Multi-modal parkways- White River Parkway

White River Parkway provides connectivity across multiple districts along the edge of the neighborhood. This corridor boasts views of the White River as well as views of Riverside Park and the golf courses and other natural resources along the White River. This corridor has limited cross streets and no on-street parking, but it allows for ample pedestrian and bicycle circulation as well as recreation cross-traffic.

Multi-modal residential streets

All streets not designated as those above will be designed as multi-modal residential streets. These local streets have slow traffic speeds and low traffic volumes and are meant to serve local residents. They do not have designated bike lanes, instead bikers must share the road with automobiles, but there is a designated area for pedestrians. A separation zone is used for transit, street trees, or green infrastructure to assist with stormwater management.
Walkability is not only based on the condition of the physical infrastructure, but also on destinations residents have to walk to. In inner-city neighborhoods a major issue residents face is the loss of jobs and industry. As industries have moved to the suburbs, they left brownfields and vacant buildings behind, some with no chance of reuse. Not only does the move to the suburbs create a 'gapped tooth' appearance in inner-city neighborhoods, but it also increases the distance between workers and available jobs (Lopez & Hynes, 2006). By redeveloping brownfields into open space, residential units, or commercial development, investment returns to the neighborhood and stimulates the local economy. Redevelopment can cure the issue of 'spatial mismatch' or the increasing distance between workers and jobs and can improve the sense of identity and place in the neighborhood (Lopez & Hynes, 2006).

Vacant buildings can also increase the perception and, sometimes, incidence of crime. Vacant lots become overgrown with weeds, covered with litter, and may sometimes be used for illegal dumping (Lopez & Hynes, 2006). This fear of crime prevents residents from walking to destinations, socializing outdoors with neighbors, and exercising outdoors. Research has shown that women who live in 'safer' neighborhoods are more likely to walk to their various neighborhood destinations than those living in crime-ridden neighborhoods. Redevelopment of brownfields can also improve the air and water quality, and thus can lead to a shrink in cases of respiratory diseases.
Redevelopment of brownfields and vacant land would also increase density, fulfilling a goal in the Indianapolis Comprehensive Plan. This increase in density would support more retail and commercial establishments and create a vibrant, sustainable neighborhood. The canal, which was once the catalyst for the development of the neighborhood itself, can be used as a catalyst for revitalization by redeveloping it similar to the downtown canal. Vacant land can also be used for the establishment of community gardens which would foster social networks and activity and provide a healthy eating environment for all residents of UNWA.
FIG. 90

Legend

- Interstates
- Railroads
- Streets
- Greenways
- Streams
- Lakes
- Rivers
- Cemeteries
- Parks

- Mixed-use retail and medium density multi-family dwellings
- Concentrate commercial development at major transit stops
- Mixed-use retail and high density multi-family dwellings
- Mixed-use light industry and community commercial-pedestrian oriented retail and service district
- Community commercial-pedestrian oriented retail and service district
- Concentrate high density multi-family dwellings around canal

Ensure infill is cohesive to surrounding context and stays true to historical character.

Focus infill housing in remaining pockets of neighborhood.

Locate full-service grocery near transit along main access corridor.
FrameworK
Guidelines

- Redevelop brownfields in the neighborhood

Retail

- Locate retail and commercial buildings and their entrances near major public transit stops on the major transit corridors—29th, 30th, Martin Luther King Jr. Street, and 16th Streets.
  - Locate buildings and their entrances near corridors with shallow setbacks
  - Ensure urban form celebrates, instead of blocks, important views such as the view downtown

- Ensure all residents live within one (1) mile of a full service grocer

Residential

- Infill housing to increase density and improve the 'gapped-tooth' appearance of neighborhood
  - Infill existing 1070 vacant lots adding an estimated additional 2611 residents to the community
  - Ensure an 80:20 ratio of market to affordable housing units in all new multi-family and single-family developments

- Develop multi-family housing near canal and major corridors
  - Incorporate public space such as plazas or park space in developments
  - Provide areas for community supported urban agriculture
  - Consider architectural style of context when designing new housing—both single- and multi-family dwellings
  - Refer to building typologies for appropriate size, style, density, and open space requirements for new residential development
  - Ensure windows are all all sides of multi-family dwellings
  - Place entrances in highly visible areas for multi-family dwellings
Community Commercial Pedestrian-Oriented Retail and Service Corridor

This land use category is for retail development of less than 125,000 square feet. This development will lie along the major arterial corridors or 29th, 30th, Martin Luther King Jr. Street, and 16th Street and will be concentrated at the major intersections. This development will be anchored by a supermarket or drug store, will contain 10-40 stores total, and will cover a market area radius of 1-3 miles. Establishments in this retail area include drugstores, grocery stores, banks, restaurants, clothing stores, hobby shops, coffee shops, specialty retail, destination retail, etc. Much of this commercial development will be mixed-use, retail, residential, and office use. These corridors will serve to reinforce existing retail along MLK and 16th Street and expand commercial development along the other major corridors.

Neighborhood Retail and Service Node

The small-scale commercial nodes will serve basic resident needs within a quarter mile walking distance. These will be located at secondary, minor bus stops in the heart of the residential development. These would be anchored by convenience stores and post offices and will contain 3-20 stores with a total retail space of 10,000 to 30,000 square feet. The market area radius will be less than 2 miles. Examples of retail tenants in this scale development include hair salons, medical offices, drycleaners, insurance offices, and restaurants.

Village Mixed-Use Node

This land use category focuses on a mixed-use core of office, retail, open space, and public and semi-public uses. This will node will be located within the northern part of the neighborhood separated from the southern half by Interstate 65 as a retail service node for that section of the neighborhood. Strip and large scale freestanding retail uses are prohibited.

Light Industrial

This land use development will be concentrated in the southern part of the neighborhood and will consist of industrial uses that have no, or extremely limited, outdoor uses. This development will create minimal impact on adjacent residential uses.
Single Family 5-8 units per acre

The majority of the UNWA neighborhood is categorized as this residential land use. Existing land use categories of this scale and density will be maintained. Infill development should be of the same density.

Single Family 8-15 units per acre

This density is the highest density single-family residential development and lowest density multi-family development. This type of single- and multi-family development will serve to transition between the lower density single family use and the higher density multi-family dwelling units.

Multi-family >15 units per acre

This density will be concentrated along major corridors such as MLK, 29th, 30th, and 16th Streets and will also be concentrated along the canal. This density will be located near the major bus stops as well as along the corridors with the potential to be used for other forms of mass transit. This development will be categorized by townhomes, rowhouses, and apartment buildings.
The following building typologies will be used to guide both infill and new residential and retail development. Exterior design of these buildings will be based on the surrounding context to ensure the new or infill development fits within the neighborhood context. Existing homes are one to two story frame buildings built in the traditional American bungalow style. Exterior materials consist of both wood and vinyl siding and brick facades.

**INFILL SINGLE FAMILY**

![INFILL SINGLE FAMILY Image](image)

**HIGHER-DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY**

![HIGHER-DENSITY SINGLE FAMILY Image](image)

**CONTEXTUAL/AMERICAN BUNGALOW TOWNHOMES**

![CONTEXTUAL/AMERICAN BUNGALOW TOWNHOMES Image](image)
Public open space is important for a variety of reasons. It offers the opportunity for physical activity and also provides a site for the formation of social relationships. Research has shown that the proximity one lives near parks and open space is associated with their participation in physical activity. This is especially true with children (Weathers, 2007). Parks provide the venue for a variety of physical activity from running to organized sports to gardening. Parks are also important to the health of seniors, an important issue to note as the UNWA neighborhood has a high percentage of senior residents. A study in Tokyo found seniors who lived in neighborhoods with walkable green spaces lived longer than those living in neighborhoods without walkable green spaces (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010). Open space networks also provide the opportunity for urban agriculture and local food production.

Parks and open space create an environment that improves mental health as well. Studies have shown that access to green view and environments can improve impulse control, resilience, cognitive functioning, and overall mental health (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010). Parks and open space can improve the mental health of residents suffering from ADHD, depression, stress, and anxiety. Parents of children with ADHD actually rated outdoor after school activity programs as significantly more helpful than those held indoors. One study showed that ADHD children who took a twenty-minute walk in an urban park actually improved their
concentration performance (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010).

Parks also offer the setting for establishing social networks and community relationships. Research has shown that residents living in socially cohesive communities are more likely to help neighbors through hard times and share information about relevant community news or job openings. Strong social cohesion also increases residents' incidence of political participation (Ellen & Turner, 1997). According to the National Recreation and Park Association, when people are connected to nature, they feel less isolated and focus less on themselves and more on the community. Parks and open space can lower crime rates, increase feelings of safety, and lead residents to have a stronger feeling of belonging (National Recreation and Park Association, 2010).

Riverside Park, a regional destination, is located on the western edge of the UNWA neighborhood. While the neighborhood boasts this 95.7 acre park, it lacks smaller neighborhood, community, and mini parks that could increase walkability, physical activity, and improve the overall health of the residents. There are two large portions of the neighborhood that do not live within a quarter mile of a park or open space, and this plan proposes a variety of potential spaces for establishing these smaller parks and creating a complete open space network in UNWA.
Provide all residents with park space within at least ¼ mi. walking distance from their home.

Ensure park and open space meets National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards:

- Community park space: 5-8 acres per 1,000 population
- Neighborhood park space: 1-2 acres per 1,000 population
- Mini park space and pocket parks will be designated based on remaining acreage of community and neighborhood park space.

Incorporate park space and plazas as components of large-scale developments, concentrating open space in a large area as opposed to dispersing the open space into smaller pieces if avoidable.

Incorporate midblock connections when blocks are greater than 600' wide.

Utilize vacant land and brownfields as sites for new open space:

- Create new community park near Fall Creek, connecting Watkins Park, Fall Creek Park, and the greenways.

Design parks, open spaces, and recreational facilities to accommodate various age groups:

- Incorporate playgrounds and active recreation facilities as well as passive recreation areas
- Incorporate paths and greenways
- Incorporate furnishing, drinking fountains, lighting, and other pedestrian accommodations
- Incorporate community gardens, urban agriculture, and farmers markets
Fig. 112
Neighborhood and Regional Connectivity
Gateways, Hearts, and Edges
Street Character
Land Use and Development
Public Open Space Network
INTRODUCTION

Just as the canal was the catalyst for the formation of North Indianapolis and what would eventually become the United Northwest Area Neighborhood, the canal is once again an opportunity for development and revitalization. This focus area master plan explores how the urban design framework can be implemented along the canal and how the guidelines can be used to spark revitalization.

Through the framework, a basic design and development concept was formed. The canal is highlighted in all framework plans to the left and from there one can see the potential the canal has in each plan.

This focus area was developed in detail from ensuring there are adequate amounts of parking per dwelling unit to the retail square footage that can be sustained by the new residential development. Building typologies follow those laid out in the urban design framework and the character of the open space was developed through perspective. Pedestrian bridges serve to create connections and establish a strong pedestrian network as well as establish focal points along the canal. This plan shows how the UNWA neighborhood can once again become a vital, sustainable, healthy place to live, work, and play.
FIG. 113

CONCEPT DIAGRAM

SOFT, VEGETATED EDGE

CENTRAL PLAZA

DEVELOPMENT FOCUS AREA

MAJOR E/W PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

NEXUS FOR CANAL, DEVELOPMENT, FALL CREEK

BUFFERS-LARGE SETBACKS, HEIGHT

GATEWAY

IMPORTANT PEDESTRIAN CONNECTION

CONNECT INTO DOWNTOWN CULTURAL TRAIL
MASTER PLAN

WAPAHANI TRAIL CONNECTION

MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AREA

FALL CREEK CONNECTION

DOWNTOWN CONNECTION
The Wapahani Trail Connection will connect the new canal to the existing trail system along the White River. Lying along the single-family residential development, it will continue the soft, vegetated edge until it reaches 30th Street. The trail will be buffered by vegetation to create a sense of privacy for the residents as well as create enclosure for those walking along the canal. At the end of each road will be a rest stop for pedestrians and bicyclists and these rest stops will have bollards to prevent vehicular traffic. An example can be seen in Figure 120.

**Mini Park**

A mini park is proposed for the small lot near Interstate-65. This park will act as a buffer between the residential development and the interstate while also serving as a destination for bicyclists and pedestrians along the Canal Tow Path and Wapahani Trail. This mini park is 1.2 acres and has amenities such as picnic pavilions, water fountains.

**Gateway**

This gateway along White River Parkway will consist of flag and light poles with the UNWA logo, historic pictures, and bold color scheme. The gateway will not only serve as a gateway for the neighborhood but also for the canal. A totem pole will be located at the small plaza near the pedestrian bridge crossing the canal as a gateway element and public art piece. This gateway can be seen in Figure 119.

**Neighborhood Park**

Due to the extent of vacancies on this block and the need for neighborhood park space, a neighborhood park is proposed for this block. The park is 3.7 acres and will feature amenities such as a playground, basketball courts, and picnic pavilion.

**Contextual Townhomes**

These townhomes will be of the American Bungalow Style similar to the surrounding single-family context. They will serve to transition to the higher density mixed-used development along the canal. These can be seen in Figures 101 and 102.

**Rowhouses**

Row houses serve to transition from the medium- and high-density single family development to the apartment buildings along the canal. These can be seen in Figures 107 and 108.
The section of the canal features the majority of the residential and retail development. It is located in the heart of the neighborhood and is designed to create a destination for UNWA residents and the greater Indianapolis context.

**Mixed-use Retail/Residential**

Along 29th and 30th Streets retail and residential uses will be clustered. This is located along the community commercial pedestrian-oriented corridor and will have 25,000 square feet of retail space that will be anchored by a grocery store. Parking for retail will be a surface lot while parking for residential units will be on the first and second floors of the apartment buildings.

**Residential Development**

Multi-family residential development will be concentrated around the canal. The residential development will be similar to that of the downtown canal and will range from townhomes to courtyard apartments. The development will transition in size and density from the existing single-family development to the 4-5 story apartments. There will also be residential development geared for senior living. Over 700 dwelling units will be added along the extent of the canal.

**Neighborhood Park**

This neighborhood park is 4 acres and will feature amenities such as a playground, basketball court, formal and informal gardens, basketball courts, and picnic pavilions. This can be seen in Figure 123.

**Community Garden**

The community garden, located near the elementary school, Neighborhood Park, and senior living development will serve many purposes. It will be a site for learning, recreation, and social networks. This also provides the opportunity for a healthier eating environment. This can be seen in Figure 122.

**Boat launch**

The boat launch and surrounding plaza acts as a public open space and a node along the larger waterway network. Here one can grab a boat or a bike and travel along the various waterways. This network improves physical and social health as well as the connectivity of the Indianapolis area. This can be seen in Figure 124.
This section of the canal connects the new development and trail system to the existing Fall Creek Trail. This section also acts to transition from the UNWA neighborhood to downtown Indianapolis. This does so by a transition in scale, water features, and materials.

**Community Park**

Along Fall Creek is an abundance of brownfields and old industrial sites. A community park is proposed for the reuse of this brownfields. This community park is 47.5 acres and adds a major piece in an overall green network for Indianapolis. It features a trail system, picnic pavilions, community center, and boat launch.

**Aqueduct**

The Fall Creek Aqueduct is a unique feature for the UNWA neighborhood. This master plan proposes to create a viewing platform for the aqueduct as well as an adjacent plaza where events can be held. This can be seen in Figure 125.

**Manufacturing trail and plaza**

The trail lining the manufacturing and industrial area of the UNWA neighborhood is treated much differently than the other sections of the canal. The trail lines only one side of the canal and terminates in a large basin and plaza similar to the downtown canal near the IU Medical Center. A cross section of this can be seen in Figure 126.

**Runnel Trail**

This section of the trail transitions from the UNWA neighborhood to the downtown connection. This section of the trail separates pedestrian and bicycle traffic through materials and scale and is lined by a runnel to continue the visual and physical connection to the canal. This runnel terminates at the MLK gateway in a basin where it symbolically drains into a basin that seems to lead to the downtown canal waterfall. A cross section of this can be seen in Figure 127.
This is the final section of the canal master plan. The downtown connection is important to connect UNWA to the overall Indianapolis context. It offers the opportunity for a different audience and demographic to enter the UNWA neighborhood from downtown and for UNWA residents to have easy access to downtown features and amenities.

**Martin Luther King Jr Street/Canal Gateway**

This gateway serves as an entrance to both the MLK streetscape as well as the UNWA Canal. It has aspects of the MLK streetscape such as the totem poles and paving materials and has the runnel and paving materials of the canal trail system. This can be seen in Figure

**Cultural Trail**

Because of the abundance of road systems between the UNWA canal and the downtown canal, creating a successful streetscape is key in connecting the two sections of the canal and creating a large pedestrian network. This streetscape will be designed as a section of the cultural trail so it visually and physically connects into the downtown pedestrian network and extends it into the UNWA neighborhood. A cross section of this can be seen in Figure 128.

**Pedestrian Bridge**

The final connecting tissue between the UNWA canal and the downtown canal is the pedestrian bridge. This bridge, similar to the BP Bridge in Chicago will cross over Interstate 65 ramps and Martin Luther King Jr. St and will serve as a safe pathway for all pedestrians. It will be functional and aesthetic, serving as a pedestrian link and gateway.
CENTRAL PLAZA

FIG. 121
COMMUNITY GARDEN

FIG. 122
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

FIG. 123
BOAT LAUNCH

FIG. 124
FIG. 126

TRAIL NEAR MANUFACTURING
TRAIL WITH RUNNEL

FIG. 127
MLK - CANAL GATEWAY

FIG. 129
A healthy environment is welcoming to all incomes, ages, and races and has a clear identity and sense of place.

- gateways
- public art
- pedestrian bridges
- civic space and parks
- signage and street elements that celebrate neighborhood history and identity

A healthy environment offers the opportunity for physical activity through walking, biking, and recreation.

- bicycle and pedestrian connections continued along dead-end streets
- playgrounds
- active recreation friends
- connections to fall creek and wapahani trails
- canoe boat launch and bicycle sharing
A healthy environment is connected, both within the neighborhood and to the greater Indianapolis area.

- designated bus stops located near major retail and residential areas
- pedestrian/bicycle only crossing along canal
- trail connects UNWA to downtown
- pedestrian and bicycle connections continue along dead-end streets

A healthy environment has a mixture of land uses, encourages investment, fosters economic growth, and provides adequate services for residents.

- mixed-use development, variety of land uses
- variety of densities, housing types, and building typologies
- additional 25,000 sq. ft. retail, 700 dwelling units, 56.3 ac. open space
A healthy environment offers a variety of social outlets and encourages networking and interaction between residents and visitors.

- 56.3 acres of park and open space [1.2 ac. mini park space, 7.6 ac. neighborhood park space, 47.5 ac. community park space]
- varying degrees of public, semi-public, and private space
- connection to downtown draws varying demographics and visitors to UNWA

A healthy environment is a safe place, where residents feel free to walk, exercise, and socialize.

- passive/natural surveillance, eyes on the canal, open space, etc.
- distinguishable public and private space
- parking lots defined by curbs and plantings
- exterior doors visible to neighbors
- windows on all sides of multi-family dwellings
A healthy environment provides access to **fresh food** from both local producers and full service grocers.

- addition of full service grocer on 29th street
- community gardens incorporated within public open spaces
The United Northwest Area Neighborhood has the potential to become one of the most ideal places to live, work, and play in Indianapolis. The neighborhood lies in the heart of many Indianapolis amenities, but is not yet a destination itself. This framework is meant to be a guidebook on how to get from here to there and to once again create a healthy, sustainable, livable inner-city neighborhood. The framework celebrates the history of the neighborhood, builds upon the existing strengths, and seeks to improve its weaknesses. The framework connects the neighborhood back to Indianapolis and connects the neighborhood residents to each other. It provides the opportunities to play outside, meet one’s neighbors, live affordably, and work close to home.

The canal master plan shows the potential the waterway has as a catalyst for neighborhood revitalization. What once sparked the development of the neighborhood itself can once again be used to draw new residents into UNWA and improve the neighborhood for those who already call UNWA home. It will act as a place to live and work and provide opportunities for all ages and incomes.

The framework and the master plan could not be implemented in simply a year or two, but instead are meant to serve as long term guides for how to bring the United Northwest Area into the future. While ‘finished’ now, their implementation would involve change and evolution as the neighborhood changes and evolves itself. These plans serve as a starting point for what could eventually be one of the most vibrant and dynamic places to call home.
Neighborhood: refers to the environment in which one lives and can be defined in terms of the social, physical, economic, or political environment.

Severely-distressed neighborhood: refers to a neighborhood characterized by high rates of poverty, unemployment, vacancies, and crime. They are also characterized by lower levels of academic attainment and poorer health outcomes for residents.

Health: refers to a combination of the social, physical, and mental well-being of an individual or group, not simply the absence of infirmity.

Revitalization: refers to the process of redeveloping or redesigning a specific area in order to create a healthier, sustainable environment, improve the local economy and give new life to the area.

Sustainability: refers to the idea that interventions done in or on an area at the present time will sustain or improve the lives of future generations and the environment in which they live.

Sustainable Design: refers to design methods that improve the current economic, physical, social, and environmental conditions of an area or place while making sure the design will sustain or improve the conditions of future generations and the environment in which they live.

Inner-city: refers to a type of neighborhood located near a city-center core within the metropolitan area of a major city as opposed to suburban.

Neighborhood Effects: refers to the ways in which the neighborhood environment in which one lives affects their behaviors, choices, and health.

Livability: refers to the degree in which the neighborhood provides the environment for a healthy life.
The history of the United Northwest Area began with the construction of the Central Canal in 1837 and its opening in 1839. This shifted the development from the east side to the near west side (City of Indianapolis, 2006). While the Canal proved to be an ineffective route for the transportation of goods through Indianapolis, it did attract industries and settlement to the neighborhood including Nathaniel West’s cotton mill, Udell Ladder Works, the North Indianapolis Wagon Works, and the Henry Ocow Manufacturing Company (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center). This increase in development spurred the platting of North Indianapolis starting in 1873, the predecessor of the UNWA neighborhoods. The Indianapolis Belt Railway Company was also incorporated and eventually led to the development of a stock yard along the river. The location of the stockyards and the Belt Railway made them a focal point for central Indianapolis and made them ideal for the import and export of livestock (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center).

By 1890, the population of North Indianapolis was around 1,479 and with the implementation of the streetcar, the population began to grow (City of Indianapolis, 2006). The neighborhood supported two churches and a country club that featured tennis courts, a clubhouse, and a nine-hole golf course. It also featured the Flanner House, an open door settlement house for African Americans stung by the post slavery era. The Alpha House, also housed in the neighborhood, served aged African American women while the Indiana Industrial School for the Blind served as another social institution for the neighborhood and surrounding context. In 1895, North Indianapolis was annexed in order to obtain cheaper natural gas rates (City of Indianapolis, 2006).

After the turn of the century, on the cusp of a blossoming economy and increased mobility, the neighborhood began to grow. What was once rural country roads became frequently travelled urban corridors and more churches sprang up as people moved into the area. Many of the historic homes erected during this boom still exist in the neighborhood. Golden Hill was erected during this time as a neighborhood for the city’s most prominent families, and is still home to a concentration of wealth at the fringe of the neighborhood, a stark contrast to the modest homes within the core. Early commercial development was concentrated along Clifton Street because of the electric rail line and from 1913 to 1974, St. Vincent’s hospital was the leading employer.
for the residents (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center).

A key feature of the neighborhood during this time was not the manufacturing or prominent homes, but in fact, the Riverside Amusement Park. Riverside Amusement Park is seen to tell the story of the rise and fall of the neighborhood—starting in the early 20th century with modest beginnings through its booming development and finishing with racial tensions and disinvestment. This park featured rides, concession stands, and a dance hall and the park attracted thousands of visitors who came to see the big bands and orchestras. This park made UNWA one of the city’s centers of entertainment and during the middle of the century, as Riverside Amusement Park was expanding, George E. Kessler developed a plan for Riverside Park and over 75 percent of the homes in the neighborhood were constructed. The Children’s Museum also relocated to the neighborhood during this time and many of the churches in the area expanded or built new buildings, improving the appearance and prominence of the neighborhood (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center).

Post World War II the neighborhood began the decline of the UNWA Neighborhood. Racial tensions were high not only because the amusement park, a focal point for entertainment refused to admit African Americans except on certain days, but because the churches and surrounding institutions played into racism as well. From the late 19th century on the neighborhood was home to a significant number of African Americans and as white flight occurred during the post-World War II years, the neighborhood transformed into a racially diverse but segregated community of almost entirely African Americans. White flight was not the only event that created a drastic change in the neighborhood, though (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center). The construction of I-65 split the neighborhood in two, causing economic and social conflicts (City of Indianapolis, 2006). During construction, over 3,000 families left the UNWA neighborhood and this outmigration continued in the preceding years (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center).

From 1960 onward can be described as the neighborhoods modern history. The racial transformation could be seen clearly in the various church congregations as poor African Americans filled the void left by the white, middle class flight to the suburbs and this led to disinvestment in the
neighborhood. Again, Riverside Amusement Park reflected the economic and social conditions of the neighborhood as it shut its doors at the end of the 1970s. When St. Vincent left the neighborhood in 1974, the neighborhood suffered another economic blow as its largest employer moved to West 86th Street. Churches began springing up as the most active social organizations in the area, with Mt. Zion Baptist Church leading the way. Mt. Zion strove to create a ‘cradle to grave’ atmosphere for the neighborhood residents by building apartment complexes, day care centers, and a nursing home. The Flanner House was another prominent figure in the neighborhood during this hard time and these organizations continue to play a crucial role in the area (Indianapolis University Purdue University Indianapolis Polis Center).

Despite all these efforts to improve the neighborhood, the 1990 census revealed the neighborhood face high rates of poverty, crime and decay. This led to the Department of Metropolitan development to designate an area as a redevelopment area. At this time the crime rate was 9.4 per 100 residents compared to the larger city's 7.8 per 100 residents (City of Indianapolis, 2006). During this time a new health center open on Martin Luther King Jr. Street and a plan to redevelop School 41 into apartments, proposed by the Pilgrim Baptist Church, began. Redevelopment of Riverside Amusement Park also began during this time and the site is not home to single family homes and condominiums.
A healthy environment is one that has connections to the context that expand job opportunities and foster upward mobility, has access to healthy eating environments, allow for physical activity and walkability, and are safe and sustainable environmentally, economically and socially. Distressed or low-income neighborhoods lack many of the features required for healthy residents and this leads to various neighborhood effects which lead to problems that can be improved or prevented through healthy neighborhood design and a focus on the urban environment.

Problems:

The foundation of the research project addresses the sub problems developed in the problem statement. Research has been conducted on how the urban fabric has changed over time, how distressed neighborhoods are defined, the effects of concentrated poverty and the mechanisms for these effects. Current and historical revitalization methods have been explored and principles of a healthy environment have emerged.

Site specific problems that were addressed in the urban design framework were the lack of neighborhood and regional connections, geographic and social isolation, poor street design and walkability, lack of investment, the gap-toothed urban fabric, lack of park space, and unsafe environment. The canal revitalization master plan addressed the lack of investment along the canal, social and physical isolation, and finally, the lack of a distinct identity.

Methods, Data Collection:

Initial research was gathered through the use of JSTOR and Academic Search Premiere accessed through Bracken Library. All plans that addressed the United Northwest Area Neighborhood or pieces thereof were obtained through the City of Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development’s website, the City of Indianapolis Parks Department website, and the United Northwest Area Neighborhood Community Development Corporation. These plans were used as references for the urban design framework in order to create a comprehensive vision for the neighborhood that addressed current and future issues. Throughout the project, more information on healthy neighborhood principles was gathered to further inform the framework and master plan.

Census data and the neighborhood plans were used in
determining whether the UNWA would be an appropriate site for the project. Then, GIS information, transit plans, aerial images, site visits, meetings with community members, and the neighborhood plans were used to develop the site inventory and analysis and determine what mechanism of distress the neighborhood face and what issues the framework needed to address. Sanborn maps were also used to explore how the urban fabric of the neighborhood has changed over time. This information was obtained through the College of Architecture and Planning: Indianapolis Center’s Director, Brad Beaubien, Google, personal site visits, the Indianapolis Department of Metropolitan Development, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis, and discussions with the UNWA Development Corporation members.

Case studies were used to explore how communities around the United States have addressed community and neighborhood health, active living, and creating neighborhood urban design frameworks. References and documents from Urban Land Institute and National Parks and Recreation Association were also obtained through the internet to assist with issues throughout the project.

Analysis and Synthesis:

Through the Census demographic and housing condition information as well as the GIS analysis I understood where the vacant housing was, the condition of the overall housing stock, the income of the and from the literature I can understood how the conditions came to be. This information will also give me an estimate of where the population and housing stock of the community was headed. Synthesizing this information together I determined where and what kind of housing is needed. Commercial vacancies and potential development was determined in the same method. ULI information was used to determine appropriate square footages for the target population in the canal master plan. The GIS information, site visits, and discussions with community members were used to determine where/along what corridors the commercial development would occur.

GIS and transit plans were used to determine existing and the lack of connections as well as to determine how to make the existing transit system more efficient. Site visits determined the conditions of transit stops in order to determine how they should be improved. Site visits also aided in determining where a lack of pedestrian and vehicular connections
occurs and where it should be improved. Literature was also synthesized with site analysis to create the neighborhood connections plan.

The census information was combined with the GIS files to determine what residents have access to park space within ¼ of a mile of an open space. The existing population was analyzed to determine the ratio of neighborhood, regional, and community park space and it was determined the neighborhood did not meet the current needs for park space. With the framework planning to incorporate additional residents, the park space ratios must be adjusted as the population increases. The ratios were based off the National Parks and Recreation Association standards. The site visits and discussion with community members, synthesized through GIS and Google, were used to review where the community buys their food. Through analysis, it was determined where new grocers should be and, incorporated with public open space network analysis, where urban agriculture should be.

An analysis of the streetscapes, existing and planned commercial and residential, and park space led to the development of the streetscape framework plan and section cuts. The new streetscapes will connect residents to places within their neighborhood, increasing walkability and providing greater opportunity for physical and social well-being.

This framework was then used to design the canal revitalization master plan. Other resources that assisted this plan were GIS, aerial photos, site visits and photos, and various books on graphic and design standards.
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