

PROSPERITY PRIORITIES

HERE ARE IDEAS GENERATED AT MAIN STREET WILLIAMS' SWEET PROSPERITY PARTY ON MARCH 9, 2009 – IDEAS OFFERED TO IMPROVE OUR PROSPERITY.

Want to get involved in moving an idea forward? Contact Jean-Ellen Kegler, Main Street manager, at MainStreetWill@aol.com or 928-607-4038.

The Main Street Williams Board of Directors committed to taking the lead on the top three vote-getting ideas. *(Additional notes, in italics, are from Jean-Ellen.)*

- 1. Improve the first impression of Williams, especially by dressing up the entrances to town. Trees, benches, trash receptacles throughout town signify a welcoming environment and encourage visitors to stay. *(This is a significant undertaking and requires much planning – some of which already exists in the Arizona Land Use Planners documents – and it has the potential to be very expensive at the outset. But it can be addressed in stages and has reason to be extraordinarily effective in the long-term.)***
- 2. Create diagonal parking the entire length of Route 66 (south side) – adding parking and creating sense of town unity. *(This appears to be very doable and would have significant visual and psychological impact.)***
- 3. Adopt attitude that our town itself IS the special event, that it is worth visiting all day, every day – utilize and unify what already exists in town. *(This is especially challenging because it is a concept about “attitude” – but it has the ability to provide the most bang for our buck.)***

Design/Appearance Ideas:

- Install street lights the entire length of Route 66 (and north?) to enhance the look and promote sense of unity.
- Rethink merchandising/decorating ordinances for shops – encourage more lighting.
- Create “pocket parks” for rest/relaxation on little-used side streets, making all of Main Street district more inviting.
- Clean up Monument Park and make it more appealing.
- Create consistent design theme(s) throughout town, also making town more pedestrian friendly (i.e., covered sidewalks).
- Provide more places to sit and relax and people-watch so visitors don't go back to their motel rooms so early.

Promotion/Events Ideas:

- Utilize vacant store windows to promote aspects of Williams - history, culture, art, advertising. Engage rather than disappoint visitors.
- Provide transportation around town - suggestions included trolley and old cars.
- Provide memorable experiences, so word of mouth works in our favor - cheap and powerful.
- Create a coupon book for cooperative merchant advertising.
- Create photo-ops in various locations throughout town - with signs, characters, etc.
- Offer daytime activities as well as afternoon/evening activities (such as the street show) - keep people in town throughout the day.
- Revamp historical walking tour. (*"Cultural/historic tourism" is increasingly popular.*)
- Revive Rendezvous Days or create a similar event, complete with street vendors. (*The vendor issue is controversial in Williams and requires further exploration.*)
- Offer "after-train" specials whereby customers are given discounts when they show their punched train tickets.
- Work to create an on-going festival atmosphere in town - i.e., banners, lights, action.
- Begin offering special events during spring break period - spring visitors need more to see and do.
- Offer entertainment (i.e., cowboy street show) throughout the Main Street district, including west and east ends.
- Get merchants to dress up, at least on the weekends - clothing to reflect various periods in our history.
- Fulfill visitor fantasies by capitalizing on our small-town wholesome historic image.
- Put more effort into appropriate "branding" for Williams - for instance, use "half-tanked" theme in markets that are only half a tank of gas away.
- Since cowboys are already part of summer evening entertainment, use them to do more promoting of businesses.
- Create a "Stroller Express" campaign to take advantage of the popularity of Polar Express and encourage families into town.

Cooperation/Communication Ideas:

- Work to educate businesses regarding what's available in Williams, so more accurate and enthusiastic referrals can be made.
- Utilize cooperative advertising - more cost-efficient, plus it promotes a more vital image of Williams.
- Create more networking opportunities so people in the Main Street District know what's going on in other establishments.
- Create one central event calendar to reduce scheduling conflicts.
- Offer customer service training to merchants and their employees - there are many complaints about customers being treated rudely.