



# IMPROVING COMMUNITY ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOODS

# Background

- \$1 Million for healthy food access in the Toledo Recovery Plan
- Goal: Find effective projects in a time of changing food systems

# Proposed Projects

1. Food Systems Education & Incubation Hub
2. Healthy Food Small Market Grant Pilot Program
3. Grocery Store Construction Incentive

# Food Systems Education & Incubation Hub Partners

## **Rebecca Singer**

President & CEO

Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT)

## **Sandra Irvine**

Programming, Development, Chef, and Instructor  
Opportunity Kitchen

## **Anthony Berin**

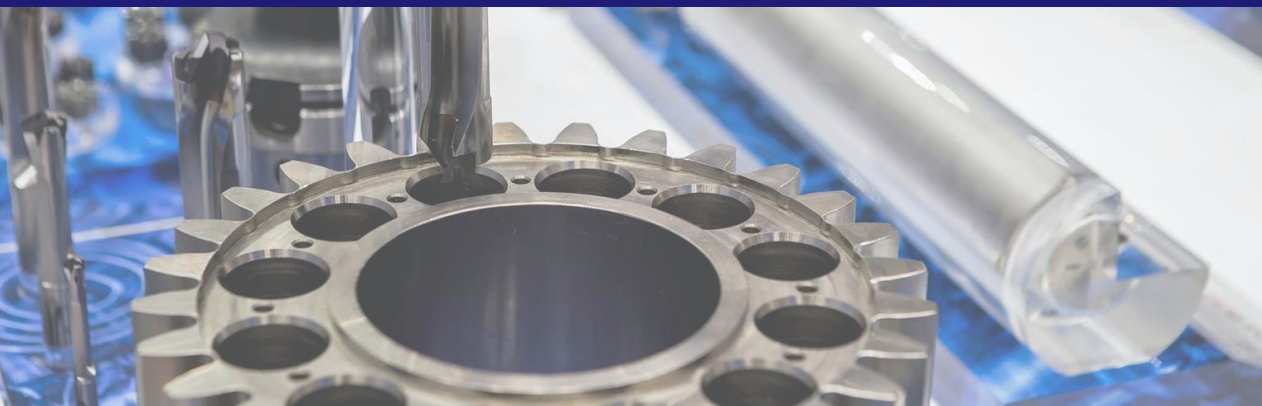
Senior Director of Food Incubation Services

Economic and Community Development Institute (ECDI)





# CIFT Overview



**Ohio**

Department of  
Development

Manufacturing Extension Partnership



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## OUR MISSION

Driving competitiveness for our customers  
through a unique blend of business  
solutions, innovation and technical  
expertise.



Department of  
Development

Manufacturing Extension Partnership





We have over 25 years providing solutions through services and resources for food processors in Ohio and beyond including:

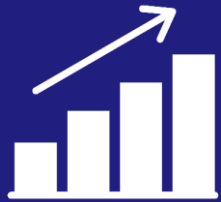
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- Product Development
- Food Safety
- Production Engineering & Automation
- Supply Chain
- Sustainability
- And much more!

# Our Impact



Jobs Created/  
Retained  
**1,251**



Increased Sales  
**\$12,517,195**



Retained Sales  
**\$144,915,161**



Cost Savings  
**\$147,729,596**



New Investments  
**\$42,125,460**

Part of the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) National Network wherein CIFT has been named the “Resource Center” for the eastern half of the US MEP’s due to the unique capabilities and experience.





## Industry Overview

- **70,000 Ohioans employed** in food and agriculture industries
- An additional **78,000 employed** in farming and ranching
- Over **1,300 food companies** in Ohio
- **\$16.4 billion in GSP** to Ohio's economy contributed
- Ohio is a national leader in food supply chain; known for lowest tax rate in Food/Agro Industry
- **\$555 Million in Capital investment** by businesses in the last three years in Northwest Ohio



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# NOCK



## NUMBER OF COMPANIES PROCESSING

43 companies have launched products

25 process consistently

Product development space for existing processors

## SUCCESS STORY

Guac Shop started off selling product in a booth at the mall. Processed at NOCK, CIFT connected to HPP, and now in regional stores, BGSU dining, and Cleveland Clinic.

## AUTOMATION

Updating the facility into a SMART food processing outlet. Co-bots and other automation will enhance the productivity of existing clients but also serve for educational platform to inspire workforce.

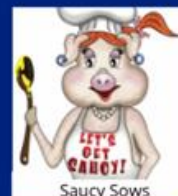
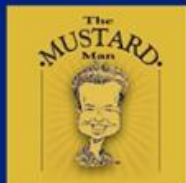


# OUR CLIENTS

*The NOCK can help entrepreneurs or restaurant owners take that next step in making a secret signature sauce, a special salad dressing, or a delicious snack! Numerous clients have achieved success transforming a recipe into a product!*



## NOCK GRADUATES:



# WORKFORCE –

## CIFT FOOD SCIENCE CREDENTIALS

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- Ohio Dpt. of Education Industry Approved
  - CIFT Food Industry Associate
  - CIFT Food Industry Specialist
- Approved in spring 2018; over 40 students have been approved over the 3 year period
- Hosting teacher workshops
- Increasing both awareness and access to students and school systems annually





# Role in this project

- 110,000 restaurants closed down due to pandemic while others transitioned to delivery/ghost kitchens
- 13% consumers brand loyal to favorite foodservice establishments
- Restaurants hit \$899B prior to COVID
- Gen Zer's looking for creative new options

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Elevate resources to the Toledo food community

Design a SMART kitchen and training center

Create a pipeline of entrepreneurs to guide to outlets for optimal results.

Technical expertise

Deliver training programs that provide food safety and regulatory guidance

Develop “ghost” kitchen space, innovation applications, and inspiration

Develop a workforce to support the food industry

Incorporate programming for career advancement

Explore a “Kids Kitchen” to introduce culinary arts to youth

# WHAT WILL DRIVE SUCCESS?

## EXPERTISE

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The combination of resources collaborating on this project is unmatched in technical skill and experience for delivery.

## DEMAND

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Explosion of food enthusiasts ranging from food trucks to new foodservice models following the pandemic.

## ADAPTABILITY

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Need for new ways to impact food systems and foster interest in this industry as career paths and business development.

## SYNERGY

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Everyone can embrace and get energized by the diverse elements of this project that will align with long term development strategies.

# RISE – Recognizing Inspiring and Signature Enterprises



## PLANNING

CIFT's SMART kitchen in the former Pepe's Restaurant space serves as a cornerstone for food advancement. The incubator bays compliment the overall vision of business development.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Funds are available to CIFT for the development of the kitchen. The facility has applied for historic tax credits for improvements. Partners have been engaged with additional resources to apply.

## IMPACTS

Various other examples of such outlets around the state exist as models. The Civic Auditorium can be a hub due to demographics of immediate residents, farmers market, and continued attention to downtown. A true destination point.

# THE OPPORTUNITY KITCHEN



**A culinary  
education for  
an inspired  
2nd chance -  
a catalyst for  
transformation.**

The Opportunity Kitchen is affiliated with Helping Hands of St. Louis and is under the auspices of Catholic Charities.



# Program Benefits

- Health department ServSafe® certification
- 10-week, 80-hour chef taught 18 class curriculum with collaborative sharing engagements from local culinary professionals, businesses and related resources.





# About ECDI

Small Business Resources and  
Loan Capital



Investing in the growth  
of small business



## Our Mission

Investing in people to  
create measurable and  
enduring social and  
economic change.





**Educate. Invest.**

**Innovate.  
Lending**

Access to capital for  
entrepreneurs who are underserved  
by traditional lenders

**Business Incubation and  
Innovation Center (BIIC)**

Wrap-around services and  
incubator/accelerator programs







## BIIC, current programs

### Food Business Incubation Services

Restaurant and food truck incubator

### Women's Business Centers

Support (for all genders) from business planning to industry trainings and beyond

### Capital for Construction

Enabling minority sub-contractors to grow

### Social Enterprise

Supporting meaningful job creation for vulnerable populations

### SBA PRIME

Providing training, pre-loan services and loan packaging to build capacity





## Proven track record

Top SBA microloan intermediary in the  
United States (as of 2021)



Individuals Assisted **More than 32,000**

70.5% Minority

48.5% Women

17.7% New American

46.8% Economically

7.3% Veteran

Disadvantaged



Funds  
disbursed:  
through  
nearly

**Nearly \$160  
6m200ion  
loans**



Jobs created or  
retained:

**More than 17,000**

*Data through Q123; Photo: ECDI client in Canton, Ohio*





# General Entrepreneur Services



## Offerings:

- 1:1 business coaching
- Entrepreneur training and education
- Professional Advisory Network
- Meeting and co-working space with WiFi
- Computers, printing, and notary services

 Weekly, free virtual classes  
([ecdiohio.org/calendar](https://ecdiohio.org/calendar))



# Food Business Incubation Services



- **Original** (Old Leonard Ave., Columbus' East Side)  
Incubator  
Food truck & cart commissary
- **2.0** (Old Leonard Ave., Columbus' East Side)  
Accelerator  
Established business as mentor, three mentees
- **Harmon Ave.** (Columbus' West Side)  
Accelerator  
Established brands for test kitchen, bottling line, etc.





# Food Business Incubation Services

## **Commercial Production Facilities**

- Incubator/accelerator models
- Retail food business commissary
- Production and manufacturing facilities

## **Access to loan capital**

- Supported with financial literacy and loan preparedness training



# Food Business Incubation Services

## Training and education

- 1:1 business coaching
- Peer mentoring network
- Industry-specific education
  - HACCP plan assistance
  - Licensing and regulation
  - Product development
  - Branding/Marketing/PR
  - Sourcing/cost controls
  - Operations and logistics
- CPG Basics
  - Cohort based programs



# ECDI's Role

## **Strategic Leadership**

- Provide guidance in the strategic and organizational planning and execution of this unique partnership

## **Operational Expertise**

- Provide organizational leadership and structure
- Standard Operating Procedures and staffing plan
- Guidance on revenue generation

## **Development and Financing**

- Fundraising and Development support

## **Entrepreneur Support and Lending**

- Embed ECDI technical assistance programing
- Expansion of Toledo lending program

## **Economic Development Programing**







## Project Outcomes

- Increased community access to healthy foods
- Growth in local food and beverage entrepreneurship
- Increased service offerings to Toledo area economic development
- Growth of multiple Toledo non-profits
- Revitalization of a historic Toledo Market
- Creation of a regional tourism attraction





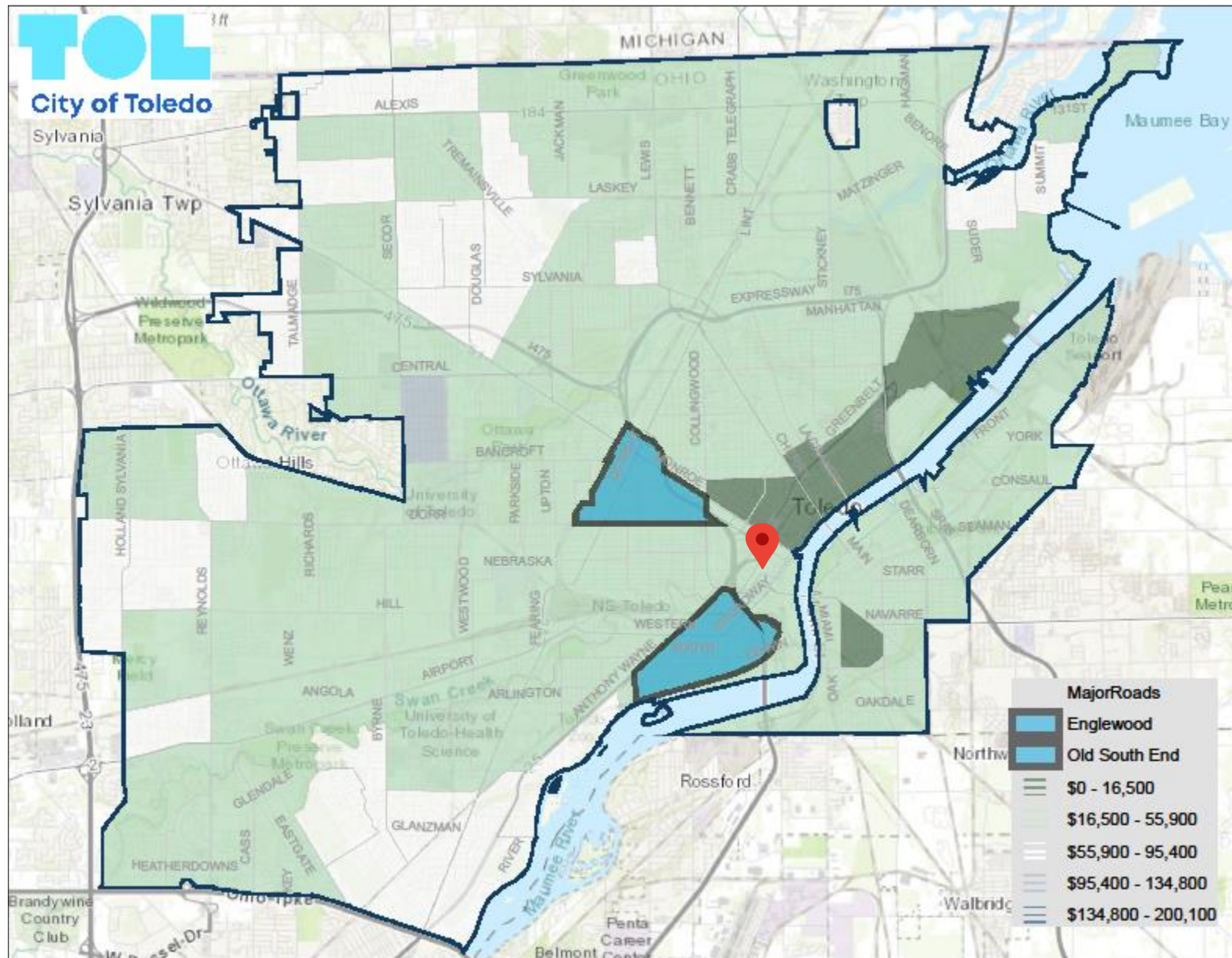
**Proposed  
Project Location**

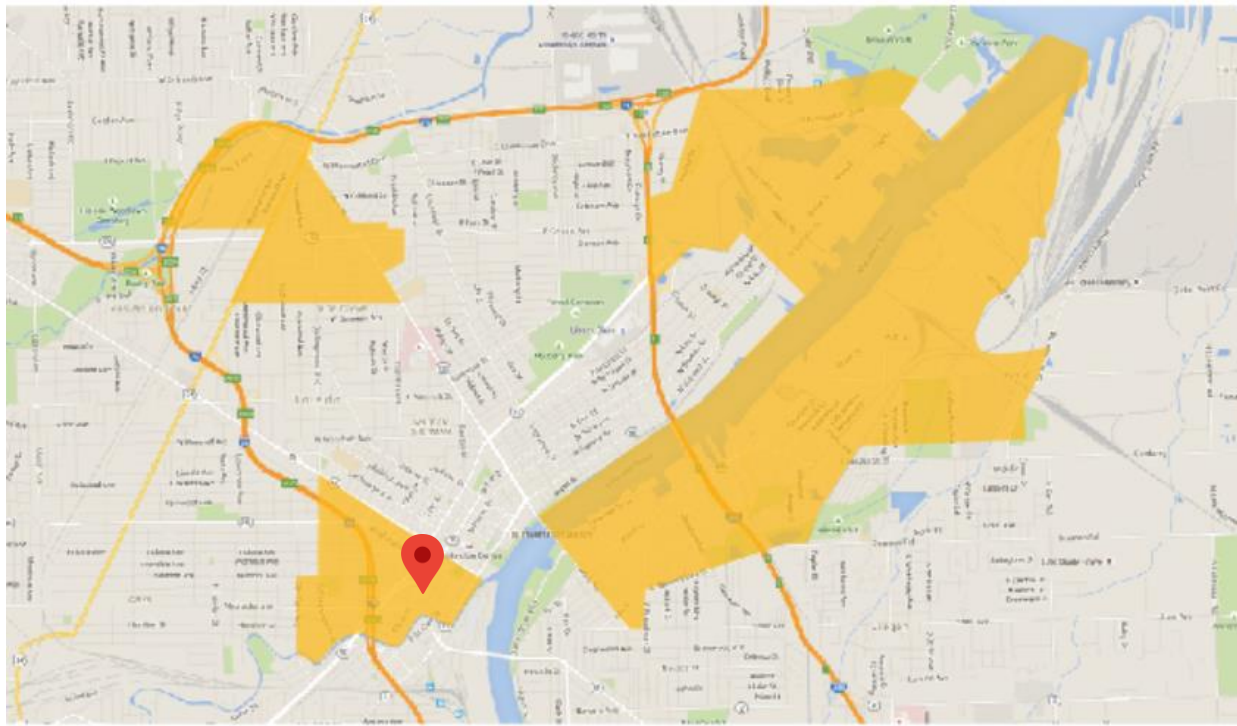


# Erie Street Market

The Erie Street Market at the Civic Center Auditorium is an iconic space in our community that is perfectly located to address healthy food access in Toledo.







Low-income areas where  
**RESIDENTS**  
live more than

**1**  
**MILE**

away from a  
**SUPERMARKET**  
with affordable, healthy food.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Map



# Healthy Corner Store Food Initiative: A Pilot Program



Shannon M. Jones, MPH, MBA  
May 8, 2023

Toledo City Council

# Healthy Food Initiative Programmatic Overview

- The pilot program will be carried out, on an application basis, to small, independent neighborhood markets, allowing for the expansion of healthy food to areas with low income and low access.
- The program will be administered by the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department.
  - Awardees will be provided equipment and displays to store and sell approved items.
  - Initial cost of stock and one-half of the cost of reorders will be subsidized up to \$10,000 per participating entity.
  - Collaborate with ECDI's Erie Street Market Project
  - Monitoring of compliance, connecting the participating business owners to entrepreneurial support and resources in the community, supporting their success.

# Program Administration

Serving as the local public health leader, the pilot program will be administered by the Health Department.

- Recruit and hire a health educator
- Facilitate Review Panel-Healthy Corner Store Committee
- Liaise between ECDI, partners, corner stores, stakeholders
- Manage Fiscal Operations and Reporting
- Ensure Store Compliance
- Pursue Sustainable Funding
- 15% Administration

# Responsibilities

A health educator will be hired by TLCHD to lead this work over the next three years and be responsible for:

- NOFA and Awardee Process
- Organization and Support of the expansion of healthy food initiatives
- Incentive Coordination (funding, equipment)
- Shared Resources and Services (ie Marketing, Connecting, etc)
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Food Education (how to prepare, eat produce)
- Evaluation Efforts



# Eligibility & Application

## Applications will be scored on the following:

- Independently Owned
- Under 5,000 square feet
- Licensed Retail Food Establishment (RFE)
- Location is in a low income, low access census tract in Toledo
- WIC/SNAP Retailer
- Capacity to stock new products and space for new equipment
- Easily accessible/visible
- Store that have existing relationships with partners/community
- Current availability, accessibility, and quality of healthy food products
- Passion for interest in the pilot program

# Win-Win-Win Approach

Working with corner stores is a win-win-win approach to improving community health.

- Participating stores get free promotion, community support, and increased revenue from healthy food sales.
- Community members gain access to healthier food choices and info about nutrition.
- The community organization supporting the initiative created positive relationships with local businesses and other community partners.

# Implementation Timeline

**May 2023:** City approves release of funding

**July/August 2023:** Recruit and Hire Staff

**October 2023:** Finalize and release NOFA

**February 2024:** Application deadline, panel review, award recommendations.

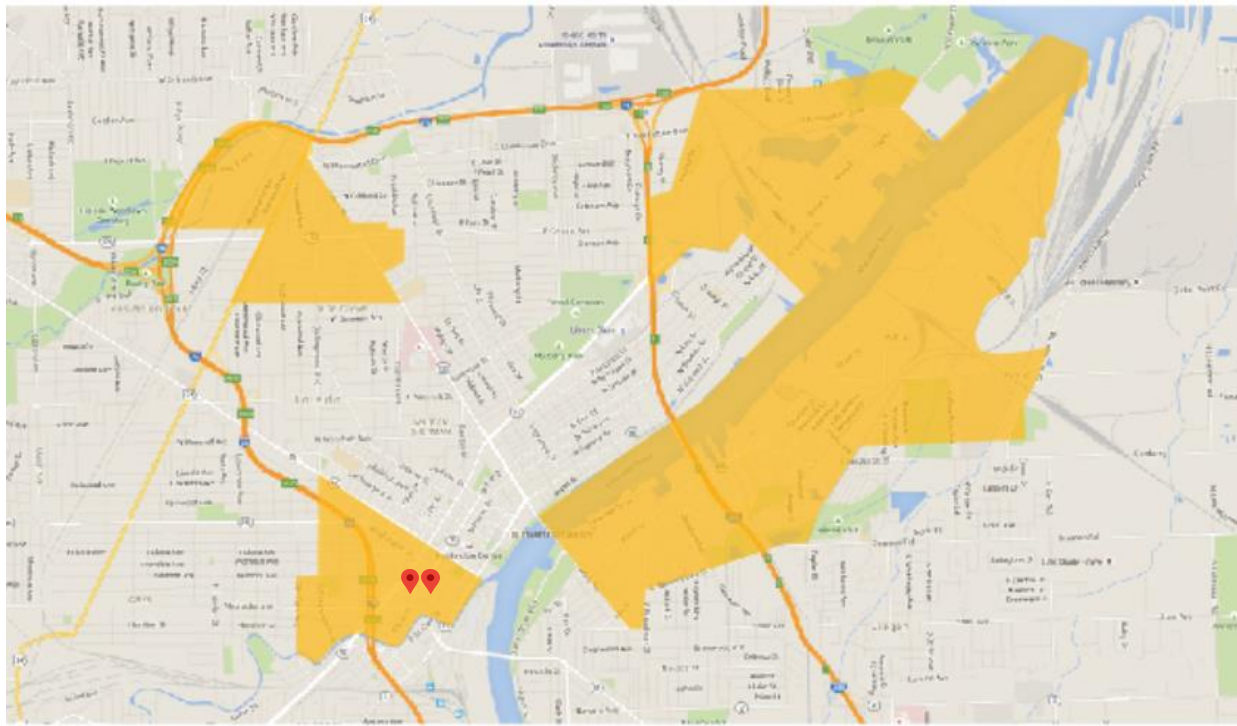
**March 2024- March 2025:** Baseline In-Store Assessments, staff trainings, community education sessions.

**April 2025-December 2026:** Compliance checks, data evaluation and final reports.





# Grocery Construction Incentive



Low-income areas where  
**RESIDENTS**  
live more than

**1 MILE**

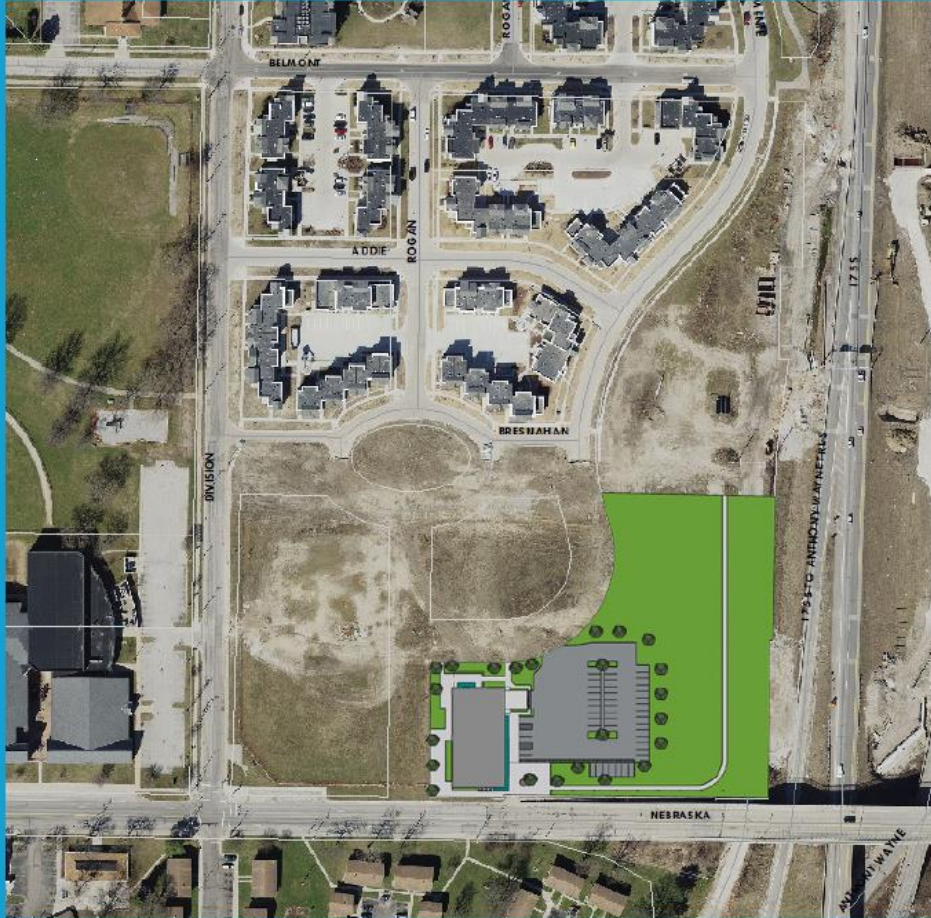
away from a  
**SUPERMARKET**  
with affordable, healthy food.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Food Access Research Map



# Potential Build Out of Collingwood Green Lot 8

Prepared by the Toledo-Lucas County Plan Commissions



## Collingwood Green Market

Approx. 10,000 sqft **Grocery Store**

45 Parking Spaces

Traditional Neighborhood  
Development (TND) design.





Retain portion of lot  
for future development.

Connectivity to bike  
trail.



Located at entrance into new  
Planned Unit Development.



**Thank you.**

➔ [toledo.oh.gov](https://toledo.oh.gov)

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