City officials to ask for ideas for downtown renovation

City officials will ask for ideas for downtown renovation projects at a public meeting Thursday at 7 p.m. at City Hall.

Money to pay for the public projects will come from the recently created Downtown Tax Increment District.

Tax increment financing works this way:

Total property valuation in the 33-block district has been set at about $38 million. Improvements like better parking, streets, sewers or other projects are expected to raise valuation. The increase will result in more property tax collections, and the taxes collected on valuation over $38 million are set aside to pay for improvements.

The improvements are usually financed by bonds, which are retired by tax increment payments.

A tax increment district does not increase the rate of taxation.