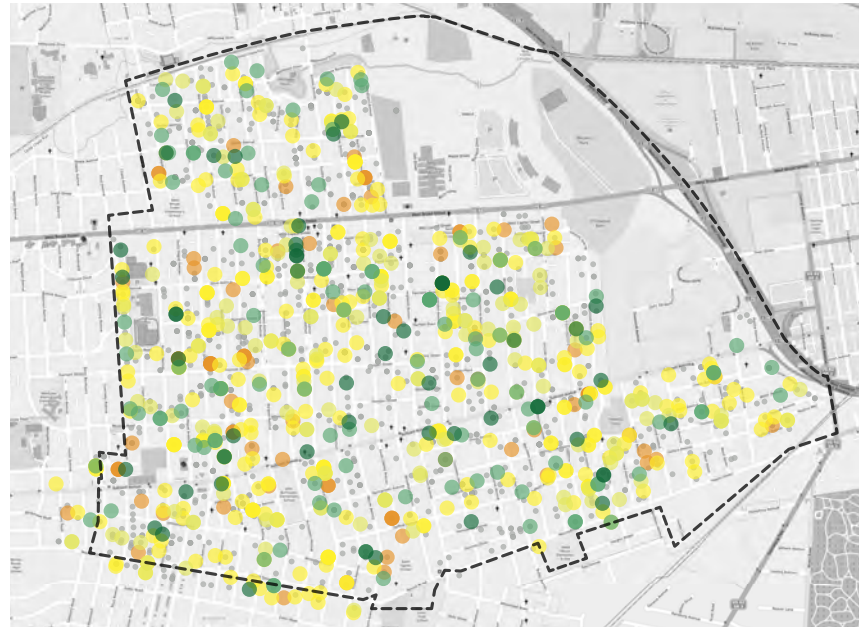
Zip	Geography	# of Units
43204	Hilltop Area	457
43223	South Hilltop Area	242
43123	Grove City Area	208
43228	Far West Area	191
43026	Hilliard Area	163
43065	Powell Area	142
43206	German Village Area	105
43215	Downtown	96
43205	Olde Towne East	95

HILLTOP AREA ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL PERMIT TOTALS



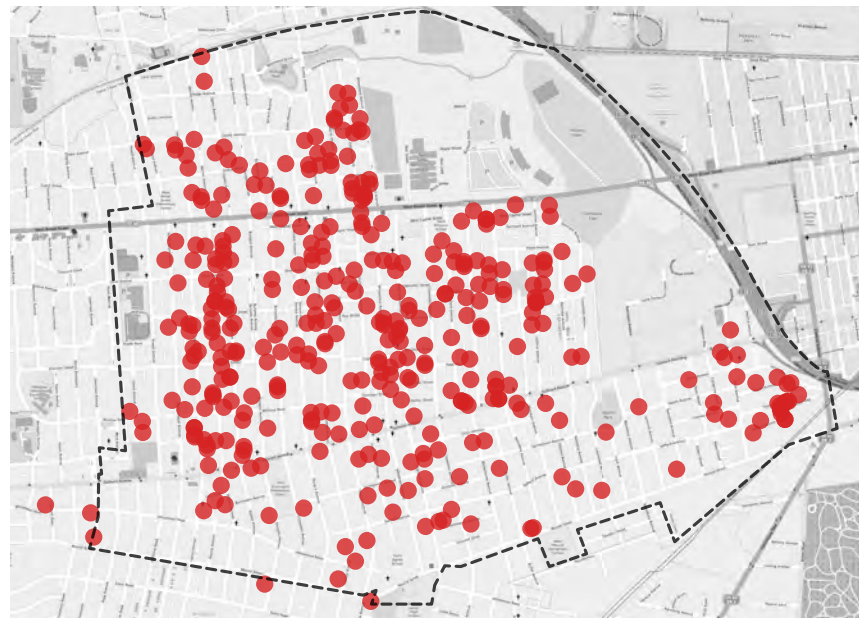
**Building Permit Activity.** One way to assess investment in the residential real estate market is by analyzing permits filed by property owners to make interior and exterior alterations to structures. Remodeling and routine maintenance of systems like electrical and plumbing require permits, which include an estimated cost for the work that is to be done. The Non-Demolition Residential Permit map at right illustrates substantial investment in focus area properties by owners in 2017 and 2018. The map does not show a specific geographic area of focus, potentially demonstrating that investment is relatively even throughout the neighborhood.

Residential demolition permits, however, show somewhat of a concentration between Broad and Sullivant, though not an overwhelming one. Data for five years illustrates the scale of demolition experienced in the focus area. In fact, the area had one of the highest number of homes demolished in the city between 2014 and 2018.



**NON-DEMOLITION RESIDENTIAL PERMITS BY AMOUNT**  
2017 AND 2018

- No amount listed
- Under \$1,000
- \$1,000 to \$5,000
- \$5,000 to \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$20,000
- Above \$20,000



**RESIDENTIAL DEMOLITION PERMITS**  
2014 THROUGH 2018

Analysis including dwelling demolitions only, not garages and accessory buildings.

NUMBER OF RESIDENTIAL DEMOLITION PERMITS, 2014-2018, SELECTED AREAS



## Housing Market

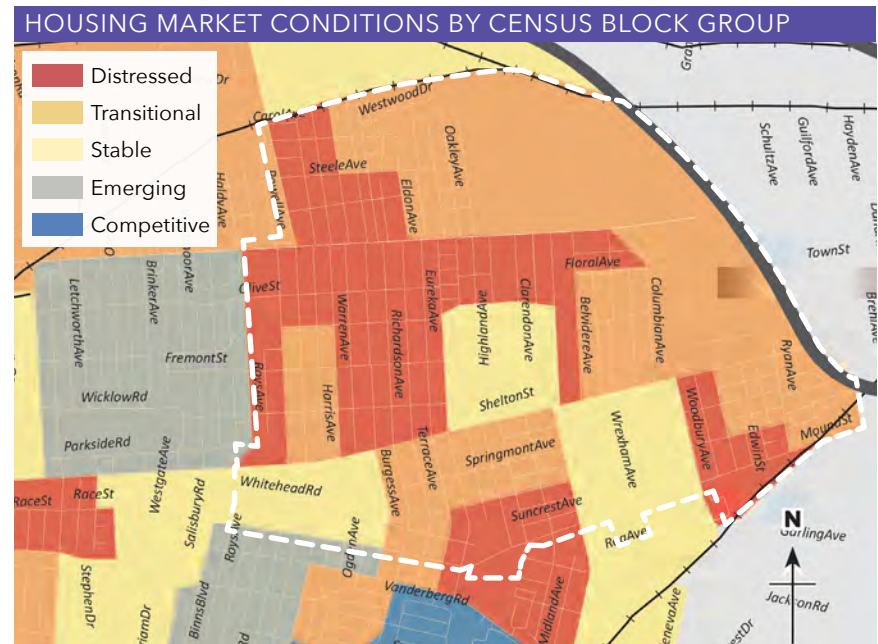
The median price of a home in Central Ohio rose to a record \$220,000 in August 2019, up from \$205,000 in August 2018 and a full \$50,000 above the median price in July 2015. Typical homes sold after just 23 days on the market and sold for more than 98% of their asking prices.<sup>1</sup>

“Falling mortgage rates are improving housing affordability and nudging buyers into the market,” said Lawrence Yun, chief economist with the National Association of Realtors. However, he added that the supply of affordable housing is severely low. “The shortage of lower-priced homes has markedly pushed up home prices.”<sup>1</sup>

**Housing Supply.** Despite the Hilltop being primarily a neighborhood of single-family homes, well over half of the households in the Hilltop focus area are renters and the proportion of renter-occupied units continues to increase, indicating that a single-family rental home is, in many ways, its own housing typology. Given affordability challenges for many existing residents, maintaining a quality rental home supply will be a major component to any future housing strategy. In addition to the single-family housing stock, there are also a number of market-rate and affordable apartment properties as well as rental townhomes. Though site capacity is limited for new multi-family construction in the focus area, maintaining the existing supply will further support the housing needs of low- and moderate-income households as well as those seeking quality market-rate rental options that are still affordable to working households.

Part of the challenge with the existing housing stock is its age—approximately 85% was built before 1960—and the fact that many properties have accumulated considerable deferred maintenance or have reached obsolescence. This is especially challenging in low-income areas where owners do not have enough income to adequately maintain their properties. Developing programs to invest in the existing stock will be critical.

1. <https://www.dispatch.com/business/20190821/central-ohio-home-prices-continue-climb-in-july-up-50000-in-four-years>

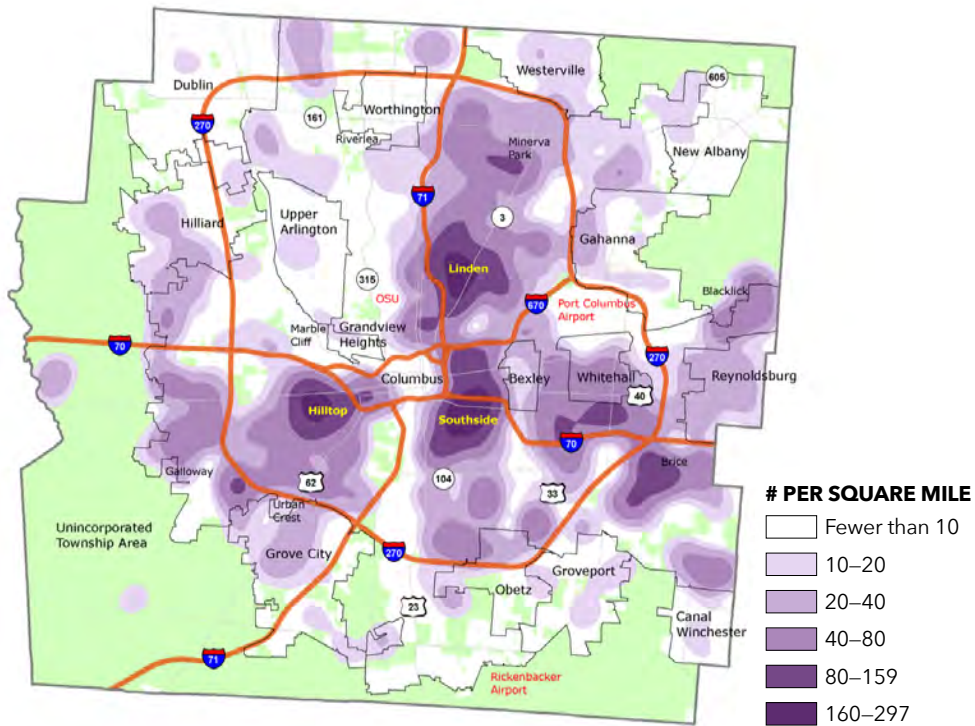


This map shows housing market conditions on the Hilltop. Scores for multiple housing variables per block group were totaled, resulting in an aggregate score for each. These totals were then sorted from least to greatest and grouped into 5 categories based on housing market strength in each block group: 1) Distressed, 2) Transitional, 3) Stable, 4) Emerging, and 5) Competitive.

Source: Jason Reece, et al. Housing in the Hilltop: Creating a Baseline Typology to Guide Investment. Kirwan Institute Research Report. Ohio State University. June 2015.

**The Larger Columbus Housing Market.** Zillow, a real estate and rental marketplace based in Seattle, offers recent housing data for the Columbus market. According to Zillow data, the median home value in Columbus is \$157,900 (August 2019). Home values in the city have gone up 7.3% over the past year, and Zillow predicts they will rise 3.6% within the next year. The median listing price per square foot in the City of Columbus is \$133, which is lower than the Columbus Metropolitan Area average of \$137. The median price of homes currently listed in the city is \$189,900 while the median price of homes that sold is \$161,100. The median rent price in the city is \$1,295, which is lower than the Columbus Metropolitan Area median of \$1,350. According to the most recent U.S. Census data, the median gross rent in the Hilltop focus area is \$809 per month.

## DENSITY OF FORECLOSURE FILINGS, JANUARY 2007–MARCH 2008



Source: Jason Reece, The Ohio State University. Obtained from United Way of Central Ohio from work completed by Community Research Partners.

**Foreclosure Crisis.** The Hilltop (as well as the nation) experienced a rapid decline in homeownership and increase in rentership as a result of the Great Recession and the foreclosure crisis. While both owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing play important roles in people's lives, neighborhoods, and our economy, a strong base of engaged and committed homeowners is an asset for a neighborhood's stability. This is perhaps especially true of a neighborhood like the focus area, which is dominated by single-family housing (85% of all units).

With the closure of major nearby employers, the Hilltop had been in a state of decline prior to the Great Recession, which was further exacerbated by the foreclosure crisis. From 2010 to 2012, the Hilltop had a foreclosure rate of 13%, far exceeding the county rate (6%), and a high-cost mortgage rate of 56%, which further displaced residents, leaving hundreds of homes vacant or abandoned. This also led to a drastic change in the rate of homeownership in the focus area, dropping from 56% in 2010 to 46% in 2017, a loss of more than 1,000 owner-occupied units.

## TAX DELINQUENT PARCELS, AUGUST 2019



In the Hilltop focus area, there were 1,190 parcels classified as tax delinquent as of August 2019. Of these, 123 parcels have tax delinquencies from before 2016. This amounts to about \$1.8 million in tax delinquency in the focus area.

**Tax Delinquency.** The Ohio Revised Code permits the Franklin County Treasurer to collect delinquent real property taxes by selling tax-lien certificates in exchange for payment of the entire delinquency. All eligible tax-lien certificates are bundled together and sold as part of a single portfolio. The Treasurer's liens are transferred to the purchaser, who is entitled to recover the purchase price and accruing interest. All properties with delinquent taxes are eligible to be sold at the tax-lien certificate sale, but the property may not already be set for a sheriff sale, be in bankruptcy, already have a tax contract, be tax exempt, or have a pending tax exemption application. In the Hilltop focus area, nearly 1,200 parcels are tax delinquent. The average parcel tax delinquency amount is \$1,556. Of the delinquent parcels, 89 are receiving a homestead exemption, a tax reduction program restricted to lower-income seniors and disabled veterans.

## THE HILLTOP HOUSING MARKET IN CONTEXT

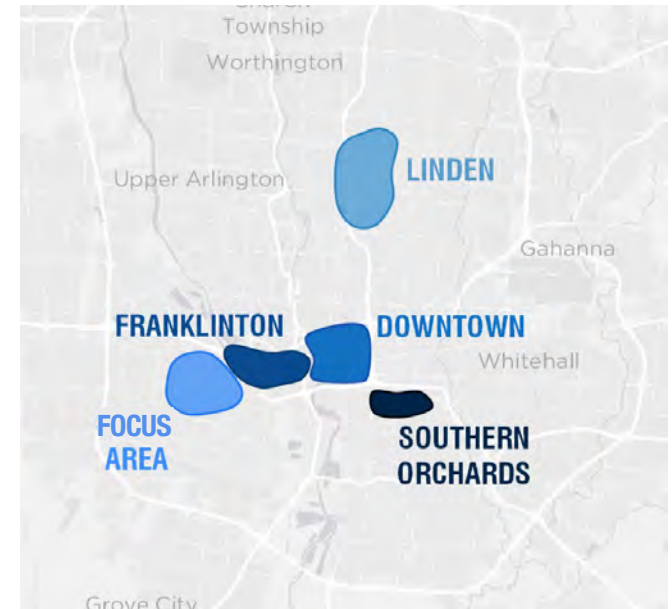
	% change in housing units (2010 to 2018)	Median Household Income	Median Home Value (Projected change by 2023)	Recent Home Sales (6-month median price)	% Vacant	% Renter
<b>Hilltop Focus Area</b>	8%	\$35K	\$75K	\$39K	20%	60%
<b>Franklinton</b>	10%	\$17K	\$70K	\$52K	25%	80%
<b>Downtown</b>	50%	\$265K	\$265K	\$285K	10%	85%
<b>Linden</b>	7%	\$80K	\$80K	\$94K	12%	45%
<b>Southern Orchards</b>	15%	\$80K	\$80K	\$98K	35%	70%
<b>City Average</b>	10%	\$140K	\$140K	-	10%	55%

**Regional Context.** Much like many regions, cities, and neighborhoods with a workforce reliant on well-paying manufacturing jobs, the closure of major employers can leave workers with little to no formal education without access to comparable opportunities. The closure of the White-Westinghouse Plant in the late 1990s and the Delphi Plant in the late 2000s represented a loss of thousands of jobs, many of which had been held by Hilltop residents. Coupled with the decline of Westland Mall, this led to several decades of population loss.

The socioeconomic conditions of the existing community present significant housing-related challenges, since **many households face considerable barriers to economic opportunity.** The weak housing market and deteriorating neighborhood conditions are functions of the limited income potential of many existing households. Many households can only afford subsidized or substandard housing, and many property owners do not have the incomes (or cannot charge high enough rents) to adequately maintain their properties.

The **median household income** for the focus area is considerably lower than the medians for the city and region. Nearly one-third of focus area households earn less than \$25,000 annually, which severely limits housing choice. Many of these households live in substandard housing; this is often the only affordable option.

Hilltop's median income is lower than the city average, but is generally positioned above other **peer neighborhoods**, including Franklinton, Downtown, Linden, and Southern Orchards. However, based on recent sales and housing value projections, the Hilltop is trailing its peer neighborhoods, indicating that other neighborhoods are in higher demand (or have better perceived trajectories for homebuyers).



Comparing the Hilltop to the peer neighborhoods of Southern Orchards, Franklinton, Downtown, and Linden demonstrates the distress of the Hilltop housing market in context.

## CURRENT AND FUTURE SEGMENTS OF HOUSING DEMAND

	Existing Residents	Nearby Residents	Potential "Pioneers"
<b>Affordability Levels</b>	Up to 80% AMI	80-120% AMI	Over 120% AMI
<b>Primary Neighborhood Preferences</b>	Housing Affordability; Safety; Community Resources/Services; Workforce Development	Housing Affordability; Quality Schools; Physical Conditions; Access to Services; Access to Employment	Walkability; Public Transportation; Access to Employment; Quality Retail; Health/Recreation; Historic Preservation
<b>Timeframe</b>	Immediate	Mid-term (3 to 7 years)	Long Term (7+ years)

In order to understand the potential for current and future housing needs and investment, several segments of demand were identified for near- and long-term scenarios.

**Housing Demand.** Demand for housing in a given neighborhood often comes from a number of “demand segments,” which consist of existing residents and new residents moving to the area. Generally, the needs of these segments are different—many existing residents need access to quality affordable housing, while new residents expect efforts to vastly improve the conditions and marketability of the neighborhood as a whole. For the Hilltop to be successful and economically sustainable, it will need to address the housing needs of both segments.

Though years of population losses have created excess capacity in the focus area, given the socioeconomic challenges of the community, across-the-board investments are needed in people, places, and housing. Considering the **needs of existing residents** on the Hilltop is critical. From a housing perspective, quantifying the number of households by affordability levels can inform the market prices needed to address existing demand. Meeting demand for most households will require some level of subsidy, and understanding the number of households by affordability range can help inform the potential amount of subsidy needed.

With approximately 1,900 vacant units and more than 170 vacant lots in the focus area, there is also capacity and need to **attract new residents**. Who are the potential new residents? Using segmentation data that combines consumer and neighborhood preferences with demographic data, household profiles were identified for potential demand. These groups were identified as working-class and middle-class family households. However, without significant improvements related to crime, neighborhood conditions, and housing stock, many households would likely not seek out housing options in the focus area. In other words, in the near or even mid-term future, these groups were deemed too aspirational to be a viable demand pool.

The segmentation analysis was further expanded to include **potential “urban pioneer” households** that are younger, prefer urban neighborhoods, and would be willing to take a risk and purchase starter homes in the focus area. It was determined that the Hilltop is still behind other emerging neighborhoods in terms of desirability. As other urban core neighborhoods continue to evolve and property values increase, creating more barriers to entry, only then will the Hilltop become “the next” neighborhood. Therefore, this segment of demand would only be viable in the long-term.

## Retail Opportunities

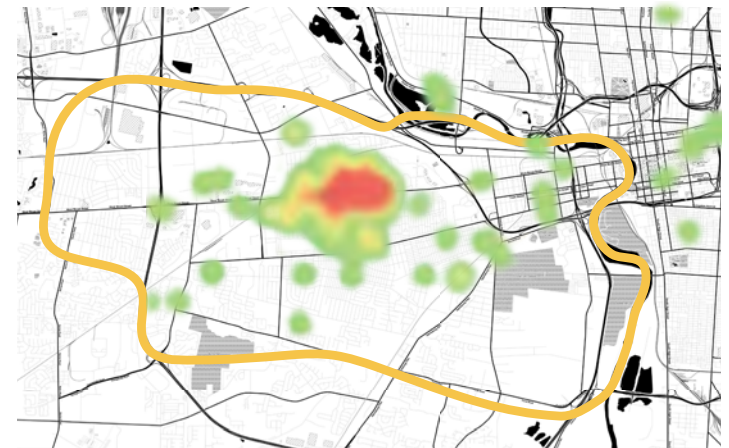
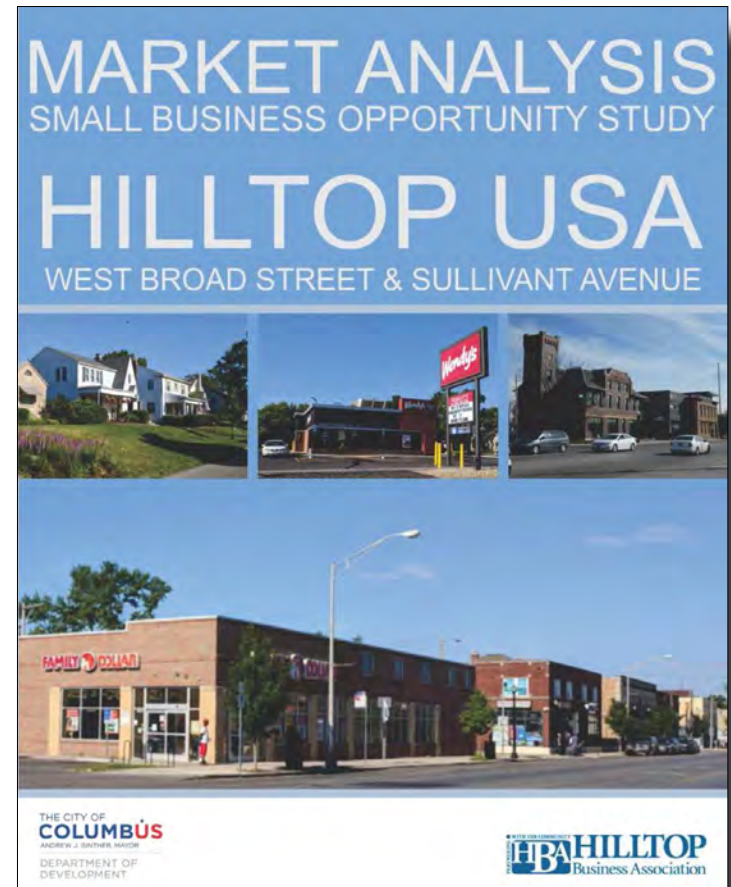
The Hilltop USA Market Analysis: Small Business Opportunity Study (2018) analyzed the neighborhood's potential for business development, with a specific focus on the Sullivant Avenue and West Broad Street commercial corridors. It determined that the Hilltop has great market potential due to its close proximity to downtown, large employment base, and connection to adjacent areas that are experiencing revitalization and redevelopment, such as Franklinton. The Hilltop is also highly accessible to the rest of Columbus due to its major connections along Broad Street and I-70. This study offers an in-depth analysis of the Hilltop's contemporary business environment, demographics, mobility, and other conditions. Key recommendations are summarized below, all with the overall goal of contributing to the revitalization of these two corridors. Additionally, the report identifies and analyzes select redevelopment sites with the greatest potential, and concludes with a strategy and implementation plan composed of detailed action steps regarding policy and regulation, branding and outreach, neighborhood improvement, and other categories. Parking is also discussed, and is identified as an "issue" on Broad Street east of Hague due to constricted traffic flow and reduced on-street parking resulting from recent city changes. The study recommends that the city seek ways to provide public off-street parking that would serve multiple establishments and encourages implementation of shared parking lots and more private parking, with less on-street parking.

### KEY RETAIL STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Turn around conditions in struggling residential neighborhoods, stem population loss, and improve incomes.
- Help existing businesses to expand at their existing site or at another, larger location.
- Improve communication and outreach to commercial brokerage and real estate companies.
- Encourage redevelopment at key locations where investment will be visible.
- Create new incentives and tools to enable private real estate investment.
- Amend programs and regulations to offer greater flexibility.
- Recruit new businesses.

### Existing City Revitalization Tools

- Commercial Zoning Overlay
- Enterprise Zone
- Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization District
- Neighborhood Investment District
- Tax Increment Financing
- Special Improvement District
- Business Loan Fund and Working Capital Loan Fund
- Proactive Code Enforcement



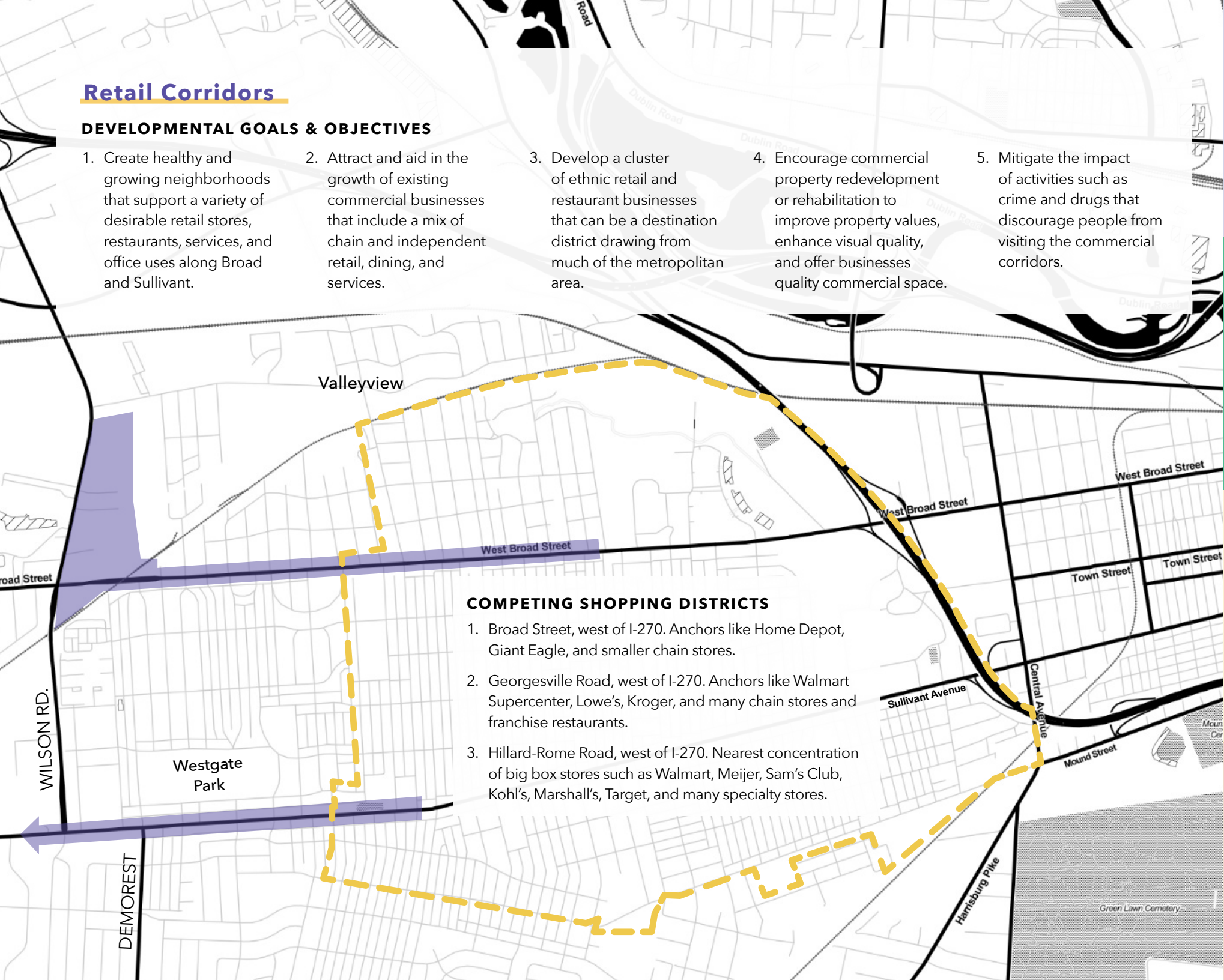
Hilltop Trade Area: Most businesses draw 70-80% of their customers from this area of about 78,000 people in 30,261 households in the trade area.



## Retail Corridors

### DEVELOPMENTAL GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. Create healthy and growing neighborhoods that support a variety of desirable retail stores, restaurants, services, and office uses along Broad and Sullivant.
2. Attract and aid in the growth of existing commercial businesses that include a mix of chain and independent retail, dining, and services.
3. Develop a cluster of ethnic retail and restaurant businesses that can be a destination district drawing from much of the metropolitan area.
4. Encourage commercial property redevelopment or rehabilitation to improve property values, enhance visual quality, and offer businesses quality commercial space.
5. Mitigate the impact of activities such as crime and drugs that discourage people from visiting the commercial corridors.



### COMPETING SHOPPING DISTRICTS

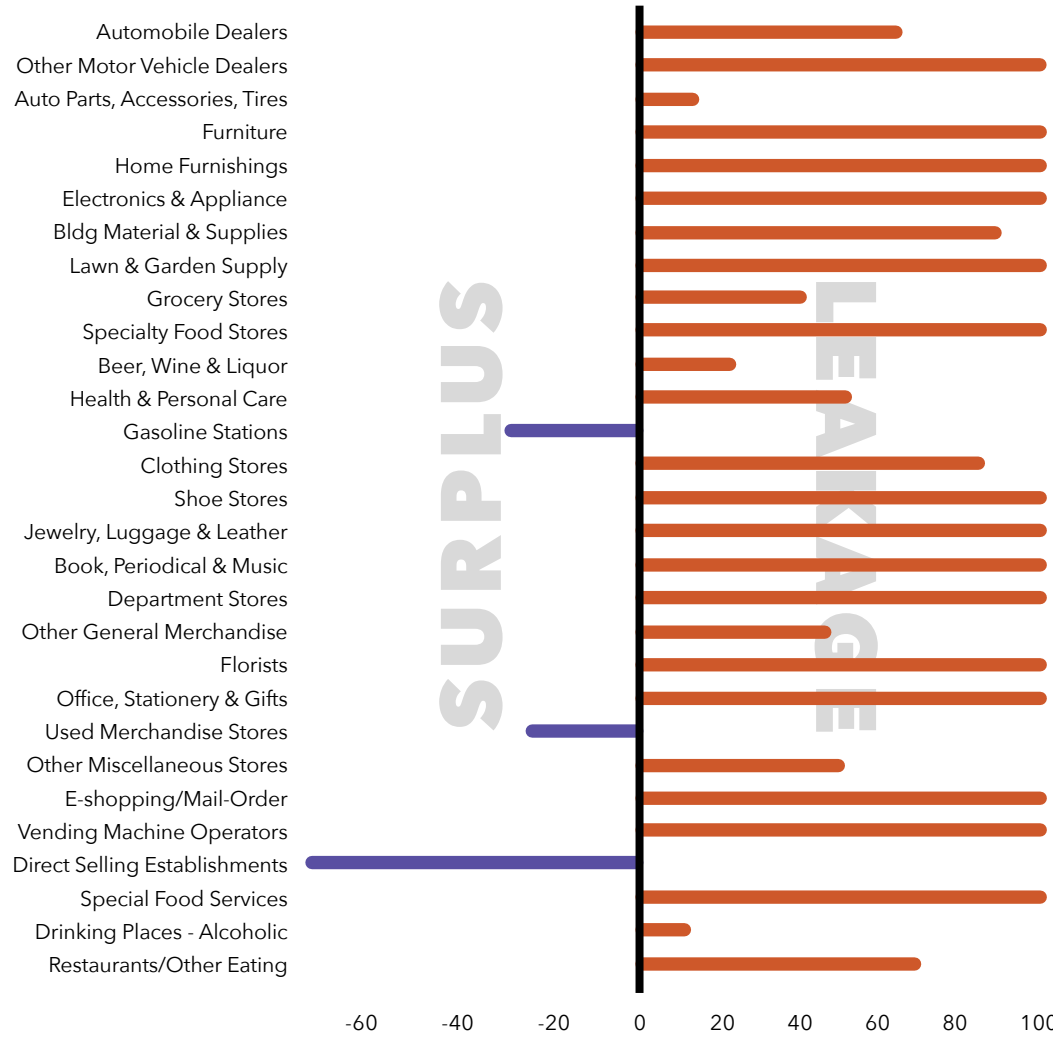
1. Broad Street, west of I-270. Anchors like Home Depot, Giant Eagle, and smaller chain stores.
2. Georgesville Road, west of I-270. Anchors like Walmart Supercenter, Lowe's, Kroger, and many chain stores and franchise restaurants.
3. Hillard-Rome Road, west of I-270. Nearest concentration of big box stores such as Walmart, Meijer, Sam's Club, Kohl's, Marshall's, Target, and many specialty stores.

**Retail Market Demand.** Market demand information is important for potential retailers to assess when considering moving into a new location. The information allows a business to understand who its potential consumers are. Leakage in an area indicates there is unmet demand in the area, which could be one positive indication for a business operating in that retail sector. A surplus indicates that the needs of consumers in that specific area are being met—and exceeded.

PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH



LEAKAGE/SURPLUS FACTOR BY INDUSTRY GROUP, 2017



**What is Leakage/Surplus Factor?** Leakage/Surplus Factor is a snapshot of retail opportunity. It measures the relationship between supply and demand and ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents leakage of retail opportunity out of the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area.

- Three industry groups show retail surplus on the Hilltop: Gasoline stations, used merchandise stores, and direct selling establishments.
- Nearly every industry group demonstrates leakage, with 15 experiencing “total leakage” of 100.

**External Retail Trends.** Rapid changes in the retail sector are causing a major shift in how the built environment supports daily shopping needs throughout the United States. With the rise of online shopping and the growing dominance of regional shopping destinations, neighborhood amenities are becoming more scarce. One way to increase retail activity is to create inviting public spaces and attractive environments, encouraging shoppers to enjoy unique experiences. Restaurants and authentic food also represent an opportunity for future growth and should be leveraged on the Hilltop.

- 72% of households will be non-family by 2025
- 66% prefer attached or small lot housing
- 3700% increase in web-based sales from 1999 to 2010

**Market Potential Index.** Using a measurement called Market Potential Index (MPI), the relative likelihood of households in a specified trade area to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns can be quantified. An MPI of 100 represents the U.S. average. According to MPI data, many of the top behaviors for Hilltop area consumers, like shopping at convenience stores, demonstrate the lack of current retail options in the neighborhood.

#### TOP TEN—HIGHEST MARKET POTENTIAL INDEX

Bought cigarettes at convenience store in last month	199
Have a smartphone: Android phone (any brand)	138
Played a video/electronic game (console) in last year	137
Usually value green products over convenience	134
Drank regular cola in last 6 months	132
Played video/electronic game (portable) in last year	132
Number of cell phones in household: 1	127
Spent at convenience store in last 30 days: \$100+	124
Usually pay more for environmentally safe product	120
Read any daily newspaper (paper version)	120

#### BOTTOM TEN—LOWEST MARKET POTENTIAL INDEX

Household bought/leased new vehicle last 12 months	35
Have a smartphone: Apple iPhone	34
Own any e-reader	34
Foreign travel in last 3 years	32
Took cruise of more than one day in last 3 years	32
Household owns Apple/Mac brand computer	30
Foreign travel in last 3 years: used travel website	30
Own any stock	28
Member of any hotel rewards program	25
Member of any frequent flyer program	17

All data provided by ESRI Business Analyst, a product that uses demographic information of the selected area to compose estimates based on national trends and consumer preferences. The data is not a survey or census, but rather an estimation. It is possible that data in these tables may conflict with other data sources.

**237**  
TOTAL BUSINESSES

**3,032**  
TOTAL EMPLOYEES

**876**  
EMPLOYEES IN HEALTH CARE  
& SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

**827**  
EMPLOYEES IN PUBLIC  
ADMINISTRATION

#### HOUSEHOLDS BY NET WORTH, 2018

	Number	Percent
<\$15,000	3,821	51.5%
\$15,000-\$34,999	943	12.7%
\$35,000-\$49,999	393	5.3%
\$50,000-\$74,999	403	5.4%
\$75,000-\$99,999	303	4.1%
\$100,000-\$149,999	404	5.4%
\$150,000-\$249,999	525	7.1%
\$250,000+	633	8.5%

Net worth is total household wealth minus debt, secured and unsecured. Net worth includes home equity, equity in pension plans, net equity in vehicles, IRAs, business equity, interest-earning assets and mutual fund shares, stocks, etc. Source: ESRI



Built in 2014, this Family Dollar at 2383 W. Broad exemplifies the proliferation of discount merchandise stores in low-income neighborhoods across the country. The project demolished two historic buildings, and the Board of Zoning Adjustment (BZA) allowed a parking lot to be constructed along W. Broad, rather than behind the building as required by the Urban Commercial Overlay. Source: Columbus Dispatch, May 31, 2013.

**Businesses in the Focus Area.** According to the ReferenceUSA (Infogroup) listing of active businesses, there are more than 200 businesses in the Hilltop focus area. However, that total includes institutions like churches and even bank ATMs. After removing these categories, there are 111 business listings in the focus area according to ReferenceUSA records. Most are located along Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue, but there is a sprinkling of between Broad and Sullivant, as well as north of Broad.

**BUSINESSES IN THE FOCUS AREA**



Data from 2018

1. Modlich Monument Company
2. NMB Consultants
3. Ted's Auto Services
4. Limitless Enterprise
5. Hague & Steele Market & Carryout
6. Pats Hague and Steele
7. Bob&Bobby Odd Jobs
8. Choon Yang Karate Institute
9. Walgreens
10. Slim & Go SPA Center / Bundles & Plus
11. A-1 Tires & Automotive
12. La tiendita Ilc
13. A-1 Tires & Automotive
14. AA Precise Collision Repair
15. Lev's Pawn Shop
16. Urban Fashion
17. Reptile Hut Exotic Pet Store
18. Bright Start Learning Center
19. Memory Lane Collectible Record
20. National Auto Sales
21. El Huaracha Veloz Taco Stand
22. Brett's of Coarse Hair Studio
23. Ramah Drive Thru
24. The Dojo
25. Stingin' Ink Tattoos
26. Good Life Barber Shop
27. Wayne Market
28. MetroPCS Authorized Dealer
29. Roy's Appliances
30. Boost Mobile
31. Supreme Touch Home Health Services Corp
32. Mag City Tires
33. La Chaparrita
34. S Ohio Oil
35. Marathon Gas
36. American Health Network Hilltop
37. United States Postal Service
38. MoneyGram
39. Tobacco Outlet
40. Sunoco Gas Station
41. Jerry Spears Funeral Home and Cremation
42. Mobil
43. Save Way Mini-Mart
44. Uncle Chuck's Printing and Signs
45. Westside Tobacco Gallery
46. Mike's Barber Shop
47. Pablo Mechanic Shop
48. Rigg's Corner Market
49. Family Dollar
50. Righteous Cuts
51. AutoZone
52. Innovations Boutique
53. Westside Free Store
54. The Buckeye Ranch
55. Flexi-Media, LLC
56. D Boor Market
57. Eureka Market
58. Belvidere Mini Mart
59. Hilltop Carry Out
60. Bob&Bobby Odd Jobs
61. Ceme 4 Transportation LLC
62. Nate Travis Sarah Bubbles
63. Central Sales Co
64. M& J Carryouts
65. Smoke Shop
66. Branywine Auto Sales
67. Starving Artist
68. Gary's Auto Services
69. Columbus Auto Group West Auto Sales
70. Zucky's Used Cars
71. MetroPCS Authorized Dealer
72. Cream & Sugar
73. Buckner & Sons Masonry
74. Kurds tire and car service
75. Irie Jamaican Cuisine
76. Hilltop Animal Clinic
77. Smith Market
78. Big Nickel
79. USA Grocery
80. Advanced Pest Control
81. Rosco's Market
82. Taz Used and New Tires
83. Extreme Audio Outlet
84. Sam's Drive Thru
85. Sunoco Gas Station
86. Future Mart
87. Six Brothers Investments
88. Eve's African Hair Braiding
89. Stew's Barber Shop
90. Zera's
91. Miller's One More
92. Woody's Used Cars
93. Foodmart Express
94. Gina's Tire Service
95. X-Treme Ink LLC Tattoos & Piercing
96. United Dairy Farmers
97. Auto Repair Shop
98. Subway Restaurants
99. Hilltop Dairy Twist
100. Adam B. Studio
101. Massey's Pizza Westgate
102. Ishtar Auto Sale
103. BP
104. Extreme Audio Outlet
105. Boost Mobile
106. Pat's Barber Styling
107. Family Dollar
108. Casa Bella Styling Center
109. Westgate Motors
110. 1818 Sullivant Group Home
111. 1834 Sullivant Group Home

# planning activities

A group of diverse people are gathered in a community meeting. In the foreground, a man in a red t-shirt with a graphic and the text 'Here I Stand' is speaking and gesturing with his hands. He is surrounded by others who are looking at documents and listening. The background shows more people, a 'Daily Schedule' board, and a room with lockers.

The Hilltop Community Plan took approximately 20 months to complete, with a substantial public engagement period, conceptual visioning period, and intensive data evaluation and analysis. The plan offers objectives in nine major areas that work together to address the primary obstacles to neighborhood stability. The executive summary captures the essence of the public planning process and communicates the primary recommendations of the plan.

# The Planning Process

The Hilltop Community Plan's public engagement process was comprehensive, resident-driven, and transparent. The core of this process was monthly resident meetings, where residents completed individual and group activities. The activities ranged from discussion-based brainstorming to mapping exercises, always with the goal of gathering concrete opinions and recording results in a thorough–yet concise–way.

In addition to the regular monthly meetings, there was a Kickoff on Sept. 24, 2018, and a Winter Workshop on Feb. 23, 2019, with slightly different formats. All events, except for the Winter Workshop, were hosted at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club at 85 Clarendon Avenue. Keeping the location consistent throughout the planning process was an intentional strategy designed to keep the process predictable and familiar to residents.

Outside of monthly meetings, the planning team organized focus groups with relevant stakeholders to allow for pointed discussions with experienced professionals. These were highly valuable events that contributed greatly to the planning team's understanding of the Hilltop focus area. In addition, a less formal approach to public engagement was followed with the "pop-up planning" events hosted throughout Summer 2018 and into 2019. These pop-ups occurred when members of the planning team attended existing community events to hear perceptions and ideas about the focus area. They were critical in building an audience, establishing relationships, and gathering contact information that was used for the duration of the engagement period.

## Our Approach

Creating a community plan requires consistent and sustained public engagement, a process the planning team led for one year on the Hilltop. The plan relies on meaningful input from residents and stakeholders through facilitated exercises and conversations designed to elicit resident experiences. Across dozens of events and discussions, the team was committed to an inclusive and holistic process that would best reflect the aspirations of the community and help envision a framework for future investments. Creating authentic relationships with Hilltop residents was vital to establishing trust and communication. Our focus was understanding community values. These values, then, have intimately shaped the Hilltop Community Plan.



Voting processes allowed residents to voice their opinions.



Meetings helped amplify and organize the experiences of Hilltop neighbors.

A well-rounded practice of  
inclusive resident engagement.



## Ask, Amplify, Synthesize

One of the primary roles of the planning team was to ask, amplify, and synthesize public feedback on a wide variety of topics. To ask for input, we met people where they already were—through pop-up planning and informal outreach. Our regular monthly meetings also created an inclusive and welcoming environment for neighbors to meet and work together at the same time and place—always with a meal to share.

Our public meetings amplified resident voices and put residents first. Through individual and group activities, the thoughts and opinions of participants were carefully recorded and presented at subsequent meetings. We did this to ensure that residents saw their words elevated to create the foundation of the plan recommendations.

To synthesize, we carefully reviewed the extensive input received throughout the year-long public engagement process. Resident feedback had been relatively consistent and concentrated on the pressing issues of **housing, employment, and crime**.

The interconnectedness of nearly all challenges facing the neighborhood presented both advantages and disadvantages to understanding resident input. Residents often expressed strong feelings about problems that could also be seen as symptoms of larger problems. The planning team worked diligently to strike a balance between addressing both the causes and effects of problems, not simply describe the existence of issues. Moving toward a preventative approach is the paramount goal of the strategies and recommendations presented in this plan.



Residents' top concerns ranged from issues of violence to lack of amenities, like restaurants and grocery stores.

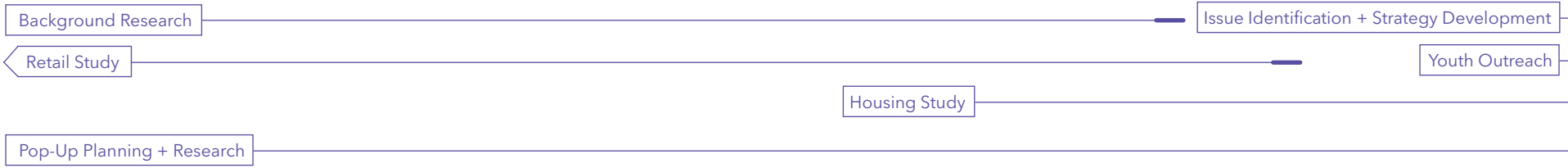
## Hilltop Plan Events

• Hilltop Community Plan Kickoff	Sept. 24, 2018
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	Oct. 8, 2018
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	Nov. 13, 2018
• Landlord Focus Group	Nov. 14, 2018
• Recreation Focus Group	Dec. 13, 2018
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	Dec. 13, 2018
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	Jan. 10, 2019
• Library Youth Engagement	Feb. 7, 2019
• Community Winter Workshop	Feb. 23, 2019
• Social Services Focus Group	March 4, 2019
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	March 14, 2019
• K12 Professional Discussion	March 25, 2019
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	April 11, 2019
• Envision Hilltop Monthly Meeting	May 9, 2019

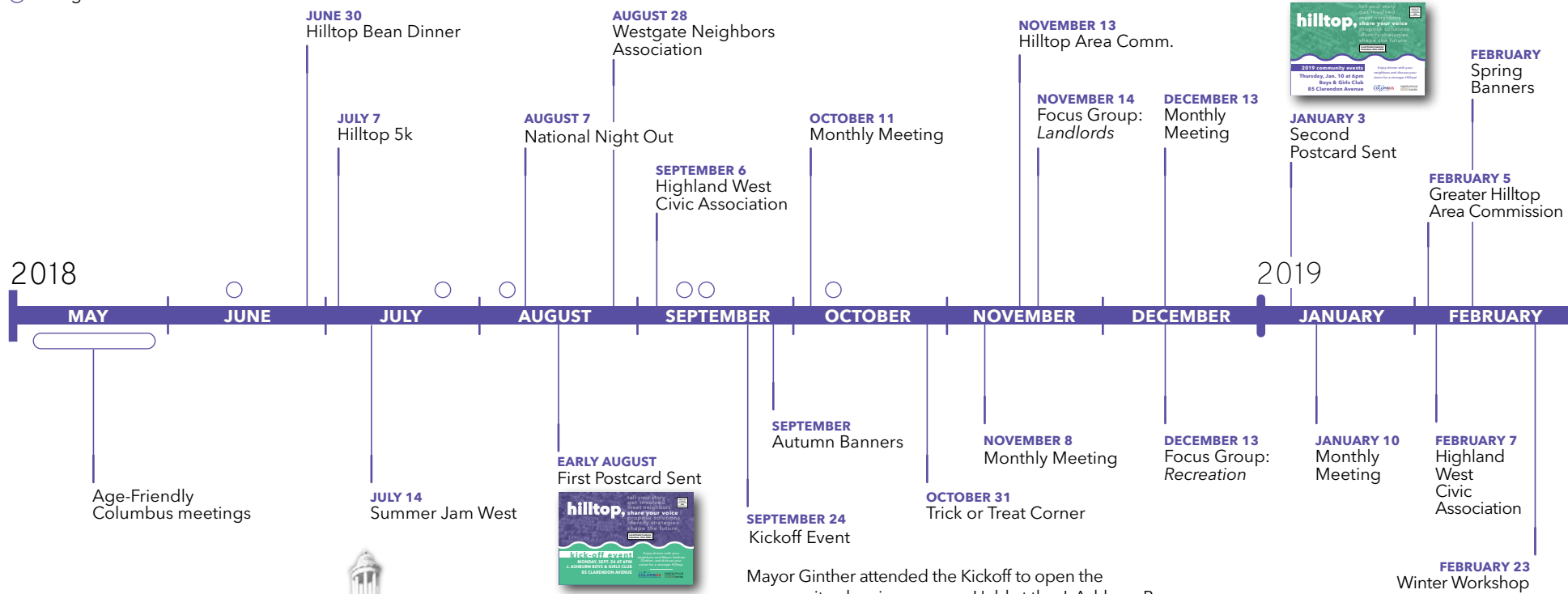
## Events attended *(not hosted)*

• Hilltop Senior Discussions	May 10-12, 16, 23, and 31, 2018
• Westside Stakeholders	June 13 and 25, 2018
• Westgate Farmers Market	June 16, 2018
• Hilltop Bean Dinner	June 30, 2018
• Highland West Civic Association	July 5, 2018
• Hilltop U.S.A. 5K Run	July 7, 2018
• Westgate Farmers Market	July 7 and 21, 2018
• Summer Jam West	July 14, 2018
• Westside Stakeholders	July 26, 2018
• Block Party (Veritas Church)	August 2, 2018
• Westgate Farmers Market	August 4, 2018
• National Night Out	August 7, 2018
• Greater Hilltop Area Commission	August 14, 2018
• Westgate Neighbors Association	August 28, 2018
• Westgate Farmers Market	September 1 and 15, 2018
• Greater Hilltop Area Commission	September 4, 2018
• Highland West Civic Association	September 6, 2018
• Hilltop Community Festival	September 22, 2018
• Sullivant Avenue Litter Clean-Up	September 29, 2018
• Westgate Farmers Market	October 6, 2018
• Trick or Treat Corner	October 31, 2018
• Greater Hilltop Area Commission	November 13, 2018
• Greater Hilltop Area Commission	February 5, 2019
• Glenwood Youth Engagement (February)	February 28, 2019
• Glenwood Youth Engagement (March)	March 7, 14, 21, and 28, 2019
• Sullivant Avenue Litter Clean-Up	May 4, 2019
• Legal Aid Society Hilltop Clinic	June 13, 2019
• Hilltop Bean Dinner	June 29, 2019
• National Night Out, South Central Hilltop	August 6, 2019
• Neighborhood Leadership Academy	September 14, 2019
• Highland West Civic Association	November 7, 2019

# Planning Process Timeline



○ Westgate Farmer's Market



Mayor Ginther attended the Kickoff to open the community planning process. Held at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club, the event attracted more than 100 attendees.





Document Drafting

Revision + Final Production

**MARCH 5**  
Focus Group:  
*Social Services*

**MARCH 25**  
Focus Group:  
*K12 Professionals*

**MAY 9**  
Monthly Meeting

**JUNE 13**  
Focus Group:  
*Legal Aid Clinic*

**AUGUST 6**  
National Night Out

**SEPTEMBER 30**  
Plan Draft

**NOVEMBER 7**  
Highland West Civic Association

**DECEMBER**  
Plan Completed

MARCH    APRIL    MAY    JUNE    JULY    AUGUST    SEPTEMBER    OCTOBER    NOVEMBER    DECEMBER

**MARCH 14**  
Monthly Meeting

**APRIL 11**  
Monthly Meeting

**MAY 7**  
Greater Hilltop Area Commission

**JUNE 29**  
Hilltop Bean Dinner

**NOV. 12-22**  
50 hours of Open Hours at the Hilltop Library for public comment

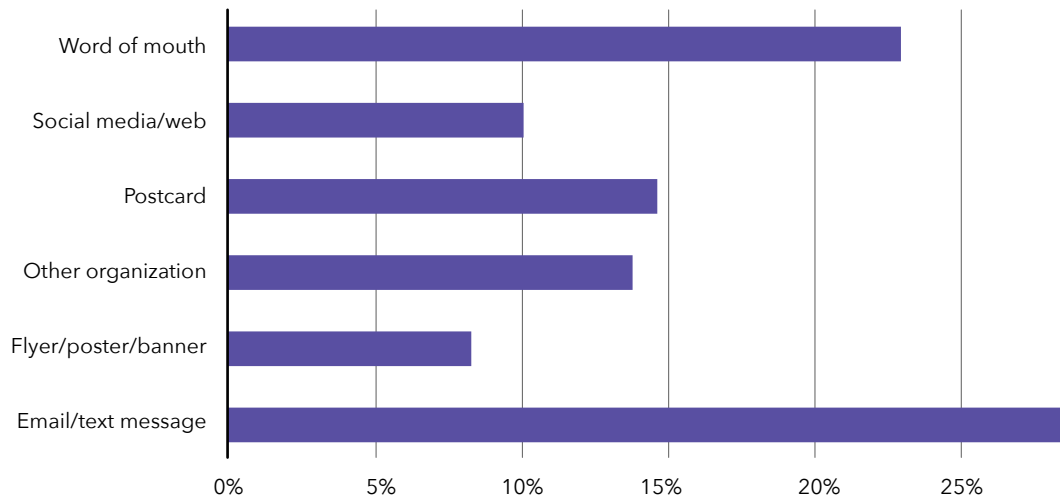


# Outreach & Communication

The planning team began reaching out to the Hilltop community in spring of 2018, with more formal contact beginning in May. The goal was to let as many people as possible know about the community planning effort in order to encourage involvement. Part of the outreach strategy was meeting people at familiar events in the community, recording their concerns, and subsequently raising those at future public events. This ensured that if people were unable to attend summer events, their ideas would not be lost.

Community organizations and stakeholders were integral to effectively sharing information about the planning process. Working with partner organizations (see list to the right), the planning team reached a much larger audience than could have been accomplished through direct outreach alone.

**How did people first hear about events?** At nearly every event, attendees were asked what prompted them to come. The responses show that email/text communications were effective, followed by word of mouth most. Flyers and postcards were less commonly marked.



The planning team spoke with residents throughout the summer at the Westgate Farmers Market to learn and gather contacts.



The planning team attended Summer Jam West to talk with neighbors and let people know about planning activities.

## Partner Organizations.

- Highland West Civic Association
- Westgate Neighbors Association
- Columbus Metropolitan Library
- YMCA of Central Ohio
- Columbus City Schools
- South Central Hilltop Block Watch
- Hilltop Business Association
- Greater Hilltop Area Commission
- City of Columbus

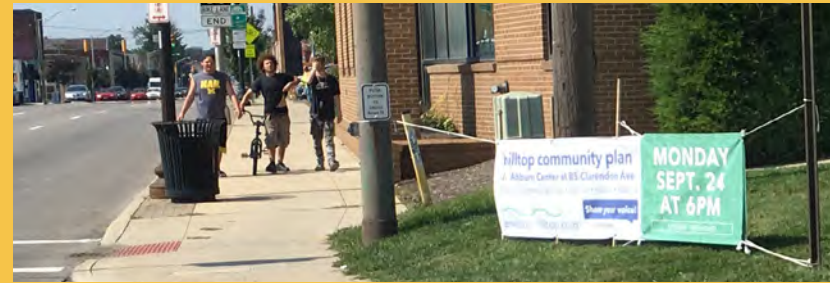
PLEASE SIGN-IN HILLTOP COMMUNITY PLAN / JAN. 10, 2019		
NAME	EMAIL (if not previously provided)	HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS?
Roberta Carter		Word
ALAN KROGER		EMAIL
Roberta Carter		Greater Hilltop Area Commission
Sara Davis		Word
Alison Beach		Word of mouth
Jessica Dill		Word of mouth
Shirley Dehl		Word of mouth
Debra Spurr		Word of mouth
SUSIE PETERSON		Word of mouth
Gene Kroyer		Word of mouth

At each meeting, we kept detailed attendance records and asked how people were hearing about events.



## Postcards

To reach as many people as possible, two rounds of postcards were delivered to each residential and business address within the focus area. The first set was delivered in advance of the Sept. 24 event to **7,782 addresses** along 11 mail carrier routes. The second set was delivered the first week of January to announce 2019 events. The delivery area was increased to **9,929 addresses** along 14 mail carrier routes. Postcards contained event dates and highlighted the website to encourage residents to learn more, contact the planning team, and provide input.



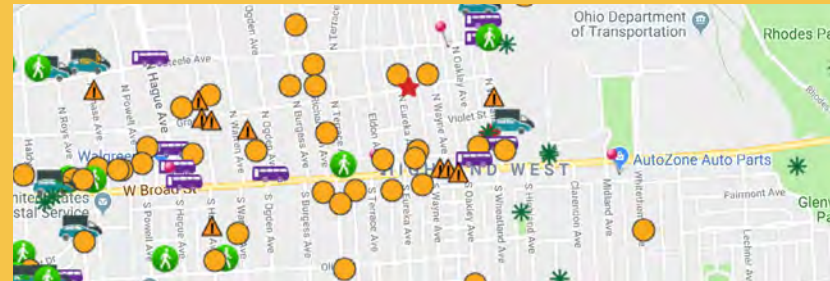
## Banners

To spread the word about the planning process, two banners were placed in the focus area. The first was outside the fire station at 2250 W. Broad. The second was at the police substation at 2070 Sullivant. Near the W. Broad banner, 2016 traffic counts estimate that **18,834 vehicles** pass daily. Near the Sullivant banner, traffic counts from 2014 estimate **16,172 vehicles** daily. The banners in prominent locations were intended to maximize both community awareness and participation in the planning process by residents and stakeholders.



## Pop-Up Planning

To reach people in the community, the planning team attended **15 events** from June 2018 through February 2019. The idea of “pop-up planning” is to build on the momentum of existing community events by attending and speaking informally with residents. Conversations sought insight from neighbors as well as to share the details of the community planning process. An approximately **450-person contact list** was created primarily from emails and phone numbers received through pop-up planning events.



## Digital Engagement

EnvisionHilltop.com was created in Spring 2018 to be the online home of the planning process. The website contains a range of information and engagement opportunities, from focus-area maps to historic photos. Results from activities at monthly events were uploaded so residents could see their contributions and to maintain a high degree of transparency. A community Wikimap (pictured above) allowed **100 unique individuals to add 357 points with 843 interactions** on a dynamic map of the neighborhood to mark issues or leave positive comments.

# Summer Outreach

Throughout the summer, the planning team attended events on the Hilltop to meet residents and let them know about the planning process. At the same time, people were asked to provide feedback on whatever topics they wanted. This feedback, provided on sticky notes and through conversations, was shared at subsequent events.

Comments received varied widely and touched on a variety of topics. They were the earliest stage of public engagement and served as the foundation of public feedback for monthly meetings. At the October 2018 monthly meeting, attendees were given these comments to digest and distill into their top priorities.



The planning team attended the Hilltop Bean Dinner, an event hosted by the Hilltop Business Association, to speak with neighbors.

## COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM ATTENDEES AT SUMMER OUTREACH EVENTS, 2018

### HEALTH

- More needle exchanges. Easy access to STD testing and pregnancy prevention
- Women's drop-in center on Sullivant Ave. to tackle prostitution, opiate addiction
- Reduce infant mortality
- Drug problem and the crime related to it
- Women/mothers need more resources
- Sex worker outreach
- Address social determinants of health
- Support faith-based organizations
- Released offenders need jobs
- Drug treatment/prevention
- Focus on health and fitness
- Desperate need for senior services
- Address resident apathy

### EDUCATION

- Engage 18-24 year olds
- Need a way for people to volunteer to help at schools
- Need home economics courses back in school
- Support groups that are doing the hard work
- Increasing community involvement in Highland West Civic Association
- More people (even without kids) involved in PTA
- Better utilize social media to get more people involved
- Immigrant community resources needed
- Trade school

- Align social services and resources better
- Recruit additional volunteers for walking school bus program
- Getting children safely home from school (protect young women from trafficking)

### EMPLOYMENT

- Lack of opportunities for people with criminal backgrounds: barrier removal needed
- Diversity is a huge asset: immigrant communities, good mix of resident ages
- Need sustainable employment opportunities and job training
- Increase in local businesses on Broad St.
- True access to equal opportunity
- Transportation to jobs and training
- Veterans in the community need more support
- Increase local jobs that people can walk to
- Training programs for fields that serve other community goals; education, renewable energy
- Develop communication channel that reaches residents and local organizations effectively
- More diverse places of employment in the neighborhood
- Need more jobs for youth to prepare for job market. Also need more transportation to jobs and training

### INCOME

- Hire residents to clear alleys
- Carpentry, plumbing, solar install, and electric classes
- Engage with smaller neighborhoods equally
- Hire residents to pick up trash, trim lawns, trim trees, clear invasive honeysuckle, clear catch basins, etc.
- Job fairs with a focus on different language groups
- Push commercial property owners to fix up and lease properties
- Circular economy built in Hilltop (employ locals to support locals)
- Neighborhoods are fractured on Hilltop
- Homelessness needs to be better addressed; more resources

### RECREATION

- Better public transportation
- Need a public pool
- More libraries
- Dog park
- Promote Camp Chase and places to stop along the way
- Camp Chase Trail is a significant new community asset
- More baseball fields
- Need to open up on Mondays exercise equipment should be free to use
- More program activities for kids and young adults
- Need senior programming

*Comments have been de-duplicated, minimally edited, and consolidated.*

## BUSINESS

- Neighborhood clean up
- How can businesses be given incentives to consider the Hilltop
- Vacant corridors: blank canvas for development
- Cooperatives and worker-owned enterprises
- Limit parking on W. Broad
- Redevelop Westland Mall: employment center and supermarket needed
- Micro-investing community support for small businesses
- Lots of vacant retail and commercial space
- End onerous parking requirements
- Need more locally owned stores, retail stores, within walking distance
- Promote existing community events and businesses
- Use historic business buildings
- Community artists and entrepreneurs need assistance starting small businesses
- The Hilltop needs a signature destination spot
- Streetscapes/landscaping along Broad St.

## SAFETY

- Prostitution, domestic violence, gang activity and drugs
- Cleaner streets and sidewalks for walkers
- Community policing as a method to improve safety and community relationships
- Increase lighting in alleys and streets
- Get the children involved in

cleaning up and taking pride in neighborhood.

- People driving too fast on residential streets
- Place cameras outside of all parks and rec centers on the west side to catch illegal activities
- More COTA bus shelters
- Enforce illegal panhandling
- More sidewalks in areas that do not have them
- More police officers (on bikes)
- More police of color
- Increase health resources, education and employment
- Angled speed bumps (not just straight across)

## MOBILITY

- Finish connecting Camp Chase at W. Sullivant through Valleyview, E. Eureka Rd.
- Improve transportation for the disabled/elderly
- Expand bus routes
- Traffic lighting/intersection alignment. ex N Wheatland/S. Wheatland at corner store
- N. Wheatland Road improvements for new WODA building
- Better, safer bus stops and more bus shelters
- Existing sidewalks are in poor condition and more sidewalks are needed
- Transform Broad Street to better accommodate foot and bike traffic
- Bike share docks (shared mobility devices)
- Cars constantly parked on street
- Speed bumps by parks
- Fix the one-ways!

## QUALITY

- Home repair help/options to age in place
- Creative use of vacant lots and revitalization of vacant homes
- Consider additional community gardens; pocket parks on vacant lots
- Assistance for the poor/ especially elderly homeowners to help them clean up and repair property; don't hit them with excessive code enforcement
- More code enforcement of bad landlords
- Home repair program
- City should inspect rental properties
- In need of local landlords over landlords living in other areas
- Try to work with landlords to clean up their properties
- Flooding issues
- Landlords don't screen tenants, will rent to anyone
- Slumlords must go!
- Provide 90-gallon trash containers
- Plant more city trees
- Better-connected block watches
- More street cameras
- Fund for code enforcement, help fund for older and owner-occupied residences
- City needs to do a better job of keeping alleys clean of litter

## MIXED INCOME

- Build higher, 35' height limit needs to be updated
- Opportunity for mixed income housing to bring in new residents
- More low-income tax credit properties
- People are being pushed westward
- Make housing available to give stability to homeless families with children
- Rehab historic housing
- Need more apartments and less tearing down
- Ability to create unique small neighborhoods within the larger neighborhood
- Need higher-end condos

## AFFORDABILITY

- Property tax support for landlords renting to low-income residents
- Keep housing affordable especially for seniors in the area who may be getting priced out
- Programs to help seniors be able to afford repairing of homes
- Need classes giving info for proper maintenance of homes
- Regulate flipping specifications. More buying options for low- and middle-income residents
- Housing for low-income families with barriers without slumlords
- Partnership with Habit for Humanity to provide affordable ownership housing
- Create low-cost housing opportunities

- Land trust; no reason Hilltop can't catch this before it's too late
- Help bring back the Hilltop with the culture. No more gentrification!
- Community solar co-op (to help neighborhoods pay utilities)

## HOMEOWNERSHIP

- Support existing homeowners on care of property
- First-time home-buyer tax credit for Hilltop (or better yet a grant)
- Rehab historic and architecturally interesting housing stock
- Work with community to make sure residents stay
- We need more local hot spots to attract young homeowners
- Appeal to millennials and young families
- More owner-occupied homes
- Residents are not as involved in the community
- We need a real, active, open-minded block watch!
- Provide references to reliable carpenters, electricians etc.
- Complete unfinished construction projects on neighborhood properties
- Connect land owners with volunteer groups
- Offer tax abatements for home improvements
- Individual neighborhoods should have clearer boundaries
- Help owners with programs to maintain their homes
- Financial coaching meetings

# Kickoff Event Sept. 24, 2018

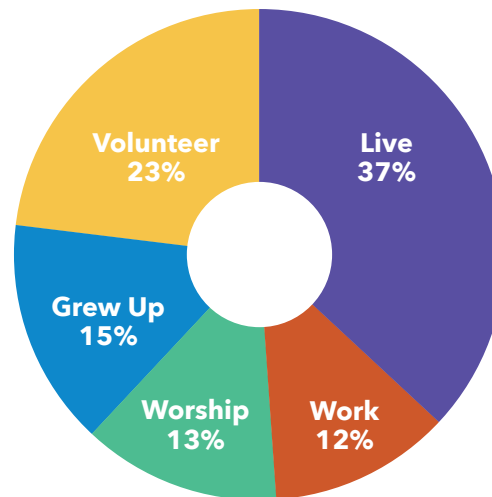
The Kickoff Event was held at the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club (85 Clarendon Ave.) on Monday, Sept. 24, at 6pm. The primary goal of the event was to formally introduce the Hilltop community planning process to the community, although many in attendance were already aware of the effort due to summer outreach and communication with groups like the Greater Hilltop Area Commission. To encourage attendance and thank participants for their time, a buffet dinner was offered.

Mayor Andrew J. Ginther welcomed residents and stakeholders, emphasizing his focus on strengthening neighborhoods and encouraging people to participate in the community plan. Nick Bankston, project manager in the Department of Neighborhoods, introduced the audience to the planning process, outlined activities to date, and explained the framework moving forward.

Following Bankston's presentation, participants were encouraged to interact with different stations to learn more and provide feedback to the planning team. The event ended with a raffle of \$25 Visa gift cards

84% of survey respondents said  
this event was Effective  
or Very Effective.

WHAT IS YOUR  
HILLTOP CONNECTION?



Mayor Andrew J. Ginther addressed the crowd, communicating the importance of the community planning effort and reiterating his focus on priority neighborhoods like the Hilltop.



The coin investments voting activity asked people to divide eight coins however they preferred within the topical options given. Voters were given a raffle ticket after completing the coin distribution.



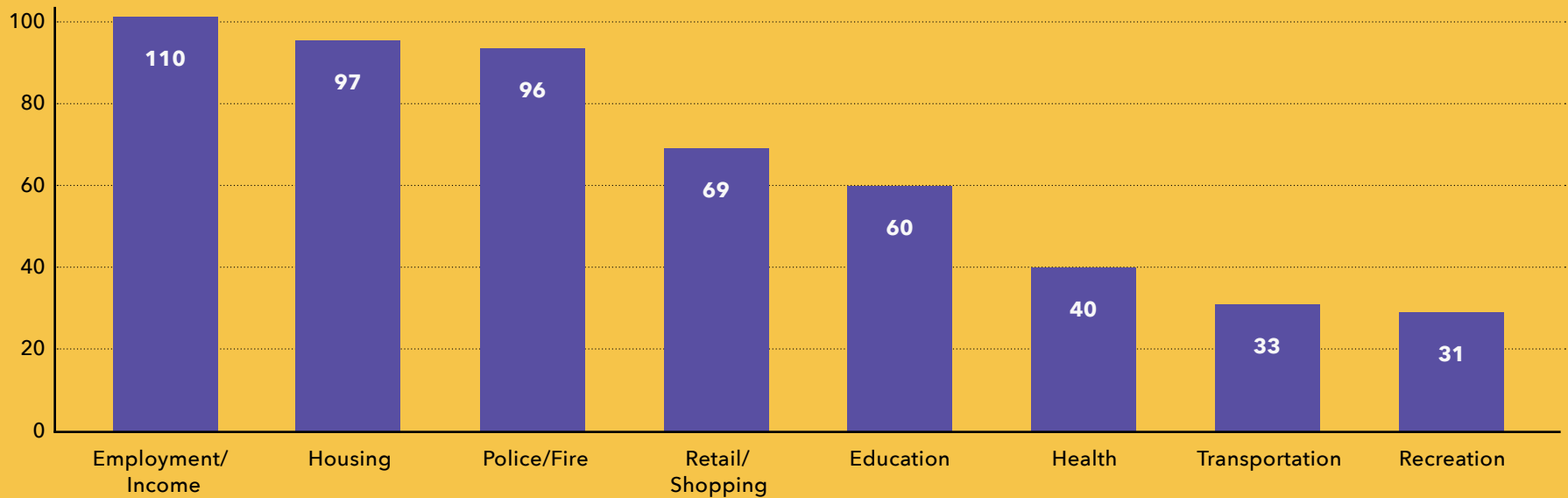
Residents were encouraged to snap photos and pose for pictures with neighbors during the event using an instant film camera.



Attendees were asked to provide comments on 30-foot-long prints of satellite imagery of the W. Broad and Sullivant Avenue corridors in the focus area.

## Overall Investment Coin Voting Exercise

The coin voting activity allowed residents to distribute eight coins among eight categories to indicate their personal priorities. The results helped the planning team understand what services and amenities are most important to the Hilltop community. The bar graph below demonstrates that the majority of coins were put into the Employment/Income bucket, illustrating that connecting residents to employment and raising incomes are top priorities among those who participated in the exercise. **The rankings below illustrate that employment, housing, and public safety were the top three issues facing the Hilltop.**



Rather than a sign-in sheet, registration cards were placed on each table and participants were encouraged to fill them out to stay connected with the planning process and provide information about their interests. The cards asked people to choose their strongest area of interest among **people, place, and home**. Results showed that investments in people were the most desired. Participants also wrote what they like about the neighborhood, the results of which are depicted in the word cloud to the right.

### What is your strongest interest area?



### What do you like about the Hilltop?



# Community Event

## Oct. 11, 2018

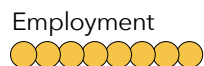
At the October 11 event—the first regular monthly meeting—residents evaluated issues brought up by others during summer outreach and indicated their preferences for where to locate future housing and retail investment through an independent mapping exercise.

The first activity split participants into two groups per category—People, Place, and Home—to discuss which resident-submitted issues were most important to them. Each group distributed twenty coins among four categories to indicate priority level. The second activity, a mapping exercise, asked residents to illustrate where they believed future investment in housing and retail would be most beneficial. Results are shown below and on the facing page.

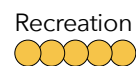
### Statement Priority Group Exercise

Residents split into six groups to discuss which resident-submitted issues were most important. Individually, they read through all the public comments recorded from summer outreach and identified which rose to the top for them. The group members then reached consensus about what comments represented the most pressing issue in each category. Each group then recorded these top statements on a small poster (displayed right) and then distributed 20 coins among the four categories to indicate priority level. The combined results are shown below, indicating that **health, safety, and homeownership** rose to the top across all groups.

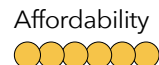
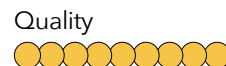
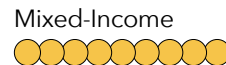
#### PEOPLE



#### PLACE



#### HOME



Some groups used consensus to distribute their 20 coins, while others gave each member an equal number of coins for distribution.



Residents shared their top comments with the entire group after distributing their coins.

PLACE			
BUSINESS	SAFETY	MOBILITY	RECREATION
Neighborhood Clean up	Crime prevention Domestic Violence and drug serving activity.	Increase access to health resources education and employment	More program activities for kids and young adults
4 PLACE COINS HERE	10 PLACE COINS HERE	3 PLACE COINS HERE	3 PLACE COINS HERE

Groups reached consensus about the most pressing comment under each category and wrote them on a small poster. Next, they came to agreement about the number of coins that should be distributed under each category. The group in the example above chose safety as their most critical category for potential investment.



## Retail & Housing Investment Mapping Exercise

As an individual activity, we asked residents to mark on a map the areas where they would like to see investment, using yellow strips for residential and red for retail/commercial investment. Then we put a grid over the map and counted how many marks were in each square of the grid. In the maps at right, the darker the area is, the more marks were made in that spot.

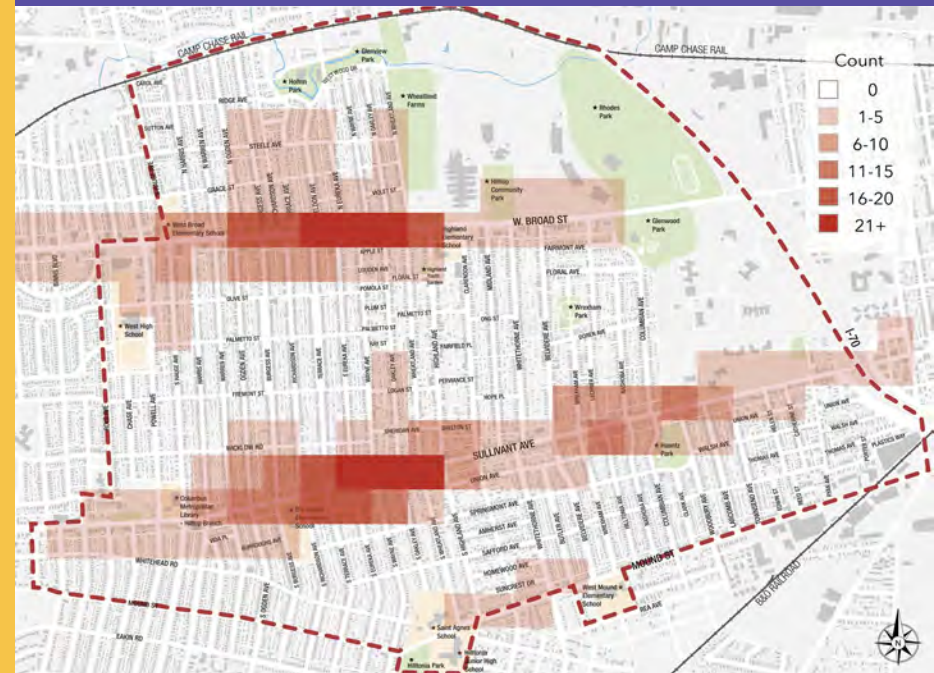
The areas that received the most recommendations on the **retail** map were **West Broad Street between Wheatland and Richardson**, and **Sullivant Avenue between Highland and Terrace**. In general, most of the West Broad and Sullivant corridors were recommended.

The area in highest need of **housing** investment, according to participants, was **between West Broad and Olive Street from Richardson to Wayne**, as well as near the intersection of **Wayne and Palmetto**. As expected, recommended housing investment is less concentrated than retail investment. In general, the residential section between Broad and Sullivant was of high concern.

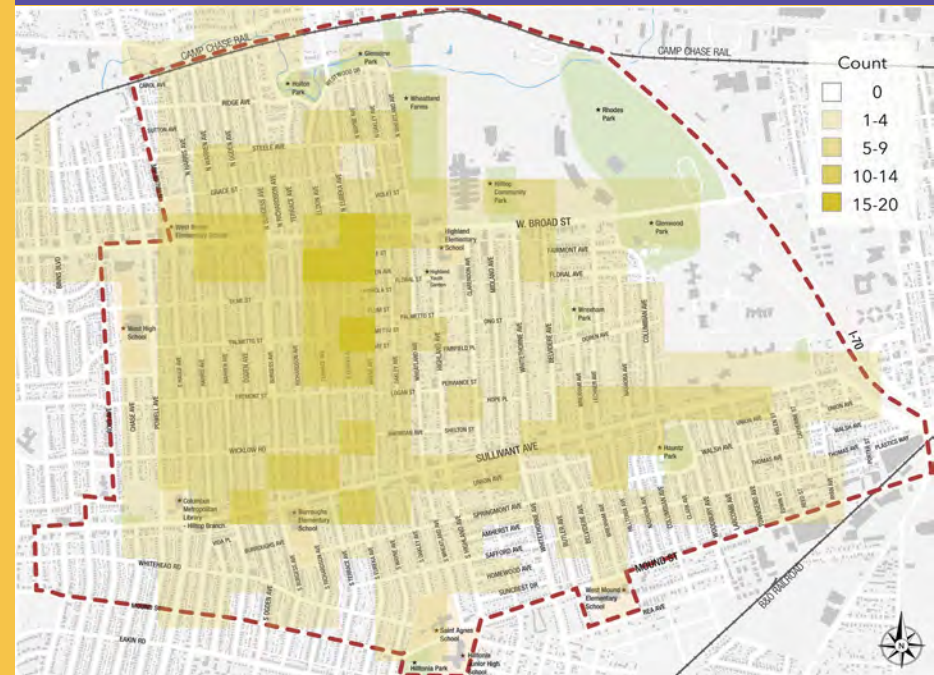


To standardize the extent of investment areas selected by participants, pre-cut lengths of red and yellow tape were provided. This ensured that people marked the same amount of geographic area and helped them focus on the most pertinent areas. In total, 61 maps were completed.

### RETAIL INVESTMENT MAP RESULT



### HOUSING INVESTMENT MAP RESULT



# Community Event

## Nov. 8, 2018



Two activities were designed for the November 8 event. A group activity asked participants to consider how they would want vacant and underutilized parcels to be used in the future. Residents worked together to imagine ways to reactivate neglected spaces, such as new housing, retail, or green-space uses like rain gardens and public art installations. The second activity asked individuals to think about how they want the Hilltop to look in the year 2038.

### Parcel Re-Use Group Exercise

Participants were asked to work in groups to select their preferred uses for vacant or underutilized parcels in the Hilltop focus area. Their suggestions are listed below. The results show that many want basic amenities like shopping, grocery, pharmacies, and laundromats. Green space is also important, as is fostering social diversity. For the most part, sites in the residential interior of the neighborhood were imagined as being used for residential or low-impact uses like gardens, playgrounds and picnic areas. Sites along commercial corridors were generally suggested for redevelopment into mixed-use, mixed-income, and/or retail amenities to serve nearby residents.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Mixed-Use</b>	0	0	6	2	0	0	0	0
<b>Residential</b>	2	0	0	0	7	1	2	9
<b>Non-residential</b>	16	16	7	17	3	9	10	6



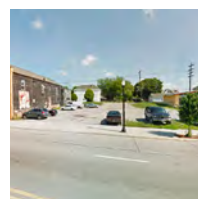
- 1 SULLIVANT & BURGESS**
- Childcare/ adult education
  - Learning garden
  - Public art
  - Cafe/coffee
  - Medical
  - Grocery
  - Multi-family, mixed-income



- 3 BROAD & POWELL**
- Grocery
  - Deli
  - Coffee shop
  - Laundromat
  - Multi-family
  - Mixed-use
  - Pharmacy
  - Affordable senior living
  - Offices



- 2 SULLIVANT & WHEATLAND**
- Restaurant/ cafe
  - Park
  - Food trucks
  - Performance space
  - Community/ senior space
  - Butcher/ produce
  - Grocery/ Target
  - Laundromat



- 4 BROAD & OAKLEY**
- Restaurant/ diner
  - Coffee shop
  - Grocery/deli
  - Pharmacy
  - Public art
  - Laundry
  - Senior center
  - Adult education
  - Mixed-use



- 5 130 S. HARRIS AVE.**
- Single-family homeownership (affordable and market rate)
  - Community garden/park
  - Playground/ picnic shelter
  - Multi-family homeownership, affordable



- 6 605 CLARK AVE.**
- Greenspace
  - Park/playground
  - Garden/ stormwater basin
  - Parking
  - Solar array
  - Side-yards
  - Affordable single-family homeownership



- 7 HARRIS & OLIVE**
- Community garden
  - Single-family rental or ownership, affordable
  - Public art
  - Performance space
  - Rain garden
  - Learning garden



- 8 OAKLEY & SHERIDAN**
- Multi-family homeownership
  - Park/garden/ urban agriculture
  - Mixed-use: park and homes
  - Off-grid tiny home village
  - Community center
  - Multi-family townhomes
  - Senior living
  - Mixed-income

## Pre-K Survey

We asked residents to complete a survey regarding the types of services that could be provided in conjunction with an early learning facility the City of Columbus is developing on the Hilltop. In addition to services for children, there may also be services for adults, families and the community as a whole. We asked residents to rank how much they agree with the necessity of each service.

Under **services for children**, the following three received the strongest support:

- Mentoring, 78%
- After-school programs, 76%
- Behavioral health services, 69%

Under **services for adults**, the following three received the strongest support:

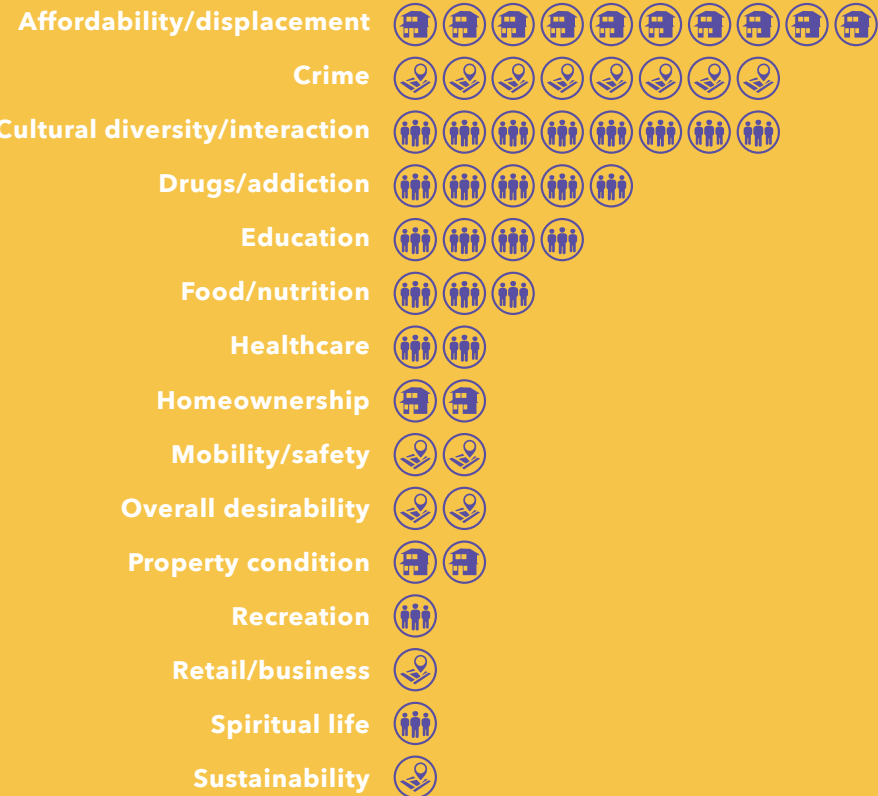
- Childcare, 70%
- Parenting classes, 67%
- Workforce development, 66%

The results demonstrate that participants realize the inter-connected nature of obstacles faced by Hilltop residents. Mentoring was the most-supported service for youth, illustrating that participants felt strongly that connecting youth with responsible adults would be beneficial. For adults, childcare was the highest ranked selection, showing that parents require childcare to pursue employment opportunities.



## Hilltop Vision 2038 Activity

Participants were asked to imagine leaving the Hilltop for 20 years and returning in 2038. What would the challenges and successes of the Hilltop be then? Below are the categories of answers, shown by icons for people, place, or home. **Key themes:** Housing affordability and resident displacement; crime and safety; cultural diversity and interaction; and drugs and addiction. Full results are available at [EnvisionHilltop.com](http://EnvisionHilltop.com).



"Kids activities are so popular that we need more!"

"We have better parks that are well-maintained and safe."

"Young people and families set down roots here."

"More permanent residents with stable housing options."

"Light rail is working well and needs expanded."

"No more prostitution and drug dealing."

"All housing is safe, livable, and not an eyesore."

"No longer an illegal dumping ground!"

"Hopefully homeowners and good landlords and responsible tenants will live together in harmony."

Selected resident comments about the year 2038, received during the event.

# Community Event

## Dec. 13, 2018

The December event pursued a deeper analysis of public input received to date. The individual Cause & Effect exercise challenged residents to think about multiple dimensions of particular issues like litter, crime, and unsafe driving. Participants discussed the interrelated nature of many of the problems—and that complexity was also revealed in the results of the exercise. A web of connected issues arose, demonstrating the enormity of the problems facing the neighborhood. For example, some people listed addiction as a cause of sex work, while others listed sex work on the Hilltop as a deterrent to visitors and business investment. That lack of investment leads to an overall lack of economic opportunity, said others—which then drives people to engage in illicit activities to earn money, like sex work or drug trafficking. This cycle was illustrated through many of the 38 completed worksheets, acknowledging that solutions cannot focus on just one issue.

For the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, participants worked together in two groups. The results are shown on the opposite page.



Participants began with an independent activity about cause and effect, followed by a group SWOT analysis exercise.

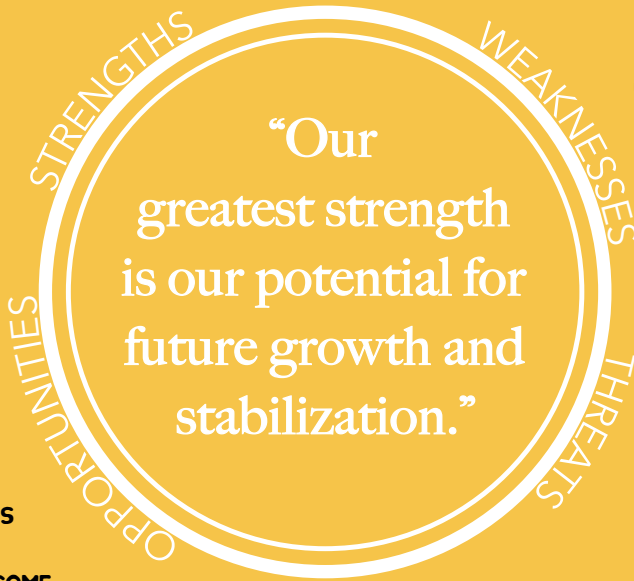
### Cause & Effect Exercise

Participants were asked to consider the cause and effect of multiple issues in order to analyze both sides of commonly cited problems in the neighborhood. Only the top results are shown here, ranked in order of most mentions.

ISSUE	CAUSE	EFFECT	ISSUE	CAUSE	EFFECT	ISSUE	CAUSE	EFFECT
<b>Litter and trash</b>	Lack of pride	Decreases pride	<b>Abandoned houses</b>	Lack of enforcement	Crime	<b>Addiction</b>	Lack of economic opportunity	Crime
<b>Lack of parking</b>	Infrastructure	Discourages development	<b>Unsafe to walk</b>	Outdated infrastructure	People walk in road/grass	<b>Infant mortality</b>	Lack of resources/healthcare access	Mother/family trauma
<b>Lack of retail/restaurants</b>	Crime	Lack of economic growth	<b>Lack of bus shelters</b>	Lack of COTA/city investment	Discourages use of public transit	<b>Sex work</b>	Addiction	Hilltop is sex destination
<b>Crime</b>	Lack of economic opportunity	Discourages growth, visitors	<b>Unsafe biking</b>	Lack of city investment	Discourages active mobility/biking	<b>Employment for Restored Citizens</b>	Job discrimination	Recidivism/unemployment
<b>Speeding</b>	Lack of enforcement	Dangerous for walking/biking	<b>Unsafe wheelchair navigation</b>	Lack of city investment	Inequity for different ability levels	<b>Domestic Violence</b>	Mental health/control issues	Destruction of families
<b>Vacant land</b>	Lack of development incentives	Discourages investment						

**PEOPLE** LOCATION **HISTORY**  
 AFFORDABILITY HARDWORKING  
 COMMUNITY PARKS **SPIRITUAL LIFE**  
 TRAILS **FREEWAY ACCESS** HISTORIC HOUSING  
**GOOD POLICE** LATINX  
 DIVERSITY **FAMILY ORIENTED**  
 RECREATION CENTERS **CORE RESIDENTS**  
**BEAUTIFUL HOMES** WALKABILITY  
 MATURE TREES LIBRARY

LACK OF PARKING ON CORRIDORS **TRAUMA** EVICTION PROTOCOL **DRUGS**  
 CRUMBLING SIDEWALKS **CRIME** INFRASTRUCTURE  
 NO CHAMPION LITTER **NO** HUMAN TRAFFICKING ABSENTEE LANDLORDS  
**SLUMLORDS ANCHOR** SEWAGE TRASH IN ALLEYS  
**GANG VIOLENCE** LACK OF PRE-K **NO RESTAURANTS**  
 RUN-DOWN LACK OF LIGHTING LITTER LOW BUS FREQUENCY  
 FAILING SCHOOLS HIGH COMMERCIAL VACANCY **PERCEPTION**  
**LACK OF GREEN SPACE** TENANT SCREENING  
 LOW ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD **NO GROCERY** LACK OF CURB APPEAL



**AFFORDABLE COMMERCIAL SPACE** LOCAL CREDIT UNION  
 FORM CDC **ODOT**  
 TWO VIABLE COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS  
 MORPC 2050 CORRIDOR STUDY  
**BUSINESS INCUBATION** POST HIGH SCHOOL TRADES **TRANSFORM PERCEPTION**  
 BUS SHUTTLE FOR GROCERIES  
 AMERICORP #10 BUS IT JOB TRAINING  
**LEVERAGE CAMP CHASE TRAIL** CLEAN UP ALLEYS  
**COORDINATION**  
 CONNECT TO GRANDVIEW HOME RENOVATION FUNDS **SERVICES DIRECTORY**  
**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT** INCREASE BUS FREQUENCY  
 STATE EMPLOYEES

**ACCEPTING STATUS QUO** VIGILANTISM  
 LOSS OF RETAIL DISPLACEMENT  
**AGING IN PLACE** **OPIOID CRISIS**  
 UNUSED WESTLAND SITE PARKING REMOVAL  
**LACK OF RESOURCES** RECREATION CENTERS CHARGING  
 LACK OF LIVING WAGE JOBS **PERCEPTION OF MEDIOCRITY**  
**POVERTY CONCENTRATION** **RETAIL LEAKAGE**  
 ILLEGAL DUMPING TOO MUCH RED TAPE  
**MEDIA COVERAGE**

# Community Event

## Jan. 10, 2019

The primary goal of the January 10 event was to begin transitioning from a focus on problems to a focus on solutions. An exercise allowed residents to rank problems within subcategories in order to reach consensus.

In addition to the ranking exercise, the event also presented participants with draft Guiding Principles (which had also been shared before the meeting via email) to be edited by each group. The results of both activities are shared here.

**Guiding Principles.** The community plan needed guiding principles under which recommendations would be developed. We asked participants to divide into three groups—People, Place, and Home—to collectively edit draft guiding principles. The results of these edits are shown to the right. They are intentionally broad, visionary, and ambitious.



Participants broke into groups to edit the guiding principle statements.



### PEOPLE

#### EDUCATION

All children will be prepared for diverse, living-wage jobs by integrating workforce development with academic and vocational experience.

#### HEALTH & RECREATION

Every person deserves unrestricted access to high-quality physical, mental, and emotional healthcare, including addiction, rehabilitation services, and primary care.

#### EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

Opportunities and assistance for living-wage employment will be accessible, achievable, retainable, and include the ability for advancement.

### PLACE

#### SAFETY

The Hilltop will be a safe, secure, and inviting community for residents.

#### BUSINESS

The Hilltop will support and sustain a variety of businesses to create a foundation of amenities and economic activity for residents and visitors.

#### MOBILITY

Hilltop infrastructure will embrace a multimodal transportation network that is responsive to the needs of the community today and in the future.

### HOME

#### HOMEOWNERSHIP

People will be encouraged and empowered to buy homes for neighborhood stability and community pride.

#### MIXED-INCOME & AFFORDABILITY

The Hilltop will be home for people in a range of incomes, while staying true to its diverse heritage.

#### QUALITY

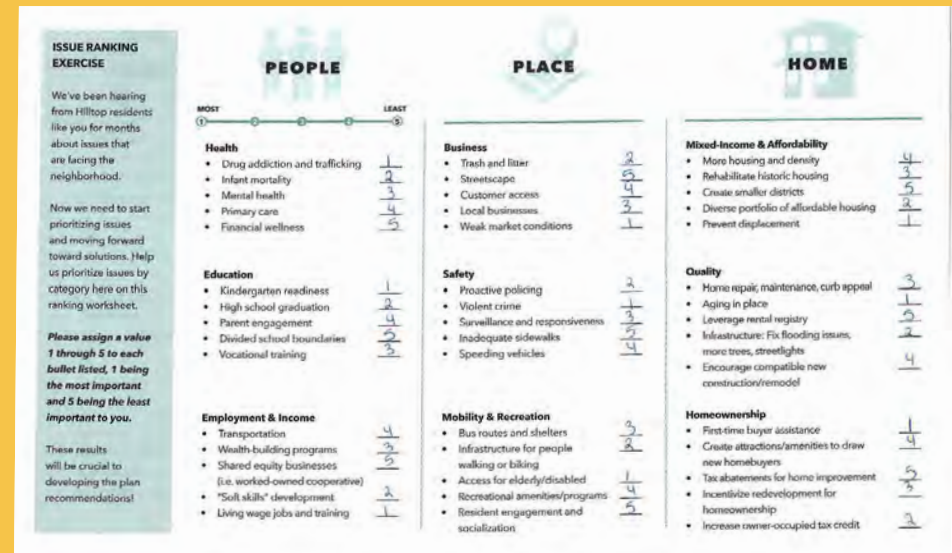
Housing on the Hilltop will be safe inside and out, and properties will be well-maintained.

# Issue Ranking Exercise

We heard from Hilltop residents for months about problems facing the neighborhood. At this point in the planning process, it was critical to begin prioritizing issues and moving toward solutions. We asked all 51 participants at the Jan. 10 meeting to **rank five issues under each category**. The results of this exercise are shown below.

To calculate the results, a weighted scoring method was used. Issues were valued higher if they received a higher ranking from a participant. Disregarding subcategory groups, the issues that received the highest priority across the board were:

- (1) Living wage jobs and training: score of 1.6
- (2) Drug addiction and trafficking: score of 1.8
- (3) Home repair, maintenance, and curb appeal: score of 1.9



## PEOPLE

### EDUCATION

1. Parent engagement
2. High school graduation
3. Vocational training
4. Kindergarten readiness
5. Divided school boundaries

### HEALTH & RECREATION

1. Drug addiction and trafficking
2. Mental health
3. Financial wellness
4. Infant mortality
5. Primary care

### EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

1. Living-wage jobs and training
2. Transportation
3. "Soft skills" development
4. Wealth-building programs
5. Shared equity businesses

## PLACE

### SAFETY

1. Violent crime
2. Surveillance and responsiveness
3. Proactive policing
4. Speeding vehicles
5. Inadequate sidewalks

### BUSINESS

1. Trash and litter
2. Local businesses
3. Weak market conditions
4. Streetscape
5. Customer access

### MOBILITY

1. Resident engagement/socialization
2. Access for elderly/disabled
3. Infrastructure for walking or biking
4. Bus routes and shelters
5. Recreational amenities/programs

## HOME

### HOMEOWNERSHIP

1. Create attractions/amenities to draw new homebuyers
2. Tax abatements for home improvement
3. Incentivize redevelopment for homeownership
4. Increase owner-occupied tax credit
5. First-time buyer assistance

### MIXED-INCOME & AFFORDABILITY

1. Diverse portfolio of affordable housing
2. Rehabilitate historic housing
3. Prevent displacement
4. Create smaller districts
5. More housing and density

### QUALITY

1. Home repair, maintenance, curb appeal
2. Infrastructure: fix flooding issues, more trees, streetlights
3. Aging in place
4. Encourage compatible new construction/remodeling
5. Leverage rental registry

# Winter Workshop

## Feb. 23, 2019

Residents and stakeholders were invited to attend the workshop, opening at 9am with refreshments and beginning at 9:30am with a presentation from Nick Bankston, Project Manager of Neighborhood Transformation Strategies for the Department of Neighborhoods. Bankston covered the premise and process of the community plan, shared preliminary results of public engagement, and updated the community about initiatives happening on the Hilltop (listed to the right).

After the presentation, residents moved around the room to discuss initiatives with city staff and view exhibits until 10:45am. Next, attendees split into three break-out groups to discuss three top issues as determined by vote on Jan. 10. After the break-out groups, residents re-convened to share results, enjoyed lunch, participated in the raffle ticket drawing, and repeated the coin investment activity offered on Sept. 24.

- Pre-K center, Dept. of Education
- Blueprint Columbus
- Slow Streets Initiative
- W. Broad Streetscape
- CelebrateONE
- United Way's Neighborhood Leadership Academy
- Comprehensive Neighborhood Safety Strategy
- Central Ohio Transit Authority
- Land Use Plan Update



Break-out groups were facilitated by RAMA Consulting, bringing a fresh perspective and new way of interpreting resident concerns and ideas.



The coin investment activity from the Sept. 24 event was repeated in order to measure change over time.

### Coin Investment Exercise





## Break-Out Group Exercise

Building upon the work of previous community planning sessions, the planning team actively engaged participants to identify and prioritize solutions for the community's most pressing concerns. The goals were:

- Provide community members the opportunity to problem-solve and ideate together
- Focus on strategy development for priority areas
- Determine the resources and people required to make their strategies a reality

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three different breakout groups; each of these sessions addressed one topic (identified by residents in previous activities) from the People, Place, and Home categories. See [EnvisionHilltop.com](http://EnvisionHilltop.com) for more complete results.

In collaboration, participants were challenged to develop solutions for the three priority areas identified in each category. Each small group shared with the room the idea they liked the most. Once all ideas were collected, the entire group voted on one idea to flesh out more. This process was repeated twice more to address the other two topics.

### MIXED-INCOME & AFFORDABILITY

#### Priority Issue: Diverse portfolio of affordable housing

- Build more middle- and upper-income homes and better commercial spaces
- Reduce regulations that make homes expensive to build
- Provide resources to help seniors stay in place
- Get developers involved in housing studies; coordinate with the Land Bank

### HOUSING QUALITY

#### Priority Issue: Home repair, maintenance, and curb appeal

- Duplicate village model for home repair and maintenance
- Free classes for home repair and maintenance
- Hold landlords accountable

### HOMEOWNERSHIP

#### Priority Issue: Create attractions/ amenities to draw new home buyers

- Improve and enhance property management standards
- Establish a Hilltop career center
- Engage at-risk youth to combat neighborhood challenges

### HEALTH

#### Priority Issue: Drug addiction/trafficking

- Improve treatment availability
- Drop-in centers
- Empower eyes on the street

### EDUCATION

#### Priority Issue: Parent engagement

- Use technology to engage parents and track child's progress
- End poverty
- Respite care
- Restore career/vocational training

### EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

#### Priority Issue: Living-wage jobs

- Create pipeline to vocations by training high schoolers for higher-paying jobs
- Small-business startup fund through a partnership with community colleges
- Require new businesses to have certain percent of jobs meeting living wage
- Have accessible benefit specialists in the community to educate and assist people in understanding their benefits

### BUSINESS

#### Priority Issue: Trash and litter

- Enforce litter/trash pick-up laws
- Offer quarterly bulk trash pick-up

### SAFETY

#### Priority Issue: Violent crime

- Meet people's basic needs
- Sentencing reform
- Stronger sentences for violent crime
- More street lights

### TRANSPORTATION

#### Priority Issue: Resident engagement and socialization

- Improve access/training to use ride sharing and carpooling
- Make not driving alone easier and more attractive
- Increase knowledge of public transit
- Use COTA to expand access to community activities



Residents shared their break-out groups' rationales for selecting each key idea.

# Community Event March 14, 2019

There were three main activities at the March community planning event. First, residents learned about the results from the February 23 workshop. Next, they learned about the results of historic Hilltop business research and discussed changes in the retail environment of the neighborhood throughout the 20th century. Lastly, residents participated in a land-use voting exercise in conjunction with the City of Columbus's Planning Division.

Residents were asked to provide additional clarity on certain sections of the February 23 results to give the planning team more insight into how specific key ideas were reached by the group. The dynamic Hilltop retail environment was briefly discussed, sharing results from an analysis of business

listings between 1915 and 2005 that revealed a major decline in the number and variety of commercial establishments along Sullivant and West Broad in the focus area. A handout was shared and discussed, and residents were directed to visit [envisionhilltop.com/business](http://envisionhilltop.com/business) for additional details. Historic business listings were framed as a foundation to understanding how desirable amenities existed when population and density were higher—in the 1950s and 60s. This helped transition to discussions about potential development and levels of density that would be appropriate for the future of the Hilltop focus area. Resident opinions on density were gauged through the activities featured below and on the opposite page.

## Mixed-Use & Employment Centers

After introducing participants to the concept of land use policies and the evolving approach to neighborhood plans, Planning Division staff asked for input on classifying the Fisher Road area as an Employment Center—an area to support office, warehouse, and light industrial uses. Residents overwhelmingly agreed that the area is appropriate for these uses. Full results are available online and the Hilltop Land Use update can be accessed at [www.columbus.gov/planning/Hilltop/](http://www.columbus.gov/planning/Hilltop/)

### Recommended Land Use

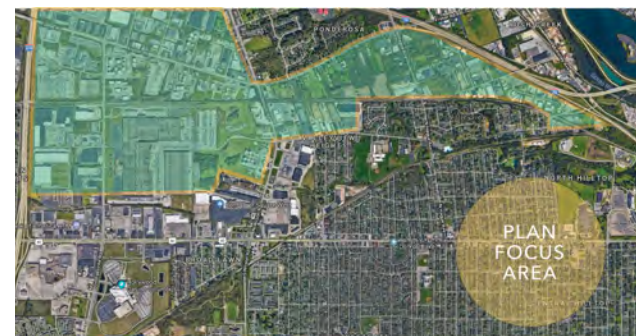
- Employment Center: Supports office, warehouse and light industrial uses

### Area Specific Policy

- May have scattered site residential uses. Existing residential uses are supported. However, in the event that a residential site is proposed for redevelopment, the Employment Center recommendation would apply.



Residents discussed the differences among levels of density featured and considered how density and population have declined since 1960.



The Fisher Rd. area was identified as appropriate for future development of office, commercial, and industrial uses. Residents overwhelmingly agreed with this designation.

## Land Use & Density Activity

To learn what scales of future development along the West Broad and Sullivant corridors would be preferable to residents, a poster voting exercise featured three levels of density: **Low** (0-24 dwelling units per acre), **Medium** (25-45 dwelling units per acre), and **High** (+45 dwelling units per acre). Residents were asked to place one of three stickers on each section to indicate their highest, middle, and lowest preference for density level. Ranked results analysis shows that for Broad and Sullivant, the most preferred density level was medium.

### WEIGHTED CHOICE ANALYSIS

Density	Broad	Sullivant
Low	89	110
Medium	106	112
High	79	65



## ← LESS DENSE Building Scale MORE DENSE →



6 dwelling units per acre



13 dwelling units per acre



25 dwelling units per acre



32 dwelling units per acre



47 dwelling units per acre



50 dwelling units per acre



10 dwelling units per acre



14 dwelling units per acre



25 dwelling units per acre



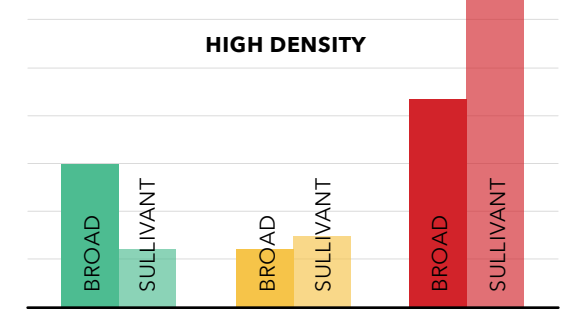
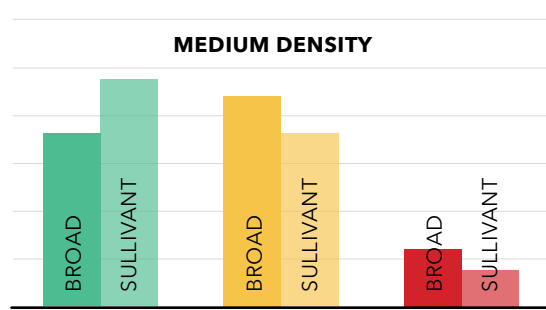
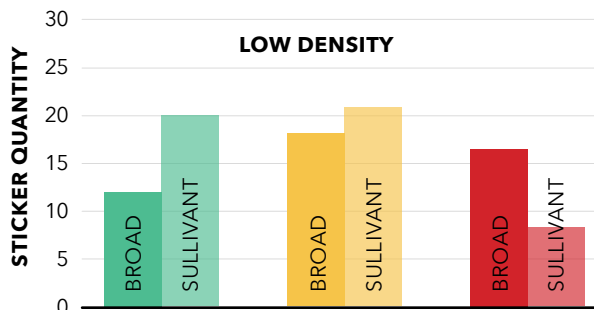
44 dwelling units per acre



49 dwelling units per acre



88 dwelling units per acre



MOST APPROPRIATE



SOMEWHAT APPROPRIATE



LEAST APPROPRIATE

# Community Event

## April 11, 2019

The topic of discussion on April 11 was neighborhoods, neighborhoods, neighborhoods. We introduced the meeting by presenting the results from the March 14 land-use exercise. Next, participants completed a mapping exercise that asked them to think about the geographic boundaries of their neighborhood (results on the opposite page). Residents used maps to mark their own ideas of what neighborhood means, and suggest new boundaries for various entities. For example, the Greater Hilltop Area Commission was a topic of discussion due to its very large size—encompassing nearly the entire southwest quadrant of Columbus. Some residents suggested that the commission be divided to more accurately represent the differences between the historic Hilltop core and the remainder of the Greater Hilltop area.

After the mapping exercise, the meeting transitioned to a large-group discussion of what “low-hanging fruit” strategies should be employed to improve the Broad and Sullivant commercial corridors in the focus area. Residents brought up a multitude of issues and solutions, primarily focused on ending blight and spurring reinvestment in currently vacant storefronts. The aesthetic appeal of the corridors was voiced as a high priority during the conversation.



Residents examined unique names on a creatively-interpreted historic subdivision map originally provided by the Highland West Civic Association.



Participants talked through historic subdivision names and asked what the word “neighborhood” means.

## Group Discussion Results

### VACANCY TAX

- After a commercial building has been vacant for 6 months, begin taxing at a higher rate

### PUBLIC ART

- Hilltop placemaking
- Colorful displays, banners
- Unifying visual themes
- “Turn blight into beauty”

### MEDIA

- Stop inaccurately reporting story locations as Hilltop, spreading misperceptions

### HOUSING

- Improve direct outreach for housing programs/services
- Proactive and targeted code enforcement

### RETAIL

- Market available retail space through community events, inviting people to come see storefronts, etc.

### PARKS & RECREATION

- Tree-clearing/restoration along hillside and lower section at Glenwood Park

### CLEAN-UP

- Trash/litter
- Create hyperfocused curb appeal efforts
- Publicly fund trash teams
- Empower neighbors to clean up neighborhood with tools, funding, and support
- Spray/control weeds along curbs/sidewalks

### COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

- Community quarterback
- Paid staff
- Encourage economic development
- Connect people to resources, each other, and businesses
- Implement plans, strategies, execute projects and policies

# What's Your Neighborhood?

Participants completed a mapping exercise designed to get their thoughts on neighborhood boundaries. Most responses indicated that **residents acknowledge the existing boundaries of neighborhoods** like Highland West, Westgate, and Wilshire Heights. These appear to be the most identifiable and well-known “neighborhoods” in the Hilltop focus area. Some people indicated the influence of large arterial roads in defining sections of the focus area—such as the area north of Broad Street being known as “North Hilltop.”

The Greater Hilltop Area Commission encompasses such a large area that it is hard to communicate the unique aspects of neighborhoods like Highland West, for example, within such a massive region. The exercise demonstrated that the Hilltop could benefit from having smaller, more identifiable districts within the broader area. **Overall, responses to the mapping exercise show that participants each view their slice of the Hilltop differently.**



“Improve bus shelters, give bus riders more dignity.”

“Many people just don’t know what it takes to be a good neighbor.”

**show us your neighborhood**

**BIG OR SMALL**

Outline, circle, or mark what you consider to be “your neighborhood” on the map. It can be as big or small as you want—just make sure it’s the area that you most strongly think of as “yours.”

What is your neighborhood called?  
After looking at the historical map, do you have any ideas of what your neighborhood could be called?

**Yellow** = Hilltop U.S.A.  
**Blue** = NORTH HILLTOP

*I've heard this is called Columbia Park? I'm west of Hague, north of Broad, and feeling a little left out :)*

**draw your own lines**

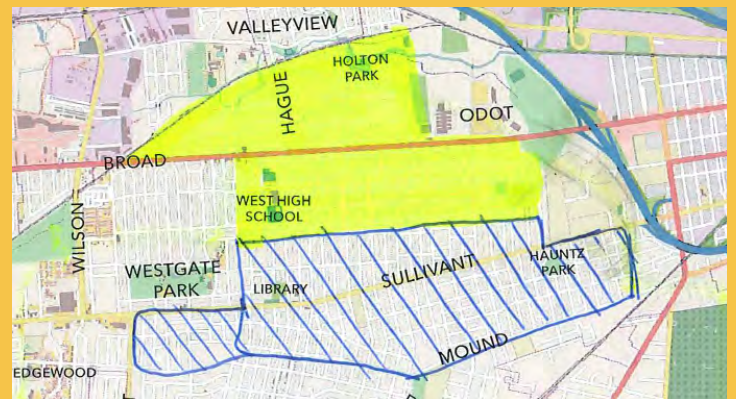
Draw some new lines. Ideas for civic association areas? Thoughts on the area commission boundaries? Maybe some block watch areas?

Use different colors (red and blue pen, highlighter) to indicate different areas. Label the lines using the legend to the left.

**thoughts?**

*Blue Lines Area Commission*  
**YELLOW** = Area negotiations  
**Red** = Job center / Senior center

*Tasks for the Hilltop: we have to be careful not to gentrify. The hilltop does not want to become the start north, we need to keep the people who have lived here for decades, in the Hilltop. We need well-paying jobs for the future in this neighborhood. We need more affordable housing.*

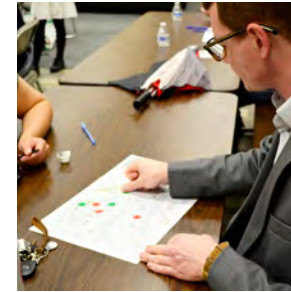


This resident selected the highlighted area to be known as Highland West and the blue penned area to be Central Hilltop Civic Association.

# Wrap-Up Event

## May 9, 2019

At the May 9 community meeting, participants discussed results from the April 11 meeting and heard announcements from a few community stakeholders, including the Franklinton Urban Empowerment Lab (FUEL) and Mount Carmel West. The first activity was an individual safety mapping exercise in which people marked three spots on the map where they feel most safe and three spots where they feel least safe in the neighborhood. Next, the group discussed the preliminary objectives for the Hilltop Community Plan and provided feedback, which resulted in some changes reflected below.



## Preliminary Objectives Review

These objectives reflect the year of public outreach and engagement led by the planning team. In each statement lies the input of a Hilltop resident or stakeholder, and each statement speaks to the top issues voted on by residents at the Jan. 10 community event.

The preliminary objectives outline the structure of the action steps for the Hilltop Community Plan. Under each item will be specific recommendations to help achieve that objective.

### PEOPLE

#### Health & Recreation

- Improve conditions, amenities, and program availability at parks and community centers
- Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community
- Increase access to mental, physical, and financial wellness opportunities

#### Education

- Collaboratively position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services
- Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare availability
- Improve outcomes, with a focus on increasing the high school graduation rate

#### Employment & Income

- Create pipeline to vocations from education and training programs
- Encourage higher wages
- Consider innovative concepts like wealth-building and worker-owned businesses

### PLACE

#### Business

- Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood
- Consider incentives to re-use existing structures and locate in historic business district
- Support customer access and positive impressions of the corridors

#### Mobility

- Prioritize active mobility
- Address hazardous vehicle behavior
- Improve access to employment centers

#### Safety

- Focus on prevention by investing in people
- Tackle physical environment attributes that contribute to criminal activity
- Expand proactive and community policing

### HOME

#### Quality

- Improve property management and maintenance
- Incentivize rehabilitation and renovation of properties
- Use carrot-and-stick approach to proactive code enforcement

#### Mixed-Income & Affordability

- Offer a variety of housing types at levels affordable to multiple incomes
- Focus housing investment in strategic areas
- Reduce barriers to development

#### Homeownership

- Improve financial capacity of current homeowners and prospective homebuyers
- Support a culture of shared homeowner prosperity to build community pride
- Enhance and add amenities to draw new homebuyers

# Safety Mapping Exercise

To learn what locations in the Hilltop focus area make people feel safe and what locations raise concern, we designed a mapping exercise that allowed individuals to rank their **most safe** and **least safe** locations and explain why.

## Where do people feel safe and unsafe?

The maps illustrate a lack of consensus among participants, except for a few locations. Areas perceived as safest appear to be around the Hilltop Library at Hague & Sullivant, and around Glenview Park and Holton Recreation Center north of Broad Street. Areas where people felt least safe appear along Sullivant Avenue and more generally in the area bounded by Broad, Sullivant, Highland, and Hague.

We also asked people to list the reasons they felt safe or unsafe at each location. The number of people who listed each reason is shown below. Reasons are not listed in the context of the rankings.

### Why do people feel safe?

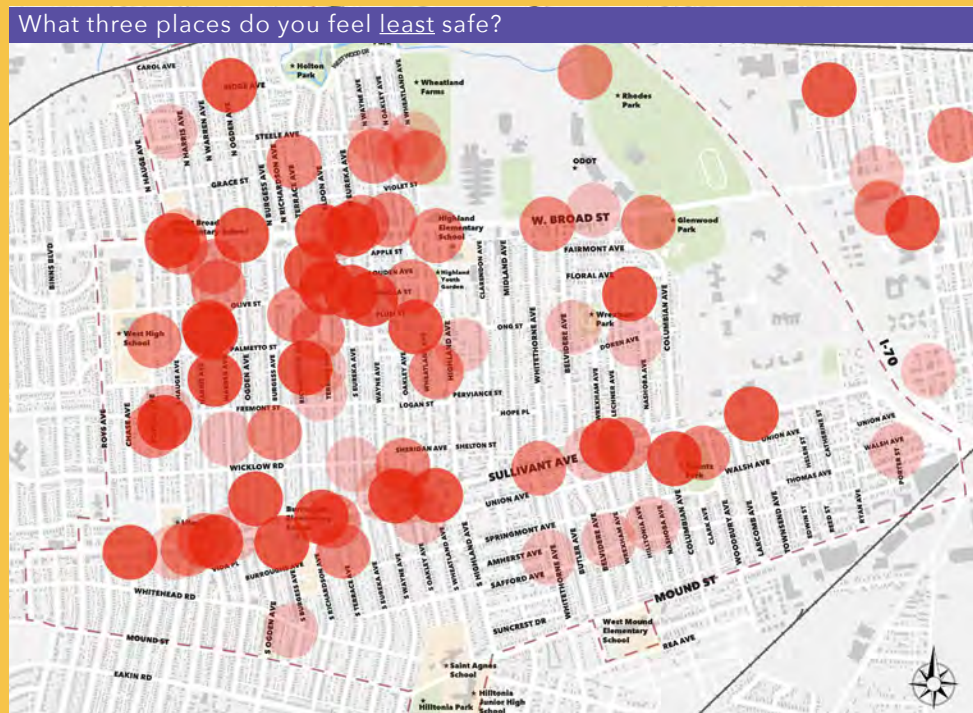
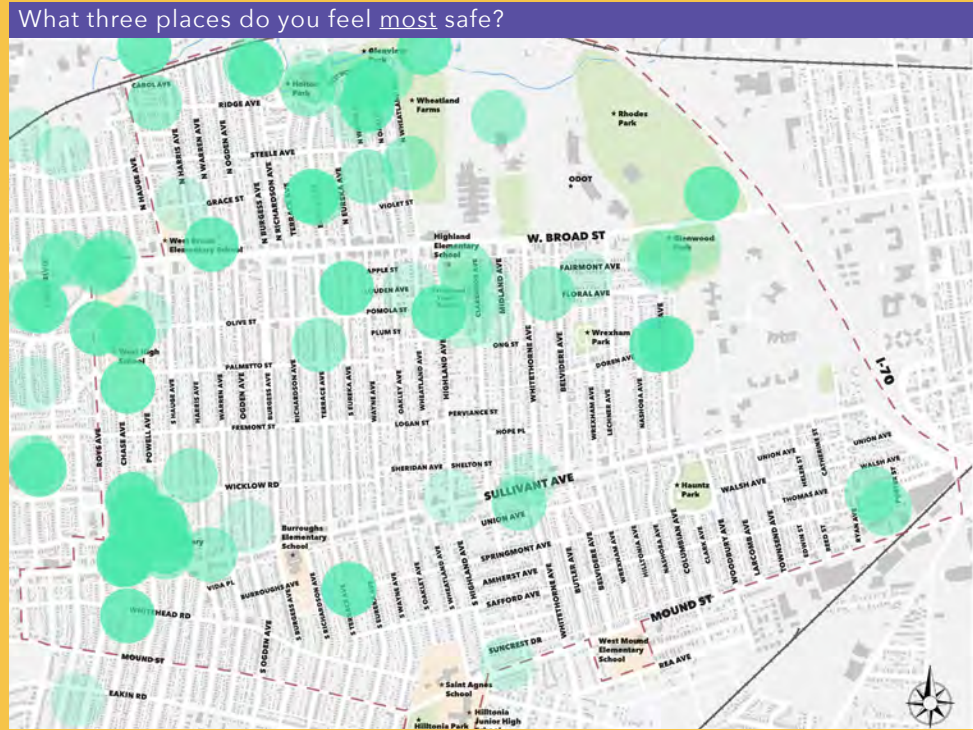
- Live nearby/know people 12
- Active parks 5
- Clean and/or well-lit 5
- Institutional bldgs. nearby 4
- Slower traffic 4
- Well-kept homes 3
- Cameras 2
- Security guards 2
- Away from crime/trash 2
- Active sidewalk 1

### Why do people feel unsafe?

- Speeding/unsafe traffic 18
- Gun activity/violence 10
- Drug activity 7
- Abandoned homes/run-down 7
- Sex solicitation 6
- Loitering 3
- Pitbulls 3
- Criminal activity 2
- Unruly youth 2
- Lack of activities/destinations 1
- Litter/garbage 1



Participants discussing **what icons represent the Hilltop community**. Common responses were Highland Youth Garden, Camp Chase Cemetery, the Firehouse, the Library, Rhodes Park, Camp Chase Trail, and Westgate Park.



# Focus Groups & Other Outreach

In addition to conducting pop-up planning and monthly meetings, the planning team organized a series of focus groups to receive targeted feedback from subject matter experts and practitioners working on the Hilltop. A focus group is a small gathering of deliberately selected people who participate in a planned discussion intended to elicit perceptions about a topic in an environment that is non-threatening and receptive. The focus groups allow group members to interact and influence each other during the discussion and consideration of the ideas of others. The purpose is not to arrive at a consensus, but to identify feelings, perceptions, and thoughts about a topic.

“Hilltop families are survivors, they are resilient, and family-oriented.”  
—K-12 Focus Group

For the Hilltop Community Plan, the planning team organized four formal focus groups and attended one Legal Aid Society of Columbus clinic in the Greater Hilltop. These events provided a critical perspective from neighborhood stakeholders that was sometimes absent from monthly resident meetings. Across our four formal focus groups, more than 25 people participated. Each session lasted about an hour and most offered snacks or lunch for participants. Participants were encouraged to speak freely and were assured they would not be quoted directly in any materials. The focus group environment allowed discussion to develop organically, with follow-up questions based on previous comments. Results are summarized here, as well as key themes from each discussion. For the most part, focus group attendees were not involved in the monthly resident meetings and had no role in the planning process other than attending the focus group.

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## Landlord Focus Group

Nov. 14, 2018

Participants in the Landlord Focus Group included a landlord who accepts HUD vouchers and an employee of a permanent supportive housing site. Discussion touched on a number of topics, but focused on physical deterioration of infrastructure and housing, as well as socioeconomic factors. Participants noted the intense impact of drug use on the lives of tenants and their families. Vacant units were pinpointed as a magnet for crime; participants claimed many break-ins occurred due to tenants or their acquaintances who were.

### Key Themes

- Drugs, crime, prostitution, etc.
- Pests: cockroaches, rats, mice, and bed-bugs
- Trash/litter: trash everywhere, front yards and alleys
- Vacant properties lead to more crime and disinvestment
- Tenant live in a constant state of crisis and are trying to survive
- Nonpayment of rent is primary cause for eviction

---

## Recreation Focus Group

Dec. 13, 2018

The recreation focus group brought together employees from the library, YMCA, Boys & Girls Club, and city recreation centers. Conversation addressed transportation as a barrier to participation, as well as a lack of funding to provide additional programs. Most attendees recognized that with more funds, they could expand hours and opportunities to serve Hilltop children, teens, adults, and older adults. Others stressed that many people just don't know about their programs, so more outreach is essential.

### Key Themes

- Extended hours
- Before- and after-school options
- Intergenerational programs: simultaneous for children and adults, would let parents attend
- Transportation is a barrier
- Paperwork, computer literacy, and signing up for programs are challenges for many parents
- Disengaged teens may find destructive activities



## Social Services Focus Group

March 4, 2019

Social services professionals from The Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services, and Lifecare Alliance attended this focus group at the Hilltop Library. Discussion revolved around the services they offered, the problems facing the Hilltop community, and how residents access programming. Some participants shared that human trafficking/sex work in Franklinton and the Hilltop has worsened in recent years, while other neighborhoods have potentially declined. Participants highlighted gaps in food programs on weekends and in the summer, when people may be going hungry.

### Key Themes

- Need to align multiple service providers that are serving clients
- Improve outreach and communication to residents
- Housing stability and/or new housing options are critical for sex workers to escape
- Improve child health and nutrition year-round

## K-12 Professionals Focus Group

March 25, 2019

One dominant challenge facing the Hilltop, according to many in the K-12 professionals group, is student trauma on individual, family, and community levels. Many students don't know how to process this trauma, leading to mental health issues. While there are some mental health professionals in schools, there are waiting lists and schools must send some children elsewhere for services. Participants wished there were more wraparound services located in the schools—especially related to mental health. There is some distrust of outside organizations, and many participants believed on-site services would make a huge difference. Positioning schools as the hub for resources such as medical, vision, and mental health would be extremely beneficial.

### Key Themes

- Mental healthcare
- Wraparound services needed
- Make schools the hub for many community services
- Expand the horizons of Hilltop youth
- Resource coordination and co-location

## Legal Aid Outreach

June 13, 2019

At the monthly Legal Aid Society of Columbus clinic on the Hilltop, we spoke with four women about their neighborhood experiences. They all expressed similar views about issues plaguing the Hilltop—drugs, crime, violence, and trash. Two of them mentioned prostitution along Sullivant Avenue. Two of the women were newer to the Hilltop, while the others had been there for decades. The two long-term residents expressed pride in being from the west side, one proudly proclaiming that her entire family has relocated to the east side, but she refuses to move. They love their neighborhood and are proud to live there despite the issues they face.

### Key Themes

- Gun violence and crime need to be addressed in order to improve resident safety and security
- Many residents characterize the Hilltop as formerly safe and thriving, but no longer so
- Residents are forced to shop in other neighborhoods due to lack of retail options
- Neighborhood pride is still prevalent among longtime residents but no longer so

“Sometimes services are disjointed  
because we are in silos.”

—Social Services Focus Group

“It’s hard to get parents involved  
because a lot of the parents don’t have  
access to internet and have different  
phone numbers like every week.”

—Recreation Focus Group

# Digital Engagement

A strong online strategy is critical for contemporary planning and community engagement efforts. The primary motivation for the Hilltop Community Plan's web presence was transparency. The planning team wanted to ensure that all activities, documents, and results were shared back with the community, not filed away. Multiple online channels were used, with an e-newsletter as the primary method of communication with residents. In it, recipients were introduced to the planning process, informed of upcoming meetings, shown the results of previous meetings, and more.

## Envision Hilltop Website

EnvisionHilltop.com is home to all content, announcements, and activities related to the planning process. After each meeting, photos and exercise results were posted. The website contains sections on history and other interactive elements, like an aerial imagery comparison tool and links to the Issuu library and Wikimap.

As of November 2019, the website had been visited by 2,254 users in 3,576 different sessions with 8,537 pageviews. The average session duration was 1 minute 45 seconds, and the average number of pages viewed per session was 2.39.

**Your Hilltop Community Plan.**  
A Framework for the Future

NEXT EVENT: THURSDAY, MAY 9 at 6pm  
J. ASHBURN BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

Focus Area

- North of Mound St.
- West of I-70
- South of RR tracks
- East of Hague, Rays, and Crescent



Agenda: December 2018  
by [Envision Hilltop](#)  
Published 2 months ago



Hilltop Market Analysis  
2018  
by [Envision Hilltop](#)



Cause & Effect Exercise |  
Dec. 13, 2018  
by [Envision Hilltop](#)



Agenda: April 2019  
by [Envision Hilltop](#)  
Published 19 days ago

## Issuu Online Document Library

The free online document viewer Issuu allows viewers to flip through multi-page documents online. The planning team used Issuu to share dozens of documents with the public, from obscure historical studies to the results or agendas for public meetings. The document library allowed people to view the extent of work already completed and stay up-to-date with current planning activities. The URL for the document library is <http://issuu.com/envisionhilltop>.

## E-newsletter

Once or twice a month, an email update was sent to 552 subscribers. During the public engagement process, subscribers received 12 emails that announced upcoming meetings, discussed previous meetings, and shared interesting information and community events. All emails can be viewed on the homepage of [envisionhilltop.com](#).

Following the public engagement process, additional updates were sent about the planning process and future events.

**hilltop community plan** March 2019

**Keep up the momentum and join us tomorrow at 6pm!**

Continue to build on the efforts of your neighbors and work toward developing strategies to address problems and harness opportunities for the Hilltop. Also give input on other major initiatives and projects coming to the neighborhood.

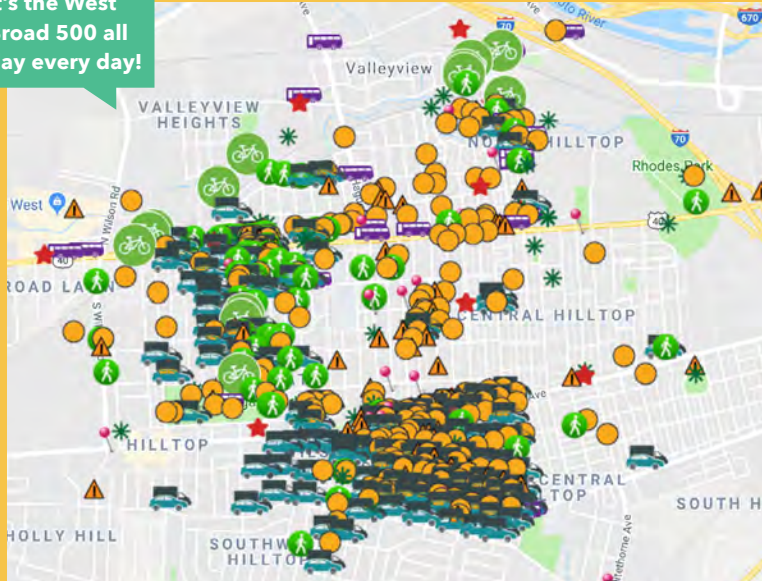
NEXT EVENT  
Thursday, March 14 at 6pm  
J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club  
85 Clarendon Avenue (Free parking)  
Food provided, activities for kids ages 5 to 18

**future events**

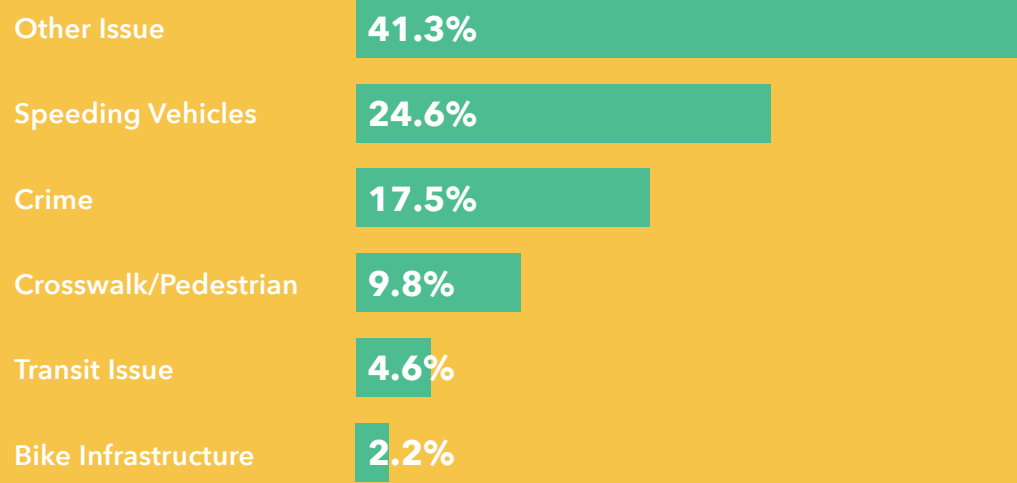
Mark your calendars for the following community plan events:

- Thursday, March 14, 6–8pm (J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club)
- Thursday, April 11, 6–8pm (J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club)
- Thursday, May 9, 6–8pm (J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club) "Final event"

It's the West Broad 500 all day every day!



### COMMUNITY WIKIMAP COMMENTS



### Community WikiMap

The goal of the WikiMap was to get geographic-based data from residents. Without logging in or leaving personal information, people could leave categorized notes as points on a map of the focus area. The categories (listed in the bar chart to the right of the map) were useful, but most comments were left under the category of "other." Many comments specifically called out properties by address and cited concerns about illegal activity or code violations. The top category was "speeding," indicating how prevalent people believe the problem to be. In general, comments about traffic and illegal drug activity were the most common.

### Selected WikiMap Comments

Below are 12 comments submitted to the WikiMap out of 357.

**Cream and Sugar is a bright positive oasis in the Hilltop business desert.**

**Sidewalks along Broad end up buried when snow plows come through. Places that don't have people on standby at all times can end up with as much as a foot of snow piled on the front walkway, which is also a bus stop.**

**Lots of pedestrians on this bridge but no sidewalk.**

**People running stop signs all the time.**

**Speeders are out of control.**

**The boulevards on the streets that have them are awesome features of the neighborhood!**

**Pawn shop encourages and purchases stolen items from the surrounding homes.**

**Family Dollar parking lot littered with trash.**

**S. Harris/Sullivant is known as Ground Zero for drugs and prostitution. Last year we picked up at least 24 syringes in the area.**

**Beautiful old bank could be repurposed into event space, co-op work space, dance hall, business incubator, etc.**

**Permanent traffic calming needed. Speed trailers seem to be the city's only answer which has proven ineffective or is being used as a tool to silence us...**

### Social Media & Text Messaging

Monthly meetings were shared as 'events' on Facebook through the Hilltop Community Plan page, which were then shared to various Hilltop groups like block watches, civic associations, and discussion groups. The planning team also used text message reminders to notify people of meetings—generally the day before or the day of the event.

# Youth Engagement Spring 2019

The planning team worked with students from the City & Regional Planning Department at The Ohio State University to create a series of weekly events with students at an after-school program at Glenwood Community Center from February 28 to April 4. Each meeting included two to three activities that engaged students in a conversation about their community.

**Meeting One.** The first meeting centered around perceptions of the neighborhood. This included a survey asking students about the current conditions of their community and their perceptions. Favorite places were mostly spaces for formal activities like football practice or after-school programs. The students had major concerns about gangs, schools, and their area being a “bad neighborhood.” When asked to write one thing they liked about their community and one thing they did not like, the most common “like” was the people in the community, including their friends and family. “Dislikes” included poverty, litter, and crime.

**Meeting Two.** The second meeting addressed parks on the Hilltop. Activities included discussing potential changes to existing parks as well as designing a park with limited resources, encouraging students to prioritize what was important to include. They were also asked to connect different amenities around

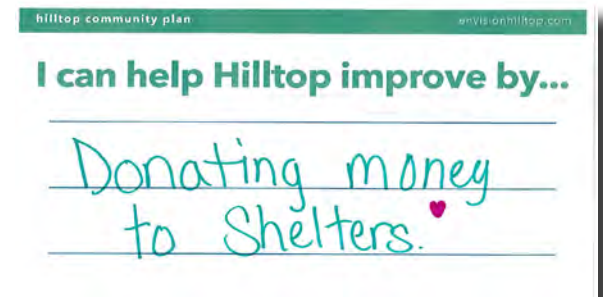
the park. Both of the park-planning groups included open space, picnic area, playground, footbridge, ice cream shop, basketball courts, parking lot, restrooms, and shade trees. Students were asked to choose one thing they would take away, keep, or add to existing parks. Common answers to take away were trash, rocks, metal slides, and poles.

**Meeting Three.** The third meeting focused on how the students used and viewed transportation. It began with a survey and discussion about what modes of transportation students use, where they go, and how safe they feel. The five modes discussed were ranked in the following order using a 1-5 scale: car (4.57), bike (4), walk (3.21), school bus (3), and COTA bus (2.5). Only three indicated that they used COTA, likely due to safety concerns and destinations not easily accessed by current routes. However, all students indicated they walk to the homes of relatives and friends, and noted that they would like to see more streetlights and quality sidewalks.

**Meeting Four.** The fourth meeting asked students to imagine their own plans for development in the neighborhood by designing a circulator route and planning a new use for a vacant lot. For the first activity, paired students added key locations to their maps and drew a Hilltop circulator route. The three resulting routes



Glenwood Community Center



were distinct, but all had the common theme of connecting areas such as parks or strip malls with multiple restaurants. Students were then given a site description and map of a lot near Clarendon & Highland Avenues and tasked with designing a use for that space in the context of its surroundings. All the proposals included a mix of storefronts and open space for activities.

### Ideas for Vacant Land

- Ice cream shop (2)
- Candy store (2)
- Skate park (2)
- Toy store
- Park (2)
- Swimming pool (2)
- Bakery
- Playground
- Youth football/soccer
- Starbucks/bubble tea
- Basketball court
- Water park
- Art store
- Playground
- Parkour playground
- Food truck
- Store/clothes
- School clubs
- Animal center/little zoo
- A shelter
- Subway
- Community garden

**Meeting Five.** The final meeting wrapped-up previous sessions and included a final survey. Students were given eight coins to place in boxes labeled health, retail and shopping, education, employment and income, recreation, transportation, police and fire, and housing. (This activity mirrored one completed during two Hilltop community meetings. Students decided how many coins to put into each box based on their personal priorities). **Health, education, and housing had 18, 16, and 16 coins respectively.** The remaining boxes had less than 10 each. A final survey asked students what they would like to see in the area. **The general consensus was a desire for better schools, housing, and roads, as well as a safer and cleaner environment.**



Over the course of five weeks, students indicated strong interest in the quality of their education, the condition of neighborhood roads, and safety. It was clear that fast food restaurants and parks are the main “third places” for socializing; students were either dropped off there or walked. Throughout discussions, there was a desire to see more investment in public spaces—particularly in trash removal and improving roads.

## Library Youth Outreach

On February 7, the planning team visited the Hilltop Branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library to engage with youth aged 8 through 16 after school. Through discussion-based activities and worksheets, the planning team elicited a variety of responses about participants' life experiences in the neighborhood.

### What do you want *more* of on the Hilltop?

- Malls
- Streetlights/stop signs
- Cops
- Speed bumps
- Helmets
- Traffic lights
- Home security
- Fields/flowers
- Sledding
- Food
- Wendy's

### What do you want *less* of on the Hilltop?

- Bad people
- Bullying
- Stealing
- Kidnapping
- Imprisonment
- Violence
- Illegal activity
- Expensive funerals
- Death

### What do you *like* about living on the Hilltop?

- Nice and kind people
- Kind people
- Nice houses
- The Hilltop needs me
- Living near friends
- Being with friends at school and the library
- Being around friends/school
- The library

### What *don't* you like about living on the Hilltop?

- Hate the shooting
- Drugs
- Too many guns
- Fighting
- People stealing things
- Boy in my class stole my watch
- Bad people live here
- Accidents and things happen where I live

### What change or improvement would you make if you could?

- I would take away gangs, shooting, and killing
- People doing drugs
- Prevent violence
- Bigger houses
- Want people to be good
- I'd want everything to be free

### What comes to mind when you hear “Sullivant Avenue”?

- Home (3)
- Bad people
- Stealing
- Kidnapping
- Cute girls
- Crack heads
- Food stamps store
- Hoes
- Lot of cars

# Highland West Civic Association

*This page was produced in collaboration with the Highland West Civic Association executive committee.*

The Highland West Civic Association (HWCA) was incorporated in 2006 with the intent to advocate for and assist in the revitalization of the largely neglected neighborhood on the east side of Hague Avenue and north of Sullivant Avenue. The desire of HWCA was to create a sustainable and diverse community, complementing the City of Columbus's efforts at the time to do the same in their plan entitled "The Economic Development of West Broad Street." This resident-involved plan called for the rebranding of a portion of the West Broad Street Corridor east of Hague Avenue. The city Department of Development created The Highland West District in 2004, which extended from Highland Avenue to Terrace Avenue; this was the subject area of the Highland West Visioning Charrette which was completed by residents in 2006. The original boundaries established by HWCA were I-70 on the east, Sullivant Avenue on the south, Hague Avenue on the west, and the railroad tracks south of Valleyview Drive on the north, surrounding the new district on West Broad Street. In 2016, the southern boundary shifted two blocks north of Sullivant Avenue in hopes of spurring new civic groups to form along Sullivant Avenue and to the south. All are welcome to HWCA events and to become members. Whereas all residents of the Highland West community are considered valued members for whom HWCA advocates, there are also dues-paid memberships available for those who wish to play a greater role.



Boundaries of the Highland West Civic Association.



The HWCA hosts events that bring residents and visitors together to learn about Highland West's unique heritage and improve the community, like litter pick-ups.

## Highland West Civic Association Goals

One of the HWCA's primary goals is to create an economically, racially and ethnically diverse community, building on the diversity we already have. To accomplish these goals we advocate for the following:

1. Responsible development that is sustainable and increases the value of our community;
2. Marketing our existing housing stock to new buyers in Highland West and from other parts of the city, encouraging home ownership for people of all income levels;
3. The upgrading and improvement of our roads and alleys to better serve our residents and visitors;
4. Restoring adequate city services for trash, sewer, street cleaning, etc.
5. Eclectic and diverse business development along West Broad Street;
6. The restoration of all city parks within our boundaries;
7. Meaningful programs that further these and other goals of our association.



[www.highlandwest.us](http://www.highlandwest.us)  
[facebook.com/highlandwest.us](https://facebook.com/highlandwest.us)

# A Commitment to Transparency

Residents involved in the Envision Hilltop public engagement process were updated consistently throughout the year long engagement process, and activities were shared immediately online after each meeting. Monthly resident workbooks were critical to keeping a record of all resident input, and allowed residents to see how their feedback shaped the plan recommendations. Workbooks were also shared online so that residents who could not attend meetings could see activities and results from each event.

## Public Plan Review Hours at Hilltop Library

The Hilltop Community Plan draft was available for public review and comment at the Hilltop branch of the Columbus Metropolitan Library (511 South Hague Avenue) for a total of **50 hours** between Tuesday, November 12, and Friday, November 22. Assisted by staff from the planning team, residents and other interested library visitors browsed through the booklet, asked questions, and made suggestions about certain aspects of the document. Some people offered clarifying remarks about historical components, while others were intrigued to read the plan's goals and recommendations in their areas of interest. In total, there were 30 visits from people (the many library staff members who offered insightful feedback) across the **10 days** of public review.



The planning team spoke with residents and library visitors about the contents of the Hilltop Community Plan draft.

## Public Engagement Evaluation Survey

A survey was taken by each participant at the May 9 meeting to learn how people felt about the public engagement process. Results for the 31 respondents showed that there was a high degree of positivity about the Envision Hilltop meetings. Here are a few takeaways:

- 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their opinions were valued during Envision Hilltop meetings.
- 97% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that meetings were primarily focused on getting resident input and feedback.

**42**  
AVERAGE  
AGE

**15**  
AVERAGE YEARS  
IN HILLTOP

**75%**  
HAD ATTENDED A PREVIOUS  
ENVISION HILLTOP MEETING

**59%**  
HILLTOP  
HOMEOWNERS

## HILLTOP LIBRARY PUBLIC PLAN REVIEW HOURS NOVEMBER 2019

Tuesday, 11/12	4pm to 8pm
Wednesday, 11/13	4pm to 8pm
Thursday, 11/14	4pm to 8pm
Friday, 11/15	9am to 3pm
Saturday, 11/16	9am to 3pm
Monday, 11/18	9am to 3pm
Tuesday, 11/19	4pm to 8pm
Wednesday, 11/20	12pm to 6pm
Thursday, 11/21	4pm to 8pm
Friday, 11/22	9am to 3pm

### Envision Hilltop Resident Activities & Monthly Booklets

Activity results were summarized and added to subsequent monthly workbooks, and activities themselves were also uploaded to the online document library for full transparency. Each month, the workbook served as the agenda for the meeting and an anthology of previous activities. Booklets were important to keep residents up-to-date if they could not attend and to increase transparency throughout the engagement process. They included results from previous resident exercises, as well as maps and data.

October 2018



November 2018



December 2018



January 2019



February 2019



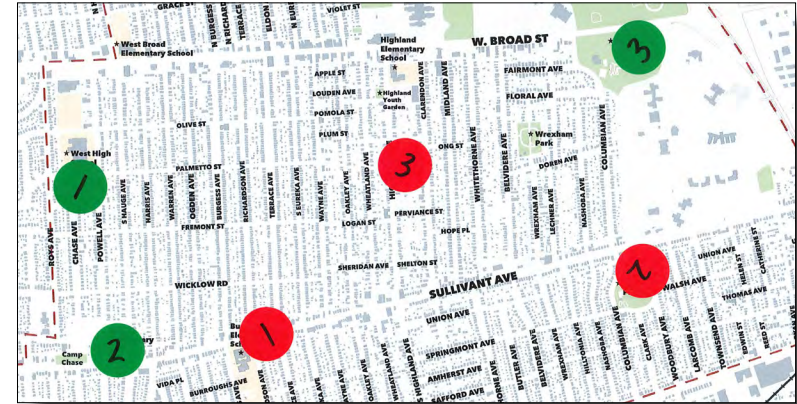
March 2019



April 2019



May 2019



### Envision Hilltop Resident Incentives

To encourage attendance and thank residents for their time and contributions, gift cards were distributed at each public meeting. Loaded with values of either \$25 or \$50, they were a small token of appreciation to the Hilltop residents that spent hours working to improve their neighborhood.





# envision hilltop

The Hilltop needs coordinated intervention to emerge as a stable neighborhood. Strategies outlined in the following section indicate potential timeline and classification for each component—a project, policy, program, or an integrated approach. Each topic area contains goals, accompanied by action steps. Case studies are featured to support specific ideas, followed by visionary concepts that could bring action steps to life.



# Reading the Plan

The Hilltop Community Plan has three pillars: People, Place, and Home. Under each pillar, there are three topic areas of goals and recommendations. Each topic area is discussed in four pages—the first two pages present the goals and

recommendations, while the second two pages offer case studies and visionary concepts. The visionary concepts relate to action steps of the goals; they are described in further detail under the visionary concepts heading.

## Guiding Principle

In each section, the guiding principle will be shown in this location on the page. Guiding principles are intentionally broad, visionary, and ambitious. They were developed with residents and provided the framework under which recommendations were developed.

## Resident Priorities

At the January 10, 2019 meeting, the 51 participants ranked five issues under each category. Those results are shown here in rank order under this heading in each section.

## ANATOMY OF A PAGE

### Resident Comments

Each topic area has resident comments that communicate common issues or desires. These comments were collected primarily during the outreach efforts of Summer 2018, but may also come from Envision Hilltop meetings or web submissions. Each topic area has two or three resident comments.

### Statement of Need

The statement of need helps explain and justify the goals and action steps that follow. It answers the question, “Why should we address \_\_\_\_\_ on the Hilltop?”

### Goal

Each topic area has three goals that were developed in tandem with residents through the Envision Hilltop planning process. Unlike the specific action steps listed under each goal, the goal itself is more broad.

SHORT TERM 

The details of each goal are communicated through icons, indicating whether the goal is projected to be completed on a short-term or long-term timeline. Short-term would be initiated by 2025, and long-term would be after that.

LONG TERM 

PROJECT 

PROGRAM 

POLICY 

INTEGRATED 

Some goals can be easily described as either a physical project, a program idea, or a policy suggestion and indicated by icons. Some goals are integrated, requiring a multi-pronged approach.

### Action Steps

Unlike goals, action steps are specific items that should be completed in order to work toward accomplishing the goal. They are more discrete, tangible, and manageable than the goal.

### Outcomes

Outcomes help measure the success of the goal. They answer the question, “How will we know when this goal has been accomplished?”

### Pillars



The three pillars of the Hilltop Community Plan—people, place, and home—are shown with a yellow icon at the bottom right corner of the first page of each topic area discussion. Each pillar has three topic areas, and each topic area has three goals.



## CASE STUDIES

Each topic area features at least one case study that expands on an idea presented in the goals and action steps. The case study illustrates a program, policy, or project that has been successful in the past and could serve as a model for the Hilltop focus area.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

Visionary concepts are ambitious ideas that suggest how recommendations can be achieved. The ideas can be programs, policies, or projects that would help further the goals and action steps they are connected to. Each topic area will feature one to three visionary concepts.

## PLAN GOALS BY TOPIC AREA

### Health & Recreation

- 1 Improve conditions, amenities, programs, and access to parks and community centers
- 2 Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community
- 3 Increase access to mental, physical, and financial wellness opportunities

### Education & Schools

- 4 Collaboratively position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services
- 5 Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare quality
- 6 Improve college and career readiness

### Employment & Income

- 7 Use education and training programs to prepare youth and adults for employment
- 8 Incentivize higher wages and offer more robust employee benefits
- 9 Consider wealth-building opportunities

### Business & Economy

- 10 Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood
- 11 Use existing contributing structures and encourage new development in historic business district at catalyst sites
- 12 Increase local living-wage employment options

### Mobility

- 13 Prioritize active and shared mobility
- 14 Address hazardous vehicle behavior
- 15 Improve access to employment centers

### Safety & Crime

- 16 Focus on crime prevention by investing in people
- 17 Address physical environment attributes that contribute to criminal activity
- 18 Expand proactive and community policing techniques

### Housing Quality

- 19 Promote quality management and maintenance of rental properties
- 20 Incentivize rehabilitation and renovation of properties
- 21 Ensure units meet the changing needs of occupants

### Mixed-Income Housing & Affordability

- 22 Offer a variety of housing at levels affordable to multiple incomes
- 23 Stabilize housing and prevent displacement
- 24 Concentrate housing investment and reduce barriers to development

### Homeownership

- 25 Expand financial capacity for current and prospective homeowners
- 26 Support a culture of shared homeowner prosperity to build community pride
- 27 Enhance and add amenities to draw new homebuyers

# Health & Recreation

## Resident Comments

Work to address the social determinants of health.

We have a desperate need for senior services.

## Statement of Need

With lower life expectancy, higher rates of chronic disease, and a substantial number of households more than a 10-minute walk from a park, the Hilltop focus area requires interventions to improve resident quality of life. These should include physical improvements to the built environment as well as policy and program steps that will lead to a healthier population, both physically and emotionally.

## Goal 1

### Improve conditions, amenities, programs, and access to parks and community centers.

SHORT TERM 

INTEGRATED 

While community centers and parks exist in the Hilltop focus area, there is an opportunity to better align programs and improve physical access and amenities in order to encourage residents to take advantage of these important assets.

## Action Steps

- 1.1 Expand and standardize hours at recreation centers.** Irregular hours throughout the week and across seasons can be confusing for residents. Consistency of programs and regular and extensive communication are critical to allowing Hilltoppers to make the best use of their community centers. From mid-August to early June, both Glenwood and Holton Community Centers are open only Monday through Friday, from 9am to 6pm. Without weekend hours, many in the neighborhood are left without safe and productive activities—and summer hours are even more abbreviated. Consideration should be given to offering some hours 7 days a week and aligning hours between the two community centers to the extent possible.
- 1.2 Improve Wrexham, Glenwood, and Holton Parks.** The three primary parks north of Sullivant can become neighborhood gems, similar to Westgate Park. Wrexham is hidden from view, and changes should be made to increase visibility and public access. Vacant lots owned by the city along Belvidere and Lechner could be used to gain street visibility and add access points. Glenwood, as the gateway park occupying the Hilltop's namesake bluff, requires substantial improvements to clear overgrowth. Holton, featuring the meandering Dry Run and scenic topography, has the potential to be a major draw for homebuyers north of Broad if water quality and safety are improved.
- 1.3 Increase access to programs.** Provision of transportation to recreation centers should be considered to accommodate those who may lack a vehicle, are afraid of walking alone, or have mobility issues. For a growing senior population and disengaged youth, community centers are a lifeline to safety and socialization.

## Outcomes

Options 7 days a week

More engaged youth

More connected seniors

## Guiding Principle

Every person deserves unrestricted access to high-quality physical, mental, and emotional wellness, including addiction treatment, primary care, and recreational activities.


## Resident Priorities

1. Drug addiction and trafficking
2. Mental health
3. Financial wellness
4. Infant mortality
5. Primary care



## Goal 2

### Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community.

SHORT TERM   
INTEGRATED 

Substance abuse affects more than just users. Friends, family, and community also experience the impacts of addiction. Programs and resources to address addiction and its repercussions should be offered.

#### Action Steps

- 2.1 Focus on addiction prevention, harm reduction, and treatment.** Reduce the supply and availability of illicit drugs by continuing to target distribution, both on the street and in homes. Continue and expand harm reduction strategies, like needle exchanges, to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Improve pipeline into inpatient treatment and availability of beds at nearby facilities. Current programs include SafePoint (a hybrid exchange program) and Columbus Public Health's Operation Red Box syringe disposal locations.
- 2.2 Empower people to escape sex work and human trafficking.** Increase grassroots street outreach and invest in on-the-ground organizations that are building relationships with victims. Offer supportive housing options to victims escaping trafficking.
- 2.3 Provide more support services for families who lose people to addiction, such as guardianship options for substance use disorder and intensive case management.** Children who lose parents to substance abuse disorder may be left to relatives or enter the foster care system. In either case, resources should go to caring for the child. Financial resources should be directed to next-of-kin who are providing guardianship through kinship arrangements, along with support services and respite care that are offered to foster families. This will help ensure that children remain stable in kinship arrangements, preventing burnout and frustration for guardians that ultimately risks the interruption of the child's placement once more.

## Goal 3

### Increase access to mental, physical, and financial wellness opportunities.

LONG TERM   
INTEGRATED 

Many Hilltop residents experience difficult situations that can negatively impact aspects of their lives. Resources should be improved to help people address these obstacles.

#### Action Steps

- 3.1 Expand access to trauma and mental health treatment.** Offer regular screenings for mental, behavioral, and emotional health for students and parents at schools in the focus area. Continue and expand mobile outreach at schools, libraries, and recreation centers to bring healthcare to more people.
- 3.2 Increase access to primary care and physical wellness options.** Increase evening and weekend hours for primary care physicians. Encourage urgent care centers to open in the Hilltop focus area. Consider incentives or partnerships with healthcare organizations to improve availability in low-income neighborhoods like the Hilltop. Urgent care centers are typically located in higher-income areas.
- 3.3 Offer financial coaching, savings incentives, and credit score assistance.** Financial instability can be highly detrimental to families. Making coaching services more widely available could help individuals get back on track. Using an incentive system, classes and education can simultaneously increase financial understanding and capacity. Franklinton Urban Empowerment Lab (FUEL) offers a paid money management class for residents of zip codes 43222, 43223, and 43204. Residents can earn up to \$252 from taking the six-week class. Programs like this can also offer Individual Savings Accounts which can provide additional funds with partnerships from contributing institutions. Programs should be offered in the Hilltop focus area at central locations during accessible hours.

#### Notes

**The Columbus CARE Coalition goes door-to-door after shootings,** a practice that should continue and expand. The group knocks on doors to see if residents need to be connected to therapy or other resources.

#### Outcomes

Less kids in foster care/kinship

Reduced prostitution

#### Outcomes

Improved credit scores

Less emergency room visits

1. <https://radio.wosu.org/post/after-shooting-task-force-goes-door-door>



## In Baltimore, a mobile van offers medication-assisted treatment options for people addicted to opioids.

Since November 2017, clients of the Behavioral Health Leadership Institute's Buprenorphine Van have been able to walk in, unscheduled, and get started on medication-assisted treatment for opioid addiction. The van, funded by private foundations, does not require ID or any insurance. Connecting people to care and subsequent long-term treatment through other providers is the primary goal. Because addiction treatment centers still cannot meet demand in Baltimore, the van meets people in their own neighborhoods to provide care.

Treatment centers frequently tie specific requirements to their services – like invasive tests, group therapy, or arduous zero-tolerance rules – due to either their own rules or government regulations. Even the stabilization center funded by the City of Baltimore, which is supposed to expand access to care, doesn't allow walk-ins.

And unlike many treatment centers, clients who relapse aren't kicked out of care at the Buprenorphine Van. Instead, they are offered support to get through the backslide without requirements for specific therapies in addition to the medication-assisted treatment. This approach is called "low-threshold" – a philosophy that makes it easy for people to receive the necessary treatment.

"There are plenty of high-threshold options, but not enough low-threshold options," one healthcare professional said about Baltimore. "If you had a functioning system, it would be very low-threshold."

German Lopez. "The opioid epidemic is increasingly killing black Americans. Baltimore is ground zero." Vox Media. April 1, 2019. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/3/22/18262179/baltimore-opioid-epidemic-overdose-addiction-treatment>



## Columbus Awarded Competitive Grant to Create Financial Empowerment Strategy for Women and Families

The City of Columbus wants to provide women and families a pathway out of poverty. In July 2019, the City received a \$20,000 CityStart grant from the Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) to create a sustainable roadmap for financial stability and empowerment. Columbus is one of seven cities selected for the intensive 6-9 month technical assistance engagement using an approach that combines local priorities, community input, and industry insight to craft an action plan or "blueprint." It draws on CFE's extensive work with government leaders in more than 80 cities. The goal is to connect on-the-ground insight about the impact of financial instability on Columbus's communities and municipal budget with strategies to improve families' financial lives.

With the support of the CFE Fund, Columbus will craft its municipal financial blueprint and identify implementation steps based on resident needs, key city priorities, and partnership opportunities. Plan development will be based on briefings with key stakeholders and a boot camp that brings together key local constituencies. Previous CFE Fund cities have created blueprints outlining their vision for integrating financial empowerment efforts within local government.

"Cities control a host of policies, programs, and funding streams that can transform the lives of residents with low incomes on a large scale. Across the nation, more and more city leaders are turning to innovative financial empowerment strategies to improve the financial stability of their residents," said Jonathan Mintz, president and CEO of the CFE Fund. CityStart cities have historically leveraged their engagement with CFE to further their commitment to this work.

Learn more online at <https://cfefund.org/project/citystart/>

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### Increase funding for immediate stabilization of victims, including transitional housing options.

Hilltop residents dealing with substance use disorder should be able to quickly connect with treatment somewhere accessible. On the South Side, Maryhaven opened the Addiction Stabilization Center (MASC) for opioid addiction. The secure treatment facility is open 24 hours a day and accepts anyone from Franklin County following an overdose, without requiring insurance or ability to pay. Five of the 57 beds are for people who have recently suffered an overdose, while others are set aside for the detox and treatment phases. In Franklin County, 10 to 15 people overdose on opioids daily. Maryhaven worked with the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County and other supporters to develop the \$7 million project. In the first nine months after opening, MASC admitted 30 pregnant women who had no previous medical care; in total it saw over 1,100 people—of whom about 1,000 received treatment.

Creating a facility similar to MASC on the west side in close proximity to the Hilltop focus area would be beneficial for treating substance use disorder and facilitating detox. The facility could be coupled with intensive case management services for the whole family unit, not just the patient. After being released from the facility, those without safe housing circumstances should be provided with options for temporary shelter.



### Leverage the meandering Dry Run stream to feature the Hilltop's natural amenities and offer educational programs.

Municipal investments in the flow of Dry Run will occur in 2020 with a new pipe installation near where the stream crosses Hague Avenue. With improved water quality from this infrastructure project, the stream can become a focal point of the Hilltop. Supported by programming from local institutions, an interpretive exhibit trail could feature the ecology of the stream and encourage youth to explore nature. The creek extends for over a mile from the Village of Valleyview to I-70, through state land and Rhodes Park. A portion of the stream could become a guided trail with signage and exhibits illustrating flora and fauna of the creek and Scioto watershed and highlighting the flow of waterways. Infrastructure could include boardwalks, benches, lighting, and signage. Children in school or after-school programs could explore the site as part of experiential learning opportunities.

1. <https://www.dispatch.com/news/20180118/emergency-overdose-treatment-center-to-open-friday>

# Education & Schools

## Resident Comments

Recruit additional volunteers for walking school bus program.

Need a way for people to volunteer to help at schools.

## Statement of Need

Residents of the Hilltop focus area have lower rates of educational attainment than the Franklin County average—and socioeconomic barriers contribute to this high figure. Strategies should help lower these barriers by offering stabilizing wraparound services, increasing the rate of Hilltop children in high-quality childcare, and improving K-12 educational completion.

## Goal 4

SHORT TERM 

INTEGRATED 

## Position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services.

In distressed neighborhoods like the Hilltop, children need more than just education. Resources must be directed to addressing out-of-school problems that prevent children from learning and advancing while in school. Resources for parents and families are also critical, using a holistic approach that respects the family unit.

## Action Steps

- 4.1 Offer support services for parents and adults.** To effectively support their children, parents may also need support and direction. If schools offer programs to parents and adults like high school completion and workforce skill-building, it would give parents another reason to ensure children arrive at school on-time and ready for the day. An on-site laundry facility can give parents another reason to come to school. Adult education and resources for the entire family can help position the school as central to life on the Hilltop, not simply a place for children.
- 4.2 Host and facilitate community events that build trust and relationships between school and community.** Ease the distinction between school and neighborhood by removing barriers to using school buildings for events, like fees and bureaucracy. Public schools should be open and accessible to neighbors by hosting special events to help support students and build community pride.
- 4.3 Offer clinical resources for mental and physical health, including dental and vision.** While clinics may be present in other parts of the neighborhood, locating clinics inside schools can have a profound impact on access for students. By co-locating critical services on a school campus, the transportation barrier is removed for families to receive important care. Immediate issues that students face, like not being able to see the board without glasses, can be corrected on-site to have instant resolution rather than potentially weeks later—or never—if left unsupported.
- 4.4 Offer a comprehensive program for parent engagement.** Many parents or guardians need support in order to fully support their children. Professional navigators should be made available to schools, perhaps a social worker, to connect parents to resources. This role would improve the quality of life for students by stabilizing their home lives and families, and connecting them to all resources and programs for which they are eligible. Parents can also be engaged through mobile apps and incentive programs that encourage school and teacher interaction.

## Outcomes

Improved student health

More events in schools

**Guiding Principle**  
All pre-K to high school aged children will be prepared for living wage jobs in diverse opportunities by integrating workforce development with academic and vocational experience.

## Resident Priorities

1. Parent engagement
2. High school graduation
3. Vocational training
4. Kindergarten readiness
5. Divided school boundaries





**Goal 5****Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare quality.**

SHORT TERM   
 INTEGRATED 

Enrolling children in pre-K is instrumental to their future academic success. Moreover, the unique life circumstances of Hilltop families requires an approach to childcare that not all providers currently offer.

**Action Steps**

- 5.1 Build a pre-K center on the Hilltop.** Work with partners to construct an integrated hub for education and wraparound services near Highland Elementary. Research shows that money invested in pre-K education produces many more jobs than spending the same amount on business tax incentives.<sup>1</sup>
- 5.2 Co-locate and coordinate wraparound services for families.** The education focus group was adamant that external factors students face significantly impact their ability to learn in the classroom. Wraparound services address these barriers so students can effectively participate in the learning process. Similarly, support services for parents and families can improve the home environment, creating more stability and safety at home that will benefit students and their ability to perform in the classroom. Examples of wraparound services include: laundry facilities, counseling, medical care (including vision/dental), and social work case management.
- 5.3 Engage, educate, and inform parents.** According to the education providers interviewed, connecting with parents can be a challenge on the Hilltop. With changing phone numbers, variable work schedules, and often multiple adults caring for children, knowing who to contact about student achievements or challenges can be difficult. Improving this communication channel is critical to student success. Efforts to strengthen community should occur in tandem with parent education and information about other services offered by the school or partner groups.

**Notes**

**Released in 2017, the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership report** offered five primary recommendations: (1) Simplify the message, (2) Launch a public awareness campaign, (3) Launch a parents-as-teachers initiative, (4) Facilitate Step Up To Quality ratings for providers, and (5) Create a hub to increase pre-K capacity. See appendix for more details.

**Outcomes**

More children in pre-K

Increased parent engagement

1. Jeffrey Thompson, "Prioritizing Approaches to Economic Development in New England: Skills, Infrastructure and Tax Incentives," August 2010.

**Goal 6****Improve college and career readiness.**

LONG TERM   
 INTEGRATED 

Preparing youth for their next steps after high school is paramount to community stability and economic mobility. Increasing graduation rates and focusing on skill-building help students prepare for a range of careers.

**Action Steps**

- 6.1 Align after-school and summer programming with academic experiences.** Programs that offer academic enrichment after school during the school year and throughout the summer should work carefully to align curricula with what children are learning in Columbus City Schools classrooms. This will help ensure consistency for children and reduce confusion.
- 6.2 Increase 4-year high school graduation rate.** Census data shows that about 3,500 adults older than 25 have not completed high school in the Hilltop focus area. Students with attendance problems in their freshman year should be addressed immediately with wraparound support to students and families. Use summer for academic remediation with incentives for completion.
- 6.3 Reduce high school dropouts.** Current data shows there are 122 students between the ages of 16 and 19 who are not enrolled in high school in the focus area, which classifies them as having dropped out. If students are dropping out to pursue employment to financially support families, they could potentially complete high school non-traditionally with after-hours classes. Support and wraparound services could be more concentrated around dropouts to stabilize lives and encourage high school completion.

**Mission**

**Columbus City Schools works to ensure that** each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.

**Outcomes**

Increased graduation rate

Less dropouts

Higher participation in summer programming



### Case Study

**The Oylers School, a Cincinnati Public School, offers more than just education to its students. A slate of wraparound services help ensure that children are prepared to learn.**

The Oylers School is a facility in the Cincinnati Public School District serving pre-school through high school. It was founded in 1901 in the Lower Price Hill neighborhood, an area with a strong Appalachian heritage.<sup>1</sup> Lower Price Hill currently experiences high levels of poverty (over half of families are below the federal poverty line), drug abuse, and gun violence. As a result, the high school graduation rate was below 36% in 2010.<sup>2</sup> To combat issues facing the Lower Price Hill community, the Oylers School became a community learning center (CLC) in 2012—complete with a \$21 million renovation. Community Learning Centers acknowledge the vital link between schools and communities by serving as hubs for community services. Oylers provides a system of integrated partnerships that promote academic excellence and offer recreational, educational, social, health, civic, and cultural opportunities for students, families, and the community. The Oylers School is considered a one-stop shop and offers services from 5:30am to 10:30pm. These services include a vision clinic, medical clinic, food services, childcare services, and services to help combat homelessness. Since Oylers became a CLC there has been an increase in test scores, school attendance, and the four-year graduation rate. During the 2006-2007 school year, before Oylers became a CLC, it received a designation of academic emergency. Zero of 24 standards were met and the performance index was 63%. In its first year as a CLC three of the 24 standards were met, attendance rose to 96%, and the performance index was 84%. In 2019, Oylers received the prestigious Advanced Accreditation Distinction, an award based on examining a school's programs, high school student performance data, attendance, and community engagement.

1. <https://oylers.cps-k12.org/about>

2. <https://features.marketplace.org/oneschool/av.html>



### Research Shows

**Certain indicators can help identify students at risk of not graduating high school. With community support, schools can take steps to help improve graduation rates.**

1. Make use of proven early-warning indicators. Freshmen who are on track to graduate—earning no more than one F in a core course per semester and accumulating sufficient credits to advance to sophomore year—are four times more likely to graduate than students who are off-track.
2. Focus on attendance data. Attendance is the precursor to engagement, learning, academic success, and graduation. The consortium found that each week of absence per semester in 9th grade is associated with a more than 20 percentage-point decline in the probability of graduating from high school.
3. Embrace collective responsibility for academic success. At the K-12 University of Chicago Charter School, which in 2015-2016 had an attendance rate of 97% at one campus, educators created charts of attendance and highlighted attendance's importance at assemblies and announcements.
4. Raise the bar to "Bs or better." Ninety-five percent of students who earn Bs or better and have a GPA of 3.0 in 9th grade go on to graduate from high school. With a C average, however, the rate slips to 72 percent.
5. Foster supportive relationships to ease transitions. The transition from middle grades to high school can be tough. In high school, it's easier to skip class and harder to figure out how to get help with coursework.
6. Assess and refine disciplinary practices. African-American students, students with low test scores, and vulnerable students with a history of abuse and neglect receive out-of-school suspensions at higher rates than their peers.

1. John Gomperts & Jenny Nagaoka. "Six Ways to Improve High School Graduation Rates. March 27, 2017. <https://edweek.org/ew/articles/2017/03/24/six-ways-to-improve-high-school-graduation>.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### The new pre-K center on the Hilltop will bring high-quality early childhood education and wraparound services to the neighborhood.

Research confirms that high-quality pre-kindergarten is highly beneficial to children, but many low-income children don't have access to programs. The federal government spends \$10 billion yearly on the Head Start program to provide early-childhood education for poorer families, but that covers just 33% of eligible children.<sup>1</sup> One study in New Jersey found that expanding pre-K access reduced the achievement gap for disadvantaged students by as much as 40% if they went for two years. At the 2017 State of the City Address, Mayor Ginther announced the creation of the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership to double the number of Hilltop children enrolled in quality early learning programs by 2020. One of the recommendations was to develop an early learning facility on the Hilltop to increase the capacity of quality programs. To make this a reality, the City of Columbus will be investing over \$14 million to build a state-of-the-art pre-K center.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, Borror Companies CEO Doug Borror's family foundation has committed \$1 million to an operating endowment to ensure the center's sustainability. More money will be raised through a partnership with Michael Redd, managing partner at Wave Innovation Group. The collaboration, which includes the Boys & Girls Club of Central Ohio and Columbus City Schools, will result in work beginning on this new facility in 2020. This new early learning center will be built in the middle of the Hilltop—directly adjacent to Highland Elementary and the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club—to provide early education and wraparound services to approximately 240 children. This unique partnership will create an educational campus, allowing all three organizations to share space and resources and collaborate on programs and services. Based on input from various Hilltop groups and residents, current plans for the facility include 12 classrooms, a pediatric medical suite, a kitchen and dining area, indoor and outdoor play space, a courtyard, activity and sensory rooms, multi-purpose rooms for community use, and offices and space for crucial student-centered services including social work, speech therapy, and health screenings.

### Train high school students with industry credentials for living wages.

Earning an industry credential allows students to learn about a particular skill and demonstrate mastery, while learning workplace expectations and "soft" skills. Programs can also teach career pathways and what the labor market looks like. Students can earn industry credentials through comprehensive career-technical education programs, programs dedicated specifically to credentials for students in their senior year, or existing courses that integrate the content needed to successfully obtain the credential. Focus should be put on connecting employers and trade groups with high schools to create seamless transitions from graduation to employment. Computer science, coding, IT, construction, plumbing, electrical work, and other skills can command high wages in Columbus' growing region. Equipping students at West and Briggs High Schools with these skills and credentials can help set them up for success as adults. One successful program is Building Futures, where graduates land jobs paying an average \$17/hour to start, with some earning upwards of \$27 an hour.<sup>1</sup> The 12-week pre-apprenticeship program was started in late 2017 by the county, the Columbus/Central Ohio Building and Construction Trades Council, and the Columbus Urban League.

1. <https://dispatch.com/opinion/20190904/editorial-fund-pre-k-for-those-who-need-it-most>

2. Rick Rouan. "Private sources join Columbus, school district to build Hilltop preschool." Columbus Dispatch. Oct 23, 2018.

1. Marc Kovac. "Training partnership links low-income residents with jobs in the building trades." Columbus Dispatch. Sept. 29, 2019.

# Employment & Income

## Resident Comments

Increase local jobs that people can walk to.

Hire residents to pick up trash, trim lawns, trim trees, clear invasive weeds, etc.

## Statement of Need

In the Hilltop focus area, a high rate of adults are not in the labor force and unemployment is higher than the county average. Connecting people to living wage employment requires early preparation and targeted efforts that align training with future jobs. Objectives include focusing on vocational training, working toward higher wages, and including workers in the shared prosperity of businesses.

## Goal 7

SHORT TERM 

PROGRAM 

## Use education and training programs to prepare people for employment.

Preparing youth and adults for meaningful living-wage employment is critical to stabilizing families and community. Programs that offer skilled trade development and soft-skill development will help Hilltop residents compete for living-wage jobs.

## Action Steps

**7.1 Reduce employment barriers for restored citizens.** The IRS offers a Work Opportunity Tax Credit<sup>1</sup> to encourage hiring people who have consistently faced barriers to employment, including SNAP recipients and ex-felons. A restored citizen is eligible if hired within a year of prison release. The city or county could augment this federal tax credit with a match or supplement. Extending the WOTC hiring date past one year after release could dramatically increase the utility of the tax credit for business owners. Additionally, programs to “ban the box” have been passed in 35 states and over 150 cities and counties. This means that employers consider a job candidate’s qualifications first—without the stigma of a conviction or arrest record.<sup>2</sup> The program embraces the concept that offenders pay their debt through prison time, and shouldn’t be marked by the offense throughout their lives.

**7.2 Provide construction training and employment to young adults.** Programs exist currently to train people for careers in skilled trades, like plumbing, masonry, and electrical work. For example, the Columbus Building & Construction Trades Council and affiliated unions provide free apprenticeship training and journeymen upgrade training courses. At training centers, certified instructors teach a continuously updated curriculum, containing the latest in industry and safety technology. Participants in programs may need support services or remedial education, which could be provided through partnerships with philanthropic or government funding.

**7.3 Provide housing assistance to low-income heads of household working to reach educational milestones.** Aligning housing assistance with supportive services (e.g., affordable daycare) can help parents stay in school while also supporting their families. Funding should be directed to programs that simultaneously support family stability and invest in economic mobility for the head of household. See the Scholar House example on page 132.

## Outcomes

Higher employment rate

More training opportunities

Increased educational attainment

1. [www.drc.ohio.gov/wotc](http://www.drc.ohio.gov/wotc)

2. [www.nelp.org/publication/ban-the-box-fair-chance-hiring-state-and-local-guide](http://www.nelp.org/publication/ban-the-box-fair-chance-hiring-state-and-local-guide)

**Guiding Principle**  
Opportunities and assistance for living-wage employment will be accessible, achievable, retainable, and include the ability for career progress.

## Resident Priorities

1. Living-wage jobs and training
2. Transportation
3. “Soft skills” development
4. Wealth-building programs
5. Shared equity businesses



**Goal 8**LONG TERM   
POLICY **Incentivize higher wages and offer more robust employee benefits.**

In the U.S. since 1973, there has been productivity growth of 73%, yet the compensation of a typical worker grew far less, just 9%.<sup>1</sup> Higher wages are key to economic stability, as are benefits that help increase the quality of life for employees and their families.

**Action Steps****8.1 Continue using tax abatements to negotiate higher wages.**

When companies want to open new offices or add jobs, they often seek tax breaks from the City of Columbus. In return, the City has leverage to negotiate specific terms—to a certain extent. In the past some of these terms have included minimum average wages for employees. This practice should continue, with special attention to encouraging higher wages for the lowest-paid employees, local hiring requirements, targeting businesses with economic multiplier effects, and setting metrics to measure business' impact.<sup>2</sup>

**8.2 Consider benefits agreements with businesses to offer non-wage benefits.**

In addition to living wages, employees should be offered benefits that improve their quality of life. Offerings like subsidized childcare and free transit passes can attract employees and increase net earnings by offsetting other costs.

**8.3 Reduce impact of the “benefits cliff.”** Called the “benefits cliff” by professionals, the challenge of individuals and families losing public benefits with increased pay can create perverse incentives to leave jobs with positive trajectories. Some benefits currently offer step plans that aim to correct this effect, but the concept should be extended to more benefits. People on fixed incomes may also experience this issue. For example, if someone’s monthly social security payment increases by a few dollars, that could substantially reduce their SNAP amount by pushing them into the next bracket.**Notes**

**Why not raise the minimum wage?** Because of Senate Bill 331 law passed by the Ohio General Assembly in 2016, cities in Ohio are banned from instituting minimum wages in excess of the state minimum wage. Ohio’s minimum wage was last raised on Jan. 1, 2019, to \$8.55 per hour for non-tipped employees and \$4.30 for tipped employees.

**Outcomes**

Improved financial stability

Increased net income

1. Economic Policy Institute, BLS and Bureau of Economic Analysis data. 2015.  
2. Bartik and Austin. “Most business incentives don’t work. Here’s how to fix them.” Brookings Institute Blog, The Avenue. November 4, 2019.

**Goal 9**LONG TERM   
PROJECT **Consider wealth-building opportunities for Hilltop residents.**

Over half of Hilltop focus area households have less than \$15,000 in net worth. Programs that help increase the wealth of Hilltop families can begin to address the widening gap between low-income and high-income families and increase economic mobility.

**Action Steps****9.1 Offer IDAs, bonds, and savings incentives for training completion.**

Individual development accounts (IDAs) help low-income families save by matching their personal savings for specific investments, such as a first home, business capitalization, or higher education and training. They can be offered as part of financial education or independently for a focused group or geography with assistance from city or philanthropic dollars. A 2009 study found that graduates of an IDA program reported higher annual household income, more likely full-time employment, and more likely ownership of an investment account.<sup>1</sup> People that obtain IDAs are also more stable in homeownership and less likely to have a foreclosure.<sup>2</sup>

**9.2 Fund and support start-ups and local entrepreneurs with technical assistance and micro-lending.**

Help entrepreneurs formulate business plans and marketing strategies, learn accounting and financial analysis, find capital financing, identify new markets, and expand their operations. Rely on recommendations from the Small Business Ecosystem Assessment, a component of Mayor Ginther’s Reimagining Small Business Initiative. Connect entrepreneurs to small grant funding through organizations like Ascent Microfinance, Kiva, and ECDI.

**9.3 Invest in educational achievement incentives for public school students.**

With municipal and philanthropic support, savings accounts for Hilltop students in Columbus City Schools could help incentivize milestones by depositing money for incremental progress, like passing state tests or finishing high school. Upon graduation, students may access funds for education or business capital, for example. Additional funds could help incentivize parent engagement.

**Outcomes**

More cash savings for residents

1. [www.joe.org/joe/2009december/rb3.php](http://www.joe.org/joe/2009december/rb3.php)  
2. [www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall12/highlight2.html](http://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall12/highlight2.html)



**Columbus Works, Inc., a local nonprofit, offers job training and connects workers to approved employer partners that offer fair wages and benefits.**

Columbus Works, Inc. is a nonprofit serving two clients: (1) Job seekers who desire to work their way out of poverty, and (2) Employer partners who pay fair wages and offer benefits. The organization offers job readiness training and removes barriers to employment. By addressing multiple concerns and needs of both Members and Employer Partners, Columbus Works helps eliminate barriers to successful and sustained employment. To remove barriers to success Columbus Works offers job readiness training in a classroom setting, as well as individual one-on-one coaching, a support system, an employment and life coach, behavioral healthcare, financial literacy, chaplain services, and legal assistance. In addition, help with resources such as daycare, affordable food, interview clothing, and transportation is offered. The curriculum also teaches resume building, interview preparation, and job application skills.

- 76% of active members are earning an average of \$12.39/hour
- 56% of employed members are retaining employment 1 year and more
- 8% of members are from zip codes 43222, 43223, and 43204
- 50% of members are previously justice-involved

With a low rate of representation from Hilltop focus area zip codes, there seems to be room for the program to serve more West Side residents in the future. As of November 2019, Columbus Works has employer partners in the north Hilltop neighborhood and throughout the West Side. The organization also has a relationship with Hilltop YMCA and The Refuge, and the main office is located on West Broad Street in Franklinton.



**At the Scholar House, students have an affordable place to call home and can receive critical resources to support their academic journey, like on-site childcare.**

A collaborative initiative of the nonprofit Community Properties of Ohio (CPO), the Scholar House provides affordable housing and childcare to 38 student parents, as of September 2019. At-risk student parents, who otherwise face barriers in completing their degree, receive support for their education and have housing services. Qualified participants attend an accredited college or university full-time while residing in the Scholar House. Student parents receive supportive services through the OSU ACCESS Collaborative program to help them stay in school and maintain their grades while also providing for their children. Students must attend school full-time while residing at the newly constructed Charles Building in Columbus's Near East Side. The program has graduated 23 students so far; graduates must move out of the house with 6 months to allow new student-parents to move in. Services are focused on issues like academic performance; financial management; navigating higher education; goal-setting; accessing childcare; parenting skills; and transitioning from school to work. The tax-credit-supported project included the construction of 18 garden-style apartments and 10 townhomes, as well as the acquisition of 10 NSP3 units. The rent is based on 30% of adjusted annual income. Units range from 2 to 3 bedrooms, with square feet between 970 and 1,145. The City of Columbus selected Scholar House as a local development priority, and the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority provided project-based Section 8 vouchers for all families in the project. The project was developed by CMHA using Low-Income Housing Tax Credits and Housing Development Loan Funding through the Ohio Housing Finance Agency.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### Support a pilot program to address the “benefits cliff.”

There are numerous federal and state assistance programs that provide various forms of aid with the goal of putting the beneficiary on a path to self-sufficiency and success. Eligibility for these benefits is based on family income, as defined by the federal government. As lower-income workers move up the income scale, however, they may fall outside the eligibility range for some benefits and lose access to those support programs. In some cases, the effects are severe: taking just a small wage increase or working a few hours of overtime can put an individual over the threshold for eligibility, costing hundreds or even thousands of dollars in assistance. This situation is known as the “benefits cliff” and can make employees feel trapped by the public benefit system because any attempt to improve their financial condition instead results in their becoming more impoverished. A pilot program in Lima, Ohio, has offered assistance to those who are TANF-eligible, have income below 200% of the federal poverty level, work full-time for less than \$16 per hour, have a child, and are already helped by an OhioMeansJobs Program.<sup>1</sup> While up-front costs of the program are about \$4,000 per person, it is expected to yield long-term savings as more people transition from public assistance into higher-paying jobs. The goal is for participants to earn about \$17/hour by the end of the 18-month program, based on salaries offered by local manufacturers. A similar pilot program in Franklin County could leverage philanthropic dollars for a limited geography, like the Hilltop focus area. Another important aspect is equipping service providers and employers with a deeper understanding of the benefits cliff. Supportive strategies include predictable shifts/schedules, flexible start/end times for people using public transit, removal of reimbursement models for training and tuition programs, paid time off for personal needs (including childcare), low deductible healthcare plans, and employee education about maintaining public benefits.\*

1. Mackenzi Klemann. “Bridging the ‘benefits cliff’: Allen County program could help people leave public assistance.” The Lima News. August 26, 2019.

\*Special thanks to Sarah Lenkay at the South Side Thrive Collaborative.



### Allow Hilltop residents to connect with employment training and job opportunities in the neighborhood.

While resources exist in Columbus to connect job seekers with training and employment, offering a physical space for these services in the Hilltop focus area would be a transformational step to bring opportunity within reach. Workforce development efforts should focus on concentrating opportunities in specific neighborhoods experiencing poverty, not citywide. Overall employment increases in Central Ohio do not automatically affect places with low unemployment or labor market participation. A job center offering one-stop services could include local labor market guidance, job listings, and counseling to help people find new employment, as well as job training. Staff may connect customers to other programs such as unemployment insurance, veterans’ programs, and vocational rehabilitation services. They could also help coordinate access to multiple work supports, such as cash assistance, food assistance, and subsidized child care, because many people have more than one barrier to employment.

The physical space could be shared with other organizations not exclusively dedicated to workforce development. By aligning education and training providers’ training programs with employers’ needs, the workforce center on the Hilltop would address multiple issues facing those not in the labor force. The center should focus on providing marketable credentials for growing employment sectors in Central Ohio, like logistics, information technology, and healthcare. The City of Columbus is offering Construction Industry, Apprenticeship and the Building Trades career sessions as part of a Community Benefits Agreement. The information sessions are oriented to potential employees interested in the construction industry and building trades. Two were hosted in Linden in Fall 2019, and one is planned for Glenwood Recreation Center on the Hilltop for January 2020.

# Business & Economy

## Resident Comments



How can businesses be given incentives to consider the Hilltop?

The Hilltop needs a signature destination spot.

## Statement of Need

The historic Hilltop business district retains a sense of place, indicating a past when establishments thrived. Attention should be given to revitalizing this district, with consideration to supporting fledgling businesses and employing residents. Inviting customers into the district to visit and shop will require substantial investment and coordination to overcome obstacles of stigma and physical access.

## Goal 10

SHORT TERM   
PROGRAM 

### Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood.

Public perception of the Hilltop is shaped largely by what visitors see through their windshields along West Broad and Sullivant while driving through the neighborhood. Improving these key gateways into the Hilltop focus area could have a major impact on the overall reputation and self-confidence of the community.

## Action Steps

- 10.1 Offer creative programming for vacant and/or underutilized sites and spaces.** Public events, public art, or temporary installations on vacant and/or underutilized sites can help activate spaces and allow onlookers to reimagine the possibilities. An organization should be funded that focuses on building community and placemaking through programs and physical interventions in the Hilltop focus area.
- 10.2 Encourage exterior building improvements.** While some funding is available through the existing Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) program, the effectiveness of the program along Broad Street in the focus area is hard to see. The program should be re-evaluated and better funded to allow for immediate physical improvements to structures in the historic business district along West Broad Street, as well as along Sullivant Avenue.
- 10.3 Beautify streets, eliminate litter, create public art and wayfinding campaign.** In addition to improving buildings, the cleanliness of the neighborhood should be a major priority. Residents perennially elevated litter to the top of their concerns. Programs to routinely clean litter should be integrated with environmental improvements like public art and wayfinding. The Hilltop focus area needs coordinated art and signage to increase its sense of place and community.
- 10.4 Ease customer access to the Hilltop through route improvements and navigation changes.** Despite the presence of West Broad Street, the Hilltop can still feel isolated. Railroad tracks, the river, and highways along the northern boundary are significant separations between the Hilltop and the more prosperous area along US-33 near Grandview Avenue. Consideration should be given to extending Grandview Avenue south to Broad Street.

## Outcomes

Stronger sense of place

Easier access to the area

Improved building conditions

## Guiding Principle

The Hilltop will support and sustain a variety of businesses to create a foundation of amenities and economic activity for existing residents and visitors.

## Resident Priorities

1. Trash and litter
2. Local businesses
3. Weak market conditions
4. Streetscape
5. Customer access





**Goal 11****Use existing contributing structures and encourage new development in historic business district at catalyst sites.**LONG TERM POLICY 

The Hilltop retains a sense of place where its thriving business district once was. Capitalizing on that sense of place will be critical to revitalizing the mixed-use corridor in the near future.

**Action Steps**

- 11.1 Increase resources to support adaptive re-use of existing buildings, from acquisition to build-out.** Consider increasing funding for and reforming the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) program to help preserve and renovate historic structures in the Hilltop business district. Utilize tax benefits to encourage adaptive re-use and rehabilitation.
- 11.2 Institute a commercial vacancy tax to bring buildings back into use and discourage blight.** Whether reserving for future use or speculating on future land values, owners holding onto vacant land and buildings are actively harming the Hilltop community. This negative impact should be quantified and mitigated through a commercial vacancy tax. A growing policy in U.S. cities, the tax would help the city recoup extra resources often demanded by vacant properties. Read more on the next page.
- 11.3 Continue improving streetscapes along historic business corridors to attract businesses and customers.** Deteriorating sidewalk conditions can detract from the overall pedestrian experience and discourage retail activity. Attention to detail should be given to controlling weeds, maintaining sidewalks and ramps, and providing high-quality amenities like lampposts, benches, trash cans, and street trees. An organization should be formed to care for these important details, including keeping the commercial districts free of litter and illegal signs (e.g., “We Buy Houses”) attached to telephone poles and other objects.

**Notes**

**Existing city code allows the City of Columbus to declare eligible properties as a nuisance, then levy a daily fine.** The city could consider applying this fee more regularly to offending property owners.

**Outcomes**

Decreased commercial vacancy

Improved streetscape

**Goal 12****Increase local employment options that pay a living wage.**LONG TERM PROJECT 

Connecting Hilltop residents to living-wage jobs is critical to community stability. As much as possible, employers should be incentivized to locate near the Hilltop focus area—not on the urban periphery.

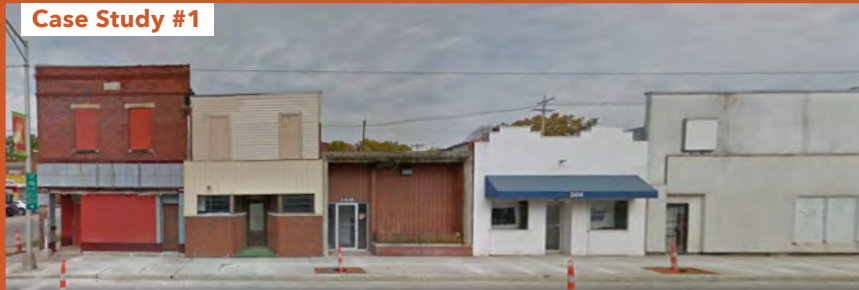
**Action Steps**

- 12.1 Draw new employers to the neighborhood.** Investments in streetscape, infrastructure, and regular maintenance and beautification of the Hilltop business districts will increase appeal for businesses to locate there. Capitalizing on light industrial land along Fisher Road and re-purposing underutilized big-box stores along West Broad, the city and county should work together to attract buyers with strong employment potential for living wages.
- 12.2 Increase opportunities for residents to be employed at large employers in the area.** Work with major employers (e.g., ODOT, ODPS, Twin Valley, CCS) to target hiring outreach to increase the number of Hilltop residents working in the neighborhood. The city or other organizations could support local advertising of jobs through postcard mailings and other localized outreach through neighborhood institutions. The city could consider partially abating the income taxes of employees living in targeted zip codes within city limits for at least five years, for example.
- 12.3 Improve business development services for entrepreneurs.** In addition to the funding for conceptual design and architectural improvements to building facades, the NCR program could offer more personalized small business development for entrepreneurs. In lieu of a formal small business center, the NCR program could be a resource for entrepreneurs to compose business plans, identify appropriate financing, and locate available space in the Hilltop focus area. Services could extend to graphic design, web development, and environmental graphics and signage. Giving business owners one point of contact for all of these services can streamline and simplify the process.

**Outcomes**

Increased wages

More local jobs



## A commercial vacancy tax can help handle blight and raise funds for important community services.

Even in cities with booming economies, storefront vacancies are impacting neighborhoods. In an effort to reduce commercial vacancies in urban areas, some cities have pursued policies that levy higher tax rates on vacant or blighted parcels to incentivize owners to bring structures back on-line.

In Washington, D.C., the taxation model raises the normal commercial property tax rate from between \$1.65 and \$1.85 per \$100 in assessed value to \$5 per \$100 when the property is vacant. Property considered blighted is taxed at \$10 per \$100 of assessed value.<sup>1</sup> This approach offers one tier for vacancy and another for blighted properties.

In San Francisco, one proposal seeks to include residential units in addition to commercial property. Landlords with three or more units that are vacant for six months would also pay \$250 per unit per day until the unit is leased.<sup>2</sup> In nearby Oakland, voters approved a parcel tax of \$6,000 per year on empty lots and empty commercial and residential buildings. Empty condominiums and ground-floor storefronts will be taxed at \$3,000 per year. The tax is expected to raise \$10 million annually for homeless services and cleaning up blight.

Proponents of the vacancy tax claim that some landlords are intentionally keeping units vacant by setting prices above market value, holding out for tenants willing to pay their price tag. The tax, they argue, could encourage property owners to bring asking rents down to more reasonable levels. The tax may also incentivize property owners to sell structures or lots that they no longer use or intend to return to active use.

1. Brian Charles. "Cities Now Use Taxes to Fight Blight. Is It Working?" *Governing Magazine*. May 14, 2018.

2. Trisha Thadani. "Vacancy Glut in S.F. Could Spur Tax on Empty Storefronts." *San Francisco Chronicle*. Jan. 23, 2019.



## A coordinated wayfinding campaign can have a major impact on how people navigate and perceive their neighborhood.

In 2012, a Walk [Your City] campaign was launched in Raleigh, North Carolina to promote walkability and increase civic health and safety. The project involved posting 27 corrugated plastic signs on light poles at three different intersections, each indicating how long it would take to walk to nearby destinations, with an option to download pedestrian-friendly directions.<sup>1</sup> Not only do these wayfinding signs help allay misconceptions about the actual distance between various local destinations, but they can also encourage passersby to explore someplace new—they may discover, for example, that they are only a twelve-minute walk from an unexplored park or recreation facility. This simple effort was a tremendous success—it not only led to changes in public policy, but also started new conversations about community health and the future of the city. There have since been numerous spin-offs in cities around the world, and in 2015 the Knight Foundation funded the development of the Walk [Your City] website, which includes a downloadable walkability toolkit visitors can use to customize these well-tested signs in order to launch similar small-scale interventions in their own communities.

Given that half of all trips taken in the U.S. are less than three miles, there's plenty of opportunity for folks to walk or bike (rather than drive) to reach useful destinations nearby. Often the perception of distance is greater than the physical distance itself. Clear, simple signage reminding neighbors that "it's not too far" to walk to places they visit every day is one way to break down that misperception and get more feet on the street.<sup>2</sup>

1. <https://www.pps.org/article/lighter-quicker-cheaper>

2. <https://walkyourcity.org/toolkit/intro>

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### Start small, but start today. Low-cost interventions can help bolster local businesses and improve perception of the Hilltop by creating memorable community destinations.

Broad Street handles nearly 20,000 vehicles daily. This level of traffic is a fantastic asset for businesses, but getting people to stop on the Hilltop rather than just pass through can be a challenge. Physical improvements to a site can help entice drivers to stop and try something new—like a taco stand. At the southwest corner of Broad and Wheatland, the El Huarache Veloz taco stand has been a fixture since 2014. Currently El Huarache operates out of a trailer parked in a corner lot with a curb cut along Wheatland (a one-way street southbound). Improvements to the site would help create a sense of identity and recognition for El Huarache, provide seasonal customer seating, and raise the profile of the restaurant. Suggested improvements include colorful themed graphics for the trailer, festoon lighting, picnic tables, benches, and landscaping. Similar treatments should be considered for businesses along Sullivant Avenue.



### Acknowledge the lack of connection between the Hilltop and Franklinton to Columbus's more prosperous Northwest side.

The Hilltop focus area is cut off from the Dublin Road corridor to the north by the Scioto River, railroad tracks, and interstate highways. So although the Hilltop is remarkably close geographically, circuitous access contributes to a feeling of disconnectedness and isolation. The extension of Grandview Avenue south to Broad Street was discussed in the 1908 plan of Columbus and has been re-proposed by neighborhood leaders in the intervening century. In 1986, Hilltop officials brought attention to the issue, and the Franklin County engineer at the time said, "I could see where it would have quite a bit of function."<sup>1</sup> A few years later, legislative leaders and local advocates noted the extension would open the Hilltop to the Northwest Side and help "create the necessary synergism and population density to support the extension."<sup>2</sup> From the Souder Avenue bridge in Franklinton to the Grandview Avenue bridge, the distance is about 2 miles. From Grandview Avenue north to the next river crossing at W. 5th Avenue, the distance is 2.6 miles. Generally speaking, other parts of the city have more frequent river-crossings, which allows for easier access overall. Consideration should be given to improving north-south access into the Hilltop community.

1. Kevin Kehres, Columbus Dispatch, December 24, 1986.  
2. Alan D. Miller, Columbus Dispatch, July 15, 1992.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

### Leverage the location of Rhodes Park by constructing a mixed-use development while retaining 14 acres of public open space.

Rhodes Park is over 50 acres of land between the state office complex and I-70 that is leased by the City of Columbus from the State of Ohio. The site has nearly half-mile of frontage along I-70 and over 1,000 feet of frontage along W. Broad Street, offering tremendous visibility and access. It is less than 1 mile from the developing Grandview Crossing at the intersection of Dublin Road and Grandview Avenue, and 1.5 miles from the redeveloped Grandview Yard project. Thus, the Rhodes Park site has the potential to become a catalyst to spur economic revitalization, building on the presence of thousands of existing jobs at the state complex. The site is uniquely suited for transit-oriented development as the population of Central Ohio continues to grow, increasing density and high-capacity transit on key corridors like Broad Street as recommended by the Insight2050 Corridor Study. Development should be mixed-use including office, retail, and residential, and public open space should be retained where the Sullivant Trace Trail provides access to Glenview and Holton Parks as well as the Camp Chase Trail. An agreement with the site's developer could result in improved parkland nearby, or more expansive measures like a local hiring effort or site amenities open to the public.



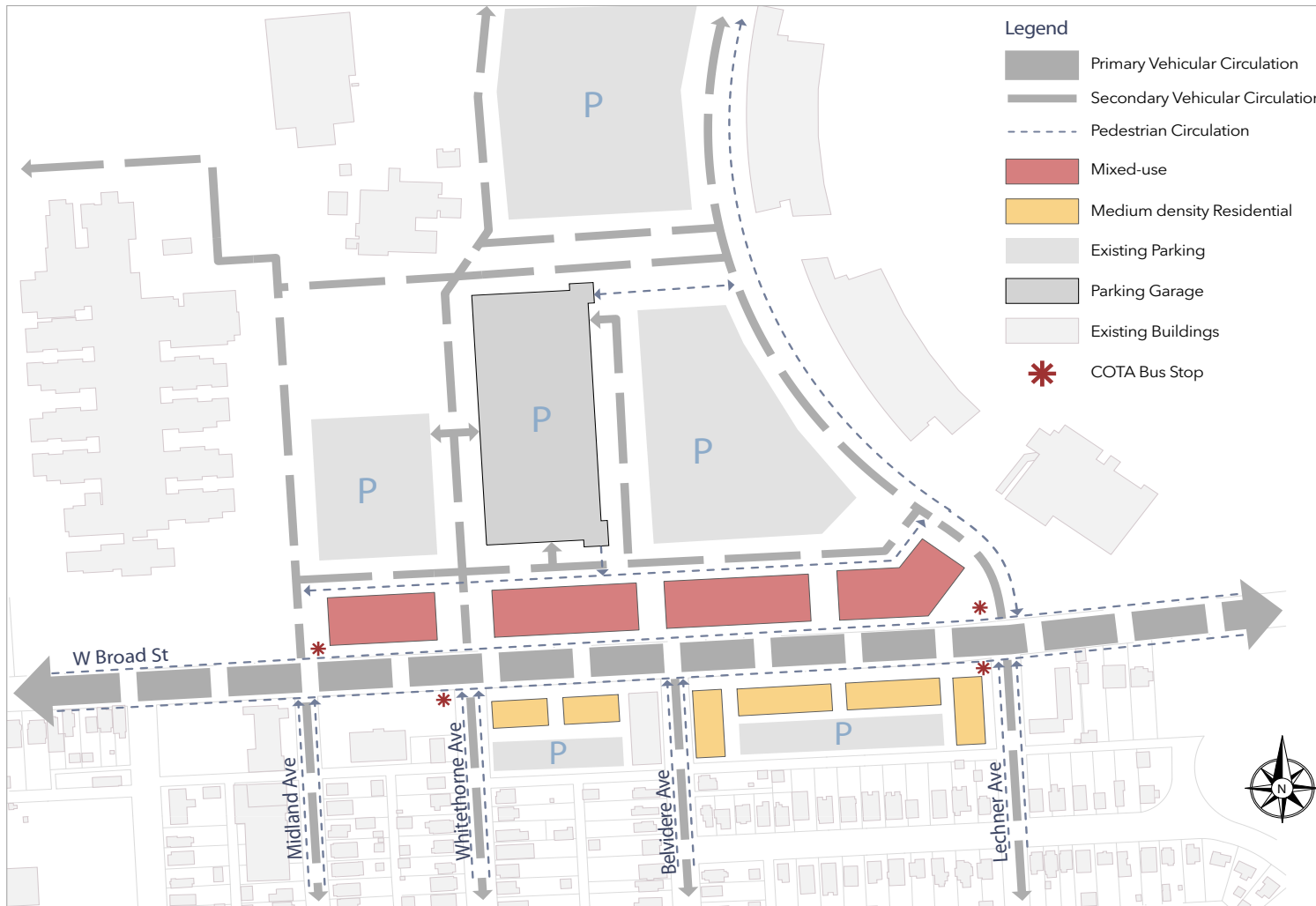
Preliminary visioning shows that a combination of office, residential, and retail would activate the site—with direct visibility and access from I-70. Concepts are purely visionary and would be contingent upon a variety of land transfers and agreements among multiple parties.



## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

### Celebrate Broad Street by bringing buildings and pedestrian activity up to the right-of-way at the crest of the hill.

Excluding Rhodes Park, the State of Ohio owns about 200 acres north of Broad Street. Much of this land is occupied by the Ohio Department of Transportation and the Ohio Department of Public Safety. Along the north side of West Broad Street there is approximately 1,000 feet of developable frontage between Lechner and Whitethorne Avenues, with a site depth of about 125 feet between West Broad and the existing surface parking lot. Buildings constructed along West Broad would align with the urban form in the Hilltop's historic commercial core immediately to the west. The addition of contributing structures would serve as an eastern gateway to the Hilltop, allow space for businesses to provide important amenities not currently available on the Hilltop to both residents and employees, and eliminate the inappropriate suburban character that exists today.



# Mobility

## Resident Comments

Better, safer bus stops and more bus shelters.

Transform Broad to better accommodate foot and bike traffic.

Fix the one-ways!

## Statement of Need

Broad Street, a thoroughfare that privileges passing cars over residents, dominates mobility in the Hilltop focus area. Strategies to improve mobility focus on safety and dignity for non-motorists, as well as improved transportation to employment centers outside the focus area. With a significant number of households lacking vehicle access, transportation choice is a high priority.

## Goal 13

SHORT TERM 

PROGRAM 

## Prioritize active and shared mobility.

In the Hilltop focus area, 18% of households do not have access to a vehicle—and 44% have access to just one. The built environment should reflect the daily experiences of Hilltop residents. For many, that means walking, biking, or taking the bus. Concrete steps to improve safety for non-motorists will help save lives and better support residents.

## Action Steps

- 13.1 Adjust crosswalk signal timing, improve signage, and invest in potential conflict points.** Broad Street is very wide at points, which makes it difficult and more dangerous for people to cross. To assist, generous countdowns automated with traffic lights could be standard at each signalized intersection, along with leading pedestrian intervals at certain intersections to give people a head start when crossing. When a light turns green, the walk signal should automatically initiate in order to put people on equal footing with vehicles and create a more seamless walking experience. Where multiple collisions have occurred, stronger interventions should be considered.<sup>1</sup>
- 13.2 Improve sidewalk and pedestrian amenities.** Creating a street that is as friendly to people walking as it is to people driving is important for equity and safety. People deserve to be safe no matter how they are traveling, but especially if they are vulnerable road users. Sidewalk condition is critical to ensuring a safe environment for people walking. Crumbling sidewalks may encourage people to walk in the street, especially when pushing strollers or using wheelchairs. An abundance of driveway access points into properties increases the potential crossing of vehicles with pedestrians, so driveway access should be limited in number and width to minimize that interaction. The sidewalk zone should have a buffer from the street whenever possible to create real and perceived safety for people walking close to fast-moving vehicles. This includes placing shelters, benches, and trash cans at transit stops.
- 13.3 Create and then connect people to shared mobility options to reduce car dependence.** Explore integrated mobility solutions that allow people to seamlessly transition from one mode to another. Paying for COTA, an e-scooter, and a ride-hailing service should be possible on the same cash-based platform. Improvements to first-mile, last-mile transportation should be considered, especially for those with different ability levels. The Pivot mobile application, being developed by Smart Columbus in partnership with COTA, is one example that can leverage integrated payment and trip planning; adoption of Pivot should be encouraged on the Hilltop.

## Outcomes

Less pedestrian-involved collisions

More people walking and biking

1. The Age-Friendly Columbus Plan from 2017 also recommended increasing crossing times at crosswalks near activity hubs on the Hilltop.

**Guiding Principle**  
Hilltop infrastructure will embrace a multi-modal transportation network that is responsive to the needs of the community today and in the future.

## Resident Priorities

1. Resident engagement/socialization
2. Access for elderly and disabled
3. Infrastructure for walking or biking
4. Bus routes and shelters
5. Recreational amenities



## Goal 14

SHORT TERM 

POLICY 

### Address hazardous driver behavior.

The most recent speed readings for Hilltop streets show motorists consistently exceed the posted speed limit. Through improved built environment and enforcement, streets can be made significantly safer for Hilltop residents.

#### Action Steps

**14.1 Reduce vehicle speeds.** At Broad and Burgess, the 85th percentile speed is 39mph, with a posted speed limit of 35. This means 85% of vehicles are traveling at or below 39mph in free-flowing conditions. If hit by a vehicle traveling 40mph, a person has an 80% chance of dying. In a neighborhood with low car ownership, this figure is a reminder of the danger faced by people navigating sidewalks. Consideration should be given to lowering and standardizing the speed limit throughout urban corridors. Signal timing should be adjusted to ensure drivers would continually encounter green lights when traveling at or just below the posted speed limit.

» In Ohio, local speed limits cannot simply be changed by municipalities. Under ORC 4511.21, the State of Ohio governs road speed based on certain characteristics. A change in state law could allow the City of Columbus to reduce the posted speed limit to help create a neighborhood atmosphere along West Broad Street.

**14.2 Ensure consistent stop control and convert one-way streets where feasible.** Throughout the focus area, stop signs are irregularly placed at intersections. At some, stop signs are present only for east-west streets, while at others (along the same street) signs exist only for the north-south streets. This irregularity is unpredictable and can cause driver confusion. Consideration should be given to standardizing sign placement and standardizing residential streets as two-way. Increasing the number of four-way stops could also increase safety and predictability for all road users. Irregular street flow also contributes to confusion. A mix of one- and two-way streets increases travel distances and complicates access.

**14.3 Consider tactical urbanism resources for citizens.** When roads are dangerous, people deserve options to protect themselves. In certain cases, introducing tactical elements like hand-held flags or high-visibility crosswalks can increase safety and encourage community interaction. At key intersections, orange flags could be offered for children and other pedestrians to wave as they cross the street—reminding drivers to yield until walkers have safely crossed.

## Goal 15

LONG TERM 

PROJECT 

### Improve access to employment centers.

Many Hilltop residents are employed along the western outerbelt and downtown. Transportation solutions for residents to access employment without vehicles should be a hybrid approach, inclusive of transit and shared mobility.

#### Action Steps

**15.1 Encourage employers to locate near high-frequency transit lines.** Too often, major increases in jobs occur in areas inaccessible to transit. Future tax abatements should hinge on a comprehensive understanding of employment, including transportation. Priority should be given to companies adding jobs in transit-accessible regions.

**15.2 Incentivize re-use of underutilized big-box centers on the West Side.** With acres and acres of underutilized retail and light manufacturing space and infrastructure, the Westland area is ripe for redevelopment. Additionally, the Consumer Square West and Great Western shopping centers at Wilson and West Broad hold potential for redevelopment, especially the massive parking lots with suburban-style outparcel buildings along Broad.

**15.3 Fill in transportation access gaps through employer-paid services.** For employment centers outside of COTA's reach, consideration should be given to funding micro-transit solutions that can connect Hilltop area residents to living-wage jobs. Employers who receive tax abatements to locate in places inaccessible to transit and out of reach to employees should offer transportation as a benefit—not a paid service—to workers.

#### Notes

**An example of employer-paid transportation is right here in Columbus.** At CoverMyMeds, a Columbus healthcare technology firm, employees within a certain distance of downtown are eligible to take a micro-transit shuttle provided by the company Share. Learn more on the next page.

#### Outcomes

Reduced traffic incidents

Safer walking experience

#### Outcomes

Better access to jobs



**In Everett, Massachusetts, a bus-only lane improved traffic flow and demonstrated the low-cost effectiveness of tactical transit lanes.**

Tactical Transit Lanes (TTLs) can be a cheap, fast, and effective way to smooth commutes for public transit users and drivers alike. A TTL is a bus-only lane in dense, congested areas intended to speed up transit without major capital improvements.<sup>1</sup> They can be as short as a block or as long as several miles. A quick pilot can prove a project's value to the public with minimal resources and effort. Everett, Massachusetts, is a primary example of this method. With the mayor's support, Everett planned a one-week trial of a one-mile bus lane on the city's busiest arterial, using simple cones to demarcate the bus lane that displaced parking.<sup>2</sup> A part-time operation (5–9 a.m.) meant that the lanes were in place only a few hours a day. Corridors with TTLs for buses saw 24% fewer crashes. Benefits were immediately noticeable: Bus trip times were cut by more than 20% at peak hours, and drivers shaved a few minutes off of their commutes, too. Notably, the pilot was opened with no prior public outreach or meetings. Instead, as city planner Jay Monty says, "the pilot was the process." He acknowledged that they received far more input and data from the pilot's first five days than they would have from holding evening meetings that "would have drawn out critics, not beneficiaries..." The initial media coverage of the pilot predicted "disaster," but coverage after the lanes opened turned generally positive. The one-week pilot was extended to nine months and became permanent in September 2017. The City has since added transit signal priority, bus bulb-outs, level boarding, and bus stop access improvements. Monty notes that the political risk of a quick pilot should not be underestimated; it took political courage from the mayor to support the pilot. However, it has paid off: "It's nice to be a leader sometimes...that goes a long way with residents," Monty says.

1. Best Practices In Implementing Tactical Transit Lanes. UCLA Institute for Transportation Studies. February 2019.  
2. <https://www.citylab.com/transportation/2019/03/bus-commute-tactical-transit-lanes-traffic-congestion/583798>



**Some employers see the benefit of providing reliable transportation to workers, both as a perk and as a way to ensure employees are on time.**

CoverMyMeds, a healthcare technology company with more than 1,000 employees, is offering free rides for employees to and from work with the micro-transit company Share. The three-month program began in July 2019 for employees living within 7.5 miles of downtown Columbus, where the company is headquartered. About 30% of CoverMyMeds employees expressed interest in such a service; workers using the service schedule their rides using a mobile app. Four of the 10 largest employers in Columbus—including Huntington Bank and State Auto Insurance—are using the Share service.

In Dublin, Ohio, more than 20 employers, including Cardinal Health, Stanley Steemer, and OCLC, are participating in a similar program giving employees rides to work from COTA bus stops. By scheduling rides 24 hours in advance on the Share app, Dublin employees can catch a ride from bus stops in Dublin to nearly two dozen employers, with more expected to be added. The workforce shuttle is a pilot program that is currently free to Dublin employers and employees.

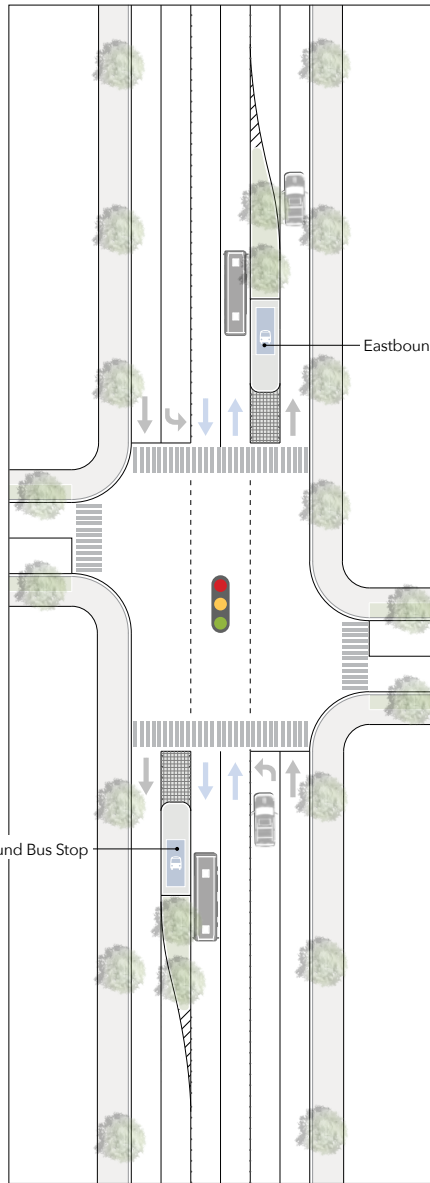
In downtown Columbus, the Cpass program has enrolled more than 422 companies. Around 30,000 workers are eligible. Property owners in the downtown special improvement district financed the program that provides free bus passes to downtown workers. "It definitely has helped our associates in their ability to get to and from work," said the manager of the Hotel LeVeque, which employs a little more than 100. "It is a hiring incentive. Not all the downtown areas have that incentive."

1. Katy Smith. CoverMyMeds Offers Its Downtown Employees Free Commutes. Columbus Dispatch. August 13, 2019.  
2. Taijuan Moorman. Dublin Partners with Microtransit Startup SHARE for a More Mobile Workforce. Columbus Underground. August 6, 2019.  
3. Mark Ferenchik. More Downtown Workers Taking the Bus Because of Cpass. Columbus Dispatch. August 14, 2019.



## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

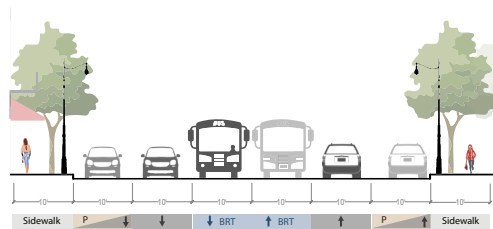
### Create Bus Rapid Transit on West Broad Street, improving travel time and preparing for future population growth.



**Plan View, Signalized Intersection  
Two Bus Stops**

Increasing the capacity, convenience, and efficiency of transportation along the West Broad Street corridor will be a key component to the long-term revitalization of the Hilltop community, especially considering future growth in Central Ohio. This illustration depicts a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) concept in the focus area.

Identified as a regional thoroughfare and noted as a corridor capable of supporting substantial redevelopment in the Insight 2050 report, West Broad Street is well-positioned for high-capacity transit, such as BRT. This configuration would use the center two lanes as dedicated BRT lanes with platform-level boarding at permanent stations located in the median at signalized intersections. One travel and one non-peak parking lane would remain in each direction for most of the corridor, except at key intersections or where dedicated turn lanes exist.



**Section View  
Lane Configuration**



### Reposition walking, biking, and public transportation as viable, respected, and safe options.

Given the Hilltop's comparably low rates of car ownership, accommodations should be made to make walking easier and safer. Creating a fair and equitable street experience across travel modes is imperative, and people navigating streets by foot or wheelchair are currently at a significant disadvantage. At the intersection of Broad and Hague, pedestrians who request to cross the street by pressing the activation button are allotted 7 seconds to begin crossing the street, followed by a 13-second countdown timer to get across about 60 feet of exposed pavement—or 6 lanes of traffic. This is a harrowing experience for anyone, let alone those with mobility challenges, including children and seniors. Walking in the Hilltop focus area should be safer and easier for the high number of individuals who walk, bike, and use public transportation to get around. Currently, the physical environment is designed to accommodate motor vehicle convenience and speed at the expense of other road users. Ticketing and enforcement also play a role to ensure pedestrians are respected by drivers. The following reforms should be implemented in the focus area:

- People, like cars, should be automatically recognized at signals.
- In traffic signal timing, pedestrian time should be prioritized.
- On green lights, pedestrians should have enough crossing time so that (1) people arriving on the phase have a chance to cross rather than having to wait for the next phase, and (2) slower-moving people have enough time to cross.
- A "leading interval" for pedestrians would let them enter crosswalks on the "walk" signal before cars advance on a green light, increasing visibility.
- Pedestrian phases should be automatic, even if no actuator is pushed. Instead, the actuator should make the pedestrian phase come sooner.
- Speeding on Broad and Sullivant should be aggressively addressed.

# Safety & Crime

## Resident Comments


Build more sidewalks in areas that do not have them.

Reduce prostitution, domestic violence, gang activity and drugs.

## Statement of Need

Violent crime is one of the most distressing issues plaguing the Hilltop focus area. Violence is traumatic for residents and casts a long shadow over the neighborhood throughout Central Ohio. Combating gun violence, domestic abuse, drug trafficking, and other criminal activity is an immense challenge. Strategies should focus on investing in people and working to prevent demand for illicit activities.

## Goal 16

SHORT TERM   
PROGRAM 

### Focus on crime prevention by investing in people.

Keeping families and individuals stable will reduce the number of people experiencing desperation—which can fuel criminal behavior. Inclusive opportunities for personal growth and approaches to deter illegal activities should be coupled with targeted enforcement that focuses on remediation and education, not just incarceration.

## Action Steps

- 16.1 Offer emergency support services for families and individuals.** Aligning social services and support networks to create stability for families can help individuals avoid desperate circumstances. Food security, housing stability, living-wage employment, and educational attainment are measures to deter crime. Supporting holistic human development should be at the center of community safety strategies. For nonviolent offenses, consideration should be given to diversion strategies that offer productive and rehabilitative opportunities instead of jail time, especially to preserve family stability.
- 16.2 Fund intensive street outreach for sex workers and human trafficking victims.** Grassroots outreach organizations can be effective in building relationships with people involved in sex work—including human trafficking victims. Funds should be directed to organizations that interface with people on the street, offer harm-reduction measures, and connect them to needed resources. Specialized transitional housing in or near the focus area for people escaping sex work should be a high priority for future investment.
- 16.3 Increase penalties for and enforcement of drug trafficking offenses.** Focusing on cutting off the source of drugs rather than punishing the end users, those chemically addicted to the substances, can help end the cycle of drug sales and use on the Hilltop. The city attorney should continue efforts to target nuisance residences for drug trafficking and other offenses, like weapons sales. Sentences for distribution should exceed those for possession.

## Outcomes

Increased family stability

Decreased prostitution

Reduced drug trafficking

## Guiding Principle

The Hilltop will be a safe, secure, and inviting community for residents.

## Resident Priorities

1. Violent crime
2. Surveillance and responsiveness
3. Proactive policing
4. Speeding vehicles
5. Inadequate sidewalks



## Goal 17

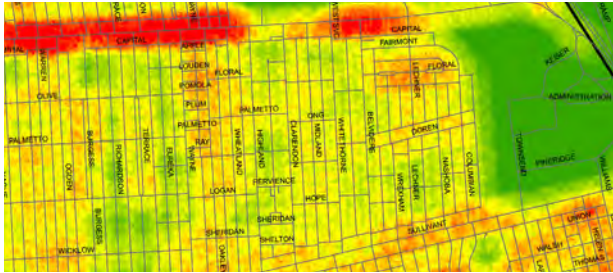
### Address physical environment attributes that contribute to criminal activity.

LONG TERM   
POLICY 

A coordinated approach to address street lighting, vacant properties, and illegal dumping should result in a well-lit neighborhood that is free of litter, with secured vacant properties that are less likely to invite crime.<sup>1</sup>

#### Action Steps

**17.1 Improve and increase street, alley, and porch lighting.** A heat map of streetlight coverage in the Hilltop focus area shows strong lighting along Broad, with weaker coverage around Wicklow and Richardson. Efforts to achieve a higher standard of street lighting throughout the focus area should be undertaken. Other methods of improving lighting include alley lighting and residential porch lighting. A pilot porch light program could credit residents' electric bills for installation of automatic lights that turn on at night.



**17.2 Ensure vacant properties are secured.** Vacant and abandoned parcels should be routinely inspected to ensure they are secure and maintained to certain standards as part of a mandatory vacant property registry. Abandoned properties can be crime magnets, and ensuring they are secured is a matter of public health and safety.

**17.3 Reform illegal dumping enforcement.** Illegal dumping is a chronic and pervasive problem throughout the Hilltop. Efforts are underway to clean up the neighborhood by offering a tip hotline for illegal dumping, reforming the eviction process, and regulating development permits more closely. See more details on page 147.

#### Notes

The **Comprehensive Safety Strategy** is an approach to address crime using a combination of targeted efforts throughout Columbus. Learn more at [columbus.gov/neighborhoodsafety](http://columbus.gov/neighborhoodsafety).

#### Outcomes

Less illegal dumping

Well-lit neighborhood

1. Ralph B. Taylor. Physical Environment and Crime. U.S. Department of Justice. National Institute of Justice. 1996.

## Goal 18

### Expand proactive and community policing techniques.

LONG TERM   
PROJECT 

Informal interactions between police and residents should be encouraged, and one method is through continued bike patrols. Having police as neighbors could also improve the reputation of law enforcement in the Hilltop.

#### Action Steps

**18.1 Continue and expand bike patrols.** Bike patrols have received positive reviews from many Hilltop residents. Continuing the bike patrols will build meaningful relationships between police and residents. Interaction outside of negative circumstances or confrontations is important to establishing trust and communication, which can lead to more reports of crime.

**18.2 Incentivize public safety personnel to live in Columbus and on the Hilltop.** Integrating police and fire personnel into neighborhoods can be encouraged through a residential incentive program. Not a residency requirement, the program could offer downpayment assistance to personnel who live in select zip codes for a certain amount of time. The program could increase investment in housing in target neighborhoods and help improve relations by making sure police are truly part of the neighborhoods they are patrolling.

**18.3 Continue and expand john school and increase penalties for repeat offenders.** Sex work thrives due to customer demand. Reducing demand through education and increased penalties for johns can diminish the presence of sex work.

#### Notes

**CATCH Court offers a pathway out of prostitution.** The Changing Actions To Change Habits (CATCH) program has changed lives and spurred the creation of seven additional specialized courts in Ohio. The program funds housing and food for participants—things they might otherwise get from their trafficker—and treatment for trauma and addiction. In return, they are eligible for records expungement. Participants must submit to drug testing and show up in court weekly for two years. Unfortunately, less than 1 in 4 of the women enrolled currently make it to graduation.<sup>1</sup>

#### Outcomes

More Hilltop neighbors

Reduced demand for sex work

1. Paige Pflieger. "A Pioneering Ohio Courtroom Helps Trafficking Victims Find Hope." WOSU, NPR News. October 7, 2019.



### In Chattanooga, shared services for early childhood education facilities throughout the city improve efficiency and ultimately prepare more children for success.

Investing in child development pays off in the long run. Research shows how critical literacy is to successful adulthood. Across the U.S., 85% of court-involved juveniles are functionally illiterate, and 60% of the nation's inmates are illiterate.<sup>1</sup> To help prepare children for self-sufficient and well-adjusted adult lives, early childhood education is crucial. Opening an Early Childhood Education (ECE) center can be expensive and complicated, from capital costs to navigating regulatory requirements. One model in Chattanooga, Tennessee helps relieve some of that pressure from the childcare providers by consolidating back-end office operations. The Chambliss Center for Children struck a shared service agreement with early childcare education providers that were struggling because they were serving low income, at-risk children and could not charge fees high enough to sustain their operation. Now administrative staff at the Center handle certain consolidated operations and management services for 13 community-based ECE programs.<sup>2</sup> Each site maintains independence with individual nonprofit status and a separate bank account. Sites have the same benefits, employment policies, collective training and curriculum, and directors are shared among them. Is there a role for city governments to play in a shared services alliance? As cities work to improve the quality of ECE, this model could provide an opportunity for cities to work more closely with community providers to achieve the shared goal of high-quality early care for all children. Cities could promote this type of model by working directly with ECE providers to set up an alliance providing expertise and technical assistance, or possibly seed money to launch an alliance. A city could, for example, enter into an agreement with providers to make bulk purchases or serve as host to a training program for teachers from multiple ECE providers within the community.<sup>3</sup>

1. Christopher Zoukis. "Basic Literacy A Crucial Tool To Stem School To Prison Pipeline." HuffPost. May, 11, 2017.  
 2. <https://www.chamblisscenter.org/programs>  
 3. <https://cityspeak.org/2015/06/05/investing-in-early-childhood-education-through-the-shared-services-model/>



### A handful of policies can have a major impact on crime rates. Reducing violence can be achieved through a diverse package of reforms that have worked in other cities.

Academic studies reveal multiple tactics that can have an immediate impact on the occurrence of violent crime in a neighborhood. Generally, strategies seek to affect "natural surveillance, access control, target hardening, and signs of territoriality."<sup>1</sup> The notable Broken Windows Theory suggests that a blighted urban environment disintegrates any feelings of mutual regard and signals that illegal behavior will be tolerated. A 2018 review of studies shows that the strongest interventions to control crime are housing and blight remediation. Evidence consistently shows that providing affordable scattered-site housing through rehabilitation or new construction has "reduced rates of homicide, assault, and violent crime in surrounding areas."<sup>1</sup> Other techniques, with less evidence, include reducing the availability of alcohol sales, reducing connectivity of the street network, and increasing greenery around homes. Other studies have shown a link between "alcohol outlet density and assaults, including intimate partner violence."

The Urban Institute has also compiled a list of strategies to reduce crime based on their own research. These include connecting returning prisoners to stable housing, helping ex-offenders find secure living-wage employment, and making use of drug courts that combine judicial supervision with substance abuse treatment. Another complication of strategies from the Washington Post highlights the importance of lead abatement, foster care, and after-school sports. The effectiveness of increasing alcohol taxes is also highlighted: "results suggest that doubling the alcohol tax would reduce alcohol-related mortality by an average of 35%, traffic crash deaths by 11%, violence by 2%, and crime by 1.4%."

1. Michelle Kondo, et al. Neighborhood Interventions to Reduce Violence. Annual Review of Public Health. 2018. 39:253-71.  
 2. <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/five-ways-reduce-crime>  
 3. Dylan Matthews. "Lead Abatement, Alcohol Taxes and 10 Other Ways to Reduce the Crime Rate Without Annoying the NRA." Washington Post. April 22, 2013.

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### **Raise the standard for litter and garbage management on the Hilltop by cracking down on illegal dumping and aligning policies to prevent frequent occurrence.**

Focused on prevention, enforcement, and education, a 2019 initiative of Columbus's Department of Public Service cleaned up 4,110 tons of illegally dumped trash, including 43 tons of tires. These crews are solely dedicated to collecting illegal dumping across the city. Additionally, more than 1,000 three-hundred-gallon trash containers, which are notorious magnets for illegal dumping, have been replaced by 4,184 ninety-gallon containers. In attempts to hold illegal dumpers accountable, 80 cameras were installed at dumping hot spots.

In the Hilltop area, these same strategies are being enacted. Just this year, over 1,133 tons of litter and illegally dumped material has been collected on the Hilltop. Additional ideas for addressing continued issues include requiring property owners to demonstrate how they will dispose of construction material when receiving permits for renovation or demolition of structures, as well as when filing for eviction. Proof of disposal method could be required to move the eviction process into the set-out stage, ensuring that any items and debris will be properly handled. Funds could also be allocated for a pilot program to employ teens or adults to pick up litter and debris, potentially through a CDC or civic organization.



### **Leverage the location of the Sullivant Avenue police substation to build something transformational—a community-oriented safety center for everyone.**

The police substation at 2070 Sullivant Avenue was built in 1965, and currently offers no opportunity for community-police interaction. The one-story building, at just over 2,000 square feet, serves as an unstaffed facility for officers and sits on almost a half-acre of land at the northeast corner of Sullivant and Belvidere. Reconstructing the substation would bring a myriad of positive benefits to the Hilltop focus area. A new public safety facility could integrate community activities, like offering space for school and youth liaisons, support for seniors, and community service or block watch teams. A welcoming, open, and community-oriented facility could help improve the relationship between the neighborhood and police, as well as encourage increased reporting of crimes. Locating a few community attractions, like a small skate park, a graffiti wall, or a little free library with a small garden and seating area, on or near the substation could increase activity in the area.<sup>1</sup> Encouraging people to come to the site when they are not experiencing emergencies can help build trust and a sense of normalcy to police interactions. A new structure could improve on the current design by offering transparency through a glass exterior and a street presence along Sullivant through eliminating the 35-foot setback.<sup>2</sup>

1. Leigh Christy. "The Police Station of the Future." *Development Magazine*. Spring 2016. NAIOP, the Commercial Real Estate Development Association.

2. Jen Kinney. *Designing a Police Station That Serves the Community*. Next City. July 15, 2016.

# Housing Quality

## Resident Comments

More code enforcement of bad landlords.



City should inspect rental properties.

We need a home repair program!

## Statement of Need

The condition of housing is critical, from fostering community pride to ensuring public health. Increasing housing quality will require building relationships with landlords, enforcing and strengthening tenant rights, and encouraging improvements. Though aging housing stock may present challenges, investing in the diversity of residential architectural styles will play a vital role in neighborhood stabilization.

## Goal 19

SHORT TERM   
PROGRAM 

### Promote quality management and maintenance of rental properties.

Improving the health and aesthetic appearance of rental properties will involve connecting directly with landlords and incentivizing good behavior. A vacant property registration would be a solid first step in managing blight, and proactive code enforcement will help reduce code violations while taking a compassionate approach to compliance.

## Action Steps

- 19.1 Connect rental property owners to property management resources and best practices.** Encourage a high standard of maintenance, help landlords operate according to rental property law, and train landlords to minimize conflict in their properties. Provide resources such as a good landlord manual and/or a registry of qualified third-party property management companies to share with owners of problem properties.
- 19.2 Provide incentives for responsible landlords.** Reward responsible landlords who meet criteria for a high standard of property management and/or participate in landlord training programs. Incentives can include: fast-track approvals of permits for improvements; free or low-cost equipment; free radon testing; waived fees for property inspection; discounts on goods and services; and/or facilitated access to land bank property.
- 19.3 Explore creation of a rental registration and/or licensing program.** A rental registry helps a city contact the property owner or other responsible party in case of an emergency or code violation and helps owners understand their obligations under city ordinances. Modest registration fees can help cover the cost of administering the program. Incentivize timely registration and renewal through penalties for failing to register. Explore expanding the registration program to a licensing program that incentivizes inspection of registered properties. Ensure compliance with the state legal framework and administrative capacity for successful implementation.
- 19.4 Require vacant property registration.** Registration typically requires owners to pay an annual fee to cover costs of inspections and complaint response and designate a local agent responsible for maintaining the property. Some laws require owners to have liability insurance and file an action plan (i.e., "Statement of Intent") for reuse after some period of vacancy. Minneapolis's annual fee of over \$6,000 for registration of vacant properties has been upheld by the courts.<sup>1</sup>

## Outcomes

Better maintained rental units

All rental units, landlords, and vacant properties registered

## Guiding Principle

Housing in the neighborhood will be safe inside and out, and properties will be well-maintained.

## Resident Priorities

1. Home repair, maintenance, curb appeal
2. Infrastructure: fix flooding issues, more trees, streetlights
3. Aging in place
4. Encourage compatible new construction/remodel
5. Leverage rental registry



1. Karen Black. "Creating the Framework in Local Government Action on Problem Properties." Vacant and Problem Properties: A Guide to Legal Strategies and Remedies. American Bar Association, Section of State and Local Government Law, 2019.

**Goal 20**

LONG TERM   
POLICY 

**Incentivize rehabilitation and renovation of properties.**

Upgrading deteriorating properties is an important part of stabilizing the Hilltop focus area. Significant investment in the exterior and interior of properties will improve quality of life for residents, and energy efficiency can help reduce monthly costs.

**Action Steps****20.1 Create a revolving fund for acquisition and/or renovation of market-rate affordable rental housing.**

Help owners and developers acquire and upgrade rental units and stem deterioration. Provide a source of financing that supports more reinvestment in buildings than currently possible through conventional financing. Improved properties can be rented at “market-rate” affordable rates (60-120% AMI). Partner with “mom and pop” property owners and developers working on the Hilltop. Share risk between mission-oriented lenders, philanthropy, conventional lenders, and the public sector in a capital pool deployed as low-cost debt or equity.

**20.2 Provide support for energy efficiency upgrades.**

Supporting energy efficiency would reduce operating costs for property owners while also lowering tenants’ energy bills and improving comfort. Connect residents and owners to resources for building energy assessments, technical assistance on energy efficiency, and access to incentives. Recommendations/improvements could include air sealing and insulation, new lighting, efficient boilers, boiler controls, thermostats, low flow water fixtures, etc. More information on page 151.

**Outcomes**

Upgraded rental units

More energy-efficient units

Lower utility bills for residents

**Goal 21**

LONG TERM   
PROJECT 

**Ensure housing units meet the changing needs of occupants.**

To help stabilize the community, the dynamic needs of residents should be addressed with new approaches. Aging in place is an important strategy to prevent displacement, and all tenants deserve access to healthy and safe units.

**Action Steps**

**21.1 Support the senior village concept to help people age in place.** In August 2019, the Hilltop senior circulator route launched service to grocery stores, libraries, recreation centers, and senior living facilities. The collaborative effort is one aspect of the senior village concept that allows people to age in place in their homes and communities. The senior village network provides a variety of services to members, including transportation, light yard work, minor home maintenance, coordination with state/local services, technology assistance, and more. A Hilltop network offering reduced or sponsored membership could help seniors age in place and feel safe at home.

**21.2 Support tenants’ right to safe housing.** Tenants should be empowered to report issues with their housing units without fear of retaliation. In New York, a mobile app called justfix.nyc allows renters to make anonymous claims against their landlords and aggregates those claims so that city officials can see property owners with multiple claims filed. This allows officials to target landlords with more egregious offenses while shielding tenants from retaliation. Annual inspection of rental units in the focus area could help improve housing quality without asking tenants to report issues to their landlords.

**Outcomes**

More seniors staying home in the Hilltop

Less evictions

Safer housing conditions



**The Healthy Homes Initiative is a program of the City of Cleveland that ensures safety of rental units by requiring rental registration.**

A rental registry helps a city contact the property owner or other responsible party in case of an emergency or code violation, and helps owners understand their obligations under city ordinances. In 2017, the City of Cleveland began the Healthy Homes Initiative as an interdepartmental effort to prevent health issues related to the home environment. The program strengthens the existing rental registration process by charging owners who fail to register with a minor misdemeanor. All rental units in Cleveland are inspected on a rolling basis, but tenants and others can also submit specific complaints or concerns to inspectors. The program requires owners of rental properties to allow inspection of their units with one month's notice. An investment of \$1.9 million added 33 employees to form the Rental Inspection Unit, including inspection staff and a lead specialist. In addition, the city's Public Health Department also added 21 employees. In 2019, the city began deploying Community Engagement Specialists across neighborhoods through Community Development Corporations (CDCs) to connect residents and landlords to healthy housing resources, education, and training. To effectively identify areas of need within neighborhoods, Community Engagement Specialists are housed in Cleveland CDCs and work closely with CDC staff to build trust with landlords and residents. Specialists provide landlords and residents with technical support, resources, and program identification, and conduct quarterly forums and classes for homeowners and landlords.

<https://www.cleveland-oh.gov/08.22.2019HHILegislation>



**A program in Chicago helps investors redevelop smaller multifamily properties into affordable market-rate units in strategic neighborhoods.**

Following the foreclosure crisis, rental properties had severely depressed values in many neighborhoods throughout Chicago. Developers were unable to secure sufficient financing to acquire and sufficiently rehab smaller rental properties of the one-to-four unit typology prevalent throughout Chicago.<sup>1</sup> To help owners and developers acquire and upgrade rental units and stem deterioration, a program offered by the Community Investment Corporation (CIC) in Chicago provides a source of financing that supports more reinvestment than possible through conventional financing. The program targeted communities with existing investment in the form of local institutions, mass transit, and neighborhood organizations.

Research by the Preservation Compact—a group preserving affordable rentals in Chicago—found that conventional financing was available for building owners seeking to buy one-to-four-unit rental buildings, but only for individual buildings.<sup>2</sup> As a result, many smaller investors could not get to scale, despite very strong cash flow with the properties. In response, CIC created a rental redevelopment program to provide permanent financing for responsible investors redeveloping groups of one-to-four-unit buildings. The program provides purchase, rehab, and/or financing for groups of distressed one-to-four unit buildings to complement public and private redevelopment efforts in low- and moderate-income communities.

1. <http://www.cicchicago.com/takeout-loans-for-groups-of-1-4-units/>

2. Kathryn Reynolds, et al. *Innovative Financing Approaches for Affordable Rental Housing*. Urban Institute. February 2019.



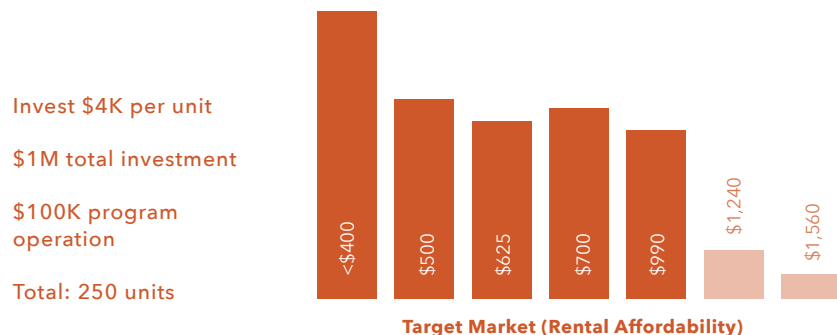
## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### Upgrade energy efficiency for market-rate affordable units in the focus area with an improved home energy program.

A program to improve the energy efficiency of aging Hilltop homes would help to reduce operating costs for property owners, while also lowering tenants' energy bills and improving comfort. The program would connect residents and property owners to existing resources for building energy assessments, technical assistance on energy efficiency recommendations and incentives. It would require a promotional campaign to create awareness of the opportunities. Providing financing and/or matching grants would help attract participants. Improvements could include air sealing and insulation, new lighting, efficient boilers, boiler controls, thermostats, and low-flow water fixtures. It would initially need to provide a free energy assessment and access to utility rebates and incentives. Potential program partners could include MORPC, the Ohio Development Services Agency, Columbia Gas of Ohio, and other utility providers.

#### HILLTOP HOME ENERGY PROGRAM PROPOSAL



### Support tenants' right to safe and stable housing. Reform the eviction process to help improve family stability.

Keeping families in their homes should be a high priority, whether they rent or own. Most low-income families devote more than half their income to rent, and more than one in four children in families living below the federal poverty line experience an eviction by age 15.<sup>1</sup> In 2017, there were over 17,000 evictions filed in Franklin County Municipal Court and over 6,500 families were "set out," meaning the sheriff was ordered to remove possessions from the property. On average, 75 families are summoned to the eviction courtroom each morning. Data shows over 40% of evictions in Franklin County occur in just six zip codes, and single mothers with young children, particularly African Americans, are at the highest risk. Furthermore, evictions cause large and persistent increases in the risk of homelessness, elevate long-term residential instability, and even increase emergency room use.<sup>2</sup>

Efforts to reduce evictions should approach the issue from increased scrutiny on landlords and improved stability of families. One proposal to achieve this would require landlords to provide proof of their rental property registration and parcel ownership before filing an eviction, in order to ensure proper legal standing in the case. On the tenant side, limiting the availability of eviction court records in public searches could reduce the stigma and discrimination faced by those with previous evictions. Overall, families experiencing eviction need help navigating the legal process and getting connected with social services to prevent displacement.

1. Robert Collinson and Davin Reed. "The Effects of Evictions on Low-Income Households." December 2018.

2. Ian Lundberg and Louis Donnelly. "How Many Children Experience Eviction During Childhood?" How Housing Matters. April 17, 2019.

# Mixed-Income Housing

## Resident Comments

Property tax support for landlords renting to low-income residents.

Keep housing affordable for seniors in the area who may be getting priced out.

## Statement of Need

Despite the Hilltop's relative affordability in the Central Ohio market, many households are still burdened by monthly housing costs. Strategies to ensure affordability include efforts to build mixed-income community, increase development activity, and plan for long-term affordability. Particular attention should be given to stabilizing senior citizens.

## Goal 22

### Offer a variety of housing at levels affordable to multiple incomes.

LONG TERM   
PROGRAM 

Economic segregation in Central Ohio is rampant—so strategies to stabilize the Hilltop should focus on integrating households of varying incomes. New development, rehabilitation and renovation, and existing structures should be priced to include a diversity of neighbors, not just one income bracket.

## Action Steps

- 22.1 Support the development of affordable rental housing.** Create high-quality, permanently affordable rental housing for current and future residents of the Hilltop. Leverage land bank property and/or underutilized sites at key gateways to create new affordable rental housing through new construction or gut rehabilitation. Explore using a mix of 9% Low Income Housing Tax Credits (for new mixed-use development) and 4% credits (for rehabilitation and renovation). Identify strategic sites that build on areas of strength and align with investments in infrastructure, education, and services.
- 22.2 Explore expanding and adapting the land trust program to the Hilltop.** As the housing market strengthens, create permanently affordable homeownership opportunities using the land trust model. Leverage land bank properties to minimize acquisition costs and use existing properties for renovation rather than building new. Capitalize on the economies of scale in multifamily units like historic row-houses and duplexes. Offering multifamily units in the land trust program would increase affordability, the number of families served, and preserve historic housing stock in the focus area, which has lost countless homes to demolition.
- 22.3 Incorporate affordability restrictions into new incentive programs.** Consider adding affordability requirements to future cycles of incentive programs. Engage developers, property owners, lenders, and other partners to explore the feasibility of income and/or rent restrictions. Examine trade-offs between public benefit, financial feasibility, ease of participation, and ease of administration. Potential mechanisms include, but are not limited to: affidavits, deed restrictions, and restrictive covenants (to preserve affordability on sale or transfer).

## Outcomes

Displacement mitigated

Mixed-income communities

Affordable housing in perpetuity

## Guiding Principle

The Hilltop will be home for a range of income levels, while staying true to its diverse heritage.

## Resident Priorities

1. Diverse portfolio of affordable housing
2. Rehabilitate historic housing
3. Prevent displacement
4. Create smaller districts
5. More housing and density



## Goal 23

### Stabilize housing and prevent displacement.

SHORT TERM   
POLICY 

Housing instability is a major issue affecting hundreds of Hilltop households each year. The trauma of eviction on children should be considered, as well as opportunities to stabilize housing for heads of households earning credentials.

#### Action Steps

- 23.1 Reform the eviction process.** Currently, property owners are not required to appear in court when they bring an eviction case against a tenant. Requiring landlords to appear in court would bring more parity to the legal process. The minimum notification for eviction filing is currently three days; this should be extended to allow more time for tenants to gather funds to pay rent in cases of unexpected hardship.
- » In 2011, Cincinnati passed an ordinance protecting tenants from retaliatory evictions. If tenants complain about nuisance issues to the police or city officials, an eviction without good cause would be considered retaliation for those complaints within 1 year (Cincinnati Municipal Code §761-14).
- 23.2 Allow creative methods to mitigate property taxes.\*** When home values rise, property taxes follow. To help those on fixed incomes handle rising property taxes, payments could be deferred until the property is sold. This would allow the payment to be shifted from an ongoing expense that could compete with living expenses to a payment that may be less impactful if it comes from the sale of the property when the resident moves or passes away. Another option is a property tax freeze for long-term lower-income residents or seniors, which could maintain their property taxable level at the year in which they purchased the home or some reasonable threshold.
- 23.3 Provide legal representation for tenants facing eviction.** Landlords often keep the upper hand in court by hiring lawyers to represent them. Columbus should ensure all tenants have access to counsel to help ensure tenants are being evicted for a just cause.

#### Outcomes

Less evictions

Increased residential stability

\*Tax exemption categories are established by the State of Ohio. Changes to property taxation would likely require legislative change and coordination with Franklin County.

## Goal 24

### Concentrate housing investment and reduce barriers to development.

LONG TERM   
INTEGRATED 

A dispersed approach to physical investments in housing will not have the same impact as a concentrated effort. Complicated and sometimes onerous regulations on housing developments can add time to construction, which inflates prices.

#### Action Steps

- 24.1 Relax red tape on housing construction.** Red tape, referring to approvals, reviews, and permitting processes that development projects must go through, is necessary to ensure resident health and safety. However, there are parts of the process that could be improved and expedited, leading to increased housing supply and reduced costs. Funding for city staff to shepherd individual development projects through the necessary steps could minimize confusion and standardize the process for developers. Regulations like minimum lot size, maximum density, and minimum unit size effectively mandate more expensive apartments. Parking minimums also add cost. Based on typical affordable housing development costs, one parking space per unit increases costs approximately 12.5%, and two parking spaces can increase costs by up to 25%. Because parking costs are a higher percentage of rents charged for lower-priced housing and low-income households tend to own fewer vehicles, minimum parking requirements are regressive.
- 24.2 Encourage higher-density development along and near transit routes.** Sites along Broad, Sullivant, and Mound should be higher-density and have reduced or eliminated parking minimums. Results from public planning meetings show the majority of participants support higher-density development along these corridors.
- 24.3 Mitigate market pressure on the Hilltop to house lower-income households.** To re-balance the distribution of household incomes in all neighborhoods, affordable housing should be allowed throughout the city and region. This concept is explored more on the next page.

#### Notes

**Parking requirements reduce the cost of owning a car while raising the cost of everything else.** Many cities are now recognizing that parking requirements increase housing costs, prevent infill development on small lots, and prohibit new uses for older buildings that lack required spaces.<sup>1</sup>

#### Outcomes

More housing units built

Mixed-income neighborhoods

1. Donald Shoup. Cutting the Cost of Parking Requirements. ACCESS, Spring 2016. [www.accessmagazine.org/spring-2016/cutting-the-cost-of-parking-requirements/](http://www.accessmagazine.org/spring-2016/cutting-the-cost-of-parking-requirements/)



Case Study #1

## A tenant relocation assistance program in Portland, Oregon compensates tenants who are forced to move without cause by landlords.

In Portland, evictions without cause were a major contributor to displacement in rapidly changing neighborhoods. A new policy helps shift some of the burden of displacement from tenants to landlords by requiring that landlords pay a relocation fee to tenants who are evicted without a just cause. The fee is substantial—about three month’s average rent—helping ensure that tenants have sufficient resources to find a new place to live and forcing landlords to think seriously before evicting their tenants or dramatically increasing rent. The relocation fee applies to tenants who are displaced under any of the following conditions: (1) a no-cause eviction, (2) a qualified landlord reason for termination, (3) a rent increase of 10 percent or higher over a 12-month period, (4) a substantial change in the lease terms, or (5) the renter receives no option to renew the lease.<sup>1</sup>

### Amount of Tenant Relocation Assistance

Studio/Single Room	\$2,900	2-Bedroom	\$4,200
1-Bedroom	\$3,300	3-Bedroom or larger	\$4,500

The Portland City Council mandates that renters in Portland who experience one of these triggering events must be paid relocation assistance by their landlord.<sup>2</sup> Tenants must receive a written notice for any of these events at least 90 days prior to the effective date that includes: a description of their rights and obligations and the amount of relocation assistance they are eligible to receive. There are 12 conditions that allow landlords to be exempt from the relocation assistance requirement, including the property being a duplex in which the owner occupies one side as their primary residence.

1. Eliot Hetterly. Case Studies: Tenant Relocation Assistance. 2018. [www.antidisplacementtoolkit.org/](http://www.antidisplacementtoolkit.org/)  
2. <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/phb/74544>



Case Study #2

## The new Minneapolis 2040 comprehensive plan eliminates single-family zoning, allowing three-unit buildings to be constructed throughout the entire city.

On October 25, 2019, the Minneapolis City Council adopted Minneapolis 2040, a comprehensive plan that permits three-family homes in the city’s residential neighborhoods, abolishes parking minimums for all new construction, and allows high-density buildings along transit corridors. Under the new plan, three-unit buildings (triplexes) would be allowed in every neighborhood. The language reads: “In neighborhood interiors farthest from downtown that today contain primarily single-family homes, achieve greater housing supply and diversity by allowing small-scale residential structures with up to three dwelling units on an individual lot.”<sup>1</sup> The move is intended to add housing supply to the city, which is experiencing serious affordability issues. The plan explicitly acknowledges the history of zoning as a tool of racial exclusion and notes that excluding renters from single-family neighborhoods through zoning helps perpetuate racial disparities. The policy also has the potential to help homeowners age in place by allowing accessory units for the elderly.

**“Large swaths of our city are exclusively zoned for single-family homes, so unless you have the ability to build a very large home on a very large lot, you can’t live in the neighborhood.”<sup>2</sup>**

—Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey

The plan also has the potential to help slow the rapid increase of housing prices by increasing supply. Because the pool of available housing in high-opportunity neighborhoods is low, prices keep rising. More units could stabilize that increase. Policies in Minneapolis 2040 take effect Jan. 1, 2020.

1. Minneapolis 2040. Page 107. December 2018. <https://minneapolis2040.com>  
2. [slate.com/business/2018/12/minneapolis-single-family-zoning-housing-racism.html](https://slate.com/business/2018/12/minneapolis-single-family-zoning-housing-racism.html)

## VISIONARY CONCEPTS

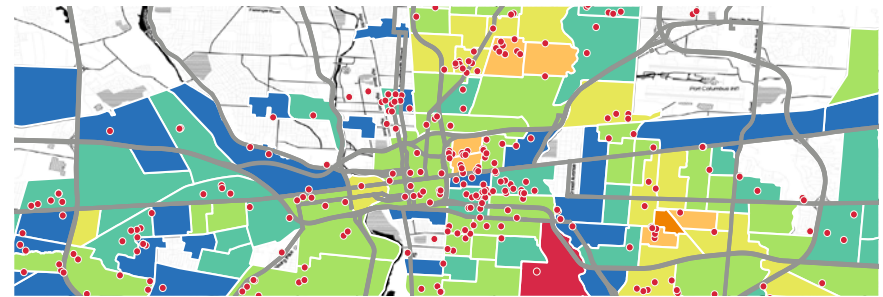


### Stabilize the community land trust and expand properties into the Hilltop focus area for permanent affordability.

The City of Columbus plans to commit \$3.8 million towards establishing the Central Ohio Community Land Trust (CLT), which was created in April 2019. Properties currently owned by the county and city land banks in four different neighborhoods will be transferred into the CLT, where private and nonprofit funding sources cover demolition of any existing buildings and construction of the first 40 homes that will be owned by the trust. The city's funding contribution subsidizes the difference between the developers' construction cost for new homes and what the homeowner pays during the final sale, to allow for lower asking prices. The homes will be sold to households with annual incomes between \$40,000 and \$80,000.<sup>1</sup> Public and private contributions to a CLT bridge the gap between an affordable sales price and a structure's market value. The new initiative initially focuses on Franklinton, the South Side, the Near East Side, and Weinland Park.

The Central Ohio CLT will be the fourth operating in the state, but there are dozens across the nation. The trust will hold the land as a permanent community asset and will guarantee perpetual affordability of homes, for its residents, through a 99-year land lease. CLT homeowners will own their home but lease the land underneath it from the trust; when a home is sold, it is sold back to the trust, which re-establishes an affordable sale price to the next buyer. This will guarantee each house remains affordable in perpetuity. Additional efforts to establish a pool of buyers are also being developed. The trust may build townhouses and multifamily units in the future. The CLT is a proven method of preserving affordable housing and would help ensure residents can remain on the Hilltop if home values increase.

<https://www.greaterohio.org/blog/2019/4/10/columbus-to-establish-community-land-trust>



### Encourage housing voucher acceptance in all neighborhoods to reduce the concentration of poverty.

Receiving a housing choice voucher can be like winning the lottery—it is a random selection process based on eligibility and a waitlist. In the U.S., more than 17 million at-risk renter households eligible for rental assistance do not receive it due to funding limitations, meaning only a select few receive the voucher.<sup>1</sup> After receiving the voucher, recipients must seek a place to live, but their money is not accepted by everyone. Many landlords refuse to accept tenants paying with a voucher, a practice which closes the door to many high-opportunity neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup> To increase voucher acceptance, funds could be allocated help convince property owners to house needy families. A risk-mitigation fund could be made available (up to a certain threshold) to landlords who accept vouchers, helping reduce the perceived risks of housing voucher holders, similar to an insurance policy against damages to the unit. Another strategy would be to base the voucher amount on housing location. For example, if additional funds from local corporate and philanthropic sources were allocated, a voucher could hold the value of the median gross rent of the census tract in which it is applied. These policies would help disperse housing vouchers throughout the city rather than concentrate them in certain neighborhoods. Creation of a rental registry could offer other options to incentivize voucher acceptance. On the rental registration, landlords could be asked if they accept HUD Housing Choice Vouchers. If they decline, the registration fee will be higher. If they accept, the fee could be reduced or waived entirely.

1. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. <https://cbpp.org/three-out-of-four-low-income-at-risk-renters-do-not-receive-federal-rental-assistance>

2. House Bill 229, introduced to the Ohio legislature by Reps. Miller and Upchurch in 2019, would outlaw source-of-income discrimination. Federal and state fair-housing laws made some forms of discrimination illegal, but not source-of-income discrimination. More than 90% of those who use vouchers through the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority are African American, which means when housing is refused to a voucher holder, 9 of 10 times that housing is being denied to an African American household. Source: [www.dispatch.com/opinion/20190524/column-bill-would-stop-discrimination-over-housing-vouchers](http://www.dispatch.com/opinion/20190524/column-bill-would-stop-discrimination-over-housing-vouchers)

# Homeownership

## Resident Comments

We need more local hot spots to attract young homeowners.

First-time homebuyer tax credit—or better yet a grant.

## Statement of Need

In 1960, nearly 70% of homes in the Hilltop focus area were owner-occupied. Today, that figure is just under 40%. Strategies to increase homeownership will prepare people financially, build pride, and add amenities to attract potential homebuyers. Additionally, shared-equity homeownership presents a unique opportunity for lower-income homebuyers to build wealth.

## Goal 25

SHORT TERM 

PROGRAM 

## Expand financial capacity for current and prospective homeowners.

Offering homeownership counseling and credit repair, as well as a physical location for people to visit on West Broad Street, could transform the homeownership climate in the neighborhood. Expanding available capital to invest in the existing housing stock, as well as addressing exterior maintenance and repair issues, will help maintain the housing stock and prevent vacancy.

## Action Steps

- 25.1 Increase access to homeownership counseling and financial literacy resources.** Expand capacity and accessibility of organizations that provide homeownership counseling and credit repair, and explore creation of a satellite counseling office on West Broad. Improve the connection between mortgage lenders and homeownership counseling to prepare buyers for purchasing.
- 25.2 Pilot an appraisal gap second mortgage program for buying and renovating existing homes.** Expand capital available for qualified homeowners and homebuyers to invest in existing housing stock. For homebuyers, help fill the gap between the appraised value of a home and the full cost of purchase and renovation. For homeowners, provide capital to renovate homes beyond what can be supported through home equity. For details, see page 159.
- 25.3 Expand home repair assistance for low-income homeowners.** Address exterior maintenance and repair issues before they worsen to help homeowners avoid future financial hardship, maintain the housing stock, and prevent vacancy and abandonment. Proactively connect homeowners to existing resources for addressing maintenance issues and avoid future financial hardship. Create a pool for forgivable loans (e.g., up to \$20,000) available to homeowners on the Hilltop. Precedents and Partners: Chores Program, Roof Replacement Program, Emergency Repair Program, Habitat for Humanity, Weinland Park, and Healthy Homes.

## Outcomes

More first-time homebuyers

More home updating/renovating

## Guiding Principle

People will be encouraged and empowered to buy homes for neighborhood stability and community pride.

## Resident Priorities

1. Create attractions/amenities to draw new homebuyers
2. Tax abatements for home improvement
3. Incentivize redevelopment for homeownership
4. Increase owner-occupied tax credit
5. First-time buyer assistance



**Goal 26****Support a culture of shared homeowner prosperity to build community pride.**LONG TERM INTEGRATED 

Rebuilding the historic culture of homeownership on the Hilltop will take time. Opportunities to convene neighbors around the collective spirit of neighborhood pride and investment in homeownership will be part of the journey.

**Action Steps**

- 26.1 Consider shared equity homeownership options.** Shared equity models help bridge the gap between what buyers can afford in a mortgage and the actual mortgage cost to own a property. Shared equity includes inclusionary zoning, limited equity cooperatives, and community land trust homes with long-term affordability restrictions. Purchasers have, on average, significantly less mortgage debt and lower monthly credit payments than other similar purchasers.<sup>1</sup>
- 26.2 Fund and facilitate initiatives that honor high standards of home maintenance.** Consider elevating home and yard awards in Neighborhood Pride! efforts and expanding resident recognition throughout the year. Offer funding to resident groups to recognize the contributions of neighbors.
- 26.3 Organize events that unify diverse residents and increase community connectedness.** Use regular social gatherings to bring people together. The Hilltop has a rich heritage of civic life, from Kiwanis to Rotary and other clubs. Funding to support management of civic organizations should be established, with a particular focus on open events and celebrations. Block parties, festivals, and holiday gatherings can improve social connectedness, introduce neighbors, and reduce isolation.
- 26.4 Expand proactive code enforcement coupled with resources to address problems.** Code enforcement can feel punitive and care should be taken to couple violations with resources and education to help homeowners tackle problems. Citations could include a resource list for assistance in addressing common maintenance issues. The city could facilitate payment plans or financing in partnership with approved contractors to address pressing issues—from roof replacement to tree trimming.

**Outcomes**

Better-maintained homes

Increased community connection

1. Shared Equity Research. The Urban Institute. [www.urban.org/projects/shared-equity-research](http://www.urban.org/projects/shared-equity-research)

**Goal 27****Enhance and add amenities to draw new homebuyers.**LONG TERM PROJECT 

Moving to the Hilltop—and staying—will be about more than individual homes. When selecting a neighborhood, people often consider amenities like parks, trails, schools, retail, and other social networks that encourage community interaction.

**Action Steps**

- 27.1 Capitalize on Camp Chase Trail and other natural features.** Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail, the Camp Chase Trail through the Hilltop brings many visitors to the neighborhood. These visitors are potential homebuyers and customers of Hilltop businesses. The benefits of bike tourism are well-documented, and with the right approach the Hilltop could become a destination for bike-packing and recreational riding. The natural beauty of the meandering Dry Run through Holton and Glenview Parks can also be a destination, as it provides a pastoral respite in the city.
- 27.2 Increase access to green space.** Calculations show that a substantial section of the Hilltop focus area lives more than 10 minutes from a public park. While adding new parks in such a dense and historic neighborhood is difficult, adding green space and greenery in other ways may be more realistic. Capitalizing on the existing median parkways by increasing landscaping, programming, and tree canopy could allow people space to be outside without going to a formal city park. Improving the tree canopy on streets, as well as the condition of grass and plantings along the roadways, can increase residents' exposure to natural elements.
- 27.3 Offer unique programs with a Hilltop-coordinated network of activities.** An entity to organize events and manage initiatives across the Hilltop should be created through a multi-partner funding collaboration. Residents should have regular opportunities for socialization, both focused on addressing neighborhood issues and simply celebrating the community.

**Outcomes**

Increased awareness of trail

Frequent activities

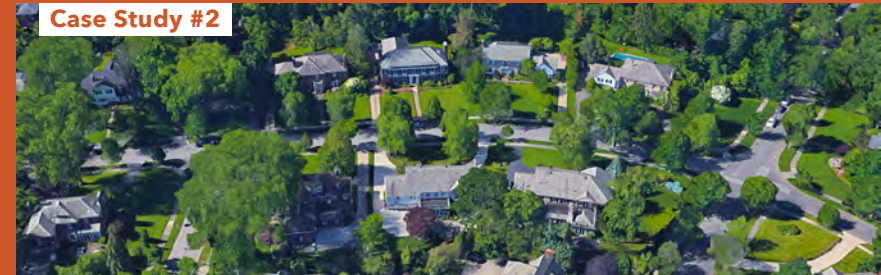


**The Champlain Housing Trust in Vermont offers affordable homeownership and rental units in perpetuity, utilizing multifamily properties to achieve scale in operations.**

By producing more housing in multifamily buildings, community land trusts (CLTs) can achieve economies of scale, and at the same time help promote dense urban development and stabilize neighborhoods vulnerable to the displacement of affordable housing. Shared equity homeownership programs attempt to balance providing owners with an opportunity to accumulate wealth with maintaining the affordability of the units for subsequent purchasers. The nonprofit Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) was created with assistance from the City of Burlington in 1984. CHT is a CLT providing affordable homeownership and rental options through a shared equity program. CHT sells homes to families whose income is no more than the HUD median family income (based on the size of the household), most often to families earning less than 80% of area median income. Many homes in CHT's program have retained their affordability, even in a housing market that saw steady price appreciation in the last decade. By allowing their homeowners to retain up to 25% of the appreciation, CHT's resellers earned a median internal rate of return of 30.8% on their initial investment of about \$3,000. This rate of return realized by most CHT home resellers far exceeded the returns that those resellers would have earned if they had rented their unit. CHT's homeownership portfolio is made up of approximately 60% condominiums and 40% single family houses, including a handful of duplexes and mobile homes. Almost all of the program's homes have between one and three bedrooms. Of the 435 resale-restricted, owner-occupied homes currently in CHT's portfolio, about 130 are new construction built mainly between 2003 and 2007 by CHT or developed in partnership with private, for-profit developers.

1. Tom Angotti. *Community Land Trusts and Low-Income Multifamily Rental Housing*. Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2007.

2. Kenneth Temken, et al. *Shared Equity Homeownership Evaluation: Case Study of Champlain Housing Trust*. The Urban Institute, October 2010.



**A program to help racially integrate Shaker Heights, a historic suburb of Cleveland, offered financing options to homebuyers who would contribute to diversity.**

In the 1960s, residents of Shaker Heights created marketing campaigns to draw white homebuyers to sections of the city that were becoming primarily African-American in order to preserve multiracial streets. These early efforts "sold" the concept of integration and sought to maintain a balance between the many new black residents moving into these neighborhoods in the 1950s and new white residents attracted to the idea of living and raising their children in an integrated community.<sup>1</sup> One 1962 advertisement read: "There is prestige today in being among the thoughtful. Come and live with us in Ludlow, Cleveland's model integrated community." Another read: "We don't mind leading the nation in per capita income, but we want to lead in per capita intelligence and social understanding as well." These early efforts at marketing and promotion evolved into a program called The Fund for the Future of Shaker Heights, created with philanthropic support from the Cleveland Foundation and the George Gund Foundation, as well as an impressive \$200,000 derived from individual contributions. The program was adopted by the City of Shaker Heights as a tool for increasing neighborhood integration and ran for 27 years until ending in 2012.<sup>2</sup> The Fund offered loans toward a down payment on a home as well as a reduced-interest mortgage or monthly mortgage supplements to home buyers making "prointegrative" purchases. During its years of operation, the Fund provided 425 loans totaling more than \$2.7 million.<sup>3</sup> The city attributed the organization to leveraging more than \$1.3 million in neighborhood improvements after providing \$565,318 in matching grant money.

1. Cynthia Mills Richter. *Integrating the Suburban Dream: Shaker Heights, Ohio*. Dissertation, University of Minnesota, December 1999.

2. Sun Press, June 22, 2011. [www.cleveland.com/sunpress/2011/06/fund\\_for\\_the\\_future\\_of\\_shaker](http://www.cleveland.com/sunpress/2011/06/fund_for_the_future_of_shaker)

3. [patch.com/ohio/shakerheights/fund-for-the-future-of-shaker-heights-ceases-operatio5deb75a591](http://patch.com/ohio/shakerheights/fund-for-the-future-of-shaker-heights-ceases-operatio5deb75a591)

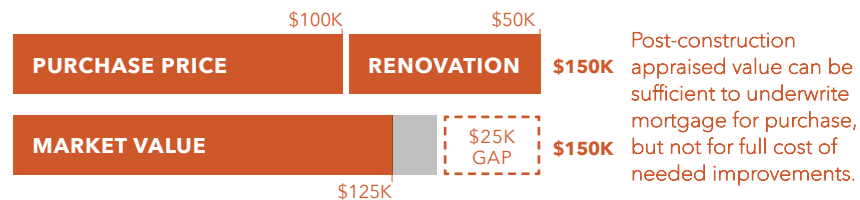


## VISIONARY CONCEPTS



### An appraisal gap second mortgage could help homebuyers purchase distressed housing stock and bring it back to life.

There are plenty of homes on the Hilltop, but many need work. With an average construction year of 1929, much of the housing stock is aging and in need of significant repair. Traditional lenders—averse to risk—are unlikely to provide financing for properties that appraise at low values, making it difficult for homebuyers to purchase and renovate homes. An appraisal gap second mortgage program would expand capital for qualified homebuyers to invest in the existing housing stock, helping fill the gap between the appraised value of a home and the full cost of purchase and renovation. For homeowners, the program could provide capital to renovate homes beyond what can be supported through home equity. The program could share risk between mission-oriented lenders, conventional lenders, and the public sector in a second mortgage pool. Potential partners could be the Land Bank, Homes on the Hill, Homeport, or Habitat. Precedents for this type of program exist in St. Louis (Gateway Neighborhoods Mortgage Program) and Detroit (Home Mortgage Program). In St. Louis, loans allow up to \$75,000 over the appraised value for the purchase and renovation of homes.



### Capitalize on the activity and connectivity provided by the Camp Chase Trail.

Access to recreational amenities, like a regional trail network, is a major positive influence for neighborhoods. In fact, the presence of trails has been connected to increased property values and overall desirability. The Camp Chase Trail has an entry point at Eureka Avenue, just south of Valleyview Drive and north of Glenview Park. The trailhead is just 3,000 feet from the Lower Scioto Greenway Trail via the Hilltop Connector—but the two trails are not connected, which forces users to travel along Harper Road and Valleyview Drive to complete the gap. While that gap should eventually be eliminated or improved, the entryway to Camp Chase Trail is a critical asset that should be elevated through physical intervention

Coordinated trail markers that celebrate the trail could be installed at key access points—both for visitors and residents. The streets of Harris, Warren, Ogden, and Burgess all terminate to the north into the Camp Chase Trail, creating opportunities on both the streetside and trailside to highlight those connections. Because the Camp Chase Trail is part of the Ohio to Erie trail network, it draws a high volume of recreational users and long-distance cyclists. Bike tourism is a growing industry across the nation, and the proximity of the trail to potential attractions on Broad Street could leverage a positive relationship. Trail users may choose to stop in for lunch or have unique retail experiences if coordinated signage lets them know about existing opportunities in the neighborhood.

1. [www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/slhc/news/joint-collaboration-launches-gateway-neighborhood-mortgage.cfm](http://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/slhc/news/joint-collaboration-launches-gateway-neighborhood-mortgage.cfm)

# Implementation Strategies

The Hilltop Community Plan advises future investments in a multitude of areas, making it an interconnected web of recommendations and goals focused on improving the quality of life for Hilltop residents. To ensure action is taken, progress is tracked, and milestones are met, there must be an entity tasked with overseeing the plan. This group should be empowered to enact portions of the plan, create the relationships and circumstances necessary to realize other portions, and equip residents with the tools and resources necessary to be active and involved with implementation as well.

## IMPLEMENTATION ENTITY WILL:

TAKE  
ACTION

TRACK  
PROGRESS

MEET  
MILESTONES

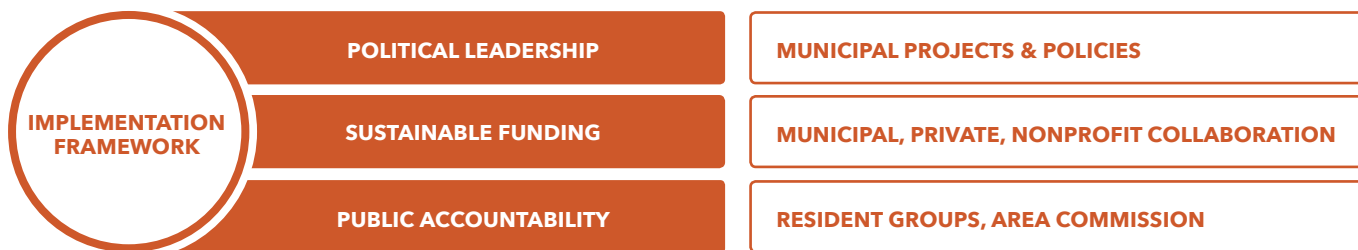
## AND NEEDS THE POWER TO:

- #1 **Enact portions of the plan**
- #2 **Create the relationships and circumstances necessary to realize other portions**
- #3 **Equip residents with tools and resources necessary to be active and involved with implementation**

## POLITICAL WILL & PARTNERSHIPS

Implementation is about translating the vision for long-term change into financial, contractual, and institutional relationships between the public and private sectors. This means creating a sustainable organizational structure that can withstand mayoral administrations and other political changes in order to ensure continued commitment to neighborhood residents. The most important factor in the implementation phase is political leadership, as words must be followed by dollars to fund transformative projects and policies—and leverage private resources.

As neighborhood revitalization is a long-term and transformative process that involves disruption and risk, political leadership is essential to managing the change process so that all stakeholders feel engaged in the process, understand its importance to the future of the city, and have genuine opportunities for participation. Another crucial component of implementation is determining the optimum institutional structure for project delivery and assigning the powers and tools to various entities. These relationships are illustrated in the diagram below.



Source: <https://urban-regeneration.worldbank.org/about>



## IDENTIFY A LEAD ENTITY

With this plan charting a course to an improved quality of life for Hilltop residents, implementation will be driven by opportunities as they arise and by the community. There is a need for a single organization, or strategic partnership of existing entities or organizations, to serve as the lead actor in terms of economic, community, and real estate development. While there are a number of engaged community groups currently operating on the Hilltop, a coordinated approach is required to increase influence and capacity. The entity or collaborative must integrate residents into decision-making functions in an authentic and meaningful way. This could include allocating a certain number of potential board positions to residents, facilitating a resident council, or working with area commissioners and or civic groups.

Realizing the physical manifestation of planning recommendations in the Hilltop focus area is a long-range proposition with a timeframe of at least a decade. There is, however, a need to focus on early catalytic projects that can seize on near-term opportunities and set a new standard for future development. Though investments in place are major components of this strategy, these efforts must be aligned with creating more opportunities for residents, businesses, and organizations. Given the market challenges on the Hilltop, there is a need to attract new investment while also developing a growth-from-within framework to ensure residents, businesses, and organizations already on the Hilltop are an integral part of a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable future.

## OFFER ENDURING SUPPORT

Many urban revitalization efforts have a targeted focus, such as housing, health, or retail. The Hilltop Community Plan, however, proposes a holistic and integrated approach that does not focus on one particular area. This can make tracking metrics more complex than a strategy that, for example, would intensely focus on housing market stabilization.

Different revitalization initiatives use different vehicles to effect change. Some focus on capacity-building of community institutions, including Community Development Corporations (CDCs) and resident organizations. Others are primarily project-focused, with capacity-building as a secondary goal. Determining the local leadership structure requires several questions to be considered: how many lead organizations will there be? What are the types of organizations? And how will leadership roles evolve over time? The leadership structures may be led by one or more organizations, like a CDC. There can be new collaborative structures between local foundations, community-based organizations, and residents, as well as more resident-driven efforts. One predominant idea throughout multiple revitalization initiatives is the importance of having “champions” to access resources and implement the plan—with meaningful participation by local residents. Champions can be members of the philanthropic community, local and regional businesses, or place-based institutions. Whatever structure is used, the entity must receive reliable operating support and funding in order to maintain a long-term commitment to plan implementation.

**Residents are the foundation  
for planning,  
for ideation, and  
for implementation of the plan.**



## TRACK PROGRESS

How will the Hilltop Community Plan measure progress throughout implementation? Outcomes for each goal point to desired results, but some goals and action steps are more difficult to quantify. Will there be a point at which the Hilltop focus area may be considered “stable” and no longer in need of concerted interventions? Community leaders should consider setting goals to help prioritize the goals and action steps within the Hilltop plan framework.

In order to measure progress, specific metrics for each area of the plan should be quickly established by the implementation partners. This will enable tracking over time and create transparency and accountability for the organizations involved. Working toward agreed-upon goals will help consistently improve the quality of life for Hilltop residents, while reducing neighborhood disparities between the Hilltop focus area and other parts of the city.

Potential points of measurement include: violent crime rate, high school graduation rate, owner-occupancy rate, opioid overdoses, and unemployment. These fundamental neighborhood indicators allow for a macro-level tracking of area distress.



## EMPOWER RESIDENTS

The guiding philosophy of the Hilltop Community Plan implementation should be resident-driven engagement and leadership. Empowering residents to drive plan implementation and community revitalization is critical to achieving this goal. What does resident empowerment look like? For an implementation entity, it means significant investment in people—investment of both time and money. Developing leaders, facilitating intellectual growth, building skills, and helping residents bring their aspirations to reality are approaches to resident empowerment that keep the focus on residents, rather than shifting decision-making to other entities.

Programs like the Neighborhood Leadership Academy (United Way of Central Ohio) help develop resident leaders, train community advocates, and identify individuals to champion resident needs. Collaborations with programs like this can allow residents to identify priorities and shape programs. It is critical to empower residents across the demographic spectrum, across income, age, and race. Building capacity occurs by facilitating neighbor-to-neighbor relationships and strengthening social connections to create a more cohesive and resilient community.

Residents know their own experiences, understand barriers their neighbors face, and bring years of life experience to the table. An inclusive approach will also value residents' time appropriately, similar to how the time of the planning team, city staff, and consultants is valued. Strategies should identify, recruit, retain, and continually display appreciation for resident involvement and engagement on a long-term basis. On the ground, this could mean financially supporting a resident group (i.e., civic association) and enabling that entity to recruit neighbors, facilitate social activities, and more.

Funding is a critical piece of this relationship. When residents have ideas, the implementation entity should work to transform them into reality. Certainly some level of discretion and oversight is needed, but making funding processes onerous could discourage resident participation. Inventing a process with letters of intent, funding cycles, grant awarding, and other bureaucratic language would not be as effective as directly funding residents by facilitating on-site materials purchases and other expenditures. Removing barriers and simplifying projects is absolutely critical to continued engagement and empowerment.

## WHERE TO START?

Based on resident priorities as indicated in a survey of event participants, action steps that align with top-ranking issues are presented below. This can help all better understand what issues are more important for Hilltop neighbors, and will help guide the focus of implementation efforts.

### EDUCATION

PRIORITY: PARENT ENGAGEMENT

**4.4 Offer a comprehensive program for parent engagement.** Many parents or guardians need support in order to fully support their children. Professional navigators should be made available to schools, perhaps a social worker, to connect parents to resources. Parents can also be engaged through mobile apps and incentive programs that encourage school and teacher interaction.

### HEALTH & RECREATION

PRIORITY: DRUG ADDICTION & TRAFFICKING

**2.1 Focus on addiction prevention, harm reduction, and treatment.** Reduce the supply and availability of illicit drugs by continuing to target distribution, both on the street and in homes. Continue and expand harm reduction strategies, like needle exchanges, to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. Improve pipeline into inpatient treatment and availability of beds at nearby facilities.

### EMPLOYMENT & INCOME

PRIORITY: LIVING-WAGE JOBS & TRAINING

**7.2 Provide construction training and employment to young adults.** Programs exist currently to train people for careers in skilled trades, like plumbing, masonry, and electrical work. Participants in programs may need support services or remedial education, which could be provided through partnerships with philanthropic or government funding.

**8.1 Continue using tax abatements to negotiate higher wages.** When companies want to open new offices or add jobs, they often seek tax breaks from the City of Columbus. In return, the City has leverage to negotiate specific terms—to a certain extent. Special attention to encouraging higher wages for the lowest-paid employees, local hiring requirements, targeting businesses with economic multiplier effects, and setting metrics to measure business' impact.

### SAFETY

PRIORITY: VIOLENT CRIME

**16.1 Offer emergency support services for families and individuals.** Aligning social services and support networks to create stability for families can help individuals avoid desperate circumstances. Food security, housing stability, living-wage employment, and educational attainment are measures to deter crime. Supporting a holistic human development should be at the center of community safety strategies.

### BUSINESS

PRIORITY: TRASH & LITTER

**17.3 Reform illegal dumping enforcement.** Illegal dumping is a chronic and pervasive problem throughout the Hilltop. Efforts are underway to clean up the neighborhood by offering a tip hotline for illegal dumping, reforming the eviction process, and regulating development permits more closely. See more details on page 147.

### MOBILITY

PRIORITY: ENGAGEMENT & SOCIALIZATION

**13.2 Create and then connect people to shared mobility options to reduce car dependence.** Explore integrated mobility solutions that allow people to seamlessly transition from one mode to another. Paying for COTA, an e-scooter, and a ride-hailing service should be possible on the same cash-based platform. Improvements to first-mile, last-mile transportation should be considered, especially for those with different ability levels.

**27.3 Offer unique programs with a Hilltop-coordinated network of activities.** An entity to organize events and manage initiatives across the Hilltop should be created through a multi-partner funding collaboration. Residents should have regular opportunities for socialization, both focused on addressing neighborhood issues and simply celebrating the community.

### HOMEOWNERSHIP

PRIORITY: CREATE ATTRACTIONS/AMENITIES TO DRAW NEW HOMEBUYERS

**27.1 Capitalize on Camp Chase Trail and other natural features.** The natural beauty of the meandering Dry Run through Holton and Glenview Parks can also be a destination, as it provides a pastoral respite in the city.

**27.2 Increase access to green space.** Capitalizing on the existing median parkways by increasing landscaping, programming, and tree canopy could allow people space to be outside without going to a formal city park.

### MIXED-INCOME & AFFORDABILITY

PRIORITY: DIVERSE PORTFOLIO OF HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

**22.1 Support the development of affordable rental housing.** Create high-quality, permanently affordable rental housing for current and future residents of the Hilltop.

**22.2 Explore expanding and adapting the land trust program to the Hilltop.** As the housing market strengthens, create permanently-affordable homeownership opportunities using a land trust model. Capitalize on the economies of scale in multifamily units, like historic rowhouses and duplexes.

**22.3 Incorporate affordability restrictions into new incentive programs.** Consider adding affordability requirements to future cycles of incentive programs. Potential mechanisms include, but are not limited to: affidavits, deed restrictions, and restrictive covenants (to preserve affordability on sale or transfer).

### QUALITY

PRIORITY: HOME REPAIR, MAINTENANCE & CURB APPEAL

**19.1 Connect rental property owners to property management resources and best practices.** Encourage a high standard of maintenance, help landlords operate according to rental property law, and train landlords to minimize conflict in their properties.

**25.3 Expand home repair assistance for low-income homeowners.** Address exterior maintenance and repair issues before they worsen to help homeowners avoid future financial hardship, maintain the housing stock, and prevent vacancy and abandonment.

## HILLTOP CITY INVESTMENTS

The City of Columbus invests millions to keep residents healthy and safe each year. Municipal investments in the Hilltop focus area are significant, and some of them are featured here.

## HIGHLIGHTS

**\$17 million**

West Broad Street  
Streetscape Improvements

**\$54 million**

Blueprint Columbus:  
Eureka-Fremont Project

**\$ 855,000**

Sidewalks along Wicklow Road & Steele  
Avenue and Neighborhood Bikeways

## WEST SIDE COALITION

The West Side Coalition gathers service providers, community organizations, residents, and available resources. Learning from each other and residents, the Coalition shares information, brainstorms strategies, and helps implement recommendations. There have been 16 meetings with 115 stakeholders involved, 49 agencies at the table, and 13 residents.

## RECENT, CURRENT, AND PLANNED INVESTMENT

### DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Staff cleared and cleaned seven miles of Hilltop alleys 2019, at a cost of \$19,300. Select highlights include:

- 19.1 tons of trash
- 3.5 tons of brush
- 1.52 tons of tires
- 600+ labor hours

### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

#### 1 Hilltop Streetscape Improvements (Planned)

- Enhancements to West Broad just east of Wilson Rd. to Terrace Ave. to include improved sidewalks, traffic signals, crosswalks, street lighting, and street trees
- Projected Investment: \$17+ million

#### 2 Operation Sidewalks - Olive/Floral (Planned)

- This project will add sidewalk to Olive Street and Floral Ave. from S. Powell Ave to S. Highland Avenue
- Projected Investment: \$1.5 million

#### 3 Celebrate One Sidewalks

- Sidewalk construction on west side of Belvidere Ave. from Mound St. to Sullivant Avenue
- Projected Investment: \$600,000+
- Sidewalk construction along Springmont and Walsh on the south side of Springmont from Highland to Columbian; North side of Springmont from Columbian to Woodbury; North side of Walsh, Woodbury to Ryan
- Projected Investment: \$1.8+ million

#### Slow Streets Initiative

- The department receives hundreds of traffic calming requests and speeding concerns yearly. Slow Streets Columbus is intended to improve neighborhood traffic safety and walkability through design. Pilot projects are planned for one-way to two-way street conversions.
- Projected Investment: \$750,000

### DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

#### Urban Infrastructure Recovery Funds (Planned)

- 4 Wicklow Road Sidewalks: \$450,000
- 5 Steele Avenue Sidewalks: \$405,000
- Hilltop Neighborhood Bikeways: \$115,000

#### 6 DEPARTMENT OF POWER

Circuit line extension to improve reliability of substation at Wheatland & Broad Street by providing additional 69-kV transmission source. Expected completion by Spring 2020.

- Projected Investment: \$5 million

#### 7 BLUEPRINT COLUMBUS

Eureka-Fremont Project (2021-2025)

- Lateral lining and downspout redirection to reduce basement backup incidents
- Over 450 new sump pumps to be installed
- Rain gardens, pervious pavement, and storm sewer improvements to address flooding and water quality
- Project Investment: \$54,253,464

#### 8 Terrace/Broad Storm System Improvements (2018-20)

- Addresses structural flooding and street flooding
- Projected Investment: \$6,649,543

Water Distribution Improvement projects: \$7,139,778

- 9 Waterline and distribution infrastructure improvements, including Westgate Water Tower replacement, to improve flow, quality, and reduce maintenance
- 10 Eureka/Steele Area: \$1,035,720
- 11 Eureka/Fremont Area: \$1,500,000

#### CELEBRATE ONE

- Dedicated four Community Health Workers on the Westside that can connect families to resources
- Held seven Safe Sleep Trainings in the Hilltop and distributed 109 pack-n-plays in the past two years.
- Sponsored two community 1st Birthdays for the Westside with over 60 families represented (\$7,000)
- Hosted two baby showers for 160 families (\$5,000)
- Three fairs at Hilltop Y reaching 600 people (\$100,000)
- Franklinton FUEL held Financial Literacy classes for Hilltop residents, graduating 80 in 2019; also built a 186-resource website HilltopUSA.org for residents to find resources and events. (\$69,280)

#### 12 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- A new pre-K center—including collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club and Columbus City Schools—will begin construction in 2020. It will be built adjacent to Highland Elementary and the J. Ashburn Boys & Girls Club, providing services to about 240 children.
- Projected Investment: More than \$14 million

#### COLUMBUS PUBLIC HEALTH

- Invested \$1.8+ million through multiple programs, including (but not limited to) home visiting for Mom and baby; car seats; alcohol & drug treatment; WIC; STI/HIV care; vaccines; mosquito control. CARE held 5 trauma-informed listening sessions, reached 6,200+ doors, and engaged more than 500 Hilltop residents.

• Projects without a number on the map are not geographically specific.

**MAP: RECENT, CURRENT, AND PLANNED INVESTMENT IN HILLTOP FOCUS AREA**



**DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS**

- 13 Glenwood Park & Community Center (2017)
  - Community center buildout, playground installation, and park improvements
  - Investment: \$7,490,000
- 14 Holton Park & Community Center (2016-2019)
  - Community center lobby renovations and gym floor refinishing, playground installation, etc.
  - Investment: \$450,000
- 15 Camp Chase Trail (2015-present)
  - Acquisition, trail design, and development
  - Investment: \$3,800,000

- 16 Dry Run Stream Restoration (2017-2020)
  - The restoration excavates existing concrete pipe and restores the stream to a natural channel.
  - Investment: \$1,320,000
- Hilltop Community Street Tree Planting (2018-2019)
  - About 121 trees will be planted throughout the Hilltop planning area in 2020 with UIRF funds.
  - Investment: \$47,000

**Proposed 2020-2024 Projects**

- 17 Glenwood Bottoms Natural Area Improvements (2021-22)
  - Investment: \$235,000

- 18 Holton Park & Community Center (2019-2020)
  - Lighting at parking lot and along walking path
  - Investment: \$50,000
- 19 John Burroughs Park & Elementary School (2021-2021)
  - Proposed park and playground improvements on school property
  - Investment: \$150,000
- Future Parkland/Greenways Acquisition (2020-2024)
  - Evaluates ongoing opportunities to buy parcels that would be suitable for the development of future parkland or neighborhood trail connectors
  - Investment: \$450,000

## PRIORITIZING GOALS AND ACTION STEPS

Goals and action steps should be prioritized according to resident rankings expressed during the planning process. On page 163, action steps that align with top resident priorities are displayed for each of the nine subcategories. When taking steps to realize the many goals of the plan, consideration should first be offered for Goals 2, 4, 7, 16, 19, and 25 (shown here at right).

However, sometimes funding or partnerships arise that present valuable opportunities to create interventions that are not aligned with top resident goals. These unique opportunities should not be declined for the sole reason that they do not align with top resident goals, but an effort should be made to extend opportunities to touch on one of the top six resident goals.

As goals and action steps are being addressed, measures should be communicated with residents and stakeholders regularly. Through email, periodic events, and updates at the Greater Hilltop Area Commission and civic associations in the area, people should be made aware of incremental progress and initiatives occurring as a result of the community plan.

1. Focus on top resident priorities first.
2. Keep neighbors informed.

## SHORT-TERM GOALS

Out of 27 total goals, 12 were classified as short-term. This means they should be initiated within the next five years—by 2025. These 12 goals are listed below, but seven are highlighted because they align with the top resident priorities found on page 163. This demonstrates that action steps within these goals should be the top priority for plan implementation.

- Goal 1** Improve conditions, amenities, programs, and access to parks and community centers.
- Goal 2** Address the impact of substance abuse on family and community.
- Goal 4** Position schools as community hubs and expand on-site wraparound services.
- Goal 5** Increase pre-K enrollment and improve childcare quality.
- Goal 7** Use education and training programs to prepare people for employment.
- Goal 10** Reinforce and strengthen key gateways into the neighborhood.
- Goal 13** Prioritize active and shared mobility.
- Goal 14** Address hazardous driver behavior.
- Goal 16** Focus on crime prevention by investing in people.
- Goal 19** Promote quality management and maintenance of rental properties.
- Goal 23** Stabilize housing and prevent displacement.
- Goal 25** Expand financial capacity for current and prospective homeowners.

SHORT-TERM GOALS THAT ALSO ALIGN WITH TOP RESIDENT PRIORITIES SHOWN ON PAGE 163



A photograph of a residential street. In the foreground, there is a wooden fence and a sign for "HIGHLAND YOUTH GARDEN" with colorful handprints. The sign also has some partially visible text like "DREAM" and "GARDEN". Behind the fence, there are tall, thin plants with dark, round seed pods. In the background, there is a white house with a chimney and a blue sky with some clouds. A sidewalk and a road with parked cars are visible on the right side of the image.

# appendix

# Age-Friendly Columbus – Hilltop Comments

The content of this page was developed by Age Friendly Columbus: [www.agefriendlycolumbus.org](http://www.agefriendlycolumbus.org)

## What Did We Hear?

### Transportation

- Accessibility and ease of public transportation
- Health challenges impacted ability and desire to drive
- Prefer not to drive at night or during inclement weather
- Almost all attendees expressed interest in a Hilltop Senior Circulator (see route on next page)
- "I would rather not drive but I feel like I have to."

### Housing

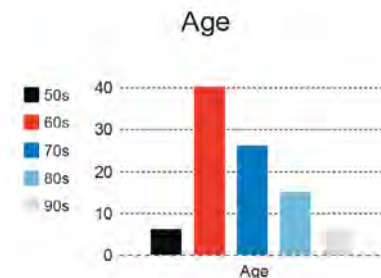
- Most reported increased challenges with home upkeep as they age
- Nearly all expressed interest in a service to connect seniors to affordable and reliable service providers

### Safety

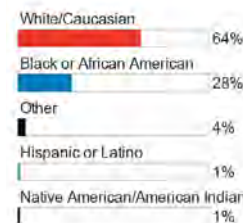
- Overall perception of safety by residents was mixed; some feel safe, while others do not

### Social Engagement

- Biggest barriers to socialization reported: transportation and awareness
- Despite most attendees reporting being social regularly, they were interested in more opportunities to connect with the community



### Race and Ethnicity



**47%**  
reported an annual household income less than \$25,000

### Age Range

56 to 96

**73%**  
Identify as Female



## Unmet Needs Identified

### Transportation

- Mix of drivers and non-drivers; those not driving rely on a mix of family and friends, public transportation and formal service providers
- Lack of sidewalks and lighting limit travel
- General frustration with the current COTA routes within community, many feel routes do not align well with their intended travel
- "My weekly hair appointment is just as important as my medical appointments."

### Housing

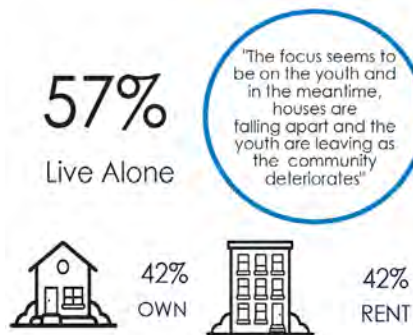
- Repairs needed to homes cost more than value of home
- Need more affordable living options in community
- "Sometimes you pray for a disaster so you can get the money from insurance."

### Safety

- Nearly every attendee has been a victim of crime or witnessed crime in their community
- Concerns over vacant and abandoned homes
- Regular dumping in alleys near homes
- Lack of street lights
- Concerns over drug use in the community
- "The crime is getting so bad, it makes me want to move."

### Social Engagement

- Attendees were interested in a wide variety of opportunities that would provide more engagement and community connection, including day trips, arts and crafts classes, and free community meals



### Zip Codes Represented

43119 43223  
43204 43227  
43209 43228  
43211

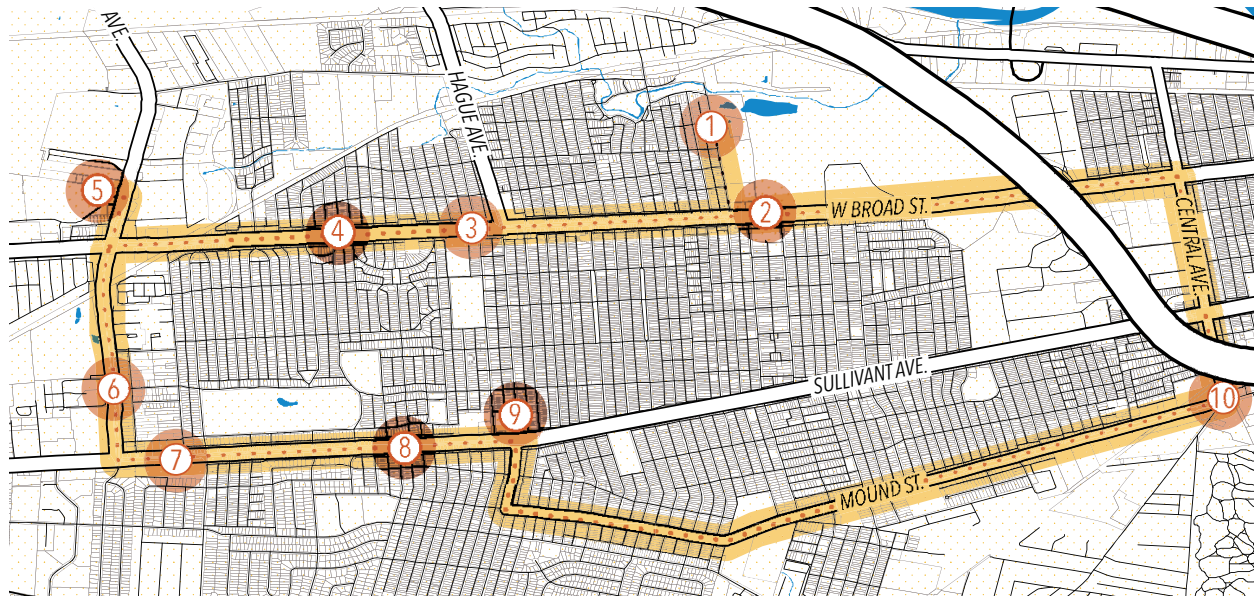


"Up here, we are just forgotten"

## Age-Friendly Strategies Previously Identified

"We deserve the same resources as everyone else."

- Strategy 3: Increase walkability of sidewalks and streets
- Strategy 4: Encourage the use of multi-modal transportation options
- Strategy 5: Empower older adults to prepare their homes to safely age in place
- Strategy 6: Increase access to programs and information that allow older adults to age in the community
- Strategy 12: Increase access to information, through a variety of community channels



### Senior Circulator Route

1. Wheatland Crossing
2. PrimaryOne Health
3. Walgreens
4. Third Way Cafe
5. Kroger
6. Hilltop Senior Village
7. KeyBank
8. My Deah's Store
9. Columbus Metropolitan Library
10. ALDI

## Voting & Representation

### Voting Data\*

#### November 2016 General Election

Total Votes	5,940
Registered Voters	13,143
Participation Rate	45%

### Voter Party Affiliation, 2018\*

Democrat	1,981
Republican	1,019
Green	20
Unaffiliated	10,123

### Ohio House District 17

Representative Adam C. Miller  
 77 S. High St, 10th Floor  
 Columbus, OH 43215  
 Phone (614) 644-6005

### Ohio Senate District 3

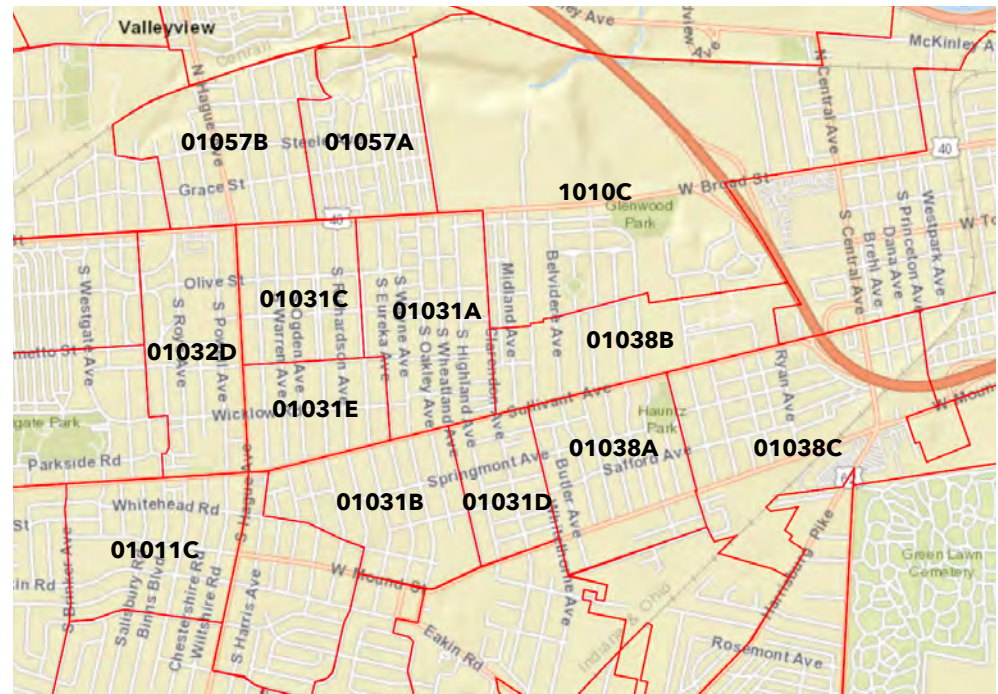
Senate Building  
 1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor  
 Columbus, OH 43215  
 Phone (614) 466-8064

### U.S. Congressional District

3rd District of Ohio  
 Congresswoman Joyce Beatty  
 Columbus Office  
 471 E. Broad St., Suite 1100  
 Columbus, OH 43215  
 (614) 220-0003

\*Data is for the 13 precincts most closely aligned with the Hilltop focus area (see map).

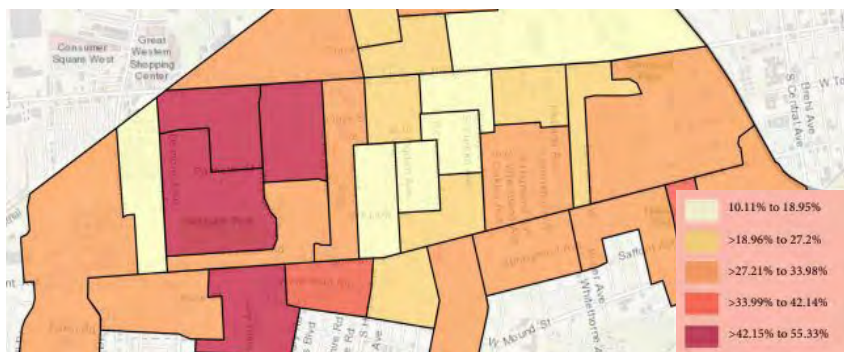
### Hilltop Focus Area Precinct Map



# Ohio State University Student Projects / Autumn 2018

## Aging in Place: Hilltop Neighborhood

Developed as a tool for Age Friendly Columbus, which is launching its fourth Senior Village on the Hilltop, this report compiles and analyzes demographic data and sidewalk/crosswalk inventories throughout the neighborhood. The students determined the concentration and income levels of seniors throughout the neighborhood, as well as where infrastructure is lacking to allow seniors to safely travel. This will help Age Friendly Columbus understand the strengths and weaknesses of the Hilltop's infrastructure lies so they can decide where to focus their efforts.



Aging in Place project work by Chris Christian, James Liou, and Stephanie Rhodes

## Hilltop Public Lands Action Plan

This plan focuses on the northeast section of the Hilltop bordered by Wheatland Avenue to the west, Dry Run creek to the north, I-70 to the east, and West Broad Street to the south. The students propose creating a new metro park from the open green space near the Sullivant Tract trail, as well as adding additional amenities to Rhodes Park and creating a new commercial area in Eldon Heights, with the idea that these spaces can be utilized by both Hilltop residents and workers from the nearby governmental complex.



Hilltop Public Lands project work by Alicia Christie, Greg Gaus, Brad McKinniss, and Ye Song

## Rooted in Community: Strengthening Food Assets

This report focuses on access to healthy and affordable food options, analyzing the demographic makeup of the Hilltop and comparing it to both the city of Columbus and Franklin County in order to determine where disparities are greatest. Students identified much of the Hilltop as low-income and low-access, and created a framework to help improve food access. They proposed three underutilized sites as opportunities—a mini-mart, a vacant retail space, and the Highland Youth Garden—and offered several low-cost strategies to strengthen these sites and help them improve food access in the neighborhood.



Rooted in Community project work by Sarah Lilly, Amalia Martin, Isabel Storey, and Stephanie Yu

## Infill & Redevelopment: The Future of W. Broad in the Hilltop

Focusing on a blighted and underutilized section of West Broad Street, this plan suggests three goals for land use and transportation: expanded, safe multimodal transportation options; enhanced quality of life metrics; and revitalized economic opportunity. Recommendations to help achieve these goals, include both a mixture of long- and short-term strategies such as pop-up shops, market-driven development, mixed-use infill, and pocket parks for specific underutilized/vacant parcels.



Infill & Redevelopment project by Emily Phillis, Tobi Otulana, Richard Hansen, Jimmy Hoppel, and Nick Julian

# Ohio State University Student Projects / Spring 2019

## Hilltop Tactical Urbanism

Tactical urbanism, the implementation of easy and low-cost enhancements to public spaces such as seating, public art, or colored crosswalks, is the focus of this report. Although these projects are often temporary, they can foster public and municipal support that can lead to the creation of permanent infrastructure enhancements. This report recommends projects such as outdoor seating and enhanced signage for local eateries, as well as neighborhood branding through logo creation for the Hilltop.



Hilltop Tactical Urbanism project work by Simon Asem, Taylor Brill, and Jaime Schmotzer

## Expanding Opportunities for the Aging Hilltop Population

The Hilltop is one of Columbus' oldest neighborhoods, in both its establishment and resident age. This report analyzes infrastructure conditions importance to seniors' quality of life and safety, such as sidewalks, lighting, and bus stop structures; ratings from very poor to excellent were given to each amenity. Data is also displayed on a number of maps, highlighting where changes are necessary to increase the comfort and safety for the Hilltop's elderly population.



Expanding Opportunities project by Julie Dombroski, Edwin V. Juarez Sr., and Emma Van Bakel

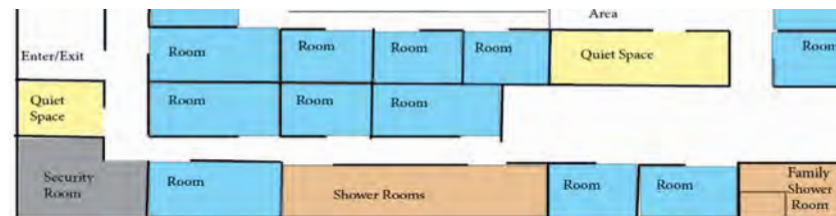
## West Broad Street Parking

These students focused on a specific corridor along West Broad Street between Wheatland and Hague, selected due to its high number of crashes. Analyses and recommendations from previous area plans are detailed and assessed, as well as case studies from other cities. The report recommends two proposals to increase the safety of this corridor: adding on-street parking and replacing parking with bus lanes to allow for Bus Rapid Transit.

West Broad Street Parking project work by Michael Bills, Claire Fetters, and Jay Henderson

## Hosea's Promise Women's Restoration Shelter

Hosea's Promise is the proposed name of a faith-based shelter that will help women involved in sex trafficking and drug addiction recuperate and re-enter society. Services and resources such as counseling, rehabilitation, and job training will allow these women to heal, both physically and mentally, and learn skills that will help them obtain well-paying employment. The center will also provide long-term housing for those who need it.



Hosea's Promise project work by Briauna Portis-McClendon

## The Hilltop Housing Assessment

This assessment focuses on homes along select streets (Wheatland, Wayne, Terrace, and Hague) and around Hauntz Park. Students scored 268 structures using a 1-4 rating system, 1 being good condition and 4 being irreparable; the overall rating represents the average of the individual ratings of a home's doors, windows, siding, roofs, and other amenities. The report estimates cost and potential funding sources for repairs, as well as recommending that housing condition data be made public as a resource for potential investors.



Hilltop Housing Assessment project by Anthony Golden, Zhengyang Liu, Ryan Printy, and Sam Richards



## Hilltop Youth Engagement Project

This project is profiled in detail on pages 114 and 115 in the Planning Activities section.

Nichole Marcus and Aerin Ledbetter worked on the Hilltop Youth Engagement Project

# Columbus Legal Aid Society – Hilltop Clinic Data

The Legal Aid Society of Columbus (LASC), a non-profit providing legal aid to economically disadvantaged people in Central Ohio. LASC hosts legal clinics throughout Central Ohio, including in the Hilltop area at Crossroads United Methodist Church, 1100 S. Hague Avenue every second Thursday of the month from 5:30pm to 7:30pm. The purpose is to help low-income people who can't afford a lawyer to move closer to resolving their legal problem. Participants must answer questions about income (must have total gross household income at or below 250% Federal Poverty Level). Interpreters are available on-call for any language upon request. Registration is followed by conference with a lawyer. The data shown at right represent the issues raised by participants at the Hilltop legal clinic. Participants were not necessarily Hilltop residents. Learn more at [www.columbuslegalaid.org](http://www.columbuslegalaid.org).

## January–October 2018

Child Custody	7
Divorce/Dissolution	6
Landlord/Tenant	6
Other Consumer	4
Criminal/Traffic	4
Probate/Estate Planning	4
Other	4
Child Support	3
Other Housing	3
Bankruptcy	3

Tax	3
Medicaid/Medicare	3
Wrongful Discharge	2
Small Claims	2
Domestic Violence	1
Housing Conditions	1
Foreclosure	1
Credit Card Issues	1
SSDI/SSI/Social Security	1
Personal Injury/Tort	1

## 2019 Available Data

Custody/Visitation	7
Other Miscellaneous	7
Wills and Estates	5
Private Landlord/Tenant	4
Divorce/Separ./Annulment	3
Collection (Repo/Def/Garnish)	1
Contracts/Warranties	1
Other Consumer/Finance.	1
Employment Discrimination	1
Social Security (Not SSDI)	1
Municipal Legal Needs	1

## C2P2 and the Hilltop Land Use Plan

In order to provide the Hilltop neighborhoods with up-to-date land use policies and design guidelines, the City worked with the Hilltop Area Commission to develop the Hilltop Land Use Plan. The Land Use Plan compliments the Hilltop Community Plan. To view the Land Use Plan, visit [www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2](http://www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2)

On September 16, 2019, Columbus City Council adopted the Hilltop Land Use Plan. Land Use Plans are primarily used to guide community and city review of future rezoning and variance requests. The planning process was initiated in the summer of 2018. The plan is a Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) document and is used with the core elements of C2P2: Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines and Land Use Policies. For more information, please visit [www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2](http://www.columbus.gov/planning/C2P2).

### ABOUT COLUMBUS CITYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2) serve as the basis for land use planning within the city of Columbus and specifically address land use and design in development review. C2P2 includes four primary elements: Guiding Principles, Design Guidelines, Land Use Policies, and Land Use Plans. The first three elements are applicable citywide, while Land Use Plans are area specific. Together, the four elements are used to guide community and city review of rezoning and variance applications.

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies are:

- Adopted city policy.
- Used to guide community and city review of future rezoning and variance requests.
- NOT...City code or law, and do not change existing zoning or zoning overlays already in place.
- NOT...used to address operational issues or issues unrelated to the built and natural environment, such as healthcare, code enforcement, and public safety. These items are outside the scope of the planning process.
- NOT...used to directly plan for traffic, congestion, or storm-water issues. (Instead, these matters are addressed as part of the development review process managed by the Department of Building and Zoning Services.)

### SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INPUT TO THE LAND USE PLAN

Key areas of community input focusing on land use and urban design issues included the following:

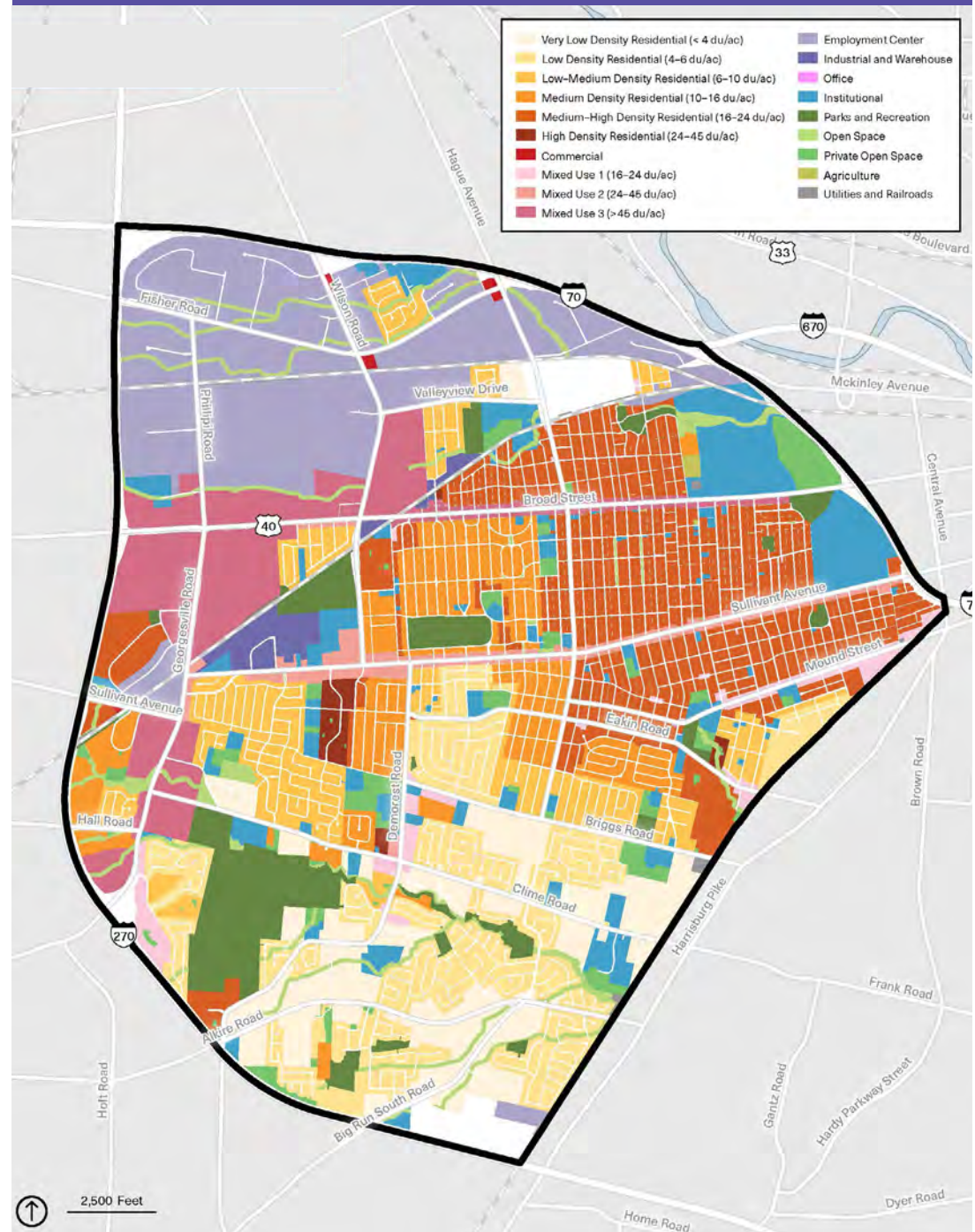
- High density development is desired along the West Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue corridors, with more neighborhood oriented mixed use or commercial development along Sullivant Avenue.
- Additional restaurants, shopping and entertainment uses are desired along the corridors and in the area.
- There is a lot of untapped buying power in the area.
- Preserving greenspace should be a priority.
- Clean up the area—eliminate litter.
- Good housing stock in the area.
- The real estate prices are very affordable for both residential and commercial.
- Home ownership needs to be encouraged more.
- A more walkable environment is desired.
- Redevelopment is welcome, but the historical character of the neighborhood should be preserved.
- Too many used car lots, check cashing places, pawn shops, and drive-through carry outs.

## KEY LAND USE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Hilltop Land Use Plan is designed to be used with the C2P2 Land Use Policies and Design Guidelines to review development proposals. Some of the plan's key recommendations are:

- **Design Guidelines:** The C2P2 Design Guidelines work with the Hilltop Land Use Plan to encourage high quality design for future development proposals in the Plan Area.
- **Proposed Land Use:** The recommended land use map in the Hilltop Land Use Plan provides guidance for every parcel in plan area. Together with the C2P2 Land Use Policies, the map will be used to review development proposals.
- **Mixed Use Development and Transit Corridors:** The Hilltop Land Use Plan recommends focused mixed use development on West Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue, as well as portions of Georgesville Road and Mound Street. This is based on the idea that these areas will continue to serve as the Hilltop's "Main Street" and that these commercial areas represent transit corridors where new or more intense development is most appropriate.
- **Protection of Employment Centers:** The Hilltop Land Use Plan designates several large areas with the Employment Center designation, which encourages the protection and expansion of employment related uses.
- **Neighborhood Infill:** The Hilltop Land Use Plan supports new single family homes and doubles in the heart of the neighborhood.
- **Area-Specific Policies:** The Hilltop Land Use Plan provides focused attention on a number of issues. These include the use of commercial overlay standards within areas recommended for mixed use, future consideration of an urban mixed use zoning district along West Broad Street, support for preservation and reuse of contributing buildings on West Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue, natural resource preservation in the undeveloped area south of Rea Avenue, providing policy guidance on the expansion of commercial uses beyond an alley, and several other topics.

## RECOMMENDED LAND USE MAP



# West Broad Street: Alternative #1

## Non-Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

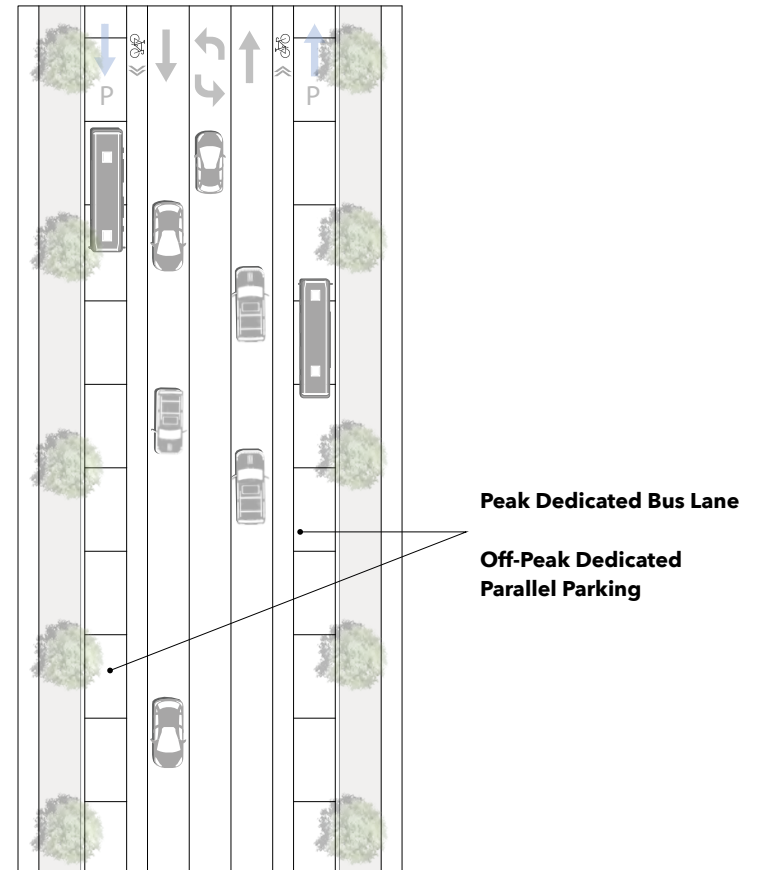
This option provides enhanced transit service by dedicating the curb lane to bus- and bike-only operation during morning and evening peak rush hours. These lanes convert to on-street parallel parking/bike lanes during non-peak hours. A continuous center turn lane reduces potential conflicts between through traffic and left-turning movements.

### Advantages

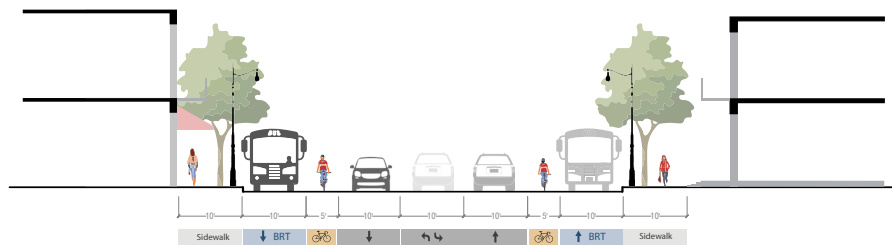
- Requires minimal infrastructure investment in signage and re-striping
- Provides faster transit service during peak hours
- Provides additional convenience parking for local businesses
- Promotes diversity of users (transit, bikes, scooters, cars)

### Disadvantages

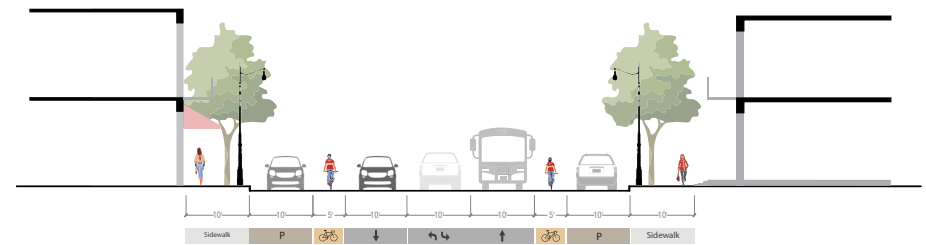
- Level of service may diminish for private vehicles with only one through lane in each direction
- Potential conflicts between bus and bikes in shared lane
- May require curb-cut consolidation (where feasible) to minimize conflicts with bus/bike lane operation



Plan View



Section View, On-Peak  
(Dedicated Parallel Parking at Curb)



Section View, Off-Peak  
(Dedicated Parallel Parking at Curb)



# West Broad Street: Alternative #2

## Shared-Lane Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with Dedicated Parking and Bike Lane

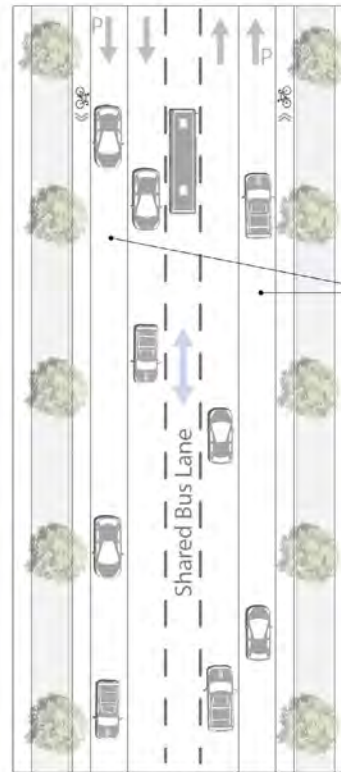
This option provides a shared-lane BRT with median loading/unloading at select signalized intersections. Layby zones are provided at the stops and at one point between stops to allow buses to pass one another. As with Alternative #2, left-turning movements occur only at signalized intersections to maintain an unobstructed center transit lane. Local buses share a lane with other traffic and utilize existing stops. Dedicated parallel parking occurs along the east and west bound lanes where feasible. Finally, this configuration allows for a continuous, dedicated bike lane along the corridor.

### Advantages

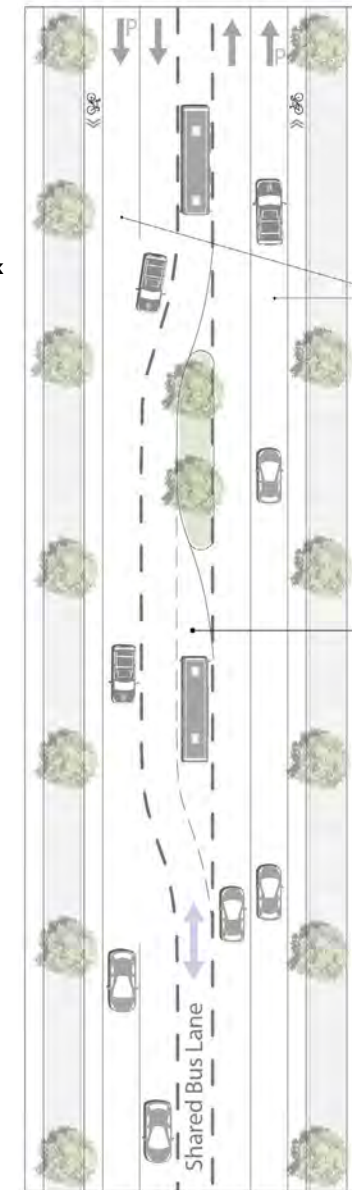
- Enhanced transit service based on dedicated transit lane
- Shared lane configuration allows dedicated parallel parking and bike lanes
- Ease of passenger loading from elevated platform
- Pollution reduction
- Enhanced traffic safety based on reduction of private car travel miles
- Increased health based on physical activity (dependent on station spacing)

### Disadvantages

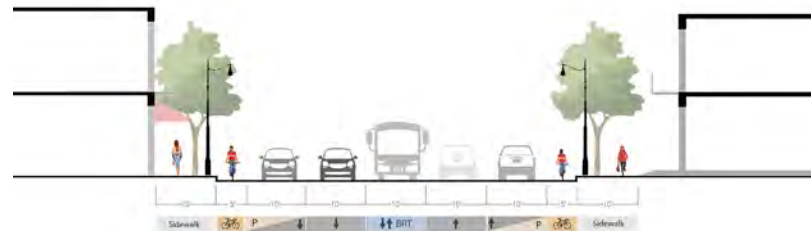
- High cost of implementation
- Significant reduction in level of service for private vehicles
- Reduction in access to adjacent streets (left-turn movements)



Plan View



Bus Layby, Plan View



Section View

# Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership Report

EXCERPTS

## Widespread perception of early childhood education

Families of the 522 Hilltop children enrolled in quality pre-K programs, as well as those attending other preschools that have not yet attained their Step Up To Quality ratings, understand the value of early childhood education. “The parents I’ve talked to are excited about preschool,” says Hilltop parent Andi Douglass. “They love watching their kids learn new things.” But the vast majority of parents and caregivers on the Hilltop have not been exposed to these opportunities. The idea of going to school prior to kindergarten is unfamiliar to them – especially for those from other countries or cultures with different education customs. “If you’re from a country that doesn’t have early childhood education, it doesn’t occur to you,” says Nancy Day-Achauer, chairperson of United Westside Coalition and senior pastor at St. Mark’s United Methodist Church. Throughout the community, there is a common perspective that preschool is group babysitting—something they do not need if they or a friend or relative can be home during the day with their kids. Some Hilltop families fear their children will actually be harmed—either physically or developmentally—at an early childhood education center. “Some childcare centers are hooking them onto phone gadgets,” says Zerqa Abid, president and founder of MY Project USA. Some parents have heard news reports of abuse at childcare facilities. Especially among the Hilltop’s Somali-born residents, there is widespread distrust of the preschool system. The reputation of the Hilltop itself poses a problem even for quality-rated early learning centers in the neighborhood. “We’re not valued,” says Laura Moehrman, executive director of Hilltop Preschool, which has earned a 5-star Step Up To Quality rating, “because the neighborhood has a stigma.” Some families may presume there are no good opportunities available to them simply because they do not expect institutions of high quality to be located in the Hilltop.

## Why kids aren’t in pre-K

In addition to perceptions, including misconceptions, about preschool, there are additional substantive barriers to kids’ enrollment in preschool. There are parents and guardians in the Hilltop who could be inclined to send their children to early education centers who feel prevented from doing so by financial, social or circumstantial factors. Many Hilltop families have been unable to make pre-K a priority because they have so many other stressors in their lives. For residents without living wages, reliable health care or stable housing, the concept of a nice place for their youngest children to play and learn may seem remote. For parents without employment, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

funding is not available, which makes pre-K cost-prohibitive. Some families wonder if enrolling their children in preschool will bring unwelcome intrusions into their lives—especially undocumented new Americans who fear deportation. One of the more oft-repeated challenges is neighborhood safety. Many Hilltop residents are afraid to venture far from their homes by themselves—much less with small children. Those without their own vehicles or another means of safe, reliable transportation are reluctant to walk significant distances to bring their kids to preschool. “Making the Hilltop safe is most important,” says Michelle Raglin, human resources director at Educational Solutions, which manages three community schools, including one in the Hilltop. “An initiative like that of the Linden area to clean up the neighborhood would benefit providers in getting more parents to enroll their kids.”

**Why families don’t choose quality** Not all childcare providers maximize the opportunity to develop their students’ brains or enrich their experiences. Some children may be dropped off at a neighbor’s house each day, where they join a group of toddlers and infants. Others may be enrolled in a preschool center where the teachers and administrators lack the training or the resources to properly engage students in developmentally appropriate activities. Unfortunately, the presence of a loving adult—as all or most of these daycare settings have—is not enough to prepare a child to learn. The majority of families are unlikely to seek out a pre-K opportunity that is rated as quality because few of them have ever heard of Step Up to Quality. “Parents don’t know about the star quality rating,” says Necole Galloway, assistant director of Fresh Start Learning Academy. A positive first impression or the recommendation of a friend is likely to carry more weight than the State of Ohio’s complicated assessment system. And many families will feel more secure leaving their children in the care of someone they know—even if that person has little or no training in early childhood education. “Safety, affordability and location are showstoppers, so if you don’t have those, you can’t go further to ask if the program is quality,” Douglass says. She says parents of toddlers are unlikely to prioritize the academic potential of a preschool. “It needs to be a safe place,” Douglass says. “It needs to be a nice place for their children to be.”

## Why providers aren’t rated quality

Even before the state announced its impending funding requirement, the vast majority of Hilltop preschools aspired to deliver a quality education to their students. However, providers will attest that it takes far more than determination

to earn three or more Step Up to Quality stars from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. In fact, there may be centers that would already be rated quality if only they could navigate the process. “I think I was operating as a 5-star center for a long time,” Moehrman says. “But I couldn’t handle the paperwork.” Providers say confusion about the standards and bureaucracy within the process are inhibitors on the path to quality. “It’s a nightmare because they keep changing the rules,” says Day-Achauer, whose church offers early childhood education. “We’re a high-quality center, but we don’t have our star rating yet.” Several providers say a lack of organized mentorship from those who have successfully achieved a quality Step Up to Quality Rating keeps others from joining their ranks. Even many of those who know what they need to do to earn their quality rating can’t afford to do so. There are numerous expenses associated with a quality rating, including curriculum, materials, assessments and family engagement. Most significantly, the state ratings value a staff that is educated and continually trained. Professional development is expensive. So are salaries for well-trained teachers with professional degrees. Few centers can afford to hire the most qualified teachers, and fewer still can keep them. “We have to pay teachers more,” Galloway says. “It costs so much to become quality star rated. It takes money to get a higher rating.” Some excellent pre-K teachers may start out in a preschool when they are new to the profession, but then pursue a career in K-12 or higher education so that they can make a better living. Until early childhood educators are compensated at least as well as public school teachers, it will be difficult to attract and retain the best ones. The average annual salary for pre-K teachers is about \$25,000, compared to \$42,000 for a first-year teacher in Columbus City Schools. This leads to inexperience and high turnover, says early childhood education consultant Terrie Ragland. “You get what you pay for, unfortunately,” she says. “Adequate funding is the number 1 barrier to quality.”

## Recommendations

The input and expertise shared through the Hilltop Early Childhood Partnership’s public process clarified the steps that need to be taken in the next two years in order to achieve Mayor Ginther’s goal. These initiatives would require collaborations, including the City of Columbus, the State of Ohio, Franklin County, Columbus City Schools and individual providers of education, health and family services in the Hilltop.

## Strategies

- Build community awareness of the necessity of a quality pre-K education
- Work with all early education providers to establish, improve or maintain a quality rating
- Expand capacity for additional pre-K children to attend quality education programming

## Tactics

### **Simplify our message**

“Finding simple ways to talk about early childhood education is important,” Alicia Leatherman, director of strategic initiatives for CelebrateOne, says. Because so many different terms are used to describe early childhood education—pre-K, preschool, childcare, early learning, day care—it is essential to engage the public with words people will understand. Hilltop families need to repeatedly hear a simple, memorable message that drills in three points about early childhood education:

- Your child needs to learn every day
- Your child needs to be in school before kindergarten
- Your child’s school needs to be quality

### **Launch a targeted Hilltop public awareness campaign around the necessity for quality early childhood education**

Armed with a simplified message, the Hilltop will be blanketed with a multifaceted awareness campaign so that every resident learns of the necessity of early childhood education from a number of sources. “Other communities have come together and done a public awareness campaign around early childhood education, and I think it’s time to do that on the Hilltop just to be all on one page and see that this is critical,” says Linda Day-Mackessy, a senior vice president at YMCA of Central Ohio. This will include a grassroots effort carried out by Hilltop residents and community leaders through social media, family-friendly public events and one-on-one conversations. Trusted sources will be prepared to talk about early childhood education while making regular home visits. Health providers will encourage families with young children to explore pre-K options. Short videos narrated by early childhood education experts will be made available to be aired in community centers, with language translations as appropriate. Targeted public service announcements and paid advertisements will amplify the message.

### **Launch a parents-as-teachers initiative**

Complementing the public awareness campaign will be an initiative to prepare families how to effectively educate their children through reading activities and constructive interaction before they begin school. Trusted community resources will be leveraged to develop a strategy to reach families about the best ways to nurture their youngest children’s learning capacity on a daily basis in the home.

### **Facilitate the attainment and retention of Step Up To Quality ratings**

A comprehensive initiative is needed in order to help pre-K providers earn and keep their Step Up To Quality star ratings from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. “Ohio’s rating system is not perfect, but it is a start,” says Justice. Providers need to fully understand how to successfully navigate the ratings system, and they need the resources to train and retain the quality teachers required by Step Up to Quality standards. This initiative will include:

- Providing adequate per-pupil funding so providers can offer insurance and improve compensation for employees
- Hiring a coach to proactively mentor every Hilltop childcare provider that needs to register with Step Up To Quality
- Organizing a support group of Hilltop providers to address challenges with attaining and maintaining a quality rating
- Directing centers to professional development and coaching programs, such as Ready4Success and Child Development Associate certificate
- Tracking overall classroom quality and student progress at quality rated preschools

### **Create a new facility and/or new early learning hubs to address needed capacity for and proximity to pre-K children**

A new facility—either a renovated or new building—is needed to provide additional capacity for pre-K students. The new facility must also create proximity for areas of the Hilltop in which there are insufficient early childhood education options. “A half-mile radius for walking is the maximum for pre-K-age children,” says Douglass. A team of Hilltop champions will be assembled to raise dollars for a new facility.

# Urban Land Institute 1992 Report

## SUMMARY

*An Evaluation of the Citywide Delivery System for Affordable Housing and of Revitalization Strategies for the Hilltop*

### **Recommendations**

#### Residential Areas:

- Establish linkages between the Columbus school system and city government, particularly those departments responsible for revitalizing center-city neighborhoods
- Stabilize and improve housing market
- Help the Hilltop achieve a good level of rehabilitation through reinstitution of a targeted, systematic code enforcement program
- Use code enforcement primarily for violations in basically sound buildings with minor deficiencies, as well as to achieve higher property standards
- Target the area for private rehabilitation assistance using loan and grant programs from all sources
- Offer incentives and encourage private reinvestment in property rehabilitation, with code enforcement employed as a sanction when voluntary efforts are not forthcoming
- Undue restrictions on rehabilitation based on new home standards shouldn’t be permitted to constrain rehabilitation activity
- Remove all substandard and abandoned buildings not suitable for rehabilitation

#### Commercial Areas:

- Removal of blighted properties on both Broad and Sullivant
- Target commercial development and redevelopment to Broad Street, which has a greater potential as a commercial corridor than Sullivant
- Cluster viable commercial uses, in compact nodes on Sullivant

- Vacant and remaining lots along the street should be appropriately rezoned and encouraged to convert back into residential uses, public functions, or low-density offices
- Alternatively, vacant lots can be land-banked as green and open spaces
- Design adequate parking to minimize impact of traffic on the neighborhood at commercial and institutional uses along arterial roads
- Take care to plan access thoughtfully and buffer adjacent residences from parking impacts, such as landscaping and lighting to help make parking design more attractive and compatible with the neighborhood

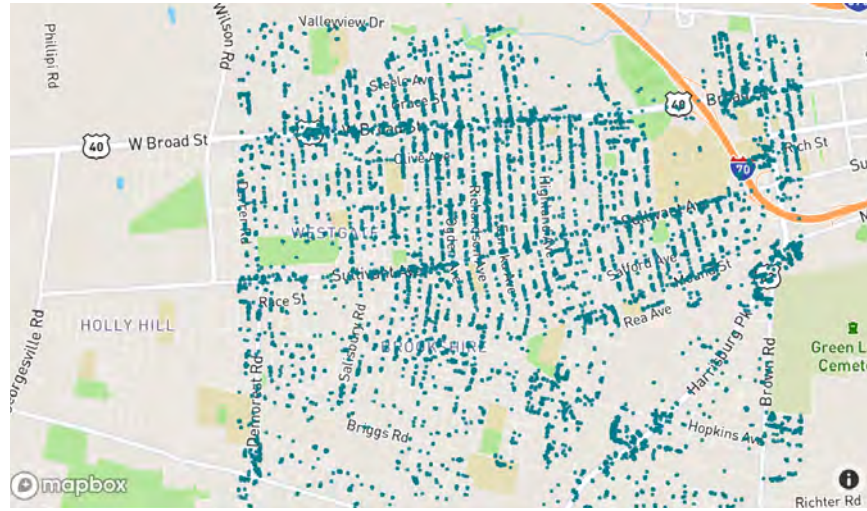
#### State Lands:

- Redevelopment of the state lands should be considered an important opportunity for the Hilltop and Columbus as a whole
- Large-scale, comprehensively planned development, such as a “new town” combining both residential and commercial uses, might be appropriate for these lands
- Such a development could create its own market demand from within the overall population growth occurring in the metropolitan area, or serve as a focal point and stimulus for revitalization of the surrounding area
- State lands development must be compatible with the uses and scale of the Hilltop neighborhood
- Concerns will likely include impact on access and traffic issues, design compatibility, edge treatments, and isolation/integration issues
- All future planning of the state lands and development of the final recommendations for their use should follow an open and responsive planning process that is sensitive to input from residents

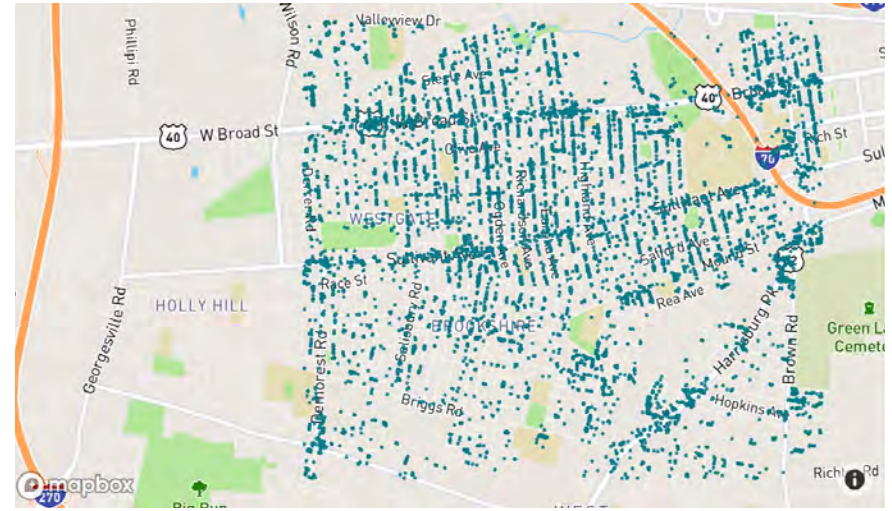
# Shared Mobility Data

## Lyft Ridesharing Pickup and Drop-Off Data, Summer 2019

### Pickups in the Hilltop Area



### Drop-Offs in the Hilltop Area

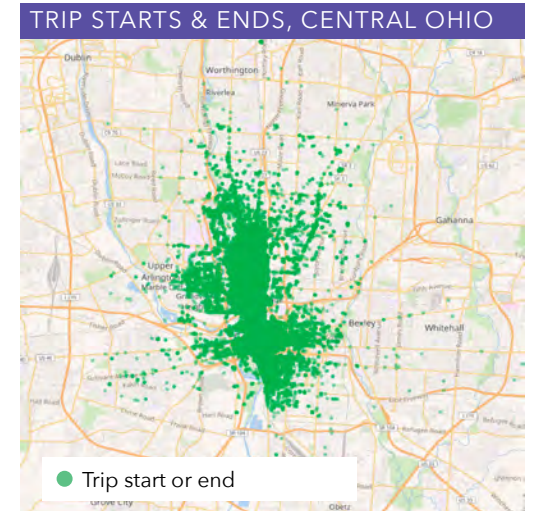
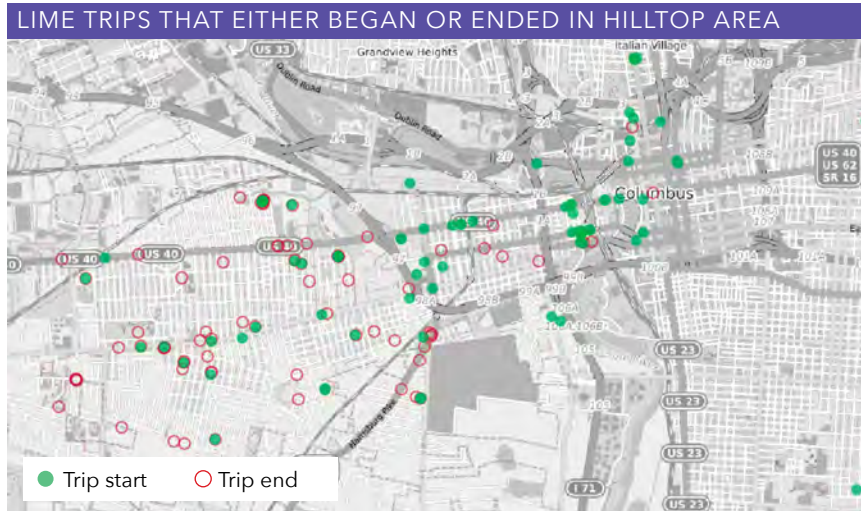


Lyft pickup and drop-off data for June, July, and August 2019. Provided via email in September 2019 by Lyft General Manager for Central/Southern Ohio and Kentucky.

## Lime E-Scooter and E-Bike Data, June 2019

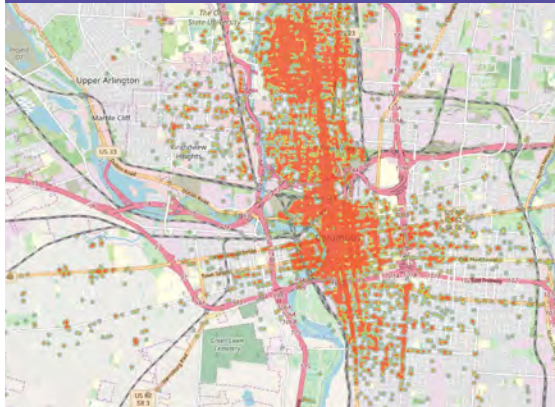
Data provided by Lime to the Columbus Department of Public Service show a low rate of use in the Hilltop area. The map at right shows that few trips end downtown, but many begin in downtown or Franklinton. The Hilltop branch library at Hague and Sullivant Avenues appears to be a significant destination in the Hilltop area.

A few trips began relatively far from the Hilltop, like one on the Near East Side and one on the South Side (shown in map at near right).

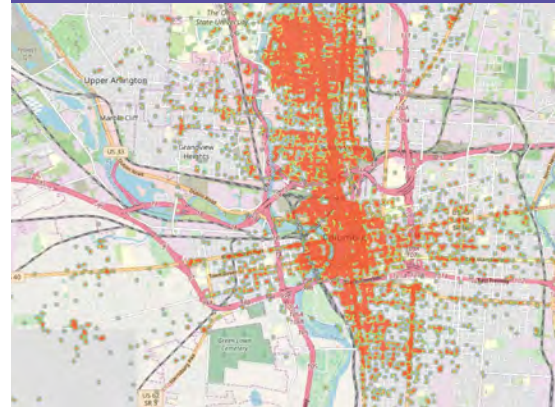


## Bird E-Scooter Heat Maps, Summer 2019

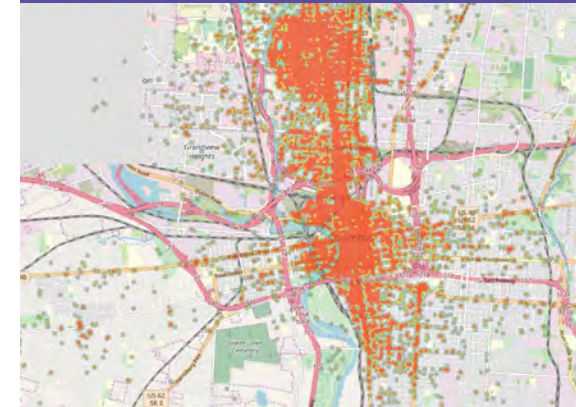
BIRD E-SCOOTER USE, JUNE 2019



BIRD E-SCOOTER USE, JULY 2019



BIRD E-SCOOTER USE, AUGUST 2019



## Hilltop Departing Students – Columbus City Schools

Assigned School	Departing Students	Staying on Hilltop	% Staying on Hilltop	Departing Hilltop	% Departing Hilltop	2017-2018 Enrollment	Total Potential CCS Students <sup>1</sup>	% Enrolled <sup>2</sup>	% Departing <sup>3</sup>
Binns Elementary	139	74	53.2%	65	46.8%	392	531	73.8%	26.2%
Briggs High School	395	165	41.8%	230	58.2%	941	1,336	70.4%	29.6%
Burroughs Elementary	199	124	62.3%	75	37.7%	434	633	68.6%	31.4%
Highland Elementary	284	198	69.7%	86	30.3%	340	624	54.5%	45.5%
Hilltonia Middle	186	105	56.5%	81	43.5%	490	676	72.5%	27.5%
Lindbergh Elementary	166	108	65.1%	58	34.9%	316	482	65.6%	34.4%
Valleyview Elementary	140	84	60.0%	56	40.0%	281	421	66.7%	33.3%
West Broad Elementary	150	97	64.7%	53	35.3%	526	676	77.8%	22.2%
West High School	267	69	25.8%	198	74.2%	875	1,142	76.6%	23.4%
West Mound Elementary	176	86	48.9%	90	51.1%	430	606	71.0%	29.0%
Westgate Elementary	86	55	64.0%	31	36.0%	341	427	79.9%	20.1%
Westmoor Middle	222	105	47.3%	117	52.7%	500	722	69.3%	30.7%
Total	2410	1270	52.7%	1140	47.3%	5866	8,276	70.9%	29.1%

Data provided by Columbus City Schools on July 17, 2019.

### DEFINITIONS

**Assigned School** – a student's address-assigned school

**Departing Students** – number of students leaving their assigned school for another CCS school or program

**Staying on Hilltop** – number of students leaving their assigned school for another CCS school or program on the Hilltop.

**% Staying on Hilltop** – percentage of students remaining on the Hilltop.

**Departing Hilltop** – number of students leaving their assigned school and the Hilltop for another CCS school or program.

**% Departing Hilltop** – percentage of students remaining on the Hilltop.

1. Departing students + enrollment

2. Enrollment divided by potential students

3. Departing students divided by potential students

# Excerpts from Police Division Operational Review

## MATRIX CONSULTING GROUP REPORT, AUGUST 2019

### Key Themes from Hilltop Community Outreach

#### Community Engagement

- The bike patrol officers are an improvement. More bike patrol or other on-foot officers should be present in neighborhoods to improve visibility and increase engagement with residents.
- Top-down leadership and increased community engagement are needed.

#### Officer Support

- Police departments are understaffed. Increasing the number of precincts and widely spreading them will improve response times.
- The justice system is a “revolving door.” Individuals are arrested and then immediately released, creating low morale among the police force.
- Social services taking the pressure off the police is important. Police officers are not social workers and should be available to respond to more crime and less mental health crises.

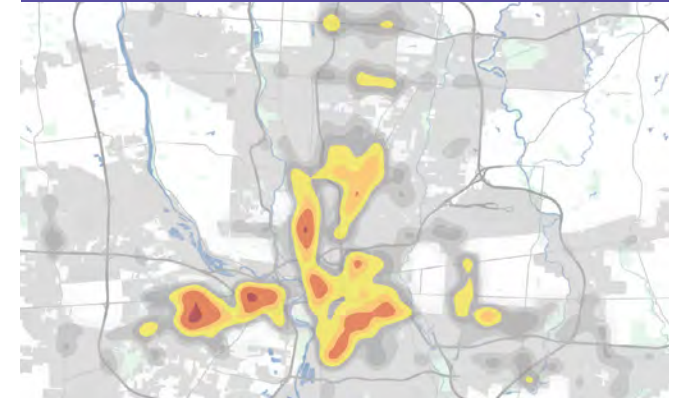
#### Transparency

Response times for the Columbus Police Department are slow across the board. Several residents expressed that wait times are 30-40 minutes at minimum after a call is placed. Reports are inaccurate and/or scrubbed and do not reflect actual events.

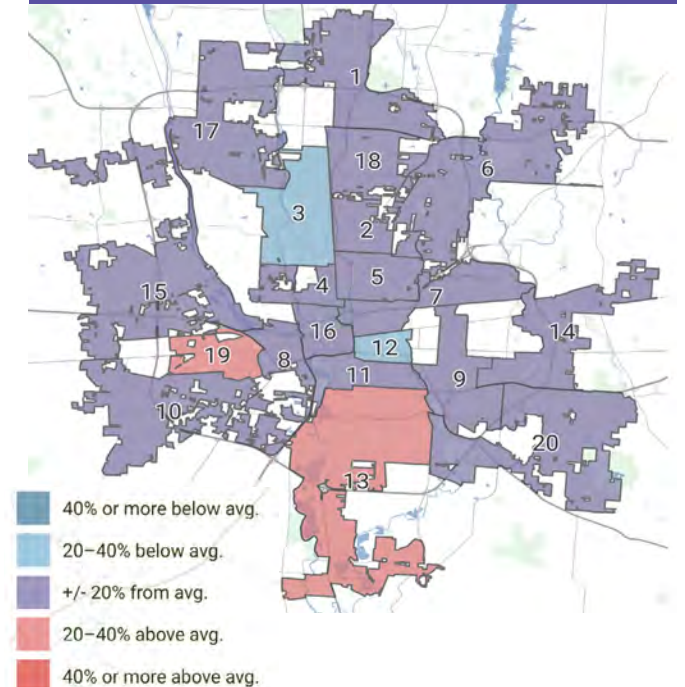
#### Select Recommendations about Hilltop/Zone 3

- Clearly, zones 4 and 5 have by far the highest proactivity levels at around 36.2%, and 41.0% respectively, while zones 2 and 3 are both below 23%. This indicates that fewer officers are allocated to these areas relative to the amount of workload.
- Specifically, two officers should be transferred to Zone 2 and Zone 3, which have lowest staffing levels relative to workload, resulting in the least amount of proactive time available.

### CALL FOR SERVICE CONCENTRATIONS



### CALL FOR SERVICE INEQUALITY BY PRECINCT



### TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT BY ZONE SEPT. 2017–AUG. 2018

Traffic Operations Unit	Citations	Warnings	Total
Zone 1 Patrol Unit	1,489	3,071	4,560
Zone 2 Patrol Unit	2,348	5,221	7,569
Zone 3 Patrol Unit	2,576	4,917	7,493
Zone 4 Patrol Unit	2,350	5,389	7,739
Zone 5 Patrol Unit	2,236	4,721	6,957
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,999</b>	<b>23,319</b>	<b>34,318</b>
Citations & Warnings Per Assigned Officer			39.0
Average Per Person Per Shift			0.23

Note: The Hilltop focus area is in Zone 3, Precinct 19

### PATROL PROACTIVITY BY ZONE SEPT. 2017–AUG. 2018

	Total Workload Hours <sup>11</sup>	# Officers	# Patrol Units <sup>12</sup>	% Proactivity
<b>Zone 1</b>	140,413	170	149	31.1%
<b>Zone 2</b>	158,304	170	149	22.4%
<b>Zone 3</b>	169,973	181	159	21.9%
<b>Zone 4</b>	132,747	173	152	36.2%
<b>Zone 5</b>	126,041	177	156	41.0%

Access the full report online:

[columbus.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147511454](http://columbus.gov/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=2147511454) or  
[issuu.com/envisionhilltop/docs/matrix\\_columbus-police-report\\_aug2019r](http://issuu.com/envisionhilltop/docs/matrix_columbus-police-report_aug2019r)

### Key Findings of the Full Report

- Disparities in the perception of policing: While overall perceptions of CPD are very high (80%), the positive perceptions drop significantly among black residents (61%).
- Disparities in the Division: Perceptions of bias and discrimination within CPD vary greatly. 51% of black employees have experienced discrimination. Gender bias and sexual orientation appear to be issues, as well.
- Supervision: While Matrix found policies and training at CPD are excellent, implementation of these policies and procedures is inconsistent.
- Deployment: Matrix suggested ways to improve deployment of officers to assure that appropriate number of officers are on duty at the right time.
- Officer wellness: Matrix found significant room for enhancing officer well-being, including expanding the definition of trauma and continuing to instill a stronger cultural understanding around the need for psychological care.
- Seniority: Special assignments and promotions are based too heavily on seniority instead of merit.

# Insight2050 Corridor Concepts

## EXCERPTS ABOUT WEST BROAD STREET

### WB CONCEPT AND METRICS SUMMARY West Broad Street Corridor

Prioritizes growth in higher density infill approaching downtown, in Franklinton, and on the Scioto Peninsula. Also locates development at moderate densities in large-scale mixed-use areas, including major growth at the former Westland Mall site.



#### Transportation - Walk and Transit Accessibility

Average number of regional jobs accessible within 45 minutes by walking and transit



#### Transportation - Transit & Active Mode Share

Share of all household trips taken by transit, walk, or bike



#### Transportation - Vehicle Miles Traveled

Annual vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per household



#### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Annual GHG emissions from passenger vehicle travel and residential energy use per household



#### Infrastructure Costs per Acre

Average costs per acre of new development to build, operate, and maintain local roads, water, wastewater, and sewer infrastructure.



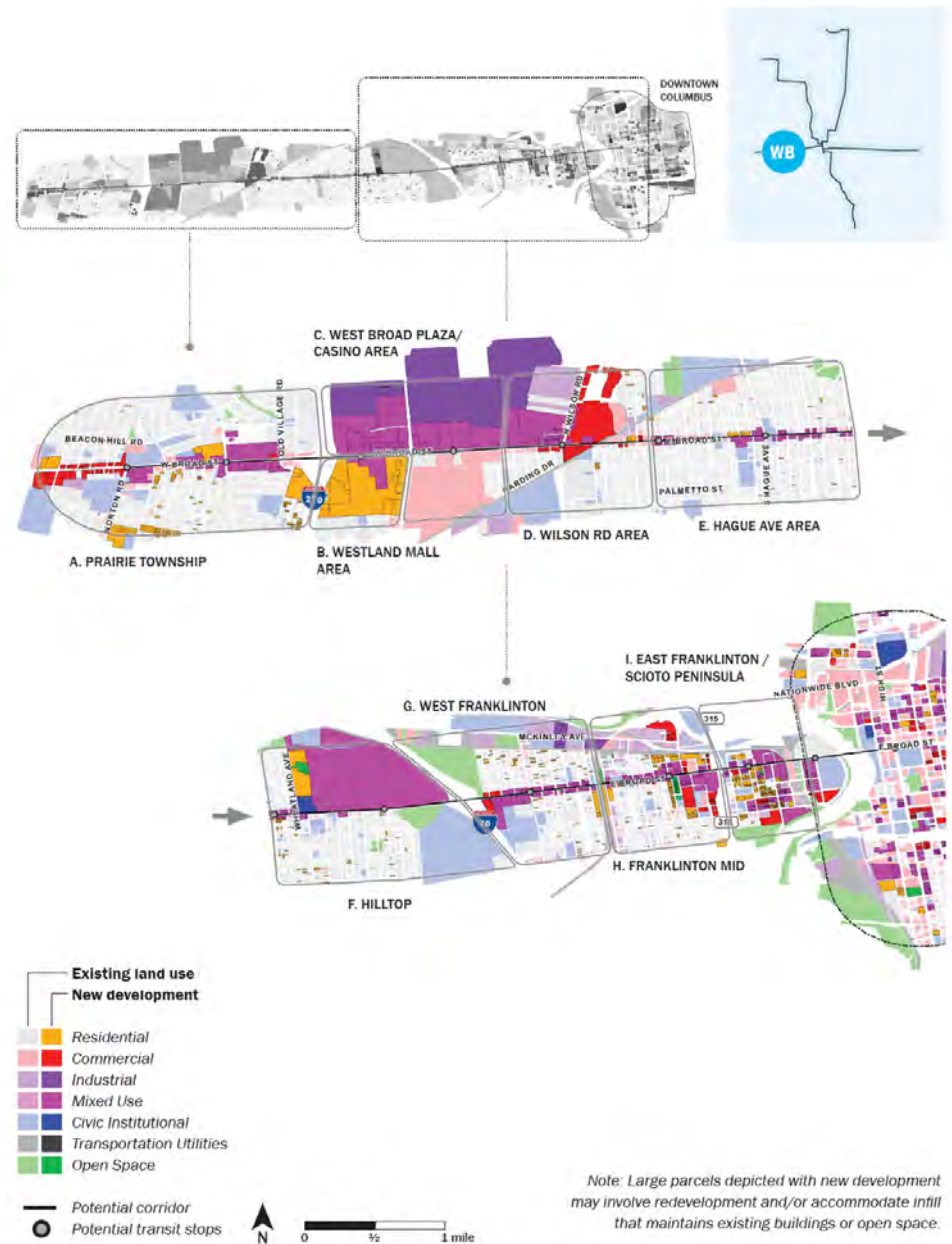
#### Tax Revenues per Acre

Average annual revenues from local income taxes, property taxes, and sales taxes per acre of new development



#### Household Costs

Annual auto and utility costs per household



# Historic Aerial Imagery

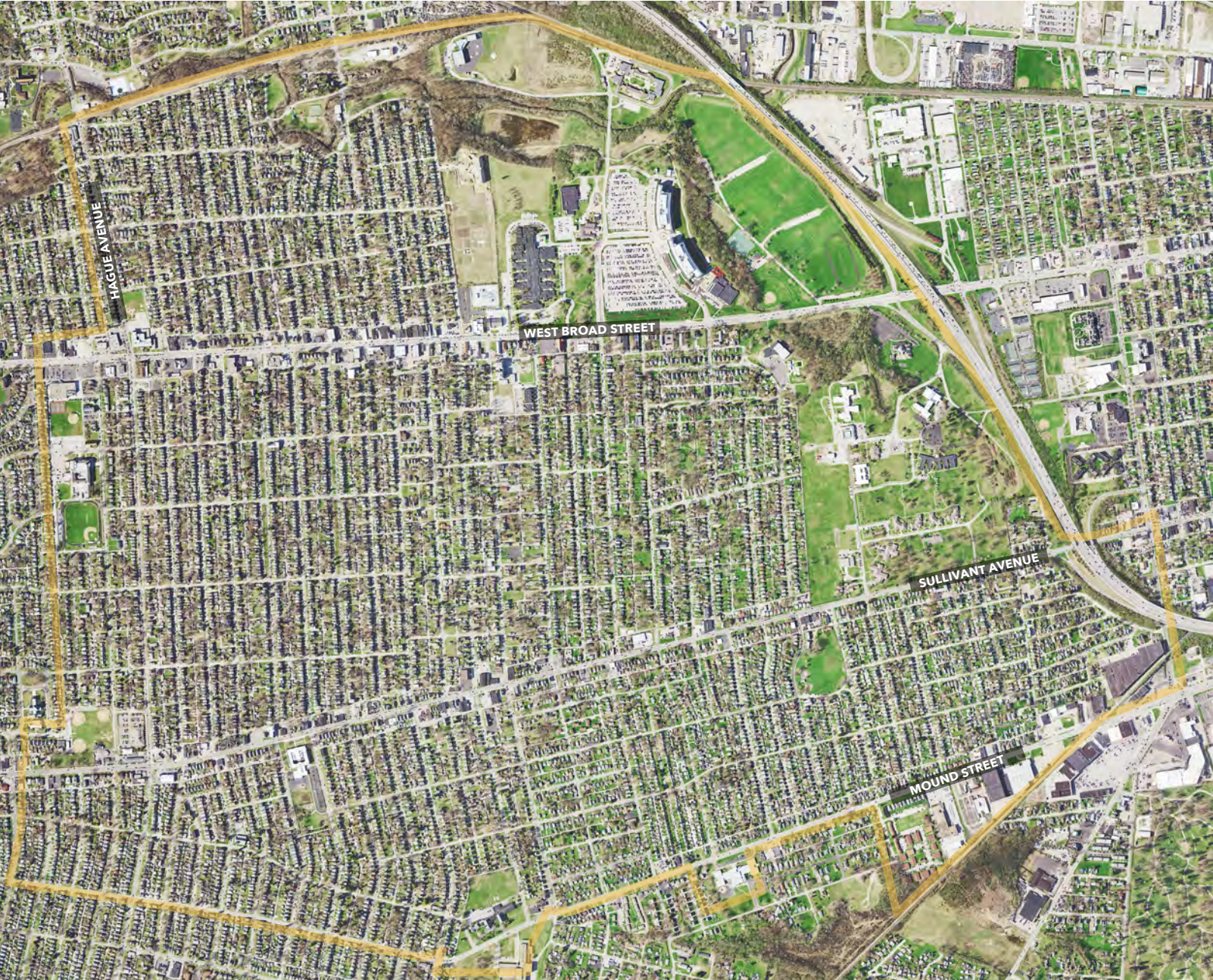
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Focus Area Boundary



# Recent Aerial Imagery



Focus Area Boundary

# Dry Run Stream Restoration Recommendations

Extending from I-270 to the west until outfall into the Scioto River, Dry Run Stream has been dramatically impacted by development on the Hilltop via man-made channels and underground piping. Thankfully, the Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks has earmarked \$1.3 million to restore a segment of Dry Run behind Westmoor Middle School, Hilltop YMCA, and Glenwood Methodist Church to a natural stream channel and broad floodplain. While Dry Run largely maintains a natural character as it winds through both Holton and Glenview Parks, the steps listed below would dramatically enhance this wonderful community asset even further.



- 1 **COMMUNITY CLEAN UP**  
While the integrity of the stream seems sound at first glance, it has been subject to various forms of dumping and fallen debris. Before any restoration efforts can begin, the parks and stream would benefit greatly from a community cleanup event.



- 4 **EDUCATIONAL WAYFINDING**  
As Dry Run flows through Holton and Glenview Parks and along the Camp Chase and Sullivant bike trails, there are opportunities to educate the community about efforts taken to restore the stream corridor and highlight this significant urban ecosystem.



- 2 **REMOVE INVASIVE SPECIES**  
The invasive *Lonicera maackii*, or Amur Honeysuckle, is present in many urban riparian zones like Dry Run. It pushes out other species that provide stream health and animal habitat. In order to gain control, the entire plant must be removed (including roots).



- 5 **EXPAND BANK STABILIZATION**  
Sedimentation, eroding banks causing too much soil in the water, is an indicator of poor water quality and leads to soil entering the confluence point in the Scioto River. Taking measures to stabilize banks and clear debris will greatly improve the stream's health.



- 3 **RESTORE NATIVE UNDERSTORY**  
Once more space under the tree canopy is established with the removal of the Amur Honeysuckle, native understory species can be planted. Examples include Rough-leaf Dogwood, Winterberry, Spicebush, and Arrowwood.

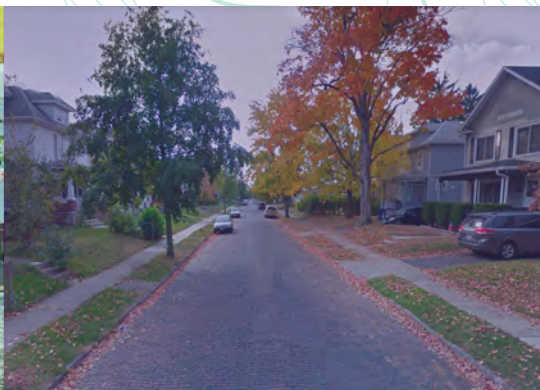


- 6 **IMPROVE ACCESS**  
The creation of a mulched path around the perimeter of Holton Park will enhance stream access. Civic assets could be linked by installing a staircase at the terminus of Eldon Avenue to connect the Camp Chase Trail to Holton Park.



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[envisionhilltop.com](http://envisionhilltop.com)

THE CITY OF  
**COLUMBUS**  
ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

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