



## SECTION B. PARKS, RECREATION, AND LIFESTYLES

### STRENGTHS

- Mississippi River
- Des Moines & Skunk Rivers
- Boat Access Availability
- Local Fishing Groups (i.e. Lake Cooper Anglers)
- Great Location For Duck Hunting
- Hunting Clubs & Organizations (i.e. Pheasants Forever & Ducks Unlimited)
- Shimek Forest (2nd Largest In State, 7800 Acres)
- Eagle Watching In Keokuk
- Local YMCA's In Ft. Madison And Keokuk New Development Of Recreation Trails
  - Bluff Rd. (Ft. Madison)
  - Bluff Rd Connecting To Bypass (Ft. Madison)
  - Keokuk To Montrose
- Lee County Fairgrounds

### WEAKNESSES

- Lee County Has No Place Similar To Burlington Rec-Plex
- Lack Of Programming And Promotion In The County
- Lack Of Coordination Among All City And County Groups
- Lack Of Support Services For Tourism Activities
- The Loss Of The Bass Tournaments In Ft. Madison
- Ft. Madison Swingspan Bridge (Inconvenience Of Bridge Keeps People In Illinois)

### OPPORTUNITIES

- Development Of More Camping On The Waterways
- Development Of A Recreational Facility Between Ft. Madison And Keokuk That Is Similar To The Rec-Plex In Burlington
- Development Of New Events To Attract Visitors To Lee County From The Temple In Nauvoo, IL
- Ferry Service Between Nauvoo And Montrose
- Ft. Madison YMCA Expansion And Renovation
- Ft. Madison YMCA Partnering Of Programs With Surrounding Communities
- Development Of Quarterly Newsletter Promoting Upcoming Events In Lee County
- Possibility Of Developing Hunting As A Revenue Generator
- Using The Lee County Fairgrounds For More Events Than Just The Fair And Friday Night Racing
- Compiling A Complete List Of Activities That Lee County Has To Offer. (Promotion)
- Bringing Back The Bass Tournaments To Lee County That Ft. Madison City Officials Have Allowed To Leave.
- Developing More Events On The Ft. Madison Riverfront.



## **FOCUS AREAS**

### TOURISM

- \$40,000,000 In Expenditures In Tourism In Lee County For 2000.
- Before 9/11/01, People Weren't As Interested In Visiting Smaller Markets. They wanted International Trips And Trips To Big Locations. This May Have All Changed After The 9/11/01 Terrorist Attacks. Therefore, We Need To Work At Attracting These People To Lee County.
- Focus On Getting Our Name Out More Locally. This Will Be Even More Important Once The Temple Opens In Nauvoo.
- Events Bring People = Money For Lee County. Therefore, Look At Developing Many More Events To Draw People To Lee County
- Local Tourism Groups Have Had Success Marketing To Mormon Population. Increase This Marketing In Order To Expand Tourism In Lee County.
- Mormon Population Is Very Family Oriented, Therefore Need To Take This Into Account When Organizing Events.
- Look At The Possibility Of Building A Convention Center In Lee County
  - No Need To Be As Big As The Oakley Lindsey Center In Quincy, IL, However Needs To Be Able To Accommodate At Least 3,000 People.
  - Need To Work With Local Economic Development Organizations.
  - Convention Center Would Open Up Many Doors Not Only With Tourism, But Also With Economic Development In The County.
  - Note. Convention Task Force Currently Looking At The Issue.
- Improvement Areas:
  - Lee County Needs More Unique Attractions To Bring People To Area
  - Event Development (i.e. Hunting Dog Events)
  - Coordination Amongst Groups In Lee County
  - The Need For More Quality Hotels And Restaurants (potentially Attached To Convention Center)
  - More Financial Support Needed From The County And Especially The Cities.

### RECREATIONAL FACILITY

A recreational facility similar to the Rec-Plex in Burlington is needed in Lee County. The city of Burlington has had tremendous success with their Rec-Plex. They draw people to their facility from many of the surrounding counties. We feel if done right, Lee County can enjoy the same success. According to John Luna (Ft Madison Parks & Recreation Director) the number of participants are dropping in each city's youth leagues, therefore a county facility could be developed that would bring kids together from throughout Lee County. The cities could still have their local leagues, but this facility could open up the possibility to have countywide leagues for competition also. The facility should have soccer fields, youth baseball and softball diamonds, and adult softball fields to begin with. Donnellson Mayor Alvin Krebill said that the city of Donnellson is currently looking at developing a facility similar to this. He was very open to the idea of the county becoming involved in the project. The facility would bring people from all over Lee County to a centralized location to compete in a variety of recreational activities. The county is in great need of a facility similar to the one proposed in Donnellson. Therefore,



we feel the county should actively work with the city of Donnellson to develop this project in order to improve the quality of life in Lee County.

#### MISSISSIPPI RIVER

- This is a highly underdeveloped recreational resource in Lee County. County should develop many more events and attractions around the Mississippi River.
- Mississippi River is the #1 Attraction for tourism in Lee County.
- Tourism offices find that there is a great demand for the following that at the present time are not available on the Mississippi River in Lee County.
  - Boat Rentals
  - Restaurants On The River or Hotels On The River
  - Dinner Cruise Ship On The River (6 Times A Year Would Be Optimal)
  - Ferry
- We need to work with city governments and local fishing clubs to bring back the Bass Tournaments to Lee County. These tournaments have a tremendous economic impact on the county. The competitors spend their money on the following and more when in town.
  - Hotels
  - Food & Drink
  - Gas
  - Fishing Supplies And More
  - Shopping At Local Merchants
- We need to coordinate events on the river with other events going on at the same time in Keokuk and Ft. Madison. We feel with two events occurring simultaneously that we would draw more people into the communities. For example:
  - Taste of Ft. Madison occurring at the same time as Dragon Boat Races.
- Once again in order to gain maximum benefit from the Mississippi River we need to have better coordination amongst all the groups in Lee County.

#### SHORT TERM GOALS

1. Form a volunteer board representing all aspects of parks, recreation, and life-styles in Lee County that would meet quarterly to discuss the upcoming events throughout Lee County. Also, this group could work at developing new countywide events. We feel this board would help to improve the lack of coordination and communication that currently exists in Lee County.
2. Develop a complete list of all the activities, events, and opportunities that currently exist in Lee County. Once this list is compiled work to do a better job of educating the citizens of Lee County of all that is already here and available to them in Lee County.
3. Work with the local governments and volunteer fishing groups to bring back the Bass tournaments to Lee County. These are great events and need to come back to Lee County.
4. Coordination and communication improvements between county and city governments and between recreational volunteer groups.