

Summary Report

Ellsworth Design Team

January 3, 2018

Ellsworth Design Team
Community Design Charrette

In collaboration with:

Ellsworth Communities Connect
The Village of Ellsworth
UW-Extension Pierce County
UW-Extension Community Vitality + Placemaking Team
UW-Extension Center for Community & Economic Development
UW-Madison Applied Population Laboratory

Summary Report prepared by:



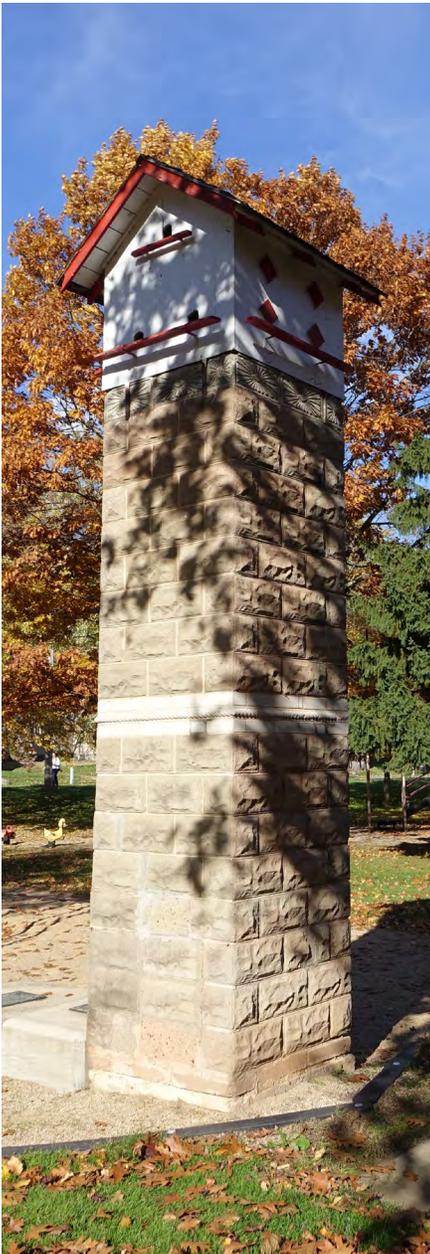
Community Vitality + Placemaking Team



Design Wisconsin Team

A research-based approach to community placemaking

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Summary Report

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Introduction

On October 18, 2018, a group of 17 planning and design professionals found their way to Ellsworth, Wisconsin to dedicate their time and expertise in hopes of helping the community discover their shared vision for the future. The following report documents the process and outcomes of the Design Wisconsin Team's three-day visit.

Design Wisconsin

Design Wisconsin is a community design program offered by the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Community Vitality & Placemaking Team. Design Wisconsin assists local communities in working to identify and visualize their short-, medium-, and long-range visions.

Design Wisconsin features volunteers from planning, creative, and design professions who donate their time and talent over the course of a long weekend (known as "the visit"). The Ellsworth Design Wisconsin Team consisted of team members from Wisconsin and Minnesota with backgrounds in architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, public art, economics, planning, education, political science, civic engagement, community marketing, and digital communication. Team members immersed themselves in the community by living on-site with host families while leading a series of public participation activities. The outcomes of the Design Wisconsin visit included hand-drawn illustrations of the community's shared vision.

Katie Feuerhelm, University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Living Educator for Pierce County, provided the community with the technical support necessary to bring the Design Wisconsin Team to Ellsworth and is assisting the community with ongoing planning and implementation.



Design Ellsworth Schedule

Thursday, October 18, 2018

7:00 PM Reception at Quinn Motors

Friday, October 19, 2018

7:45 AM Design Wisconsin team meeting

8:15 AM Law Enforcement presentation: Lars Loberg (Loberg Law Office), Kristi Frederick (Pierce County Department of Human Services and Child Protection), Mary Kelly (Drug Court), Eric Ladwig (Ellsworth Police Department), and Samantha Brill (Pierce County Criminal Justice)

8:45 AM Pierce County Historical Society presentation: Ellen "Onee" Butts (Director)

9:05 AM Village Government presentation: Kenneth Manfred (Village Board), Mike Steel (Village Board), and Peggy Nelson (Village Clerk)

9:30 AM Public Education presentation: Barry Cain (Superintendent), Jason Haugley (Special Education Teacher), Mary Zimmerman (Elementary School Principal), and Jon Dodge (Middle School Principal)

9:55 AM High School Youth presentation

10:00 AM Health & Wellbeing presentation: Jennifer Thatcher (Hunger Prevention Council), AZ Sneider (Board of Health), Brittany Morah (Fit Families), Lisa Olson (Birth to 3)

10:20 AM Economic Development presentation: Joe Folsom (Executive Director, PCEDC) and Russ Korpela (Board Member, PCEDC)

10:40 AM Ellsworth Public Library presentation: Tiffany Meyer (Library Director)

11:00 AM Immigrant/Underserved Population presentation: Mary Brand (dairy farmer)

11:20 AM Arts Community presentation: Jary Gilseth (local artist)



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- 12:00 PM Focus Group discussions over lunch
- Senior Citizens @ Senior Center
 - Business Community @ Ellsworth Creamery
 - Passionate Community Members @ Zion Church
- 1:40 PM Bus & Walking Tour
- 3:30 PM Design Wisconsin team meeting to develop discussion questions
- 6:00 PM Community Meal at Ellsworth Elementary School
- 7:00 PM Community Workshop at Ellsworth Elementary School

Saturday, October 20, 2018

- 8:30 AM Design Wisconsin Team develops design alternatives
- 7:00 PM Final Presentation at Ellsworth High School





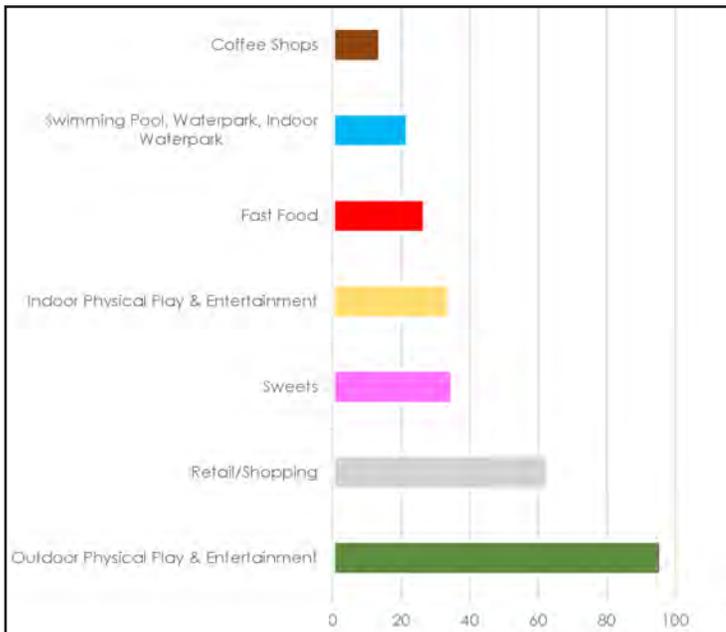
Youth Perspectives

Prior to the Team visit, elementary school youth and high school youth were asked to provide their perspectives as to current issues and hopes for Ellsworth's future.

Over 400 grade school youth drew pictures of their hopes and dreams, while a team of high school youth conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, & Threats (SWOT) Analysis of the community.

In addition, several teens worked with Neil Klemme, UW-Extension Youth Development Educator for Iron County, to expand on the SWOT to develop design alternatives.

The following images and text provide examples of the youth perspective.



Grade School Youth

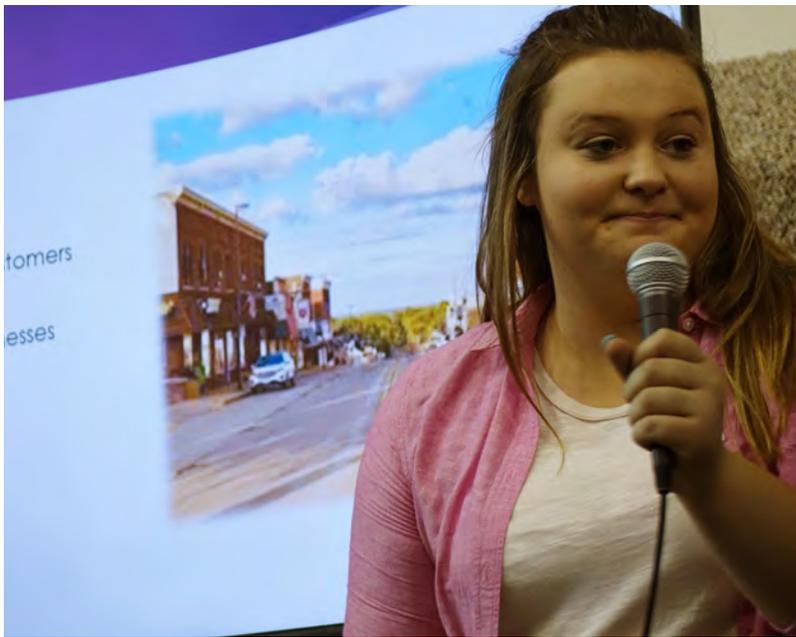
Over 400 Ellsworth grade schoolers submitted drawings of the kinds of activities and facilities they would like to see in Ellsworth. A random survey sample of 291 drawings were reviewed to create a list of ideas from these youths.

That list was then synthesized into common themes. The most common themes in order of frequency were: "Outdoor physical play and entertainment" (96 references), "Retail/shopping" (63), "Sweets" (35), "Indoor physical play and entertainment" (34), "Fast food" (27), "Swimming pool, waterpark, and indoor waterpark" (22), and "Coffee shops" (14).



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Teen SWOT

A group of Ellsworth teens worked together to identify the internal strengths and weakness of Ellsworth as well as its external opportunities and threats.

Following the SWOT exercise, UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development Educator Neil Klemme led the teens in a placemaking exercise to identify potential strategies that might improve Ellsworth. The youth presented their findings to the Team and community members as part of the "Community Presentations" on Friday, October 19. The following slides were featured as part of their presentation.

MAP

Strengths

- S1 – Creamery
- S2 – New School
- S3 – New Jail
- S4 – Businesses
- S5 – County Seat

Opportunities

- O1 - Parks
- O2 – Open Lot
- O3 - Fair
- O4 - Field
- O5 – Teen Outlet

Weakness

- W1 – Roads
- W2 - Eye Sores
- W3 – East End
- W4 – Parking
- W5 – Old Buildings

Threats

- T1 – Check Inn
- T2 – Graffiti
- T3 – Drug Problem
- T4 – Small Farms
- T5 - Buildings

Some Items are all around town such as: S4, W1, W2, W5, O5, T3, T4, T5





STRENGTH 1 – The Creamery

- Massive International Business, many opportunities for workers in Ellsworth Wisconsin.
- Also It is a nice looking building for an industrial workplace.



STRENGTH 2 – New Elementary School

- Brand new
- Looks nice inside and out
- Has many new features





STRENGTH 3 – New County Jail

- ▶ It is a new and Improved place to store convicts.
- ▶ Also saves us money due to not having to pay other jails to hold our prisoners.



STRENGTH 4 - Businesses

- It is a nice looking New Building (Quinn Motors)
- Represents numerous Businesses on Main Street





WEAKNESS 1 - Roads and Sidewalks

- ▶ Roads and Sidewalks are falling apart
- ▶ This is not attractive
- ▶ Makes it difficult for handicapped/elderly/strollers
- ▶ Potential for better transportation



WEAKNESS 2 – Eye Sores in Town

- ▶ Main Street needs to be fixed up
- ▶ Main Street does not have a uniform look
- ▶ Makes our town look not as nice
- ▶ It could use some repainting





WEAKNESS 3 - East End Main Street

- ▶ The buildings are sketchy
- ▶ The roads could be fixed up a little more
- ▶ There are many unique bars and small businesses
- ▶ If it was cleaned up there is potential to have attractive tourist destination



WEAKNESS 4 – Lack of Parking on Main Street

- ▶ Could use some more spots to park
- ▶ Businesses doesn't have enough people that come in
- ▶ We could make more parking behind the businesses





OPPORTUNITY 1 - Updating parks

- Equipment needs to be updated from the old and rusty existing equipment



OPPORTUNITY 2 - Open lot and McDonald's building

A new business could occupy either empty space near McDonald's or the empty lot near McDonald's.





OPPORTUNITY 3 - Pierce County Fair

- Bring more people in to the community
- We could have different events other than the County Fair
- We could use the grandstand for some of those events



OPPORTUNITY 4 - Field by EES

- ▶ We could make it a nice field
- ▶ Used for high school practices and youth games
- ▶ Put up soccer nets and start a youth soccer organization.





OPPORTUNITY 5 - Teen Outlet

▶ High School Students would like somewhere they could hang out.

▶ Suggestions:

- ▶ Bowling Alley
- ▶ Coffee Shop
- ▶ Movie Theatre
- ▶ Taco Bell

THREAT 1 – Check Inn

- It is an old building, with registered criminals.
- With it being on Main Street and by the schools, this could cause problems and our land could be used differently.





THREAT 2 – Graffiti

Visitors could see and think of our town as being sketchy and trashy, doesn't make us look good. It can also be offensive or harmful.



THREAT 3 – Drug Problem

- ▶ People will begin to think we are only associated with drugs and that we allow drugs in our community, which gives us a bad reputation. If drug use keeps increasing in our community, we will have to put aside more money for the police department budget, which will take away money from other parts of community like graffiti, and the Check In.



THREAT 4 – Small Farms not Surviving

Large farms are taking advantage of land and resources which isn't allowing the smaller farms to have that.



THREAT 5 - Abandoned Buildings

- ▶ Make our towns look run down and can cause harm.

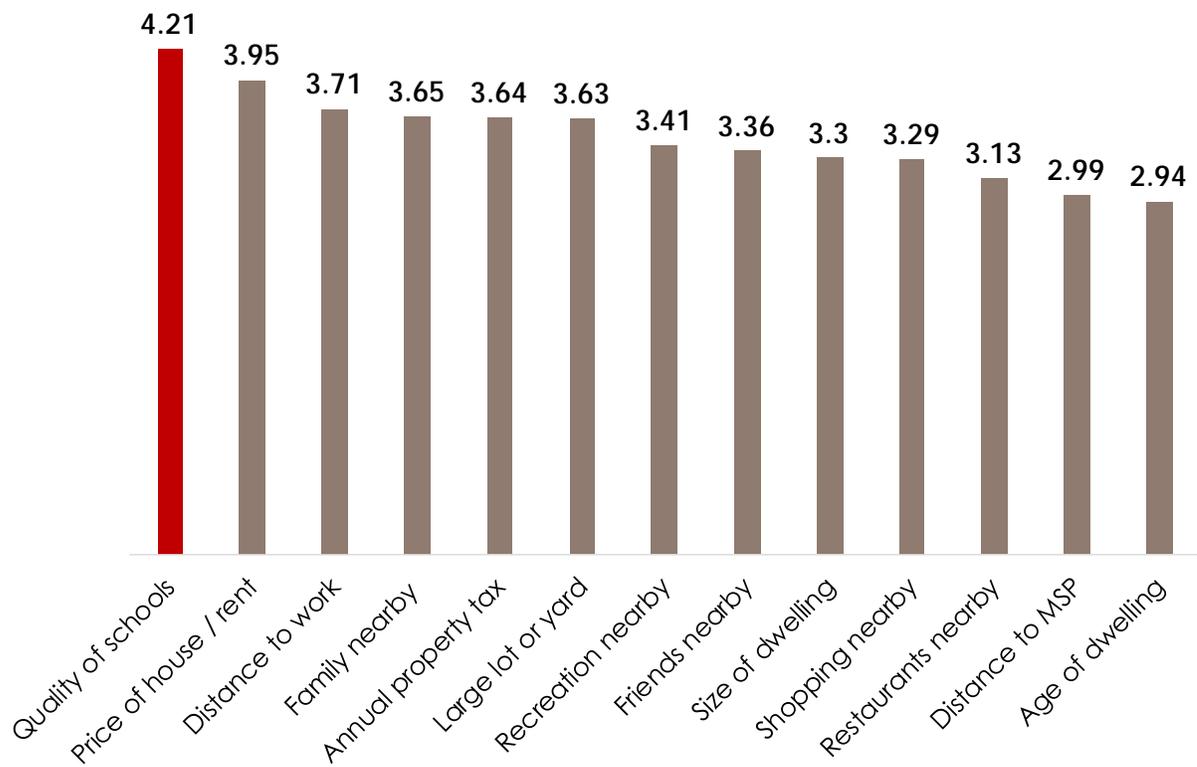




Community Survey

From October 1 to November 1, Ellsworth residents and stakeholders were asked to complete an online survey distributed via e-mail and Facebook. The survey focused on the following aspects of the Ellsworth community: Resident Experience, Social Life in Ellsworth, Recreation, Downtown & Business Districts, and Community Amenities & Housing. A total of 402 residents and 130 local stakeholders completed the survey. The survey questions, results, and recommendations are featured below.

Resident Experience: "Why did you choose to live here?"

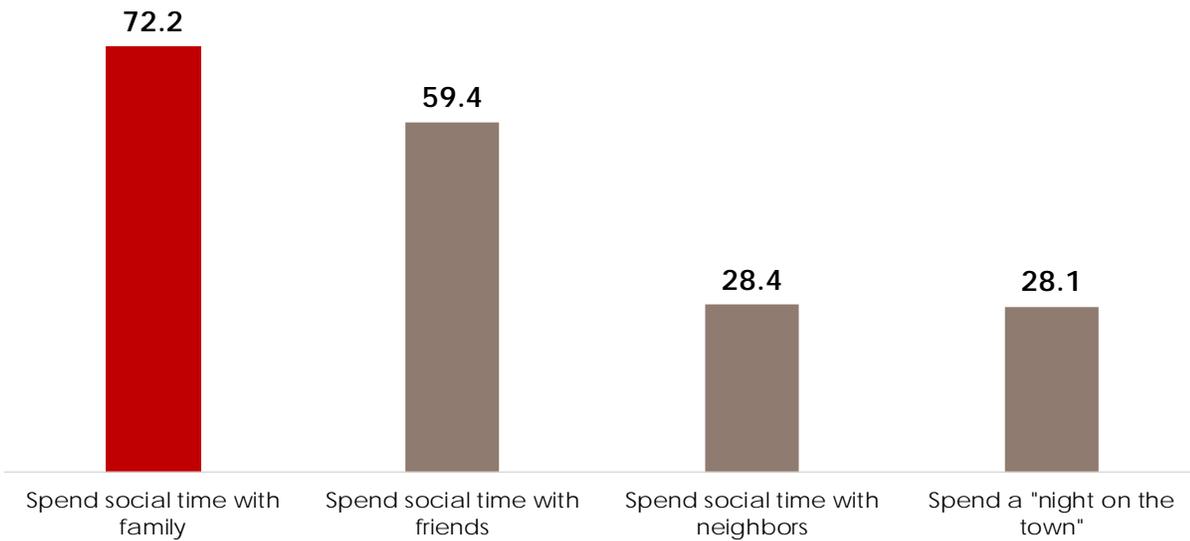


When asked to rate different reasons for living in Ellsworth (1 to 5 stars), "Quality of schools" received 4.21 out of a total of 5 stars, followed by "Price of house/rent" (3.95-star rating) and "Distance to work" (3.71-star rating). Based on this, continue to emphasize high quality schools and relatively low cost of living when communicating about Ellsworth to potential residents and stakeholders.



Social Life:

"In the typical year, how often do you do the following?"



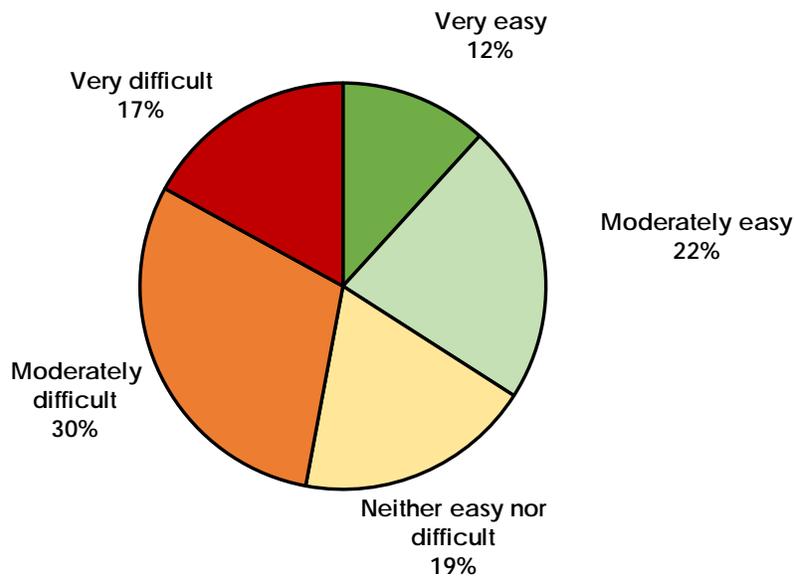
72.2 % of respondents answered "At Least Weekly" or "Several Times a Month" regarding the activity "Spending social time with family" and 59.4% had the same responses for "Spending social time with friends." Based on this, continue supporting activities that cultivate close relationships among residents.





Social Life in Ellsworth:

“When you moved to Ellsworth, how easy or difficult was it to get to know other people?”



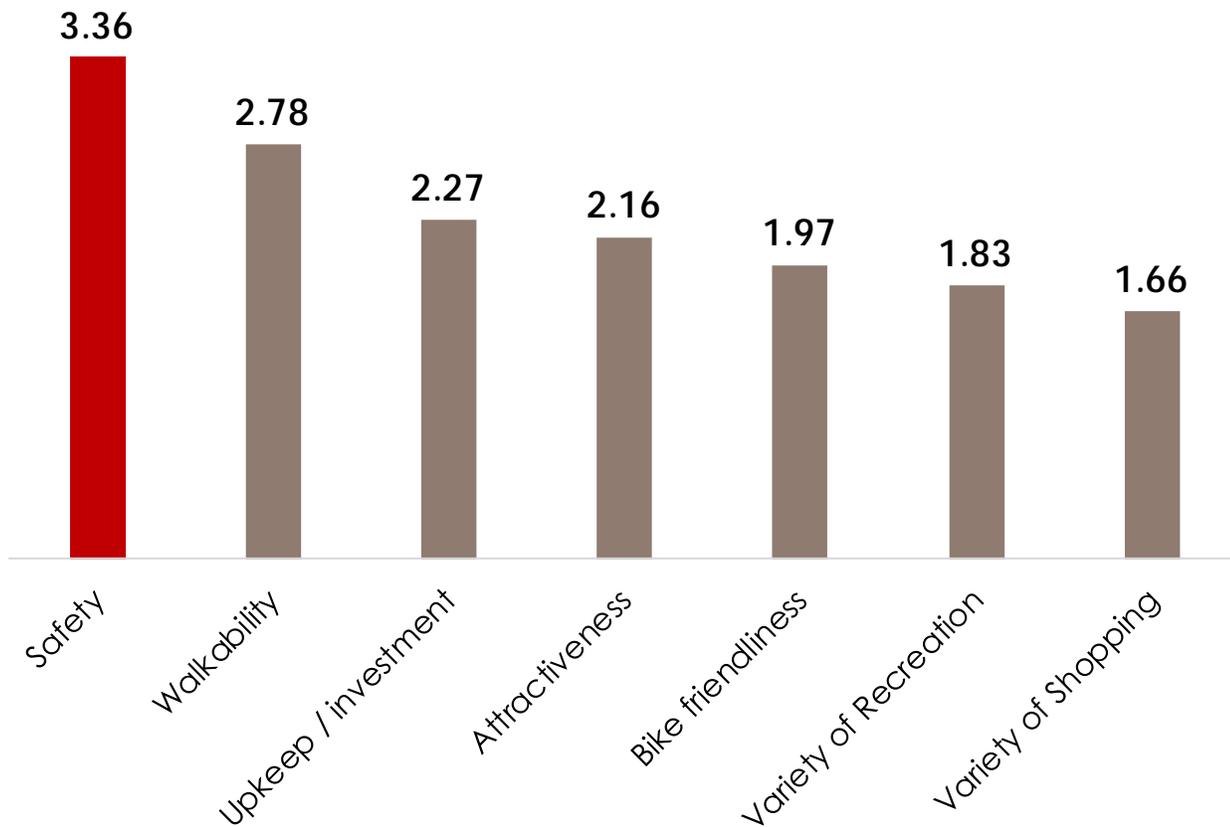
Welcoming new community members is critical in developing the relationships necessary to grow businesses, organizations, and volunteerism. Consider the following strategies:

- Establish a Newcomers Club to provide a mechanism for new residents to meet others.
- Establish a Young Professionals and Tradesperson (YPT) group.
- Encourage employers to participate and actively support these organizations, and also to address social integration of the employee and their spouse/partner as part of their new employee onboarding process.
- Work with realtors to identify new residents in advance of their home closing, and issue personal invitations to join these groups.
- Ask the local school to host a once-a-semester “New Family Night” for the purpose of introducing the parents of transfer students to other parents, making sure established families are also present that are willing to serve as social guides.
- Look to the library as a source of social activity, and consider asking it to establish a newcomers book club and a Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS) or Parents of Preschoolers (POPS) group for those with children too young to be part of the school system.



Downtown & Business Districts:

“How satisfied are you with the following aspects of Ellsworth’s downtown and business districts?”

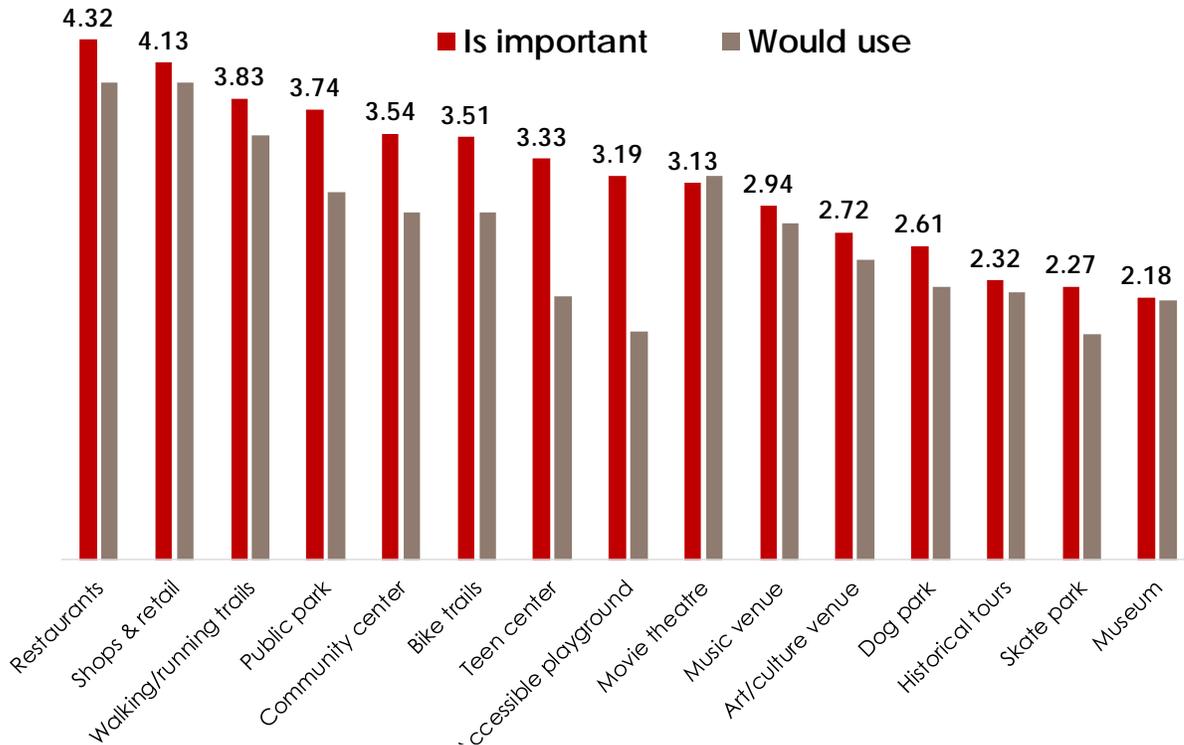


When asked to rate each of the aspects, “Safety” received an average of 3.36 out of a possible 5-star rating. All other aspects received less than a 3 star rating, suggesting that the downtown and business districts need improvements.



Recreation:

“How often would you, or someone in your household, use the following if it was in Ellsworth? Regardless of how much you or someone in your household would use the following, how important is it that we include these things in community improvements?”

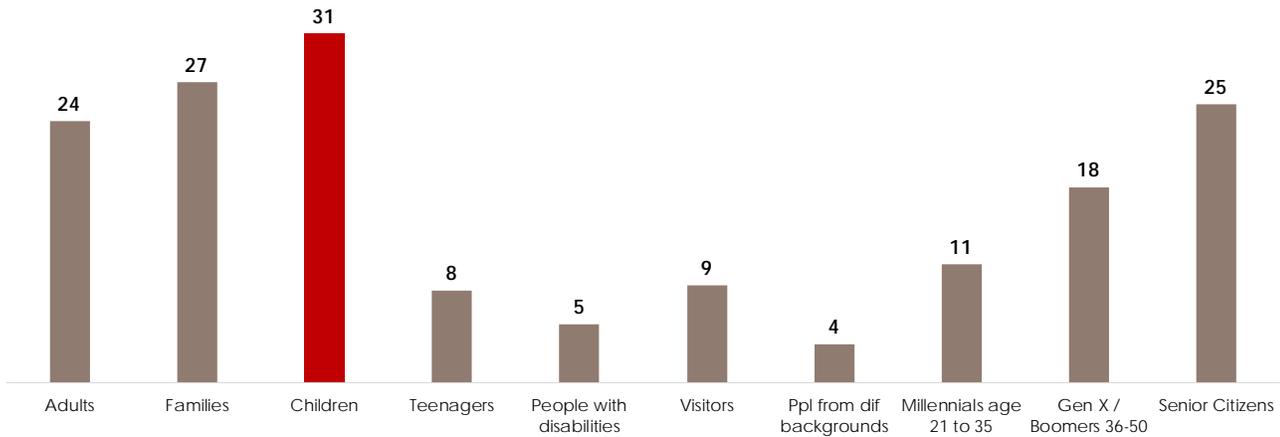


When asked to rate different ideas for community improvements (1 to 5 stars), “Restaurants” received 4.32 out of a total of 5 stars as being “Important” and a 3.95 star-rating that it “Would be used.” The next highest were “Shops & retail” (4.13 important/3.96 would use), “Walking/running trails” (3.83/3.53), “Public park” (3.74/3.05), “Community center” (3.54/2.89), and “Bike trails” (3.51/2.89).

Likely more valuable than seeing where an individual idea ranks would be further consideration of what mix of amenities could complement one another in Ellsworth. One might ask how those that cater to visitors might also support the success of improvements that would mean a lot to the local residents included in this survey.



Amenities by Age: “Does Ellsworth offer a sufficient number of activities or amenities to be attractive to...”



31% of respondents believed that children have a sufficient number of activities or amenities. After that, “Families” (27%), “Senior Citizens” (25%), and “Adults” (24%) were well-served. Only 4% thought that “People with different backgrounds” were well served, 5% for “People with disabilities”, 8% for “Teenagers”, and 9% for “Visitors”.

Although building a new community center may be a medium- to long-range goal, consider the following:

- A youth soccer league would offer opportunities for girls and boys and could use existing fields.
- A summer swim team would utilize the pool to a greater extent.
- School facilities could be used by residents during downtimes.
- Engage 4-H clubs and community teenagers when planning activities designed to appeal to their age groups.

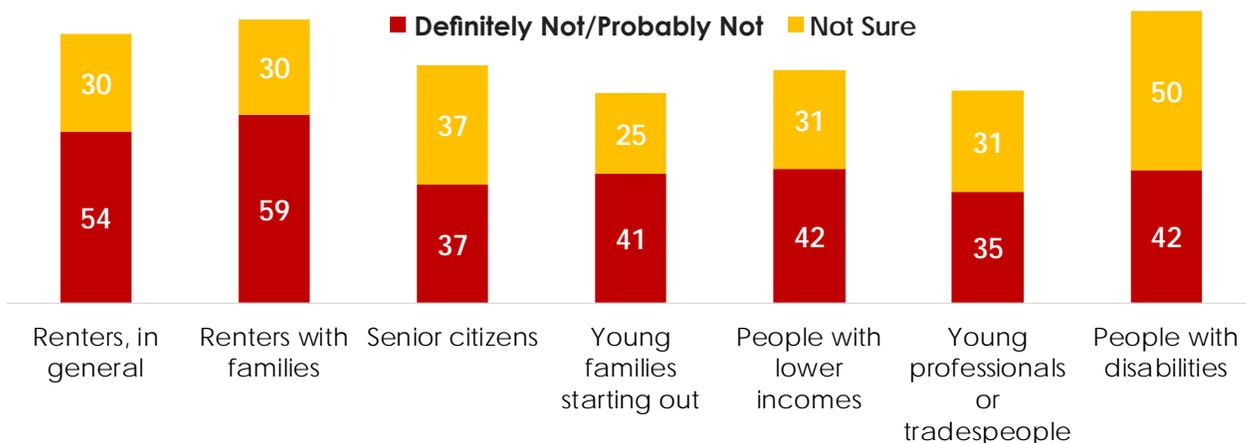


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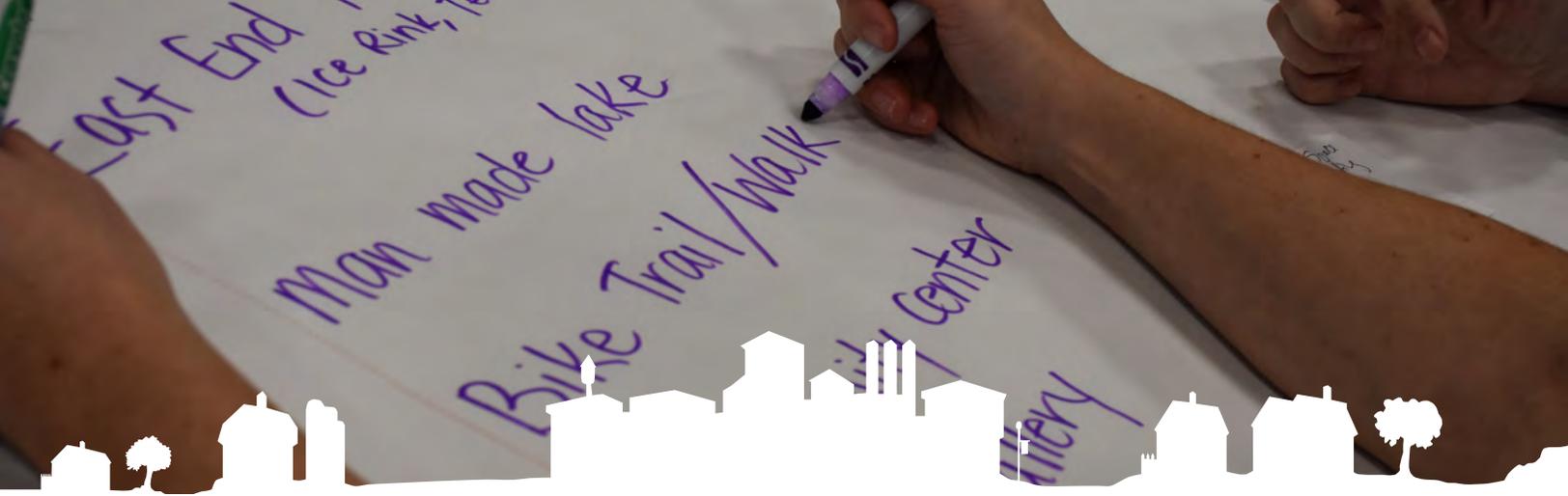
Housing: “Are there a sufficient number of housing options for...”



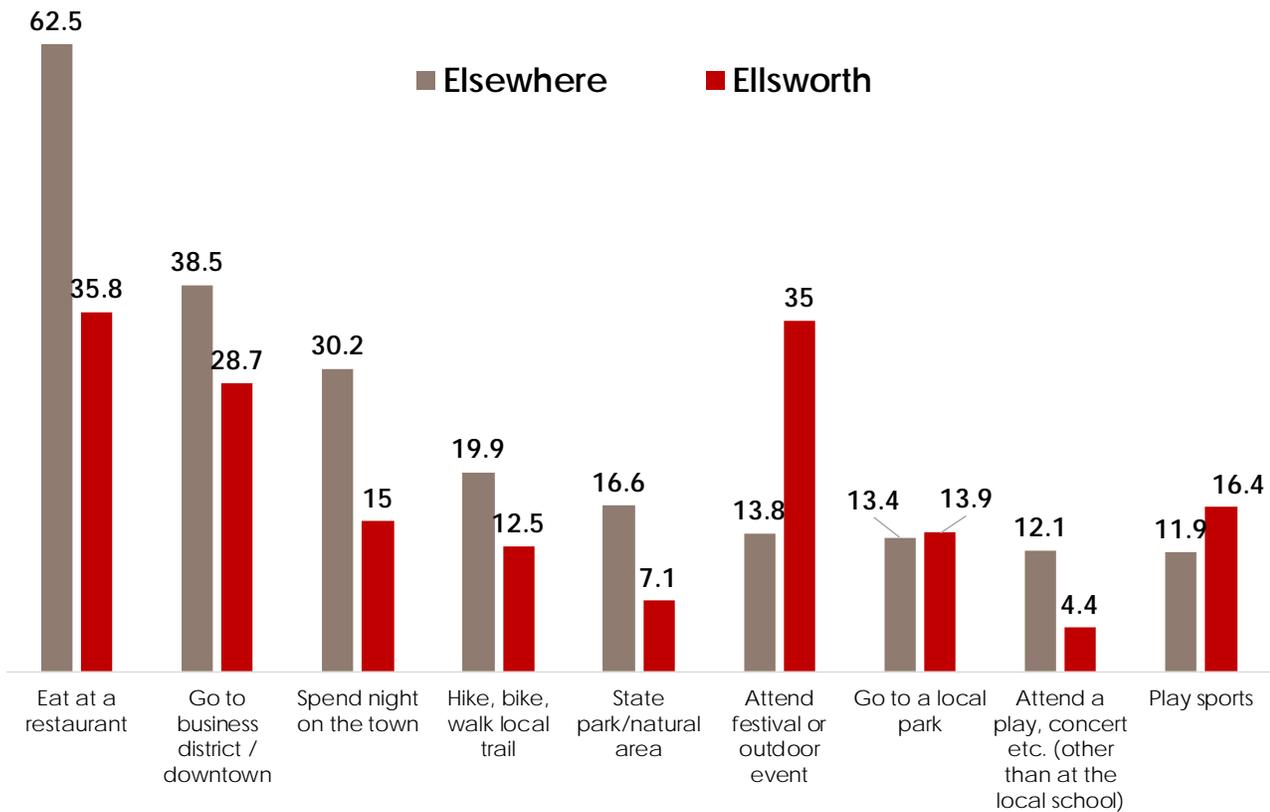
When asked about housing options, 59% of responses indicated “Definitely Not/Probably Not” that “Renters with families” would be able to find housing, followed by “Renters, in general” (54%), “People with disabilities” (42%), and “People with lower incomes” (42%). When combined with the response “Not Sure”, “People with disabilities” ranks worst with 92%, followed by “Renters with families” (89%), and “Renters, in general” (84%).

These responses reveal a real need for improvement in rental housing options. In order to better understand Ellsworth’s housing needs and issues, consider having a professional housing study conducted.





Activities: "How often do you do the following... in Ellsworth? Elsewhere?"



The graph above indicates which activities received either "at least weekly" or "several times a month" for "Ellsworth" or "Elsewhere". 62.5% of respondents indicated that they "Eat at a restaurant" "Elsewhere" and 35.8% in "Ellsworth". When asked about where do they "Go to a business district/downtown", 38.5% indicated "Elsewhere" and 28.7% in "Ellsworth". 35% "Attend festival or outdoor event" in Ellsworth compared to 13.8% "Elsewhere".

Based on these responses, consider focusing new business attraction and development efforts on restaurants, shops, and small retail development. Public service development should focus on trails, parks, and community gathering spaces.





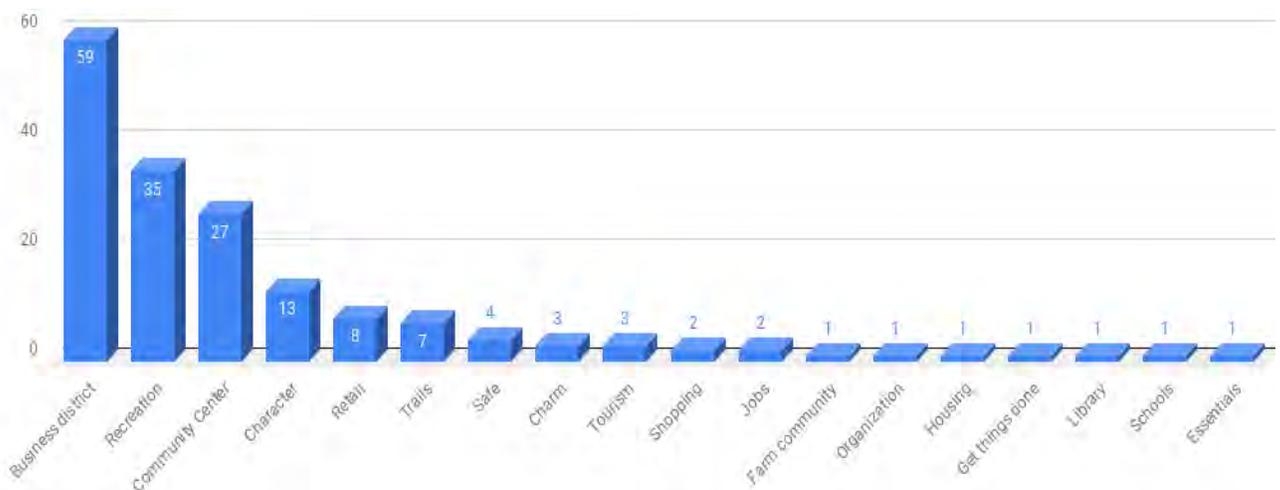
Community Values

On Friday, October 19, over 250 Ellsworth residents participated in a group exercise designed to share their hopes and concerns about the future of their community.

Following dinner, community members provided answers to key questions on note cards. Small groups discussed and summarized the answers which had been provided to the questions. Participants then reviewed all of the small group summary responses and voted for their favorite response to each question with stickers.

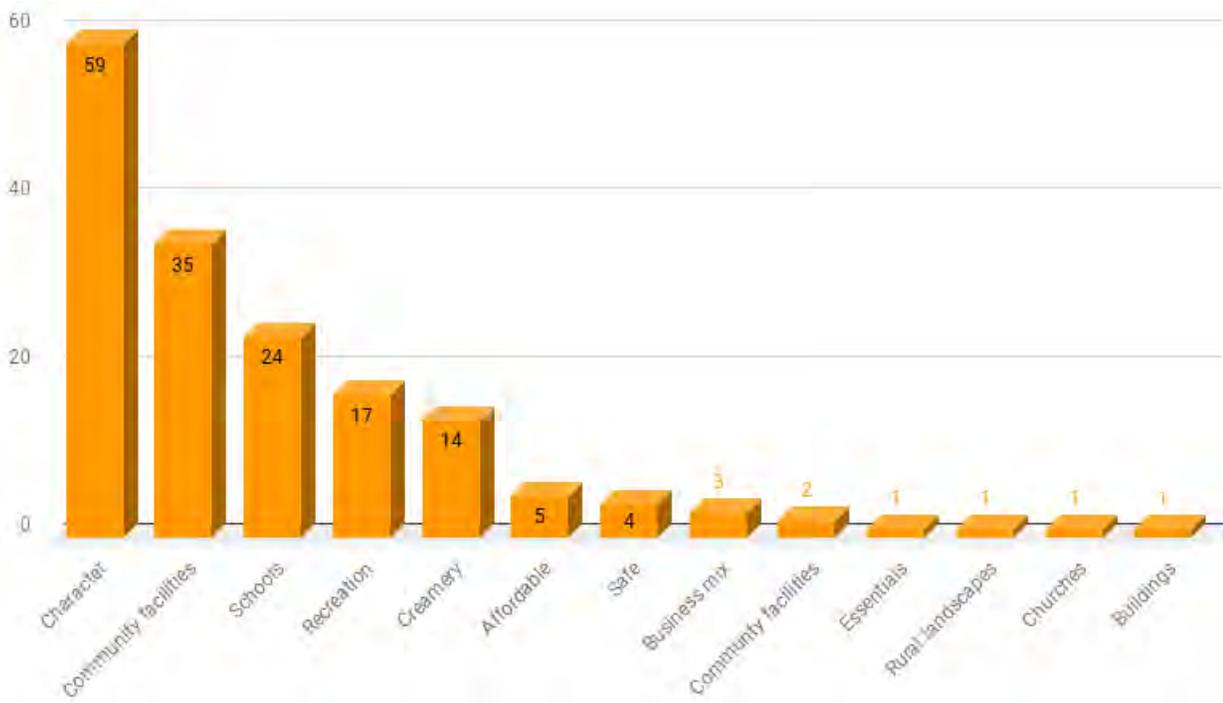
The top responses for each question are listed below:

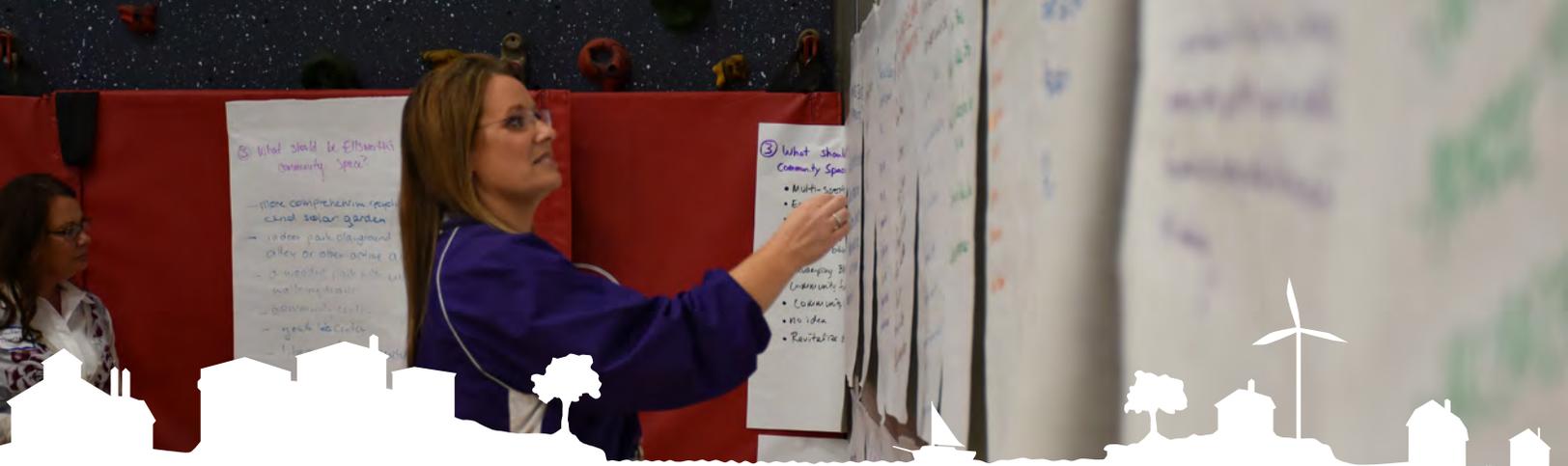
Ten years from now, what one thing about Ellsworth do you hope to brag about?



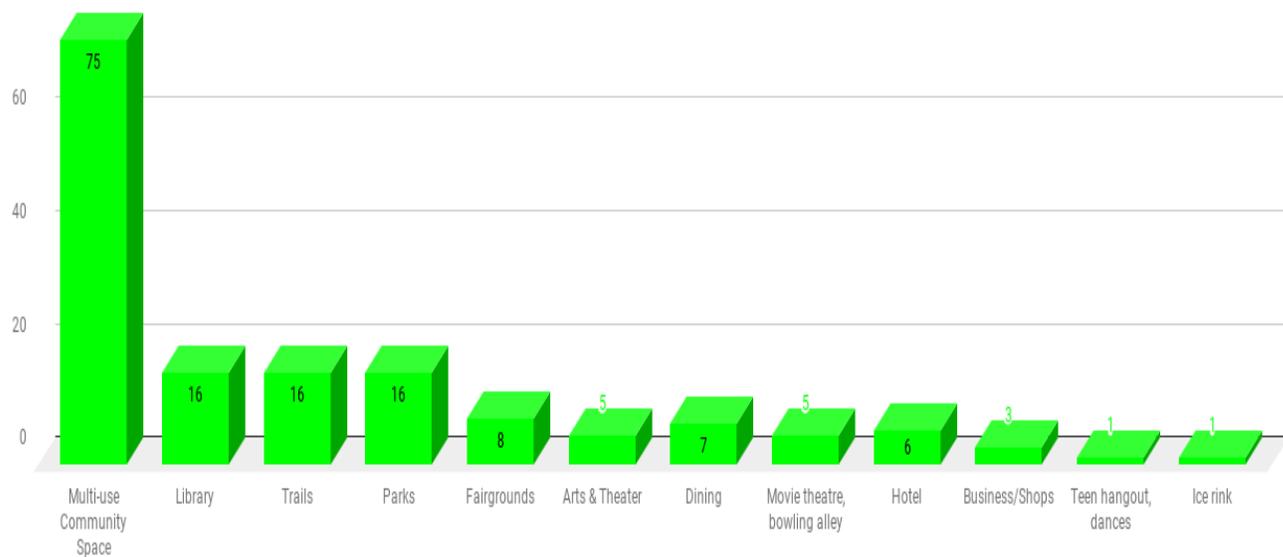


What is something you really love about Ellsworth that you would not want to lose?



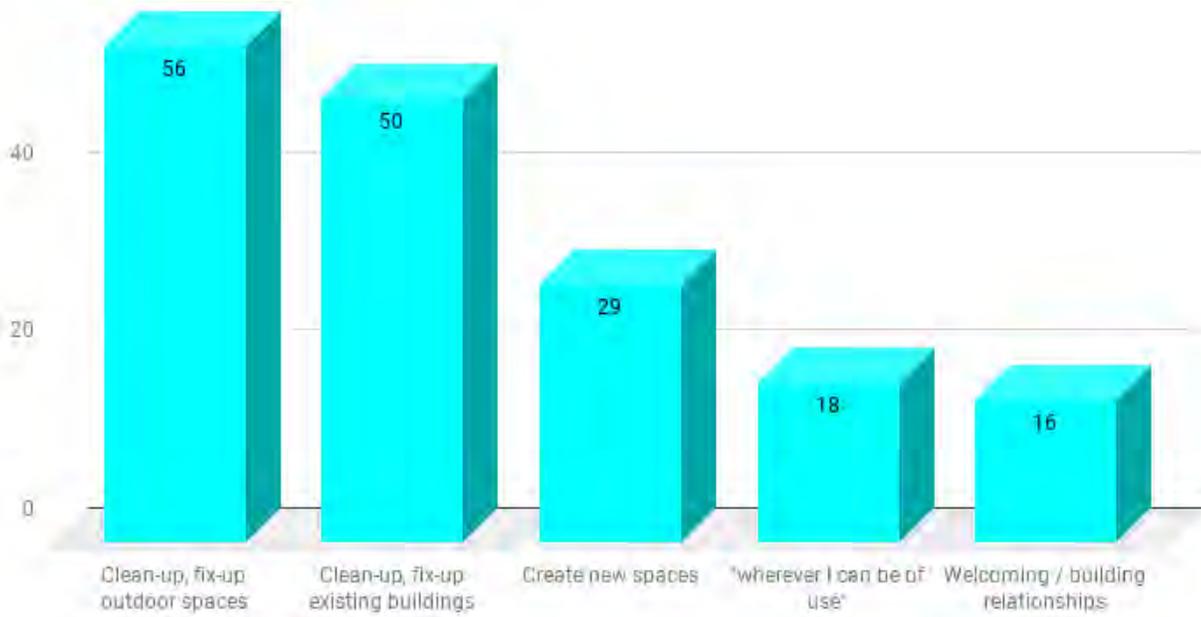


What should be Ellsworth's next great community space?



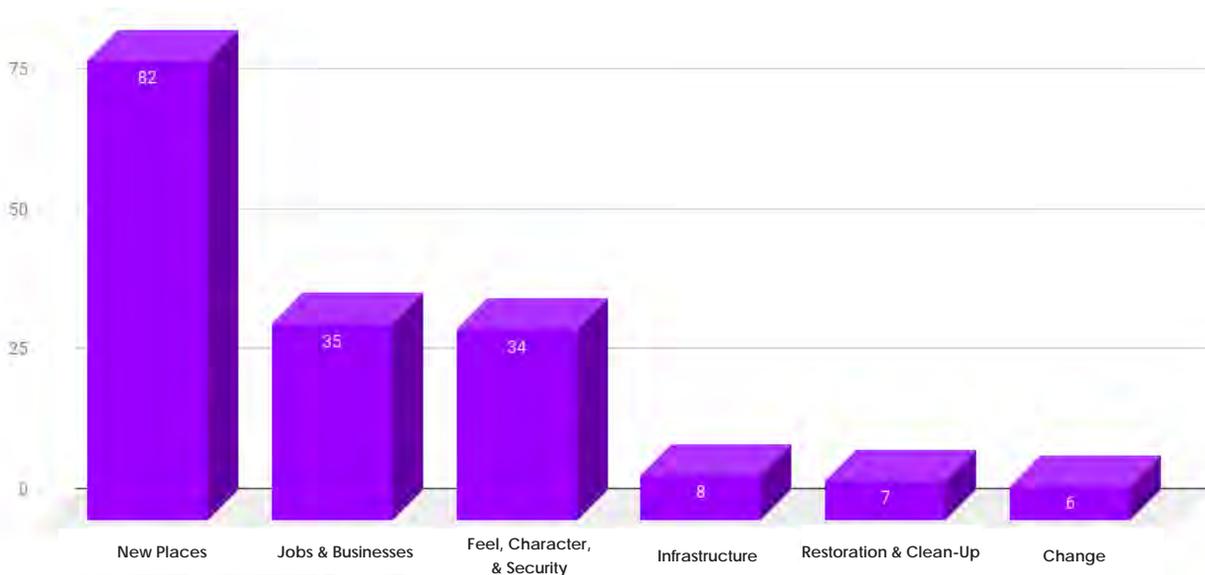


What kind of community improvement would you be willing to work on?





What's your one wish for Ellsworth?





A Shared Vision for Ellsworth

We don't know where we're going unless we have a vision of the destination. If there is no vision, different groups and efforts go in all directions and there is no progress. Some communities - large and small - look to a charismatic leader or organization to provide and impose a vision. A lot of time, energy, and resources are spent imposing and dragging wandering individual groups along. There may be progress, but there is little momentum as groups have their own priorities.

Often a well-intentioned individual or group comes up with a vision that has some basis in the community's reality. The visionaries sell that vision to the leaders and groups in the hope they buy into that vision. There is potential for progress and some momentum. However, each individual and group still has their own priorities.

A shared vision is the result of a grassroots process of conversations. It may take longer to discover or uncover or recognize, but when that happens everyone has an "A-ha!" moment. They all see community priorities that will order their individual priorities. Rather than spend time and energy to sell the vision, the vision is celebrated. Leaps of progress are possible as momentum builds.





Vision Elements

The purpose of Design Wisconsin is to help Ellsworth develop a shared vision that will enable folks to work together to create a more vibrant community. Collecting information from a variety of sources and methods and reinterpreting that information through a variety of disciplines helped define the basic elements of Ellsworth's shared vision. The following vision elements along with potential strategies (sub-bulleted items) were developed from the Design Wisconsin process.

Celebrate Ellsworth

Develop a comprehensive strategy to host events that encourage outside investment as well as enhance and improve quality of life for residents.

- Events for Local Residents: Keep the events small and personal, allowing for communication amongst community members.
- Events for Tourists: Bring in crowds from neighboring communities. Great for getting out-of-towners to spend their money right here, where you want them to. Brings more capital in and builds up the local economy.

Streets, Buildings, & Businesses

The community identified a need to improve its streets and buildings in Downtown, Midway and East End.

- Downtown Business Improvement District (BID): Encouraging and supporting property owners who maintain and improve their buildings in order to create a vibrant and attractive Downtown.
- Facade & Streetscape Study: Develop a comprehensive facade and streetscape plan for Downtown and East End.
 - Property inventory and assessment
 - Historic analysis
 - Design alternatives
 - Demonstration project
- Vacant Land Registry: Identifying, documenting, and enforcing codes and ordinances using an online database.
 - Identifying and documenting (online) data about the status and condition of vacant properties and buildings
 - Enforcing codes and ordinances
- Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings and Streetscape: Creating a safe and welcoming downtown for residents and visitors with physical enhancements.
 - Pedestrian "bump outs" at crossing points.
 - Street trees and vegetation.
 - Street furniture and lighting.
 - Wayfinding elements.
 - Local art (murals & sculpture).



- East End Arts & Entertainment District: Encouraging development of East End to focus on the arts and entertainment. This will help define which areas of Ellsworth are primarily reserved for residents and which ones are designed to support visitors.
 - East End Transportation & Land Use Plan
 - The Woonerf
 - The East End Boardwalk
 - Miss Muffet's Family Restaurant
 - Bottling Factory Brewpub
- Midway Hotel: Strategically locating a hotel that bridges Downtown and the East End.
- Volunteer Building Revitalization Program: Creating and supporting volunteer beautification efforts.
 - Planting and maintaining street trees and other vegetation.
 - Cleaning up the storefronts of vacant buildings.
 - Adopting a building for rehabilitation.

Parks, Trails, Public & Community Spaces

The community identified a need to improve existing and create new public parks, trails, and community spaces.

- Summit Park Improvements: Enhancing the existing park with amenities to provide additional opportunities for recreation, relaxation, and community gathering.
 - Skate park
 - Additional basketball hoops and court painting
 - Ice skating/hockey rink
 - Frisbee golf course
 - Soccer field
 - Outdoor performance space/movie screen
- The Midway Promenade: Creating a new focal point that connects both the Downtown and East End at Midway.
 - Trail and staircase leading up to Summit Park from Main St.
 - Emphasize the unique history of the Midway District
 - Water feature and sculpture
 - Lighting and signage
 - Decorative landscaping
- Volunteer Trails & Sidewalks Program: Creating and supporting a group of volunteers to plan, build, and maintain trails and sidewalks.
 - Trails & Sidewalk planning
 - Fundraising or "Adopt a Walk/Trail"
 - Construction and maintenance
- Community Center & Library: Creating and sustaining a new community center and library that meets the existing and future needs of Ellsworth.



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Housing

The community identified a need to provide a variety of housing options.

- Variety: Making sure that Ellsworth provides a variety of housing types and ownership models to be able to meet the needs of all of its current and future residents.
- Affordable: Creating an affordable housing program in order to meet the increasing demand.
- Targeted: Developing a workforce residency program to provide temporary housing for specific employment needs of the community.
- Responsible & Sustainable: Enforcing existing codes and ordinances to protect Village finances, property values, the environment, and public health.
 - Infill development
 - Junior High site

Creating Positive Change

The community identified a need to coordinate existing and develop new community and economic development initiatives.

- Education: Providing educational resources regarding local government, public participation, and volunteerism.
- Organization: Developing the appropriate organizational structure(s) to coordinate, fund, and maintain Design Ellsworth.
- Communication: Communicating opportunities and successes for Design Ellsworth.
- Volunteerism: Creating and maintaining a central hub for coordinating volunteer activities



Envision, Enhance,
Enjoy Ellsworth

It's just Ellsworth

ELLSWORTH!



Presentation: Background & Introduction

The following images and text describe each of the slides featured in the community presentation on Saturday, October 20, 2018.

We're Not "Just Ellsworth" Anymore

Ellsworth is strategically located within the Twin Cities Metropolitan region and within a short distance of both Red Wing and River Falls. It is surrounded by family farms and beautiful countryside and is home to the Pierce County government and County Fair. Its strengths are its proximity and access to amenities, a strong school system, and a dedicated workforce.

During the visit, the team members heard from members of the community that all too often, Ellsworth just settles for the status quo. In fact, the phrase, "It's just Ellsworth" seems to be something that community members brought up as limiting people's expectations and hopes for the future.

It is important that the people of Ellsworth learn to expect and demand a quality of life that meets their expectations as well as the expectations of future residents of Ellsworth. Now is the time to envision, enhance, and enjoy Ellsworth!



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Our Process

Prior to the visit, members of the community came together to work with UW-Extension on bringing the Design Wisconsin program to Ellsworth. After 9 months of planning, marketing, and fundraising, the Design Ellsworth planning team was successful in: completing the application; raising \$10,000 to cover the \$5,000 program fee and other costs; collecting over 400 youth survey drawings; conducting an online community survey; facilitating middle school and high school visioning workshops; housing and feeding nearly 20 planning and design professionals; developing community presentations, tours, and focus group sessions; and rallying a record number of participants (around 250) for the Friday evening workshop.

This document represents the direct outputs from this process and is intended to serve as a record of Ellsworth's shared vision of the future. The ideas are drawn out of the community through the activities of the process and then literally drawn onto paper to illustrate them in a manner which hopes to inspire positive community change.



Community Engagement. Building Rapport.

Spring: Easter Egg Hunt, Art Fairs, Yoga in the Park

Summer: Cheese Curd Fest, 4th of July celebration, Pierce County Fair, Music Festivals/Block Party, Open Street, movies in the park, grilling contest/chili cook off



Celebrate Ellsworth

Throughout the Design Wisconsin process, residents from all walks of life identified a need to cast away the “we’re just Ellsworth” mentality and to celebrate Ellsworth’s unique quality of life.

Strengthening Ellsworth’s Sense of Community

Residents of Ellsworth specified that they want to continue to feel like a small town that’s welcoming to all. One way to do this is to increase the number of local events that occur within the Village of Ellsworth. Currently, the Pierce County Fair and the Cheese Curd Festival are Ellsworth’s biggest attractors for local and out-of-town traffic. Bringing in more out-of-towners will increase revenue for businesses located in Ellsworth and will boost Ellsworth’s local economy. But in order to feel like a tight-knit community, people need to be able to see one another more often. The natural direction would be to incorporate a good mix of both local and tourist-focused events.

Community Activities & Events

The following are just some examples of events that the Village of Ellsworth could hold, loosely organized according to the seasons they naturally occur in.

Some spring events could include: an Easter Egg Hunt, hosting art fairs that showcase local talent, and yoga in the park. Ellsworthians have noted that they love being outdoors, and all of these events could be held in either East End Park or Summit Park.

Some summer events (in addition to the existing and wildly popular Cheese Curd Festival and Pierce County Fair) could include: a Fourth of July celebration with fireworks (there used to be an event like this held in the Pierce County Fairgrounds, but it no longer occurs), hosting music festivals or block parties for local teens, Open Streets events where a public street is closed for a day of fun (bouncy castles, food trucks, craft sales, musical entertainment all occurring in the unusual location of the middle of the street), movies in the park for some last minute fun in the day, and cooking/grilling contests for residents to show off their culinary prowess.

The Pumpkin Party in the Park event is a current event held in Ellsworth that revolves around celebrating Halloween (mid to late October). More event ideas to add to the arsenal of fall fun could include a Harvest Festival in time for Thanksgiving, a Fall Art Crawl, and local Flea Markets as a community-wide ‘garage sale’ of sorts.



Summary Report

Ellsworth Design Team 2018

Community Engagement. Building Rapport.

Fall: Pumpkin Party in the Park, Harvest Festival, Fall Art Crawl, Flea Market

Winter: Winterfest, trivia events at local bars



Some locals mentioned that Winterfest used to be a thing in Ellsworth, but the event was dropped (perhaps due to poor attendance in the past). It is critical to continue engaging with the community during all seasons, including winter.

The Village should consider revisiting the idea of a Winterfest. Start by thinking of who you want to have attend and then take the time to ask them what kind of activities they would be interested in. It's alright to look to other communities for ideas, but rely on your own population to decide what makes the most sense for Ellsworth.

Implementation Strategies: Short-term

- Ice Skating Rink: Develop a unique ice rink and skating experience using local ice sculptors.
- Health & Wellness: Work with local business owners and schools to provide outdoor recreation and health and wellness opportunities using existing trails and parks.
- Local Events: Coordinate activities among local businesses and schools to create unique Ellsworth celebrations throughout the year.
- Curd 2.0: Expand Cheese Curd Festival to encourage overnight stays.

Implementation Strategies: Medium-term

- Art Walk 1.0: Work with local ice sculptors to create a winter art walk downtown.
- Fair 2.0: Expand the Pierce County Fair as part of a community-wide celebration.
- Curd 3.0: Work with local business owners, schools, and artists to expand the Cheese Curd Festival activities to support the East End as an Arts and Entertainment District.

Implementation Strategies: Long-term

- Art Walk 2.0: Work with local businesses and artists to establish an Art Walk and festival in the Downtown, Midway, and East End.
- Winter Festival: Develop a winter festival that focuses on the ice rink and ice sculptures.
- Curd 3.0: Market Cheese Curd Festival internationally to attract outside investment that aligns with community values.



Streets, Buildings, & Businesses

The following images and text refer to ideas generated from the visit to address the community's need for better streets, buildings, and businesses.

Connecting the Community

Ellsworth has unique and valuable community assets separated by a unforgiving transportation system designed for moving freight through town, not for moving people within town. Connecting these assets to one another will make the community safer and increase the quality of life for current and future residents. Making these changes will require investments in time, energy, and money.

The illustration above identifies some of the key assets in Ellsworth along with some suggestions for future connections or enhancements to existing connections.

- Downtown Connections: Courthouse, schools, Prescott, Pierce County Fairgrounds
- Midway Connections: Summit Park, Downtown, East End
- East End Connections: East End Gateway, Trailhead node, Durand, River Falls
- South Neighborhood Connections: Residences, schools, and Creamery
- North Neighborhood Connections: Residences, Fairgrounds, Summit Park, and East End

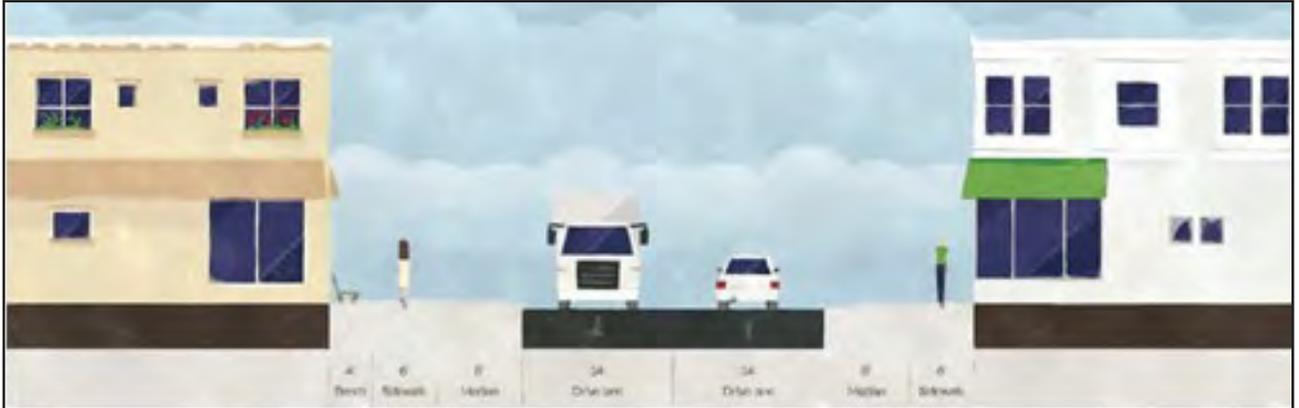
Local investments of time, materials, and funds will be necessary in order to make and secure these connections. A comprehensive trail and sidewalk plan should address incomplete sidewalk networks; painted, signed, and lighted crosswalks and bike lanes; as well as new trails with proper lighting and signage.



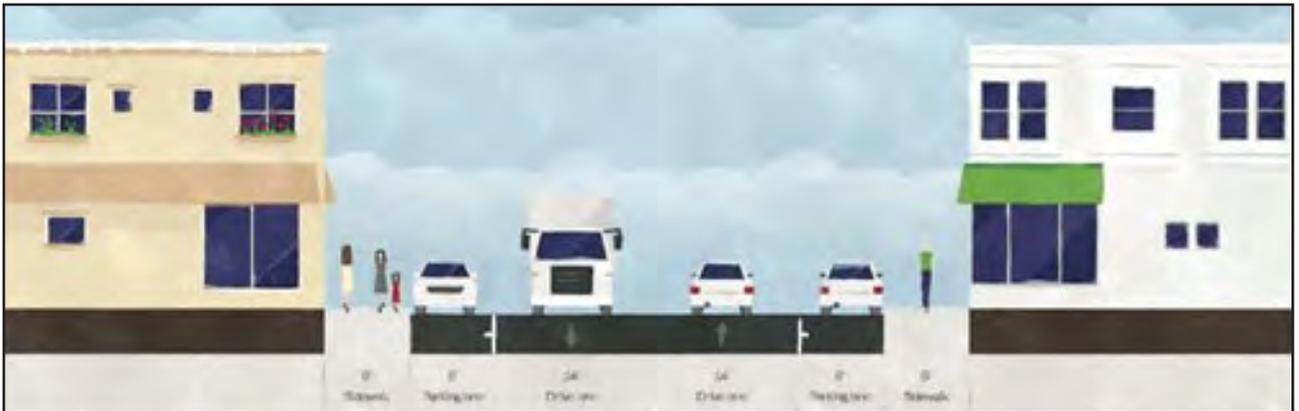
Street Design

Ellsworth can make its streets more attractive and safe by narrowing traffic lanes, expanding sidewalks, and planting street trees. Many of the existing streets are designed only for vehicular traffic and discourage walking and cycling. Wide streets only encourage automotive traffic to drive fast. Narrowing lanes, either visually with vegetation and ornamentation or by reducing actual street width, forces drivers to slow down.

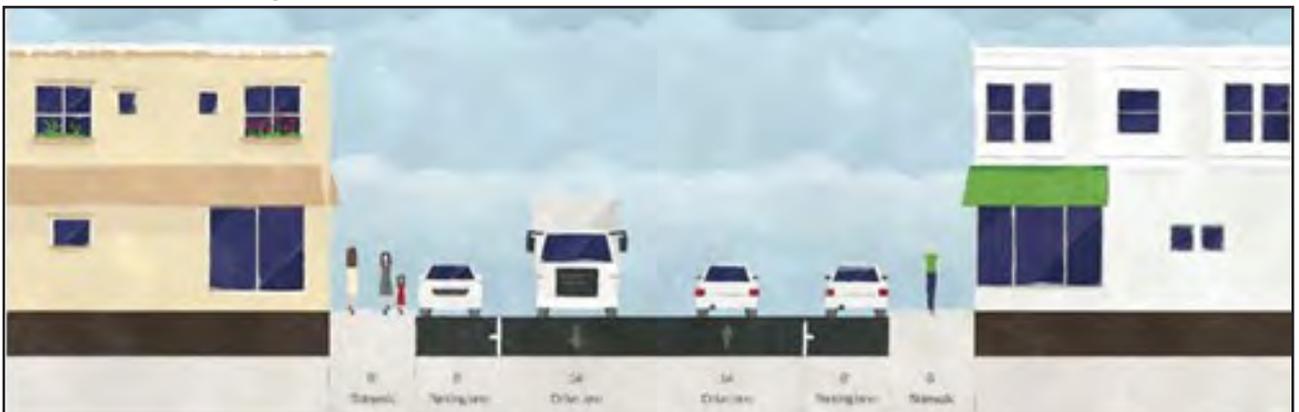
Proposed Street Design: Main Street (West End)



Proposed Street Design: Main Street with Parking



Proposed Street Design: Chestnut



The lack of street trees allows solar radiation to collect at the street level during the summer. These heat islands repel visitors and shoppers and increase energy consumption of buildings in the summer. Planting and maintaining street trees provides shade for people and their buildings.

By narrowing the streets and adding pedestrian and cycling amenities Ellsworth can make the community more accessible and attractive while encouraging exercise. Consider pedestrian “bump-outs” to shorten street crossing distances when necessary. Encourage wider sidewalks in front of storefronts to narrow streets while accommodating outdoor seating and shopping.

Downtown Property Improvements: Streetscape & Facade

Ellsworth has a number of historic buildings that still retain unique architecture worthy of preservation. The community should consider working with property owners to revitalize the downtown with building facade and streetscape improvements. This could be done through low interest improvement loans or grants administered through existing or new organizations.

Begin with a property survey of buildings and uses in the downtown to identify opportunities for improvements. Consider the current uses on the first and second floors, square footage, exterior finishes, signage, lighting, street furniture, and vegetation. Assess the current value and condition of the property and note unique design characteristics.

Work with local and state historians to collect historic photos of building facades in order to develop a better understanding of the original architecture, color scheme, and materials used for each property. In addition, look for original business signage, street lighting, street furniture, and vegetation.

Working with a professional designer, develop proposed streetscape and facade improvements for the downtown that reflect local history and traditions and/or the current vision for the community’s future.

Consider developing a property improvement program to improve facades, lighting, signage, and vegetation for properties within the downtown. Work with a professional facilitator to define the purpose, governing structure, process, and funding mechanisms to launch and sustain such a program. Work with local property owners to develop a pilot project to serve as a demonstration.





The Village of Ellsworth could advance programs and policies within its authority to ensure that properties are well-maintained, safe, and suitable to be used as intended.

Paint the Town

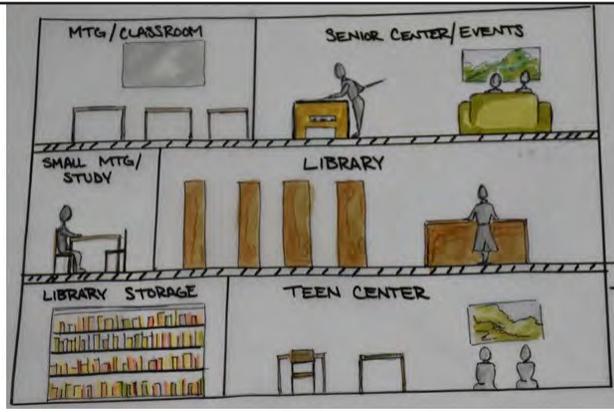
Transforming Ellsworth into a vibrant community doesn't have to cost a lot of money or take years of planning. Consider Downtown and East End as opportunities for local artists to contribute to the revitalization of Ellsworth through murals, sculpture, street furniture, and lighting.

Professionally designed and painted murals and sculptures can be used to celebrate local culture and heritage. Consider developing a mural program that invites artists to share their talent while enhancing the Downtown and East End. Find opportunities to connect mural unveilings with festivals that will attract visitors and shoppers.





Washington Free Public Library, Washington, IA



Community Center & Library

As of the writing of this document, the Village of Ellsworth is considering a vote on a non-binding referendum to borrow up to \$3 million to create additional public library space by acquiring and remodeling an existing bank building downtown. The team approves of keeping the location of the library downtown and encourages the community to support this effort. If for some reason that referendum does not pass or the project as planned does not come to fruition, our team would like to offer the following design alternatives.

Public libraries serve as the community hub for activity, education, and culture. No longer are they merely the repository for books and periodicals. Today's libraries provide access to technology and information. They provide training programs and help people connect with one another, improve themselves, and build community. Because they provide essential civic functions, their design and services are often interpreted as a reflection of the civic health and values of the community. More than ever, the public library is an important investment for the community members who live here now and the community members that hope to live here in the future.

Consider designing and building an Ellsworth Public Library that provides the services mentioned above as well as those found in a community center to share costs, expand services, and concentrate community activities in a central location. Look for opportunities that cut across ages such as combining or co-locating a teen center, senior center, and daycare. This may enable the community to provide affordable childcare while providing opportunities for youth and seniors to interact. In addition, the co-location of these groups could open up multi-generational educational and recreational programming such as book clubs, film clubs, history clubs, genealogy research, technology workshops, dance and exercise classes, art classes, after school tutoring, etc.

Community Center: Short-term



- Visible, central location
- Walkable to schools
- Little renovation required



- Rec-center/open space
- Near Summit Park, on-site parking
- Co-locate teen & senior functions

Library: Short-term



- Maximize use of existing spaces
- Consider relocating senior space functions
- Future adaptive reuse



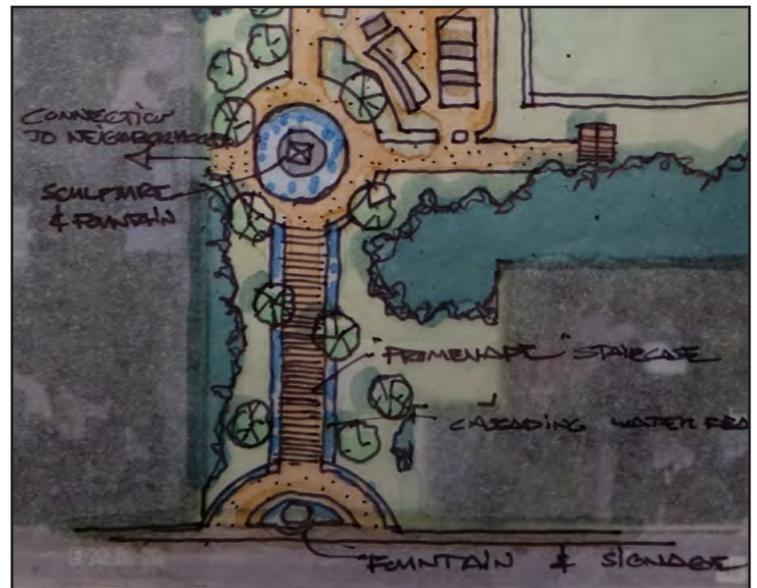


Summit Park Promenade

Midway Ellsworth serves as the connector between Downtown and East End. The hillside on the north side of E. Main St. (Highway 10) could be developed into a promenade that connects Summit Park at the top of the hill to the street below. This could replace the existing “gateway” signage on the edge of town to create a strong central focal point that provides Midway with a civic identity.

Research the unique history of the Midway District including this site and adjacent parcels (e.g. Ellsworth House) where modern day Ellsworth got its start and held court while becoming the county seat; consider including design elements that emphasize key aspects of this history.

Consider a water feature at the base of the hill, which would help draw people together and lead them up a series of steps flanked by a cascading waterfall. At the top of the hill, a tall sculpture would serve as a landmark that could be used to orient visitors and residents alike. Look to existing sculpture and architecture for ideas and encourage local artists to take a leadership role.



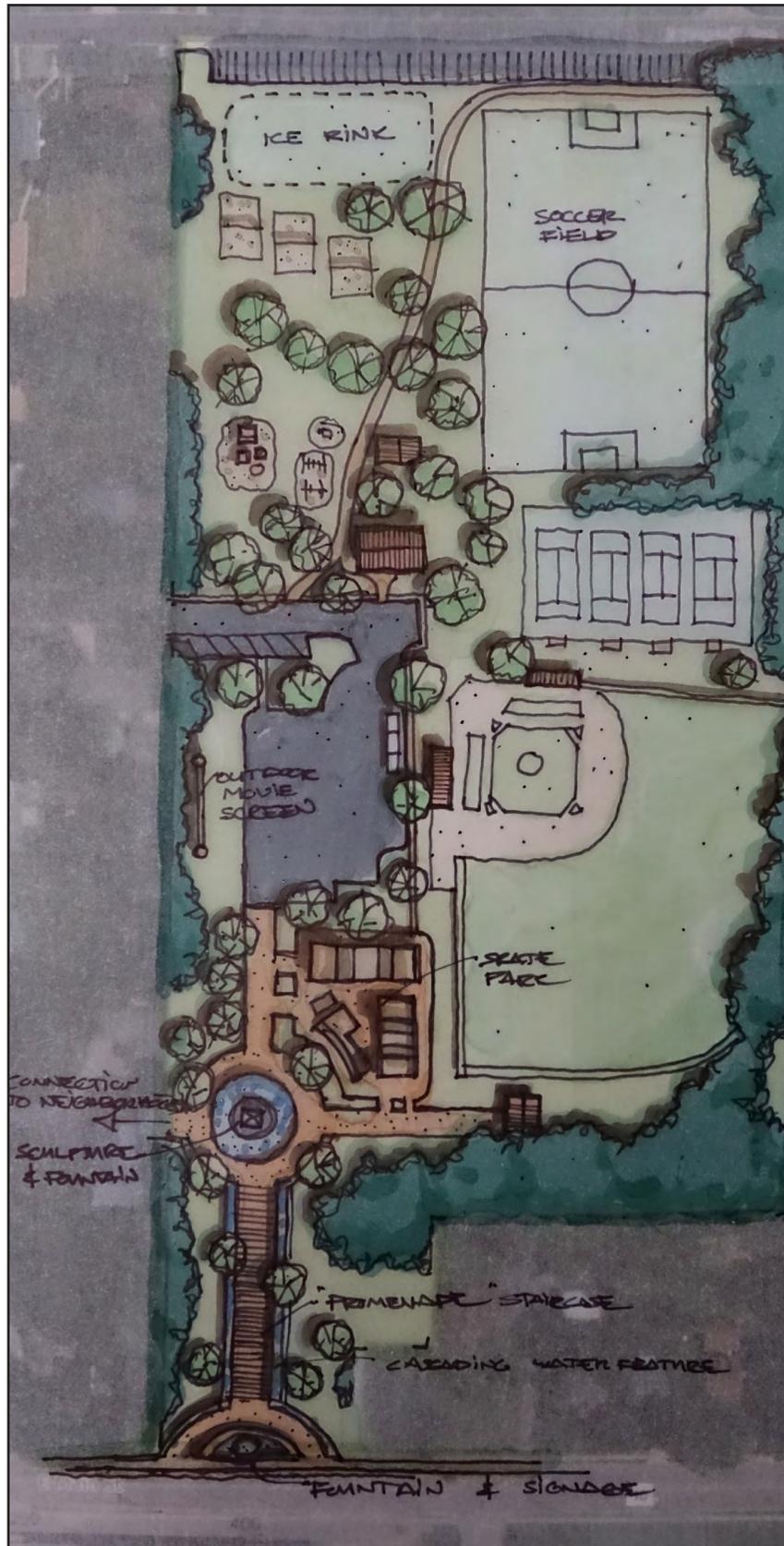


Summit Park Improvements

During the visit, the team heard from a variety of sources about the need for additional outdoor recreational activities. Summit Park is centrally located and already offers 2 softball fields, 3 sand volleyball courts, 4 tennis courts, a basketball court, playground, and picnic pavilion.

A recent proposal accepted by the Village Board to build a skatepark could be located at Summit Park along with additional basketball hoops in the southwest corner of the park. This area would be less costly to build on and if located south of the current basketball court, would be free from automobile traffic. Consider adding additional basketball hoops with painted surfaces that assist in play and celebrate local arts and sport.

On the bus tour, the team learned that the north softball field gets little use. Consider alternative summertime uses (Frisbee golf, soccer field, outdoor performance space/ movie screen, etc.) as well as winter uses (ice skating/hockey rink).

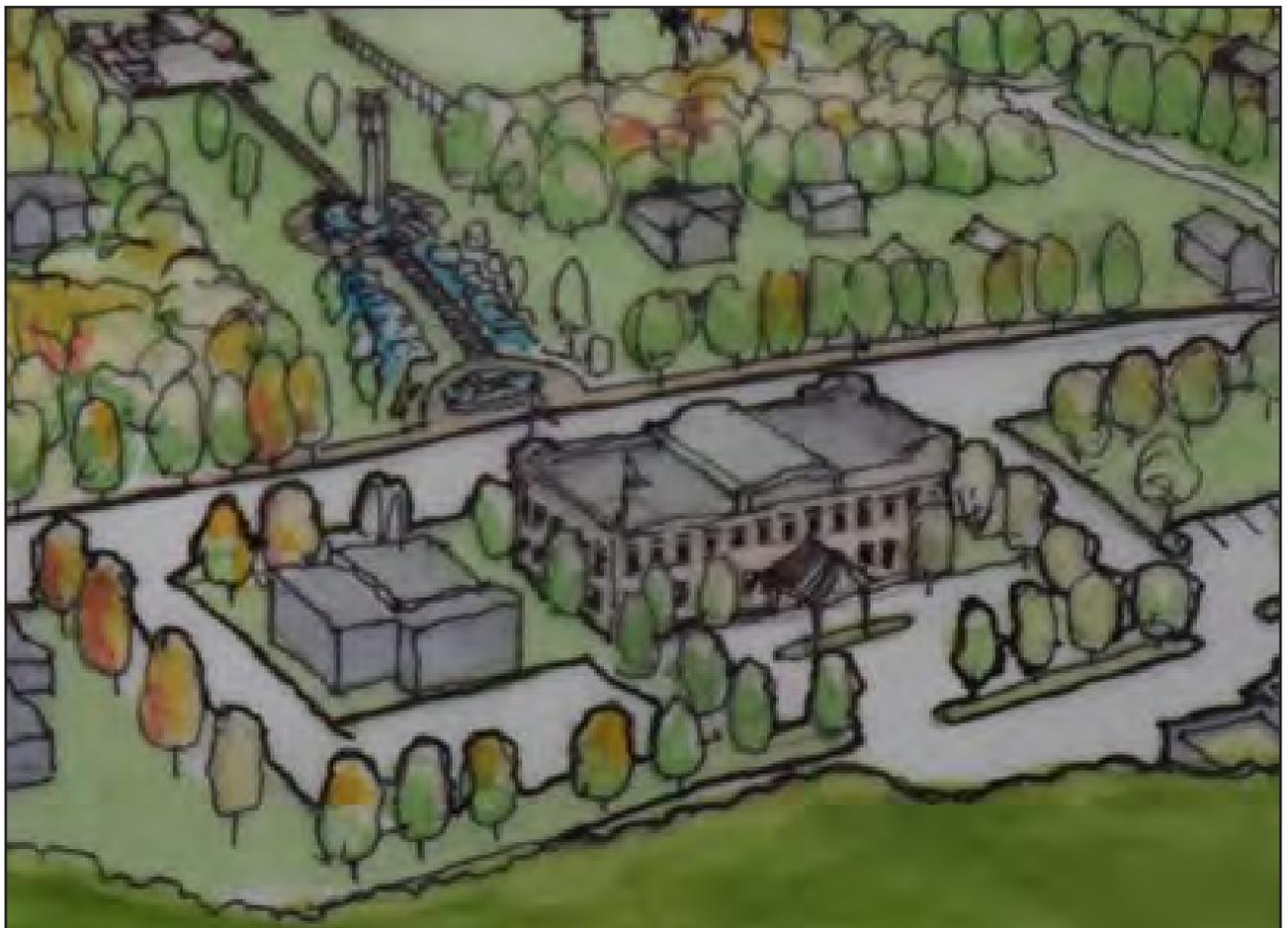




Midway Hotel

Recent commercial investments in the Midway area along the south side of E. Main St. (Highway 10) provide modern services and retail. The concentration of these activities may support the development of a small hotel that would be able to serve the local Ellsworth population's needs (weddings, reunions, and local events).

Consider working with UW-Extension's Center for Community & Economic Development to conduct a market analysis for the development of a local hotel. Identify multiple locations that might serve different clientele. Work with local property owners and community leaders to recruit a developer that meets the community's needs.





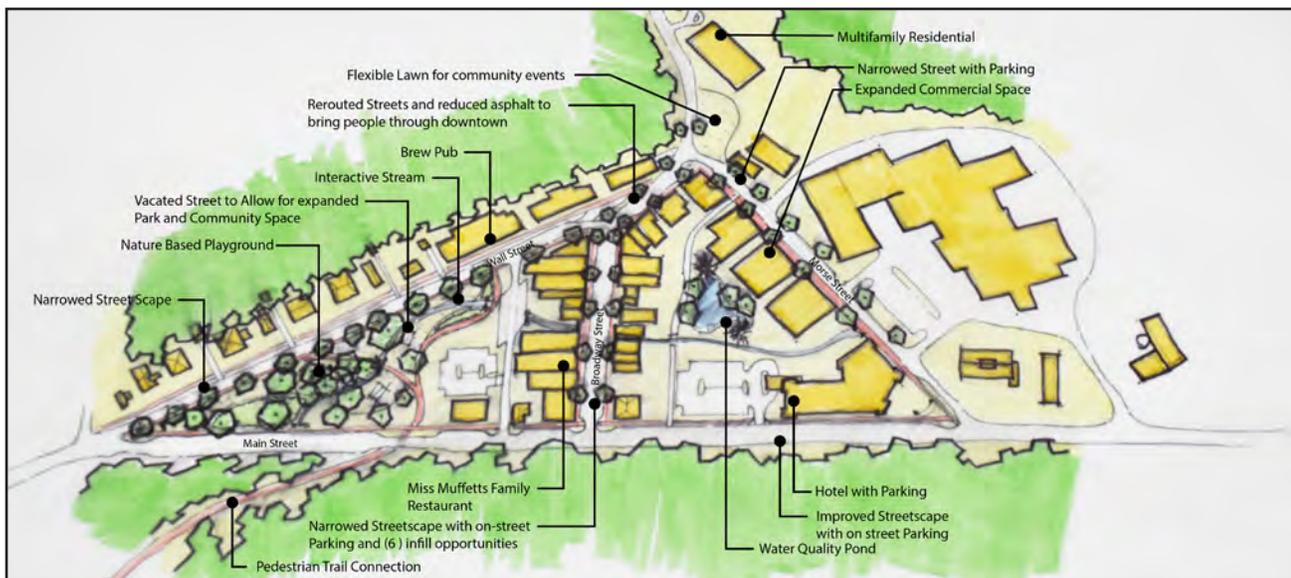
The East End: Arts & Entertainment District

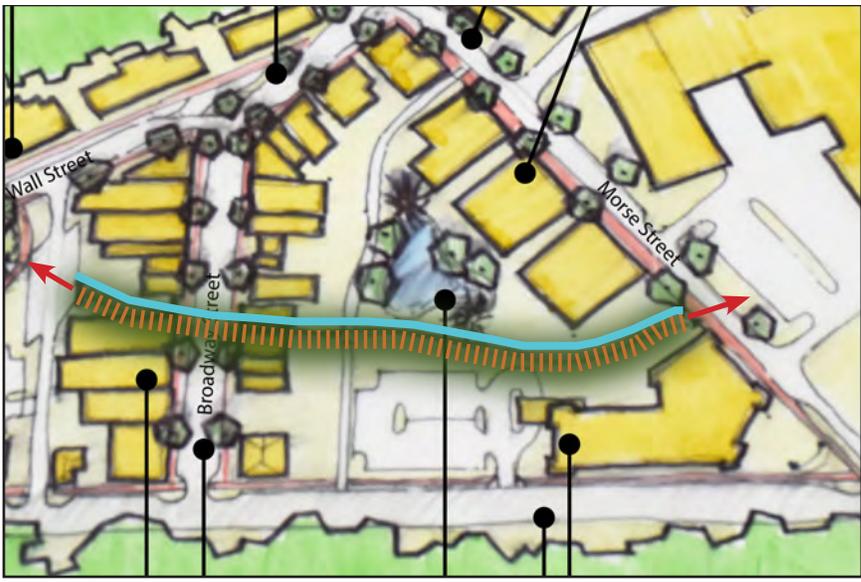
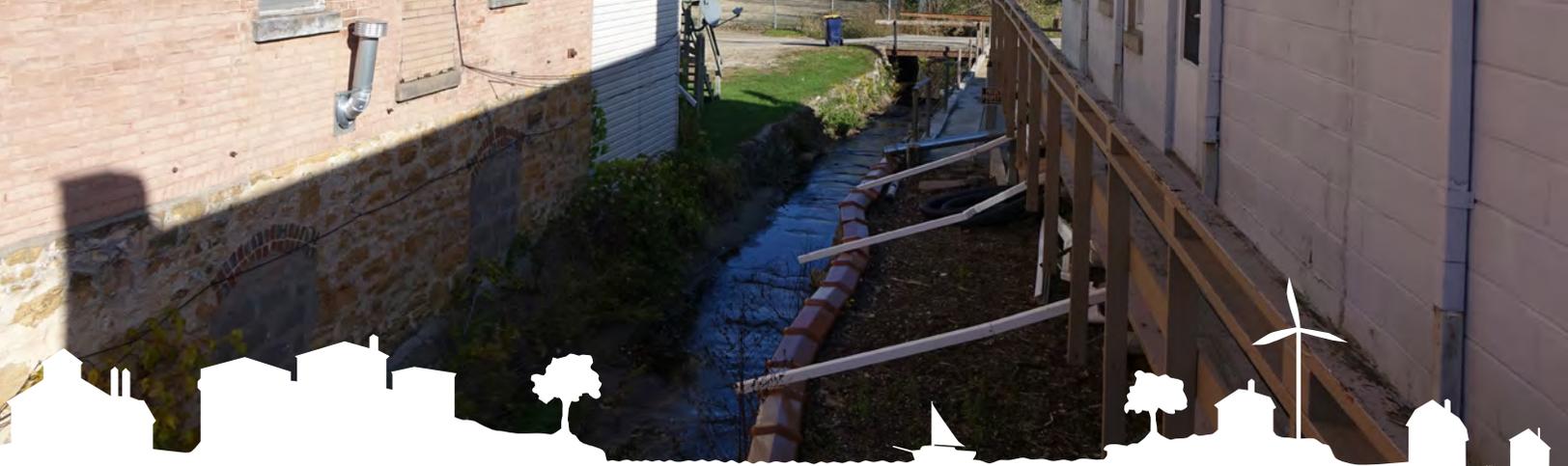
The team heard from many sources about the disconnect between the Cheese Curd festival and the rest of the community. While growing the festival may provide economic benefits to local businesses, there may be unintended consequences and costs of doing so. To mitigate negative impacts, re-imagine the East End as a cultural and entertainment district designed and programmed for hosting multiple events and activities for visitors and residents alike.

Strategically located near existing food and beverage establishments, the East End could be developed into a district in which the land uses, circulation, lighting, signage, and programming are focused on attracting and promoting art and culture. This could be done using a coordinated plan with expectations designed by the community for the community.

Consider narrowing and rerouting some of the vehicular traffic to create a more pedestrian and visitor-friendly environment. Investigate paver materials that calm traffic and provide variety and whimsy to the district. This lets people know that they are now in a “special” place and need to slow down and pay attention to shops, activities, and people. Plant street trees and use decorative lighting and signage. This will encourage folks to stop and pull over to explore.

Design the district to accommodate large groups of people. Identify key locations for hotels, restaurants, and performance spaces. Develop wayfinding elements to help folks from out of town understand where different amenities are located. Make use of existing structures for redevelopment to retain community heritage and authenticity.





The East End Boardwalk

One of the most interesting features in East End is the stream that flows around and through the different nooks and crannies of the area.

If developed and maintained as a boardwalk, the new path could become a very attractive means of moving people from one place to another.





The East End “Woonerf”

A woonerf is a space designed to share vehicle and pedestrian traffic by installing traffic calming elements such as pavers, vegetation, local art, lighting, and signage.

Careful attention is paid to designing the space to slow vehicular traffic and encourage pedestrians and cyclists. Transforming the East End into an Arts & Entertainment District may create opportunities to explore the idea of a woonerf in Ellsworth.





Bottling Plant Brewpub

Ellsworth is strategically located within an easy drive of the Twin Cities Metropolitan area. This expands its business market potential and access to talent (brewmasters, entertainers, entrepreneurs, chefs, etc.).

The Common Man Brewery is one example of how Ellsworth already can support a local brewery operation. Expanding this as part of a coordinated effort to build the East End as an entertainment district could have spillover benefits for other local businesses.

The Team heard through a variety of sources the need to make better use of the old Bottling Plant in East End. By designating East End as an entertainment district, this building could be home to a future brewpub that could offer food, beverages, and live entertainment. This would be keeping in character with the history of the building while serving as an anchor business in the district.

Consider working with UW-Extension's Center for Community & Economic Development to conduct a market analysis for the development of a local brewpub. Work with local property owners and community leaders to develop a project that meets the community's needs.

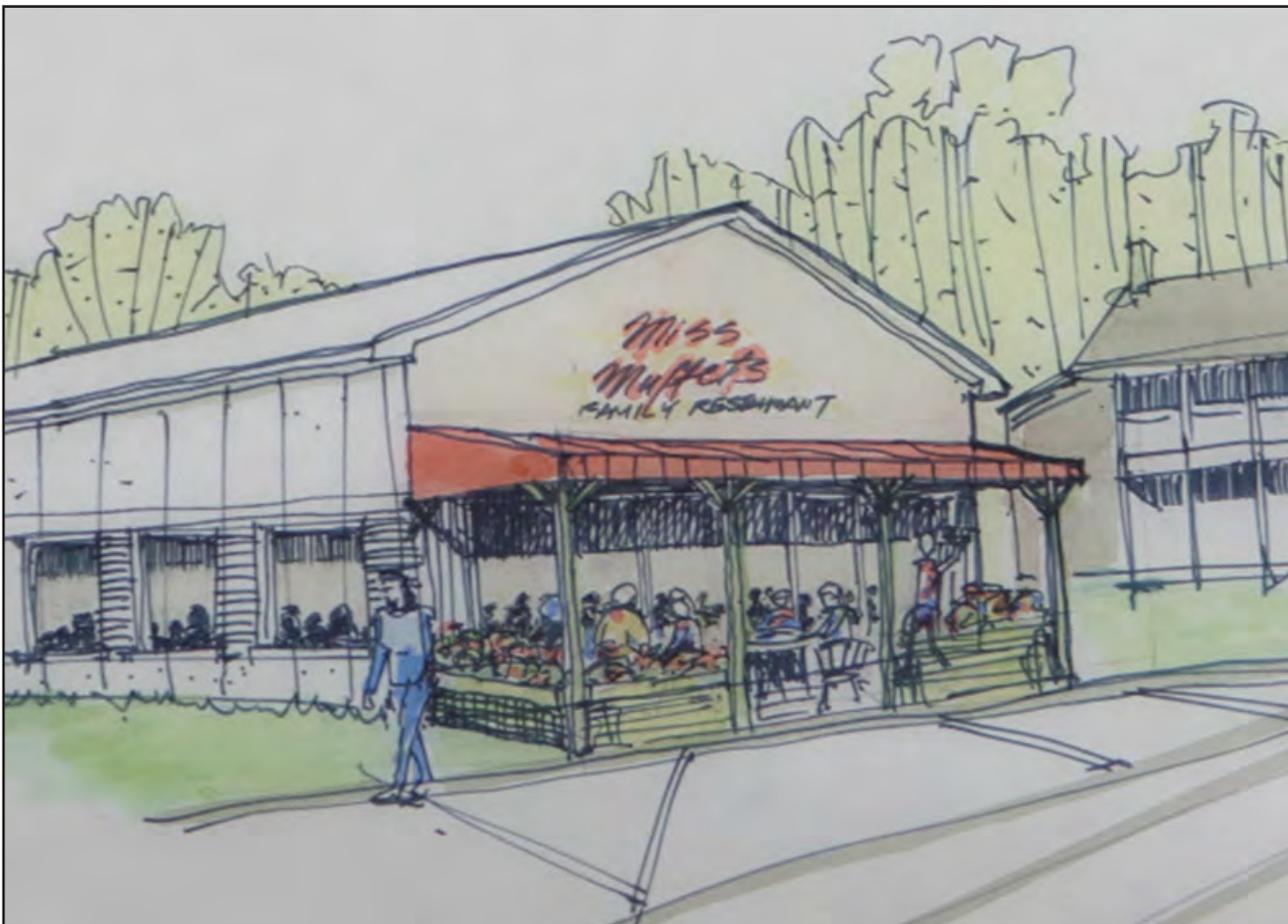




East End Adaptive Reuse: **Miss Muffet's Family Restaurant**

Ellsworth offers a variety of fast-food and bar-food dining options. What it lacks is a restaurant that serves quality food and is family-friendly. Consider redeveloping one of the East End buildings as a family restaurant. This would make use of an existing structure while providing a much-needed establishment that meets the needs of the community and its visitors.

Consider working with UW-Extension's Center for Community & Economic Development to conduct a market analysis for the development of a family-style restaurant. Work with local property owners and community leaders to develop a project that meets the community's needs.



Implementation Strategies: **Short-term**

- Public Art 1.0: Develop a sculpture and mural plan for the Downtown.
- Streetscape 1.0: Collect residents' ideas about street design to inform a plan for the Downtown, Midway, and East End.
- Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program: Interview local business owners to understand: How's business doing? What do you like about doing business here? What can we do to help you succeed?
- Building Assessment: Conduct an inventory of existing buildings, uses, and opportunities.
- Midway Market Study: Work with UW-Extension to conduct a market analysis/feasibility study for the Midway Hotel.
- Friends of the East End: Create a task force charged with developing the East End into an arts & entertainment district.
- Community Construction Crew (CCC): Organize and support volunteer efforts to make improvements to the Downtown, Midway, and East End streetscape (facades, street furniture, lighting, vegetation, etc.).

Implementation Strategies: **Medium-term**

- Public Art 2.0: Work with local businesses, schools, and artists to create a local art program in Downtown, the Midway, and East End.
- Streetscape 2.0: Develop a comprehensive facade and streetscape plan for the Downtown, Midway, and East End.
- Downtown Business Improvement District (BID): Work with UW-Extension Local Government Center to investigate different business improvement district models for the Downtown, Midway, and the East End.
- East End Development: Work with local property owners, businesses, and local government to encourage arts and entertainment activities to be located in the East End.
- Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings & Streetscape: Creating a safe and welcoming downtown for residents and visitors with physical enhancements.
- Vacant Land Registry: Identifying, documenting, and enforcing codes and ordinances using an online database to encourage development and to remove blight.

Implementation Strategies: **Long-term**

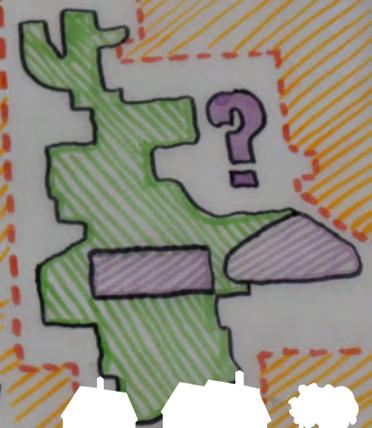
- Public Art 3.0: Celebrate local culture and history with local art exhibits, performances, and walks (sculpture on pedestals, galleries, murals on buildings, etc.).
- Streetscape 3.0: Enhance the pedestrian experience with street vegetation, "bump outs", street furniture, decorative lighting, wayfinding, business signage, and local art.
- Downtown Business Improvement District (BID): Encouraging and supporting property owners who maintain and improve their buildings in order to create a vibrant and attractive Downtown.
- The East End Programming & Marketing: Use coordinated marketing and programming to promote the East End as a regional center for arts and entertainment.
- The Midway Hotel: Strategically locating a hotel that bridges Downtown and the East End while supporting Midway businesses.



LIVE ELLSWORTH!

MADE UP OF:

- BOUNDARY
- HOUSES
- DOWNTOWN
- EAST END
- COUNTRYSIDE



Housing

The following pages illustrate some of the key issues identified by the community as well as some strategies that might be used to address them.

Live Ellsworth!

Like many rural communities near urban centers, population retention and attraction is critical. Ellsworth has many amenities that other communities lack and is positioned well as a great place to live, work, and play. One of Ellsworth's biggest challenges will be its ability to provide affordable, quality housing that meets a range of housing needs.

Housing Challenges & Opportunities

Like many other rural communities, Ellsworth has potential to develop underutilized properties into housing at relatively low construction costs. However, market conditions are not currently supporting the type of housing that is needed by the community. This presents a complex challenge and may require intervention of community resources either through local government, a non-profit, or a combination thereof.

Life-Cycle Housing: Establishing a Diverse Housing Portfolio

Communities need to provide a complete system of housing options in order to meet the changing needs of the population. Consider how the housing needs change as one enters and leaves the housing market. For many, renting an apartment is our first housing need and choice. Young professionals and families are searching for their first single-family home. For some, this means a fixer-upper with an opportunity to develop equity, for others it means something that is easy to get into and easy to get out of. As folks grow older or think of downsizing, finding smaller housing with accessibility features becomes more important.

In order to address this life-cycle of housing needs, a community needs make sure that it has a diverse portfolio of housing options. For years, the market has been able to supply most communities with what they need. With changes to demographics, commuting patterns, cost of education and healthcare, as well as volatility of the housing market, many communities lack the type of housing that is needed to attract and retain population. Establishing a diverse housing portfolio may require the public, private, and non-profit sectors to re-think housing in regards to housing ownership and housing type.

Consider ways in which housing ownership and housing types can be manipulated in order to meet housing needs. Here are some examples of housing needs and interventions:

- Workforce Housing: A lack of affordable quality housing can have a detrimental effect on workforce attraction and retention. How can local businesses work with property owners to improve existing and develop new affordable housing (e.g., apartments, ancillary dwellings [grandmother flats], and manufactured homes)? Consider developing a workforce housing fund to which businesses and individuals can contribute.



Summary Report

Ellsworth Design Team 2018

- Young Professionals & Families: Attracting and retaining young professionals and families often is about providing affordable and/or flexible single-family housing. Consider reducing the entry cost of home ownership by separating the structure from the property. In other words, work with developers to create single-family condominiums in which only the house itself is purchased and sold, thus lowering the overall purchase price. Because of changes in housing preferences, consider developing condominiums and apartments located near the downtown and other public amenities.
- Aging In Place: Keeping folks in town as they get older is important for maintaining community relationships, transferring knowledge and leadership, as well as supporting the local economy. Providing a variety of housing options for a variety of needs may require coordination between builders and healthcare providers with support from public, private, and non-profit sectors.

When developing housing types, consider location, materials, and ownership models.

- Multi-family apartments, townhouses, & condos: It is critical that communities have affordable and quality apartments available. Opposition to multi-family housing should be addressed using sound knowledge and awareness of community needs. Consider the specific multi-family needs of Ellsworth and work with key stakeholders to develop housing that is sensitive to neighbors while filling a community need.

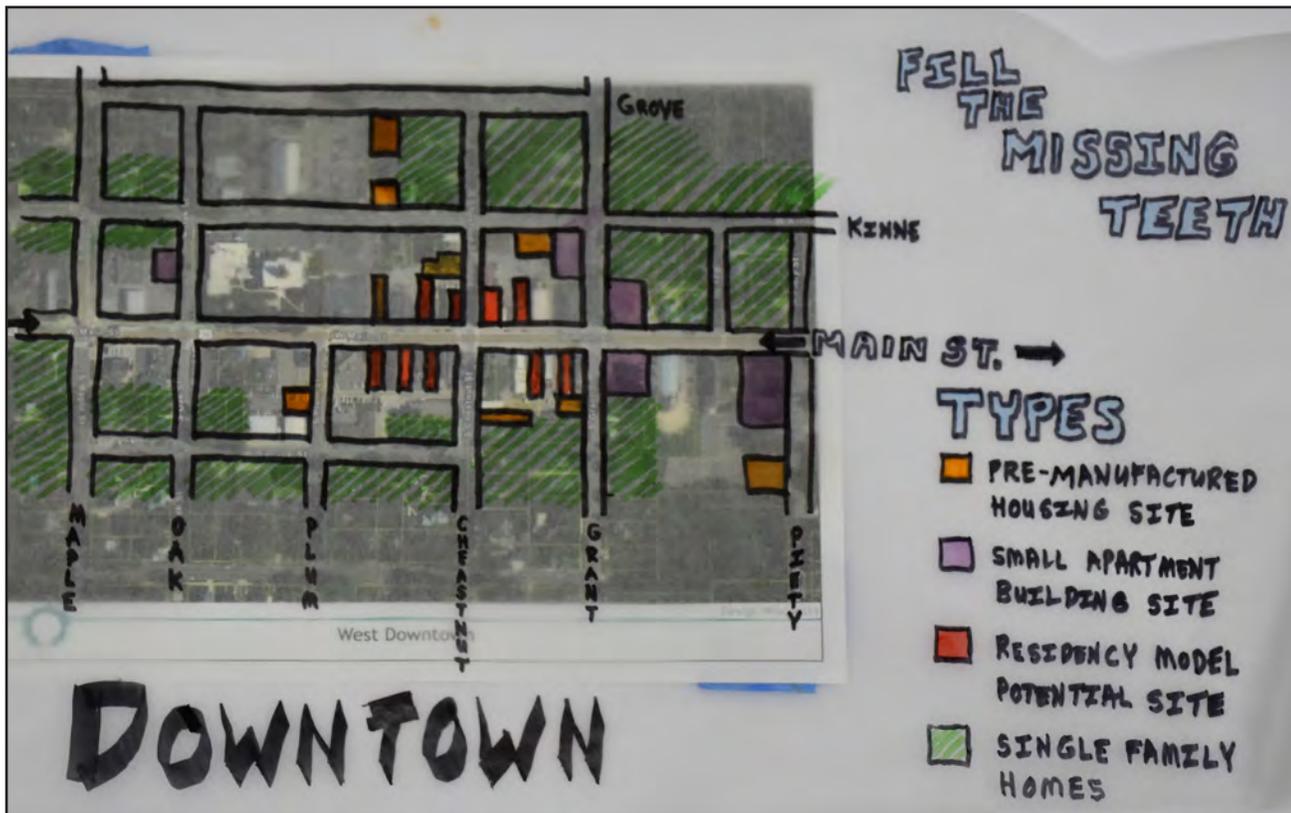


- Bungalow Courts: These medium-scale housing developments are comprised of small single-family homes that share a common courtyard. Bungalow courts can fill a niche for those who are looking for something more private than an apartment but are not ready or able to purchase a single-family home.
- Prefabricated Homes: Manufactured homes are cost-effective ways of creating a supply of entry-level housing. The design and construction of these units can be a part of a community campaign to develop an Ellsworth response to affordable housing. Consider working with local builders and schools to create projects that reflect local community values while addressing a local community need.



Infill & Neighborhood Connections

Before developing new “green field” sites on the edge of town, consider “in-fill” opportunities that exist within the boundaries of the community. The illustration below suggests the potential location of future housing types within the Downtown. Concentrating housing density near and around shops and services helps local businesses while providing housing with conveniences. Filling in these “missing teeth” helps to save construction and maintenance costs of community infrastructure and helps to revitalize existing neighborhoods.

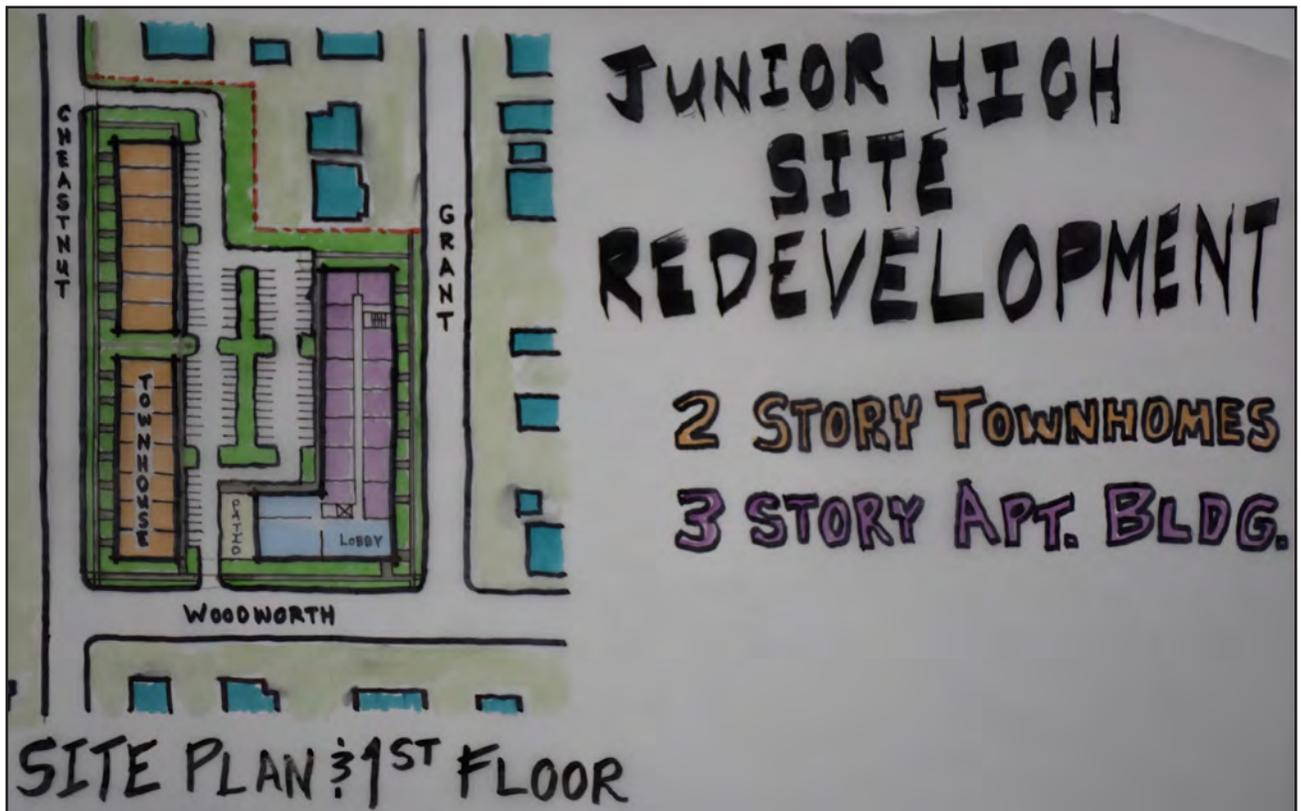




Old Junior High Site Redevelopment

The Old Junior High Site is strategically located within a well-established residential neighborhood within walking distances of schools, shopping, and churches. The current structure is in disrepair and likely to contain hazardous materials, the removal of which would need to be part of any redevelopment project.

A multi-family residential complex with a variety of housing types would fill a real community need while at the same time cleaning up a blighted area. Consider working with county, regional, state, and federal agencies to identify technical and financial resources for transforming this site into a community asset.





The Northside: A Model Development for Growth

This initial housing development on the north side of town was never fully realized. Take advantage of the existing infrastructure and quality homes to expand and fill in the neighborhood as a model for residential development in Ellsworth. Develop “The Northside” as a diverse neighborhood that addresses the full life-cycle of housing needs. When possible, reconnect streets to the existing grid to provide more efficient circulation and maintenance.





Live Ellsworth! **Organization**

As noted earlier, many of Ellsworth's housing needs are not being met by traditional market forces. Interventions from public, private, and non-profit sectors may not be able to bear the burden alone and may need to pool their resources. Consider forming a public/private partnership charged with the mission of developing housing that meets the current and future needs of Ellsworth. In addition, support local volunteer efforts to rehabilitate existing housing through donations of materials, time, and funds.

Implementation Strategies: **Short-term**

- Complete Community Housing Program 1.0: Work with Pierce County Economic Development Corporation, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, and/or UW-Extension to conduct a detailed housing survey of existing and needed housing.
- Community Workforce Housing 1.0: Work with local businesses to identify "targeted" housing needs related to employment sectors (education, healthcare, arts, retail, etc.).
- Junior High Housing Development 1.0: Investigate costs associated with cleaning up the Junior High site to create multi-family housing.
- Community Construction Crew (CCC) 1.0: Organize and support volunteer efforts to improve existing housing.

Implementation Strategies: **Medium-term**

- Complete Community Housing Program 2.0: Examine tax revenue potential for future developments. Investigate organizational and financial models to create and maintain a variety of housing options.
- Community Workforce Housing 2.0: Investigate "residency" programs that offer housing in return for employment and community involvement.
- Junior High Housing Development 2.0: Identify funding mechanisms to clean up Junior High site.
- Community Construction Crew (CCC) 2.0: Work with local schools and tradespeople to build new housing options.

Implementation Strategies: **Long-term**

- Complete Community Housing Program 3.0: Create and sustain a variety of housing options that meet the existing and future needs of the community.
- Workforce Residency Program 3.0: Create and sustain a workforce residency program that supports needed workforce in exchange for temporary housing.
- Junior High Housing Development 3.0: Redevelop current Junior High site into multi-family housing development.



Creating Positive Change

The following slides focus on the programs, activities, and organizational structures needed to implement strategies outlined in Ellsworth's vision.

Ellsworth's Comprehensive Plan

A community's comprehensive plan is their "master plan" for the future. It contains policy recommendations used to guide land use, economic, housing, and other community infrastructure decisions. Because the plan is a reflection of the community's values, it needs to be a document that is created, monitored, updated, and known by the community.

A successful comprehensive plan is dependent largely on the quality of the effort put into it. Elected officials, staff, and advisors must develop and deploy meaningful methods of public participation that will create a living document used to direct community decision-making.

Consider developing an educational program designed to connect residents to Ellsworth's comprehensive plan. Identify and take action on opportunities to bring local experts to inform the plan and its implementation. Reference specific articles of the plan when making decisions and identify and amend articles that do not reflect community values. The following steps will help Ellsworth create and implement a meaningful comprehensive plan that can be used to shape its future.

- Step 1: Hosting more events in Ellsworth gets more attention drawn to Ellsworth. The more positive attention Ellsworth receives, the more outsiders will be drawn to do business in Ellsworth and potentially even move to Ellsworth, thereby increasing the amount of tax revenue that the Village can use to make more improvements. This sort of 'chain of events' is commonly called a "Positive Feedback Loop". Improved communication and relationship building between the Village, other local and county governments, and private sector groups will help Ellsworth work on and achieve positive goals that benefit everyone in the community.
- Step 2: Educating both elected officials and residents will help to keep everyone on the same page with the Village's desire to move forward. By keeping a solid plan in place, nobody can deny Ellsworth's needs.
- Step 3: Placing these needs and desires into a more personalized comprehensive plan will help Ellsworth plan for its future. Amending the current comprehensive plan to include some of the ideas discussed during the Design Ellsworth event will help provide a solid foundation from which to work upon. Additionally, if and when funding is required in the future to achieve some of the goals outlined in the comprehensive plan, having them laid out with proof that residents do want these things (from the public participation events held for Design Ellsworth), this will help Ellsworth compete for grant funding from a variety of federal and state programs.





Community Change

Change is inevitable, but very few people react positively to personal and societal change. Major community changes can be disruptive and can lead to frustration. The challenge - and the opportunity - is to stay ahead of changes with shared vision and action. If a community lacks a shared vision for change, individual efforts expend resources without creating a larger impact. When a directive or mandate is forced onto a community, change happens, but with little meaning for those involved. Meaningful community change comes when individual efforts identify common interests in which they can "pull together".

Implementation Strategies: **Short-term**

- Education 1.0: Work with local businesses, schools, and UW-Extension to provide ongoing education and training regarding community development, economic development, and volunteerism.
- Organization 1.0: Work with public, private, and non-profit sectors to investigate the potential for creating a community development authority and community fund.
- Communication 1.0: Develop and sustain a central communication program for Design Ellsworth initiatives.
- Volunteerism 1.0: Develop an online volunteer registry and calendar to support the Community Construction Crew (CCC) and other volunteer efforts in Ellsworth.
- Youth & Community Development 1.0: Work with the local school district and UW-Extension to provide opportunities for youth involvement in local government, entrepreneurship, and community development.

Implementation Strategies: **Medium-term**

- Education 2.0: Work with UW-Extension, the UW-Extension Local Government Center, the League of Municipalities, and local public schools to provide ongoing education and training regarding local government, public participation, and comprehensive planning.
- Organization 2.0: Develop the appropriate organizational structure(s) to coordinate, fund, and maintain Design Ellsworth.
- Communication 2.0: Communicate opportunities and successes for Design Ellsworth.
- Volunteerism 2.0: Create and maintain a central hub for coordinating volunteer activities.

Implementation Strategies: **Long-term**

- Education 3.0: Work with the local school district, businesses, local artists, local government, and UW-Extension to provide meaningful opportunities for youth involvement in community development, economic development, the arts, and local government.
- Organization 3.0: Raise funds and provide resources for local community and economic development projects.
- Communication 3.0: Market Ellsworth as a place where people will want to and can live.



Implementation Resources & Next Steps

Realizing your shared vision requires an understanding of your existing community resources, or capital. These “community capitals” include natural resources, built infrastructure, financial resources, political capital, social networks and groups, human resources and skills, and cultural assets and traditions. Work with existing assets and strengths to realize ideas that bring the most community benefit with the least community cost.

Next Steps: Ideas

Realizing the community’s shared vision is an ongoing process that requires assembling a group of people with the skills, time, and passion to get things done. Because everyone has different interests, talents, and energy, allow folks to enter and exit the implementation process in places that make sense. The following list illustrates some of the “first steps” that resulted from the Design Wisconsin Team Visit within each of the 5 vision elements.

- Celebrate Ellsworth
 - **Ice Skating Rink:** Work with local ice sculptors to develop a unique ice rink and skating experience
 - **Health & Wellness:** Work with local business owners and schools to provide outdoor recreation and health and wellness opportunities using existing trails and parks.
 - **Local Events:** Coordinate activities among local businesses and schools to create unique Ellsworth celebrations throughout the year.
 - **Curd 2.0:** Expand Cheese Curd Festival to encourage overnight stays.
- Streets, Buildings, & Businesses
 - **Art Walk 1.0:** Work with local ice sculptors to create a winter art walk downtown.
 - **Public Art 1.0:** Develop a sculpture and mural plan for the Downtown.
 - **Streetscape 1.0:** Collect residents’ ideas about street design to inform a plan for the Downtown, Midway, and East End.
 - **Business Retention & Expansion (BR&E) Program:** Interview local business owners to understand: How’s business doing? What do you like about doing business here? What can we do to help you succeed?
 - **Building Assessment:** Conduct an inventory of existing buildings, uses, and opportunities.
 - **Midway Market Study:** Work with UW-Extension to conduct a market analysis/feasibility study for the Midway Hotel.
 - **Friends of the East End:** Create a task force charged with developing the East End into an arts & entertainment district.
 - **Community Construction Crew (CCC):** Organize and support volunteer efforts to make improvements to the Downtown, Midway, and East End streetscapes (facades, street furniture, lighting, vegetation, etc.).





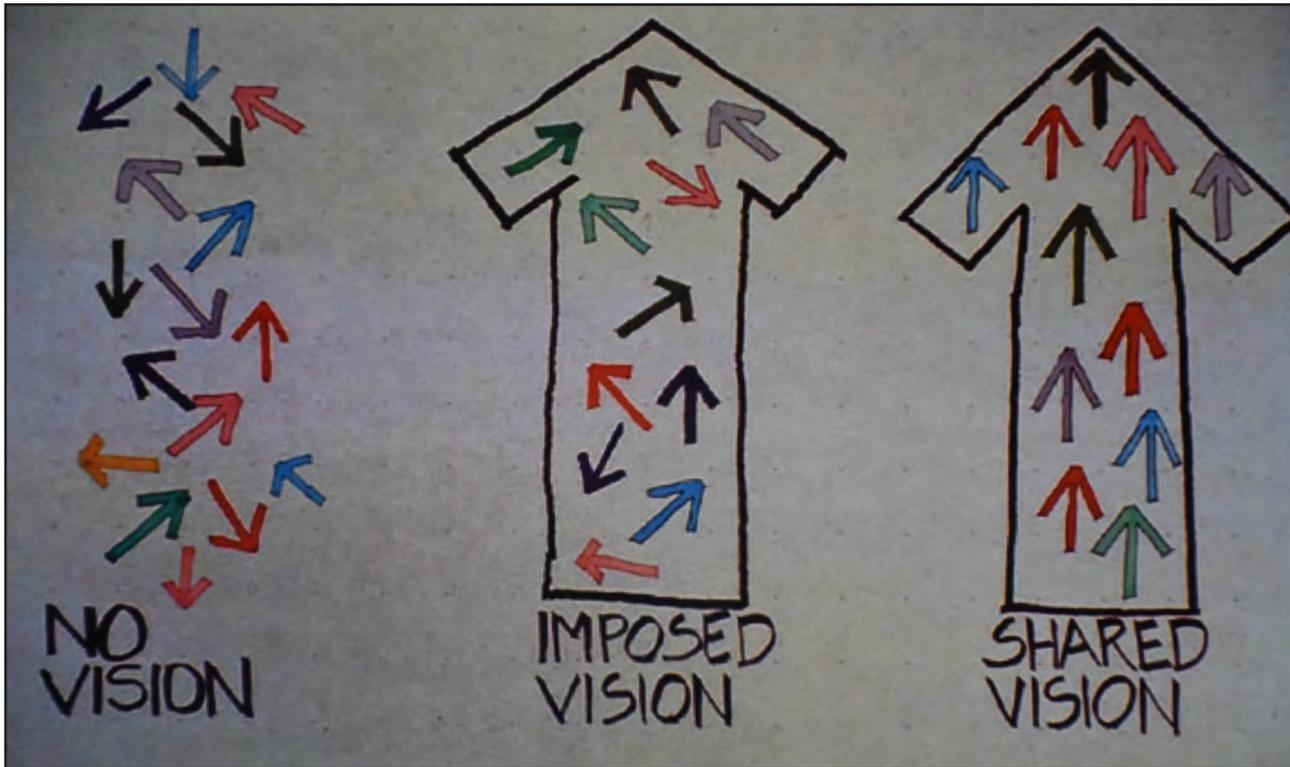
- Parks, Trails, Public & Community Spaces
 - **Summit Park Improvements 1.0:** Document and assess existing parks infrastructure, programs, and performance. Survey residents regarding future needs. Work with local residents, business owners, schools, law enforcement, and local artists to build a skatepark and ice rink.
 - **Community Center & Library 1.0:** Conduct a future needs assessment regarding what Ellsworth residents want to have in a future community center and library.
 - **The Midway Promenade 1.0:** Work with residents, business owners, schools, and local artists to develop the concept for a Midway Promenade.
 - **Trails & Sidewalks Program 1.0:** Conduct an inventory and assessment of existing sidewalks and trails in order to identify areas of opportunity and investment.
 - **Community Construction Crew (CCC):** Organize and support volunteer efforts to create and maintain sidewalks, trails, parks, and landscaping.
- Housing
 - **Complete Community Housing Program 1.0:** Work with Pierce County Economic Development Corporation, Mississippi River Regional Planning Commission, and/or UW-Extension to conduct a detailed housing survey of existing and needed housing.
 - **Community Workforce Housing 1.0:** Work with local businesses to identify “targeted” housing needs related to employment sectors (education, healthcare, arts, retail, etc.).
 - **Junior High Housing Development 1.0:** Investigate costs associated with cleaning up the Junior High site to create multi-family housing.
 - **Community Construction Crew (CCC) 1.0:** Organize and support volunteer efforts to improve existing housing.
- Creating Positive Change
 - **Education 1.0:** Work with local businesses, schools, and UW-Extension to provide ongoing education and training regarding community development, economic development, and volunteerism.
 - **Organization 1.0:** Work with public, private, and non-profit sectors to investigate the potential for creating a community development authority and community fund.
 - **Communication 1.0:** Develop and sustain a central communication program for Design Ellsworth initiatives.
 - **Volunteerism 1.0:** Develop an online volunteer registry and calendar to support the Community Construction Crew (CCC) and other volunteer efforts in Ellsworth.
 - **Youth & Community Development 1.0:** Work with local school district and UW-Extension to provide opportunities for youth involvement in local government, entrepreneurship, and community development.



Next Steps: People

The people of Ellsworth are its most valuable resource. The Design Wisconsin Team heard from many residents about all of the projects currently underway in the community. This commitment to investing in Ellsworth's future illustrates the community's ability to work together.

Moving forward, it will be important for folks to prioritize community investments of time, money, and energy. Take the time to consider current commitments in order to align interests and make strategic decisions. Consider working with UW-Extension to develop an action plan that prioritizes projects, identifies resources, and sets goals.



When groups or individuals in a community are not working toward a shared vision of the future the community begins to lose continuity, energy, and resources. In addition, an imposed vision will not sustain itself as well. Vital communities work together to address issues that will benefit the entire community.

Next Steps: Process

Implementation doesn't have to be difficult, but it does require some planning. Ideas are realized because a group of people came together to get something done. Take deliberate steps to bring folks into the process, provide clear and consistent communication, and remember to celebrate your successes.

The ideas generated during the Design Wisconsin Team Visit provide opportunities for community members to come together in order to create something that benefits the entire community. Use these ideas to identify common interests and energy. Convene a series of planning meetings to identify why folks are interested in the idea, what they can offer, and what's left to figure out. Focus on simple "quick wins" in order to build the capacity and confidence to take on larger more complex projects.

Don't be afraid to make mistakes, but maintain relationships, as those are the key to success. The following text from Dr. John Kotter's books "Leading Change" and "The Heart of Change" describe the basic steps for making change happen in a community.

- Step 1: Establish Sense of Urgency
 - Examine market and competitive realities
 - Identify and discuss crises, potential crises or major opportunities
- Step 2: Form a Powerful Coalition
 - Assemble a group with enough power to lead the change effort
 - Encourage the group to work as a team
- Step 3: Create a Shared Vision
 - Create a vision to help direct the change effort
 - Develop strategies for achieving that vision
- Step 4: Communicate the Vision
 - Use every vehicle possible to communicate the new vision and strategies
 - Teach new behaviors by the example of the Guiding Coalition
- Step 5: Empower Others to Act
 - Remove obstacles to change
 - Change systems or structures that seriously undermine the vision
 - Encourage the risk-taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions
- Step 6: Plan for and Create Wins
 - Plan for visible performance improvements
 - Create those improvements
 - Recognize and reward people involved in the improvements
- Step 7: Change Improvement Checkpoints
 - Use increased credibility to change systems, structures and policies that don't fit the vision
 - Hire, promote, and develop people who can implement the vision
 - Reinvigorate the process with new projects, themes, and change agents
- Step 8: Institutionalize New Approaches
 - Articulate the connections between the new behaviors and organizational success
 - Develop the means to ensure leadership development and succession

Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston, Mass., Harvard Business School Press. Kotter, J. P. and D. S. Cohen (2002). *The heart of change : real-life stories of how people change their organizations*. Boston, Mass., Harvard Business School Press.



Final Comments

The Design Wisconsin Team process provides a glimpse of a community's shared vision for the future. The drawings represent ideas the Team Members believe could help the community realize their vision. Because of the fast-paced nature of the process, only the strongest and most important ideas are expressed. The community is responsible for developing the ideas and implementing the results. It is an opportunity to invite people to share their time, talent, and passion to create positive change in their community.

Members of the Design Wisconsin Team and the Design Ellsworth Team would like to thank the following people who dedicated their time, talents, and passion to bring Design Wisconsin to Ellsworth.

Design Ellsworth Planning Team

The Design Ellsworth program would not have been possible if it were not for the time and dedication of the following community members:

Denton Achenbach, Paul Bauer, Kim Beebe, Becky Beissel, Raynee Farrell, Katie Feuerhelm, Leah Franklin, David Hugare, Lars Loberg, Tiffany Meyer, Meghan Quinn Kummer, Adam Westrich, and Angie Whelan

Community Presenters

Mary Brand, Samantha Brill, Ellen Onee Moore Butts, Barry Cain, Jon Dodge, Joe Folsom, Kristi Frederick, Jary Gilseth, Jason Haugley, Mary Kelly, Russ Korpela, Eric Ladwig, Lars Loberg, Kenneth Manfred, Tiffany Meyer, Brittany Morah, Peggy Nelson, Lisa Olsen, AZ Sneider, Mike Steel, Jennifer Thatcher, and Mary Zimmerman

Senior Citizens Focus Group: Algot Anderson, Dorothy Bloomstrand, Lillian Doll, Pam Enger, John Fagerland, Jeanne Jahnke, Linda Johnson, Karen Meyer, Sharon Schulze, Kathy Sears, Mary Jo Quinn, Diane Esterby, Judy Perkins, Kathy Steffen, Jenny Funk, and Tiffany Meyer





Business Community Focus Groups

Denton Achenbach (State Farm), Paul Bauer (Ellsworth Cooperative Creamery), Kim Beebe (Ellsworth Chamber and Limelight), Tara Buechner (Westconsin Credit Union), Jean Chalifoux (Associated Bank), Larry Dokkestul (Pierce Pepin Cooperative), Tony Drummond (Kaufhold's Kurds), Russ Korpela (Common Man), Raynee Farrell (CCF Bank), Joe Folsom (Pierce County EDC), Katie Galloway (Associated Bank), Steve Georgakas (Federal Foam), Meghan Quinn Kummer (Quinn Motors), Jason Nilssen (Nilssen's Foods), Sharon and Joe Seibel (J&S Machine), Wyman Smith (Federal Foam), Tim Torason (Countryside Cooperative), and Angie Whalen (YB Urban?)

Passionate Community Members Focus Group

Becky Beissel (Limelight and Ellsworth Chamber), Ellsworth Boy Scouts, Katie Feuerhelm, Leah Franklin, April Gipford (HS Student), Missy Harris, Milt Helmer (Masonic Lodge), Dave Hugare (Zion Covenant Church), Paul Johnson, (Ellsworth Funsters), Jeff Smith (English Lutheran Church), Julie Stoltenburg, and Adam Westrich (St. Paul's UCC Church)

Design Wisconsin Team Members

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The University of Wisconsin-Extension

University of Wisconsin (UW)-Extension provides statewide access to university resources and research so the people of Wisconsin can learn, grow and succeed at all stages of life. UW-Extension carries out this tradition of the Wisconsin Idea – extending the boundaries of the university to the boundaries of the state – through its four divisions of continuing education, cooperative extension, business and entrepreneurship, and broadcast and media innovations.

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Who We Are

With an office in each Wisconsin county, Cooperative Extension develops practical educational programs tailored to local needs and based on university knowledge and research. We deliver our expertise to the public, addressing a wide range of needs to people, plants and animals, in both urban and rural areas of the states.

What We Do

We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting people with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.

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“The University of Wisconsin’s direct contributions to the state: to the government in the forms of serving in office, offering advice about public policy, providing information and exercising technical skill, and to the citizens in the forms of doing research directed at solving problems that are important to the state and conducting outreach activities.”

– Jack Stark, “The Wisconsin Idea: The University’s Service to the State”, p.1



Summary Report

Ellsworth Design Team 2018