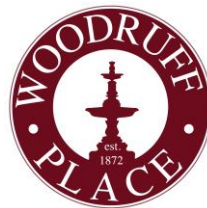




# **WOODRUFF PLACE ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



# Woodruff Place EID

## Economic Improvement District

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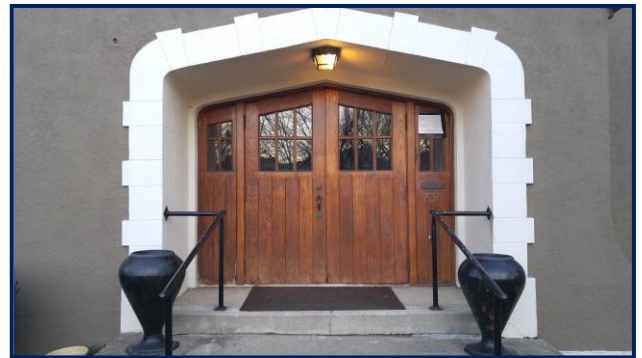
### **I. Background**

Woodruff Place is located just over a mile from the downtown circle and was the first "suburban" neighborhood in Indianapolis. The neighborhood's historic significance lies in its unique character as a planned residential community created within a park-like atmosphere. James O. Woodruff, a civil engineer from Auburn, New York created a grand plan in 1872 to develop a residential park, a Victorian version of formal Italian Renaissance gardens. From the beginning, Woodruff Place possessed all the prerequisites of a park: three boulevard drives bisected by grassy, shaded esplanades, spacious lots, picturesque homes, clusters of graceful cast-iron statues, multi-tiered fountains, and unique street light fixtures.

James Woodruff's vision included several unique infrastructure features: fountains, statuary, urns, street lights, fences along 10<sup>th</sup> and Michigan Streets, and monuments at the entrances to the neighborhood. There was also a municipal building on East Drive that continues today as the Woodruff Place Town Hall.

Woodruff Place incorporated as a town in 1876, but was annexed by the City of Indianapolis in 1962 after a ten-year court battle. The Parks Department was the reluctant heir to the historic infrastructure.

One by one, due to budget constraints and higher priorities throughout the city, the City of Indianapolis decreased funding maintenance of the Town Hall, esplanades, fountains, statuary, urns, and street lights. These beautiful features deteriorated over time, due mainly to a lack of financial resources for timely, sustained maintenance.



In response, Woodruff Place residents have successfully raised thousands of dollars annually through neighborhood contributions, fundraisers, special events, and grant-writing. The total amount raised is impressive for an all-volunteer organization but is only a fraction of what is necessary to maintain, let alone improve, the historic infrastructure.

In 2014, the Historic Woodruff Place Foundation authorized a small committee of Woodruff Place property owners to evaluate the feasibility of a Woodruff Place Economic Improvement District (WPEID) as a long-term financial resource. The WPEID plan assesses all property owners a modest annual amount that is paid into a general fund intended solely for here-to-fore unachievable large, life-extending investments in maintenance and restoration of the neighborhood's historic infrastructure.

In mid-2015, after 18 months of planning, outreach to and input from property owners, the WPEID proposal was voted on by the neighborhood through a door-to-door campaign. The results: At the end of a two-month petition drive, the owners of 78% of Woodruff parcels voted "YES" for the WPEID. Further, the owners of 92% of Woodruff parcels that responded to the petition drive voted "YES" for the WPEID.

Later that year, three City/County Councillors co-sponsored an ordinance to create the City's first EID and this remarkable achievement was approved by the City/County Council and the Mayor. The Department of Public Works (DPW) agreed to match the funds raised by the WPEID for five years. The Indianapolis Foundation also provided a grant to match contributions to the Historic Woodruff Place Foundation's annual fundraising campaign.

In 2016, all Woodruff Place property owners paid into the WPEID for the first time.

## **II. Process**

In 2016 a seven-member board, made up of Woodruff Place property owners, was created to govern the WPEID. The board is responsible for: (1) developing and recommending an annual budget and work plan, (2) overseeing administration of the EID funds, and (3) monitoring the performance and provision of EID services. The board met four times in 2016, providing public notice of all meetings in accordance with Indiana's Open Door Law. In keeping with the WPEID's commitment to inclusion and transparency, the board welcomes attendance and input from all neighborhood residents.

During 2016, an original board member sold his residence in the neighborhood and was replaced on the board by a nominee of the Woodruff Place Civic League board of directors. This nominee was subsequently approved by the City/County Council.

The board elected officers, drafted and approved a governing set of Board Policies, and amended the original budget based on the approval of the DPW funding and the various restrictions attached to the different funding sources.

The WPEID established an account at the Financial Health Federal Credit Union on East 10<sup>th</sup> Street and received deposits throughout the year from the Marion County Treasurer and DPW.

In late 2016, the WPEID submitted a budget and board for 2017 to the City/County Council. The board voted to maintain annual assessments at the same levels as in 2016. The budget and board were approved by the City/County Council.

All WPEID organizational documents and meeting agendas and minutes are posted at [www.woodruffplace.org](http://www.woodruffplace.org).



## **III. Accomplishments**

In 2016, the WPEID funded major repairs and improvements to the neighborhood's historic infrastructure despite having less than a full year to plan, solicit bids, and complete all work. As the first EID in the city, the WPEID board, volunteers, and partners devoted many weeks learning about the bidding process, working with contractors, public meeting laws, and statutory regulations governing the EID. The DPW Memorandum of Understanding was not executed until the second quarter. Finally, the WPEID funding had to be integrated with the Foundation's budget. The resulting time period left the WPEID board and volunteers leading the restoration with six months to complete work usually accomplished in a year.

Despite less time, unprecedented achievements were completed. The Light Brigade overhauled eight historic street lights from top to bottom. Five street lights were bolstered by new concrete pads. The WPEID and DPW funded six of the eight overhauls. Cracks were welded, all parts sandblasted, and the exteriors were primed and



painted. Given that in a typical year one to two streetlights receive this extensive treatment, the WPEID was responsible for nearly five times the usual output. Further, 370 light globes were cleaned for the first time in anyone's memory.

The WPEID and DPW funded the boring of new underground lines for wiring the Cross/Middle and Cross/West fountains. When the new wiring is installed in 2017, the Cross/West Drive fountain will be operable once again. The fountain never functioned in 2016 due to the faulty underground wiring. New covers were also built for the Cross Drive fountain pump houses to prevent water from flooding the pump houses, plus they can be locked securely.

The entire Town Hall roof was replaced and two dormers were restored, work that had been deferred for many years, a significant life-extending investment. Various leaks in the roof had fostered rot in the dormers and were beginning to deteriorate interior renovations completed the prior year.

Finally, new concrete rails were completed for a section of the 10<sup>th</sup> Street wall.



Work on the streetlights, fountains, and Town Hall roof cost over \$75,000.

*New fountain pump house fountain cover*

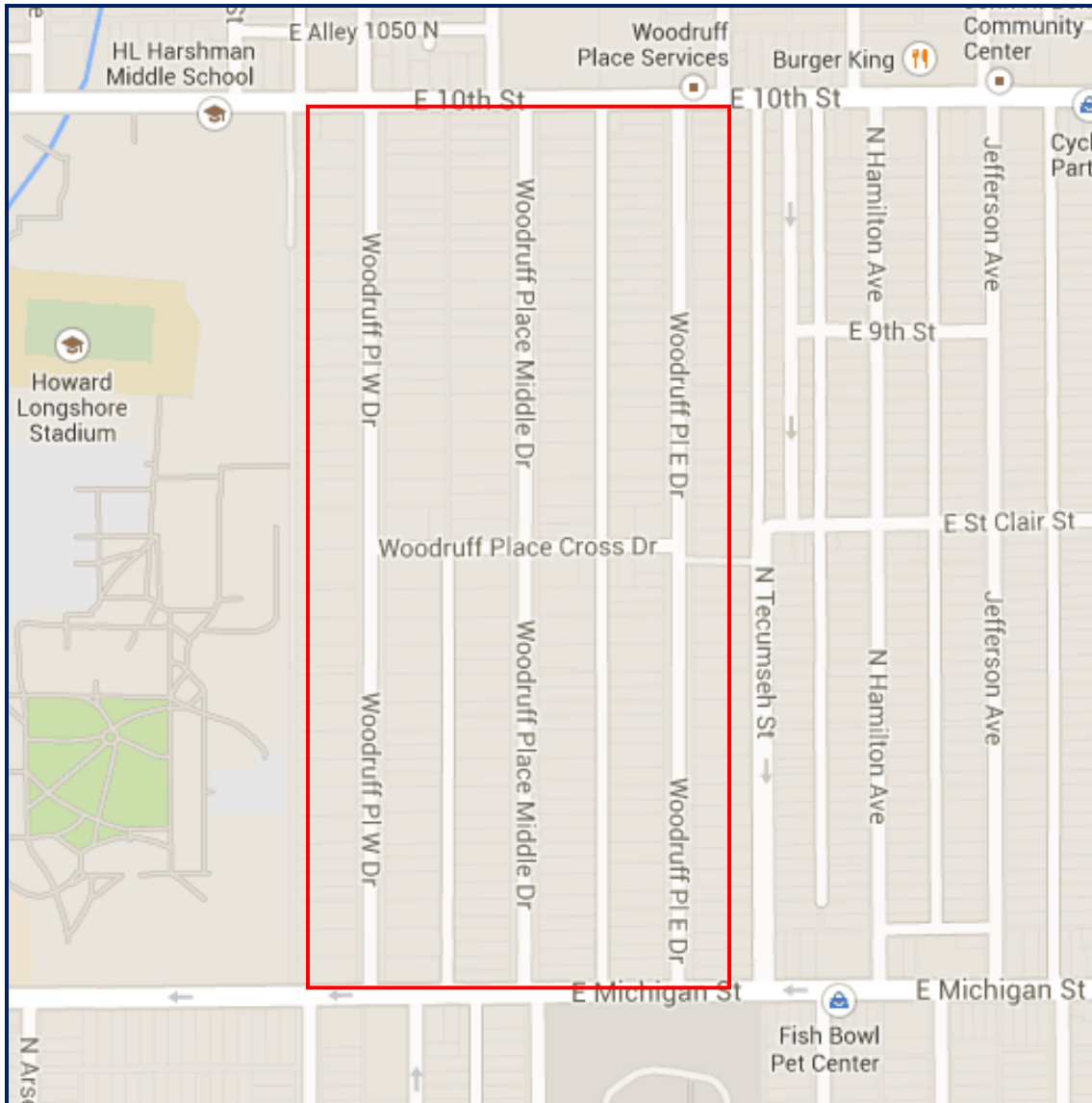
Without the WPEID and DPW funding, these life-extending investments would be beyond the scope of the neighborhood's usual fundraising and would have been postponed for years.

The WPEID and DPW funds enabled the neighborhood to invest in improvements at a level not accomplished in decades, but neighborhood volunteers were critical to the process. The Street Light Brigade led by Tom Abeel, Fountain Heads led by Ken Brooks, Town Hall renovations led by Matt Belsaas, and the 10<sup>th</sup> Street wall renovation led by Charlie Neill committed dozens of hours and saved the neighborhood thousands of additional dollars. Volunteers learned and prudently navigated new bidding, soliciting, and contractor selection processes that were rarely required by prior funding sources. As important as the new funding from the WPEID and DPW, these volunteers were the catalysts for incredible progress in 2016.



# Exhibit I

## Woodruff Place EID Map



## **Exhibit II**

### **Woodruff Place Historic Street Light Restoration with funds from Woodruff Place EID**

Before



After



# **Exhibit III**

## **2016 Financial Report**

<b>EID and DPW</b>			
	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
EID	\$ 45,000	\$ 42,453	\$ (2,547)
DPW	\$ 45,000	\$ 43,708	\$ (1,292)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>	<b>\$ 86,161</b>	<b>\$ (3,839)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Town Hall	\$ 35,017	\$ 34,775	\$ 243
Historic Street Lights	\$ 15,000	\$ 13,458	\$ 1,542
Fountains	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,250	\$ (250)
E. 10th St and Michigan St fences	\$ 6,353	\$ 5,148	\$ 1,205
Statues, urns, trees	\$ 1,000	\$ -	\$ 1,000
Assessor's Fees & Penalties	\$ 2,630	\$ 2,531	\$ 99
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 90,000</b>	<b>\$ 86,161</b>	<b>\$ 3,839</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>