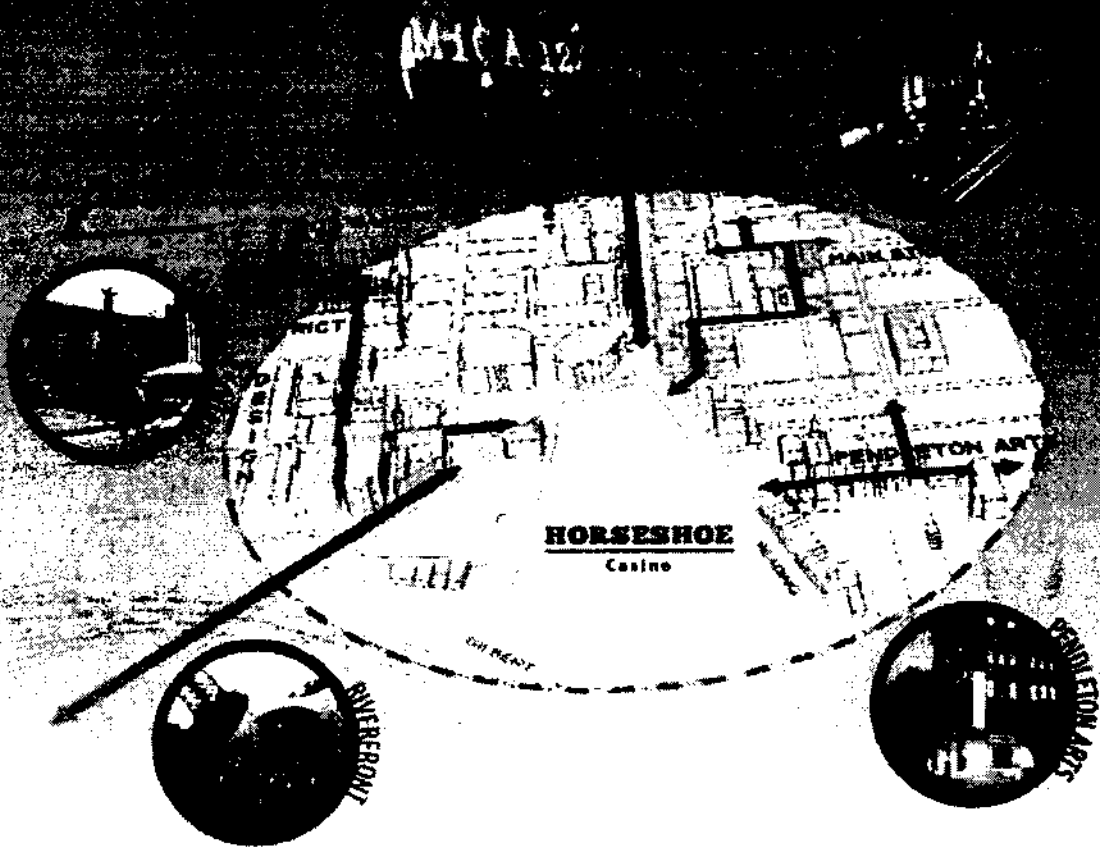


Broadway Commons District Plan



Executive Summary

Purpose

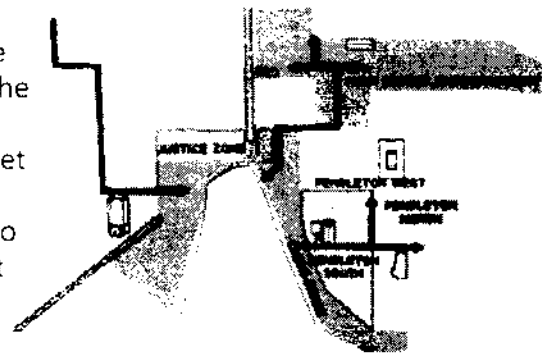
On November 3, 2009, Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment (Issue 3) to allow four casinos to be built in the state—in Cleveland, Columbus, Toledo, and Cincinnati. The amendment specified that the Cincinnati casino will be located downtown on the Broadway Commons site, which abuts the Central Business District and the neighborhoods of Over-the-Rhine, Pendleton, Mount Adams and Mount Auburn. Because of the Cincinnati casino's central, urban location, residents, business owners and local stakeholders are asking:

How can the investment and energy of the casino development create a positive, synergistic relationship with the residential neighborhoods and business districts that surround it, promoting economic development, improving quality of life, and enhancing a sense of place?

The City of Cincinnati engaged Bridging Broadway and the University of Cincinnati's Community Design Center to research and answer this fundamental question.

Focus

This report summarizes a one-year investigation into this and related questions, focusing geographically on the impact areas that surround the casino site, rather than the design of the casino site itself. The study identifies Four Focus Areas—the Casino Fringe, Justice Zone, Main Street (OTR) and Pendleton—as areas most directly impacting and impacted by the casino development. The study also identifies key corridors that link the casino development to other downtown destinations and amenities.



Methodology

In collaboration with the Community Design Center at the University of Cincinnati, Bridging Broadway has served as the primary conduit for community engagement to collect and synthesize the concerns and aspirations of center city residents and stakeholders. This study summarizes the outcomes from three Bridging Broadway Dialogues, conducted to engage the public in identifying concerns and opportunities ("Block Walk"), creating a vision plan for the area ("Visioning"), and developing strategies for implementation ("Implementation and Management"). Bridging Broadway also initiated the Pendleton Neighborhood Development Roundtable, to more directly engage the neighborhood's key property owners and the Pendleton Neighborhood Council. The study also incorporates case studies from other US cities, and best practices in contemporary community development, urban design and public policy.

Six Guiding Principles

1. Avoid the casino "island effect" by blending into the adjacent area
2. Create a multi-use destination that has more appeal than a single gaming facility
3. Tighten the urban fabric by eliminating the edges of downtown's districts
4. Close the gaps that are void of light and activity
5. Encourage visitor mobility with great street design and complementary businesses
6. Find opportunities for new workforce housing that can accommodate casino employees living in the neighborhood

Recommendations

Urban Design

Improve the public realm and promote synergistic infill development via:

- Streetscape improvements along key corridors
- Potential sites for expanding the supply of quality workforce housing
- New public open space including a pedestrian plaza
- Sites for neighborhood- and region-serving services/ businesses
- A major gateway at Liberty and Reading, and a secondary gateway at Pendleton Street and Reading to adequately welcome visitors to the area and attract them to the Pendleton Arts Center

Five primary corridors identified to maximize multi-modal connectivity enhanced via:

- "Complete Street" design
- Public art
- Programming that activates street life

Complementary infill development to benefit existing uses, encourage mobility, and enhance the appeal of the new entertainment district via:

- Development sites for new casino work-force
- Retail space for complementary businesses

Capture critical mass of visitors at the south end of Casino via:

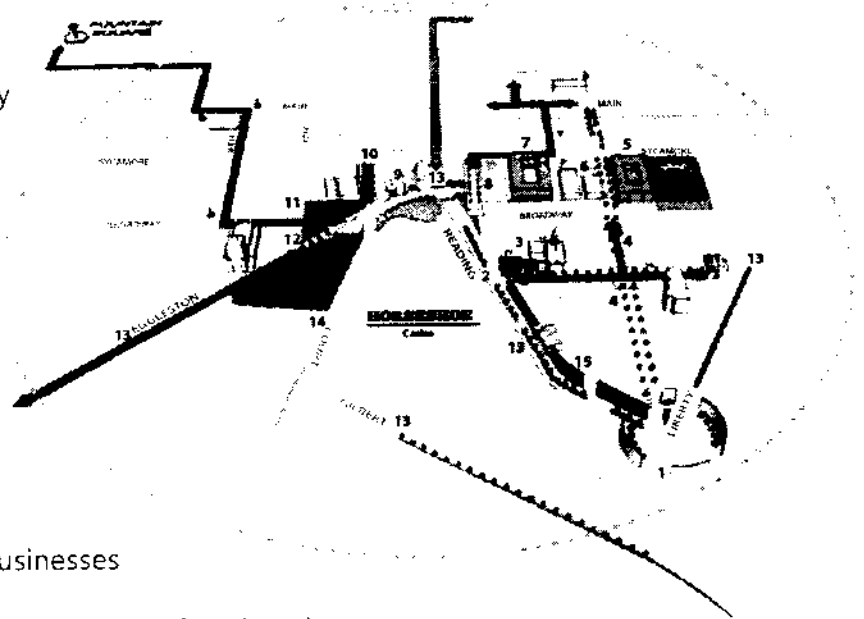
- Short Reading redesigned as a pedestrian plaza with existing uses converted to night time entertainment options
- The installation of a pocket park to the south-east
- New landscaped pathway between the County buildings
- Art screen for the jail to mobilize visitors improve sightlines, and tighten the urban fabric

Administration

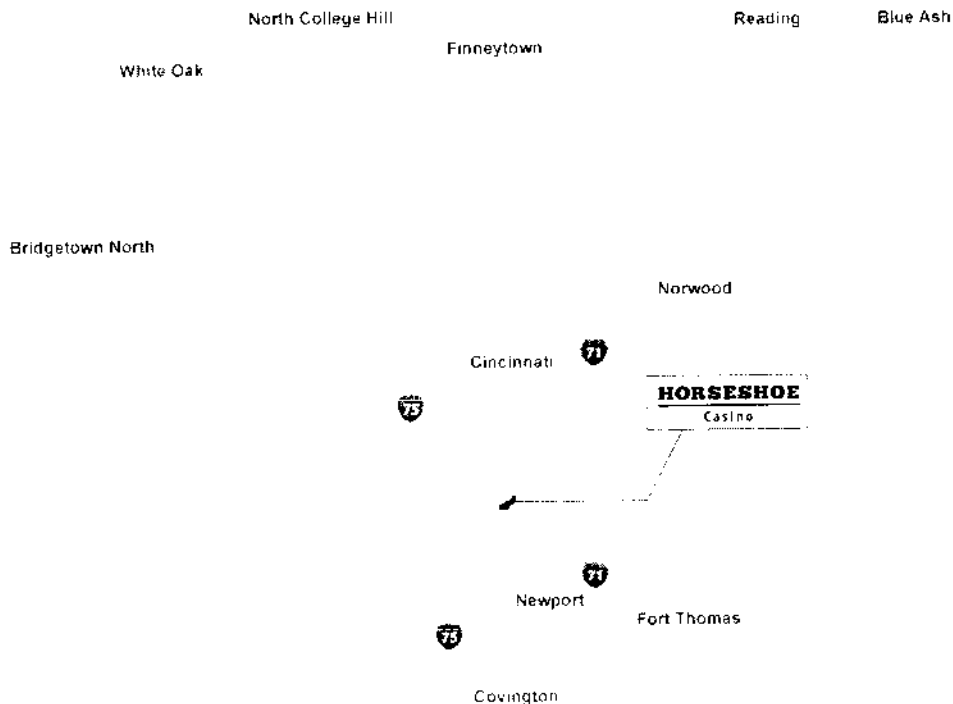
- Creation of a nonprofit Community Development Corporation (CDC) to focus on work-force housing and non-market driven development
- Management entity for a Special Improvement District (SID) serving the casino impact area

Public Policy

- A Community Benefits Agreement (CBA), linking the casino operator, the City, and community stakeholders to create an ongoing funding stream which supports neighborhood-serving activities and improvements in the impact area
- Casino overlay district which can enhance the entertainment character and activities of the area while protecting the residential lifestyle around it



Introduction



On November 3, 2009, Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment, known as Issue 3, to allow four casinos to be built in the state. As stated in that amendment, the site of the Cincinnati casino was determined to be Broadway Commons, an approximate 20-acre surface parking lot on the northern edge of the downtown's central business district.

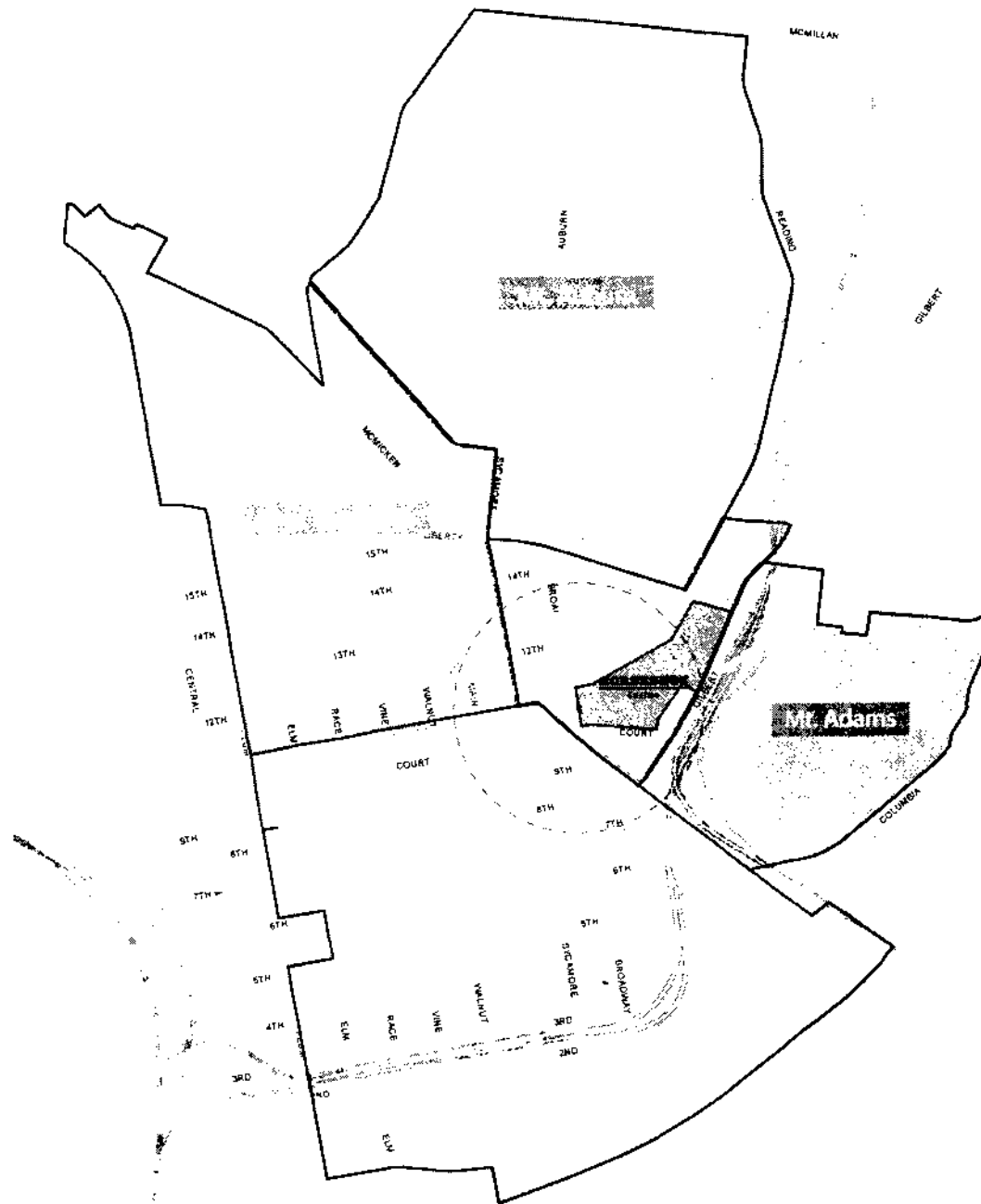
Five communities are directly adjacent to the site, each with a very distinctive character and quality of life. Demographics, lifestyles, and the overall livability of each community is unique. None of the existing infrastructure, business inventory, public policy, or mindset of residents and workers, was prepared for a large-scale gaming establishment to be built in this location. This is a historical moment for the community of Cincinnati and the state of Ohio as both grapple to respond to the impact such mega-projects will have on their immediate surroundings.

One community response in 2010 was the creation of Bridging Broadway, a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to maximize the new casino's positive effect on Greater Cincinnati. It is the only civic organization with the singular goal of promoting the Broadway Commons casino development as a catalyst for improving the quality of life for downtown Cincinnati, its businesses, and neighborhoods.

Bridging Broadway and the University of Cincinnati's Community Design Center partnered in June 2010 to conduct the Broadway Commons District Study, commissioned by the City of Cincinnati's Department of City Planning and Buildings. By combining the passion and community engagement of Bridging Broadway, with the Community Design Center,

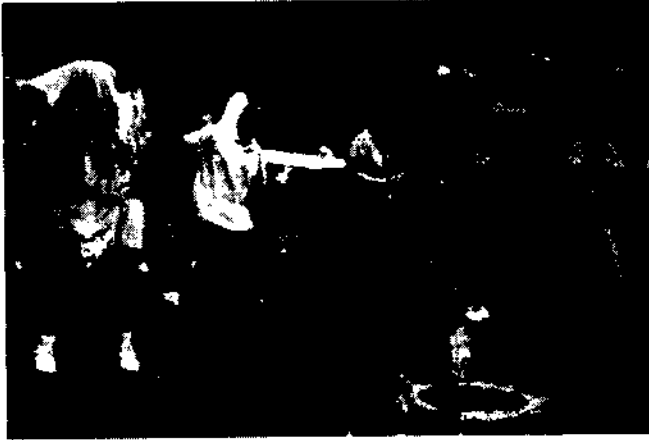
the research was able to penetrate the market and uncover implementable stakeholder-driven recommendations. This was made largely possible by the public community dialogues, dynamic website, extensive local media coverage, complementary initiatives, and countless volunteer hours by Bridging Broadway Board members and fans.

The intention of the Broadway Commons District Study is to inspire constructive forward planning and creative investment by local stakeholders, community members, elected officials, and the City of Cincinnati, to insure that the Horseshoe Casino Cincinnati is a positive asset to the region. It is the strong desire of the hundreds of individuals who have contributed in some part to the Broadway Commons District Study, that there is an action-oriented plan put in place to realize some of the design concepts and recommendations included here.



Primary Implementation Recommendations

Community Benefits Agreement



Whether through land use decisions or publicly funded subsidies worth billions of dollars nationwide, local governments and metropolitan regions are supporting more and more development projects in their jurisdictions, including sports stadiums, big-box or other retail stores, and new mixed-use destinations. In many cases, these may be low-road developments, which include low-wage jobs without benefits or opportunity for advancement; they have spurred gentrification and the loss of affordable housing; and they have

created environmental and safety hazards in local communities, despite the promises of the many benefits community residents would receive.

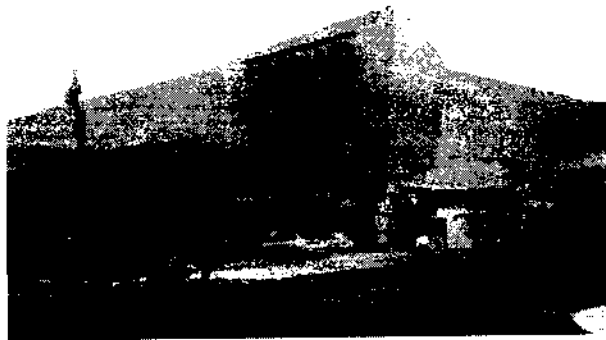
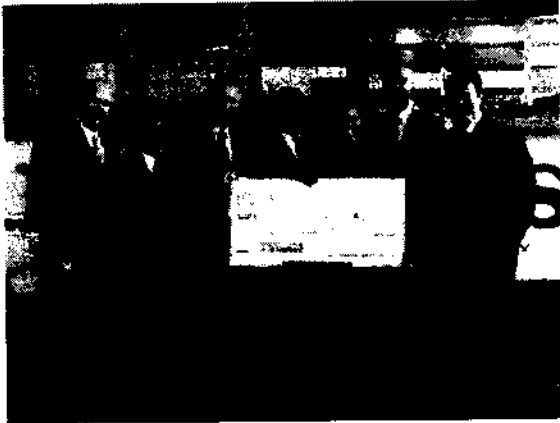
But emerging out of the accountable development, smart growth, and living wage movements of the last couple of decades, local residents are advancing the principles of social inclusion and demanding a voice in planning for economic development in their communities. Community coalitions have been able to demand equitable, high-road development. Using community benefits agreements as a tool, local residents have become full participants in the political process of economic development, which has positively addressed quality of life issues and strengthened neighborhoods.

While several strategies are available for addressing the interests of the Cincinnati community articulated in this Broadway Commons District Study, an emerging and effective approach in the strategic toolkit is a community benefits agreement (CBA), a legally binding and enforceable agreement between a developer or employer and a broad-based coalition of community groups. These agreements can include a range of benefits a developer agrees to provide to the affected community. These benefits can include local hiring and job training provisions, affordable housing, funds for parks and recreation, public art, safety and noise protections, and green building practices. In exchange for having a voice in how the development will proceed, the community groups that are signatories agree to support the development through the political process. While the agreement is private, voluntary, and enforceable by the coalition, in some cases community benefits agreements are attached to existing contracts that developers have with local government, enabling local officials to have enforcement authority as well.

As stewards of the community trust in accountable development, local officials play a critical role in developing these agreements. When developers promise community benefits as part of the approval process, elected and other officials must ensure that these promises are kept. When a local authority has leverage to approve requests from the developer, these officials should represent the community's interest. In recent years, many local officials have used this leverage to require that the developer negotiate and sign a CBA.

Sugar House Casino

Community Benefits Agreement | Philadelphia



The SugarHouse Casino is located directly north of downtown Philadelphia at the site of an abandoned sugar refinery. Prior to the casino, the neighborhood was primarily working class but was experiencing moderate gentrification due to the influx of upscale art, entertainment, and dining establishments. The project stirred heated debate within the neighborhood making development approval a lengthy process. Some believed the casino would bring jobs and economic development, while others believed it would increase crime, addiction, and other social problems.

A Community Benefits Agreement was created between SugarHouse Casino, Fishtown Action (the pro casino advocacy group), and the New Kensington Community Development Corporation to create a special service district financed by casino contributions. The agreement outlines contributions to the community to ensure that residents share in the benefits of the casino development. The agreement gives community groups a voice in shaping the project tailored to their particular needs and gives them an opportunity to share in the benefits of the development.

The SugarHouse community benefits agreement includes an annual contribution of \$1 million to fund a special services district within the surrounding neighborhood. The agreement also outlines that casino representatives host neighborhood meetings, provide special training for problem gambling, provide vendor opportunities for local residents, provide sanitation and security services, and give the advocacy group responsibility for dispersing funds. To date the Casino has kept its word and has donated \$675,000 within the first month of operations in September of 2010.

It is our recommendation that to implement and sustain the range of benefits sought by residents, stakeholders and city representatives, the City should require that a CBA be executed between the casino developers/operators and stakeholders. This legally binding contract will most likely need to be leveraged as part of a development agreement between the City and casino developers.

Experience in other communities illustrates that a CBA is a powerful tool to insure mega-projects, like the Horseshoe Casino, act in the highest accord as “good neighbors.” As a result of the community engagement conducted by Bridging Broadway, the most salient benefits desired by the community include:

- Streetscape improvements
- Public Art
- Creation of a Special Improvement District
- Financing for redevelopment in Pendleton
- Housing assistance
- Business retention and attraction
- Clean & Safe programs
- Parking solutions
- Employment / Job Training / Job Fair
- Programming of public space
- Cross-promotions with local businesses
- Multi-purpose family center
- Security - lighting, cameras, patrols
- Youth Programs
- On-site marketing for local tourism

Broadway Commons Special Improvement District



To enhance safety and cleanliness of the Broadway Commons entertainment district, and maximize visitor experience through marketing and programming, it is our recommendation that a Special Improvement District (SID) be created according to the boundaries in the attached illustration. Within this boundary area, services would be provided similar to those currently being supplied by Downtown Cincinnati Inc. (DCI). Due to the area’s proximity to DCI’s current service area, we recommend investigation into a collaborative relationship in which DCI could contract and/or share some of its services and infrastructure. By doing so, efficiency and reduced overhead may be achieved.

The Broadway Commons SID would be funded by the commercial businesses located within its boundary area. By state statute, seventy-five percent of the cost is based upon assessed value of the property, and twenty-five percent according to front footage. According to Bridging Broadway’s community engagement throughout the District Study, a significant portion of private landowners in the area are in favor of a SID. However, agreement by the Horseshoe Casino, based upon its significant front footage, would also need to be attained in order to create the SID. Next steps should include meeting with more of the commercial property owners in the proposed SID boundary, including the casino, to determine their interest in the program, and a feasibility study to determine potential revenue and forecasted costs.