ImagiNEXT Selection Committee Begins Processing Ideas

In October of 2017, Marion's community visioning process, ImagiNEXT, began soliciting the public for ideas about what they would like to see next in Marion. Over 3,020 ideas were submitted and in January the 23 member Selection Committee began the task of sifting through the ideas. The goal is to narrow potential project ideas to a list of 75-100 by the end of February. The community will have another opportunity to play a role by voting to narrow that list to 30. Then the Selection Committee will choose the final 3-5 ideas which will be celebrated and revealed in March.

Those 3-5 ideas will be part of an application to the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs to have Marion re-designated as an Iowa Great Place. Designation is given to communities with a strong vision for innovation, and enhancing vitality and quality of life. The program supports the development of new and existing infrastructure intended to cultivate the unique and authentic qualities of regions in Iowa.

What about the ideas not selected?

Nearly ten years ago over 1,800 ideas were submitted during the Imagine8 process. Since 2009 many of the ideas not included in The Great Eight have found a way to become a reality. Some were already being included in future plans, others came to life following the completion of Imagine8 projects.

The ImagiNEXT Selection Committee will be focusing their efforts on choosing the final 3-5 ideas. With so many great ideas submitted by the community there are more than 3-5 that are worthy of closer examination. The project Steering Committee is excited to announce a second committee that will be forming with the intent of taking the extra ideas submitted and getting them into the hands of individuals, organizations and businesses who could possibly make those ideas come to fruition more quickly. This group will be led by Kyle Martin of Martin Gardner Architecture, who served as a member of the Imagine8 Selection Committee.

"Marion isn't a one-note place. While a great community has big goals, there are always cool things happening in the periphery," stated Martin. "The biggest ideas should take some time for planning and implementation. While that goes on, there are plenty of other-sized wins to be had and a larger sector of community members to get involved."

Watch for more information on how to be part of the next community vote!