

DOWNTOWN FREEPORT IN THE LOOP



March 2022



2022 SCHEDULE:

Survey of Shoppers to Benefit Retail

The Illinois Main Street application is now available, and we are taking advantage of the resources they offer even before we have completed the process! The Partnership has been in contact with Main Street regarding a topic that has been brought up numerous times in our meetings; we want to provide an educational session that will benefit businesses regarding strategies for marketing during events and other festivities.

Before the speaker puts together her presentation, she would like more information on the shopping habits of our local shoppers. The Partnership has released a survey to the general public to hear their comments on what they shop for, when they shop, what they miss and wish would be offered locally and other demographic information. **This survey can be found at greaterfreeport.com/dtsurvey and will be open until the end of March before the data will be provided to our speaker for review. Please share the survey with your patrons so we can collect as much feedback as possible for a great sample!**

Downtown Freeport Festival District

The Downtown Freeport Festival District ordinance was established by the city council to allow patrons to walk around and shop with alcohol from local restaurants and bars on designated days. **Business owners may opt-in if they would like patrons to walk in with open containers of alcohol in their store.** Window decals are available at the Partnership. You can find more information on the city's website cityoffreeport.org/downtown-festival-district

2022 dates

March 5 – Arctic Ale Walk
April 23 – Pretzel Fest
May 6 – First Friday
May 21 – Winefest
June 3 – Music on Chicago
July 1 – Music on Chicago
August 5 – Music on Chicago

August 27- Eats and Beats
September 2- First Friday
September 23 – Night before Brewfest
October 7 – First Friday
October 13 – Wine & Witches

APRIL DOWNTOWN MEETINGS

Downtown Design & Placemaking
(formerly known as *Beautification*)

- April 12, 7:30 AM
@ Greater Freeport Partnership

Downtown Promotions Meeting

- April 14, 8 AM
@ Greater Freeport Partnership

Downtown Business & Building Owners

- May 11, 7:30 AM
Looking for a host!

Downtown Traffic Attraction Workshop

- TBD after survey responses

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- April 9
Back Country Roads Concert
- April 23
Pretzel Fest
- May 6
Festival District Day/Food Truck Fri.
- May 14
Opening Day of Farmer's Market
World Migratory Bird Day
- May 21
Pretzel City Winefest

Upcoming Event & Promotion Schedule

- **March 19 - Pub Crawl**
Hosted by downtown bars.
- **April 9 - Back Country Roads Concert at Masonic Event Center**
A spring fundraising concert has been planned to benefit downtown promotions and beautification this year. Tickets are available on Facebook, the Partnership website, and Riteway Furniture.
- **April 10-17 Stephenson County Clean-Up Week**
- **April 22-30 Stephenson County Restaurant Week**
Details can be found on the Partnership Facebook event.
- **April 23 - Pretzel Fest**
Back for 2022 with new features and more pretzels! The event is being held on Chicago Avenue and hopes to feature more vendors, cultural performances and pretzel fun!
- **May 6 - Food Truck Friday & Festival District Day**
- **May 14 - Opening of Stephenson County Farmer's Market in Municipal Lot & World Migratory Bird Day**
- **May 21 - Pretzel City Winefest**
Wine will be hosted in store locations and bars within the festival district. If you would like to be included in the event, please contact Katie or Nicole by April 9.
- **June 1 - Music on Chicago, Food Truck Friday & Festival District Day**
All Music on Chicago dates will be hosted in the Art Plaza similar to 2021.

For a full list of events for 2022, visit greaterfreeport.com/dtbusiness

Facade Improvement Grant Now Open

A new round of grant funding is available for the City of Freeport's Façade Improvement Program. The Façade Improvement Grant Program is designed to provide owners of properties financial incentives to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the exterior features of buildings located within the Downtown Tax Increment Redevelopment (TIF) Area. The City has proposed a budget of \$20,000 for 2022, funded by the Downtown TIF. The funds will be payable as a reimbursement of up to 50% of the project costs, which cannot exceed \$15,000 total.

The grants are provided by the City of Freeport in recognition of the positive impact that individual facade rehabilitations can have on the overall appearance and quality of storefronts. Applications will be accepted through April 12, 2022. For more information and to receive an application, contact the Community and Economic Development Department at 815-235-8202.

Pretzel Fest Coming April 23

Just after our first event with Arctic Ale & Art Walk and we are already planning for the next! Pretzel Fest will return for its second year in Downtown Freeport on Saturday, April 23. This year's event will also be held on a Festival District Day. Features for this year's event so far include a BBQ competition with opportunity for public to taste for a people's choice awards, performances by school and local talent groups, food trucks, and pretzel activities. We are always interested in new ideas and volunteers to help execute them. If you have an activity, competition, or performance in mind that you believe would help to enliven the event and engage the public, please contact Katie to tell us all about it! We want Pretzel Fest to be a family-friendly event that draws pretzel lovers of all ages. Your ideas and suggestions are welcome and appreciated!



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