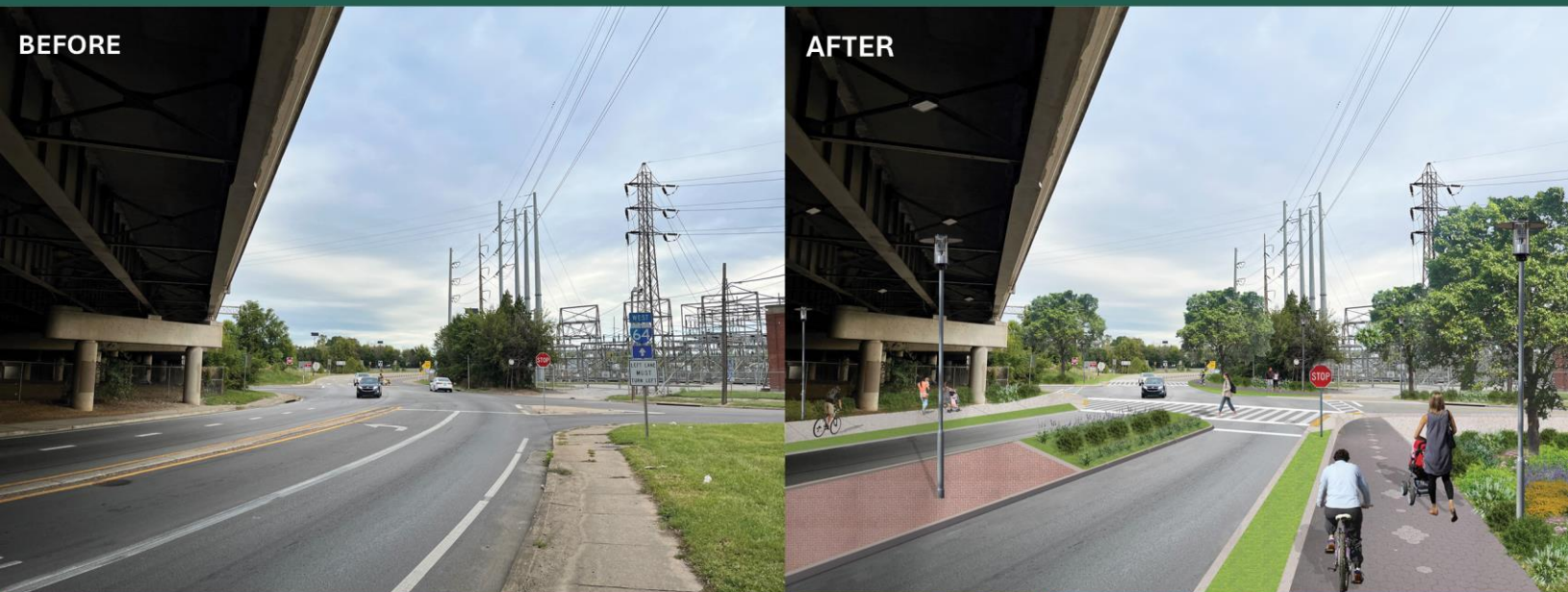


Reconnecting Central Portland to the Riverfront



Appendix B – Transportation Needs



TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

The construction of I-64 through Portland created a barrier in the community by separating much of the neighborhood on the south side of the interstate from employment, recreational, and educational opportunities on the river/north side. It isolated some residents and businesses on an island of development on the north side of I-64. The interstate created safety issues for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles traveling through this area, especially in the vicinity of the 22nd Street interchange. The existing north-south connections that go under and over I-64 are inadequate and need updates or replacement. Transportation needs in the community fall into three categories: connectivity to essential services and local assets, multimodal safety and access, and infrastructure investment.



Figure 1: Employment, Recreation and Education Opportunities in Project Area

CONNECTIVITY TO ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND LOCAL ASSETS

As illustrated in Figure 1, I-64 separates much of the community from important employment, recreational, and educational opportunities.

Lack of Access to Parks, Recreational Areas, and Greenspace – Locations that have been cut off include Lannan Memorial Park which covers 17 acres and provides ballfields, basketball and tennis courts, playground equipment, and open fields for football and soccer. The Louisville Loop/Riverwalk, other greenspace (such as Shippingport Island), and the Ohio River itself are all difficult to access. The current entrances to these locations are not well-defined, poorly lit, and uninviting, discouraging users from accessing these recreational facilities and services.

Lack of Access to Jobs and Economic

Development Opportunities – According to the [U.S. Census](#), there are approximately 250 jobs in the hard-to-access areas on the north side of I-64 along Northwestern Parkway (Figure 2), including many well-paying jobs at locations such as the United States Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) McAlpine Lock and Dam as well as manufacturing, construction, and utility firms. Residents need better access to these jobs. This is especially true given that the unemployment rate in the project area is in the 97th percentile according to the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST).

The underutilized warehouses and vacant land, which have very flexible local zoning, provide entrepreneurial opportunities that could yield new enterprises if there was better access. Improved connections and signage are needed to take full advantage of this opportunity and promote economic development with new jobs that would benefit all of Portland. One local business recently took a risk and converted a warehouse to a new professional indoor skate park, Sprak Skatepark.

Lack of Access to Educational Opportunities -

The McAlpine Locks and Dam Visitor Center is a unique regional asset that is not easily accessible by members of the community or the region at large. This is an important riverfront resource, which provides educational opportunities and information about the current and historical Ohio River shipping and navigation. The existing entrance is not well signed, see Figure 3. It is also poorly lit and uninviting (see photo in Figure 3).

Lack of Access from Households to Essential Services – The approximately 20 households on the north/river side of I-64 have limited access to the rest of Portland. Their regional access is also difficult as the eastbound I-64 ramps currently restrict left turns.



Figure 2: US Census Employment Summary



Figure 3: Only Directional Sign to USACE Lock and Dam Visitor Center

MULTIMODAL SAFETY AND ACCESS

Safe multimodal access for all users across the I-64 barrier is a major need. The segment of 22nd Street within the project area is identified as a route in [Louisville's Vision Zero - High Injury Network](#) as are adjoining segments of Bank Street and Portland Avenue, including the area adjacent to the 19th Street pedestrian bridge, see Figure 4. The safety needs can be divided into pedestrian and cyclist safety, vehicular safety, and access and mobility for all users.

Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety – In the five-year period from 2019 to 2023, there were ten pedestrian and bicycle crashes in the vicinity of 22nd Street in the project area. Four of these were serious pedestrian injury crashes. Two were fatal pedestrian crashes that occurred on the interstate and appear to have involved pedestrians crossing the interstate and/or walking in the travel lanes. The primary project area census tract (CT) was identified as the 12th highest risk CT in the state for pedestrians and cyclists ([2023 KY Vulnerable Road User \(VRU\) Safety Assessment](#)). 22nd and Lytle St was listed as the 21st highest risk unsignalized pedestrian location in Louisville ([Understanding Pedestrian Crashes Report 2011-2020](#)). 22nd St and Portland Ave is also a high-priority pedestrian safety intersection. As evidenced by the high number of pedestrian crashes, all of the 22nd Street intersections within the project area are difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to safely navigate. Additionally, the 22nd Street and Portland Avenue intersection is a high priority KYTC Highway Safety Improvement Program Vulnerable Road User upgrade location.

Vehicular Safety – The 22nd Street corridor is the highest crash-density corridor in the Portland neighborhood. From 2019 to 2023 there were 119 crashes in the under half-a-mile section, including one fatal crash, seven severe injury crashes, and 17 minor injury crashes. A KYTC safety analysis showed that the 22nd and Portland Ave and 22nd and Lytle St intersections have experienced more crashes annually than would be expected,



Figure 4: Crashes and the High-Injury Network

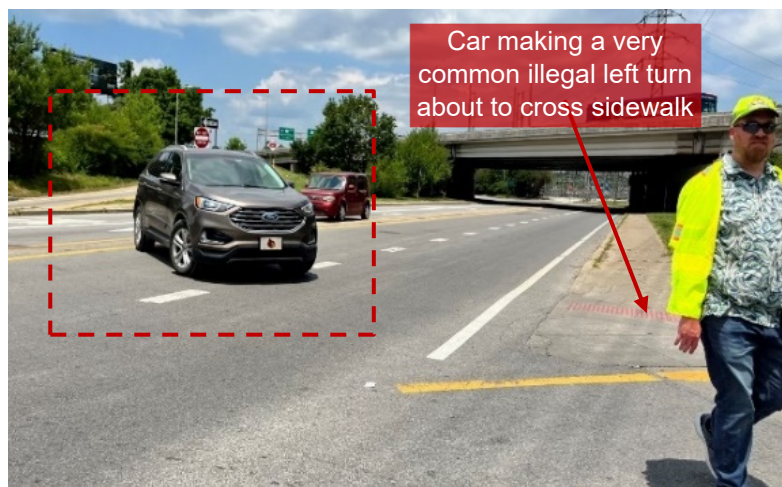


Figure 5: Vehicle making illegal left turn from 22nd Street to I-64 on ramp

based on statistical models developed by KYTC and the Kentucky Transportation Center, under HSM guidelines. The models estimate the expected crashes for different types of intersections. The 22nd Street corridor near Lytle Street had a 2019 to 2023 crash rate of 1,291 crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (100 MVMT), which is nearly twice the statewide average. More importantly, the injury crash rate was 340 crashes per 100 MVMT, which is three times the [statewide average](#). The intersections at either end of this corridor (Bank Street and the I-64 ramps) have also experienced a number of severe crashes as illustrated by Figure 4. 22nd St, Portland Ave and Bank St are on [Louisville's Vision Zero High Injury Network](#), with 22nd St listed 15th in the city.

The same safety issues mentioned in the Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety section apply to vehicular travel. Currently, entry onto the eastbound I-64 ramp from southbound 22nd St is prohibited. The existing alignment of the eastbound ramp tie into 22nd Street was meant to deter this movement. However, drivers consistently ignore this and cross over the existing sidewalk to get onto the ramp, see Figure 5. The existing alignment of the I-64 eastbound off ramp onto 22nd Street ties in very near the intersection of 22nd Street and Portland Avenue. Vehicles are merging and making turns onto Portland at high speeds. Both ramps will be reconstructed to provide improved connections as a part of the Project. Another need is for reduced speeds on all of the intersection approaches along this corridor. These safety needs were documented in the [1983 Portland Area Plan](#).

ACCESS AND MOBILITY FOR ALL USERS

There are access and mobility needs throughout the project area. Below details the issues with the four main I-64 crossing locations: 22nd Street and its intersections, the two pedestrian bridges over I-64, and 27th Street.



Figure 6: Trail Access at 22nd Street intersection

22nd Street – It is difficult for users of all modes and ability levels to navigate along 22nd Street from Portland Avenue to Northwestern Parkway across the I-64 ramps. In addition, the lack of lighting under the bridge creates a barrier by inhibiting pedestrians and cyclists from traveling through this area. Once people arrive at Northwestern Parkway it is challenging for individuals to access the *hidden* entrance to the trail given that there are no signs, markings, or curb ramps indicating where/how to cross the street, see Figure 6. These issues are in addition to the 22nd Street safety issues presented in the two previous sections. See Figure 7.

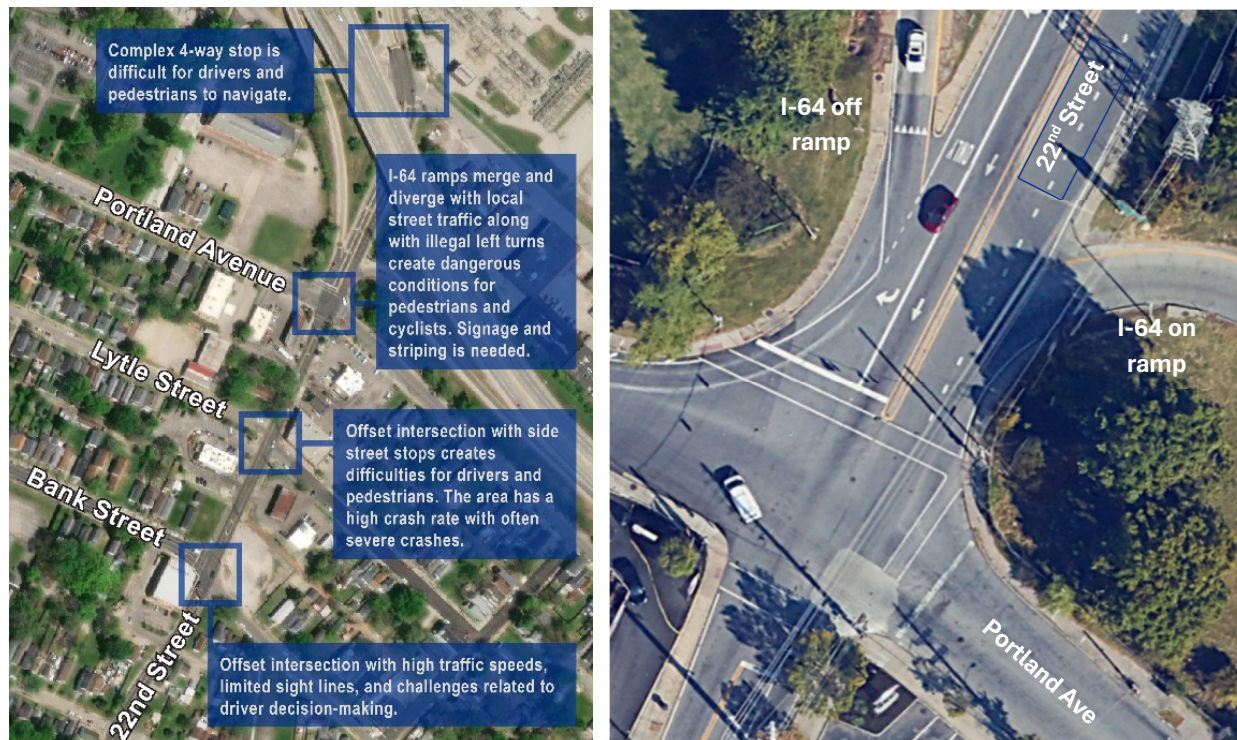


Figure 7: Roadway Geometrics at 22nd Street in Project Area

Pedestrian Bridges Near 19th and 23rd Streets – These bridges over I-64 have a width of approximately 6 feet 10 inches between the hand railings. This width does not meet the current shared-use path guidelines of a minimum usable width of 10 feet (desirable) or an absolute minimum of 8 feet to allow for pedestrian and bicycle traffic to pass concurrently. With railings present, the actual width should be 10 feet between the railings to account for 1 foot of shy distance from the railings to yield an absolute minimum usable width of 8 feet. The bridges are also in need of critical upgrades (Figure 8).



Damaged Fence on approach to Pedestrian Bridge



Narrow pedestrian bridge / ramp



27th Street underpass no overhead lights

Figure 8: Pedestrian bridge approaches and 27th Street underpass

27th Street – This underpass that leads to the entrances to Lannan Park and the McAlpine Locks and Dam has a sidewalk which is adjacent to the roadway curb on one side and hand railing on the other, limiting the usable width of the sidewalk due to people’s natural tendencies to shy away from barriers. There are also drainage issues in this area, which when addressed would alleviate standing water and the need for the railing, and also improve the sometimes-unpleasant odor in this area. There are open ditches with steep slopes adjacent to the sidewalk, and using buried stormwater pipes to convey the runoff would allow the steep slopes to be filled in and more level with the sidewalk, eliminating the need for the railing, the standing water, and foul smells associated with the standing water. Additionally, there is no lighting under the I-64 bridge in this area making the area undesirable and uninviting for pedestrians and bicyclists (Figure 8).

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT NEEDED

Over the last 40 years, numerous studies have been completed in the Portland area and transportation needs have been identified (Figure 9). However, this community has not seen a significant change in transportation infrastructure since I-64 was originally constructed (1976). The limited improvements that have been made over the last 20-plus years include restriping 22nd Street with a center turn lane and the construction of the sidewalk referenced above on 27th Street. **The Reconnecting Central Portland to the Riverfront Project represents a unique opportunity to help address needs that were identified decades ago and to improve the quality of life for this community.**

- **1983 Portland Neighborhood Study** – Identified safety and mobility needs on 22nd Street and at the interchange.
- **2008 Portland Neighborhood Study** – Identified safety, mobility, and connectivity needs including access to Lannan Park and the riverfront.
- **2012 Northwestern Parkway Study** – Identified additional transportation needs.
- **2024 Northwest Louisville Connectivity Study** – Reconfirming many of these needs.

Figure 9: Studies of the Portland Neighborhood