

## MARKTOWN

In 1914, Chicago Industrialist Clayton Mark established the Mark Manufacturing Company, a steel mill, just north of the Inland Steel Company's new Indiana Harbor works. Mark wished to create a model industrial community for his employees and commissioned a popular Chicago architect, Howard Van Doren Shaw, to design a new town.

The result was a distinctive community of 200 white stucco buildings—stores, clubs, single-family and duplex homes, and dormitories—constructed on a swampy 92-acre site.

Educational, recreational and service facilities were provided, including Marktown's own school, playgrounds, tennis courts, baseball and football fields, and an automobile service garage. The town was owned and maintained by the company and the homes were rented to the employees at reasonable rates.

The design of Marktown was greatly influenced by the architect's extensive travels in England, Spain, and Italy and still projects a strong European feeling. The architecture of Marktown closely resembles the English country house style Shaw used in designing his own residence in Lake Forest, Illinois. The narrow residential streets and white stucco

facades of the community remind visitors of small European towns.

A unique landscaping feature was a fountain, formally centered in a town square at the intersection of Broad and Dickey Roads. This square was removed in 1939 when Dickey Road was realigned. The original garage is now utilized as a construction office, and a bar and grill. The hotel stands vacant, but the majority of the residential units still reflect the original character of Mr. Mark's town. In 1942, the homes were sold to individual buyers.

Marktown presently has a population of 683, with a gross density of 16.8 persons per acre. Forty-three percent of all families own their homes; the median value of houses is \$12,600. The residents have indicated a great interest in the future of the neighborhood. This interest is demonstrated in the high degree of pride and sense of loyalty residents have for their community.

Marktown is an architectural landmark as well as a home for many families. While the improvement of homes and public facilities should have first priority, the need to preserve a unique architectural landmark is a special kind of responsibility in a region that has few distinguishing natural landmarks.

## NEIGHBORHOOD RECOMMENDATIONS

**HOUSING**—The unique architectural composition and predominantly residential character of Marktown should be retained. All changes proposed should be carefully evaluated for their effect on the appearance of Marktown. Through good code enforcement, a housing rehabilitation program and community support, improvements can be made in the existing residential environment. Such housing improvements would increase Marktown's attractiveness as a community and as an architectural landmark. A number of buildings require improvements ranging from minor painting and upkeep to major structural work. Those blocks in which over one-third of all the buildings needed some type of improvement have been identified as starting points for a citizen- and City-organized housing rehabilitation effort. Most of the original Marktown area falls in this category. The problem can be overcome, but it will require that all residents work together to improve their truly unique neighborhood.

**TRAFFIC**—Non-residential traffic should be discouraged by closing entry to the neighborhood at Oak and Spring Streets. Heavy truck traffic on Riley Road should be limited to daytime working hours. Small, convenient off-street residential parking lots should be made available throughout Marktown to lessen congestion on narrow residential streets. Several lots are shown on the Marktown plan.

**PARKS AND RECREATION**—The small park adjacent to Marktown School should serve as a focus for neighborhood recreational activity. A children's play area, a softball field, an expanded neighborhood center, a volleyball court and a small picnic area are several of the many activities that could be

located in this area. Street trees and parkway landscaping for the entire neighborhood should be initiated on those streets indicated in the plan. Four children's play areas or "tot lots" are needed for easy access from all parts of Marktown. A physical buffer such as a mound of earth or rows of trees should be placed between the neighborhood area and noisy streets, factories or unpleasant views; a buffer is suggested around the park area.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES**—The existing neighborhood center should be expanded to provide additional area for workshops, community meetings and recreational activities. An increased lighting level on the residential streets is recommended.

**COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES**—The improvement of the commercial facilities along Dickey Road should be encouraged. This could be accomplished through site landscaping, remodeling of shops, well-designed parking areas, and more attractive outdoor advertising.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**—The unique origins and design of Marktown give it architectural significance. An application has been submitted to register Marktown as a State and Federal architectural landmark. This recognition, when obtained, will give the neighborhood an identity and recognized status that could be a valuable asset in improving the environment. This could be commemorated in a new "Fountain Square" opposite the school, consisting of a small paved area with a fountain and marker to tell the story of Marktown. The Marktown plan illustrates one arrangement for such a new square.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

The improvements recommended in neighborhood plans indicate the commitment of the City of East Chicago to protect and improve the identity and residential character of each neighborhood. Recommendations relate to those physical aspects of the neighborhoods which can be made a part of the City's capital improvements program. Plans are also intended to encourage resident volunteer efforts to improve their own neighborhoods. Hopefully, each plan will serve as a starting point for cooperative effort on the part of citizens and the City. To be successful, however, citizen comments, help and recommendations are needed.

Many decisions are made beyond the neighborhood level which influence its attractiveness and property values. These decisions relate to problems which individual neighborhoods cannot solve alone. Programs to secure better public school education, efficient and reasonably-priced public transportation, security for people and property, mortgage money for home improvements and new construction, zoning and building code enforcement to keep residential areas free from the expansion of business

and industry, and pollution control all require City-wide action. Neighborhood plans, therefore, are only parts of a comprehensive City plan.

Other important elements include plans for major thoroughfares, utilities, schools, parks and recreation, parking facilities, commercial areas, public transportation, fire and police protection, health care facilities, and urban design.

The City has a proud record as a working man's town. It offers many advantages including job opportunities, educational facilities through the college level, an art center, a marina, and a number of strong local clubs, societies and organizations. The future of East Chicago depends upon cooperative action to maintain and improve the City's homes, businesses, industries, and public spaces. The neighborhood plan proposals are a call to action, inviting each citizen's help to improve his neighborhood, solve community problems, maintain community assets, and improve the appearance and livability of his City.



Backyard Areas

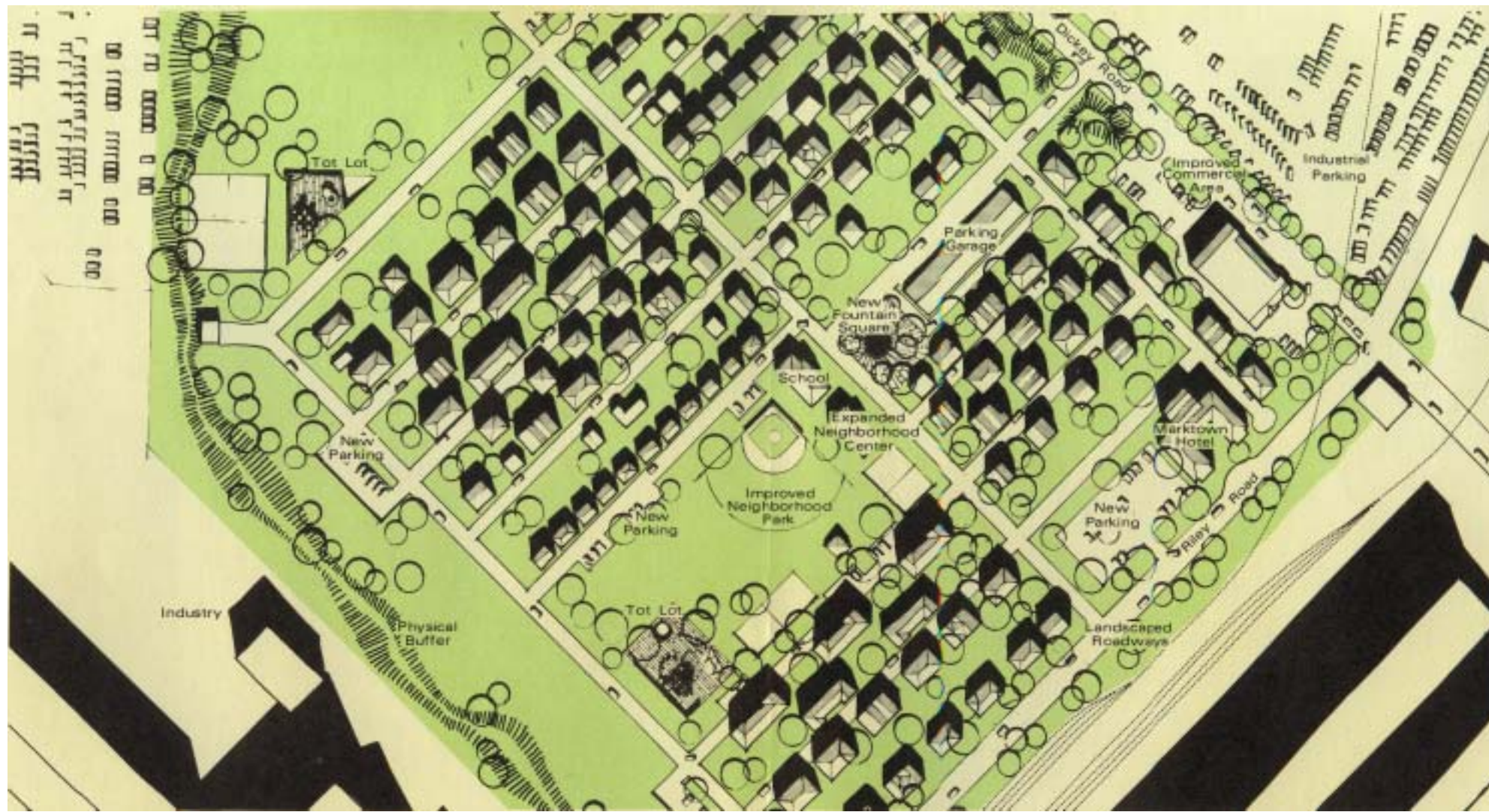


Residential Street

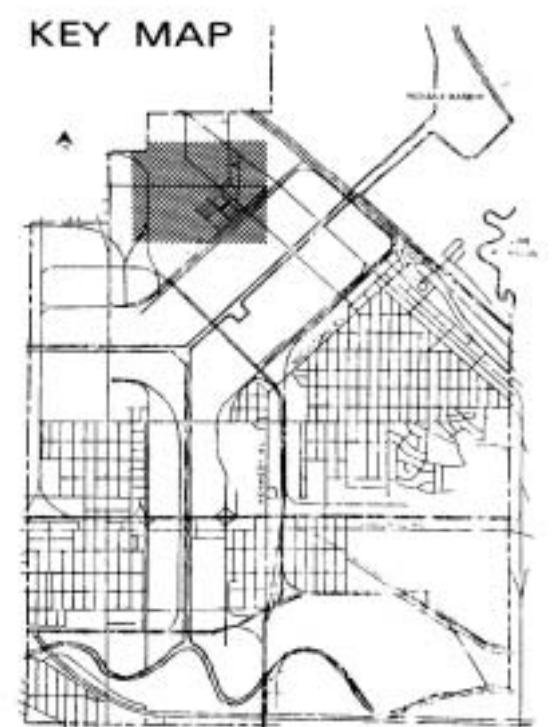
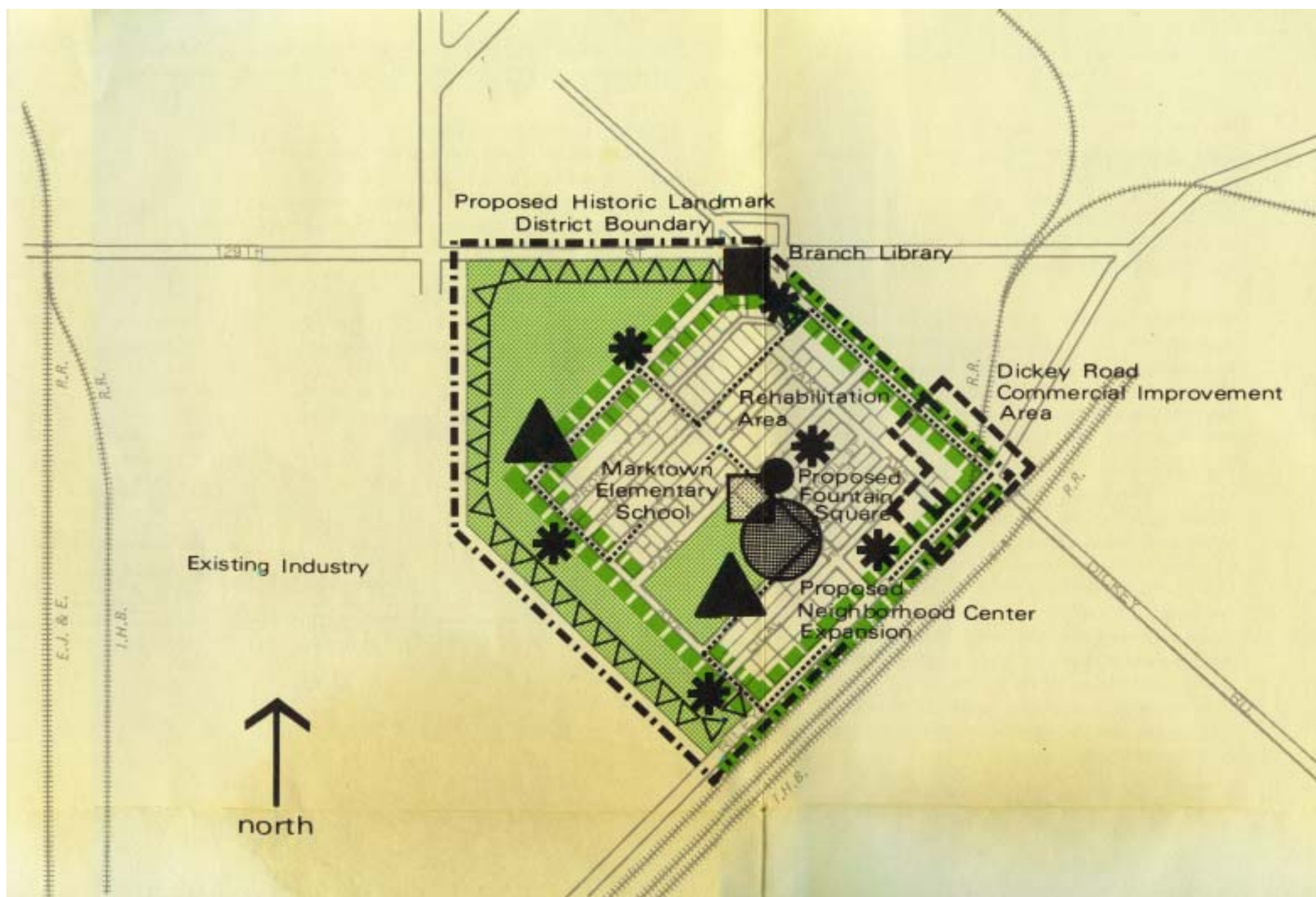
# MARKTOWN

neighborhood development plan  
east chicago, indiana





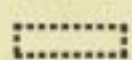


NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN DETAIL



SCALE IN FEET  
0 400 800 1200

LEGEND

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  PROPOSED PARK       |  STREET IMPROVEMENTS |
|  PARKWAY LANDSCAPING |  STREET CLOSURES     |
|  EXISTING PARKS      |  CUL DE SAC          |
|  TOT LOT             |  PHYSICAL BUFFER     |
|  OFF-STREET PARKING  |  REHABILITATION AREA |

DE LEUW, CATHER & COMPANY  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS AND PLANNERS · CHICAGO

# MARKTOWN

neighborhood  
development plan  
east chicago,  
indiana

robert a. pastrick - mayor  
john s. vasconi - planner