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Abstract

The majority of people encounter a built environment that is influenced by a linear development model that prioritizes economic profitability over holistic sustainability, which includes community vitality, economic feasibility, and environmental sensitivity. Recognizing the shortfall of this convention, we propose to merge development and community design into a hybridized model of community-oriented development in an effort to reintroduce design, story, symphony, empathy, play and meaning into the modern lifestyle (Pink, 65-66).

This study consists of two phases. In the first phase, we evaluate existing models of development and identify key design principles of community-oriented development. The sources for these principles and practices derive from a review of relevant literature, extensive field study, and interviews with key designers, administrators, and community members. This phase also examines and evaluates the effectiveness of community-oriented development principles in select precedent projects and explores how this alternative model is better suited to address certain urban design opportunities.

In the second phase, we apply the design principles and guidelines to the city of Indianapolis and demonstrate how a particular site within the city can serve as a catalyst for influencing fellowship towards a holistic and sustainable model of living. This phase involves selecting a site, analyzing the physical, cultural and economic context, and developing a pilot study to test the feasibility of a community-oriented development. The final project attempts to improve community health through social, cultural and financial empowerment.