

JOLIET

Downtown Plan *As of June 2017*

1. Chicago Street Reconnection

- ✓ The City and Will County reached agreement regarding land acquisition of property east of the courthouse to accomplish this goal.
- ✓ The City has hired a consulting engineer who is presently designing the roadway connection between Washington and Jefferson Streets.
- ✓ A planning firm (Ginkgo Planning & Design) has been retained via a grant from the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to begin a streetscape and design plan for Chicago Street (Washington to Ruby) to provide a vision for this corridor. This will involve a process of 12-18 months and will include much public and stakeholder input. A Steering Committee is in place and has begun the process of guiding the study.

2. Reorganize Stakeholder Responsibilities

- ✓ The City has approved a time extension and physical enlargement of the Joliet City Center Special Service Area. This action was intended to expand the economic development focus to include both the downtown area, as well as the entryways into the downtown area.
- ✓ In order to implement the new expectations and roles of an expanded SSA, the City and City Center Partnership have approved a Memorandum of Understanding to better define the roles and expectations of each agency.

3. Extend Life of the Downtown TIF (12 Years)

- ✓ The City and Joliet City Center Partnership began discussions regarding options available for the downtown Tax Increment Finance District (TIF) in order to continue the redevelopment vision. This includes the potential of merely extending the time of the TIF, but could also involve a number of alternatives involving time and boundary changes. These concepts have also been presented to the Downtown TIF Joint Review Board.

- ✓ It is expected that a formal recommendation will be made for City Council consideration prior to the end of 2017. This will likely include consideration of boundaries that reflect the territory envisioned for redevelopment in the Downtown Plan. At present potential redevelopment sites are not within the TIF.

4. Stimulate Residential Development Projects

- ✓ The City has aggressively worked with owners/realtors to seek adaptive re-use of several downtown properties to encourage residential development.
- ✓ This has led to proposals for the development of property at 1 East Cass for a mixed use project which would include 12 apartments, and property at 141 East Jefferson which would include a mixed use project with 11 apartments.
- ✓ The new owner of 66 North Chicago (Barber Building) began negotiations with the City for 35 apartment units on upper floors with retail/commercial on the first floor.
- ✓ The City has urged multi-family developers to consider a project at the old Barrett's Hardware Building located at 65 North Ottawa Street.
- ✓ The City purchased approximately 3.5 acres of property (former Lyons Lumber) immediately south of the Metra-Rock Island Train Station. The vision for this property is to create a mixed-use transit oriented development.

5. Improve Homeless/Vagrancy Problems

- ✓ Since the summer of 2016, additional foot patrol officers were assigned to the city center including two additional officers on the day shift and two officers on the evening shift. This foot patrol program has been effective and well-received by the city center business community.

6. Complete Negotiations on New County Courthouse

- ✓ The City completed negotiations with Will County regarding a funding partnership via approval of a written agreement in January 2016.
- ✓ The City assisted First Midwest Bank and the owner of 212 North Chicago with a redevelopment project to relocate the bank, which further assisted the County with their timetable to eventually demolish the building to prepare for the new courthouse.

7. Build Downtown Square/Park at Chicago Street & Van Buren

- ✓ The City and the County have reached a tentative agreement for the acquisition of the State's Attorney Building located at 121 North Chicago, which is immediately adjacent to Van Buren Plaza.

- ✓ A planning firm (Ginkgo Planning & Design) has been retained for the design of this eventual improvement, with work to be accomplished in conjunction with the Chicago Street work cited in initiative #1.

8. Upgrade Street Parking Operations/Management

- ✓ The City has had discussions over the past several years regarding modernization and privatization of our downtown parking operations. The City executed a contract with a firm to conduct a parking rate study to determine an equitable nexus between fees charged and expenses. The City recently agreed to a program test area with a company modernizing on-street parking options and payment.

9. Renovate Chicago Street as an Urban/ Multi-Modal Corridor

- ✓ This initiative contains many of the elements previously noted, but the eventual physical design of Chicago Street (via the Ginkgo Plan) will assist in making this a reality. The City is seeking a plan that encourages the creation of a vibrant public space; outside dining capacity along the corridor; improved outside festival accommodations; physical attractiveness to better define the heart of our downtown; safe and efficient pedestrian and biking; increased restaurant and entertainment uses; and a continuation of encouraging apartments to create additional downtown population.
- ✓ Creating a vibrant corridor on Chicago Street requires both social as well as physical elements. The following summarizes activities in 2016 which contributed to the goal to make this corridor the heart of the arts and entertainment district:
 - The Joliet City Center Partnership successfully sponsored the Farmers Market, Nitro Night, Race Fan Rally, Kidzfest and Light Up the Holidays events.
 - The Joliet City Center Partnership added a new event to attract visitors to the downtown. The inaugural *Blues & Brews on 66* event was held, with plans to make this an annual event.
 - The Joliet Public Library successfully sponsored Star Wars Days.
 - The Joliet Area Chamber of Commerce successfully sponsored New Orleans North event.
 - Alianza De Negocios successfully sponsored the inaugural Fiesta En La Calle event, with plans to make this an annual event.
 - The Joliet Historical Museum and City Center Partnership coordinated local promotion of the Route 66 Red Carpet Corridor weekend, resulting in record setting attendance at the Museum during the weekend.
 - The City and Heritage Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau successfully collaborated to retain the Illinois High School Association 3A/4A Baseball Tournament in Downtown Joliet.
 - The Chamber of Commerce and City began collaborating on the implementation of a Joliet Arts & Entertainment Council to better schedule, coordinate and

market events occurring within the Downtown (and general community). The Council began meeting in early 2017.