The first phase of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street Vision Plan implementation will include key elements of the long-range plan for revitalization of this important commercial and institutional front door to the UNWA neighborhood. Vision Plan elements include reduction from four to three travel lanes to create space for formalized on-street parking and landscape medians. Those combine to calm traffic to a local rather than through orientation in support of local businesses and institutions and to enhanced pedestrian safety and comfort.

The heritage and identity of the neighborhood will be reinforced by a celebration of the street’s namesake, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., as well as honoring the African-American heroes that have contributed to the life of the neighborhood and city. In addition to banners and storyboards telling those stories, an iconic symbol derived from the initials MLK has been developed using traditional patterns. That symbol is used in distinctive crosswalk patterns at key intersections, and on a pair of totem-like sculptures that bracket the street at its north gateway at 30th Street.

The long-range MLK Boulevard Vision Plan includes street enhancements and gateways at 30th Street and Fall Creek Boulevard. The new Boulevard will be the framework for economic development measures to attract new businesses and institutions to better serve the adjacent neighborhoods, offer employment opportunities, and increase the revenue stream dedicated to the neighborhood. Those efforts will be accompanied by district-wide improvements including enhancements to the Canal Tow Path and commercial node revitalization.