



PROJECT KICK-OFF MEETING- MEETING SUMMARY PACKET
APRIL 25, 2024



NEW CASTLE DOWNTOWN MASTERPLAN
Planning For a Healthy Heart



**NEW CASTLE
MAIN STREET**
The Heart of New Castle



TAYLOR
SIEFKER
WILLIAMS
design group



WELCOME

Plan approach.

PHASE 1: EDUCATE AND INFORM- *APRIL TO MAY*

This initial effort is intended to produce a snapshot of the existing conditions of the area, analyze existing infrastructure and the regulatory environment, and recognize past successes in order to begin planning for the future.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1 | ONLINE TOOLS

PHASE 2: ENGAGE AND EXPLORE- *MAY TO JUNE*

As part of this phase of work, the project team will review market forces, retail factors, and overall community needs. This will allow future recommendations and policy decisions to evolve during the planning process in a demonstrated way that is rooted in give-and-take education and awareness.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2 | FOCUS GROUPS | COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

PHASE 3: INNOVATIVE IDEA CREATION- *JUNE TO AUGUST*

This phase of work will describe the overall vision, character, and identity of the future downtown New Castle. The exploration included within this phase allows us to use data to drive decision-making and to identify strategic improvements needed to support local growth and development.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2 | FOCUS GROUPS (AS NEEDED)

PHASE 4: STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT- *AUGUST TO NOVEMBER*

It is the goal of this planning effort to create a plan that increases downtown's competitive position in the marketplace that is based on sound market principles and the expressed desires of the local community through the creation of key strategies, policies, and physical improvement initiatives.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING (TENTATIVE)

PHASE 5: IMPLEMENTATION AND EXECUTION- *NOVEMBER TO DECEMBER*

This plan will allow the downtown to enhance user experience, provide better stewardship of the environment, improve the health of its residents, and reduce infrastructure costs. Each of the identified actions will be carefully outlined to be measurable, establish a timeline, and identify responsible parties for implementation.

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #4 | PUBLIC MEETING TO PRESENT PLAN



WHY ARE WE HERE?

Plan priorities.

This Plan will identify the best ways to create a revitalized, rehabilitated, well-developed and active downtown. The final Downtown Master Plan will clearly define revitalization concepts, provide a basis for future public policy decisions, identify responsible parties or champions, and outline various sources of funding and modifications to existing development regulations.

NEW CASTLE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

What intentions and priorities should we consider?

Accessibility- Many areas are not accessible by wheelchair or stroller. Things have been done by code/ standards but that doesn't necessarily mean there is a truly accessible route. Broad Street has several examples of this condition.

Green space- The Arts Park is nice and well maintained, but outside of that green space is limited. It's hot in the downtown area and we should look at ways to reduce the "heat zone".

It would be a nice usable amenity if there was a dog park.

Want to make the downtown an appealing place to live- provide appropriate amenities for residential needs.

Quality of life- Arts should be an integral part of downtown. Providing art free of cost or very low expense could be a draw for the area.

The Courthouse divides the business community and divides downtown. Location of retail establishments also impacts this- if buildings are isolated it's hard to provide a connected downtown experience.

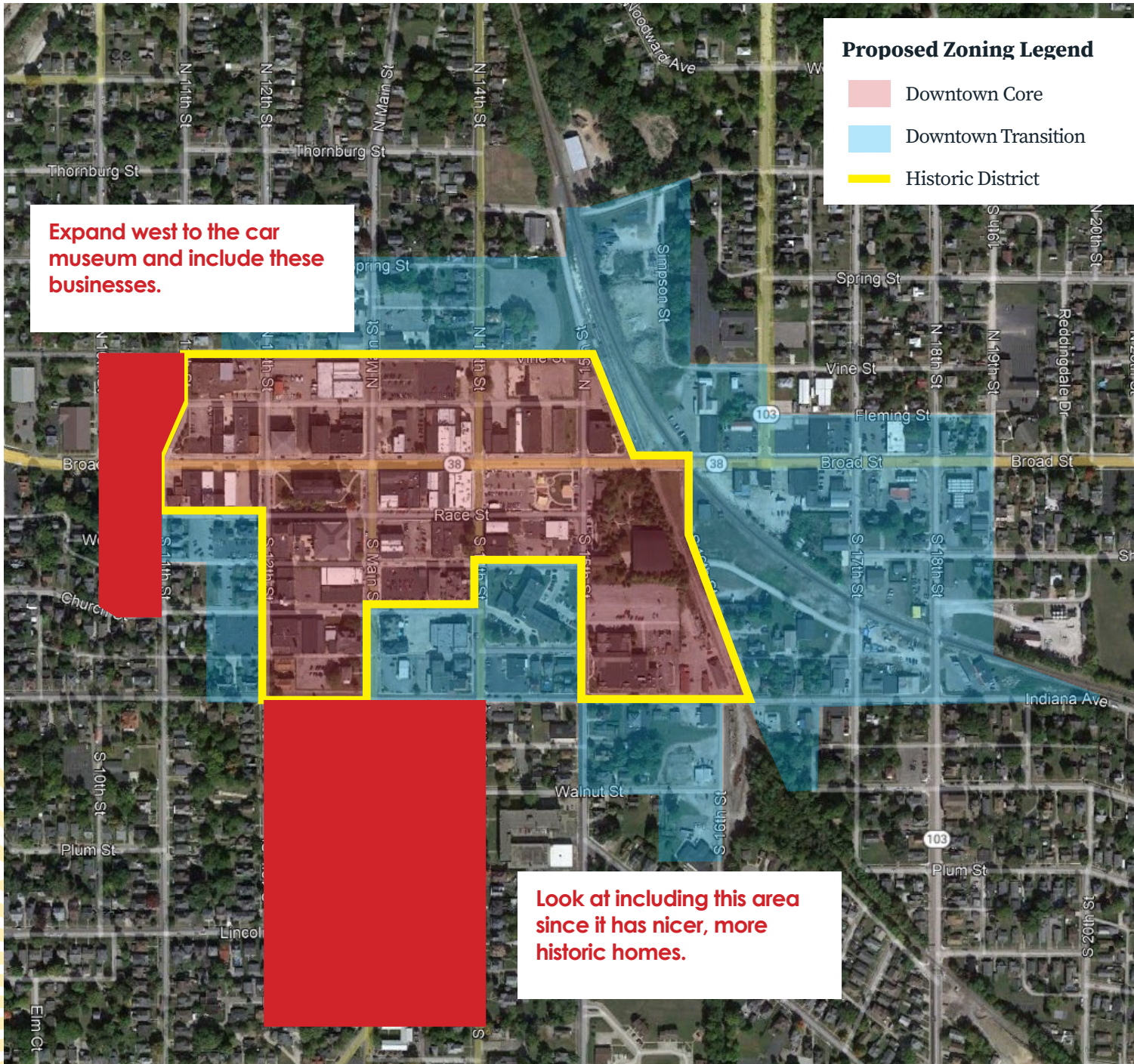
Need to fill in empty lots to provide a connected atmosphere. (Look at Franklin, and Lebanon, IN as examples- courthouse divides the downtown but they have overcome it)

Traffic calming- make courthouse the attraction; then have things come off that.



WHERE ARE WE PLANNING?

Proposed study area.





WHAT ARE WE PLANNING FOR?

Plan challenges.

Any planning process has to overcome real and perceived challenges which can include anything from community planning fatigue, to outright disagreement in priorities and recommendations. We are prepared to face these challenges head on so that we can develop appropriate tools, techniques and dialogues early in our process.

NEW CASTLE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

What challenges do you think we will encounter?

1. Parking and walking problem; Parking is owned by an individual and that is causing capacity issues.
2. Christmas walk- 3-4K people at a time. Larger events cause challenges with parking.
3. Broad Street- INDOT controls this. Makes it difficult to do business repairs on building
4. There are individuals that want to do things their own way- we need to get these people on board so they aren't working on their own. Their lack of buy-in hinders progress.
5. HPC can be a hindrance; some people find this to be problematic because of the policies and rules.
6. Could be a challenge to get building owners to participate and or support.
7. Need to balance revitalization and gentrification as we explore the blue areas adjacent to downtown.
8. Homeless downtown- how can this be improved and/or addressed.
9. Finances and resources are a challenge- Victim mentality.
10. Could be in the running for Stellar for 2026.
11. Buy-in on the climate action side of recommendations- hard for some people to buy-in to but is attractive to younger generations.



WHAT ARE WE PLANNING FOR?

Recommendation types.

To provide a complete set of recommendations and a useable set of resources we want to make sure we identify what makes downtown New Castle a desirable place now, and what you want to see happen in the future. These types, paired with the decision making criteria will also help us prioritize ideas.

NEW CASTLE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Components of Downtown

1. Buildings and structures
2. Businesses
3. Open spaces
4. Parking
5. Streetscapes
6. Branding **Awareness**
7. Events and Culture
8. **Economic Vitality**

Needed Resources & Tools

1. **Signage**

2. **Transformational strategy**

3. **Active storefronts**

4. **Communication tools- how can we get things in front of their face**





WHO ARE WE PLANNING FOR?

Implementation partners

Implementation partners can include individuals or organizations that provide funding, technical assistance and overall guidance. They can also be individuals or organizations that can spearhead projects moving forward. Since the plan can be crafted in a way that gives these partners appropriate tools and resources, they should be incorporated early and often in the planning process..

NEW CASTLE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN

Who can help us and what can they provide?

INDOT

Property owners/business owners

County Commissioners (building and parking lot; financial support; land holding)

Mayor and City Council

City infrastructure- 100 years old

OCRA

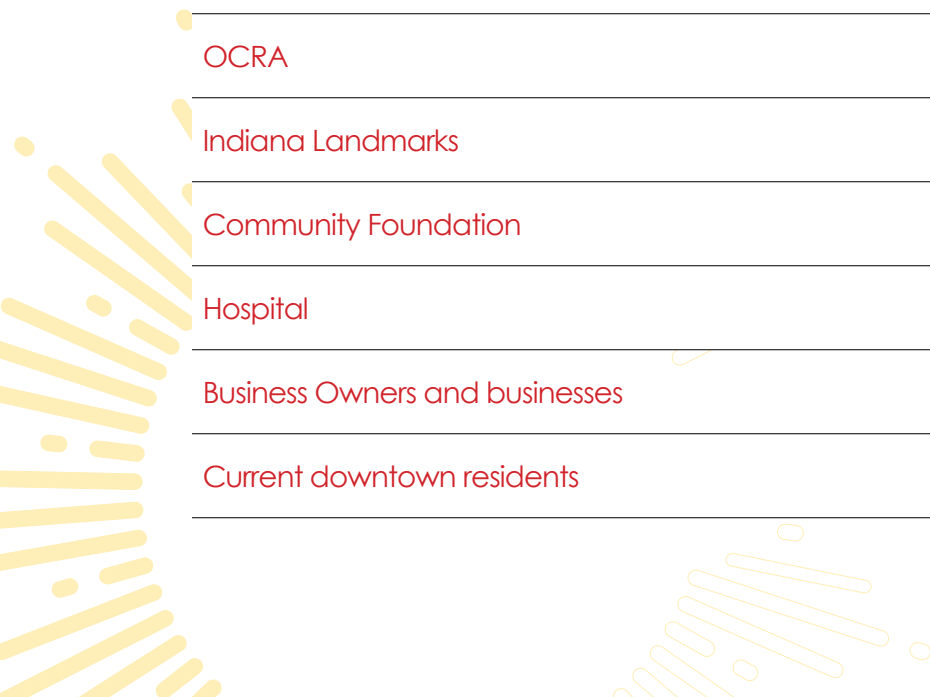
Indiana Landmarks

Community Foundation

Hospital

Business Owners and businesses

Current downtown residents



VOLUNTEER SIGN-IN SHEET



DOWNTOWN
The Heart of New Castle

EVENT: Downtown Development Plan Mtg #1

DATE: 4/12/24

#	NAME	ACTIVITY
1	Scott Frost	
2	Mike Schembne	
3	Melissa Hiday	
4	Rex Eckhardt	
5	Cindy Brooks	
6	Brook Davis	
7	Duke Hamm	
8	Ed Hill	
9	Greg York	
10	Vickie Bestram	
11		
12		
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