

Notes from meeting 6: Present, Doug Irwin, Pat Mutter, Laurie Lucas, Mike Dieter, Ben Johnson, Jeff VanFossen.

Summary of last meeting was noted where two topics were introduced and the committee concluded they were important to include within goals and objectives of the Economic Development Plan. The Committee confirmed Technology and Downtown Development/Redevelopment should be incorporated.

Meeting five notes were approved. One change suggested was to include and emphasize affordability for living in Winona to the Quality of Life piece related to Goals and Objectives.

The Group reviewed Goal 1 Market Winona to the world. The group felt this was appropriate as the first goal, since it is step 1 in promoting Winona as a great place to start, expand and grow business. It is also a goal that is not complex.

The next goal to support existing and new business was discussed. Wordsmithing suggestions made include:

Provide an environment for business to start, thrive and grow in Winona. Also to add build on diversity of businesses. Stunning, natural setting.

Discussion of startup related to culinary and food scene was discussed extensively. Members commented it is difficult to recruit food trucks to locations. Ben mentioned Fastenal has food trucks that come periodically. Pat brought forth an observation from Las Vegas where they had a "Container Park" where business could try a business idea.

Culinary foods were discussed and there was a meeting with MN State College Southeast Tech about 1 ½ years ago to discuss a program for the school. The program is one of the most expensive to establish and measuring outcomes on wage ranges after school, ranks low.

A suggestion to provide support for ethnic restaurants was brought up. Discussion of how a commercial kitchen could be helpful was discussed. It could help non-profits with their events, but may have little impact on existing businesses.

The importance of supporting businesses was discussed and Jeff Van Fossen gave an example of speaking with a business looking at the Midwest. There should be a "hot button" where a business could call for direction and answers to the multifaceted questions that come up when considering a location.

Encouraging Development and Redevelopment in Downtown Winona was discussed. Lucy reviewed the component of the current Downtown Strategic Plan that has criteria for support of projects for Downtown:

Does it bring more people downtown, is it financially feasible, is there someone to lead the effort, and is it sustainable and meeting unmet needs.

The committee want to keep this in the goals and objectives but understands that there is a subcommittee dedicated to downtown and riverfront. The emphasis of connecting Winona to the river was emphasized. Front Porch. Signage and other amenities at the Levee were discussed and noted as very important- Walnut Street Access, signage restrooms, etc.

The goal of workforce, people and human capital was discussed. The Committee agreed that better language is needed for describing this goal. Childcare, transportation and housing should be incorporated into the goals and objectives. Discuss of workforce participation and gathering data on this to address the lower participation rates would be helpful to plans to address more participation.

Childcare within businesses could be an option for companies.

Technology goal was discussed and supported by the group. Adding to assure ongoing sustainability of technology could be added.

Recreational amenities and quality of life were discussed. The importance of outdoor space was emphasized. Ideas of having a “big” draw such as zip line, snow tubing hill, etc. was discussed to act as a draw for people to come into Winona while also serving existing residents. The Ice Wall is an example of this.

A timeline for projects could be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan with financing of project to also be incorporated.

Instead of Partnerships being a goal, the group thought this could be better woven throughout the plan, institutions communicating and meeting with one another, Community Services group, and further discussion.

Tentative next meeting dates August 29th at 4 p.m. or August 30 at 3:30. This is also Council Budget Review so coordination and timing necessary.