

# Headlines



## DOWNTOWN STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

8/4/08

Staffs of the City and Renaissance Rock Island met recently to review accomplishments to date on the Downtown Strategic Plan 2007-2010 and set priorities for the next quarter.

### **1) Increase utilization and occupancy of the downtown properties, ultimately enhancing activity and commerce.**

Completed:

- The McKesson Lofts renovation is underway with first floor commercial space, twenty-two condos on the second and third floors, and a green roof. Several condos are pre-sold and commercial leases are being drafted.

Priorities:

- Develop and maintain statistical data and analysis of downtown attributes indicative of its economic vitality.
- Identify and implement the best use of the Rocket Theatre.

### **2) Complete a Riverfront Plan, to include funding and timetable, while integrating the downtown as a place of commerce and recreation.**

Completed:

- A public hearing on Armory Park was held 5/20 by the Planning Commission; the Commission unanimously approved the plan. The plan proposed that the existing Armory building be demolished and replaced with a new stage / pavilion with restrooms and an observation deck. Two promenades are proposed adjacent to the river, along with an observation tower. Proposed water features include a water course and interactive fountain. A dock is proposed that would support the water taxi and transient marina. Public parking is planned on the eastern part of the site. Flood protection would incorporate a demountable system. The latest concept plan offers a variety of passive and active use areas, year-round views of the river, and multiple programming areas for the public as well as private events.
- A wave analysis will be conducted to determine the effect of wind, waves, and barge wake on the proposed transient boat dock and marina.
- A construction manager has been hired to oversee the Armory Park process. Williams Construction Company and Valley Construction will jointly serve in this capacity.

Priorities:

- Complete riverfront plan.
- Implement Blackhawk mural lighting.

### **3) Continue to grow the downtown residential population through an understanding of current and future needs.**

Completed:

- Efforts to formalize the Downtown Neighborhood Association consisting of downtown residents are underway.

Priorities:

- Engage CCC, Neighborhood Partners, staff, and residents to develop a neighborhood residential organization.
- Complete McKesson Lofts.

**4) Engage the business community to understand their needs, develop solutions, and support the growth of the downtown area.**

Priorities:

- Develop a database of business and property owners.
- Hire a Downtown Manager.

**5) Continue to enhance a pedestrian friendly downtown.**

Completed:

- Eighty-four new planters have been placed from 1st to 3rd Ave., between 15th & 24th St.
- Cigarette urns for downtown have been ordered.
- Events held downtown must now be reviewed by The District's special events team, in addition to the City Clerk.

Priorities:

- Microsurface the alleys.
- Replace broken sidewalk tiles.
- Determine new street furniture.
- Complete maps for downtown kiosks.

**6) Refine and promote the brand of the downtown area (The District).**

On hold pending hiring of Downtown Manager.

**7) Enhance the creation and performance of the arts for sale or public display in the downtown.**

Completed:

- Work is progressing on the DeSoto Arts Center.
- A nearly 100 ft. mural was painted on the east facade of the DeSoto Arts Center by Quad City Arts' Metro Arts apprentices.
- The Rotating Sculpture Program for this year includes: Contemporary Budding Pipelines \$12,825, by Charles Yost, on the southeast corner of 18th St. and 1st Ave. Hoochie Couch \$8,000, by Ted Sitting Crow Garner, located in Arts Alley. The Big Red Arc \$5,500, by Tom Newport, located on the southeast corner of 16th St. and 1st Ave.
- The Arts Advisory Committee meets monthly.

Priorities:

- Complete development of DuMarche, Market on Third.
- Install new light pole banners on 1st Ave.
- Determine artist loan or assistance program.

**8) Complete evaluation of nightlife activities and make recommendations on changes to enhance the image of downtown.**

Completed:

- MetroLINK's shuttle from Augustana to The District had a successful start with an average of 250 rides per night. With a few revisions, the shuttle will return when the students do.

Priorities:

- Convene core group to review ordinances.

- Implement Responsible Hospitality Institute's plan.

**9) Collaborate with neighboring cities.**

- Red White and Boom! was a success.
- The joint downtown map of Davenport and Rock Island is complete.
- The RiverVision committee meets regularly to share and provide updates.