

Lindsay Heights

Quality of Life Plan Highlights





For many visitors to **Lindsay Heights**, the point of entry is a renovated Victorian home that serves as the headquarters of the Walnut Way Conservation Corp. Those who visit this historic urban neighborhood during the summer may be surprised to see trees laden with peaches and tender vegetables and colorful flowers growing in the large garden adjacent to Walnut Way. Tended by volunteers and neighborhood young people, the garden is an apt metaphor for the new growth, opportunity, and “neighboring” that defines Lindsay Heights.

Sharon and Larry Adams, who co-founded Walnut Way with their neighbors in 2002, are the driving force behind the Zilber Neighborhood Initiative in Lindsay Heights, which brings together people who live, work, or serve in the area to improve the quality of life for residents. Sharon Adams grew up in the neighborhood, which she remembers as a diverse community where people sat on their porches and watched out for one another.

By the late 1950s, that neighborhood had disappeared. With the construction of I-43, many homes in Lindsay Heights were torn down. The community was the target of redlining, resources stopped coming in, and poverty, crime, prostitution, and drugs began to take hold.

The revitalization of Lindsay Heights has come about slowly. Today, institutions such as Legacy Bank,

Columbia Savings and Loan, the Community Planning Council, YMCA, Lindsay Heights Health Alliance, Fondy Food Market, and Beckum-Stapleton Little League anchor the community. Hundreds of homes built or rehabbed in the past decade are visible signs of rebirth.

Although blessed with many assets, Lindsay Heights also faces serious challenges. The poverty rate is double that of Milwaukee, and the median income is about half of the city’s. Only one of the neighborhood’s elementary schools meets state proficiency standards.

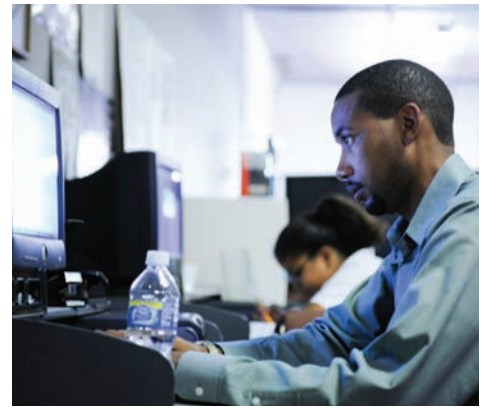
To tackle these issues and others, community members have developed a comprehensive Quality of Life Plan. Much work lies ahead to implement the plan, but Lindsay Heights neighbors already have demonstrated that by drawing on their collective strengths they can create the place that they envision—or remember.



YOUNG LEADERS ACADEMY



RUNNING REBELS YOUTH PROGRAMS



EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Lindsay Heights

Academic Achievement

Imagine a neighborhood where all the schools help students achieve their academic potential, teach good citizenship, and engage parents in their children’s education. This is our vision.

Last year, however, only 40 percent of students in the neighborhood schools (excluding the high-achieving YMCA Young Leaders Academy, a public charter school) met standards in reading, 19 points below Milwaukee Public Schools as a whole. Only 32 percent met standards in math.

We believe our neighborhood schools must **enable high academic performance and civic character for the purpose of sustaining personal well-being and a healthy community.**

Lindsay Heights has taken several important steps in this direction. The principals of nine schools that serve the area formed a Principals’ Council focused on improving academic achievement. The Young Leaders Academy decided to accept only local students beginning in fall 2009. Lindsay Heights representatives are serving on an MPS advisory council to help reorganize the high school that serves the vast majority of local students. These steps will help meet goals such as higher academic performance, more youth engagement in civic activities, and better after-school programming.

Youth and Families

Lindsay Heights is a young neighborhood when it comes to residents’ age: 40.6 percent are under 18, compared with 28.7 percent of Milwaukee’s population. Consequently, providing young people with positive activities is critical to our community. Well-established institutions, such as Beckum-Stapleton Little League, Running Rebels, the YMCA, and the LaVarnway Boys & Girls Club, work to enrich the lives of children and teens. We envision creating additional structured programs and activities that will accommodate a wide range of interests, including sports and the arts. All will strive to **develop positive character traits in youth by promoting constructive activities and effective parenting.**

Connecting adults to parenting programs and encouraging youth to participate in organized activities will increase self-esteem and foster stronger families.



HOUSING CONSTRUCTION



TITANS, LINDSAY HEIGHTS FOOTBALL



JAKE'S DELI

Lindsay Heights

Lifelong Learning

Earning a GED, enrolling in technical school, or going to college will not guarantee self-sufficiency. But providing people with access to these opportunities can change their lives. In Lindsay Heights, 45 percent of residents 25 and older do not have a high school diploma. One-quarter of people living in the neighborhood were unemployed as of the 2000 census, compared to 9.4 percent in the city. Lindsay Heights will **engage adults in lifelong learning to support self-sufficiency** and put them on the path to success.

For example, a building trades training institute, the True Green Home Contractor Training Program, will offer certification in green construction, linked to reclaiming foreclosed or abandoned properties for community ownership. Career pathways also will be developed in culinary arts and health care.

Residents will have opportunities to engage in programs that broaden their horizons, including arts, travel, and “green living,” boosting their quality of life.

Housing

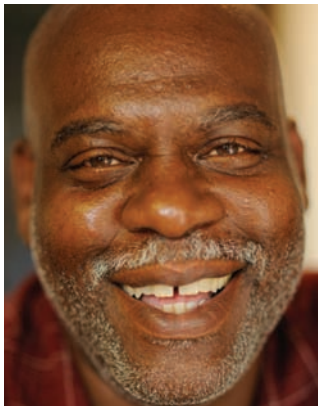
Like many other neighborhoods, Lindsay Heights experienced a wave of property foreclosures as a result of subprime lending and the economic downturn. In 2008, foreclosures were filed on 6 percent of homes in Lindsay Heights, compared to about 1.8 percent in the U.S. as a whole.

To stabilize our housing, Lindsay Heights will participate in Milwaukee’s Neighborhood Stabilization Initiative (NSI). The initiative, led by a professional Housing Coordinator, will focus on blocks with a high concentration of foreclosures or proximity to schools. We will partner with other institutions to acquire and rehab these properties and return them to use. This is just one example of how we will **expand high-quality housing options within Lindsay Heights to establish the neighborhood as a destination for economically diverse individuals and families.**

We also will launch a for-profit community investment corporation to manage and sell properties in collaboration with the NSI. Maranatha Community Corp. will raise funds to acquire local property, and profits from sales will return to local investors.

“Yesterday is gone. And tomorrow is not promised to you.
You can’t live in tomorrow, but you sure in hell can prepare for it.”

LINDSAY HEIGHTS RESIDENT WILLIE ADAMS, WHO PASSED AWAY IN 2002



BRADLEY THURMAN, COFFEE MAKES YOU BLACK



LEGACY BANK, FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMAN-OWNED BANK IN THE COUNTRY



FONDY FOOD CENTER

Lindsay Heights

Commercial Corridors

Lindsay Heights is a community of small businesses. Of the approximately 365 employers, 70 percent have fewer than 10 employees. No companies employ 250 or more people. Enhancing existing businesses and improving the mix of both size and type of companies would help build wealth and satisfy local demand for products and services.

We will **develop our commercial corridors by supporting existing businesses and attracting new businesses, emphasizing local ownership.** North Avenue, the main commercial corridor, boasts established businesses such as Jake’s Deli and new developments such as Omni Medical Center and Legacy Bank, which is the only bank holding company in the nation organized by African-American women. Two catalytic projects on North Avenue—the Fondy Food Center and the Alsco mixed-use development—will lend new vitality to the corridor and boost the green economy.

Lindsay Heights will use the “Main Street” approach to systematically create new businesses and jobs by leveraging local assets along North Avenue as well as other corridors and nodes targeted for attention. New enterprises will include “green” businesses, retail, and light manufacturing.

Public Safety

“Home” should be a place where people feel responsible for one another, take pride in their neighborhood, and feel safe going out after dark.

In Lindsay Heights, we are committed to creating a peaceful, clean, and well cared for place where everyone feels good about the neighborhood. However, public safety remains an issue in our community. Both the property and violent crime rates in Lindsay Heights are much higher than the average for the city of Milwaukee.

We will encourage residents, businesses, and property owners to take responsibility for their physical environment and to get to know their neighbors. We’ll provide residents with crime prevention and reporting tools, and work to establish a clear line of communication with the Milwaukee Police Department.

In addition, we plan to institute a Neighborhood Ambassador Program similar to those in other Milwaukee business districts. Neighborhood ambassadors clean up litter, remove graffiti, and do landscaping in commercial areas, while providing jobs to local residents.



HARRIET DORSEY, RESIDENT



CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH, FOOD PANTRY



ALICE'S GARDEN

Lindsay Heights

Health and Wellness

Despite the presence of providers such as Bread of Healing, Aurora Sinai, Shafi, and MLK Heritage Health Center, Lindsay Heights is designated as a “shortage area” in medical, mental, and dental health, according to the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services.

Not surprisingly, a recent Milwaukee study found that zip codes with the lowest socio-economic status, including Lindsay Heights, have more than three times the infant mortality rate of zip codes with the highest SES, and also rank lower on other health measures. To address these concerns, we will strive to **improve access to comprehensive health and wellness services including primary care, dental care, and mental health services.**

Working with the Lindsay Heights Neighborhood Health Alliance, a partnership of neighborhood associations, community-based organizations, and academics, we will develop a program to hire and train residents to provide health education and connect people to health care resources. We also will create a cohesive referral system through a newly established Lindsay Heights Health Care Provider Network.

Healthy Food

Like other communities comprised largely of people of color and low-income residents, Lindsay Heights has a disproportionate number of fast-food and convenience store outlets in relation to healthy food retailers. The rates of obesity-related disorders such as diabetes and heart disease have risen most dramatically among people of color. These facts highlight the urgent need to expand the availability of healthy food outlets and **increase consumption of healthy food** such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

Lindsay Heights will create a “Healthy Corner Stores” campaign to work with small business owners to sell and promote healthier food options. We also will lure stores and restaurants that provide a broad range of nutritious foods to our commercial corridors and build the capacity of Fondy Farmers Market to sell fresh food year-round. In addition, our community will advocate for healthier food choices at local schools.





MEETING AT WALNUT WAY



HANDSOME BARBER SHOP



STUDENTS AT BROWN STREET ACADEMY

Lindsay Heights

Comprehensive. Collaborative. Cohesive.

From the beginning, we have understood that the way we work together matters. The Lindsay Heights Neighborhood Initiative has brought together residents, young people, business owners, non-profits, and a range of other stakeholders to create a vision of what Lindsay Heights can be. By working deliberately and systematically to “connect the dots,” we hope to revitalize our community for the benefit of all our neighbors.

The LHNI Steering Committee, comprising Lindsay Heights residents, neighborhood group leaders, businesspeople, educators, funders, and local officials, helped guide the planning process and approved the final plan. A Project Facilitation Team, including representatives of Walnut Way, LISC Milwaukee, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Center for Urban Initiatives and Research, met weekly to ensure

that the planning process was on track and to supervise writing and production of a strategic plan for the community. United Neighborhood Centers of Milwaukee will develop performance management systems and help attract private and public investment going forward.

A series of public visioning sessions on community aspirations and concerns took place in February and March 2009. These sessions led to the creation of eight work groups focused on specific areas of interest and led by a facilitator. In April, the steering committee members worked to synchronize the strategies and goals and in August, the plan was adopted after two community viewing sessions.

The result of the process is a comprehensive Quality of Life Plan, summarized in this document.



These efforts are supported by the Zilber Family Foundation. In 2008, the Foundation announced a ten-year, \$50 million commitment to improve the quality of life in Milwaukee neighborhoods, starting with Lindsay Heights and Clarke Square. To read the full neighborhood plan, please visit znimilwaukee.org.

Lindsay Heights



Lindsay Heights Catalytic Projects

The following catalytic projects will strengthen the community's infrastructure through new construction and renovation. Maranatha Community Corp., a for-profit entity owned by local stakeholders, will be the vehicle through which capital is raised for the projects.

1 Alsco Mixed-Use Development

The 2.5 acre former site of the Alsco commercial laundry service at 1003 W. North Ave. will be redeveloped into a mixed-use development that accommodates for-profit and non-profit ventures in the green economy. The project, which will anchor the east end of the North Avenue commercial corridor, is in the pre-development stage.

2 Beauchamp Townhomes

Twenty-four of 48 rental units owned by the Inner City Redevelopment Corp. near the former Lee School would be converted to owner-occupied units and sold, when possible, to current occupants. The duplexes were developed using Low Income Housing Tax Credits and are eligible to be sold beginning in 2010.

3 Bread of Healing Free Health Clinic

A capital campaign will be initiated to expand the organization's medical clinic and increase services for uninsured workers.

4 Center for Neighborhood Innovation

A new building shepherded by Residential Living Services and Walnut Way Conservation Corp. will house a business incubator, after-school programs, and adult training.

5 Coffee Makes You Black

The locally-owned coffee shop intends to add a commercial kitchen to enable it to serve freshly prepared food.

6 Bloomberg Ice Cream Building

Lindsay Heights sponsored a design competition for the North Avenue Corridor, focused on a vacant warehouse building, which would be an ideal location for the Green Jobs Training Institute or Community Warehouse.

7 Fondy Food Center

This expansion of the historic open-air Fondy Market will anchor the west end of the North Avenue commercial corridor. Plans for the new center include a greenhouse, fresh fish shop, cooking pavilion, and office space. The project will meet the community's needs by extending the growing season for locally-grown fresh produce and enhancing the market through the addition of a healthy protein source.

8 Franklin Square

This mixed-use development will comprise two buildings with 37 apartments for individuals and families. Built by Maures Development Group, LLC, in partnership with Brinshore Development, LLC, Franklin Square will incorporate meeting space, public art, and green space to encourage community interaction.

9 FRESH/Culinary School

A new restaurant focusing on locally grown food will provide culinary training, with a particular emphasis on people who are re-entering the workforce.

10 Johnsons Park

The city, county, and multiple private businesses and foundations have joined forces to redevelop the 13-acre park, which was built in the 1980s where 14,000 homes were leveled for a failed highway project. It will include sports fields, a children's play space, a pavilion and stage, and a historical walkway that will tell the story of the area, which was part of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. The improvement plans extend across the street to Alice's Garden, a community garden, and Brown Street Academy, which will house an outdoor nature classroom.

11 Running Rebels

Interior renovation of the century-old building that houses the non-profit youth organization will include creating and upgrading program space, offices for youth workers, classrooms, a computer lab, and infrastructure such as an elevator, plumbing, and electrical.

12 Josey Heights, Senior Cooperative Housing

This project, in pre-development, would create 12-30 units, depending on the number of seniors who join the co-op. It would adjoin Josey Heights, a new housing development of 37 single-family homes and 16 townhomes.

13 Home Renovation

Single and multi-family housing in Lindsay Heights will be acquired and renovated to upgrade energy efficiency and attract owner-occupants.