

## **Focus Group #6 – Youth Attendees**

8 high school aged youth from Kalona were in attendance for the focus group.

## Youth

---

### ***Where is good fishing around here?***

English River has a little  
Farm ponds

### ***What's great about growing up in Kalona?***

#### **Amish**

Culture we have with the Amish is pretty unique to have something to be known for.

Local Amenities

City has pretty much you need with grocery store and Yoddy's.

#### **Location**

Nice location: right between two bigger cities.  
time.

#### **Safety**

No real crime.

When we were little our parents us outside; there was really no one around who would harm us.

#### **Smalltown Atmosphere**

Friendly, almost everyone knows each other.

Small town, everyone knows each other, quiet and peaceful.

It is small and I never really liked big cities.

community.

Nice to walk in somewhere and everyone knows you.

Fun driving through downtown Kalona and everyone is waving at each other.

### ***What would Kalona benefit from/does the community need?***

#### **Choices**

Bigger grocery store so you can get things that you have to go to Iowa City for.  
city.

Try and get activities around that youth can enjoy, but yet more middle age people can also enjoy.

#### **Local Entertainment**

More stuff for youth to do (i.e. bowling alley, movie theatre)

Need somewhere to go that is open past 10:00; only place is Casey's, which isn't much of a hangout.

Kalona.

City.

Videos are for rent at Casey's, new place on the highway and here (library).

#### **Outdoor Recreation**

Always enjoy riding on the Keywash Trail, a bike path would be nice.

Kalona.

#### **Trails.**

I would be interested in a bike trail that connects to other trail.

out on.

An aquatic center; expand the pool.

### **Recreation Center**

Uplift the facilities we have.

YMCA or a bigger gym, shape up the facilities.

YMCA: Place for kids to go after school, somewhere to hang out in the evenings if it had a big screen TV.

### ***What do you think about the new library?***

A lot of the younger kids like to come here after school and they got a nice program.

It's a lot nicer than the old one.

We have computers at home.

### ***What do you think about downtown?***

people attract.

Historical downtown as in how old the buildings are definitely needs to be preserved.

If you build new buildings you need regulation to make sure they fit in and you can keep and show people our community is proud of our heritage and where we come from.

There is more room for expansion.

With a tourist economy we could put more shops in or spruce it up a little bit with planters, etc.

### ***What about the downtown traffic?***

One ways would be nice because you don't have to worry about oncoming people.

Sometimes it can be a little crowded with cars on both sides of the road and traffic going in between, but I don't see any other way you can do it unless you put in a big parking lot.

There's no where you can park.

You can't see around buildings when you back out.

### ***How about the annual events (Kalona Days, Fall Festival)?***

#### **Age Oriented**

Hard to say what it needs because a lot of older people like to go to Kalona days but the younger people want more activities, yet it all costs money and sometimes you can't have all that.

Orient more Kalona Days activities towards kids and continue to have quilt show etc. for older people.

#### **New Ideas**

Most definitely an outdoor theatre would be really cool.

We have kids who drive up to Iowa City just for that where they show movies at University of Iowa.

Would something similar to movie night in Ankeny go over here?

#### **Participation**

We most definitely participate.

#### **Past Years**

One year had small carnival rides and we had fun on those (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade)

One year they had a skateboarding guy come do tricks and that drew a big crowd.

Some years are better than others.

#### **Variety of Activites**

For younger people Kalona Days is not that much fun because there's not that much to do.

### ***What do you think about the parks?***

little kids.

made Frisbee golf items for the City of Wellman. We are talking about going over to Wellman to play Frisbee golf.

Maybe we need a Frisbee golf course at Kalona Park.

Recently, we've gotten hooked on Frisbee golf.

The restroom facility needs improvement; a little bit bigger.

Think City Park is nice, spacious, not everything is crammed in together.

### ***Is soccer very big here?***

High school basketball team got second at the stat tournament this year.

Little kids, like the ASA and YFO

Main sport is basketball and football.

Soccer is not that big here.

We just got it at high school 4 or 5 years ago.

### ***What do you think about the school system?***

here.

Classes are getting smaller.

It's nice because we have great facilities and strict academics that give kids the means to excel.

It's really good.

Junior class is class that's huge, we are almost to 3A.

Our academics are great.

Our principal shows us every year how we are ranked at the top in the state in 2A.

Teaching staff is phenomenal.

some go to Mid-Prairie.

You always hear about Washington trying to get a new school.

### ***How often do you guys go to Iowa City?***

We go it least once a week.

### ***What do you do in Iowa City?***

Downtown Iowa City

Have friends there.

Mall

Movies

Nice walk around Downtown Iowa City.

Scheels is a big one

### ***Are there other issues about Kalona?***

**City Management**

Bunch of people are upset about the Old River Bridge closing.  
Should definitely save the Old River Bridge for the historic aspect.

**Future Development**

active.

**Outdoor Recreation**

Regional county trails would be awesome.

**Recreation Center**

Add something like a YMCA or a big place that gives a hangout place to kids and a workout place to adults.; I think that would increase Kalona's appearance to everybody.

**Traffic**

Intersections at Highways 1 and 22 is kind of the crossroads into the town, I think they could make that look a little bit nicer. When you come to Kalona that's kind of the way you come.

***Kalona?***

Academically, the school system is a good reason to come back.

Definitely would come back.

Have no regrets about growing up here.

Kalona is a great place to grow up and raise kids in.

***Did you ever try to cross between City Park and swimming pool on the south side and elementary school and middle school with ball fields on north side?***

It's important to have a way to get across.

They need to make a road

Think a bridge or archway going across would be something appealing that the city of Kalona could also use as an entryway feature.

We need a bridge to make it safe for kids to cross, but it doesn't help that there is a creek there.

We snuck through yards a lot.

***What do you think about new development areas?***

Good place for the city to grow but now it's getting into the country.

I live right beside Harvest Hill on 1<sup>st</sup> Place and a lot has grown around our home since I grew up.

***Do you have friends among the Amish?***

Quite a few.

***Is connection with the Amish what it should be?***

up

If Kalona grows and pushes the Amish out is destroying the reason for tourists to come in.

Our town getting bigger and their land getting smaller isn't the quite the way we want to go.

People come to Kalona to get a taste of the Amish culture.

Yes and no.

***Where do you work?***

I work construction and am also trying to work at a nearby dairy farm and help my dad farm.

KB Electric and Construction.

Lifeguard during the summer.

Work for the city of Kalona.

Work here (library), Yotty's Ice Cream Shop, and a local restaurant.

County engineers.