

WINTERSET HEART & SOUL STATEMENTS

There is something special about every town. Whether it is historic places, rural traditions, or friendly neighbors, the special community characteristics are the things that really matter to people. They draw people to a place and make them care about where they live. This is what Community Heart & Soul™ is all about. Heart & Soul is a community engagement process that reconnects people with what they love most about their town. Through the Heart & Soul process, these connections are translated into “values statements” that help serve as a foundation for future community decisions. It is an approach designed to empower all residents, including business owners, social and civic groups, and city government, with the knowledge of what is really important to its residents. Knowledge of our values helps all local decision-makers to shape the future of the community in a way that upholds its cherished character.

Since 2018, Madison County has been engaged in Heart and Soul efforts to discover what is valued most in our county and our respective communities. In Winterset, our journey started with 7th graders interviewing individuals and small groups. Our efforts went on to encompass open-ended surveys that were completed by more than 400 Winterset community members. Analysis of the survey results uncovered recurring themes of what our community values most. Heart and Soul value statements were then created to reflect those themes. Finally, after many drafts and community review, these value statements are being presented to the Winterset community. As a Heart & Soul committee, we didn't stop fine tuning the statements until we believed that each one represented what the people of Winterset really value about our community. We didn't stop until the “we” truly meant all of us! This is our town. This is our past. This is our future. This is our heart and soul. These are our value statements:

NEIGHBORLY COMMUNITY

We value our welcoming, neighborly, rural community that provides a sense of small town pride, safety and belonging. Neighbors and friends look out for each other and are quick to strike up a conversation and lend a hand.

“A community who cares and whose actions always speak louder than their words”

“The culture should also remain the same... a community where one keeps their doors open and welcomes their neighbors.”

“The determination to stay an autonomous community with its character intact...People keep caring about what happens to their neighbors”

LOCAL COMMERCE

We value the joint efforts of businesses, volunteers and city government who actively support local commerce and business success, while preserving our historic look and enhancing our small-town feel.

“Together, everyone achieves more.”

“The small town feel of recognizing people everywhere you go and the helpfulness of the city workers and business owners”

“Reaching out to newcomers and welcoming their ideas and energy, being friendly and welcoming to visitors to our stores, restaurants and accommodations”

“The business community supports one another to make our community always better.”

COMMUNITY PRIDE

We value the sense of pride people have in the Courthouse Square historic district, beautiful homes and landscaping, parks, bridges, monuments and museums, and we actively work to preserve the history, character, warmth and charm they provide to our small town.

“Winterset has been able to combine new with the old that preserves the ambiance and wonder of the past. I hope that continues.”

“People committed to caring for the community and keeping it aesthetically pleasing”

“Remain in our core values, not to get urbanized...People come to the small town for the appeal of it...Maybe a step back in time by some, but loved for the slower pace”

RURAL HERITAGE

We value our rural heritage, our local heroes and the preservation of our treasured landmarks, greenspace, wildlife and nature. We are committed to protecting our heritage, honoring our heroes, and maintaining our landmarks and identity for the benefit of all generations.

"A sense of connectedness to the land and like-minded people who care about not only where we all choose to live, but how we all treat one another"

"Wildlife, beauty of nature, fields and pastures, creeks and rivers"

"Nature habitats and beauty in the town and surrounding natural beauty/varied landscapes"

"To pass on to future generations the peacefulness, beauty, wild-life and rich land that was passed to us by the past generations"

ACTIVITIES and SERVICES

We value affordable and accessible community events, recreational and cultural activities, and local goods and services that result in an excellent quality of life within our small town. Our health care system, schools, libraries, churches and other organizations offer support, learning activities and social opportunities for all ages.

"The culture of respect and collaboration among civic groups, businesses, churches and individuals"

"I would like to see a program that "opens kids' worlds" for those children whose parents can't afford to enroll them in camps, sports teams, clubs, art classes, dance, etc."

"It is small enough to know a lot of people, but large enough that you can find most everything you need in the way of friends, fellowship and resources."

COMMUNITY SPIRIT

We value our vibrant community spirit and the willingness of people who step up and work with one another to address community needs, challenges, and opportunities.

"We step up and help each other when we are in need."

"A loving and accepting culture that values family and true relationships"

"Where people come together to make beautiful things happen"

PEOPLE

Above all, we value people. Friendly, caring person-to-person connections are the heart and soul of the Winterset community.

"The people you meet here become your family."

"I love the kind and friendly atmosphere."

"Commitment of people to keep values strong"

