

City of Fort Wayne Common Council
DIGEST SHEET

Department of Planning Services

Title of Ordinance: Amendment to Comprehensive Plan
Case Number: COMP-2021-0001
Bill Number: G-20-03-22
Council District: All

Introduction Date: March 23, 2021

Plan Commission
Public Hearing Date: April 12, 2021

Next Council Action: Ordinance will return to Council after recommendation by the
Plan Commission (PC Business meeting on April 19, 2021)

Synopsis of Ordinance: A proposal to adopt the guiding principles and policies of the
Riverfront Implementation Framework

Location: Within the planning jurisdiction of Fort Wayne

Applicant: The City of Fort Wayne Division of Community Development

Related Petitions: Resolution R-14-21 (approved by Council on March 9, 2021)

Effect of Passage: Adoption of the Riverfront Development Implementation Framework's
guiding principles, goals and policies as an amendment to the City's
Comprehensive Plan ensures that the Community's vision for the future
of Riverfront development as reflected in the Framework will guide
public boards, commissions and elected bodies when they make
decisions about land use, development, and public
investment. Amending the Comprehensive Plan to reflect this vision
for Riverfront development acknowledges the principles, goals and
policies of the plan as worthy of consideration by all decisionmakers
working on behalf of the City.

Effect of Non-Passage: Not adopting the Riverfront Development Implementation
Framework's guiding principles, goals and policies as an amendment of
the City's Comprehensive Plan will compromise their effectiveness as a
guide to public boards, commissions, elected bodies as well as private
investors and developers. Without the full force of the Comprehensive
Plan, the Framework's guidance will be fragmented and limited; a
condition that is likely to slow and disrupt the momentum of public and
private investment in the Riverfront area.

1 **COMP-2021-0001**

2 **BILL NO. G-21-03-22**

3 **GENERAL ORDINANCE NO. G-_____**

4 **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTION 153.07 OF**
5 **CHAPTER 153 "PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT OF**
6 **THE CITY OF FORT WAYNE, INDIANA, CODE OF**
7 **ORDINANCES)**

8 WHEREAS, Common Council of the City of Fort Wayne adopted a Comprehensive
9 Plan for the City of Fort Wayne, in accordance with the statutes of the State of Indiana; and,

10 WHEREAS, on March 9, 2021, the Common Council adopted Resolution No. R-14-
11 21, which initiated an amendment of the Comprehensive Plan to adopt the Riverfront
12 Implementation Framework; and,

13 WHEREAS, the Common Council desires to amend Section 153.07 to recognize the
14 amendment to the Comprehensive Plan; and

15 WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission, in accordance with the Planning Statutes of
16 the State of Indiana held a public hearing on the Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan;
17 and,

18 WHEREAS, this ordinance is to establish an amendment to the Comprehensive
19 Plan to include the guiding principles and policies of the Riverfront Implementation
20 Framework to be adopted.

21 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
22 FORT WAYNE, INDIANA:

23 SECTION 1. Section 153.07 of Chapter 153 (Planning & Development) of the
24 City of Fort Wayne is amended by including the guiding principles, goals, and policies of the
25 Riverfront Development Implementation Framework:

26 **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

27 **Foster Inclusion: Sustain and support inclusive housing, employment,**
28 **commercial and entertainment opportunities, supporting diversity across**
29 **neighborhoods, socio-economic groups and age spectrum.**

- 30
 - Diversify housing typologies and locations to accommodate all residents
 - Locate and connect to neighborhood amenities, considering all communities
 - Create inclusive public programs which appeal to a diverse population
 - Create public spaces that foster conversation and interaction

- Actively invite and reach out to diverse populations to participate in community decision making

Diversify Activities: Unify the riverfront as a memorable and loved asset that offers experiences and destinations everyone can access and enjoy.

- Encourage mixed use development with a variety of opportunities, especially at the ground floor of buildings
- Create an active, continuous and varied riverfront pedestrian experience
- Introduce a variety of new water programs in the river, at the river's edge, around the river
- Prioritize the pedestrian experience and consider strategic road diets

Design to Adapt: Design for the future of tomorrow's river, protecting its health and ecology from impacts of climate change and complementing it with sustainable development.

- Educate the population about the river's health and ecology
- Draw attention to river + riparian edge
- Preserve natural areas and edges where appropriate
- Consider additional policies which require sustainable and resilient strategy implementation with new projects
- Advocate for architecture that can be reused and updated over many decades or centuries

Expand Outward: Extend the river's reach beyond downtown, creating a downtown riverfront that is the heart of the region.

- Strengthen walkable corridors which connect downtown to adjacent neighborhoods
- Bridge across rivers
- Incorporate multi modal transportation infrastructure to connect people and places
- Embrace the river as a connector
- Understand Fort Wayne's position as a hub in the regional context

Create Identity: Build upon the community's passion and momentum to design a downtown riverfront that is authentically Fort Wayne.

- Enhance existing public spaces and adaptively reuse existing buildings to inject new life
- Honor Fort Wayne's history and preserve where appropriate
- Celebrate the confluence of three rivers
- Strengthen the existing economies, business owners, and industries
- Embrace maker and small manufacturing spaces as part of the street experience
- Encourage start-ups, innovation, and new small local businesses with new programs or incentives

Work Together: Cultivate meaningful public/private partnerships, create revenue and support economic sustainability on the riverfront for generations.

- Actively pursue public private partnerships for project implementation: icon - public / private partnership: development, public private plazas
- Focus growth in areas that the market can support
- Encourage communication and partnerships between stakeholders and diverse neighborhoods
- Introduce new roles/positions/jobs that will foster partnerships in an inclusive manner

DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL:

Private property development should focus on and connect to the river, implement a high-quality design, contribute to the public realm, and contain a mix of higher-density residential, retail, personal service, and office uses that create economic opportunities.

Policy 1: Zoning:

Zoning districts within the Riverfront District area should allow for a mix of river-focused higher density variety of services including residential, retail, entertainment, education, light production, and creative arts, and personal and professional services that support the goals of the Riverfront Development Implementation Framework Plan

Policy 2: High-Quality Design

New development and redevelopment should incorporate a complimentary high-quality design that is river-focused, environmentally sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, urban in form, and constructed with materials that are long-lasting and resilient.

Policy 3: Public Art

Incorporate public art into private development design following recommendations contained within the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

Policy 4: Pedestrian Connections

New development and redevelopment should create strong pedestrian connections to public open spaces and the river.

Policy 5: Adaptive Reuse

Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic and/or significant buildings within the Riverfront District area.

Policy 6: First Mover Development

Prioritize the development and redevelopment of Wells Street Wedge, Canal House, and Townhomes first mover sites as identified in this Plan.

Policy 7: Diverse Housing Options

New housing within the Riverfront District area should meet a broad spectrum of demand for urban housing types and price points.

Policy 8: Encourage Entrepreneurs

Commercial and office space in mixed-use buildings or stand-alone developments should encourage local business, innovation, and new local businesses.

PUBLIC SPACE GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL:

Public space development will foster vibrancy and economic vitality by connecting the public visually and physically to the river.

Policy 1: Sense of Place

Public open spaces within the Riverfront District area should create an identifiable sense of place that prioritizes the pedestrian experience.

Policy 2: River Access + Visibility

Preserve and expand visibility and physical access to the river from public spaces.

Policy 3: Safety + Accessibility

Public space design should prioritize safety and accessibility.

Policy 4: Public Art

Incorporate public art into open space design following recommendations contained within the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

Policy 5: Year-Round Programming

Open spaces should be designed to accommodate year-round programming that is active and passive, diverse, and inclusive.

Policy 6: Resilient Infrastructure

Strategically design public open space to mitigate flood hazards, stormwater runoff, and reduce maintenance costs.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL:

Infrastructure development within the Riverfront District contributes to the district's sense of place, enhances and balances connectivity between the river, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods while promoting safety and resiliency.

Policy 1: Vibrant Complete Streets

Streets, streetscapes, and bridges should add to the vibrancy of the Riverfront District area, include pedestrian and transit amenities, and accommodate and balance all modes of travel.

Policy 2: Public Art

1 Incorporate public art into street design following recommendations contained within
2 the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

3 **Policy 3: Rivergreenway System Enhancement**

4 The Rivergreenway System within the Riverfront District area should be preserved
5 and enhanced as an asset that provides vital transportation and recreational
6 connectivity.

7 **Policy 4: Sustainability**

8 Streets should be designed to incorporate sustainable stormwater management
9 practices that control stormwater and promote water quality.

10 **Policy 5: Flood Mitigation**

11 Strategically design and improve infrastructure to mitigate flood hazards and reduce
12 maintenance costs.

13 **Policy 6: The Urban Grid**

14 New streets, as proposed in the Riverfront Framework Plan, should be connected to
15 existing streets whenever possible to reestablish the urban grid in the Riverfront
16 District area.

17 **Policy 7: Maintain Viewsheds**

18 Overhead infrastructure and utility poles within public rights of way should be
19 reduced and carefully placed when necessary, so as to not obstruct river and gateway
20 viewsheds.

21
22 SECTION 2. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and
23 after its passage and approval by the Mayor.

24
25 _____
26 Council Member

27
28 APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

29
30 _____
Carol T. Helton, City Attorney

CITY OF FORT WAYNE

RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Executive Summary



Riverfront
FORT WAYNE
Always moving.







A MESSAGE FROM MAYOR TOM HENRY | SUMMER 2020

I am pleased to present you with the Riverfront Fort Wayne Implementation Framework, a detailed road map for continuing our efforts to create a vibrant and inclusive Riverfront District.

We've come a long way in our journey to once again embrace our three rivers and create a destination for everyone to enjoy. In 2011, when planning for the use of Legacy Fort Wayne funds, residents named riverfront development as their top priority. Since that time, we've worked hard to set the vision for a riverfront district that honors our history while also bringing new energy and life to our community.

The vision is becoming reality. Thousands of people celebrated the grand opening of our spectacular Promenade Park in 2019 and development of housing, retail, dining and commercial space in the district continues along Superior and Columbia streets.

This Riverfront Fort Wayne Implementation Framework outlines the steps we must take to make the next phases of development just as successful as the first phase. The plan outlined here ensures we leverage our public resources responsibly in order to attract high-quality private investment that fosters inclusion in housing, employment and recreational opportunities.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this plan. The Riverfront Advisory Committee's guidance, along with input from hundreds of residents, helped ensure that we stay true to the original vision of the district. Through extensive research, discussion and hard work, the Land Collective team and City staff have pulled all the final pieces together in this document.

With this plan as our guide, I look forward to continuing the momentum of Riverfront Fort Wayne and creating a place in which all residents can take pride.

Sincerely,

MAYOR OF FORT WAYNE

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas C. Henry".

Thomas C. Henry, Mayor
City of Fort Wayne

CITY OF FORT WAYNE

Mayor Thomas C. Henry

Cindy Joyner, *Director: Community Development (retired)*

Nancy Townsend, *Director: Community Development*

Steve McDaniel, *Director: Parks and Recreation*

RIVERFRONT WORKING GROUP

Project Leadership

Alec Johnson, *Deputy Director: Park Planning & Development*

Paul Spoelhof, *Deputy Director: Planning and Policy*

Stacy Haviland, *Community Development Administrator -
Redevelopment*

Project Steering Team:

Mark Becker, *Deputy Director of Riverfront Development (retired)*

Patrick Zaharako, *City Engineer: Public Works Department*

Anne Marie Smrcek, *Sewer and Stormwater Engineering
Manager: City Utilities*

Chris Cloud, *Chief of Staff: Allen County Commissioners' Office*

John Urbahns, *CEO and President: Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.*

Mary Tyndall, *Community Development Public Information Office*

DeWayne Nodine, *Development Services: City Utilities*

Gail Bradley, *Finance Manager: Community Development*

Staff Resource Team:

Steve Schuhmacher, *Deputy Director of Park Maintenance*

Megan Butler, *Program and Events Manager - Riverfront Fort
Wayne*

Chad Shaw, *Superintendent of Park Planning, Landscape and
Horticulture*

Kim Bowman, *Director: Department of Planning Services*

Dan Wire, *Riparian Supervisor (retired)*

Sherese Fortriede, *Senior Planner: Planning and Policy*

Josh Campbell, *Planner: Planning and Policy*

Joe Giant, *Redevelopment Manager*

Palermo Galindo, *Neighborhood Liaison: Community Development*

Natalie Eggeman, *Public Information Officer: Mayor's office*

Stephen Bailey, *PH Digital*

MAYOR'S RIVERFRONT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Michael Barranda

Kathy Callen

Mike Conley

Connie Haas Zuber

Patti Hays

Jermaine Jackson

Pamela Kelly

Brad Little

Mark Luttik

Dan O'Connell

Geoff Paddock

Dan Ross

Richard Samek

Lisa Starks

AJ Stites

Tom Smith

Tom Trent

Irene Walters

Judi Wire

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Allen County Commissioners

Faegre Baker Daniels

Fort Wayne Community Schools

Grand Wayne Center

Greater Fort Wayne Inc.

Mayor's Youth Engagement Council

Memorial Park Middle School Staff and Students

North Side High School

Rothberg Logan & Warsco



Riverfront
FORT WAYNE
Always moving.

RIVERFRONT DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Everyone will have a place in Riverfront Fort Wayne.

INTRODUCTION

Fort Wayne has a legacy of dynamic entertainment, culture, cuisine and commerce. Bold visioning and thoughtful decision-making guide strategic implementation. Momentum is mounting and the City is poised to increase its gravitational pull beyond the City's borders to the region beyond. Fort Wayne has jumped-in with both feet to emerge as a regional destination with the successful Phase 1 execution of a world-class urban riverfront park. Promenade Park has exceeded expectations in reconnecting the City and its citizenry with the River. Along its length and in the vicinity of the riverfront, a series of strategic public-private partnerships have further fueled a River Renaissance amongst the citizenry and visitors, who are discovering new ways to experience Fort Wayne and the Downtown core.

An extraordinary urban riverfront positively informs not only the river's edge but exponentially increases all that is good in the surrounding neighborhoods and beyond. It is the center of gravity around which excellence orbits. The plan describes development opportunities that enhance the best aspects of Fort Wayne while catalyzing new connections between the rivers, downtown, and the surrounding neighborhoods. This plan will guide the City in capturing value from a vibrant Riverfront District with quality private developments reflecting a return on investment from public expenditures to date.

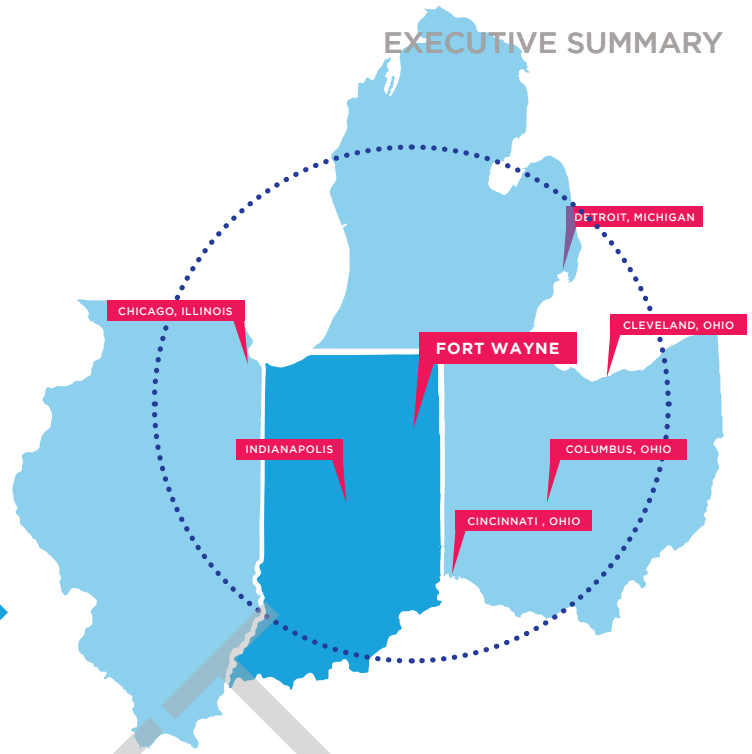
Not ones to rest on their laurels, the City of Fort Wayne is ready to deliver on these next steps of the Riverfront District.

**Riverfront Fort Wayne
is in the Making.**

COMPETITIVE ASSETS

Centrally located between Indianapolis, Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati, Fort Wayne is an emerging competitor in the region with distinct economic and cultural assets. Recent urban-living developments, a vibrant Downtown, notable culinary, arts and music scenes, and a relatively low cost of living are valuable characteristics to attract new residents and retain a capable work force.

Fort Wayne has the capacity to draw from neighboring communities and serve as a cultural hub for the region.



CONNECTIONS

Fort Wayne is an asterism in a constellation of cities in the Midwest, composed of singular and unique character that is in a wonderfully dynamic state. Always relevant throughout history for its physical position in northeast Indiana – its unique topography separates the water that flows West to the Mississippi or East through Lake Erie – informing trade, communication, and strategic initiatives.



DYNAMIC DOWNTOWN

With a population over 250,000 people, Fort Wayne is the second largest city in the State of Indiana. The downtown core has become a dynamic center of entrepreneurial spirit taking advantage of the diverse assets that comprise the DNA of the City, with a focus toward and around the riverfront. The unique qualities of Fort Wayne ensure that the downtown will continue to be vibrant, be singular in character from other major cities, and complement diverse development opportunities with equitable engagement.



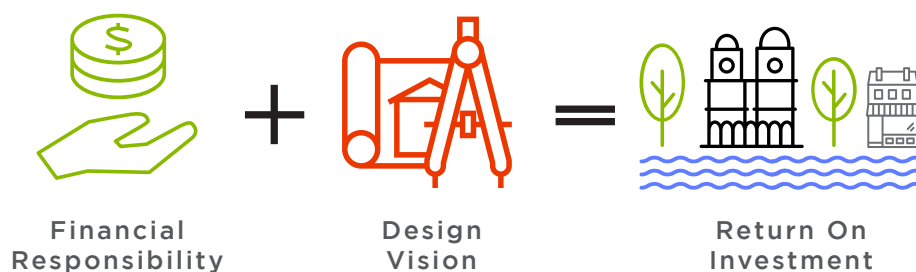
ARTS, CULTURE, MUSIC

Fort Wayne's art scene complements its diverse population, with assets in the visual and performing arts, as well as rich cultural experiences reflective of the breadth of citizenry. Whether in the physical armature of Louis Kahn's Arts United campus, The Fort Wayne Museum of Art, or any of the myriad galleries or festivals throughout the downtown, the City's extensive season of cultural arts opportunities affords year-long engagement.



QUALITY OF LIFE

The City's growing population and increasing percentages of tourist visitations reflects the true quality of life available in Fort Wayne. With over 2,800 acres of parks and trails, rich cultural opportunities, a wide range of quality academic institutions, from primary through collegiate, and a vibrant and growing downtown core, the City boasts a quality of life like few cities of Fort Wayne's scale (or larger!).



< A financially responsible assessment supports a design vision that can be achieved, assuming a return on investment for investors and lenders that support and undertake opportunities along the Riverfront and Downtown Fort Wayne.

OVERARCHING GOALS

This Master Plan envisions a Vibrant Riverfront District that embraces the living systems, natural and social, static and living, and supports investment opportunities for development in complement with that vision. There are myriad opportunities for sustainable, resilient private development in complement to all of the public assets existing and proposed. Public dollars have facilitated opportunities for investment that is solidly rooted in successful outcomes. The network of support, both infrastructure and social, suggests a future wherein people are always present throughout the year, and generationally.

Create a Vibrant Riverfront District: Plan for **quality, sustainable private development.**

Devise programming and development strategies that **enhance existing assets** and **catalyze new connectivity** between the rivers, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods

Leverage public dollars to facilitate complementary economic opportunities **reflecting the aspirations** of the citizenry of Fort Wayne

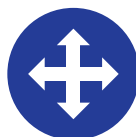
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The planning process was informed by six guiding principles created in collaboration with the citizenry of Fort Wayne, City of Fort Wayne Staff, and the Riverfront Advisory Committee - through a series of in-depth and focused public engagements. These principles align the goals of the citizenry with the vision of the plan. They inform each strategy, enabling Fort Wayne to achieve its aspirations for a more resilient and vibrant Riverfront District.

FOSTER INCLUSION: Sustain and support inclusive housing, employment, commercial and entertainment opportunities, supporting diversity across neighborhoods, socio-economic groups and age spectrum

DESIGN TO ADAPT: Design for the future of tomorrow's river, protecting its health and ecology from the impacts of climate change and complementing it with sustainable development

CREATE IDENTITY: Build upon the community's passion and momentum to design a downtown riverfront that is authentically Fort Wayne



DIVERSIFY ACTIVITIES: Unify the riverfront as a memorable and loved asset that offers experiences and destinations everyone can access and enjoy

EXPAND OUTWARD: Extend the river's reach beyond downtown, creating a downtown riverfront that is the heart of the region

WORK TOGETHER: Cultivate meaningful public/private partnerships, create revenue and support economic sustainability on the riverfront for generations

FRAMEWORK PLAN GOAL

Public and private development in the Riverfront District will create a vibrant extension of the urban core that simultaneously embraces the natural, recreational and economic assets of rivers; supports private investment in buildings that contribute urban form and scale to create places to live, learn, work and play; and delivers public investment in infrastructure design to foster human-scale connections between the rivers, adjacent neighborhoods, and downtown.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

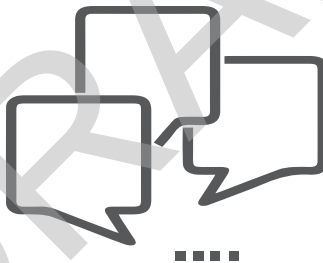
A place is only lasting when it is beloved in the hearts and minds of the citizens it serves. Bringing forth this emotional richness and connection requires a thoughtful understanding of how diverse people engage within a place throughout time. Essential to the framework, the process included engagement with project stakeholders, focus groups, and the breadth of the community. The process featured strategic methods that provided the community with opportunities to share their thoughts and concerns, express ideas and preferences, and respond to draft findings and recommendations. The result is an alignment between aspirations and the final vision. Civic leaders change over time; the citizenry are always present. Their belief in and support of the plan is paramount. As such, what is envisioned can be accomplished.

ASSET MAPPING, BREAK UP / LOVE NOTES, DOT VOTING



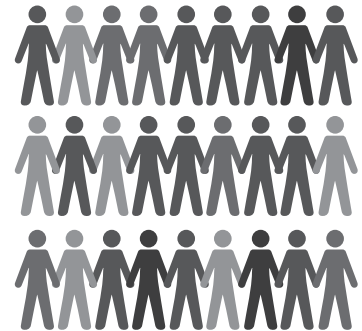
- +140** Love / Break-Up Letters
- +200** Community Assets Mapped
- +100** Diamonds in the Rough
- +75** Analog Instagrams
- +160** Urban Design Ballots
- +100** Urban Component Dot Votes

FOCUS GROUPS



- 13** Focus Groups:
 - Transportation and Accessibility
 - Environmental
 - Zoning & Planning
 - Business Representatives
 - Retail Owners
 - Downtown Employees
 - Downtown Residents
 - Neighborhood Representatives
 - Historic Preservation
 - Tourism, Arts + Culture
 - Real Estate Development Professionals
 - Maintenance and Operations
 - Mayor's Youth Engagement Council/ Next Generation

PUBLIC MEETINGS

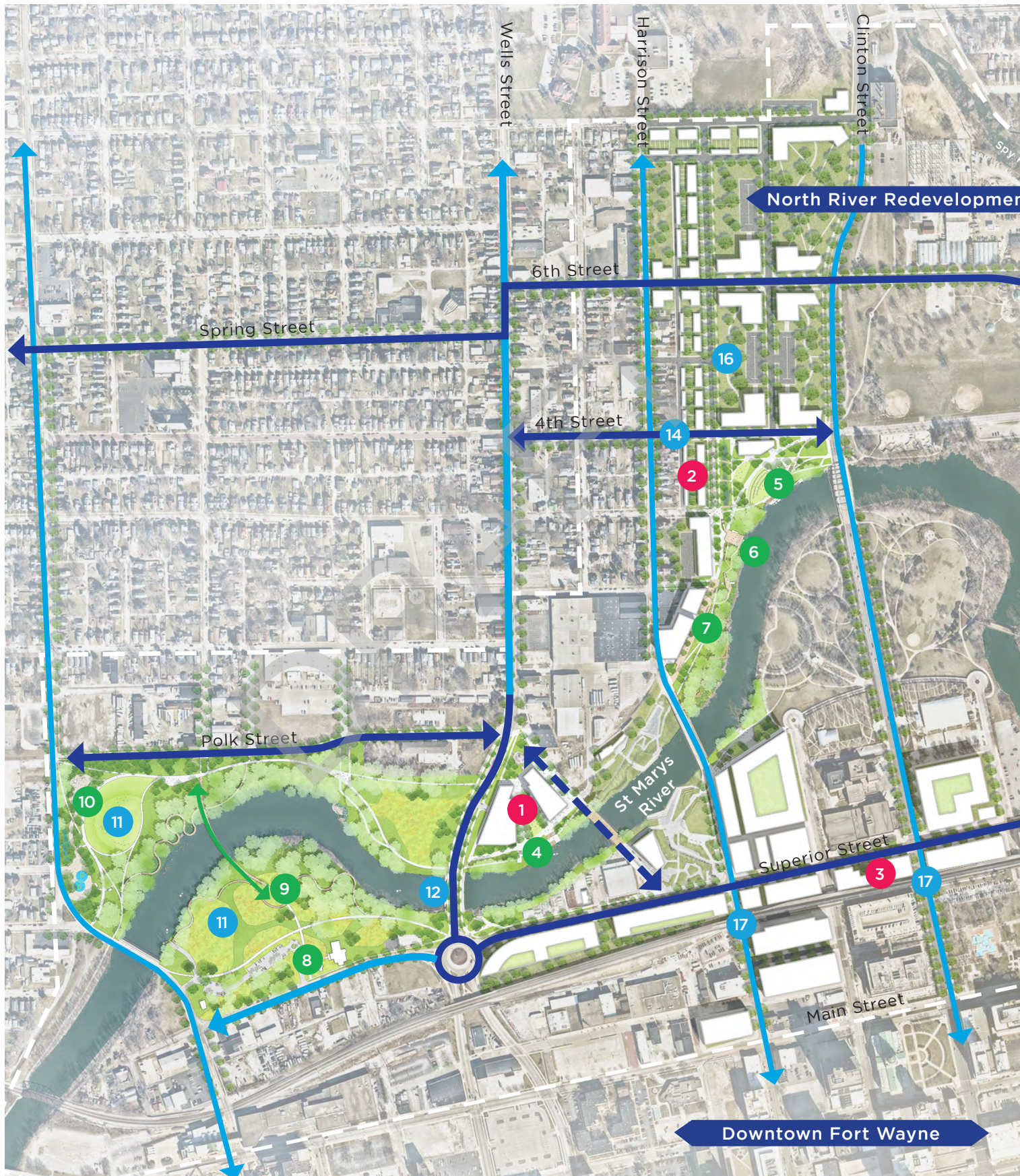


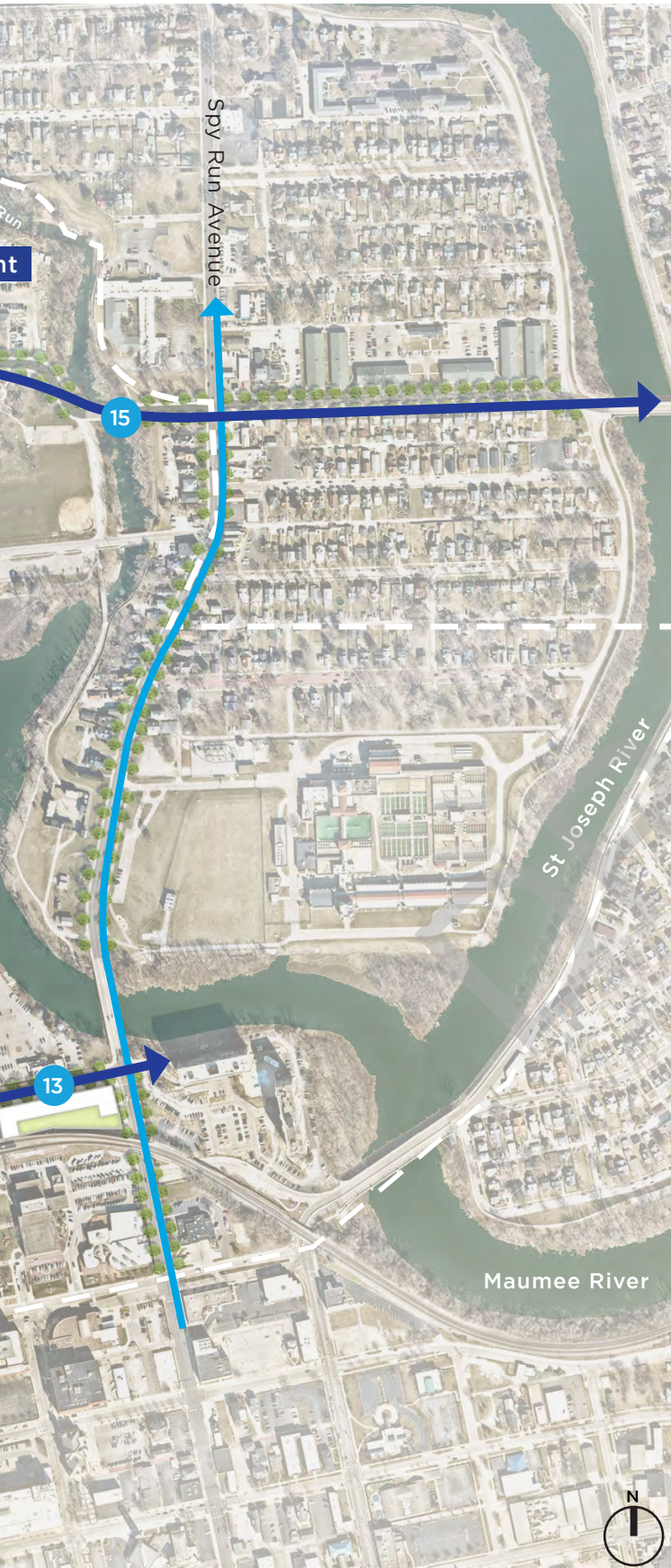
- 3** Major Public Input Meetings
- +650** Total Attendees



Meaningful public engagement positively informed the Riverfront planning process through a series of diverse engagement activities, discussions, and public meetings. Input was collected, documented and then quantified to analyze the community's priorities. Each exercise was summarized and reported back to the community, at the following public meeting, to serve as a foundation that informed decision-making of elements of the master plan.

OVERVIEW: PLAN ELEMENTS





The plan seeks to extend Downtown's reach to activate the Riverfront District by promoting riverfront density and vibrancy through diverse residential opportunities, employment opportunities, and strategies for riverfront activation and culture to thrive.

The plan seeks to connect existing assets, hubs and neighborhoods to each other and to the riverfront. River infrastructure is re-imagined beyond utilitarian purposes to emotionally resonate and physically connect citizenry to the river. The physical framework is organized by three lenses: development, public space and infrastructure.

KEY DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS SEE P58

Demonstrating Feasibility and Catalyzing Future Development

- 1 The Wedge - Mixed Use Development
- 2 Townhomes - Housing Development
- 3 Canal House - Adaptive Reuse, Mixed-Use Development

KEY PUBLIC SPACE ELEMENTS SEE P102

Increasing Value and Vibrancy of Potential Development

- 4 Front Porch at Wedge
- 5 North Lawn Anchor
- 6 Pump Station Overlook
- 7 Esplanade Civic Terrace
- 8 Guldlin Park Enhancements
- 9 Pedestrian Bridge and Iconic Viewing Tower
- 10 Bloomingdale Park Enhancements

KEY MOBILITY +

INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENTS SEE P148

Enabling Resilient Development

- 11 Compensatory Storage
- 12 Ewing Street Bridge and Wells Street Corridor
- 13 Superior Street Corridor
- 14 4th Street Corridor
- 15 6th Street Connector
- 16 Connect to Urban Grid
- 17 Rail Underpass Activation

RIVERFRONT GOALS

PRIVATE PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT should focus on and connect to the river, implement a high-quality design, contribute to the public realm, and contain a mix of higher-density residential, retail, personal service, and office uses that create economic opportunities. See supporting policies and action steps on p.18.

PUBLIC SPACE DEVELOPMENT will foster vibrancy and economic vitality by connecting the public visually and physically to the river. See supporting policies and action steps on p.21.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT within the Riverfront District contributes to the district's sense of place , enhances and balances connectivity between the river, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods while promoting safety and resiliency. See supporting policies and action steps on p.23.

'FIRST MOVER' DEVELOPMENT CATALYSTS

Within the Master Plan boundaries, the City has the lion-share of land holdings, which allows for a comprehensive vision and the prospect of controlling the outcome in support of the overall vision. Upon review of those landholdings, the design team used the opportunity to investigate key catalytic sites for their capacity to support the goals of the plan.

In a strategic move, sites were chosen for the challenges these properties face in terms of development. In doing so, and ensuring their viability — their capacity to be realized — we have taken the burden off of investigation by prospective investors unsure whether a profitable venture could be supported on the challenging catalytic sites. The design team, in cooperation with the City, selected the Canal House site, the “Wedge” site, and a site supporting of Townhomes — a missing housing typology within the fabric of the adjacent neighborhoods — demonstrating through the investigation, that even these most seemingly constrained sites are rich with opportunity to bring forward the principles of the plan, reinforcing the true DNA of Fort Wayne, and supportive of resilient, socially-purposeful constructs. They are considered the “First Mover” projects because in their undertaking north and south of the riverfront, they have the potential to anchor the future in demonstrable potential.



CANAL HOUSE

An adaptive reuse of the Canal House will reimagine this historic building into a mixed-use development with ground floor retail, creative commercial, residential units and a parking structure. This project is emblematic of the Riverfront District's connection to Fort Wayne's waterfront history finding new identity for future generations.



THE WEDGE

Residential development presents the best short-term market opportunity and can serve to build up the market for additional commercial activity as the market grows. The Wedge site is a premium redevelopment site, located on the riverfront, proximate to Promenade Park, and is the southern anchor of the Wells Street Corridor.



TOWNHOMES

Additional townhomes for Downtown Fort Wayne will buffer the transition between existing single-family housing neighborhood and future development in North River. This project will diversify available housing and increase density along in the Riverfront.

PUBLIC SPACE STRATEGIES

Building upon the Character Zones established during Schematic Design, the length of the downtown riverfront, north and south, is reinforced with “signature spaces” that heighten the experience of each area, from the wilds of nature to the west, to the urbane spaces opposite Headwaters Park. Public spaces, varied in scale and character, allow citizens to occupy environments appropriate to their needs throughout the day and the seasons.



NATURAL REACH

The Natural Reach links Bloomingdale Park and Guldlin Park into a unified language of “natural” enhancements and iconic viewing tower that affords panoramic views of Fort Wayne.



URBAN REACH

The Urban Reach, characterized by dense, adjacent development and narrower riparian embankments, transforms levee to become amenity that brings commercial and recreational opportunities to the river's edge.



CIVIC REACH

In the Civic Reach, a new North Lawn offers the opportunity to focus larger groups toward the river, while a new Pump Station Overlook and Civic Terrace create new paradigms to integrate infrastructure and public spaces

INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGIES

The plan seeks to connect existing asset, hubs and neighborhoods to each other and to the riverfront. River infrastructure is re-imagined beyond utilitarian purposes to emotionally resonate and physically connect citizenry to the river. Public infrastructure investments benefit the public and private sectors with improved connections to the riverfront, mitigate flood risks, and sites primed for redevelopment.



COMPENSATORY STORAGE: PRIMING THE DISTRICT FOR REDEVELOPMENT

This plan works with the river, rather than against it, so understanding the dynamic hydrologic functions of the river is paramount to the plan's success. To ensure development parcels conform to the potential of flood conditions, compensatory storage – areas of the river edge designed to receive water during flooding – have been defined in complement to identified development parcels abutting the river's edge. Compensatory storage is an increasingly important response to climate change in the face of proposed development, particularly in an era when the frequency of storm events, and their intensity, are measurable. The City has gone to great lengths to ensure future success.



EXPANDING REACH: BRIDGING DOWNTOWN'S INFLUENCE ACROSS THE RIVER

A river has two sides, and the Fort Wayne Riverfront serves populations well beyond the Downtown neighborhood that is immediately proximate to the South. As such, a strategy has been described that allows the riverfront to reach over the levees and other infrastructure elements to the north into the adjacent neighborhoods, thereby facilitating physical and visual connection with the river. The north side and all of the associated neighborhoods are an equal partner in the benefits of development and participation.



MAKING CONNECTIONS: LINKING NEIGHBORHOODS AND HUBS TO RIVERFRONT

Fort Wayne has a rational grid of streets that allows for clarity and legibility in the movement of cars, bikes, and pedestrians. As part of the plan, streets in the plan area (and beyond) are envisioned as multi-modal living spaces with improved traffic circulation, reinforcing of strategic connections in all directions. Where connections are missing or greater connectivity can be achieved, new streets are proposed. In this way, ease of movement is reinforced, connections to new and existing assets are realized, and residents and visitors have access from all directions. Everyone is connected to the Riverfront.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LONG TERM BUILD-OUT

This plan focuses on opportunities to leverage investment of public dollars to encourage public gathering and engagement with the river — in support of investment by private dollars — commercial enterprises that see the value add of the riverfront experience and all who participate in it. It is a flexible framework that continues to build upon what has come before. The City worked with its citizenry to establish a vision for what might be. This led to Promenade Park, a nationally-recognized, highly designed public space. Now it is time to capitalize on the success of Promenade Park and the public dollars allocated to date, to define immediate next steps and those steps further in the future.



In addition to Promenade Park and as a result of its potential and that of future initiatives, other significant economic responses have been realized, including The Bradley boutique hotel, The Landing development, Superior Lofts, and others. These investments can be linked to Fort Wayne's current and future potential as a growing destination. But economic analysis of potential opportunities suggests there is even greater capacity that speaks to the potential of this plan to support additional private investment opportunities. The City has greater capacity than what has been realized to date.

A FOCUS ON THE RIVER, north and south, and strategic first initiatives on either side of the riverfront, are paramount to distributing opportunities for investment that positively inform a variety of engagements inclusively. Building upon the success of Promenade Park, the plan focuses on the potential initiatives that will exponentially increase the positive impact of development and foster even more return on investment. Reinvention of the Canal House (authentic Fort Wayne DNA), finding opportunities for newer housing typologies, including townhomes, establishing a vision for "The Wedge" site, demonstrate how challenging sites along the river can offer extraordinary opportunity for investment and diversity. These First Movers set the stage for an expanded reach on both sides of the riverfront.

EXPANDING THE RIVERS' REACH is a fundamental aspect of this plan. Every citizen of Fort Wayne and their friends should be considered a participant in the engagement and, therefore, success of this extraordinary river construct. Strategic portals or "front porches" connect neighborhoods over levees and other infrastructure thresholds that create physical separation from the river's edge. While these obstacles are about flood safety, they shouldn't inhibit the emotional connection individuals and communities have with the river.

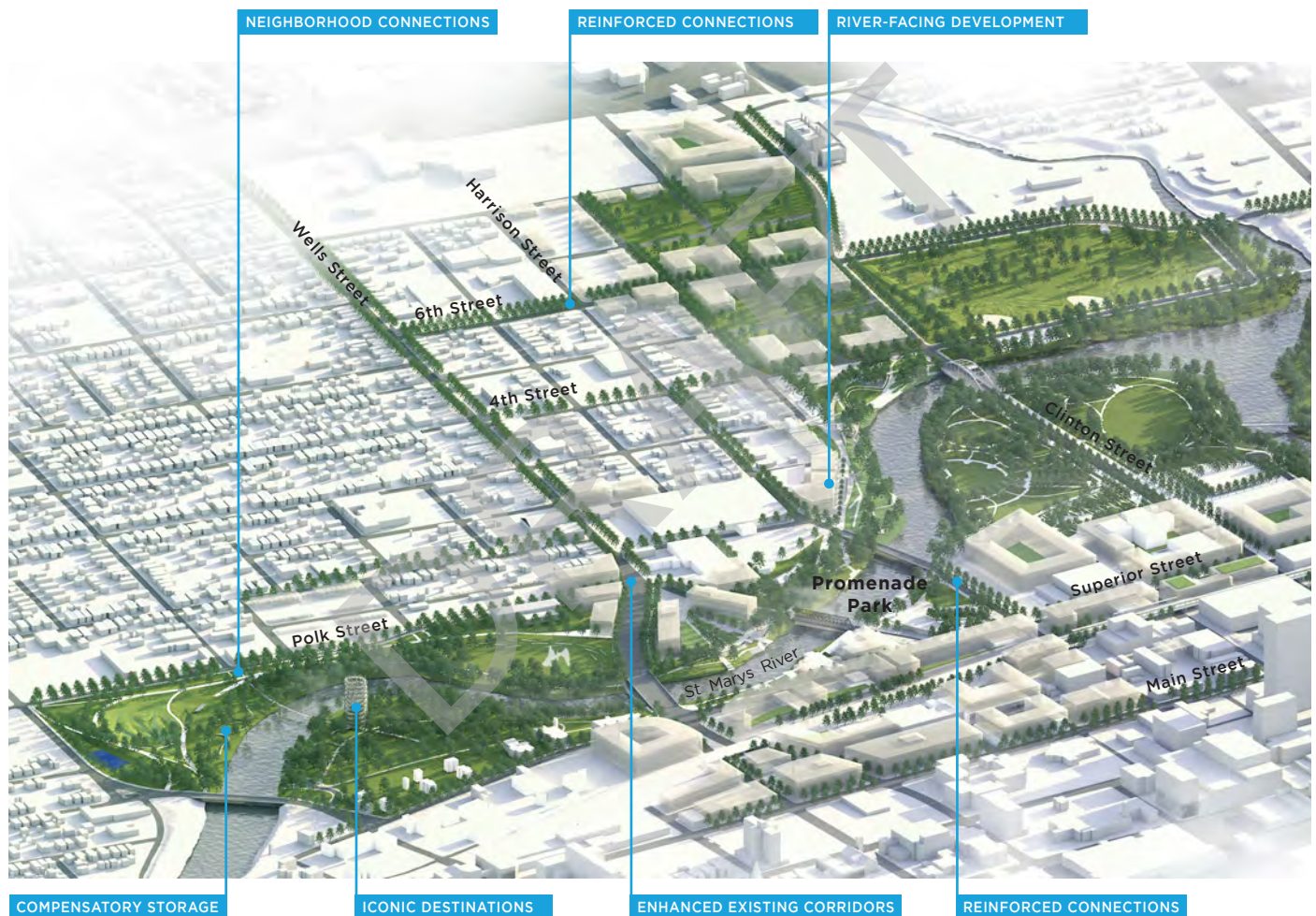
Every effort in support of this plan should be made to reach beyond the adjacent neighborhoods out to those communities that would not, typically, feel a part of this City's most important feature. The front porches offer an opportunity to identify communities further afield, through art and articulation. As a linear natural feature, lines reach out perpendicular from the river and offer an opportunity to go beyond the site and pull communities in. These perpendicular lines marry into the parallel, linear path and promenade systems along the river's edge. Thus, a far-reaching network is established that re-establishes a variety of systems — streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, stormwater collection — into a truly living system supporting social vibrancy.

It is this vibrancy that will be the ongoing attraction to the investment of private dollars. Investors want to see and understand the prospect of repeat and engaging visitations, and a City whose citizenry proudly identify themselves in this growing civic construct — a place that resonates in the hearts and minds of those citizens — are the identifier measured by potential investors and the stimulus to a return on investment.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Uplift local businesses, offer opportunities to the range of economic means, and focus on Fort Wayne's DNA.

Riverfront Fort Wayne anticipates that a mix of public and private entities will make the development strategies of the plan possible, both in the short and long term. The flexible framework and market-driven solutions can be implemented as funding allows and will encourage momentum within the development community. Through focused riverfront development, the recommendations will strengthen Fort Wayne's resiliency as an authentically unique place to live, work, and play.

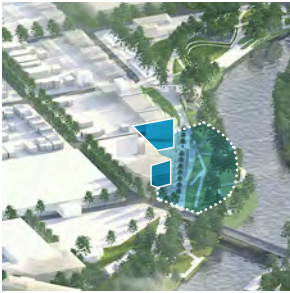


By expanding Downtown's reach across the St. Marys River, and focusing development along the riverfront that engages with new public spaces, a new urban-river paradigm for Fort Wayne will offer a quality of life that attracts, and engages individuals and families of all ages and backgrounds.



NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

Existing neighborhoods will find new physical and emotional connectivity to the river. Enhanced streetscapes invite residents to their riverfront and are greeted at one of a series of public "front-porches" arranged along the river's edge. These front-porches are universally accessible, public spaces at the threshold of the river's edge. While part of a greater whole, each are uniquely identified to their adjacent neighborhood through signage and custom seating elements.



RIVER-FACING DEVELOPMENT

The City is endowed with a significant quantity of land-holdings adjacent to the riverfront, which affords great opportunity to create a new paradigm of riverfront development. The river's edge should become an engaging corridor with active ground floors and vibrant programming. By doing so, new riverfront development can capture the greatest value for return on investment.



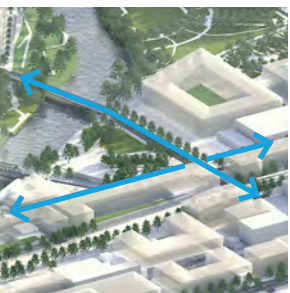
COMPENSATORY STORAGE

In an effort to establish resilient development sites that are proximate to and additive of the Riverfront experience, some of the most advantageous parcels identified are within the 100-year flood zone. Finding areas of compensation – land designed to receive flood waters equal to or greater than those to be built upon – is necessary. These compensatory storage sites are integrated into the downtown riverfront in the re-described, naturalized areas of Lawton, Guldlin, and Bloomingdale Parks.



ICONIC DESTINATIONS

The Rivers have drawn development and visitors for generations. New paradigms bring dynamism and novel experiences to appreciate the riverfront. Iconic viewing tower, sculptural pedestrian bridge, and socially-engaged infrastructure will complement the natural energy that invites residents and visitors to the Riverfront District.



ENHANCE EXISTING CORRIDORS

Fort Wayne is thriving with local businesses along streetscape corridors that attract residents and visitors to eat, dine and shop. Enhancements to the public realm of these corridors within the Riverfront District will make stronger connections to each other and the River, thereby uplifting the network of corridors within the District.



CONNECTED HUBS

Existing neighborhood hubs are reinforced by new connections through the Riverfront District. Taking cues from the existing urban grid patterns, new enhanced corridors and bridges make new connections that deliver a stronger system for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians.

POLICIES + ACTION STEPS

GOAL

Private property development should focus on and connect to the river, implement a high-quality design, contribute to the public realm, and contain a mix of higher-density residential, retail, personal service, and office uses that create economic opportunities.

POLICY 1: ZONING

Zoning districts within the Riverfront District area should allow for a mix of river-focused higher density variety of services including residential, retail, entertainment, education, light production, and creative arts, and personal and professional services that support the goals of the Riverfront Development Implementation Framework Plan.

ACTION STEPS

1A) REZONE INDUSTRIAL AREAS

Rezone industrial areas north of the river to appropriate mixed-use urban zoning classifications as identified on the Proposed Zoning Map.

1B) DEVELOP A RIVERFRONT DISTRICT

Develop a new riverfront zoning district that promotes river-centric development patterns and an appropriate mix of uses in areas directly adjacent to the river.

POLICY 2: HIGH-QUALITY DESIGN

New development and redevelopment should incorporate a complimentary high-quality design that is river-focused, environmentally sustainable, pedestrian-oriented, urban in form, and constructed with materials that are long-lasting and resilient.

ACTION STEPS

2A) DEVELOP DESIGN STANDARDS

Develop and adopt design standards and guidelines for private development within the Riverfront District area that work to implement the goals and recommendations within this Plan.

2B) DESIGN TO REGULATIONS

New development and redevelopment in flood hazard areas will be designed to meet all State and local regulations.

POLICY 3: PUBLIC ART

Incorporate public art into private development design following recommendations contained within the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

POLICY 4: PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS

New development and redevelopment should create strong pedestrian connections to public open spaces and the river.

ACTION STEP

4) ENSURE COORDINATION

Ensure coordination and connectivity between private development, public space, and infrastructure design through the design and development review process.

POLICY 5: ADAPTIVE REUSE

Encourage adaptive reuse of existing historic and/or significant buildings within the Riverfront District area.

ACTION STEPS

5A) INVENTORY SIGNIFICANT BUILDINGS

Develop an inventory and map of historic and significant buildings within the Riverfront District area.

5B) DEVELOP INCENTIVES

Develop and market incentives for the adaptive reuse of historic and significant buildings within the Riverfront District area.

5C) ENCOURAGE HISTORIC DESIGNATION

Encourage the National Register and Local Historic District designation of historically significant structures.

POLICY 6: FIRST MOVER DEVELOPMENT

Prioritize the development and redevelopment of Wells Street Wedge, Canal House, and Townhomes first mover sites as identified in this Plan.

ACTION STEPS

6A) DUE DILIGENCE

Perform due diligence on the first mover sites in order to identify potential barriers to redevelopment.

6B) IDENTIFY SOURCES TO LEVERAGE

Identify potential local, state, and federal economic development incentives that could be leveraged to achieve the vision for the first mover sites as described in this plan.

6C) IDENTIFY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Identify development teams with expertise in comparable types of development and experience with public-private partnerships either through a targeted search or a broad marketing process.

POLICY 7: DIVERSE HOUSING OPTIONS

New housing within the Riverfront District area should meet a broad spectrum of demand for urban housing types and price points.

ACTION STEP

7A) UPDATE THE DOWNTOWN MARKET ANALYSIS

Update the housing market analysis for the Downtown and Riverfront District area.

POLICY 8: ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURS

Commercial and office space in mixed-use buildings or stand-alone developments should encourage local business, innovation, and new local businesses.

ACTION STEP

8A) ATTRACT + ASSIST START-UPS

Develop and market programs or incentives to attract and assist startups, innovation, and local businesses.

POLICIES + ACTION STEPS

GOAL

Public space development will foster vibrancy and economic vitality by connecting the public visually and physically to the river.

POLICY 1: SENSE OF PLACE

Public open spaces within the Riverfront District area should create an identifiable sense of place that prioritizes the pedestrian experience.

ACTION STEP

1A) DEVELOP DESIGN GUIDELINES

Create and adopt design standards and guidelines for open space development within the Riverfront District area that implement design criteria, an appropriate material palette, and a wayfinding signage system based on Promenade Park design precedent to be utilized throughout the Riverfront District.

POLICY 2: RIVER ACCESS + VISIBILITY

Preserve and expand visibility and physical access to the river from public spaces.

ACTION STEPS

2A) CONSIDER A RIVERBANK OVERLAY

Evaluate the creation of a riverbank overlay district to protect the riverbank and facilitate river and trail connectivity.

2B) IMPLEMENT THE RIPARIAN MANAGEMENT PLAN

Continue to implement recommendations found in the Fort Wayne Riparian Management Plan.

2C) ENSURE COORDINATION

Ensure coordination between public space, infrastructure design, and private development through the design and development review process.

POLICY 3: SAFETY + ACCESSIBILITY

Public space design should prioritize safety and accessibility.

ACTION STEP

3A) LIGHTING AND ACCESSIBILITY

Public spaces should be well lit with pedestrian-scaled lighting and comply with or exceed ADA standards for design.

POLICY 4: PUBLIC ART

Incorporate public art into open space design following recommendations contained within the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

POLICY 5: YEAR-ROUND PROGRAMMING

Open spaces should be designed to accommodate year-round programming that is active and passive, diverse, and inclusive.

POLICY 6: RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategically design public open space to mitigate flood hazards, stormwater runoff, and reduce maintenance costs.

ACTION STEPS

6A) INCREASE COMPENSATORY STORAGE

Redesign the levee system in Bloomingdale Park and the topography of Guldlin Park to create additional compensatory storage for Superior Street west of Harrison Street.

6B) INCORPORATE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Incorporate green stormwater infrastructure into public open space design in coordination with the City of Fort Wayne Stormwater Quality Management Plan, other city or state regulations, and best practices.

POLICIES + ACTION STEPS

GOAL

Infrastructure development within the Riverfront District contributes to the district's sense of place, enhances and balances connectivity between the river, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods while promoting safety and resiliency.

POLICY 1: VIBRANT COMPLETE STREETS

Streets, streetscapes, and bridges should add to the vibrancy of the Riverfront District area, include pedestrian and transit amenities, and accommodate and balance all modes of travel.

1A) DEVELOP INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Create and adopt design standards and guidelines for infrastructure and streetscape development within the Riverfront District area that are informed by complete street best practices along with the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (AASHTO Bike Guide) and the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bikeway Design Guide to design new streets and adapt existing streets in the riverfront district area.

1B) INCORPORATE ON-STREET PARKING

Incorporate on-street parking within "key mobility corridors" to support retail and access public open spaces.

POLICY 2: PUBLIC ART

Incorporate public art into street design following recommendations contained within the Fort Wayne Public Art Master Plan.

POLICY 3: RIVERGREENWAY SYSTEM ENHANCEMENT

The Rivergreenway System within the Riverfront District area should be preserved and enhanced as an asset that provides vital transportation and recreational connectivity.

POLICIES

ACTION STEPS

POLICY 4: SUSTAINABILITY

Streets should be designed to incorporate sustainable stormwater management practices that control stormwater and promote water quality.

ACTION STEP

4A) INCORPORATE GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

Incorporate green stormwater infrastructure into the street design in coordination with the City of Fort Wayne Stormwater Quality Management Plan and other city or state regulations and best practices, especially within or adjacent to the floodplain or rivers.

POLICY 5: FLOOD MITIGATION

Strategically design and improve infrastructure to mitigate flood hazards and reduce maintenance costs.

ACTION STEP

5A) INCREASE COMPENSATORY STORAGE

Redesign the levee system in Bloomingdale Park to create additional compensatory storage for Superior Street west of Harrison Street.

POLICY 6: THE URBAN GRID

New streets, as proposed in the Riverfront Framework Plan, should be connected to existing streets whenever possible to reestablish the urban grid in the Riverfront District area.

POLICY 7: MAINTAIN VIEWSHEDS

Overhead infrastructure and utility poles within public rights of way should be reduced and carefully placed when necessary, so as to not obstruct river and gateway viewsheds.

ACTION STEP

7A) EXPLORE BURYING UTILITIES

Explore the feasibility, including funding sources for burying overhead utilities along arterial and collector roadways within the Riverfront District area.

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

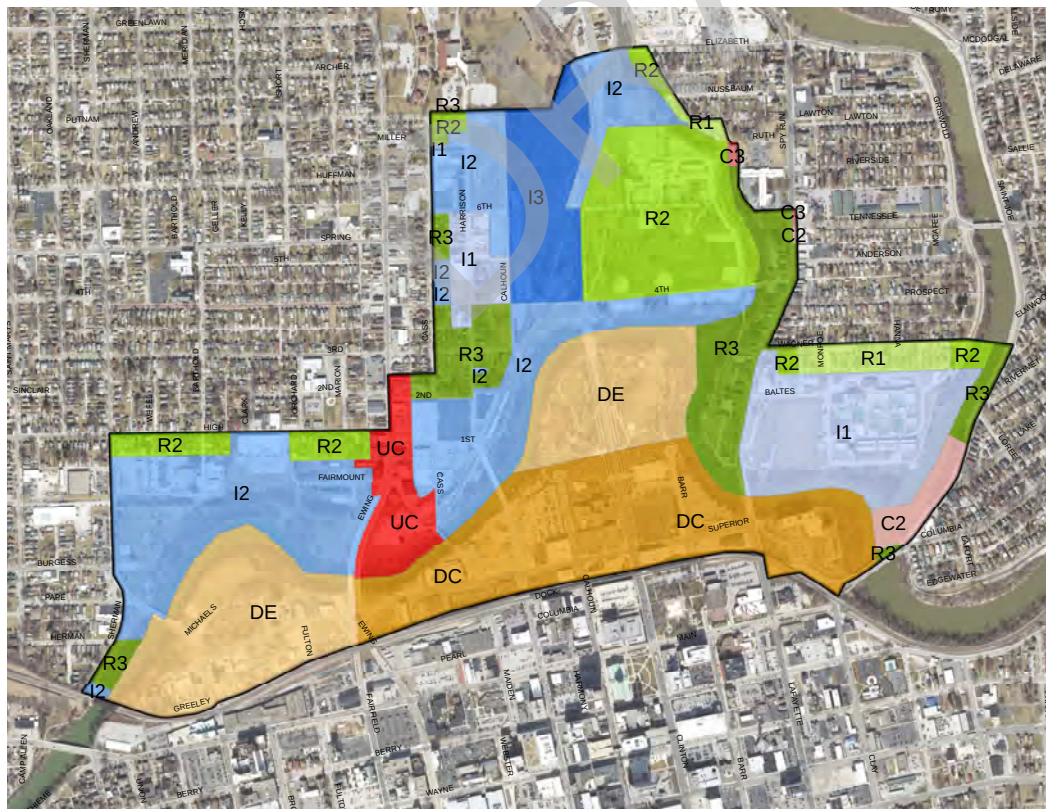
Zoning is a regulatory tool that controls how land is used. It ensures that adjacent uses – such as residential, commercial, or industrial – are compatible. Industrial zoning districts such as I3, I2, and I1 currently permit a number of incompatible uses in the riverfront area

RIVERFRONT DESIGN EXCELLENCE IMPERATIVE

Through a robust public engagement process established to guide the investment of public funds, Fort Wayne residents spoke up in resounding support of the city's downtown riverfront. With millions of dollars being invested in the riverfront by the community's direction, the city has a responsibility to work to promote high-quality design. New development projects should be held to the highest standards of design excellence to ensure that Fort Wayne's Riverfront remains a place of lasting value for generations to come.

PROTECTING THE RIVERFRONT INVESTMENT

Currently, some areas of the Riverfront area are zoned to allow uses such as factories, salvage yards, self-storage, and warehouses that put the mission of creating a vibrant, walkable riverfront experience at risk. Most new buildings will be around for several decades, so it is critical that all new development in the Riverfront area is, at a minimum, not running counter to the goals and values that have been expressed by the community. Recognizing that the city has an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a truly great downtown riverfront experience, both short- and long-term measures should be taken to protect the area from harmful uses and development types.



EXISTING ZONING MAP

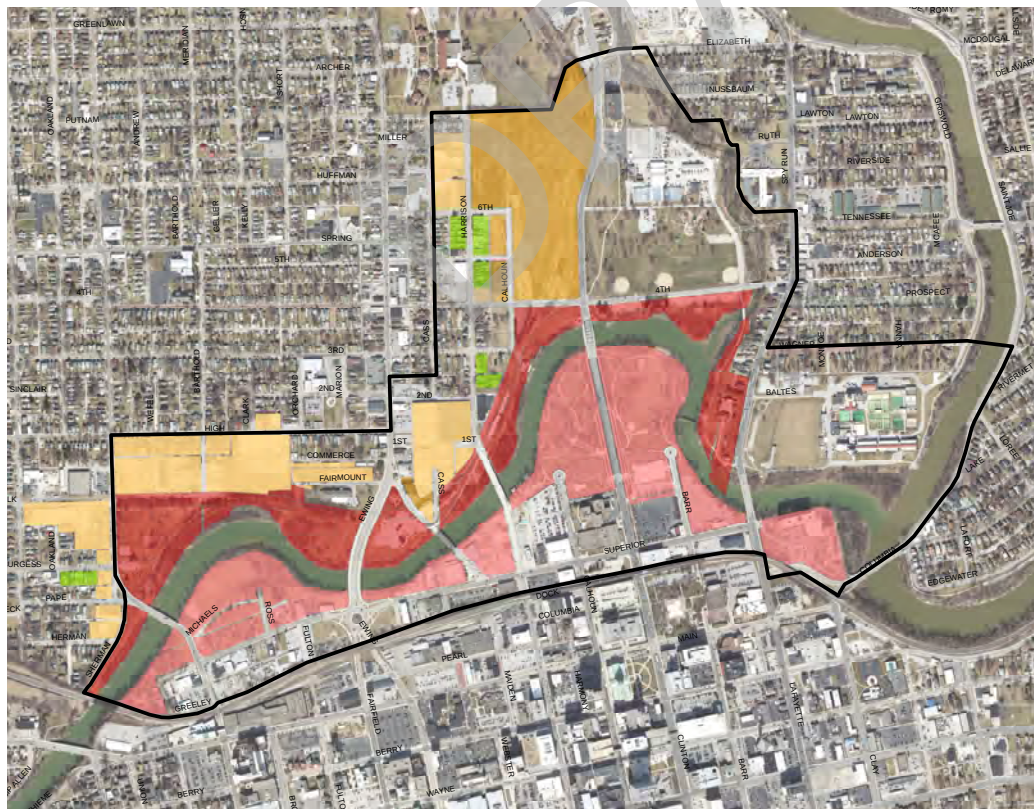
- LIMITED COMMERCIAL (C2)
- GENERAL COMMERCIAL (C3)
- URBAN CORRIDOR (UC)
- DOWNTOWN EDGE (DE)
- DOWNTOWN CORE (DC)
- LIMITED INDUSTRIAL (I1)
- GENERAL INDUSTRIAL (I2)
- HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (I3)
- SINGLE FAMILY (R1)
- TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R1)
- MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R3)

In the short-term, the zoning map for the riverfront area should be updated to prevent incompatible industrial and heavy commercial uses, as well as uses that have a negative impact on walkability, such as gas stations, drive-through restaurants, and other suburban-format retail. Mixed-use, higher-density development should be encouraged.

After initial protections have been put into place to prevent the worst types of incompatible development, a comprehensive review of the zoning ordinance should be conducted to identify opportunities for improved governance of high-quality urban design that specifically addresses the unique needs of the riverfront. An update to the zoning ordinance can establish a process for new development to be reviewed for design quality.

Currently, design review is only in place for the land south of the river. The design guidelines that accompany this document are intended as a first step toward this goal. They provide an initial tool to encourage discussion centered on what design excellence means in the Riverfront area. They do this by encouraging creative, context-sensitive design and providing guidance to developers and decision-makers on how future development can promote the goals of this plan. These design guidelines are a good first step, but they won't be enforceable unless a design review process is established through zoning.

Updating the zoning for the riverfront area will ensure that new development is consistent with the goals of this plan.



PROPOSED ZONING MAP

- MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R3) PRIORITY 2
- DOWNTOWN EDGE (DE) PRIORITY 1
- DOWNTOWN EDGE (DE) PRIORITY 2
- DOWNTOWN EDGE/NEW RIVERFRONT DISTRICT PRIORITY 1
- DOWNTOWN EDGE/NEW RIVERFRONT DISTRICT PRIORITY 2

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