

DOWNTOWN FREEPORT IN THE LOOP



Thank You for Your Participation!

Main Street community stakeholder focus sessions were held March 15 and 16. The Partnership held five focus group sessions with over 50 people (business owners, building owners, elected officials and partner agencies) in attendance! Additionally, there were 417 responses to the community survey. At each session, Main Street staff reviewed the *Main Street Approach* and asked attendees a series of questions about their vision for downtown. A full synopsis from survey and focus group sessions can be found greaterfreeport.com/mainstreet. The data was insightful and informative to better understand the perception of our downtown, opportunities for growth, and the most noticeable challenges. In April, Main Street staff will provide the final compiled report with a full digest of survey results, market data and recommended Transformation Strategies.

Again, thank you all for taking time to participate and share your thoughts and ideas about downtown.



Summer Planting Sponsorships

One of the resounding comments we have heard is how beautiful downtown looks when it is full of color! To make this a reality for 2023, funds are needed for downtown planting and watering through the summer months. Sponsorships levels of \$100, \$200 and \$500 are available. Sponsors will be recognized on our website, social media posts, at summer events, and on a banner displayed at the municipal parking lot. A sponsorship form is attached to this newsletter and can be found at greaterfreeport.com/dtbusiness. Please contact Andrea Schultz Winter with questions.

2023 SCHEDULE:

Reminder: All meetings are open to ALL business and building owners! Please join us!

APRIL DOWNTOWN MEETINGS

- **Design & Placemaking**
April 11, 7:30 AM, Partnership Office
- **Downtown Promotions**
April 13, 8:00 AM

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **Stephenson County Clean-Up**
April 9-16
- **Pretzel Fest**
April 22
- **Freeport First Friday**
May 5
- **Mother's Day Promotion**
May 9-14
- **Pretzel City Winefest**
May 20
- **Music on Chicago**
June 2
- **Route 75 Garage Sale Promotion**
June 8-10

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Results from 2023 Promotions

We have had a lot going on in just the first two months of the year for downtown. Here are some results to share:

- Souper Friday: 61 paid attendees and 7 participating businesses and non-profits
- Valentine's Day paid social promotion: 18,530 impressions on Facebook and Instagram for 12 businesses
- Arctic Ale & Art Walk: 400 cups given to attendees
- Usual Suspects Fundraising Concert: 422 attendees



Pretzel Fest

Our next big downtown event is Pretzel Fest! This year's event chair is Aubra Palermo and she is working on some great new ideas for this year. We will welcome back the BBQ competition with people's choice, pretzel vendors (whether food or school district), great demonstrations in the stage area and more. If you have ideas or would like to help with the event on April 22, please contact Aubra. Pretzel Fest celebrates the Pretzel City on the Saturday closest to National Pretzel Day, April 26. Aubra@Aubrarealtor.com



Pretzel City Winefest

Pretzel City Winefest will return on May 20 to a format similar to 2019 with retail and business locations having the option to participate and offer wine samples to attendees. The festival district is also in place for Winefest making it possible for attendees to take their sample with them as they stroll between shops. Promotion will begin soon, so please look for deadlines in emails!



Stephenson County Clean-Up

We are seeking individuals/groups to volunteer in the Stephenson County Clean-up, occurring April 9-16th. Please visit our Facebook page for more details. We appreciate all volunteers! If you have any questions please contact Katie Gentz .



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