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Fishers to build outdoor amphitheater, trail system

11:45 AM, Nov. 16, 2011 | 1 Comments

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Written by Dan McFeely

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FISHERS — Town officials will announce today plans today to build a new outdoor amphitheater and an enhanced trail through a tiny downtown area that has struggled to claim an identity within the vast, sprawling suburban town.

Estimated cost: \$4 to \$5 million to be raised by a grant and town surplus [funds](#).

“This really is a different philosophy for us. We are going from managing our growth to fostering it,” said Fishers Town Manager Scott Fadness.

Unlike the city of Carmel, which has aggressively invested millions in its Arts & Design District and the Carmel City Center, the town of

Fishers has historically held back from major public [investments](#), preferring to let the town grow at a pace dictated by the market for suburban living.

Fadness said Fishers would not be doing anything close to what Carmel has done.

“But, financially, we are in good shape and it's time for some [investment](#),” Fadness said. Plans call for the amphitheater to be built on the north side of the elliptical shaped property where the Fishers Town Hall is situated off 116th Street near the railroad tracks.

The venue, which could be used for concerts and other artistic performances, would be designed as a gathering place for Fishers residents.

Additionally, the town plans to build a trail system that would meander through the immediate downtown area and connect with adjacent subdivisions. The idea would be to encourage more folks to walk or ride their bikes to a congested commercial district that

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has struggled to attract new business in the past.

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The plan is like baby steps compared to the last grand idea to create a new Fishers downtown.

A few years ago, a Cleveland-based developer had proposed a massive reconstruction of the area around 116th Street, west of I-69 -- an elaborate plan to purchase existing homes (some of the oldest homes in town) and rebuild with a mix of new homes, townhomes, condos and businesses.

But the developer has since backed off that idea when homeowners expressed a reluctance to sell their properties for the \$100 million idea and town officials were equally reluctant to use its power of eminent domain to take the homes.

Fadness said he'd like to see amphitheater construction begin by spring.

The town recently received a \$500,000 grant from the Hamilton County Convention and Visitors Bureau to help fund the project. The rest will come from town surplus and Fadness said there is no tax increase planned to pay for the projects.

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