

# Opinion

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## Our Views

### Year ahead likely to see changes in Twin Cities

**A**s Central Illinoisans welcome a new year, those in the Twin Cities, in particular, are likely to see many new things completed or brought a step closer to completion.

"Downtown revitalization" has been a catch phrase used by both cities from time to time. But in 2001, Bloomington and Normal did more than talk, they planted seeds, some of which could bloom in 2002. Officials in each town have demonstrated a stronger commitment to government involvement than in the past.

Bloomington's ambitious plans are aimed at the top, bottom and middle.

The north end will be anchored by the Cultural District, with the old Scottish Rite Temple and McLean County Arts Center becoming — it is hoped — a gathering point for art and cultural activities in various forms.

Bloomington has taken steps through property acquisition and planning that should move forward in 2002.

At the other end of downtown, plans are not as complete. That should change as soon as feasibility studies — with a clearer idea of costs — are presented for a proposed multipurpose arena facility with an adjacent ice rink.

The Bloomington City Council has scheduled a special work session on the project at 5 p.m. Monday and is likely to decide whether to proceed with the arena early in the year.

Meanwhile, Uniquely Bloomington! has been working with the city and downtown building owners on streetscape and facade improvements. The group has developed momentum that should carry into this new year.

Up the road, Normal has initiated a plan that will totally revamp its downtown.

Not content to make mere cosmetic changes, the town is considering a mixture of new buildings amid the old with significant changes in traffic patterns, including construction of a traffic circle.

The Children's Discovery Museum's new home and a multi-modal transportation center that would bring together buses, trains and are key components of the plan.

The town purchased some buildings...



### There's an alternative to 'central planning'

In today's Pantagraph (Dec. 24) you have a column by Max J. Castro ("Don't put most vulnerable citizens on front lines of current economy," Page A9) claiming that conservatives believe that "market is God," and that Mr. Castro has found a better alternative.

Please be kind to remind the readers of the statement by Professor Harry Markowitz, Nobel Prize winner in 1990. I do not really know if Professor Markowitz defines himself as a "conservative":

"Granted that the invisible hand is clumsy, heartless and unfair, it is ever so much more deft and impartial than a central planning committee."

It is indeed important to remember what the alternative proposed by Mr. Castro is.

Krzysztof Ostaszewski  
Bloomington