

Smallville Background

Some Prospective

Partners

Social/Civic

Bethel Church

Lions Club

Church on the Green

Office of the Mayor

County Community Foundation

Weekly Gazette

Town Planning Director

Business & Economic Development

Riverside CDC

Just Housing Advocates

Third National Bank

Central Business Assoc.

Farmers Grange Assoc.

Blue River Fertilizer Co.

First National Bank

Downtown Grocery

Environmental

Clean River Alliance

Friends of the Park

Park Department

County Extension Agent

Education/Youth

School Board

4-H

Broadway Youth Ctr.

District Community College

Culture/Arts

Acme Arts Center

Latinos Unidos

Elm Street Theater Co.

County Historical Soc.

Public Library

Gallery on Main

Deco Theater Film Soc.

The Smallville Chamber of Commerce is proposing a planning task force to better identify the community's unique qualities and to focus on opportunities for the future. Through a ten to twelve-month planning process, the task force will arrive at strategies that highlight Smallville's special character and mobilize its citizens. It requires strengthened cooperation among businesses, organizations, and institutions. By engaging a broad range of community members, this effort will build on the community's positive attributes, and create a more diverse and dynamic economy to benefit all residents over the next 10 to 20 years. These strategies will further diversify the economy, stimulate trade, build bridges among a changing population and keep youth involved in the community.

Smallville is a special place. It began as a bountiful fishing and trading site for Native ancestors. Over the last 150 years, it has grown through the work of industrious, creative people. Its present-day residents come from many corners of the globe and other U.S. states. They proudly work and play together to make life better for their children and families. The economy is rooted in transportation and agriculture. Sited on a key tributary to one of the world's great river systems, Smallville is on an important rail line and highway. Besides its role in transport, Smallville's economy includes a major fertilizer manufacturer, many farms, small manufacturers, and services for locals and visitors traveling to and from regional farming and food processing centers. Throughout Smallville's history there have been many fascinating and unique individuals, natural phenomenon, and inventions.



This presentation is part of the UMass Arts Extension Service's Peripheral Vision Project made possible with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Smallville's Values and Most Unique Assets – The Short List

Values

The Smallville community planning task force ended up with the following statements of things they especially value about their community: (not in priority order)

- Face to face relationships across generations and ethnic groups
- Friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- Historic architecture in the town center
- Clean natural lake, creeks and forests
- Inventive and creative people
- High level of volunteerism in community and civic projects
- Easy access to transportation routes

The town of Smallville, a modest-sized, mid-western agricultural community of 8,500 residents serves as a county seat and commercial center for an area of 18,000. The town has a long history as a place where people work and play together, and was the site of some unique natural phenomena. Concerned with its economic future, town leaders decided to seek a strategy to re-invigorate both community life and financial fortunes. An asset-based planning process with numerous key leaders generated an inventory of assets (attached). They then distilled the following short list of unique assets.

Most Unique Assets

- **Site of major meteor strike**
- **Community of origin of TV and movie super-star**
- **Home base of state's largest manufacturer of chemical fertilizers**
- **Birthplace of several widely-known card games including Gin Rummy**
- **Headwaters for tributary that provides 60% of flow of the Clark River**
- **Transportation access point to the Wheat Belt**



This presentation is part of the UMass Arts Extension Service's Peripheral Vision Project made possible with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Community Asset Inventory for Smallville

Describe Your Community's Parameters/Demographics:

Smallville – 20 square miles at the northwest corner of Headwaters County, primarily agricultural with a traditional town center; population 8,500, serving as a commercial and service center for a population of 18,000; originally built on the Clark River; population – 22% under 18; 12% over 65; 70% Caucasian, 4% Native American, 7% Black, 9% Latino, 8% Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% Other

Some Areas to Examine

Asset/Distinctive Quality

History/Industry

Native American/Pre-colonial	<i>Key regional fishing & trading site</i>
Significant events/people	<i>Freak meteor shower 1936 Movie superstar birthplace (deceased)</i>
Products manufactured/grown	<i>Fertilizers, corn, soybeans</i>
Cultural/technological innovations	<i>Fertilizer odor control system Popular card games</i>
Economic Base/Employment	<i>Agriculture, fertilizer plant, local trade, light manufacturing, services to through traffic</i>
Other	<i>Site of legendary stage coach stop where "wild west" luminaries met untimely demise</i>

Geography

Natural/geological features	<i>Lovely natural glacier-formed lake- origin of largest Missouri River tributary; boulder fields and meteor craters</i>
Climate	<i>Hot summers, cold winters, moderate humidity</i>
Recreational amenities	<i>Popular, deep lake for swimming, boating; wooded creek-side hiking trail</i>
Other	

People *

Openness	<i>Widely known as welcoming to visitors, immigrants</i>
Age range/balance	<i>Shrinking youth population</i>
Ethnic mix	<i>Rapid changes in past 20 years; interesting mix emerging representing global spectrum</i>
Economic status	<i>78% considered middle class; 18% in poverty; 4% considered well-off</i>
Education levels	<i>Most have high school and some community college; higher than average drop outs among more rural sections</i>
Other	<i>Highly active in social events, especially in winter</i>



This presentation is part of the UMass Arts Extension Service's Peripheral Vision Project made possible with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Reputation

Visitor receptivity	<i>Exceptionally friendly, fun-loving</i>
Easy to locate and get to	<i>Central location, downtown visible from major east- west highway and key Amtrak/rail route</i>
Easy to navigate, get around	<i>Compact central street grid, in walking distance from train depot</i>
Safe	<i>Crime virtually eliminated</i>
Aesthetic experience	<i>Pleasant and distinct, quick transition from commercial district to farm/rural/recreational areas</i>
Other	

Proximity

Natural amenities	<i>Vast farming lands to the West</i>
Widely known attraction(s)	<i>Meteor fields; boyhood home of movie/TV superstar</i>
Urban center/district	<i>Major Metropolitan center 100 miles east</i>

Major or unique service(s)

Well known institution(s)	<i>Award-winning high school newspaper; Franklin's Museum of Farm Implements</i>
Special Places	<i>Sunset Ridge overlooking Lake</i>
Other	

Infrastructure

Transportation	<i>Major freight rail siding; cross-country inter-state highway; Amtrak station; daily bus service to Metropolitan Ctr.</i>
Education/culture	<i>Excellent high school; community college branch; thriving 40-year-old community theater; two art and galleries; active cinema club and 2-screen commercial movie house; nonprofit artist collective; 8 card clubs; Mayoral-sponsored community book reading</i>
Architecture/built environment	<i>Largely in-tact 1920s commercial district with art deco movie house; Arts & Crafts era hunting lodge on Lake; Two dozen elaborate Victorian style homes on south side near railroad tracks</i>
Power/water/sewer capacity	<i>Excess capacity, upgraded with mill expansion in 1973</i>
Underutilized structures/real estate	<i>Abandoned 1890 mill building, some underutilized warehouses, designated industrial site near Amtrak station</i>
Health care	<i>Small regional hospital near downtown; community clinic attached</i>
Other	



This presentation is part of the UMass Arts Extension Service's Peripheral Vision Project made possible with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.