



COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

BUT-North Hamilton Crossing
PID 115755

March 6, 2026

Prepared by:



For:



**Department of
Transportation**



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1.0 Introduction

This analysis discusses the impacts of the proposed North Hamilton Crossing (NHX) project on the geographic and social environment of the surrounding communities, including changes to neighborhoods, community cohesion, changes to travel patterns and accessibility, and impacts on community resources such as schools, houses of worship, businesses, hospitals, police, fire, and other public services.

1.1 Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to improve east-west connectivity north of SR 129 in the City of Hamilton and to reduce congestion and improve mobility in support of current and planned economic growth in the City of Hamilton and western Butler County, as identified in *Plan Hamilton*.

The project's primary needs, which must be addressed to the extent feasible to satisfy the purpose and need, are summarized below and detailed in the *North Hamilton Crossing PID 115755 Purpose and Need (February 2022)*, available in the EnviroNet Project File (Purpose and Need\Project Information).

Primary Needs

- **Poor East-West Connectivity** - Improved connectivity between the east and west sides of Hamilton north of SR 129 is needed to reduce travel times through the city and improve access to regional and national highways including SR 4 (Erie Blvd.), SR 129, US 127 (MLK Jr. Blvd.), and I-75.
- **Insufficient Crossings of the Great Miami River** - A major contributor to traffic congestion within the study area is the lack of crossings over the Great Miami River.
- **Lack of Grade-Separated Railroad Crossings** - There are only two grade-separated railroad crossings within the city limits. However, there are 26 at-grade crossings in Hamilton which cause significant commuter delays and traffic congestion, blocking streets, and causing traffic to shift and contribute to congestion on SR 129.
- **Mobility/Congestion on Local Road Network** - Traffic congestion in the study area is expected to worsen as traffic demand increases due to ongoing residential development, redevelopment of the Main Street corridor, redevelopment of the former Cohen Recycling property at 105 Black Street, and the Spooky Nook development at the former Champion Mill site at 601 N B Street.
- **Safety** - A primary need of the project is to improve safety on the roads within the NHX project area and at the railroad crossings, as roadway safety is highly correlated with congestion.

Secondary Needs

The project's secondary transportation needs, which are considered discretionary and are not the deciding factor in alternative development, include the following:

- **Economic Development** - The NHX project is needed to support planned and proposed economic development in Hamilton by improving transportation infrastructure to meet the traffic demands of ongoing development, including the Spooky Nook retail/recreation/hotel complex.
- **Improve Bike/Pedestrian Connectivity** - The NHX project provides an opportunity to improve bike and pedestrian facilities in the NHX corridor and support the city's goals for bike/pedestrian connectivity within the City of Hamilton, build connections to the broader regional and state trail system, and make Hamilton a walkable city.
- **Improve Multimodal Linkage** - The project supports the city's goal to encourage alternative modes of transportation and to improve and expand bus transportation opportunities to connect transit-dependent individuals to jobs. Improving east-west connectivity in the city would increase access to Butler County Regional Transit Authority (BCRTA)'s transit hub and improve bus service throughout the city.

1.2 Organization of Analysis

The *North Hamilton Crossing (NHX) PID 115755 Feasibility Study (July 2023)* evaluated engineering and environmental information and the associated public input during in-person and virtual public open houses and meetings. Based upon the Feasibility Study, the City of Hamilton, Butler County Transportation Improvement District (TID), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) selected several feasible alternatives for further study, as summarized below and described in further detail in the relevant sections of this report.

For purposes of analysis, the project was divided into three sections as illustrated in **Figure 1**. The three sections and associated alternatives from west to east are:

West Section Alternatives (North B St to US 127)

- NW Washington Crossing
- Gordon/Rhea Crossing

Central Section Alternatives (US 127 to North Fair Ave)

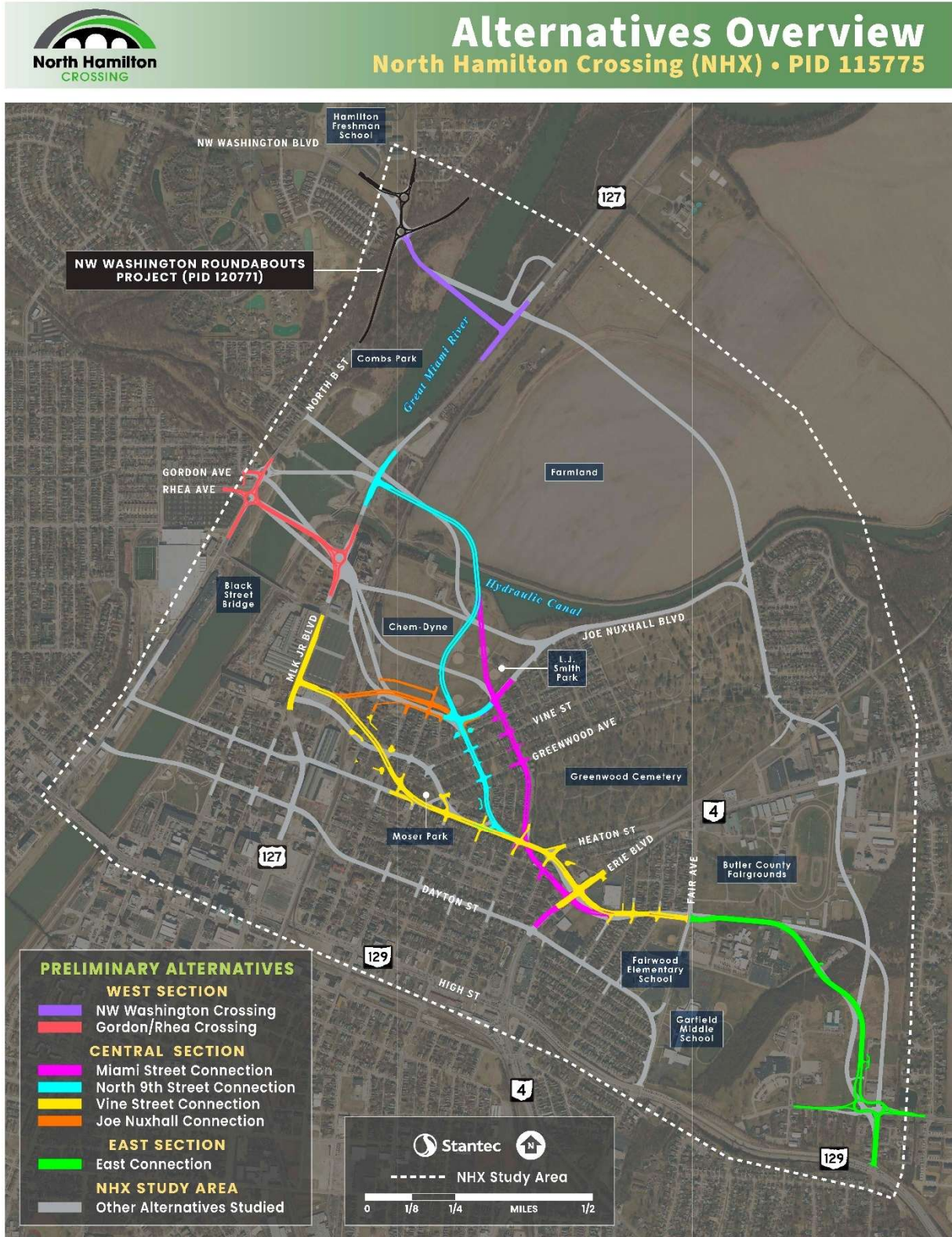
- Miami Street Connection
- Vine Street Connection
- Joe Nuxhall Connection
- North Ninth Connection

East Section Alternative (North Fair Ave to SR 129)

- East Connection

Detailed engineering and environmental analyses were completed for the feasible alternatives. The assessment of each alternative's effect on local communities is described within this document.

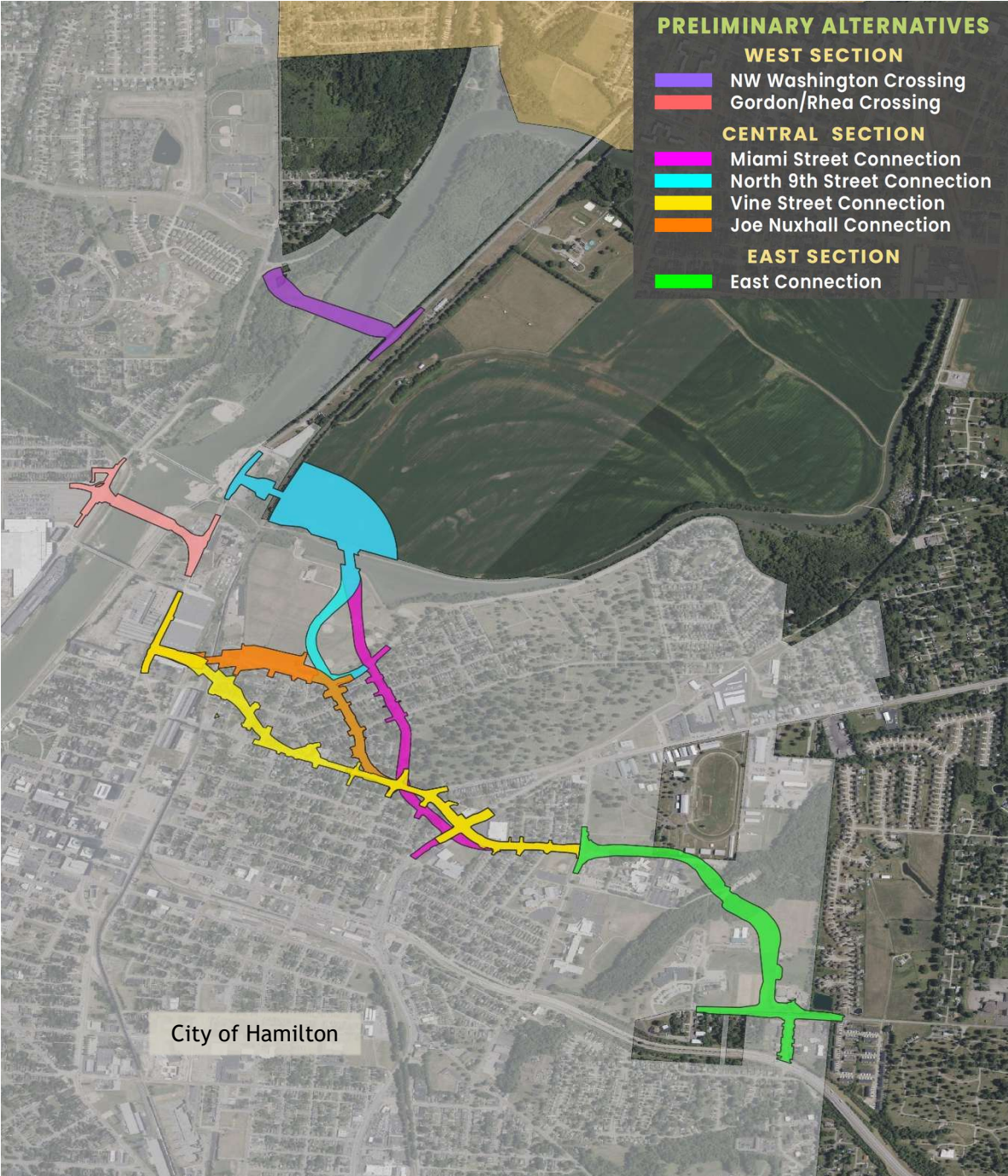
Figure 1: Alternatives Overview (Stantec, June 2025)



1.3 Project Setting

The project is located in Butler County, Ohio. As shown in **Figure 2**, the majority of the project alternatives are entirely within the City of Hamilton. The portions outside the city are limited to the unpopulated area of the North 9th Street/Miami Street Connections and portions of Princeton Road in the East Connection.

Figure 2: Project Alternatives and City Boundaries



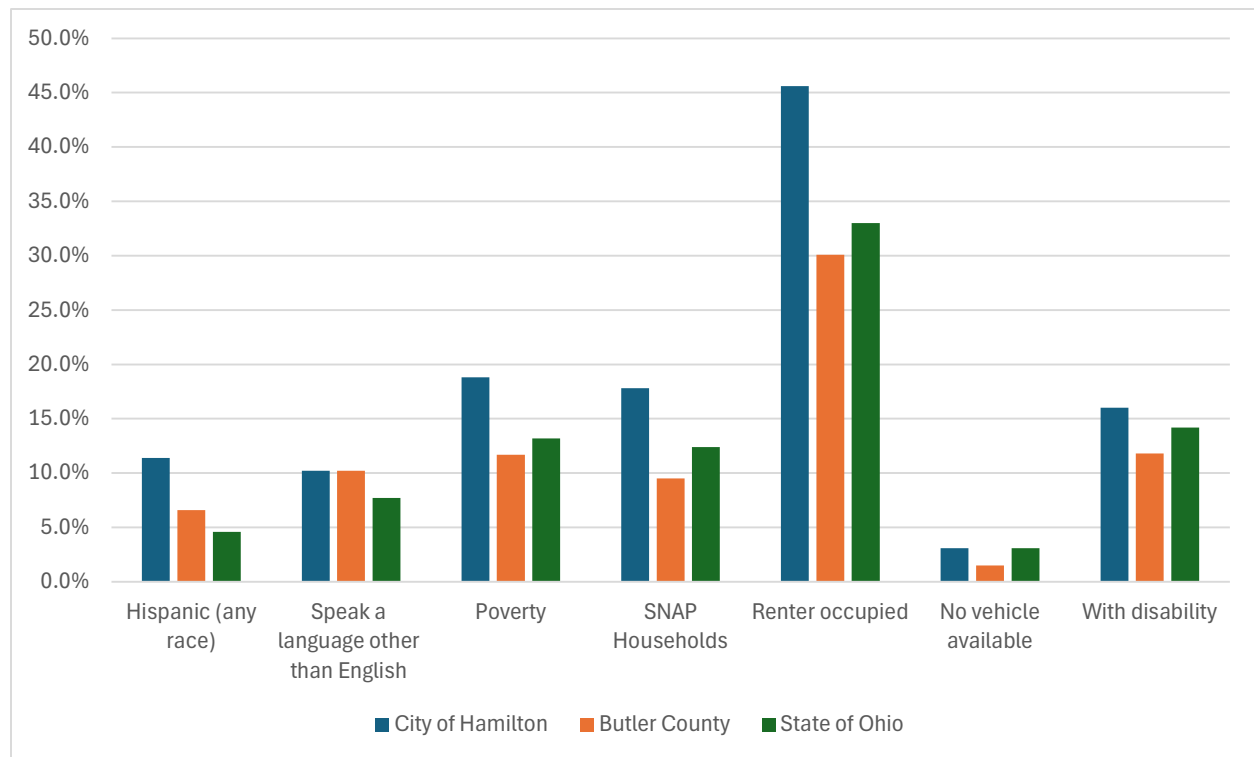
According to the U.S. Census *American Community Survey 2019-2023* five-year estimates, there are 24,729 households in the City of Hamilton with a total population of 63,124. Approximately 26.2% of the population within the City of Hamilton are non-white, with 8.5% Black and 11.4% Hispanic or Latino. The population includes 16.0% with one or more disabilities. Households in the City of Hamilton are comprised of 36.4% married couples, 10.3% cohabiting couples, 31.5% female householder with no spouse or partner, and 21.8% male householder with no spouse or partner.

Approximately 14.3% of the population is aged 65 or older. 27.9% of all households had one or more people 65 years or older. Of the 1,222 grandparents living in Hamilton with their grandchildren under age 18, 59.4% were responsible for basic needs of their grandchildren, making up 2.8% of all households. Approximately 10.2% speak a language other than English at home, with 8.2% speaking Spanish. A total of 4.3% of the population has limited English proficiency, making up 2.7% of the households in the City of Hamilton.

The median household income is \$54,293, with 18.8% of households living below the poverty line and 17.8% of households received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) funds. The federal government defines poverty based upon income thresholds and family size. For example, the Census Bureau’s 2025 poverty threshold for a household of three with no children is \$25,183.

Approximately 45.6% of housing is renter-occupied with a median gross rent of \$974 per month. 74% of employed residents work within Butler County, with 33.7% working inside the City of Hamilton. 3.1% of households have no vehicle available.

Figure 3: Contrast of City of Hamilton with County and State



As shown in **Figure 3**, the percentage of Hispanic or Latino population, poverty level, households receiving SNAP, individuals with disabilities, and renter-occupied housing in Hamilton are higher than the average for Butler County and the state of Ohio. Data presented in this report will contrast the characteristics of local communities and Census Tracts with the city, county, and state data.

2.0 Communities

As explained in ODOT's *Community Impacts Guidance*, communities may be defined by geographic, spatial, behavioral, or psychological unifying factors. The unifying characteristics can be behavioral patterns, daily social interactions, shared perceptions or attitudes towards a particular identifiable area, or shared attributes.

The social characteristics are demonstrated through the residents' association with their neighborhood within the City of Hamilton. The shared attributes are discernable through U.S. census data. The following sections will explain how the project overlays both the City of Hamilton neighborhoods and the applicable Census Tracts.

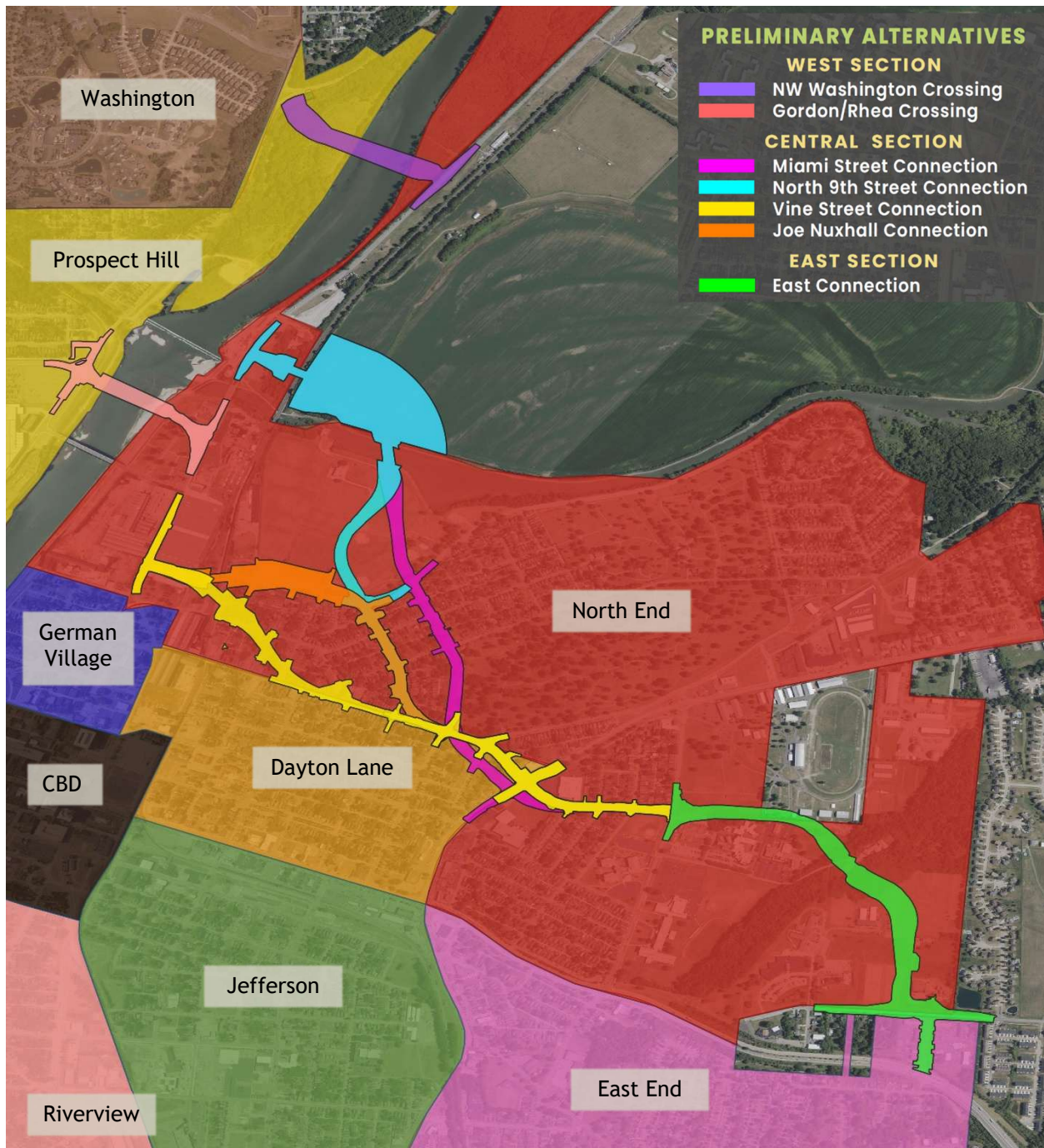
2.1 Neighborhoods

The city of Hamilton, Ohio, has a citizen-led effort called 17STRONG that defines 17 distinct neighborhoods within three types:

- Suburban - separated single-use zones
- Traditional - walkable and densely built with public spaces, institutions, and commercial spaces within the neighborhood
- Urban Core - traditional neighborhood characteristics with higher density, considered Downtown Hamilton.

The project alternatives traverse the traditional neighborhoods of Prospect Hill and North End, containing the majority of the alternatives, the urban core neighborhood of Dayton Lane, and the traditional neighborhood of East End. The suburban neighborhood of Washington is outside the project limits to the west. The traditional neighborhood of German Village abuts the southernmost alternatives to the south. **Figure 4** illustrates the neighborhood boundaries.

Figure 4: City of Hamilton Neighborhoods



2.2 Census Tracts

The project's alternatives traverse seven Census Tracts. The neighborhood boundaries and Census Tracts are not well matched. From west to east, the Census Tracts are listed below with the neighborhoods that they generally contain.

- Census Tract 10.01 - Washington neighborhood, portions of Prospect Hill, and Butler County areas outside the city
- Census Tract 147 - Most of Prospect Hill
- Census Tract 146 - German Village, Central Business District, and the mostly industrial portion of North End
- Census Tract 6 - Populated areas of North End and Dayton Lane
- Census Tract 5 - Most of East End
- Census Tract 110.05 - Eastern, mostly institutional and commercial portion of North End, and Butler County areas outside city
- Census Tract 110.04 - Butler County areas outside, Enterprise Park suburban neighborhood (far removed from project)

Census Tracts 10.01 and 147 are located west of the Great Miami River. Census Tracts 146, 6, 5, 110.4 and 110.05 are east of the river, as shown in **Figure 5**.

As illustrated in **Figure 6**, an expanded view of the overall Census Tract boundaries, the Census Tracts with populated areas within the project limits are Tracts 147, 146, and 6. The eastern terminus of the project extends into a populated area at the northern edges of Tracts 5 and 110.04.

These Census Tract boundaries and the U.S. Census Bureau *American Community Survey (ACS) 2019-2023* 5-year estimates are the source for community information discussed in this report, unless otherwise stated.

Figure 5: Census Tracts Central Section

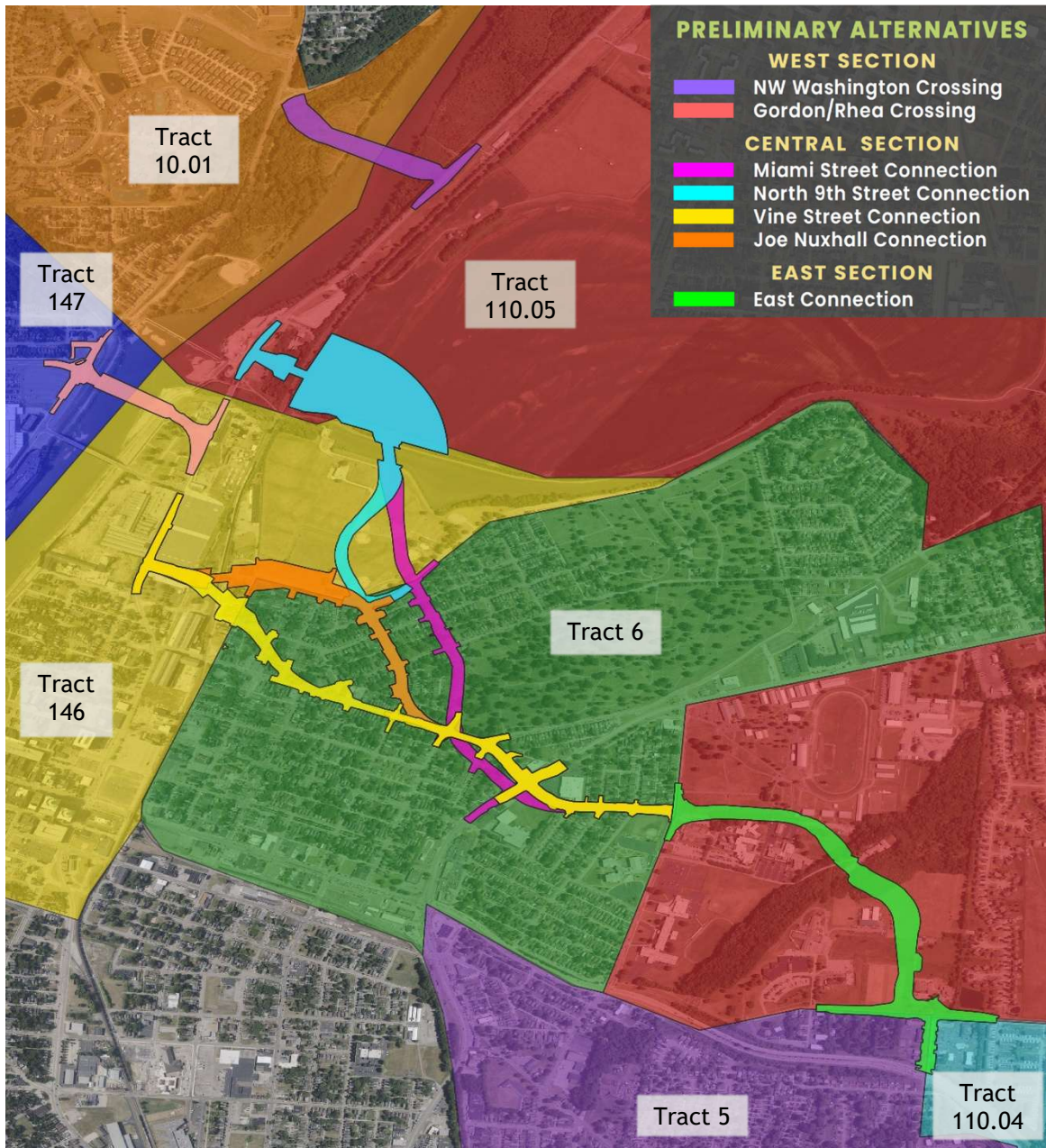
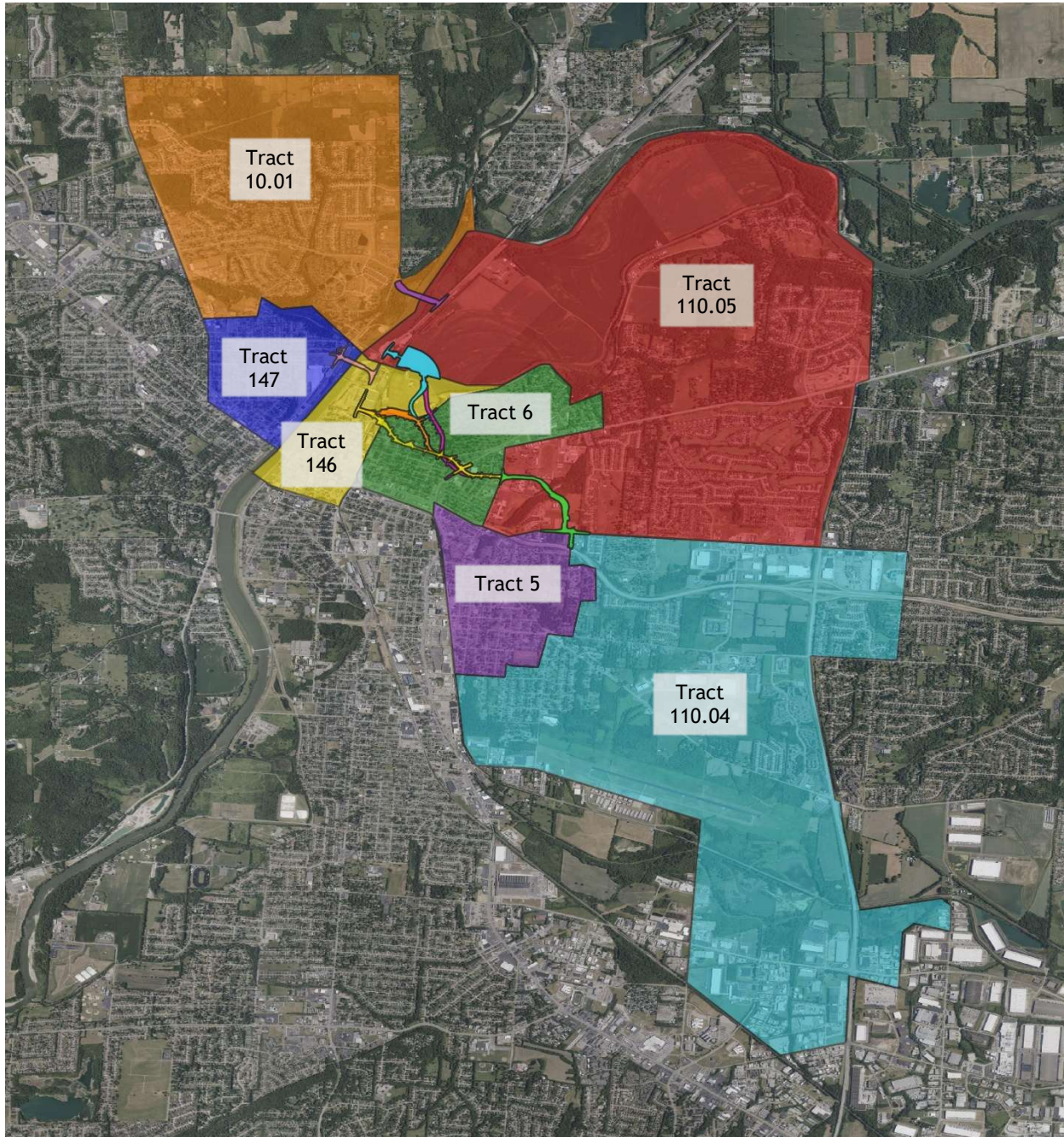


Figure 6: Census Tracts Central Section - Expanded View



2.3 Historical Context

Hamilton was one of fourteen red-lined cities in Ohio from 1935-1940 (see **Figure 7**). Redlining was a practice by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC), a government agency that graded neighborhoods on investment risk based on factors such as the racial demographic, age and condition of housing, public utilities sufficiency, and transportation access. Neighborhoods were graded on a scale from "A" to "D" as follows:

- A. Best (green)
- B. Still desirable (blue)
- C. Definitely declining (yellow)
- D. Hazardous (red)

The HOLC maps were utilized by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA Underwriting Manual 1936) and private lenders to assess whether mortgages would be granted to potential home buyers. Individuals or families from "C" and "D" neighborhoods were less likely to be given a mortgage or loan to purchase a home, resulting in the segregation of minority and low-income populations to prevent "infiltration" of these populations into neighborhoods with a higher grade. Redlining and the associated lending practices were legally used until discriminatory housing practices became illegal in 1968 Fair Housing Act. This historical practice has had long-term detrimental impacts on neighborhoods and their residential populations.

Comparing Census Tracts to the HOLC Residential Security Area maps (see **Figure 8**), Prospect Hill (contained primarily within Census Tract 147) is comprised of areas that were graded "A" and "B," with portions closer to the river graded "C." Factors considered during 1935 grading of the Prospect Hill neighborhood included all conveniences of a city, rapid population growth, and new, good quality housing with no detrimental influences other than the Champion Mill and a Conservancy Tax District area relating to the 1913 flood.

North End and Dayton Lane (contained within Census Tracts 146, 6, and 110.05) received a "C" grade. Factors considered during 1935 grading of the neighborhood included all conveniences of a city as a positive, but detrimental influences included limited housing options, the presence of industrial areas, railroad tracks, and a Conservancy Tax District relating to the 1913 flood.

Therefore, most of the project area was categorized as risky investments by HOLC, with the neighborhoods viewed as declining in 1935 and projected to continue to decline. As a result, there are demographic and socioeconomic differences between the communities that exist today.

Figure 7: 1935 Residential Security Map, Home Owners' Loan Corporation for the City of Hamilton

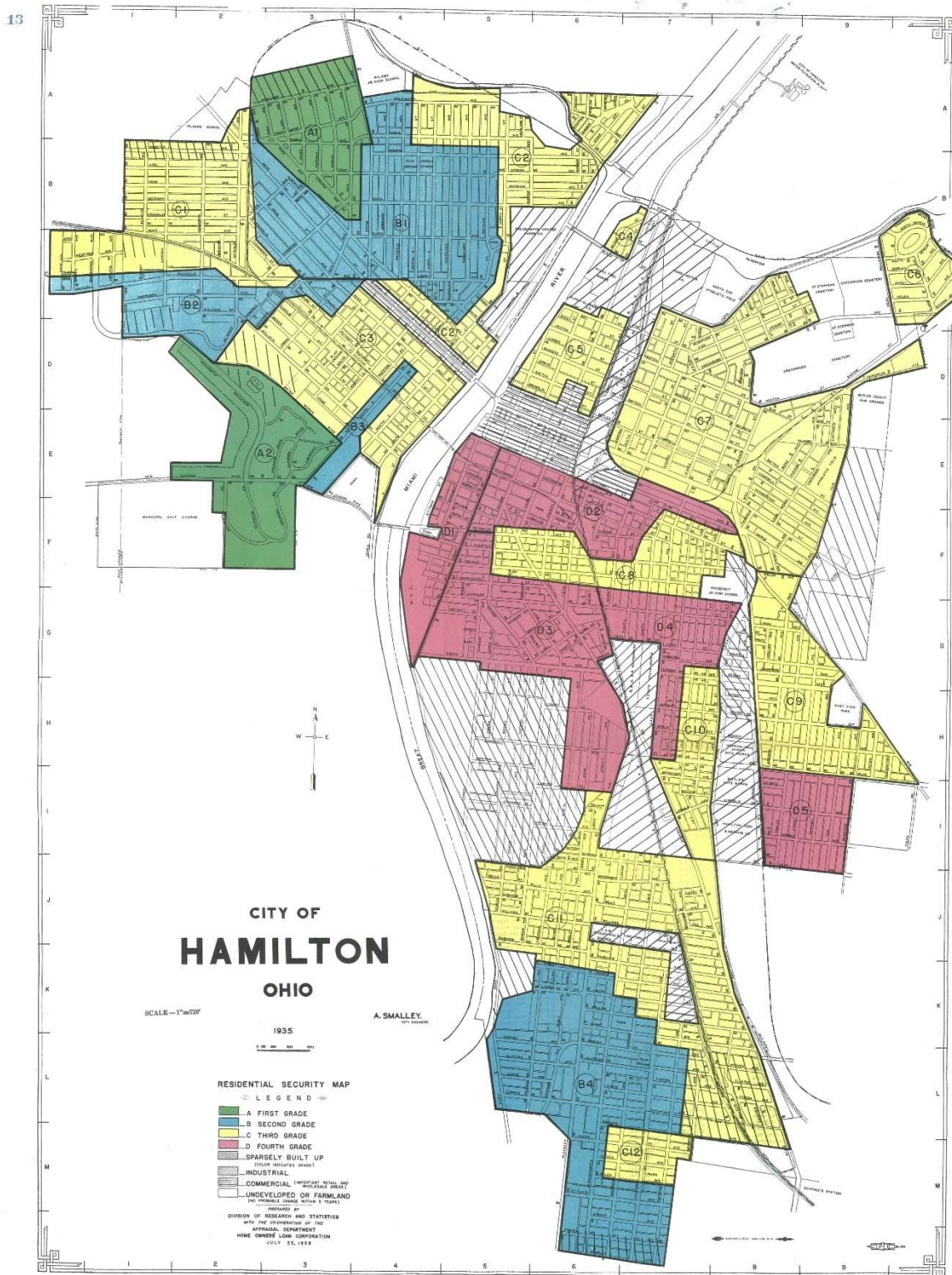
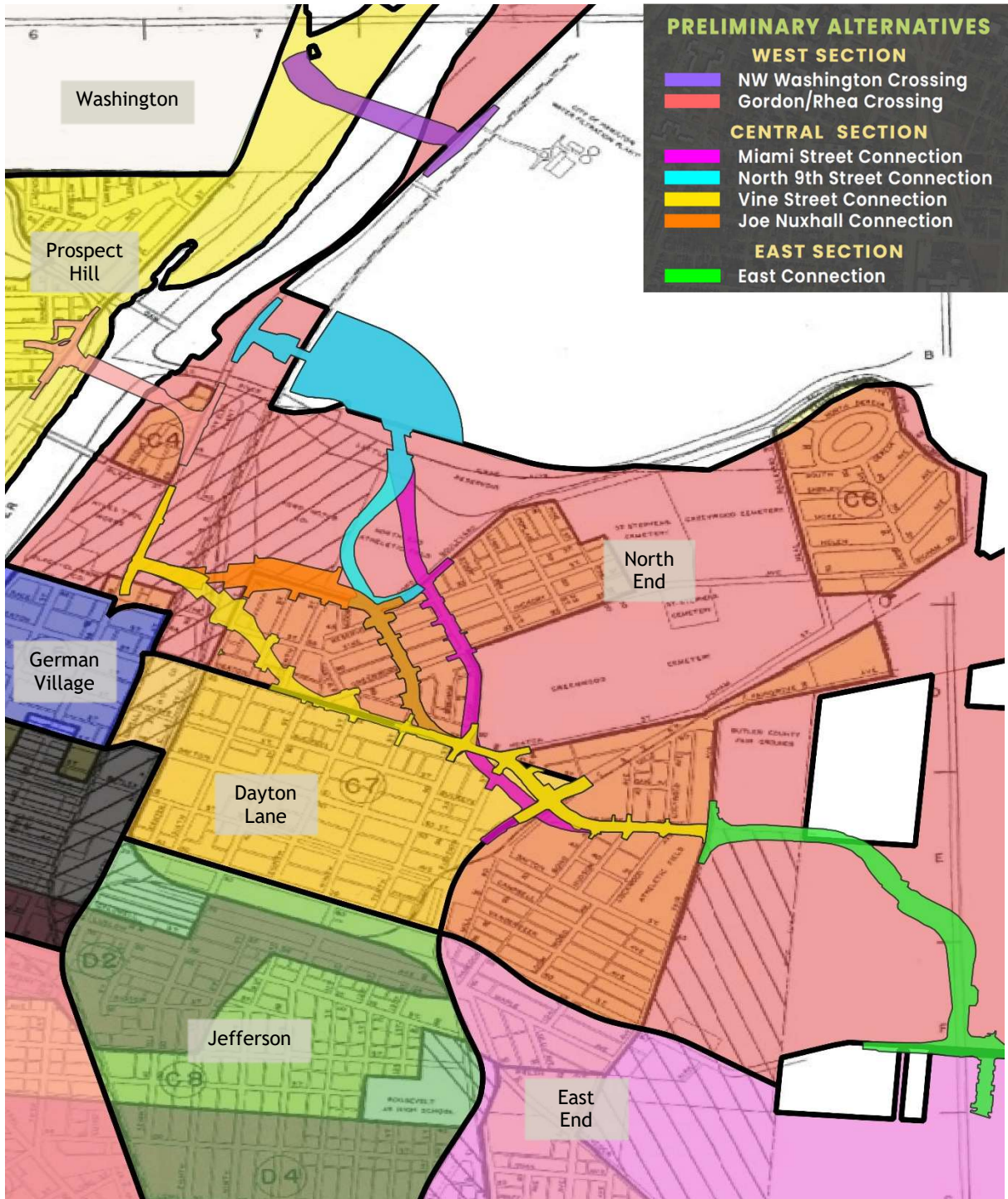


Figure 8: HOLC Map with Neighborhoods Overlain

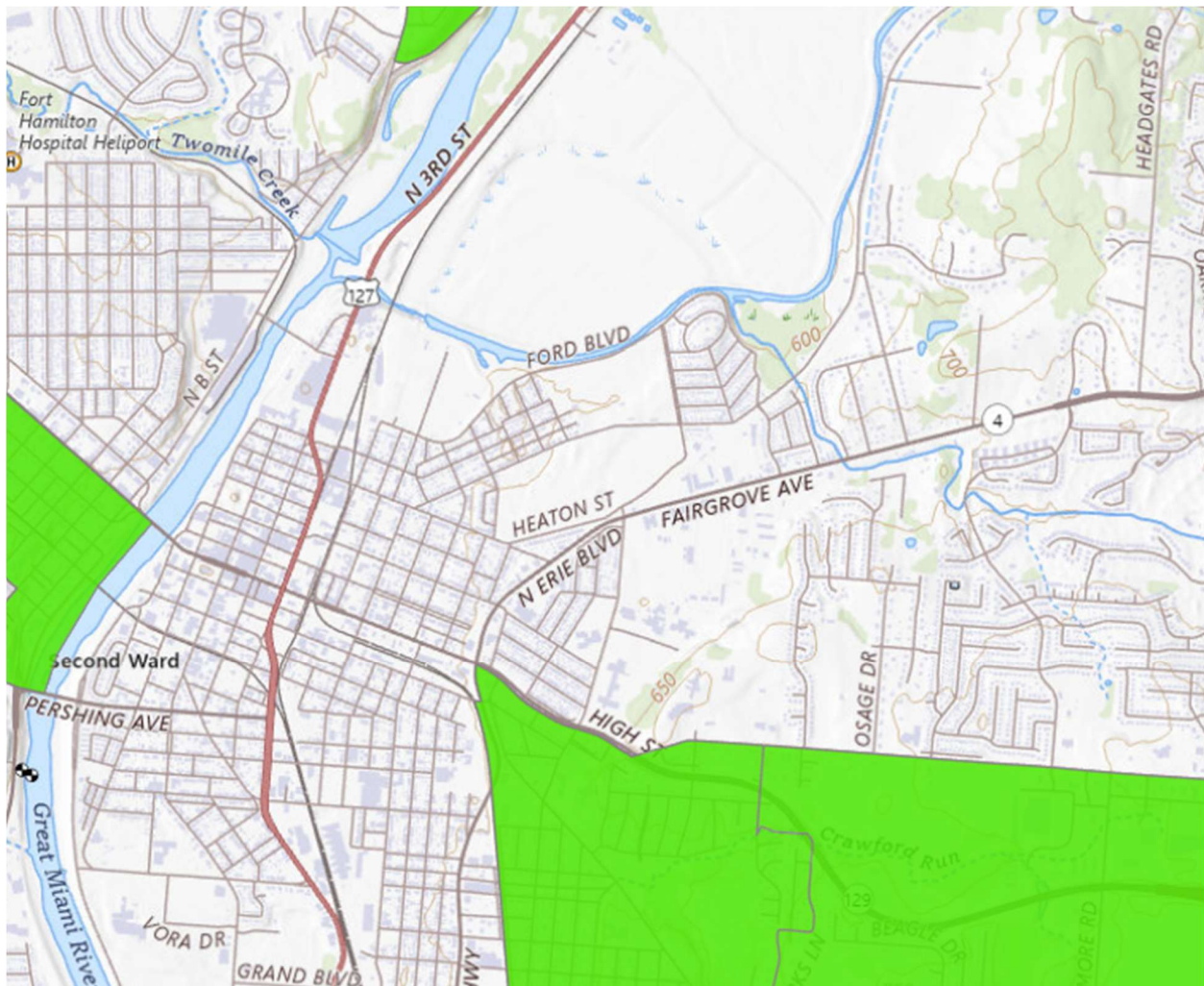


Lack of investment decades ago can be seen in other datasets, such as access to food. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service maintains the Food Access Research Atlas (FARA) to illustrate how low-income areas overlap with low access to supermarkets (designated LILA for low income/low access).

FARA defines low-income census tracts as those with a poverty rate of 20% or greater, median family less than 80% of the statewide median family income, or with a median family income less than 80% of the median family income for the metropolitan area. In urban areas, FARA characterizes low access census tracts as those where at least 500 people or 33% of the population live more than one mile from the nearest food store. They also provide data for 0.5-mile distance. FARA classifies food stores as supercenters, supermarkets, and large grocery stores. They do not compile data on small stores since they do not have consistent data on what they carry, when they are open, or what food sources they use.

The latest FARA mapping is based upon 2019 data. The tract boundaries do not perfectly correlate with current tracts; however, the pattern is visible. The LILA areas with no access to food stores within one mile are shown on **Figure 9** and include the census tracts that were red (East End) and yellow (Rossville) on the HOLC mapping (**Figure 7**), mostly outside the project area.

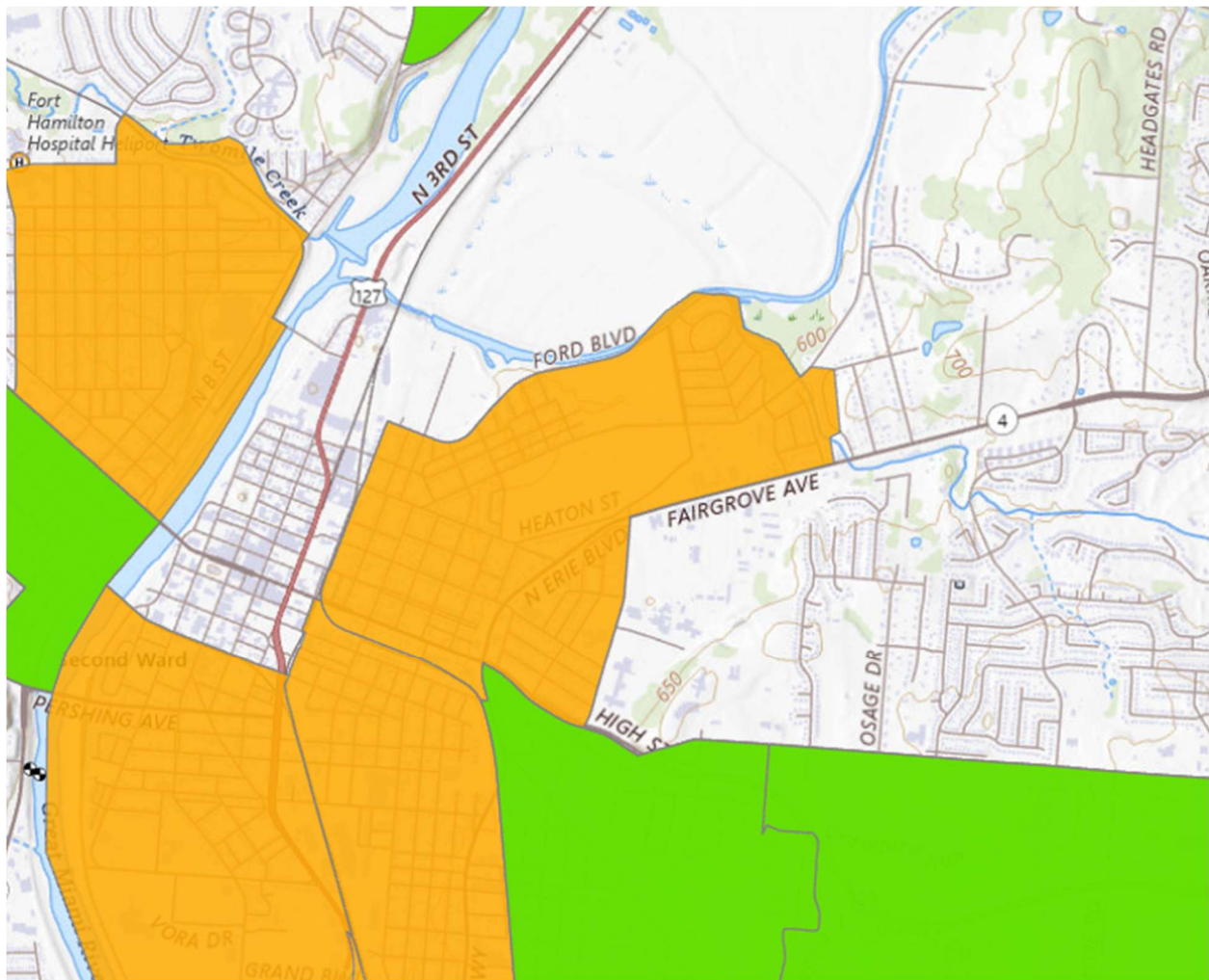
Figure 9: Food Access Research Agency Mapping - One-mile Threshold, 2019



When you reduce the threshold to a half-mile, Prospect Hill, North End, and Dayton Lane are shown as LILA, as shown in **Figure 10**. These neighborhoods were yellow on the HOLC mapping (**Figure 7**).

Based upon their definition of food stores, FARA does not track small community markets, however, FARA mapping illustrates how important such resources can be to these neighborhoods. The effects of the alternatives on local neighborhood markets is one of the factors that will be explored within this report.

Figure 10: Food Access Research Agency Mapping - 0.5-mile Threshold, 2019



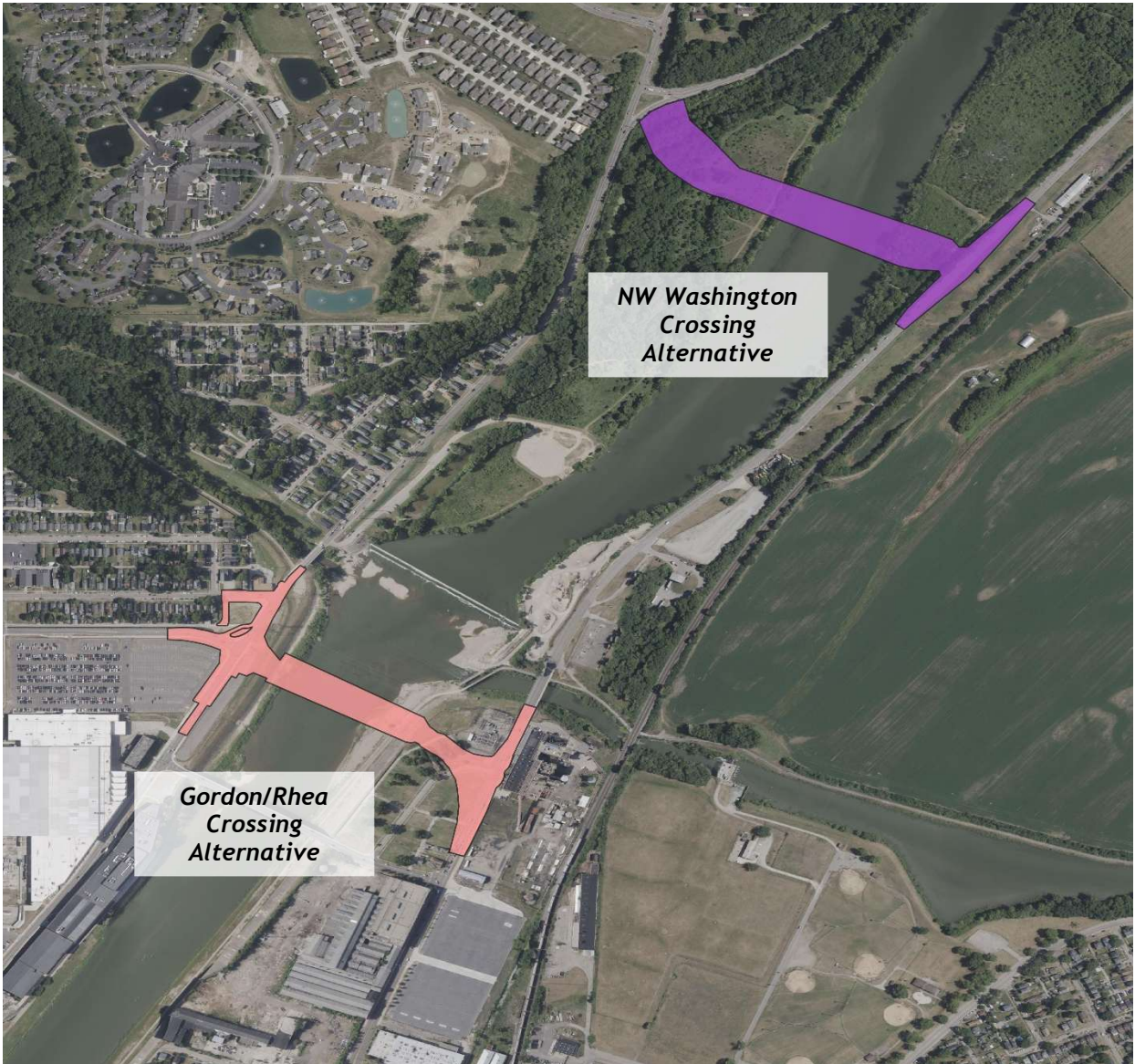
3.0 West Section Alternatives (North B St to US 127)

3.1 Description of Alternatives

This analysis focuses on the West Section Alternatives (North B St. to US 127). This section includes two river-crossing alternatives, as shown in Figure 11 and described below.

The **NW Washington Crossing** alternative is a river-crossing tie-in to NW Washington Boulevard. It begins with a connection to the proposed dual roundabouts at the intersections of NW Washington Boulevard and W Elkton Road, as well as North B Street and W Elkton Road, which are under development as an independent project (BUT-NW Washington/W. Elkton/N. B St PID 120771). The NW Washington Crossing alternative proposes a new bridge through Combs Park and over the Great Miami River. The alignment connects with US 127 using a traditional intersection.

Figure 11: West Section Alternatives



The **Gordon/Rhea Crossing** is the southern river-crossing alternative. It begins near Rhea Avenue and North B Street at Gordon Avenue and crosses the Great Miami River between Black Street and the hydraulic canal. The alternative includes a roundabout on North B Street and Rhea Avenue, a right-in/right-out intersection at North B Street and Gordon Avenue, and an at-grade T-type intersection at US 127 on the west side of the river.

3.2 Community Characteristics

Community demographics for the proposed project area were identified using the U.S. Census *American Community Survey 2019-2023* 5-year estimates. The West Section Alternatives are within two neighborhoods (Prospect Hill and North End) and within four Census Tracts (shown on **Figure 5**):

- Census Tract 10.01 - Washington neighborhood, portions of Prospect Hill, and Butler County areas outside the city
- Census Tract 147 - Most of Prospect Hill
- Census Tract 146 - German Village, Central Business District, and the mostly industrial portion of North End
- Census Tract 110.05 - Eastern, mostly institutional and commercial portion of North End, and Butler County areas outside city

The portion of the West Section alternative within Tract 110.05 consists only of the unoccupied eastern bank of the river. For clarity and to avoid skewing the comparisons, this Census Tract is excluded from discussions below. Tract 110.05 is included in the East Section analysis where populated areas are present.

The Gordon/Rhea Crossing alternative is within Prospect Hill (Tract 147) on the west side of the river and North End (portion of Tract 146) on the east side. The NW Washington Crossing alternative is within the northern portion of Prospect Hill (portion of Tract 10.01) on the west side of the river and an area of Butler County outside the city (portion of Tract 110.05) on the east side.

The community characteristics are discussed in **Sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.8** below which provides context for the assessment of impacts, which begins in **Section 3.3**.

3.2.1 Population, Race and Ethnicity

The percentages of non-white populations for the identified Census Tracts range from 8.2% to 27.7%. These values are similar or lower than the overall population characteristics for the City of Hamilton, Butler County, and the state of Ohio.

The percentages of White non-Hispanic populations in Census Tract 10.01 and 147 and the percentage of Hispanic population in Census Tract 146 are higher than the city, county, and state averages. Census Tract 146 consists of the Central Business District (CBD), German Village, and the sparsely populated commercial and industrial area of North End. There are no impacts within German Village or CBD, so impacts to the Hispanic or Latino population in Tract 146 is unlikely. The impacts within Tracts 10.01 and 147 are limited to the connection on the west side of the river with no impacts to populated areas.

Table 1: Population, Race and Ethnicity – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Population	White-not Hispanic	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic (any race)
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	5,912	91.8%	2.5%	1.0%	1.3%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	4,587	85.4%	2.0%	0.0%	7.5%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	1,239	72.3%	9.0%	0.0%	13.4%
<hr/>						
City of Hamilton		63,124	73.8%	8.5%	0.6%	11.4%
Butler County		389,910	75.9%	8.3%	4.1%	6.6%
State of Ohio		11,780,046	76.5%	12.3%	2.4%	4.6%

3.2.2 Populations Experiencing Poverty

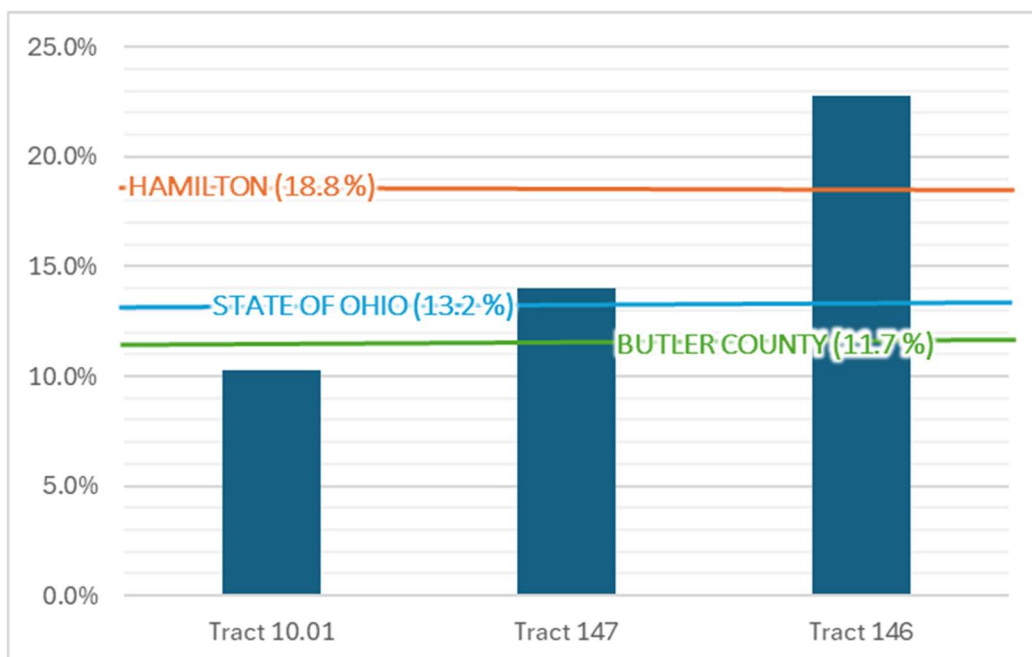
The percentage of households in poverty ranges from 10.3% to 22.8% for the subject Census Tracts. Low-income households (defined as an income level up to 1.49 times the poverty level) range from 6.7% to 14.4%. As shown in Table 2 and illustrated in Figure 12, the concentration of households in poverty within Census Tract 146 (North End neighborhood) is substantially higher than the averages for the city, county, or state. The percentage of households that received SNAP assistance ranges from 18.3% to 23.7%. All Census Tracts are higher than the city, county, or state averages.

The values for Census Tract 146 likely reflect conditions in German Village and the Central Business District, as the portion of North End within the project area is sparsely populated and mostly commercial and industrial. There are no impacts to German Village or CBD from the West Section alternatives. The impacts within Tracts 10.01 and 147 are limited to the connection on the west side of the river with no impacts to populated areas.

Table 2: Poverty – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Poverty	1-1.49x Poverty	Median Household Income	SNAP Households
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	10.3%	6.7%	\$71,513	18.3%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	14.0%	14.4%	\$60,347	18.6%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	22.8%	7.6%	\$44,369	23.7%
City of Hamilton		18.8%	10.1%	\$54,293	17.8%
Butler County		11.7%	6.6%	\$81,194	9.5%
State of Ohio		13.2%	7.7%	\$69,680	12.4%

Figure 12: Comparison of Poverty Levels - West Section



3.2.3 Older Adults

The percentage of adults aged 65 and older varies from 8.9% to 27.8%. Census Tract 10.01 contains a higher percentage of older adults compared to the other nearby Census Tracts, the city, county, or state. The impacts within Tract 10.01 are limited to the connection on the west side of the river with no impacts to populated areas.

Prospect Hill (mostly within Census Tract 147) has 13.7% of households with a grandparent as the person in whose name the home is owned or rented. In 8.4% of these households, the grandparent householder is responsible for taking care of basic needs for their grandchildren. This is higher than all other Census Tracts in the study area, city, state, and county. Grandparents raising grandchildren highlights the importance of pedestrian safety and easy connections to community spaces.

Table 3: Older Adults – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Over Age 65	Households with Grandparent as Householder	Households where Grandparent is responsible for Grandchildren
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	27.8%	2.5%	0.5%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	8.9%	13.7%	8.4%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	9.0%	1.0%	1.0%
City of Hamilton		14.3%	4.7%	2.8%
Butler County		15.5%	4.0%	2.3%
State of Ohio		17.9%	3.8%	2.0%

3.2.4 Individuals with Disabilities

The population of residents classified as disabled ranges from 14.0% to 20.4% in the West Section, as shown in **Table 4**. Census Tracts 10.01 and 146 exceed the city, state, and county averages. The populations within Tract 146 are likely present within German Village and CBD outside the project limits since the North End portion of Tract 146 is primarily industrial and commercial. The impacts within Tract 10.01 are limited to the connection on the west side of the river with no impacts to populated areas.

Table 4: Individuals with Disabilities – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	With disability
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	16.6%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	14.0%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	20.4%
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City of Hamilton		16.0%
Butler County		11.8%
State of Ohio		14.2%

The ACS uses six disability types based upon difficulties with hearing, vision, cognition, mobility (ambulatory difficulty), self-care, and independent living, as shown in **Table 5**. For this reason, reported disabilities among residents may exist that are not self-evident. Public meeting advertisements offered to arrange for accommodations for disabilities, transportation alternatives, and alternative entrances to the venues. No requests were received for accommodation, and no attendees were observed utilizing the accessible entrance.

Table 5: Types of Disabilities by Census Tract – West Section

Census Tract	Hearing difficulty	Vision difficulty	Cognitive difficulty	Ambulatory difficulty	Self-care difficulty	Independent living difficulty
Census Tract 10.01	7.2%	2.0%	6.3%	8.3%	4.1%	8.1%
Census Tract 147	1.8%	2.0%	7.8%	6.9%	1.6%	4.9%
Census Tract 146	2.8%	6.0%	11.5%	7.6%	1.7%	7.9%
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City of Hamilton	3.4%	2.9%	7.3%	7.9%	2.9%	7.9%
Butler County	3.0%	2.1%	5.1%	6.0%	2.3%	5.5%
State of Ohio	3.7%	2.4%	6.1%	7.2%	2.5%	6.2%

3.2.5 Languages Spoken and English Proficiency

Populations are present within or near the project area that have limited English proficiency (LEP), defined as speaking English less than “very well.” **Table 6** shows the percentage of residents with LEP and percentage of foreign-born residents.

According to U.S. Census data, from 1.0% to 13.0% of residents in the West Section Tracts have LEP. The most common language is Spanish, ranging from 0.1% to 16.8% in the identified Census Tracts. Previous public involvement materials, such as fact sheets and notification letters, included Spanish language translation. No comments were received in languages other than English.

Table 6: Languages and English Proficiency – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Foreign born	LEP individual	LEP household	Speak a language other than English	Spanish
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	0.9%	1.0%	1.3%	1.1%	0.1%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	3.2%	1.1%	2.2%	6.4%	6.2%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	12.9%	13.0%	16.5%	17.6%	16.8%
City of Hamilton		6.9%	4.3%	2.7%	10.2%	8.2%
Butler County		8.0%	5.2%	3.3%	10.2%	4.2%
State of Ohio		5.0%	2.8%	1.5%	7.7%	2.5%

3.2.6 Housing

Information on the percentage of home ownership and housing costs is provided in **Table 7**. Of occupied rental units, the median gross rent in the West Section ranges from \$863 to \$1,048 per month. This information is provided for context only. The West Section alternatives do not acquire any residential properties and do not result in the displacement of residents.

Table 7: Housing Characteristics – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Households	Average Household Size	Owner occupied	Renter occupied	Median Monthly Housing Cost	Median Gross Rent
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	2,443	2.38	71.0%	29.0%	\$1,056	\$1,048
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	1,627	2.81	58.1%	41.9%	\$942	\$946
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	599	1.68	7.7%	92.3%	\$875	\$863
City of Hamilton		24,729	2.48	54.4%	45.6%	\$957	\$974
Butler County		145,232	2.61	69.9%	30.1%	\$1,174	\$1,098
State of Ohio		4,829,571	2.38	67.0%	33.0%	\$1,042	\$988

3.2.7 Household Transportation and Employment

As shown in **Table 8**, 60.8% to 80.7% of residents within the subject Census Tracts work within Butler County, with 19.8% to 44.4% working inside the City of Hamilton.

The percentages of zero-car households and methods of travel to work are listed in **Table 9**. Data indicate 0.7% of households have no car available in Census Tract 147 (most of Prospect Hill) while 6.2% have no car in Census Tract 146 (German Village, CBD, and the mostly commercial/industrial portion of North end). Compared to 1.5% for Butler County as a whole, a greater percentage of households are dependent on walking, carpooling, or transit in Census Tract 146.

Table 8: Employment Locations – West Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Living in a place (city)	Worked in place of residence	Worked in county of residence
Census Tract 10.01	Prospect Hill, Washington, county	100.0%	44.4%	80.7%
Census Tract 147	Prospect Hill	100.0%	19.8%	69.8%
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	100.0%	33.1%	60.8%
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City of Hamilton		100.0%	33.7%	74.0%
Butler County		57.3%	18.0%	60.5%
State of Ohio		70.9%	27.4%	71.3%

Table 9: Transportation and Commuting – West Section

Census Tract	No vehicle available	Walk to Work	Biked to Work	Public transit to Work	Carpool	Work from home
Census Tract 10.01	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	11.0%	9.1%
Census Tract 147	0.7%	2.3%	0.0%	2.4%	10.7%	2.5%
Census Tract 146	6.2%	4.4%	1.7%	0.3%	35.4%	3.4%
<hr/>						
City of Hamilton	3.1%	2.2%	0.3%	0.6%	13.1%	5.6%
Butler County	1.5%	1.8%	0.3%	0.3%	8.8%	11.8%
State of Ohio	3.1%	2.0%	0.3%	1.1%	8.1%	11.5%

3.2.8 Summary of Community Characteristics for West Section

The data presented above was distilled to determine the factors most likely to influence the West Section alternatives' impact on the community. Following is a summary of key findings:

- The two West Section Alternatives (NW Washington Crossing and Gordon/Rhea Crossing) traverse four Census Tracts; however, the populated areas most likely to be impacted by, or to directly benefit from, these alternatives are concentrated in the Prospect Hill neighborhood, contained almost entirely in Census Tract 147.
- Prospect Hill (Tract 147) has defining characteristics similar to the city, county, or state averages in most categories, with these standout issues:
 - 8.4% of households where a grandparent is responsible for their grandchildren, financially and otherwise. This is vastly higher than other nearby Census Tracts and the city, county, and state averages.
 - 2.4% of residents take public transit to work. This is higher than other nearby Census Tracts and the city, county, and state averages.
 - The poverty rate is 14%, which is lower than the city but higher than the county or state. Considering the population at 1 to 1.49 times the poverty line increases the total to match the city value of 28%. 18.6% of households receive SNAP benefits. There are many people in Prospect Hill just getting by but above the poverty line.

3.3 Social and Community Impacts

This section discusses the impacts and benefits on the affected communities in the West Section based upon the *Community Impact Analysis Guidance*. The affected communities within the West Section are primarily Prospect Hill and the commercial/industrial portion of North End.

3.3.1 Residential and Business Relocations

The West Section Alternatives do not result in residential or commercial relocations.

3.3.2 Parks

Combs Park is a 65-acre community park owned by the City of Hamilton and managed by the Hamilton Parks Conservancy (HPC). The park includes a natural area along the waterfront of the Great Miami River featuring a boat ramp, an area for fishing and wildlife viewing, and two large fields with walking paths.

According to the HPC staff observations, the most frequently used areas of the park are the boat ramp and general river access for fishing, which are in the southern portion of the park. Unimproved trails are located in the northern portion of the park. Trail utilization is minimal. There are no reported organized groups using the park on a regular basis. Per HPC, there is a generally negative public perception of the park due to perceived lack of safety.

The Combs Park Preliminary Master Plan (2017) proposes numerous improvements for the park; none have been funded for implementation as of 2026. An excerpt from the plan is shown as **Figure 13**. The northern portion of the park is proposed to remain as natural trails and a paved trail.

Figure 13: Excerpt From Combs Park Preliminary Master Plan, 2017



The NW Washington Crossing alternative bisects the northern end of Combs Park and impacts approximately 4.1 acres (See **Figure 14**). The proposed connection requires the installation of bridge piers, as well as grading and roadway embankment within the park at North B Street. Park users would be able to cross underneath the new bridge to access the north end of the park once construction is complete.

Like other alternatives, NW Washington Crossing includes bicycle/pedestrian shared-use paths and sidewalks, which improves pedestrian and non-motor vehicle users' access to the park area. Refer to **Section 3.4** and **Figure 18** for details on pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

The NW Washington Crossing Alternative's 4.1-acre impact on Combs Park was not noted as a community concern. No public comments were received regarding Combs Park impacts.

The Gordon/Rhea Crossing Alternative does not impact any parks.

Figure 14: NW Washington Crossing Alternative at Combs Park



3.3.3 Markets, Grocery Stores, and Restaurants

Riverview Food Mart is located at 901 North B Street, on the corner of Gordon Avenue and North B Street in the Prospect Hill neighborhood, as shown in Figures 15A and 15B.

Figure 15A & 15B: Riverview Food Mart (Google Earth and Google Street View)



Based on a review of Google Earth, Riverview Food Mart is the only available grocery store for the residents in this neighborhood near Gordon Avenue, Rhea Avenue, and Webster Avenue. Census Tract 147 has 14.0% of the population experiencing poverty. According to the Food Access Research Atlas, Census Tract 147 is identified as a “low access” location as discussed in **Section 2.3**. Therefore, the Riverview Food Mart is an important community resource in Prospect Hill.

Both alternatives include bicycle/pedestrian shared-use paths and sidewalks, which will enhance access. The Gordon/Rhea Crossing Alternative would directly improve pedestrian and non-motorized access to the market. While the intersection at Gordon Avenue and North B Street would be modified from full access to a right-in/right-out configuration, access to the store is maintained. Traffic analysis indicates that 1,150 vehicles turn left from North B Street to Gordon Avenue daily. This change is not expected to impact Riverview Food Mart customers. No parking is removed. In addition, several design elements are expected to enhance pedestrian access and walkability in this location. Restricting the vehicle turning movements is expected to make crossing the street in this location easier and safer. A center refuge island is added at the crossing, allowing pedestrians to cross one direction of traffic at a time. Additionally, the sidewalk along Gordon Avenue shifts away from the building frontage, providing additional space for pedestrians.

3.3.4 Houses of Worship

West Side Baptist Church is located at 154 Gordon Avenue, approximately 0.14 mile from the Gordon/Rhea Crossing alternative. The church is on the corner of Gordon Avenue and Hunter Avenue, and there is no impact on the facility. The Gordon/Rhea Crossing is expected to improve vehicular access to the church from the east side of the river by providing an improved, direct connection. By including shared-use paths and sidewalks, the Gordon/Rhea alternative directly improves pedestrian and non-motor vehicle users' access to the church as well, as discussed in **Section 3.4**.

Free Christian Church of God is located at the corner of Gordon Avenue and Summer Street adjacent to the proposed alignment. It is unclear whether this building has a current congregation based upon publicly available data. It is currently listed as a commercial property on the auditor's website. No impact on the property is anticipated.

Figure 16: Church Locations in West Section

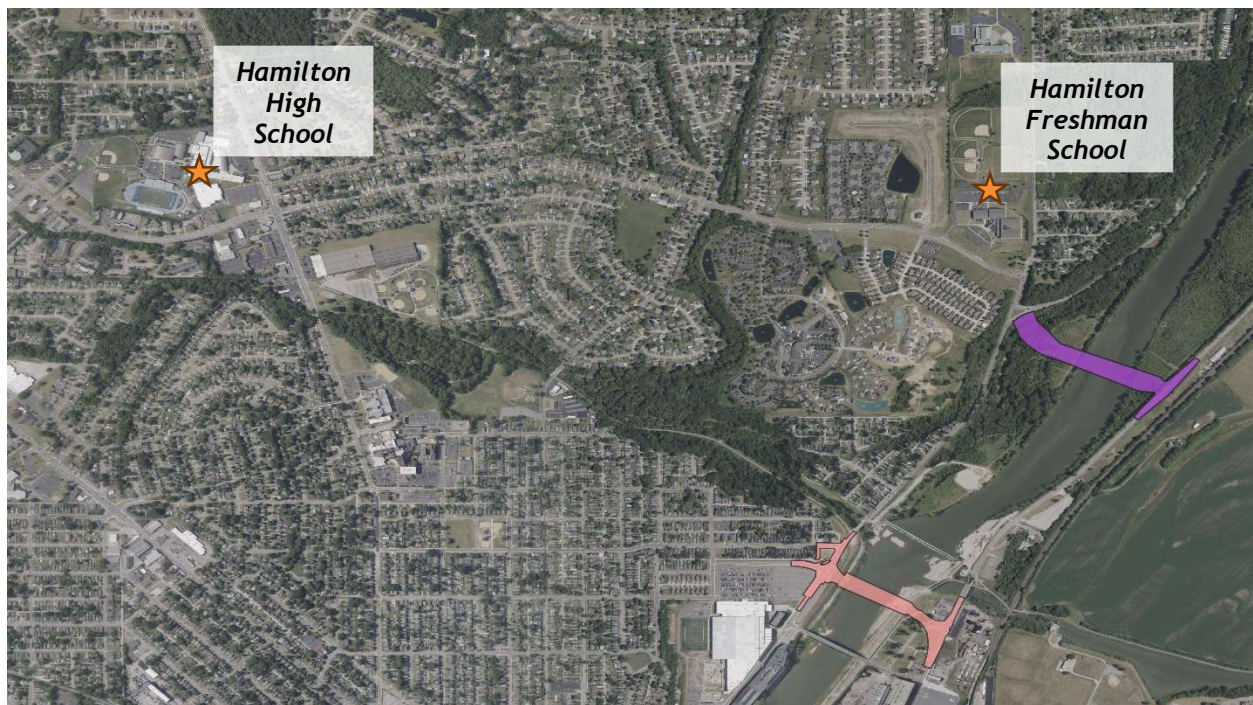


3.3.5 Schools

Hamilton High School Freshman Campus is situated at the corner of NW Washington Boulevard and W Elkton Road, which is the location of the NW Washington Roundabouts project (separate action). The school is approximately 0.2 miles from the NW Washington Crossing alternative. There are no impacts on the school building or the school athletic fields. Access to and from the school for vehicles and pedestrians is unchanged.

School transportation (busing) is provided on joint routes with the Hamilton High School (10th-12th grade) building located approximately 1.5 miles west of the freshman campus. These high schools serve the full school district with students bused from neighborhoods. No impacts on any current bus routes are expected. Construction of the additional river crossing under either alternative will assist in travel times from the east side of the river to the schools on the west side.

Figure 17: School Locations in West Section



3.4 Traffic Movement/Public Safety

For the two river-crossing alternatives, the proposed new bridge and roadways would improve traffic flow. Predicted 2050 traffic volumes on NW Washington Blvd increase from 13,300 vehicles per day (vpd) to 24,300-25,300 vpd for the NW Washington Crossing and 15,600-17,900 vpd for the Gordon Rhea Crossing. NW Washington Crossing provides regional connectivity to SR 177 and areas of western Butler County. The Gordon/Rhea Crossing provides direct access to the Spooky Nook development, as well as the prime development areas on the east side of the river in the vicinity of North 3rd Street and Black Street.

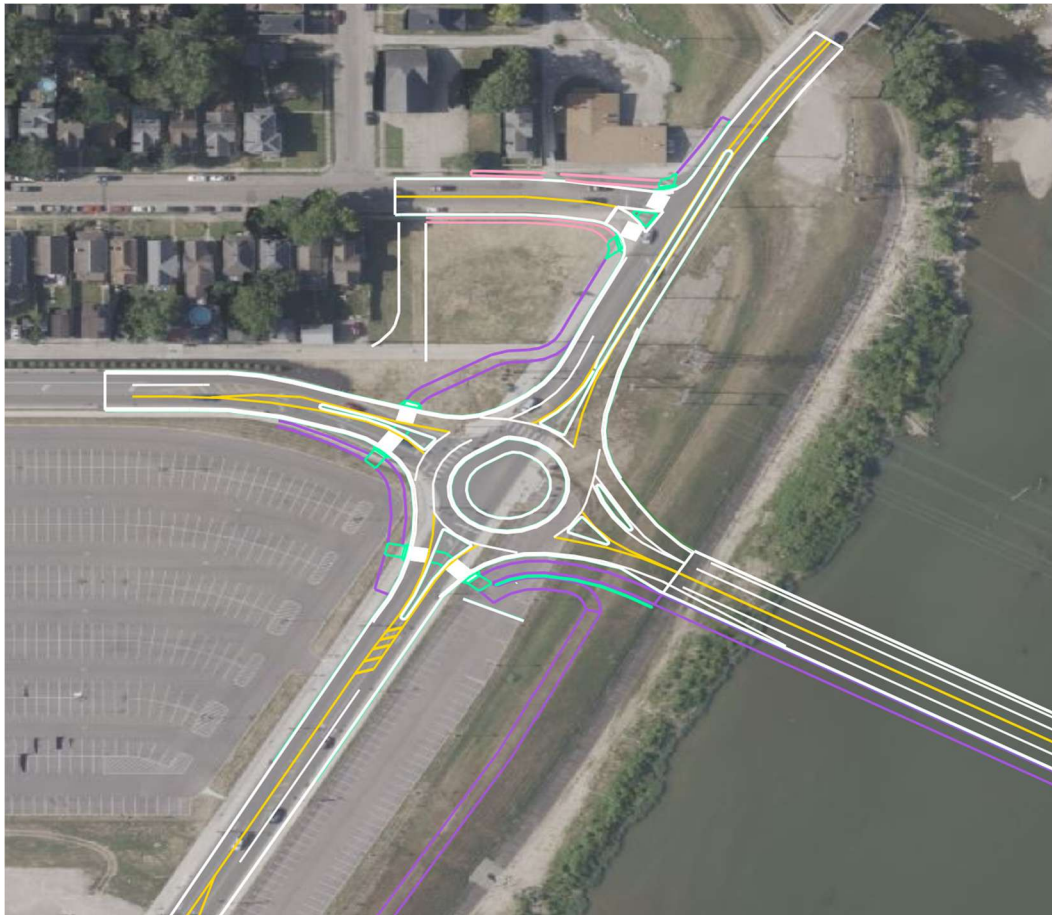
Public comments reflected concerns about increased traffic and congestion in the area related to Spooky Nook and the lack of options for getting across the river. Public perception was mixed,

with many respondents noting the need for a new bridge, and others expressing concern that a new bridge would contribute to localized congestion in the surrounding neighborhood.

No changes to traffic volumes are expected on neighborhood streets for the NW Washington Crossing alternative. Traffic may decrease on neighborhood streets under the Gordon/Rhea Crossing alternative. As noted in **Section 3.1**, the connection of Gordon Avenue with North B Street will be reconfigured to a right-in/right-out intersection, eliminating the vehicles turning left onto Gordon Avenue from North B Street. Traffic analysis indicates that 1,150 vehicles turn left from North B Street to Gordon Avenue daily.

Prospect Hill (Census Tract 147) on the west side of the river contains 14.0% of households with incomes below the federal poverty line with 0.7% zero-car households. North End/German Village/CBD (Census Tract 146) on the east side has 22.8% below the poverty line and 6.2% with no car available. Given that Census Tract 146's poverty and no-vehicle households are higher than the city, county, and state averages, a substantial portion of the community relies on public transportation and pedestrian access. **Figure 18** is an illustration showing pedestrian amenities, such as sidewalks (pink), shared-use paths (purple), curb ramps (green), and crosswalks (white) that would be included on any alternative. These connections improve pedestrian and bicycle connectivity compared to existing conditions.

Figure 18: Example Bicycle/Pedestrian Amenities - West Section

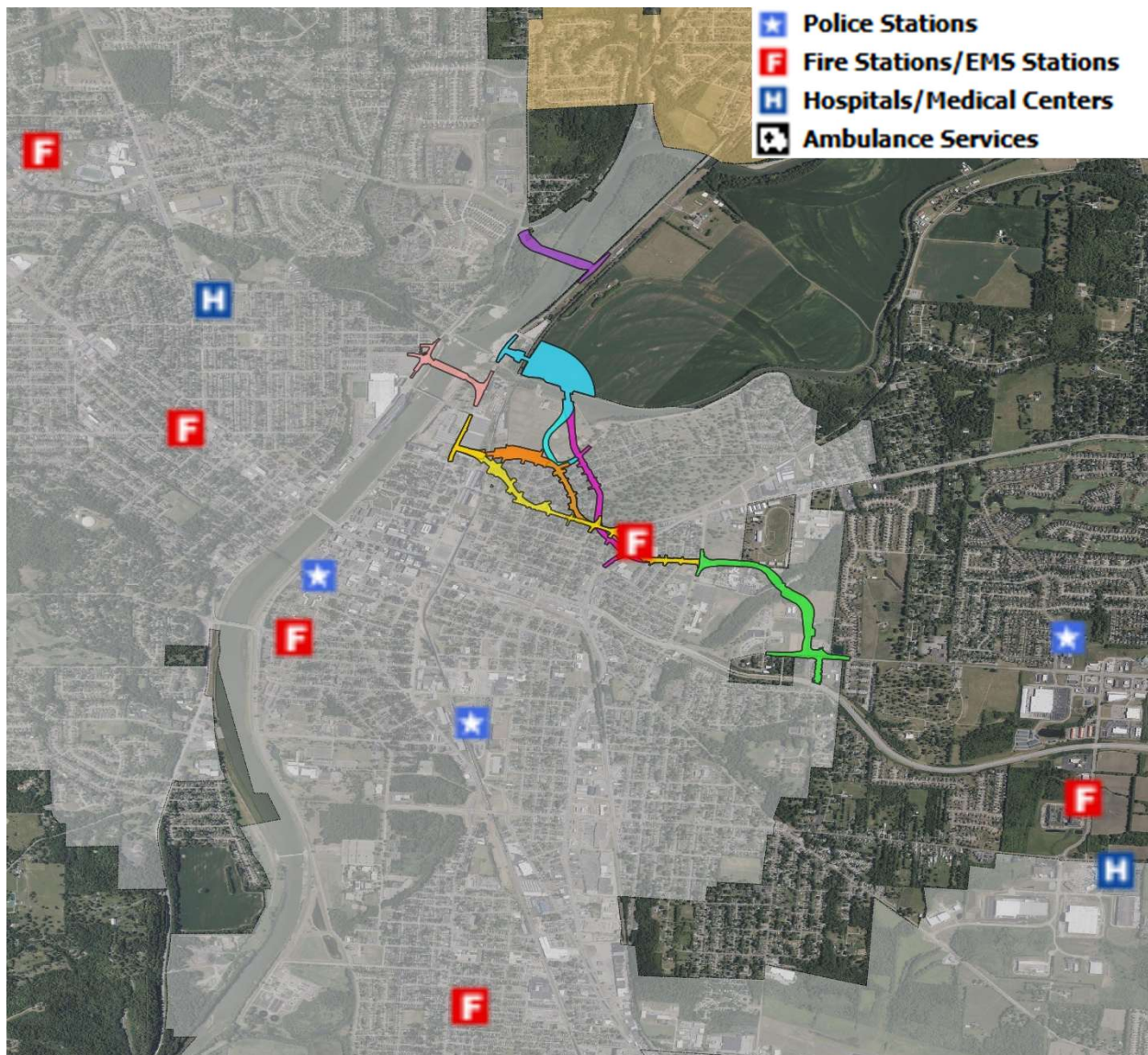


The locations of safety services are shown in **Figure 19**. Hamilton Fire Station 24 (604 Main Street), Hamilton Fire Station 21 (220 N Brookwood), and Kettering Health-Hamilton Hospital (630 Eaton Avenue) are located on the west side of the river.

Hamilton Fire Station 25 (335 N Erie Blvd), Hamilton Fire Station 22 (77 Pershing Avenue), Hamilton Police Department (801 S. 8th Street), and Butler County Sheriff's Office (705 Hanover Street) are located on the east side of the river.

Both West Section Alternatives improve east-west connectivity across the river, particularly for events requiring response from more than one station. The West Section Alternatives will have no negative impacts on safety services.

Figure 19: Location of Safety Services



3.5 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is expressed through strong social networks, opportunities for interaction, shared problem-solving, and a sense of belonging to a place. As part of 17STRONG, discussed in **Section 2.1**, Hamilton residents defined their neighborhood identities, making clear to which community each household belongs. The West Section alternatives primarily influence the Prospect Hill neighborhood. Prospect Hill is a residential neighborhood of primarily single-family homes. There is active neighborhood coordination in Facebook groups and on Nextdoor, where residents assist each other with the challenges of daily living such as borrowing a shovel or asking about trash pickup issues.

The West Section alternatives do not impact any parks, churches, grocery stores, or any other gathering places, nor sever any pedestrian connections. Pedestrian improvements and shared use paths constructed as part of the project will serve to enhance such connections.

Despite specifying the boundaries of the 17 neighborhoods that comprise Hamilton, there are community efforts to get residents together across neighborhoods. 17STRONG holds an annual Neighborhoods Summit. March 2026 will be the fourth year, with the theme “Connecting on Purpose.” New river-crossing connections at either NW Washington Boulevard or Gordon Avenue and Rhea Avenue improve vehicular east-west connectivity across the river, improving connections between the neighborhoods. The Gordon/Rhea Crossing, due to its proximity to the Prospect Hill, North End, and German Village neighborhoods would also improve pedestrian connections between neighborhoods. Neither of the two river-crossing alternatives displace any residential or commercial properties. There are no negative impacts to community cohesion from the West Section alternatives.

3.6 Environmental Concerns

As part of the evaluation of the preliminary alternatives, potential environmental issues or concerns that could impact the communities were identified. The NW Washington Crossing alternative has greater impacts on parkland and forested areas compared to the Gordon/Rhea alternative. No public comments were received regarding this issue. No noise impacts (defined as 10 dBA or greater) are expected, and neither alternative is expected to have substantial impacts related to air quality. No community-related environmental concerns are expected for either of the West Section Alternatives.

3.7 Comparison of West Section Alternatives

A summary of the two West Section alternatives is presented in Table 10.

Table 10: West Section of North Hamilton Crossing Alternatives Comparison

Key Issues	NW Washington Crossing	Gordon/Rhea Crossing
Residential & Business Relocations		
Residential Relocations	0	0
Commercial Relocations	0	0
Community Resources		
Parks	Combs Park 4.12-acres (bisects the north end of the park) No loss of amenities No community concerns	None
Riverview Food Mart	None	Direct improvement in pedestrian access
Other Grocery Stores	None	None
Schools	Improvement to east-west access for busing	Improvement to east-west access for busing
Houses of Worship	None	Near Westside Baptist Church No impact
Healthcare Facilities	None	None
Traffic Movement/Public Safety		
Traffic change on a neighborhood street	No change	Decrease
Pedestrian Mobility	Sidewalk and shared-use path added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along the alignment	Sidewalk and shared-use path added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along the alignment
Emergency Services	Access improved due to new bridge/east-west connectivity	Access improved due to new bridge/east-west connectivity
Community Cohesion		
Improve east-west connectivity	Improved vehicular connectivity between east and west side neighborhoods	Improves pedestrian and vehicular connectivity between east and west side neighborhoods

Based upon the above summary, similarities and key differences are discussed below.

Similar effects

- Neither of the alternatives require residential and/or commercial relocations.
- Both alternatives improve pedestrian mobility along the corridor and access across the river for emergency services and school transportation.
- Neither of the alternatives include impacts on healthcare facilities or access to services.
- Both alternatives improve east-west connections between neighborhoods.

Differing effects

- One alternative (NW Washington Crossing) requires bisecting Combs Park.
- One alternative (Gordon/Rhea Crossing) would improve connections at a pedestrian scale between Prospect Hill and North End and German Village.

Conclusion

Based upon the above comparison table, neither river-crossing alternative results in residential nor commercial relocations. The NW Washington Crossing would have greater impacts on Section 4(f) recreational properties since it would bisect Combs Park, however, the impact avoids the most frequently used areas of the park, and the park was not identified as an important community resource during public involvement activities.

Neither of the West Section alternatives bisect residential areas and both provide the benefit of improving east-west connectivity.

Consideration was given to how the alternatives impact the local community, in the context of the characteristics described in **Section 3.2**. In the West Section, there is a high percentage of people living near or below the poverty line, who are reliant on walking, biking, and public transit to access community resources like markets, parks, houses of worship or other community resources. In the West Section, both alternatives will improve pedestrian access to local resources. The Gordon/Rhea crossing will further benefit community cohesion by connecting three neighborhoods east and west of the river. Consequently, both West Section alternatives are anticipated to improve community cohesion.

4.0 Central Section Alternatives (US 127 to North Fair Ave)

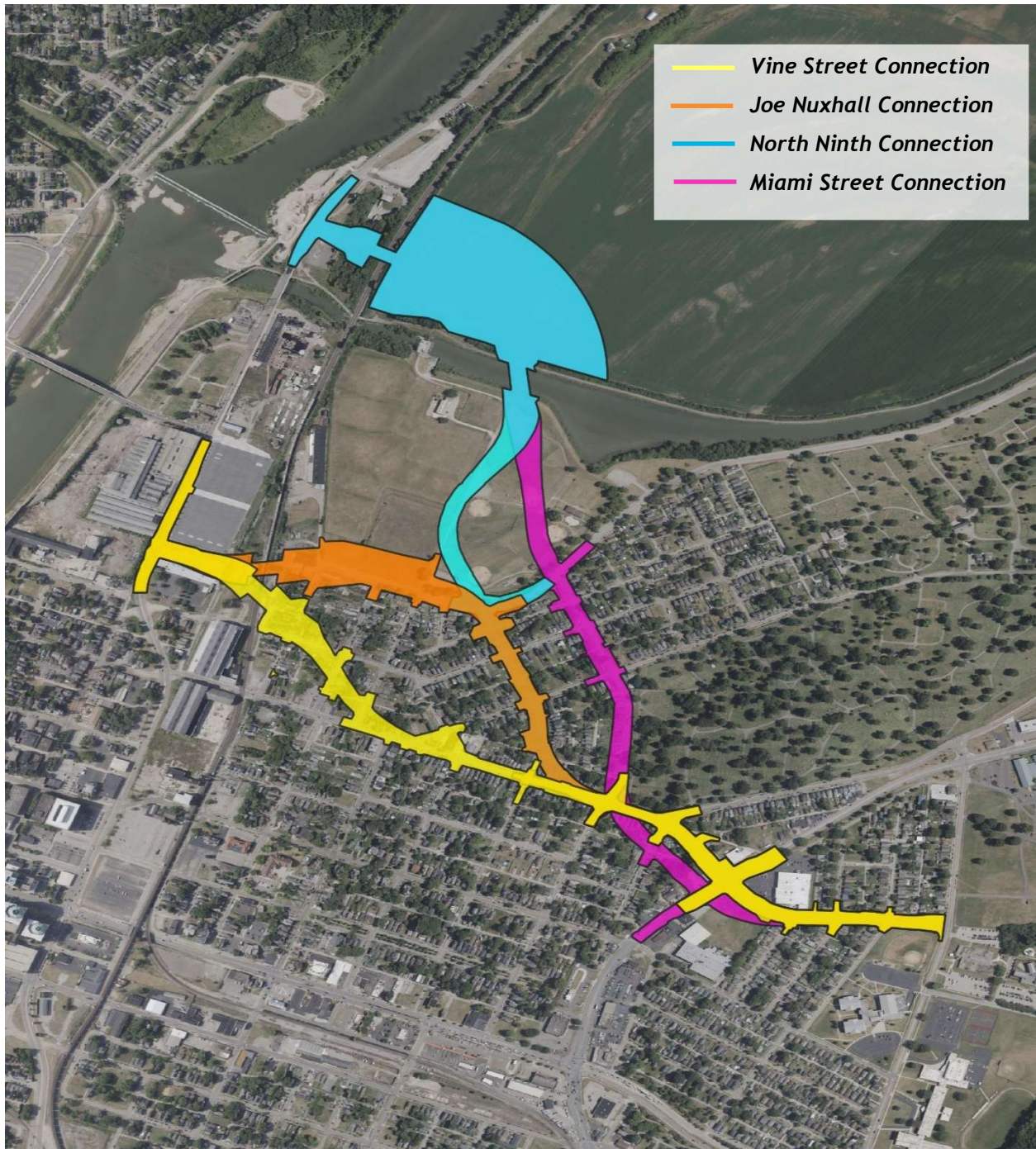
4.1 Description of Alternatives

This section focuses on the Central Section Alternatives, illustrated in **Figure 20** and described below. The **North Ninth Connection** and **Miami Street Connection** alternatives connect with US 127 using a traditional T-type intersection just north of the hydraulic dam on the Great Miami River, then continue east, bridging over the CSX railroad, traveling across the southwest corner of the floodplain on Bonham Farm, then traveling across the hydraulic canal. From there, North Ninth Street Connection and Miami Street Connection travel south through LJ Smith Park and follow either North Ninth Street or Miami Street to Heaton Street. Both alternatives then continue east/southeast, crossing SR 4 in the vicinity of the Hamilton Fire Station and heading eastward along Gilmore Avenue to North Fair Avenue.

The **Vine Street Connection** and **Joe Nuxhall Connection** alternatives begin with a traditional T-type intersection at US 127 just north of the existing US 127/Vine Street intersection. **Vine Street Connection** then heads eastward, crossing the CSX railroad tracks (via an overpass of the tracks) and continuing in a southeasterly direction to Heaton Street, then east along Heaton Street to North 11th Street, then east/southeast, crossing SR 4 in the vicinity of the Hamilton Fire Station and heading eastward along Gilmore Avenue to North Fair Avenue.

Joe Nuxhall Connection heads in a northeasterly direction crossing the CSX railroad tracks via an overpass of the tracks. The alignment then continues eastward along Joe Nuxhall Boulevard to North Ninth Street, continuing east/southeast to cross SR 4 in the vicinity of the fire station before heading eastward along Gilmore Avenue to North Fair Avenue.

Figure 20: Central Section Alternatives



4.2 Community Characteristics

Community demographics for the proposed project area were identified using the U.S. Census *American Community Survey 2019-2023* 5-year estimates. The Central Section Alternatives are within two neighborhoods (North End and Dayton Lane) and within three Census Tracts:

- Census Tract 146 - German Village, Central Business District, and the mostly industrial and park portions of North End
- Census Tract 6 - Populated areas of North End and Dayton Lane
- Census Tract 110.05 - Eastern, mostly institutional and commercial portion of North End, and Butler County areas outside city

The portion of the Central Section Alternatives within Census Tract 146 are within the industrial, commercial, and park portions of North End. The German Village neighborhood is within this Census Tract, abutting the alternatives to the south.

Census Tract 6 comprises the majority of the populated areas within the Central Section Alternatives, consisting of North End and Dayton Lane. All alternatives cross the North End neighborhood and traverse along the edge of the Dayton Lane neighborhood.

Census Tract 110.05 in the Central Section consists of the portion outside the city limits north of the hydraulic canal. To avoid skewing the alternatives discussion, this Tract 110.05 is excluded from the Central Section discussion. Tract 110.05 is included in the East Section analysis where populations and community resources are present.

The community characteristics are discussed in **Sections 4.2.1 to 4.2.8** below which provides context for the assessment of impacts, which begins in **Section 4.3**.

4.2.1 Population, Race and Ethnicity

The percentages of non-white populations for the identified Census Tracts range from 20.6% to 27.7%. These values are similar or lower than the overall population characteristics for the City of Hamilton, Butler County, and the state of Ohio.

The percentage of White non-Hispanic populations in Census Tract 6 is higher than the city, county, and state averages. The percentages of Hispanic populations in Census Tract 146 are higher than the average for Butler County but similar to the City of Hamilton. Census Tract 146 consists of the Central Business District (CBD), German Village, and the sparsely populated commercial and industrial area of North End.

Table 11: Population, Race and Ethnicity – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Population	White-not Hispanic	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic (any race)
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	1,239	72.3%	9.0%	0.0%	13.4%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	4,542	79.4%	2.6%	0.7%	8.8%
City of Hamilton		63,124	73.8%	8.5%	0.6%	11.4%
Butler County		389,910	75.9%	8.3%	4.1%	6.6%
State of Ohio		11,780,046	76.5%	12.3%	2.4%	4.6%

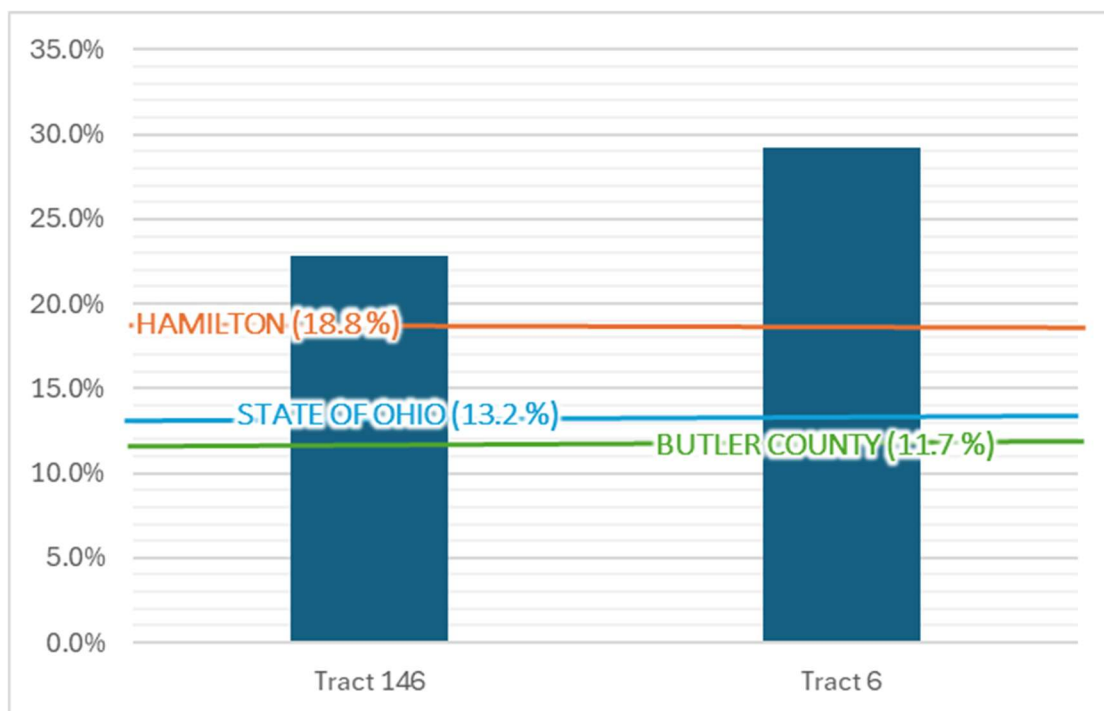
4.2.2 Populations Experiencing Poverty

The percentage of households in poverty ranges from 22.8% to 29.2% for the subject Census Tracts. Low-income households (defined as an income level up to 1.49 times the poverty level) range from 7.6% to 10.2%. As shown in Table 12 and illustrated in Figure 21, the concentration of households in poverty within Census Tracts 146 and 6 are substantially higher than the averages for the city, county, or state. The percentage of households that received SNAP assistance ranges from 23.7% to 26.1%. Both Census Tracts are higher than the city, county, or state averages. The values for Census Tract 146 likely reflect conditions in German Village and the Central Business District, with Tract 6 reflecting North End and Dayton Lane.

Table 12: Poverty – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Poverty	1-1.49x Poverty	Median Household Income	SNAP Households
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	22.8%	7.6%	\$44,369	23.7%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	29.2%	10.2%	\$48,993	26.1%
City of Hamilton		18.8%	10.1%	\$54,293	17.8%
Butler County		11.7%	6.6%	\$81,194	9.5%
State of Ohio		13.2%	7.7%	\$69,680	12.4%

Figure 21: Comparison of Poverty Levels - Central Section



4.2.3 Older Adults

The percentage of adults aged 65 and older varies from 9.0% to 13.7%. These percentages are lower than the City of Hamilton, Butler County, and the state of Ohio. In Census Tract 6 (North End and Dayton Lane), 7% of households have a grandparent householder present defined as the person in whose name the home is owned or rented, which is higher than the city, county, or state average. In 2.1% of households, the grandparent householder is responsible for the grandchildren, which is similar to the averages.

Table 13: Older Adults – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Over Age 65	Households with Grandparent Householder	Households where Grandparent is responsible for Grandchildren
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	9.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	13.7%	7.0%	2.1%
City of Hamilton		14.3%	4.7%	2.8%
Butler County		15.5%	4.0%	2.3%
State of Ohio		17.9%	3.8%	2.0%

4.2.4 Individuals with Disabilities

The population of individuals with disabilities in the Central Section ranges from 20.4% to 21.0%, higher than the city, county, or state averages.

Table 14: Individuals with Disabilities – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	With disability
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	20.4%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	21.0%
City of Hamilton		16.0%
Butler County		11.8%
State of Ohio		14.2%

The ACS uses six disability types based upon difficulties with hearing, vision, cognition, mobility (ambulatory difficulty), self-care, and independent living. For this reason, reported disabilities among residents may exist that are not self-evident. The Central Section Census Tracts indicate a higher percentage of vision, cognition, and independent living difficulties compared to the city, county, and state averages. Public meeting advertisements offered to arrange for accommodations for disabilities, transportation alternatives, and alternative entrances to the venues. No requests were received for accommodation, and no attendees were observed utilizing the accessible entrance.

Table 15: Types of Disabilities – Central Section

Census Tract	Hearing difficulty	Vision difficulty	Cognitive difficulty	Ambulatory difficulty	Self-care difficulty	Independent living difficulty
Census Tract 146	2.8%	6.0%	11.5%	7.6%	1.7%	7.9%
Census Tract 6	3.8%	2.7%	9.6%	7.1%	2.9%	14.8%
City of Hamilton	3.4%	2.9%	7.3%	7.9%	2.9%	7.9%
Butler County	3.0%	2.1%	5.1%	6.0%	2.3%	5.5%
State of Ohio	3.7%	2.4%	6.1%	7.2%	2.5%	6.2%

4.2.5 Languages Spoken and English Proficiency

Percentages of LEP within the affected Census Tracts are shown in **Table 16**.

For previous public involvement, key materials such as fact sheets and meeting notices included Spanish language translation. No comments have been received in languages other than English.

Table 16: Languages and English Proficiency – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Foreign born	LEP individual	LEP household	Speak a language other than English	Spanish
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	12.9%	13.0%	16.5%	17.6%	16.8%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	7.7%	1.7%	0.0%	8.2%	6.3%
City of Hamilton		6.9%	4.3%	2.7%	10.2%	8.2%
Butler County		8.0%	5.2%	3.3%	10.2%	4.2%
State of Ohio		5.0%	2.8%	1.5%	7.7%	2.5%

4.2.6 Housing

Each Central Section alternative requires acquisition of 45 or more residential properties and displacement of residents within Census Tracts 146 and 6. Tract 146, which is located west of 5th Street, has a home ownership rate of 7.7%, meaning 92.3% of households rent. Census Tract 6, located east of 5th Street, 42.9% households are rented. Both Census Tracts have housing vacancies of over 16%, compared to the city at 9.1% and the county at 6.2%.

The median housing costs and median gross rents in this area are lower than the city, county, or state values. Based upon input from the city, many households within North End are paying below market rents, some reported as lower than \$400/month. This information cannot be verified based upon current data but will need to be investigated during acquisition studies.

Table 17: Housing Characteristics – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Households	Average Household Size	Owner occupied	Renter occupied	Median Monthly Housing Cost	Median Gross Rent
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	599	1.68	7.7%	92.3%	\$875	\$863
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	1,810	2.47	57.1%	42.9%	\$890	\$913
City of Hamilton		24,729	2.48	54.4%	45.6%	\$957	\$974
Butler County		145,232	2.61	69.9%	30.1%	\$1,174	\$1,098
State of Ohio		4,829,571	2.38	67.0%	33.0%	\$1,042	\$988

4.2.7 Household Transportation and Employment

The percentages of zero-car households for Census Tracts 146 and 6 indicate 6.1-6.2% of households have no car available, compared to 3.1% for the city or 1.5% for the county. In Census Tract 146, 39.2% of employed residents work outside of Butler County while for Census Tract 6 23.3% of employed residents work outside of the county. For Census Tracts 146 and 6 over 60% of residents work within Butler County but do not work within city limits. The percentage of employed residents in Census Tract 146 that carpool, walk or bike to work is higher than in the city as a whole. For Census Tract 6, the percentage of employed residents using public transit or carpooling to get to work is higher than the city, county, and state.

With less access to personal vehicles, the availability of comfortable walking, biking, and public transportation is of special importance. Refer to **Section 4.4** for a discussion of impacts and benefits.

Table 18: Employment Locations – Central Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Living in a place (city)	Worked in place of residence	Worked in county of residence
Census Tract 146	North End, German Village, CBD	100.0%	33.1%	60.8%
Census Tract 6	North End, Dayton Lane	100.0%	36.1%	76.7%
City of Hamilton		100.0%	33.7%	74.0%
Butler County		57.3%	18.0%	60.5%
State of Ohio		70.9%	27.4%	71.3%

Table 19: Transportation and Commuting – Central Section

Census Tract	No vehicle available	Walk to Work	Biked to Work	Public transit to Work	Carpool	Work from home
Census Tract 146	6.2%	4.4%	1.7%	0.3%	35.4%	3.4%
Census Tract 6	6.1%	2.0%	0.0%	2.1%	20.6%	8.2%
City of Hamilton	3.1%	2.2%	0.3%	0.6%	13.1%	5.6%
Butler County	1.5%	1.8%	0.3%	0.3%	8.8%	11.8%
State of Ohio	3.1%	2.0%	0.3%	1.1%	8.1%	11.5%

4.2.8 Summary of Community Characteristics for Central Section

The data presented above was distilled to determine the factors most likely to influence the Central Section alternatives' impact on the community. Following is a summary of key findings:

- The four Central Section Alternatives traverse three Census Tracts; however, the populated areas most likely to be impacted by, or to directly benefit from, these alternatives are concentrated in the North End and Dayton Lane neighborhoods, with the populated areas contained almost entirely in Census Tract 6. The German Village neighborhood in Census Tract 146 is close to the two southerly alternatives and not impacted.
- North End/Dayton Lane (Tract 6) has defining characteristics similar to the city, county, or state averages in most categories, with these standout issues:
 - The poverty rate is 29.2%, higher than most nearby Census Tracts and twice the statewide average. 26.1% of households receive SNAP benefits, more than any studied Census Tract, the city, county, or state.
 - Median housing costs and rent are lower than corresponding costs for the city, county, or state, with reports of monthly costs as low as \$400.
 - 21.0% of the population has one or more disabilities, with cognitive and independent living difficulties substantially higher than comparable city, county, or state rates.
 - 8.8% of the population is Hispanic or Latino, similar to the city average, with 8.2% speaking a language other than English at home; however, only 1.7% of the population reports speaking English less than very well. 79.4% of the population is White, which is higher than the city, county, and state rates.
 - 6.1% of households have no vehicle available higher than the city, county, and state rates.
 - 20.6% of employed residents carpool and 2.1% use public transit to commute to work, with 39.2% working outside Butler County. Carpool and public transit use is higher than city, county, and state rates.

4.3 Social and Community Impacts

This section considers how the proposed alternatives impact the normal function of the community in terms of residential and business relocations, as well as community resources and assets. Community resources include public buildings that provide services such as recreational, educational, and healthcare facilities, bike and pedestrian trails, libraries, and places for worship. Community assets include residential properties and buildings that are used for the well-being of the community such as grocery stores.

4.3.1 Residential Relocations

Each of the four build alternatives in the Central section results in greater than forty-five residential relocations. These anticipated relocations occur in the North End neighborhood which has over 20% households in poverty, as discussed in **Section 4.2.2**. The relocation impacts for each alternative are summarized in **Table 20**. These values are a range based upon the preliminary alternatives and the Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) Conceptual Survey.

Table 20: Estimated Residential Relocations (Stantec, June 2025)

Alternative	Residential Relocations
Miami Street Connection	55-65
Vine Street Connection	55-65
Joe Nuxhall Connection	50-60
North Ninth Connection	45-55

Miami Street Connection and Vine Street Connection have the highest potential residential relocations at 55-65. The remaining alternatives have a similar magnitude of residential relocations, ranging from 45 to 60 residences. The residential relocations represent the number of households, not the number of buildings. It is currently unconfirmed whether any of the residential units are unoccupied. Per the RAP Conceptual Survey, the number of displaced households may exceed the capacity of the local real estate market to absorb.

Although the affected Census Tracts have disability rates of 20.4%-21.0%, no evidence of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-specific infrastructure such as ramps were observed during visual inspections of the possible relocations. The ACS uses six disability types based upon difficulties with hearing, vision, cognition, mobility (ambulatory difficulty), self-care, and independent living. For this reason, reported disabilities among residents may exist that are not apparent from the exterior appearance of the home.

4.3.2 Business Relocations

The four alternatives within the Central Section have differing impacts on commercial buildings and businesses. City of Hamilton staff were interviewed to provide information for characterization of the nature of the business, the number of employees, and potential outcome if impacted. A listing of the affected buildings is included in **Table 21**.

Table 21: Estimated Commercial Relocations

Building	# of Employees Impacted	Miami Street Connection	Vine Street Connection	Joe Nuxhall Connection	North Ninth Connection
Advanced Auto Parts, 323 N. Erie St	<25	X	X	X	X
Edmonds Carpet (currently storage), 956 Heaton St	0	X	X	X	X
Professional Motor Services, 530 N. Third St	<10		X	X	
Benton Metal & Stone Care, 501 N. Fifth St	0		X		
Vacant (former Brown Bar), 502 Vine St	0		X		
Wine Seller, 802 Heaton St	0		X		
Butler Glass, 626 Heaton St	0		X		
Tri-State Concrete, 565 N Fifth St	0			X	

Impacted by all alternatives

One commercial property with employees on site, Advanced Auto Parts, is impacted by all alternatives. The number of employees was estimated by city staff at approximately 25, with the majority as part time.

Advanced Auto Parts is a national retail chain. It is uncertain if this store would be relocated or they would consolidate business with the nearby location at 1215 Main Street. A second business, Edmond's Carpet, is also impacted by all alternatives. It is not an active storefront and appears to be used for storage. There are 6.1%-6.2% zero-car households per the ACS data, with 2.0%-4.4% of employed residents walking to work. Relocation of these businesses would not be expected to have a substantial impact on local employment or access to services for the neighborhoods.

Impacted by Vine Street Connection and Joe Nuxhall Connection

Professional Motor Services is impacted by the Vine Street Connection and Joe Nuxhall Connection alternatives. Professional Motor Services provide specialty work with skilled employees, fewer than 10. Customers are regional and not local. They would be expected to relocate in the area, possibly outside the city, depending on their business needs.

Impacted by Joe Nuxhall Connection

Tri-State Concrete/Salvage is impacted only by the Joe Nuxhall Connection alternative. According to city tax records, no staff are based at this location. This business type typically serves a regional client base and would be unlikely to provide substantial services within the immediate neighborhood.

Impacted by Vine Street Connection

The Vine Street Connection impacts several additional buildings compared to the remaining alternatives. These include several that are vacant or storage only: wine seller warehouse, and the former Brown Bar. There are two specialty service businesses, Benton Metal and Stone Care and Butler Glass, that apparently work in dispersed locations, using these facilities as a home-base for supplies. City tax records indicate that no employees are based at these locations.

Additional relocation issues

Several properties are not directly affected but will have storage, parking, or outbuilding impacts. These properties will be evaluated further during design and right-of-way negotiations:

- Butler County Education Services Center (BCESC) (400 N. Erie St) - impact to shed and parking, all alternatives
- Minnick's Drive Thru (810 Heaton St) - impact to site circulation, Vine Street Connection
- Kornylak (400 Vine St) - impact to outbuilding/storage, Vine Street and Joe Nuxhall Connections
- AMD Auto Sales (317 N. Erie Blvd) - impact to parking, all alternatives

BCESC employs staff from throughout the region, with most employees driving. This organization provides services for the whole county, though some clients may be local to North End. They report serving a negligible number of walk-ins. BCESC would be impacted by loss of nearly all parking, likely resulting in relocation of the facility. The city will evaluate options during the right-of-way negotiation process, such as vacating portions of unused roadway right-of-way to replace the lost parking. Since the current BCESC building is a retrofitted Kroger building, BCESC has indicated a desire to explore a new location if relocation due to the project is unavoidable. It is anticipated that BCESC would relocate within the city to maintain a central location and access to their base of clients.

Minnick's Drive Thru is part of a chain of 17 locations. The Vine Street Connection would modify the access such that the site circulation would not be compatible with the drive thru as currently configured. It is unknown whether Minnick's would desire to have the building rebuilt on this site, choose another location to relocate, or close this store. Their choice will be based upon their own business factors.

Kornylak is a major business in the area with fewer than 20 employees at their Hamilton location. The Vine Street and Joe Nuxhall Connections would impact a garage located north of the main facility. Kornylak has indicated a desire to maintain operations at this facility. No employees would be displaced.

AMD Auto Sales is a used car dealership that would probably consolidate with another location or relocate if a suitable location is available.

Conclusion

The only substantial employer is Advanced Auto Parts, with fewer than 25 employees. Vacant or storage-only properties do not contribute to local employment or services. Zero-car households in North End are relatively high (6.1-6.2%), but walk-to-work rates are low (2.0%-4.4%), suggesting limited reliance on proximity for employment. In summary, business relocations regardless of alternative are not expected to have a substantial impact on the North End community.

4.3.3 Relocation Assistance and Acquisition Regulations

Regardless of alternative, the project is federally funded and follows FHWA and ODOT's policy and procedures for the relocation process. As part of the Relocation Assistance Program, ODOT assists people and businesses that are displaced by the project in finding comparable housing, and ensures that all replacement housing, moving, and other benefits are offered in compliance with established law, policy, and procedures.

If comparable replacement housing is not available within the limitations provided under standard relocation procedures, ODOT has authority under the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 5501:2-5-04 to utilize "replacement housing of last resort" which allows for additional replacement housing payments, improvements to an existing replacement residence, construction of a new residence, and strategies to address needs for persons with disabilities.

Mitigation of Relocation Impacts

Due to the possibility of "housing of last resort" and recognizing that there may be limited replacement housing which would allow families to remain within the neighborhood, the City of Hamilton has committed to working closely with Neighborhood Housing Services of Hamilton, Inc. (NHS), or other housing development partners, to identify city-owned vacant lots within and adjacent to the North End neighborhood which may be suitable to build replacement housing for the affected population. The NHS is proposing to build affordable single-family homes on these vacant lots and make them available for the displaced residents. In addition to the newly built homes, the city is also exploring options for rehabilitation of existing vacant homes within the neighborhood. This allows displaced residents to stay within their community.

As a result of historic redlining practices (as described in **Section 2.3**), the North End experienced systematic disinvestment, limited access to capital, and underinvestment in housing. These conditions contributed to the area's current concentration of aging housing stock, higher rates of vacancy, and lower household incomes. Because the long-term effects of redlining continue to shape housing conditions in the neighborhood, targeted investment in new and rehabilitated housing is particularly important.

In addition, the NHS rental program is expected to be utilized to assist the relocation of residents who are not homeowners or do not want to purchase a home. Additionally, Hamilton will also provide housing-related financial literacy and homebuyer and renter education, intended to improve budgeting, credit readiness, and understanding of housing costs to support successful and sustainable homeownership or tenancy.

During public involvement, residents with and without access to vehicles raised concerns that if they were moved out of the local area, they would no longer be able to walk to employment and stores that they currently frequent. Offering the opportunity to relocate within the neighborhood is important to these individuals.

4.3.4 Low-income Housing

According to the Butler Metro Housing Authority (BMHA) website, there are two Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) sites located in the vicinity. Both sites are located south of the proposed alternatives in the Dayton Lane neighborhood:

- YWCA Goodman Place, Dayton Street (permanent supportive housing)
- Dayton Lane Gardens, North Sixth Street

Neither of the HCV communities is impacted by any of the alternatives.

4.3.5 Parks

L.J. Smith Park is a 24.9-acre community park owned by the City of Hamilton and managed by Hamilton Parks Conservancy (HPC). The park includes a playground, a spray ground, basketball courts, baseball diamonds, park buildings, walking paths, and parking lots. Three of the alternatives (North Ninth Connection, Miami Street Connection, and Joe Nuxhall Connection) impact the park, illustrated in **Figure 22**.

During public involvement, L.J. Smith Park was identified as a valuable community resource for the North End. Specifically, the baseball fields and the spray ground were identified as important park features. During the public open house held in early 2023, several comments were received related to the baseball fields in L.J. Smith Park. These comments highlighted the importance of the baseball fields to the North End community due to their connection with Joe Nuxhall, a legendary local figure who practiced there and was discovered at age 14, becoming the youngest player in Major League Baseball history.

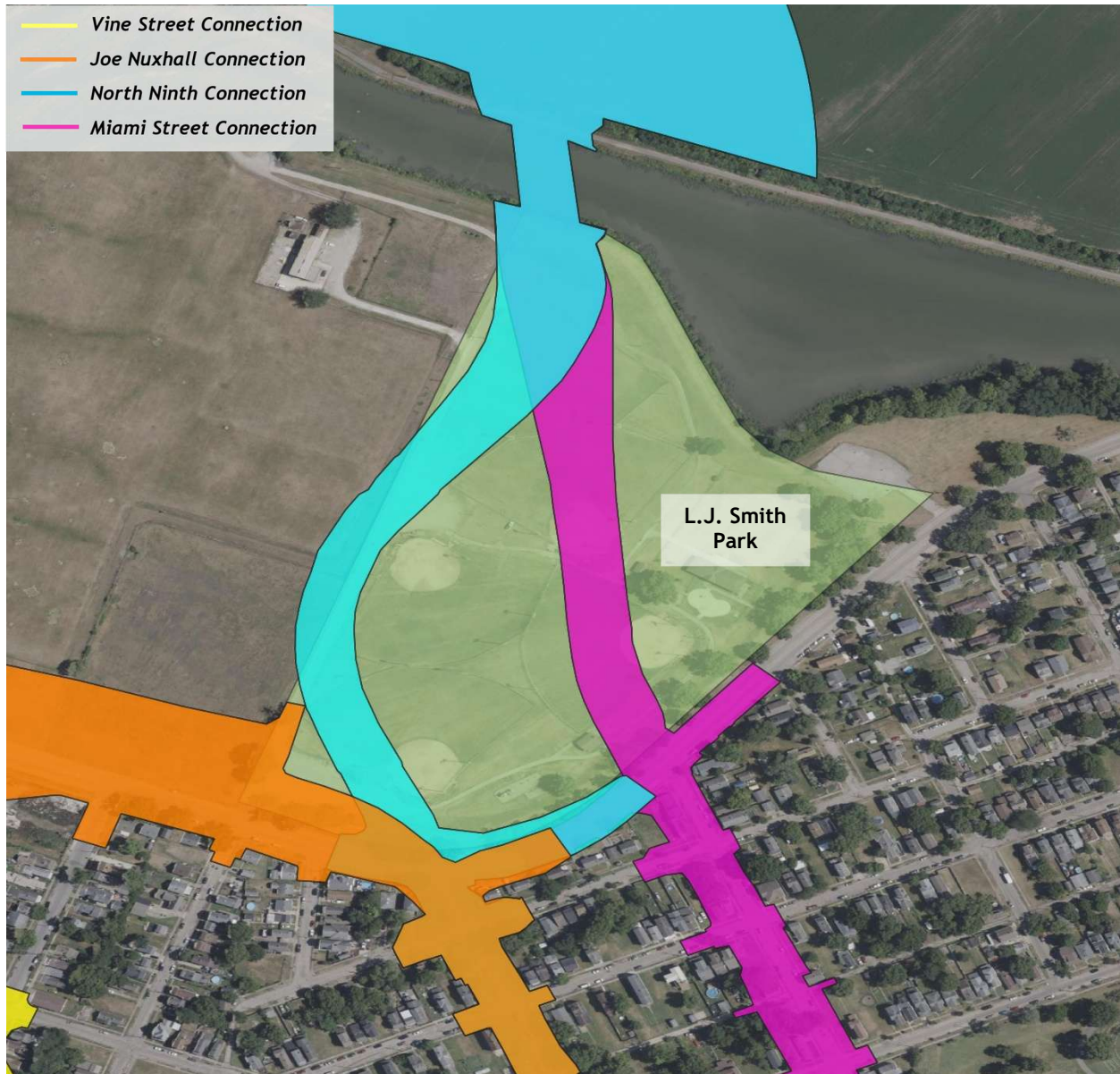
The ballfields also serve as a central gathering space for youth and families in the neighborhood. In 2010, the North End Citizens for Community Action (NECCA), a nonprofit community organization, launched the Reds Rookie Success League of Hamilton, a free youth baseball and recreation program held at the park. This was the first organized youth sports program in the North End in over 20 years and provides children with access to structured, character-based activities in a safe environment. In recognition of the park's historical and cultural value, NECCA also secured an Ohio Historical Marker in 2019 to commemorate the ballfields and their connection to Joe Nuxhall.

Finally, the installation of the spray ground in 2014 was important to the Hamilton Community after the closure of their public pools.

North Ninth Connection (blue) impacts approximately 4.5 acres, including three ballfields, parking areas, and a park building. Miami Street Connection (purple) impacts approximately 4.0 acres, including three ballfields, and bisects the park. Joe Nuxhall Connection (red) has fewer impacts, requiring approximately 1.0 acre. It traverses the southwest portion of the park with the playground and adjacent parking, while avoiding the ballfields. Vine Street Connection does not impact L.J. Smith Park. There are existing narrow sidewalks on Miami Street and North Ninth Street and an existing bike lane on Joe Nuxhall Boulevard. All of the three alternatives would provide improved sidewalks and a shared use path, facilitating improved pedestrian and bicycling access to the park.

L.J. Smith Park is the largest park within easy walking distance of the North End neighborhood, which has over 20% of households without access to a vehicle. Based upon the size and type of amenities at the park, any impacts would be unlikely to be mitigated within an area that would be accessible to the existing users.

Figure 22: View of L.J. Smith Park



John R. Moser Park is a 0.48-acre park located at 664 Heaton Street owned by the City of Hamilton and managed by HPC. It contains a picnic shelter and a playground. Per HPC, the park receives regular visits. Moser Park is used by a YMCA youth program in the summer, 1-2 days per week. An “Art in the Park” program uses the location typically one Saturday per month. Public perception of the park includes concerns over lack of lighting, proximity of houses, and traffic safety on Heaton Avenue. Public comments regarding Moser Park expressed concern over proximity of traffic, while others noted that the project provided an opportunity to improve the park.

Moser Park is impacted by the Vine Street Connection, which would affect approximately 0.1 acre and the shelter house, as shown in **Figure 23**. Impacts to Moser Park would be mitigated through a “net benefit” strategy to improve the overall park and amenities for the Vine Street Connection Alternative. Moser Park is not affected by the remaining three alternatives.

Figure 23: Moser Park Location



4.3.6 Markets, Grocery Stores, and Restaurants

North End Market is located at 927 Vine Street, between North Ninth Street and Miami Street. (See **Figures 24** and **25**.) Based upon community input, this market functions as a community resource and the “heart” of the neighborhood. It holds an annual August community event which attracts hundreds of neighborhood residents to celebrate and dance in the street near the market. The market sponsors a raffle for toys during the community’s “Operation North End Pole” event in December. According to media reports, the market often extends store credit when needed for groceries.

The owners of North End Market were honored in July 2025 by the City of Hamilton. Vine Street through the length of the North End was renamed *Toni & Ray Moore Way* in honor of their lifelong commitment to the community.

Figure 24: North End Market Location



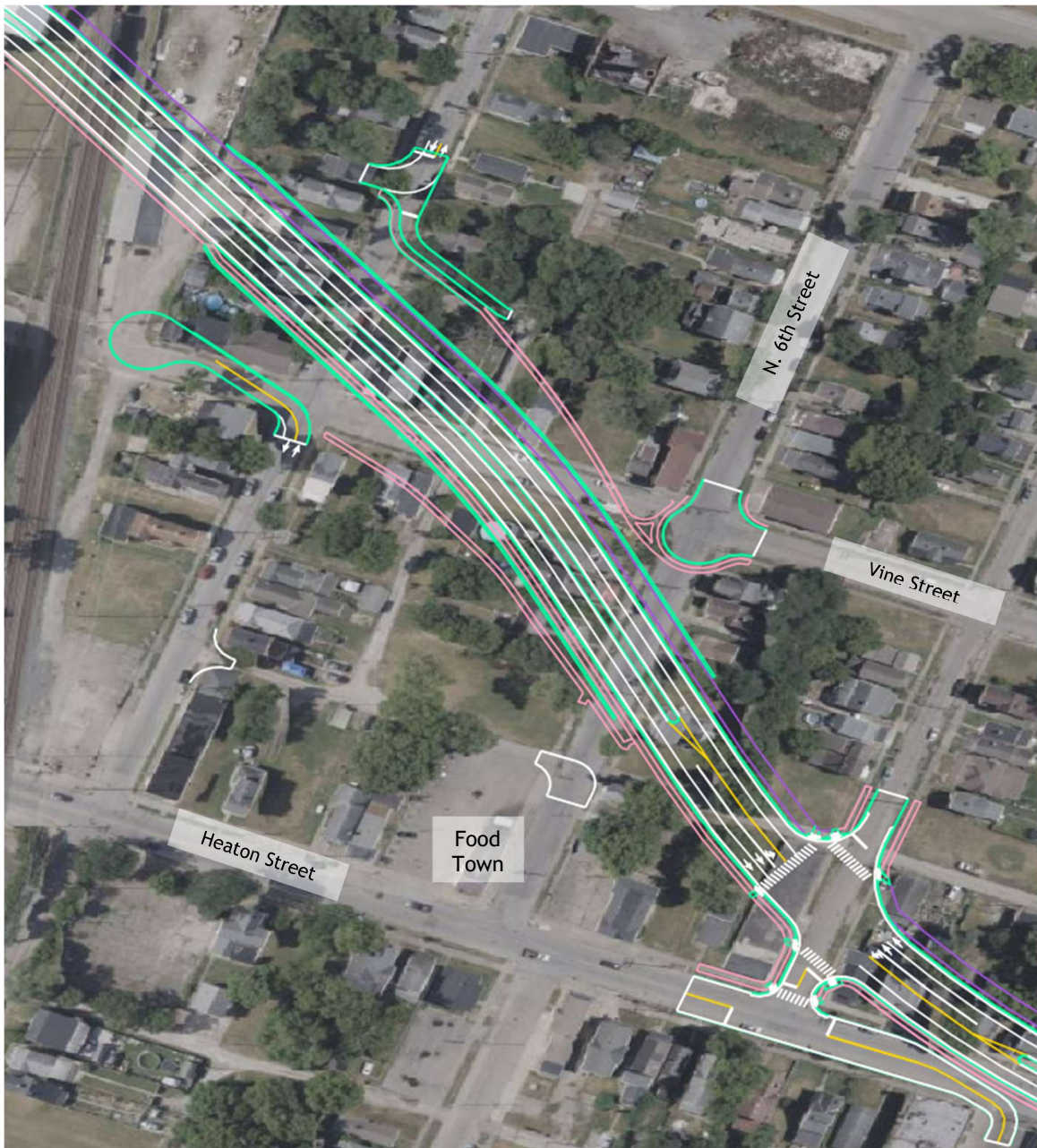
None of the alternatives impact the North End Market directly. The North Ninth Connection and Joe Nuxhall Connection use Ninth Street a block west of the market. The Miami Street Connection uses Miami Street a block east of the market. These alternatives are expected to increase traffic volumes on the impacted local streets, increasing the traffic for residents crossing on foot to reach the market. The community has expressed concerns about the improved roadway creating a perceived barrier between the market and the area of the neighborhood on the other side. See **Section 4.4** regarding pedestrian amenities to address these concerns.

Figure 25: View of North End Market (Google Streetview)



Food Town is a local market within easy walking distance of the affected neighborhoods. Food Town is located at 536 Heaton Street, at the intersection with N. Sixth Street, two blocks west of where the Vine Street Connection splits from existing Heaton Street. The North Ninth Connection, Miami Street Connection, and Joe Nuxhall Connection have no impact to access to Food Town. The Vine Street Connection begins climbing vertically just west of the intersection with N. Seventh Street to bridge over the railroad, resulting in no access to local streets from N. Sixth Street to the west, with cul-de-sacs proposed on N. Sixth Street and N. Fifth Street. See **Figure 26**.

Figure 26: Vine Street Connection at Food Town



Connecting sidewalks (shown in pink on **Figure 26**) reconnect the neighborhood streets north and south of the new roadway. The longest pedestrian detour to Food Town occurs for residents on the southeast corner of Vine Street and N. 6th Street. In existing conditions, they may walk 400 feet to Food Town located just south on N. 6th Street in about two minutes. With the access changes, the new walking route is via Vine Street to N. 7th Street to Heaton Street. The new route via N. Seventh Street increases the walking distance to 0.2 miles, approximately 4 minutes. The walking routes are illustrated in **Figures 27A and 27B**.

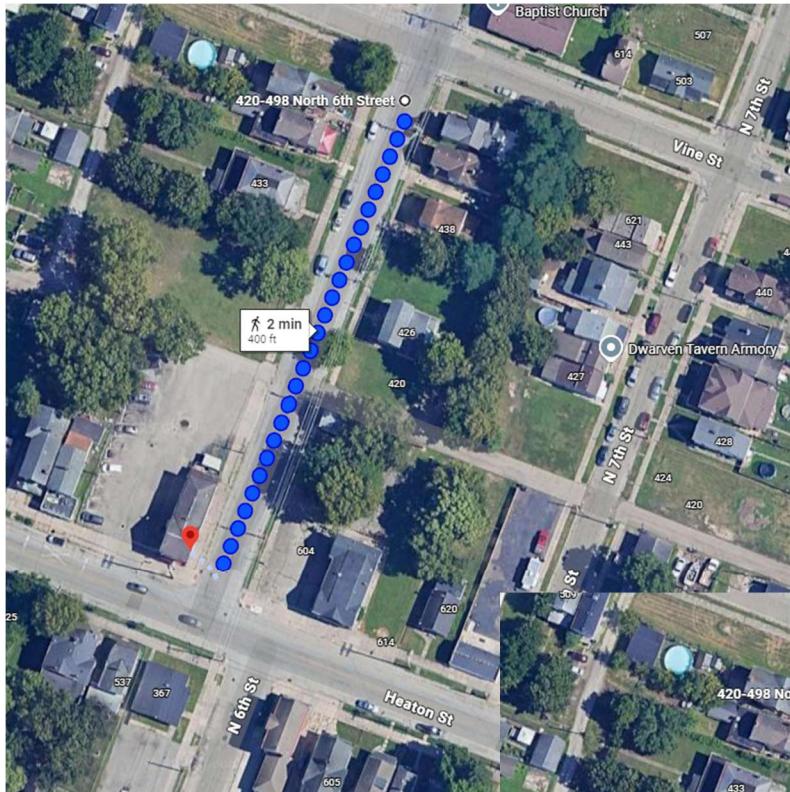


Figure 27A: Walking Distance to Food Town - Existing Conditions
(Google Maps)

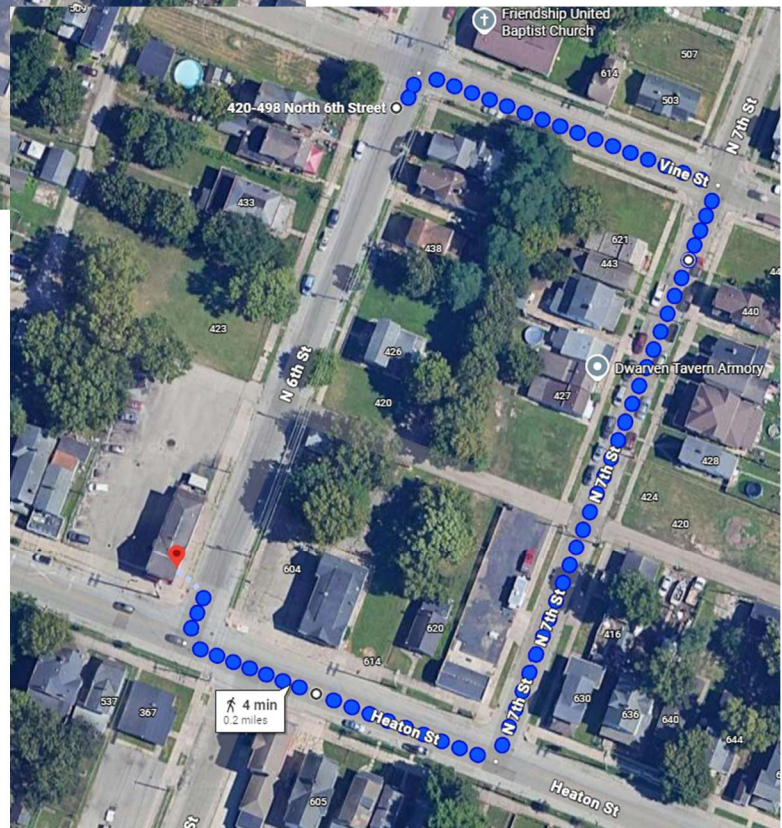


Figure 27B: Walking Distance to Food Town - Vine Street Connection
(Google Maps)

Minnicks Drive Thru is located at 810 Heaton Street along the Vine Street Connection alternative. Although this location may experience increased traffic that would benefit a drive-thru business, the Vine Street Connection does not allow Minnicks to maintain their current site circulation. They may choose to reconstruct on site, to move elsewhere, or to close this location. Jiffy's Drive-In is located on N. Erie Boulevard and is not impacted. Stone Tavern (720 Greenwood Avenue) is located at the intersection of Heaton Street and Greenwood Avenue. The business is expected to be able to remain in operation.

4.3.7 Houses of Worship

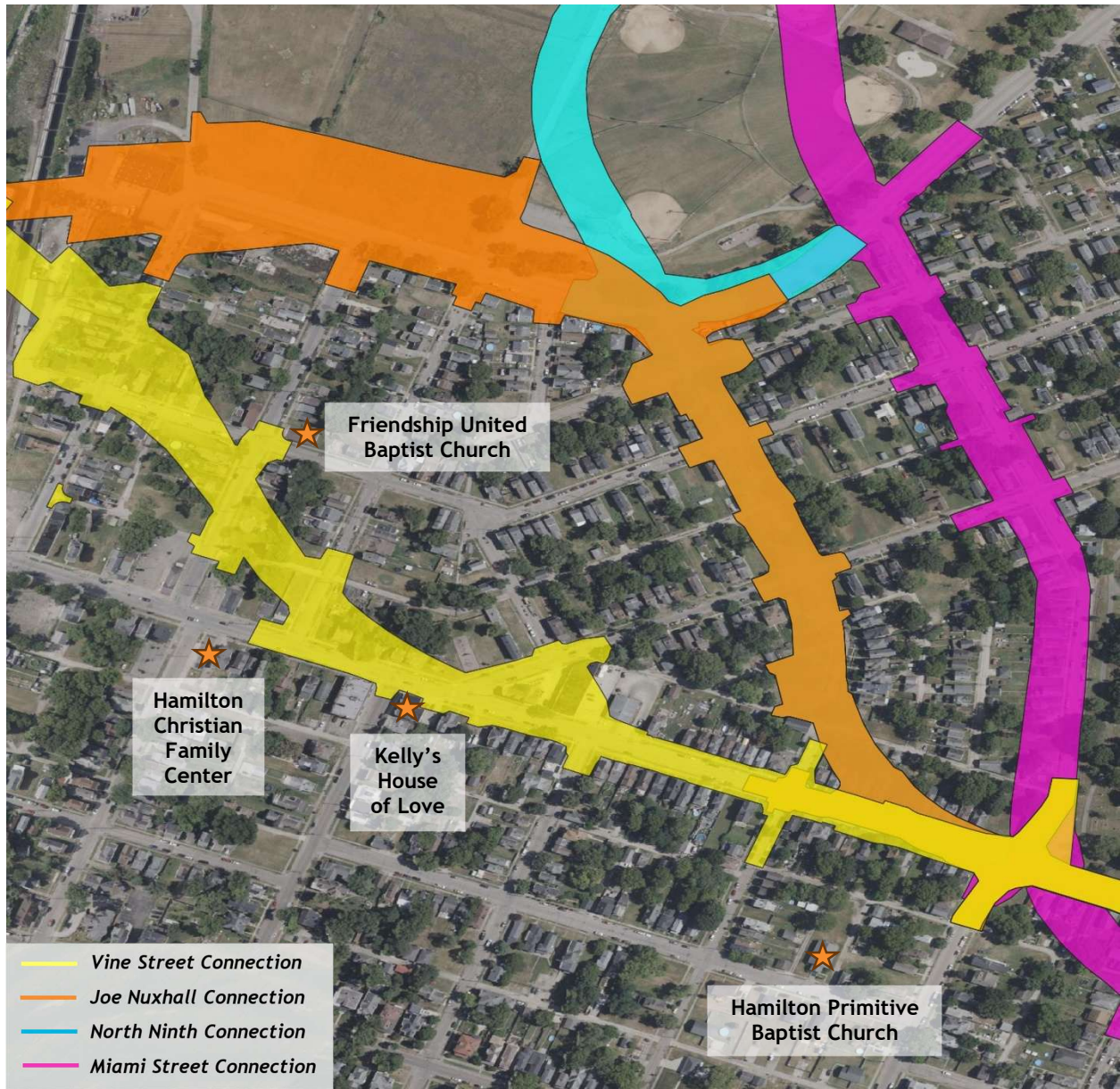
The North End neighborhood is home to four religiously affiliated neighborhood resources, as described below. The Friendship United Baptist Church and the Hamilton Christian Family Center are shown in **Figure 28**. The Friendship United Baptist Church building is located at 502 N Sixth Street at the northeast corner of the Vine Street/Sixth Street intersection. This church name is mapped at this address, but it is unclear whether this building has a current congregation based upon publicly available data. It is listed as single-family residential in the Butler County Auditor records. The building is owned by a private individual that does not reside at the location. This location is adjacent to Vine Street Connection alternative where the new boulevard is climbing in elevation, resulting in cul-de-sacs at N. Sixth Street. For the Vine Street Connection, residents south of the new roadway use N. Seventh Street to gain access to the church building if it is used for that purpose.

The Hamilton Christian Family Center is located at 601 Heaton Street, across the corner from Food Town, two blocks west of the location where the Vine Street Connection splits from existing Heaton Street. Traffic would be expected to decrease in front of the facility. The Vine Street Connection improves access for vehicles and connections for bicycles and pedestrians via N. Seventh Street. However, residents north of the new boulevard would have a similar increase in walking distance as described in **Section 4.3.6** above. The Joe Nuxhall Connection, North Ninth Connection, and Miami Street Connection do not impact either the Friendship United Baptist Church or the Hamilton Christian Family Center.

Kelly's House of Love is also located along Heaton Street and would also be in the vicinity of the Vine Street Connection. The building is located directly across from Moser Park at 701 Heaton Street, on the corner of Heaton Street and N. Seventh Street. This building is one block east of The Hamilton Christian Family Center, and two blocks east of Food Town. The Vine Street Connection improves access for vehicles and connections for bicycles and pedestrians via N. Seventh Street.

The next closest house of worship is the Hamilton Primitive Baptist Church located at 930 Buckeye Street, which is greater than two blocks south of the closest alternative along Heaton Street. No changes are anticipated for this resource, or the dozen churches and one temple located 0.25-miles or farther south of the project area.

Figure 28: Church Locations in Central Section



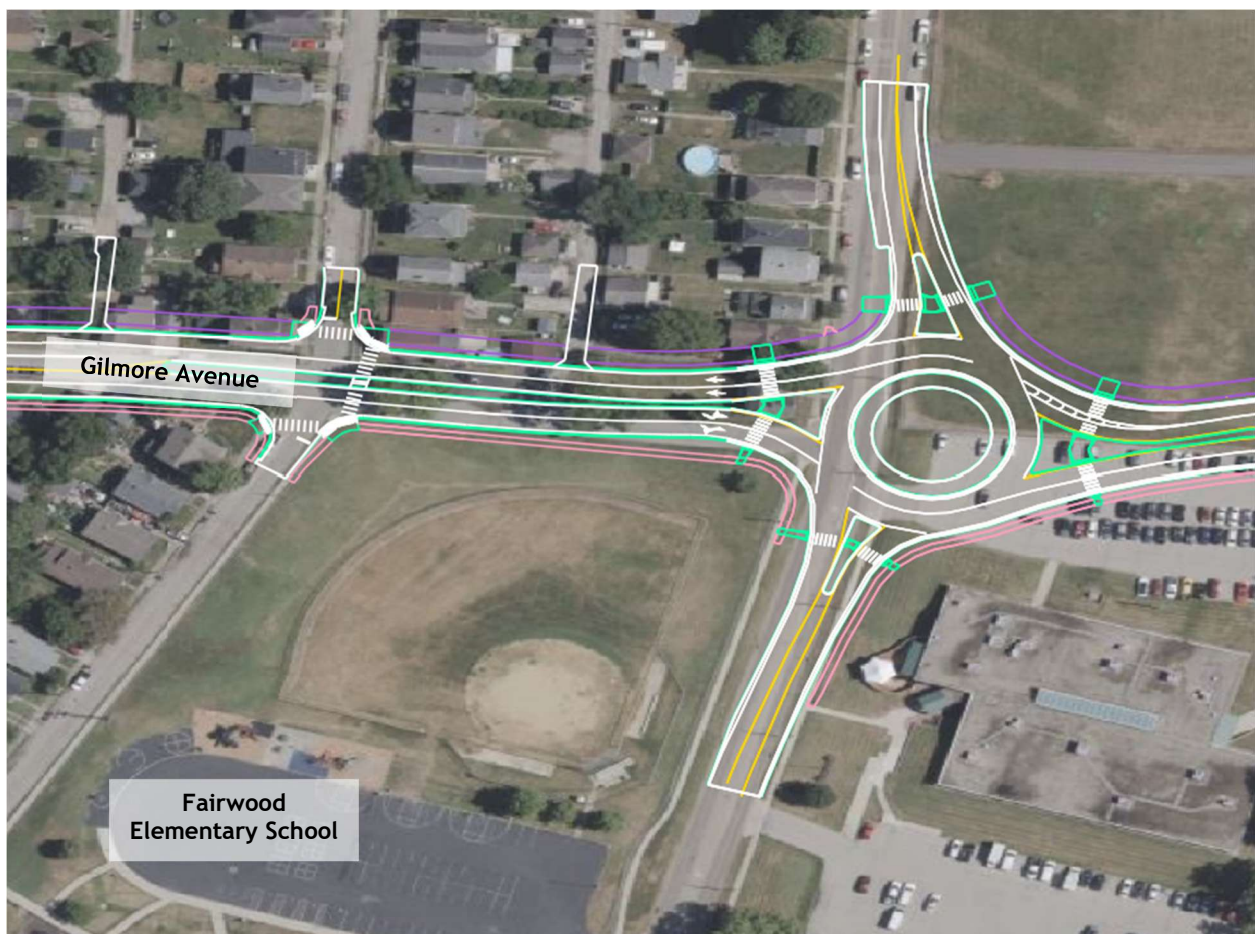
4.3.8 Schools

Fairwood Elementary School is located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Gilmore Avenue and North Fair Avenue. All four alternatives are identical in this location and impact approximately 0.25 acres along Gilmore Avenue, with no impact on the adjacent ballfield and playground. The ballfield is currently fenced along Gilmore Avenue and access to the ballfield remains unchanged.

Traffic volumes on Gilmore Avenue will increase from 500 vpd to 16,700 vpd due to the additional east-west connectivity. All alternatives include a roundabout at Gilmore Avenue and N. Fair Avenue, which reduces speeds. Crosswalks with pedestrian refuge areas are included, as well as a High-intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) pedestrian-activated signal. **Figure 29** illustrates the roundabout location, shared use path (purple), sidewalk (pink) and crosswalks. The school currently employs crossing guards in this area, which is expected to remain unchanged.

Although specific numbers are not available, traffic volumes are expected to decrease in front of the school building due to traffic using the new roadway to continue east and south rather than using North Fair Avenue.

Figure 29: Fairwood Elementary School Location



4.3.9 Healthcare and Elder Care

The Centerhaven Adult Care Facility is an assisted living facility at 422 N 2nd St. The facility is west of MLK Boulevard and would not be impacted. The closest alternative is the Vine Street Connection, which provides improved access to the east. No other healthcare facilities or senior centers are located within the project area.

4.4 Traffic Movement/Public Safety

For all four alternatives, the proposed new roadway is designed to be a 35-mph boulevard with two lanes in each direction, a shared use path, and sidewalk. All four alternatives are located within the North End neighborhood. The Vine Street Connection uses Heaton Street, which is the boundary between North End and Dayton Lane neighborhoods.

Whichever route is chosen, traffic volumes will increase on the affected roadway. Traffic volumes are often measured in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in vehicles per day. Examples of the largest changes in volume for each alternative are provided in **Table 22**.

Table 22: Representative Changes in Traffic Volume

Alternative/Road	2050 No Build AADT	2050 Build AADT
Vine Street Connection - Heaton Street	6,000	23,100
North Ninth Connection - 9 th Street	600	17,500
Miami Street Connection - Miami Street	1,100	17,500
Joe Nuxhall Connection - 9 th Street	600	23,100

Heaton Street carries through traffic under existing conditions. The remaining routes have mostly local traffic and low traffic volumes, as shown in **Table 22**.

The North End neighborhood contains a high percentage of the population having household incomes below the federal poverty line and over 20% without a car available. No bus stops or bus routes will be impacted. All four alternatives are expected to provide improved pedestrian and bicycle access within the North End neighborhood. The proposed boulevard includes a landscaped median, lighting, and pedestrian amenities to assist with comfort and safety when walking or crossing the roadway. In addition to a shared use path and sidewalks along the route, the project will include:

- Mid-block crossing with pedestrian refuge and Rapid Flashing Beacon (RFB) in areas of high pedestrian activity where a signalized crossing is not close by, such as near parks.
- HAWK signal (pedestrian activated warning light) for crossing near the elementary school.
- Bump-outs on side streets to shorten crossing distances where feasible.
- Leading pedestrian intervals at signalized intersections.
- Sidewalks at the existing grade, connecting neighborhood streets that are severed by the railroad grade separation.

Existing heavy traffic was identified as a problem for pedestrian safety during multiple public involvement events. Community members noted that speeding and aggressive driver behavior is creating unsafe crossing conditions for pedestrians near schools and at signalized intersections. Additionally, commenters expressed concern that drivers would not obey the 35 MPH speed limit on the new boulevard. In addition to the measures listed above, the installation of a roundabout at North Fair Avenue and Gilmore Avenue (adjacent to Fairwood Elementary), and landscaped center medians throughout the Central Section, each serve as engineering controls to slow down vehicular traffic, making it more difficult to speed.

As illustrated on Figure 19 (page 33), Hamilton Fire Station 25 is located at 335 N Erie Boulevard, which has existing access to the North End and Dayton Lane neighborhoods via Elm Street to Heaton Street. For any alternative, access is available to the new four-lane boulevard within approximately 200 feet along Erie Boulevard. The Hamilton Police Department is located at 331 S. Front Street, which is about one mile southwest of the project area on the opposite side of the railroad tracks. Each Central Section alternative includes a grade separated railroad crossing connection to MLK Boulevard, providing an alternative crossing in addition to High Street for accessing the area east of the railroad tracks when a train is present.

During public involvement, comments were received regarding trains and the problems they cause. Respondents noted that trains cause travel delays by blocking routes through the city. Several individuals specifically mentioned concerns with the impact train blockages have on the ability to provide timely emergency response services. Closure of existing at-grade rail crossings provides a safety benefit. Therefore, regardless of alternative, the project is expected to improve response for fire and emergency services.

4.5 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is expressed through strong social networks, opportunities for interaction, shared problem-solving, and a sense of belonging to a place. As part of 17STRONG, discussed in **Section 2.1**, Hamilton residents defined their neighborhood identities, making clear to which community each household belongs. The Central Section alternatives primarily influence the North End neighborhood and, to a lesser extent, the Dayton Lane neighborhood.

Through public involvement conversations, the North End neighborhood in particular has demonstrated a strong connection among residents, with mutual support and assistance. Sites such as Nextdoor show numerous conversations about borrowing space heaters and finding lost cats, among other assistance with the challenges of daily living. As discussed in **Section 4.3.6**, the North End Market provides community support and place of connection. Moser Park, the Stone Tavern, Food Town, and several faith organizations are situated on or near Heaton Avenue, where Dayton Lane and North End meet.

North Ninth Connection, Miami Street Connection, and Joe Nuxhall Connection alternatives bisect the North End neighborhood. As part of public outreach, residents mentioned concerns over the potential loss of a sense of community if the neighborhood is bisected by a boulevard. These alternatives physically separate and isolate some blocks of the neighborhood, depending on how the boulevard is designed, diminishing the cohesiveness of the North End neighborhood. Although it would be designed as an urban boulevard with sidewalks and crosswalks, it would break up the sense of place that currently exists in North End. Additionally, the Miami Street

Connection traverses behind several houses on Heaton Street, which results in a new road behind them while Heaton Street remains in front. This isolates these residents from the remainder of North End.

In contrast, the Vine Street Connection alternative follows existing Heaton Street which currently carries through traffic at the southern boundary of the North End neighborhood. The new connection at the west end would bisect three blocks diagonally when turning northwest from Heaton Street but would not fully bisect the majority of the North End. Due to the increase in elevation, N. Fifth Street and N. Sixth Street do not have access to the Vine Street Connection. Vehicular connections would be severed. Pedestrian connections would be maintained by the new paths as shown in Figure 25. Improvements to Moser Park as part of the Vine Street Connection would increase the ability for community connections among North End and Dayton Lane residents.

Impacts on access for the North End Market from the remaining three alternatives are summarized in **Section 4.3.6**. Other than these issues, the project is not expected to create further obstacles to travel for residents. It would not impact travel times to bus stops, other grocery stores, or employment if residents are able to relocate locally.

The quantity of relocations anticipated from each of the alternatives may affect the social bond of the residents with their current neighbors. In each alternative, there are segments where an entire block of residents is relocated. The effectiveness of the residential relocation strategy discussed in **Section 4.3.3** affects the outcome. One positive aspect of clustered relocations is that few residences appear to be left isolated on a block.

The construction of sidewalks as part of the proposed alternatives will improve community cohesion within portions of the project area by making it easier for the pedestrians to navigate North Ninth Street and Miami Street to visit neighbors, facilities, and businesses within and outside of the project area. Providing designated crosswalks at the intersections along the proposed alternatives would also provide a safe and ADA compliant crossing for pedestrians to move between streets. The addition of a bike lane on all proposed alternatives would also facilitate more active transportation in the area and potentially contribute to improved community cohesion. The Vine Street Connection or Joe Nuxhall Connection provide a grade-separated crossing, which improves North End's connection to amenities available to the west.

4.6 Environmental Concerns

As part of the evaluation of the preliminary alternatives, potential environmental issues or concerns that could impact the communities were identified. North Ninth and Miami Street Connection alternatives impact >3 acres of forested land, as compared to the Vine Street and Joe Nuxhall Connection alternatives, which each impact less than one acre. Noise increases are expected for residents along the selected route; however, noise impacts are not expected to vary by alternative. The Vine Street Connection avoids property impacts to the former Chem-Dyne site. None of the alternatives are expected to have substantial impacts related to air quality.

4.7 Other Community Concerns

According to *the In-Person & Virtual Open Houses Summary Report, January/February 2023*, public comments raised a series of issues that are relevant to social and community issues. Comments mentioned the following issues:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Dividing the North End community
- Impacts on ballfields used by residents
- Lack of ability to walk to employment or store from new location, if required to move due to the project
- Concern over public safety if Chem-Dyne site is disturbed
- Gentrification and/or economic development that would not benefit the residents impacted

For the first four topics, please refer to detailed discussions in **Sections 4.3.1** through **4.3.5**. The final two topics are explored below.

4.7.1. Regulated Materials

The North Ninth Connection and Joe Nuxhall Connection require a strip of right-of-way from the former Chem-Dyne site, which is located just north of Joe Nuxhall Boulevard and adjacent to L.J. Smith Park. The Chem-Dyne site is a Superfund site included on the National Priorities List (NPL). Comments from the Public Open House expressed concerns that alternatives which impact the former Chem-Dyne site would disturb contamination. As part of the Project Development Process, ODOT conducts a Regulated Materials Review (RMR) Screening. If necessary, further studies such as RMR Assessments and RMR Investigations are prepared to characterize the site and plan for any remediation that would be needed if it is disturbed. If this area is impacted by the project, ODOT will follow the RMR process to determine how to address any excavated materials and protect public health.

4.7.2 Gentrification

Public comments expressed concerns that the city's focus on economic development may benefit the city but result in negative effects for the North End residents. There is a concern that a new boulevard bisecting North End would lead to gentrification pressures and cause residents' housing costs to increase. The Miami Street Connection, North Ninth Connection, and Joe Nuxhall Connection (which bisect North End) provide enhanced through-access where it does not currently exist, which could lead to pressure to redevelop adjacent areas. The Vine Street Connection does not bisect the North End and uses Heaton Street for much of its length, which is a roadway that currently carries through-travel and has several businesses on the route. Based upon available information, it is not possible to speculate on land use changes or redevelopment pressures on privately owned property for any of the four alternatives.

Refer to **Section 4.3.3** regarding relocation strategies to help residents remain in the community.

4.8 Comparison of Central Section Alternatives

A summary of the four alternatives is presented in Table 23.

Table 23: Central Section of North Hamilton Crossing Alternatives Comparison

Key Issues	Miami Street Connection	Vine Street Connection	Joe Nuxhall Connection	North Ninth Connection
Residential & Business Relocations				
Residential	55-65	55-65	50-60	45-55
Commercial	<5	10-15	5-10	<5
Community Resources				
Parks	LJ Smith Park - 4.0 acres (3 fields, bisects park)	Moser Park - 0.1 acre (picnic shelter)	LJ Smith Park - 1.0 acre (playground, parking)	LJ Smith Park - 4.5 acres (3 fields, building, parking)
North End Market	One block east of Market; additional traffic between eastern portion of North End and market	No impact	One block west of Market; additional traffic between western portion of North End and market	One block west of Market; additional traffic between western portion of North End and market
Other Grocery Stores	None	Increases walking distance from north to Food Town; Access changes to Minnicks Drive Thru	None	None
Fairwood Elementary School	0.25-acre, no facilities impacted, traffic increase on Gilmore Avenue	0.25-acre, no facilities impacted, traffic increase on Gilmore Avenue	0.25-acre, no facilities impacted, traffic increase on Gilmore Avenue	0.25-acre, no facilities impacted, traffic increase on Gilmore Avenue
Houses of Worship	None	Increases walking distance to family center and church	None	None
Healthcare Facilities	None	None	None	None
Traffic Movement/Public Safety				
Traffic change on neighborhood street	Miami St +1,491%	Heaton +285%	9 th St + 3,750%	9 th St + 2,817%
Pedestrian Mobility	Sidewalks added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along alignment	Sidewalks added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along alignment	Sidewalks added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along alignment	Sidewalks added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along alignment
Emergency Services	Access improved due to railroad grade separation	Access improved due to railroad grade separation	Access improved due to railroad grade separation	Access improved due to railroad grade separation
Community Cohesion				
North End Neighborhood bisected	Bisects North End, isolates residences south of Heaton and west of N 11 th St	Severs area north of Heaton, south of new Vine Connection split from neighborhood	Bisects North End	Bisects North End
Other Community Concerns				
Chem-Dyne Site	Not impacted	Not impacted	Impacted	Impacted

Based upon the above summary, similarities and key differences are discussed below.

Similar effects

- All alternatives have the same effect in the vicinity of Fairwood Elementary School.
- All alternatives improve pedestrian mobility along the corridor.
- All alternatives provide a railroad grade separation which will enhance access for emergency services.
- None of the alternatives are expected to have any notable effects on healthcare facilities or access to services.
- All alternatives require relocation of commercial properties. Vine Street Connection and Joe Nuxhall Connection impact more active businesses than the other two alternatives.
- No public health issues are anticipated since the project will follow ODOT's requirements for addressing regulated materials; however, the neighborhood has expressed concerns about impacts on the former Chem-Dyne site. The Joe Nuxhall Connection and North Ninth Connection impact the site.

Differing effects

- All alternatives require a substantial number of residential relocations. The Miami Street Connection and Vine Street Connection have the highest potential relocations at 55-65. North Ninth Connection has the lowest at 45-55.
- The Miami Street Connection and North Ninth Connection have a substantial effect on L.J. Smith Park, impacting three ballfields and other facilities.
- The Vine Street Connection results in a smaller relative increase in traffic volumes on the affected route. The remaining three alternatives bisect the North End neighborhood, increase traffic on neighborhood streets that are not currently carrying through traffic, and separate the North End Market from a portion of the community. These alternatives are more likely to elicit community concerns regarding cohesion.
- The Vine Street Connection does not bisect North End but severs 2-3 blocks along Heaton Street (at N. Fifth St. and N. Sixth St.) from the remainder of the North End. Due to an increase in elevation, residents will use N. Seventh Street to cross the new boulevard, increasing walking distances to Food Town and Hamilton Christian Family Center by approximately 0.2 miles.

Conclusion

All proposed alternatives impact the North End neighborhood, with a high percentage of the population having household incomes below the federal poverty line. Based upon the above comparison, the Vine Street Connection results in the least impact on community cohesion and parks, and better addresses identified community concerns. The Joe Nuxhall Connection has the second least impact, by avoiding substantial park impacts while not severing connections to N. Fifth Street and N. Sixth Street and avoiding increases in walking distances to community resources.

5.0 East Section Alternative (North Fair Ave to SR 129)

5.1. Description of Alternatives

This section focuses on the East Section Alternative, illustrated in **Figure 30** and described below.

The **East Connection** alternative begins at the intersection of Gilmore Avenue and North Fair Avenue. At this point, the alignment runs east behind the Butler County Children Services Board, Juvenile Justice Center, and Butler County Board of Developmental Services buildings, turns southeast to go behind the Humane Society, and then turns south to cross Princeton Road, west of the Hampshire Drive intersection. The alignment then would be connected to Hampshire Drive and SR 129.

Figure 30: East Section Alternative



5.2 Community Characteristics

Community demographics for the proposed project area were identified using the U.S. Census *American Community Survey 2019-2023* 5-year estimates. The East Section Alternatives are within two neighborhoods (North End and East End) and within three Census Tracts:

- Census Tract 110.05 - Eastern, mostly institutional and commercial portion of North End, and Butler County areas outside city
- Census Tract 5 - Most of East End neighborhood
- Census Tract 110.04 - Butler County areas outside city and the Enterprise Park suburban neighborhood, which is distant from the project

The portion of the East Section within Tract 110.05 consists of schools, fairgrounds, and other institutional and commercial properties. The populated areas of Tract 110.05 are outside the project area just to the east and northeast.

Census Tracts 5 and 110.04 are located south of Princeton Road, east and west of the proposed East Connection Alternative where it meets SR 129. This area contains residential properties.

The community characteristics are discussed in **Sections 5.2.1 to 5.2.8** below which provides context for the assessment of impacts, which begins in **Section 5.3**.

5.2.1 Population, Race and Ethnicity

The percentages of non-white populations for the identified Census Tracts range from 22.6% to 43.9%. These values are higher than the city, county, or state averages. The percentage of Asian populations is higher than all comparable city, county, and state averages while the percentage of White populations for the identified Census Tracts is similar to the city, county, and state for Census Tract 110.05. Most of the residential area of Census Tract 110.05 is outside of the project area.

The percentage of White, non-Hispanic population in Census Tract 110.05 is greater than the city, county, or state averages. The percentage of Hispanic population in Census Tract 5 is much higher than the city, county, and state. The percentage of Black or African American population in Tract 110.04 is substantially higher than the city, county, or state. Both Tracts 5 and 110.04 are at the very edge of the East Connection Alternative. There are no relocations within the East Connection Alternative and no impacts on these populations are anticipated.

Table 24: Population, Race and Ethnicity – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Population	White-not Hispanic	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic (any race)
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	6,776	77.4%	8.1%	6.4%	6.5%
Census Tract 5	East End	4,701	60.2%	9.4%	0.0%	26.7%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	7,018	56.1%	21.2%	1.9%	12.4%
City of Hamilton		63,124	73.8%	8.5%	0.6%	11.4%
Butler County		389,910	75.9%	8.3%	4.1%	6.6%
State of Ohio		11,780,046	76.5%	12.3%	2.4%	4.6%

5.2.2 Populations Experiencing Poverty

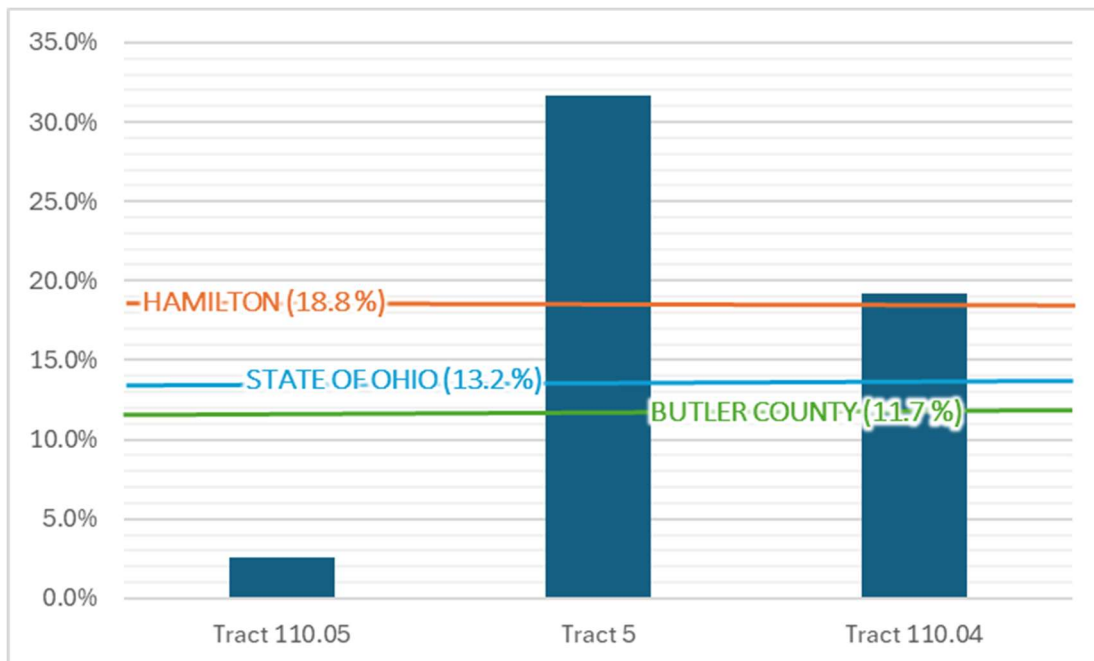
The percentage of households in poverty ranges from 2.6% to 31.7% for the subject Census Tracts. Low-income households (defined as an income level up to 1.49 times the poverty level) range from 0.4% to 14.2%.

As shown in **Table 25** and illustrated in **Figure 31**, the concentration of households in poverty within Census Tract 5 (East End) and Census Tract 110.04 (East End and Enterprise Park) are higher than the averages for the city, county, or state. Census Tract 110.04 (East End and Enterprise Park) also has a higher low-income population than the city, county, and state. The percentage of households that received SNAP assistance ranges from 4.5% to 25.9%. Census Tract 5 is higher than the city, county, or state averages for SNAP benefits.

Table 25: Poverty – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Poverty	1-1.49x Poverty	Median Household Income	SNAP Households
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	2.6%	0.4%	\$125,380	4.5%
Census Tract 5	East End	31.7%	8.2%	\$42,715	25.9%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	19.2%	14.2%	\$50,054	16.1%
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City of Hamilton		18.8%	10.1%	\$54,293	17.8%
Butler County		11.7%	6.6%	\$81,194	9.5%
State of Ohio		13.2%	7.7%	\$69,680	12.4%

Figure 31: Comparison of Poverty Levels - East Section



5.2.3 Older Adults

The percentage of adults aged 65 and older varies from 10.7% to 21.4%. The percentage within 110.05, which is the county tract abutting North End, is higher than the City of Hamilton, Butler County, and the state of Ohio. In this project section, the percentage of grandparents taking care of basic needs for their grandchildren is 2.6%.

Table 26: Older Adults – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Over Age 65	Households with Grandparent Householder	Households where Grandparent is responsible for Grandchildren
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	21.4%	4.0%	1.5%
Census Tract 5	East End	10.7%	2.6%	2.6%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	13.8%	0.1%	0.0%
City of Hamilton		14.3%	4.7%	2.8%
Butler County		15.5%	4.0%	2.3%
State of Ohio		17.9%	3.8%	2.0%

5.2.4 Individuals with Disabilities

The population of residents classified as disabled ranges from 8.6% to 16.1% in the East Section, as shown in Table 27. Census Tract 5 is similar to the city average but exceeds the state and county averages.

Table 27: Individuals with Disabilities – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	With disability
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	8.6%
Census Tract 5	East End	16.1%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	12.7%
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City of Hamilton		16.0%
Butler County		11.8%
State of Ohio		14.2%

The ACS uses six disability types based upon difficulties with hearing, vision, cognition, mobility (ambulatory difficulty), self-care, and independent living. For this reason, reported disabilities among residents may exist that are not self-evident. Public meeting advertisements offered to arrange for accommodations for disabilities, transportation alternatives, and alternative entrances to the venues. No requests were received for accommodation, and no attendees were observed utilizing the accessible entrance.

Table 28: Types of Disabilities – East Section

Census Tract	Hearing difficulty	Vision difficulty	Cognitive difficulty	Ambulatory difficulty	Self-care difficulty	Independent living difficulty
Census Tract 110.05	2.2%	0.9%	3.6%	6.0%	0.7%	3.2%
Census Tract 5	4.7%	3.8%	5.6%	8.5%	2.9%	10.1%
Census Tract 110.04	1.1%	1.3%	6.6%	9.6%	6.0%	7.1%
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City of Hamilton	3.4%	2.9%	7.3%	7.9%	2.9%	7.9%
Butler County	3.0%	2.1%	5.1%	6.0%	2.3%	5.5%
State of Ohio	3.7%	2.4%	6.1%	7.2%	2.5%	6.2%

5.2.5 Languages Spoken and English Proficiency

Populations are present within or near the project area that have limited English proficiency (LEP), defined as speaking English less than “very well.” **Table 29** shows the percentage of residents with LEP and percentage of foreign-born residents.

According to U.S. Census data, from 4.5% to 8.9% of residents in the East Section Tracts have LEP. Census Tracts 110.05 and 5 have higher percentages of foreign born, LEP populations that speak a language other than English compared to the city, county, and state averages. The most common language is Spanish, ranging from 3.1% to 16.8% in the identified Census Tracts. Previous public involvement materials, such as fact sheets and notification letters, included Spanish language translation. No comments were received in languages other than English.

Table 29: Languages and English Proficiency – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Foreign born	LEP individual	LEP household	Speak a language other than English	Spanish
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	10.1%	8.1%	3.3%	13.8%	5.6%
Census Tract 5	East End	11.1%	8.9%	4.8%	17.8%	16.8%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	7.6%	4.5%	5.1%	8.3%	3.1%
City of Hamilton		6.9%	4.3%	2.7%	10.2%	8.2%
Butler County		8.0%	5.2%	3.3%	10.2%	4.2%
State of Ohio		5.0%	2.8%	1.5%	7.7%	2.5%

5.2.6 Housing

Information on the percentage of home ownership and housing costs is provided in **Table 30**. Of occupied rental units, the median gross rent in the East Section ranges from \$925 to \$1,161 per month. This information is provided for context only. The East Section alternatives do not acquire any residential properties and do not result in the displacement of residents.

Table 30: Housing Characteristics – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Households	Average Household Size	Owner occupied	Renter occupied	Median Monthly Housing Cost	Median Gross Rent
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	2,672	2.47	97.1%	2.9%	\$1,542	unknown
Census Tract 5	East End	1,753	2.63	43.0%	57.0%	\$901	\$925
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	2,733	2.49	38.9%	61.1%	\$1,111	\$1,161
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City of Hamilton		24,729	2.48	54.4%	45.6%	\$957	\$974
Butler County		145,232	2.61	69.9%	30.1%	\$1,174	\$1,098
State of Ohio		4,829,571	2.38	67.0%	33.0%	\$1,042	\$988

5.2.7 Household Transportation and Employment

As shown in Table 31, 65.0% to 70.5% of residents within the subject Census Tracts work within Butler County, with 16.6% to 27.8% of city residents working inside the City of Hamilton.

The percentages of zero-car households and methods of travel to work are listed in Table 32. Data indicate 4.6% of households have no car available in Census Tract 5 (East End), compared to 1.5% for Butler County as a whole.

Table 31: Employment Location – East Section

Census Tract	Neighborhood	Living in a place (city)	Worked in place of residence	Worked in county of residence
Census Tract 110.05	North End, county	0.4%	0.2%	65.4%
Census Tract 5	East End	99.6%	27.8%	65.0%
Census Tract 110.04	East End, Enterprise Park, county	57.3%	16.6%	70.5%
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City of Hamilton		100.0%	33.7%	74.0%
Butler County		57.3%	18.0%	60.5%
State of Ohio		70.9%	27.4%	71.3%

Table 32: Transportation and Commuting – East Section

Census Tract	No vehicle available	Walk to Work	Biked to Work	Public transit to Work	Carpool	Work from home
Census Tract 110.05	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	7.7%	18.8%
Census Tract 5	4.6%	1.9%	0.0%	1.6%	6.5%	1.7%
Census Tract 110.04	2.8%	0.9%	0.7%	0.0%	5.3%	11.1%
<hr/>						
City of Hamilton	3.1%	2.2%	0.3%	0.6%	13.1%	5.6%
Butler County	1.5%	1.8%	0.3%	0.3%	8.8%	11.8%
State of Ohio	3.1%	2.0%	0.3%	1.1%	8.1%	11.5%

5.2.8 Summary of Community Characteristics

The data presented above was distilled to determine the factors most likely to influence the East Section alternative's impact on the community. Following is a summary of key findings:

- The East Connection Alternative traverses three Census Tracts; however, the populated area is limited to residences at the east end where it joins SR 129, at the very north end of the East End neighborhood.
- Census Tract 110.05 impacts are within the community resources areas including schools, fairgrounds, and other institutional and commercial uses. Impacts to these community resources, rather than populations, is the focus of the East Section.

5.3 Social and Community Impacts

This section considers how the proposed alternative impacts the normal function of the community. In the East Section, there are numerous public buildings that provide services, recreational, educational, and healthcare facilities. The majority of the East Connection Alternative traverses properties owned by Butler County, as shown in **Figure 32**. The alternative passes between the Butler County Fairgrounds and a public services complex including children's services, juvenile court, and board of developmental disabilities, among others. This section will explore these resources in greater detail.

Figure 32: Butler County Properties in the East Section



5.3.1 Residential and Business Relocations

The East Connection alternative does not result in residential or commercial relocations.

One institutional property, Sojourner Recovery Services, will be impacted by loss of the existing parking lot. Relocation of the parking is likely to occur within the existing Butler County properties, and the facility is expected to remain open. This issue is discussed further in **Section 5.3.3**.

5.3.2 Schools

Fairwood Elementary School is located at the southwest quadrant of the Gilmore Avenue and N. Fair Avenue intersection, which is the dividing point between the Central Section and the East Section. Refer to the discussion in **Section 4.3.8**.

Garfield Middle School is located on the east side of N. Fair Avenue, approximately one-quarter mile south of the East Connection. There are no impacts on the school property and access remains unchanged. Traffic volumes on N. Fair Avenue are expected to decrease and primarily serve school-related traffic, as motorists use the East Connection to travel east and south.

5.3.3 Healthcare

The Sojourner Recovery Services is a comprehensive mental health and substance use treatment facility at 249 Fair Ave. The East Connection alternative bisects the parking lot of the facility (see **Figure 33**). This property and adjacent properties are owned by Butler County. Therefore, the parking lot is expected to be reconstructed elsewhere on the property. The new parking lot location will be determined as part of real estate negotiations and is not expected to have any impact on community resources.

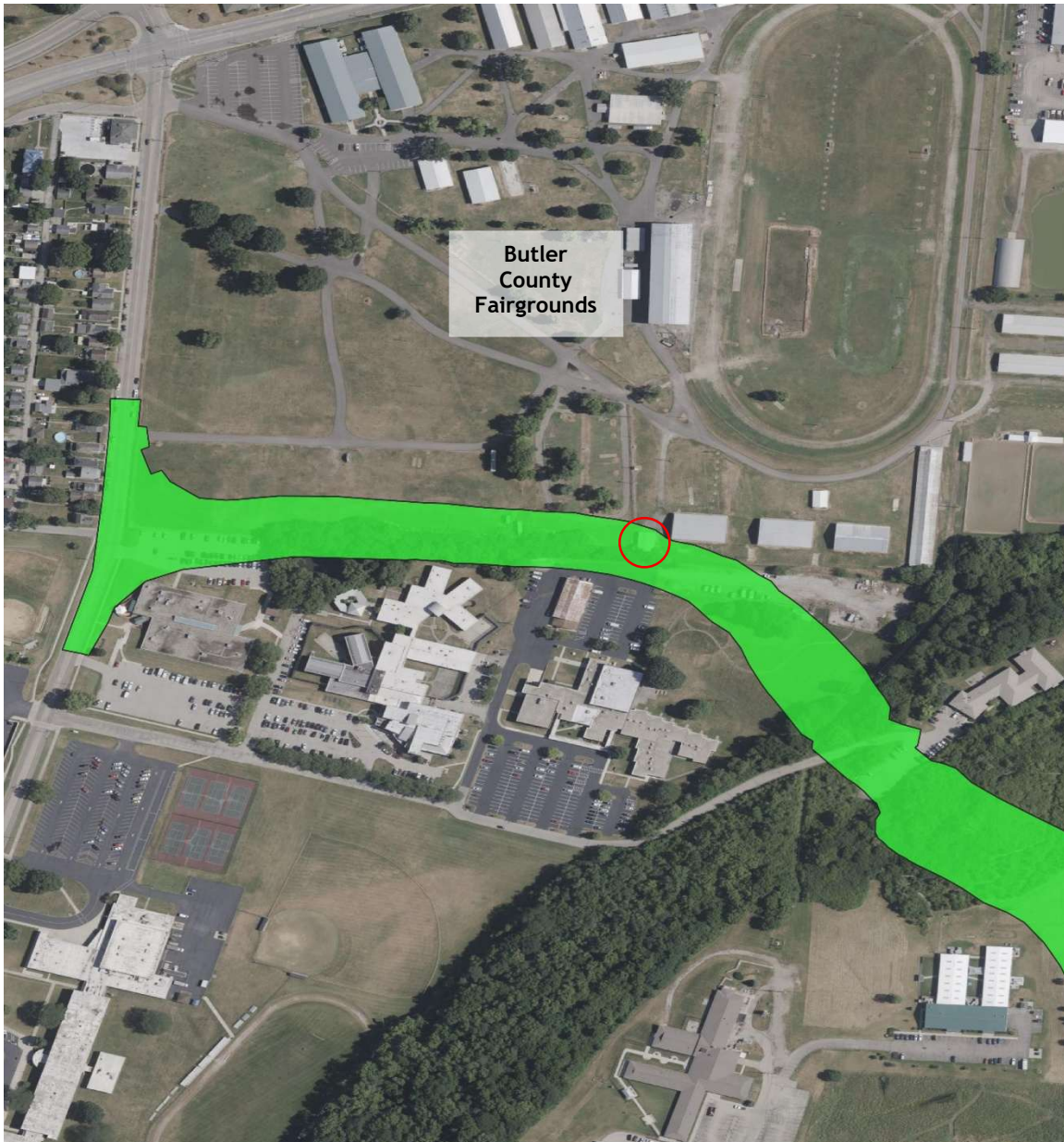
Figure 33: East Connection Alternative at Sojourner Recovery Services



5.3.4 Butler County Fairgrounds

Butler County Fairgrounds consists of 54 acres of exhibition buildings and grandstand seating located at 1715 Fairgrove Ave on the north side of the East Connection alternative. The alignment runs along the south edge of the Fairgrounds property, and a small building (maintenance shed) located in the southwest area of the Fairground is planned to be demolished (circled in red on Figure 34).

Figure 34: East Connection Alternative impact on Butler County Fairgrounds

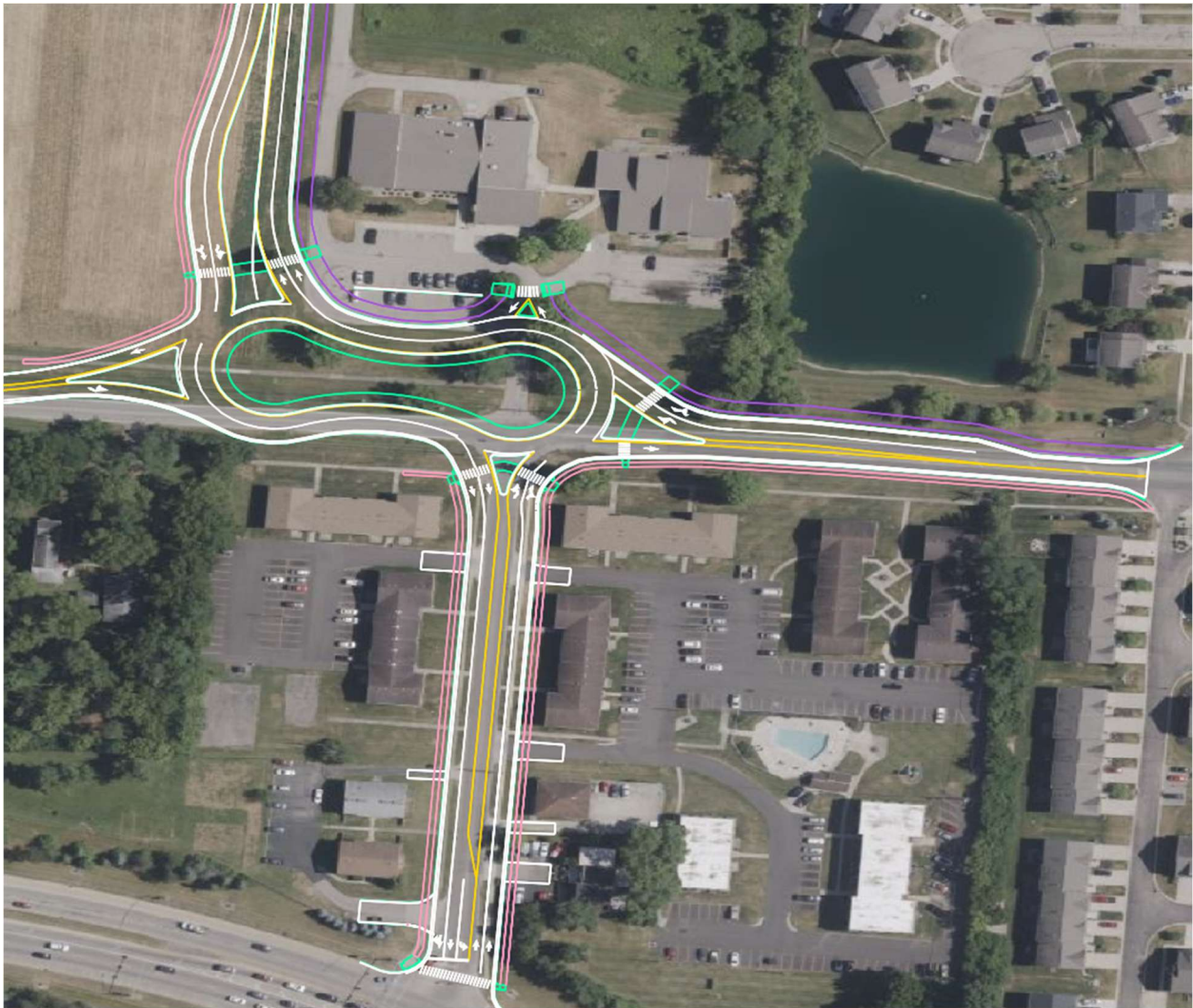


5.4 Traffic Movement/Public Safety

The new roadway is proposed as a boulevard with two lanes each way. Traffic volumes adjacent to the school on N Fair Avenue and Gilmore Road intersection are expected to increase after the construction of the project and provide pedestrian improvements as discussed in **Section 4.4**. The East Connection alternative improves access to Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Animal Friends Humane Society, Butler County Board of Elections, Sojourner Recovery Services, and the sheriff's dispatch office. These service buildings will have access points along the new boulevard, improving their connections to the surrounding roadway network.

Traffic is expected to increase from 11,100 vpd to 23,900 vpd on Hampshire Drive due to routing of the new connection. As shown in **Figure 35**, the project includes sidewalk (pink), shared use path (purple), a roundabout, and crosswalks to provide traffic calming and improve pedestrian access and safety.

Figure 35: Hampshire Drive/Princeton Road Intersection



As illustrated on Figure 19 (page 33), Hamilton Fire Station 25 is located at 335 N Erie Boulevard within North End. Emergency response from this station to the public facilities and apartments within the East Section will be enhanced access to a new four-lane boulevard through the county complex and to the residential area.

5.5 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is expressed through strong social networks, opportunities for interaction, shared problem-solving, and a sense of belonging to a place. As part of 17STRONG, discussed in **Section 2.1**, Hamilton residents defined their neighborhood identities, making clear to which community each household belongs. The East Section alternative primarily influences the North End and East End neighborhoods.

The East Connection Alternative does not relocate any residents or businesses, does not impact any parks, churches, grocery stores, or any other gathering places, and provides improved vehicle and pedestrian connections. The sidewalks proposed as a part of the project will improve community cohesion by making it easier for the pedestrians to navigate residential streets. The project provides ADA-compliant pedestrian crossings. The addition of the shared use path along the alignment facilitates more active transportation in the area.

Despite specifying the boundaries of the 17 neighborhoods that comprise Hamilton, there are community efforts to get residents together across neighborhoods. 17STRONG holds an annual Neighborhoods Summit. March 2026 will be the fourth year, with the theme “Connecting on Purpose.” The East Connection Alternative provides a boulevard connecting East End to North End, improving pedestrian, biking and vehicular access between the neighborhoods.

5.6 Environmental Concerns

As part of the evaluation of the preliminary alternatives, potential environmental issues or concerns that could impact the communities were identified. The East Connection alternative impacts approximately 5.25 acres of forested land. Substantial noise increases (defined as 10 dBA or greater) are expected within the portions of Butler County Fairgrounds that are within 200 feet of the proposed roadway. There are 32 campsites/camper hookups that are affected. According to staff, these campsites are used for approximately two months of the year. No substantial impacts related to air quality are expected.

5.7 Summary of the East Section Alternative

A summary of the alternative impacts of the East Section is presented in **Table 33** and discussed below.

Table 33: East Section of North Hamilton Crossing Alternative Impact Summary

Key Issues	East Connection Alternative
Residential & Business Relocations	
Residential Relocations	0
Commercial Relocations	0
Community Resources	
Parks	None
Schools	Fairwood Elementary School and Garfield Middle School are located southwest of the intersection of Gilmore Avenue - no direct impacts Traffic increase on Gilmore Avenue
Houses of Worship	None
Healthcare Facilities	Bisects the parking lot of Sojourner Recovery Services
Butler County Fairgrounds	Run along the south edge of the Fairgrounds property, and a small building located in the southwest area of the Fairground is planned to be demolished Substantial noise increase for 32 campsites
Traffic Movement/Public Safety	
Traffic change on neighborhood street	Hampshire Drive + 115%
Pedestrian Mobility	Sidewalks added; pedestrian mobility and safety improved along alignment
Emergency Services	Access improved for fire station to county complex and apartments
Community Cohesion	
Neighborhoods bisected	None

Conclusion

The proposed alternative impacts the North End and East End neighborhoods, with up to 31.7% of households with incomes below the federal poverty line. The alternative does not result in residential or commercial relocations.

The East Connection alternative impacts the parking lot of Sojourner Recovery Services. A new parking lot location will be determined as part of real estate negotiations. The alignment runs along the south edge of the Fairgrounds property, and a small building located in the southwest area of the Fairground will be demolished.

6.0 Summary of Public Outreach

The Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) Project Development Process (PDP) outlines a phased approach for planning, engineering and construction of transportation improvement projects. Public involvement (PI) is considered at each phase of the PDP and the requirement to solicit and consider public feedback is integral to the project process. A robust public involvement program has been planned and implemented for the NHX project in accordance with ODOT guidance. This program provided a collaborative effort between stakeholders, the public, coordinating agencies, transportation officials, and other interested parties to make informed decisions related to the NHX project based on multiple viewpoints. The purpose of the public involvement program was to:

- Understand and meet local community transportation goals
- Design the NHX project to address local and regional transportation needs
- Minimize impacts through early identification

Throughout the course of the NHX project, there has been sustained community outreach through a variety of activities to facilitate and encourage public involvement. These activities are described in the *Public Engagement Plan (PEP) for the North Hamilton Crossing (NHX) Study*, dated June 28, 2021 (updated April 2025) which is included in the project file (Public involvement\Project Information). These activities are briefly summarized below:

Public Involvement Activities: Beginning in 2020, several distinct types of public involvement activities have been conducted including numerous neighborhood and stakeholder meetings, a town hall meeting, two in-person and virtual open houses, and on-going social media postings. In addition, a project website has been maintained to inform the public about the project and upcoming outreach events. The main types of public involvement activities that have been conducted for the NHX project are described below:

Digital On-line Survey - As part of the development of the purpose and need for the NHX project, a digital on-line survey with an interactive map was developed to identify concerns and issues within the study area. This online survey was viewed 4,374 times and received 14,827 responses to questions embedded on the site as well as 4,188 comments. This meeting is summarized in the North Hamilton Crossing Public Input Opportunity #1 Summary Report dated December 2021 available in the EnviroNet project file (Public Involvement\Project Information)

Open Houses/Virtual Open Houses and Town Halls -There have been three open houses and one town hall held during the project to provide updates and solicit public input at key project decision points as follows:

- The first open house was held virtually during the COVID pandemic between August 29, 2021, and September 30, 2021. Attendees were able to join a discussion of the project remotely and meeting materials were available for viewing virtually during a 30-day comment period. This open house discussed the purpose and need of the project. The virtual site was viewed approximately 4,300 times and 1,600 people provided input.

- The second open house included both in-person and virtual opportunities for participation. The in-person open house occurred on January 23, 2023, and the virtual open house was available between January 23, 2023, and March 12, 2023, to allow maximum participation. These open houses provided information on preliminary route alignments and allowed attendees to ask questions and provide comments. Approximately 300 individuals attended the in-house meeting, and the virtual open house was visited 6,500 times and received feedback from approximately 700 people.
- A town hall event was held on August 28, 2023, which presented the findings of the NHX Feasibility Study. This event was attended by approximately 100 individuals.
- The third open house included both in-person and virtual opportunities for participation. The in-person meeting occurred on June 24, 2025, and the virtual open house was available for viewing between June 24 and August 8, 2025. This meeting provided results of engineering and environmental studies on the preliminary alternatives and presented the recommended preferred alignment. The in-person meeting was attended by approximately 140 people, and the virtual site was visited approximately 1,500 times and received over 150 comments.

Neighborhood and Special Interest Meetings - A dozen neighborhood and special interest meetings and other events have been held with impacted neighborhoods and community resources to provide project updates and learn of community concerns. These meetings were open to neighborhood residents. These meetings included the following:

- Six (6) meetings with North End neighborhood
- One (1) meeting with Dayton Lane neighborhood
- Three (3) meetings with German Village neighborhood
- One (1) meeting with Butler County Fairgrounds

In addition, a project team representative attended a Hamilton Police Department Neighborhood picnic for the German Village, Dayton Lane, and North End neighborhoods to provide a project update and answer questions.

Stakeholder Meetings - A Stakeholder Committee was established for the project, which was comprised of local organizations, businesses, neighborhood leaders, and other special interest and community groups. Members of impacted communities on the committee were charged with serving as liaisons between their constituents/neighbors and the project team between public input events. Four stakeholder meetings have been held on the project to provide project updates and learn of concerns.

Communities are characterized by their distinct unifying features. These may include behavioral patterns such as use of local facilities, frequent social interactions, or shared perceptions and attitudes, as well as common characteristics including religion, culture, age, disability, race, or income level. Public engagement activities play a critical role in identifying

community groups and understanding their values and priorities. Communities within the project area were identified by utilizing demographic information, engaging in discussions with stakeholders, collecting public comments, and interacting with participants of public engagement activities. This approach allowed for outreach efforts to be tailored effectively to reach as many community members as possible. All public involvement materials (flyers, handouts, yard signs, etc.) were in both English and in Spanish. In addition, Spanish-speaking translators were available at each of the open houses, if requested. In addition to traditional meeting notification methods (i.e., newspaper announcements, social media notifications, etc.) the following notification efforts were used to inform residents of upcoming public meetings:

- Flyers announcing upcoming public open houses were distributed at locations throughout the study area including grocery stores, markets, the public library, churches, and food banks.
- Announcements of upcoming events were posted on the City of Hamilton’s Facebook page and the project website.
- Yard signs announcing the public meetings were placed in areas with heavy traffic. These signs were in Spanish and English and include QR codes for the project website.
- Notification flyers for the meetings were mailed to residents near the project.
- Full-color ads were placed in the *Hamilton Journal-News* promoting several of the public involvement events. These ads have also appeared online, on social media, on television, and on the radio.
- Door Drops: For the in-person Open House held on January 23, 2023 and the virtual Open House held January 23, 2023 through March 12, 2023, the City of Hamilton prepared packets of project information materials, which included the project Fact Sheet, Project Development Process information sheet and a meeting notification flyer (in both English and Spanish), and hand-delivered them to the front doors of approximately 250 residences. Another 200 packets were provided to the North End Market for distribution and to North End RENEW representatives to leave as door drops around their neighborhood.
- Utility Bill Inserts: For the in-person Open House held on January 23, 2023 and the virtual Open House held January 23, 2023 through March 12, 2023, the NHX Fact Sheet, Project Development Process sheet and copies of the meeting notification flyer in both English and Spanish were included in the January utility bills of all City of Hamilton utility customers receiving paper billing; digital notices were included with bills for online payers.

Efforts were also made to ensure that access to the public meetings was provided for all residents. The meeting venues were ADA accessible, and a shuttle was provided for individuals with mobility issues.

Community Concerns and Responses: During all Public Involvement events, feedback was gathered via comment forms filled out by attendees, as well as any comments submitted via the project website during the 30-day comment period. There were many public comments received during the public in-person and virtual open houses held in January - March 2023, and in June - August 2025. Each comment was reviewed and responses provided. All comments and responses were included in the Public Meeting Summary Reports, which are posted on the NHX website for all residents to view, and included in the EnviroNet project file (Public Involvement\Project Information). Comments and responses received on the project to date are provided in **Appendix C**. Community concerns and public comments are discussed where relevant throughout this report.

7.0 Preferred Alternative Description

As a result of the engineering and environmental evaluations performed on the preliminary project alignments, as well as the input received from the public during the in-person and virtual public open houses held between June 24 and August 8, 2025, a Preferred Alternative was selected for further detailed study.

The Preferred Alternative combines the following alignments for the West, Central, and East Sections of the NHX study area:

- West Section: Gordon/Rhea Crossing
- Central Section: Vine Street Connection
- East Section: East Connection

The Preferred Alternative is shown on mapping provided in **Appendix A**.

8.0 Community Impact Summary

The Preferred Alternative for the NHX has the following effect on impacted communities:

West Section: The preferred alignment for the West Section is the Gordon/Rhea Crossing. This alignment provides a new river crossing of the Great Miami River, improving connectivity between the west side of the river and the east. In addition, this alignment improves pedestrian and bicyclist mobility as a result of the sidewalk and shared-use path along the alignment.

Central Section: The preferred alignment for the Central Section is the Vine Street Connection. Like all of the alternatives which traverse the densely developed Central Section, the Vine Street Connection requires a substantial number of residential relocations (approximately 55 - 65 based upon preliminary design).

Due to the possibility of “housing of last resort” and recognizing that there may be limited replacement housing which would allow families to remain within the neighborhood, the City of Hamilton has committed to working closely with Neighborhood Services of Hamilton, Inc. (NHS), or other housing development partners, to identify city-owned vacant lots within and adjacent to the North End neighborhood which may be suitable to build replacement housing for the affected population. The NHS is proposing to build affordable single-family homes on these vacant lots and make them available for the displaced residents. In addition to the newly built homes, the city is also exploring options for rehabilitation of existing vacant homes available within the neighborhood. This will allow displaced residents to stay within their community. In addition, the NHS rental program is expected to be utilized to assist the relocation of residents who are not homeowners or do not want to purchase a home. Additionally, Hamilton will also provide housing-related financial literacy and homebuyer and renter education, intended to improve budgeting, credit readiness, and understanding of housing costs to support successful and sustainable homeownership or tenancy.

The Vine Street Connection avoids L.J. Smith Park and has minor (less than 0.1 ac) impacts on Moser Park. Mitigation for these impacts will be coordinated with the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Parks Conservancy, the Officials with Jurisdiction (OWJ) for Moser Park, as part of the Section 4(f) coordination for the NHX project.

The Vine Street Connection does not bisect the North End like the other three Central Section alignments. It severs 2-3 blocks along Heaton Street (at N. Fifth St. and N. Sixth St.) from the remainder of the North End. Due to an increase in elevation, residents will be required to use N. Seventh Street to cross the boulevard, increasing walking distances to Food Town and Hamilton Christian Family Center by approximately 0.2 miles.

Of the Central Section alternatives, the Vine Street Connection best addresses community concerns regarding potential impacts to the Chem-Dyne site, LJ Smith Park, and increased traffic on neighborhood streets.

The Vine Street Connection improves east-west connectivity, reduces congestion on local streets, and improves pedestrian and bicycle connectivity through the Central Section of the NHX study area.

East Section: The East Connection will have no residential or commercial relocations. Traffic will increase on Gilmore Avenue in the vicinity of Fairwood Elementary School. Pedestrian crossings, including a HAWK signal, will be provided to facilitate access. The project will include a sidewalk and shared-use path to improve pedestrian access to and from schools.

The parking lot of Sojourner Recovery Services and a small building on the Butler County Fairgrounds property are impacted.

The addition of sidewalks with the East Connection alternative improves access to community resources in the project area including the aforementioned schools, Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Animal Friends Humane Society, and the Butler County Board of Elections. The sidewalks and bike lane provide improved connectivity for bicyclists and pedestrians and potentially contribute to improved community cohesion.

9.0 Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

Throughout the development of the preliminary NHX alignments, efforts have been made to avoid and minimize impacts on communities. Where impacts cannot be entirely avoided, minimization measures will be implemented and included in the environmental document and project plans as environmental commitments. These mitigation measures will be detailed in the Environmental Assessment (EA) being prepared for the NHX project.

Issues specific to community impacts include:

- City commitment to explore new housing options
- Traffic calming features such as roundabouts
- Inclusion of a shared use path, sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signals where appropriate
- Minimization of relocations during the design process

Appendices

Appendix A: Preferred Alternative Map, Stantec

Appendix B: Public Comments and Responses

