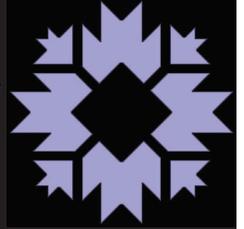




The Planning Post

The Newsletter of the City of Bloomington Planning Department



City of Bloomington Planning Department

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Platinum Biking Task Force

The Bloomington Platinum Biking Task Force was created to assess Bloomington's strengths and weaknesses in regard to bicycling and to plan how the City can achieve "Platinum", the highest Bicycle Friendly Community designation, from the League of American Bicyclists by 2016.

The Task Force meets twice a month at City Hall to develop a plan the City can pursue to attain Platinum status. The Task Force's website is regularly updated. Check it out at: http://bloomington.in.gov/Bloomington_Platinum_Biking_Task_Force



Downtown TIF District Expanded

In the fall of 2010, the Redevelopment Commission, Plan Commission, and City Council each voted to expand the existing Downtown Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District. An Economic Development Plan (EDP) to lay out the goals and objectives for the entire Downtown TIF District was also approved. Some of these goals and objectives include: to create new publicly held plaza space and green space, renovate historic structures, improve infrastructure, and to develop the Certified Technology Park (CTP) as a research and industrial park.

The Downtown TIF has experienced revitalization and growth in the tax base, but more emphasis on employment was needed. The approval expanded the Downtown TIF area by 48 acres, for a total Downtown TIF area of 202 acres. The purpose of this expansion is to provide adequate growth space for office, research and technology business uses. The EDP will direct future TIF investments to attract, grow, and retain desired employers.

Tax Increment Financing is a tool used by cities to encourage economic development. In a TIF district, the tax revenues from increasing property values within the district are invested back into the TIF district using guidance from the TIF's respective EDP. Typical uses for TIF-generated funds include infrastructure, transportation, and façade improvements. These types of improvements often reduce or remove barriers to redevelopment, thus incentivizing development within TIF districts. There are currently six TIF districts in the City of Bloomington.

The expanded Downtown TIF area has excellent new development and redevelopment opportunities because, unlike other areas within the previous TIF area, there are fewer land owners and larger lot sizes, which make land assembly less challenging. Further, existing buildings in the 48 acres are well suited to support redevelopment opportunities.

(Continued on page 3)

Transportation Improvement Plan

Pursuant to federal regulations, the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BMCMPPO) must maintain a four year capital improvement program known as the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP shows how federal, state, and local transportation money will be spent within the metropolitan planning area by the Indiana Department of Transportation, Monroe County, the City of Bloomington, the Town of Ellettsville, Rural Transit, Bloomington Transit, and IU Campus Bus - the BMCMPPO member agencies/local public agencies.

The BMCMPPO is currently developing the TIP for fiscal years 2012 to 2015 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2015). The BMCMPPO will spend the next couple of months prioritizing how allocated funds should be spent on transportation projects. The BMCMPPO is allocated over \$3 million annually in Surface Transportation Program funds, which are typically used for road projects like the expansions of W. 3rd Street and Vernal Pike. Additionally, the BMCMPPO receives \$280,000 in Transportation Enhancement funds, which have historically funded multi-use trails like the B-Line Trail and Karst Farm Trail. Lastly, the State allocates approximately \$215,000 per year in Highway Safety Improvement Program funds, which have been used for intersection safety projects like the Atwater Avenue and Henderson Street signalization project. Members of the community are encouraged to participate in the development of the TIP.

The following timeline will be followed in the development of the TIP:

1/14/11	Call for projects issued
2/14/11	Call for projects ends/TIP form submittals due
2/16/11	Meeting with LPAs to finalize proposed projects
2/23/11	Advisory Committees review projects
3/1 - 3/30/11	30 Day public comment period
3/11/11	Policy Committee review of projects
3/23/11	Advisory Committees review projects and make final recommendation
4/9/11	Policy Committee considers adoption of TIP
4/30/11	Transmittal of TIP to State for review



Inside Look

The Planning Department would like to welcome two new staff members: Vince Caristo and Katie Bannon.



Vince Caristo joined the Department as Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator. Vince moved from Charlottesville, Virginia, where he was the executive director of a local alternative transportation advocacy group. He received a Bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Virginia. Vince is looking forward to exploring the nooks and crannies of Bloomington and the surrounding area - by bike, of course!



Katie Bannon is the Department's new Zoning and Long Range Planner. Katie previously worked for the City of Indianapolis in several capacities including code enforcement, permit plan review, and brownfield redevelopment. She received her Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Ball State University. Her Bachelor's degree is from the University of Illinois. In her free time, Katie enjoys biking and traveling.

Construction Buzz

1 2810 S. Deborah Drive Bloomington Hospital Hospice House

The Plan Commission provided final plan approval for a hospice facility within the Southern Indiana Medical Park Planned Unit Development. The development will include several green features, including geothermal heating and cooling.

2 1515 S. Rogers Street Community Kitchen

Renovations have begun for Community Kitchen's new location. Community Kitchen works to eliminate hunger in Monroe County and surrounding areas through direct service, education, and advocacy.

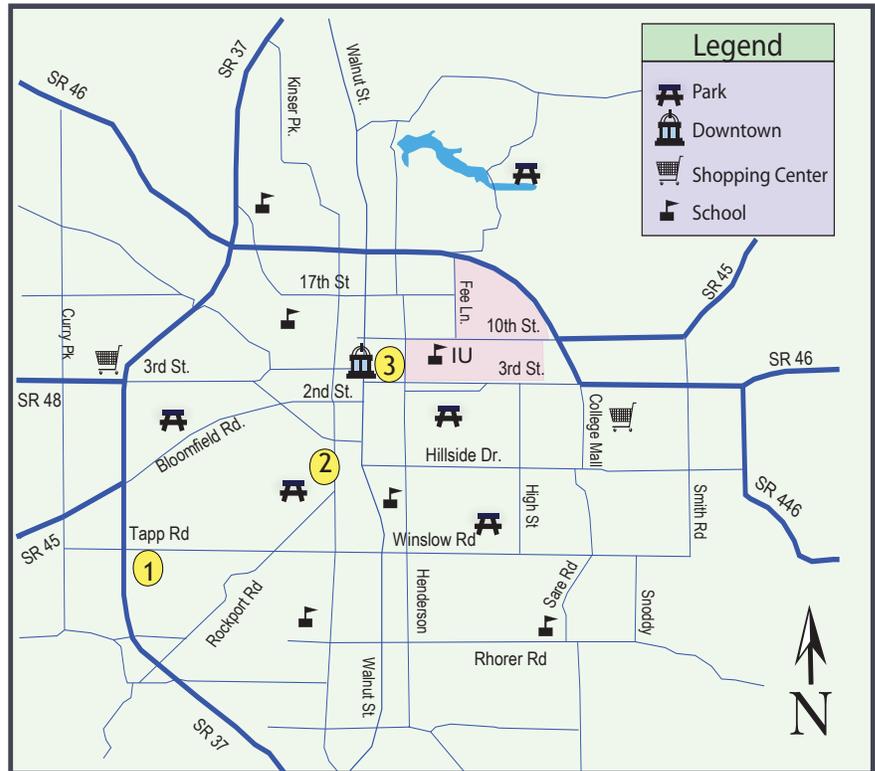


The Rubicon Building was recently completed.

3 422 E. Kirkwood Avenue Rubicon Building

Construction of the Rubicon building was recently completed. It now houses a "Which Wich" sandwich shop on the first floor and nine apartment units on the upper floors. It will also soon house the Vintage Vogue clothing store.

Construction Buzz Location Map



Downtown TIF District (Continued)

One key strategy to the 48 acre Downtown TIF district expansion is focused on 12 acres of property owned by Indiana University. IU is interested in selling the land, and the City's goal is to ensure that future development and redevelopment activities are consistent with the goals of the EDP and the CTP.

The majority of the 65 acre CTP is also included in the 2010 expansion. In 2005, the State of Indiana's designation of Bloomington's CTP was an important step for Downtown Bloomington. Similar to TIFs, CTPs are tools that allows local and state tax revenues, as well as state grants, to be used within the CTP area for economic development. More specifically, CTPs target the creation of new businesses engaged in information technology, instructional technology, and life sciences. Likewise, the CTP also has a plan (the CTP Action Plan) that recognizes the benefits of expanding the Downtown TIF district to include the CTP.

Together, the Downtown TIF and CTP provide important tools for creating and retaining employment in the Downtown. They also can help foster desired, active land uses such as small-scale retail/services, and residential uses catering to live-work, young professional, empty nester and senior housing markets. Employment, retail/service, and housing markets will be attracted to a vibrant Downtown – an employment, recreational, cultural and entertainment center - partially made possible through strategic investments with TIF and CTP resources.

Prospect Hill Conservation District Referendum

Ballot results from a recent Prospect Hill referendum showed that a majority of property owners supported retaining the neighborhood's conservation district status. The Prospect Hill Conservation District was approved by the City Council on April 17, 2008. Per state statute, the City Council must reassess the appropriateness of a conservation district within three years of its original approval. This is done by conducting a vote of all property owners within the conservation district, which occurred during December of 2010 for Prospect Hill. The ballot allowed owners to vote on the following options: 1) to maintain or rescind the conservation district, and 2) to elevate or not elevate to a full historic district. The City Council then acts to formally vote on the results of this referendum.



A conservation district has fewer regulations than a full historic district and affects only the moving, demolition or new construction of a principal or accessory structure. Unlike a full local historic district, a conservation district does not require review by the Historic Preservation Commission of more minor changes such as paint color, window replacement, additions, and porch enclosures. Currently, the McDoel Gardens and Prospect Hill neighborhoods are the City's only two conservation districts.

For more information regarding conservation districts, visit the following webpage:
http://bloomington.in.gov/documents/viewDocument.php?document_id=2819

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