

MAYOR SHARON TUCKER'S 2025 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

THANK YOU, PASTOR DIX, FOR THAT WARM AND MEANINGFUL INTRODUCTION.

I VALUE YOUR FAITH-BASED LEADERSHIP IN OUR COMMUNITY AND MANY YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE.

LET ME JUST SAY WHAT AN HONOR IT IS TO BE HERE TODAY AS YOUR MAYOR TO DELIVER MY FIRST STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS.

THE SUPPORT AND WELL WISHES I'VE RECEIVED SINCE TAKING OFFICE NEARLY 10 MONTHS AGO HAVE BEEN HEARTWARMING AND APPRECIATED.

I'M TRULY GRATEFUL TO BE LEADING A CITY THAT TAKES CARE OF ONE ANOTHER.

WHEN WE LOST OUR GREAT MAYOR AND FRIEND TOM HENRY, THIS COMMUNITY CHOSE COMPASSION, SUPPORT, AND LOVE TO COME TOGETHER TO KEEP FORT WAYNE MOVING FORWARD.

NOW WE'RE FORGING NEW FOOTPRINTS TOGETHER AS A COMMUNITY FOCUSED ON HELPING PEOPLE REACH THEIR POTENTIAL, WHILE ENSURING WE'RE A BUSINESS FRIENDLY CITY THAT'S POSITIONED FOR ONGOING SUCCESS AND NEW OPPORTUNITIES.

I WANT FORT WAYNE TO CONTINUE BEING SAFE, FAMILY FRIENDLY AND EVEN MORE FUN.

I'M A PEOPLE FOCUSED MAYOR COMMITTED TO PROVIDING AN ENHANCED QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL.

FAITH AND FAMILY GUIDE ME EACH DAY. THOSE TWO THINGS PROVIDE MY MORAL COMPASS TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT IN A MANNER THAT GLORIFIES GOD AND REACHES ALL SEGMENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY.

MY MOTHER HAS TAUGHT ME TO ALWAYS BE KIND BECAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU'RE IN THE PRESENCE OF AN ANGEL.

MY PRIVATE SECTOR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND IS IN INSURANCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES THROUGH VINCENT VILLAGE.

MY POLITICAL BACKGROUND INCLUDES TIME ON ALLEN COUNTY COUNCIL AND FORT WAYNE CITY COUNCIL.

TOGETHER, THESE EXPERIENCES HAVE PREPARED ME FOR THIS MOMENT.

AS I CONTINUE TO NAVIGATE LEADING INDIANA'S SECOND LARGEST CITY AND THE FASTEST GROWING CITY IN THE MIDWEST, I FIND MYSELF BEING MOST PROUD OF HOW OUR EMPLOYEES HAVE A SHARED MISSION AND VISION TO DO THE RIGHT THINGS TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY THE BEST IT CAN BE.

LAST YEAR PROVIDED SEVERAL GLIMPSES INTO WHY WALLETHUB RANKED US AS THE 8TH BEST RUN CITY IN THE COUNTRY AND WHY WE'RE ON THE MAP AS A CITY WHERE CUSTOMER SERVICE COMES FIRST.

OUR PARKS FOR INSTANCE HAVE AN ABILITY TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO MAKE MEMORIES AND ENJOY LIFE.

ONE OF MY FONDEST MEMORIES FROM THE PAST YEAR WAS MY VISIT TO BOONE PARK TO DEDICATE A NEW PLAYGROUND.

I MET A LITTLE GIRL WHO ASKED ME TO GO DOWN THE SLIDE WITH HER. I WASN'T SURE AT FIRST, BUT I GOT OVER MY FEAR AND DID IT. MY SMILE WAS AS BRIGHT AS HERS.

I'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT DAY. IT SERVES AS A REMINDER TO LIVE IN THE MOMENT AND HAVE A JOYFUL HEART.

THAT PARTICULAR EVENT WAS ONE OF MANY WINS FOR PARKS AND RECREATION IN 2024.

THE MUCH-ANTICIPATED COMPLETION OF PHASE ONE OF THE FRANKE PARK RENAISSANCE IS ALREADY MAKING AN IMPACT.

FROM THE NEW ENTRANCE OFF GOSHEN AVENUE TO THE BEAUTIFUL MCMILLEN FAMILY PAVILION, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS HAVE NEW WAYS TO GET THE MOST OUT OF OUR LARGEST PARK.

THIS YEAR WE'LL BE REIMAGINING THE ENTRANCE TO FOSTER PARK TO BETTER SERVE PARK USERS.

WITH FEEDBACK FROM THE PUBLIC, CONCEPTUAL DESIGNS FACTOR IN RECREATIONAL AMENITIES, LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS, AS WELL AS PEDESTRIAN AND VEHICULAR CIRCULATION.

THE REDESIGN PLANNING PROCESS SHOULD BE WRAPPED UP LATER THIS YEAR.

IN ADDITION, NEW PLAYGROUNDS WILL BE INSTALLED AT SIX NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS, ONE IN EACH CITY COUNCIL DISTRICT.

I ALSO WANT TO POINT OUT THAT OUR TEAM IS INTENTIONAL IN HELPING TO ENSURE THAT THE WONDERFUL AMENITIES IN OUR PARKS ARE INCLUSIVE AND ABLE TO BE USED BY PEOPLE OF ALL ABILITIES.

AS WE'RE ALWAYS THINKING AHEAD, WE TURN OUR ATTENTION TO SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT PART OF OUR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION – RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT.

PROMENADE PARK CONTINUES TO BE A CROWN JEWEL AND WE'RE BUILDING ON THAT SUCCESS WITH RIVERFRONT PHASE 2B BY EXTENDING THE PUBLIC SPACE ALONG THE ST. MARYS RIVER.

CONSTRUCTION WILL START THIS YEAR WITH AN EXTENSION OF THE TREE CANOPY TRAIL, BOAT DOCKS, EXTENSION OF THE URBAN TRAIL, AND MORE. IT'S AN INVESTMENT OF 30-MILLION DOLLARS.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT OUR RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

THE TREELINE DISTRICT LED BY BROWNING REAL ESTATE PARTNERS IS A REDEVELOPMENT OF THE FORMER PEPSI WAREHOUSE SITE.

THERE WILL BE PARK SPACES ALONG WITH APARTMENTS, RETAIL SPACE, AND A PARKING GARAGE. WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO CONSTRUCTION BEGINNING LATER THIS YEAR.

THE EDDY WILL BE A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT NEAR THE HISTORIC WELLS STREET BRIDGE.

THE 45-MILLION DOLLAR VENTURE WILL INCLUDE HOUSING UNITS, RETAIL SPACE, AND A PUBLIC PARKING GARAGE.

BARRETT REALTY INVESTMENTS IS OVERSEEING THIS PROJECT THAT WILL GET STARTED THIS YEAR. THEY'VE ALSO DEVELOPED THE RIVERFRONT AT PROMENADE PARK AND THE LOFTS AT HEADWATERS PARK.

THE LANDING EXCHANGE IS A 20-MILLION DOLLAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT ALONG THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF HARRISON AND COLUMBIA STREETS.

FORTY NEW HOUSING UNITS WILL BE CREATED WITH 20 PERCENT OF THOSE UNITS BEING CONSIDERED AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

THE MODEL GROUP IS THE DEVELOPER, CONTINUING ITS SUCCESSFUL REDEVELOPMENT OF THE LANDING.

NOT FAR FROM THE RIVERFRONT YOU'LL FIND MANY MORE STRUCTURES THAT HAVE ENHANCED OUR SKYLINE.

THE PEARL, A SEVEN-STORY, MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT OPENED LAST FALL FEATURING HOUSING AND COMMERCIAL AND EVENT SPACE.

THE BUILDING REPRESENTS A NEARLY 82-MILLION DOLLAR PRIVATE INVESTMENT FROM CHUCK AND LISA SURACK.

ACROSS FROM THE PEARL ON WEST MAIN STREET IS THE NEW STAR BANK CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS.

THE 45-MILLION DOLLAR INVESTMENT IS AN EXAMPLE OF STAR'S COMMITMENT TO SERVING ITS CUSTOMERS AND OUR COMMUNITY.

MY JOB AS MAYOR IS TO BALANCE THE PORTFOLIO OF OUR INVESTMENTS. WE HAVE TO STRIKE THE RIGHT NOTES ON WHAT WE DO DOWNTOWN AND HOW WE PUT ATTENTION AND RESOURCES TOWARD OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.

I DO WANT TO POINT OUT SEVERAL NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECTS THAT BENEFIT OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POSITION BUT ALSO THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS.

VILLAGE PREMIER PHASE ONE IN THE SOUTHEAST QUADRANT HAS ADDED 208 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

PHASE TWO IS NOW UNDERWAY THAT WILL HAVE A MUCH-NEEDED HEALTH CLINIC.

FUTURE PHASES WILL INCLUDE AFFORDABLE APARTMENTS FOR OLDER ADULTS, MARKET-RATE TOWNHOMES, SOME SINGLE-FAMILY HOMES, AND AN EARLY LEARNING CENTER.

THE PROJECTED TOTAL INVESTMENT IS 55-MILLION DOLLARS OVER THREE PHASES OF WORK.

MORE NEIGHBORHOOD ADVANCEMENTS ARE OCCURRING WITH THE RECENT

ADOPTIONS OF THE PACKARD 2030 AND HISTORIC NORTHEAST 2035 PLANS.

THIS YEAR WE'LL BEGIN PROVIDING FUNDING FOR EACH ADOPTED NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN TO HELP KICKSTART PROJECTS.

OUR DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS IS ALSO WORKING TO ADOPT THE NORTHWEST AND EAST CENTRAL PLANS IN 2025.

DOING THE BASICS WELL IS THE MARK OF A SUCCESSFUL CITY.

FROM HAVING INDIANA'S BEST TASTING WATER TO BEING FORWARD THINKING AND ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, CITY UTILITIES IS LEADING THE WAY.

I WAS IMPRESSED WHEN I FIRST SAW THE COMPLETED MICROGRID THAT POWERS THREE MAJOR FACILITIES.

THIS STATE-OF-THE-ART SYSTEM INTEGRATES MORE THAN 12-THOUSAND FLOATING SOLAR PANELS, BATTERY STORAGE, AND RENEWABLE METHANE GAS.

BY COMBINING THESE WITH NATURAL GAS, WE'VE CREATED AN ENERGY SOLUTION THAT'S COST EFFICIENT FOR RATEPAYERS, SUSTAINABLE, AND RESILIENT AGAINST SEVERE WEATHER.

BETTER YET, WE'RE PROJECTING A SAVINGS OF 60-MILLION DOLLARS ON ELECTRIC BILLS OVER THE NEXT 40 YEARS.

MORE INNOVATION COMES WITH THE ACTIVATION OF THE DEEP ROCK TUNNEL.

THIS INCREDIBLE PROJECT WILL PREVENT UP TO 900 MILLION GALLONS OF SEWAGE FROM REACHING OUR RIVERS.

IN JUST IT'S FIRST MONTH IN OPERATION, THE TUNNEL CAPTURED 15-MILLION GALLONS OF SEWAGE.

THE TUNNEL IS BUILT TO LAST INTO THE 22ND CENTURY AND WILL PROTECT NEIGHBORHOODS AND OUR RIVERS.

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 18TH AND FINAL YEAR OF THE LONG-TERM CONTROL PLAN TO MOVE OUR COMMUNITY FORWARD IN A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND TEAMWORK TO MEET FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS.

THROUGH THIS EFFORT, WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO IMPACT MORE THAN 200

NEIGHBORHOODS AND IMPROVE CONDITIONS FOR MORE THAN 33-THOUSAND HOMES.

IT IS ALSO GOING TO BE AN ACTIVE YEAR IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS WITH DRAINAGE AND STORMWATER IMPROVEMENTS AS WELL AS WATER MAIN REPLACEMENTS.

A SAFE AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT SERVES ALL USERS SETS US APART AS A LEADING COMMUNITY THAT'S DESIRED BY FAMILIES AND BUSINESSES.

I'VE LONG BEEN AN ADVOCATE FOR THE WORK OVERSEEN BY THE PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION.

WE SET A RECORD IN 2024 OF NEARLY 49-MILLION DOLLARS IN NEIGHBORHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AND THERE'S GOING TO BE ALMOST 42-MILLION DOLLARS IN INVESTMENTS THIS YEAR.

MAJOR PROJECTS WILL INCLUDE STREET RECONSTRUCTION IN THE HARVESTER COMMUNITY, MOUNT VERNON PARK IMPROVEMENTS, LEESBURG ROAD EXTENSION, AND BLUFFTON ROAD BRIDGE WORK.

WE'LL ALSO BEGIN ENGINEERING WORK FOR THE WIDENING OF ARDMORE AVENUE FROM COVINGTON TO LOWER HUNTINGTON ROADS.

IN ADDITION, INITIAL EFFORTS WILL GET UNDERWAY FOR THE AIRPORT EXPRESSWAY GRADE SEPARATION PROJECT, ALONG WITH MULTIPLE NEIGHBORHOOD SIDEWALK AND ALLEY UPGRADES.

DID YOU KNOW THAT LAST YEAR WE HIT THE MILESTONE OF ONE-MILLION TRIPS ON OUR TRAILS, AND THERE'S GOING TO BE PLENTY OF WORK IN THE YEAR AHEAD.

WE'LL COMPLETE THE HANNA STREET TRAIL WITH THE FINAL PHASE FROM WALLACE TO BERRY STREETS.

THE PUFFERBELLY TRAIL INSIDE CITY LIMITS WILL BE COMPLETED FROM ICE WAY TO WASHINGTON CENTER ROAD.

AND, THANKS TO A GENEROUS DONATION FROM THE VANN FAMILY FOUNDATION, WE'LL BE IN POSITION TO CONSTRUCT A PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE STARTING IN 2026 AS A MUCH-NEEDED AMENITY FOR THAT TRAIL.

THIS YEAR WILL ALSO SEE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WHEELLOCK ROAD TRAIL FROM STELLHORN ROAD TO JEFFERSON MIDDLE SCHOOL.

MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT I PRIDE MYSELF ON BEING A FISCAL CONSERVATIVE. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE TO FOLLOW A BUDGET AND MAKE WISE DECISIONS AT WORK AND HOME. IT'S NO DIFFERENT FOR CITY GOVERNMENT. IT'S OUR DUTY TO BE GOOD STEWARDS OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS.

I HAVE THE UTMOST RESPECT FOR OUR CITY CONTROLLER'S OFFICE AS THEY HELP NAVIGATE THE CITY'S FINANCES WITH MY OFFICE AND CITY COUNCIL. COLLECTIVELY, WE SHARE A COMMON GOAL TO DO WHAT'S RIGHT FOR THE PUBLIC.

MY FIRST BUDGET SESSION AS MAYOR WENT VERY WELL. A BALANCED BUDGET WAS PASSED AND INCLUDED FORWARD THINKING PLANS WHILE ALSO MAKING SURE THAT WE HAVE FUNDS FOR UNKNOWN CIRCUMSTANCES THAT COULD ARISE.

MY PLEDGE TO OUR PARTNERS ON CITY COUNCIL IS THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO BE TRANSPARENT WITH INFORMATION AND AVAILABLE FOR MEETINGS. IT'S CRITICAL FOR THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BODIES TO KNOW AND TRUST ONE ANOTHER.

PUBLIC SAFETY CONTINUES TO BE A TOP PRIORITY AND IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF MY ADMINISTRATION.

WE EXPERIENCED SOME HARDSHIPS THIS PAST YEAR, AND I KNOW THERE'S MORE WORK AHEAD.

WE'RE CONFIDENT THOUGH THAT WE'LL BE ABLE TO DO OUR VERY BEST TO CONTINUE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE PUBLIC THROUGH BEST PRACTICES, OPEN COMMUNICATION, AND TRUST.

OUR COMMITMENT TO PUBLIC SAFETY IS EVIDENT THROUGH AN 88 PERCENT CLEARANCE RATE ON HOMICIDES, AND OVERALL CRIME DECREASED BY 2.8 PERCENT IN 2024.

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRAFFIC UNIT THAT FOCUSES ON EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM RESIDENTS WANTING MOTORISTS TO SLOW DOWN AND BE SAFER.

THIS YEAR WILL BE HIGHLIGHTED BY STAFFING FOR 510 OFFICERS. PATROLS OF

OUR DOWNTOWN AREA WILL EXPAND, AND WE'LL CREATE A DOWNTOWN PATROL DISTRICT.

I'M ALSO LOOKING FORWARD TO THE LAUNCH OF A CITIZENS ACADEMY TO ALLOW COMMUNITY MEMBERS TO BECOME MORE FAMILIAR WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT.

OUR FIRE DEPARTMENT RESPONDED TO MORE THAN 23-THOUSAND CALLS FOR SERVICE IN 2024.

AND THIS YEAR WE'LL BREAK GROUND ON A NEW FIRE STATION NUMBER FIVE IN WAYNE DALE, THERE WILL BE STAFFING FOR MORE THAN 370 FIREFIGHTERS, WHICH WILL BE A RECORD, AND WE'RE GOING TO EXPAND OFFERINGS IN FIRE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS.

OUR NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL DEPARTMENT IS PART OF OUR PUBLIC SAFETY TEAM AS WELL.

THROUGH THE INTAKE OF ANIMALS, CALLS FOR SERVICE, ADOPTIONS, FOSTERING PROGRAM, AND EDUCATION AND OUTREACH, WE'RE MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE FOR ANIMALS AND PET OWNERS.

I ALSO WANT TO SHARE MY PLEDGE TO THE COMMUNITY REGARDING EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES THROUGH THE THREE RIVERS AMBULANCE AUTHORITY, ALSO KNOWN AS TRAA.

YOU CAN TAKE COMFORT IN KNOWING THAT TRAA AND THE FORT WAYNE FIRE DEPARTMENT CONTINUE TO RESPOND TO EMERGENCIES INSIDE CITY LIMITS IN A TIMELY AND PROFESSIONAL MANNER AND HAVE A STRONG COMMITMENT TO SAVING LIVES.

THE SAFETY OF OUR CITY IS STRONG, AND I'M THANKFUL FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE POLICE, FIRE, AND TRAA DEPARTMENTS.

ONE OF THE ACCOLADES FROM THIS PAST YEAR THAT I'M MOST PROUD OF IS BEING RANKED IN THE TOP THIRD OF THE MOST CARING CITIES IN THE COUNTRY BY WALLETHUB.

THE STUDY LOOKED AT HOW WE CARE FOR THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE, HOW WE LOOK AFTER OUR VULNERABLE POPULATION, AND HOW WE TREAT THE LOCAL WORKFORCE.

VOLUNTEERING AND THE SHARE OF INCOME DONATED TO CHARITY SERVED AS METRICS AS WELL.

OUR HIGH RANKING SHOWS WE PUT EACH OTHER FIRST OVER PERSONAL GAIN AND ATTENTION.

WHEN YOU LOOK AT OUR CITY, IT SHOULDN'T BE A SURPRISE THAT WE'RE A HOT SPOT FOR TOURISM.

DAILY PASSPORT RECENTLY NAMED FORT WAYNE THE 7TH MOST AFFORDABLE VACATION DESTINATION IN THE COUNTRY.

THE UNIQUE AMENITIES WE PROVIDE HAVE SET THE TABLE FOR GUESTS TO HAVE A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE.

OUR PARTNERS AT VISIT FORT WAYNE ARE VIEWED NATIONALLY AS A LEADER AMONG DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS.

IN 2024 VISIT FORT WAYNE LED THE CHARGE IN ATTRACTING 9.2 MILLION GUESTS THAT RESULTED IN 1.1 BILLION DOLLARS IN VISITOR SPENDING.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT PARTNER OF OURS IS THE GRAND WAYNE CENTER.

I WANT TO THANK THE GRAND WAYNE FOR TAKING CARE OF US TODAY AND RECOGNIZE THEM AS THIS YEAR MARKS 40 YEARS OF OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

WORKING TOGETHER MATTERS, AND WE'VE BECOME AN INNOVATIVE AND STRATEGIC LEADER IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

PRIVATE INVESTMENTS WORKING IN TANDEM WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR ARE GETTING RESULTS.

OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH GREATER FORT WAYNE INC. CONTINUES TO BE A GAME CHANGER.

IN 2024 ALONE, WE SAW 15 PROJECTS, 813 NEW JOBS, THE RETENTION OF NEARLY 28-HUNDRED JOBS, INVESTMENTS OF 2.5 BILLION DOLLARS, AND AN AVERAGE WAGE OF 74-THOUSAND DOLLARS.

I HEAR A LOT FROM PEOPLE ASKING WHAT'S NEXT.

WELL, I CAN TELL YOU WE HAVE SEVERAL EXCITING INITIATIVES THAT ARE

DESIGNED TO HELP US FORGE NEW FOOTPRINTS TOGETHER.

FIRST, FORT WAYNE AND MANY CITIES OUR SIZE FACE SIMILAR CHALLENGES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED.

THAT'S WHY I'M LEADING AN EFFORT TO PUT TOGETHER A MENTAL HEALTH COMMISSION.

GETTING INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES THE HELP THEY NEED IS VITAL.

PART OF THE CHALLENGE WE HAVE WITH HOMELESSNESS AND THE UNHOUSED IS THE MENTAL ILLNESS COMPONENT.

SO, WE'LL BE EXPLORING MANY DIFFERENT TOPICS TO GET OUR ARMS AROUND THE COMPLEXITIES THAT WE'RE SEEING AND WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT.

FORT WAYNE IS ALSO THE RECIPIENT OF FUNDS FROM THE OPIOID SETTLEMENTS.

WE HAVE MORE THAN 3-MILLION DOLLARS TO UTILIZE TO HELP PEOPLE DEALING WITH THE EFFECTS OF ADDICTION.

A COMMITTEE WILL BE ESTABLISHED TO EXPLORE WAYS TO INVEST THESE DOLLARS INTO MEANINGFUL PROGRAMS.

I'M ALSO IN THE PROCESS OF FORMING A YOUNG ADULT COUNCIL FOR AGES 19 TO 26.

I WANT TO GET YOUNGER PEOPLE INVOLVED IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT. WE'RE LOOKING FOR IDEAS TO MAKE FORT WAYNE BETTER WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF NEW ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE AND HOPEFULLY IMPLEMENT.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING CONTINUES TO BE TOP OF MIND FOR ME, AND WE KNOW THERE'S MORE WORK TO BE DONE.

I WANT TO BUILD ON THE SUCCESS OF OUR RECENT INNOVATIVE HOUSING SHOWCASE THAT DELIVERED NEW CONSTRUCTION METHODS TO THE EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD.

TO DO THAT WE'LL BE LAUNCHING THE SECOND PHASE OF OUR INFILL HOUSING STRATEGY.

WE WANT TO EXPAND THE HOUSING SUPPLY IN FORT WAYNE AND REDUCE BARRIERS TO HOMEOWNERSHIP.

POTENTIAL PROJECTS COULD INCLUDE MORE HOMES WITH NEW CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGIES, COTTAGE COURT STYLE DEVELOPMENTS, AND HOMES WITH SMALLER SQUARE FOOTAGES.

ANOTHER NEW INITIATIVE CENTERS AROUND ACQUIRING LEGACY INDUSTRIAL PROPERTIES THAT HAVE BEEN VACANT OR UNDERUTILIZED AND REDEVELOPING THOSE AREAS.

THE GOAL IS TO ATTRACT 25-HUNDRED JOBS, AND 250-MILLION DOLLARS IN CAPITAL INVESTMENTS BY 2031 IN SOUTHEAST FORT WAYNE.

WE ALSO MUST MAKE CONCERTED EFFORTS TO HELP BUSINESS OWNERS SUCCEED.

THIS YEAR, WE'LL BE STUDYING CORRIDOR RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES.

THE FOCUS WILL BE ON SOUTH CALHOUN STREET, WAYNE DALE, AND EAST STATE VILLAGE.

WE WANT TO IDENTIFY WHAT'S WORKING AND WHAT ISN'T, ALONG WITH OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT.

THE END RESULT WILL BE AN ACTION PLAN TO FACILITATE FUTURE INVESTMENTS IN THESE AREAS OF INTEREST WHERE GAPS MAY EXIST.

IT IS NO SECRET THAT MY HEART IS WITH NEIGHBORHOODS.

I'M ECSTATIC TO ANNOUNCE THE CONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE.

WE'LL BRING NEIGHBORHOODS TOGETHER TO DEVELOP PLANS AND APPLY FOR A GRANT OF ONE-MILLION DOLLARS PER NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP.

THIS PROGRAM, WITH AWARDEES SELECTED IN 2025 AND 2027, WILL HELP CATALYZE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION.

ONE OF THE MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING IS EXPECTED TO BE LAND SALE PROCEEDS FROM THE GOOGLE DATA CENTER.

NOT ONLY WILL THE GENERATIONAL INVESTMENT BY GOOGLE BRING NEW JOBS,

RECORD SETTING INVESTMENTS, AND NEW TAX REVENUE TO THE CITY, IT WILL ALSO INFUSE FUNDING DIRECTLY INTO OUR NEIGHBORHOODS.

BUT WE'RE NOT DONE YET.

THERE'S A PLAN FOR THE NORTH RIVER SITE THAT SERVES AS AN IMPORTANT GATEWAY INTO DOWNTOWN.

THE NORTH RIVER FIELDHOUSE WOULD BE A NEW HUB FOR YOUTH AND ADAPTIVE SPORTS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH.

PHASE ONE CALLS FOR A 160-THOUSAND SQUARE FOOT FIELDHOUSE WITH CONVERTIBLE COURTS FOR BASKETBALL, VOLLEYBALL, AND MORE. IT'S A PLANNED INVESTMENT OF 50 TO 60 MILLION DOLLARS.

BEYOND SPORTS, THE FIELDHOUSE WOULD HAVE THE CAPACITY TO HOST COMMUNITY EVENTS THAT WOULD ADD TO OUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE.

BEING CENTRALLY LOCATED WITHIN A TWO AND A HALF HOUR DRIVE OF 10 MILLION PEOPLE POSITIONS THE FIELDHOUSE AS A TOURISM DESTINATION FOR THE ENTIRE REGION.

FUTURE PHASES COULD INCLUDE A HOTEL, PARKING GARAGE, RESTAURANTS, SHOPPING, AND LIVING SPACES.

IT IS PROJECTED TO BRING IN 36-MILLION DOLLARS IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ANNUALLY.

THIS REDEVELOPMENT EFFORT HAS THE POTENTIAL TO BE A MONUMENTAL BOOST FOR FORT WAYNE.

I BELIEVE UPON COMPLETION, NORTH RIVER WILL BE A SOURCE OF COMMUNITY PRIDE AND A CENTER OF ACTIVITY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME.

WITH A RECAP OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND A WIDE ARRAY OF NEW PROJECTS AND AGGRESSIVE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES, IT'S APPARENT WHY I HAVE UNWAVERING HOPE AND OPTIMISM.

LET'S KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING AS WE CONTINUE TO INVEST IN PEOPLE.

FORT WAYNE IS MY HOME. I WANT THE VERY BEST FOR EVERY RESIDENT, NEIGHBORHOOD, AND BUSINESS IN OUR GREAT CITY.

COME ALONG SIDE ME AS WE FORGE NEW FOOTPRINTS TOGETHER FOR A BETTER TOMORROW.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND THE CITY OF FORT WAYNE.

THANK YOU.