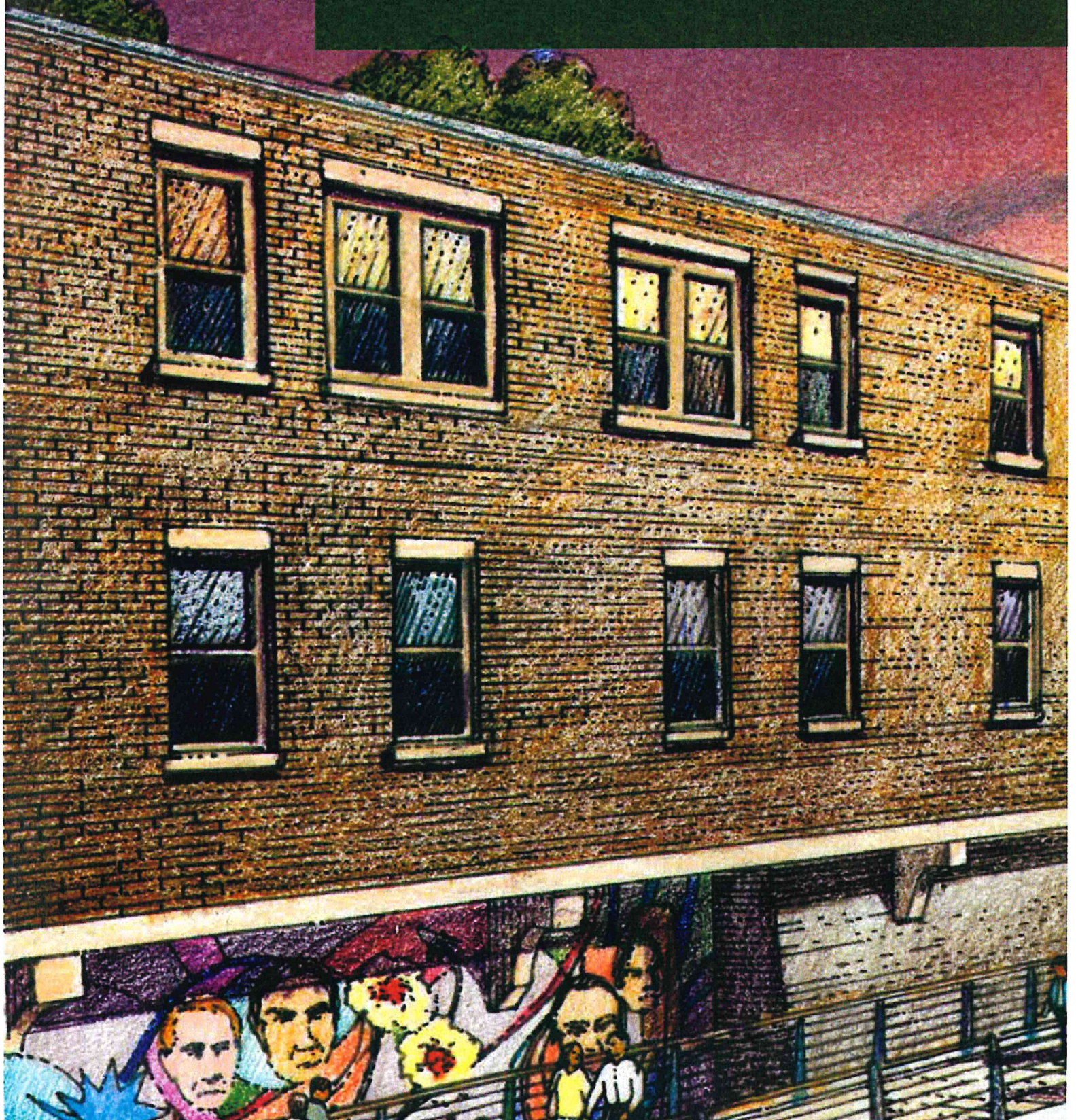



Section 9 Implementation



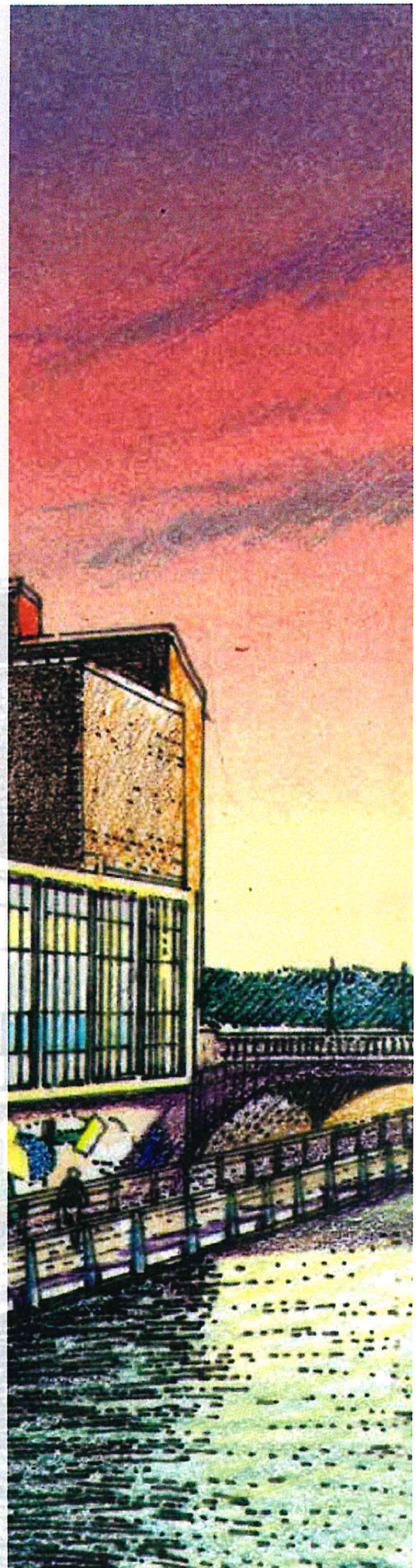


The goal of this Downtown Master Plan is to build upon previous implementation successes and continue forward within the context of Aurora's historic downtown to create a more livable, walkable, and vibrant core. The Master Plan outlines the community's vision and defines guiding principles to help achieve that vision.

The strategies recommended in this Plan begin with creating a unique, memorable experience to solidify downtown as a desirable destination for people who live here, work here, or just come to visit. Increasing the number of people in the downtown will lead to the development of supportive businesses, entertainment, and retail activity. Arts and culture activity will find direction and increased support at various levels.

The Fox River will continue to be the heart of Aurora with attractive new open space, and wetlands to improve water quality and mitigate flooding. Transportation improvements will help to encourage more walking, and reduce frustrations with parking and traffic. Creative and targeted outreach approaches will help to foster a stronger relationship with the municipality and its residents, and cultivate new leaders along the way. The Aurora Community has been working, and will continue to work tirelessly toward this bold vision for the future—a future that is, indeed, bright.

The tables in this section list the recommendations from the plan, suggested initiation steps for each recommendation, phasing, level of difficulty, and cost. The recommendations fall into three categories: program, policy, and infrastructure. For phasing information, it is not expected that the City of Aurora would be able to complete all tasks within the identified time frame; rather, this information should be viewed as ease of implementation with regards to how long it may take to make progress. Some of the challenges to implementation include coordination efforts, data collection, or political opposition to changes. Unless otherwise noted, the City of Aurora Development Services Team is expected to be the lead implementer.



Implementation Matrix

Rec. #/Recommendation	Type: INF, PRO, POL	Phasing			Next steps	Complexity 1 = easy 5 = difficult	Cost \$ = low to \$\$\$\$ = high	Partners (* indicates lead other than COA Planning department)
		0-18 months	1.5 - 3 years	3+ years				
THE DOWNTOWN EXPERIENCE								
1. Enhance the built environment to create a sense of place								
1.1	INF	X			Starting with CMAP's gateway map, prioritize major and minor gateways, assess current gateway experience, identify potential improvements. Count the number of cars, bikes, and pedestrians passing through priority gateways. Initiate conversations with Aurora's various cultural advisory boards to get suggestions for how best to honor Aurora's unique local history and culture	2	\$\$	BNSF, Metra, IDOT, Cultural advisory boards, area business associations, City departments
1.2	INF		X	X	From the gateway analysis (1.1), identify locations that might benefit from artistic paint treatment. Consult with local Arts Alliance or other partners.	3	\$\$	BNSF, Metra, IDOT, COA Arts Alliance, City departments
1.3	INF	X	X		Assemble a committee to research and identify best practices and strategies for signage. From the gateway analysis (1.1), and input from the RAMIP project process, determine appropriate locations to target.	3	\$\$	Neighboring communities, City departments, Kane County Forest Preserve District
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive signage and wayfinding program								
2.1	INF	X			Develop inventory map of destinations, based off of the gateway analysis (1.1).	1	\$	Local organizations
2.2	PRO		X		Assemble a committee to research and identify best practices and strategies for a universally accessible wayfinding system.	3	\$\$	Fox River communities, Kane County DOT, Fox River Forest Preserve District
2.3	INF			X	Contact Illinois Tollway to better understand their restrictions on signage. Continue with on-street signage at important gateway locations. Identify locationally appropriate signage for different gateways.	2	\$	Public Works

3. Enhance marketing, branding, and communication										
3.1	Promote and cultivate the creative, cultural identity of downtown	PRO			X	X	Initiate conversations with Aurora's various cultural advisory boards to get suggestions for how best to honor and promote Aurora's cultural identity. Develop culture-based creativity, stemming from art and cultural productions or activities that nurture innovation, enrich residents' and visitors' experience and knowledge about downtown Aurora.	2	\$	Local organizations, Local Boards and Commissions (Aurora Public Art Commission, Aurora Civic Center Authority Board, Downtown Executive Committee, Hispanic Heritage Advisory Board, Historic Preservation Commission, Riverwalk Commission, Indian American Community Outreach Advisory Board, African American Heritage Advisory Board)
3.2	Establish a broad marketing reach	PRO			X		Develop a mission, vision, and goals statements for marketing. Identify target audiences.	2	\$	Invest Aurora, UIC Academic Computing and Communications Center
4. Improve feelings of comfort and safety										
4.1	Identify and evaluate common pedestrian routes and parking facilities for safety improvements	INF			X		Conduct a SWOT analysis and identify best practices and strategies for safety improvements.	2	\$	Local organizations, Public Works, Bike Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Board, UIC Office of Parking Services
4.2	Identify and activate vacant spaces	PRO			X		Develop an inventory map. Initiate conversations with Aurora's various partners to get suggestions for how best to market and activate spaces. Develop a strategic economic and redevelopment projects plan that enhance activities, infrastructures, public facilities or services to draw attention to vacant spaces nearby.	3	\$\$	Invest Aurora, CMAP, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations
4.3	Promote community engagement and enhanced patrolling techniques	PRO					Enhance community engagement by having monthly neighborhood meetings with police representatives and local organizations. Implement a smart security guard system by also placing emergency poles in strategic locations.	2	\$\$	Invest Aurora, CMAP, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations, Aurora Police Department

Rec. #/Recommendation	Type: INF, PRO, POL	Phasing			Next steps	Complexity 1 = easy to 5 = difficult	Cost \$ = low to \$\$\$ = high	Partners (* indicates lead other than COA Planning department)
		0-18 months	1.5 - 3 years	3+ years				
REVITALIZING THE DOWNTOWN ECONOMY								
1. Enhance the business climate by focusing on economic development initiatives and programming to encourage investment								
1.1	POL	X			Code of Ordinances amendment to streamline and improve development and redevelopment facilitation strategies. Permits and fees amendment	1	\$	
1.2	PRO	X			Achieved	N/A	N/A	
1.3	PRO	X	X		Initiate conversations with Aurora's various partners to get suggestions for how best to attract, retain and expand businesses. Offering loan/grant opportunities. Engage the community and promote community based enterprises.	2	\$\$	Invest Aurora, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations
2. Focus on growing small, local, and niche businesses								
2.1	POL	X	X		Promote physical community business model to engage and attract storefront businesses such as convenience stores.	3	\$\$	Invest Aurora, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations
2.2	PRO			X	Develop existing inventory map of available spaces, assess readiness of properties, develop projected demand absorption heat map	2	\$	Invest Aurora, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations, UIC Office of Business and Financial Services
2.3	PRO	X			Continue ongoing efforts to provide technical assistance.	2		Local organizations, UIC Office of Business and Financial Services

3. Support the downtown core by enhancing livability									
3.1	Maximize the rehabilitation of the existing downtown residential spaces through engagement, resources, and support	PRO	X	X		Develop a strategic intervention plan that provides subsidies, grants, loans, technical and professional consultation for the overall project management.	2	\$\$\$	Local organizations, Invest Aurora
3.2	Increase access to goods and services for current and future downtown residents	POL		X		Develop a survey to understand residents needs and wants. Initiate conversations with Aurora's various partners to get suggestions for how best to market and activate spaces. Develop a strategic economic and redevelopment projects plan that enhances activities, infrastructure, public facilities or services to draw attention to vacant spaces nearby.	2	\$	Invest Aurora, Greater Aurora Chamber of Commerce, Local organizations, UIC Office of Business and Financial Services
3.3	Continue to support inclusive and supportive housing initiatives	POL		X	X	Form a taskforce and initiate conversations with Aurora's various organizations to support renovation projects and allocate units for the people in need.	2	\$	COA Planning, Local organizations
3.4	Identify and support key sites for the construction of new higher density residential development	POL/ PRO/ INF	X	X		Develop an inventory map of available properties. Initiate conversations with Aurora's various partners to get suggestions for how best to market key sites for the construction of new higher density residential development	2	\$	Local organizations

Rec. #/Recommendation	Type: INF, PRO, POL	Phasing			Next steps	Complexity 1 = easy to 5 = difficult	Cost \$ = low to \$\$\$ = high	Partners (*indicates lead other than COA Planning department)
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ACTIVATING DOWNTOWN THROUGH ARTS AND CULTURE								
1. Coordinate and encourage local efforts to promote art, highlight culture and support the performing arts								
1.1	Develop an Arts and Culture Consortium to leverage resources through coordination and collaboration	PRO	X		Identify lead organizers. Establish a charter to identify the groups purpose, time commitment, scope, resources, deliverables, potential members.	2	\$	Paramount Theatre, Aurora Downtown, Fox Valley Music Foundation
1.2	Develop a comprehensive arts and culture plan for Downtown Aurora	PRO	X	X	Identify mutual goals and develop a plan which also establishes priorities. Seek grants or other funding opportunities.	3	\$\$	Arts Recreation and Culture Alliance (ARC)
2. Pursue targeted arts and culture endeavors								
2.1	Boost architectural tourism to strengthen Downtown Aurora's sense of heritage and identity	PRO	X		Create an inventory of architectural assets. Using existing downtown tours, create audio walking tours to accompany printable tour descriptions.	1	\$	AHPC*, APAC, COA Planning
2.2	Add public art installations to downtown at strategic locations with a self-guided public art tour	INF/ POL		X	Develop inventory map of existing art downtown, identify locations lacking in nearby art, and determine available funding resources and potential funding sources	2	\$\$	APAC*, COA Planning
2.3	Increase support for both active and passive arts and culture initiatives	PRO	X		Brainstorm potential passive arts activities, such as sculpture exhibits, light exhibits in public spaces, etc.	1	\$	ARC, Local organizations, Chicago Architecture Foundation
2.4	Create a comprehensive inventory of space available for cultural uses	PRO	X		Develop a map of existing and proposed spaces for cultural uses.	1	\$	COA Arts Alliance, Local organizations
2.5	Simplify processes for arts and culture initiatives	POL		X	Streamline and simplify the approval process	1	\$	Local Organizations

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THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN: THE FOX RIVER								
1. Activate the Fox River Corridor								
1.1	Enhance riverfront infrastructure to increase active recreation	INF	X		Work with stakeholders to prioritize riverfront infrastructure improvements. Issue an RFP to study the necessity of dams and explore alternatives.	2	\$\$	ARC, Business Associations City, Fox Valley Park District
1.2	Promote events and activities along the river	PRO	X		Coordinate an annual river-focused event that promotes activities and programming for children and adults.	1	\$	ARC*, Business Associations, Fox Valley Park District
1.3	Create passive recreational attractions	INF	X		Coordinate with local business associations and the park district to explore seasonal attractions to bring more people to the riverfront.	3	\$	ARC*, Business Associations, Fox Valley Park District
1.4	Provide and enhance river and riparian habitat to create a wildlife friendly environment	INF	X	X	Establish a Fox River beautification committee of volunteers. Issue an RFP to create a comprehensive land use study with a focus on creating more habitat and restoration of the floodplain.	3	\$\$	ARC, City, Fox Valley Park District, IEPA
1.5	Enhance environmental education opportunities and facilities	PRO	X		Work with APL, FVPD, and the School Districts to develop a curriculum with educational programming activities for people of all ages.	2	\$	ARC*, Aurora Public Library, Fox Valley Park District, School districts
2. Enhance connections between the Fox River and downtown								
2.1	Implement improvements that enhance connectivity	INF	X		Coordinate with the development of the Regional Area Mobility Plan (RAM) to participate in the development of a unified and coordinated wayfinding system. Identify key areas for connectivity as part of the riverfront infrastructure improvements prioritization process (strategy 1.1).	2	\$\$	ARC, Business Associations, City, Fox Valley Park District, Northwest Water Planning Alliance, neighboring Fox River communities
2.1	Align riverfront planning and economic development planning	PRO	X		Coordinate with business associations to identify opportunities to promote and support current businesses, and attract new ones.	2	\$	Business Associations, ARC
2.3	Improve signage to provide information and connect to downtown attractions	INF	X		Engage with stakeholders to design a consistent theme and look for wayfinding signage. Coordinate wayfinding improvements with riverfront infrastructure improvements (strategy 1.1).	2	\$\$	ARC, Business Associations, Fox Valley Park District, Northwest Water Planning Alliance

3. Continue to demonstrate leadership in improving environmental quality

<p>3.1 Pursue collaborative environmental improvement efforts with other Fox River communities</p>	<p>PRO</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>Work with peers and partners maintenance staff to reduce the use of chlorides to control snow and ice. Explore alternative ice removal materials.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>\$</p>	<p>ARC, Fox River communities, IEPA, Northwest Water Planning Alliance</p>
<p>3.2 Identify priority restoration areas</p>	<p>PRO</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>Based on restorability, quality of habitat, land ownership, partnership opportunities, and input from environmental groups, stakeholders should identify priority restoration areas that have positive benefits for the Fox River Watershed.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>\$</p>	<p>Fox River communities, IEPA, Northwest Water Planning Alliance</p>
<p>3.3 Encourage pride and stewardship of the river through education</p>	<p>PRO</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>Develop an educational marketing campaign using social media, flyers, brochures, and programming to engage with property owners and promote environmental friendly practices.</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>\$</p>	<p>ARC*, Aurora Public Library, City, Fox Valley Park District</p>

Rec. #/Recommendation	Type: INF, PRO, POL	Phasing			Next steps	Complexity 1 = easy to 5 = difficult	Cost \$ = low to \$\$\$\$ = high	Partners (* indicates lead other than COA Planning department)
		0-18 months	1.5 - 3 years	3+ years				
TRANSPORTATION: GETTING TO AND AROUND DOWNTOWN AURORA								
1. Identify traffic network bottlenecks and high crash locations for projects to improve traffic flow								
1.1	INF		X		Conduct traffic studies to identify patterns of commuter travel and routing options at rush hour.	1	\$\$	IDOT, City departments
1.2	INF		X		Determine circulation patterns, and conduct a parking study (see 4.2)	2	\$\$	IDOT, City departments
2. Encourage walking and enhance the transition to walking from all transportation modes								
2.1	PRO	X			Develop a hierarchy map, starting with the CMAP developed map in the Master Plan.	1	\$	Bike Pedestrian and Transit advisory board
2.2	INF	X			Improve pedestrian experience by separating the sidewalk along Broadway (IL-25) from the roadway with a parkway and street trees. Design and install maps to welcome and guide visitors.	2	\$\$	IDOT, City departments
2.3	INF		X		Collect data analysis concerning signal phase timing.	2	\$	IDOT, City departments
2.4	INF		X		Identify locations where safety improvements (such as those listed on Pages 54-55) would enhance the pedestrian experience.	2	\$\$	IDOT, City departments
3. Encourage the use of bicycles for transportation								
3.1	INF	X			Implement the Bicycle and Pedestrian plan. Develop a map highlighting areas of intervention, estimate improvements cost and budget accordingly. Plan and implement accordingly.	1	\$	IDOT, RAMP, Local organizations

3.2	Encourage active transportation and healthy living through programs and activities	PRO	X			Coordinate with local institutions to develop promotional programs and materials to encourage active transportation.	2	\$	Park Districts, School Districts, Counties Local organizations
3.3	Adopt a Complete Streets policy	POL		X		Review sample Complete Streets policies and draft an ordinance	2	\$\$	Aldermen
4. Address downtown parking challenges									
4.1	Use simple signage and information delivery to improve the parking experience	INF	X			Conduct a parking survey to create an online platform also available via app to better locate and reserve parking facilities and spots available.	2	\$\$	City departments, Aurora Downtown
4.2	Continue to assess strategies for managing demand, including the potential of user fees for on-street parking	POL		X		Develop an RFP for a parking occupancy study to better understand supply and demand.	3	\$\$\$	City departments, Aurora Downtown
4.3	Restructure fines to create more of a deterrent to parking abuse	POL	X			Evaluate potential fine structures, considering if the City wants to target repeat offenders with a large fine after a certain number of tickets, or a single higher ticket fine, or a progressive fine.	1	\$	City departments, Aurora Downtown
5. Encourage more transit usage and visitors by train									
5.1	Provide clear, direct, and inviting options for connections between downtown and the Downtown Metra Station	INF		X		Provide different means of transportation and related signage	2	\$	BNSF, Metra, IDOT, PACE, City departments
5.2	Improve real-time transit information delivery at bus stops	INF		X		Install real-time message boards	1	\$	BNSF, Metra, IDOT, PACE, City departments
5.3	Market transit for events, destinations	PRO		X		Create a ridership campaign exploring the possibility of offering free transit rides to selected events.	1	\$	BNSF, Metra, IDOT, PACE, City departments
6. Identify and fix barriers for those with mobility challenges									
6.1	Improve Riverwalk accessibility from downtown streets	POL		X		Develop a swot analysis map and an implementation plan	2	\$\$	City departments, Aurora Downtown, IDOT
6.2	Continue with plans to create a drop-off area near RiverEdge Park	INF		X		Obtain the required permits and allowances, design drop-off area, launch an RFP, approve the proposal and start construction	2	\$\$	IDOT, City departments
6.3	ADA improvements on downtown streets	INF		X		Develop a map of areas that intervention and identify best practices such as zebra-style painted crosswalks, countdown timers, and audible/chirping crossings for people with vision impairment.	2	\$\$	IDOT, City departments

Rec. #/Recommendation	Type: INF, PRO, POL	Phasing			Next steps	Complexity 1 = easy to 5 = difficult	Cost \$ = low to \$\$\$\$ = high	Partners
		0-18 months	1.5 - 3 years	3+ years				
BUILDING THE DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY								
1. Explore innovative public engagement methods to implement the downtown master plan								
1.1	Hold educational forums	INF	X		Identify community meetings, events, or other municipal activities that already attract residents and stakeholders. Use up-to-date listing of community leaders and local groups to recruit partners and volunteers. Annually update on progress, get input.	1	\$\$	City staff, elected officials, local institutions, businesses, community groups, and residents
1.2	Re-engage existing resident groups and facilitate the creation of new community groups	INF	X		Develop and maintain a database of community leaders and organizations who were involved in the planning process. Create an outreach plan based on plan objectives and the opportunities to engage various segments of the population.	2	\$\$	City staff, elected officials, local institutions, businesses, community groups, and residents
1.3	Update website and use social media outreach	INF	X		Create and launch webpage for the Downtown Master Plan.	2	\$\$	City staff
2. Engage the diverse population of Aurora								
2.1	Make public engagement accessible	INF	X		Solicit input from leaders and organizations in determining the best models of engagements.	1	\$	COA's cultural advisory commissions and boards
2.2	Address communication barriers	PRO	X		Designate a community liaison position (could be filled by current employees who are bicultural and bilingual or volunteers from local CBOs).	2	\$	Faith based organizations, public safety agencies, first responders, community leaders
2.3	Improve language access	INF	X		Establish a volunteer language bank.	2	\$	Local faith-based organizations, community-based organizations, community college student groups

3. Strengthen local capacity									
3.1	Build trust and collaboration between the City and the residents	PRO	X			Continue to develop strong partnerships with organizations active in Aurora, particularly those who work directly with Latino and African-American groups.	3	\$	City staff, elected officials, COA's cultural advisory commissions and boards, faith-based organizations, community groups and residents
3.2	Foster leadership among the various constituencies	PRO		X		Design and execute a municipal citizen academy.	2	\$	Aurora Public Library, school districts, Family Focus, Boys II Men, Waubensee Community College
3.3	Promote civic engagement	PRO		X		Partner with USHLI or ICIRR and engage local non-partisan groups to leverage resources and encourage voter participation.	2	\$	School districts, Aurora Public Library, Family Focus, Boys II Men, USHLI, ICIRR
3.4	Organize community building activities	PRO	X			Assemble a committee of representatives from COA's advisory boards and commissions, and local community groups to design, plan, and host year-round community activities in the downtown.	1	\$	City staff, elected officials, COA's cultural advisory commissions and boards, local institutions, businesses, community groups, and residents
4. Update the City's Comprehensive Plan									
4.1	Update the City's Comprehensive Plan	INF			X	Identify funding sources for plan update, develop RFP	4	\$\$\$	COA departments, CBOs, business owners, adjacent communities and local partners, service providers, local institutions, and Aurora residents