

Chicopee 9-29-2020

Themes we need to research internally

- Gentrification (Lena)
- Best practices in bringing social services and policing together (Lena)
- East west rail (McMahon)

What worked well?

- Input from business owners who are already invested here.

What could have we done better?

- Have more opportunities, time slots

What did you hear that surprised you?

- Lots of agreement within the group.

What did you hear that you expected?

- Optimism
- Sometimes things are negative, so having good ideas shared was rewarding.

THEMES

Chicopee takes care of people.

Excitement and optimism.

Focus inward.

Lisa's MIAB was exciting and people were ready to go!

Lee

- New faces
- Rivoli theater was the place to be and this nostalgia speaks to an important desire
- We want a reason to stay in the City.

Nate note: Has the arts really had much of a focus?

Goal over the next month...Surveys are going out in the mail.

MIAB.

Valley Opportunity Council. What should we be getting from this group?

Picture of electric sign?

Next Monday will have a meeting about how the City uses Facebook.

Nate note: What was this process?

Transportation

- Shuttle Service
- East west train
- Go back to Boys and Girls Club interview about how kids are getting around
- Neighborhoods feel disconnected

Schools

- People here love the schools
- But do people move here for the schools?
- Jack: Chicopee schools did not get as high marks as other communities. We feel like we're in the middle of the pack. People use regional school aggregation sites, which aren't great for marketing. Should Chicopee market better? Do they perform well enough to market the school system? There's a feeling that the schools are better than their reputation.
- This should be its own bucket.
- Superintendent
- School Committee
- Focus Group? Couple of SC and a couple of City Councilors for a work session (Lee).

Local Business Development/Retention/Sustaining

- The Memorial Drive experience is unpleasant. So chains get associated with that experience
- Businesses that lease are impacted by the need for compliance upgrades. Are there low/no interest loans that would fix rent prices?
- WMDC. TDI Fellow (Andrea) for downtown, presentation to the group.
- Military Task Force
- MassDevelopment
- Connect Building Department with Community Development.
- Site Plan Advisory Review Committee (SPRAC) could be a good forum on some of these redevelopment issues.

What's Going On?

- Communication with the public
- Reliable source of information
- How do we get information out now? This could be a staff discussion.
- Springfield MVP is a communication project.

Who needs to be engaged?

- Different ages, especially for "How do you get your information?"
- Mayor's communication manager
- FOCUS GROUP

How do we make this friendly? All ages can be happy?

Geography question

- Base has Area Development Plans
- Downtown
- Memorial Drive. Are there MassDOT Plans for this area?
- Use neighborhoods as a “hook” for outreach.

VITALITY

Breweries

Riverfront Development

Special Events

Farmers Market (under 391, yuck). Potential to grow. Run by VOP. They have limitations, maybe capacity and funding sources. No winter market. Hadley has a good winter market.

Neighborhoods

- Can we have a great experience in our own neighborhood?
- What are the assets that would raise up neighborhoods?
- Grocery
- Entertainment