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Master planning begins

Cities are required by law to plan for responsible growth and development to ensure that community needs are met in the coming years and decades. They plan for consistent, deliberate growth by creating a master plan, the framework that supports the goals of preserving community character, ensuring diversity, supporting investment, and promoting desired change.

When done well, the plan expresses a vision that a broad range of community members help define. That is why the master planning steering committee is made up of members representing local business, neighborhoods, and tourist attractions. The committee is led by a team of professional planners from Abonmarche, a firm that was selected by the Planning Commission and hired by City Council using local and State funds.

Although committee members guide and support the planning process, all who live, work, or visit the greater Galesburg area are asked to help shape the plan by sharing their thoughts on the City's strengths, shortcomings, and the kinds of development that should be encouraged and discouraged.

Engaged citizens make for a strong, healthy community, so opinions are encouraged. Please take a moment to scan the QR code below or visit the City website to take the survey.



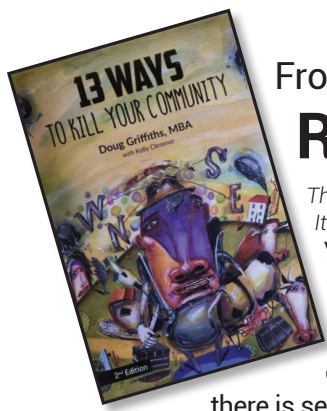
No smart phone? No problem! Complete a paper copy of the survey at City Hall or the Galesburg-Charleston Memorial District Library.

The survey will end January 1, 2023, and results will be used by the steering committee to identify and prioritize projects for the coming five to ten years.



Above: The master planning steering committee met to review the scope of work, demographics, and timeline.

Left: The committee toured the city to observe and discuss the successes and opportunities related to residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational areas.



From 13 Ways to Kill Your Community Reject everything new

This article is one in a series outlining ways that communities damage their ability to thrive, according to author Doug Griffiths. It is presented here with permission to help residents identify ways to revitalize the community. Griffiths' book, 13 Ways to Kill Your Community, is available at www.13ways.ca and at the Galesburg-Charleston Memorial District Library.

The implicit nature of human beings is to strive and work to achieve consistency because in consistency there is security. As we age, this tendency grows and we become increasingly willing to trade opportunity and rewards for security and consistency. This means we choose not to try new food or new drinks or new friends or new places or new ideas. We become entrenched in the status quo and what we know. As communities, we often choose not to accept new people or new ideas or new ways of thinking or new attitudes. We reject everything that is new, preferring the slow deterioration of our community because we fear change even if change means success.

Many small communities are victims of circumstance. They never had exposure to ideas that went beyond the water tower, but in today's day and age, keeping your thoughts, your ideas and your knowledge within immediate sight range of the water tower means deliberately engineering failure.

Historically many communities refused to share information with one another for fear of the competition it would create. Even if they were willing to share, there was little way for the ideas to spread. Communication was very poor compared to what it is now. Only two generations ago many rural residents had no phones or they had "party lines." There was no web, no social media and no real-time news.

Today, there are rural development institutes that research the viability of rural communities all over the world, and they pass that research on to whoever wants to read it. Now the information is there and we simply need to glean value from it. To choose not to know when it is all right there for the taking is to willfully be ignorant of possible solutions and deliberately to choose to have your community fail.

Many wonderfully creative people have

taken risks to try something new, and all we need to do is to learn from their success. One does not need to be brilliant and creative, only resourceful and bold.

Presenting new ideas may possibly make you a target of ridicule and criticism, but you must take the risk if you want the reward. Every great invention, discovery, idea or change in the course of human history originated with someone who was ready to try something different. If not, it would be status quo until the end of time.

People who suggest trying something new are often ridiculed or resented because everyone hates change when it is first presented. After the change has occurred, however, people act as though it has always been that way and defend against any new change again, good or bad, for the sake of securing a new status quo. Communities that seek ideas, explore options, and find partners often find an entirely new world of opportunities on which they can capitalize. They find the future.

Communities and people that fear new ideas, that shun opportunities that stare them right in the face, that embrace everything that's old, that reject anything that is new, are destined to see their communities fail.

These people have names. Sometimes they are NIMBYs (Not In My Back Yard), and sometimes they are NOPEs (Not On Planet Earth). Some are CAVE people (Citizens Against Virtually Everything) and BANANAs (Build Absolutely Nothing Anywhere Near Anything). The most dangerous are the FEARS (Fire-up Everyone Against Reasonable Solutions). They present lies and feelings as facts, they attack people so others are afraid to speak up at meetings, and they succeed by spreading fear. They are social terrorists. Fighting FEARS is necessary if you are to succeed, while letting FEARS take over is a sure path to failure.

Everything changes. It always will. You can take part in it and capitalize on it or you can deny it, and its consequences will hit you like a freight train. Change will come whether you like it or not. Many have tried to fight it. None have succeeded. Change always wins.

If failure of your community is what you're after, don't consider any new ideas. Abandon the notion of taking a risk because the chance something might happen to change the course of your town's future for the better is too great. Better to accept a slow, painful death.

If failure of your community is what you seek, you should especially turn away from any ideas that have already proven to be a success in other places. Reject anything new. With proper focus and dedication your community can slowly die doing exactly what it has always done.



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