



# Near West Side Neighborhood Plan

Adopted August 2022





# Table of Contents

03	What is a Plan?
04	Neighborhood Background
08	Planning Process & Engagement
10	What We Heard
12	Neighborhood Planning Principles
13	Scale of Development
14	Neighborhood Plan
26	Streets & Transportation
30	Housing
32	Sustainability
33	Preserve Historic Character
34	Built Form & Zoning
40	Implementation

## Acknowledgments

**James Mueller**, Mayor of City of South Bend  
**Canneth Lee**, City Council Member, 1st District  
**Henry Davis Jr.**, City Council Member, 2nd District

*Special thanks to all the residents, area organizations and institutions that shared their thoughts and vision for the future of the Near West Side Neighborhood.*

## Department of Community Investment

**Tim Corcoran**, Director of Planning and Community Resources  
**Michael Divita**, Principal Planner  
**Chris Dressel**, Senior Planner  
**Andrew Netter**, Senior Planner  
**Angela Rose**, Senior Planner

## Planning Consultants

**McNicholas Architects | MGLM**



# What is a Plan?

A neighborhood plan is a shared statement about the desired long-term future for that area and a strategy to reach those goals. Developed through a public engagement process, a plan is a guide for:

- Making decisions about what kind of development and services are appropriate,
- How resources should be allocated, and
- How issues residents, business and property owners, and others in the neighborhood are concerned about should be addressed.

Created in the context of the needs and priorities of the larger region, a neighborhood plan focuses on assets and challenges unique to that specific area. Neighborhood plans seek to create a more livable urban place that is attractive, healthy, equitable, and sustainable for current and future generations.

## What does it include?

Neighborhood plans typically identify strategies to be implemented over the next 20+ years for the following topics:

- Public facilities and infrastructure (including parks, streets, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, lighting, and utilities),
- Housing (types, condition, and affordability),
- Zoning (building types and design, density, and locations for residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use development), and
- Other matters important to the neighborhood.

## Who is it for?

- **Neighborhood residents** will use the plan to understand proposed initiatives in the short, medium, and long terms.
- **Developers, builders, and other individuals** will use the plan to help determine the type, scale, intensity, and location of projects.
- **Public officials and community leaders** will use the plan to direct funding and to make decisions on zoning issues.
- **City staff** will use the plan to understand key neighborhood issues and as a guide to implementing priority projects and initiatives.

## How is it used?

A neighborhood plan provides a broad framework for future initiatives, and it serves as a starting point for more detailed planning and public engagement as individual projects are pursued. A plan will continually evolve to meet the changing needs and context of the community.

The maps, diagrams, photographs, and other graphics presented within a neighborhood plan are illustrations of its key features. These images are not intended to represent the exact results expected from the implementation of the plan, but they provide a general representation of the desired building types, land use, infrastructure, and other elements that the plan establishes.

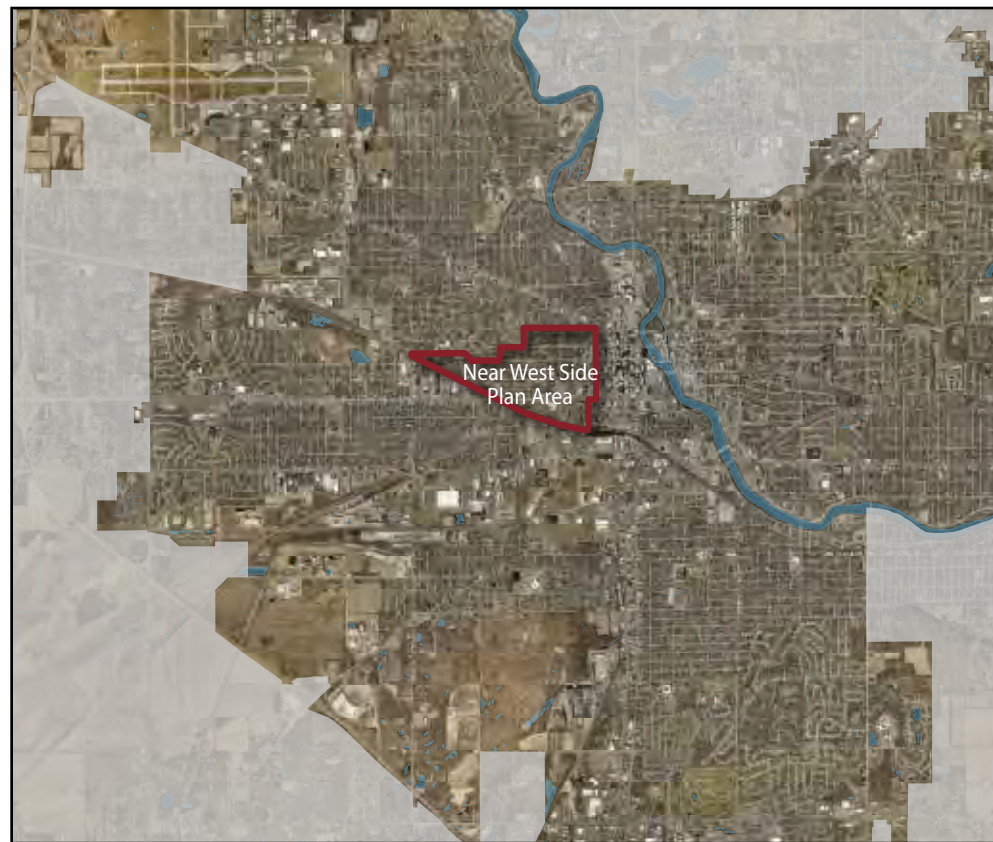
The specific scope, final form, and timing of neighborhood plan initiatives will depend on market demand, the interest of private organizations and individuals, available resources, and direction from further public engagement.



# Neighborhood Background

## Planning Area

The Near West Side Neighborhood plan area is roughly bounded by Washington Street and LaSalle Avenue on the north, William Street on the east, and railroad tracks on the south and west.



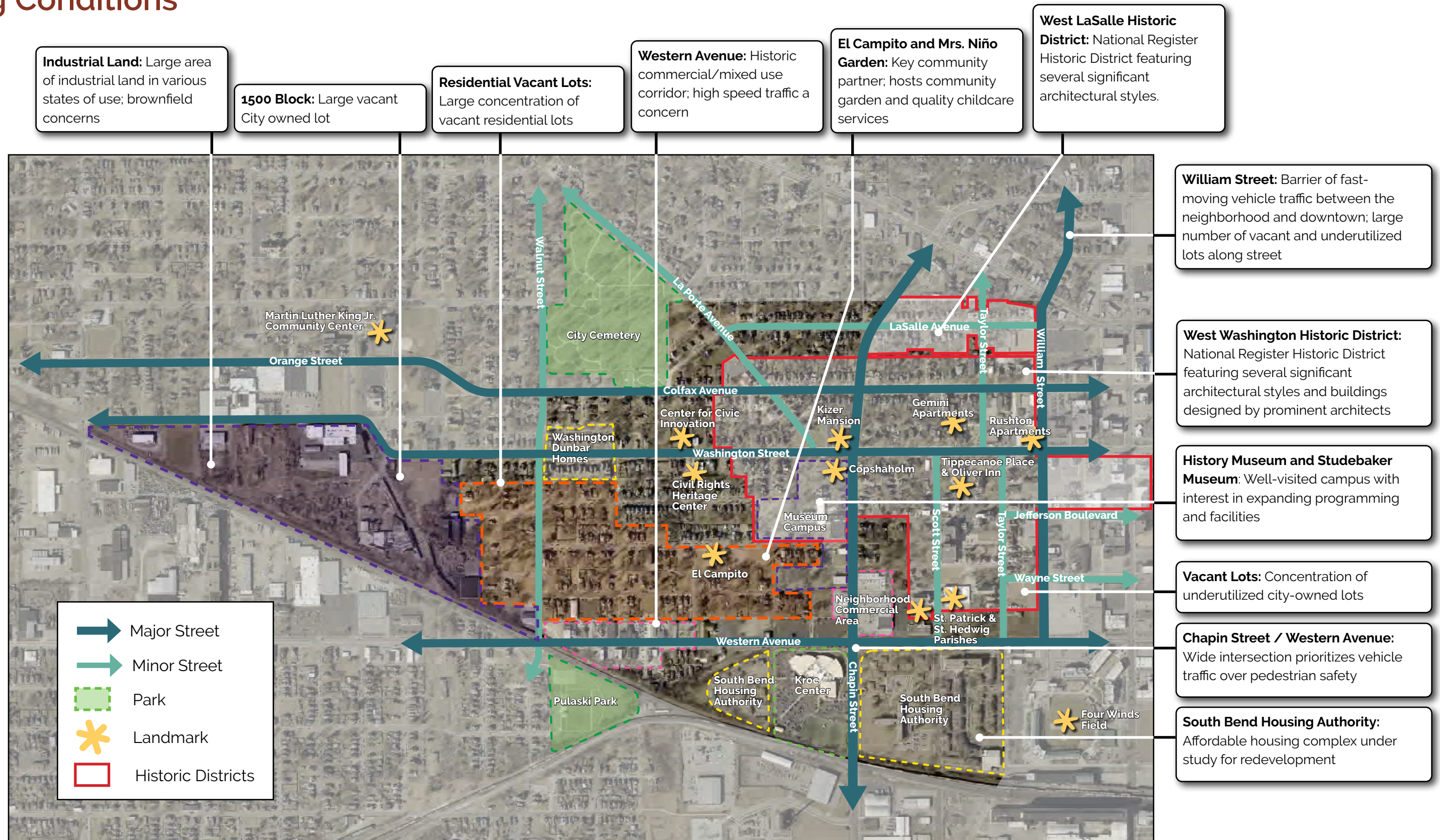
Near West Side Neighborhood Context Map.



Near West Side Neighborhood Boundary Map.



# Existing Conditions





## Neighborhood Character

Located adjacent to downtown South Bend, the Near West Side Neighborhood features a full range of housing choices, important community institutions, unique small businesses, and industrial uses. Part of the neighborhood falls in the West Washington and West LaSalle National Historic Districts, and it contains several prominent local landmarks. Below is a sampling of the neighborhood's character.



*Top Row (left to right): Houses on Taylor Street, Civil Rights Heritage Center, Museum Campus, South Bend Housing Authority Complex.*

*Middle Row (left to right): Gemini Apartments, Jefferson Boulevard brick street, Houses on LaSalle Avenue, Houses on Laurel Street.*

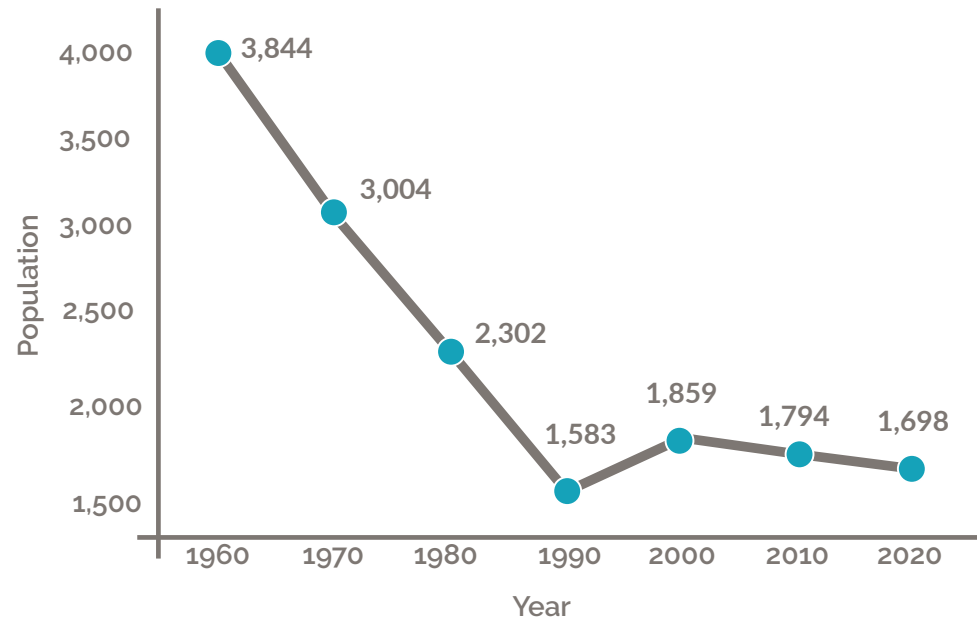
*Bottom Row (left to right): Corner of Napier and Laurel Streets, Tippecanoe Place, Western Avenue Mixed-Use Structures, Historic houses on West Washington Street.*



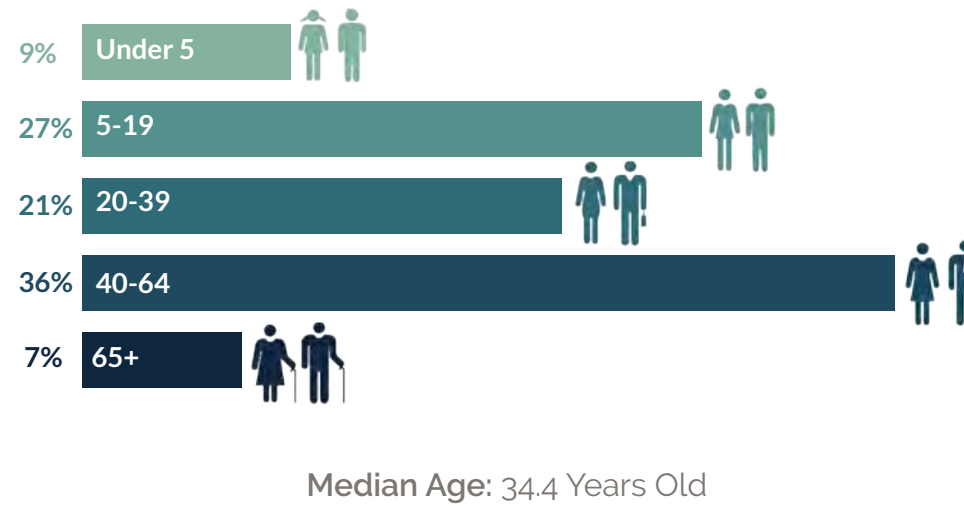
# Neighborhood Data

All figures are from the 2020 Census and are based on Census Tract 20, which approximates the Near West Side Neighborhood, unless otherwise noted.

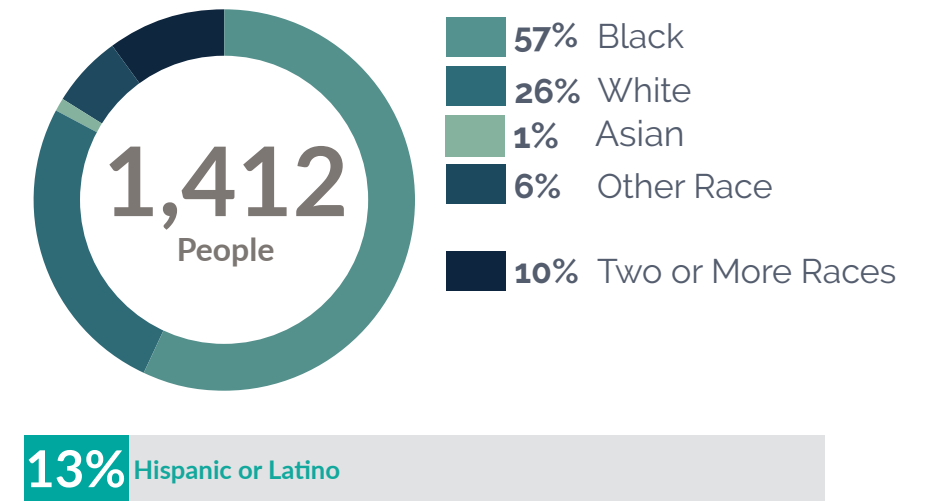
## Population



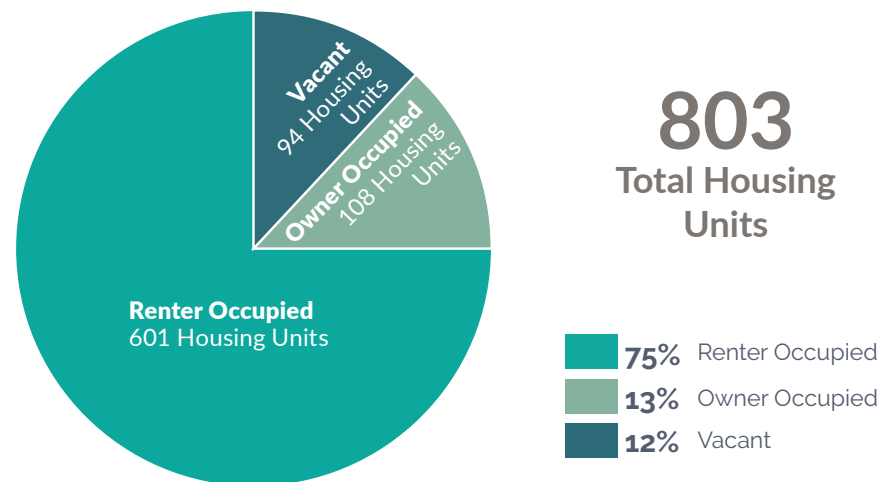
## Age



## Race and Hispanic Origin

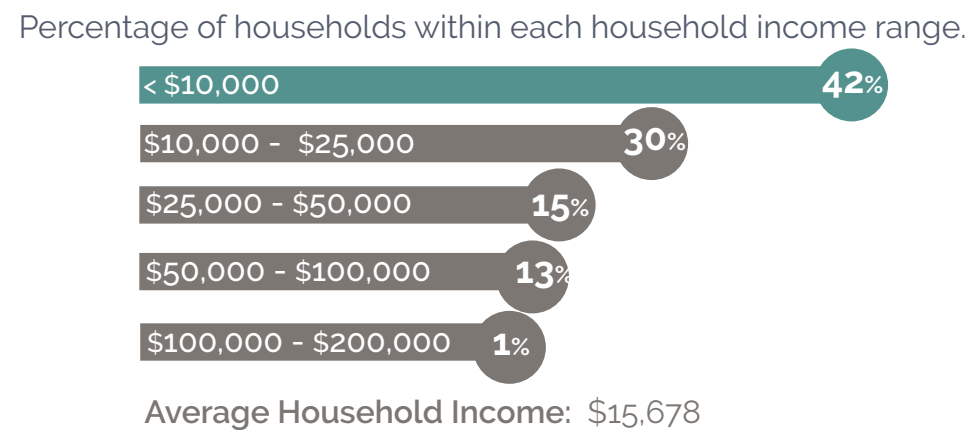


## Housing



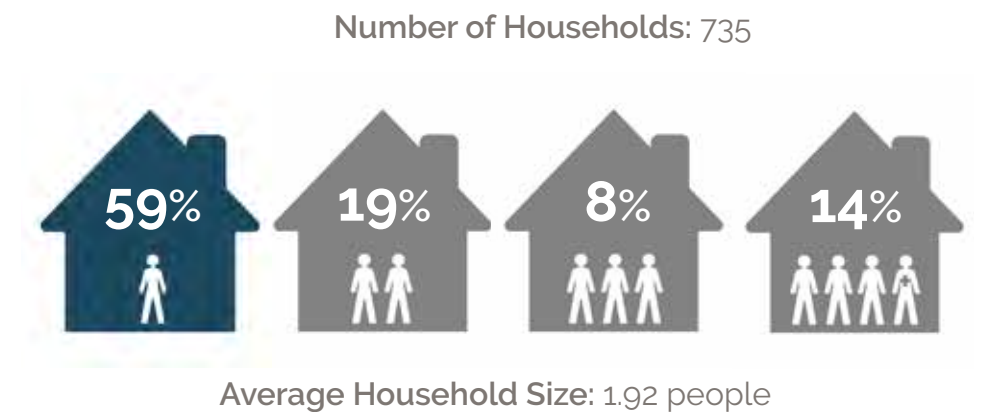
Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimate.

## Household Income



Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.

## Household Size



Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates.



# Planning Process & Engagement

## Overview

The City of South Bend developed this plan through a process that engaged residents, businesses, institutions, government agencies, and other neighborhood stakeholders. The planning process included online surveys, key stakeholder interviews, in-person and virtual workshops that gathered critical information about the Near West Side Neighborhood's existing conditions, needs, and opportunities. This engagement provided the basis for this plan. During the planning process, the City provided updates to the neighborhood organization and Common Council.



## Outreach Methods

The City used a series of outreach methods throughout the planning process to encourage participation. These methods included mailings to more than 1,500 residents and property owners, e-mail lists, press releases, water bill announcements, posters, yard signs, door hangers, presentations to neighborhood associations, and attendance at other community events.



## Stakeholder Meetings

The City's Planning staff conducted 18 virtual meetings with neighborhood stakeholders. Stakeholders included neighborhood associations, community and nonprofit organizations, faith-based institutions, businesses, developers, City departments, and City Council representatives. These conversations began to outline general themes and potential focus areas for the neighborhood plan.



## Together South Bend

The City created an online engagement platform called Together South Bend that allowed residents to participate in the planning process from anywhere and at any time by using interactive mapping tools and surveys. Together South Bend mirrored the methods of collecting feedback traditionally seen at public meetings. The platform included an overview of the process and planning exercises about infrastructure, housing, open space, and quality of life topics, all available in both English and Spanish.



August

September

June 2022

August



## Visioning Workshop

Two identical visioning workshops, each held in person and virtually, focused on understanding the neighborhood and its vision for the future. Participants were asked big-picture questions and completed exercises on topics such as housing, infrastructure, land use and building form, neighborhood amenities, and neighborhood specific issues.

## Priorities Workshop

At the neighborhood priorities workshop, participants confirmed that the data gathered from the online engagement platform and the visioning workshops were complete and represented their ideas. The community was then asked to prioritize potential neighborhood initiatives. This helped prepare the framework and priorities outlined in this plan.

## Open House

After a draft neighborhood plan document was created, the City held an open house to present it to neighborhood stakeholders and ask for feedback.

## Adoption

Following public hearings, the Plan Commission and Common Council adopted the Near West Side Neighborhood Plan as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. This Plan now serves as the City's official policy for the area.



# What We Heard

Following are the main ideas expressed during the public engagement process for the Near West Side Neighborhood. The items in **bold** were identified as priority projects at the public workshops.

## Streets & Transportation

Calm traffic along the following streets:

- **Washington Street**
- Charles Martin Drive / Chapin Street
- Colfax Avenue
- **Western Avenue; improve its intersection with Chapin Street**
- **LaSalle Avenue**
- Thomas Street

### Create consistent lighting of streets

### Repair curbs and sidewalks

Plant street trees where possible

Create a comfortable connection to downtown

### Repair and restore brick streets when possible

Add more protected and shared use trails

## Housing

### Promote and expand home repair program

Diversify housing types, especially by adding missing middle housing

Preserve and expand affordable housing options

Identify homes needing repair through code enforcement

### Promote infill housing opportunities in neighborhood

Meet demand for market-rate housing, including single-family and missing middle

## Built Form & Zoning

Increase housing density in targeted areas to support additional amenities

Examine development opportunities of city-owned properties

### Promote neighborhood scale (corner store) businesses in the neighborhood

## Other Amenities

### Create an easily accessed neighborhood park

Incorporate neighborhood signage where appropriate

Address brownfield concerns

Clean up litter on vacant lots

Promote more entrepreneurs and local businesses, especially walkable third places







# Neighborhood Planning Principles

The characteristics described below serve as the guiding principles for the development of the Near West Side Neighborhood Plan. These principles were formed through the neighborhood planning process

## ① Urban

The neighborhood is walkable, has a network of well-connected streets and blocks, and a variety of public spaces. It contains a range of housing types that draws people from all economic levels. Amenities such as stores, schools, healthcare, entertainment, parks, cultural institutions, and places of worship are within a convenient distance.

## ② Attractive

The neighborhood's physical environment is thoughtfully managed to make it desirable, competitive, and vibrant. The neighborhood features well maintained buildings and properties, safe streets for all users, quality public spaces, and a memorable, unique identity.

## ③ Healthy

The neighborhood encourages an active lifestyle for residents and visitors, regardless of age or ability, through engaging open spaces and comfortable transportation options. Access to nutritious, fresh, and affordable food. The neighborhood is free of pollution that would notably impact its residents.

## ④ Equitable

The neighborhood's housing accommodates the unique needs, desires, and income levels of all households. Historic disinvestment is addressed through zoning reform and increased private and public investment promoting recovery.

## ⑤ Sustainable

The neighborhood fully uses its existing infrastructure, preserves and reuses structures of historical and/or architectural significance, implements sensible environmental policies, and is committed to reducing its carbon footprint. The neighborhood is resilient, including by being prepared for the effects of climate change.



Colfax Avenue.



Colfax Avenue.



# Scale of Development

This plan refers to low-, medium-, and high-density development. Below are illustrations of the scale of each for the Near West Side Neighborhood. Each scale of development incorporates and builds upon the scale below helping to create diversity of housing options.

## Low-Density



## Medium-Density

Medium-density areas would include buildings of this scale, as well as buildings from the low-density category.



## High-Density

High-density areas would include buildings of this scale, as well as buildings from the medium-density category.












# Neighborhood Plan

The following is a list of Near West Side Neighborhood project ideas which may be pursued by the City, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector over the next 20 years. The timing and scale of each project will be subject to funding and additional community engagement. Projects may change as the neighborhood and city evolves. More information on the concepts listed below can be found on the following pages.

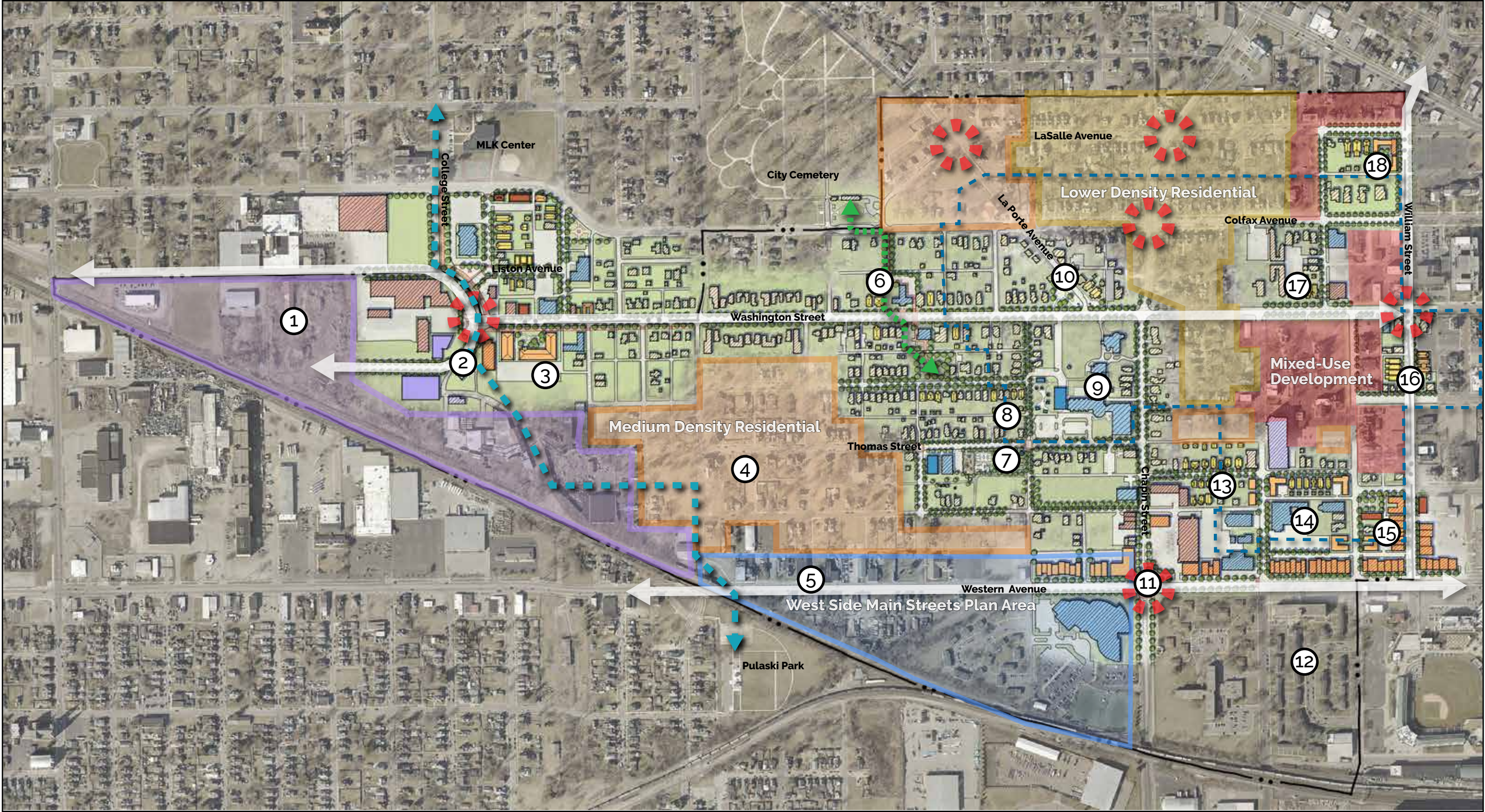
- ① **Industrial Re-Use**  
Encourage new industrial uses; assess and address environmental conditions as necessary.
- ② **Circle Avenue**  
Reconstruct historic alignment to access vacant industrial land and include cultural placemaking element at the intersection of Washington Street and Circle Avenue.
- ③ **1500 Block West Washington Street**  
Fill vacant and underutilized lots on the 1500 block of West Washington Street with medium- to high-density residential development, mixed-use, and green space.
- ④ **Vacant Lots**  
Explore interim use of vacant lots; fill lots with a mix of residential development over time as market conditions allow.
- ⑤ **Western Avenue**  
Complete streetscape improvements along Western Avenue; develop area per West Side Main Streets Plan.
- ⑥ **Civic Connector**  
Connect space between the City Cemetery, Center for Civic Innovation, Civil Rights Heritage Center, and Jefferson Boulevard open space; add housing to the east and west of Civil Rights Heritage Center along Washington Street.
- ⑦ **El Campito Area**  
Create a shared neighborhood park that can benefit both residents and El Campito.
- ⑧ **Laurel Street**  
Fill vacant lots with a mix of residential development.
- ⑨ **Museum Campus**  
Coordinate the expansion of History Museum amenities and services within the fabric of the neighborhood to foster closer ties with residents.

- ⑩ **Washington Street - LaPorte Avenue Area**  
Explore options for a small formal park and complementary high-quality development addressing the Oliver Mansion.
- ⑪ **Western Avenue - Chapin Street Intersection**  
Complete streetscape improvements to enhance pedestrian safety; fill parking lots with medium- to high-density residential development on northwest corner and neighborhood scale commercial/mixed-use development on northeast corner of intersection.
- ⑫ **South Bend Housing Authority Site**  
Redevelop properties with medium- to high-density residential and mixed-use development.
- ⑬ **Wayne Street Area/Hoose Court**  
Fill vacant lots with a mix of residential development.
- ⑭ **St. Patrick's Block**  
Develop underutilized lots with low-, medium-, and high-density housing along Western Avenue, Taylor Street, and Wayne Street.
- ⑮ **Western Avenue - William Street Area**  
Fill vacant lots with medium- to high-density residential and mixed-use development.
- ⑯ **William Street - Jefferson Boulevard Area**  
Fill vacant lots with medium- to high-density residential and mixed-use development.
- ⑰ **Taylor Street - Washington Street**  
Fill vacant lots with low- to medium-density residential development.
- ⑱ **LaSalle Avenue & William Street**  
Redevelop South Bend Housing Authority warehouse and vacant lots with a mix of low- to high-density residential or mixed-use development.

## Infrastructure

-  **Traffic Calming & Streetscape Improvements**  
Washington Street  
William Street  
Western Avenue
-  **Circle Avenue**  
Reestablish alignment
-  **Intersection Improvements**  
Chapin Street - Western Avenue  
Charles Martin Sr. Drive - Colfax Avenue  
Charles Martin Sr. Drive - LaSalle Avenue  
La Porte Avenue - LaSalle Avenue  
Washington Street - Circle Avenue  
Washington Street - William Street
-  **Trail Expansion**  
 Trail connection to Coal Line Trail
-  **Civic Connections**  
 Trail connecting neighborhood civic amenities
-  **Preserve Historic Character**  
 Preserve the character of the West Washington National Historic District; explore expanding district to include a few notable nearby structures.









Circle Avenue redevelopment concept, looking northeast.



Washington Street, looking west from Birdsell Street.

## Circle Avenue Area | Sites 1, 2, 3

The Circle Avenue area can be transformed to serve the needs of residents. Neighborhood-scale retail development, apartment buildings of 2-3 stories, and green space can fill the large vacant lot along Washington Street. Smaller residential dwellings can fill other vacant parcels to the north.

Circle Avenue can be redesigned to calm traffic, better support pedestrian use, and provide access to industrial areas to the west. Property owners can work with governmental agencies to assess and address environmental conditions on brownfield sites.

A monument or other cultural placemaking element could be placed at the intersection of Circle Avenue and Washington Street to terminate the view of Washington Street.

- (A) Realign Liston Street with Circle Avenue
- (B) Placemaking opportunity
- (C) New industrial infill / expansion
- (D) Retail space
- (E) Parking in rear
- (F) Apartment buildings
- (G) Park / open space
- (H) Parking screened from street
- (I) Low-density residential infill



Circle Avenue and 1500 Block of Washington Street concept.



## Vacant Lots | Site 4

As market conditions allow, vacant lots in the Thomas and Napier Street corridors can be developed for residences of one to four units. In the meantime, these parcels can be open space, flower and vegetable gardens, native pollinator areas, and similar uses.



*Western Avenue, looking east at Maple Street.*

## Western Avenue | Site 5

Western Avenue can be reestablished as a walkable area of restaurants, shops, and apartments. Existing buildings could be renovated to host ground-floor commercial uses with upper-floor apartments. New residential buildings of 2-4 stories could fill vacant and underutilized lots, including the northwest corner of the Western Avenue-Chapin Street intersection. Streetscape improvements, including enhanced lighting and street trees, can help support this environment.



## Civic Connector | Site 6

A walkway can be established to link the neighborhood's cultural amenities. The path could connect City Cemetery, the Center for Civic Innovation, the Civil Rights Heritage Center, and the green space along Jefferson Boulevard. Street crossings can be upgraded to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort.



Civic Connector path concept.

- (A)** Jefferson Boulevard open space
- (B)** Civil Rights Heritage Center open space / garden
- (C)** Enhanced mid-block crossing
- (D)** Pedestrian connection to City Cemetery

## El Campito Area | Site 7

Through partnerships, El Campito can create a quality public space at the southwest corner of Thomas and Laurel Streets. A natural playscape, community garden, and seating are among potential features. With potential expansion of school facilities and programming to the west. Traffic calming on Thomas Street can enhance the safety of people going to El Campito or the park.



El Campito Area concept.

- (A)** Potential expansion of facility and programming
- (B)** Enhanced playscape for El Campito and community
- (C)** Community garden
- (D)** Traffic Calming



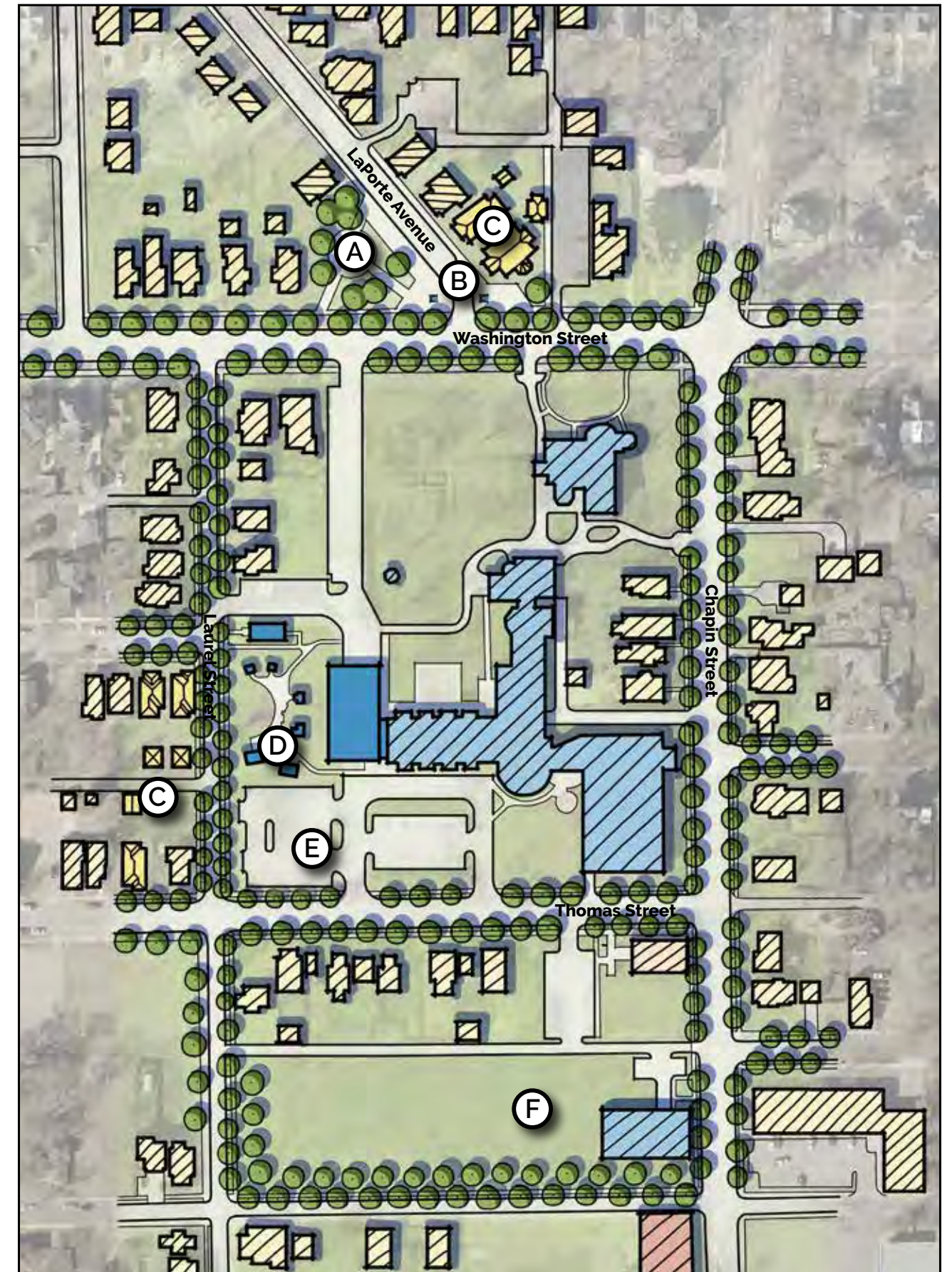
## Museum Campus Area | Sites 8, 9, 10

The History Museum can expand its amenities while enhancing the use and appearance of areas around the existing facility. Museum programming, both indoors and outdoors, can be extended west toward Laurel Street. Laurel Street could feature an attractive edge along the museum campus, including newly built houses near its intersection with Jefferson Boulevard. The History Museum's main parking lot along Thomas Street can be enlarged and screened with a landscape hedge.

The parcel at the northwest corner of Washington Street and LaPorte Avenue can become a more formal open space, to be enjoyed by the neighborhood and for museum events. The vacant lots at the northeast corner of that intersection can be a spot for high quality new development of about two stories that are consistent with the scale and design of the neighborhood.

The History Museum's collections warehouse near Chapin and Napier Streets can be expanded to meet their needs in a manner sensitive to the neighborhood. The open area west of the warehouse could be lined with shade trees and serve as attractive flexible use space.

- Ⓐ Park / green space
- Ⓑ Gateway / placemaking elements
- Ⓒ Residential development
- Ⓓ History Museum outdoor programming
- Ⓔ Expanded parking area
- Ⓕ Future use for History Museum



Museum Campus Area development concept.





Medium-density residential development at Chapin Street and Western Avenue.



Western Avenue and Chapin Street intersection development concept.

- (A) Rebuilt intersection with improved pedestrian crossings
- (B) Medium- to high-density housing
- (C) Parking internal to block
- (D) Potential commercial or mixed-use development

## Western Avenue - Chapin Street Intersection | Site 11

New apartment or townhouse buildings of 2-4 stories can fill the parking lots along Western Avenue west of Chapin Street. Small mixed-use buildings in an urban format can be added east of Chapin Street to expand retail options. The Western Avenue-Chapin Street intersection can be redesigned to enhance safety as people head to shops, homes, and the Kroc Center.



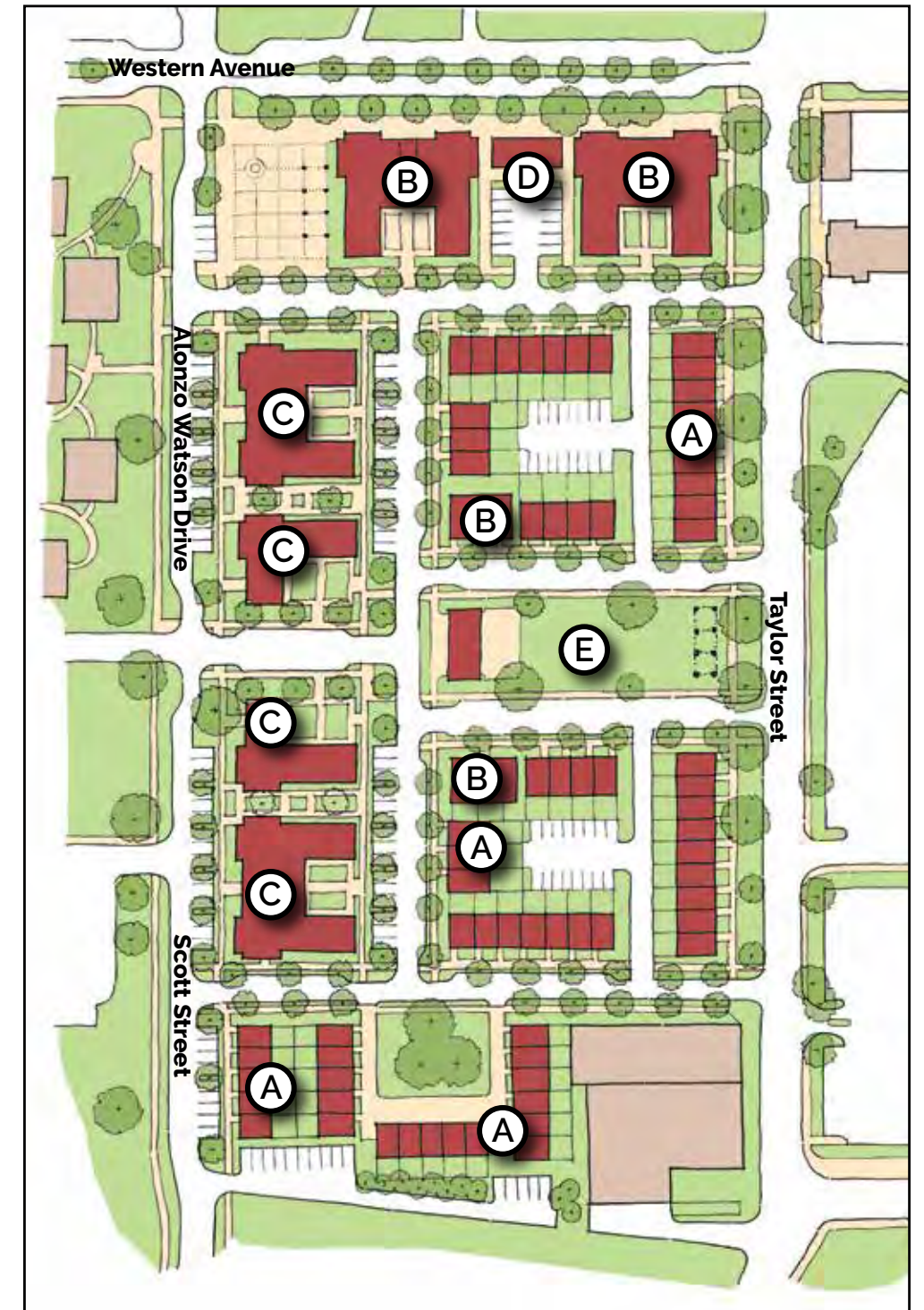
## Housing Authority Site | Site 12

The South Bend Authority can redevelop the Monroe Circle area into a desirable neighborhood well connected with its surroundings. A small network of streets can be reestablished through the site, which can feature a series of well-defined public spaces of different sizes. Apartment buildings and townhouses can provide housing for senior citizens and for lower-income workers and families. Commercial or community uses can be included along Western Avenue to engage the project with the street and the broader community.

- (A)** Townhouses with back yards for family housing
- (B)** Apartment buildings for workforce housing
- (C)** Apartments for senior housing with on street parking
- (D)** Commercial space / community amenities
- (E)** Central park and community center



Housing Authority site redevelopment concept looking southwest from Western Avenue and Taylor Street. Images on this page courtesy of University of Notre Dame School of Architecture.



Housing Authority site redevelopment concept.





Wayne Street and William Street, looking southwest.





Wayne Street and Western Avenue Areas concept.

- (A) Medium- to high-density residential and mixed-use development fronting Western Avenue; active ground floor
- (B) Medium- to high-density residential
- (C) Alleyways re-established to provide access
- (D) Low-density residential development
- (E) Formal open space or plaza

## Wayne Street - Western Avenue Areas | Site 13, 14, 15

The area around St. Patrick and St. Hedwig can feature a mix of urban housing and small-scale commercial uses. Western Avenue can be lined with 2-4 story mixed-use buildings, having commercial uses on the first floor and apartments above. William Street, between Wayne Street and Western Avenue, can feature a blend of small mixed-use buildings and medium- to high-density residential buildings, generally 2-3 stories tall. Modestly scaled apartment buildings could be incrementally developed along Taylor Street and at street corners within the neighborhood. Low-density urban housing could be built in vacant lots along Wayne Street. A public space facing St. Patrick Church can be created at the southeast corner of Wayne and Taylor Streets.





William Street and Jefferson Boulevard area concept.

## William Street - Jefferson Boulevard Area | Site 16

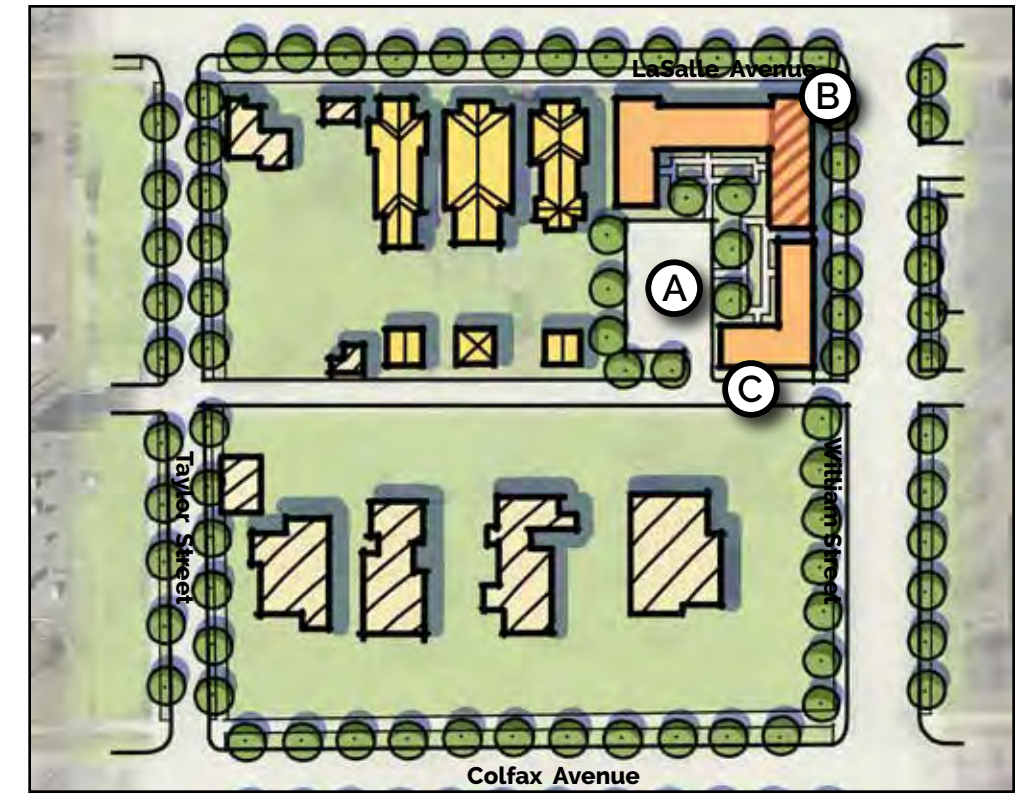
Small apartment buildings and townhouses, both generally 2-3 stories, can fill vacant and underutilized lots along William Street near Jefferson Boulevard.



Washington Street and Taylor Street area concept.

## Taylor Street - Washington Street | Site 17

The vacant land near Washington and Taylor Streets can be developed with low- to medium-density dwellings with parking internal to the block.



LaSalle Avenue and William Street area concept.

## LaSalle Avenue - William Street | Site 18

The southwest corner of LaSalle Avenue and William Street can be redeveloped with medium-density apartment buildings of 2-4 stories, possibly with a neighborhood-serving business in the first-floor corner space. Smaller-scale residential buildings, with garages accessed from alleys, could provide a transition to the lower density dwellings to the west.

- (A)** Parking access from alley
- (B)** Architectural feature on building corner
- (C)** Building face addresses Birdsell Mansion





*LaSalle Avenue and William Street, looking southwest.*



# Streets & Transportation

## Streetscape Improvements & Traffic Calming

Throughout the planning process, participants frequently noted the need to address the condition of streets, alleys, sidewalks, and lighting within the Near West Side Neighborhood. As these types of infrastructure improvements are important to every neighborhood in South Bend, they should be addressed on a citywide scale according to condition, funding, and current priorities.

Yet, this plan does identify places to receive improvements beyond general maintenance. The project list that follows was developed based on input gathered at neighborhood workshops, from 311 calls to the City of South Bend, and planning and engineering considerations.

Changes to streets in the Near West Side Neighborhood should be improved in accordance with South Bend's Complete Street policy. The use of streets by people on foot and bicycle is prioritized over high-speed vehicle travel. Street improvements should support the use of the Transpo bus system, including by improving the comfort of bus stops.

### Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape improvements are large-scale projects that may:

- have significant traffic and aesthetic impacts;
- include changes to street pavement width, the full replacement of driveway approaches, curbs, and sidewalks;
- upgrade street trees and lighting; and
- include traffic calming elements.

#### Priority Areas

Washington Street  
 William Street  
 Western Avenue  
 Circle Avenue

### Traffic Calming

Traffic calming involves small-scale interventions to alter the physical design of a street to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists.

#### Priority Areas

Chapin Street  
 Colfax Avenue  
 Thomas Street

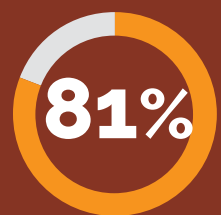
### Intersection Improvements

Intersection improvements are projects that improve safety, often by reducing excessive pavement widths and enhancing pedestrian crossings.

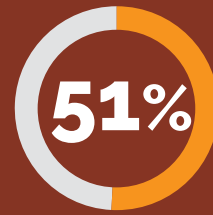
#### Priority Areas

Chapin Street - Western Avenue  
 Charles Martin Sr. Drive - Colfax Avenue  
 Charles Martin Sr. Drive - LaSalle Avenue  
 La Porte Avenue - LaSalle Avenue  
 Washington Street - Circle Avenue  
 Washington Street - William Street  
 Civic Connector on 1000 Block of Washington Street

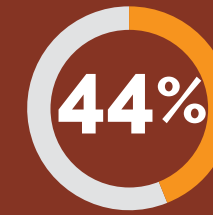
During the planning process, participants were asked a series of questions about streets, bicycle infrastructure, and other infrastructure topics.



of respondents stated they walk in the neighborhood

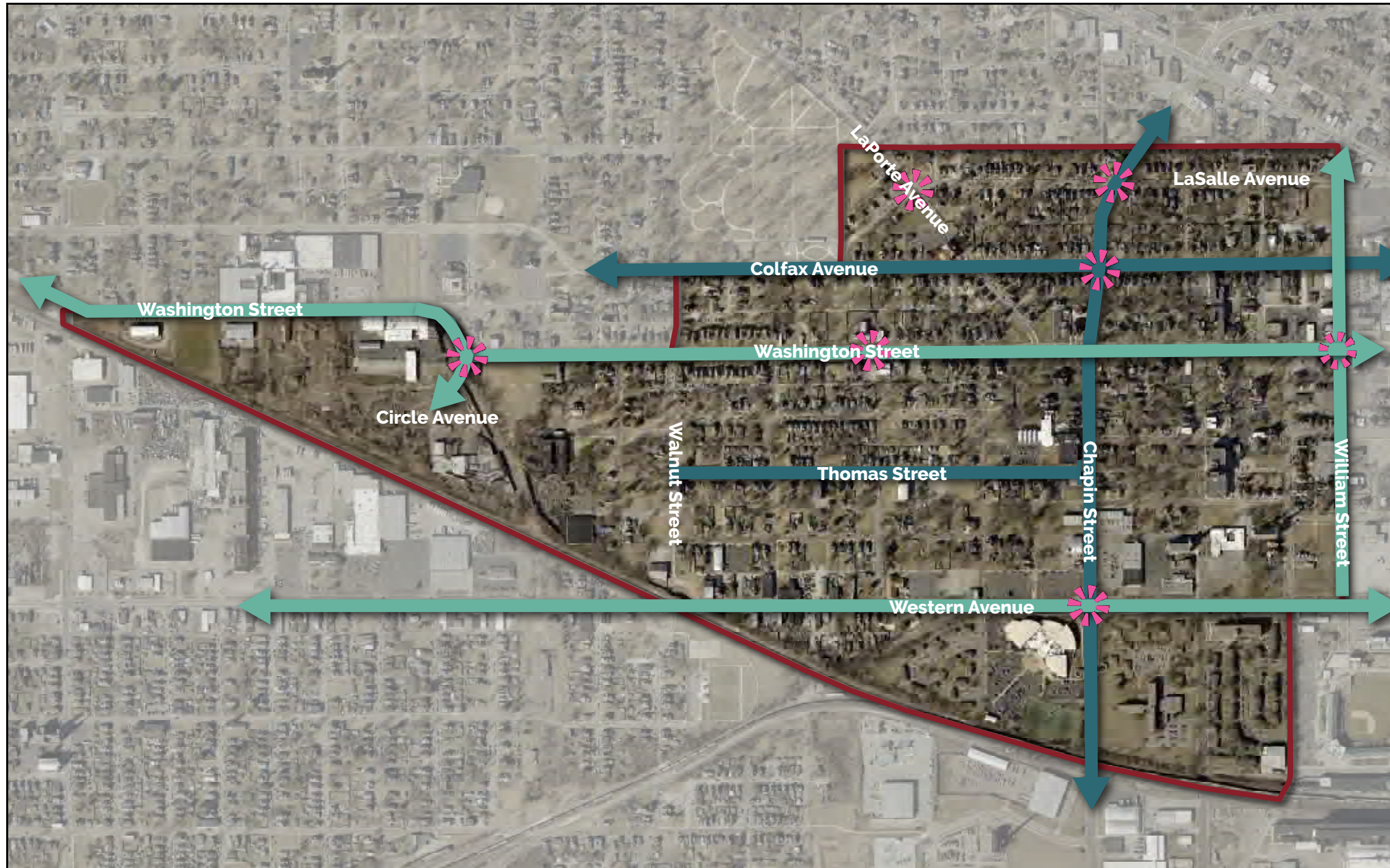


stated improved sidewalks would encourage them to walk more.






stated improved lighting would encourage them to walk more.





Map showing infrastructure improvements.

**Streets Map Key**

-  Streetscape Improvements
-  Traffic Calming
-  Intersection Improvements



Western Avenue - Chapin Street intersection, looking northwest.



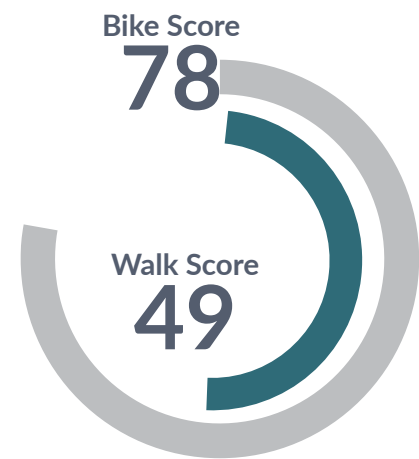
William Street, looking south at Jefferson Boulevard.



## Bicycle Infrastructure

Following is a list of bicycle-related projects, including shared bicycle-pedestrian paths, proposed for the Near West Side Neighborhood.

### Walk Score & Bike Score



Source: Walkscore.com; Score at History Museum Campus on Thomas Street as of 2021.



### Shared Use Path

Route	Extent
Orange Street / Colfax Avenue	Walnut Street - William Street
Walnut Street	Washington Street - Pulaski Park (Western Avenue)
Circle Avenue	College Street - Washington Street
Washington Street	Circle Avenue - Walnut Street



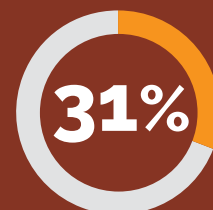
### Bike Lane

Route	Extent
Jefferson Boulevard	Taylor Street - William Street

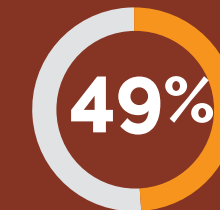
### Shared On Street

Route	Extent
Chapin Street	Western Avenue - Colfax Avenue

During the planning process, participants were asked a series of questions about bicycle infrastructure.

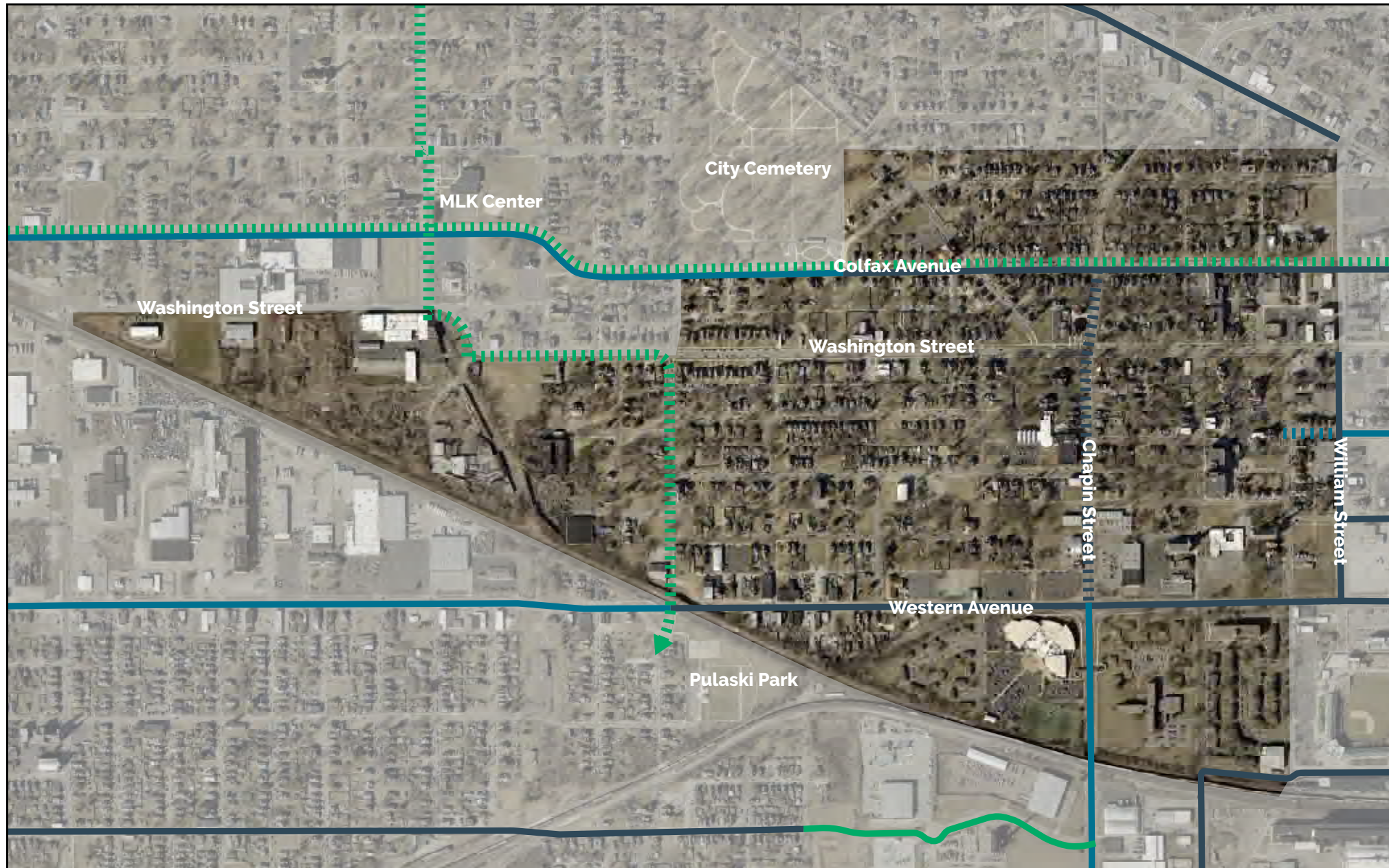


of respondents stated they bike in the neighborhood



stated designated bicycle infrastructure would encourage them to bike more.





Map showing bicycle infrastructure improvements.

**Streets Map Key**

Existing		Shared Use Path (Trail)	Proposed		Shared Use Path (Trail)
		Protected Bike Lane			Protected Bike Lane
		Bike Lane			Bike Lane
		Shared On-Street			Shared On-Street



**Shared Use Path**  
Off-street facility shared by people on foot and bicycles



**Protected Bike Lane**  
Facility separated from motor vehicle traffic by a curb, planter, or other physical barriers for the exclusive use of people on bicycles



**Bike Lane**  
Designated lane for bicyclists within the street; normally marked with a painted line and cyclist symbol



# Housing

A range of housing strategies will help ensure the Near West Side Neighborhood as a successful, diverse, mixed-income area.

## Market Challenges

For much of the Near West Side neighborhood, the cost of constructing new housing is greater than the appraised value of the property once it is completed. This financial gap is a barrier to the financing and construction of new housing, especially market-rate units, in the area.

Several tactics can be employed to help close the gap. Multi-unit housing can usually be built at a lower cost per unit than detached houses. Additionally, pre-approved building plans for residential structures, a detached accessory dwelling unit revolving loan fund, grants to replace sewer and water laterals, low-cost land through land banks, and building adjacent to stronger market areas are among the potential ways to make new construction of attainable housing units possible.

## Missing Middle

A mix of housing types and price points can mean that housing is available for people of all means. One way to support this mix is through “missing middle” housing. Missing middle housing is a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units — compatible in scale and form with detached single-family houses — located in a walkable neighborhood. This housing is called “missing” because zoning regulations had made it difficult or impossible to build over the last half-century and “middle” because it sits in the middle of a spectrum between detached single-family houses and mid-rise to high-rise apartment buildings, in terms of form, scale, number of units, and often, affordability.

Often seen in South Bend in the form of duplexes, townhouses, and small apartment buildings, missing middle housing was part of the historic development of the Near West Side Neighborhood. Many of these types can still offer opportunities for ownership and for the amenities that can be found in detached houses or in large apartment buildings. The South Bend Zoning Ordinance has been reformed to promote missing middle housing, but changes to the zoning map for the neighborhood can further encourage these units.



Existing “Missing Middle” type homes on Colfax Avenue.

## Housing Repair and Quality

Housing repair assistance can allow neighborhood residents to stay in their homes as they age. Code Enforcement can ensure that houses and their yards are kept in acceptable condition; in particular, the City’s Rental Safety Verification Program Code can assure a level of quality for rental housing units.

## Direct Housing Provision

Housing providers, both for-profit and nonprofit, can use tax credits, government grants, and other financing to rehabilitate or build new housing units for lower-income households. South Bend Housing Authority can continue implementing its plans to renovate or redevelop its housing units within the neighborhood.







# Sustainability

South Bend is committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2050, and each neighborhood has a role to play in reducing the community's emissions. The projects put forward in the Near West Side Neighborhood Plan support the City's sustainability goals related to green infrastructure, built environment, and clean transportation.



## Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure plays a central role in improving air, soil, and water quality, by reducing energy use in buildings, supporting the capturing and use of carbon, and improving stormwater filtration.

- Increase the number of trees planted to improve the energy efficiency of buildings by lowering the energy needed to heat or cool a building.
- Plant street trees to help extend the useful life of street pavement due to increased shading of pavement.
- Reduce paved surfaces in the neighborhood to help lower stormwater run off, improve water quality, and reduce vulnerability to the urban heat island effect.
- Seek to have water be absorbed where it falls instead of transferred off site for processing.

## Built Environment

Reducing energy use in South Bend will significantly cut greenhouse gas emissions.

- Rehabilitate existing structures to reduce carbon emissions and construction waste.
- Reuse materials or select lower-carbon building materials when constructing new housing.
- Encourage urban residential infill and the use of existing public utilities and infrastructure to reduce the need to extend services into rural areas.
- Promote the use of solar panels for energy generation.

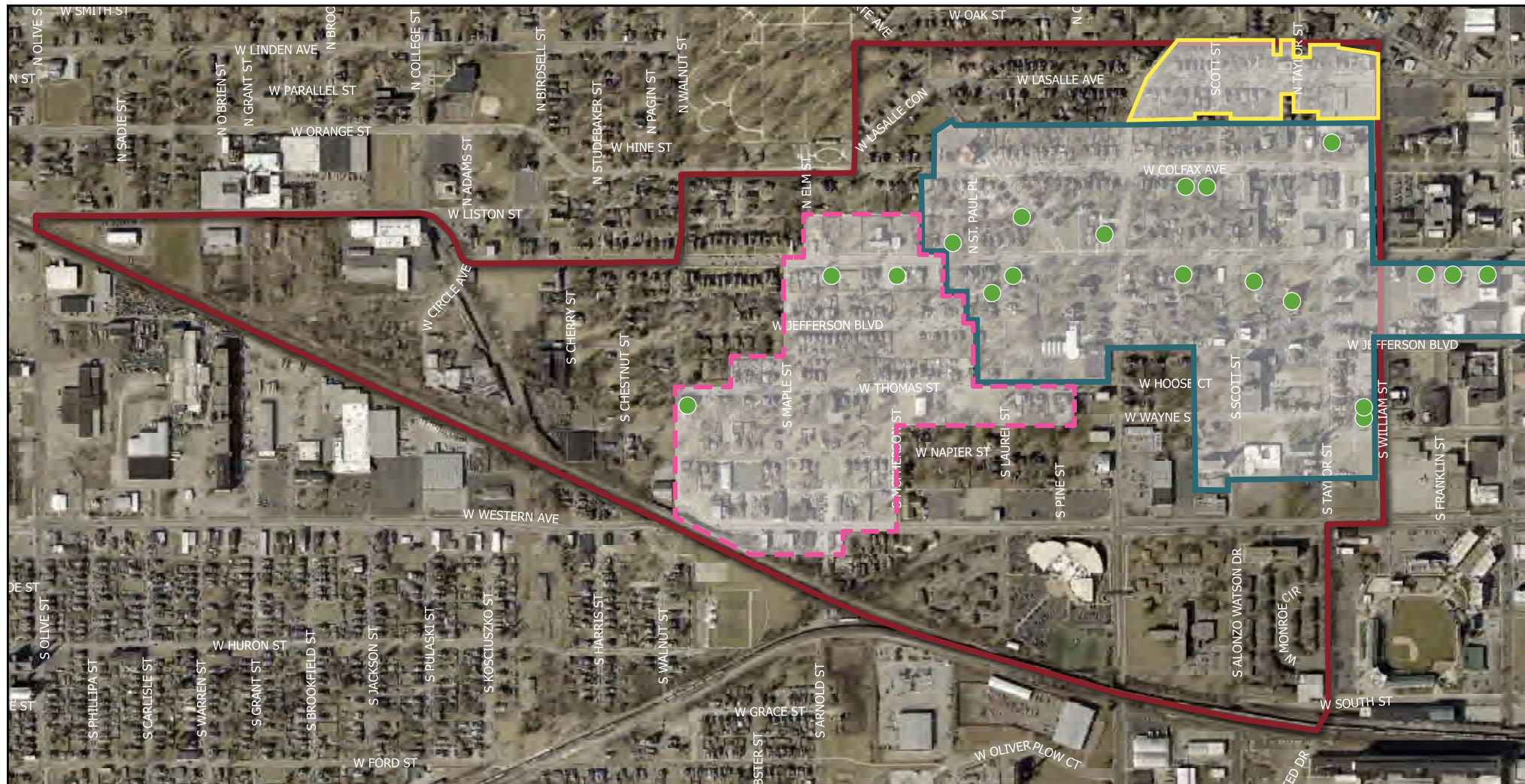
## Transportation

Transportation represents one of the largest sources of emissions in our community, so making biking, walking, transit, and other forms of shared mobility more accessible to residents is critical.

- Allow an appropriate mixing of land uses to reduce the amount of travel required.
- Add new bike lanes and improve walkability to allow more people to safely bike and walk, reducing vehicle-related emissions.
- Construct shared-use paths, which put less stress on the existing street infrastructure, ultimately reducing the frequency of street repair.
- Promote public transportation, which compared to driving alone, reduces emissions and improves air quality.



# Preserve Historic Character



West Washington National Historic District boundary, potential expansion, and local landmarks.

Part of the Near West Side Neighborhood falls within the West Washington and West LaSalle National Historic District. To maintain the unique characteristics of the neighborhood, the following actions are recommended:

- Preserve the historic character of individually designated local landmarks and the overall neighborhood, particularly within the National Register Historic District.
- Use financial incentives of National Register designation to complete building rehabilitations and consider expanding the district to broaden the reach of these incentives.
- Build new structures consistent in scale and design with the neighborhood.

**Preserve Historic Character Key**

- Neighborhood boundary
- West LaSalle National Historic District
- West Washington National Historic District
- Potential expansion of district
- Locally designated historic structures / sites



Jefferson Boulevard houses.



El Campito building.



# Built Form & Zoning

## Overview

The built form of the Near West Side Neighborhood is guided by the South Bend Zoning Ordinance, including its zoning map. The ordinance is a local law that governs the physical development of property, both the form and scale of buildings and the specific use of land.

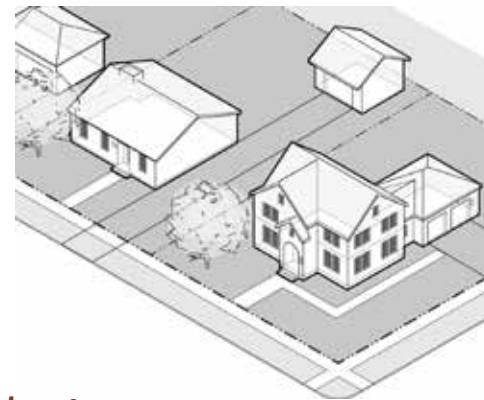
The future zoning map within this section proposes how each lot within the Near West Side Neighborhood should be zoned following adoption of this plan. Over time, property within the neighborhood should be allowed to proceed gradually to the next increment of development.

Combined with the regulations found within the South Bend Zoning Ordinance, the aim of the future zoning map is to maintain and enhance the Near West Side Neighborhood's pedestrian-oriented, urban environment. Vehicle access, parking, and garages should be from alleys when present. Drive-throughs are discouraged, and if they are present, they should be designed not to be visible from the street.

This plan seeks to allow a greater quantity and diversity in housing units; doing so will permit people to find housing within the neighborhood that meets their price and lifestyle needs. New housing should be carefully designed and located to support, and positively influence, neighborhood character. Ancillary dwelling units, such as carriage houses or backyard cottages, are encouraged for the Near West Side Neighborhood.

The South Bend zoning map divides the city into the twelve zoning districts. Six of these districts are proposed for the Near West Side Neighborhood: **U1:** Urban Neighborhood 1, **U2:** Urban Neighborhood 2, **U3:** Urban Neighborhood 3, **UF:** Urban Neighborhood Flex, **NC:** Neighborhood Center, and **I:** Industrial.

### S1 Suburban Neighborhood 1



#### Intent

The S1 Suburban Neighborhood 1 district primarily supports single-unit residential development on larger lots with deep setbacks.

#### Where It Is Appropriate

Due to its suburban nature, the S1 District is not appropriate anywhere in the Near West Side Neighborhood.

### S2 Suburban Neighborhood 2



The S2 District supports a full range of housing types placed on large lots with deep setbacks.

Due to its suburban nature, the S2 District is not appropriate anywhere in the Near West Side Neighborhood.

### U1 Urban Neighborhood 1



The U1 Urban Neighborhood 1 district supports mostly single-unit detached dwellings, but well designed duplexes would also be appropriate. The U1 district features modest building setbacks and inviting frontages, such as porches and stoops.

Portions of the northern and central part of the Near West Neighborhood would fall within the U1 district. This plan would support special exceptions for new construction duplexes but would discourage conversions of existing single-unit dwellings to multi-family.



**U2** Urban Neighborhood 2



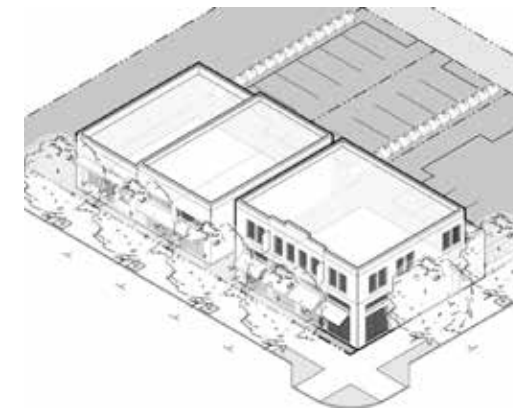
**U3** Urban Neighborhood 3



**UF** Urban Neighborhood Flex



**NC** Neighborhood Center



**DT** Downtown



The U2 Urban Neighborhood 2 district provides for primarily detached houses and duplexes, but it allows for neighborhood-scale buildings of up to four units. Buildings have modest setbacks and inviting frontages, such as porches and stoops.

The U3 Urban Neighborhood 3 district supports a full range of housing types, from single-unit dwellings to large multi-unit buildings, placed at small setbacks. Buildings in the U3 district may be built up to four stories in height.

The UF Urban Flex district supports a full range of housing types, together with limited small-scale commercial uses. Buildings typically have small setbacks and are two to four stories.

The NC Neighborhood Center district supports higher intensity, mixed-use urban centers, often near the intersection of major streets. Buildings usually have small or no setbacks and can be up to four stories. In addition to having higher concentrations of housing units, these areas typically serve as the commercial centers for their neighborhood.

The DT Downtown district supports the development of South Bend's core into a high-intensity, mixed use urban area.

This district is well suited for much of the central area of the neighborhood and other select locations. These properties support new buildings of 1-4 units built at a scale compatible with surrounding residential properties. Unless well-designed, conversions to add units to existing buildings are discouraged.

The Housing Authority properties and other scattered sites are suitable for the U3 district. Additional properties along intersections or major streets may be appropriate for U3 if limited to 6 units and 2.5 stories.

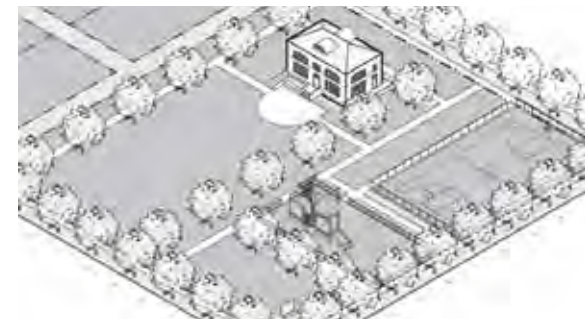
The UF Urban Flex district is appropriate along the eastern edge of the Near West Side Neighborhood, as well as a few other scattered sites. If located on a lot interior to a block, UF buildings should be in a scale and form of nearby building types.

The NC Neighborhood Center district is well suited for along Chapin Street and Western Avenue and a few other locations, including for neighborhood institutions. Pedestrian-scale design is critical in this district, which has increased design standards. Auto-oriented uses are highly discouraged.

The DT Downtown district would not apply to any properties in the Near West Side Neighborhood.



**OS** Open Space



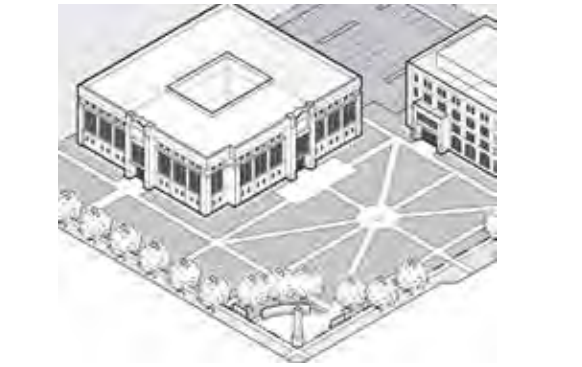
**Intent**

The OS Open Space district supports the development of public parks and other open spaces.

**Where It Is Appropriate**

While no land is proposed for OS zoning, this plan proposes green spaces within other zoning districts. If a publicly-owned neighborhood park were developed in the future, it should be zoned OS.

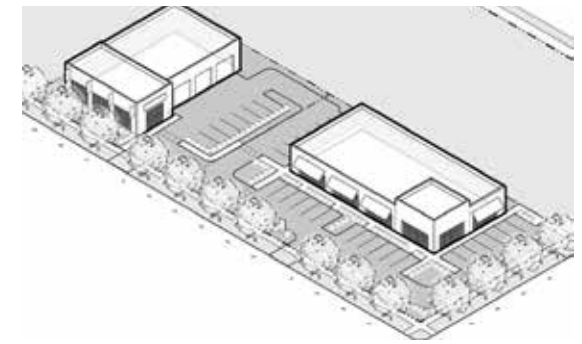
**U** University



The U University district supports the development of university campuses.

The U University district is not currently proposed for the Near West Side Neighborhood.

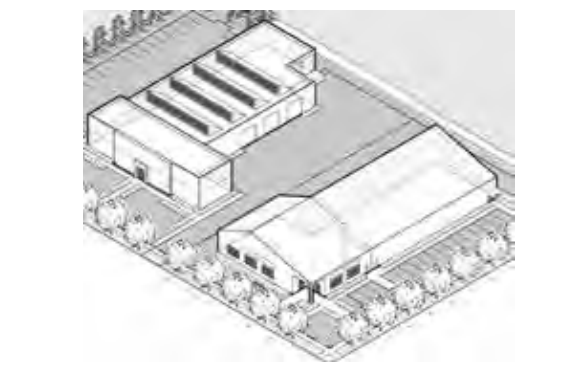
**C** Commercial



The C Commercial district supports medium- to high-intensity commercial uses that are auto-oriented and found in suburban locations.

Because of its suburban, automobile-oriented nature, the C district would be inappropriate anywhere in the Near West Side Neighborhood.

**I** Industrial



The I Industrial District supports medium- to high-intensity industrial uses, typically grouped along highways and major streets and separated from residential uses.

The far west end of the Near West Side Neighborhood is a good location for the I Industrial district. This area historically developed as industrial because of the proximity of the rail line. Expansion of the I district east of Walnut Street is discouraged.

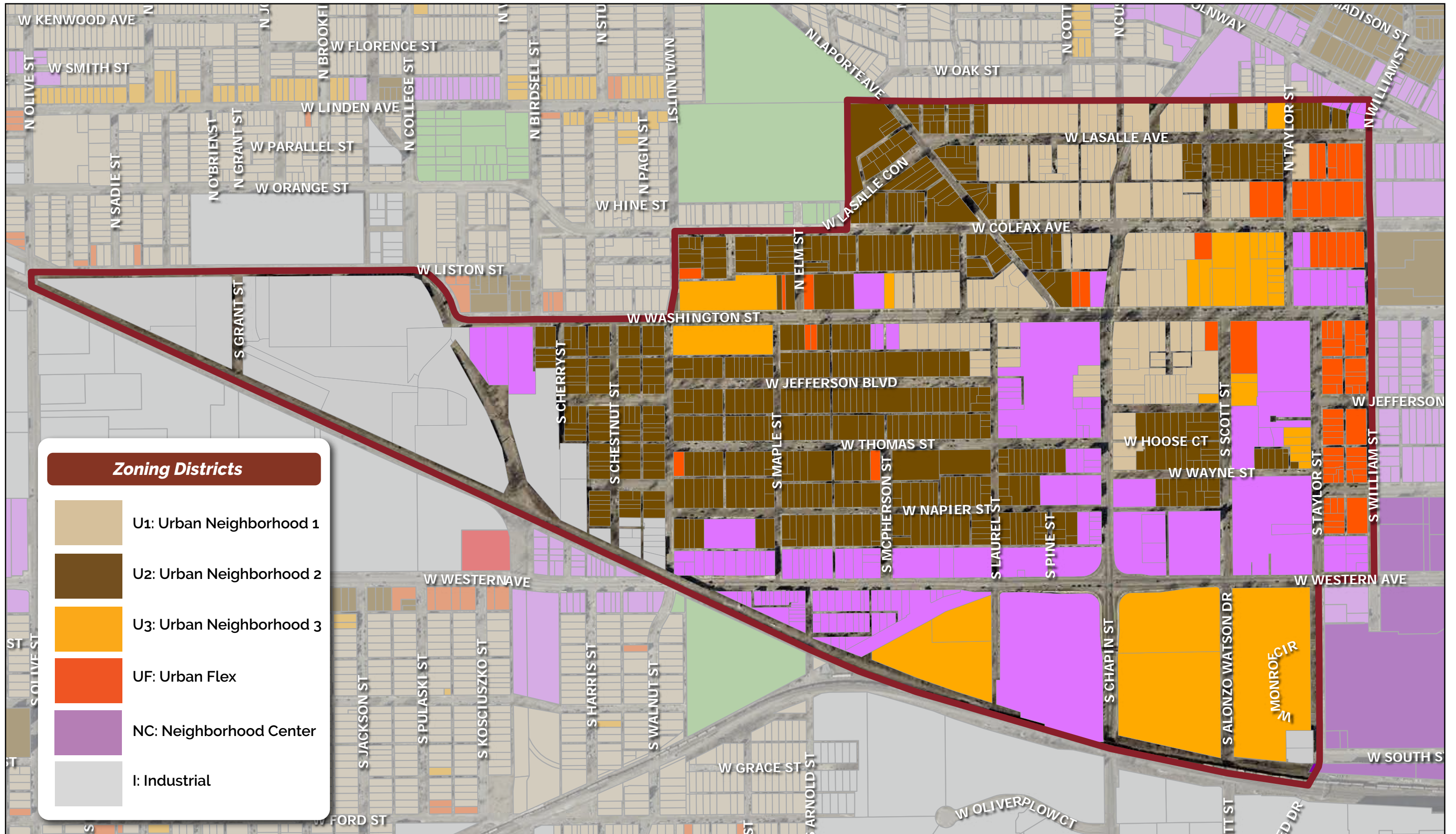
**HP** Historic Preservation



The HP Overlay District is established to preserve buildings, other structures, and sites of historical, architectural, engineering, and cultural significance in South Bend.

Several properties in the Near West Side Neighborhood are designated as local historic landmarks. Other properties may be added to the HP Overlay District as warranted by designation criteria.









Future Zoning Map for Near West Side Neighborhood.



# Building Types

The table on the following pages illustrates the character of different building types and shows in which zoning districts they are permitted. Building types do not apply to the OS, U, C, or I zoning districts.

	Carriage House	Detached House	Cottage Court	Duplex
	S1 S2 U1 U2 U3 UF NC	S1 S2 U1 U2 U3 UF	S2 U2 U3 UF	S1 S2 U1 U2 U3 UF
<b>Zoning Districts</b>				
S1 Suburban Neighborhood 1				
S2 Suburban Neighborhood 2				
U1 Urban Neighborhood 1				
U2 Urban Neighborhood 2				
U3 Urban Neighborhood 3				
UF Urban Neighborhood Flex				
NC Neighborhood Center				
DT Downtown				
Cottage court photos (top to bottom): michaelwatkinsarchitect.com kerneyhomes.com cottagecourt.com				



Townhouse

Apartment House

Stacked Flats

Shop

Mid-Rise / Tower

S2 U2 U3 UF NC DT

S2 U2 U3 UF NC DT

S2 U3 UF NC DT

UF NC DT

DT





# Implementation

This plan outlines potential projects and activities to occur in the neighborhood over the next 20 years. Major projects, especially those to be undertaken in the next 10 years, are highlighted in the implementation matrix below.

Strategy 1: Complete neighborhood infrastructure improvements.						
Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>1.1 Western Avenue:</b> Complete streetscape improvements.	●			●		
<b>1.2 William Street:</b> Complete streetscape improvements including intersection improvements and bicycle infrastructure.	●			●		
<b>1.3 Chapin Street and Western Avenue:</b> Complete intersection improvements in order to improve pedestrian safety.	●			●		
<b>1.4 Washington Street:</b> Complete streetscape improvements including intersection improvements.	●			●		
<b>1.5 Chapin Street / Charles Martin Sr. Drive:</b> Complete traffic calming and pedestrian safety improvements, especially at Colfax Avenue and LaSalle Avenue intersections.	●				●	
<b>1.6 LaPorte Avenue - LaSalle Avenue:</b> Complete intersection improvements to improve pedestrian safety.	●				●	
<b>1.7 Washington Street and Circle Avenue:</b> Complete intersection improvements including shared-use path.	●					●
<b>1.8 Orange Street / Colfax Avenue:</b> Explore the creation of multi-use trail connecting MLK Center to downtown.	●			●		
<b>1.9 Street Trees:</b> Plant street trees where possible.		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Residents, Property Owners	●	●	●
<b>1.10 Promote Infrastructure Programs:</b> Promote existing curb & sidewalk replacement program to assist with the cost of replacement.		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Residents, Property Owners	●		
<b>1.11 Downtown Connection:</b> Explore ways to create more comfortable connections between the neighborhood and downtown.	●			●	●	
<b>1.12 Infrastructure Maintenance:</b> Complete regular maintenance on streets and sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.	●	●	Property Owners	●	●	●



**Strategy 2: Improve park spaces and access.**

Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>2.1 Park:</b> Facilitate the creation of a publicly accessible neighborhood park.	●	●	El Campito, Near West Side Neighborhood Organization	●		
<b>2.2 Museum Campus:</b> Support programming of museums and expansion within the context of the neighborhood.	●	●		●		
<b>2.3 Civic Connection:</b> Investigate creating a pedestrian connection between City Cemetery, Center for Civic Innovation, Civil Rights Heritage Center, and Jefferson Boulevard green space.	●	●	IU South Bend, University of Notre Dame, Property Owners		●	
<b>2.4 Coal Line Extension:</b> Create a connection from Martin Luther King Jr. Center to Pulaski Park.	●					●
<b>2.5 Pocket Park:</b> Explore creation of park at LaPorte Avenue-Washington Street.		●	History and Studebaker Museum			●

**Strategy 3: Develop and preserve housing in the neighborhood.**

Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>3.1 Develop Housing:</b> Support the production of a range of housing types including new construction and rehabilitation of market rate and affordable units for owner and rental housing.		●	Developers, Local Nonprofit Housing Providers, City of South Bend	●	●	●
<b>3.2 Zoning:</b> Update neighborhood zoning map.	●			●		
<b>3.3 Home Repair:</b> Promote housing repair program.	●			●		
<b>3.4 Historic District:</b> Explore the expansion of the West Washington National Register Historic District to allow for the expanded use of federal tax credit incentives.	●		Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Property Owners, Indiana Landmarks	●		
<b>3.5 Tools:</b> Explore mechanisms that can assist with the financial gap that impacts housing development.	●			●	●	●
<b>3.6 Housing Authority:</b> Work with the South Bend Housing Authority to redevelop SBHA owned sites.		●	South Bend Housing Authority, City of South Bend	●	●	



**Strategy 4: Develop sense of community through neighborhood engagement.**

Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>4.1 Capacity Building:</b> Build neighborhood capacity through engagement of all neighborhood residents.		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization	●	●	●
<b>4.2 Neighborhood Events:</b> Hold neighborhood events including annual spring clean-up and celebrations of the neighborhood..		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Neighborhood Institutions	●	●	●
<b>4.3 Communication:</b> Develop and maintain communication with neighbors including residents of rental housing.		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization	●	●	●
<b>4.4 Relationships:</b> Foster relationships among the City, neighborhood institutions, and the neighborhood organization.	●	●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Neighborhood Institutions	●		

**Strategy 5: Address underutilized properties in the neighborhood.**

Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>5.1 City-Owned Lots:</b> Promote the reuse of city-owned properties.	●			●	●	●
<b>5.2 Interim Use:</b> Find creative ways to utilize vacant lots in the short term with ability to develop housing as market demands in the long term.		●	Property Owners, Near West Side Neighborhood Institutions	●	●	●
<b>5.3 Industrial Lots:</b> Investigate ways to reuse industrial properties.	●	●	Property Owners	●	●	●
<b>5.4 Facade Grants:</b> Promote facade improvement program for Western Avenue mixed-use properties.	●	●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization, Property Owners	●		
<b>5.5 Brownfield:</b> Work with federal, state, regional, and local governments to connect property owners with resources to assess and remediate brownfield sites.	●	●	EPA, IDEM, MACOG, St. Joseph County, Property Owners	●	●	●



Strategy 6: Increase feeling of neighborhood safety.						
Action	Lead Responsibility		Potential Partners	Timeline		
	City	Partner		1-5 Years	5-10 Years	10+ Years
<b>6.1 Problem Properties:</b> Utilize the Chronic Problem Properties regulations to reduce the negative impact of problem properties on the neighborhood.	●		Near West Side Neighborhood Organization	●	●	●
<b>6.2 Crime Stats Meeting:</b> Attend Police monthly crime information meetings and report back to neighborhood.		●	Near West Side Neighborhood Organization	●	●	●
<b>6.3 Street Lighting:</b> Improve level of street lighting and trim trees that block street lights.	●	●	Property Owners	●	●	