

DOWNTOWN BLUEPRINT PROGRESS REPORT

The Downtown Blueprint was completed and adopted in the City of Fort Wayne's Comprehensive Plan in late 2002. In the short time since adoption, a significant number of the Plan's recommendations have either been started or completed. Following is a summary of these accomplishments.

Foundational Tools

One of the most important aspects of the Blueprint was the creation of a financial implementation strategy. The plan called for \$3 to \$5 million annually in public investment in order to leverage and encourage private sector involvement. Now, through a number of initiatives, the downtown is well positioned for emerging opportunities.

- **Community Revitalization Enhancement District (CREED)** – the establishment of the district will allow the City to capture up to \$11.25 million in increased sales and income taxes from new development that occurs within the district. It can also bring multi-million dollar tax credits to private investors who choose to develop within the district. Some planned projects have already earned tax credits, and more are earmarked as eligible projects are completed.
- **\$10 million CEDIT Bond for downtown infrastructure** – The CEDIT backed bond was issued in order to support the smaller public projects such as the 2006 Downtown Block Face enhancements, as well as be ready to support larger catalytic public-private partnership projects, as identified in the update to the Blueprint undertaken in 2005 – aptly called *BlueprintPLUS*.
- **\$500,000 (+ city match of \$160,000) Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant for Urban Trails** – currently being engineered, Spring 2007 will bring enhancements to the Barr Street cultural corridor, including public art and streetscape richness.
- **Increased operational funding for the Downtown Improvement District and creative programs for downtown business development in collaboration with the Downtown Improvement District** – the 2006 re-authorization of the DID and its renewed partnership with the City of Fort Wayne has strengthened the opportunity for public-private cooperation. With the flexible Downtown Incentive Pool and the DID's free design assistance, storefronts are receiving makeovers to create the unique walkable experience downtown you just can't get anywhere else. Total new public funding over a three-year period for both increased DID support and the grant program equals roughly \$825,000.

Projects Identified in the Blueprint either Accomplished or Underway & Scheduled for Completion in 2007:

- New Arts Plaza (Winter 2003) – \$1,000,000
- Embassy Centre Marquee & Blade (Spring 2003) – \$240,000
- Grand Wayne Center Expansion (May, 2005) – \$46,000,000
- Library Expansion (Winter, 2006 Completion) – \$65,000,000
- New Webster Street Plaza (Part of Library Expansion) – included above
- Scottish Rite Center Renovation (2004) – \$3,000,000
- Civic Center Parking Garage Renovation (2004) – \$1,100,000
- Headwaters Park Ice Skating Facility (2005) – \$200,000
- Headwaters Park Festival Plaza Improvements (2005) – \$1,000,000
- Downtown Wayfinding Signage (2005) – \$300,000
- Downtown Parking, Information Kiosks, Corridor Wayfinding (2006-2007) – \$350,000
- Phased Streetscape Improvements
 - Main Street Median Project (2004) – \$50,000
 - Embassy Theater Streetscape (2003) – \$150,000
 - Landing Streetscape (Fall 2002) – \$350,000
 - Grand Wayne Center Streetscape (May 2005) – \$1,000,000
 - Library Streetscape (Fall 2006) – included in 2006 Downtown Block Faces below
 - Clinton Street Lane Reduction and Streetscape Project at Superior (2006) – \$230,000
 - Calhoun Street Conversion to Two Way and New Streetscape (2006-2007) – \$2,250,000
 - Barr Street Streetscape (engineering: 2006, construction: 2007) – \$660,000
 - Downtown Block Face Streetscape Improvements – 8.5 block faces (2006) – \$1,300,000

The Blueprint included a number of projects calling for initial Feasibility Studies and/or Market Analysis. While several of these studies were commissioned and can be found on the City of Fort Wayne's Redevelopment website, they are not sited here.