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### Envision 2030 enters second week of meetings

Business representatives key in on tourist-g geared development  
By JESSE HELLING,  
Messenger staff writer

Tourist-g geared development on the banks of the Des Moines River could be the key to revitalization for Fort Dodge, according to a focus group that convened Monday.

In day four of a seven-day series of meetings, six participants representing business and retail organizations met at the Best Western Starlite Village to discuss their ideas for the city's economic future.

They're part of the city's overall Envision 2030 process. The focus group sessions provide an opportunity for the public to give their input on the planning process.

Roger Slater, president of The Slater Group of Woodstock, Ga., which was hired by the city to coordinate the process, encouraged participants in Monday's focus group to help create and maintain a vision for the area.

"Without vision, the people will perish," said Slater, quoting the Bible.

Slater offered an alternate interpretation of the quote, Proverbs 29:18: "Without people, the vision will perish," he said.

Members of the focus group offered their ideas as to how to spur the Fort Dodge economy.

Several advocated development along the city's riverfront, which could include an indoor aquatic center and restaurants, among other developments.

Others suggested continued development in the area of the Gypsum City Off-Highway Vehicle Park on the eastern edge of the city.

Karna Lowenstein, a consultant with The Slater Group, encouraged group members to "keep thinking big."

"Keep talking to others," Lowenstein said.

Focus group meetings continue today, with representatives of industry and agri-business invited to the Starlite from 8 to 10 a.m. Citizens of the city's 3rd Ward are invited to join a group from 6 to 8 p.m. at Fort Dodge Senior High School.

The Slater Group will compile all suggestions gleaned during the group sessions, eventually processing the information into a final recommendation. The report is expected in late March or early April.

The city of Fort Dodge will pay \$28,500 for The Slater Group's services.

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