

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE

Editorial Page



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Completing tourism puzzle can mean big dollars for area

Tourism dollars can be a big part of an area's economy.

And Lycoming County has a lot to offer visitors, starting with natural beauty and outdoor recreation opportunities, including walking and biking trails and paths.

It has an historic district in Williamsport that showcases the area's lumber capital of the world heritage perfectly.

It has an attractive downtown in Williamsport that includes arts attractions that other towns its size don't have, and those elements are well blended with a combination of restaurants and entertainment.

As much as Williamsport and the surrounding area have to offer, the tourism dollars can't be generated to full potential without a welcome mat that gets people to the attractions.

The Susquehanna Greenway Partnership led a visitor readiness assessment last week in an effort to improve the city's destination welcome mat.

Is there enough signage for visitors and enough information easily available? Are there enough places to sit and park? Are there enough easily accessible bathroom facilities?

Are there direct connections between rivers, recreation trails and cultural facilities? Is the marketability of them adequate?

How can the connection between downtown and the Susquehanna River Walk be improved? How can the connection between Lycoming College and downtown be improved? How can the connection between neighborhoods and downtown be improved?

The answers to these prescient questions will be obvious when the results of surveys taken last week are tabulated. More information will be coming forth in public meetings in October or November.

The city and Lycoming County have a lot to offer. The tourism dollars are an important piece of the area's economic health.

Hopefully, the final assessment of how to complete the tourism puzzle will capture those dollars.