Neighborhood Land Analysis
This area of Glenville was developed primarily from 1900 to 1930. In that time it densified and followed the typical development pattern of neighborhoods with streetcars as the backbone of their transportation systems. The layout, form, street grid and most of the land use patterns that we see today are the same as they were during Glenville’s heyday. The growth of the neighborhood can be seen progressively from 1912 to 1930 in Figures 8 through 13.

Figure 8: Circle North, Glenville in 1912
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
Figure 9: East 105th Street and Superior Avenue, Glenville in 1912
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
Figure 10: Circle North, Glenville in 1920-22
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
Figure 11: East 105th Street and Superior Avenue, Glenville in 1920-22
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
HISTORIC LAND USE PATTERNS AND DEVELOPMENT

Figure 12: Circle North, Glenville in 1927-37
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
Figure 13: East 105th Street and Superior Avenue, Glenville in 1927-37
Source: ESRI People Maps / Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
EXISTING LAND USE TODAY

While the neighborhood’s overall form and street grid remain largely unchanged; there are a number of noticeable differences to the Glenville of the early and mid 20th Century that can be inferred from the existing land use map in Figure 13.

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES

The interior of the blocks in the neighborhood still maintain much of their character. The majority of the historic homes that line the streets are still intact although there are a large number of vacant lots where homes have been demolished, and some vacant structures that still remain. Vacancy is more concentrated to the north with the south being more stable.

The historic apartment blocks that line East Boulevard north of Ashbury Avenue still remain and present a handsome front to Rockefeller Park. The line of buildings then changes south of Ashbury where structures where removed to build the apartment blocks designed by Ohio’s first African-American architect, Robert Madison in the mid 20th Century. Further south along East Boulevard, a row of historic apartment buildings where removed very much more recently to make way for the expansion of the VA Medical Center.

LANGSTON HUGHES LIBRARY

The Langston Hughes Library, designed by Robert Madison Architects, sits on the site of an old apartment building named “Boulevard Manor” that once held the corner of East Boulevard and Superior Avenue. The branch replaced the old branch, an original Carnegie Library which still stands on East 105th Street between Orville and Churchill.

EAST 105th STREET

The commercial structures that once lined East 105th Street, giving it the nickname “The Gold Coast” are largely gone, the victims of flight to the suburbs and neglect. In their place are vacant lots and parking lots that serve the street’s many churches.

These are the two most common conditions along East 105th Street. Taken together the churches are one of the largest property owners along East 105th Street. While some of the church structures are new, many of them are former synagogues, remnants of an earlier period when Glenville was largely a Polish, Jewish neighborhood.

STREETS

The streetcar system, which was the primary form of transportation for most of Glenville’s resident’s for nearly 70 years was dismantled in 1954. Buses replaced the streetcars in the 1950s and still run to this day. The right-of-ways for both primary streets remains the same today as it was a century ago.

The northwest corner of East 105th Street and Superior Avenue was the site of an old streetcar barn in the early 20th century. Today it is the site of the Greater Abyssinia Towers apartment building for seniors.

While the street grid remains largely unchanged, one very noticeable difference is the abandonment of many of the neighborhood’s alleys. Some are still used, but not well maintained, others have been completely abandoned, with their structure still evident, and others have been abandoned to be incorporated into surface parking lots.

SUPERIOR AVENUE

Superior Avenue, also an important commercial corridor, suffers from the same types of vacancy as East 105th Street. Notable losses are the neighborhood’s two theaters, The Liberty and The Manhattan. The Manhattan, Cleveland’s last Yiddish Theater was approved for demolition recently.
Figure 14: East 105th Street and Superior Avenue, Glenville Today
Source: Google Maps
EXISTING LAND USE

- **INSTITUTIONAL**
  Churches, education, organizations, government, finance, health services

- **GREEN SPACE**
  Private, public

- **COMMERCIAL**
  Food, arts & entertainment, retail, professional offices, beauty, automotive

- **MIXED USE**
  Described as housing located above a business or institution

- **MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING**
  Described as housing accommodating more than 2 families

- **RESIDENTIAL**
  Described as single family or double family housing

- **VACANT LAND**
  Described as land currently not in use

- **PARKING**
  Major parking lots

- **VACANT STRUCTURE**
  Structures not currently in use

Figures 15-24 (this page and facing page) Existing Land Uses in Circle North
Data sourced from the City of Cleveland GIS website and by field study visits.
The mixed use buildings that exist in the neighborhood are remnants of its heyday as a shopping street and core of Glenville. Multifamily uses predominate along East Boulevard and are scattered elsewhere in small pockets throughout the neighborhood.

Vacant land is the second greatest existing condition, and when combined with surface parking create a feeling of abandonment and neglect.

Vacant buildings are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Most vacant structures in recent years have been acquired and demolished by land banks. This process continues today, with some more notable structures being targeted for reuse.

Institutional uses are spread evenly throughout the neighborhood. The VA, and nonprofits are focused along Magnolia Dr. The Langston Hughes Public Library sits at the center near E 105th St and Superior Ave, with schools and churches dispersed throughout the neighborhood.

The largest collection of greenspace is Rockefeller Park, one of the neighborhood’s greatest assets, which defines the western border of Circle North. There is a noticeable absence of programmed greenspace type uses elsewhere in Circle North such as a neighborhood square.

Commercial uses are concentrated at the intersection of E 105th St and Superior Ave and along Superior Ave east of E 105th St. There is a lack of this use type south of Superior Ave.

Surface parking exists most often in clusters near churches, schools, and institutions.
PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

PARCEL STATUS

For the purposes of this study, parcels have been divided into land ownership groups that indicate their potential readiness for development and partnership.

TEAL _READY TO GO
Those parcels in the teal spectrum are publicly owned by Famicos and land banks meaning they are ready for immediate development.

GREEN _POTENTIAL PARTNERS
Greens are other publicly owned parcels that may or may not be currently in use. Owners of these parcels may be partners amenable to working towards the vision for Circle North.

REDS _POTENTIAL PARTNERS
These parcels are owned by various non profit entities that also may be good partners for achieving the vision for Circle North.

GOLDS _PRIVATE PARTNERS
Gold parcels are those owned by private individuals and businesses and may vary widely in their readiness.

Figures 25-33 (this page and facing page) Property Ownership in Circle North
Data sourced from the County Auditor website
Famicos has control over a large number of parcels along E 105th St south of Superior Ave.

The City Landbank owns a large number of critical parcels along Superior Ave and various other parcels throughout the residential portions of the neighborhood.

The County Landbank has a grouping of parcels along E 105th St that are slated for use as the site of the new Fisher House and various other parcels on residential streets.

The city’s park system owns all the land bordering the western edge of the neighborhood. The Cleveland Public School District controls the large grouping of parcels between Churchill and Orville Avenues. The Federal Government is the primary user at the southern end of the neighborhood.

Various nonprofit entities own land in the neighborhood. The largest groupings are the row of nonprofits offices along Magnolia Drive to the southeast, and the parcels on the southwest corner of E 105th and Superior which are owned by the Cleveland Business League.

Churches occupy a large percentage of the parcels fronting E 105th St north of Superior Ave. Physical structures for worship or living make up less than 40% of this land’s use with surface parking being the remainder.

Private individuals make up the largest sector of ownership in the neighborhood. This segment is divided between units which are owner occupied, and rentals whose owners, for the most part live outside the neighborhood.

Private businesses own most of the apartment buildings along East Blvd, a few commercial structures along East 105th St and some homes. In addition, Citizens Academy is a charter school in the northwest corner of the neighborhood.
PROPERTY OWNERSHIP

CONTROL

Property control is key to the success of reaching the vision set forth for Circle North by Famicos and the Cleveland City Planning Department. While Famicos, and the city and county landbanks control many lots along East 105th Street, shown in shades of blue in the property ownership map on the following page, all the key parcels at the core of the neighborhood where East 105th Street and Superior Avenues intersect, are held by other entities. This may be the biggest challenge to execution of the plan for Circle North.

CONTROL AT THE CORE

SOUTHWEST CORNER

The southwest corner is owned by the Cleveland Business League which Famicos has spoken to and is amenable to allowing for development on this corner.

NORTHWEST CORNER

The southwest corner is owned by Greater Abyssinain Apartments and the plan calls for an upgrade and opening up of this corner for a public plaza while providing screening elements and private greenspace for the residents of the apartment tower.

NORTHEAST CORNER

The owner of the northeast corner would like to develop his parcels into a gas station with retail. The City and Famicos are pursuing alternatives with the owner so that this parcel can be used for multistory mixed-use development.

SOUTHWEST CORNER

The southwest corner is privately owned and an agreement would need to be worked out with the owners to leverage this corner for the kind of development call for in TOD.

READY TO GO

The map in figure 15 shows parcels owned by entities that will facilitate immediate development. The large number of aggregated parcels along E 105th Street between Wade Park Avenue and Superior Avenue mean that a dramatic impact can be made on one of the two main corridors in Circle North.

Superior Avenue to the east of E 105th Street also holds potential for development that can dramatically change the perception of the neighborhood in the near term.
Figure 35: READY TO GO Parcels Ready for Immediate Development
Data sourced from the County Auditor website
POTENTIAL PARTNERS

Figure 36 shows land controlled by public and non profit entities that may vary widely in their capacity to partner in the future development of Circle North. Most of these parcels are occupied and in use, but may offer partnerships in programming and cultural development.

1. The church parking lots to the north of Superior Avenue along E 105th St comprise an important opportunity to further the walkability of the neighborhood with the proper redevelopment that balances the churches’ needs with the neighborhood’s.

2. The Greater Abssynian Apartments property offers an opportunity to reversion urban public space at the heart of the neighborhood for resident’s of the building and the public.

3. Partnership with the Cleveland Public Library and the City of Cleveland along Superior Ave where it meets East Boulevard offers many cultural destination opportunities for Circle North.

4. The Cleveland Business League has indicated its willingness to partner with the land they control on the southwest corner of E 105th St. and Superior Ave.

5. The Wade Park/Harry E Davis School site is a prime location for redevelopment near the core of the neighborhood.

6. The empty land around the Louis Stokes Veterans Administration Hospital offers a potential connection to Rockefeller Park that would serve veterans at the hospital.
PRIVATE PARTNERS

Private ownership in the neighborhood constitutes the majority of parcel control. Unlike the other categories of ownership where the number of entities is small, this category is very large and diverse. Private ownership means that owners’ willingness to partner will vary greatly. Parcels identified for development opportunities from this category need to be carefully vetted.

Figure 37: PRIVATE PARTNERS Private ownership of land in Circle North. Data sourced from the County Auditor website
The Western Reserve Land Conservancy conducted a survey of all the structures in the City of Cleveland in 2015. The results of their survey are reflected in the maps on the following two pages. Of the best and worst properties:

- “A (Excellent) or B (Good). These structures are considered to need only minor improvements, if any, and appeared to be cared for and well maintained.”
- “D (Deteriorated) or F (Unsafe or Hazardous). These structures may exhibit characteristics including major cracking; rotting wood; broken or missing windows; missing brick and siding; and open holes.”

- Glenville had the third highest number of vacant D and F properties at 9.2%.

A general finding of the survey and research was that when residential vacancy rates are compared to median sale prices of properties, ‘lower median sale prices do tend to be in the neighborhoods with highest vacancy, and higher median sale prices tend to be in the neighborhoods with lowest vacancy.’
Properties given a D grade by the most recent survey are in danger of moving to beyond saving. These properties should be prioritized for analysis and rehabilitated if deemed worth saving for their historic character and the context of the neighborhood that their architecture may reinforce.

Greenspace in Circle North is mostly made up by Rockefeller Park and is maintained by the City of Cleveland Parks Department.

The abundance of vacant land in Circle North reflects the attention given to removing blighted properties and presents an opportunity for new development.

There are well kept public and privately held properties throughout the neighborhood. Grade A residential properties are clustered on the southern edge and the less so to the northeast with an additional cluster to the northwest. Institutional properties, in general achieve A grades.

Grade B properties are scattered evenly throughout the neighborhood and are comprised of mostly residential homes. Exceptions are the Wade Park / Harry E Davis School owned by the Cleveland Public School District and Park Place 1 Apartments on East Boulevard.

Grade C properties, similar to grade B properties are evenly spread through the neighborhood and are mostly single family residential. The two notable exceptions to this trend are St. Mark’s Church on East Blvd and Citizens Academy School on Hampden Ave. These properties offer the best opportunity to improve the overall appearance of the neighborhood with a moderate investment and should be prioritized for attention.

Diligence on the part of Famicos, and the City of Cleveland have kept failing properties to a minimum. The two larger properties on Superior Ave shown on this map have since been demolished with the remainder being single family homes primarily north of Superior Ave.

Parking
TARGET PROPERTIES

Figure 47 illustrates the locations of properties in the C and D categories.

C properties are where targeted investments for maintenance can create the greatest benefit to the overall property values in the neighborhood.

D properties should be assessed and then either rehabilitated if their architecture, the context they provide or their cultural and historic value are deemed important to the neighborhood. If keeping them does not benefit the overall neighborhood, they should be removed.

Special properties to target:

1. The Citizens Academy property is a large school building that has a greater impact on the surrounding area than a smaller building would. It should be a high priority for a maintenance overhaul.

2. 10929 Superior Avenue is a prominent parcel on a main street. Its architecture is not significant and its sit configuration degrades the walkability of Circle North.

3. The old gas station at East 105th and Ashbury should be targeted for adaptive reuse. It is a unique structure that could fit well into a plan that leverages the greenspaces to the east and west of it.

4. 10728 Superior Avenue is a single family house that stands alone in a row of 7 adjacent parcels. It may better serve the neighborhood if it were removed to create an aggregate parcel for development.