



# THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF CINCINNATI AND HAMILTON COUNTY FACILITY MASTER PLAN

REPORT PART I | DECEMBER 9 2019



THE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
of Cincinnati and Hamilton County



GROUP 4

[cincinnati.library.org/NextGenerationLibrary](http://cincinnati.library.org/NextGenerationLibrary)

# OPENING LETTER

## THE PUBLIC LIBRARY OF CINCINNATI AND HAMILTON COUNTY



### BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION LIBRARY

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Paula Brehm-Heeger

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The Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County spent 2019 working on our Facility Master Plan. We held community listening sessions at every Library location and heard from over 3,000 residents and library users. Our Facility Master Plan will serve as a roadmap to our Building the Next Generation Library initiative, providing the Library with recommendations and a strategic direction for upgrading our facilities over the next 10 years. We've never undertaken such a comprehensive plan as this, which will enable us to make informed decisions and maximize the dollars given to us by the taxpayers.

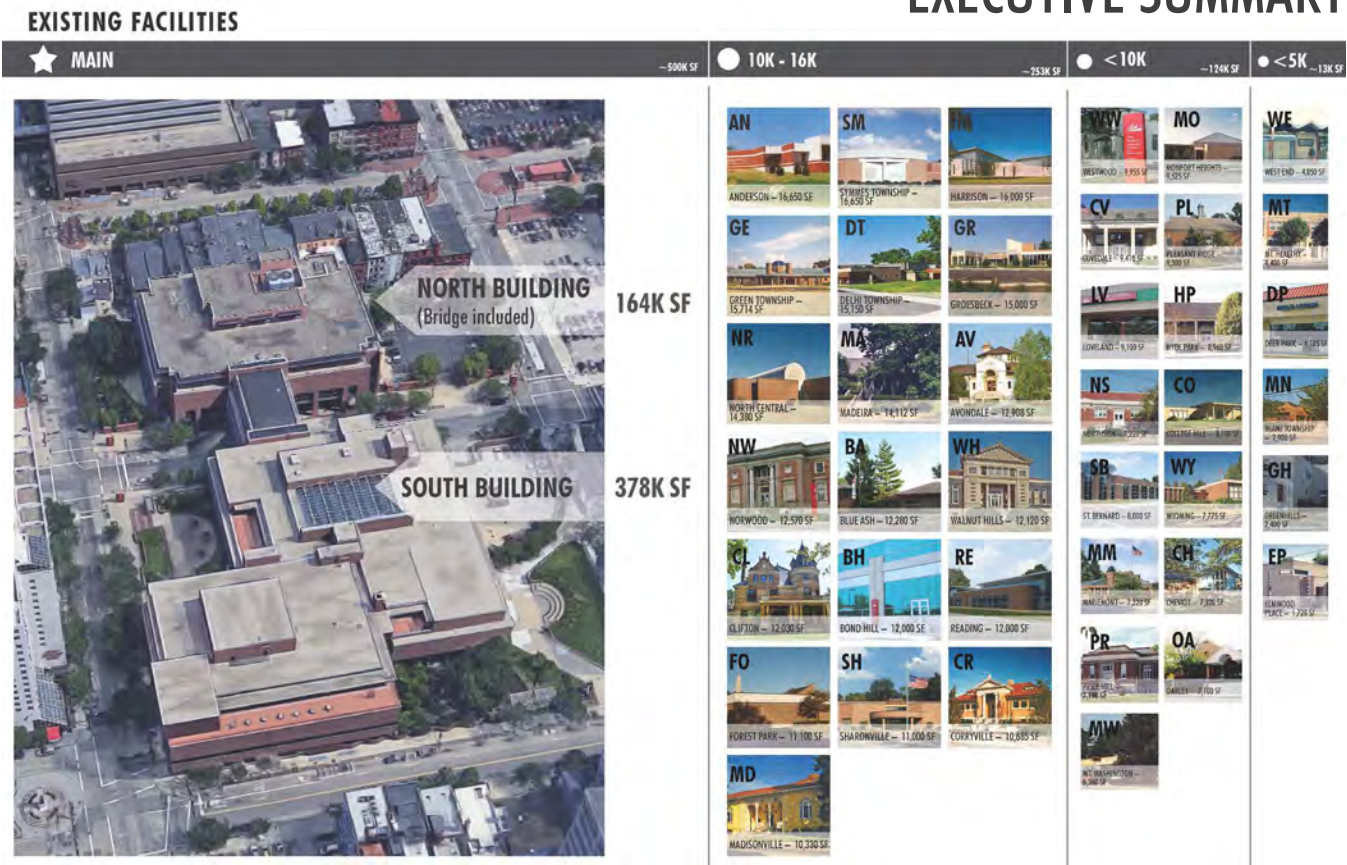
All 40 branches and the downtown Main Library will receive improvements over the next 10 years. Readers will not find closure or consolidation recommendations in this 10 year plan. While we may consider consolidations at some later point, our year of careful study revealed that locations sometimes considered for closure or consolidation provide a very high impact for communities in need without consuming significant resources and funding. They operate very efficiently, particularly in light of the service provided.

The extensive assessment and engagement process revealed that our need is substantial; greater than we thought. The levy funds made available in annual allotments over the next 10 years will certainly enable us to make great strides towards Building the Next Generation Library, and we deeply appreciate the support from our residents. We take that support seriously and we will need additional funds in the years ahead to fully address the needs that were identified when architects and engineers conducted an assessment of all our spaces during the past year. This is a generational moment for our Library and our county. We have a rich tradition of truly outstanding public library service and a community that supports and appreciates the many benefits a strong and healthy public library offers the community. Past generations helped foster a community of readers and learners by providing buildings that have outlived their expected lifetime and usability – in many cases by perhaps more than half a century. We seek to honor this tradition of constructing long-lasting, flexible facilities that will support our generation and the next and the next, just as has been the tradition in our community. This is a once-in-a-generation chance to contribute to re-envisioning our city and county for residents for years to come.

This is not the end of our conversations and collaborations – it's just the beginning. To realize our vision for our Next Generation Library we will need everyone's help and ideas. Thank you again and I believe the best is yet to be realized!

Paula Brehm-Heeger  
Eva Jane Romaine Coombe Director





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Founded in 1853, the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County today is one of the busiest and most highly acclaimed library systems in the United States, providing service to over 800,000 residents through a network of 40 branch libraries, a major downtown Main Library, and a Distribution Center. The average age of a library branch is over 40 years. In the first two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Library had to confront funding challenges as the great recession set in. Funding from the state shrank significantly, which led to budget cuts in the short term and a longer term strategy of obtaining local funding. As a result, there is a very large backlog of repairs – many libraries are not fully accessible to those with disabilities, and most libraries have designs that reflect outdated service models.

In 2018, Hamilton County voters approved a 1 mil levy, a portion of which will be used to fund deferred maintenance, renovations, and expansions. These funds will be distributed in annual allotments over a 10-year period from 2019 – 2028 and will enable many branches to meet community needs for the next twenty years.

This report is the product of a year-long planning process whose scope included identifying a vision for future services, evaluating facilities, determining community needs through an extensive engagement process, designing a system strategy, and recommending improvement projects.

All 41 existing Library locations organized by size. Snapshots scaled in rough proportion to their relative size.



*Various activities at Library locations*

Following the direction of the Library Board of Trustees to have an inclusive and transparent process, over 90 meetings were held including Community Listening Sessions and open houses for every library as well as advisory groups, workshops, focus groups, surveys, and more. Over 3,000 community members, stakeholders, and staff members contributed to the plan development through their participation in these activities. Many local plans and strategies from governmental, educational, and, institutional sources were consulted. The Facility Master Plan recommendations complement broader community goals and initiatives related to equity, inclusion, and environmental sustainability.

Community priorities are more than just making critical repairs and improving library accessibility, but also renovating and expanding libraries so that they may provide the full range of next generation library spaces. This Facility Master Plan proposes improvements at all locations ranging from small strategic investments that will provide low cost, high impact improvements, to moderate capital maintenance projects, to larger design projects. These projects also range from light makeovers to modest renovations, major renovations, additions, replacements, and relocations.

Today there is not a clear organizational structure related to branch size and the types of services and hours that customers can expect. The plan proposes four library types:

- **Main Library**, which has flagship services and supports the entire library system;
- **Next Generation Libraries**, which are the larger branches from 12,000 to 25,000 square feet, and, because of their larger size, can provide a full range of traditional, contemporary, and emerging services and will serve as regional destinations within their planning zones;
- **Neighborhood Libraries**, sized from 6,000-12,000 square feet, can contain a good cross section of library services and provide important access to services in their communities;
- **Focused Libraries**, which are the smallest at less than 6,000 square feet, but despite their size, can be run efficiently to deliver important targeted, impactful services tailored to neighborhood needs.

Over the coming years, the Library will refine its service model to correspond better to these library types and evolving community needs.



The plan identified a capital facility need in the range of \$300M - \$350M in today's dollars. If the Library's funding does not change, these needs will take 20 years to address. Building upon the finding that a majority of Library customers use multiple libraries and the knowledge that all libraries work together as a network supporting service everywhere, the plan's recommendations are organized according to planning zones as a tool to ensure that investments are equitably distributed and deliver the maximum impact.

The planning process identified the 10-year priority projects, amounting to: \$120M-\$130M in design projects; \$20M - \$25M in capital maintenance projects; as well as approximately \$2M in strategic investments. A total of \$98M is projected to be available in the first five years, and the plan identifies the initial projects anticipated to launch through 2023. The balance of projects and funding will be conditional on continued funding streams including state and local funding.

This 10-year plan should be seen as a framework that is intended to set clear directions yet also be adaptable. New opportunities and constraints will likely emerge as this plan is implemented, as the Library seeks additional land and partnerships for expansions or relocations, as new input is gathered as projects proceed through planning and design, and as external factors arise. Individual project size and improvement strategy may be changed to achieve overall planning zone and systemwide goals.

This Facility Master Plan is organized into three parts:

- Part I – Executive Summary and Facility Master Plan;
- Part II – Branch and Main Library Recommendation Summaries; and
- Part III – Implementation Strategy.

For more and updated information visit:

[www.cincinnati.library.org/NextGenerationLibrary](http://www.cincinnati.library.org/NextGenerationLibrary)



**UPDATED 12/08/2019**

## Legend

## BIG NEXTGEN:

Big Next Generation Library  
more than 20,000 Square Feet

## NEXT GEN:

Next Generation Library  
12,000 to 20,000 Square Feet

## NBHD:

Neighborhood Library  
5,000 to 12,000 Square Feet

## FOCUSED:

Focused Library  
less than 5,000 Square Feet

Branch	Branch Type
AN Anderson	NEXT GEN
AV Avondale	NBHD
BA Blue Ash	FOCUSED
BH Bond Hill	NEXT GEN
CH Cheviot	NBHD
CL Clifton	NBHD
CO College Hill	NBHD
CR Corryville	NBHD
CV Covedale	NBHD
DP Deer Park	BIGNEXTGEN
DT Delhi Township	BIGNEXTGEN
EP Elmwood Place	FOCUSED
FO Forest Park	BIGNEXTGEN
GE Green Township	NEXT GEN
GH Greenhills	FOCUSED
GR Groesbeck	NEXT GEN
HA Harrison	NEXT GEN
HP Hyde Park	NBHD
LV Loveland	NBHD
MA Madeira	NEXT GEN
MD Madisonville	NBHD
MM Mariemont	NBHD
MN Miami Township	FOCUSED
MO Monfort Heights	NBHD
MT Mt. Healthy	FOCUSED
MW Mt. Washington	NBHD
NC North Central	NEXT GEN
NS Northside	NBHD
NW Norwood	NEXT GEN
OA Oakley	NBHD
PL Pleasant Ridge	NBHD
PR Price Hill	NEXT GEN
RE Reading	NBHD
SH Sharonville	NEXT GEN
SB St. Bernard	NBHD
SM Symmes Township	NEXT GEN
WH Walnut Hills	BIGNEXTGEN
WT West End	FOCUSED
WW Westwood	NBHD
WY Wyoming	NBHD
MAIN	
North & South Building	MAIN
South Building	MAIN
North & South Building	MAIN
Vine St. Plaza	MAIN
New Stairs in Atrium	MAIN

## 10 - YEAR PROPOSED PROJECTS

Strategy - Option A	Strategy - Option B
Strategic Investment	
Waterproofing + Strategic Investment	
Relocation to Summit	
Strategic Investment	
Major Renovation, Accessibility Expansion	
Strategic Investment	
HVAC, Electr. Upgrade + Strategic Investment	
Roof Repairing + Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Replacement with New, Expansion	
Replacement with New, Expansion	
Makeover	
Relocation with New, Expansion, Accessibility	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Elevator Replacements + Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Major Renovation , Accessibility	Relocation with New
HVAC, Electr. Upgrade + Strategic Investment	
Relocation with New, Expansion	
Strategic Investment	
Relocation with New, Accessibility	
HVAC, Electr. Upgrade + Strategic Investment	
HVAC + Strategic Investment	
Exterior Tuckpointing + Interior Painting + Strategic Investment	
3rd Floor Renovation, Expansion, Accessibility	
Strategic Investment	
Exterior Tuckpointing + Interior Painting + Strategic Investment	
Major Renovation, Expansion, Accessibility	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Strategic Investment	
Makeover + Parking Expansion	
Major Renovation, Expansion, Accessibility	
Makeover	
Strategic Investment	
HVAC, Electrical Upgrade + Strategic Investment	
Strategy	
South Building Electrical Upgrade, HVAC, FP	
South Building Skylight, Elevator Replacement	
Small Scale Reorganization (100,000 SF)	
Vine Plaza Extensive Reconstruction	
New Stairs in the Atrium	

NOTICE / ADVISORY regarding DRAFT **RECOMMENDATIONS**: This list of projects, proposed improvements, and budgets are subject to change. Scope, size and schedule will be determined based on funds being collected and matching to project costs. Draft recommendations will be adjusted based on market conditions, fund availability, critical repairs and other factors beyond the Library's control.

The list of projects that are projected to be started within the first five years can be found in Part III.





BRANCH TYPE



MAIN LIBRARY



BIG NEXT  
GEN  
BRANCH



NEXT GEN  
BRANCH



NEIGHBORHOOD  
BRANCH



FOCUSED  
BRANCH

STRATEGY



STRATEGIC  
INVESTMENT



CAPITAL  
MAINTENANCE  
+ STRATEGIC  
INVESTMENT



MAKEOVER



EXTENSIVE  
RENOVATION



REPLACEMENT/  
RELOCATION



STRATEGY TO BE  
DETERMINED IN  
IMPLEMENTATION  
PHASE

BACKGROUND MAP



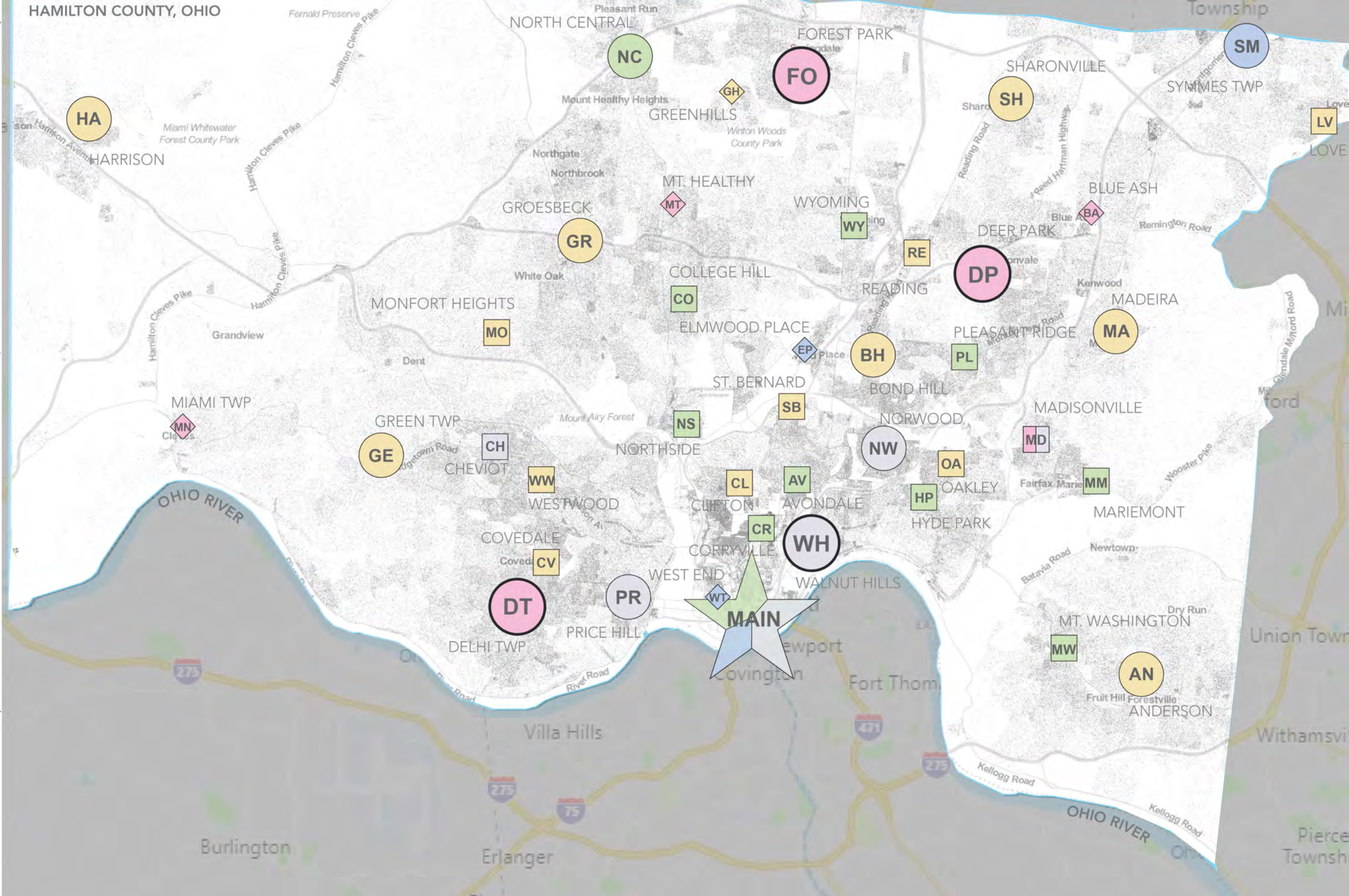
1 Dot = 1 Person

Geographic Distribution and Population Density of the American People  
2010 Census Block Data

Source of Background Map:  
creator: Dustin Cable, Weldon  
Cooper Center for Public Service,  
University of Virginia  
Accessed 12/2/2019

# 10 - YEAR PROPOSED PROJECTS

HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO







THE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
of Cincinnati and Hamilton County

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