

Director's Report

March 9, 2017

Downtowns: We have worked with both Maquoketa and Bellevue to help educate property owners about the value of creating downtown Historic Districts. We also helped solicit funding to hire Heritage Works.

We piggy backed on the Maquoketa presentation to also promote their downtown incentive programs. Nic has assisted several property owners with various applications.

We toured a Monticello developer through the Mitchell Maskrey Mill. He is very interested, but would like someone to be a financial partner in what he envisions to be a \$2-3 million rehabilitation project.

We are working with two local contractors for pricing to rehabilitate 110 South Main in Maquoketa. We have also met several times regarding the Maquoketa Art Experience façade project.

We've also met with the owner of La Casa, Tiffany Mangler and Carl Reimer of ECIA to walk through the next steps to take advantage of a \$75,000 housing grant for upper story housing above the restaurant.

Heart & Soul: This is the visioning process for Bellevue. We continue to meet with their leadership team on a monthly basis. We have also participated in a meeting with Bellevue students and the Center for Rural Entrepreneurship to discuss the survey that had been completed of middle and high school students. The results of the survey were very interesting. I have attached the summary along with some observations by the Bellevue Superintendent.

Preston Urban Renewal: Assisted the City of Preston in an amendment to their urban renewal plan. As part of this process, I attended a Council public hearing and participated in the consultation process. I also met with Preston Growth and Development and downtown property owners to discuss Dollar General's interest in building a store in their community.

Bellevue: Met with Chamber representatives, Loras Herrig and Nick Hueneke to discuss the future direction of the Chamber since they are currently operating without a director. We also discussed ways to improve communication and partnership opportunities.

ECIA Orientation: I had a meeting with Kelley Deutmeyer and a couple of key ECIA staff to introduce their range of services to some new leaders in Maquoketa. This included Tiffany Mangler, Chair of Maquoketa Betterment, and Matt Notz, Director of the Maquoketa Chamber. Jack Willey also joined us, although Jack is not "new" to his position, he will now be serving on the ECIA Board as a Jackson County representative, which is a new role for him.

Parks to People: We continue to move forward with many projects in the region. ECIA facilitated a regional meeting to introduce the potential partnership with Keep Iowa Beautiful/Hometown Pride to help pay for ongoing administrative costs. Maquoketa, Bellevue, Preston and Sabula were all represented at the meeting. The overall comments were positive. Kelley has asked for commitments by April 8th.

Since my last report, we have participated in several marketing meetings, met with an organization that wants to develop another mountain bike park, met with the Dubuque City Council, facilitated projects committee meetings, GWMRR Board meetings, and presented to the Jackson County Farm Bureau. We have also participated in many fundraising meetings and events.

Nic has also taken a leadership role in establishing the GWLoop.com website. I would encourage you to visit the site if you have already. We have had much positive feedback in response to the site.

Lieutenant Governor: Our office facilitated a visit by Lt. Governor Kim Reynolds to Bellevue. We used this opportunity to showcase Bellevue Big, Heart & Soul, the Marquette school expansion, Grant Wood Loop. The Lt. Governor is from rural Iowa and seemed to really appreciate all that was happening Bellevue.

We have formally invited her back to Jackson County to tour the expanding HUSCO operation as her schedule permits in 2017.

Bellevue High School: As a follow up to Manufacturing Week last October where we have high school students tour local industries, Bellevue High School wanted to reciprocate with local business and industries. Our office worked closely with the high school staff to provide tours of parts of the school and to meet with some of the students who are participating in Bellevue Big. We had approximately 25 business/industry representatives who took advantage of this opportunity.

Layers of Maquoketa: Nic has attended many planning meetings for the “Layers of Maquoketa” initiative. This started as part of a University of Iowa and Maquoketa Art Experience collaboration to engage in a “deep history,” a survey of the cultural and economic makeup of Maquoketa. The initiative will culminate in a weeklong community celebration from April 17-22. Saturday, April 22 will be the main day of celebration highlighting the newly completed Downtown streetscape. One of the many aspects of this celebration will be an exhibit entitled “Made in Maquoketa” to be displayed at the Maquoketa Art Experience. 8 industries will be providing examples of the products they produce, and artist Rose Frantzen will design an installation to highlight these products and their producers.

Maquoketa Branding: Nic is coordinating the City of Maquoketa’s partnership with the Iowa Institute of Sustainable Communities and University of Iowa Marketing Institute students. This team, along with a diverse stakeholders group of Maquoketa residents, has worked to develop a tourism and new resident marketing plan based on Maquoketa’s strengths. A professional graphic designer also has developed a reinvigorated community brand package. These proposals will be presented to Maquoketa City Council on April 17.

Iowa Workforce Development: Jack Willey, Nic and I met with representatives of the Iowa Workforce Development office to discuss ways to better promote the satellite services they provide one day a week in Maquoketa. The satellite office has been available for just over a year, but the number of monthly clients does not keep Pamela busy. We have reached out again to local industries and recently I met with the local Operation New View Director to make sure they were aware of this service.

Other Activities:

- Attending two Housing Trust Fund Board meetings.

- Participated in Freight Study meeting and conference call.
- Attended ECIA Council meeting.
- Met with Patty Manuel, Maquoketa Valley REC for update on their broadband project.
- Attended PEI meeting. ECIA has secured some grant funding to help with marketing the Grant Wood Loop.
- Held a number of breakfast meetings in our office for Maquoketa community leaders.
- Attended Brownfields training.
- Nic attend Maquoketa Betterment Board meetings.
- Attended Regional Iowa Workforce Advisory Board meeting.
- Participated in a couple of Business Growth meetings.
- Presented at the Maquoketa Optimists Club
- Nic attended planning meeting on the Grant Wood Scenic Byway corridor management and interpretive master plans.
- Met with representative of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and a county property owner about the process of donating land for future public use.
- Attended Bellevue Chamber lunch & learn related to local real estate market.
- Met with Maquoketa consultant tasked with helping hire a City Manager.
- Met with County financial institutions to review loan program guidelines.
- Worked with Superintendent Chris Hoover on potential funding for national speaker, Eric Wahl, who will be in Maquoketa in August.
- Nic attended the Watershed Management Symposium in Dubuque
- Attended the Rural Development Summit in Jefferson.
- Nic attended many Maquoketa Rotary meetings.
- Did update on Just Talk radio show.
- Prepared for Annual Meeting.
- Met with local committee and representative of the Grant Wood Scenic Byway to discuss process for selecting downtown art piece.
- Participated in a webinar entitled “Retail as a catalyst for Economic Development.” Matt Notz, Maquoketa Chamber Director, joined us for this webinar.
- Meet with SBDC Director to follow up on several referrals.
- Met with ECIA and City representatives to consider application for a grant to evaluate the need for broadband in rural Iowa.
- Attended training/seminar on “Untapped Workforce Solutions”.
- Facilitated meeting with ECIA staff and representatives of Bellevue and Maquoketa to discuss potential interest in a CDBG Façade Grant application.
- Participated in a regional transportation update event held at ECIA with Stu Anderson of the IDOT.
- Brian Wagner and I met with a couple of local realtor to discuss a prospective commercial business opportunity for the City of Maquoketa
- Met with Supervisor Mike Steines to give him an update on our office.