



# SO INDY QUALITY OF LIFE





# What is a Quality of Life Plan?

- A **planning process** that engages all communities' stakeholders
- Defines a **shared vision** for their community's future
- Includes **all aspects of life**:
  - Housing, Safety, Culture, Parks, Health Care, Child Care, Education, Economic Development
- Results in a **written document** that captures a collaborative vision
- Outlines clear **action steps**
- Provides **timelines**
- **Identifies** individuals and institutions **responsible** for making it a reality



# How it is different than other plans:

- Follows a **Results Based Accountability** process to motivate community members to create a community vision and to guide implementation.
  - Each focus area has an active, vested action team that meets monthly to implement the plan.
  - Each focus area has vision statements, strategies, action steps, performance measures, collaborating and lead partners, and timelines.



11: All neighborhoods will boast a diversity of affordable housing opportunities available to all (age, income, race, familial status).				
Year	Action Steps	Performance Measure	Collaborating Partners	Lead Partners
11.1: Connect individuals and families with low income access to home repair assistance.				
17, 18	11.1.1. Identify funding sources & existing programs.	Five programs are identified.	Mayor's Neighborhood Advocates, Riley Area Development Corporation (RADC), SEND, INHP, Fifth Third, PNC, Habitat for Humanity, AARP	SEND



# How it is different than other plans:

## Problem-based vs. Asset Focus

Problems → “negative” → unemployment, illiteracy, slum housing, vacant buildings

Assets → “positive” → schools, libraries, community colleges, hospitals

## ABCD (Asset Based Community Development)

The Quality of Life Plan incorporates community **assets**, focuses on **opportunities** and builds upon larger public, private and philanthropic projects planned and/or in development.

Our people are our biggest asset!



## How it is different than other plans:

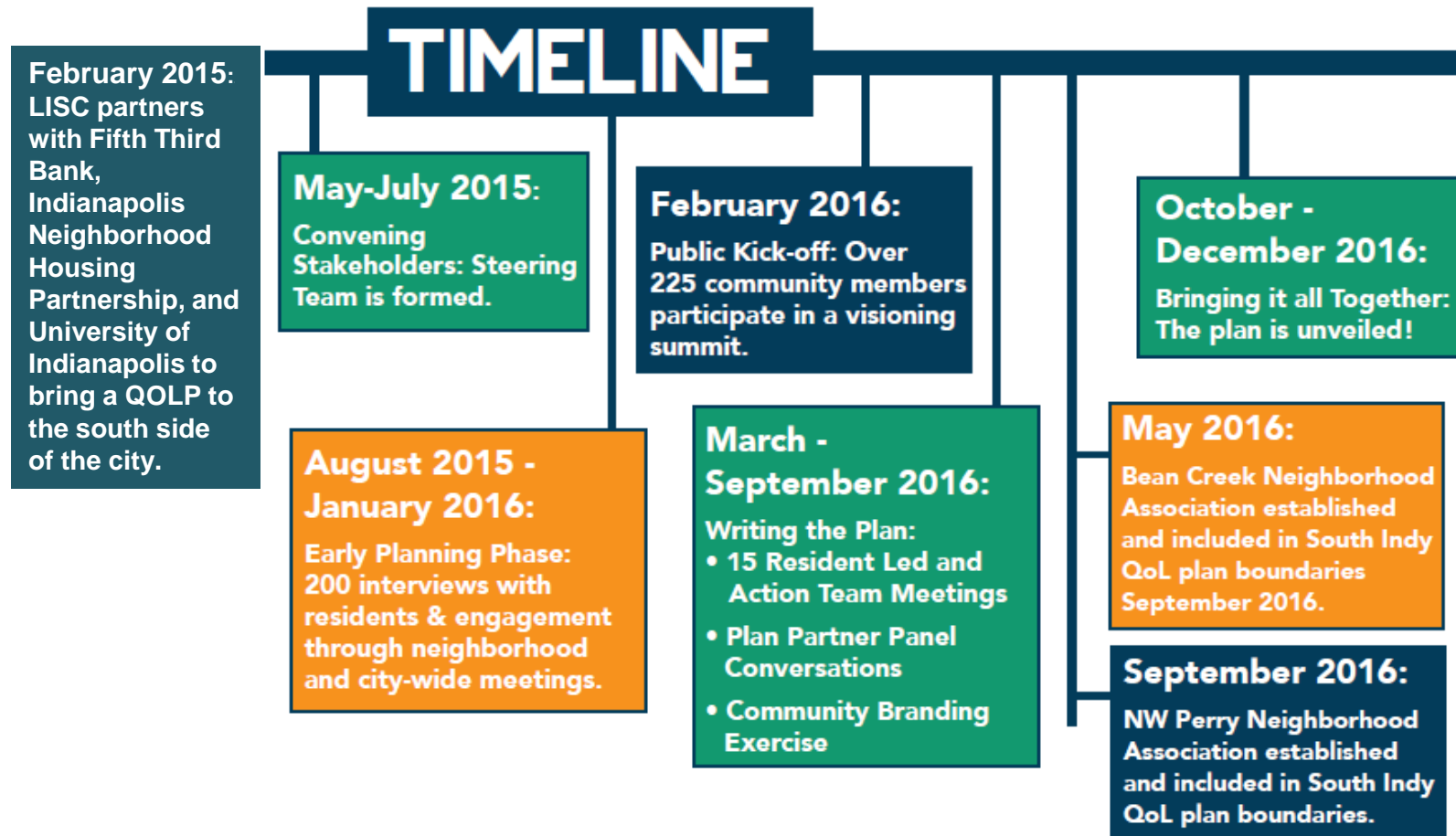
This plan is a **living document**.

- Action teams have the ability to add, amend or remove action steps at biannual Summit gatherings.



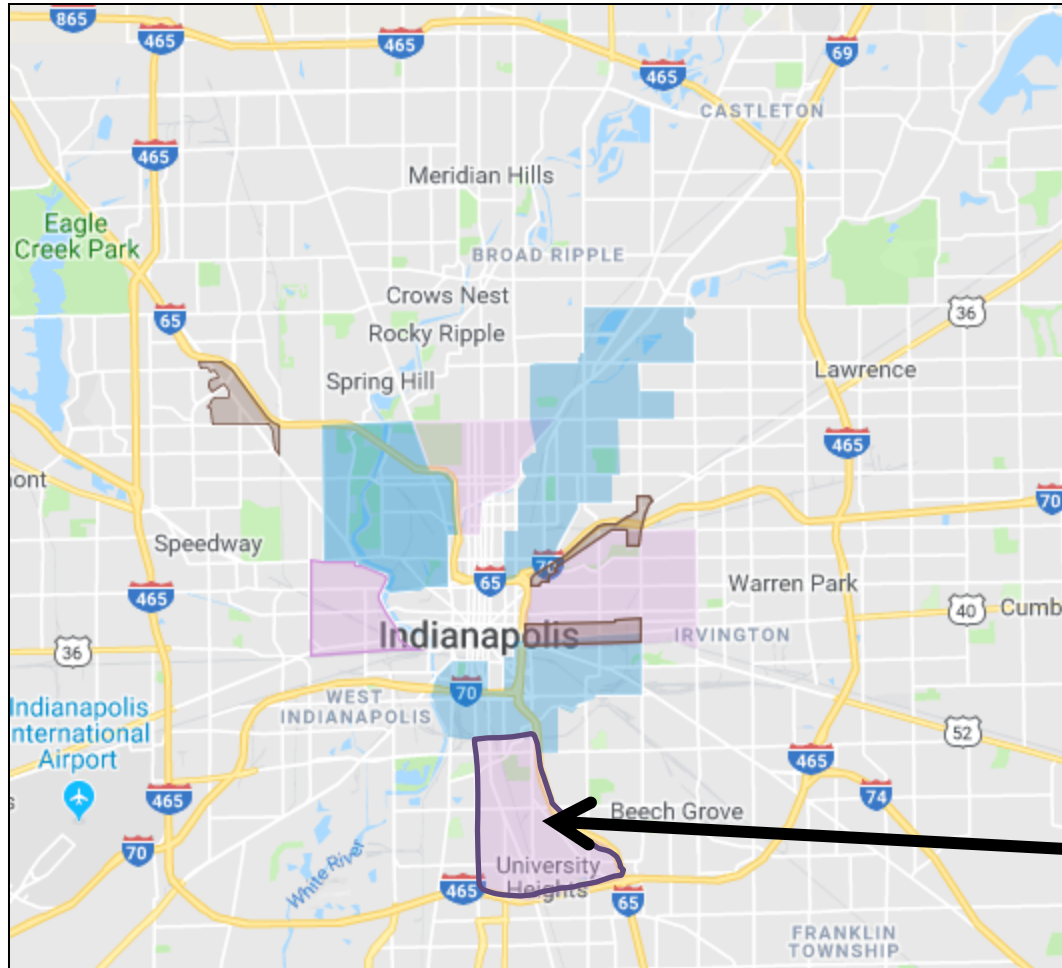
-SoIndy Summit, June 2018: Voting on QOL workplan amendments

# How the South Indy QOLP was formed



Once the initial steering team was formed, it took 15 months to conduct interviews, form teams, and create the QOL workplan.

# The South Indy QOLP is the 9<sup>th</sup> in the City



SoIndy

We are 8 neighborhoods in South Indy working to implement a shared vision that includes all aspects of life, such as housing, education, safety, culture, health, and economic development.

We envision a community in which residents, businesses and community partners are able to communicate and collaborate across boundaries to generate solutions to common problems and take collective action.





# We are SoIndy:

## 15 Advisory Board Members

Chair: **Bryan Hannon**, Rosedale Hills Neighborhood  
Vice-Chair: **Aryn Shounce**, Garfield Park Neighborhood  
Secretary: **Dan Deno**, Bean Creek Neighborhood  
Treasurer: **Terri Garcia**, Southeast Community Services  
Action Team Liaison: **Ruth Soper**, University Heights Neighborhood

**Jason Fletcher**, Carson Heights Neighborhood  
**Deanna Medsker**, Northwest Perry Neighborhood  
**Elyse Kitner**, South Village Neighborhood  
**Janette Smith**, Meridian-Raymond Neighborhood  
**Corey Wilson**, University of Indianapolis  
**Jim Walker**, Big Car Collaborative  
**Lauren Johnson**, Indianapolis Public Schools  
**Judy Fackenthal**, Garfield Park Baptist Church  
**Jadira Hoptry**, Fifth Third Bank  
**Cal Kuphall**, Underwood Tax & Bookkeeping Service

## 1 Director

**Michelle Strahl Salinas**

## 1 Convening/Fiscal Agent

**Big Car Collaborative**

## 200+ Collaborating Partners

## 14 Lead Partners

## 34,000+ Residents

## 11 Action Team Chairs

Community Building: **Katie Carlson**, **Jason Fletcher**  
Connectivity: vacant  
Education & Workforce Development: **Lauren Johnson**  
Health & Wellness: **Rob Campbell**, **Anye Carson**  
Housing: **Chris Paulsen**, **Rauf Khahid**  
Madison Ave. Corridor: **Angie Evans**, **Roy Gabriel**  
Shelby Street: **Aryn Schounce**, **Noelle Pickler**

# What We Do:

- There are 7 actions teams, consisting of residents throughout the SolIndy area, which collaborate with neighborhoods, businesses, schools, churches, and community organizations across neighborhood boundaries to implement the SolIndy QOL plan.
  - **Community Building,**
  - **Connectivity,**
  - **Education & Workforce Development,**
  - **Health & Wellness,**
  - **Housing,**
  - **Madison Avenue Corridor,**
  - **Shelby Street Corridor**
- The QOL workplan contains 172 action steps that we work to implement within the action teams.

# Action Team Leadership:

Role	Goals/Results	Responsibilities	Time Commitment
Lead Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a meeting agenda</li> <li>• Provide leadership and facilitation for action team meetings</li> <li>• Delegate action items and set timelines for follow up</li> <li>• Maintain communication with action team members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all meetings, if absent coordinate with vice chair to run the meeting</li> <li>• Attend SolIndy leadership trainings/meetings</li> <li>• Create and email the agenda and communications to the team members</li> <li>• Upload the agenda and team documents to the SolIndy Google Drive AT folder</li> <li>• Progress monitor action step completion for LISC reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly action team meeting and any additional meetings as needed.</li> <li>• Communicate with action team members via phone and/or email as needed</li> </ul>
Vice Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulfill the Lead Chair role in his/her absence</li> <li>• Recruit new members and orient new members to the action team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all meetings, fill in for Lead Chair if absent</li> <li>• Attend SolIndy leadership trainings/meetings</li> <li>• Actively recruit and orient new action team members for sustainability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly action team meeting</li> <li>• Attend community events or neighborhood meetings to recruit new action team members as needed.</li> <li>• Orient new members to QOLP and focus area strategies.</li> </ul>
Recorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take meeting minutes including action items, responsible person, and due dates</li> <li>• Assist with time management during meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all meetings and find a substitute if absent</li> <li>• Send out meeting minutes within 7 days of the action team meeting to allow follow up.</li> <li>• Upload meeting minutes to SolIndy Google drive folder</li> <li>• Attend SolIndy leadership trainings/meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly action team meeting</li> <li>• Type and send meeting minutes to all team members and the SolIndy Director via email</li> </ul>
Community Partners Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connects and coordinates subject matter experts</li> <li>• Connects and coordinates available resources for their action team</li> <li>• Identifies and communicates with organizations and community groups that may be partners in QOLP goals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend all meetings</li> <li>• Attend SolIndy leadership trainings/meetings</li> <li>• Communicate with community partners to find expertise or leverage resources for the action team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly action team meeting</li> <li>• Correspond with partners</li> </ul>

## COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTION TEAM

- Administrative tasks, involving governance and public relations
- Creating opportunities to bridge all South Indy neighborhoods and Action Teams.
  - ◊ Planning social events
  - ◊ Semi-annual Solndy Summits.



# CONNECTIVITY ACTION TEAM

## WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES THAT SOINDY RESIDENTS CURRENTLY FACE?

### CAR ORIENTED CULTURE AND DESIGN



### POOR OR INCONSISTENT SIDEWALK INFRASTRUCTURE



### ACCESSIBILITY AND WAYFINDING



### PUBLIC SAFETY AND WELLNESS



## IMPLEMENTATION

### SOCIAL

- ACTION STEP 1.1** Hire part-time or a full-time connectivity planner for South Indy
- ACTION STEP 1.2** Organize neighborhood cleanups
- ACTION STEP 1.3** Encourage residents to take part in the Adopt-a-Block program
- ACTION STEP 1.4** Implement lighter quicker cheaper placemaking techniques to promote walking and biking
- ACTION STEP 1.5** Provide Educational programming on the social and health benefits of walking and biking infrastructure
- ACTION STEP 1.6** Create a safe routes program for pedestrians and bikers
- ACTION STEP 1.7** Educate and Organize neighborhood groups to lobby for infrastructural and policy changes

### POLICY

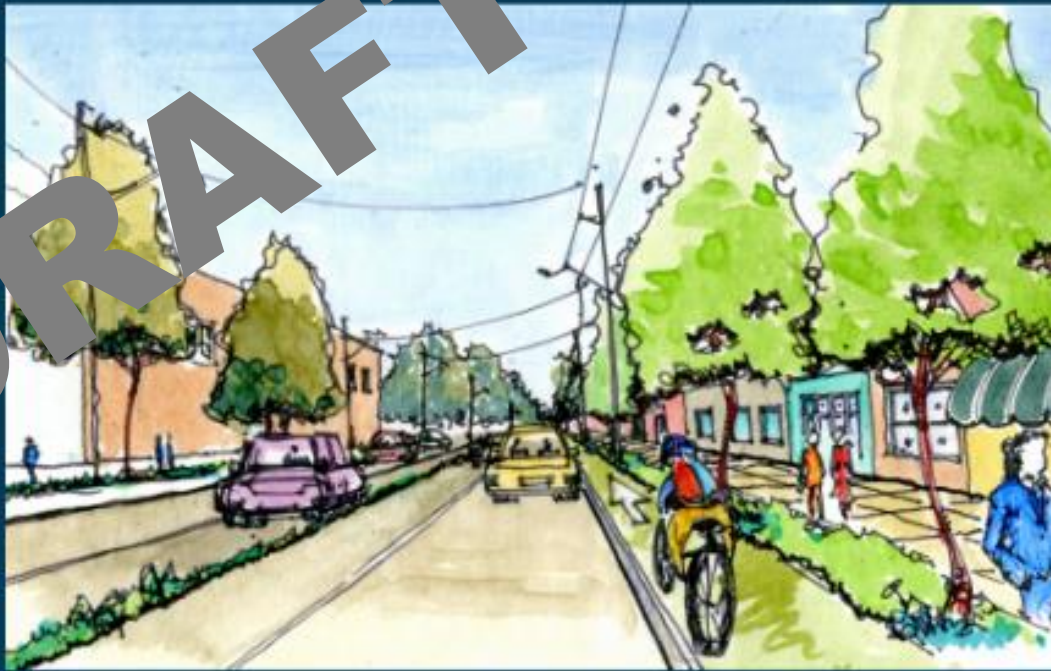
- ACTION STEP 2.1** Enforce sidewalk clearance rules for snow and ice removal
- ACTION STEP 2.2** Advocate for implementation of bike routes and trails with easy access to childcare, and neighborhood assets in mind.
- ACTION STEP 2.3** Enforce speed limits
- ACTION STEP 2.4** Install and enforce no turn on red signs at major intersections
- ACTION STEP 2.5** Coordinate signal timing with lights on 1-65 and raymond
- ACTION STEP 2.6** Adopt South Indy Vision Zero street design standard
- ACTION STEP 2.7** Update zoning ordinances to promote transit oriented mixed use development along redline stops

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- ACTION STEP 3.1** Implement a public art and tactical urbanism taskforce for traffic calming
- ACTION STEP 3.2** Implement Soindy bike rack program
- ACTION STEP 3.3** Add vegetation along medians and corridors
- ACTION STEP 3.4** Extend pacers bike share program to logical locations in Soindy
- ACTION STEP 3.5** Identify and prioritize intersections in need of crosswalks and incorporate stop and yield bars to design
- ACTION STEP 3.6** Provide human scale street lighting
- ACTION STEP 3.7** Install pedestrian signal indicators at crosswalks
- ACTION STEP 3.8** Prioritize areas and implement separated bike lanes
- ACTION STEP 3.9** Improve sidewalk infrastructure

In Progress:  
We are working with collaborating partners to finalize action steps that have been categorized into one of three groups.

# SOUTH INDY CONNECTIVITY PLAN



Big Car Collaborative and Ball State University: Masters of Urban Design  
Studio 2017

## EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ACTION TEAM

### Recent accomplishments:

- In 2018 we have already held 3 job fairs.
- Connected individuals with the Garfield Park Library's Job Center
- Connected with the community using social media, trade fairs, and face to face contact at other community activities such as food pantries.
- SolIndy recruited participation in the Emma Donnan Career Day
- Promoted Adult Education programs in the community.



- On June 13, 2018, Raymond Brandes Elementary School Principal Lauren Johnson cut the ribbon in the school's new Makerspace. In the Makerspace, students will make connections to the real world with collaborative projects.

## In Progress:

- During the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter we will have an activity at one of our local schools.
- We will be working more closely with local business, colleges, universities, and training programs to obtain guest speakers for local schools.
- We will continue to promote the local trades organizations and training programs.



The poster features the SO INDY logo in green and orange, with 'QUALITY OF LIFE' in orange below it. A dark blue banner reads 'We hear you!'. Below this, a yellow horizontal line is followed by the text 'JOB FAIR OPPORTUNITIES' in bold black. A list of services follows, each preceded by a small circle icon. At the bottom, a green banner contains the website 'www.soindy.org', the text 'South Indy Quality of Life Plan', a Facebook icon, and 'southindyqol' with a Twitter icon.

I need a job with a living wage & health insurance?

I need new job skills!

I need help with online applications.

How do I find jobs online?

How can I start a business!

**SO INDY**  
QUALITY OF LIFE

**We hear you!**

**JOB FAIR OPPORTUNITIES**

- Job Search Assistance
- Job Training
- Resume Writing / Completing Applications
- Adult Education:  
HS Diploma / Certifications
- Starting your own business

Learn more about us at [www.soindy.org](http://www.soindy.org)

South Indy Quality of Life Plan  [southindyqol](https://www.facebook.com/southindyqol) 



# HEALTH & WELLNESS ACTION TEAM

- Increased access to healthy food
- University Heights community garden at UIndy

## United Methodist Church Community Garden Raised Bed Project

Friday, April 20 | 1-5pm

4002 Otterbein Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227

Come and help us in building a community garden for the Southside residents to increase healthy food access.

RSVP to Nehal Gajjar: [gajjar@uindy.edu](mailto:gajjar@uindy.edu)



For more information, please contact Gurinder Hohl at [hohl@uindy.edu](mailto:hohl@uindy.edu)



· Bethany Lutheran community garden



## Gardening Together

*Let's Build Community Through Gardening. Together and at Home.*

**Bethany Community Garden**  
invites you to a **FREE** series on backyard and  
community gardens.

Presented by the Purdue Extension Urban Garden Program.

**Join us for gardening class and a community meal to learn**



**Let's Celebrate National Public Health Week**

**BETHANY COMMUNITY GARDEN:  
RAISED BED PROJECT**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 3, 2018**  
**1:00PM- 4:00PM**

Bethany Lutheran Church is working to increase healthy food access for us by building a community garden. The Master of Public Health program led Public Health Week this year by collaborating with the church to help bring our neighbors. We are looking for 20-25 students to join the church on Apr raised beds to starting a successful garden and learn how healthy food access health outcomes. Please dress appropriate for the weather and clothes that getting dirty.

To sign-up please contact

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
Master of Public Health



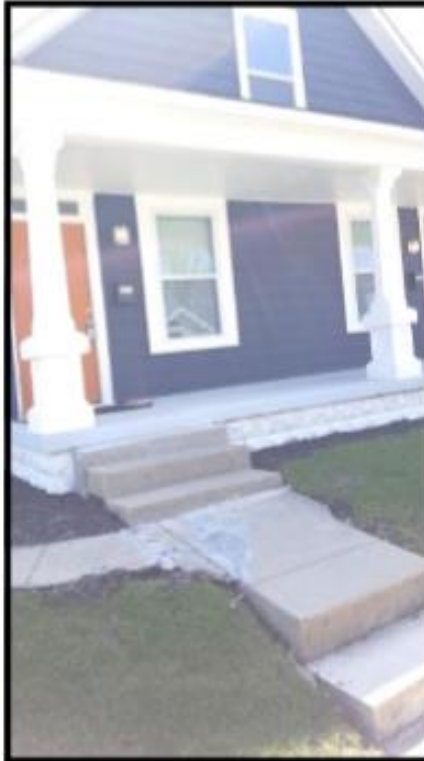
- Other Projects:**
- Little Free Pantry is a “take what you need, give what you can” resource for non-perishable and hygiene items
  - Increase knowledge about environmental concerns
  - Keep areas of the Southside litter free.

## HOUSING ACTION TEAM

**Join one of our project teams:**

- **Home Repair**
- **Home Ownership**
- **Responsible Landlords**



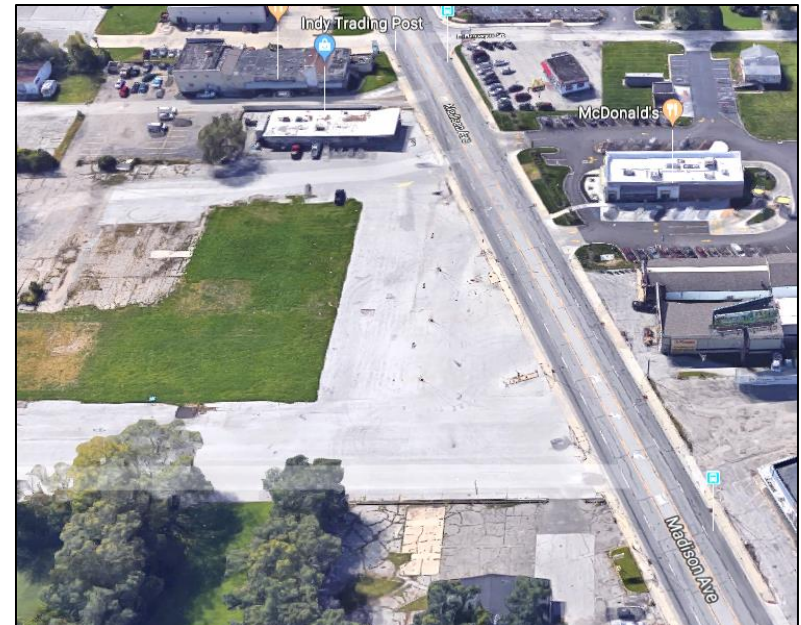


### **Recent Housing Action Team Accomplishments:**

- Created Home Repair Survey
- Completed 100 housing surveys in Bean Creek
- Established a partnership with INHP and distributed info to assist homeowners with repair
- Distribute information about the INHP home repair programs to Solndy residents.
- Invite INHP to attend neighborhood events
- Devise a plan to follow up with landlord owned properties with repairs that are needed
- We will be replicating this process in other neighborhoods
- Made key revisions to the Housing action plan

# MADISON AVENUE CORRIDOR ACTION TEAM

- Request for Proposal – Economic Revitalization Study
  - Understanding the Challenges & Opportunities
  - Maximizing Potential and Community Input
  - Betterment of the Quality of Life – Addressing the Underutilized Areas
  - Knowledge Attainment of the Frequency of Vacancies.
- Understanding Brownfields on Madison Avenue and Next Steps
  - Overview of Projects
  - How can we benefit?
- A Watchful Eye on the Neighborhood
  - Monitor and update the QOL work plan
  - Coordination & Collaboration on the Madison Avenue Corridor



## SHELBY STREET ACTION TEAM

The DigIndy and Red Line construction is putting a hold on many of our action steps. As we anticipate the benefits of these projects, we continue to work with Indy Go and Big Car to create a vision for what Shelby Street looks like after it is completed, in terms of both aesthetics and business. We have spent most of the year gathering input from neighbors and evaluating what the needs and wants are for the corridor, so that when the time comes, we're ready to hit the ground running. In the meantime, we're using some of that feedback and are working with early action grant money provided by INHP to create an eastern gateway to the SoIndy area.



## Mural design for underpass at Troy/I65



\*with  
Photoshop  
placement of  
image.



# Other 2018 Highlights:

## Winter:

- University Heights Neighborhood Association named **Mayor's Neighborhood of the Month**

## Spring:

- SoIndy received the **Building Local Economy Award** at Neighbor Power Indy hosted by Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center
- Bean Creek Neighborhood received **Livability Award** at LISC Love Thy Neighborhood Event
- **Great "So" Indy Cleanup** sponsored by KIB had over 400 volunteers cleaning and beautifying in all 8 neighborhoods

## Summer:

- 5 MOKB concerts in Garfield Park

## Fall:

- Garfield Park Neighbors Association named **Mayor's Neighborhood of the Month**
- Health & Wellness Team's Bethany Community Garden is INRC **Community Spirit finalist**



Sign up for our newsletter at [www.soindy.org](http://www.soindy.org)  
 or text "soindy" to 22828

**Many thanks to our lead partners and funders:**



**CICF** CENTRAL INDIANA  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
THE INDIANAPOLIS FOUNDATION  
LEGACY FUND



**The Brave Heart Foundation**



**Gateway Community Alliance**



**RILEY AREA** *development corporation*

# **Historical Attachments: Media articles**

LISC will measure our impact by tracking investment and progress in each of the initiatives below using the following outcomes:

**Livability:** Creating healthy, active and beautiful places

**Opportunity:** Fostering entrepreneurship and employment

**Vitality:** Reviving a growing and diverse population

**Education:** Offering excellent lifelong learning opportunities.

## How We Do It



LISC realizes that comprehensive community development can't be imposed by outsiders coming into neighborhoods to "make them better." Real, lasting, positive change is conceived and driven when neighbors and stakeholders inside the community create dedicated organizations to lead the charge. Before change can happen in a neighborhood, effective institutions have to be in place and working together. That's why we've long been committed to assisting in the

development of strong grassroots organizations inside the urban neighborhoods we serve.

We connect neighborhoods to funders, government agencies, technical assistance and other resources that help them advance local plans and implement community development strategies. LISC serves neighborhoods through:

- **Sharing Best Practices** – Our staff members are assigned to specific neighborhoods to help facilitate work, identify neighborhood challenges, and respond to new opportunities. We provide program and capacity-building grants, technical assistance and other resources to our neighborhood partners.
- **Programs** – LISC Indianapolis serves as a program developer and broker to bring funders and government agencies together with neighborhood partners that can implement specific types of programs. We help manage multiple-neighborhood programs in five areas: housing, economic development, family income and assets, education, and health and environment. LISC's staff helps neighborhoods with program design, planning, communications, implementation, and evaluation of program impacts.
- **Loans and Equity Investment** – LISC disburses loans to support a variety of real estate developments, including housing, retail stores, industrial projects, and community facilities. We also help neighborhood projects **secure grants**.

# LISC Indianapolis- February 6, 2015

## Southside Indy Begins Quality of Life Process

POSTED ON FEBRUARY 6, 2015

LISC, INHP, Fifth Third Bank, the City of Indianapolis and University of Indianapolis have partnered to bring a quality of life plan to the south side of the city. The focus area is bound by I-65 and I-465 and Raymond and Meridian streets.

Revitalization efforts will seek to decrease high rates of unemployment and poverty, reduce the amount of abandoned and vacant homes and storefronts, and spur community development and neighborhood engagement. Fifth Third Bank has pledged a \$100,000 Strengthening Our Communities grant and LISC and UIndy have committed to raise \$70,000 to support an intense study and launch the 18-month quality of life planning process.

“This grant will strengthen our community partnership and support the ongoing progress on the Southside,” said Steven Alonso, president and CEO of Fifth Third Bank, Greater Indiana. “Fifth Third is proud to contribute to the comprehensive community and economic development strategy to improve the quality of life for residents and business owners in the area.”

On January 29th, UIndy President Robert Manuel, LISC Executive Director Bill Taft, Department of Metropolitan Development Director Adam Thies, and Fifth Third Bank Indiana Regional President Steven Alonso gathered at the university to announce the partnership and pledges and host a bus tour of the focus area.

“We know that neighborhoods can be revitalized when they have sufficient capital, technical expertise, and political will to support their unique agendas. Quality of Life plans have proven to be a great vehicle for attracting these resources,” said Bill Taft, executive director of LISC.

## Southside Indy Begins Quality of Life Plan

POSTED ON JUNE 19, 2015



UlIndy President Rob Manuel announces QOL plan launch.

The boundaries of productivity and progress on the Southside of Indianapolis have expanded through the unique partnership of Fifth Third Bank, Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and University of Indianapolis. These three entities have partnered to bring an extraordinary Quality of Life Plan to the south side of the city.

The proposed focus area covers 4.25 square miles and is bounded by I-65, I-465 and Raymond and Meridian streets. The area primarily includes University Heights, Gateway Community Alliance, South Village, Friends of Garfield Park and Garfield Park Neighborhood Association. LISC and UlIndy are heavily involved in supporting this area's Quality of Life Plan and will help drive additional enhancements to the Southside.

Although the neighborhood is stricken with a 20+ percent poverty rate, higher than average unemployment and an excess of empty homes and storefronts, the citizens of this area have come together to shape the neighborhood's course. The Community Reinvestment Act Enterprise Grant from Fifth Third Bank of Greater Indiana, will contribute \$100,000 to the 18-month Quality of Life Plan. The plan will identify opportunities to strengthen all aspects of life and create a vision for the future in an area that is rich in tradition and history. An additional \$70,000 will support the planning process behind this initiative on the behalf of LISC and UlIndy. Revitalization efforts will seek to spur community development and neighborhood engagement with a goal of increasing employment, stemming poverty and reducing the amount of vacant homes and storefronts.

A related initiative, the Garfield Park Creative Community Project, is sponsored by Big Car Collaborative, an artist-led nonprofit organization specializing in creative place-making, community art and social practice. This is an inclusive effort to engage residents, create jobs, boost livability and develop space for education and cultural programming. This creative approach to community development will boost momentum for this overlooked area of the city. The project, along with the Quality of Life Plan, sets the stage for the Southside to become a place where art and education are a catalysts for social and economic change and upward mobility in Indianapolis.

# LISC Indianapolis- June 19, 2015

# LISC Indianapolis- April 3, 2016

## Southside Quality of Life Plan begins

POSTED ON APRIL 3, 2016

*Southside Quality of Life Plan begins*

In 2015, LISC embarked on a new Quality of Life Planning process on the Southside for the area from Garfield Park south to I-465 in conjunction with the University of Indianapolis. **The Southside Quality of Life Plan** seeks to identify strategies for improving the Southside of Indianapolis through community engagement and a plan for sustained and conscious development.

In late February, a Visioning Summit was held with more than 200 residents in attendance to define a shared vision for their neighborhood's future that included housing, safety, culture, parks, healthcare, childcare, education and economic development.



# Southside Times – December 15, 2016

## **South Indy Quality of Life Plan defines what makes the Southside of Indianapolis great, and what needs work**

What does quality of life mean to the people on the Southside of Indianapolis? The answer has been revealed as the South Indy (SoIndy) Quality of Life Plan was unrolled on Dec. 13 at the University of Indianapolis campus.

The University of Indianapolis, Fifth Third Bank, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership (INHP) and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) partnered in 2015 to lead the Quality of Life Plan. A steering team was formed with approximately 20 members consisting of elected officials, neighborhood and community leaders. Scarlett Martin was brought in that year as a community builder to conduct interviews and surveys with Southside residents and educate them of the importance of a quality of life plan.

By the end of December, the study accumulated 108 interviews, 100 online surveys and 268 university-based interviews. In February, a Visioning Summit was held and afterwards volunteers formed seven action teams to create each part of the plan. Those action team topics are: community building, housing, connectivity, Madison Avenue Corridor, education and workforce, Shelby Street Corridor and health and wellness.

“My compliments to everyone involved,” said Steve Alonso, president and CEO of Greater Indiana Region at Fifth Third Bank. “I thought the most impressive page of this whole document is the last page which lists all of the people that were involved in this. It is a comprehensive body of work. It’s very impressive. This is the beginning of a transformation. We feel very fortunate. to be on this journey with you.”

The plan encompasses eight neighborhoods, four off which were added as this planning process started: Bean Creek, Carson Heights, University Heights, Garfield Park, Meridian Raymond, Northwest Perry, Rosedale Hills and South Village.

“Neighborhoods like the ones represented here tonight represent a competitive advantage when people begin looking at where they want to live and where they want to work,” said Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett. “This area is authentic, with anchor institutions like this great university. The neighborhoods celebrated this evening in this rollout of our quality of life plan have a rich history that attaches to them. They have a memory that makes this a very special part of our city. This area is unique with opportunities for renaissance and the opportunities for renewal. You all benefit from increased connectivity and incredible community spirit. You also appreciate that you cannot do it alone.”

Action teams expressed their concerns about South Indy including having the infrastructure to support connectivity, affordable healthy food options, commercial development, a local industry to support education and employment and more. INHP sponsored six Early Action grants for these teams, including: Community Career Fairs, South Indy Connectivity Master Plan, Shelby Street Beautification and Signage, SNAP Outreach for Garfield Park Farmer’s Market, South Indy Environmental Health Research, and South Indy Neighborhood Tailgate Party.

The entire plan can be found at [soindy.org](http://soindy.org).

The plan outlines plenty of work that needs to be done. All residents and stakeholders are invited to the 2017 Action Team Meeting on Jan. 24, 5:30 p.m. at Emmerich Manual High School to participate in the process.



## Ready to engage

**SoIndy looks to revitalize Quality of Life Plan with new members and new leadership in 2018**

### FEATURE

By Nicole Davis

SoIndy is looking to bring in new volunteers in 2018, giving a fresh perspective and energy to the group which seeks to revitalize the Southside Indianapolis community. With that comes new leadership in the newly-appointed director, Michelle Strahl Salinas.

She took on the position at SoIndy's Winter Summit on Dec. 11.

"For me, as we move into 2018, I feel like one of the biggest goals is to engage new residents in the plan and reactivate some of the businesses," Salinas said. "Bringing in more people is going to help the action teams meet their goals quicker and more successfully. Identifying key people that, because of their background and placing them in the right action team, is something I will be looking to do. That's just building relationships, putting them in the right position, good ol' volunteer management."

The University of Indianapolis, Fifth Third Bank, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership (INHP) and Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) partnered in 2015 to lead the Quality of Life Plan. Through that, seven action teams consisting of community volunteers work together to revitalize the designated Southside neighborhoods. Those teams are Community Building, Con-

nectivity, Education & Workforce Development, Health & Wellness, Housing and Shelby Street and Madison Avenue Corridors.

The plan is now being facilitated by Big Car Collaborative.

The new director, Salinas, has lived in the Garfield Park neighborhood for nearly 12 years, having been active in the neighborhood association and other various committees. She became involved with SoIndy's Quality of Life Plan a year and a half ago through participation the community building action team.

Salinas said the SoIndy teams have achieved a lot in the past two years, such as engaging businesses which weren't involved in the community before.

"By coming together as eight neighborhoods, we're better able to advocate than we were able to as individual neighborhoods," she said.

Aside from the monthly action team meetings, the next big event SoIndy will host is a Career and Trades Fair on Jan. 27, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Garfield Park Arts Center.

Keep Indianapolis Beautiful recently proclaimed SoIndy as a focus community, which leads to on April 28, the eight neighborhoods will come together for a clean-up effort. KIB will provide three-to-five hundred volunteers to assist in beautifying the area.

For more information or to volunteer with SoIndy, visit [soindy.org](http://soindy.org) or text soindy to 22828 to register for its newsletter.



Left, SoIndy celebrated its Winter Summit on Dec. 11, discussing what the seven action teams achieved in 2017 and goals for 2018. | Below, on right, is new director Michelle Strahl Salinas. (Submitted photos)

