

Lansing Tomorrow Commission

The LTC met at the Lansing Fire Department on Friday night September 18, 2009. Prior to the meeting Madeleine Crawford had graciously picked up some sandwich stuff, which we enjoyed very much. Our thanks go to Madeleine. There were 18 adults and no children at the meeting.

Jason Ring opened the meeting with prayer. He stated that the Rural Center has not received August or September reports from Nita Church. That could be part of what was holding up the money from the Rural Center. Misty Herget had told us before that, no money would be released if there were reports due. Nita Church was not getting the reports in on time; we should get someone else to do it. Sarah Beck volunteers to submit the reports. Nita Church has missed two consecutive meeting. The Commission needs some here to open the meetings. Everett Adams was elected as a Co-Chairman, to serve when Nita is absent. As was talked about in our meeting, we needed a new tape recorder. The tape of this meeting messed up. So I will take most of the minutes from the hand out. I will purchase a new one. I am very sorry.

Paul Combs our coach began by saying that we had talked about several projects. These projects are all based on the understanding that economic development depends on increasing the flow of income into the town and reducing the rate at which that income leaks out of the local "town" economy. Local residents of Lansing and the surrounding area can choose whether to spend a portion of their income in Lansing. Attracting tourist income is a twofold process. First, getting high country tourists to visit the Lansing area and second, inducing them to spend tourist dollars in Lansing. Finally, growing the capacity for the community to produce goods and services, particularly manufactured items, for export has potential for increasing the flow of income. The New

River Winery and local production of arts and hand made products are examples of local manufacturing.

LTC decided to address the four economic growth income-producing areas under three categories of projects, including:

- 1) projects that improve the appearance and functionality of the town.
- 2) Projects that assist with marketing and outreach to the target audiences.
- 3) Projects that add new products to the community.

Organizing along these three dimensions recognizes that Lansing's future depends on its ability to serve the target audiences identified above. Although all the projects identified during the earlier project development phase have merit, it is clear that the community does not have the resources or energy to pursue every suggestion over the next few years. Therefore, our task is to assign priorities to a limited number of projects, estimate costs, identify potential funding sources, determine appropriate project leadership, and develop a plan for project implementation.

Improving the appearance and functionality of Lansing. Our goal is to make Lansing a more attractive and visitor-friendly town in order to encourage people to spend time and purchase goods and services in the town.

1. Building a stage in the Virginia Creeper Park and put benches and flower boxes in the downtown area. This project is already funded with NCSTEP planning funds and most of the project is completed.
2. Identify and mark public spaces in downtown Lansing. This project is already funded with NCSTEP planning funds and should be completed soon. A committee was formed to get the striping done. On the committee were George Rembert, Everett Adams, Larry Blevins, Jack Brown, Carl Jordan.

3. Walkway connecting the center of town to the Old Lansing School area. This may be a crucial component of making the town more visitor-friendly.
4. Adopt Early American Village theme and provide incentives for downtown property owners to make improvements consistent with the theme. (As shown by The Williams' store, even the signage can contribute the theme.)
5. Install a sound system on the Virginia Creeper Park stage to support future concerts and events.

In marketing and outreach, five students in an upper-level marketing communications class at ASU have agreed to take this as a class project. We hope that they will come up with an organized approach to marketing and contribute some concrete ideas. A donation of \$1000.00 is going to be made to ASU for their help.

1. Develop a brand and outreach message for the Lansing area.
2. Prepare marketing materials, including and improved website and brochure for distribution.
3. Identify potential market areas for tourists, retirees, and second-home buyers and develop a five-year marketing plan.

Product Development

1. Public Computer Center
2. Community Center.
3. Bed and Breakfast.
4. Public-Private partnership for adaptive reuse and preservation of the Old Lansing School and gymnasium.
5. Medical Clinic.
6. Entrepreneurship/business development program.

Obviously, not all of these 14 projects can or should be pursued immediately, and some will depend more on private sector investment than on input for public sector funds for economic development projects undertaken by GLAD, and the Town Board

formally changes GLAD to carry out the objectives and responsibilities of the LTC on behalf of the greater Lansing area.

It was also asked if Bernice needed something. Bernice said she desperately needs a chair. Jeff Key said he new of one that was in good shape, and he would try to get it. The next meeting will be October 16, 2009. With no other business, the meeting was adjourned.