

Implementation and Next Steps



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Overview

The implementation and next steps provide a framework for future action. It outlines important action items for the City to begin moving forward to realize the vision for the Grand Connection. Following adoption of the framework plan, the City should detail an implementation and work plan. Over time this chapter should be revisited and updated to ensure that all strategies remain relevant as the project evolves.

The *Implementation and Next Steps Chapter* will be updated to reflect the direction provided by City Council upon review and adoption of the recommended strategies.

Immediate (Less Than 1 Year)

1. Develop a Branding Strategy

The City should develop a branding strategy for the project that provides its own identity. A branding strategy is consistent with similar efforts including projects such as the 11th Street Bridge Park (Washington, D.C.), the Stitch (Atlanta, GA) and High Line (New York, NY). The branding strategy should include elements such as logos, aesthetic, web based information, media campaign, and regular outreach.

The branding strategy will assist in creating consistent marketing materials as the project pursues funding and partnership opportunities. The branding strategy will also assist in creating a consistent messaging strategy, making the project easily identifiable and recognizable. On call materials will assist in maintaining the momentum that has been developed during the charrette and visioning stages and can be paired with a detailed outreach program that continues to engage

residents, stakeholders, and businesses in the future planning and implementation of the project. Outreach may include tours, workshops, and regular newsletters.



▲ 11th Street Bridge Park Logo - Image source - 11th Street Bridge Park

2. Update Pedestrian Corridor Design Guidelines

The City should immediately begin updating the Pedestrian Corridor design guidelines with the updated and adopted elements of the Grand Connection framework plan. This should include design references to public spaces, paving, weather protection, urban amenities, programming, art, and overall vision. As part of the Wilburton Commercial

Area land use and transportation study, the city should ensure that the Design Guidelines for the area include elements related to the Grand Connection. Updates to any corresponding and affected codes, plans, and initiatives should also be considered.

3. Measurements of Success and Impact

The City should develop a plan to measure and analyze the success of the Grand Connection from the perspective of physical build out, as well as impact on the quality of life for residents and businesses.

This plan should include yearly surveys of residents, businesses, and tourists. Projects such as the Indianapolis Cultural Trail have developed a robust analysis of the impact of the trail and can serve as a precedent for the City when developing its metrics. Some common elements should include:

- Number of physical improvements completed.
- Change in assessed property values over time.
- Changes in development patterns, particularly in the Wilburton Commercial Area.
- Change in economic activity of surrounding businesses, including sales, hours of operation, and number of patrons.
- Resident and worker surveys that assess the number of hours spent on the route, number of events attended associated with the route, type of usage of the route.
- Measurements and counts of people attending events associated with the route and the use of particular public spaces such as Compass Plaza and the Downtown Park.
- Overall satisfaction survey with the route and needs for improvements.
- Number of safety incidents along the Grand Connection route.



▲ Indianapolis Cultural Trail - Indianapolis, Indiana - Image source - Indianapolis Cultural Trail

4. Capital Improvements Priority Plan

Following adoption and amendment of the framework plan, the City should develop a detailed Grand Connection Capital Improvement Priority Plan. The projects should be prioritized by:

- Identifying initial projects necessary for the advancement of other projects
- Available funds
- Opportunity for redevelopment and partnership
- Coordination with other City departments and private development
- Level of readiness for each initiative

To determine the level of readiness for each adopted recommendation the City should refer to the next steps outlined for each recommendation (i.e. implementation, design refinement, Environmental Impact Analysis).

5. Tactical Urbanism and Pilot Projects

The City should identify and implement pilot projects and tactical urbanism interventions to analyze the readiness of public space improvements and programming to inform the Capital Improvements Priority Plan.

Pilot projects and tactical urbanism events can also be used to build additional project support and momentum. The City should develop annual events that continue to market and promote the project, while also providing updates and new opportunities for engagement. The City should also continue with partnerships such as the *Enliven Wilburton!* event with King County to promote and demonstrate the opportunity of the Grand Connection and other interfacing projects.

6. Raised Intersections

Prior to the visioning process the City had already identified key intersections for raising. The City should continue this initiative and its pursuit of grants to fund these improvements along the route. This should be a continuous process of systematically upgrading the intersections and applying aesthetic and artistic improvements.

7. Identify Partnership Opportunities

The City should identify and pursue partnership opportunities and build relationships to advance improvements and initiatives related to the project. Partnerships and relationships could advance tactical urbanism and pilot project opportunities, and facilitate the study and implementation of projects such as Group Rapid Transit. Partnerships should also inform

the Capital Improvements Priority Plan. Partnerships could include land owners, local businesses, civic organizations, tourism boards, and Bellevue Arts Museum.

8. Art and Culture

Use the 2018 Bellwether program to lay the foundations of the cultural corridor including new cultural plinths at Downtown Park, partnerships for a new mural program along the Garden Hill Climb, and joint programming with the Bellevue Arts Museum ARTSFair at NE 6th Street. Integrate artists onto the design teams to add art features to the new Downtown Park entrance at NE 4th Street and the new raised intersection on 106th Ave NE along Compass Plaza. (See *Art and Culture Plan for detailed implementation*).

Near-Term (1 - 2 Years)

1. NE Downtown Park Entrance

The City has already identified the northeast corner of the Downtown Park as a near term initiative. City departments should collaborate to implement the vision that supports all department initiatives including access and character.

2. Design Refinement of Preferred Interstate 405 Crossing Alternative

Upon selection of a preferred Interstate 405 crossing alternative the City should advance a design refinement and grant ready level proposal. This refinement should address, in greater depth,

- Funding sources
- Engineering

- Property acquisition (where applicable)
- Modification to transportation networks
- Programming
- Final Design

3. Design Refinement of Cohesive Design Strategies

The City should develop finer grained plans for the cohesive design strategies that include context sensitive proposals, refinement of colors, materials, locations, and phasing strategies based on the Capital Improvements Priority Plan and partnership opportunities.

4. Testing, Refinement, Analysis of Group Rapid Transit

The City should explore and evaluate opportunities to implement the group rapid transit recommendation. This work should include determination if an Environmental Impact Statement will be required, identifying partnerships for implementation, design refinement of the route and necessary improvements, and development of a phasing plan if determined to be a feasible strategy.

5. Art and Culture

Explore program partnerships with the King County Library Regional Library’s new maker-space for an Emerging Artist Program and with merchants and property owners along the route for evening art walks. Make upgrades to NE 6th between Bellevue Way and 106th Ave NE to be activated as a festival street including replacing the sidewalk art installation, adding light pole installations and new wayfinding. Develop and support an artist community in

Wilburton by opening an arts incubator at Lincoln Center. (See Art and Culture Plan for detailed implementation).

Mid-Term (2 - 5 Years)

1. Study and Analyze the Secondary Grand Connection Route

If adopted, the City should conduct a visioning and planning study for the secondary route of the Grand Connection. This study should consider:

- Integration with existing City plans and initiatives.
- Improvements to Main Street and route segments west of the Downtown Park.
- Improved and new public spaces as part of the expanded route.
- Integration with non-motorized improvements.
- Connectivity to the Wilburton Hill Park and Botanical Garden.
- Improvements to crossing Interstate 405.

2. Design Refinement of Major Improvements

Based upon the Capital Improvements Priority Plan the City should begin refinement and analysis of key design elements, including feasibility and impact.

These refinements should include:

- “Street as Plaza” segment of the existing Pedestrian Corridor
- Compass Plaza
- Bellevue Transit Center
- Public Space Improvements in the Wilburton Commercial Area related to the adoption of a preferred Interstate 405 crossing alternative.

3. Art and Culture

Refresh Compass Plaza as it redevelops by replacing Bellgate and City Within A City artworks with a major new signature light-based artwork and temporary artist-designed canopies. Partner with Bellevue Square to commission a new major sculpture to act as beacon at the Bellevue Way and NE 6th Street entrance. Commission artistic treatments west of I-405 including along the columns and guideway of future light rail crossing, a cultural plinth and community hub at the redeveloped Lincoln Center Property for events and performances, and a signature gateway artwork at ERC connection to act as entryway to the Grand Connection.

Implementation Plan and Next Steps Matrix

Task	Timescale
Policy and Public Relations	
Develop a Branding Strategy	0-1
Update and create any necessary guidelines, codes, and plans.	0-1
Develop Measurements of Success and Impact	0-1
Capital Improvements Priority Plan	0-1
Identify Partnership Opportunities	0-1
Art & Culture and Programming	
Tactical Urbanism and Pilot Projects	Initiate in Year 0-1 Ongoing
Art and Culture Plan	Initiate in Year 1 -2 Ongoing
Physical Improvements	
Raised Intersections	Initiate in Year 0-1 Ongoing
NE Downtown Park Entrance	1-2
Cohesive Design Strategies (including overall identity)	Initiate in Year 1-2 Ongoing
Design Refinement	
I-405 Crossing	1-2
Group Rapid Transit	1-2
Compass Plaza	2-5
"Street as Plaza"	2-5
Compass Plaza	2-5
Bellevue Transit Center	2-5
Long Term Grand Connection Route	2-5