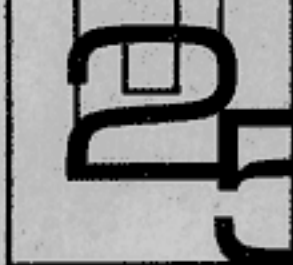


DEPARTMENT OF METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
216 WASHINGTON AVENUE  
EVANSVILLE, INDIANA 47713



# 25 YEARS

of  
**Community Redevelopment  
Progress**

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA

INDIANA



**1954-1979**

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## IN THE BEGINNING: URBAN RENEWAL

...the basic concept of the program on the part of the federal government is to assist towns and cities through loans and grants to clear blighted and slum areas and to assist in putting them to better use.

...It's basically a local program with joint participation by local and federal governments to accomplish objectives important to community life.

The speaker was Ivan Carson, an area supervisor of the Housing and Home Finance Agency in Washington, D. C. Listeners were newly appointed members of Evansville's newest public agency — the Redevelopment Commission. The date was November 30, 1953.

The Commission had been created by Republican Mayor H. O. Roberts for a very specific purpose: to clear a 37-acre area containing some 200 structures, known as the "High Street Area". Most of the structures were substandard and deteriorating according to at-the-time community leaders and Redevelopment Commission statistics. In addition, the area was widely known to harbor numerous "houses of ill repute".

The decision to establish the Commission was made, according to former-Mayor Roberts, in response to "public clamoring" to rid the city of an area which was a "notorious red-light district and in terribly run-down condition".

The project did not move quickly or easily. "It took several years to get off the ground," according to Drachman, "due to the fact we were unfamiliar with what we were supposed to do, plus the fact that the (federal) government didn't know too much about it either."

One of the major problems was the legal situation. Enabling legislation allowing the creation of redevelopment agencies in Indiana cities had been passed by the state legislature before the Commission was established according to William G. Grief, Executive Director and then legal counsel for the Commission in late 1950's. But the legislation was defective. The Redevelopment Commission had to have clear authority to condemn land and to float bond issues to pay the required local share of projects undertaken before it could begin. Grief succeeded in getting the legislation appropriately amended. A friendly suit, **McCoy versus the City of Evansville**, followed, in order to test the law. A favorable opinion was rendered by the Indiana Supreme Court in January, 1959, and demolition proceedings in the project area began immediately.

"It was frustrating and disappointing," Drachman remembers, "but we stayed with it. Bill Grief made the difference."

Original Commissioners John Berry and P. E. Drachman concur. "It was a very blighted area," states Berry. "It was a red-light district, an eyesore for the entire community, and a logical place to start," explains Drachman. "Yes, the decision was definitely made before the Commission was created, and everyone was in agreement that this is what we should do: clear the High Street Area."

A vehicle for undertaking such a project had become available in 1949 when the federal government's urban renewal program was created under Title I of the Housing Act of that year. "The whole purpose of this urban renewal program, in the beginning, was slum clearance," explains Drachman, echoing the explanations of federal officials. "It's something different now, and that's fine, but the idea then was to clear mainly residential slums. That's what we did."

The target area, the High Street district, fit well the types of areas that would qualify for federally-assisted clearance and reuse programs. Thus the Commission was established, and with advice and counsel from federal officials, had voted by April, 1954, to request \$34,750 from the City Council to begin a study of the chosen district. The first federally-assisted urban renewal project in the state of Indiana, as well as Evansville, was underway.

Another hurdle that had been overcome was the problem that the High Street renewal area, as first envisioned, included slightly more commercial than residential structures. The federal requirement was that a target area had to be predominately residential. The boundaries were finally re-drawn, excluding some commercial properties and including more deteriorating housing to satisfy federal requirements that 51% of the area be residential. "It was a gerrymandered project," comments Raymond Anderson, who became Commission Director midway through the project.

Residents of the area were relocated with the assistance of local realtors. The land was cleared and new streets, curbs, gutters and sewers installed. The area was renamed **Midtown Industrial Park** and designated as an area for light industry and offices. This use blended well with the surrounding areas which were almost entirely business and industrial.

*Corporate headquarters of Credithrift Financial Inc. built in the Midtown Industrial Park.*



Midtown Industrial Park was ready for new development in the early 1960's, but a new frustration had arisen, according to Drachman, who had resigned his Commission position but followed the action. "Months and months passed with no one willing to purchase land." It was the decision by locally-owned Credit Thrift, Inc. to locate their national offices in the area, and the development of Midtown Center, a predominately small-office complex, on the site that "determined the direction of that development," according to civic leader Joseph O'Daniel.

Midtown Industrial Park is now an attractive area with numerous thriving businesses. Yearly tax revenue for the area had been \$6,000 prior to renewal. Within ten years after renewal began, the city had realized \$817,828 in real estate tax revenues from the area, well above the \$317,000 which had been the local cash share of the project. Revenues to date, since renewal was complete total \$2,088,893. Indiana's first started and first completed urban renewal project appeared to be, by any measure, a success.



*City-County Administration Building in the Civic Center Complex completed in 1969 as one anchor for downtown redevelopment.*



We employed a firm to develop a master plan for land use in the downtown area — future land use. We employed a firm . . . to do an economic base study. . . to study it into 1985, and project what shape and form our retail community should take and how much space should be devoted to it. . . Out of these studies came the message that the business core should be shrunk to an area that would give us basically 100% utilization of the space that would be left in that core, to serve the needs as they are likely to exist in 1985, and to anchor (the core) with good sophisticated structures that would generate confidence in the builders and land owners and tenants that were left in the downtown area — to the extent that they would invest money in upgrading their facilities and building new facilities.

As a result it was decided that we should have a new government complex. . . to take the place of our antiquated government buildings. . . and a decision was made to locate that in the vicinity of 7th and Main where the present Civic Complex now stands.

As another aspect of the plan the riverfront area should be redeveloped into an apartment complex, transient housing, parking and entertainment. . . The areas between these two complexes. . . with the river anchoring one end, the Civic Center anchoring the other end, Welborn Medical Center anchoring east side of the core and the Old Courthouse and Coliseum anchoring the west. . . we should then develop from within. . .

The **Welborn Project** and the **Riverfront Project** were undertaken almost simultaneously, during 1962, according to Anderson.

The Welborn Project was "a natural", not only because of its strategic location vis-a-vis the Central Business District, but also because of its location within the boundaries of a previously prepared General Neighborhood Renewal Plan (GNRP) area. In 1960-61 federal officials had required development of a residential clearance and renewal target area as a condi-

tion for further funding. The GNRP was bounded by Division, Kentucky, Washington and the High Street project and extended south of the downtown area to include Welborn Baptist Hospital. Federal grants-in-aid were available under Section 12 of the Urban Renewal Act of 1954 to finance clearance, relocation and renewal involving hospitals and educational institutions in a target area. Welborn had been acquiring homes around the hospital for expansion and such expenditures could be counted as the local matching contributions required by the law.

Anderson approached the Board of Directors of Welborn Baptist Hospital and Welborn Clinic to suggest a coordinated project, which would give the two institutions the land they needed for significant expansion and provide adequate traffic flow, parking, and pleasing landscaping. Both institutions elected to become part of the project. The project consisted of 20 acres surrounding and including Welborn Hospital and Welborn Clinic. Ninety percent of the area's 50 structures were substandard or deficient according to a Commission survey in 1963. As acquisition began, the Commission was opposed by a few property-owners. Litigation followed, with the Commission eventually being granted a favorable ruling. By the early 1970's, the hospital had completed a \$10,000,000 addition, and the Clinic had finished its \$2,500,000 addition. In one section of the Project area IBM built an office building which immediately produced more tax revenue than the entire area had produced previous to renewal. Several hundred new jobs were created in the new and expanded facilities. And one of the "anchors" for the Central business District was complete.

*IBM Building (foreground), Welborn Clinic (right), and Welborn Baptist Hospital.*



Meanwhile, the Riverside Project which leaders considered most crucial to the health of the Central Business District was moving out of a lengthy deliberation stage. The project area consisted of 29 acres, containing 86 structures: all old, many vacant, and most in deteriorating to dilapidated condition. These "eyesores" lined the streets for blocks, abutting the Central Business District.

The Committee of 100 had first proposed clearing it in 1955 as part of the program to bolster the lagging economy. The Redevelopment Commission first considered it as a project in 1958. McDonald, who became Mayor in 1961 was adamant: "We had to do something with that host of ware-rooms. Actually, it was an extension of the High Street area." "Removing all those loft-type buildings was necessary," observes Raymond Andersen, then Redevelopment Commission Director. "That area was a millstone around the necks of the downtown merchants. Open land," he concluded, "would be better for downtown than that."

In 1962 things came together for the Riverside Project. The city was working on a levy which was necessary to get federal approval for a project in a flood-prone location. Evansville Future, Inc., with Grief now as Director was active and pushing for the project. The federal renewal agency now had funds for non-residential projects; therefore, Grief and Andersen proposed the project to the Commission. "They approved it in two week," noted Andersen.

Intense efforts to put together a package that would win federal dollars in a highly-competitive situation paid off. Washington approval was received several months later.

Then began a long series of difficulties for the "riverfront anchor" to the Central Business District. In spite of its rundown condition, a number of businesses were located in the area. The majority of the business owners were happy with the opportunity for financial assistance in obtaining newer and better facilities in a better location, but several were "understandably wary" of the risk of abandoning an established location, according to F. Wesley Bowers, Redevelopment Commission attorney at the time.

For a large number of these property owners, it was "a matter of a lot of explanation". Most of the people involved "suddenly realized it was all to their advantage to get rid of the junky property no one else would buy, and get something better". Bowers cites numerous examples of businesses improving dramatically after moving, including one small business that moved one block from the renewal area and instantaneously enjoyed a \$50 a day increase in profits. Bowers recalls one case that ended in a condemnation suit. In the final judgement, the court granted the property owner less for his property than the Commission had offered. "A few days after the ruling, the roof of the building caved in," Bowers recalls.

Acquisition of the property had taken more than two years, but finally demolition was completed, site improvement made, and a search began for a developer who would develop the property with some combination of high rise residential space, hotel-motel

facilities, office space and retail shops as civic leaders and urban consultants had advocated. By the early '70's the Commission had entered into a contract with such a developer, and plans were announced for a major Riverfront development, including several high rise apartment and office buildings and a hotel.

The first phase was completed: a high rise apartment on the west end of the project area. However, the developer was having trouble getting financing to continue the project. Several extensions were granted by the Commission, but the nation was entering the recession economy of the early 1970's. Financial backing for the developer shifted from "difficult" to "impossible", and the Commission finally terminated the agreement.

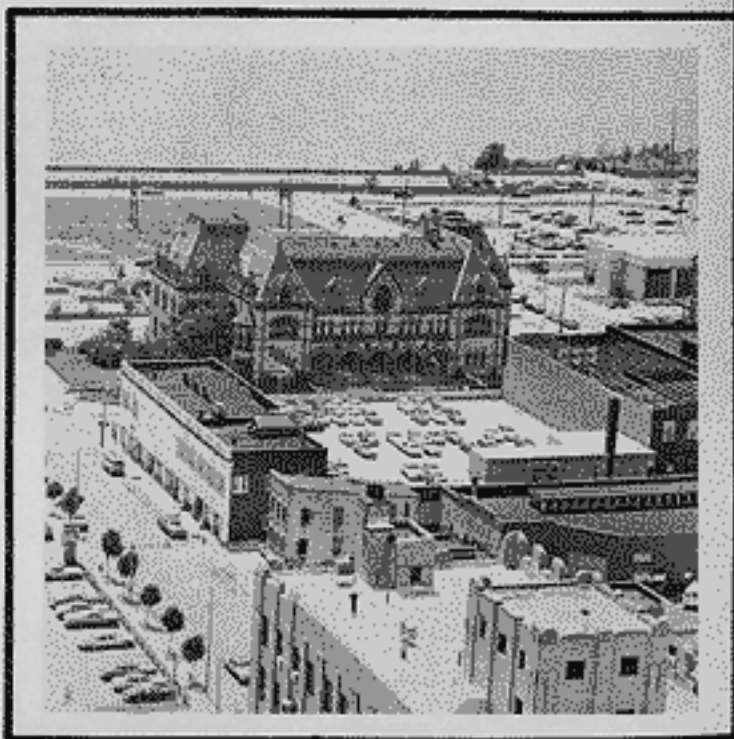
With the demise of the first overall plan for the project area, what policy the Commission should adopt in handling the land became a point of some disagreement. Keith Emge, a Commissioner since 1976 for the Redevelopment Commission, explains the course elected by the majority of the Commission:

When the original plan did not come about, we began formulating a change of direction. The land lay dormant for quite a few years, and the decision was made to start selling off in smaller parcels to individual redevelopers. . .

. . . It was being developed on a piecemeal basis. . . very much to our satisfaction, but with some concern that there was more potential down there than was being realized. . .

Roger Klassy, also a Commissioner, felt keenly the "concern that there was more potential".

There is a lot of pressure when you move into an area to remove the blight. . . then get the property back on the tax roll.



*Old U.S. Customhouse, Post Office, and Courthouse that will be part of the new Marriott Hotel in the Riverview Commerce Center.*



*Riverside One, apartment building that was the first new building in the Riverside Project.*



In the Riverside Project, I saw minimum sale prices established on a suppressed level because the downtown was suppressed. . . because the Redevelopment Commission did remove the blight, was unable to attract the purchasers, (and) arrange financing. . .to see building take place. During that same era the shopping center became quite popular, people moved to the outskirts of the city, (and) the city was dormant. And a lot of people felt we should fill the land with something, anything.

I view my position as preventing that, to hold these parcels intact, land-banking if you will, to the end that they could be utilized down the road when something would change — the economic condition or whatever, would change to a point where (an overall plan for the land) was once again feasible.

Although several parcels of the land were sold, and new buildings constructed, most of the area was still intact when the time came that conditions had, evidently, changed.

In 1974, Andersen resigned as Director of the Commission, and several short term or acting directors followed. Then in the spring of 1976, Vincent Bernardin was appointed to the post. Comments Klassy: ". . .the crux of the whole situation, in good sound redevelopment, is a director that is resourceful. . .we have been blessed with one who is well qualified. . ." Bernardin began carrying out the Commission policy of selling the Riverside land in small parcels. At the same time, concern for its larger potential prompted him to begin, within six months of taking office, to probe for a new overall plan for the project area. Explains Bernardin,

I became convinced there was a need for more hotel rooms in downtown Evansville. The concept of a hotel on Riverside was not a new one — it had been pursued a couple of times. . .It just seemed to me that the time was right.

Well, we (Bernardin, with Commission approval) had a feasibility study done, a full blown market analysis. . . and they came back with very positive market findings. So when that came back, I blitzed the market, so to speak. . .all the major (hotel-motel) franchise people. . ."We would be interested in franchising," many of them said, "but get yourself a local developer that is interested in making an investment' . . .and the first name that came to mind was Greg Kempf.

I passes along a lot of literature (to Kempf) and (talked about) some other things we could do. . .he got kind of excited. . . then he approached Jack Rogers. . . (and) Jack pulled in the idea of the coal companies. . .Possibilities really seemed to be there. Thus, a new overall design for the Riverside Project, called the Riverview Commerce Center, was developed. At its heart is the Old U. S. Post Office and Customs House, a century old structure vacated when the Civic Center was constructed. The Post Office will be an integral part of a proposed hotel. Several office buildings (including coal company headquarters), well-defined open spaces, a heliport and parking facilities are part of the complex. Co-developer Jack Rogers discusses the project:

We have four or five office buildings planned — two are in place now. We have a hotel lined up: a 300-room hotel connected to the Old Post Office.

We believe the Post Office is a monumental structure and very important to the plan. It's going to cost more to use that building than it would have to build from scratch, but we think it's worth it. So many monumental structures are not really re-used. They're roped off with velvet ropes and stay forever off the tax rolls.

*New Midwest Federal Building in the Riverside Project.*



We want to really use the building. It's what will make Evansville and the Riverview Project different. It will house the hotel's main restaurant. There will be lobbies and meeting rooms. There will be a discotheque and downstairs a wine cellar and a rathskeller. The third floor will be executive suites leased on a year by year basis.

As of now everything looks great, really great. All the feedback is good.

Recognizing that "it is just about impossible now for the private sector to completely subsidize, through private funding, a major downtown development," (according to Republican Mayor Russell B. Lloyd) the Redevelopment Commission applied to the Department of Housing and Urban Development for a new type of grant, made available in 1978, and used already for one other project in the city. Called the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG), it allows the city to participate with private enterprise in a commercial venture by purchasing land or providing services or amenities necessary to a project which the private sector cannot undertake because it has no way to recoup its investment. With the approved UDAG's, the city will provide a heliport, parking and other amenities for the Commerce Center.

As far as progress on the project is concerned, public officials agree with Rogers. Says Bernardin, "I am very much encouraged at this stage of the game." "We have great expectations. . ." agrees Keith Emge, who points out that the Commissioners have been "very much behind the project since it became a possibility."

"It's a realizable project," says Lloyd. "One of the keys, of course, was the decision of Citizens Bank to relocate in the Riverside area. . ."

Thus it now appears likely that 17 years after its redevelopment was officially proposed, the Riverside Project area will become a vital, perhaps predominant, part of the Central Business District.

In the meantime, the Riverside Project has "held its own" as far as the generation of tax revenues is concerned. Before renewal was begun the entire 29-acre area paid only \$133,962 annually in real estate taxes. The improvements presently on the project area produce \$204,979 in tax revenues even with much of the land still undeveloped. In a less tangible vein, the threat to the Central City from this previously blighted area has long since been removed.

### PHASE TWO FOR A REVITALIZED CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT: THE DOWNTOWN WALKWAY

When the Welborn and Riverside projects and the privately undertaken Civic Center Complex, were in the planning stages in the early 1960's urban consultants were of the opinion that as these undertakings progressed, the core of the Central Business District would "take care of itself," explains Andersen. "But it became apparent by the late '60's that just wasn't happening," though the work already done had made a contribution in halting rapid deterioration. "That's when McDonald named his Blue Ribbon Committee to revive the downtown area." The consultants were called back and "came up with the Walkway idea."





The committee was made up of private and public leaders concerned with the downtown area. The downtown merchants were well-represented. A 30-block area of the Central Business District became the focus of an intense, multi-faceted program of revitalization.

"The subsequent renewal of the central city has been the result of a forceful alliance between the private and public sectors," states Norman Gerth, at the time a Redevelopment Commissioner and presently Director of the Downtown Merchants and Business Association. "The association has been deeply involved as a part of the private sector."

An ambitious, two-pronged effort to revitalize the 30-block area was launched in 1970. The first prong was basically rehabilitation. Urban renewal funds were obtained for improving sidewalks, curbs and streets; for improving traffic patterns; for landscaping; and numerous other activities. Operation City Beautiful, then a part of the Chamber of Commerce, cooperated with the Redevelopment Commission in a program to paint attractive murals on drab walls. Property owners were encouraged to bring their buildings up to building code standards. Millions of private dollars went into a major rehabilitation of buildings.

The second prong was the creation of a five-block Walkway through the heart of the business district — from the Riverside area to the Civic Center Complex along Main Street.

Regular traffic was removed and an attractive curving drive to accommodate emergency vehicles only was constructed. Trees, flowers and shrubs were set

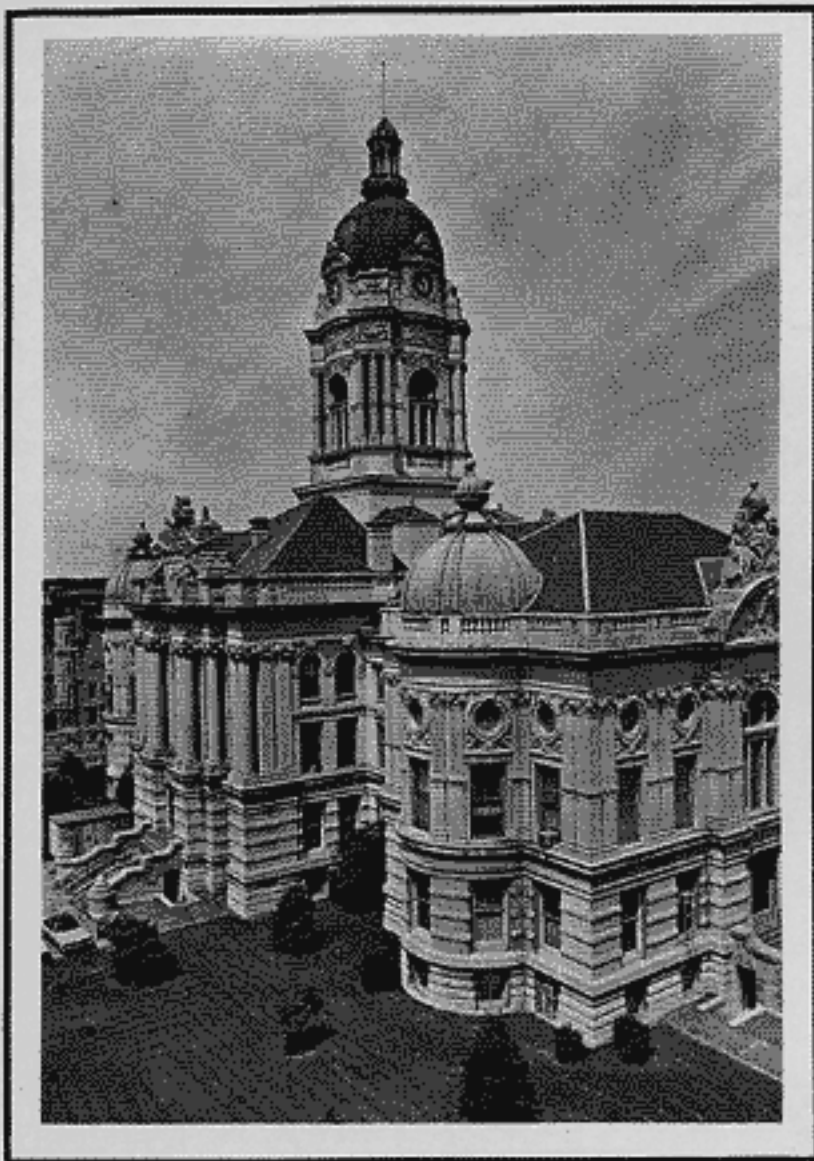
out in large, multi-shaped planters. A distinctive variety of fountains and shaded benches were installed. Attractive globe lights were set in place along the length of the Walkway and in adjoining alleys to encourage after-dark strolling. Speakers for providing a background of soft music were hidden among the shrubs. Striking, cube-shaped street directories were placed at intersections.

The Walkway was to be completed with funds raised 1/3 from federal monies, 1/3 from the city, 1/3 from private subscribers — the property owners along the Walkway. The property owners oversubscribed their percentage and so got a 30% refund in the form of assistance with their property. When an owner's property was up to code, an attractive canopy that went along with the design of the Walkway was installed, (explains Gerth).

A variety of canopies were installed, each compatible with the whole, and with the particular building. City Council passed an ordinance restricting the size and length of extension of outdoor signs. Many canopies were hung on completely new and streamlined facades.

The finished product received national attention among urban designers and has won several awards. "People still come to the city to study the Walkway," says Jeff Marston, Director of the Department of Metropolitan Development.

*Old Courthouse, a National Register property being restored as one anchor for downtown redevelopment.*



More importantly, "downtown perked up as soon as the Walkway started," says Gerth. According to Redevelopment Commission files, retail sales increased 15 to 20% in the two years following construction of the Walkway.

Retail growth has not kept pace in subsequent years; however, with the completion of the Civic Center Complex which includes city, county, federal and school corporation facilities and Vanderburgh Auditorium the district has quickly shifted to a thriving government and service center, according to Joseph O'Daniel. "This is the type of development that was forecasted when we had our first studies done. There are more jobs today in the Central Business District than any other concentrated area of the city."

"Evansville's Central Business District is all government and services now — and that's all right," says former-Mayor McDonald, echoing the unanimous satisfaction (except for problems of ingress and egress) expressed by leaders with the "state of the Central City" a decade after concentrated renewal efforts began.

Two facets of the Central City project which have been only recently carried out are: (1) the preservation of the **Old Courthouse**, stipulated as one of the "anchor-points" of the Central Business District, and (2) the building of a **Downtown Parking Garage**.

The Old Courthouse was also vacated with the completion of the Civic Center. A private, not-for-profit corporation, the Conrad Baker Foundation, was formed to preserve the building and find uses for it. Since 1975 \$7,884,635 in federal funds has been granted by the city to assist the Foundation. Funds are from the Community Development Block Grant, CETA, and the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Services programs.

Off-street parking facilities were considered vital to the project from the beginning, but there was some resistance on the part of several key local officials to "getting the city into the parking business," explains Gerth. Furthermore, the Downtown Merchants had leased the Riverfront Project property for downtown worker's parking, taking off some of the immediate pressure. As more surface land was acquired, however, the downtown was faced with a new shortage of parking spaces. So merchants, business leaders, city and Redevelopment Commission officials and others again joined forces to get, as a Redevelopment Commission project, a multi-story Downtown Parking Garage.

O'Daniel, a downtown businessman involved in every revitalization effort from the first searching steps in the 1950's to the completion of the Parking Garage in 1979, notes that a number of new buildings have been constructed over the past decade in the Central Business District. He attributes this to the strenuous efforts of private sector and public sector leaders working together, the synergistic effect of the location of the Civic Center Complex, and adds that the revitalization of the central city "couldn't have been done" without the Redevelopment Commission during the McDonald administration.



## EARLY REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION EFFORTS IN HOUSING

At the outset of the McDonald administration, with the city in economic crisis and the central city in serious decline, an extensive amount of attention was focused on the problems of the urban core. After commitments had been made to try to cure the "ills" of the Central Business District, the Redevelopment Commission could not concentrate on Welborn and Riverside, because those projects were being slowed down by litigation; so, the Commission staff began to take a serious look at housing conditions in Evansville.

The poor condition of the local housing stock was yet another facet of the city's economic distress, as well as being a social problem. In a 1967 speech to the Board of Evansville Future, Inc., Andersen reviewed the housing situation that had greeted officials in the early 1960's:

- (1) According to the 1960 U. S. Census of Housing, Evansville had 22% more deteriorated housing and 60% more dilapidated or slum housing than the average of South Bend, Gary, Hammond and Fort Wayne.
- (2) 25% of all housing units rated as either deteriorated or dilapidated — 1960 Census.
- (3) A 1964 survey indicated that 40% of all housing was located in blighted areas.
- (4) The number of deteriorated and dilapidated housing units in Evansville increased by 25% between 1950 and 1960, and . . .

- (5) "There are probably more outhouses per capita than any other Northern city of 50,000 or more," (added Andersen).

The first step taken by the Redevelopment Commission in the early 1960's was to undertake a systematic program for housing code inspection and enforcement. A minimum housing code had been adopted by the city in 1955. In 1960 the responsibility for enforcing the code was given to the Redevelopment Commission as an added component of its slum clearance and relocation programs. The systematic program, which was undertaken in 1963, resulted in \$52,740 in repairs being made between that date and 1979. The program was recognized nationally, and numerous other cities requested Evansville officials' assistance in setting up their inspection programs.

Approaches to slum clearance were then studied with attention focused on those areas which were clearly beyond being recovered through the enforcement of housing codes.

"There was an overall strategy," explains Ray Andersen.

Before I came, the commission had (at the behest of federal officials) adopted a General Neighborhood Renewal Plan (mentioned earlier in connection with the Welborn project). Under this plan a broad area, east of downtown extending to Kentucky Avenue, had been targeted as a potential renewal area. \$100,000 had been spent studying the area.

The studies had confirmed that the most blighted section of the target area was "the whole Lincoln-Governor neighborhood — nearest downtown." Tentative plans were being made to undertake a clearance project in that neighborhood.

"But it was a high density area," explains Andersen; ". . . there was a high percentage of blacks. There was no open housing. In 1961 and 1962 there just wasn't any place for them to go!"

Studies had revealed there were other extremely blighted areas in the city, and they were less dense.

One of these was well-known by the community and in fact, had been discussed by the first Commissioners. That was **Villa Sites** — a 57-acre tract with less than 200 structures on the Southeast side of the city. The site was familiar to Mayor McDonald who had been responsible for the patrolling of the area as Sheriff in previous years. "It was a crime breeder," McDonald asserts, ". . . the biggest and worst slum in the city."

The area had no city water and no sewers. A number of the dwellings had dirt floors. Homes were interspersed with open ditches and junk heaps.

Surveys revealed two neighborhoods on the North Side and one on the West Side which were quite similar in overall condition, though they were smaller and less notorious. These included a 57-acre site known as Beverly Heights, a 75-acre site known as Avondale, and the West Side location of Boxtown. A very high per-

centage of housing units in all three areas were best described as dilapidated.

"The idea developed that we could clear these areas. The numbers of people were manageable and, with time and patience, could be relocated in standard housing," Andersen explained.

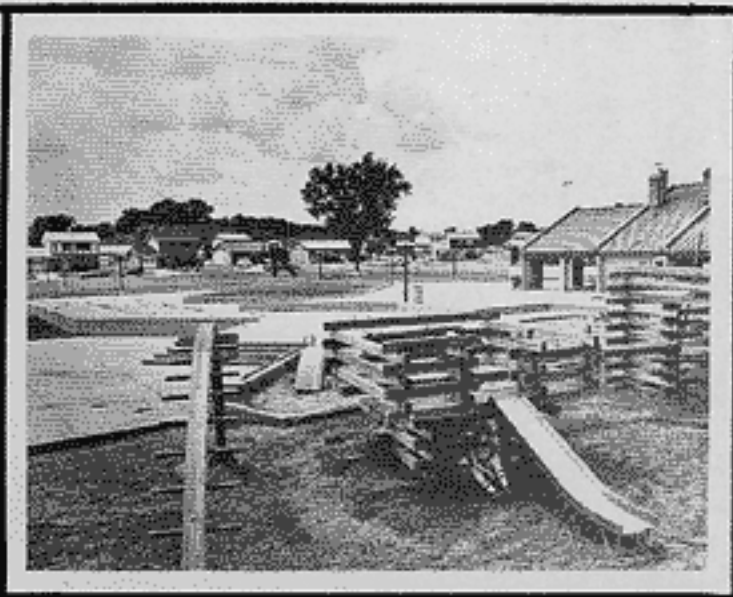
These areas would then be available for new low cost housing: single-family and apartments. This would increase the stock. This was land banking. You have to have land banking if you're going to have a long-range plan for increasing the stock of standard housing for low and moderate income families.

We kept up the code enforcement to slow the deterioration, and worked for an open housing ordinance so blacks could have the opportunity of moving out of the worst slum areas.

Then we looked at the downtown again. Actually, Project A and B were the first moves in this direction. We decided on these areas because they were abutting Welborn, earlier renewal projects, the new Buckner Towers, and the downtown area. We'd start here and move out. Also, we started Project A when we did because Liberty Baptist Church had indicated an interest in sponsoring a low income apartment project on land near the church.

*"Before" — Riverside Project*





*Apartments, park, and houses built in the Parkside Terrace Project.*

## **VILLA SITES REDEVELOPED AS PARKSIDE TERRACE**

In 1965 Villa Sites was selected by the Commission as the place to begin its first strictly residential slum clearance with residential re-use. By 1968 surveys and planning were completed and a loan and grant contract entered into with the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. A Redevelopment official, Dwight Smith, was set up in offices on the site, to be on location for his one large task: to assist the people with re-location.

"We have taken periodic surveys of the people who were moved," says Anderson, "97% we were able to get into standard housing they could afford. Just about everyone we've talked to has been happy with the move, but we've lost track of a few, and we don't know if the change was detrimental or not. Dwight Smith was good with the people."

The 67-acre site was cleared, regraded, and replatted; sewers were installed; new sidewalks, curbs and streets were constructed with names such as Sunburst Boulevard and Lilac Lane.

Initial plans were made for 90-100 single family homes and 350 apartment units. These units could be constructed and sold or rented under the provisions of Sections 235 and 236 of the 1968 Housing Act on the mortgage of a single-family home being purchased by a low-income family.

An agreement was made with the city Department of Parks for construction of a six-acre park and swimming pool in the heart of the project. The notorious name Villa Sites disappeared with the crumbling shacks and the truckloads of trash. This new area was now called **Parkside Terrace**.

The Commission advertised nationally for developers to submit bids for the land with proposals for an overall coordinated design for the entire area. A number of national firms submitted detailed plans. A group of local citizens, ranging from architects and builders to housewives and low income residents, was then appointed to rate each plan on a number of categories: from overall aesthetic impact, to use of space, to cost per square foot.

This process generated considerable local interest, and when the day arrived for the meeting at which the Commissioners were to vote on the recommendations of the citizens committee, the room was filled. A cheer went up when the firm recommended by the committee was chosen. "The people made the decision on this one," commented Gerth, President of the Commission at the time. The chosen-firm of Holtzman and Silverman of Southfield, Michigan, began the project immediately. Though there were some delays, within the five to six subsequent years they had built 85 homes and 322 apartment units on curving streets around the newly completed park. The homes were sold as soon as they were completed for prices ranging from \$18,000 to \$21,000 with interest subsidies bringing monthly payments within reach of lower income families. In 1979 these homes were being resold on the open market for prices ranging in the mid \$30's.

## PLANNING FOR BEVERLY HEIGHTS, AVONDALE, PROJECT A, AND THE CENTRAL CITY PROJECT

With this marked success in residential renewal moving toward completion the Commission moved to the next designated projects — **Beverly Heights and Avondale**.

The plan devised for Beverly Heights was essentially the same as that for Parkside Terrace: single-family homes, to be sold to low and moderate income families under Section 235, and apartment units, built under Section 236 would be clustered on new drives surrounding a park and lake. The name would be changed: Beverly Heights would become **Diamond Valley**.

In keeping with the long-range approach, preliminary surveys of Avondale were begun and residents informed of proposals even as definite plans were being formulated for Beverly Heights.

As the Beverly Heights project was taking shape, several trends indicated the time was right for a review of the downtown neighborhood situation.

A badly deteriorated cluster of homes and buildings lay almost in a crescent formed by the new Civic Center on the North, the Welborn Project on the South and the newly-cleared land which had been the site of the old government buildings on the West. Plans for the major Central City Project were being finalized.

Furthermore, this site lay adjacent to Liberty Baptist Church, whose representatives had indicated to the Commission their interest in sponsorship of housing in the area.

Studies were made confirming the high percentage of dilapidated structures in the area, and an 8-acre tract designated to **Project A** was designated for slum clearance.

HUD had by this time devised a new vehicle for urban renewal projects called the Neighborhood Development Program. Under this concept, a total project was funded in segments on a one-year budget. Areas were to be developed on a staged basis.

Under this arrangement, the Commission submitted in 1969, a package proposal for funds for the clearance of Project A and Beverly Heights, plus the needed funds for the first stages of the Central City Project.

Work began on all three projects in 1970. In Beverly Heights, residents were compensated and relocated, demolition completed, a park and lake constructed, and new sewers and streets installed. A contract was signed with a developer and some housing construction initiated.

Meanwhile, the first step in the long-delayed attack on the near downtown residential slum neighborhoods had begun in Project A. The area was cleared and the Commission began assisting the newly formed Liberty Baptist Corporation in a proposal for a low rent apartment complex to submit to HUD. Solomon Stevenson, Chairman of the Corporation recalls the beginning:

I was Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the church during this time. There was interest in housing because of the great housing need in Evansville. We felt that the church should get involved in more than what happened in our four walls. In 1972 Pastor Robert L. Saunders came to me with the idea, which I took to the trustees. They recommended we form a housing corporation. The congregation approved.

An initial design for the complex received preliminary approval from HUD. However, inflation interfered, the project could not be constructed for the original costs approved, and the corporation had to start over with new plans and new cost estimates.

Meanwhile, the Redevelopment Commission had received approval from HUD for a slum clearance and residential re-use project in Avondale. The commission had also made the decision to continue with slum clearance in the inner-city, designating a 27-acre site abutting Project A and the completed Welborn Project. "It was simply the next step," explains Andersen. **Project B** was submitted to HUD as a slum clearance site.

At this point, the City of Evansville had nine urban renewal projects in final, active or initial stages. (The Commission had completed its part in some of the early ones, but private construction was ongoing.) Since the beginning, a total of 300 acres of city land had been designated as urban renewal land, in addition to the 30-block Central City area being improved. A total of \$13,846,617 federal dollars had been received or committed. The city had earned a reputation among urban officials in Washington and other areas of the nation as a successful practitioner of urban renewal "arts".



## A TIME OF CHANGE: FROM URBAN RENEWAL TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

At the height of the activity, changes were "in the wind". "There was beginning to be real resistance to clearance," Mayor Lloyd recalls. Then, too, citizen participation had become a rallying cry of the 1960's, and this was being heard by officials. Said Andersen in a speech in 1969:

The success of planning programs in the future is going to rest more and more upon the ability of various governmental agencies to meaningfully involve greater number of people in the planning and development process, and thereby achieve the consensus that is going to be necessary in order to achieve significant results.

Finally, the federal system of awarding a specific sum, for a specific project, according to specific federal requirements was being reassessed. HUD was beginning to experiment in the early 1970's with some new approaches.

I (Andersen) learned that HUD was going to choose 12 cities for pilot systems for funding. What they were setting up was a forerunner of the Community Development Block Grant. The cities were chosen by the amount and quality of urban renewal activity. I knew we had a good chance and did everything I could to get Evansville chosen. We were. HUD came to McDonald and asked him to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which committed them to funding a set of projects we would work out. The "we" in this case was not just Andersen speaking for the Redevelopment Commission, but for the entire city government — the Mayor, City Council and every city department and agency were involved in negotiations. "There were intensive meetings between a HUD representative and all our agencies, during which our strengths and weaknesses and needs were assessed. We were working on a 'shopping list' of things we wanted to fund. At one point I felt the HUD rep knew more about the city than we would like anyone to know." Not only were provisions for public housing units included, but also in the package were plans for such items as trunk line sewer systems, and funds to purchase open space for park land and the initiation of a flood control program for Pigeon Creek.

As its side of the agreement, the city promised to work to expand the supply of housing for low and moderate income families, increase opportunity for citizen participation, create equal employment opportunity for minorities, and to provide maximum locational choices for low income families.

The plan was called an "annual arrangement process" for a "community development program".

The memorandum was signed in July, 1971, by Frank McDonald. Russell Lloyd, who was elected Mayor in November of that year quickly picked up the effort and began meeting with HUD officials to work out the many details in so broad an experimental program.

Before the pilot "annual arrangement" could really be tried, however, President Nixon, in January, 1973, declared a "moratorium" on all housing, urban renewal and community development funding. All local projects came to a standstill. After a short period, projects in process such as Diamond Valley were allowed to continue. Plans for Avondale and Project B, not yet begun, were halted indefinitely. A few months later Andersen resigned for a position in private industry.

An era in urban renewal in Evansville had ended.

Reviewing those days when slum clearance had predominated, Neuman Sheppard, who has been Assistant Director and sometime Acting Director of the Commission since February, 1988, says:

A lot of people associate urban renewal simply with bulldozers. But all in all the city has done an standing job. We have replaced bad housing with good on a three-to-one basis. We added some fine recreation facilities. Welborn, with its expanded medical facilities, is a tremendous advantage to the community. The only place where things have been slow, Riverside, now looks good, and we have increased the tax revenues with what is there now. In 1974, Congress passed the Housing and Community Development Act which, for the time being, replaced entirely the system by which a city, through its Redevelopment Commission, obtained a specific sum of money for a specific project, chosen in accordance with fairly strict federal regulations. The new Act created a form of special revenue sharing in which the federal government annually allotted a city a "block grant" of federal funds which replaced the "categorical" grants of former years. The city's first grant was \$2,878,000.

There were some broad guidelines: the money had to be spent within areas where a high percentage of low income, and moderate income people lived. More systematic citizen involvement was required, and a new emphasis on rehabilitating housing was added. But, in the main, the local government had a great amount of discretion in using the funds: setting priorities, developing target areas, creating projects, and deciding how much should be allocated to what.

## THE LLOYD ADMINISTRATION ASSIGNS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM PLANNING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF METRO- POLITAN DEVELOPMENT

The Redevelopment Commission still functioned and had some broad responsibilities but its funding came from the Community Development entitlement which was administered by a city agency created early in the Lloyd administration (1975): the Department of Metropolitan Development. "... We compete for the block grant money the same way everyone else does." Vincent Bernardin, Executive Director of the Redevelopment Commission explains, "and once the determination is made locally by the City Council and the administration that these are the projects we are going to run with, 95% of the time (the Department of Housing and Urban Development) buys it because the new regulations are so flexible, HUD just can't impose its values too much anymore."

With the appearance of Community Development Block Grant money on the horizon, Mayor Lloyd appointed Jeff Marston to the directorship of the Department of Metropolitan Development. He also appointed a Community Development Task Force, including Marston and heads of related departments and agencies to "work out the city's first community development application, which was then submitted in the winter of 1975," Marston recalls.

In a way, city officials were in the same position as the earliest urban renewal officials. "Everybody was new at this!" Marston exclaims, echoing the lament of the first Redevelopment Commissioners. "We didn't know what we were doing; the federal government didn't know what it was doing. . . ! A lot of people were learning, so there was an awful lot of group decision making in setting. . . early strategies."

In other ways, the situation was reversed. In the beginning, city officials had identified a "problem area" — High Street — and had created an urban renewal program to eliminate the problem. Now officials had several million dollars being granted by the federal government and had the task of deciding how most effectively to use the sum for purposes of community development.

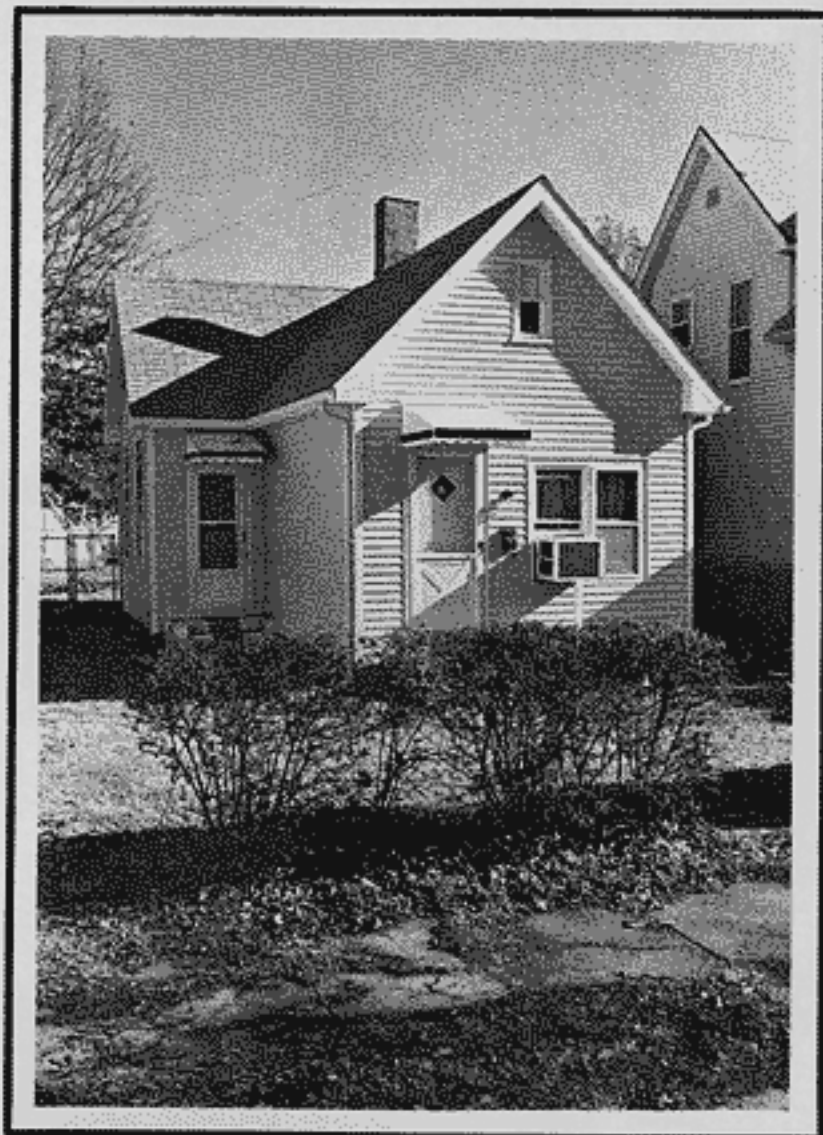
Then, too, there were 20 years of renewal activity to take into account. "Decisions that were made were important in supporting what had been done in the previous 10 to 12 years," Marston explains. But the concept of slum clearance and re-use of land, basic to urban renewal since its inception, was coming in for some major questioning.

## BEGINNING A NEW CONCEPT: NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

"Urban renewal is terribly expensive — and disruptive," offers Mayor Lloyd in discussing shifts in policy. "... We pretty well felt in the case of Avondale and Project B, that they were commitments that had to be honored, but there was a definite change in philosophy," City Councilman David Koehler asserts.

The change in approach was given impetus, Marston believes, at an early public hearing on community development spending, which only two people attended.

There were more councilmen, city planning staff and media people there than neighborhood people. The only reason these people came was they had heard we were going to do a clearance project in their area, and they said "We don't want a clearance project in our area; we want housing rehabilitation." Their pleas had an impact, (Marston says): . . . those two ladies from the Near North side made it easier for the planners to come to the elected officials with some new directions.

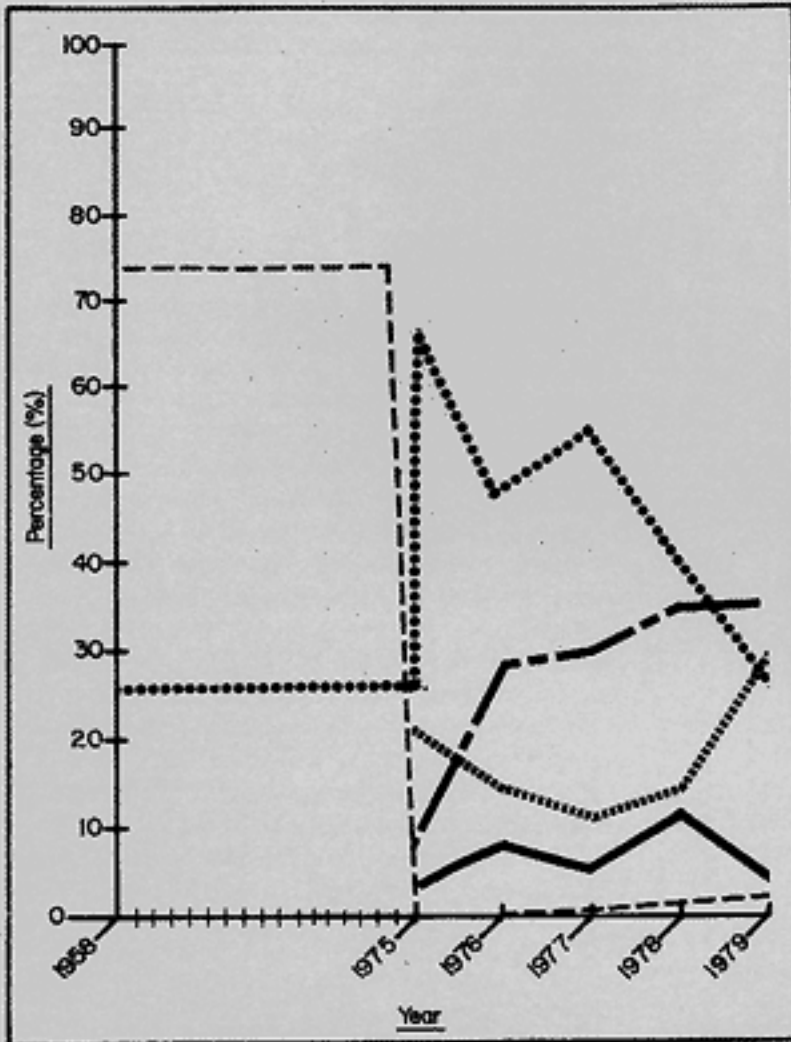


*Small house rehabilitated as part of Neighborhood Revitalization.*

# City of Evansville

## Department of Metropolitan Development

EXPENDITURES BY PROGRAM CATEGORY  
Community Development, Section 312,  
and Action Grant Funds  
as of 10/31/79



	Housing Rehab	Other Neighborhood Projects	Neighborhood Clearance	All Other Projects and Costs	C.B.D. Projects
1958-1974	---	---	26%	---	74%
1975	9%	22%	66%	4%	---
1976	29%	15%	47%	8%	0.1%
1977	30%	11%	55%	4%	0.3%
1978	35%	14%	40%	11%	1%
1979	36%	31%	27%	4%	2%
1975-1979	30%	19%	45%	6%	1%

Prepared: 12/79

The new directions were largely into neighborhoods and into the concept of housing rehabilitation, rather than slum clearance. "The first neighborhood revitalization project signalled a major new community development concept," says Marston.

The Redevelopment Commission would continue with projects already begun, while the Department of Metropolitan Development would build on what was done by creating and implementing "rehab" programs, as well as allocate funds for special projects supportive in designated areas, such as fire protection and drainage projects.

The decision was made not to do more in the Central Business District at that point because, as a result of previous projects, "there was a lot of vacant land, and therefore, the public sector was ahead of the private sector." It was time to "let the private sector catch up," Marston explains.

In the next five years, C.B.D. and clearance activities decreased from 100% to 40% of city revitalization funding.

The housing rehab program and neighborhood revitalization projects jumped from 0% to 49%.

The next crucial question was which neighborhood to choose for rehab programs. After lengthy and sometimes agonizing deliberation two near downtown neighborhoods were selected for reasons outlined by both Lloyd and Marston:

- 1) They were within the broad area where a majority of the city's low income, black and elderly live, in accordance with HUD's general guidelines.
- 2) They were part of the Central Business District retail market; thus, their improved vitality would build on previous development in the downtown area. They were also adjacent to the urban renewal project areas, and would hopefully have a positive impact on those.
- 3) The neighborhoods were in initial stages of deterioration rather than being totally blighted. One neighborhood appeared amenable to a reversal of early blight; the other appeared to be already in reverse. The idea was to prevent blight, to restore the neighborhood before it became blighted, and prevent the loss of families fleeing blight, thus stabilizing the neighborhood.
- 5) The homes were, in large part, structurally sound and economically savable. A fair percentage were owner-occupied.
- 6) The neighborhoods had a prior history of some of their homeowners working together in the interest of the whole neighborhood. In each of these areas, it was necessary to form a neighborhood association, which would participate in the development and implementation of the program. "The development of neighborhood pride, concern, and involvement is essential," says Lloyd, "and the way we try to do this is through encouragement and assistance to neighborhood associations. They become mini-governments lobbying loudly — and effectively for neighborhood benefits."

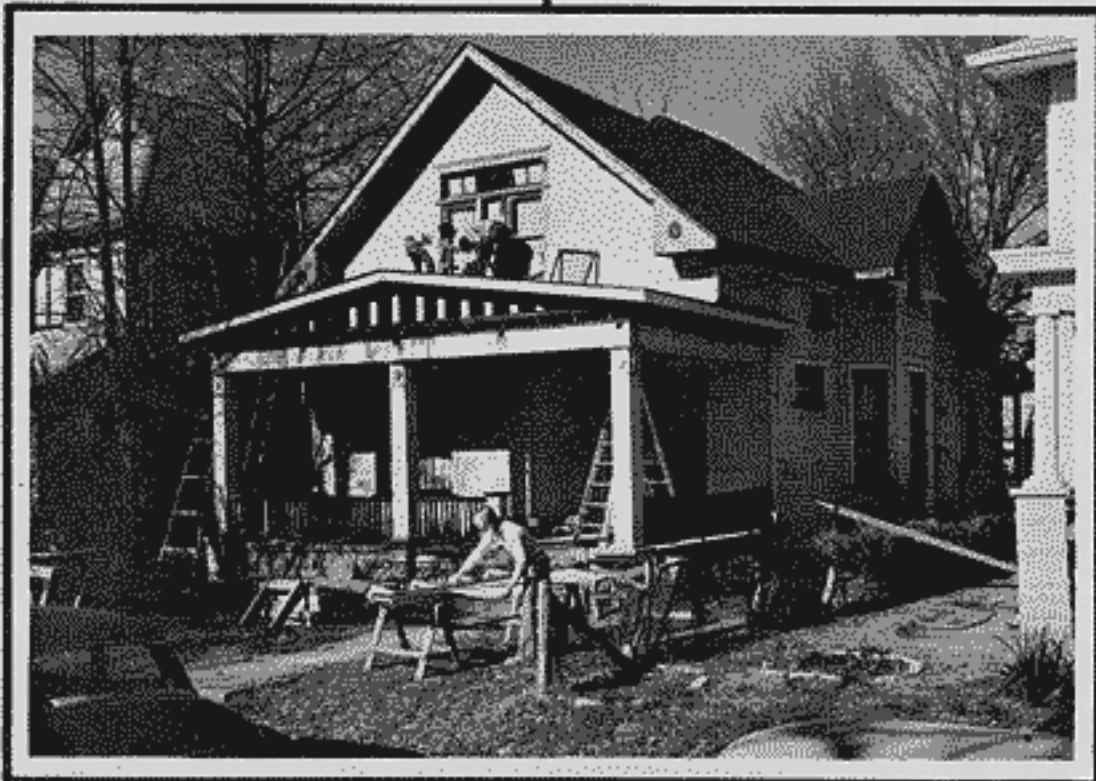
## THE FIRST NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROJECT: BELLEMEADE—BAYARD PARKS

The first neighborhood selected was a racially and economically mixed area, which contained a considerable stock of structurally-sound, large family homes. Bayard Park and East Branch Library were at its heart. It became the **Bellemeade-Bayard Parks Neighborhood Strategic Area**.

The second was the **Riverside Neighborhood Strategic Area**. This area was adjacent to the Central Business District. Although there are a considerable number of apartments in this area, it also takes in several blocks of large, solid and unique homes, built during the city's 19th century "steamboat era". A sizable part of the Riverside Neighborhood fell within the boundaries protected by the previously-enacted Historic Preservation Ordinance. Substantial resources were allocated to these neighborhoods in accordance with federal directives and the local philosophy which stipulate that funding should be concentrated on improving a limited target area rather than being spread thinly over a wide section of the city.

Marston contacted some people who lived in the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks Neighborhood to find residents to form a neighborhood association: the necessary first step in beginning a rehab program. This contact, and a series of meetings, led to the formation of the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks Neighborhood Association. In speaking of the neighborhood and program, Harriet Kimmel, one of the organizers, explains that the neighborhood

had a history of working together even before the formation of the association. They fought a losing battle to keep a school in the area; then joined forces for a variety of reasons, including the time when some agency wanted to put tanks and cannon with barbed wire (in the park) — We didn't really want tanks and cannon and barbed wire, because we



want tanks and cannon and barbed wire, because we think we have a nice neighborhood, and we have a nice park. About 1974, we noticed the neighborhood was right on the borderline. We were beginning to see a bunch of "For Sale" signs. . . we knew the neighborhood was beginning to get in trouble. (About that time, the city made contact, and the association was set up.) Dr. Walter Hopkins of ISUE was our first president. . . He set up a system of block captains. . . we began to have regular meetings at East Branch Library. . . one of the smaller libraries, but more than a library. . . it is really a very vital part of the neighborhood. The first Tuesday night of the month your block **only** met. The next week was a neighborhood meeting; then a cluster meeting; then everyone. We would come and talk about our blocks as a whole. Every person there was actively doing something in relation to improving the neighborhood. Marston has been very good, very effective, and we have been fortunate in having two very good coordinators.

Some people used to say you can't fight city hall. We don't look at it as a matter of **fighting** city hall — we try to work together.

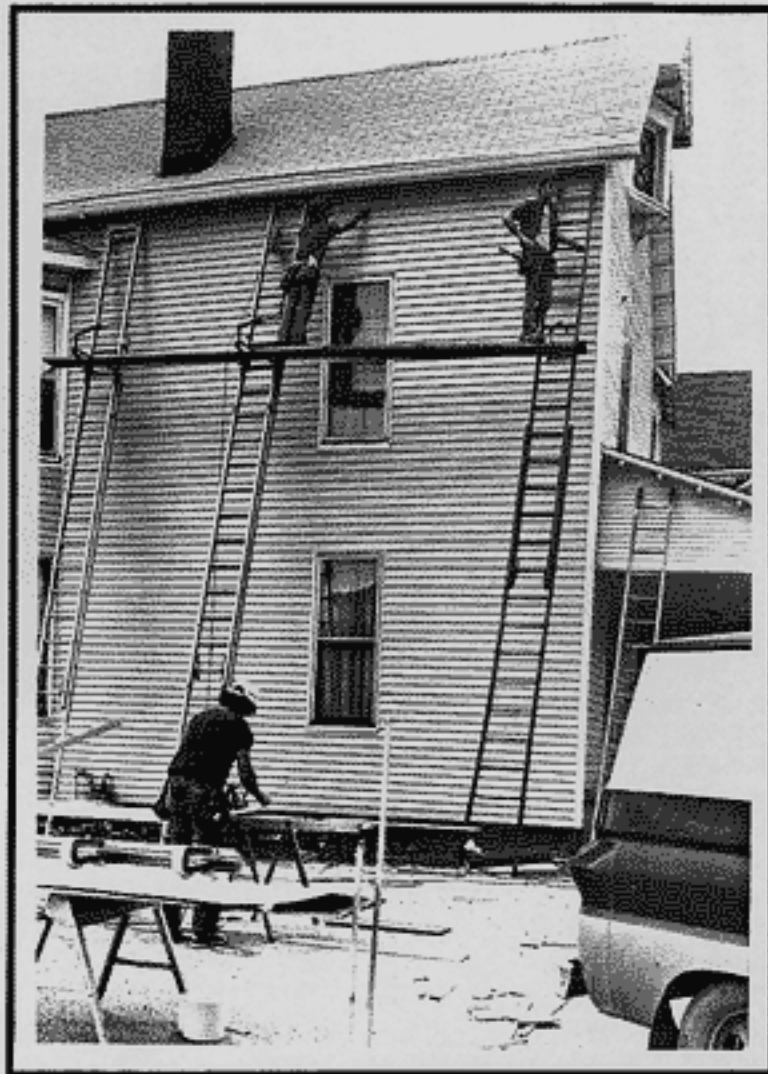
In the beginning Jackie Schmidt was here. She was very instrumental in getting a neighborhood office, which is a remodeled house. It's a showcase: we invited people in to watch it done step by step. It was in bad condition, but it's a beautiful house now.

Ms. Schmidt, then a Federal Housing Administration inspector, and now a HUD Community Development official, recalls the period in 1975; she was "on loan" part-time from HUD to get the first rehab program underway.

The centerpiece of the program was the system of low interest or no interest loans to homeowners in the designated area. The loans were used to bring homes up to code and add other improvements. The program provided that all homeowners in the area were eligible for federal home improvement loans at 3% interest, for a 20 year term. Homeowners earning below a designated income were eligible for loans which were allocated from the city's Community Development funds. There was no interest on these loans and they were considered "Deferred Payment Loans"; that is, the amounts borrowed is attached as a mortgage against the house and need not be repaid until the house is sold.

First thing we did was buy a house and completely rehab it, for two reasons: **one**, the whole idea was was to make a financial commitment to the community. Buying that house let them know that we wouldn't move out overnight — they could faith that we will do what we say we'll do. **Second**, look at the rent we would have paid! And the house has appreciated over the years.

Bellemeade-Bayard Parks was a perfect place to start learning the rehab process — it's hard — a lot of people, in very sophisticated cities, are still having trouble. Some you can rehab, some you can't. The area had a lot of houses that work well with rehab. It was a good place to get started, to get the mechanism in hand.



"There were three areas we wanted to work on," recalls Marston. "Bellemeade-Bayard Parks, Riverside and one on the near North Side. Luckily, we couldn't get the third one together — we had our hands full with the first two — it was a big job." "Anyway, we got some people together and talked to them about this new concept (in the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks Neighborhood), and we had money to offer, and we got started."

"There's a spot demolition program that meshes perfectly with these rehabilitation programs," Councilman Koehler points out. "We can go in where there is a building or two that isn't capable of being fixed up, beyond repair; tear it down; and eliminate that eyesore before it spreads like a cancer to the buildings around it."

"We can interrelate these programs," explains Judy Wilke, a member of the rehab staff. "If a person's house is condemned in this area, we can help them relocate in the neighborhood, using their relocation allotment (of \$15,000) to purchase a better house and then arrange a Deferred Payment Loan, if they qualify, to put the house in good shape — without payments. . . they can't afford."

Thus does the rehab loan program work, and since its inception in 1975, 166 loans, totaling \$2,125,000 have been made to rehabilitate homes in this 40-square-block area.

Other major supportive efforts have been made. "We've worked to keep a viable neighborhood organization," says Marston. "We've done some public improvements to Bayard and Bellemeade Parks. There's a new swimming pool going into Bellemeade Park." "We got into alley clean-up, alley paving, housing code enforcement, zoning code enforcement; we're doing some street pavement."

Everyone involved believes that the program has "turned the neighborhood" from its formerly deteriorating state.

Ms. Kimmel notes some changes:

One of the things I like best is that people are not going ahead the way they used to — one big problem was rezoning. They would take it into their heads and go right down and do it. Now I see a distinct change — they come into the neighborhood and say, 'How do you feel about this?' Because we have been so successful in staving these things off.

Other neighborhoods are organizing — and all this because we thought there were too many for sale signs — but, we couldn't have done it without the city. . .

We formed a corporation, besides the association, and we are about to pick up our seventh house. We bought the first one to get rid of an absentee landlord. We remodeled it, and sold it to a nice quiet family. Six times this has happened."

Do you know we have reduced our fire alarms more than 85% between 1977 and 1978?

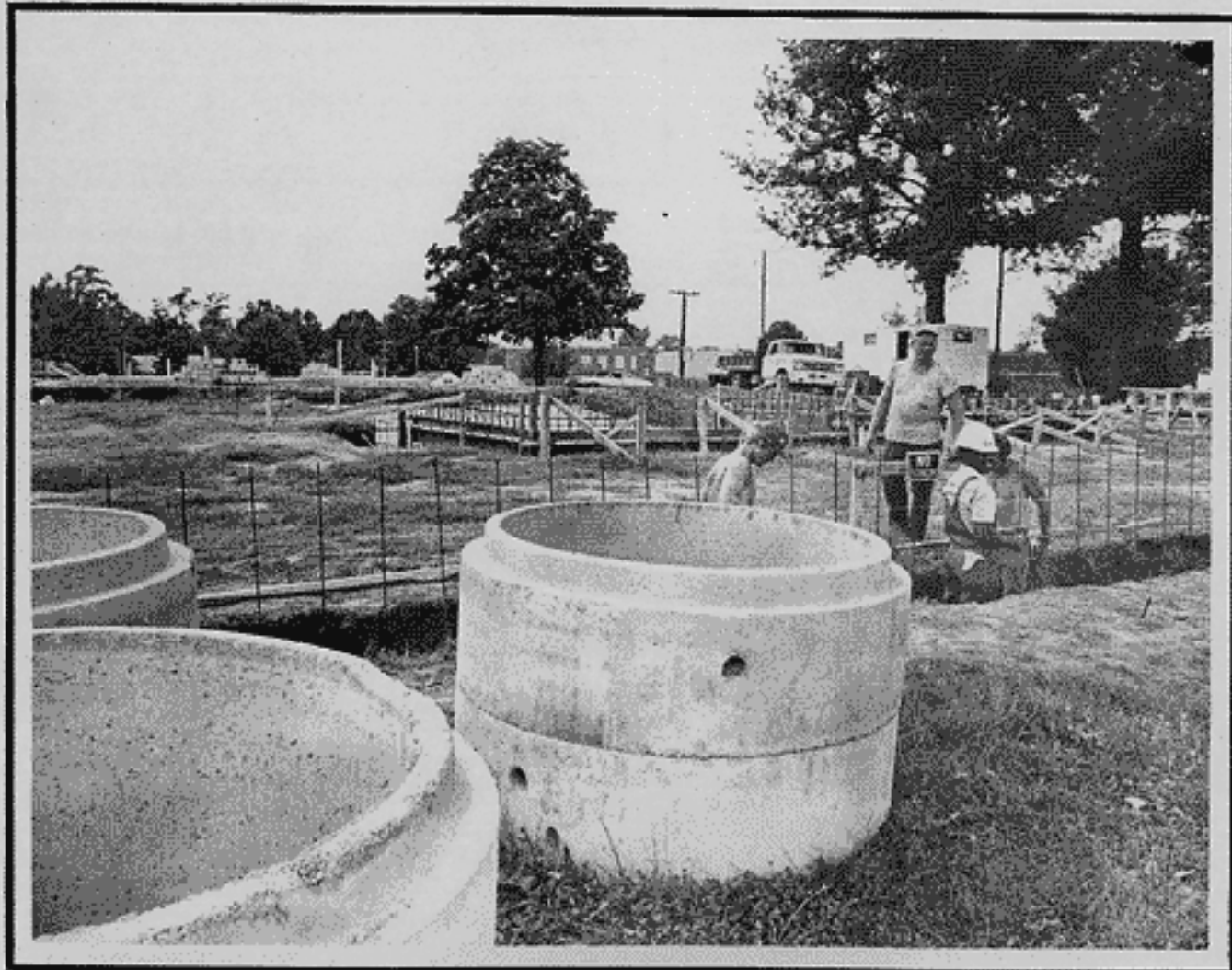
We have a 'Blow the Whistle on Crime' Program.

Obviously it's a safer and cleaner neighborhood; we've had superb help from the city, and I am very pleased.

The city is likewise pleased with the results of this stabilized neighborhood. "The housing styles are good," says Marston, "once they were fixed up they were attractive. Many are big enough so that there's room for a play room, a family room, and a big kitchen. There are a lot of reasons why people would be attracted to that area."

The Department of Metropolitan Development will probably end its active participation in the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks by 1981, to focus on new neighborhoods. However, it is likely that time will be spent there by Marston playing host to visitors from other cities who wish to see first hand how a successful rehab program works. Leading tours of visitation-teams from other cities has become a tradition in the Evansville Community Development-Urban Renewal Programs.

*Construction on the new Bellemeade Park Pool.*



## THE SECOND NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROJECT: RIVERSIDE

As the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks project was funded, and getting underway, Marston approached some residents of the Riverside area. There was immediate interest. "They didn't have to take the big money items on faith," says Marston. "Bellemeade-Bayard Parks was there and I could say next year we can get some money for your neighborhood."

The Riverside Neighborhood was a somewhat blighted area which flowed directly out of the Central Business District; it was abutted on the Northwest by the Riverside Urban Renewal Project area and on the Northeast by the Welborn Project area. It had already begun to "turn around" economically, Marston says, undoubtedly because of improvements in the Central City area, but also because of renewed interest in the historic homes that lined two streets in the neighborhood: Riverside Drive and First Street. First Street retained much of the charm of a by-gone age, both in the architecture of its houses and its brick-paved streets.

"Our goal in Riverside was to insure that the turnaround happened and continued — make it go faster — it would be a building block, into the Southeast — into more deteriorated areas."



The Riverside Neighborhood had a wide diversity of income-levels, from the very wealthy who had remained in some of the older mansions for decades, to the multitude of apartment-dwellers, most of whom earned low incomes. The active leadership in neighborhood concerns came mostly from middle-income, younger families who were buying and renovating the historic homes.

Marston contacted resident Larry Barnfield to assist with organizing a formal neighborhood association. Says Barnfield: "The people had been actively involved with the area all through the period of the Historic Preservation Ordinance passage. They knew each other — at least the homeowners — and had dealt with neighborhood problems, although often on different sides! I got a small group together to form an organization because there were funds available if we did." Barnfield recalls he had just purchased a badly deteriorated house he was planning to renovate "and we had to meet on the back porch." The organization was formed shortly after the boundaries were re-drawn to exclude an area Welborn Hospital was interested in acquiring for future expansion.

"Very, very little money has gone for low-cost loans to homeowners in this area," explains Barnfield. Statistics confirm this. In the four years of its existence as a project the Riverside Association closed only 20 loans (of which five were deferred payments) for a total of \$311,000. There were also some park improvements.

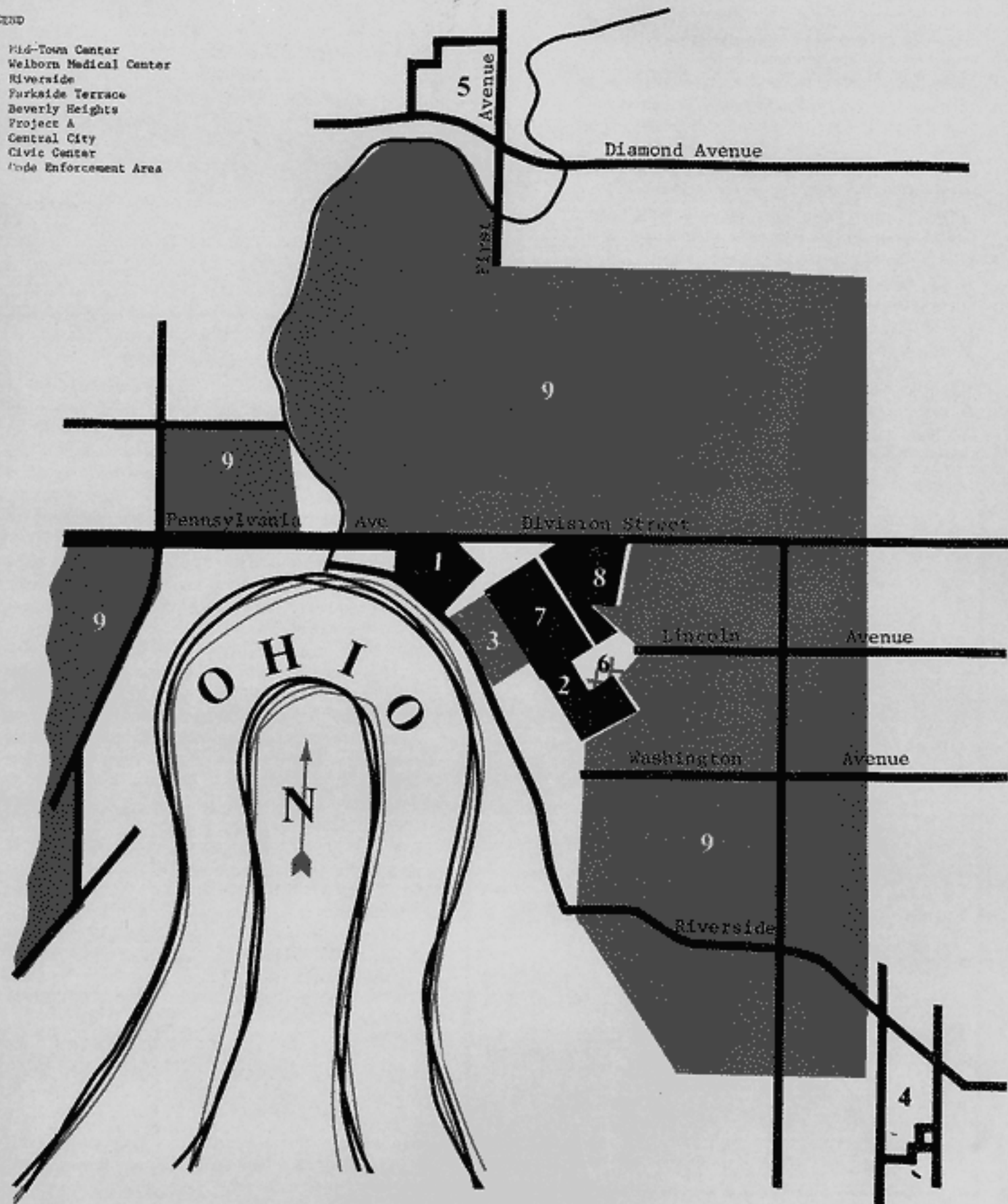
*(Left and above) Riverside Neighborhood houses in the rehabilitation program.*



# Urban Renewal Projects 1954-1974

## LEGEND

1. Mid-Town Center
2. Weiborn Medical Center
3. Riverside
4. Parkside Terrace
5. Beverly Heights
6. Project A
7. Central City
8. Civic Center
9. Code Enforcement Area

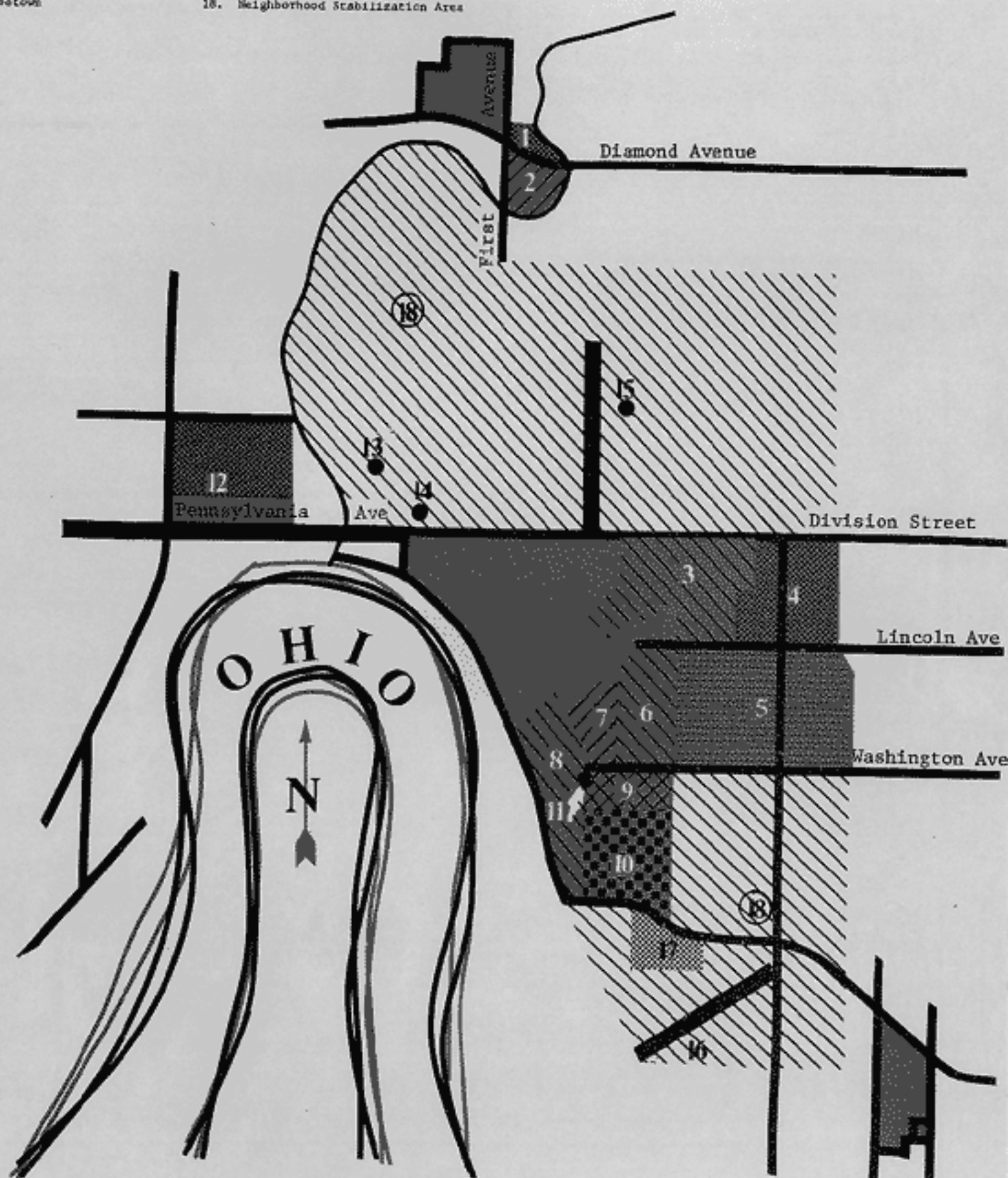




# Community Development Projects 1975-1979

## LEGEND

- |                            |                                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Avondale                | 10. South Governor                  |
| 2. Kleymeyer Park          | 11. Haynie's Corner                 |
| 3. Walnut Street Corridor  | 12. West Franklin                   |
| 4. Lincoln-Walnut          | 13. Fire House # 3                  |
| 5. Bellemeade-Bayard Parks | 14. Willard Library                 |
| 6. South Governor          | 15. Fire House # 10                 |
| 7. Blackford's Grove       | 16. Bee Slough                      |
| 8. Riverside               | 17. Maple Grove                     |
| 9. Cocestown               | 18. Neighborhood Stabilization Area |



## ANOTHER NEW CONCEPT: COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION LINKED TO NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

"The biggest concern of the group from the beginning was the condition of Haynie's Corner," Barnfield asserts. "What the association wanted to do with its allocation was have a consultant study the kinds of improvements necessary to 'turn Haynie's Corner around'. It was definitely a major drug center."

Marston concurs, "sixty or seventy people at a meeting in November of 1975 voted on 16 or 17 proposed alternatives for the use of funds. Haynie's Corner came up clearly number one."

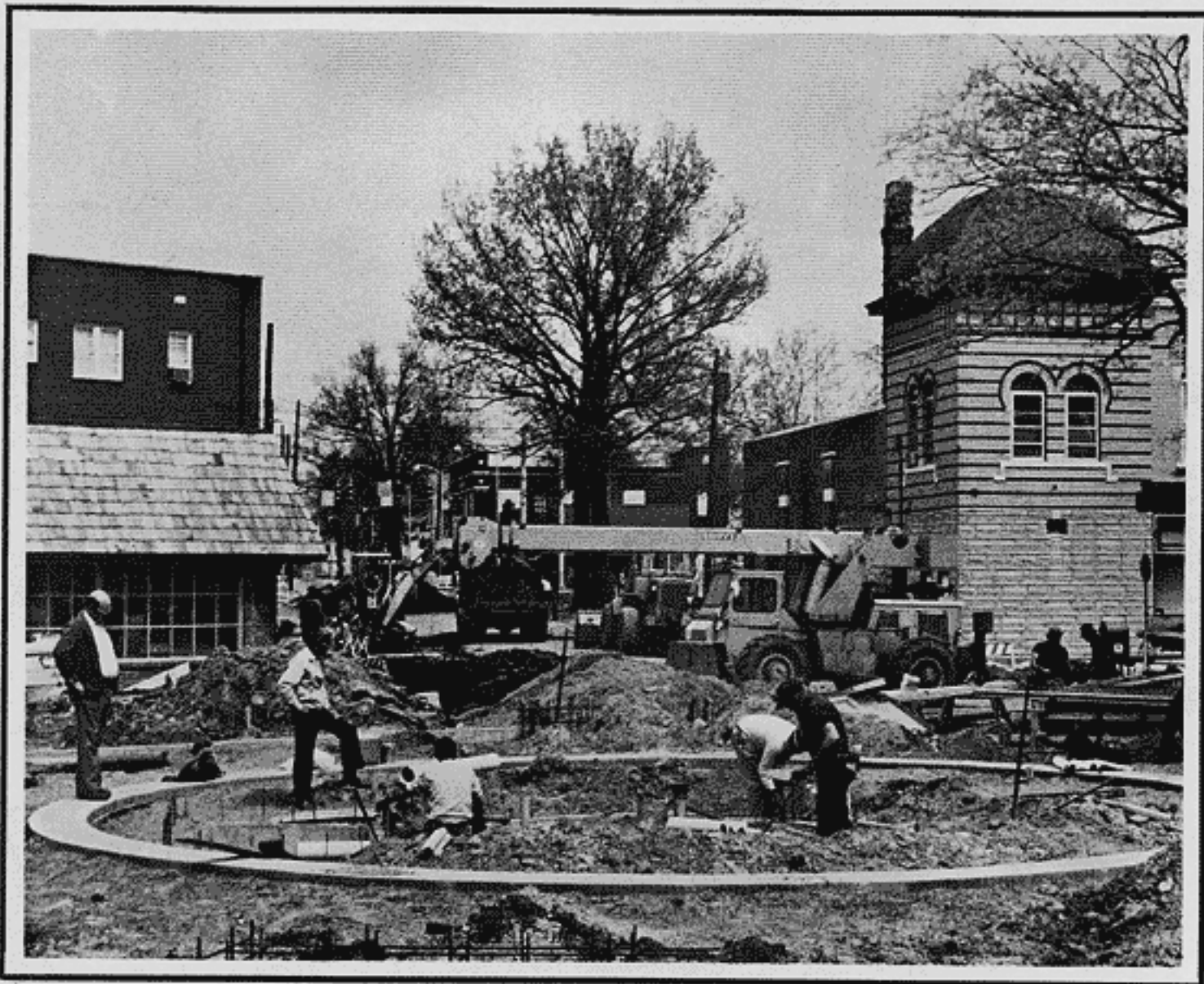
Haynie's Corner was the third "notorious" area of the city about to be dealt with by the local government through federal community development funds. A neighborhood shopping district at the Southeastern boundary of the Riverside Neighborhood Area, Haynie's Corner served predominantly the low and moderate income areas to the East. "In fact it feeds several areas," says Marston. It had become severely blighted, was a known drug traffic center, and was avoided by most city residents.

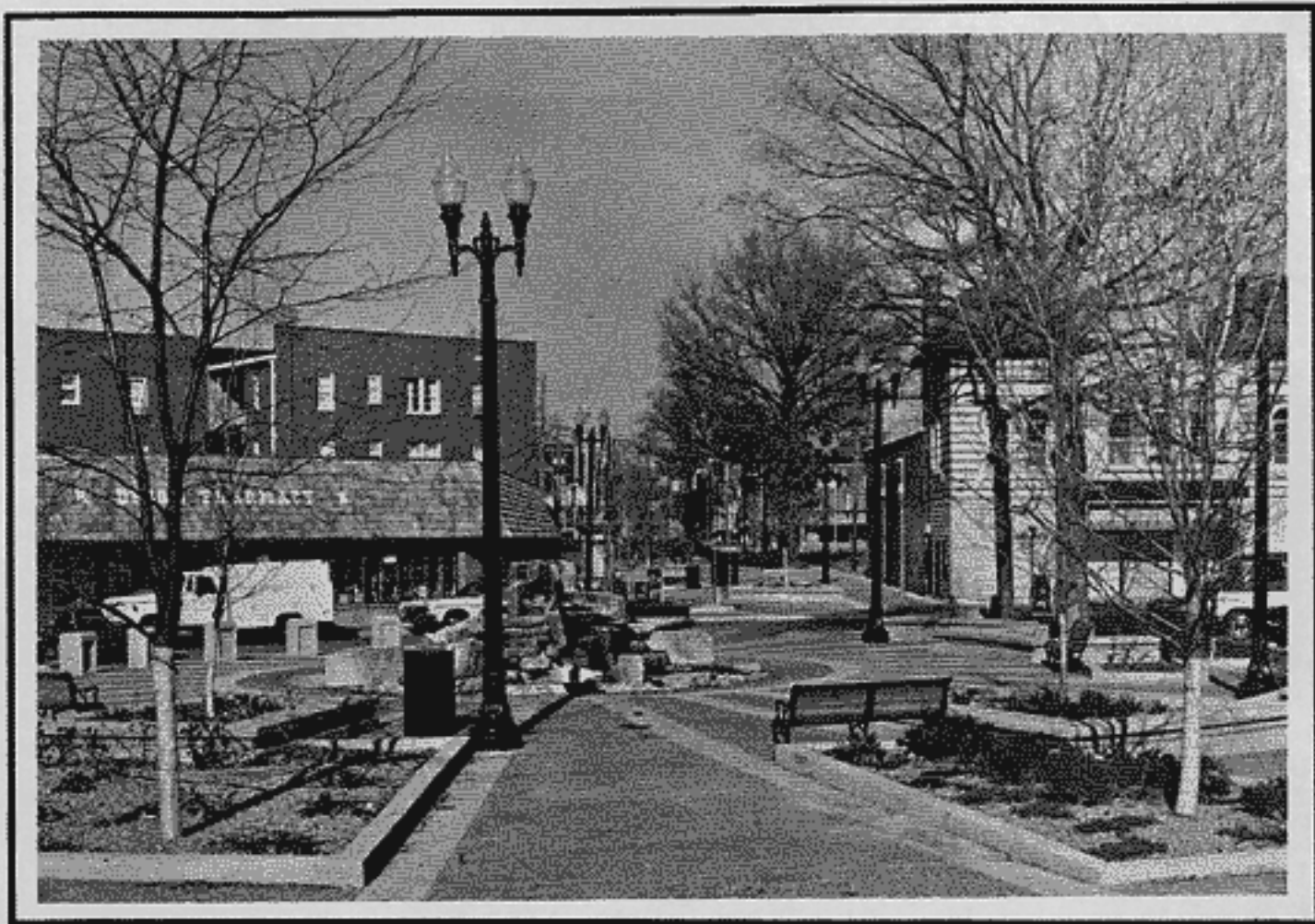
A revitalization of Haynie's Corner would serve the multiple purposes of (1) providing a better and safer

commercial center for nearby residents, (2) contributing to the revitalization and improvement of property values in the Riverside Neighborhood area, and (3) continue the strengthening of the Central Business District area by improving one of its key approaches.

Barnfield and three others formed a "Haynie's Corner Committee" and assisted with the study. "I remember I stood in Deeg's Drug Store all day asking people why they came there; how often; where they lived; and all that." After the study, community development funds were allotted to begin major improvements. This became a project on its own, separate from the Riverside Neighborhood Strategic Area.

The **Haynie's Corner Commercial Revitalization Area** consists of a 4-block area containing approximately 20 businesses. A confusing array of streets meeting at "the point" has been simplified by the construction of the \$241,000 Parrett Street Walkway as an attractive heart of the rejuvenated district. In addition, two parking lots are being constructed with community development funds.





Several businesses have invested considerable sums in their own redevelopment, one totaling \$150,000 and another \$85,000. "The idea is to retain existing businesses for the neighborhood and attract new convenience type business. It's working fast," claims Bob Meyers, Business Development Officer for the Department of Metropolitan Development. The experience with the Riverside Neighborhood-Haynie's Corner development helped clarify the complex interrelationships between commercial and residential renewal in the minds of local officials.

To improve a neighborhood you've got to do more than improve housing. (Marston concludes). One of the important reasons people like to live in an area is convenience for shopping and services like laundromats, drug stores, and that sort of thing. So when we are looking at a residential neighborhood, we also want to look at where they shop, and do

things to bring businesses back, or to strengthen and and retain the current businesses.

What developed from this was a dual policy: the rehabilitation of a series of strategically selected neighborhoods, with a revitalized neighborhood commercial center as an anchor or starting point for each.

The next logical place to move with a new rehab area was the neighborhood directly east of Haynie's Corner, which is to some degree blighted, but is a workable area, and one which would stretch across to touch, at its Northeast boundary, the Bellemeade-Bayard Parks District. Thus, the rehabilitation areas would begin to link up.

## AN EMERGING PATTERN OF CONTIGUOUS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS: GOOSETOWN

Before an official decision could be made, the "word got out", and people in other areas saw what was happening and took the initiative. Ruth Walden, president of the **Goosetown Neighborhood Association**, which got its start in 1977 tells this story:

I lived in this neighborhood except from 1958 to 1968. When I came back to town, I couldn't believe how badly the neighborhood had deteriorated. . . I started getting so many complaints about dirty alleys, dirty streets. . . I got a few people together and said let's work together and get some of the services we're paying for through our taxes. Well, the word kind of spread. . . a lot of people wanted to go with us, so we organized a neighborhood association and went to the Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD).

They had already allocated funds; they encouraged us to go ahead and form — they would help us any way they could.



*House at 216 Washington Avenue being rehabilitated for the offices of the City's Housing Rehabilitation Services program.*

### *Goosetown Festival at Haynie's Corner.*



In 1977 we were recognized as a neighborhood association and received some funds for alley clean-up and a crime prevention program. Now, we have a housing rehab going real, real well.

The greatest thing is that people are speaking to each other again; people know their neighbors now; and they are more open to suggestions as to how to go about getting things done.

Shortly thereafter a group known as the **Southside Neighborhood Association**, a district encompassing an area adjacent to the southern border of Goosetown, followed in the footsteps of the earlier groups.

In 1977 a "Goosetown Festival" was undertaken by some of the active associations and the DMD office, "to (1) have fun, and (2) attract people from throughout the community who had a negative image of Riverside, Goosetown and Haynie's Corner — to let them know they could come, enjoy themselves and leave without getting ripped off." In its fourth year, the festival is self-sufficient and a "roaring success" says Marston.

Building in the same general near-downtown area, attempting to expand the revitalized areas, DMD has also selected an area near Bellemead-Bayard Parks — the **Lincoln-Walnut Neighborhood** and its commercial companion, the **Lincoln-Canal Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Project** as targets for rehab efforts in the immediate future.

31 loans, amounting to \$505,000, have already been approved in these three new neighborhoods.

*Goosetown Neighborhood house being moved to a vacant lot for rehabilitation and to make room for a mini-park.*



*Completed rehabilitation in the Lincoln-Walnut Neighborhood.*



#### **AND ANOTHER NEW APPROACH: PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CITY, LENDER, AND RESIDENT**

Most recently, the DMD office has developed another new approach to working in a neighborhood. This is in **Maple Grove**, an area just south of the Southside Neighborhood and north of the Oakdale clearance area — continuing the building block process. The approach, beginning in 1979 is based on city-lender-resident cooperation. It's called the Neighborhood Conservation Services Program.

The money for rehab really comes from property owners, and they have to get it from lending institutions," (explains Marston). Since the City had never done rehab before 1975, we weren't going to get the bank and savings and loans into this until we had a good track record. We started a cooperative planning process in 1978 and Maple Grove was chosen as the program's first neighborhood.

Under this program community development will pay for program staff neighborhood organization work, and public improvements. We will also develop a high-risk loan fund for rehab loans for people in the neighborhood who apply to lenders and are turned down, but what we're hoping is that most of the work can be done through direct conventional loans between local lending institutions and property owners. This is an area where the decline has just started, and you want to cut it off with a relatively little amount of money.

## REVERSING A PATTERN: INITIATING COMMERCIAL REVITALIZATION BEFORE A NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Even as the "building block" process was being carried out on the Near East Side, planners had concluded they needed to broaden the geographic base of their operations. Comprehensive studies of the city revealed an area on the Near North Side, between Division and Diamond, along North Main Street, and the adjoining neighborhoods as "ripe" for revitalization: "The people of the North-Side are not people who come to government and say 'Give us something', so we decided to start with the commercial area first."

The **North Main Commercial Revitalization Area** followed the pattern of the Haynie's Corner project with its extensive pedestrian improvements, business development assistance, and extensive cooperation of businesses investing in improvements.

From this commercial point as an anchor, the DMD has looked west to Deaconess Hospital, as another anchor point for a North Side residential rehab area, and has now designated the **Deaconess North Neighborhood Strategic Area** as a rehab district where work will begin in 1980.

A different area, and a different type of commercial center, where DMD has been concentrating some effort, is the **West Franklin Commercial Revitalization Project**: "West Franklin has the only really good stand of 19th century commercial buildings left in the community," says Marston.

Before community development funds were infused, some efforts were being made to preserve the area. Preservationist Gwen Koch worked with the West Franklin Street Development Corporation to improve 17 of the buildings. "They didn't know they had any valuable old buildings," says Mrs. Koch. "They had just taken care of them all these years. . . they never changed a thing!"

West side businessmen and women were eager for cooperation with the city. The city felt the . . . area had many strengths, but there were some abandoned and some underutilized buildings; furthermore, they have to get ready for the shock of a new West side shopping center opening in a short time," says Marston. "I would hope that in the next three to five years that we would spread out around the West Franklin area and do some neighborhood revitalization."

*West Franklin median. Phase I of a commercial revitalization project.*



*North Main public improvements. Phase I of a commercial revitalization project.*

## THE ROLE OF PRESERVATION IN CITY REVITALIZATION

In one vital respect, community development funds have re-entered and become part of the continuing revitalization of the Central Business District. This is in the form of assistance to the preservation of the **Old Post Office and Customhouse**, which is the centerpiece of the proposed Riverview Commerce Center, and assistance to the preservation of the **Old Courthouse**, which was, years earlier, designated as the Western anchor of the beleaguered downtown business district.

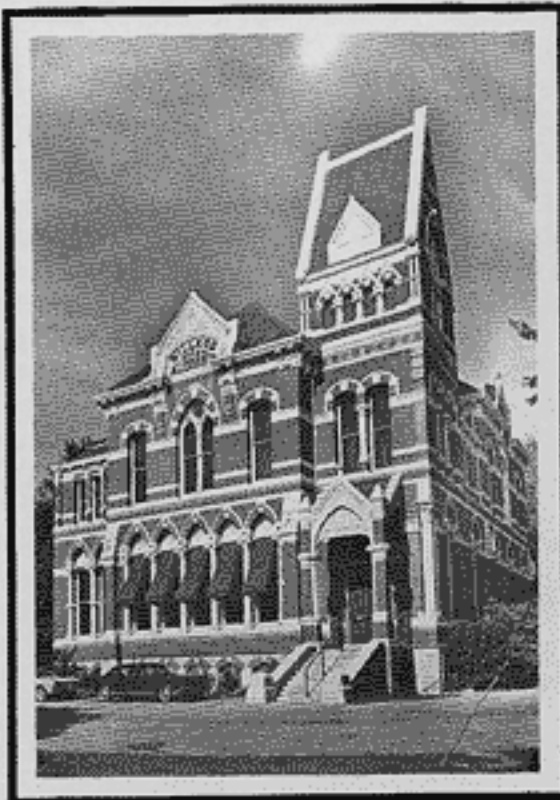
The Customhouse was used as a public building from the late 1800's to 1969, when its facilities were removed to the new Civic Center Complex. It was placed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1972 through the efforts of preservationist Gwendolyn Koch. In 1976, Mayor Lloyd announced the city would preserve the building, and Randall Shepard, then Mayor Assistant, led the search for restoration funds.

Community development funds were added to funds received through grants from the Departments of Interior and Labor, the Economic Development Administration, and local funds to preserve the unique building and hold it in readiness for the private developers who appeared on the scene in 1977.

Likewise the Old Courthouse, preserved and put into use (as a meeting place and boutique-type shopping complex) through the strenuous efforts of the private Conrad Baker Foundation, has come in for assistance from community development funds.

*Work underway in \$1,200,000 renovation of the Old Post Office.*





*Willard Library.*

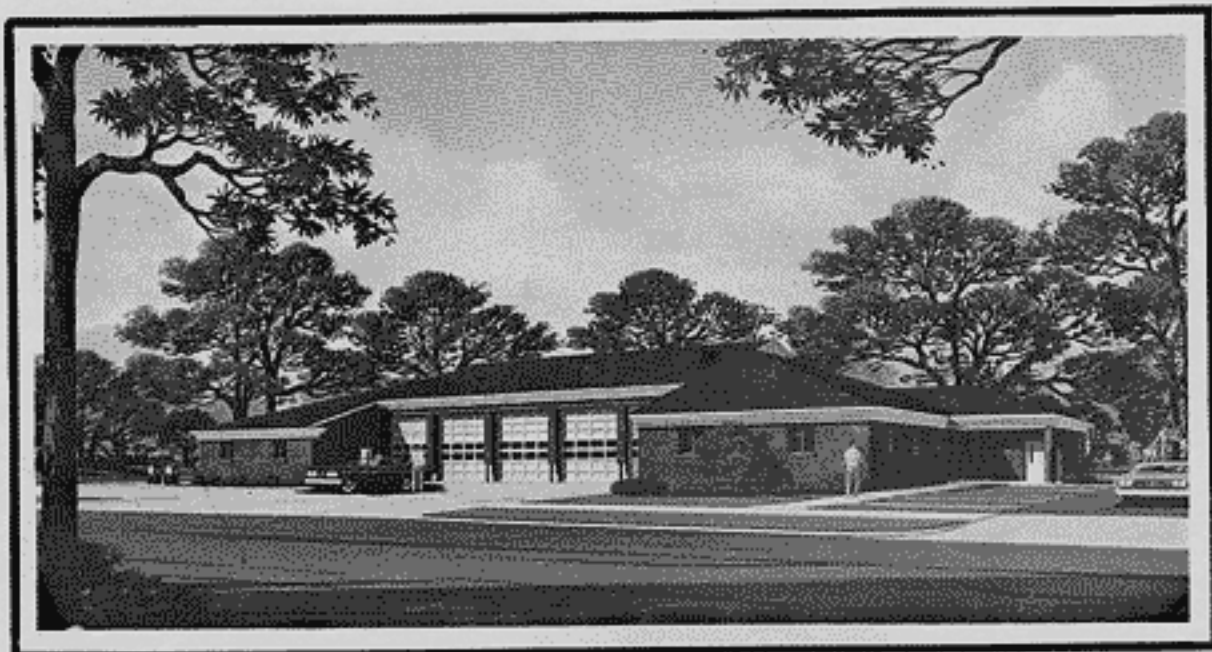
Two other buildings of considerable historical significance — the **Reitz Home**, located in the **Riverside Neighborhood Strategic Area**, and **Willard Library**, an outstanding, privately-endowed, 19th-century-built structure, still in active use as a library near the downtown area, have been granted assistance through community development block grant funds. Up to 1979, \$145,447 has been spent on historic preservation and \$263,358 in further allocations are anticipated for the 3-year period, 1979-1981.

We feel that historic preservation is a very important part of center city revitalization. Americans are more and more interested in these older buildings; they are one of the few competitive advantages the center city has over the suburbs, so let's capitalize on a strength. Our effort has been to try to strengthen the appeal of historic houses as a magnet to pull people back. . . We have not put much community development money, but some, as a supplement to Economic Development Administration funds, as an economic development stimulus, to continue and help the process of Central Business District revitalization, (Marston explains).

For similar reasons, as a policy, community development funds have been invested in one-time-only projects such as drainage programs, park development, and fire services — all as **supportive services** in the total revitalization of targeted neighborhoods. This general strategy is the chosen one for the future, according to DMD Director Marston, Mayor Lloyd, and Councilman Koehler. "Neighborhood housing, neighborhood preservation and commercial revitalization, as well as historic preservation assistance are all brand new directions undertaken under Community

Development that officials see continuing," says Marston. "The Act is very flexible in decision-making structure and how you set priorities. . . Our approach was a local decision. . . in addition, it was very clear that the Mayor and City Council were going to take a more active role in the review. . . and in the initiation of ideas. . . .this will continue," believes Marston.

Below is a table of funding for the major ongoing projects using Housing and Community Development Block Grant funds for the City of Evansville:



*Artist's concept of the Fire Station No. 3 under construction in Fulton Park.*



## **BACK TO REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: OR, HOW THINGS TAKE MORE TIME THAN THEY DO**

When Vincent Bernardin took office in 1976, as Director of the Redevelopment Commission, he was greeted by a tangle of unfinished business, complicated by the interruptions and program changes that had taken place the previous three years:

(1) The 1973 Nixon Administration moratorium had halted three projects which had started again amid uncertainty concerning their place in an overall renewal plan.

(2) One residential project had been continued without the benefit of formerly-available federal housing subsidies, and problems with developer were being encountered.

(3) A new clearance project had been undertaken

which spawned a host of divergent views as to its eventual re-use.

(4) The Riverside Project area was being sold in small parcels, under public pressure to re-use the land, even as the Commission was haunted by the possibility that a greater potential was yet to be realized.

(5) The Redevelopment Commission was no longer funded through categorical grants directly from HUD. Mostly, future funding for Redevelopment Commission projects would come from the City's Housing and Community Development Block Grant allotment.

*Diamond Valley Park, lake, and apartments for the elderly under construction.*



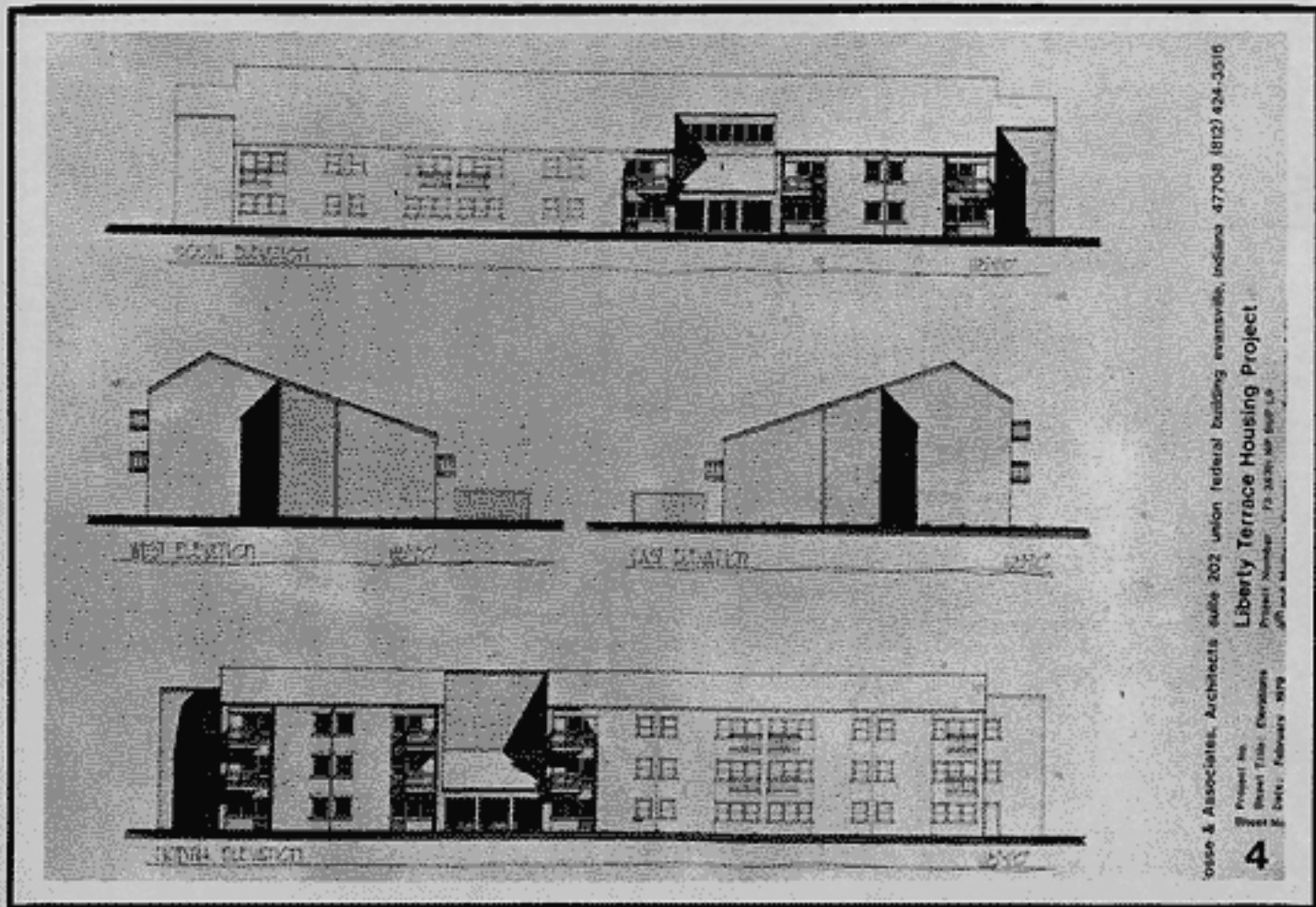
Diamond Valley was one of the projects that had continued throughout the years of change and was in 1976 in the implementation phase, of constructing single-family units. "There was no direct subsidy for homeowners, although there was an indirect subsidy," explains Bernardin, in that "the property was improved and prepared for development by the Redevelopment Commission so the builder did not have to incur that expense and pass it on to the homeowner."

Average costs of the 65 homes built was \$30,000 according to Assistant Director, Neumann Sheppard. But there were problems. "We learned a lot of lessons on that, as far as the reliability of a developer. We had problems with the developer, and really had to work

hard at seeking responsible developers, and as a result came out with people who did a nice job. I think that's turned out to be an asset to the residential segment of our community," says Commissioner Emge. In addition to single-family homes, the development has 218 apartment units completed or under construction, and 66 more units planned immediately. Furthermore, 140 units of subsidized apartment units for elderly are in the construction stages. The subsidy is available under "Section 8" of the Housing and Community Development Act. Under this program a builder allots a percentage of units to persons earning less than a designated income. The rents of those qualifying are then subsidized.

*New homes constructed in the Diamond Valley Project.*





Goss & Associates, Architects, 202 Union Federal Building, Evansville, Indiana 47708 (812) 424-3510  
 Liberty Terrace Housing Project  
 Project No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sheet Title: Elevations  
 Project Number: 73-3830-MP-RFP-10  
 Date: February 1979  
 Sheet No. **4**

*Architect's rendering of Liberty Terrace apartments for the elderly — Project A.*

This apartment building being built by the Gibbons-Grable Company was first granted a mortgage commitment by HUD for a site on the Riverfront Project. When developers Kempf and Rogers indicated an interest in the entire Riverfront area, Bernardin was able to persuade Gibbons-Grable and HUD to move the apartment complex to the more appropriate lakeside Diamond Valley Area. "I think that was a first," comments a pleased Bernardin, "— getting HUD to retain the commitment while changing the site."

Project A, the area first contracted for development by the Liberty-Baptist Corporation and then forced to redesign, had also been halted by the moratorium. Beginning again in 1974 with assistance and encouragement of HUD Community Development representative Jackie Schmidt, the project was once again rejected by HUD on the grounds that the area was "too impacted" by minority and low income people.

Armed with new and more accurate facts and figures, an army of Evansville officials convinced HUD that the complex of 58 one-bedroom units. After a 7-year effort, the groundbreaking occurred on Oct. 20th, 1979. "Solomon Stevenson should have a crown in heaven for the work he's done on that," comments Schmidt, echoing other officials.

Perhaps the greatest anguish on the parts of officials and citizens alike came from the **Avondale Project** on the city's North Side and **Project B**, near the Welborn Project.

*Beginning of construction of the Liberty Terrace apartments — Project A.*



Both projects were begun before the moratorium of January, 1973 — residents were told their homes would be purchased and that they would be assisted with relocation; therefore, it would be unwise to invest in improvements in their homes. Years passed before funds again became available to proceed with the projects. Meanwhile, officials debated the question of proceeding with clearance. Some residents appeared before the City Council in opposition. "The city had lost its credibility, because we were forced to stop in mid-project," explained Bernardin, "but the people couldn't be expected to understand the intricacies." The City Council directed the Commission to survey the residents to see if the majority wanted the clearance to proceed. An overwhelming majority wanted the projects completed. With the approval of all concerned, the Commission proceeded with clearance in the two project areas, but with some major changes in philosophy.

Acutely conscious of the costs of extensive site preparation for future re-use, the Commission, concurring with city officials, made the decision to clear the land and put it up for sale, for whatever use a developer might wish, as long as it was generally acceptable to the Redevelopment Commissioners. Local officials were no longer working under stringent requirements from the federal government for re-use. Furthermore, the earlier strategy of land banking for building the stock of low and moderate-cost housing had given way to the emphasis on the preservation and rehabing of existing housing.

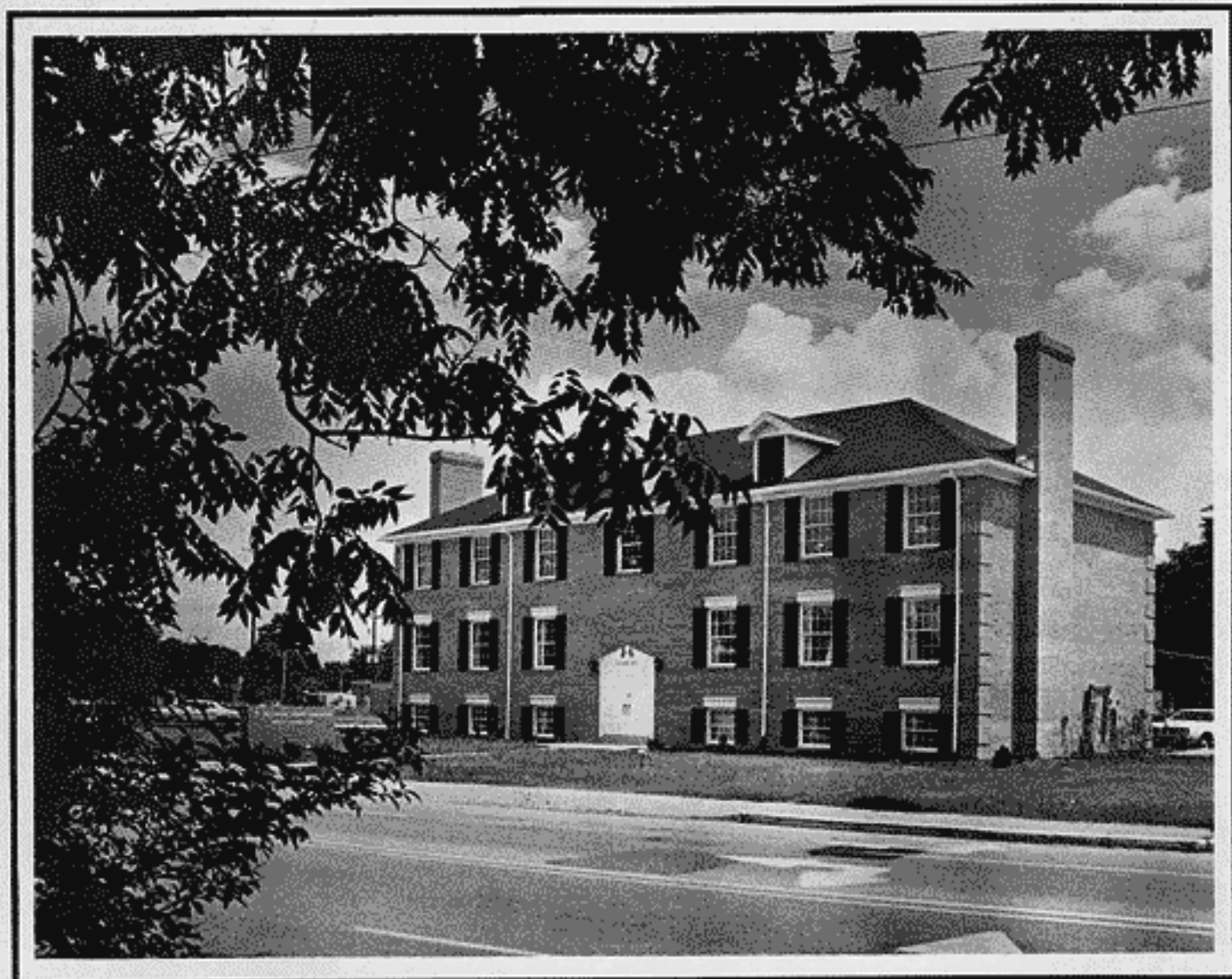
Several possibilities have been explored for use of the project areas. In 1979, plans for Avondale were being explored with two potential developers. Under their proposal, Avondale would become available for a Planned Unit Development with a combination of multi-family (again Section 8) units, and limited commercial usage. "The whole combination seems to be the best way to go, and that's what we're pursuing now," says Bernardin.

Project B was perhaps the most contested of the urban renewal projects. As the last of the clearance projects, it met with both a local attitude of resistance to further clearance and a renewed interest in older, perhaps historically significant, structures.

"Project B just shouldn't have happened," preservationist Gwendolyn Koch flatly states. Several properties with documented historical significance within the project boundary had been exempted from clearance, but the consensus was to move with clearance as a whole. "We basically cleared a blighted area," states Emge. "It doesn't appear to be a huge

new development — it did get rid of a bad near downtown area." In the spring of 1979, Welborn Baptist Hospital contracted with the Commission to purchase the major portion of the land. Future use appears to be institutional and commercial.

Bernardin "inherited" yet another project whose future is undetermined in 1979. A small, blighted commercial area at the corner of **Lincoln Avenue and Governor Street**, near downtown, was brought to the attention of city officials at early public hearings on the allocation of community development funds. The intersection was the scene of "loitering, vandalism and some violence," comments Councilman Koehler. Citizens in the surrounding neighborhoods "wanted something done" with the district, beginning with clearance. The Department of Metropolitan Development delegated the project to the Redevelopment Commission, which had the power of eminent domain. The structures were cleared, and initial plans called for a neighborhood commercial center on the site.



*Mooney-Simpson building constructed in Project B.*

## **"CREATIVITY", OR HOW UDAG'S AND AN ELECTRIC COMPANY CAN PROVIDE HOUSING FOR LINCOLN-GOVERNOR**

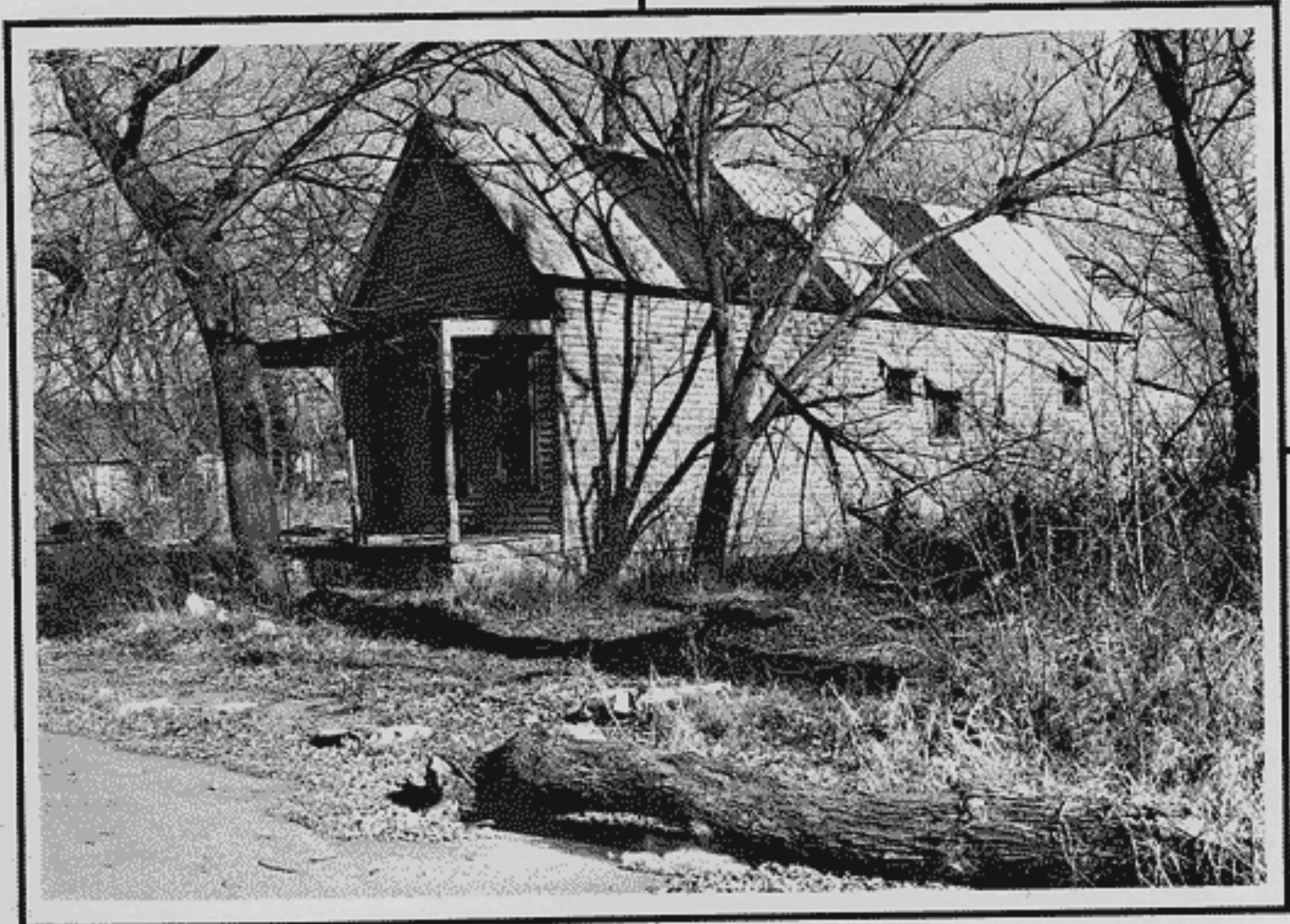
Objections to the planned re-use of the Lincoln-Governor land on the part of some area residents and some government officials led to hearings on this matter in particular. Many who testified were concerned with what they felt was a critical need in housing, and they supported a housing development at this location. At the time, there was no way to provide new housing at a cost area residents might afford. The project had to await future, more creative efforts to find the means. The opportunity was not long in coming, for although there were other difficulties from the past to resolve, new and challenging pathways were opening up for renewal officials.

An opportunity for some creative linking of projects occurred when Swanson-Nunn Electric Company, a business which had been a staple downtown employer for generations, approached the city. The company needed room for expansion, spokesmen said. They wished to stay in the area, but if they could not expand, the firm would have to move.

"It's an inner-city firm," explains Bernardin. "There are people who walk and ride their bikes to work, and that census tract over the last several years has lost more firms, more jobs to out-migration than any other census tract in the city. . ."

About this time (1977) Congress added a companion program to the Community Development block grant programs — Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG'S), a kind of funding that is a return to categorical grants, for specific projects, on a competitive basis. Action Grant's special feature is the up front, firm cooperation between government and business.

*"Before" — Oakdale Project.*



Bernardin immediately saw the possibilities for obtaining a UDAG to purchase and clear a blighted area adjacent to Project A, to the Civic Center and to Swanson-Nunn, for resale to that company for expansion. "I'd followed the legislation," he said, "and was one of the first to 'bug' the HUD office" for this which became known as the **Ninth Street Project**. Regular Community Development funds before the Action Grant was ready Development funds were used for phase on activities before the Action Grant was received.

Accordingly, Evansville was one of the first cities in the country to receive UDAG funds. That was, however, only half of the story. Proceeds from the sale of property purchased with UDAG funds may be used for subsidizing low and moderate income housing in a community. Bernardin has devised a tentative plan to subsidize mortgages for a hoped-for housing development in the nearby Lincoln-Governor Project. HUD has given full support to the proposal.

On the southern end of the city lies a neighborhood now connected with the overall revitalization area through its common border with the association of Maple Grove. For many years, residents of this area, led by citizen Helen Robinson, have been going to the city seeking assistance for their neighborhood, **Oakdale**.

*"After" in Phase I — Oakdale Project.*

"It seemed like it was always 'Oakdale, you're next,'" says Bernardin. Finally Oakdale's turn has come with the commitment of Mayor Lloyd and Metropolitan Development Director Jeff Marston. And with it, another experimental renewal program. "It seems that many of these people feel a great attachment to their neighborhood. They want it improved, but they don't want to leave," observes Emge. The Commission is attempting to accommodate this desire. After surveying the plans for Oakdale, Councilman John Caldwell, pastor of a church in the immediate neighborhood, concluded: "I think you're going to save the neighborhood — which would otherwise be lost."

The concept is to blend all of the phases of redevelopment into one, so that they are going on simultaneously, (explains Bernardin). In some cases you have to do the entire project in separate phases — in this case you don't.

The concept in Oakdale is to acquire and do site improvements in sections where you can do it now. Oakdale lends itself to this. We will be building homes this summer, (1979) and we hope, that with the cost of the land written down, we can get them into some nice new homes, only a block away, before their's are torn down.



There are some problems with renters: we hope we can get relocation benefits raised. It's an administrative nightmare: acquiring property, relocating people, dealing with all kinds of contractors — but we want to try.

## CONCLUSION

"We want to try" seems to have been the refrain of renewal and community developmental officials of all stripes, philosophies and political persuasions who have put a hand to re-creating the worn-out parts of the city over the past 25 years. The result has been (1) an unrelenting attack on blight, substandard housing, and lagging business, (2) a long list of firsts in the use of federal programs, and (3) a number of successes of various kinds, from the Walkway to the rehab program, which have become models for other cities.

Present as a close observer throughout most of the 25-year history, actively involved for 12 years, usually behind the scenes, with ideas, assistance and valued technical advice, is HUD representative Jackie Schmidt. Dismissing comments of gratitude from a long list of officials, Ms. Schmidt explains that she "hadn't been that much involved in decisions — when things get going I encourage people to stay in and keep asking."

"It is interesting to see from this point," she adds, "all that got started — to see things done years ago... that still touch people's lives."



## Appendix I

This twenty-five year survey of Urban Renewal and Community Development in Evansville was prepared by a research team from the University of Evansville. The Project Director was Donald M. Freeman, Inglehart Professor of Political Science and Public Policy. The principal Research Associate on the project was Berta Hammerstein. John Farrar served as a Research Associate for four weeks, primarily as an interviewer. Pearl Durkee handled communications and served as typist for the project.

The methodology of the study would best be described as historical and analytical. That is, the study includes the full historical record, but that record is supplemented with analysis and interpretation of events. We have tried to identify the catalyst for an event or trend; we have noted major program shifts, the emergence of new concepts in programs, and we have identified several overall strategies adopted by the policy makers during the twenty-five year period.

Many of the standard historical records have been consulted, including: minutes of policy-making bodies, newspapers, speeches, published works, reports of the Redevelopment Commission and the Department of Metropolitan Development, and data pertaining to funding programs. However, these traditional historical sources are not central to our study and its findings. We have relied very heavily on in-depth interviews with public officials, members of advisory committees and boards, and with the key actors who have contributed to Evansville's renewal and development efforts during the last twenty-five years. This is primarily an oral history.

The research effort was formally planned in stages which can be described as follows:

I. Research team meeting with Jeff Marston and selected staff from the Department of Metropolitan Development for an orientation and briefing on programs and agencies responsible.

II. Research team tour of projects: orientation to the physical location of projects.

III. Preparation of two working memoranda:

1. Preliminary Working List of Urban Renewal and Community Development Projects, with brief descriptions and dates.

2. Preliminary Working List — Panel of Informed Persons.

IV. Submission of the preliminary working lists to a small panel of highly informed persons. The six member panel was asked to correct errors on the lists; to add projects or events we had omitted; and to add names to the "panel of informed persons".

V. The working memoranda were revised in light of corrections made by the panel.

VI. Each member of the panel of informed persons was mailed: (1) a cover letter explaining the project in full and requesting their cooperation in an interview, (2) the revised list of projects, and (3) a list of all persons to be interviewed.

VII. Interviews followed as quickly as possible after the mailing, but the interviewing phase consumed better than a month of our time. There was no structured interview schedule. Interviewers asked respondents to consult the list of projects and to tell us all they know about them, including: How the project got started? Why the project was selected? Who the key participants were? and What went right and what went wrong? Some interviews lasted more than an hour; the interviews were taped and later transcribed for use by the research team.

VIII. Writing, editing, typing of the study.

Jeff Marston and his staff helped the research team in selecting the photographs and other exhibits included in the study. We acknowledge Mr. Marston's close cooperation and assistance throughout the project. Many of the photographs used in this study were taken especially for this publication by Donald C. Goodaker. We also acknowledge the assistance of all those persons listed in Appendix II; the study is really their story, which we have woven into the larger story. We have been careful to avoid error in quoting our respondents; if we have failed, we beg the understanding of the offended panelist. A few of our respondents have asked that their interviews not be made available to others, but the transcriptions of other interviews will be available for secondary analysis in the archives of the Willard Library.

Appendix II  
Panel of Persons Interviewed and Positions  
During Period of Association with Projects

Raymond A. Anderson  
Executive Director, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission 1962-1974

Ray W. Arensman  
Professor of Economics  
University of Evansville

Larry S. Barnfield  
An Organizer of Riverside  
Neighborhood Association

Vincent Bernardin  
Executive Director, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission, 1976-1979

John Berry  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

F. Wesley Bowers  
Legal Counsel for Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

Nay Broerman  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

Rev. John Caldwell  
Common Council, City of Evansville

J. William Davidson  
Mayor, City of Evansville, 1958-1959

P. E. Drachman  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

N. Keith Emge  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

James E. Fields  
Executive Director  
Evansville Future, Inc.

Norman A. Gerth  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

William G. Grief  
Executive Director, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission, 1956-1958  
Legal Counsel for Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission; first director  
of Evansville Future, Inc.

Walter A. Hopkins  
An Organizer of Bellemeade-Bayard Parks  
Neighborhood Association

Gregory G. Kempf  
Developer, Riverview Commerce Center  
Harriet Kimmel

An Organizer of Bellemeade-Bayard Parks  
Neighborhood Association

Roger N. Klassy  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission

Gwen Koch  
Preservation Leader

David A. Koehler  
Common Council, City of Evansville

Russell G. Lloyd  
Mayor, City of Evansville, 1972-1979

Jeffrey Marston  
Executive Director, Department of  
Metropolitan Development, 1974-1979

Frank F. McDonald  
Mayor, City of Evansville, 1960-1971

Richard E. Meier  
Community Leader

Morton Newman  
City Attorney during H. O. Roberts  
Administration

Joe O'Daniel  
Community Leader

Henry O. Roberts  
Mayor, City of Evansville, 1952-1955

Jack Rogers  
Developer, Riverside Commerce  
Center

George H. Schenetzke, Jr.  
Member, Citizens Advisory Committee  
for Community Development

Jackie Schmidt  
Department of Housing and Urban  
Development

Randall Shepard  
Mayor's Assistant, City of Evansville

Neuman Sheppard  
Assistant Director, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission  
Dwight Smith  
Staff, Evansville Redevelopment  
Commission  
Denis Stallings  
Commissioner, Evansville  
Redevelopment Commission  
Solomon Stevenson  
President, Liberty Baptist  
Association  
Ruth Walden  
An Organizer of Gosetown  
Neighborhood Association  
Judy Witte  
An Organizer of Riverside  
Neighborhood Association

### Appendix III

#### Urban Renewal and Community Development Projects

1. **Midtown Industrial Park** — old High Street area. Initiated 1953, stalled waiting for state enabling legislation and court test. Re-started 1958 — first project started and first project completed under federal urban renewal funds in Indiana. 22 acres. Blighted, mostly residential, adjacent to central business district. Converted to commercial and light industry. Completed. Evansville Redevelopment Commission (ERC).

2. **Riverside Project** — clearance of riverfront, 29 acres blighted commercial and warehouse district. Initiated December, 1962, still in progress with current Riverview Commerce Center. ERC.

3. **Welborn Medical Center** — clearance of blighted residential and commercial area, 20 acres, adjacent to Welborn Medical Complex. Initiated May, 1963. Completed. ERC.

4. **Parkside Terrace** — old Villa Sites, 67 acres severely blighted residential area on Southeast side. Initiated 1965. Entire area redeveloped under master design to include single-family and apartment residential (all subsidized) and park. Completed. ERC.

5. **Diamond Valley** — former Beverly Heights, blighted residential area on North Side. Initiated approximately 1969, under Neighborhood Development Program, 57 acres. Master design for redeveloped area includes single-family and multi-family residential (partially subsidized) and park. Private development in progress. ERC.

6. **Project "A"** — Blighted, mostly residential area adjacent to Welborn Medical Center. 8 acres. Initiated approximately 1970. A small section of the cleared land was sold to Welborn Medical Center; the balance was sold to a not-for-profit corporation (Liberty Baptist Association) for construction of a federally-assisted, housing for elderly project. The housing project is in the final, federal review stage prior to construction. (Begun under Neighborhood Development Program.) ERC.

7. **Central City Project** — 30-block Central Business District in deteriorating condition. First federal funds involved Master Plan for revitalization developed in early 1960's. Initiation of revitalization in 1969 under Neighborhood Development Program, continuing with combination of local and federal cooperation culminating in Downtown Walkway. The Citizens National Bank Building, which will be a component of the Riverview Commerce Center, will be constructed on Central City Project land. Urban Development Action Grant for initial construction approved. ERC.

8. **Project "B"** — Blighted, mostly residential area adjacent to Project "A" and Welborn Medical Center, 21 acres. Cleared, for institutional and commercial development. Initiated in 1972, but delayed by moratorium. Clearance completed, one building under construction, remainder under contract to Welborn Hospital. ERC.

9. **Avondale** — Blighted, sparsely populated area adjacent to Diamond Valley. 75 acres. Initiated approximately 1972, but delayed by moratorium. Cleared, proposed as Planned Unit Development for multi-family and limited commercial usage. Still in progress. ERC.

10. **Lincoln-Governor Project** — Blighted, mixed commercial and residential area. Initiated approximately 1974. Cleared, proposed as residential with some commercial. ERC.

11. **Downtown Parking Garage** — Initiated approximately 1976. Part of Central City program. Completed. ERC.

12. **Ninth Street Project** — Removal of several homes and businesses in blighted area adjacent to Swanson-Nunn Electric Company and close to other redeveloped areas. Land to be redeveloped and the major portion sold to Swanson-Nunn for that company's expansion with the remainder being sold to Snyder Buick. Initiated in 1977. Now in progress. City one of first to get Urban Development Action Grant for this project. ERC.

13. **Bellemeade-Bayard Parks Strategic Area** — First neighborhood revitalization project in Evansville; signalled major new community development concept. Rehabilitation of neighborhood through variety of improvements directly to area and administration of federal low-cost home-improvement loans. Improvements made with Community Development funds. Under Department of Metropolitan Development (DMD). Cooperation with neighborhood association. Initiated in 1975. In progress.

14. **Riverside Neighborhood Strategic Area** — Rehabilitation of downtown First Street residential area through same type of program as Number 13. Initiated 1975. In progress. DMD.

15. **Goosetown Neighborhood Strategic Area** — Rehabilitation plan for area surrounding Haynie's Corner; same type of program as Number 13. Initiated in 1977. In progress. DMD.

16. **Southside Neighborhood Strategic Area** — Rehabilitation plan similar to plan described in Number 13. Proposed in 1978. DMD.

17. **Oakdale Project** — New concept, involving clearance, relocation and residential development. Initiated in 1979. ERC.

18. **Deaconess-North Neighborhood Strategic Area** — Proposed rehabilitation under same plan as Number 13 for 1980. DMD.

19. **Haynie's Corner Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Project** — Initiated in 1975. In progress. Improvements to area under community development funds; assistance to businesses. Initiation of new, multi-faceted approach to neighborhood development

