

Synopsis of Neighborhood Meetings

Synopsis A: Aging-Friendly Community

There was general agreement that a lot of existing resources for aging are not currently understood, used, or known, and the town feels like they offer a lot of resources already. At the neighborhood meetings there was a lack of understanding about what an "aging-friendly" community is, so this hindered the numerical rankings for this scenario choice. Some thought this was a growth opportunity for the town, but others hesitated to consider this option, since they perceived it would make young people want to stay away. There were also a lot of negative connotations about the elderly, listed under the "cons" column, such as "they are stuck in their ways" and if "outsiders moved into MAQ they would not become actively involved". There was also fear that low-income elderly would be a drain on the area's economy.

Summary: Aging-Friendly "pros"	Summary: Aging-Friendly "cons"
enhances seniors' lives	Leakage of medical services would continue
We already have many resources	Negative perceptions of aging population
This is a growth opportunity for the town	Current resources are not used/known
The population is aging anyway	Doubts about benefits of this scenario
	Don't want to marginalize youth
	Concerns about aging population with low incomes
	Lack of resources for this scenario

Synopsis B: Professional Community

While this scenario seemed do-able and attractive to some participants, others were reluctant to believe that viable professional offices would or could locate in MAQ. There was a lot of concern for adequate amount of downtown parking. It was generally agreed that this scenario would bring benefits to the community if it were implemented, there were just doubts about the realities of attracting professional offices. There were also concerns, as well as excitement, in addressing the additional services, shopping, and restaurant needs of a growing professional community. There was a tendency to leapfrog quickly from thoughts of filling vacant storefront with small professional offices, to thoughts of building a new office building in the vacant downtown space, with added parking as well. There is also disagreement about downtown rental space--some say it's expensive, others disagree.

Summary: Professional Growth "Pros"	Summary: Professional Growth "Cons"
Financial benefits for the town	Is this workable? Would there be enough clients here for the professionals?
We have existing resources	Doubts about the resources to make this happen
Benefits of this scenario will have spin-off impacts in Maquoketa	Who would want to come here?
Good location	High utility costs here
Works nicely with our existing older demographic--retire and pass down businesses to younger generation	Poor condition of downtown--both visible and underground infrastructure
This scenario is do-able and feasible	Location and leakage to nearby communities
Provides a good quality of life	
Why not include technical services--plumbing, electrical, etc.	



Synopsis C: Manufacturing Growth

This scenario was generally discouraged by ISU economists but was highly favored at the neighborhood meetings. Comments revealed that residents think of this as an easy fix, since MAQ has many of the necessary resources in place for manufacturing to thrive.

In contrast, there were also comments that addressed a lack of skilled workforce, and general reluctance to bring in low-paying manufacturing jobs. Attendees thought that low-paying or part-time jobs would not help the financial situation in MAQ.

There were also thoughts expressed about the need for good economic development leadership and support for existing local businesses. Some people acknowledged a lot of competition in the region for good manufacturing jobs, and also wondered if MAQ would be very welcoming to a diverse population that might move in with new manufacturing jobs. Other people were concerned about environmental consequences of manufacturing facilities in the town.

Summary: Manufacturing Growth "Pros"	Summary: Manufacturing Growth "Cons"
Viewed as do-able, and an easy fix	Doubts about the financial realities
We have the resources in place	constraints due to location, weather
financially beneficial	If this is a big success we have other problems
important to have good economic development leadership and support existing business & jobs	Wary of jobs that are low-paying or only part-time
Benefits of this scenario will have spin-off impacts in Maquoketa	We don't have skilled workers
	Downtown might not improve with this scenario
	leakage to nearby, more attractive cities
	concerns about the environment
	Would Maquoketa welcome outsiders?



Synopsis D: Art, Recreation, and Tourism (ART)

There were differences in attitudes about downtown properties in this category as well. Some people thought the rents were expensive, others thought the rents were low in cost. There was general consensus that the downtown area needed extensive redevelopment if this scenario were to become a reality. People generally agreed that Maquoketa has a lot of existing resources but many people don't know about them. If this scenario became a reality, a lot of time and energy would be needed to promote all aspects of the scenario. Both the "pros" and the "cons" agreed that greater awareness and redevelopment would need to occur, and that there would need to be heavy investment of time, energy, and money to achieve this scenario.

Summary: ART "pros"	Summary: ART "cons"
This scenario would bring in a diversity of people and money from different sources	Costs of downtown revitalization
We have many resources already, including volunteers and passion	Property taxes and high utility costs
Maquoketa is unique and we can capitalize on that	community is unaware of existing resources
Benefits of this scenario will have spin-off impacts in Maquoketa	High cost of promoting this scenario: money, time, energy
Has benefits to all age groups	This is do-able but it would be a lot of work
	Poor condition of downtown buildings
	Who's going to drive this?



Synopsis E: Do Nothing

There was general agreement that this has already been tried in Maquoketa and the people know it does not work. The community rejected this scenario soundly.

Summary: Do nothing "pros"	Summary: Do nothing "cons"
low upfront cost	high long-term costs
We're already a nice community	Doing nothing is a step backwards
no change is easy and makes people happy	We have tried this already and know it will not work.