

Planning Matters: Case Study #2



The Need to Plan:

The City of Erie, PA recognized in 2005 that the time was upon them to create a redevelopment plan to address a myriad of issues facing the City.

- By 2005, only 1% of housing in the downtown as owner-occupied
- The downtown was rife with outdated infrastructure and public amenities
- Community perception was that of decline, tattered by deindustrialization

The City's leaders knew that redevelopment needed to occur, but what would it look like? A Master Plan would provide the vision for the downtown.

The Funding:

The City of Erie, the Erie Downtown Partnership and the Erie Redevelopment Authority partnered to apply for grant funds to complete the first comprehensive study of Downtown Erie in a quarter Century.

- The partnership received \$50,000 in LUPTAP funds
- The partnership supplied the matching \$50,000 from local funds

The Plan:

The Downtown Erie Master Plan consisted of a market and physical analysis of the downtown. The market analysis made the case for financiers to invest in Erie and provided a baseline for where the community was financially and what type of investment would be needed. The physical analysis changed perception by allowing people to visualize what a new Erie could look like.

The Bottom Line:

In addition to the major redevelopment projects completed by the City of Erie, millions of dollars have been invested into the Downtown as a result of the Master Plan:

- \$5,000,000 Investment—Mercantile Building: 5 story, 49,000 sq ft of office, retail, and condos
- \$750,000 Investment—Griswold Park: redesign and development of Downtown Park
- \$3,500,000 Investment—12th Street Redesign: streetscape, pedestrian and vehicular improvements

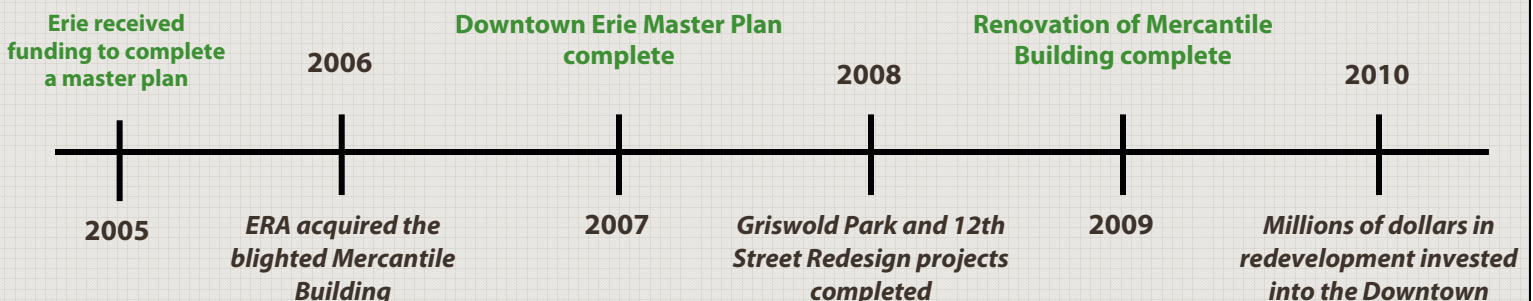
The Investment:

The City of Erie was able to leverage \$50,000 in state funding to generate a resurgence in its Downtown with millions of dollars being invested by private developers as part of redevelopment projects.



Mercantile Building, Source: ERA

*"The [Master Plan] has spurred redevelopment efforts from private developers, creating halo investment from the work we have done."
—John Elliot, President and CEO of the Economic Development Corporation of Erie County, 2010*



Key Milestones in the City of Erie's Downtown Redevelopment Project