Great Places 2020
Advocacy Agenda

Context

**Great Places 2020**

Great Places 2020 is a visionary and inclusive community development initiative that is transforming five Marion County neighborhoods into dynamic centers of culture, commerce, and community, preparing these neighborhoods for unprecedented success as Indianapolis enters its 2020 bicentennial year. Neighbors in each of the five Great Places have developed strategic redevelopment plans to spur growth in each place. While each Great Place neighborhood has its own unique character and vision, together they strengthen Indianapolis. Detailed plans can be found at www.greatplaces2020.org

Supported by a 26-member Great Places Steering Committee, each comprehensive neighborhood plan includes elaborate details regarding required next steps toward revitalization. These details are organized around the LOVE framework:

- **L**: Livability – Creating healthy, active, and beautiful places;
- **O**: Opportunity – Fostering entrepreneurship and employment;
- **V**: Vitality – Reviving a growing and diverse population;
- **E**: Education – Offering excellent lifelong learning opportunities.

Together, investments in these four areas are designed to tangibly elevate the people, organizations, places, and cultures in each Great Place. To achieve this goal, implementation partners, alongside residents, work with community-based organizations to identify developers, investors, entrepreneurs, innovative programming, and institutional reform efforts that can be connected and activated to realize neighborhood goals and achieve collective impact.

Great Places 2020 is supported by four action teams charged with informing direction around:

- **Project Capacity** – Coordinating short-term leadership development and technical assistance strategies to ensure neighborhoods have the competency to successfully implement their plans and achieve the goals defined in them.

- **Bicentennial Partners** – Aligning city-wide priorities, resources, and initiatives to ensure the expertise of key partners is leveraged to support successful implementation of neighborhood plans.
- **Funders Network** – Cultivating relationships among funders to align investments in ways that support neighborhood plans and the ultimate success of the Great Places 2020 initiatives.

- **Advocacy** – Promoting the expressed needs of residents by influencing local, state, and federal decisions that support neighborhoods and their strategic plans.

**Purpose and Principles of Advocacy Agenda**

Not all neighborhoods of the city are the same, whether in relation to their assets, demographics and constituents’ needs, market forces at work, or the capacity of existing community organizations to lead a transformation or even an advocacy effort. Understanding and respecting these and other differences, the Great Places 2020 Advocacy Action Team is comprised of neighborhood representatives of each of the Great Places as well as city- and county-focused stakeholders invested in community and economic development. The Advocacy Action Team convened bi-monthly in 2019 to elevate shared principles, Great Place-specific challenges, as well challenges shared across Indianapolis neighborhoods. This document outlines the resulting principles and agenda that will inform advocacy to support the five Great Places – Englewood Village, King Commons, Maple Crossing, River West, and Twin Aire. That said, this advocacy agenda is applicable to neighborhoods across the city and identifies how the City of Indianapolis and other key stakeholders can be engaged to support neighborhoods in ways that align with residents’ visions.

Foundational to this Great Places advocacy agenda is a belief that Indianapolis residents deserve to live in healthy, thriving neighborhoods. As such, this advocacy agenda built upon the following principles:

- Respect for long-time neighborhood residents;
- Accepting of newcomers to neighborhoods;
- Inclusive and equitable representation of persons and neighborhoods;
- Cultural humility; and
- Decision-making that is informed by high quality data.

**LOVE Advocacy Agenda**

The Great Places 2020 Advocacy Action Team and the Great Places 2020 Steering Committee encourage the agenda, below, and related engagement of MNAs as well as other public and private resources to enhance livability, opportunity, vitality, and education (LOVE) in Indianapolis’ five Great Places.

**Neighborhood Redevelopment**

1. Inform the development and execution of community agreements that elevate and support neighborhood interests and priorities in the context of (re)development projects.

2. Create and support maximally flexible policies for Tax Increment Financing (TIF) that ensure the formal visions and plans articulated by neighborhood residents can be adequately supported and can effectively take advantage of TIF as a meaningful funding mechanism. Educate neighborhood residents regarding: (a) the importance of maintaining flexible TIF policies in order to take advantage of TIF district-specific redevelopment and economic development opportunities; (b) valuable, effective uses of TIF as a funding mechanism; and (c) TIF processes.
3. Raise awareness of the need to increase TIF reserves as a key neighborhood redevelopment resource.

4. Elevate communities’ needs and priorities in terms of land use policy and form-based zoning.

5. Understand and leverage the Opportunity Zone Investment Consortium portal to support redevelopment projects that fall in Opportunity Zones.

6. Encourage the increase in technical assistance and streamlining of code and zoning processes and explore reduced fees and other incentives for neighborhood supported projects.

**Vacant Property**

1. Encourage the collaborative development of a vacant commercial and industrial property registry.

2. Promote and support expert led education opportunities for neighborhood residents to effectively address vacant and abandoned property challenges, including securing site control of properties for neighborhood-informed redevelopment.

3. Foster partnership with the City of Indianapolis’ to institute neighborhood-informed, targeted code enforcement to address unsafe and blighted properties.

4. Bolster use and sustainability of land banking and intentional site assembly.

**Brownfields**

1. Stimulate a more aggressive approach to incentivizing responsible parties to submit insurance claims for brownfields remediation. This includes advocating to the City of Indianapolis to promote the same to the Indiana General Assembly.

2. Elevate priorities that increase funding options, minimize regulation and encourage investment in brownfields to aid economic development efforts.

**Affordable Housing**

1. Urge the development of innovative options that address the acute need for long-term affordable housing in neighborhoods.

2. Drive the development of housing options that are diverse and inclusive – mixed income, mixed use, and accessible, particularly equitable transit oriented development.

3. Influence increased and creative funding for housing and services targeted for homeless and formerly homeless persons and families.

4. Elevate the awareness of tenant rights for residents renting housing to reduce unfair eviction.
**Child Care and Development**

1. Promote increased public and private funding as well as direction of additional, meaningful resources to sustain high quality, equitable, and accessible child care and pre-K programs and facilities.

2. Leverage community resources to develop and sustain affordable child care programs and facilities.

3. Champion higher wages for early child care providers and teachers in every pre-K and K-12 environment, addressing this systemic issue.

4. Support work-based learning and other, creative workforce development programs and strategies designed to build a pipeline of early childhood development professionals and teachers.

**Talent Development**

1. Influence the direction of resources to community-based talent development organizations to fund high quality, customized job training for neighborhood residents.

2. Promote funds development for Centers for Working Families and Bridges to Career Opportunity sites in the five Great Places.

3. Leverage charter school financing tools to support neighborhood efforts to attract high quality schools.

4. Promote public financing of expanded transportation options.

**Mayor’s Neighborhood Advocates (MNAs)**

1. Foster capacity building for and reduce turnover of MNAs, ensuring they are informed, equipped, engaged, accessible, visible, supported, and empowered to proactively promote the Great Places 2020 initiative and the priorities outlined in this advocacy agenda. Create more formal relationships between MNAs and Great Places neighborhoods and plans.

2. Recommend the reinstatement of the Mayor’s Night Out as a forum to address neighborhood concerns and identify ways to cooperate.
The Great Places 2020 Neighborhood Advocacy Agenda captures the collective input and expertise of the Great Places 2020 initiative, composed of representatives of the following organizations and neighborhoods, and was adopted by the Great Places 2020 Steering Committee in December 2019.

Great Places 2020 Neighborhoods
Englewood Village
King Commons
Maple Crossing
River West
Twin Aire

Great Places 2020 Partners
Englewood Community Development Corporation
Flanner House
Midtown Indianapolis, Inc.
Westside Community Development Corporation
Southeast Neighborhood Development, Inc.

BWI
Central Indiana Community Foundation
Citizens Energy
City of Indianapolis-Department of Metropolitan Development
Employ Indy
Eskenazi Health
IMPD
Indy Chamber
IndyHub
Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership (INHP)
IUPUI Office of Community Engagement
JP Morgan Chase
Keep Indianapolis Beautiful
Key Bank
Landmark Foundation
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust
PNC Bank
United Way of Central Indiana
University of Indianapolis
Urban League of Indianapolis
Advocacy Methods and Platforms

Methods
[Early/Basic considerations to be vetted and expanded by Great Places Steering Committee members include the following:]

Partner with Indy Chamber.
Engage LISC-funded community builder advocates.
Engage MNAs with GP 2020 plans and coordinators.
Support neighborhood residents and organizations to be advocates.
Determine ways to bring other institutions and partners to support this agenda.
Determine means to ensure this agenda continues to be informed directly by representative voices.

Platforms
The Mayor’s Office
City County Council