



## WELCOME!

The **City of Hobart** and the **Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Committee (NIRPC)** have initiated a planning process to create a set of zoning standards to guide the use and design of sites within local conservation areas. The goal of this project is not to prohibit development, but to define the opportunities where development can take place in a manner that respects and enhances conservation areas – both by reducing adverse impacts of adjacent land uses and by improving local access to wildlife where appropriate. The City of Hobart has engaged The Lakota Group along with Duncan Associates to complete this Conservation Zoning and Sub Area Plan.

## PART 1: CONSERVATION ZONING

This process will result in the creation of one or more new “conservation” zoning districts to be applied to existing and future managed conservation lands. The geographic focus of this district will be in the area outlined in purple in the Environmental Areas & Managed Lands map, though the zoning classification can be applied to managed lands outside of the boundary as well.

The new district(s) will:

- **Identify permitted uses and activities**, including open space and natural resource preservation, (active and passive) recreation, conservation and maintenance (including trail construction, invasive species management, clearing and burning).
- **Include regulations governing construction** of trails, parking lots, buildings and structures, including conservation-specific fences.
- Specify the need for and rules governing **natural resource management plans**.

## PART 2: SUB AREA PLAN

The sub-area plan will focus on the area south of the Hobart Marsh, as outlined in pink in the Environmental Areas & Managed Lands map. While there are environmentally sensitive areas within this area, there are also many development opportunities.

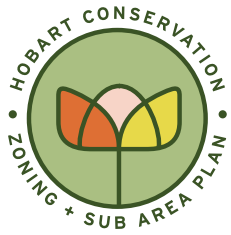
The plan aims to:

- **Identify areas where conservation is needed** to protect the Lake George watershed and preserve local habitats.
- **Determine parcels where conservation and new development partnerships** could occur.
- **Establish best practices** for how development plans can work with local conservation groups to achieve stormwater management and conservation goals.

Visit [www.HobartConservationPlan.org](http://www.HobartConservationPlan.org) to learn more!

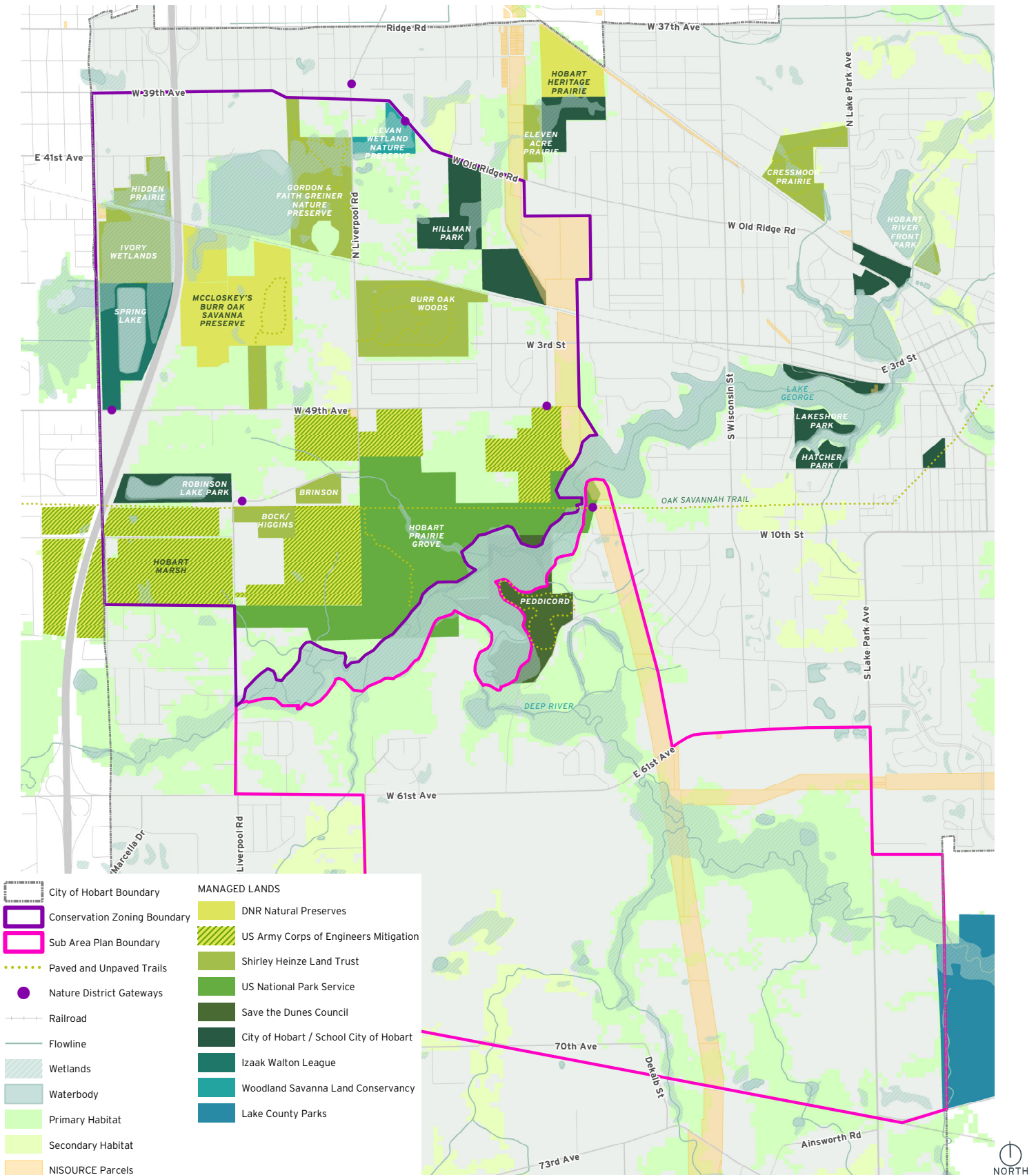
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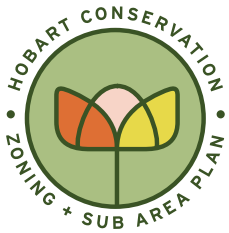




# Conservation in Hobart

## ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS & MANAGED LANDS MAP



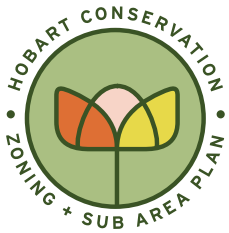


# Conservation in Hobart

## HOBART'S PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

*There are many organizations and entities working to preserve, protect, and restore Hobart's natural areas. The diagram below outlines the missions of these groups, and illustrates the various conservation tools that are being used in the nature district.*





# Why Conserve

## WHO BENEFITS, WHAT IS DONE, AND WHY DO WE DO IT?

*Extensive conservation efforts are underway throughout Northwest Indiana. In Hobart, these efforts improve water quality conditions throughout Hobart Marsh and protect the Lake George watershed.*

### WHO

We all benefit from conservation no matter how involved or removed you are from the process. Conservation practices affect everything from our food supply, air quality, climate, water quality, and our mental and physical well-being.

- Individuals
- Municipalities
- Communities
- Developers
- Farmers
- Government

### WHAT

The earth is made up of fundamental natural resources including air, water, soil, minerals, plants, and animals. Conservation is the practice of nurturing these resources to ensure that all living things can benefit from them, now and in the future.

#### Land Stewardship

Care and management of the land and its resources.

#### Tree Planting (Reforestation)

Establishing trees in areas adapted to woodlands.

#### Mitigation Banking

Replacement of wetland functions through the creation or restoration of wetlands.

#### Soil Conservation & Erosion Control

Preventing the loss of soil particles due to rain, wind, or water-flow.

#### Seed Collection (Seed Banks)

Collecting and storing seeds of valuable plant species for protection from extinction.

#### Stormwater Management

Water conservation practice to increase permeability and ground water recharge.

### WHY

Humans rely on natural resources for sustenance. Engaging in conservation not only establishes a connection to the natural world, it helps us live healthier more productive lives while preserving these resources for future generations.

#### Water

Removes pollutants, provides flood control, and increases ground water recharge.

#### Biodiversity

Improves native plant and animal habitat.

#### Infrastructure

Prevents natural disasters from damaging bridges, roads, and buildings.

#### Smart Growth

Enables higher density development among high functioning open spaces.

#### Education

Introduces students and residents to environmental education and stewardship.

#### Human Connection

Fosters an emotional connection with the natural world while improving physical health.

#### Aesthetic Improvement

Creates scenic open spaces that improve our health and reduce stress.

#### Increased Property Value

Provides numerous economic benefits for communities.

#### Air Quality

Removes pollutants through plant storage and oxygen production.

#### Climate Regulation

Increases carbon sequestration and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

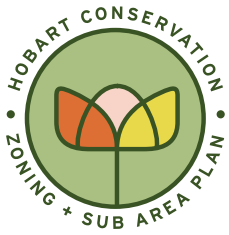
#### Provides Habitat

Creates biologically diverse natural open space.

#### Recreation Opportunities

Creates open spaces and trails for active exploration.





## Why Conserve ANIMALS UNIQUE TO HOBART

*The natural areas in Hobart are home to unique and often rare plant and animal species.*



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

*Lithobates pipiens*

**STATUS:**

State Species of Special Concern

**HABITAT:**

Permanent ponds, swamps, marshes, and slow-moving streams throughout forest, open, and urban areas

**FUN FACT:**

The northern leopard frog produces enzymes that are potential treatments for cancer.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

*Emydoidea blandingii*

**STATUS:**

State Endangered,  
Federal Candidate

**HABITAT:**

Wetlands with clean shallow water.

**FUN FACT:**

These turtles show no common signs of aging and are active and reproductive for up to 90 years.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

*Rallus elegans*

**STATUS:**

State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Breeds in marshes, the nest is a raised platform built with marsh vegetation and covered by a canopy.

**FUN FACT:**

When it catches food on land, it often takes the item to water and dunks it before eating it.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

*Cistothorus palustris*

**STATUS:**

State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Marsh wrens occupy wetlands year-round, using brushy thickets in the winter.

**FUN FACT:**

These birds cling to stems of wetland vegetation, shimmying up and down and belting out a series of gurgling, buzzy trills.



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

*Nycticorax nycticorax*

**STATUS:**

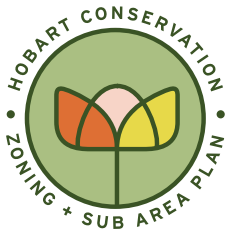
State Endangered

**HABITAT:**

Common in wetlands, where they require aquatic habitat for foraging and terrestrial vegetation for cover.

**FUN FACT:**

A breeding Black Crowned Night-Heron will brood any chick that is placed in its nest—they don't distinguish between their own offspring and nestlings from other parents.



# Why Conserve PLANTS UNIQUE TO HOBART

*The natural areas in Hobart are home to unique and often rare plant and animal species.*

EARLEAF FOXGLOVE



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Agalinis auriculata

**STATUS:**

State threatened,  
Globally rare and uncommon

**HABITAT:**

Prairies, disturbed sites, prairie remnants along railroad rights-of-way, and open upland woods.

**FUN FACT:**

Studies suggest this species is capable of self-pollination. It is believed it can obtain part of its nutrients from the roots of other plants.

SMOOTH VEINY PEA



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Lathyrus venosus

**STATUS:**

State threatened

**HABITAT:**

Wet to dry habitats, prairies, disturbed sites, woods, riverbanks, slopes and shores.

**FUN FACT:**

The dried roots are considered a lucky charm and can be used as a stimulant or tonic to treat convulsions and internal bleeding.

PRAIRIE VIOLET



**ALSO KNOWN AS:**

Viola pedatifida

**STATUS:**

State threatened

**HABITAT:**

Mesic to slightly dry black soil prairies, savannas, and loess hill prairies. Can indicate high quality prairie remnants.

**FUN FACT:**

Seeds are released by natural mechanical ejection, falling to the ground several inches away from the mother plant.

MESIC SAVANNA



**DESCRIPTION:**

Areas featuring widely scattered trees with a grass-dominated ground layer on seasonally saturated, somewhat poorly drained to well-drained loam soils.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**

Graminoids, forbs, woody plants, and deciduous trees.

**LOCAL EXAMPLE:**

McMcloskey's Burr Oak Savanna Nature Preserve

MESIC PRAIRIE



**DESCRIPTION:**

Complex communities of dense tall grass species and other herbaceous plants. The term mesic indicates a moderate amount of moisture content in the black-soil (silt-loam) profile of these prairie.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**

Native grasses (big bluestem & switchgrass), and wildflowers (blazing star, rattlesnake master, compass plant)

**LOCAL EXAMPLE:**

Cressmoor Prairie Nature Preserve

DRY-MESIC UPLAND FOREST



**DESCRIPTION:**

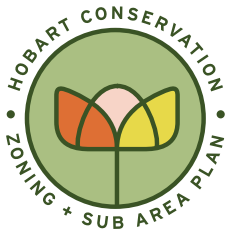
A community of scattered trees with a canopy that is generally more open than in mesic forests, resulting from intermediate moisture content in the soil profile.

**PLANT COMMUNITIES:**

Deciduous trees (White, red, and black oak, shagbark and mockernut hickory, flowering dogwood, and hop hornbeam)

**LOCAL EXAMPLE:**

Shirley Heinze Land Trust Hidden Prairie



## Why Conserve

# MYTHS v. FACTS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES

*There are a number of misconceptions about conservation.  
Let's clear things up by addressing some common myths!*

## MYTH



*Wetlands and natural areas attract unwanted mosquitoes and other pests.*



*Unsupervised natural areas and woodlands harbor dangerous criminal activity.*



*Open burns and brush pile burns are unsafe for neighbors.*



*If you don't see water, it is not a wetland.*



*Conservation turns farmland into weeds.*



*Natural areas encroach on neighbors and reduce property values.*



*Tree removal disrupts natural processes and endangers plant and animal species.*

## FACT



Mosquito larvae are very important in aquatic ecosystems not only to provide food for many animals and organisms but, in their full-grown form, mosquitoes help to pollinate vital aquatic plants. **These 'pesky' insects are the key to species diversity and functional ecosystems.**



Studies have shown that contact with nature **promotes stronger community ties and reduced crime rates.** Green space provides opportunities for communities to work together towards a united goal in ways that promotes social connection and discourages local crime.



Controlled or prescribed burns are a land management strategy to reduce hazardous fires, properly manage forest and prairie ecosystems, and promote restoration and greenhouse gas abatement. **They are carefully performed by organized teams of trained individuals.**



Certain types of wetlands have **natural wet-dry cycles** such as ephemeral wetlands and fens and therefore may appear dry at the surface. Ephemeral wetlands are isolated ecosystems that temporarily hold water in spring and early summer, while fens are ground water fed and receive their water and nutrients from below the surface.



Former agricultural lands acquired by conservation groups undergo a series of long-term treatment regimes to restore them to native landscape conditions. Restoration ecologists will repair significant erosion gullies, abandon drainage tiles to **restore native hydrology**, and plant native species to **re-establish native plant communities.**

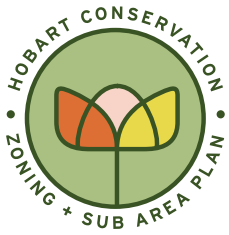


Conservationists tend to pay special attention to site boundary conditions as the potential for restoration often depends largely on the degree of degradation and adjacent land uses. Moreover, **evidence suggests that homes adjacent to natural areas and open spaces are valued at 8-20% higher than comparable properties.**



Some restoration practices such as tree thinning, removal of invasive species, and clearing and disposal of debris may seem disruptive to the existing ecosystem. However, these practices are vital to re-establish healthy plant communities and species diversity. **Thinning the tree canopy allows light and water to penetrate the under-story and provide nutrients for growing species to thrive.**



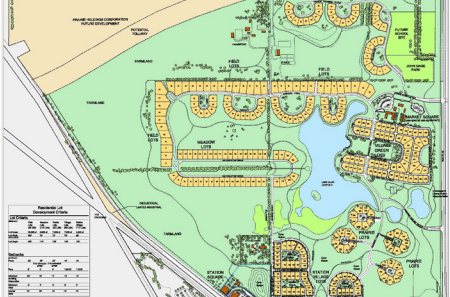


## Case Studies

# CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT RESIDENTIAL

***Conservation Development in Hobart was recommended as part of the Hobart Marsh plan, and also follows NIRPC 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan recommendations. This type of development focuses on sustainable building and site development practices, and can be found in suburban and rural areas across the country.***

### PRAIRIE CROSSING Grayslake, Illinois

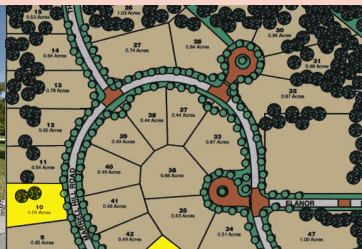
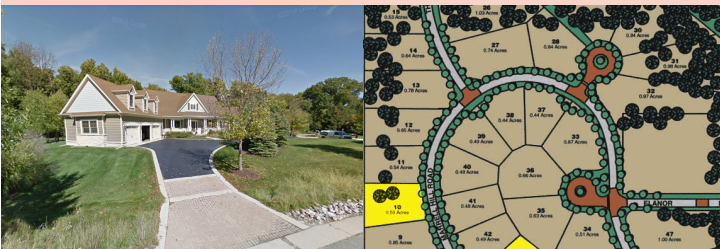


Prairie Crossing is a nationally recognized conservation community, featuring 359 single-family homes and 36 condominiums. The 675 acre formerly agricultural site was developed in the early 1990s following a lengthy legal battle against the original proposed development.

The residential community is built around an 100 acre organic farm surrounded by a conservation easement. There are eleven home models designed by various architects, all of which feature “green” construction techniques, making them 50% more efficient than comparable homes in the area.

The development features native landscaping and ten miles of trails that wind through the preserved open space or prairies, ponds and wetlands. These native plants are a key part of the stormwater management strategy developed by Applied Ecological Services—the long roots slow and purify rainwater as it makes its way to the central lake. In addition to stormwater detention, the lake serves as an community amenity, used recreationally for swimming, boating, fishing, and skating.

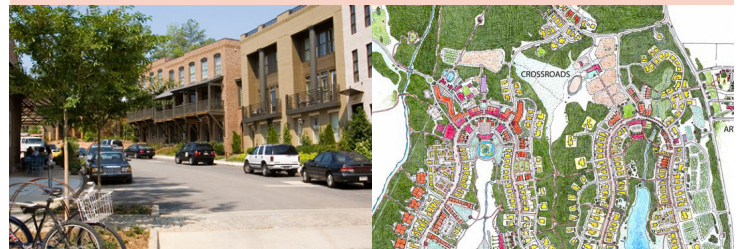
### HARRISON WEST Valparaiso, Indiana



Harrison West is a planned community with a commitment to ecological integrity. The development design included substantial tree preservation and lot restoration programs, as well as green infrastructure features such as conservation zones and vegetated swales. The design aims to enhance the existing environment and create sustainable living. Lot sizes in the development range from 0.5 to 1.5 acres.

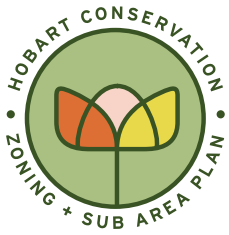
Harrison West won the Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence in Land Use in 2003.

### SERENBE Palmetto, Georgia



The Serenbe community is designed around four hamlets, a clustered design that requires minimal land disturbances and allows the community to reserve over 70 acres of undeveloped green space. The community features a 25 acre organic farm and an extensive trail system that winds through the community and connects the various hamlets. The community includes a wide variety of home types, including live work spaces, townhomes, cottages, and commercial spaces. The development conserves energy through the use of geothermal, solar, and net zero homes. Wastewater is naturally treated on-site and reused for ornamental irrigation.





## Case Studies

# CONSERVATION DEVELOPMENT BUSINESS & LIGHT INDUSTRIAL

*The much of the land in the sub-area plan is envisioned as future business park or light industrial development sites. These local examples showcase environmentally sensitive developments. In Hobart, development that is sustainable and also engages with adjacent natural areas is desired.*

### CARDINAL CAMPUS Highland, Indiana



The Cardinal Campus business park is currently under construction in Highland Indiana. When the campus is complete in five years, the 9-acre complex will include seven two-story office buildings and a three-story boutique hotel. The 100,000 square feet of Class-A office space features brick paved streets, native landscaping and a central green space called "Fountain Square." Veterinary and medical offices are among the first tenants to sign on.

Sustainable design features include renewable solar energy from rooftop solar arrays, enhanced stormwater infrastructure, native landscaping, high-performance mechanical systems and building design. The campus will be one of the first LEED Neighborhood Development certificated projects in the state.

### METHOD SOAP FACTORY Pullman (Chicago), Illinois



The Method Soap Factory opened its doors in 2015 in the historic Pullman district of Chicago. The factory is just one part of a larger vision for the 175-acre area, which is in the midst of a decade-long renovation which will one day feature homes, retail, a neighborhood recreation center and a park.

The 150,000-square-foot factory will cover five acres, the area surrounding the factory will be landscaped with native trees and plants.

The LEED Platinum factory features a variety of sustainable investments, including a wind turbine, solar "trees" shade the parking lot and solar thermal panels provide hot water for factory processes.