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- The downtown was rife with outdated infrastructure and public amenities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 financers 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.

“[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