

VIBRANT MICHIGAN CITY – RUNNING DRAFT AGENDA

An Inclusive Economic Development Agenda for Michigan City

RUNNING AGENDA AS OF 4.20 - SUMMARY

1. Support for Healthy and Engaged Communities

- 1.1. Reinvigorate the HOPE Center as a Community Hub
- 1.2. Activate Core Neighborhoods and Engage Residents
- 1.3. Arts and Placemaking in Neighborhoods

2. Core Neighborhood Housing (Westside, Midtown, Eastport, Canada)

- 2.1. For the Westside - Coordinate with Lake Michigan CDC on Scattered-Site Infill
- 2.2. Eastport Quality of Life Plan Support
- 2.3. Midtown Quality of Life Plan Support

3. Transformational Westside Opportunity Sites

- 3.1. Complete Streets Upgrades to US12
- 3.2. An unknown future for the State Prison site
- 3.3. Future Ideas for NIPSCO site - Connecting West Side to Lake Michigan

4. Walkable Neighborhood Commercial

- 4.1. Coordination with Main Street
- 4.2. Michigan Boulevard as a Gateway and Main Street
- 4.3. Midtown South Franklin – Connection from Franciscan to Elston
- 4.4. Update Commercial Zoning at Neighborhood Nodes

5. Employment and Entrepreneurship

- 5.1. Addressing Barriers and Creating Pathways to Employment
- 5.2. Connecting graduating seniors to meaningful and high-paying jobs
- 5.3. Support for Entrepreneurs

6. Outdoor Recreation

- 6.1. Invest in the Invest in Neighborhood Parks and Greenspaces
- 6.2. Next Phase of Trails
- 6.3. A Boost for Recreation

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1. SUPPORT FOR HEALTHY AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

LEAD:

A – Data – High unemployment, low educational attainment, food desert

B – Previous plans –

C – AC Meetings – Various challenges mentioned in multiple meetings

D – Engagement – Pastor’s meeting

E – Best Practices – United Way LEVEL UP, See Give Inc. work in Gary

1.1. Reininvigorate the HOPE Center as a Community Support Hub

1.1.1. Goal: A thriving multi-service center that doubles as a social hub of the community

1.1.2. Task: Needs study (see below) with a scan of potential local social service partners and needs

1.1.3. Task: Conduct a feasibility analysis and a vision for the current building and site

1.1.4. Potential Role of HC or Stand-Alone: Family and Community Supports

1.1.4.1. Task: Pursue Early Learning, including 2023 LEI Grant for 0-3 Aged Children

1.1.4.1.1. Application due in June – if funded, pursue

1.1.4.2. Task: Services to support those providing senior care to relatives

1.1.4.3. Task: Mental health services

1.1.4.4. Task: Financial literacy and education

1.1.5. Potential Role of HC or Stand-Alone: Food insecurity programs:

1.1.5.1. Support Westside Community Garden at New Hope

1.1.5.2. Coordinate to incentivize grocery to new 11th Street station developments

1.1.5.3. Consider options to work with larger groceries for buying power access

1.1.5.4. Consider replicating some programs from Walker Park at HOPE (prep kitchen, healthy cooking classes, and climate-controlled food locker options)

1.2. Activate Core Neighborhoods and Engage Residents

1.2.1. Find funding for and reinstitute Neighborhood Leadership Academy

1.2.1.1. Task: Support growth of Eastport Neighborhood Association

1.2.1.2. Task: Create a neighborhood association for Midtown

1.2.1.3. Task: Create a neighborhood association for Westside

1.2.2. Task: Recruit leaders to reinstitute Westside Improvement Group and start association for Midtown

1.2.3. Task: Work with the banks, realtors, and non-profits that provide homeowner readiness in study area

1.3. Arts and Placemaking in Neighborhoods

1.3.1. Task: Coordinate with LAC on arts and placemaking to activate neighborhood public spaces

1.3.2. Task: Consider public art rental program at gateways into the neighborhoods from visible corridors

1.3.3. Task: Provide artist led or creative outdoor events, such as concerts, dance, culinary, etc...

2. CORE NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING (Westside, Midtown, Eastport, Canada)

LEADERSHIP: Lake Michigan CDC, City Planning

A – Data – Housing affordability may be due to poor quality, high vacancy, and low population on Westside.

B – Previous plans – See LaPorte County study goals, Current plans for apartments near double-track

C – AC Meetings – Concern over conditions and need for affordable housing

D – Engagement – Housing focus group still to meet, Follow up with Mark Gould from 1st Source Bank

E – Best Practices –

2.1. For the Westside - Coordinate with Lake Michigan CDC on Scattered-Site Infill

2.1.1. Task: Conduct a boots on-the-ground inventory of vacancy and needs for all single-family lots

2.1.2. Task: Identify a cluster of initial parcels near the HOPE Center to target for rehab and infill

2.1.3. Task: Develop a pattern-book for infill housing to meet physical context and quality standards

2.2. Eastport Quality of Life Plan Support

2.2.1. Task: Conduct a boots on-the-ground inventory of vacancy and needs for all single-family lots

2.2.2. QOL Plan: Financial literacy training and homebuyer counseling

2.2.3. Additional Item – Pursue a LIHTC project for the available site in Canada

2.3. Midtown Quality of Life Plan Support

2.3.1. QOL Plan: Increase homeownership rates (target of 10% per year in plan)

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- 2.3.2. QOL Plan: Construct new affordable apartments – target initial effort near Franklin and Ripley
- 2.3.3. QOL Plan: Consider support for goal of brand, logo, and signage from previous plan

2.4. Community Safety

- 2.4.1. Task: Goal of increasing safety and reducing crime rate in Eastport QOL Plan
- 2.4.2. Task: Identify overlap areas between plan objectives and improved community safety
- 2.4.3. Task: Coordinate with Matt Aalsma from IU - study on youth gun violence training with police

3. TRANSFORMATIONAL WESTSIDE OPPORTUNITY SITES

LEAD: Redevelopment Commission, City Planning, State

A – Data – Lower and declining population size. Acreage (prison is high percentage)

B – Previous plans – Prison Relocation Study ongoing, Gateway Plan

C – AC Meetings – Some of top 3 Items from AC meetings

D – Engagement –

E – Best Practices –

3.1. Complete Streets Upgrades to US12

- 3.1.1. Priority: The segment from Mount Baldy to Walnut Street – Connections to HOPE Center
- 3.1.2. Task: Work with landscape architects to develop drawings based on the 2016 “Gateway Plan” concept
- 3.1.3. Task: Incorporate many crosswalks assuming better access to the lake post-NIPSCO
- 3.1.4. Task: Coordinate with INDOT for approval of US12 design plans and seek funding to implement
- 3.1.5. Task: Engage the community in placemaking efforts along US12

3.2. An Unknown Future for the State Prison Site

- 3.2.1. Unknown: State is conducting a state-wide study of prison sites and facilities
- 3.2.2. Unknown: Results of this will not be made available until a later time
- 3.2.3. Task: Determine community desires for the site in the event the prison site were to relocate
- 3.2.4. Task: Provide desires to Redevelopment Commission for potential future consideration

3.3. Future Ideas for NIPSCO site - Connecting West Side to Lake Michigan

- 3.3.1. Coordinate with NIPSCO board on timing of cleanup and closure
- 3.3.2. Need advocacy – to reuse the site for mixed-use and public benefit (not wealthy homes)
- 3.3.3. AB to show how to connect Westside neighborhood (Need US12 INDOT coordination)

4. WALKABLE NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL

LEADERSHIP: Chamber, City Planning, EDCMC

A – Data –

B – Previous plans – Previous Revisions to Zoning, 2016 Gateway Plan

C – AC Meetings – Michigan Boulevard, Neighborhood Nodes, and Support for Local Businesses all Concerns

D – Engagement – FOCUS Group with Michigan Boulevard Businesses,

E – Best Practices –

4.1. Coordination with Main Street

- 4.1.1. Task: Coordinate with Main Street organization and discuss options for a paid, full-time director
- 4.1.2. Task: Capacity-building and strategic planning with Main Street
- 4.1.3. Task: Expand focus to a Michigan Boulevard and South Franklin Business Association

4.2. Michigan Boulevard as a Gateway and Main Street

- 4.2.1. Task: Develop a Michigan Boulevard Business Association
- 4.2.2. Task: Address low property ownership by businesses

4.3. Midtown South Franklin – Connection from Franciscan to Elston

- 4.3.1. Task: Identify who the key individuals are from all parties for coordination, Elston and Franciscan
- 4.3.2. Task: Coordinate on a master development with Franciscan and Elston connected to Franklin
- 4.3.3. Task: A facilities evaluation and reuse study for the Elston site
- 4.3.4. Task: Apply new MU zoning class developed for Marquette Mall at both sites

4.4. Update Commercial Zoning at Neighborhood Nodes

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4.4.1. Update outdated zoning to allow easier reuse of commercial buildings and sites in neighborhoods

5. EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

LEADERSHIP: EDCMC

A –Data – Shows very high unemployment

B – Previous plans – Eastport QOL

C – AC Meetings – A lot of Discussion at Economic break-out Table

D– Engagement – FOCUS group with employers

E– Best Practices –

5.1. Addressing Barriers and Creating Pathways to Employment

5.1.1. Task: Address barrier of daycare needs

5.1.2. Task: Address barrier of transportation needs

5.1.3. Task: Tap into resource of high-speed Fiber running through Michigan City

5.1.4. Task: Consider Goodwill's Excel Center for those who've left the workforce

5.1.5. Task: Explore expanding United Way's Level Up program to Michigan City

5.1.6. Task: Promote and support Center for Workforce Innovation's mobile training unit

5.2. Connecting graduating seniors to meaningful and high-paying jobs

5.2.1. Task: Expand MCAS programs - Job shadowing at Franciscan - Partner with GAF, Carpenters Union

5.2.2. Task: How to incentivize local opportunities in manufacturing to young, local workers

5.2.3. Task: Can Ivy Tech provide new training in fields desired by local youth?

5.2.4. Barrier: Need for mentors, recovery credits, (school counselors are already maxed)

5.3. Support for Entrepreneurs

5.3.1. Task: Develop a task force to evaluate potential for Entrepreneurial Center (The Mill in Bloomington)

5.3.2. Task: Consider opportunities in computer gaming field

5.3.3. Task: Support for micro- and storefront business startups

6. OUTDOOR RECREATION

LEADERSHIP: PARKS DEPARTMENT

6.1. Invest in Neighborhood Parks and Greenspaces

6.1.1. Eastside Task: Water Tower Park inclusive playground to be complete in 2024

6.1.2. Eastside Task: Support the Eastside Community at Walker Park with its thriving gardens

6.1.3. Eastside Task: Increase use of kayak launch at Hansen Park

6.1.4. Westside Task: Coordinate with LAC and HOPE Center to increase activation at Pullman Park

6.1.4.1. Support for Juneteenth Celebration

6.1.4.2. Additional support for active skate park amenities

6.1.4.3. Consider additional tree planting, art, and program options

6.2. Invest in the Next Phase of Trails

6.2.1. Task: Finish the top priorities of the 5 major trails that are planned in concept but not designed

6.2.1.1. Task: Support the NIPSCO ROW Trail along rail line south of Ames Park

6.2.2. Task: Singing Sands Trail Phase 1 and 2 is complete

6.3. A Boost for Recreation

6.3.1. Task: Find funding to bring back a dedicated recreation director to focus on programming

6.3.2. Task: Develop a task force to create an indoor recreation center in the study area.

6.3.3. Task: Include an indoor pool, as Michigan City has many beaches, but no pool and the pool at Elston is beyond is useable life.