

**ADVANCING
DOWNTOWN
FORT WAYNE
AS THE VIBRANT,
URBAN CORE
OF NORTHEAST INDIANA**

DOWNTOWN
Fort Wayne

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

LETTER FROM THE INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO

2025 marked a significant milestone for Downtown Fort Wayne with the successful reauthorization of our organization for another ten years. As one of the original founders in 1995, I have had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the remarkable evolution of our Downtown over the past three decades.

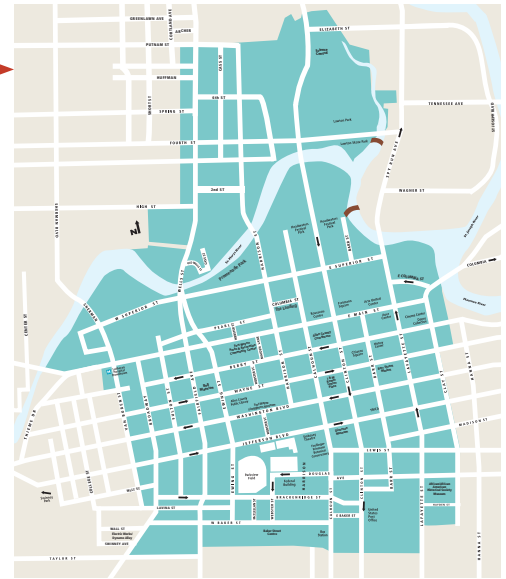
Reflecting on last year, Downtown came alive in fresh and exciting ways. Energized public spaces, growing local businesses, and memorable events showcased the spirit and resilience of our city. These moments are a testament to the dedication of everyone who cares deeply about this place.

As we enter this new chapter, we do so amid change, growth, and ongoing challenges, but also with strong momentum. Our focus remains clear: to enhance quality-of-life amenities and foster a thriving community where residents, property owners, businesses, and visitors feel connected and welcome.

Looking ahead, we embrace this decade of opportunity with intention and resolve. Together, we will build on our legacy, meet challenges head-on, and shape a Downtown Fort Wayne that truly reflects the pride, potential, and passion of our community.

Thank you for your continued support and belief in this shared journey.

— **Bob Walters**, Interim President & CEO, Downtown Fort Wayne



2025 Staff

Bob Walters, Interim President & CEO
Frank Howard, Director of Operations & COO
Preston Wallace, Director of Marketing
Tamara Cummins, Events & Programs Manager
Kim McCutchan, Business Services Manager
Anthony Racic, Clean & Safe Manager
Mark Sharin, Downtown Ambassador
Jordan Southwick, Clean & Safe Technician
Clayton Bowers, Clean & Safe Technician
Juan Vasquez, Clean & Safe Technician

2025 Contractors

Alexandra Hall, A H Public Spaces Consulting,
Director of Art This Way & Public Realm
Molly Conner, Sonder Digital Marketing,
Digital Content Manager
McKayla Nevers, Never Creative,
Photographer & Videographer
Jacqui Russett, Graphic Design

2025 Board of Directors

Tom Ludwiski, *Chair*, Barrett McNagny
Lorie Ailor, *Vice-Chair*, Lutheran Health Network
Pete Henry, *Secretary*, Midwest Pipe & Steel
Amanda Muldoon, *Treasurer*, Hanning & Bean Enterprises
Greg Allen, WesBanco (*retired*)
Zach Barrett, Barrett & Stokely
Rich Beck, Allen County Commissioners
Michelle Chambers, City Council of Fort Wayne
Tiffany Fries, Surack Enterprises
Brittany Kruse-Andrews, Ash Crest Corp.
Harley Parsons, Blush Bridal & Beauty Boutique
Matt Reckman, Model Group
Andrea Robinson, City of Fort Wayne
Theoplis Smith III, Phresh Laundry
Bob Walters, Downtown Property Owner

2025 Board of Directors Legal Counsel

Justin Molitoris, Barrett McNagny



PHOTO: McKayla Nevers

CLEAN & SAFE

Clean & Safe services the 99-block District and surrounding Community Corridors 6 days a week, 52 weeks out of the year

51 TONS

OF TOTAL DEBRIS AND LITTER
COLLECTED BETWEEN OUR
DOWNTOWN CORE AND
NEIGHBORING BUSINESS CORRIDORS

THE TEAM COMPLETED 64,803 TASKS

3,341 BUCKETS, TOTALING
25,057.5 POUNDS

752 PILES OF
UNHOUSED DEBRIS

721 STICKERS OR
POSTERS REMOVED

PHOTO: McKayla Nevers

AMBASSADOR PROGRAM PILOT

In 2025, a single ambassador was piloted to enhance safety and hospitality in Downtown Fort Wayne. They supported visitors and community members, including those experiencing homelessness, while promptly and respectfully addressing concerns. The program will expand in 2026 to further promote an inclusive and welcoming Downtown.

COMMUNITY CORRIDOR PROGRAM

In a partnership with the City of Fort Wayne, Clean & Safe continued its extended services to 13 neighboring corridors leading into Downtown Fort Wayne.



To get involved with any future Clean & Safe volunteer projects, please go to **DowntownFortWayne.com**.

Corridor	Total Pounds
Wells	5,416.88
W Main	5,130.00
Broadway	4,927.50
Fairfield	4,134.38
S Calhoun	4,185.00
Spy Run - 4th - N Clinton	4,050.00
E Berry	3,830.63
Hanna	3,898.13
Columbia	3,121.88
E Jefferson	6,041.25
E Washington	5,703.75

50,439.38
TOTAL POUNDS OF DEBRIS
AND LITTER COLLECTED

EVENTS



The Monday Lunch Club was a pilot event that activated a traditionally quiet day, filling a lunch gap and proving demand for creative downtown programming."

— **Tamara Cummins**, Events & Programs Manager,
Downtown Fort Wayne

Celebrate Downtown

BuskerFest

Lunch on the Square

The Monday Lunch Club

Fright Night

HolidayFest featuring
the Night of Lights



PHOTO: McKayla Nevers

EVENT ATTENDANCE

Celebrate Downtown	165
BuskerFest	8,000
Lunch on the Square	7,000
The Monday Lunch Club	800
Fright Night	12,000
Night of Lights	23,000

50,965

TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

6

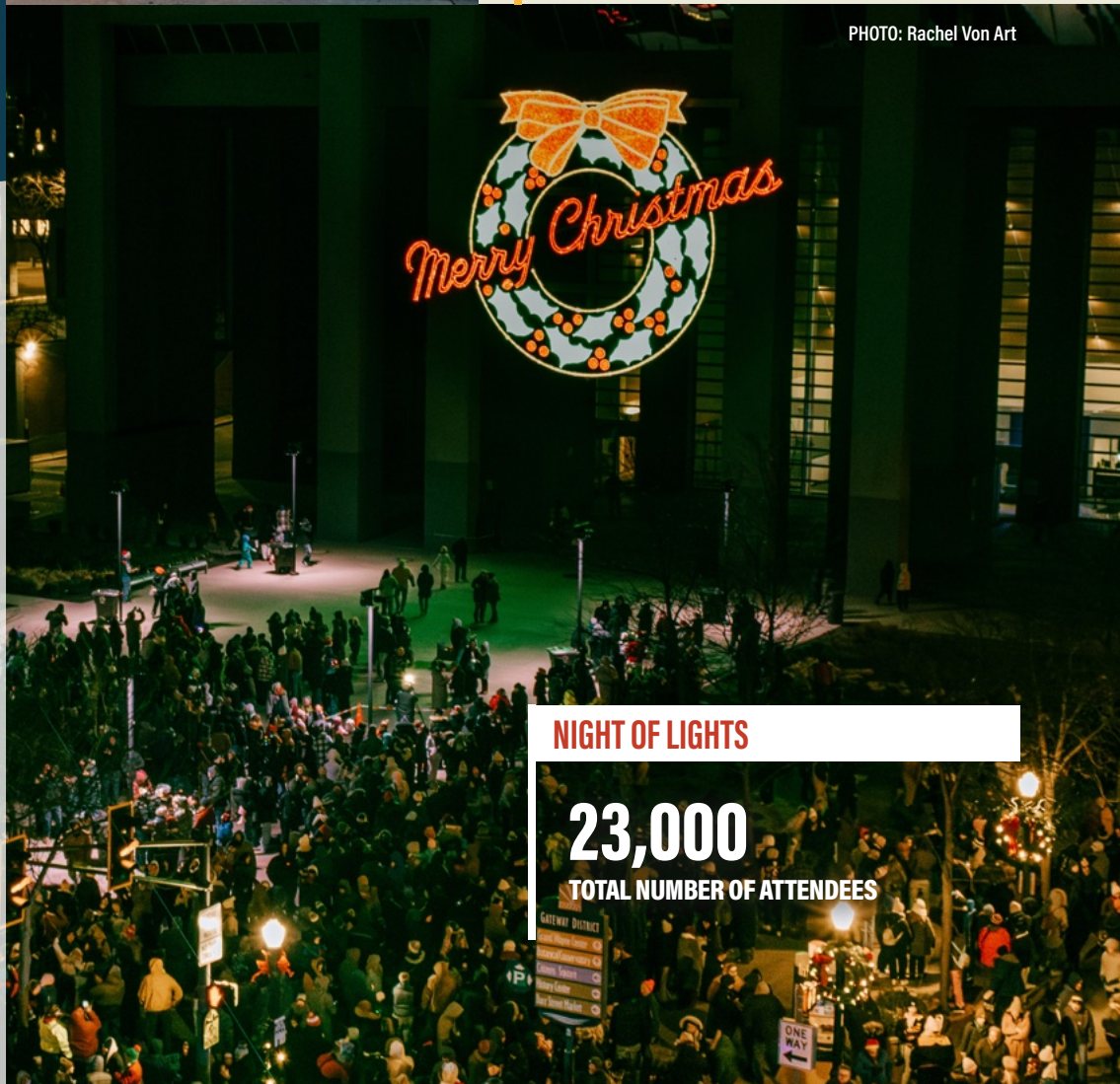
PROGRAMMED EVENTS/
EVENT SERIES

PHOTO: Rachel Von Art

\$3+

MILLION

TOTAL ECONOMIC
IMPACT



NIGHT OF LIGHTS

23,000

TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

ART THIS WAY

CITY OF FORT WAYNE FAÇADE GRANT PROGRAM

Art This Way worked with five local artists on eight mural projects at 222 Pearl Street.

Artists: Brandon Coley, Natalie Fetzer, Carly Mitchell, Mitchell Egly, Jon Mendelson

PHOTO: Rachel Von Art



Art This Way brought 22 new murals to Downtown Fort Wayne in 2025. Julie Wall installed her 2,000+ square foot mural at the Riverfront at Promenade Park Apartments, adjacent to Promenade Park. This piece was funded by Barrett Realty Investments.

\$30,000+ PROJECT-SPECIFIC FUNDING FROM SPONSORS

\$35,000+ PROJECT-SPECIFIC GRANTS SECURED FOR 2026

3,600+ SQUARE FEET OF NEW MURALS PAINTED IN DOWNTOWN

\$100,000 SECURED FOR A NEW LIGHTED SCULPTURE, FLOW, IN THE 77 STEPS ALLEYWAY

CLEAN DRAINS FORT WAYNE

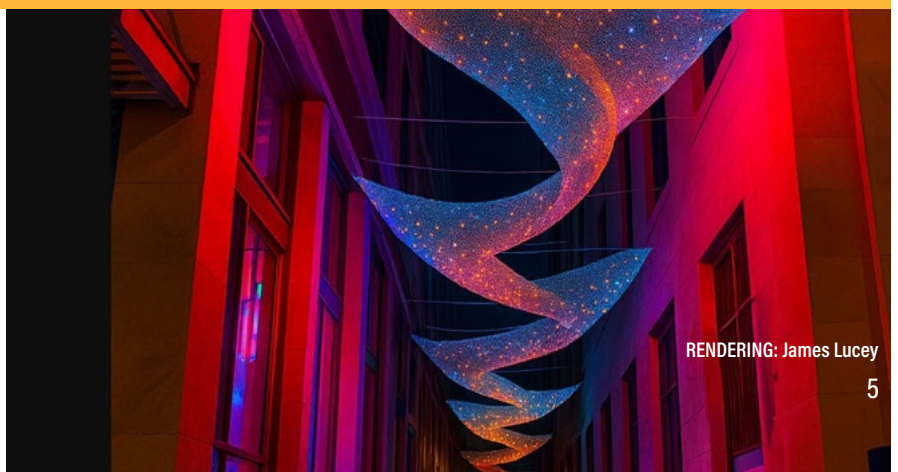
City Utilities continues to invest in the Clean Drains mural program. The temporary murals will serve as a visual reminder that the storm drains in the city go directly to the waterways and rivers. 14 new murals were installed in 2025.



2026 PROJECTS: FLOW • 600 WEST MAIN STREET MURAL • 206 PEARL STREET MURAL • BROADWAY COORIDOR PROJECTS

“Flow is about movement—of water, of people, of ideas. We’re honored to work with the Fort Wayne community to transform the 77 Steps Alleyway into a living, ever-changing experience that responds to its environment and the people who pass through it.”

— James Lucey, lead artist for Flow, a designer specializing in interactive light-based sculpture



RENDERING: James Lucey

MARKETING

TOP TEN WEB STORIES

DTFW's Festival Guide:
Spring & Summer 2025

Downtown Fort Wayne's Guide to
the 2025 Holiday Season

DTFW's Guide to Happy Hour

Downtown Fort Wayne's
2025 Fall Festivities Guide

85 Years of Powers.
Let's Celebrate With a
New World Record!

Partnership Spotlight:
Pontiac Street Market

Celebrate Mother's Day the
DTFW way—with the Downtown
Favorites gift box & more!

Meet One of DTFW's
Unsung Heroes: Scott Pepper

The New Wave of Three Rivers

What to Expect at This Year's
Lunch on the Square

7.2+
MILLION
TOTAL DIGITAL
VIEWS

WEB, EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA

188% INCREASE
FROM 2024

PARTNERSHIP WITH OUTFRONT MEDIA

849,768
TOTAL PLAYS

12,060,886
TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

WEBSITE MARKETING

150,000
TOTAL PAGE VIEWS

30 SECONDS
AVERAGE TIME ON SITE

EMAIL/NEWSLETTER MARKETING

9,200
TOTAL CONTACTS

36%
AVERAGE OPEN RATE

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK
3.6%
FOLLOWER GROWTH
51,300+
TOTAL FOLLOWERS

INSTAGRAM
14.2%
FOLLOWER GROWTH
45,000+
TOTAL FOLLOWERS

LINKEDIN
12.6%
FOLLOWER GROWTH
10,420+
TOTAL FOLLOWERS

TOP TEN WEBPAGES VIEWED

Homepage: **27,600**

HolidayFest: **16,700**

Fright Night: **13,200**

Parking: **11,500**

Lunch on the Square: **4,300**

Blog Feature:
Spring & Summer Festival Guide: **4,000**

BuskerFest: **3,800**

Holly Shopping: **3,400**

DTFW Living: **3,200**

Ladies Night Out: **3,200**

BUSINESS SERVICES

300+

**BUSINESSES SERVICED AND SUPPORTED
WITHIN THE 99-BLOCK DISTRICT**

7

TARGETED BUSINESS SECTORS

RETAIL • HOSPITALITY • RESIDENTIAL • ARTS •
ATTRACTIONS/ ENTERTAINMENT • CREATIVE &
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES • PROPERTY OWNERS



PHOTOS: McKayla Nevers

EVENTS

Two Ladies Night Out events were held, one in the summer and one in the fall. Downtown Favorites Boxes were sold online for Mother's Day, Father's Day, and holiday shopping. In 2026, these activities will expand to include new partners from Broadway and Wells Street.

BUSINESS SERVICES ROUNDTABLES

Five roundtables were held in 2025 with retail and restaurant owners and their representatives. These will expand to other sectors in 2026.

CONTESTS

Two Window Decorating contests were held, one in spring and one for the holidays, both with strong participation.

DOWNTOWN GIFT CARD

The Downtown Gift Card program through Yiftee grew in 2025, with over \$26,000 in sales and more than \$14,000 redeemed to date. The program includes 50 participating locations across the 99 blocks Downtown and will expand in 2026 with the district's growth.

DESIGNATED OUTDOOR REFRESHMENT AREA (DORA)

Approved in 2025 and taking effect in January 2026, the expansion of the DORA marks a significant milestone for Downtown Fort Wayne's business community. This growth will open new opportunities for local businesses and help make Downtown an even more welcoming place for everyone."

— **Preston Wallace**, Director of Marketing & Lead DORA Administrator,
Downtown Fort Wayne



SPONSORS

THANK YOU!

Thank you to our stakeholders, sponsors, and community partners in 2025. Your continued support is helping move Downtown Fort Wayne forward as a vibrant, welcoming, and connected urban core for northeast Indiana.

PARTNER/PRESENTING LEVEL

Brightmark
Centier Bank
JH Specialties
Lutheran Health Network
ProFed Credit Union

SILVER LEVEL

Do It Best Corp.
Light & Bruening
Peterman Brothers
Renewal By Andersen
T-Mobile

GOLD LEVEL

Adams Radio Group
Allen County Courthouse
Allen County Public Library
Barnes & Thornburg LLP
Drive & Shine
Federated Media
Fort Wayne Newspapers
Indiana Michigan Power
Lincoln Financial Group
Model Group
OUTFRONT Media
PNC Bank
Steel Dynamics
Surack Enterprises/ Sweet Real Estate
The Bradley
Trinity English Lutheran Church
WANE 15

BRONZE LEVEL

Adapt For Life
Allen County Public Library
Arts United
Barrett & McNagny LLP
CertaPro
Fort Wayne Metals
SST Services
Union Street Market
Visit Fort Wayne
WesBanco

GRANTS

Allen County Department of Health
AWS Foundation
City of Fort Wayne Commercial Façade Grant Program
Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne
Knight Foundation
Parkview Health
SEED Fort Wayne

PHOTOS: McKayla Nevers

