

# Downtown Cleveland Retail Strategy

PREPARED BY  
**STREETSENSE**



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# Message from the Client

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Dear Partners:

Downtown Cleveland is the only organization to focus solely on strengthening and building Downtown – the heart of Cleveland itself. We work from the sidewalk to the skyline and everything in between to enhance the Downtown environment, economy, and experience. We are Downtown’s convenor and great implementor.

Downtown Cleveland is emerging strongly from the crises of the past few years. More people live Downtown today than before the pandemic. Visitor and foot traffic have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels. Downtown workers are steadily returning. However, there is much work to do to lead the city into its next chapter.

This is why Downtown Cleveland engaged Streetsense, a national place consulting agency, to create an action plan for our Downtown retail environment. The Streetsense consultants have worked diligently with our team and stakeholders to determine a slate of market-informed recommendations and projects that focus on quality of life to attract residential and job density, retain existing businesses, and attract new storefront tenants to enhance the vibrancy of the Downtown area.

We would like to thank Destination Cleveland for its partnership and support of this project. They recognize the importance of bringing more retail into Downtown Cleveland to enhance the visitor experience. Our organizations share the goal of expanding opportunities for minority-owned retailers to enter the market and serve the community.

We are proud to present this plan that will set the course for our continued efforts to ensure Downtown Cleveland leads the nation as a best-in-class environment.

Best,

Michael Deemer  
President & CEO

# Acknowledgments

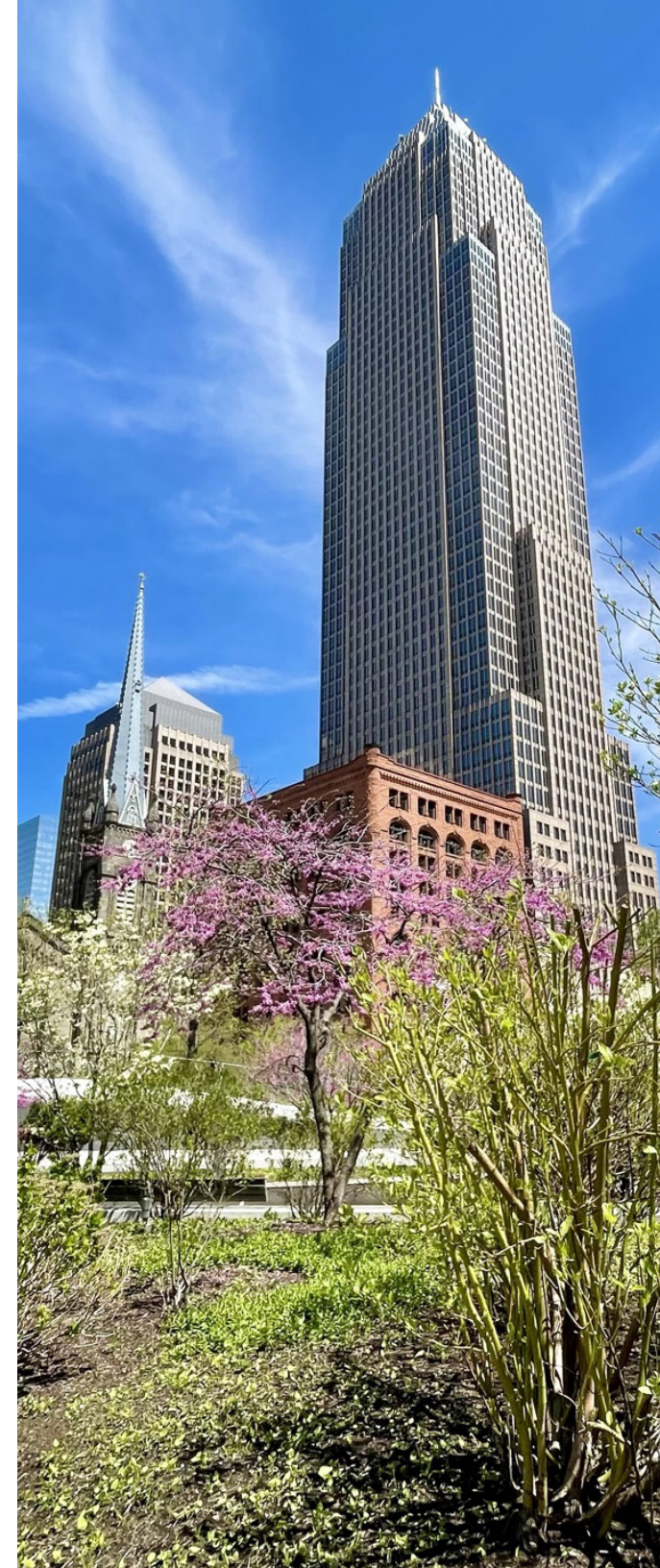
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## About Downtown Cleveland, Inc

Downtown Cleveland, Inc.'s mission is to attract talent, jobs, residents, and investment through market influence, community impact, and irresistible experiences. We envision Downtown Cleveland as a vibrant and welcoming city center that weaves Downtown districts and surrounding neighborhoods into a seamless urban fabric that is greater than the sum of its parts.

## About Streetsense

Streetsense is a global creative collective. We're placeshapers, brandbuilders, storytellers. For two decades, we've been creating places and brands people love—vibrant streetscapes and local gathering spots, big ideas and bespoke concepts, communities both physical and virtual. Our consultants and creatives make space for great experiences, and shape what's next.



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**1**

# **Introduction**

# Approach & Methodology

The diagnostic framework outlined here serves as the basis of qualitative and quantitative analysis aimed at uncovering downtown economic development challenges and opportunities for retail to thrive in four key areas, the **Physical Environment**, the **Business Environment**, local, regional and visitor **Market Demand**, and **Administrative Capacity**.

The research questions that the analysis uncovers include the following:



## **Business Environment -**

- Where are clusters of existing business concentration?
- What are their characteristics and how does this inform the current mix of businesses in each of these locations?
- Is this mix of businesses aligned with who visits and shops there?
- Are there opportunities for new businesses or business expansion to better meet the needs of the customer base?



## **Physical Environment -**

- How consumers and businesses experience downtown as a place. Does downtown feel comfortable and safe to the average visitor?
- Are there sufficient transit and transportation options to enable ease of movement into and out of downtown, as well as throughout downtown upon arrival?
- Are there pain points or areas of friction that prevent customers from convenient patronage or downtown businesses?



## **Market Demand -**

- How much demand is there for retail?
- To what degree is this demand generated from local or regional residents, downtown workers or visitors?
- Are there opportunities to inform the mix of offerings to better meet the needs of these customers?



## **Administrative Capacity -**

- Are organizational resources being deployed effectively?



The Diagnostic uses the answers to these questions to uncover gaps and opportunities to improve the downtown experience for both customers and businesses and leads to recommendations consisting of policies, programs, and investments that will be either led or supported by Downtown Cleveland, Inc. to address these opportunities.

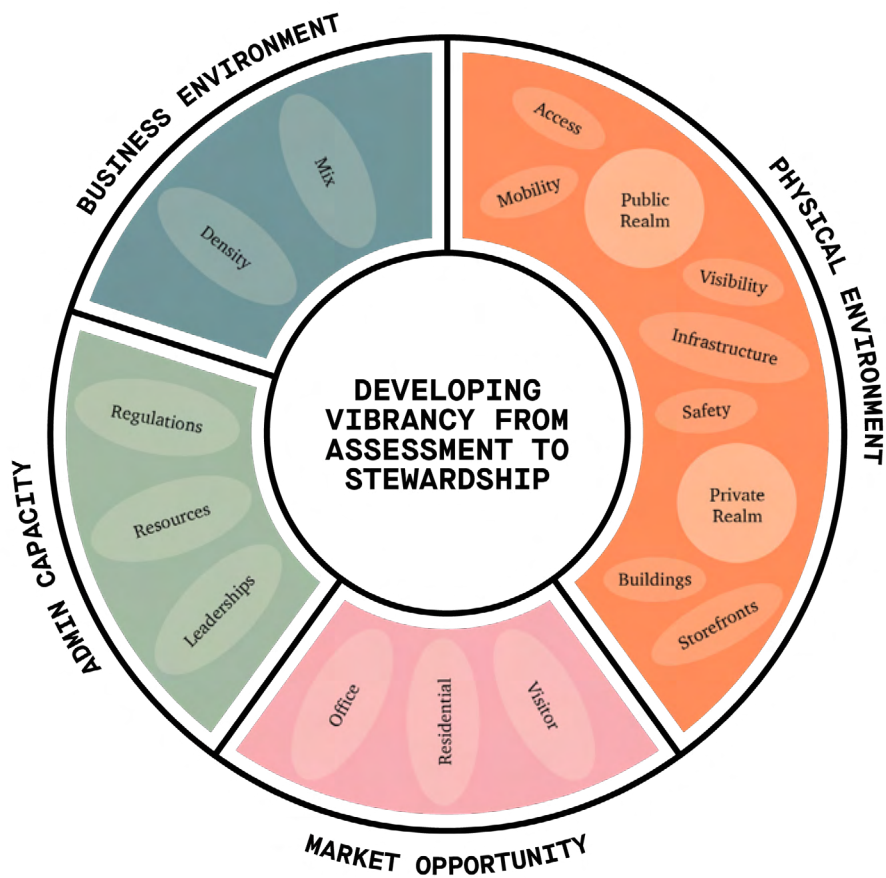


Figure 1: The Streetsense approach to diagnosing Commercial Districts



# Overview of Diagnostic Findings

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# Big Picture Challenges



**Great strides have been made to grow the downtown residential population.** Since 2010 the population of the downtown core population has grown 31%, to 20,132. However, that population remains widely dispersed throughout an area that is up to 2 miles in distance from end to end, the upper limit for most walkable environments. With limited options for additional fast, convenient connectivity, residents are less likely to patronize businesses in different areas of downtown, and tenants are less likely to see a downtown location as an opportunity meet the collective needs of the growing customer base.



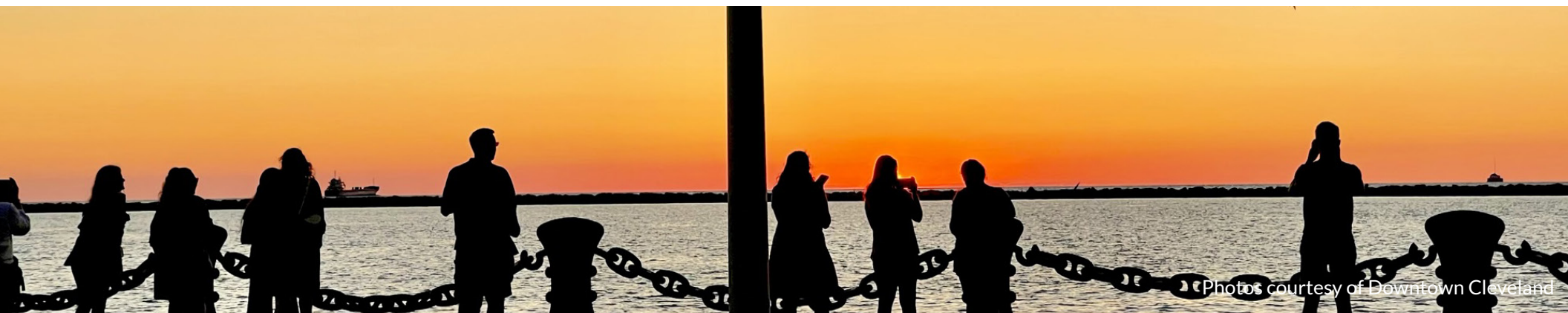
**Retail activity in Downtown Cleveland has been impacted by hybrid work,** resulting in a decline in spending that we estimate will reduce the demand of total retail SF by over 100,000 SF. This reduction in retail demand will mean right-sizing the amount of retail space downtown and identifying targeted areas where retail concentration and co-location will be intentionally supported.



**Downtown spending is driven by visitors to a larger degree than previously assumed.** Visitors constitute 70% of all downtown spending, which is what fuels a tremendous F&B culture throughout downtown.

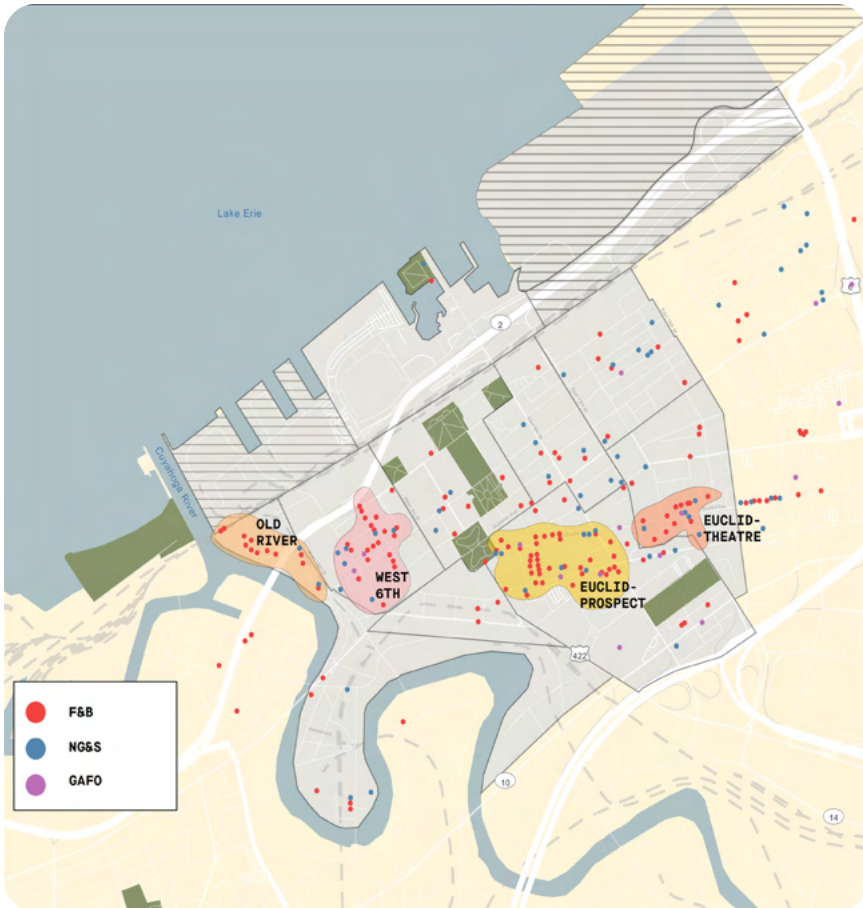


**Despite the growth in the downtown residential customer base, the needs of the downtown resident are often overlooked** – not only for goods and services, but also for the social infrastructure so critical to quality of life. The vast majority of businesses that have opened downtown recently are in F&B, while the needs of the local residential customer base for goods and services remains largely unmet.



# Business Environment

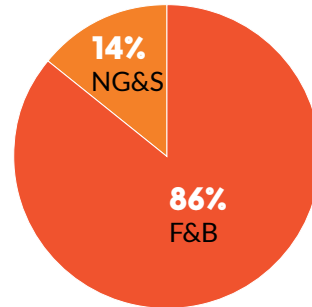
The diagnostic found four significant areas of business concentration, or “micro-climates”, in the Downtown retail ecosystem. Each downtown micro-climate has a clear or emerging identity informed by proximity to destination drivers, employment hubs, and residential characteristics. The four micro-climates identified through his exercise are outlined in the following pages.



# Micro-Climate Characteristics

## OLD RIVER (THE FLATS)

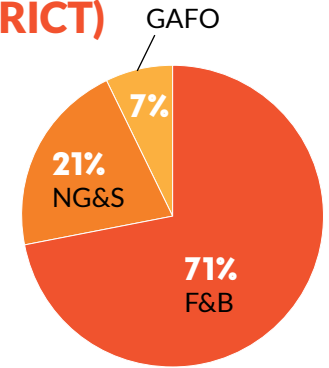
**14** Retail Stores  
**589K** Retail SF  
**\$30-35** Asking Rent per SF



Categorization: **REGIONAL MALL**  
 Trade Area: **SECONDARY & TERTIARY**

## WEST 6TH (WAREHOUSE DISTRICT)

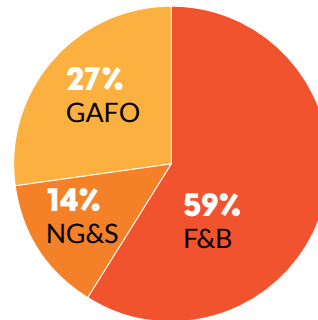
**28** Retail Stores  
**195K** Retail SF  
**\$18-20** Asking Rent per SF



Categorization: **NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER**  
 Trade Area: **PRIMARY, SECONDARY & TERTIARY**

## EUCLID-PROSPECT (GATEWAY DISTRICT)

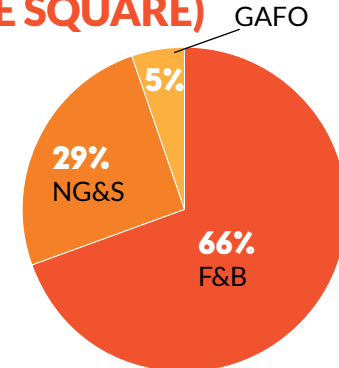
**73** Retail Stores  
**942K** Retail SF  
**\$25-30** Asking Rent per SF



Categorization: **SUPER REGIONAL MALL**  
 Trade Area: **PRIMARY, SECONDARY & TERTIARY**

## EUCLID-THEATRE (PLAYHOUSE SQUARE)

**17** Retail Stores  
**222K** Retail SF  
**\$20-25** Asking Rent per SF



Categorization: **SUPER REGIONAL MALL**  
 Trade Area: **PRIMARY, SECONDARY & TERTIARY**

### DEFINITIONS

**GAFO** – General Merchandise, Apparel and Accessories, Furniture and Other Sales | **NG&S** – Neighborhood Goods & Services | **F&B** – Food & Beverage

# Market Analysis

**The Local & Regional Customer.** The market analysis considered a combination of primary, secondary, and tertiary trade areas that collectively reflect 416k households. Together, local, and regional customers make up 17% of total downtown retail demand.

The Diagnostic also uncovered differentiation between residents in downtown neighborhoods East and West of Public Square. Corridors to the West of Public Square (Old River in the Flats and West 6th in the Warehouse District) are surrounded by residents with higher median incomes, higher educational attainment levels, and higher car ownership. East of Public Square, where the bulk of the downtown core’s residential density is located (Euclid-Prospect and Euclid-Theatre) residents are younger and less likely to own a car.

**Visitor Snapshot.** Downtown visitor levels are expected to return to pre-Covid levels in 2024. The Downtown visitor represents a powerful component of total economic activity - visitors drive a full 70% of Downtown spending. This can be attributed to Downtown destination drivers such as Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse and Progressive Field with 4.6 and 2.5 million unique visitors (according to PlacerAI) in the last twelve months, respectively. All told, downtown sees 15.68 million visitors annually.

**2023 RETAIL DEMAND GENERATORS**  
Study Area Only

<b>7,400</b> Downtown Households	<b>15,680,000</b> Downtown Visitors*
<b>45,200</b> Downtown Employees	<b>416,000</b> Trade Area Households

Destination	Visits in Last 12 Months
Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse	4.6 M
Playhouse Square	3 M
Progressive Field	2.5 M
First Energy Stadium	1.4 M
Rock Hall of Fame	761.7 K
Huntington Convention Center	734.5 K
Greater Cleveland Aquarium	500 K
Great Lakes Science Center	319.5 K
House of Blues	292.9 K
FWD Day + Nightclub	250.1 K
Jacob Pavilion at Nautica	165.6 K

\*Visitors constitute a unique regional or national visitor that does not work or live in Downtown

\*\* Visit data from Placer AI

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## THE COMPETITION

**Significant Regional Competition.** Given the relatively robust options for tenants in adjacent neighborhoods, businesses have found that it is possible to capture spending from downtown residents *without* having a downtown location. Downtown residents with easy access to their vehicles do large or value shopping outside of Downtown. Additionally, unlike Downtown, regional competitive areas like Crocker Park and Pinecrest offer newer retail-appropriate spaces and proximate co-tenancies that retailers find valuable. Finally, Ohio City, while considered part of “Greater Downtown” is competitive with the downtown core for Food & Beverage tenants.

**Limited Locally Serving Competition.** Neighborhood-serving retail, particularly that which offers a mix of convenience goods and services that customers can’t get online, is limited, with opportunities to bring small businesses like drug stores, salons and pet services to the area. However, a lack of concentrated downtown density will continue to make it difficult to attract additional grocery or big box tenants. Growing the Downtown residential population remains critical to replacing daytime foot traffic lost due to the remote work environment. As density downtown continues to grow incrementally, retail demand particularly for neighborhood goods and services will continue to increase.



# Market Analysis

**Downtown Retail Vacancy.** Downtown retail vacancy among the 2.3 million square feet of street-facing retail is estimated at 20% - 25%. This vacancy rate is largely driven by vacancies among the downtown's four shopping centers, Galleria at vacancies, Tower City, The Arcades, and the 5th Street Arcades, which collectively reflect 594,000 SF. Additionally, Tower City is only holding short-term month-to-month leases, so tenancy is very fluid, and vacancy may be understated.

**Daytime Populations and Impacts of Remote Work.** Downtown Cleveland lost 113,180 SF of employee-generated retail demand in 2023 due to hybrid and remote work schedules. By 2028, employee generated demand will grow by 57,000 SF, assuming return to office increases to 60%. Maintaining the same return to work rate, by 2033 employee-generated demand will grow by an additional 46,000 SF, for a total of about 400,000 SF of employee-generated demand by 2033.

## RETAIL DEMAND

**Retail Spending is Driven by Visitors.** Downtown visitors make up to 70% of retail demand, followed by Downtown employees, at 13%. Downtown households only make up 3% of the total retail demand. This aligns with credit card data from Zartico which indicates that roughly 67% of downtown retail spending can be attributed to visitors.

**Majority of demand is focused on F&B,** followed by general merchandise and this is driven by the high volume of visitors and regional customers. This aligns with the overwhelming supply of F&B tenants. While neighborhood goods and services make up the smallest share of demand, it also accounts for the smallest share of supply, indicating a need to realign Downtown retail to serve local residents and customers' daily needs if growth in the Downtown population is a priority.

Although Downtown retail is oversupplied, **total demand aligns with the supply of street-facing retail space.**

Focusing retail activity within street-facing spaces will fill vacant gaps in the streetscape and create continuous activity. The oversupply of inward-facing retail spaces that are underutilized or vacant have potential to accommodate synergistic non-retail uses, like culture and entertainment, that serve to attract a broader audience and diversify daypart activity downtown.

### PRE-COVID 1:5 RESIDENT TO WORKER RATIO



### POST-COVID 1:3 RESIDENT TO WORKER RATIO







# Physical Environment

**Downtown Streetscape.** Overall, the Downtown streetscape environment is well maintained. Highlights include gateway signage and overall district branding and labeling throughout Downtown. Additionally, much of Downtown has wide, well-maintained sidewalks and instances of mature tree coverage. However, there remain opportunities to improve walkability and overall comfort, as well as point-of-decision cues – simple signs that depict direction and walk time to support walkability, particularly among visitors who may not be aware of distances. There remain opportunities to improve connectivity between Downtown assets through a variety of means such as walking, riding, scooting, etc.

**Intra-City Mobility Infrastructure.** Cleveland currently hosts three shared mobility operators – Bird, LINK and Lime – who together provide a mix of e-bikes and scooters. Despite the growth in use of these devices Downtown, there are limited safe passages and networks that accommodate usage by those who fall outside of the current customer profile – often a young and “risk-oblivious” user. Scooters and bikes are officially instructed to “share the road” and ride in the street with the flow of traffic, which can be harrowing and frankly a non-starter for inexperienced, young and/or older riders.

**Downtown as a Neighborhood.** As downtown continues to grow as a neighborhood, it also needs to develop places for “social infrastructure” including outdoor recreation destinations and park, playgrounds and sports facilities, schools, libraries, gyms, day care and community centers. Within the Downtown study area, the diagnostic found that this infrastructure was nearly entirely absent, save for passive green spaces found at the Mall and Public Square, and volleyball and playground (used mostly by visitors) along the lakefront.



# Administrative Environment

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**Downtown Stewardship.** As highlighted in Downtown Cleveland Inc's 2022 Strategic Plan, responsibility for Downtown place management is led by a complicated cauldron of organizations that suggest significant duplication of financial and human resources, particularly in the management of Public Square. Current efforts to streamline these bodies to enable more efficient resource allocation should remain a priority.

**Regulatory Framework.** Downtown regulations are quite favorable towards office to residential conversions. Cleveland has been among the leading cities in the country in office to residential conversions. Additionally, there is no ground floor retail requirement which allows for the flexible repositioning of spaces to right-size downtown



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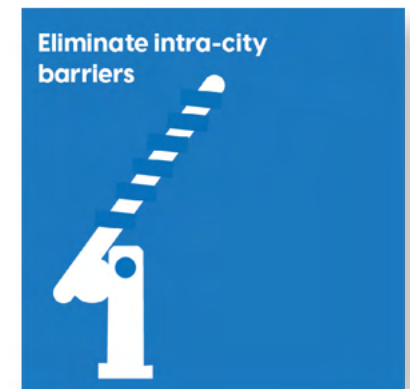
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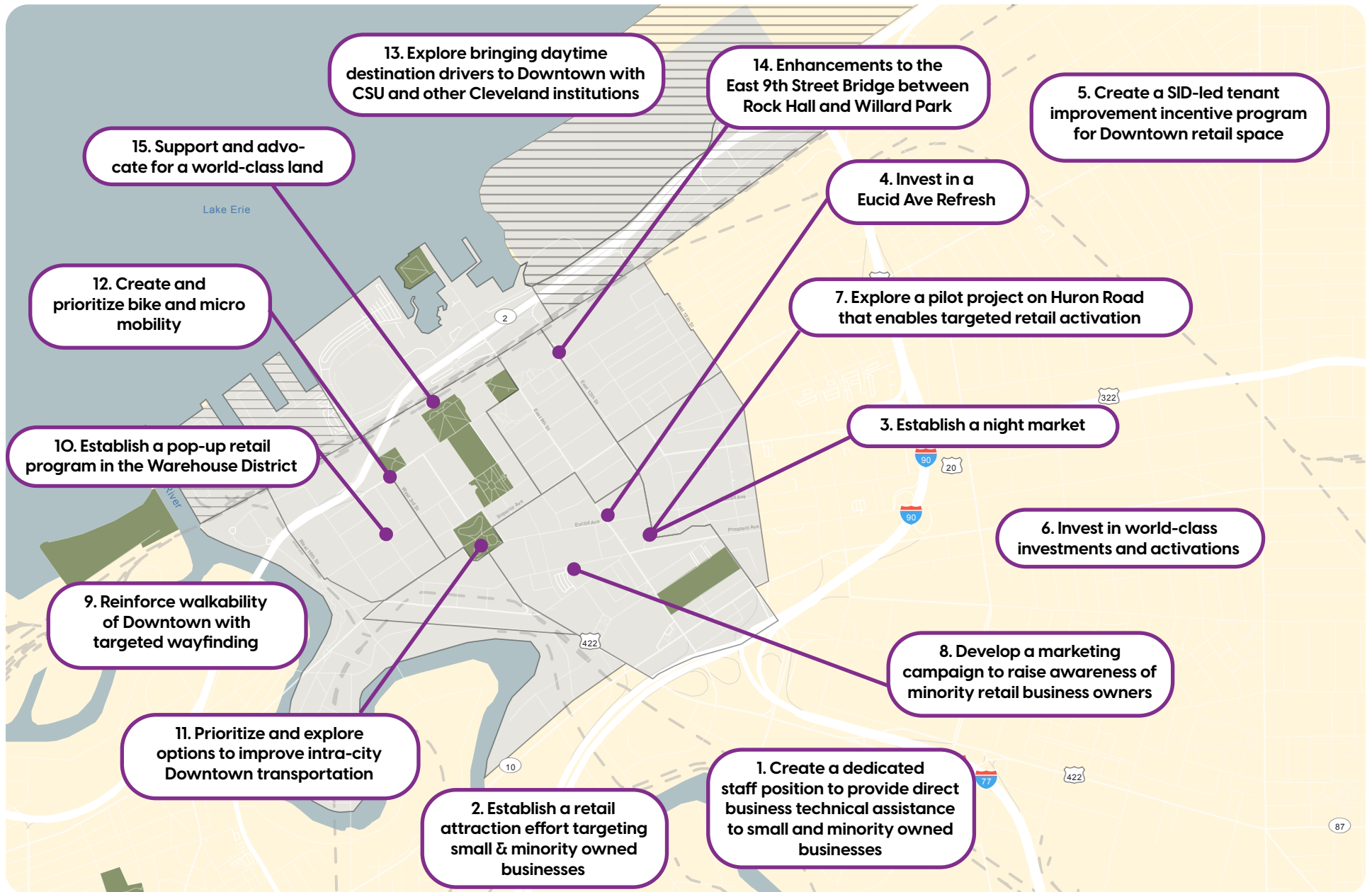
**Guiding Principles  
& Project  
Recommendations**

# Guiding Principles at-a-Glance

The guiding principles outlined here are the “true north” of this exercise. While individual projects will evolve over time as resources, community interests, and markets change – the guiding principles offer a framework that will continue to offer a clear directive for the organization over time. These principles are as follows:

- **Emphasize neighborhood building** by investing in public facilities and improving the diversity of offerings that meet the needs of Downtown residents
- **Eliminate intra-city barriers** to ensure downtown is easy to navigate by visitors and residents
- **Focus, don't disperse** limited resources in areas of existing concentrated business activity and the connections between
- **Celebrate the waterfront** and improve connections between Downtown and the waterfront
- **Infuse equity and sustainability** in all of the SIDs economic development efforts
- **Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions** to support project execution and offer opportunities to reinforce Downtown's brand





# Project Recommendations at-a-Glance

#	Type	Project
1	Retail Attraction & Retention	Create a dedicated staff position to provide direct business technical assistance to small and minority owned businesses
2	Retail Attraction & Retention	Establish a retail attraction effort targeting small and minority owned businesses
3	Marketing, Promotion & Activation	Establish a night market
4	Public Realm	Invest in a Euclid Avenue streetscape refresh
5	Private Realm	Create a SID-led tenant improvement incentive program for small and minority owned businesses
6	Public Realm	Invest in world class infrastructure & activations
7	Public Realm	Explore a pilot project on Huron Road that enables targeted retail activation
8	Marketing, Promotion & Activation	Develop a marketing campaign to raise awareness of minority retail business owners
9	Public Realm	Reinforce walkability of Downtown with targeted wayfinding
10	Retail Attraction & Retention	Establish a pop-up retail program in Warehouse District
11	Public Realm	Prioritize and explore options to improve intra-city Downtown transportation
12	Public Realm	Create and prioritize bike and micro-mobility infrastructure
13	Private Realm	Explore bringing daytime destination drivers to Downtown with CSU and other Cleveland institutions
14	Public Realm	Enhancements to the East 9th St Bridge between Rock Hall & Willard Park
15	Public Realm	Support and advocate for a world-class land bridge



# Rubric Legend

## Timeframe



Short 0-12 Months



Medium (1-3 Years)



Long (3+ Years)

## Budget



Under \$50K, mostly staff time



Between \$50-200K



Over \$200K, mostly capital projects for which additional cost estimating will be required

## Ease of Implementation



Easy



Medium



Hard



# 1

## Create a dedicated staff position to provide direct business technical assistance to small and minority owned businesses

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time & Cost & Effort



### Project Description

Explore a staff position focused on serving as a case manager for small businesses looking to locate or expand in Downtown. This may include an emphasis on small and/or minority owned businesses.

### Diagnostic Connection

Previous efforts by Downtown Cleveland, Inc. to support retail attraction relied on a dedicated staff person to support prospecting efforts. While we have included recommendations to support the local brokerage community (Project #14), we recommend focusing a staff person's time on providing technical assistance and support that helps brokers close deals, rather than positions the SID as a competitor in the retail leasing space.

A position within the Downtown Cleveland organization that is specifically devoted to providing direct business technical assistance to businesses to help them take advantage of programs, market themselves, and improve business practices.

Examples of technical assistance topics/ practice areas:

- Grants
- Loans

- City Permitting Process
- Branding
- Digital Marketing and Advertising
- E-commerce
- Storefront Designs & Merchandising
- Food & Beverage Concepting & Visioning
- Cash Flow/ Money Management
- Regulatory/insurance compliance
- Business succession planning

### Project Steps

- Explore building in-house expertise on the City's lending programs and providing technical assistance to small businesses with their applications – including submission and tracking – to ensure that businesses make it through the process.

### Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc

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# 2

## Establish a retail attraction effort targeting small & minority owned businesses

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Develop a retail attraction program focused on small and minority owned businesses in the category of neighborhood goods and services. Focus on adding value to the existing ecosystem of owners, brokers and retailers through highly targeted district marketing and data sharing, communication and outreach to property owners.

### Diagnostic Connection

The diagnostic found that the vast majority of new business growth is concentrated in the Food & Beverage subcategory, a reflection of the fact that 70% of Downtown spending is driven by the visitor population. However, the success of Downtown as a mixed-use community, and the ability to continue to support residential growth and building conversions, is critical to maintaining a stable downtown economy.

Discussions with current local residents suggest that their experience living downtown is diminished by the lack of neighborhood goods and services, including clothing, beauty care or toiletries, home goods, hardware, liquor, cleaning supplies, etc. In some cases, residents might simply lack awareness of existing offerings (which can be rectified, in part through marketing efforts). In other instances, existing offerings, even if they are located within the study area boundaries, simply “feel” further away or less convenient than they would

like, especially given the alternative - a relatively short 10–15-minute car ride to Steelyard Commons, for instance. For those who do not leave Downtown, their shopping needs are being met by on-line shopping and delivery services.

Residential growth projections for the Downtown study area include 2,397 units under construction with another 2,039 planned. The analysis showed a clear under supply in neighborhood serving retail overall, particularly for smaller scale NG&S tenants like pharmacies, pet stores and pet services, personal services, salons, dry cleaners, etc. that will serve as an amenity for the growing residential population.

Meeting the needs of this growing residential population, whose spending is both further amplified by work-from-home a few days a week, and made more important in light of the staying power of hybrid work overall, is an important long-term strategy for Downtown's overall economic recovery.

### Project Steps

- Summarize and communicate your retail vision, including targeted retail categories, broadly and through the application of targeted programs, incentives and technical assistance.
- Consider focusing on local or regional prospects rather than national prospects (which will likely be led by a well-connected brokerage community). Smaller businesses may not engage

brokers in a site selection search and may not even have Downtown on their radar.

- Identify and maintain a list of opportunity sites. Use this list to build relationships with the owners and brokers who represent these sites and have this list – along with the brokers who represent each site – at the ready when potential prospects come calling.
- Develop communication tools that tell a compelling story about Downtown using the data in this report, as well as data from proprietary data sources such as PlacerAI. Distribute and make this information available to brokers for their use with prospective tenants. Make sure brokers know that you are a source of data and information that cannot be found elsewhere.
- Offer potential prospects an online portal for them to sign up for on-going support and technical assistance. Aim to serve as the connector between brokers/property owners and tenants. Be sure to establish a tracking system for businesses that reach out to you so that you can monitor their progress.
- Consider hosting broker breakfasts to share relevant data about the district, as well as the availability of incentives and grant programs they can use to close a deal. Be available to brokers to offer Downtown tours to potential prospects.
- Following introductions between tenants, landlords and brokers, remain available to support tenants with applications for financial resources and incentives, vendors, qualified lawyers for lease review, etc.
- Track and evaluate the outcomes of your retail attraction efforts using relevant Key Performance Metrics (businesses supported, resources distributed, # of new businesses, etc)

*Note: these steps are adapted from the ICSC Guide for Improving Tenant Mix: A Guide for Commercial District Practitioners authored by Streetsense Managing Director Larisa Ortiz.*

## Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc, Destination Cleveland, local brokers, property owners



The West End Business Improvement Zone in Winnipeg, Canada developed an award-winning "Open for Business" retail attraction effort based on the ICSC that resulted in 81 new businesses in the first two years of the program. The effort included information packages for realtors, media and business owners, a submission form on their website for interested businesses, and direct distribution of material to brokers through their website videos and broker breakfasts to ensure that brokers had the information they needed to sell the district.

*Note: The West End BIZ adopted these strategies from the "ICSC Guide for Improving Tenant Mix: A Guide for Commercial District Practitioners" authored by Streetsense Managing Director Larisa Ortiz.*

# 3

## Establish a night market

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

A night market aimed at expanding downtown offerings for visitors and residents beyond Food & Beverage, while also emphasizing local entrepreneurs.

### Diagnostic Connection

Night markets have increasingly played a role in urban tourism. They offer low barriers to entry for small, often undercapitalized businesses while giving them an opportunity to develop a following that might support moving up to a brick-and-mortar space.

When curated thoughtfully, they can fill a critical gap in offerings beyond Food & Beverage for casual shopping, leisure and entertainment experience for visitors and residents, creating an authentically "Cleveland" experience that helps keep visitors Downtown before and after events with non-F&B offerings.

### Project Steps

- Identify a location – we recommend the exploration of Huron Road – which is well situated between high areas of concentration of both nighttime visitors and residents.

- Issue a call for vendors and work to curate a highly unique, local mix of vendors, including local artisans and performers. Set up guidelines for vendor qualification, booth setup, and product quality.
- Work with local partners, including Playhouse Square, Rocket Mortgage Field House and Progressive Field to raise awareness and promote the event through social media, local advertising, and partnerships with participating vendors.
- Plan for entertainment options like music, performances, workshops and interactive activities to engage visitors.
- Following the event, collect feedback from vendors and visitors to improve future night markets. Consider tracking attendance, sales and growth.

### Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc, Huron Road Property Owners, Playhouse Square, Progressive Field, Rocket Mortgage Field House



PC: Downtown Pittsburgh Partnership

Downtown Pittsburgh Night Market.



PC: The Path Less Traveled/ Trip Advisor

Frenchmen Art Market in New Orleans is a weekly night-time art market featuring local and regional artists with hours Thursday through Monday from 7/8 - 12/1 am depending on the evening.

# 4

## Invest in a Euclid Avenue “Streetscape Refresh”

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Focus streetscape investments along Euclid that emphasize softening the built environment, including landscape and design elements, such as a lushly planted median, street trees, planters, seating, public art, and lighting along Euclid between Cleveland State University and Public Square.

### Diagnostic Connection

Euclid Avenue is the city's gateway corridor, connecting key retail and visitation nodes including Playhouse Square, East 4th Street, and Public Square. However, its design is dominated by hardscape, much of it reconstructed with a \$200 million dollar streetscape plan in 2008 that included brick sidewalks, granite curbs, street furniture, lighting, extensive landscaping and a center median built to restrict drivers from turning in front of the buses. Over the past fifteen years, many of these elements have become worn and dated and are ready for a refresh and upgrade. This timeframe of fifteen years is commensurate with the typical “Shopping Center Lifecycle”, which reflects the stages of growth, maturity and decline following an initial capital investment. By the end of the lifecycle, reinvestment is often necessary to help a place maintain a competitive edge against new destinations in the local marketplace. Most competitive shopping centers – and downtowns are no exception – must maintain and refresh their spaces at the end of the lifecycle.

In particular, the center median, maintained by a separate vendor under an existing 5-year contract with Regional Transit Authority, needs significant landscaping improvements that should fall within the responsibility of the SID. Other potential areas for improvement include the concrete planters, many of which now require repair. Additionally, they are an older design that needs to be watered manually, unlike self-watering planters which have become standard in downtown environments and require less manpower to water and maintain. Additionally, as temperature rise, self-watering planters will be critical to helping plants survive.

### Project Steps



AI rendering of Euclid Avenue.



- Invest in a streetscape upgrade plan with an emphasis on Euclid as the city’s premier gateway corridor.
- Create a streetscape matching program, wherein the City will match property owner investments into streetscape improvements such as plantings, furniture, trees, etc. This program can be piloted on Euclid Ave but should be replicated throughout the city.
- In the short-term, explore updated planters with self-watering capabilities. This would enable more lush and attractive plantings along the street that are less susceptible to extreme weather conditions.
- Explore a “tree fostering” program where Downtown “fosters” smaller trees in planters as they grow before they find a more permanent home in a Downtown park to circumvent the infrastructure limitations on grown trees Downtown.

## Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland, Destination Cleveland, City of Cleveland, Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, Playhouse Square Development Corp.

## Existing Plans & Policies

- Destination Cleveland is leading a \$7M Illuminate CLE lighting project focused on Public Square with lighting connections on The Malls & Euclid Avenue.
- Playhouse Square is leading a \$10M marquee lighting project in Playhouse Square with lighting connections on Euclid Avenue.



PC: Hudson Square BID



PC: Hudson Square BID



PC: Earth Planter

In 2012, the Hudson Square BID commissioned a \$2.7 million streetscape plan that used to leverage city funding for district improvements. The streets were improved to support improved pedestrian and cyclist circulation and included public spaces, sidewalks widening, mini plazas, over 100 new trees, bike lanes and bike racks, and benches. The plan was estimated at \$27 million, of which roughly half was covered by the BID.

In Downtown San Antonio self-watering planters have reduced maintenance and watering costs and enabled more lush plantings.

# 5

## Create a SID-led tenant improvement incentive program for small & minority owned businesses

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Establish a flexible grant program that makes it easier for undercapitalized small business owners to upgrade new or existing retail space.

### Diagnostic Connection

Small businesses are historically undercapitalized, often struggling with fit-out and start-up costs and limited cash on hand to reinvest. Small scale investments are a common tool in the economic development toolbox to help entrepreneurs set up their businesses and help existing businesses grow and remain competitive.

The city already funds a number of existing programs for small businesses, including a Storefront Renovation Program (which has resulted in 34 storefront improvements for a total of \$552k in city rebate assistance in 2022) and the Neighborhood Retail Assistance Program, which provides a maximum loan of \$50k and is focused on local entrepreneurs looking to upgrade their exterior or interior spaces.

While the Diagnostic did not include a detailed assessment of the City of Cleveland's existing small business grant and loan programs, too frequently, public sector funded loan and grant programs go underutilized owing to procedural details, including application procedures, review and underwriting policies, and

reporting requirements, which often end up making these programs difficult to access. Frequently, small businesses may not be aware of available programs, or may find the paperwork and compliance requirements overly burdensome for the small amounts they seek.

In addition to raising awareness of existing loan programs, the SID may be in a position to identify funding, in partnership with local institutions and philanthropic organizations, for more flexible grants to plug funding gaps and offer more robust technical assistance to applicants.

### Project Steps

- Audit the Downtown Cleveland website and ensure that all existing City programs are listed.
- Explore and help raise awareness of existing Small-Loan Programs that are becoming available through large banks, including Bank of America, U.S. Bank and Wells Fargo. These grants are increasingly offering to qualified consumers access to small-dollar loans based on their consumer credit history.

- Work closely with the City of Cleveland to share lists of businesses that are exploring use of both grants and loan products.
- Explore partnerships with local institutions and philanthropic organizations to establish a dedicated grant or loan program.

## Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland, City of Cleveland, corporate sponsors or philanthropic donors, LISC Cleveland, KeyBank



In response to a community desire to see more small businesses in downtown, the Downtown Orlando BID developed a Retail Stimulus Program offering eligible applicants up to \$75,000, or 50% of the total cost of Tenant Improvements, whichever is less. Applicants are also able to receive a one-time award of up to \$25,000 to cover rent expenses. Rent abatement payments will be made quarterly, i.e., a business would receive up to \$6,250 a quarter for a total of \$25,000. The maximum total funding amount under the Program per eligible business is \$100,000.

## Storefront Improvements

J&F Mini Market (2980 Fulton Street) received a **new awning and signage** to increase visibility. In addition, **new storefront windows** were installed to increase transparency and the perception of safety.



Before

“ The same day we finished the installation of the windows, I immediately saw an increase in foot traffic coming to the store. I was in shock to hear people asking me if the store was under new management. ”  
- Juan Diaz, owner of J&F Mini Market



After

## Storefront Improvements

Serving the community for more than 13 years, Mirian Beauty Center (3168 Fulton St) increased its visibility by installing a **new sign and awning**.



Before



After

The Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC), a national community development intermediary with an office in Greater Cincinnati, developed the Commercial Corridor Challenge program, funded by Citibank's philanthropic arm. The effort created flexible and easy to use finance tools for small businesses. Each participating community received \$50 – 75k towards a variety of improvements, including small grants for signage and storefront enhancements. The lack of regulatory hoops made for much more efficient distribution of funds and impactful outcomes.

# 6

## Invest in World Class Infrastructure & Activations

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Investments in world-class places and spaces that elevate Downtown as a neighborhood of choice, including playgrounds, dog parks and athletic facilities (i.e., tennis court, basketball courts, pools).

### Diagnostic Connection

In a post-COVID world where hybrid work has become the norm, downtowns have naturally become more heavily reliant on a mix of visitor and residential spending (from both local and regional residents). Currently, Downtown residents from the Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary Trade Areas comprise 17% of total Downtown spending. While not the dominant customer base, they are an important one whose patronage helps ensure that Downtown remains "authentically Cleveland", part of what will help it retain its status as a visitor destination.

Supporting the growth of spending by the local and regional residential population is part of a holistic solution to improving overall retail spend in Downtown. To accomplish this task, Downtown Cleveland must offer a quality of life and residential amenities that elevate it as both a "neighborhood of choice" as well as a destination for residents and visitors. Currently, we recommend special emphasis on world-class amenities which might include

playgrounds, dog parks, and athletic facilities, with special emphasis on pickleball, one of the fastest growing sports in the nation. These amenities give residents spaces to convene and socialize, while also keeping their spending Downtown.

We believe that a world-class playground will help grow Downtown's appeal to families. Households with Children comprise 24 - 28% of all households in the Secondary (STA) and Tertiary Trade Areas (TTA). Opportunities to create more interactive, high-quality play spaces include Eastman Reading Garden and open spaces, including the Malls, in and around Public Square.

Alternatively, investments in Downtown athletic facilities meet the needs of another important customer base - Downtown residents. These residents are generally younger (average age 33.85) when compared to Cleveland (average age 37.1) and significantly less likely to have to children, 4% of Downtown households have children, compared to 24-28% from the Secondary and Tertiary trade areas. We further believe that these facilities, if developed in partnership with the City's world class sports teams, will reinforce Cleveland's reputation and brand as a sports city, where visitors can not only attend professional basketball, baseball, and football games, but they can also participate in sports activities with friends and family.

## Project Steps

- Canvass and engage partners, including the city's sports teams, on their interest. Establish a short-term "Recreation Task Force" to explore options for sites and types of recreational activities.
- Create an inventory of downtown open spaces whose location and ownership profile lend themselves to potential spots for recreational activity.
- Work closely with the city to raise their interest in investments in recreational spaces that serve to reinforce downtown as a neighborhood.

## Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland, Inc, City, Department of Public Works, Professional Sports Teams, Public Library, Playhouse Square, Cleveland Metroparks

## Existing Plans & Policies

- Downtown Lakefront Master Plan
- Downtown Public Space Management Study



Artists at Play, an imaginative, artists-created playground located in the plaza between the Museum of Pop Culture (MoPOP) and Seattle Center Armory.



The Ancient Playground, located in Central Park, is inspired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Egyptian collection.



NBA team Brooklyn Nets and WNBA team New York Liberty partnered with the Trust for Public Land, Kevin Durant and the NYC EPA to unveil a new community schoolyard in Brooklyn.

# 7

## Explore a pilot project on Huron Road that enables targeted retail activation

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Explore beautification and activation strategies that elevate Huron Road and create a connector between the destination drivers of Playhouse Square and the stadiums of the Gateway District. In the short term this might include temporary street closures. In the long term, we recommend exploration of a purpose-built shared street that enables more frequent activation in a best-in-class environment.

### Diagnostic Connection

Huron Road has the bones of a great street – an intimate scale, wide brick sidewalks, mature trees, adjacent public space, and lighter traffic flows -- making it well-suited for concentrated creative placemaking concepts and activation.

Huron is also strategically located between two of Downtown's highest concentrations of both visitors and residents. Approximately 5,000 of the study area's 12,000 plus residents live within ¼ mile of the street. Additionally, Huron Road connects Playhouse Square, with 3 million annual visitors, and Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse and Progressive Field, with a combined 7.1 million visitors annually. (Data reflects Placer AI visits from June 2022 – 2023).

At this time, most of the ground floor spaces along Huron are occupied by office uses. Over time, we anticipate that higher footfall will naturally facilitate interest from retail uses that increase the level of ground floor activation.

### Project Steps

- In the short term, explore pilot activations, including a Night Market (Project #11) along Huron Road.
- Create and maintain an inventory of existing property and business owners along the street and track lease expiration dates, with an emphasis on identifying in advance opportunities for more active ground floor uses as spaces become available.
- In the long term, explore capital investments in streetscape improvements that encourage and support more activation.

### Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc, City of Cleveland, Playhouse Square Development Corp, Local/regional business owners and vendors interested in testing the market.



PC: Greater Greater Washington



PC: NJ Patch



PC: Stone Street NYC



PC: Greater Greater Washington



PC: NJ Patch



The Wharf, Washington DC. Shared streets, also known as “Woonerf” Street are increasingly being incorporated into best-in-class environments. Shared space streets often do not have curbs that separate pedestrians, cars and bikes. They can also be closed from time to time and activated.

Montclair, NJ’s Seymore Street Redevelopment Plan included significant investments in a streetscape environment that could serve double duty as both a functional street part and an environment that could be activated regularly. The investment was part of a privately led “Arts and Entertainment District”.

Stone Street (NY, NY) was transformed from a sleepy street into an outdoor dining destination that services local food and beverage establishments during warmer months.

# 8

## Develop a marketing campaign to raise awareness of existing business offerings with emphasis on minority retail business owners

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

A “shop local” marketing campaign to raise awareness with an emphasis on the 5th Street Arcade, Tower City, and the pending Night Market would raise awareness of Downtown’s small and minority business owners’ community. The campaign should also have a theme of business attraction.

### Diagnostic Connection

The diagnostic uncovered a lack of awareness among many residents of the existing offerings in downtown, suggesting the need to raise awareness of existing offerings, with an emphasis on small businesses unique to Cleveland.

### Project Steps

- Explore potential funding with local philanthropic organizations. If the program design emphasizes equity concerns a strong case may be made to local foundations. Notably, the Cleveland Foundation, a \$3.2 billion foundation, has a team focused on Equity Initiatives and is increasingly regarded as a leader in “place-based” philanthropy.
- Explore a marketing network where any business participating will have their info/business card showcased in the other businesses

### Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc, 5th Street Arcade Business Owners



NYC Small Business Sweeties Valentine’s Day Marketing Campaign The program, encouraging residents to shop local, highlights small businesses throughout the city and boroughs and encourages you to shop small for your sweetheart.



# 9

## Reinforce walkability of Downtown with targeted wayfinding

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort

Short-term



Long-term



### Project Description

Invest in improvements to Downtown's wayfinding system with directional signage that promotes walkability.

### Diagnostic Connection

End to end, the distances from significant destination drivers in Downtown Cleveland run between 1 – 1.6 miles. While much of Downtown has wide, well-maintained sidewalks and instances of mature tree coverage, the wide streets, lack of consistent tree coverage (which is becoming increasingly important as a result of climate change), and gaps between areas of activity lead to a form of "distance decay". This refers to the phenomenon whereby even a relatively short distance can feel much longer than it is. Visitors in particular may overestimate the walk time and distances between Downtown destinations and may have a fear of getting lost. Point-of-decision cues – simple signs that depict direction and walk time - have been demonstrated to alter behavior in walkable environments.

Reinforcing the walkable nature of Downtown and making clear walking distances and paths between Downtown districts will also help improve the likelihood that customers will lengthen their duration of stay and cross-shop between areas of concentrated business activity. Additionally, this will help convince retailers that a Downtown location serves a single market that offers access to all of Downtown's residents and visitors.

### Project Steps

- Improve existing or add additional signage with an emphasis on walk times
- Begin by investing in improvements along most well traversed routes, including Euclid, W St. Clair Ave, East 9th

### Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland, Destination Cleveland, City of Cleveland



University of Kentucky, Walk UK. As part of a project supported and funded in part by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the University of Kentucky installed 80 signs around campus showing distances in minutes to both on- and off-campus destinations that helped encourage campus-communication connections between students, staff and visitors.

# 10 Establish a pop-up retail program in the Warehouse District

## Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

## Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

## Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



## Project Description

Develop a pop-up program where small and local businesses may be market tested and retained within the community. This program would focus initially on attracting neighborhood goods and services within the Warehouse District and expand to other neighborhoods as resources allow.

## Diagnostic Connection

Reduced future retail demand of over 100,000 SF will require retail concentration in market-supported locations. In target areas, this approach reduces vacancies that erode market confidence leading to difficulty attracting quality and/or targeted tenants. An area of concentrated activated storefronts attracts visitors as well as residents, especially if the tenant mix is a balance of offerings, including Neighborhood Goods and Services. Currently, however, a majority of new business growth is in Food & Beverage catering largely to visitors, leaving the needs of local residents for goods and services unmet.

Such is the case in the Warehouse District where in addition to Food and Beverage, a growing nightlife scene has emerged. To encourage a true day-to-night neighborhood, more balanced offerings that meet the needs of residents should be introduced via a pop-up program focused initially on goods and services in vacant ground floor spaces.

## Project Steps

- Create the program in partnership with willing property owners and potential funding sources. Consider starting the program as a pilot should it be met with skepticism.
- Consider focusing on local or regional entrepreneurs.
- Identify opportunity sites experiencing vacancy and prioritize locations in market-supported areas.
- Offer business start-up assistance in navigating the permitting and licensing processes to ensure swift openings.
- Serve as the liaison between property owners and pop-up tenants during the pop-up lease. Consider facilitating conversations that may aid in potential long-term leasing at the pop-up location or another vacant location downtown.
- Offer potential prospects an on-line portal for them to sign up for the program during the application window. Also offer contact information and/or a means to ask questions from the website.
- Track and evaluate the outcomes of the pop-up program using relevant Key Performance Metrics (businesses supported, resources distributed, number of new businesses, vacancy rates, Certificates of Occupancy, etc) to promote extension of the program in the neighborhood and/or elsewhere Downtown.

## Champion & Partners

- Downtown Cleveland Inc, property owners, small business liaison



### Project Pop-up, Pittsburgh, PA

The Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership created Project Pop-up through the financial support of the Hillman Foundation to activate vacant downtown storefronts with local entrepreneurs seeking to test their business and grow the City's small business community. The program offers six months to one-year rent-free lease terms and grants up to \$15,000 per storefront to cover expenses for utilities, setup, maintenance, insurance, events, and implementing the pop-up concept. Having launched in 2023, its impact is to be seen but is met with great optimism from the small business community and city leadership.



### Pop-Up Shops at Martin Street, Raleigh, NC

The partnership between the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, Wake Tech Entrepreneurship & Small Business Center, LM Restaurants, and Lenovo created the Pop-Up Shops at Martin Street, a pop-up program where retail tenants looking to share an affordable brick and mortar space with other pop-up tenants can do so at a single location in Downtown Raleigh. The program focuses on inclusion and equity of business ownership for the small minority and women owned business community and supports them with business counseling while they test their business in the Downtown Raleigh market. Leases are six months for 300 to 600 SF of tent space with a set \$10 per SF per year rent and a common area maintenance fee to cover utilities. Thanks in part to this program, of the 100 storefronts in Downtown Raleigh, more than 50 percent are female owned.



### Downtown Pops!, Santa Cruz, CA

As a pilot program through the Santa Cruz Economic Development Department, Downtown Pops! aims to lower the barrier to entry for businesses looking to open in brick-and-mortar locations and reduce risk for property owners to lease to new tenants. The program involves the City entering a master lease with a commercial property owner experiencing vacancy. It provides a guaranteed minimum rent, and sub-leases the space temporarily, up to six months, to a business with a lease term set at 5% of monthly sales. Now in its second season, the program's successful first round resulting in several pop-ups permanently locating in former vacant spaces in concentrated retail centers.

# 11

## Prioritize and explore options to improve intra-city Downtown transportation

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Focus on Downtown circulation by working closely with the RTA to reinstate or expand existing trolley routes with connections between key Downtown districts.

### Diagnostic Connection

Downtown stakeholders were nearly unanimous in their concerns that the reduction in lines and hours of the Downtown trolleys has made it significantly more difficult for visitors to move around among the City's most popular destinations. Distances between Downtown's more popular destinations generally run between 1 mile - 1.6 miles, as shown in the table below. The walk between Downtown destination drivers can run 15-20 minutes, the upper limit for what is generally considered a reasonable walkshed.

These distances can be a challenge for both older visitors and those with young children. Additionally, if visitors have parked their car near their destination, they may avoid having to walk and then return for their car given the distance. As a result, regional visitors are often disinclined to remain in Downtown to simply explore. Easy-to-use transit options that enable visitors to return to their cars, thereby reducing the likelihood that they will leave Downtown and take their spending with them.

At this time, the modified B-Line Trolley Route does not serve these visitors on the weekends when visitation is highest. It only runs on Monday - Friday from 7 am to 7 pm. Without a frequent and convenient way to get between these destinations, the likelihood that those 1+ million visitors will travel Downtown to spend their time and money is significantly diminished.

### Project Steps

- Initiate discussions with the RTA to expand trolley service Downtown
- Explore a master Downtown valet system that would allow for more seamless time spent across different Downtown neighborhoods.

### Champion & Partners

- RTA, Downtown Cleveland, Destination Cleveland, Bedrock and other major property owners and businesses, hospitality partners

### Sample Distances between Downtown Destination Drivers

Playhouse Square to the Flats	1.6 Miles
Lakefront to Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse	1.2 Miles
East 4th Street to Rock Hall	1 Mile



PC: Downtown Rochester Minnesota

Rochester Downtown Alliance Trolley System is free and stops along areas of downtown for great places to eat, shop and get to appointments at Mayo Clinic on time.



PC: Visitor Historic Charleston

Downtown Area Shuttle (Dash) Trolleys, Charleston, SC – CARTA runs a separately branded shuttle service in Downtown that serves key destination drivers.

# 12 Create and prioritize bike and micro-mobility infrastructure

## Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

## Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

## Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



## Project Description

Explore significant enhancements to existing micro mobility infrastructure, including dedicated lanes and signed routes within the boundaries of Downtown.

## Diagnostic Connection

Micro mobility is an increasingly popular mode of transit in Downtown Cleveland. The distance from Playhouse Square to the Flats, for instance, is approx. 1.5 miles, perhaps a bit further than one might casually walk, but within the sweet spot of the average rented scooter ride of 11 – 15 minutes/1 – 1.5 miles (NACTO, 2021). Downtown's scale makes it well suited to micro mobility - it is no wonder that there are numerous popular mobility options available to Downtown visitors and residents, including three e-scooter providers and two e-bike providers.

Unfortunately, there are limited safe passages and networks that embrace these newer forms of transportation and make them comfortable for all users. The lack of safe bike infrastructure is a lost opportunity to keep visitors and residents downtown for their shopping and dining needs. The current user profile right now leans towards the "risk-oblivious", often young, male riders who may be less concerned about their personal safety. Unfortunately, those who fall outside of this risk profile are much less likely to use micro mobility

without safer options for riding on city streets.

Additionally, the lack of safe passages further reduces the likelihood that non-automotive means are considered a viable option for residents. Once residents get into their cars, they are more likely to leave Downtown for shopping options in nearby competitive neighborhoods. Therefore stronger micro mobility networks therefore will serve to knit together areas of residential density in Downtown – notably between Euclid, the Warehouse District, and the Flats – and offer prospective retail tenants more confidence that a Downtown location gives them true and meaningful access to the entirety of the Downtown residential customer base.



The diagnostic analysis suggests an emphasis on the following paths between downtown micro-climates.

## Project Steps

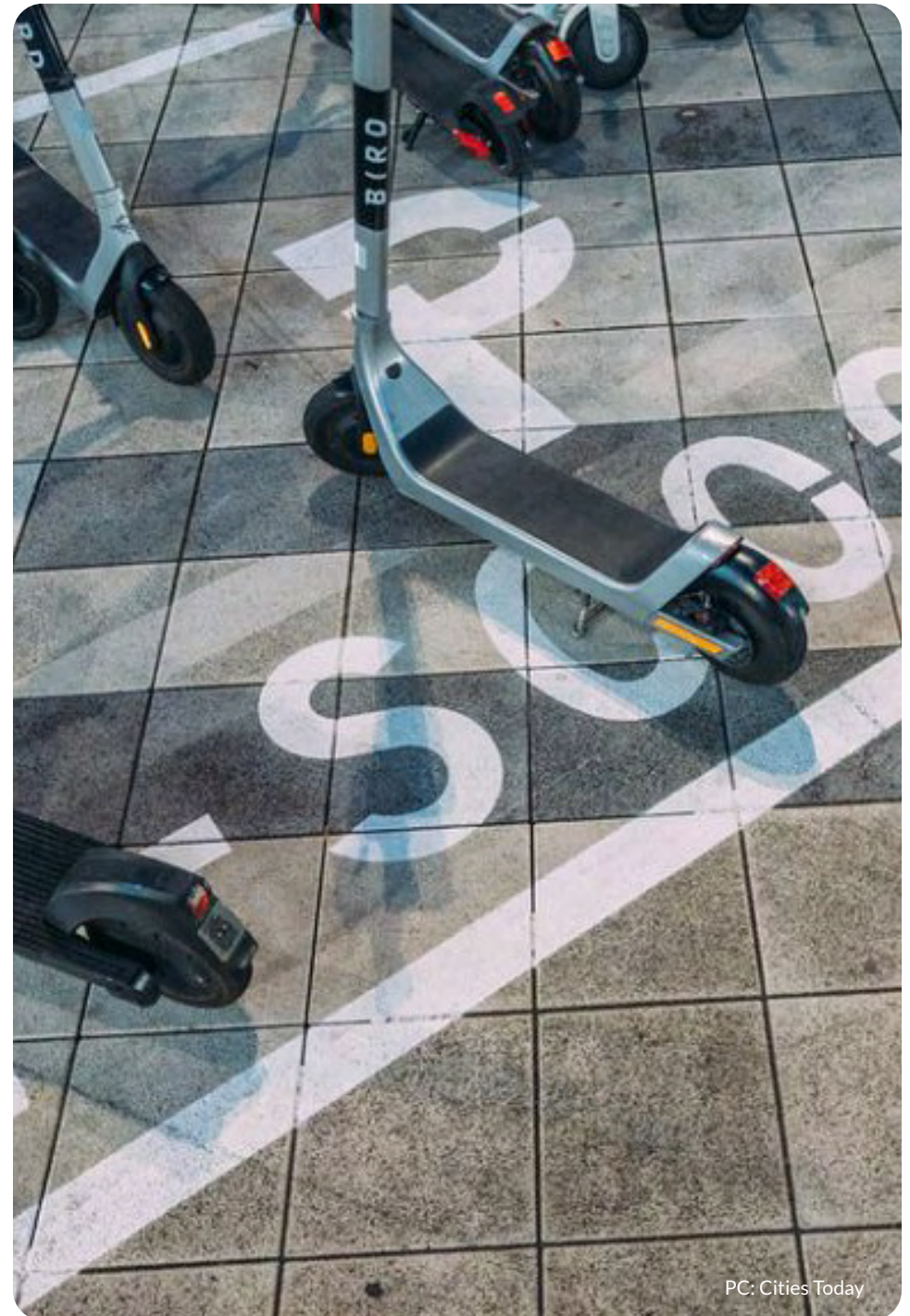
- In the short term, explore tactical interventions that demonstrate the demand for more bike and shared mobility infrastructure. Examples include closed street days for Saturday bike rides, which help build momentum and public support for these efforts. Slow Roll Cleveland sponsors a “Go Bike Cleveland” event upon which this effort could be a starting point.
- Investigate the existing “no ride” and “no park” zones throughout Downtown to ensure they are not constraining or obstructing scooters’ functionality entirely.
- In the medium term, continue to develop an aggressive micro mobility plan for Downtown. Utilize the soon to be completed Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) study which offers planning assistance studies that can lead to improvements in transportation systems. Focus on implementation grants to help communities support the installation of infrastructure identified in the study.

## Champion & Partners

- City, Department of Transportation, Downtown Cleveland, Destination Cleveland, Bike Cleveland, NOACA, GCRTA

## Existing Plans & Policies

- Reimagining Downtown Cleveland includes recommendations focused on improving bike, pedestrian and multimodal mobility networks, including a network of protected bike lands connecting Downtown districts.



PC: Cities Today

In 2021, Washington, DC invested significantly in micro-mobility infrastructure – the city installed more than 800 bicycle racks and planned to install 1,000 additional bike racks and in-street parking corrals. This occurred in tandem with a DC law that requires riders to lock shared electric scooters to bike racks, scooter corrals, or sign posts after use.

# 13

## Explore bringing day-time destination drivers to Downtown with CSU and other Cleveland institutions

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Explore opportunities to partner with these institutions to open satellite offerings in Downtown.

### Diagnostic Connection

Cleveland is a city rich with educational, cultural, and medical institutions. These organizations are place-based, which means their self-interest in Downtown improvements is frequently aligned with the SID's efforts to ensure that Downtown continues to thrive economically. Ultimately, a safe, vibrant downtown is a powerful calling card for institutions interested in attracting employees, visitors, students and/or patients.

This acknowledgment of the role of place in employee satisfaction, visitation and matriculation has led many institutions to explore investments in their adjacent communities. While the needs and interests of every institution differ, identifying opportunities for partnership will mean connecting with partners on a regular basis in open discussions of needs and opportunities.

In the case of Downtown Cleveland, the most prominent potential partner is Cleveland State. Regular communication with campus administrators, as well as with individual departments might yield potential opportunities for exploration, which in other jurisdictions have included some of the following off-campus facilities:

- Space for small business incubators & workshops
- Space for extra-curricular student facilities (black box theaters, culinary arts spaces/kitchens, students meeting rooms/study areas)
- Student bookstore or other retail businesses
- Student housing

### Project Steps

- Engage local institutions and meet regularly to discuss expansion plans and opportunities for partnerships. Opportunities will likely be opportunistic and emerge from frequent conversations and alignment of priorities with local institutions.
- Develop an opportunity site list that enables the SID to propose opportunity locations and sites that are available for activation.

### Champion & Partners

- Cleveland Clinic, CSU, Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland area High Schools vocational training Excel Tech





PC: DNA Info

In the late 1990's, Pratt Institute, located in Downtown Brooklyn sought to make the University more of a residential college rather than a commuter school. This required investments along nearby Myrtle Avenue, which at the time was considered a dangerous street that students were warned not to visit. Pratt's investments included financial support for a community organization, which ultimately became a Business Improvement District. Most notably, over time Pratt moved a number of its spaces from on-campus locations to new buildings along Myrtle Avenue, including the "Prattstore", departmental spaces, and new dormitories that brought more students to the street.



PC: Hood Museum

While the Dartmouth Hood Museum of Art was undergoing renovations, the museum signed a lease for a community-oriented satellite space in Downtown Hanover on Main Street.

# 14

## Enhancements to the East 9th St Bridge between Rock Hall & Willard Park

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time | Cost | Effort



### Project Description

Invest in targeted physical and capital investments on the two blocks between the lakefront and Downtown.

### Diagnostic Connection

Cleveland's lakefront is a true differentiator, and making it more accessible and connected to Downtown would create tremendous impact for both residents and visitors. With at least 1 million plus visitors annually to the Rock Hall and the Science Center and over 14,566 existing, under construction or planned units in the pipeline – improved connections would help both audiences.

Making the lakefront more accessible will make Downtown living more appealing, as people desire a connection to nature and opportunities for outdoor recreation near their homes. The lakefront as an amenity will help Downtown compete in attracting and retaining residents who might otherwise choose other walkable mixed-use neighborhoods.

Currently the passageway to the Lakefront down West 9th is barren and uncomfortable for the average pedestrian. As the status of the landbridge has yet to be decided (which would be a long-term and capital-intensive solution) there are short-term, small-budget improvements that can be

made to these routes to make it more enjoyable for the visitor and resident. Investments in planters along the roads leading to the lakefront can make the journey more comfortable by providing shade, greenery, and color to the route. Planters also present opportunities for Downtown branding which could help improve connectivity and a sense of place for this area.

### Project Steps

- Explore whether the project is eligible for ARPA funds that have been set aside for “Waterfront Activation”.

### Champion & Partners

- Ohio Department of Transportation, City of Cleveland, Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency

### Existing Plans/ Policies

- \$10 million in ARPA funds for “Waterfront Activation”, including \$3 million towards the proposed Land Bridge connecting Mall C to the lakefront.



PC: Ashley Hahn, Plan Philly



PC: Ashley Hahn, Plan Philly

Market Street Bridge, (Philadelphia, PA) – The project to “soften” the Market Street Bridge was completed in 2015, cost \$500,000, which was funded primarily by the William Penn Foundation and Joanna McNeil Trust. The project required PennDOT approval, who stipulated that the “dead load” of the enhancements could not exceed 100 lbs per square foot and needed to be “reversible” – and easily removed. (These constraints are likely to be similar to those for the East 9th Street bridge). The project was a partnership between University City District, Center City District, and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation and took approximately ten weeks to complete.

# 15

## Support and advocate for a world-class land bridge

### Project Type

- Public Realm
- Private Realm
- Marketing & Promotion & Activation
- Retail Attraction & Retention

### Guiding Principles

- Emphasize neighborhood building
- Eliminate intra-city barriers
- Focus, don't disperse
- Celebrate the waterfront
- Infuse equity & sustainability
- Partner with Cleveland's world-class institutions

### Estimated Time & Cost & Effort



### Project Description

Explore investments in the overpass connections.

### Diagnostic Connection

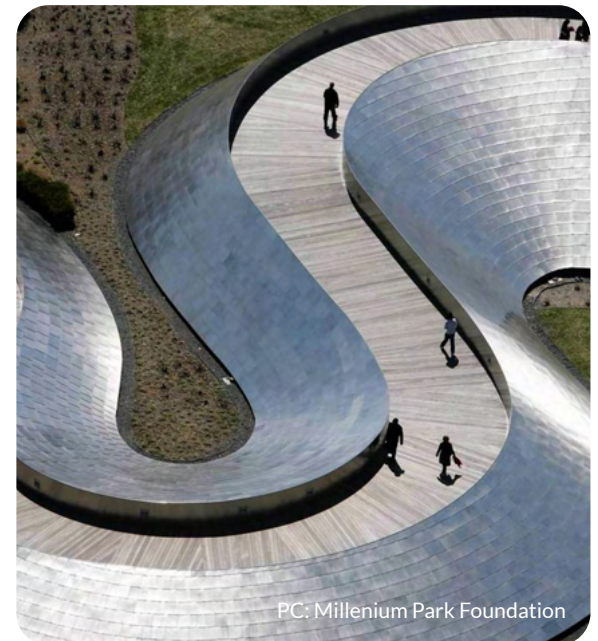
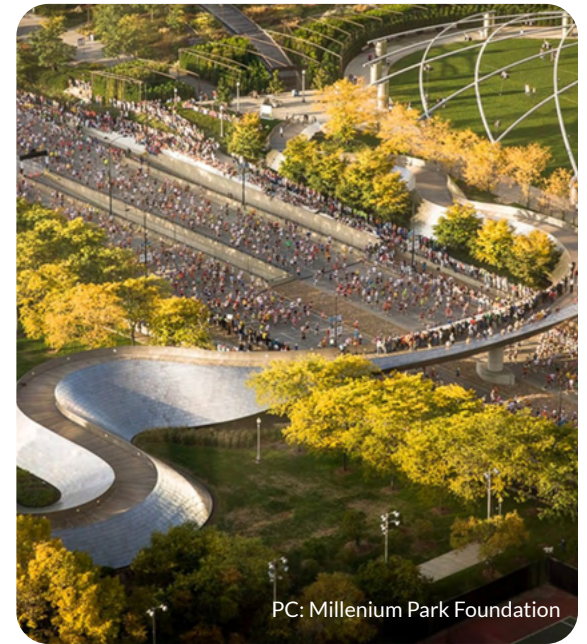
It remains paramount to connect Downtown to the lakefront and its institutions and destinations. The proposed North Coast Connector Plan ambitiously solves this issue by envisioning a land bridge connecting Downtown to the Lakefront. The land bridge provides a long term and permanent solution to the issue of Downtown's limited and obstructed access to its waterfront.

### Champion & Partners

- Ohio Department of Transportation, City of Cleveland, Greater Cleveland Partnership

### Existing Plans/ Policies

- The Ohio Department of Transportation and the City of Cleveland are currently funding planning and engineering work for a land bridge.



Chicago's, BP Pedestrian Bridge connects Millennium Park with Maggie Daley Park over Columbus Drive – a multi-lane thoroughfare presenting a significant physical barrier between both spaces.

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# Conclusion

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The Plan outlined here acknowledges the need for Downtown Cleveland to find balance as not only a destination for visitors but also as an amenity rich neighborhood that attracts residents and workers. It offers the SID a roadmap to build the mutualistic environment that will both grow the Downtown population and strengthen Downtown retail. Through public realm improvements that better knit together the fabric of Downtown, programs and incentives focused on supporting business owners, and activations that serve all parts of the community, the SID and its partners can usher in a new era of vibrancy in Downtown Cleveland.

