

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mayor Ezard Announces Jacksonville to Receive Additional ITEP Funds for Downtown Plaza Construction Project

Mayor Andy Ezard announced Thursday that the City of Jacksonville will receive \$445,770 in additional Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) funds for the Downtown Plaza Construction Project. The funds will be used to offset costs for construction of sidewalks, lighting and associated streetscape items in the inner part of the Downtown Square Plaza. The proposed ITEP funds to be received were made available as part of President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) through the Illinois Department of Transportation.

In discussing finance solutions for the Downtown Project, Mayor Ezard directed the project's engineers, Hutchison Engineering, Inc., to continue to look and push for any additional funding that may be available for the project. Project Engineer Jim Burke, of Hutchison Engineering, indicated in their evaluation that this project...“is a good example of a community striving toward sustainable living”. “I firmly believe in this project,” Ezard stated, “but I also believe the project should largely stand on its own merits and not the shoulders of the public. I am pleased IDOT concurs.”

Based upon the information provided to IDOT by Hutchison Engineering, seeking funding on behalf of the City, IDOT approved the additional \$445,770 of federal enhancement funds. Given the \$1,356,000 of ARRA Enhancement funds previously committed to this project, the total funds available are \$1,802,370. The additional \$445,770 will decrease the local share of the project requiring significantly less funds to be borrowed for this phase of the project.

“Any time I can take an expected project cost of \$557,000 and decrease it by 80% using an alternate funding source so that the City's cost becomes roughly \$110,000, I will!” Ezard said.

The Downtown Plaza Reconstruction Project is slated for completion in December 2010.