
Livable Communities Initiative

COMMUNITY ADVISORY FORUM | MAY 1, 2025



AN ENGINE FOR COLLABORATION
IN NORTHERN ILLINOIS



ABOUT LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (LCI)

Initiative to enhance the quality of life for residents in the Rockford Region's "middle" neighborhoods through sustainable, accessible, and vibrant community development.

Administered annually by R1 and will continue to be conducted each fiscal year for the foreseeable future.

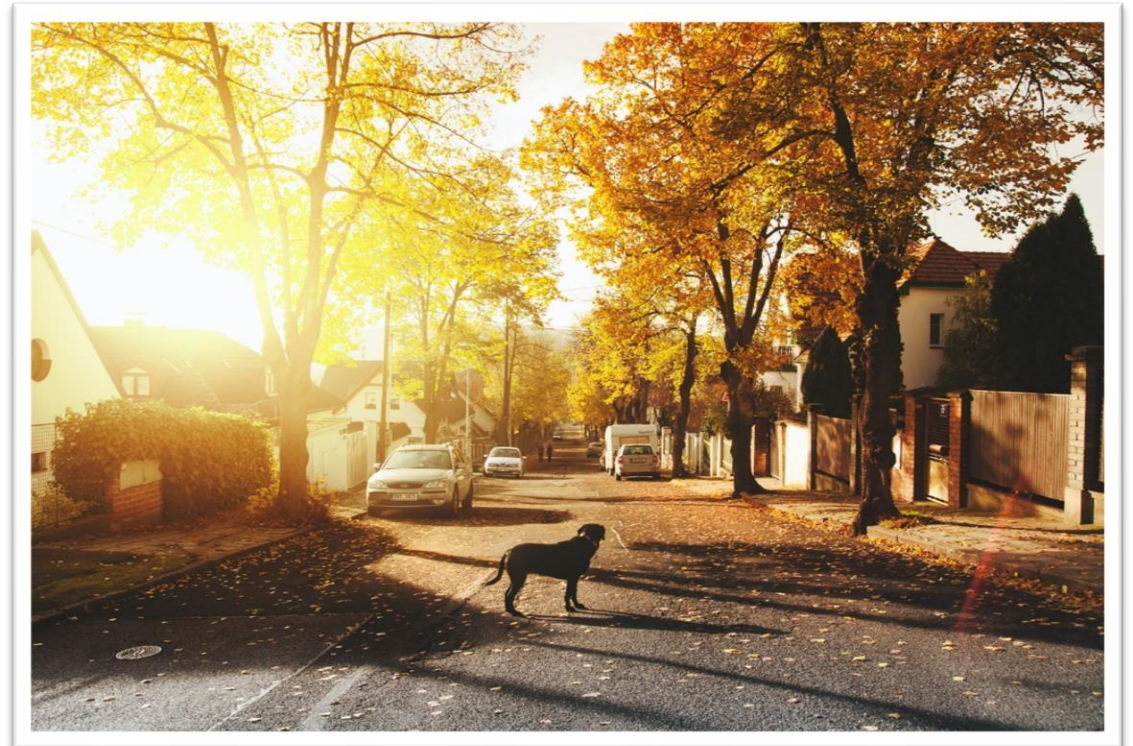
Livability Framework Principles

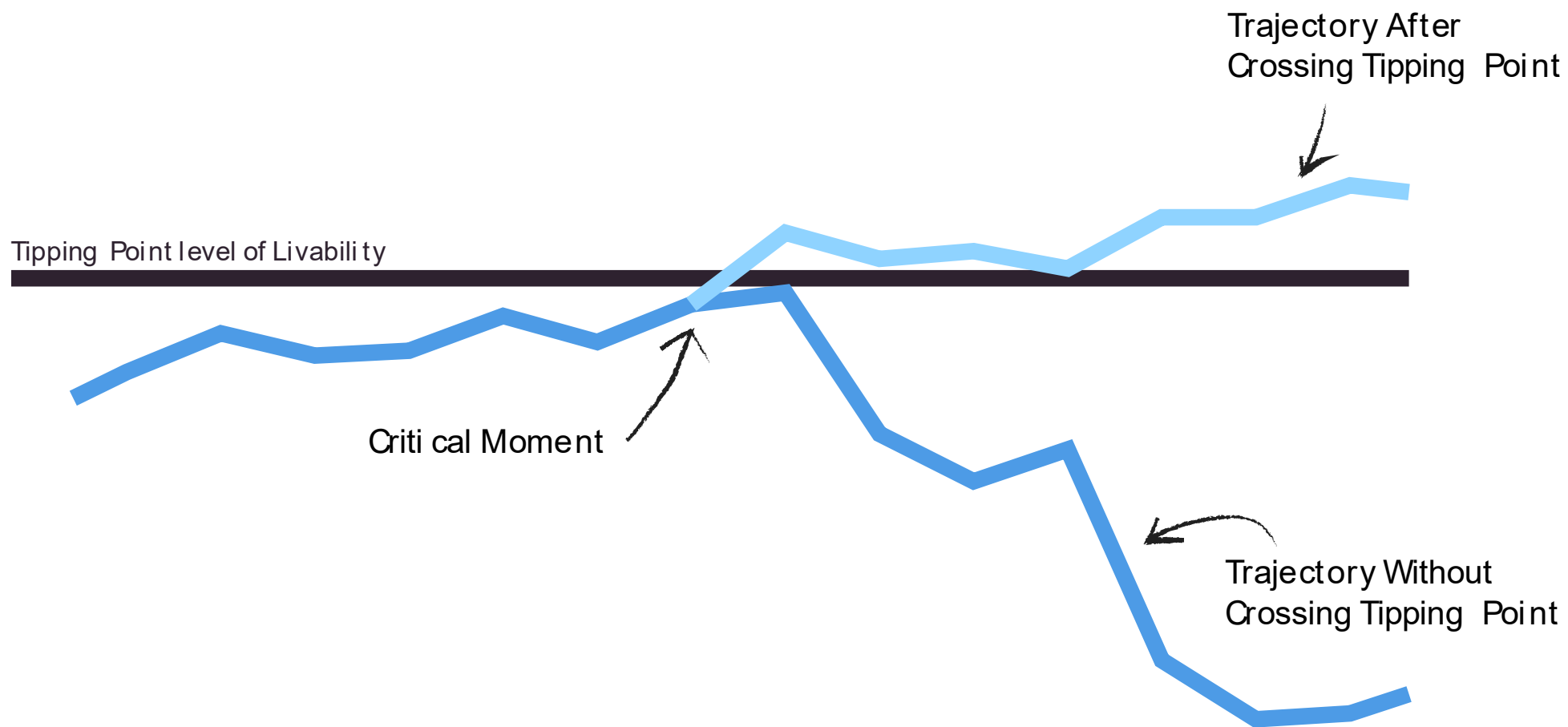
1. Provide more transportation choices.
2. Promote equitable, affordable housing.
3. Enhance economic competitiveness.
4. Support existing communities.
5. Coordinate and leverage investment.
6. Value communities and neighborhoods.

[*HUD-DOT-EPA Partnership for Sustainable Communities – Guiding Principles*](#)

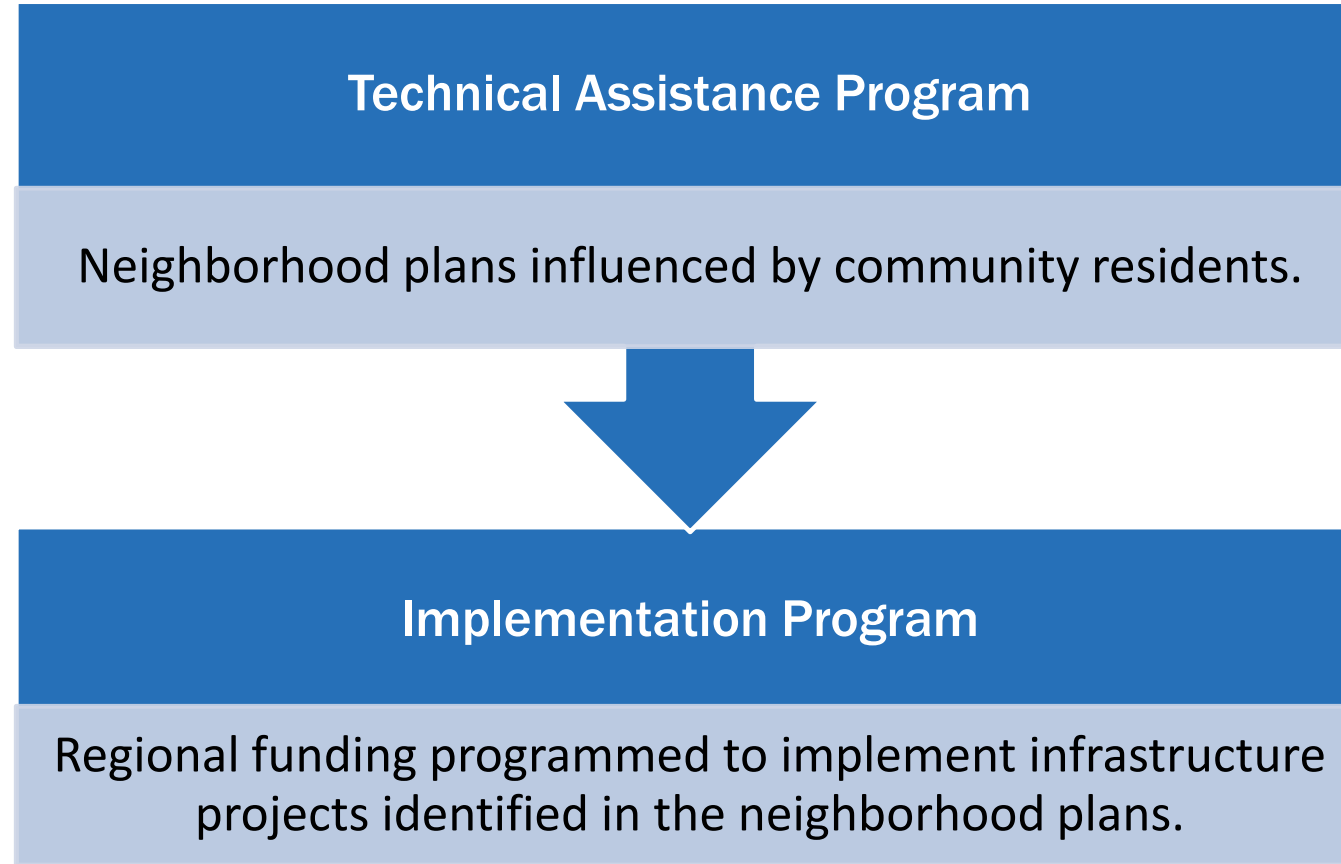
MIDDLE NEIGHBORHOODS

- Communities that have been stable for middle and working class families, but are on the verge of growth
 - 46 percent of the nation's urban population lives in these neighborhoods
 - Essential to a region's tax base, identity, and economic mobility and security
 - Often not eligible for funding sources that focus on downtown or “distressed” neighborhoods





LIVABLE COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE (LCI)



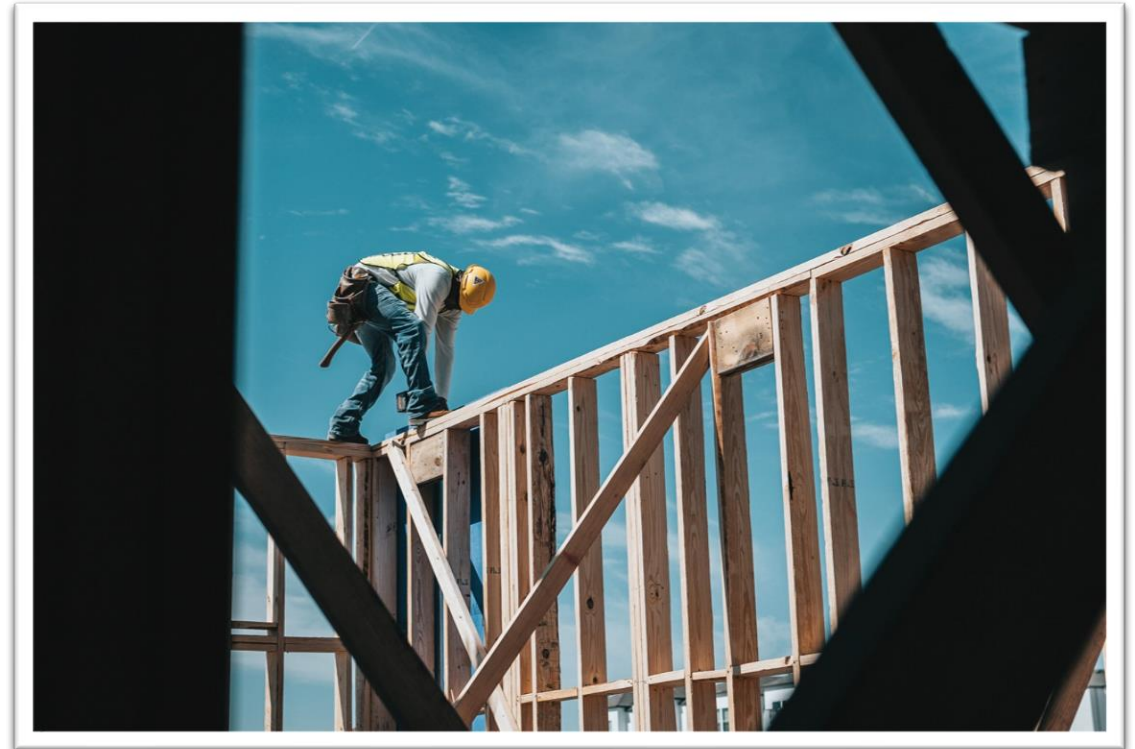
1. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

- Neighborhood organizations in the Rockford Region apply for planning support
- Neighborhood plans will aim to stabilize and strengthen targeted neighborhoods by:
 - Enhancing access to **quality transportation**,
 - Expanding **housing options**,
 - Driving robust **economic development**,
 - Promoting **inclusive growth**, and
 - Encouraging **strategic reinvestment** from both public and private sectors.



2. IMPLEMENTATION

- Available exclusively to communities that have successfully completed a neighborhood plan
 - Awards funding for infrastructure projects identified in a neighborhood plan
- **Funding Sources:**
 - Private funding (*LCI Foundation*)
 - Public funding (*may include federal, state or local funds*)



EXAMPLES OF IMPLEMENTATION PROJECTS



Art installations
Bus shelters



Parks
Green spaces



Crosswalk painting



Community
gardens

WHAT MAKES A NEIGHBORHOOD LIVABLE?

Housing

- Affordability and diversity

Transportation

- Safe and varied options, Access to jobs/schools/services



Social Interaction and Civic Engagement

- Public spaces, civic engagement, and community cohesion

Essential Services and Amenities

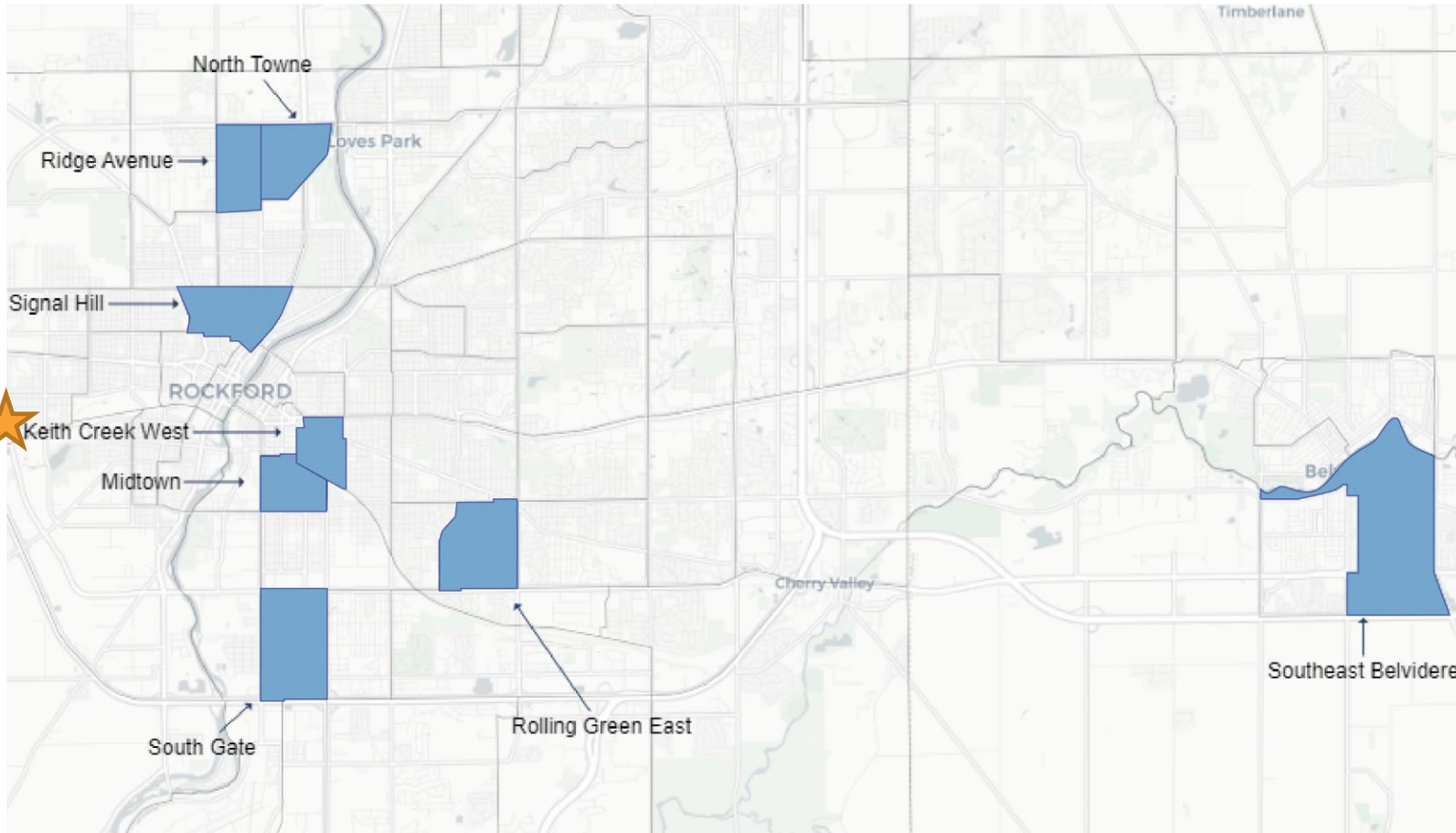
- Healthcare, education, and employment

Sense of Place and Identity

- Shared history and culture, environmental sustainability, aesthetics and beauty

“Middle” Neighborhoods in the Rockford Region

Census Tract boundaries within the Rockford Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA)



“Middle” Neighborhood Indicators

- High Population Density
- Close Proximity to Job Opportunities

Middle Range %:

- Percent of Aging Buildings (built pre-1970)
- Vacancy Rates
- Educational Attainment
- Uninsured Individuals
- Housing Cost Burden
- Health Indicators

Methodological Framework

- [Detroit Model for Tipping Point Neighborhoods](#)
- Urban Livability Literature:
 - [Badland et. Al \(2014\)](#)
 - [Valcarcel et. Al \(2019\)](#)

Data sources

- [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) Places](#)
- U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-year data
- [MIT Livable Wage](#)
- [HUDs for Jobs Proximity Index](#)

APPLICATION DETAILS

Eligible Applicants

- Neighborhood organizations/associations
 - With support from the local municipality and alderman

Eligible “Middle” Neighborhoods:

7 total neighborhoods eligible for round 2 application process.

★ Keith Creek West	Rolling Green East
Midtown	Signal Hill
North Towne	Southeast Belvidere
Ridge Avenue	South Gate

TA Application Checklist

- Complete Application
 - Available via LCI webpage on R1 website.
 - Fillable PDF format to submit via email.
- Present Application to the CAF
 - Every applicant is expected to present.
 - Presentation template to offer best practices.
- Participate in Community Engagement Activities *(if selected)*
 - Four community workshops over Technical Assistance period.
 - Encourage broad and diverse community participation to ensure inclusive representation.

CALL FOR PROJECTS

2025 SCHEDULE



Milestone	Description
May 5	City of Belvidere City Council Presentation
May 12	City of Rockford City Council Presentation
June 2	Application Period Opens
August 4	Application Period Closes
October 23	Neighborhoods Present Applications to CAF
Early November	LCI Stakeholders Meeting
November 13	R1 Governing Board Votes on Recommended Neighborhood Project



Visit to learn more about LCI and the Technical Assistance Program!

KEITH CREEK LCI

- Stay up to date on the Keith Creek LCI on Engage R1!



About LCI: r1planning.org/planning/livable-communities-initiative/

Livable Communities Initiative



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APPLICATION PROCESS CONTACT

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