



Feedback from Idea Lounge 5: Savvy Spaces (Tuesday, October 30th)



What does the Chippewa Valley have going for it as far as cool spaces? Lofts, restaurants, retail, work spaces, etc...

- ❖ Phoenix Park
- ❖ RCU
- ❖ VolumeOne Headquarters
- ❖ Leinie Lodge
- ❖ Eau Claire Children's Theater, beautifully remodeled warehouse space
- ❖ Ray's Beach and Native Bay in Chippewa Falls do a great job using their proximity to Lake Wissota
- ❖ Farmer's Market
- ❖ Garage Salon (Chippewa Falls)
- ❖ Bridge Street Station (Chippewa Falls)
- ❖ Nucleus Backroom, the only restaurant space that faces the river

How does the Chippewa Valley compare to other markets. What places/experiences have you seen and had elsewhere?

- ❖ Los Angeles, has many architecturally provocative spaces
- ❖ Duluth (warehouse/historic space)
- ❖ San Diego – River Walk
- ❖ Milwaukee does a great job using their rivers
- ❖ Cherry Creek, Colorado, many restaurants here face the water and also are accessible by water taxis
- ❖ Use of windows – windows should make a restaurant space available from the outside not just from the inside
- ❖ It would be nice to return old character to some of our buildings.
- ❖ Would it be possible to turn more businesses to face the river?
- ❖ Loft apartments

Do we have historic spaces in Eau Claire? How can we put them to better use?

- ❖ We lack historic spaces in Eau Claire, but the few we have recently generated a lot of interest from people with funding behind them.
- ❖ Lofts (Benny Haha, Mousetrap)
- ❖ Positive trend
- ❖ Lack of well-designed spaces
- ❖ Each space needs to be appealing not just be a restaurant or bar or office



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Are aesthetics important to a business that doesn't see any walk-in customers? Does it affect employees happiness/effectiveness?

- ❖ Currently, we have no problems attracting talent, because the quality of living in the area is very strong.
- ❖ We try to design our office so that there is open space for work groups, but private space for client meetings.
- ❖ Aesthetics inspire creativity.
- ❖ Each space for humans should be designed as a place for Design for plants – with lots of light and air.
- ❖ Workspaces have to be designed for efficiency.
- ❖ If we build so that people can live downtown it will drive retail to follow. That's the way we should be doing economic development.

Would a Pedestrian Mall be beneficial to downtown? How can we make downtown more pedestrian friendly?

- ❖ People should decide if they want to use their cars and park or walk
- ❖ Add parking with trail connectivity
- ❖ Focus on walking and alternative transportation
- ❖ Winter makes it difficult for people to walk around
- ❖ Water Street is working to become more pedestrian friendly – adding warning signs to crosswalks
- ❖ Jeremy Gragert suggested making Barstow into a pedestrian mall
- ❖ Cross-walks should be enforced throughout the City of Eau Claire.
- ❖ Some people are afraid for their safety at night.
- ❖

Winter. What do we have for indoor public spaces? How do we lengthen the list of indoor winter activities and spaces?

- ❖ Ice-rink
- ❖ Library
- ❖ Pedestrian mall

Advice for those wanting to create Savvy Spaces in Eau Claire?

- ❖ Creativity doesn't need a lot of money.
- ❖ Don't be afraid to explore new spaces.



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Suggestions:

- ❖ With regards to parking/pedestrian issues discussed tonight, there has been an individual who has provided bike taxi services at the Phoenix park concert series as well as the Farmer's Market. Perhaps the city could hire him, or at least promote such a venture. Dan Green has been doing this. Thanks

- ❖ I'm interested in very energy efficient small housing (co-housing maybe) units in downtown Eau Claire. Must be affordable – not high end lofts. (Eleanor Wolf)

- ❖ Too much of the best waterfront space is parking lot. I'd rather see the following set up street with cars next to sidewalk with trees next to buildings next to sidewalk next to river.

- ❖ Does anybody wonder why there isn't more involvement by retail business owners who have a vested interest in downtown??

- ❖ Future Topic: The Internet and the Chippewa Valley. Being dragged kicking and screaming into the 21st century. (Steve Hanson, shanson@chippewaguide.com)