PRIMED FOR STELLAR TRANSFORMATION

CITY OF CRAWFORDSVILLE - 2015 Stellar Communities Strategic Investment Plan

Stellar Projects Overview

1. FUSION 54
2. PIKE STREET POCKET PARK
3. BIG FOUR TRAIL
4. HISTORIC WHITLOCK NEIGHBORHOOD OWNER-OCCUPIED REHABILITATION
5. DOWNTOWN LOOP TRAIL
6. BEN-HUR BUILDING ADAPTIVE REUSE

Project Target Area

LEGEND:

- Focus Area
- City Limits
- Trail
- Park
- Downtown District

CONTEXT MAP:

PROJECT LIST:

Overview
This 20,000 sq. ft., two story facility will be located on vacant property along US 231/SR 47/SR32 just south of downtown. It will bring together the following components in a highly charged and stimulating environment:

- Montgomery County Visitors' and Tourism Bureau located in the front. This elevates our presence as we are now home to major events such as the Lucas Oil Motorsports Championship Series season finale.
- Indiana West Advantage: the lead economic development organization for our community (formerly Montgomery County Economic Development)
- Fusion 54 co-working space for entrepreneurs
- Crawfordsville/Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
- Crawfordsville Main Street
- Montgomery County Leadership Academy
- Wabash College Center for Innovation, Business, and Entrepreneurship
- Fusion 54 Senior Center
- Fusion 54 Center for Volunteerism to implement our Cities of Service initiatives
- Greenspace and direct access to the Big Four Trail

When constructed, this property will serve as the southern gateway into downtown Crawfordsville. The development of this facility will be further enhanced by its location along the planned Big Four Trail connection to the Sugar Creek Trail. The completion of these two projects at a prominent entrance to downtown should spur additional private investment in this area.

**BUDGET:** $4,000,000.00

**SITE PLAN:** We plan to take our current Crawfordsville Commerce Center concept to the next level by fusing our many efforts together into an out-of-the-box format.
Our community is blessed with 4.5 beautiful miles of Sugar Creek Trail, which has become a hugely successful and beloved trail system for our community. Currently, the trail system is disconnected creating an unsafe situation for bicyclists and pedestrians. In 2014, Crawfordsville was awarded INDOT funding to connect these two pieces of trail alongside a lightly traveled rail spur. While this will be a great benefit to trail users, the majority of the City’s trail system is located outside of City limits. Our goal is to bring that trail system into the heart of the community with this additional mile, remove dangerous railroad crossings, and provide access to thousands.

Plans are currently in the works to close down an industrial rail line that will become obsolete following the construction of a new rail facility along the main rail line. Our plan is to then construct the Big Four Trail on one mile of this former rail line under an agreement with CSX. The trail will begin at Fusion 54 and pass through the campus of Wabash College before joining the existing Sugar Creek Trail. It will also connect to the Downtown Loop Trail, providing access to many of our shops, restaurants, museums and parks downtown. This addition of one mile of trail will make existing 4.5 miles much more accessible, increasing the trail use exponentially.
In 2014, the City of Crawfordsville received funding and technical assistance from the Indiana State Department of Health to complete a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. This process received a great deal of public input, and we are currently planning to complete many of the recommendations pertaining to the downtown area. Stellar designation could greatly accelerate the implementation of our plan, and result in a “complete streets” concept promoting use of our downtown.

While the entire plan will take time to complete, our residents are looking forward to jumpstarting this process. As part of Indiana’s 2016 Bicentennial Celebration, bike racks will be placed downtown as a first step to becoming more welcoming to bicyclists. There were 8 priority routes identified as part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, and several of the priorities are located within the downtown.

We anticipate constructing the Bike and Pedestrian improvements on Green Street and Water Street.

This would connect the Amtrak Station to the heart of the downtown, including to the Marie Canine Plaza as well as the Big Four Trail. In addition to improving the bicycle and pedestrian friendliness of our downtown, this improved connection will help to establish our community as a regional destination.

Currently, our downtown infrastructure includes combined sewer and stormwater lines throughout the downtown. We plan to separate these lines in 2017, and these bike/ped improvements can be easily constructed during that process.

**Downtown Loop Trail**

* DOWNTOWN LOOP TRAIL: This project originated directly from the *Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan* the city completed in August 2014.

**BUDGET:**

$1,190,500.00

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*This project originated directly from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan the city completed in August 2014.*
The former Culver Hospital, sitting at the east gateway to downtown Crawfordsville, has stood vacant for 30 years. The surrounding neighborhood has suffered greatly in its shadow. Renovation and cleanup of the hospital is currently under construction as part of the Historic Whitlock Place tax credit project awarded through IHCDA. Flaherty & Collins is in the process of remodeling the former Culver Hospital as a 56 unit adaptive reuse development. This neighborhood owner-occupied rehabilitation will serve as a companion project to the adaptive reuse, creating a dramatic boost to the area located on the northeast side of downtown.

The City of Crawfordsville will partner with Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana (CAPWI) to complete the owner-occupied rehab program. This neighborhood is in desperate need of attention after years of neglect. The city has also committed to making infrastructure improvements in this neighborhood to better connect its residents to the downtown. At the completion of these projects, this neighborhood will be significantly improved, and should be a place its residents are once again proud to call home.
The City of Crawfordsville and Montgomery County have partnered with the Vandalia Heritage Foundation on an adaptive reuse project for the Historic Ben-Hur Building.

Constructed in 1912-1913 by the Supreme Tribe of Ben-Hur, this building was used for many years to house the Ben-Hur Life Insurance Company. In addition, it was filled with professional offices and various retail stores. Unfortunately in the 1970’s and 1980’s the property began to suffer from a lack of maintenance, and most of its tenants moved out. By the early 1990’s the property was vacant, and it has stood idle for more than 2 decades. It is an impressive five-story structure but is suffering greatly from neglect and it looms over our downtown like a dark cloud, casting a shadow on efforts to reinvigorate the area. The Montgomery County Commissioners have acquired the Ben-Hur Building due to back taxes, and that property is in the process of being transferred to the Vandalia Heritage Foundation for redevelopment.

The concept for this $9.1 million dollar project includes a restaurant/bar on the first floor with a lobby and conference space, and combination of condominiums and hotel space on the 2nd-5th floors. This project could also include a roof terrace for meeting and banquet space, as well as an enhanced streetscape. The idea is that the corner units could be sold as condominiums to local companies, Wabash alumni etc., which could also be put into the hotel bank for rental when not in use. This property will be renovated in a manner that maintains its historical character along with emphasizing our unique, local history in a way that will distinctly set it apart from other lodging options within the region. The reactivation of this part of our downtown will greatly enhance this area and spur additional private investment.
The City of Crawfordsville, Wabash College, and Montgomery County Community Foundation will join together to create a pocket park on 0.4 acres of land located in the heart of the downtown.

This property has been vacant since a devastating downtown fire in 2008. The high-profile site sits alongside the 100 block of West Pike Street that is now home to our highly successful farmers’ market every Saturday. The site is also prominently located along US 231/SR47/SR32. The area will be well designed to bring back the urban edge to this property. In addition, sidewalk and infrastructure improvements at this site will help improve the pedestrian friendliness of this corner of downtown, giving us an opportunity to implement portions of our Bike/Ped Plan and ADA Transition Plan.

Pike is a lightly traveled street that is easy to close for events such as the farmers’ market, making this the ideal spot for a public gathering space. The property will be designed to host events, as well as serve as a gathering location and a focal point for the community.

The Montgomery County Community Foundation was responsible for funding the Marie Canine Plaza in downtown Crawfordsville, and is looking for a community project to celebrate the Foundation’s 25th anniversary in 2016. This site will see great use by the community, whether that is during the farmers’ market, Crawfordsville Main Street events, downtown festivals, etc. The design will allow the park to be used for a wide variety of uses - for everything from performances to lunch in the park.

**Budget:** $650,000.00