



CITY OF CLEVELAND

MIDTOWN-HOUGH CONNECTOR PROJECT



Project Name MidTown-Hough Connector Project

Project Type Urban Capital Project: Road-Complete Streets

Total Project Costs \$20.77M

2021 RAISE Funds Requested \$15.64M

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Supporting Information can be found at:

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/midtown-hough-connector-raise/>



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I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Cleveland (herein referred to as the City), Ohio, is submitting this application to the United States Department of Transportation’s (USDOT) 2021 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program for \$15.64 million in discretionary grant funds for its MidTown-Hough Connector Project (herein referred to as the Project). The total future eligible cost of the project is \$19.55 million and the City and its partners are committed to match funds in the amount of \$3.91 million.

The Project is designated as Urban and focuses on East 66th street, an approximately 1-mile-long corridor bound by US Highway 6 (Superior Avenue) to the north and US Highway 20 (Euclid Avenue) to the south (Figure 1). RAISE funding will be used to realize the community’s shared vision to reimagine and improve the East 66th corridor, an essential but crumbling infrastructure link, into a safe and accessible multimodal connector that bridges the neighborhoods of Hough and MidTown in Cleveland. The Project will create significant local and regional impact, relative to RAISE merit criteria, with an inclusive, resident driven approach that tears down barriers to opportunity, advances racial equity, addresses environmental injustice, and respects community history and heritage at every stage in the process.

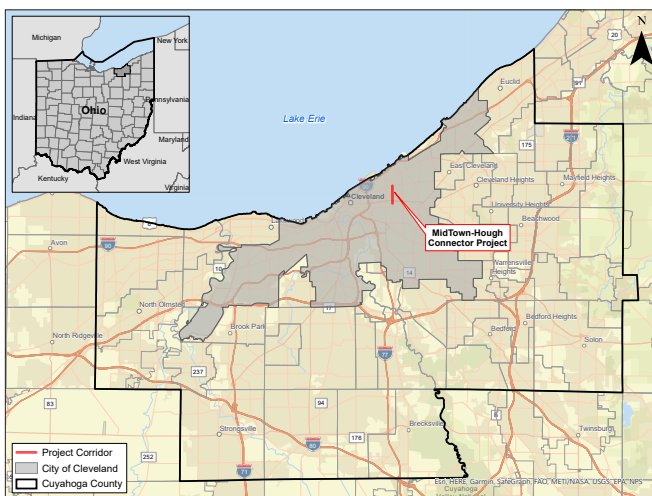
“Create a national model public space that emphasizes seamless connectivity and accessibility – promoting physical, social and technological links – with an underlying commitment to justice and equity.”

The Project will improve the one-mile corridor by implementing the street-scape recommendations co-designed by underrepresented and underserved community residents and youth during an intensive engagement process suc-

cessfully conducted through the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal is to **create significant local and regional impact** with an innovative new typology for neighborhood street design that employs **advances in technology**, improves **safety and accessibility**, and **addresses neighborhood challenges** through a **resident-driven and community-responsive process**. The City intends to replicate this model in infrastructure projects throughout Cleveland.

East 66th Street must be improved to provide safer access to economic opportunities, major destinations, and neighborhoods assets such as the Dunham Tavern Museum (the oldest building in Cleveland built originally in 1824 on the grounds of a large open-to-the-public park), the upcoming headquarters of The Cleveland Foundation (TCF) (the oldest community foundation and Cleveland’s largest philanthropic institution), the HealthLine bus-rapid transit line (offering quick public transit service to major employment hubs of downtown and University Circle), and community educational centers such as the upcoming Hough branch of Cleveland Public Library, Fatima Family Center (Roman Catholic social service facility founded in 1970), and the historic baseball field League Park (former home to the Cleveland Indians and the Negro League Cleveland Buckeyes) among others. Despite its world class assets, East 66th Street is barely passable on foot

Figure 1 Project Overview



and the conditions of the road and streetscape are inexcusably poor – this Project is essential in creating safe and easy access to the many assets on the corridor.

East 66th Street is classified as a major collector by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) and carries an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) of 790. It is important to note that the traffic volumes on the major east-west highways bisecting East 66th Street are much higher and leads to significant safety concerns specially for vulnerable roadway users. The AADT on Chester Avenue, Superior Avenue, and Euclid Avenue are 35,500, 16,913, and 5,591, respectively. **The Project is in four census tracts and three of these tracts are designated as Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP). As demonstrated in this application, the Project will provide direct benefits to these APP.** The majority (84.6 percent) of area residents are underserved communities comprising of low-income families and communities of color. The Project is in the vicinity of the [68th worst polluting industrial facility](#) in the United States, MPC Plating Inc. Another site, a [brownfield](#) at the former Key Gas Components facility (currently remediated) is located at 1966 East 66th Street and is within the project limits. East 66th Street has been subjected to years of systemic racial, economic, and environmental injustices which has led to a poor state of infrastructure, disinvestment and lack of development, and ongoing safety issues in the Hough neighborhood.

This Project aims to remedy these failures to enforce environmental laws and the resulting adverse public health affects through community-led sustainable design by leveraging the renewed interest and investments in the corridor. The proposed Project bisects the Cleveland Health-Tech Corridor (HTC), one of Cleveland’s most important economic development districts, connecting Cleveland Clinic, Case Western Reserve University, University Hospitals, and Cleveland State University. Real estate investment in the Health-Tech Corridor totals \$5.2 billion since 2008, the majority coming on either end of the Corridor in downtown Cleveland and University Circle.

The Project provides neighborhood residents and community partners with a voice to ensure their East 66th Street infrastructure project is rebuilt to address their needs and their specifications.

The Project, which connects to the center of the HTC, will further leverage the more than \$300 million invested in redevelopment in the MidTown neighborhood in the middle of the HTC over the past ten years. It will provide a physical and economic connection between the Hough and MidTown neighborhoods and most importantly connect neighborhood residents to vital economic opportunities through new and ongoing catalytic investments (detailed in Section IV, part 4).

[Photographs](#) and [video](#) of the corridor reflect the current mobility challenges and poor infrastructural conditions of East 66th Street. An interview with Keith and Sylvia Benford, East 66th Street residents for 20 years can be found [here](#).

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The project team conducted a comprehensive evaluation of the current infrastructural challenges and identified the following improvements to be of utmost importance to the community:

- Redeveloping East 66th Street with a focus on establishing it as a “Black Avenue” to actively address the systemic racial and environmental injustices and provide economic opportunities to underserved communities in the neighborhood.
- Improving the existing condition of the pavement, which is rated poor and needs reconstruction to improve safety and mobility along the corridor. Fifty two percent of area residents travel to work by car while 48 percent of the community depends on multimodal transit. More information about the existing pavement condition for East 66th Street can be found [here](#).
- Restoring pedestrian connections by addressing [discontinuous and/or partially missing sidewalk](#) (Figure 2) which leads to absence of a pedestrian network limiting opportunities for many residents. Currently, 18 percent of the sidewalks are missing or so damaged that they are unusable by vulnerable multimodal users.

Figure 2 Existing Condition of Sidewalk

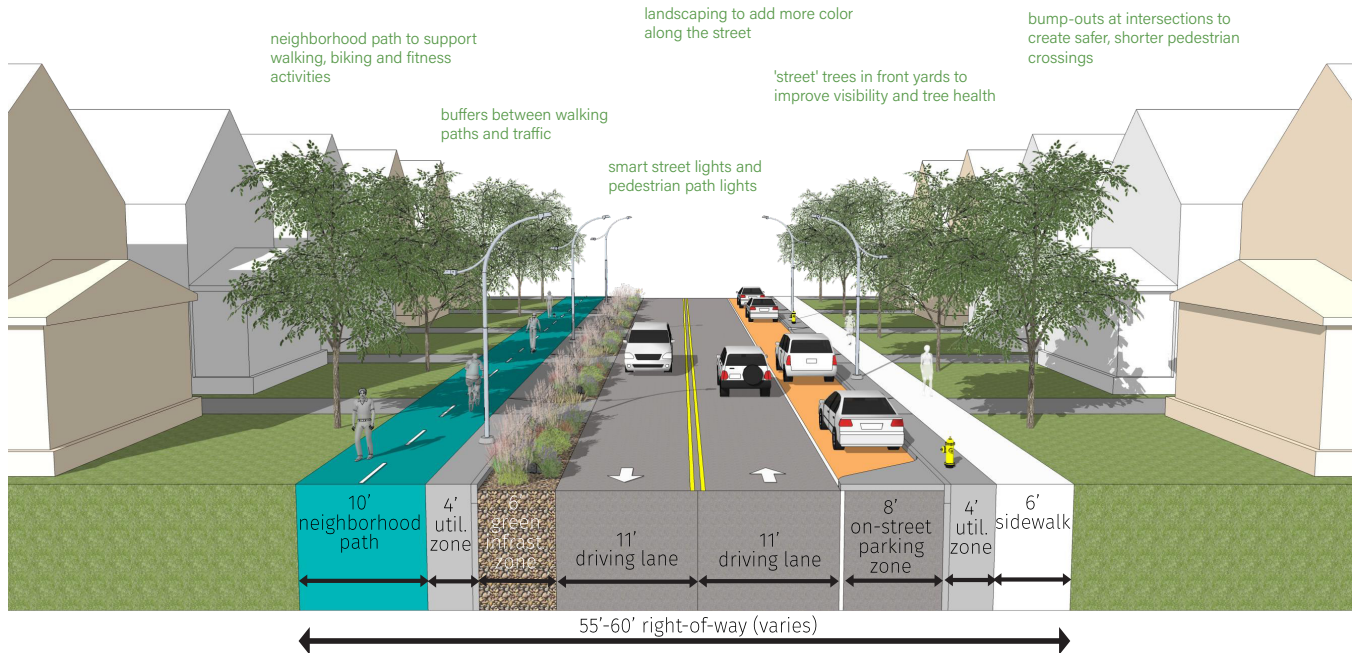


- Healing the [neighborhood bifurcation](#) barrier caused by Chester Avenue, a high-volume, high-speed, six-lane corridor (with an added turn lane at intersections) for east-west movement. This leads to a disruption in safe pedestrian/bicyclist movement needed to access the bus rapid transit (BRT) routes and neighborhood connectivity.
- Addressing safety issues by adding lighting to overcome a complete absence of lighting along East 66th Street. Thirty four percent of commuters leave for work between 4 p.m. and 7 a.m., times that are dark during winter months. Currently, the lighting is unevenly placed creating dark spots along the corridor and at street crossings which leads to unsafe conditions for area residents.
- Addressing the digital divide - presently, the Hough Neighborhood has one of the lowest access to broadband rates (digital redlining) in the city with approximately 50 percent of households lacking access. There is a pressing need to provide community members with affordable high-speed internet access.
- Adding safe and green community spaces such as neighborhood parks, general use public space for community events, parking, transit shelters, etc. [Crime rates](#) in this area are high and safety improvements are an absolute priority.

The project design team in collaboration with the local community, youth leaders, and area residents designed a [comprehensive vision and plan](#) for East 66th Street to address the challenges identified above. The project enhancements will **remedy racial, environmental, and physical barriers to opportunity; create a Black-centered community; improve safety; improve links to social and economic assets; provide regional roadway system access to economic generators; enhance bicycle and pedestrian movement across the corridor; and provide a regional transit advantage.** The RAISE funding will result in the following Project improvements (Figure 3) that include:

- Full-depth reconstruction of approximately one mile of East 66th Street to a two-lane roadway with an eight feet on-street parking zone to address current roadway condition.
- Creating a four-foot utility zone on both sides of the roadway to bury existing overhead power cables to significantly improve the neighborhood appearance and reduce weather-induced power outages. This will also serve to install underground fiber optics conduit for broadband internet for the neighborhood.
- Constructing six-foot to ten-foot-wide multi-use sidewalks with ADA upgrades on both sides of the roadway to improve safety and mobility for pedestrian, bicyclist, and persons of all abilities.

Figure 3 Proposed Project Improvements



- Providing landscaping elements and “street” trees to create a green infrastructure zone that adds beauty and value to the street along with improving user visibility, and environmental benefits.
- Creating safer, shorter pedestrian crossings with traffic calming measures and intersection elements such as bump outs, pedestrian-activated controls at key intersections, and special paving material to prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist movement.
- Adding cameras and enhanced pedestrian lighting such as LED replacement streetlights and supplementary pedestrian path lights to provide additional safety features and to resolve gaps in the current streetlight placement along East 66th Street.
- Creating micro-mobility hubs along East 66th Street at Euclid Avenue and Lexington Avenue to enhance the mobility network. The micro-mobility hubs will include bike share and e-scooter stations as well as vehicle charging stations. The hubs will additionally be used as transit stops, shelter and waiting areas, information displays, and curb space for pickup/drop-offs.
- Rebalancing the Chester Avenue intersection by adding intersection improvements such as extending the existing medians to create pedestrian refuge islands, creating 15 feet to 20 feet crosswalk zones to visually prioritize north-south movement, adding pavement changes to alert motorists, adding community and wayfinding signage to provide visual neighborhood connections, and including pedestrian-controlled visual and audible crossing signals.
- Managing stormwater runoff through lower maintenance sustainable infrastructure such as inlets for roadway drainage along the curb, permeable paving at the on-street parking, and adding a six feet wide zone of green infrastructure along the west side of East 66th Street that includes native grasses and salt- and drought-tolerant plantings.
- Creating a transitional space – Park PLAYce that would generally be used as a recreational park but could also function as a surface parking lot when needed for community events. This space will be flexible to support community-identified needs, including playground space, athletic facilities, gathering space for community events, fitness areas, wi-fi spots/charging stations and more. Incorporating community art elements to achieve the vision of celebrating East 66th Street as a hub for artistic expression of the Black community. These elements include artistic banners, pavement art (including water-activated poetry), historic murals, col-

ored-glass sculptural elements to project patterns of color on the sidewalks, special colored lighting, flexible performance spaces, and unique street furniture.

The benefit-cost analysis (BCA) for the Project resulted in a benefit cost ratio (BCR) of 1.3 The Project will provide safer transportation options, improve access to a variety of multimodal transit options, increase economic vitality in the region, leverage the ongoing investments towards the redevelopment of the neighborhoods, and will provide access to amenities and cultural resources that support improved quality of life for the communities served by East 66th Street.

PROJECT HISTORY

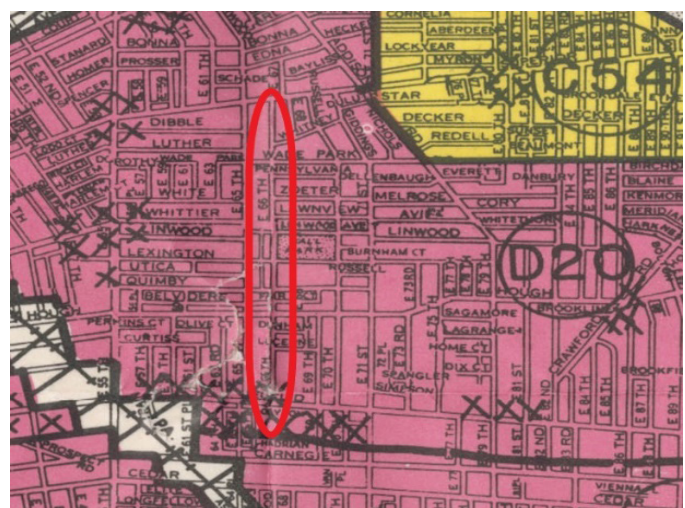
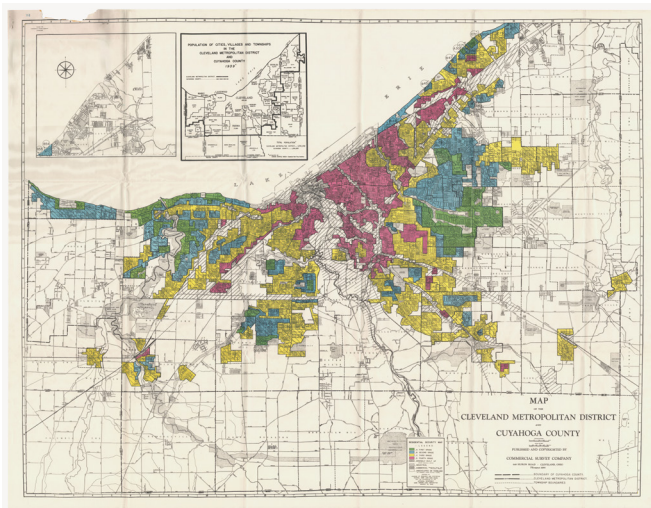
East 66th is crumbling from the impacts of more than eighty years of systemic failure. Eroding far more than infrastructure, these failures created the inequities, barriers to opportunity, and environmental and racial injustices which have plagued the residents of Hough and MidTown for generations. Systemic failures are silent oppressors that yield a lack of inclusion and opportunity as well as diminish thriving, diverse relationships in many cities across America. In fact, they mimic earlier centuries in American history when all racial groups were not granted equal participation in local decision-making processes.

The neighborhoods of Hough and MidTown have been a witness to several historical injustices – redlining, tearing apart of Black neighborhoods, [Hough riots](#), and environmental contamination, to name a few. The impacts of

these injustices are inherited by generations of community residents that bear the brunt of these injustices to this day. Leaders of the Midtown-Hough Connector Project have been working to address these failures and drive changes to disrupt the processes, behaviors, and outcomes of these oppressors. The transformational benefits of the Project are a substantial step towards addressing these injustices and related challenges.

Cuyahoga County, home to MidTown and Hough neighborhoods, suffered through a history of FHA redlining practices. In 1940, over 90 percent of the African American population in Cuyahoga County lived in a redlined neighborhood (Figure 4). Presently, 63 percent of African Americans in Cuyahoga County live in neighborhoods that were once rated ‘C’ or ‘D’ in the Home Owner’s Loan Corporation (HOLC) maps, while only 27 percent of whites live in such neighborhoods. These practices widened the inequity between people of different races and socioeconomic status. It created ripple effects of business, retail, education, arts, and health care disinvestment consequently slowing down the growth and economic vitality of the region. The East 66th corridor still suffers from the long-term consequences of racial redlining: unemployment, poor health outcomes, blight, vacancy, and disinvestment. The Hough neighborhood has a high concentration of vacant land as well as foreclosed or tax delinquent properties (Figure 5). Approximately, 30 percent of the parcels are vacant in the Project area.

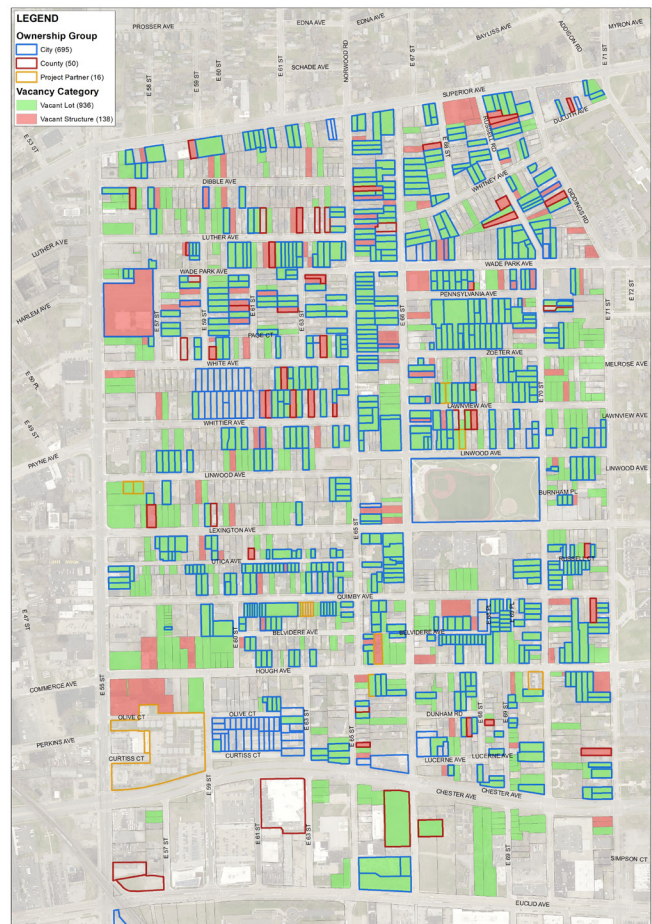
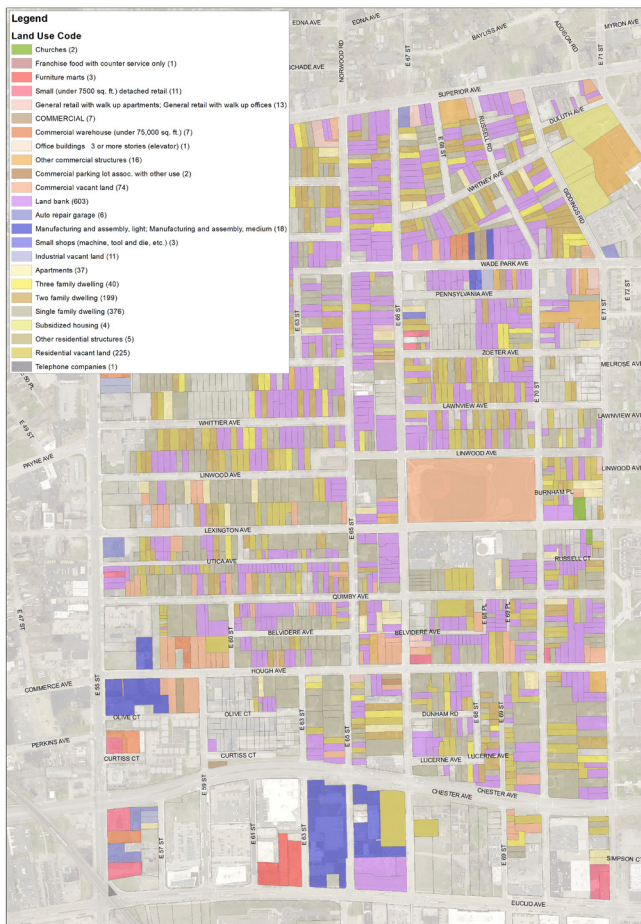
Figure 4 1940 HOLC Maps of (a) Cuyahoga County in 1940 (b) the Redlined East 66th Street corridor



If systemic racism were not enough to suppress the quality of life of underserved residents along the East 66th Street corridor, non-inclusive infrastructure planning drove a physical barrier between neighborhood residents and opportunity. In 1949 [Chester Avenue was carved through the thriving neighborhood of Hough](#), displacing residents and businesses to build a 6-lane highway designed to quickly move people between downtown and eastern suburbs. It was the culmination of plans for a fast thoroughfare north of Euclid Avenue that began in the 1890s. This “bypass”

isolated Hough residents and created a physical and social barrier between the Hough neighborhood to the north and amenities to the south. Although the early stages of planning for this street show the intentions to protect neighborhoods by providing buffer streets as borders to the highway, it divided the neighborhoods further and limits access to transit, jobs, healthcare, and critical destinations – all of which are dependent upon access to automobile transportation or located on the opposite side of this dangerous street.

Figure 5 Current Land Use and Vacancy near Project Corridor



Another major environmental injustice suffered by Hough and MidTown was in the form of clustered industrial sites that contaminated neighborhoods with lead and other toxic substances. A [2020 report](#) by the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ highlights the environmental injustice of highly toxic air emissions in these neighborhoods. The report examines the 100 worst polluting industrial facilities in the United States. The MPC Plating

facility located at 1859 East 63rd Street ranks 68th out of 100 facilities overall. This facility ranks highest in Ohio in terms of concentration of communities of color and low-income families living nearby. The brownfield site at the former Key Gas Components facility was cleaned up in 2015 by Sixty-Six LLC as part of the redevelopment of City owned parcels between East 65th Street and East 66th Street that front Euclid Avenue.

In 2012, the City of Cleveland made a \$5 million investment to restore League Park, the historic home of Cleveland's Negro League baseball team as well as the Cleveland Indians. With the renovation of League Park, in the heart of Hough on East 66th Street, the City and NOACA also initiated a Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) plan for East 66th. In 2019, TCF partnered with the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Cuyahoga County, to update the TLCI plan for the League Park Neighborhood District, originally completed in 2012. TCF provided a \$150,000 grant to update the plan specific to content and expanded geography. Community partners, residents, and the City worked to reimagine

and improve the East 66th Street corridor. The resulting TLCI plan is the basis for the proposed MidTown-Hough Connector Project.

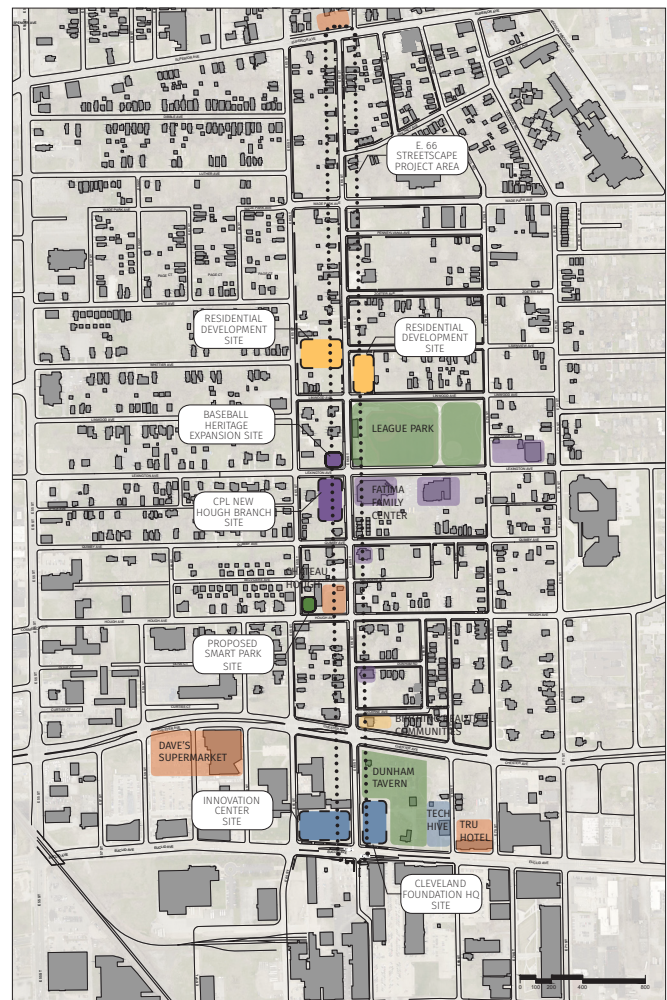
The MidTown-Hough Connector Project addresses the failures due to infrastructure challenges, racial inequities, barriers to opportunity, and environmental injustice experienced by the communities along East 66th Street corridor. The Project enables MidTown and Hough neighborhood residents to benefit from major redevelopment projects and equitable opportunities, policies, and investment strategies that will lead to economic growth and wealth creation.

II. PROJECT LOCATION

The Project runs approximately one mile in length along East 66th Street bound by Superior Avenue to the north and Euclid Avenue to the south. East 66th Street runs north to south and is intersected by 15 east-west cross streets within the project limits as shown in Figure 6. The Project is in the Hough neighborhood between Superior Avenue and Chester Avenue and in the MidTown neighborhood between Chester Avenue and Euclid Avenue, with East 66th Street bridging the two neighborhoods.

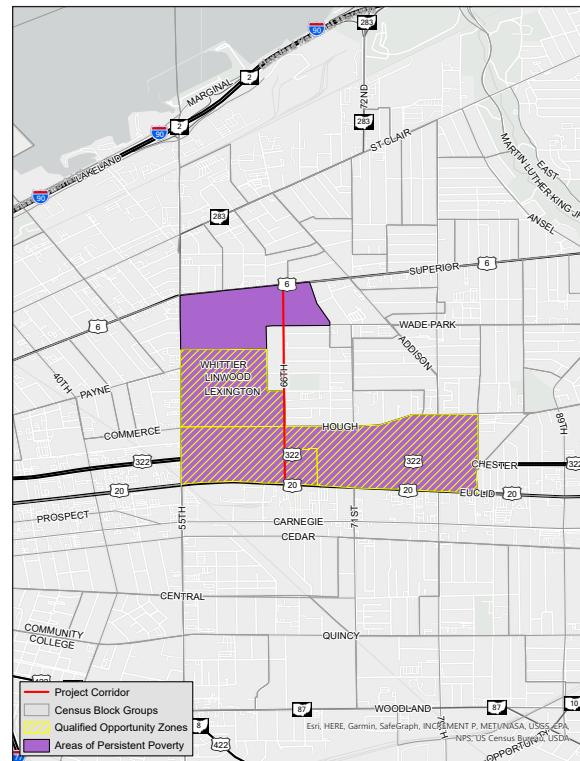
[MidTown](#) is a vital [economic hub](#) in the city of Cleveland. It is home to more than 650 organizations, including 70 nonprofits, 12 design and architecture firms, 75 health-tech and high-tech ventures, dozens of manufacturers, and hundreds of small businesses. [Hough](#) is one of Cleveland's oldest as well as poorest neighborhoods. In the aftermath of the [Hough Riots](#) in 1966, the neighborhood experienced modest growth until the last few decades in which an accelerated amount of commercial and public investment has been made. As of 2019, 84.6 percent of residents in Hough are African Americans and 55 percent of Hough families live below the poverty line.

Figure 6 Project Location



The Project is located within the Cleveland, OH Urbanized Area, and is designated as an urban project. MidTown has a residential population of 2,000 while the Hough neighborhood has a population of just under 11,000. The Project sits across four census tracts (1121, 1123.01, 1124 & 1128 Cuyahoga County, OH), of which three (1121, 1123.01 & 1128) are designated as APP covering more than 50 percent of the project investments (Figure 7). Two of these tracts (1123.01 & 1128) are also designated as Ohio Qualified Opportunity Zones. The entire project corridor is designated as an area of high poverty and unemployment and falls under the Federal Empowerment Zones (EZs).

Figure 7 Project Location with APP & Ohio Qualified Zones



III. GRANT FUNDS, SOURCES, AND USES OF PROJECT FUNDING

PROJECT BUDGET

Total Future Project Cost: \$19,553,364

RAISE Grant Request Amount: \$15,642,691 (80 percent of project cost)

Local Match Amount: \$3,910,673 (20 percent of project cost)

Availability and Commitment of Funding Sources:

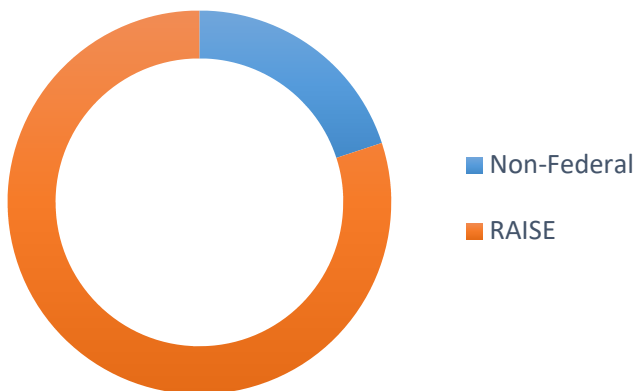
The RAISE funding request is an integral piece of the total funding for the Project. The Project is the result of a long-standing public/private collaboration between the multiple partners mentioned later in the narrative. The cost share providers of the City of Cleveland, The Cleveland Foundation, and NOACA are **committed** to providing the 20% cost share of \$3,910,673 (Figure 8). The specific sources of this cost share are being determined and the details of each partners' specific cost share and source will be identified and supported by letters of commitment by no later than November 1, 2021

In addition to the commitment to the local match for the future Project costs, the public/private collaboration has, and will continue to, provide significant investment in the corridor (Table 1). This investment to date includes \$1,218,374 for planning, preliminary design, inclusive public engagement, environmental cleanup, and implementation of the corridor tree plan. Beyond the Project implementation, TCF has provided \$1 million to the Hough Community Land Trust. The community land trust will work to ensure long-term real-estate affordability and support racially and economically inclusive ownership and access.

Table 1 RAISE Grant Project Budget

Project Element	Project Funding						Total Cost Estimate
	Non-Federal		RAISE		Other Federal		
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%	
Final design, 10% minus Prelim Eng	171,172	20%	684,688	80%	0	0%	855,860
Construction	2,145,320	20%	8,581,280	80%	0	0%	10,726,600
Construction Administration 8%	231,741	20%	926,963	80%	0	0%	1,158,704
Contingency 20%	429,064	20%	1,716,256	80%	0	0%	2,145,320
Inflation to 2025	322,376	20%	1,289,504	80%	0	0%	1,611,880
Broadband Connection	36,000	20%	144,000	80%	0	0%	180,000
Utility Burial	550,000	20%	2,200,000	80%	0	0%	2,750,000
Land Assembly (Right of Way Acquisition)	10,000	20%	40,000	80%	0	0%	50,000
Remediation Allowance	15,000	20%	60,000	80%	0	0%	75,000
Total Future Costs	3,910,673	20%	15,642,691	80%	0	0%	19,553,364
Future							
Federal Participation (RAISE Maximum 80/20)							
Non-Federal	3,910,673	20%					
Federal Funding	15,642,691	80%					
Total Future Project Cost	19,553,364						
					Total Project Costs		20,771,738

Figure 8 Project Funding



NON-FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCE

CITY OF CLEVELAND MATCH FUNDING

The City of Cleveland is approximately a \$1.8 billion municipal corporation whose operating funds are divided into a General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Enterprise Funds, Debt Service Funds, Internal Service Funds and an Agency Fund. The General Fund comprises slightly more than one-third of the city's budget. The Enterprise Fund includes Public Utilities, Airport Operations, Cemeteries, Parking Facilities and other operations. The City's source of local Project match may include General Obligation bond proceeds.

THE CLEVELAND FOUNDATION MATCH FUNDING

The Cleveland Foundation is the community foundation serving Greater Cleveland, including Cuyahoga, Lake and Geauga counties. It is made up of more than 1,300 funds representing individuals, families, organizations, and corporations. Its mission is to enhance the lives of all residents of Greater Cleveland, now and for generations to come, by working together with our donors to build community endowment, address needs through grant-making, and provide leadership on key community issues. The Cleveland Foundation's source of local Project match may include unrestricted grant funds from the foundation's \$2.8 billion endowment.

NOACA MATCH FUNDING

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is the transportation and environmental planning agency that represents state, county, city, village, and township officials in Greater Cleveland. NOACA receives approximately \$51 million annually in funds from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to allocate to projects in its five counties. The NOACA Board of Directors determines which transportation improvement projects will receive federal funds in the NOACA region. NOACA funding

programs include Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI), Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), and Transportation Alternatives. NOACA's source of local Project match may include the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

RAISE FUNDING NEED

If RAISE funding is not awarded, the City of Cleveland will postpone construction of the Project. The absence of funding would adversely impact the underserved population in the area. Without the Project improvements:

(1) Hough residents will remain detached from inclusive development and abundant opportunities in MidTown to enhance their quality of life; (2) the corridor will continue in its state of disrepair; and (3) more than \$50 million in planned development investment will be jeopardized. On the east side of Cleveland where infrastructure investment for generations has been focused on commuters along an east-west axis, this north-south investment places residents first.

IV. SELECTION CRITERIA

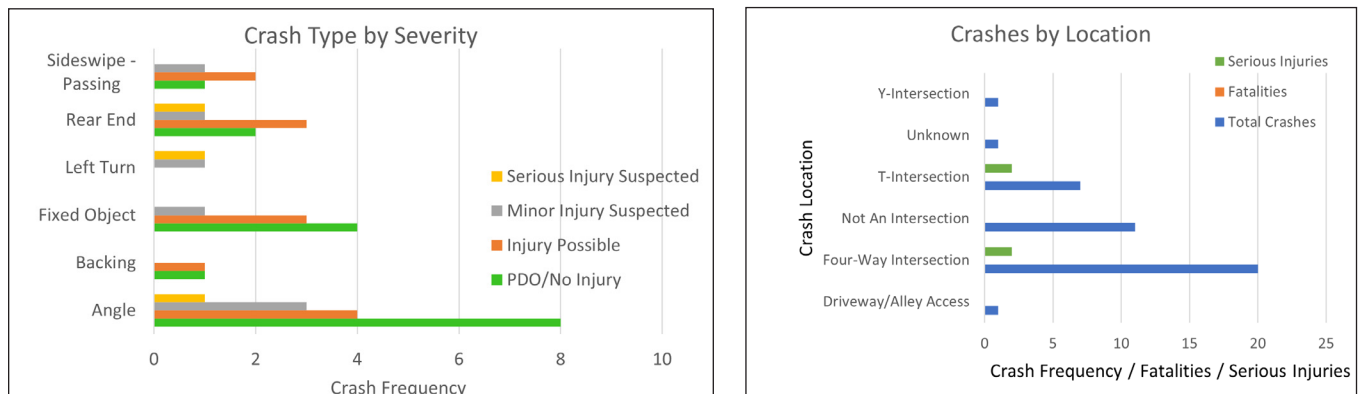
PRIMARY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. SAFETY

The Project area experienced multiple crashes along the East 66th Street corridor. Between 2017 and 2021, there were 41 crashes of which three were serious injuries and 28 of these crashes occurred at the various cross street intersections (four-way, Y-, and T-intersections) along East 66th Street (Figure 9). Most of the crashes were angle, fixed object, and rear end in nature. These types of

crashes are typically indicative of failure when one driver fails to yield the right of way by running a traffic light or stop sign or disregarding a yield sign. The proposed project improvements address this issue by incorporating design elements that enhance safety for multimodal roadway users thereby protecting all users.

Figure 9 Crashes along the Project Corridor



Addressing Vulnerable Roadway Users

Currently, East 66th Street does not provide a reliable transportation network for vulnerable roadway users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, wheelchair users, stroller users to connect safely to the various community destinations along East 66th Street. The current state of the sidewalk is extremely poor with nine percent (842 feet) missing altogether and another nine percent (856 feet)

too damaged to support safe movement, out of the 9,720 feet of potential sidewalk along the corridor. As 48 percent of the community depends on multimodal transit options (access to buses, carpools, walking, riding, users of all abilities), the absence of a complete and safe sidewalk infrastructure has significantly limited accessibility for the corridor's underrepresented and underserved residents.

These users classified as vulnerable users, including those with physical disabilities, have given up using the corridor altogether because of the broken infrastructure.

“(We need) a very walkable street – a place people will be inspired not to drive.”

–Youth Session # 2 (April 24, 2020)

The Project will proactively remove the existing barriers for vulnerable roadway users by constructing **designated walking and biking space** in the form of multi-use sidewalks. The proposed improvements include constructing 6 feet to 10 feet wide sidewalks on both sides of the street. The sidewalks will include ADA upgraded curb ramps. Another proposed improvement, **enhanced pedestrian lighting**, will address current lighting issues and safety concerns and will provide a complete street design for all users. These enhancements will improve safety and mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists, stroller users, and users of all ability. The goal of creating safer and more convenient walking and riding paths for year-round use will support improved transportation infrastructure for the vulnerable users and achieve better health outcomes for the community.

Figure 10 Example of Multi-use Sidewalks

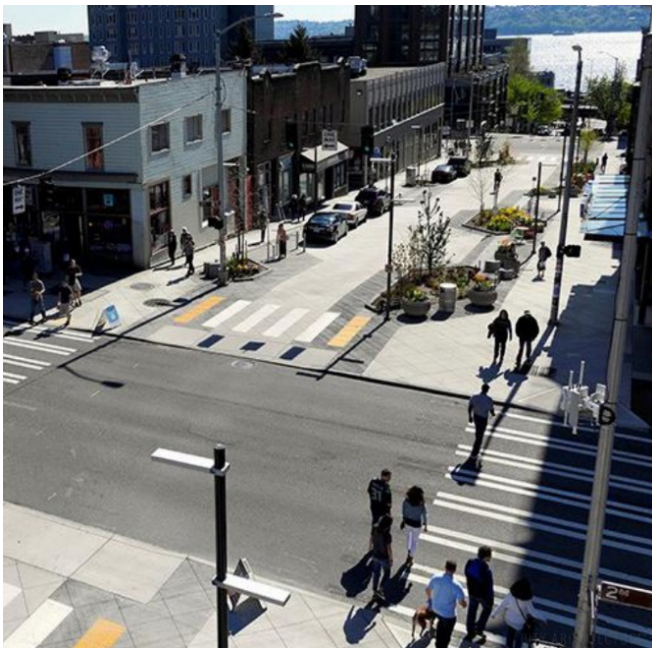


Figure 11 Pedestrian Marking for Safe Crossing



Incorporating Design and Technology to Improve Safety

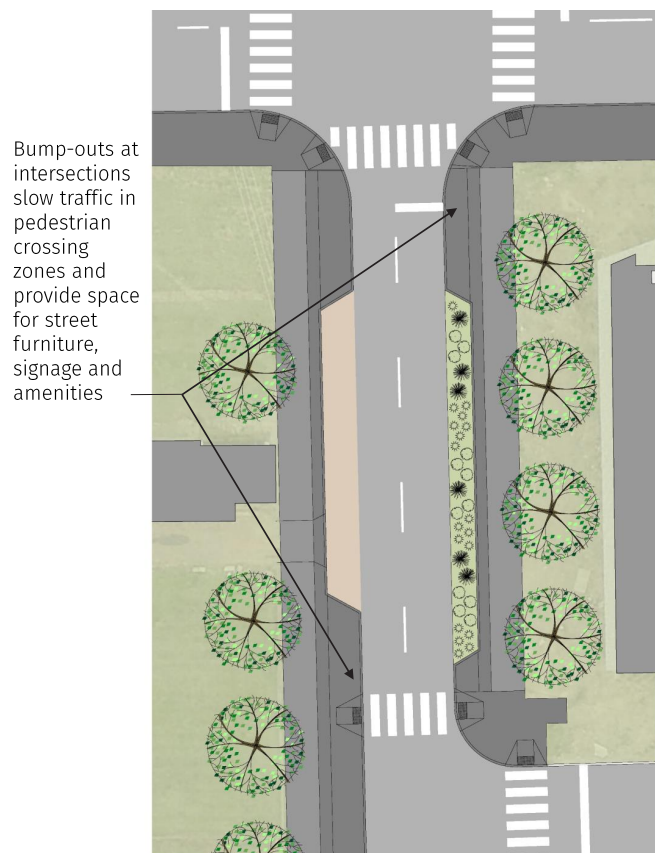
There are significant safety challenges at East 66th Street due to decades of disinvestment and historical racial and environmental injustices in the Hough and MidTown neighborhoods. While safety is traditionally viewed in terms of transportation network crash statistic, the progressively evolving theory of racial and environmental equity leads to the concept of safety as a holistic understanding of the value of human life. The [high crime rate](#) in the Hough neighborhood including personnel and property crimes, homicides, and illicit drug offenses are directly tied to vacant lots and crumbling infrastructure. Many of these concerns are also a result of poor transportation infrastructure in the area.

The proposed project improvements will add design and technology elements to address safety in terms of reducing the crash statistics as well as improving the quality of life for the neighborhood community. The following enhancements will achieve the desired outcomes:

Full-depth Reconstruction of the Corridor: The project corridor will undergo a full-depth reconstruction to address the poor state of the current roadway. The reconstruction will replace underground water, sewer and drainage lines, construct two 11 feet wide through traffic lanes with curb and gutters along with an eight-foot wide on-street parking, replace damaged sidewalks and driveway aprons, install ADA compliant curb ramps at intersections, bury existing overhead utilities underground, and add a conduit for providing high-speed broadband internet. These improvements will enhance safety for the neighborhood community by upgrading East 66th Street to complete street design standards.

Addition of Curb Bump-Outs:

Figure 12 Addition of Bump-Outs



This project improvement will reduce the current crossing distance from 34 feet to 22 feet and formalize crossing areas for pedestrian safety. Curb bump-outs will be added on the street to maintain permanent on-street parking on the east side, dedicated landscaping on the west side, and shorten the crossing distances for pedestrians at the

intersections. As this corridor is connected to the [Safe Routes to School](#) path for Wade Park Elementary School, it is important to improve safety at pedestrian crossings. The addition of 14 feet of additional sidewalk space at the bump-outs will allow additional amenities and support more formalized transit waiting environments. Neighborhood locations currently lack bike facilities which discourages bike use for mobility. The bump-outs will also provide an area for installing additional bike racks.

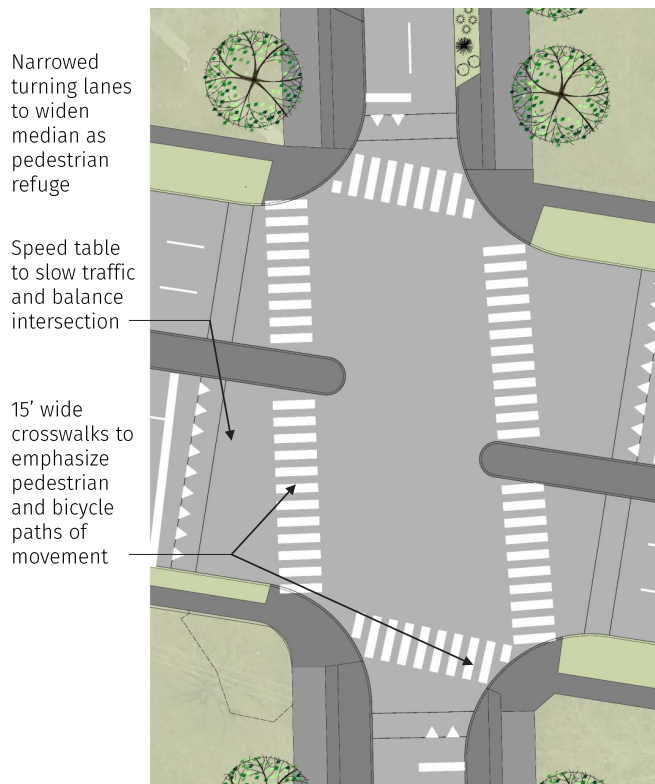
Enhanced Pedestrian Lighting: A primary concern of area residents was identified to be lack of safety due to gaps in street lighting and the resulting dark paths. The neighborhood will be receiving LED replacement streetlights through a separate project by the City and Cleveland Public Power’s [Safe Smart CLE program](#). While this addition will strengthen the streetlight infrastructure, the area residents were further concerned about the LED lights not providing adequate path lights along the adjacent sidewalks. The Project will install supplementary pedestrian lighting to evolve East 66th Street to a “well-lit street” environment. The enhanced pedestrian lighting will make the corridor safe and mobile even after day light hours which is especially significant during the winter months, and when commuters are going to/from work.

Dedicated Sidewalks/Crosswalks with Special Paving Material: As discussed above, the project improvements include construction of 6 feet to 10 feet wide sidewalks with ADA upgrades on both sides of the street. The sidewalks will use special paving materials that are less susceptible to freeze-thaw cycles and support quicker melting of ice and snow. Crosswalks at key intersections will also incorporate special paving materials and marking to give priority to pedestrians and indicate an area where cars should slow down.

Pedestrian-Activated Traffic Controls: The Project will include pedestrian-activated traffic controls at key intersections to give greater priority to non-vehicular movement and support increased micro-mobility. This was a crucial need identified and requested by the local community. The pedestrian-activated traffic controls will be located at the intersection of East 66th Street with Chester Avenue, Hough Avenue, Lexington Avenue, Wade Park and Superior Avenue.

Rebalancing Chester Avenue Intersection: The rebalancing of Chester Avenue intersection is crucial to improving safety at this highway crossing and connecting the community to transportation networks, employment opportunities, and neighborhood amenities such as the RTA HealthLine bus-rapid transit system on Euclid Avenue, the recently constructed Dave’s Supermarket, and the UH Rainbow Center for Women and Children. This rebalance will mitigate the neighborhood bifurcation brought about by the construction of the high-volume high-speed 6-lane Chester Avenue roadway (with an added turn lane at the intersections) in 1949. The current AADT on Chester Avenue near the Project is 35,500. Currently, the intersection of East 66th Street and Chester Avenue is [not signalized](#) for pedestrian crossing. Intersection improvements will include the extension of existing medians at the intersection to create pedestrian refuge islands, the creation of 15 to 20 feet wide crosswalk zones to visually prioritize north-south movement, the addition of pavement changes to alert motorists, the addition of community and wayfinding signage to provide visual neighborhood connections, and the inclusion of pedestrian-controlled visual and audible crossing signals to prioritize north-south movement and support safer pedestrian crossing.

Figure 13 Design Elements for Rebalancing Chester Avenue Intersection



Technology Elements such as Traffic Cameras and Smart Kiosks: The City will install traffic cameras to monitor traffic incidents and help in quick response at the location. The traffic cameras are also a deterrent to [crime in the neighborhood](#) and will improve safety. The City will also incorporate Smart Kiosks, similar to those [installed in downtown Cleveland](#), as part of the corridor development. The Smart Kiosks will provide interactive maps, neighborhood information, and other features that lead to better connectivity with the multimodal and micro-mobility transit options through greater digital access, enhancing the safety of the entire transportation network in the area.

Figure 14 Smart Kiosk at Downtown Cleveland



The BCA indicates that the Project is expected to provide \$5.9 million in safety benefits. For the reasons outlined above, this Project aligns with the USDOT’s strategic goal of reducing transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries across the transportation system and providing a safe and improved transportation infrastructure for vulnerable users.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Climate Action Plan

The City adopted the first [Cleveland Climate Action Plan](#) in 2013 which was subsequently updated in 2018. In 2011, the City passed a [Complete and Green Streets Ordinance](#) to create a walking, biking and public transportation-friendly network while minimizing environmental impacts by incorporating green infrastructure. The Project is strongly aligned with the City's sustainable transportation objectives of building a transportation system that prioritizes safety for all, enhances public transit access, expands bike infrastructure, incorporates green street design features, and integrates alternative fuel vehicle infrastructure improvements.

The Project will reconstruct the East 66th Street Corridor as a 21st Century Street incorporating smart street, sustainable design, and complete street design features. Sustainable design features include smart lighting, native landscaping that supports pollinator species, green infrastructure including bioswales and infiltration planters, expanded street tree canopy, and permeable pavement at select locations including parking lanes and trail facilities.

The Project is part of a greater transformation of East 66th Street as an Innovation District that will serve as a model for future complete and green street reconstruction projects in the region. Redevelopment of the district will incorporate sustainable principles, including the construction of [TCF's new headquarters](#) at the intersection of East 66th Street and Euclid Avenue. TCF's headquarters, currently under construction, will meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold sustainable design standards and includes a parking lot solar canopy that supplies approximately 65 percent energy needs for the new facility.


Environmental Justice

Justice has been a guiding principle at the heart of every decision-making process of this project. Throughout the community engagement process, the project team heard a call for justice – to repair the built environment and create pathways for economic opportunities in the Hough Neighborhood. The Project directly seeks to improve the quality of life within a community that has endured a legacy of racism and environmental injustices. Race, economic interests, and zoning have historically gone hand in hand. Zoning ordinances targeted neighborhoods with detrimental land uses. Despite the best efforts of vulnerable neighborhoods and community activists, many of these detrimental land uses, such as industrial hazard and waste

facilities have been concentrated in communities of color. In neighborhoods throughout the City's East Side, clustered industrial sites have contaminated neighborhoods with lead and other toxic substances.

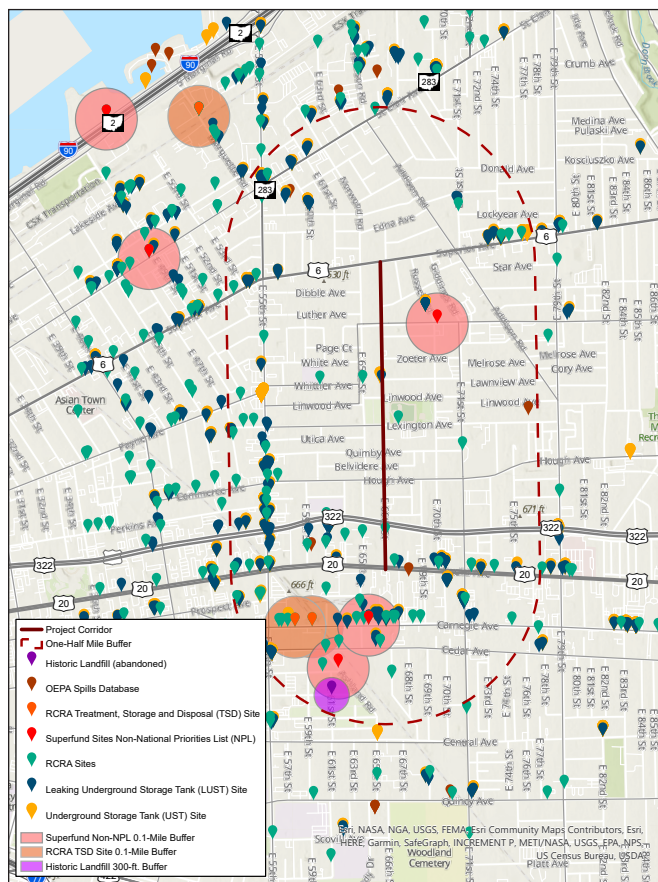
The Hough neighborhood

is burdened by an extensive history of industrial activities located near residential areas and poor management of hazardous waste generating facilities. A 2020 report, [Breath to the People](#), by the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ ranks the 100 worst polluting industrial facilities across the nation. The MPC plating facility ranks 68th out of the 100 worst polluting industrial facilities, which is less than 1,000 feet from the East 66th Street Corridor at 1859 East 63rd Street. Based on a review of the [Ohio Regulated Properties Search \(ORPS\) Tool](#) published by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Office of Environmental Services (OES), numerous potentially contaminated sites are located in close proximity to the Project including a Non-National Priorities List (NPL) Superfund Site; EPA Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Permitted Treatment, Storage, and Disposal (TSD) sites; and an abandoned landfill (Figure 15).



Project incorporates climate change and environmental justice in both the Project Planning and Project Delivery stages by using design elements that address climate change impacts.

Figure 15 Potential Contaminated Sites



The [Breath to the People](#) Report highlights the environmental injustice due to highly toxic air emissions in the MidTown and Hough neighborhoods. Most striking, the neighborhood adjacent to the MPC plating facility ranks highest in Ohio for concentration of people of color living nearby. Nearly 91 percent of residents within a mile of this Hough facility are people of color, and more than 70 percent are low-income. High rates of poverty have been associated with high rates of infant mortality, which is evident in the Hough Neighborhood.¹ In the Hough neighborhood, the infant mortality rate is 22.1 infant deaths per 1,000 live births, whereas nationally the infant mortality rate was 5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018. Figure 16 illustrate the concentration of people of color and low-income populations in the vicinity of the East 66th Street Corridor based on U.S. Census data obtained through the EPA EJSCREEN tool (last modified April 22, 2021).

¹ Mohamoud, Y Kirby R and D Ehrental Poverty urban rural classification and term infant mortality: a population based multilevel analysis BMC Pregnancy Childbirth 2019 Jan 22 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6343321/>

And why are our streetlights so dim? A lot of the streetlights are never changed or they don't work, so you're just walking down a dark street. We need our community to look the right way. When you come outside you need to feel like you can come out and walk. People don't want to walk at all, that's why everybody gets in their car. They won't go nowhere unless they in their car. Sometimes you just want to be like "I don't want to be in my car today, I just want to walk." You want to walk without somebody approaching you or pulling up beside you in their car.

– Youth Session Comment (April 24, 2020)
Modal Shift to Reduce GHG Emissions

Further evidence of the tragic ramifications of the environmental injustice experienced by the Hough Neighborhood is evident in the EJSCREEN air toxics-related cancer risk data based on the 2014 National Air Toxics Assessment. Figure 17 indicates that the Project is in an area that is at high risk for air toxics-related cancers.

The City, TCF, MidTown Cleveland, Inc., and other partners are committed to remediating the contamination in the Hough Neighborhood. Several environmental assessments have been conducted in the vicinity of the Project. TCF invested \$100,000 in tank removal and asbestos removal of buildings that were demolished as part of the redevelopment plan. The former Key Gas Components facility located at 1966 East 66th Street was remediated by Sixty-Six LLC in 2015. As part of the continued redevelopment effort in the East 66th Street community, the City, TCF, and other partners will invest approximately \$1 million in cleanup of contamination resulting from the MPC plating facility and will implement a vapor intrusion mitigation system estimated to cost \$600,000. It is anticipated that these remediation activities will occur in 2021 through 2022.

Figure 16 Concentration of People of Color and Low-income Populations in the Vicinity of Project

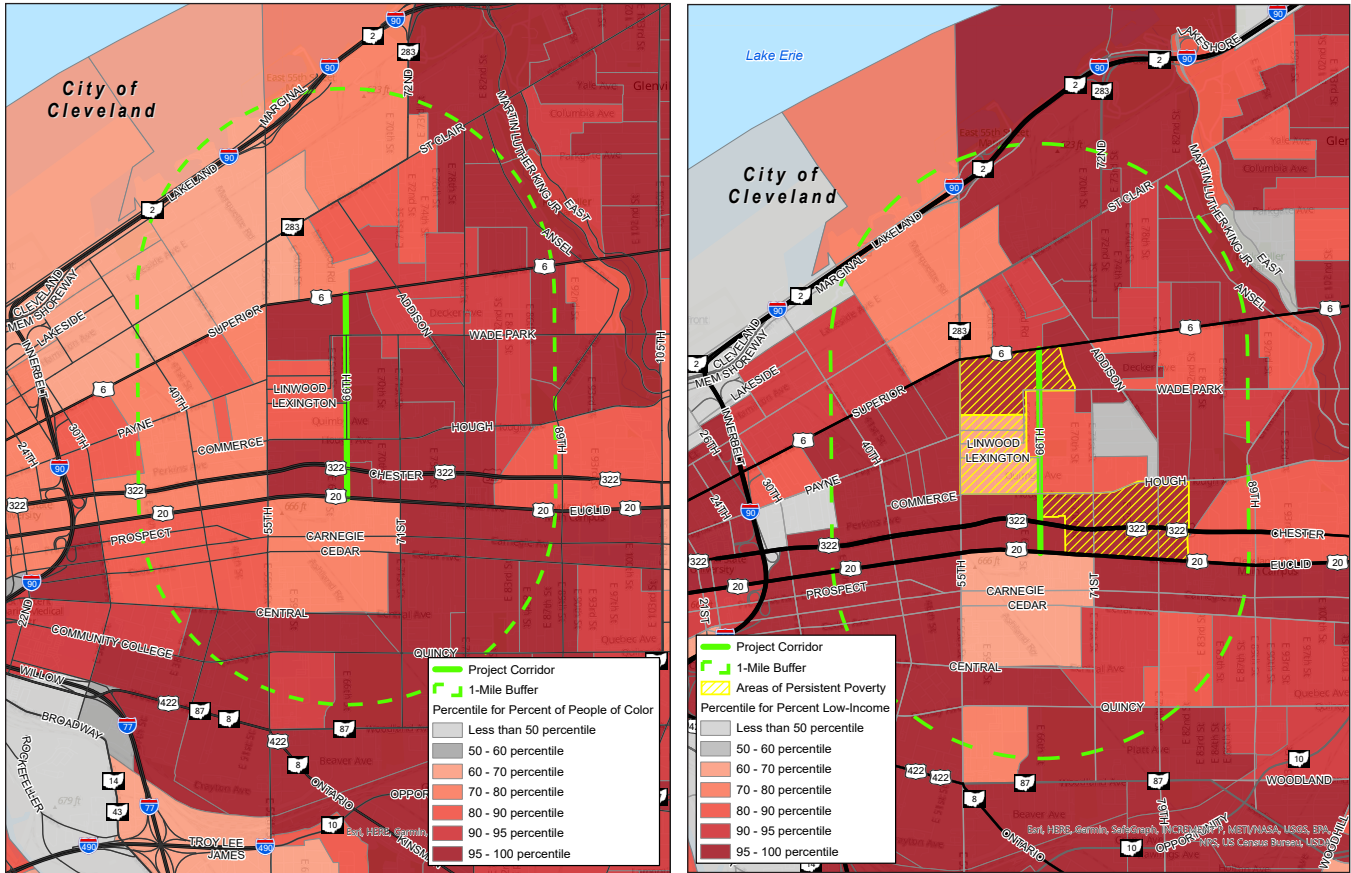
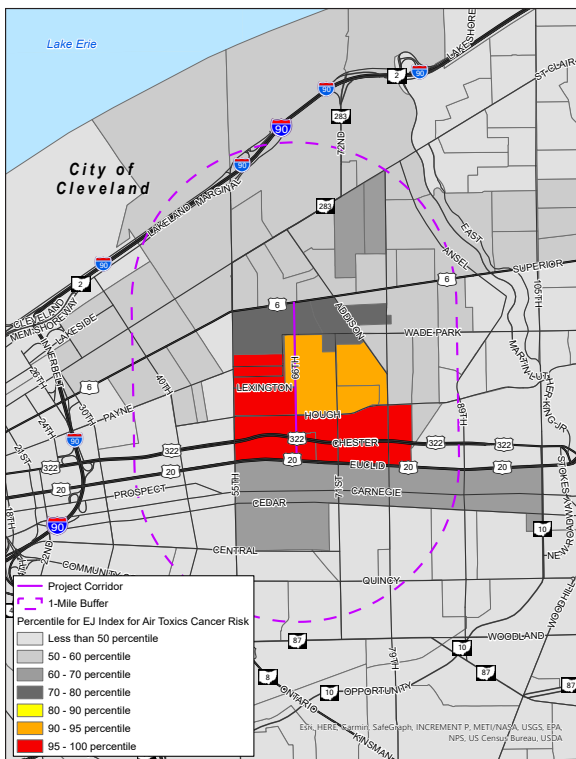


Figure 17 Cancer Risk due to Air Toxins



Modal Shift to Reduce GHG Emissions

The existing sidewalks along East 66th Street are in very poor condition and gaps in the sidewalk network are present throughout the Corridor. The existing and streetscape environment lack sufficient lighting for safe pedestrian and bicyclist travel. The Project will spur a modal shift in transportation options by constructing trail facilities, sidewalks, and critical safety measures including pedestrian-activated controls at key intersections, visual and audio crossing signals, pedestrian refuges, and lighting improvements. The Project will also include transit-related improvements including enhanced transit waiting areas near existing transit stops to create safe and inviting community spaces.

Figure 18 Transit Waiting Area



Figure 19 Pedestrians and Bicyclists Crossing



Figure 20 Conceptual Rendering of Multi-Use Path with Green Infrastructure



Electrification Infrastructure / Zero-Emission Vehicle Infrastructure

The Project will build upon the sustainable principles adopted by TCF's headquarters by identifying potential locations for installing electrical vehicle (EV) infrastructure. The Project will evaluate locations to expand EV infrastructure along East 66th Street in the next phase of design development. The City will also utilize public and

Sustainable Design

The Project will include several sustainable design features including green infrastructure, high efficiency LED lighting, native plants, and pollinator species landscaping, bioswales, rain gardens, stormwater bump outs and infiltration planters, expansion of the tree canopy, and permeable pavers along street parking areas. Additional measures that will be considered as the design develops include electric vehicle charging stations, air quality monitors, and installation of a wind turbine at the intersection of East 66th Street and Chester Avenue.

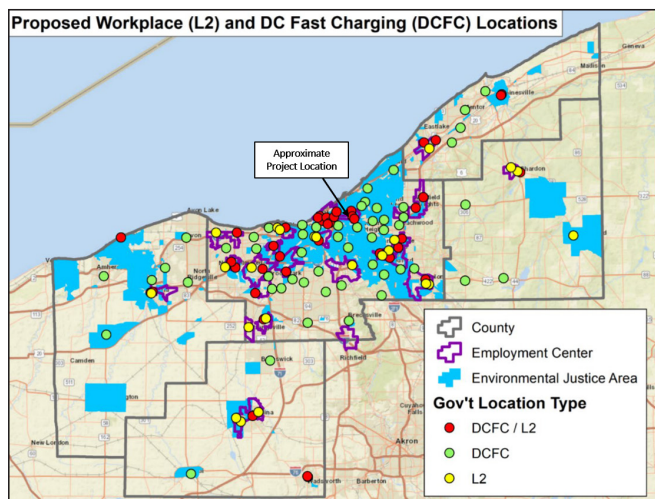
A four to six-foot strip along the west side of East 66th Street will be reconstructed as a green infrastructure zone to support a more sustainable approach to stormwater management. The green infrastructure zone will include native grasses with salt and drought tolerant plantings. Implementation of green infrastructure and permeable pavers will reduce the total impervious area of the street corridor by nearly one acre compared to existing conditions. The design team is collaborating with the Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District to develop best practices for the green infrastructure design.

private partnerships to seek investments in EV infrastructure as part of this Project.

NOACA, a partner on this Project, is committed to investing \$3 million in expanding EV infrastructure in the region. NOACA recently released an RFP to select a consultant to lead development and construction of EV infrastructure. NOACA has identified preliminary station locations in the

vicinity of the project, which will be further refined during the next phase of the project design. Additionally, Sway Mobility, Inc. is seeking federal funding to implement the CLEVeLAND project through the U.S. Department of Energy's Low Greenhouse Gas Vehicle Technologies Research, Development, Demonstration, and Deployment Program to add 100 shared electric passenger vehicles and 50 to 75 EV charging stations that will expand car share opportunities in low and moderate-income communities. The Project team will coordinate with partnering organizations and identify suitable locations for EV charging stages with community members during the next phase of public engagement activities.

Figure 21 EV Charging Station Locations in Cleveland



3. QUALITY OF LIFE

The City of Cleveland's Office of Sustainability launched the [Sustainable Cleveland Initiative](#) in 2009. This initiative collaborates with the community to design and develop a thriving and resilient Cleveland that leverages its wealth of assets to build economic, social, and environmental well-being for all. The initiative helps to better understand how transportation systems, services, and decision-making processes help or hinder the lives of underserved and underrepresented communities in Cleveland in terms of project planning and policy decisions as well as project invest-

Project incorporates Solutions for Ensuring Racial Equity & Removing Barriers to Opportunity in both Project Planning and Project Investments.

ments. The Project improvements in the East 66th corridor will develop a community that emphasizes seamless connectivity and accessibility and will increase access to multimodal transit options – a crucial link in removing barriers to opportunities for underserved communities.

Planning and Policies

Racial Equity Impact Analysis

The City developed the [Cleveland Climate Action Plan Racial Equity Tool](#) which is the primary decision-making tool regarding the policy, planning, programming, and budgeting within the city government and other institutions looking to advance racial equity and shared prosperity. The City's 2017-2018 Climate Action Plan represents concerted efforts that are connecting climate action with solutions that would mitigate negative effects and enhance positive results for underserved and underrepresented communities in Cleveland. Census block group data from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (ACS) found that three out of the four block groups in the project area are designated as APP. The Project improvements along East 66th Street will create a wide variety of benefits for communities of color and low-income individuals in the area.

Equity and Inclusion Programs

The project sponsor and several partners have proactively developed a strong portfolio of several Equity and Inclusion Programs. The City's [Sustainable Cleveland Initiative](#) has built upon equity and inclusion policies to ensure that communities from every walk of life work together to reshape Cleveland into a vibrant livable city with thriving businesses and a flourishing natural environment. Similarly, [NOACA's Diversity and Inclusion](#) policy

include programs such as Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE), Environmental Justice Areas Policy, Disadvantage Communities Policy, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Program, among others.

These programs/policies ensure that the minority and low-income populations enjoy a fair share of the benefits of federal investments while not receiving an unfair portion of any potential environmental burdens.

Equity-Focused Community Outreach and Public Engagement in Underserved Communities

Recognizing the inherent racism built into the infrastructure of America's cities, an inclusive community-led prototype for neighborhood street design was initiated to ensure the voices of those most impacted by racial inequities and environmental injustices had a seat at the table to reimagine and improve the East 66th Street corridor.

Figure 22 Youth-led Design Session



The project team convened an intensive community planning process to build from the experience of resident experts through a series of resident conversations, interviews, and surveys; community outreach activities with seniors, youth, and children; stakeholder meetings; and virtual community meetings (virtual block parties and kitchen table conversations). The planning process was then augmented by a youth-led design process where youth leaders from the community came together to work on a plan to reflect their visions for the community. The neighborhood vision and implementation plan developed because of the community outreach and youth-led design truly reflects the priorities and desires of the community. A range of best practices were considered and then balanced with the community's priorities to enhance the safety, equity, walkability, environmental and economic health of the area. The [results](#) are included in the TLCI East 66th Street Implementation Plan. This planning process also led directly to multiple new initiatives including the

creation of Hough Youth Council and East 66th Neighborhood Council and community programs like Hood Ballet and the Umoja Juneteenth celebration.

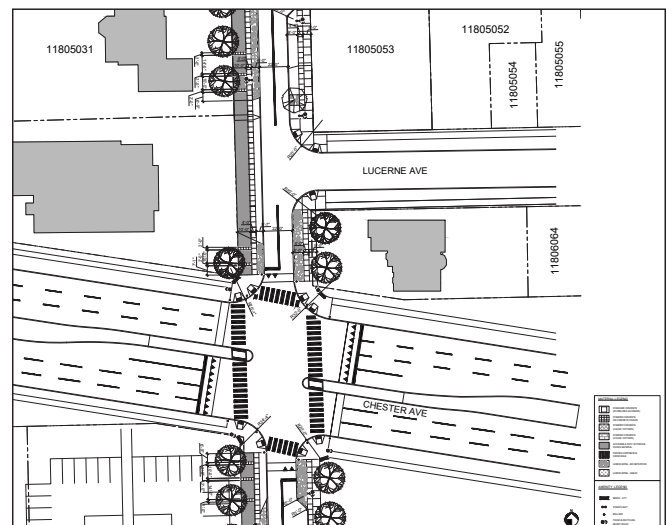
Project Investments

An initial equity analysis along the project corridor was conducted to identify vulnerable and/or transit dependent populations within the project area; to map residences and destinations for low-income populations, communities of color, immigrant populations, and people with disabilities; and to identify barriers to engagement and ways to overcome these barriers.

New and Improved Connections to Underserved Communities

The Project will remove the barriers for local circulation by constructing **designated walking and biking spaces** in form of multi-use sidewalks on both sides of the street. The proposed improvements provide for a new 6 feet wide sidewalk on the east side of the street. This sidewalk design is wider than the current 5 feet wide City standard to better accommodate wheelchairs. The Project will also construct a new 8 feet to 10 feet wide recycled asphalt multi-use path on the west side of the street. The multi-use path will be detailed utilizing materials that are less susceptible to freeze-thaw cycles and the dangerous sidewalk heaving that often results due to the temperature extremes experienced by Cleveland. A dark paving material is recommended to support quicker melting of ice and snow.

Figure 23 Rebalancing Chester Avenue Intersection



The proposed improvements at the intersection of East 66th Street and Chester Avenue will directly address and reverse the disproportionate impacts of neighborhood bifurcation due to the construction of Chester Avenue in 1949. A park-like green path will provide safe multimodal connections to nearby amenities like Dave’s Market and Dunham Tavern Museum. The goal of creating safer and more convenient walking and riding paths for year-round use will support improved transportation infrastructure for vulnerable users and achieve better health outcomes for the community.

Direct Partnership with Underserved Communities

Engaging local community was a top priority for this project. [Public engagement](#) focused on reaching underrepresented populations was conducted between February 2020 and July 2020. The engagement team hosted numerous virtual and in-person events, conducted focus groups, individual conversations, group activities and surveys, connected with community leaders, youth leaders, and organizations, and used social media platforms to engage the public. The challenges identified by the community throughout the engagement process were focused on these key themes:

- Better developed communities with focus on heritage and culture
- Parks and spaces for community events
- Multimodal access
- Incorporating innovative technology for sustainable design
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections across

These themes are being addressed by the Project. The BCA indicates that the Project is expected to provide \$6.9 million in quality of life benefits.

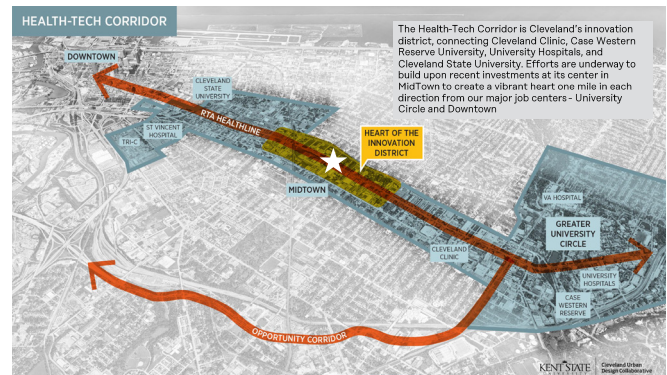
4. ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

The Project creates significant local and regional impact and directly benefits APP with an inclusive, resident driven approach that tears down barriers to opportunity, advances racial equity, addresses environmental injustice, and respects community history and heritage at every stage in the process. The Project also support a more than two million square foot development hub for sustainable,

inclusive, and equitable economic development and job creation..

In 2010, City leaders recognized a long-term commitment was necessary to bridge racial disparities along the East 66th Street corridor and devised a plan to guide investment and redevelopment in the particularly hard-hit sector of the corridor. NOACA approved a \$125,000 grant through its Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) for the League Park Neighborhood District Plan, sponsored by the City of Cleveland.

Figure 24 Health Tech Corridor



Since the completion of the plan in 2012, there have been significant undertakings within and beyond the immediate League Park area. The East 66th Street corridor gained momentum in the last few years with major commitments from organizations to move into and invest. This resulted in a second \$150,000 TLCI study, funded by TCF, to update and improve the 2012 plan to reimagine and improve the East 66th corridor with a resident-driven approach to neighborhood street design. The resulting TLCI plan is the basis for the proposed MidTown-Hough Connector Project. The proposed Project is a vital part of the [Health Tech Corridor](#), one of Cleveland’s most important economic development districts, and will leverage more than \$300 million in investment and redevelopment in MidTown over the past ten years. The Project creates social, cultural, physical and economic connections between the Hough and MidTown neighborhoods; and most importantly, enables neighborhood residents to directly benefit from following catalytic investments in the immediate vicinity:

- [A New Home for The Cleveland Foundation](#) – TCF’s new \$22 million, 54,000-square foot headquarters was designed by Pascale Sablan to enhance community

access. Moving its headquarters to East 66th Street and Euclid Avenue is the first step toward creating a catalytic heart of the Health-Tech Corridor, built around a vision for a vibrant, innovative, and equitable community that benefits everyone. Established in 1914, [TCF](#) is the world's first community foundation and one of the largest today with assets of \$2.6 billion and annual grants totaling more than \$115 million. This move helps to catalyze more than \$400 million in related projects and empowers the foundation to stay proximate to the residents and neighborhoods in which it serves.

- [Creation of the Hough Community Land Trust](#), a nonprofit organization designed to buy and lease land to developers after negotiating community benefit agreements. A central component to the Project's economic competitiveness, the land trust is working to build wealth for community residents by acquiring tracts of commercial land to capture the appreciation and benefit; ensuring **long term real-estate affordability**; and supporting **racially and economically inclusive ownership** in the neighborhoods of Hough, MidTown, and the Greater University Circle area. The trust is also key component in realizing the community's **vision of an innovative Black Avenue of arts and cultural development, adaptive public spaces, and Black owned businesses**. Ward 7 Councilman Basheer Jones and other partners established the trust with \$1 million of financial support from TCF. [New Village Corporation](#), a subsidiary of the community development intermediary Cleveland Neighborhood Progress, works with the trust to facilitate complex real estate transactions with public and private partners.
- The new location of the [Hough Branch of the Cleveland Public Library](#) at the corner of East 66th Street and Lexington Avenue broke ground in June 2020 and will

bring **several jobs with a choice to join a union**. The \$4 million project is expected to be completed in spring 2022.

- Frontline Development, an all-minority real estate development firm, is currently constructing phase I of [Allen Estates](#) – a sleek and modern designed community of single- and multi-family housing at the corner of East 66th Street and Linwood Avenue. Frontline Development is also committed to **ensuring minority principals and/or subcontractors** are selected to complete the

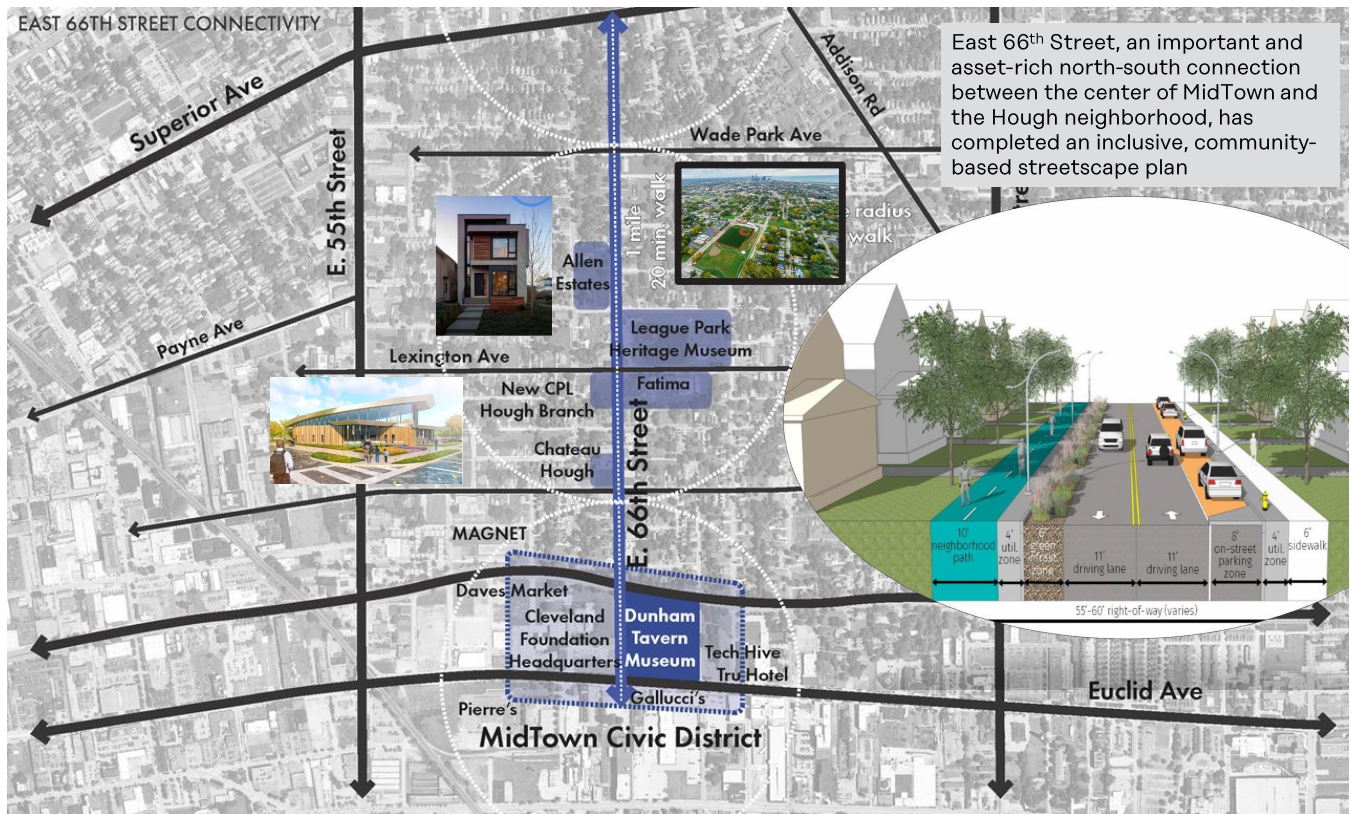
construction which will be utilizing the vacant lots along East 66th Street.

- The [MidTown Cleveland Innovation Community](#) between Euclid Avenue and Chester Avenue along East 66th Street will be developed as 1 million square feet of mixed-use commercial, residential, and green space where students, researchers and scientists, faculty, community residents, entrepreneurs, and businesses can **collaborate to innovate and promote economic growth** in the City of Cleveland. The anticipated tenants in the first phase, a new \$50 million [MidTown Center for Innovation](#), to be located at the northwest corner of Euclid Avenue and East 66th Street, will include JumpStart, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland State University, and Cleveland Institute of Art. The building will also include entrepreneurial support organizations, workforce developing, coding education, and inclusive program-

ming. The MidTown Center for Innovation is scheduled for completion in 2022. Overall, the MidTown Cleveland Innovation Community project will invest \$350 million in the MidTown and Hough neighborhoods and will contribute towards the economic vitality of the region by creating several thousand jobs.



Figure 25 Economic Investments along the Project Corridor



The Project will improve economic competitiveness of the Hough and MidTown neighborhoods by leveraging the investments being made in the project corridor. East 66th Street is one of the first streets to develop north to south and the proposed project improvements would catalyze neighborhood development across the city.

In line with the Biden Administration’s commendable efforts to focus on equity in federal infrastructure investments, the Project will improve access for underrepresented and underserved communities and provide better connections to key destinations and employment opportunities. The scope of this project will catalyze long-term, multigenerational social and economic development to enhance underserved neighborhoods, and transform the lives of people who deserve and need it so desperately. This type of strategic public/private collaboration among corporations, neighborhood

residents, and community revitalization partners directly benefits the economic vitality of the neighborhoods and is critical to the long-term success of Cleveland.

5. STATE OF GOOD REPAIR

The existing pavement and sidewalk along East 66th Street are in very poor condition and require full reconstruction to address the safety concerns. NOACA prepares pavement conditions and scenario reports for the Northeast Ohio Region. Pavement condition of the region’s roadways is ranked based on a Pavement Condition Rating (PCR) system. Based on [available 2020 data](#), the pavement condition for East 66th Street ranges from a PCR ranking of 43 to 54 out of 100, indicating that the pavement is in poor condition.

“My mother used to walk all the time. She is blind now, and I am afraid to take her out on walks because our sidewalks are missing. It’s not safe for her. I have called the City for years to see if we could get our sidewalks back.”
 – East 66th Street Resident, 2020

Approximately nine percent of the existing sidewalk along East 66th Street is missing altogether, and another nine percent has deteriorated to a point that the sidewalk

is unable to support safe movement. The condition of the sidewalk has significantly limited accessibility for residents, including some with physical disabilities along the Corridor who have given up walking altogether because of this. The current design provides for a new six-foot sidewalk on the east side of the street and an eight

to ten foot recycled asphalt multi-use path on the west side of the street. The proposed sidewalk will be wider than the current City standard of five feet to better accommodate wheelchairs. The BCA indicates that the Project will result in a reduction of \$860,000 in maintenance costs over the project life.

Operations and Maintenance Costs

Figure 26 Existing State of Pavement and Sidewalk



NOACA prepares roadway pavement maintenance reports every two years for counties and communities in the Northeast Ohio Region. The following table identifies recommended pavement treatments and planning levels

costs based on the 2020 report. It is anticipated that these maintenance activities will generally be implemented for the East 66th Street Corridor.

Table 2 Preventive and Minor Rehabilitation Maintenance Activities and Cost Estimates

Activity	Cost (per sq. ft.)	Estimated Cost per 12-ft. Lane Mile
Crack Sealing, Rejuvenators, Chip Sealing	0.09	\$5,700
Microsurfacing, Slurry Seal	0.26	\$16,500
Partial Depth Patching, Chip & Seal	0.43	\$27,200
Thin Asphalt Overlays without Milling	0.54	\$34,200
Pavement Milling	0.78	\$49,400

Operations and Maintenance Funding

The City of Cleveland is committed to maintaining the roadway and streetscape improvements for the life of the Project. The City will utilize the general fund for all maintenance obligations and partner with project partners to maintain streetscape enhancements to be constructed as part of this Project. The City has gradually [tripled the funding](#) spent on street repairs for the last five years, reaching about \$12 million over the last three years. The City increased its street budget in 2016, doubling the

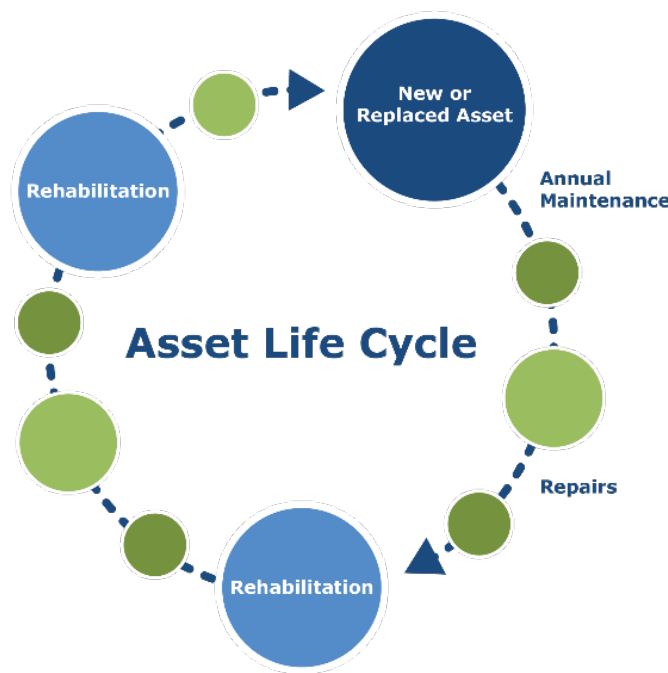
program from \$4 million to \$8 million. An increase in the income tax from 2 percent to 2.5 percent was adopted in 2016 which increased the street budget to \$12 million annually.

The City's income tax represented the largest source of revenue for the General Fund. Approximately 89 percent of income tax revenue supports the General Fund. Charges for services, such as the solid waste collection fee, generate the second largest source of revenue for the General Fund.

Transportation Asset Management Plan

NOACA has established a transportation asset management program to ensure the transportation network is maintained efficiently and effectively, focusing on pavement condition and bridges. NOACA has also adopted a [Transportation Assessment Management Plan](#) that establishes an integrated approach to effectively maintain existing and new infrastructure. Components of the asset management plan include:

- Asset inventories
- Evaluation of existing conditions
- Asset management goals, objectives, and measures
- Performance measures and targets
- Performance gaps
- Lifecycle Management
- Risk management
- Financial summary
- Investment strategies
- Process enhancements



NOACA utilizes an advanced pavement management software tool to inform decision making and maximize the budget while achieving the highest possible return on investment. The system generates scenarios based on

utilization of different prioritization criteria over a defined planning horizon.

SECONDARY SELECTION CRITERIA

1. PARTNERSHIP

The [City of Cleveland](#) is the applicant and primary point of contact of this RAISE grant application. The City and its partners have been proactively leading and advocating for this Project for several years. The City has extensive experience with procuring and developing transportation improvement projects and is experienced and committed to the maintenance of East 66th Street. Within the last 3 years, the City and its partners have procured 3 federal grants used for several development projects in Cleveland. The partners also include area residents and youth leaders that are involved in the planning and public engagement of the Project.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Designed through an innovative and inclusive planning process, the Project's inclusive approach tears down barriers to opportunity, advances racial equity, and addresses environmental injustice. The ongoing efforts of a broad range of Project stakeholders are responsible for every aspect of Project design, development, and funding. In addition to the core Project Team listed below, the Project benefits from the ongoing involvement of more than two dozen project partners and stakeholders, including many non-profit organizations, public institutions, community residents, youth leaders, private developers, businesses, and elected officials. This type of strategic public/private collaboration directly benefits neighborhoods and is critical to the long term-success of Cleveland. A list of all parties can be found [here](#). All project partners support the project and have actively engaged in bimonthly meetings since 2017. The letters of support from the partners and stakeholders can be found [here](#). These numerous stakeholders represent diverse interest and investments in the success of this Project. The Project leverages economic development, affordable housing projects, water and waste infrastructure, power and electric infrastructure, broadband and land use plans and policies as well as other public service efforts such as public library, youth councils, and family services.

NOACA – [The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency](#) (NOACA) is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) that represents state, county, city, village, and township officials in Greater Cleveland. It is the regional transportation and environmental planning agency and addresses the transportation, air quality, and water quality needs for the region. NOACA plays a significant role in the success of this project. NOACA's vision to strengthen regional cohesion, preserve existing infrastructure, and build a sustainable multimodal transportation system to support economic development and enhance quality of life in Northeast Ohio aligns perfectly with this Project. NOACA supports the project through funding to update the Transportation for Livable Communities Initiative (TLCI) plan that addresses the reconstruction and development of East 66th Street corridor as a focal "Black Avenue" for Cleveland. NOACA is a funding partner for the Project.

"Build from the experience of resident experts."
 – Adam King - property owner & East 66th Street Stakeholder Group Member

TCF – [The Cleveland Foundation](#) is the oldest community foundation and as the City's largest philanthropic institution with assets of \$2.6 billion and annual grants totaling more than \$115 million. TCF's mission is to enhance the lives of all residents of Greater Cleveland, now and for generations to come, by working together with our donors

to build community endowment, address needs through grantmaking, and provide leadership on key community issues. TCF's decision to rehome its headquarters into MidTown supports the Project by reimagining East 66th Street as a community connector for the neighborhoods of Hough and Midtown. The move will bring future investments in the region, job growth for all skill levels, and a tangible outcome to honor and experience the history, social fabric, and cultural richness of communities along East 66th Street. TCF is a funding partner for the Project.

MidTown Cleveland – [MidTown Cleveland](#) is one of the Project driving partners and the sole organization charged with leveraging MidTown's diverse assets to develop a dynamic neighborhood that unites the city's downtown and innovation districts. MidTown Cleveland aspires to create a model equitable neighborhood, with strategies to ensure that all people benefit from and shape the neighborhood's growth and change, particularly historically marginalized people of color. MidTown Cleveland is involved in the development of several other projects in the MidTown Cleveland Innovation Community between Chester Avenue and Euclid Avenue along East 66th Street that will leverage the investments in the Project corridor.

Figure 27 Project Partners



2. INNOVATION

Innovative Technology

Broadband Deployment

Decades of digital redlining have resulted in many areas of Cleveland lacking sufficient access to affordable, high-speed internet. Of cities with populations over 100,000, Cleveland was ranked as the one of the worst connected cities based on American Community Survey data. The Hough Neighborhood has one of the lowest rates in the City for access to broadband with approximately 50 percent of households lacking access. The Project will include relocating existing utilities in dedicated underground conduits and to expand fiber optics internet access in the Corridor. Furthermore, the project will install the infrastructure to provide 5G reliable, high speed internet access to the Hough Neighborhood. Anticipated costs for these improvements are included in the project budget shown in the Section III. Increased internet connectivity from the fiber infrastructure will provide \$322,000 in benefit to the neighborhood as noted in the BCA. This investment in-turn will spur economic growth. For instance, [DigitalC](#), a non-profit organization focused on improving Greater Cleveland's digital literacy, would be able to expand their coworking space, Tech Hive, in the surrounding neighborhood to reach a greater population.

Complete/Green Street Design

The Project will service as a pilot project for an innovative complete/green street design that has the potential to be replicated regionally and nationally. The foundation of the Project vision is to reconstruct an urban corridor that includes smart street technologies, complete street details, and green infrastructure. The Project design team has conducted extensive engagement with neighborhood residents and is committed to incorporating neighborhood priorities including ADA design, expanded pedestrian/bicyclist facilities, safety priorities, and aesthetic improvements that empower the neighborhood and create safe, comfortable, and appealing spaces for the community. The Project expands low-emission transportation facilities by reconstructing crumbling sidewalks, providing new trails facilities, enhancing transit waiting areas, and creating safer intersection crossings. The Project includes green infrastructure design details including a green infrastruc-

ture area throughout the Corridor, separating vehicular traffic and pedestrians.

Air Quality Monitoring

The Project team has identified installation of an air quality monitoring system along the Corridor as a component to consider for further evaluation in the final design phase of the project. As discussed in the environmental sustainability section of this grant proposal, the Hough Neighborhood has been identified as an area at high risk for cancers from inhalation of air toxics. Monitoring the air quality will be an informative tool for the community to be aware of potential health concerns.

Roadway Condition Sensors

The Project team will be further exploring the use of embedded maintenance sensors in the new paving to allow the City to better manage roadway maintenance needs. The existing Corridor has fallen into substantial disrepair. The City, TCF, Midtown Cleveland, Inc., and other partners are committed to ensuring that the redevelopment of the Corridor is maintained throughout the life of the project and serves as a catalyst for reinvestment in the neighborhood. Installation of maintenance sensors will provide a tool to monitor the condition of the roadway and make informed decisions in the future to prevent future deterioration of the Corridor.

Vehicle-to-Grid Technologies

The Project team will explore best locations for electric vehicle charging stations as well as locations for bike share and e-scooter stations along the Corridor to support increased mobility for residents. Locations for electric vehicle charging stations and e-scooter stations will be vetted by the community to identify the most suitable locations for these stations.

Safety Systems

Safety in the East 66th Street is a critical concern among the residents in the Hough Neighborhood. Installation of a ShotSpotter gunshot detection system will be considered during the final design of the project. The Project team is committed to transforming the Corridor into a safe and comfortable neighborhood for all residents.

Park PLAYce Concept

Community facilities, including the historic League Park, Fatima Family Center, and neighborhood churches,

require larger parking areas for scheduled events that would largely be unused about 80 percent of the time. The Hough neighborhood lacks adequate parks and public spaces. The design team has developed a unique concept, Park PLAYce, which would accommodate parking needs during community events while also providing additional park spaces.

Figure 28 Conceptual Rendering of Park PLAYce

PARK PLAYCE OPTION A: PARKING LOT



PARK PLAYCE OPTION B: PUBLIC SPACE / PLAY AREA



Park PLAYce is envisioned as a community-supportive flexible play space and surface parking lot which will be near the historic League Park. The surface parking lot will be flexible to support community-identified needs, including playground space, athletic facilities, gathering space for community events, fitness areas, wi-fi spots/charging stations, and additional amenities.

V. ENVIRONMENTAL RISK

The City and its partners are prepared to deliver the Project in accordance with the project schedule. Additional analysis of project readiness factors is provided below, but in summary, the City assesses minimal project delivery risks for the following reasons:

- **The Project team has developed a proposed design that has been vetted with the community through**

Innovative Project Delivery

Environmental Review and Permitting

If awarded RAISE grant funding, the project will be required to complete the federal NEPA review process. The Project team, including the City of Cleveland and its design engineers, have extensive experience with the development of federal-aid projects and the NEPA review process. It is anticipated that the NEPA reviews will occur during the winter of 2021 to 2022 as shown in the [Project Schedule](#). The Project will benefit from the Ohio Department of Transportation’s (ODOT) programmatic agreements to maximize the efficiency of the environmental review and permitting process. ODOT has executed an agreement with FHWA to streamline the environmental review process through the NEPA Assignment program. ODOT assumes FHWA’s responsibilities through this program for all environmental laws, rules and orders, and interagency consultation including Section 4(f) and Section 106 requirements. *Innovative Financing*

Public/Private Partnership

The Project will leverage City funding by utilizing private and public funding sources. The City, TCF, and NOACA have committed funding to support the MidTown-Hough Connector Project. As described in the previous partnership section of this grant proposal, the project is championed by numerous other non-profit organizations, community leaders, private developers, and elected officials. Numerous partners have supported this project since its conception and have committed to realizing the transformative vision of the neighborhood.

extensive public engagement. Residents of the Hough neighborhood and community leaders have held a central role in the development of the Project. The residents of Hough have called for a project vision that is focused on equity, inclusion, and prosperity for their neighborhood. The proposed project lays the foundation for the realization of this vision.

- **Design and environmental work done to-date lowers uncertainty around scope, impact, and cost.** The Project team has evaluated several conceptual design alternatives and anticipates that the preliminary engineering will be completed in winter 2022, which allows for the environmental and right-of-way acquisition processes to be completed prior to a late winter/early spring 2024 design-build letting. Environmental investigations of potentially contaminated sites have been completed for properties adjacent to the Corridor and additional investigations will be completed as the final design develops.
- **Minimal Right of Way Acquisition will be required.** The Project footprint is substantially within the existing right of way. Minimal acquisition will be required to construct intersection improvements. The Project team has identified options to minimize right of way acquisition while improving the Corridor landscape

and expanding the tree canopy. The team is seeking a unique approach of placing street trees slightly outside of the existing narrow right of way boundaries in residential front yards. The City would maintain these trees through a tree maintenance easement. This approach received positive feedback was from community members during public engagement activities and will be explored further as the design advances.

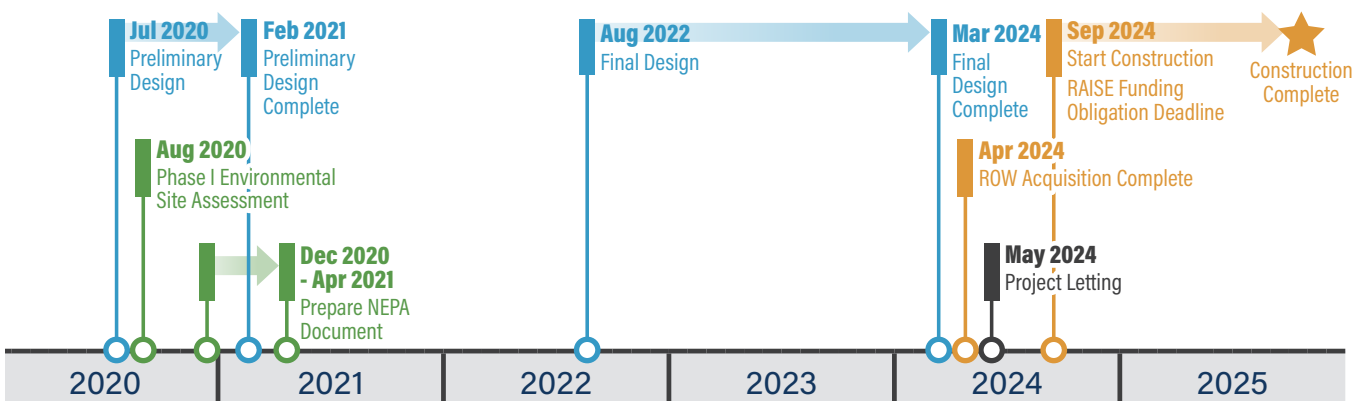
- **The Project is noncontroversial and supported by Project partners.** The Project team has conducted extensive public engagement and advanced community engagement through multiple resident-led advisory committees, community meetings and neighborhood events. This Project has numerous partners, as discussed above, that have committed approximately \$630,000 in funding to-date and will provide an additional \$3.2 million for final design and construction.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The [Project schedule](#) demonstrates that funds can be obligated in advance of the RAISE funding obligation deadline of September 30, 2024. The City anticipates construction will begin by September 2024 and will be completed by November 2025. All property and right-of-

way acquisition will be completed in accordance with 49 CFR Part 24 and other Federal regulations. The City has an experienced right of way acquisition staff who have been actively involved in the project development process.

Figure 29 Project Schedule



REQUIRED APPROVALS

The Project team has worked in close coordination with key stakeholders throughout the preliminary design phase of the Project. As a result of this coordination, the Project has achieved or is expected to achieve all approvals necessary to begin construction in September 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL APPROVALS

The Project team anticipates that the appropriate NEPA class of actions for the project is a Categorical Exclusion per 23 CFR 771.117(26). The Project team anticipates completing a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment in the fall of 2021 and initiating the Categorical Exclusion

document in December 2021. The Project team intends to obtain ODOT approval of the Categorical Exclusion document by September 2022.

STATE AND LOCAL APPROVALS

The Project is being led by the City of Cleveland and partnering organizations. There is a broad base of support for the Project, as shown by the [Letters of Support](#) submitted for this application. ODOT will review and approve the NEPA document for the Project. The project will not require other State approvals. The City of Cleveland has included funding for streetscaping improvements on East 66th Street in the [2019 Three Year Capital Improvement Program](#). The project will be included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

The City and NOACA have extensive experience delivering large-scale projects completed through the NEPA process. In 2020, the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) was awarded \$15 million through the BUILD program to replace heavy rail vehicles and construct infrastructure upgrades and NOACA received \$9 million in federal funding through the 2019 INFRA program to rehabilitate riverbank infrastructure along the Cuyahoga River. Additionally, the City of Cleveland was recently awarded \$35 million in a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grant to redevelop a long-neglected area of the Buckeye-Woodhill Neighborhood and improves connections to other areas of the city. The Project team is knowledgeable on the requirements associated with receiving federal funding and fully prepared to meet the funding obligation deadline. The proposed design will conform to all current USDOT, AASHTO, ADA, and ODOT design standards for roadway

reconstruction and sidewalk/trail facilities. [Conceptual design](#) and [typical sections](#) have been completed or are close to completion for the Project, which demonstrate the Project can be designed effectively to meet the needs of the Corridor and surrounding communities.

ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT RISKS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The Project team coordinated closely with the community and key stakeholders to identify risks early during the conceptual design and alternatives evaluation phase. The Project team has gained the support of the community through extensive engagement center on inclusion and equity. The Project team is committed to continuing advanced community engagement to successfully transform East 66th Street from a crumbling corridor into a model public space that is inclusive, accessible, multi-modal, and empowers the community. The Project has minimized risks associated with right of way acquisition by designing the Project largely within the existing right of way and pursuing an innovative approach of obtaining a tree maintenance easement with the support of the community. Environmental investigations have been completed at contaminated sites adjacent to the Corridor and remediation has been initiated at select sites. Additional investigations will be completed as the Project design develops. The Project team is experienced and knowledgeable on potential risks associated with remediation of contaminated sites and is prepared to manage additional cleanup requirements associated with this Project. With the proactive approach taken, the Project team does not anticipate any of the identified risks to significantly alter the schedule or costs.

VI. BENEFIT COST ANALYSIS

The objective of a benefit-cost analysis (BCA) is to bring all the direct effects of a transportation investment into a common measure (dollars), and to account for the fact that benefits accrue over an extended period while costs are incurred primarily in the initial years. The primary elements that can be monetized are travel time, changes in vehicle operating costs, vehicle crashes,

environmental impacts, remaining capital value, and maintenance costs. The results of the BCA are briefly summarized below. A detailed technical memorandum of the analysis is attached and available to view at the grant application website: <https://www.srfconsulting.com/mid-town-hough-connector-raise/>

NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The No Build Alternative includes leaving the East 66th Street corridor in its current geometric and operational state, as described in the above sections of this document. Intensified maintenance activities that were recently incurred to keep the corridor operational are expected to persist over the upcoming years.

BUILD ALTERNATIVE

The Build Alternative assumes a full-depth reconstruction and redesign of the East 66th Street corridor from Euclid Avenue on the south to Superior Avenue on the north. In addition to reconstructing the deteriorating pavement and subsurface infrastructure, the project provides high-speed broadband internet to local residents, an off-street mixed-use path for bicyclists, upgraded sidewalks for pedestrians, and numerous spot mobility and traffic calming improvements to increase safety.

BCA METHODOLOGY

The primary cost and benefit components analyzed in the BCA included:

- Safety: crashes by severity
- Fiber: high-speed broadband internet
- Quality of life benefits:
 - » Bicyclists' mobility
 - » Bicyclists' health
 - » Bicyclists' recreation

» Reduced auto-use: congestion, emissions, and vehicle operating costs

- Initial capital costs
- Remaining capital value: value of improvement beyond the analysis period
- Maintenance costs

Other analysis considerations included:

- The analysis assumed that construction would take place from year 2024 to 2026. Therefore, year 2027 was assumed to be the first full year that benefits will be accrued from the project.
- The present value of all project benefits and costs was calculated using 2019 as the year of current dollars

PROJECT COSTS

The project cost for the RAISE Grant components of the project is expected to be \$12.1 million after discounting to year 2019 dollars.

BCA RESULTS

The benefit-cost analysis provides an indication of the economic desirability of a scenario, but results must be weighed by decision-makers along with the assessment of other effects and impacts. Projects are considered cost-effective if the benefit-cost ratio is greater than 1.0. The larger the ratio number, the greater the benefits per unit cost. The BCA Analysis for this Project resulted in a benefit-cost ratio of 1.3. Results of the benefit-cost analysis are included in Table 3.

Table 3 Benefit-Cost Analysis Results

	Initial Capital Cost (2019 Dollars)	Project Benefits (2019 Dollars)	Benefit-Cost Ratio (7% Discount Rate)	Net Present Value (2019 Dollars)
No Build vs. Build	\$12.1 million	\$15.4 million	1.3	\$3.3 million

VII. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Links to supporting documents are included throughout this narrative. All supporting documents and the RAISE grant application narrative are available to view at the following webpage:

<https://www.srfconsulting.com/midtown-hough-connector-raise/>