

# Harrison West Plan

A Revision of the Harrison West Reach Section of the Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan



City of Columbus, Department of Development, Planning Division



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## LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Dear Friends,

As we work to build safer, stronger neighborhoods right here in America's 21st Century City, I am proud of everyone who joined in with residents of Harrison West to ensure the community's success and vitality. As a great neighborhood and a critical part of the Riverfront Vision Plan, Harrison West is already seeing great new investment that respects the historic nature of the area and will make it an even better place to live. The redevelopment of the riverfront, along with new homes and new businesses locating nearby, are all key elements in improving the quality of life in the area. We are committed to working in partnership with residents to continue this momentum and successfully help plan for the future.

In an effort to better guide future development and investment, the Harrison West Plan is being created to serve as a guide for future improvements. This plan will give residents, developers and civic leaders a realistic and viable tool to get results and maintain the unique nature of the area.

The development of this plan would not be possible without the assistance from neighborhood leaders, organizations, residents and businesses. Your work is to be commended as you look to the future of the Harrison West Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MBC", written over a horizontal line.

Michael B. Coleman,  
Mayor

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## Executive Summary

The *Harrison West Plan* is both a policy document and an agenda for action - a "blueprint" for future neighborhood growth and redevelopment. In the coming months and years, the Plan's recommendations and strategies will serve as a reference, guiding decision-makers in the protection of historic assets, the preservation of neighborhood character, and the identification of significant infrastructure needs.

The Plan was developed by a committee of stakeholders during the summer/fall of 2004 and the winter/spring of 2005. The committee was comprised of neighborhood residents and property owners, Harrison West Society officers, local business representatives, and city staff. Members convened monthly at the First Brethren Church on Third Avenue to discuss issues, identify neighborhood priorities, and develop a series of recommendations.

Though it is the first plan ever prepared for the neighborhood, the *Harrison West Plan* was originally conceived as an update to an earlier Plan - the *Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan*, adopted by Columbus City Council in 1998. As the name

suggests, the Riverfront Vision Plan was developed to guide development and coordinate parkland acquisition along the Scioto and Olentangy River Corridor, which runs through Harrison West. The *Harrison West Plan* is much more than an update to the Vision Plan, however, as it addresses a larger geography - the entire Harrison West neighborhood - and a broader scope of issues.



*The Harrison West Plan is both a policy document and an agenda for action - a "blueprint" for future neighborhood growth and redevelopment.*

In general terms, the *Harrison West Plan* recommends a continuation of the development patterns that lend the neighborhood its unique character. Additional residential development, retail development, office and light industrial development, and parkland have all been proposed as a part of a balanced mix.

The implementation of the Plan's recommendations (summarized on the following page) will be ongoing and collaborative. Together with the efforts of property owners, the strength of the Harrison West Society, and support from the city of Columbus,

the *Harrison West Plan* will help to ensure that Harrison West retains its charm and character - and that it continues to be regarded as one of the city's most vibrant and desirable neighborhoods.

## The Plan recommends:

- ◀ taking inventory of the neighborhood's architecture and historic structures
- ◀ establishment of a Neighborhood Conservation District or a review commission
- ◀ nomination of eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places
- ◀ development of architectural guidelines for use in development review
- ◀ planning for landscaping and sound mitigation along S.R. 315
- ◀ completion of capital improvement projects already planned/programmed
- ◀ replacement of fencing along the Michigan-Goodale connector
- ◀ preservation and extension of the existing street grid
- ◀ installation of median and crosswalk improvements
- ◀ prohibition of additional curb cuts along neighborhood streets
- ◀ use of UIRF and capital improvements funds to enhance planned projects
- ◀ relocation of the pole-mounted signage at Michigan Avenue and Goodale Street
- ◀ increased enforcement of the speed limit along Goodale Street
- ◀ enhancement of neighborhood intersections
- ◀ a thirty (30) ft. pavement width for all new streets, to allow for on-street parking
- ◀ installation of sidewalks, treelawns, and street trees as properties are developed
- ◀ relocation of utility lines below ground, if funds become available
- ◀ an upgrade of the light fixtures along Third Avenue and Fifth Avenue
- ◀ installation of decorative lighting if property owners choose to be assessed

*Note: It is the goal of this document to preserve the spirit and intent of the Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan. Consequently, Vision Plan recommendations that do not otherwise conflict with the recommendations of this document are hereby incorporated by reference.*

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



## Impetus for the Plan

The *Harrison West Plan* was developed to update and expand the scope of the "Harrison West Reach" portion of the *Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan*, a policy document adopted by Columbus City Council in 1998. Because the Vision Plan addresses a

geographic area that extends beyond the boundaries of the Harrison West neighborhood, it remains a relevant document and will continue to serve as the primary guide for development/redevelopment along the Olentangy and Scioto River corridors.

"The *Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan* expresses the community's vision for a nine-mile river corridor that stretches along the Scioto and Olentangy Rivers from The Ohio State University to State Route 104. The Plan identifies over 600 acres of potential parkland, 30 miles of mixed-use trails, and 150 acres of new development opportunities. Envisioned for the riverfront corridor is 1) an actively used greenway that preserves and enhances the existing natural riparian ecology, 2) strong linkages to the riverfront from future and existing neighborhoods, and 3) new development that complements the traditional character of existing neighborhoods. Developed under the auspices of the

Riverfront Commons Corporation (RCC) and adopted by Columbus City Council in 1998, the *Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan* establishes a framework for the revitalization of the riverfront, identifies desired land uses, and outlines open space and development guidelines."

- *Handbook for Private Development and Public Improvements*, p. 1

Like the Vision Plan, the *Harrison West Plan* also incorporates guidelines contained in a supplemental reference that was developed in July of 2001: the *Handbook for Private Development and Public Improvements in the Riverfront Corridor*. Though not adopted by Council like the Vision Plan, the Handbook was intended to serve as a companion piece. It establishes a framework for development review and encourages the use of context-sensitive standards:

"*The Handbook for Private Development and Public Improvements* in the Riverfront Corridor was developed to supplement the Riverfront Vision Plan by providing design and development suggestions that can be used by individuals and organizations seeking to develop within the boundaries of the Vision Plan. The design approaches and strategies presented in the Handbook have also been developed as a tool to help Commissions, with powers of review, evaluate proposals made for development and redevelopment within the boundaries of the Riverfront Plan... Although not mandatory, the concepts of this Handbook are a

resource: a reference toolbox of valuable design and development options, which if implemented, will help reinforce a riverfront character that is consistent with the adopted *Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan*."

- *Handbook for Private Development and Public Improvements*, p. 1

Although the Vision Plan and Handbook address a wide variety of opportunities that exist in the Harrison West neighborhood,

both documents concentrate almost exclusively on planning and design issues, development/redevelopment strategies, and recommendations for riverfront enhancement. In addition, the Vision Plan limits its geographic scope to properties that have some relationship to the river corridor. Nevertheless, the Vision Plan's broad objectives and vision are still germane to Harrison West and were used to set the framework for the *Harrison West Plan*.

### VISION PLAN OBJECTIVES

- ◀ The river should contribute to the image of Columbus
- ◀ The river should be a destination in and of itself
- ◀ The river should be a connector between activities and places
- ◀ New development should be mixed use and mixed income
- ◀ The river should be accessible by diverse communities
- ◀ The riparian environment should be a special asset to the city

*Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan*, p. 3

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan  
Vision Statement**

The Columbus riverfront will respect the special environmental characteristics of the Scioto and Olentangy River ecosystem and celebrate the unique opportunities that can bring citizens and visitors alike to enjoy and experience the river".

"The river will become a cultural spine for the city. Cultural features and destinations along the riverfront will be linked with interpretive information to create a special Columbus experience including historical features, musical events, public art, and educational and cultural institutions. The riverfront parks will accommodate large gathering spaces suitable for special arts, music, and civic festivals. Along the length of the entire corridor, the bridges will establish an architectural statement that is unique to the history of Columbus."

"New urban development will respect and compliment existing neighborhoods and urban districts and relate directly to a continuous corridor of public open space along the river. Appropriate development will face the riverfront, rather than turn its back, and will generate life and activity, contributing to a secure and safe recreational experience. Because of the value of the land and the preciousness of the open space resources, new development will have urban densities comparable to Columbus' traditional urban neighborhoods and commercial mixed use districts."

- Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan, pp. 5-6



Original concept proposed by the 1998 Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan.

## Purpose of the Harrison West Plan

The *Harrison West Plan* was developed to serve as a reference document for city officials, the Harrison West Society, builders/developers, neighborhood groups and organizations, and other local stakeholders involved in decision-

making. The recommendations and implementation strategies contained in the document will help the city of Columbus to identify infrastructure priorities, plan projects efficiently, assign resources to needs, and deliver services in ways that best meet the needs of neighborhood residents. The plans will also aid the Harrison West Society, Columbus Development Commission, and Columbus City Council in regulating development, as applications for variances and zoning changes are received and reviewed.

The Harrison West Plan, in essence, is an update of the "Harrison West Reach" portion of the *Columbus*

### OTHER RELEVANT PLANNING DOCUMENTS

<i>The Columbus Riverfront Vision Plan</i>	Riverfront Commons Corporation
<i>The Columbus Thoroughfare Plan</i>	City of Columbus, Transportation Division
<i>Overall Traffic Management Plan</i>	City of Columbus, Transportation Division
<i>The Columbus Comprehensive Plan</i>	City of Columbus

*Riverfront Vision Plan.* With the Vision Plan's broad objectives and vision in mind, the *Harrison West Plan* simply takes the next step -- it addresses a larger geography (the entire neighborhood), considers a larger realm of issues, and incorporates a more specific set of implementation strategies.

The Plan also includes the real-world perspectives of residents, who have the most at stake... and, of all stakeholders, are perhaps most qualified to guide the preservation and enhancement of the historic urban neighborhood known as Harrison West.

### NEIGHBORHOOD CENSUS DATA (2000)

Total Population (Residential)	<b>3,191</b>
Total Housing Units	<b>1,685</b>
Average Family Size:	<b>2.6 persons</b>
Owner Occupied Housing:	<b>21%</b>
Renter Occupied Housing:	<b>75%</b>
Vacant Housing:	<b>4%</b>

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

# The Planning Area

The Harrison West Neighborhood lies approximately one linear mile northwest of the Columbus downtown. It contains roughly 300 acres and more than 800 individual parcels of land. Though it is often perceived as a residential neighborhood, almost half of the acreage has been developed with nonresidential uses: corporate offices, retail stores and restaurants, light industrial establishments, parkland, and manufacturing facilities.

The planning area is roughly defined by Fifth Avenue to the north, Harrison Avenue to the east, Goodale Street to the south, and the railroad tracks west of Olentangy River Road to the west (incorporating the area known as Gowdy Field). State Route 315 bisects the area, as does the adjacent river, and is accessible from Goodale Street and Olentangy River Road.

The unique location and context of the neighborhood may explain some of its appeal. The historic Victorian Village sits to the east,

the City of Grandview Heights lies to the west, and two "destination" areas - The Ohio State University to the north and Arena District to the south - are less than a mile away.



## The Planning Process

In May 2004, the Harrison West Society submitted a formal request for planning assistance to the City of Columbus' Planning Division. The Society recognized that several large-scale projects, including Harrison Park and the redevelopment of Gowdy Field, would soon reshape a significant portion of the neighborhood and that a review of the policies and strategies contained in the "Harrison West Reach" portion of the Vision Plan might be due. The Planning Division agreed and with input from the Harrison West Society officers and members, designed a process to create a new plan.

In July, a broad working committee consisting of neighborhood residents, property owners, local business representatives, city and university staff, community leaders, and members of the Harrison West Planning and Development Committee conducted a kickoff meeting at the First Brethren Church on Third Avenue. The group defined the scope of the process, selected the planning area boundaries, and introduced broad topics to be considered and addressed. During the fall and winter months, the committee explored a broad spectrum of neighborhood issues and began to formalize a series of recommendations. In May and June of 2005, the Planning Division compiled this information into a draft plan document. The committee convened again in July to review the draft, make revisions,

and select a date for presentation to the public. Copies were then distributed internally to city staff for review and comment. The final draft, as approved by the working committee, was subsequently presented to the broader neighborhood at a public open house and then forwarded to the Development Commission and City Council for review and adoption.



### TIMELINE

<b>May, 2004</b>	request for assistance from the Harrison West Society
<b>July, 2004</b>	kickoff meeting hosted at the First Brethren Church
<b>August, 2004</b>	working committee begins to explore relevant issues
<b>January, 2005</b>	preliminary recommendations generated
<b>February, 2005</b>	design guidelines and development standards proposed
<b>May, 2005</b>	implementation strategies developed
<b>July, 2005</b>	committee review of plan recommendations and strategies
<b>August, 2005</b>	review by city staff and the public
<b>September, 2005</b>	adopted by the Columbus City Council

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

# Neighborhood Snapshot

## Current Assets and Strengths

- ◀ Healthy mix of residential and commercial uses
- ◀ Pedestrian-friendly buildings
- ◀ Neighborhood-scale development
- ◀ Affordable urban living with a "small town feel"
- ◀ Social and civic-minded residents
- ◀ Grid orientation (streets, alleys, and sidewalks)
- ◀ Greenspace and parkland
- ◀ Scenic bike path along the Olentangy River
- ◀ Attractive to young professionals
- ◀ Street trees, flowers, and small gardens
- ◀ Convenient location, accessible
- ◀ Diverse incomes, ages, and lifestyles
- ◀ Close to the Ohio State University
- ◀ Property values are increasing
- ◀ Unique and historic architectural character
- ◀ Relatively safe (low rate of crime)
- ◀ Diverse group of churches
- ◀ Residents are active and involved
- ◀ Historic homes and buildings

## Issues and Concerns

- ◀ Renter-occupied units outnumber owner-occupied units by a factor of 3:1
- ◀ No direct connection to North Bank Park
- ◀ Inconsistent infill development (not context sensitive) erodes character
- ◀ Student residents support the local economy, but are transient
- ◀ Section 8 housing is poorly maintained
- ◀ Rising home prices may lead to a less diverse population
- ◀ The riverfront is a missed opportunity
- ◀ Increase in neighborhood traffic due to I-670
- ◀ No public schools or learning centers
- ◀ Homeless people are congregating along the trail and near I-670
- ◀ Noise from helicopters is intrusive
- ◀ Development along Olentangy River Road lacks consistency/character



## Imagining the Future

- ◀ Pedestrian-friendly character has been preserved and enhanced
- ◀ The grid of streets and alleys extends south of 1st Avenue
- ◀ Unique gateway features have been constructed at 3rd and 5th Avenues
- ◀ Residential and commercial uses support each other
- ◀ The Victorian architecture is intact, and reflected in new development
- ◀ Standards are in place to guide redevelopment
- ◀ Additional parkland has been acquired along the Olentangy River
- ◀ Home ownership levels high - and continuing to rise
- ◀ A lengthened bikeway provides a physical connection to the downtown
- ◀ New recreational opportunities exist along the river
- ◀ Pedestrian amenities have been added to streets and intersections
- ◀ Public/private schools have opened and are in close proximity
- ◀ Olentangy River Road complements the character of Harrison West
- ◀ The overhead electrical lines have been buried below grade
- ◀ Sanitary and stormwater sewers have been repaired/upgraded
- ◀ Redevelopment projects respect and enhance neighborhood character
- ◀ Fencing along I-670 helps to screen adjoining properties
- ◀ Harrison West fits seamlessly into the larger area context
- ◀ Dwellings and uses are keeping pace with changing demographics



## LIFE IN HARRISON WEST

## 22 Years in Harrison West

by Debby Colvin

In 1984, Jerry and I had been planning a move from apartment living to home ownership. We were committed to the Columbus area and had been looking at properties in many parts of town. We had the same question as many other home buyers - new or existing? When we found the new "Victorian" style homes being built by M/I Homes in the Harrison West area, an established older neighborhood, we felt we had found the best of both worlds. Although the Harrison West area had become a less than desirable place to live in the minds of many

homes on her block (Vermont Place.) It is sobering to remember that this was a beautiful and well-kept neighborhood prior to its downturn in the 70's.

The diversity of the neighborhood population which drew us here is still a strong selling point to us, although as housing prices have skyrocketed, we have seen that diversity begin to wane. This is an unfortunate side effect of the upgrading of the neighborhood.

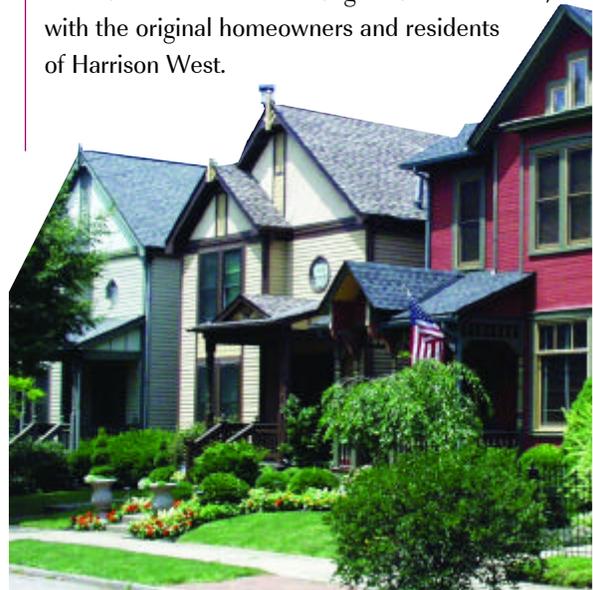
To a sometimes greater or lesser degree, we have been active in the Harrison West Society for the entire period we have lived here. We have seen the Society grow with the neighborhood into a force that has the power to affect, in a positive manner, the many issues concerning our neighborhood. When we first moved here, issues were crime, domestic violence, and absentee landlords. Now, our priorities include preserving the historical nature of our neighborhood, oversight of new construction projects, and acquisition of green space. By being actively involved in the neighborhood, we continue a tradition that was started long before we arrived, with the original homeowners and residents of Harrison West.



*When we found the new "Victorian" style homes being built by M/I Homes in the Harrison West area, an established older neighborhood, we felt we had found the best of both worlds... the diverse nature of the residential mix, and the proximity to downtown.*

individuals, the fact that Ohio Bond money was available for low-interest loans in this area was a strong positive factor for us. (At this time, conventional loan interest rates were very high.) We also were drawn to the diverse nature of the residential mix, and the area's proximity to downtown. We took a chance and selected a lot.

The past twenty-plus years seem to have flown by! The changes to this neighborhood have been immense! Although we feel like long-time residents of the area, we know individuals who have a much longer history with the neighborhood. They lived through the good times and the bad. For instance, our neighbor, Ruth, across the alley, showed us pictures of the home which originally sat on our property, and has told us family stories about



## Architectural Vernacular of Harrison West

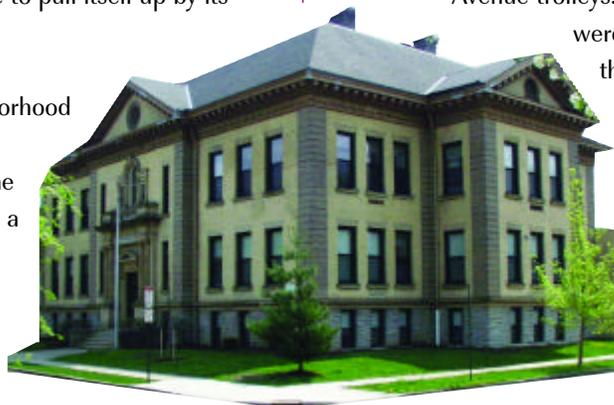
by Rob Harris

Architecturally, Harrison West is an honest representation of the social, economic, and geographic nature of its environment. The neighborhood speaks clearly through built forms, displaying an architectural vernacular that is unique and specific.

Socially, this neighborhood has always been ethnically diverse. Comprised of Italian, German, and African immigrants during the 1850s, the 1950s brought a wave of Appalachian and Southern Ohio immigrants looking for work. The 1980s featured urban pioneers interested in the neighborhood for its housing and lifestyle, not for pedestrian access to jobs.

Economically, the neighborhood started as a working class community that served as home to employees of local businesses and factories. The steady decline in manufacturing jobs combined with the economic hardship across post-war America created a downward spiral in the area during the late 1940s and 1950s. 'Urban renewal' left its brutal scars on the neighborhood as well. Fortunately, thirty years of economic turmoil were to come to an end with a virtual renaissance in 1980. Through targeted grants and neighborhood activism, the neighborhood was able to pull itself up by its collective bootstraps.

Geographically, the neighborhood started out with a working relationship to the river. The river was used primarily as a workhorse for the growing factories. Later, this trend would reverse with the closing of the factories and the conversion of the



land into home sites. The river would soon become a location for living, parks, and recreation.

The Harrison West Architectural Vernacular consists of simple working class homes built around the turn of the century. The area is known not for any individual building, but for the grid-like structure and harmonious nature of the whole community. The architecture of the area is primarily the late Victorian Queen Anne style, minimally detailed due

*The neighborhood speaks clearly through built forms, displaying an architectural vernacular that is unique and specific...The area is known not for any individual building, but for the grid-like structure and harmonious nature of the whole community.*



to working class economics. Highbrow architectural types such as Richardsonian and Four Square can be found in Vermont Place or relocated to Dennison Place. The most expensive homes generally were located closer to the Neil Avenue and Pennsylvania Avenue trolleys. Institutional buildings

were commonly built in the highest style of the time; a fine example of Italianate architecture can be found at the First Avenue School.

Queen Ann architecture is normally fanciful and

flamboyant, but when combined with economic limits the style becomes more restrained. Normally elaborate details are simplified and used sparingly. The tall narrow facades use double hung windows that are twice as high as they are wide. There is an element of surprise to the typical Queen Anne home: the breaking of symmetry. The roof is steeply pitched and irregular. The overall shape of the house is asymmetrical and usually incorporates a gable projection from the main roof. The intense heat and desire for social interaction lead to the predomination of front porches. Newer homes built during the neighborhood's renaissance emulated the historic style and blend with older buildings. Recent construction that has been sensitive to the vernacular has become a great asset to the community; however, some recent

building types have ignored simple but basic design elements and are foreign to the architectural vernacular (examples: recent riverfront development and Third Avenue multi-family buildings).

Building lots are generally narrow, only thirty (30) to forty (40) feet, requiring a vertical building orientation and forcing close proximity. Front porches and gardens line the streets unifying the common theme of the architecture. The neighborhood is a harmonious, interwoven network of understated homes that forms a highly prized collective environment in today's housing market. Pedestrian-friendly streets with tucked away private gardens add to a diversity of environments that provides a vibrantly tranquil lifestyle.

## Harrison West: for some it's the best of all possible worlds

by Veda Gilp

Residents of Harrison West will tell you it's the best of all possible worlds, to paraphrase Candide. Just consider: Harrison West is a short walk from Broad and High, and 20 minutes from Polaris. Thanks to I-670, the airport is 12 minutes away. Thanks to the Short North, all types of art and antiques are only two minutes away. On our northern boundary are

two giants - Ohio State University and Battelle Memorial Institute. On our southern boundary is the City. The Arena District is excitement on the east and the bike path is quiet relaxation on the west.

In the center of all this is Harrison West, a cohesive, organized community where you know the people next door and down the block and across the alley. It's a community created by proximity, rather than by income levels or color or jobs or interests. The people who live here chose to do so, for the most part; they researched the metro area and selected this neighborhood as the ideal place to sink their roots deeply.

Part of the draw is the historic charisma of the neighborhood. Harrison West is an historic



*...Harrison West, a cohesive, organized community where you know the people next door and down the block and across the alley. It's a community created by proximity, rather than by income levels or color or jobs or interests.*

neighborhood dating back to the 1870s. It was placed on the national Register of Historic Places in 1975 and experienced a renaissance in the 1980s. Most of the original housing stock remains, carefully renovated and updated to maintain the character of the neighborhood.

People can find the type of housing they want here. Housing stock includes houses dating to 1883 and condos built just last month. The diversity of people and personalities is that broad also. People who go clubbing and people who cherish their grass and tomatoes live amiably next door to each other. Senior citizens amble down the sidewalk in the early morning getting gentle exercise. Runners race by after work in the evening. We all live happily side by side, just like our old houses and new condos.

The charm of the neighborhood includes two small parks, and a larger riverside park, and one of the City's finest public art projects - Side by Side: initiated, implemented, installed, and admired by the people of Harrison West. Out-of-town visitors delight in the Harrison House Bed and Breakfast, a true Queen Anne Painted Lady.

More of the attraction is that Harrison West is a real neighborhood, with walkable sidewalks, sittable porches, and friendly neighbors. We visit with each other in the coffee shops, chat with each other in the



checkout lines in the grocery store, grab a quick bite together at the deli, have a friendly after-work drink together in one of the area bars. The neighborhood organization, the Harrison West Society, is forceful and active.

A component of the pull Harrison West extends is the sense that you can have it all right here. You can have the energy, the exhilaration, the edginess of downtown because they are right there on our southern border, ready for the taking. But here in the neighborhood, it's safe and quiet and home. The galleries and the restaurants of the Short North where we play are right around the corner, but the gardens and the porches and the patios where we live are all right here.

In all the areas of the greater Columbus Metropolitan area, there probably isn't another neighborhood

with the exact mix of advantages enjoyed by Harrison West. We're so close to everything exciting, yet it's so quiet and peaceful here. It's an area of such stimulating change and growth, yet we're surrounded by such stability and permanence that even time itself sometimes seems to slow down.

The people who choose to live here can't be pigeonholed, yet they come together to make a society in its truest sense. And that is what makes Harrison West the best of all possible worlds.

## LIFE IN HARRISON WEST

## Harrison West: a foundation of strength and future vision

by Mary Funk

As Harrison West prepares to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2006, it is hard to believe how far we have come...but how much is still left to do.

In the mid 1970's Harrison West was an area comprised of low to middle income families. Most homes in this area were affordable rental homes with some owner occupied houses. The largest property owner between West 3rd Avenue and West 5th Avenue was Battelle Memorial Institute. Battelle had purchased these properties with the intention of demolishing the housing stock, using the land for

Olentangy Management Company subsequently formed a partnership with the City of Columbus to seek federal funds through HUD. Known as the "Innovative Grant" program, the money was used to relocate displaced residents, provide down payment assistance and low interest loans, and help residents who would soon become property owners. To further assist residents with the purchase of homes (in many cases the ones which they had rented for many years), the City of Columbus, Olentangy Management Company, Godman Guild, and the Harrison West Society agreed to form the Near Northside Housing Corporation. The Corporation worked with residents to secure conventional and low interest loans to make their dreams of becoming a homeowner come true. Most houses were in need of major repairs to both the interior and exterior. The low interest loans and grants were made available through the City of Columbus to help assist these future homeowners with these much-needed repairs. "Sweat equity" was a valuable tool -- the residents would do a large portion of the repairs in exchange for the down payment.



*...the members of the Harrison West Society have volunteered thousands of hours to work on a variety of projects, including: the design and construction of I-670, the planting of nearly 500 trees, the construction of the bike path, the public art installation at the Side by Side Park, the placement of new street and alley lights...*

future expansion of their campus. By 1975, however, Battelle's priorities had changed and expansion was no longer a vision. Olentangy Management Company was formed by Battelle to help dispose of their property holdings. Their office was located at 1265 Neil Avenue, which is currently a very beautiful office for Attorney Bradley Frick. Displacement of families was a big concern for many residents. The Godman Guild Settlement House, located then at 321 West 2nd Avenue, stepped to the plate to help residents form what is now The Harrison West Society.

In some cases houses were determined to be financially beyond repair. These houses were razed. M/I Schottenstein Development was selected to be the developer to construct infill homes, which are found throughout the area today. To an outsider these homes are hard to pick out, as they share the characteristics of the older homes.

Renaissance Village, a project consisting of town-houses, was also built during this period. It replaced the homes just north of 4th Avenue. The Harrison West Society saw this land as an ideal spot for a

neighborhood park, which was part of the original plans for the revitalization of the neighborhood. Olentangy Management Company had other plans... specifically, a major shopping center with the rear facing the residential neighborhood. This would require rezoning of the land through the Columbus City Council. The Harrison West Society met with officials from Columbus City Council for over a year, stating why this would be harmful to the neighborhood. The message was heard by City Hall and the rezoning was ultimately defeated by City Council. An alternate site was then selected for the park, at the southeast corner of Oregon West 4th Avenues.

With the revitalization in high gear, the area south of 3rd Avenue was now undergoing a transformation. This sparked a boom in new-builds and rehabilitation of the older housing stock.

*The Riverfront Vision Plan* adopted by Columbus City Council in

1998 regarded "Harrison West Reach" as one of several neighborhoods that could play a key role in the redevelopment of the river corridor. This plan called for the development of green space along the riverfront. This concept changed drastically in 2003, however, when the Wagenbrenner Company purchased the former A.C. Humko site. After nearly 18 months of dialogue between the Harrison West Society and the developer, a plan was agreed upon for this site. The project will include single-family homes, duplexes, condominiums, a four-acre park, and a community center with meeting space for the Harrison West Society.



Over the years, the members of the Harrison West Society have volunteered thousands of hours to work on a variety of projects, including: the design and construction of I-670, the planting of nearly 500 trees, the construction of the bike path, the public art installation at the Side by Side Park, the placement of new street and alley lights, the down-zoning of the neighborhood from R-4 to R-2F, the creation of an Urban Commercial Overlay district along West 3rd Avenue, and most recently the *Harrison West Plan*.

Today, the City of Columbus and Gowdy Partners are working creatively with the neighborhood to develop the 23-acre parcel known as Gowdy Field. Gowdy Field, located on the west side of Olentangy River Road, was once a recreation field used for pick-up softball and baseball games. Later, the park was transformed into post-war victory garden and then gradually became a dumping ground for the construction of State

Route 315. The planned construction of three office buildings with over two hundred forty thousand (240,000) sq. ft. of floor space will revitalize this property and turn it into an asset - for both the neighborhood and the greater City of Columbus.

So much has been done, but there is so much more to do... I have no doubt in my mind that the Harrison West Society will step up to these challenges as they have so many times in the past. Harrison West is a great place to live... it will only be a greater place in the years to come. Harrison West, in its 30th year, is still going strong.

Harrison Park, a mixed-density residential project located in Harrison West, will be developed on blighted property that has been used for various industrial operations since the late 1890's. Former owners of the site include Sinclair Oil, the Columbus Forge and Iron Company, Capital City Products Company, Stokely-Van Camp Inc., Dresser Industries, International Derrick and Equipment Company, Ohlen and Sons Saw Manufacturing Company, Washington Breweries Inc., and the Joyce Products Company. ACH Food Companies Inc., the most recent occupant, ceased operations in 2001.

The Wagenbrenner Company will be redeveloping most of the 16.4 acres with condominium units, lofts, and single-family homes. The remaining acreage will be dedicated to the City of Columbus as street right-of-way and parkland. The project will be relatively dense (approximately 20 units/acre), but the architecture is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and successfully incorporates features that evoke a sense of "historic charm". To provide for adequate vehicular circulation, Perry Street, West First Avenue, and Percy Street will be improved and extended into the site. Alleys will be constructed to provide access to garages and sidewalks will be installed along both sides of each street, to accommodate pedestrian traffic.

## Redevelopment Case Study



ILLUSTRATIVE MASTER PLAN

ARCHITECTURAL ALLIANCE  
100 WEST FIRST AVENUE  
COLUMBUS, OH 43215  
614.264.1111

REDEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

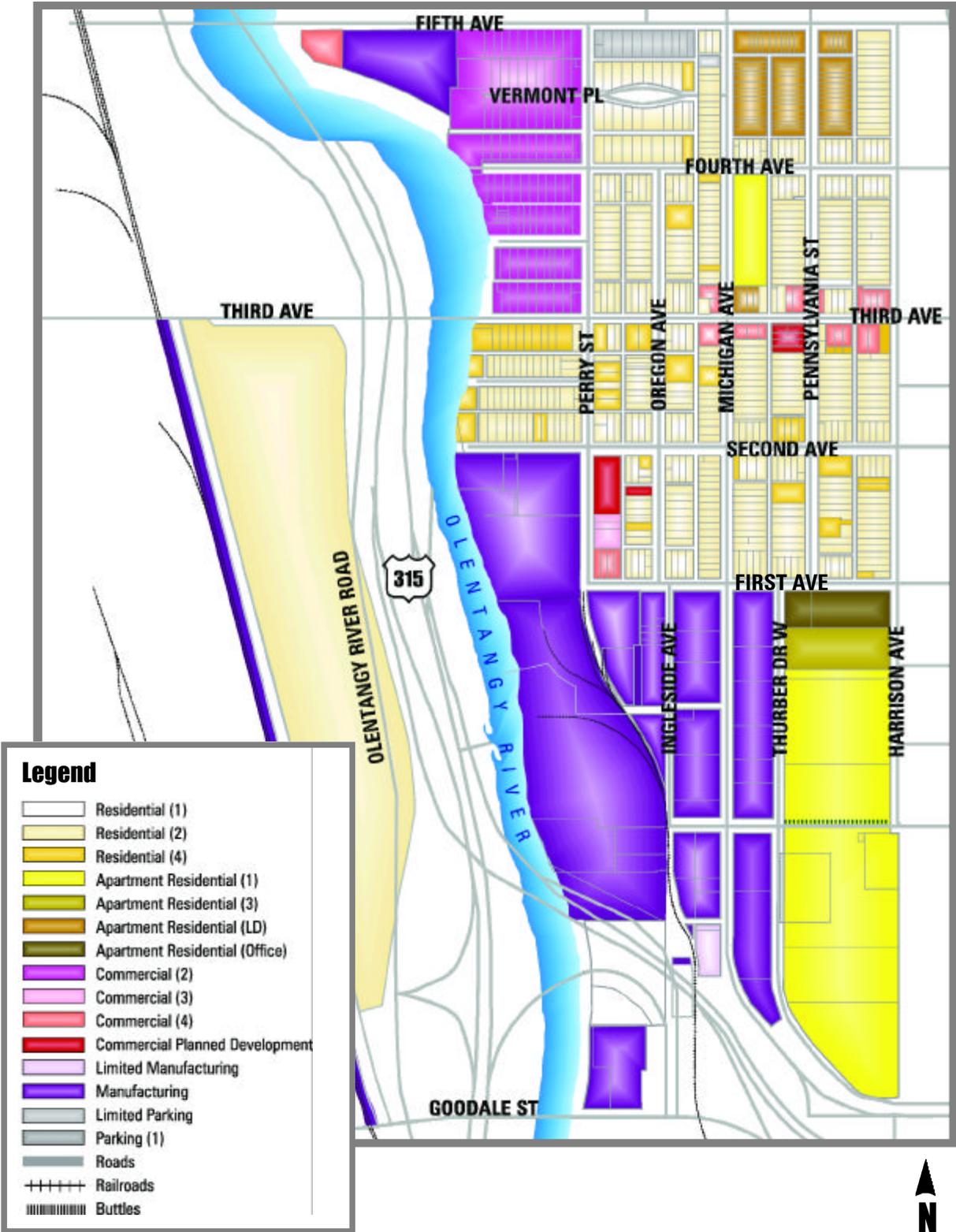


HARRISON PARK

JUNE 22, 2000  
SCALE: 1"=50'



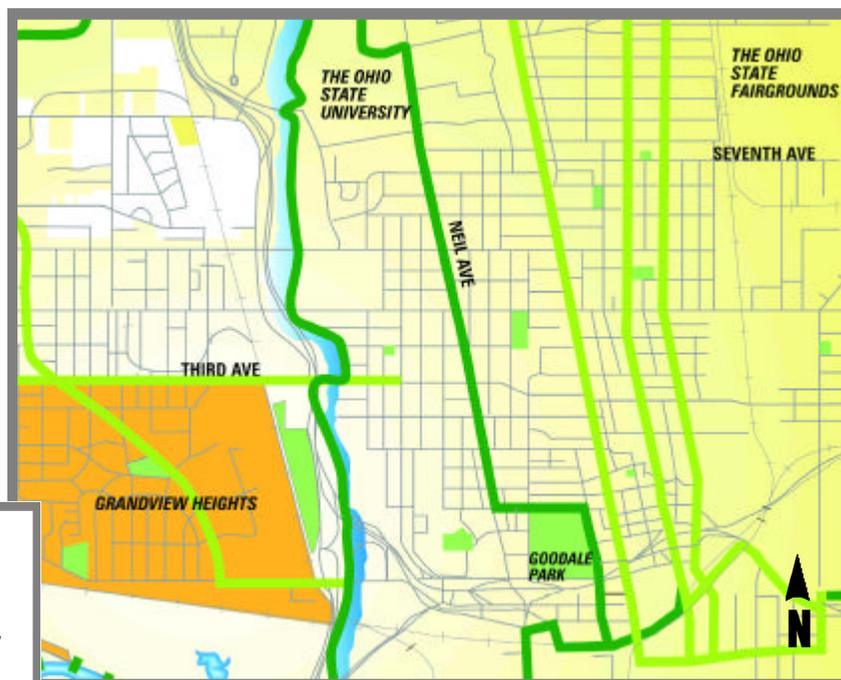
# Existing Zoning Map



# Urban Commercial Overlay Map



# 2003 Proposed Regional Bikeway System



**Legend**

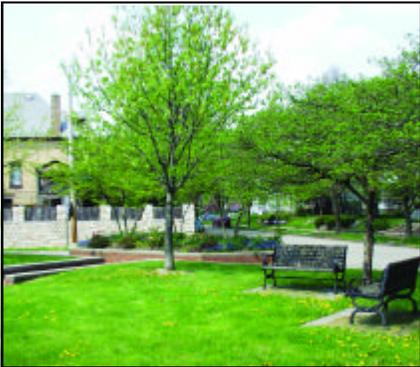
- Existing Bikeway
- Proposed Bikeway

RECOMMENDATIONS

# Recommended Land Use Map



*Residential*



*Neighborhood park*



*Office commercial*



*Retail commercial*

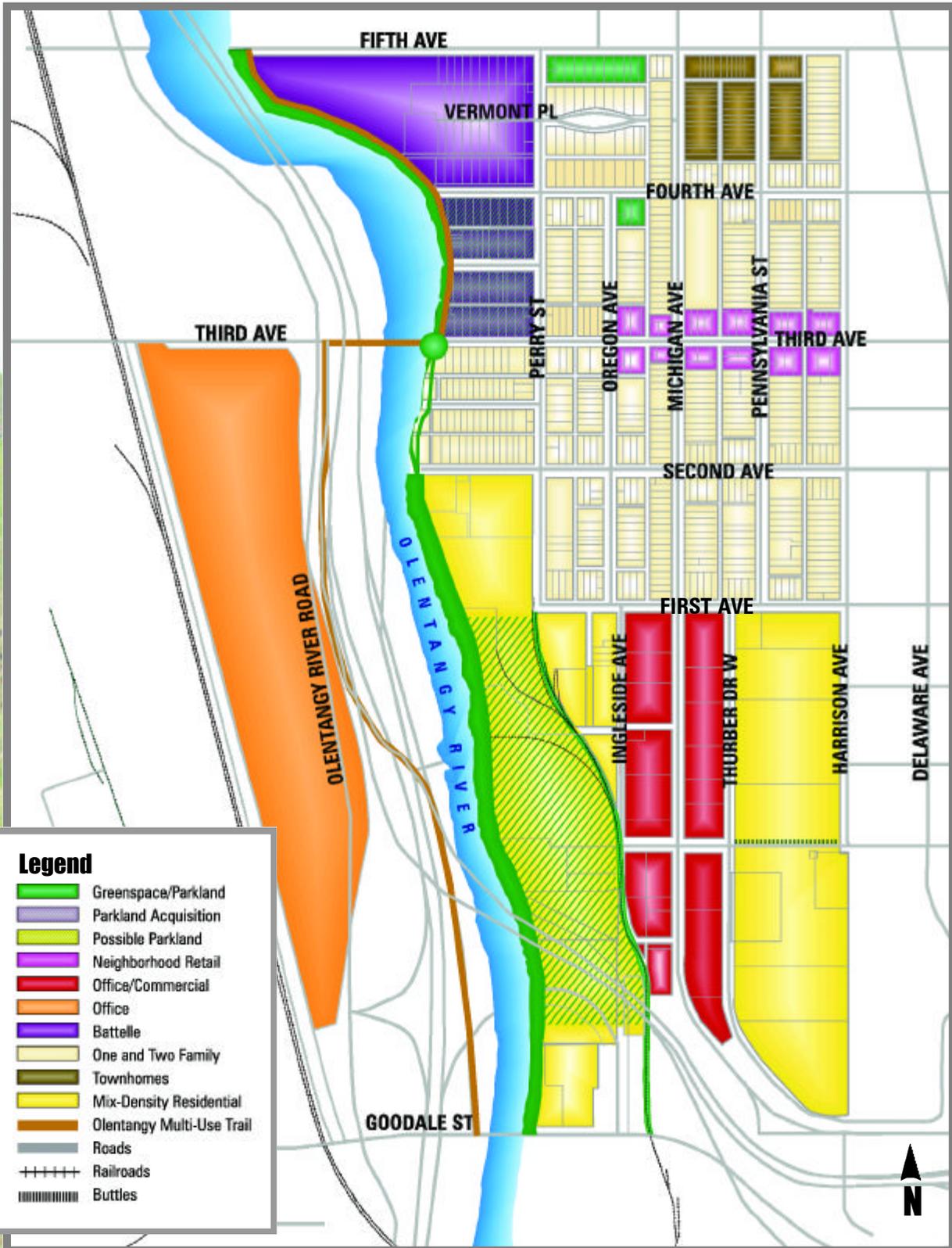


*Multi-use trail*



*Residential*

# RECOMMENDATIONS



**LAND USE AND ZONING**

# Land Use and Zoning

## Parkland

- ◀ Using the funds generated by the sale of Gowdy Field, acquire parcels (or portions of parcels) along the east side of the Olentangy River, to extend the linear park in Harrison Park further north and south. Priority areas include:
  - a) 3rd Avenue (north side) at Perry Street, property owned by Battelle
  - b) properties south of 1st Avenue
  
- ◀ As parkland is acquired and developed, seek to accommodate both active and passive recreational needs. Sites should be large enough to accommodate a mix of facilities and uses (such as athletic fields, picnic areas, and/or a shelter house and restrooms). In addition, the acquired parkland should:
  - a) recognize the historic significance of the site and the Harrison West neighborhood;
  - b) be designed as a "community park" but reflect local neighborhood priorities; and
  - c) preserve enough open space to accommodate future changes in demand.



- ◀ If the acquisition of parkland is not feasible, acquire riverfront conservation easements to permit access to the river, provide for public recreation, and preserve and enhance the riparian edge. Seek funding through the Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund (UIRF) or use proceeds from the sale of Gowdy Field.

## Neighborhood Retail

- ◀ Preserve neighborhood-scale retail commercial development where it exists along 3rd Avenue, between Harrison Avenue and Oregon Avenue. Redevelopment and/or new development should adhere to the standards and requirements of the *Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO)*.
- ◀ Discourage enclosed atrium or arcade-style retail development. Pedestrian-oriented architecture, ground floor display windows, primary entrances that face streets/sidewalks, and other such features consistent with neighborhood character are desired.
- ◀ Permit additional food service establishments if they are designed to serve the surrounding neighborhood, and thus limited in size and scale.
- ◀ Require sidewalks, five (5)-six (6) ft. wide treelawns, and street trees along new and existing streets as properties are developed/redeveloped.

## Office / Corporate Commercial

- ◀ If/when the properties along Michigan Avenue and south of 1st Avenue are redeveloped, support a conversion from the existing M (manufacturing) zoning classification to C-1 (commercial). Office uses and, to a lesser extent, certain retail uses are desired.
- ◀ Limit retail uses to those that are intended to serve the surrounding neighborhood. Auto-related uses, convenience stores, fast-food restaurants, and other uses generating significant amounts of vehicular traffic should be discouraged.
- ◀ Discourage enclosed atrium or arcade-style retail development. Pedestrian-oriented architecture, large windows, primary entrances that face streets/sidewalks, and other such features consistent with neighborhood character are desired.
- ◀ Require all new development/redevelopment to incorporate landscaping. Plant materials (trees and shrubs) should be installed around buildings, at entrances, and at the perimeter edges of parking lots to screen vehicles from Michigan Avenue.
- ◀ If desired by property owners, create a Special Improvement District (SID) through the city's Economic Development Division. Use the revenue generated through the assessment to fund priority projects/initiatives.
- ◀ Require sidewalks, five (5)- six (6) ft. wide treelawns, and street trees along new and existing streets as properties are developed/redeveloped.

## Battelle

- ◀ Preserve the existing development pattern. Battelle's office and research facilities occupy the northern half of this acreage, but the vacant property south of Fourth Avenue may be needed for future expansion. Thus, the existing M (manufacturing) and C-2 (commercial) zoning classifications are appropriate. No change is recommended.
- ◀ If Battelle is willing to entertain offers for its vacant acreage, the city's Department of Recreation and Parks should pursue acquisition or dedication to facilitate the development of a neighborhood park.



## Employment Center (Cowdy Field)

- ◀ Support the employment (office commercial) uses and redevelopment plan that have been proposed for this site.
- ◀ Use available proceeds from the sale of Cowdy Field to expedite the acquisition and development of parkland along the east side of the Olentangy River.

**LAND USE AND ZONING**

**1-2 Family Residential**

- ◀ If/when the properties located at the southeast corner of 4th Avenue and Michigan Avenue are redeveloped, limit permitted uses to low-density residential development. The existing AR-1 zoning classification is inconsistent with the surrounding context and should be changed to R-2F. A mix of single-family and two-family dwellings is desired.
- ◀ Limit building height to thirty-five (35) feet. New development and/or redevelopment should be consistent in character and scale with the existing single-family and two-family dwellings.
- ◀ Discourage the aggregation of existing residential lots into larger parcels for higher-density multi-family development/redevelopment.
- ◀ Preserve the current R-2F zoning classification where it applies. Multi-family development and/or redevelopment at higher densities would be inconsistent with neighborhood character.
- ◀ Require sidewalks, five (5)- six (6) ft. wide treelawns, and street trees along new and existing streets as properties are developed/redeveloped.

**Townhomes**

- ◀ Preserve the existing development pattern. Although these properties were originally developed with 1-2 family dwellings, they have since been redeveloped with townhomes. The existing ARLD zoning district is therefore appropriate. No changes are recommended.



## Mixed-Density Residential

- ◀ Support redevelopment projects that would incorporate mixed-density residential uses. The existing multi-family development between Harrison Avenue and Thurber Drive, south of 1st Avenue, is too dense and homogeneous - it is inconsistent with neighborhood character. Desired uses include:
  - Duplexes and four-family dwellings, with design elements and features that are consistent with the existing, historic housing stock;
  - A limited amount of multi-family development, provided that:
    - 1) buffers and transition zones are used to soften the impact of buildings containing two or more stories;
    - 2) structures are designed to reflect the architectural character of the neighborhood; and
    - 3) buildings are limited to thirty-five (35) feet in height.
- ◀ As properties west of Ingleside Avenue and south of 1st Avenue are redeveloped, limit permitted uses to 1-4 family dwellings, townhomes, apartments, and accessory/subordinate office or retail development. A continuation of the development patterns and uses in Harrison Park is desired, along with the dedication of additional parkland if opportunities for land acquisition emerge.
- ◀ Require all new development/redevelopment projects to comply with code requirements for off-street parking. A minimum of two off-street parking spaces should be provided for each residential unit.
- ◀ Include provisions for greenspace and pocket parks in redevelopment projects.
- ◀ Require sidewalks, five (5)- six (6) feet wide treelawns, and street trees along new and existing streets as properties are developed/redeveloped.

## Multi-Use Trails

- ◀ Enhance the bikeway trailheads at Third and Fifth Avenues with additional signage, landscaping, and ornamentation.
- ◀ Extend the existing bikeway further south along the river as additional parcels or easements are acquired by the Recreation and Parks Department.
- ◀ Acquire the CSX railroad right-of-way between Harrison Park and Goodale Street for use as a pedestrian path and/or bike trail. Establish a trail-head in or near Harrison Park and a connection to the existing bikeway along the Olentangy River.



- ◀ Establish an east-west connection to Neil Avenue, along Goodale Street or Thurber Avenue, with dedicated bike lanes and/or route signage.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Neighborhood Conservation**



**NEIGHBORHOOD-WIDE ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT**

Conduct a neighborhood-wide assessment of architecture (design styles and features) to have a quantifiable basis for comparison in future development review. Take an inventory of all existing structures and prepare a summary of the information to aid the Harrison West Society and/or any future design review body in decision-making.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Obtain assistance from students enrolled in the Knowlton School of Architecture at OSU, Harrison West Society members, and/or neighborhood volunteers.

**IDENTIFY ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES**

Identify properties eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Work with property owners to preserve and/or renovate significant structures and buildings.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES:**

Contact the city's Neighborhood Services Division, Historic Preservation Unit, to obtain eligibility criteria and application information.

Promote awareness of incentives (federal tax credits) to attract redevelopment interest.

**ESTABLISH REVIEW COMMISSION**

Establish an Architectural Review Commission or a Neighborhood Conservation District to give the neighborhood more control over building design and the development approval process.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Educate neighborhood residents and build public support for the initiative through the Harrison West Society. Assign process and procedural responsibilities to the Society's Planning and Development Committee.

**DEVELOP ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES**

Develop a set of design guidelines to promote and preserve the architectural character defined by the neighborhood's historic commercial and residential structures and dwellings. Apply the guidelines to applications for permits, variances, and zoning changes.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Obtain assistance from the Neighborhood Design Center, students enrolled in the Knowlton School of Architecture at OSU, Harrison West Society members, and/or neighborhood volunteers.

CITY CODE CHAPTER 3113 (PROPOSED)

## Neighborhood Conservation Districts

### PURPOSE

- ◀ promote and conserve unique built environments
- ◀ stabilize property values by respecting architecture and context
- ◀ permit alterations which are consistent with character
- ◀ foster civic pride in the distinctive character of districts
- ◀ promote local design qualities and compatible infill development
- ◀ increase the tax base through reinvestment in neighborhoods

### ADMINISTRATION

The Historic Preservation Office will provide staff support to the Neighborhood Conservation District Review Board. The Board, consisting of seven members, will review the merits of each application, make a recommendation, and issue a certificate of appropriateness if the application is approved.

### STANDARDS FOR ELIGIBILITY

- ◀ must contain at least ten contiguous blocks
- ◀ must have identifying, distinctive atmosphere or character
- ◀ must contain significant architectural or cultural attributes
- ◀ cannot be inconsistent with the city's comprehensive plan
- ◀ cannot create barriers for low income residents or the disabled

### PROCESS FOR DESIGNATION

- ◀ submit a letter and documentation to the Historic Preservation Office
- ◀ obtain signatures from at least ten property owners
- ◀ contact all property owners and residents within the proposed district
- ◀ simple majority of affirmative respondents is required

### GUIDELINES

Guidelines will be created for each district by residents, Historic Preservation Office staff, and interested preservation groups. The Board will approve and adopt the guidelines and may review them annually.



**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Streets and Traffic**

**DEVELOP PLANS FOR LANDSCAPING/MITIGATION**

As improvements are programmed for State Route 315, work with the Ohio Department of Transportation and the City of Columbus Department of Public Service to develop plans for landscaping and sound mitigation measures. Participate in public hearings and/or the design process, if opportunities to do so emerge.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Appoint a member of the Harrison West Society's Planning and Development Committee to collaborate with ODOT and the city's Transportation Division. Meet with both agencies to convey the neighborhood's desires and intentions.

**EXTEND GRIDS**

Extend the grid of streets and alleys north of 1st Avenue further south to facilitate residential redevelopment. In addition, as redevelopment occurs, Buttles Avenue should be extended west to Thurber Drive.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division on behalf of the Harrison West Society.



**CONSTRUCT RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS**

Construct the Michigan-Goodale connector median, bumpouts, and textured pedestrian crossings recommended by the Traffic Task Force and incorporated into the *Capital Improvement Projects 2003-2008 Implementation Plan*. The improvements will help to segregate pedestrian and vehicular circulation, enhance the sense of entrance, and preserve the identity of the neighborhood.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Monitor progress through the city's Transportation Division. Contact city staff members intermittently to confirm construction schedules and plans.

**INSTALL MEDIAN/CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS**

Install median and pedestrian crossing improvements along Third Avenue and Fifth Avenue, as recommended by the Traffic Task Force and incorporated into the *Capital Improvement Projects 2003-2008 Implementation Plan*. The improvements will enhance the function, character, and safety of these streets and are therefore endorsed by this Plan.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Monitor progress through the city's Transportation Division. Contact city staff members intermittently to confirm construction schedules and plans.

**REPLACE EXISTING FENCING**

Replace the existing fencing along the Michigan-Goodale connector with the same grade and style of fencing used along Park Street over I-670.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division on behalf of the Harrison West Society.

**PROHIBIT NEW CURB CUTS**

Prohibit new curb cuts along primary streets. Vehicular access to residential properties, in particular, should only be permitted by alley(s).

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division on behalf of the Harrison West Society.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### USE FUNDS TO ENHANCE PROJECTS

Use Capital Improvements Program funds and/or Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund (UIRF) grants to enhance streetscape projects that have already been programmed. Opportunities for enhancement include:

- ◀ landscaping for roadway medians (Third Avenue and Fifth Avenue)
- ◀ ornamental bus shelters at COTA bus stops
- ◀ landscape plantings for the Michigan-Goodale Connector median
- ◀ gateway monuments, signage, and other forms of ornamentation
- ◀ intersection improvements (Olentangy River Road at 3rd and 5th)

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Collaborate with the city's Economic Development Division, Office of Financial Assistance (UIRF staff), to identify opportunities and priority projects.

### LOWER SIGNAGE

Reduce the height of the pole-mounted signage at Michigan Avenue and Goodale Street. At its current location, the sign is too high to attract the attention of passing motorists. The sign should be lowered (or relocated) to improve its visibility.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division on behalf of the Harrison West Society.

### INCREASE ENFORCEMENT

Increase speed limit enforcement efforts along Goodale Street, between Neil Avenue and Michigan Avenue. If warranted, lower the speed limit to discourage cut-through traffic ensuring pedestrian safety.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Contact the city's Division of Police. Request assistance from the appropriate precinct officer.

### ENHANCE NEIGHBORHOOD INTERSECTIONS

Enhance major neighborhood intersections with brick or textured paving. Include the projects in capital improvements programming and/or pursue funding through the Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund (UIRF) program.



#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Identify priority intersections and submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division. Alternatively, collaborate with the city's Economic Development Division, Office of Financial Assistance (UIRF staff), to identify opportunities/priority projects.

### INCREASE PAVEMENT WIDTH

Require a pavement width of thirty (30) ft. for all new neighborhood streets, to allow for safe vehicular movement and on-street parking.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Submit a formal request to the city's Transportation Division on behalf of the Harrison West Society.

### REQUIRE STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS

Require sidewalks, five (5) - six (6) ft. wide treelawns, and street trees along new and existing streets as properties are developed/redeveloped.

#### IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Apply development/streetscape improvement standards to zoning and variance applications as they are reviewed by the Harrison West Society.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

## Utilities and Services

### **LOCATE ON-SITE UTILITIES BELOW GRADE**

Bury all on-site utilities below grade as properties are developed/redeveloped. Existing overhead lines along streets and alleys should be relocated underground if funds become available.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Appoint a member of the Harrison West Society's Planning and Development Committee to collaborate with the city's Department of Public Utilities as development/redevelopment applications are received and reviewed. Meet with appropriate city staff members to convey the neighborhood's desires and intentions.

### **UPGRADE LIGHTING FIXTURES**

Upgrade the lighting fixtures on the Third Avenue and Fifth Avenue bridges to match the ornamental (historic) fixtures found elsewhere in the neighborhood.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Submit a formal request to the city's Division of Electricity on behalf of the Harrison West Neighborhood.

### **EDUCATE ABOUT DECORATIVE LIGHTING**

Educate residents and property owners about decorative lighting opportunities along secondary streets. Where interest exists, work with the Division of Electricity to develop a plan and initiate the assessment process.

**IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

Contact the city's Division of Electricity to obtain program requirements and procedural information.



# GET CONNECTED

## CITY OF COLUMBUS

### SERVICE

Animals (Strays)  
 Block Watch Information  
 Bulk Refuse Pick-up  
 Building Services Division  
 Code Enforcement  
 Crime Stoppers Anonymous  
 Economic Development Division  
 Electricity (Repair)  
 Garbage Collection  
 Housing Inspection  
 Junk Cars on Private Property  
 Junk Cars on Public Property  
 Mayor's Action Center  
 Narcotics Hot Line  
 Police Complaints and Praise  
 Police (Crime Prevention)  
 Pothole Repair  
 Sewers and Drains (Repair)  
 Sidewalk Complaints and Permits  
 Snow and Ice Complaints  
 Strategic Response Bureau  
 Street Light Repair  
 Street Repair  
 Traffic Lights and Signs  
 Volunteer Corps  
 Water (Repair)  
 Weed and Environmental Complaints  
 Zoning Information

### PHONE

462-3400  
 645-4610  
 645-8774  
 645-7433  
 645-8139  
 645-8477  
 645-8032  
 645-7627  
 645-8774  
 645-8139  
 645-8139  
 645-2277  
 645-3111  
 645-4850  
 645-2677  
 645-4610  
 645-5660  
 645-7102  
 645-7497  
 645-5660  
 645-4610  
 645-7627  
 645-5660  
 645-7393  
 645-6404  
 645-7788  
 645-8139  
 645-7314



## OTHER RESOURCES (WEBSITES)

Central Ohio Transit Authority	<a href="http://www.cota.com">www.cota.com</a>
City of Columbus	<a href="http://www.columbus.gov">www.columbus.gov</a>
City of Columbus Economic Development Division	<a href="http://www.columbus.gov">www.columbus.gov</a> (select Department of Development)
City of Columbus Planning Division	<a href="http://www.development.columbus.gov">www.development.columbus.gov</a>
Columbus Foundation	<a href="http://www.columbusfoundation.org">www.columbusfoundation.org</a>
Columbus Public Schools	<a href="http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us">www.columbus.k12.oh.us</a>
Columbus Supersite	<a href="http://www.columbus.org">www.columbus.org</a>
Harrison West Society	<a href="http://www.harrisonwest.org">www.harrisonwest.org</a>
Private Industry Council	<a href="http://www.ipicsolutions.com">www.ipicsolutions.com</a>
Public Safety Department	<a href="http://pubserv.ci.columbus.oh.us">pubserv.ci.columbus.oh.us</a>
Public Service Department	<a href="http://www.publicsafety.ci.columbus.oh.us">www.publicsafety.ci.columbus.oh.us</a>
Public Utilities Department	<a href="http://utilities.ci.columbus.oh.us">utilities.ci.columbus.oh.us</a>
Recreation and Parks Department	<a href="http://www.columbusrecparks.com">www.columbusrecparks.com</a>
Urban League of Greater Columbus	<a href="http://www.columbusurbanleague.org">www.columbusurbanleague.org</a>

## Urban Commercial Overlay

### 3372.601 Definitions.

**Building Frontage:** "Building frontage" means the side, or facade, of a building closest to and most nearly parallel to an abutting street.



**Building Frontage, Primary:** "Primary building frontage" means a building frontage that abuts a street listed as a primary street in the applicable Overlay Areas subsection of this chapter.

**Building Frontage, Secondary:** "Secondary building frontage" means a building frontage that abuts an alley or a street not listed as a primary street in the applicable Overlay Areas subsection of this chapter.

**Building Rear:** "Building rear" means the wall or plane opposite the primary building frontage. For a building on a corner lot, the building rear is the wall or plane opposite the wall or plane containing the principal building entrance.

**Drive-Thru:** "Drive-thru" means a building or portion thereof that, by design, permits customers to receive goods or services while remaining in a motor vehicle.

**Parking Lot:** "Parking lot" means any off-street public or private area, under or outside of a building or structure, designed and used for the temporary storage of motor vehicles.

**Principal Building:** "Principal building" means a building in which the principal use of the property is conducted. All parcels containing at least one building shall be deemed to have a principal

building. A parcel may contain more than one principal building.

**Public-Private Setback Zone:** "Public-private setback zone" means an area between a principal building and a public street right-of-way line utilized for seating, outdoor dining, public art and/or other pedestrian amenities.

**Reconstruction:** "Reconstruction" means the replacement or rebuilding of a building, premises or structure.

**Setback:** "Setback" means the distance between a lot line or right-of-way line and a building, structure, defined outdoor area serving as the primary activity, parking lot, or vehicular circulation area.

### 3372.603 Purpose.

The purpose of the Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO), consisting of Columbus City Code Sections 3372.601 through 3372.699, inclusive, is to regulate development in specifically designated areas in order to protect, re-establish and retain the unique architectural and aesthetic characteristics of older, urban commercial corridors. Such corridors are typically characterized by pedestrian-oriented architecture, building setbacks ranging from zero (0) - ten (10) feet, rear parking lots, commercial land uses, a street system that incorporates alleys and lot sizes smaller than 0.5 acre. The provisions of the UCO are intended to encourage pedestrian-oriented development featuring retail display windows, reduced building setbacks, rear parking lots, and other pedestrian-oriented site design elements. Where applied, UCO standards generally require full compliance for new construction, partial compliance for exterior building additions and alterations and minimal or no compliance for routine maintenance and the replacement in-kind of materials.

**3372.605 Designated Areas.**

The boundaries of designated UCO areas are part of the Official Zoning Map and described in separate sections beginning with C.C. 3372.650 and ending with C.C. 3372.699. For the purposes and requirements of an Urban Commercial Overlay area, the term "primary street" means:

- Third Avenue
- Fourth Street
- Fifth Avenue
- Fifth Street
- Broad Street
- Cleveland Avenue
- Front Street
- Indianola Avenue
- High Street
- Hudson Street
- Lane Avenue
- Livingston Avenue
- Long Street
- Main Street
- Mt. Vernon Avenue
- Parsons Avenue
- Summit Street

**3372.607 Applicability and Extent.**

The standards and requirements of the UCO apply as follows:

- A. On a commercially-zoned or commercially-used property within a designated UCO area:
  1. the placement, construction, or reconstruction of a principal building is subject to all standards and requirements of this Chapter;
  2. the expansion of a principal building's gross floor area by up to 50% is subject to C.C. 3372.611 and 3372.613 and the expansion

of a principal building's gross floor area by more than 50% is subject to all standards and requirements of this Chapter;



- 3. the extension or expansion of a principal building towards a public street is subject to all standards and requirements of this Chapter; and
  - 4. exterior alteration of a primary building frontage is subject to C.C. 3372.611 and 3372.613. Secondary building frontages and primary building frontages set back from an abutting street a distance of more than thirty (30) feet are exempt from this requirement. For purposes of this requirement, the placement of window shutters, fabric canopies and awnings and/or building-mounted signage is not considered to be exterior alteration.
- B. The construction or installation of parking lots, fences and other accessory structures on commercially-zoned or commercially-used properties shall comply with C.C. 3372.609 B. and C., 3372.611, 3372.613, and 3372.615.
  - C. The installation of new on-site lighting must comply with C.C. 3372.612.
  - D. The standards and requirements of this Chapter may be waived for buildings officially recognized as historic if they would result in an unacceptable modification of the original, historic appearance of the building as determined by the City of Columbus Historic Resources Commission.

**URBAN COMMERCIAL OVERLAY**

E. Residentially-zoned properties and residences are exempt from the standards and requirements of this Chapter, except in architectural review commission districts.

F. In architectural review commission districts, residences, residentially-zoned properties and commercially-zoned or commercially-used properties are subject to C.C. 3372.615, 3372.612, and 3372.609, excepting 3372.609 B, and are not subject to Sections 3372.611 and 3372.613.

G. Routine maintenance and in-kind replacement of materials are exempt from the standards and requirements of this Chapter.

The standards contained in the UCO are in addition to the regulations of the underlying zoning districts. Where the provisions of this Chapter conflict with those of the underlying zoning district or other provisions of this Zoning Code, the most restrictive provision applies.

**3372.609 Setback Requirements.**

Setback requirements are as follows:

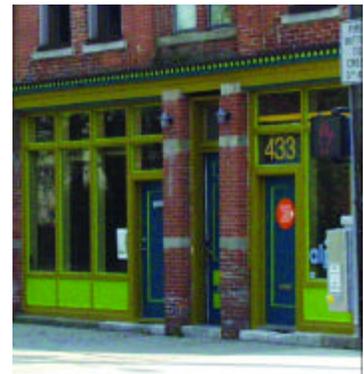
- A. The minimum building setback is zero (0) feet and the maximum building setback is ten (10) feet, except where a Public-Private Setback Zone is provided. Where a Public-Private Setback Zone is provided, a maximum setback of fifteen (15) feet is permitted for up to 50% of the building frontage.
- B. The minimum setback for parking lots is five (5) feet. Parking lots and accessory buildings shall be located at the rear of the principal building. Where access to the rear of the property is not possible from a public alley or street, up to 50% of the parking may be located at the side of the principal building.

C. The minimum setback for fences and masonry or stone walls is zero (0) feet.

**3372.611 Design Standards.**

Design standards are as follows:

- A. A primary building frontage shall incorporate at least one main entrance door. At a building corner where two primary building frontages meet, one main entrance door may be located so as to meet the requirement for both building frontages.



- B. A building frontage that exceeds a width of fifty (50) feet shall include vertical piers or other vertical visual elements to break the plane of the building frontage. The vertical piers or vertical elements shall be spaced at intervals of fifteen (15) feet to thirty-five (35) feet along the entire building frontage.
- C. For each primary building frontage, at least 60% of the area between the height of two (2) feet and ten (10) feet above the nearest sidewalk grade shall be clear/non-tinted window glass permitting a view of the building's interior to a minimum depth of four (4) feet. For a secondary building frontage, the pattern of window glass shall continue from the primary frontage a minimum distance of ten (10) feet.
- D. The standards below apply to upper story windows. They recognize that regularly spaced upper story windows (any story above ground) created a repeated pattern for unity and are an

integral part of the building design. Upper story windows are generally smaller than storefront windows at street level, are spaced at regular intervals, and give scale and texture to the street edge formed by building facades.

1. For any new installation or replacement of upper story windows, the new/replacement windows must be clear/non-tinted glass.
  2. Windows must not be blocked, boarded up, or reduced in size, unless otherwise required by code for securing a vacant structure.
  3. At least 25% of the second and third floor building frontages (as measured from floor to ceiling) must be window glass. This requirement may be waived if historic documentation (e.g. historic photos) from when the building was first constructed can be provided that shows a different percentage of window glass was used on the second and third floor building frontages. In such cases, the historic percentage must be maintained.
- E. All roof-mounted mechanical equipment shall be screened from public view to the height of the equipment. The design, colors and materials used in screening shall be architecturally compatible with the rooftop and the aesthetic character of the building.
- F. Dumpsters and all ground-mounted mechanical equipment shall be located at the rear of the building and screened from public view to the height of the dumpster/equipment.
- G. Fences, with or without masonry piers, shall be decorative and constructed of ornamental metal tubes or solid metal bars. Fences may not exceed a height of four (4) feet. Chain link fences are not permitted.

- H. Masonry or stone walls may be used for screening, sitting, or used as independent architectural elements. Walls may not exceed a height of four (4) feet.
- I. Parking lots must be screened from all abutting public streets. In architectural review commission districts, required parking lot screening will be the screening approved by the architectural review district commissions. In all other areas, parking lot screening shall consist of either:
1. a four (4)-foot high solid masonry or stone wall; or
  2. a four (4)-foot high decorative metal tube or solid metal bar fence located at the street right-of-way line (property line), with or without masonry pier supports, with a minimum three foot wide landscaped area along the parking lot side of the fence. The landscaped area must be planted with three evergreen shrubs and one deciduous shade tree per (thirty) 30 feet of frontage. Trees and shrubs must be maintained in good condition; dead material must be replaced within one year. Chain link fences are not permitted.
- J. Commercial signage shall comply with C.C. 3375-3383. Billboard signs are not permitted.
- K. Backlit awnings are not permitted.

**3372.612 Site Lighting.**

Exterior lighting must be designed, located, constructed, and maintained to minimize light trespass and spill over off the subject property. To achieve this objective, the following are mandatory site lighting requirements:

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- A. Area lighting fixtures must direct light downwardly, i.e. must be cut-off type fixtures.
- B. The height of any parking lot light pole/fixture must not exceed eighteen (18) feet above grade.
- C. Exterior building light fixtures must not generate excessive light levels, cause glare, or direct light beyond the facade onto neighboring property, streets, or the night sky. Strobe or flashing lights are not permitted.
- D. Security lighting must be from full cut-off type fixtures, shielded and aimed so that the light is directed to the area that is being protected by light.
- E. The required number of off-street parking spaces may be reduced by up to 50% by the Chief Zoning Official or designee in consultation with the Division of Transportation staff. Factors to be considered include, but are not limited to: the availability of on-street, public, permit or shared parking; available transit service; pedestrian traffic and accessibility; elimination of arterial curb cuts; hours of operation and existing/proposed land use. The required number of loading spaces may be eliminated at the discretion of the Chief Zoning Official or designee, with due consideration given to: frequency and time of deliveries; size and nature of vehicles accommodated by the loading spaces; the character of the neighborhood; and impact upon adjoining streets or alleys.

**3372.613 Drive-thru Uses.**

Drive-thru pickup windows and coverings are prohibited on primary building frontages and shall be attached to the rear or side of the principal building.

**3372.615 Parking and Circulation.**

Parking, access and vehicular circulation standards are as follows:

- A. Parking, stacking and circulation aisles are not permitted between a public street right-of-way line and a principal building.
- B. Additional curb cuts along streets identified in the Columbus Thoroughfare Plan will not be permitted unless the Division of Transportation staff determines that a new curb cut is the only means available to provide vehicular access to the site and that the new location of the curb cut meets the requirements of the Division of Transportation.







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