

City of Ithaca DDA Goals & Insight

Revised May 12, 2026

DDA Goals

- Land use- Zoning considerations in progress
- No vacancies- currently 6 store fronts are vacant
- Variety in retail business- retail, restaurant, entertainment, service
- Utilize grant opportunities – MEDC/Gratiot Community Foundation
- Attract lodging – hotel/bed & breakfast/event/conference center
- Keep district attractive – encourage & send letters to downtown businesses
- Light canopy- work with IPC to promote activities

Threats

- No TIF capture – City General fund contribution
- Population loss
- Lack of housing
- Neglected downtown buildings – in need of restoration

Strengths

- Courthouse/County seat
- New business opportunity- vacant store front available
- Public transportation- Alma transit
- School systems- new turf football field also available to other neighboring schools
- Fair grounds at McNabb Park- host to Gratiot Ag Society fair
- New playscape at Woodland Park
- Snow hill- only one in Gratiot County
- Bike trails (Jail House Trail)
- Local grocery store/new pharmacy at Ric's Food Center
- Vibrant – considering economy - industrial/higher income
- Community “Unity” pride
- Only bowling alley in the county
- Farmers Market
- Ice cream shop/food
- Hearthstone Oven/Apple Barrel
- Restaurants – A variety of eateries
- Car dealership
- Gaining new businesses – retail shopping/antique store/coffee shop
- Self-Serve Lumber – open 7 days /TSC/Ellens Equipment/ZFS
- Downtown apartments
- Newsletters – communication through constant contact, website, Facebook etc.
- Collaborate for promotional events with IPC, Chamber and neighboring communities
- Member of the Gratiot Area Chamber of Commerce

- Nearing completion of new sidewalks through community
- US-127 Bike path
- Soccer field/Parks – partner with local campgrounds
- Snow/leaf removal
- Pickleball courts

Opportunities

- Vacant store fronts, opportunity for more retail shops
- Federal, State and County Grant opportunities
- Registered as a Historical District/beautiful architectural buildings
- Fine dining- potentially the Wendy's building
- ZFS Inc – 2 more phases, increase in people
- Vacant retail space/apartments- still more opportunities for downtown apartments
- Low-cost website advertising
- Year-round events

Weaknesses

- Limited land opportunity to attract lodging – hotel/bed & breakfast
- Tough economy – interest rates, inflation, building costs
- Limited funds
- Evening activities/Fine dining
- Lodging accommodations/conference center
- Lack of volunteers with today's busy environment