

Columbus Redevelopment Commission

# Annual Report

2023



**columbusindiana**  
**redevelopment**

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# Shaping our community **The Columbus Way**

“ We would like to see this community come to be not the cheapest community in America, but the very best community of its size in the country. We would like to see it become the city in which the smartest, the ablest, the best young families anywhere would like to live... ”

**J. Irwin Miller**



# Purpose

The purpose of the Columbus Redevelopment Commission, as supported by the Redevelopment Department, is to execute the Economic Development Plan for the City of Columbus.

# Mission

We are committed to being consistent, accessible and transparent in all of our actions and decisions to improve our community. We believe in balanced growth and revitalization. This is achieved through creative public and private engagement that seeks to promote and encourage business growth, expand economic and employment opportunities, and improve our quality of life. The Redevelopment Commission administers and funds projects after extensive public review and approval.

# Meet the Commission

**Al Roszczyk**  
President

**Kyle Hendricks**  
Vice President

**Trena Carter**  
Secretary

**Shannon McDonald**  
Member

**Cynthia Boll**  
Member

**Jason Major**  
BCSC Liaison

**Grace Kestler**  
City Council Liaison

The Columbus Redevelopment Commission is composed of five (5) voting members with three (3) appointed by the Mayor and two (2) by the City Council each serving one (1) year terms.

CRC membership includes one (1) non-voting member of the school corporation serving a two (2) year term and one (1) non-voting liaison from City Council serving a one (1) year term.

All of the members are local residents. The Commission meets in regular session – open to the public, once a month, unless otherwise advertised.

# Redevelopment Staff

The City of Columbus Redevelopment Department supports and facilitates the work of the Redevelopment Commission.

The Redevelopment Department is comprised of a full-time Director, a part-time Project Coordinator and an Office Administrator with shared time between Community Development and Redevelopment.



**Heather Pope**  
Executive Director



**Mikala Brown**  
Project Coordinator



**Nichole Young**  
Office Administrator

# Roles and Duties

As defined by Indiana Code 36-7-14



Cooperate with the departments and agencies of the municipality, other governmental entities, the public, etc. in the manner that best serves the purpose of Indiana Code



Select and acquire the areas needing redevelopment to redevelop under Indiana Code



Replan and dispose of the areas needing redevelopment in the manner that best serves the social and economic interests of the municipality and its inhabitants



Investigate, study and survey areas needing redevelopment within the corporate boundaries of the municipality



Investigate, study, determine, and to the extent possible, combat the causes of areas needing redevelopment



Promote the use of land in the manner that best serves the interests of the municipality and its inhabitants



Make findings and report on their activities and keep those reports open to inspection by the public at the office of the department

# 2023 Redevelopment Commission Funds

Fund	Fund Description	Beginning Balance	Revenue	Expenses	Ending Balance
<b>246</b>	Downtown/Airport CTP	\$600,602.57	\$0.00	\$100,602.57	\$500,000.00
<b>272</b>	Redevelopment General Fund	\$608,916.97	\$989,148.14	\$42,706.63	\$1,555,358.48
<b>273</b>	2nd Street Garage	\$105,364.41	\$229,369.25	\$253,177.9	\$81,555.76
<b>274</b>	Jackson Street Garage	\$1,250,352.33	\$399,640.47	\$236,579.56	\$1,413,413.24
<b>327</b>	2016A&B Jackson St. Bond	\$0.00	\$942,324.33	\$942,324.33	\$0.00
<b>491</b>	Airport TIF	\$1,306,520.15	\$421,625.95	\$1,246,948.24	\$481,197.86
<b>492</b>	Central TIF	\$20,222,135.44	\$9,264,872.45	\$8,107,108.88	\$21,379,899.01
<b>493</b>	Cummins TIF	\$20,102,392.11	\$5,399,719.84	\$15,029,013.57	\$10,473,098.38
<b>494</b>	South Commons / Cole TIF	\$384,452.27	\$300,810.88	\$126,047.04	\$559,216.11
<b>501</b>	2011 SRF Reserve	\$31,874.72	\$1,544.45	\$0.00	\$33,419.17
<b>502</b>	2011B Brownfield	\$25.75	\$36.62	\$0.00	\$62.37
<b>504</b>	2011B Brownfield Reserve	\$63,749.19	\$3,088.85	\$0.00	\$66,838.04
<b>TBD</b>	Midtown TIF	\$228,850.37	\$3,336,784.96	\$290,721.55	\$3,274,913.78

# 2023 Activities and Projects

During 2023, the Redevelopment Commission was engaged in several pivotal discussions and project initiatives designed to move Columbus forward.

The Redevelopment Department plays a key role in enhancing quality of life for residents of the City of Columbus and Bartholomew County. Commission staff work with the Mayor, City Council and members of the CRC to ensure that the City of Columbus develops projects that: benefit the overall community; retain and create good-paying jobs; support local businesses; provide quality housing options; redevelop properties; and reinforce our community's commitment to innovative design and responsible development.

The Redevelopment Commission takes a keen interest in the revitalization of downtown Columbus. The CRC has actively pursued the objectives of the Envision Columbus Downtown Strategic Plan since its inception in 2018. Envision Columbus is a project of the Heritage Fund that provides a flexible framework to guide the next evolution of downtown Columbus and the surrounding neighborhoods. The study is intended to positively influence the way residents and visitors alike work, live, shop, and play downtown and has been instrumental in the development of downtown Columbus, along with the city and private entities.

Beyond the Downtown, Redevelopment actively encourages growth and development in our industrial parks and underutilized parcels within our TIF districts. The CRC collaborates with the Columbus Municipal Airport as a key stakeholder to promote economic development within our AirPark Columbus, the 4th busiest in the state.

The 2023 accomplishments of the Redevelopment Commission are outlined in the pages to follow. The project activity is representative of the Redevelopment Commission's adherence to the Envision Columbus Plan.

# Social Media and Marketing



Stay up to date!

The Redevelopment Department maintains an active Facebook account [@ColumbusIndianaRedevelopment](#). Weekly posts focus on current and future projects, events, downtown tenant news and public information from the Mayor's office. Our Facebook outreach encourages positive communication through keeping the public informed about what is going on in regard to redevelopment in Columbus.

By the end of 2023 we had over 1600 followers, which included local businesses as well as the general public.



# City Garage Updates

REI continues to manage the Redevelopment Commission's parking garages (Jackson Street Parking Garage and Second Street Parking Garage) and the two tenants in the Jackson Street Parking Garage (Lucabe Coffee Co. and The Garage Pub & Grill). Lucabe capital improvements were completed in the spring of 2023, which included enhancements such as window film installation, a new and more efficient HVAC system, a new exterior awning, a counter and cabinet space redesign, an improved water heater system, etc. Additionally, Pro Trades was engaged to perform brick maintenance work on both CRC-owned parking garages in 2023.

The garages are both self-sustaining – rent and parking fees support operations and maintenance of the garages.

At the close of 2023, REI began exploring EV opportunities within the garages to update or replace the existing equipment. These opportunities will continued to be explored in 2024.

The Department of Public Works continued to support snow removal in 2023.



# Commons Tenants

The Redevelopment Department manages the four tenant spaces in the Commons through an agreement with the Commons Board.

## Orange Leaf

Orange Leaf remained open in the Commons Food Court throughout 2023 under new ownership, BW Smith LLC.



## Luciana's

Luciana's continues to be a strong, family-friendly dining staple downtown. At the end of 2023, they renewed their lease for their downtown space.

## Vacancy

The alternate Commons internal space, previously a Subway tenant, received a few inquiries throughout 2023 but there have been no serious leads.



## Bucceto's

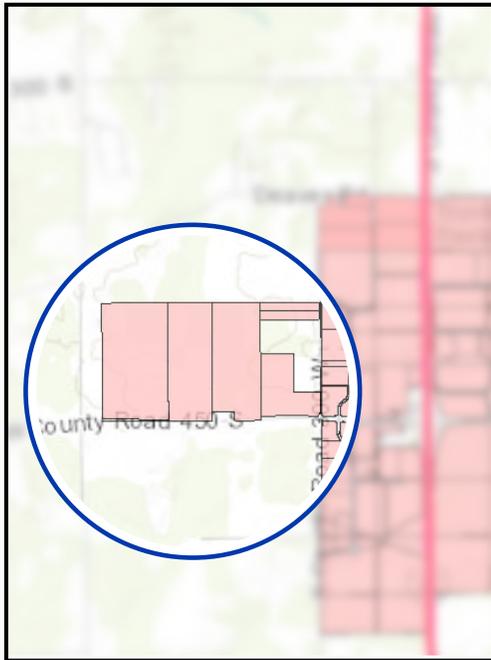
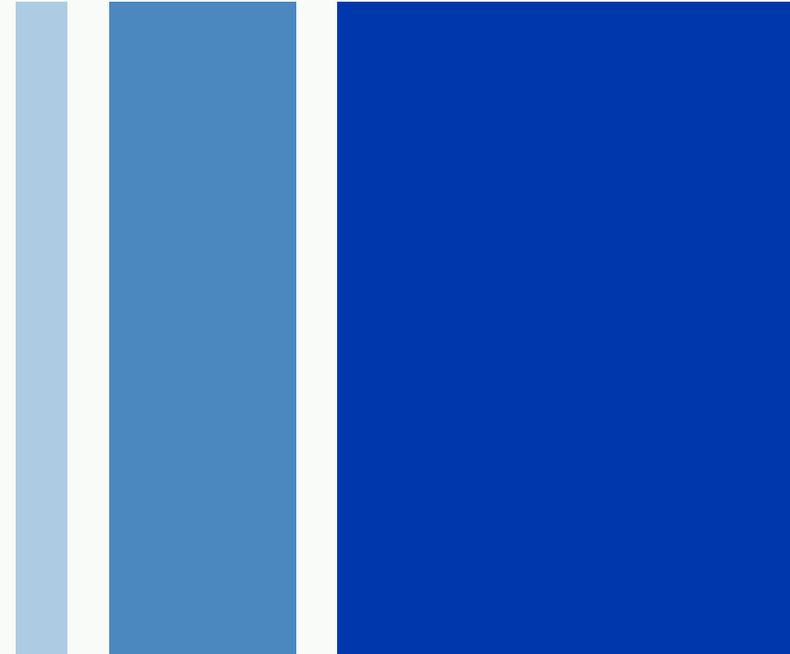
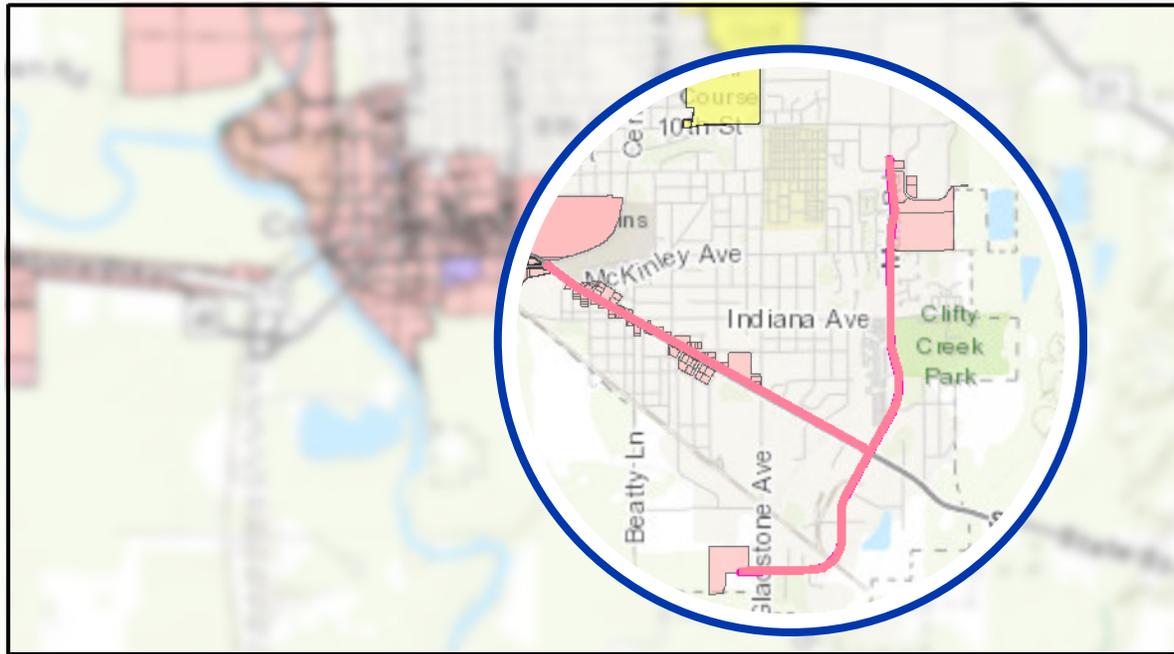
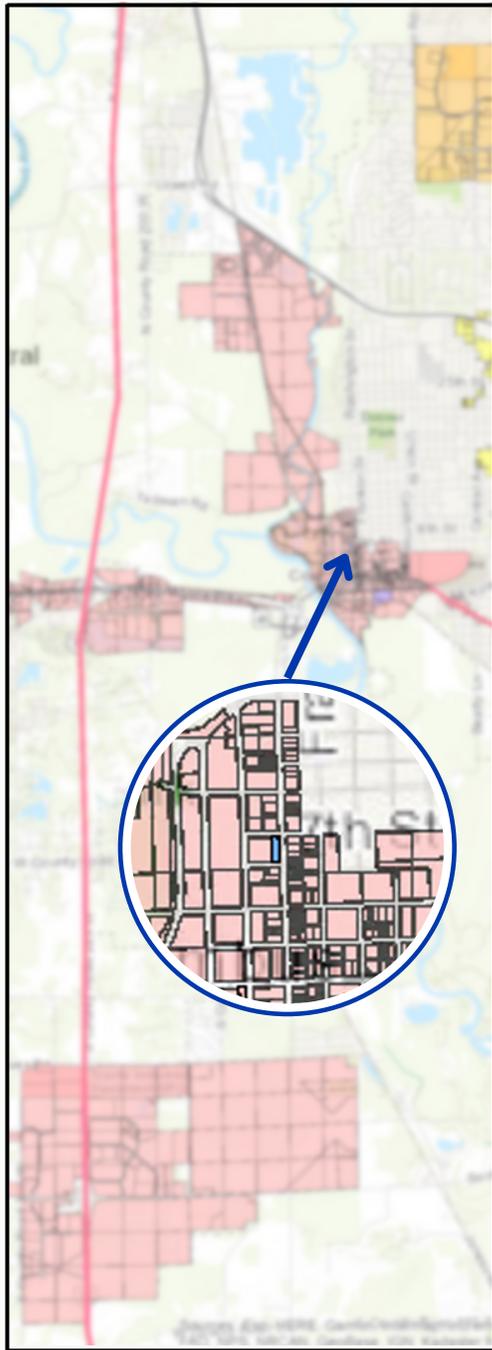
Buccetos, terminated their lease in June 2023. Later in the year, we began entering into lease negotiations with Upland on their new pizza shop concept.

# 2023 CRC Debt Service

In 2023, the CRC approved the payoff of the South Commons (Cole) TIF with cash on hand, which recognized approximately \$619,000 in savings associated with the early payoff. Additionally, the Cummins TIF was paid off early in 2023.

Once paid off, these allocation areas were approved to be absorbed into the Central TIF, along with some additional modifications to add parcels along State Street.





# TIF Modifications

In 2023, the CRC made various modifications to the Central TIF such as expanding to include new parcels along State Street and in the Walesboro Industrial Park, consolidating the Cummins and South Commons (“Cole”) TIFs into the Central Allocation Area, and removing residential parcels.

Additionally, the CRC created a new TIF called the 6th & Washington Allocation Area, which is intended to recapture TIF from an upcoming mixed-use development on the site. This project will be detailed further on the next page.

# 6th & Washington Mixed-Use Development

Discussions regarding a future mixed-use project development at the corner of 6th and Washington Street encouraged the creation of a new TIF Allocation Area, called 6th & Washington Allocation Area. The referenced parcel had been vacant since the Cummins Parking Garage was built. There have been several other development attempts, which were unsuccessful, prior to 2023.

Developer, Flaherty & Collins Properties, executed an agreement with Cummins, the property owner, to rekindle the original development commitments for this property, which will include approximately 50 residential units on the top floors and 10,000 sq ft of commercial/ retail space on the bottom floor. This development will allow residents to share amenities with the sister development, The Taylor, only a few blocks away.

In 2023, the Columbus Redevelopment Commission approved a resolution to execute a project agreement with Flaherty & Collins. This included a taxpayer guarantee on a \$5.8M forgivable loan funded through the Central TIF, which will be paid back by the developer in full in 25 years. The project's investment into the heart of our downtown is expected to exceed \$16M.

# 1821 Trail

The seminal project for the Columbus/ Bartholomew County Bicentennial was the People Trail extension from the Haw Creek Trail to Water Street, named the 1821 Trail. The trail serves as a connection between the recently completed Taylor mixed-use site trail and the future Riverfront Trail, completing the People Trail connection gap downtown. The 1821 trail features historical marker content highlighting Columbus and Bartholomew County's past 200 years, along with Washington Street gateway monuments, stone benches, engraved bricks and landscaping. The project was funded primarily through Redevelopment TIF funds, Certified Tech Park Funds, a brick campaign and private donor contributions. The total project was completed at a cost of approximately \$1.9M.

In April 2023, the Redevelopment Department hosted the 1821 Trail Ribbon Cutting ceremony with over 150 guests in attendance. Later, in November, the 1821 Trail received an Indiana Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) award in the category of Excellence in Landscape Design. Hitchcock Design Group was the landscape architect for the project.



# A Quick Glance

at the Numbers... **1821 Trail**

**209**  
*shrubs*

**472**  
*engraved bricks*

**1**  
*replaced sanitary  
sewer line*

**1,900**  
*lineal feet of trail*

**1,639**  
*lineal feet of curb*

**46**  
*trees*

**30**  
*repurposed  
limestone blocks*

**500**  
*cubic yards  
of concrete*

**30,321**  
*bricks installed*

# Grissom Street Extension

The Columbus Municipal Airport continues to develop the AirPlex Commerce Center, which includes the creation of shovel ready commercial / industrial parcels for future rental opportunities.

In 2022, the CRC authorized the expenditure of Airport Allocation TIF funds not to exceed \$1,150,000 for engineering/design and utility coordination associated with the Grissom Street extension and trail addition. In 2023, the Columbus Redevelopment Commission amended the original resolution to increase the not-to-exceed amount by \$45,000 to complete additional utility work, for a total amount of \$1,195,000.

# AirPark Columbus College Campus

The Columbus Learning Center has been renovated to provide a Student Connection Center for all three educational institutions located at the AirPark Columbus: Ivy Tech, Purdue University, and IU - Columbus.

The original estimated cost of a landscaping program was \$2.3M, with all funding secured, except a remaining \$100,000 needed for design and engineering, infrastructure, surveying, and geotechnical work for infrastructure. In 2022, the CRC approved \$100,000 from the Airport TIF. This design and infrastructure work has commenced, and initial project costs were billed in 2023.

# Downtown Hotel and Conference Center

Throughout the beginning of 2023, the CRC, City and Sprague Hotel Developers continued to discuss the project scope, proposed brand, and future plans regularly with the intent of executing a Project Agreement. Because the project had been awarded READI funds (\$5M), there were conditions tied to the construction timeline. Understanding that the ongoing City and Developer discussions could delay the construction timeline beyond READI requirements, the CRC shifted our attention to the design and construction of a parking structure which would support the hotel conference center and qualify for READI fund reallocation.

The CRC engaged atelierRISTING to provide the schematic design and renderings for the parking garage. The old probation building was demolished in 2023 to ready the site for redevelopment.

## What's Next?

After much consideration and additional discussion, the City and selected developer mutually agreed to part ways on the hotel conference center project. The City and Redevelopment are reassessing the project location. The proposed parking structure is currently on hold.



# The Taylor

## ◆ Investment, Collaboration, and Connectivity

The Taylor, a 200-unit, multi-family development is a \$41M housing investment adjacent to our downtown core. This development features a critical trail connection to the 1821 Trail and People Trail system meandering through the site. Construction included building a parking lot adjacent to the Court Services Center for County employees to use.

## ◆ The Taylor Amenities

The Taylor was completed in December 2023, following 18 months of construction, and features 200 market-rate apartments with several amenities including a pool, fitness center, pickleball courts, a dog park, etc. The property also includes an additional 10,000 sq. ft. of space for an urban grocer along the 2nd Street frontage. The developer continues to try to identify an urban grocer and complementary tenant.

## ◆ Now Open!

The Taylor began leasing units in August 2023 as part of their early occupancy phased leasing approach. By the end of the year, the Taylor was completed, the trail was reopened, and all units became available for leasing.

**73%**  
*pre-leased*  
Rate statistics as of April 2024

**50%**  
*occupied*

# The Taylor Follow the Progress...

May 2022



November 2022



April 2023

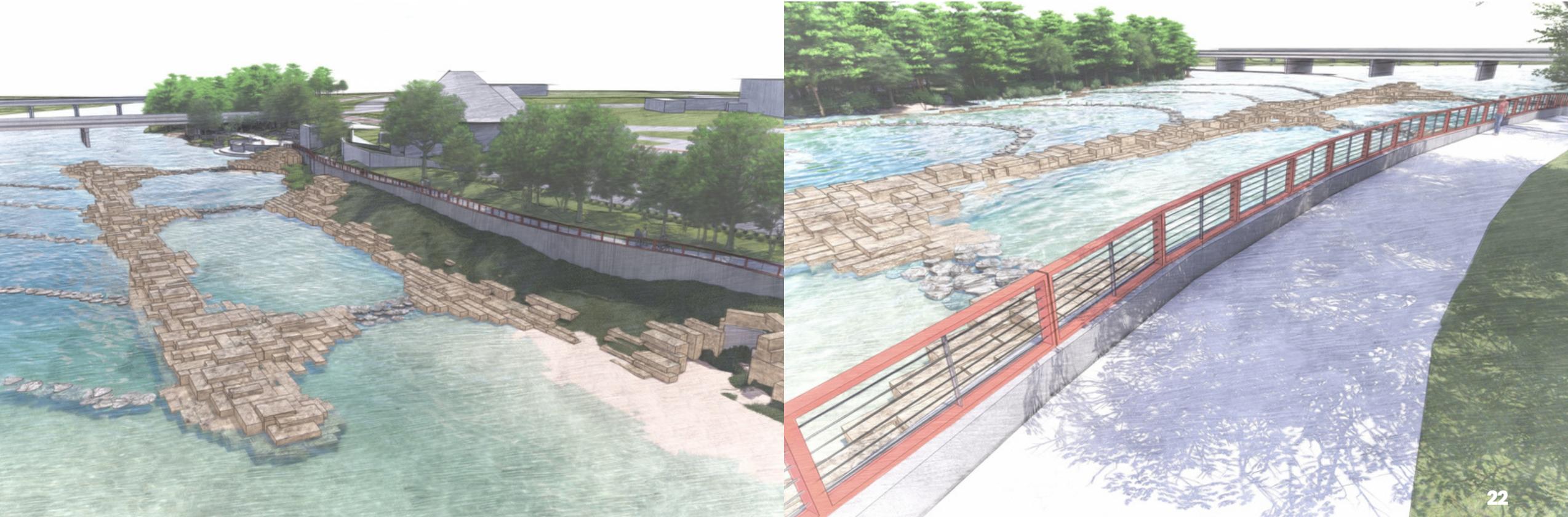


October 2023

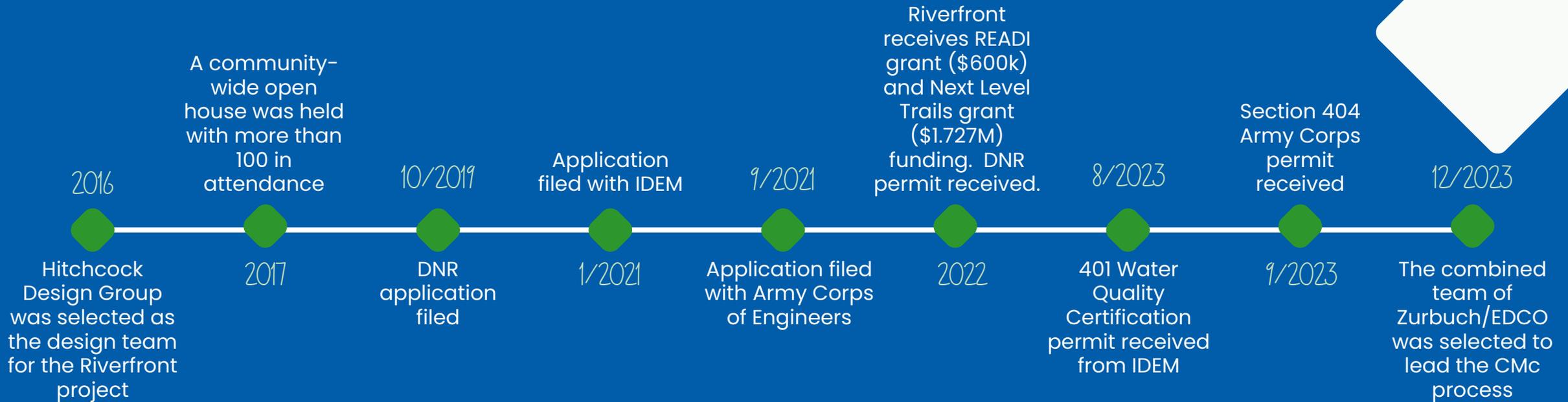


# Our River... Our Riverfront

The “Our River... Our Riverfront” project will provide a 12’ wide trail (accessible to all) along the east bank of the White River, which will bridge the gap in the existing People Trail network downtown. This project will ultimately remove the unsafe low-head dam, repair erosion on the west bank of the river, integrate an in-river recreation piece, provide for safe fish and sediment passage and allow safety personnel undeterred access to the riverfront.



# Our River... Our Riverfront



In 2023, following the receipt of all necessary permits, the Riverfront Project team provided a refresher review of the Riverfront Project and the proposed CMc consulting process to City Council at a public meeting. An RFP was released to select a CMc for the project, and ultimately, the combined team of Zurbuch and EDCO was selected to lead the CMc process.

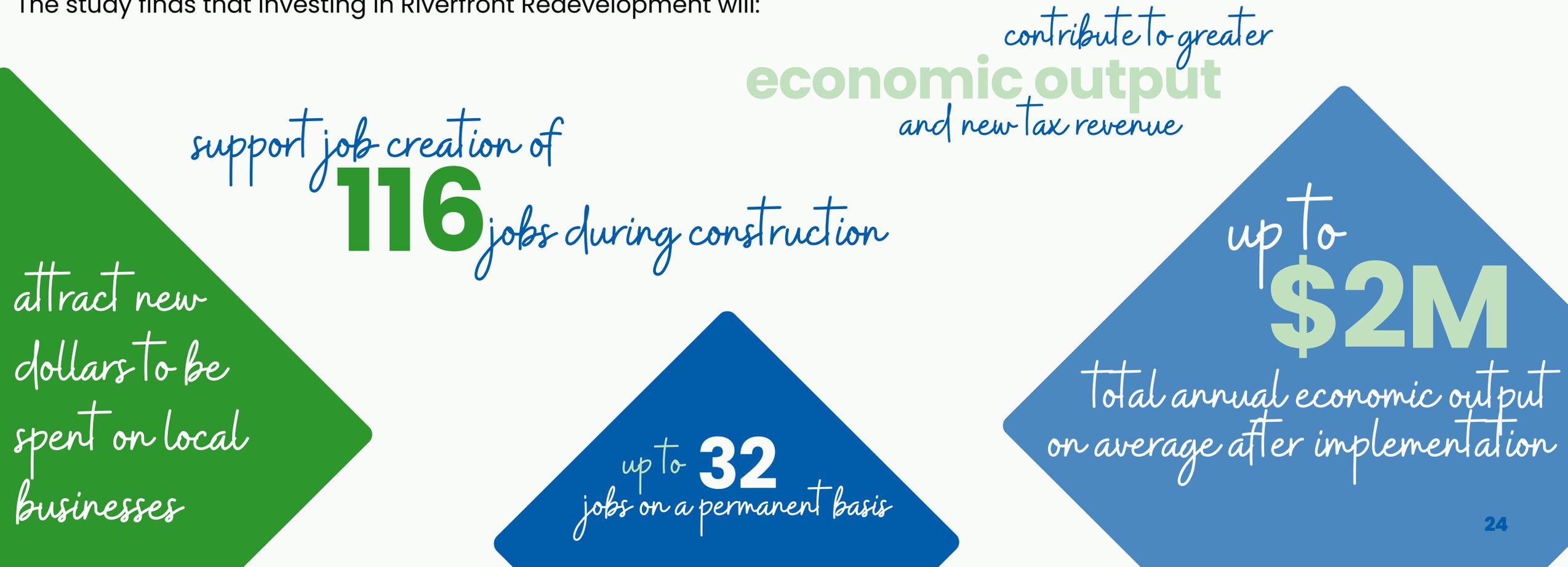
Funding for the Riverfront project was approved at the November CRC meeting and December City Council meeting in 2023. The project will be bid in 2024, contractor(s) will be selected and the project anticipates to break ground in 2024 with an 18-month anticipated timeline for construction.

# A Quick Glance

## at the Numbers... **Our River... Our Riverfront**

Also in 2023, the CRC engaged James Lima Planning + Development to complete a riverfront economic impact study. The study results were presented during a joint CRC and City Council public meeting in November and maintained that the Riverfront Project will support jobs, encourage tourism and support quality of life for residents.

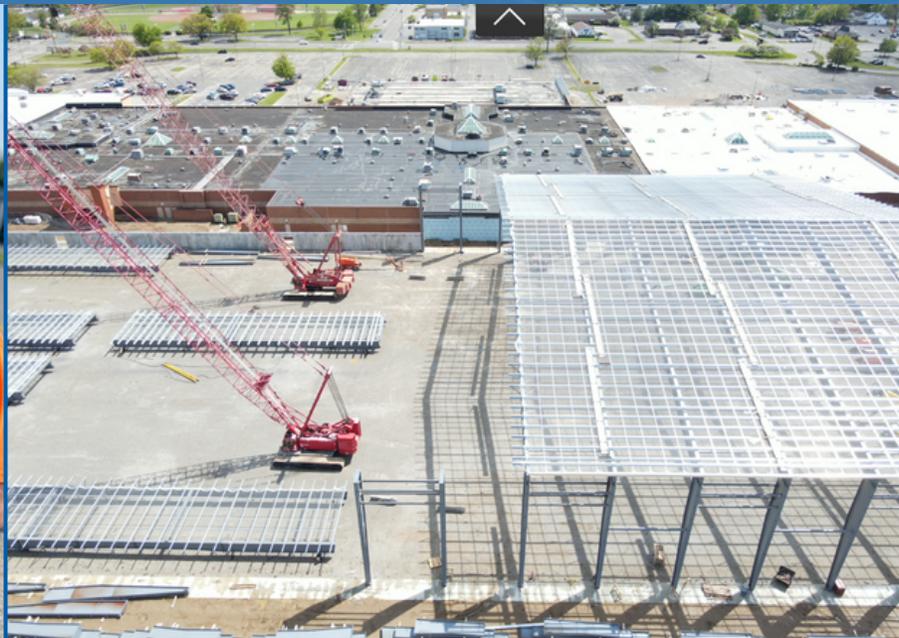
The study finds that investing in Riverfront Redevelopment will:



# NexusPark

NexusPark is included in the Midtown TIF and saw much construction activity in 2023. The CRC approved a resolution to grant \$6.5M from the Central TIF to the Midtown TIF for infrastructure-related improvements to the exterior NexusPark campus.

This significant project spurred from the collaboration and partnership between the City and CRH.



# Water Street Property

Throughout 2023, CRC legal counsel continued to work with the L&I Railroad to encourage realignment of property lines adjacent to the railroad. The City and CRC provided a signed MOU to the L&I RR, including requested exhibits and updated deeds. This process will support the request for right-of-way realignment prior to any future property transfers.

Additionally, the CRC pursued appraisals in preparation for property transfers within this area. Prior to the end of the year, the CRC purchased the property at Lafayette Avenue and Water Street for future Redevelopment initiatives.



# 2nd Street Thoroughfare Project

The 2nd Street Thoroughfare Project is in response to a desire to extend the pedestrian-friendly experience downtown. The project will feature several modifications to the existing conditions, such as:

**Parking**  
Integrating on-street parking

**Landscaping**  
Planting new landscaping

**Traffic Calming**  
Narrowing the traffic lanes as a traffic calming measure

**Buffers**  
Installing safety bumpouts and buffers

**Ped Safety**  
Installing pedestrian crosswalks

**Connection**  
Creating an on-street connection to the Taylor apartments

# 2nd Street Thoroughfare Project

In 2023, AZTEC Engineering Inc. was selected to design and engineer plans for the 2nd Street Thoroughfare Project. Dave O'Mara Contractor Inc. was selected as the contractor for this project and hosted their pre-construction meeting in November. Central TIF funds were approved in an amount not to exceed \$1,395,600 to fund the construction initiatives. The project is on track to break ground in spring 2024.



Jackson Street Intersection >

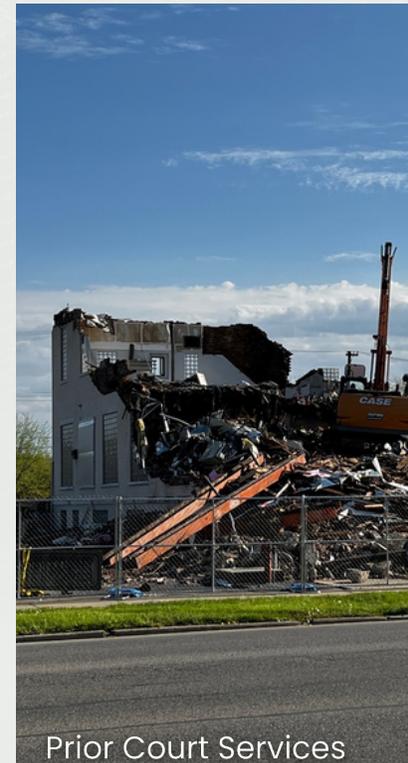


Washington Street Intersection >



# Miscellaneous Projects and Accomplishments

In addition to the previously referenced projects, the Redevelopment Commission and Staff remained engaged in alternate projects and partnerships throughout 2023. The following pages represent several of these initiatives but are not all-inclusive.



# Facade Grants

In 2023, the Office of Downtown Development (ODD) was formed to support downtown businesses and encourage activation. The CRC met with ODD to discuss façade grant implementation to support downtown revitalization efforts. In December, the Columbus Redevelopment Commission approved a \$250,000 Downtown Improvement Grant to the Office of Downtown Development.

## The Office of Downtown Development's Façade Program will:

- Stimulate investment through preservation, rehabilitation and restoration of historic commercial buildings
- Maintain and expand the contribution of historic buildings in the City to Columbus' economy
- Promote architectural appreciation through maintenance and rehabilitation of historic Downtown Columbus properties
- Initiate aesthetic improvements by helping to offset the cost of rehabilitation of an existing façade or creation of a façade



# RAI Columbus Site Tour

In 2023, the CRC hosted the annual Redevelopment Association of Indiana site visit in Columbus where nearly 50 Mayors, City officials, and Redevelopment counterparts attended. The event was sponsored by our partners at CWC Latitudes LLC, Barnes & Thornburg LLP, and Stifel Public Finance and included a downtown walking tour featuring Redevelopment public-private projects, a lunch activity and post-event Happy Hour.

The Columbus Redevelopment Department facilitated a presentation, which included the following topics:

## Envision Columbus Summary

The Envision Columbus: Downtown Strategic Development Plan has guided the way City Administration and Community Leaders have encouraged economic growth and development downtown.



## CRC Current Projects

The RAI presentation and tour provided detailed descriptions of past, current and future Columbus Redevelopment Projects and initiatives.



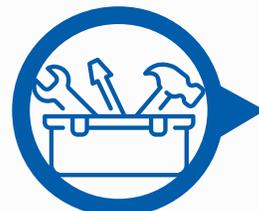
## Spurring Activation

The presentation also highlighted our Office of Downtown Development, a newly established entity charged with spurring activation downtown.



## TIF Toolbox

A critical component to the RAI site tour and presentation was an overview of Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIF is a shared development tool that the CRC uses to spur economic development activity in Columbus.



Following the conclusion of the RAI Site Tour, Heather Pope was elected to serve as Vice President of the Redevelopment Association of Indiana at the Annual AIM Summit Conference.

# Continuing Education

## Site Visits

The CRC staff attended several site visits in 2023 for training and legislative sessions, networking and community education programs. These included, but are not limited to:

- The Central Regional Forum regarding natural resources and Riverfront development
- The River Ridge Commerce Center site, which is a 6,000-acre decommissioned Indiana Army Ammunitions Plant, now featuring an industrial and business development site in Jeffersonville
- The Annual Aim Summit Conference
- Additionally, the Redevelopment Department planned and coordinated developer tours promoting economic development opportunities in Columbus

## Training and Education Programs

The Columbus Redevelopment staff graduated the Leadership Bartholomew County program in 2023.

The redevelopment staff also attended several continuing education programs such as: the Racial Wealth Gap activity, DEI training, stormwater employee trainings, Economic Outlook Panel, multiple webinars related to housing and economic development, etc.

Additionally, Redevelopment Staff and Commission members obtained access to the City-wide learning platform, Lorman, to download learning modules relating to a variety of Redevelopment-associated topics.



# BCSC Workforce Development Grant

For the last several years and continued in 2023, the Redevelopment Commission approved funding to support BCSC's efforts to grow programming designed to assist workforce development initiatives. The School Corporation has identified three (3) programs in need of financial assistance: iGrad, S.T.E.M, and Transition Planning. The 2023 Resolution granted \$1,000,000 to support these programs.



## iGrad

Embedded systemic approach in the high schools and middle schools to achieve a high school graduation rate of 100%



## STEM

K-12 courses that teach science, technology, engineering, and math



## Transition Programs

Systemically developed approaches to transition students with disabilities into the workforce or post-secondary opportunities

# Community Partners...



## 8th Street

The CRC approved \$80,000 from the Central Allocation area to support the 8th Street Gateway Project led by Landmark Columbus. In December, a Bell Ringing Ceremony signified the opening of the Mill Race Park Gateway Project.



## Chamber and EDC

The Columbus Chamber of Commerce and Greater Columbus EDC remained displaced throughout 2023. In December, the Columbus Redevelopment Commission approved a \$400,000 grant to the Chamber Foundation for proposed renovations to their new space located at the corner of 3rd and Franklin.



## Ground Rules

The CRC coordinated efforts to temporarily rehome Ground Rules, an Exhibit Columbus installation, to a new location on 4th Street. Ground Rules received approval for a special use of right of way in December. This permitted use will allow for seasonal placement of Ground Rules to be used as a parklet to promote an outdoor gathering space along 4th Street.



## Housing Study

With the last official housing study conducted in 2012, a new comprehensive study was proposed in 2023 and is being led through a joint effort between Community Development and the Planning Department. The Columbus Redevelopment Commission approved \$150,000 from the Central TIF to support the Columbus Housing Study, which will be available in 2024.

# 2024 Priorities

The Columbus Redevelopment Commission has much on its horizon for 2024. Many of the referenced projects will continue into 2024:

- Workforce Development
- The Riverfront Project
- 2nd Street Thoroughfare Project
- Water Street Property Development
- Downtown Business Continued Support and Facade Programming

## **As well as new opportunities for ...**

- TIF Expansion
- The Downtown Entrance Plaza Redesign
- A Downtown Hotel Conference Center
- A Performing Arts Centre
- Training Opportunities for Elected and Appointed Officials
- Strategic Property Acquisitions
- Housing and Housing Incentives
- Walesboro Infrastructure Improvements
- Railroad Overpass Enhancements
- Master Planning and Envision Updates
- Downtown Activation
- Strengthening Community Partnerships
- And Much More... Stay Tuned!



# Contact

Redevelopment Staff can be reached at:

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