MAYOR GREG BALLARD UNVEILS PLAN TO HONOR GREAT HOOSIERS DOWNTOWN

INDIANAPOLIS – Mayor Greg Ballard today after months of work unveiled a plan to add to the newest destination space in Downtown Indianapolis by honoring great Hoosiers who have left a lasting mark on our state and nation.

“We have been working for close to a year on a plan to showcase great Hoosiers along the new event space currently being constructed on Georgia Street,” said Mayor Ballard. “I never felt comfortable honoring great Hoosiers on a street named after another state, but after listening to a lot of public input, I have asked Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. to stop the street renaming process while we finalize the plans for these memorials and gather additional public input.”

Mayor Ballard’s plan calls for up to 30 six-foot-tall pillars lining the boardwalk featuring the likeness and short biography of honored Hoosiers. The sidewalks will feature historical markers identifying key historical facts about the street. The Indianapolis Super Bowl Host Committee is donating the cost of the first 15 pillars and sidewalk markers.

The pillars and markers will be incorporated into the $12 million in improvements being made to Georgia Street that include creation of a pedestrian mall, overhead canopies, enhanced lighting and landscaping, and public event space.

Mayor Ballard is asking the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) to lead the process of identifying and recommending honorees to the Mayor for final approval. Mayor Ballard intends this tribute be conferred posthumously to Hoosiers whose contributions to society transcended their selected fields and left a lasting legacy on our state and the nation. The inaugural class could include eight to 10 names with one to two honorees awarded annually in the coming years. Indianapolis and Indiana have a long list of people who have made great contributions to our society that could be honored in this space such as: Colonel Eli Lilly, Madame CJ Walker, Virgil “Gus” Grissom and many others.


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