



King-Lincoln

Transforming the King-Lincoln Neighborhood

Historical Context and Overview

King-Lincoln has history, opportunity, resources of people and institutions, a musical and artistic legacy, and challenges that came with segregation, integration, dividing freeways, lack of jobs, downward national economic turns, suburbanization, and numerous efforts to revitalize.

In the 1990s, a snapshot of the neighborhood would have included these assets—the restoration and establishment of the King Arts Complex with the Pythian Theater as a centerpiece, the establishment of The Ohio State University’s African American and African Studies Department, a new facility for the Urban League, redevelopment along Taylor Avenue, Ohio State’s acquisition of the old St. Anthony Hospital, a new life for the old St. Clair Hospital, the beginnings of the renovation of the Lincoln Theater, remodeled condominiums on East Long Street, new single-family homes in the Elijah Pierce Estates, planned playgrounds near churches, a proposed new Champion School, and proposed new retail in the 800 block of East Long for a coffee house and bookstore in the old Alpha Hospital. Other things not mentioned where not even on the drawing board yet.

How did these improvements affect King-Lincoln? Which ones were realized and which did not live up to promise? A significant change in direction is in process through the combined efforts of the city and of Ohio State. By recognizing how solutions did not work in the past (like the Model Cities Program and Urban Renewal), looking at how past mistakes might be mitigated (like the gash of the freeway to be healed by a new connector), and concentrating on bringing a mix of housing to appeal to different economic groups, there is much hope but also fear from some who live in the community that they will not have a voice in the changes.

Standards Alignment

Ohio’s New Learning Standards: K-12 Social Studies

Grade 3, Content Statement 3: Local communities change over time.

Grade 8: Choices made by individuals, businesses, and governments have both present and future consequences.

HS American History, Content Statement 29: The postwar economic boom, greatly affected by advances in sciences, produced epic changes in American life.

Learning Objectives

- Explain how the past of a neighborhood has affected its present circumstances and its future.
- Explain how forces outside of a neighborhood or city—and beyond the control of the local area—create both positive and negative changes
- Describe how people, organizations, and governments have an ability to make better choices based on their interpretation of history and past mistakes.

Discussion Questions

1. What does “transformation” mean? What would it look like in a neighborhood?
2. What factors contribute to a stable, safe, and attractive neighborhood? What factors take away from realizing that goal?
3. Which factors can be changed for the better and how?
4. What is more important in transformation—money, creative solutions, defining what is the common good, or working together for the common good?

Extension Activity

Have students create a list of five important values that any plan for the future of King-Lincoln must include, and based on the five values, five recommendations to be implemented for each (that can be agreed upon by a majority vote). For instance, if a value is that the community should be inclusive and open to all –what are five recommendations (think creatively) that would help that value to be realized? The recommendations would be part of a plan to be presented to City Council for their acceptance in order that all agreed on the types of projects that the city could support with funding.

Additional Resources

City of Columbus website: www.columbus.gov for a copy of the Near East Side Area Commission Plan most recently adopted by City Council.

Funding provided by:

