



## Downtown Management Report : 2025

Sparta TODAY (Consisting of Sparta DDA, Sparta Chamber & Sparta Events)



### COMMUNICATION

**2.7 M** Views on Facebook (2024 was 747.3k)

**43,547** Sessions on the Sparta Chamber website

**62K** Accounts reached on the top reaching Facebook post for Apple Fest (2024 was 18.4k)

**12,689** Blog Post Views (139% increase)

**85** Local businesses who attended our mobile monthly "What's Brewin" networking events



### EVENTS

**70+** Days of Special Events

**60+** Businesses that donated, volunteered, or engaged in the community

**70** Round Haybales decorated by the community

**\$119,600** Sponsorship dollars raised

**\$74,000** Grant Dollars Acquired

**600+** Over 600 Volunteer Hours clocked to help make great things happen in Sparta



## KEEPING THINGS VIBRANT

### Sip & Shops

This is a reinvigorated shop local campaign designed to encourage traffic for downtown businesses. This year, we hosted three seasonally-themed events: The Downtown Cider Stroll, Doe Days, and Hometown Christmas. We offered Sparta Bucks giveaways, brought in local vendors, and advertised area deals and specials for the event. The result was a simple, but effective program that boosted engagement and sales in downtown shops, restaurants, and boutiques!



## SPARTA BUCKS



**27** Local businesses accepting Sparta Bucks

**\$11,065** Sparta Bucks spent in Sparta small businesses in 2025

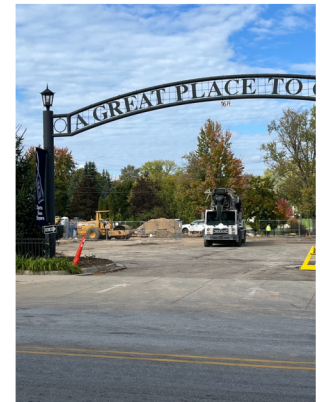
**\$32,405** Amount of Sparta Bucks purchased by community to circulate back into local economy

**\$5,800** Shop Local Campaign "prizes" of Sparta Bucks awarded through Shop Local promotions!

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2025

### Sparta Town Square Construction

Utilizing grant funding from Revitalization and placemaking 1.0, Community Development Block Grant Dollars, and Downtown Development Authority Match Dollars, the masterplan of the Sparta Town Square began construction. Variations of this project have been discussed since 2014, and final plans include a formal public gathering space, outdoor fireplace, stage, public restrooms, and small community room. It will all be located in the heart of Downtown Sparta, which is within walking distance of many local businesses, making it easy for visitors and locals to engage with downtown businesses during events. The space is anticipated to open early 2026.



## Exciting things to note!

**5** Businesses that celebrated ribbon cuttings: Abra Autobody of America, Sp ARTa Works, Surf Internet, Blondie Blossom Boutique, and Elements Movement Yoga Studio.



**150+** People who found yetis hidden throughout Sparta businesses during the Yeti on the Loose, a Shop Local initiative hosted by Sparta TODAY



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

As of December 1, 2025

## DDA Board

**Tom Cheslek**, President North Ridge Funeral Home | **Kelly Potes**, Vice President ChoiceOne Bank | **Mike Lamb** Coldwell Banker | **Robert Whalen** Sparta Village President | **Rex Baker** Baker Investments LLC | **Robert Shangle** LiveStatue | **Doc George Freeland** Freeland Chiropractic | **Andrea Grey Bayes** Water Treatment | **Tim Driscoll** Driscon LLC | **Nate Benham** Sparta Tire | **Joel Stoner** Sparta Area Schools | **Dr. Dan Scarffe** Scarffe Chiropractic

*Mission (approved 2009): Create a downtown that still has a small town feel and offers a bit of yester-year and yet is on the cutting edge with up-to-date shops and business practices. A safe, secure, friendly downtown where every member of the family can find fun things to do. A beautiful, busy, and thriving downtown that has things you can't find elsewhere. The heart of a real town that is a great place to raise a family. Once you come to downtown Sparta, you won't want to leave!*

## Chamber Board

**Amber Marks** Dance with Me | **Konrad Raclawski** ChoiceOne Bank | **Maryanne Wright** Wrightway Appraisal | **Tom Cheslek** North Ridge Funeral Home | **Tom Penland** Tom's Hometown Bakery | **Lynn Driscoll** Sundaes at the Park | **Michelle Cooper** Servpro | **Karin Kay** Sable Homes | **Sarah Acker** Compass Credit Union | **Alysia Gill** Auto Care Excellence

*Mission: Promote local business development through community interaction.*

## Sparta Events Board

**Maryanne Wright** Wrightway Appraisal | **Brenda Braybrook** McDonald's | **Tom Cheslek** North Ridge Funeral Home | **Scott Grossmeyer** Member at Large | **Kendra Afton** Blondie Blossom Boutique

*Mission: Promote economic development and community pride by creating great events for people near and far to come together and enjoy!*

## STAFF

**Elizabeth Morse** DDA/Chamber Director

**Beth Baltruczak** Events Coordinator

**Amy Falk** Chamber Administrator

**Heather Hockey** Hospitality Coordinator

**Michelle VanWeelde** Social Media Coordinator

