



SOUTHEAST FORT WAYNE

CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS TRANSFORMATION PLAN

Creating Neighborhoods of Choice for ALL...

Dear Reader,

On behalf of the Fort Wayne Housing Authority, the residents of Tall Oaks Apartments, the Southeast Fort Wayne (SEFW) Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) community, and its stakeholders, we are pleased to present a comprehensive Transformation Plan for the SEFW CNI.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all community members who engaged in this collaborative effort. It is our hope that this plan reflects your collective vision for the SEFW CNI community. This document is the culmination of several months of rigorous engagement with residents, stakeholders, local organizations, and partners. The wide-ranging input we received showcases a range of possibilities for the SEFW CNI neighborhood and the redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments.

The Southeast Fort Wayne area has, over time, encountered significant challenges, including disinvestment and elevated poverty levels compared to other city regions. Despite these obstacles, residents and partner organizations are committed to revitalization initiatives aimed at transforming perceptions of the Southeast Fort Wayne community. Our objective is to develop a cohesive and interconnected community that fosters socio-economic self-sufficiency while ensuring that living costs remain affordable and enjoyable for all residents.

We believe that this plan, alongside other initiatives, can serve as a catalyst for the necessary change to elevate Southeast Fort Wayne's standing.

With dedicated purpose and thoughtful intent, we support the redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments and the broader Southeast Fort Wayne community. We are committed to strengthening the quality of life for all residents of the SEFW CNI and creating a vibrant neighborhood of choice.

Sincerely,

George Guy
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
Fort Wayne Housing Authority



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We want to acknowledge and thank the following organizations and groups for their participation and dedication to the SEFW CNI planning process.

SEFW CNI COMMUNITY

TALL OAKS APARTMENTS RESIDENTS

FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY

CITY OF FORT WAYNE

BRINSHORE DEVELOPMENT

CLESIA VENTURES

FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

ALLEN COUNTY

EAST ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS

PETRA SOLUTIONS

GREATER FORT WAYNE INC.

BRIGHTPOINT DEVELOPMENT FUND

FORT WAYNE TRAIL

YMCA OF GREATER FORT WAYNE

MARTIN LUTHER KING MONTESSORI SCHOOL
MCMILLEN PARK

THE ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY HEALTH
FOUNDATION

BRIDGE OF GRACE MINISTRIES

LEGACY ONE





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1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

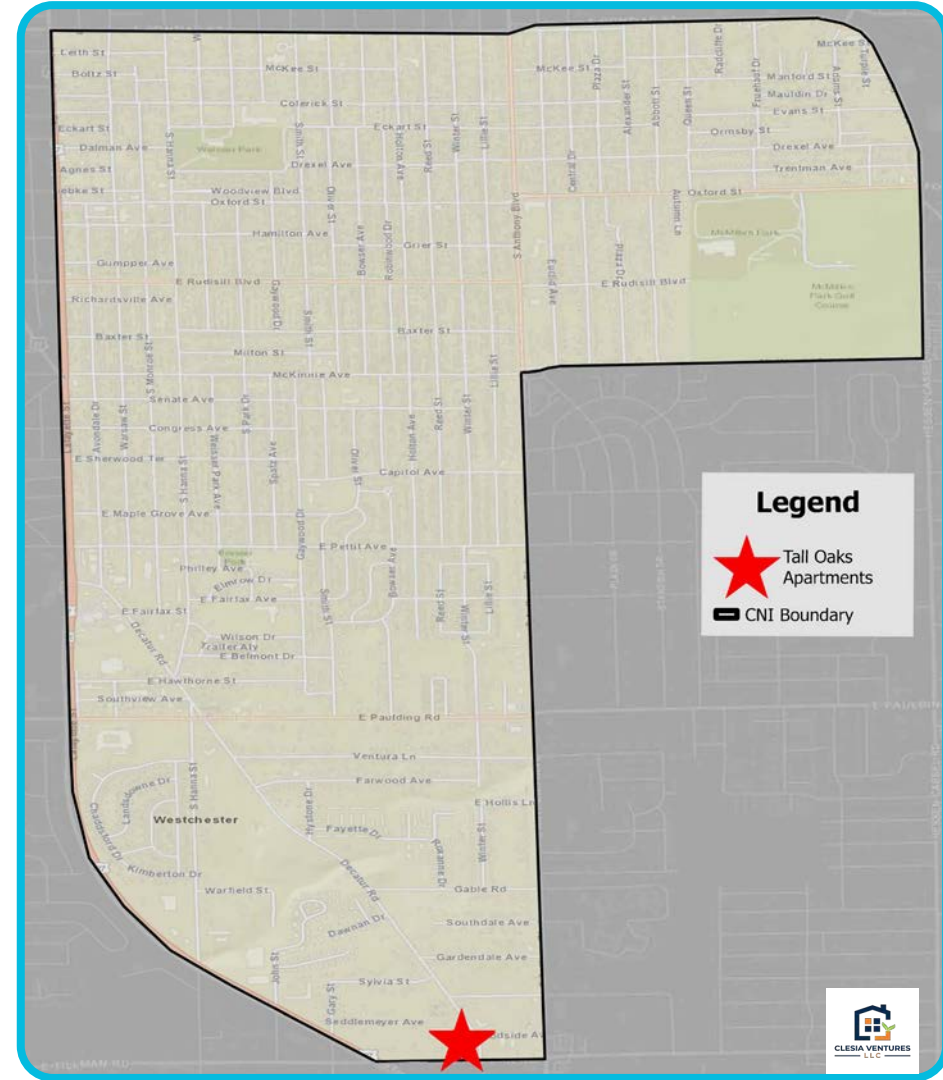
WHY FORT WAYNE? WHY NOW?

The Southeast Fort Wayne Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (SEFW CNI) Transformation Plan was created with the involvement of the SEFW CNI neighborhood community and community stakeholders in an effort to reinvest in the southeast quadrant.

In 2022, the Fort Wayne Housing Authority was awarded the coveted Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant, which focuses on revitalizing the target neighborhood (SEFW CNI) and Public Housing site (Tall Oaks Apartments). The City of Fort Wayne is well on its way to reinvesting in the redevelopment and revitalization of the southeast quadrant.

The time for Fort Wayne is now!

**CREATING A NEW LEGACY
THAT PROMOTES COMMUNITY,
AFFORDABILITY, AND OPPORTUNITY
FOR ALL!**



SEFW CNI Boundary Map



OUR PLANNING PROCESS

During the planning process, there were several crucial milestones that needed to be achieved to ensure the project's success. These key milestones included:

- » Comprehensive community engagement
- » Early action activity completion
- » Transformation plan outline with content
- » Transformation plan draft
- » Transformation plan final

In order to ensure the successful execution of the SEFW CNI project, a comprehensive array of engagement strategies and dedicated member committees have been established. These initiatives are designed to support collaboration and encourage active participation from all stakeholders. Below are the principal committees and engagement initiatives that have been instituted throughout the planning process of the SEFW CNI program.



Core Members

SEFW CNI COMMUNITY

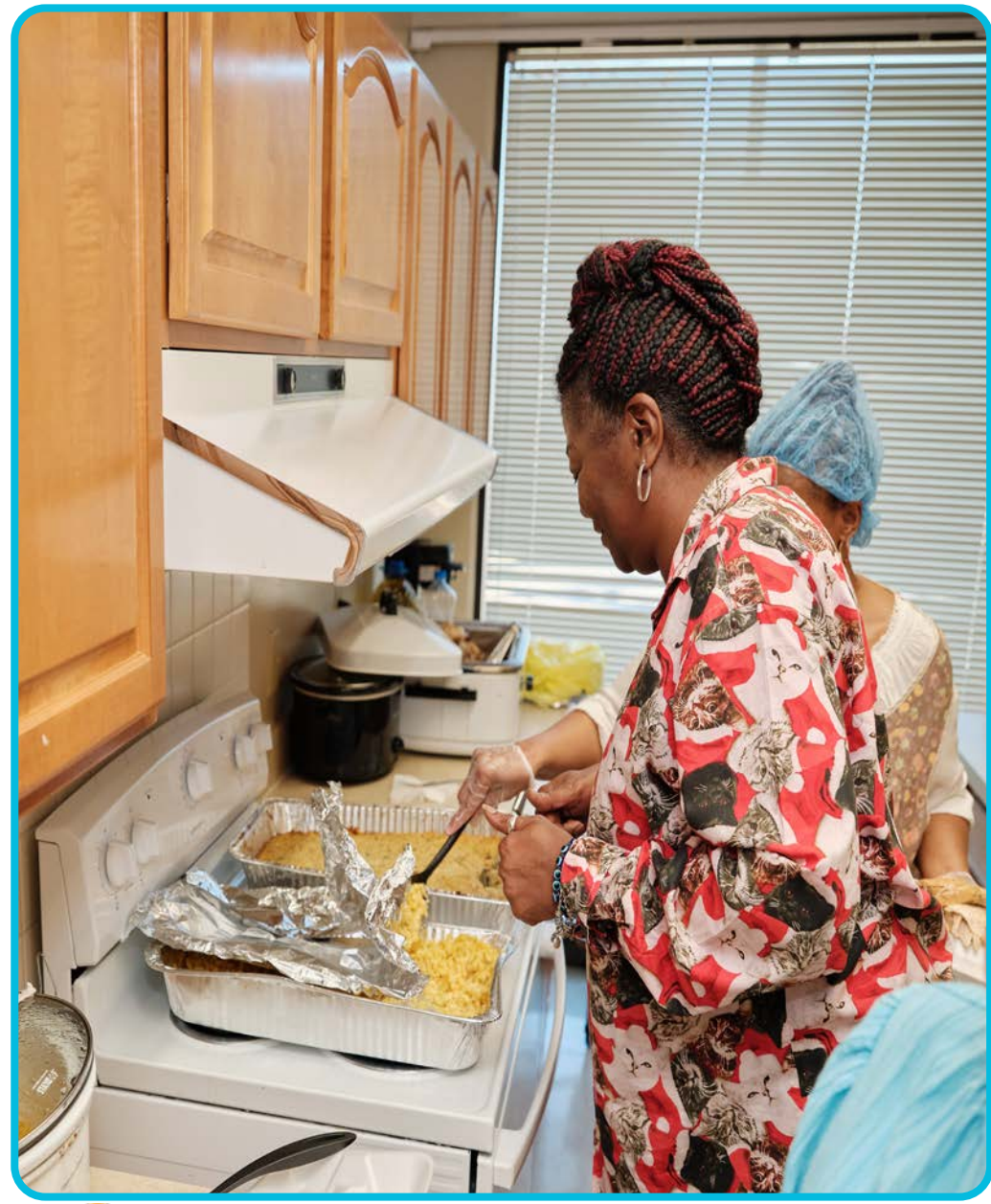
Individuals that reside and/or work in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.

FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Lead of the planning process.

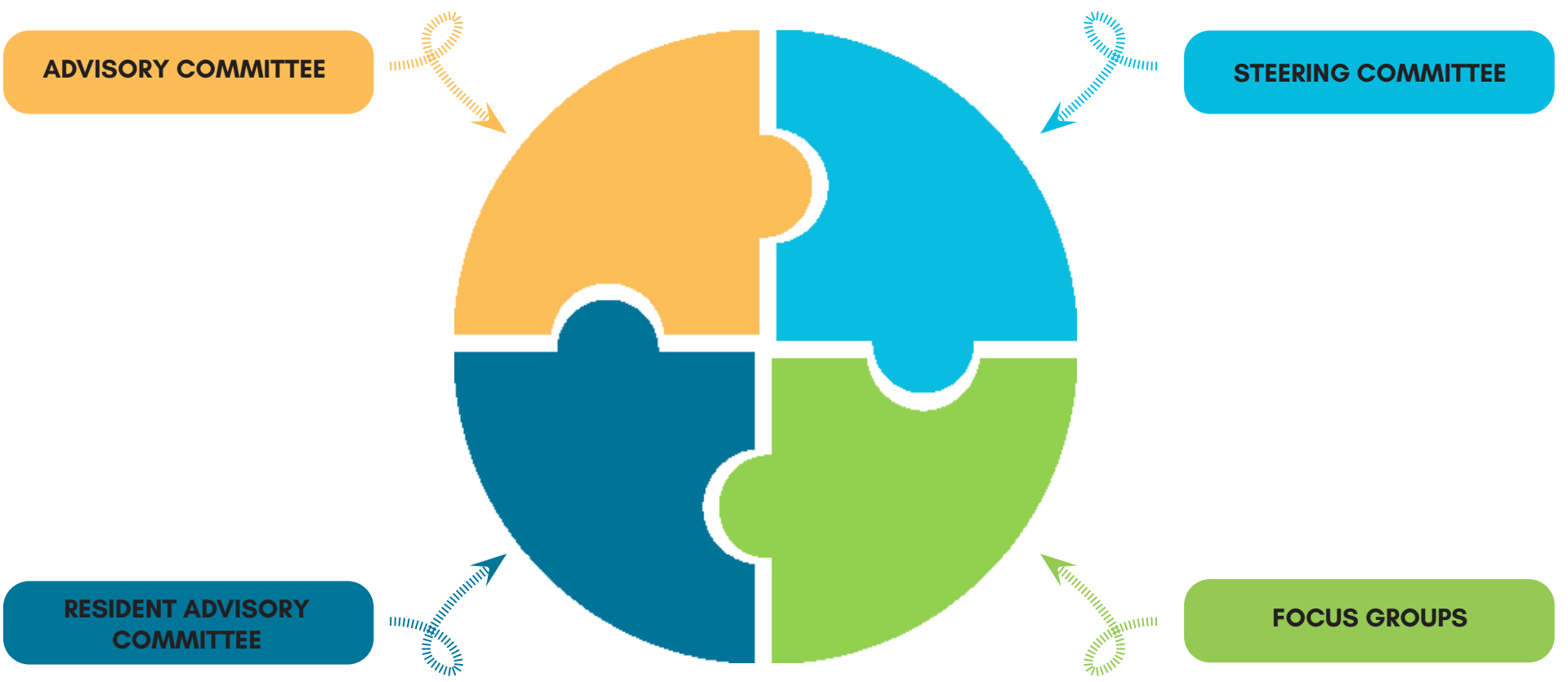
CLESIA VENTURES, LLC

Planning Coordinator of the planning process.



Project Management Structure

The project management structure of the planning process included four main elements that worked together to compile this transformation plan.



1.

FOCUS GROUPS

RESIDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

STEERING COMMITTEE

Includes knowledgeable experts who provide detailed information are the following focus areas: Housing & Development , Neighborhood Housing, Economic Development, Youth & Education, Health & Wellness, Environment & Sustainability, Mobility & Connectivity and Doing While Planning.

Participating organization include:

Tall Oaks Apartments Residents	City of Fort Wayne
Fort Wayne Housing Authority	Allen County
Greater Fort Wayne Inc.	United Way
Brightpoint Development Fund	Fort Wayne
Trail	
East Allen County Schools	Boys and Girls
Club Fort Wayne County Schools	
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	

Includes residents who provide organized representation in the master planning process and represent the public housing residents in the final Transformation Plan.

Participating organization include:

Tall Oaks Apartments residents
SEFW CNI Ambassadors

Includes executive leadership from public agencies and organizations who provide the overarching guidance to the planning process and the plans implementation.

Participating organization include:

Fort Wayne Housing Authority
City of Fort Wayne
YMCA
Boys & Girls Club
Fort Wayne Community Schools
United Way of Allen County
Vincent Villages
Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce
Urban League
East Allen County Schools

Includes local community and grassroots organizations, who ensure that the plan is built on the expertise of people connected directly with the community.

Participating organization include:

Urban League
Adams Township
City of Fort Wayne
East Allen County Schools
Fort Wayne Housing Authority
Wayne Township Trustee
Southeast Area Partnership
Bridge of Grace Ministries
Petra Solutions

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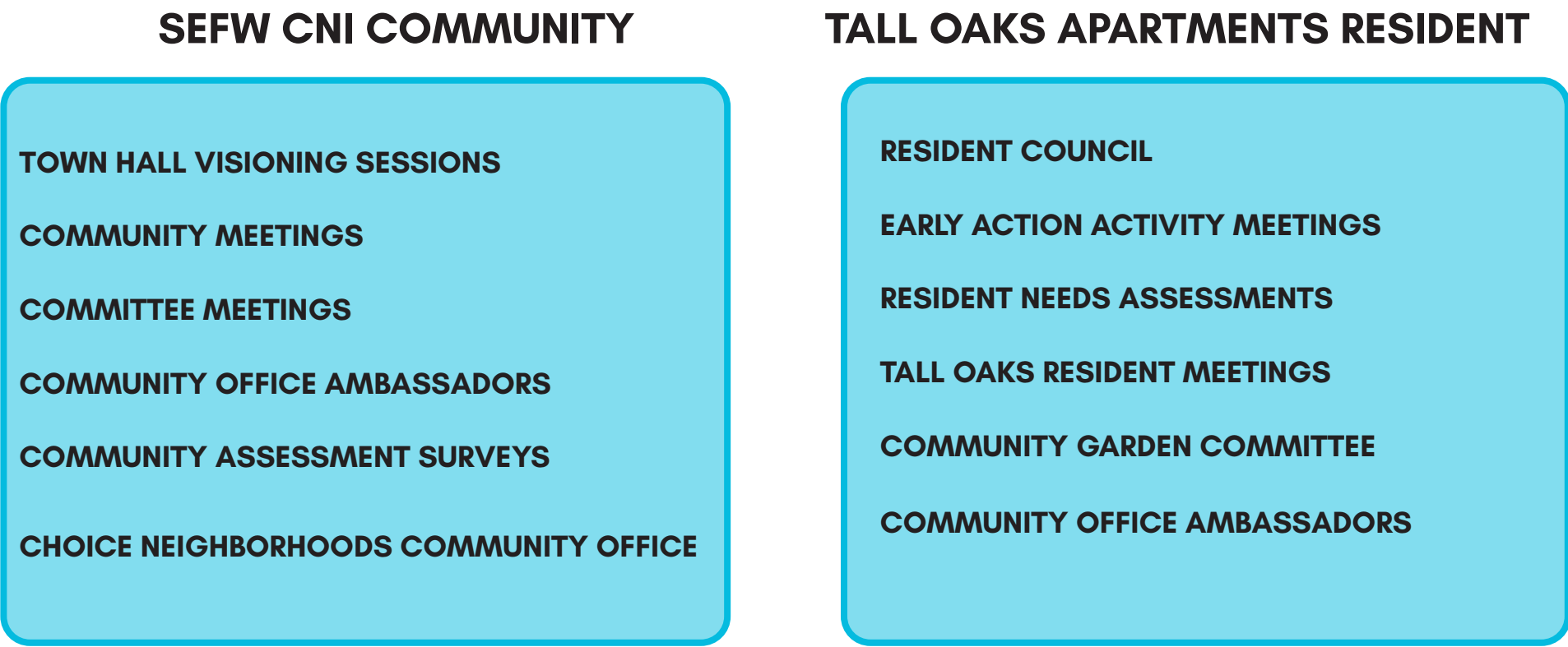


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1. THE PROCESS

The foundation of the SEFW CNI planning process is to strengthen relationships and partnerships amongst the SEFW CNI community members, Tall Oaks Apartments residents, and stakeholders. Building these relationships is integral to the work both during and after the Choice Neighborhoods initiative. By building these relationships and partnerships, the outcome of the planning process was a collectively developed transformation plan that is actionable, sustainable, and implementable. Community- and resident-centered engagement occurred throughout the entire grant term. The measures in which this engagement took place are listed below.



COMMON THEMES

The SEFW CNI Transformation plan was built on the solid foundation of existing plans to compile a plan that works in tandem with existing efforts to ensure a streamlined approach to assembling and implementing goals and strategies. The analysis of the All in Allen comprehensive plan and the Southeast Strategy neighborhood plan reveals several common priorities. The common priorities serve as the interconnected themes that run through this plan. The interlinked themes include:



1. GOALS, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The SEFW CNI Transformation Plan aims to encourage future investment in the SEFW CNI neighborhood. The initiative’s goals and strategies were driven by intentional community engagement efforts that addressed the challenges outlined by the SEFW CNI community. Ongoing engagement will occur with implementing partners to ensure a seamless implementation of all goals and strategies.

HOUSING PLAN

STRATEGY		PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	
GOAL 1. PROVIDE MORE VARIED HOUSING OPTIONS			
1.1.	Substantial rehabilitation of Tall Oaks Apartments using Low Income Housing Tax Credits.	Brinshore Development, FWHA	
1.2	Develop offsite new construction income-based housing the SEFW Community using FWHA’s Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program.	FWHA, Vincent Villages, Brightpoint	
GOAL 2. HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM AWARENESS AND EXECUTION			
2.1	Partner with organizations to offer grant assistance to low-income and moderate-income homebuyers.	FWHA, Brightpoint, Wayne Township Trustee	
2.2	Partner with local organizations to offer homeownership education opportunities.	FWHA, Brightpoint, Fort Wayne Urban League	
2.3.	Develop single-family homes for homeownership.	FWHA, Vincent Villages	

PEOPLE PLAN

STRATEGY		PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	
GOAL 3. IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES			
3.1	Partner with local schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations to strengthen early childhood education programs, ensuring that young children have a strong foundation for learning.	Martin Luther King Montessori School, Abbott Elementary	
3.2	Develop comprehensive after-school and tutoring programs for elementary and middle school students, leveraging resources from local universities to provide academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship.	Fort Wayne Community Schools, Boys & Girls Club	
3.3	Collaborate with local high schools and higher education institutions to offer college preparation, career readiness programs, and dual enrollment opportunities, helping students transition successfully to higher education or the workforce.	Ivy Tech Community College, East Allen County Schools	
GOAL 4. EXPAND ADULT EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES			
4.1	Partner with local higher education institutions to offer adult education programs, including GED preparation, computer literacy, and vocational training, tailored to the needs of Southeast Fort Wayne residents.	FWHA (YouthBuild), Ivy Tech Community College, Brightpoint	
4.2	Provide financial literacy, small business development, and entrepreneurship workshops in collaboration with local colleges and universities to help residents manage their finances effectively, start new businesses, and achieve economic independence.	Brightpoint, Fort Wayne Urban League	

GOAL 5. PROVIDE POSITIVE AND ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH		
5.1	Develop after-school programs, sports leagues, and arts/performing arts initiatives that offer constructive activities and build life skills.	Boys & Girls Club, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne Boys & Girls Club, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne
5.2	Establish mentoring and leadership development programs to connect youth with positive role models and support their personal growth.	Come As You Are Church, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne
5.3	Implement summer programs and camps that provide educational enrichment and recreational activities during school breaks.	YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, Boys & Girls Club
GOAL 6. SUPPORT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER READINESS		
6.1	Create job training and employment programs for teens, focusing on skills development and work experience.	FWHA (YouthBuild), Fort Wayne Urban League, Brightpoint
6.2.	Partner with local businesses to offer internships and job shadowing opportunities, helping youth explore career paths and gain real-world experience.	Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce
GOAL 7. IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES		
7.1	Partner with local healthcare providers to offer regular health screenings, emotional wellness counseling, and community-based wellness programs tailored to local needs.	St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, YMCA
7.2	Develop nutrition and fitness programs, including cooking classes and group exercise sessions, to encourage healthy routines and reduce the risk of chronic conditions.	YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, St. Joseph Community Health Foundation
7.3.	Implement initiatives that strengthen emotional support systems, including individual counseling and stress management workshops, to address elevated levels of anxiety and depression reported by residents.	St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne

GOAL 8. IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS		
8.1	Partner with local businesses and industries to create job opportunities within the SEFW CNI neighborhood, focusing on sectors such as healthcare, service providers, and manufacturing.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), FWHA (YouthBuild), Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce, Greater Fort Wayne
8.2	Establish job training and career coaching programs that equip residents with the skills needed for available jobs, including technology and customer service roles.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), FWHA (YouthBuild), Brightpoint, Ivy Tech Community College
8.3	Provide support services such as transportation assistance and affordable childcare to remove obstacles to employment.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), Wayne Township Trustee, Adams Township
GOAL 9. SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		
9.1	Offer workshops and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, including business planning, marketing, and access to capital.	Brightpoint, Petra Solutions
9.2	Highlight and support local small business incubators to assist startups and strengthen economic growth within the community.	Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

STRATEGY		PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	
GOAL 10. IMPROVING POLICING AND SECURITY EFFORTS			
10.1	Strengthen policing visibility in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.	City of Fort Wayne, Allen County	
10.2	Create a SEFW-wide crime and safety task force to encourage safety, facilitate communication around safety issues, and build stronger relationships with law enforcement.	Bridge of Grace Ministries, City of Fort Wayne	
GOAL 11. IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ROUTES FOR ALL ABILITIES			
11.1	Provide ADA-compliant features throughout the SEFW CNI neighborhood	City of Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Trail	
GOAL 12. ACCESS TO ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY			
12.1	Making the SEFW CNI neighborhood walkable and bikeable.	City of Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Trail	
GOAL 13. ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE LAND USE AND ENERGY PRACTICES			
13.1	Reduction of Vacant and blighted lots to form pocket parks.	Bridge of Grace Ministries, City of Fort Wayne	
13.2	Identify opportunities to incorporate alternative energy systems into buildings.	City of Fort Wayne, Petra Solutions	



2.

MODELING A NEIGHBORHOOD OF CHOICE



MODELING A NEIGHBORHOOD OF CHOICE

The Choice Neighborhoods (CN), formally known as the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI), is a program implemented by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under the Obama administration in 2010. Choice Neighborhoods represents the next generation of neighborhood revitalization policy, as it builds upon the HOPE VI public housing revitalization program launched in 1993.

HOPE VI provided funds for local leaders to redevelop some of the nation’s most severely distressed public housing and create stable mixed-income communities. Choice Neighborhoods takes HOPE VI to the next level by broadening the properties and activities that resources can be targeted towards. The goal is to ensure that the redevelopment is an even more robust anchor, spurring neighborhood stability and elevated levels of investment.

While housing was the primary objective, experience has shown that this redevelopment (CN) has also been associated with reduced levels of poverty, crime, and unemployment, as well as increased income and property values, and the creation of investment, business growth, and local jobs.

CORE GOALS

Choice Neighborhoods has three core goals that should be represented in all grant activities. All three goals have a significant impact on people’s decisions about where they choose to live, play, learn, and work.

HOUSING

Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer a variety of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families’ choices about their community.

PEOPLE

Improve the outcomes for households living in the target housing in terms of income, employment, health, and education.

HOUSING

Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the surrounding neighborhood’s needs

GRANT TYPES

Choice Neighborhoods has two types of grants available to applicants:

Planning Grant

This is a two and a half year (30-month) grant that supports the development of a comprehensive neighborhood Transformation Plan that focuses on directing resources to address the three core goals: Housing, People, and Neighborhoods.

Typical HUD Planning Grants Awards: \$500,000

Implementation Grant

This eight-year grant supports those communities that have undergone a comprehensive local planning process and are ready to implement their “Transformation Plan” to redevelop the neighborhood.

HUD Implementation Grants Awards: \$50M

OUR JOURNEY TO CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS

Fort Wayne’s journey to having a choice neighborhood has not been without its challenges. It took three attempts to secure the award for the southeast Fort Wayne area. Under the Fort Wayne Housing Authority’s (FWHA) lead, Fort Wayne secured the Choice Neighborhoods (CN) Planning Grant in December 2022.

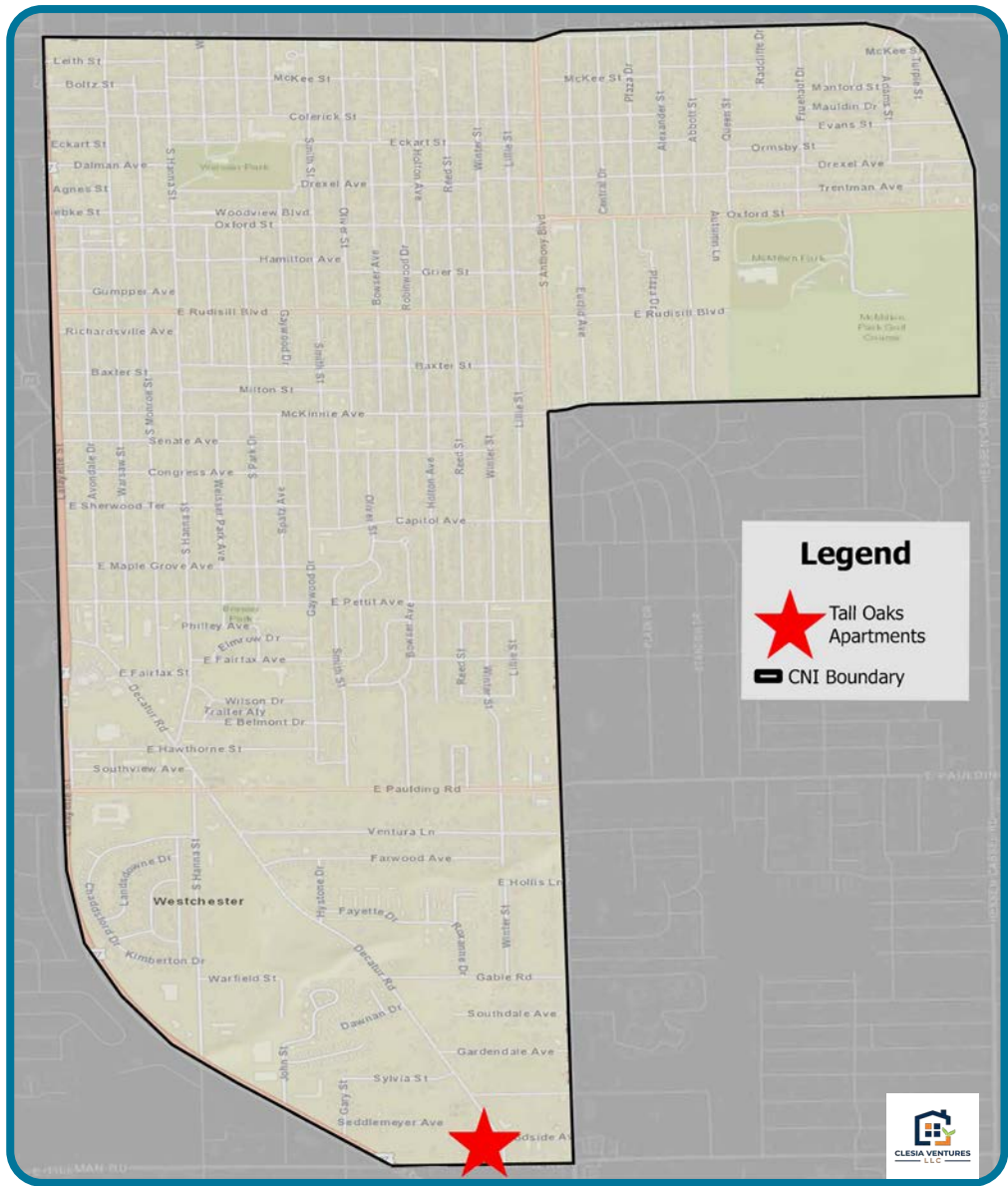
At the time of the award, Fort Wayne was the first and only City in the state of Indiana to receive a CN planning grant. With \$500,000 in federal funding and over \$600,000 in pledged leverage funds, FWHA alongside the City of Fort Wayne, their partners and most importantly, the residents of Tall Oaks Apartments (TOA) and the Southeast Fort Wayne neighborhood have worked together to revitalize the Southeast Fort Wayne Choice Neighborhood Initiative (SEFW CNI) neighborhood.

The SEFW CNI neighborhood is not only the needed catalyst for the positive and progressive change needed in the Southeast quadrant of Fort Wayne but the epicenter for

“Creating Neighborhoods of Choice.”

SEFW CNI BOUNDARY

The boundary for the planning area was established based on HUD’s required criteria, including long-term vacancy, concentrated poverty, and demonstrated housing need. As part of the Planning Grant Application, the boundary was required to encompass a HUD-distressed public housing site—identified here as Tall Oaks Apartments. While this boundary defines the core focus of revitalization efforts, it does not represent a limit. Instead, revitalization efforts will also extend into the surrounding areas to create a cohesive and connected approach that integrates seamlessly with the broader neighborhood.



SEFW CNI Boundary Map



TALL OAKS APARTMENTS

Tall Oaks Apartments is the designated HUD-distressed public housing site at the center of the Southeast Fort Wayne Choice Neighborhoods planning effort. Constructed in 1970, this seven-story building contains 105 units consisting of one- and two-bedroom apartments. Although originally intended for families, the current population primarily consists of older residents. The property is located at the intersection of East Tillman Road and Decatur Road.



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This award will provide Fort Wayne Housing Authority, the City of Fort Wayne, residents, and stakeholders an opportunity to bring the community and planning partners together to create a viable and actionable Transformation Plan for southeast Fort Wayne.

**George Guy,
Chief Executive Officer/
Executive Director**

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The board and staff of Fort Wayne Housing Authority see this as a unique once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to revitalize an important neighborhood in our community through housing investments, enhanced services for our residents, and physical neighborhood improvements.

**George Guy,
Chief Executive Officer/
Executive Director**



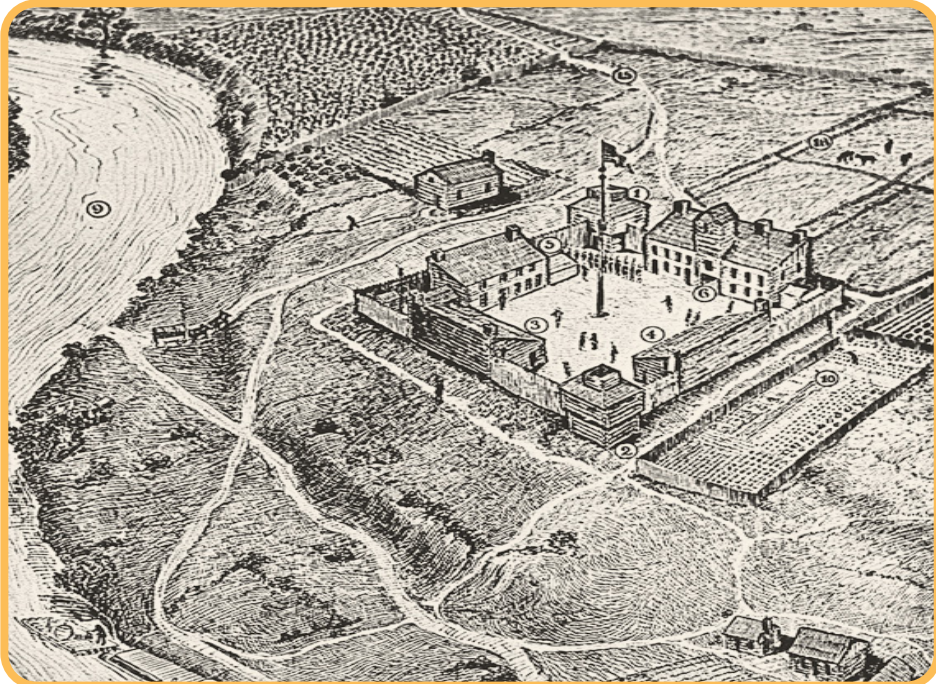
3.

**THEN:
FORT WAYNE &
SEFW COMMUNITY**



FORT WAYNE & SEFW COMMUNITY

The City of Fort Wayne is in Allen County, Indiana. Located in northeastern Indiana, Fort Wayne is 18 miles west of the Ohio border and 50 miles south of the Michigan border. The City’s population was 263,886 as of the 2020 census, making it the second-most populous City in Indiana behind Indianapolis, and the 83rd most populous City in the United States. It is the principal City of the Fort Wayne metropolitan area, consisting of Allen and Whitley counties, which had an estimated population of 423,038 as of 2021. Fort Wayne is the cultural and economic center of northeastern Indiana.



FORT WAYNE IN THE 1800S

Fort Wayne has long held a reputation as a key meeting point due to its location where the St. Mary’s, St. Joseph, and Maumee Rivers come together. The city is named after General Anthony Wayne, a prominent military figure who oversaw the construction of the first U.S. fort at this important site. The area was originally known as Fort Miami, a trading post established by Jean Baptiste Bissoit around 1706. The modern layout of Fort Wayne was established in 1823, following a period of recovery after the War of 1812.

In 1824, the Indiana General Assembly created Allen County, and the 1830s saw the arrival of the Wabash and Erie Canal. This major waterway earned Fort Wayne the nickname “Summit City” because it marked the highest elevation point along the entire canal route. As rail lines expanded, Fort Wayne became a pivotal location along the Pennsylvania Railroad and earned the title “Altoona of the West.” By the late 1800s, manufacturing and trade were thriving, drawing new residents in search of opportunity.



FORT WAYNE IN THE 1900S

As the 20th century progressed, Fort Wayne experienced continued growth. Even during the economic downturn of the 1930s, the city maintained strong business activity. Major companies such as Lincoln National Life Insurance Corporation, Farnsworth Television, Zollner Piston, Central Soya, and Holsum Bakery were all based in Fort Wayne. This period also saw the construction of several key structures that remain important to the city’s identity, including the Embassy Theatre, the Scottish Rite Auditorium, and the Lincoln Tower.



FORT WAYNE IN THE 2000S

Fort Wayne, once a thriving industrial hub in the region historically referred to as the Rust Belt, has transitioned to a multi-sector economy in the 21st century. Today, the city’s economy is supported by sectors such as distribution, transportation, logistics, healthcare, business services, hospitality, and finance. It also plays a significant role in national defense-related production, with approximately 1-2% of the local workforce employed in this field. Fort Wayne has been recognized multiple times for its civic achievements, receiving the All-America City designation in 1983, 1998, 2009, and 2021. In 1999, it was also honored with a City Livability Award by the U.S. Conference of Mayors.



4.

**NOW:
SEFW'S EXISTING
CONDITIONS**



EXISTING CONDITIONS

The southeast area of Fort Wayne has a long and layered background. It was once a key location for industrial activity, local businesses, and a range of households connected through residential blocks and places of worship. Over time, as factory jobs declined, many residents relocated to nearby areas. This shift contributed to ongoing challenges, including fewer job opportunities and reduced local business activity. The summary below offers a present-day comparison of the Southeast Fort Wayne planning area, the City of Fort Wayne, and Tall Oaks Apartments.



DEMOGRAPHICS

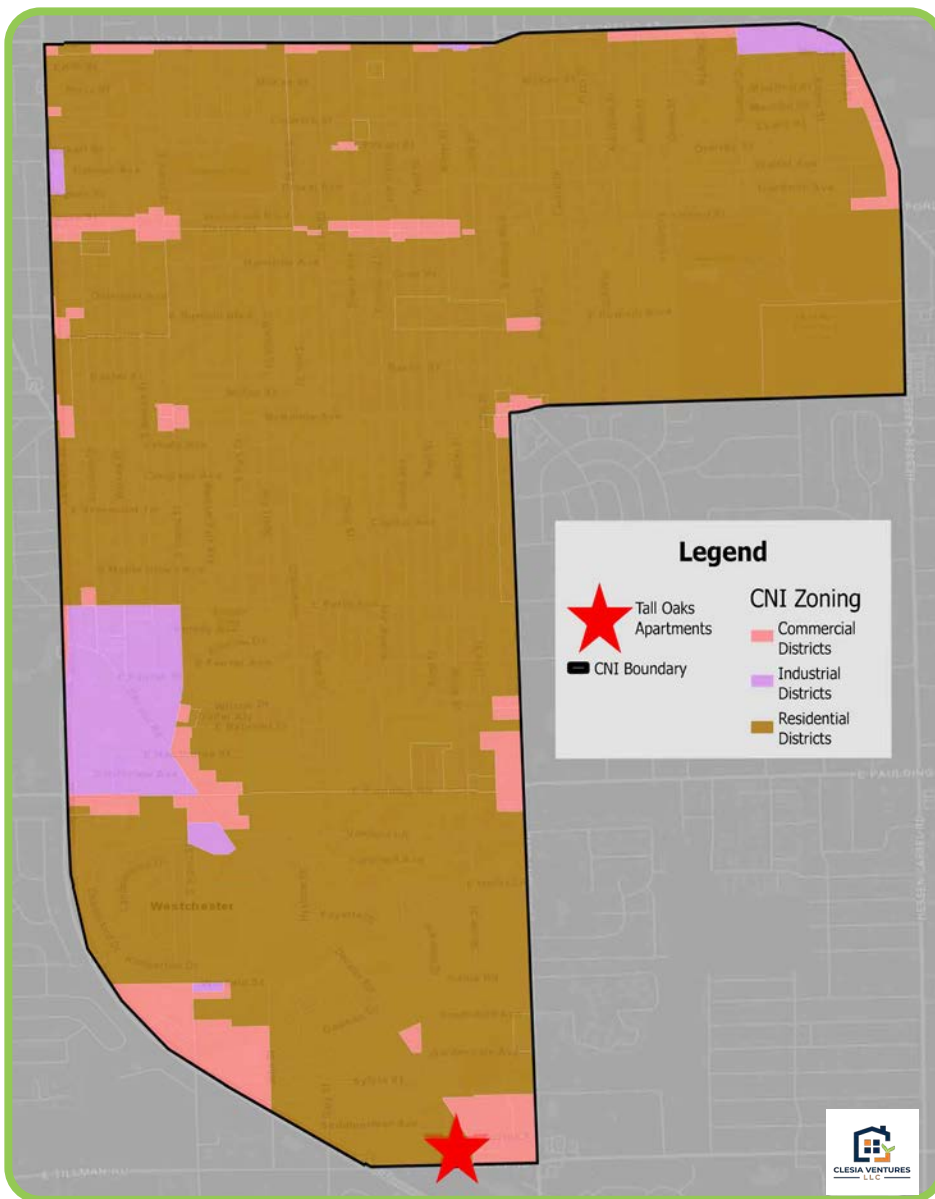
	SEFW CNI NEIGHBORHOOD	FORT WAYNE	TALL OAKS APARTMENTS
Population	19,553	267,670	122
Median Age	30.1	37.1	50+
Population Composition	Caucasian: 37.7%	Caucasian: 72%	Caucasian: 15%
	African American: 40%	African American: 15%	African American: 80%
	Asian: 7.6%	Asian: 5%	Asian: 1%
	Other: 14.7%	Other: 8%	Other: 4%

HOUSING

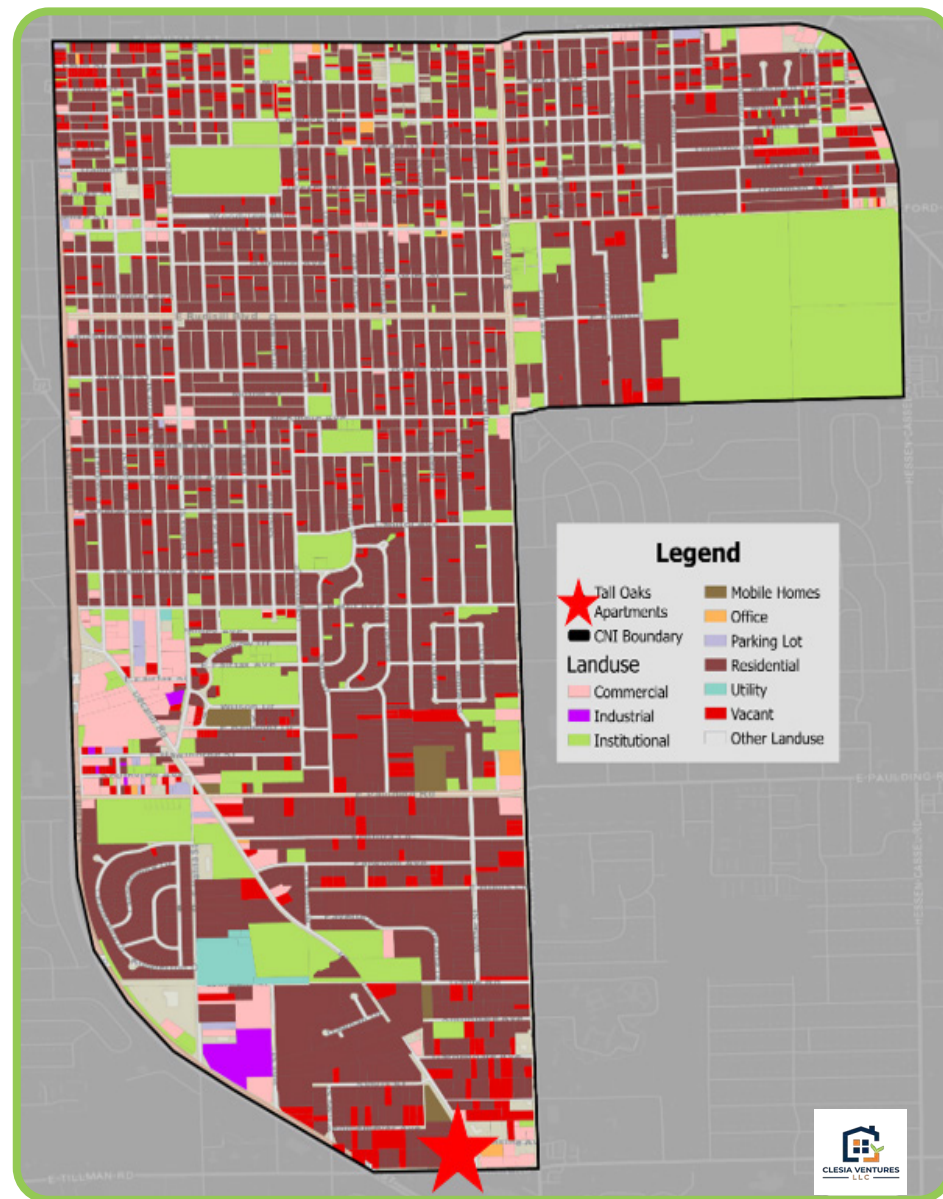
	SEFW CNI NEIGHBORHOOD	FORT WAYNE	TALL OAKS APARTMENTS
Households	6,706	109,507	105
Ownership	49.10%	64.50%	0
Renting	50.90%	35.50%	100%
Median Home Value	\$47,962	\$167,762	N/A

ECONOMIC

	SEFW CNI NEIGHBORHOOD	FORT WAYNE	TALL OAKS APARTMENTS
Median Household Income	\$28,717	\$51,454	\$10,180
Unemployment	11.10%	5.90%	77%
Poverty	40.20%	15.50%	N/A



SEFW CNI Zoning Map



SEFW CNI Landuse Map

COMMUNITY ASSETS

The SEFW CNI neighborhood has considerable assets within the boundary, making the area ripe for investments. Community pride runs deep in this neighborhood and that is reflected by the engagement and drive for a better neighborhood.

Downtown Fort Wayne

Downtown Fort Wayne, Indiana, serves as the central hub of the city, where historic structures stand alongside newer developments. The area features a variety of arts venues, shops, restaurants, and parks, creating an active setting for both residents and guests.



Village Premier Mixed-Use Development

Village Premier is a community project designed to revitalize 20 acres in Southeast Fort Wayne. Expected to be completed by 2027, this space will offer additional public amenities, essential facilities, and a range of housing options.



McMillen Park

McMillan Park in Fort Wayne, Indiana, is a long-standing neighborhood park that offers a range of recreational features, including sports fields, courts, playgrounds, walking paths, a swimming pool, and an activity center. Its layout supports regular use by area residents and serves as a key gathering place for leisure and programs.



5.

THE PLANNING PROCESS



THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Southeast Fort Wayne planning effort focuses on building strong connections among local residents, partner organizations, and other involved groups. These relationships are key to the success of both the planning phase and future implementation. Through joint efforts, the goal is to develop a plan that is clear, realistic, and ready for action.

This effort places high value on broad involvement. The planning process has been designed to make sure individuals from across the Southeast Fort Wayne area have opportunities to share input and help guide decisions that will shape the future of the neighborhood.

KEY MILESTONES

Throughout the planning process, several important steps were identified to guide progress and support the overall success of the project. These key steps included:

- » Comprehensive community engagement
- » Early action activity completion
- » Transformation plan outline with content
- » Transformation plan draft
- » Transformation plan final

THE TEAM: HOW WE ORGANIZED

To ensure the success of the SEFW CNI project, a broad range of member committees were established to support various aspects of the initiative. Each committee plays a crucial role in the overall SEFW CNI planning process, contributing unique insights and expertise. This collaborative structure is designed to support efficiency, strengthen communication, and improve the overall effectiveness of the plan’s goals.

Core Members

SEFW CNI COMMUNITY

Individuals that reside and/or work in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.

FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Lead of the planning process.

CLESIA VENTURES, LLC

Planning Coordinator of the planning process.



COMMITTEES

Leads

FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Plan Lead

BRINSHORE DEVELOPMENT, LLC

Housing Lead

CLESIA VENTURES, LLC

People Lead.

THE CITY OF FORT WAYNE

Neighborhood

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee is made up of senior representatives from key public agencies who provide direction to the planning team throughout the project. Their primary role is to ensure that the final plan reflects a unified direction supported by all participating groups. This shared direction will act as a guide for carrying out the plan, detailing actions and required resources. Through ongoing meetings and coordination, the committee offers oversight, expert guidance, and helps maintain coordination across agencies to support neighborhood goals.



STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is composed of a wide range of local leaders and organizations with direct ties to neighborhoods in the Southeast Fort Wayne area. Their knowledge and lived experience help ensure that the plan reflects the realities and priorities of those who live and work in the area. The committee reviews data and input from multiple sources, helping to confirm its accuracy and relevance. Members also assist in shaping the plan’s direction by reviewing and refining goals and action steps to ensure they are clear, practical, and achievable. This involvement encourages stronger local participation and helps build lasting support for the plan’s success.



RESIDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Resident Advisory Committee includes individuals from Tall Oaks Apartments who take part in shaping the planning effort. This group ensures that the perspectives of public housing residents are represented throughout the development of the plan. By attending meetings and offering feedback, residents contribute to the overall direction, key priorities, and focus areas of the planning effort. Their involvement helps create a plan that is better aligned with the day-to-day realities and interests of those it is designed to serve.



FOCUS GROUP

The Focus Groups are composed of subject-matter specialists from various sectors, along with residents of Tall Oaks Apartments. These selected participants provided important insights on eight key topic areas, helping to shape a well-informed and balanced plan. Each focus area was explored through detailed discussions, contributing to recommendations grounded in practical knowledge and lived experience.



The combined expertise and input of the focus group participants were instrumental in shaping the goals and action steps outlined in this plan. Through structured discussions and joint problem-solving, the groups worked to identify and respond to key challenges within the neighborhood. Their contributions helped ensure that the resulting strategies are practical, well-rounded, and aligned with the priorities of those who live and work in the area.



PARTNERSHIPS

The success of any comprehensive planning effort is closely tied to the strength and reliability of its partnerships. Across the country, long-term progress has been made possible where groups worked together with a shared purpose and clear communication. The Southeast Fort Wayne planning effort has embraced this approach by intentionally cultivating a wide network of partnerships grounded in collaboration, trust, and shared responsibility. These partnerships are not just helpful—they are essential to creating solutions that can be carried out effectively and make a real difference for the people who live in the area.

Fort Wayne is home to a variety of organizations with deep knowledge and specialized experience that align closely with the primary goals of this initiative. These partners contribute technical skills, trusted local relationships, and practical tools that enhance the plan’s direction and quality. The Southeast Fort Wayne area also contains many active neighborhood-based organizations that have been working to improve conditions and support long-term progress. Rather than starting from the ground up, the planning team has built upon these existing efforts and relationships. This has allowed for a more coordinated and informed process, where the input of long-standing community partners helps shape decisions in a way that respects what has already been done.

The role of these partners extends far beyond occasional input. Many participate as active members of working groups and advisory bodies, where they review ideas, help shape strategies,

The role of these partners extends far beyond occasional input. Many participate as active members of working groups and advisory bodies, where they review ideas, help shape strategies, and provide feedback rooted in both professional experience and neighborhood understanding. They also host public events, helping residents stay informed and involved in the planning process. These gatherings not only provide important updates but also create space for new ideas to emerge.

Additionally, several partners have pledged resources—both financial and in the form of services—which are crucial to carrying out the goals of the Southeast Fort Wayne planning effort. This level of commitment strengthens the program’s foundation and increases the likelihood of achieving meaningful and lasting results. The depth of these partnerships reflect a strong collective commitment to working together toward shared progress.



- » SOUTHEAST AREA PARTNERSHIP
- » FORT WAYNE URBAN LEAGUE
- » UNITED WAY OF ALLEN COUNTY
- » IVY TECH COMMUNITY COLLEGE
- » BOYS & GIRLS CLUB OF NORTHEAST INDIANA
- » COME AS YOU ARE COMMUNITY CHURCH
- » VINCENT VILLAGES
- » FORT WAYNE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- » CLESIA VENTURES
- » FORT WAYNE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
- » ALLEN COUNTY
- » EAST ALLEN COUNTY SCHOOLS
- » THE ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY HEALTH FOUNDATION
- » FORT WAYNE TRAIL
- » YMCA OF GREATER FORT WAYNE
- » PETRA SOLUTIONS
- » ADAMS TOWNSHIP
- » SEFW CNI COMMUNITY
- » TALL OAKS APATRMENTS RESIDENTS
- » FORT WAYNE HOUSING AUTHORITY
- » CITY OF FORT WAYNE
- » BRINSHORE DEVELOPMENT
- » MARTIN LUTHER KING MONTESSORI SCHOOL
- » GREATER FORT WAYNE INC.
- » BRIGHTPOINT DEVELOPMENT FUND
- » BRIDGE OF GRACE MINISTRIES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Choice Neighborhoods Community Office

The SEFW CNI office opened in the Summer of 2023 and is located at the Tall Oaks Apartments public housing site. The office is a designated location within the SEFW CNI neighborhood where residents can visit and obtain information related to the Choice Neighborhood. The office is open to the public three days a week and is operated by the dedicated SEFW CNI Ambassadors. The office will remain functioning throughout the planning grant and beyond.

Town Hall Visioning Sessions

Town Hall Visioning Sessions were meetings where the community could voice their opinions and participate in the data collection process. Each Town Hall consisted of a short presentation and an interactive session. The interactive sessions enabled attendees to engage in the planning process actively and, most importantly, initiate a conversation about the revitalization of the SEFW CNI. Attendees were able to freely discuss complex topics and engage with their fellow community members.

**SEFW CNI TOWN HALL
VISIONING SESSION I**

November 8th, 2023
FWHA Central Office
45 Attendees

**SEFW CNI TOWN HALL
VISIONING SESSION II**

February 15th, 2024
McMillen Park Community Center
125 Attendees



I really enjoyed [the] community conversation at mcmillen. Continue to engage the community with events like this!

SEFW CNI Resident



Community Meetings

Community meetings were our version of open houses, where the SEFW CNI community could gather to learn more about the SEFW CNI program and review relevant documents.

DAFT PLAN REVIEW
COMMUNITY MEETING

September 12th, 2024
Legacy One
12 Attendees

Committee Meetings

The Advisory, Steering, and Resident Advisory committees met on multiple occasions during the planning grant term. The topics of discussion at these meetings included the data collected from the SEFW CNI community and how to best utilize their expertise in efforts to revitalize the SEFW CNI neighborhood.

Resident Advisory Committee

The Resident Advisory Committee has met monthly at Tall Oaks Apartments since May 2023. These meetings included residents of Tall Oaks Apartments, the Planning Coordinator, the SEFW CNI Ambassadors, and the Tall Oaks Apartments Property Manager. These meetings gave a more in-tune understanding of the wants and needs.



Advisory Committee

EVENT DATE	MEETING DESCRIPTION
December 14th, 2023	This meeting reviewed the data collected at that time. The outcome was a more robust plan of action to garner more information.
June 18th, 2024	This meeting discussed the suggested themes, vision, and goals for the collected data. The outcome was a clearer understanding of the implementable goals and vision.
September 4th, 2024	The topic of this meeting was finalizing the goals and strategies. The outcome was implementable goals and strategies that would benefit the SEFW CNI community and beyond.

Steering Committee

EVENT DATE	MEETING DESCRIPTION
December 14th, 2023	This meeting reviewed the data collected at that time. The outcome was a more robust plan of action to garner more information.
June 18th, 2024	This meeting discussed the suggested themes, vision, and goals for the collected data. The outcome was a clearer understanding of the implementable goals and vision.

Focus Groups

From August to October 2023, the SEFW CNI Focus Groups virtually met to discuss the eight themes.

FOCUS GROUP NAME	MEETING DATE
Housing & Development	August 23rd
Neighborhood Housing	August 30th
Economic Development	September 6th
Youth & Education	September 13th
Health & Wellness	September 20th
Environment & Sustainability	September 27th
Mobility & Connectivity	October 4th
Doing While Planning	October 11th

SEFW CNI Surveys

To gather meaningful input from the Southeast Fort Wayne area, three survey types were developed to reflect different living and working patterns. This approach helped ensure the responses captured a broad range of experiences and priorities. Participants could select the survey that best matched their connection to the area, allowing for more accurate and useful feedback.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Short thirty-question survey completed by individuals who live the SEFW CNI boundary.

BUSINESS SURVEY

Short ten-question survey completed by individuals who own a business in or abutting the SEFW CNI boundary.

TOPIC SURVEY

Survey divided into seven topic areas, modelled after the focus group concentrations. If a SEFW CNI resident is interested in a specific, they could take the corresponding short survey.

TALL OAKS RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS

Needs Assessments

Long surveys—especially those with more than eighty questions—can be challenging for participants and may result in incomplete or less accurate responses due to fatigue. To address this concern, particularly among the older residents at Tall Oaks Apartments, the SEFW CNI resident assessment was divided into four shorter sections. These were administered in phases to make the process more manageable and support more thoughtful responses.

To further reduce stress and improve participation, the assessments were offered on a quarterly schedule, allowing ample time for completion. With support from the property manager, SEFW CNI Ambassadors, and the Planning Coordinator, residents were given several convenient ways to take part. QR codes linking to the assessments were placed on flyers in the building’s main foyer and on postcards delivered directly to residents through door-to-door outreach.

Additionally, printed copies of the assessments were available at the main office. Offering multiple ways to participate helped accommodate different preferences and made it easier for all residents to take part in the process. This approach ensured that everyone had a fair opportunity to share their input in the format that worked best for them.

Tall Oaks Community Meetings

At Tall Oaks Apartments, a series of open house-style meetings were held to give residents a welcoming space to learn about and engage with the Southeast Fort Wayne Choice Neighborhoods planning effort. These gatherings served as key opportunities to share updates, explain ongoing efforts, and gather feedback directly from residents. The format was designed to be obtainable and comfortable, allowing participants to join discussions at their own pace and level of interest.

Each meeting featured guided conversations led by facilitators, focusing on important elements of the planning process. Topics included the resident assessments, which were used to better understand daily experiences and local priorities, as well as early-stage improvement efforts addressing immediate concerns. Residents were also invited to review visual displays and printed materials that outlined the planning timeline, goals, and current progress. Staff and partner representatives were on hand to answer questions, provide clarification, and listen to input throughout the event.

These meetings also created valuable space for open dialogue. Residents were encouraged to share their thoughts, express concerns, and suggest ideas for how the neighborhood could move forward. This two-way communication helped strengthen relationships and build a sense of shared purpose among participants. Overall, the meetings played a vital role in keeping residents informed, involved, and connected to the decisions shaping the future of their neighborhood.

EVENT	EVENT DATE
SEFW CNI Town Hall Visioning Session I	November 8th, 2023
EFW CNI Town Hall Visioning Session II	February 15th, 2024
Daft Plan Review Community Meeting	September 12th, 2024

EARLY ACTION ACTIVITIES

Early Action Activities are physical projects completed during the planning grant term that showcase the arrival and presence of a Choice neighborhood. Throughout the SEFW CNI planning process, residents were heavily involved in exploring potential projects, participating in discussions, and providing valuable input. The community collectively agreed that establishing a community garden and improving pedestrian safety measures would be the most beneficial. These projects will improve community health and wellness and social cohesion.

Pedestrian Safety Improvements

Residents have reported feeling unsafe when crossing the intersection at East Tillman Road and Decatur Road due to frequent speeding. To avoid hazardous driving, many instead use Woodside Avenue to reach nearby stores and services along South Anthony Boulevard. However, the sidewalks along Woodside Avenue are incomplete and uneven, creating walking hazards—particularly for older individuals and those with limited mobility. This often forces pedestrians to walk in the street, putting their safety at risk. Residents of Tall Oaks Apartments have recommended improvements such as traffic calming and directional signage to support safer travel for all individuals who walk or use mobility aids in the area.

Project 1: Crosswalks and Flashers

Well-marked crosswalks with solar-powered flashers will be installed at the East Tillman Road and Decatur Road intersection to ensure safe crossing areas for residents, particularly children and seniors.

Project 2: Sidewalk Improvements

Sidewalk improvements that include the rehab of the current sidewalks along Woodside Avenue.

Project 3: Placemaking Signage

Erecting clear and attractive breakaway signage to establish the SEFW CNI Neighborhood branding and guide residents, visitors and motorists safely around the median and through the neighborhood.

Community Garden

Tall Oaks Apartments is home to many older residents who have voiced concerns about the lack of age-friendly features and limited access to social activities nearby. The absence of such amenities has contributed to increased isolation and related health issues. In addition, the property’s location in southeast Fort Wayne presents further challenges, as there are few grocery stores or markets in close proximity that offer fresh, healthy food. This limited access has created additional hardships for residents seeking to maintain their well-being. In response to these concerns, residents have come together to plan a community garden that will enhance the area and provide space for connection and shared activity. Scheduled for completion by June 2025, the garden is intended to offer fresh produce and create opportunities for neighbors to interact and collaborate. A dedicated group—the Community Garden Committee—has been established to manage and maintain the space, with guidance from the Southeast Fort Wayne planning effort. Their work supports a shared goal of building a welcoming and well-maintained space that strengthens ties among residents.

“

I’m so proud...it’s time! This is our garden we’ve been asking for. We finally getting it! Thank y’all very much!

It’s Choice Neighborhoods – they finally got it done!

Helen Faye Pace,
Tall Oaks Apartments Resident



Conceptual Masterplan

OUTREACH

Due to the rich variety of backgrounds within the community, a multifaceted approach to outreach was deployed, aiming to engage individuals at every level of involvement. Outreach methods included:

Newspaper Advertisements

Strategically timed advertisements in local newspapers reached various demographics and kept the community informed about initiatives and events.

Radio Advertisements

Collaborations with local radio stations resulted in the creation of engaging audio spots to support outreach efforts. This approach tapped into the auditory channels that many community members rely on for news and information.

Partnerships

Partnerships were established with key local organizations and community leaders. Leveraging these relationships broadened the reach and connected with segments of the community that might have been otherwise overlooked.

Postcards

Eye-catching postcards were designed and mailed to residents, providing a tangible way to disseminate information. This approach ensured that messages reached homes directly.

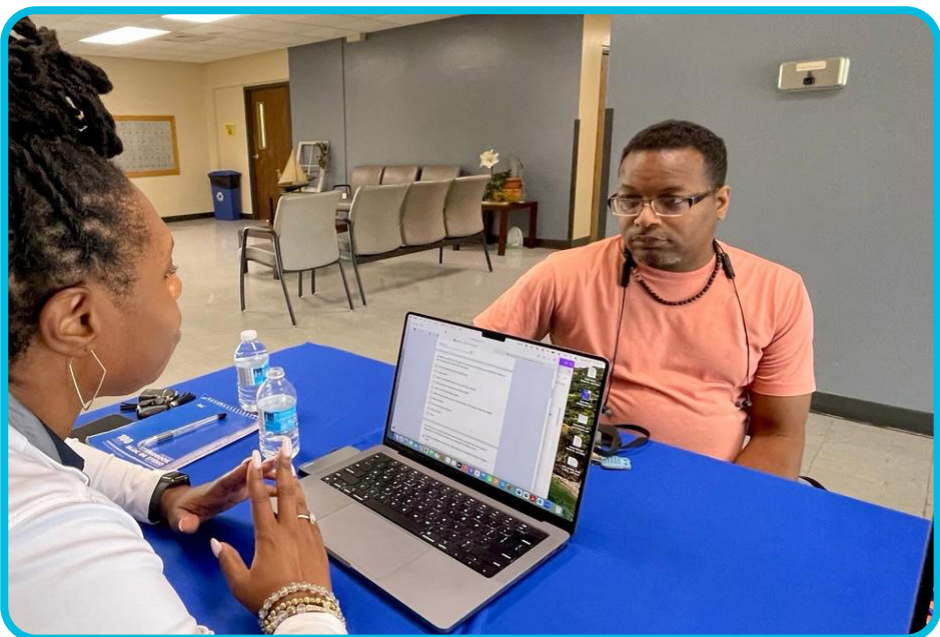
Emails

Existing mailing lists were utilized to send out targeted email communications that included updates, event invitations, and important announcements. This strategy engaged those who prefer electronic communication.

Flyers

Flyers were distributed at community centers, schools, and local businesses. These visually appealing materials highlighted programs and events, ensuring visibility in shared spaces frequented by community members.

By employing this wide-ranging set of outreach methods, the aim was to build a welcoming approach and encourage participation across all segments of the community.



ON GOING ENGAGEMENT

Continued involvement will remain a central part of the Southeast Fort Wayne planning effort as the Transformation Plan moves from planning into implementation. Residents, local organizations, committee members, and partner agencies will stay engaged through a variety of formats, including both digital tools and in-person meetings. These channels will ensure that individuals have regular opportunities to offer feedback, track progress, and participate in shaping the neighborhood’s future. Open communication and steady participation are essential to building trust and maintaining momentum.

Capacity Building

From the outset, the planning team has prioritized creating meaningful pathways for involvement that go beyond short-term participation. The goal is to support long-lasting engagement by building the capacity of residents and partners to remain actively involved in local initiatives. Workshops, public meetings, and structured feedback sessions have been key tools in this effort, offering participants the chance to deepen their knowledge, share their ideas, and stay informed about next steps. These activities not only support the current planning process but also lay the foundation for long-term involvement in neighborhood development.

A key part of this effort is the SEFW CNI Ambassadors group. These individuals serve as an important link between the planning team and the wider community. Their responsibilities include coordinating outreach, collecting input, and helping to organize neighborhood events.

We extend our sincere appreciation to SEFW CNI Ambassadors Helen Faye Pace, Laura Reber, and Bessie Martin for their outstanding contributions during the planning phase of the Southeast Fort Wayne Choice Neighborhoods initiative. Each ambassador brought a unique perspective, grounded in lived experience and deep local knowledge, which enriched the overall process. Their leadership, creativity, and consistent dedication were instrumental in organizing outreach activities, encouraging resident participation, and helping to ensure that the planning effort remained rooted in the voices of those most directly connected to the neighborhood.

Beyond their involvement in meetings and events, these ambassadors played a vital role in building trust and facilitating communication between residents and the planning team. Their efforts helped foster a stronger sense of connection and collaboration throughout the community. As the initiative moves into the next phase, their continued involvement will be essential in supporting implementation, maintaining momentum, and ensuring that the vision developed through the planning process becomes a reality for the neighborhood. Their work exemplifies the kind of commitment that drives meaningful progress and lasting change.



The Choice Neighborhoods project has increased involvement and beauty for the residents who call Tall Oaks home. They are being inspired by being involved and seeing the finished product of the CNI planning. It helps the surrounding community to enhance how they may feel and react to people who live on the south side of Fort Wayne.

Avery Rice, FWHA Director of Programs



6.

AMPLIFYING THE COMMUNITY'S VOICE



6.

AMPLIFYING THE COMMUNITY'S VOICE

The SEFW CNI Neighborhood is known for its strong history and active neighborhood spirit. Residents have shown steady determination and a shared interest in strengthening their surroundings despite ongoing challenges. The area is home to a wide mix of individuals and families, each contributing unique viewpoints and experiences. Through local engagement efforts, several strengths have been identified, including active neighborhood connections, a strong sense of belonging, and a community-wide approach to solving problems together.

The neighborhood has the feel of a small town, where familiarity and neighborly connection are part of daily life. Although it sits within a larger city, Southeast Fort Wayne maintains a close-knit atmosphere that sets it apart. Many families have lived in the area for several generations, building a strong sense of continuity and local pride that is deeply rooted in shared experiences and long-standing relationships.

This small-town quality is reflected in the way neighbors support one another and regularly gather for local events. From seasonal celebrations to informal block gatherings, these activities help maintain neighborhood bonds and foster a welcoming environment. Residents often work together, share resources, and help one another in ways that contribute to a strong sense of unity and teamwork.

A focus on families is another defining trait of the SEFW CNI Neighborhood. Many households choose to remain in or move to

the area because it offers a supportive setting where children and families feel at ease. Local activities, spaces designed for families, and community-led programs all help create a healthy and encouraging environment for youth and parents alike.

This long-term investment in family life and neighborhood well-being fuels a shared interest in progress. Residents are committed not only to improving their own surroundings, but also to shaping a place where future generations can thrive. This continued dedication has helped shape the goals of the Transformation Plan, ensuring it reflects the hopes, priorities, and values of the people who live here.



OUR COMMUNITY’S VOICE

In crafting the Transformation Plan for the Southeast Fort Wayne Neighborhood, a cornerstone of our approach was to ensure that the community’s voices were not only heard but also actively integrated into the planning process. This process involved a series of targeted activities designed to capture a wide range of perspectives from residents, partners, and stakeholders. The engagement strategy for this project involved a multifaceted approach. Through,

- » FOCUS GROUPS
- » VISIONING SESSIONS
- » RESIDENT NEEDS ASSESSMENTS
- » COMMUNITY SURVEYS

We aimed to create conversations that were open and welcoming, shaped by the unique identity of the Southeast Fort Wayne area. These efforts offered valuable input on local strengths, concerns, and priorities, which helped guide the development of the Transformation Plan. Each approach to gathering input was carefully selected to focus on different aspects of neighborhood experience, helping to build a clearer picture of current conditions and future opportunities.

The next section outlines the most important findings collected throughout the planning process. These highlights represent recurring themes shared through meetings, surveys, and one-on-one discussions. Additional information, including supporting data and full summaries, can be found in the appendix.

Focus Groups

Focus Groups were instrumental in providing detailed insights into the specific concerns and aspirations of different community segments. During these discussions, participants, including residents, stakeholders, and community partners, shared their thoughts on various topics and key issues. The key topic areas included:

- » Housing & Development
- » Neighborhood Housing
- » Economic Development
- » Youth & Education
- » Health & Wellness
- » Environment & Sustainability
- » Mobility & Connectivity
- » Doing While Planning.

These sessions enabled residents to express their opinions in a more intimate setting, encouraging open dialogue and nuanced feedback. The feedback from these discussions highlighted some key areas of concern that were not as apparent in broader community surveys. By delving deeply into these topics, focus groups revealed the underlying factors influencing residents’ perceptions and priorities.

Additionally, the focus groups facilitated a deeper understanding of the community’s strengths and resources. The collaborative nature of the focus groups also helped build trust and rapport, thus creating a solid foundation for ongoing dialogue and collaboration throughout the planning process.



Doing While Planning

Do you think the Community Garden Early Action Activity will be good way to show that Choice Neighborhoods is coming to SEFW?

Yes	80%
Somewhat	20%
No	0%

Do you think the Wayfinding & Signage Early Action Activity will be good way to show that Choice Neighborhoods is coming to SEFW?

Yes	60%
Somewhat	20%
No	20%

Economic Development

What are your economic development priorities for the SEFW community?

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1st | Providing resources to grow small businesses. |
| 1st | Helping retain and expand existing businesses. |
| 2nd | Investing in infrastructure |
| 3rd | Actively recruiting appropriate business prospects. |

What future growth and development opportunities do you envision in the SEFW community and beyond?

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1st | More economic and employment opportunities. |
|-----|---|



Environment & Sustainability

Health & Wellness

Housing & Development

Mobility & Connectivity

Sustainable development calls for changes in conduct and lifestyle. What should we aim to implement (through the CN project) within the SEFW community to encourage such changes?

Awareness Programs	50%
Environmental Education	33.33%
Encourage More Community-led Movements	16.67%

Which alternative energy sources do you think will be the MOST important in the next 10 years?

Sun Power	83.33%
Wind	16.67%

How easy is it to reach health clinics and doctor offices in the SEFW community?

Somewhat Reachable	100%
Reachable	0%
Very Reachable	0%
Not Reachable	0%

How would you rate the SEFW community's knowledge about health and related resources?

Somewhat Knowledgeable	100%
Knowledgeable	0%
Very Knowledgeable	0%
Not Knowledgeable	0%

What would your vision be for a redeveloped Tall Oaks?

1st	Demolition & Development on-site
2nd	Rehabilitation in Place
3rd	Hybrid Demolition.

Tall Oaks is currently a family-oriented site; what type of orientation would you prefer the redeveloped Tall Oaks site to be?

1st	Senior & Disabled
2nd	Near Senior
3rd	Mixed

Does public transportation adequately service the SEFW community?

Somewhat	50%
No	30%
Yes	20%

Do you feel there are adequate bike lanes in the SEFW community?

No	90%
Somewhat	10%
Yes	0%

Neighborhood Housing

How do feel about the housing options in the targeted CNI neighbourhood?

Neighborhood has limited options for moderate housing (missing middle) 100%

Youth & Education

For the purpose of the SEFW CNI targeted community, please rank where our collective priorities should begin?

- 1st K-12
- 2nd Early Childhood Education
- 3rd Trade School

Visioning Sessions

Visioning sessions were a key part of the outreach process. These gatherings were designed to encourage residents to think about the future of their neighborhood and share their ideas, priorities, and concerns. Participants took part in hands-on activities that helped identify shared goals and potential strategies for local improvement. This approach helped ensure that the plan was shaped by local input rather than outside direction. The strong interest and involvement shown during these sessions highlighted the area’s commitment to creating lasting change.

The most concerning traffic safety issues in the SEFW CNI neighborhood are

- 1st Speeding
- 2nd Dangerous Pedestrian Crossing
- 3rd Other

How would you describe the current state of the infrastructure in the SEFW community?

Needs Improvement 100%
Very Adequate 0%
Adequate 0%

How would you rate the quality of education in SEFW Community?

Average 33.3%
Below Average 33.3%
Good 22.2%
Poor 11.1%
Great 0%

What type of commercial activity would you like to see in the SEFW CNI neighborhood?

- 1st Eateries
- 2nd Boutique Retail
- 3rd Health Services
- 4th Neighborhood Serviecs

What type of housing would you like to see in the SEFW CNI neighborhood?

- 1st Single Family Home
- 2nd Apartment
- 3rd Duplex



Resident Needs Assessments

Throughout the outreach process, residents of Tall Oaks Apartments were not only involved but played an active role in shaping the planning effort. The full resident assessment was divided into four shorter sections to make the process more manageable and reduce the potential for fatigue. This structure allowed individuals to respond thoroughly and at their own pace. Each section focused on a specific topic, allowing for a clearer understanding of daily experiences, challenges, and priorities. This method supported detailed data collection and ensured that the information gathered provided a well-rounded picture to help guide planning and future improvements.

Resident Needs Assessments Participation

63%

Assessment Part 1

What do you consider to be the top strengths of your current neighborhood?

- 1st Housing affordability
- 2nd Access to public transportation
- 3rd Access to neighborhood conveniences and services (post office, bank, restaurant)

What are you hoping to get out of the CNI for Tall Oaks?

“ [A] better place to live and be comfortable and safe.

Tall Oaks Apartment Resident

Assessment Part 2

What are the TOP THREE safety improvements that you feel would make the neighborhood safer?

- 1st Better security systems (ex: cameras, license plate readers)
- 2nd More frequent and/or visible police patrol
- 3rd Better and/or more street

Please explain any safety concerns you may have for your community.

“ I think there are too many drugs and too much violence

Tall Oaks Apartment Resident

Assessment Part 3

How do you rate the health care services you receive?

Excellent	6%
Good	59%
Fair	11%
Poor	2%
Very poor	0%
No answer	9%
Not applicable	13%

What are the primary unmet health care needs of your household?

- 1st Dental services

If Tall Oaks were to be redeveloped, would you want the name of the new development to remain the same or be changed?

Remain the same	91%
Change the name	9%

What do you like/enjoy about living at Tall Oaks Apartments?

The people are nice and friendly.

My new family! The neighbors treat me like I'm the baby of the building!

Community Survey

Throughout the outreach process, residents of the SEFW CNI area were invited to take part in a detailed survey aimed at gathering a clearer understanding of local conditions. The survey included a wide range of questions covering key topics related to daily life, challenges, and areas for improvement. This approach allowed participants to share personal experiences, express their needs, and provide input on future priorities. Through this process, the planning team was able to gain meaningful insight into the factors that influence residents' day-to-day lives and inform future improvements within the neighborhood.

Community Survey Participation

44 individuals

In your opinion, what are the greatest weaknesses of the SEFW CNI neighborhood?

1st	Vacant/abandoned property
-----	---------------------------

What are the TOP THREE safety improvements that you feel would make the neighborhood safer?

1st	Youth violence/crime prevention programs
2nd	Better and/or more street lighting
3rd	Better security systems (ex: cameras, license plate readers)

In your opinion, what type of youth program(s) do you think would best benefit the SEFW CNI neighborhood's Youth?

1st	After school programs
-----	-----------------------

To your knowledge, what services are missing in the SEFW CNI Neighborhood?

1st	Emotional Wellness Counseling/Assistance
2nd	Training to Help Start a Small Business
3rd	Homeownership Counseling /Assistance

In your opinion, what are the greatest strengths of the SEFW CNI neighborhood?

1st	Places of worship
2nd	Nearby to relatives/friends
3rd	Location (near downtown)

Business Survey

Why did you choose to locate your business in the SEFW CN Neighborhood?

// Same area that I reside. [I] want this area to grow & benefit from economic development

SEFW CNI Business Owner

What benefits/strengths has your business experienced being located in the SEFW CN neighborhood?

// We hire from this community & neighborhood. We shop in this community.

SEFW CNI Business Owner

Topic Survey

What future growth and development opportunities do you envision in the SEFW community and beyond?

- 1st More local job opportunities
- 1st More program/activities for youth
- 2nd More entertainment (all ages)
- 3rd More mixed-use development (residential/non-residential mix).
- 3rd More mixed-use development (residential/non-residential mix).



7.

A SOLID FOUNDATION: PLANS IN ACTION



A SOLID FOUNDATION: PLANS IN ACTION

Southeast Fort Wayne, the City of Fort Wayne, and Allen County have a strong tradition of civic engagement that has led to the development of several key neighborhood and county-level plans. These plans address critical community issues and form a solid foundation for the SEFW CNI planning process.

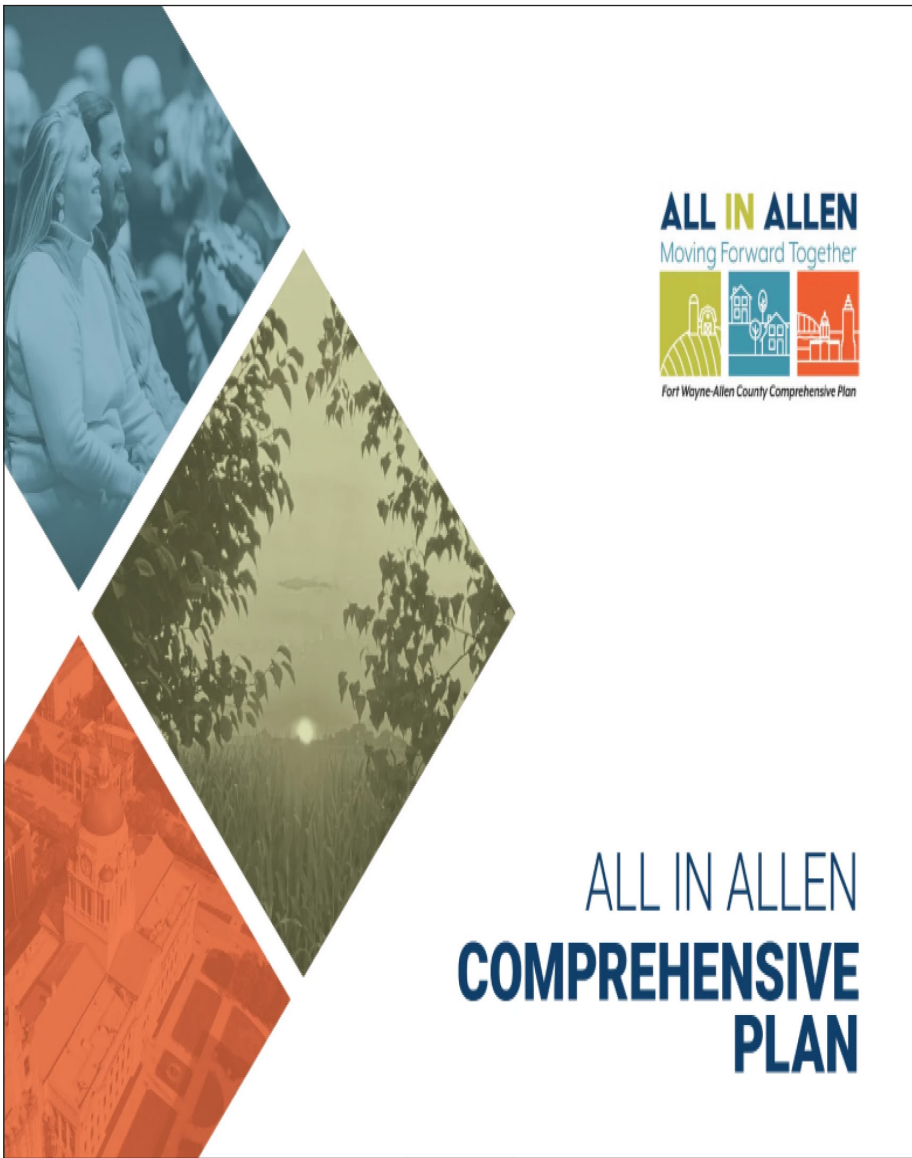
Starting with the Southeast Strategy quadrant plan (2022) and advancing to the “All in Allen” comprehensive plan (2023), the SEFW CNI transformation plan seeks to build on past efforts and the dedication of local champions. By collaborating with the organizations behind these foundational plans, the SEFW CNI process aims to identify synergies and make meaningful progress toward shared community goals.

ALL IN ALLEN

“All in Allen” is a comprehensive plan designed to guide community growth and development over the next 20 years. The plan was adopted by the City of Fort Wayne and Allen County in December 2022 and took effect on March 13, 2023. The plan’s development was guided by feedback obtained from community outreach, analysis of existing conditions, and community visioning, ensuring that the comprehensive plan reflects the communities it will serve.

Topic Areas of the plan include:

- » Land Use and Development
- » Agriculture and Food Systems
- » Housing and Neighborhoods
- » Economic Development
- » Transportation and Mobility
- » Public Facilities and Infrastructure
- » Community Services and Education



SOUTHEAST STRATEGY

In 2020, the City of Fort Wayne’s Community Development Division and the Southeast Area Partnership collaborated to create the Southeast Strategy Update. This comprehensive plan aims to reinvest in the southeast quadrant of the city, outlining strategies to encourage growth, a sense of community, and elevate the overall quality of life for residents in the southeast area.

Topic Areas of the plan include:

- » Community & Pride
- » Economic Development & Revitalization
- » Housing & Neighborhoods
- » Public Spaces & Interconnectivity
- » Transportation & Infrastructure



COMMON THEMES

The examination of the plans mentioned above identifies several shared priorities for the SEFW CNI neighborhood, which include:

- » **Economic Growth & Development**
- » **Community Health & Wellness**
- » **Education & Youth**
- » **Affordable Quality Housing**
- » **Safety & Security**
- » **Environment & Sustainability**
- » **Transportation & Connectivity**



8.

HOUSING PLAN



8. HOUSING PLAN

The Housing Plan aims to expand access to safe, stable housing that is sensitive to a range of income levels and fits well within the character of the surrounding area. The Plan will explore strategies to reduce social disconnect, support long-term residency, and provide options such as homeownership and offsite rental opportunities. These efforts are designed to reinforce neighborhood stability and promote lasting improvements in housing conditions.

Guiding Principles and Lead

The Housing Plan for the Southeast Fort Wayne planning area is shaped by the following guiding principles:

- » **Affordability**
Housing should be reachable to residents across various income levels. The plan supports housing choices that are financially manageable and suitable for different household sizes and situations.
- » **Health and Safety**
All individuals in the Southeast Fort Wayne area should live in housing that supports well-being, provides physical security, and ensures comfort.

Housing Lead

Brinshore Development, LLC will serve as the ‘Housing Lead’ for the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation Plan. The Housing Lead is responsible for coordinating and implementing the Housing Plan, ensuring that all initiatives align with the guiding principles. Brinshore Development will work closely with community members, local organizations, and stakeholders to foster collaboration, monitor progress, and adjust as needed to achieve the desired outcomes. The partnership with Brinshore is structured as a co-development partner with the FWHA.



HOUSING LEAD DEEP DIVE

Brinshore Development, LLC is a national real estate firm with over 30 years of experience in residential development. The company has developed a portfolio of more than 11,000 housing units valued at over \$1.3 billion, across 100 neighborhoods in multiple regions throughout the country.

Brinshore brings expertise in a variety of housing types, including single-family homes, townhomes, multi-use properties, planned developments, and the adaptive reuse of historic structures. The firm has a strong record of delivering high-quality housing in areas requiring long-term investment, often through collaborations with public and private sector partners at the local, state, and federal levels.

Brinshore is widely recognized for its leadership in implementing programs such as Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), Choice Neighborhoods, and projects financed through low-income housing tax credits. By leveraging these tools, Brinshore has consistently delivered durable, newly constructed housing that addresses long-standing challenges and contributes to neighborhood improvement efforts.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE MORE VARIED HOUSING OPTIONS

Strategy 1.1: Substantial rehabilitation of Tall Oaks Apartments using Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

Any substantial redevelopment plan for Tall Oaks will require the use of low-income housing tax credits. The FWHA and its development partner, Brinshore Development, have extensive experience securing tax credit funding for the redevelopment of multi-family housing.

Once the Transformation Plan has been approved, FWHA, along with its development partner, will initiate the pre-development process, which includes preparing for an Indiana Housing Community Development Authority low-income housing tax credit submission. To apply, the development team must address the HFA threshold requirements that include the following:

- » Development Feasibility - 15-year pro forma
- » Notification of Intent to Apply
- » Nonprofit Participation
- » Market Study (must be within six months of anticipated closing date)
- » Development team capabilities
- » Readiness to proceed
- » Phase 1 Environmental (to be completed during Planning Phase)
- » State Historic Review (updated from Planning Phase)

- » Appraisal
- » Rehabilitation Costs / Capital Needs Assessment
- » Tenant Displacement and Relocation

Strategy 1.2: Develop offsite new construction income-based housing the SEFW Community using FWHA’s Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program.

There are currently 105 units at Tall Oaks. The goal of the SEFW CNI program is to double the number of affordable units as a result of this Transformation Plan. Using Project-Based Vouchers, the FWHA will ensure new construction units are developed on existing vacant parcels of land throughout the SEFW neighborhood. These PBV apartments are affordable units where residents only pay 30% of their income. The LIHTC program will provide for moderate-income families ranging from 50%-80% AMI, creating a mixed-income multi-family dwelling. Existing residents of Tall Oaks will have the right of first refusal to return to the newly rehabilitated on-site building and the new off-site construction.

GOAL 2: HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM AWARENESS & EXECUTION

Strategy 2.1: Partner with organizations to offer grant assistance to low-income and moderate-income homebuyers.

Saving for down payment assistance and covering closing costs can present a significant challenge to homeownership. With rising construction costs leading to higher home prices and interest rates, the path to homeownership can be difficult for low- and moderate-income first-time homebuyers. By working with partnering agencies, residents will be informed and have access to down payment and closing cost assistance grants available to homebuyers, as well as opportunities for residents to establish Individual Development Accounts (IDAs).

Strategy 2.2: Partner with local organizations to offer homeownership education opportunities.

The transition from renting to homeownership can be overwhelming. Homeownership courses are beneficial for first-time homebuyers. These education courses will inform potential homebuyers about topics such as budgeting, planning for home maintenance and additional costs, how to choose a lender, and credit counseling services. Additionally, by attending first-time homebuyer courses, residents may be eligible for grant assistance and benefits through partnership organizations.

Strategy 2.3: Develop single-family homes for homeownership.

The Fort Wayne Housing Authority currently implements a Homeownership Program (HO) for qualifying families. The program is designed to enable individuals and families to use Housing Choice Vouchers for homeownership, providing many with the opportunity to purchase their own homes. During Town Hall and other community engagement events, residents of the community, along with Tall Oaks’ residents, expressed interest in homeownership. The FWHA will expand its existing HO program by including non-FWHA residents in the education and outreach related to the program.

OFF-SITE HOUSING: SEFW CNI COMMUNITY

As of the completion of this transformation plan, FWHA currently lacks ownership or control over the necessary land for developing off-site single-family homes. The City recognizes this strategy as part of a broader urban development initiative and is collaborating with the FWHA to identify and gather parcels of land, including those with dilapidated homes. This effort aims to facilitate the construction of new single-family residences, aligning with the City’s goals for revitalization and neighborhood improvement. Ongoing negotiations and planning efforts reflect a commitment to improving housing options and addressing the needs of residents in the area.

FWHA does not possess any unrestricted market-rate housing units. This situation necessitates the implementation of a strategy to acquire additional properties, thereby facilitating continued expansion efforts through a targeted acquisition plan. To meet the increasing demand for a range of market-rate rental units and homeownership opportunities, there is a commitment to collaborate closely with the City of Fort Wayne. The aim is to identify and acquire suitable parcels of land within the designated boundary area. This proactive approach will help address the pressing need for varied housing options in the area, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more welcoming housing market.

The overall aim for the off-site program is to add additional multi-family units and up to fifty (50) single-family homes on various City and privately owned parcels throughout the SEFW area.



ON-SITE HOUSING: TALL OAKS APARTMENTS

The upcoming redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments represents a significant rehabilitation effort aimed at improving the property while preserving the existing number of housing units. Currently, Tall Oaks Apartments consists of a single building that offers a varied mix of one- and two-bedroom units, carefully designed to cater to different family sizes and living needs. The architectural design of the building showcases a regional style that harmonizes with the natural surroundings, utilizing exterior finishes that are both aesthetically pleasing and environmentally considerate.

In planning for the redevelopment, extensive data collection from residents has revealed a strong preference for a complete demolition and total redevelopment of the structure. However, the redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments will involve significant rehabilitation while maintaining the same number of existing units on-site. Brinshore Development conducted a pre-scoring evaluation for both new construction and rehabilitation approaches. The results indicated that rehabilitation was the better option, as the property does not perform well in terms of ‘new construction costs’ without the basis boost associated with a Qualified Census Tract (QCT). This assessment is in accordance with the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) from the Indiana Housing Community Development Authority (IHCDA), the state’s housing finance agency.

The planned rehabilitation will be a RAD /Section 18 blend with a 1:1 replacement ratio for housing units, meaning that every existing unit will be replaced with a new unit of the same type, thereby maintaining the current housing capacity. Furthermore, the development team is exploring the feasibility of adding additional units to expand the overall housing availability beyond the existing count at Tall Oaks.

A preliminary onsite development program has been created for the rehabilitation of Tall Oaks, the HUD-assisted distressed property.

- » Units: 105 (RAD /Section 18 blend)
- » Hard Cost: \$7,828,947
- » Cost per unit: \$265,754
- » LIHTC Basis: \$24,240,060
- » **Total Development Cost: \$27,954,194**

The following is a highlight of the Permanent and Construction Sources of Funds for Tall Oaks:

CONSTRUCTION SOURCES		COST (\$)
Construction Loan		14,050,000
Federal LIHTC		1,127,145
State LIHTC		521,948
Seller Note		9,045,000
Total		24,744,093

PERMANENT SOURCES		COST (\$)
First Loan		2,280,000
IHCDA Dev Fund Loan		500,000
Federal LIHTC		7,773,413
State LIHTC		3,599,640
Deferred Developer Fee		710,478
Seller Note		9,045,000
Income During Construction		600,995
Total		24,509,526

Total Development Costs



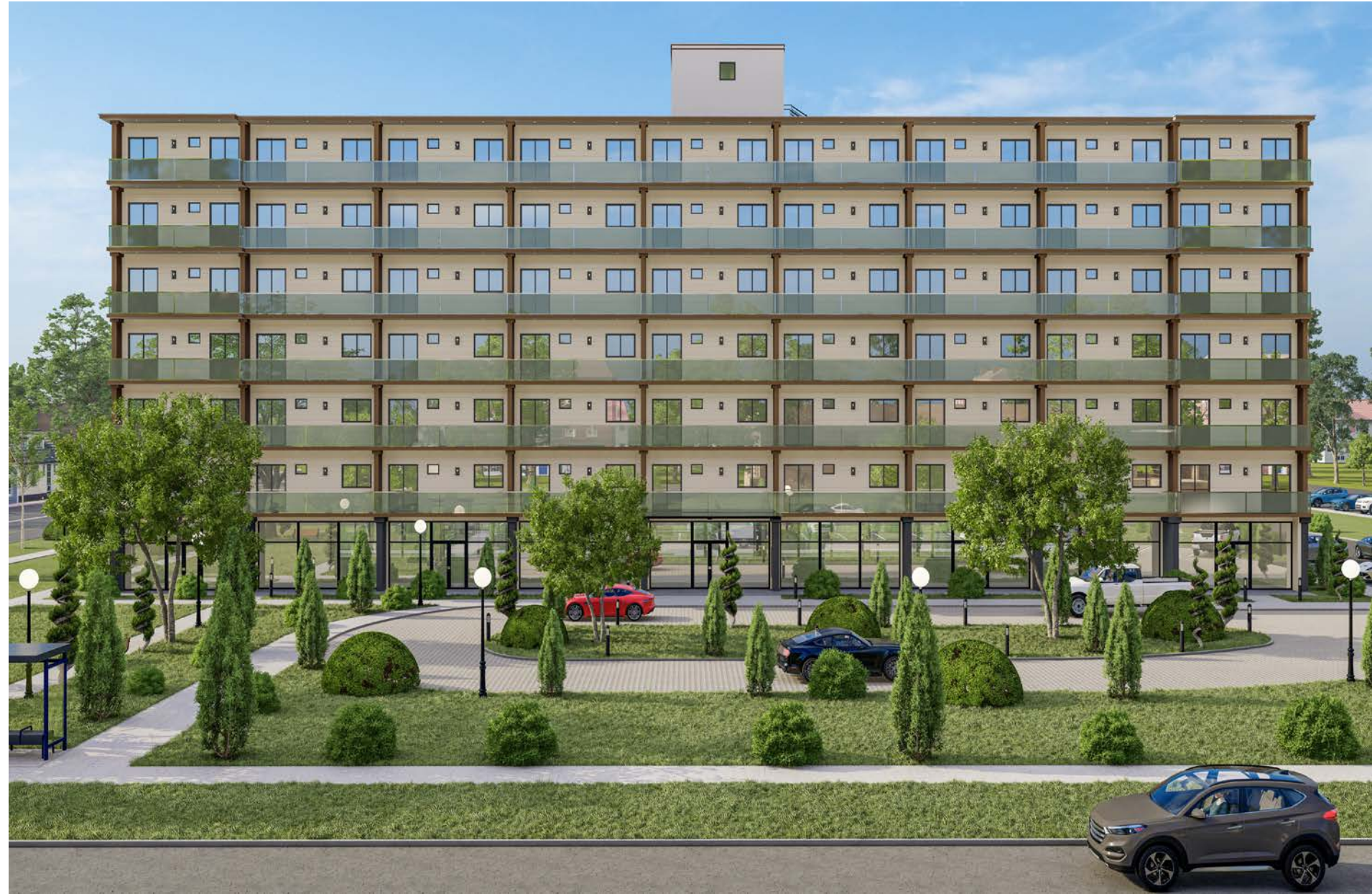
GAP



With a total development cost of \$27.9 million. The current modeling shows a gap of \$3.4 million. This reasonable gap can be absorbed with Federal Home Loan (AHP) funds, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, and other grants that experienced developers can secure.







RELOCATION STRATEGY

In implementing the housing plan, all residents of Tall Oaks will not be required to relocate off-site. Before beginning relocation, FWHA will retain a relocation consultant with expertise in resident relocation, as outlined in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 18 Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD) regulations, which include the Uniform Relocation Act (URA). Expertise in the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program will be required. The selected consultant or firm will assist FWHA in creating and implementing the relocation plan, as well as working with Clesia Ventures (People Lead) to prepare residents for a smooth transition from public housing to their preferred housing option. Residents will receive assistance with moving costs and customized services as needed, based on their individual needs. Families will be relocated in a phased approach, commencing after FWHA secures tax credits for the Tall Oaks project.

The strategy of performing construction while residents are in the building will require the FWHA to create enough vacancies to empty 1/3 (2 floors) of the building. This will be achieved by managing attrition by not re-leasing vacated units and permanently relocating families that do not desire to reside at Tall Oaks. This relocation method will enable construction to proceed on the top two floors (floors 6 and 7) while residents continue to reside on floors 2 through 5. Once units have been completed on floors 6 and 7, residents from floors 4 and 5 will move into the new units, thereby creating two floors for the next phase of construction.

This process will be repeated a third time for floors 2 and 3. Once construction is complete on floors 2 and 3, the Authority can relocate residents who have been temporarily relocated offsite and begin processing residents from the site-based waiting list. The first floor of Tall Oaks will host an office and community space with no residential units.

The relocation plan will outline the relocation processes, eligibility guidelines for residents, and the housing options they will be offered. Each resident in Tall Oaks may be provided the following housing options:

- » **Remain onsite during construction**
Residents may choose to remain on-site during construction, understanding the inconvenience that the construction will bring. Additionally, this option may require multiple moves before a unit is permanently assigned.
- » **Off-Site Project-Based Voucher Units**
Residents may opt for a project-based voucher (PBV). This voucher is tied to specific units that are still under construction.

MIXED-INCOME HOUSING STRATEGY

While current Tall Residents who were surveyed preferred demolition/new construction redevelopment, the FWHA and Brinshore Development understand that Tall Oaks will not score well enough for demolition on its Section 18 Demo/Dispo application. Furthermore, the feasibility of a complete demolition and redevelopment of Tall Oaks would necessitate the Fort Wayne Housing Authority to defer some of its other ongoing development initiatives, as there are currently four projects under consideration. Although residents express a strong preference for a newly constructed building, the probability of successfully realizing this aspiration remains low. This current housing strategy and modeling is based on a 4% low-income housing tax credit strategy and currently pencils out to a \$27 million development.

Modern amenities will be included in newly rehabilitated Tall Oaks units, including washers and dryers, modern appliances and cabinetry, and air conditioning. The Tall Oaks rehabilitation plan is estimated to be completed in three phases over the next three years. In each phase, units with supportive features will be available for individuals with mobility, hearing, or visual impairments.

In accordance with Section 504, in each phase of construction with federally assisted financing, at least five percent (5%) of the dwelling units will be designed to accommodate individuals with limited mobility, and two percent (2%) of the dwelling units will be equipped for those with hearing or visual impairments.

In accordance with Section 504, in each phase of construction with federally assisted financing, at least five percent (5%) of the dwelling units will be reachable to persons with mobility needs, and two percent (2%) of the dwelling units will be reachable for those with hearing or visual impairments.

Additionally, phases of construction receiving funding from the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority (IHCDA) will meet their minimum design and construction requirements.

The phasing approach of the housing plan will not only create a mixed-income community but will also:

- » Provide speed of execution for redevelopment
- » Incorporate a variety of housing options to meet the needs of current and future residents
- » Incorporate high-quality architecture, landscape, and urban design
- » Incorporate security strategies to keep residents safe
- » Create an infrastructure with access to high-speed internet

FINANCING PLAN

The financing plan will leverage the maximum amount of Federal, state, local, and private dollars available for housing financing. The FWHA, Brinshore Development, and the City of Fort Wayne will strategically pursue funding from the following resources:

- » Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)
- » Tax Exempt Bond Financing
- » State and local HOME Funds
- » National Housing Trust Funds
- » Housing in Energy Efficiency (HIEE) Funds
- » City HOME and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds
- » Federal Home Loan Bank (AHP) Funds
- » Private Construction and Permanent Debt

Tall Oaks will be redeveloped in one transaction. The offsite program, which will be further developed as parcels are acquired, will be developed in a multi-phased approach.

NEXT STEPS

Land Use Approvals

Any land use approvals needed to implement this plan will follow the City of Fort Wayne's process. The City of Fort Wayne's parcels are zoned for residential use, and Tall Oaks Apartments will maintain or update its current zoning accordingly. Rezoning the land in the neighborhood to make it more amenable to housing and businesses is also a strategy that will be employed, as needed.

Site Control

FWHA owns the public housing site, Tall Oaks Apartments. Many off-site parcels within the boundary are owned by the City of Fort Wayne and private citizens. Once the offsite plan is further crystallized, FWHA will pursue the acquisition of contiguous sites for additional development opportunities of multi-family and single-family units.



9.

PEOPLE PLAN



PEOPLE PLAN

The People Plan is a comprehensive strategy designed to improve the quality of life for all residents by addressing critical issues in education, health and wellness, employment, and youth engagement. Based on extensive community assessments, surveys, and focus groups, this plan is tailored to meet the unique needs and aspirations of the SEFW CNI Neighborhood.

Key principles of engagement, health and safety, economic opportunity, lifelong learning, and sustainable development guide the People Plan. These principles will shape every aspect of the plan, ensuring that all residents, regardless of age, background, or financial circumstances, have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive.

By aligning with these principles, the People Plan aims to create a community where all residents feel valued, supported, and motivated to reach their full potential. This transformation effort is not just about physical changes to the neighborhood; it's about building community pride, shared responsibility, and meaningful connections among neighbors for a better future.

Guiding Principles

The Housing Plan for the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation is anchored by the following guiding principles:

- » **Engagement**
Every resident's voice matters. The plan is shaped by the insights and needs of the community, gathered through comprehensive assessments, surveys, and focus groups. It ensures that all demographics, including children, youth, adults, and seniors, are represented and that their specific needs are addressed.
- » **Health and Safety**
A healthy and safe environment is foundational to the community's well-being. The People Plan prioritizes initiatives that support physical wellness and emotional well-being, reduce crime, and improve overall safety, ensuring that all residents feel secure and supported.
- » **Economic Empowerment**
Employment opportunities and economic development are crucial for the prosperity of Southeast Fort Wayne. The plan focuses on addressing challenges to employment, providing job training, and creating pathways for economic mobility and financial independence.

- » **Education and Lifelong Learning**
Access to quality education at all stages of life is essential for personal and community growth. The plan supports educational initiatives that span from early childhood programs to adult education, ensuring that residents possess the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed.
- » **Sustainable Development**
The People Plan encourages sustainable practices that improve quality of life while preserving the community's natural and built environment.

People Lead

Clesia Ventures will serve as the 'People Lead' for the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation Plan. The People Lead is responsible for coordinating and implementing the People Plan, ensuring that all initiatives align with the guiding principles. Clesia Ventures will work closely with community members, local organizations, and stakeholders to foster collaboration, monitor progress, and adjust as needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

PEOPLE LEAD DEEP DIVE

Clesia Ventures, LLC, formed in 2008, is a real estate development, consulting, and program management firm based in Atlanta, Georgia. CV and their professional group of consultants have over 75 years of combined experience.

Clesia Ventures, and its partners, collectively provide housing development, development consulting, program management, financial modeling and grant writing and management services for public and private organizations around the country.



GOAL 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES

Strategy 3.1: Partner with local schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations to strengthen early childhood education programs, ensuring that young children have a strong foundation for learning.

Data from the resident assessments indicated that only 11% of respondents rated early childhood education as excellent, highlighting the need for improvement in this critical area. Partnering with higher education institutions in Fort Wayne, such as Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW) and Ivy Tech Community College, can provide access to resources, research, and student volunteers to support early childhood education. These institutions can contribute expertise and best practices in early childhood development, teacher training, and curriculum enhancement, helping to build a solid educational foundation for the youngest residents.

Strategy 3.2: Develop comprehensive after-school and tutoring programs for elementary and middle school students, leveraging resources from local universities to provide academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship.

The assessments indicated that 45% of respondents believe the quality of education at the middle school level is mediocre, suggesting a need for additional support.

Collaborating with higher education institutions can strengthen these programs by involving university students and faculty as tutors and mentors. Programs such as service-learning courses or internships for education majors can provide valuable experience for university students while offering essential academic support and role models for younger students. This partnership can also introduce students to college environments early on, encouraging aspirations for higher education.

Strategy 3.3: Collaborate with local high schools and higher education institutions to offer college preparation, career readiness programs, and dual enrollment opportunities, helping students transition successfully to higher education or the workforce.

Survey data revealed that only 36% of respondents feel that high school education quality is good or excellent, highlighting the need for more robust college and career preparation. By working closely with local higher education institutions, such as IPFW, Ivy Tech, and the University of Saint Francis, the community can offer college preparation workshops, SAT/ACT prep courses, and dual enrollment opportunities that enable high school students to earn college credits. These initiatives will help students gain the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in higher education and prepare them for the workforce. Universities can also host career fairs, college tours, and workshops on financial aid and scholarship opportunities to support students' transitions further.

GOAL 4: EXPAND ADULT EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Strategy 4.1: Partner with local higher education institutions to offer adult education programs, including GED preparation, computer literacy, and vocational training, tailored to the needs of Southeast Fort Wayne residents.

With 11% of survey respondents identifying a lack of professional training and skills as a challenge to employment, expanding adult education opportunities is essential. Higher education institutions in Fort Wayne can offer access to courses, workshops, and certifications that align with the local job market's needs. By providing on-site programs in the community or through easy-to-use online platforms, these institutions can help residents acquire the skills necessary to secure stable employment and improve their economic prospects.

Strategy 4.2: Provide financial literacy, small business development, and entrepreneurship workshops in collaboration with local colleges and universities to help residents manage their finances effectively, start new businesses, and achieve economic independence.

The survey identified a need for more financial literacy education, with 7% of respondents highlighting this as a missing service. Partnering with business and economics departments at local universities can bring expert knowledge and resources into the community. These workshops can cover topics such as budgeting, credit repair, business planning, and marketing, equipping residents with the skills to manage their finances and start their own businesses, contributing to the economic revitalization of Southeast Fort Wayne.

By involving higher education institutions in the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation Plan, the community can leverage their resources, expertise, and programs to strengthen educational opportunities for all residents. These partnerships will not only improve the quality of education but also cultivate a culture of lifelong learning, empowering residents to reach their full potential and contribute to the community's growth and prosperity.

GOAL 5: PROVIDE POSITIVE AND ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH

Strategy 5.1: Develop after-school programs, sports leagues, and arts/performing arts initiatives that offer constructive activities and build life skills.

Crime often emerges from a lack of resources and opportunities. Connecting people to programs can help prevent them from committing crimes. With twenty-four percent (24%) of respondents identifying youth violence and crime as significant safety concerns, providing structured, positive activities for youth is critical. After-school programs and sports leagues can provide safe and engaging environments that support personal growth and reduce the likelihood of youth involvement in crime.

Strategy 5.2: Establish mentoring and leadership development programs to connect youth with positive role models and support their personal growth.

Mentoring was highlighted as an essential strategy, with eleven percent (11%) of respondents supporting the development of such programs. By connecting youth with mentors, the community can provide guidance, support, and positive role models, helping young people navigate challenges and make positive life choices.

Strategy 5.3: Implement summer programs and camps that provide educational enrichment and recreational activities during school breaks.

The need for structured summer activities was supported by 11% of survey respondents. Implementing these programs will keep youth engaged during the summer months, providing opportunities for learning, growth, and recreation, which can help prevent summer learning loss and reduce the risk of

negative behaviors.

GOAL 6: SUPPORT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER READINESS

Strategy 6.1: Create job training and employment programs for teens, focusing on skills development and work experience.

With 12% of respondents indicating the need for job training and employment programs for youth, these initiatives will provide teens with valuable work experience and skills development. By preparing young people for the workforce, the community can help break the cycle of poverty and set them on a path to success.

Strategy 6.2: Partner with local businesses to offer internships and job shadowing opportunities, helping youth explore career paths and gain real-world experience.

Offering internships and job shadowing opportunities can provide young people with practical insights into various career options. These opportunities enable young people to explore their interests, gain valuable experience, and establish professional networks, laying the groundwork for successful careers.

GOAL 7: IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

Strategy 7.1: Partner with local healthcare providers to offer regular health screenings, emotional wellness counseling, and community-based wellness programs tailored to local needs.

The assessments indicated that 10% of households have unmet emotional support needs, and 11% require assistance with weight management. By collaborating with healthcare providers, the community can deliver targeted services that address these concerns, resulting in stronger health outcomes and overall quality of life.

Strategy 7.2: Develop nutrition and fitness programs, including cooking classes and exercise groups, to promote healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic diseases.

Survey responses revealed that 11% of residents are seeking weight management support, and 5% noted gaps in access to nutritious food preparation education. These programs can help residents build sustainable habits, improving long-term physical well-being and overall daily functioning.

Strategy 7.3: Implement initiatives to strengthen emotional support services, including counseling and stress management workshops, to address high levels of anxiety and depression reported by residents.

With 10% of respondents indicating a need for emotional counseling, this strategy aims to provide reliable support services that contribute to a healthier and more connected neighborhood. These resources can help reduce stress and emotional strain, contributing to improved overall wellness.

Across all three strategies, Community Health Workers (CHWs) will serve as a vital bridge between residents and the health and wellness services available to them. These trusted individuals will assist with health screenings, wellness education, and connecting residents to care, helping to build trust and improve participation in health-related programs. To support this effort, the Fort Wayne Housing Authority's YouthBuild Program, under Construction Plus, will offer a nationally recognized Community Health Worker Certificate. This initiative not only equips local youth with valuable, career-ready skills but also ensures that the neighborhood is supported by a growing network of trained Community Health Workers (CHWs) who understand the unique needs and experiences of the community.

GOAL 8: IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS

Strategy 8.1: Partner with local businesses and industries to create job opportunities within the SEFW CNI neighborhood, focusing on sectors such as healthcare, service providers, and manufacturing.



Data from the survey shows that transportation issues (19%) and lack of local job opportunities (10%) are significant employment challenges. By focusing on creating jobs within the community, these challenges can be reduced by providing residents with greater access to employment and economic mobility.

Strategy 8.2: Establish job training and career coaching programs that equip residents with the skills needed for available jobs, including technology and customer service roles.

Eleven percent (11%) of respondents identified a lack of professional training and skills as a challenge to employment. By providing targeted job training and career coaching, the community can help residents develop the skills necessary to secure and retain employment, contributing to economic growth.

Strategy 8.3: Provide support services such as transportation assistance and affordable childcare to remove obstacles to employment.

Transportation and affordable childcare were identified as critical challenges to employment for 19% and 12% of respondents, respectively. Offering support services to address these issues will make it easier for residents to find and maintain employment, improving their economic stability and quality of life.

GOAL 9: SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Strategy 9.1: Offer workshops and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, including business planning, marketing, and access to capital.

The survey identified a need for more support for small businesses in the community. Supporting entrepreneurship through workshops and resources will encourage local business development, create jobs, and boost the local economy.

Strategy 9.2: Highlight and support local small business incubators to assist startups and strengthen economic growth within the community.

By supporting local business incubators, the community can provide the necessary resources for startups to thrive, encouraging innovation and a broader economic base. This strategy will help create a vibrant local economy that benefits all residents.



10.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN



NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

The Neighborhood Plan addresses a range of quality-of-life concerns, organized under the broad themes of Safety & Security, Mobility & Connectivity, and Environment & Resource Efficiency. With the SEFW CNI vision in mind, the Neighborhood Plan aims to create a new legacy that encourages connection and ease of movement through carefully crafted improvement projects intended to make the SEFW CNI neighborhood more navigable, safer, and mindful of environmental impact.

Guiding Principles

The Neighborhood Plan for the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation is anchored by the following guiding principles:

- » **Addressing Neighborhood Safety**
Building stronger relationships, expanding and creating local programs, and ensuring safe mobility.
- » **Increasing Transport Access**
Expanding affordable, multi-modal transit networks that provide convenient and reliable access, connecting Tall Oaks, the SEFW CNI neighborhood, and the Fort Wayne metro area.

- » **Thinking Forward**
Expanding sustainability efforts and outdoor recreational spaces to improve community well-being.
- » **Supporting a Thriving Community for All**
Creating opportunities that encourage social, educational, and recreational activities.

Neighborhood Lead

The City of Fort Wayne will serve as the ‘Neighborhood Lead’ for the SEFW CNI Neighborhood Transformation Plan. The Neighborhood Lead is responsible for the coordination and implementation of the Neighborhood Plan, ensuring that all initiatives align with the guiding principles. The City of Fort Wayne will work closely with community members, local organizations, and stakeholders to foster collaboration, monitor progress, and adjust as needed to achieve the desired outcomes.

NEIGHBORHOOD LEAD DEEP DIVE

Fort Wayne, Indiana, is a rapidly developing city in the northeastern part of the state, known for its rich history, strong economy, and vibrant culture. As the second-largest city in Indiana, it combines urban amenities with suburban charm. Key industries include manufacturing, healthcare, and education, with major employers like the University of Saint Francis and Parkview Health.

The Community Development Department guides the city’s growth through strategic planning and initiatives aimed at improving infrastructure, promoting affordable housing, and boosting economic development. Ongoing urban revitalization efforts include redeveloping the riverfront, creating open spaces, and enhancing transportation networks, all reflecting Fort Wayne’s commitment to sustainability, walkability, and community engagement.



GOAL 10: IMPROVING POLICING AND SECURITY EFFORTS

Strategy 10.1: Strengthen policing visibility in the SEFW CNI neighborhood

Lighting and police presence are essential factors to consider when moving into a developing and revitalizing community. Minimal lighting and police presence can lead to criminal activities such as drug deals, gunshots, gang-related activity, and car break-ins. During the resident assessments at Tall Oaks Apartments, the issues of drug-related activity were profound. The community survey revealed that the most prevalent criminal activity or criminally associated activity in the area is hearing gunshots (30%), gang-related activity (9%), and Car break-ins (9%). This criminal activity was mirrored in the resident assessments, where the three most prevalent crimes or criminally associated activity were Car break-ins (12%) and hearing gunshots (8%).

Drug activity – a lot of people in and out at different times of day and night.

Tall Oaks Apartments Resident



When asked about safety improvement strategies, fifteen percent (15%) of the SEFW CNI neighborhood and Tall Oaks Apartments residents wanted more frequent and visible police patrols within the neighborhood. Additionally, eighteen percent (18%) of the SEFW CNI neighborhood and Tall Oaks Apartments residents wanted better and more street lighting within the neighborhood. In comparison, seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents wish to have better security systems (i.e., cameras, license plate readers) installed in their neighborhood. Improving lighting by installing sun-powered lighting, adding additional security systems such as cameras, and increasing the frequency of police/security patrols will help deter criminal activity. The criminal activity being mentioned by the residents shall be minimized. Collaborating with local organizations and the City of Fort Wayne will ensure a community effort at improving safety and security in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.

Strategy 10.2: Create a SEFW-wide crime and safety task force to encourage safety, facilitate communication around safety issues, and build stronger relationships with law enforcement.

SEFW CNI residents and their surrounding neighborhoods need to be at the forefront of improving safety in their community. The community survey showed that fourteen percent (14%) of respondents wanted some form of community crime watch program and community policing. Similarly, resident assessments showed that thirteen percent (13%) of respondents wanted some form of community crime watch program and community policing. SEFW CNI residents and their surrounding neighborhoods need to be at the forefront of promoting

Residents can understand safety issues through a task force and collectively suggest viable solutions. Empowered residents can lead the way in encouraging innovative solutions to improve safety and build stronger relationships with law enforcement.

While numerous ideas exist, ranging from police walking patrols and neighborhood watch programs to conflict resolution skill-building and gun buyback events, residents will take the lead in deciding what works in their community and making it happen. Collaborating with local organizations and entities programs will not only improve the SEFW CNI neighborhood’s knowledge about crime prevention and community safety but also reduce the prevalence of crime and violence in the SEFW CNI neighborhood and the surrounding area.

“A lot of criminal activities; willing to provide info to property management, but not police. Police aren’t helpful”

Tall Oaks Apartments Resident



GOAL 11: IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ROUTES FOR ALL ABILITIES

Strategy 11.1: Provide ADA-compliant features throughout the SEFW CNI neighborhood

When asked about the condition of sidewalks, trails, roads, bus stops, and public transportation in the Southeast Fort Wayne area, 66% of respondents rated sidewalk conditions as either fair or poor. Among residents of Tall Oaks Apartments, 48% reported having at least one household member who uses walking aids or other physical support. In response, the City of Fort Wayne has taken steps to replace aging sidewalks and install ramps at key intersections to improve mobility. Sidewalk design moving forward should consider a range of physical needs to ensure safe and reliable use. By building on the early improvements initiated through the first phase of the project, the planning area will feature walkways that are better maintained and safer for daily use.

GOAL 12: EXPAND OPTIONS FOR MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY

Strategy 12.1: Making the SEFW CNI neighborhood walkable and bikeable

According to input from residents of Tall Oaks Apartments and the Southeast Fort Wayne planning area, only 9% of respondents use walking as a primary mode of travel, and just 3% use bicycles. This suggests that the area is primarily oriented around vehicle use rather than walking or cycling. When asked about conditions of sidewalks, trails, roads, bus stops, and bike paths, 42% of respondents stated that trails and bike lanes are not usable, while 47% indicated that trails are either not relevant to their location or entirely missing.

Although trails are present along the northern and western edges of the planning area, the eastern side lacks this type of infrastructure. The area also does not have bike lanes or bike-sharing stations. Notably, 21% of Tall Oaks Apartments residents indicated an interest in adding bike lanes and walking or running trails. Coordinating with Fort Wayne Trails, the City of Fort Wayne Public Works Department, and local transit providers to expand trail access and introduce bike-related features would help support a broader range of transportation preferences, encourage active living, and contribute to thoughtful land-use practices.



GOAL 13: ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE LAND USE AND ENERGY PRACTICES

Strategy 13.1: Reduction of Vacant and blighted lots to form pocket parks

According to the SEFW CNI neighborhood, sixteen percent (16%) of respondents believe the greatest weakness of the neighborhood is the presence of vacant or abandoned properties. While this presents a challenge, these properties also represent opportunities for future investment. As improvements take shape, vacant land can be repurposed for productive community use. Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents feel there are not enough recreational facilities or spaces, and ten percent (10%) believe there are too few park areas in the neighborhood.

In collaboration with the City of Fort Wayne's ongoing initiatives, this vacant land can be cleared and transformed into pocket parks. These spaces would support recreational activities for young people and serve as community education zones by providing valued hands-on programs. Survey feedback showed that forty-one percent (41%) of respondents have limited access to learning opportunities related to responsible land use and environmental topics. The proposed pocket parks could offer practical programs like gardening, composting (noted by 32% of respondents), and efficient water use practices (highlighted by 85% of respondents as especially valuable).

Strategy 13.2: Identify opportunities to incorporate alternative energy systems into buildings.

The environment and sustainability focus group identified building-mounted systems that harness sunlight as the most viable energy improvement for the SEFW CNI neighborhood. According to community feedback, fourteen percent (14%) of SEFW CNI respondents indicated that resource-efficient building practices would be among the most impactful environmental enhancements for the area. Households with limited income, rental tenants, and small businesses often experience high utility costs. Improving the efficiency of existing structures and creating programs that allow residents to participate in shared local energy solutions can help ease the financial burden of utilities in the SEFW CNI. Beginning a dialogue with the City of Fort Wayne about adapting zoning regulations could support and encourage these efforts.



11.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



*Creating a new legacy
that promotes community,
affordability, and opportunity
for ALL*

SEFW CNI Neighborhood

A well-crafted plan is only as effective as the individuals tasked with bringing it to life. In the case of the SEFW CNI Transformation plan, there are three key implementation entities responsible for overseeing its execution. These organizations play a crucial role in ensuring the plan is carried out successfully and effectively. The entities involved are:



Together, these organizations will collaborate to ensure that the objectives of the SEFW CNI Transformation plan are met and that meaningful progress is achieved.

Ongoing Engagement and Capacity Building

The Fort Wayne Housing Authority will establish an ongoing SEFW CNI Implementation Steering Task Force to provide advice, ensure implementation, and achieve the project’s goals. This committee will comprise the SEFW CNI Resident Advisory Council, SEFW CNI community members, and community stakeholders. Furthermore, each sub-plan of this transformation plan will have a task force consisting of partners and stakeholders that will manage the implementation process from a micro level. In contrast, the SEFW CNI Implementation Steering Task Force will manage the implementation process at a macro level.

Outside of the Steering Task Force Committee, Fort Wayne Housing Authority and Brinshore Development will meet with Tall Oaks Apartments and SEFW CNI residents to discuss the housing plan. Meetings will be held regularly to cover a range of topics related to the redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments. This will include meetings about the Section 18 process and its implications for residents, relocation meetings specifically focusing on the Housing Choice Voucher and Project-Based Voucher Program, design concept meetings, resident preparedness meetings, and general information and project update meetings. These meetings will provide the Fort Wayne Housing Authority, Clesia Ventures, and Brinshore Development with continued community insight into implementing the housing plan and offer regular updates to residents regarding the redevelopment plan.

Partner Roles and Responsibilities

Throughout the SEFW CNI planning process, a broad network of community partners has actively contributed to shaping the Transformation Plan. These partners, representing sectors such as education, workforce development, housing, healthcare, youth services, and economic mobility, have participated in advisory committees, visioning sessions, resident engagement, and strategic work groups. Many of these organizations also currently collaborate with the Fort Wayne Housing Authority (FWHA) through ongoing programs like ROSS (Resident Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency), FSS (Family Self-Sufficiency), YouthBuild, the FW Homeownership Program, and the recently awarded Jobs Plus initiative.

Their longstanding service to the SEFW community has provided valuable insights into both the challenges and opportunities residents face. While formal Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) specific to the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative have not yet been executed, targeted discussions are underway with each partner to explore the most effective alignment of their services, capacity, and expertise within the implementation framework. These discussions are intended to clarify roles, responsibilities, and resource contributions as part of a cohesive strategy to bring the vision of the SEFW Transformation Plan to life. We anticipate finalizing roles and formalizing commitments to ensure seamless collaboration as we move towards the first phase of implementation.

PARTNER	ORGANIZATION FOCUS AREA	CHOICE IMPLEMENTATION AREA	CHOICE IMPLEMENTATION ROLE & RESPONSIBILITY
City of Fort Wayne	City Development	Neighborhood	Coordinate infrastructure, zoning and land use; support financing efforts for redevelopment
Brinshore Development	Housing Redevelopment	Housing	Lead housing redevelopment planning and implementation for Tall Oaks and offsite housing
YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	Health & Wellness	People	Provide mentoring, fitness, wellness and emotional wellness programming to youth and families
Fort Wayne Community Schools	Education	People	Support K-12 education strategies including after-school and academic enrichment programs
Allen County	County Development	Neighborhood	Collaborate on neighborhood infrastructure, permitting, and coordination with county services
East Allen County Schools	Education	People	Support middle and high school academic engagement and college/career readiness programs
Come As You Are Community Church	Community Building	People	Support community engagement, family services, and mentoring initiatives
Vincent Villages	Housing	Housing	Collaborate on affordable housing and supportive housing strategies
Southeast Area Partnership	Neighborhood Development	Neighborhood	Assist in neighborhood capacity building and community planning engagement
Fort Wayne Urban League	Economic Education	People	Provide job readiness, financial literacy, and economic mobility programming for residents



United Way of Allen County	Economic mobility	People	Support family stability initiatives, early education, health screenings, and social services
Ivy Tech Community College	Education	People	Offer adult education, GED prep, workforce training, and dual enrollment opportunities
Boys & Girls Club of Northeast Indiana	Youth Education	People	Support youth development programs including after-school and summer engagement
Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce	Economic Development	People	Facilitate workforce connections, job training programs, and business engagement
Bridge of Grace Ministries	Community Building	People	Deliver place-based services, neighborhood safety, and housing stability support
Petra Solutions	Community Development	People	Assist in implementing workforce, economic mobility, and entrepreneurship programs
The St. Joseph Community Health Foundation	Health and Wellness	People	Deliver health screenings, chronic disease prevention, and maternal/child health education
Greater Fort Wayne	Commerce and Economic Development	People	Support local business engagement, workforce readiness, and business development strategies
Fort Wayne Trail	Environment	Neighborhood	Support responsible land use and active transportation initiatives
Adams Township	Community Development	People	Assist with community engagement, housing support services, and youth outreach
Wayne Township Trustee	Financial Assistance	People	Provide emergency financial assistance and referrals to stabilize families



Brightpoint	Housing, Education, Economic and Youth services	Housing	Assist with wraparound services for families including housing, education, and workforce
Martin Luther King Montessori School	Education	People	Support early childhood education and readiness for Pre-K youth
Abbott Elementary	Education	People	Collaborate on elementary school-based programs focused on literacy and tutoring



Implementation Timeline

The table below outlines the timeframe for completing the associated strategy, divided into three key phases:

- » Short Term (1 month – 12 months)
- » Medium Term (1 year – 3 years)
- » Long Term (3 years and beyond)

This timeline serves as a guide for aligning efforts throughout the implementation process.

HOUSING PLAN

STRATEGY	PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	TIME
GOAL 1. PROVIDE MORE VARIED HOUSING OPTIONS		
1.1. Substantial rehabilitation of Tall Oaks Apartments using Low Income Housing Tax Credits.	Brinshore Development, FWHA	Medium
1.2 Develop offsite new construction income-based housing the SEFW Community using FWHA’s Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program.	FWHA, Vincent Villages, Brightpoint	Long
GOAL 2. HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM AWARENESS AND EXECUTION		
2.1 Partner with organizations to offer grant assistance to low-income and moderate-income homebuyers.	FWHA, Brightpoint, Wayne Township Trustee	Long
2.2 Partner with local organizations to offer homeownership education opportunities.	FWHA, Brightpoint, Fort Wayne Urban League	Medium
2.3. Develop single-family homes for homeownership.	FWHA, Vincent Villages	Long

PEOPLE PLAN

STRATEGY	PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	TIME
GOAL 3. IMPROVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL AGES		
3.1 Partner with local schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations to strengthen early childhood education programs, ensuring that young children have a strong foundation for learning.	Martin Luther King Montessori School, Abbott Elementary	Short
3.2 Develop comprehensive after-school and tutoring programs for elementary and middle school students, leveraging resources from local universities to provide academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship.	Fort Wayne Community Schools, Boys & Girls Club	Medium
3.3 Collaborate with local high schools and higher education institutions to offer college preparation, career readiness programs, and dual enrollment opportunities, helping students transition successfully to higher education or the workforce.	Ivy Tech Community College, East Allen County Schools	Short
GOAL 4. EXPAND ADULT EDUCATION AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES		
4.1 Partner with local higher education institutions to offer adult education programs, including GED preparation, computer literacy, and vocational training, tailored to the needs of Southeast Fort Wayne residents.	FWHA (YouthBuild), Ivy Tech Community College, Brightpoint	Short
4.2 Provide financial literacy, small business development, and entrepreneurship workshops in collaboration with local colleges and universities to help residents manage their finances effectively, start new businesses, and achieve economic independence.	Brightpoint, Fort Wayne Urban League	Short



GOAL 5. PROVIDE POSITIVE AND ENGAGING OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH		
5.1 Develop after-school programs, sports leagues, and arts/performing arts initiatives that offer constructive activities and build life skills.	Boys & Girls Club, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne Boys & Girls Club, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	Medium
5.2 Establish mentoring and leadership development programs to connect youth with positive role models and support their personal growth.	Come As You Are Church, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	Medium
5.3 Implement summer programs and camps that provide educational enrichment and recreational activities during school breaks.	YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, Boys & Girls Club	Short
GOAL 6. SUPPORT YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND CAREER READINESS		
6.1 Create job training and employment programs for teens, focusing on skills development and work experience.	FWHA (YouthBuild), Fort Wayne Urban League, Brightpoint	Short
6.2. Partner with local businesses to offer internships and job shadowing opportunities, helping youth explore career paths and gain real-world experience.	Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce	Medium
GOAL 7. IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES		
7.1 Partner with local healthcare providers to offer regular health screenings, emotional wellness counseling, and community-based wellness programs tailored to local needs.	St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, YMCA	Short
7.2 Develop nutrition and fitness programs, including cooking classes and group exercise sessions, to encourage healthy routines and reduce the risk of chronic conditions.	YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne, St. Joseph Community Health Foundation	Medium



7.3.	Implement initiatives to strengthen emotional support services, including counseling and stress management workshops, to address high levels of anxiety and depression reported by residents.	St. Joseph Community Health Foundation, YMCA of Greater Fort Wayne	Medium
GOAL 8. IMPROVE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RESIDENTS			
8.1	Partner with local businesses and industries to create job opportunities within the SEFW CNI neighborhood, focusing on sectors such as healthcare, service providers, and manufacturing.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), FWHA (YouthBuild), Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce, Greater Fort Wayne	Long
8.2	Establish job training and career coaching programs that equip residents with the skills needed for available jobs, including technology and customer service roles.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), FWHA (YouthBuild), Brightpoint, Ivy Tech Community College	Medium
8.3	Provide support services such as transportation assistance and affordable childcare to remove obstacles to employment.	FWHA (Jobs Plus), Wayne Township Trustee, Adams Township	Medium
GOAL 9. SUPPORT ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT			
9.1	Offer workshops and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, including business planning, marketing, and access to capital.	Brightpoint, Petra Solutions	Short
9.2	Highlight and support local small business incubators to assist startups and strengthen economic growth within the community.	Greater Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce	Short

NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

STRATEGY		PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	TIME
GOAL 10. IMPROVING POLICING AND SECURITY EFFORTS			
10.1	Strengthen policing visibility in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.	City of Fort Wayne, Allen County	Medium
10.2	Create a SEFW-wide crime and safety task force to encourage safety, facilitate communication around safety issues, and build stronger relationships with law enforcement.	Bridge of Grace Ministries, City of Fort Wayne	Short
GOAL 11. IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY ROUTES FOR ALL ABILITIES			
11.1	Provide ADA-compliant features throughout the SEFW CNI neighborhood	City of Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Trail	Long
GOAL 12. EXPAND OPTIONS FOR MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY			
12.1	Making the SEFW CNI neighborhood walkable and bikeable.	City of Fort Wayne, Fort Wayne Trail	Long
GOAL 13. ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE LAND USE AND ENERGY PRACTICES			
13.1	Reduction of Vacant and blighted lots to form pocket parks.	Bridge of Grace Ministries, City of Fort Wayne	Long
13.2	Identify opportunities to incorporate alternative energy systems into buildings.	City of Fort Wayne, Petra Solutions	Long

Performance Tracking and Management

To ensure the success of the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan, a robust system for performance tracking and management will be implemented. This will involve collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Plan Leads, in collaboration with community partners, will be responsible for collecting and analyzing this data to assess the effectiveness of the various strategies.

STRATEGY	ACTION	KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
OBTAINABLE AND AFFORDABLE QUALITY HOUSING		
Goal 1 Provide more varied housing options		
Strategy 1.1 Substantial rehabilitation of Tall Oaks Apartments using Low Income Housing Tax Credits.	1. Commence pre-development process by applying for Low Income Housing Tax Credits.	1. Use Low Income Housing Tax Credits to supplement redevelopment of Tall Oaks Apartments.
Strategy 1.2 Develop offsite new construction income-based housing the SEFW Community using FWHA's Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program.	1. Acquired land for development. 2. Expand FWHA's Project-Based Voucher (PBV) Program.	1. Secure land for development.
Goal 2 Homeownership program awareness and execution		
Strategy 2.1 Partner with organizations to offer grant assistance to low-income and moderate-income homebuyers.	1. Identify partners that offer homeownership assistance programs.	1. Assisting ten (10) homebuyers secure income assistance.

Strategy 2.2 Partner with organizations to offer grant assistance to low-income and moderate-income homebuyers.	1. Identify partners that offer homeownership assistance programs. 2. Promote the programs to SEFW CNI community	1. Five percent (5%) improve program enrolment annually.
Strategy 2.3 Develop single-family homes for homeownership.	1. Identify additional funding resources for construction and down payment assistance of single-family homes 2. Identify partnering agencies to assist with the application and qualifying process.	1. Construction of five (50 single-family homes annually.
EDUCATION & YOUTH		
Goal 3 Improve Access to Quality Education for All Ages		
Strategy 3.1 Partner with local schools, higher education institutions, and community organizations to strengthen early childhood education programs, ensuring that young children have a strong foundation for learning.	1. Identify partners specializing in the 0-5 years education category.	1. Five percent (5%) improve in enrolled students annually.
Strategy 3.2 Develop comprehensive after-school and tutoring programs for elementary and middle school students, leveraging resources from local universities to provide academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship.	1. 1. Identify partners specializing in academic support, enrichment activities, and mentorship programs for children 5-13. 1.2 Collaboratively working with partners to create a comprehensive program.	1. Five percent (5%) improve in enrolled students annually.

Strategy 3.3 Collaborate with local high schools and higher education institutions to offer college preparation, career readiness programs, and dual enrollment opportunities, helping students transition successfully to higher education or the workforce.	1. Identify education partners that provide the needed services. 2. Connect children ages 14-18 with programs promoting post-high school opportunities/pathways.	1. Five percent (5%) improve in enrolled students annually. 2. Number of high school graduates per year increasing 3. Number of high school graduates finding post-graduation employment. 4. Number of high school graduates enrolling in tertiary education institutions.
Goal 4 Expand Adult Education and Skill Development Opportunities		
Strategy 4.1 Partner with local higher education institutions to offer adult education programs, including GED preparation, computer literacy, and vocational training, tailored to the needs of Southeast Fort Wayne residents.	1. Identify education partners that provide the needed services. 2. Connect participants with programs promoting adult education.	1. Five percent (5%) improve in enrolled students annually.
Strategy 4.2 Provide financial literacy, small business development, and entrepreneurship workshops in collaboration with local colleges and universities to help residents manage their finances effectively, start new businesses, and achieve economic independence.	1. Identify education partners that provide the needed services. 2. Connect participants with programs promoting financial independence	1. Five percent (5%) improve in enrolled students annually.
Goal 5 Provide Positive and Engaging Opportunities for Youth		

Strategy 5.1 Develop after-school programs, sports leagues, and arts/performing arts initiatives that offer constructive activities and build life skills.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that need services. 2. Promote the existing programs. Connect participants with programs promoting after-school initiatives	1. Five percent (5%) improve youth participation annually. 2. Retention of 50% of participants in programs annually. 3. Reduction in Youth-based violence and crime annually.
Strategy 5.2 Establish mentoring and leadership development programs to connect youth with positive role models and support their personal growth.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that need services. 2. Use existing programs and connect participants with programs promoting leadership and mentorship initiatives.	1. Five percent (5%) improve youth participation annually. 2. Retention of 50% of participants in programs annually.
Strategy 5.3 Implement summer programs and camps that provide educational enrichment and recreational activities during school breaks.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that offer summer programs and camps. 2. Collaborate with identified partners to create programs that address the specified needs of SEFW CNI youth.	1. Creation of an implementable program 2. Ten percent (10%) annual growth in enrolment numbers
Goal 6 Support Youth Employment and Career Readiness		
Strategy 6.1 Create job training and employment programs for teens, focusing on skills development and work experience.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that offer teen job training and employment programs. 2. Collaborate with identified partners to create programs that address the specified needs of SEFW CNI youth.	1. Creation of an implementable program 2. Number of program completions is increasing annually. 3. Number of individuals employed post

Strategy 6.2 Partner with local businesses to offer internships and job shadowing opportunities, helping youth explore career paths and gain real-world experience.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that offer internship and job shadowing programs. 2. Highlight existing programs connect participants with programs promoting leadership and mentorship initiatives.	1. Creation of an implementable program 2. Number of program completions is increasing annually. 3. Number of individuals employed post
COMMUNITY HEALTH & WELLNESS		
Goal 7 Improve Access to Health and Wellness Services		
Strategy 7.1 Partner with local healthcare providers to offer regular health screenings, emotional wellness counseling, and community-based wellness programs tailored to local needs.	1. Identify and partner with health providers and recruit certified Community Health Workers. 2. Collaborate with partners to create quarterly health and wellness fairs to bring health services to the SEFW CNI community.	1. Creation of an implementable program 2. Number of individuals assisted per fair. 3. Reductions in chronic disease prevalence.
Strategy 7.2 Develop nutrition and fitness programs, including cooking classes and group exercise sessions, to encourage healthy routines and reduce the risk of chronic conditions.	1. Identify and partner with health and wellness providers and recruit certified Community Health Workers. 2. Collaborate with partners to create host programs at their facilities.	1. Number of individuals enrolled in each program increasing by ten percent (10) annually for five years. 2. Reductions in chronic disease prevalence.
Strategy 7.3 Implement initiatives to strengthen emotional support services, including counseling and stress management workshops, to address high levels of anxiety and depression reported by residents.	1. Identify and partner with emotional wellness providers and recruit certified Community Health Workers. 2. Collaborate with partners to create quarterly emotional wellness workshops to bring health services to the SEFW CNI community.	1. Creation of an implementable workshops. 2. Number of individuals returning patients increasing annually by ten percent (10%). 3. Improvements in self-reported emotional wellness

ECONOMIC GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT		
Goal 8 Improve Employment Opportunities for Residents		
Strategy 8.1 Partner with local businesses and industries to create job opportunities within the SEFW CNI neighborhood, focusing on sectors such as healthcare, service providers, and manufacturing.	1. Identify and partner with employers in identified sectors. 2. Understand partner needs in employment and employment opportunity expansion strategies. 3. Collaborate with partners to create a portal that assists in job advertisements in specified sectors.	1. Number of individuals employed in identified sectors.
Strategy 8.2 Establish job training and career coaching programs that equip residents with the skills needed for available jobs, including technology and customer service roles.	1. Identify and partner with employers in identified sectors and career training service providers. 2. Collaborate with partners to create a program that assists participants gain employment skills.	1. Number of individuals employed after program completion. 2. Number of individuals completing programs/trainings.
Strategy 8.3 Provide support services such as transportation assistance and affordable childcare to remove obstacles to employment.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that provide the needed services. 2. Establish a supportive services hub in SEFW CNI to ease service access.	1. Number of individuals served annually increasing by fifteen percent (15%)

Goal 9 Support Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development		
Strategy 9.1 Offer workshops and resources for aspiring entrepreneurs, including business planning, marketing, and access to capital.	1. Identify and partner with organizations that provide the needed services. 2. Highlight use of existing programs in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.	1. Number of businesses created after workshops. 2. Number of businesses growing after workshop completion.
Strategy 9.2 Highlight and support local small business incubators to assist startups and strengthen economic growth within the community.	1. Identify and partner with regional and local incubators for collaboration. 2. Promoting the existence of local incubators.	1. Number of individuals enrolled in incubator programs 2. The number of individuals who completed incubator programs 3. The number of small businesses created and successfully retained business after the first year.
SAFETY & SECURITY		
Goal 10 Improving policing and security efforts		
Strategy 10.1 Strengthen policing visibility in the SEFW CNI neighborhood.	1. Installing sun powered street lighting. 2. Installing security systems such as cameras. 3. Increasing police/security patrols.	1. Installation of twenty sun powered lights annually. 2. Installation of security systems
Strategy 10.2 Create a SEFW-wide crime and safety task force to encourage safety, facilitate communication around safety issues, and build stronger relationships with law enforcement.	1. Create SEFW CNI Crime and Safety task force.	1. Creation of task force. 2. Induction of five (5) new members annually.

MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY		
Goal 11 Improve pedestrian-friendly routes for all abilities		
Strategy 11.1 Provide ADA-compliant features throughout the SEFW CNI neighborhood	1. Replace sidewalks with ADA-compliant features.	1. Replacing 1,000 sq ft of sidewalks annually.
Goal 12 Expand options for mobility and connectivity		
Strategy 12.1 Making the SEFW CNI neighborhood walkable and bikeable	1. Expand walking trails. 2. Establish bike-sharing program.	1. Replacing 1,000 sq ft of sidewalks annually.
ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY		
Goal 13 Encourage responsible land use and energy practices		
Strategy 13.1 Reduction of Vacant and blighted lots to form pocket parks	1. Replace blighted/vacant lots with pocket parks. 2. Establish programs at pocket parks.	1. Turning five vacant/blighted lots into pocket parks. 2. Host quarterly events/programs at pocket parks.
Strategy 13.1 Identify opportunities to incorporate alternative energy systems into buildings.	1. Identify actionable opportunities 2. Modify the zoning ordinance to allow for incentivized energy measures	1. Installing energy features in two development projects a year in the neighborhood. 2. Adoption of modified zoning ordinance.

Performance Reports and Reviews

Regular performance reports will be generated and shared with the community, ensuring transparency and accountability. These reports will highlight successes and areas for improvement, enabling stakeholders to make data-driven decisions and adjust the plan as needed. Continuous performance tracking will also help identify new challenges and opportunities, ensuring that the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan remains dynamic and responsive to the community’s evolving needs.

- » **Quarterly Reviews and Adjustments**
Each Plan Lead will conduct quarterly reviews of program data, working with partners to analyze results and adjust as needed to ensure continuous improvement.
- » **Annual Community Report**
A comprehensive annual report will be shared with the community and stakeholders, summarizing achievements, challenges, and adjustments to future strategies for each plan.

The SEFW CNI Transformation Plan will be positioned to achieve lasting, measurable improvements in the lives of residents. Through collaboration and accountability, the SEFW CNI community will be empowered to thrive and grow together.

FINANCES

The financial aspects of the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan are currently being defined and refined. To formalize the monetary contributions, Memoranda of Understanding will be created. Discussions are ongoing with both existing and potential partners to explore collaborative opportunities.

Leveraging Resources

The financial success of the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan will depend on leveraging a broad mix of local, state, federal, and private funding sources. All sub-plan implementation entities will put significant effort into identifying and securing these resources, with strategies including:

- » **Federal and State Grants**
Actively pursuing grant funding from HUD, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, and other relevant agencies to support health, education, and economic initiatives.
- » **Philanthropic Contributions**
Partnerships with local and national foundations, such as the Knight Foundation or the Lilly Endowment, will be sought to provide funding for community engagement, educational programs, and small business development.

- » **Corporate Sponsorships**
Local businesses will be approached for sponsorship of key initiatives, such as job training programs, youth sports leagues, or health screenings, ensuring mutual benefit through community goodwill and local economic development.
- » **In-kind Contributions**
Partners such as educational institutions and healthcare providers will be asked to provide in-kind support, including volunteer hours, facilities for workshops, and materials for training programs.

Sustainability of Funding

To ensure long-term viability, the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan will incorporate sustainability strategies, including:

- » Developing a community investment fund, where local businesses and residents can contribute to specific projects.
- » Establishing public-private partnerships that generate recurring revenue, such as job training programs that create a local talent pipeline for participating businesses.

- » Expanding funding sources by continually identifying new grant opportunities and building long-term relationships with key donors.
- By pooling resources from various sectors, the SEFW CNI Transformation Plan will not only secure the necessary funding for its initiatives but also create a sustainable financial model for long-term impact. This multifaceted approach ensures that the economic burden is not borne solely by one entity and encourages broader community engagement.



12.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Area Media Income (AMI) – Area Media Income is the midpoint of a region’s income distribution – half of families earn more than the median and half earn less than the median.

CDBG – HUD’s Community Development Block Grant program provides communities with resources to address a wide range of needs and priorities relating to housing and economic opportunity.

CN – Choice Neighborhoods. Sponsored by HUD, Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans that focus on three goals: People, Housing, and Neighborhoods. To achieve these goals, communities must develop a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy or “Transformation Plan.”

CNI – Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

Early Action Activity – Up to \$150,000 of CNI Planning Grant funds can be used for limited physical neighborhood improvements during the two-year planning process.

Extremely Low Income – Households with an income under 30% of AMI.

FQHC – Federally Qualified Health Centers are community-based health care providers that receive funds to provide primary care services in stricken areas. They must meet a stringent set of requirements, including providing care on a sliding fee scale based on the ability to pay.

FMR – Fair Market Rent is the rent amount, including utilities (except telephone), to rent privately-owned, decent, safe and sanitary rental housing of modest (non-luxury) nature.

HCV – Housing Choice Voucher is commonly known as a Section 8 voucher. With a HCV, the participant is free to choose any housing that meets the requirements of the program.

Low Income – Households with income between 30% and 60% of AMI.

HUD – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

IHCDA – Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority is the Housing Finance Agency (HFA) that administers the states’ Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program.

LIHTC – Low Income Housing Tax Credit program provides a tax incentive to subsidize the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income tenants. These credits are issued by the Indiana Housing & Community Development Authority.

9% Tax Credits – The 9% tax credit is a competitive tax credit allocation for the construction of affordable rental housing. It typically covers most of the cost of new construction. Tax credit units have set rents, and prospective tenants must meet income limit requirements.

4% Tax Credits – The 4% tax credit is not competitive and does not cover the total cost of new construction. As a result, it is typically claimed for rehabilitated affordable housing and new construction of income-sensitive units that are financed with tax-exempt bonds or other subsidies.



Market-Rate Housing – Housing units unrestricted by income.

Non-Replacement Housing – New housing proposed by the Choice Plan that is not intended to replace Tall Oaks units.

Part I Violent Crimes – Aggravated assault, rape, murder, and robbery are classified as Part I Violent Crimes.

Public Housing – Public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, seniors, and persons with ability needs. Rent is 30% of adjusted gross income. All existing units at Tall Oaks are public housing.

PBV – Project-Based Voucher units are part of the Housing Choice Voucher program, also known as Section 8. PBV’s are tied to a unit.

RAD – HUD’s Rental Assistance Demonstration program supports public housing agencies in preserving and improving public housing and increasing residents’ stability and choice by converting public housing properties’ regulatory status to become permanent affordable Section 8 housing.

QAP – A Qualified Allocation Plan issued by the Housing Finance Agency that describes the process of distributing LIHTC.

Replacement Housing – This refers to rental housing (public housing and PBV housing) that will replace any Tall Oaks units that are demolished, disposed of, or reduced.

School Readiness – This refers to a set of expectations, guidelines, or developmental milestones that describe what all children need to know before entering kindergarten.

TDC – Total Development Cost.

Section 8 Housing – Section 8 is a common name for the Housing Choice Voucher Program that allows private landlords to rent apartments and homes at fair market rates to qualified low-income tenants. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies with funds from HUD.

Transformation Plan – Communities that receive a CN Planning Grant from HUD must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy that addresses the three core goals of the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (Housing, People,

Neighborhood). The Transformation Plan becomes the guiding document for the revitalization of the public and/ or assisted housing units while at the same time, directly transformation of the neighborhood and creating positive outcomes for families.

Wealth Building – Community wealth building aims to address wealth unfairness by improving collective and individual asset-ownership and creating a more stable local economy. Strategies can include expanding affordable homeownership, investing in the capacity of local businesses, and increasing job training.

Workforce Housing – Rental or homeownership housing that is income-sensitive to households earning between 60 and 120 percent of area median income.

