Big Problems in the Heart of Iowa

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#ICMA2018
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Why am I here? 2017 Scholarship Recipient, felt I had a story to tell from a truly small city with big budget problems

What can I accomplish? Provide insight and perspective on how even a small city with a small budget can accomplish big changes

What will you glean from listening to me? Rejuvenation and excitement, hope and renewed passion to accomplish projects back in the communities you represent
Community visioning program providing small communities with access to professional planning and design resources through grant funding mechanisms

City of Elkhart conducted Community Visioning through the program, concluding in the summer of 2015

In typical small town fashion, the final report and visioning plan was filed away to collect dust
Visioning Pictures
Fast Forward to 2016

City clerk position transitions from Uhl to Michel in Elkhart

MOST POPULAR
1 Ames firefighters looking to improve cardiac health testing
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Fast Forward to 2016 – 2017

$5 million WWTF Project

New to the City, green in the profession

Asked for help

Attended conferences

Reconnected with interested parties

Found my success and sparked a catalyst
Moral of the Story?

Help exists, you just need to ask for it

Stay connected with your local, regional and state planning organizations

Get second opinions from entities your municipality doesn’t currently work with

Get your elected officials out of your municipality to learn and connect with others

Have passion for progress. It is ultimately your job to inspire your community and your elected officials to go after those big projects
Where are we now?

Transitioned to the City of Van Meter, Iowa in July 2018 as the City Administrator

Currently pursuing the Iowa Living Roadways Community Visioning grant to jumpstart community collaboration and planning

Currently utilizing grant dollars and volunteer labor to expand our rec complex with the addition of parking, boat ramp access and hard surface trails

Keeping the Heater from Van Meter alive through a lease/purchase agreement of the Bob Feller Baseball Museum that is now HOME to the administrative offices of the City in addition to museum displays
Van Meter Progress Pictures
Questions?