

BLUEPRINT FOR AN URBAN VILLAGE

Planning Guidebook



GREAT PLACES
2020

LOVE THY NEIGHBORHOOD

SUPPORTING INDY'S NEXT GREAT PLACES
The City of Indianapolis | LISC | Plan 2020 | Great Places 2020

INTRODUCTION

Everyone's life is better when they live in an economically healthy city. Indianapolis is increasingly having to compete with surrounding counties and peer cities to attract and retain residents, businesses, and investment. Young people are particularly intent on living in cities that are high quality urban places.

According to the Project for Public Spaces, to have a great city, it is not enough to have one great place. You need a number of them to create a truly lively community – places where people choose to live, work, and play. You need to provide people all over town with close-to-home opportunities to take pleasure in public life.

Indianapolis has some great places to be sure: Fountain Square, Irvington, Broad Ripple, Downtown, and Meridian-Kessler. But, we need to be more proactive in adding to this list of great places if we want to meet the challenge of growing the Marion County population as we continue to compete both regionally and nationally.

Great Places 2020 is a program created to respond to this need. The effort seeks to transform strategic places in six Marion County neighborhoods into dynamic urban villages. This guidebook has been created to help define what steps are needed in planning for an urban village.

Philanthropic, civic and private partners will engage with neighborhoods to make significant social and capital investments to enhance quality of life and spur private investment.

» WHAT IS AN URBAN VILLAGE?

Urban villages provide an exciting alternative to recent patterns of urban development in many cities, especially decentralization and urban sprawl. Suburban development focused on providing efficient movement via automobiles, but everything was separated. You had to make a different trip in your car to go to the grocery, to school, to work, to the coffee shop, sometimes even to friends homes.

In an Urban Village, getting around by car is not the only option. Ideally, there is a strong network of transit, bicycle lanes, and comfortable and safe sidewalks. They focus on the pedestrian and help facilitate strong community institutions and interaction. In very well-designed Urban Villages, it is possible to live-car free and still live well.

Urban Villages have a central area that is denser than its surroundings with taller buildings that include a mix of different uses. There is often commercial activity on the first floor of these buildings with apartments or condos on the upper floors. Buildings gradually get smaller and smaller, the farther away you get from this center.

There is also an emphasis on public spaces. There may be a central plaza or green space that is surrounded by buildings with interesting shops and other commercial activity. There is less private yard space, but there are multiple public spaces that everyone can use. The goal is that by living closer together, people will have better access to grocery stores, daycares, retail, restaurants, coffee shops, and other gathering spaces.



Image courtesy of Duany, Plater-Zyberk

Special thanks to the Plan 2020 CityCorps Fellowship for its financial support and to Anderson+Bohlander LLC for its technical support to create the Blueprint for an Urban Village.

URBAN VILLAGE BENEFITS

» ATTRACTING + RETAINING RESIDENTS

Creating an urban village center is a great way to make a neighborhood an exciting place to live, shop, and enjoy, which will make more people want to live there.

» BOOSTING TRANSIT

The growth of urban villages will support the improvement of local transit options. IndyConnect is Central Indiana's Transportation Initiative. It is a partnership of the Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), Central Indiana Regional Transportation Authority (CIRTA), and IndyGo in support of the future development of our region. The IndyConnect Plan envisions several new rapid-transit routes that, in some cases, will see new development occur around stations.

In urban planning circles, it is generally agreed that people will be willing to walk somewhere between 1/4- to 1/2-mile to get to a transit station. Therefore, to take full advantage of these new routes, it is important to increase the number of people who live in walking distance to transit stations.

» CREATING HIGHER DENSITY

Urban village development is an opportunity to increase density in a neighborhood-sensitive way. Greater density will attract more amenities for residents. Improving density can improve the quality of life of residents and business owners who are located near new stations. Density should increase gradually towards a transit station.

» BETTER USE OF AVAILABLE LAND

One of the steps in increasing density around transit stations is to acquire land that may be vacant, or perhaps may already have low-density buildings on it. Once these vacant or underperforming parcels are acquired, they can be reused or rebuilt to provide newer buildings with an increased number of apartments and condominiums, as well as new commercial space.

» REUSE WITH AUTHENTICITY

Most urban neighborhoods once boasted urban village centers, but many of these were lost over time. There may be interesting, older buildings that are empty or underutilized near planned transit stops. These buildings may be able to be repurposed and remodeled to house new uses, such as office space, residential space, or other activities. These buildings have been visible to residents for generations and if repurposed well, can add to the character and identity of neighborhoods.

» STRENGTHENING THE REAL ESTATE MARKET

Efforts to build new medium-density buildings and rehab older buildings will add value to existing homes and businesses. For communities where the market is not yet ready to support new medium-density mixed-use development, there are other steps that can be taken to help them prepare and improve market conditions. This may include planning and partnering with neighborhood groups and institutions.



Image of Cleveland Healthline, courtesy of Flickr



Image of Broad Ripple, courtesy of Midtown, Inc.



Image of Mass Ave, courtesy of Visit Indy

» HOW DO WE CREATE AN URBAN VILLAGE?

This Planning Guidebook is intended to help guide stakeholders, municipal leaders and consultants in the development of planning and implementation documents for Urban Villages.

This guide will walk users through a process of outreach, analysis and visioning to create a detailed revitalization plan for a particular place. It is intended to set a common set of expectations for all involved to ensure that the planning process can move effectively and in a timely fashion.

Urban Villages and Great Places

All Great Places will plan to become Urban Villages, but not all communities planning to become Urban Villages will be Great Places.

Several areas have already been selected as “Great Places” by a committee and several more will be selected in 2015. These places will receive funding to engage planning and real estate consultants who will be part of a team that includes stakeholders from the City of Indianapolis and LISC, as well as neighbors and community partners.

The City of Indianapolis also hopes that planning will occur to develop additional Urban Villages around certain transit stations, beyond those already designated Great Places. There will also be communities interested in planning for Urban Villages. The process outlined in this guide will help these efforts get started, but partnering with local content experts is encouraged.

How Does this Relate to Quality of Life Planning?

The best Urban Villages will be created in neighborhoods that have a unifying vision of how they plan to improve a wide range of quality of life issues before they start planning their urban village center. Locations selected as part of the Great Places initiative will exist in a larger neighborhood that may have already engaged in a Quality of Life Plan (QOL Plan). QOL Plans are great tools, as they are broad and comprehensive and engage a very large and diverse audience of neighbors and leaders. Comprehensive plans such as these lay the groundwork for more specific urban village revitalization efforts.

Planning for an Urban Village can utilize relationships and priorities established during QOL planning, but will focus on a tighter geography and more specific recommendations. These recommendations will include specifics on buildings, public spaces, and streets as well as soft development goals, such as safety watches and community programming.

What is Included?

This Guidebook is laid out in a series of chronological steps, as listed below. Each step will include details to inform the teams as to what is expected to move the process forward.

- ENGAGEMENT + INVENTORY
- ANALYSIS + OUTREACH
- LIABILITIES, ASSETS + OPPORTUNITIES
- VISION CREATION
- IMPLEMENTATION

STEP 1: Engagement + Inventory

LETS GET STARTED!

» PULL TOGETHER A TEAM

The first step in this process will be to build a team that knows the selected place well, but also brings technical design and development skills. The teams will include urban designers, technical partners and neighborhood leaders. Teams are encouraged to remain small enough that they can make timely and effective decisions.

Once a team is selected, it is important to establish a structure to ensure that progress is made and deadlines are met. The following are important components:

- Create a schedule for the team and a list of deliverables for the planning consultant
- Establish routine meeting times with relevant stakeholders for review + input
- Establish a strategy for outreach and engagement

NOTE: QOL Planning held broad public meetings, but this effort is more detailed in a smaller geographic area. Public involvement will be more targeted to specific stakeholders and agenda items.

» GET TO KNOW THE SITE

NOTE: Boundaries are to be within ¼-mile of the heart of this place. While boundaries were established in Great Places Applications, adjustments can be made to account for nearby assets, physical features, or boundaries. It is important to focus on a concentrated, walkable, and cohesive area in order to achieve real impact.

The place does not exist in a bubble - the site's larger context is important as well. Maps that extend beyond the site to show the larger QOL Plan Area are suggested. Some suggestions for defining context are:

- Create a location map that shows the place's location within the QOL Plan Area
- Create a figure/ground map to help convey the scale of buildings and open spaces
- Create a context map that portrays road names, place names, and important physical attributes
- Create a social assets and vulnerability map to track important issues such as food access and public safety
- Highlight significant funding boundaries, such as TIF, Redevelopment Areas, Brownfields, etc...

» REVIEW PREVIOUS PLANS

It's important to pay homage to previous planning efforts and the community work that went into creating them. Every Great Place exists in a larger neighborhood that has already developed a Quality of Life or similar plan. Time has passed, however, and QOL Plans covered a much larger geographic area than these efforts.

To create a comprehensive place plan, teams should select two to three goals -- either newly created or lifted directly from existing plans -- that reflect each of the following four outcomes:

- (L) - Livability - A Healthy and Beautiful Place
- (O) - Opportunity - A Place for Entrepreneurs and Jobs
- (V) - Vitality - A Place with a Growing Population
- (E) - Education - A Place with Lifelong Learning Opportunities

NOTE: Other recent plans may exist for the immediate area. The team should be aware of these. For the PR Mallory site, for example, review the "ReEnergize East Washington Street Plan".



Context Map, Courtesy of Saint Clair Place Opportunity Assessment, EDEN Collaborative

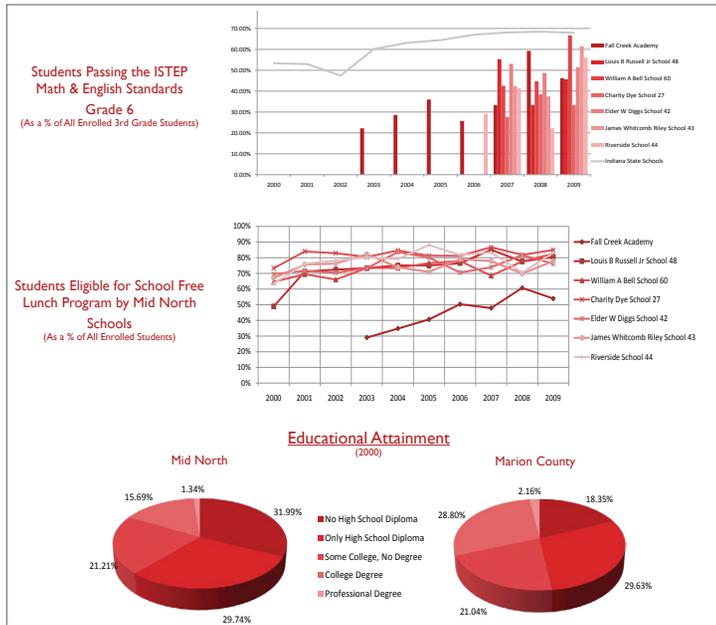


Figure Ground, Courtesy of Saint Clair Place Opportunity Assessment, EDEN Collaborative

Action Item	Performance Measures	Collaborating Partners	Lead Partner	Year
CRIME & SAFETY				
3. The Mid-North area will be a safer community with improved communication and cross-neighborhood coordination.				
311	Create communication between all Neighborhood Associations, their neighbors, and the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department.	Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center, Ivy Tech, Lacy Leadership Association, Making Connections Indianapolis	Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17
312	Create strong leadership within the neighborhoods by encouraging neighborhood association leaders and emerging leaders to participate in leadership development program.	Neighborhood associations attend 75% of Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department monthly meetings.	Crown Hill Neighborhood Association, Highland Vicinity Neighborhood Association, Historic Meridian Park Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association, Marion County Prosecutor's Office, Meridian Highland Neighborhood Association, Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17
313	Ensure that each neighborhood association is represented at monthly Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department community meetings.	Identify existing neighborhood crime watch captains and leaders.	Highland Vicinity Neighborhood Association, Historic Meridian Park Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association, Meridian Highland Neighborhood Association, Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17
314	Identify existing neighborhood crime watch captains and leaders.	List identifying neighborhood crime watch leaders created.	Crown Hill Neighborhood Association	17
315	Establish a crime watch program in the neighborhoods where one does not exist.	25% increase of new crime watches formed.	Historic Meridian Park Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association, Meridian Highland Neighborhood Association, Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17, 18, 19, 20
316	Create a crime task force comprised of all neighborhood crime watch captains to share information and to coordinate activities and advocacy.	Task force established.	Highland Vicinity Neighborhood Association, Historic Meridian Park Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association, Meridian Highland Neighborhood Association, Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17
316	Establish block clubs where none exist.	25 new block clubs established spread across the Mid-North area.	Crown Hill Neighborhood Association, Highland Vicinity Neighborhood Association, Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Mapleton-Fall Creek Neighborhood Association, Meridian Highland Neighborhood Association, Watson-McCard Neighborhood Association	17, 18, 19, 20

Crime and Safety Workplan, Courtesy of Mid-North QOL Plan

STEP 2: Analysis + Outreach



Education Data, Mid North Quality of Life Plan

» ANALYZE THE DATA

Demographic and market data was collected during the QOL Planning process. This data should be reviewed, analyzed and updated as needed. Teams should review this data with a real estate professional. Some minimum suggestions for data to include are:

- Population and Housing Type and Value Data
- Income, Employment, and Educational Attainment Data
- Health and Crime Statistics
- Business Location and Activity Data

NOTE: Data needs to be analyzed, not just provided. Data should be used to create charts and graphs so that it can be easily understood by multiple audiences.

» UNDERSTAND THE REAL ESTATE

An Urban Village needs local residents and businesses to support it. To understand housing conditions, teams should gather data from GIS and conduct walking reviews. A photographic overview of typical housing and building styles and conditions is suggested. A color-coded map of properties should be created, that identifies the following property types:

- Property available through Renew Indianapolis
- Other government-owned property
- Tax Sale and Surplus Sale property
- Property in a stage of bankruptcy or foreclosure
- Unoccupied, but not officially vacant property (observation made from walking inventory)

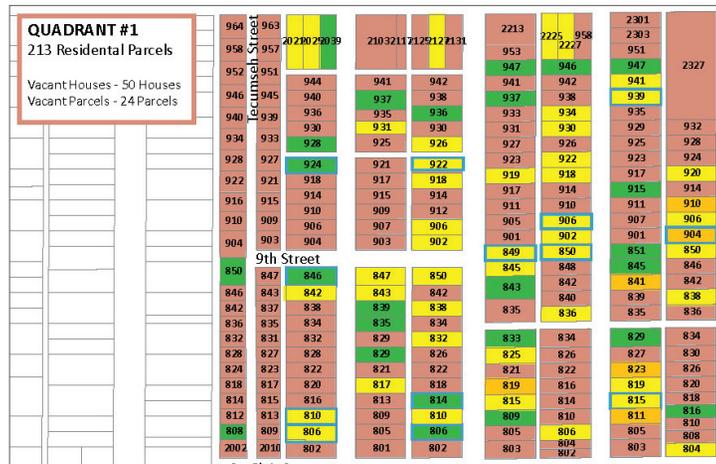
NOTE: Data and information may be provided by Renew Indianapolis.

» INTERVIEW LOCAL EXPERTS

Conduct an interview of experts and other stakeholders who have been or are active in the area to understand their future goals and current plans that they are willing to share. These should include:

- Developers - focus on developers that have been active in this area or other similar areas of the city. Ask their outlook for development in the area and what they believe would improve the marketplace
- Businesses - from large employers to boutique retail, food and beverage operators
- Anchor Institutions - interview any large anchor institution to understand their goals and priorities
- City Agencies + Utilities - ask for plans for infrastructure and for utility upgrade projects and investment
- Non-Profits + Neighborhood Leaders - to understand their work and concerns for the area

NOTE: Interviews can be informal and are intended to gather information and understand concerns.



Housing Focus, Courtesy of Saint Clair Place Plan

STEP 4: Vision Creation

DON'T FORGET!

Casting a vision for what this place will look like is important. However, some of the less visible aspects of a vision need to be addressed as well. Programs and soft development opportunities should be incorporated into the most appropriate section of the vision. Each part of the vision is a piece of the whole. Teams are encouraged to think and plan holistically.

» THE MIXED-USE CENTER

The commercial node will be the heart and soul of this great place. An illustrative plan or graphic must be created that identifies individual projects, based on actual developable parcels. Some important points to highlight are:

- Identify the project (school, mixed-use building, grocery, etc...)
- Identify whether it is renovation, new construction, or a combination
- Identify any important character points, such as height, visual character, views, etc...
- Provide basic numbers, such as square footages, unit counts, parcel size, etc...

NOTE: Provide high-quality perspective images that can be used to help depict the vision. Compelling imagery will be important in promoting the concepts, recruiting development partners and obtaining funding.

» HOUSING + SURROUNDING AREA

Housing within 1/4-mile of the commercial node will need to have a plan for redevelopment that includes the following decisions:

- What housing is in need of basic maintenance or minor upgrades?
- What housing is structurally sound, but in need of some renovation, such as porch repair, new windows, etc...
- What housing has structural issues? Should units be saved or demolished?
- What vacant parcels are good candidates for new construction and what should the character be? Should these be apartments, multi-unit houses, duplexes, single-family homes, or other types?

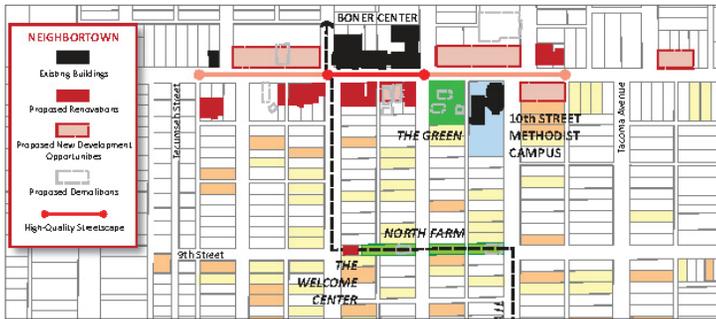
NOTE: With limited time and access to properties, many assumptions are made at this stage in the process. This is a preliminary plan and may be adjusted as more is learned about individual properties.

» ACTIVE OPEN SPACES

Create an illustrative plan or graphic that depicts the vision for public realm amenities. These spaces should be capable of providing for the desired social, cultural, and human development goals identified above. These plans should also be strategic. A narrative is required that describes why the amenity is needed, why the location was chosen, why it is the size shown, who the target age groups are, and how it can be leveraged to help accomplish other goals. Some examples of public realm amenities are:

- Public plazas and parks
- Streetscapes or streets that are upgraded to promote highly active pedestrian use
- Trails, separated bike paths, or bike lanes

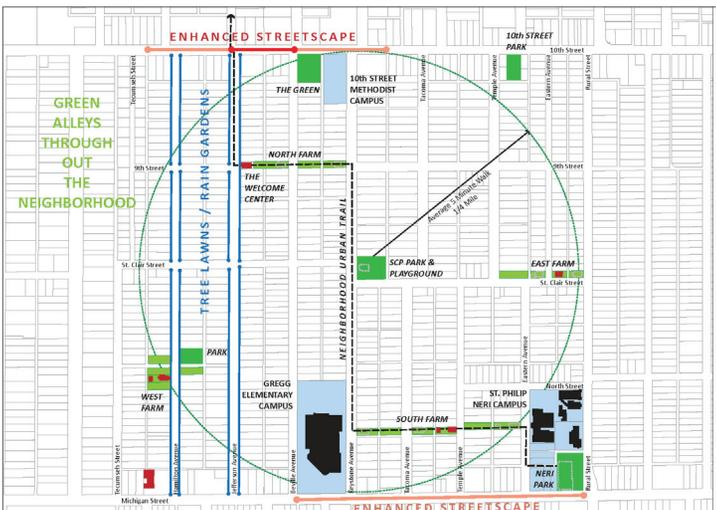
NOTE: Provide high-quality perspective images and cross-sections that can be used to help depict the vision. Compelling imagery will be important in promoting the concepts, recruiting development partners and obtaining funding.



Courtesy of Saint Clair Place Plan



Housing Plan, Courtesy of Re-Energize East Washington Street Plan



Courtesy of Saint Clair Place Plan

» PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER + TELLING YOUR STORY

At this point, the team should have a series of graphics and written descriptions for each of the phases, from Engagement and Inventory to Vision Creation. Now, it's time to put everything together into a holistic plan document. It is important to remember that these documents will need to be portable and carried in briefcases and work bags. Size and document quality are important.

- You have to communicate the plan and the steps that led to the plan to a wide audience - avoid jargon
- Label your graphics - make sure your analysis and recommendations are clear to people unfamiliar with the site
- Don't be afraid to look at other examples for reference
- Think about hard copy and web presentation formats.



CATALYST SITE: WASHINGTON + ORIENTAL

PROJECT GOALS - Revitalize Historic Node around Anchor Institutions

- Build on maximum of the redeveloping Historic Ford Plant Building and site
- Achieve the beautiful, historic Art Deco facade of the Ivy Tech
- Build a new contemporary structure to add space for Ivy Tech that will cater to new, advanced education programs. The two buildings will speak to the institution's commitment to its history within the neighborhood and its commitment to the future of advanced technology training.
- Provide "third spaces" at the intersection, such as plazas for food and drink or other places to socialize for residents, students, and workers.
- Provide ample parking within the various lots between Washington Street and the rail line to the south.
- Provide a facade upgrade for the Historic Strand Theatre that houses a hydroponics manufacturer.
- Provide a mixed-use market rate structure at the northeast corner of the site.
- Encourage Damen Center expansion to occur on a site that takes advantage of existing structures.

ReEnergize East Washington Street | 42

Images Courtesy of Re-Energize East Washington Street Plan

Washington and Oriental Streets will focus on improvements to assist in the long-term viability of Ivy Tech. In addition, the plan builds off of the increased interest in many groups for the former Ford Building. A new mixed-use project is also envisioned, along with a facade upgrade to the historic Strand Theatre building.

WASHINGTON + ORIENTAL
2018-2020 | 43

Images Courtesy of Re-Energize East Washington Street Plan

STEP 5: Implementation

» CREATE AN IMPLEMENTATION SUMMARY

An implementation guide should provide an overview of the components identified in the plan, distilled into one comprehensive map as well as in list form with key details

- Executive Summary of the Project
- Project Details Spreadsheet (with total estimated units or square feet, costs per unit or square foot, and total value, including:
 - Homeowner repairs - how many properties, costs
 - Rehab, resale, and new construction - units and costs
 - Affordable rental - existing units, new units, costs
 - New commercial and mixed-use - square feet, costs
 - Property acquisition costs
 - New infrastructure and amenities - costs
 - Social programming and soft development - costs
 - Public facilities - square feet, costs
- Written Summary of Challenges
- Financial Summary (Sources and Uses Spreadsheet - with summarized costs)

» WRITTEN STRATEGY

The written strategy should provide more detailed information

- The Team - Provide an Organization Chart and a detailed written summary of each team member's responsibilities to implement items in the plan.
- Provide a Written Strategy and Key Maps for the following focus areas. Include action items, responsible parties, needs and sources of funds, measures of success, and timing. Additional information that is needed is listed with each item:
 - Social programming + Soft Development (Identify early action items)
 - Property Acquisition Strategy (Identify individual parcels and identify any contracts needed)
 - Homeowner Repair Strategy (Identify units and cost/unit and identify any contracts needed)
 - Home Rehab / Resale and New Construction Strategy (Identify units, target sales price, profit or gap per sale, loan types, pool of contractors to select from)
 - Multi-family, Mixed-Use and Commercial Strategy (list projects, units and square footage, and other factors)
 - Sales and Marketing Strategy (Including branding, target market, welcome center, demonstration site)
 - Infrastructure and Public Improvement Strategy (scope of improvements, estimate of design and construction costs / fees, identify owner's representative for construction)
 - Public Facilities Development Strategy (list of projects, units and square feet impacted, other factors)

» MULTI-YEAR BUDGET + SCHEDULE

The multi-year budget + schedule provides more detail than what is in the implementation summary

- Sources and Uses with more detailed information than the financial summary
- Capital sources type and timing
- Quarterly to monthly benchmarks for action over the course of the project timeline

WE HAVE A PLAN. WHAT NOW?

»KEEPING IT GOING

As planning comes to a close and implementation kicks into gear, neighborhoods and their partners need to keep the positive momentum moving forward. A number of steps need to be taken:

- Regularly convene an implementation team that includes neighborhood stakeholders and external developers.
- Balance the impact of implementation to both benefit existing residents and businesses and attract new ones.
- Continue to convene the quality-of-life plan discussions neighborhood-wide and regularly connect those efforts with the placemaking implementation.
- Maintain regular formal and informal communication to build trust and keep internal and external stakeholders engaged.
- Stay Opportunistic. Even as the neighborhood builds its internal capacity and organizes its support for the placemaking plan, it needs to be nimble enough to respond to new opportunities that arise in the coming years.
- Make hard decisions to prioritize resources to the Urban Village area until the plan is fully implemented. Resist the urge to spread out resources for political reasons.
- Always look for new partners both inside and outside the neighborhood.



Lilly Day of Service, Saint Clair Place



Re-Energize East Washington Street Public Input Session, Better Blocks



Saint Clair Place Housing

BLUEPRINT FOR AN URBAN VILLAGE

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