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Demolitions Mark Route 4 Revitalization Milestone

FAIRFIELD – The City of Fairfield continues to prioritize the revitalization of Route 4, a key commercial corridor extending more than five miles across the City. The upcoming demolition of several vacant and antiquated properties are milestone steps towards redevelopment within the corridor.

On the north end of Route 4, the former Pearl's Diner building at **4696 Dixie Highway** will meet the wrecking ball in September. The building has been vacant since Pearl's Diner closed in 2018. Later this year, the City also anticipates removing the foundations, swimming pool, signage, and other remnants of the former Budget Inn property at **4670 Dixie Highway**. Much of the hotel building was demolished in 2020 following a fire at the property, yet remnants remain and create an obstacle to redevelopment. Demolition of the Pearl's Diner and Budget Inn properties will be funded through a \$300,000 grant from the Ohio Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program. The grant was obtained with assistance from the Butler County Land Bank.

Near the intersection of Route 4 and Mack Road, the former PNC Bank branch at **7075 Dixie Highway** and former car wash/detailing business at **7051 Dixie Highway** will be demolished by Anchor Associates to make way for a new Wawa gas station and convenience store. Both buildings have been vacant for several years and are in a deteriorated state. The City is cooperating with the developer of the project as it will require relocation of the Stockton Station Service Drive and other related infrastructure improvements. Demolition activities are expected to begin in early September.

On the opposite side of Mack Road, the former Mango's Tropical Oasis building at **7121 Dixie Highway** is also planned for demolition. The vacant building was condemned following a fire in 2020, just months after a large section of the retaining wall on the property collapsed. Demolition of the building and remaining retaining wall is anticipated to start later this year thanks to a \$293,750 grant also obtained from the Ohio Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program.

"Fairfield City Council has identified the revitalization of Route 4 as a strategic priority for the city. Much work has gone into advancing these redevelopment projects, and it is exciting to see active demolition of several vacant eyesore properties," said Scott Timmer, Fairfield City Manager.



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The City received \$3 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding from the Butler County Commissioners for Route 4 revitalization. These funds were used toward the acquisition of the 7121 and 4670-4696 Dixie Highway properties. Following demolition of the existing buildings on both properties, the City will market the properties for private redevelopment. In the interim, grass will be planted and maintained to improve the visual appearance of the Route 4 corridor.

The City also used a portion of the Butler County ARPA funds to provide a forgivable loan to the Cincinnati Center for Autism (CCA). CCA has acquired and renovated a former office building at the corner of Route 4 and Commercial Drive. The organization will soon relocate its operations, including more than 60 employees, from its current Springdale facility. In total, CCA will invest nearly \$2.2 million into the project.

In addition to the projects detailed above, several private development projects are also improving the visual appearance and economic health of the Route 4 corridor; these include:

- **Jeff Wyler Hyundai** is wrapping up a \$2.6 million expansion which transformed the exterior of its showroom building and included demolition of an older sales building.
- **Gordon Food Service (GFS)** is completing a comprehensive exterior renovation, estimated at \$1.4 million.
- **Honda of Fairfield** is undertaking a modernization and rebranding of its exterior, estimated at \$1.1 million.
- **Mercy Health** is planning to open an urgent care location within a new building under construction at the Jungle Jim's International Market complex.

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