

Columbus, Ohio

Livingston Avenue

Retail Market Analysis

2025



This report was produced by

ESI ECONSULT
SOLUTIONS INC.
economics | strategy | insight

Acknowledgments

This planning effort was supported through interviews and outreach with a number of key stakeholders, including individuals representing The City of Columbus (Department of Development, Department of Public Service, the Livingston Area Neighborhood Commission, area Civics and Neighborhood Associations, the Livingston Avenue Merchants Association, the Rickenbacker Woods Foundation, Nationwide Children’s Hospital, residents and other property and business owners. This planning process also included two community meetings and a web-based community survey.

In March of 2024 the City released an RFP for the Livingston Avenue Area Market Analysis. The purpose was to provide a detailed evaluation and retail market analysis of the Study Area, providing recommendations and strategies for the Study Area, and outlining an implementation plan. In 2024, the City of Columbus engaged the consulting team of Econsult Solutions Inc., The Riddle Company, LLC, and New Reach Community Consulting to perform a market analysis within and along the Livingston Avenue corridor and surrounding neighborhoods.

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Executive Summary

Overview of the Study

About This Study

The intent of this study is to examine the market for commercial development and business growth along the stretch of Livingston Avenue from 18th Street to the west to Interstate 70 to the east. The goal of this effort is to identify challenges and opportunities to re-invigorate and invest in retail and small commercial businesses along the corridor to better serve the surrounding neighborhoods bounded by Interstate 70 to the north and east, Frebis Avenue to the south, and South 18th Street to the west.

The strategic recommendations from this study are intended guide the city and local stake holders to leverage long-term public and private interests, existing programs, and ongoing development already taking place the corridor and the surrounding areas, including the \$29 million planned public infrastructure and streetscape improvements.

Approach

The team initiated a retail market study, the results of which can be found in Section 4. As part of this effort, the team engaged with local stakeholders through a variety of means including one-on-one meetings, public meetings, and participation in community and neighborhood civic association meetings. To broaden input from residents of the area, a market survey was conducted, focused on retail and grocery to better understand how, when, and where the community shops, and why.

The Challenges

The initial research revealed weak market fundamentals, suggesting a conventional retail study evaluating supply and demand factors was premature. After reviewing data, touring the area, and consulting stakeholders, the focus shifted to a neighborhood stabilization and community development approach with more grassroots efforts to improve conditions along the corridor. Therefore, the strategic recommendations place an emphasis on creating opportunities for retail growth through real estate, community safety, accessibility, and changing market trajectory.

Establishing a New Path Forward

While not a comprehensive neighborhood plan, the strategy presented on the following pages combines a traditional community development approach with a foundation to retain existing businesses, attract new ones, and encourage long-term investment. It includes a detailed review of current demand and the future retail market, consumer spending habits and patterns, and market trends and patterns within trades areas defined for the corridor. The strategy also includes a real estate analysis focused on the market today, and opportunities for new investment in the future.

Recommendations presented here are informed by the market and demographic data, community input, city policies and programs and city and community priorities. The recommendations aim to strengthen fundamentals of the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods. The focus is on supporting existing businesses and enterprises, while encouraging future investment through a series of tools, tactics, along with short and long-term strategies. The strategies presented align with ongoing initiatives including the streetscape improvement program and other city programs and initiatives.

About Livingston Avenue

The Livingston Avenue Study Area from South 18th Street to the west and Interstate 70 to the east includes a range of property types and land uses, including single-family homes, apartments, older commercial buildings, single-use commercial buildings, and community uses such as the Rickenbacker Woods Foundation and the Driving Park Branch of the

Columbus Public Library. Just west of the Study Area is the main campus of Nationwide Children’s Hospital, which is one of the top employers in the Columbus region. Given the length of the corridor, stretching almost two miles, there is a need to create more opportunities for concentrated nodal development given market and land use constraints

for creating a contiguous main street environment. However, with the future streetscape investments that are soon to be underway, there is an opportunity to set the corridor on a new path with a diversity of retail and service offerings and enhancing quality of life for the community as a whole.



Summary of SWOT Analysis

A strategic analysis was undertaken to assess the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the study area. Analyzing these four elements identifies areas of excellence, areas needing improvement, potential growth opportunities, and potential risks. A complete description of the SWOT Analysis is in Section 5, on page 55.



Findings of the SWOT Analysis of the Study Area

Strengths

- Housing Market Momentum
- Streetscape Improvements
- Strong Institutional Anchor
- Strong Community Assets
- Established Neighborhood Groups
- Central Location
- Growing Momentum on Parsons Avenue and Main Street

Weaknesses

- Limited Retail Market Demand
- Limited Retail Offerings
- Limited Opportunity for New Development
- Vacancy and Property Conditions
- Perception of (and Actual) Crime and Lack of Safety
- Retail Store Conditions
- Length of Corridor

Opportunities

- Creating a Clean and Safe Environment
- Supporting Public Realm and Beautification Efforts
- Providing Technical Assistance and Resources Small Business Support
- Supporting Land Assembly Efforts
- Investing in Existing Structures
- Focusing on Nodal Investment
- Ongoing Collaboration, Engagement, Coordination
- Enhanced and Intentional Marketing and Branding
- Targeting Neighborhood-Scale Retail and Services

Threats

- Fear of Change
- Lack of Stakeholder Alignment
- Competition for Philanthropic and Public Dollars
- Competition from Emerging Corridors and Submarkets
- Retail Market Uncertainties
- Lack of Engagement with and Cooperation from Property Owners

Overview of Strategic Framework

The strategic framework serves as a comprehensive roadmap for addressing community-identified challenges and translating the vision into actionable implementation steps. Each of the six goals is supported by specific strategies that combine policies, programs, partnerships, funding mechanisms, and specific tactics to create coordinated change along the corridor. While some initiatives build on existing Columbus programs and partnerships, this framework identifies clear opportunities to enhance, expand, or better align these efforts to address the unique commercial dynamics and community needs.

The success of retail corridor revitalization is dependent upon the multiple stakeholders in the area: the community, the private sector, and funders, with support from the city. Section 5 of this report, The Strategic Framework for Action, provides details of each recommendation.

Six Goals of the East Livingston Avenue Retail Market Strategy

Clean and Safe

Create a clean and safe environment to encourage more pedestrian activity from residents and visitors

Commercial Revitalization

Support near and long-term investments and activation of existing properties and spaces

Business Attraction and Support

Attract and support neighborhood-serving businesses and tenants

Redevelopment Opportunities

Set a stage for long-term redevelopment opportunities

Marketing and Communications

Coordinate marketing and branding efforts

Governance

Establish a governance structure and/or a special district

Executive Summary

Strategic Framework Matrix

Strategy/ Tactic	Purpose	Responsibilities	Next Steps	Implementation Timeline
Clean and Safe				
Clean and Safe Streets	Create clean, safe environment to encourage pedestrian activity through street cleaning, maintenance, lighting, and safety programs similar to East Main Street SID	Public Private Community Fundors	Target Livingston Avenue for routine Clean and Safe Corridor Initiatives Enhance safety programs similar to East Main Street SID Implement corner store improvement strategy Support public realm investments (plantings, murals, public arts) Explore the creation of a business camera surveillance program. Provide subsidy/grant to businesses to install cameras, and requires the camera registration with the local Police Department's SafeCam program	Short-Term Ongoing
Commercial Revitalization				
Healthy Corner Stores	Enhance corner stores with improved fresh food selection and strengthen business operations through technical assistance and incentives.	Public Private Fundors	Secure corner store owners' participation Identify the best model to pursue Evaluate potential collaborative distribution models Identify funding and/or grants	Short Term Ongoing
Façade and Building Improvements	Incentivize physical improvements for immediate visual impact using Ohio Main Street methodology - buildings, signage, streetscapes, landscaping.	Public Private Community	Target Livingston Avenue for future façade improvement program grants Engage with OSU Architecture Program and/or Columbus AIA for pro-bono design services Engage with the Neighborhood Design Center for additional design services Identify 2-5 businesses to catalyze the effort.	Medium-Term Ongoing
Temporary/Pop-Up Retail	Activate streets with temporary stores, offer low-risk business testing for entrepreneurs, build brand awareness with low entry costs.	Public Private Community	Identify one or two locations as pilot effort, secure landlords' permission Create Pop-up retail policies (length of time, target businesses, license agreement, marketing) Identify potential tenants Secure a process to expedite permits and certificates of occupancy	Short-Term Ongoing
White Box Commercial Space	Prepare commercial spaces to essential elements, eliminate extra tenant costs, expedite move-ins for new and secondary spaces.	Public Private	Identify potential locations Engage landlords to commit to participate in this program	Short Term Ongoing
Business Attraction and Support				
Business Recruitment	Target businesses filling neighborhood gaps: grocery, family restaurants, coffee shops, personal fitness, childcare - businesses serving daily needs creating foot traffic.	Public Private Community	Create a retail/business attraction advisory group with representatives from the existing civic and community groups and the private sector, including existing businesses. Establish relationships with retail brokers that work in Columbus and the region to enhance awareness about market gaps, available sites and opportunities, and community priorities. Create and distribute marketing collateral that includes relevant market data and metrics retailers (and other businesses) need to make site selection decisions (demos, trade area information etc.) Target small business and entrepreneurial resources along Livingston Avenue; engage with existing businesses and attract aspiring business owners. Target wellness programs and resources in the study area Create market-readiness dashboard with key indicators for future retailers Market current (or future) incentive package to attract investment	Medium-Term Ongoing
Business Incubator/ Shared Space for Makers and Entrepreneurs	Create shared spaces for entrepreneurs to test concepts, grow businesses. Focus on fashion, food, locally made goods with business support, funding access, mentorship.	Public Private Community Fundors	Establish relationships with local institutions in the field of entrepreneurship. Include universities such as Ohio State University, Franklin University, and the Ohio Dominican University's Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship. Connect with organizations that support entrepreneurship, such as the SBDC, NAWBO Identify and inventory resources available for entrepreneurs, from training to capital. Identify potential sites along the corridor or within the study area that might be suitable; for example: a shared kitchen ideally with existing infrastructure (cooking and prep equipment, refrigeration)	Short-Term Ongoing

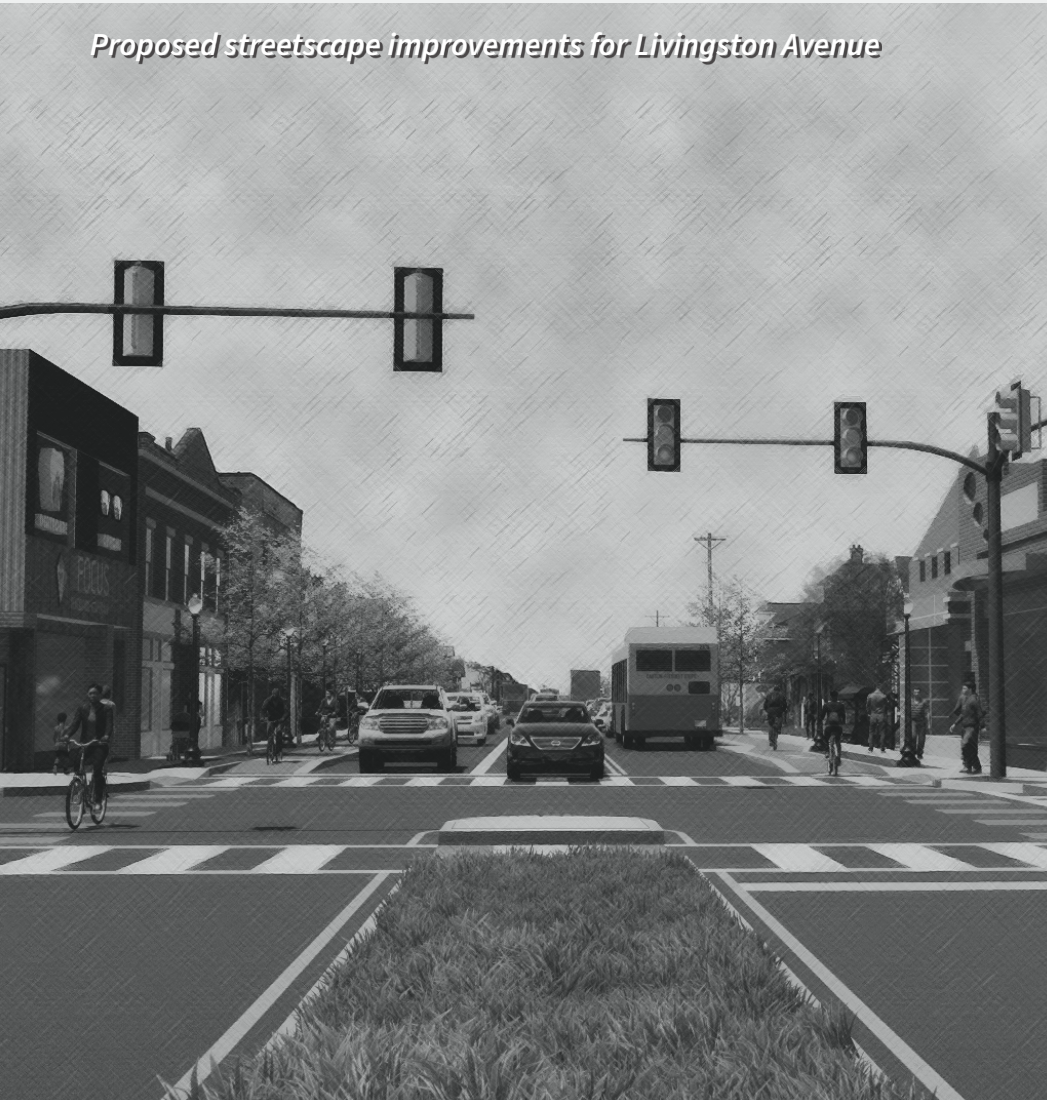
Executive Summary

Strategic Framework Matrix

Strategy/ Tactic	Purpose	Responsibilities	Next Steps	Implementation Timeline
Marketing and Communications				
Neighborhood Branding and Marketing	Leverage infrastructure improvements for positive momentum, shift public perception, attract visitors/businesses during construction periods.	Public Private Community Funders	Craft clear, consistent messaging to communicate the unique character and offerings of the Study Area Promote streetscape improvements to the local media Use social media to promote streetscape improvements and business activity; utilize neighborhood groups' accounts to promote, have stakeholders repost messages Visual storytelling utilizing high-quality images and video to showcase improvements and other promotional activities, events, and new businesses	Short-Term Ongoing
Business Promotion and Events	Coordinate business promotion and community engagement activities that increase visibility and customer traffic for existing businesses while building community connections that support long term corridor success.	Public Private Community Funders	Promote local businesses and neighborhood efforts Create social media accounts to inform the community about ongoing improvements and activities (Facebook, Instagram, etc.) Continue to support/promote community events and festivals Explore pop-up events/activities (e.g., food truck parks) Link Livingston Avenue activities with Parsons Avenue, Main Street, and Downtown Establish relationships with area brokers to put Livingston Avenue "on the map"	Short-Term Ongoing
Redevelopment Opportunities				
Strategic Site Assembly	Prepare corridor for development through coordinated land assembly, create developable sites for significant investment addressing fragmented ownership.	Public Private Community Funders	Corridor Analysis and Site Identification to determine potential focus parcels Identify 3-5 priority catalyst sites with the greatest potential for transformative development Coordinate with neighborhood organizations and residents to ensure projects align with community goals Engage existing businesses and property owners who may be interested in participating in site assembly opportunities Develop implementation plans for priority sites	Medium-Term
Affordable Commercial Space	Ensure commercial affordability through innovative ownership preventing displacement, maintain neighborhood-serving businesses as values increase.	Public Private Community Funders	Research and feasibility assessment of potential acquisition targets Stakeholder engagement and coalition building of property owners, business owners, and community organizations Establish strategic properties for pilot commercial land trust acquisition Implementation and expansion	Long-Term Ongoing
Governance				
Community Development Corporation	Create dedicated organization for neighborhood revitalization that focuses on affordable housing, economic development, job training, social services as community intermediary.	Public Private Community Funders	Identify potential seed funding Assemble a board representing the City Department of Development, Children's Hospital, community members, businesses, and property owners Secure ongoing funding sources Complete legal and administrative setup; establish financial management and accountability systems Launch the program with evaluation and monitoring phases	Long-Term Ongoing
National Main Street Designation	Establish a Main Street designation on the Livingston Ave commercial corridor. This offers numerous benefits, primarily centered around revitalizing downtown areas and fostering economic growth.	Public Private Community Funders	Build on work already done by Livingston Ave. Merchants Association. Explore the process to establish a designated Main Street program which offers communities a proven framework for revitalizing commercial districts, fostering economic growth, and enhancing quality of life.	Medium-Term Ongoing

Section 1: Introduction

Proposed streetscape improvements for Livingston Avenue



Key Takeaways

Location

The Livingston Avenue corridor is positioned as a key east-west connector in Columbus, serving multiple neighborhoods and benefiting from proximity to downtown and major institutions like Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Zoning Modernization

The City's Zone In initiative introduces three new mixed-use districts (Community Activity Center, Urban Center, Urban General 1) along Livingston Avenue, allowing 4-8 story buildings and eliminating minimum parking requirements to encourage transit-oriented development.

Fragmented Land Use

Commercial parcels represent the largest developed land use at around 22 percent of corridor acreage, but are often small and discontinuous, limiting development potential. Industrial, vacant, and parking uses (+10 percent combined) present some redevelopment opportunities.

Strong Planning Foundation

Multiple adopted plans, including the 2022 Joint Livingston Avenue Plan and 2011 Near Southside Area Plan, provide comprehensive frameworks emphasizing mixed-use development, walkability, and streetscape improvements.

Implementation Support

Existing city programs and community organizations provide a foundation for small business support and development, creating opportunities to leverage current resources for corridor revitalization.

Introduction

Project Purpose and Goals

The City of Columbus seeks balanced, equitable neighborhoods throughout the city where residents all have access to financial stability and economic opportunity. East Livingston Avenue is a priority corridor for the city. As part of its neighborhood-based economic development strategy, the City offers programs aimed at supporting revitalization and reinvestments in designated traditional neighborhood business districts. The \$29 million planned public infrastructure and streetscape improvements along East Livingston Avenue will enhance mobility and the following study aims to build on this momentum.

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Shown here are renderings depicting some of the streetscape improvements that will be implemented in the East Livingston Avenue Study Area.



Proposed intersection improvements, Champion Street (west)



Proposed Linwood Street Improvements



Introduction

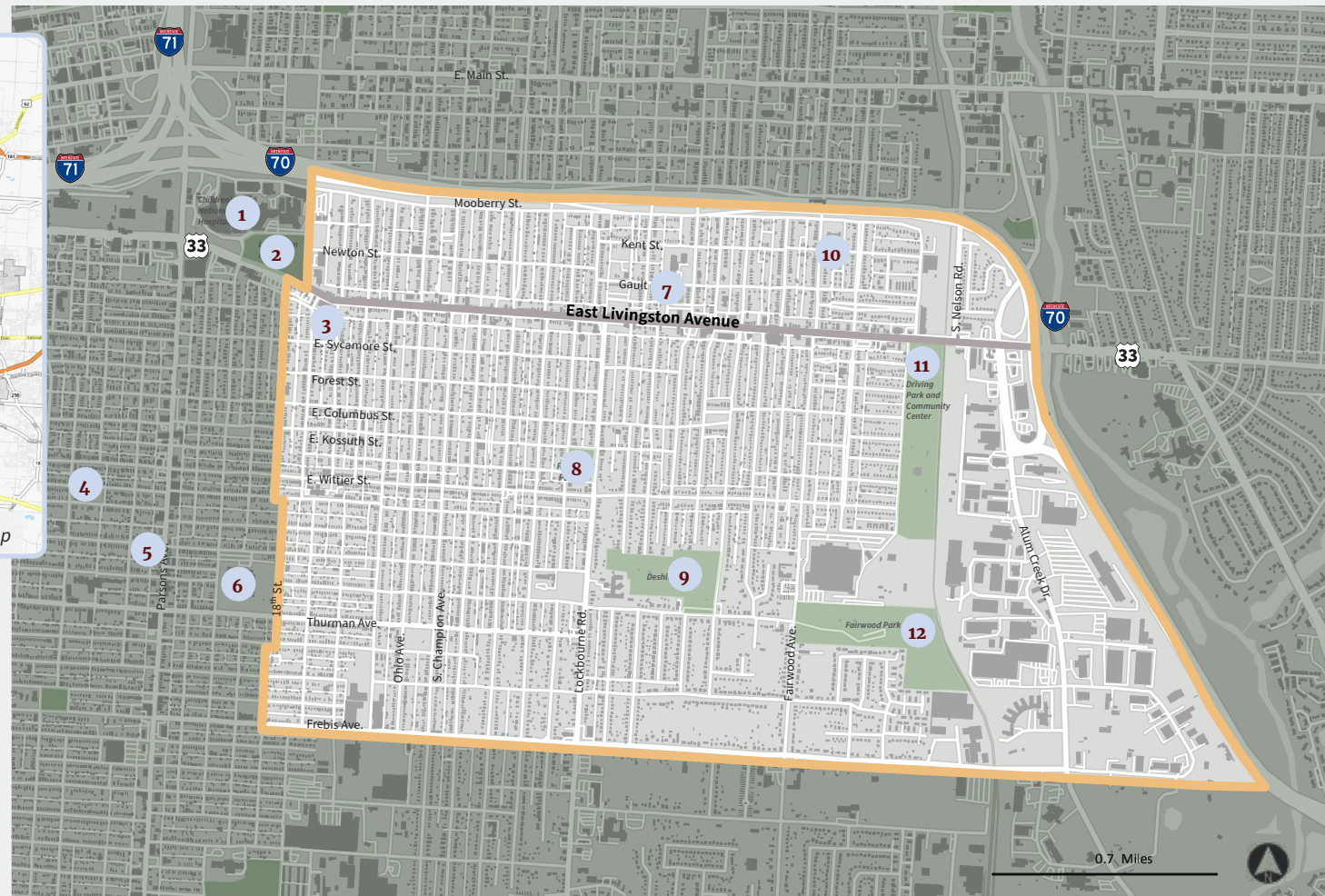
Regional Context



The Livingston Avenue Study Area is located within the City of Columbus, Ohio, southeast of Downtown. It is close to the intersection of I-70 and I-71, affording the area with access to the regional highway network.

Livingston Avenue is a nearly two-mile corridor with nodes where a mix of commercial and residential uses and is anchored by Nationwide Children's Hospital on the west. Areas north and south of Livingston Avenue include all or portions of the Driving Park, Old Oak, Livingston Park, and Southern Orchards neighborhoods, which consist primarily of older single-family homes as well as parks, schools, a public library and community recreation center.

Livingston Avenue Study Area

**Key Neighborhood Assets**

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Nationwide Children's Hospital | 7. Driving Park Branch of the Columbus Metro Library |
| 2. Livingston Park | 8. Roosevelt Park |
| 3. Livingston Elementary School | 9. Deshr Park |
| 4. Siebert Elementary School | 10. Fairwood Alternative Elementary School |
| 5. Parsons Branch of the Columbus Metro Library | 11. Driving Park and Community Center |
| 6. South High School | 12. Fairwood Park |

Introduction

Plans Covering the Study Area

Joint Livingston Avenue Plan (2022)

The *Bexley and Columbus Joint Livingston Avenue Plan*, completed in 2022 is a comprehensive, collaborative initiative between the cities focused on reimagining the East Livingston Avenue corridor from Nelson Road to James Road. The plan, shaped through extensive community engagement and a year-long planning process, addresses critical safety issues, especially high vehicle speeds, and aims to enhance pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist safety through near- and long-term improvements.

Key strategies include implementing a road diet, enhancing bikeways and sidewalks, and adding streetscape beautification elements. Near-term actions focus on tactical urbanism and lane re-striping, while long-term plans propose significant redesigns, including landscaped medians and multi-use pathways. The plan also provides detailed urban design principles and streetscape guidelines to support cohesive, attractive redevelopment along the corridor.

These improvements aim to transform Livingston Avenue into a safe, accessible, and vibrant urban neighborhood street that fosters connectivity and neighborhood pride.

Plan Components Related to Retail and Commercial Development

- **Mixed-Use and Urban Form:** Promotes multi-story, mixed-use development with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential (including affordable housing) above, with buildings placed close to the street to create an active, pedestrian-friendly corridor.
- **Parking and Access Management:** Encourages rear-lot parking and use of alleys or access roads for vehicular entry, reducing front-facing surface lots and curb cuts to support safer, more attractive streetscapes.
- **Streetscape and Design Guidelines:** Provides unified design standards for street trees, lighting, furniture, signage, and public art to enhance commercial appeal and ensure continuity along the corridor.
- **Tactical Urbanism and Placemaking:** Recommends short-term, low-cost interventions—such as planters, public art, and temporary landscaping—to quickly improve the look and feel of commercial areas while supporting local businesses.
- **Integration with Long-Term Redevelopment:** Aligns long-term street improvements with property redevelopment, particularly in commercial nodes, to support infrastructure upgrades, reduce turning conflicts, and create inviting, destination-oriented retail environments.

Other Relevant Plans and Studies

Bike Plus Plan (2024)

Downtown Columbus Strategic Plan (2023)

Livingston Ave. Area Community

Street Tree Inventory (2023)

Columbus Small Business Agenda (2020)

Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (2018)

Insight2050 (2015)

South Side Plan (2014)

Livingston East Area Plan (2009)

Near East Area Plan (2005)

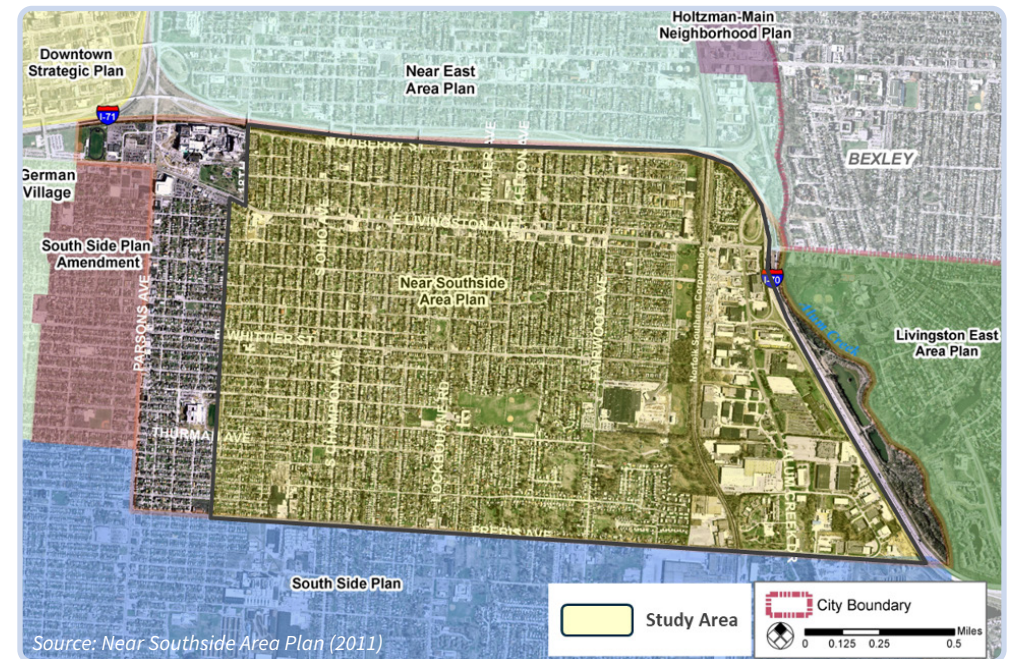
Introduction

Plans Covering the Study Area

Near Southside Area Plan (2011)

The *Near Southside Area Plan*, adopted in 2011 by the City of Columbus, establishes a comprehensive framework to guide future growth and revitalization in the Near Southside Planning Area, which lies just southeast of Downtown Columbus. The plan emphasizes mixed-use development along primary corridors, particularly Livingston and Parsons avenues, encouraging a blend of multifamily housing, retail, and office spaces to support transit accessibility and walkability. It promotes design guidelines for both residential and commercial projects, outlines strategies to preserve historic character, and recommends significant upgrades to transportation infrastructure, including bicycle and pedestrian enhancements. Key redevelopment concepts focus on underutilized sites at the intersection of Champion and Livingston avenues.

The plan also integrates goals for housing diversity, economic development, environmental sustainability, and improved community facilities, using a coordinated implementation strategy supported by land use, urban design, and transportation policies.



Plan Components Related to Retail and Commercial Development

- **Mixed-Use Corridors:** Promotes mixed-use development along Livingston and Parsons avenues, combining retail, office, and multifamily residential uses to create walkable, transit-supportive environments.
- **Neighborhood and Community Commercial Designations:** Establishes land use categories for neighborhood and community commercial nodes, recommending small-scale retail and office uses integrated into key intersections and corridors with appropriate zoning and design standards.
- **Urban Commercial Overlay and Design Guidelines:** Applies the Urban Commercial Overlay to portions of Livingston and Parsons to preserve architectural character and support pedestrian-oriented site design, including storefront windows, rear parking, and reduced setbacks.
- **Reinvestment Tools and Incentives:** Leverages Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) program funding and other economic development incentives to attract investment and support property renovation along key corridors like Parsons Avenue.
- **Development Concepts and Streetscape Improvements:** Provides visual development concepts for key sites (e.g., Champion and Livingston intersection) and recommends streetscape enhancements—including landscaping, signage, lighting, and pedestrian access—to improve commercial district aesthetics and functionality.

Introduction

Zoning Code Update

The City of Columbus has recently launched a major overhaul of its zoning code, the first in over 70 years, through the Zone In initiative. Phase One of this modernization effort is focused on updating zoning regulations along key corridors, including Livingston Avenue, as a strategy to address the city's housing shortage, promote equitable growth, and support transit-oriented development. The updated code introduces new mixed-use zoning districts with flexible, context-sensitive standards that support taller, denser, and more walkable development. These changes are designed to better align zoning with adopted community plans and regional priorities, enabling more efficient and predictable development of the types of projects residents and stakeholders have long supported.

Among the most significant updates are the elimination of minimum parking requirements, a transition to market-driven parking strategies, and a height bonus program that allows additional building stories in exchange for the provision of affordable housing. The new code also features clear, objective design standards that aim to streamline approvals, reduce the reliance on variances, and encourage investment by smaller developers. By concentrating this first phase on high-opportunity corridors, the Zone In initiative seeks to deliver a substantial share of the region's new housing in a way that supports economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and improved access to employment, services, and transportation.



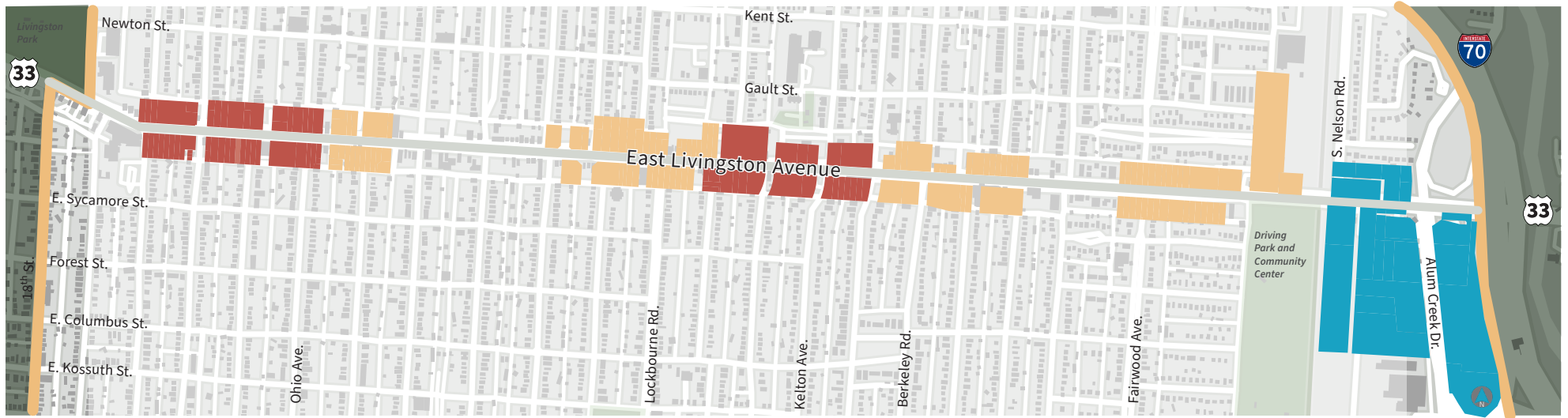
City Programs to Support Small Business and Development

- [The Columbus Foundation](#)
- [Community Development Collaborative of Greater Columbus](#)
- [Ohio Small Business Development Center at Columbus State \(SBDC\)](#)
- [Ohio Department of Development](#)
- [City of Columbus Small Business Agenda & Hub](#)



Introduction

Mixed Use Zoning Districts, Livingston Avenue Corridor



Source: ArcGIS Pro (2025), Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2025)

The updated zoning framework under the Zone In initiative applies three key district types along segments of the Livingston Avenue corridor: Community Activity Center (CAC), Urban Center (UCT), and Urban General 1 (UGN-1). Each district is tailored to support different intensities of mixed-use development and is designed to promote walkability, transit access, and context-sensitive growth in alignment with local neighborhood plans.

Mixed Use Districts

- **Community Activity Center (CAC):** The CAC district applies to areas with existing auto-oriented commercial uses that are poised for transformation into walkable, mixed-use environments. It allows buildings up to five stories by right and up to seven stories with affordability bonuses. This district supports residential, retail, and service uses and encourages redevelopment that improves pedestrian and transit access.
- **Urban Center (UCT):** The UCT district is intended for high-density, transit-oriented areas along the corridor. It permits up to five stories by right and up to eight stories with affordability incentives. This district prioritizes active ground-floor uses and compact urban design, positioning buildings close to the street to foster a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly environment.
- **Urban General 1 (UGN-1):** The UGN-1 district supports lower-intensity mixed-use development, serving as a transition between more intensive zones and adjacent residential areas. It allows up to four stories and accommodates a range of residential and commercial uses. The district is designed to promote gentle infill while maintaining neighborhood character and walkability.

Introduction

Land Use in the Study Area

The Livingston Avenue corridor contains a diverse but fragmented pattern of land uses, with no single use occupying a majority share of the street frontage. Commercial parcels account for around 22 percent of total acreage, the most dominant developed land use, reinforcing the corridor’s historical function as a neighborhood-scale commercial spine. However, these uses are often situated on small and sometimes discontinuous lots, limiting their visibility, continuity, and development potential.

Residential uses collectively make up around 19 percent of corridor acreage, with multifamily housing (12.0 percent) representing a larger share than single-family homes (7.4 percent). This reflects a moderate but notable presence of medium-density housing, which aligns with current policy goals to expand housing options along transit corridors. Community uses are also prominent, comprising more than 18 percent of acreage, and include schools, medical facilities,

and other civic institutions that anchor key segments of the corridor and serve as potential catalysts for mixed-use reinvestment.

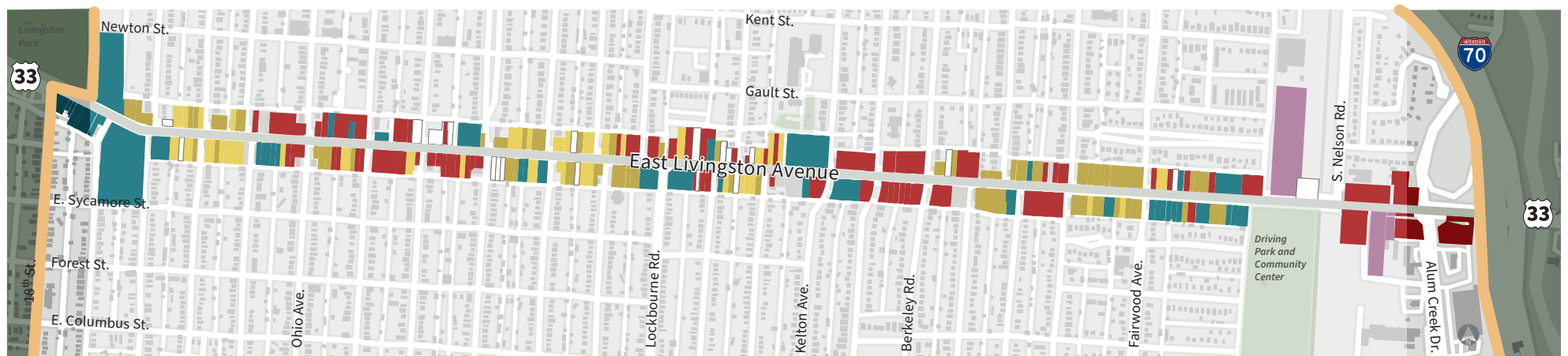
Industrial, vacant, and parking uses together account for over 10 percent of total corridor land, highlighting clear opportunities for redevelopment. These underutilized parcels, many of which are located on the eastern end of the corridor, could play a key role in accommodating future residential or mixed-use projects under the new zoning framework. While open space represents the largest single land use by acreage at 29 percent, this figure is largely attributable to Driving Park and does not reflect a corridor-wide pattern. Overall, the corridor’s fragmented and fine-grained fabric offers both a challenge and an opportunity: while current land use lacks continuity, the diverse mix provides a strong foundation for more intensive, walkable, and transit-supportive reinvestment, particularly under the Zone In framework.

Parcel Count and Size by Land Use along the Livingston Avenue Corridor, 2024

Land Use	Parcels	Acreage	Share of Total Acreage
Open Space	2	22.7	29.0%
Commercial	74	17.4	22.3%
Residential	119	15.1	19.4%
Multifamily	67	9.3	12.0%
Single Family	52	5.8	7.4%
Community	49	14.5	18.6%
Industrial	3	4.4	5.7%
Vacant	19	2.7	3.4%
Parking	8	1.2	1.6%
Total	274	78.1	100%

Source: City of Columbus (2024), Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2025)

Land Use by Parcel along East Livingston Avenue Corridor, 2024



Source: City of Columbus (2024), ArcGIS Pro (2025), Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2025)

Section 2: Public Engagement

Key Takeaways

Comprehensive Outreach

The engagement process reached over 21 key stakeholder organizations and approximately 16,000 addresses through direct mailings, with the project microsite receiving over 4,600 views.

Three Strategic Priorities

Community input identified **Business Support and Attraction, Clean and Safe Environment, and Redevelopment Opportunities** as the top priorities for immediate 12-month focus.

Inclusive Development Vision

Residents want diverse retail options (coffee shops, restaurants, bookstores, accessible grocery stores) that replicate the walkable, mixed-use character of neighborhoods like Clintonville and Grandview.

Gentrification Concerns

Community members expressed worries about displacement of existing residents and businesses, emphasizing the need for balanced approaches that support local entrepreneurs while managing rising costs.



Public Engagement

Overview

A robust community outreach and engagement plan was developed and implemented to inform and involve stakeholders. The plan communicated the study's purpose, activities, and progress while remaining flexible and responsive to community dynamics. It also adapted to emerging opportunities, including community-led outreach efforts that the project team could coordinate with as much as possible.

The plan prioritized gathering diverse feedback and understanding of stakeholder interests. Opportunities for input and feedback were created to reflect the diverse interests and preferences of stakeholders' engagement. Sustaining engagement throughout the decision-making process helped ensure transparency, foster awareness, and build alignment with community needs. It also supported stronger connections to future decisions and outcomes. Activities were designed to be inclusive and respectful of cultural, historical, accessibility, and language considerations, ensuring meaningful participation across all community segments.

Targeted Representative Stakeholder Organizations

City of Columbus Liaison for South Side, Far South, Southwest Area Commissions

City of Columbus Liaison for Near East Area, Livingston Avenue Area, and Milo Grogan Area Commissions

Community Development For All People

Driving Park Civic Association

Gathers Place

German Village Society

Gertrude Wood Community Foundation

Healthy Neighborhoods Healthy Families

Impact Community Action

Livingston Avenue Area Commission

Livingston Area Merchants Association

Local Matters

Merion Village Association

Nationwide Children's Hospital

Old Oaks Civic Association

Rickenbacker Woods Foundation

Schumaker Place Civic Association

Southern Orchards Civic Association

Southside Area Commission

Southside Community Action Network

South Side Thrive Collaborative

Key Stakeholders

Key stakeholders were identified for outreach and engagement through research conducted by the consultants, as well as recommendations provided by the City of Columbus and community members. During outreach and engagement activities, audiences received background information about the origins and goals of the retail market study. Additionally, they were provided with information about taking the survey and additional engagement opportunities hosted on the online microsite.

The list below shows the stakeholder groups or representatives targeted for outreach and engagement efforts, aiming to involve them and serve as primary channels for sharing project activities with their audience.

Recognizing that organizational capacity and community networks differ, the following suggestions were offered to stakeholders as options for sharing information about the market study:

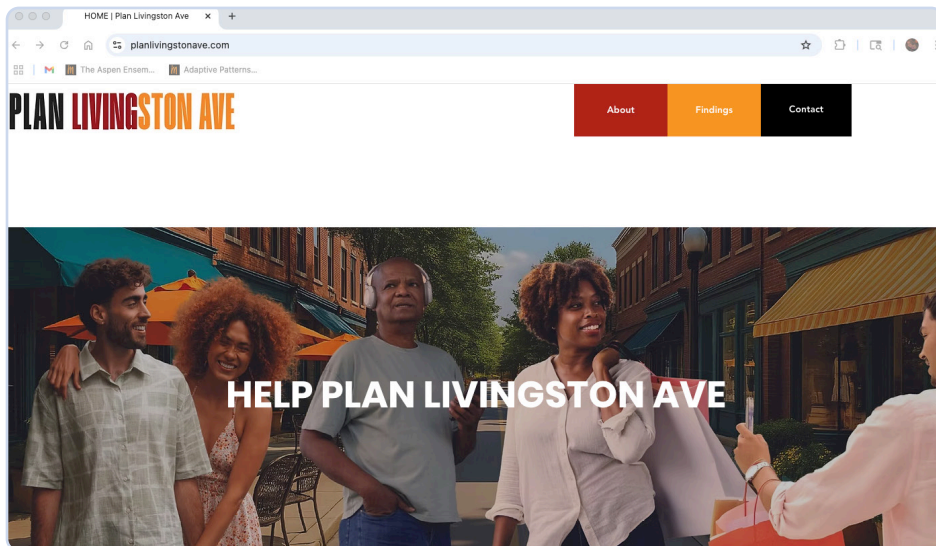


- Community meetings and events
- Email blasts or digital newsletters
- Facebook posts or groups
- Nextdoor.com posts
- Other community channels
- Organizations' websites
- Physical copies of the survey and flyers available upon request

Public Engagement

Public Outreach and Engagement

An online microsite, planlivingstonave.com, was developed and promoted for the project's duration. The webpage serves as the primary hub for online information and communication. It hosts content such as the stakeholder survey, a sign-up form to receive project updates, RSVP forms for community meetings, meeting presentations, and contact information for the project. Whenever possible, the microsite replicated the input and feedback process conducted during in-person convenings, such as community meetings. The webpage is continuously updated to reflect project activities at various stages.



A map of the Study Area boundaries was created and hosted on the microsite for public reference and interaction. It has received over 4,600 views as of this report.



Flyers/Mailers

Collateral, such as flyers and mailers, was designed and created during the project's public launch in April 2025. The collateral exists in both hard copy and electronic formats. The flyers provided a general overview of the project's purpose rather than promoting specific activities, ensuring the content remains relevant throughout the project. Additionally, they direct recipients to the microsite for more information and to learn about ways to get involved, including participating in the stakeholder survey, community meetings, and other activities. To expand their reach, flyers and mailers were mailed to approximately 16,000 residential and commercial addresses. The mailing included the following ZIP codes within and near the project's boundaries: 43205, 43206, 43209, 43213, and 43227. Hard copies and digital versions were also made available for stakeholders to distribute to their networks.



Public Engagement

Key Informant Interviews

A series of interviews were conducted with representatives of stakeholder groups to gather early insights. Participants included representatives of nonprofits, community groups, and businesses. They were identified based on consultants' stakeholder analysis of key interested and affected stakeholders, recommendations from the City of Columbus, and those of interviewees. Invitees and participants received information about the project and its purpose, as well as access to the project webpage and the survey. They were also notified when the first community meeting was scheduled.

Key Informant Interview Participants

Organization	Representative	Organization Type
CBRE	Luke Streng, CBRE	Commercial Brokerage
Church & Community Development For All People	Mike Premo, Executive Director	Nonprofit
Coldwell Banker Commercial – Aspire Team	Anthony Maronitis, CCIM, MS, Principal – Broker Marcus Banasik, PhD, Commercial Advisor	Commercial Brokerage
Columbus City Attorney's Office	Tiara Ross, Deputy Chief Zone Attorney	Government
Columbus Land Bank	John M. Turner	Nonprofit
Columbus Mayors Office	Chris Suel, Assistant Director of External Affairs	Government
Healthy Neighborhoods Healthy Families	Gretchen West, Executive Director	Nonprofit
INCommercial Property Group	Meggie Jenkins, Managing Broker	Commercial Brokerage
Livingston Avenue Merchants Association	Nina Craddolph, Executive Director	Nonprofit
Livingston Avenue Neighborhood Commission	David Gray, Commissioner	Community Group
Livingston Avenue Neighborhood Commission	Danielle Dillard, Commissioner	Community Group
MKSK	Andrew Overbeck, Principal	Business
Nationwide Children's Hospital	Tifini Ray, Director, Community Relations, Community Wellness Nieme Banks, Community Relations Patricia McCimon, SVP, Strategic and Facilities Planning	Nonprofit
New York Fashion	Jason Saleh, Owner/Manager	Business
Ohio Equity	Dan Sheeran, Principal	Commercial Brokerage
Old Oaks Civic Association	Kim Dodson, President, Old Oaks Civic Association	Community Group
One Columbus	Kenny McDonald, CEO, One Columbus	Nonprofit – Economic Development
Rickenbacker Woods Foundation	Mike Aaron, Executive Director	Nonprofit
Ronald McDonald House	Dee Anders	Nonprofit
South Side Thrive	Sarah Lenkay, Director	Nonprofit
Toro Market	Ownership Team	Business
Woda Cooper Companies	Jonathan D. McKay, Vice President, Development	Real Estate Developer

Public Engagement

Community Meetings

A community meeting was held Monday evening, April 28th, 2025, at the Parsons Branch Library. The location was chosen due to its location within easy access to the project area. During the meeting, ESI and The Riddle Company provided an overview of the retail market study process and current findings. New Reach Community Consulting facilitated discussions among participants in small and large groups to identify aspirations and concerns for the Livingston Avenue corridor. Information about the meeting was emailed to Eastside and Southside-based organizations, who were encouraged to attend and help promote through their networks. Sixteen community members were in attendance, as recorded on a sign-in sheet, representing residents, organizations, groups, and businesses from the Southside and Eastside of Columbus. Afterward, an email was sent to meeting attendees and others who signed up on the project's contact list. It included a PDF of the meeting presentation and an online form for sharing insights and aspirations for retail and small commercial businesses.

A second community meeting was held in the evening of Thursday, July 10, 2025, at the Driving Park Branch of the Columbus Public Library, which is within the study boundaries. The meeting helped shape the final recommendations for the Study.



Virtual Community Organization Information Sessions

Two virtual informational sessions were held for nonprofit organizations based in Eastside and Southside on the evenings of Monday, June 2, and Thursday, June 5. Target audiences included nonprofits, community groups, government agencies, and businesses. During the sessions, participants received an overview of the project. Afterward, they had an opportunity to review, give feedback, and help prioritize strategic action areas. Information about the meeting was emailed to Eastside and Southside-based organizations, who were asked to identify a representative to attend. Seven people participated in the sessions. Individuals who were interested but unable to participate were emailed an online form to prioritize strategic action areas based on the draft recommendations discussed. They were also encouraged to seek involvement in the activity from others in their organization and from partner organizations in their network.

The Old Oaks Civic Association received a requested presentation at their community meeting on Monday, June 9. Afterwards, they were provided with an online form to use to provide input on prioritizing strategic actions.

Public Engagement

Community Survey Results

A community survey was administered to gather input from local residents and stakeholders about the current retail and entertainment offerings in the neighborhood as well as preferences about future offerings and opportunities. The survey was heavily focused on food and beverage and grocery, top priorities that were identified by the neighborhood. The survey was launched online in May 2025 and remained open through early July.

Access to fresh food and a full-service grocer is important to the community, so part of the survey addressed local grocery shopping habits. To better understand dining and entertainment demands and preferences, we also asked about residents' preferred places for meals and recreation.

Similarly, the survey included questions intended to gain a better understanding of dining and entertainment demands and preferences. There are limited eateries and entertainment venues in the Study Area. Consequently, questions about dining and entertainment determined where residents preferred to go out for meals or recreation.

The survey also captured demographic and market data about the respondents, which, along with the survey responses, helped to guide the recommendations.

The following is a summary of the findings.

Survey Responses

234 respondents

Top three zip codes (+ 85%)

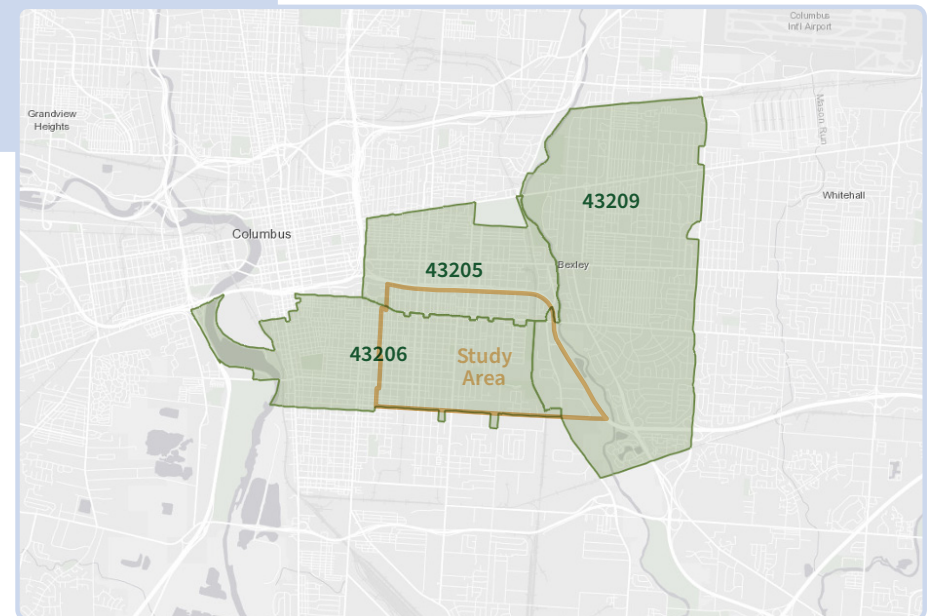
- ▶ 43209
- ▶ 43206
- ▶ 43205

Average time living in the area

- ▶ 37% for 1 to 5 years
- ▶ 35% for +10 years
- ▶ 23% for 5 to 10 years



The majority drive alone to get to work



Public Engagement

Community Survey Findings

Groceries and Food

The primary factors affecting local grocery shopping choices, listed in order of importance, are store cleanliness and condition, product selection, location, and price. Crime levels and perception of crime also affect shopping choices.

Most respondents shop at Kroger and Giant Eagle, national, full service supermarkets that are located outside of the Study Area. A few also purchase groceries from local stores like Toro Market, drug stores, discount stores, and online. Only a small

number patronize corner stores. Other mentioned stores include Aldi, BJ's, Charmy's Market, Costco, Hills, Lucky's, Marc's, Meijer, Sam's Club, Saraga Grocery, Trader Joe's, Walmart, Weilands, and Whole Foods.

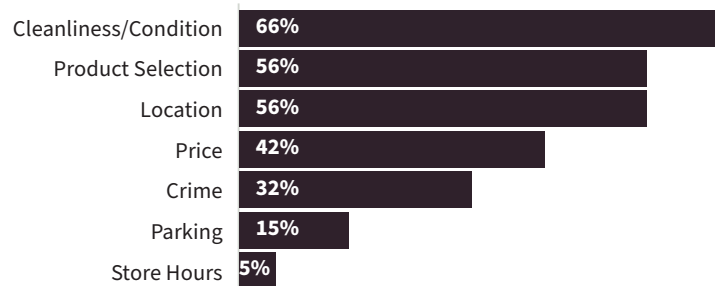
The same factors that shape shopping habits and store choices also determine when and where people shop. Most respondents visit stores on weekends, evenings, or after work—often at locations outside the Study Area.

The survey revealed that Bexley, Downtown, and German Village were the top three locations for both

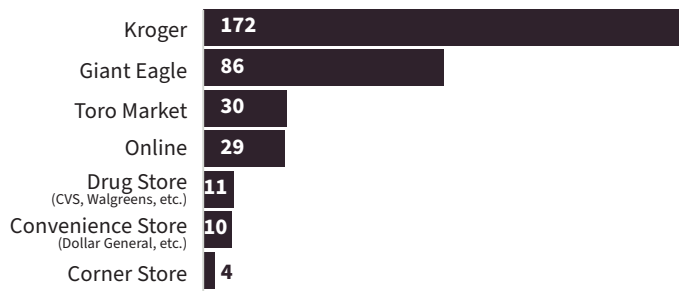
dining and entertainment. Both Downtown and Bexley lead with nearly 45 percent of respondents choosing them for meals and fun, while German Village ranked third in both categories. These areas, all near the study site, offer diverse dining and entertainment options at various price points.

Several other locations, such as the Arena District, Brewery District, Clintonville, East Market, Easton, Franklinton, Gahanna, Grandview, Old Towne East, Reynoldsburg, and the University area, appeared in both categories. These areas provide various options for dining and entertainment.

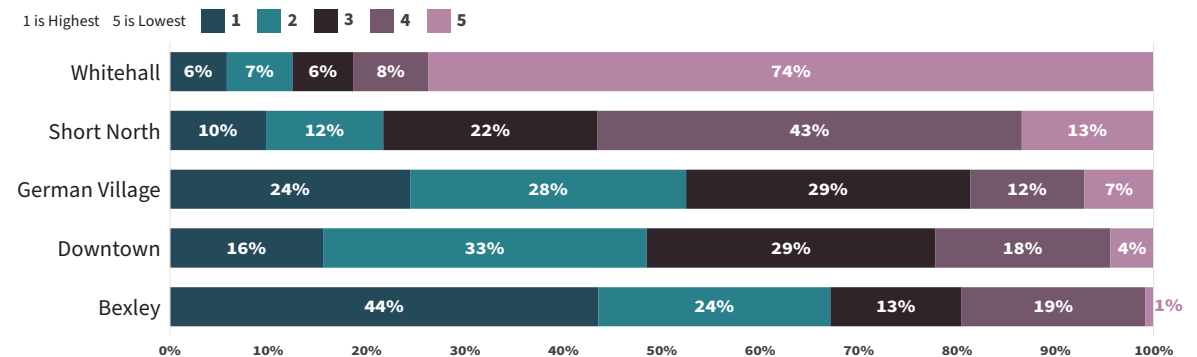
What influences respondent's decision on where to shop for groceries/food?



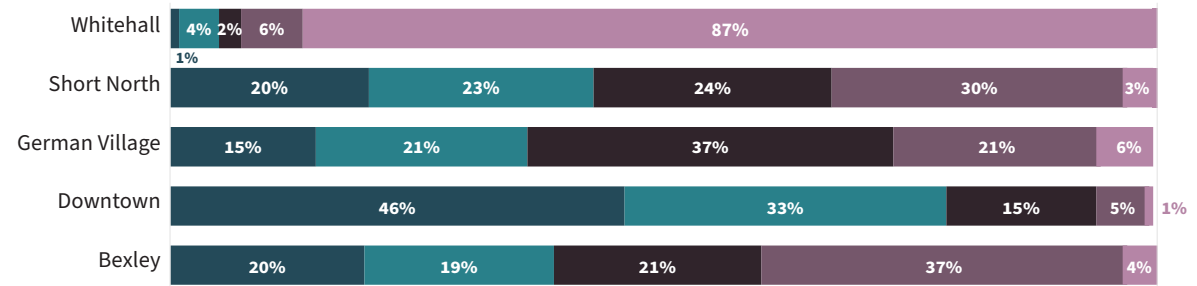
Where do respondents shop for groceries?



Where do respondents go out for a meal?



Where do respondents go for entertainment?



Summary of Engagement Findings

This summary highlights a wide range of input and feedback from various community stakeholders regarding revitalization and retail priorities along Livingston Avenue. It reflects both aspirational ideas and pressing concerns. Community sentiments indicate that the corridor has strong potential for renewal. Residents requested clear, adaptable plans that can adjust to community needs over time, along with an optimistic yet realistic timeline for when they can expect to see change.

However, success depends on centering local voices, addressing infrastructure and safety concerns, and fostering organic, inclusive growth. Beautification, walkability, and business attraction must align with efforts to build trust, support small businesses, and reinforce community identity. Without trust and transparency, many fear revitalization will remain superficial rather than transformative. Other areas, including **Governance, Investments in Existing Properties, and Marketing and Branding**, were seen as important follow-up steps, building on the progress of these foundational efforts.

Strategic Priorities Identified by the Community

Three strategic priority areas emerged as central for immediate focus over the next 12 months:

- **Business Support and Attraction**
- **Clean and Safe Environment**
- **Redevelopment Opportunities**

Concerns and Risks

Displacement and Gentrification

Community members worry that improvements could:

Displace existing residents or small businesses due to rising costs.

Attract outsiders without preserving the cultural identity and needs of long-time residents.

Systemic Challenges

Beyond retail and aesthetics, participants also highlighted:

Public health concerns: such as access to healthy food and managing conditions like diabetes.

Limited trust in government processes: stemming from inconsistent engagement and a lack of visible follow-through.

Work/life affordability: questions were raised about how revitalization efforts will improve access to good-paying jobs and affordable housing.

Safety: a majority of individuals expressed concerns about safety. This includes concerns about the speed and aggressive driving along the corridor making it unsafe for residents as well as overall crime from petty theft to more violent crime.

Public Engagement

*Top Community Needs and Recommendations****Walkability, Safety, and Beautification***

Participants across neighborhoods consistently emphasized:

Improved infrastructure: updated street lighting, wider sidewalks with buffers, benches, green spaces, and traffic calming.

Cleaner environments: power-washed sidewalks, more trash bins, and visible, consistent maintenance.

Public safety: reduced crime, stronger police presence, and fewer traffic incidents.

Feedback highlighted that revitalization efforts will not succeed without tackling the core issue of crime, which some call “the number one issue.” Many believed that regardless of how attractive retail or streetscape upgrades are, they will not be sustainable without a comprehensive crime-reduction plan. Concerns also included **speeding, unsafe intersections, and specific hot spots**, such as left turns onto Grattan Road during rush hour, which were described as chaotic.

Questions arose about traffic control plans, especially on side streets between Livingston and Main. The community reports an increase in both vehicle and

pedestrian crashes. There have also been calls for speed enforcement, lower speed limits, and pedestrian-first infrastructure.

Efforts in areas like Old Oaks demonstrate what is achievable. Examples include self-funded beautification projects (such as tree planting), collaborations with Keep Columbus Beautiful, and active reporting through 311. However, some frustrations persist regarding the City’s responsiveness, as well as the need for more follow-up and a stronger, more consistent presence in the community and support for grassroots initiatives.

Vibrant, Mixed-Use, and Inclusive Business Development

Stakeholders envision a commercial corridor that offers:

Diverse retail options: coffee shops, restaurants (including suggestions like Social Pho or 6-1-Pho), bookstores, record shops, plant stores, hardware stores, and consignment shops.

Essential services: accessible grocery stores (e.g., Trader Joe’s, Aldi), CSA pick-up sites, and neighborhood-scale fresh markets.

Community-friendly amenities: cafés with large windows, outdoor seating, spaces for children and families, and

welcoming storefronts that promote visibility and social interaction.

Residents want Livingston to replicate the walkable, mixed-use charm of neighborhoods like Clintonville or Grandview. Some suggested attracting established businesses that have been displaced from downtown or the Short North. Others urged a dual strategy: bringing in new investment while helping evolve existing businesses, such as converting carry-outs into coffee shops, to create a more welcoming atmosphere.

Support for Local Entrepreneurs and Economic Inclusion

Many residents expressed interest in opening or supporting local businesses, but pointed to barriers like:

Lack of startup capital, microloans, and small business grants.

Challenges navigating permits, zoning, and code enforcement without adequate support.

Need for city-endorsed efforts to attract and sustain minority- and women-owned businesses.

Concerns were also raised about the **role of code enforcement**, which some said can hurt small businesses

if applied harshly without flexibility or resources. Residents emphasized the need for a **balanced approach**, combining accountability with assistance to uplift, not penalize, local entrepreneurs.

Multiple comments inquired whether small businesses are genuinely being considered and if concrete **opportunities and incentives** will be provided to support their success.

Section 3: Market Assessment

Key Takeaways

Population

The East Livingston Avenue corridor is experiencing demographic stabilization after a decade of decline. While the Study Area previously lost population, it now shows growth rates aligned with the Columbus region.

Income

Despite having a median household income lower than the city, there has been a shift in income levels over the last decade with higher income households moving into the Study Area.

Employment

The Study Area has a concentration of employment in healthcare given the presence of Nationwide Children's Hospital as well as blue collar industries and public sector. Given the proximity of Downtown Columbus, there are approximately 200,000 jobs within a 10-minute drive.

Housing

There has been minimal housing development in the Study Area over the last decade and the median home value is substantially lower than the citywide median. Despite the housing stock consisting of primarily single-family homes, there is a much higher share of renter-occupied housing units. At the same time, market conditions are improving and property values are appreciating at a relatively fast rate.

Development

There has been no new development along the corridor with the exception of The Livingston built in 2017. Most new commercial and mixed-use development in this part of the city has occurred on Parsons Avenue to the west and East Main Street to the north. Granville Woods Lofts is currently under construction and will bring 85 new affordable apartment units to the area representing the largest multifamily development in the area for many years.

Market Assessment

Demographic Overview

From 2010 to 2020, the Study Area experienced a slight decline in population by five percent, contrasting with the City of Columbus, Franklin County, and the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), which saw growth rates ranging from 12 percent to 15 percent. However, from 2020 to 2024, the Study Area’s population increased by two percent, comparable to the city, county and MSA.

The median household income for the Study Area is just under \$44,000, substantially lower than the city, county, and MSA. Additionally, median home value in the Study Area (\$205,699) was also much lower than the city, county, and MSA.

Household Income

Over the past decade, the Study Area has experienced a significant shift in household income distribution. The proportion of households earning \$100,000 or more rose sharply from representing 4 percent of total households to representing 26 percent. Meanwhile, the share of households earning less than \$35,000 declined from 63 percent to 35 percent. Households with incomes between \$35,000 and \$100,000 also saw a modest increase, growing from 33 percent to 39 percent.

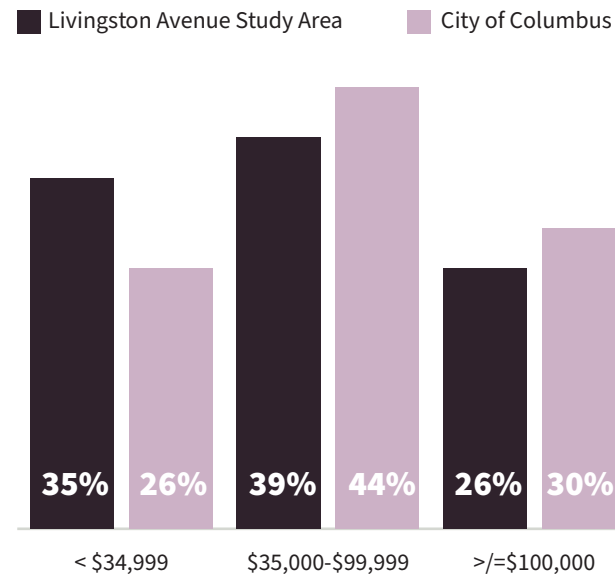
Despite the decline in lower-income households, the area still has a higher proportion of households earning under \$35,000 compared to the city average of 26 percent. On the contrary, the shares of households in the middle- and upper-income brackets remain below the citywide averages.

Demographic Data for Livingston Avenue Study Area, City of Columbus, Franklin County, and the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)

Population Summary	Study Area	City	County	MSA
Total Population (2024)	14,449	927,348	1,354,595	2,209,888
2010-2020 Population Change	-5%	15%	14%	12%
2020-2024 Population Change	2%	2%	2%	3%
Households	6,001	394,586	557,288	875,428
Average Household Size	2.41	2.29	2.38	2.47
Median Household Income (2024)	\$61,373	\$89,977	\$105,816	\$111,809
Median Home Value (2024)	\$205,367	\$302,175	\$340,993	\$354,931

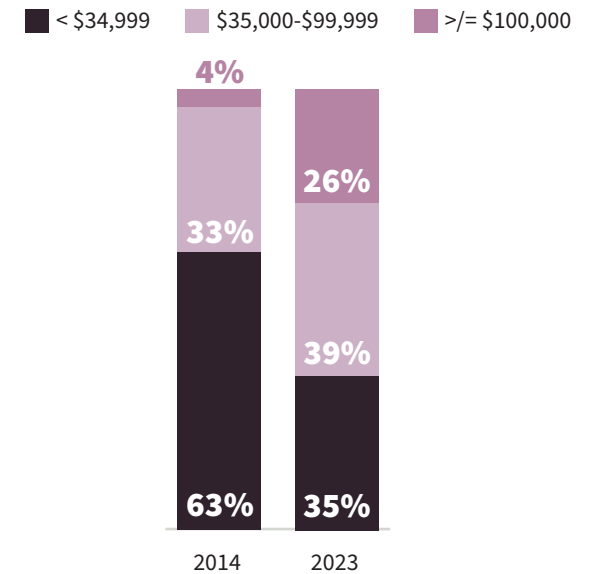
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023 or Esri???)

Distribution of Household Income, Study Area and City of Columbus, 2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

Distribution of Household Income, Study Area, 2014-2023



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2014, 2023)

Market Assessment

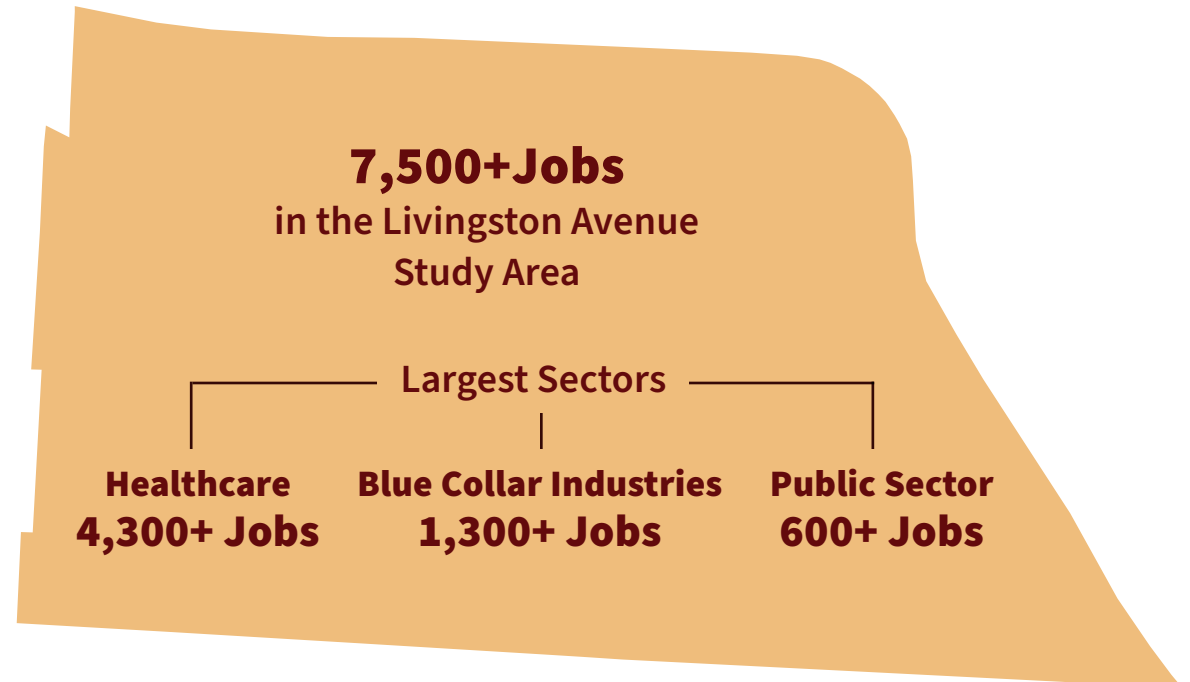
Economic Overview

Study Area Employment

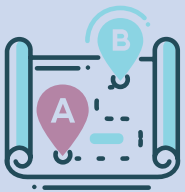
Supporting a healthy retail environment along Livingston Avenue will require market support from residents, but also workers and visitors.

According to Esri, there are nearly 7,600 jobs in the Study Area, most of which (48 percent) are within the Health Care and Social Assistance sector. Many of these jobs are associated with Nationwide Children's Hospital campus, with a workforce of more than 16,000, although the core parts of the campus are just beyond the Study Area boundaries.

Given the concentration of industrial development on the east side of the Study Area along Alum Creek Drive, there are approximately 1,300 jobs in the Construction, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, and Transportation & Warehousing sectors. There are also more than 600 public sector jobs given the presence of the Columbus Sewer Maintenance Office at 1250 Fairwood Avenue as well as area schools, library, and recreation center.



Given the Study Area's central location, about two miles southeast of Downtown Columbus, there is substantial market potential from the local workforce both for housing and new retail establishments. In fact, within a 10-minute drive of the intersection of Livingston Avenue and Lockbourne Road there are more than 200,000 jobs and 180,000 residents. However, as presented in this study, in order to attract shoppers to the corridor, efforts will be needed to address safety and building conditions.



200,000+ workers

180,000+ residents

**are within a 10-minute
drive of the East Livingston
Avenue Study Area**

Market Assessment

Housing Overview

The Study Area has just over 7,200 housing units. From 2010 to 2024, the Study Area saw a four percent decrease in the number of housing units due to an increase in the number of abandoned or demolished properties. The city of Columbus, Franklin County, and the Columbus Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced growth rates of 14 to 15 percent.

The Study Area experienced a seven percent increase in renter-occupied housing units from 2010 to 2024. Since 2010, there has been an increase in the number of renter-occupied houses which places some households at risk for displacement if property values continue to appreciate. The vacancy rate has declined, although is at 17 percent indicating that there is capacity for new households, which in turn, could bolster market support for new retail. Currently, the Study Area maintains a 17 percent vacancy rate, which is notably higher than the City of Columbus (8 percent), Franklin County (7 percent), and the Columbus MSA (7 percent).

Study Area Housing Summary, 2010–2024

Housing Summary	Study Area	City	County	MSA
Housing Units	7,237	429,852	600,085	938,027
Change of Total Units (2010-2024)	-4%	15%	14%	14%
Owner Occupied Housing Units (2024)	2,721	171,511	288,641	530,923
Renter Occupied Housing Units (2024)	3,278	223,093	268,238	344,256
Change of Renter Occupied (2010-2024)	7%	27%	26%	24%
Vacancy Rate (2024)	17%	8%	7%	7%
Change of Vacancy Rate (2010-2024)	-32%	-11%	-15%	-13%
Average Home Value (\$2024)	\$205,367	\$302,175	\$340,993	\$354,931

Source: CoStar, Esri (2024)

Renter-occupied housing units are more prevalent within the Study Area and the city. However, in the county and the MSA, owner-occupied housing units are more prevalent. The Study Area has 3,278 renter-occupied units compared to 2,721 owner-occupied units.

Following a similar pattern, the average home value in the Study Area is the lowest compared to the other geographies at \$205,367. The city's average is \$302,175, while the average of the county is \$340,993. The average of the MSA is the highest at \$354,931.

The trend of increasing renter households was consistent across all geographies, with the City of Columbus showing the strongest growth at 27 percent, followed by Franklin County at 26 percent and the Columbus MSA at 24 percent. All areas also experienced decreases in vacancy rates, though the Study Area's 32 percent reduction was the most substantial compared to the city's 11 percent decrease, the county's 15 percent decrease, and the MSA's 13 percent decrease.



Market Assessment

Housing Stock

Based on the Census Block Groups adjacent to Livingston Avenue, there are a total of a little over 4,700 housing units. Of these, 44 percent were built in 1939 or earlier, and 39 percent were constructed between 1940 and 1969. There was a substantial increase in new units during the decade from 2010 to 2019. However, the number of new units in the current decade (2020 onwards) is lagging behind.

Aging Housing Stock



65%
Before 1950

30%
1950-1999

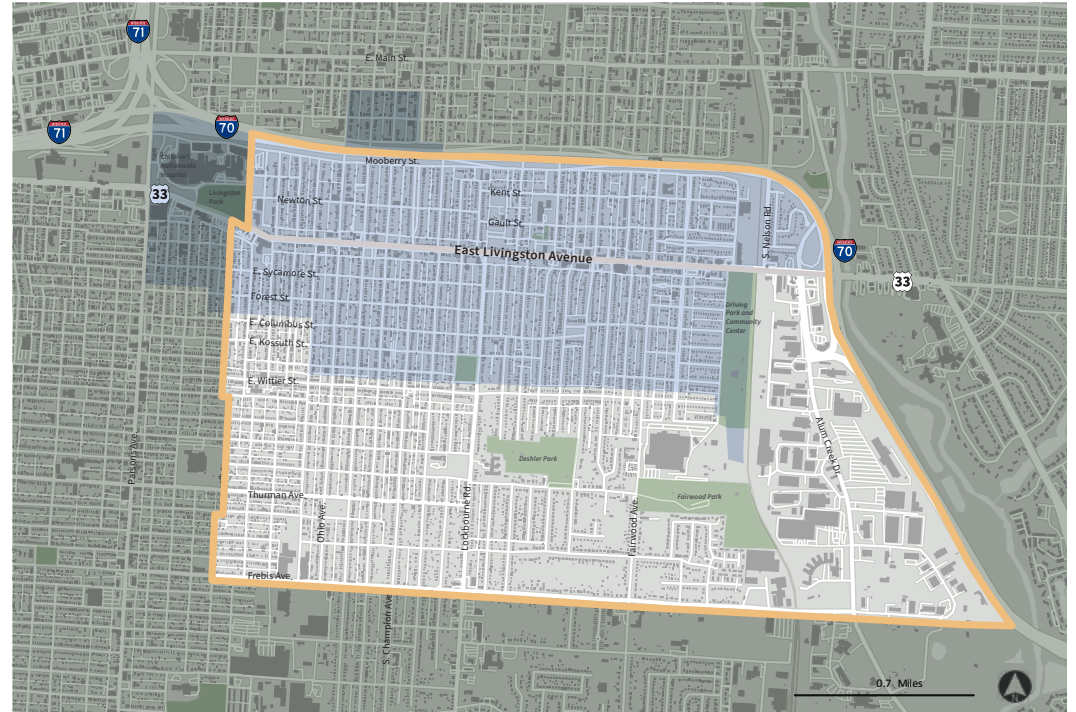
5%
2000 to Present

Housing Stock Adjacent to Livingston Avenue, Number of Units Built by Decade

Decade Built	Unit Count
2020 or later	47
2010 to 2019	186
2000 to 2009	24
1990 to 1999	13
1980 to 1989	205
1970 to 1979	249
1960 to 1969	307
1950 to 1959	638
1940 to 1949	550
1939 or earlier	2,493
Total	4,712

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

East Livingston Avenue Census Block Groups



The shaded area on the map shows the Census Block Groups that approximate the corridor. American Community Survey data was used to understand more localized demographic and housing trends.

Market Assessment

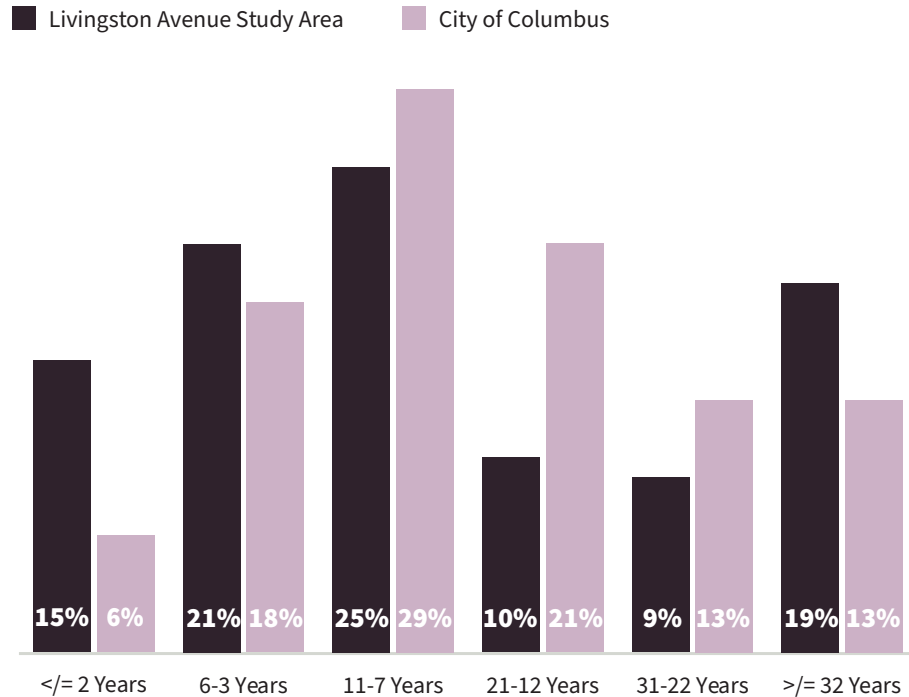
Residency Trends

In the areas adjacent to Livingston Avenue, there is a high proportion of long-standing residents compared to the citywide average. Around 28 percent of residents have lived in their homes for at least 22 years. At the same time, there has been an influx of new residents with more than a third of residents moving to the area in the last 6 years. With 19 percent of residents in the moving to their housing units 32 years or more ago. Residents that moved six to three years ago represent 21 percent

of the area population, while residents moving into their units in the past two years represent 15 percent of the total. This is a higher proportion than the average in Columbus, which is at six percent.

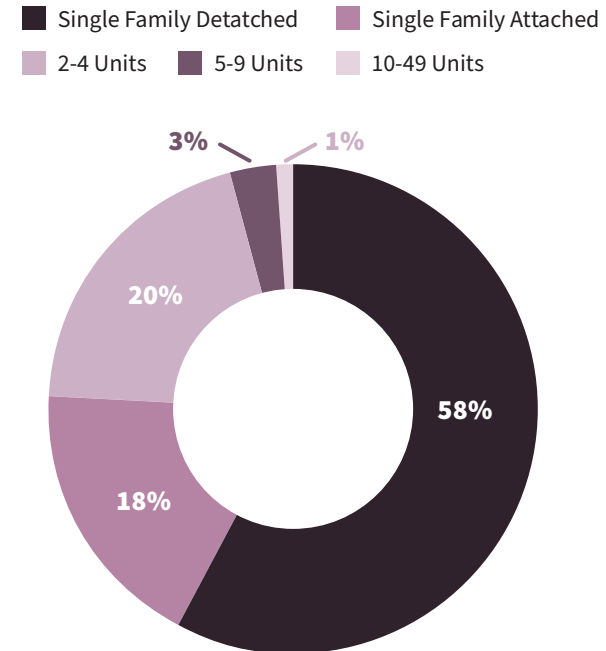
Of the total housing stock, the vast majority of units are single-family homes. Other popular types of housing in the Study Area include two-unit homes and three-to-four-unit apartments.

Years Residents Remain in Housing Unit



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

Housing Type by Number of Units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (2023)

Market Assessment

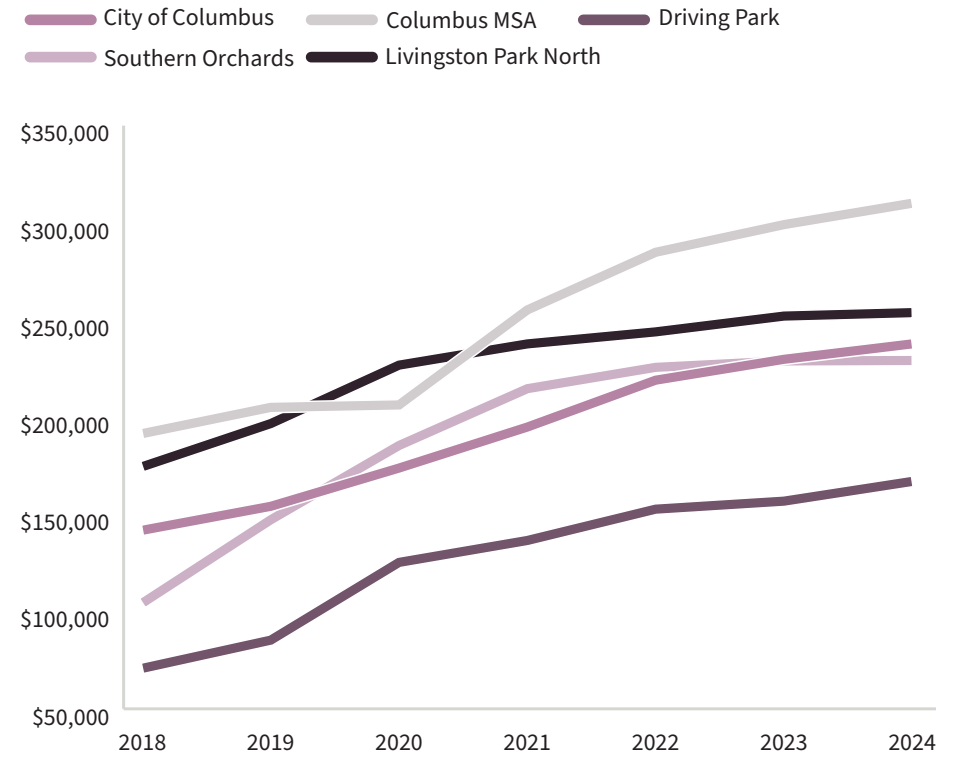
Housing Value Trends

Housing values have increased in the last five years for Columbus. The median home value in 2024 was \$300,000 in the Columbus MSA, while Columbus City follows a steady appreciation pattern, with home values rising gradually and nearing the \$250,000 mark.

Livingston Park shows a strong upward trend, keeping pace with the citywide average and stabilizing in recent years. Southern Orchards saw rapid growth between 2018 and 2021 before stabilizing at a similar level to Columbus City, indicating strong early investment interest that later leveled off. Driving Park, which had the lowest home values at the start, has experienced the most dramatic percentage increase, nearly doubling in value since 2018, though it remains the lowest-priced area on the chart. Overall, while all areas have appreciated in value, Columbus MSA shows the highest home values, while Driving Park shows the most significant relative growth.

Housing values in Driving Park, Southern Orchards, and South of Main are lower than the city and regional average but have increased faster than the city and regional rate from 2019 through 2024

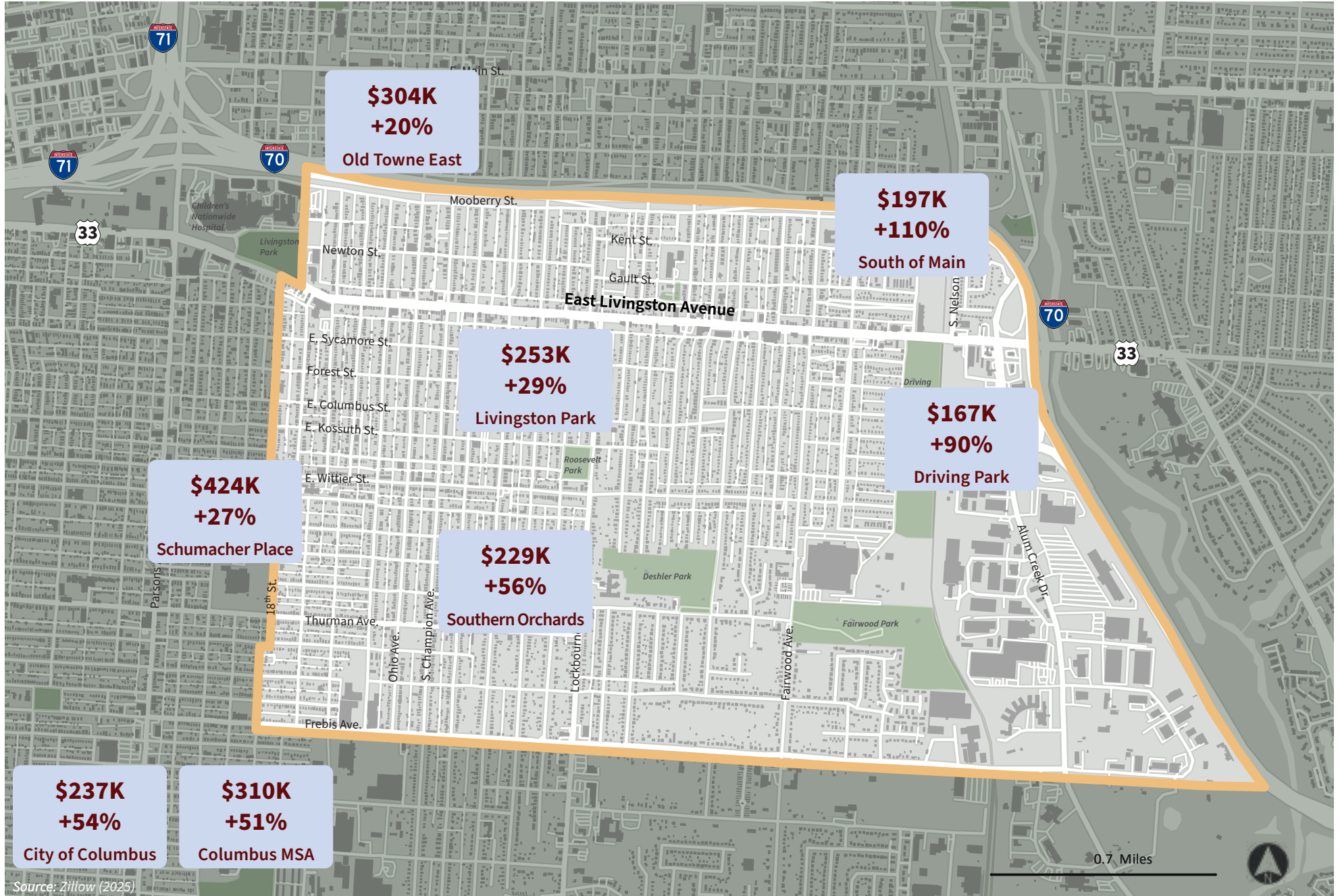
Comparison of Property Value Trends, 2018-2024



Source: Zillow (2025)

Market Assessment

Median Property Value Comparison and Rate of Change, 2018-2024



Market Assessment

Existing Real Estate Supply

Houses



50+ Units
Single Family Homes

Apartments



200+ Units
in Multi-Family Buildings

Commercial



180,000+ S.F.
Retail/Commercial

Community




25,000+ S.F.
Library & Fire Station

Livingston Avenue is lined with a mix of uses, including single-family homes, apartments, community uses, and retail and commercial space. Given the length of the corridor (nearly 2 miles) there is not a contiguous Main Street experience from one end to the other; however, there are opportunities for nodal development with concentrations of retail and commercial uses within clusters of city blocks.

While the commercial space is not concentrated in a single portion of the corridor, there is more than 180,000 square feet of commercial space along the corridor in a combination of single-use tenants (e.g., Autozone), historic mixed-use or commercial buildings (e.g., Family Carryout), auto-oriented out parcel buildings (e.g., Teriyaki Express), and smaller strip centers (e.g., 1485-1511 Livingston Avenue). With the exception of The Livingston, an affordable senior apartment community built in 2017, there has been no new construction on the corridor for more than a decade. However, the 85-unit Granville Woods Lofts is currently under development and will add new market support for retail when completed and leased.

Real Estate Development

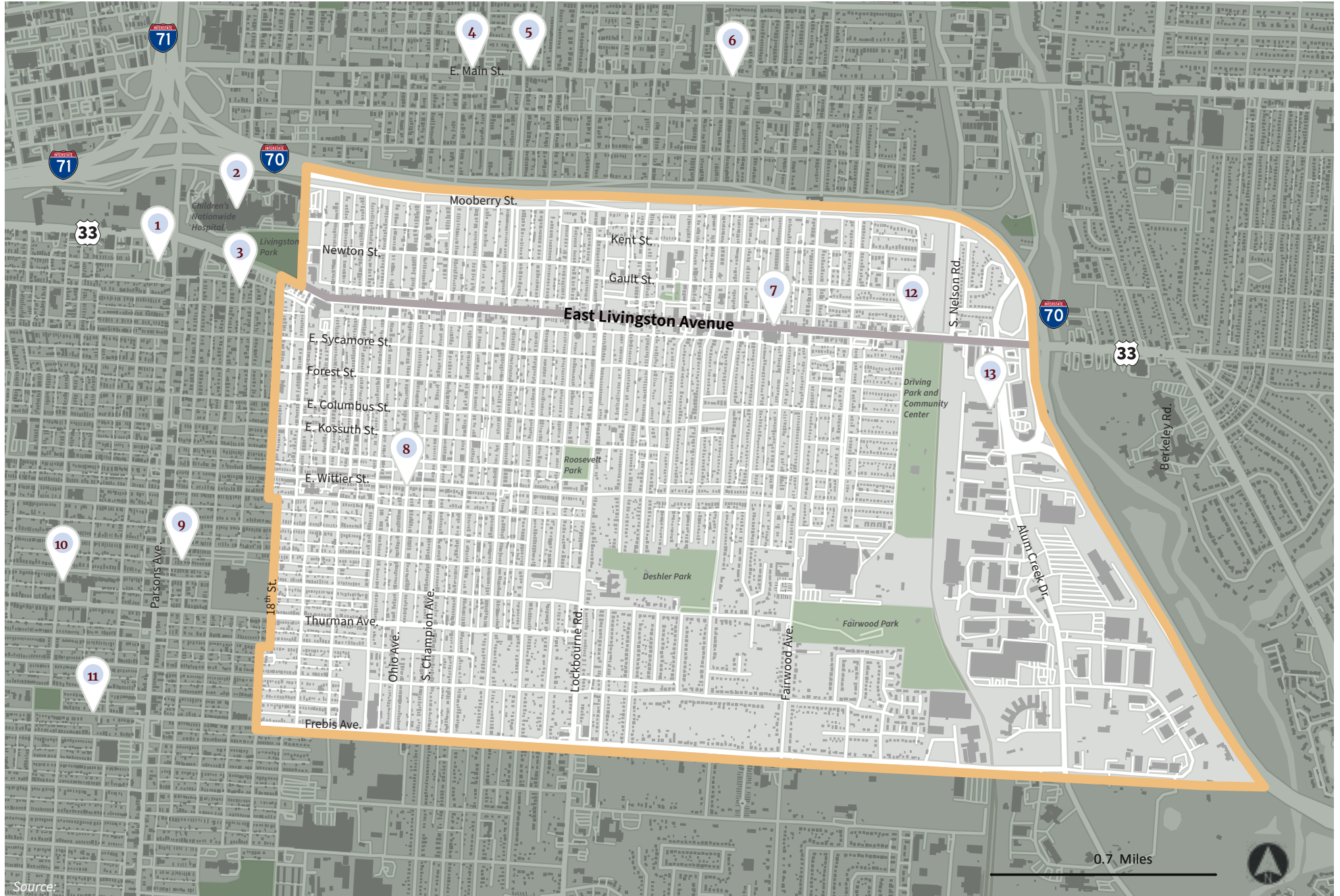
New Commercial Real Estate Built After 2015 in and around the Study Area

 Property Name	Address	Property Type	SF	Units	Year Built
1. The Arbor Apartments	626 Lehman Street	Multi-Family	200,000	141	2018
2. Nationwide Children's Hospital	611 E. Livingston Avenue	Office/Retail	150,000	-	2016
3. Ronald McDonald House	686 Ann Street	Health Care	110,000	-	2023
4. The Ethan Apartments	1179 E Main Street	Multi-Family	85,000	85	2024
5. Heritage Square	1205 E. Main Street	Retail	6,987	-	2016
6. Preston Pointe Apartments	1534 - 1560 E. Main Street	Multi-Family	50,000	50	2024
7. The Livingston Apartments	1573 E. Livingston Avenue	Multi-Family	161,289	45	2020
8. Residences at Career Gateway	755 E. Whittier Street	Multi-Family	79,993	58	2017
9. Parsons Avenue Library	1113 Parsons Avenue	Recreation (Library)	17,181	-	2016
10. Barrett Luxury Apartments	345 E. Deshler Avenue	Multi-Family	165,188	103	2016
11. Eisen Village Apartments	359 Frebis Avenue	Multi-Family	30,000	20	2024
12. Granville Woods Lofts (in development)	910 Rhoades Avenue	Multi-Family	75,000	58	TBD
13. White Castle (in development)	1025 Alum Creek Drive	Commercial		-	TBD

Source: Costar, Econsult Solutions, Inc. (2025)

Market Assessment

Developments In and Around the Study Area



Source:

Section 4: Retail Market Analysis

Key Takeaways

Post-COVID 19 Pandemic Retail Transformation

The industry has become highly agile with retailers adapting to supply chain disruptions, technology changes, and cost pressures. In-person retail shopping has rebounded strongly despite early pandemic closures, with retailers focusing on enhanced shopper experiences.

Consumer Behavior Shifts

Convenience is paramount, with steady growth in online sales. Consumers prioritize sustainability, local shopping, and values-based purchasing. Spending on food-at-home now exceeds food-away-from-home as households manage rising costs (89 percent of consumers eat at home more to save money).

Limited Available Inventory

The East Livingston Avenue corridor has extremely limited retail space available, with most remaining spaces under 2,500 square feet and unsuitable for grocery or full-service restaurants. Recent leasing activity has further reduced available options.

Below-Market Lease Rates

Asking rents along East Livingston Avenue range from \$9 to \$13 per square foot triple net lease, significantly below other Columbus neighborhood corridors. Newer properties west and north command rents up to \$23 per square foot, indicating potential for rate increases with improvements.

Neighborhood-Serving Business Mix

Current retail consists primarily of local businesses with convenience stores, service businesses (mobile phone stores, vision ware, tax preparation), limited apparel (NY Fashions, Talib Shoes), and food outlets (Teriyaki, Brothers Chicken & Fish).

Market Fundamentals Challenge

Spending potential within the east node of the Study Area is below national and citywide levels across all retail categories. The trade area analysis using 15-minute walk times and 1-, 3-, and-5 mile rings shows limited market support for significant new retail in the near term.

Grocery Market Reality

The probability of attracting a traditional 40,000 to 65,000 square foot full-service grocery store to the corridor is low due to the lack of availability of suitable sites and existing competition within three miles of the Study Area. However, opportunities exist for corner store improvements, boutique/ethnic grocers, and expansion of fresh food offerings.

Strategic Opportunities

Focus on strengthening existing retail, attracting small/local businesses, expanding fresh food at corner stores, adding missing services (dry cleaner, childcare), and leveraging nearby national tenants (CVS, AutoZone, Panera) to demonstrate market viability for future recruitment.

National Retail Trends

Who is shopping, how we shop, and where we shop is consistently changing!

The retail industry has undergone a tremendous transformation over the past five years. The industry has become extremely agile, with retailers and suppliers adjusting their models in response to shifts in markets, supply chains, and technology, consolidations, and overall cost of operations (goods and real estate). The COVID 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the industry and the current tariff situation is also impacting retail. Consumers have responded in kind, adjusting what, how, when, and where they buy goods from groceries and household essentials to apparel, home furnishings, and entertainment. All of this has had an impact on the overall retail industry, the types of tenants that are growing and expanding, the size of stores, even where they choose to locate.

In the five years since, despite early pandemic store closures, in-person retail shopping has rebounded and thrived. Retailers are upgrading existing stores and opening new ones, with many focusing on providing a good shopping experience.

Economic data released in May 2025 suggests the turmoil surrounding tariffs is affecting U.S. consumer spending. Retail sales in the U.S. dropped 0.9 percent in May, a sharp dip from the 0.1 percent decline the month before. Spending on food out of the home also declined as households continue to monitor their food budgets.

The following is a snapshot of national retail trends. This includes general industry trends, and those impacting the Study Area. We have provided a more in-depth look at several sectors that are a priority for the community, including grocery.



Retail Market Analysis

Industry Trends

When it comes to food, flavor is a priority. Taste is a common denominator across all generations and ethnic consumers tend toward spicy ones.

Demand for locally sourced food is also rising, which ties into awareness around sustainability, buying local, and overall freshness.

Food prices are expected to rise this year, with food-at-home (grocery) prices increasing more than upwards of four percent and food-away-from-home (restaurant) prices increasing nearly four percent as well (according to U.S. Department of Agriculture July 2025 forecast and National Grocers Association).

A May 2025 Harris Poll Survey shows **89 percent of U.S. consumers now eat at home** more frequently to save money. While consumers are not cutting eating out entirely, they are cutting back. This includes how often they dine out and the type of restaurant they patronize, favoring more family style and casual eateries than fine dining options.

Spending on food at home has once again exceeded food out of home (it flipped in March 2016 for the first time since it was tracked). Rising food costs, tariffs, and concern for household budgets are causing people to eat more meals at home. When they do go out, they tend toward less expensive eateries.

Retailtainment is continuing to expand as consumers choose to invest in experiences rather than products. Stores are becoming immersive, appealing to shoppers' desire for something unique, aesthetically pleasing, inviting, and visually stimulating.

E-commerce demand continues to grow, and most stores offer online options, including local ones. Many online only retailers continue to open brick-and-mortar locations as demand for experiential shopping continues to grow.

Appearance is increasingly important, in physical stores and online. Retailers and restaurants need to use compelling imagery to shape public perception about their offerings, whether in stores, on their menus, websites, or their own social media sites.

Younger consumers are prompting tenants to place greater emphasis on wellness and sustainability.

82 percent of consumers consider wellness in their retail purchasing (according to McKinsey). Wellness retail openings are projected to continue increasing steadily over the next five years as the market grows 5 to 10 percent per year (according to Colliers).

“Showrooming” is trending: retailers are moving to a model with limited inventory onsite (one of every product in the store) offering next day delivery.

The demand for immediate delivery is compelling retailers to reconsider their distribution strategies, particularly the last mile, which in turn presents opportunities for warehousing.

Affordability issues are propelling growth for off-price retailers and outlets.

The resale market in the U.S. is expected to double by 2027. By year end 2025, secondhand sales will account for 10 percent of the apparel market and are expected to grow to 13 percent by 2029.



Consumer Trends

Convenience is paramount. Technology has enabled ease in purchasing and while the COVID 19 pandemic exaggerated demand for this, online sales are steadily increasing.

Social networks have as much power today, if not more, than traditional advertising. While the different platforms provide a way for people to stay in touch, social media also changes how they get advice on products and services.

Values also influence purchasing. Sustainability is a priority. Younger generations are increasingly interested in how their food is sourced or grown, and where and how their clothes are made.

Supporting and shopping “local” is even more important than ever, especially with Gen X and Gen Z. These consumers are forcing retailers to

increase their focus on wellness and sustainability. Wellness retail openings increased by 2.8 percent in 2023 and continued to rise through Qtr1 2025.

Millennials tend to be more influenced by their peers as compared to Gen Z which can be reached through “influencers.” Millennials are five times more likely to use social networks and social media to get advice on products or services and twice as many use it to stay current on new products and retail including restaurants.

More than half of Gen Z consumers are worried about their financial situation in the year ahead. In response, young shoppers in the US are changing their spending habits, including around 40 percent less spending on clothing.

Fashion customers consistently adopt cost-conscious shopping behavior, with 60 percent of U.S. shoppers

trading down in the first quarter of 2025; over 70 percent of customers plan to purchase from outlets or off-price retailers in the next twelve months.

Seventy-five percent of shoppers are likely to spend more after receiving high-quality service from store personnel, indicating up-selling and cross-selling opportunities.

The root of Baby Boomer’s brick and mortar preference is tied to high expectations of great customer service. Gen Xers will not buy a product until they have researched it thoroughly.

The Silver Generation is disproportionately wealthier and spends more on fashion.

Over 56 percent of consumers consider themselves “a foodie,” including restaurant goers.

Real Estate Trends

Retail vacancy rates across the U.S. are the lowest in 20 years (4.1 to 5 percent QTR 1 - QTR 3 2024) though they trend higher in urban neighborhood markets.

Lease structures are changing, with terms decreasing from the traditional ten and five years to three and five years. Percentage rent leases are becoming more common, particularly in retail segments with high sales volatility.

Tenant fit-out budgets are often limited to permanent infrastructure.

Rising costs are increasing the demand for secondary spaces, particularly among food-related tenants.

Mixed-use projects with residential, retail and commercial/hotel uses are the new normal for development, especially in urban markets.

Retail tenant footprints are shrinking as retailers in all sectors are right sizing and adapting to consumer preferences.

Grocery is also leaning towards smaller store sizes in part driven by increased online grocery

shopping, a desire for convenience, and the growth of smaller formats (local, Aldi, Lidl, Fresh Market).

Retailers are re-evaluating their portfolios, especially national discount stores (e.g., Dollar General, Family Dollar) and eliminating stores that are not performing well.

Retail construction costs have soared since the pandemic, thanks to surges in inflation, cost of capital, labor, and material prices. While 5-year rent spreads are also up by double-digits, in many cities rent spreads are still trailing construction costs.

Retail Market Supply

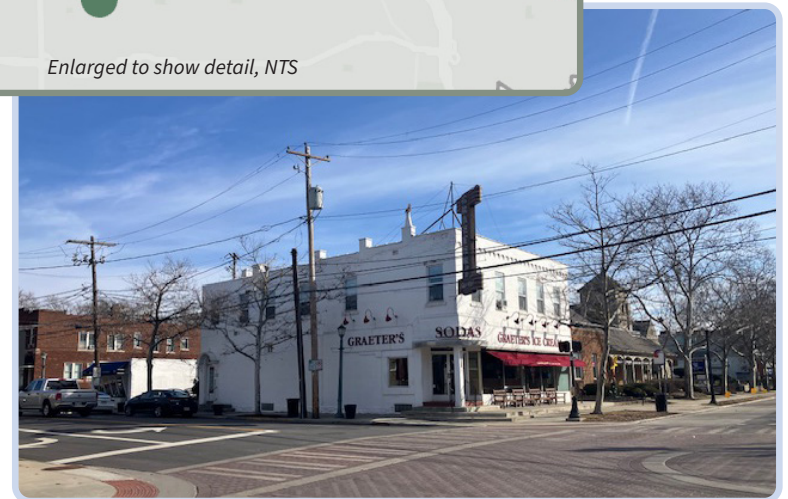
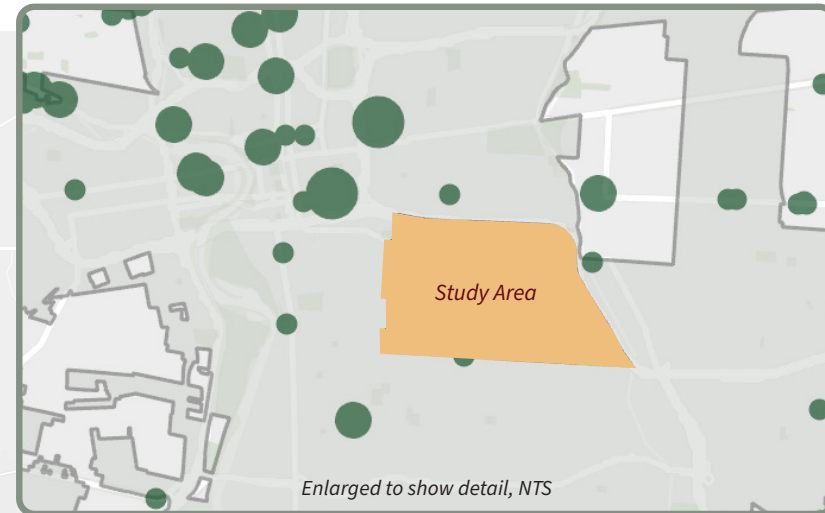
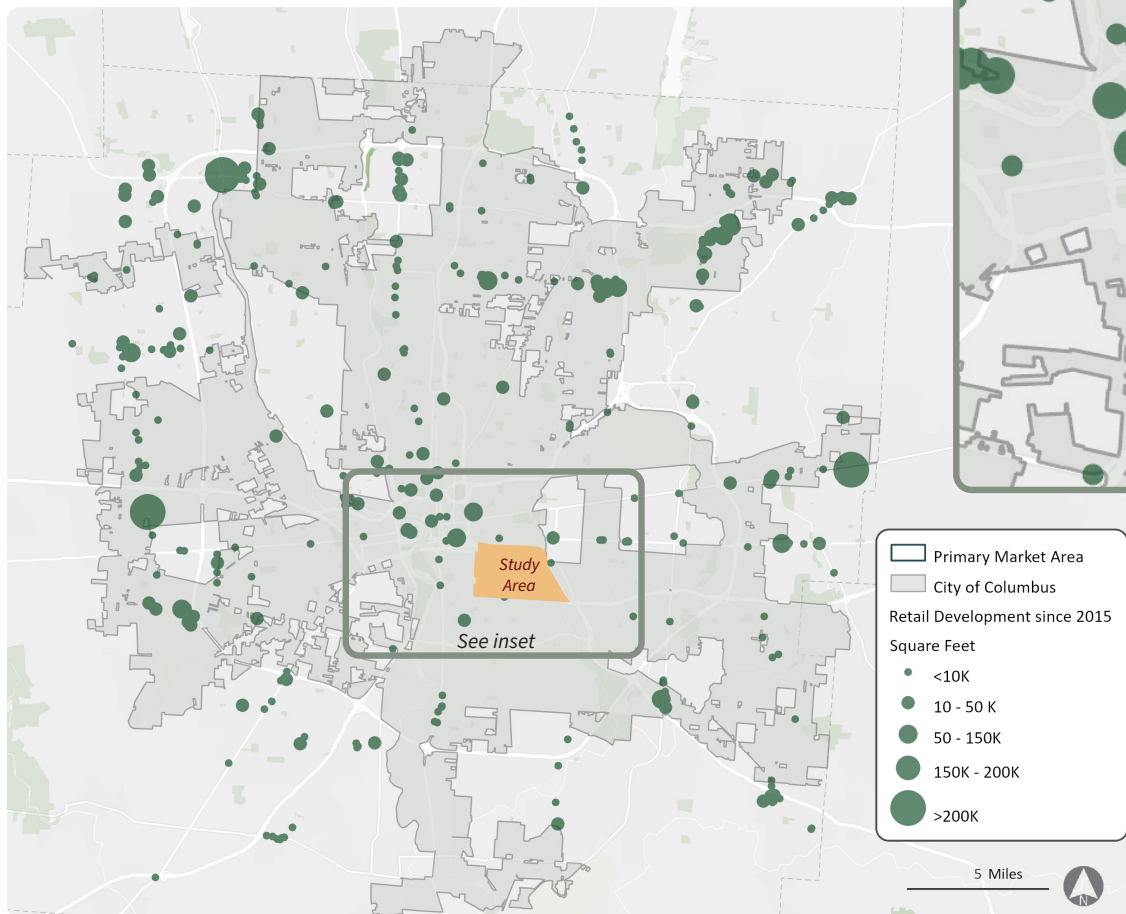
The Retail Inventory in Columbus

Over the past decade, nearly 4.4 million square feet of new retail space has been built in Franklin County and 2.9 million square feet in the city of Columbus.

While the broader neighborhood has benefited from the addition of several new retailers in recent years, most of these tenants took secondary space, replacing

former retail uses. This includes the Toro Market on Parsons Avenue (former Family Dollar), the new Wholistic and Wellness Spa, which opened in 2024 at 1615 East Livingston Avenue, and the recently opened Hair and Beauty Depot, at 1500 East Livingston Avenue, (the former Dollar General). Consequently, while several new businesses have opened in the neighborhood, the total retail space has not increased. Additionally, several sites remain vacant, including those on Parsons Avenue like the former CVS and the former Pizza Hut.

Retail Development in Columbus, Ohio Since 2015



Source:

Retail Market Analysis

The East Livingston Avenue Corridor

There is limited inventory available along the corridor to accommodate new retail uses. According to INCommercial Property Group, two former retail sites have recently been leased and are off the market. This includes the former Dollar General at 1500 East Livingston Avenue which has been leased to Health and Beauty Depot, which opened in summer 2025, and 1029 East Livingston Avenue, for a use not yet announced (per CREXI Real Estate).

The remaining spaces along the corridor are generally small (under 2,500 square feet) and unsuitable for grocery stores or restaurants. Some spaces are poorly located and would need significant investment to attract new tenants. This lack of suitable retail space limits the potential to draw new retail, service, and entertainment businesses along the corridor.

Retail Real Estate Lease Rates

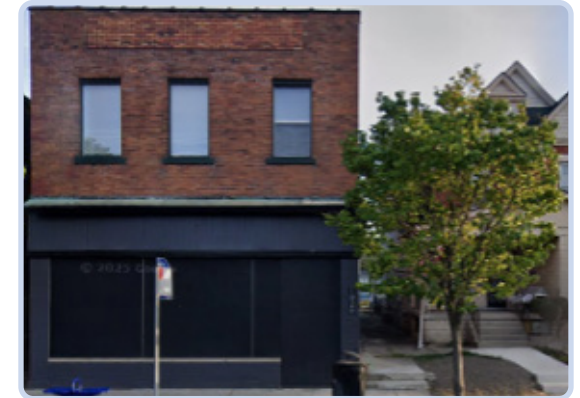
**East Livingston Avenue
Average Asking Rents
\$9/SF NNN to \$13/SF NNN**

Average retail asking rents along the corridor are generally below other neighborhood commercial corridors in Columbus.

Asking rents along East Livingston Avenue and within the Study Area range from \$9 to \$13 per square foot triple net (NNN). Final rents may vary due to factors like property age, required improvements, and tenant upgrades. Rates increase further west on Livingston Avenue and to the north of the corridor. Newer properties to the west and north of the Study Area command rents upwards of \$23 per square foot. Recent transactions, new investments in real estate and infrastructure, including the new Livingston Avenue streetscape improvements, may influence asking rates in the future.



1500 East Livingston Avenue, Hair and Beauty Depot



1029 East Livingston Avenue, courtesy of Loop Net



1351 South Parsons Avenue, former Dollar Tree



445-495 East Livingston Avenue, Charlies Corner, German Village

Retail Market Analysis

Retail Business in the Study Area

What is in the corridor today?

Most of the retail along East Livingston Avenue and in the study area focuses on neighborhood goods and services. Existing tenants are a mix of local businesses, with some national and regional brands. This includes five convenience stores and several service oriented businesses such as Metro by T-Mobile, Boost Mobile, Driving

Park Vision Store, H&R Block, car repair shops, Auto Zone, Hair & Beauty Depot, Barbers and Salons, Wholistic Health and Wellness Spa. In addition, there are two apparel stores, New York Fashions and Talib Shoes & Accessories, and several food and beverage outlets including Teriyaki Express and Brothers Chicken & Fish.

Additional retail and dining establishments are located to the west of the Study Area, in proximity to Nationwide Children's Hospital. These include the Toro Market, a regional grocer, CVS, Panera Bread, Tim Hortons, and Simply Honest Cafe. While not within the Study Area, these businesses contribute to the overall mix of retail available to the residents in the area. National brands such as CVS, Tim Horton's, Auto Zone and Panera Bread also demonstrate there is buying power in the market.



1615 East Livingston Avenue, Wholistic Health and Wellness



1035 East Livingston Avenue, Talib's Shoes & Accessories



704 Parsons Ave., Toro Meat Market



567 East Livingston Avenue, Simply Honest Cafe

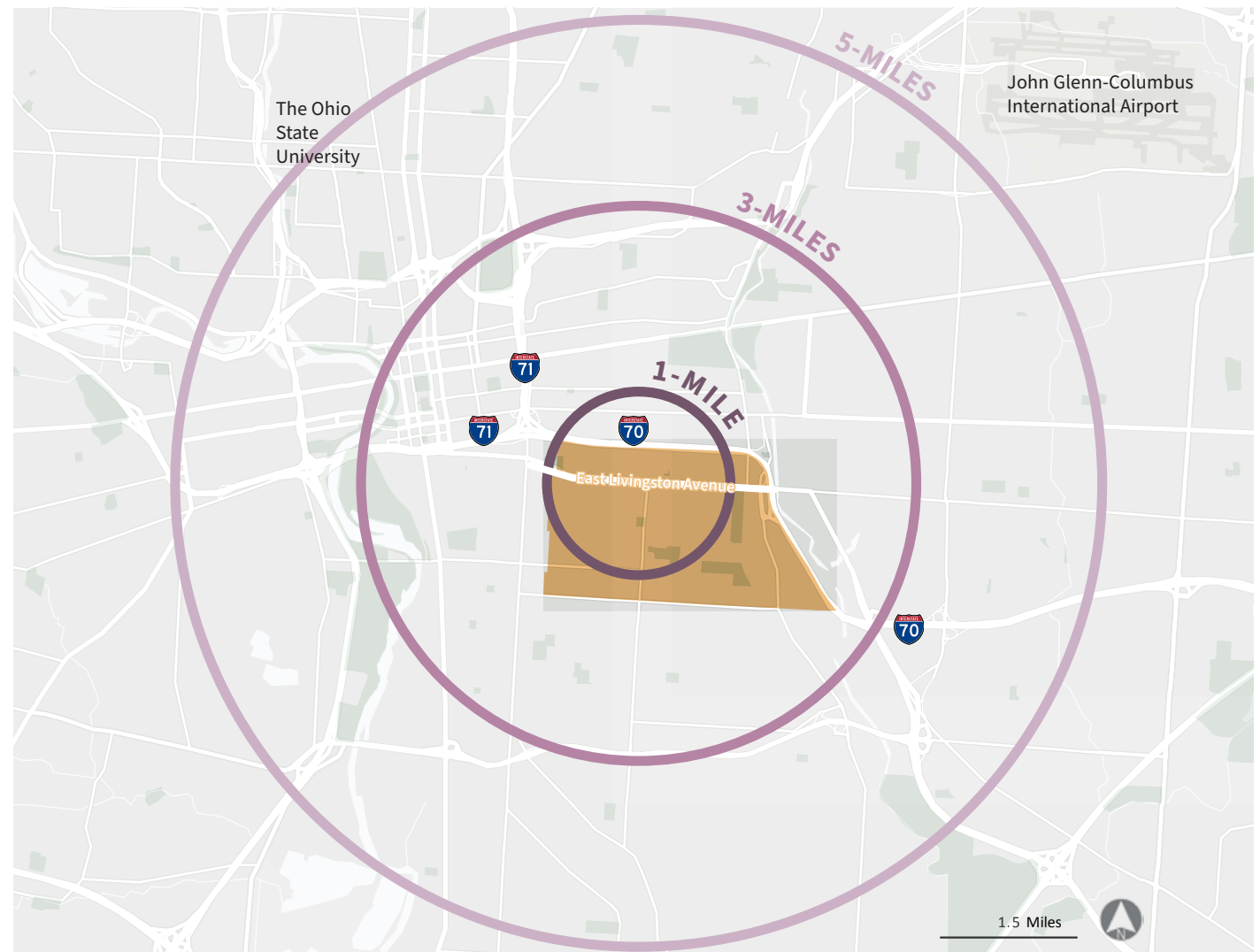
Retail Market Potential

Where are the trade areas?

Each retailer has a trade area, a geographic region where their customers come from. Knowing this helps businesses target their market, adjust marketing strategies, and streamline operations. Trade areas vary by retail type: local grocers and pharmacies have smaller areas due to frequent visits, while full-service grocers and destination businesses, like Auto Zone or Best Buy, draw customers from wider areas.

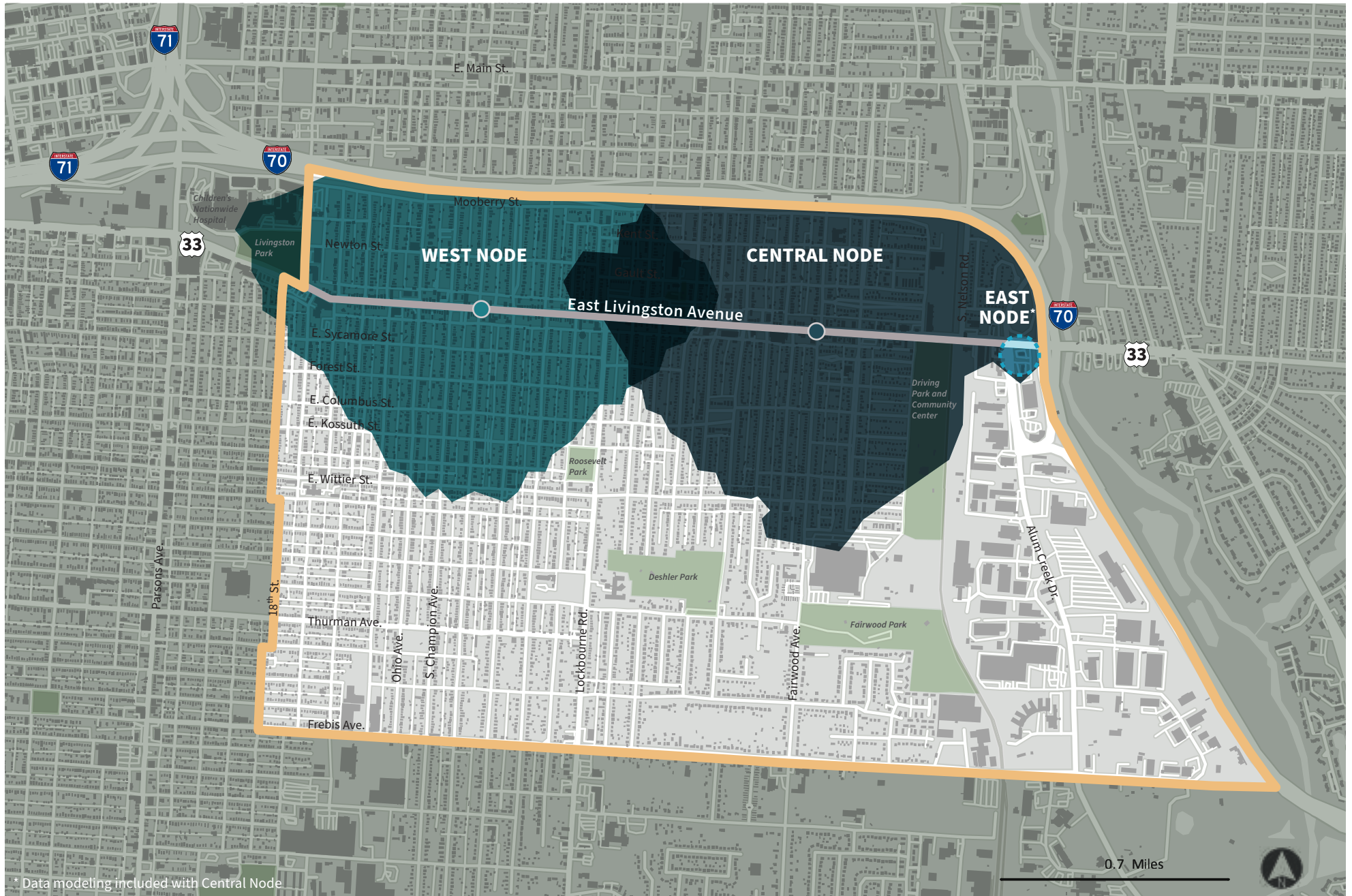
Examining the Study Area through the lens of a retailer, our market analysis indicates a unique approach to delineating trade areas. Due to the length of the corridor—which is approximately two miles—a blend of walk times and ring boundaries were used for a more comprehensive assessment. Two nodes have been identified where clusters currently exist or where new investment opportunities may arise. The geographic features of the Study Area, with the road network including highways, suggests a 15-minute walk time for the two nodes. Additionally, 1-, 3-, and 5-mile rings were established (familiar metrics for certain tenants and investors) from the center of the Study Area corridor. The maps below represent the trade areas defined for the East Livingston Avenue corridor.

Retail Market Trade Areas: 1-, 3-, and 5-Mile Drive Times



Retail Market Analysis

Retail Market Trade Areas: 15-Minute Walk Times



* Data modeling included with Central Node

Retail Market Analysis

Retail Market Demand Indicators

Market Area Profile

Residents form the largest audience of the local retail market, especially for neighborhood goods and services. This is complemented by workers and visitors to the neighborhood including those passing through to areas just beyond.

The Market Profile presented on the right provides a snapshot of key metrics that are typically used by retailers and investors. The profile also shows how each geographies compare. The Retail Market Profile for the East Livingston Avenue Corridor, found in the Appendix, provides more details about the residents, workforce, shifts, and trends.

2024 Demographic Snapshot of the East Livingston Avenue Market Area

Key ■ West Node of Study Area ■ Central Node of Study Area ■ 1-Mile Ring ■ 3-Mile Ring ■ 5-Mile Ring ■ Citywide



Population

7,962 6,591 21,699



Median Age

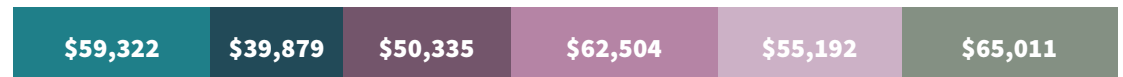


Number of Households

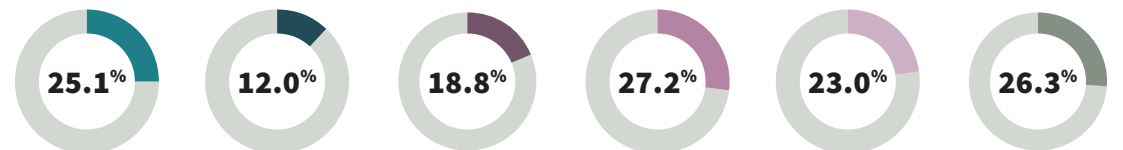
3,566 2,749 9,283



Median Household Income



% of Population with at Least a Bachelor's Degree



* Data inclusive of East Node

Source: Esri

Retail Market Analysis

Retail Spending and Demand

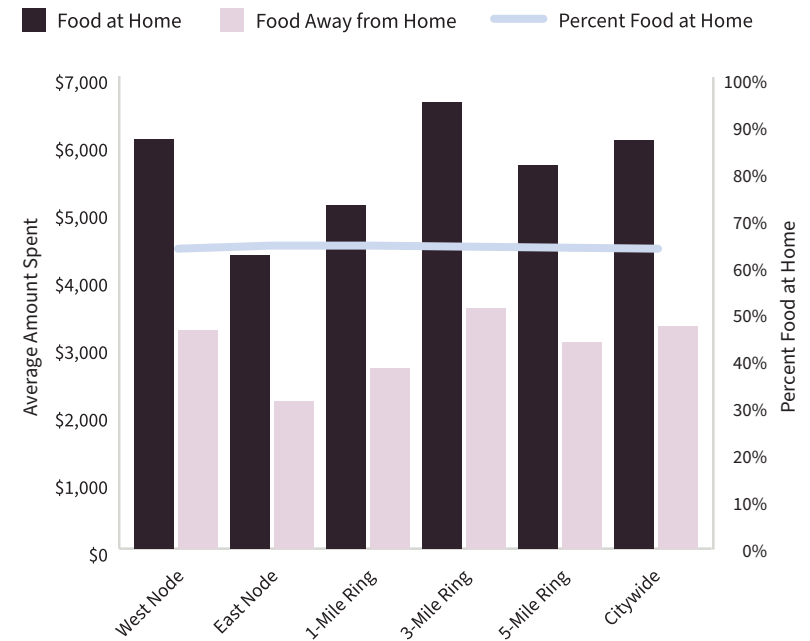
The retail sales and potential in each of the trade areas for select categories of retail and entertainment were examined. The categories were chosen for several reasons including retail uses and activities typically found in neighborhood markets, and/or identified as a priority for the area by the local stakeholders.

Two top priorities for the community are a grocer and eateries; therefore, spending on food at home and food out of the home across the various trade areas were analyzed. Household spending on food, both at home and dining out, reveals market trends.

Historically, U.S. households spent more on home-cooked meals until 2016, when dining out surpassed it. The pandemic briefly shifted preferences back to home cooking, however since 2023 urban spending on dining out has rebounded, but spending on food at home is increasing again as the cost of food rises.

Within the Study Area, spending on food at home is higher than spending for food out of the home (almost double) but is consistently below the national average for both across all trade areas. This may be due to the lower cost of goods in the market, but also due to cultural and market nuances (more family households, lower household income).

Comparison of Spending on Food



Source: Esri

Retail Market Analysis

Comparison of Retail Spending and Demand: East Livingston Avenue Trade Areas

	West Node of Study Area			Central Node of Study Area*			1-Mile Ring			3-Mile Ring			5-Mile Ring		
	2024 Consumer Spending	2029 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth	2024 Consumer Spending	2029 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth	2024 Consumer Spending	2029 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth	2024 Consumer Spending	2029 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth	2024 Consumer Spending	2029 Forecasted Demand	Projected Spending Growth
Apparel and Services	\$7,544,116	\$9,106,980	\$1,562,864	\$4,032,907	\$4,985,126	\$952,219	\$16,145,333	\$20,017,056	\$3,871,723	\$126,149,729	\$155,660,961	\$29,511,232	\$264,983,120	\$326,209,576	\$61,226,456
Personal Care Products	\$1,655,431	\$1,998,510	\$343,079	\$882,494	\$1,091,029	\$208,535	\$3,596,819	\$4,461,065	\$864,246	\$28,787,953	\$35,559,820	\$6,771,867	\$60,464,395	\$74,502,555	\$14,038,160
(Prescription, Nonprescription Drugs) Health	\$9,199,547	\$11,105,490	\$1,905,943	\$4,915,401	\$6,076,155	\$1,160,754	\$19,742,152	\$24,478,121	\$4,735,969	\$154,937,682	\$191,220,781	\$36,283,099	\$325,447,515	\$400,712,131	\$75,264,616
Entertainment & Recreation	\$10,930,531	\$13,199,902	\$2,269,371	\$6,057,521	\$7,491,209	\$1,433,688	\$24,320,044	\$30,159,802	\$5,839,758	\$193,816,902	\$238,773,814	\$44,956,912	\$405,447,399	\$498,782,388	\$93,334,989
Child Care	\$1,567,339	\$1,893,200	\$325,861	\$758,820	\$937,493	\$178,673	\$3,217,168	\$3,989,604	\$772,436	\$26,495,297	\$32,671,163	\$6,175,866	\$53,679,611	\$66,139,975	\$12,460,364
Pets	\$2,583,634	\$3,119,918	\$536,284	\$1,433,949	\$1,773,533	\$339,584	\$5,765,641	\$7,149,468	\$1,383,827	\$46,475,094	\$57,265,842	\$10,790,748	\$97,325,656	\$119,742,320	\$22,416,664
Food at Home	\$21,624,884	\$26,113,227	\$4,488,343	\$11,955,381	\$14,781,202	\$2,825,821	\$47,291,215	\$58,632,220	\$11,341,005	\$369,909,035	\$456,332,616	\$86,423,581	\$777,169,176	\$956,324,218	\$179,155,042
Food Away from Home	\$11,522,398	\$13,912,505	\$2,390,107	\$6,024,618	\$7,446,595	\$1,421,977	\$24,771,386	\$30,723,194	\$5,951,808	\$199,424,520	\$246,241,597	\$46,817,077	\$418,958,976	\$516,159,851	\$97,200,875
Bakery and Cereal Products	\$2,747,112	\$3,317,346	\$570,234	\$1,531,844	\$1,894,001	\$362,157	\$6,026,256	\$7,471,239	\$1,444,983	\$47,151,876	\$58,149,633	\$10,997,757	\$98,837,740	\$121,601,056	\$22,763,316
Alcoholic Beverages	\$1,955,175	\$2,360,425	\$405,250	\$1,008,260	\$1,245,900	\$237,640	\$4,134,115	\$5,127,135	\$993,020	\$33,963,446	\$41,999,795	\$8,036,349	\$70,966,319	\$87,532,511	\$16,566,192
Housekeeping Supplies	\$2,595,189	\$3,133,965	\$538,776	\$1,463,787	\$1,810,235	\$346,448	\$5,766,884	\$7,150,215	\$1,383,331	\$44,925,785	\$55,390,152	\$10,464,367	\$94,575,286	\$116,322,050	\$21,746,764
Furniture	\$2,852,370	\$3,445,155	\$592,785	\$1,606,762	\$1,987,280	\$380,518	\$6,344,720	\$7,866,285	\$1,521,565	\$48,511,140	\$59,696,230	\$11,185,090	\$102,598,426	\$126,077,066	\$23,478,640
Lawn and Garden	\$1,622,833	\$1,961,192	\$338,359	\$1,007,302	\$1,246,673	\$239,371	\$3,822,378	\$4,736,710	\$914,332	\$29,121,077	\$35,674,894	\$6,553,817	\$61,136,924	\$74,880,979	\$13,744,055

Source: Esri (2025)

* Data inclusive of East Node

Retail Market Analysis

Potential for Retail Spending and Demand

In addition to analyzing spending, the potential for consumer spending was examined to gain insights into local spending behaviors, with a focus on specific retail and food categories that reflect uses typically available in a neighborhood retail environment. Also included were uses that are already in the area and several that local stakeholders articulated might do well along the corridor or in the neighborhood.

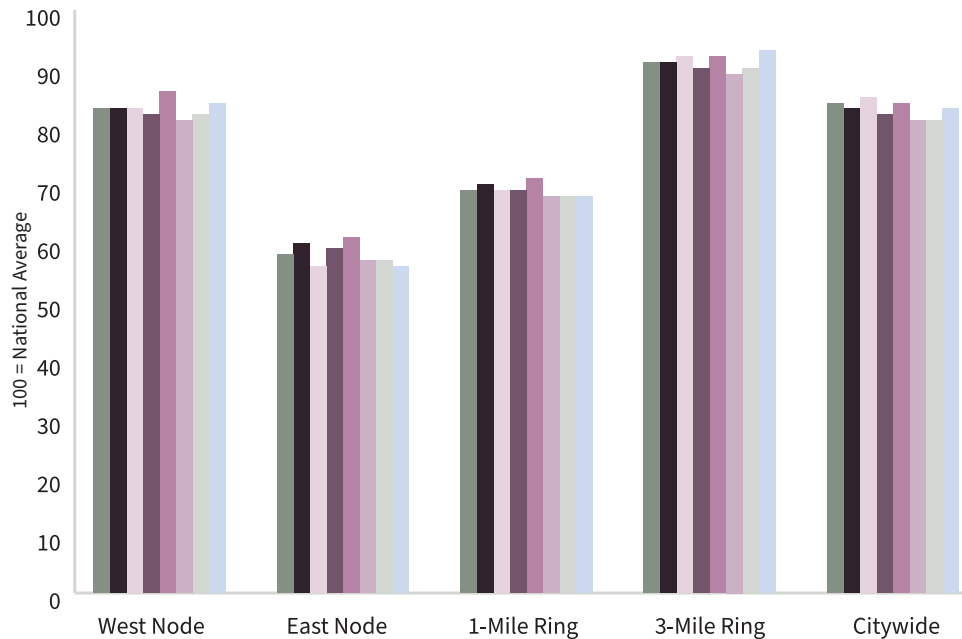
The Esri Spending Potential Index (SPI) which utilizes data from the Consumer Expenditure Surveys and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, was used to provide estimated current household spending patterns and potential expenditures. The Spending Potential Index (SPI) is household-based and represents the amount spent on a product or service relative to a national average of one hundred.

An SPI of 120 shows that average spending by local consumers is 20 percent above the national average. The charts below offer a comparison of the SPI for retail and food purchasing in the primary geographies used in our research.

The potential for household spending within the east node is well below the national and citywide levels. Households within the 3-mile ring and west node benchmark the highest, close to citywide spending and potential followed by those in the 1-mile ring, but still below the national average. This is in part a reflection of the cost of goods in the market, the availability of goods, but also a reflection of household income.

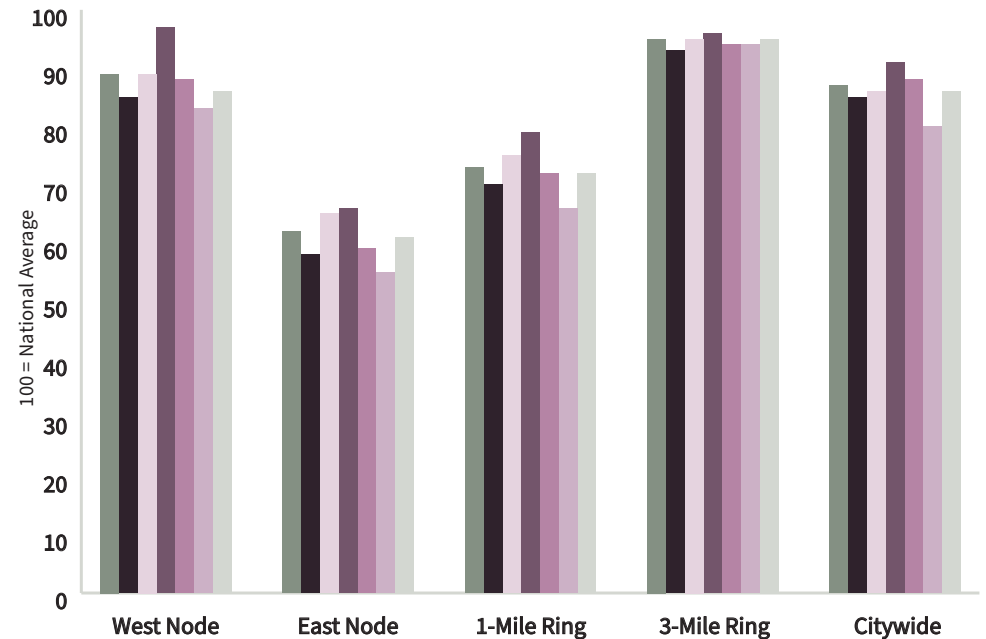
Comparison of Spending Potential Index: Food by Category

- Food Total
- Food at Home
- Food Away from Home
- Bakery & Cereal Prod.
- Meats, Poultry, Fish, & Eggs
- Dairy Products
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Alcoholic Beverages



Comparison of Spending Potential Index: Apparel

- Apparel & Services
- Men's
- Women's
- Children's
- Footwear
- Watches & Jewelry
- Apparel Products & Services

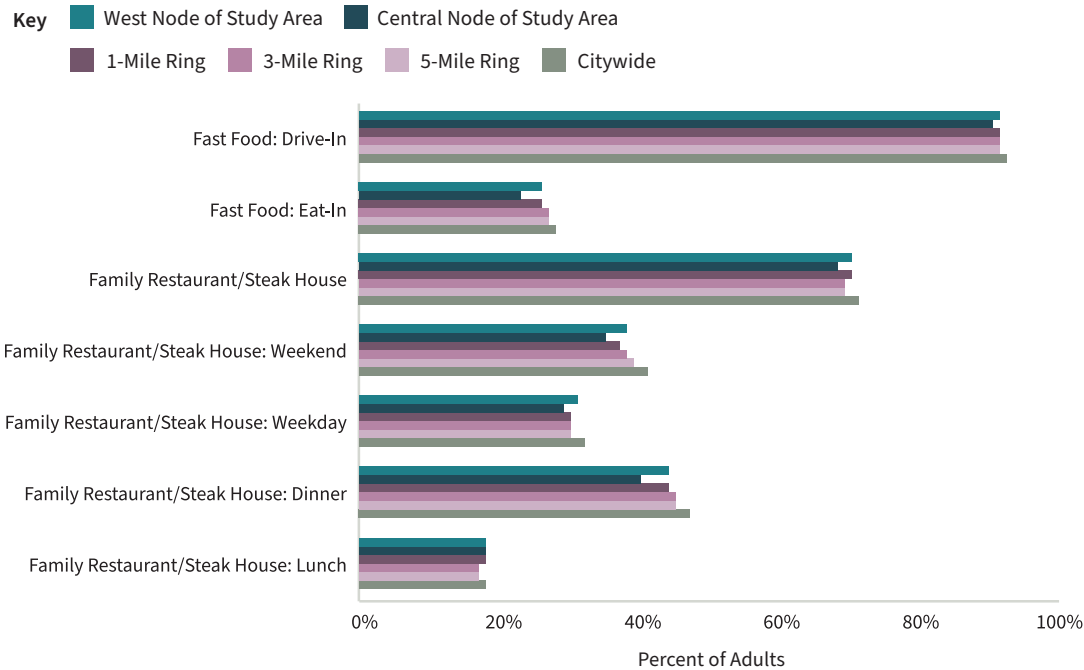


Source: Esri

Retail Market Analysis

Restaurants and Dining Out

Past Six Month Comparison of Dining Habits, 2024



When it comes to dining out, there is a prevalence for dining at fast food/drive-in and family style restaurants, including mid-priced steakhouses. Dinners out tend to exceed lunchtime meals out, following national trends as more consumers are reducing the amount of money spent at restaurants.

This data underscores the evolving consumer behaviors and preferences shaping the dining and grocery landscape in the market. Similar patterns emerge and are consistent for other select categories including apparel, entertainment, recreation, as well as household items and furniture.

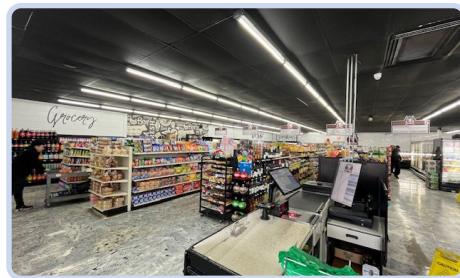
It is important to note that no individual indicator directly aligns with specific consumer behavior or any individual consumer. Instead, the indices provided highlight the average expenditure (in dollars) and the probability of consumer behavior within distinct geographical regions.

Source: Esri

Retail Market Analysis

Grocery Stores and Corner Stores

Securing a full-service grocery store in the Study Area is a priority for the community. Although the neighborhood lacks one, there are several convenience stores and local markets in adjacent neighborhoods (e.g.: Kim’s Market, Toro Market, Fine Foods). Within three miles from the center of the East Livingston Avenue corridor, there are several full-service grocery options including Kroger, Aldi, Market District, and a Walmart Supercenter.



704 Parsons Ave., Toro Meat Market



1541 Frebis Ave., Convenient Plus Food Mart

National Stores / Full Service

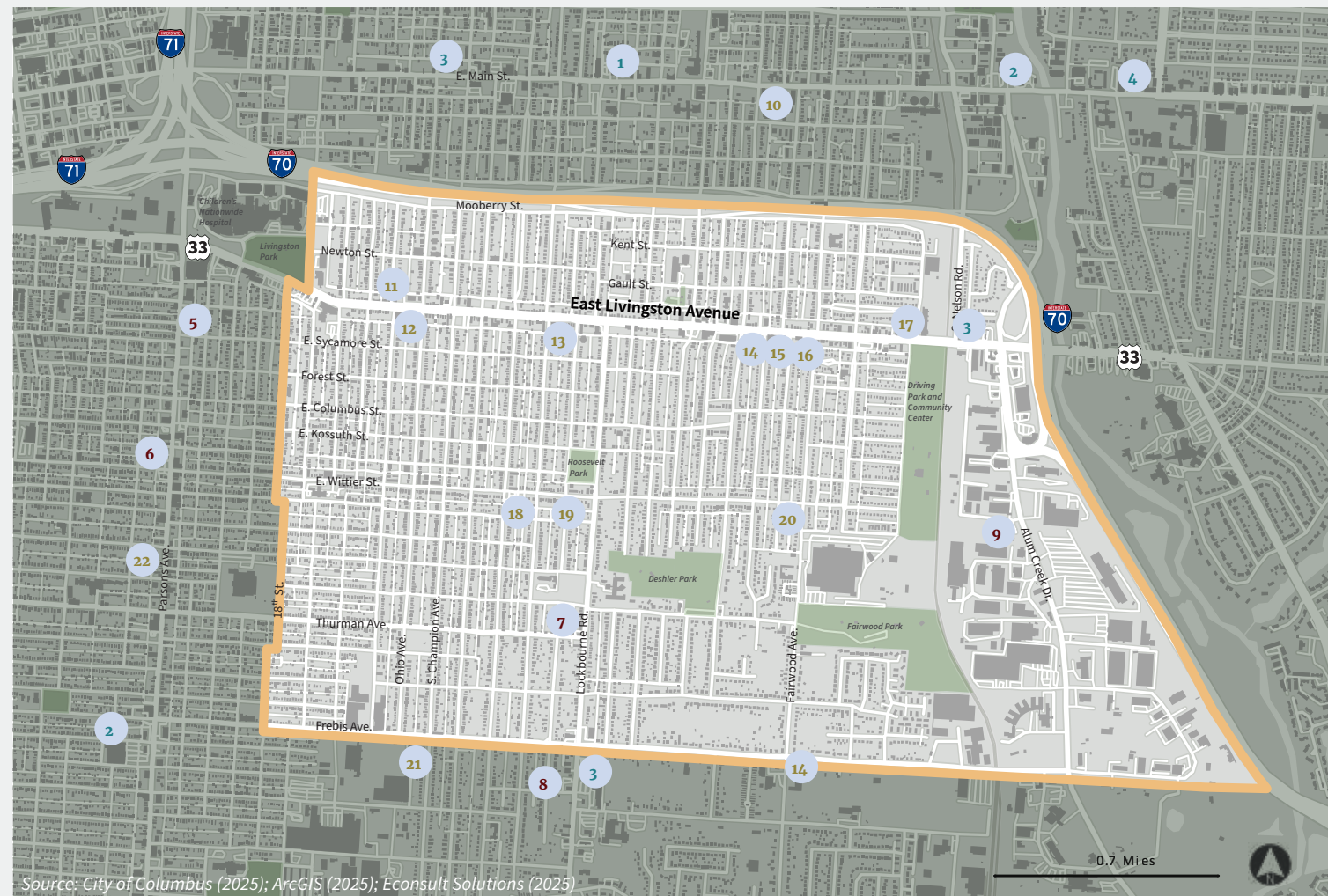
1. Dollar General
2. Kroger
3. Family Dollar
4. Market District Express

Local / Specialty Stores

5. Toro Meat Market
6. All People’s Fresh Market
7. Fine Food Market
8. El Girasol Family Market
9. Four Seas Asian Food

Corner / Convenience Store

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 10. Berkeley Market | 17. Brother’s |
| 11. Family Market/Carryout | 18. Jordan Food Mart |
| 12. Southeast Fish & Produce | 19. Lockbourne Mart |
| 13. Kim’s Market | 20. J&N Carry Out |
| 14. Convenient Plus | 21. Daisy Mart |
| 15. Pepper’s | 22. Bushman’s Food Market |
| 16. Livingston Market | |



Source: City of Columbus (2025); ArcGIS (2025); Econsult Solutions (2025)

Retail Market Conclusions

Limited Retail Options

Currently, residents and visitors within the East Livingston Avenue Corridor have limited choices for shopping, especially in apparel, home goods, and grocery. However, market fundamentals within the Study Area are not ideal to support significant new retail in the near future.

There are immediate opportunities to strengthen the retail that is there today, as well as attract new uses, especially small and/or local businesses.

Lack of Good Quality Retail Space

A key challenge for attracting new retail is the lack of availability of sites, and those that are vacant are in various stages of disrepair. The ideal scenario is white box space that is ready for lease. Short of that, there may be resources and tools that can be directed to those sites and stores that are available to reduce the cost of entry for a new business. This might range from making tenant fit-out dollars and lease subsidies available to expedited plan review and permitting.

Limited Opportunity for a Full-Service Grocery Store

The probability of attracting a traditional full-service grocery store that is between 40,000 to 65,000 square feet in the study area is low. Traditional grocers target areas with high traffic, dense populations, and good household incomes within 1 to 3 miles of a site. At present there is no obvious location that could accommodate a full-service store on the corridor, and there are several full-service grocers within three miles from the center of the corridor.

While there are several corner stores, they fall short of offering a comprehensive range of fresh food and products to meet local consumers requirements. Expanding the fresh food options in the neighborhood is a promising opportunity. This might be accomplished by enhancing fresh food offerings at the corner stores. If the owners collaborated on purchasing fresh food including from local farmers, they might achieve efficiency of scale and the ability to offer fresh food affordably. Alternatively, establishing a weekly farmers market or hosting the Local Matters “Veggie Van” would also provide the community greater access to fresh food.



Photo credit: Local Matters

Building off the success of the Toro Market, there may also be an opportunity for another boutique or ethnic grocer with a focus on fresh produce and baked goods, perhaps even a full-scale bakery with a cafe.

Lack of Apparel Stores

When it comes to apparel and home goods there is a scarcity of options for residents in the neighborhood. The increasing trend of resale and discount shopping suggests opportunities for tenants that align with existing businesses in the corridor or nearby areas. This might include consignment stores (kids, apparel, furniture).

Expand Personal and Household Service Providers

Services that complement the existing uses should be considered a priority and present an opportunity for local entrepreneurs and businesses already in the market to expand. Uses such as a dry cleaner and childcare, currently missing from the service and merchandise mix, would also offer job opportunities for residents while providing conveniences for residents as well as workers in the area.

National Retailers Demonstrate Market Demand

The majority of businesses located along East Livingston Avenue are locally owned. Few national tenants exist within the Study Area, however there are several national eateries and stores just outside, further west on Livingston Avenue. Their presence should be leveraged when promoting the neighborhood and leasing. Credit tenants such as CVS, Auto Zone, Panera Bread, and Tim Horton’s demonstrate that there is market demand, even if it is limited today.

Building Relationships with Small Businesses

Although the current residential and visitor market may not currently support these additions, the anticipated streetscape enhancement will likely create a conducive environment for such types of business. Therefore, establishing relationships with potential tenants now, especially local businesses, can make the way for future opportunities.

Section 5: Strategic Framework for Action

Key Takeaways

Near-Term Action

Designate Livingston Avenue for Clean and Safe Corridor programs, façade improvement grants, and corner store improvement strategies.

Business Development Focus

Target recruitment for neighborhood-serving businesses including smaller-scale grocery, family restaurants, coffee shops, personal services, and health/wellness facilities, supported by entrepreneurial resources and business incubation.

Long-Term Development

Identify catalytic sites for parcel assembly, explore commercial community land trust models to ensure affordability, and develop character areas to create distinct sub-districts along the corridor.

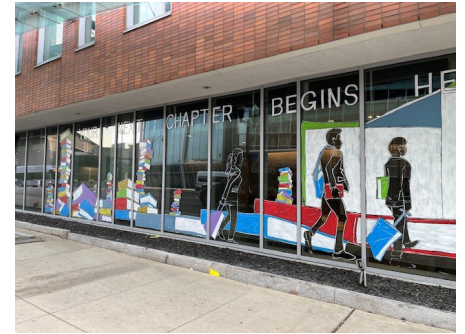
Governance Structure

Consider Main Street designation, Special Improvement District (SID) creation, or joint Retail Advisory Committee establishment to provide ongoing coordination and management of corridor improvements.



Overview of SWOT Analysis

Based on research of previous plans and studies, market analyses, stakeholder interviews, community survey, and community meetings, Livingston Avenue's strengths, weaknesses, challenges and threats (SWOT) were identified to inform strategies and recommendations for improving the retail and business conditions. The intent is to change the market trajectory of the corridor so that it better serves residents, while attracting shoppers and visitors and spurring new small business development and growth. Following pages present a summary of these findings and provide insight into the formation of the strategic framework.



Strengths

Housing Market Momentum

After experiencing population decline, disinvestment, and high vacancy in the 2010s, since 2020, the Study Area has experienced growth and a decrease in vacancy. Property values have increased over the last decade and the marketability of the housing stock has been repositioned by increasing investment and renovation activities.

Streetscape Improvements

As part of the implementation of the Joint Livingston Avenue Plan, Livingston Avenue will receive nearly \$30 million in investment for a new roadway configuration, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities. These improvements, anticipated to begin in 2026 with completion in 2028, will significantly enhance the perception of the market and the pedestrian experience along the corridor and help unlock future real estate investment.

Strong Institutional Anchor

Since the 1990s, Nationwide Children's has invested more than a billion dollars in its campus, expending its real estate and footprint, including the opening of a new twelve-story main hospital and research tower in 2012, the construction of an eight-story behavioral health pavilion and associated research offices along Livingston Avenue around 2020, and the launch of Central Ohio's first proton therapy treatment facility in late 2023. It has more than 16,000 employees on site and provided care to nearly two million patients in 2024. In addition to its campus, Nationwide Children's Hospital supports community programs and organizations throughout the Columbus region through the Nationwide Children's Hospital Foundation, including Healthy Neighborhoods Healthy Families, which is a non-profit supporting community development efforts throughout South Columbus.

Strong Community Assets

The Study Area is served by several quality community assets, including the 15,000 square foot Driving Park Branch Library (built in 2014) and the more than 54,000 square foot Driving Park Community Center that received a \$10.5 million renovation in 2015 to include a swimming pool and upgraded gymnasium. The area also has a strong historic and cultural anchor through the Rickenbacker Woods Foundation and Learning Center that provides youth education programs, community garden, and arts and cultural advocacy. These assets provide multi-generational amenities that generate activity and vibrancy, but also market support for new retail opportunities.

Established Neighborhood Groups

There are a number of engaged community and neighborhood groups that are focused on the areas within and near the Study Area, including:

Livingston Avenue Area Commission

represents the neighborhoods of Livingston Park, Driving Park, and Old Oaks. It makes advisory recommendations to Columbus City Council on zoning, demolition, and infrastructure projects within its defined corridor boundaries.

Healthy Neighborhoods Healthy Families

Launched in 2008 by Nationwide Children's Hospital in partnership with Community Development for All People (CD4AP), HNHF targets South Side zip codes (43205, 43206, 43207) through five impact areas: affordable housing (via the Healthy Homes arm), health and wellness, education, community

Strategic Framework for Action

enrichment, and economic development. Its branded programs include BOOST job training, school-based health clinics, SPARK kindergarten readiness, youth mentorship, home repairs and homeownership offerings, and community events like PlayStreets.

Livingston Avenue Merchants Association (LAMA) A nonprofit business association, LAMA works to support and promote the corridor’s retailers and small businesses, offering networking opportunities, community programming, advocacy and façade-improvement partnerships

(e.g. “Power of One”) to enhance curb appeal and commercial vitality.

South Side Thrive Collaborative (SSTC) An inclusive, collective-impact network of more than 40 organizations (including nonprofits, civic groups, businesses, and residents) committed to advancing health, housing stability, economic mobility, and community connection on Columbus’ South Side. SSTC convenes leadership partners to coordinate cross-sector investment and programming in support of South Side residents’ upward mobility.

Central Location

From a retail perspective, Livingston Avenue’s marketability is enhanced by its central location, near very strong and/or emerging sub-markets, including Old Towne East to the north, Downtown Columbus to the northwest, German Village to the west, and Bexley to the northeast. Drawing market support from these areas can bolster the competitive positioning of current and future retailers

Growing Momentum on Parsons Avenue and Main Street

Livingston Avenue benefits from market momentum on Parsons Avenue and Main Street, which over the last decade, have attracted new retail businesses contained within newly constructed mixed-use buildings and renovation of existing properties. There is an opportunity for Livingston Avenue to build off of this moment and create opportunities that complement not compete with these corridors.

Weaknesses/Challenges

Limited Retail Market Demand

While the housing market has improved in recent years, overall retail demand indicators are relatively weak, including relatively low median household incomes and housing density in the areas within walking distance of Livingston Avenue resulting in lower-than-average consumer buying power.

Limited Retail Offerings

While there are a number of long-standing business owners on the corridor, currently retail offerings generally consist of corner stores (aka

carry-outs) primarily selling alcohol, tobacco, soda, and snacks, fast food, and auto and tire shops. Other businesses include a health and beauty shop (now occupying the former Dollar General), tax services, barber shops/salons, cell phone store, and apparel store. There is a Mexican grocery store (El Tulipan) with a restaurant as well as Toro Market, just west of the Study Area on Parsons Avenue that sells fresh produce and a wide selection of meats; however, there is a limited availability of fresh foods, quality restaurants, cafes, or service providers (like a dry cleaner) along Livingston Avenue.

Limited Opportunity for New Development

There are a number of vacant lots throughout the corridor; however, given the lack of size and lot depth, there are very limited viable redevelopment sites. Smaller-scale mixed-use development would require much stronger market conditions to support feasibility (a scenario in which the future value exceeds the cost of development). Based on current market conditions, development would require incentives or subsidies, hence the continued development of affordable housing in the Study Area. Additionally, many

of the long-standing commercial property owners may be reluctant to sell their properties in the near term limiting reinvestment opportunities.

Vacancy and Property Conditions

Building conditions vary throughout the corridor, but many of the commercial properties are vacant or in very poor condition and would require substantial renovation to make them attractive to a retail business owner. Additionally, many of the vacant lots are littered with trash and debris.

Strategic Framework for Action

Perception of (and Actual) Crime and Lack of Safety

Loitering outside corner stores with visible use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs can make the area feel unsafe and less appealing. Though sometimes these activities only affect perceptions, they can also be linked to real safety issues like drug dealing, prostitution, firearms, and altercations

Retail Store Conditions

A number of businesses along the corridor, particularly corner stores, currently have inadequate lighting and signage, as well as gated or covered windows that limit visibility into the premises. In some instances, these conditions can create an impression that the stores are not operational due to a lack of inviting or marketable

building features. Additionally, many corner stores display insufficient interior lighting, weak inventory presentation, and in certain cases, expired perishable goods such as milk and eggs.

Length of Corridor

From 18th Street to the west to Interstate 70 to the east is a nearly two-mile stretch with a mix of commercial and

residential uses. Given finite demand for retail development and leasing, it would be unrealistic to envision a contiguously developed retail corridor, like a Main Street; however, this emphasizes the importance of pursuing development on select nodes within the corridor that leverage assets and development opportunities.

Opportunities

Creating a Clean and Safe Environment

would improve the shopping experience for customers but also make the area more attractive for small businesses. Fundamentally, successful Main Streets and mixed-use corridors are free of trash and debris, are well lit at night, and create a safe and welcoming experience for pedestrians.

Supporting Public Realm and Beautification Efforts

would contribute to “clean and safe” efforts but also build upon the nearly \$30 million streetscape improvements that are planned and soon to be underway. Incorporating public art, landscaping and planters, and public spaces would help improve market conditions for new retail development and leasing activity.

Providing Technical Assistance and Resources Small Business Support

would create opportunities for growing new and attractive existing businesses along the corridor, especially for home-growth businesses by local residents. These services include assisting with businesses planning, marketing, operations, and access to capital.

Supporting Land Assembly Efforts

which is the process of acquiring and merging key parcels along the corridor in the near term, would create opportunities for new community-supported redevelopment in the long term. If led by a community development entity, a land trust model could provide future affordability for residential and commercial uses.

Investing in Existing Structures

would enhance the marketability of the corridor through façade improvements, better signage, and white box programs to create more move-in ready space. Currently, there are very few move-in ready retail spaces in the corridor and many properties require substantial investment.

Focusing on Nodal Investment

would concentrate finite resources to select nodes with existing clusters of commercial uses, community assets, and/or future redevelopment opportunities. Key nodes include the blocks near the intersection of Champion Street given vacant parcels and existing businesses, and the intersection of Kelton Avenue, given existing businesses and Driving Park Branch Library. These

are also cross streets that provide access to Main Street to the north.

Ongoing Collaboration, Engagement, Coordination

would help align interests among community groups over the long term and help mitigate any potential conflicts related to future retail tenancing, real estate investments, and land use decisions. There is a need for a central organization that could align community interests.

Enhanced and Intentional Marketing and Branding

would allow local businesses to expand their trade area and broaden their customer base. While neighborhood-serving businesses are desired by the community, businesses operating

Strategic Framework for Action

along the corridor will also need market support from visitors, including employees, patients, and families from Nationwide Children's Hospital, those living in surrounding neighborhoods and

beyond. There is an opportunity to build upon the publicity of the streetscape improvements and bolstering the reach of local organizations like the Livingston Merchants Association.

Targeting Neighborhood-Scale Retail and Services

would bring more variety to the corridor and address community needs, including a small grocer, family-oriented sit down restaurants, bar/tavern, health and

wellness options e.g. fitness center, yoga studio), and neighborhood services like laundromats, salons, cafes and bakeries, cafés, bakeries, even local arts or culture venues.

Threats

Fear of Change

could limit revitalization efforts. The neighborhoods along Livingston Avenue have experienced substantial change over the last few decades. For many years, the area suffered from disinvestment and increasing housing vacancy, but in recent years, the housing market has accelerated and there is a concern of gentrification and displacement from long standing residents. However, conditions on Livingston Avenue are not sustainable and there is risk of further decline. Coordinated efforts and continual community engagement will be critical to ensure there is a

forum for addressing concerns about change and productive dialogue for supporting revitalization efforts.

Lack of Stakeholder Alignment

may lead to community divisions, resource competition, and mistrust. Several active community associations share similar goals but differ in priorities. A unified agenda would reduce competition, especially for scarce resources.

Competition from Philanthropic and Public Dollars

could limit the pool of potential funding for Livingston Avenue's community programs and initiatives, although over the long run, the ultimate goal is to change the market trajectory along the corridor, so positive economic

activity can occur without substantial subsidy. While Livingston Avenue is in need of new investment, there are other neighborhoods and corridors in the City of Columbus that are in various stages of their revitalization and are also relying upon philanthropic and public funding to support these efforts.

Competition from Emerging Corridors and Submarkets

could pull prospective retail tenants away from Livingston, such as along East Main Street and Parsons Avenue, both of which have stronger market conditions and a larger supply of quality, move-in ready commercial spaces. Beyond these corridors, continued momentum in Downtown Columbus will also draw more focus from developers, brokers, and small businesses.

Retail Market Uncertainties

are impacting both consumer behavior and business operations; key factors include potential tariffs, supply chain disruptions, rising cost of labor and overhead, and increasing ecommerce.

Lack of Engagement with and Cooperation from Property Owners

will limit the influence and impacts of the community on future tenancing and property maintenance, since the future retail potential of Livingston Avenue will be driven almost entirely by the private sector. Several owners own multiple sites, including those that are underutilized and undeveloped, and have demonstrated no immediate interest in developing or selling the properties.



Strategic Framework Format

The strategic framework provides:

1. The purpose or objective of each action,
2. Next steps for implementation, including stakeholder involvement,
3. Examples and resources, including useful links and references
4. Timeline of implementation:
 - short-term** (1-3 years)
 - medium-term** (3-6 years)
 - long-term** (6+ years)
 - and/or **ongoing**,
5. And responsibilities, whether it is public, private, community or funders.
6. Collaborative Implementation: Roles and Responsibilities

Success in the plan's implementation in Livingston Avenue comes from the coordination of four sectors, each bringing unique and complementary capacities and efforts. Those sectors are defined as the City of Columbus, private sector, community and funders.

The **City of Columbus** serves as the public sector partner, providing infrastructure through technical support for planning and design, code enforcement to maintain standards, public safety services to ensure a secure environment, and funding through various municipal programs and grants. The city's role is crucial in establishing the regulatory framework and basic services that make revitalization possible.

The **Private Sector** drives revitalization through real estate development that creates new spaces and improves existing properties, entrepreneurship that brings new businesses and services to the corridor, strategic leasing decisions that determine the mix of businesses, and property ownership that provides the physical foundation for commercial activity.

The **Community** provides the social infrastructure and local knowledge essential for sustainable change through community development organizations that advocate for resident priorities, marketing efforts that promote the corridor's unique character and businesses, and events and community programs that create vibrancy and draw people to the area. Community engagement ensures that revitalization reflects local needs and builds lasting support.

Funders enable and accelerate revitalization efforts by providing the financial resources that other sectors cannot generate independently. This includes philanthropic organizations that support community-driven initiatives, grants from foundations and government agencies that fund specific projects, broader initiatives that address systemic challenges, and crowdsourcing efforts that engage residents directly in funding local improvements.

The different sector's responsibilities overlap, meaning that there needs to be collaboration, and a combination for all of them to achieve the strategic vision of the corridor.

Sectors of Coordination for Implementation



Recommended Actions

The recommended actions presented on the following pages are categorized to meet the goals resulting from the analysis of the Study Area. The timing and effectiveness will rely on the community and its stakeholders. Each recommended action includes an explanation of purpose, a list of next steps, examples and resources, and the anticipated implementation timeframe as well as the primary stakeholders to initiate and energize action.

1

Clean and Safe

Create a clean and safe environment to encourage more pedestrian activity from residents and visitors

2

Commercial Revitalization

Support near and long-term investments and activation of existing properties and spaces

A: Healthy Corner Stores

B: Façade and Building Improvements

C: Temporary/Pop-Up Retail

D: White Box Commercial Space

3

Business Attraction and Support

Attract and support neighborhood-serving businesses and tenants

A: Business Recruitment

B: Business Incubator/ Shared Space

4

Marketing and Communications

Coordinate marketing and branding efforts

A: Neighborhood Branding and Marketing

B: Business Promotion and Events

5

Redevelopment Opportunities

Set a stage for long-term redevelopment opportunities

A: Strategic Site Assembly

B: Affordable Commercial Space

6

Governance

Establish a governance structure and/or a special district

A: Community Development Corporation

B: National Main Street Designation

1 Clean and Safe Streets

Purpose/Objective

Create a clean and safe environment to encourage more pedestrian activity from residents and visitors through comprehensive corridor improvements. This strategy mirrors the approaches used by Columbus's existing Special Improvement Districts (SIDs), particularly the East Main Street SID, which has launched a number of initiatives to enhance the overall economic well-being and community safety. They officially partner in communication with area police departments (Columbus, Bexley and Whitehall); they contract with Community Crime Patrol (CCP) to patrol the corridor and report crime, code violations and assist neighbors in need, and coordinates with Columbus Police for special duty foot patrols, and has influenced the ability to attract new business investment and property improvements. The Enhanced Clean & Safe Operations strategy establishes routine maintenance schedules similar to how Downtown Columbus's Capital Crossroads and Discovery Districts deploy trained safety ambassadors providing safety services, cleaning, landscaping, and homeless outreach typically from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and until 8:00 p.m. on Sundays. (These services generally have a baseline cost of \$100,000 annually.)

Key tactics include implementing regular street cleaning and maintenance similar to successful programs citywide and enhancing lighting infrastructure through utility partnerships. A focused approach of city service under the Clean & Safe Corridor Initiative as was recently completed along Parsons Avenue. Additional programs

such as an integrated business camera program might also enhance safety and perception of safety. Many of the businesses along Livingston Avenue have security cameras installed on the interior and exterior of their businesses. Linking these to the police system enhances safety and also the ability of local law enforcement to catch criminals. Many police departments offer a free program for businesses to register their security cameras. In these programs, law enforcement does not get live access to your feed, but when a crime occurs in your area, police can use the registry to see if your camera may have captured relevant footage. Officers can then contact you directly to request the video evidence.

This comprehensive approach addresses both immediate safety concerns and long-term business attraction by creating a welcoming environment that supports increased foot traffic and commercial viability.

Next Steps

1. Target Livingston Avenue for routine Clean and Safe Corridor Initiatives
2. Enhance safety programs similar to East Main Street SID
3. Implement corner store improvement strategy
4. Support public realm investments (plantings, murals, public arts)

5. Explore the creation of a business camera surveillance program. Provide subsidy/grant to businesses to install cameras, and require the cameras to be registered with the local Police Department's SafeCam program.

Examples and Resources

-  [Clean & Safe Corridor Initiative](#)
-  [Columbus 614 Beautiful](#)
-  [Philadelphia Business Camera Program](#)
-  [D.C. Residential/Business Camera Rebate Program](#)
-  [North Broad Camera Program](#)
- City maintenance budget and utility partnerships
- SID model documentation from East Main Street and downtown districts
- Store improvement grants and design assistance
- Capital improvement funds
- Enhanced property inspections and code enforcement
- JobsOhio Inclusion Grant (JOIG) offers broad small business grants and the funds can be used for technology, including cameras

Implementation: Short Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

 **Public** |  **Private** |  **Community** |  **Funders**

2 Commercial Revitalization

Columbus has a strong track record of strategic and targeted neighborhood investment, and will continue to support programs that enhance existing commercial businesses and create an environment that attracts new businesses and consumers to the corridor. The city has certain programs that might be directed toward the neighborhood, which collectively could have a strong impact on the overall neighborhood. Additional programs could be adopted, modified and targeted to the Livingston Avenue corridor, to strengthen the corridor overall. This might include programs such as the Power of One façade renovation program or a program focused on enhancing corner stores.

A: Healthy Corner Store Initiative

Purpose/Objective

Enhance existing corner stores with improved selection of fresh food, building of the foundation established by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the stores and the Livingston Avenue Merchants Association, and also strengthen local business operations.

Corner or convenience stores play an important role in meeting the food needs of a local community. These stores are particularly important for in between larger “stock-up” trips to more distant supermarkets or supercenters. All too often these stores have limited fresh food, have outdated even insufficient lighting, storage and refrigeration.

Healthy Corner Store Initiatives such as the Food Trust’s Healthy Corner Store Initiative, work with small and independent grocery stores to enhance the amount of fresh food for sale and the physical infrastructure in the stores. These programs typically provide stores with training about healthy food, how to display it and funding for equipment and marketing to promote the new fresh food items they are offering.

This might also include collaborative purchasing agreements among existing stores to expand access to distributors and wholesale suppliers, including from local farmers and farmers markets.

Successful models exist in Toledo, Detroit, and Washington, D.C. that incentivize store owners to enhance fresh food offerings, improve merchandising and presentation, and upgrade store lighting and displays. This initiative would take the MOU executed between corner stores and the Livingston Avenue Merchants Association to offer fresh food in their stores to the next level.

Next Steps

1. Secure corner store owners’ participation
2. Identify the best model to pursue
3. Evaluate potential collaborative distribution models
4. Identify funding and/or grants

Examples and Resources

- [!\[\]\(871763ce268644956ec625ebcc9081f3_img.jpg\) Toledo Corner Store Initiative](#)
- [!\[\]\(4de38d966e28c5cdaeb74ffb980c0bb6_img.jpg\) Detroit Green Grocer Program](#)
- [!\[\]\(fb7f849743f61f11d27cca24c81941db_img.jpg\) D.C. Central Kitchen Healthy Corners Program](#)
- [!\[\]\(8da7753ccaea28c4798173d73948ea27_img.jpg\) Food Trust Healthy Corner Stores](#)

Implementation: **Short-Term | Ongoing**

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | **Community** | Funders

2 Commercial Revitalization

B: Façade and Building Improvements

Purpose/Objective

Incentivize physical improvements that create immediate visual impact and demonstrate corridor investment momentum. This strategy leverages Ohio's Main Street Program methodology, which focuses on improving downtown's image through physical appearance improvements including buildings, streetlights, window displays, signage, sidewalks, streetscapes, and landscaping.

Facade improvement programs have proven effective throughout Ohio, with cities like Marysville offering grants covering up to 50 percent of project costs with a maximum of \$70,000 for economically significant projects including window and door repair, exterior cleaning, and facade restoration. The strategy includes partnering with OSU's Knowlton School of Architecture and Columbus AIA Chapter for pro-bono design services, similar to successful academic-community partnerships that provide professional expertise while giving students real-world experience. This approach maximizes limited resources while ensuring high-quality design outcomes that enhance the corridor's visual appeal and business attraction potential.

Next Steps

1. Target Livingston Avenue for future façade improvement program grants
2. Consider future partnerships with OSU Architecture Program and/or Columbus AIA for pro-bono design services
3. Engage with the Neighborhood Design Center for additional design services
4. Identify 2-5 businesses to catalyze the effort.
5. Leverage 614 Beautiful to target efforts on Livingston Avenue

Examples and Resources

- ☞ [Ohio Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program](#)
- ☞ [City of Columbus Power of One Grant](#)
- ☞ [OSU Knowlton School of Architecture Partnerships](#)
- ☞ [Heritage Ohio Preservation Services](#)
- ☞ [Main Street America Main Street Approach Handbook](#)
- AIA Columbus Pro-Bono Design Services

Implementation: Medium-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders



2 Commercial Revitalization

C: Temporary/Pop-Up Retail Program

Purpose/Objective






Pop-up shops or a temporary store can help to activate a street, offer entrepreneurs a low-risk way for to test the viability of their business, and build brand awareness. The cost of entry is low, appealing to entrepreneurs and online businesses expanding. Generally space is offered as is, with minimal investment (paint, cleaning) under a license agreement (30 to 90 days typical) rather than a traditional lease, with reduced rent and discounted or no utility fees. Many cities offer expedited permitting to ensure expeditious opening. Pop-up initiatives are generally locally led by community organizations such as merchant associations, BIDS and SIDs.

Common examples that take advantage of public/ and/or open space include farmers markets, plant/ garden stores, beer gardens, food trucks, and even night markets. Examples commonly found in brick and mortar spaces include used bookstores, secondhand clothing, local designer apparel, jewelry and artistic designs, and artist/creative spaces including galleries.

Next Steps

1. Identify one or two locations as pilot effort, secure landlords permission
2. Create Pop-up retail policies (length of time, target businesses, license agreement, marketing
3. Identify potential tenants
4. Secure a process to expedite permits and certificates of occupancy

Examples and Resources

-  [Pop-Up Licensing Agreement Templates and Legal Framework \(Main Street America\)](#)
-  [Score Why Pop-Ups Work](#)
-  [Seattle Restored](#)
-  [OSU Center for Entrepreneurship](#)
-  [D.C. Pop-Up Permit Program](#)
Columbus SBDC, City of Columbus
Office of Small Business

Implementation: Short-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

D: White Box Program



Purpose/Objective

Prepare commercial spaces by stripping them down to essential elements thereby eliminating extra costs for potential tenants and to expedite move ins for tenants, including both new space and secondary space

Next Steps

1. Identify potential locations
2. Engage landlords to commit to participate in this program
3. Develop white box toolkit

Examples and Resources

-  [Racine Commercial “White Box” Grant Program](#)
-  [Toledo White Box Grant Program](#)
- Cleveland White Box Recoverable Grant

Implementation: Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

3 Business Attraction and Support

A: Business Recruitment

Purpose/Objective

Actively target businesses that fill a gap that exists in the neighborhood. This includes: neighborhood goods and services, small scale grocery, family style/fast casual restaurants, coffee shops/cafés, personal fitness, and even childcare. Proactive retail attraction efforts are typically led. Some cities and organizations have dedicated staff that focus on retail attraction. Some communities create advisory boards comprised of property owners and brokers to advise them on the best tenants to target and even initiate connections with potential tenants.

Next Steps

1. Create a retail/business attraction advisory group with representatives from the existing civic and community groups and the private sector, including existing businesses.
2. Establish relationships with retail brokers that work in Columbus and the region to enhance awareness about market gaps, available sites and opportunities, and community priorities.
3. Create and distribute marketing collateral that includes relevant market data and metrics retailers (and other businesses) need to make site selection decisions (demos, trade area information etc.)
4. Target small business and entrepreneurial resources along Livingston Avenue; engage with existing businesses and attract aspiring business owners.
5. Target wellness programs and resources in the Study Area
6. Create market-readiness dashboard with key indicators for future retailers
7. Market current (or future) incentive package to attract investment

Examples and Resources

- [Ohio City, CLE Business Attraction](#)
- [International Council of Shopping Centers](#)
- [Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership Retail Profile](#)
- [North Broad Renaissance](#)

Implementation: Medium-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

3 Business Attraction and Support

B: Explore Creation of Retail, Maker, Small Business Incubator or Shared Space

Purpose/Objective

Incubators and shared spaces for entrepreneurs create an opportunity for entrepreneurs to test concepts and grow their businesses. These types of spaces focus on supporting a wide range of retail businesses, providing general business support, access to funding, and mentorship. Common formats that are successful are focused fashion, food, and locally made goods.

A Livingston Avenue incubator might be more targeted toward the local assets. This might include something related to healthcare and wellness. The Volunteers of America's Futures Fund Community Health Incubator powered by SEED SPOT supports early-stage entrepreneurship that develops innovative products and services for improved community health outcomes. The program is partly funded by Humana. A wellness focused incubator could also include businesses such as Yoga or Pilates, physical fitness/therapy, nutrition, even meal kits.







Another option would be food focused such as a community/shared kitchen. The idea is that small entrepreneurs would have access to a commercial kitchen allowing them to scale up production for direct sale of items or to support an existing enterprise such as a catering business. This could be supported by capital and equipment donations from organizations such as Nationwide and around food donations

of equipment by Toro Market and Kroger. Other possible donors include food manufacturers that have a presence in the market and regularly upgrade equipment such as refrigerators (Shearer's Foods, General Mills). A good example to consider is ECDI's Food Fort and Incubation Services.

Next Steps

1. Establish relationships with local institutions in the field of entrepreneurship. Include universities such as Ohio State University, Franklin University, and the Ohio Dominican University's Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.
2. Connect with organizations that support entrepreneurship, such as the SBDC, NAWBO
3. Identify and inventory resources available for entrepreneurs, from training to capital.
4. Identify potential site along the corridor or within the Study Area that might be suitable; for example: a shared kitchen ideally with existing infrastructure (cooking and prep equipment, refrigeration)

Examples and Resources

-  [Philadelphia Fashion Incubator](#)
-  [Rochester Shared Kitchen](#)
-  [Made in D.C. Retail Store for Local Products](#)
-  [The Hatchery](#)
-  [The Women's Small Business Accelerator](#)
-  [ECDI Food Fort and Incubation Services](#)

Implementation: Short-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Fundors

4 Marketing and Communications

A: Neighborhood Branding and Marketing

Purpose/Objective

Leverage infrastructure improvements to create positive momentum and visibility that shifts public perception and attracts new visitors and businesses. This strategy recognizes that construction periods, while disruptive, provide opportunities to communicate positive change and build anticipation for completed improvements. The approach builds on examples where infrastructure improvements have been coordinated with broader rebranding efforts, such as in Mount Vernon where streetscape improvements along Mount Vernon Avenue and East Long Street now host “the annual Long Street Tour cycling event” that brings regional visitors to the corridor.

Effective neighborhood branding during construction phases involves consistent messaging about the vision for the improved corridor, regular updates on progress and upcoming businesses or amenities, and programming that maintains community engagement during disruption. This strategy coordinates with planned streetscape improvements to ensure that marketing materials, signage, and communications create a cohesive identity that differentiates Livingston Avenue from other commercial areas while highlighting its unique strengths and character.

Next Steps

- **Messaging:** Craft clear and consistent messaging that communicates the unique character and offerings of the East Livingston Avenue, whether it is the historic background or the planned streetscape improvements even initiatives such as those offered by the Rickenbacker Woods Foundation.
- **Promote the streetscape improvements to the local media:** invite press for a tour during construction with city, design team and local stakeholders.
- **Promote streetscape and new business activity via social media:** Utilize existing neighborhood group accounts and ask stakeholders and partners to repost.
- **Visual Storytelling:** Utilize high-quality photography and potentially videos that showcase the improvements and other activity along East Livingston Avenue, from events to new businesses.

Examples and Resources

- 🔗 [NBC 4 news clip re: North Market Improvements](#)
- 🔗 [Instagram campaign](#)
- 🔗 [Heritage Ohio Main Street Guidelines](#)

Implementation: Short-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

4 Marketing and Communications

B: Business Promotion and Events

Purpose/Objective

Coordinate business promotion and community engagement activities that increase visibility and customer traffic for existing businesses while building community connections that support long-term corridor success. This strategy addresses the immediate need to support existing. The approach recognizes that successful districts like Columbus’s Discovery District have transformed areas into vibrant destinations by adding restaurants and programming.

Community events and festivals create regular opportunities for residents to engage with local businesses while building the social connections that make neighborhoods resilient and attractive to new residents and businesses. But this more than just events and includes seasonal promotional activities that would support area business such as coordinated holiday and “back-to-school” special sales, sidewalk sales at the start of summer, and so forth. There may also be opportunities to link special promotions to events and activities at the Children’s Hospital.

The strategy includes both supporting existing community events and exploring new programming like pop-up food truck parks that can provide immediate activation while longer-term restaurant development occurs. The ideal timing for this is post streetscape improvements; promotional activities and events can be used to celebrate even leverage the local improvements.

Next Steps

1. Promote local businesses and neighborhood efforts
2. Create social media accounts to inform the community about ongoing improvements and activities (Facebook, Instagram, etc.)
3. Continue to support/promote community events and festivals
4. Explore pop-up events/activities (e.g., food truck parks)
5. Link Livingston Avenue activities with Parsons Avenue, Main Street, and Downtown
6. Establish relationships with area brokers to put Livingston Avenue “on the map”

Tactics include leveraging streetscape improvement announcements to rebrand the neighborhood

Examples and Resources

- 🔗 [Experience Columbus-Franklinton](#)
- 🔗 [Designing for Community Well-Being](#)
- Professional marketing and communications coordination
- Project communications budget and materials
- Social media and local media campaign
- Community engagement programming during construction
- Signage and wayfinding coordination with infrastructure projects
- Banners that reflect the branded corridor

Implementation: Short-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

5 Redevelopment Opportunities

A: Strategic Site Assembly

Purpose/Objective

Prepare the corridor for long term development opportunities through coordinated land assembly and development planning that creates developable sites of appropriate scale for significant investment projects. This strategy addresses the common challenge in older commercial corridors where properties are often in small, fragmented ownership that makes larger-scale development difficult. The approach builds on Columbus’s successful experience with large-scale redevelopment projects like Poindexter Village, where the Columbus Metropolitan Housing Authority used a \$29.7 million Choice Neighborhoods Initiative grant to assemble and redevelop a 414-unit housing project. Based on the neighborhood economics, it would likely be more successful to focus on a few smaller nodes that are at key intersections, that collectively could help to incentivize other investment. Examples include the “west node” that leverages investment by Nationwide Children’s Hospital and other investment south of Livingston along Parsons and an “east node” located near the interchange that leverages recent investments such as Middle West Distillery on Alum Creek Drive just off Livingston Avenue.

Next Steps

1. Corridor Analysis and Site Identification to determine potential focus parcels
2. Identify 3-5 priority catalyst sites with the greatest potential for transformative development
3. Coordinate with neighborhood organizations and residents to ensure projects align with community goals
4. Engage existing businesses and property owners who may be interested in participating in site assembly opportunities
5. Develop implementation plans for priority sites

Examples and Resources

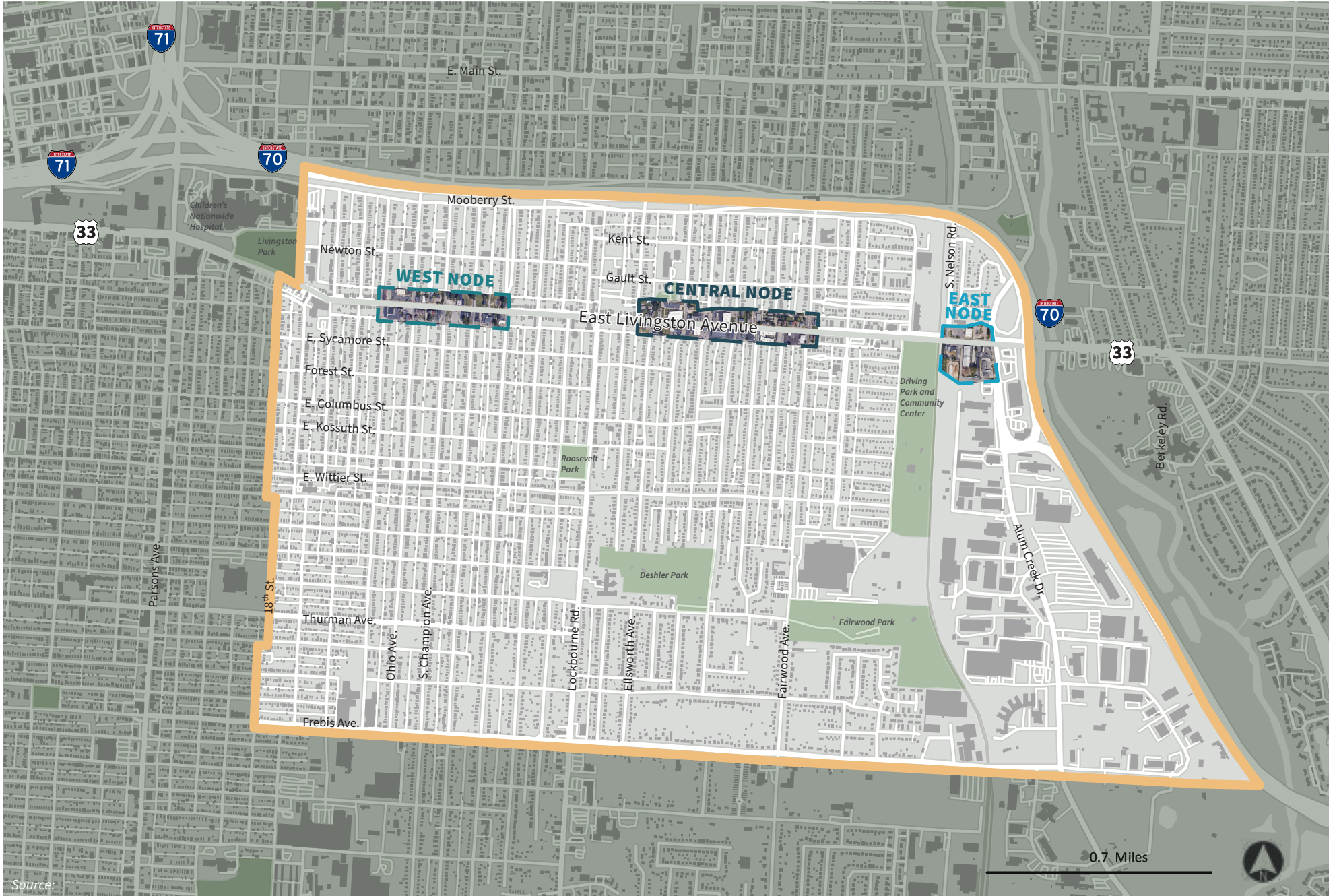
- Professional site analysis and market feasibility studies
- Legal services for land acquisition and assembly negotiations
- TIF, bond financing, and land bank resources from Columbus
- Development partner identification and coordination
- Community engagement and input processes

Implementation: **Medium-Term**

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Funders

Livingston Avenue Redevelopment Opportunity Nodes



Source:

WEST NODE

The West Node leverages its proximity to Nationwide Children’s Hospital. This location presents unique opportunities for mixed-use development that serves both hospital employees and neighborhood residents. Ground-floor retail in the new development would target daily-needs businesses that benefit from consistent foot traffic, including cafes and take-out food options for hospital staff, personal services such as barber shops and salons, dry cleaning, and other

convenience-oriented businesses that serve both the medical campus and surrounding community.

The West Node contains several underutilized properties, including vacant parcels and buildings requiring significant renovation or redevelopment. These sites present opportunities for strategic assembly that could accommodate larger-scale projects while maintaining neighborhood character and scale.

The long-term vision for the West Node emphasizes transit-oriented development principles, creating increased residential density with ground-floor commercial space that capitalizes on the area’s walkability.

The node’s position near Nationwide Children’s Hospital and the established Parsons Avenue commercial corridor creates potential that supporting both institutional needs and neighborhood vitality.



CENTRAL NODE

The Central Node centers around the Livingston Branch Library, which serves as a community anchor and daily destination for residents across the corridor. This institutional presence creates a foundation for developing a more cohesive commercial district that can serve the broader neighborhood.

The Central Node presents the corridor's greatest opportunity for strategic site assembly, containing the largest concentration of developable parcels and underutilized buildings suitable for renovation

or redevelopment. This includes both vacant lots that could accommodate new construction and existing structures that could be adaptively reused for commercial purposes. The node's development potential is enhanced by its central location along the corridor.

Current commercial space in the Central Node includes several existing storefronts along Livingston Avenue, with additional opportunities emerging through planned improvements and private investment. Future development should focus on creating a commercial

district incorporating ground-floor retail in new mixed-use buildings and rehabilitated structures. The concentration of assembly opportunities allows for coordinated development and support complementary business mixes that create a cohesive district identity.

Newton St.

CENTRAL NODE

Columbus Metropolitan Library: Driving Park Branch

East Livingston Avenue

Denton Aly.



VACANT PARCEL

Great visibility across from library
Opportunity to assemble with other properties

POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES

POTENTIAL RENOVATION

Repurpose existing space
Node anchors

E. Sycamore St.

Ellsworth Ave.

Kelton Ave.

Lilley Ave.

Berkeley Rd.

Geers Ave.

Seymore Ave.

Fairwood Ave.

EAST NODE

The East Node occupies a strategic position at the intersection of Livingston Avenue and the I-70 interchange, creating both opportunities and challenges for development. While the interchange generates significant vehicle traffic and provides regional accessibility, the current infrastructure prioritizes automobile movement over pedestrian activity. This auto-oriented environment presents opportunities to attract businesses that benefit from high visibility and convenient highway access, including automotive services, quick-service restaurants, retail chains, and other car-dependent businesses that can serve both neighborhood residents and regional travelers.

However, realizing the East Node's potential as a true gateway district requires investment in pedestrian infrastructure and connectivity improvements.

The area's fragmented development pattern and highway-oriented design currently create barriers to walkability and limit its function as a cohesive neighborhood destination. Improved pedestrian connection to destinations like Middle West Distillery and other local businesses is needed.

The long-term vision for the East Node positions it as Livingston Avenue's gateway district. However, the node's success as a gateway depends on creating seamless pedestrian connections that allow visitors to safely transition from highway-speed travel to neighborhood-scale exploration, establishing it as both a regional destination and a launching point for experiencing the broader Livingston Avenue corridor.



5 Redevelopment Opportunities

B: Affordable Commercial Space

Purpose/Objective

Ensure commercial affordability through innovative ownership models that prevent displacement of existing businesses and maintain space for neighborhood-serving enterprises as property values increase. This strategy addresses the common challenge in revitalizing corridors where improvements lead to increased rents. The approach builds on Columbus's experience with the Central Ohio Community Land Trust (COCLT), which holds land in perpetuity under 99-year leases, enabling affordable occupancy even as market values rise. Though COCLT has focused on single-family and multi-family housing developments in neighborhoods like Linden, Franklinton, and the Near East Side, its model offers a replicable structure for commercial community land trusts. Applied to commercial districts, this structure ensures that neighborhood-serving businesses can access space at stable, affordable rates without risk of displacement as property values grow.

Commercial community land trust models allow communities to maintain control over commercial space affordability permanently, ensuring that successful neighborhood-serving businesses can remain even as property values increase. This approach provides long-term protection against gentrification-induced displacement. The strategy also includes developing flexible

space programs that can accommodate businesses of different sizes and types, recognizing that neighborhood commercial districts benefit from diversity in business scale and operation models.

Next Steps

1. Research and feasibility assessment of potential acquisition targets
2. Stakeholder engagement and coalition building of property owners, business owners, and community organizations
3. Establish strategic properties for pilot commercial land trust acquisition
4. Implementation and expansion
5. Layer land trust model with site acquisition and assembly efforts

Examples and Resources

- Community Land Trust legal framework and operational models, including:
 - 🔗 [Rondo Community Land Trust](#) (St. Paul, MN): Offers deeply affordable commercial spaces along historic Black business corridors like Selby Avenue. Rondo CLT prioritizes BIPOC entrepreneurs through long-term leases with below-market rents, helping to reverse displacement from urban renewal.

🔗 [City of Lakes Community Land Trust](#) (Minneapolis, MN): Through its Commercial Land Trust Initiative, CLCLT helps small businesses, especially those led by people of color, acquire equity stakes in commercial properties via shared ownership models.

🔗 [Pittsburgh Innovation Project CLT](#) (Pittsburgh, PA): Combines land banking with cooperative commercial ownership in historically dis-invested neighborhoods like Hazelwood and the Hill District to preserve affordable storefronts and support business incubation.

- Foundation grants focused on anti-displacement and community ownership
- Public investment in land acquisition and development
- Legal expertise in alternative ownership structures
- Community engagement in governance and decision-making processes

Implementation: Long-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Fundors

Case Studies

Commercial Community Land Trusts

Commercial Community Land Trusts represent an emerging model that combines affordable commercial space preservation, community ownership, and corridor revitalization. These organizations secure land for long-term affordable small business space while ensuring community control over neighborhood development and preventing displacement.

PEER CITY EXAMPLE

Philadelphia, PA
Kensington Corridor Trust

The nation’s first neighborhood trust focused on a commercial corridor, 1.4 miles of Kensington Avenue, the Kensington Corridor Trust demonstrates the power of community-controlled development,

Structure and Governance

- Uses a Perpetual Purpose trust legally tied to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a Trust Stewardship Committee of nine community members
- Board comprised of community residents and small business owners

Impact and Scale

- Provides community control over \$7 million in commercial real estate assets

PEER CITY EXAMPLE

St. Paul, MN
Rondo Community Land Trust

Minnesota’s first commercial community land trust supports mixed-use potential

Development Approach

- Created the Selby Milton Victoria development with affordable senior housing and 9,300 square feet of commercial space
- Offers commercial rent at \$7 per square foot, significantly below market rate
- Demonstrates how commercial CLTs can address both housing and business affordability simultaneously

PEER CITY EXAMPLE

Minneapolis, MN
Partnership in Property Community Land Trust

PIPCLT specifically targets BIPOC small business owners in North Minneapolis

Mission and Focus

- Makes commercial real estate perpetually affordable for BIPOC entrepreneurs
- Addresses vacant buildings held by speculative investors
- Removes properties from for-profit real estate markets through 99-year renewable ground leases

Community Impact

- Addresses racial disparities in commercial property ownership
- Provides opportunities for local entrepreneurs facing capital access barriers
- Combats gentrification through community-controlled development

PEER CITY EXAMPLE

Minneapolis, MN
City of Lakes Community Land Trust

Shows how residential-focused CLTs can expand into commercial applications

Development Strategy

- Expanded operations since 2016 to include commercial land trust initiatives
- Conducted feasibility analysis, community outreach, and program design
- Pilot project on Nicollet Ave. “Eat Street” commercial corridor
- City-supported initiative to prevent commercial displacement

6 Governance

A: Community Development Corporation

Purpose/Objective

A **Community Development Corporation (CDC)** is a **non-profit organization focused on revitalizing distressed neighborhoods and improving the lives of residents, particularly those with low incomes.** CDCs achieve this by engaging in a range of activities, including developing affordable housing, fostering economic development, providing job training, and offering social services. They often act as intermediaries between community members, public agencies, and other organizations.

Many banks have foundations and support such programs. Seek seed funding from an organization such as Columbus Foundation or Nationwide Children's Hospital and seek matching grants from other banks and institutions.

Building on the work of existing organizations, such as the Livingston Area Merchants Association, which actively engages and promotes businesses along the corridor, the proposed CDC structure can access additional funding sources and implement real estate-focused programs. These may include white box improvements, development initiatives, pop-up retail management, and business incubators. Funding can be sourced from memberships, private donations, rental income, public grants, and philanthropic contributions.

The CDC can serve as a medium-term solution, with the potential to evolve into a Special Improvement District (SID) over time. SIDs are legally defined geographic areas where property owners agree to pay additional assessments beyond regular taxes to fund enhanced services and improvements that directly benefit the district. These districts primarily focus on creating clean and safe environments that attract customers, businesses, and investment to commercial corridors. SIDs represent a long-term strategy.

Next Steps

- Identify potential seed funding
- Assemble a board representing the City Department of Development, Children's Hospital, community members, businesses, and property owners
- Secure ongoing funding sources
- Complete legal and administrative setup; establish financial management and accountability systems
- Launch the program with evaluation and monitoring phases

Examples and Resources

 [Ohio Bankers Foundation](#)

- Bank of America
- JP Morgan Chase Bank

Implementation: Long-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Fundors

Case Studies

Corridor-Focused Community Development Corporations

Community Development Corporations focused on corridor revitalization represent a proven approach to transforming commercial districts. Unlike broad-based CDCs, these organizations concentrate exclusively on commercial corridor development, involving coordinated efforts to revitalize commercial properties, support local businesses, and strengthen economic opportunities within targeted corridors.

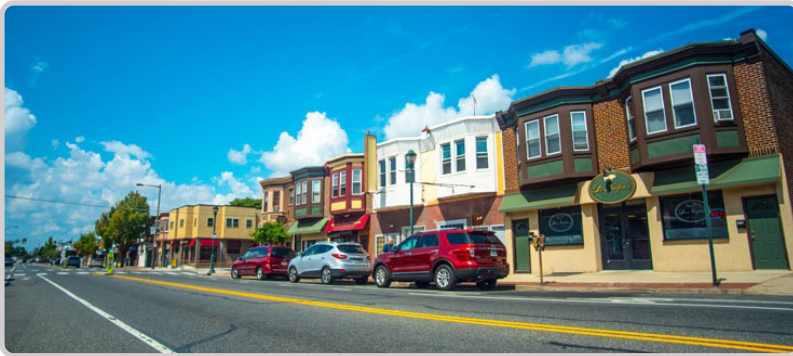
PEER CITY EXAMPLE

Philadelphia, PA

Tacony Community Development Corporation

The Tacony Community Development Corporation demonstrates how a small-budget CDC can effectively focus on corridor revitalization. The organization re-focused its resources on revitalizing the Torresdale Avenue commercial corridor, employing the Main Street program's four-point approach:

- ❶ **Design:** Creating attractive storefronts and public spaces
- ❷ **Organization:** Building partnerships between stakeholders
- ❸ **Promotion:** Marketing and events to drive foot traffic
- ❹ **Economic Vitality:** Supporting existing and recruiting new businesses



PEER CITY EXAMPLE

Pittsburgh, PA

Mount Washington Community Development Corporation

This CDC partnered with LISC MetroEdge to implement simple but effective corridor improvements. LISC MetroEdge provided funding for bold storefront signs along Pittsburgh's Shiloh Street, demonstrating how targeted visual improvements can create immediate impact and build momentum for larger revitalization efforts.

Proven Strategies

Successful corridor-focused CDCs implement both immediate and long-term interventions:

Immediate Impact Strategies

- Facade improvement grants and signage upgrades for existing businesses
- Installing trash cans, organizing clean-up days, commissioning murals
- Connecting businesses with financing and technical assistance
- Creating quick visual improvements that change community perceptions

Long-term Development

- Strategic business recruitment aligned with community needs
- Property acquisition and rehabilitation
- Infrastructure improvements and streetscaping
- Comprehensive marketing and branding initiatives

6 Governance

B: National Main Street Designation

Purpose/Objective

Being a Main Street organization in Ohio offers numerous benefits, primarily centered around revitalizing downtown areas and fostering economic growth. These organizations focus on historic preservation, economic development, and creating vibrant, attractive commercial districts. By leveraging a four-point approach (Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality), they aim to transform traditional commercial areas and downtowns into thriving community hubs. Plan for creation of the organization during the streetscape construction. It could fall under the CDC or independent organization. Many community organizations wear multiple hats, and programs/services and operations, while operated by the same staff, are layered under different “organizations” and separate legal entities. This allows for diversification in funding and also limits overhead, especially personnel costs and office space.

The Ohio Main Street Program, administered by Heritage Ohio, offers two paths to becoming an Ohio Main Street Community.

DART Visit The first is to request and complete a Downtown Area Resource Team Visit (DART). This comprehensive analysis of your downtown is completed by our professional staff. Once completed, your community is automatically enrolled as an

Aspiring Main Street Community for one year. Read more about how a [DART Visit](#) could benefit your community.

Aspiring Main Street Program The second is to sign up as a Community Member or Aspiring Main Street Community. We still encourage DART Visits for all communities joining, particularly those with the ambition to become an Affiliate Main Street community. Read more on how your community can become an [Aspiring Main Street Community](#).

Next Steps

1. Build on work already done by Livingston Ave. Merchants Association.
2. Explore the process to establish a designated [Main Street program](#) which offers communities a proven framework for revitalizing commercial districts, fostering economic growth, and enhancing quality of life.

Examples and Resources

- [Ohio Main Street Program](#)
- [National Main Street Program](#)
- [Why Main Street Matters](#)
- [Westerville-Uptown Westerville Affiliate Main Street](#)

Implementation: Medium-Term | Ongoing

Implementation Details:

Public | Private | Community | Fundors

7 Miscellaneous Programs and Best Practices

Purpose/Objective

Communities across the country have implemented programs and adapted resources to support retail corridor development focusing on business attraction and retention. The following are tools and programs that have a proven track record. Layering incentives and programs often help attract new businesses by lowering entry costs and increasing results.

Examples and Resources

- 🔗 [Pittsburgh Downtown Rent Abatement Program](#)
- 🔗 [New Jersey The Small Business Lease Grant](#)
- 🔗 [Wilmington Property Tax Abatement Program \(commercial and MF\)](#)
- 🔗 [NY Commercial Property Revitalization Program](#)
- 🔗 [St. Louis Downtown Retail Incentives](#)
- 🔗 [Great Streets DC](#)
- 🔗 [Downtown Orlando Retail Business Incentives](#)
- 🔗 [DC Supermarket Tax Incentive](#)
- 🔗 [NJ The Food Desert Relief Supermarket Tax Credit Program](#)
- 🔗 [Baltimore City Personal Property Grocery Store Tax Credit](#)
- 🔗 [Columbia SC Grocery Store Incentive](#)
- 🔗 [NY Food Retail Expansion to Support Health](#)
- 🔗 [Orlando Targeted Revitalization Site Redevelopment Pilot Program](#)
- 🔗 [CLE Storefront Renovation Program](#)
- 🔗 [Phila InStore Forgivable Loan Program](#)
- 🔗 [New Rochelle Retail Tenant Improvement Fund](#)
- 🔗 [Massachusetts Vacant Storefront Program](#)
- 🔗 [Greater St. Louis Tenant Improvement Program](#)

About the Consulting Team



Econsult Solutions, Inc. (ESI) provides businesses and public policy makers with consulting and thought leadership services in urban economics, real estate, transportation, public infrastructure, economic development, public policy and finance, strategic planning, as well as expert witness services for litigation support.

ESI combines robust quantitative analysis with trusted expert insights to create sustainable solutions. The firm works collaboratively with its clients, and draws in expertise, when necessary, from its network of experts and partners across industries, regions, and management practices. Based in Philadelphia, the firm supports clients nationwide.



The Riddle Company is a woman owned consulting firm that specializes in real estate and economic development marketing. We develop and implement data driven strategies to support business attraction and economic investment for a diverse portfolio of public and private clients. Our services include marketing and public relations (traditional and social media), communications strategy and planning, client and market research and analyses, and business development and recruitment. Our clients include municipalities, economic development organizations, downtown development organizations, private and institutional investors and developers, and small businesses across North America. Our work is tailored to individual clients needs driven by their short and long-term goals. The business and strategic plans we have developed and executed range in value from \$50 thousand to \$5 million. This work is augmented with media (earned and social) and public relations to engage community, build consensus, secure project approvals, enhance market perception, and shape consumer behavior.



New Reach Community Consulting is a Black-owned, purpose-driven public affairs consulting business based in Columbus, OH. Its mission is to help organizations connect with communities to improve lives. New Reach keeps a finger on the pulse of communities, and its work centers on adding value to society in authentic ways.

New Reach specializes in community engagement and has a consistent and credible focus on social impact. Areas of specialization include stakeholder outreach and community engagement, public awareness, issue advocacy, and strategic planning and implementation.



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