



HOUGH

Cultural Preservation Project

A STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE

Hough Cultural District Public Realm Strategies

04.02.26



**Welcome! Thank you for having a seat with us.
While we wait...**



Invigorate Gallery

**What is something you're
looking forward to in the spring?**

Hough Cultural District Public Real Strategies

AGENDA

- Project Overview and Values
- Where we are and what we've learned
- Initial Strategies
- Discussion
- Next Steps



GOAL FOR TODAY

1. Share initial strategies about the public realm.
2. Gather your thoughts about the strategies.
3. Share next steps towards the Town Hall presentation.

Overview

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Cultural Preservation Project

A STRATEGY FOR PEOPLE AND PLACE

The Hough Cultural Preservation Project: A Strategy for People and Place represents a **groundbreaking approach to neighborhood development**, one that places **Black cultural legacy at the center** of community transformation. Treating preservation as integral to our process, this 15-month project demonstrates how **honoring existing community assets** can drive sustainable economic growth, prevent displacement, and create a **replicable model for culturally-rooted development** nationwide.



Project Values

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Wealth Creation

Encouraging Black-owned businesses to foster economic empowerment and reinvestment in the community.



Sense of Belonging & Identity

Cultivating culturally familiar spaces that connect residents to their heritage.



Self-Actualization & Creativity

Encouraging Black-owned businesses to foster economic empowerment and reinvestment in the community.



Celebration & Historic Significance

Highlighting and honoring Black history through landmarks, public art, and events.



Anti-Displacement:

Ensuring the retention of Black residents, businesses, and cultural elements to prevent displacement and preserve community identity.

DURING OUR SITE TOUR, WE HEARD MANY VISIONS AND DESIRES FOR WHAT THIS CULTURAL DISTRICT COULD BE...

- Connecting 55th Street and E 66th Street.
- Creating Third Spaces for artists, creatives and neighbors.
- Bringing vibrant businesses and activities - at day and night.
- Building generational wealth and uplifting entrepreneurs.
- Showing different flavors, faces and identities of Hough culture.
- Building up community pride, nourishing and healing through art and placemaking.



The **existing conditions analysis** helped us observe and understand a few aspects of the neighborhood...

VACANT LOTS



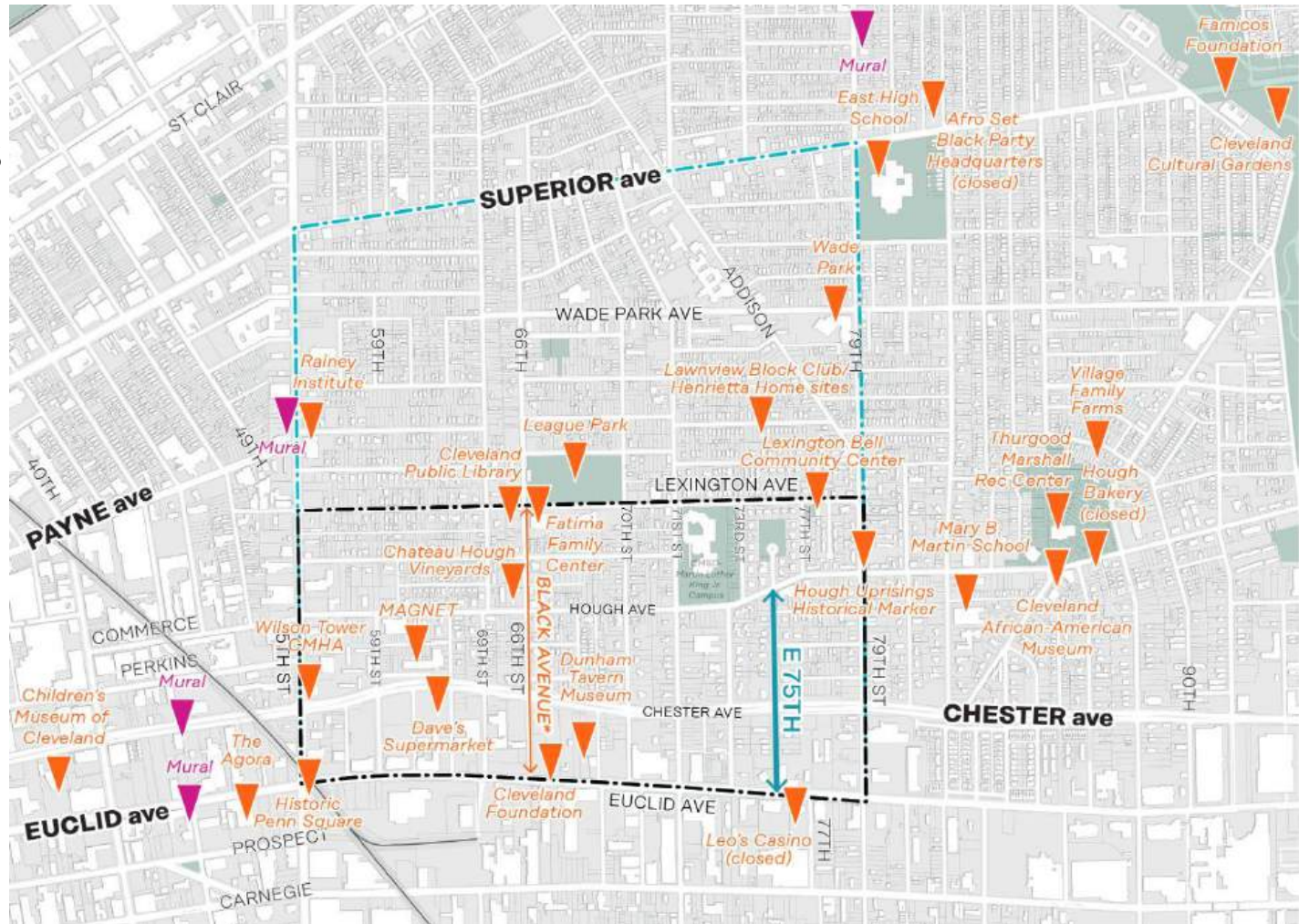
STREET + SIDEWALK
CONDITIONS



PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES



like the wealth
of community
spaces and
partners in the
neighborhood.



...while the **community engagement process** helped us learn your vision, desires and needs as they relate to public spaces:

Increase connectivity and improve infrastructure



Preserve Hough's history and culture in the community's terms



Revitalize community spaces



Support current initiatives as a foundation for long-term growth



This is an important moment to have conversations about the cultural district, as we can rally community partners, institutions, and funding to support neighborhood initiatives and priorities. **Where do we start?**



Midtown Collaboration Center, completed in late 2025

Neighborhood Investments Underway

Public Realm Investments

- Site Readiness Fund for Good Jobs
- 66th Street
- 55th Street

Institutional Investments

- Midtown Innovation District
- Dunham Tavern
- Famicos
- Hough Community Land Trust

Community Investments

- Leo's Casino Collaborative
- Hough Winery
- Invigorate Gallery

Private Investments

- 9410 Hough
- M7 Holdings
- Allen Estates
- Gateway 66

A photograph of a residential street scene. In the foreground, a group of diverse people are gathered on a paved area, some looking towards the camera and others towards the houses. To the left is a two-story grey house with a red-painted porch and white support columns. To the right is a two-story yellow house with a wooden balcony and a fire escape. The background shows more trees and a clear sky.

Public realm strategies help bring to light what the community wishes to see, do, remember, and celebrate what's already here.

“How do we increase the visibility for all the good Hough has to offer?”

“Art and philosophy are building blocks for this kind of renaissance.”

“We’re creating a toolkit of values for any project tied to this vision.”

Our strategies are based on a holistic framework, informed by community engagement and data:



01

Who We Are (People)

Connectivity, Identity, and Storytelling



02

Where We Live (Place)

Infrastructure, Nodes, and Corridors



03

What We Shape (Power)

Governance, Ownership, and Policy



04

How We Thrive (Prosperity)

Commerce, Business, and Wealth Creation

Four Pillars — Twenty Strategies

The Hough Cultural Preservation Project organizes its vision across four interconnected pillars. Each pillar addresses a critical dimension of community transformation and ensures that Hough's residents are the authors, leaders, and primary beneficiaries of the neighborhood's future.

PILLAR 1

People

Who We Are

Build the organizational infrastructure and cultural visibility that make resident leadership durable and self-sustaining.

- PE-01 Resident-Led Cultural Narrative
- PE-02 Youth as Decision-Makers & Ambassadors
- PE-03 Anti-Displacement Protections
- PE-04 Coordinated Community Infrastructure
- PE-05 Cultural Heritage Documentation

PILLAR 2

Place

Where We Live

Make Hough's cultural identity visible and legible in the built environment — through its corridors, anchors, and land.

- PL-01 Hough Avenue as Cultural Connector
- PL-02 Chester Avenue Reconnection
- PL-03 Strengthen Cultural Anchors
- PL-04 Rebuild Pedestrian Network
- PL-05 Vacant Land as Community Assets

PILLAR 3

Power

What We Shape

Build the governance, legal, and financial structures that ensure residents hold decision-making authority over the neighborhood's future.

- PW-01 Strategic Land Acquisition
- PW-02 Resident-Majority Governing Board
- PW-03 Wealth Circulation Partnerships
- PW-04 Organizational Infrastructure
- PW-05 Community Compacts

PILLAR 4

Prosperity

How We Thrive

Ensure that economic returns flow first to residents, entrepreneurs, and homeowners who have held this neighborhood together.

- PR-01 Black Economic Development
- PR-02 Access to Capital
- PR-03 Business Pipelines & Leo's
- PR-04 Homeowner Stabilization
- PR-05 Digital Infrastructure & Brand

PILLAR 2 OF 4

Place

Address physical conditions that improve residents' safety, gathering, and buildings. Hough's cultural should become visible and legible in the corridors, properties, and public lands. Every Place investment should acknowledge the neighborhood as a cultural hub.

"Increasing connectivity, improving infrastructure. That's the one that's huge for me. My wife and I walk the neighborhood."

— KEITH BENFORD

ID	STRATEGY	PRIORITY	TIMELINE
PL-01	Transform Hough Avenue into the Neighborhood Connector Support existing transit and strengthen connections to community assets.	HIGH	12–36 months
PL-02	Reconfigure Chester Avenue to Connect Hough Address physical and social separation through traffic calming, road diet, improved intersections, and adding hundreds missing tree canopy sites.	HIGH	12–48 months
PL-03	Strengthen Cultural Anchors as District Identity Invest in East 66th (activate 3–5 vacant lots for pop-up programming before permanent infrastructure). East 75th (Avenue as a Venue), and Hough Avenue as gathering nodes; install Hough-centric wayfinding and district signage.	CRITICAL	0–36 months
PL-04	Reinvest in Multi-modal Network for Safe Streets Identify and remediate highest-crash intersections; repair broken sidewalks; add pedestrian-scale amenities like lighting, benches, and sheltered bus stops.	CRITICAL	0–24 months
PL-05	Convert Public Lands into Community Assets Transform underutilized Land Bank parcels into community gardens, event spaces, and pocket parks; infill development with cultural identity layer.	HIGH	0–18 months

Let's pause...

01

Are these ideas
**going in the right
direction?**

02

**Is there anything
missing** that we haven't
mentioned yet?

Please let us know in the chat!

Let's take a look at these

STRATEGIES

in practice

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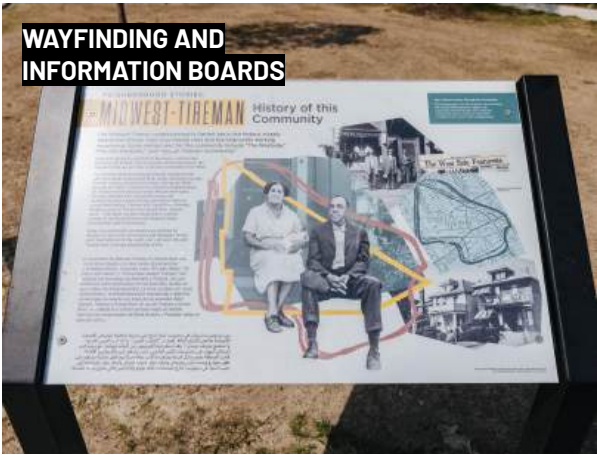
Different strategies may show up in different ways to reach these community priorities and desired outcomes:

CONNECT	CREATE VIBRANCY	INVEST IN COMMUNITY ASSETS
<i>through</i>	<i>through</i>	<i>through</i>
Bus shelters	Pop-up markets and fairs	Vacant lot activation:
Traffic calming	Cultural performances and events	- Cleaning and greening (fence/dumping removal, tree removal, mowing)
Road and path resurfacing	Pedestrian and event amenities (seating, shade, trash and recycling cans, performance stages)	- Soil preparation (terrain regrading, soil amendment, canopy elevation and thinning)
Street trees + tree care	Intergenerational programming	- Sidewalk restoration
Curb extensions	Temporary gathering spaces	
Pedestrian lighting	Public Art	Community and open spaces
Cultural Wayfinding + Signage	Facade Improvements	- Play and exercise infrastructure
Public Art (expand?)		- Green infrastructure
Stormwater infrastructure		- Community gardens
Multimodal infrastructure		
Trash and recycling cans		Infill development

What does it mean to **CONNECT**?



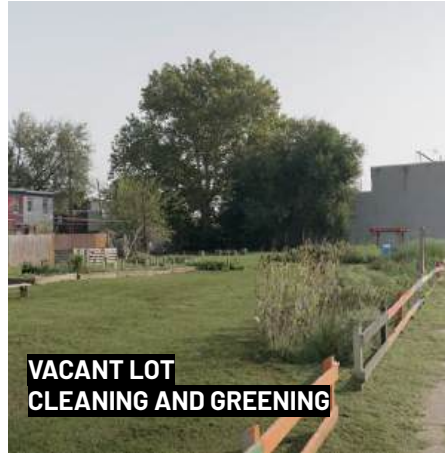
What does it mean to RECONNECT?



What does it mean to **CREATE VIBRANCY?**



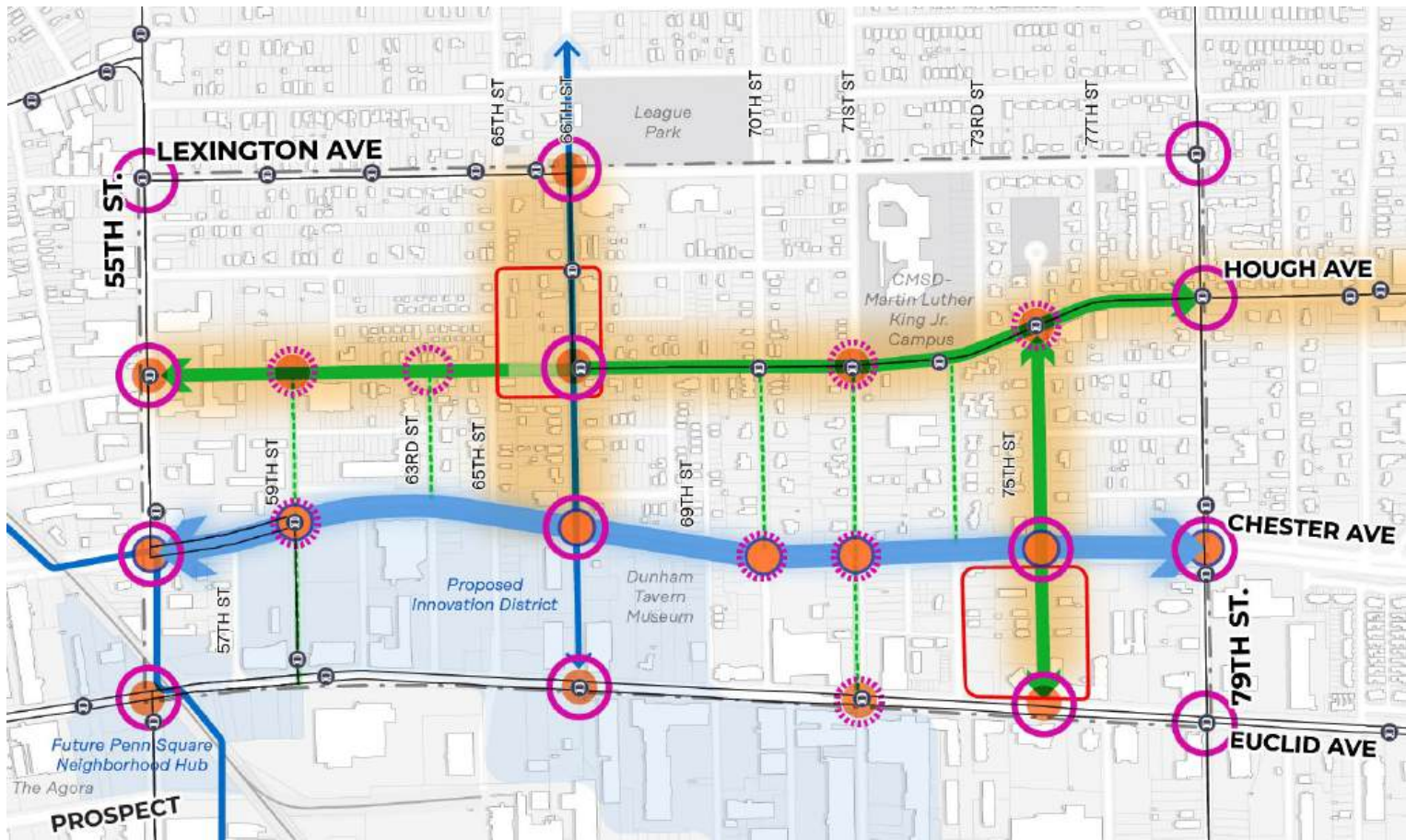
What does it mean to INVEST IN COMMUNITY ASSETS?



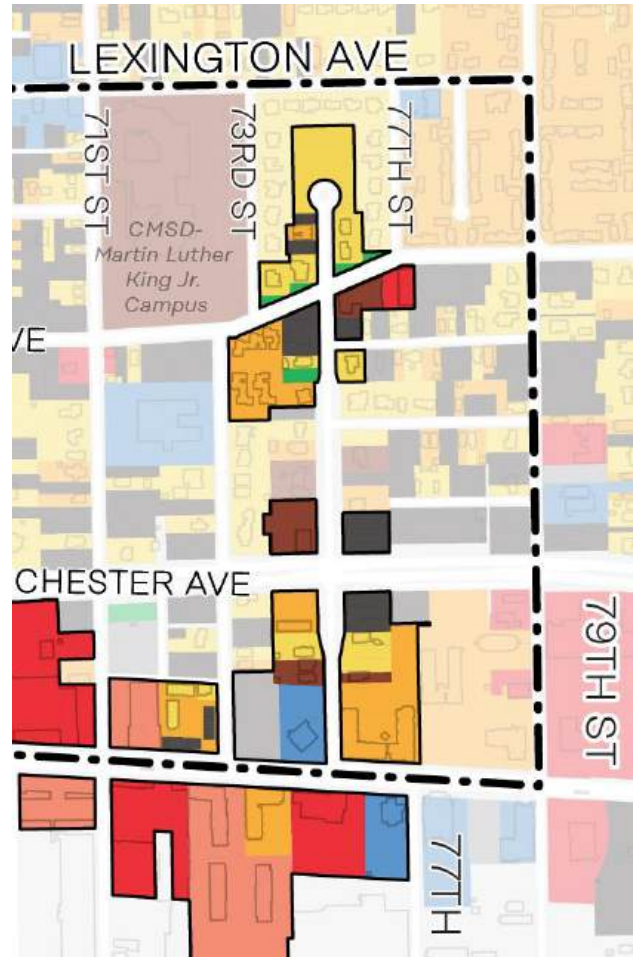
Where do we **CONNECT** – **CREATE VIBRANCY** – **INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY**?

OPPORTUNITIES

-  Focus Area
-  GCRTA Bus Routes
-  Major streetscape improvements
-  Local green connectors
-  Connect Chester Avenue
-  Key Intersection Safety Improvements
-  Cultural wayfinding and signage
-  Community Activation
-  Areas for community investment

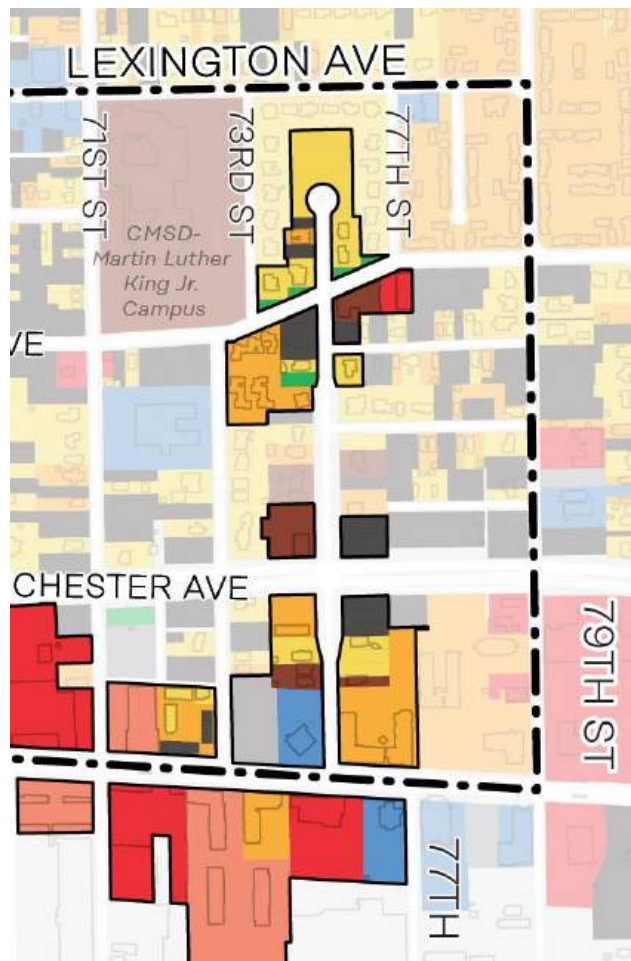


75th street has a different character North and South of Chester Avenue:



- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| Single Family Residential | Parks and Open Space |
| Multifamily Residential | Community Garden |
| Commercial and Office | Vacant Land |
| Mixed Use | Vacant Building |
| Institutional | Transportation and Utilities |
| Industrial/Manufacturing | Parking |

75th street has a different character North and South of Chester Avenue:



75th Street

The historic home of Leo's. This spine is targeted for development as a flagship creative economy anchor, focusing on arts, music, and cultural production.

Leo's Casino Corridor: 75th Street at Chester and Euclid

This is where James Brown played. Where Aretha Franklin played. Where Otis Redding and Sam Cooke performed for Black Cleveland when no downtown venue would have them. The legacy of Leo's Casino is not a memory to be honored in a plaque. It is a future to be built in a functioning creative and cultural economy. Ron Fuqua holds existing site control. The Democracy Collaborative is structuring community ownership. The Ohio Cultural Facilities Commission capital grant is the primary funding target. With 21 parcels and the highest concentration of Land Bank-available properties between 73rd and 75th Streets, this corridor has the land, the legacy, and the organizational momentum to become the most significant creative economy anchor in Cleveland's Black community.

District Imperative: *Celebration and Historic Significance: the legacy of Leo's Casino is a future, not a memory.*

There is a strong community desire to see 75th Street become a cultural hub or campus. **Where are the opportunities?**



- Community Projects
- Community Activation Areas
- Land Assets
- Open Space Assets

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- Events and Performances
- Vendors
- Gathering Space
- Bikeline and Bike Infrastructure
- Pedestrian Path
- Playground with Shade
- Community Garden
- Bus Shelter
- Mobility Hub
- Wayfinding
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- Public Art or Community Exhibit

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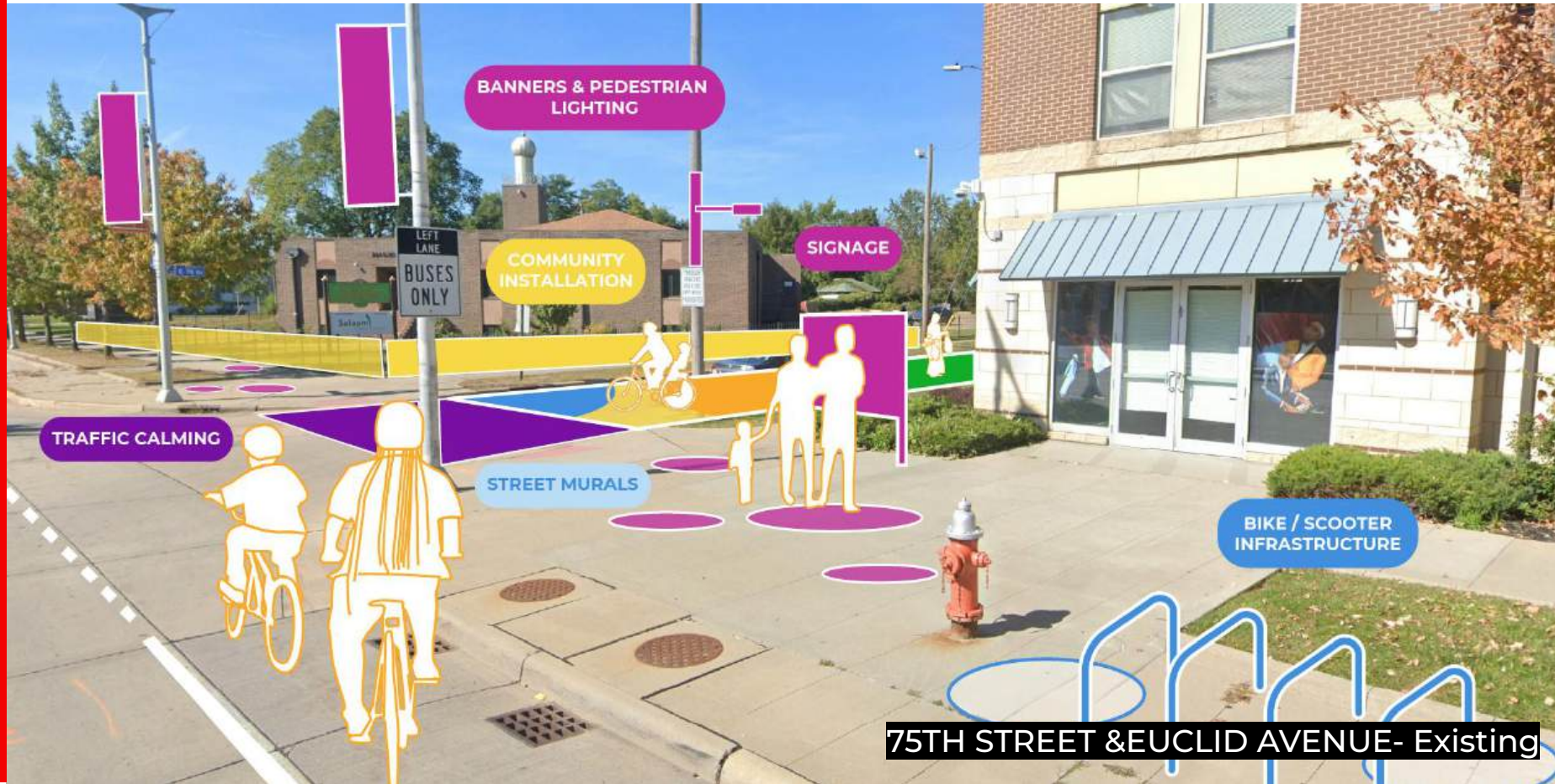
-  Community Projects
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This is how some public realm strategies can work together to support Leo's Casino and 75th Street as a community anchor.



75TH STREET & EUCLID AVENUE- Existing

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75TH STREET - Existing
From Euclid to Hough Avenues

This is how some public realm strategies can work together to support Leo's Arts and Music Collaboratory and 75th Street as a community anchor.

BANNERS & PEDESTRIAN LIGHTING

TREE PRUNING & SIDEWALK REPAIR

TRAFFIC-CALMING

PROGRAMMING ON THE PORCHES

SEATING & SHADE

EVENT SIGNAGE

SEATING

SIDEWALK REPAIR

STREET MURALS

OUTDOOR VENDING

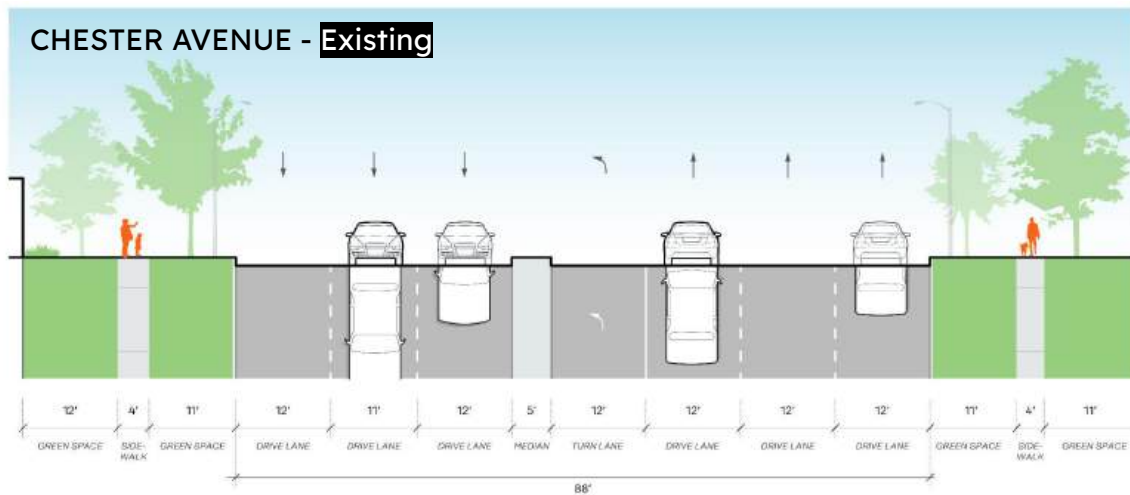
75TH STREET - Initial Ideas
From Euclid to Hough Avenues



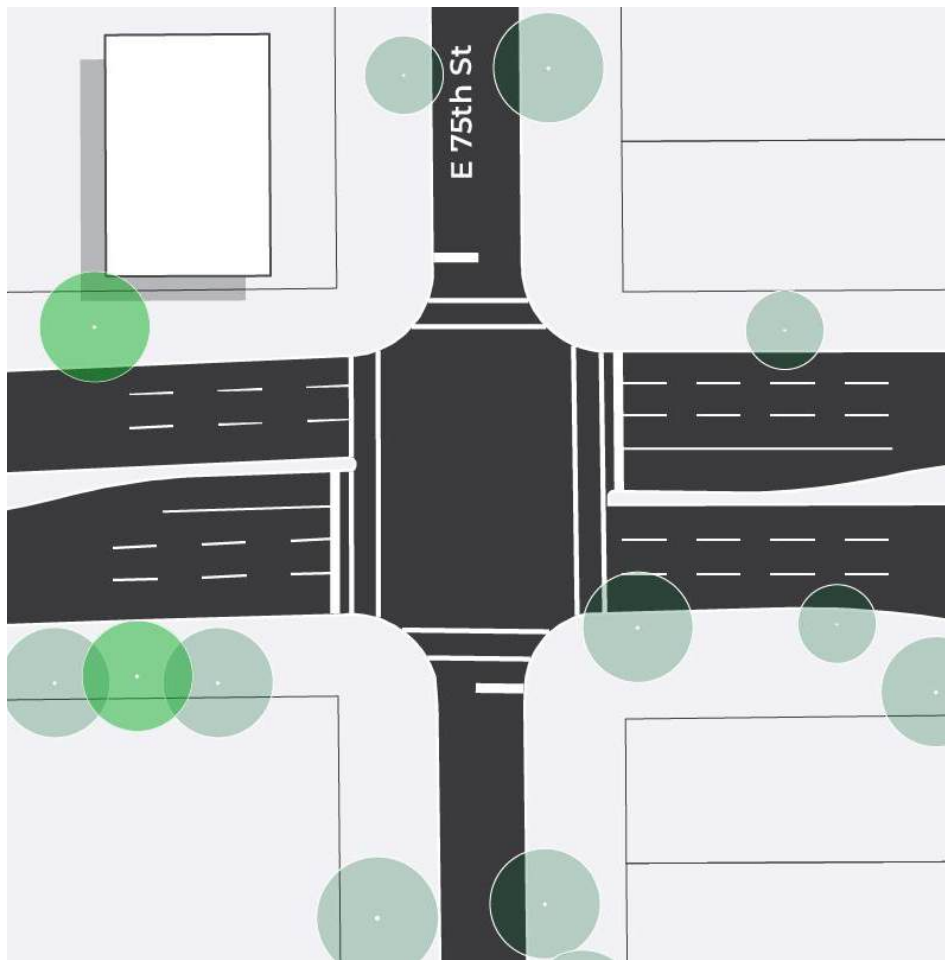
Let's continue walking on
75th Street.

Chester has historically and
physically divided the
community, and has been
addressed before in previous
plans.

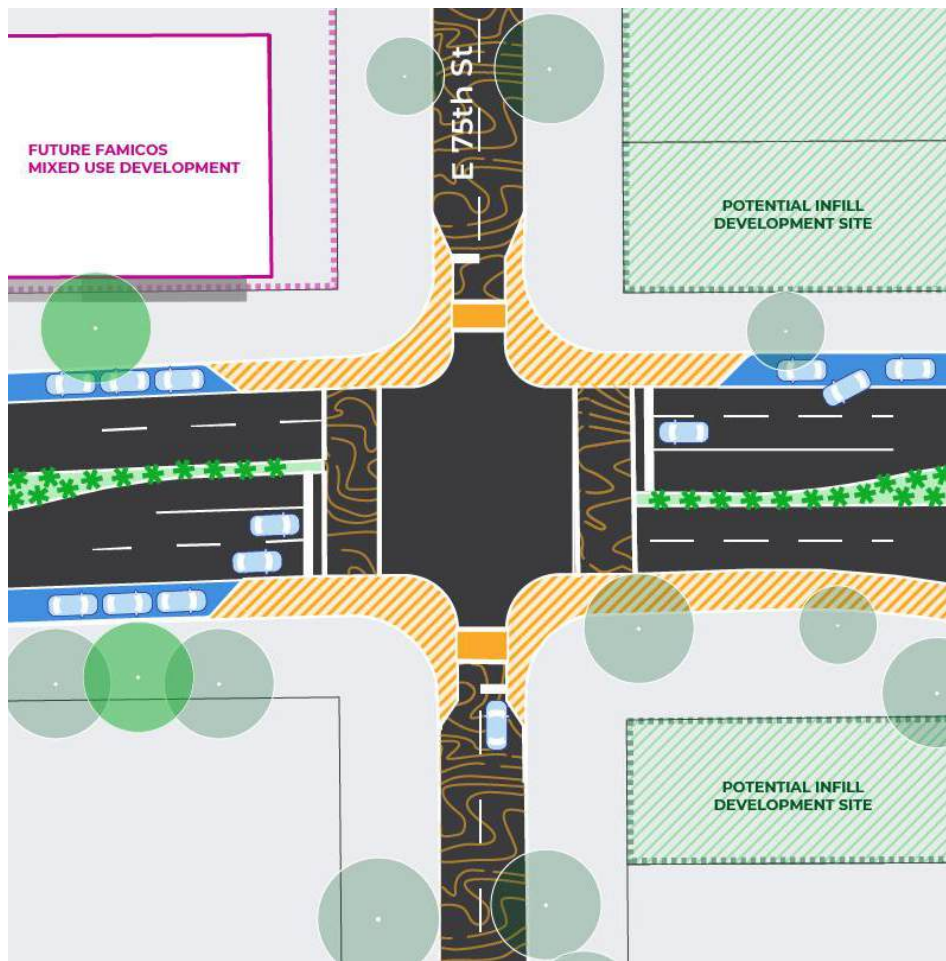
How can we move forward
in addressing it?



CHESTER AVE & 75th STREET - Existing Intersection



CHESTER AVE & 75th STREET - Proposed Intersection



This is how some accessibility and placemaking strategies can work together to reconnect the areas North and South of Chester Avenue at every intersection.



CHESTER AVE. - Existing

This is how some accessibility and placemaking strategies can work together to reconnect the areas North and South of Chester Avenue at every intersection.



CHESTER AVE. - Short-term strategies

This is how some accessibility and placemaking strategies can work together to reconnect the areas North and South of Chester Avenue at every intersection.



Let's poll...

01

Where do you think
**we could begin on
75th Street?**

02

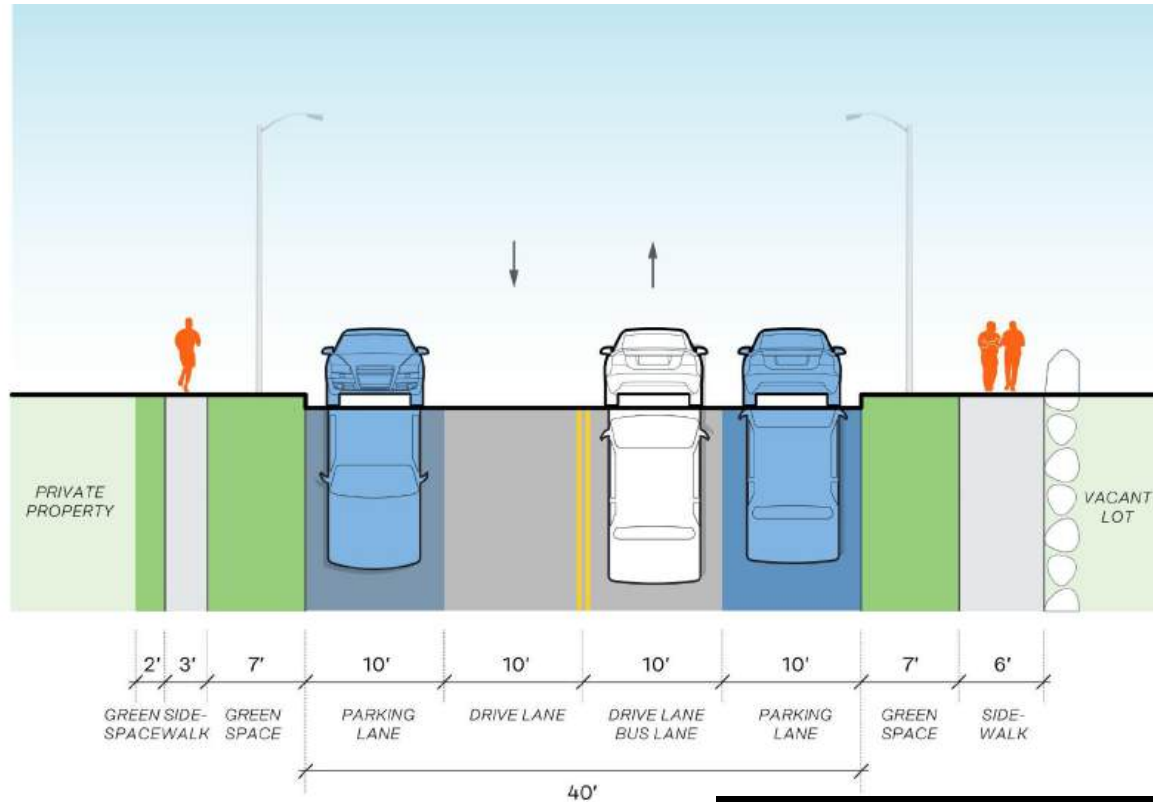
What do you think
could be a **barrier?**

Please let us know in the chat!

We've reached Hough Avenue, a key East-West neighborhood corridor that supports transit and connects multiple community assets. How can we bring it to the forefront?

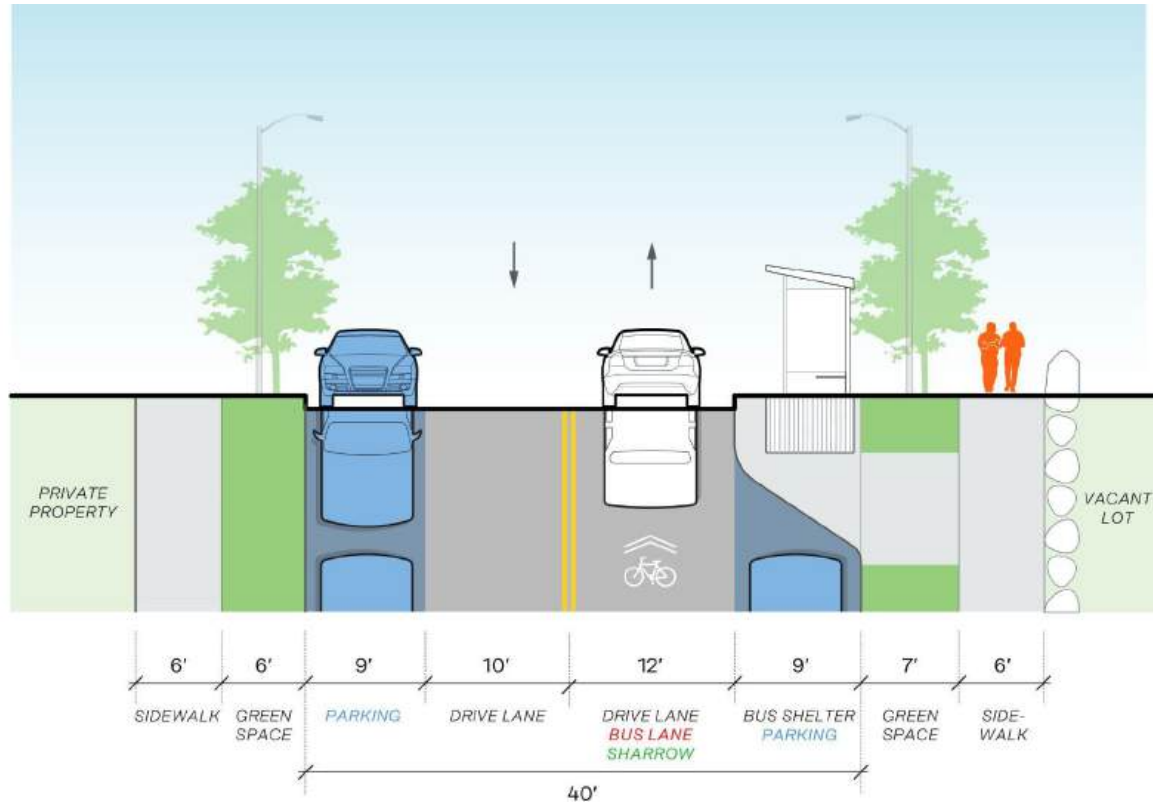


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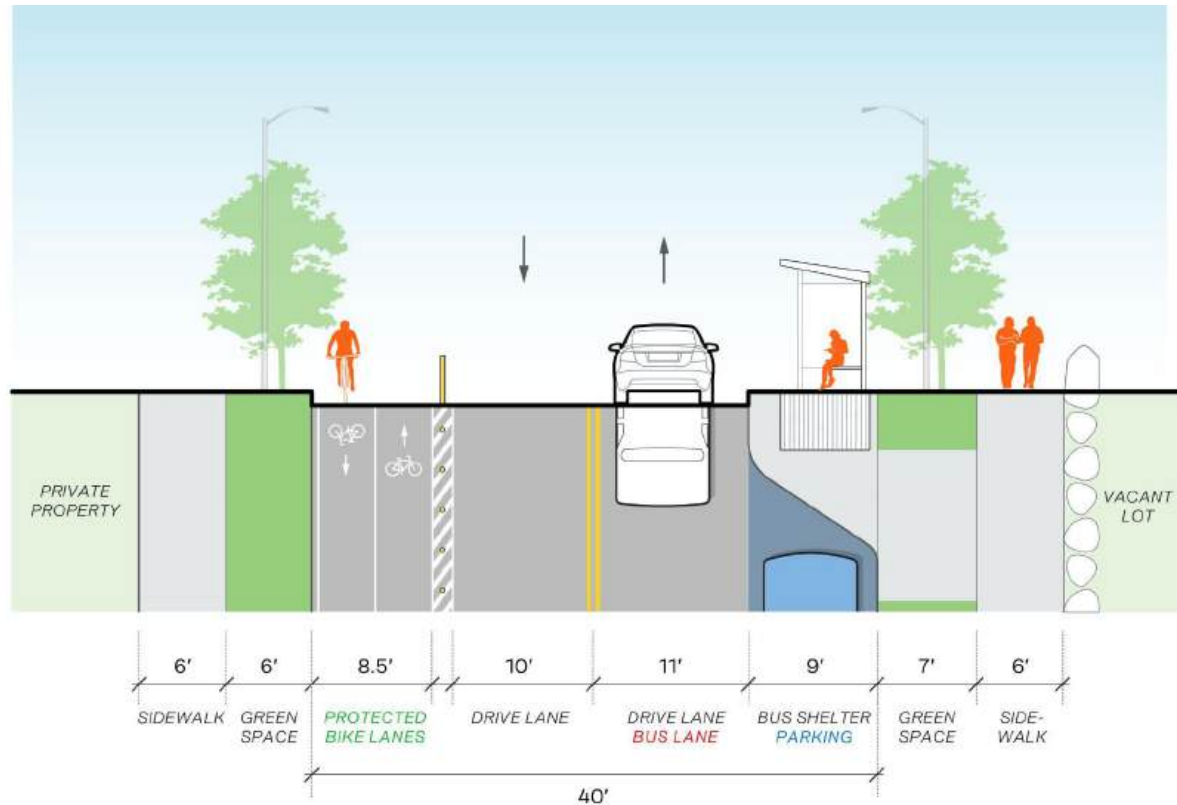
HOUGH AVE. - Existing Street Section

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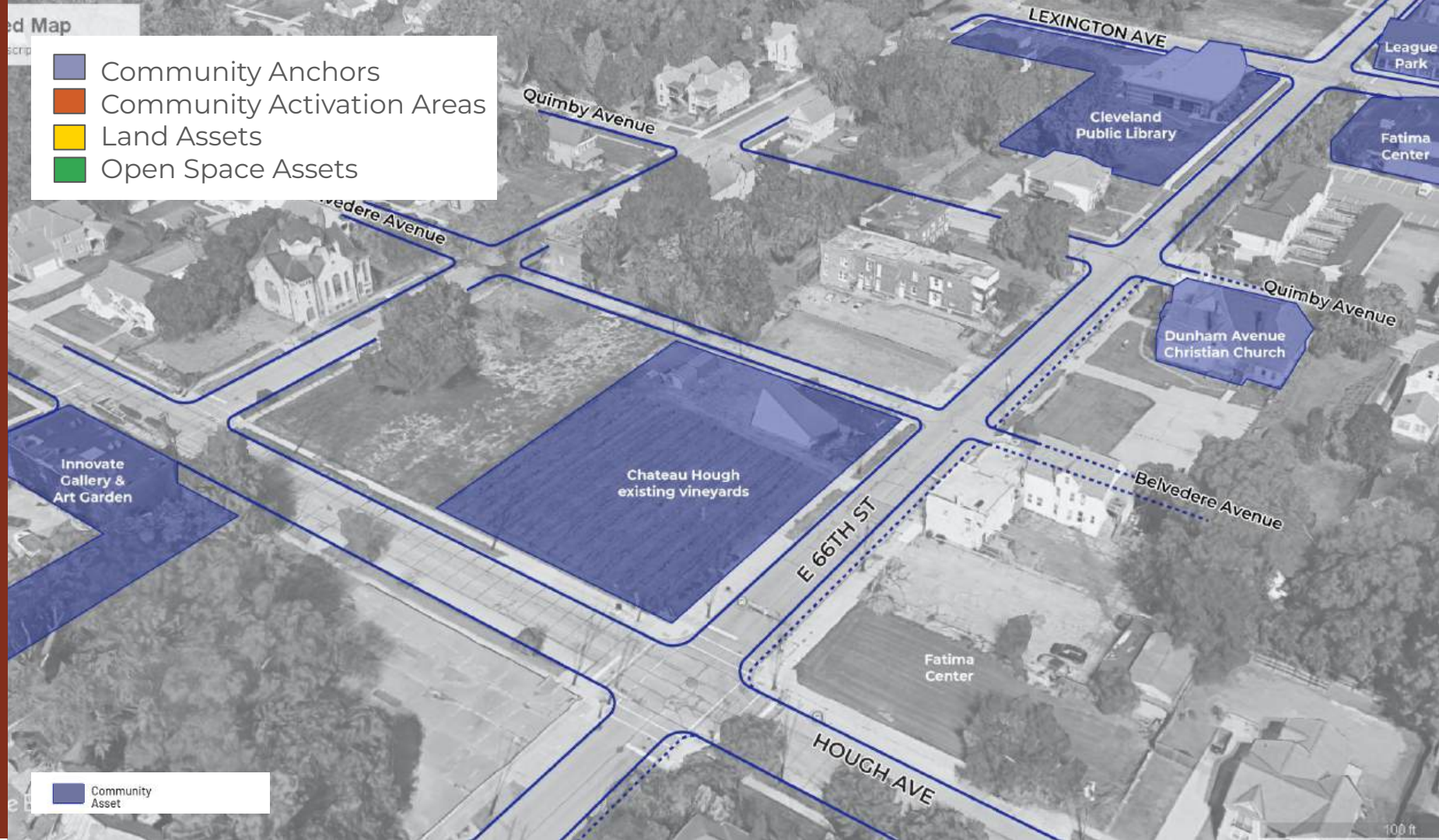
HOUGH AVE. - Proposed: Sharrow

Hough Avenue is a key east–west neighborhood corridor that supports transit and connects multiple community assets. **How can we bring it to the forefront?**



HOUGH AVE. - Proposed: Separated Bike Lane

- Community Anchors
- Community Activation Areas
- Land Assets
- Open Space Assets



Innovate
Gallery &
Art Garden

Chateau Hough
existing vineyards

Cleveland
Public Library

Dunham Avenue
Christian Church

Fatima
Center

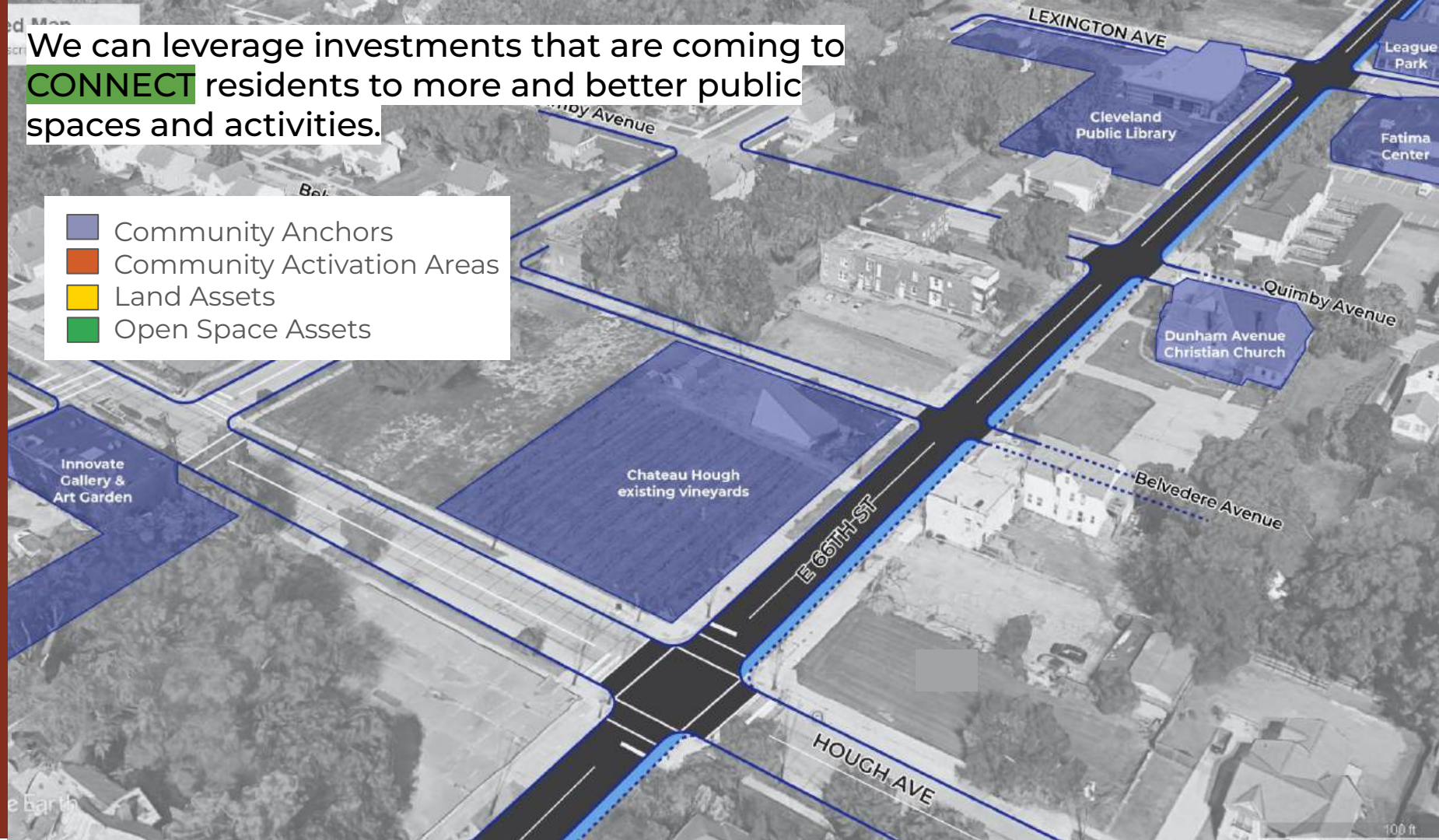
League
Park

Fatima
Center

Community
Asset

We can leverage investments that are coming to **CONNECT** residents to more and better public spaces and activities.

- Community Anchors
- Community Activation Areas
- Land Assets
- Open Space Assets



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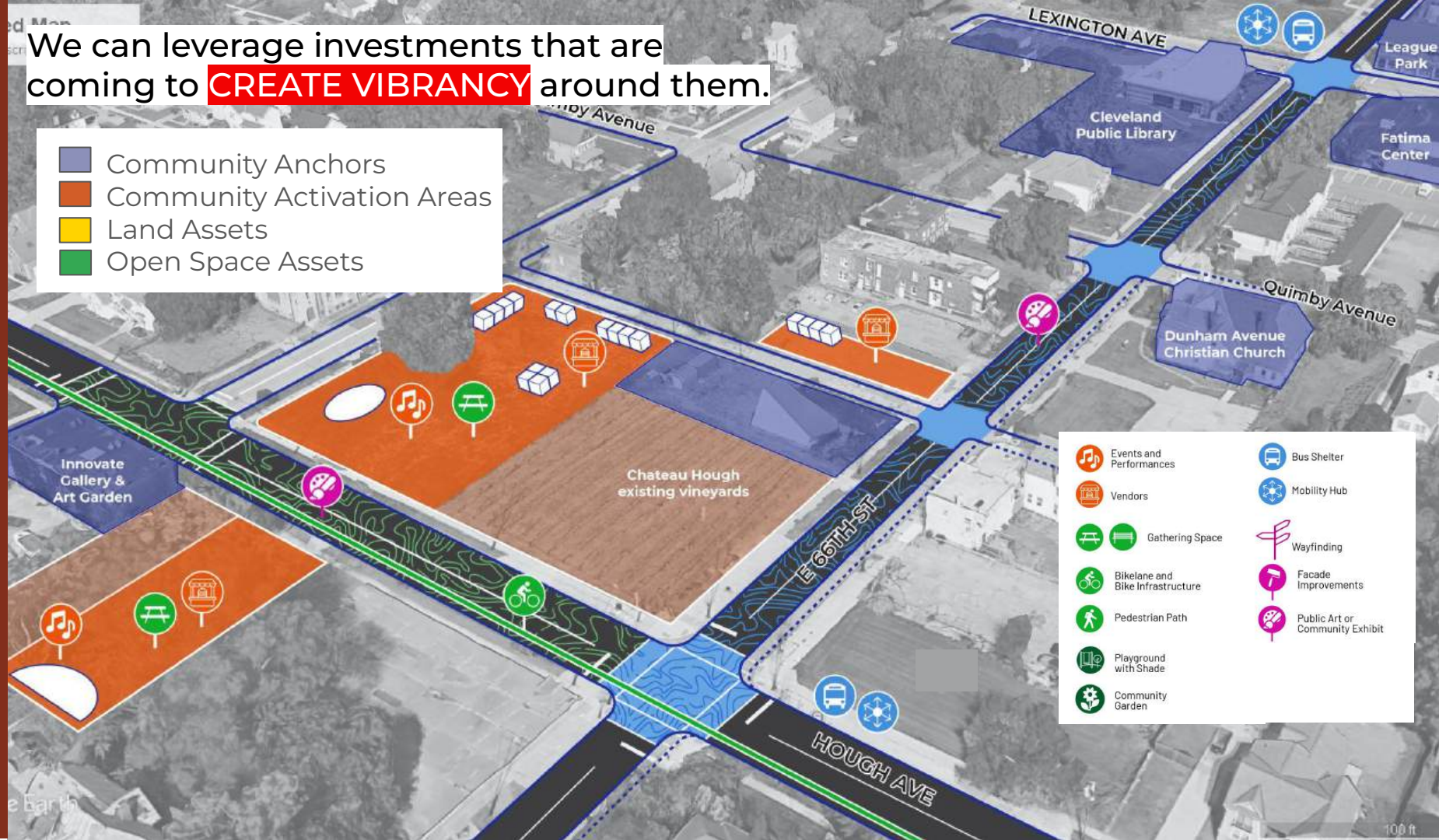
- Community Anchors
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- Events and Performances
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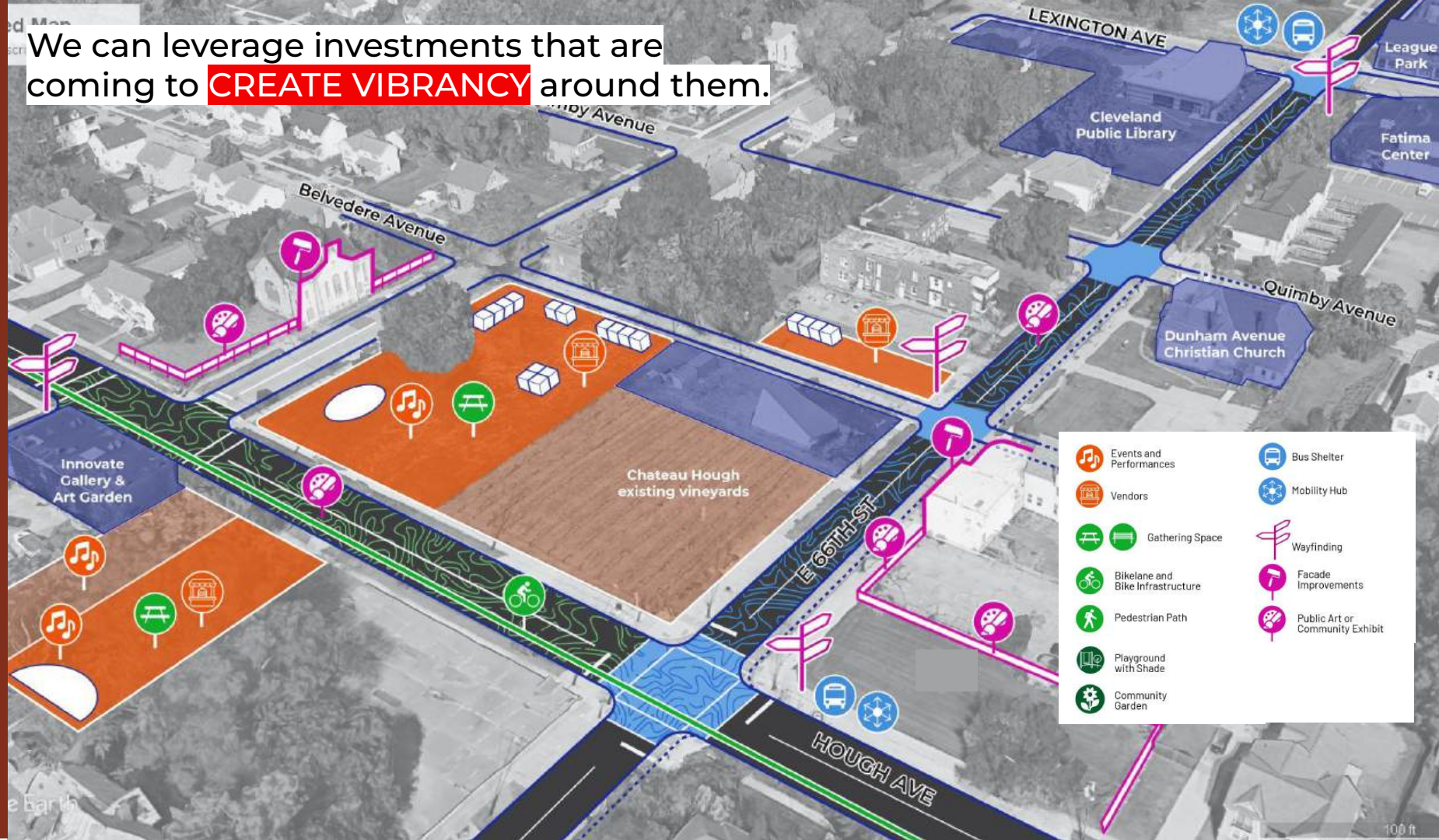
We can leverage investments that are coming to **CREATE VIBRANCY** around them.

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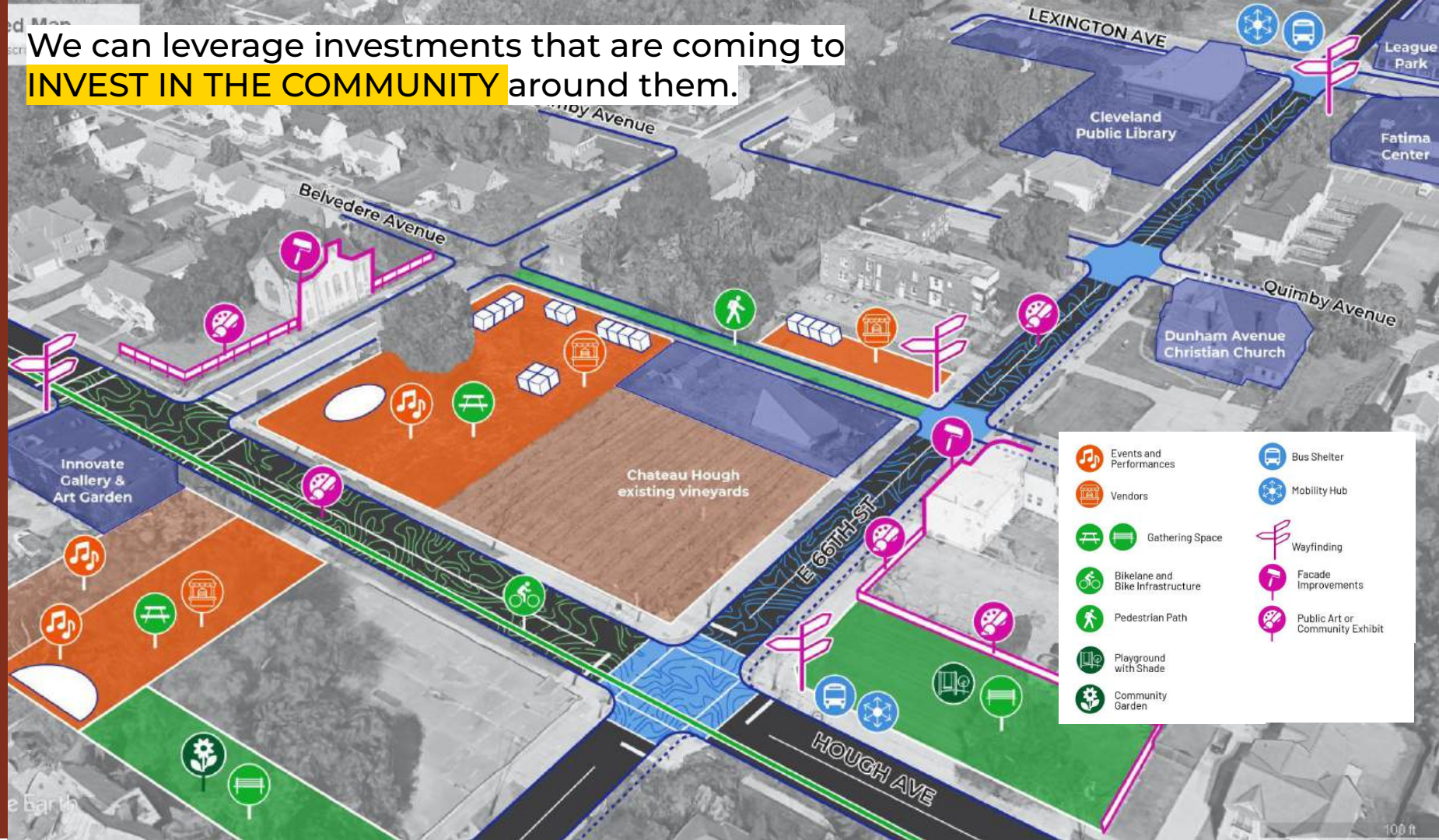


- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Events and Performances | Bus Shelter |
| Vendors | Mobility Hub |
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We can leverage investments that are coming to **CREATE VIBRANCY** around them.



We can leverage investments that are coming to
INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY around them.



- | | |
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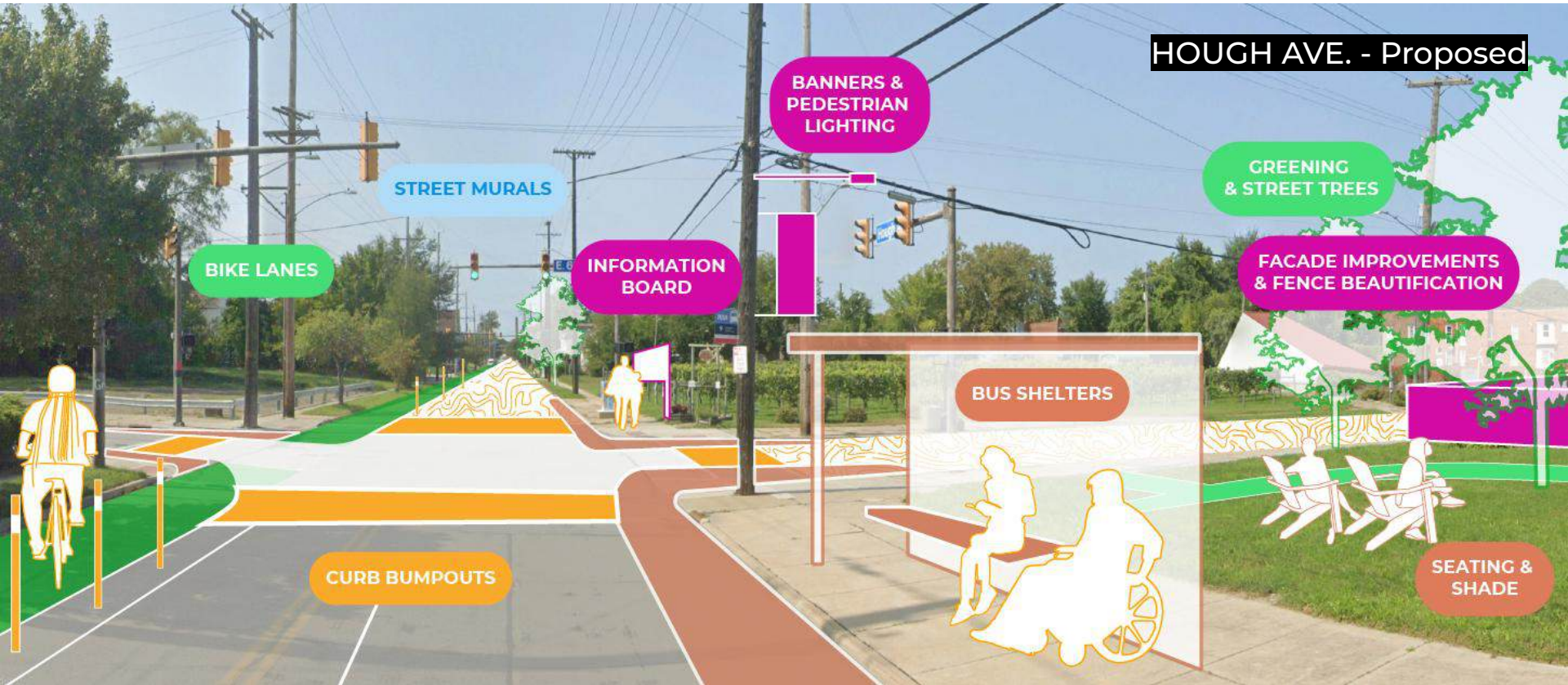
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This is how some accessibility and placemaking strategies can work together to make Hough Avenue a true neighborhood connector and support 66th Street as a community anchor.



HOUGH AVE. - Existing

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Let's pause...

POLL:

After seeing these ideas in practice:

Which strategy makes
you excited?
Give it a thumbs up!

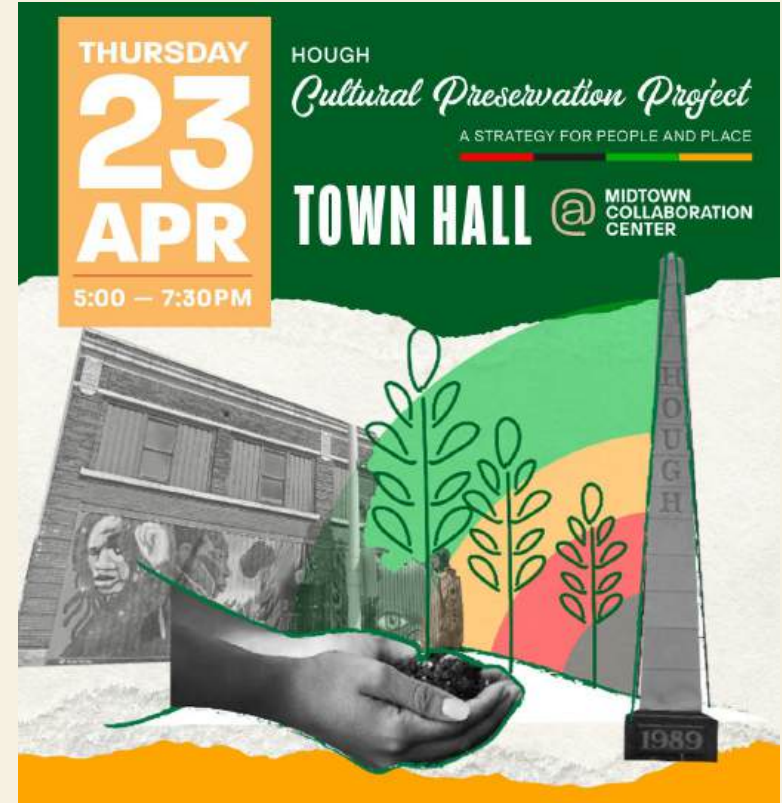
Is there any that might
not be a good fit?
Add a thumbs down.

You can let us know why/why not in the chat.

Looking Ahead

UP NEXT:

- **APRIL 23:**
In-person town hall meeting.
- **MAY-JUNE:**
Development of final report.





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THANK YOU!