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“Reconstructing the Vale of Paradise: A Return to the City Beautiful Movement”

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Abstract: Since the election of Jon Costas as mayor of Valparaiso, Indiana in November 2003, his administration has embarked on an urban renewal program that fits—for better and for worse—squarely in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement of the early twentieth century. Like earlier proponents of the City Beautiful movement, the Costas administration has implemented urban renewal policies that have emphasized commercial development, beautification, civic culture, efficiency, and health and fitness. The administration’s plans include some initial successes, particularly its efforts to use civic institutions to revitalize rundown sections of the city; however, the city’s policies also share some of the drawbacks of the City Beautiful movement, by emphasizing the benefits of upscale commercial development while overlooking the housing needs of lower-middle class and poor residents of the community.

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Reconstructing the Vale of Paradise: A Return to the City Beautiful Movement

Valparaiso is an affluent and growing community of around 27,000 residents located in Northwest Indiana. While the economy of Northwest Indiana historically has been dominated by steel mills and other manufacturing industries, Valparaiso has had a somewhat more diverse economy. The city has more “white-collar” jobs to offer than most other cities in the region, partly due to the presence of Valparaiso University and numerous medical facilities, such as Porter hospital, in the city. In recent years, the city and surrounding Porter County have experienced a strong wave of residential and

commercial development. The city government has responded to these trends, especially since the election of Jon Costas as mayor in November 2003. The city has taken advantage of this period of growth by annexing new residential developments and attracting new business to the city; however, it also has embarked on an urban renewal program to revitalize and beautify its existing commercial districts and to enhance public space within the city.

The best way to understand the Costas administration's notion of urban renewal is that it fits—for better and for worse—squarely in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.¹ By way of temperament and policies, Costas is a neo-progressive Republican who believes that government can and should improve communities by helping to re-shape their physical environments so that they are ennobling, and thus, like his predecessors in the City Beautiful movement, he has begun to implement urban renewal policies that have emphasized commercial redevelopment, efficiency, beautification, the central importance of civic culture, and health and fitness. Yet, the Costas administration's policies are vulnerable to the same sorts of criticisms voiced by detractors of the City Beautiful Movement: the approach to city planning is excessively top-down, commercial interests are given more attention than those of lower-income residents, and the policies cater narrowly to the lifestyles of higher income, “upscale” residents to the exclusion of others who live in the city. To be sure, the administration, which is much more concerned with practical outcomes than with theory, has not self-consciously followed either this earlier model of city planning or any more recent model. In particular, the administration's policies are not consistent with the ideals of recent urban planning models, such as New Urbanism and New Pedestrianism, which try to blend residential and commercial space and to address environmental issues induced by urban sprawl.² Ultimately, both the successes and the missed opportunities of Valparaiso's renewal policies demonstrate that the city's approach is securely in the City Beautiful tradition. The greatest strength of Valparaiso's plan for urban renewal is its emphasis on the role of civic institutions. Indeed, each area slated for urban renewal will be anchored by a specific major civic institution in the city, an approach which will enhance the possibilities for both greater economic prosperity and an increased sense of community. The primary weakness of the administration's approach to urban renewal is that, ultimately, it is too narrow. As with earlier City Beautiful efforts, Valparaiso's leadership has focused primarily on improvements in the physical environment that will aid the more affluent members of its community. Unfortunately—again in the City Beautiful tradition—while the administration successfully has reached out to commercial and civic leaders to develop a plan for commercial beautification, it has failed to address the pressing housing needs of lower-middle class and poor residents of the community.

City Beautiful

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Progressives across the United States embarked on the City Beautiful movement to bring order out of the chaos wrought by the Industrial Revolution.³

Leading the way in championing city planning was Daniel Burnham, the famous architect who designed the Columbian Exposition and the Plan of Chicago of 1909 and who turned to cities such as Paris as models of how the urban environment could be made beautiful, efficient, economically productive, and civically unified—all at the same time. The City Beautiful vision emphasized that the physical environment had the power to shape people's outlook and behavior, even their moral state.⁴ To this end, the creation of a beautiful city demanded an expansive system of parks suited to healthy activities, landscaped boulevards, attractive fountains and outdoor sculptures, and the removal of billboards cluttering the skyline. The movement also emphasized the practical advantages of city planning. A clean city with upgraded roadways and a rationalized railway system was not just more attractive; it also was a better place to cultivate business. As the historian Carl Smith explains, Progressives also maintained that “a beautiful city would function more effectively than an unappealing one.”⁵ The historian Paul Boyer puts it more bluntly: “ugliness, dirt, and disorder were bad for business; a more attractive and orderly city would surely attract more customers and investors.”⁶ Moreover, at a time when there was much political and economic strife as well as historically high levels of immigration, the movement appealed to a greater sense of civic unity and engagement. To achieve this goal of unifying the urban environment, the movement called on cities to build grand civic centers in the neoclassical style. These buildings, along with new monuments and statues, would help create a civic core for an otherwise teeming urban population. To turn their vision into reality, practitioners in the City Beautiful movement eagerly forged partnerships between the public and private sectors.

While the movers and shakers behind the City Beautiful movement brought abundant ambition and energy to their plans to transform commercial and civic space, they virtually ignored residential neighborhoods, particularly working class ones dominated by tenements. For the members of the City Beautiful movement, it was important to reshape cities so that they would appeal to middle- and upper-class sensibilities. They wanted beautiful and orderly cities that advanced good citizenship and abundant commerce, and to that end, they openly welcomed an expansive government role in revitalizing commercial districts. But for all of this ambition, the proponents of the City Beautiful movement had a narrow vision to this extent: they did not directly address the concerns of working class or poor people. In particular, they were willing to ignore the vast assemblage of tenement housing that marked city after city during this era. Of course, Burnham and others recognized the need to improve the urban housing stock, but ultimately they were more concerned about having their ideas approved by the local business community.⁷ As a result, the eradication of slum housing did not play a part in the City Beautiful movement in cities such as Chicago.

When we jump forward a century to Valparaíso, we find a Costas administration that fits squarely in the tradition of the City Beautiful movement. Granted, the City Beautiful movement proper long ago experienced its demise after critics found that its vision benefited the wealthy at the cost of the poor, stressed aesthetics above the practical, emphasized optimism at the expense of realism, and, at the

bottom line, was simply too expensive to justify.⁸ But over the years, as the historian William Wilson has noted, “The ideals of the City Beautiful survived in spite of the critics’ best efforts.”⁹ Indeed, Valparaíso’s plans for urban renewal embrace most of those ideals. Though Valparaíso has no plans to build a civic center in the neo-classical style, Costas’s urban renewal efforts do emphasize the central importance of the city’s civic institutions. The city’s plan, however, puts a modern spin on the City Beautiful tradition. While the earlier movement tried to create civic identity through neo-classical architecture (a rather implausible proposition), the current administration has developed a better plan to create civic and commercial vitality by wedding each area of urban renewal to a major civic institution in the community and, thereby, connecting civic and commercial space in order that both might flourish. Moreover, the administration’s vision stresses the redeeming qualities of the beautification of public and commercial space, the efficiency of the city’s infrastructure, and the expansion of public space to afford its residents opportunities for more healthful lifestyles.

The Costas administration, though, does not merely build on the strengths of the City Beautiful movement; it also suffers from the same narrowness of vision and the same middle-class and upper-class sensibilities. Even though the administration has energetically sought out partnerships with commercial interests in the community, it has not reached out with the same vigor to social agencies that represent the interests of the poor and working classes who have serious concerns about the affordability of a city with an already difficult housing market for lower-income residents and where new home construction is focused on the high-end. Ultimately, then, the mayor’s agenda for urban renewal harkens back to the Progressive era because of both its successes and its missed opportunities; both by fusing together the ideals of beauty, efficiency, civic engagement, and commercial development and by overlooking the importance of affordable housing for those with low incomes.

The Costas Vision

Valparaíso is going through a period of significant growth, and this growth will lead to changes. Costas’s opinion is that the city government can best represent the citizens of Valparaíso by actively managing that growth rather than allowing market forces to run their own course. Costas likes to say that Valparaíso is a “vibrant and progressive city.”¹⁰ By this, he means that the citizens of Valparaíso are “inherently progressive” and that they will support the initiatives of an activist city government. “I think there is an inherent attitude in the community—the values of risk taking, cooperation, respect, investment, concern about long-term rather than short-term.”¹¹ During the 2003 mayoral election, the Costas campaign critiqued the Democratic Butterfield administration for failing to manage Valparaíso’s growth and for allowing parts of the city to become rundown and unsightly. A postcard mailed to city residents by the Costas campaign just before the election displayed a dilapidated, unsightly carwash building that had sat vacant on one of the city’s main commercial corridors for decades. The postcard asked, “What makes you think things will change if City Hall stays the same?” (Figure 1) Another postcard showed a traffic backup at a busy commercial



Figure 1: A Costas flier from the 2003 election.

intersection. In the foreground, the pavement is cracking, and in the background stands an unsightly mishmash of commercial buildings. This card states, “Growth is inevitable. Whether we let it affect our quality of life in Valparaiso is a challenge that will require New Ideas and More Energy in City Hall” (**Figure 2**). These images capture what Costas thought was wrong with things as they existed in Valparaiso. The city’s infrastructure was deteriorating, the commercial districts were stagnant and unsightly, and much of the existing commercial development in the city was poorly planned and ugly.

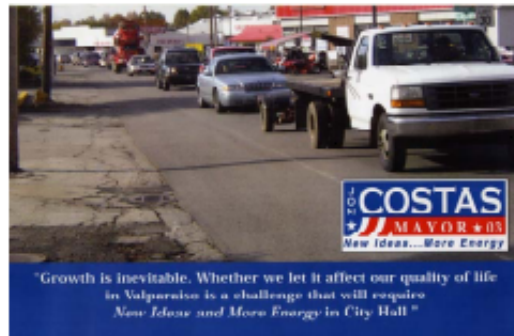


Figure 2: A 2003 Costas Campaign flier highlighting congestion near the “Triangle” Intersection.

Jon Costas was elected as a Republican and included promises to keep taxes low and run government efficiently in his campaign platform, but he is not a typical smallgovernment conservative. Costas’s redevelopment program in many ways reflects the thinking of early twentieth-century Progressive Republicans who believed that government must act to ensure the proper functioning of market forces. Costas promises to make the city government more efficient in order to keep taxes low, but he also insists that the city must make substantial investments in its infrastructure in order to promote commercial activity. Soon after taking office, Costas began an ambitious plan to improve and rationalize the city’s infrastructure through repaving existing roads, constructing new roads, and rebuilding several inefficient intersections, including the notorious “Triangle” intersection on the southeast side. Beyond improving the roads, the administration created a public transportation system. The V-Line buses began running regular routes throughout the city in October of 2007. To do all this without raising taxes, he aggressively pursued state and federal dollars to pay for city projects and frequently boasts about the \$16 million in state and federal money his administration has procured so far. According to the mayor, “The only thing that I like better than investing in our city is doing it with money from Washington and Indianapolis.”¹² And instead of allowing market forces to decide where new commercial development will happen, Costas uses city powers aggressively to focus development

on the renewal of existing commercial districts. “You do the planning. You do the infrastructure. You do the incentives, and then you try to sell it to the people who are going to invest a lot of money. Because it’s easier for them to go outside, and tear up a new cornfield, but that’s not what we want to do.”¹³

Also like earlier Progressives in the City Beautiful movement, Costas sees a role for the city government that involves more than paving roads and issuing building permits. He believes that the city government can and should shape the city’s entire culture. In his vision of Valparaiso as a “vibrant” community, Valparaiso will become a more livable city with attractive commercial districts, beautiful parks, and a downtown filled with events and entertainment. These changes in the way the city looks will lead to changes in the way its residents live. The city’s already extensive system of parks will be expanded by developing walking and biking paths throughout the city, such as the attractive boardwalk along the Vale Park Road extension which opened in December 2006 (**Figure 3**). These pathways will bring people out of their homes and encourage a more engaged and healthy lifestyle. Costas also regularly promotes the Fit City Initiative, a program launched by the Valparaiso Parks and Recreation Department in 2005 that promotes active and healthy lifestyles, and he was clearly supportive of the ban on smoking in public places adopted by the city council in 2007.



Figure 3: Boardwalk along the Vale Park extension.
Photo: Steven Middleton.

Like proponents of the City Beautiful movement, Costas believes in long-term planning that weds efficiency, beauty, and commerce, and he believes that all of this can happen only through careful, long-term planning by the city government. The efficient use of existing resources and pursuit of external funding allows the city to invest in larger infrastructure and beautification projects. This investment will stimulate private investment that will renew commercial areas in the city, and the city should create partnerships with private developers in order to guide these projects and make sure that they are consistent with the administration’s vision for the city. The revived commercial areas of the city will be anchored by prominent civic institutions and integrated with parks and pathways that will draw residents out into public space, connect them to one another, and promote healthy and active lifestyles (**Figure 4**). This approach to urban renewal is visible in ongoing redevelopment projects in three areas of the city: the Downtown, North Calumet Avenue, and the Eastgate corridor. Although each project is different, each demonstrates the combination of efficiency, beauty, and commerce that

is the hallmark of both the Costas vision for Valparaiso and the City Beautiful Movement.

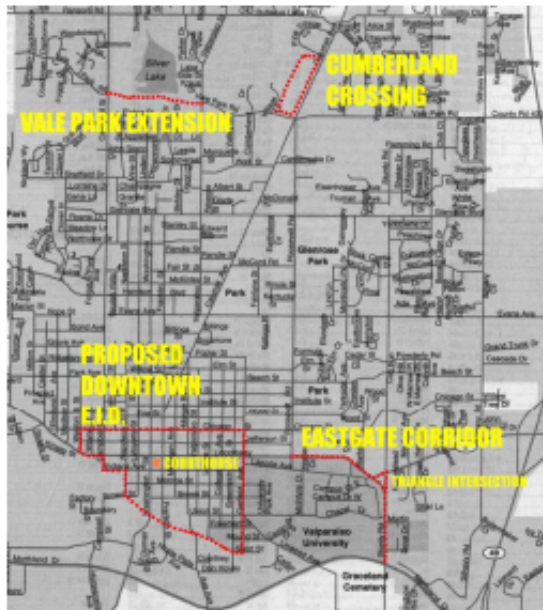


Figure 4: Areas of Renewal in Valparaiso, 2007.
Map: Matthew LaBarbera

Downtown Valparaiso: From Good to Great

The title page of Valparaiso's 2005 Strategic Plan bears the slogan "Embracing the journey from GOOD to GREAT." The slogan was meant to apply to the entire plan, but it fits the downtown plans best. Valparaiso's city leaders speak with pride of their downtown, but also express some concern about its future due to the emergence of new shopping centers on the city's edges and a slightly higher than desirable vacancy rate.¹⁴ They believe that now is the time to act to make a good downtown great, and that if they fail to act the downtown might go the way of other commercial districts in Valparaiso. Plans to renew the downtown were initiated during the Butterfield administration. A 2002 plan developed by the consulting firm HyettPalma recommended a number of improvements for the city's downtown.¹⁵ A few of these were adopted, such as improvements to parking, but most were rejected or postponed primarily due to lack of funding. After Jon Costas became mayor, the city's budget situation improved considerably when Porter County adopted a County Economic Development Income Tax (CEDIT) in 2003. The Costas administration has used a combination of CEDIT money, redevelopment funds garnered from Tax Incremental Financing (TIF) districts, and federal grant money to pay for several of the projects recommended by HyettPalma, such as improvements to the streetscape along the downtown's central street Lincolnway.¹⁶

But the current administration's plans for the downtown area are broader in scope and vision than those of HyettPalma. Instead of focusing on maintaining and expanding commercial activity, Costas has a vision that entails remaking the downtown into both an upscale retail and entertainment center and a beautiful and vital center of civic life for city residents. The Costas administration envisions a revitalized downtown centered around two central civic institutions, the Porter County Courthouse and

a planned new downtown park. The activity and vitality generated by this civic space will complement the downtown's commercial space, which the city also is working to reenergize through aesthetic improvements and careful cultivation of particular kinds of businesses.

Valparaiso is the county seat of Porter County. County courthouse buildings are important civic institutions that bring into downtowns people such as lawyers, title company employees, and regular citizens who do business with county offices. But as county and city governments make more information available online, courthouses bring fewer people into city centers. For a county courthouse to continue to serve as a civic institution and as a draw for the downtown, it must be reinvented. The HyettPalma plan offered modest recommendations for improving the courthouse grounds: "Enhance and intensify landscaping of the Courthouse grounds," and "Include a fountain and public art..."¹⁷ Again, Costas's vision went much further. Initially, the administration proposed a complete redesign of the courthouse grounds to include not only fountains and public art, but also open green space for picnickers or an ice rink in winter, an outdoor dining area to serve the downtown's restaurants, pergolas to provide greenery and shading, a gazebo, and additional space for the existing farmers' market. Costas stated that the idea is to "create a downtown park, a destination place where people could have small events."¹⁸ Newspaper reports of the plan described it as a miniature version of Manhattan's Central Park.¹⁹ The park not only would beautify the downtown; it also would draw more people into it. When during the summer of 2007, a group of local youths began using the existing courthouse grounds for impromptu drumming sessions, a few downtown residents complained about the noise and the city police, at first, asked the youths to stop. Mayor Costas supported the drummers and made sure that they felt welcome to return. He described their percussion sessions as "a positive activity" that was appropriate to the downtown. "Downtown is a good place to do this. It's a good place to gather."²⁰ Costas's vision is to create a park that will draw even more people downtown, a city center that will provide opportunities for both recreation and entertainment.

The main difficulty in implementing this plan, besides paying for it, was that the courthouse grounds were not owned by the city but by Porter County. City officials expressed hope that a deal could be worked out in which the city could develop a new park on the property and the county would be relieved of financial responsibility for maintaining it.²¹ However, the project received a lukewarm response from county officials, and in January 2008, Mayor Costas announced that the city was looking for another downtown location for the park but was committed to the goal of building it by 2009.²²

Beyond its role as a civic center, Valparaiso's downtown is also an important commercial district in the city, and the administration's vision for downtown will have nearly as much impact on commercial space as it does on civic space. The connection between the two is the downtown streetscape, which was one of the first facets of the downtown that the Costas administration moved to improve. The new streetscape, completed throughout most of the downtown district by the summer of 2007, further

enhances the downtown's historical ambiance with brickwork at street corners, decorative lighting, and markers designating the route of the historic Lincoln Highway.

In the actual commercial space, existing buildings and businesses are being encouraged to improve and the city is seeking to bring in new businesses of a particular sort. The fact that the downtown is an area of the city with many established businesses and government offices presents both an opportunity and an obstacle for redevelopment. Existing merchants are committed to the downtown and willing to invest resources to see it improved, but—as the administration found when it approached the County government about renovating the Courthouse property—they can be skeptical of costly, long-term projects. In light of this, the city has tried to involve the merchants in implementation of its plans. One example of this is the façade improvement program. In 2006, the city adopted a set of design standards intended to preserve and enhance the historic appearances of downtown buildings. Whenever property owners make improvements to their buildings, they must now hire an architect to design changes consistent with the new standards. However, the city also created an incentive fund to help pay for these improvements. Property owners can recoup up to fifty percent of construction costs, up to \$25,000.²³

Another initiative that demonstrates both the potential benefits and frustrations of partnerships with existing businesses is the attempt to create an Economic Improvement District (EID). An EID is an association funded through a special assessment placed on all property owners in a district. It provides services beyond those typically offered by city governments, for example marketing programs or business retention and recruitment programs. Although the city government would not directly control the EID, the project represents another kind of public-private partnership. The very existence of an EID will encourage merchants to think in terms of cooperative projects beneficial to the entire district. Furthermore, the close partnership that currently exists between city government and commercial organizations like the Chamber of Commerce and Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation likely would be replicated for the EID.²⁴ State law requires that a majority of property owners and the owners of two-thirds of the assessed value in the district sign a petition before an EID can be created, and, to encourage participation, the city offered to contribute \$50,000 to the EID's budget.²⁵ In December 2007, the administration announced that only forty-four percent of affected businesses had agreed to the creation of the district, and the plan was placed “on hold.”²⁶

The façade incentive program and the EID are ideas that Costas inherited from previous plans. Another downtown initiative had its genesis during the Costas administration and reveals even more about his vision for the downtown. The Costas administration persuaded the state legislature to assign ten new full-service liquor licenses for Valparaiso's downtown district. One existing strength of Valparaiso's downtown district is the presence of several fine restaurants, but the existing restaurants could not afford to purchase any existing liquor licenses, which cost around \$250,000 on the open markets. The new licenses would be awarded by the city rather than by the state Alcoholic Beverage

Commission and would cost the licensee only about \$6,000.²⁷ Since only four or five existing restaurants were likely to apply for the licenses, this offered the Costas administration an opportunity to reshape the downtown dining district by handpicking at least five new restaurants (**Figure 5**).

From the beginning, the administration made very clear that these licenses would not be available on a first-come first-served basis. All applicants were submitted to a vigorous screening process first by the city's director of the Economic Development Commission and then by a Downtown Alcoholic Beverage Committee which had to recommend each applicant to the City Council for final approval. Among the requirements to receive a license were that the property must be brought into line with downtown design standards and the establishment had to be primarily a restaurant and not a bar, fully non-smoking, and support the creation of the EID.²⁸ The original guidelines for the new licenses also specifically stated that the purpose of the new licenses was "encouraging the location and operation of upscale restaurants in the historic downtown district."²⁹ The city's Economic Development Commission oversees the license granting process. The Commission director stated, "Typically people that come to these [upscale] places view dining out as entertainment. They are not just going to grab a piece of pizza. It's an evening. It's a celebration. It's a reward."³⁰

The original guidelines' emphasis on "upscale" restaurants created a small controversy and is revealing regarding the administration's vision for downtown. When the first round of applicants applied, the committee declined to recommend a license for one existing downtown restaurant, at least partly due to concern that the restaurant was not, "upscale enough to fulfill the goal of creating a fine dining draw for visitors from outside the area."³¹ The decision was criticized by some city residents who perceived it as Figure 5: Pikk's Tavern was the first new restaurant to receive one of Valparaiso's new liquor licenses. It also received a façade grant. Photo: Steven Middleton.



Figure 5: Pikk's Tavern was the first new restaurant to receive one of Valparaiso's new liquor licenses. It also received a façade grant. Photo: Steven Middleton.

"snobbish," and the committee reversed itself not long later, voting to recommend the applicant for a license and to drop the "upscale" guideline in favor of guidelines that aim to "increase the number and variety of distinctive and unique restaurants."³²

The Costas vision for Valparaíso's downtown is slowly coming into focus. The new downtown restaurants create a unique and vibrant dining district, but one that is intended to cater to an upper-middle class clientele. Property owners are being encouraged to redesign their façades to accentuate the downtown's history, and the new streetscape further enhances the historical ambiance. If the proposed new downtown park becomes a reality, it likely would stimulate even more recreational activity and entertainment downtown. In addition, the administration states that it is looking for ways to increase the number of people living downtown, which would help create the desired sense of vitality and activity in the area.³³ However, it has made limited efforts to make that happen, since it prefers to allow the private sector to take the lead. The Costas administration is working to redefine Valparaíso's downtown as a vibrant and beautiful district; however, it is reasonable to ask whether this new downtown will meet the needs of lower- and middle-income city residents as well as it serves the desires of the upscale customers the administration hopes to attract to its new dining district.

Eastgate: A Gateway and a College Town

Heading east from downtown along Lincolnway leads to Eastgate, a district long beset by poor planning, substandard infrastructure, and out-of-date buildings.³⁴ Once located just beyond the city limits—and thus beyond the city's zoning requirements, the jumble of businesses that sprung up in the area earned a reputation for ugliness, inefficiency, and inaccessibility. Never a welcoming place, the absence of curbs, sidewalks, and business setbacks also meant that the area was particularly uninviting for pedestrians. By the late 1960s, the Downtown Development Plan noted that the “stringing out” out of this commercial district “pose[d] significant problems from both a land use and economic standpoint.”³⁵ By 2003, when Costas came to office, there were several different redevelopment plans floating in the air for Eastgate, but there was no specific plan of action.³⁶ Costas broke the logjam by creating a plan for “dramatic change” which would transform this outdated district “into a unique retail area and a beautiful entranceway into the city.”³⁷ His administration successfully sought state funding to transform the heavily trafficked intersection at East Lincolnway, LaPorte Road, and Sturdy Road from a triangle into an efficient roundabout. It also had to contend with serious concerns over the cost of the renovations, as well as with a variety of proprietors who had divergent interests and opinions about how the redevelopment should proceed.³⁸ Despite these complications the administration has been able to forge on and implement a program along this corridor which is consistent with the vision and ideals of the City Beautiful movement. The plan emphasizes beautification, an effort to entice more attractive businesses and development to the area, and an increased connection between the district and the major civic institution which resides in the district, Valparaíso University. In particular, connecting Eastgate more closely with the University should prove advantageous because it increases the presence of the University in a neighborhood where previously its absence had been striking. Yet for all of these positives—for all of these partnerships—it is apparent that this plan, like the plans from the earlier City Beautiful era, overlooks the interests of the working class and poor residents of the community, particularly in regard to the supply of affordable housing.

The renovations of the Eastgate corridor contain four main elements. First, the administration's plan is to take a previously ill-defined commercial corridor and turn it into an impressive and attractive gateway into the city. Work on this part of the project already has commenced along Sturdy Road, with the installation of new landscaping, antique-style lighting, curbs, and sidewalks. According to Redevelopment Commission Executive Director Stuart Summers, the city will have its greatest opportunity to make a "statement" when it completes landscaping around the new roundabout, which will include green space and some sort of monument sign, similar to the one at the western entrance to the city on Lincolnway. Originally, the administration considered installing a more dramatic feature such as a fountain or a statue, but found that they would not be allowed to install anything that might obstruct sight lines around the roundabout.³⁹ The next phase of the beautification project will focus on the daunting task of rebuilding the infrastructure along East Lincolnway. The greatest challenges here were to find a practical way to hide the electrical utilities and to acquire legal rights of way from property owners in order to have enough land to put in curbs and sidewalks.⁴⁰ Third, the city has encouraged individual proprietors to improve their buildings through a façade grant program which issues forgivable loans. The incentive appealed to Joe Feller, whose company applied for a grant in the summer of 2007 to upgrade Heinold & Feller Tire: "We wanted to bring the building up to the [new] Eastgate standards, and, if we get momentum on this, a lot of others will bring up their property."⁴¹ And, indeed, this is exactly what the Costas administration sought to accomplish with these grants. By January of 2008, six businesses had applied for façade grants to help fund improvements to their buildings along East Lincolnway.⁴²

Finally, the Costas plan for redeveloping Eastgate astutely highlights the role of Valparaiso University. Over the years, the University, though proximate to Eastgate, has been surprisingly detached from the area. Summers explains that the new plan will "leverage" this civic institution in order to make it as big an asset as possible in the redevelopment project. The administration's most ambitious plans include recruiting a technology park which would benefit from its strategic location next to the University, as well as bring quality jobs into the area. The shorter term plan to create more of a "college town" atmosphere involves constructing University Boulevard, a short road that directly connects the University to Eastgate and which will have a "Bloomington environment" with shops that cater to a college crowd.⁴³ Moreover, Larry Gough, a local developer, is putting together plans to demolish existing housing on Homer Court and the College View Apartments in order to build University Apartments which will allow hundreds of Valparaiso University students to move off-campus (**Figure 6**).⁴⁴



Figure 6: Graffiti near College View Apartments in Valparaiso, which are slated for demolition as part of the Eastgate renewal project.

The demolition of College View Apartments, however, shows the trade-off of gentrification, where there are winners and losers, but more than that, it shows how the administration works well with organizations in the community such as civic institutions and developers but is less effective at reaching out to marginal members of the community. Many residents in the city consider the College View Apartments blight and are happy that this “abomination” will be razed and replaced with an attractive alternative.⁴⁵ But most telling is that while the demolition of the College View Apartment complex is imminent, no one in the administration has broadly considered the impact of destroying part of the city’s limited supply of affordable housing, or more specifically, questioned what is going to happen to those displaced by the demolition or if the displaced will need assistance. In short, while the city has created impressive relationships with the University and some of the commercial entities along Eastgate, the absence of communication with the poorer residents of this neighborhood stand in stark contrast.

Cumberland Crossing: Not Good Enough

When Jon Costas entered office, County Seat Plaza was an outdated, poorly maintained, and largely vacant shopping center on Valparaiso’s north side. That structure has now been razed, and a new development, named Cumberland Crossing, is going up in its place. This project, at first glance, looks very different from the downtown and Eastgate projects. City officials refer to Cumberland Crossing as a “neighborhood retail center.”⁴⁶ They do not see it as an upscale entertainment center like downtown, as a main entrance to the city like Eastgate, or as a regional shopping center like the Valparaiso Marketplace on the city’s southeast side. On closer examination, the Cumberland Crossing project shares a great deal with these other projects, including a process involving public-private partnerships and a plan to create a renewed district drawing vitality from civic institutions and pedestrian traffic. In fact, of all the Costas administration’s projects, the Cumberland Crossing redevelopment resembles the best the City Beautiful tradition. Once the administration’s vision is fully realized, a strip mall once considered a dilapidated eyesore will be transformed into a beautiful new civic center, anchored by a YMCA, and integrated into nearby neighborhoods through a network of walking and bike paths.

The plaza had long been a thorn in city leaders’ sides. During his last term in office, the previous

mayor had grown frustrated by the refusal of the owners, a Europeanbased investment company, to address deteriorating conditions or even return his calls. As a result, he initiated condemnation proceedings in 2003.⁴⁷ The owners immediately filed for bankruptcy, and the property was sold to another group of out-of-town owners. The executive director of the Redevelopment Commission commented that these owners planned to "...pump a little bit of money into the project and then try to flip it. The city heard those plans, and we decided those plans weren't good enough."⁴⁸ The new owners actually planned to spend about \$2 million on the plaza, but, by this time, the Costas administration was developing a new vision for the plaza and decided to proceed with efforts to condemn it.⁴⁹ In December 2005, the owners, under strong pressure from city officials, agreed to sell to the city, and the city quickly resold the property to a prominent local family.

The new Cumberland Crossing development is possible because of a partnership between private developers and the city, a partnership that is beneficial to both. City officials knew that the previous owners were focused on short-term profit and not interested in the city's larger plans. The new owners were local residents who also owned undeveloped property nearby and thus were more amenable to a long-term view. In the new plan, the city agreed to build new access roads into the property and a new boulevard through its center, and the new owners agreed to raze the existing structure and build several smaller buildings oriented toward the central boulevard. In September 2006, the Valparaiso YMCA announced plans to build a new facility at the north end of Cumberland Crossing on twelve acres donated by the plaza's new owners, who also donated \$7.5 million, half of the projected construction costs, for the new YMCA.⁵⁰

The presence of the YMCA is likely to dramatically change the nature of the entire development. The YMCA, which previously was on the north side of downtown, has long been an important civic institution in the city, and it will anchor Cumberland Crossing just as the courthouse anchors downtown and the university will anchor Eastgate. Pathways connecting the shopping center and the YMCA to nearby residential neighborhoods will further the sense that the new development will be as much public and civic space as commercial space. The new access roads being constructed for the property will include broad pedestrian and bicycle pathways. These will connect to the growing number of pathways in the area, including the boardwalk along the Vale Park extension which connects to the existing pathway along North Calumet Avenue, a pathway leading to Rogers-Lakewood Park on the city's northwest corner.

The redesign of the commercial space itself is intended to improve the property not only in terms of aesthetics and commercial value; it also will improve it as public space. In fact, a spokesperson for the developer announced, "The entire center will be made to look like a downtown."⁵¹ The new center will look less like a suburban shopping center and more like a vital city center. Cumberland Crossing will be smaller and more intimate than County Seat Plaza. The new buildings will have peaked roofs and brick façades facing the new road and pathways. One of the new owners described the plan using

language similar to that used by city officials when they describe their vision for downtown. “Now it won’t be just another shopping center. It will be a destination where people can shop, have a nice meal, and enjoy recreation with their families.”⁵²

Perhaps better than any other Costas administration project, the project on North Calumet fits squarely in the City Beautiful tradition. The plan for Cumberland Crossing draws insight from New Urbanism’s emphasis on pedestrianism; however, another aspect of New Urbanism, the blending of commercial and residential space, is more difficult to achieve in an area where pre-existing neighborhoods and shopping centers have been separating by long-standing zoning policy. Instead, the city administration is attempting to enhance both the commercial and residential areas by converting a strictly commercial district into a new city center that will draw citizens out of their neighborhoods and into shared, public space. The fact that the focal institution of this new center is a facility promoting the mayor’s agenda of health and fitness, also harkens back to the City Beautiful movement, which not only sought to use urban architecture to inculcate civic virtue and the American way of life in the nation’s growing urban populations, but also strove to expand the opportunity for recreational activities for its residents.

Affordable Housing: A Problem without a Plan

In contrast to the abundant energy that Mayor Costas has used to stimulate redevelopment in the commercial sector, his administration has been much less active in its efforts to expand the stock of affordable housing in the city. This inaction is not surprising when we place the Costas administration in the context of the City Beautiful tradition. To be sure, proponents of the City Beautiful movement such as Daniel Burnham recognized that addressing substandard housing was an important part of urban redevelopment, but they nevertheless downplayed or ignored this issue and instead directed their efforts to commercial and civic improvements for which they had much greater support from their communities’ financial leaders.⁵³ Like Burnham, Costas recognizes the critical importance of housing to urban redevelopment, yet his administration, despite its stated goals to address the issue of affordable housing, has been slow to act. In short, while Costas can point proudly to the city’s three featured areas of urban renewal and claim that they are making Valparaiso a more “vibrant and progressive” community, he simply cannot say the same thing about the issue of affordable housing at this point in his tenure as mayor.

Although members of the Costas administration routinely tout the importance of strategic planning, the mayor’s housing plan pales in comparison to the substantial planning and aggressive implementation that went into other projects. The mayor’s “housing strategy” in his Strategic Plan has two main goals. First, the administration has sought to “limit new multi-family rental developments over the next five years.” This is in response to a perception among city leaders that the city has a high ratio of apartments to single family homes.

U.S. Census Bureau data confirm that the city’s ratio of home-renters to homeowners is relatively

high. In 2000, the ratio was 0.81. Out of all thirty-one Indiana cities with populations above 25,000, this was the sixth highest ratio (**Table 1**). To date,

Table 1					
Ratios of Home-Renters to Home-owners, Year 2000					
Indiana Cities with Year 2000 Population > 25,000					
City	Renters/Home-Owners	Rank	City	Renters/Home-Owners	Rank
West Lafayette *	2.11	1	Fort Wayne	0.82	17
Bloomington *	1.83	2	Marion	0.81	18
East Chicago	1.24	3	Jeffersonville	0.81	19
Lafayette *	0.89	4	Greenwood	0.80	20
Elkhart	0.87	5	South Bend *	0.69	21
Valparaiso *	0.81	6	Hammond	0.58	22
Gary	0.79	7	Goshen	0.57	23
Muncie *	0.79	8	Anderson	0.57	24
Mishawaka	0.76	9	Columbus	0.54	25
Indianapolis *	0.71	10	Merrillville	0.42	26
Richmond	0.70	11	Portage	0.38	27
New Albany	0.69	12	Noblesville	0.35	28
Terre Haute *	0.68	13	Lawrence	0.32	29
Evansville *	0.67	14	Fishers	0.29	30
Michigan City	0.64	15	Carmel	0.26	31
Kokomo	0.64	16	Hobart	0.25	32
* = Towns with major university.					
Data: US Census 2000					

the city government has addressed this issue by annexing homes outside the city limits and by passing a controversial moratorium on apartment construction in commercial districts.⁵⁴ For the administration's critics, these efforts are misguided. They argue that regardless of the ratio between renters and homeowners, the housing market in Valparaiso remains challenging for low-income families and individuals, and that limiting the construction of new rental units, especially in a university town, will further exacerbate this problem. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines 30% of household income as the maximum threshold for housing affordability. According to the 2000 Census, 72.8% of the 908 renting households in Valparaiso that have annual incomes between \$10,000 and 10,999 were paying more than 30% of their household income in rent (**Table 2**). Of the 797 renting households that have annual incomes less than \$10,000, 91.5% were spending more than 30% of their annual incomes in rent.⁵⁵ A few calculations demonstrate that, as of the year 2000, there were over 1,800 renting families in Valparaiso who, according to federal government standards, were living beyond their means to pay for housing.

Costas's second goal calls for the city to increase opportunities for affordable

Table 2						
Home Ownership Costs and Rent as Percentage of Family Income in Valparaiso						
By Household Income						
2000						
Family Income	Homeowners			Renters		
	Total Homeowners	Housing Costs > 30% of income		Total Renters	Rent > 30% of income	
		%	Number		%	Number
<\$10,000	166	71.2%	111	797	91.5%	729
\$10,000-\$19,999	242	47.5%	115	908	72.8%	661
\$20,000-\$34,999	647	36.6%	237	1269	38.4%	495
\$35,000-\$49,999	875	26.7%	234	853	1.2%	10
\$50,000-\$74,999	1813	10.4%	167	718	0.0%	0
\$75,000-\$99,999	1031	4.5%	47	197	0.0%	0
\$100,000+	905	5.9%	53	161	0.0%	0
Totals	5469		964	4921		1895
Source: U.S. Census 2000						

housing by creating “incentives to encourage the development of affordable owner-occupied homes to allow apartment-renters to purchase their first home here in Valparaiso.”⁵⁶ On this point, the administration has been much less creative and productive. At this time, the administration has no active programs designed to achieve this goal. Rather than initiating partnerships as they have for commercial redevelopment, the administration is content to assume that private groups, such as construction firms, church groups, or organizations like Habitat for Humanity, will take the lead. Although the Strategic Plan calls on the administration to “encourage developers...to build neighborhoods with varied housing types,”⁵⁷ the administration has not yet created a substantive and viable affordable housing action plan.

At times, the Costas administration has taken significant steps toward serving the needs of lower-income city residents. The creation of a public transportation system, with buses that residents can ride throughout the city for a \$1 fare, is one example of the progressive approach to urban planning of which the administration is capable. However, the issue of affordable housing is a particularly tricky issue for public officials, and in Valparaiso there are several different barriers which have led to the administration’s inactivity. Foremost, the administration has not cultivated the same kinds of partnerships with social agencies and advocates for affordable housing that it has forged in the city’s commercial redevelopment. In Valparaiso, City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce are located next door to one another. Symbolically this is significant, but more than that, the two entities have worked extremely closely to advance a common agenda. In contrast, there is a surprising lack of communication between the region’s social agencies that support affordable housing and the administration. According to Caroline Shook, the Executive Director of Opportunity Enterprises, after the Porter County Coalition for Affordable Housing conducted a study in 2005 on affordable housing they invited all public officials in the county to attend an informational meeting. Disappointingly, only two officials from the county attended and none were from the city of Valparaiso. While the LaPorte County Coalition for Affordable Housing includes representatives from the mayors’ offices in LaPorte and Michigan City, as well as Michigan Township, the LaPorte Realtors Association, and the religious community, the Porter County Coalition for Affordable Housing only has representation from social agencies.⁵⁸

Creating such partnerships, moreover, has been limited by a political culture in City Hall, where traditionally many leaders in the city have not seen the creation of affordable housing as a role of local government.⁵⁹ Lack of creativity and energy also has been an issue. Though the Costas administration has created such innovative programs as a “Neighborhood Advocate” to promote a better sense of community and the “Home Team” to help homeowners make repairs in order to comply with local ordinances, it has not brought that same vitality to constructing new affordable housing.⁶⁰ Finally, there remains among some residents of Valparaiso a mentality that building affordable housing is problematic because it will attract African Americans to the area.⁶¹

Nevertheless, according to recent studies, the issue of affordable housing is becoming a concern in Porter County. Compared to other parts of the country and to other communities in and around Chicago, housing costs in Valparaiso remain relatively low. However, evidence is growing that the availability of affordable housing is becoming an increasing problem in the city and the rest of Porter County. The booming housing market of the last several years has caused a sharp increase in home values in Porter County and Valparaiso; however, incomes have not increased at the same pace.

Housing costs in Valparaiso are among the highest in the state of Indiana (**Table 3**). The median value of a home in Valparaiso in 2000 was slightly over \$121,000. That is

Table 3
Costs of Housing in 2000
Indiana Cities with Populations > 25,000

Median House Value			Median Monthly Rent			% Paying > 30% of Income for Housing		
Rank	City	\$	Rank	City	\$	Rank	City	%
1	Carmel	\$205,400	1	Fishers	\$797	1	West Lafayette	48.8
2	Fishers	\$161,500	2	Carmel	\$748	2	Bloomington	42.3
3	West Lafayette	\$145,400	3	Merrillville	\$704	3	Gary	31.4
4	Noblesville	\$144,900	4	Noblesville	\$629	4	Muncie	28.3
5	Bloomington	\$126,000	5	Hobart	\$628	5	East Chicago	26.2
6	Valparaiso	\$121,700	6	Valparaiso	\$625	6	Michigan City	24.8
7	Greenwood	\$116,400	7	West Lafayette	\$614	7	Valparaiso	24.8
8	Lawrence	\$116,200	8	Greenwood	\$610	8	Indianapolis	24.7
9	Columbus	\$111,900	9	Portage	\$594	9	Lafayette	24.5
10	Portage	\$109,000	10	Lawrence	\$590	10	South Bend	24.3
11	Merrillville	\$101,300	11	Columbus	\$579	11	Terre Haute	24.0
12	Indianapolis	\$98,200	12	Indianapolis	\$567	12	Hammond	23.9
13	Hobart	\$97,700	13	Lafayette	\$560	13	Anderson	23.2
14	Goshen	\$93,700	14	Bloomington	\$557	14	Evansville	23.2
15	Lafayette	\$89,700	15	Elkhart	\$537	15	Richmond	23.1
16	New Albany	\$87,300	16	South Bend	\$531	16	New Albany	23.0
17	Jeffersonville	\$85,900	17	Mishawaka	\$526	17	Greenwood	22.9
18	Hammond	\$78,400	18	Goshen	\$519	18	Elkhart	22.5
19	Elkhart	\$78,200	19	Hammond	\$518	19	Mishawaka	22.0
20	Mishawaka	\$77,400	20	New Albany	\$503	20	Lawrence	21.9
21	Michigan City	\$76,800	21	Kokomo	\$498	21	Marion	21.7
22	Fort Wayne	\$74,800	22	Anderson	\$493	22	Columbus	21.6
23	Kokomo	\$74,000	23	Fort Wayne	\$490	23	Jeffersonville	21.0
24	Richmond	\$73,000	24	Michigan City	\$489	24	Fort Wayne	20.9
25	East Chicago	\$69,900	25	Jeffersonville	\$485	25	Kokomo	20.7
26	Evansville	\$69,700	26	Gary	\$489	26	Goshen	20.5
27	Anderson	\$67,900	27	Evansville	\$454	27	Portage	20.4
28	South Bend	\$66,800	28	Muncie	\$449	28	Merrillville	20.3
29	Terre Haute	\$60,400	29	Richmond	\$439	29	Noblesville	20.0
30	Muncie	\$59,300	30	Terre Haute	\$430	30	Hobart	19.6
31	Marion	\$57,000	31	Marion	\$413	31	Fishers	19.2
32	Gary	\$53,400	32	East Chicago	\$409	32	Carmel	16.7

Source: U.S. Census 2000

the sixth highest median home value among the thirty-one cities in the state with populations over 25,000. Valparaiso's median rent was also the sixth highest. Furthermore, the affordability of housing is not simply a matter of the cost of housing. It depends on the relationship between incomes and housing costs in an area. In Valparaiso, 24.8% of families are paying more than 30% of their income for housing. This ranks seventh highest in the state.

More recent Census Bureau estimates of changes in housing costs and income for Porter County (annual estimates for Valparaiso are not available) demonstrate that housing affordability is likely becoming a more serious problem in the city (**Table 4**). In the first five years after 2000, home values increased dramatically in Northwest Indiana, largely due to two factors: the availability of low interest rates on home mortgages and an increase in the number of home purchasers moving into Northwest

Indiana from Chicago and its Illinois suburbs. Between 2000 and 2006, the median house value in Porter County increased by almost 17%. At the same time, monthly rents increased by nearly 16%. However in the same time period, the median family incomes of Porter County residents increased only half as quickly. Thus the percentage of family incomes consumed by housing costs also will have increased in these years. Although by the end

Table 4
Increase in Housing Costs and Family Incomes, 2000-2006
Porter County, Indiana

	2000	2006	Increase
Median Home Value	\$127,000	\$148,500	16.9%
Median Monthly Rent	\$625	\$724	15.8%
Mean Family Income	\$53,100	\$58,710	6.8%

Source: U.S. Census 2000 and Census Bureau Estimates

of 2007, the housing market had slowed down considerably, it is not yet clear what long term effects this will have on the affordability of housing in the area.

With housing costs increasing at a rate faster than incomes, several leaders in the community have voiced concerns about the administration's lack of action on affordable housing. Michael Essany, an unsuccessful Democratic candidate for city council in 2007, articulates a perception that some city residents have that the Costas administration is elitist, a criticism that echoes earlier criticisms of the City Beautiful movement. Essany charges that the administration is "picking and choosing new developments to get the 'right people'" and in the process the town is becoming "elitist."⁶² Both Shook and Carol Nordstrom, the Executive Director of Christian Community Action, think that the city's vast expansion in the retail and service sectors has not been matched by an equal attention to the issues of who is going to work at these establishments and where they will be able to reside.⁶³ They report of business owners struggling to find staff who can afford to live in the city and low-wage earners that are doubling up or are near eviction. Shook asks: "Does Valpo want to be a place where people can work but not afford to live?"⁶⁴

Critics of the administration's affordable housing policy have no shortage of suggestions, and all of them demand a closer relationship between City Hall and affordable housing advocates. Tom Isakson, Director of the Spring Valley Homeless Shelter, wants to see growth in the number of apartments to match the recent growth in low-paying jobs.⁶⁵ Nordstrom maintains that the Community Development Corporation (CDC), a non-profit agency which helps build affordable single family homes, is "not operating at the level that it needs to be."⁶⁶ She would like to see the agency expand its mission and have more support from the mayor's office.⁶⁷ Shook believes that increased action on affordable housing issues is mostly a matter of "communication and commitment." She points to LaPorte and Michigan City as models for effective partnerships, as local governments in those communities have helped non-profit agencies "capture community development block grant dollars" to create better housing opportunities.⁶⁸ Essany makes a similar argument about partnering for grant applications: "the

Costas administration has chased down grants for development in the commercial sector, well, there are also grants to help with affordable housing that the administration needs to be applying for.”⁶⁹ Other suggestions call for more substantial governmental intervention. Paul Schreiner of Design Construction wants more flexible zoning ordinances so that his company will be able to build low-cost, modest homes on small lots. Nancy Pekarek,⁷⁰ city planner under the Butterfield administration, maintains that relying on the CDC and Habitat for Humanity will produce only limited results. To be more effective the city will have to follow the example of other communities that have adopted ordinances requiring each planned unit development to set aside a certain percentage of construction for affordable housing.⁷¹ Whether the Costas administration will follow these more substantial programs during the mayor’s second term remains to be seen. But Costas has said that “diversity in housing stock” is essential to having “a healthy community,” and there is some evidence that the CDC is looking into smaller ad hoc set aside programs and that the administration is supportive of Schreiner’s efforts.⁷²

Conclusion

“Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever-growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us.”

Daniel Burnham (1909)⁷³

Like Daniel Burnham and the City Beautiful movement, Mayor Jon Costas believes in bold plans. Reflecting on all of the accomplishments that his administration has made to date, he maintains that “the most significant thing we’ve done is we’ve put together the city’s first strategic plan.”⁷⁴ In that plan, Costas laid out a redevelopment program that fits squarely in the City Beautiful tradition. He has taken on the challenge of beautifying three of the city’s districts most in need of an overhaul. At its best, his administration has not merely attended to cosmetic enhancements such as new streetscapes or fancy façades on older buildings. Consistent with the City Beautiful tradition, it also has tied all of its renewal projects to civic institutions which hold together modern communities whose residents are often overwhelmed by their own busy lives, as well as by the rapid growth of their cities. Indeed, it is in anchoring the city’s redevelopment projects with a downtown park, Valparaiso University, and the YMCA, that Costas has demonstrated the magic to stir people’s blood, especially when we consider that Burnham’s plan for a civic center in Chicago did not come to fruition. The energy, vision, and communication that the Costas administration brings to the development of civic and commercial space should be applauded. But these accomplishments must be placed in balance with the reality that Costas, like Burnham, has not shown the same vigor and insights in developing plans that address concerns of 36th community’s working-class and poorer residents, in particular in regard to

affordable housing. It must be understood that although his administration has ushered in partnerships between the city and business interests, it has not proven itself able to create the same kinds of alliances with social agencies. As Mayor Costas entered into his second term, he announced that it would be “more visionary.”⁷⁵ To that end, the mayor’s vision of a “vibrant and progressive” Valparaiso will be greatly strengthened if he manages to broker the same kinds of partnerships between the city and social agencies that he already has forged between the city and the business community.

¹ For the most important studies on the City Beautiful movement, see William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989); Thomas S. Hines, *Burnham of Chicago: Architect and Planner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1974); Jon A. Peterson, “The City Beautiful Movement: Forgotten Origins and Lost Meanings,” *Journal of Urban History* 2 (August 1976): 415–434; Paul S. Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820–1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 261–276; Bonj Szczygiel, “‘City Beautiful’ Revisited: An Analysis of Nineteenth-Century Civic Improvement Efforts,” *Journal of Urban History* 29 (December 2003): 107–132; Carl Smith, *The Plan of Chicago: Daniel Burnham and the Remaking of the American City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

² For information on new urbanism, see the Congress for the New Urbanism website: <http://www.cnu.org/>; Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck, *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* (New York: North Point Press, 2001); and Kenneth Hall and Gerald A. Porterfield, *Community By Design: New Urbanism for Suburbs and Small Communities* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2001). For a critique of new urbanism and a discussion of the rationale behind new pedestrianism, see Michael Arth’s website, http://michalearth.com/herc_IX.htm (accessed January 26, 2008).

³ Elmer W. Johnson, *Chicago Metropolis 2020: The Chicago Plan for the Twenty-First Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 153.

⁴ Boyer, *Urban Masses*, 262.

⁵ Smith, *Plan of Chicago*, 15.

⁶ Boyer, *Urban Masses*, 264.

⁷ Johnson, *Metropolis 2020*, xiii.

⁸ Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 288.

⁹ Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 298.

¹⁰ Jon Costas, "State of the City Address," (speech, Valparaiso, Indiana, January 17, 2006), 3.

¹¹ Jon Costas, personal interview, July 18, 2007.

¹² Jon Costas, "State of the City Address," 2006.

¹³ Costas, personal interview.

¹⁴ Charles McGill, Director of the Economic Development Commission, personal interview, July 25, 2007. On the problems facing downtowns generally, see: Robert M. Fogelson, *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall, 1880–1950* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2001); Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961). 37

¹⁵ HyettPalma Consulting, "Valparaiso Downtown Action Agenda 2002, Executive Summary," <http://www.ci.valparaiso.in.us/DAA/ExSummary/ExecutiveSummary.pdf> (accessed January 26, 2008).

¹⁶ Stuart Summers, personal interview, July 17, 2007; McGill, personal interview; Costas, personal interview. Also see: Phil Wieland "City Gets \$625,000 for Streetscape Work," *Northwest Indiana Times*, June 24, 2006.

¹⁷ HyettPalma Consulting.

¹⁸ Phil Wieland, "City Talks about Dressing up Downtown," *Northwest Indiana Times*, February 16, 2007.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ James D. Wolf, Jr. "Police Move Musicians Along." *Post-Tribune*, September 17, 2007; "Valpo Officials Say the Beat Can Go On." *Post-Tribune*, September 30, 2007.

²¹ Summers, personal interview.

²² Phil Wieland, "New Downtown Park in Valpo's Plans," *Northwest Indiana Times*, January 18, 2008.

²³ Phil Wieland, "Valpo Wants to Preserve, Promote Historic Look," *Northwest Indiana Times*, April 6, 2006; Phil Wieland, "Valpo Adopts Downtown Design Standards," *Northwest Indiana Times*, October 10, 2006.

²⁴ Charles McGill, at the time of our personal interview, held both the positions of Valparaiso City Economic Development Director and Vice President of the Valparaiso Economic Development Corporation.

- ²⁵ McGill, personal interview; Phil Wieland, "Valpo Launches Downtown Petition Drive," Northwest Indiana Times, June 24, 2007.
- ²⁶ James D. Wolf Jr., "Economic District on Hold\ Not Enough Businesses Approve of Improvement Plan for Downtown Valpo," Post-Tribune, December 20, 2007.
- ²⁷ Phil Wieland, "New RDA Law Gives Valpo License to Chill," Northwest Indiana Times, May 6, 2005.
- ²⁸ Phil Wieland, "Valpo Gets First Two Downtown Liquor Applicants." Northwest Indiana Times, July 8, 2005.
- ²⁹ Phil Wieland, "City Ready to Adopt Criteria for New Liquor Licenses," Northwest Indiana Times, June 30, 2005.
- ³⁰ McGill, personal interview.
- ³¹ Phil Wieland, "Bon Femme Earns Liquor License Nod." Northwest Indiana Times, October 23, 2005.
- ³² Phil Wieland, "Valpo Aims for Upscale But Not Snobbish Dining," Northwest Indiana Times, November 10, 2005.
- ³³ Costas, personal interview; Summers, personal interview.
- ³⁴ East of downtown, the district stretches from Roosevelt Avenue down East Lincolnway to the old Triangle intersection and south on Sturdy Road to Highway 130.
- ³⁵ Schellie Associates, Inc., "Downtown Development Plan: Valparaiso, Indiana, May 1969," Report prepared for the Valparaiso City Plan Commission, 25.
- ³⁶ Nancy Pekarek, personal interview, July 23, 2007.
- ³⁷ City of Valparaiso, Indiana, City of Valparaiso Strategic Plan, (Valparaiso, Indiana, 2005).
- ³⁸ Costas, personal interview; Summers, personal interview.
- ³⁹ Phil Wieland, "Designing a Gateway to the East" Northwest Indiana Times, January 14, 2007; "Rotary Grant Aids Roundabout Landscaping," Northwest Indiana Times, January 13, 2008.
- ⁴⁰ After deciding that it was impractical to bury the utility lines, the city has decided to move them to easements behind the buildings on East Lincolnway. Summers, personal interview.
- ⁴¹ Phil Wieland, "Heinold & Feller the Latest to Seek Valpo Façade Loan," Northwest Indiana Times, July, 13, 2007.

⁴² Phil Wieland, "Eastgate Grants in Big Demand." Northwest Indiana Times, January 20, 2008.

⁴³ Summers, personal interview.

⁴⁴ Phil Wieland, "Eastgate Apartment Project Now Set for 2009 Opening," Northwest Indiana Times, June 14, 2007.

⁴⁵ Costas, personal interview.

⁴⁶ Costas, "State of the City Address," (2006), 4.

⁴⁷ Summers, personal interview; Phil Wieland, "Valpo Mayor Addresses Plaza Issue," Northwest Indiana Times, January 9, 2003. 38

⁴⁸ Summers, personal interview; also see: Phil Wieland, "County Seat Face-lift Expected to Begin in Fall," Northwest Indiana Times, August 14, 2004; Phil Wieland, "County Seat Owners Ask for Time," Northwest Indiana Times, December 9, 2004.

⁴⁹ Mayor Costas contends that the use of eminent domain powers in this case differs from the use of such powers as reviewed by the U.S. Supreme Court in the highly controversial case *Kelo v. City of New London*, 545 U.S. 469 (2005). He notes that in the County Seat Plaza case eminent domain was used not only to foster economic development, but also "to cure a blighted condition." See: Jon Costas, "Governments Must Use Eminent Domain Wisely," Northwest Indiana Times, July 17, 2005. Indiana statute (Ind. Code Ann. 36-7-14-15(a)) leaves the determination about what constitutes "blight" to local bodies such as redevelopment commissions. Before a municipality can condemn property to advance economic development, a commission must declare the area in which the property is located to be blighted. When making this determination, the commission must consider the following factors: (1) Whether the area is in need of redevelopment; (2) Whether such need can be corrected by the regulatory process or the ordinary operations of private enterprise; and (3) Whether the public health and welfare is better served by the redevelopment of the parcel. This determination is considered a legislative decision and is not reviewable by the courts; however, it does not void property owners' rights to due process and just compensation in the actual condemnation process that follows. In 2006, the State of Indiana severely restricted local governments' power to use eminent domain to transfer private property to another private owner (P.L. 163-2006). Redevelopment Commission Executive Director Stuart Summers expressed doubt that under current law the city could have achieved its objectives for County Seat Plaza (Summers, personal interview).

⁵⁰ Robyn Monaghan, "Valpo Plans \$15.5 Million YMCA," Northwest Indiana Times, September 21, 2006.

⁵¹ Quoting Todd Etzler, attorney for the Urschels' development company, Vale Park Development LLC., in Phil Wieland, "Cumberland Crossing 'To Look Like a Downtown.'" Northwest Indiana

Times, February 9, 2007.

⁵² Robyn Monaghan, "Valpo Plans \$15.5 Million YMCA," Northwest Indiana Times, September 21, 2006.

⁵³ Johnson, *Metropolis* 2020, xiii.

⁵⁴ Phil Wieland, "Valpo Studies Moratorium on Apartment Construction," Northwest Indiana Times, January 12, 2005; "Valpo seeks to increase single-family homes," February 6, 2005; "Valpo mulls building limits," February 14, 2005.

⁵⁵ For a further examination of this census data and the availability of affordable housing for low-income households in Valparaiso, see: Larry Baas and James Paul Old, "Affordable Housing in Valparaiso," Report prepared for the Greater Valparaiso Community Development Corporation, (Community Research and Service Center, Valparaiso University, Summer 2004), 19–25 and 36–39.

⁵⁶ City of Valparaiso, Strategic Plan.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Caroline Shook, telephone interview, July 19, 2007.

⁵⁹ Baas and Old, "Affordable Housing in Valparaiso," 48.

⁶⁰ James D. Wolf, Jr., "Valpo's Block Parties Getting City's Support," Post-Tribune, July 28, 2007; "City Launches 'Home Team' Help," City of Valparaiso, Indiana, City Talk (Summer 2007).

⁶¹ Pekarek, personal interview; Baas and Old, "Affordable Housing in Valparaiso," 43–44. Valparaiso still has a very small number of minority residents, although there is a perception among city residents that the minority population is growing. This perception is confirmed by recent census data. Between 1990 and 2000, the African American population of the city grew from 0.6% to 1.6%, and the Hispanic population grew from 1.4% to 3.3%.

⁶² Michael Essany, telephone interview, July 27, 2007; Carol Nordstrom, telephone interview, July 19, 2007; Shook, telephone interview.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Carol Nordstrom, telephone interview, July 19, 2007; Shook, telephone interview.

⁶⁵ Tom Isakson, telephone interview, July 18, 2007.

⁶⁶ Nordstrom, telephone interview.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Shook, telephone interview.

⁶⁹ Essany, telephone interview. For a similar conclusion, see Baas and Old, “Affordable Housing in Valparaiso,” 26. According to a Northwest Indiana Times article, the Costas administration did apply for at least one grant to fund affordable housing (see: Phil Wieland, “Dramatic Changes Expected in Valpo in 2006,” Northwest Indiana Times, December 26, 2007).

⁷⁰ Wieland, “Valpo Groups Create New Form of Affordable Housing,” Northwest Indiana Times, August 7, 2005; Costas, personal interview; Eric Garrard, telephone interview, July 26, 2007.

⁷¹ Pekarek, personal interview.

⁷² Wieland, “Valpo Groups Create New Form of Affordable Housing,” Northwest Indiana Times, August 7, 2005; Costas, personal interview; Eric Garrard, telephone interview, July 26, 2007.

⁷³ Johnson, Chicago Metropolis, 7.

⁷⁴ Costas, personal interview.

⁷⁵ Costas, personal interview.