

**SUMMARY**  
**East Jordan Downtown Development Authority**  
**Strategy Session**  
**May 30, 2006**

Members of the East Jordan Downtown Development Authority Board of Directors met in order to brainstorm issues related to long range planning. The meeting was facilitated by Bryan Crough, with assistance from Richard Lewis.

**GOALS FOR THE MEETING**

To Build Cohesiveness

Get Directions

Develop a Sense of Place with Concepts to Move Forward

Community Plan Development

Stir Creative Juices

Deal with City/DDA/Planning Commission Directives – get on “same page”

**IDENTIFICATION OF STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS – (S.W.O.T)**

**STRENGTHS**

Tourism

Proximity to Boyne and other Regional attractions

History

Place to Roam

North Central College

Snowmobile Trails & Dealerships

Beachfront

Parks

Motorcycle Shops

Lady Biker Days

Quilt Retreat

Freedom Festival

Urban Outfitters Canoe Livery

Year Round Local Shopping

Water Service Infrastructure

Band shell

Marina

Natural Environment

Water

Friendly People

Art Center

Churches

Public Services

Diversity of Business

Governmental Cooperation

One Traffic Light  
Good School District  
Iron Works  
Reputation  
Jordan Valley  
Artsy People  
Civic Clubs  
Cooperation: Government, Civic Organizations, Chamber

### **WEAKNESSES**

Not all on the same page  
Business Hours  
Lack family shopping  
Lack of “third places”  
Higher cost of local government because of economy of scale  
Not a destination  
Limited lodging  
Lack of wayfinding information  
Lack of connectivity; walkability  
Industry downtown  
Lack of community pride  
Perception is that of a seasonal community

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

Improve Community Self Image  
Improve Communication/Community Involvement  
Develop Marketing Plan  
Promotional activities  
Infrastructure built in scale to handle growth  
Reach out to Seasonal Resident – time & resources  
Downtown housing  
Internet sales  
Local’s shopping  
Connections to casinos  
History of Ironworks  
Hometown atmosphere  
Promotion of activities at Sportsman Park  
Promotion of Recreation – Natural environment – river & lake  
Party Store – snacks, coffee  
Bookstore  
Artist showcase  
Improve wayfinding/communications  
Improve communications with community

## **THREATS**

Fuel prices  
National & Michigan Economy  
Loss of businesses  
Higher taxes keep people out  
Globalization – Ironworks and all industry  
Internet sales  
Auto Plants closing  
Increased property values = higher rents  
Non profit use of land  
Difficulty attracting investors  
Casino growth

## **MAJOR GOAL IDENTIFICATION**

Based on issues raised in SWOT analysis, the group identified major goals and then prioritized them as follows:

6 votes – Vision Development  
3 votes – Historic Guidelines  
3 votes – Marketing Plan  
2 votes – Increase Community pride  
1 vote – Develop Parks Plans  
1 vote – Fill vacancies

Other important goals identified but not receiving votes:

Improve internal communications  
Address walkability issues  
Develop promotional materials  
Survive road construction  
Encourage investment  
Encourage housing

## **NEXT STEPS – MAJOR GOALS**

The group spent time identifying next steps that would be needed in order to move forward the top two identified goals:

## **VISION DEVELOPMENT**

Two key strategies were created:

1. Develop plans that mesh – all governmental units, major organizations & constituencies
2. Use a process that maximizes community input and creates ownership

Next Steps:

1. Communicate this work to all potential partners (City, Chamber, Planning Commission, Parks & Recreation...) with a goal of building consensus on the need for vision development.
2. Obtain a facilitator to assist in moving the process forward
3. Facilitator to conduct community assessment & processes for community input

**HISTORIC GUIDELINES**

Next Steps:

1. Research model guidelines and ordinances - seek input from State of Michigan
2. Research other related sources – TC Chamber of Commerce New Designs for Growth Guidebook, Michigan Downtown Association, and others
3. Include historic guidelines or an ordinance as part of the community input process above.