



KING COMMONS

A GREAT PLACE

ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE
ON INDY'S NORTHWEST SIDE.

KING COMMONS IS A GREAT PLACE

Nestled on the northwest outskirts of downtown Indy, bound by 25th & Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Streets, lies a gem of a community. Rich in heritage, culture and green space. It's also home to a main street that honors Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an icon of American history. The community is close-knit, family oriented and embedded in its history; from Flanner House to Riverside Park. King Commons is characterized by the West African Adinkra symbol Besé Sake, located in the center of the Flanner House gardens, which represents agriculture, affluence, power, abundance, plenty, togetherness and unity.

The goals of the King Commons Great Place are an outgrowth of the long-term work of the Northwest Area Quality of Life planning process, completed in 2014 by residents to build a stronger, more sustainable community for the current and future residents of the northwest area.



In a great city, you need a number of great places to create a truly lively community – places where people choose to live, work and play.

Great Places 2020 is a collaborative initiative that responds to this need. The effort seeks to transform five strategic places in Marion County into dynamic urban villages bettering both the economy and quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Five strategic places located within the west, north and, east sides of Indianapolis, have deep roots in our city's history. While each Great Place has its own unique character and vision, together they will strengthen Indianapolis and allow the City to grow and prosper.

- » Englewood Village is centered at the intersection of East Washington and Oxford Streets
- » Maple Crossing is centered at the intersection of 38th and Illinois Streets
- » River West is centered at the intersection of West Michigan Street and King Avenue
- » Twin Aire is centered at the intersection of Southeastern and English Avenues
- » King Commons is centered at the intersection of 25th and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Streets





LIVABILITY

Enhance the health and well-being of residents by uplifting natural and cultural amenities and improving greenspaces, walkability, and resiliency.

- » **Build on the use of Adinkra symbols into physical spaces and programming.**
- » **Develop Cleo's Café and Bodega as a community anchor to provide healthy food that is affordable to current neighbors and accepts EBT.**
- » **Create an integrated campus between Flanner House and Watkins Park with focus on existing successful events, such as Jazz in the Park and Open Bite Night.**
- » **Improve connections to and through the community, including connecting future trail planning to destinations in the King Commons area along with implementing a safe routes to school plan.**



WATKINS PARK – EVENT PAVILION



OPPORTUNITY

Utilize the area's legacy of hard work that attract and support entrepreneurs and growing businesses that create valuable jobs and strengthen the community.

- » **Connect local students and others with educational opportunities for 21st Century jobs in technology.**
- » **Connect students with mentor programs and internships with area anchor employers.**
- » **Further encourage the growing local food businesses with affordable shared facilities to help local chefs incrementally develop and grow into local storefronts.**
- » **Acquire the parcels needed for mixed-use development and make them construction-ready by working through brownfield remediation and environmental cleanup issues.**
- » **Create paths for local businesses to sell goods and services to nearby anchor institutions with the Buy Indy program.**



MERIDIAN LODGE DEVELOPMENT



VITALITY

Use diversified housing, homesteading programs, and support for current residents to bring energy back to the area.

- » **Create outreach programs and market to three primary groups:** 1) Former residents of the area who may be interested in returning; 2) Members and staff of area churches who do not currently live in the neighborhood; and 3) Existing residents who desire homeownership, but do not currently have the means to do so.
- » Coordinate with partners, including a proposed skilled trades program, or a homestead program to assist locals who have (or wish to learn the needed skills) to acquire and rehab homes.
- » Develop a net-zero energy demonstration house in a visible location to educate contractors and residents engaged in home construction.
- » Coordinate with nearby anchor institutions to provide employee incentivized housing opportunities in the area.



FALL CREEK & WATKINS PARK TOWNHOMES



EDUCATION

Offer a rich array of educational opportunities to residents, from cradle to career, to ensure that all children, youth and adults have access to high quality schools, enrichment activities and training programs.

- » **Identify mutual collaborations with area K-12 schools, including Holy Angels Catholic School, Ignite Achievement Academy at Elder Diggs 42, George Washington Carver Montessori 87, and Riverside High School to ensure location students have access to a variety of educational opportunities.**
- » **Incorporate educational and cultural opportunities to help people learn about the history of Flanner House and the African American community in Indianapolis.**
- » **Provide support services to youth experiencing challenges not addressed by the education system.**
- » **Promote vocational, skilled trades, and innovative training programs to prepare and connect young adults and adults to viable jobs.**



This is just the beginning.
To view the full plan, go to GreatPlaces2020.org

LOVE THY NEIGHBORHOOD

Every Great Place needs a variety of attributes to succeed. Great Places 2020 uses the L.O.V.E. acronym to embody these critical components: livability, opportunity, vitality, and education.

King Commons developed the following LOVE goals during a community engagement and planning process to build upon current assets and guide work over the next five years.

LIVABILITY

- » Become the hub for African American arts and culture
- » Promote resilience through community agriculture and celebrating Flanner House's historic role in this area
- » Update Watkins Park and other public spaces based on usage and opportunity
- » Improve relationships across the neighborhood
- » Develop connectivity, enhance sustainability, and improve the pedestrian experience of streets, alleys, and other public spaces that impact the area

OPPORTUNITY

- » Connect residents with a spectrum of educational and career opportunities, from tech to advanced and sustainable building trades
- » Provide financial help to nurture start-up businesses of all types, including food-based businesses, the tech industry, renewables, and skilled trades
- » Develop a mixed-use presence at 25th and MLK to be a center of community and commercial prosperity
- » Create and grow relationships with nearby institutions and local businesses

VITALITY

- » Increase variety of housing options and prices appealing to existing African-American community, and former residents who've left in recent decades
- » Create affordable home ownership opportunities for renters programs, offering training in rehab and homesteading
- » Develop resilient and sustainable concepts for homeowners that are forward-looking and reduce energy costs
- » Promote employer incentive housing in partnership with nearby anchor institutions.
- » Boost access to existing programs and funding for home repairs and upkeep

EDUCATION

- » Develop more relationships with local schools as they evolve in the area
- » Provide education opportunities and environments for children beyond the core curriculum of schools
- » Provide social support services for K-12 students that address obstacles that impede learning
- » Offer educational programs to increase job opportunities and readiness
- » Connect residents to opportunities for post-secondary education with local institutions

LEAD NEIGHBORHOOD PARTNERS: Flanner House, Groundwork Indy, Northwest Quality of Life Committees, Riverside Civic League, Neighbors Helping Neighbors, Marian University, IUPUI, Flanner House Library, BWI, LLC

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS: City of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership, Indy Chamber, Keep Indianapolis Beautiful, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, and United Way of Central Indiana

SPONSORS: Central Indiana Community Foundation, Lilly Endowment, US Department of Housing and Urban Development, Huntington Bank, JP Morgan Chase, McKinney Family Foundation, MIBOR, Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, PNC Bank, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Great Place plan completed by Anderson+Bohlander, LLC

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LIVABILITY

- ① King Commons Orchard
- ② Cleo's Café and Bodega
- ③ Watkins Park

OPPORTUNITY

- ① Meridian Lodge
- ② Edgemont and MLK Mixed Use Development
- ③ King Commons Mixed Use Development

VITALITY

- ① Fall Creek and Watkins Park Townhomes
- ② Single Family Homes
- ③ King Commons Mixed Use Development

EDUCATION

- ① IPS 87 Montessori
- ② Ignite Academy
- ③ Flanner House

MAP KEY

- Proposed New Development
- Key L.O.V.E. Projects
- Current and Future Assets

KING COMMONS
A GREAT PLACE

This map displays King Commons as projected in 2020.