

NEIGHBORHOODS AND SCORES

Three of the biggest and most valuable assets our city offers to developers are:

- Tax Abatements
- Public Land
- Bonus density through zoning variances



We believe that public land-- whether or not it is sold at market value-- should be reserved for development that contributes to equity in our city. As the market controls private property all around us, this finite resource must be leveraged to bring the kind of investment that the market will not bring on its own. This means that land transferred or sold by the city or the Greater Cincinnati Redevelopment Authority must go to development projects that meet the cut scores.

Minimum rubric scores (or cut scores) should be required for the use of any of these.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Cincinnati suffers from deep economic and racial segregation caused largely by uneven development and discrimination in investment. Because different neighborhoods are in different stages of development, our public incentives should be used strategically to level the playing field. They should also be used carefully so they do not cause harm to communities. This means that we should set different cut scores for different neighborhoods, and that neighborhoods should be regularly assessed (at least annually) to account for changes and transitions.

We need criteria for sorting our 52 neighborhoods into different cut score levels. The first of these is **median household income**. This is measured by census data every ten years, and it's a pretty stable and strong indicator of neighborhood investment patterns over time.

The list on the right arranges each neighborhood in order from highest to lowest household median income (2010), and groups them into fourths, or quartiles. For now, these will form our 4 minimum score levels:

- **Highest income group --> requires at least a 75% score**
- **2nd highest --> requires at least a 65% score**
- **3rd highest --> requires at least a 55% score**
- **Lowest --> requires at least a 50% score**

STEP 1

Find your neighborhood's group and baseline score level.

This is a good starting point, but there are other factors to consider...

BASELINE SCORE LEVELS BY MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

75%

- Mount Lookout \$115,558
- Columbia Tusculum \$104,511
- Mount Adams \$99,125
- Hyde Park \$74,000
- California \$61,818
- Mount Washington \$48,882
- Oakley \$48,002
- North Avondale \$47,465
- Pleasant Ridge \$47,436
- Saylor Park \$47,293
- Downtown \$45,849
- East End \$45,592

65%

- Kennedy Heights \$44,310
- East Walnut Hills \$44,103
- Madisonville \$41,526
- College Hill \$40,464
- West Price Hill \$37,720
- Clifton \$35,834
- Carthage \$35,000
- Northside \$34,495
- Westwood \$33,922
- Bond Hill \$33,492
- Hartwell \$33,021
- Spring Grove Village \$32,067

55%

- Mount Airy \$30,189
- Mount Auburn \$30,146
- Roselawn \$28,535
- East Price Hill \$28,425
- Riverside \$28,033
- Camp Washington \$27,669
- East Westwood \$27,097
- North Fairmount \$26,547
- Linwood \$26,143
- South Fairmount \$24,395
- Sedamsville \$24,091
- Evanston \$23,637
- Paddock Hills \$22,277

50%

- CUF \$20,650
- Walnut Hills \$19,885
- Corryville \$18,119
- Avondale \$18,000
- South Cumminsville \$15,357
- Lower Price Hill \$15,257
- Millvale \$15,000
- Over-the-Rhine \$14,517
- Pendleton \$14,000
- West End \$12,808
- Winton Hills \$10,849
- English Woods \$8,474
- Villages at Roll Hill \$7,328

NEIGHBORHOODS AND SCORES, CONT.

Median income changes slowly, even in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods. If that is our only indicator, our efforts to protect against displacement will come far too late. Our neighborhood might improve physically, but the benefit will mostly go to wealthy newcomers. We must also take note of changes and circumstances that affect trends in market investment.

STEP 2 Run through the following list and check any descriptions that apply to your neighborhood.

- Dramatic rise in housing costs**—rent and home prices in my neighborhood have recently gotten much higher
- Significant resident displacement**—neighbors of mine have been getting priced out of the neighborhood
- Surge in development projects**—there's a lot more construction, renovation, or business growth happening in my neighborhood recently
- Influx of amenities serving high-incomes**—there are many new shops, restaurants, and other businesses that are mostly too expensive for my long-time neighbors
- Racial shift**—most of my long-time neighbors are people of color, but the new folks moving in are mostly white
- Speculation**—real estate businesses are heavily advertising my neighborhood, and people describe it as "revitalized"

If most of these descriptions fit your neighborhood, you're in a **hot, gentrifying market**, and you need to **bump up to the 75% score level**. More investment is coming, and we need to make sure it doesn't leave vulnerable folks behind. Even if there's lots of low-income affordable housing now, market forces will make it extremely difficult to keep. And new economic opportunities will have to be targeted specifically where they are most needed.

If this set of criteria doesn't apply to your neighborhood, move on to Steps 3 and 4.

STEP 3 Run through one more list and check what applies.

- More moderate change**—similar changes to the ones described above are happening in my neighborhood, but not quite as dramatically
- Proximity to downtown**—from my neighborhood, you can drive quickly and easily to downtown Cincinnati
- Renter occupancy**—most of my neighbors are renters
- Adjacent investment**—at least one of the neighborhoods that border mine is either quite wealthy or gentrifying quickly
- Historic designation**—my neighborhood is home to a local or national historic district

If your neighborhood is described by some combination in this list, it is **likely starting to transition or gentrify**, and you should **bump up one score level from where you started**.

STEP 4 Consider other special circumstances.

Your neighborhood might be a special case. Maybe one huge project is on it's way, and you know it's about to change the game for investment and development. In order to lay the groundwork for a healthy community and equitable city future, adjustments may have to be made accordingly.