Marquette Comprehensive Plan

FOCUS GROUP FEEDBACK SUMMARY

Community Culture

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Riverfront events/activities/amenities:

- BBQs and Fish Frys, Maiden Voyage Riverboat Tours, Lazy River Beer & Wine Fest, Music on the River Friday nights, Tom Sawyer Adventure Days, pier walk for great river views, bird fly zone/viewing, bluff views, Effigy Mounds, Pikes Peak

Other community events/activities:

- Flea market under Highway 18 bridge, 4th of July parade and fireworks, CP Holiday Train comes through town, Ice skating rink in the Bench neighborhood, Railroad Days, Emma Big Bear and related events, music at the winery

Driftless Area Wetland Centre events/activities:

- Welcome Spring Event, Astronomy event, Dino Day, Hawk Watch, Santa at DAWC & holiday activities, summer camps, after school programs, preschool programs, concerts, art activities

Eagles Landing Winery, Depot Museum, Casino, School House Mall as key draws to the downtown area

Have a great tree board, excellent parks & are a Tree City

Small town atmosphere, beautiful natural surroundings & recreational opportunities, Ports of Discovery designation (chamber), Iowa Great Places designation (state), Bird Friendly City designation in works

Bench neighborhood as draw for families, Bench Bunch

Volunteer groups (Action Club, Historical Society, DAWC, etc)

Potentially a more transient population

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Need to revitalize flea market to draw more people

Need to increase museum events and information

Increase Wetland Centre advertising and usage

Need to increase and age-diversify volunteers in key groups such as Action Club, historical society, chamber board, etc.

A community art festival (e.g. Prairie du Chien's art displays at riverfront)

An annual community branding type event

Need for public Wifi (for safety & increased access)

Need to better connect Marquette & McGregor

Need to attract more people for downtown shopping

Communicating community information to different age groups a challenge (multiple methods/media types needed)

Community Culture

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Revitalize the flea market

Support Driftless Area Wetland Centre's community education & engagement efforts

Work on building an age-diverse volunteer base for local community groups and non-profits

Pursue activities to build art & culture (E.g. community art event, panels/murals on bridge, etc.)

Work with McGregor on a variety of joint projects & needs

Move ahead on Trail of Two Cities plan to provide a trail connection to McGregor

Work with Trees Forever & McGregor on Living Roadways planning to look at trail connections

Pursue additional activities to engage people with the river (e.g. jet ski race, ride up bluff for river views, etc)

Coordinate with and support Marquette Action Club, Marquette Historical Society, McGregor & Marquette Chamber of Commerce as key partners

Economic Development

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

- Generally, limited number of businesses and employment opportunities locally
- Largescale development and industries constrained by topography and surrounding public landowners, etc.
- Key local businesses or industries are: Gencor, Norag LLC, Casino, Winery, events that promote visitors/tourism, railroad, Police Dept., contractors, school (McGregor).
- Employers are struggling to find employees / skilled workforce
- Lack of housing & low pay are factors in workforce shortages
- Open space and recreation opportunities abound
- Limited store hours/operations an issue for serving people in downtowns
- Mobile food trucks trending / an attraction
- Endowment to help with senior needs exists
- Challenge of getting investors & developers locally
- Concerns regarding E-W railroad traffic and noise
- Alpine (internet provider)
- City has heard of childcare needs; kindergarten enrollment is going up; young children may increase in future as young workers or families move back
- MFL Mar-Mac elementary in Monona has good part-time 3 - 4 YO early childhood program; school district helped fund childcare centers in McGregor & Monona

Economic Development

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

- Help address issues surrounding workforce shortage, including addressing workers needs for housing and childcare
- Work on stable funding source for senior endowment
- Tourism industries expansion, but also balance this
- More tax incentives for businesses & housing
- Need to revitalize downtown, including redevelopment, rehab, and infill
- More shops, mixed-use development, and food options in downtown
- Capitalize on assets (E.g. recreation, eco-tourism)
- Senior services and housing needed

Economic Development

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

- Downtown revitalization, redevelopment and infill
- Work with downtown property & business owners
- Industries continuing on the job training and considering increasing wages to help get workers
- Increasing work from home opportunities (for professionals, etc.)
- Continue to expand fiber/internet access for residents, businesses, etc.
- Finish ordinance & efforts to support food trucks
- Continue plans for senior housing development
- Incentives for businesses and residences (e.g. TIF, abatements, etc.)
- Update urban renewal plan for TIF
- County, schools, higher education institutions, state, regional planning commission as partners
- Shared economic development projects with McGregor
- Support for small businesses (e.g. revolving loans through Clayton County Development, Upper Explorerland Regional Planning, and Allamakee Clayton REC)

Agricultural Resources

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

- There are limited areas with agriculture within city limits currently
- Land in Marquette isn't ideal for further agriculture development
- City water is impacted by harmful agricultural practices up stream in watershed. Bloody Run Creek is a trout stream running through town and may be at risk.

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

- Balance agriculture & natural resources to protect water quality, specifically along Blood Run Creek & its watershed.
- Need for agricultural conservation practices to protect water quality & manage water quantity

Agricultural Resources

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

- Encourage landowners & farmers to consider conservation practices that protect water quality & manage water quantity downstream
- Engage Farm Bureau, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Iowa Soybean, and Practical Farmers of Iowa as potential partners regarding water quality impacts from animal confinements & other agriculture practices up stream in Bloody Run Creek watershed

Natural Resources

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

- Water recreation, fishing, boating & the river are key draws to the community
- Marquette is first city downstream from confinement & is worried about water quality impacts; water quality changes are being detected in city wells
- Natural areas in city-owned evacuation route are valuable (300 acres), can be used for trails, & are in a forest management plan
- Wetland areas are valuable for flood mitigation, nutrient management & wildlife
- Great natural areas and recreation opportunities exist around the Driftless Area Wetland Centre
- City has bluff protection ordinance limiting development in these areas to protect natural resources & reduce hazards

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

- Prioritize water quality to ensure safe drinking water and with outdoor recreation in mind
- Protect Bloody Run Creek from upstream chemicals, fertilizers and manure
- Protect watersheds from industries that pose a risk
- Embrace agriculture heritage, but improve its sustainability
- Protect all environmentally sensitive areas
- Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC) environmental education and outdoor engagement is important

Natural Resources

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

- Gather and assess data on Bloody Run Creek water quality, pinpointing problem areas and sources of contaminants if possible
- Partake in water quality & conservation partnerships, including pursuing partner programs to help address water quality in Blood Run Creek
- Engage higher education partners to help address water quality issues (e.g. Upper Iowa, NICC, Luther College, University of Iowa)
- Create a water quality mitigation plan
- Encourage businesses that avoid negative impacts on natural resources, or sustainably capitalize on them to create recreation-based industries (etc.)
- Work with farmers on conservation practices to protect downstream water quality
- Support Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC) education & outreach regarding wetlands and natural resources
- Protect & consider expanding wetlands and natural areas near DAWC
- Maintain strong partnerships with local natural resource and recreation partners, such as Clayton County Conservation
- Protect evacuation route natural areas, facilitate trail use along route & implement timber management plan
- Work with state, federal, and county entities regarding parks & natural areas near Marquette

Housing

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

- Housing is generally older
- Some housing is affordable but in need of updates; other housing is priced high currently/in a bubble
- Few houses for sale; need to build more but there are few new single family lots in town (many substandard)
- New people moving back also need housing (e.g. empty nesters, people seeking small-town setting, unmarried singles, workers that can telecommute, etc.); a moving rural trend last 2 – 3 years
- Downtown has older housing, some in disrepair others okay, lower price points, some families
- Bench neighborhood, older housing, small to mid-size housing, low to mid price points, lots of families
- Tiber Ridge development, active last few years with new housing, higher price points, available lots, families/retirees/new residents
- Roundhouse & Café are main multi-family dwellings, as well as some upper story housing and scattered duplexes.
- Roundhouse is LMI, as well as scattered single-family.
- High number of single occupants in a single-family home (many with seniors)
- Younger people struggling to afford buying a house
- Investment property tensions - single family homes or spec houses being purchased by investors for AirBNBs; city wants tourism but needs to preserve housing stock
- Trickle effect of insufficient housing impacts employers, schools, services and more
- Vacant properties don’t equate to available homes – they may need improvements to be livable, or may function for only seasonal or temporary use
- Teachers & police officers cited as local groups struggling to find housing

Housing

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

- Rehab/updates to older housing
- Pursue options for tear down/rebuild and infill to increase housing numbers in developed areas
- Need for more senior living options, to open up single family housing to families & workers
- Prioritize housing that is affordable based on local wages; need for mid-cost housing for single families ($100,00 - $200,000 range)
- Duplexes good opportunity to increase units; can fit in different settings (R-1, R-2, R-3), are liked by developers, work for seniors (who can own & live in one side)
- New upper story housing in downtown area

Housing

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

- Continue to create incentives to encourage new housing, or housing infill/redevelopment
- Continue the First Time Home Buyer Program
- Utilize Low to Moderate Income (LMI) funds that are already set aside by the city; continue to use for Housing Trust Fund match & other housing priorities
- Community housing projects (senior housing, downtown revitalization with upper story housing)
- Work with Clayton County Development Group to understand housing needs, & to assess and market developable lots

Transportation

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Roadways & Traffic:

- Highway 18 is busy with large semi-trucks
- Traffic backs up at railroad crossings when trains block roads
- Certain roads need updating

Safety:

- Safety for walkers generally an issue in vicinity of railroad crossings
- Few sidewalks in Bench neighborhood, with people often walking on roads
- Walking routes from Bench neighborhood to downtown especially dangerous for children (crossing casino parking lot, railroad tracks, walking near Hwy 76, & crossing on-ramp to highway bridge)
- Safety issue of children walking from Driftless Area Wetland Centre to town having to cross Hwy 18 at grade

Trails:

- Informal trail exists through city-owned evacuation route/natural areas
- Some gravel & paved trails exist at Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC)
- Multi-modal trails are limited right now, but city is in midst of planning several opportunities to increase connectivity
- Transportation planning, especially pedestrian and bike connections, are constrained by railroad setbacks (25') and shore setbacks (due to endangered snail)
- Need better connections between casino & downtown (E.g. shuttle, walking)

Public Transportation:

- Public transportation is limited right now

Transportation

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Roadways & Traffic:

- Updates needed to Brown Street on the Bench
- Improvements needed near Hwy 18 bridge

Trails:

- Prioritize increasing multi-modal transportation options & connectivity; need more accessible walking/biking
- Additional trail connections from Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC), including trail to Marquette downtown/riverfront (key factor of addressing safe crossing at Hwy 18), and meandering trails through valley to Bloody Run Park
- Prioritize river trail / boardwalk connection to McGregor (Trail of Two Cities), to create safe & direct walking connections between two communities

Transportation

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Roadways & Traffic:

- Plan & implement Brown St. roadway improvements
- Work with IDOT & county roads to address highway or county road projects in/near Marquette

Trails:

- Coordinate with Clayton County Conservation regarding multi-modal trail connection from Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC) to Bloody Run Park; examine options for using city's existing water easement
- Finish planning (tackle need for box culvert at Hwy 18, etc.), pursue funding for, and implement multi-modal trail from Driftless Area Wetland Centre (DAWC) to downtown Marquette & riverfront
- Finish examining feasibility of Trail of Two Cities connection to McGregor (Trees Forever Living Roadways planning); move ahead on funding & project development based on planning outcomes

Hazards

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Flooding & Stormwater:

- Flash flooding occurs along Pleasant Ridge Rd. & due to melting snow from bluffs
- Flooding occurs in Bloody Run Creek (which can be backed up by Mississippi R. flooding), on annual basis
- City has a water study and floodplain ordinance; no set actions from study, just a set of practices
- Dike near Bench manages river flooding and may have structural issues; it is privately owned
- Retention pond near Bench helps with water storage & sediment removal; it is privately owned

Other Hazards:

- Transportation & railroad accidents a risk, including threat of hazardous materials spills
- Community room can act as storm shelter
- Tornadoes a risk (e.g. Timber Ridge development atop bluffs)
- Derelict or unsafe buildings pose potential safety threat; city has ordinance in place to regulate & provides resources to property owners
- Emerald Ash Borer a threat to tree inventory
- Landslides and falling debris due to bluffs

Hazards

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Flooding & Stormwater:

- Solidify emergency response for flash and river flooding events
- Address maintenance and updating needs of privately owned stormwater management structures (E.g. dike, retention) to ensure function and safety

Other Hazards:

- Prepare community for potential train derailment or accident
- Improvements to emergency response and community shelter needs for storm events
- Address derelict/dangerous buildings and properties
- Understand impact of and plan mitigating invasive species in community

Hazards

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Flooding & Stormwater Management:

- Clarify and formalize city responses to flash vs. river flooding events
- Better manage retention pond near Bench to ensure its future function; consider purchasing, or look at maintenance agreement options
- Identify needs for ensuring structural integrity and function of dike; work with private owner on permanent access easement for maintenance

Other Hazards:

- Improvements to community room for serving as community shelter, including generator & wiring
- Identify evacuation route & steps in case of a train derailment or accident
- Prioritize enforcement of existing regulations addressing derelict/dangerous buildings & properties
- Review property maintenance and/or rental ordinances and consider feasibility for Marquette, as means of regulating property & rental conditions
- Tree Board to complete plan for tackling Emerald Ash Borer in community
- Public works and council committee will coordinate on mitigating invasive plant species in community

Public Facilities & Services

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Facilities:

- Police Department, Rescue Squad and city shop are located on the same site and may need to expand in future (need storage space, and better vehicle access and parking)
- City has agreements w/McGregor for shared equipment
- School facilities in McGregor (middle school) and Monona (elementary + preschool); recent referendum to close MFL Mar-Mac Middle School which would impact Marquette families & businesses; school district may have turnover of admin soon, which will impact things

Services:

- Several community recreation opportunities in nearby communities (pools in Prairie & Monona, splash pad in McGregor)

Public Facilities & Services

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Facilities:

- Expand Police Department/shop, and better funding support

Services:

- If middle school was to close, participate in planning re-use of the space for community-oriented purposes (fitness center, community center, senior center, etc.)
- Help families access community recreation/ youth activities opportunities in nearby communities
- Add senior services
- Assess childcare capacity and demand, and be a partner in addressing gaps and solutions

Public Facilities & Services

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Services:

- Assist with planning public transportation opportunities to nearby recreation facilities and destinations (e.g. pools); consider coordinating with school district for a driver/route, or look at options for a shuttle; assist youth, seniors, visitors in particular

Public Infrastructure

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Sewer System:

- Sewer infrastructure is 20 years + old
- Force main pipe (circa 1978) is cast iron, is corrosive and has had breaks; city has replaced a few thousand feet on location-by-location basis
- City is setting aside funds for new storage tank

Water System:

- Water infrastructure is 20 years + old
- Water mains are okay for the time being

Treatment Plant:

- Treatment plant equipment is dated (20 years +)
- Will be getting ultraviolet at plant

Storm Sewer & Stormwater Management:

- Curb & gutter in some locations but not in subdivision; there have been stormwater issues at Timber Ridge being dealt with on case-by-case basis
- Flash flooding impacts on Pleasant Ridge Rd.
- Debris falls down slopes near downtown and may enter storm sewer system

Utilities:

- New solar installations have brought cost of electricity down for city

Public Infrastructure

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Sewer System:

- Update remaining old and corrosive force main pipe

Water System:

- Replace reservoir
- Transition away from lead pipes for homeowners

Treatment Plant:

- Update outdated equipment & incorporate new ultraviolet treatment

Storm Sewers / Stormwater Management:

- Address debris falling from bluffs into storm sewers
- Address flash flooding issues down Pleasant Ridge Rd.

Utilities:

- Pursue renewable energy and energy efficiency projects to reduce costs for utilities

Public Infrastructure

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Sewer System:

- Consider options for boring in new, non-corrosive plastic pipe, to replace remaining dated force main

Treatment Plant:

- Implement ultraviolet at treatment plant
- Update outdated plant equipment as funding becomes available

Other:

- Review and update capital improvement plan following comprehensive plan process to account for prioritized projects

Storm Sewer / Stormwater Management:

- Work with county on stormwater management needs along Pleasant Ridge Rd. to mitigate flash flooding
- Plan for and implement catchment system to capture bluff debris before it gets into storm sewer

Utilities:

- Meet with Clayton County Energy District & electric utility to discuss options for future solar installations

Land Use

EXISTING CONDITIONS + TRENDS

Teachers and Police Dept. offic

NEEDS & PRIORITIES

Rehab/up

Land Use

OPPORTUNITIES / PARTNERSHIPS / PROJECTS

Revitalize flea

Marquette Action Club