

City of Galesburg

Galesburg Advantage - Community Visioning Assembly

Session 5: DRIVING Innovation: CELEBRATING Community: Tourism and Downtown Development

Group 1 - Facilitator - Steve Gugliotta

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be?

National Railroad Hall of Fame

Increased restaurant and retail

Vehicles will be allowed to turn right on red

Improve and expand Motel/Hotel Conference facilities needed to support increased tourist activities

Upper story residential

Develop a system of bike/hike trails that physically connect various attractions and can be extended in phases throughout the community

Need a major retailer and grocery store downtown

We need a History of Galesburg Museum to highlight our past strengths and create civic pride

Other comments

Look into providing trolley tours that focus on our historical properties and locations

The existing RR Museum works with BNSF and provides 2 tours per year through the BNSF Yard, that needs to be better marketed and utilized

Carry the Seminary Street theme to other side streets off of Main Street

Install a Ferris Wheel at Colton Park to create a lasting image to those coming in or passing through Galesburg via Amtrak

The Squared Circle downtown needs renovation

Promote the Underground Railroad history in Galesburg

The City needs a family oriented business that will draw from the larger Galesburg area such as bringing back Kiddy land or getting a Fun City

Contact the larger corporations that now have vacant buildings in the community, such as Wal-Mart, and investigate the possibility of them donating the property to the City for redevelopment

Encourage activities/tourist attractions that will make people inclined to stay overnight in the community, spend more, and more likely to refer their friends

We need a location for local artists to display their work

There are a series of old steam lines that were underground downtown and connected some buildings. These lines may have been used as escape routes for frequent visitors to Galesburg, such as Al Capone. This could be another potential tourist attraction

Need to make sure any new developments will blend in with our existing historic fabric

The incentives offered for development/redevelopment are a needed resource and should be used to encourage developers to work in parallel with our community vision

Encourage local/area farmers to get involved in agri-tourism. This may include educational tours for schools or general public that would help educate people on how farms operate, seasonal festivals, restaurants, petting zoos, etc.

Positive Comments from Panel Discussion

Many attractions

History

Absolutely love the Ferris Wheel ideas and where we can go with that

Make the Ferris building a downtown garage

5 - 10 year bench marks - Community Goals for a 21st Century workforce

Great ideas can become reality with community support

Improved bike trails

More things for tourist to do downtown

Any ideas to improve the Visioning Assembly Sessions?

It's very hard to hear in breakout sessions

Group 2 - Facilitator - Wayne Carl

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

A kid friendly restaurant. Somewhere kids will want to go when they are in Galesburg

Souvenir Gift Shop

More Specialty shops. Expand area to include one block north/south Main Street from Cherry to Seminary

Develop Ferris Building into Boutique Hotel

A toy/hobby store

A 5 and Dime store

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Free shuttle service to get around

NRRHoF will be open and will attract people to the downtown

What tourist attractions outside of the downtown area are important to develop?

Recreational - soccer/softball/baseball fields for tournaments

Water park near I-74 or Lakeside for good visibility

Bike (BMX) Park

Radio-controlled airplane park/miniature car racing track

Par 3 lighted golf course

Indoor virtual golf course/driving range

Ice skating rink

Indoor go-cart track (possibly old Wal-Mart building on National Blvd)

Paintball/laser tag facility

Casino

Stearman museum

Stearman repair training, Stearman rides, Stearman parts vendors, etc. Expand existing show by adding these items

Are there additional markets to be tapped/developed to attract visitors?

Underutilizing Orpheum and Prairie Players

Golf course - partner with Amtrak for weekend golf package - attract from Chicago and other areas

Improve and promote the golf course to be part of a golf course circuit (players play at several courses on circuit)

Car shows - attract car enthusiasts, vendors, etc

Intermediate fishing tournament - regional attraction

Tap into Lake Storey Park - use for more events and promote the Lake Storey area

Tap into Frisbee golf course - Galesburg has good course, need to promote and have tournaments

Knox Alumni's Weekend - Tie into Symphony/Orpheum/Shopping Trip for the weekend to get Alumni back in the area

Encourage Knox Alumni to bring their talents and abilities back to Galesburg

Partner with other Regional Events for Galesburg to be one part of a bigger tour (ex - Old Threshers (Mt. Pleasant))

Offer bus tours in cooperation with the Orpheum Theatre/Museums and Shopping

Need to advertise Galesburg's attractions at the rest areas on I-74 east and west of Galesburg

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

No Quiet Zones currently - hard to attract people with train noise

Lack of advertising of community attractions - Lack of Branding

I-74 Entrance leading to downtown - currently not attractive

More diverse shopping needs to be added (Something for everyone - men, women and children)

Need an IHOP/Denny's

No commercial air travel to community

No one big attraction to spend a whole day in Galesburg instead of a few hours

RR crossings (having to wait on trains)

Lack of activities for youth

No civic center type building to host large events, trade shows, etc.

No TV media presence in Galesburg to assist in promoting and attracting events

Name the most important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

Fill in the OT Johnson space

NRRHoF

Quiet Zone

Library

Armory Redevelopment

Businesses in the downtown area staying open past 5:00 p.m. (Downtown to be alive in evening)

Expand Depot parking space

Expand Seminary Street type shops out onto Main Street

Open up an access way (roadway) through Standish Park to Knox College

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Façade Improvements to downtown buildings

Fill empty stores in downtown

More parking and directional signage for parking in downtown (need more spaces to attract larger restaurants/businesses)

What function do the entry corridors play in attracting people to the downtown area?

Not attractive currently

Improve signage and driveway at Welcome Center

Need signage directing to the shopping area downtown (Square)

Keep entry corridors clean to attract people to the community

The entry corridors have huge potential to attract people. Entry corridors for interstate, highways and rail

Provide distances to destination on signage to encourage motorists to stop in Galesburg

Change name of Main Street from Grand Ave to I-74 to "Welcome Way" to be more inviting to guests

Positive Comments from Panel Discussion

Galesburg is alive but needs to pick up the pace of growing and cleaning up the problem sites and bringing the beauty of the town back for others to want to come see.

Group 3 - Facilitator - Julie Main

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

Look at attractive parking areas

Put angle parking on Main Street. Look at developing parking plan

More pedestrian friendly walk/bike to Knox and railroad attractions

All season focus not just summer - use canopies

Develop bus tour of underground railroad - reopen tunnel between Central Congregational Church and Library

Expand Seminary Street brick street program in downtown - cross walks

Adopt design codes for facades

Need downtown czar. They get to rule

What tourist attractions outside of the downtown area are important to develop?

Expand Lake Storey opportunities. Continue bike path all the way around and festival every weekend at Lake

Encourage/expand sports programs i.e. soccer

Gold Galesburg program - Bunker/Lake Bracken, Soangetaha

Develop revolving loan fund for Galesburg historic homeowners

Need a nice statue of Lincoln

Develop Elder Hostel in Galesburg. Market with Bishop Hill

Develop local interest education programs - passport program

Are there additional markets to be tapped/developed to attract visitors?

Organic/dynamic farming

Buy local

Exploit area outfitters promote

Area barn, church, etc tours

Expand history - tell our story - very rich past

Expand farm show

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

Clean entrance ways - Get residents to care about exterior maintenance of properties

Expand litter programs

Expand downtown parking

Coordination of information problem and hospitality. Town pride program. Be happy to help to promote Galesburg

Need conference friendly downtown hotel

Back facades need cleaned up

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Name the most important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

Campaign for Obama Presidential Library NOW!

National Railroad Hall of Fame

Conference Center

Revamp downtown plaza

Build shelter by Railroad Museum

Need more street furniture - benches

Reevaluate rules i.e. allow items on sidewalks facades

What function do the entry corridors (East and West Main, Seminary, Broad, south Streets) play in attracting people to the downtown area?

Need more i.e.. welcome to downtown Galesburg

Positive Comments from Panel Discussion

Really enjoy the energy tonight! I would like to have the City ask each person in attendance how they are going to continue their service to Galesburg and our continuing project to make the City the place people want to live and work. Ask us how we are going to contribute/volunteer. Also, let us know what help you need! A volunteer corps! - Natalie Kessler

Great panel! I am pumped Loved the Ferris wheel idea! - Dave Dunn

Good ideas. Sensed love for Galesburg!

5 - 10 year bench marks - Community Goals for a 21st Century workforce

Façade program is enforced by City Code!

Stricter standards for downtown stores! GS Bond

Lets not let owners have plywood, why vinyl windows and residential items on historic buildings.

Clean up Main entrance

Any ideas to improve the Visioning Assembly Sessions?

Have active tour of the underground rail road

Keep going after these 6 are done

Keep using the resource you have found

Group 4 - Facilitator - Captain Lindsey May

Are there additional markets to be tapped/developed to attract visitors?

Attract Knox and Monmouth College students

Market motels to business and industry

Market attraction to schools

Bus/trolley to attractions

coordination of events and attractions

Numbered guide/pamphlet

Community calendar

Transportation to attractions

Google calendar - master all contributing

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

Rural transportation improved

Improved railroad crossings

Improve Stearman Flyin. Pilot incentives, museum, national promotions

Empty store fronts - looks junky

All gateway (East Main) Improvement entry appeal

Purinton Paver history tie in for gateways

Photo highway billboards

Restore/maintain historic properties

MARKETING

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Name the most important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

Store fronts

NRRHoF

Implement Massey & Massey study

Parking

Boutique hotel

"You are Here" Maps

Affordable restaurant for students

Mall /downtown interaction

Unique store concept

Wi-Fi in stores

Book store

Empty store fronts into museum/art display. Give to a school

What function do the entry corridors (East and West Main, Seminary, Broad, south Streets) play in attracting people to the downtown area?

Better landscape maintenance (mowing)

Brick entry way - historic lighting (street lights)

Litter

Utilities underground

Uniform zoning (signs and set back signs on ground)

Passenger train attraction list. East of Amtrak station on buildings/large displays

RR Right of way clean up and landscaping

Community ownership along RR Right of way, BNSF, City, Property Owner

Cedar Creek Clean-Up

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

Make it look historic/organized. Closed streets? Like Galena, walking district

Improved public square & fountain

Trolley for downtown or bus

Night life i.e. First Fridays - expand have First Saturday/ weekend follow-ups. Flea markets, cultural dance, food fairs, art. Weekend of --- everything, vendors, close streets

More loft apartments

NRRHoF - related shops, restaurants, hotels

Positive Comments from Panel Discussion

The Victorian homes are a great gem to attract visitors

Great update on NRRHOF

Appreciated Railroad Hall of Fame update

5 - 10 year bench marks - Community Goals for a 21st Century workforce

Every store front filled

Develop the unique store concept throughout downtown

Apartments and loft apartments in downtown area with specialty shops below and living space above

Obama Presidential Library - maybe in the Courthouse? This has been recommended on Facebook by some Knox Alumni

Any ideas to improve the Sessions?

No their great!

Fine way they are

Keep it up for a while longer

Sad that only one more is left!

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Group 5 - Facilitator - Kelli Bennewitz

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

- Problem - looks! Absentee landlords
- Decay on outer edges of downtown
- Consultants need to look at store front
- Traffic issues
- Commuter service (mass transit to outlying communities: Cities and Peoria)
- Placement of NRRHoF very important

What tourist attractions outside of the downtown area are important to develop?

- Agri tourism
- Knox College Old Main
- Promote golf courses
- Architectural tours - homes, brick streets
- Nature Areas

Are there additional markets to be tapped/developed to attract visitors?

- Large metro areas
- Agri tourism - draw ag industry
- Weekend "trippers" - have attractions open!
- ADVERTISE!
- Need the materials to give out (i.e. walking tours, Victorian homes)

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

- Interstate entrances
- No consistent message between city, county and private signage
- Don't attract "cultural" tourists
- Knox needs to be more visitor friendly
- Signage - local attractions

Name important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

- Lake Storey - water park, trails
- Needs beautification
- Buildings should be true to the period built
- Upper story development
- More Seminary Street like areas
- Recruit real retail - niche marketing
- NRRHoF - Parking assoc with
- Consistent signage
- Bike and walking paths

What function do the entry corridors (East and West Main, Seminary, Broad, south Streets) play in attracting people to the downtown area?

- Downtown Imp plan closes off corridors
- Need business directory
- More/better landscaping
- Local radio information station
- East Main Street corridor needs major improvement

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Group 6 - Facilitator - Cesar Suarez

Downtown

- Consider expanding our concept/boundaries of downtown (i.e. building loft, potential)
- Parking - improvements/multi-level/alley scaping. Commercial on 1st & 2nd floors with parking on roofs
- Residential development condos
- Address EPA Regulatory Issues through grant funding
- Camera System - Use for safety purposes and for promotional value on events

Tourism

- First impressions step towards ED
- Use tourism as springboard for future development
- Elder hostel - several days stay (55 + years) use of Knox Campus Housing. Possible use of Ferris building (history of Lincoln as the hook)
- Corporate Sponsorship of bed and breakfast
- Railroad days - involve schools. Need to move it when school is in session
- Improve marketing communications
- Better Use of partners
- Focus on Fridays - monthly promotion
- More attractive signage - wayward
- Stearman - Special/Unique. Needs development
- Popcorn

Markets

- We got the stuff already feature
- Upgrade existing hotels/motels
- Look at International Opportunities
- We have a great downtown and it need to be promoted. Over 5,500 people work in downtown
- Preserving historical character of worthy buildings.
- Build pedestrian traffic
- Upper level commercial space
- Work with children at earlier age
- Proximity of Institutions to preserve pedestrian traffic for youth/elders
- Attracting youth - Children's museum. Survey children/youth

Other key projects

- Log City History/amusement park
- Ferris Building - elder hostel, expansion of Children's museum, connected by walkway
- Movie Theatre Reused - Old movies i.e. black and white/silent movies

Group 7 - Facilitator - Chief Cratty

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

- Small businesses/retail
- Government/professional
- Residences
- Tourism/entertainment
- Churches
- Ferris Wheel
- Antiques

What tourist attractions outside of the downtown area are important to develop?

- Youth sports
- Wine tours

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- Barn tours
- Parks/camping
- Regular historic home tours
- Golf
- Conference Center
- "Fun City" like complex

Are there additional markets to be tapped/developed to attract visitors?

- Youth sports - family
- Chicago area - via rail
- Viewing stand - Peck Park
- Frisbee league

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

- Promotion to the outside world
- Good hotels

Name the most important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

- Facades
- Code Compliance options
- Book store
- Parking

What function do the entry corridors (East and West Main, Seminary, Broad, south Streets) play in attracting people to the downtown area?

- Great lighting (Stewartsville, MN)
- Parking with shuttle
- Decorative signs
- Clean neighborhoods
- Bike Trails

Group 8 - Facilitator - Roy Parkin

How will the Downtown Function in 10 years? What will the major uses be? What tourist attractions could or should be integrated into a future downtown?

- All building facades restored
- Zionsville, IN - restored buildings with quaint shops
- More activities (events, concerts, bike races, etc)
- Woman's clothing stores
- Shoe stores
- Expand Seminary Street idea to Main Street and side streets
- NRRHoF Facility
- Bookstore
- Retain library downtown
- County administrative offices to old library
- Rehab Courthouse for court services
- Improved landscaping. More flower areas

What tourist attractions outside of the downtown area are important to develop?

- NRRHoF Facility
- Better draws at Orpheum (more sponsors)
- Reopen Sandburg site
- Amtrak Sponsor Galesburg tours
- Expand Knox College as tourist attraction

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- Viewing platform for trains
- Jack Finney Film Festival
- Peck Park - sign directing to downtown
- Food Festival - something grown locally
- Courthouse - historic building tours once renovated

Special Draws

- Budweiser horses
- Special trains, etc
- Four star hotel facility and conference center
- Ferris Wheel
- Kiddy land/miniature golf/ other children activities

Name the most important project/improvement needed in downtown Galesburg?

- NRRHoF Facility
- Seminary Street idea to other streets - façade/landscaping/beautification
- Incentives for businesses to locate downtown
- Expansion of visiting artists program (Studios Midwest)

Are there weaknesses in attracting tourists to Galesburg?

- Foreign tourists - non- English speaking
- Poor way finding signs
- I-74 southbound - lack of signage
- Lack of activities to draw youth (community youth or tourists)
- Soccer Complex

What function do the entry corridors (East and West Main, Seminary, Broad, south Streets) play in attracting people to the downtown area?

- Seminary More attractive currently
- East Main Street - deteriorated buildings
- Additional landscaping (trees to cover up deterioration)
- Replacing older trees
- Improve entrance at I-74
- Creating improved maintenance
- Attitude of residents/property owners/business owners
- Utility company butchering of terrace trees

5 - 10 year bench marks - Community Goals for a 21st Century workforce

- NRRHOF - downtown
- Library new
- Bookstore
- Art Gallery
- Move non court county office into old library and court house restored as court and historic site.
- Four star hotel/Conference center

Any ideas to improve the Sessions?

No, I thought they have all been good!