



# Ward 5 Kinsman Union

*Master Plan • Cleveland, Ohio*

## WARD 5 KINSMAN UNION

### *Master Plan*



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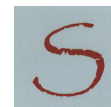
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Kinsman Union neighborhood study area

## 1. THE CONTEXT FOR PLANNING

**Purpose and Goals of the Study** The Kinsman Union Neighborhood in Cleveland's Ward 5 is a well-established residential area in the south-east corner of Ward 5, anchored by the East 93rd Street commercial corridor. Like other adjacent areas of the city, population and investment in the neighborhood have declined in recent years. However, the neighborhood has seen some new construction, primarily in the form of infill housing on existing residential streets, largely concentrated on Bessemer and Fuller Avenues. Long-time residents and newcomers are engaged in planning for the neighborhood's future and there is strong consensus around the key goals for the neighborhood, which are to:

- Reinforce residential streets to retain existing residents and attract new residents.
- Enhance major streets leading into and through the neighborhood, especially East 93rd Street and Union Avenue.
- Identify opportunities for potential development, both infill development on individual residential parcels and larger scale opportunities along East 93rd Street.
- Expand recreational opportunities and improve access to existing facilities, to provide young people with something and all residents with access to the resources in their midst, most notably Luke Easter Park and Bisbee Park.





Kingsbury Crossings Shopping Center  
(Burten, Bell, Carr, Development Inc.)

**Previous Studies and Current Plans** The City of Cleveland's Connecting Cleveland 2020 Plan provides a planning framework for the entire city, with links to detailed neighborhood plans prepared at the local level. The Ward 5 Kinsman Union Master Plan will become adopted as part of the citywide plan. The Connecting Cleveland plan currently identifies the area of the Kinsman Union Neighborhood as a primarily single-family residential neighborhood. In addition to the single-family uses the Connecting Cleveland land use plan proposes a mixture of townhouses, institutional and retail uses along East 93rd Street, Union Avenue, and Kinsman Avenue.

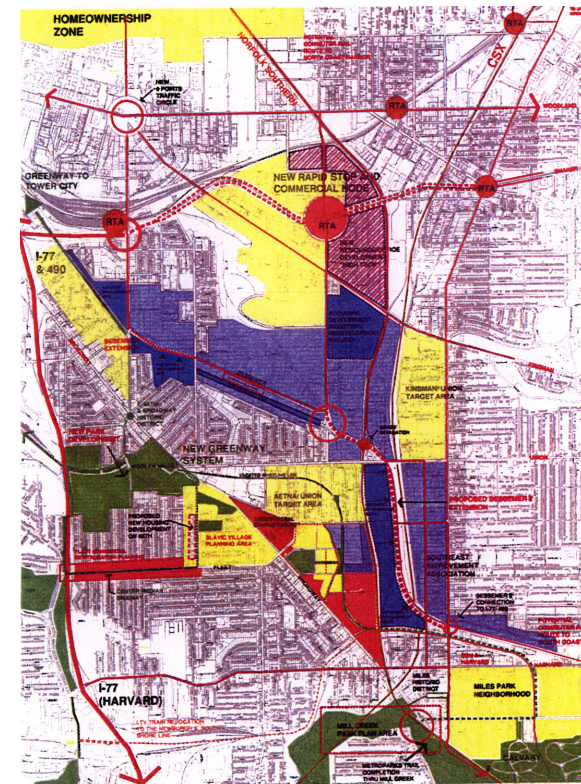
*The Kingsbury Crossings Shopping Center:* Planned at the intersection of Kinsman Avenue and East 93rd Street, the Kingsbury Crossings Shopping Center is a new 60,000 square foot shopping center. This shopping center will provide the Kinsman Union Neighborhood with a much needed variety of products and services, and it will also attract retail traffic from the commuters along these two busy arterials.

*Ward 5 Market Feasibility Study:* The Kinsman Union Community Association prepared the Market Feasibility Study in 2000. The study outlines the needs of the community based on surveys and interviews. The study also indicates how these services can be provided based on the demographics of the neighborhood. The clearest needs expressed in this study were the provision of local retail (particularly grocery stores), enhanced city services, new housing options, stronger code enforcement, enhanced green spaces and connections, and improved education and employment possibilities.

*Business Revitalization District:* The Burten, Bell, Carr Business Revitalization District (BBC BRD) was formed in early 2007 to review the designs of all proposed new-construction developments and major renovations to existing buildings along the main thoroughfares of Ward 5. The committee is charged with ensuring that new projects are aesthetically-pleasing and functionally-accessible to potential users. Through this process, the BBC BRD oversees that future development in the Ward 5 neighborhoods is held to the highest standard possible. Within the Kinsman Union neighborhood, this area includes the entire East 93rd Street corridor, and the old RTA site on Laisy Avenue.

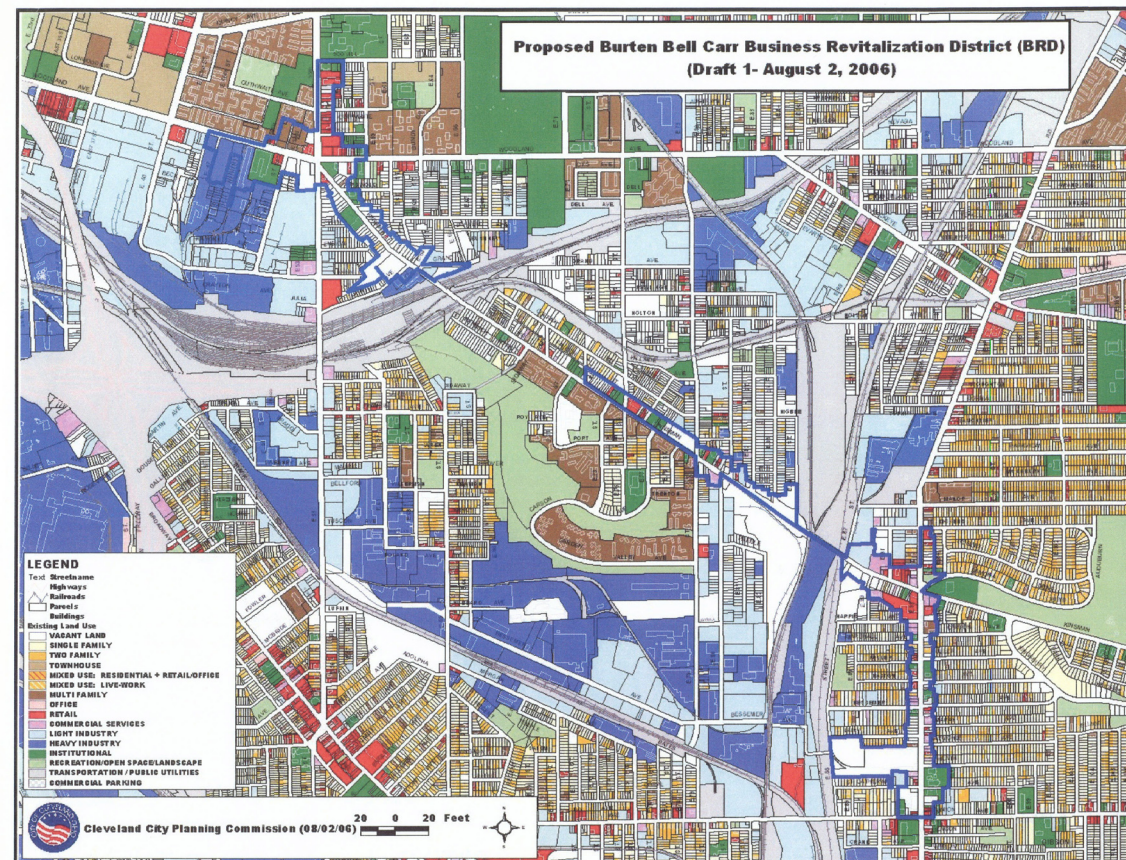
*Cultural Garden:* Plans have been developed to construct a Cultural Garden along Kinsman Road, adjacent to the proposed Kingsbury Crossings shopping center. This garden will provide a wonderful green amenity while also expressing the social and cultural heritage of the neighborhood.

*Vacancy & Abandonment Study:* Produced by Burten Bell Carr in 2006, this study surveys the parcels of the Kinsman Union neighborhood to locate properties that suffer from abandonment and vacancy. These parcels are seen as prime locations for future redevelopment of housing within the neighborhood.



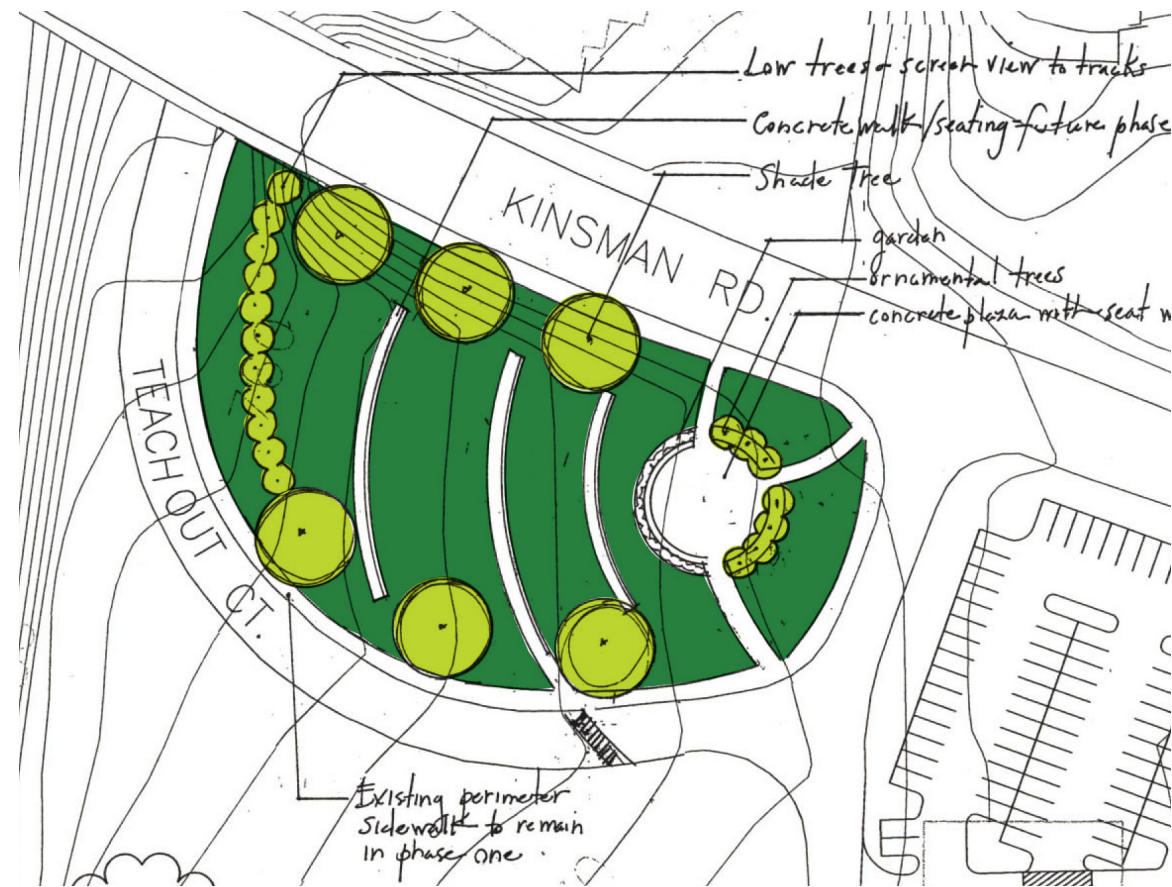
PROPOSED PLANNING FOR BROADWAY/ KINSMAN UNION/ MILES

Ward 5 Feasibility Study  
(Kinsman Union Community Association)



New Business Revitalization District





Proposed Cultural Garden  
(Schmidt Copeland Parker Stevens)

**Planning Methodology** The Urban Design Center of Northeast Ohio, Richard L. Bowen & Associates, and Ubiquitous Design collaborated on the Ward 5 Kinsman Union Neighborhood Master Plan. The plan was a three-phase process, beginning with an analysis of existing plans and current development trends in the neighborhood. This was followed by an extensive community-based process to define a shared vision for the future, and then by the development of a detailed master plan that will achieve this vision.

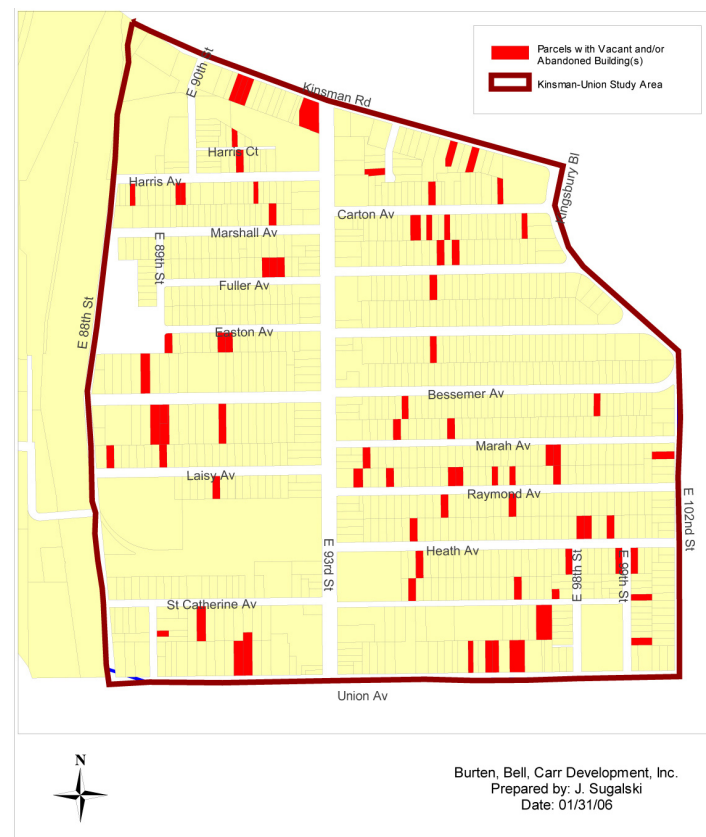
The planning process for the Ward 5 Kinsman Union Neighborhood Master Plan was directed by a three-tiered organization, including a core Working Group, a project Steering Committee, and the community-at-large:

- The Working Group consisted of the Executive Director and staff from Burten, Bell, Carr Development Corporation, planning staff from the City of Cleveland, and the consultant team from the Urban Design Center of Northeast Ohio, Richard L. Bowen & Associates and Ubiquitous Design. The working group compiled and analyzed information, and coordinated Steering Committee and public input throughout the process.
- The Steering Committee was a larger group of community leaders and stakeholders who oversaw the master planning process and provided policy direction to the Working Group. Steering Committee members are listed in the acknowledgements on page 15. The Steering Committee met at key points in the process to review the progress of the work, evaluate technical conclusions and emerging directions, and process the opinions and ideas put forward by the community-at-large. Community-wide input occurred during three public meetings held in each phase of the process.

The process was organized around a series of public forums. During these meetings the consultant team worked directly with the community, and members of the Working Group and Steering Committee, to secure agreement on development directions for the neighborhood and preferred design concepts for specific sites and public improvement projects. The results of these meetings become the basis for preparation of the plan.

The process began by collecting data about existing conditions in the neighborhood. The UDC prepared an updated base map of the BBC area, along with a series of maps of current conditions, including land use, zoning, recent and proposed development projects. Demographic data from the 2000 Census was compiled to provide an indication of population trends and key changes in the composition of the community. This process led to an overall understanding of the development potential of the neighborhood, including the area's strengths and problems to be addressed by the plan.

Based on community input and an analysis of existing conditions, the UDC prepared sketches of preliminary development options. These preliminary plans were reviewed with the Working Group, the Steering Committee and the community at large. The plans were then refined with an increased emphasis on neighborhood development potential and enhancement of the key streets in the area. The final plans were again reviewed with the Working Group, the Steering Committee, and the community, and the community's priorities for implementation were identified.



Vacant building survey  
(Burten, Bell, Carr, Development Inc.)





Residential Street in the Kinsman Union Neighborhood

## 2. EXISTING CONDITIONS

**Demographics** The following demographic information is from the 2000 Census and Case Western Reserve University's Northeast Ohio Community and Neighborhood Data for Organizing (NEO CANDO) database. Because the boundaries of the Kinsman Union Neighborhood do not exactly correlate with the boundaries of census tracts, the census numbers are approximations, with adjustments based on the parts of the neighborhood that fall into each tract.

### Population:

- There are approximately 2,880 people living in the Kinsman Union Neighborhood.
- Neighborhood population has declined 6% since the 1990 Census.
- 97% of neighborhood residents are African-American
- 56% of neighborhood residents are female.
- The average family size is 3.4 people.
- The median age of neighborhood residents is 28.7 years.
- Children and seniors make up about half of the total population; there are 1,021 residents under age 18 and 306 residents over age 65.

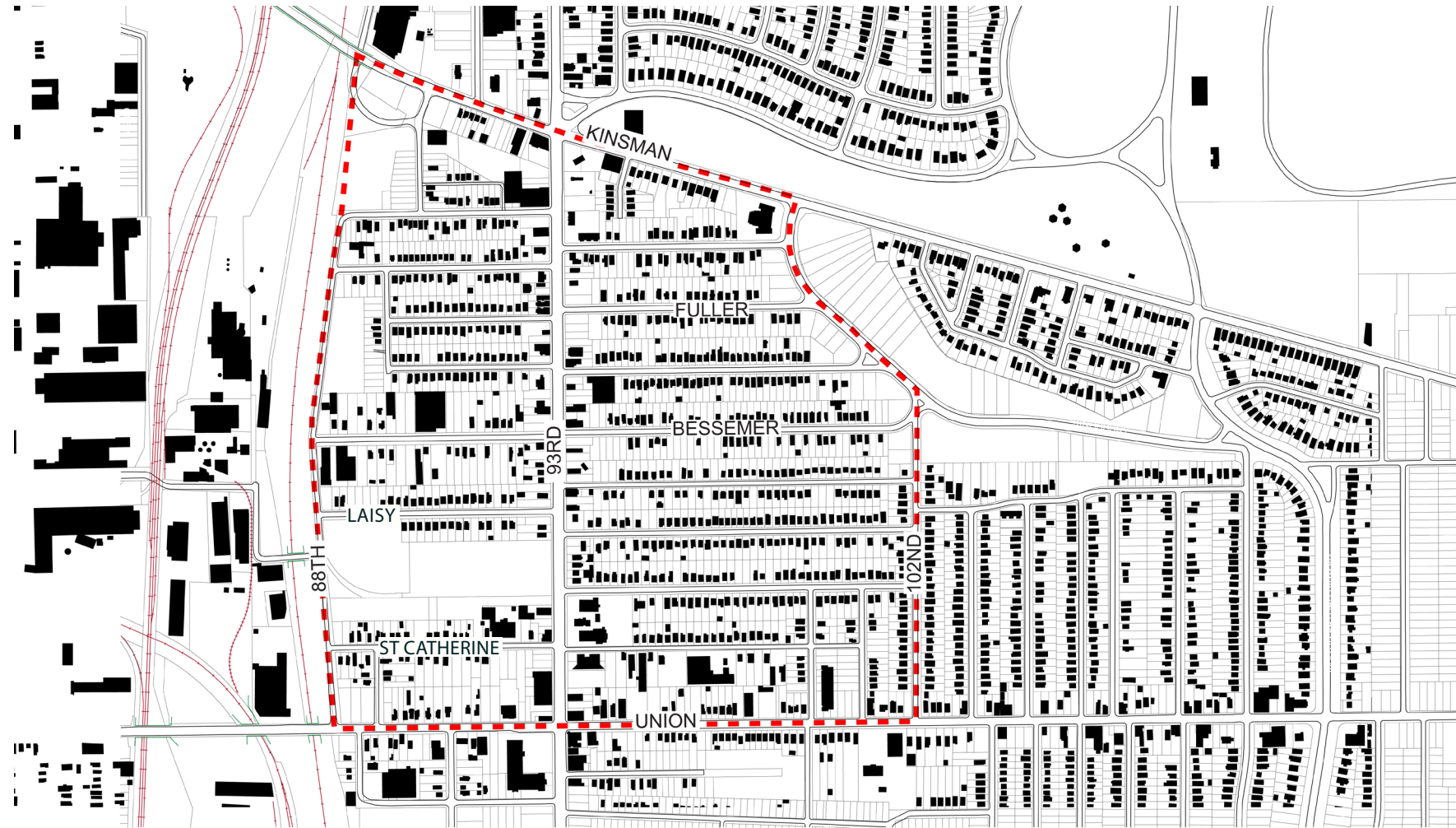
### Households and housing:

- There are approximately 1,064 housing units in the neighborhood.
- At the time of the 2000 census, 10% of these units were vacant.
- Of the occupied housing units, approximately 42% are owner-occupied.
- The median value of single family homes within the neighborhood in 2005 ranged from \$20,000 to \$48,000, depending on the census tract in which the house is located. The median value for all housing in the City of Cleveland in 2004 was \$61,800.

### Employment and Income:

- There are approximately 930 residents of the Kinsman Union Neighborhood who work full or part time.
- 3/4 of these residents drive to work, while 1/4 use public transportation.
- The median household income ranges from \$11,500 to \$25,700 based on block group (based on 1999 income).
- Approximately 40% of households in the neighborhood have incomes of less than \$15,000 per year (based on annual income in 1999).
- Between 1989 and 1999 the poverty rate has decreased from 40% to 28%. The poverty rate in the entire City of Cleveland in 1999 was 26%.





Existing buildings in the Kinsman Union neighborhood

**Physical Conditions** The Kinsman Union Neighborhood area of study is bounded by Kinsman Road to the north, Union Avenue to the south, East 102nd Street to the east and East 88th street to the west. The neighborhood is characterized by two defining corridors, East 93rd Street and Union Avenue, and a well established collection of single- and two-family houses. Most of the larger retail, commercial and institutional uses occur along the two corridors. Housing in the neighborhood is located primarily east of East 93rd Street along very long blocks running east-west. These long blocks inhibit movement in the north-south direction. This constraint contributes to heavy traffic along East 93rd Street. To the west of East 93rd there is a mixture of both housing and industrial uses. The western-most edge of the neighborhood is bordered by a busy rail line.

Like other places in Ward 5, vacancy is an issue in the Kinsman Union neighborhood. This being noted, the extent of the vacancy is more sporadic and less intense than in some other areas of the Ward. The majority of the residential neighborhood is composed of well-maintained houses.

The Kinsman Union neighborhood has good access to the RTA with major bus routes occurring along Kinsman Avenue, East 93rd Street, and Union Avenue. The closest Rapid Transit lines are the Blue and Green lines accessible on Woodhill Road, north of the neighborhood.



Vacant Site on East 93rd Street between Laisy Avenue and St. Catherine Avenue





Union Square Apartments

**Land Use** Kinsman Union is primarily a single- and two-family residential neighborhood. East 93rd Street and Union Avenue contain a mixture of commercial, institutional, retail and multi-family housing. Some examples of these include the St. Catherine Church on East 93rd at St. Catherine Avenue and the Union Square apartment building on Union Avenue at East 98th Street. There are a number of existing industrial properties in the neighborhood, including the Day Piston Company on St. Catherine Avenue, west of East 93rd Street. The neighborhood has at least fifteen active churches. There is one park within neighborhood boundaries—Easton Park, along East 88th Street at Easton Avenue. The park is across from the railroad line at the neighborhood’s western boundary. The park includes a baseball diamond, basketball courts, and playground equipment. Just beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood, there are three parks: The large Luke Easter Park to the northeast, the recently refurbished Bisbee Park to the south and Odellia Robinson Park to the east. Also to the north adjacent to Luke Easter Park is the Zelma Watson George Community Center. Although many of these facilities are just outside of the neighborhood study area, they still serve as valuable recreational resources to the neighborhood itself. Vacant properties are dispersed throughout the neighborhood, with one large vacant site on the west side of East 93rd Street between St. Catherine and Laisy Avenues.



Day Piston Company



Existing Land Use in the Kinsman Union Neighborhood





Existing parks and green space in and around the Kinsman Union Neighborhood



4 Luke Easter Park



5 Odelia Robinson Park



1 Easton Park



2 Bisbee Park



3 Zelma Watson George Community Center



### 3. ECOLOGY & SUSTAINABILITY

Ward 5 has many characteristics that make it suitable for ecologically-friendly development. These include:

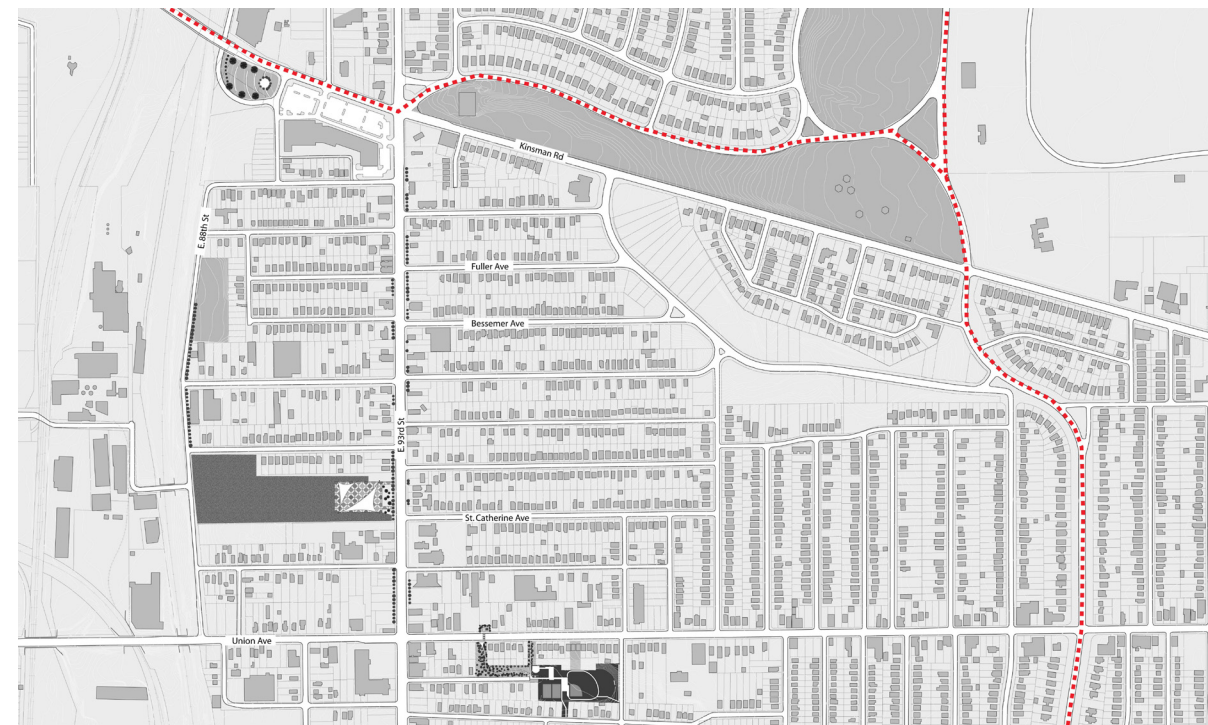
1. Good access to a range of public transportation options.
2. Close proximity to downtown Cleveland, thus reducing commute times.
3. Existing and future integration into the regional bike trail system.
4. Many existing structures are of solid construction and capable or rehabilitation, thus reducing construction waste.
5. Large quantities of open land that, with the correct guidelines, could be developed in an environmentally conscious way.
6. Many sites that could provide areas for stormwater detention and infiltration.

Any new development within Ward 5 should seek to maximize these characteristics while also following the best practices suggested by LEED for Neighborhood Development. Some of these include:

1. Encourage infill construction
2. Promote pedestrian friendly environments
3. Utilize public transportation whenever possible
4. Reuse existing infrastructure
5. Conserve natural resources
6. Encourage brownfield reuse and cleanup
7. Utilize bicycle networks
8. Reduce automobile dependence
9. Encourage higher density, mixed-use development
10. Consider proximity to schools and work
11. Wetland avoidance, conservation and restoration
12. Reduction of stormwater runoff



Parking lot vegetated swale



Existing and proposed bike trail system



Swale along residential street

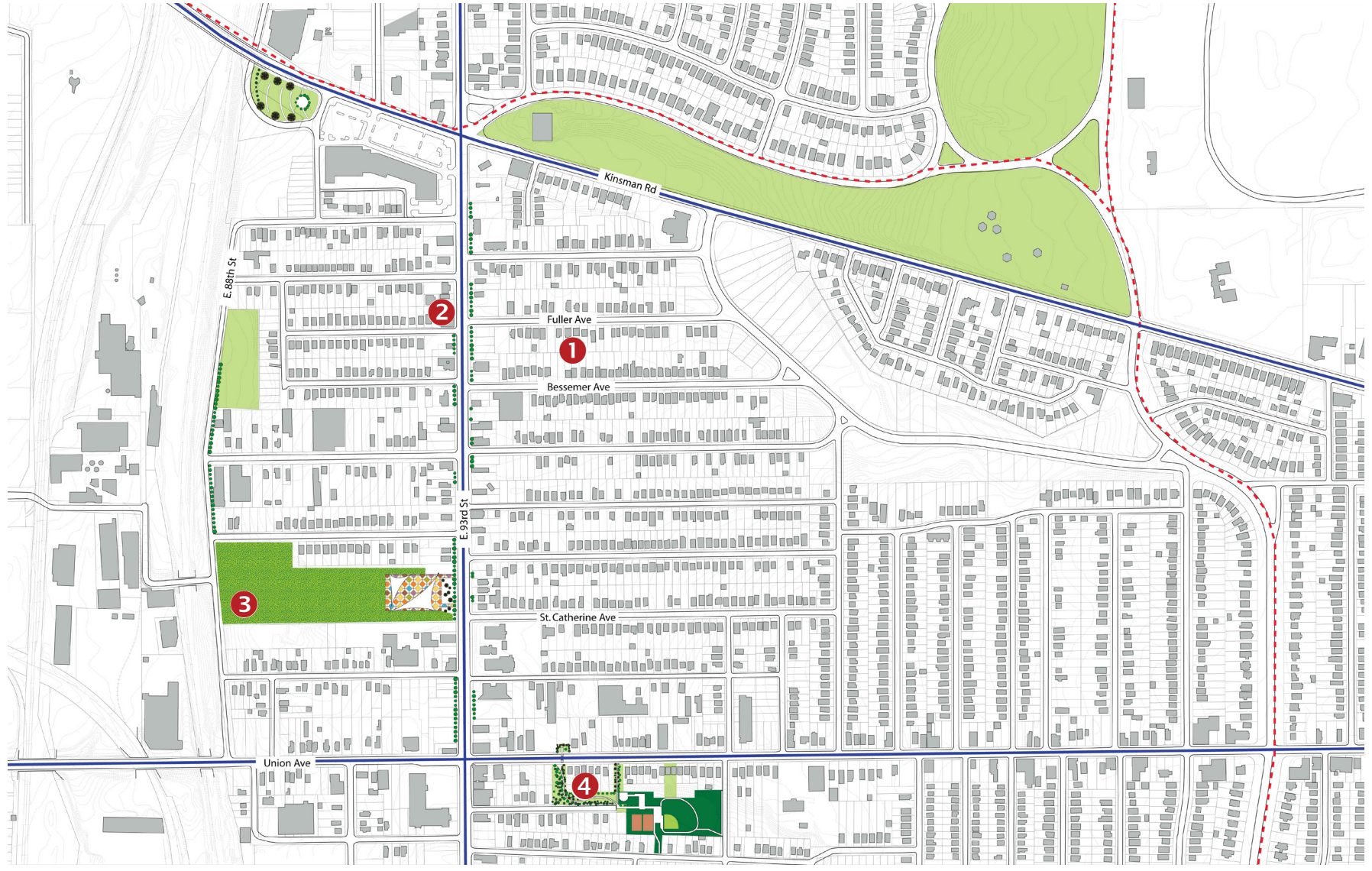


# 4. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

The Kinsman Union Neighborhood's relatively low rate of residential vacancy and tight-knit community feeling lend themselves toward a more strategic, site-specific set of design solutions. Both East 93rd Street and Union Avenue are heavily traveled corridors and could support a range of uses, yet with the new Kingsbury Crossings Center on Kinsman Avenue, the market demand will be low for additional retail and commercial uses along these corridors. The large size and high quality of the surrounding recreational areas and facilities merit study into how they can be more easily accessed by the residents of the neighborhood.

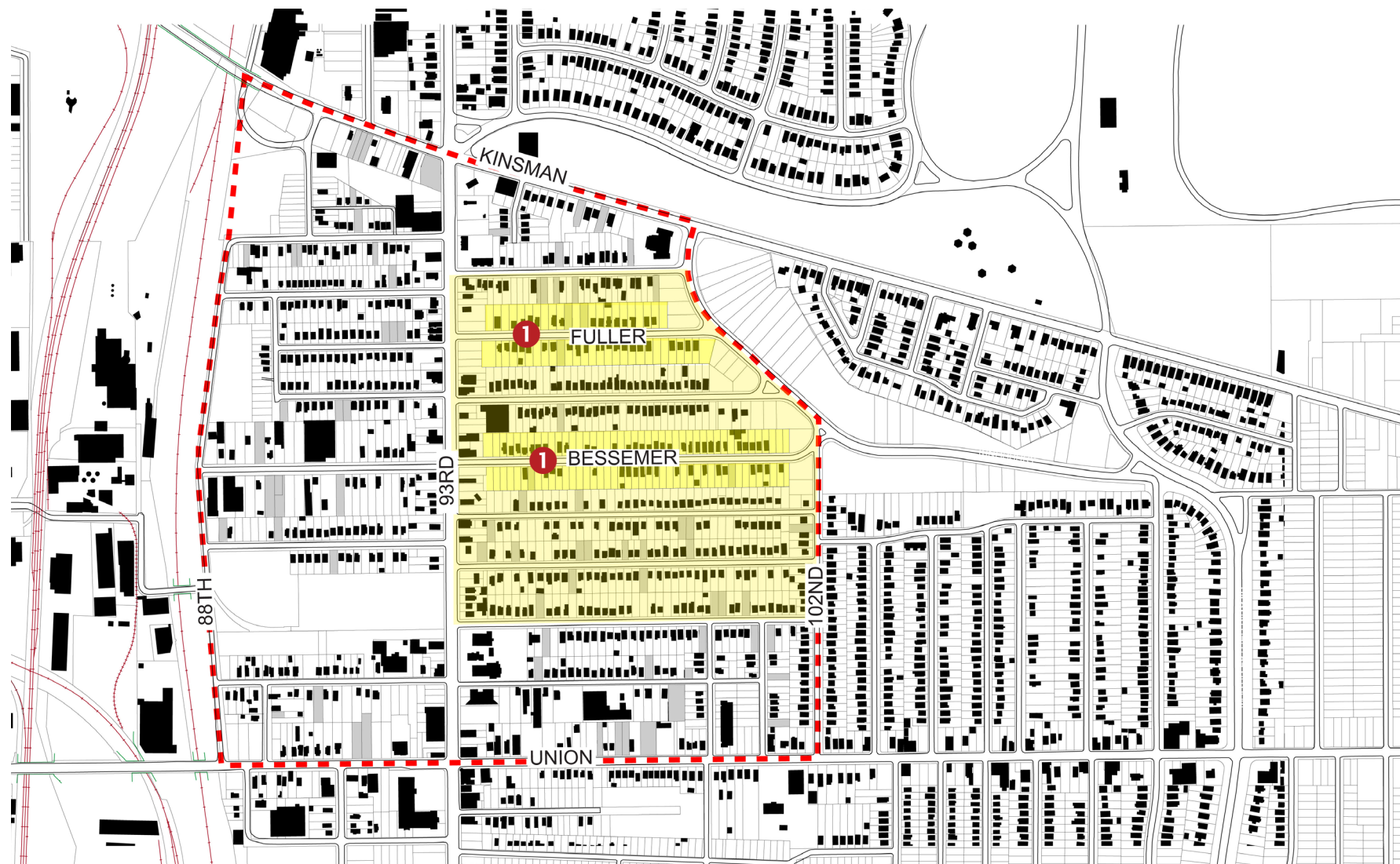
**Focus Areas** The plan for the Kinsman Union neighborhood focuses on improvements to the following areas:

- ✦ Housing / residential streets
- ✦ East 93rd Street corridor
- ✦ East 93rd Street and Laisy Avenue site
- ✦ Union Avenue / Bisbee Park



- 1 Housing / Residential Streets
- 2 East 93rd Street Corridor
- 3 East 93rd and Laisy Avenue
- 4 Union Avenue / Bisbee Park





**FOCUS AREA 1: Housing / residential streets** Residential streets in the Kinsman Union neighborhood have retained much of their traditional housing stock. Overall, home maintenance levels in the neighborhood are high, although there are vacant properties and houses in need of substantial repairs scattered through the residential streets. A strategy of land assembly and targeted acquisition of the most deteriorated homes will enable Burten Bell Carr to facilitate additional infill development of new housing. In addition, targeted code enforcement, especially for exterior maintenance issues, will help to ensure that a small percentage of substandard properties do not undermine perceptions of the neighborhood and detract from the property values of surrounding housing. Community organizing strategies can also be used to engage residents in block club activities to beautify the neighborhood and increase safety.

Infill housing has already occurred on both Bessemer and Fuller. Although much of the neighborhood is still intact, there are still patches of vacancy that could be remediated through continued infill housing, particularly east of E. 93rd Street.

- 1 Existing infill housing projects
- Vacant or Abandoned Parcels (BBC Vacant and Abandoned building study)



Homes and residential streets in the Kinsman Union Neighborhood





East 93rd Street Corridor



Religious institutions along East 93rd Street (in blue)

**FOCUS AREA 2: East 93rd Street** One of the top priorities for residents is to increase street lighting and to ensure all street lights are in working order on East 93rd Street and the surrounding streets. Residents were also supportive of streetscape improvements to improve the appearance of East 93rd Street, although better lighting was the most often requested improvement. Street trees along East 93rd Street would enhance and soften the street's appearance, although the tree lawn in the existing right-of-way is discontinuous and is not wide enough in all segments of the street to support healthy street trees. The plan recommends installing street trees in the segments of the street where the right-of-way is wide enough to accommodate trees. Any new development in the corridor should be designed to allow for street trees. Where street trees cannot be accommodated, property owners are encouraged to plant street trees on their own property, especially for vacant sites and surface parking lots. Greening up the edge of the street will have a dramatic impact on the appearance of the corridor. Many of the surface parking lots belong to the numerous churches in the area and perhaps the churches can be encouraged collectively to landscape the edges of their lots in an effort to improve the appearance of the corridor.

High-volume bus stops at East 93rd Street and Kinsman Avenue, and East 93rd Street and Union Avenue can be enhanced through the Greater Cleveland RTA's transit waiting environments program. This program encourages seating, unique bus shelters, bike racks, and other amenities at main bus stops in an effort to improve the transit experience and promote ridership.



East 93rd Street looking north

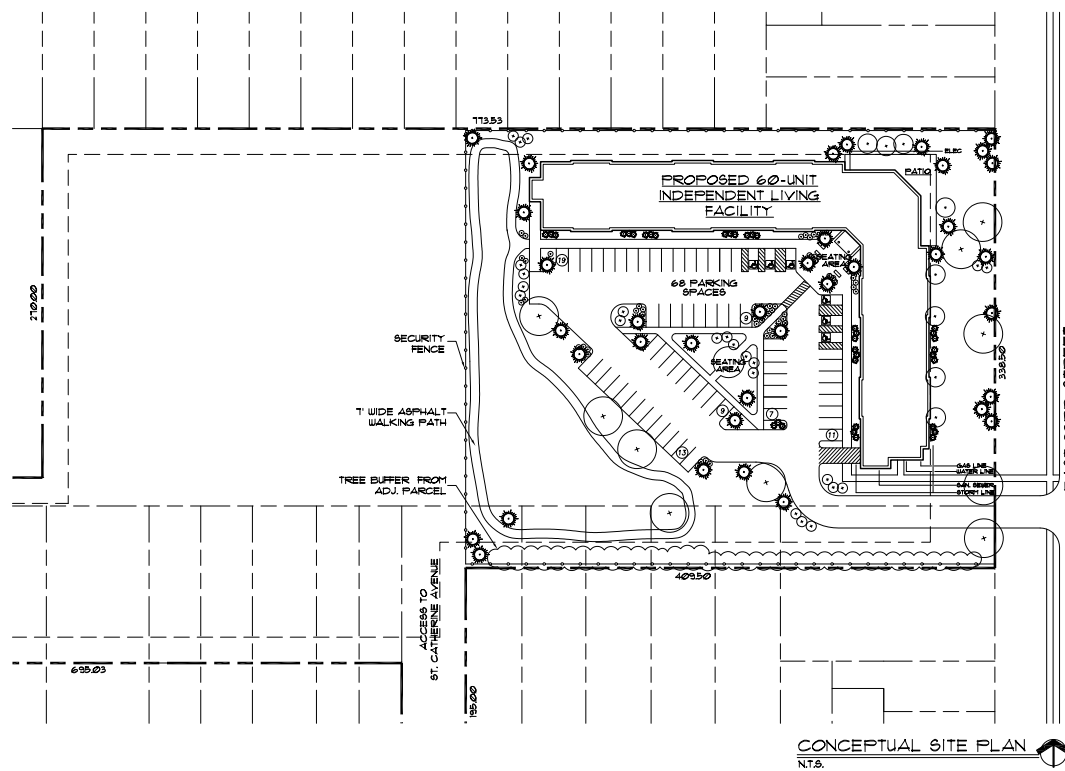


East 93rd Street looking south





Housing Development on full site



Senior Housing on Eastern portion of site

**ADA**  
ARCHITECTS, INC.

EAST 93RD ST. SENIOR HOUSING  
E. 93RD ST. & CATHERINE AVE. CLEVELAND, OHIO

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**FOCUS AREA 3 East 93rd Street and Laisy Avenue:** The largest vacant property in the neighborhood is the former RTA bus garage site at East 93rd Street and Laisy Avenue. The eleven acre site has environmental issues and contaminants that need to be remediated before the site can be redeveloped. There are several options for redevelopment, including:

*Retail and Institutional Development:* An earlier plan by the Kinsman Union Community Association proposed a mixed use development on the site, incorporating a retail use (a drug store), a community center, and housing. While this mix continues to have strong appeal for neighborhood residents, attracting a retail use to the site is a challenge given current market conditions. Also, retail at this site would potentially compete with the Kingsbury Crossings Shopping Center planned for a nearby site.

*Institutional Development:* The Kinsman Union Community Association proposed an alternate plan that would develop the site as a community center and green space. The community center would provide meeting space, job training and educational programming, and support services for neighborhood residents. Although the City of Cleveland does not have resources set aside to develop such a center, it was suggested that the many churches in the neighborhood could collaborate on a shared facility that would allow for meetings, events, banquets, and other community-based activities.

*Housing Development:* The site is also large enough to accommodate a major housing development. The possibilities range from a large senior housing facility (a much needed resource in the community) to a mix of housing types that could vary depending on market demand. Higher density apartments, condominiums, or senior housing units could be sited at the eastern edge of the site, with a well-landscaped setback between the housing units and East 93rd Street. Lower density cluster homes or townhouses could be located over the rest of the site, with a green space or substantial landscape buffer between the western side of the housing development and the nearby train tracks to the west of East 88th Street. The housing development could be configured to allow for a pedestrian connection to nearby Easton Park, possibly with video surveillance along East 88th Street to increase safety and reduce illegal dumping.

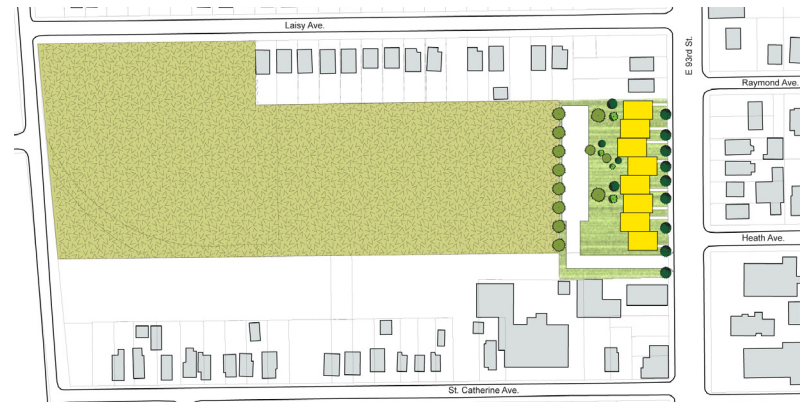
*Temporary Use:* In its current state, the vacant site is an unused resource and a neighborhood eyesore that detracts from the appearance of the surrounding area. As a temporary holding strategy, the existing slab from the former bus garage could be cleaned up and painted and street lights could be temporarily installed around the perimeter of the site. The remainder of the site could be planted with sunflowers or other cover plantings to improve the landscape and begin the process of remediating toxins from the soil. These improvements could be implemented at a low cost and would allow the site to act as a staging area for a variety of formal and informal community activities, including:

- Sports, through the installation of temporary basketball standards
- Temporary flea markets, collective garage sales, and farmer's markets
- Block parties, outdoor movies, family reunions, and other social events
- Other organized and impromptu events, as determined by residents, local churches and institutions

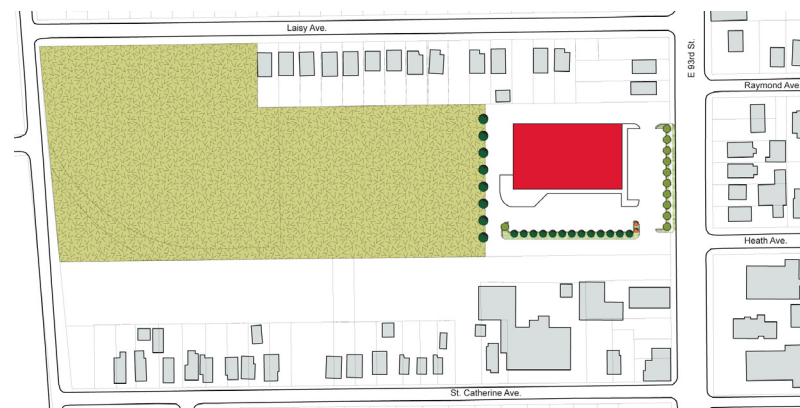




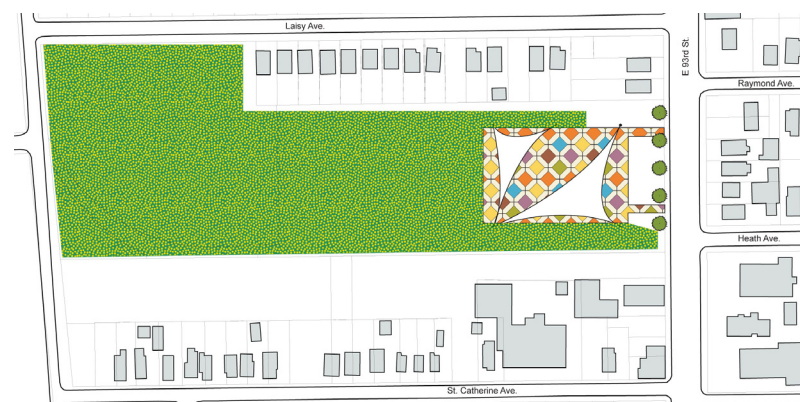
Institutional use and community green space



Infill housing and remediative landscape



Drug store and remediative landscape



Temporary use and remediative landscape



Existing site



Outdoor movies



Temporary fabric roof



Basketball court



Temporary use and remediative landscape





**FOCUS AREA 4 Union Avenue / Bisbee Park:** Bisbee Park is a little known gem at the end of Beacon Avenue, just south of Union Avenue. Views into the park from Union Avenue are blocked by existing housing along the south side of the street that back up to the park. Increasing views into the park from Union Avenue would make the park more of a presence in the neighborhood and enhance the appearance of the street for neighborhood residents and those driving through. Although there is a grade change between Union Avenue and Bisbee Park (with Union being at a higher level) there are several open lots along the south side of Union Avenue that could be used to expand the park, providing access and views into the park from the north. A mid-block crosswalk between the existing Cleanland Commons green space on the north side of Union Avenue and a new entrance to Bisbee Park directly across on the south side of Bisbee Commons would enable residents to access this park more safely and easily.

- 1 Bisbee Park
- 2 Proposed path connection
- 3 Proposed stair connection
- 4 Potential view corridor



Potential site for connection to Bisbee Park



Existing green space on Union Avenue



Bisbee Park





## 5. COMMUNITY PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Through a series of public meetings, community residents and other stakeholders identified the following priorities for implementation:

**Housing maintenance:** Eliminating deteriorated housing is a top priority for many residents. Stepped up housing code enforcement and abatement of nuisance properties were among the recommendations that received the greatest support from community residents. Resources should also be developed to help existing residents make small repairs and improvements to their properties, in order to foster the high level of home maintenance currently found in the neighborhood.

**Safety:** Addressing safety issues and reducing quality of life crimes in the neighborhood are another priority. Residents are more willing to reinvest in their properties and remain in the area if they feel safe and confident in their neighborhood. Enhanced street lighting, neighborhood block watch programs, and increased collaboration with local law enforcement will improve safety in the neighborhood.

The development of strategies to address the vacant land within the neighborhood through land acquisition and continued infill housing should be considered a priority.

**Redevelopment of the vacant site on East 93rd Street between St. Catherine and Laisy Avenues:** This large vacant property is a top priority for redevelopment. To prepare this site for redevelopment, public and/or private funding must be secured to clean up the property and resolve environmental problems. Because of the size and location of the site, it may be possible to work with the City's industrial landbank program to clean up the site and prepare it for redevelopment. Securing a private sector developer or facilitating a partnership with local churches to create a shared community facility are two possible approaches to redeveloping the site.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



### **Burten, Bell, Carr Development Inc.**

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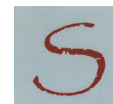
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