

Mayor's Statement for Media Briefing on 200 East Berry Street Plan – July 13, 2009:

Thank you for coming. Three weeks ago, when I announced plans for a new city hall at 200 East Berry Street, I said that we were charting a new course for Fort Wayne. I told you that it was an opportunity, not just for our police, but also for every citizen.

I believe this community-based decision paves the way for greater Fort Wayne and Allen County cost savings and cooperation, benefitting all taxpayers and residents. I firmly believe it is a platform on which to build for the future.

200 East Berry Street is a one-of-a-kind opportunity in downtown Fort Wayne. It will allow us to bring together all city departments; get the most out of every tax dollar; ensure the delivery of cost-effective, high-quality services to every resident; and make the best use of our resources.

It will help us prepare for the future, retain flexibility and provide a long-term solution for our space needs. Additionally, it will create new paths for community growth and for City-County cooperation. These are my fundamental goals in these tough economic times – goals I am committed to achieving.

During the initial news conference, I presented an overview of the plan, noting it would bring together City of Fort Wayne operations, including the Fort Wayne Police Department, Neighborhood Code, Fire Department administration and all departments currently housed in the City-County Building, except 911 Communications.

I've asked Pat Roller, our City Controller, to present the full 200 East Berry Street plan today. The June announcement gave you the scope of the plan and the highlights, but not the detail or the complete financials.

The only way to have a real discussion about options or choices or the future is to have all of the facts. That is what today is all about.

This presentation would have already occurred, but it was delayed by the County's request for further discussion, an accommodation that I was happy to make and a discussion that I look forward to.

In order to have open discussions, however, it is important that the community has the full picture, that our dialogue be based on specifics, not assumptions or speculation or emotion, but a complete understanding of the entire plan. I want to make sure there is a sound foundation for community discussion – one that is objective and factual. It's part of my promise to be straightforward with the people of Fort Wayne.

With that I will ask Pat to walk you through the 200 East Berry Street plan.

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