

A Comprehensive Development Plan for

# KING COMMONS

LOVING INDY'S NEXT GREAT PLACES

Great Places 2020



# About Great Places

Everyone's life is better when they live in an economically healthy city. Indianapolis must compete, now more than ever, with surrounding counties and peer cities to attract and retain residents, businesses, and investment. Young people are particularly drawn to cities that have dynamic urban places and a thriving culture.

According to the Project for Public Spaces, a city must have a number of great places to be a community where people choose to live, work, and play. People want opportunities to take pleasure in public life.

Indianapolis has some great places to be sure: Fountain Square, Irvington, Broad Ripple, Downtown, and others. But, we need to be more proactive in growing these places as we continue to compete both regionally and nationally.

Great Places 2020 is a collaborative initiative that responds to this need. The effort seeks to transform five strategic places in Marion County into dynamic urban villages, bettering both the economy and quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Five strategic places located within the west, north, and east sides of Indianapolis, have deep roots in our city's history. While each Great Place has its own unique character and vision, together they will strengthen Indianapolis and allow the City to grow and prosper.

## KING COMMONS

King Commons was selected as a Great Places 2020 site for its potential, unique assets, and support from active neighborhood groups. It is a unique community with a strong African-American identity and many interesting cultural initiatives. King Commons is a place with a great deal of positive momentum and this plan will increase that momentum in the coming years.

The name King Commons is a tribute to the main thoroughfare's namesake, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The word "commons" refers to the cultural and natural resources collectively available to all members of a community and managed in common by that community. King Commons is the shared history, culture, land, and public institutions that bind together the people who reside here. King's legacy is an enduring part of the cultural commons, shaping the community's drive for peace, justice and prosperity.

*"Almost always, the creative dedicated minority has made the world better."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

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# An Introduction to the Study INVENTORY + PROCESS

To kick off the planning effort for Great Places 2020, a process was established for collaboration with civic leaders and community members, to guide the process of developing a vision for the place, and to create teams to assist in developing and implementing that vision.

The first step in developing a vision is to understand the background of a particular place. This section of the document provides an overview that includes the King Commons Great Place location, within the context of the City of Indianapolis, and its proximity to Fall Creek and the Central Canal.

Some important characteristics about the area are included with an overview of the neighborhoods that are located in or near this Great Place. Maps are provided to indicate where both existing businesses and community assets are located.

To convey some of the more qualitative aspects of the study area, graphics are provided that illustrate the existing urban form of the area, which includes building types and land uses and their relative scale. In addition, a photographic overview is provided to highlight some of the unique elements of the study area.

Finally, this section of the document includes an overview of previous neighborhood plans that have guided recent efforts in the area. These plans helped inform the initial planning process as the Great Places 2020 initiative seeks to enhance and build on existing networks and strategies.

*"Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# About the Process

## THE L.O.V.E ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

The L.O.V.E. acronym stands for livability, opportunity, vitality, and education, which are four of the critical components of a Great Place. The goal of this effort is to create an actionable comprehensive plan that will lead to improvements within King Commons.

### King Commons PLACEMAKING TEAM

This team is focused on individual places. It has multiple members, but is primarily led by a team of eight, with two people devoted to each of the L.O.V.E. focus areas, and one convener who is the point person for the place.

### CITY-WIDE STEERING COMMITTEE

This civic leadership team meets quarterly to govern the Great Places 2020 Initiative.

### CITY-WIDE L.O.V.E. COMMITTEES

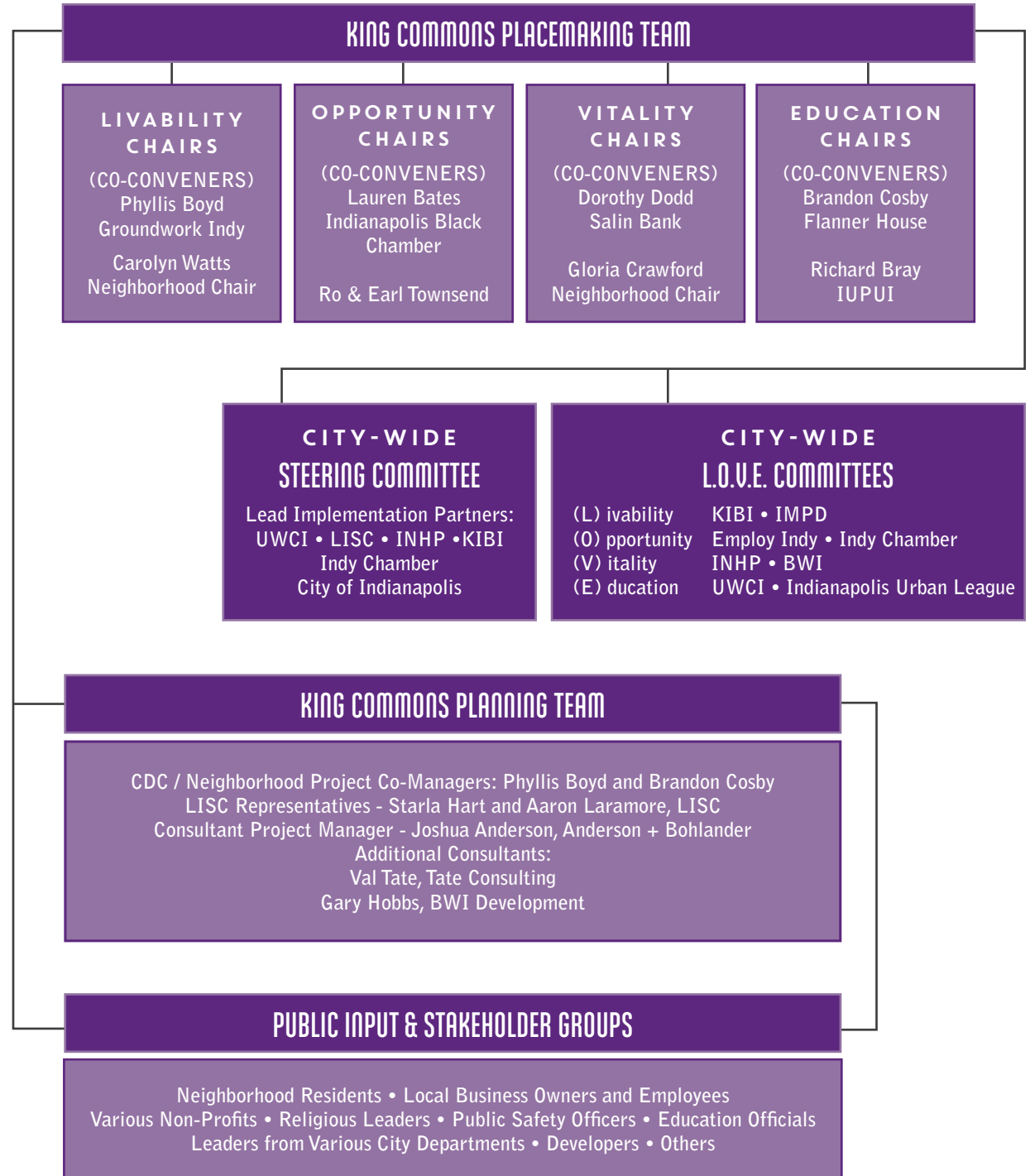
These committees consist of neighborhood and topical experts that meet regularly to provide support and technical assistance to the Great Places and their plans.

### King Commons PLANNING TEAM

This team, in coordination with the Placemaking Team, manages the planning process for King Commons.

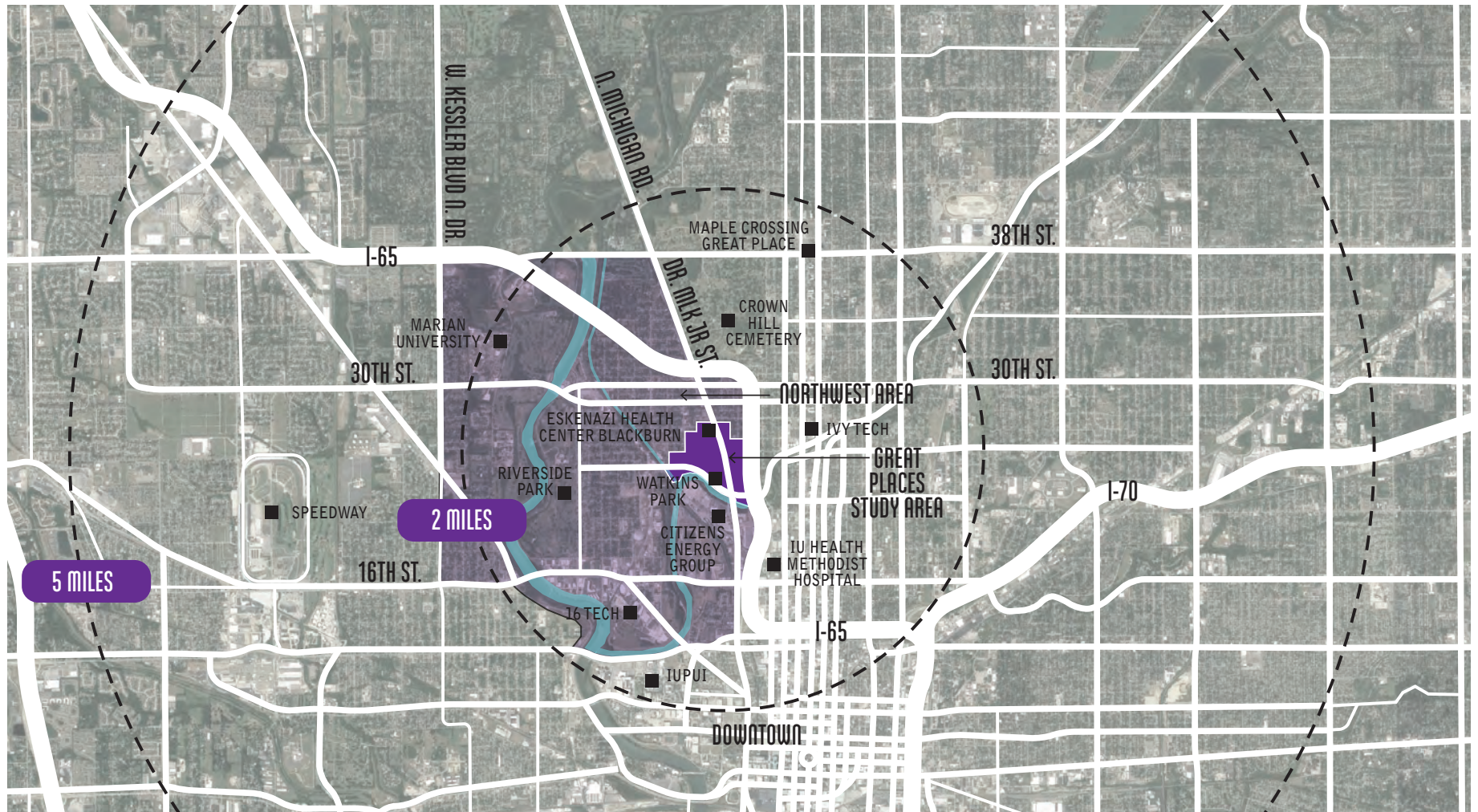
### PUBLIC INPUT AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

The Placemaking Team and Planning Team have worked with local residents, concerned stakeholders, and subject matter experts to develop this plan and to make sure it is responsive to the community's input and desires.





# Great Places 2020 Location



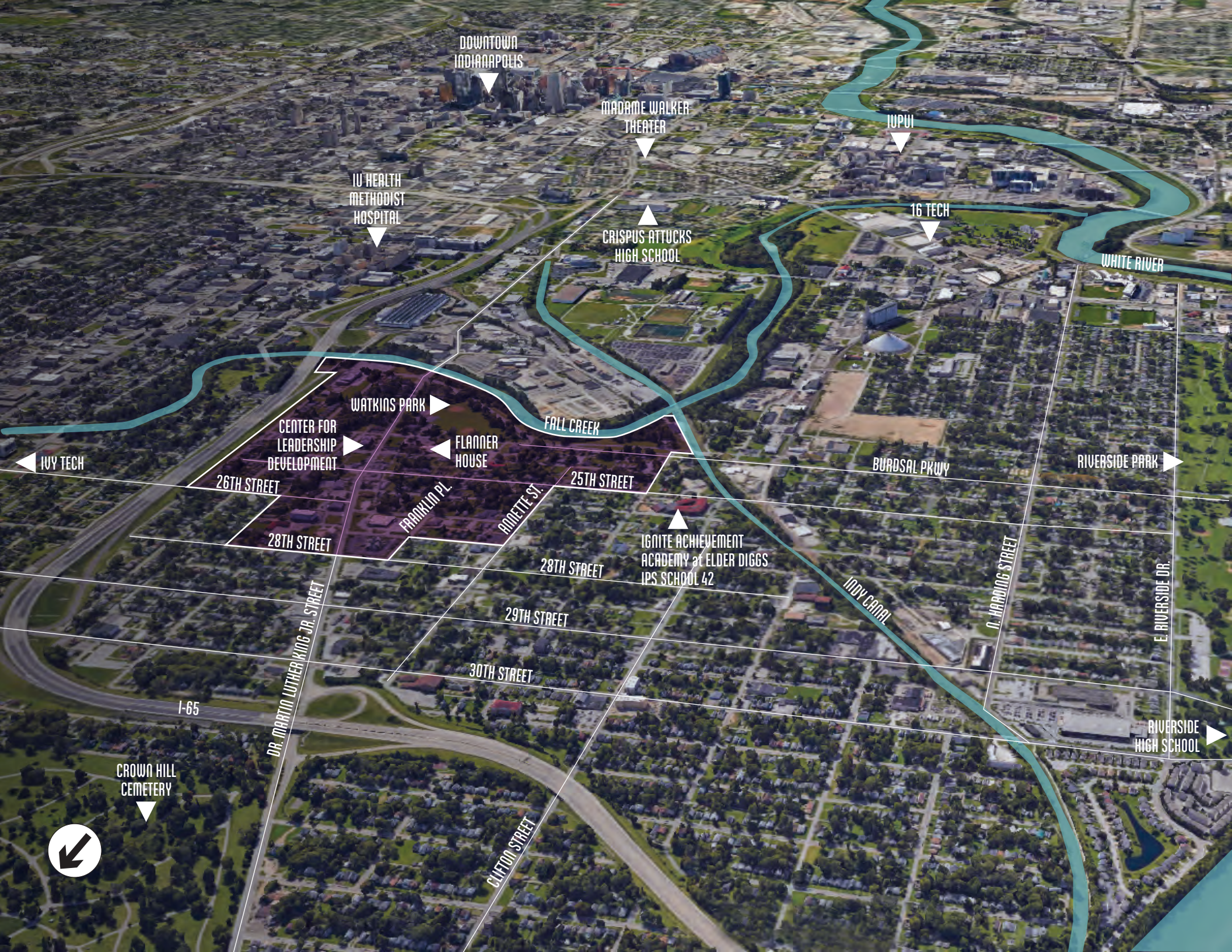
## NEARBY ANCHORS + ASSETS

- Flanner House
- Center for Leadership Development
- Ivy Tech Community College
- IU Health Methodist Hospital
- 16 Tech
- Eskenazi Health Center Blackburn
- IUPUI
- Riverside Park
- Watkins Park
- Crown Hill Cemetery
- Marian University
- Citizens Energy Group

## WHERE IS KING COMMONS?

King Commons is located in the Northwest Area at the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street and 25th Street. The study area (shown above) is just east of the Riverside Neighborhood within the Northwest Area. It is in close proximity to Riverside Park, IU Health Methodist Hospital, Ivy Tech, 16 Tech and the White River. It is enclosed on three sides by I-65, Fall Creek and the canal. It is less than 3 Miles from the heart of downtown.





DOWNTOWN  
INDIANAPOLIS

MADAME WALKER  
THEATER

IUPUI

IU HEALTH  
METHODIST  
HOSPITAL

CRISPUS ATTUCKS  
HIGH SCHOOL

16 TECH

WHITE RIVER

FALL CREEK

WATKINS PARK

CENTER FOR  
LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT

FLANNER  
HOUSE

IUVY TECH

26TH STREET

25TH STREET

BURDSAL PKWY

RIVERSIDE PARK

28TH STREET

FRANKLIN PL.

ANNETTE ST.

IGNITE ACHIEVEMENT  
ACADEMY at ELDER DIGGS  
IPS SCHOOL 42

28TH STREET

INDY CANAL

N. HARDING STREET

E. RIVERSIDE DR.

29TH STREET

30TH STREET

I-65

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. STREET

CLIFTON STREET

CROWN HILL  
CEMETERY

RIVERSIDE  
HIGH SCHOOL





# Study Area in Neighborhood Context

## NORTHWEST AREA

The King Commons study area is located in the Northwest Area, described in the 2014 Northwest Area Quality of Life Plan as the area between I-65, Fall Creek, Kessler Boulevard, and 38th Street. It subsumes the historic Riverside Neighborhood.

## RIVERSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD

Bounded by the White River to the west, the Central Canal to the east, Fall Creek to the south and 30th Street to the north, the Riverside Neighborhood boasts many natural and recreational amenities, including Riverside Park.

## CROWN HILL NEIGHBORHOOD

The Crown Hill Neighborhood takes its name from the Historic Crown Hill Cemetery, which forms its western edge. The neighborhood's other borders are 38th Street to the north, Meridian to the east and 30th Street to the south.

## HIGHLAND VICINITY NEIGHBORHOOD

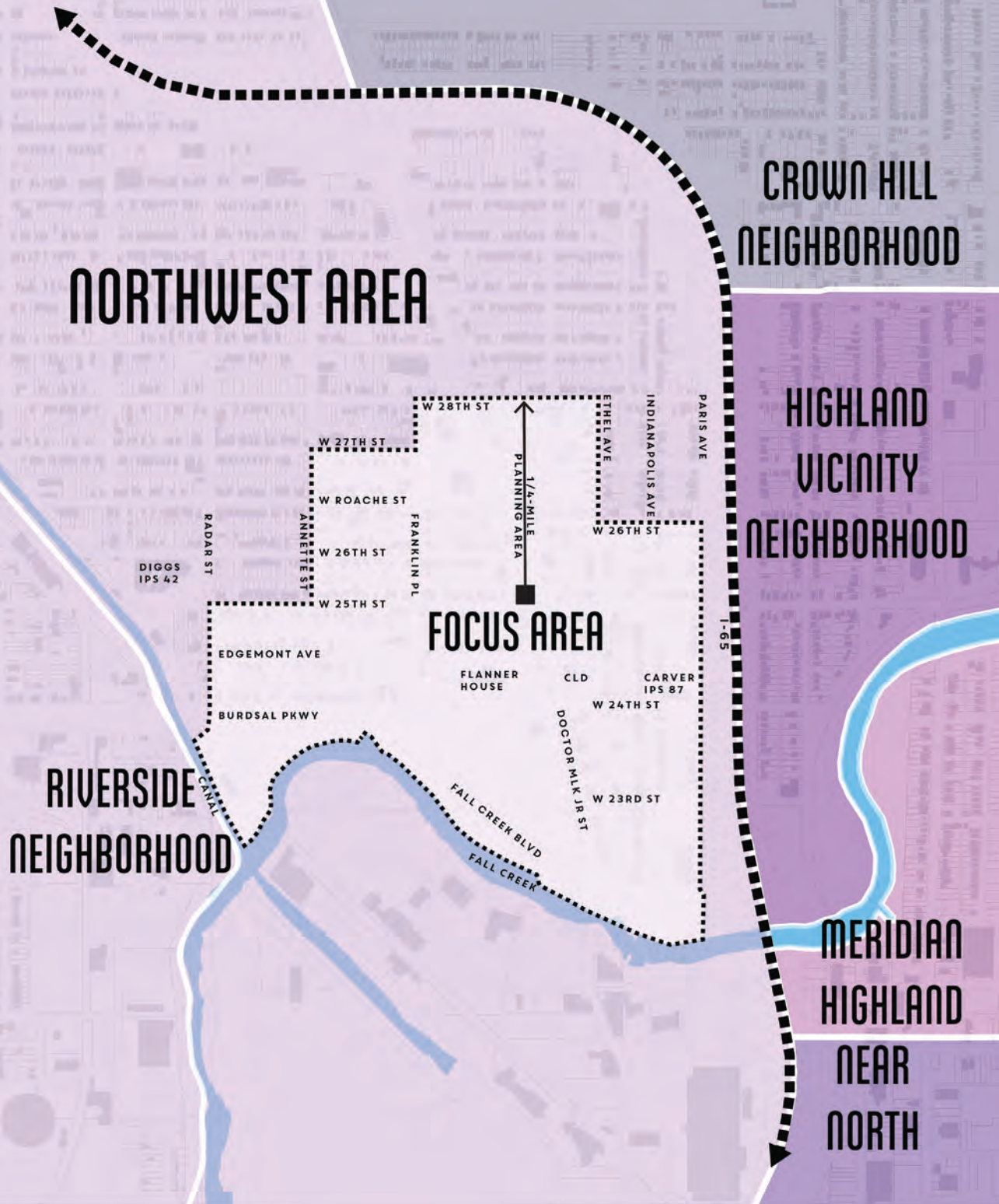
Highland Vicinity is home to the Ivy Tech Community College Campus. This neighborhood's borders are 30th Street to the north, Meridian Street to the east, I-65 to the west and Fall Creek to the south.

## MERIDIAN HIGHLAND NEIGHBORHOOD

Meridian Highland is located between Fall Creek to the north, Meridian to the east, 21st to the south and I-65 to the west.

## NEAR NORTH NEIGHBORHOOD

This neighborhood is located just south of the Meridian Highland Neighborhood and is home to IU Health Methodist Hospital and commercial businesses along Meridian Street.





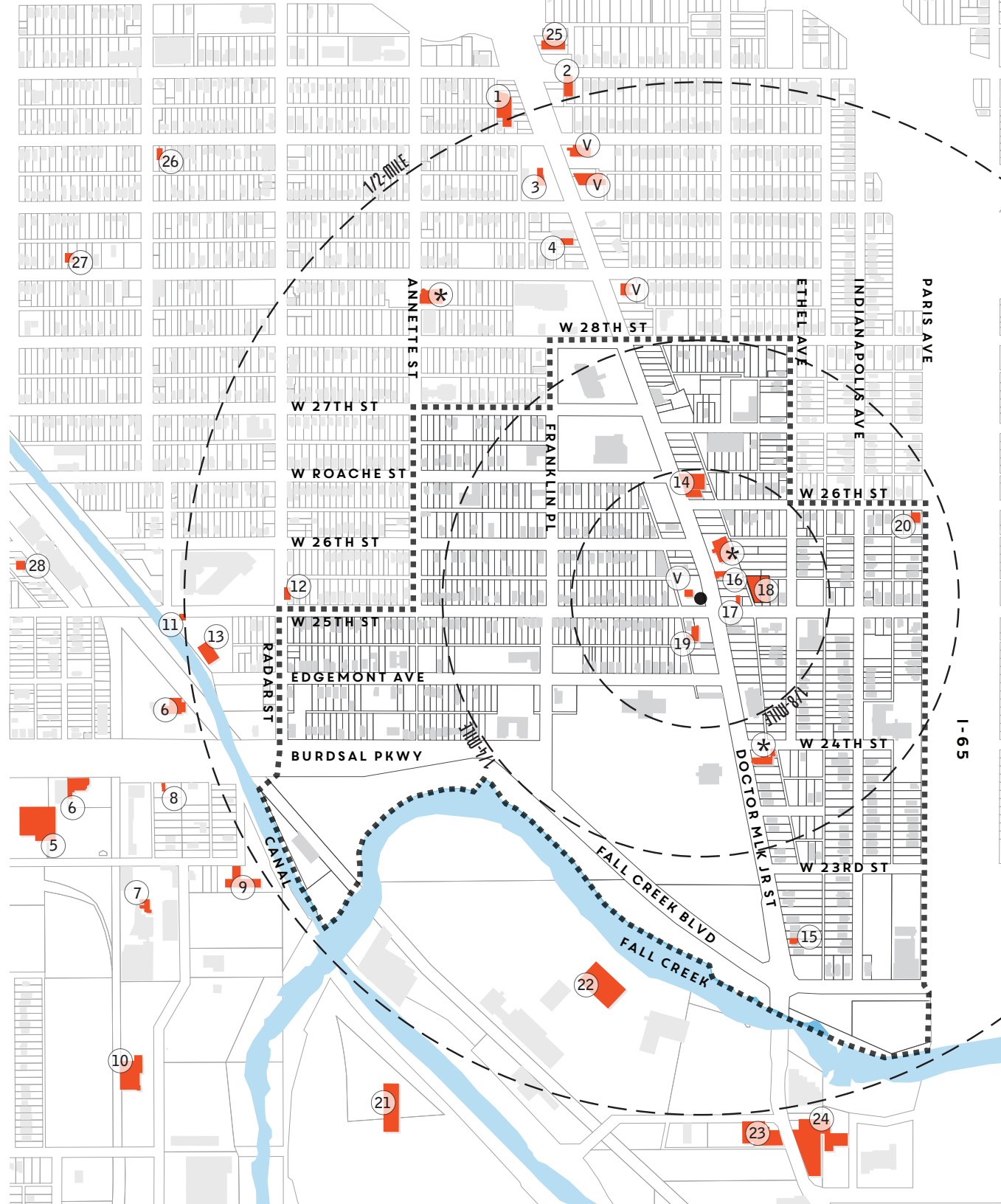
# Existing Businesses

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Best Mobile / Restaurante Oaxaca / Juquila Mexican Restaurant | 15. Farmer's Insurance   |
| 2. Tull Auto Services  | 16. Bar-B-Q Heaven   |
| 3. Marathon  | 17. We Kutz Barber Beauty Studio   |
| 4. Baba's Steak & Lemonade / Community Spirits                   | 18. Big Ric's Premium Firewood   |
| 5. Stanley Signs   | 19. Big Red's Discount Tires   |
| 6. Summit Construction Co., Inc.                                 | 20. King's Corner Barber Shop / Indy Flea Market / Strader's Beauty Shop |
| 7. All Seasons Building Supply Company                           | 21. U-Pull-&-Pay   |
| 8. Community Spirits   | 22. Citizen's Energy Group   |
| 9. MERSS Corp.   | 23. Prefab Solutions   |
| 10. Ben Hur Construction   | 24. Bodycote   |
| 11. Campbell's Auto Shop   | 25. Triple R Mustang Ranch   |
| 12. Men's & Women's Clothing                                     | 26. Williamson Fish Market   |
| 13. HCC Services, Inc.   | 27. Talk of the Town   |
| 14. Family Dollar  | 28. Cornerstone Equipment & Rigging                                      |

 **BUSINESSES**

 **SEE COMMUNITY ASSETS GRAPHIC**

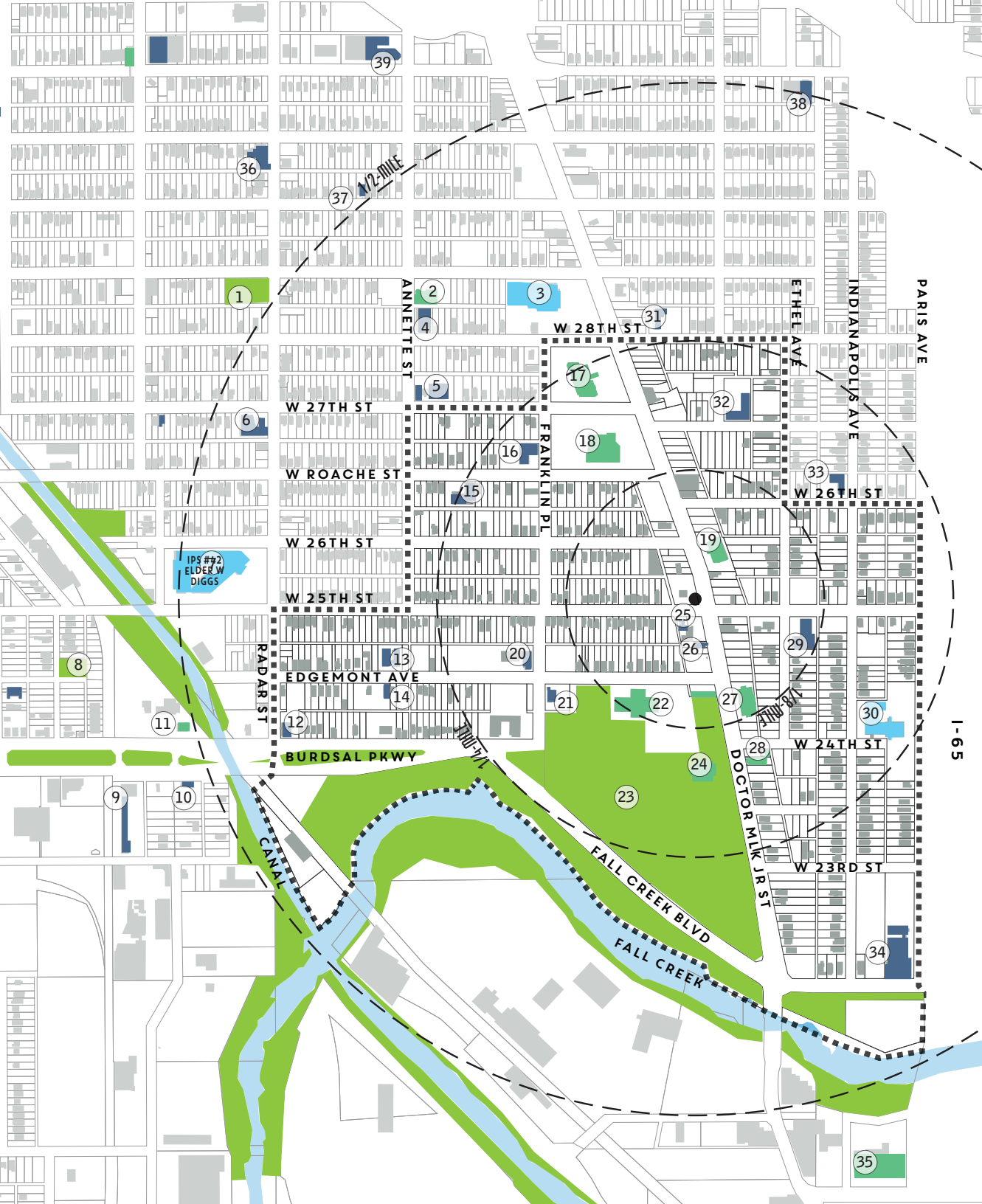
**(V) VACANT COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS**



# Existing Community Assets

- |                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Frank Young Park                   | 23. Watkins Park                                   |
| 2. The Grindery                       | 24. Watkins Family Center                          |
| 3. Holy Angel's Catholic School       | 25. God's Temple of Deliverance                    |
| 4. First Baptist Church North         | 26. St. Anthony's                                  |
| 5. Puritan Missionary Baptist Church  | 27. Center for Leadership Development              |
| 6. Church of the Living God           | 28. Grundy Memorial Chapel                         |
| 7. Elder W Diggs School 42            | 29. 25th Street Baptist Church                     |
| 8. CWUW Greenspace                    | 30. IPS George Washington Carver Montessori No. 87 |
| 9. Cityview Christian Center          | 31. 28th Street Church of God                      |
| 10. Christian Love Baptist Church     | 32. Christ Our King Christian Church               |
| 11. Groundwork Indy                   | 33. True Tried Missionary Baptist                  |
| 12. Providence AME Church             | 34. Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Assembly         |
| 13. Bethany Church of God             | 35. Fire Department Station 5                      |
| 14. Emmanuel Free-Will Baptist Church | 36. Christ Missionary Baptist Church               |
| 15. Carters Memorial Baptist Church   | 37. Freedom Full Gospel Community Church           |
| 16. Loving Missionary Baptist Church  | 38. New Era Church                                 |
| 17. Eskenazi Health Center            | 39. Barnes United Methodist Church                 |
| 18. US Post Office                    |  |
| 19. American Legion                   |  |
| 20. Promiseland Christian Community   |  |
| 21. Church of Christ Holiness USA     |  |
| 22. Flanner House / Public Library    |  |

- EDUCATIONAL
- HOUSES OF WORSHIP
- COMMUNITY SUPPORTIVE
- GREEN SPACE





# Existing Urban Form + Land Uses



## HOUSING TYPES

The study area contains chiefly residential land uses. The majority is made up of single-family homes with periodic duplexes.

## NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING

Most houses were built between 1910 and 1920 and feature porches and charming details.



## SENIOR HOUSING

There are very few multifamily housing structures in the study area apart from two senior housing complexes. Glenn Howard Manor is newly built with easy access to the bus stop on MLK.



## COMMUNITY SPACES

### WATKINS PARK

Watkins Park features basketball courts, baseball diamonds, tennis courts as well as a playground. In the summer, jazz concerts draw residents outdoors.



### FLANNER FARMS

Flanner House's urban farm increases access to fresh food and provides learning and job opportunities.

## CHURCHES

There are nearly 10 churches scattered throughout the focus area. The Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Assembly was the first Pentecostal church built in the Midwest.



## COMMERCIAL & RETAIL ENVIRONMENTS

### MLK CORRIDOR: AUTO-ORIENTED RETAIL

Most of the remaining businesses in the area are auto-oriented retail located along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. St., although they are still accessible to the surrounding community by foot.



### WALKABLE COMMERCIAL

A couple storefronts and auto shops are located in the residential neighborhood. A small retail business & barber shop is located at the corner of 26th St. and Paris Ave, and an auto shop is located on 25th St. near the canal.



## BOUNDARY CORRIDORS

The study area is uniquely situated between several of Indianapolis's iconic corridors, which converge to contain the study area on three sides. Fall Creek to the south, the Central Canal to the west, and I-65 to the east create physical barriers around the neighborhood.



### CENTRAL CANAL

The Central Canal, built in 1839, stretches from the White River in Broad Ripple and crosses Fall Creek in an aqueduct adjacent to the study area. The canal in this area is lined with railroads and industrial sites.



### FALL CREEK

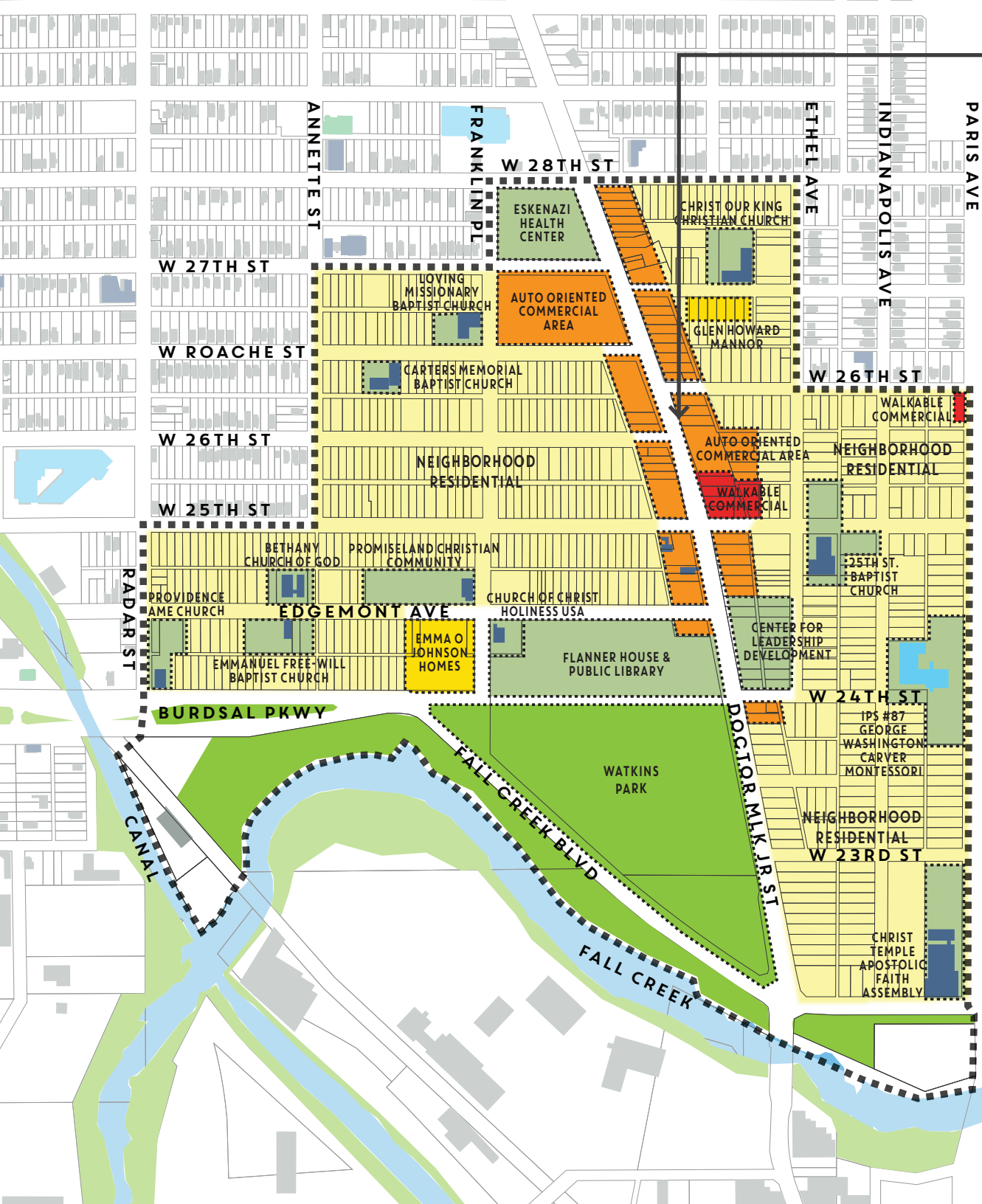
Fall Creek is a tributary of the White River that cuts through several Indianapolis neighborhoods. It separates the study area from industrial sites to the south.

### I-65

I-65 is a major north-south interstate.

**NEED MORE COMPELLING, WALKABLE DEVELOPMENT**

To truly create the character of an urban village, the existing walkable commercial activity along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street will need to be more compact.



I-65

- NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL
- MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- AUTO-ORIENTED COMMERCIAL
- WALKABLE COMMERCIAL
- CIVIC



# Unique Elements of the Study Area

These photographs highlight some of the unique elements of the study area, which are difficult to convey in mapping efforts, including beloved neighborhood institutions, architectural qualities, and character.



## FLANNER HOUSE

Flanner House has been a community anchor for over a century, providing educational, social and economic resources.



## WATKINS PARK

This 21-acre park has numerous sporting facilities and a recreation center. It is also home to Open Bite Night, Jazz in the Park, and other events.



## CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The non-profit works to advance minority youth in central Indiana. It provides learning and mentoring programs that prepare youth for college.



## BAR-B-Q HEAVEN

Bar-B-Q Heaven is an iconic eatery on Dr. MLK Jr. St. with festive outdoor seating. The restaurant also has a catering business.



## FAITH CONNECTIONS

The study area's nearly 10 churches vary from small to large and historic to new, and community members practice their faith in many ways.



## GROUNDWORK INDY

Groundwork engages youth with the environment, redevelops vacant land and brownfields, advocates for greenways and parks, and promotes community health.



## BURDSAL PARKWAY

Burdsal Parkway, whose generously sized mall is planted with mature trees, leads to Riverside Park.



## LOCAL BUSINESSES

Several small businesses, including King's Corner Barber Shop, serve the local community.





### FRONT PORCHES

Many of the houses in the area have front porches where residents can engage with one another, building community and enhancing safety.



### 26TH STREET UNDERPASS

26th Street provides one of the few connections through the I-65 barrier to Ivy Tech and local businesses to the east.



### IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The Ivy Tech campus is a brief walk away. It trains students for a number of careers in technology, health, business and public service.



### SENIOR HOUSING

Senior housing in the neighborhood provides opportunities for local residents to remain a part of their community as they age and require additional support.



### HISTORIC HOMES

Early 20th century homes offer neighborhood charm.



### NEARBY RAILROAD & INDUSTRY

The section of railroad that lines the canal is no longer in use, but the vicinity is still industrial in character and in use.



### FALL CREEK BOULEVARD

The boulevard is flanked by two natural assets--Fall Creek and Watkins Park.



### I-65 LANDSCAPE

A large grassy setback from the busy I-65 highway helps to buffer noise and pollution, but the chain-link fence creates an unpleasant view for residents.



### CENTRAL CANAL & AQUEDUCT

The canal blends its industrial heritage with its natural surroundings.



# Building on Previous Planning Efforts

## BUILDING ON RECENT EFFORTS

The first part of the Great Places planning process involved understanding the background and context of the project area and planning that had preceded this effort.

The project management team was tasked with summarizing several previous plans. They developed a list of key points from those plans that pertain to this particular effort. Those plans included:

- UNWA DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
- WATER CANAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE
- UNITED NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN
- NORTHWEST AREA QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN
- NORTHWEST AREA HOUSING STRATEGY
- ROCK'N RIVERSIDE
- RIVERSIDE REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN

Relevant goals from each of the plans were categorized into Livability, Opportunity, Vitality, and Education. The summaries here were provided to residents and stakeholders to confirm which goals were still current and which goals might be supplemented given particular desires for this project area.

The summaries are provided to the right.

## BELOVED STREETS OF AMERICA

The Beloved Streets of America is a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring pride and prosperity to streets named after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., of which there are nearly 900 across the nation. The "beloved community" was King's vision for a society based on love, equality, and nonviolence.

This plan complements BSA's national effort; it seeks to make Indianapolis's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street a beloved street and a reflection of King's legacy.



## UNWA DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A Summary of Existing Planning Ideas Include:

### LIVABILITY

- Upgrade streets and infrastructure (22)
- Link UNWA to White River Greenway, Canal Towpath and Fall Creek Trail by extending Towpath south of 30th Street (22)
- Centralize community services, gathering space, and recreation to strengthen neighborhood identity along Canal and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street (23)

### OPPORTUNITY

- Grow and diversify retail businesses along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street (21)
- Increase access to employment (22)

### VITALITY

- Renovate and restore housing to benefit current residents and attract future development of single-family and multifamily housing (21)
- Relocate or remove incompatible uses, including heavy industrial use adjacent to residential use (21)
- Foster identity built on history and cultural legacy (23)

### EDUCATION

- Improve Elder W. Diggs School's visibility to neighborhood and access to green space by creating park between Canal, Burdsal Parkway and school (48)

## Water Canal Development Guide Burdsal Parkway to West 30th Street

### WATER CANAL DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

A Summary of Existing Planning Ideas Include:

#### LIVABILITY

- Provide a south terminus/access for the Central Canal 'non-stop' trail north to Broad Ripple (4)
- Create linear park along Central Canal between 30th Street and Burdsal Parkway (11)
- Connect users of Canal linear park to Indy Parks' trail system (11)

#### VITALITY

- Provide neighborhood-based recreation and community building (4)

#### EDUCATION

- "Celebrate Water" by telling the story of water, the Central Canal, and the Indianapolis Water Company (4)



## UNITED NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

A Summary of Existing Planning Ideas Include:

### LIVABILITY

- Improve the general appearance of the neighborhood (60)
- Improve neighborhood relationships and physical appearance related to safety to reduce crime (65)
- Increase recreation advertising and variety of programs (68)

### OPPORTUNITY

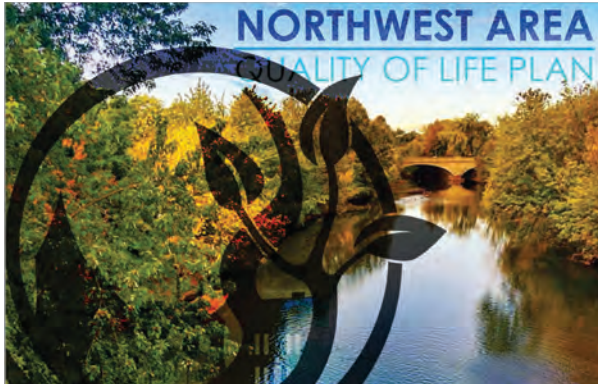
- Improve commercial development in the neighborhood (66)
- Provide job opportunities, particularly vocational trades, and a new job center for United Northwest residents (69)

### VITALITY

- Increase home ownership in the United Northwest neighborhood (59)
- Provide all necessary services to support the needs of neighborhood residents (67)
- Provide a diversity of owner and renter occupied housing in the United Northwest neighborhood (70)

### EDUCATION

- Increase support for children's reading skills and literacy for adults, and provide post-high school programs with focus on job training (60)



## NORTHWEST AREA QUALITY OF LIFE PLAN

A Summary of Existing Planning Ideas Include:

### LIVABILITY

- Provide reliable and adequate transportation, including ride-share programs, the Purple Line, and faith-bus transport (38)
- Expand new and specialized programming to increase audience participation in the parks and accommodate intergenerational use (59)
- Improve equipment, wayfinding, and infrastructure of parks (62)
- Incorporate more art and cultural activities in neighborhood (64)
- Reduce crime with Environmental Design Strategies and community knowledge of crime prevention and legal rights (85-90)
- Promote community health (32)
- Increase overall food access and healthier food options (116)

### OPPORTUNITY

- Build capacity of area residents and organizations through a Community Training Academy, increased membership in neighborhood organizations, industry-specific training, and partnership mixers (28-29)
- Increase access to technology and information with local computer resources (34-35)
- Utilize arts, culture, food production, alternative energy, parks and natural assets as vehicle for economic development (67, 103)
- Educate and advocate for usage of TIF for Northwest Area (109)
- Effectively brand and market the Northwest Area community (110)

### VITALITY

- Develop a comprehensive housing program that serves homeowners and renters (128)
- Reactivate 200 vacant properties over the next 5 years (133)

### EDUCATION

- Increase access to quality child care (30-31)
- Connect residents with jobs and life skills training opportunities (47)
- Provide intentional job training and entrepreneurial support (51)
- Develop network of area resources and services as well as support formerly incarcerated adults (52)
- Incorporate more Community School models into area schools (141)
- Partner with organizations to reduce suspension rates (142)
- Increase Family Engagement opportunities within area schools (144)
- Increase access to quality early education and preschool (148)



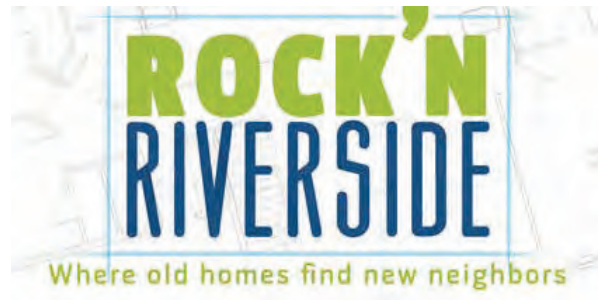
# Housing Strategy

## NORTHWEST AREA HOUSING STRATEGY

A Summary of Existing Strategy Includes:

### VITALITY

- Repopulate neighborhood with households who want to live in NW Area
- Cultivate a neighborhood that serves a wide range of household types and incomes
- Serve existing homeowners
- Respect neighborhood's history
- Identify target areas and goals:
  - Riverside for housing as Phase I (see Rock'n Riverside);
  - Flanner House Homes area as CLT
  - Carrier Bryant brownfield site to be remediated
  - MLK, 16th, 18th for mixed use
  - Marian University vicinity for employer-assisted housing
- Commit to align and layer investments and initiatives
- Hire professional "Neighborhood Development Integrator"



## ROCK'N RIVERSIDE

A Summary of Existing Initiative Includes:

### VITALITY

- Acquire, renovate and sell 50 houses over 3-4 years in Riverside
- Offer credit counseling to potential homebuyers
- Provide down payment assistance to qualified buyers



## RIVERSIDE REGIONAL PARK MASTER PLAN

A Summary of the Park Master Plan Includes:

### LIVABILITY

- Convert part of golf course to other uses, and provide a broad diversity of recreational opportunities that appeal to a diverse population (72)
- Develop Riverside Park as an arts and cultural hub by featuring public art (86-90)
- Enhance the park's connection to the river through design and access (66)
- Improve pedestrian circulation and experience with new pedestrian bridge and Riverside Promenade (68, 76)

### OPPORTUNITY

- Build new facilities that can be rented or leased to generate revenue (50)
- Host events to draw people and revenue to the community (78-80)

### VITALITY

- Create an ecologically sensitive park that will improve surface water quality (54, 84)
- Start an urban farm that will provide food to nearby communities at risk of food insecurity (70)

### EDUCATION

- Open a small museum to teach park visitors of the park's history (50)
- Provide space for educational programs (50)
- Establish an Ecology Park which can educate park visitors on local ecology and the water cycle (54, 84)

*"I have decided to stick with love...Hate is too great a burden to bear."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*







# What do we know about King Commons? ANALYSIS + OUTREACH

Following the initial phase of the effort, the focus shifts to an analysis of different aspects of the study area and outreach to neighbors and other members of the community.

**Demographics and Real Estate Information** - Basic demographics about the area are provided and compared to statistical averages for the whole of Marion County. The demand for various types of real estate will be discussed, including the opportunity for retail space, office space, and housing of various types.

**Safety, Education, and Employment** - Information regarding safety and crime, as well as an overview on the schools and educational resources in the area is discussed. Transit access graphics are provided, including IndyGo bus routes and future Red/Purple Line Bus-Rapid Transit service.

**Property Ownership** - Property information is provided including a map of availability and non-local ownership.

**Community Outreach** - An overview of the engagement process will be provided along with the community's value statement and themes for Livability, Opportunity, Vitality, and Education.

*"Let us therefore continue our triumphant march to the realization of the American dream.*

*"Let us march on segregated housing until every ghetto or social and economic depression dissolves...*

*"Let us march on segregated schools until every vestige of segregated and inferior education becomes a thing of the past...*

*"Let us march on poverty until no American parent has to skip a meal so that their children may eat. March on poverty until no starved man walks the streets of our cities and towns in search of jobs that do not exist."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Demographic Summary

## POPULATION GROWTH, 2000 TO 2021

Over the ten-year period from 2000 to 2010, this area experienced significant population loss, decreasing by more than fifteen percent.

However, since that time, this area's population has held steady.

|      | MARION COUNTY | STUDY AREA |
|------|---------------|------------|
| 2000 | 860,454       | 779        |
| 2010 | 903,393 +5.0% | 644 -17.3% |
| 2016 | 939,150 +4.0% | 637 -1.1%  |
| 2021 | 977,063 +4.0% | 644 +1.1%  |

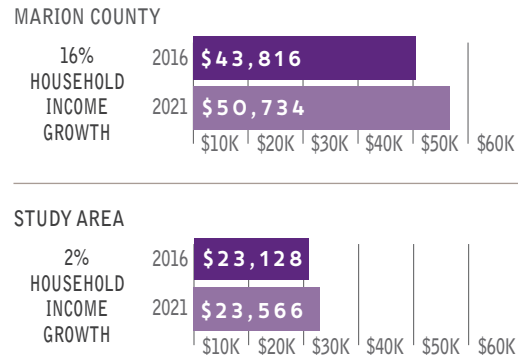
**MINIMAL GROWTH IS EXPECTED THROUGH 2021 AT A QUARTER OF THE RATE OF MARION COUNTY.**

## INCOME COMPARISON

At \$23,128 per year,

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN THE STUDY AREA IS ONLY 53% OF ITS MARION COUNTY EQUIVALENT.**

By 2021, household incomes are expected to grow at a much slower rate than in Marion County.



*"No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."*

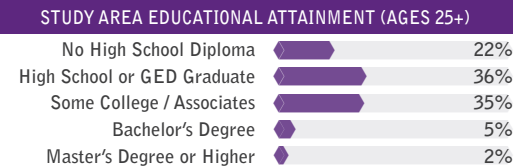
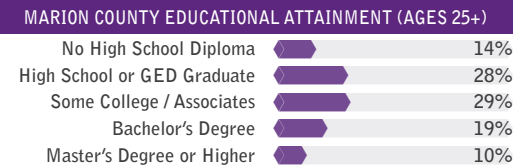
*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

## EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN 2016

Educational attainment in the study area for residents ages 25 and up is

**GENERALLY LESS WHEN COMPARED WITH MARION COUNTY.**

High rates of residents with no high school diploma highlights the importance of workforce development in high-growth, blue-collar sectors, bolstering long-term economic success.



## POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD INCOME, 2016- 2021



From 2016 - 2021, the distribution of household incomes is not likely to change significantly. However, there will be a slight decrease in households with modest incomes, ranging from \$15,000 to \$50,000, coupled with a slight increase in both households in poverty and those with higher incomes.

## OWNERSHIP, RENTAL, AND VACANCY RATES

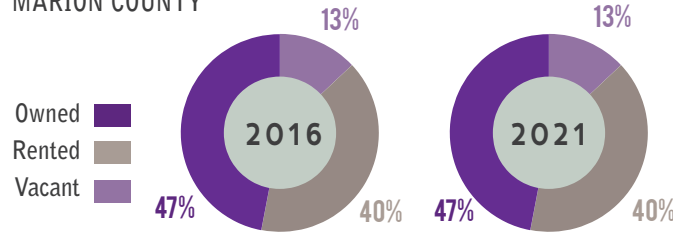
40% of housing units in the study area are now vacant and are projected to stay vacant by 2021.

**THIS IS ALMOST TRIPLE THE CURRENT AND PROJECTED VACANCY RATE FOR MARION COUNTY.**

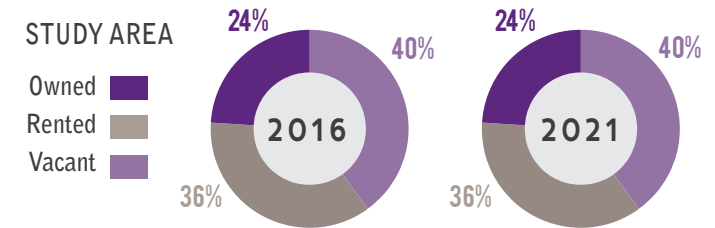
In addition, home ownership rates in the study area are much lower than the rates for Marion County.

No significant changes are expected by 2021, consistent with Marion County projections.

### MARION COUNTY



### STUDY AREA



## HOUSEHOLD GROWTH, 2000 TO 2021

The population decline is leveling off in the study area, but it is not projected to rebound to the 2000 level in the next five years.

|      | MARION COUNTY | STUDY AREA |
|------|---------------|------------|
| 2000 | 352,164       | 362        |
| 2010 | 366,176 +4.0% | 308 -15%   |
| 2016 | 376,273 +2.8% | 302 -2.0%  |
| 2021 | 389,581 +3.5% | 303        |

Higher density, measured as Dwelling Units per Acre (DUA), is typically desired to support walkable retail and commercial activities. The study area's residential districts are zoned as D-5 and D-8. D-5 is a medium intensity residential zone with a typical DUA of 4.5, whereas D-8 is a flexibly designed district for older urban neighborhoods that varies in DUA from 5 to 26.

**THE STUDY AREA CONTAINS APPROXIMATELY 84 ACRES OF RESIDENTIALLY ZONED LAND WITH ABOUT 4 DUA.**

The inclusion of a large amount of green space and under utilized commercial space makes the neighborhood feel more sparse than similarly zoned neighborhoods.

## AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE, 2010 TO 2021

The study area has a somewhat

**SMALLER AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE THAN THE REST OF MARION COUNTY.**

|      | MARION COUNTY | STUDY AREA |
|------|---------------|------------|
| 2010 | 2.42          | 2.09       |
| 2016 | 2.45          | 2.11 +1.0% |
| 2021 | 2.46          | 2.13 +1.0% |

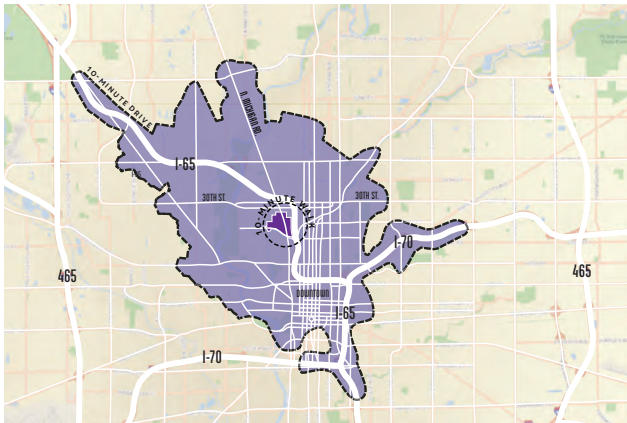
*"We refuse to believe there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Traditional Retail Demand

## RETAIL TRADE AREA: 10-MIN DRIVE



A 10-minute drive from the study area stretches to areas around the interstates to the northwest, southeast and east. It includes downtown. A 10-minute walk from 25th Street and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street reaches 30th Street.

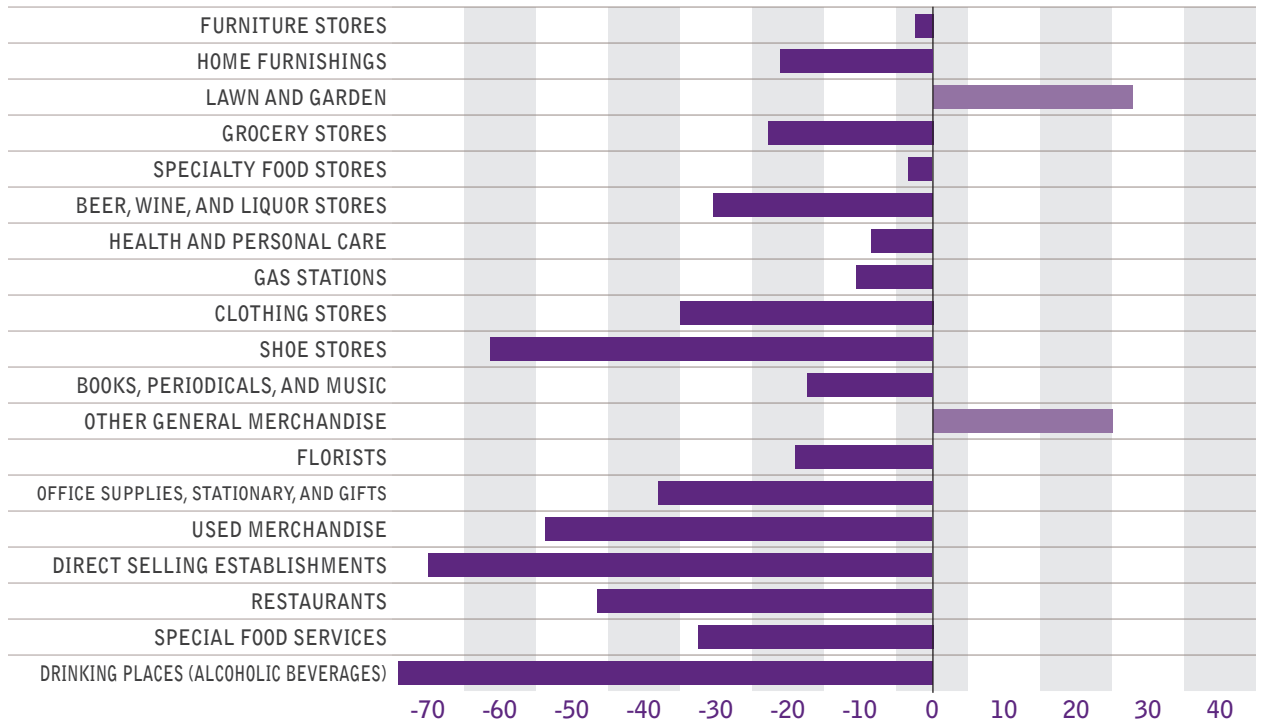
Leakage and surplus evaluations measure the balance between retail sales (supply) and retail potential (demand) of a given area. This information was pulled from an ESRI Retail Marketplace Profile for a 10-minute drive area.

A positive value for a type of service, such as “lawn and garden” means there may be a market for these services within the given area and that residents may be seeking those services somewhere else. A negative value for a type of service, such as “beer, wine, and liquor stores” means there are more of those services than locals need.

The trade area (shown above) attracts a lot of consumers from outside its borders, and demand for new retail or services is limited.

### A CLOSER LOOK: THE 10-MIN WALK

The graphs above account for the larger 10-minute *drive* area that retailers often use to make decisions. However, evaluating a 10-min *walk* area tells a more local story. A leakage and surplus profile was run for this area (not shown here) and indicated a few retail establishments accessible by foot. The only type of retail services available to residents in their immediate vicinity is beer, wine, and liquor; restaurants; and general merchandise, e.g. the Family Dollar store.



10-MIN DRIVE:

**SURPLUS**

**LEAKAGE**

An index representing how much of local spending is met locally.

### FOOD RETAIL DEMAND

At the behest of Indy Food Council and LISC, the Reinvestment Fund conducted a Huff Analysis Neighborhood Food Retail Market Study, examining the market demand for food retail at two locations in King Commons. The Huff analysis is based on an industry-accepted model developed by Dr. David L. Huff. One location, 2956 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, could accommodate a 30,000 square foot store with estimated yearly sales of \$6 million. Another location, 2647 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, could accommodate a 17,500 square foot store with estimated yearly sales of \$4 million. These sales figures are low for industry standards, but they could be sufficient for a limited assortment store, such as Aldi or Save-a-Lot. The sites might also serve as a promising location for an alternative food store, such as a co-op.

The authors also looked at the overlap of the Huff Trade Areas for the studied locations and previously defined Limited Supermarket Access (LSA) areas. The LSA areas were determined prior to the 2017 closing of the Double 8 Foods store at 2907 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street. The authors conclude that the Double 8 closing created a new LSA area that overlaps with much of the Huff Trade Areas, demonstrating a need for better food access in King Commons.

# Commercial & Mixed-Use Development Roundtable

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH STAKEHOLDERS - AUGUST 2, 2017

## OVERVIEW OF ROUNDTABLE



In August, a group of stakeholders, including representatives from LISC, the King Commons Planning Team, Riverside Civic League, and other for-profit and non-profit developers met to discuss retail and commercial mixed-use development opportunities within the corridor.

Ideas presented at the meeting came from a combination of suggestions at public meetings, traditional retail demand “leakage” reports, and local expertise.

### TRADITIONAL RETAIL DEMAND

Retail demand is limited due to a low population density and low median incomes. Traditional retail demand includes Lawn and Garden supplies and General Merchandise.

### AFFORDABLE SPACE FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

Local vendors and entrepreneurs require affordable space to market their products and build their businesses. Events where local vendors can sell their food and crafts, such as Open Bite Night, help them to build a reputation. Many will need long term space to transition into larger enterprises.

### MLK AS THE FOCUS CORRIDOR

MLK has the traffic and visibility to support retail and other commercial activity. Local businesses will require clientele from outside the immediate focus area to thrive.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### BIG COMMUNITY EVENTS AND POP-UP RETAIL

- Open Bite Night and Jazz in the Park draw very large crowds throughout the summer in Watkins Park and provide space for local food and craft vendors.
- Juneteenth events occur across town annually, and there is a desire to host the main event here in Watkins Park, a potential hub for African American culture.
- Can the park and area around it be better organized to host both large community events and serve as a central plaza facing MLK Street?

### FARMING AND SELLING

- Farming is an important aspect of the local community, both due to the history of Flanner House and the desire to improve access to healthy food. The theme is going from a “food desert” to a “food oasis.”
- Flanner House has built an urban farm and plans to install an orchard. It operates a market on Friday afternoons.
- The Flanner-owned building facing MLK will be converted to a bodega to provide fresh produce to the community.

### WINE-BAR WITHOUT GENTRIFICATION?

- Breweries are seen as a sign of gentrification by many, yet there is a desire for a local wine-bar.
- This business should focus on catering to the existing, largely African-American community.
- Some are interested in creating a demonstration vineyard in under utilized space nearby, such as in vacant lots, or in the near-term at the Carrier site.

### SHARED RETAIL FOR SMALL VENDORS

- Many local vendors struggle to enter the marketplace due to costs associated with setting up a brick-and-mortar establishment.
- A shared retail space that operates like an antique mall can help small vendors reduce startup costs. Vendors rent booths to market their products, and the facility runs the shop, collecting a percentage of profits.
- This model not only saves small vendors on staffing and facilities but also marketing. By pooling vendors together, the facility can generate more customers and advertise a larger store.

### BUSINESS INCUBATOR WITH SUBSIDIZED OFFICE SPACE

- Local professionals, such as dentists and lawyers, as well as start-ups face similar hurdles in setting up their offices.
- A community-managed business incubator can lease office space to qualified businesses at below-market rates.
- This space can also offer training, business support, and networking opportunities.

*“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, ‘What are you doing for others?’”*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Neighborhood Housing Development Roundtable

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION WITH STAKEHOLDERS - AUGUST 2, 2017

## OVERVIEW OF ROUNDTABLE



In August, a group of stakeholders, including representatives from LISC, the King Commons Planning Team, local realtors, and other for-profit and non-profit developers met to discuss housing development and revitalization in the focus area.

The experience of local developers and realtors, previous planning efforts in nearby communities, and community needs and desires informed the ideas presented for King Commons's housing strategy.

### CURRENT HOUSING DEMAND

The panel expressed uncertainty about the housing market here due to high rates of vacancy.

Subsidized housing programs, targeting households with 80% or less of the Area Median Income, have been successful in nearby Riverside. Likewise, one local developer has had success in renting market-rate apartments to young people.

### BALANCED APPROACH

The community wants to focus on existing residents first. Housing strategies may include market-rate housing, but must be balanced with long-term affordable housing; this approach maintains affordable prices so that the community continues to be welcoming to low-income neighbors.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### RESIDENTIAL AMENITIES

- To retain, attract and serve residents, the community can seek to highlight and improve its existing amenities.
- Improvements to Watkins Park and its Family Center will make its recreational programs and activities more recognizable to residents.
- The community can advocate for the completion of trails, including the Fall Creek Greenway and Central Canal Towpath, which appeal to families and retirees alike.

### AFFORDABLE HOME REHAB

- Much like Rock'n Riverside, non-profit housing developers and agencies can develop a program to restore existing houses and market them to low-income households.
- There is a plethora of potential properties that can be given new life with restoration. Restoration rather than new-build makes these properties not only affordable to residents but also desirable.
- Restoration preserves and enhances the community's existing architectural character and heritage.

### THE QUESTION OF MARKET-RATE DEVELOPMENT

- To attract new residents and increase density in the focus area, housing developers will find greater success in concentrating market-rate housing in a highly visible area, such as along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street. Concentrated new-build housing is easier to market, in part because it has a larger visual impact.
- The community should utilize local developers, who have a stake in the neighborhood, not just a profit motive. These developments should provide benefits to the existing community.
- New housing can be marketed to young people and first-time home buyers, who are looking for a variety of housing types, such as condominiums or town homes.

### HOMESTEADING PROGRAM

- A homesteading program can supplement other revitalization efforts, while also offering a way for homeowners to hone construction skills and shape their community directly.
- A local non-profit can oversee and provide support to homesteaders.
- Arsenal Tech High School can partner with the program to provide work experience to construction and design students.

### COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

- A community land trust can prevent housing prices from skyrocketing if revitalization proves highly successful.
- The trust owns the land in the community, but residents have the option to own their homes with a perpetual lease on the land.
- A community land trust helps to maintain the community's autonomy and promotes responsible development.

### COMMUNITY BRANDING

- A marketable community identity will help attract developers and investors to King Commons.
- This identity can be built around the community's history and notable places.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

- Former residents of the area who now live somewhere else, but may be convinced to live here again with recent investment and momentum
- Current renters in the area who may have previously not been able to consider homeownership
- Members and staff of local churches, who worship here, and may be convinced to live closer to church and become more involved in the neighborhood.
- Staff of nearby companies and anchor institutions, such as Marian, IUPUI, 16 Tech, and Eskenazi Health

# Resiliency Considerations

## OVERVIEW OF RESILIENCE AT KING COMMONS FROM RAEVEN RIDGELL (RESILIENCY FELLOW)

### OVERVIEW OF RESILIENCY

#### WHAT IS CLIMATE RESILIENCE?

- Climate resilience is the capacity of a community, business, or natural environment to prevent, withstand, respond to, and recover from a disruption.
- Disruption in this context is a term used to explain the extreme fluctuations that can and will occur to our weather systems as carbon dioxide and other green house gases increase in our atmosphere, the oceans get warmer, and weather events go wild.
- In other words, resiliency is the ability to adapt, recover, and flourish in the face of a changing climate.

#### WHY ARE WE HIGHLIGHTING IT?

- Changing climate conditions will have harmful effects on communities, so we must prepare for and adapt to these changes in order to ensure the neighborhood's long-term success.
- Projected climate conditions in Indianapolis include higher temperatures, heat waves, increased precipitation, heavy downpours, and droughts.
- In general, these changes will have negative effects on health and safety, infrastructure, transportation, natural and environmental resources, and cultural resources.

#### CHANGING CLIMATE CONDITIONS WILL CAUSE:

- Reduced air quality;
- Increased risk of heat stress and heat-related death;
- Higher food prices;
- Increased energy costs;
- Reduced water supply;
- Flooding; and
- Relocation of people from coasts

### APPLICATION HERE

#### HOW DOES THIS AFFECT KING COMMONS

- Residents most vulnerable to these changes include:
  - young children;
  - the elderly;
  - those with limited mobility;
  - those with pre-existing health conditions;
  - those with low income households; and
  - those historically exposed to environmental burdens
- It is critical for King Commons to implement a resiliency plan so that the neighborhood will continue to thrive long term.
- The L.O.V.E. committees have identified various goals and objectives that will allow the area to better prevent, adapt to, and recover from the effects of a changing climate. Resilient strategies incorporated into the plan include:
  - Educate neighbors about the financial and health benefits of locally grown, organic produce;
  - Work with DPW and Citizens Energy to incorporate resilient concepts into public right-of-way design;
  - Enhance the natural beauty, air quality, and water quality of the area through landscape projects;
  - Include features that embrace green and renewable energy and provide affordable ground-floor space to nurture local businesses in new developments;
  - Develop a net-zero demonstration house in a visible location and provide training to contractors engaged in home construction; and
  - Connect contractors and homebuyers to grant opportunities aimed at energy efficiency and sustainability.

A special thank you to the McKinney Family Foundation, LISC, the Indianapolis Office of Sustainability, and the Marion County Public Health Department for making climate resilience possible in King Commons.



Continuing growth of local organic farming



Stormwater treatment in public spaces



Harvesting energy and reducing utility use and costs



# Safety Considerations

The study area fares worse in regards to safety and crime than the city as a whole. The rate of UCR Person Crimes, otherwise known as Violent Crimes, is particularly high.

The vision for King Commons and the larger Northwest area itself is that those who live, work, worship and play in this neighborhood will perceive and experience it as a safe environment that is void of crime and violence. In addition to reversing the effects of long-term blight and disinvestment, the King Commons initiative will address the challenges of public safety which negatively impact quality of life. Towards this goal, the neighborhood in 2015, working in concert with IMPD, received a Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant from the Department of Justice to study the drivers of crime and develop strategies to reduce it.

The resulting report jointly produced by the neighborhood and IMPD identified active hot spots in the King Commons area with blight and economic decline as the main drivers of crime. The report noted that residents desired an effective police presence, but also expressed a lack of trust with law enforcement. To promote a safe environment, this joint effort developed several goals: a strengthened relationship between law enforcement and residents, support for ex-offenders and their families, a dedicated response team to mental health emergencies and substance abuse, and improved collaboration among residents to reduce criminogenic conditions.

The following is a summary of the BCJI report's anti-crime strategy:

## YOUTH & ADULT MENTORING

Engagement with area youth can help to prevent them from falling into criminal behaviors, while mentorships for adults can provide support to those returning to the community from incarceration.

## PRE ARREST INTERVENTION AND DIVERSION

Crime prevention starts with intervening before an officer determines that an arrest is warranted, before an addiction spirals into an offense, or before mental illness leads to illegal behavior. Collaboration between neighborhood leaders and the IMPD can include pre-arrest screening tools and mobile crisis units, which de-escalate situations before the police are called for service.

## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

Collective impact investment initiatives underway in the Northwest Area will improve the efficacy of anti-crime activities.

## COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Neighborhoods are more competitive for resources and support when they have plans to address their specific challenges and when they are organized to implement those plans. The existing structure of the Northwest Area Quality of Life plan initiative and its leadership can be leveraged to implement anti-crime activities.



Crime Prevention Strategy in BCJI Report on the Northwest Area  
(Courtesy of the Northwest Area Partnership team)

*"Law and order exist for the purpose of establishing justice and when they fail in this purpose they become the dangerously structured dams that block the flow of social progress."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*

# Schools, Education, + Workforce

## LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

Located between Indianapolis and Paris Avenues at 24th Street, is Indianapolis Public School #87, a Montessori school with classes from prekindergarten through 8th grade. The school has a satisfactory record, while other nearby schools are struggling. Quality schools are a key component of improving the lives of existing families as well as attracting new residents into the area. In addition to IPS School #87, there are several elementary schools within walking distance of the site, including Ignite Achievement Academy at Elder W. Diggs School and Holy Angels Catholic School.

| SCHOOL NAME                      | STUDENTS | SCHOOL GRADE 2015 | I-STEP PASSING (%) | SUSPENSIONS (2012) | FREE / REDUCED LUNCH |
|----------------------------------|----------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| IPS #87 George Washington Carver | 337      | B                 | 45.3%              | -                  | ~79%                 |
| Holy Angels Catholic School      | 97       | D                 | 11.9%              | -                  | ~76%                 |



George Washington Carver - IPS School #87 Montessori School (Photo from IPS)

## OTHER NEARBY SCHOOLS & SCHOOL PARTNERS

Located in the former Heslar Naval Armory, Riverside High School emphasizes a classical liberal arts education. Arsenal Tech High School offers a number of career-oriented education options, and Crispus Attucks Medical Magnet School prepares students for careers in science or medicine. Other nearby elementary charter schools include Vision Academy and the Global Preparatory Academy, formerly IPS #44 Riverside. The Global Preparatory Academy is part of the Innovation School Network, which allows schools to make school-specific academic and operational decisions.

There are several child care options in the immediate vicinity, including the Child & Youth Development Center at Flanner House and the Christ Temple Christian Academy at the Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Assembly.

## HIGHER EDUCATION, JOB TRAINING, AND WORKFORCE PROGRAMS

The Center for Leadership Development fosters the personal development and educational attainment of minority youth, empowering them to become professional, community and business leaders. It offers mentoring programs, testing and college preparation courses, business and career orientations, among others.

Ivy Tech Community College's downtown campus is just to the east of the study area along Fall Creek Boulevard. It trains students for a number of careers in technology, health, business and public service. Other nearby institutions of higher learning include Marian University, about 3 miles west; IUPUI, about 3 miles south; and Martin University, about 6 miles east.

In addition to post-secondary education, there are needs within the community for workforce development certifications to help residents find jobs, including those with criminal records and other impediments to employment.



IVY Tech Community College



# Transit + Employment Access

The study area is modestly served by the proposed 2021 IndyGo Network, particularly to Downtown Indianapolis and to the east.

## WALKING AND BIKING ACCESS

Walking and biking access to employment centers on the study area's eastern and southern edge is a realistic mode of job access. Providing preferred routes for daily walkers and cyclists to these areas is important.

## TRANSIT ACCESS

Frequent and reliable transit access to other job centers is critical to improving economic opportunities.

Key routes include:



- Route 34 - infrequent, but access to job centers
- The Red / Purple Line - preferred access Downtown
- Route 6 - access to 16 Tech, IUPUI, and Downtown
- Routes 20 and 30 - east / west connections

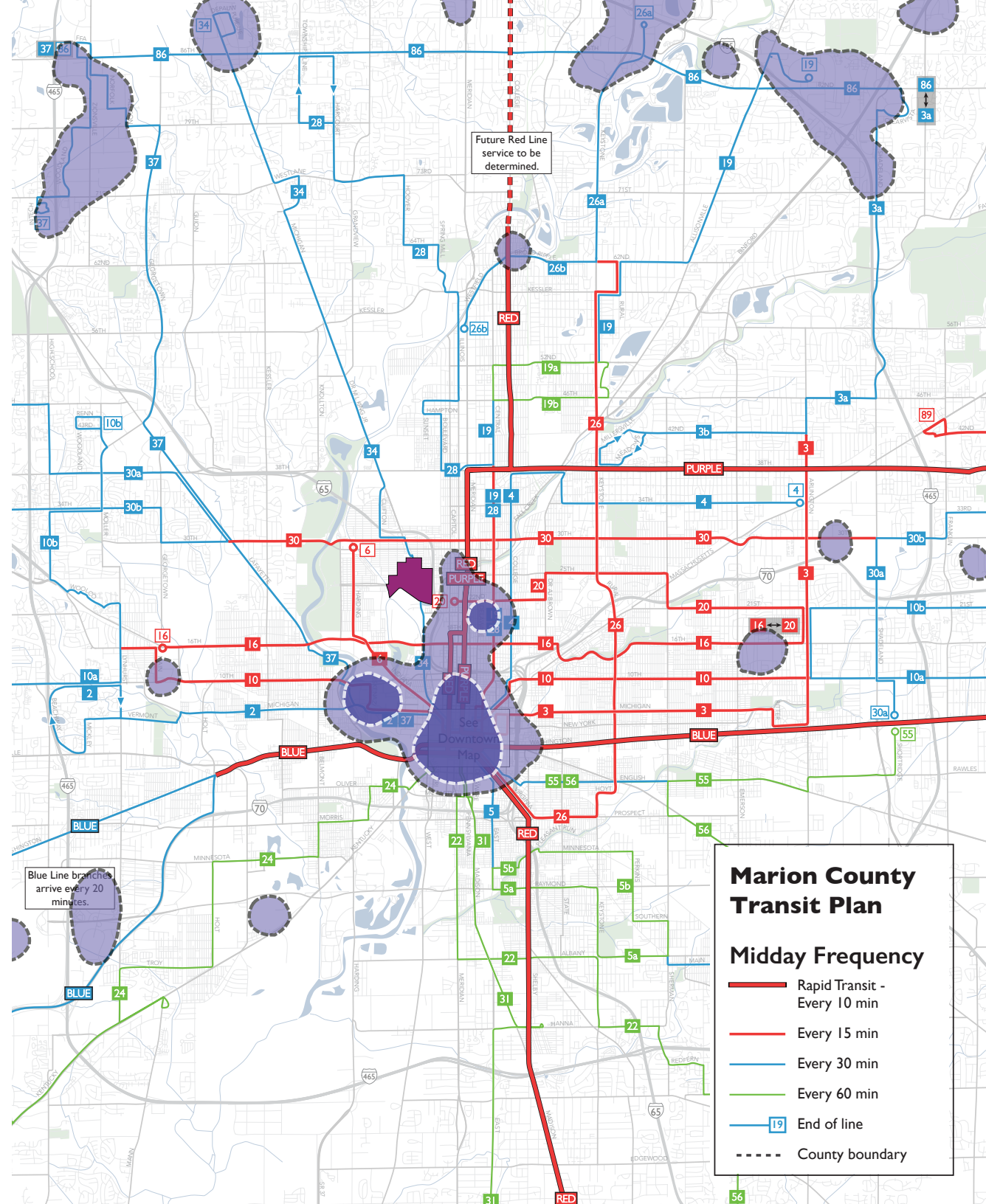
## KEY EMPLOYMENT CLUSTERS

The largest employment area within the State of Indiana is Downtown Indianapolis. The best service will be provided by the proposed Red / Purple line, so walking and biking connections to this route are critical. The other significant employment area accessible from the study area is located along I-465 in the northern suburbs of Indianapolis. A community survey of residents with employment or employment interest here may be of value.

 **STUDY AREA**







## EMPLOYMENT HOT SPOTS

-  22,000 to 137,000 Jobs / Square Mile
-  5,000 to 22,000 Jobs / Square Mile
- Other Areas < 5,000 Jobs / Square Mile



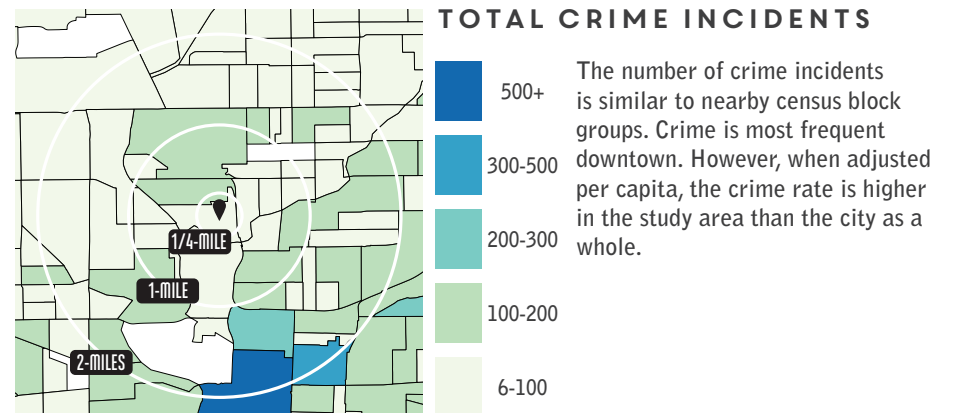
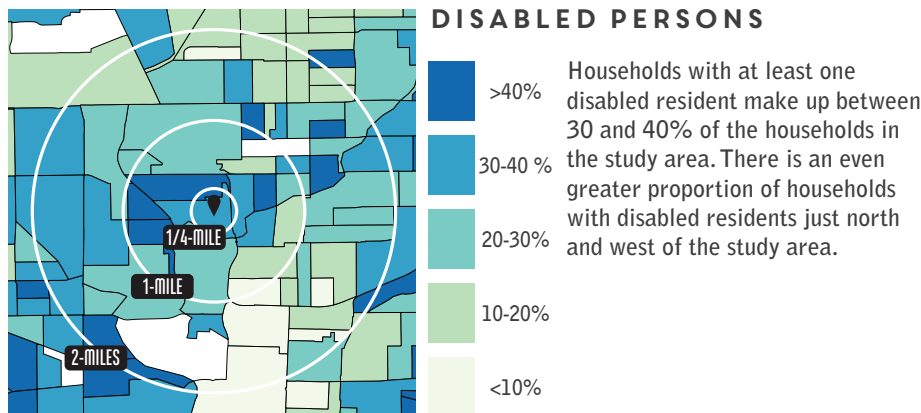
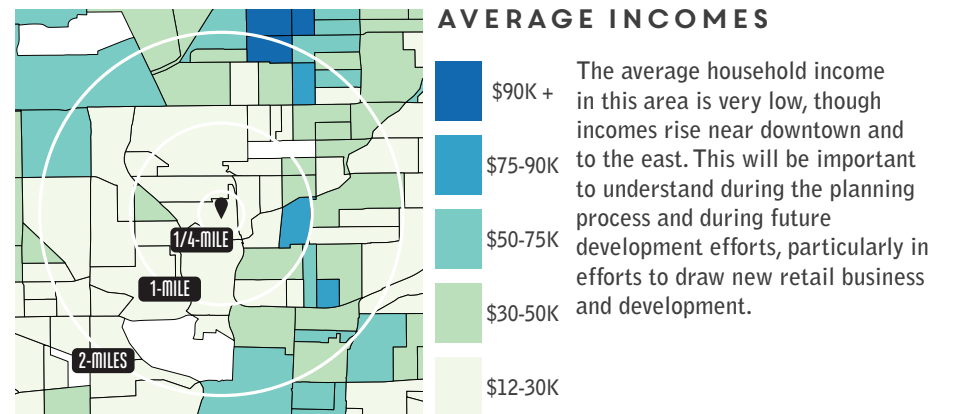
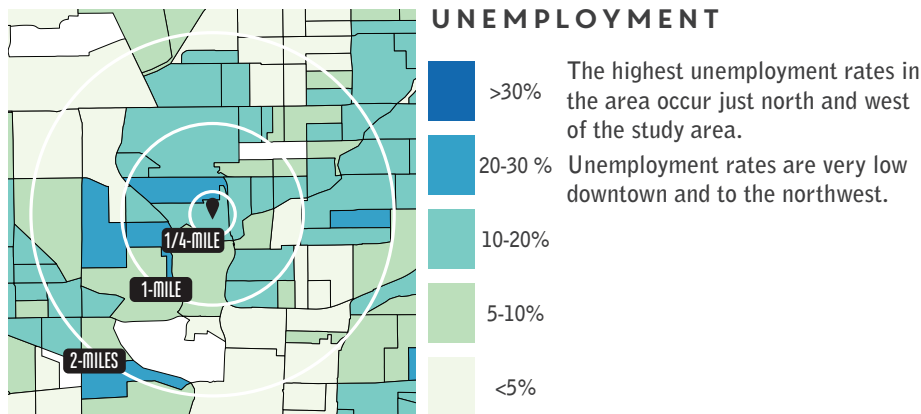
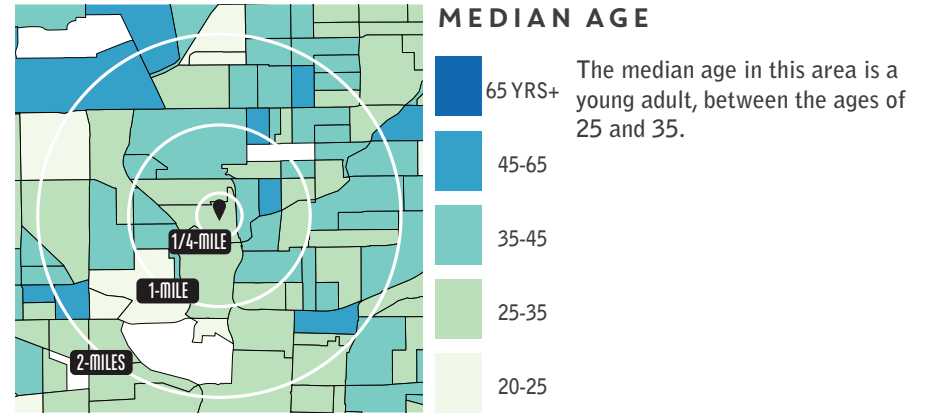
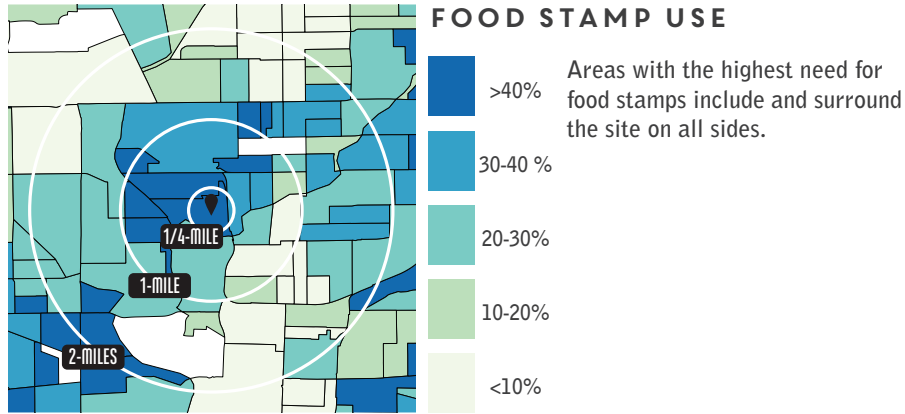
**Marion County Transit Plan**

**Midday Frequency**

-  Rapid Transit - Every 10 min
-  Every 15 min
-  Every 30 min
-  Every 60 min
-  19 End of line
-  County boundary

Note: The outlines for data on these maps indicate 2010 census block groups.

# Social + Economic Factors





# Analysis: Property Availability

## LEGEND

- RENEW INDIANAPOLIS
- SURPLUS PROPERTIES
- VACANT PROPERTY (APPROXIMATED)

Note: Property control layers were provided by Open Indy Data Portal and Renew Indianapolis in the summer of 2017. Property attributes are subject to change. It is advised that current conditions are requested at the time of implementation for accuracy.

## RENEW INDIANAPOLIS / SURPLUS

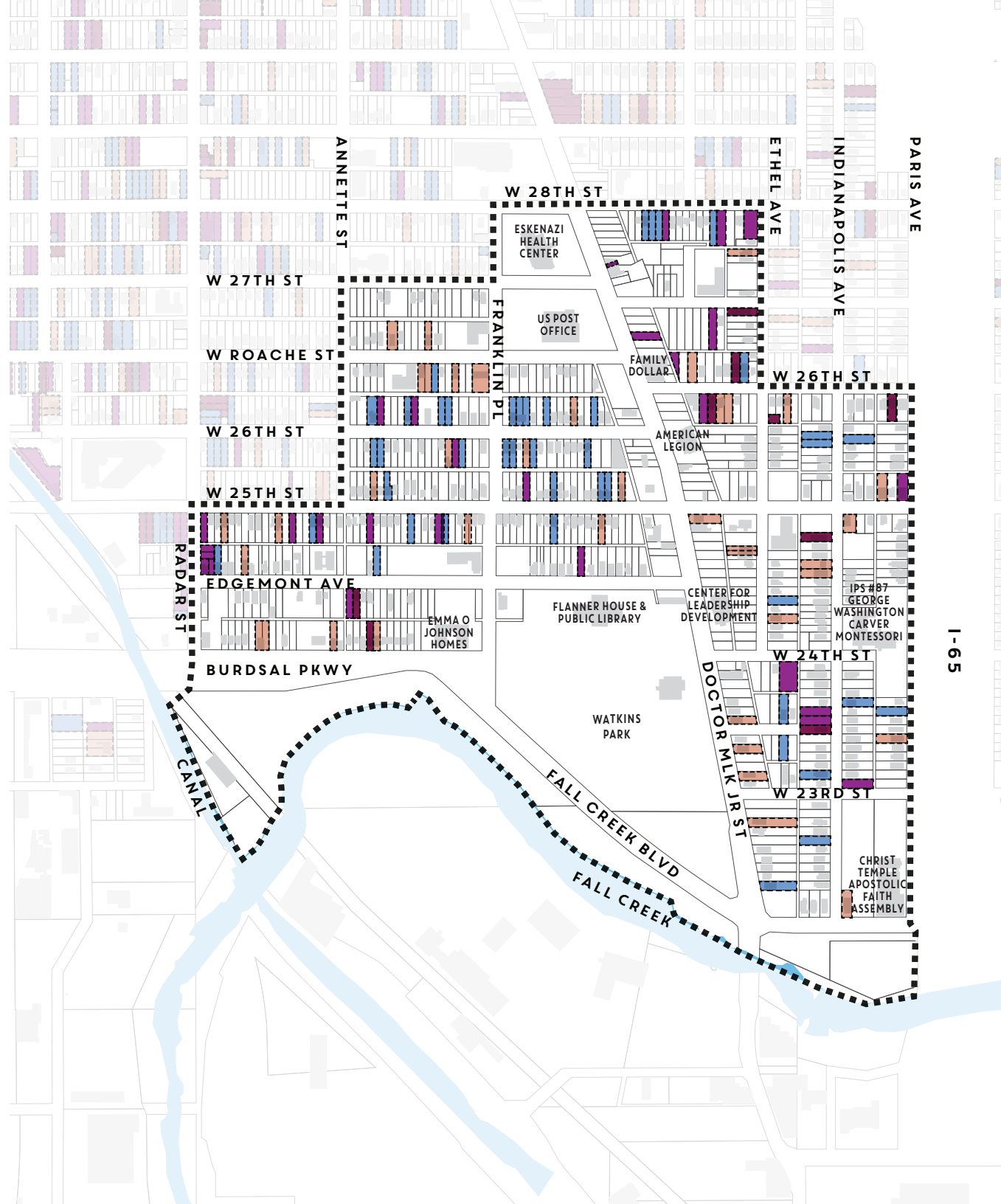
Renew Indianapolis and Surplus properties are numerous and scattered fairly evenly throughout the project area. Properties are primarily made up of single-family houses.

## VACANT (ABANDONED) PROPERTY

Vacant property is difficult to confirm. For this study, the City of Indianapolis provided data on abandoned housing that was last updated in May 2016. Abandoned houses are found throughout the project area, but they occur with greater frequency on Roache Street and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street.

## CONCENTRATIONS

There is not a significant pattern of under utilized properties; the problem is pervasive throughout the site. Nevertheless, some blocks fare better than others, such as those surrounding IPS #87 and those along Edgemont Avenue. 26th Street from Martin Luther King, Jr. west to Annette Street and Indianapolis Avenue from 25th Street to 23rd Street may provide opportunities for more concentrated residential investments.



# Analysis: Non-Local Ownership

## LEGEND

- OWNERSHIP - OUT OF STATE
- OWNERSHIP - OUT OF METRO AREA

Note: Property Control layers were provided by Renew Indianapolis in the summer of 2017. Property attributes are subject to change. It is advised that current conditions are requested at the time of implementation for accuracy.

## OUT OF STATE

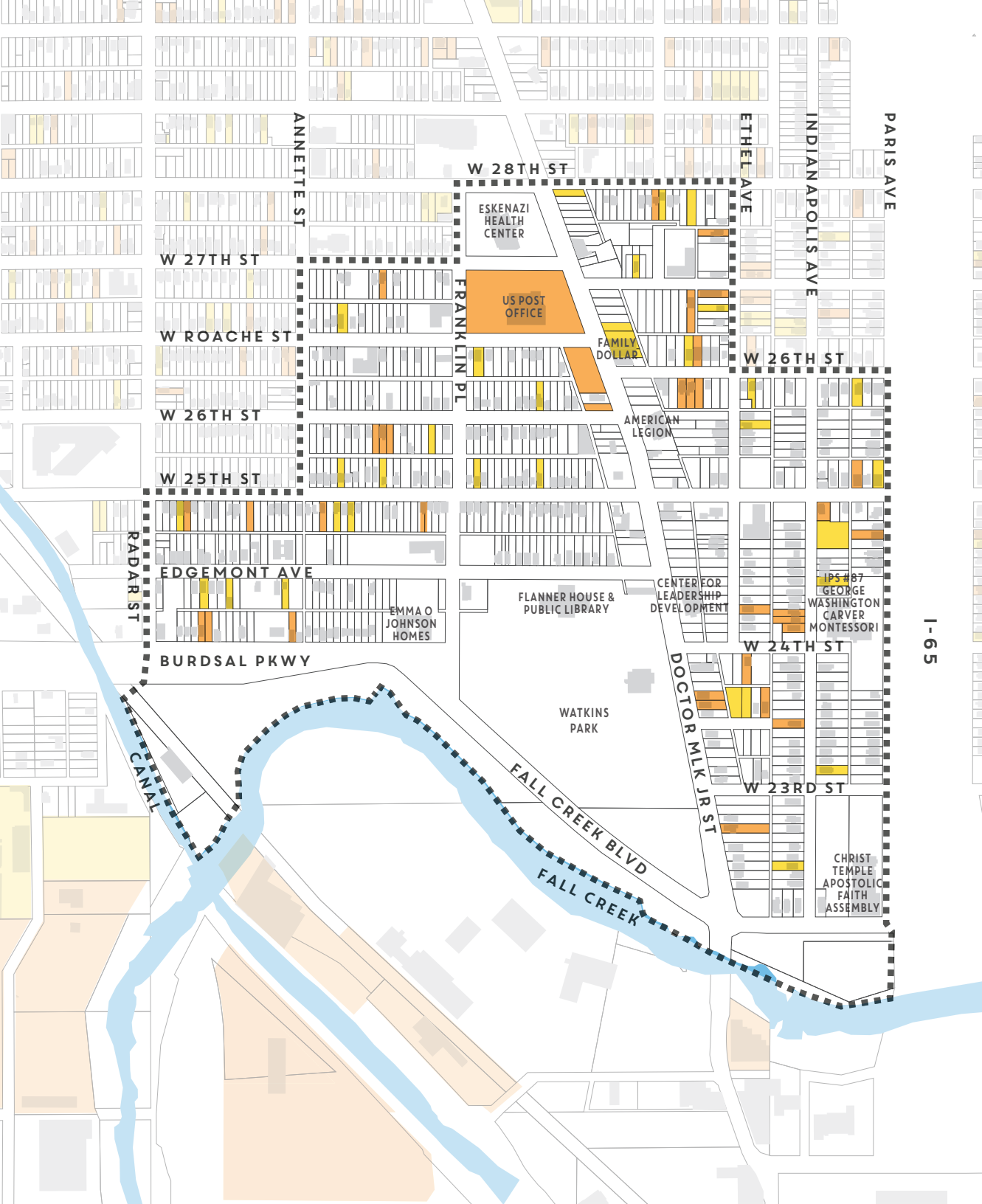
Aside from the Post Office and its parking lots, most of the out-of-state owned properties in the study area are single-family homes. To the south of the study area, a significant number of industrial properties have out-of-state owners.

## NON-INDIANAPOLIS OWNERSHIP

The Family Dollar Store as well as a number of single-family homes are owned by entities or individuals outside the Indianapolis metro area. These houses are likely rented or vacant.

*"We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*





# Community Engagement

## WHAT DO NEIGHBORS WANT?

Four public input sessions were held from May 2017 to January of 2018 to better understand the desires of residents, workers, and business owners.

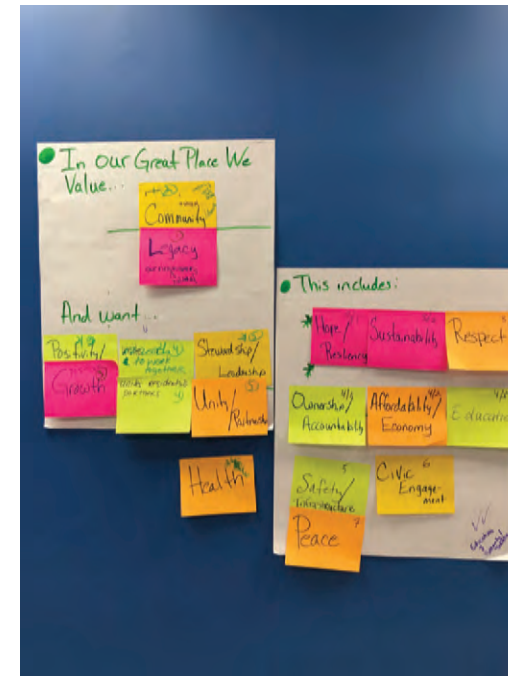
- The first meeting introduced the public to the Great Places effort and provided a summary of ideas around Livability, Opportunity, Vitality and Education (L.O.V.E.) from previous plans.
- The second meeting provided an overview of existing conditions and analysis conducted by the team and a first DRAFT of initial L.O.V.E. Goals for more substantial input and discussion.
- The third input meeting included 360 Group, who gathered input on branding, and was followed with the team presenting initial ideas of where physical development could go and core concepts, as well as further L.O.V.E. Goal input.
- The fourth meeting included a review of final branding options, and vision concepts and graphics for development, parks, and infrastructure with input gathered for final revisions.



# The Community's Value Statement:

*In our Great Place, we value our rich African American cultural history and unite with residents, partners and leaders to*

- *Improve the lives of all neighbors, embodying the principles of hope, respect and peace, while;*
- *Focusing on making King Commons an affordable, healthy, inclusive and sustainable neighborhood.*



# The Community's L.O.V.E. Themes



## (L)IVABILITY

Input was coordinated by the Livability co-chairs, Carolyn Watts and Phyllis Boyd. Major themes revolved around beautifying public space, improving access to healthy food, improving the pedestrian experience and safety, strengthening relationships across the neighborhood, and promoting the area as a hub for African American culture and the arts.



## (O)PPORTUNITY

Input was coordinated by the Opportunity co-chair, Lauren Bates. Major themes revolved around starting a co-working space, building off the legacy of providing jobs and opportunity through home-building, and providing more opportunities to assist the organic growth in food entrepreneurship in the area.



## (V)ITALITY

Input was coordinated by the Vitality co-chairs, Dorothy Dodd and Gloria Crawford. Major themes revolved around rehab of existing homes, new home construction, increasing access to home repair funds, coordinating with Northwest Quality of Life efforts, providing multi-family and mixed-use housing, and maintaining and promoting affordability. Target audiences would include recruiting back former residents, recruiting current renters to become homeowners, and recruiting staff and members from local churches.



## (E)DUCATION

Input was coordinated by the Education co-chairs, Brandon Cosby and Richard Bray. Major themes revolved around developing a pipeline from the neighborhood to local universities and colleges, supporting anchor institutions that provide wholistic guidance and counseling, and increasing access to and sharing of information among residents, institutions of higher learning, and anchor institutions.





Outreach

Cucumbers  
50¢ ea.  
3 for \$1

Bell peppers  
50¢ ea.

Tomatoes  
1.50 per box  
50¢ ea.

Green  
tomatoes  
2.00 per box  
50¢ ea.

DONATOS  
Every pizza is important.



# ASSETS + OPPORTUNITIES

A list of conceptual opportunities are included in this section of the document, based on evaluations of a number of factors from the previous section. The existing “assets” of the community are evaluated and opportunities are recommended for housing, infrastructure, development, and placemaking.

**Housing** - An observation of the existing housing assets is provided and it includes an overview of housing scales, types, and characteristics, including exceptional homes that may be used as assets in housing intervention strategies. Opportunities are indicated based on identified clusters of vacancy and need.

**Infrastructure** - An assessment of existing infrastructure conditions is provided that rates the condition of streets, sidewalks, and alleys. Based on this assessment, there is a diagram of opportunities for future basic infrastructure improvements, based on areas of need.

**Education** - An overview of existing education facilities that serve the study area is provided, including those directly located within King Commons.

**Placemaking** - An abstract concept of placemaking opportunities based on community input, previous planning and physical realities is provided with the goal of going beyond basic needs to provide beauty and catalyze new investments. There is also a list of early action opportunities that were identified during public outreach sessions, with the goal that these will be worked on in the early stages of implementation.

**Development** - An abstract concept of development opportunities based on community input, previous planning, property availability, and real estate experts’ input is provided, which is looked at in more detail in the following section.

*“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.”*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Housing Assets

## SUMMARY OF HOUSING TYPES

The vast majority of housing in the study area is single family or duplex; the only multifamily housing consists of two mid-rise senior housing complexes.

## SUMMARY OF HOUSING CONDITIONS

The condition of homes varies drastically throughout the area. Many houses are abandoned, and several appear to have suffered from significant fires. However, the neighborhood has a number of houses that are lovingly lived in; residents have planted flower gardens and painted their bungalows in cheerful colors.

Most houses have front porches where residents can sit and socialize with neighbors. There are few driveways to break up the sidewalk and separate houses. Cars are predominately parked on the street or in garages along rear alleys. These design elements have been copied by New Urbanists in new developments across the country in an effort to capture the walkability, conviviality, and sense of community of historic neighborhoods like King Commons. Therefore, restoration and new development within this neighborhood should reinforce and build upon these elements; increased density will help to make them function as they once did. It is recommended that a targeted focus block be selected as the first phase of a housing revitalization effort to maximize visibility and impact.

Given the dearth of multifamily housing, it is recommended that future development add apartments, townhomes, and condos to accommodate residents of all generations and incomes. Housing development should capitalize on existing community assets, such as Watkins Park, trail connections, and schools as well as offer new amenities to attract and serve residents.

## TYPE #1 - SINGLE FAMILY/DUPLEX HOMES

The dominant type of house is the bungalow, built in the early 20th century.



- **MOST SINGLES AND DUPLEXES HAVE A CRAFTSMAN CHARACTER, THOUGH THERE IS VARIETY**
- **VERY LITTLE NEW CONSTRUCTION**
- **YARD AND HOME MAINTENANCE VARIES**

## TYPE #2 - SENIOR APARTMENTS

The recently built Glenn Howard Manor for seniors is one of the few multifamily buildings in the area.



- **NEW-BUILD TRADITIONAL STYLE**
- **SCALE DIFFERS FROM NEARBY BUILDINGS**

## HOUSING ACROSS THE DECADES

Although the majority of houses were built in the bungalow style of the early 20th century, the neighborhood has examples of housing from other eras, including mid-century modern and 1990s traditional.



# Housing Opportunities

## HIGH VACANCY

Vacancies are prevalent throughout King Commons. There are numerous instances with contiguous parcels that are either vacant or available for purchase from the City or County.

The highest concentration of vacancies occurs along West 26th Street, west of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street. This length of 26th street is within a quick and direct walk of Ignite Achievement Academy School 42, which could sponsor teachers and staff to live in the neighborhood that they serve.




## \* FLANNER HOUSE PROPERTY

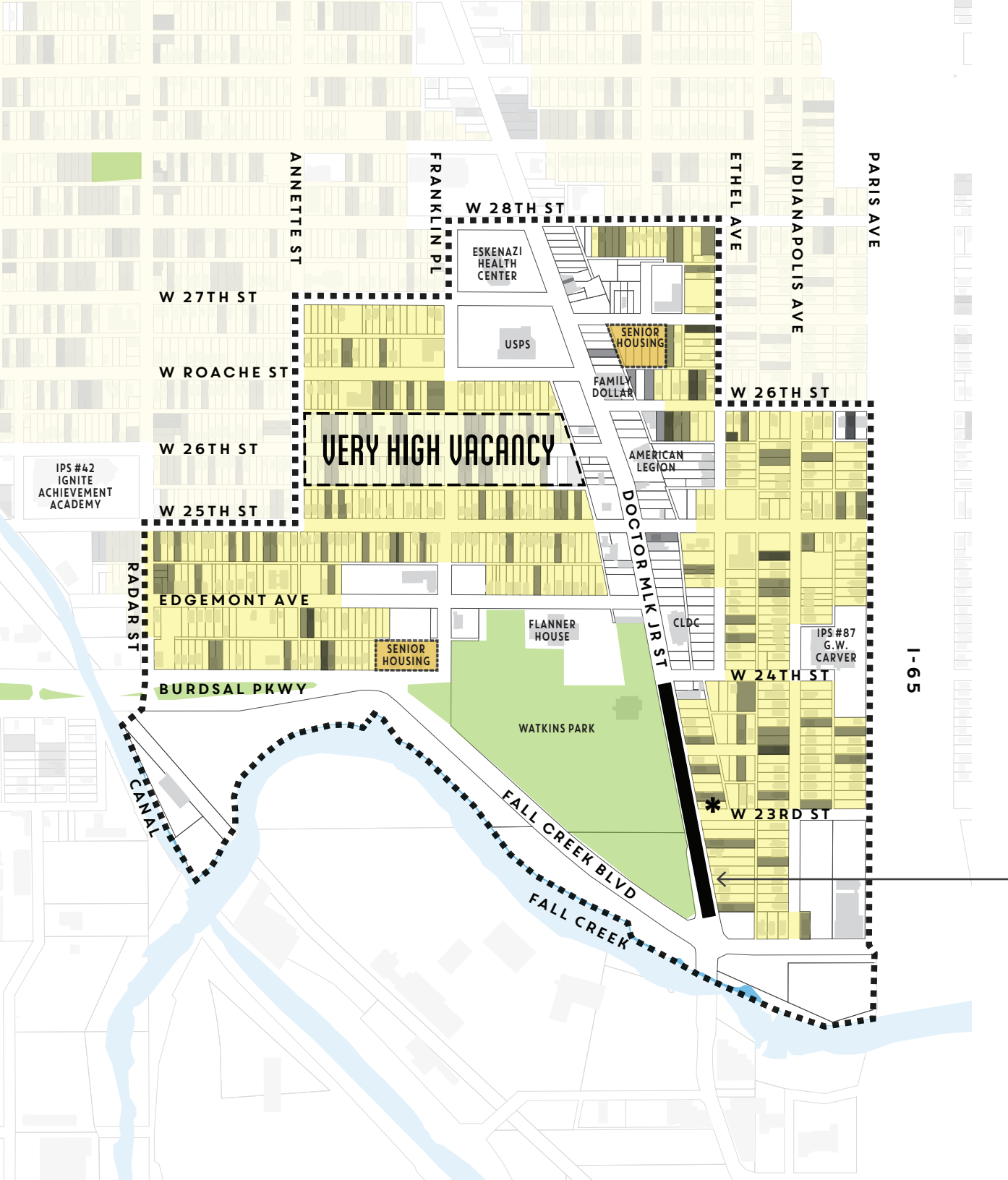
Flanner House owns a single-family home on the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street and 23rd Street that has a historic wrap-around porch looking out over Watkins Park. This property could be used as a catalyst for neighboring property restoration or as a model for energy-saving building innovations.

## HIGH-VISIBILITY RESIDENTIAL

Single-family houses that face Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, Watkins Park, and Fall Creek Boulevard are highly visible to passing traffic. This area presents an opportunity to showcase a positive image of King Commons, potentially a good location for townhomes.

## LEGEND

-  MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING
-  SINGLE-FAMILY AND DUPLEX
-  RENEW INDI, SURPLUS, OR VACANT PROPERTY





# Infrastructure Assessment

## SCORING

A field evaluation was performed on a block by block and alley by alley basis to understand the condition of infrastructure in the area.

All pieces of infrastructure are rated on a scale of zero (0) to five (5). Scores of 2 or lower are highlighted in red text as problematic.

- (0) **Zero** - no road or sidewalk exists (as of 2018).
- (1) **One** - conditions are extremely poor and may represent a safety issue or make basic travel difficult.
- (2) **Two** - conditions are poor, but passable, however there may be ADA concerns and the condition of infrastructure would negatively impact redevelopment.
- (3) **Three** - conditions are average, but may be in need of maintenance, such as cleaning of gutters and curbs and weeding along sidewalks.
- (4) **Four** - conditions are good.
- (5) **Five** - infrastructure is new.

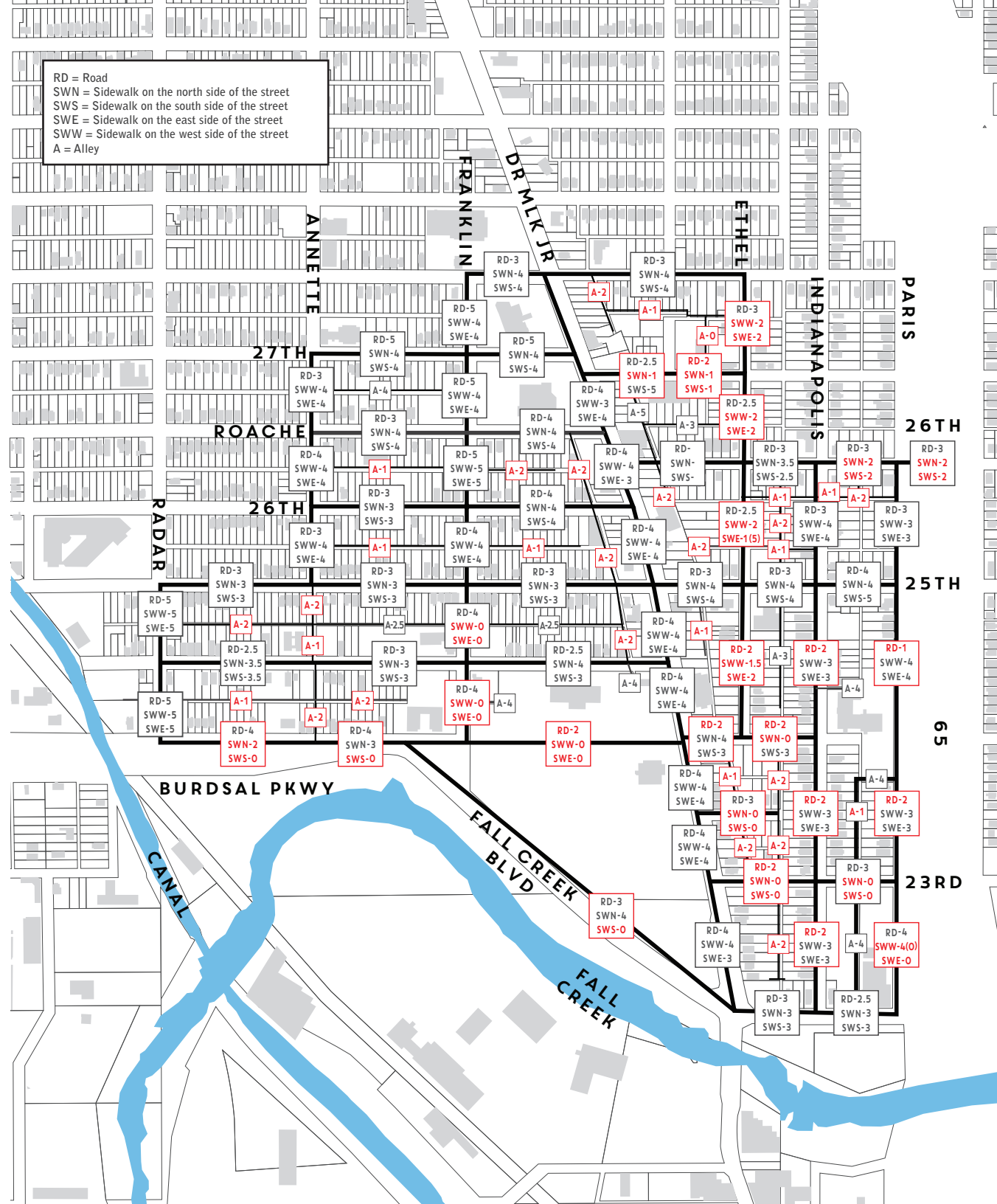
## GENERAL ASSESSMENT

The roads and sidewalks in King Commons are generally in good condition, while most of the alleys are in extreme disrepair. Improvements to roads and sidewalks are needed mostly to the east of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street. Throughout the area, vegetation and debris have accumulated in the gutters, which can contribute to a faster decline in road and sidewalk quality.

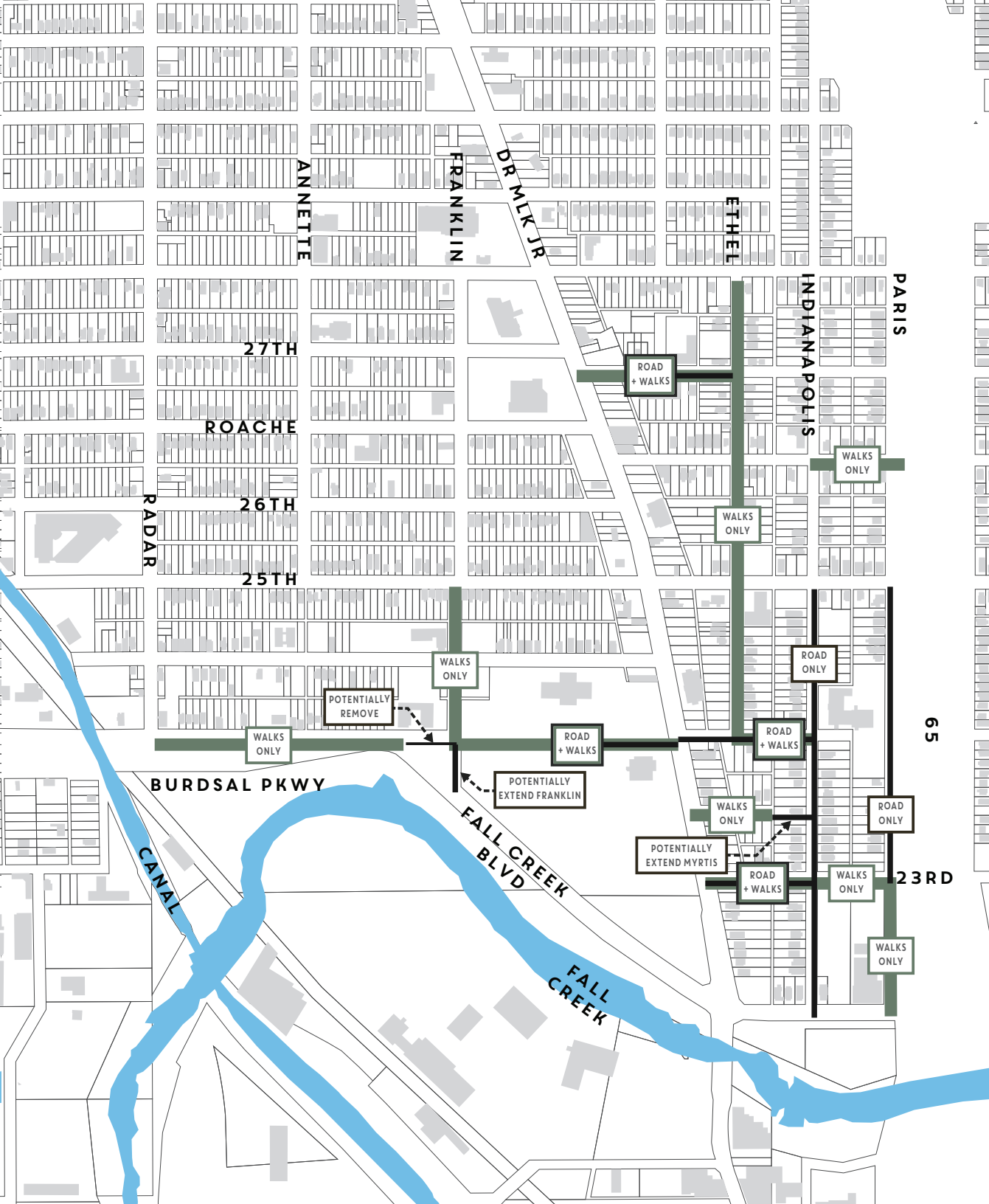
## PEDESTRIAN ISSUES

While most of the residential streets can boast of comfortable tree-lined sidewalks, the main thoroughfare--Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street--lacks shade and pedestrian separation from the busy street. Since most pedestrian destinations line MLK, improvements to its pedestrian experience could bolster the sense of community and increase development prospects. In addition, there are no sidewalks along Fall Creek, a critical natural asset to the neighborhood.

RD = Road  
 SWN = Sidewalk on the north side of the street  
 SWS = Sidewalk on the south side of the street  
 SWE = Sidewalk on the east side of the street  
 SWW = Sidewalk on the west side of the street  
 A = Alley



# Basic Infrastructure Opportunities



## ALLEYS

- Alleys noted in red on the Infrastructure Assessment page are in very poor condition and should be replaced as funding allows.

## NORTHWEST QUADRANT

- Gutters should be cleared of debris and vegetation.

## SOUTHWEST QUADRANT

- A sidewalk on the south side of Burdsal Parkway should be added.
- Franklin Place needs new sidewalks as well as a pedestrian connection to Dr. MLK Jr. Street.
- Potentially extend Franklin Place to Fall Creek Boulevard.

## NORTHEAST QUADRANT

- 27th Street should be patched and resurfaced; it needs new sidewalks between MLK and Ethel.
- Ethel Avenue needs new sidewalks.
- A section of 26th Street closest to the highway underpass needs new sidewalks.

## SOUTHEAST QUADRANT

- Indianapolis Avenue needs to be resurfaced.
- Paris Avenue needs to be resurfaced. Sidewalks should be added south of 23rd Street.
- 24th Street and the entrance to Watkins Park need to be resurfaced. Sidewalk improvements and an enhanced crosswalk are needed here as well.
- Myrtis Street needs new sidewalks and can be extended to Indianapolis.
- 23rd Street needs new sidewalks, and a section of the road needs to be resurfaced.



# Educational Assets



Outdoor Play at the Flanner House Child Development Center (courtesy of Flanner House)



Center for Leadership Development



Rendering of Riverside High School (courtesy of RATIO)



George Washington Carver - IPS School #87

## FLANNER HOUSE - CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER & CENTER FOR WORKING FAMILIES

Flanner House includes a Child and Youth Development Center among its many community services and programs. The child center operates from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM, offering preschool, toddler care, and before and after school care. Facilities include classrooms as well as outdoor play areas. Flanner House serves local residents and working families, providing tuition assistance to qualified parents. The Center for Working Families supports individuals and families experiencing the challenges of poverty by providing case management, emergency assistance, community referrals, and employment services.

## YOUTH MENTORING AND COLLEGE PREP - CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Leadership Development is a non-profit focused on lifting up the next generation of community leaders and minority leaders in particular. It offers numerous programs and opportunities to youth for college readiness, career advising, and mentorships.

## HIGH SCHOOL - RIVERSIDE HIGH SCHOOL

Riverside High School opened with a freshman class in the fall of 2017 in response to the unmet demand for more seats at the successful charter Herron High School. Riverside High School will follow the same model as Herron, teaching classics, Latin and the liberal arts. Riverside High School will be located in the former Heslar Naval Armory, next to the White River and Riverside Park, following the completion of renovations. The school district plans to close three high schools, including Arlington, Broad Ripple and Northwest, so the community is need of quality public secondary education.

## ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL - GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER - IPS SCHOOL #87

Located at Indianapolis Avenue and 24th Street, Indianapolis Public School #87, is within King Commons. The school has achieved good student outcomes, matching state-wide averages in math and reading scores. These scores are higher than many other nearby elementary schools. Quality schools are a key component of improving the lives of existing families as well as attracting new residents into the area.

IPS #87 utilizes the Montessori approach from Kindergarten through 8th grade. This educational philosophy emphasizes progression from a concrete example to an abstract idea, collaborative projects in multi-age classrooms, and individually directed research projects. Students are expected to develop self discipline and self motivation from exploring individual interests and tailoring their educational pursuits to those interests.



Ignite Achievement Academy (courtesy of Ignite Achievement Academy)

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - IGNITE ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMY AT ELDER DIGGS - IPS SCHOOL #42

In the fall of 2017, IPS 42 Elder W Diggs became Ignite Achievement Academy, part of the Innovation School Network. Built in 1995, the school is located between 25th and Radar Streets. The transformation into an innovation school is intended to improve student outcomes. Ignite Achievement Academy will apply community engagement, project-based learning and the latest research on learning and development to its curriculum. It hopes to teach its students habits of success, including a growth mindset as well as to employ a democratic process in decision making.



IVY Tech Main Campus (courtesy of Ivy Tech)

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE - IVY TECH DOWNTOWN CAMPUS

Ivy Tech Community College's largest campus is located between Fall Creek Parkway and 29th Street, and between Capitol Avenue and Meridian Street. It offers degree programs in health, technology, computing, business and public services. Students can complete an associate's degree in two years, a certification in one year, or transfer credits to a four-year college. A great asset to the community, Ivy Tech can help local residents tailor their degrees to specific jobs that are available in the community. It also makes higher education more accessible to those who may face institutional, financial or other hurdles to four-year colleges and universities.



Marian University Campus (courtesy of US News)

## HIGHER EDUCATION- MARIAN UNIVERSITY

Located about two miles from the study area, just west of the White River, Marian is a Catholic university with programs in nursing, arts and sciences, business, education and exercise and sports science. It also has graduate degree programs in osteopathic medicine and education, among others. The school has a number of programs to connect students to the Indianapolis community, including Students Taking Active Reflective Roles (STARR) and Urban Indy Plunge.



IUPUI (courtesy of IUPUI)

## HIGHER EDUCATION- IUPUI

IUPUI, the premier urban research university campus in Indiana with over 29,000 students and 300 degree programs, is located about 3 miles south of the study area. IUPUI facilitates partnerships between faculty, staff, students and the community. The goal of these partnerships is to improve the quality of life in Indianapolis and across Indiana, no matter what form they take.



Holy Angels Catholic School (courtesy of Holy Angels)

## PRIVATE SCHOOL - HOLY ANGELS CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Holy Angels Catholic School is private Catholic elementary school located on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street, just north of 28th Street. The school was founded in 1907 by the first Catholic church in the neighborhood and has long-standing ties to the community. Currently, it has partnered with Notre Dame University to support teaching and learning, advancement, and its Catholic identity. Although a private school, it accepts Indiana School Vouchers and awards financial aid.



# Placemaking Opportunities

## WATKINS PARK

Watkins Park can serve as community forum and recreation space with specific improvements, such as renovations to the Watkins Family Center. It is recommended that a new park Master Plan consider the addition of a central plaza for community events and festivals, the reorientation of the bandstand for better concert visibility, the relocation of the playground closer to the Family Center, a splash pad for neighborhood children, improved bicycle and vehicular circulation through and around the park, and public art and signage to mark entrances and orient visitors.

## TRAIL CONNECTIONS

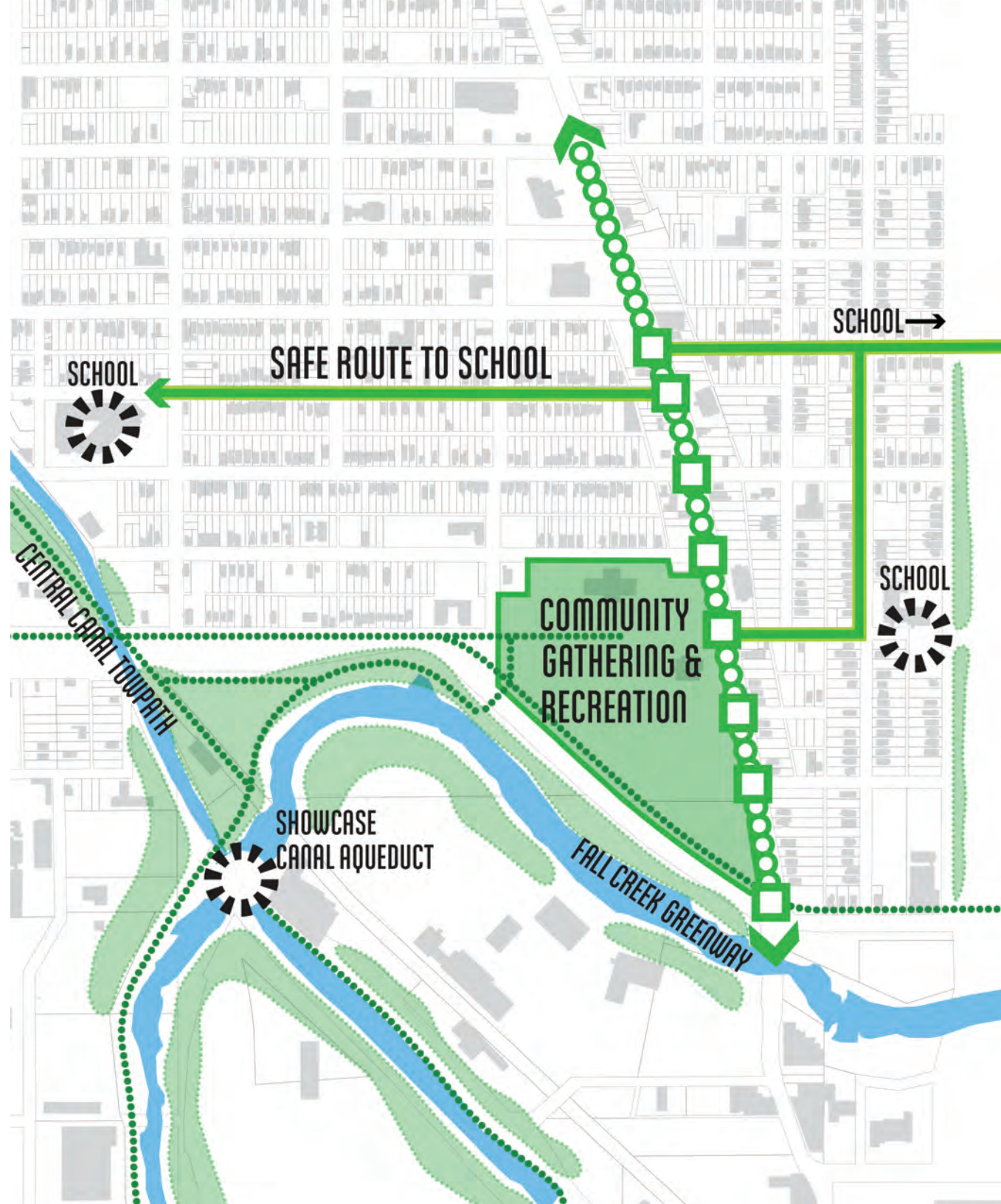
King Commons is at the nexus of planned trail extensions for the Fall Creek Greenway and the Central Canal Towpath. The 2014 Indy Greenways Full Circle Master Plan calls for the Towpath to extend downtown, and for the Fall Creek Greenway to extend along the creek to 10th Street. It is recommended that the Fall Creek Greenway travel along the north side of the creek next to Watkins Park and connect to Burdsal Parkway and the Towpath extension. Also, the trail system and neighborhood would benefit from physical or visual access to the canal aqueduct.

## STREET IMPROVEMENTS

It is recommended that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Street be improved with updated infrastructure, including street trees and widened sidewalks to create a more pleasant pedestrian environment.

## SAFE ROUTE TO SCHOOL

Ignite Achievement Academy at Elder Diggs is located on 26th which is pocked with vacancies. It is recommended that this street be repopulated with housing for teachers and staff, cleared of overgrown vegetation, and lined with signage and lighting to create a safe route to school. Likewise, the crosswalk at 24th Street and Dr. MLK Jr. Street should be improved for safe passage between Watkins Park and George Washington Carver School.



## ITEM #1 - FLANNER HOUSE ORCHARD



As part of the ambitious Cleo's Bodega and Cafe project, Flanner House has partnered with Keep Indianapolis Beautiful to plant an orchard. KIB has designated the orchard as an IPL GreenSpace project.

The orchard will include the following:

- Variety of apple types
- Seating area
- Public gathering space
- Educational opportunities for nearby schools

## ITEM #2 - OPEN BITE NIGHT



Image courtesy of Drew Daudelin/wfyi

Flanner House will continue to partner with King Commons community members to organize and advertise Open Bite Night in Watkins Park. Open Bite Night is an outdoor festival featuring local foods, crafts and entertainment. The event will promote the following:

- Local entrepreneurs
- Community identity
- African American culture
- Great Places 2020 Plan awareness and momentum

## ITEM #3 - FUTSAL FACILITIES



Flanner House is working with the Parks Department to turn tennis courts in Watkins Park into a facility for futsal, a sport similar to soccer that is growing in popularity in the region. With the creation of futsal courts, King Commons will be able to host tournaments, introduce players to the neighborhood, and attract people to its local businesses.

# Early Action Opportunities

## SUMMARY OF EARLY ACTION ITEMS

A number of early action items are identified so that work can commence as plans are being finalized.

Early action items for the King Commons study area include the following:

- (1) Complete Flanner House's plan for an orchard at Cleo's Bodega and Cafe;
- (2) Host and organize Open Bite Night in Watkins Park;
- (3) Coordinate the creation of regulation futsal courts; and
- (4) Organize a regional Juneteenth celebration at Watkins Park.

## GOALS FOR THESE EFFORTS

These efforts are meant to provide an early boost to momentum for areas that will take time to develop. They are also intended to engage local neighbors in meaningful efforts so that they can have direct involvement in improvements to the neighborhood.

Some of the efforts may be temporary in nature, and some may be longer lasting, such as tree plantings. In either scenario, the action is intended to enhance and beautify the study area.

*"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late.*

*...*

*Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter -- but beautiful -- struggle for a new world."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Development Opportunities

## GREEN SPACE AND PARKS

King Commons has a plethora of green spaces that can be enhanced to host unrivaled amenities within Indianapolis. The planned trail connections along Fall Creek, the Canal, and Burdsal Parkway would all eventually meet where the Canal crosses Fall Creek, known as the Aqueduct. This has the opportunity to provide a western gateway to the King Commons focus area, which could be home to community uses and attached housing.

Watkins Park is a great community asset, but can benefit from new improvements and programming. The existing family shelter is active daily with basketball and the large outdoor lawn hosts the large Jazz in the Park and Open Bite Night activities. Making the park and family shelter more public-facing and welcoming would be a great asset in the effort to create energy along Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street.

## FLANNER FARMS

Flanner House Farms is a wonderful new asset growing fresh produce to serve the community. There is a social goal behind the farm to encourage residents to grow fresh produce, especially with the neighborhood being a large food desert.

## SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

### A - WATKINS PARK

- A Central Plaza - the park could have a central plaza between the family center, CLD, and Flanner House and Bodega. The plaza should be the most public center of the park, while the bulk of the park is programmed for larger, public events.
- Buildings Fronting the Plaza - buildings along this plaza's edges could open up to the plaza and MLK with new or enhanced entries, generous glass, and a pedestrian focus.
- Amenities for Today's Uses - the plaza could be re-imagined with a focus on today's festivals and community desires.
- Burdsal Pass - a linear pedestrian area in line with Burdsal would create an east and west gateway and allow more space for booths and events.

### B - WATKINS PARK FAMILY CENTER

- The family center could expand and become more visible and welcoming with an enhanced entry along MLK and facing the proposed plaza.
- The family center could enhance its western facade to open up to and orient towards events in the park

### C - FLANNER HOUSE, FARM, AND BODEGA

- Flanner House's building could be improved, particularly along the east and south facade, with a large glass atrium community space and entry facing the street and park.
- The farms and planned orchard can include art and edge treatments along the pass.
- Flanner House's planned bodega can include renovations or a new pavilion structure with storefront glass, a very public entry with signage and seating.

### D - CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- It is encouraged that a planned expansion for an auditorium be focused on the south with a pedestrian-facing entry on the corner facing the park.

### E - MLK WALKABLE MIXED-USE AREA

- The intersection of 25th and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Streets will be the center of mixed-use activity with the goal of creating a focused, walkable cluster of development.
- The northwest block contains an abandoned Church's Chicken and a hand car wash business that can be transformed into a 3-4 story mixed-use building.
- The northeast block contains Bar-B-Q Heaven and a small retail building set back from the street. Consider a facade grant to allow for storefront retail or mixed-use space to extend to the corner.
- The southwest block contains an open lot, a small abandoned church storefront, and a used tire store that could be re-imagined with a mixed-use building.
- The southeast block contains an interesting vacant building with large red lanterns and a small masonic lodge. Facade improvements could breathe new life into this location with a small, local retail presence.

### F - ATTACHED HOUSING POCKETS

- Past plans and subject matter experts encourage the development of attached homes (townhomes, etc...) to add a variety of choices to the largely single-family neighborhood here.
- Locations near the Walkable Mixed Use Area, along Fall Creek, and along the Canal are suggested. Smaller areas near Flanner House could also be considered.

### G - AUTO-ORIENTED IMPROVEMENTS (LONGER-TERM)

- This area is primarily made up of auto-oriented uses. It is recommended that this area focus on pedestrian and landscape improvements, along with beautification. It is recommended that new users seeking development with parking and drive-throughs be encouraged to locate here, north of the proposed walkable central area.

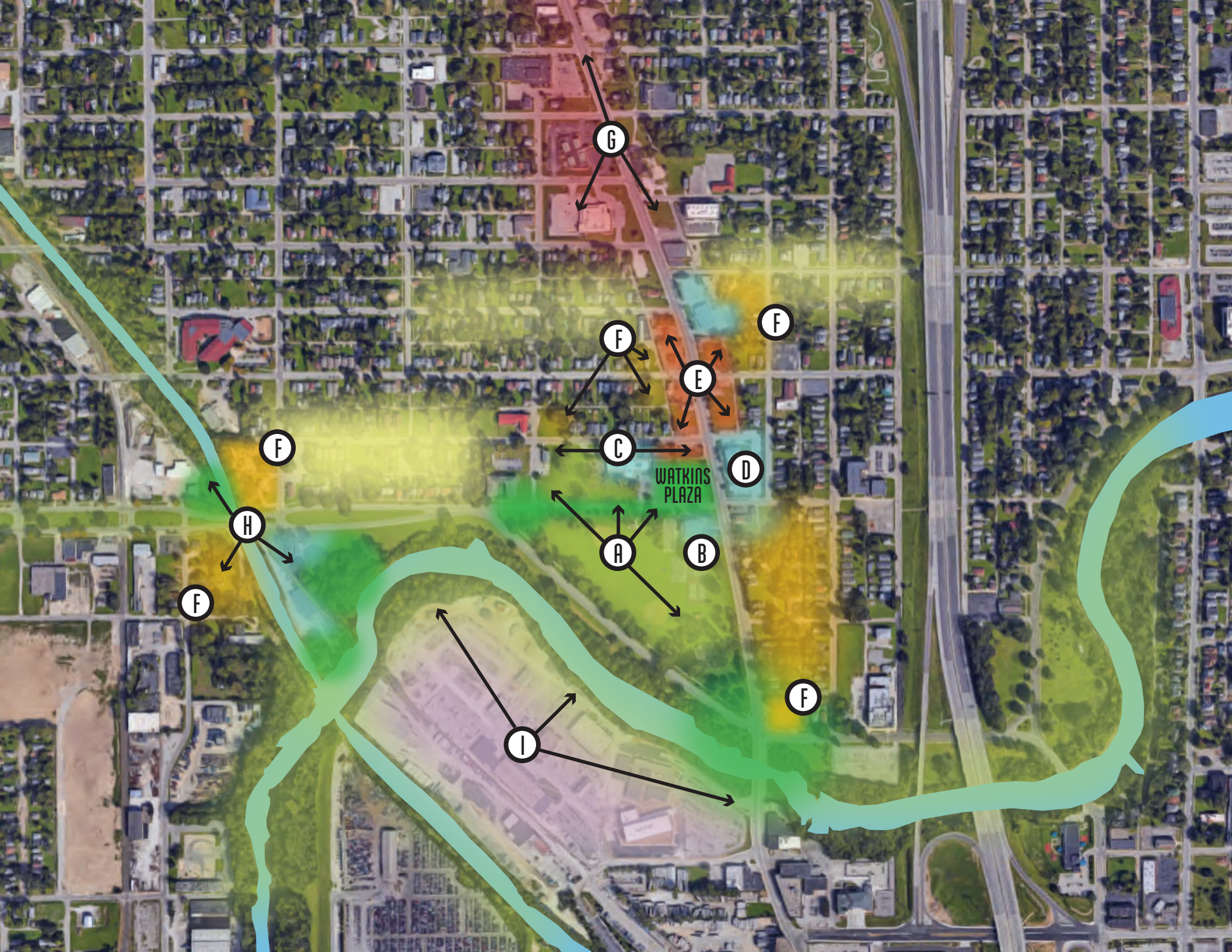
### H - CANAL AQUEDUCT GATEWAY (LONGER-TERM)

- This area around the aqueduct is primarily hidden. With the availability of the former fire-station, there is an opportunity to put the area to community use.
- It is recommended the intersection of the Canal, Burdsal Parkway, and Fall Creek be beautified over time, with townhomes facing the planned trails here.

### I - INDUSTRIAL WATERWAYS

- The industrial uses along the Canal and Fall Creek provide great job opportunities.
- It is recommended that over time, these areas include improved and better maintained buffers and water edges, with easy pedestrian connections, walks, and bike access.





G

F

E

F

C

D

WATKINS  
PLAZA

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# A VISION FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Based on a number of assets and opportunities that were identified as important during the planning process as well as the L.O.V.E. goals, a vision for future development projects was developed and is outlined here. The goal for these development efforts is that they are informed by both neighborhood desires and realistic property sites and partnerships, as well as being realistically achievable by the year 2020. The scope and list of projects is purposefully ambitious.

There is a physical development summary list and diagram provided at the beginning of this section of the document with a bird's-eye view rendering of the study area. This is followed by a series of renderings for a number of specific locations that include:

- Meridian Lodge Development
- Watkins Park and Flanner House Campus
- Watkins Park Event Lawn and Pavilion
- Edgemont and MLK Development
- 25th and MLK Development
- Fall Creek and Watkins Park Townhomes

In addition to the series of renderings for development sites, there are renderings and diagrams to help illustrate a vision for neighborhood housing and multi-modal infrastructure. These include:

- A Multi-faceted Neighborhood Housing Diagram
- A Connectivity Improvements Diagram

Lastly, there is a graphic to indicate goals for Future Development Looking Beyond 2020.

*"I still have a dream that one day all of God's children will have food and clothing and material well-being for their bodies, culture and education for their minds, and freedom for their spirits."*

*Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# L.O.V.E. GOALS

## WHAT ARE THE L.O.V.E. GOALS?

The list of L.O.V.E. goals was developed during the community engagement and planning process as a way to distill community desires into key actionable ideas to work towards over the next five years.

The goals are meant to be comprehensive. While much of the planning work is physical in nature, these goals include topics such as improving safety and community relations, empowering entrepreneurs, developing housing in an equitable way, and improving options for quality education for a variety of age groups and circumstances.

The L.O.V.E. goals and physical development vision should combine to encapsulate the bigger vision for the King Commons study area. The intent of the project is to achieve as much as possible towards each of these areas in time for the city's bicentennial in 2020.

**R** Denotes goals that improve King Commons' resiliency

## LIVABILITY GOALS

### *Become the hub for African American arts and culture*

- Develop a robust annual Juneteenth fair in the Great Place that is well attended and celebrated across the city.
- R** Create food-based spaces, including a shared-kitchen food market, that promotes local chefs and culture, and where neighbors can socialize.
- Create a space or spaces, for unique aspects of art and culture, such as spoken word poetry, creative dance, etc. at the former fire station, Watkins Park Family Center, or Flanner House.
- Build on the use of Adinkra symbols into physical spaces and programming.

### *Promote resilience through community agriculture, celebrating Flanner House's historic role in this area*

- R** Educate neighbors, of all ages and backgrounds, about the financial and health benefits of locally grown, organic produce through Flanner Farms and other programs.
- R** Develop Cleo's Cafe and Bodega as a community anchor to provide healthy food that is affordable to current neighbors and accepts EBT.
- R** Build an orchard in coordination with the bodega development.
- Update the park layout to better support food vendors (and others) at events.
- R** Create a winter farmers market space in Watkins Family Center, Flanner House, or in a space near the two facilities.

### *Update Watkins Park and other vital Public Spaces based on actual usage and opportunities*

- Coordinate planning between parks and public spaces in the larger QOL area and the Great Places focus area to ensure a larger collective impact.
- Improve Watkins Park family center with expanded spaces to support revenue-generating uses in the gym, a more attractive exterior and more welcoming entry areas, while coordinating programs and spaces with Flanner House.
- Reconsider design of park with a focus on already highly successful events, such as Jazz in the Park and Open Bite Night. Improvements should seek to appeal to all ages and people in the community.

### *Improve Relationships Across the Neighborhood*

- Improve relations between police and community by inviting out-of-uniform officers to events, such as "Coffee with a Cop."
- Continue building a sense of community between neighbors through public gatherings, such as Open Bite Night.
- Develop a community gathering space or village square near the cafe/bodega.

### *Develop connectivity, enhance sustainability, and improve the pedestrian experience of streets, alleys, and other public spaces that impact the area.*

- R** Work with DPW and Citizens Energy to incorporate resilient concepts into public right-of-way design by retrofitting streets with stormwater collection features, and drainage design that is easier to clean and maintain.
- Improve connections to and through the community, including connecting future trail planning to destinations in the Great Place area, and implementing safe routes to schools planning.
- Work with existing and new building owners and developers to make buildings along the corridor more public-facing and welcoming, including more glass storefronts facing the streets, multiple entries, more windows on all sides of buildings, and better curb appeal.
- R** Enhance the natural beauty, air quality, and water quality of the area through landscape projects, including tree plantings, clearing brush and debris from alleys and gutters, and removing invasive species from Fall Creek and the Canal.

## OPPORTUNITY GOALS

### *Connect residents with a spectrum of educational and career opportunities, from tech, to advanced and sustainable building trades.*

- Connect local students and others with educational opportunities for 21st-century jobs in tech. Connect students with mentor programs and internships with 16 Tech and IU Health Methodist.

### *Provide financial assistance to help nurture start-up businesses of all types, including food-based businesses, the tech industry, renewables, and skilled trades.*

- Connect startups, existing businesses, and business owners to technical assistance grants and existing micro-loan programs for businesses of all types, available through multiple sources.
- Work with BWI to create a start-up business incubator space on the MLK Corridor that encourages and nurtures local entrepreneurs.
- Further encourage the already growing local food businesses with affordable shared facilities to help local chefs incrementally develop and grow. As they grow, work to retain restaurants in storefronts along the MLK corridor.
- Connect local business owners and operators with business coaching, entrepreneurship mentoring, and financing assistance.
- Work with event partners to develop a 6-week vendor-training program for those with booths at local events.

### *Develop a mixed-use presence at 25th and MLK, to be a center of community and commercial prosperity.*

- Acquire the parcels needed for mixed-use development and get them construction-ready by working through brownfield remediation and environmental cleanup issues.
- Build two or more mixed-use multi-story buildings to the right-of-way with pedestrian-oriented ground floor space.
- Developments should include features based on community values, embracing green and renewable energy, and providing affordable ground floor space to nurture small, locally rooted businesses.
- R** Create a fully funded position for a person to educate and enroll business owners in facade grant programs to improve their storefronts, signage, and ADA access.

### *Create and grow relationships with nearby institutions and local businesses*

- Create relationships with large anchors institutions, such as IU Health, IUPUI, Ivy Tech, 16 Tech, IMA, Marian, Citizens Energy and local churches and seek to train and place residents into available jobs.
- Work with the Buy Indy program to create paths for local businesses to sell goods and services to nearby anchor institutions.
- Connect local business owners and operators with business coaching, entrepreneurship mentoring, and financing assistance from Ivy Tech, Marian, and IUPUI.

## VITALITY GOALS

*Create a variety of housing options and prices that appeal to the existing largely African-American community, and former residents who have left in recent decades.*

- Create outreach programs and market to three primary groups:
  - (1) Former residents of the neighborhood who may be interested in returning;
  - (2) Members and staff of area churches who do not currently live in the neighborhood;
  - (3) Existing residents who desire homeownership, but do not currently have the means to do so
- Create a standing coordination meeting the NWA QOL housing committee and vitality co-chairs for Great Places.
- Identify vacant land for new home construction or clusters of parcels for town homes.
- Convene an exploratory committee to develop a community land-trust with Flanner House and local community organizations to guard against potential rapid increases in property values for low-income neighbors

*Build on the history of Flanner Homes, Inc. and create affordable homeownership opportunities for current renters, focused on training for rehab and homesteading.*

- Identify vacant homes or those owned by Renew Indianapolis as candidates for rehabilitation and homesteading activities at affordable price points.
- Coordinate with partners, including the proposed Skilled Trades program, INHP and Insight, on a homestead program to assist locals who have (or wish to learn the needed skills) to acquire and rehab homes. They would receive loans to purchase materials that are forgivable after five years, if progress deadlines are met.
- Connect local renters to services that assist with purchasing homes in need of repair and borrowing money for repairs or the material to complete them themselves.
- Coordinate a group of local rehab specialists who are linked to the community to provide basic training and oversight to those willing to participate in a homesteading effort.
- Coordinate with the proposed skilled trades program to create a community tool-sharing facility, where members could borrow tools for a limited time, if they pass training requirements.

*Develop resilient and sustainable concepts for homeowners that are forward-looking and reduce energy costs.*

- R** Develop a net-zero demonstration house in a visible location and provide training to contractors engaged in home construction.
- R** Connect contractors and homebuyers to grant opportunities aimed at energy efficiency and sustainability.
- R** Work with the proposed skilled trades program to incorporate sustainable materials and practices into programs.

- R** Connect new homebuyers and renters to education opportunities around energy efficiency, home improvements, and gardening, through the proposed skilled trades program and Flanner House.

*Work with adjacent anchor institutions to promote employer incentivized housing*

- Coordinate with INHP who administers the “Live” portion of the Indy Chamber’s Live/Buy/Hire effort to attract workers from local institutions to live in the study area.
- Coordinate with nearby anchor institutions to implement their anchor housing programs that provide employee incentives for down payment and home repair assistance.
- Market housing opportunities to nearby churches to encourage parishioners, staff, and others involved in local churches to both live and worship in the study area.
- Market the benefits of living in the neighborhood to workers in nearby schools and local businesses.

*Increase access to existing programs and funding for home repairs and maintenance.*

- A local program officer will identify seniors who struggle to provide regular maintenance on their homes. Connect these seniors to volunteers in the community who can assist them to avoid code violations and improve curb appeal.
- A local program officer will connect homeowners with repair programs.
- Connect black homeowners to NAREB and Central Indiana Realtist Association (CIRA) opportunities, perhaps as a demonstration neighborhood.
- Host a meeting with area pastors or representatives to discuss and promote existing programs, including eligibility criteria and contact information, to their congregations and community members.

## EDUCATION GOALS

*Continue to develop relationships with local schools, as they are evolving in the area.*

- Identify mutual collaborations with area K-12 schools, including Holy Angels Catholic School, Ignite Achievement Academy at Elder Diggs 42, George Washington Carver Montessori 87, and Riverside High School to ensure local students have access to a variety of educational opportunities.
- Collaborate with the Center for Leadership Development to engage students who live in the study area in leadership activities and grow the use of CLD’s free tutoring services.
- Help local children enter the 21st Century Scholar program by partnering with area middle schools.

*Provide education opportunities and environments for children beyond the core curriculum of schools.*

- Incorporate educational and cultural opportunities to help people learn about the history of the community - about the history of Flanner House and the history of the African American community in Indianapolis.
- Create spaces that are engaging to kids and their families, such as the farm.
- Link children and young adults to mentors that look like them to encourage them in fields like computer coding, etc.
- Provide opportunities to engage youth and young adults in hobbies that inspire career goals and workforce development.

*Provide support social services for K-12 students that address obstacles that impede learning*

- Develop and support community ambassadors to engage students who are currently homeless.
- Provide safe spaces and an escape from toxic environments for students who are in danger from violent situations.
- Assist young adults who fear compulsory education, to stay in school, by providing more engaging forms of learning such as arts, hobbies, and hands-on learning activities.
- Provide financial assistance for unpaid fees that can block students from finishing programs.

*Provide education opportunities for adults and young adults in partnership with the Center for Working Families to increase job opportunities and readiness*

- Promote vocational training in high school, and establish partnerships with local trade organizations or unions, with the incentive of employment at the finish of the program.
- Collaborate with the proposed skilled trades program to engage local community members in education and training opportunities.
- Develop relationships with Dropout Recovery and Excel Center to appeal to young adults who have checked out of education system.
- Provide adult education for formerly incarcerated citizens to help them back into the workforce.

*Connect residents with local post-secondary education institutions*

- Work with IUPUI, Marian University, and Ivy Tech on developing deeper engagement and service, collaborating with Flanner House on early childhood education, job readiness, and seniors programs.
- Find mutual collaborations with Marian University’s community service teams for children, students, and seniors.
- Ask local universities to research current gaps in neighborhood education programs, utilizing web-based information sharing on how best to partner with the community.
- Institutionalize collaborations so they last beyond individual relationships.



# Physical Development Summary

## MIXED-USE CENTER CONCEPTS

- Meridian Lodge Mixed-Use Development
  - This site includes the existing Meridian Lodge, which has been located in the community for over thirty years.
  - The site should include a 3- to 4-story mixed-use building with Meridian Lodge occupying the groundfloor and apartments above, with parking behind that is screened from view.
- Mixed-Use Development at Edgemont and MLK
  - This site is adjacent to Cleo's Bodega and Cafe, which is in progress.
  - The site should include a 3-story mixed-use building with commercial space and apartments, with parking behind that is screened from view.
- Mixed-Use Development at 25th and MLK
  - This site is the vacant former Church's Chicken property.
  - The site should include a 3-story mixed-use building with commercial space and apartments, with parking behind that is screened from view.
- Cleo's Bodega and Cafe
  - Cleo's Bodega and Cafe will provide fresh produce to the community and include a cafe with on-site coffee roasting.
  - The building should include a large amount of storefront glass to create a welcoming atmosphere facing MLK, Watkins Park, and Edgemont Avenue.
- Center for Leadership Development (CLD)
  - CLD has one of the newer buildings within the corridor and is a highly important community anchor, which may expand over time.
  - The planning team should coordinate with CLD, to the extent possible, to encourage improvements that front onto and provide street-level interaction with the MLK Corridor.
- Future Phases for Enhanced Sense of Place
  - A hypothetical 2nd Phase is shown at the Edgemont and MLK site for additional mixed-use development, however, the current property is in use by a valued community member.
  - A hypothetical 2nd Phase is shown at the 25th and MLK site for additional mixed-use development, however, the current property is in use by a valued community member. There may be opportunity to coordinate a mutually beneficial improvement to the site over time.
  - Bar-B-Q Heaven is a great community asset. There may be opportunity to coordinate a mutually beneficial improvement to the site over time. One hypothetical development is shown, as an example.
  - The American Legion is well located within the corridor and maintains their property well. There may be opportunity to coordinate a mixed-use development over time, similar to plans for Meridian Lodge. One hypothetical development is shown.

## NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING CONCEPTS

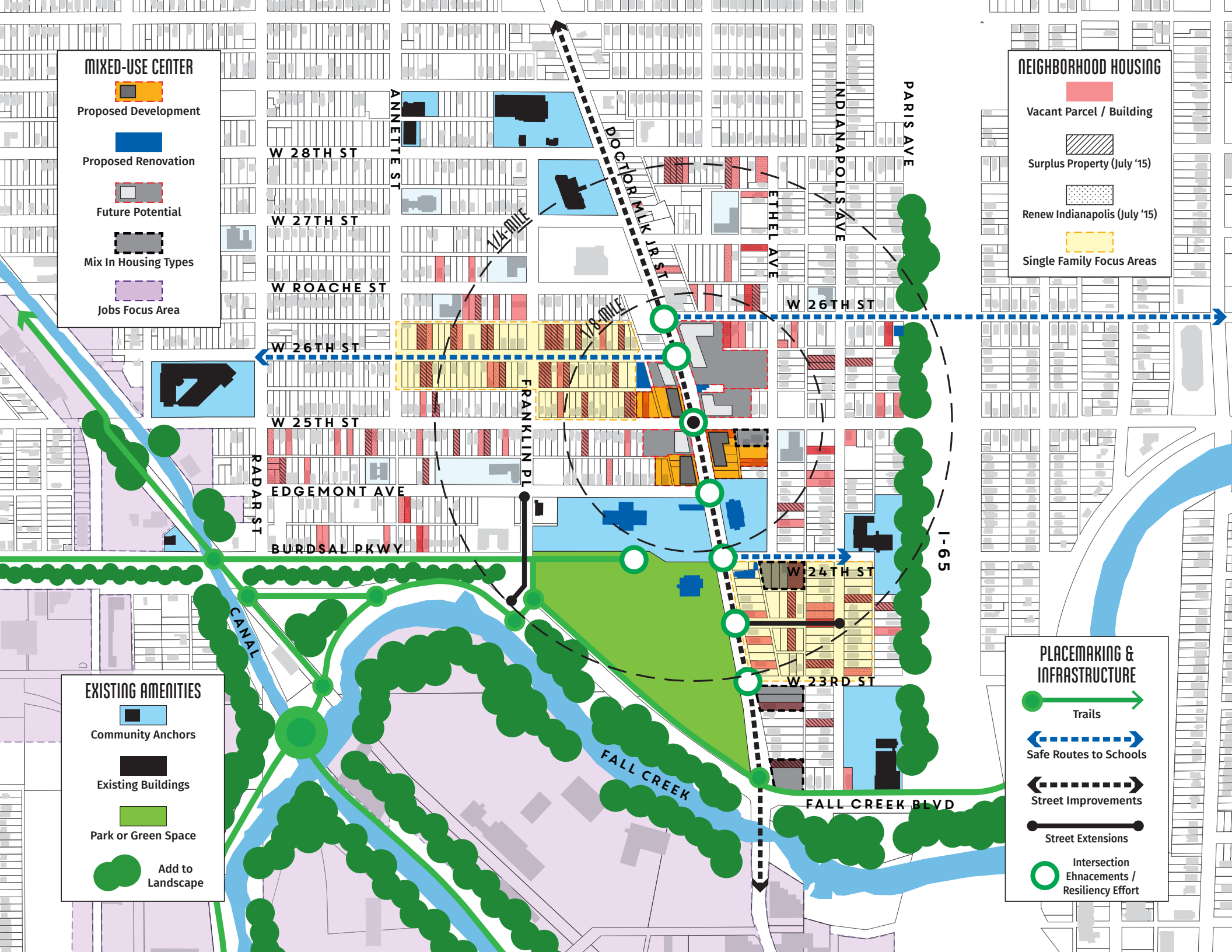
- Town homes at Fall Creek and Near MLK
  - Most housing in this area is single-family, but market studies have suggested that there is demand for attached housing (town homes, rowhomes, apartments, etc...). The Fall Creek area as well as other sites near the MLK Corridor are good candidates with several locations where multiple adjacent properties could be combined for town homes.
- Focus Areas for Long-Term Affordable Single Family Investment
  - West 26th Street Area - The two-block span from Annette Street to MLK has a concentration of parcels and houses available through Renew Indianapolis or the Surplus process - or that register as vacant in various GIS databases. This area is book-ended to the west and east by Elder Diggs "Ignite Academy" School and the "Mixed-Use Center".
  - East of Watkins Park Area - South of 24th Street, there is a concentration of vacant or available properties that face Watkins Park and have George Washington Carver Montessori School and Christ Temple Apostolic Faith Assembly as anchors.
  - These locations were selected for the recruitment of educators, and parishioners and staff of local churches. They also bookend the north and south end of the "Mixed-Use Center" and touch both the west and east side of the MLK Corridor.

## PLACEMAKING AND INFRASTRUCTURE CONCEPTS

- A "Campus" Environment for Flanner House and Watkins Park
  - Flanner House and Watkins Park are major community assets. This plan shows improvements to the grounds of both to create a campus-like environment, purposefully designed for large events that already occur - Jazz in the Park and Open Bite Night.
- Thriving Green Corridors - The Canal, Fall Creek, and Burdsal Parkway
  - This area is projected to be a location where three important trails cross - a planned extension of the Fall Creek Trail, a trail along the Canal corridor to downtown, and a trail along Burdsal Parkway to Riverside Park. This plan shows trail heads at Watkins Park, Flanner House, and the former Fire Station and Aqueduct on the Canal. All three corridors should thrive with native trees, views of nature, and removal of invasive brush.
- Resiliency, Stormwater, and Energy
  - This plan encourages resiliency concepts in general, from stormwater to food access to energy conservation. Specifically, the intersections along the MLK Corridor include pedestrian enhancements, water quality features, and more tree canopy.
- Welcoming and Pedestrian-Friendly Improvements
  - This plan indicates a more walkable MLK Corridor, connections at Franklin Place and Myrtis Street, and several safe routes to schools locations. It also encourages enhanced facades for existing buildings, renovations, additions, and new buildings that are more welcoming, with storefront glass, front doors, entry features and outdoor seating.

## EXISTING AMENITIES

- Schools and Churches
  - There are many churches and schools in the focus area itself and nearby. This plan imagines infrastructure investments and housing improvements in and around these amenities.



### MIXED-USE CENTER

- Proposed Development
- Proposed Renovation
- Future Potential
- Mix In Housing Types
- Jobs Focus Area

### NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING

- Vacant Parcel / Building
- Surplus Property (July '15)
- Renew Indianapolis (July '15)
- Single Family Focus Areas

### EXISTING AMENITIES

- Community Anchors
- Existing Buildings
- Park or Green Space
- Add to Landscape

### PLACEMAKING & INFRASTRUCTURE

- Trails
- Safe Routes to Schools
- Street Improvements
- Street Extensions
- Intersection Enhancements / Resiliency Effort





CANAL  
AQUEDUCT

1

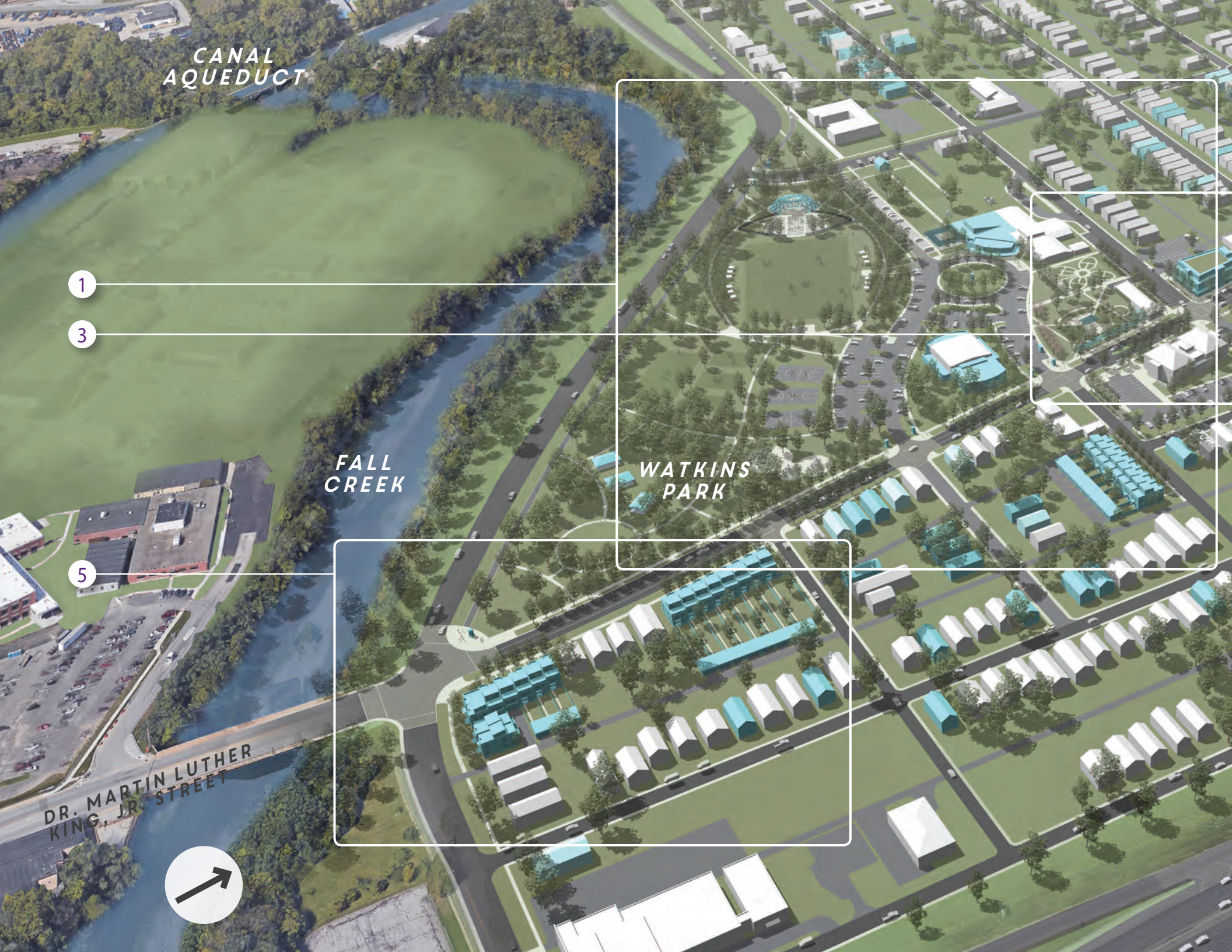
3

5

FALL  
CREEK

WATKINS  
PARK

DR. MARTIN LUTHER  
KING, JR. STREET







# 2020 Aspirational Mixed-Use Center Projects

**1 - Watkins Park and Flanner House Campus**  
The Watkins Park and the Flanner House areas are redesigned to better accommodate major events such as Jazz in the Park and Open Bite Night. The two properties will be better integrated to create the feeling of a purposefully designed campus.

**2 - Meridian Lodge Development**  
Meridian Lodge will be the anchor of a new mixed-use development that will allow them to grow in their current location while also providing much needed residential units. The building itself will front along the MLK Corridor and provide a welcoming storefront to enhance the pedestrian experience.

**3 - Edgemont and MLK Mixed-Use Development**  
A 3-story mixed-use development would front the MLK Corridor with commercial space on the ground floor and residential units on floors 2 and 3. The commercial space, being caddy-corner from the proposed Cleo's Bakery and Cafe, would be a good candidate for food- or health-related retail or community space.

**4 - 25th and MLK Mixed-Use Development**  
A 3-story mixed-use development would front the MLK Corridor with commercial space on the ground floor and residential units on floors 2 and 3. The commercial space is adjacent to both Bar-B-Q Heaven, a long-time neighborhood restaurant, and larger footprint businesses to the north. Potential users could include traditional food and drink retail, or community amenities such as business incubator space, tailored to community skills, needs, and desires.

**5 - Fall Creek and Watkins Park Town homes**  
Market studies have suggested that the area is over-saturated with single-family housing, while there is demand for apartments and town homes. There is also a need for increased residential density to better support community retail and commercial activity. Locations are shown near the MLK Corridor, along Fall Creek, and in areas where property can be assembled while impacting the least number of existing properties.



# Meridian Lodge Development



## PROJECT NOTES

Meridian Lodge is an institution along the corridor and has been in their current location for over thirty years. They are currently in need of additional space that is more modern and open. Their existing building and the adjacent building are not suitable for their current needs. This plan indicates a new structure on the southeast corner of 25th and MLK.

Meridian Lodge will be the anchor of a new mixed-use development that will allow them to grow in their current location while also providing much needed residential units. The building itself will front along the MLK Corridor and provide a welcoming storefront to enhance the pedestrian experience.

There is an additional opportunity to incorporate shared parking and even additional town homes to the rear. The front (west) and north facades will benefit the corridor most with extensive use of storefront glass and a welcoming entry with storefront signage near the corner.

In conjunction with the development, additional improvements to the property's rights-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management.

### TOWN HOMES IN REAR

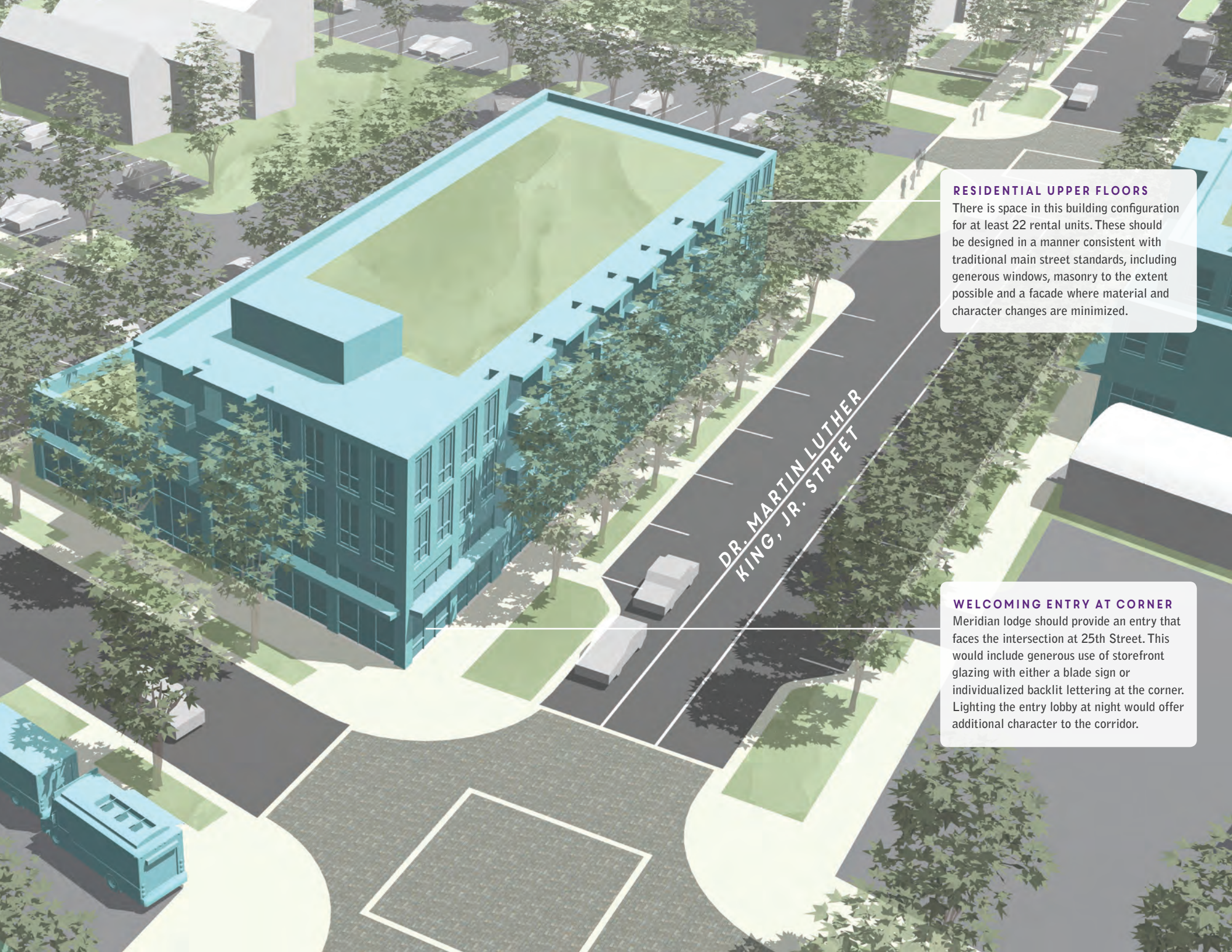
There is space on this parcel for approximately five town homes with parking in the rear. These should include walks from the street to the building and individual stoops or small porches. Rooftop decks could supplement the limited rear yard space if desired.

### PARKING AREA

Parking to the rear of the building along the current alley alignment would provide the majority of needed parking. In addition, there is an east-west oriented parcel which could provide additional parking, as well as parallel parking along the MLK Corridor.







**RESIDENTIAL UPPER FLOORS**  
There is space in this building configuration for at least 22 rental units. These should be designed in a manner consistent with traditional main street standards, including generous windows, masonry to the extent possible and a facade where material and character changes are minimized.

**WELCOMING ENTRY AT CORNER**  
Meridian lodge should provide an entry that faces the intersection at 25th Street. This would include generous use of storefront glazing with either a blade sign or individualized backlit lettering at the corner. Lighting the entry lobby at night would offer additional character to the corridor.



# Watkins Park and Flanner House “Campus”



## PROJECT NOTES

Watkins Park is an amazing community asset located along Fall Creek and Martin Luther King, Jr. Street. The park is characterized by large trees, open lawn spaces, and the Watkins Family Center, which has a large basketball-oriented gymnasium.

Flanner House is the core social-service provider of the community and has recently undertaken exciting new programs on its grounds with a large farm space, a flower garden (in the shape of an Adinkra symbol), an expanded child services center, plans for a new bodega and cafe, as well as an orchard. Physically, they hope to continue in the use of Adinkra symbols and other artistic elements that point to African and African-American art and culture.

This plan seeks to find a way to combine the needs of Watkins Park and the planned growth of the grounds of Flanner House into a cohesively-planned “campus” that is able to better accommodate the thriving events that take place, as well as support the desire to host the main regional Juneteenth celebration. This includes a large gathering lawn and shelter, integrated parking areas, expansions to the Family Center and Flanner House buildings, and entry features that help to make the “campus” more visible and welcoming.

### EVENT PAVILION

This pavilion would be an iconic, sculptural feature with permanent amphitheater seating and a large expanded lawn for additional seating for events. This lawn area is also large enough to support outdoor football practices.

### EXPANDED BASKETBALL

The Family Center would expand to allow it to host revenue-generating basketball tournaments and outdoor courts are provided for everyday community use.

### MLK CORRIDOR ENTRY FEATURES

The new entry drives would be at existing intersections and would include new entry monument features that make it easier to find the park, Flanner House, and key entrances to facilities.



DR. MARTIN LUTHER  
KING, JR. STREET



**FLANNER  
FARMS**

**FLANNER  
HOUSE**

**WATKINS  
FAMILY  
CENTER**

**24TH STREET**

**FLANNER HOUSE VISIBILITY**

Flanner House is expanding its childhood education programs and spaces, yet with its location, it can be hard to see the entry and facility from the MLK Corridor. This plan indicates a more visible entry the faces a new entry drive and drop-off area that is more integrated into Watkins Park.

**CLEO'S BODEGA AND CAFE**

This bodega and cafe is in progress; the plan imagines the site around it being integrated with other features, including the planned orchard and new entry area.

**WATKINS FAMILY CENTER**

The family center could benefit from additional space for offices, restrooms, lockers, and other facilities to allow for revenue-generating events. Furthermore, an addition would allow for more welcoming facades with storefront glass, windows, and entry areas to welcome visitors.





### FRANKLIN PLACE GATEWAY

Franklin Place would extend to Fall Creek Boulevard and be improved and the 24th Street access point to Burdsal Parkway would be removed in favor of a western gateway and trail head for Watkins Park with entry features and improved sidewalks.

### EVENT PAVILION

This pavilion would be an iconic, sculptural feature with permanent amphitheater seating and a large expanded lawn for additional seating for events. The sculptural form would act as both a venue and large-scale public art.

FALL CREEK BOULEVARD

### FALL CREEK TRAIL

Fall Creek Trail is shown extended west of the MLK Corridor on the north side of the boulevard for direct access to Watkins Park and Flanner House. Between the boulevard and curb, there could be a shoulder to handle event parking surges.

### VENDOR SPACE FOR EVENTS

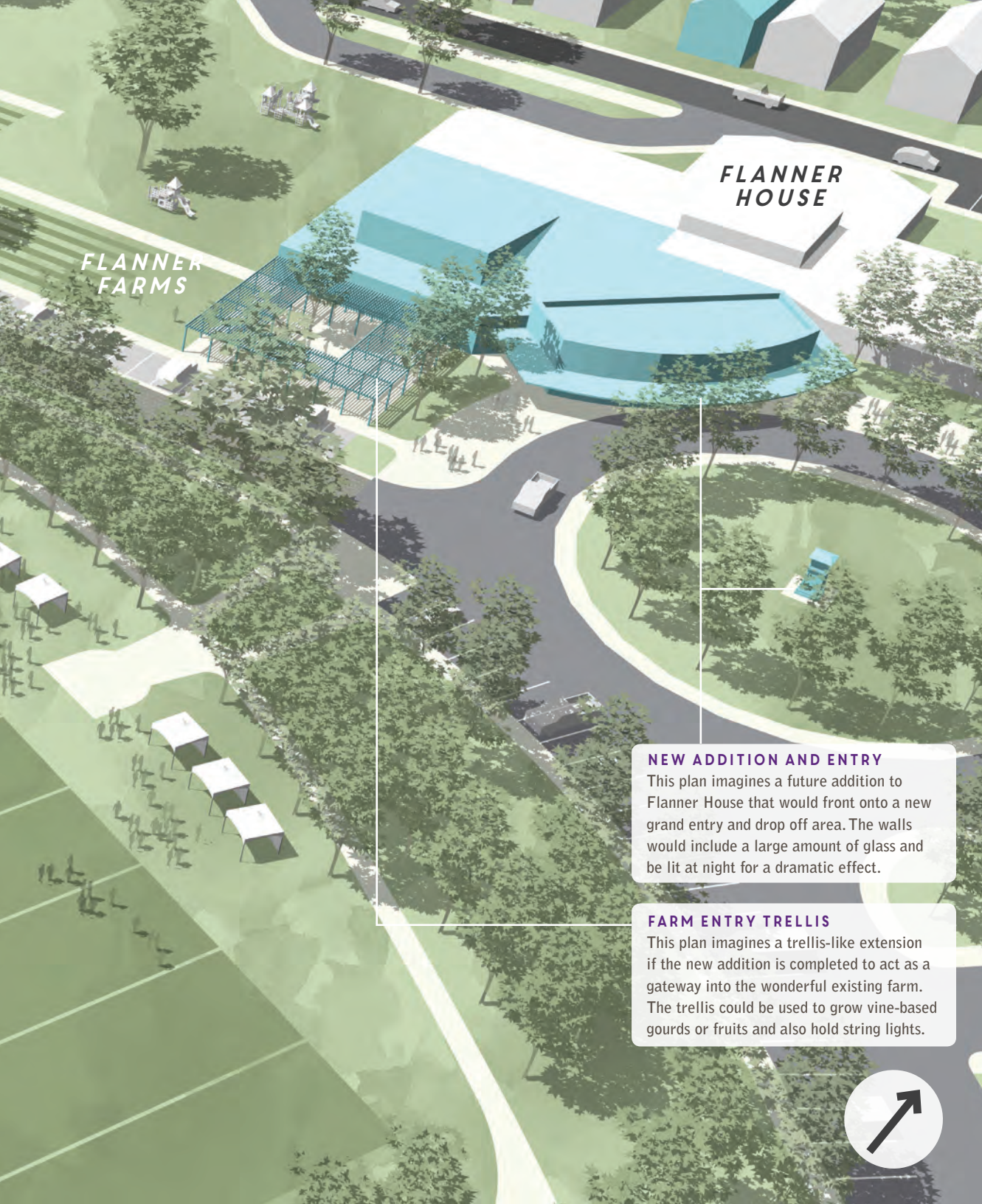
The layout is "petal" shaped like one of the petals of the Adinkra Garden. The shape allows for space outside the play field for a number of vendors to set up tents and tables.

### MULTI-USE LAWN

The lawn here would remain open and flexible, but would be well drained to allow for recreational use or overflow space for large events, concerts, and other activities.



# Watkins Park Event Lawn and Pavilion



## PROJECT NOTES

The Watkins Park Event Lawn and Pavilion concept is laid out in a way that the space is able to better accommodate the thriving events that take place here. These include Open Bight Night and Jazz in the Park, both of which draw up to three-thousand attendees regularly throughout the summer.

This layout provides a space equivalent to the amphitheater at Garfield Park for seating for events on the stage, with additional overflow space. The space provides extra room for large events, but also supports recreational use during regular weekday hours. A new path surrounding and defining the area is planted with rows of trees to provide shade from the summer heat.

One of the community's goals is to become the main hub of the annual Juneteenth Celebration, with this outdoor facility as a major asset. There is generous space for vendors to utilize tents and tables as well.

The iconic visual element would be a sculpturally designed and crafted pavilion structure that would be the backdrop for photos, selfies, Instagram posts, etc.

### NEW ADDITION AND ENTRY

This plan imagines a future addition to Flanner House that would front onto a new grand entry and drop off area. The walls would include a large amount of glass and be lit at night for a dramatic effect.

### FARM ENTRY TRELLIS

This plan imagines a trellis-like extension if the new addition is completed to act as a gateway into the wonderful existing farm. The trellis could be used to grow vine-based gourds or fruits and also hold string lights.



# Edgemont and MLK Development



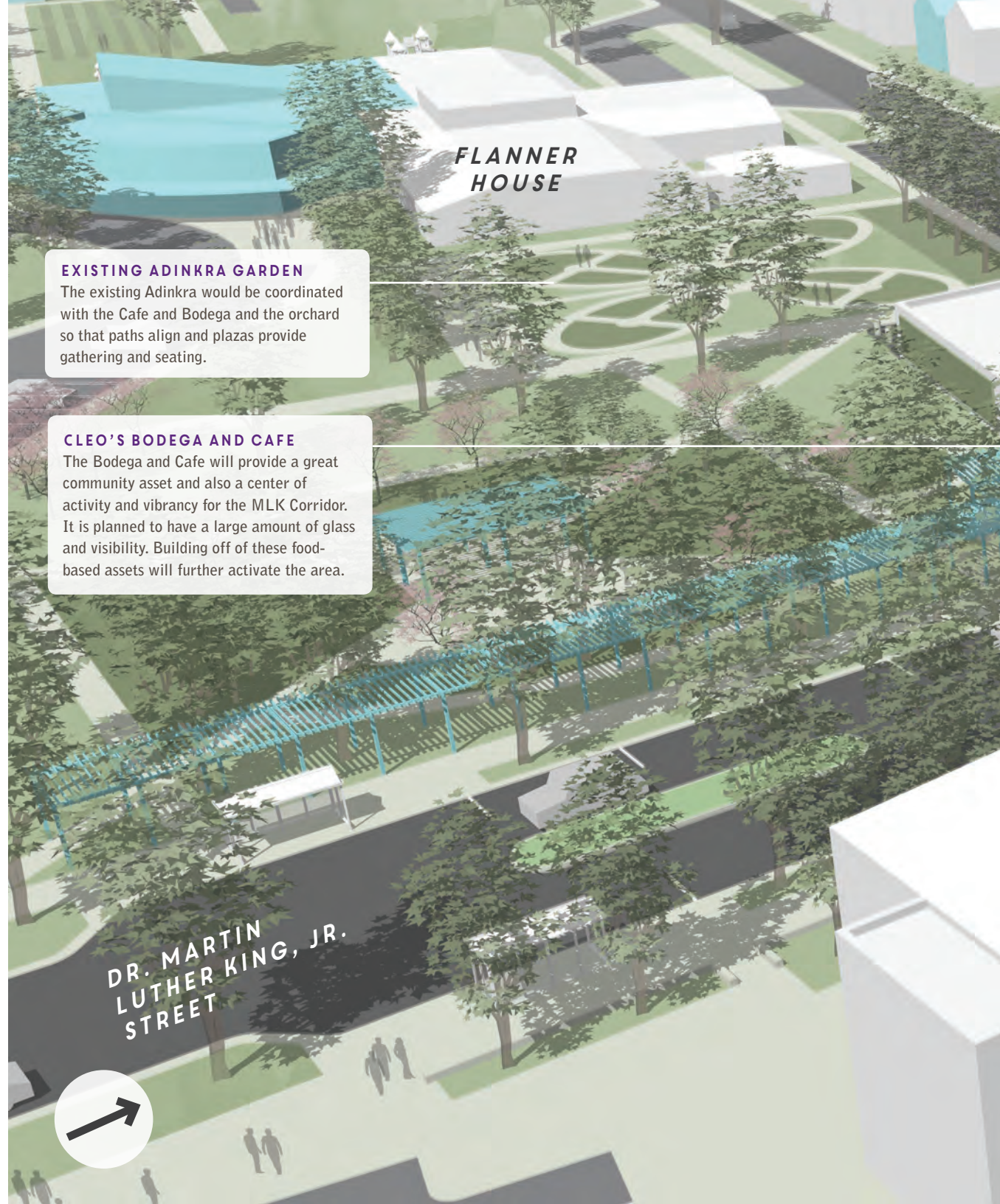
## PROJECT NOTES

The northwest corner of the Corridor at Edgemont Avenue is currently a parking lot that offers a great opportunity to build on the momentum to the south from the recent Adinkra garden, and the planned Cleo's Bodega and Cafe and orchard plaza. The bodega and cafe will build on the theme of local farming and food-based entrepreneurship seen at the very successful Open Bite Night event.

Given this context, the new building indicated on the north side of Edgemont could offer ground-floor space for either traditional food and drink retail - or - a more community-oriented use such as a shared kitchen food vendor hall. Multiple food startups that have previously found success at events could have a more routine presence, without the financial hurdle of leasing commercial property and building or operating their own commercial kitchen.

The front (east) and south facades will benefit the corridor most with extensive use of storefront glass and a welcoming entry with storefront signage near the corner while also providing much needed residential units on the upper two floors.

In conjunction with the development, additional improvements to the property's rights-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management.



**FLANNER HOUSE**

### EXISTING ADINKRA GARDEN

The existing Adinkra would be coordinated with the Cafe and Bodega and the orchard so that paths align and plazas provide gathering and seating.

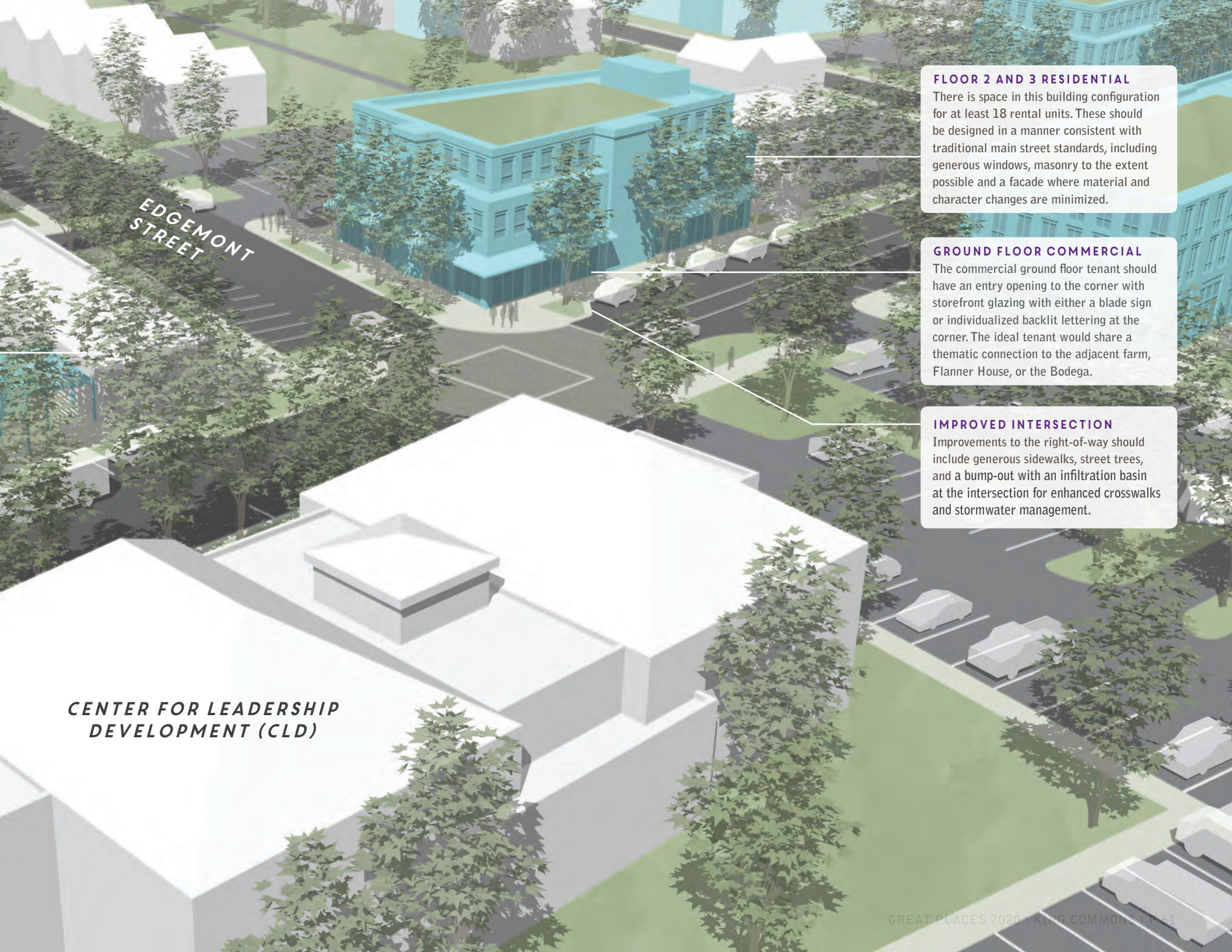
### CLEO'S BODEGA AND CAFE

The Bodega and Cafe will provide a great community asset and also a center of activity and vibrancy for the MLK Corridor. It is planned to have a large amount of glass and visibility. Building off of these food-based assets will further activate the area.

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EDGEMONT  
STREET

**CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT (CLD)**

**FLOOR 2 AND 3 RESIDENTIAL**  
There is space in this building configuration for at least 18 rental units. These should be designed in a manner consistent with traditional main street standards, including generous windows, masonry to the extent possible and a facade where material and character changes are minimized.

**GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL**  
The commercial ground floor tenant should have an entry opening to the corner with storefront glazing with either a blade sign or individualized backlit lettering at the corner. The ideal tenant would share a thematic connection to the adjacent farm, Flanner House, or the Bodega.

**IMPROVED INTERSECTION**  
Improvements to the right-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management.



# 25th and MLK Development



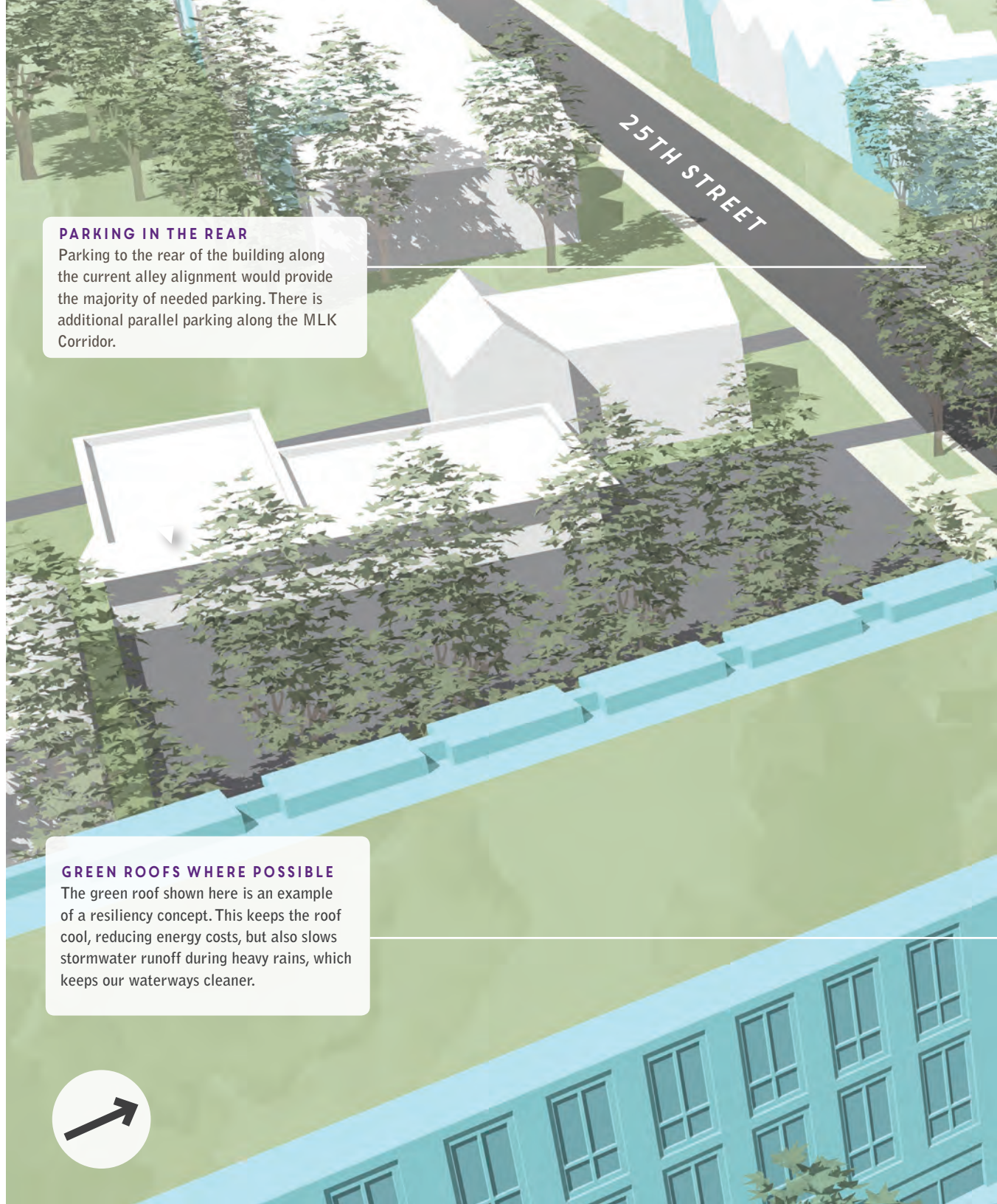
## PROJECT NOTES

The northwest corner of the Corridor at 25th is currently the home of a vacant Church's Chicken stand alone retail building. It is caddy corner from the planned Meridian Lodge development and across the street from Bar-B-Q Heaven.

Given this context, the new building indicated on the north side of 25th could offer ground-floor space for a community-oriented use such as a business incubator to help nurture startups and entrepreneurs from the community. These concepts are growing across Indianapolis and the country as they offer an affordable way to grow a business.

The front (east) and south facades will benefit the corridor most with extensive use of storefront glass and a welcoming entry with storefront signage near the corner while also providing much needed residential units on the upper two floors.

In conjunction with the development, additional improvements to the property's rights-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management.



### PARKING IN THE REAR

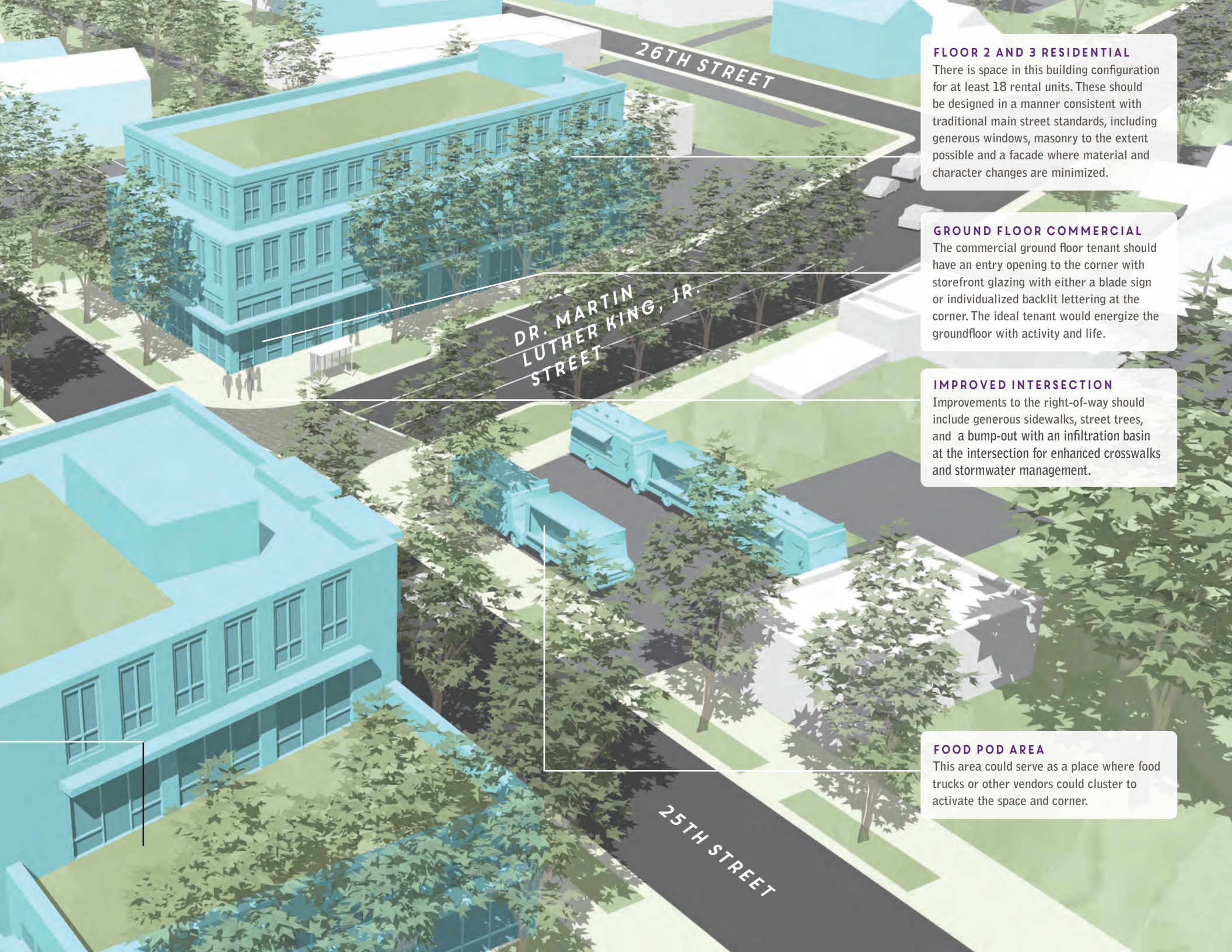
Parking to the rear of the building along the current alley alignment would provide the majority of needed parking. There is additional parallel parking along the MLK Corridor.

### GREEN ROOFS WHERE POSSIBLE

The green roof shown here is an example of a resiliency concept. This keeps the roof cool, reducing energy costs, but also slows stormwater runoff during heavy rains, which keeps our waterways cleaner.







26TH STREET

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. STREET

25TH STREET

**FLOOR 2 AND 3 RESIDENTIAL**  
There is space in this building configuration for at least 18 rental units. These should be designed in a manner consistent with traditional main street standards, including generous windows, masonry to the extent possible and a facade where material and character changes are minimized.

**GROUND FLOOR COMMERCIAL**  
The commercial ground floor tenant should have an entry opening to the corner with storefront glazing with either a blade sign or individualized backlit lettering at the corner. The ideal tenant would energize the groundfloor with activity and life.

**IMPROVED INTERSECTION**  
Improvements to the right-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management.

**FOOD POD AREA**  
This area could serve as a place where food trucks or other vendors could cluster to activate the space and corner.



# Fall Creek and Watkins Park Town homes



## PROJECT NOTES

Market studies have suggested that the area is over-saturated with single-family housing, while there is demand for apartments and town homes. There is also a need for increased residential density to better support community retail and commercial activity. Locations are shown near the MLK Corridor, along Fall Creek, and in areas where property can be assembled while impacting the least number of existing properties.

The northeast corner of Fall Creek Boulevard and the MLK Corridor is currently a vacant parcel and could be developed in a manner such that the buildings act as a gateway into the King Commons area.

The units would be attractive as they would front onto the Fall Creek corridor and future trail, along with having views of Watkins Park and easy access to downtown.



### ENTRY FEATURES

Entry monuments provide a sense of welcome to the area and can also provide a place for neighborhood and place names.

### ENHANCED INTERSECTION

Improvements to the right-of-way should include generous sidewalks, street trees, and a bump-out with an infiltration basin at the intersection for enhanced crosswalks and stormwater management. An enlarged hardscape area furthers a sense of entry into Watkins Park.





**WATKINS PARK**

**ADDITIONAL UNITS**

In addition to the main corner parcel, there are other locations along the corridor where multiple contiguous parcels can be assembled and developed into town homes.

**REAR YARD AREAS**

Due to this being a corner site, a combination of attached and detached garages is shown. The detached garages allow for private yard spaces.

**UNITS BUILT TO FACE MLK CORRIDOR AND FALL CREEK**

Units are designed with the front door facing onto the MLK Corridor and Watkins Park to the west, and Fall Creek Boulevard to the south. These should include individual entry walks and stoops and porches at front doors. The design shown includes a small upper story with a walkout deck for socializing and entertaining.



# Multi-faceted Neighborhood Housing

## PROJECT NOTES

Apartments are primarily indicated in the vision section of the document as being integrated into the upper floors of mixed-use development.

In general, the housing effort here is focused on attracting the following audiences:

- People and families who used to live in the neighborhood, but have moved away for any number of reasons.
- People who currently live or work in the neighborhood, but have previously not had the resources to purchase a home.
- People who worship in this area at one of the many churches, but that live in another part of the City.

Throughout the process, input has suggested that the community is concerned about affordability, gentrification, and displacement. Efforts here should seek to address these concerns.

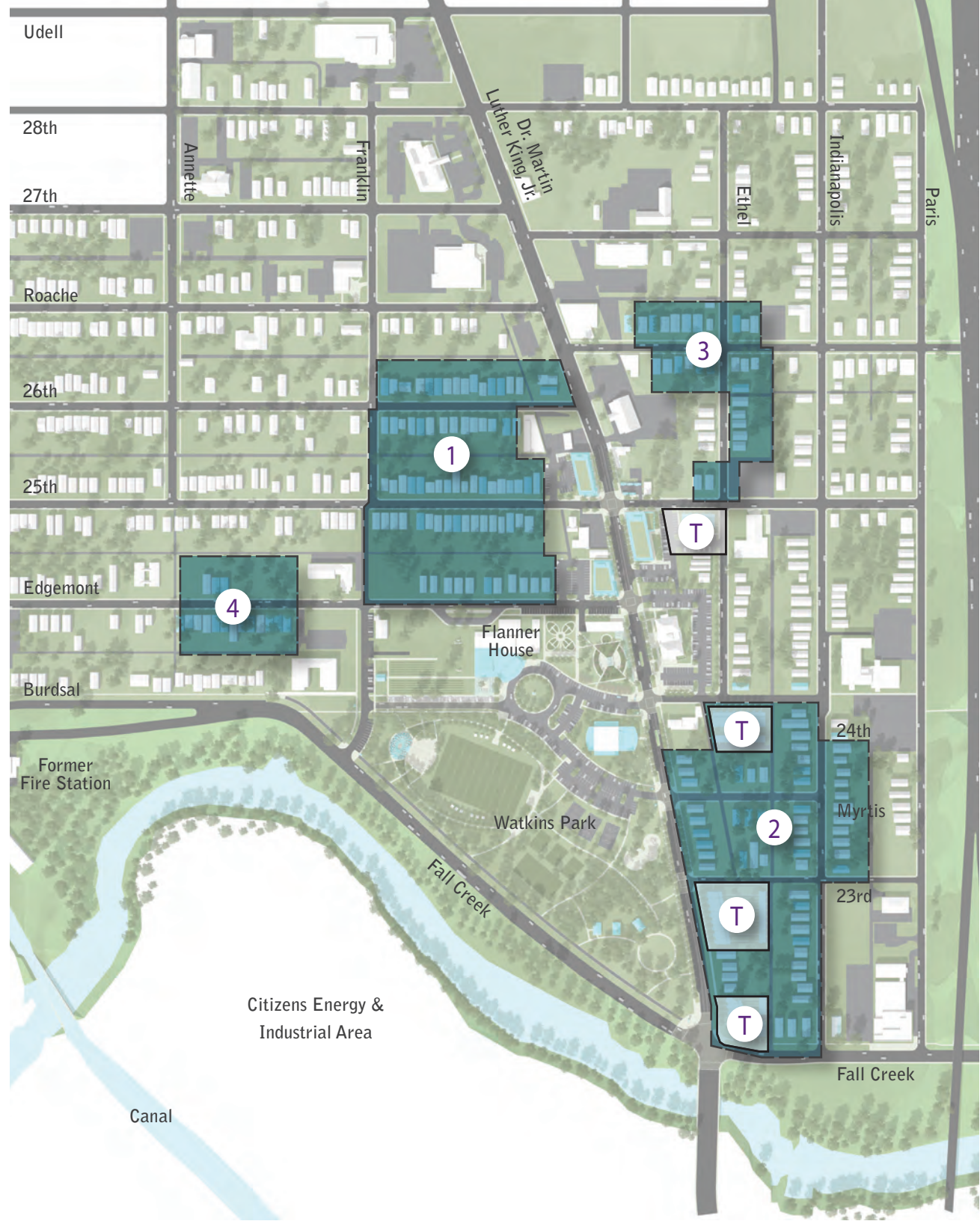
1 - Housing in this area would be focused on affordable, single-family rehab and home construction.

2 - Housing in this area would be focused on more dense and attached housing than is offered elsewhere in the neighborhood. In addition, there are a large amount of opportunities for affordable, single-family rehab and home construction, as is found in the rest of the study area.

3 - Housing in this area would be focused on affordable, single-family rehab and home construction.

4 - Housing in this area would be focused on affordable, single-family rehab and home construction.

T - These areas indicate town homes or other types of multi-family development. These are opportunities to increase density and add more diversity to the type of housing available here.





# Connectivity Improvements

## PROJECT NOTES

1 - The focus of this plan is on the area in and around the intersection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street and 25th Street. The corridor itself is a much longer entity and is important not only as infrastructure, but also as a symbol. This plan indicates making the corridor more pedestrian-friendly, particularly at intersections with bump-outs in the parking lanes and other treatments to help calm traffic.

2 - The intersections indicated here are from Fall Creek Boulevard at the southern end to 26th Street at the northern end. These would have bump-outs into the parking lane to make crosswalks shorter and safer for all age groups and abilities. The intersections themselves would be raised along with the crosswalks to minimize the need for ADA ramps. As a resiliency measure to reduce stormwater and flood impacts, these bumpouts would include infiltration basins, carefully designed to avoid introducing traffic hazards.

3 - This plan indicates improving Franklin Place with full sidewalks and extending it to Fall Creek Boulevard at a safer, perpendicular crossing.

4 - The entry drive from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street at 24th Street and Myrtis Street is a new configuration to allow a stronger sense of entry, more parking, and a campus-like character.

5 - This plan indicates improving Myrtis Street with full sidewalks and extending it to Indianapolis Avenue.

6 - This plan aligns with previous planning to support Safe Routes to Schools efforts, but only indicates key routes - more information is available on the complete plan.

7 - This plan incorporates long-term planning concepts from other trail plans, including the Fall Creek Trail extension, a trail along Burdsal from Riverside to Watkins, and a trail along the Canal.





CANAL  
AQUEDUCT

5

FALL  
CREEK

WATKINS  
PARK

DR. MARTIN LUTHER  
KING, JR. STREET







# Future Development Looking Beyond 2020

This plan is focused on near-term feasible development within the 2020 time frame, yet this place has considerable potential over the long-term. Many of the properties which will be difficult to acquire and modify in the near term, will have greater market demand in the future for larger and denser mixed-use development, and current property owners may seek to partner on opportunities then.

**1 - Phase Two of 25th and MLK Mixed-Use**  
The property needed to build the portion indicated in Phase Two is not available, but over time, if situations change, it represents an opportunity to expand mixed-use density on the corridor and ground-floor commercial space.

**2 - The American Legion Property**  
The American Legion owns a significant amount of land that is not currently built on, but that they maintain well. Over time, there may be an opportunity to partner with them in the same way Meridian Lodge is considering, as a main ground-floor tenant of a mixed-use structure.

**3 - Bar-B-Q Heaven Development**  
The existing Bar-B-Q Heaven restaurant is a great community asset and they also own land adjacent to the building. Over time, there may be opportunity to co-develop the property in a mutually beneficial way that adds amenities to the restaurant.

**4 - Phase Two of Edgemont and MLK Mixed-Use**  
The property needed to build the portion indicated in Phase Two is not available, but over time, if situations change, it represents an opportunity to expand mixed-use density on the corridor and ground-floor commercial space. It would also create a more finished corner at 25th Street.

**5 - Center for Leadership Development**  
Over time, this plan advocates for coordinating with Center for Leadership Development to ensure that additions would front onto MLK with glass and be lit at night.





## INVENTORY AND PROCESS

This section of the plan provides an introduction to the Great Places 2020 effort and this project’s process. A background of the place is provided including the project location within the context of the multiple neighborhoods and the City of Indianapolis. Maps are provided to identify where existing businesses and community assets are located. There is an overview of the existing urban form of the area that includes the size and type of buildings and land uses. A photographic overview is provided to highlight some of the unique elements of the study area that are more difficult to convey in mapping efforts. An overview of previous planning efforts is also provided, as they helped inform this process.



## ANALYSIS AND OUTREACH

This section of the plan provides analysis of different aspects of the study area and outreach to neighbors and other members of the community. Local demographics about the area are provided and compared to the same statistical averages for the whole of Marion County. The demand for various types of real estate are evaluated, including the demand for retail space, office space, and housing of various types. Information regarding safety and crime, as well as an overview on the schools and educational resources in the area is discussed. Transit service and various social and economic factors are provided. Property information is provided including a map of availability and non-local ownership. An overview of the engagement process is provided along with the community’s value statement and themes for Livability, Opportunity, Vitality, and Education.



## ASSETS AND OPPORTUNITIES

This section of the plan provides an evaluation of assets and recommended opportunities for housing, infrastructure, development, and placemaking. An observation of the existing housing assets is provided with scales, types, and characteristics. Opportunities are indicated based on identified clusters of vacancy and need. An assessment of existing infrastructure conditions and a diagram of opportunities for future infrastructure improvements, based on areas of need is provided. A summary of placemaking opportunities, based on community input, goes beyond basic infrastructure to provide beauty and a more social environment with opportunities for early action identified. Concepts of development opportunities based on community input, previous planning, property availability, and real estate experts’ input is provided, as well, which is looked at in more detail in the following section.



## A VISION FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

A vision for future development projects is outlined here. The scope and list of projects are purposefully ambitious. A list of goals for each L.O.V.E. category has been developed, based on community input and led by the chairs of livability, opportunity, vitality, and education. The list is included at the beginning of the chapter and will be the guide for work over the next several years. There is a physical development summary list and diagram provided at the beginning of this section of the document, with a birdseye view rendering of the study area, followed by a series of renderings for a number of specific locations. In addition to the series of renderings for development sites, there are renderings and diagrams to help illustrate a vision for neighborhood housing and multi-modal infrastructure. Lastly, there is a graphic to indicate goals for future development and urban form that will continue beyond the target goal for development by the year 2020.

## A CALL TO ACTION

This plan was community engagement-focused and comprehensive, yet was vetted continually with experts in real estate markets, and other areas. There is broad support for helping King Commons to continue to develop as an active, dense, and exciting place that builds on its unique character and African American heritage. The time is now to focus energy and efforts to work together to accomplish these goals.



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LOVING INDY'S NEXT GREAT PLACES

Great Places 2020

A Comprehensive Development Plan for

KING  COMMONS