

Wabash Neighborhood

Community Enhancement Plan





TO AMPLIFY THE NEIGHBORHOOD'S POSITIVE MOMENTUM INTO **RESIDENT- DRIVEN ENHANCEMENTS**

Acknowledgements

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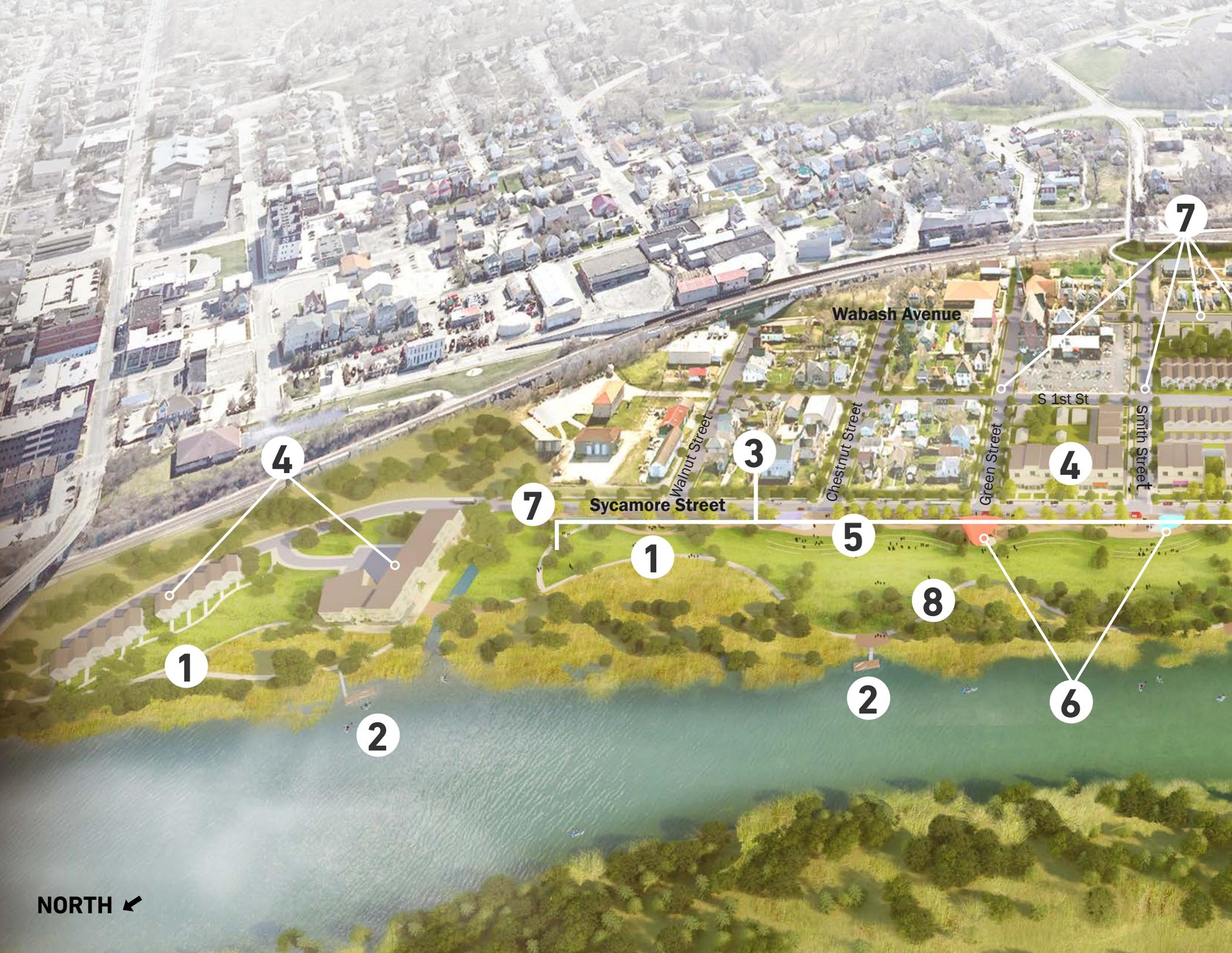
Prepared by

MKSK

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NORTH ↙

Wabash Avenue

Sycamore Street

S 1st St

Walnut Street

Chestnut Street

Green Street

Smith Street

4

7

3

4

7

1

1

5

8

2

2

6



LEGEND

- 1** Riverfront Trail
- 2** River Overlooks/Access Points
- 3** Linear Park
- 4** Future Development
- 5** Canal Feature
- 6** Pavilion/Shelter
- 7** Streetscape Improvements
- 8** Lawn/Gathering Space
- 9** Stormwater Park
- 10** Cargill Staging

01 | INTRODUCTION

Completed in January 2020, this plan studied the 150-acre Wabash neighborhood and set a community-driven vision for its future growth.

The purpose of this plan is to amplify the neighborhood's positive momentum into resident-driven enhancements to improve:



Streets and Connectivity

Better connecting Wabash with other neighborhoods in the city; rethinking traffic and street design with residents in mind; analyzing the quality of place and roadway configuration of neighborhood streets; finding solutions to pressing connectivity issues, such as Cargill truck traffic.



Open Space, Parks, and River Access

Providing the right type of places for residents and families to gather and recreate; linking the neighborhood to the Wabash River and its trail network.



Housing and Development

Strengthening the quality of housing; infilling areas where housing or commercial development don't currently exist; providing diversity of housing choices to supplement downtown development.



Identity and Activation

Capturing the essence of this neighborhood through markers, gateways, crosswalks, lighting, art, or other devices that resonate with residents; identifying quick and easy neighborhood-oriented projects that can build community and create a sense of ownership.



Safety and Services

Advocating for fire, police, and transit needs; determining aspects of the physical environment that can improve the perception of safety in the neighborhood.



Business, Industry, and Institutional Relations and Partnerships

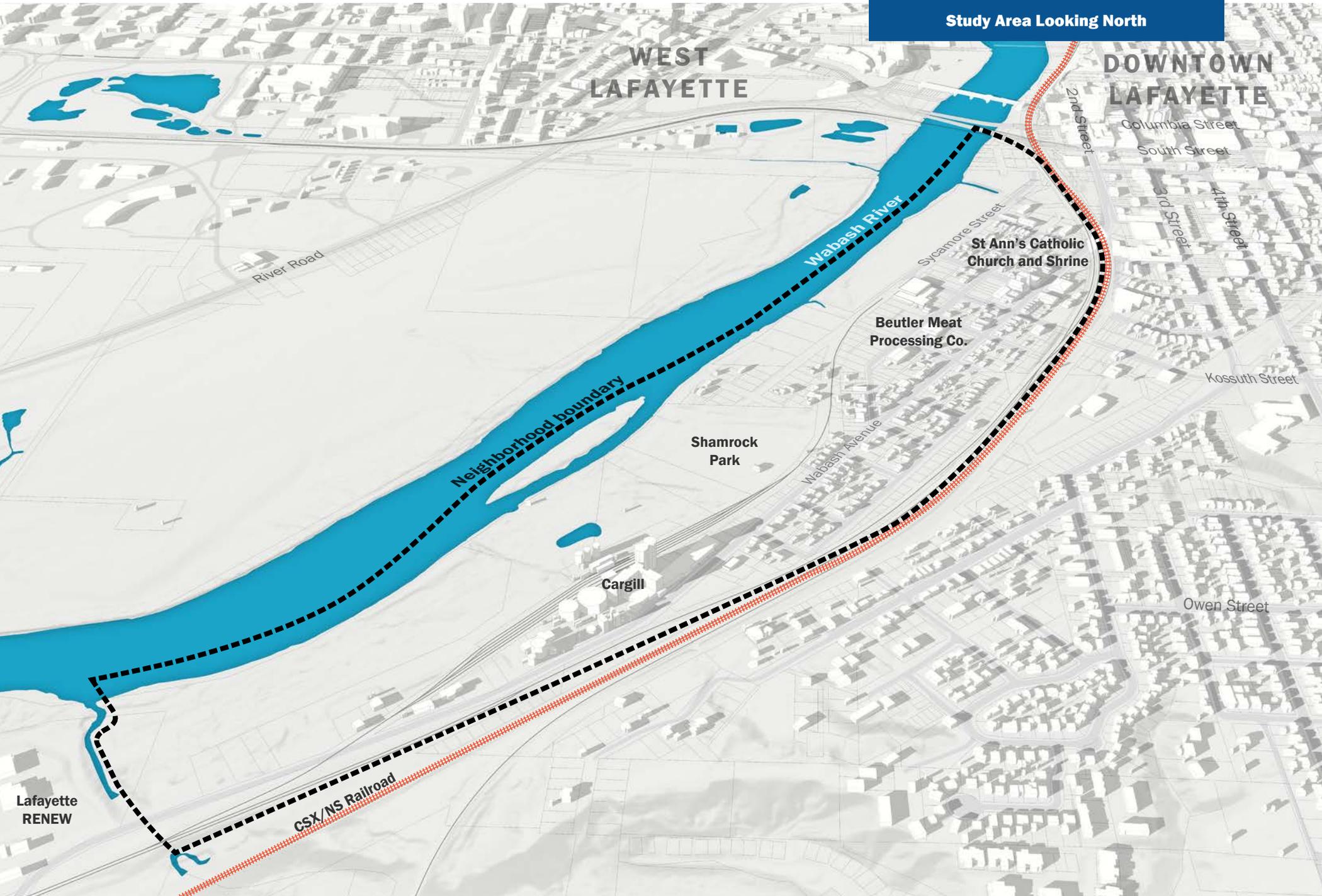
Inviting businesses, industry, and institutions into the conversation about the neighborhood's future; asking these parties to recognize their role and responsibility relative to equity and shaping the neighborhood fabric.

WHY THIS PLAN, WHY NOW

The Wabash neighborhood, located just a short walk from Downtown Lafayette, is a place with a strong history and sense of community where residential and industrial uses have co-existed for decades. The Wabash Avenue corridor threads the needle between the Wabash River and the CSX/NS rail, both of which have shaped the neighborhood as it exists today. The neighborhood is small, with approximately 200 homes, mostly single-family, and several important neighborhood anchors and industrial employers. The overall footprint occupies approximately 150 acres, 50 of which are in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain along the Wabash River.

The neighborhood is home to multiple generations of families, young families, and couples, with a split of ownership and rental properties. It is a collection of people – artists, craftspeople, entrepreneurs, business owners, and more – creating a unique and robust micro-economy. While this neighborhood is small, its active neighborhood association (Wabash Avenue Neighborhood Association), Habitat for Humanity, and Wabash CAN steering committee together create an energetic group of engaged residents, artists, entrepreneurs, and advocates sharing a passion for improving the Wabash neighborhood and supporting its residents. Due to its proximity to downtown and the Wabash River, this area is poised for growth and redevelopment. This plan was undertaken as a proactive, not reactive response to that potential.

Study Area Looking North



OUR PROCESS

The City of Lafayette conducted a three-phase, eight-month process to prepare a multi-faceted community enhancement plan for the Wabash neighborhood. The neighborhood was engaged early, often, and in meaningful ways.

The project steering committee (Wabash CAN) was engaged eight times during this process. Meetings were interactive, topical, and focused on activities that helped the city to understand opportunities and develop grounded recommendations. Initial meetings focused on listening and learning about overall impressions of the neighborhood. Subsequent Wabash CAN meetings explored topics (summarized on page 6) important to the neighborhood and consisted of a listening/brainstorming session followed by an ideas session. Real-time feedback on opportunities, recommendations, and concepts was sought during these meetings. Multiple stakeholders were engaged continually throughout the process in several days of individual and small group interviews and in collaborative sessions. Project engagement also went into the neighborhood to meet people where they already gather. On Saturday, August 3rd 2019, the city participated in a highly-successful Wabash Walls event where early opportunities, recommendations, and concepts were shared and discussed.

This plan documents the wealth of public input, neighborhood impressions, opportunities, recommendations, concepts, and implementation steps that resulted from these conversations with the community. The final plan was shared during the Boldly Wabash Open House on February 18th, 2020, in a highly engaging event held at the Wells Center in collaboration with the Tippecanoe Arts Federation. Several short-term implementation steps included within this plan are already in process, and the city and Wabash neighborhood are incredibly excited about what the future holds for the neighborhood.



STEP 1

Learning

June - July

- Talk with residents, business owners, and stakeholders to learn about the neighborhood.
- Gather mapping information about the study area and review previous planning work.

STEP 2

Opportunities

April - September

- Develop an understanding of physical conditions, and interpret its significance.
- Hold sessions with the community to discuss topics.
- Identify big opportunities and challenges to realizing them.
- Develop a neighborhood-supported decision with feasible solutions.

STEP 3

Recommendations

September - January

- Recommend paths forward and identify potential partners.
- Propose strategies such as regulatory changes, guidelines, and incentives.
- Determine action steps and time horizons.
- Plan development
- Public open house

PREVIOUS **PLANNING**

Strategic Planning (Source: Wabash Avenue Neighborhood and Habitat for Humanity)

The goals and strategies drafted as part of strategic planning conducted by the Wabash Avenue Neighborhood Association (WANA) and Habitat for Humanity were instrumental to the development of this plan's focus. This information is summarized below and was referenced and built-upon throughout the planning process.

"The mission of the Wabash Avenue Neighborhood Association (WANA) is to strengthen our neighborhood by promoting our area as a quiet, peaceful neighborhood with well-kept houses. We want to encourage new homeowners and address any problem properties. We are a hands-on group, and we respect each other's privacy but help each other when needed."



WANA Goals and Strategies:

Promote a positive image of Wabash Avenue Neighborhood Association

- Neighborhood signs
- Adopt a flower/mailbox program
- Create a brochure about the neighborhood
- Promote the low crime statistics of the neighborhood
- Promote local businesses/churches in neighborhood

Increase communications, neighborliness, and participation

- Produce quarterly newsletters
- Host an annual hog roast/block parties
- Create youth activities
- Create a WANA website
- Form relationships with churches to outreach to neighbors
- Hold annual signature events

Increase safety

- Improve lighting
- Initiate safety surveillance/crime watch group
- Work with City of Lafayette to improve sidewalks
- Work with Lafayette Police to increase bike patrols

Strengthen partnership with Shamrock Dog Park

- Propose to the City Clerk about selling (water, dog treats, hand sanitizer, coffee/hot chocolate)

Promote homeownership

- Provide realtors/school corporations with brochure of neighborhood
- Host open houses and tours of the neighborhood to generate interest in homeownership
- Work with City of Lafayette, Lafayette Neighborhood Housing Services (LNHS), Habitat for Humanity for different type of incentives
- Encourage renters to become homeowners

Address problem properties

- Work with Habitat for Humanity
- Work with Lafayette Neighborhood Housing Services
- Work with City Engineer's Office
- Identify specific problem properties in neighborhood
- Identify absentee landlords
- Initiate a hands-on project to beautify the problem properties

PREVIOUS PLANNING

Two-Cities, One River: Master Plan for the Wabash River Urban Corridor (Source: WREC)

Several plans relevant to the Wabash neighborhood were reviewed as part of this process. The Two-Cities, One River Master Plan for the Wabash River Urban Corridor summarized below includes the recommendations most relevant to the neighborhood and this plan.

Open space

- Expansion of Shamrock Park, including a trail extension, stormwater management, interpretation of the historic Wabash and Erie Canal, and a water resource education and research center
- Programmatic elements specific to Shamrock Park and the riverfront in the Wabash neighborhood

Development

- The former Boxboard paper mill site adjacent to the Wabash Avenue neighborhood has enormous potential due to its proximity to the river and its elevation outside the 100-year floodplain (19+ acres outside of the 100-year floodplain)
- Residential should be neighborhood-scaled and residential mixed-use in character

Connectivity and activation

- Proposed new connections, including the rail bridge downtown and the Riverside Promenade, will improve downtown connectivity
- The wide right-of-way along Sycamore Street provides an opportunity for the new interpretation of the historic Wabash and Erie Canal and an innovative stormwater management approach

- Effluent from the West Lafayette Water Treatment Facility can be piped over the river along the rail bridge and used to provide flow to a water feature associated with canal interpretation
- The location of the historic Wabash and Erie Canal along Sycamore Avenue and the investments around Shamrock Park provide the foundation for the recommended signature river front park along the entire Southern Reach of the Wabash River to create a Canal Trace Park and continuous trail access



02 | EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing conditions were evaluated by reviewing a wealth of information on the ground analysis and stakeholder engagement. The following pages summarize the findings from this important part of the process.

Overview

The Wabash neighborhood is a stable neighborhood with a rich history. The history of this neighborhood grounds this place and the people who live here. However, the neighborhood's recent focus on the arts with the Wabash Walls public art initiative has given it much attention and a breath of fresh air. It is widely acknowledged that as one of Lafayette's oldest neighborhoods outside of downtown, this place is poised for transformation, attention, and investment in the future. Residents are concerned about gentrification and displacement, as homes are renovated, and the planned riverfront park is completed. Land values and rentals are expected to continue increasing in price over time. The evaluation of existing conditions focused on understanding what exists today, what has been, and what could occur in the future.

The Riverfront

Much of the Wabash Riverfront was industrial but has been cleared over the past several decades. Today, the riverfront is mostly under control by the City of Lafayette and Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC). The 150-acre study area is approximately one-third (50-acre) in the regulatory floodway, or 100-year floodplain (described on page 20).

Neighborhood Core

As one moves eastward into the neighborhood, there is a blend of legacy industrial businesses (Cargill, Indiana Steel Fabricators, and Kirby Risk) and mostly small, century-old cottage-style homes. Homes are a blend of rental and individually owned homes (many are multi-generation households) in varying conditions. This neighborhood is relatively safe, low-traffic, and walkable. Residents take pride in their homes, know their neighbors, and lend a hand when needed. Several underutilized industrial parcels within the neighborhood's western edge could support redevelopment over time.

Wabash Avenue Corridor

Wabash Avenue is the only way in and out of the neighborhood for vehicular traffic. As the sole means of access, this corridor is of the utmost importance for people who live, work, and visit this area. Truck traffic backups (semi-trucks delivering soybeans to Cargill from throughout the region) along Wabash Avenue north to South Street were identified as a critical issue both from an access and public safety. Wabash Avenue has a storied past and has now improved in its perception, especially with the addition of several popular businesses (Sacred Grounds), the work of area community organizations, and Wabash Walls public art.

Today, Wabash Avenue is home to a blend of traditional main-street two to three-story architecture, a historic Catholic Church, and small scale homes. The Wabash Avenue corridor was once home to many more stores, restaurants, and bars, but only has one restaurant today.

Shamrock Park and Cargill

Anchoring the southern end of the Wabash neighborhood is Shamrock Park (a large park, including a dog-park - mostly in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain) and Cargill's large soybean processing plant. Cargill is in need of a sizeable truck staging area near its plant that will mitigate truck traffic backups on Wabash Avenue. Residential areas near Shamrock Park are less dense, with more vacant buildings and lots, especially in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain. In general, this area is less stable than the core of the neighborhood further north and has significant barriers to redevelopment except as park/open space uses. South of Cargill is a large wooded area along the riverfront that is largely inaccessible and mostly in the regulatory floodway (owned by Cargill and adjacent Lafayette RENEW).

Study Area Boundary



Wabash neighborhood boundary

Cargill plant

Lafayette RENEW wastewater treatment

CSX/NS Railroad

Shamrock Park

2nd Street underpass

At A Glance:
150-acre study area (50-acre floodplain)
Wabash Avenue corridor
Wabash River engagement
Proximity to Wabash River and downtown
Blend of owners and renters
Strong culture and place with a DIY attitude
CSX/NS Railroad
Shamrock Park
Cargill Inc. (15% of area)

WHAT WE OBSERVED

Through a site tour and discussions with stakeholders and members of the steering committee, the planning team has identified the following observations about the Wabash neighborhood. These impressions were explored to greater detail as the planning process moved into later phases.

Observation Summary

Historic buildings or high architectural quality that contribute to their surroundings

A strong heritage reflected in the neighborhood's history, and visible through remnants of historic structures and industry

A burgeoning neighborhood identity supported and activated through public art

Strong community bonds evidenced by highly engaged residents, active neighborhood associations, and nonprofit organizations

Barriers to connectivity that inhibit walkability, including railroad tracks, changes in topography, missing sidewalks, and connections to surrounding neighborhoods

Underutilized parcels and buildings that interrupt the urban fabric, and lead to a perception of unsafety

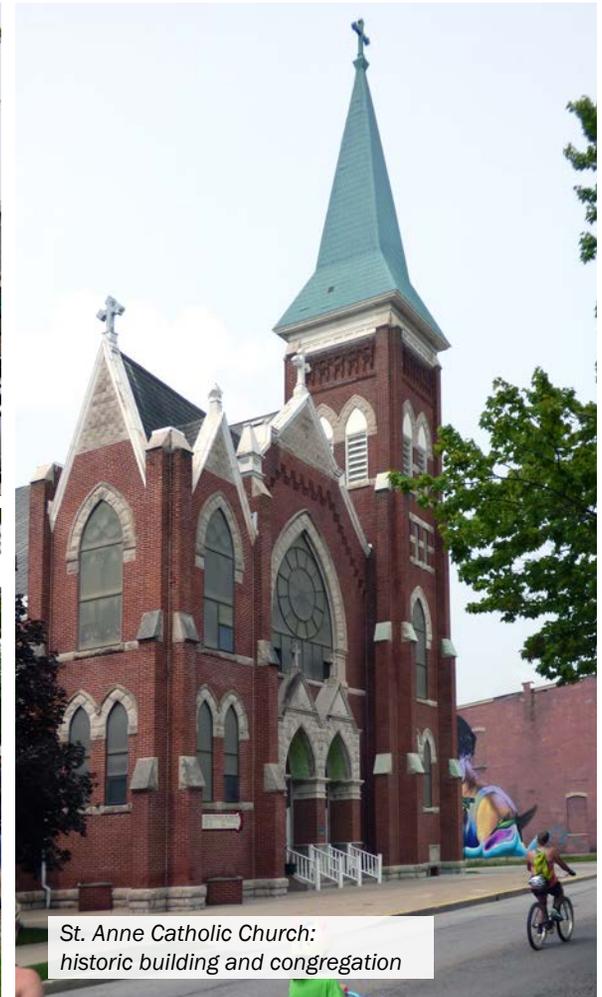
A waterfront opportunity along the Wabash River, reflecting a strong community desire, to access the water



Sacred Grounds Coffee Shop: neighborhood gathering spot



Murals through neighborhood enliven streets



St. Anne Catholic Church: historic building and congregation



Whimsical public art scattered in unexpected places



Neighborhood bulletin board



The Sharing Shed is a unique neighborhood feature



Gateway signage at neighborhood thresholds



Pocket park on Wabash Avenue



Railroad spurs create challenging barriers



Engaged residents



Address markers along Sycamore Street



Functioning industry rooted in history

DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

This demographic profile for the Wabash neighborhood was generated using data from the U.S. Census and aggregated by ESRI. These numbers represent a high-level overview of the neighborhood, and unless noted otherwise, are Census estimates for 2018 and ESRI-generated projections for 2023.



Population

Wabash Neighborhood

City of Lafayette



551

Population
(2018 Estimate)

75,362

Population
(2018 Estimate)



598

Population Projection
(2023)

79,620

Population Projection
(2023)



1.65%

Annual Population
Growth

1.11%

Annual Population
Growth



32.3

Median Age
(2018)

33.6

Median Age
(2018)

Households

Wabash Neighborhood

City of Lafayette



152

Households
(2018)

31,956

Households
(2018)



166

Households Projection
(2023)

33,701

Households Projection
(2023)



1.78%

Annual Household
Growth

1.07%

Annual Household
Growth



3.38

Avg. Household Size
(2018)

2.31

Avg. Household Size
(2018)



Income and Education

Wabash Neighborhood



\$28,576

Median Household Income (2018)



33.76%

Population With Bachelors Degree Or Higher



249

Total Employees (2018)



19.7%

Households Without Vehicles

City of Lafayette

\$43,120

Median Household Income (2018)

25.45%

Population With Bachelors Degree Or Higher

64,394

Total Employees (2018)

16.1%

Households Without Vehicles

Housing

Wabash Neighborhood



\$625

Median Rent (2018)



64.9%

Renter Occupied Housing Units (2018)



206

ACS Total Housing Units (2016)



\$92,410

ACS Average Home Value (2016)

City of Lafayette

\$630

Median Rent (2018)

44.3%

Renter Occupied Housing Units (2018)

33,787

ACS Total Housing Units (2016)

\$123,490

ACS Average Home Value (2016)

Note: American Community Survey (ACS)

NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY

Rich in history, the Wabash neighborhood has been a vital part of Lafayette's economy and culture since the city's founding. A neighborhood with industrial beginnings, immigrant heritage, and a southern gateway to the city, Wabash continues to play a part in Lafayette's vibrancy.

1825: City of Lafayette is platted

1835: Wabash Avenue neighborhood becomes a significant industrial center with mills, factories, and whiskey distilleries

1835: Indiana State Legislature votes to extend the Wabash and Erie Canal to Lafayette

1840: Wabash and Erie Canal construction begins, bringing in Irish immigrant laborers into the neighborhood

1843: Canal begins operations

1863: A Confederate prison camp exists in the neighborhood on Chestnut Street

1870: St. Ann's Catholic Church is built

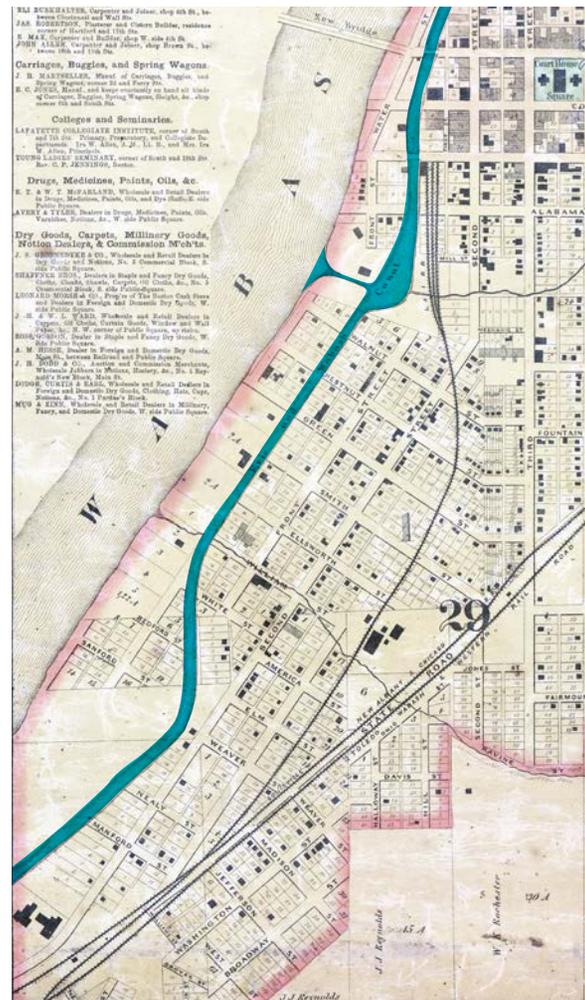
1874-5: Canal stops operations, following years of financial insolvency. Canal is buried under current alignment of Sycamore Street

1960 - 1970's: High crime rates drive residents out of the neighborhood

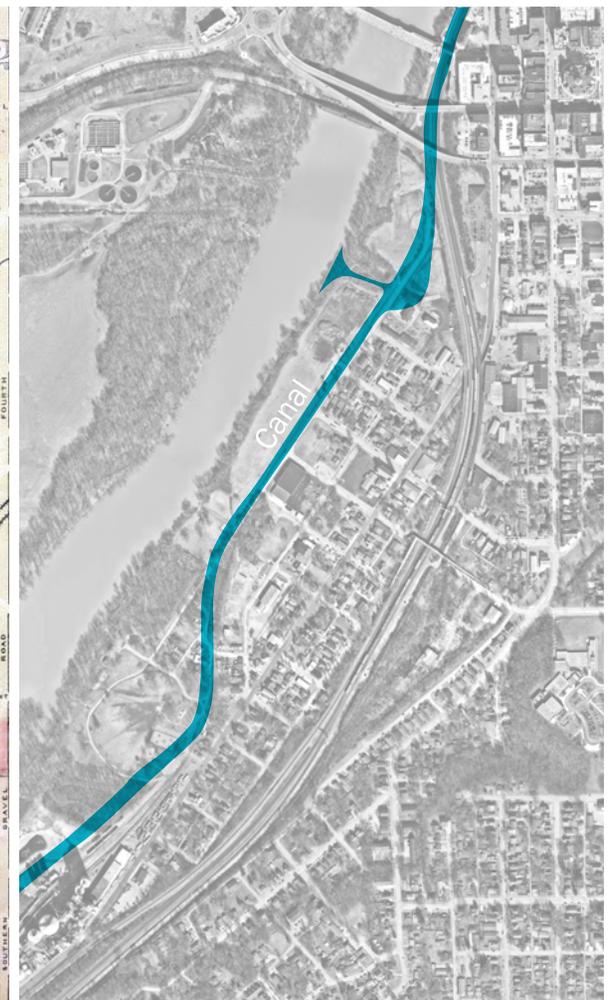
2000: Habitat for Humanity begins revitalization efforts in the neighborhood, eventually renovating dozens of properties

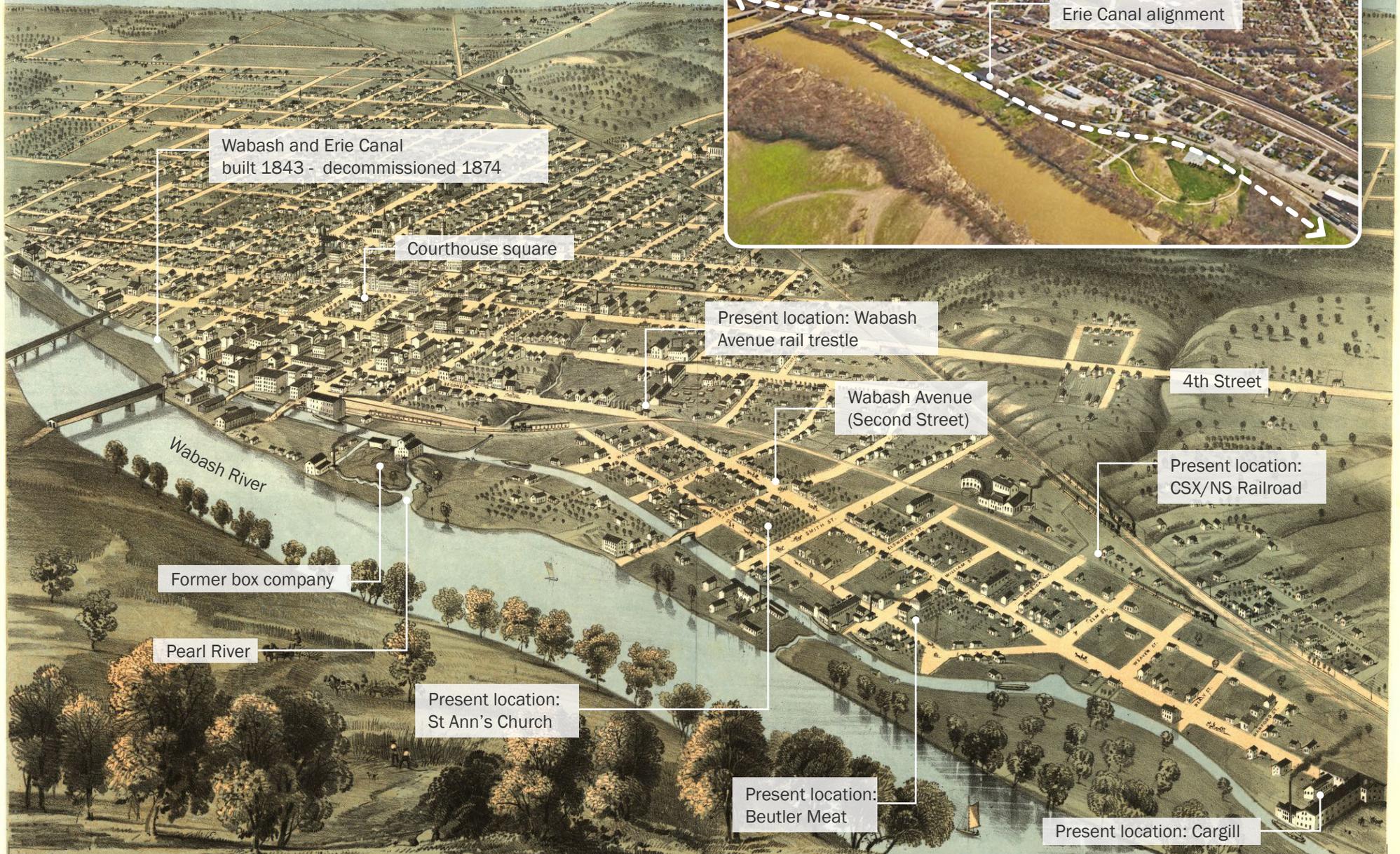
2018: Wabash Walls public art program brings in dozens of murals to the neighborhood

Historic map: 1866



Current aerial: 2019





Wabash and Erie Canal
built 1843 - decommissioned 1874

Courthouse square

Present location: Wabash
Avenue rail trestle

Wabash Avenue
(Second Street)

4th Street

Present location:
CSX/NS Railroad

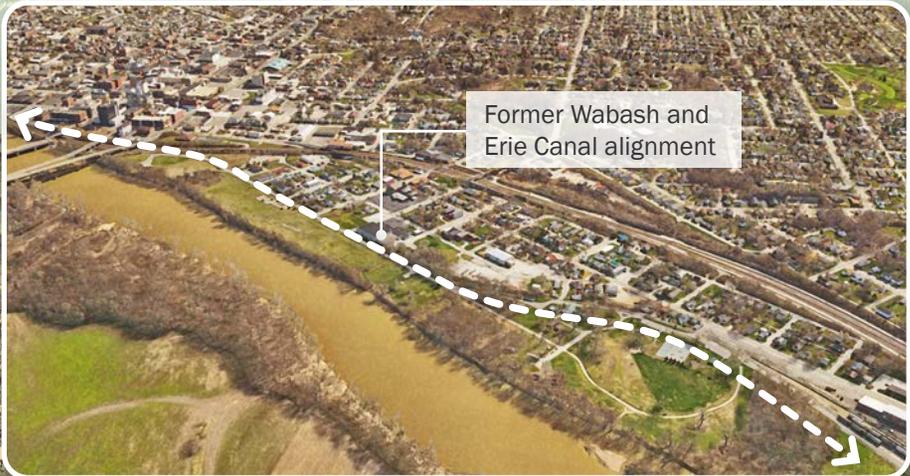
Former box company

Pearl River

Present location:
St Ann's Church

Present location:
Beutler Meat

Present location: Cargill



Former Wabash and
Erie Canal alignment

BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CITY
OF
LAFAYETTE.
TIPPECANOE CO. INDIANA, 1868.

1 Court House	10 Opera House & Post Office.	15 Baptist	26 1st
2 County Offices	11 Gas Works	16 Christian	27 2d
3 Centre	12 T. W. & W. Depot	17 Episcopal	28 3d
4 Eastern Public School.	13 T. W. & W. Round House.	18 German Reformed	29 4th
5 Southern	14 L. C. & L. R. Depot.	19 German Lutheran	30 5th
6 Lafayette Collegiate Institute	15 C. & A. L. & Machine Shop.	20 German Lutheran	31 6th
7 Lafayette Grammar School.	16 C. W. A. L. & Depot	21 St. Methodist	32 7th
8 St. Ignace Academy.	17 Greenbush	22 German	33 8th
9 St. Bonifacius Academy.	18 German Cemetery	23 Churches.	34 9th
		24 United Presbyterian	35 10th
		25 Roman Catholic.	36 11th
		26 United Brethren.	37 12th
		27 North	38 13th

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following pages illustrate an initial understanding of the Wabash neighborhood, using field-verified observations, data sets provided by the city, county, and state, and nationally-sourced data.

Open Space and Gathering Areas

The Wabash River runs along the entire western boundary of the neighborhood, though except for informal canoe and kayak launch points, remains inaccessible to the neighborhood, and is largely fenced-in. Located near the geographical center of the neighborhood, Shamrock Park includes recreational facilities and fenced-in dog areas. The park itself is surrounded by streets without sidewalks, railroad tracks, and vacant properties. Further north on Wabash Avenue, a small pocket park across from the Sacred Grounds coffee shop acts as the symbolic center of the neighborhood, with seating areas and a community bulletin board.

Connectivity

The Wabash Neighborhood operates as an island, largely separated from downtown and other neighborhoods. Disconnected streets, railroads, the Wabash River, and industry are all barriers to vehicular and pedestrian connectivity. Wabash Avenue is the primary north/south connection, providing the only vehicular access points in and out of the neighborhood. A pedestrian bridge at Smith Street across the CSX/NS Railroad connects to the Ellsworth-Romig Neighborhood and Miller Neighborhood. This bridge lacks signage and is easily identified. Before railroad relocation occurred several decades ago, the areas east of the CSX/NS Railroad were within the Wabash Neighborhood.

Now this area is disconnected and lacks a neighborhood identity. Within the neighborhood, traffic is light, but there is a lack of sidewalks on streets except for Wabash Avenue.

Natural Features

Approximately one-third of the neighborhood's land area is within a regulatory floodway or 100-year floodplain, generally following the Sycamore Street alignment. Between Sycamore Street and the CSX/NS Railroad, the topography changes by a 30-foot increase over a span of 600 feet. Along the Wabash River, various inlets remain as remnants of the Wabash and Erie Canal.

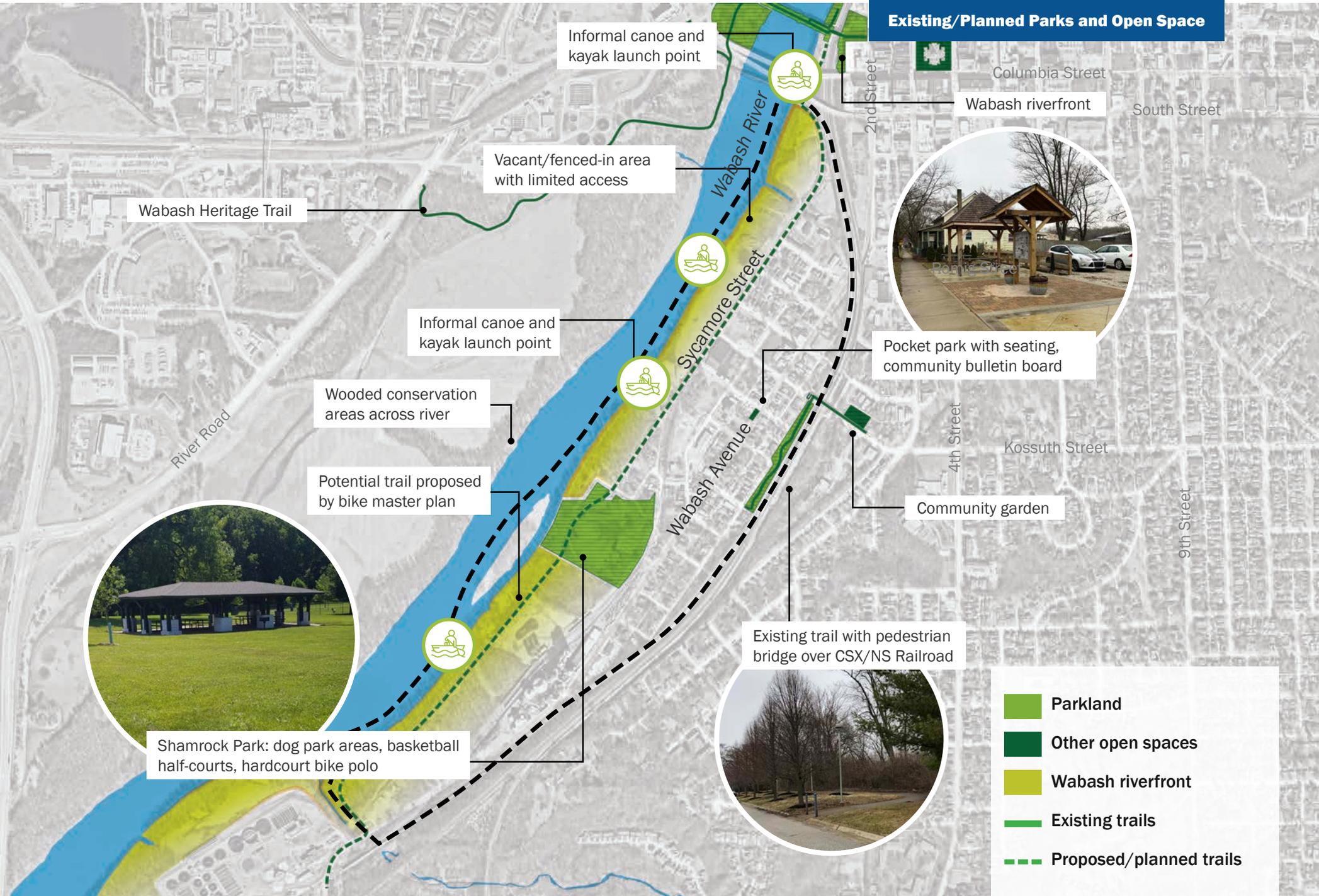
Land Uses and Zoning

The neighborhood's makeup of single-family homes surrounded by industrial or former-industrial land reflects urban development patterns from the 1830s. Still home to functioning industrial and commercial uses along the peripheries, the Wabash Avenue corridor remains primarily single-family in nature, with a commercial node near Ellsworth Street. These land uses are reflected in the neighborhood's current zoning districts. Natural features also impact zoning designations, with riverfront properties within flood-prone areas designated as within a Floodplain Zoning District. The Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission administers zoning for the City of Lafayette and places restrictions within the Floodplain Zoning District.

Land Ownership and Vacancies

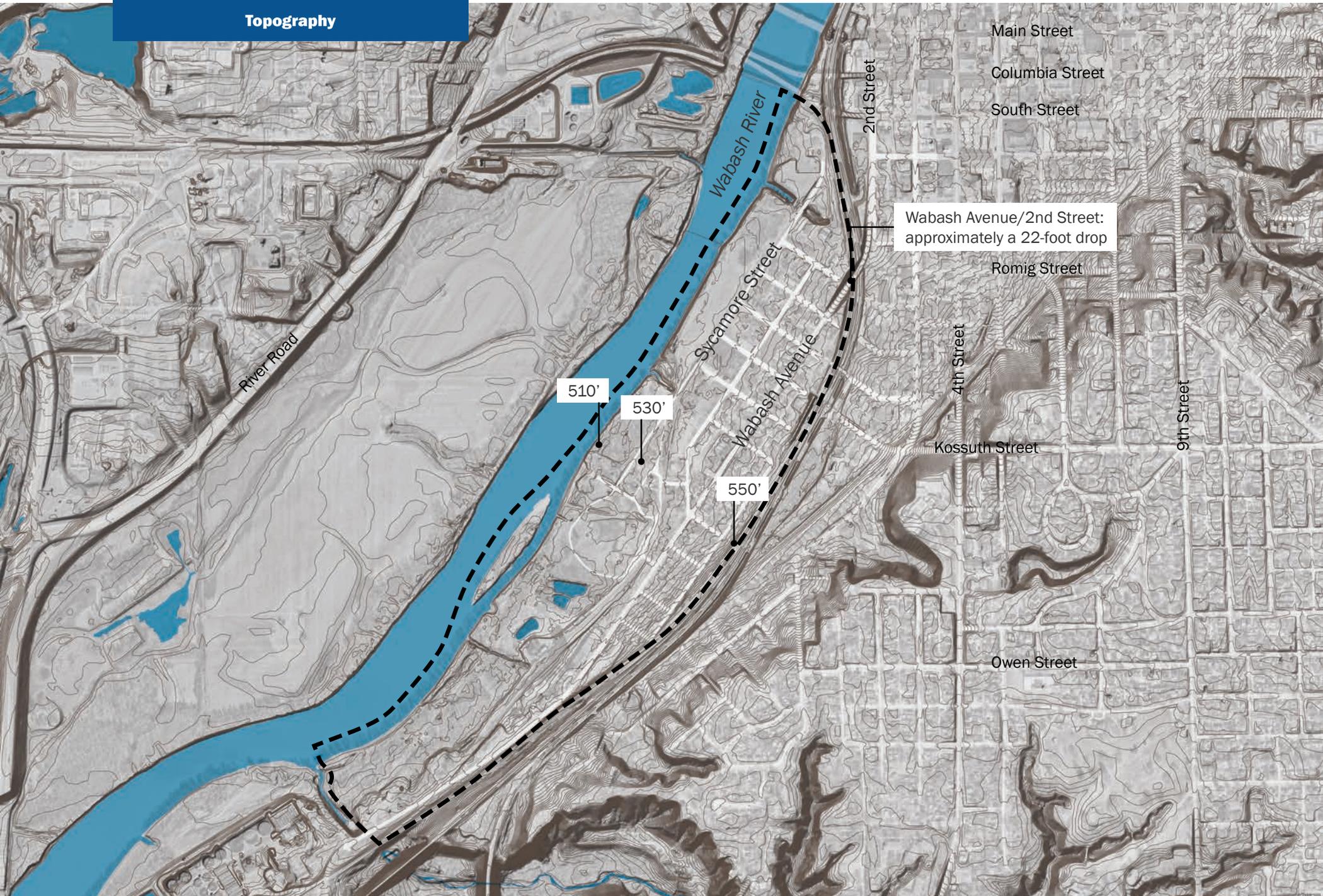
About eleven landowners control close to 80% of the neighborhood's land area. The largest landowners by land area include the City of Lafayette, Kirby Risk, Indiana Steel Fabricators, Cargill Industries, and the Wabash Enhancement River Corporation (WREC). A handful of these owners also control much of the underutilized and vacant land within the neighborhood, especially parcels on the Wabash River. These include WREC, members of the Snyder Family, the City of Lafayette, and Cargill.

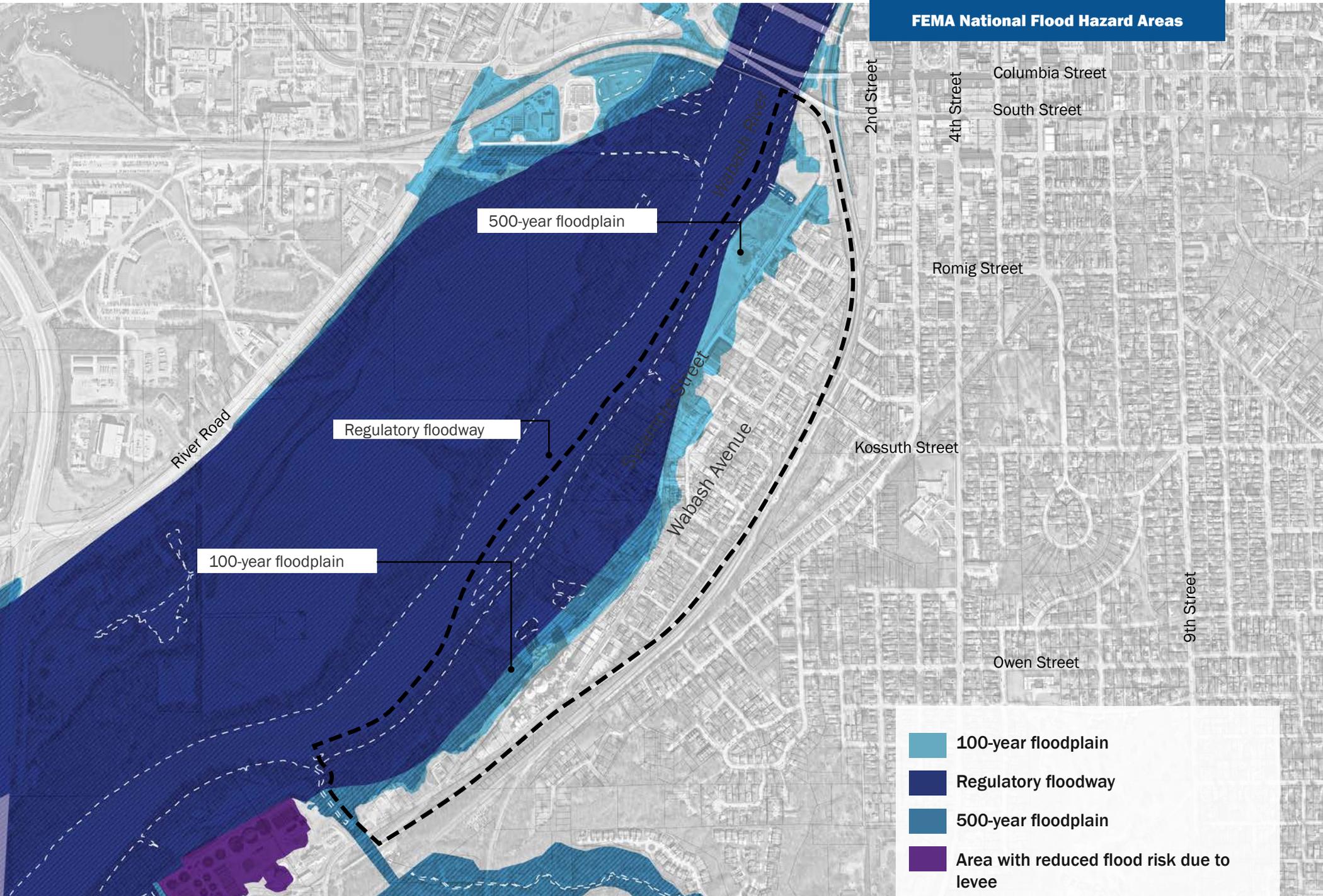
Existing/Planned Parks and Open Space



- Parkland
- Other open spaces
- Wabash riverfront
- Existing trails
- Proposed/planned trails

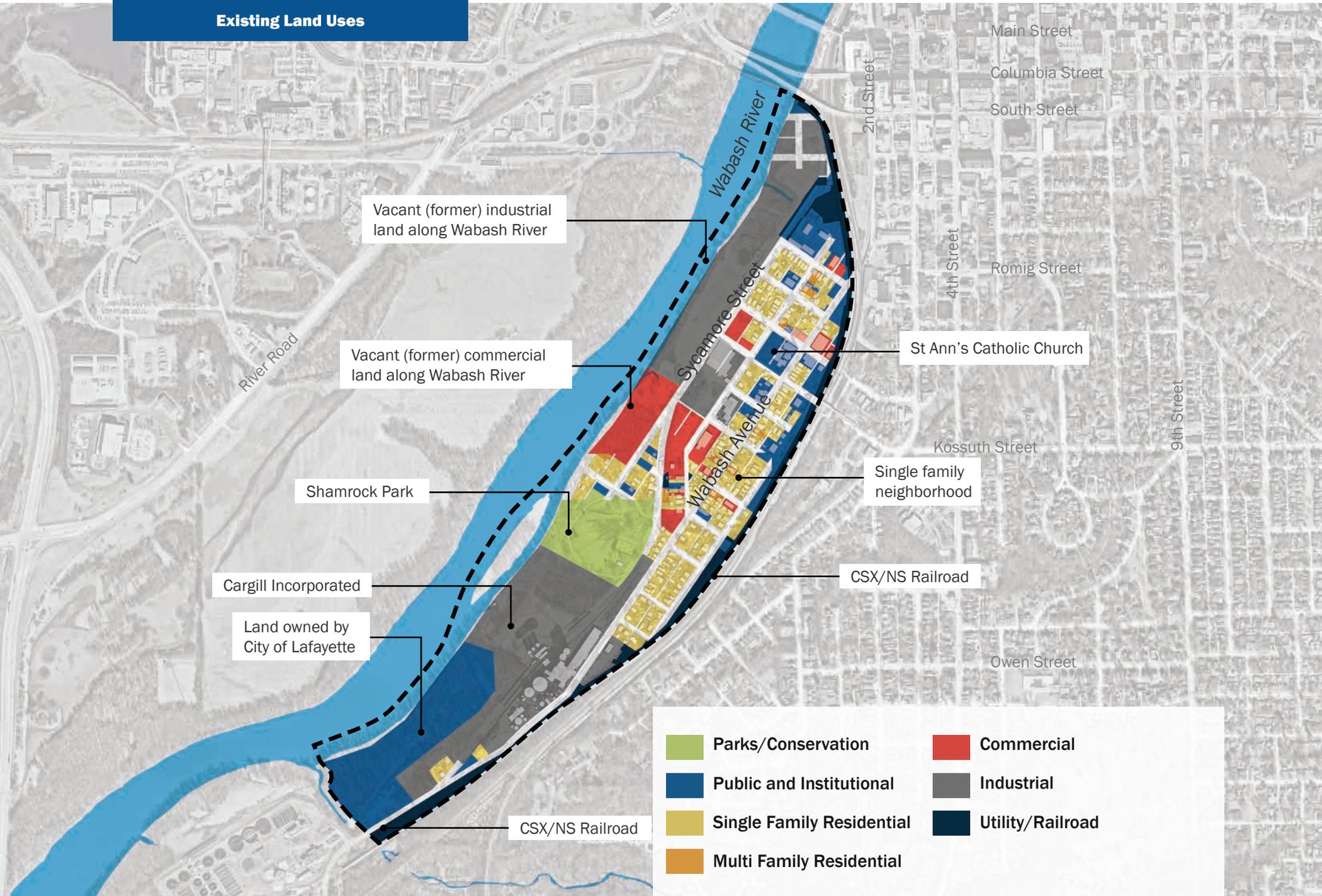
Topography



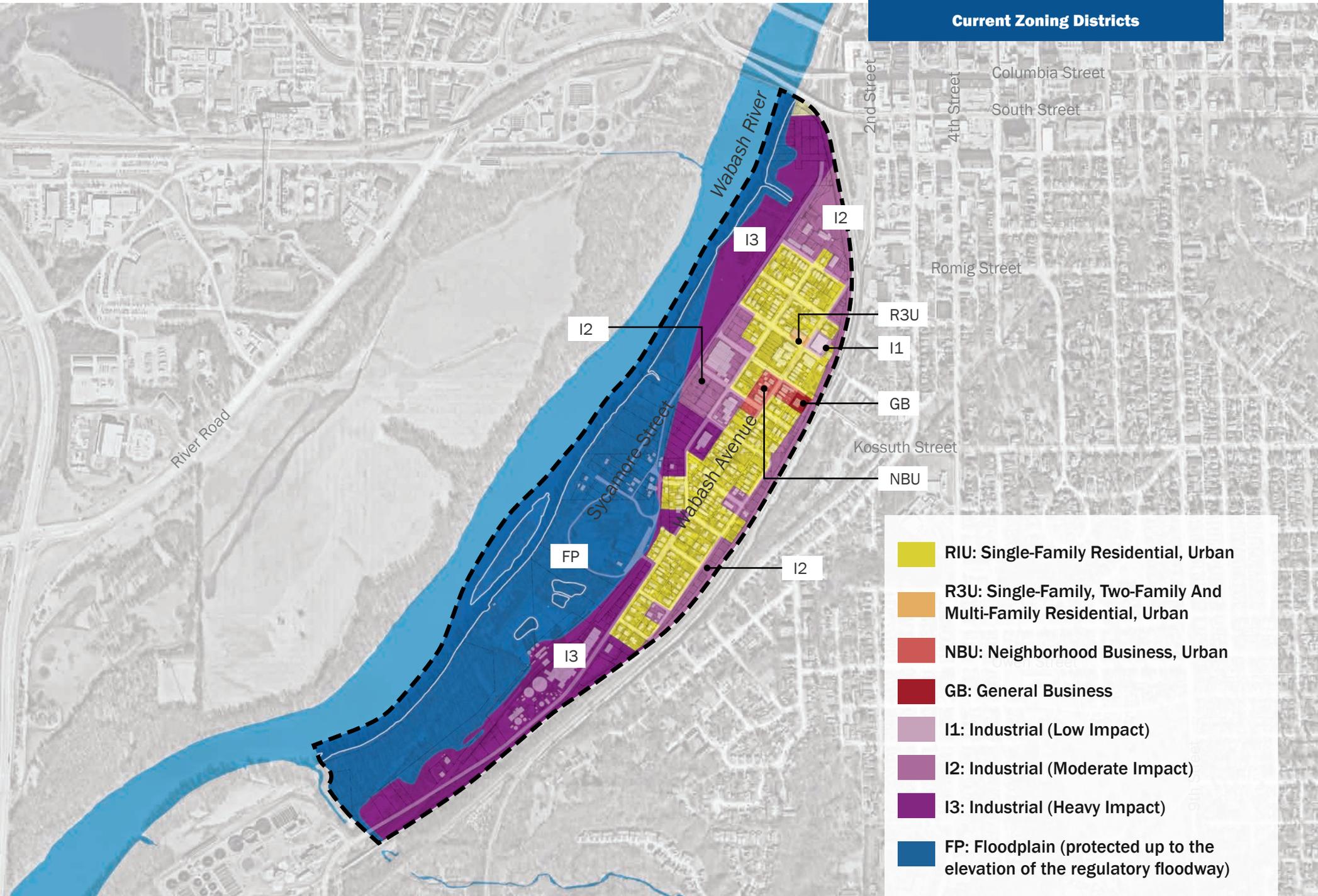


Note: this information is Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) data and may require further study/surveying prior to development occurring

Existing Land Uses



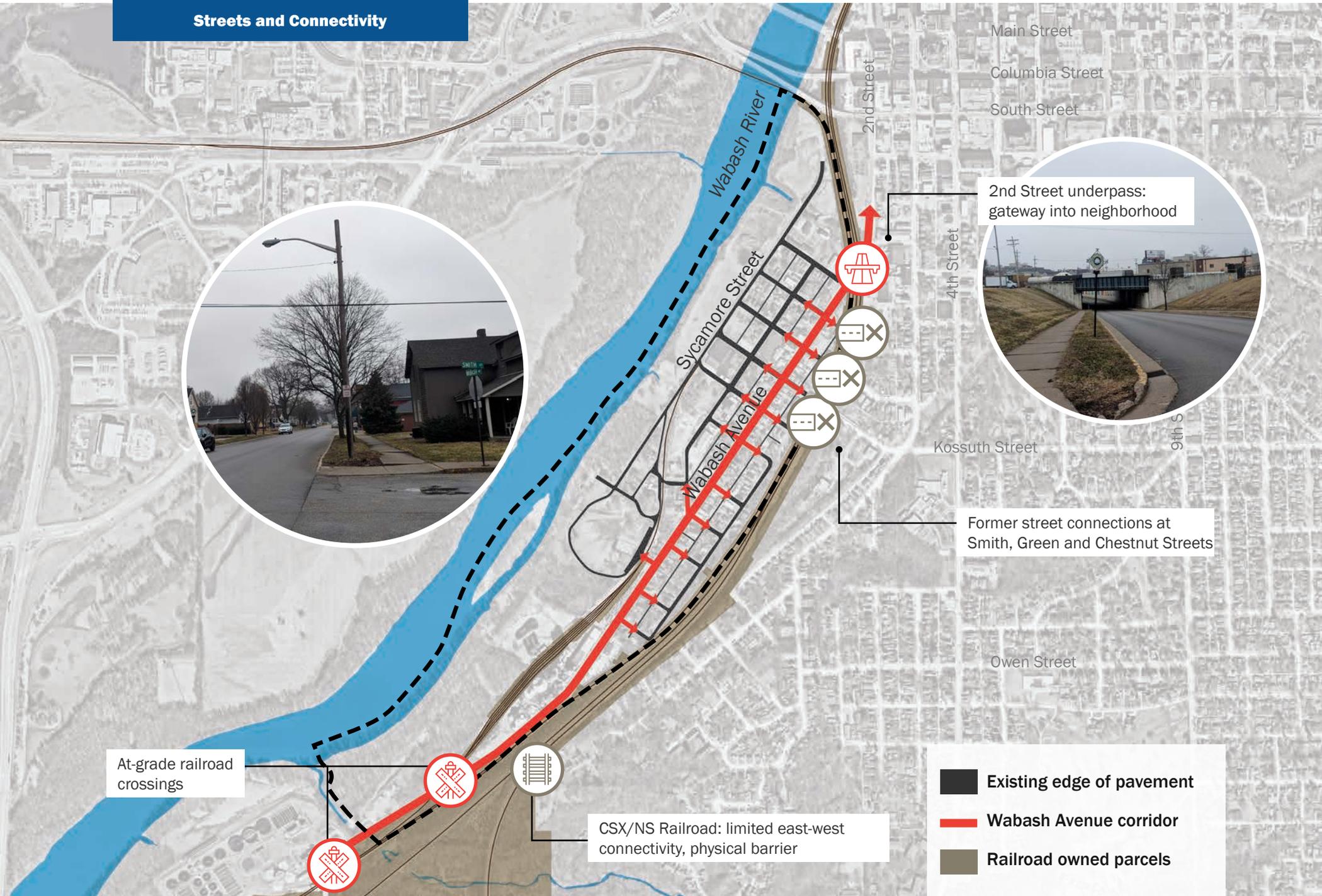
Current Zoning Districts



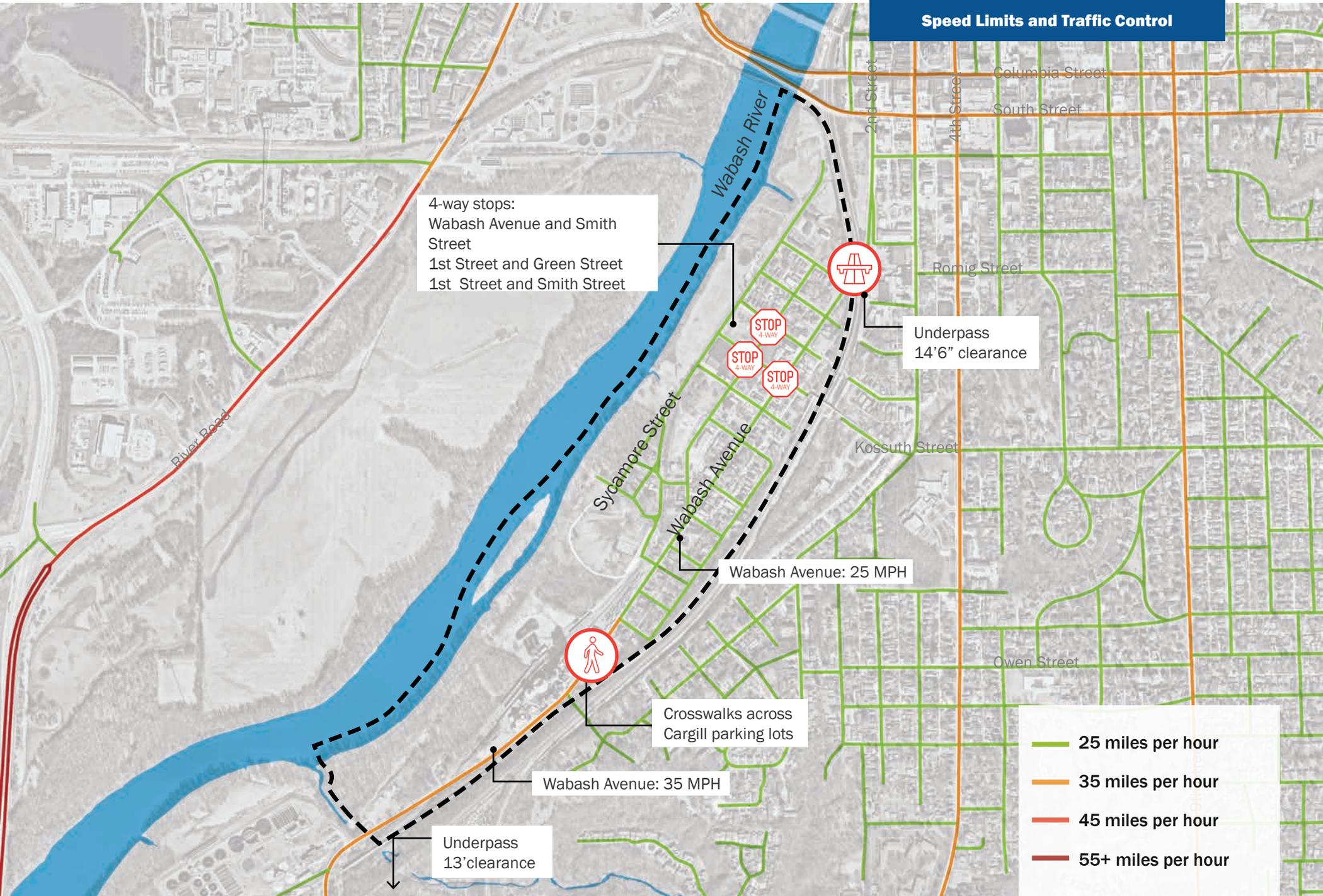
- RIU: Single-Family Residential, Urban
- R3U: Single-Family, Two-Family And Multi-Family Residential, Urban
- NBU: Neighborhood Business, Urban
- GB: General Business
- I1: Industrial (Low Impact)
- I2: Industrial (Moderate Impact)
- I3: Industrial (Heavy Impact)
- FP: Floodplain (protected up to the elevation of the regulatory floodway)

Note: this information is maintained by the Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission and was accurate the time of this plan, but is subject to change

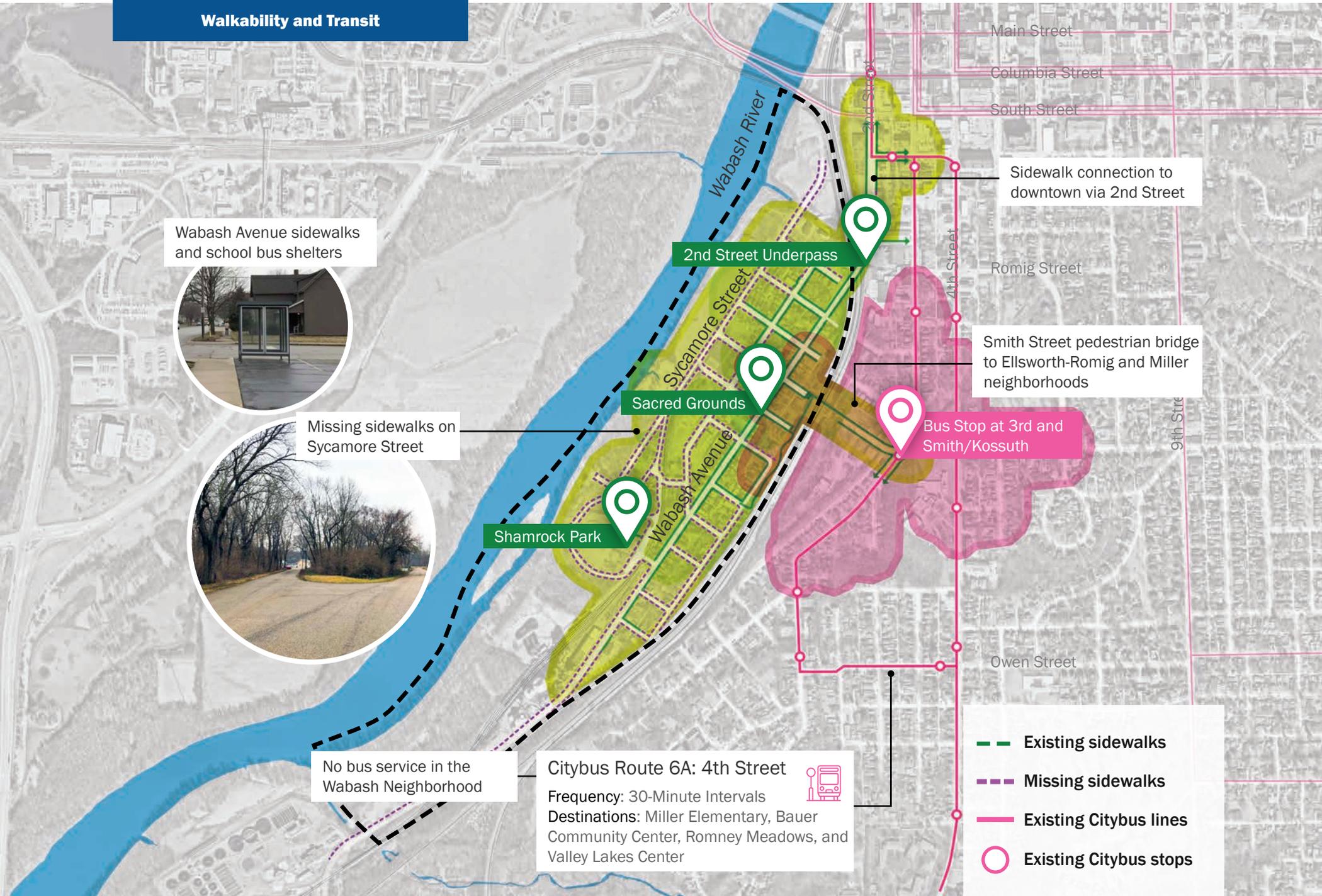
Streets and Connectivity



Speed Limits and Traffic Control



Walkability and Transit



Wabash Avenue sidewalks and school bus shelters



Missing sidewalks on Sycamore Street



No bus service in the Wabash Neighborhood

Citybus Route 6A: 4th Street
 Frequency: 30-Minute Intervals
 Destinations: Miller Elementary, Bauer Community Center, Romney Meadows, and Valley Lakes Center

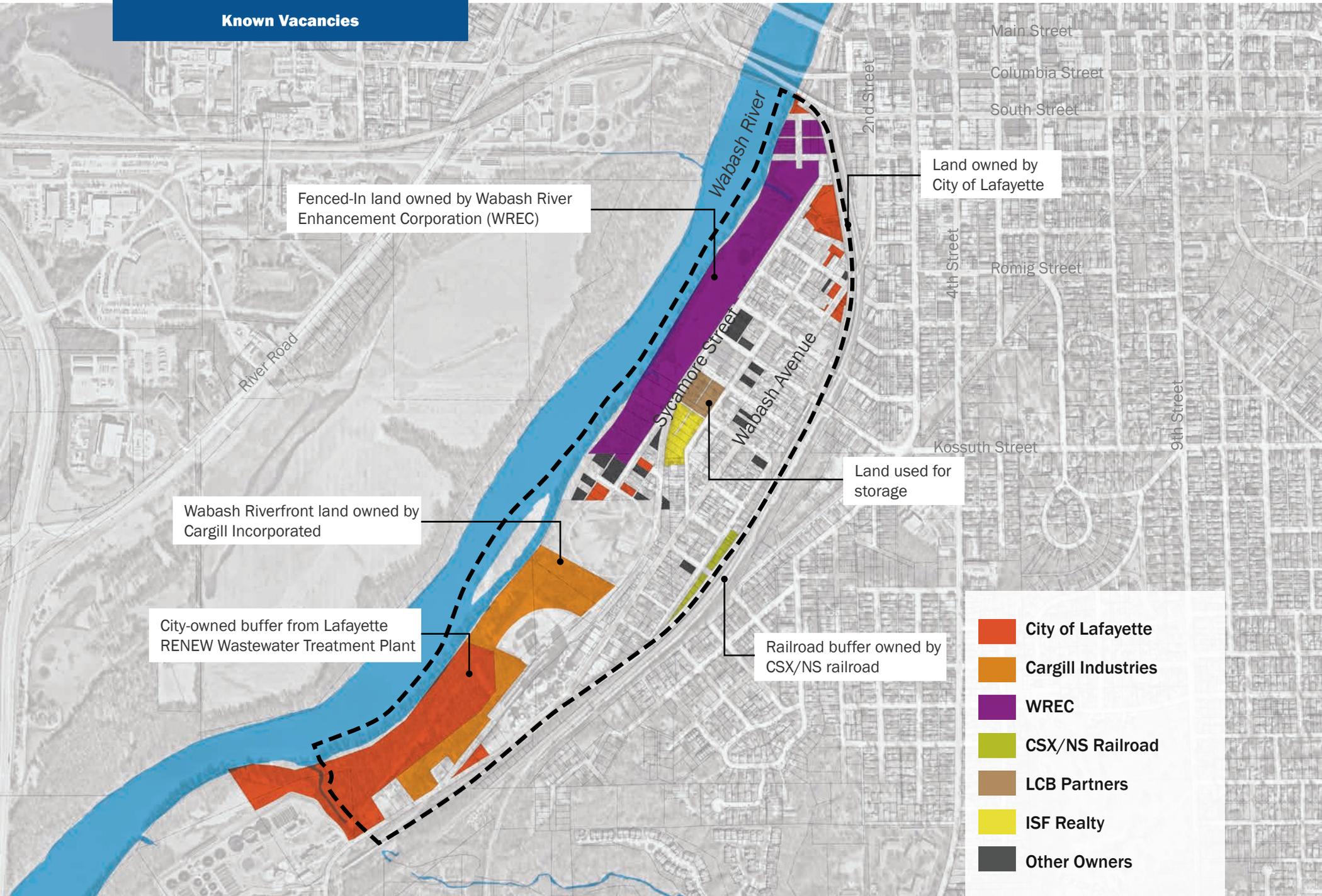
- Existing sidewalks
- Missing sidewalks
- Existing Citybus lines
- Existing Citybus stops

Historic Structures of Note (SHAARD)



Note: historic ratings are from the Tippecanoe County Interim Report by Indiana Landmarks

Known Vacancies



Major Landowners

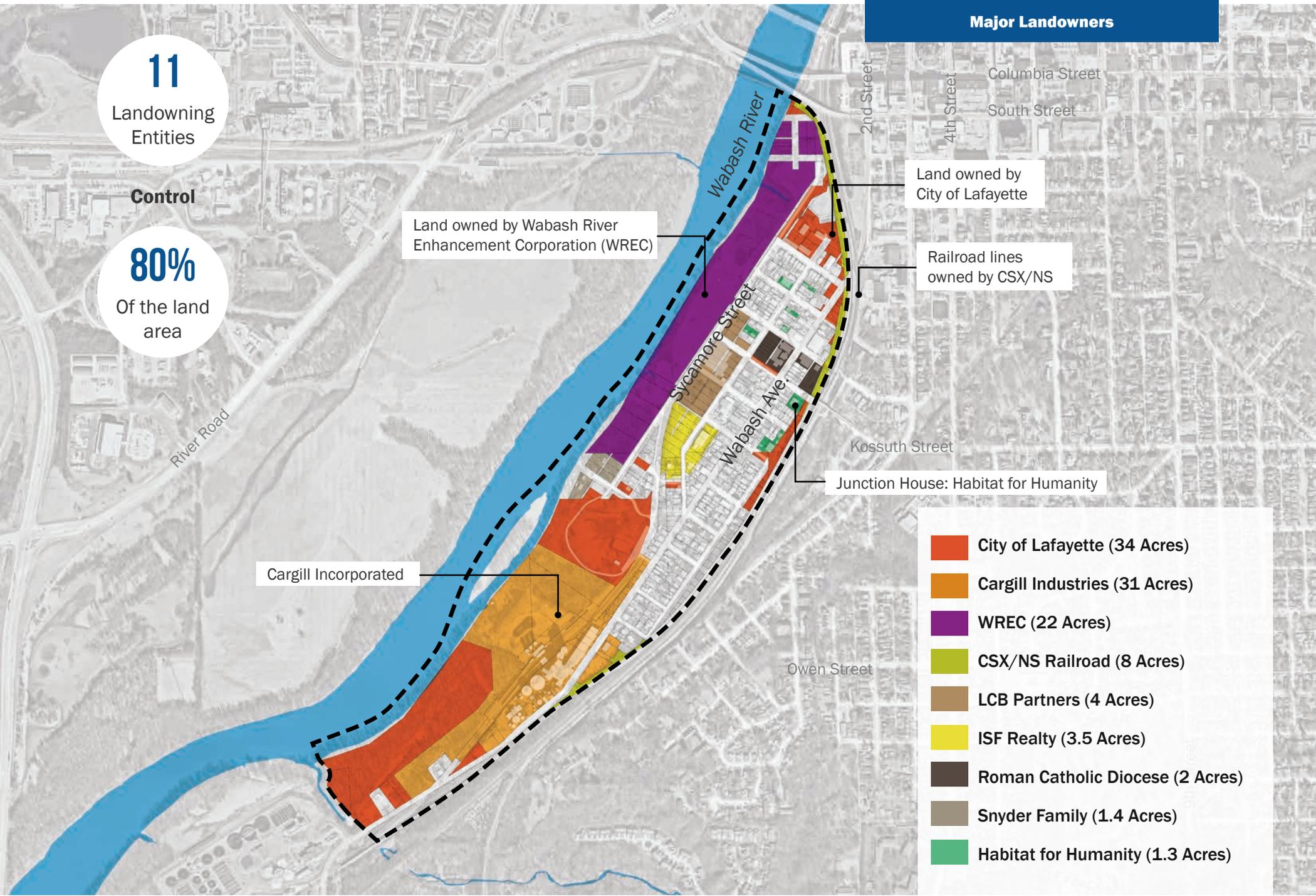
11

Landing Entities

Control

80%

Of the land area



Land owned by Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC)

Land owned by City of Lafayette

Railroad lines owned by CSX/NS

Junction House: Habitat for Humanity

Cargill Incorporated

- City of Lafayette (34 Acres)
- Cargill Industries (31 Acres)
- WREC (22 Acres)
- CSX/NS Railroad (8 Acres)
- LCB Partners (4 Acres)
- ISF Realty (3.5 Acres)
- Roman Catholic Diocese (2 Acres)
- Snyder Family (1.4 Acres)
- Habitat for Humanity (1.3 Acres)

3 | WHAT WE HEARD

Meetings were interactive, fun, and solidified neighborhood support around the process and the plan's recommendations and concepts.

Overview

The public process for the Wabash Neighborhood community enhancement plan was multi-faceted and focused on the following engagement activities:

- Study area tour with city staff and Wabash CAN members
- Wabash CAN meetings (8 meetings)
- Stakeholder interviews (23 meetings)
- Wabash Walls event participation (over 100 attendees)
- Celebratory Boldly Wabash Open House at Wells Center

Wabash CAN

The Wabash CAN group met eight times during this process. Meetings focused initially on impressions and gathering information. The following meetings focused topically on bold themes for the future of the Wabash Neighborhood including:

- **Celebrate 'The Avenue'** - making vehicular and pedestrian improvements to the Wabash Avenue corridor
- **Let Wabash Grow** - conceptualizing proactive redevelopment and revitalization
- **Rediscover the River** - exploring the potential of a riverfront park along the Wabash River
- **Keep Wabash Special** - celebrating the history and telling the story of the community

Wabash Walls

On August 2nd 2019, the city participated in a highly-successful Wabash Walls event where the community could learn about initial opportunities, recommendations, and concepts and provide feedback.

Open House

The final plan was shared during the Boldly Wabash Open House on February 18th, 2020, in a highly engaging event held at the Wells Center in collaboration with the Tippecanoe Arts Federation. This interactive session shared the “arc of progress and potential” in the Wabash Neighborhood.



STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

2 DAYS | 23 SESSIONS | 40 STAKEHOLDERS

These interviews provided great insight into the issues and strengths of the neighborhood today and began to ideate opportunities for the future that shaped the concepts developed in this plan.

We met with representatives from...

- Cargill, Inc.
- Catholic Diocese
- City Council
- City Staff
- CityBus
- Fairfield Township Trustee
- Friends of Downtown
- Grow Local Lafayette
- Habitat for Humanity
- Historic Preservation Commission
- Indiana Steel Fabricators
- Kirby Risk
- Lafayette RENEW
- Neighborhood businesses
- Neighborhood Residents
- Parks and Recreation
- Real estate and development industry
- Tippecanoe Arts Federation
- Wabash Neighborhood Association
- Wabash River Enhancement Corp. (WREC)

Streets and Connectivity

While the Wabash Neighborhood is close in proximity to downtown Lafayette, it feels isolated. Stakeholders indicated that this isolation has held the neighborhood back, but it also helped to preserve the unique identity and feel of this place.

Traffic congestion

As the primary corridor for vehicles through the neighborhood, Wabash Avenue is plagued by traffic congestion and truck backups during busy months at Cargill. One of the biggest opportunities for this neighborhood is to address congestion and backups through a partnership between the city and Cargill on a permanent solution that removed idling trucks from occupying travel lanes. Cargill is willing to be a participant in finding this solution.

It was suggested that the CSX/NS Railroad bridge over Wabash Avenue on the south side of the study area is reviewed to determine if additional height could be gained by removing pavement on the bridge improve conditions for trucks traffic through the southern entrance.

Experience of 'The Avenue'

Wabash Avenue is the “front door” of the neighborhood, which makes it central to the character, identity, and perception of the



community. Improvements to Wabash Avenue should embrace the existing business and residential community, support the arts, and provide opportunities for new small businesses and restaurants to thrive.

Multi-modal transportation

As Wabash Avenue is activated, this important corridor can be the “spine” to lead people into the neighborhood and serve as a high-quality street with infrastructure for vehicles and pedestrians. Due to its relative isolation, it is unlikely that without major population growth, the Wabash Neighborhood will see CityBus service. As such, there is an opportunity to develop Wabash Avenue as a pilot for “last-mile” transit opportunities such as scooters and ride shares combined with enhanced sidewalk and trail amenities for non-car users.

Streetscape

An enhanced Wabash Avenue streetscape can catalyze revitalization and redevelopment along the corridor and within the neighborhood. Both short- and long-term projects were identified as part of this plan. Short-term projects included streetscape, beautification, tactical urbanism and partnerships with existing businesses to alleviate congestion and truck backups from Cargill. Short-term projects demonstrate progress and continue the neighborhood’s positive momentum. Longer-term projects included a more intensive rebuilding

Open Space, Parks, and the River

Today, the story of the Wabash Neighborhood's development around the river and canal is not told, but this historic aspect could be a signature part of the future of this area.

Wabash riverfront

Activating the riverfront is one of the biggest opportunities for the Wabash Neighborhood, but this activation needs to be done carefully to make sure that amenities appeal to both nearby neighborhood residents and the entire community.

Shamrock Park

Today, Shamrock Park is underutilized, and many residents are unhappy with its limited access to the river, use as a dog park, and roller hockey/ bike polo facilities. There may be an opportunity to integrate Shamrock Park into part of a connected riverfront.

Trail connections

Trails to the riverfront would provide users and visitors with crucial access to amenities. Trails could connect with the promenade to the north, and east along Smith Street to the pedestrian bridge over the CSX/NS Railroad to Kossuth Street. These portions could link the riverfront and the Wabash Neighborhood to regional trail networks.

Stormwater management

There is an opportunity to manage stormwater and make improvements to riverfront conditions in conjunction with RENEW's plans for stormwater and combined sewer outfall (CSO) reductions.

In order to take advantage of these opportunities and execute recommendations in this plan, the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC) intends to continue to acquire riverfront property as it becomes available.

Housing and Development

As the neighborhood evolves, there is a concern about gentrification and displacement of long-term residents. Residents indicated that they are open to targeted redevelopment on large and medium sites but want to maintain the character of established residential blocks.

Residential

The neighborhood's housing mix consists of owner-occupied and for-rent single-family homes that are generally affordable. Many of these homes have been owned by the same family for multiple generations. Some structures are over 100 years old and contribute to the overall look and feel of the neighborhood.



Homes are in various conditions, but many of the river rock foundations are failing. A significant portion of occupied housing exists in the 100-year floodplain and regulatory floodway. Both of these conditions pose concerns for the structural soundness of some homes.

Redevelopment and infill

There are a number of vacant lots in the neighborhood, and an infill strategy could bring new residents to the area, further stabilize property values and encourage vibrancy in the neighborhood. Infill lots could continue to be developed in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. Various funding sources should be explored and applied to encourage affordability.

The City of Lafayette and WREC own several large properties along the riverfront at the north end of the study area. These properties may be major redevelopment opportunities for targeted density in an area that will not negatively affect existing residential areas.

Stakeholders are interested in being proactive about future development pressure as opposed to being reactive. Part of this approach involves establishing a neighborhood plan and investigating regulatory mechanisms such as form-based code that will control future scale of development.



Local business community

Several industrial businesses operate along the riverfront today and occupy large land areas and multiple properties. These business owners indicated that they are invested in the neighborhood and are willing to work with the city on a range of options that balance preserving existing operations and strategically redeveloping underused storage sites or empty lots.

Today, there is one restaurant/coffee shop (Sacred Grounds) on Wabash Avenue. There is a major opportunity to attract small businesses and restaurants to 'The Avenue' to capitalize on its proximity to downtown the riverfront. This addition of new businesses and destinations along 'The Avenue' would entice visitors to enter the neighborhood. Restaurants and small businesses could be locally-focused and foster a sense of entrepreneurship in the neighborhood.

Identity

Honoring history

The Wabash Neighborhood has a rich history as one of the oldest neighborhoods in Lafayette. Stakeholders discussed prominent families with storied histories (some good, some bad), which would provide a glimpse into the neighborhood's past. There is an opportunity to solidify the image by telling the story of culture, history, and heritage through public art, interpretive signage, and historical markers.

Wabash Walls

Wabash Walls, in addition to the efforts of the community and non-profits, has shifted the conversation from Wabash Avenue's past a neighborhood with crime issues. The shift has been positive and focuses on a celebration of uniqueness, history, and culture. Investments in placemaking can continue this cultural shift and change in perceptions. While long-time residents of the community remember Wabash's past issues, many new residents do-not feel a stigma about this neighborhood. Building on the success of Wabash Walls could enliven the core of Wabash Avenue into a cultural district that continues to welcome artisans and entrepreneurs. Wabash Walls is a highly successful partnership lead by the Tippecanoe Arts Federation and an example of how public art can catalyze positive change locally.

The riverfront

Stakeholders indicated that the riverfront was highly-industrial, and the river itself was polluted and inaccessible as a result. Since the industry has been removed from the riverfront and WREC has acquired property, there is a once in a generation opportunity to remake the Wabash riverfront. In the Wabash Neighborhood, residents are often psychologically tied to the river and look forward to a future where they have better access and amenities to enjoy this special place. Stakeholders indicated there is an opportunity to transform the riverfront for both regional visitors and the Wabash community by balancing riverfront investments with neighborhood revitalization.

Creating a draw

Stakeholders indicated the neighborhood's biggest issue is its lack of major attraction or destination to entice visitors. Aside from housing and development which would bring residents and workers to the area, establishing new restaurants and small businesses, investing in the riverfront investments, and organizing special events such as festivals could improve the draw to this area.

Safety and Services

Redevelopment sites

The “boxboard” site is undergoing a Phase Two Environmental Assessment and will need cleanup before redevelopment occurs. The adjacent “port-a-potty” site has been cleaned up and is ready for redevelopment.

Flood-prone properties

Much of the riverfront property is in the 100-year floodplain or regulatory floodway. Existing residential properties in this zone are impacted by flooding and have severe restrictions attached to them. Due to development limitations, these properties could become part of a riverfront stormwater park.

On Wabash Avenue, the removal of a curb and addition of fire lanes, between Smith and Ellsworth Streets, have resulted in localized basement flooding.

Industrial traffic

Properties on the south side of the neighborhood between Wabash Avenue and the CSX/NS Railroad have access issues, experience noise and vibrations, and encounter truck traffic. Connectivity improvements in this area could begin to remedy these problems. There is a semi-truck congestion issue related to peak soybean drop-off at Cargill.



Crime

While crime has reduced in this area, there are several pockets of undesirable activity around residential properties.

These properties could be targeted for infill or stabilization revitalization strategies.

This neighborhood has a strong sense of community and an informal neighborhood watch.

Vehicles and pedestrians

Conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrian crossings on Wabash Avenue continue to be a concern for stakeholders. The relationship between the pedestrian and vehicular traffic on this corridor should be studied.

Business, Industry and Institutions

Neighborhood-serving uses

Today, the Wabash Neighborhood functions as a small, self-sustaining community, yet it has no basic services such as a grocery, pharmacy or gas station. Stakeholders indicated a redevelopment opportunity could bring these types of businesses in or near the neighborhood.

The power of community organizations

The Wabash Neighborhood already benefits from a number of extremely active and involved community organizations, non-profits, and faith-based organizations in the Wabash Neighborhood. These groups already have organized networks, a track record of success and the capacity to take on projects. These groups should be included as part of the short term implementation strategy.

Shamrock Park

Shamrock Park floods regularly, and stakeholders indicated that flood events cause the dog park located there to close during rain events, and debris often washes up on the bank. Any future riverfront activation strategy should take flooding into account.

Industry partners

Industrial business owners indicated that they want to partner in the success of the Wabash Neighborhood. They are open to the concepts of community enhancement through traffic/congestion mitigation and redevelopment strategies, and they are interested in participating in other initiatives such as Wabash Walls, neighborhood cleanups and beautification.

Assets, Issues and Opportunities Inventory

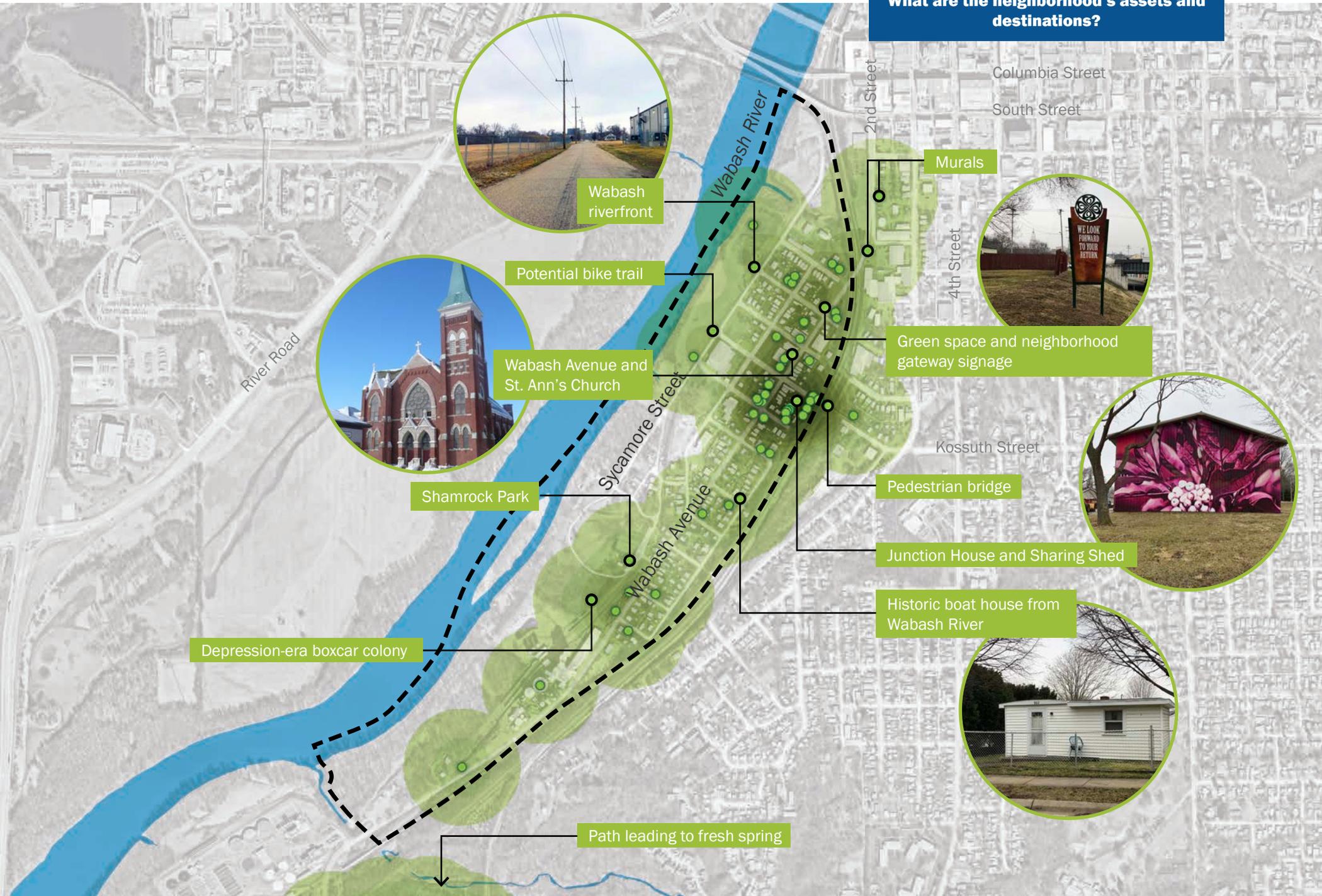
Pages 37-39 summarize an inventory activity focused on understanding assets, issues, and opportunities. This activity was useful and multi-dimensional in geographically locating these aspects of the neighborhood in a way that defined areas of focus for the project. Correlating results identified assets to build upon, issues to address, and opportunities to explore further.

Major insights include:

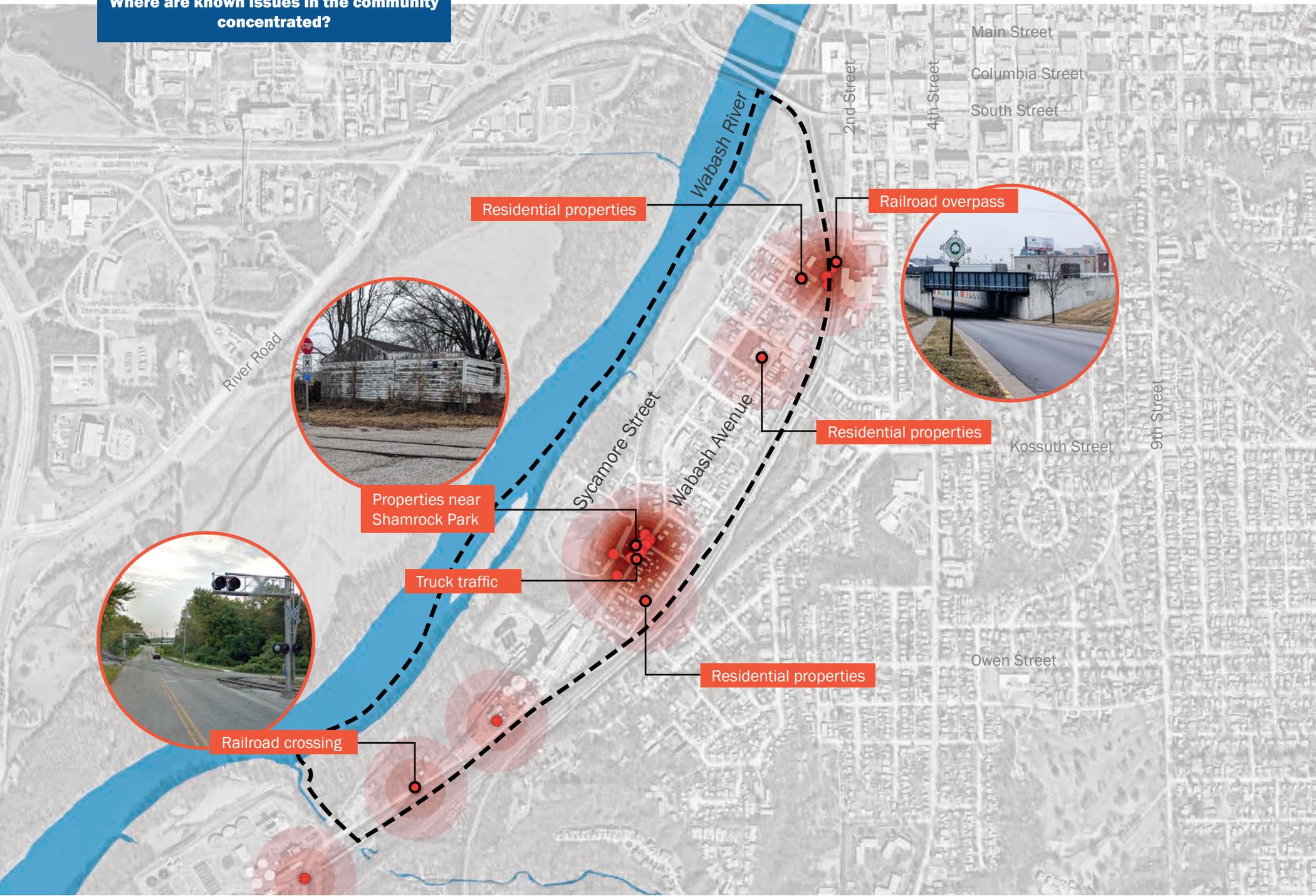
- The importance of Wabash Avenue as a central organizing feature in the neighborhood; opportunities to address traffic backups, safety and condition issues, and bring additional activation to the corridor
- Barriers along the Wabash riverfront including access, 100-year floodplain, and environmental issues; opportunity to remake the Wabash riverfront and Shamrock Park as park that spans multiple generations, from the past and into the future; include high-quality amenities and ensure access
- Challenges for residents near Shamrock Park stemming from repeated flooding and access issues
- The 2nd Street CSX/NS Railroad overpass is unpleasant and unsafe; needs to be gateway into the neighborhood
- Opportunities to work with Cargill to address truck backup issues on Wabash Avenue and provide appropriate truck staging areas for the facility
- Rehabilitate underutilized industrial property within the neighborhood for appropriately-scaled redevelopment
- Informal riverfront canoe and kayak launch points could be formalized as part of riverfront investment



What are the neighborhood's assets and destinations?



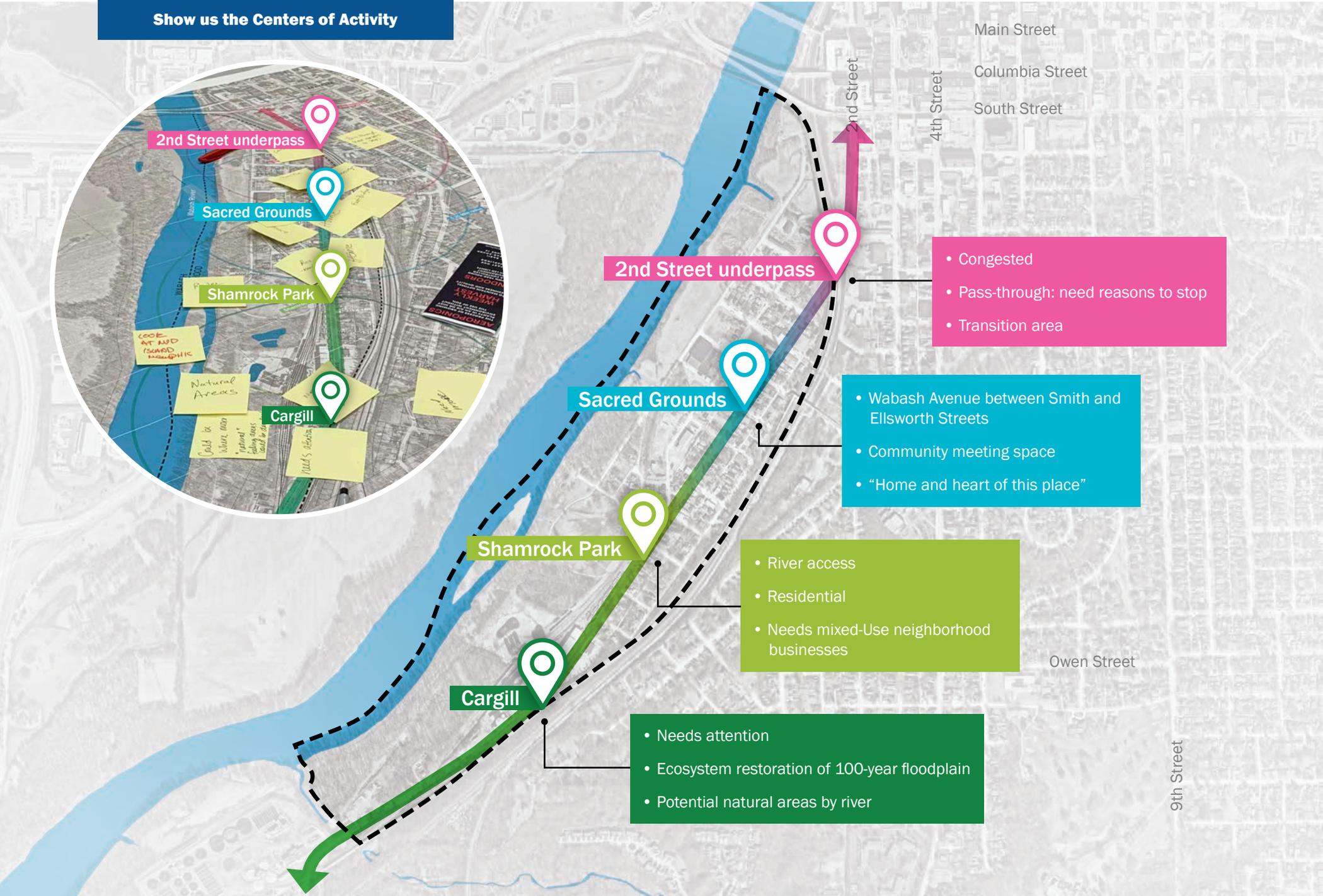
Where are known issues in the community concentrated?



Where are the opportunities for future development or investment?



Show us the Centers of Activity



Main Street
Columbia Street
South Street

4th Street

2nd Street

2nd Street underpass

- Congested
- Pass-through: need reasons to stop
- Transition area

Sacred Grounds

- Wabash Avenue between Smith and Ellsworth Streets
- Community meeting space
- "Home and heart of this place"

Shamrock Park

- River access
- Residential
- Needs mixed-use neighborhood businesses

Cargill

- Needs attention
- Ecosystem restoration of 100-year floodplain
- Potential natural areas by river

Owen Street

9th Street

Envisioning the Riverfront: Residents were asked to vote for recreational components



Centers of Activity

The previous page summarizes an activity focused on where people felt the centers of activity were along the Wabash Avenue corridor.

Respondents located activity at four points:

- 2nd Street underpass
- Sacred Grounds
- Shamrock Park
- Cargill

Respondents indicated that the quality of the centers of activity were best near Sacred Grounds and were not activated, safe, or programmed elsewhere.

Wabash Avenue between Ellsworth and Smith Streets were also described as the symbolic center of activity in the neighborhood.

Recreational Amenities Preference Activity

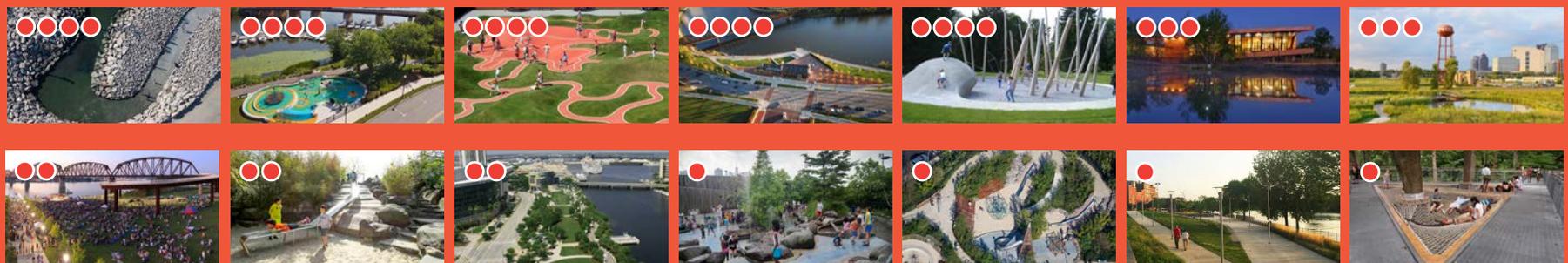
The summary graphic below documents the results of an activity focused on preferences for recreational amenities along the Wabash riverfront. Respondents were asked to use green dots for amenities they would like to see in the neighborhood and red dots for amenities they did not see a need for or did not want in the neighborhood.

Respondents indicated a preference towards trails, water features, playgrounds, and informal gathering places along the riverfront.

GREEN DOTS: YOU TOLD US YOU WANT THESE AMENITIES



RED DOTS: YOU TOLD US YOU DON'T SEE A NEED FOR THESE AMENITIES



Development Types: Residents were asked to state a visual preference



Development Types Activity

The exercise summarized on this page focused on preferences for development types for redevelopment areas in the Wabash Neighborhood.

Respondents indicated that a mix of small scale mixed-use (commercial first floor and residential upper floors) would be appropriate on Wabash Avenue and Sycamore Street with a step down to townhome and single-family development within the neighborhood's residential areas.

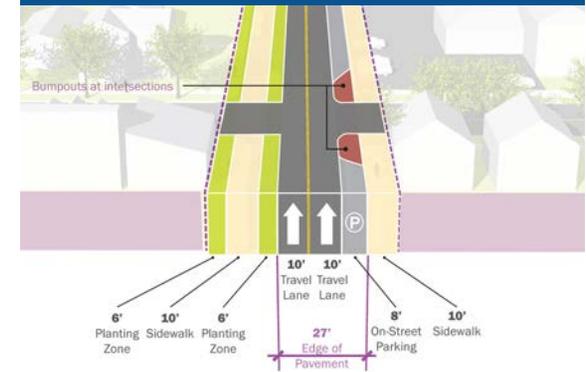
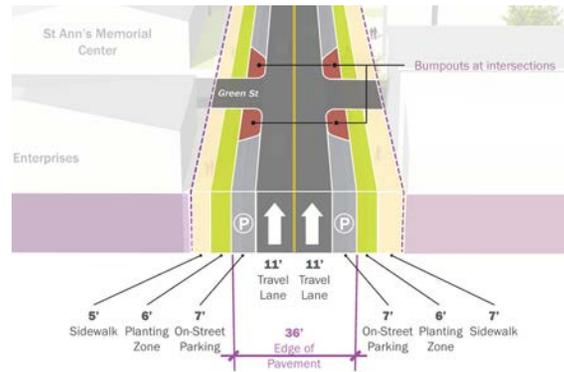
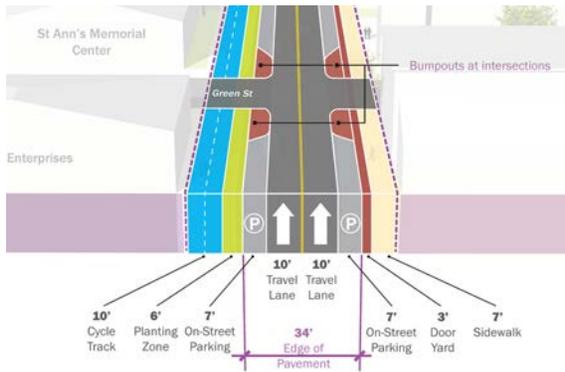
Streetmix Activity

The following page summarized a Streetmix activity where participants could re-imagine important thoroughfares in the Wabash Neighborhood by placing components in the existing right-of-way.

Respondents indicated a preference for better pedestrian infrastructure and on-street parking protected by bump outs.



Streetmix: Residents were asked to build a street configuration using a kit of parts



Wabash Avenue Concept 1

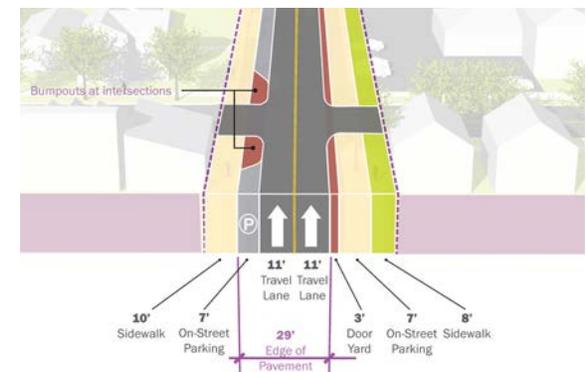
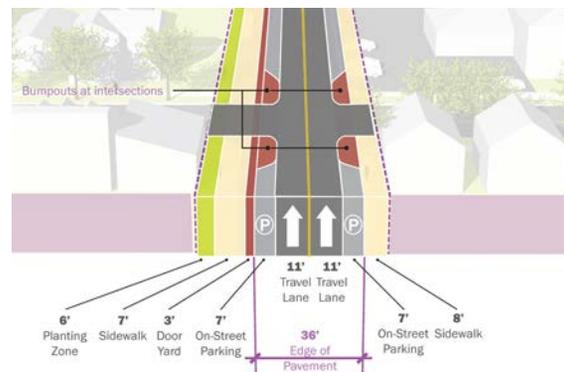
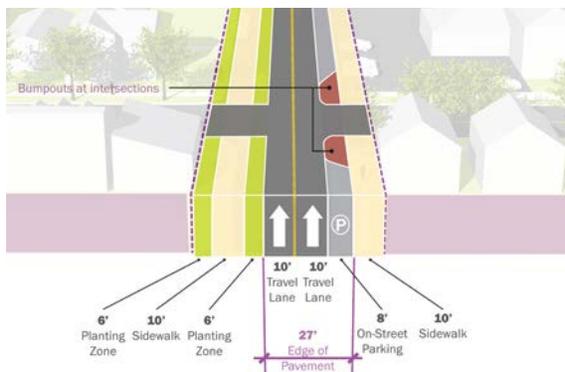
- 10' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on both sides of the street
- 10' cycle track

Wabash Avenue Concept 2

- 11' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on both sides of the street
- Sidewalks with planted buffer zone

Wabash Avenue Concept 3

- 10' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on one side
- 10' sidewalks



Smith Street Concept 1

- 10' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on north side of the street
- 10' wide sidewalks on both sides, with tree-lined lawns on south side

Smith Street Concept 2

- 11' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on both sides of the street
- Sidewalks with urban edge to the street

Smith Street Concept 3

- 11' travel lanes
- On-street parking with bump outs on south side of the street
- Sidewalks with urban edge to the street

04 | BOLDLY WABASH

The understanding of the neighborhood, which was shaped by community meetings, stakeholder interviews, and the planning team’s physical analysis, identified four themes to guide the neighborhood’s future. These themes, shown in the graphics below and on the following page, set a bold and community-driven vision for the Wabash Neighborhood.

Introduction

Through various activities and exercises, the community identified priorities for the riverfront, neighborhood streets, redevelopment concepts, and an enhanced brand for the Wabash Neighborhood. The planning team used this feedback, and the analysis performed in the second chapter of this report to glean significant take-aways from the community’s vision. The result is **Boldly Wabash**, which sets priorities for a clear, implementable vision for the neighborhood, encapsulating the community’s desire for a strengthened sense of place that begins with Wabash Avenue and radiates into the neighborhood.

The following chapter is organized by each of these themes, setting recommendations that together will celebrate Wabash Avenue, create a riverfront destination, guide new development, and preserve the neighborhood’s authenticity.

Wabash Avenue is the spine of the community



- Ensure that “The Avenue” works for everyone
- Connect neighborhood streets with “The Avenue” as a spine
- Bring the community together

The river is our history and our legacy



- Embrace the Wabash River is a recreational amenity
- Tell the story of the river and the legacy of the historic canal
- Unlock the full potential of the river

Welcome new residents and businesses



- Blend preservation with new development
- Be proactive, not reactive
- Be a welcoming community

The community is special - let’s keep it that way!



- Embrace and foster a DIY attitude
- Change perceptions by sharing the story
- Celebrate history and culture



CELEBRATE "THE AVENUE"

Wabash Avenue
is the spine of the
community



LET WABASH GROW

Welcome new
residents and
businesses

BOLDLY
WABASH

The river is
our history
and our
legacy



REDISCOVER THE RIVER

The community is
special - let's keep it
that way!



KEEP WABASH SPECIAL



NORTH ↙

Wabash Avenue

S 1st St

Sycamore Street

Smith Street

Chestnut Street

Walnut Street

Green Street

7

4

3

7

1

5

8

4

1

2

2

6



LEGEND

- 1** Riverfront Trail
- 2** River Overlooks/Access Points
- 3** Linear Park
- 4** Future Development
- 5** Canal Feature
- 6** Pavilion/Shelter
- 7** Streetscape Improvements
- 8** Lawn/Gathering Space
- 9** Stormwater Park
- 10** Cargill Staging

CELEBRATE “THE AVENUE”



Improving neighborhood-wide connectivity, with “The Avenue” as a walkable spine.

Wabash Avenue provides the neighborhood’s sole vehicular access from north to south. Consequently, the street is largely designed to move cars and trucks at high speeds. In order to improve “The Avenue” and make it safe for all users, connectivity improvements are needed to Wabash Avenue and surrounding streets, in addition to addressing issues arising from Cargill truck traffic.



WHAT IS A COMPLETE STREET?

- Active multi-modal pathways/sidewalks
- Gathering spaces
- Planting strips with trees/amenity zone
- Safe crossings
- Traffic-calming features and green
- Right-sized active roads
- On-Street parking

Overview

As noted by residents, the neighborhood’s current centers of activity are all clustered along Wabash Avenue. Nonetheless, “The Avenue’s” wide travel lanes, lack of dedicated crossings, and various vacant or underutilized properties contribute to gaps in walkability. At meetings with residents, the notion of transforming Wabash Avenue into a complete street was discussed; with the understanding that these improvements should be undertaken with a kit of parts approach over time. The improvements should respond to the street’s changing context from commercial to residential to industrial.

As improvements to the Wabash riverfront are completed, the neighborhood’s center of gravity may shift from “The Avenue” to currently vacant property along the riverfront. Residents expressed a desire to maintain the community’s close-knit feel and single sense of identity when it comes to anticipated new development. Investing in high-quality connections to the riverfront is in the long-term interest of the community. The planning process identified three corridors that may serve this purpose: Green Street, Smith Street, and Ellsworth Street. Adding sidewalks and street trees and improving crossings on these corridors will better connect the future energy of a revitalized riverfront with the neighborhood’s current spine.

Short-Term Recommendations

- Focus on intersection improvements at Wabash Avenue and Ellsworth Street as a short-term improvement.

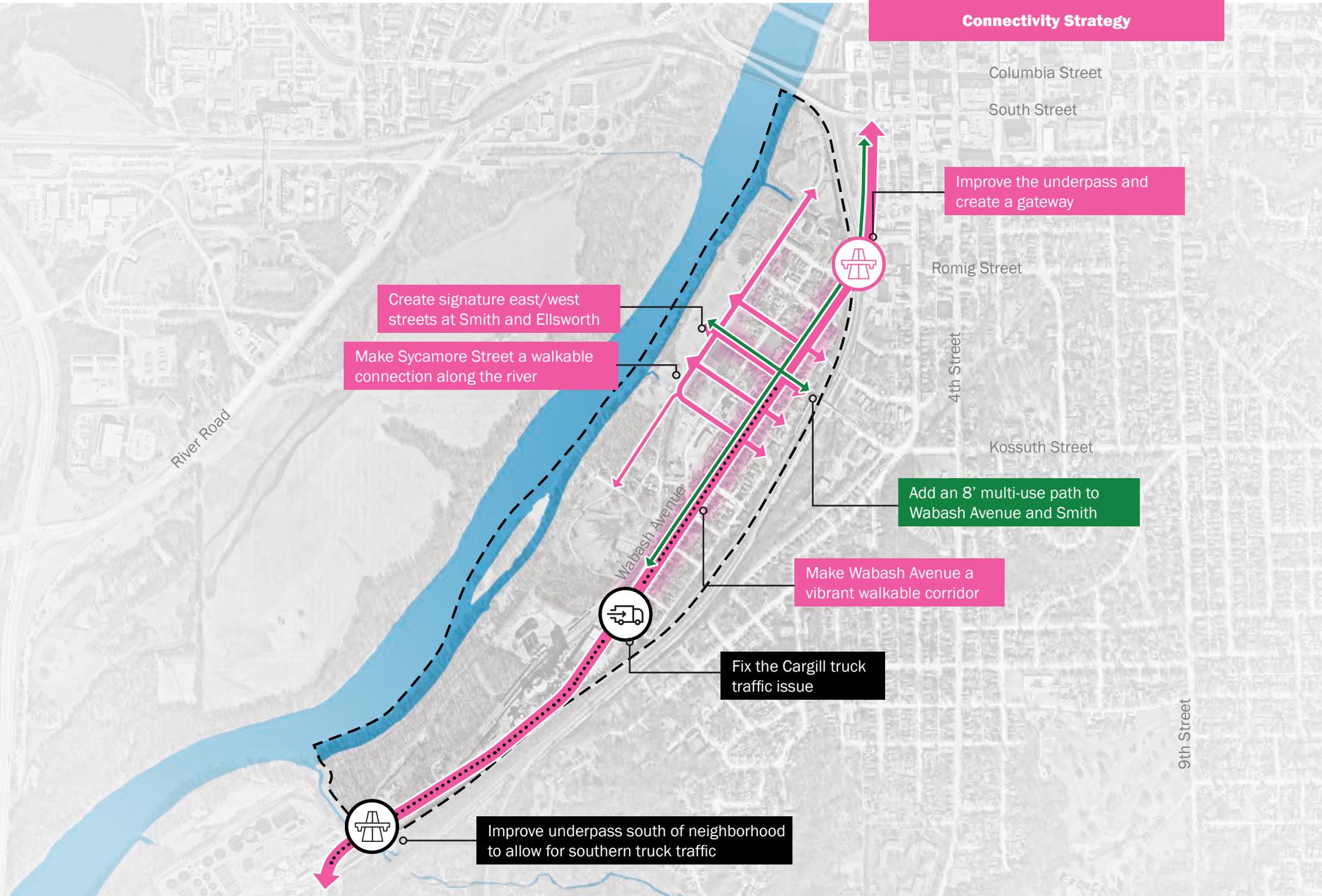
Short-term improvements may include an early step using Tactical Urbanism to stripe parking spaces, crosswalks, create outdoor seating areas, and temporary art installations as a demonstration project. This could be a partnership between the city and the neighborhood and work in concert with a WREC grant for improvements to the Sacred Grounds parking lot at that intersection.

- Commission a study of the southern rail bridges on Wabash Avenue to test the feasibility of lowering the roadbed to accommodate taller trucks.
- Collaborate with Cargill to internally encourage trucks to utilize the southern approach along Wabash Avenue.
- Replace railing along Wabash Avenue under the north end rail bridge; apply new paint; and upgrade lighting to improve safety and pedestrian experience and to calm traffic.

Long-Term Recommendations

- Redesign Wabash Avenue as a complete street with intersection improvements, formalized on-street parking, curb bump outs for streetscape/stormwater retention, activation of outdoor dining areas, and a multi-use path.

Connectivity Strategy



Create signature east/west streets at Smith and Ellsworth

Make Sycamore Street a walkable connection along the river

Improve the underpass and create a gateway

Add an 8' multi-use path to Wabash Avenue and Smith

Make Wabash Avenue a vibrant walkable corridor

Fix the Cargill truck traffic issue

Improve underpass south of neighborhood to allow for southern truck traffic

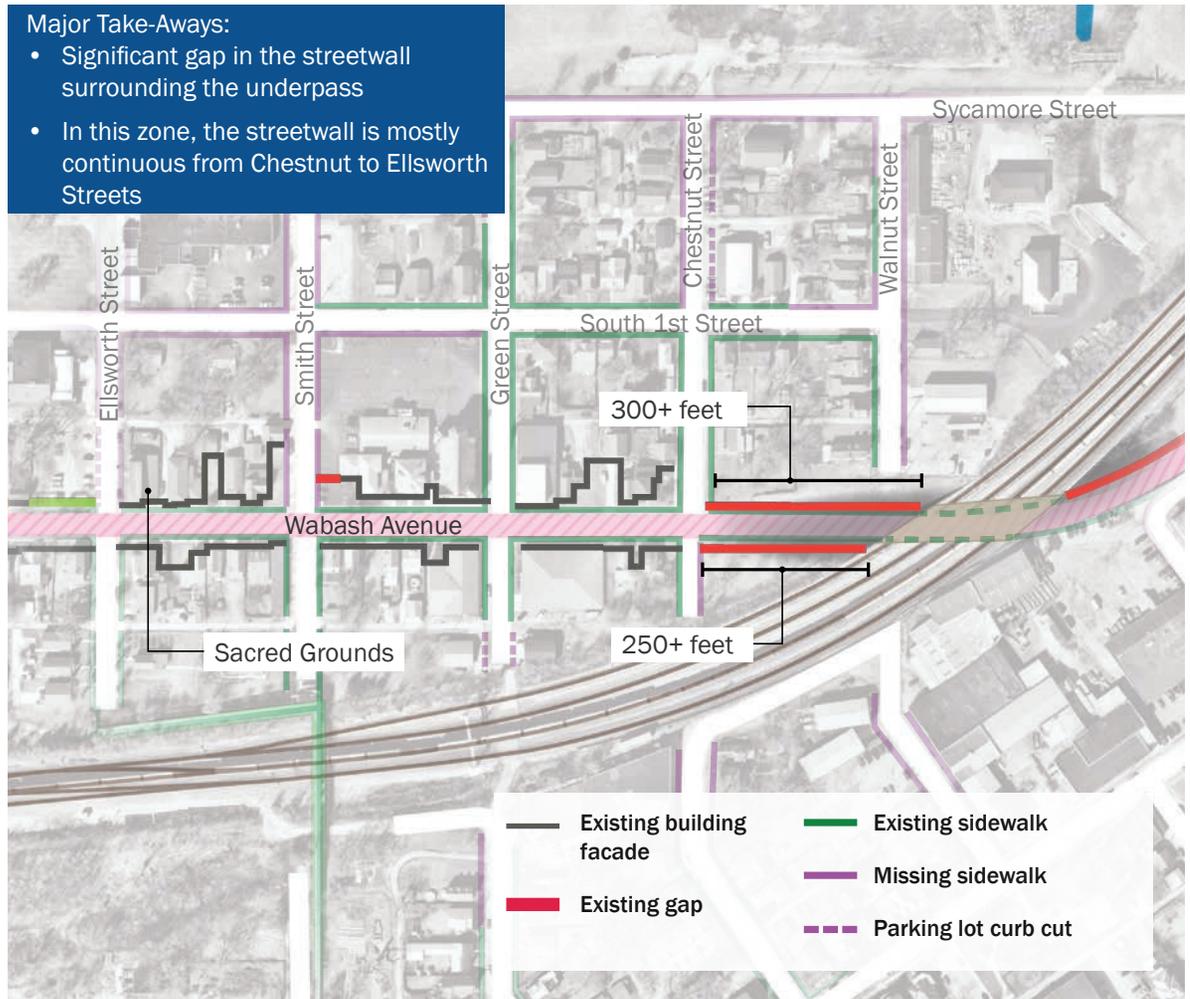
Wabash Avenue Improvements

Neighborhood Commercial

The portion of Wabash Avenue between Walnut Street and Ellsworth Street includes many of the neighborhood’s destinations and assets. As seen in the streetwall diagram below, except for the grade change at the underpass, Wabash Avenue has continuous and active street frontage for much of this segment.

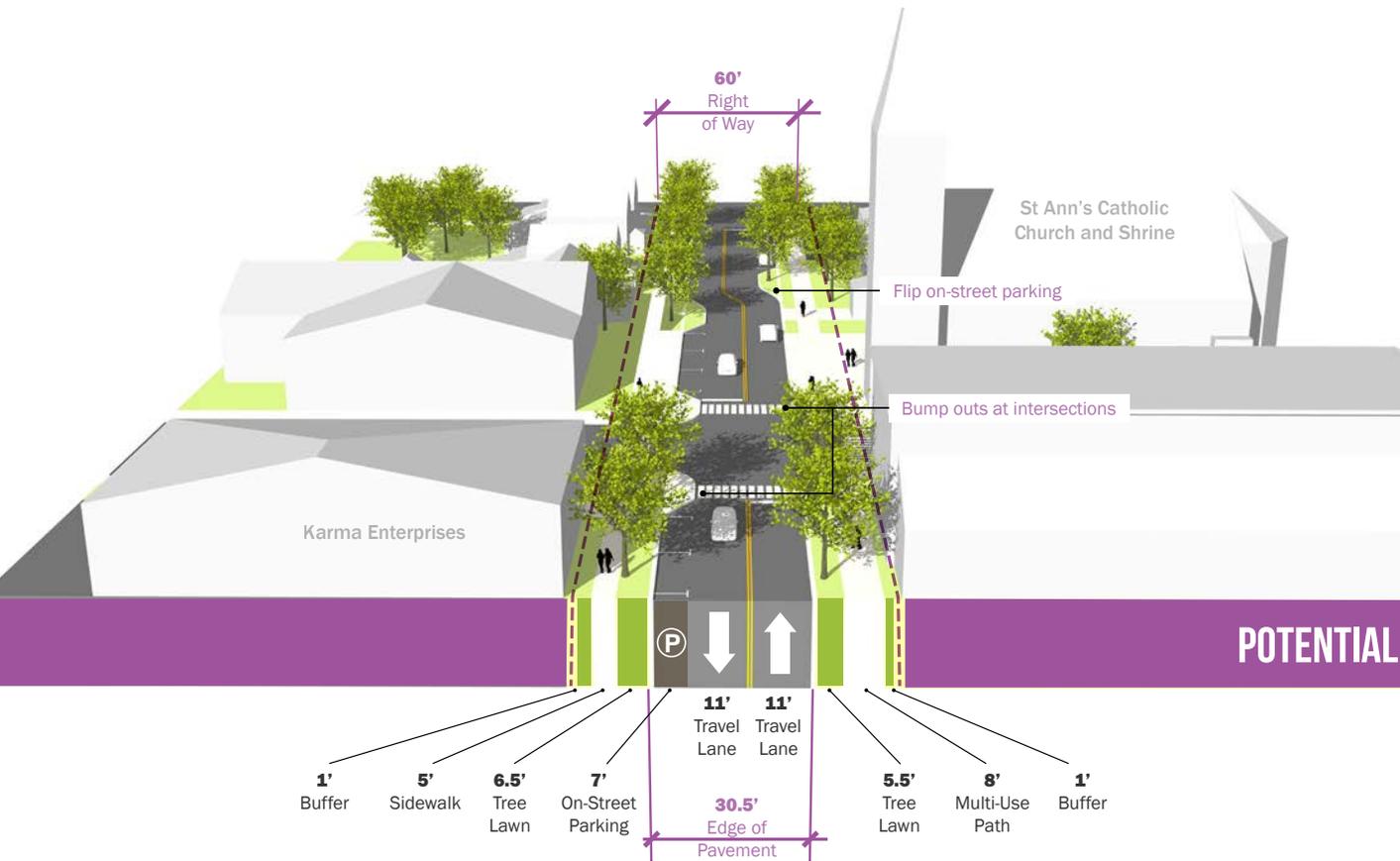
Improvements to Wabash Avenue were tested with the community through an interactive build-a-street exercise in which residents reconfigured an existing neighborhood street using a kit of parts. The recommended configuration shown on the following page largely resembles the pedestrian facilities prioritized by residents in this activity. Reducing travel lanes to eleven feet allows for the addition of an eight-foot multi-use path on the west side of the street and preserves on-street parking on one side of the road. The concept for Wabash Avenue allows for flexibility in on-street parking. For instance, on-street parking may shift sides within a single block, as illustrated in the graphic.

These improvements can be paired with planted bump outs and improved crosswalks. As an interim solution, these bump outs may be painted on the street to test the long-term viability of the street-calming measure.

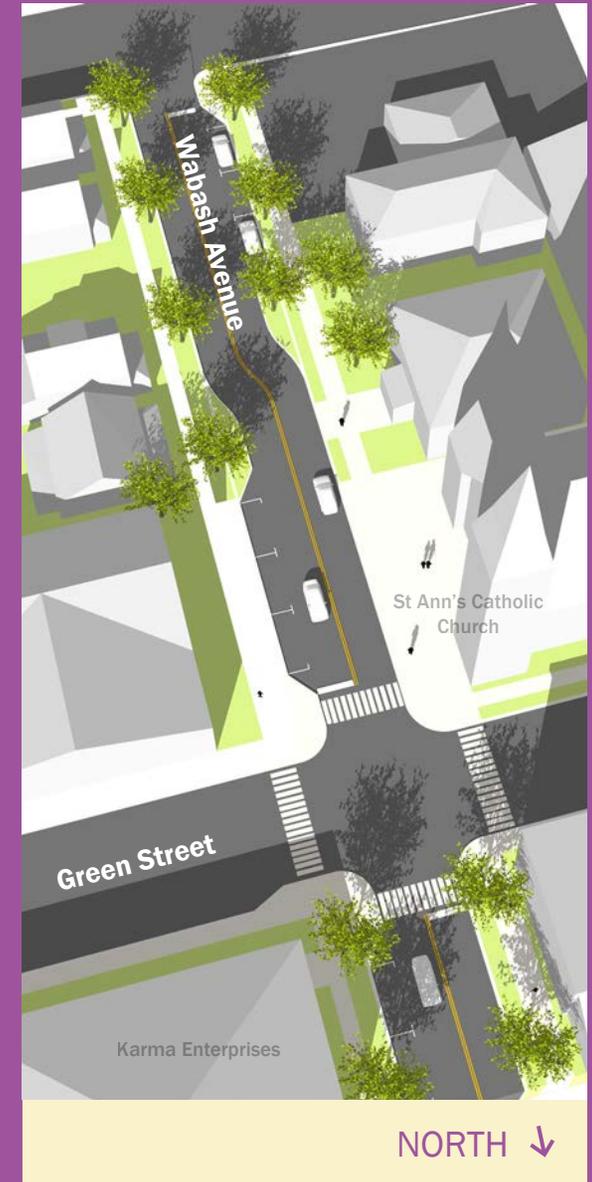




POTENTIAL WABASH AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS NEAR GREEN STREET
(looking south)



ON-STREET PARKING

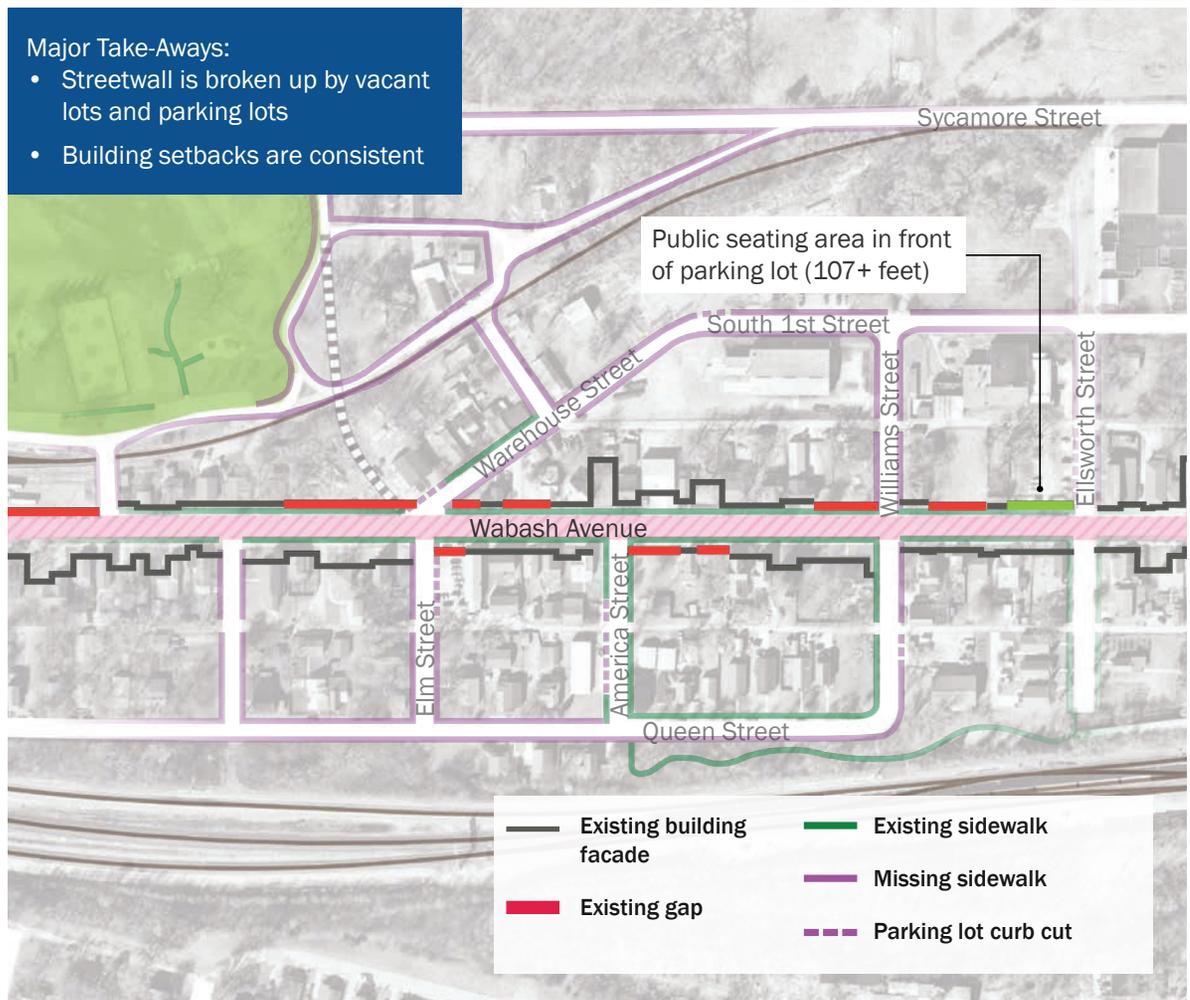


ON-STREET PARKING THAT WORKS FOR BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

Residential Transition

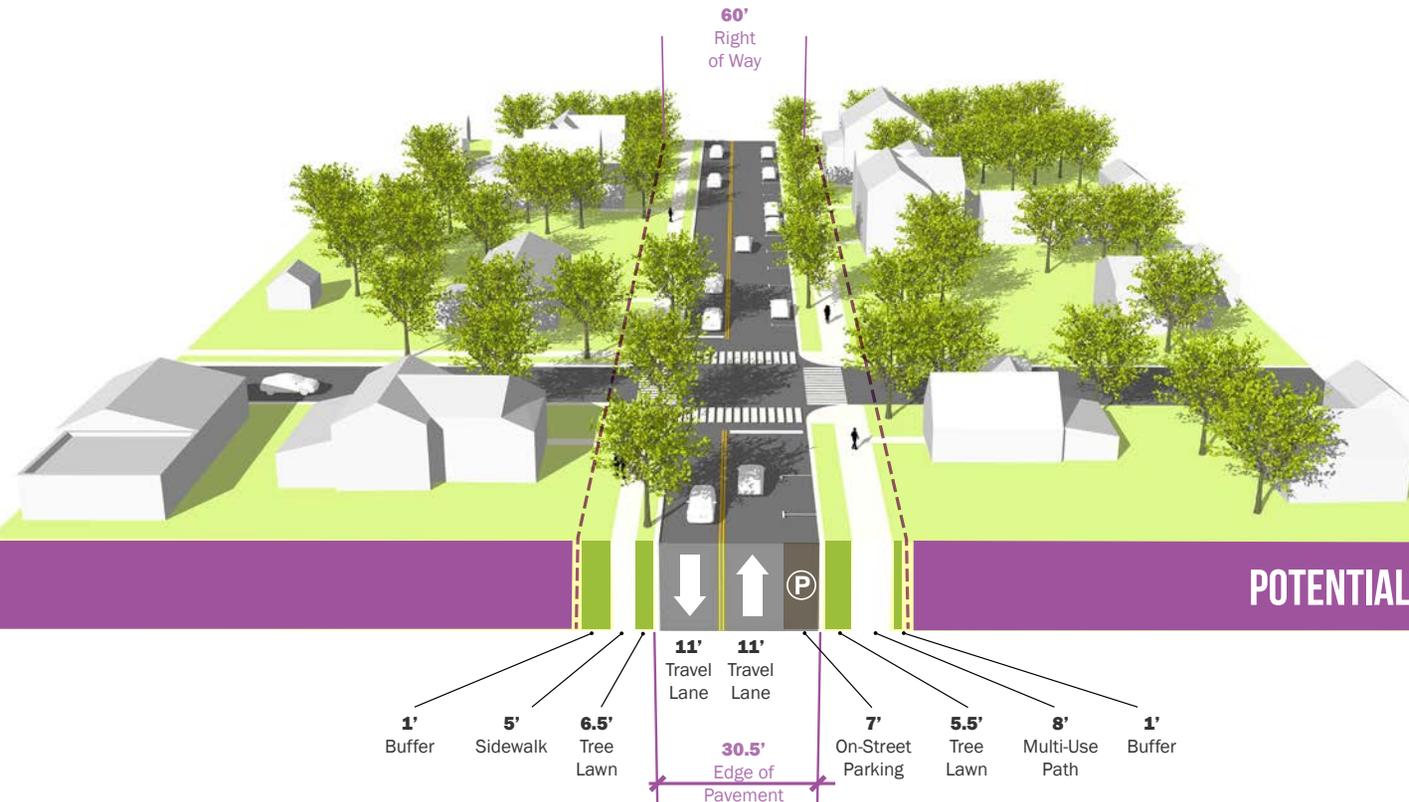
Moving southward through the neighborhood from downtown, land uses along Wabash Avenue transition from neighborhood-scale commercial to residential. South of Ellsworth Street toward Shamrock Park, Wabash Avenue is mostly fronted by single-family homes. Though there are some gaps in frontage, residences face the street and have rear alley-accessed garages and parking spaces. On-street parking is allowed on an unmarked portion of the west side of the street.

The concept for this portion of “The Avenue” expands the sidewalk on the west side into an eight-foot multi-use path with a tree lawn. Other improvements may include new marked crossings and stop signs at east-west connections, such as Williams Street and Elm Street, and the addition of painted or planted bump outs paired with on-street parking.





**POTENTIAL WABASH AVENUE
IMPROVEMENTS NEAR
WILLIAMS STREET**
(looking south)



CASE STUDY



**FOURTH STREET
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA**

One-block stretch of 4th Street between downtown and the university.

Former residences converted into restaurants with international flair.

Outdoor patios, vibrant signage, and wide sidewalks are featured in every business.

Cargill Truck Traffic

At the southern end of Wabash Avenue, past America Street, industrial land uses occupy most of the street frontage. Although industrial land uses are clustered in this portion of “The Avenue”, the effects of industry are felt along the entire corridor. Cargill truck traffic is especially known to create significant issues for residents during harvest season. Addressing the Cargill truck traffic issue is key to creating a more walkable Wabash Avenue. Redirecting trucks to access Cargill from the south alleviates traffic concerns further north and allows for a redesign of the street with narrower traffic lanes and expanded pedestrian facilities.

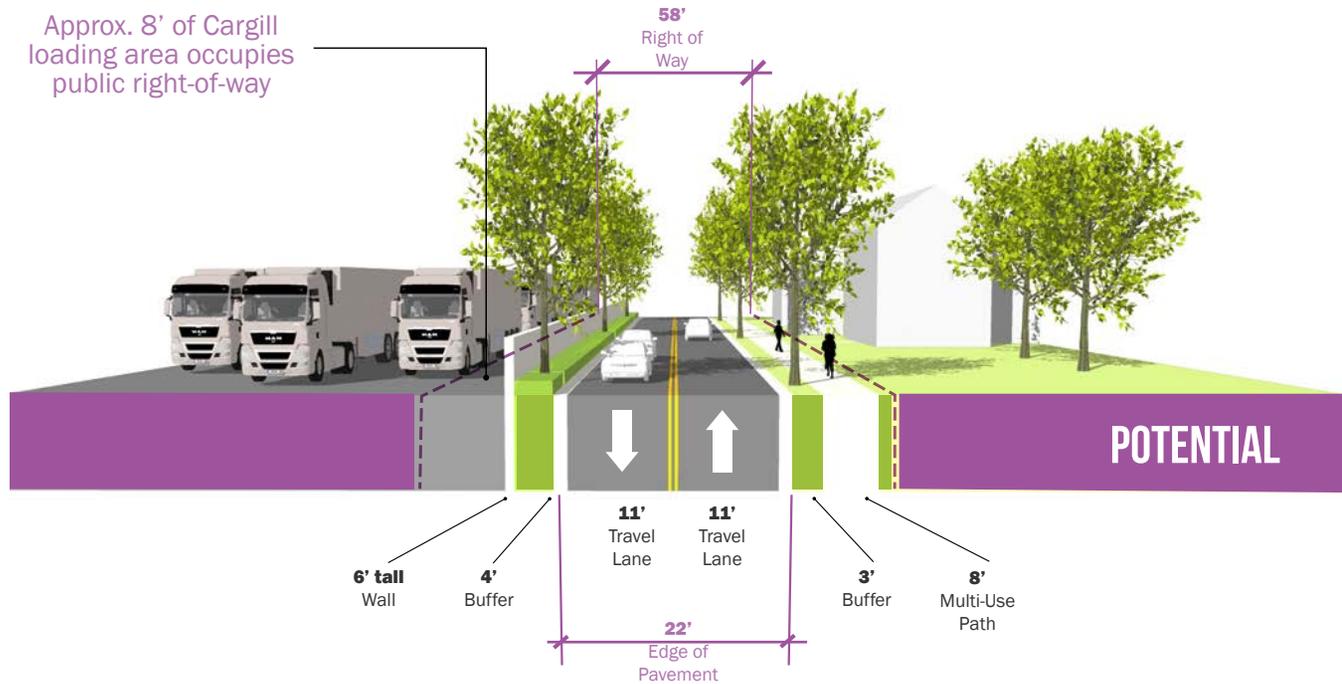


POTENTIAL WABASH AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS NEAR CARGILL (looking north)

Approx. 15' of Cargill loading area occupies public right-of-way



Approx. 8' of Cargill loading area occupies public right-of-way



Cargill Truck Staging Concept



Current Staging:
26 Trucks



Potential Staging:
74 Trucks



Rerouting truck traffic south:

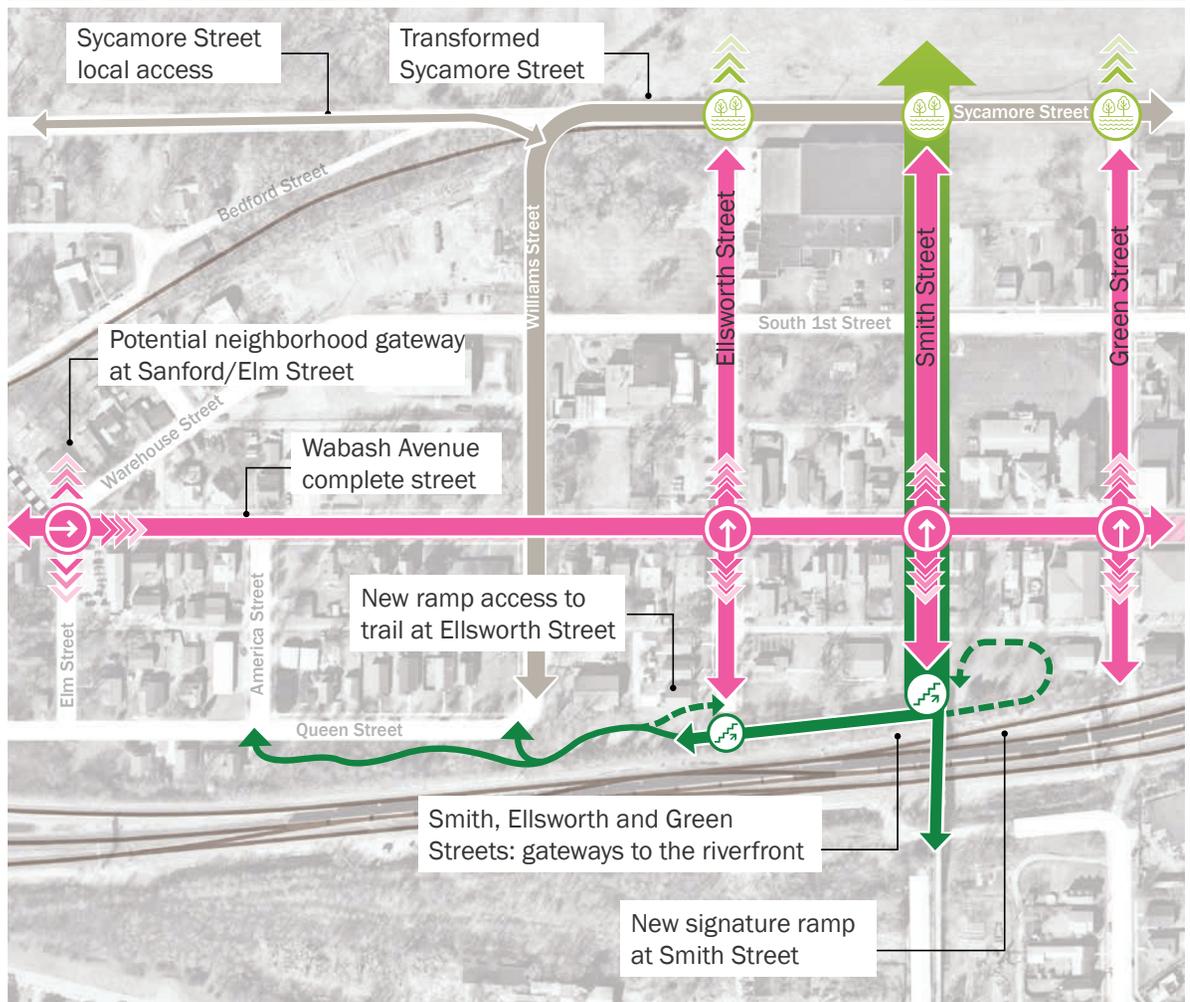
- Current 13'3" (sign notes 13'0") clearance on rail bridges is insufficient for truck traffic
- 13'6" to 14'0" is ideal
- May be feasible lower road bed and re-direct truck traffic to approach from the south

Signature East-West Connections

The following recommendations focus on improvements to Smith Street as the signature east-west corridor, but these elements can also be applied to Ellsworth and Green Street.

Smith Street is identified as a signature corridor due to its alignment with the pedestrian bridge to the Ellsworth-Romig Neighborhood. An enhanced ramp is also recommended north of Smith Street, which would provide an ADA accessible direct route from the pedestrian bridge to Smith Street and the riverfront. This enhanced ramp could be possible by acquiring vacant property from the Lafayette Catholic Diocese.

Alternatively, a second, simple ramp could be built on city property to the south of Ellsworth Street. West of Wabash Avenue, Smith Street, currently lacks sidewalks on the north side of the street. In this segment, the St. Ann's Catholic Church parking lot encroaches into a city-owned parcel. The edge of pavement widens along this portion, creating an opportunity to right-size the roadway and create a multi-use path on the north side of the street. This solution avoids any major reconfiguration to St. Ann's parking lot that may result in loss of parking spaces.





POTENTIAL SMITH STREET IMPROVEMENTS
(looking west)



CASE STUDY



SERENBE AVENUE
PALMETTO, GEORGIA

Rural setting in an arts-driven community.

Serenbe Lane is the heart of the community, including both residential and commercial.

Mid-block crossings, street trees, and sidewalks make for a walkable street.

REDISCOVER THE RIVER



Repositioning the riverfront as a recreational destination for the neighborhood and the city

The Wabash Neighborhood has a once in a generation opportunity to reposition the Wabash riverfront as a signature park with distinctly and uniquely amenitized and programmed zones. With an activated riverfront, the Wabash Neighborhood will be the location of one of the most significant stretches of accessible riverfront in the City of Lafayette.

Overview

As noted by residents, the Wabash River and the historic Wabash and Erie Canal (which ran approximately where Sycamore Street is today) are the reasons the neighborhood exists. While the riverfront had a heavily industrial past, most of the property is now under control by either the City of Lafayette or the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation (WREC). The consolidated ownership is favorable and preserves the riverfront for public use. Remaining privately-owned properties are planned to be acquired for the public use as they become available. Today, the riverfront in the Wabash Neighborhood is largely inaccessible; except for a small canoe and kayak launch point at Shamrock Park. The rest of the riverfront is mostly fenced-in and inaccessible.

Through preliminary planning completed in the *Two Cities, One River* plan (summarized on page 11), and WREC has identified former industrial properties in various stages of cleanup/assessment. Much of the riverfront is in the regulatory floodway or 100-year floodplain (summarized on page 21).

Seven activation zones have been identified as part of this signature riverfront park space and are described in more detail on the following pages.

Short-Term Recommendations

- Address the Cargill truck traffic issue by re-routing traffic to approach from the south and building a new truck staging area at Shamrock Park. Invest in a stormwater amenity/constructed wetland at Shamrock Park.
- Work with WREC and other local, state, and federal entities/funding sources to thoroughly study the Wabash River South Reach regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain.
- Collaborate with Lafayette RENEW and WREC to ensure that planning for future stormwater and the riverfront happen concurrently.
- Continue to coordinate with and support WREC's pursuit of EPA brownfield assessment and cleanup funding for former industrial riverfront properties.
- Coordinate with Daughters of the American Revolution and the Tiptecanoe County Historical Association to tell the story of the Wabash River.
- Clean up debris and remove fencing along the riverfront and provide the public with temporary access to this future riverfront park.

- Construct a riverfront trail connecting Downtown Lafayette and Shamrock Park with access points into the Wabash Neighborhood. A permanent trail could be constructed at the same location as signature riverfront park improvements are implemented.

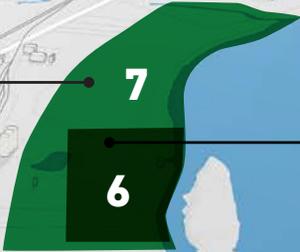
Long-Term Recommendations

- Partner with the WREC on the design and construction of a signature riverfront park from South Street to Shamrock Park.
- Redesign Sycamore Street as a complete street to provide a signature experience including re-created canal and linear park, on-street parking, and a high-quality streetscape.
- Redesign east-west connections Ellsworth and Smith Streets as complete streets with multi-use paths and new ramps to access the existing pedestrian bridge.
- Work with WREC and other local, state, and federal entities/funding sources to acquire properties and vacate portions of Sycamore Street within the regulatory floodway. This includes a re-routing of Sycamore Street to connect with Williams Street.

Riverfront Zones Character



Zone 7



7

6



Zone 6



Zone 4



5

4



Zone 5



Zone 3



3

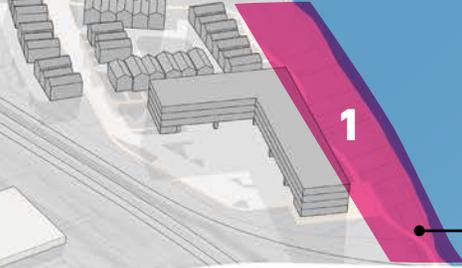
2



Zone 3



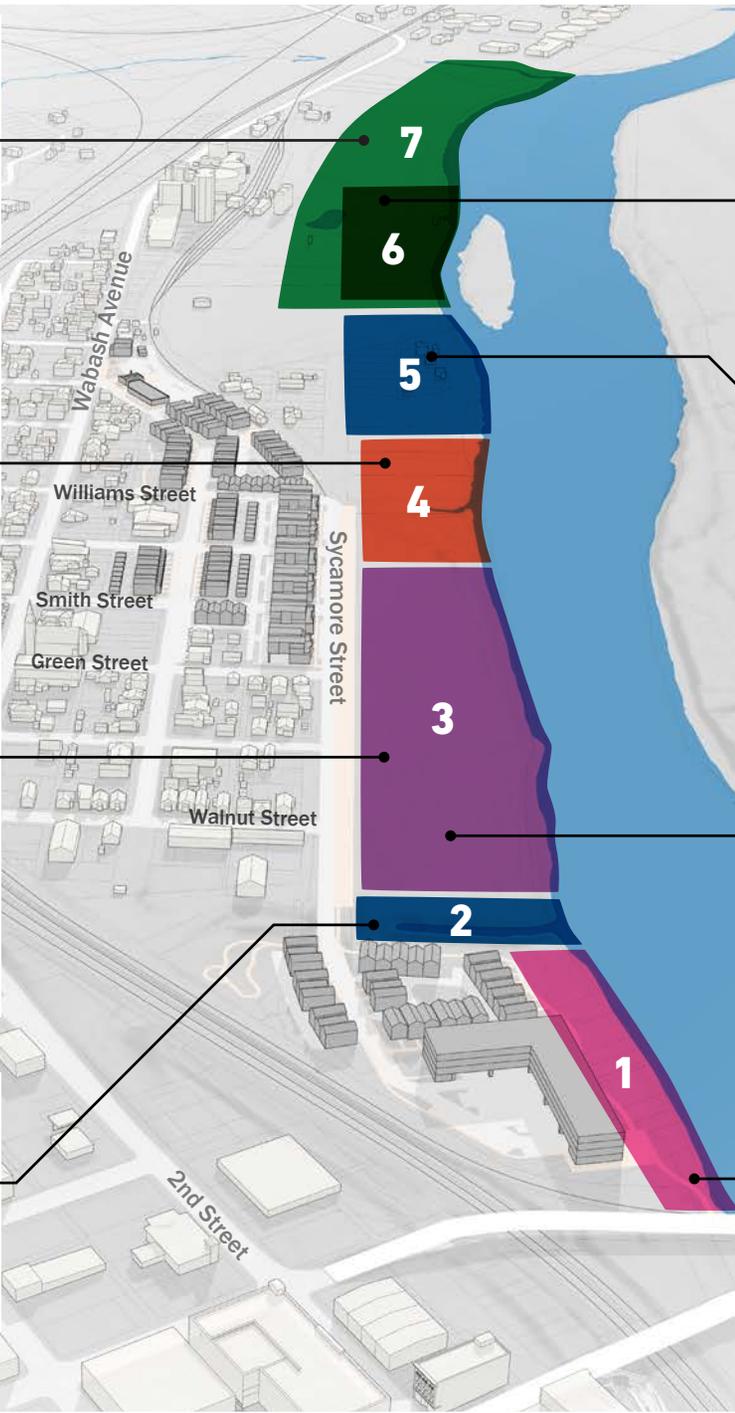
Zone 2



1



Zone 1



Zones 1 - 2

Zones 1 and 2, located in the northernmost area of the neighborhood, encompass approximately four acres of potential park space and five acres of developable property. These parcels are under the ownership of the City of Lafayette and WREC. This dynamic site could provide a riverfront trail link to the Riverfront Promenade to create an opportunity to access the waterfront with overlooks and access points, and support high-quality residential development. These zones represent active linkages to riverfront park space further south in the Wabash Neighborhood.

Within these zones is the outfall of the historic Pearl River, which exists as a culvert that flows through downtown Lafayette. While there isn't much to see or experience today, this could be improved upon as outfall events are reduced and edges are planted with native wetland edge plants.

At the time of this plan, Lafayette RENEW was planning to install a 1.5 million-gallon underground storage tank just east of Zones 1 and 2. The tank will store stormwater and reduce CSO events to the four most significant stormwater events per year affecting the Pearl River outfall. The reduction of CSO events will allow for the Wabash River to be cleaner and have safer conditions for recreation.

Today, these zones are inaccessible and have eroded banks. In the future, this area could be improved with native plantings along the bank, and it could become a highly-attractive area of the riverfront.



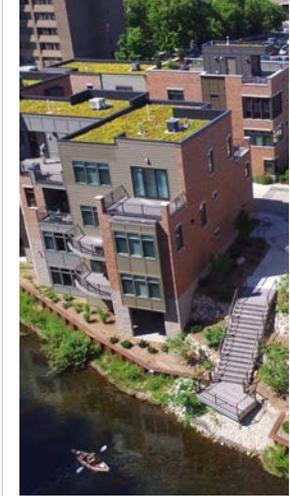
ACCESS TO THE WATER



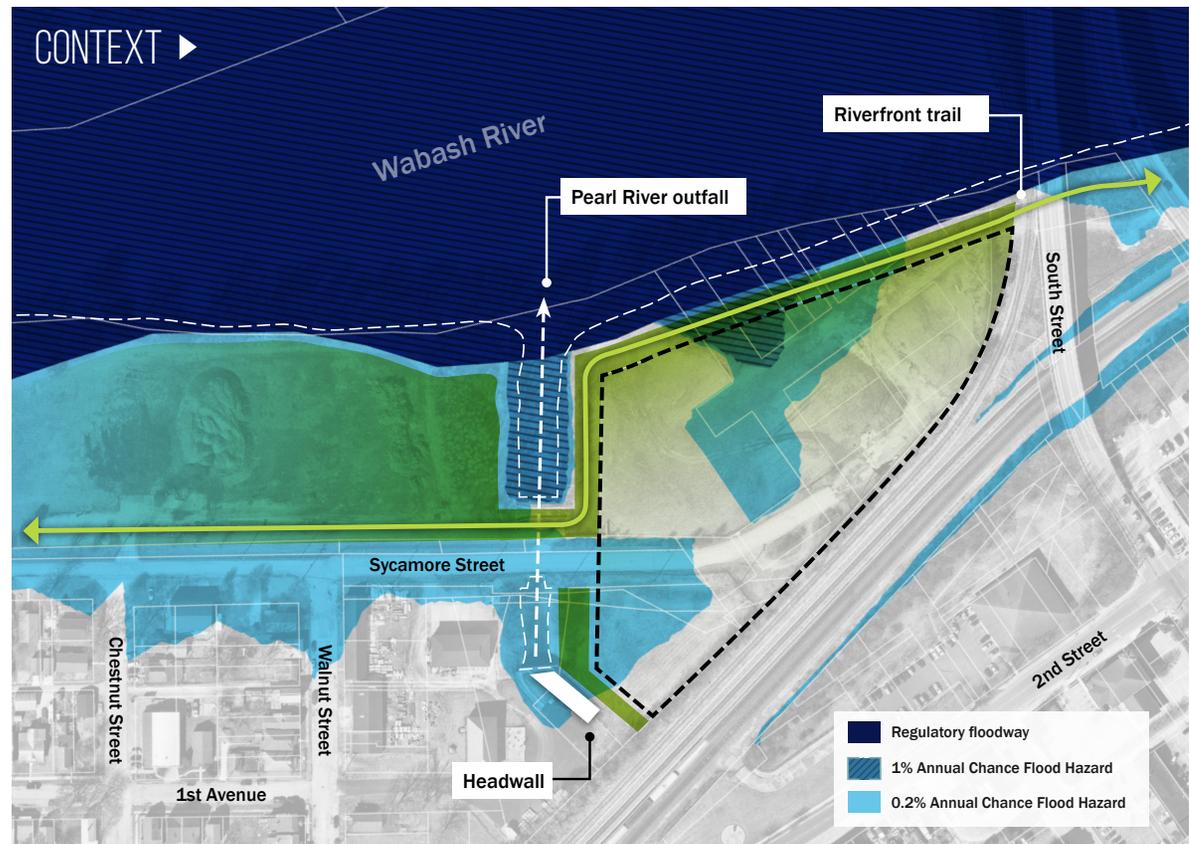
RIVERFRONT TRAIL



PARK AND OVERLOOK



MIXED-USE OR TOWNHOMES



Trail connection to downtown and the promenade

Potential development site

Sycamore Street

Riverfront trail

River overlook/access

Pearl River outfall

Riverfront park space

Wabash River

NORTH ←

Zones 3 - 4

Zones 3 and 4, located in the central portion of the riverfront, is approximately 15 acres of future park space controlled by WREC. Due to the central location and large size of this area, it is planned as one of the most highly-programmed areas of the riverfront.

Here, the history of the Wabash River in Lafayette can be told, and this will create a connection for visitors with the rich history of this riverfront's industrial past, including the Wabash and Erie Canal. The neighborhood's strong history as an Irish neighborhood can also be told in this zone.

This area is envisioned to have a linear component called Canal Trace Park with a recreated canal water feature evocative of the historic Wabash and Erie Canal, which is now followed by present-day Sycamore Street. Treated effluent (water) from the Lafayette RENEW facility could be pumped into the feature before being released into the Wabash River. Today the effluent is just treated and released into the river.

The riverfront is should be active in these zones with trails, small kiosks, gathering spaces, playgrounds, and informal recreation areas. This space is envisioned as a place for residents and visitors to experience the Wabash River in a meaningful and active way.



Connecting to history - Wabash and Erie Canal



STORYTELLING



SWINGS AND SHELTERS



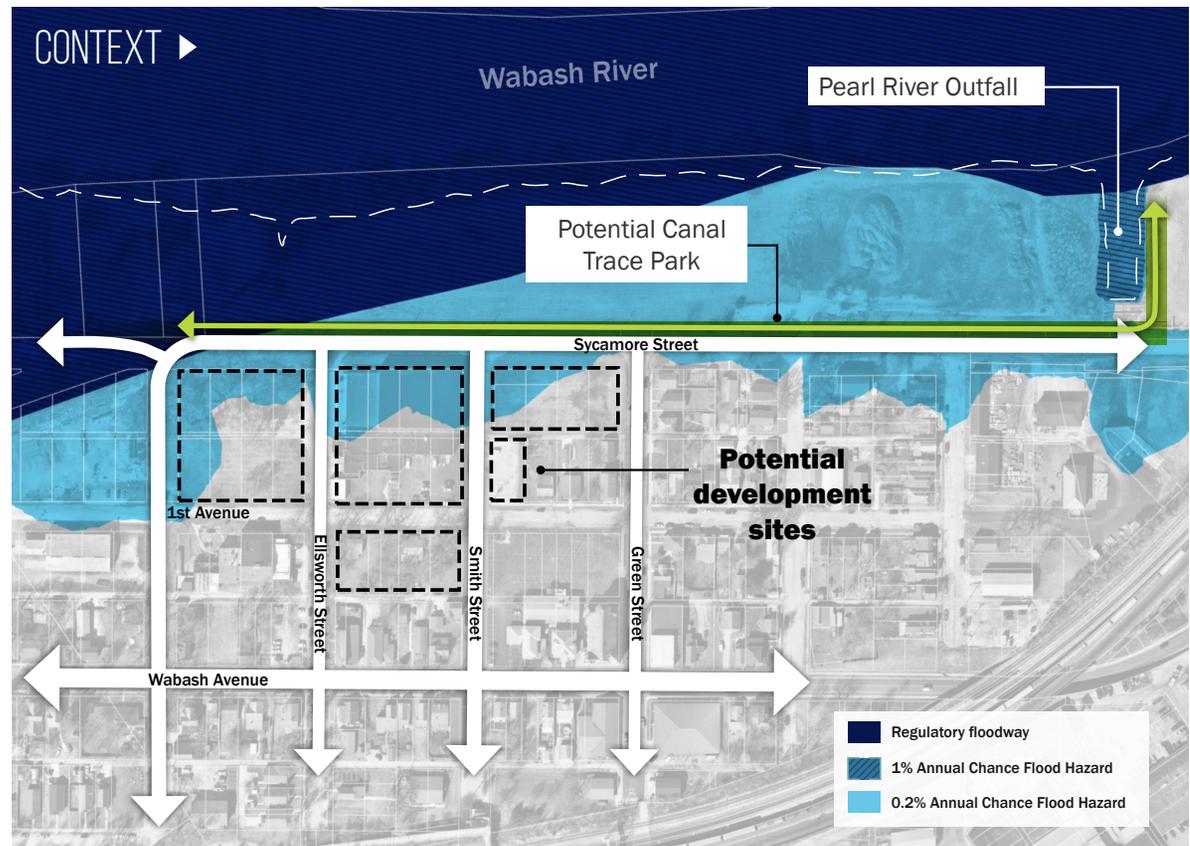
GATHERING SPACES

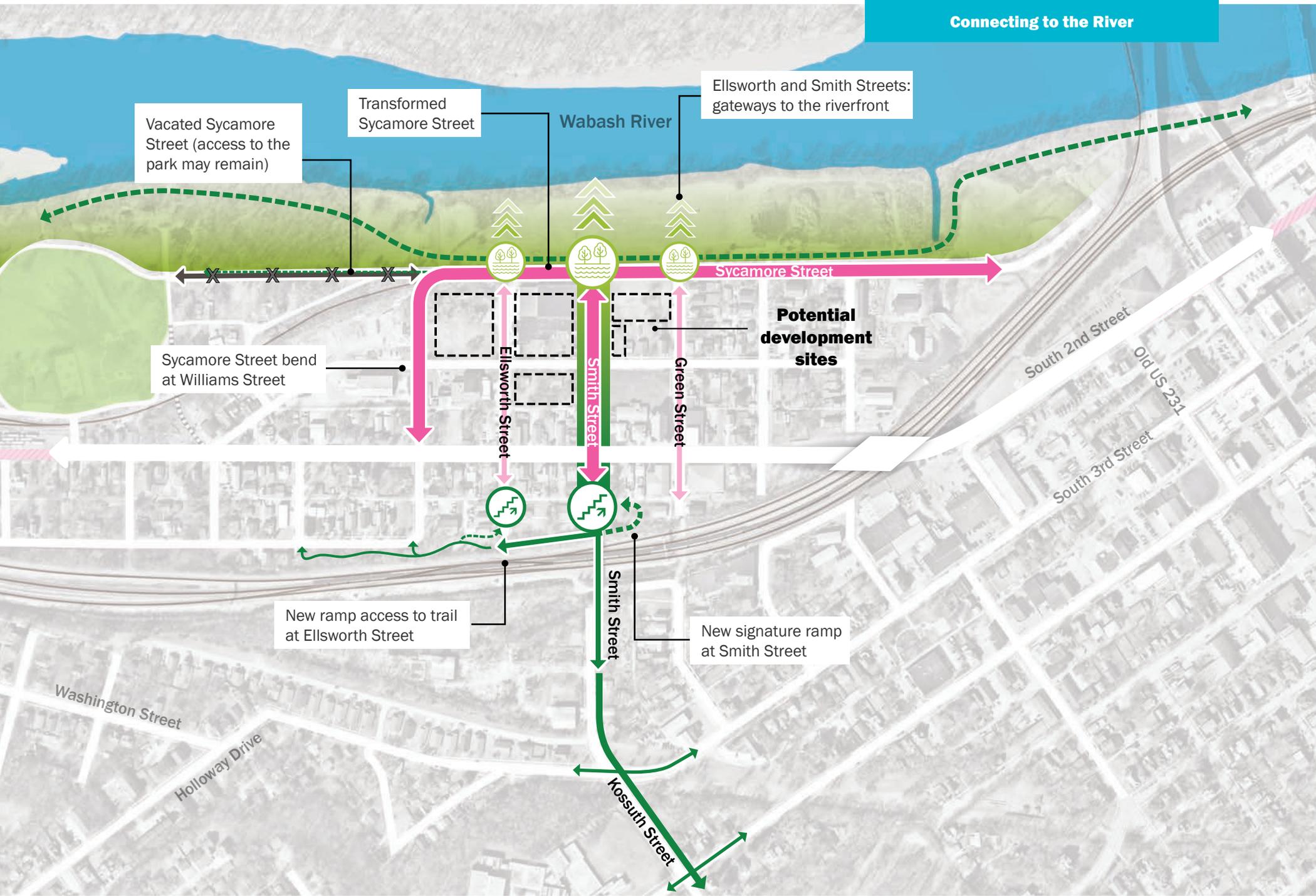


RIVERFRONT TRAIL



CANAL FEATURE





Vacated Sycamore Street (access to the park may remain)

Transformed Sycamore Street

Wabash River

Ellsworth and Smith Streets: gateways to the riverfront

Sycamore Street bend at Williams Street

Potential development sites

New ramp access to trail at Ellsworth Street

New signature ramp at Smith Street

Washington Street

Holloway Drive

South 2nd Street

Old US 231

South 3rd Street

Smith Street

Kosuth Street

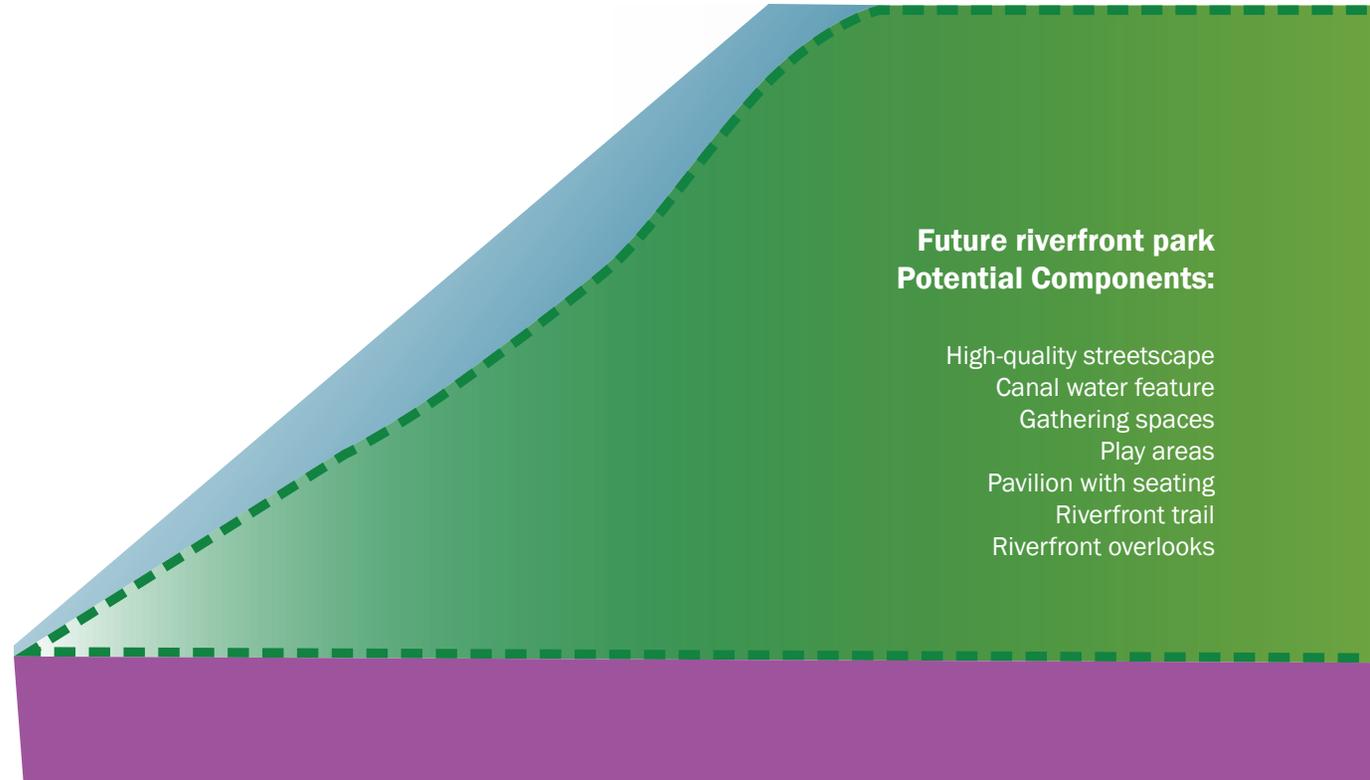


Canal feature opportunities

Creating synergy between the canal and riverfront

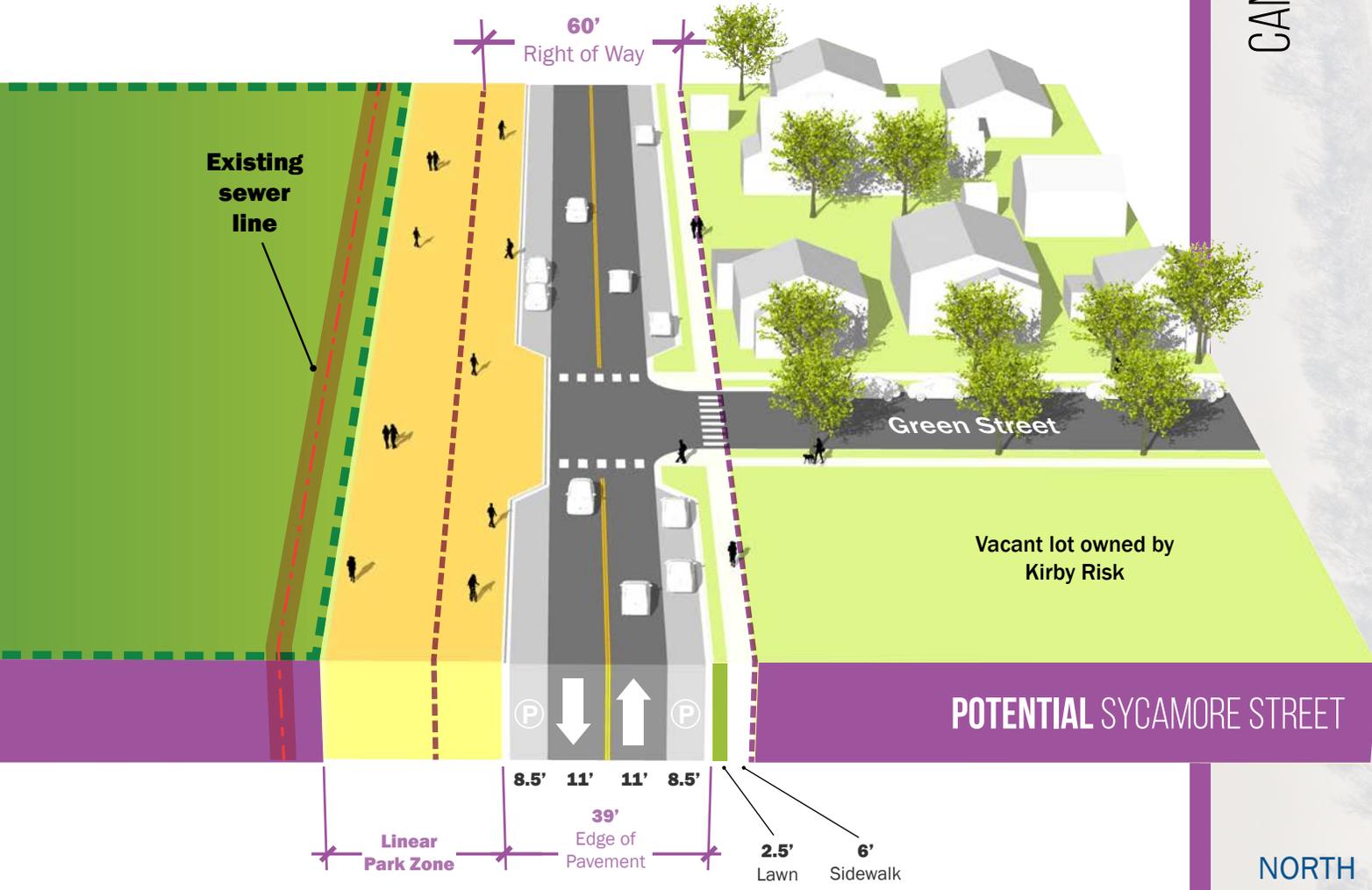
Canal Trace Park

There is a fantastic opportunity to leverage the riverfront and Sycamore Street's large right-of-way to create an activated linear park. This park would be the front door to the riverfront for residents and visitors. This page describes how Sycamore Street could be developed as Canal Trace Park.

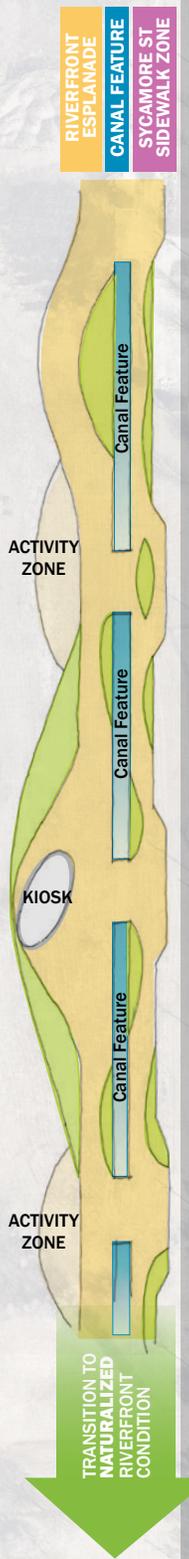




Creating a linear park



CANAL TRACE PARK



NORTH ↑

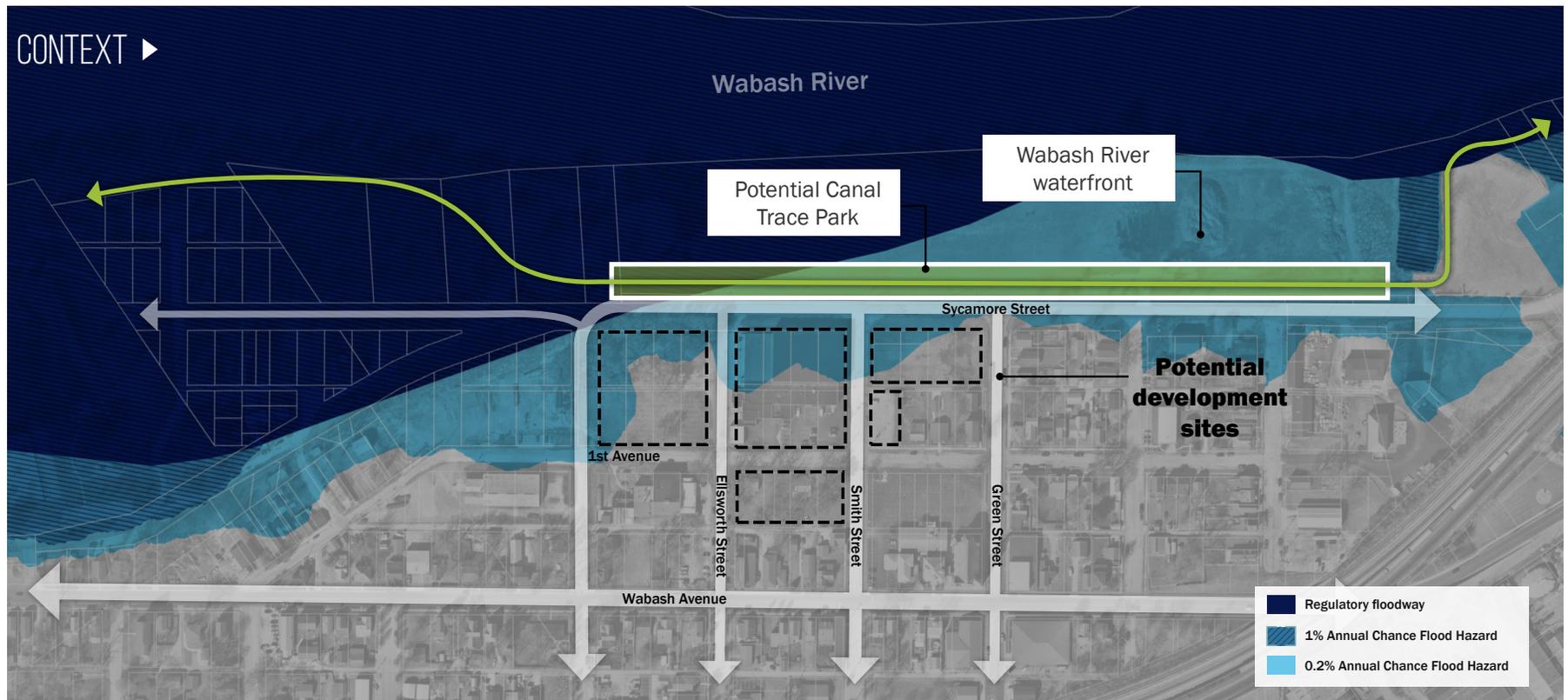
Riverfront Approach

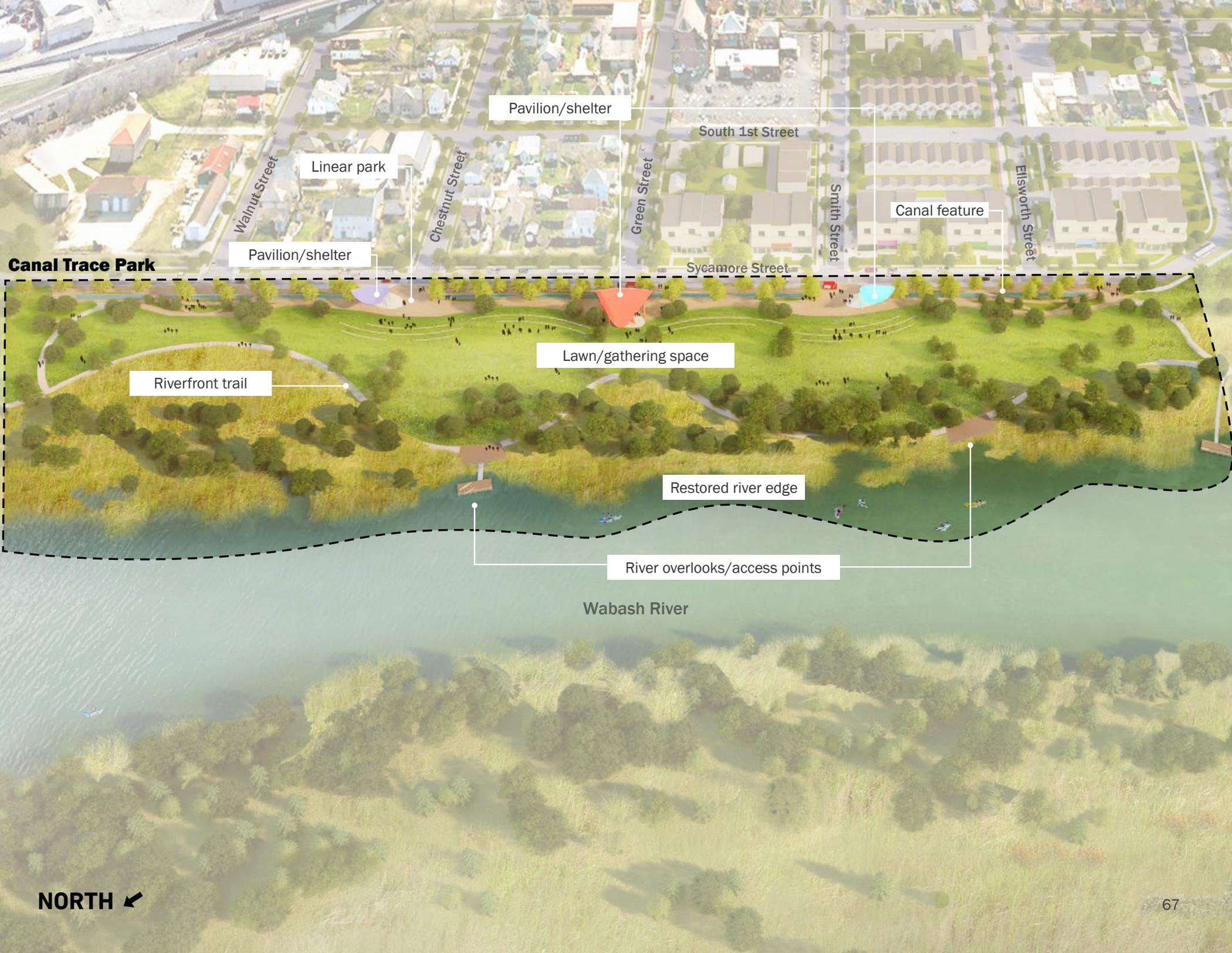
Within zones 3 and 4, it is envisioned that visitors to this park can easily access the riverfront with a simple slope down to the riverfront. Most of the active features will occur in a linear park being called Canal Trace Park. The riverfront approach will be designed for passive recreation and would not sustain damage if flooded. The edge will likely be planted with native wetland edge plants that will prevent erosion.

There may be an opportunity for users to physically experience the river here, with a small beach or a canoe and kayak launch point.



Experiencing the riverfront





Pavilion/shelter

South 1st Street

Linear park

Canal feature

Pavilion/shelter

Sycamore Street

Canal Trace Park

Lawn/gathering space

Riverfront trail

Restored river edge

River overlooks/access points

Wabash River

NORTH ←

ZONES 5 - 7

Zones 5, 6 and 7, located in the southern portion of the riverfront, are approximately a combined 35 acres of future park space. Most of this acreage is in the regulatory floodway or 100-year floodplain. This property is owned by WREC, the City of Lafayette, Cargill, and several other individuals.

Within zones 5, 6 and 7, the riverfront becomes much more informal and naturalistic. The canal, which is a formal water feature further north, becomes a natural stream before terminating in a stormwater park envisioned for a portion of Shamrock Park. By replacing a portion of the lawn in Shamrock Park with a series of wetlands and boardwalks, stormwater in the neighborhood can be conveyed in an ecologically-conscious and educationally-rich way.

These three zones are programmed with opportunities for visitors to experience and learn about the river's edge, wetland habitats, and stormwater management. The beauty of these zones is that the river is allowed to do what it has always done, which is flood throughout the year.



Wetland experiences



RIVERFRONT OPPORTUNITIES

WETLAND HABITAT



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



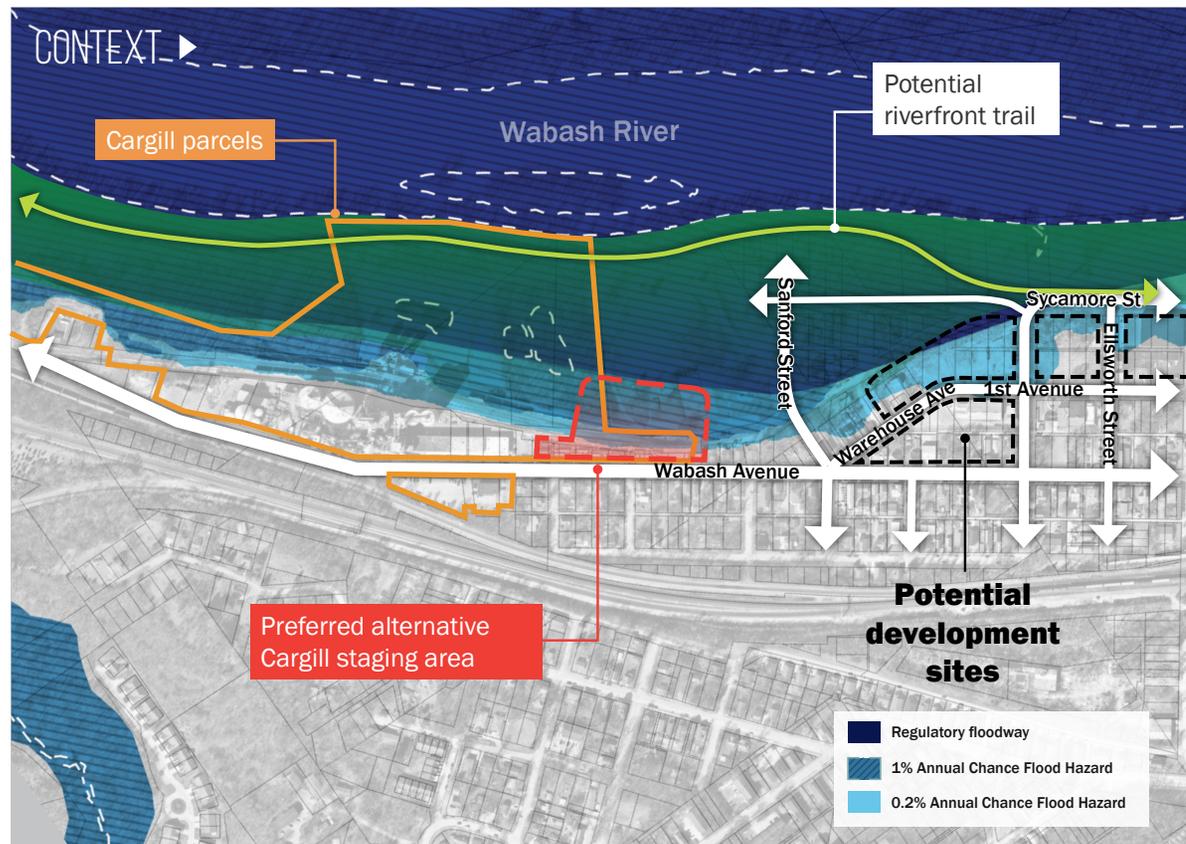
BOARDWALKS



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT



WALKING TRAILS





Wabash Avenue

Williams Street

Warehouse Street

Wabash Avenue

Pavilion/shelter

Parking

Pavilion/shelter

Cargill staging

Trails

Boardwalks

Riverfront trail

Stormwater park

River overlooks/access points

Wabash River

NORTH ←

LET WABASH GROW

Ensuring future development is blended with the existing character of the neighborhood

The Wabash Neighborhood has a transformative opportunity for growth and development. The community wants to be proactive about this growth and proscriptive in guiding development based on their vision described in this plan. This section sets appropriate thresholds of scale that can be integrated into the existing neighborhood.

Overview

Wabash Avenue historically has been the center of activity for the neighborhood with thriving businesses, but over time many of these establishments have closed. Today, there are few options for neighborhood-serving restaurants and stores. Aside from Wabash Avenue, the neighborhood is mostly comprised of small-single family homes that are a blend of owner-occupied and rentals. Housing in the Wabash Neighborhood is stable, and values are expected to increase in the future due to the proximity of downtown, growth in the community, and future investments in a riverfront park. The legacy of this neighborhood is related to its history as a place where many Irish laborers settled. The Wabash Neighborhood also has an industrial heritage, but industrial uses, especially along the riverfront, have all but disappeared. There are several viable industrial businesses in the neighborhood that have excess or underutilized property that could redevelop in the future.

Development recommendations within this plan are supported by concepts illustrated over the next several pages. These concepts focused on larger collections of properties where mixed-use and townhome developments could be potential scales of development.

The following page connects opportunity sites as a general overview of the proposed development types and scales.

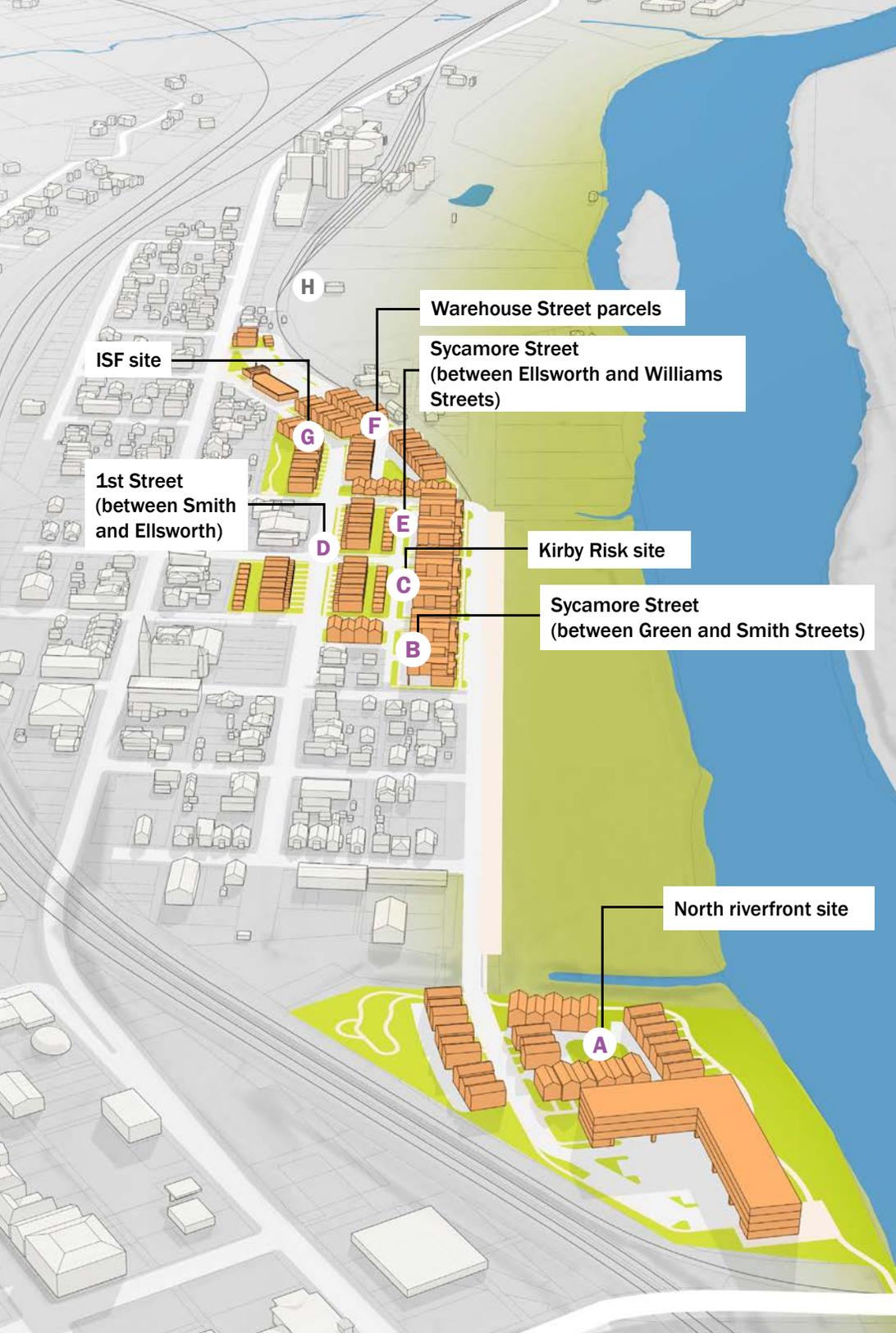
Short-Term Recommendations

- Work with Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission to update the Future Land Use Map for the Wabash Neighborhood to foster infill and targeted redevelopment.
- Explore the implementation of a Form-Based Overlay as part of the Tippecanoe Unified County Zoning Ordinance to balance preservation of neighborhood character with flexible and community-supported development.
- Foster a greater relationship with Habitat for Humanity to advocate for and implement affordable small-scale infill development.
- Strengthen relationships with Lafayette Code Enforcement, Lafayette Housing Authority, and Fairfield Township Trustee to support safe and high-quality housing and to provide relief to those in need.
- Coordinate with large property owners such as the Wabash River Enhancement Corporation, Indiana Steel Fabricators and Kirby Risk to understand short- and long-term goals for the property per the development vision outlined in this plan.

- Support adaptive re-use projects including industrial and residential conversions to appropriately-scaled neighborhood retail and restaurants along Wabash Avenue and Sycamore Street.
- Conduct a developer tour of the Wabash Neighborhood in the spring of 2020 to bring awareness to opportunities that exist in the neighborhood and along the riverfront.
- The Wabash Neighborhood is in a Federal Opportunity Zone eligible census tract. Opportunity zone funds could help with the redevelopment of the more significant sites throughout the neighborhood by providing access to tax beneficial funding. The city should create a list of Opportunity Zone funds that may be interested in investing in redevelopment projects in the Wabash Neighborhood and solicit those developers' interest.

Long-Term Recommendations

- Explore expansion of the downtown TIF district to include Wabash Avenue, the riverfront park, and development sites; or explore the creation of a new TIF district in the Wabash Neighborhood.
- Proactively re-zone and negotiate development agreements on sites A-G outlined in this plan.



Potential Development Sites

	Potential Dev. Typology							
(A) North riverfront site	2	3	5	6	7	8		
(B) Sycamore Street (between Green and Smith)	2	3	4	5	7			
(C) Kirby Risk site	2	3	4	5	7			
(D) 1st Street (between Smith and Ellsworth)						2	3	
(E) Sycamore Street (between Ellsworth and Williams)	2	3	4	5	7			
(F) Warehouse Street parcels		2	3	4	7			
(G) Indiana Steel Fabricating (ISF) site						2	3	
(H) Potential Cargill loading area								N/A
Infill sites (scattered throughout the neighborhood)		1	2					

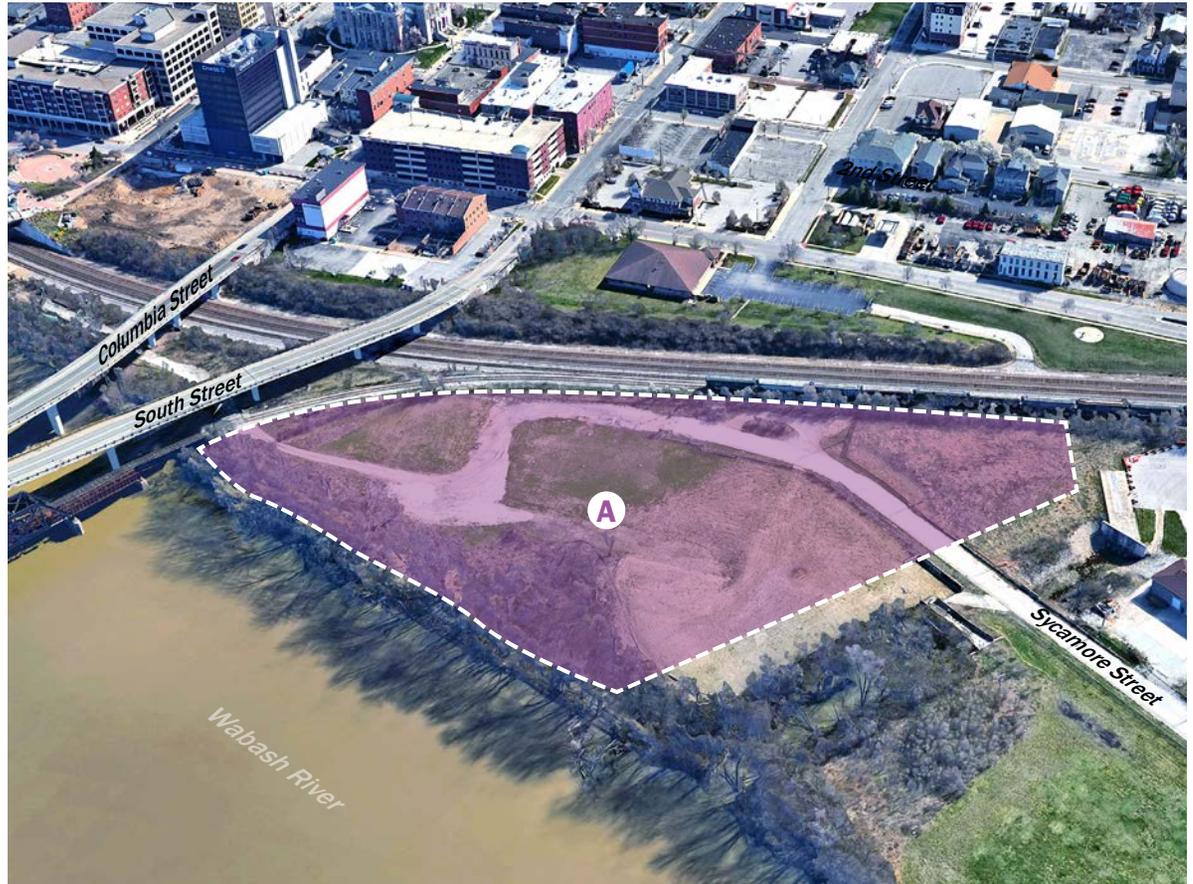
Development Typologies

1 Single-Family Residential 	2 Townhome Residential 	3 Multi-Family Residential
4 Commercial Retail 	5 Office / Retail (Surface Parking) 	6 Office / Retail (Garage Parking)
7 Res / Retail (Surface Parking) 	8 Res / Retail (Garage Parking) 	

Site A: North Riverfront Site

Site A is a highly attractive potential development site. The density shown on this site is higher due to its proximity to downtown and separation from residential areas of the neighborhood. Access could occur from an improved Sycamore Street and along the riverfront trail connecting to downtown (for pedestrians). This site is approximately nine acres in size (four acres of future park space) and is owned by the City of Lafayette and WREC. This site has an industrial past and has undergone partial environmental brownfield remediation and cleanup (by WREC). Portions of this site are also in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain; however, due to concerns about the reliability of FEMA flood data, several alternative development concepts have been produced for this site. As mentioned previously, Lafayette RENEW is planning a 1.5 million-gallon underground storage tank at this site. On all development concepts, this tank could be situated under lawn areas or parking lots.

Note: further coordination and study on flood concerns and stormwater infrastructure will be required before development enters the design and engineering phase.

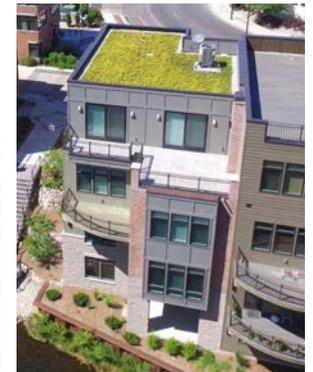


Aside from development, this site could become additional riverfront park space if development proved too difficult.

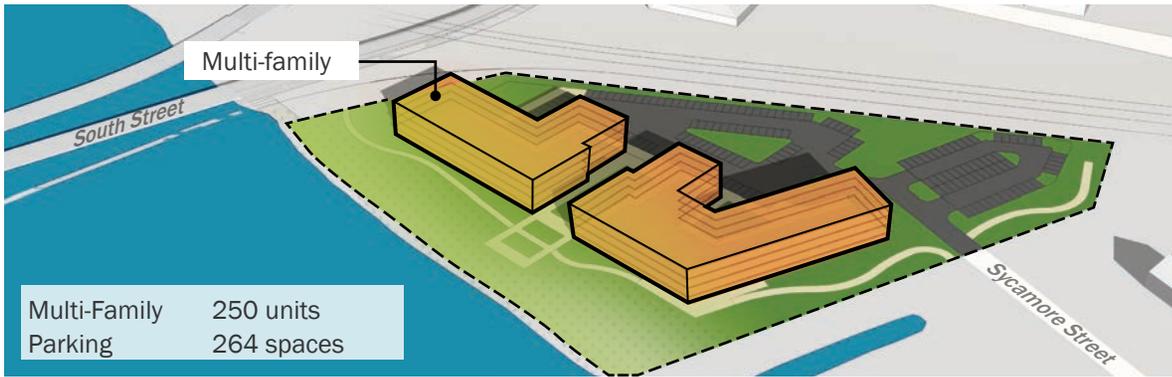
Riverfront Site Concept 1 (preferred concept)



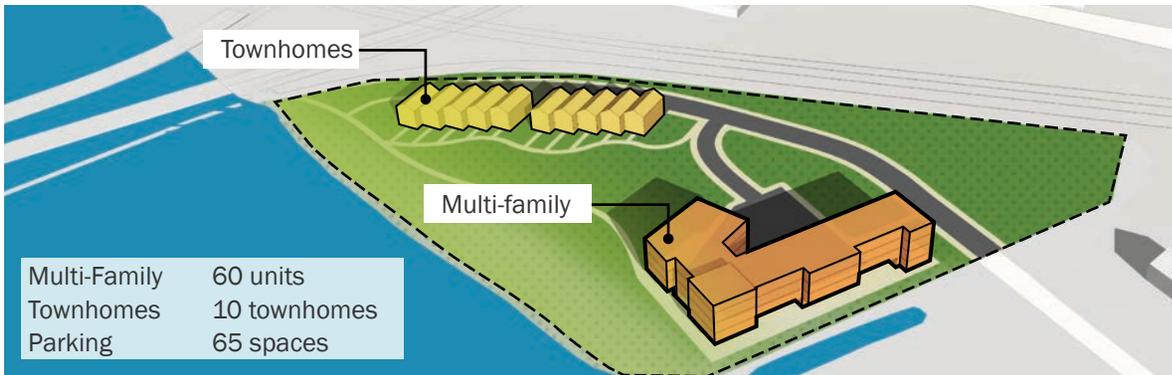
Concepts one, two, and three avoid the FEMA 100-year floodplain.



Riverfront Site Concept 2

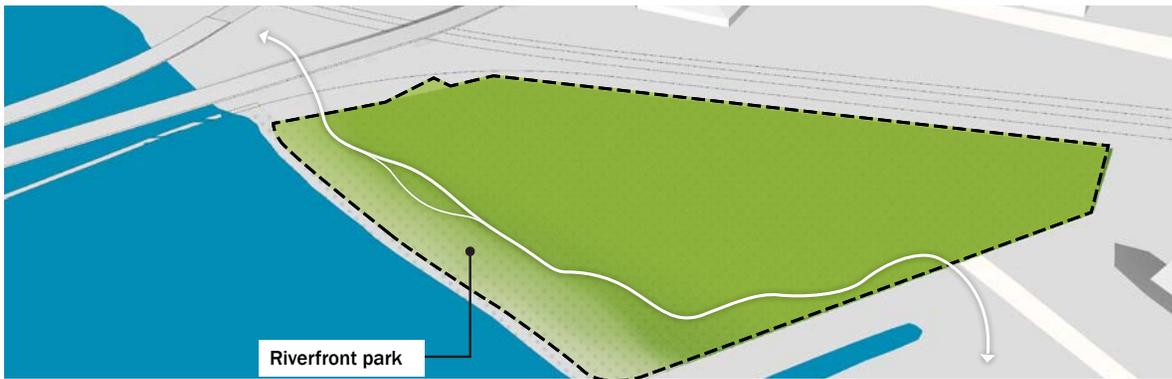


Riverfront Site Concept 3



Concept four avoids both the 100-year floodplain and 500-year floodplain.

Riverfront Open Space Concept



Sites B - E: Riverfront Opportunity

Sites B-E present a unique opportunity situated in the heart of the riverfront and outside of the 100-year floodplain. The density shown on this site is higher along Sycamore Street with mix of uses (retail on corners blended with multi-family), and this scale steps down to attached townhomes with detached garages along alleyways that can be better integrated into the neighborhood. Access occurs from Smith, Ellsworth, and Green Streets and from an improved Sycamore Street. Further access to the riverfront trail will amplify access to park space and downtown. These sites combined are approximately six acres in size and are owned by Kirby Risk and a few other owners.

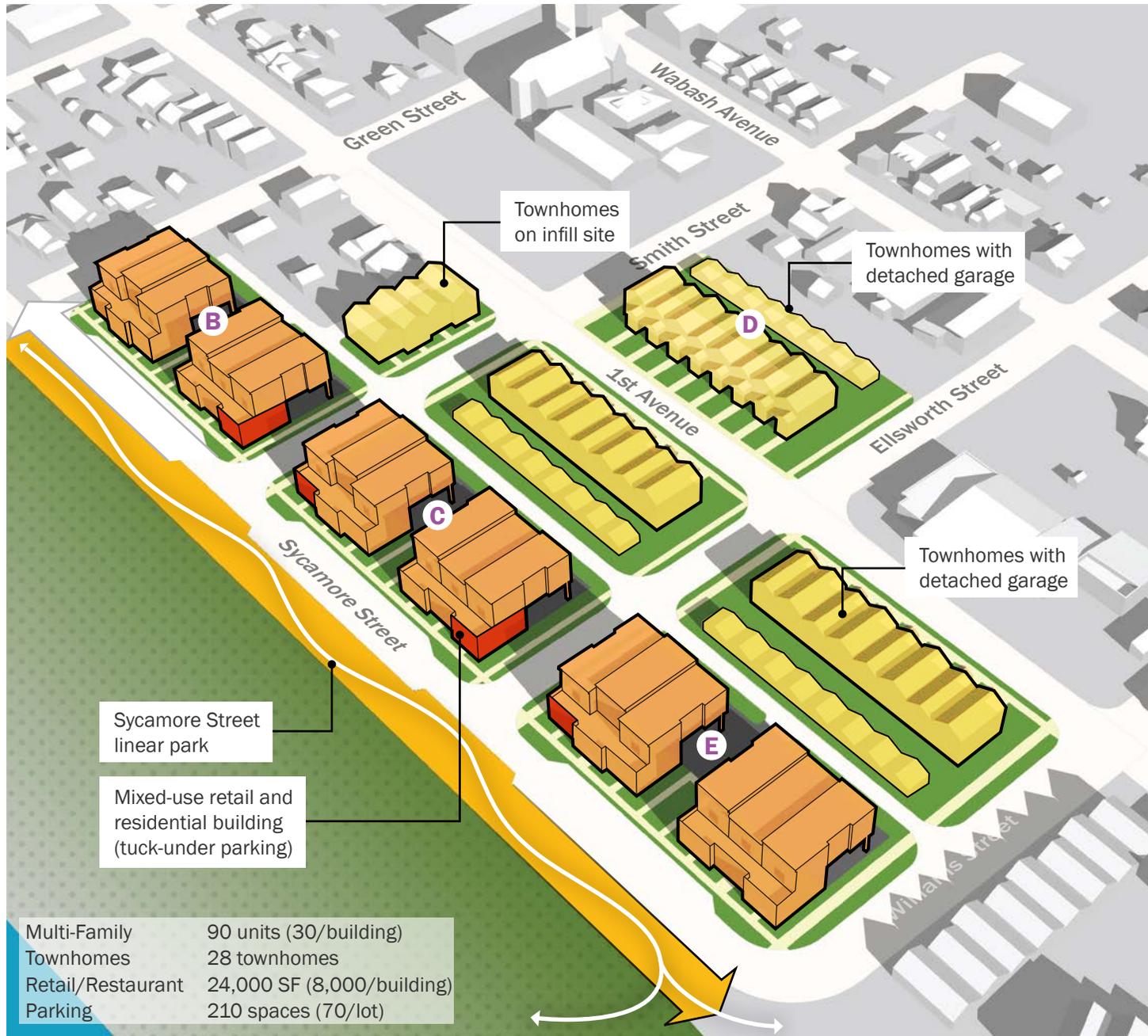
These sites are highly attractive due to favorable access, proximity to the riverfront, and the opportunity to redevelop industrial sites with consolidated ownership.

Development could be phased over time, concentrating first on the vacant and underutilized property, allowing for the industry to co-exist. For instance, Kirby Risk operates a facility at Site C, but indicated they do not have growth plans for the facility. Industrial property owners in this area were consulted as these development concepts were prepared, and they agreed to be included in these capacity studies.



Existing conditions and industrial property in sites B-E.

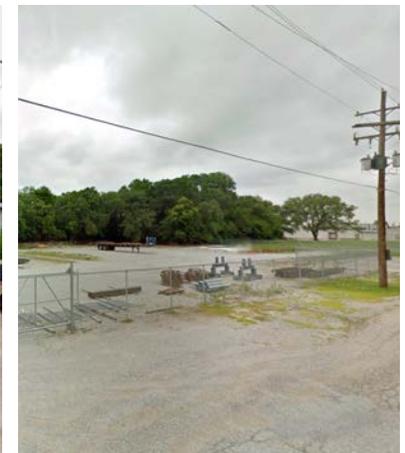
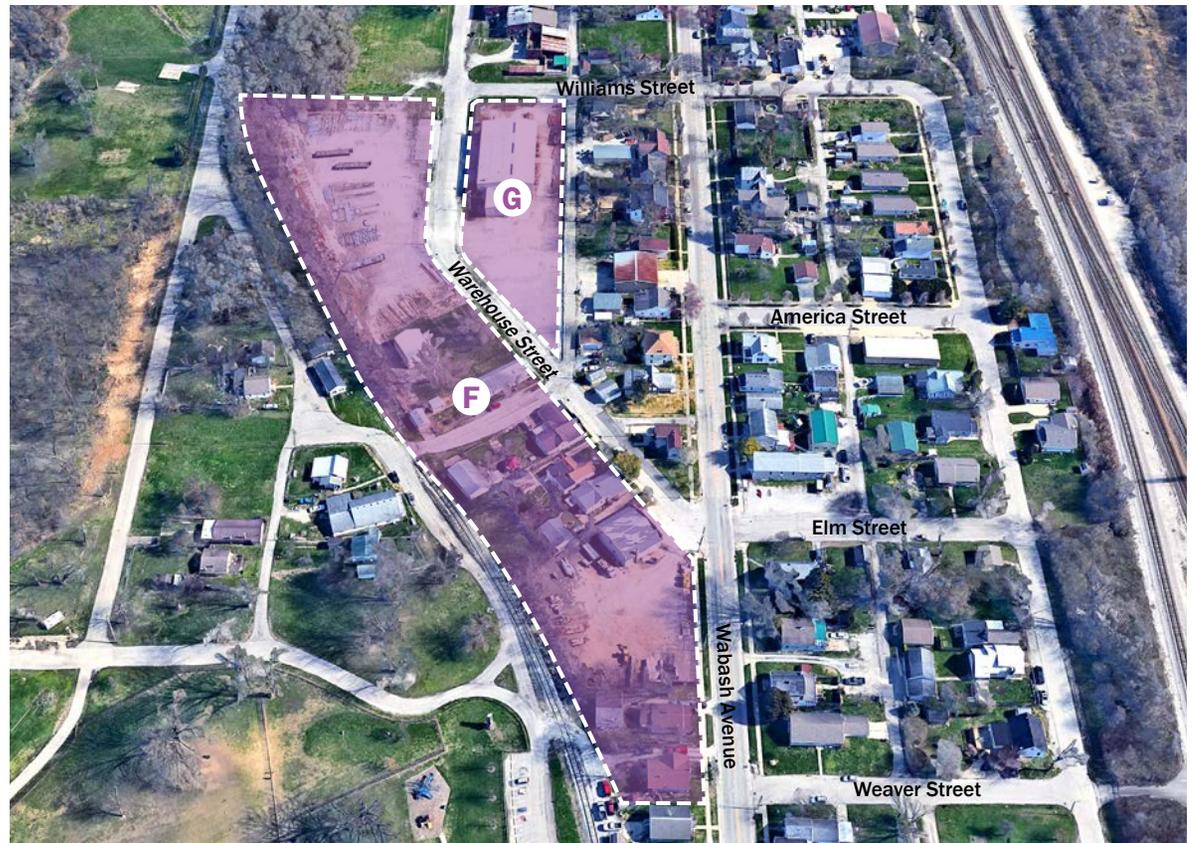
Riverfront Sites B - E



Sites F - G: South Riverfront Opportunity

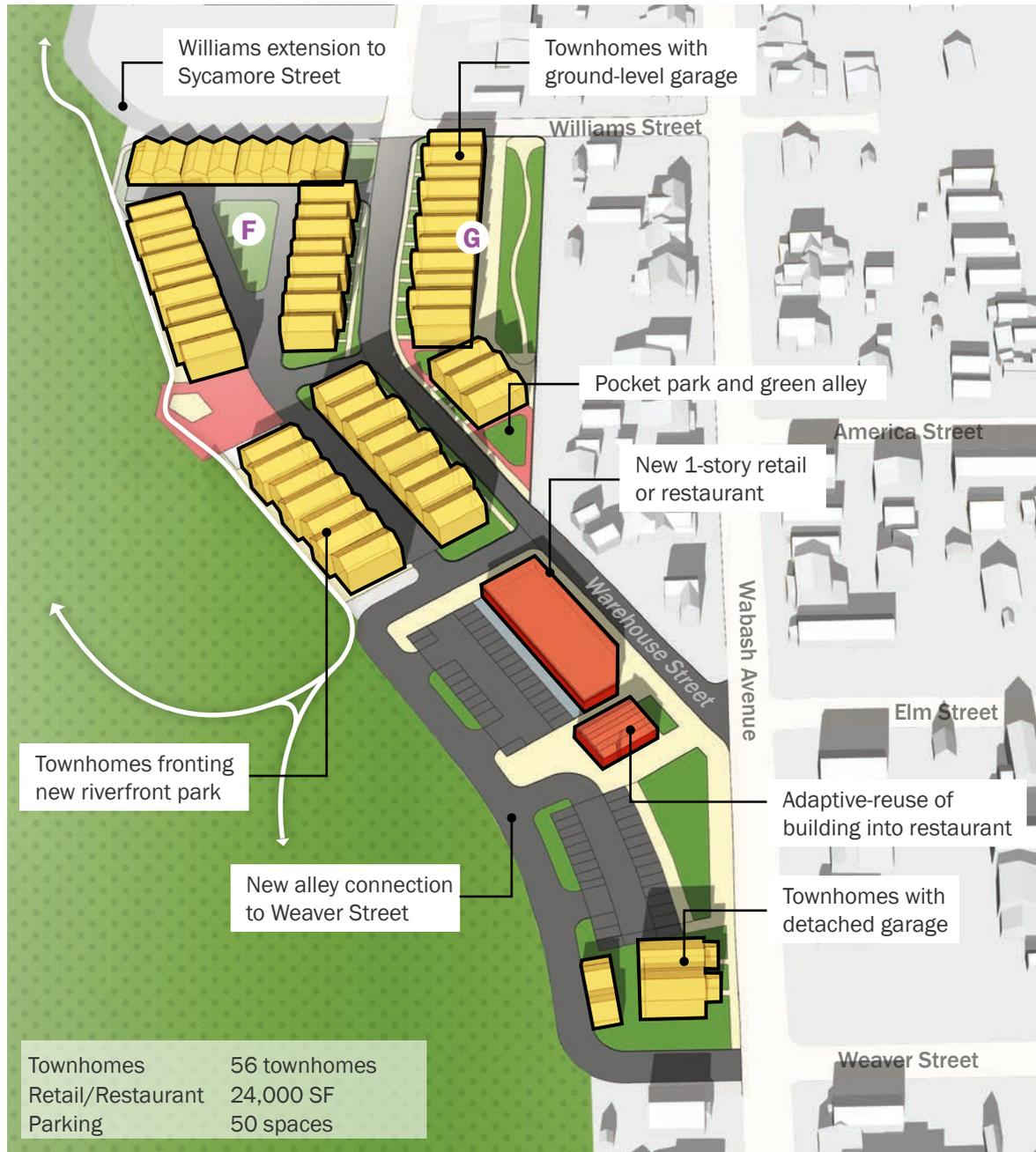
Sites F-G, could transform industrial property adjacent to the riverfront park into active and vibrant development. These development sites are located outside of the 100-year floodplain but may have some environmental remediation needed before redevelopment occurs. Development on these industrial sites focuses on townhomes, with infill and adaptive re-use development occurring further south. Access occurs from Warehouse Street and from a re-aligned Sycamore Street connecting to Williams Street. Further access to the riverfront trail will amplify access to park space and downtown. These sites combined are approximately eight acres in size and are owned primarily by Indiana Steel Fabricators and a few other owners. Coordination with Cargill will also be necessary because they own some inactive rail that may need to be acquired as part of this development.

Similar to sites B-E, these sites are highly attractive due to favorable access, proximity to the riverfront, and the opportunity to redevelop industrial sites with consolidated ownership. The development could be phased over time, concentrating first on the vacant and underutilized property, allowing for the industry to co-exist. Industrial property owners were consulted as these development concepts were prepared and agreed to be included in these capacity studies.



Existing industrial properties in sites F-G

Riverfront Sites F - G



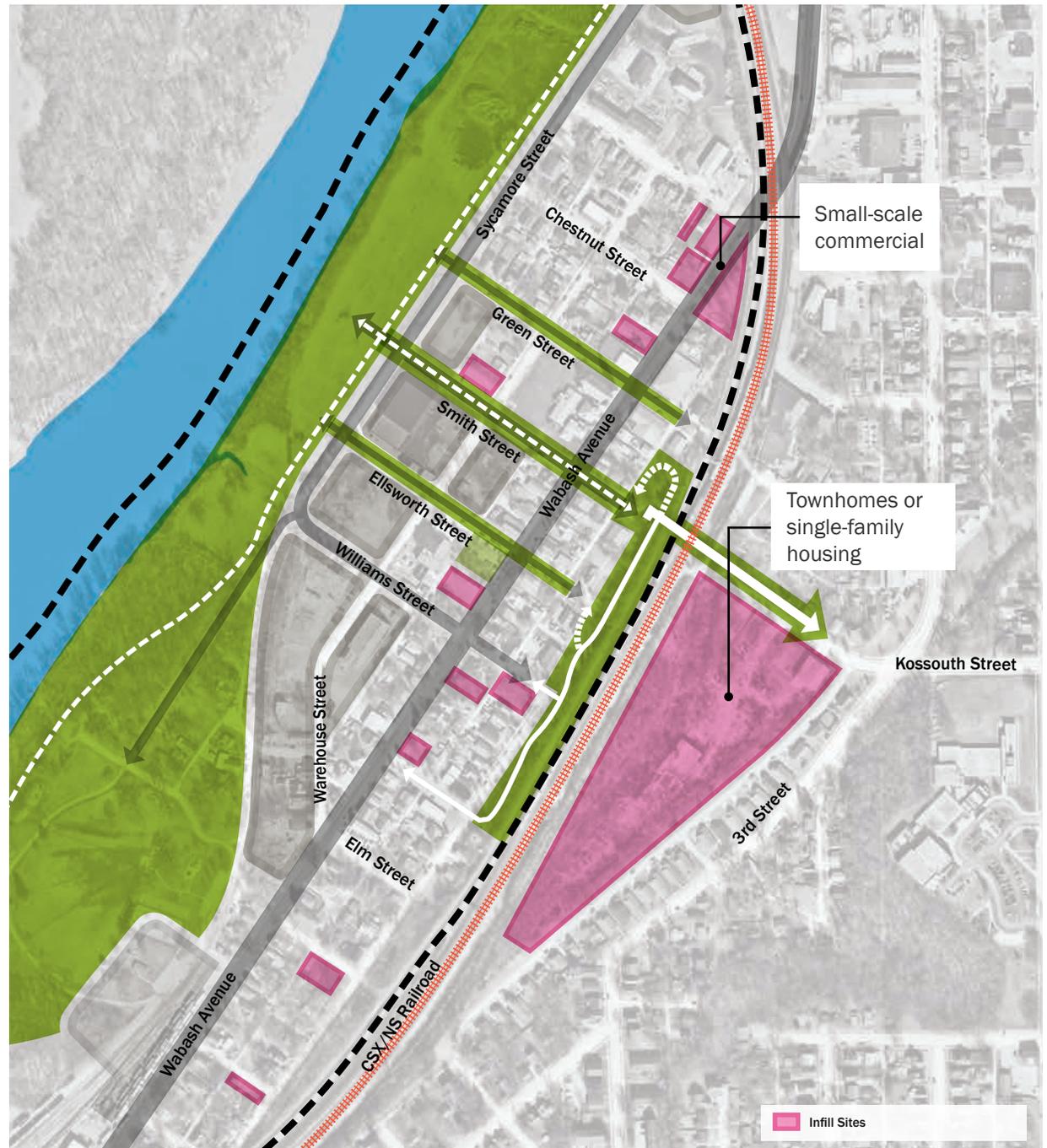
Infill Sites

Development capacity studies were not conducted for smaller infill sites, but in general, these sites are envisioned to encourage new construction that is complementary to adjacent scales and uses.

The larger site, located to the east of the rail outside of the neighborhood boundary (depicted in the map to the right), would be a suitable size for single-family or townhome development. Due to potential environmental concerns, this property may require second-floor residential with tucked-under parking.

Smaller sites located on Wabash Avenue are envisioned to be a blend of single-family, townhome, or commercial. The neighborhood supports the conversion of single-family homes on Wabash Avenue into restaurants or small shops in the future.

Throughout the neighborhood, infill sites should be designed and developed with appropriately scaled single-family or duplex development.



Maintaining Affordability

The development concepts within this section were vetted by the Wabash CAN committee and are reflective of that process. The neighborhood also vocalized concerns about affordability and gentrification in the area as redevelopment and investments to the riverfront occur.

Gentrification is an issue facing many neighborhoods throughout the country. *Gentrification is defined as the buying and renovation of housing and commercial properties in deteriorated urban neighborhoods by upper- or middle-income families or individuals, raising property values but often displacing low-income families and small businesses.*

The case study described on this page explores policies and development types that could maintain affordability, especially for artists and entrepreneurs in the neighborhood.

Lastly, this section contains recommendations and case studies for a neighborhood-supported Form-Based Code (FBC), which would replace the traditional euclidian zoning for this neighborhood through the Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission. Form-Based Code is another tool for regulating uses and the built environment. A FBC can help encourage affordability by maintaining the scale of existing housing in the neighborhood and discourage tear-downs resulting in larger, more expensive homes.

HOUSING CASE STUDIES



ARTIST AND PUBLIC LIFE RESIDENCY PROGRAM
(BIG CAR) INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

- Artists (or creatives/makers) of all disciplines can apply to be matched with one of five affordable homes and down payment assistance. Disciplines may include architecture, culinary arts, visual art, public art, etc.
- Artist Financial Commitments: Artist homeowners will purchase a 49% ownership interest in the home. Artists are required to make less than 80% of the average Marion County income (less than \$43,250)
- Artist Public Commitment: Artist residents commit to working for six years in support of the community as part of their practice as artists (includes: 16 hours/month to work with the community, open their home to community-wide tours and public events, participate in exhibits)
- Homes: Currently four previously-vacant homes, to avoid displacing current residents.
- Program Perpetuity: If the artist moves out, the partnership buys their 49% share of the house and puts it back in the program at the same cost level.



SAWMILL COMMUNITY LAND TRUST
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

- Sawmill Community Land Trust is a 501(c)3 nonprofit membership organization with the goal of creating a permanent reserve of affordable housing for families at, or below, 80% of Area Median Income.
- Former Industrial Property: Arbolera de Vida is a community with 93 homes in 27 acres of reclaimed industrial property (single-family detached, duplexes, townhomes and live/work flex spaces). Encourages social connection through plazas, parks, playgrounds and community gardens.
- Lofts for artists: The Sawmill Lofts is a 60-unit live/work complex for artisans who earn 60% or below of the Area Median Income. Housing offers a common workroom and performance space for residents.
- Senior Housing: Villa Nueva is a senior apartment complex with 46 units for seniors earning 50% or below if the Area Medium Income.
- Mixed-Use: 62 affordable apartments and 16 ground floor commercial spaces for small business owners.

Zoning Recommendations

Purpose of Form-Based Zoning

Wabash is a distinctive neighborhood with rich historical characteristics and assets that define this riverside community. There is a unique blend of residential, commercial, cultural, and industrial uses that co-exist amongst each other in this relatively small neighborhood. In order to address future desirable and pedestrian-oriented development, a zoning overlay or Form-Based Code (FBC) can create flexible standards that embrace and enhance the historic and diverse qualities of the neighborhood. This tool can help encourage development to be cohesive with the existing neighborhood but remain flexible to market demands and “Let Wabash Grow.”

Key Elements of Zoning to Help Achieve Neighborhood Goals

Fitting development into the appropriate context of the neighborhood should be a critical component of the zoning language that is created for the neighborhood. Zoning should encourage the redevelopment of vacant properties, enhance walkability, and provide standards that are appropriately scaled for this neighborhood. The zoning overlay or FBC could be sectioned into multiple subdistricts based upon existing and future land use contexts, all of which should promote pedestrian-scaled development and focus on enhancing walkability and accessibility. This section provides key regulations that should be considered when creating a zoning overlay or FBC for the Wabash Neighborhood.

The Lafayette Centennial Neighborhood Form Based Code may be a useful starting point as the neighborhood begins to explore updating its zoning.



Uses Permitted

Since Wabash already has a strong mixture of uses, it is ideal to continue this trend while ensuring that more intense uses, such as industrial, do not negatively impact (noise, odor, traffic, etc.) the rest of the neighborhood. Strategically locating any future industrial uses is necessary to maintaining the quality of life for residents. Mixed-use buildings should be permitted, with residential components integrated into building projects above the first floor. A mixed-use overlay could permit a range of uses in areas where only single-family residential is permitted. The zoning map could indicate which specific parcels could permit slightly more intense uses, such as multi-family residential. As part of the overlay or FBC, considerations should be made to relax some dimensional standards such as setbacks and minimum lot sizes to avoid the need for variances.



Scale of Development

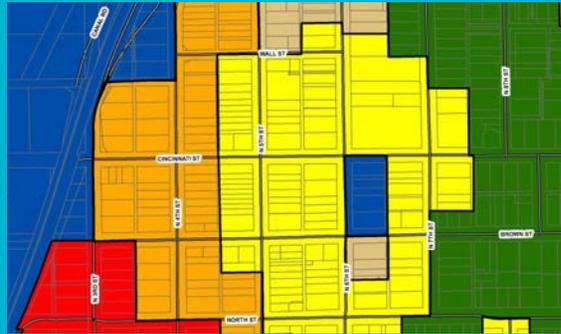
Development should be appropriately scaled to the Wabash Neighborhood. Existing buildings are primarily smaller in scale, however certain areas of the neighborhood could accommodate denser development, including sections along the river. Incentives could also be created to allow for height bonuses. For example, the neighborhood could permit three stories outright, but if an applicant preferred to build a project that included four or five stories, then they would have to provide certain amenities. Those amenities could include providing a designated pedestrian system throughout the site, incorporating streetscape elements beyond what is required, utilizing quality materials and site design (i.e. architecture, facades, signage, etc.), and/or using sustainable building and site development practices.



Building Placement and Orientation

Buildings should be oriented to emphasize a continuous street wall where possible and ensure quality pedestrian access and circulation on a site. Examples of regulatory language that can be included in an overlay to address this includes: maximum front yard setbacks, require at least one building entrance to front the primary road, and require that landscaping and amenities be provided between the building and lot lines to encourage more interaction between the public and private realms.

LOCAL CASE STUDY



CENTENNIAL CHARACTER CODE
LAFAYETTE, INDIANA

Located just to the north of Downtown Lafayette, the Centennial neighborhood recently adopted a Form-Based Code to address the compatibility of increasing development demands with the existing historic nature of the neighborhood. A simplified version of this code could serve as the primary example for the Wabash Neighborhood. The Centennial Code does lack visual representation of its standards so the Wabash code should incorporate some visual examples and illustrations to describe desired development and dimensional standards. Below are recommended areas of the Centennial Code that could be used to help create zoning language for the Wabash Neighborhood:

- **Development Sectors:** There are six total development sectors, the majority of which could be adapted to fit within the context of the Wabash Neighborhood. While there are two mixed-use districts found in this code, Wabash really would only need one mixed-use district given the size of the neighborhood. The Near Downtown district could be used near the rail underpass and serve as a transitional extension from Centennial into Wabash.

- **Uses:** Unless prohibited in the FBC, all permitted and special uses from current zoning still apply in this FBC. Prohibited uses include massage establishments, adult bookstores, and auto sales. This code also prohibits all uses except public and civic uses in Conservation/Recreation district on riverfront. Wabash would need to differ slightly, allowing for industrial in specified areas and permitting some mixed-used development along the riverfront (keeping in mind 100-year floodplain areas and regulations).
- **Lot Coverage and Dimensional Standards:** Each development sector has a set of standards to regulate building height, lot minimums, lot coverage, and setbacks. In general, these are appropriate to use in Wabash but should be adjusted accordingly to match average existing lot sizes, coverage, and setbacks for the type of district.
- **Materials:** The FBC includes a table with permitted and prohibited building materials (for instance, clay brick is permitted while vinyl siding is prohibited) that can be replicated in a Wabash overlay zoning district or FBC.
- **Parking:** Uses must conform to parking minimum but may reduce due to mixed uses. Front-loaded garages are only permitted on lots without alleys.
- **Density:** This section regulates building heights by development zone. With density bonuses are available if additional standards are met, including if bike storage or underground parking is provided on site, if the project is LEED certified, or if public art is incorporated.
- **Public Frontages:** The code requires three frontage types depending on development sector. Each of these could be adapted as part of the Wabash code.



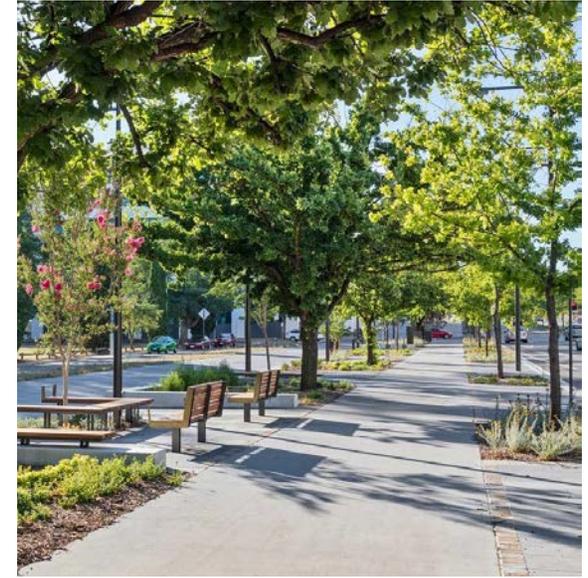
Materials and Façade Treatments

A simple table of permitted, secondary, and prohibited materials can be created for the primary façades of a building to ensure quality design and compatibility with adjacent uses. Fenestration (the arrangement of windows and doors on a building) is also a necessary element that can drastically upgrade the appearance and experience of a building, especially in regards to the ground level where pedestrian interaction occurs. Window coverage should encompass a certain percentage of the entire building (at least 40% of the first level and at least 30% of the upper stories), with a focus on areas that abut the public right-of-way.



Parking

The number of parking spaces and the location of parking lots has a significant influence on the overall appearance and accessibility of the built environment. Altering parking requirements and design standards can help transform the look and feel of a community. Some standards that could be adopted include limiting parking locations to the rear yards, instituting maximum parking ratios for certain uses, and allowing for shared parking between adjacent sites and mixed-use developments. In addition, on-street parking could



count towards parking minimums.

Landscaping/Streetscape

The streetscape and landscaping within and around a site can define the experience of the public realm. Certain elements should be required to ensure that site development is thoughtful to the environment. Sidewalks along the street should be required to be installed (if they aren't already present), native vegetation should be planted along walls and fences, sidewalk cafes or patios should be encouraged, and applicants should be required to contribute to streetscape improvements along the frontage of the property, such as sidewalks and street trees.

REGIONAL CASE STUDIES

FORM-BASED CODE MUNSTER, INDIANA

Adopted in late 2019 and guided by their comprehensive plan, Munster recently undertook the process to create a Form-Based Code to replace their traditional zoning code. The purpose of this FBC was to guide development to be more walkable and mixed-use-focused instead of auto-oriented. The goal of the new code will be to protect historic areas of Munster, enhance other areas by ensuring high-quality design and development, improve walkability, and create a code that is easier to administer. The FBC will contain approximately five character districts to replace the existing 13 zoning districts, with the ultimate goal of simplifying and creating appropriate development standards. Detached single-family residential will still be preserved and other areas of Munster will likely be rezoned to accommodate future redevelopment.

Five character districts are broken out by uses, building types, setbacks, and block size. For example, the CD-3, R-1 Single-Family Residential Character District is made up of mostly low-density single-family detached housing, medium to deep front setbacks, thoroughfares without sidewalks or curbs, and medium to large block sizes. The minimum lot size is 12,000 square feet with an average lot width of 75 feet.

An example of a denser character district is the CD-5: Urban Center Character District which contains higher density mixed-use components. Sidewalks, streetlights, and consistent tree spacing define these medium-sized blocks, and buildings are set close or directly adjacent to the sidewalks.

DOWNTOWN FORM-BASED ZONING CODE AUBURN, INDIANA

This code was created to protect and enhance the historic downtown area, ensuring that future buildings complement existing historic structures. Three different districts were created (Downtown Core District, Downtown Buffer District, and Downtown Transition District). The code is only 31 pages long, and it includes example imagery of different standards (i.e. appropriate signage, housing types, and design elements) and dimensional illustrations. The code is perhaps oversimplified, but does contain some good examples of different design standards and dimensional regulations that could be used in the Wabash Neighborhood for mixed-use and downtown-type districts:

- **Uses:** The uses listed within the code are very generalized and focus more on uses that are prohibited in each district. Some are regulated by right while others can be reviewed and approved by the administrator. Uses are also regulated by ground floor versus upper floors.
- **Building Placement:** Beyond standard setbacks, this code specifies the percentage of setback allowed from the building line along primary and side streets and indicates that loading docks and service entrances should be located along rear alleys.
- **Height:** Minimum and maximum building heights are specified to maintain consistency within each district.
- **Design Standards:** These include regulations for windows, storefront doors, cornice details, awnings, balconies, roof top decks, lighting, fencing, roofs, rear and side elevations, and façade materials. All of these should be considered as part of the Wabash code.

FORM-BASED CODE MERIDIAN TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN

In order to create traditional urban design elements and preserve community character, Meridian Township sought to create a zoning tool that provides flexibility to future development through parking and dimensional requirements, height bonuses, and streamlined site plan review and submittal process. The code applies to only a small commercial area of the Township along Grand River Avenue and is currently an optional overlay. Eventually, if proven successful, the Township hopes to expand the Form-Based Code regulating plan and make it a requirement. A companion document, the Design Guidelines, provides optional material, architectural, and landscaping/streetscaping standards that are encouraged.

- **Applicability:** A table in the FBC indicates when the code becomes applicable and what parts of the code apply and/or are optional.
- **Height and Height Bonuses:** There are minimum and maximum heights included. For certain subdistricts, a height bonus can be applied if certain amenities are provided.
- **Building Placement:** Minimum and maximum front yard setbacks are applied, with the primary street and secondary streets having slightly different thresholds. Front yard parking is not permitted, and screening regulations are included to ensure that proper buffers are placed between adjacent uses.
- **Design Guidelines:** These guidelines were created to provide supplemental and optional standards to the FBC document. They include architectural regulations, signage and lighting standards, streetscaping/landscaping, and street design guidelines.

KEEP WABASH SPECIAL

Staying true to the neighborhood's roots and highlighting the community it is today.

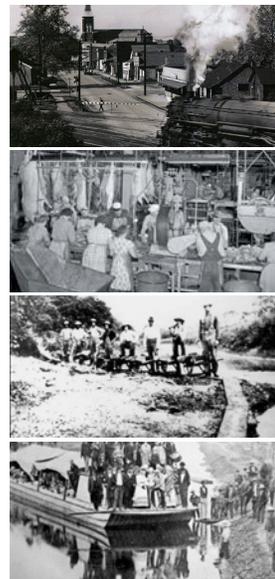
The history and heritage of the Wabash Neighborhood and the energy of Wabash Walls and community-led organization has created a synergy that can propel the neighborhood forward.

Overview

The Wabash Neighborhood is an example of how a neighborhood with a sense of pride and a vision can use public art and activation projects to change its trajectory. The neighborhood was in decline and had issues with crime. Now it is becoming a much more desirable place to live and open a business. The combined efforts of active neighbors and partnerships with groups such as Habitat for Humanity and the Tippecanoe Arts Federation are partly responsible for the change that has occurred in the Wabash Neighborhood. This section focuses on keeping the positive momentum going!

Short-Term Recommendations

- Continue to convene meetings for Wabash CAN as an implementation-focused committee who will use this plan as a guidebook for creating a **BOLD** future for the neighborhood.
- Identify funding opportunities for community organizations to implement a historical signage installation to tell Wabash's dynamic story.
- Explore the expansion of GrowLocal and other organizations to promote healthy eating, address food security, and create and support food-focused businesses and a farmer's market.
- Establish partnerships with regional nonprofits and supportive business organizations to help attract artists and entrepreneurs.



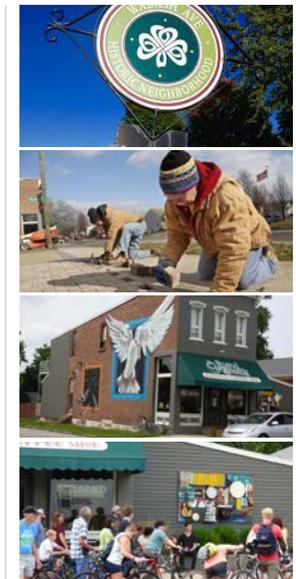
HISTORY AND HERITAGE



INDUSTRIAL CENTER



ARTS DESTINATION



SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Long-Term Recommendations

- Tell the story of Wabash Avenue with a series of interpretive and wayfinding signage applications, using a common graphic theme, and installed at strategic moments.
- Commission a branding and marketing strategy around Wabash Avenue and the riverfront as the riverfront is designed and funded.
- Expand the Wabash riverfront Tippecanoe Arts and Cultural District into the Wabash Neighborhood.

- Explore the creation of an artist/maker and public life residency program to provide financial commitments towards securing home/studio spaces and ensure community involvement. This may include a partnership between the city, nonprofits, and state organizations such as Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCD).

Branding Strategy

The future of the Wabash Neighborhood is bold! The branding strategy illustrated below incorporates many of the aspects that keep the neighborhood special. This graphic can be part of a strategy for the implementation of this plan and revitalization of the neighborhood.



Riverfront and Open Space Placemaking and Identity

The future riverfront park and improved Sycamore Street is a tremendous opportunity to brand future improvements and space activation in a way that is unique to and respectful of the neighborhood's rich heritage. Historically, this area was industrial and centered around the Wabash and Erie Canal. The people who came to this neighborhood were working-class, primarily Irish immigrants who shaped the way the area was developed and who are the ancestors of many residents today.

As the riverfront park and Sycamore Street are rethought as more active, community-centric places, the brand can be one that is uniquely Wabash, but with an eye to the future.



Wabash's Irish, working-class heritage



Wabash's industrial past (1990 aerial)



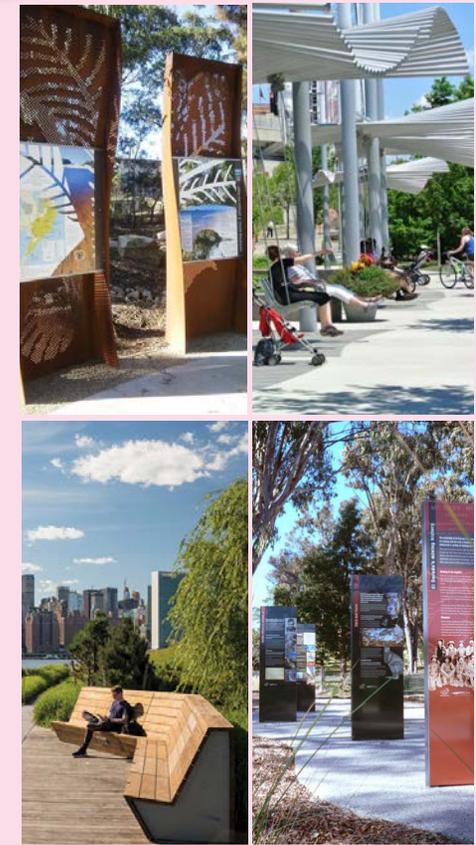
Riverfront Park Strategies



The riverfront park's future brand blends this places rich history, with its bold future. It can tell the story of the Wabash River in the neighborhood through a series of programming, public art, interpretive signage, and wayfinding. This place is envisioned as a signature piece of the Wabash Neighborhood for residents and visitors to enjoy.



Sycamore Street Strategies



Sycamore Street is the front door to the Wabash riverfront. There is a transformational opportunity to define this street as a high-quality multi-modal corridor. The western edge of Sycamore Street can be transformed as an activated linear park called Canal Trace Park. Attention to detail, activation, expressive art, branding, and wayfinding are vital components.

Riverfront and Open Space Placemaking and Identity



CASE STUDY



CRESCENT PARK, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Former industrial area

Design references to industry

Iconic bridges over railroad

Industrial pier structure as pavilion/event venue

Gateways and Wayfinding

Wabash Avenue provides the primary access to the Wabash Neighborhood and its riverfront. The quality of place has dramatically been improved since the Wabash Walls project has implemented a series of murals on “The Avenue” and throughout the neighborhood. Wabash Walls has not only created a new brand for the area focused on artists and entrepreneurs, but it has also created a reason for people to visit. As future improvements to the Wabash Avenue streetscape are made, there is further opportunity to create a signature corridor where businesses can thrive. Wabash Avenue could be branded to express a **Boldly Wabash** vision and a connection to the heritage of the neighborhood.



Wabash Avenue today



Riverfront connections today



Wabash Avenue



Wabash Avenue’s future brand can be active, pedestrian-oriented, and allow for spill-out spaces for restaurants and businesses. Public art could co-exist with a high-quality experience for all users. Since this is the major thoroughfare throughout the neighborhood, wayfinding signage is essential along the corridor.



Riverfront Connections



The connections to the riverfront primarily are on east/west corridors between Wabash Avenue and Sycamore Street. As streetscape improvements are made along these corridors, there is an opportunity to include wayfinding signage and public art aimed at emphasizing the experience approaching the future riverfront park.



2nd Street Underpass



Today, the Second Street underpass is unsafe, dark, and unattractive. This gateway to the Wabash Neighborhood could be an exciting exercise in light and public art. The light play could compliment decorative railings creating a pleasant and safe experience for drivers and pedestrians.

Gateway and Corridor
Placemaking and Identity



 2nd Street underpass

 Riverfront connections

 Wabash Avenue

NORTH ↑

CASE STUDY



RAD RAIL ARTS DISTRICT MUSEUM AND TRAIL
NAPA, CALIFORNIA

Free outdoor contemporary art museum.
Path connects from Oxbow District to Napa Valley
Vine Trail bike/ped path.

05 | IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

While planning efforts are inherently long range in scope, there is often a need to identify early projects — catalyst projects— that are necessary to improve market conditions. This is where a development plan becomes more tangible with near-term goals for the community and implementation entities come into sharper focus. Critical components include site capacity, economic viability and political support.

The implementation section is organized by theme (summarized on page 46), with project recommendations, key players and timeline featured for each project.

Information contained within the following pages include:

- Implementation Matrix (summary chart) - all projects - *all projects/recommendations*
- Development Project Implementation Summary (public and private improvements and partnerships) - *development projects*

Implementation Matrix

Project/Recommendation	Key Players	Short Term	Long Term
Celebrate 'The Avenue'			
Focus on intersection improvements at Wabash Avenue and Ellsworth Street	City of Lafayette		
Use tactical urbanism to make temporary improvements to key intersections (stripe parking spaces, paint crosswalks, create outdoor seating areas and temporary art installations) and create a demonstration project	City of Lafayette, Area Businesses, Neighborhood, Indiana State Department of Health (grant opportunity)		
Commission a study of the rail bridges south on Wabash Avenue	City of Lafayette, CSX/NS railroad		
Collaborate with Cargill to internally encourage trucks to utilize the southern approach	City of Lafayette and Cargill		
Replace railing along Wabash Avenue under the north end rail bridge, paint and upgrade lighting	City of Lafayette, Community Organizations		
Redesign Wabash Avenue as a complete street	City of Lafayette		

Implementation Matrix (continued)

Project/Recommendation	Key Players	Short Term	Long Term
Rediscover the River			
Address the Cargill truck traffic issue by re-routing traffic from the south and building a new staging area	City of Lafayette and Cargill		
Study the Wabash River South Reach 100-year floodplain	WREC, City of Lafayette, and Indiana DNR		
Ensure that planning for future stormwater and riverfront happen concurrently	WREC, and City of Lafayette		
Coordinate with and support the WREC's pursuit of EPA brownfield assessment and cleanup funding	WREC, and City of Lafayette		
Coordinate with community partners to tell the story of the Wabash River and seek funding	Community Organizations and City of Lafayette		
Partner with WREC on the design and construction of a signature riverfront park	WREC and City of Lafayette		
Redesign Sycamore Street as a complete street	City of Lafayette		
Redesign Ellsworth and Smith Streets as complete streets	City of Lafayette		
Work with partners to acquire properties and vacate portions of Sycamore Street within the regulatory floodway	WREC and City of Lafayette		

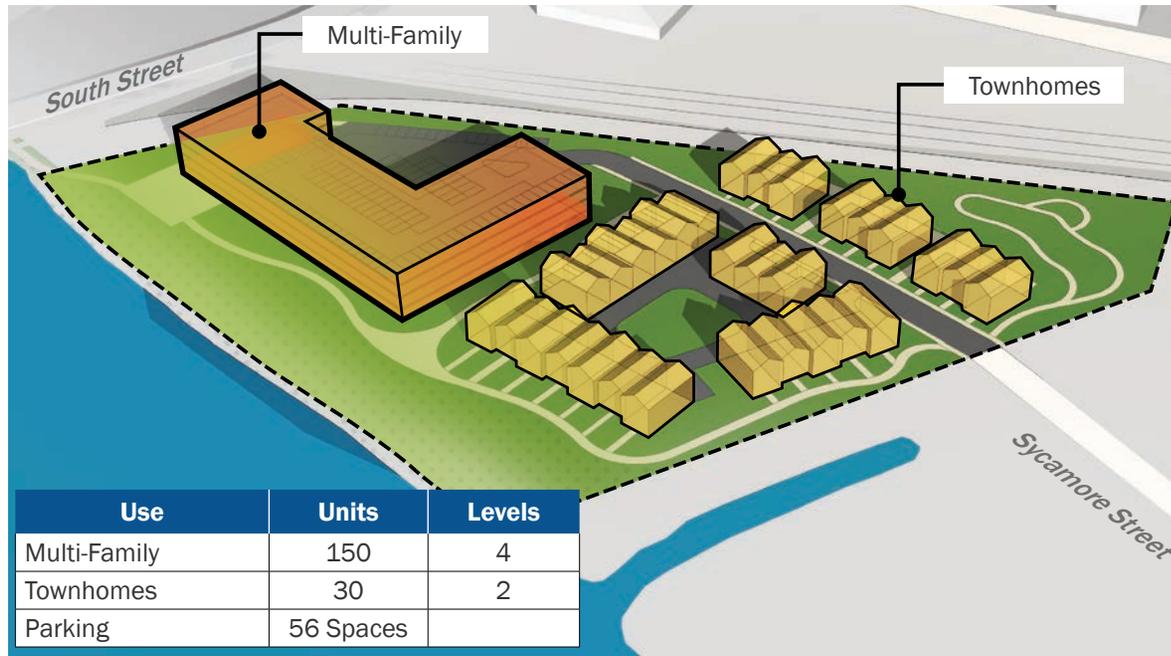
Implementation Matrix (continued)

Project/Recommendation	Key Players	Short Term	Long Term
Let Wabash Grow			
Update the Future Land Use Map	City of Lafayette and Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission		
Explore the implementation of a Form-Based Overlay	Neighborhood, City of Lafayette, and Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission		
Foster relationship with Habitat for Humanity to support affordable small-scale infill development	Habitat for Humanity, City of Lafayette, and Development Community		
Strengthen relationships with partners to support safe and high-quality housing	Habitat for Humanity, City of Lafayette, and Housing Authority		
Coordinate with property owners to understand goals for properties per development vision in this plan	City of Lafayette, Neighborhood, and Development Community		
Support adaptive re-use projects to appropriately scaled neighborhood retail and restaurants	Neighborhood, City of Lafayette, and Development Community		
Conduct a developer tour in spring 2020	City of Lafayette and Development Community		
Explore Opportunity Zone Funds and entice developers to evaluate the Wabash Neighborhood for projects			
Explore expansion of the downtown TIF district or the creation of a new TIF district in Wabash	City of Lafayette		
Proactively re-zone and negotiate development agreements on sites A-G	City of Lafayette and Tippecanoe County Area Plan Commission		

Implementation Matrix (continued)

Project/Recommendation	Key Players	Short Term	Long Term
Keep Wabash Special		<i>1 year or less</i>	<i>5+ years</i>
Continue to convene Wabash CAN meetings as an implementation-focused committee	Wabash Neighborhood Association		
Identify funding opportunities in implementing a historical signage installation	Community Organizations		
Explore the expansion of Grow Local	Community Organizations		
Establish partnerships to help attract artists and entrepreneurs	City of Lafayette and Community Organizations		
Tell the story of Wabash Avenue with a series of interpretive and wayfinding signage applications	City of Lafayette, Neighborhood, and WREC		
Commission a branding and marketing strategy	City of Lafayette		
Expand the Wabash Riverfront Tippecanoe Arts and Cultural District into the Wabash Neighborhood	City of Lafayette and Community Organizations		
Explore the creation of an artist/maker and public life residency program	City of Lafayette and Community Organizations		

Site A: North Riverfront Site (Preferred Concept)



Description

Site A is a highly attractive potential development site. The density shown on this site is higher due to its proximity to downtown and separation from residential areas of the neighborhood. Access could occur from an improved Sycamore Street and along the riverfront trail connecting to downtown (for pedestrians). This site is approximately nine acres in size (four acres of future park space) and is owned by the City of Lafayette and WREC. This site has an industrial past and has undergone partial environmental brownfield remediation and cleanup (by WREC). Portions of this site are also in the regulatory floodway and 100-year floodplain; however, due to concerns about the reliability of FEMA flood data, several alternative development concepts have been produced for this site. As mentioned previously, Lafayette RENEW is planning a 1.5 million-gallon underground storage tank at this site. On all development concepts, this tank could be situated under lawn areas or parking lots.

Development Tools

1. TIF Funding
2. Donation/sale of city property
3. Community and public facility location (park and storage tank)
4. Expedited permitting
5. Reduced fees/fee deferrals
6. Incentive-based zoning
7. Joint development (riverfront, storage tank, and project)
8. Opportunity Zone funds

Contingencies

Redevelopment is contingent upon land assembly and agreement by ownership to develop a portion of the property (two owners - WREC and City of Lafayette). Further coordination and additional study on the location of the 100-year floodplain (WREC study showed a discrepancy in the FEMA adopted 100-year floodplain) and on environmental contamination on the "port-a-potty" and "boxboard" sites. Also, coordination with Lafayette RENEW is needed on the storage tank location, and what can be built over it.

Building Typologies

2 Townhome Residential



3 Multifamily Residential



Time Frame

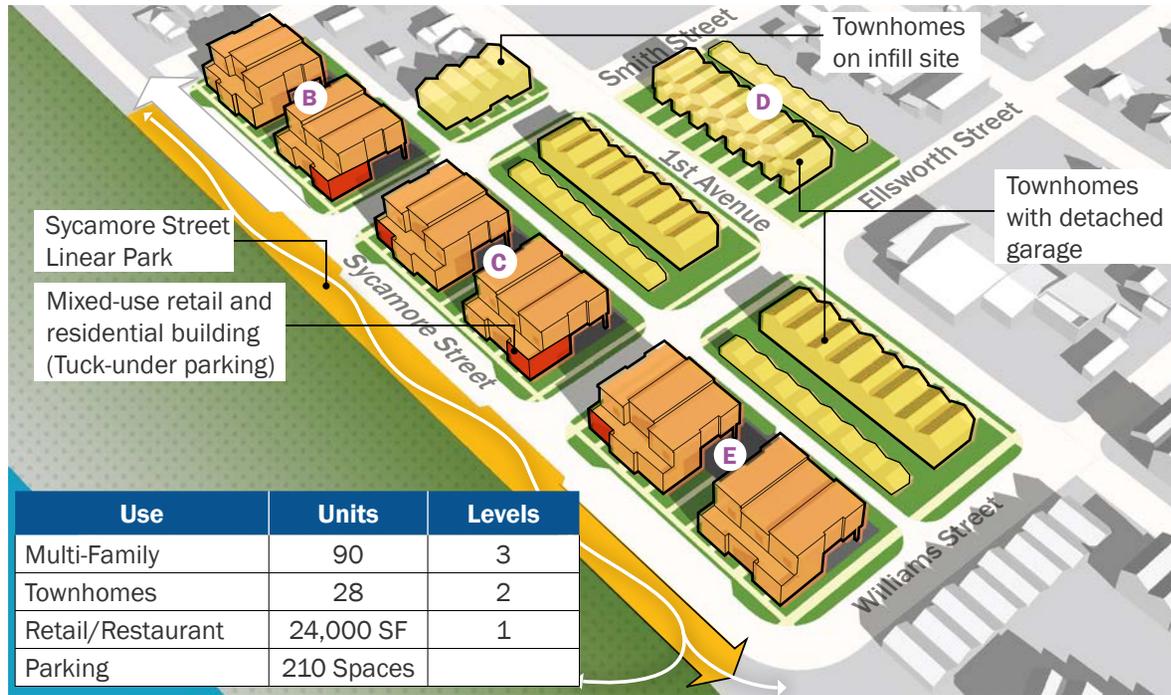
Short

Long

Key Players

Key players are WREC and the City of Lafayette, who controls the property included in site A. Further coordination with IDEM, Indiana DNR, and Lafayette RENEW will be required as this project is implemented. The neighborhood reviewed and is generally supportive of this preferred concept, but further neighborhood coordination is advised as development occurs.

Sites B-E



Use	Units	Levels
Multi-Family	90	3
Townhomes	28	2
Retail/Restaurant	24,000 SF	1
Parking	210 Spaces	

Development Tools

1. TIF Funding (new TIF district or expansion of the Downtown TIF district)
2. Expedited permitting
3. Reduced fees/fee deferrals
4. Incentive-based zoning
5. Parking reductions
6. Joint development (industrial users could partner in redevelopment, and the City of Lafayette could help with infrastructure component)
7. Opportunity Zone funds

Time Frame



Contingencies

This implementation is likely to be phased. There are three owners in this area (Sites B, C, and E are all owned by LCB/Kirby Risk). Sites B and E are underutilized, and Site C is used by Kirby Risk for manufacturing and office purposes. Site D recently sold to one private owner. The Ellsworth Street alignment would require additional ROW acquisition between blocks C and E to continue the street (an existing sewer easement/main is in this location). Likely, Sites B and E would develop first, and the site would either continue to be used by Kirby Risk or transition into a different use as the riverfront park is developed. Kirby Risk was approached as part of this project and is open to participating in redevelopment. Site D could redevelop at any time, but the owner has not yet been approached (property was sold in late 2019).

Description

Sites B-E present a unique opportunity situated in the heart of the riverfront and outside of the 100-year floodplain. The density shown on this site is higher along Sycamore Street with mix of uses (retail on corners blended with multi-family), and this scale steps down to attached townhomes with detached garages along alleyways that can be better integrated into the neighborhood. Access occurs from Smith, Ellsworth, and Green Streets and from an improved Sycamore Street. Further access to the riverfront trail will amplify access to park space and downtown. These sites combined are approximately six acres in size and are owned by Kirby Risk and a few other owners.

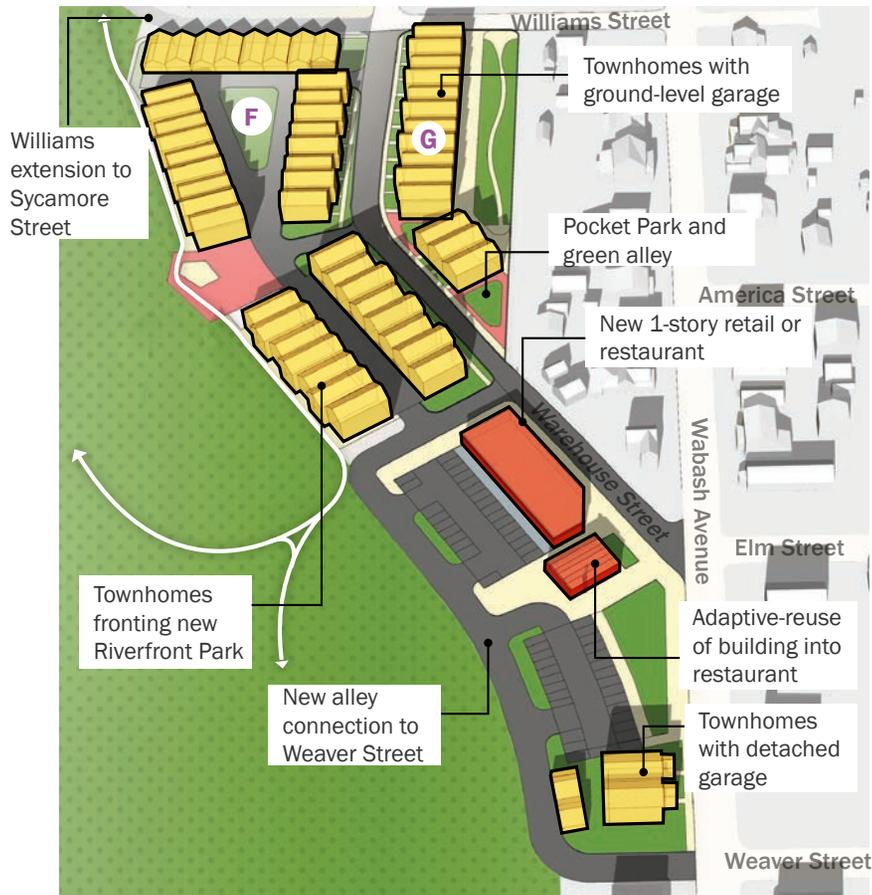
Building Typologies



Key Players

Key players are the City of Lafayette and Kirby Risk, who controls the bulk of this property. Further coordination with Kirby Risk and the development community could catalyze this project. The neighborhood reviewed and is generally supportive of the concept, but further neighborhood coordination is advised as development occurs.

Sites F-G



Time Frame



Key Players

Key players are the City of Lafayette and Indiana Steel Fabricators, who control the bulk of this property. Further coordination with Indiana Steel Fabricators and the development community could catalyze this project. The neighborhood reviewed and is generally supportive of this concept, but further neighborhood coordination is advised as development occurs.

Description

Sites F-G could transform industrial property adjacent to the riverfront park into active and vibrant development. These development sites are located outside of the 100-year floodplain but may require some environmental remediation before redevelopment occurs. Development for sites F and G focuses on townhomes, with infill and adaptive re-use development occurring further south. Access occurs from Warehouse Street and a re-aligned Sycamore Street connecting to Williams Street. Further access to the riverfront trail will amplify access to park space and downtown. These sites combined are approximately eight acres in size and are owned primarily by Indiana Steel Fabricators and a few other owners. Coordination with Cargill will also be necessary because they own some inactive rail that may need to be acquired as part of this development. Industrial property owners were consulted as these development concepts were prepared and agreed to be included in these capacity studies.

Development Tools

1. TIF Funding (new TIF district or expansion of the Downtown TIF district)
2. Expedited permitting
3. Reduced fees/fee deferrals
4. Incentive-based zoning
5. Parking reductions
6. Joint development (industrial users could partner in redevelopment, and the City of Lafayette could help with infrastructure component)
7. Opportunity Zone funds

Building Typologies



Contingencies

Implementation will likely be phased. There is one primary owner (Indiana Steel Fabricators) and five smaller owners (south of the alley that cuts through the middle of site F). The northern part of site F is owned by Indiana Steel Fabricators and is used for staging and storage. Site G is also owned by Indiana Steel Fabricators and is a viable business. This redevelopment would benefit from the realignment of Sycamore Street, connecting to Williams Street, but could occur without this realignment. Indiana Steel Fabricators was approached as part of this project and is open to participating in this redevelopment strategy. Likely the northern part of site F would redevelop first, and site G could either be redeveloped or adaptively re-used. Indiana Steel Fabricators has considered using the existing industrial building at site G as an event venue or working/maker space. The southern part of site F would develop later, and Cargill could acquire properties near the Weaver Street alignment overtime for a larger buffer from their operation.

