

Local Historic Districts in Clifton

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Cincinnati Preservation

2026 NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN- DRAFT

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Clifton is a historic neighborhood that has largely retained its architectural integrity. It has a remarkably intact stock of residential buildings that date from the middle of the 19th Century to 1930. This collection of buildings gives Clifton its charm and attraction and is deserving of recognition and protection. Interest in new development in Clifton could replace some of the neighborhood's historic buildings, as recent rezoning allows higher-density construction. One or more local historic districts would protect the neighborhood's significant historic structures and ensure compatible redevelopment within the district.

Local Historic District designations would afford the neighborhood protection from demolition and establish standards to guide exterior building changes without prescribing regulations that overly restrict property owners from making personal and necessary updates. Historic Designation and related Conservation Guidelines ensure that changes and new construction are generally appropriate and architecturally compatible with the building's historic character. Local Historic Districts are a zoning overlay approved by the City Council following prior actions by the Historic Conservation Board and the City Planning Commission, with public hearings at each step of the process.

A working group was established in 2025 to determine the appropriate boundaries for one or more local districts and draft new guidelines for building and site changes within the district(s). This neighborhood plan supports these efforts. The establishment of the local historic designation in Clifton will be conducted through a process of wide dissemination of information about the designation and its impacts, ensuring that property owners are informed and have opportunities to comment, lend support, and participate in the process and decision-making.

DRAFT

ACTION #2.2: Determine a proposed local historic district boundary based on architectural styles and historical significance. Engage residents within the proposed boundary to share information on local historic districts.

ACTION #2.3: Draft conservation guidelines that will apply to the local historic district considering the affordability and availability of new materials and technologies. Engage residents within the proposed boundary to collect feedback on the guidelines and verify support

ACTION #2.4: Establish the Local Historic District with the City of Cincinnati, as informed by resident engagement

REASONS FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION

To promote the public health, safety and welfare;

To foster the beauty of the city;

To stabilize and increase property values;

To strengthen the local economy;

To maintain and enhance the distinctive character of historic buildings and areas;

To safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving districts and landmarks which reflect elements of its history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or culture;

To protect and enhance the city's attractions to current and prospective residents, businesses and tourists;

To facilitate reinvestment in and revitalization of certain districts and neighborhoods;

To facilitate and encourage economic development, public and private investment, and tourism in the city;

To conserve valuable material and energy resources by ongoing use and maintenance of the existing built environment; and

To maintain the historic urban fabric of the city.

- From the City of Cincinnati Zoning Code

2 BASIC HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS LEVELS

National Register of Historic Places- established by the National Preservation Act of 1966

Local Preservation Designation- established by local ordinance 1976, most recently updated 2011

WHAT THE NATIONAL REGISTER DOES DO...



- Recognition of historic properties and their importance (planning/education tool)
- Consideration in planning federal and federally assisted projects (Section 106 Review Process)
- Eligibility for federal and state tax benefits (income-producing contributing properties)
- Qualifying preservation projects for federal grant assistance

WHAT THE NATIONAL REGISTER DOES NOT DO...

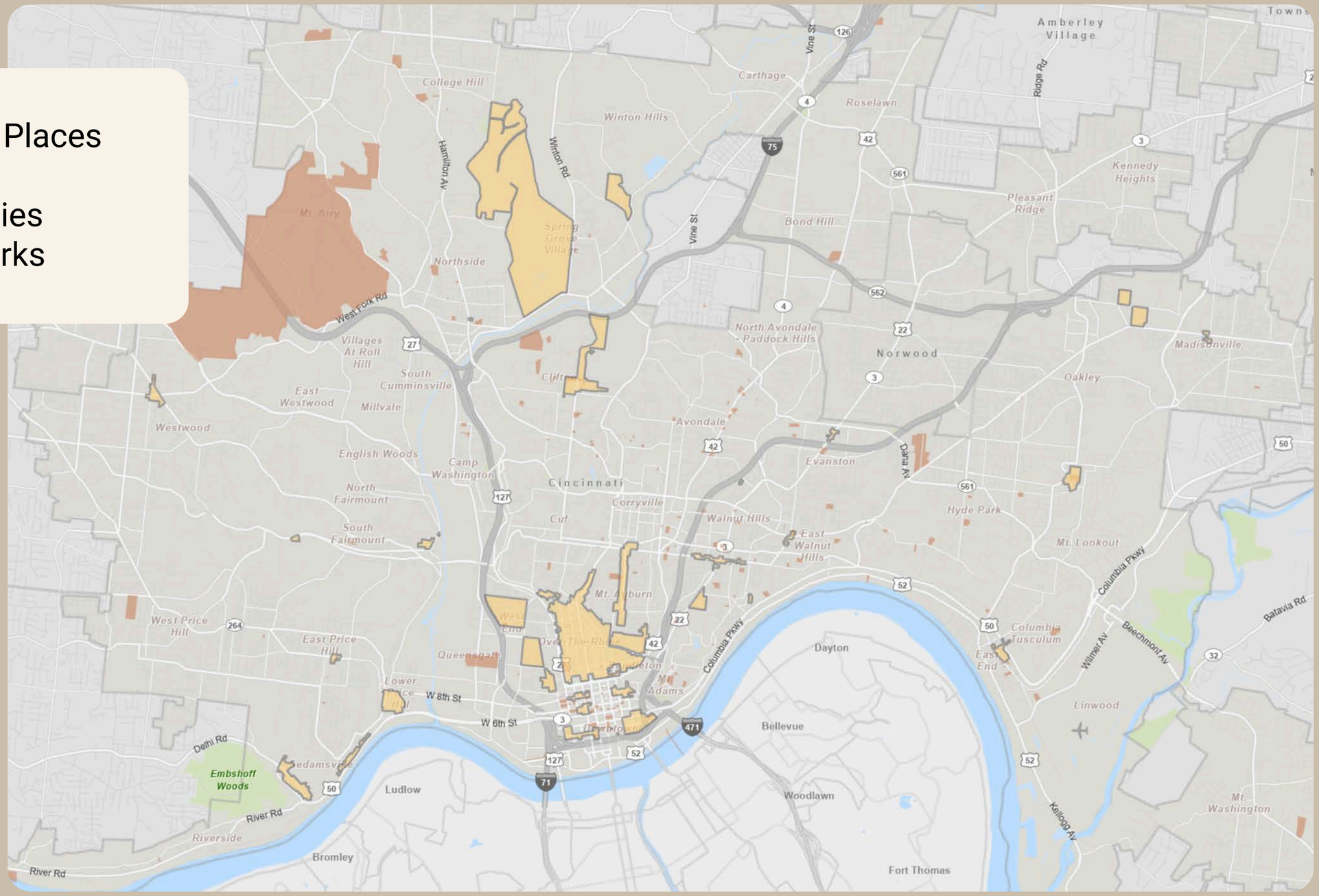


Prevent owner from remodeling, repairing, altering, selling, or demolishing with other than federal funds

Obligate owner to make repairs or improvements to property

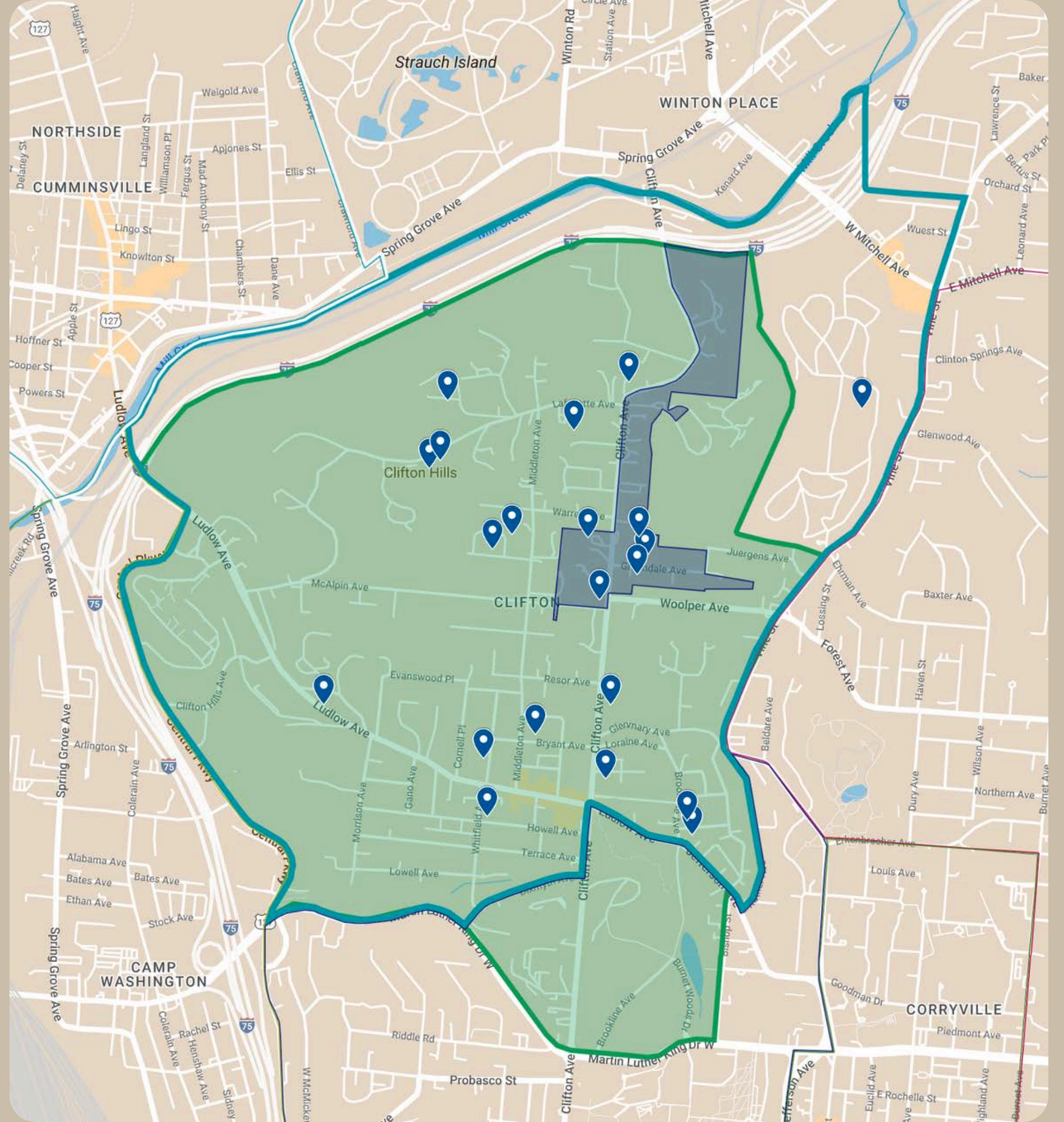
WHAT WE HAVE IN CINCINNATI ...

National Register of Historic Places
44 Historic Districts
250 Individual Listed Properties
10 National Historic Landmarks



WHAT CLIFTON HAS

National Register of
Historic Places
1 Historic District
22 Individual Listings



LOCAL DESIGNATION

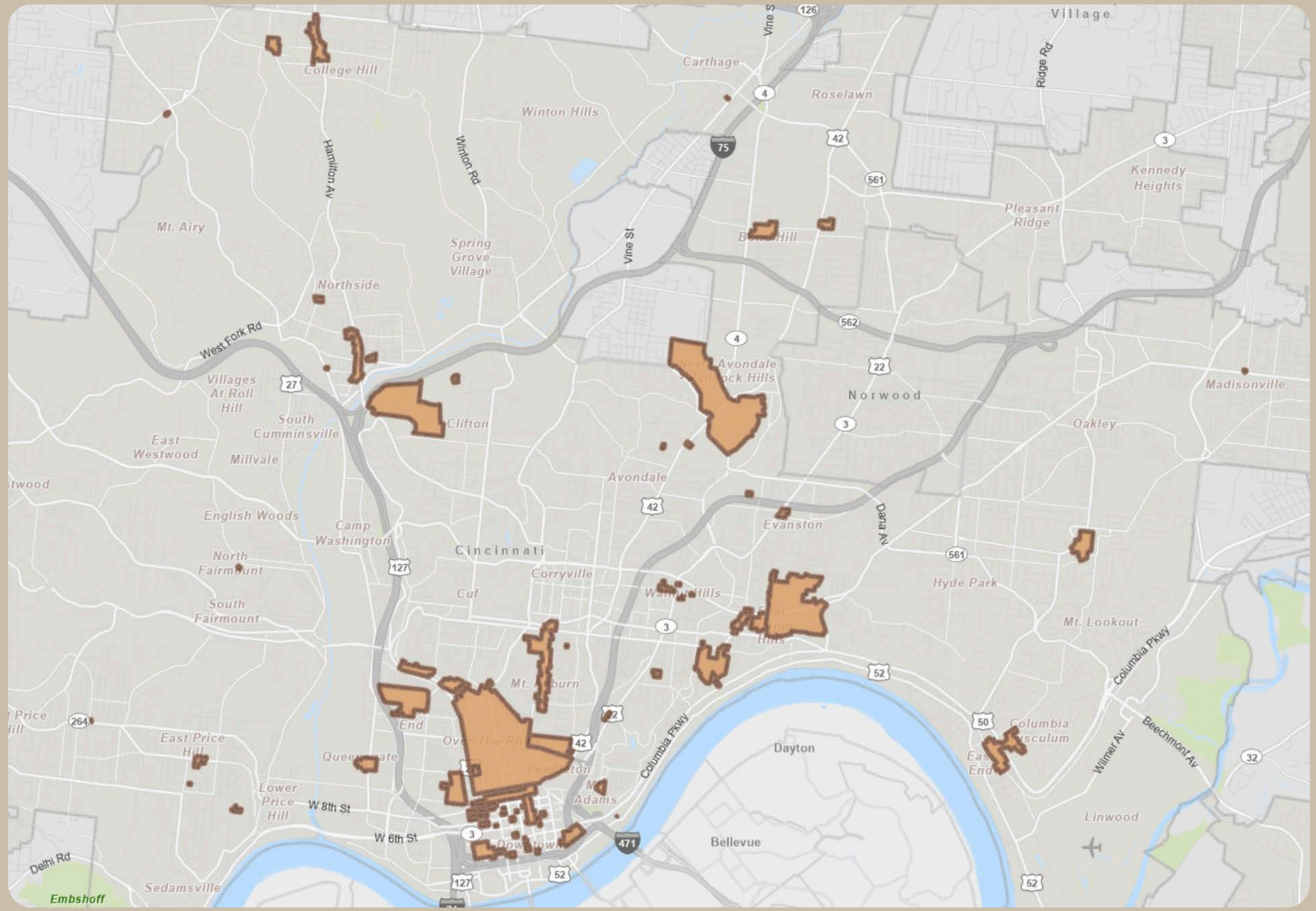
Local legislation is one of the best ways to protect the historic character of buildings, streetscapes, neighborhoods, and special landmarks from inappropriate alterations, inappropriate new construction, and other poorly conceived work, as well as outright demolition.

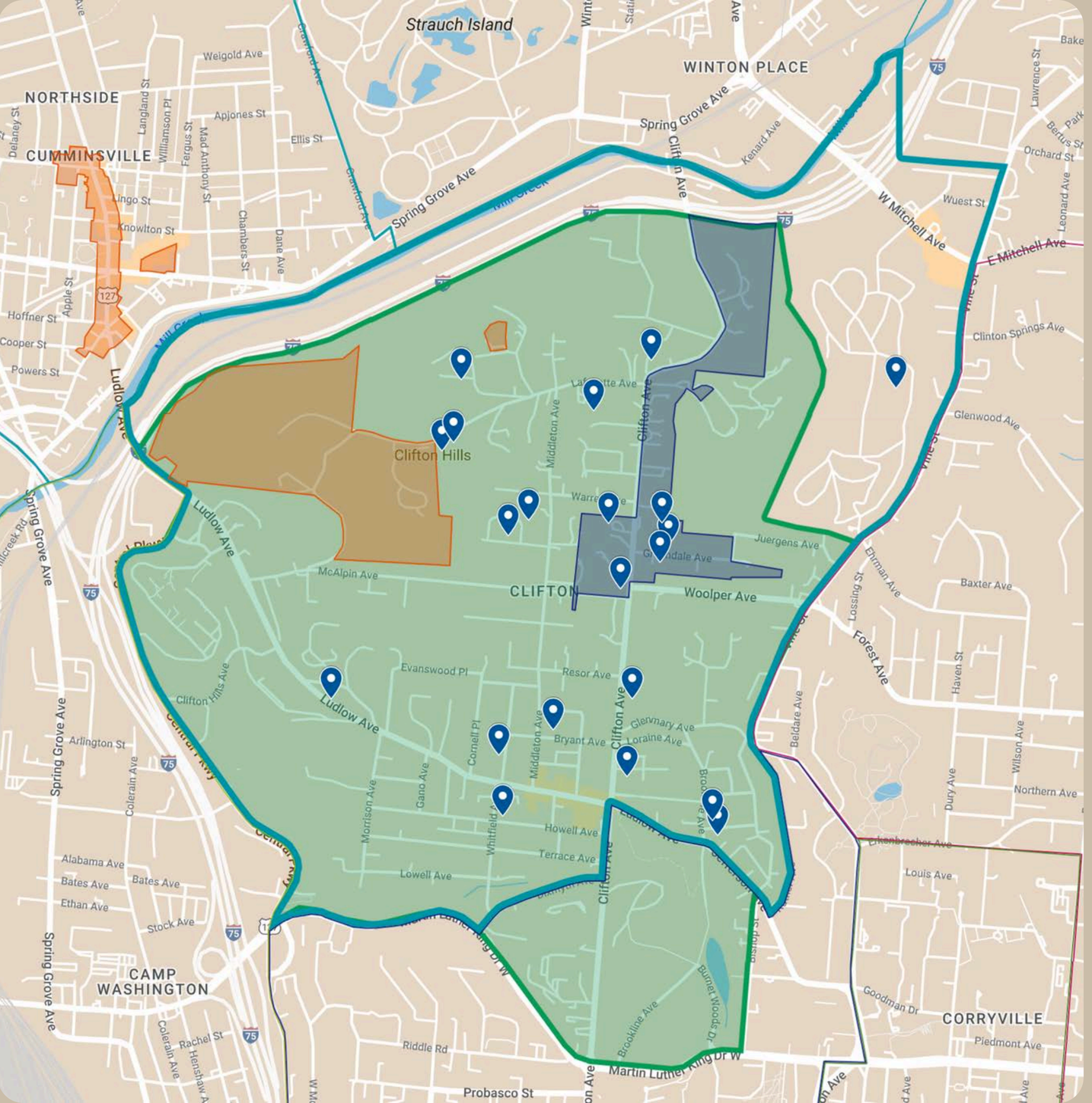
"The preservation ordinance is nothing more than local legislation enacted to protect buildings and neighborhoods from destruction or insensitive rehabilitation…"- *Pratt Cassity, Maintaining Community Character: How to Establish a Local Historic District. National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2000.*



WHAT WE HAVE IN CINCINNATI ...

Local Designation
28 Historic Districts
53 Individual Landmarks



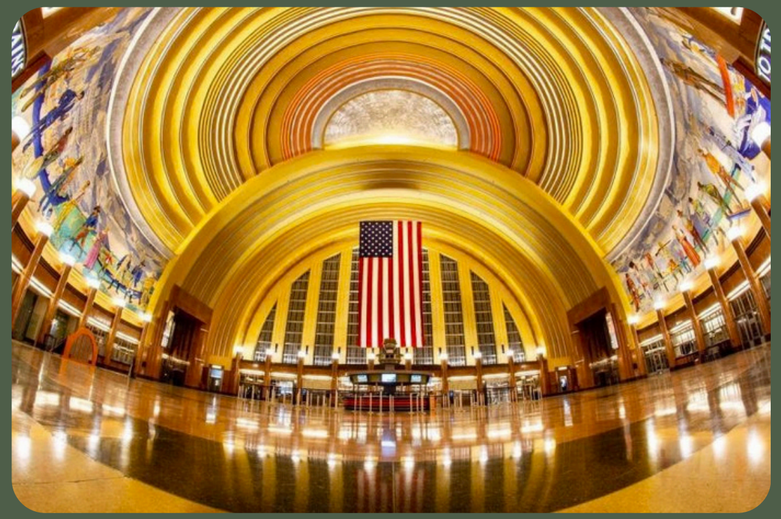


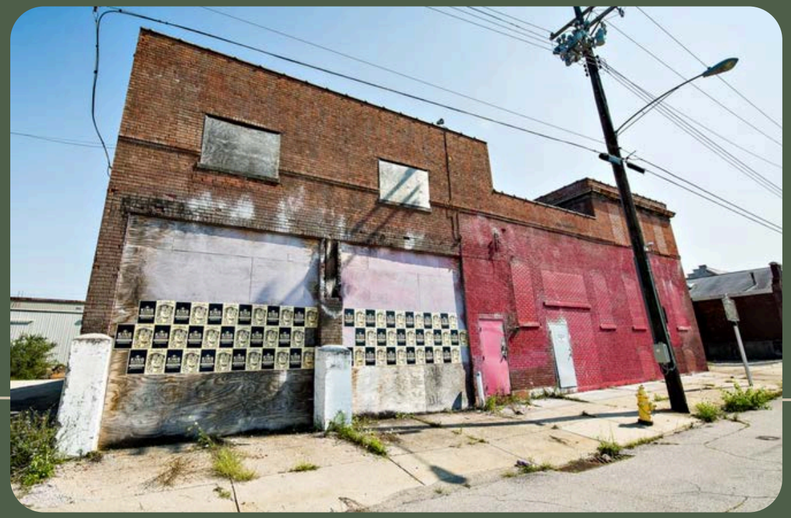
WHAT CLIFTON HAS

Local Designation
1 Historic District
1 Local Landmark

National Register Designation
1 Historic District
22 Individual

WHAT THE LOCAL DESIGNATION DOES DO...





- Establishes an objective process for designating historic properties and districts
- Provides protection of historic properties and districts. (Integrity and Demolition)
- Tool to manage sympathetic change with design guidelines and review process
- A thoughtful process to determine if demolition is the right answer
- Stabilizes declining neighborhoods and protects and enhances property values.
- Heritage Tourism…. Studies show that people come to visit and then decide to stay longer in protected historic districts

WHAT THE LOCAL DESIGNATION DOES NOT DO...



- Require improvements, changes, or restoration of the property
- Require that historic properties be open for tours
- Restrict the sale of the property
- Require approval of interior changes or alterations
- Prevent new construction within historic areas
- Require approval for ordinary repair or maintenance
- Affect the allowed uses on the property

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT GUIDELINES

Reflect the district's distinctive features, including its architecture, materials, and development patterns.

Guide repairs and exterior changes to historic buildings.

Guide compatible additions and new construction, including scale, placement, materials, and design.

Provide clear criteria for reviewing proposed work, helping owners plan projects.

Protect neighborhood character while allowing buildings to evolve and remain useful.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

The Local District and Landmark ordinances require that prior to (exterior) material changes, (exterior) major alterations or demolition to a designated historic resource, the Historic Conservation Board or Staff must approve a Certificate of Appropriateness.

in short a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is a Historic Approval/Historic Permit

Not required for:

- Paint colors
- Ordinary repair and maintenance
- Interior alterations
- Landscaping

STAFF APPROVAL

6.2. **Schedule**: **Minor Alterations to Existing Structures**. [•] = Yes; [–] = No.

Type of Work	Restoration/ Rehabilitation	New	Remove
Awnings/Canopies	•	•	•[1]
Chimney, Flue, or Pipe	•	•	•[2]
Decks/Decking[3] [4]	•	•	-
Doors/Garage Doors	•	•	-
All Door/Window Openings	•	-	-
Exterior Surface Alteration[5]	•	•	•
Fences/Walls[6]	•	•	•
Fire Escapes	•	•[7]	•
Landscaping/Site Alteration	•	•	•
Lighting	•	•	•
Mechanical Equipment[8]	-	•	•
Painting Masonry	•	•[9]	•[10]
Railings	•	•	•[11]
Ramps[12]	•	•	-
Roofing Material	•	-	-
Signs	•	•	•
Skylights[13]	•	•	•
Stairwells[14]	•	•	-
Storefront	•	-	-
Windows	•	•[15]	-

[1] Not historic fabric or non-character defining feature
[2] Non-character defining feature
[3] Not visible from an abutting street
[4] Rooftop decks are not included except when on a flat roof and any railing or flooring required is not visible from the street.
[5] Alterations not visible from abutting street that do not impact the form of the structure, and that do not impact historic fabric or character-defining feature. Properties that have a Part II Historic Tax Credit Application that has been approved by the State Historic Preservation Office and National Park Service, excluding new additions.
[6] Must satisfy underlying zoning requirements and must not be historic fabric or character defining feature.
[7] Not on a Building Façade, as defined by CZC Section 1401-01-F
[8] Not visible from an abutting street
[9] Presently unpainted masonry walls and foundations are permitted to be painted if large sections of original masonry walls that have been replaced with new masonry that clearly varies in color, size, shape, or mortar joint as compared to the original masonry or where more than 25% of original masonry is in very poor condition and painting masonry is likely to protect it from further damage. All mortar and masonry must first be repaired before painting. Only the walls affected by brick replacement or deterioration may be painted. All non-contributing buildings.
[10] May be removed if removal process is an accepted means of removal as outlined in National Park Service Preservation Brief 1: Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings
[11] Not historic fabric or character defining feature
[12] Not located on Building Façade, as defined by CZC Section 1401-01-F; not visible from abutting street; not historic fabric or character defining feature.
[13] Not visible from an abutting street
[14] Not located on Building Façade, as defined by CZC Section 1401-01-F; not visible from abutting street
[15] New windows are permitted when historic windows cannot be restored and must match historic windows in style, size, composition, material, and fit the entire opening.

HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD APPROVAL

Major Alterations

New Construction

Demolition

Minor Alterations that do not meet the guidelines

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS APPROVAL STATISTICS- 2025

93% In 2025 93% of COA's were Staff Review

2% In 2025 only 1 application was denied at the HCB. This is just 2% of cases of all the cases heard by the HCB.

5 of 52 cases at the HCB were continued. 90% of cases were decided at the first hearing.

90%

Staff Level Reviews take an average of 5 days to review 5 Days

COST COMPARISON

Windows

Material	Typical Cost (installed)	Lifespan	Cost/year	Energy Efficiency (R-Value)
Vinyl	$450–$800	20 years	$22.5-$40	~R-3 to R-4
Wood	$800–$1,500+	50+ years (with maintenance)	$16-$30	~R-2 to R-3
Aluminum-Clad Wood	$900–$1,500+	40–60 years	$22.5-$37.5	~R-2 to R-3 (similar to wood frame)
Fiberglass	$650–$1,100	40–50 years	$16.25-$27.4	~R-3 to R-5 (can be higher with premium

Roofing

Material	Typical Cost (installed) per sq foot	Lifespan	Cost/year	Wind Resistance Rating
3 tab shingle	$300–$500	15-25 years (most common 20)	$15-$25	60-70 mph
Architectural Shingle	$400-$700	25-50 (Most common 30 years)	$13-$25	80-130 mph

Materials required are often higher quality and will last longer= lower cost over the lifetime of the product, lower maitenance costs and higher return on the investment

EXTRA FEES ARE MINIMAL

	Fees		
	Outside of HD	within HD	Difference
Roofing and windows without building permit	$0	$154	$154
Fence	$154	$154	$0
Deck that meets zoning	Building permit fees	Building permit fees + $154	$154
Deck that does not meet base zoning but conforms to historically appropriate setbacks	Building permit fees+$300	Building permit fees + $154	($146)
Addition/New Construction that meets zoning	Building permit fees	Building permit fees + $654	$654
New Construction/additions with zoning variances for height or setback residential	building permit fees+$300	Building permit fees + $654	$354
New Construction/additions with zoning variances for height or setback commercial	building permit fees+$500	Building permit fees + $654	$154

COMMON HISTORIC DISTRICT MYTHS



Myth: Historic districts displace minorities and working-class families.
Fact: Non-White homeownership in Cincinnati's local historic districts increased at a faster rate than the city as a whole.



Myth: Historic districts make neighborhoods exclusive and unaffordable.
Fact: In East Walnut Hills Historic District, home values increased 89% over 22 years- the rest of the City increased 85%



Myth: Historic districts prevent housing density.
Fact: Cincinnati's local historic districts average 10,783 residents per square mile, more than double the density of the rest of residential Cincinnati (5,010 residents per square mile). Historic districts support substantial population density and diverse housing opportunities.



Myth: Historic district regulations allow police to enter private property without probable cause.
Fact: Historic district regulations are administered through standard zoning and code enforcement procedures. They do not create authority for warrantless searches or give police special powers to enter private property

PRESERVATION PROMOTES RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT



Reusing historic buildings can reduce environmental impacts by up to 82% while delivering development faster and more affordably than new construction.

Adaptive reuse can deliver housing faster and often more affordably than new construction, helping address housing shortages

Existing homes can be adapted for multi-family use and some already have been, but this should be done in a way that preserves the character of the neighborhood.

LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION PROCESS

Proposed Process by Cincinnati Preservation

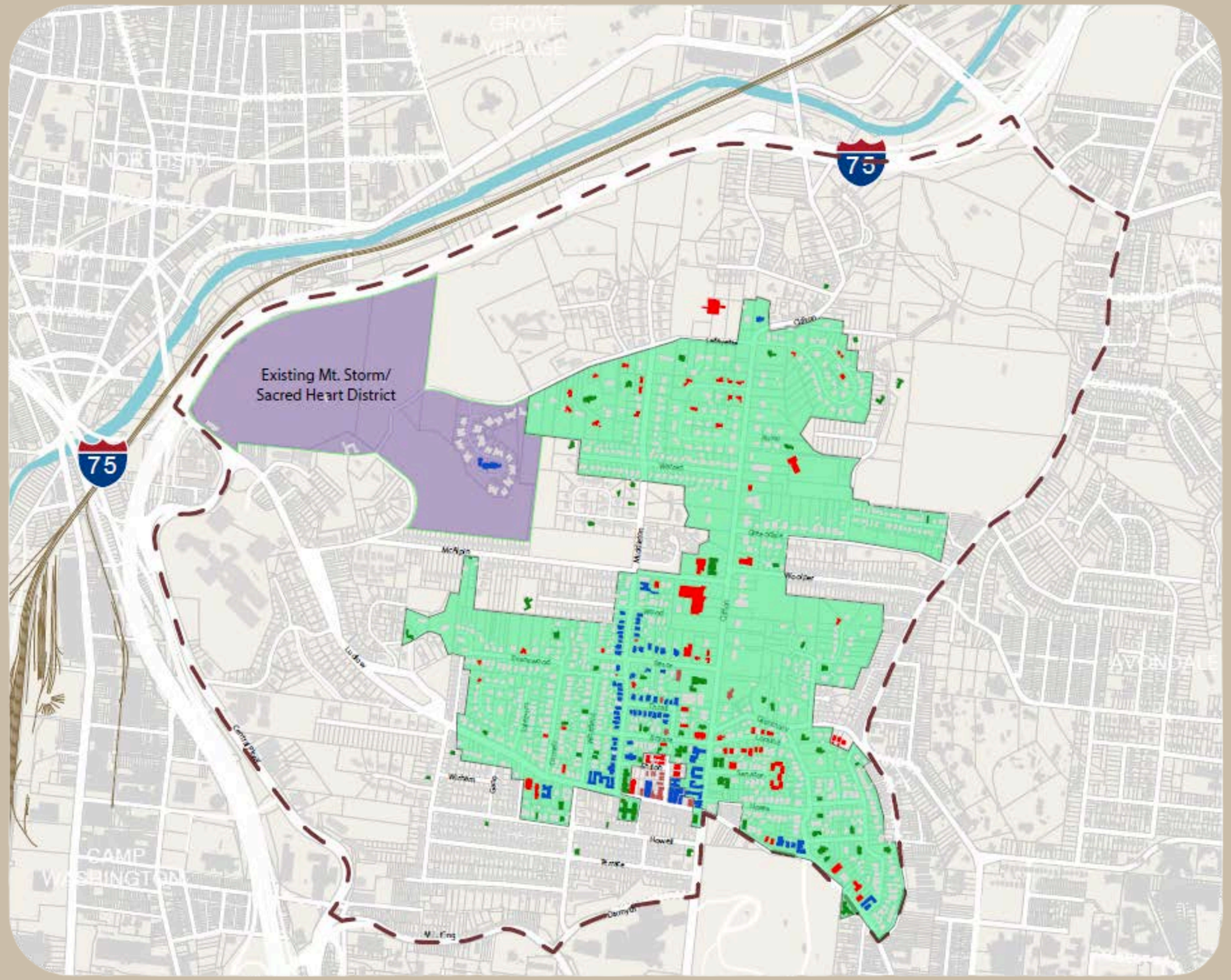
Informational Meeting → Historic District Study → Community Meeting Boundaries → Boundary Recommendation → Community Council Vote on Boundaries

Draft Designation & Guidelines → Community Meeting Guidelines-Rehab → Community Meeting Guidelines-Infill → Final Designation & Guidelines → Community Meeting Presentation and Q&A

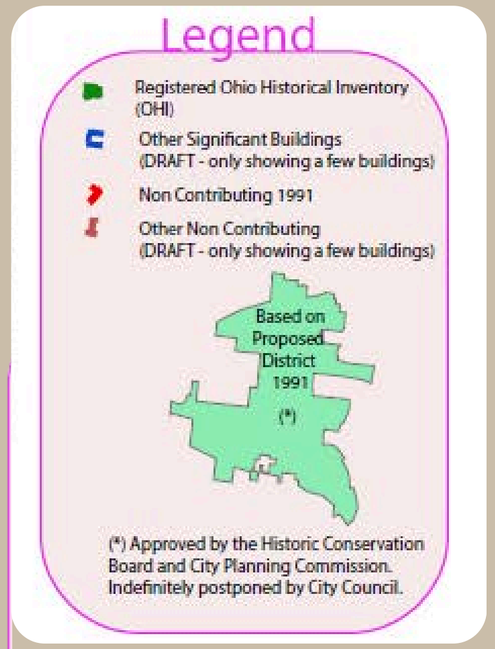
Required Process Per the Cincinnati Municpal Code

Clifton Town Meeting Vote → Application Submission → Staff Conference → Historic Conservation Board → City Planning Commission → Council (Committee-Full Council)

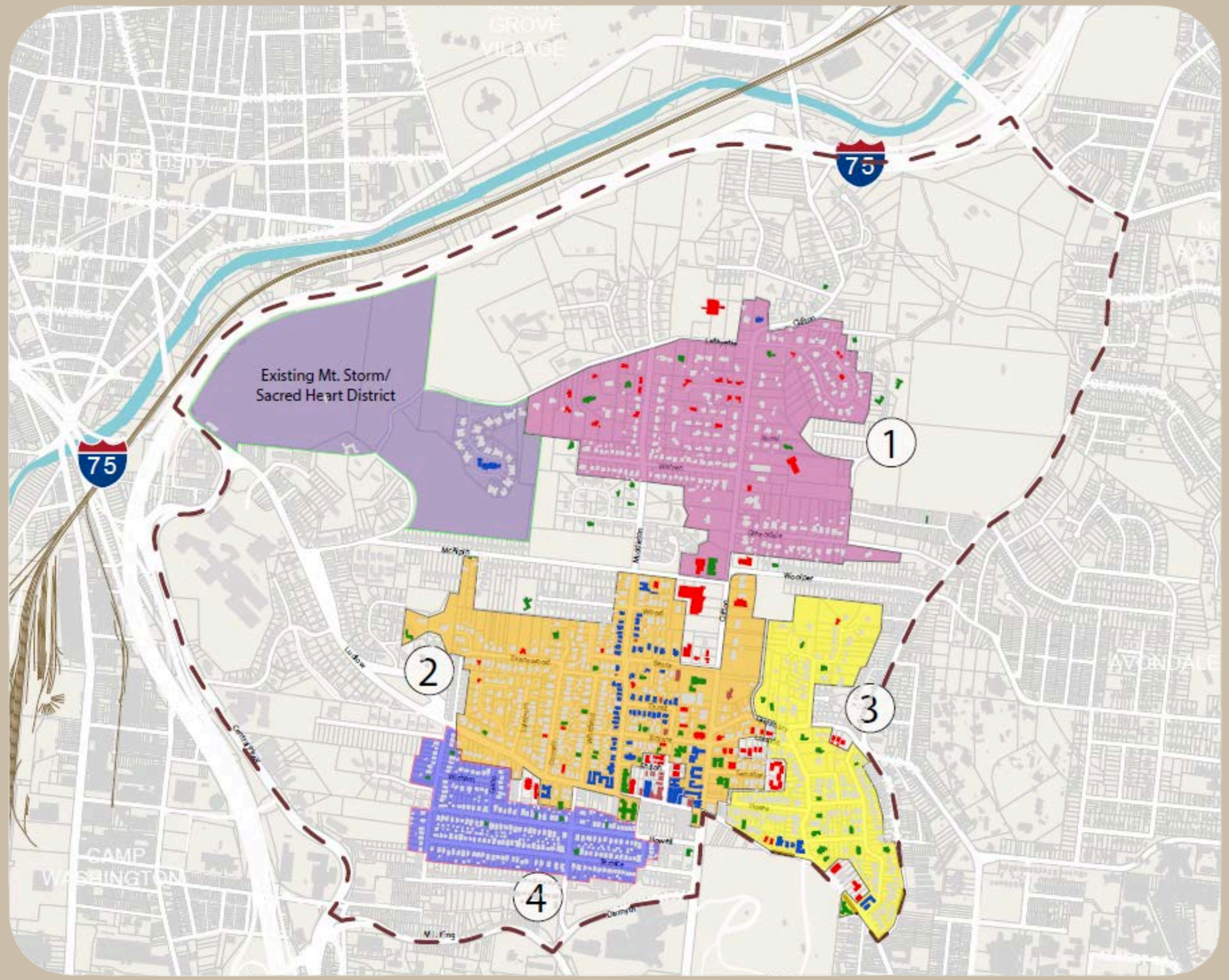
DEFINING BOUNDARIES



1. Historic Boundaries
2. Architectural Survey
3. Type of building- Commercial Building vs Residential
4. Physical Features
5. Officially Surveyed lines
6. Politics



DEFINING BOUNDARIES



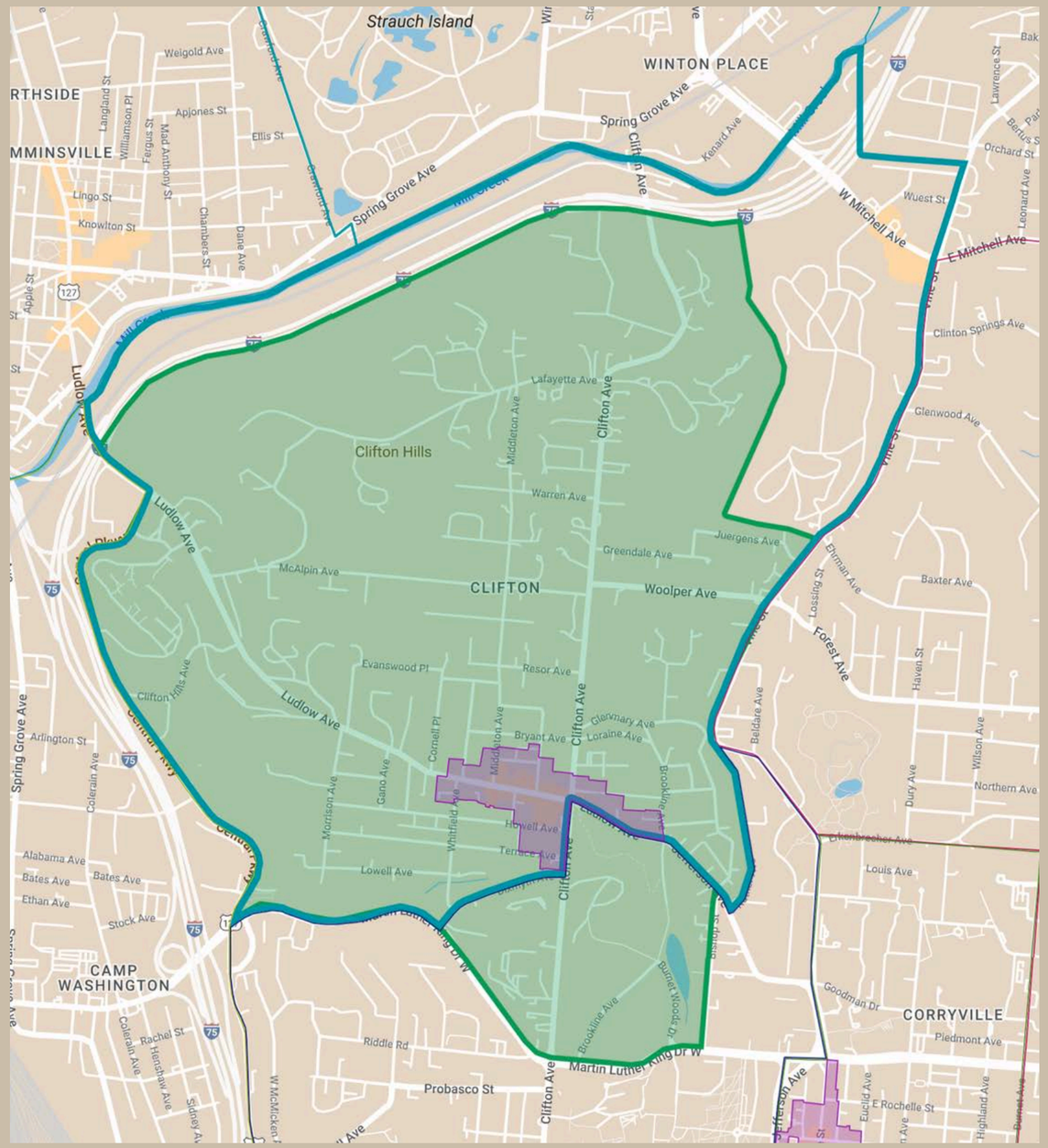
1. Historic Boundaries
2. Architectural Survey
3. Type of building- Commercial Building vs Residential
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Legend

- Registered Ohio Historical Inventory (OHI)
- Other Significant Buildings (DRAFT - only showing a few buildings)
- Non Contributing 1991
- Other Non Contributing (DRAFT - only showing a few buildings)

1. Lafayette - Middleton District
   Large Estates
2. Cornell - Bryant District
   Large Apartments &
   Turn of Century Homes
3. Bishop - Hosea District
   East Side District
4. Howell - Terrace District
   South Side District

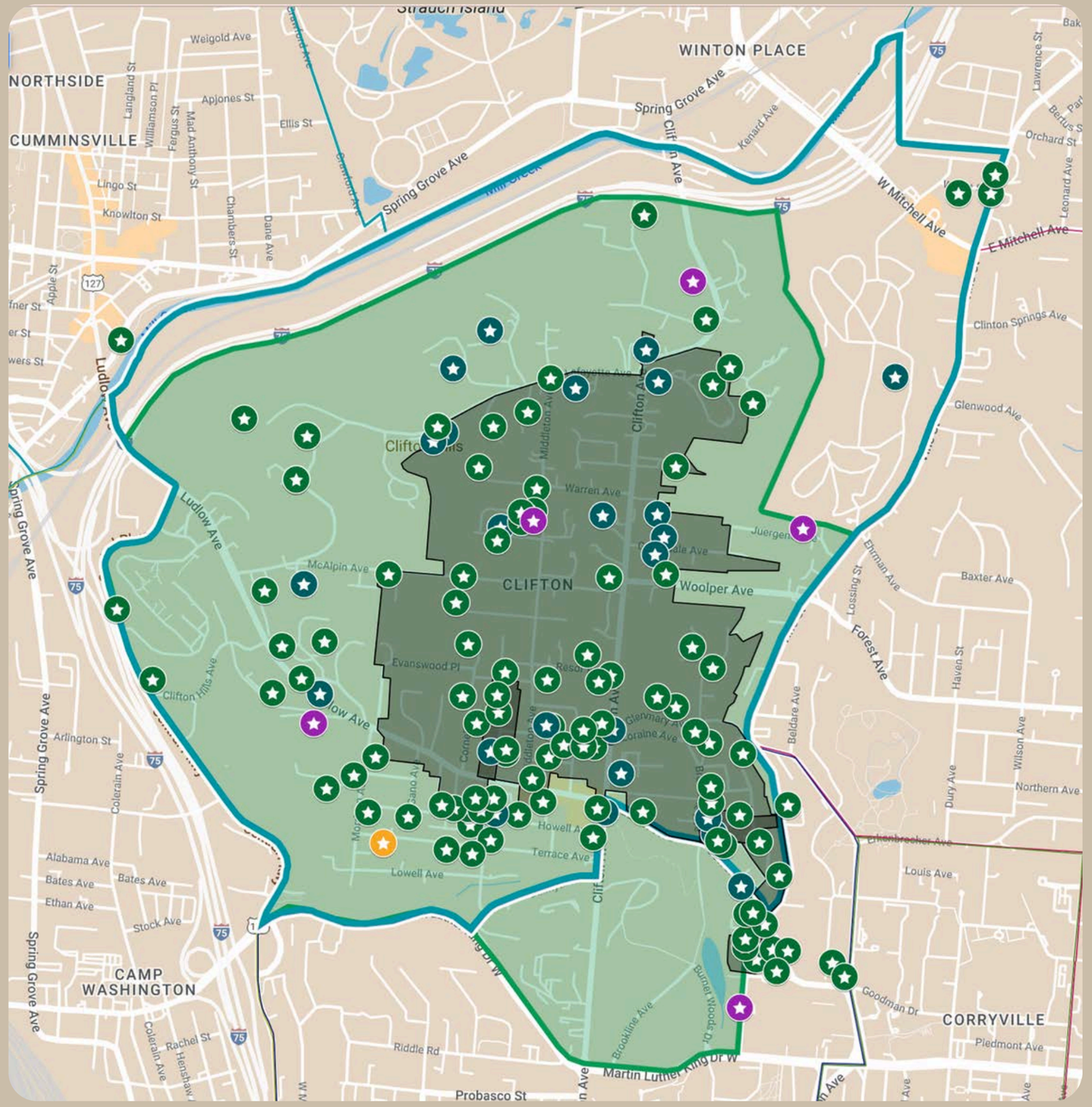
OTHER PROTECTIONS- URBAN DESIGN OVERLAY ZONE

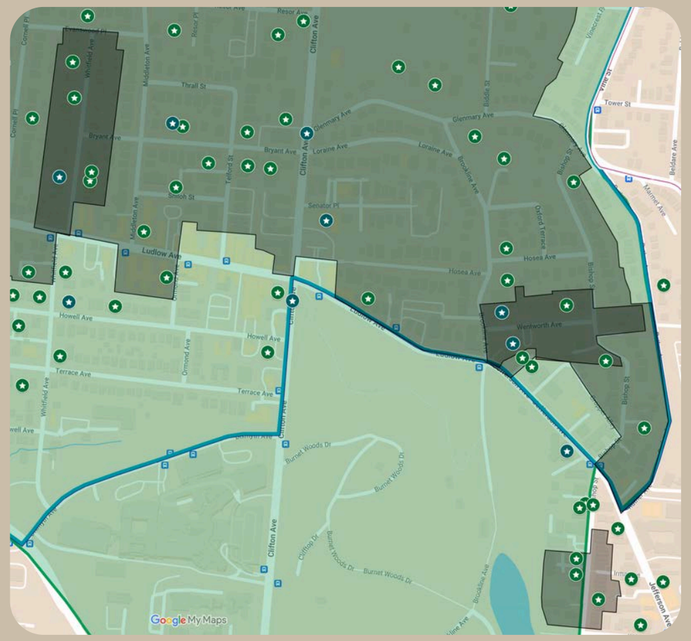


- **Urban Design Overlay Zone**
  - Review of Demolition
    - Non-contributing Building or
    - New building will physically and economically contribute
  - Review of Exterior Changes
    - Must be sympathetic to the building/district
  - Review of New Construction
    - Must match the character of the district

UDO= Physical Characteristics of the District not necessarily if its historic

WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED?

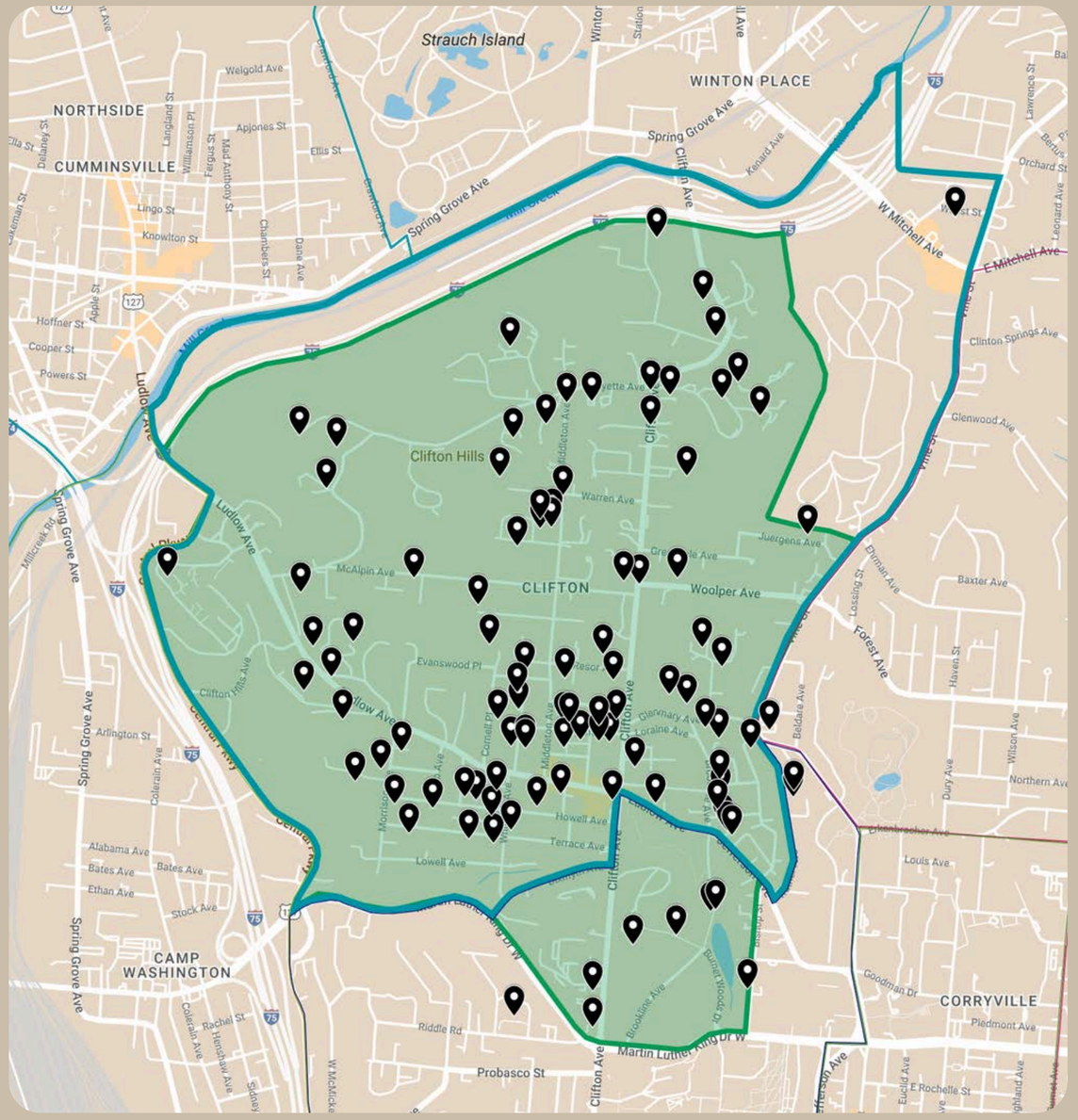




- **Previous City Inventories**
  - 1978 and 2001-2003

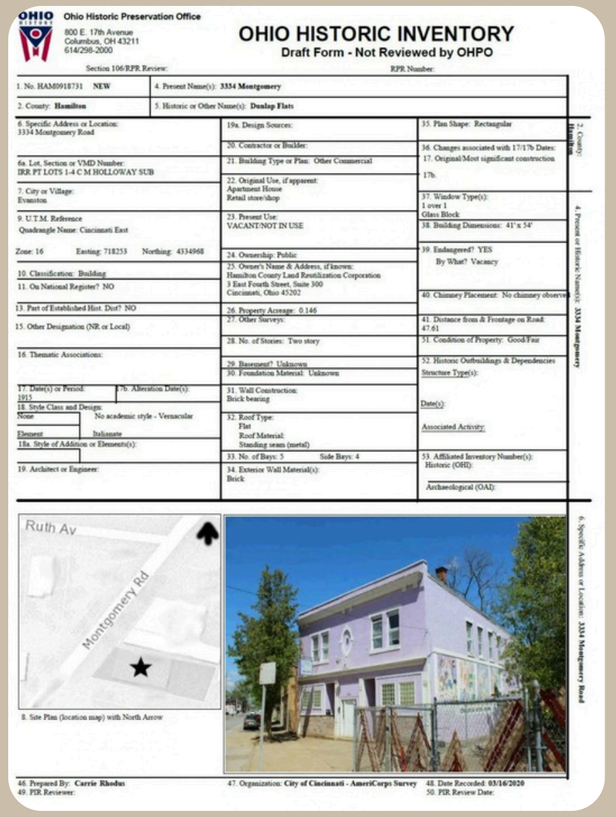
- NR Eligible (111)
- Listed (8)
- Not Eligible (4)
- DEMOLISHED (3)
- Historic Interest (3)

WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED?



Ohio Historic Inventory Forms- 103 sites

- Basic Documentation- No formal findings



Ohio Historic Preservation Office
800 E. 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43211
614/298-2000

OHIO HISTORIC INVENTORY
Draft Form - Not Reviewed by OHPO

Section 106/EPR Review: EPR Number:

1. No. HAM0918731 NEW
2. County: Hamilton
4. Present Name(s): 3334 Montgomery
5. Historic or Other Name(s): Dunlap Flats
6. Specific Address or Location: 3334 Montgomery Road
6a. Lot, Section or VMD Number: IRR PT LOTS 1-4 C M HOLLOWAY SUB
7. City or Village: Evanston
9. U.T.M. Reference: Quadrangle Name: Cincinnati East; Zone: 16 Easting: 718253 Northing: 4334968
10. Classification: Building
11. On National Register? NO
13. Part of Established Hist. Dist? NO
15. Other Designation (NR or Local)
16. Thematic Associations:
17. Date(s) or Period: 1813
17b. Alteration Date(s):
18. Style Class and Design: None — No academic style - Vernacular; Element — Italianate
18a. Style of Addition or Elements(s):
19. Architect or Engineer:
19a. Design Sources:
20. Contractor or Builder:
21. Building Type or Plan: Other Commercial
22. Original Use, if apparent: Apartment House; Retail store/shop
23. Present Use: VACANT/NOT IN USE
24. Ownership: Public
25. Owner's Name & Address, if known: Hamilton County Land Reutilization Corporation; 3 East Fourth Street, Suite 300; Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
26. Property Acreage: 0.146
27. Other Surveys:
28. No. of Stories: Two story
29. Basement? Unknown
30. Foundation Material: Unknown
31. Wall Construction: Brick bearing
32. Roof Type: Flat; Roof Material: Standing seam (metal)
33. No. of Bays: 5 Side Bays: 4
34. Exterior Wall Material(s): Brick
35. Plan Shape: Rectangular
36. Changes associated with 17/17b Dates:
17. Original/Most significant construction
17b.
37. Window Type(s): 1 over 1; Glass Block
38. Building Dimensions: 41'w 54'
39. Endangered? YES; By What? Vacancy
40. Chimney Placement: No chimney observed
41. Distance from & Frontage on Road: 47.61
51. Condition of Property: Good/Fair
52. Historic Outbuildings & Dependencies; Structure Type(s):; Date(s):; Associated Activity:
53. Affiliated Inventory Number(s): Historic (OHI):; Archaeological (OAI):

Ruth Av
Montgomery Rd
8. Site Plan (location map) with North Arrow

46. Prepared By: Carrie Rhodus
47. Organization: City of Cincinnati - AmeriCorps Survey
48. Date Recorded: 03/16/2020
49. PIR Reviewer:
50. PIR Review Date:

2. County: Hamilton
4. Present or Historic Name(s): 3334 Montgomery
6. Specific Address or Location: 3334 Montgomery Road

NEXT STEPS

1. **Volunteers for Historic District Working Group**
2. **Study Boundry Options**
3. **Bring a Recommendtion to the Community Council**

Questions?

Beth Johnson
Cincinnati Preservation Association

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513-246-2046

Sign up to stay informed &
Vote: Are you in favor of a local historic district?