

Chamber Focus Group

“Entertainment”

Our Discussion Topics were:

- 1.) Nightlife
- 2.) Attracting and keeping young people and families

Group Dynamic:

The professional backgrounds range from:

Non Profit Administrator
Health Care Business Owner
Service Industry Business Owner
Real Estate Sales Agents
Banker
Attorney
Corporate For Profit Administrator

The age range for this group was from late twenties to late sixties.

The New Bern area is not a Metropolitan area which by definition is:

Large urban center of culture and trade.

The New Bern area IS a MICROPOLITAN area. Smaller in representative size but with the same needs and wants for its community in culture and trade.

Also

**The New Bern area IS the HUB of Eastern North Carolina from
Hwy. 70 East and West
Hwy. 17 North and South
Hwy. 55 and 43**

Our vision comes in a 3 phase approach: 1.) create more opportunity 2.) increase awareness through better communication 3.) Brining people to our community and keep our own from leaving to fulfill their wants needs. This would build our community stronger, and make our local economy stronger.

Phase One: Things to focus on now! Better communication and advertising of local area events and entertainment.

Liven Up Downtown in the Evening!

- * Electronic Sign at Convention Center – Weekly/Month
- * Sign Outside Chamber of Commerce – Weekly/Month
- * Local Businesses bought in and posting – Weekly/Month
- * Expand on what we are already doing.
- * Consistent offering of Downtown Entertainment – All businesses, City & County must buy in.
- * Downtown Businesses stay open later – Incentives from city/county.
- * Weekly Block Party – Downtown/Union Point. Family Night themes could have Historical or International Themes, also involving area churches, civic clubs, entertainers, and artists to help provide Entertainment / Music / Food / Beverages.

Phase Two: Thing to focus on in the next 5 – 10 years. Building on the good things we already have in place.

Expand out from the center!!

- * Revitalize the Mall – City and County need to entice Mall Management Companies by creating a package of incentives to bring business back.
- * Keeping Shopping & Entertainment in our county, instead of traveling out our county.
- * Multiplex, Popular Stores, Popular Restaurants as part of Mall complex.

- * A clearly marked and well maintained *Bike Path System* and *Bike Rental System* helping our community and visitors get around and “Go Green”.
- * A *Boat Taxi* linking New Bern to Bridgeton for future shopping, entertainment, and restaurants.

Phase Three: Things to focus on 10+ years out.

Make the New Bern area a Destination for Entertainment!!!

- * Eastern North Carolina Amphitheater – Attracting national performing talent. Concerts, Plays, Movies in the round, Historical Presentations year round.
- Art Co-Op – Highlighting our Local and Eastern NC Artists who can display and sell their art while practicing their passion for painting, drawing, sculpting, and pottery.

Our group is sure that each and everyone of you seek out these same wants and needs outside our county, and spend your hard earned money outside our area.

Lets Bring It Home!

**Underlying all Downtown Activity/Events/Entertainment is
a solution for convenient parking.**