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Sent: Monday, February 3, 2020 1:44 PM
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Cc: Edwards,Michelle
Subject: *Ext!* Remarks: Judy O'Bannon and C9 Parking
Attachments: judyobannon.docx; ATT00001.htm

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- Helpdesk

Hi Fellow Council Members,

As you probably know, Judy O'Bannon visited Terre Haute on January 23. I invited her downtown to thank her for the gift of a Hoosier Millennium Tulip Poplar tree in August 1999, over twenty years ago.

Judy's visit prompted me to dig into my files and remind myself of what we were doing downtown back then. We were very busy: shop keepers, university reps, bankers, attorneys, property owners, interested citizens and restaurateurs were led through a planning process called Indiana Downtown. Mayor Judy Anderson hired consulting firm HyettPalma to produce the Downtown Action Agenda. It's the last time our city held such an open, focused conversation about the future of downtown, and it really helped get everyone pushing in the same direction.

If you'd like me to email you a copy of the Downtown Action Agenda, I can do that. To further frame it though, please read my remarks from Judy's visit.

I would appreciate the chance to talk with each of you about where I'm coming from when I discuss downtown development in general, and the future of 7th and Wabash in particular. Feel free to call me or reply to this email.

See you soon,

Todd
mobile 812-870-4986

Remarks: Judy O'Bannon Visit, January 23, 2020. Todd Nation

Judy O'Bannon is the former [First Lady](#) of Indiana, having served in that role from January 13, 1997 to September 13, 2003, during the administration of her husband [Governor Frank O'Bannon](#). Judy has been a leader in community development and historic preservation throughout much of her life, including having helped launch and then serving as chair of the Indiana [Main Street](#) program, and serving on the boards of the [Indiana Landmarks](#) foundation, the [Indiana State Museum](#) and the [National Trust for Historic Preservation](#).

As First Lady, Judy led initiatives that were an outgrowth from her life-long advocacy and work in community development, historic preservation, education and the arts. In 1998 and 1999, she launched the *Hoosier Millennium: Communities Building Community* initiative to encourage citizens across the state to use the upcoming calendar change of a new millennium as an opportunity to strengthen Indiana communities, asking "Who we are? Where have we come from? and What do we want to be in the future?."

Judy delivered Hoosier Millennium toolboxes to communities and organizations throughout the state, including our local Downtown Business Association. She traveled in a motor home wrapped in the initiative's logo, with space around the bottom for citizens to sign our names at each stop.

In the crowd with us today are Chris Schellenberg, Marlene Lu and others who signed that motor home when Judy made a presentation at our Vigo County Public Library downtown in August of 1999. Our group was already working hard to raise the profile of Downtown Terre Haute, but we took Judy's message to heart.

1999 was the year that the DBA decided to formally organize ourselves as a 501-c3 non-profit corporation, and we worked with Terre Haute's Department of Redevelopment and Urban Enterprise Association to find

funding and hire Tara Lane to help advance our efforts. Tim Fears wrote our bylaws, and we rebranded ourselves Downtown Terre Haute Inc.

Encouraged by Judy O'Bannon to fully embrace the Main Street model of downtown revitalization, DTH reached out and pulled together a broad coalition of stakeholders to expand and reform our board. Dave Zaun represented ISU, becoming an important member of our leadership team. Old National and First Financial banks had representatives on the board, alongside small business owners like Cathy Azar, Rob LaVanne, Norbert Gottschling, Theresa Ortega, and me.

We continued to work with local government, prodding the mayor, Redevelopment Commission and Urban Enterprise Association to help us clean up downtown, turn the Wabash Avenue City-owned parking garage into a 24/7 facility, and conduct planning exercises that brought the community together to hash out a collective vision.

In 2001, Mayor Judy Anderson hired HyettPalma to produce a Downtown Action Agenda for Terre Haute. A series of planning sessions was held late that year and early in 2002, and HyettPalma's report provided a set of goals for local government and DTH to work toward together. Plans for a new parking structure at 7th and Cherry were launched, partly in response to concerns about the imminent closure of the Downtown Post Office and Federal Building.

Mayor Anderson also empowered City Engineer Pat Goodwin to administer two Transportation Enhancement Grants awarded to the City — one for new light poles, trash cans and benches throughout downtown, and a second grant that established the 7th Street Arts Corridor. Years of working together with Pat and his Assistant City Engineer Andy Theisz resulted in those improvements being fully implemented, which made a big difference in the neighborhood.

HyettPalma's process in producing the Downtown Action Agenda brought together downtown stakeholders to build consensus around tough issues like parking and design standards for infill construction. We worked with city government to implement HyettPalma's recommendation that a Pedestrian Core be established, encompassing Wabash Avenue and the 7th Street Arts Corridor. The C9 zoning district was adopted for Wabash and 7th, and City Code was updated to reflect a commitment to limiting the development of new surface parking lots in the C9 district, and guiding infill development to bring new front facades right up to the sidewalk, or Zero Lot Line. Many new buildings have been constructed downtown since these design standards were adopted by City government — the Hilton Garden Inn across the street, the Children's Museum at 8th and Wabash, Highland Quarters on Cherry Street, and Ellis Place on the 500 block of Wabash Avenue, to name a few. The C9 rules have been followed, mostly.

Throughout this period of downtown activity and growth in the early 2000s, DTH deepened our commitment to Indiana Main Street. We filed the comprehensive Annual Reports that they required, sent delegations to the annual Main Street Conference, and hosted Main Street workshops here in Terre Haute. With Frank O'Bannon in the Governor's office and Judy tirelessly promoting Indiana Main Street, we understood that Terre Haute was part a bigger movement. There was genuine interest in recasting the role of Indiana downtowns in the 21st century, and we were making progress here.

The momentum has continued over the 16 years since Governor O'Bannon passed away and Judy became a Former First Lady. The Cherry Street Garage was built, the Federal Building was conveyed to ISU and reborn as the Scott College of Business, two hotels have been built, dozens of units of upper floor housing have been developed in historic buildings, and businesses continue to open and expand. We have seen a shift away from retail toward food, entertainment and celebration of our rich cultural heritage. The latest addition to our Downtown, the Vigo County History Center at 929 Wabash, is a wonderful and

welcome addition. Its presence is one of the many reasons Downtown Terre Haute was recognized as a state Arts and Cultural District — a distinction that we should all be proud of.

So we find ourselves at the dawn of a new decade, twenty years after Judy O'Bannon challenged us to look toward the future as a new millennium was upon us. As we look around at the progress that has been made, it's important to reflect on where we have been and how we got here. Looking at you all who have gathered today, I see so many people who have worked together to bring us to this point. Thank you all for your commitment to improving our community.

You're probably wondering about the tree. When Judy gave it to us back in 1999, it was about two feet tall, and the trunk was about the diameter of my pinky finger. It got off to a rocky start, getting broken almost in half by someone stumbling over it. We repaired it with a splint held together by duct tape, and it didn't really grow for a couple of years after that. But with help and patience, this tree repaired itself and is now healthy, reaching about 40 feet tall.

To me, our Hoosier Millennium Tulip Poplar Tree is a symbol of our downtown and our collective efforts to improve it. Thank you, Judy, for this enduring gift, and for all you have done for our Hoosier State.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please help me welcome Judy O'Bannon.