

**Marquette Chamber of Commerce
Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026**

Note from Chamber

Hi all,

I wanted to insert this note with our strategic plan to give you an idea of the process taken to create this document and the overall hope we have with the completion of these projects in the future.

Much like all non-profits do, the Chamber felt it important to create a strategic plan to dictate the direction that we go in over the next few years. For this process, we started with a community survey to gather your input. It was important to us that we build the community that YOU want, rather than the community for just those who attend the Chamber meetings. The survey showed that Marquette residents and visitors wanted us to focus heavily on beautification, housing, and business retention. With this information in hand, a small group was created to comb through the survey results and determine how we want to proceed to do our best to fulfill your requests and projects that we believe will help Marquette to be its best in the future. This group was made up of people from all generations, those raising families in town and those who are not, representatives of different key businesses, those who have been in town for generations and those considered 'new.'

We recognize that there's many projects to do, and many build on the success of another. Please consider the list below to be our starting point and not an all-encompassing list. **The theme of this plan is building blocks.** If something that is important to you isn't on this list, we'd love to hear your suggestion. We appreciate your contributions to the survey and we hope we will see you volunteering your time, with the rest of our Chamber crew, to help us build something really cool, that we can all be proud of.

- Hayley, Chamber President 2022

HOUSING

There is a significant need for housing in Marquette. The current availability does not come close to meeting the demand. As beautification was the number one community request and business recruitment another priority for the Chamber to tackle, housing will be a key component to our success in those areas. Mari Loder leads this project.

PROJECT 1: Free land section of town

- Develop a parcel map to showcase what is available
- Work with developers to create a financially sustainable model for new housing
 - Strongly support initiatives brought to the City Council to help aid developments
 - Access County/MIH funding and be more involved in County efforts to fund housing needs

PROJECT 2: Existing housing

- Strongly support and encourage City Council to enforce City Codes, especially as it relates to property cleanliness and unsafe, vacant properties
 - Learn more about the process of passing/enforcing codes
- Encourage infill of existing, empty lots
- Work with City to create Housing Assessment Tool for use in housing grant applications with the McPherson County Housing Coalition

BUSINESS & WORKFORCE

In the community survey conducted in 2022, community members self-reported the desire for more support of existing businesses and recruitment for more businesses. This phase hopes to aid our 'cornerstone' businesses, both existing and soon-to-be, that will attract new businesses, talent, and tourism to town. Stan VonStrohe has been appointed to lead this project.

PROJECT 1: Open the Cafe

- Work with property owner to place signage advertising the cafe space being for sale and/or signage reflecting the community's commitment to recruit/support a cafe.
- Create marketing materials that express the community need & support
 - Create a subpage on the Chamber website
- Continue conversations with property owner to assist in the sale and opening of a new cafe as needed

PROJECT 2: Succession Planning for key businesses and events

- City Sundries: Recruit a cafe to help manage the significant number of patrons coming to town for food.
- Piper's Fine Foods: Ask Steve and Mary how we can help them
- Alumni Banquet: Offer to take on the Alumni Banquet as a Chamber to ensure it continues.
 - Matt Graham is selected to head the next banquet, with help of committee members Janis, Fred, Art, and Allan. Dorrine has offered to co-chair.
 - Contact information will be compiled for as many alumnus as possible, to create direct invitations for future banquets.

Sub-projects:

- Host more events in the Fine Arts Center
- Utilize the City Park for more community activities: live nativity scene, buskers, etc.

COMMUNITY BEAUTIFICATION

In the '22 Community Survey, beautification of spaces was a top item on the list for the Chamber. This group, spearheaded by Janis Larson and Justine Ferris looks to spread community pride and improve overall appearance through volunteer-led projects.

PROJECT 1: City Museum upkeep/maintenance

- Ensure that the Historic committee begins to meet again on a regular basis.
- Encourage the committee to recruit new, next gen leadership. Justine volunteers.
- Work with the Historic comm. to complete the planned museum exterior projects

PROJECT 2: Create a public art movement

- Work with Piper's for a mural, featuring Kanopolis
- Ask local children to create quilt squares & assemble a kids' quilt mural, like the adult version. This would be placed on the west side of the City Park bathroom.
- Work with The Art Room for an art installation on the South bridge fencing
- Continue working with the Kansas Motorcycle Museum for a mural on the building's south, exterior wall.
 - From current discussions: The KMM Board is working to get the brick wall repaired, in order to be prepared for a mural.

PROJECT 3: Bring more projects & publicity to Community Clean up Day

- Work with owners of vacant downtown buildings to update/clean the windows
- Clean up the City playground property East of the Learning Center
 - Hang signage to identify this as a public space
- Replace the benches, trash cans, and planters downtown
 - Host an Adopt-a-Bench fundraiser at the Alumni Banquet
 - Utilize the Lion's Club to do repairs and installation of new items

PROJECT 4: Update downtown basketball courts with paint, new rims, and etc.

- Work with the Marquette Rec. Commission/ City to get funds allocated for repairs
- Ask local students to help with the repairs and fresh paint lines

PROJECT 5: City Park improvements

- Determine the cost to purchase a new playground set up
- Fix immediate safety concerns of local parents: exposed metal, cut hazards, etc.

PROJECT 6: Downtown Sidewalks

- Work with City and property owners to repair uneven sidewalks downtown

YOUTH

The Chamber team recognizes the importance of involving young people in community projects to create ownership, pride, and relationships within the community. This is our official declaration to involve youth in more of our projects. Whitney Weaver was selected to head this project group.

PROJECT 1: Work more closely with the Recreation Commission/ Director

PROJECT 2: Engage the local Youth Group in more community projects

MISC. PROJECTS

This group catches all of the additional projects deemed important for the experience of both visitors and residents in the community. Themes are heavily related to the marketing of our community and making our community history more accessible. Leads on this category are Matt Graham and Art Mayfield.

PROJECT 1: Create a QR Code Historical Tour

- Pilot phase: Compile the information on each downtown building into a page on the Chamber website. Hang laminated QR Codes in the buildings' windows that will direct foot traffic to the applicable, informational page.
- If web analytics show the pilot phase to be successful, purchase more permanent plaques that can be displayed on the building with the web link.

PROJECT 2: Increase community connection/marketing at Kanopolis Lake

- Hart Marina
 - Invite the business owners to the table
 - Work with Marina to place Marquette-specific brochures at the Lake
 - Advertise their rentals in community marketing, to tie the Kanopolis Lake and Marquette experience together.
- Assist the VonStrohes and Pipers in installing the third Marquette specific billboard at a critical lake access route
- Once 501c3 is acquired, begin grant writing for funds to advertise Marquette digitally to lake patrons

PROJECT 3: Endowment

- Create and base fund the endowment