

CITY OF DUNKIRK

March 16, 2015

cityofdunkirk.com



Dear Stellar Communities Committee:

Dunkirk is a do-it-yourself community founded on the blue collar workers that made it the "Glass Capital of Indiana". Led by local public and private investment, our small but character-filled downtown is undergoing a rebirth.

A group of local business owners – with an eye on revitalization and community investment more than profit - have united to restore seven of our grand old storefronts and prepare them for new stores and services.

Our local government has acquired key buildings and land for "tipping point" projects downtown like a new Dunkirk Library & Glass Museum. To prepare for these tipping point projects, nothing captures our spirit of self-reliance and desire for constant betterment so much as the local volunteers who, after getting clearance from INDOT, came out at night during a road-widening project to run conduit from light pole to light pole so that someday, Dunkirk's downtown can have decorative lighting.

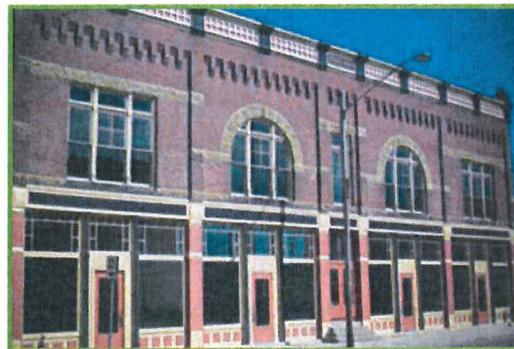
Because of our can-do attitude and work ethic from generations working in the glass manufacturing plants, Dunkirk has ALREADY completed many of the things requested in earlier Stellar applications, including millions of dollars in new sidewalks, new wastewater and water plants, and dramatic street improvements. We've done all that!

We also don't need to convince Dunkirk residents that, "someday downtown will be great again." Not only do residents believe, they're investing in it! The Dunkirk Investment Group has grown from three to seven investing members. These seven members have purchased and renovated seven storefronts in downtown Dunkirk.

Here's what we do need -- a Stellar designation that will allow Dunkirk to quickly take the next steps in implementing the final big pieces in our revitalization plan!

"The Dunkirk Investment Group believes in our community. We have seen what local cooperation can do, including our strong partnership with the city. The DIG group has grown from three investors to seven and looks forward to working with city leaders on even more opportunities in the future.

*-William Hinkle,
City Attorney & Dunkirk
Investment Group*



Before & After the Façade Program—Todd Opera House, Main Street

- Located in Jay County
- Population 2,362
- Main Street Community
- Downtown Revitalization Plan in 2009 with 2014 Update
- 2011 Dunkirk Library Planning Study

The target area...

Since before 2007, the City of Dunkirk has been preparing, focusing, planning, and building momentum for opportunities such as this. Since 2009, the City of Dunkirk, located in Jay County and Blackford County, has completed the "Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Plan" and a "Dunkirk Library Planning Study". During this time of planning for the downtown, the City of Dunkirk completed a new water treatment plant and a new wastewater treatment plant. The City of Dunkirk has new infrastructure and a laser focused project area as a result of planning together for the future of the community. In early 2014, the community held a "Course Correction Planning and Update" meeting with the community, local business, local organizations, school corporation, county and city government officials and other community stakeholders to insure that the City of Dunkirk and the community are on the right track together. The City of Dunkirk realizes the importance of self-evaluation and 'course correction' during planning and implementation.

Local & Regional Impact

Becoming a Stellar community will have a positive impact on the region. The projects we will carry out are designed to create the amenities that attract new businesses and residents. Dunkirk already has a much-larger-than-usual employment catchment area. For example, the Ardagh Group manufacturing plant pulls in workers from seven Indiana counties to make up its 400 employee base. The wage base at Ardagh, Dunkirk Plant, averages \$55,000 per employee, making it the highest in Jay County.

As a side note, and as a result of the Stellar process, Dunkirk and Yorktown officials have started talking about shared issues. As it turns out, many of the people with executive-level jobs who work in Dunkirk have their homes in Yorktown. We will be talking with Delaware County and the Yorktown community about expanding opportunities to live, shop and work in both communities.

"As the longest continuously operating glass manufacturing facility in the United States, the Ardagh Group facility in Dunkirk, Indiana, is pleased to recognize its excellent partnership with the local community over the past 126 years. As a result of significant investments, including nearly \$80 million over the past five years, and its outstanding workforce, this state-of-art facility was one of only 70 manufacturing plants in the nation and one of only three in Indiana to earn the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's ENERGY STAR certification for superior energy performance in 2014.

Since Ardagh Group acquired the Dunkirk glass manufacturing facility last year, we have already witnessed work completed on downtown

buildings and local infrastructure. Ardagh is impressed with the city's steady progress and innovative spirit, and we look forward to supporting this deserving community on future projects, particularly Dunkirk's proposed expansion of the historic Glass Museum." - John Riordan, President & CEO, Ardagh Glass Inc.



What we have accomplished....

2009 Water Treatment Plant Project—new plant with more capacity and water mains throughout the city

2009 Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Plan Completed and Adopted by the City of Dunkirk

2009-2010 INDOT State Road 167 Project through downtown Dunkirk—pulled the conduit at night for "someday" decorative lighting

2011 Dunkirk Library & Glass Museum Planning Study Completed

2011 The Beautification Committee raised \$26,836 for the "My Roots are in Dunkirk" to replace the trees cut down from the INDOT State Road 167 Project that were not replaced

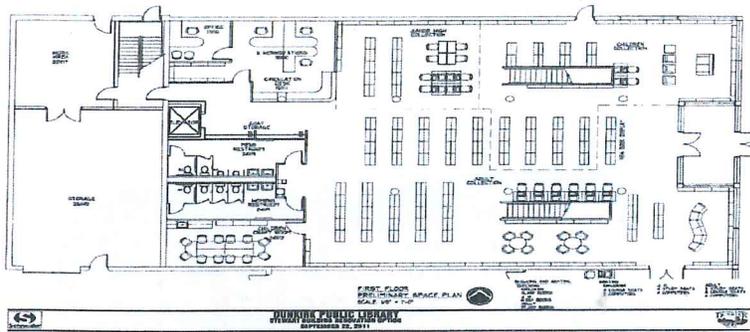
2014 City of Dunkirk Façade Grant Program & Todd Opera House Façade Completion

2014 Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Plan "Course Correction and Get Together" Planning Meetings and Plan Updates

2014 Wastewater Treatment Plant Project—new wastewater treatment plant with more capacity

2014 Blight Elimination Program Grant recipients for the demolition of 10 abandoned properties

2015 Completion of the \$600,000 exterior renovation of the historic Dunkirk Passenger Depot for a future Senior Center



The Projects, The Plan...

Dunkirk Public Library & Glass Museum

The City of Dunkirk was founded on its glass heritage. As a result, the city is proud of the glass collections housed in the Dunkirk Glass Museum. Years ago the Glass Museum was partnered with the Dunkirk Public Library to enhance both learning and history to embrace community heritage. Housed on gifted property in a shared, inadequate, and inefficient building, both the Library Planning Study and the Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Plan indicate that relocating this regional gem to the downtown corridor would benefit both entities much more than its current off Main Street location. In 2010, after the results of these studies, the Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation (DIDC) purchased the historic downtown Stewart Brothers Building on Main Street with the goal of preserving it as the future home of the Dunkirk Public Library & Glass Museum. In 2014, the DIDC invested \$180,000 into the Stewart Brothers Building to secure the infrastructure and replace the roof.

The confined space in the library doesn't allow for tutoring, children's activities, adult reading groups, or for area visitors to sit and use library materials or wi-fi. The importance of the local public library is immeasurable and that is especially true in communities with low to moderate income, such as Dunkirk. The Dunkirk Public Library is the local source of entertainment with magazines, books, and DVD's available to check out. It is the one free resource education, entertainment and internet use in the community. The Dunkirk Public Library serves as a place for multiple generations to meet and gather, which is vital to providing a sense of community.

Downtown Lighting & Connectivity to the Action.....

The City of Dunkirk is very proud of the new sidewalks, curbing, and road-widening in the 2009/2010 INDOT Major Moves Project. The downtown project once had decorative light posts included until budget cuts forced the lighting to be removed from the project. At the request of the community, and to save future expenses, INDOT allowed the Mayor to run the conduit at night from light pole to light pole so that someday the downtown could have decorative lighting and sidewalk cutouts could be "popped" out and decorative lighting be installed. These decorative posts will alternate banners and flower planters representing the community and the glass heritage, which will be managed by the Dunkirk Beautification Committee.

Our plans also include designated walk-ways, with the "Safe Routes to Schools" concept in mind, to Westlawn Elementary School, West Jay Middle School and West Jay Community Center, from the downtown. The design will incorporate "CPTED – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" to make the walkways the safest they can be and do all possible to prevent any negative activity.

Readiness Status

The City of Dunkirk and partners, the Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation (DIDC) and the Dunkirk Investment Group (DIG), have been working hard to acquire, complete environmental reviews, and be set for projects.

Crown Crossing Senior Housing

- ✓ "Slum & Blight" Buildings Acquired for Site Control
- ✓ Environmental Review Completed
- ✓ Developer, Buckeye Hope Foundation, Financing in Place with the exception of IHEDA Tax Credits, City of Dunkirk providing \$100,000 to the project—Jay County Council providing \$150,000 interest free loan to the project

Dunkirk Library & Glass Museum

- ✓ Building Acquired by DIDC
- ✓ Environmental Review Complete
- ✓ Planning Study Completed
- ✓ DIDC invested \$180,000 in 2014 to put a new roof on the proposed building and secure the structure

Downtown Lighting Project

- ✓ Conduit pulled by the community
- ✓ Pop-out sidewalk plates where cobra head lighting is for easy lighting replacement



Crown Crossing Senior Living Village Before & Proposed After

The Projects, The Plan...

Crown Crossing Senior Living Village & Depot Senior Center

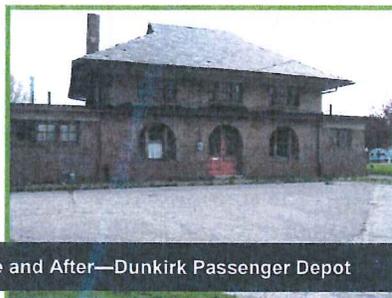
Over the years and throughout each study that has been done with the City of Dunkirk, the older adult population has been discussed at length as a serious growing need in the community. It is important to the City of Dunkirk to embrace the 3rd, 4th, and 5th generation glass workers that are aging in the community. The community does all it can to embrace the local seniors by hosting the Dunkirk Speedcat Alumni Banquets and supporting LifeStream, Inc. partnerships for the Interurban Transportation. In March of 2013, the City of Dunkirk completed a Senior Housing Feasibility Study to assess the feasibility of a senior living complex in downtown Dunkirk. The study shows that the regional market will support a 24 unit Senior Living Complex, which has been named "Crown Crossing Senior Retirement Village". In 2014, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation partnered with the City of Dunkirk, repeated the feasibility study, partnered with the DIDC for an "option to purchase" the site for \$1, and rendered architectural plans that the community adores. In the financing plan for the project, IHEDA Tax Credits are essential, while the City of Dunkirk has committed \$100,000 and the Jay County Council and Commissioners have committed to \$150,000 interest-free loan.

"I want to live in Dunkirk, but I need to live in a low-maintenance complex. If Dunkirk doesn't get senior housing, Bill and I are going to have to move away. I don't want to, we don't want to move out of Dunkirk." - 45 year Dunkirk jewelry store owner Marilyn Blankenbaker, who has lived above the family business but is aging and the loft apartment is no longer an option.

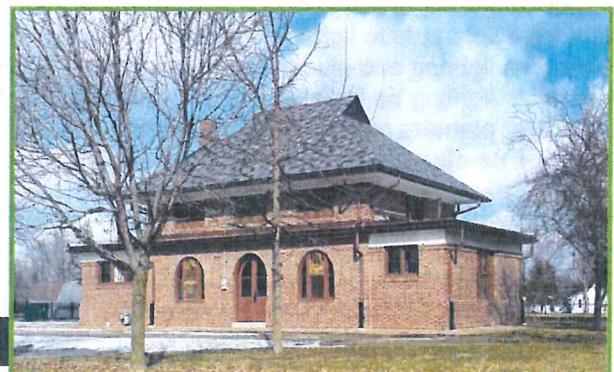


Mayor Watson, Marilyn, Lt. Gov. Ellspermann, & Bill at the Blankenbaker's Jewelry Store Retirement Celebration

The Dunkirk Passenger Train Depot is located adjacent to the proposed location of a future "Crown Crossing Senior Living Village". The City of Dunkirk and the Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation have worked to acquire this community asset and have completed the \$600,000 exterior renovation in the Spring of 2015. The community has decided this will be a local Senior Center and will house the local heritage. The City of Dunkirk believes that social opportunities and senior housing are key to creating a livable place, that fosters the older adult population "aging in place".



Before and After—Dunkirk Passenger Depot





Marketing the City of Dunkirk as a Stellar Community

Marketing Dunkirk as a Stellar Community will be a pleasure. In fact, the success of our local investment group has already

attracted attention and given us the opportunity to talk about our DIY spirit.

In February, Mayor Watson and DIG investor Rock Fuqua were speakers at *Small Town Success Stories*, a workshop sponsored by the Grant County Economic Growth Council.

Based on interest generated from this event, we believe Dunkirk could act as a statewide case study on how small, rural communities can generate local, private investment to revitalize downtown. Becoming a Stellar Community will greatly strengthen our community and increase our opportunities to talk about every small town's potential.

Our ability to complete the Project Scope

In closing, I would like to emphasize that the City of Dunkirk has the team in place to complete these projects within the three year time frame. Over the past three years we have completed over five million dollars in infrastructure improvements as a team, all while planning and implementing projects throughout the community. As Mayor and Jay County Engineer, I do not see any easement issues, environmental problems, or any other barriers to accomplishing these projects in three years. Each property needed for these projects already has site control by the City of Dunkirk or board approval by the respective organizations. All the investment in this proposal is visible and above ground because of the great infrastructure already in place. The leadership team in place is proven, responsible, and ready for this designation. We have the capacity and are ready to go from being a great residential community to a stellar designated community! It would be an honor to join the ranks of the stellar designated communities that have been awarded in the past. This is a truly community transforming opportunity for the City of Dunkirk that has impacts that will resonate for years to come.

Sincerely,

Daniel Watson, Mayor

"Kathy and I have a great passion for Dunkirk and are on a mission to improve the conditions in our small community. We feel the best way to predict the future is to make it! When an individual or community starts wishing and stops "doing" - nothing gets done. At the end of the day, we simply want to make a positive impact. We believe small town rural America is at the heart of what makes this country the best on the planet." - Rock & Kathy Fuqua, Downtown Business Owners & Dunkirk Investment Group Members

Stellar Team of Dunkirk

Daniel Watson, Mayor
-Certified Engineer in the State of Indiana
-Jay County Engineer for more than 25 years

City of Dunkirk Council, Judy Garr, President

Scott Burgins, SDG, Senior Project Manager

Beam, Longest, & Neff Engineering, Jim Longest and Staff

Ami M Huffman, INDOT ERC, OCRA Grant Administrator

Dunkirk Investment Group, Chuck Huffman, President

Dunkirk Industrial Development Corporation, President Craig Faulkner

Jay County Development Corporation, Bill Bradley, Executive Director, and Jodi Hayes, OCRA Grant Administrator

Buckeye Community Hope Foundation, Senior Housing Development, Ian Maute, Senior Project Manager

Jay County Council & Commissioners

Dunkirk Public Library Board, Chip Phillips, President

Dunkirk Beautification Committee, Chuck & Gay Ann Rife, Judy Garr

Dunkirk Planning and Zoning Administrator, Jack Robbins

Jay County School System

Dunkirk, Indiana

Reference Map

