

The Consortium seeks to make Uptown amenity rich complete with a dynamic set of retail offerings that appeal to its diverse residents, employees, students and visitors. The vision for retail development is focused on enhancing and strengthening existing retail while creating competitive shopping, dining and entertainment areas within Uptown. The approach to realize this vision is based upon Uptown's desire to become a unified district and the need to establish a rich set of community amenities- geared towards supporting the resident, student, visitor and worker.

Despite the competition posed by nearby suburban retail development, Uptown's opportunity lies in serving its own underserved urban market with attractive amenities that traditional retail has missed with its cookie-cutter prototypes. The door remains wide open for Uptown to create a vibrant, coordinated and identifiable pedestrian-oriented shopping district with distinctive retail uses and cafes. Urban markets are often undervalued by retailers. Their spending potential is easily underestimated when the retail industry relies on traditional market analysis. New and innovative market indicators that examine concentrated buying power and subset spending patterns combined with information gathered from existing businesses can provide a more accurate picture of Uptown's potential purchasing power. A growing Uptown residential base will also boost demand for competitive retail offerings. The Uptown Consortium must promote a stable and diverse retail environment and support the existing areas while strengthening challenged ones.



Fig 5.1 The Short Vine retail corridor.

The Current Market

Uptown's approximately 533,000 SF of retail is dispersed among six very different activity nodes.

- Avondale Town Center
- Burnet Avenue
- Clifton Heights/ University Heights/ Calhoun Street / McMillan Street
- Jefferson Avenue
- Ludlow Avenue
- Short Vine Corridor - University Plaza

In total, there is 533,000 SF of retail space spread out amongst the six nodes. This translates to 224 units of varying sizes. The 13% overall vacancy rate in Uptown reflects the 29 units of that 224 that are currently unoccupied. However, vacancy rates for individual retail nodes vary dramatically; for example, the Avondale Town Center area and University Plaza has no vacancies, while Burnet Avenue has the highest vacancy rate at 54%.

The average retail unit size, including four anchor retailers occupying over 20,000 SF each, is 2,379 SF; excluding the four anchor units, the average unit size is 1,984 SF.

Currently, there are 83 new retail spaces that are proposed or under construction within Uptown. Using the 1,984 SF average space figure, the average size store in Uptown, translates into an additional 165,000 SF of available space for retail in Uptown. In total, the primary retail nodes will have 307 retail establishments (existing, planned/proposed or under construction) totaling 698,000 SF of space. This is 20% more square footage than nearby regional malls such as Kenwood Towne Centre (550,000 SF without department stores) and 53% more than Rockwood Commons (325,000 SF). Presently, there is no other district in the entire Cincinnati Metropolitan Area with as much retail space. Although there appears to be an excess supply of physical space of retail in Uptown, there is a lack retail diversity to adequately meet the needs of Uptown's, residents, employees, students and visitors, leading to a mismatch of supply and demand.

The primary trade area that encompasses part or all of Avondale, Clifton, Clifton Heights, Corryville, Fairview, Mt. Auburn and University Heights is bounded by Vine Street to the south (from Over-the-Rhine), Interstate 71 to the east and Interstate

Retail node	Total number of spaces	Occupancy by space count	Total SF	Occupied SF	Average size space in SF - all spaces	Average size space in SF - less anchors (1)	
						#	SF
EXISTING							
Avondale Town Center	12	100%	50,000	50,000	4,166	0	4,166
Burnet Avenue	28	46%	28,000	12,880	1,000	0	1,000
Clifton Heights	56	89%	90,000	80,100	1,607	0	1,607
Jefferson Avenue	12	92%	35,000	32,200	2,916	0	2,916
Ludlow Avenue	52	94%	150,000	141,000	2,884	2	2,319
Short Vine	52	92%	90,000	82,800	1,730	1	1,400
University Plaza	12	100%	90,000	90,000	7,500	1	4,863
Total	224	87%	533,000	463,710	2,379	4	1,984
PROPOSED (2)							
Calhoun Street Marketplace	50	87%	100,000	87,000	1,984	0	1,984
Uptown Crossings	25	87%	50,000	43,500	1,984	0	1,984
University Village	8	87%	15,000	13,050	1,984	0	1,984
Total	83	87%	165,000	143,550	1,984	0	1,984
Grand total	307	87%	698,000	607,260	2,274	4	1,984
<i>Source: Mastin & Kufka, 2004</i>							

75 to the west and north. In 2003, it is estimated that the primary trade area had nearly 2,000 businesses employing more than 42,000 people. Of the 42,000 potential consumers employed within the primary trade area, 28,000 are employed by Consortium Members. Almost all of these employees live more than 30 minutes outside of Uptown. The median annual income of households within the primary trade area is \$23,589 with households within the secondary trade area, within a 10 mile radius, is \$43,494. However, traditional data analysis may not accurately capture concentrated buying power and the growing cash economy in traditionally low-income communities. According to the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, inner cities- defined as economically distressed urban communities- retail potential is quite high- "because the market is highly concentrated, there is enormous buying power per square mile in these communities despite the lower household incomes."

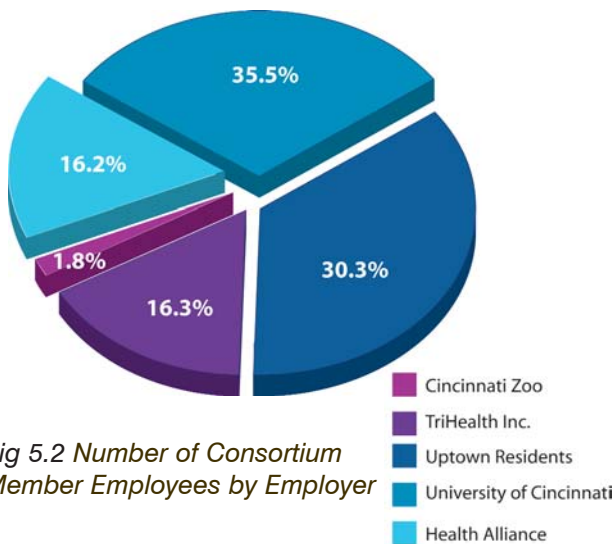


Fig 5.2 Number of Consortium Member Employees by Employer

Thirty-six percent of all Uptown retail establishments include food-oriented uses (fast food, sit down or take out). Only four home goods stores are located within Uptown. The absence of retail diversity indicates exciting opportunities for new offerings in Uptown for particular vendor types such as:

- Electronics, computers and office supplies;
- Well-priced home goods;
- Family-oriented apparel stores;
- High quality thrift stores (e.g. Snooty Fox) and;
- Ethnic dining options.

Strategic Opportunity 1

Revitalize the Short Vine Corridor with linkage to Clifton Heights and new retail positioning.

A. Physically Reposition University Plaza

Develop a plan that relocates/repositions University Plaza resulting in the connection of Vine Street and Short Vine - and then link these areas with Clifton Heights/University Heights. This L-shaped area may become Uptown's "Zone of Distinction." The repositioning of University Plaza is essential to connect the Clifton Heights retail area with the Short Vine retail node. This will create important linkages to further unify Uptown's fragmented geography and better position existing retail to potential consumers.

B. Introduce Mix of Ethnic Dining Options at Different Price Points

Responding to Uptown's diversity, increasing ethnic dining options may distinguish Uptown from other parts of the Cincinnati. Ethnic food establishments can serve as a complement to Uptown's current entertainment draws - Bogart's and Esquire Theater. While these two establishments tend to draw a predominately white audience, adding ethnic dining options nearby may encourage diverse programming and foster healthy market competition.

C. Support Existing Businesses to Upgrade Facades and Inventory

A unified streetscape/facade improvement program including trash, lighting, planting, pavers, directional signage, and printed directories should be created. This could be accomplished with a single, unified streetscape program.

D. Establish Visible Safe and Clean Presence

Creating a corps of Uptown "ambassadors" in custom uniforms, bicycle mounted and/or foot patrols - highly visible especially at commuting time and mid-day at lunchtime - would be effective in promoting public safety and improving the perception of safety in Uptown. See public safety section for detail.

Strategic Opportunity 2

Lead National Urban League's Economic Empowerment (NUL) Agenda for minority business owners in retail nodes.

A. Create a One-Stop Entrepreneurial Technical Assistance Center

Currently, there are several retail organizations and commerce groups that serve Uptown's retail nodes. A comprehensive solution technical assistance center for entrepreneurs supported by and through Cincinnati's African-American Chamber of Commerce, Minority Business Development Center and Urban League of Cincinnati, in coordination with the University of Cincinnati, could be created to represent local businesses as one unified entity. Another important role a technical assistance center could fill is to initiate programs to assist local businesses that allow better business-to-business working relationships and service provision.

B. Increase supplier diversity initiatives

The Consortium should provide a database or "vendor list" that includes local and minority and women-owned businesses within Uptown as potential service providers to its Members.

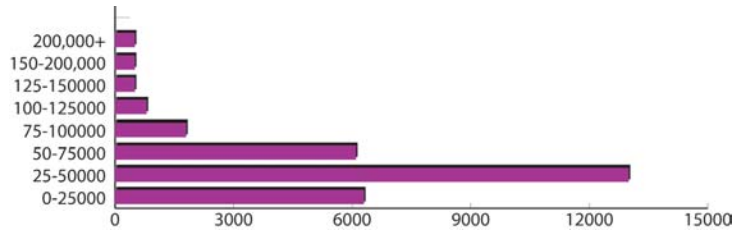


Fig 5.3 Distribution of Consortium Employee Incomes

Strategic Opportunity 3

Establish a coordinated retail management capacity team to market Uptown to retailers and to support small business.

A. Data Collection

Collect "real time" data to build database capacity on Uptown's retail providers, consumers and space inventory

B. Retail Marketing Campaign

Using this data, and as part of a larger Uptown communications strategy, engage professionals to create a retail marketing campaign. Retailers need to be introduced and reminded of Uptown's opportunities, promoting its authentic street oriented retail nodes such as Short Vine and Clifton Heights corridor among others.

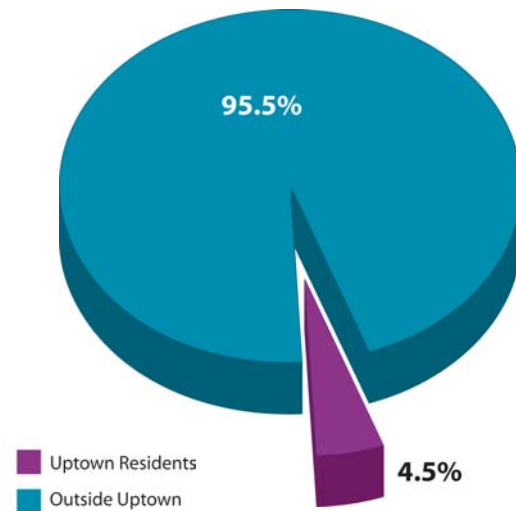


Fig 5.4 Percentage of primary Residence of Consortium Member Employees

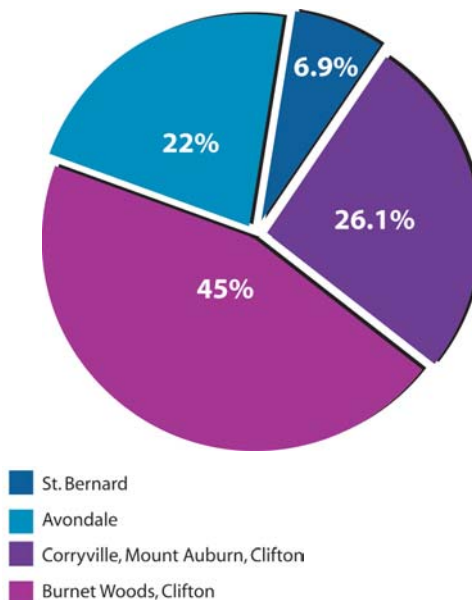


Fig 5.5 Neighborhood Distribution Member Employees