

Strategic Plan – Initiative Work Plan FY2016

Initiative Name: Energize Downtown

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Goal # 3 Partnering for Success

Goal Chair(s): Diann McKee

Initiative # 4

Initiative Chair(s): Daniel Pigg

Thesis Statement Indiana State University (ISU) students are increasingly engaged in the process of energizing downtown and 2016 will be a critical year to build upon the success of ISU's engagement and partnerships with downtown Terre Haute merchants, the local arts community and other stakeholders.

1. Introduction/Background – What?

The University continues to partner with a number of downtown stakeholders, including the City of Terre Haute, the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Terre Haute Inc., Art Spaces, real estate developers and others to identify and implement methods by which ISU can best affect the redevelopment of downtown. Emphasis will continue to be directed toward ongoing downtown development projects, including retail recruitment, support of local merchants and off-campus student housing with integrated street level retail.

2. Proposal/Purpose/Justification – Why?

During Fiscal Year 2016, the Energize Downtown team will continue to concentrate on working with local developers and property owners to improve the capacity for retail recruitment, and further the development of the cooperative marketing initiative for existing downtown merchants.

The Energize Downtown team will continue to need student interns to research and organize data, assist and engage with downtown organizations, communicate with prospects, produce and analyze marketing material, coordinate student and merchant groups, and compile database information to assist in retail recruitment.

The university recognizes the importance and value of building a great “college town” and is committed to working collaboratively with arts and community development partners to ensure the continued revitalization of downtown Terre Haute. These efforts provide experiential learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff and help enhance the overall campus environment, which, in turn, is having a positive impact on recruitment and retention of quality students and faculty.

The Energize Downtown projects identified for FY2016 will provide ISU the opportunity to demonstrate tangible results in partnership with downtown merchants, developers, and arts organizations.

3. Discussion of Past Years Results – Benchmark Successes?

In terms of experiential learning and community engagement, Energize Downtown has been successful. The number of students engaged in downtown activities and the number of downtown events supported by ISU has exceeded stated goals. Annual events that are supported include the Downtown Block Party, Donaghy Day activities, Blues at the Crossroads, Miracle on 7th Street, and the Strawberry Festival. Each unique community event draws students, faculty and staff downtown.

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The number of downtown merchants being assisted by ISU students, faculty and staff also continue to increase. Last year, forty-three (43) local businesses were engaged. Long-term community partners that benefit from our involvement include Art Spaces, the Downtown Terre Haute Farmers Market, and Downtown Terre Haute.

The current development of new student housing options downtown will continue to enhance the downtown experience and add to the “college town” feel. In turn, increasing the number of resident’s downtown will lead to a demand for additional products and services catering to a college demographic.

Downtown Terre Haute, Inc. has relied heavily on ISU for both financial support and student support from the Energize Downtown Initiative. The “Choose Downtown” newsletter has shown a steady increase in the number of subscribers; however, membership in Downtown Terre Haute has not increased in the past year and several key financial supporters have decreased or ended their contributions to key events.

Partnering with the local arts community is also increasing our level of engagement for students and faculty. Art Spaces continues to provide new approaches to urban planning through public art projects. ISU student interns have been provided to assist on a number of projects which are having tangible results in improving our quality of place.

The Downtown Farmers Market has established itself with the assistance of ISU interns. Currently, an ISU student intern serves as the assistant market director. Our continued support will allow the market to grow and offer additional community involvement activities.

4. Work Plan, Next Fiscal Year – Action Steps – Process – How?

The plan will be accomplished through the following:

1. Retail Recruitment:
 - a. Continue to identify retail prospects, refine market data information and communicate downtown Terre Haute’s message of revitalization and growth.
 - b. Work with area developers to promote downtown Terre Haute to potential retail business interests.
 - c. Coordinate with university, Thompson Thrift, and Core Redevelopment on downtown housing project(s) to identify optimal “college oriented” retail outlets.
2. Downtown/Fairbanks Landing Turn to the River Integrated Way-finding Project:
 - a. Data compilation, design, and review
 - b. Draft of plan presented by Art Spaces and Energize Downtown interns
 - c. Fabrication and Installation
3. Broad Promotion of Downtown Terre Haute as a Shopping, Dining and Entertainment Destination
 - a. Identify engagement opportunities for ISU students and class projects
 - b. Promote community outreach services offered
 - c. Create and implement business assistance plans and event offerings
 - d. Promotion and recruitment

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5. Reporting and Deliverable Schedule – When?

The Energize Downtown team meets weekly to discuss project goals and timelines. Project goals and timelines are evaluated and prioritized according to progress, challenges, and individual needs.

6. Budget – How Much, a General Discussion of Funds Use?

The Energize Downtown team requests \$52,500 for FY 2016 to support and fulfill its mission of building a great college town and further engaging with the Terre Haute arts community.

1. Student Interns wages: \$28,500 (base budget)

Description – Three (3) student interns to assist in the research, production and execution of project materials, work with downtown stakeholders, coordinate engagement efforts, and compile database information to assist in executing action steps. Interns to support Art Spaces and the Downtown Farmers Market are critical to their continued success.

2. Operational supplies, materials and printing: \$4,000 (base budget)

Description – Media and research materials to assist in the collection and communication of market data, retail recruitment packets, farmer’s market promotion, report of accomplishments and community arts projects. Publish materials to communicate results of Energize Downtown success.

3. Capital Expenses: \$20,000 (one-time expense)

Description – to partner with downtown arts and community developers (Art Spaces, Terre Haute Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Terre Haute Inc., City of Terre Haute, etc.) to plan, organize and execute the projects described above. The funds will be used specifically to support an integrated Turn to the River/Downtown Terre Haute Wayfinding project and matching funds for the Indiana Main Street enhancement grant. Each project will leverage talent from ISU and provide faculty and students experiential learning opportunities throughout the process.

FY2015 Total Energize Downtown Budget Request: \$ 52,500

7. Stakeholders and Management Plan – Who?

Daniel Pigg (Business Engagement) serves as the leadership for the Energize Downtown initiative, assisted by Julie Davis (Business Engagement AA), and three ISU student interns.

Externally, the staff of Arts Spaces, Inc. (Mary Kramer, Kim Shwibbe, and one ISU intern), the Chamber of Commerce (David Hayne and Kristen Craig), Downtown Terre Haute, Inc., and the City of Terre Haute (Mayor Bennett and staff) will work collaboratively to manage and organize activities described for FY 2016.

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8. Outcome Assessment & Future Testing

The University recognizes the importance and value of building a great “college town” and is committed to working collaboratively with arts and community development partners to ensure the continued revitalization of downtown Terre Haute. These efforts provide experiential learning opportunities for students, faculty and staff and help enhance the overall campus environment, which, in turn, is having a positive impact on recruitment and retention of quality students and faculty.

The Energize Downtown projects identified for FY2016 will provide ISU the opportunity to demonstrate tangible results in partnership with downtown merchants, developers, and arts organizations.

The initiative outcomes show an enhanced neighborhood surrounding the campus and additional opportunities for economic development and community engagement.

9. Line Item Budget Discussion that tracks Budget Templates ...

Undergraduate Student Wages:

Up to 20 hrs/week (fall/spring) and 28 hrs/week (summer) = (\$9,500) X 3 \$28,500

Energize Downtown student workers have been critical to the success of our initiative. They fulfill a number of key operational positions which allow the executive director to focus on more strategic activities while providing our students daily and weekly project management experience.

Energize Downtown Supplies/Expenses: \$ 4,000

Printing costs (\$1,500)

Postage (\$500)

Market research collection (e.g. traffic counts, market data) (\$2,000)

Fairbanks Landing/Downtown Way-finding Project: \$10,000

Art Spaces, in partnership with The City of Terre Haute, Downtown Terre Haute, Inc., and the Energize Downtown initiative are working toward the development of a much needed way-finding system for downtown and the proposed Fairbanks Landing Park. Last year’s three-day design charrette provided recommendations for a strategic wayfinding plan that will integrate with both ISU’s and downtown Terre Haute’s current methods. A way-finding system is an effective method to promote downtown and spur economic and community development.

Funds would be used to fabricate and install new signage with a consistent visual identity to enhance the visitor’s experience by easily directing them to places of interest. As a result, residents and visitors will more efficiently navigate the community and likely observe civic, cultural, commercial, conference, lodging and recreational amenities they may otherwise miss.

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Indiana Main Street Grant (matching funds):

\$10,000

Indiana Main Street encourages the revitalization and restoration of downtown areas in Indiana cities and towns. The program provides technical assistance and educational opportunities to participating communities. As a participating community, Terre Haute is eligible for assistance with programs that are designed to foster innovative approaches to activities, which support and promote community-based planning, pre-development, and research initiatives. The goal of these projects is to improve the quality of life and opportunities for increasing private investment and employment in the community.

Funds would be used as a dollar for dollar match and directed toward the marketing of the downtown areas assets to customers, potential investors, and visitors, and strengthening the downtown's existing economic base while finding ways to meet new opportunities and challenges from outlying development. ISU will benefit from the stabilization of current neighboring downtown businesses as well as the increased emphasis on recruiting new "college friendly" businesses to fill the gaps.

Total FY15 \$52,500